

House Special Committee on Redistricting

Rockingham County Public Hearing
Hilton Auditorium, Rockingham County Nursing Home
Brentwood, NH
October 20, 2011
7:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Rep. David Bates (Chairman), Rep. Warren Groen and Rep. Sandra Keans

Other State Reps. Present: Reps. David Welch, Kenneth Weyler, Stella Tremblay, James Waddell, Norman Majors, Marcia Moody, Frederick Rice, Christopher Nevins, Mike Kappler, John O'Connor and Donna Schlachman

There were approximately 65 people in the audience.

Materials made available to the public:

1. Map of Rockingham County with 2010 populations
2. State and federal constitutional provisions and state laws addressing redistricting
3. The algebraic formulas for calculating deviation with the aggregate method and the component method
4. Instructions for finding the House Special Committee on Redistricting website
5. The schedule for all of the county public hearings.

Rep. Bates called the hearing to order at 7:00 p.m.

Testimony:

Maureen Mann:

Q: Anticipated date?

A: (Rep. Bates) - Must file for office by June 5 – need pre-clearance from Feds (allowed 60 days). Backing up the dates for process puts date back to sometime in March.

Rep. Kenneth Weyler (Rock/Dist 8):

- Keep District 1 Republican.
- Adhere to small districts for House.

Larry Drake, Portsmouth:

Q: What is status of HB 592?

A: Rep. Bates – This is the bill for redistricting.

Gary Ellmer, representing Portsmouth Republicans

- Hoping not to be all at-large in future.

Wendy Stanley Jones:

Two interests:

- Voting at large in Greenland – hope to make smaller communities.
- Congressional Districts – use equalization of party affiliation not just pure numbers.

Sue Polidura, Vice Chair, Portsmouth Republicans:

- Need to go to individual wards so there will be better representation.
Easier to run.

Barbara Carpenter, Kensington:

- Suggest combine with Exeter.

Norm Olsen, Portsmouth:

- Support ward divisions because diverse community and need diverse Reps.

Helen Galloway, Atkinson:

- Hope that entire county would remain in same Congressional Districts.

Rep. Bates (answer)

- Congressional Districts are totally based on numbers with essentially zero deviation.

Robert Prior, Exeter:

- Kensington uses same SAU which makes sense (also Kingston).

Rep. Bates:

- HB 592 represents just a place-holder which was put in hopper, even before census was available.

Gary Patton, Hampton:

- 5 Reps. with no ward.
- Why isn't it a good idea to break up every community?

Rep. Fred Rice, Hampton (Rock/15):

- Offered his concerns

Rep. John O'Connor, Derry (Rock/Dist. 5):

- Four districts for Council, School Board.

Rep. Donna Schlachman, Exeter (Rock/Dist. 13):

- Like to see with Kensington – same SAU.

Rep. Marcia Moody, Newmarket (Rock/Dist.12):

Don't understand how Newmarket would work out

Rep. Sandra Keans (answer)

Newmarket equals 2 plus floterial with someone.

Rep. Wes Shuler, East Kingston and Newton (Rock/Dist. 11):

- Worried about small towns being swallowed up by Exeter.

Lucy Edwards, Northwood

- Each of Northwood, Nottingham, Deerfield in same.

Marcella Quandt, Hampton

Q: Is there a Republican and Democrat on each county on committee – would prefer to see equal numbers on sub-committee?

Hon Eileen Flockhart, former state representative, Exeter:

Q: How possible to get everything done by June?

A: (Rep. Bates) – Thinking to file legislation authorizing the Secretary of State to move filing date later in year if plan is not coming together or approved by Feds.

.The hearing was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Rep. Sandra Keans

Handwritten Comments Submitted:

Charlotte Lutie, Chester:

Currently there are 3 small towns (Chester, Sandown, Kingston) with 4 representatives. I think it would be better if possible each town could have its own Rep. with a float district.

When it is necessary to combine towns to make a district, try to make the towns combined of similar size. That way the larger town will not dominate, and towns the same size are more likely to have the same concerns.

Ivey Jones, Portsmouth

As a member of the Portsmouth community I would like you to consider Portsmouth voting by wards and not at-large. The current system means we have 5 wards and only 3 are represented. If we vote by ward all would have a voice. Also, why isn't Newington put with Greenland instead of a Portsmouth ward? Those two communities have more in common (no high school...) and would work well together without changing the make up of Portsmouth.

Kaitlyn Smith, Portsmouth

I support the proposed changes to the wards in Portsmouth. I also ask that you consider having Portsmouth vote by wards and helping get that accomplished.

Rep. Norman Major, Plaistow (Rock/Dist. 5)

I recommend Plaistow and Hampstead share a Floterial District.

Result:	Population
Plaistow (2 Reps.)	7609 – 6582 = 1027
Hampstead (2 Reps.)	8523 – 6582 = <u>1941</u>
Plaistow-Hampstead (1 Rep.)	2968
Total Population	<hr/> 16,132
Deviation	2%

Karen Daniell, Stratham:

Use existing town groupings when possible – SAU's , other joint commissions, or use social patterns – shared business districts – or group towns with similar characteristics – rural towns, suburban towns, etc. Also aim for consistency – either use wards for all large towns or have them all at- large.

Gary Patton, Hampton:

With reference to the question of ward voting vs. at-large voting in Portsmouth. I live in Hampton; we don't have wards and do have at-large votes for our five state representatives. Don't towns like Hampton have disproportionate representation simply based on where state reps. live (i.e. cluster in one neighborhood)?

Marcella Quandt, Hampton

Ten years ago each county had a bi-partisan group working on redistricting for each county. Will you please give me the names of the Republicans and Democrats working on the Rockingham County plan.