

Town of Brookline Redistricting Committee

Date: 9/23/2021

Start Time: 7:00 PM

Meeting held via ZoomGov

Committee Members Present: Heather Hamilton, Chair; Jeff Rudolph, Jennifer Raitt, Neil Gordon, David Gacioch, Elizabeth Schafer, Mary Dewart, Shira Fischer, Cynthia Drake, Sassan Zelkha, Michael Berger, Kimberley Richardson, Stephanie Bruce, Nathan Shpritz, Isaac Silberberg

Staff Present: Ben Kaufman, Town Clerk

7:00 PM: Meeting called to order. Chair Heather Hamilton presiding.

### **I. Legislative Update from Rep Vitolo**

Representative Tommy Vitolo provided a legislative update on the timeline for the Redistricting Committee.

Discussion included: T. Vitolo, D. Gacioch, N. Shpritz

### **II. Discussion: Committee Organization**

H. Hamilton discussed committee organization, potential subcommittees, and discussion of a Vice Chair.

M. Berger asked what a subcommittee would look like.

N. Gordon encouraged the committee decide the number of precincts first.

C. Drake encouraged prioritizing equity first.

M. Dewart asked what a subcommittee would look like.

E. Schafer expressed that a 16 precinct map is difficult.

D. Gacioch said that, if the committee stays at 16 precincts, this is the last year to do 16 precincts. Suggested that the committee start by solidifying priorities.

J. Rudolph asked what tools are available. Suggested having a technical subcommittee.

M. Berger asked if it was possible to do 16 precincts.

- B. Kaufman presented several maps.
- E. Schafer presented several maps.
- D. Gacioch presented several maps.
- N. Shpritz presented several maps.

### **III. Discussion: Priorities**

- B. Kaufman presented results of the Priorities survey.
- J. Rudolph said that walkability to the polls should be more important than the number of Town Meeting Members.
- Shira Fischer provided background on the survey.
- M. Berger spoke about the importance of neighborhoods. More precincts can fit around more neighborhoods.
- J. Raitt expressed interest in subcommittees to further identify communities of interest. Results say that the importance is not numbers, but more about equity, access, and equality.
- M. Dewart said the number of voters in a precinct can be quite low. We should encourage people to vote. Expressed concerns that changing precincts can discourage voting.
- H. Hamilton expressed concern about shrinking the size of Town Meeting.
- S. Bruce spoke about process and priorities. Hope to collapse precincts into four categories, and eliminate some of the lower priorities.
- M. Berger emphasized that diversity is important, as is walkability.
- D. Gacioch suggested building precincts from the ground up, not work from existing precincts.
- N. Shpritz agreed that maps should be built from the ground up.

### **IV. Presentation: Polling locations**

- B. Kaufman gave a presentation about polling locations.
- J. Raitt asked if there had been a consideration of other polling locations.

### **V. Public Comment**

- M. Vogt asked about the possibility of splitting precincts between multiple polling locations.

## **VI. Vote on Vice Chair**

David Gacioch was nominated as Vice Chair.

David Gacioch was unanimously elected Vice Chair of the Committee on Redistricting.

## **VII. Discussion: Subcommittee Assignments**

Discussion includes: H. Hamilton, C. Drake, M. Berger

Subcommittees for Maps and Precincts, and for Equity and Accessibility were discussed. Breakout rooms the following week were discussed.

9:05pm The meeting with ADJOURNED by Chair Heather Hamilton, without objection.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is scheduled for September 30, 2021 at 7 p.m.

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The above minutes were approved at the October 14, 2021 meeting.

PREPARED BY:

Ben Kaufman, Staff for the Committee

APPROVED BY:

Heather Hamilton, Chair of the Committee