

**OFFICE OF THE ULSTER COUNTY LEGISLATURE
MEETING MINUTES**

NAME OF GROUP: Commission On Reapportionment

DATE: June 15, 2011

TIME: 4:00 P.M.

PLACE: UCOB, Legislative Chambers, 6th Floor

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vernon Benjamin, Paul Benkert, Michael Catalinotto, Cynthia Lowe, Richard Messina, Dare Thompson, Bill West

MEMBERS EXCUSED: None

OTHERS ATTENDING: Victoria Fabella, Deputy Clerk, Legislature

- The meeting was called to order by Facilitator West at 4:17 PM.
- A motion was made by Bill West, Seconded by Michael Catalinotto, to approve the Minutes of the Meetings on April 12, 2011, April 13, 2011 Afternoon Meeting, April 13, 2011 Public Comment Meeting, and April 20, 2011 Afternoon Meeting. All in favor, Carried.
- Final Report

Facilitator West asked the Commissioners their thoughts on the report.

Commissioner Catalinotto said he finds it acceptable.

Commissioner Benkert said he, too, is comfortable with the report, as the Commission has discussed it at the last three meetings. Again, Paul reiterated that it is not this Commission's role to tell future redistricting commissions how to do their job, but to list for them the problems/issues they may face in order to better prepare them to accomplish their goals.

Commissioner Thompson suggested adding the following recommendation to the report:

"Both for good government reasons and to help avoid litigation, we recommend that the whole process be as transparent as possible and that public participation be actively encouraged. Besides having open, videotaped meetings with a time for public comment, we recommend a page on the county website where videos, minutes, drafts of maps, and other information can be posted; visits by commissioners to all town boards who request them; well-publicized meetings with the legislature and in the southern and northern parts of the county; and at least one easily-accessible computer with the mapping software on it. Technological advances will no doubt provide even more options."

After discussion, the Commissioners agreed to add this as the final recommendation under the Recommendation portion of its report.

Facilitator West went around the table, asking each Commissioner if he/she had any further recommendations for the final report. All Commissioners are satisfied with the report as it stands.

Again, Facilitator West went around the table, this time asking for any final comments.

Commissioner Benjamin said it has been a wonderful process for him. He said he enjoyed working with everybody.

Commissioner Lowe thanked all of her fellow Commissioners for their hard work. She said that she is thankful all of the Commissioners are sitting around the table smiling at each other. Cynthia said that's what the goal was. In addition, she added, the Commission got the job accomplished and that's a major victory all the way around.

Commissioner Thompson said she is delighted.

Commissioner Catalinotto said it has been an interesting experience. He called the relationship between Commissioners "cantankerous congeniality."

Commissioner Messina said it was his first time getting involved in any political work and he really enjoyed it. He added that the Commission worked very hard, and he can't say enough about his feelings for his fellow Commissioners. He said it was a pleasure.

Commissioner Benkert echoed Commissioner Messina's comments. He said that despite animosity at some points, he believes every Commissioner left the table feeling okay. He feels the Commission did a good job and did the right thing. He added that he might even consider doing this again.

Commissioner West said it's been a relatively pleasant experience. He believes this was a congenial group. He said there could have been a fair amount of contention, but there wasn't.

The Commissioners determined that this will be their last official meeting. They will come to the Legislative Office when all of the meeting minutes are complete to officially sign off on them.

- Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Bill West, Seconded by Michael Catalinotto, with all in favor. Carried. The meeting was adjourned at 4:36 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Victoria Fabella, Deputy Clerk, Ulster County Legislature