

# Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission

Virtual Meeting and via Zoom Webinar due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, pursuant to 2020 PA 254 (MCL 15.263 and 15.263a), and in compliance with Section 6(10) of Article 4 of Michigan's 1963 Constitution

Full agenda, presentations, transcripts, and video recordings are available at [www.michigan.gov/micrc](http://www.michigan.gov/micrc)

**Friday, June 25, 2021**

**9:00 AM – 1:55 PM**

## MINUTES

**PRESENT:** Douglas James Clark (attending remotely from Rochester Hills, MI)  
Anthony Eid (attending remotely from Detroit, MI)  
*(joined the meeting at 9:07 AM)*  
Rhonda Lange (attending remotely from Reed City, MI)  
Dustin Joseph Witjes (attending remotely from Warren, MI)

**ABSENT:** N/A

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Suann Hammersmith, Executive Director  
Julianne V. Pastula, General Counsel  
Edward Woods III, Communications and Outreach Director  
Michigan Department of State ("MDOS") staff  
Electronic Data Services ("EDS") staff, including Kim Brace, Fred Hejazi, Kent Stigall, and John Morgan

## **CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME**

Commissioner Witjes, Chair, called the meeting of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission's (MICRC) Redistricting Process Committee to order at 9:00 AM.

## **ROLL CALL**

MDOS staff called roll. All Commissioners were present except Commissioner Eid and a quorum was met.

*Commissioner Eid arrived at 9:07 AM*

## **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Witjes, Chair, called for a motion to approve the agenda. **Motion by Commissioner Clark. Supported by Commissioner Lange. Commissioner Witjes, Chair, held a vote by show of hands. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Commissioner Witjes, Chair, put the motion "to begin the public comment" which was adopted. Two individuals provided public comment: James Gallant and Gary Morehead.

A full inventory of live and written public comment is available at [www.michigan.gov/micrc](http://www.michigan.gov/micrc)

## **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Questions/Fact Finding with EDS. Commissioner Clark opened by summarizing the purpose of the Committee: provide recommendations to the full Commission for approval on the process to produce maps. Kim Brace, with Electronic Data Services (EDS), outlined his staff's outlook on the day's meeting. Fred Hejazi, with EDS, presented the capabilities of his redistricting software, AutoBound EDGE. Both compared EDS's software capabilities to Metric Geometry and Gerrymandering Group's (MGGG). Mr. Hejazi's presentation utilized sample electoral data from Washington state and various demographic sets produced by the software. He proceeded to show how the software can adjust the map plans. Mr. Hejazi highlighted communities of interest and how comments submitted by the public would appear in a web-based browser. Mr. Brace briefly presented the active matrix that showcased more capabilities including individual population, racial demographics, citizenship voting age, and political data.
- b. Committee Discussion. Executive Director Hammersmith volunteered to record recommendations by the Committee. The Committee addressed questions on several subjects. First, they considered utilizing existing maps or starting fresh when drawing. The discussion included topics such as the

first districts with which to start and nesting; it was noted that nesting was not a Constitutional criteria and the math was difficult. Second, the Committee discussed a region-based approach to drawing and exploring the possibility of running simultaneous meetings of multiple committees assigned to various regions. Third, Commissioner Lange asked EDS and Executive Director Hammersmith regarding billing and methods of communication with EDS. The Committee then asked for advice on a work timeline, particularly, how the timeline configures with Dr. Lisa Handley's work. Mr. Brace informed the Committee that until the legacy format data is available in mid-August. Dr. Handley will begin working with the 2010 data and will provide racially polarized voting analysis with each set of data as it becomes available. The PL 94-171 redistricting data is expected by September 30. Commissioner Clark lead a discussion on ideas for documentation of the Commission's work. Commissioner Eid recalled that school districts were a large point during public comment and asked EDS on how they can be incorporated into map-making; Mr. Brace stated that in his experience, school district lines are inefficient as they usually do not follow straight lines. Commissioner Eid also brought up "prison gerrymandering" for EDS to provide perspective on; Mr. Brace indicated that the Commission would have needed to coordinate with correctional facilities a year and a half in advance of the redistricting process to effectively sort out addresses and the population differences. After the Committee determined the role of JURGS/geographical regions, Commissioner Lange inquired how the public comment portal would function with the map-drawing process. Sarah Reinhardt, with the Michigan Department of State, informed the Committee that efforts are underway to encourage as many live-public commenters as possible to submit maps and testimony to the portal. Commissioner Lange asked about the "digital divide" and incorporating hand-written maps and testimony into the mapping process. There are no current plans to upload hand-written maps and testimony and there was discussion on how to incorporate those comments. The final discussion was on software installation and use, specifically whether Commissioners themselves would directly engage in line mapping or would they direct EDS to draw the lines. The Committee spent the remainder of their time preparing questions for the June 28<sup>th</sup> meeting which includes VRA Counsel Bruce Adelson. The Committee wished to add a discussion on communities of interest as an agenda item for June 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **RECESS**

**MOTION:** Recess for 5 minutes until 10:20 AM. **Motion by Commissioner Eid. Supported by Commissioner Lange. Commissioner Witjes, Chair, held a vote by show of hands. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Witjes, Chair, called the hearing of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission's (MICRC) Redistricting Process Committee back to order at 10:20 AM.

**PRESENT:** Douglas James Clark (attending remotely from Rochester Hills, MI)  
Anthony Eid (attending remotely from Detroit, MI)  
Rhonda Lange (attending remotely from Reed City, MI)  
Dustin Joseph Witjes (attending remotely from Warren, MI)

**ABSENT:** N/A

## **ROLL CALL**

MDOS staff called roll. All Commissioners were present and a quorum was met.

**MOTION:** Recommend to the Commission to Draw Fresh Maps While Using Existing Data for Comparison Purposes. **Motion by Commissioner Clark. Supported by Commissioner Eid. Commissioner Witjes, Chair, held a vote by show of hands. MOTION APPROVED 3-1.**

**Voting Yes:** Commissioners Clark, Eid, Witjes

**Voting No:** Commissioner Lange

**MOTION:** Recommend to the Commission that the Full Commission Adopt a Regional Approach to Drawing, Beginning with State Senate Districts. **Motion by Commissioner Clark. Supported by Commissioner Witjes. Commissioner Witjes, Chair, held a vote by show of hands. MOTION APPROVED 3-1.**

**Voting Yes:** Commissioners Clark, Eid, Witjes

**Voting No:** Commissioner Lange

## **RECESS**

**MOTION:** Recess for five minutes until 12:43 PM. **Motion by Commissioner Clark. Supported by Commissioner Lange. Commissioner Witjes, Chair, held a vote by show of hands. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Witjes, Chair, called the hearing of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission's (MICRC) Redistricting Process Committee back to order at 12:43 PM.

**PRESENT:** Douglas James Clark (attending remotely from Rochester Hills, MI)  
Anthony Eid (attending remotely from Detroit, MI)  
Rhonda Lange (attending remotely from Reed City, MI)  
Dustin Joseph Witjes (attending remotely from Warren, MI)

**ABSENT:** N/A

## **ROLL CALL**

MDOS staff called roll. All Commissioners were present and a quorum was met.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Commissioner Witjes, Chair, called for a motion to adjourn.

**MOTION:** Adjourn the meeting. **Motion by Commissioner Lange. Supported by Commissioner Eid. Commissioner Witjes, Chair, held a vote by show of hands. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 PM.