

Memo

TO: Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commissioners

FROM: Sue Hammersmith

DATE: June 2, 2021

This memorandum is prepared in response to the Commission's request for options to expand the time and/or frequency of regular Commission meetings during the next month while conducting mobile public hearings, as well as lengthen the time of public hearings. It addresses four topics and provides relevant information and preliminary options to consider prior to discussion at the meeting on Thursday.

After discussing internally and with MDOS various considerations, including availability, logistics, and cost implications, we offer the following responses to the Commission's request for options, including staff's recommendation. If any of these are approved and adopted by the Commission at Thursday's (6/3) meeting, they would take effect the following Thursday (6/10) and then last for the three weeks of mobile public hearings after that until Thursday (7/1).

1. Regular Commission Meetings

Time period: Thursday (6/10) to Thursday (7/1) while on the road with public hearings.

Considerations:

- *Logistics.* Set-up for all of the technical components of meetings takes four hours prior to meetings. This is a significant investment of time borne primarily by MDOS staff that may not be readily apparent to commissioners or the public, however, it greatly affects staff availability, logistics, and costs. It would also impact existing contracts for venues if the commission wanted to have a regular in-person meeting first thing in the morning.
- *Costs.*
 - On Tuesday and/or Thursday public hearing days use existing facilities and modify contracts for full vs. half days, if available.
 - Saturday costs for translators, close captioning, and ASL will be 15-20% more than weekday meetings.
- *Availability.* Given the late discussion of this possibility, weekly availability may be impacted by MDOS staff and vendors having made other obligations.
 - With respect to possible summer Saturday commission meetings, availability is severely limited due to regular MDOS staff and vendors having already made other obligations. Could explore the possibility of finding non-regular staff and vendors on short notice to support summer Saturday operations, but cannot confirm availability at this time, though it would definitely be a challenge getting them up to speed to meet the commission's usual quality standards.

Options:

- a. **Staff Recommendation:** Two 2-hour meetings each week hours ahead of the already established public hearings – one on Tuesday and one on Thursday. Run time: 12-2 PM or 1-3 PM to allow time for set-up in the morning and also a break in between the meeting and the hearing.
- b. Single 4-hour meeting on Thursdays. Run time: 12-4 PM to allow time for set-up in the morning and also a break in between the meeting and the hearing.

- c. Meetings of any length/time on Wednesday or Friday which may be virtual through June.
- d. Meetings of any length/time on Saturday which may be virtual through June. As noted in considerations above, cannot confirm availability at this time due to short notice of possible summer Saturday meetings and known existing scheduling conflicts.

2. Public Hearings

Time period: Thursday (6/10) to Thursday (7/1) while on the road with public hearings.

Considerations:

- *Metrics.* On average 25 public comments can be made per hour, so 100 = 4 hours and 150 = 6 hours. To date our largest number of public hearing comments has been around 75, however we anticipate this will increase as we get into more densely populated areas.
- *Fairness.* Commissioners have expressed a desire for fairness – keeping the time at 2 minutes plus allowing two hours for sign up; the goal is to welcome and receive as many public comments as possible and exemplify the fairness with which the maps will be drawn.
- *Logistics.* MDOS staff require 4-5 hours to set up and test everything to launch the Teams meeting for translators, Zoom meetings for virtual participants, and connect with the AV team.

Options:

- a. **Staff Recommendation:** Option A.
 - Meetings from 2-4 p.m. (or 1-3 p.m.) on Tuesdays and Thursdays.
 - Media interviews / break from 4-5 p.m. (or 3-5 p.m.)
 - Public Hearings at 5 p.m. until all comments are heard (noticed from 5-9 p.m.; sign up 4-7 p.m.). Can accommodate 100 comments by 9 p.m. plus 25 per additional hour.
- b. Option B.
 - Meetings on Thursdays from 1-4 p.m.
 - Media interviews / break from 4-5 p.m.
 - Public Hearings at 5 p.m. until all comments are heard (noticed from 5-9 p.m.; sign up 4-7). Can accommodate 100 comments by 9 p.m. and an additional 25 per hour subsequently.
- c. Option C.
 - Meetings 9-12 or 1-4 on Wednesdays or Fridays (if more than 3 hours are needed, add a ½ or full hour to the start or end time). If this approach were adopted, would also cancel the 4-5 p.m. on Thursdays
 - Media interviews: 4-5 p.m.
 - Public Hearings on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2-4 and 5 p.m. until all comments are heard (noticed 2-4 and 5-9; sign up 2-3 and 4-7 p.m.); can accommodate 150 comments by 9 p.m.

3. Next Steps / Future Agenda Items

- a. Election Data Services (EDS)
- d. Relevant MICRC documents to be provided by staff to inform the work.
- e. EDS to connect with Michigan's Center for Shared Solutions (CSS) to get the data for building the Michigan database.

- f. EDS to connect with MDOS & DTMB to determine process for downloading the database on Commissioners' laptops (for Commissioners who wish to have this; there is also a less robust database, that is easier to navigate, that is accessible through the internet).
- g. Meeting to connect Kim Brace of EDS, Dr. Lisa Handley (Racially Polarized Voting analyst), and Bruce Adelson of Federal Compliance, Voting Rights Act legal counsel, so they can begin their collaborative work.
- h. EDS to connect with Dr. Duchin, MGGG, and determine process for accessing and integrating information from the Public Comment Tool into the EDS mapping software.
- i. MICRC staff to gather Commissioners' questions and compile them into one document for EDS to answer
- j. Process for incorporating Communities of Interest into the mapping process.
Process for Commissioners to provide input into the mapping process. How do we achieve one voice/consensus?
- k. Sue is staff assigned to coordinate with EDS.
- l. Voting Rights Act Legal Counsel
 - o Relevant MICRC documents to be provided by staff to inform the work.
 - o Meeting to connect Kim Brace of EDS, Dr. Lisa Handley (Racially Polarized Voting analyst), and Bruce Adelson of Federal Compliance (Voting Rights Act legal counsel) so they can begin their collaborative work.
 - o Julianne is staff assigned to coordinate with Federal Compliance, LLC
- m. Commission Discussions/Continuing Education
 - o How will the Commission prioritize the continuing education?
 - o EDS to initiate four 45-minute sessions of continuing education regarding the 'data cube'.
 - o Continuing education from Bruce Adelson regarding Race and Redistricting, the VRA, and legal compliance
 - o Continuing education from Bruce Adelson around the issues of coded language and implicit bias.
 - o What is the best time to request that Dr. Petering make a presentation on the algorithm he has developed to assure partisan fairness? Coordinate with EDS for optimal timing.
 - o Remembering that mapping deliberations will take place in open meetings, what will be the process for making decisions, e.g. will we utilize consensus, vote, etc. to request how the lines will be drawn or how VRA and RPV analyses are overlaid appropriately on the maps?
 - o Would a refresher on Parliamentary Procedure be helpful?
 - o Would Commissioners like a training on navigating the Kelly Services expense report system?