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MICRC

11/18/21 10:00 am Meeting

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>> CHAIR SZETELA: As Chair of the Commission, I call the meeting of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to order at 10:09 a.m.

This Zoom webinar is being live streamed on YouTube at Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission YouTube channel.

For anyone in the public watching who would prefer to watch via a different platform than they are currently using, please visit our social media at Redistricting MI.

Our live stream today includes closed captioning. Closed captioning, ASL interpretation, and Spanish and Arabic and Bengali translation services will be provided for effective participation in this meeting. Please E-mail us at Redistricting.gov or details for language translation services for this meeting.

People with disabilities or needing other specific accommodations should also contact Redistricting at Michigan.gov.

This meeting is also being recorded and will be available at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC for viewing at a later date and this meeting also is being transcribed and those closed captioned transcriptions will be made available and posted on Michigan.gov/MICRC along with the written public comment submissions.

There is also a public comment portal that may be accessed by visiting Michigan.gov/MICRC, this portal can be utilized to post maps and comments which can be viewed by both the Commission and the public.

Members of the media who may have questions before, during or after the meeting should direct those questions to Edward Woods III, our Communications and Outreach Director for the Commission at WoodsE3@Michigan.gov or 517-331-6309.

For the purposes of the public watching and for the public record I will now turn to the Department of State staff to take note of the Commissioners present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Hello, Commissioners, please say present when I call your name. If you are attending the meeting remotely, please disclose you are attending remotely and as well as your physical location you are attending from. I will call on Commissioners in alphabetical order starting with Doug Clark.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry. Commissioner Curry I believe you are still muted.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Sorry about that. I'm present and attending remotely from Detroit, Michigan.
Anthony Eid?

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>> COMMISSIONER EID: Present.

Brittini Kellom?

>> COMMISSIONER KELLOM: Present.

Rhonda Lange?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Present attending remotely from Reed City, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Steve Lett?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Cynthia Orton?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: MC Rothhorn?

>> VICE COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Present.

Janice Vallette?

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Erin Wagner?

>> COMMISSIONER WAGNER: Present; attending remotely from

Charlotte, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Richard Weiss?

>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: All Commissioners are present.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you, Ms. Reinhardt.

As a reminder to the public watching you can view the agenda at Michigan.gov/MICRC. I would now entertain a motion to approve the meeting agenda. So moved.

Motion made by Commissioner Lett. Seconded by Commissioner witches. Is there discussion or debate on the motion?

All in favor raise hand and say aye. Opposed raise your hand and say nay.

The ayes prevail and the meeting agenda is adopted.

Without objection we will now begin the public comment pertaining to agenda topics portion of our meeting. Hearing no objection, we will now proceed with the public comment pertaining to agenda topics.

Individuals who have signed up and indicated that they would like to provide in person public commentary to the Commission will now be allowed to do so. Please step to the nearest microphone when I call your number. You will have one minute to address the Commission. Please conclude your remarks when you hear the timer.

First in line to provide public comment is number one.

>> You want me to take my mask off?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: You can do that if it makes it easier for us to hear you.

>> My name is Judy and live in Ann Arbor in Washtenaw County. I'm here to ask you to continue to make districts as nonpartisan as possible.

Please select cherry V2 or Linden for Senate maps.

If you don't continue to work on the House maps, please select Hickory as it's the fairest of the maps.

Thank you for all your hard work you have done and make partisan fairness a priority.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number two.

>> Good morning and thank you, Commissioners, for all your hard work.

Gary Morehead from Auburn Hills.

Now that we have approved, I'm sorry, now that we approached the final decisions on maps, we get to see the Commission's real superpower. Not that you did a bad job withdrawing the maps, but honestly your superpower is what you can do and that is select the final ones. So I'd like to just suggest one suggestion regarding the procedures for making that selection.

It's necessary to have a little more detail than what is in the state Constitution, that is a good outline, but you should probably, thinking you have already gotten to this, develop some additional rules and procedures beyond what is currently in the mapping process guide.

One is to have an orderly approach and avoid a scramble for the microphone.

On the majority votes.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number three.

>> Hello. I'm Ed Saunders, resident of Ann Arbor.

Since year 2000 the party receiving the most statewide House vote won the State House only half of the time. I'm sure you have heard this statement many times. I worked hard to get proposal two on the ballot in 2018.

And joined a majority of voters in every County to pass it with the goal to end political gerrymandering.

Sincerely, thank you for your considerable efforts to realize this goal.

The last-minute change to allow Commissioner initiated maps shocked the public. And it may be well intentioned and even produced good maps, but the late change in the process does not instill confidence.

We all know that Birch trees stand in the forest Birch 2 also stands out as the best Congressional map. It's fair and respectful of communities of interest.

If you are going to choose Congressional maps from the Commissioners, the Szetela map is also good.

I like Linden and Cherry too and Hickory if you must choose, but the House maps need a lot more work. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number four.

>> I'm Nancy. I'm from Livingston County. I'm a pediatric nurse and hospital administrator and a Realtor. Livingston County has increased in population dramatically. There is over 4000 of us every single day that come down 23. We have clerks that live in Howell. We have clerks that live Hamburg and also in Pickney. We are aligned with Washtenaw County.

Hickory is a map that represents greatly our interests. I'm down here five days a week for work. And I'm also down here for a six day. The church I'm attending is in Washtenaw.

Please, our interests are greatly aligned with Hickory.

We depend on Mont children's hospital for the healthcare of our children that live in Livingston County. Please consider Hickory as the map you consider.

Thank you very much and I appreciate your work.

It is a hard job that you have. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. And just for the people who are online, waiting for remote public comment, we currently have 43 people signed up in person for in-person public commentary.

Number five.

>> Commissioners, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

My name is Holly Fox. I'm a lifelong resident of Ypsilanti, a recent U of M graduate and will be attending Harvard Law next year with a focus on election law.

I'm here today because Michiganders like me deserve the opportunity to elect lawmakers in districts but do not unfairly advantage one party over another.

While the Chestnut and Cherry maps are of the 2010 status quo, there is still more work to be done especially with the State House maps to make sure each Michigander has fair, proportional representation.

I want to stress that this is possible and it must be done.

In my studies I have drawn maps for Michigan State House Senate and Congressional districts. And I know it's not easy. I feel your pain.

However, I have also drawn State House maps with less than 2.5 efficiency gap and Senate maps that have less than 1.25% gap and Congressional Districts that have less than a .25 population deviation.

It is the duty of this Commission to ensure each and every Michigander has equal opportunity to elect their preferred candidates.

Cherry, Chestnut and Hickory maps are currently our best chances. I urge you to continue working and to pass the most partisan fair maps before you today. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number six.

>> I'm Brian. I live out in Lodite Township between Ann Arbor and Saline.

Thank you very much for the incredible work you have been doing over the last months as we've worked with trying to find the bright solutions for redistricting.

I believe that fair elections require fair maps.

And that means that there has to be an equal opportunity for parties to win elections if they have the most votes for those elections.

So of the U.S. House maps I support the Szetela. State Senate I support Linden. And the State House I think also still needs some work to become something other than a locking in a particular partisan advantage for one party.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number seven.

>> Before you start the time, I do have a question because the website, your website indicates we have 90 seconds.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: No. We actually changed it to a minute several meetings ago.

>> I looked at the website yesterday and it was 90 seconds. Start my time, please. I've been a resident of Waterloo in Jackson County for nearly 18 years. I spoke about our beautiful township to you back in May at the first redistricting commission public comment hearing in Jackson and a month ago in Lansing, here I am again.

Several of the maps continue to pull Waterloo Township into Washtenaw County and even Livingston County maps. Waterloo Township is a small rural community on the far northeast corner of Jackson County.

Please understand that Waterloo Township is very rural and has very different needs from Washtenaw and Livingston County.

I will say this again. Our needs...if our needs will go unaddressed if we are merged with Washtenaw or Livingston County.

As a member of Waterloo Township Planning Commission, I ask that you again keep us with similar Townships in Jackson County such as Henrietta, Leoni and Grass Lake. We are already working together on similar needs and issues. Please use Chestnut for Congressional, Palm for State Senate, Szetela for House rep. Thank you for your work on this important project and for listening to residents.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number eight?

>> Hi, my name is Sharon and my community of interest is the rural area that I have lived in for 20 years, which is Waterloo Township, Jackson County.

Waterloo Township's population is low density with biking trails, horse trails, campsites and water sports, lakes, and 50% of our Township is DNR property.

My community of interest has low light pollution that makes the stars pop at night and has low traffic levels, so there is no congestion and minimal noise.

These things are very much in contrast with noisy and more congested, light polluted, higher density areas such as the City of Ann Arbor.

City residents enjoy close proximity to restaurants, retail shopping and museums.

This is very different from the expectations and the needs of rural residents. Point is that people in rural and high density areas have different preferences and resource

requirements and should therefore have different representation. And most of the existing draft maps don't accomplish this for Waterloo. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number nine.

>> Good morning. My name is Kathy. I'm a resident of Waterloo Township in Jackson County.

My thoughts on this redistricting is very common sense approach.

Consider you have cattle and rabbits. They are very different in size and needs. You wouldn't group them altogether in a field and expect that they would all require the same amount of care.

The rabbits will not consume the same amount of feed and care as larger cattle.

So in the same way a small community will not have the same needs as what is offered in a large City.

Examples, water, sewer, public transportation.

There is no reasonable reason to group a small community with larger ones.

The larger communities' needs are very different from the small ones.

They would want very different representation, and that's no bull.

Most of the existing maps do not reflect this idea of small versus larger communities.

And, in my opinion, the maps that best accomplish fairness for both communities would be the Szetela state map, the Chestnut Congressional and the Palm State Senate map. Thank you for your time and efforts on this redistricting.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number ten.

>> Good morning. My name is Kathy Upton. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

I am also a resident of Waterloo Township in Jackson County.

I moved from Ann Arbor actually to Waterloo Township because of the vastly different community of interest aspects of each location.

Ann Arbor is high density and has many citizen services as water, sewer, broadband, Internet, and public transportation.

Waterloo Township residents don't have these service and are not taxed for them and prefer it that way. It's quieter in the country and less congested and people don't have to rely on these in the City with a cost.

These different communities of interest require different representation as the resources they have, and the resources they may or may not need are very different.

Most of the existing draft maps combine Waterloo Township with Washtenaw County and the City of Ann Arbor, which won't accomplish the different representation that is required.

Of the maps that exist, the ones I think that can achieve the appropriate representation for both rural and urban areas are the Szetela State House map, the Chestnut and Palm map. Thank you for your work on this complicated and difficult process.

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>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 11.

>> Commissioners, you do some fair maps when you focused on the top three criteria through communities of interest.

When you moved from communities of interest down to partisan fairness, you didn't just tweak your maps, you completely redrew your maps.

By changing the maps so drastically, your own process became unconstitutional.

There are hours of online videos demonstrating how you gerrymandered the maps for partisan fairness.

You committed the very act proposition two of 2018 was designed not to do.

When your maps are challenged in Court, and I guarantee you they will be, the only maps that have a remote chance of holding up in Court are Chestnut, Palm and Magnolia.

Chestnut, Palm and Magnolia.

I look forward to the Court challenges to come. And it would be justified to see you defend your gerrymandering under oath in a Court of law.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 12.

>> Thank you to the committee for your work and for taking time to hear input from citizens. My name is Mike Cameron. I live in Waterloo Township in Jackson County. My Township has very different needs than the largest Townships and communities in Washtenaw County.

What I've noticed with the draft maps is that in almost every case Waterloo Township is included with Washtenaw County, including the City of Ann Arbor.

I have concerns about one representative being able to protect the needs of these vastly different communities.

I would like to see Waterloo Township included in Jackson County District since they are similar communities of interest.

Of the draft maps remaining, I feel the following maps would do the best to protect rural communities: Chestnut Congressional map, Palm State Senate map, the Szetela State House map.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 13.

>> My name is Gail Steiner. I live on Ann Arbor's west side. I speak out today for the same reason that I volunteered nearly full time with the prop two campaign to end gerrymandering.

That motivation is protecting people's right to choose our elected officials.

My two favorite consensus maps for partisan fairness are Congress Birch version two and State Senate Linden. The State House maps appear to result in the party projected to win the most votes, not likely to win majority of seats.

That is deeply disappointing.

Because of your timeline, if you must choose a consensus map, I reluctantly recommend Hickory as the least egregious of the three options.

Thank you for putting yourselves publicly on the line to protect our democracy.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 14.

>> Good morning. My name is Dave. I'm a resident of Waterloo Township in Jackson County.

I commend the Commission for undertaking a very difficult and complex task. In reviewing the proposed redistricting maps, I was disappointed to discover that Jackson...that Waterloo Township has been separated from Jackson County and attached to Ann Arbor and Washtenaw County.

Basically I believe this is contrary to the guiding principle of communities of interest, which is meant to maintain common values and needs and so forth of respective communities.

Certainly Waterloo Township being a small rural community has a lot more in common with its adjoining urban and rural communities in Jackson County.

As a result, I urge the Commission to consider the following maps that best integrate urban and rural needs.

It would be the Palm map for State Senate.

The Szetela map for State House.

And the Chestnut for the Congressional map. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 15.

>> Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Sandy. And I lived in Ann Arbor. And I live in Ann Arbor. I've practiced law here for over 30 years.

First, I want to thank you for your hard work over the last 18 months.

I know it's been a challenge to be the first Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.

You guys are leading the way.

I watched you in action and I can see how much you care about keeping the redistricting process transparent, fair and nonpartisan as required by the Constitution. I've reviewed the maps and analysis done by the Secretary of State and also by the nonpartisan Michigan State IPSR project.

These are my request on the maps.

Please adopt the Chestnut map for Congress. It's a fair map and keeps the most communities of interest together.

For State Senate adopt the Linden collaborative map or Commissioner Kellom's map that strengthens Detroit's VRA districts. For State House please adopt Pine version five or Hickory.

Finally, I'm so glad your meetings and discussions are open and transparent.

Please keep it that way.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 15.

>> Yeah, hi. So you can go ahead and start the time and I will probably stare at my phone since it's short.

No map can perfectly satisfy everyone. There are some obvious issues with some of these maps, especially those that split Jackson and Ann Arbor in half and connect the north and south sides together of vastly different communities.

Worse yet people are commenting on the maps happy to silence and suppress the voices and voters of our communities in favor of securing seats for political candidates or prioritizing the agenda of politicians instead of prioritizing the people they are supposed to serve.

Proper representation of our community of interest matters.

The people of Jackson County and the people of Ann Arbor are great people but they have very different wants and needs and different problems that require different solutions.

Each of which should be properly represented as to best serve the people in those respective communities.

If you truly care about the people of our communities in Michigan, then please recognize the diversity between these different communities in our state, deserve accurate and proper representation. The best maps I believe that serve this goal are Chestnut for Congressional, Palm for Senate and Szetela for State House. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 16.

Do we have a number 16? Okay, let's move on to 17 then.

>> I hate these masks.

Yes, my name is Mike.

I live in Lodi Township, outside of Saline.

And I thought that one of the best comments that I've heard or read, I should say, on redistricting had to do with the front Page of the "New York Times" this past Monday. I want to read just the first sentence.

A year before the polls opened in 2022 mid-term elections republicans have already poised to flip at least five seats and the closely divided House thanks to redrawn District maps that are more distorted, more disjointed, and more gerrymandered than any since the Voting Rights Act was passed in 1965.

Here in Michigan I think we have this whimsical, largely republican stuff about communities of interest, which are being used from what I hear as a justification for gerrymandering.

All this says to me is that the voting rights bill must be passed.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 18.

>> Good morning. My name is Bill Richardson and live in Waterloo in Jackson, Michigan.

I have concerns about all three types of maps. In most cases Waterloo is included in Washtenaw County districts, not Jackson County districts.

Also, Jackson County is not kept whole on many of the maps.

I heard an overwhelming theme in the May hearing in Jackson that both rural and urban residents that urban and rural communities are different and need different representation.

Waterloo Township is a single precinct township of less 3,000 residents and has very different needs from the larger populated Townships in Washtenaw County.

Our Township has no City water, no City sewer, no broadband Internet, and no public transportation.

The City of Ann Arbor has all these things. How can a single representative represent all their constituents when the constituents have vastly different resources and needs?

The maps I feel are the best to protect rural communities in Jackson county are Chestnut for Congressional, Palm for State Senate and Szetela for State House.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 19.

>> Good morning. My name is Lori and I've come in today from Huntington Woods in Oakland County. Thank you for your hard work.

I'm sure it has felt thankless at times. Be assured many Michiganders appreciate how difficult your task has been.

I speak today in support of the Birch Congressional map. It is fair and has the strongest VRA districts of the Congressional maps. In my district this map keeps together cities that I consider to be my sister cities. It combines parts of Macomb County and Oakland County together in districts making for more fair, competitive districts.

With respect to the Senate maps, I like the Kellom Senate map.

This map respects Detroiters' concerns for adherence to the VRA by not dipping down from Oakland County into Detroit like other maps have done.

I hate to end on a bum note, but I cannot support any of the House maps as they are not fair.

Please continue to work on the House maps by looking to the maps that have been submitted to the Commission by others that satisfy constitutional requirements and are fair.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 20.

>> Good morning. My name is James and I live in Ann Arbor.

After studying the maps proposed by the Independent Commission, I believe the following about the three separate maps. Congressional maps. Of the Congressional maps I believe the best map is the Szetela map, which is partisan fair, and meets many of the other criteria.

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The comment was put in the comment Section for District 14 and that it was a gerrymandered District.

Gerrymandering by definition is favoring one party over the other.

This map is partisan fair, so either side could win based on merits.

Of the State Senate maps I, again, I favor the Szetela map as meeting issues of partisan fairness as well as many of the other criteria.

State House maps, unfortunately, none of the House maps are good with partisan fairness. And the best map so far is the AFLCIO map that needs to be revisited and revised.

I want to thank the Commissioners for all of their hard work. There is still more to be done.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 21.

>> My name is Sela and I'm from Ann Arbor.

Thank you, Commissioners, for all of your hard work in improving the maps.

For the U.S. Congressional map, I like Birch version two. It has partisan fairness and with the voting rights VRA.

Chestnut is competitive with partisan and VRA.

I prefer Szetela. It has partisan fairness and respects the community of interest than Birch or Chestnut.

For the Michigan State, Linden and Szetela do well with partisan fairness and with the VRA.

Kellom does well with partisan fairness.

And the AFLCIO map does well with community of interest.

For the State House map, unfortunately, only the AFLCIO map indicates some partisan fairness, good coverage of communities of interest and representation of the VRA.

I ask the committee to please go back to the drawing table and focus on creating more maps with partisan fairness of what is crucial for the State House.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 22.

>> My name is Ron. I live in southeast Ann Arbor.

Good morning, Commissioners.

Thank you for your service.

This is hard.

The House Districts are unacceptable. They are unfairly partisan with uncompetitive districts, that do not represent the voting public in this state.

In the Senate Linden is a fair and balanced map as I support representing my southeast Ann Arbor interest along with Pittsfield and Ypsilanti.

The Szetela map is also acceptable.

The Congressional District map I prefer is Birch version two.

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It is balanced and fairly nonpartisan with competitive districts and encompasses the environmental concerns that I have for the Huron River and economic concerns of the I-94 corridor around Ann Arbor.

Clearly fair maps can be produced.

House District maps can be reduced and do not waste so many votes in so many districts and that are fair and balanced. Please rectify the House District maps so they fairly reflect the majority voting preferences of the people across this state.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 23.

>> Jill Adams, Lenawee County.

In all of the State House maps, there are over 50 districts that cross County lines that could and should be kept compact within one County or fewer Counties. There are 38 sparsely populated Counties that are being chopped up into four to six Districts that could easily be kept whole. There are 24 Counties with less than 80,000 people that are split into two to three districts.

You are trying so hard to force your definition of community of interest you lost sight of actual communities.

Your logic is like categorizing hospital patients according to their political affiliation and assigning them to a nurse who is instructed to care for an equal amount from each category instead of having the same nurse treat the hard patients on the same floor.

The floor, area of expertise is with the hard patients. And my time is up.

The same floor.

Not jumping around and trying to treat various issues that don't involve your specialty. Show me which representative is okay with their once compact districts spread across two to three Counties. Show me how many constituents want the communities broken up into unidentifiable, irrational puzzle pieces being represented by two to three different people.

This will be a nightmare for the clerks.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 24.

>> Good morning, Commissioners.

I sincerely thank you for your public service to the people of the State of Michigan.

My name is Jim Paul.

I'm a resident of Freedom Township in Western Washtenaw County. I'm a farmer and an engineer.

In my opinion, communities of interest is vague and should not take precedence over partisan fairness.

It's my understanding that the Supreme Court agrees.

Before this Commission was formed, who even knew what communities of interest was? I didn't.

I had to look it up.

You all know the wording, including but not limited to populations of historic or economic interests, et cetera.

I and my family belong to many communities of interest.

And there is no way anyone could draw districts whose boundaries did not divide some of those communities of interest.

Western Washtenaw County should be included within districts with all or some of Jackson County because we share common interests and because these districts have more fairness and less partisan advantage than the districts that segregate Washtenaw County.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 25.

>> Hi. My name is Jeannie Brown and I'm from summit Township. I would like to propose the Chestnut map.

We love Washtenaw County people, but Senate Districts would not be well served by having Jackson and Washtenaw put together.

I would also suggest the Palm map and the Magnolia map.

These maps represent our common community values and opinions.

I feel that Washtenaw County values and opinions conflict with the most of the people in Jackson and Hillsdale County.

We are more country people than high City tech and don't feel Jackson County would be represented properly.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 26.

>> Good morning, Commissioners.

First, I'd like to tell you that I'm grateful for the dedication of this tedious task. My name is Stephanie Riley. I'm...I moved from Ohio in 1981 to Jackson where I've established my home, family and my career.

My vote is for the Chestnut, Palm and Magnolia maps. These maps keep Jackson County whole, or mostly whole, and with the surrounding Counties of similar interests.

I have concern with the maps that are combining Jackson with Washtenaw County. Mixing Jackson with Washtenaw County is like bringing the Ohio State Buckeyes into the big House.

To win this game, both counties need to be able to run plays that support their own goals and special interest. I vote to keep Jackson out of Washtenaw County because our areas are vastly different.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 27.

>> Hi, my name is Judy and I live in Plymouth, Michigan.

I want to start by thanking you for your exceptional effort in imagining this process in a fair and effective manner.

Regarding the Congressional maps, my preference is Birch and second is Chestnut because both reflect partisan fairness.

Regarding State Senate I prefer Linden and the alternatives Kellom and Szetela all for their strengths with communities of interest, partisan competitiveness and VRA districts.

Unfortunately, when it comes to House maps, there does not appear to be a good choice. Please take some time to develop a better alternative to the House maps, one that reaches partisan fairness.

I understand not wanting to trigger another 45-day comment period, but we will have to live with these maps for another ten years.

And it's really important that they be fair.

None of the current options would result in electoral outcomes that accurately reflect how Michiganders' vote. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. 28.

>> Good morning. My name is Carolyn Stark and I'm a long-term resident of Ann Arbor and worked hard on getting prop two passed.

Thank you to the Commissioners for all your hard work on these maps.

I favor the Birch version two map for the Congressional districts.

It reflects a statewide voting patterns quite well and addresses many communities of interest.

Partisan fairness is achieved in this map.

For the State Senate maps, I favor the Linden map. By joining Ann Arbor with Jackson and Ypsilanti, it makes us more diverse and balanced and reflects partisan fairness.

Regarding State House maps, I believe more work is needed.

Each proposed House map gives the majority of seats to the minority of voters.

Perhaps the Commission can draw from the good maps submitted by our citizens for ideas to improve these maps.

Our whole Country is watching Michigan's progress in redistricting.

The "New York Times" Article that was referred to earlier is very interesting in that way.

We need to show them that the process works and that we can come up with fair maps so that the majority of seats are filled by the votes of the majority of voters.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 29.

>> Good morning. My name is Robert George. I'm a Washtenaw County parks and recreations Commissioner. And I just am very happy to be here. And thank you for your service.

I was able to address the Commission at the very first meeting in Jackson.

I just want to advocate for the Cherry version two map for the Senate as it keeps the Waterloo state recreation area whole, which is a very important park and recreation center for Washtenaw and Jackson Counties.

Additionally, I want to make sure and convey that the Palm map is the worst map for partisan fairness at the Senate level. It packs Washtenaw County voters together and I would very much encourage you not to adopt that map.

Additionally, in regards to the House and the Congressional maps, Chairwoman Szetela's maps for both levels are the best on partisan fairness metrics and creating more competitive districts that lead to better representation.

Thank you for your time.

And thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 30.

>> Good morning. My name is Janet.

I live in Pittsfield Township.

First, thank you for all your hard work on this monumental task of redrawing districts for the Michigan House and Senate and representatives in Congress.

You accomplished a great deal.

But I would urge you not to stop just yet.

You need to continue your work and improve the maps for the Michigan House Districts.

Let me repeat, you need to revise and improve the House District maps.

When we voted to amend our state Constitution and establish this Commission, our motivation was to make the districts fair. And that means the party that gets the most votes statewide should get the most seats in the legislature.

The new districts for the Michigan House unfortunately do not do that.

These maps need to be redrawn.

You do have time to accomplish this.

I know you may be tired, but I urge you not to stop when you are this close to the finish line. Redraw the Michigan House maps to eliminate partisan bias.

We will live with these maps for ten years.

Push on for a few more weeks, do it right.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. 30, 31.

>> Hello. I addressed you before. My name is Alice. And in the interest of time I'm just going to say that I published a comment portal submission, W9051, in which I outlined why I think the Palm Senate map is legally questionable.

I think it is a cracking and packing scheme for the Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti area for the ethnic and minority populations and their surrounding communities.

I would urge you not to adopt the Palm map and instead into with the Linden map, which is a fairer and accurate community of interest for the greater Washtenaw County Area.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Did we have a number 30? I wanted to make sure I did not skip 30.

You were 30.

Okay, so 31, just went so 32.

>> Good morning. My name is Stewart, a resident of Pittsfield Township in Washtenaw.

I'd like to concentrate my comments today in regard to the House maps.

You've already heard some good comments and testimony in showing that these maps need rework.

I strongly urge you to please revise the House maps.

Take the time to do it.

I also understand that you have some concerns that doing so, revising the House maps will trigger another 45-day period.

I'd like to give you at least one of many possible reasons why revising it is a better alternative than simply picking the best of the lot in the House maps.

That's because litigation is likely. Any decisions you take, litigation in the state courts.

Put yourself in the position of several months from now, being told by one of the courts to redo these maps.

That's more expensive and it's more confusing. It's going to be more work for the clerks, more work for you and more confusion for the voters.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 33.

>> Good morning. My name is Tim Wilson. I'm from Jackson where I practice law for many years.

When making your final selections, I'm going to oppose any plans that divide up Jackson County.

I just don't see how that is necessary.

I further oppose any plans that place Jackson with Washtenaw.

Lastly, we'd like to keep Waterloo Township.

We are very proud of its beauty and natural resource. I'm from Summit, but we would like to keep them. And thank you to the Commission and all my fellow citizens who are participating. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 34.

>> Good morning, Nancy Wang on behalf of Voters Not Politicians. I would like to make a few points today and commend all of you. And thank you so much for all the work you have done, and especially how you have done that work.

You really have been a model of working in collaboratively and cooperation with mutual respect for each other all along the way, which is the opposite of what we are seeing all across the Country and what we have seen in the past with redistricting in this state as well.

We also appreciate how you've taken seriously all of the public comments you have gotten,

That you still continue to get. We encourage you to keep public comment and keep incorporating it in your decision making especially as to partisan fairness.

And, lastly, as you go towards the final vote, first, on the collaborative maps only, trying to get to a constitutional majority and then to individuals.

We hope that you will adopt best practices like putting all the maps on the same ballot and voting by secret ballot so you can reach the right decision. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 35.

>> Good morning, Commissioners. My name is Yelsi and I'm cofounder of next vote and a resident of Ann Arbor.

First of all, I want to thank you all for all your hard work.

We helped many communities with their maps this year.

We also analyzed close to 300 District maps.

We like the Congressional and Senate maps for their political fairness.

We find the proposed House maps all to be politically biased regardless of election results.

The four proposed House maps would have favored the republican party by 2, 4 or 6 seats if they were this place in 2020.

That is not much different than the current map, which is decided to be gerrymandered. Problem maybe that in evaluating your maps you're using an average of past election results without the emphasis on the latest.

Political deviation and racial fairness calculation, two of the most important criteria, are based on the latest census results, never subject to averaging.

Thanks again for all your hard work.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 36.

>> Good morning, Commissioners. Thank you for your work.

My name is Leslie. I'm from Scio Township and represent one of the diverse communities there.

But I'm currently represented in the State Senate by a person who holds extremist views and who is clearly out of step with the views of the communities of interest in that area.

This misrepresentation could easily be remedied by any of the expansion of the map to incorporate the areas of Jackson and Ypsilanti, which would bring about a greater representation.

And, if I may say so, a higher caliber of representation.

I'm very glad to hear that you put forward the Linden version for State Senate. And I support other comments about the House maps being highly partisan and, therefore, legally questionable.

Thank you very much.

Appreciate it.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 37.

>> Thank you to the panel for listening and I hope you will listen closely.

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All of Jackson County is a single community of interest.

I think that has been established at earlier hearings.

Jackson County and Ann Arbor, no matter how you claim it, are totally different.

In fact, previous Ann Arbor testimony complained that Ann Arbor, the District, the Senate District was confined to too close an area.

Solution, your solution, so far divide Jackson County in half, divide the City of Ann Arbor in half.

Join the halves.

Wow.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 38.

>> All right. Good morning, Commissioners of the MICR scam, MICRC. Anthony Skinnell, Wayne County. I drove all 45 minutes from Wayne County to here. And Ann Arbor is beautiful with the students running around this morning and so great to see. And I live in one of the best defined communities in the state which would be Down River. And at least anyone in Down River could tell you ever City that is in it, but no Commissioners up could tell you the City because the last meeting we had the Chair said I'm familiar with Down River. I grew up in Dearborn. I looked at that map. Did I select Melvindale on this map? I don't know. So when you tell me you constructed it starting with communities of interest, I'm at a lost because I'm looking at the District Congressional, especially that I live in. And I've lived there my whole life. And I don't know whose community. Like the one from Ecorse said at the TCF hearing, I don't know whose community you were thinking of. So I brought a visual aid because you know I like to do that.

Here is your Michigan map. You know that old commercial, here is your brain, here is your brain on drugs? Well, here is your map. And here is your map on MICRC.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 39.

>> Hello, Commissioners. This is Kurtis Fernandez with APIA vote Michigan. At the Congressional level we feel that Birch version two is the best choice. And at the State Senate level we believe Linden is the best choice. These maps do the best at the Congressional and State Senate level at protecting our communities of interest in Metro Detroit.

That being said, we urge the Commission to spend more time revisiting the State House maps as they have considerable issues with partisan fairness.

If we want to right the wrongs that gerrymandering has caused to our state, then we need to revisit the State House maps.

As always, I appreciate the work that the Commission has done.

I know this is not an easy job.

But there is more work to do.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 40?

>> Hello, Commissioners.

I'm Jackie from Jackson County.

The MICRC website says that for the first time in Michigan history the Commission will lead the redistricting process to draw fair and independent maps.

It says you as Commissioners are responsible for drawing the District lines for Michigan Congress, House, Senate and you are the only entity to draw and adopt these plans.

This is a great responsibility.

Our Michigan Constitution requires specific criteria and procedures you must utilize when proposing and adopting these plans.

A few criteria are districts shall be of equal population.

Districts shall be geographically contiguous, shall reflect the state's diverse population and committees.

Shall reflect consideration of County, City and Township boundaries.

We citizens ask you hear our pleas for authentic representative democracy providing input in drawing lines that will best represent our communities.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 41.

>> Good morning. My name is Sue from Northfield Township.

Thank you for your work.

For the Senate, the State Senate map, the Cherry version two Senate District 22 where I live is 60% republican.

So my vote doesn't count.

I prefer the Linden map. It's more fair, at least in that District, I believe across the state.

I prefer the Szetela map for the House for how they deal with Washtenaw County.

And as a rural resident, in my opinion, I don't think the rural and Ann Arbor residents are so different.

Try again please to draw the State House maps for partisan fairness across the state and within districts necessary so that candidates with the best work ethic and policy win.

The party that wins the most votes should win the most seats. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 42.

>> Good morning. I'm Jennifer from Jackson County.

We do appreciate all the time you have put into redrawing the maps.

It is unfortunate that the political influences of large corporations and unions are overriding the sincere desires of concerned citizens.

The proposed maps reflect a greater consideration to partisan redistricting than to communities of interest.

I represent many who have listened to conservative Commissioners being dominated for those who are pushing their agenda to break up our valued communities.

This Commission was supposed to be evenly represented.

The concept of unpacking citizens onto rural areas is unfair to our ideals.

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We choose where we live for a reason based on many factors, and hope to have representation that supports our needs and interests.

It is principle to our Constitution.

You must eliminate all the Senate maps that cut our County in half, only to pair us with Ann Arbor, the only proposed one that doesn't is Palm. Please do right by Jackson County and keep us united. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 43.

>> Good morning, everyone. My name is Vicki and I live in Napoleon Township, Jackson County.

I have many friends and family that live there.

They have all I've been born there, all of my kids, all of my grand kids, my great grand kids, and they are concerned about the new maps that have been drawn that separate our community and add it to Washtenaw.

We have so much in common with our small City of Jackson and the rural areas that surround it and very little with a huge, urban City of Ann Arbor.

All we are asking is that you allow us to have fair representation by keeping our community together as a whole.

The Chestnut map is the best Congressional map.

The Palm is the only one that keeps us as a whole in Jackson County.

And the Magnolia is the best one for the House.

But I really hope that you do revisit to the House maps.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. I'm sorry, I might have lost my count, was that 43 or 44?

>> 43.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay, so 44.

>> Hi, Norman coming back again for Detroit Change Initiative. I will be quick. Congressional I will live with the Birch. And State I will live with Linden. State House I can't say anything about that because it's still gerrymandered. You just took two seats off.

So it's still a gerrymandered map.

And you will be in Court in litigation for another time and again another 45 days and do the process all over again.

Guys, I get it. I have been here since the beginning. And you guys have been working tirelessly. You guys have been working hard. But do not let anything deter you doing this in the right way.

Let's get this right.

Take the time.

Redo the Congressional maps all over again.

Put everybody's interests in state.

Let's take the time and do this.

We have to live with the maps coming out of the committee. And Szetela you have the best maps and win the prize. But it's still not fair.

It's still gerrymandered. Let's get to the drawing board and push this effort out, guys.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 45.

>> Good morning. My name is Colleen Anderson. I'm a small business owner and live in rural Jackson County.

I have never done anything like this before. But when I saw the draft maps for my area for the State Senate, I was shocked by what I saw.

I could not believe that Jackson County would get divided and connected to halves of Ann Arbor. Where Jackson County has similarities with rural parts of western Washtenaw County, we have no communities of interest with the City of Ann Arbor. Please support Palm. Every other map would take my representation.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 46.

>> Hi. Good morning, Commissioners.

My name is Loida Topia. And I'm a resident of Detroit, Rosedale Park neighborhood. I want to thank you for your hard work in the draft maps. It's evident in the Linden and Szetela and Kellom maps and the Birch Version Two and Szetela Congressional maps.

I'm here and I'm concerned about the House draft. As every independent analysis still shows an unfair partisan advantage for republicans in all of your drafts, Hickory being the version that is the least unfair, still only has one seat advantage of 53 dems to 57 republican seat count to 52-58 republicans to what we currently have enacted, which was found to be unconstitutional and gerrymandered.

Hickory in fact, has two less voting rights districts than what we have enacted. Please take the 45-day period to revise the House maps as this will impact our communities for the next ten years.

We still have gerrymandered, unfair, unpartisan House maps.

Please work on those during this 45-day period. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 47.

>> Hi. My name is Nick. I'm a student at the University of Michigan.

I'm the only college student here as far as I can tell. I'm from Climax which is between Kalamazoo and Battle Creek. And I know your timeline is tight so probably are not going to be redrawing these maps. You don't have any more time.

So only Chestnut keeps Battle Creek and Kalamazoo together and making a cohesive COI formed by the two Cities. Chestnut also boosts Black voting power in Districts 12 and 13 to elect a preferred candidate.

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As far as State House maps go, they are all more fair than the current ones. Joe Biden won 55 kind districts while he won 54 of all the other proposed maps, 51 with current.

Both Whitmer and Nessel one majority in the Pine.

So I like Pine the best and keeps my House in a Kalamazoo based District instead of a District that goes all the way to Jackson, Washtenaw County border, which is about an hour and a half from my house.

So the only unacceptable State House map is the Szetela map which slices the City Kalamazoo and dilutes Hispanic voters in Wyoming and Black voters in Saginaw.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 48.

>> My name is James from Jackson County and I live in Brooklyn.

You know, when you're 16 in Irish Hills, you are only allowed to go to three places. You can go to Jackson, Hillsdale or Adrian. And out of those three places Jackson was always the funniest.

Now some of us never really left the County and went too far. And we still live in our area. And I was just recently bought two properties in the City of Jackson, and I'm going to Jackson college.

Jackson has always been a family. My brother lives in Jackson.

My friends and family live in Jackson.

For us to be split up, it just doesn't make sense.

I tried looking at the maps and I've listened to the political groups and the union groups and I too much don't care about that.

I kind of care about that woman's grand kids who are going to be in that area forever. And Jackson is going to be their town. And they might want to live there. And if they can't vote for that, they may not want to go there. Keep our family and Jackson together in the County. Thank you for your work. It's a lot to digest.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. 49.

>> All right. Good evening. My name is Mark Payne. I'm the DFA coordinator for the Michigan League of Conservation Voters and I want to thank you for your work. I'm a lifelong Detroit.

Hickory is the least bad of the options in terms of partisan fairness. The Commission can and must do better for Michigan.

You were making good progress on improvements but just ran out of time to deliver what Michigan needs.

And also Michigan Department of Civil Rights said as drafted the maps dilute majority-minority districts and strip the ability for minority voters to elect legislatures who reflect their community and affect any meaningful opportunity to impact public policy and law making.

Please reconsider your VRA districts.

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Also, please use primary data, primary data, get it together, for State House and State Senate and use the 2020 data as a test.

I also want to reiterate what your VRA lawyer said when he said that you can go up to 50%

BVAP for community purposes.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 50.

>> Good morning, Commissioners. Thank you so much for your service and work so far and your dedication and work does not go unnoticed. My name is Demal and I live on the old west side with my partner and our cats. He and I are both alumni of the University of Michigan but work extensively throughout Southwest Michigan. I urge the Commission to hear our comments and use the remaining days of the comment period to continue working, to create maps that both preserve community of interest and achieve partisan fairness.

I support the Chestnut Congressional map because it preserves districts, the Black population of greater than 40% and recognizes that the Asian/American community in Detroit and Hamtramck is its own community of interest, separate from the Asian/American community of interest in Warren.

I'm disappointed that none of the proposed state maps achieve partisan fairness and also fail to preserve COIs.

As an Asian/American immigrant and first generation American and college student and graduate, I believe the fate of my community is tied up with the Black, indigenous and other communities of color. It is vital that Black Michiganders are well served in this process.

It's more than over adieu that Black Detroiters are not cracked to view the districts and not represented. It is obvious that this State has failed the communities of interest and only you as a Commission have the power now to change this. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 51.

>> Good morning, Commission.

Roger Downey from Brooklyn, Michigan.

After looking at a lot of the maps, and especially the ones that are left, there has been a lot of maps put out there,

I couldn't vote on any of them.

And wait until the last-minute, for these last five or six for Congressional has really been souring to me to see what happened to Jackson County.

The Palm map is the only one that I can see that will keep Jackson County and the surrounding communities together.

Any of the other maps dividing Jackson County and that only screws the people of Jackson and our community.

Thank you.

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>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 52.

>> Hello, Commission. My name is Harrison. I'm from Whitmore Lake, Michigan. I'm also a student here at the University of Michigan.

I want to thank you for your work.

Michigan has had notoriously gerrymandered districts for two decades. Proposal two of 2018 as you all well know was meant to remedy this. Michigan Constitution Section 6, 13D says districts shall not provide a disproportionate advantage to any political party. This is a time of heated partisanship. We all know this.

People have less confidence in our democracy than ever.

You all play an important role in restoring good Government and confidence that our Government can actually work for each and every person.

Whatever maps you choose, choose maps that represent partisan fairness, that gives the party with the most votes the most seats, especially marginalized communities.

They were just mentioned a little while ago, Black, people of color, indigenous communities, especially need fair maps.

I want to encourage you all to keep working.

The stakes are high.

We have to live with these maps for ten years.

And they affect not just Michigan but our entire nation and the future of our world.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. 53.

>> Good morning, Commissioners.

I'm a child of Bangladesh immigrants and grew up in the City of Detroit by Bangla Town. I urge the Commissioners to hear comments and use remaining days of this comment period to continue working to create maps that both preserve COIOs, sorry, COIs and achieve partisan fairness.

I support the Chestnut Congressional map in particular because it recognizes that the Asian American community in Detroit and Hamtramck has its own COI separate from the Asian American community of interest in Warren.

Additionally, as Asian Americans we believe our fates are tied up with those of Black, indigenous and other communities of color.

Therefore, I support this map because it presents the District with the Black voting age population of greater than 40%, increasing the community's chance of electing preferred representatives.

Finally, we are disappointed that none of the proposed State House maps achieve partisan fairness and also fail to preserve community of interest.

And includes approximately nine blocks from the community of interest in Hamtramck from Conan east to Alpena. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 54.

>> Hi. My name is Laura, a resident of Hamtramck and Japanese American and part of the Asian community here in Michigan.

I support the Linden Michigan Senate map because it reserves the Asian American Communities of interest while achieving partisan fairness.

I would also like to note and appreciate the Kellom map for being the only Senate map that contains a VRA district of more than 50%. Again, we believe the Black community should be able to elect candidate of choice.

And to follow-up with my colleague, we are disappointed that none of the state maps achieve partisan fairness and hope that the Commission use the remaining time available to you to continue to work on State House maps that both preserve community of interest and achieve partisan fairness.

Pine five excludes approximately nine blocks of the Asian American community of interest in Hamtramck.

From Conan East to Alpena and one block on Talbot Street, southeast. And Magnolia cracks the Asian American community of interest in Warren and centerline and leaves Detroit with only two District with a Black voting age population exceeding 40%. And Hickory excludes part of the Asian American community of interest in Detroit and cracks the Asian community of interest on Warren and Centerline.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. I believe that's the last of our in-person public comment.

Is there anyone, 55? Do we have a 55?

Okay. So that will conclude our in-person public comment. At this point we will move to the remote public comment. And, obviously, if anybody shows up in addition, we will work you in the remote public comment.

So individuals who have signed up and indicated they would like to provide live remote commentary to the Commission will now be allowed to do so.

If you are on a computer, you will be prompted by Zoom app to unmute your microphone and speak. If you are on the phone a voice will say that the host would like you to speak and prompt you to press star six to unmute.

I will call on you by your name. Also please note if you experience technical or audio issues or we do not hear from you for 3-5 seconds, we will move on to the next person in line and return to you after they are done.

If your audio still does not work, you can e-mail us at redistricting@Michigan.gov and we will help you troubleshoot so you can participate during the next public comment period, at the later hearing or meeting.

You will have one minute to address the Commission. Please conclude your remarks when you hear the timer.

First in line to provide public comment is James Gallant. Please allow our staff to unmute you.

>> Hello. This is James Gallant, Marquette, these are my opinions.

The Citizens Research Council of Michigan is considering my request to revisit their 2018 prop two memo number 1150.

In light of the House fiscal agency reports that were released after they filed their report, which is what I believe this Commission is following the report that says you...this created prop two created this Commission from scratch. And Page two of the Supreme Court ruling says, no, this is a reiteration, this is a reviving the authority of the Commission that is already in the Constitution. That means that I will be moving that the Supreme Court will issue a mandamus order for the Secretary of State to bring forward the rules of procedure from the former Commission on legislative apportionment just like you just changed the rules and invalidate all your rules, because you did not follow the rules. You have to follow the rules to change the rules. So we invalidate your rules. And then get the other rules reinstated. And then you folks just agree with me in Court and we can fix this.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission, Chris Andrews.

>> Chris Andrews from Haslett. Please answer these questions about the selection process: Has the process been finalized? Will you be voting on one map at a time or all of one type at once? One chamber at a time, secret ballots? Will the collaborative maps be considered first? Or are individual maps considered equally from the start? If there is no consensus on a map, an initial voting only the individual maps be considered?

Will any maps not already published be considered?

The public is left in the dark at this point. Please leave up the date, clear explanations on your website. I have put more comments in a comment at #explain voting but the #s are not working.

You can also find my comments at W9053 and Palm is particularly unfair.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Next in line is number three.

>> Thank you. My name is Surabhi. I'm a resident of the north side of Ann Arbor. I'm grateful for the hard and honest work of MICRC compared to others in the country. I want to particularly uplift Cherry V2 and the Linden map.

I may live in Ann Arbor now, but it's because I'm a researcher at U of M studying identity in rural America. And with my professional expertise I want to debunk a trend I have seen on public comment. There are some interesting recognitions of rural to prioritize over representing white consecutive voters. This rhetoric flattens rural Michigan and distorts political geography of the state. And although I would be the first to say that rural America is under appreciated and misrepresented in a number of ways. I think that especially at the state legislative level, the ability to elect an appropriate representation is not one of them.

I very much appreciate the Commissioner's work to ensure the statewide partisan fairness and representation for all Michiganders and hope you continue not to prioritize one group over another. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number four is Jennifer Austin.

>> Hello Jennifer Austin, City of Midland. Thank you for your historic work in ungerrymandering our maps. Although none of the maps meet partisan fairness standards, they are a vast improvement. I especially want to thank you for reuniting the Tri-Cities in Mid-Michigan. I support Chestnut for Congressional because it keeps District 8 counties whole and adds most of Midland. And Linden for Senate with the Tri-Cities District. And I like the Szetela State House map for Midland District. But if that is not available for the initial vote and not going to address partisan fairness further on the House maps, I support Hickory with the changes made to Detroit made by Kellom and Curry.

But I want more clarification on the voting process. You need to determine how the voting structure will work and outline every step of the process and inform the public of the procedures. For example, will the maps be voted on a ballot or up and down vote on each map until you get to a winner? What happens if more than one map in a category meets two democrats and two republicans, two unaffiliated standard? And what is the final decision to move to a ranked choice voting? And when will the individual maps be up for consideration? We need very clear procedures put in place to be sure the public understands and the Commission follows preapproved protocol. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Five, Essence Wilson.

>> Good morning. My name is Essence Wilson. And I'm a resident of Flint and wanted to share I believe for your proposed Congressional map the Chestnut or Birch version two maps are the best and for your proposed State Senate maps the Linden or Cherry version two maps are best. However, I feel that comment about in the State House have not been accurately reflected. Flint needs to preserve a majority-minority District, but the entire City of Flint should not be packed in a single District which would be a clear and obvious partisan gerrymander.

Flint should retain a majority Black seat while allowing us the opportunity to elect a second seat when possible.

The submitted map P7273 does this and should be used as a guide for the Commission in determining a State House map for the City of Flint. The Commission should also ensure that the partisan split of Genesee is reflected in the overall County State House map.

Please do not subject us to ten years of partisan gerrymander in our City when better options have been submitted to the Commission.

There is still more work to be done on the State House maps.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 7, Lori Ross.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Lori, if you can unmute yourself, you are free to address the Commission.

>> Good morning. My name is Lori Ross and I'm the resident of Genesee County and a staff member of Community First Inc. I wanted to echo the comments of my colleague and note that for Congressional map your Chestnut or Birch V2 maps are best. And for State Senate map your Linden and Cherry version maps are best. However, as Essense noted, packing all of the Flint into a single District in the State House is a clear mistake.

Our City would be subject to a partisan gerrymandering of the new, excuse me, of the next decade, for the next decade.

When this is not even necessary to ensure Flint representation or majority of Black Districts.

Submitted map P7273 achieves the goal of ensuring representation for our communities of color and allows for the City to elect a second representative as has been the case for the last decade.

Please revise your maps for the State House to reflect map P7273.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. At this point we have another in person, number 55. You may now address the Commission.

Assuming they made it in the room yet.

Do we have 55? All right. We will just do one more remote person.

Gregory Fox, number eight.

>> We can't hear you, Mr. Fox. Can you please unmute?

>> Hello.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Now we can hear you. Thank you.

>> Okay, thank you. My name is Gregory Fox, a long time Ann Arbor resident.

I worked on the prop two campaign and I believe in this Commission.

But like so many others, I've been unhappy with proposed Michigan House maps.

I'm a democrat and I've been frustrated to see democrats with the majority of votes statewide but always get a minority seats.

Of the proposed House maps, Hickory and Szetela are the least bad I feel. So can't we do better? Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Do we have number 55 in person? You can address the Commission, ma'am, if you are number 55.

>> Hi. Sorry for the delay.

Hi. My name is Regina. I'm a member of rising voices, a civic engagement, and a parent who cares deeply about racial and education justice. In short please we wanted

to...I'm calling on the members of the Commission to continue working to create maps that both preserve communities of interest and achieve partisan fairness. Specifically please continue working on the proposed State House maps as they stand. They do not achieve partisan fairness and also fail to preserve communities of interest. Specifically in Pine five, again, it excludes approximately nine blocks of Asian American with an interest in Hamtramck from Conan east to Alpena, one block on Talbott Street, southeast to Kin. And Magnolia cracks the Asian American community COI in Warren and centerline and leaves districts with two districts with a Black voting age population with a percentage and COI in Hamtramck and Detroit and cracks the Asian American COI in Warren and Centerline. And, again, it dilutes the power of the Black vote. So thank you so much.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Bernie Bennett.

>> Good morning, Commissioners. I'm Bernie Bennett. I live in Ann Arbor. Thank you for your good and public spirited work on the District maps.

I have one concern and one request. The concern is that not one of the maps for the State House of representatives achieves partisan fairness.

The request is that you take a step back.

Look at the maps again and work until partisan fairness is achieved.

How do I know that there is a partisan fairness problem? I'm getting my data from the website next vote.U.S., next vote in that context is spelled as one word.

What is shown there is that even the fairest map is likely to award the party with a popular majority of the votes statewide, a minority of seats in the House of representatives. This is similar in result to the current gerrymandered maps.

Please don't give us gerrymandering by another name and work some more on the State House District maps.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number ten, Molly M.

>> Hello.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Hello.

>> Can I start?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, you can go ahead.

>> Okay. Every time I attend one of these meetings, I'm really appalled some of the threatening comments you all receive and it's very sad. But I believe you have worked diligently, so this is a little bit hard to say too.

Like many here I would encourage you to continue to work on the House maps.

All the House maps need work for partisan fairness. But if I have to choose between these maps, I would select the Szetela map. It has the best partisan fairness scores and places the City of Midland with Bay City, a City of similar size and economic interest.

And it contains the changes that Kellom and Curry made to the Detroit area.

Thank you so much.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 11, Jill Haver-Crissman.

>> Hello, can you hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> Hi. My name is Jill from Midland, Michigan.

I want to applaud your professional and congenial behavior as a group through this very arduous process. Thank you and keep it up.

Your collaborative Congressional and Senate map metrics showed efforts to create fair maps that reflect our electorate. The House are hard to shake.

The Chestnut Congressional map is the most fair statewide. I like it keeps most of Midland County with all of Bay, Saginaw and Genesee Counties in a competitive District. The Linden Senate and Hickory House maps are the best collaborative maps overall in partisan fairness, although the Szetela House map is better.

I hope in the voting process you will continue to be models of democracy in action. Remember Voters Not Politicians, fairness, nonpartisanship and please vote for the Chestnut Congressional, Linden Senate and Hickory or Szetela for House maps. Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 12, Margaret.

>> Hi. I'm Margaret from Ann Arbor. Thank you all for your dedication. I appreciate how you have listened to the public comments and I've adjusted the maps along the way.

Regarding the woman who spoke earlier about combining rural Jackson County with Washtenaw County and saying it's like inviting the Buckeyes into the big House, well maybe so. But at least the game would be competitive and the playing field level. The current maps give one team a 10 point victory before the game even begins.

On the Congressional maps, the Szetela map is the best and only map to have a perfect partisan fairness score.

The Birch map is also fair.

For Senate Linden, Kellom and Szetela maps come closest to fairness, but they still favor one party and require tweaking.

I ask you to do more on the House maps. While Hickory comes closest, none of the House maps would represent an outcome that accurately reflects the way we vote. I don't want to delay the process, but an extra 45 days pales in comparison than living with unfair maps for ten years. And please continue your good work and redo the House maps. Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 13, Jan.

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>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That participant is not currently present.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you. Number 14, Carolyn Nathans.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: I believe you are muted.

>> I'm sorry, thank you.

I'm Carolyn Nathans from Ann Arbor.

Thank you all for doing such difficult and critical work for our state.

I believe that prop two establishing the Commission passed with a large majority and notably in a bipartisan way because people wanted their own voices to be heard, not those of political parties protecting their own interests.

I think the Commission has done an excellent job in reflecting citizens' voices in many of the proposed maps, especially Szetela and Birch for U.S. Congress and Linden for State Senate. However, I respectfully ask that the Commission revise the Michigan House maps and call for more proposals.

Based on Michigan's 2016 and 2020 election results, the current proposals continue to give a disproportionate advantage to one political party, giving the majority of seats to minority of voters, which is not fair.

Again, we ran into the same problems before 2018. And many Michigander's voices will not be heard.

Of the proposed maps right now, I think the proposal by Commissioner Szetela would produce.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 15, Kathy.

>> Thank you very much.

I thank the Commission for your incredible work.

We very much appreciate your efforts and your agreeable...your being agreeable to listen to so many people for such a long time.

These maps are going to be important for the next ten years.

And because of that it's important that you continue to work on the Michigan House map to make it more partisan fair.

At the moment it does not represent the numbers in the State of Michigan and we need to see those again.

Thank you very much.

You have excellent choices for the Michigan Congressional District.

Either the Birch version two or Chestnut and the Michigan State Senate maps in Linden and Kellom.

Thank you very much for your efforts.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 16, Eli-Nathans.

>> Good morning. I'm a resident of Ann Arbor. And I also want to thank the Commission for its incredible work. I do not believe that the communities of interest

provision of the Redistricting Commission's mandate prevents the joining of communities with different cultural characteristics and economic interests in the same District.

Clause C of the mandate requires the Commission to create Districts that quote reflect the states diverse population as well as community of interest.

Seems to me the diverse population requirement is often being forgotten. In my view thee Commission is mandated to create Districts that are diverse and not marginalizing communities with distinctive cultural, historical characteristics or economic interest.

The law does not require only one community of interest per District.

The Redistricting Commission's mandate on community of interest is not a kind of Voting Rights Act for rural Michigan, requiring that the Commission create districts at least 50% or maybe 40% rural.

That is not a reasonable interpretation of the law and, in fact, would violate the diverse requirement.

Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number Pam-Byrnes.

>> I'm supervisor of Linden Township in the northwest corner of Washtenaw County where than more than 50% of the land is state owned.

I urge you to adopt the Chestnut Congressional map. We are a small, rural, agricultural Township of less than 3,000 residents with an emphasis on outdoor recreation.

We are part of the Chelsea community linked in our regional fire service, library, schools, transportation, recycling and building code enforcement.

Birch two and the two individual Commissioner maps split the Township in half between two Congressional districts. Apple two, and out of Washtenaw County into a Congressional District that has no connection, no community of interest.

We are small and likely to be ignored.

We would be adversely impacted for the next ten years in the delivery of quality governmental services to our constituents if the Chestnut map is not adopted. And thank you very much for your hard work and public service.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 18, Rich Thrush.

>> Hi, I'm Rich Thrush, a long-term resident of Grand Rapids.

I want to point out the Apple V2 map is the best representation of the large minority population in West Michigan.

30% of this District population are minorities.

Not only are Black and Hispanic populations represented, but Asian and Native Americans as well.

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In fact, the map meets the community of interest criteria for both the Midwih Grand Rapids area, indigenous people and the Hispanic Center of West Michigan, Kent County organizations.

In our area this is the only District map that focuses on representation at the Federal level of larger, densely populated cities in West Michigan.

Grand Rapids, the second largest City in Michigan, Kalamazoo number 13, Wyoming number 14, and Kentwood number 23 have common, unique characteristics in attending issues and improvements that need to be addressed.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Next in line is number 19, Dorothy Munson.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dorothy, if you can unmute yourself, you are free to address the Commission.

>> You are good. Start talking. Hello, I'm Dorothy Munson. I am representing nonpartisan Grand Rapids proactive organization. Can you hear me?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> Okay, the most appropriate Congressional map for West Michigan is Apple V2. It provides great representation for the two largest groups of minorities outside of Grand Rapids.

Grand Rapids has the second largest group of minorities and Kalamazoo the third. The combination of these cities make sense as most of the population in this District is in high density City areas.

These areas have unique demands, issues, needs and wants that can only be addressed at the Federal level.

The second best map, Chestnut, has minorities represented by not to such a large degree.

The Birch map is a poor representation of this District.

It combines low density rural Townships in Ottawa and Ionia Counties with Grand Rapids and the six surrounding Metropolitan cities.

Neither the area nor its residents will be able get priority and effective representation.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 20, Nada.

>> Hi, everyone. My name is Nada. I am with M-gauge Michigan and we are nonprofit folks Muslim politically engaged and politically empowered. So today I want to show support for Chestnut map for the Congressional, 13 District for the Congressional map, so Chestnut.

And then for the state maps we think the Linden map is the best map that shows our community of interest.

For the House map we do urge the Commission to take these 45 days to improve the House maps. They do not represent our communities of interest.

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Also, I ask you, the Commission, to look at maps 3644, 4108, 4107.

Again, it's 3644, 4108, 4107.

Those are our communities of interest that represent our Muslim communities. We urge you to keep those together in the House map.

Thank you so much.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 21, Janice.

>> Hello. My name is Janice. I'm an Ann Arbor resident. I live on the southeast side. Thank you, Commissioners, for all your work in developing these maps.

For U.S. Congress I support the Birch and Szetela maps as both are fair from a partisan perspective.

For the State Senate I support Linden for its partisan fairness and because it incorporates several VRA districts.

For State House, well, these maps need more work.

None of them are fair as they give an outsized voice to the minority of the state's population.

In other words, they are still gerrymandered.

If I had to choose among the maps presented, Hickory is the lesser evil. But I cannot support it without reservation.

I know you can do better as you've demonstrated with the Congressional and State Senate maps. So please continue working on this. And thank you for your service.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 22, Leslie Kamil.

>> Hello, Leslie Kamil. And I live in Ann Arbor Township, northwest side of Ann Arbor.

I would agree.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: We are getting some feedback on your microphone. So if you have two computers up and they both have Zoom, if you can unmute it.

>> It's now taken care of and it's out of the room, I apologize.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay.

>> I would like to say that I agree with the Congressional map Birch version two. And with the Michigan Senate map Linden as they are both fair from a partisan perspective and from the Voting Rights Act perspective.

I thank you for all the hard work that you've done.

But do request that you go back and look at the Michigan House.

There is no map that I can support as people before me have said, those with the minority vote get the majority seats.

So please go back and redo the Michigan House maps.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 23, Lisa.

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>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: If you can unmute yourself, you are free to address the Commission.

>> Lisa, if you can hear us, if you are able to unmute yourself, you are free to address the Commission.

>> It looks like Lisa may be experiencing some audio difficulties. I recommend we move on to number 25, number 24 is not present.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: 24 Allen, did you want 24 or 25?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Number 24 is not present, so we can move on to number 25.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: 25, please, which is Percy Johnson.

>> Okay. I'm in. Good morning, Commissioners. Thank you for what you're doing. But it sounds like you got two out of three going on here.

You got for Congress everybody is happy with the Chestnut. For Senate they like the Linden is the ideal map that we preferring.

The House maps we got problems.

Not happy with the House maps because you're not giving the support for the charters like they should have in the big cities. So go back and redo these House maps.

Hickory sounds like it's the closest one too, but still it still doesn't have the support that Detroiters need and the big cities need.

The big cities should be able to represent their community with the least of 50% vote or more.

So please go back and do the maps, give the big cities a chance to have good representation. Big cities have a lot more concerns than our cities that are around the big cities. So good job so far, but you got two out of three and let's make it three.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 28.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: If you can unmute, you can address the Commission.

>> I'm from Jackson County and want to thank you for your hard work with the proposed maps. The Apple V2 Congressional map is the most fair provided although I wish you would have provided a Congressional map with less partisan fairness than 4%. Please approve the Apple V2 Congressional map.

The Linden State Senate map does a good job of keeping the communities of interest of Jackson and Washtenaw County as well as the I-94 corridor together and provides partisan fairness Jackson County has not seen in over a decade.

Please approve the Linden State Senate map.

The Hickory State House map does a good job of keeping communities of interest of Jackson County together as well as providing more partisan fairness than Jackson County has seen in over a decade.

Please approve the Hickory State House map. Thank you all for your time.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 29, Venessa?

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>> Hello. This is Venessa. I am from Jackson County. I'm a lifelong resident of Jackson County. And my communities of interest are centered in this County, into northern Hillsdale County and into southern Ingham County. And I would like to express that I agree with some of a large number of keeping Jackson County as much as possible whole.

Some of the maps divide Jackson County into four different districts. And this is unacceptable.

I can you to support the Chestnut map for the Congressional District. The Palm for the Michigan Senate and the Magnolia map or the Szetela map for the Michigan House. Thank you very much.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 32, Katherine.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: If you can unmute yourself, you are free to address the Commission.

Katherine, if you can hear us, you can unmute yourself you are free to address the Commission.

It appears Katherine may be experiencing technical difficulties and recommend we move on.

Number 33 is not currently present, so we can move to number 34.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Rosa Holiday.

>> Good morning.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Good morning. We can hear you.

>> Good morning. I'm Rosa Holiday, a resident of Bay City. And I'm in support of the Chestnut map for Congress.

The Linden map for the State Senate. And I think they give a better partisan fairness, in fact, throughout the state.

But your House map, I really don't have any support for that.

I think the Hickory, if it's worked on more could be given in a partisan fairness, that would be a better map for us, for the state.

And I encourage you to strongly continue to work on the map so that we can have fair partisan.

This is a great opportunity here for Michigan that we could vote, have our representatives.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Barb Handley Miller, number 35.

>> Good morning. I'm Barb Handley Miller from Bay City, Michigan.

I'm part of the I75 Saginaw Bay watershed community of interest.

And we thank you for your public service on these maps.

We support the Chestnut map for Congress, creating a Flint, Saginaw, Bay City, Midland consolidated urban District.

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We think that will give citizens a strong voice with similar issues in environmental, industrial, economic concerns.

We also support Birch version two.

For State Senate we support the Linden map consolidating much of the Tri-Counties of Saginaw Bay and Midland. These three Counties have well established common interests as well.

The Palm map is unacceptable because it has the worst partisan scores. For State House, as others have said, Hickory is the best; but we think there could be continued work on that for partisan fairness.

So, again, we urge you to stay the course and adopt Chestnut, Linden and Hickory with some changes and to...

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 36, Andrew.

>> Hi, everyone. I'm Andy and live in Ann Arbor and I want to thank the Commission for all your hard work on our behalf. The main message I have is we want you to please continue working on the State House maps. None of the House maps proposed so far are fair. And currently all the House maps give the majority of seats to minority of voters.

I understand that with 110 House Districts, this is a complex challenge; but it is critical. Of the Congressional maps, I prefer the Birch version two, Chestnut and Szetela of the State Senate maps. The fairest I think are Linden and Cherry version two. Thank you so much for all your hard work on behalf of the citizens of Michigan.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 37, Lisa.

>> Hello. Thank you for listening to me personally. Hi, thank you for listening to me personally in the past and also to the public.

I support the Congressional Birch and Senate Linden maps.

I'm commenting today because I'm concerned with the partisan gerrymandering in the House maps that many people have mentioned due to hesitancy to break up cities.

Packing cities will make the urban rural divide worse over the next ten years. And as you have seen throughout this process, it already polarizes the people of Michigan.

I urge the Commission to revisit the House maps and do better.

Several organizations have submitted fairer maps, particularly next vote.

It is possible to achieve more competitive, unpacked districts in the House maps. And, as others have said, it's important to get this last piece right. And I support you in doing so even if it takes a bit longer.

If not, I support Hickory and Szetela.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 39, Sarah.

>> Good morning, can you hear me?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> Thank you so much. My name is Sarah Torres on behalf of APIA vote Michigan. I'd like to make general comments about the maps.

The Congressional districts look good.

The Senate maps are fairly decent.

However, I want to ask the Commissioners to please spend more time on the State's House maps.

Each of the House maps needs significant improvements as they have large partisan biases.

I appreciate the hard work that the Commission has done.

But there is so much more to be done.

We need to make sure these maps are fair and with as little partisan bias as possible to protect our communities of interest across the state and correct the damage that gerrymandering has done for a long time.

Thank you so much today for your time.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 40 Michael Davis.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That participant is not currently present.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Let's move on to 41, Lisa Downey.

>> Hello, can you hear me?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> Okay. My name is Lisa. I'm from Columbia Township in Jackson County.

As a lifelong resident of this area, I believe that Jackson County as a whole needs to have representation with other similar areas of the state.

For this reason in my opinion the best choice for Congressional map is Chestnut.

And State Senate is Palm.

As far as the State House maps, I agree with others that have spoke today that these need to be reworked.

I honestly can't choose one that appears to be the best.

I want to thank you for your time and work as you have put in a lot of time in this effort and thank you for allowing me to speak today.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 42, Rita.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: That participant is not present.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay, we will move on to 43, is James available? I believe they are husband, wife.

>> I'm James Sheerin from Ann Arbor and I would like to thank the Commissioners for their work.

I also think that the congratulations are in order on the milestone of achieving some consensus on the Congressional map, Chestnut being cited by many commenters this morning for a very diverse communities and appeal far and wide.

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For the State Senate I promote the Linden map.

And as many have echoed the House maps needs some additional work. So I would urge the simple motion to be approved to schedule more mapping sessions to achieve better political fairness.

Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. Number 44, Ilene McNeil.

>> Good morning.

Thank you for your time.

I wanted to make sure you knew there are many, I've heard lots of comments, and appreciate the time you put into these State Senate maps and Congressional District maps.

I strongly support the Palm State Senate District map.

It has -- there is one area I think it would be great if you could tweak it.

Please keep the dividing line where it is.

Do not move that dividing line in Grand Rapids.

I live in the Grand Rapids Township area.

And I've also lived in Heritage Hill.

You would not want to split up and move that line down to Wealthy.

It would divide the neighborhood associations and it's not a good idea. So I appreciate where you have the line drawn right now at Fulton.

Also we would also support the Magnolia plan. I live in Grand Rapids Township and would appreciate you keeping Grand Rapids Township with Ada and Cascade so they are altogether in the Forest Hills School District area.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission. That concludes our public comment for this morning.

However, I would like to mention that all e-mailed and mailed public comment is provided to the Commission before each meeting. And the Commissioners also review the public comment portal on our www.Michigan.gov/MICRC website on a regular basis.

We appreciate everyone who provides public comment in whatever way they choose to do so and invite you to keep sharing community of interest and maps and we will recess for 30 minutes for lunch.

Hearing no objections, we will stand in recess until 12:32.

Thank you, everybody.

[Lunch recess]

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I call this meeting of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission back to order at 12:41 p.m. will the secretary please call the roll?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Absolutely, Madam Chair.

Commissioners, please say present when I call your name. If you are attending the

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meeting remotely, please disclose you are attending remotely and As well as your physical attending from. I will call on Commissioners in alphabetical order starting with Doug Clark.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I'm present and attending remotely from Detroit, Michigan.

Anthony Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Present.

Brittini Kellom?

>> COMMISSIONER KELLOM: Present.

Rhonda Lange?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Present; attending remotely from Reed City, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Steve Lett?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Cynthia Orton?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: MC Rothhorn?

>> VICE COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Present.

Janice Vallette?

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Erin Wagner?

>> COMMISSIONER WAGNER: Present; attending remotely from Charlotte, Michigan.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Richard Weiss?

>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: All Commissioners are present.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you very much.

All right, at this point on our agenda we have unfinished business which we don't have any unfinished business and will move on to new business. The first on the agenda is new business 6A review of the September 30th fiscal year end budget projections excuse me projections for the September 30th, 2022, fiscal year end budget.

And discussion of the future structure of the Commission to carry out our business without objection I will ask Suann Hammersmith to provide information about the budget.

Please proceed Ms. Hammersmith.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Thank you very much Chair Szetela.

On the left of your budget is the results from the September 30, 2021, fiscal year end. You will see down at the very bottom line that the budget has remaining 1160.90 for any trailing bills that may come in.

We hope there are not have many.

I think we are very, very close.

So again that is close to a balanced budget and getting as many expenses as we could into the 2021 fiscal year end and balancing that budget.

Any questions on that before I move to the 2022 fiscal year end budget?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Clark?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah, I think we did a good job budgeting for the year.

Do you anticipate anything else coming in that we can account towards last year? Or my opinion is it's all going to be pushed into in year's expenses.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: I don't anticipate anything.

But if a bill should come through that is dated before September 30 it would be paid in the last fiscal year.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: How long do we have to do that?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: We were supposed to have it done by October 14th, those requests in so the requests I made were made by October 14th but a few trailing bills have come since then that have been paid in the last fiscal year.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: So the probability is very low we will get anything in against.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: It is very low, yes.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: All right any additional questions? Okay Sue did you want to talk about the projected budget?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Absolutely so when we adopted the budget for the current fiscal year we are if on October 20th, we did not have much discussion about that.

We were at a public hearing and Commissioners wanted to get to the public comments, rightly so.

So I just wanted to briefly go through this budget with you.

And let you know how it was built out.

Originally it was built out so we can begin paying bills in the current fiscal year.

As you know by our policy, I can pay a bill or approve a bill to be paid as long as the Commissioner has it in the approved, Commission has it in the approved budget.

So that was the necessity of getting something on the books which we did to start being able to pay our 2022 fiscal year end bills.

If you look at this, the line item for Commissioner pay assumes paying the Commissioners through year end.

That would be a total of 913,000 and the projected budget.

Our full time staff have contracts through March 31st.

You can see that cost that was approved in the budget.

Should the Commissioner wish to retain staff through the fiscal year, that budget would in essence double because 331 is half of the fiscal year.

For mileage we took travel costs last year and they were divided into several categories.

And the legislative services Bureau doesn't pay within those categories.

They use something called objections in the state budget.

So when I built out this budget, I built it with the state objects so everything that we do will coincide with how the state categorizes our expenses.

And you can see the object column there right after the expense line item category.

So for travel costs instead of using general mileage general travel, in person meeting mileage, parking, meals, public hearing costs for travel, travel is all in one bucket.

And estimated it to be about \$26,000.

This assumes that all of the meetings starting at January 1st of next year will be day meetings with no overnights.

So mileage is built in but no hotel for overnights after the 1st of the year.

And there may be some of those.

The telecommunications and technology internal purchases include what used to be in technology.

So last year we spent \$32000.

And that did include purchase of computers though and phones for the Commission.

This year that's been built out in two categories one is for phone service that is at \$9600.

It's about 8-900 every month for 17 phones for Commission and staff.

And then the technology or internal purchases through the state 14,904 this is DTMB costs these are assessed to the Commission.

We don't as we incur those costs.

The next category is facilities, AV and security.

And again meetings and public hearings are all combined into one line item.

There is extensive detail put there in the notes.

And we anticipate that cost to be projected at \$242,500 this year.

The public hearings did average around 22000 with the lowest being \$15,000, the highest being over \$27,000 for the venues and the AV costs.

Consultants, there are several consultants that outside contractors that we are working with.

The first translation, again, the Commission has approved Linguista International to do translation services for meeting notices and for documents.

We also have approved \$20,000 for Braille that is inadequate.

That is the next item on the agenda.

But this was not in our budget approved on October 20th.

Projected about \$30,000.

This year that will be spent for those categories.

The line drawing and the VRA legal counsel are the balances of those contracts that was not spent in the previous fiscal year.

The local counsel and litigation counsel expenses are contracts that this Commission has awarded up to these amounts.

General legal expenses were not in the ten 20 budget either but we are currently working with a paralegal last year we had \$50,000 in the budget for it however we did not spend any of that.

This year we have the paralegal.

We also have a couple of subscriptions one is Westlaw that is like the law library for Julianne to utilize.

And also, she is in need of the relativity workspace for document review and production primarily for FOIA requests so there is \$32000 projected for that line item.

The promotional consultant was approved prior as was most of the advertising and outreach costs.

And a good deal of that has been spent.

We don't have all the bills, but a good deal of that was spent on the public hearings.

And then lastly office supplies.

So if you get to the bottom line, you can see this budget anticipates projected costs of about \$724,000 more than the \$3,108,900 that has been appropriated to this Commission.

I would entertain any questions about this budget and how this Commission may wish to move forward.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Clark?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I have a number of questions.

So let's start at the top line item Commissioner pay.

Difference between last year and this year I would assume is because we had two individuals that resigned and we went for a period of time that pay was not given to anyone.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: That is correct both the Commissioner line item and the staff salary line item assumes at the same rate of pay.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Correct staff salaries we've got this full time through 3-31 which is what the contracts, the original appointment contracts were.

I would think that as we move forward and before we decide staffing levels and so forth that we plug that number with the assumption that the current staff is going to work through the end of the fiscal year.

Okay, and then we will adjust it if we get into any other conversations.

I would suggest that from a staff salary perspective, not salaries but staffing, that we go back and review based on workload that we have projected out, that we review that every 90 days.

So we will come in every 90 days.

We will confirm among us that the staffing level still meets the requirement that we currently have or it does not.

And adjust the budget appropriately.

I would also in help with the motion as we go forward if we decide to reduce staff for some reason and that staff is the full time staff, that we give them a minimum of 60 days' notice.

That gives them an opportunity to get another job if we go that route.

And given the workload I don't see us even going that route personally. So I would plug this with the full number through September 30th.

Travel costs, which is the next line item, this is a tough one to struggle with.

Because we are going to meet.

But this is based on one meeting per month.

I would anticipate we are going to have to meet at least twice a month.

And the reason being we've got a lot of documentation to do.

Particularly the beginning.

And we just can't go off individually and do that.

We have to coordinate it and get the plan together and so forth.

And it's just going to take time.

I would suggest and I've noticed in here throughout here that we've got one meeting a month.

I would suggest we go to two.

And then budget that appropriately.

And I know we are already over budget but we will get to that when we get down to the consultants.

Telecommunications there is nothing we can do about the phones.

Price is what it is.

The technology purchases through the state, what would those consist of, Sue?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: That is any support that is provided by DTMB so we've not received the bills yet for all the assistance they gave with the most recent software downloads those kinds of things or any technical.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: It's not purchases it's a service.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Yeah, they are just internal transactions that show up at month end based on services provided.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah services.

And we do use them significantly.

The facilities, the AV, security, I mean every meeting we've got to have that, we have to have the interpreters, we have to have the room, I don't see where we get away from it.

But like my previous comment I would budget for two meetings a month.

And again that accelerates the cost of the expense that we're going to have.

I think we need that.

I don't think one is going to be sufficient.

Maybe as we get through the year, we will see that one is sufficient and we don't have enough to do for the two.

But coming out of the gate for this year, this year's budget I would do that.

That gets us through the consulting.

And the big expenses.

You know and we knew a year ago that day is going to come.

And so we just other than EDS and our voting rights attorney, we have a good idea what their costs may be.

At least from what we have gotten so far.

We will continue to need them as we go forward.

That is not even up for debate.

Because they will get involved in any lawsuits we are in.

So.

As far as the local counsel and Baker Hostetler I don't think we know enough now.

We may get sued.

We may or may not and I don't think we know enough and I suggest what you have done here is right and we just plug it with a number.

Whatever that number is.

And then as we learn more, as we go through the upcoming months, we will know in the next two or three months as we go through that we can adjust that.

You know based on what we are seeing.

So I would see that acceptable.

Promotional outreach and advertising.

I question why a quarter of a million dollars for that when the maps have already been decided on.

What type of advertising would we do? And what type of outreach would we do at that point?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Is that a question.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Clark did you want director.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Edward may be best to answer that question.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Communication director did you want to go ahead and answer that?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: [Off mic]

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>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Can we get the mic on?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Test 123.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Promotional outreach and advertising \$222,340.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Okay, a lot of this money was spent with regards to the first round of public hearings.

We had television ads that we did in Northern Michigan, Traverse City.

That was some of the money that we were going to try to recoup.

We are still looking at doing a video.

Assessment.

We did newspaper ads through the Michigan press association.

We did radio ads through the Michigan association of broadcasters.

We had.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Could I interrupt you for a minute.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Sure.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: This is money we already spent but not billed.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: I don't know if it's already billed, correct.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I see that.

So according to the line items, we've spend \$51,000.

And are going to spend another \$25,000.

Yeah.

Just coming up, in November but then there is additional after that.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: The one above is the promotional consultant that we've already signed just so you have context.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: That we've already.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Recontracted for.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Contracted for and so forth, okay.

So I got that.

But then we got an additional \$220,000 of which \$50,000.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: 50 and I think 24 has been billed between November 1-15; is that correct?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: We have paid year to date the \$50,500 in October and between the November 1st and 15th we paid out \$25,000.

The projected would be the total and would include that \$76,000.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Would include what \$76,000?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: The 2650, 49999 and the 2494, so projected is the total for the year.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: So let's take the 76,000 and subtract that from \$220,000. What are we going to spend the rest of that money on?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: We have, I have not seen the newspaper ad yet so I don't know if that is in there but there is a newspaper ad billing.

There is going to be a radio billing.

I think this includes the mail billing.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Do we have a built up of that amount of money what we expect to use it for?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: I mean I do but I can just tell you in looking at the numbers what I don't think has been billed that we've already incurred.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: We've already gotten the service but we have not paid the bills.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: And we have not paid the bill because we have not received the bill is what I'm saying.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: So I would say let's take that money, figure out what it is.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: We can come back.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: What we paid and as a residual from the quarter million and whatever that is we need to define what we're going to spend it on. That's what I'm interested in.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Sure I can bring that report back in two weeks.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: All right Commissioner Lett?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Isn't Doug isn't the question that I think you're trying to get to is how much are we planning on spending going forward, not how much we have spent to date.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Correct.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: What are the plans for this coming fiscal year? And we understand we got to pay for what we've already done but what do you got in store for us?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: A couple things I have in store.

One we are looking at the I don't want to say documentary but the video that we're looking at purchasing with regards to best practice, what we have gleaned from the Commission.

The other things that we're doing is more or less social media with regard to announcing our dates which is minimal.

We also have expenses with regards to the final meeting in terms of what that looks like, in terms of renting the facility, how that is being set up, security, all of that is being brought on as part of that.

And depending on the type of feedback we get from the lawsuits, what kind of identify some of the other strategies that we have.

And so it's more it's how can I say? It's not reactive but trying to be proactive based on some of the reactions that we've received as relates to the maps.

And so there is definitely an opportunity possibly, Commissioner Clark, for an adjustment.

But I would hope you would let me come back in two weeks so I can actually see what we have and where we are going because there might have to be some adjustments.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Definitely.

I just want a line item detail so we can understand where we think the money is going to be spent as we go forward.

I would appreciate that, Edward.

Office supplies, that is same as last year, it's basically, it's a little less but it's needed. So that leaves us with a deficit.

A large deficit of money.

And that's largely driven by the legal bills that we are going to incur or expect to incur.

And I think we need to put together a program to start addressing that with the state, Department of State initially.

I would suggest start it with Mike Brady.

And see how that sort of thing works within the state.

When we need additional money.

And I don't know if the money is coming from the Department of State or the legislature, we don't know. Mike can help us through that.

But I would suggest that as administrative function that we begin to do that.

So we don't get in a position where we can't pay our bills because we don't have the money authorized.

That is the last thing we want to do.

So and another question associated with that if we do get sued, if they sue the Department of State and they don't sue MICRC, are we up to pay the legal bills or is the Department of State? I'm sorry I could not hear you.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: The chances they are not going to sue us slim and none and slim left out.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: We would probably be joint parties.

They would probably sue multiple entities.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I would assume it's like that.

How does the bill get split if it's joint? Those are the thing we have to work out with Mike.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Rothhorn, you have been trying to go through this.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: I appreciate this and the question and there are 13 of us and a staff and there is uncertainty and appreciate the administration and we are paying having the staff members full at this point the staff have to help us.

I think I will speak for myself but it feels like learning how to govern is differ than learning how to operate and I come from an operations background and I think you do too.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I do.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: 13 bosses can't do this.

We hire staff to help us figure this stuff out, to understand what it is we need to do. So they are going to give us some metrics and help us figure out a way to do this. But I do believe that we should empower them frankly to help answer the questions you're asking on behalf of me too but like how do we get that money, how do we get -- who does it.

I do not want to tie their hands by creating some policy or creating a motion that ties their hands.

I think they need to be flexible and need to report back to us because we are the ones that need to do this but their experience up to this point, I feel like if we don't trust it, we are going to yeah, we are going to be in a world of hurt.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I agree.

It's just a function of your organization, Sue and should take that on.

I would definitely use Mike Brady as a resource.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I think kind of the takeaway of what you just said is you want more detail from director Woods about what we've spent and what we plan to spend. I think that is part one.

I think part two we maybe need some clarification from General Counsel or possibly Mike Brady about how we would divvy up expenses in the event we are sued and if there is multiple parties, multiple Defendants, which I think there likely will be.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yep.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: And additionally we need to have some discussion with Mike Brady about and our Executive Director can probably interface with that as to what the process would be for us to request additional funds if we anticipate we are going to need them.

So I sort of see those as like sort of the three; is that correct? Three overarching?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Correct and I suggest we make the changes to the budget before we go to Mike with any dollar figure.

For example we talked about going to two meetings a month instead of one so that will drive cost.

And that will drive our deficit even more.

So.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Rothorn?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yeah, so the two meetings a month also challenges me.

I guess what I'm saying our staff the three of them as a team recommended one meeting a month.

What I'm saying is like part of me wants to know is that what happens? Is it just a ballpark? Or is there a reason we need two or did the staff again trying to understand all of the complications and forecasting in the future I know is difficult.

But I'm asking you is there some reason that you guys said, yep, we think that one eight-hour meeting or five-hour meeting or whatever per month and you all doing the work in between that we can -- you all can get the work done with one meeting a month for us to help you decide what you all need to do.

Or do we need two meetings a month? Again I think that is a question that Commissioner Clark is asking.

I want to be as clear as possible the three of you decided yes this is the right choice one meeting a month knowing it's a forecast that is hard to predict.

Help I mean come back to us, right, with the Secretary of State help us understand this is the best choice for this budget, please?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: We know it's difficult because we don't know what the workload is in front of us.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Yeah well, I agree with everything that has been said.

I also think it's important for us and the public to also understand we've spent very little money so far compared to what some of these other Commissions across the country are spending.

I'm looking at the Arizona Commission which is another citizen led Commission like ours and Arizona has 80% of the population of Michigan.

And they are 2022 and 2023 is 7.9 million near than double we spent so far and double what we were able to spend last year.

So I think that is exactly the route we should go.

Let's just put together a budget request and ask the legislature for the funds that we need to do our job.

Especially since we've been very good at you know not spending an extraordinary amount of money to get as far as we have so far.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I agree with you 100%.

I think we have been very fiscally responsible last year.

And we started off with that attitude in September and I think we followed through with it and done an excellent job.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: So I just wanted to say in regards to the meetings that we have scheduled for the budget plan for two.

I don't see any reason why we wouldn't be able to meet two times a month.

And you can always expect for two and hope for one and saying we potentially have to cancel one.

But two I think is a fair number to at least budget for without really because I don't think we are going to do much more than that.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Correct.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Unless there is a really rare circumstances that would have to happen but from a budgeting standpoint, I think two is a fair assessment.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I do too.

And it's going to help us in the long run when we go back to get more money from the state in case of legal bills are higher than we anticipate too.

So we will have some of that money built in and we can deal with it at that point.

I'm finished making my comments on the budget with exception of one motion I'm going to put forward.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay is your motion on budget or is it on.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: The motion is on.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Is it on the staffing issue.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Staffing levels.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay, all right so it sounds like we have some more work that needs to be done on this budget but I also know that do we have a proposed budget currently adopted at this point? I thought we had like a tentative one?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: We do have a budget adopted the 2022 budget after your gray line towards the center of the Page, the 2022 budget is the third column over.

So we have adopted that budget.

What that budget does not enable us to do right now is pay on the brilliant contract or the paralegal general legal expenses so if we don't want to move on the whole budget was, I understand there are a lot of unanswered questions it would be helpful to have those funds available those two line items 30,000 for translation and 32000 for general legal expenses so we can continue the work over the next two weeks.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Pardon the interruption this is Sarah Reinhardt for the Department of State I wanted to note for the record that Commissioner Lange left the meeting at 1:10 p.m. thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you.

So because we already have a budget proposed it sounds like in order to facilitate payment for the Braille contractor Executive Director Hammersmith has just asking us to approve two line items on this proposed budget and we will come back and deal with the remaining items later and those two items are approval of the consultants translations which is 30,000 for meeting notices, documents and Braille and then the other one is the general legal expenses is the paralegal through March 31 and subscriptions which is the Westlaw and so on for 32000.

I would entertain a motion to adopt those two line items.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: So moved.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Second.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Motioned by Witjes and seconded by Rothorn any discussion or debate on the motion, Commissioner Clark?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Another one would be to adopt the budget knowing we will change it that way if additional line items come up Sue already has the authority to pay, we can pay it immediately.

We don't have to hold them and vote on another single line item or another one following a meeting.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: That actually makes a little bit more sense so I will withdraw my motion and move to adopt the budget as presented.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: You withdraw your motion and moving.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: To adopt the budget as presented.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: And you seconded Commissioner Rothorn.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Yes.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Discussion or debate on the motion? All right all in favor raise your hand and say aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

All right the ayes prevail and the motion is adopted.

I'm actually still seeing Rhonda Lange on the Zoom.

Is she on there or not? All right I still see her showing up on Zoom.

Thank you everybody.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Madam Chair.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Can I put forward a motion.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Go ahead.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yes, I'd like to put forward a motion that for all full time staff that if we decide to do staff the individual be impacted by that will be given at least a 60 day notice of time so they can get appropriate start on getting a new assignment or a new job.

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: I'd like to wait, I don't think it's a bad idea but I want to explore as many options as possible with that.

So I just I don't want to lock us into anything by motioning and voting on something we may want to revisit or try to understand more even with the staff.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I'll withdraw the motion.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay thank you.

Yeah, I know part of what we wanted people to start thinking about and something that was on my notes to start thinking about, not necessarily make decisions today, is you

know I think we as a Commission need to evaluate what structure we want for our staff moving forward.

Do we want to maintain the structure we have as a General Counsel Executive Director and communication and Outreach Director or do we want to make changes do we anticipate the roles being full time going forward, do we anticipate them being part time. I think that will play into our budgeting quite a bit so I think there needs that to be some thought object what do we want to add, what do we want to keep, what do we want to keep the same, what changes the we make.

And I think we need to discuss that possibly at the next meeting because I think that leads into the budget discussions as well.

Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I would actually recommend that that particular discussion would occur after we vote on that in December.

I wouldn't do this in the next meeting is what we are going to keep for next year.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Rothhorn?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: After what? After we.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: After we vote on maps this is something we should possibly discuss come January as opposed to next meeting.

We got plenty on our plates right now.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yep.

All right anything else on this topic we need to discuss Executive Director?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: I'm fine on the budget and thank you for approving the projections.

So we can move forward with the work of the Commission.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay thank you very much.

All right so we will move on to new business item 6B.

Which is updated Braille quote without objection I will ask Executive Director Hammersmith to provide information about the Braille vendor estimate and timeline. Please go ahead and present Ms. Hammersmith.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Thank you Chair Szetela.

When we got the original estimate from light House there were eight maps, they were doing ten sets of maps.

And subsequently we ended up with 15 maps.

And we now need 44 sets of maps based on discussions with the Braille and talking book library in Lansing and there are 11 satellites and also the Lansing chapter of the national federation for the blind.

So we went with what they requested and what they felt people would use.

So 44 sets of maps compared to ten and then 15 maps put forth by this Commission.

I also added two documents.

One is an overview so there is an understanding for example, of the criteria and the Constitution.

And also the compliance spreadsheet.

Because I felt that was really important for them to know the metrics on the maps that they were receiving.

So instead of a 7500 quote it is now \$24,220.

This Commission did approve \$20,000 for this contract with light House which by the way is a nonprofit organization.

So I believe that they're being reasonable with the level of work that needs to be done.

And then I also wanted to share the timeline.

So they expect to have the design completed this week and send the files to me for review by today or tomorrow.

They are going to start production.

I don't think next week but the following week.

And then they will work to get all the packets shipped out by Friday December 3 or Monday the 6th at the latest.

I'm recommending paying for two day priority shipping.

They are in California so shipping across the country could become a serious issue if we don't pay for that.

Normally I wouldn't but I think in this case we need to be able to get the maps to people who want to review them as quickly as possible.

So that is my report.

On light House.

And their estimate and I would request that the Commission allocate up to the \$24,220 for this project.

So we can make these maps accessible for people who are blind or visually impaired.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: All right any questions for our Executive Director? Okay, I would entertain a motion to approve the estimate of \$24,220 to produce the proposed maps in Braille and overview and compliance terms.

Motion made by Commissioner Eid.

Seconded by Commissioner Rothorn.

Is there any discussion or debate on the motion? Hearing none it is moved and seconded that we approve the updated estimate of for the Braille contractor all in favor please raise your hand and say aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

The ayes prevail and the motion is adopted.

All right next item on our new business agenda is agenda item 6C, review of the process for I'm sorry process for the review of collaborative proposed maps and individual maps prior to deliberations on the final maps.

So we've had a few people mention this to us today and it's also out on the public comment portal about how are we going to review maps.

Do we want to set up a process, do we want to discuss maps before the actual days of deliberations go ahead Commissioner Witjes.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: The days of deliberations meaning the final vote on the 30th?

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Whatever day we end up doing, at this point we can do the 28th, 29th or 30th do we want to have discussions before that such as a meeting like today or in two weeks?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I would motion to table this until next week so we can think how we potentially want to handle this.

Because this conversation could take hours on how we want to potentially end this.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I have four questions here from our staff. That I'd like to run through so everybody can -- so here are kind of the questions that our staff wanted us to think about is: Number one was what I just mentioned do we want to deliberate in advance of those late December meetings? Do we want a presentation from each Commissioner who proposed individual maps? Do we need a refresher on the sequence in which collaborative maps were drafted? For example, we have maps that were built on other maps and do we need someone to sort of discuss that? And then what data and metrics we are going to utilize. So that is what staff suggested we look at. And, Commissioner Kellom, I see your hand over there.

>> COMMISSIONER KELLOM: So I know and I understand Commissioner Witjes is saying it could take hours given the wonderful group we have. But I think the questions that you just read off Chair Szetela would be like helpful quick "Yes" or "No" so we have a sketch of how we are moving forward. I don't think we necessarily need to be labor just the intro discussion of the topic for next week.

With me saying that, it's not like today we are going to be going into great lengths of how we are going to deliberate.

But I think a refresher given you know public feedback and that we have had individuals submitting maps all of those things would be necessary and to be a part of the cohesive and wholistic process.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: So I'll just give my quick two cents on those four questions.

One, maybe.

Two three four no because we were all there.

We know how the maps were drawn.

We have the metrics on our computers.

We can run the reports.

We can do all of these things on our own.

We can call somebody and say hey, do you remember how this particular thing happened and I don't think we need to actually have meeting times set up to do this as a whole.

At all.

I now would I say we could potentially meet prior to the first to the final vote on the 30th whether that be on the 29th, the day prior to do some final discussion? Sure.

That makes a lot of sense.

But going through everything again and how we did things and why we did things doesn't really make much sense to me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Kellom? .

>> COMMISSIONER KELLOM: Commissioner Witjes and to you know the rest of my Commissioners I think the benefit would be for the public just to acclimate them into what the discussions are.

Because we know that especially given some of the comments that I remember yesterday or today that it might be a little behind in terms of which maps are which and I think a refresher is...always is necessary.

We've been entrenched in the work so that is great that we can use our laptops.

But again we are serving these folks out here and I think for one we haven't really reviewed like the individual maps and the thinking behind those and I just think that could be useful.

And not time exhaustive.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Clark?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I agree with Dustin.

That we are the ones that will make the decision.

And we've gone through this and developed them together and the only thing I would add from the floor is the individual maps.

We need a walkthrough of each one of those to understand what base they used and what changes they made for those maps because all we know now is we have a map available to us but we don't know how it got developed.

The collaborative maps we do know how it got developed.

We did it together as Dustin recommended so I think we definitely need a meeting to do that and whatever submitted individual maps they need to walk through those in detail on how they got to where they got.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Go ahead Commissioner Witjes then Commissioner Rothhorn.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I would agree with you but we don't need to schedule a meeting we have two more meetings prior to my suggestion of maybe one before the 30th if we decide to vote on the 30th where that can be done. But other than that I will stand with what I said earlier.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Rothhorn?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: Maybe we are saying so, yeah, we are talking about how we will use the time in the next three meetings that we have scheduled.

I do like the idea of walking ourselves through and therefore walking the public through it and I offer it does not have to take a lot of time.

It's going to be about two hours.

That's all we got.

We got public comment and we have two hours.

A two hour meeting, that is short for us.

[Laughter]

And what I'm suggesting too is like I think that we might actually build more consensus. We might hear each other in ways that we right it's been a while.

I would appreciate it and I do think I guess what I'm hearing Commissioner Clark say we want you know he would like to have the individual maps laid out, that is true and therefore as a Commission to give the same respect so to speak to each collaborative map makes sense, that it's a similar process for all of them.

That's kind of where I'm thinking okay, I can see that.

I can, yeah, and again I don't think it has to take more than two hours or it will take more than two hours but we have three more days three more meetings I'm sorry.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I get the individual maps but you mean to tell me you don't remember what we all did for the collaborative maps?

>> VICE CHAIR ROTHORN: I'm trying to speak to what Commissioner Kellom was saying which is the education for the public and that is what I'm saying.

It's not about walking us through as much as we are remembering trying to say something and it does not have to be long just the idea, we are walking through why we chose this map.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I will follow that up with everything that we've done is recorded in the public will see that.

They can find a date and say okay what were they working on based on our agendas, go watch the videos, based on time stamps that are on the agendas to get the information.

I don't see the need to reinvent the wheel here.

Commissioner Eid and I have a comment too.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Another point that we might want to discuss at these future meetings while discussing these topics that you all have brought up is how is the actual voting going to go down? I see Sarah has her hand up and I believe there is a process laid out in our process document but you know is it going to be what set of maps come first, are they all on the same ballot versus being on separate ballots, if they are on separate ballots well how do we know which one to vote on first, stuff like that.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Ms. Reinhardt did you have your hand up?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Yes, thank you to Commissioner Eid's point regarding how the final vote will occur, he is absolutely correct that there is a prescribed process in the Constitution.

However, I'm aware that your staff and members of our staff are meeting to discuss a more detailed and thorough process we will bring to you for review and any adjustments you see fit so more to come on that.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: That would be very useful thank you.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you Ms. Reinhardt when might we expect that, Ms. Reinhardt?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Likely at the next meeting in two weeks.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you.

So I would just add for the individual maps, I think for me personally it would be useful to have those presentations like on the second or the 16th so we have time to sort of reflect on what individual Commissioners have presented.

I would not want to do it at the very end on December 30th because I think that doesn't give people time to think about the maps.

So that would just be my thought on that.

And then in terms of presenting them I know I could do all three of mine in less than 15 minutes so honestly that is a vast probably overestimate because I can tell you less than five what the differences are.

Commissioner Lett?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: That brings up an interesting point we are meeting on the 30th to vote are we going to have public comment on that meeting because if we are we will need a lot longer afterwards because my anticipation will be there will be a lengthy discussion amongst all of us as to what the vote is going to be so I guess my motion would be on the day we schedule for the vote that there is no public comment.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I don't believe we can do that.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Well your General Counsel will figure out a way.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Go ahead General Counsel.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Good afternoon, Madam Chair and the Commission so the Commission will be meeting in public for those discussions and public comment is a key requirement of those meetings.

So what I would recommend the Commission consider is an option is maybe scheduling a two-day period for vote and that way allow the Commission enough time and that of course is based on your discussions next week how you would like to pursue directions of the District type maps that are currently published for the 45 days.

And summarizing those particularly the individual maps for the benefit of the public thank you.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: If I may Madam Chair, I would also add to what General Counsel said that while the public comment period cannot be gotten rid of per

the Open Meetings Act because it is a public meeting the Commission does have the right to limit individual public comment time as they have done in the past.

But public comment period for public meeting is required.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: All right any other comments? Questions? Concerns? Okay so I don't think we have any action items at this point unless someone wants to make a motion on something so let's just move on to our next item of unfinished business.

All right I got out of order here on the list.

So next item on our agenda is approval of meeting minutes and we have quite a bit here.

Guys so just bear with me while we go through them.

So we have agenda for our minutes for approval from sorry got to take this out October 29 I'm sorry October 27-29, November 1-5, and November 8th.

Meetings minutes from these minutes were held in East Lansing and provided to the Commission in advance of the meeting are there any edits to any of the meeting minutes.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Make a motion to approve the minutes.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Second.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: General Counsel can we do them all at once or do we have to do them one by one I think we have to do it one by one.

Motion of the meeting minutes held October 27, 2021.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: So moved.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Motion made by Witjes and seconded by Commissioner Lett all in favor raise your hand and say aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay? The ayes prevail and the meeting minutes are adopted.

May I have a motion to approve the meeting minutes from October 28, 2021.

Motion made by Commissioner Lett seconded by Commissioner Witjes.

All in favor raise your hand and say aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

The ayes prevail and the meeting minutes are adopted may I have a motion to approve the meeting minutes from October 29, 2021.

Motion made by Commissioner Witjes seconded by Commissioner Lett.

All in favor raise your hand and say aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

The ayes prevail and the meeting minutes are adopted may I have a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting from November 1, 2021.

Motion made by Commissioner Lett seconded by Commissioner Witjes.

All in favor raise your hand and say aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

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The ayes prevail and the meeting minutes are adopted may I have a motion to approve the meeting minutes from November 2, 2021.

Motion made by Commissioner Witjes seconded by Commissioner Lett all in favor raise your hand and say aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

The ayes prevail and the meeting minutes are adopted.

May I have a motion to approve the meeting minutes from November 3, 2021.

Motion made by Commissioner Lett seconded by Commissioner Witjes.

All in favor raise your hand and say aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay. The ayes prevail and they are adopted.

Motion to approve the meeting minutes from November 4, 2021.

Motion made by Commissioner Witjes seconded by Commissioner Lett all in favor raise your hands and say aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

The ayes prevail.

Meeting minutes from November 5, 2021.

Motion made by Commissioner Lett seconded by Commissioner Witjes all in favor raise your hand and say aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

The ayes prevail and the meeting minutes are adopted.

A motion to approve the meeting minutes from November 8, 2021.

Motion made by Commissioner Witjes, seconded by Commissioner Lett.

All in favor raise your hands and say aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

The ayes prevail and the November 8, meeting minutes are adopted.

All right it's my understanding there are no reports from Executive Director

Hammersmith I'm sorry Executive Director you have a report?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: I don't have a report but I just wanted to thank Mustafa for the heavy lift on these minutes as you can see, they were absolutely extensive and deserves our appreciation.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you Mustafa all right General Counsel we do not have an update from you as well I understand.

So we do have an update from our communications and Outreach Director Edward Woods III please proceed Mr. Woods.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Thank you can you hear me.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, we can.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: You can take a look at the slides we can go over what is happened and just kind of want to really applaud the Commission for its outstanding efforts in communications and outreach.

I really don't think the public knows all the time that you've spent, the pains you have endured, both publicly and privately.

With regards to the work of the Commission.

Many people know about proposed two and the ballot and how it was comprised and how the MICRC has the authority or responsibility as relates to maps for Michigan Congressional Michigan House and Michigan Senate districts.

What they don't know what they might not know is the makeup of the Commission.

When the Secretary of State did the random selected process, Southeast Michigan was weighted at 35.4% and it includes Oakland County it includes Ingham County.

And as you can see, we have as well as Eaton County and from the we have Clark Eid Rothhorn Clark and Witjes.

For West Michigan those wondering what do we have Commissioner Lange and Commissioner Orton.

In Wayne County we have Curry, Kellom and Szetela.

And I want this to be known this is when at the point of the selection even though people may have moved this is the representation at the point of selection.

Central we have Commissioner Weiss in Northern Michigan we have Commissioner Lett and no one was selected or picked out of the ballot box for Upper Peninsula.

So I just want to make sure that in terms of how it was defined, the demographic break down that there is an accurate story about who came from Southeast Michigan, who is from West Michigan, who is from Wayne County, who is from east Central Michigan and who is from Northern Michigan.

Our Commissioners as you know have endured a lot of pain, a lot of loss.

And they keep coming to work.

We have never missed a meeting due to a lack of quorum and we want to make sure that that record is straight.

People have participated and engaged and put in a ton of hours, a ton of hours moved their medical appointments around, missed medical appointments just to ensure that the State of Michigan residents could have fair maps with public engagement.

And so we would like to take this opportunity to salute Commissioner Clark, Commissioner Curry, Commissioner Eid, Commissioner Kellom, Commissioner Lange, Commissioner Lett, Commissioner Orton, Commissioner Rothhorn, Commissioner Szetela, Commissioner Vallette, Commissioner Wagner, Commissioner Weiss and Commissioner Witjes for an outstanding effort and camaraderie and making sure the mission never gets knocked over because of personal preferences or partisan bickering. This has not been the story of the Commission and heard it in the comments that were made during our public comment period and it's a true testimony of what can happen when people come to work together for the common good.

[APPLAUSE]

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The key elements for proposal 2018-2 we want to reiterate is the responsibility was given to citizens not legislatures to draw the maps.

It changed it from Apol standards that dealt a lot with Counties to the seven ranked redistricting criteria.

Openness, all meetings are streamed online. Transparency as raised to subsection 11. So we are not influenced by lobbyists or other people in private conversations.

Which has happened under the old redistricting process. And public engagement through public hearings and outreach.

This is what the citizens voted.

This is not something the Commission voted.

The citizens voted to go from the Apol standards to the seven ranked redistricting criteria and this is why the Commission is adamant in following what the citizens voted as amended properly in the Constitution when this ballot proposal passed.

Sometimes the Commission is unfairly criticized because we are following the 7 ranked redistricting criteria according to the Constitution when it comes to other areas that they would like to have more of a higher ranking such as County municipal boundaries is one that keeps coming up, over and over again but that is reflective of the Apol standards not the 7 ranked criteria that passed more than 61% of Michigan voters.

The key findings as you know the Commission did an outreach survey, a survey of Michigan and the key findings that kept coming up, over and over again that the public was emphasizing is map fairness and public feedback.

The message is no unfair advantage citizen input and transparency.

News stories and website was the most likely avenues for engagement. And 48.2% believe that participation will have an impact.

These were the findings from the Glen Carif study we did in the spring.

Our strategic plan that was developed by Sue Hammersmith our Executive Director and voted on by the Commission is our mission is very clear to lead Michigan's redistricting process to ensure Michigan's Congressional State Senate and State House districts are drawn fairly in a citizen led transparent process meeting constitutional mandates.

Our vision chart a positive course for elections based on fair maps for Michigan today and for the future.

Whereas our core values are integrity, respect, transparency and being purposeful.

Fairness is one of our things that we have and we wanted to ensure fairness in the redistricting process.

We share the process for adopting maps.

We have our mapping policies and procedures.

That was done as well as redistricting 201 that is available on our website.

The Commission has done a great job of reference how public comments influence the mapping process.

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And then in addition we took Commission meetings on the road so that we could impact various parts of the state so people had an opportunity to come to our meetings.

We did one in Benton Harbor we did Traverse City then in September every meeting in September on Thursday was at a University campus.

Just to give broad exposure and opportunity for people to participate in the process if they desired to within their home communities so they wouldn't have to drive as far.

Awareness, heightened awareness of the redistricting process we directed or mailed 145,788 informational postcards and predominately rural areas in the Down River community.

We ran television ads in Northern Michigan Upper Peninsula Atlanta Michiganders whose media is Indiana Ohio and Wisconsin to make sure that no one was left behind and they could get the information.

We paid for state right radio ads and newspaper ads and promoting the second round over public hearing to ensure that Michigan residents knew they could #show up and speak up to be a part of this historic process.

Our transparency.

I'm sorry did I transparency, model we continue to show public comments maps and community of interest incorporated to the mapping process and enable residents to comment directly on the mapping portal.

And to the public comment portal we also had the mapping portal that EDS opened up and approved by this Commission where people could directly comment on draft maps for proposed draft maps and now proposed maps as to what their preference may be.

And then we ensure the website is user friendly.

I would be remiss if I did not thank the Michigan Department of State in particular Jake, Michael Doyle, Nelson and Linda who have been updating the websites and changing it. They have done a yeoman's effort in terms of getting that stuff up and up quite quickly so the public is aware of what is taking place in this new historic process.

Engagement we increased engagement in redistricting process.

We created promotional materials and videos.

We have our promotional materials are available in Arabic, Bengali and Spanish. Our videos are also available in Arabic and Japanese and different languages people were able to access and be a part of that from our YouTube channel to talk about the importance of Michigan's new redistricting process and why they should engage.

I want to commend the Commission and staff who provided more than 200 outreach presentations across the state.

Whether it was in person or through Zoom, that has taken place.

We obtained at our press conference last week recapping the second round of public hearings we obtained 21,753 public comments.

1950 were in person, 872 were either through the mail or e-mail.

1107 was public comments either over the phone or through Zoom.

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Then the public comment portal which was led out by the Michigan Department of State under Sarah Reinhardt's leadership we had 7028 public comments and then on the mapping portal we had 10,796 public comments that we heard directly from the public.

Nevertheless as we did today, we encouraged people to sign up for alerts so they can show up and speak up whether it's by e-mail, whether it's by text messages, we encourage people to mail their public comment to our PO box.

We encourage people to call.

To learn about more information.

About how to participate in if process and encourage people to "Like" us or follow us on Facebook Instagram or Twitter to subscribe to the YouTube channel and submit public comments either on the public comment portal or on the proposed maps at the mapping portal which are both accessible off the website.

I just want you to know the hard work that you have done and just want to say thank you to the Commission for all of this because you made this possible that Michiganders for the first time in history to really have a voice, not just a token public hearing but to have a voice in creating far maps with citizen input and for that you deserve an outstanding round of applause for the communication outreach that happened in this process.

Congratulations.

[APPLAUSE]

That concludes my report.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: I was going to say is there more thank you Mr. Woods without objection I will ask Sarah Reinhardt from the Michigan Department of State if she has a report.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: I'm glad I have no reports so I don't have to follow Edward.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: All right correspondence received in advance of our meetings is provided along with written public comments to the Commissioners in our meeting materials.

It's my understanding there is no future agenda items to discuss.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Wait, wait.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: So there is something I want to bring up as a potential future agenda item for our next meeting.

I've done a lot of thinking and I'm going to bring up a motion, I'll explain it to you later or what it's going to be here in a second, next meeting but I wanted to bring it up as a future agenda item so we can think about it.

I have been mulling over all of those memos that we went into in regards to closed session and I'm seriously considering you releasing them to the public or trying to vote to release those memos to the public in the case of transparency.

I personally cannot see any legal strategy that was really discussed in that particular closed session that the public should not be made aware of.

This is something I don't want to handle now I just want you folks to think about it.

I don't necessarily know how I'm going to vote "Yes" or "No."

But it is something I'm going to bring up.

So review them and see if you can personally think that this is something that the public should be made aware of in the case of transparency.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: So along those lines that is something I have been mulling as well but one thing I want to review again because obviously we have the memos and I personally don't have a recording of the meeting and would like to rewatch it so I'm wondering Sarah if you are the holder of that or maybe General Counsel whoever it is if you could provide us with a link of that so we can sit down and rewatch the closed session and see what was discussed exactly so it informs our decision making that would be very helpful General Counsel.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Thank you so much Madam Chair.
And certainly that can be provided.

Commissioner Witjes is correct.

So the MICRC as a body holds the privilege.

So no privilege and confidential communications can be shared absent the body formally waiving that privilege which I understand is what some individual members may be considering.

So certainly we will provide you with that information.

And look forward to discussing that.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: All right thank you anything else Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: No, that will be all.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Okay, all right, Mr. Woods?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS:

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Curry? Thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Yes, I just wanted to say that I'd like to thank all the staff that has participated and worked hard for us and even our communications director Edward Woods who has done a great job.

And a tiring job.

And ditto to him he has done an excellent job in what he has done and all of the Commissioners I just say it's been great working with you all this year.

That's all.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you Commissioner Curry and thank you Mr. Woods.
Go ahead Mr. Woods.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: I know the Commission is looking at a date for December.

And the sooner we have it the better for logistics.

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That meeting that is taking place is not going to be a regular meeting in terms of the amount of press and security and logistics that needs to be set up and so I'm hoping that on December 2, at the latest, we can agree upon a date.

So that we have enough time.

But also because of the shortage of staffing that the venue is able to staff hired.

As you know that is a holiday period.

And that is just a concern that I have so we are also trying to make sure our contractors are available, and putting you on notice because it's right between Christmas and new year where people may not want to work and be with their families and if they have a short and we might not even have a venue so I cannot stress enough to have the date on December 2nd at the latest in terms of when we want to meet.

>> CHAIR SZETELA: All right thank you.

Okay any announcements? All right so I do want to take a second to thank everybody who helps us make these meetings accessible to people.

I want to thank the thank and recognize people who help us with accessibility on our second public hearing tour and all of our mapping and deliberations that includes our Closed Captioner, Annette Blough, and Katie and Bethany and Spanish and Bengali from Brown Burke and associates and your hard work and being available for us during these long meetings to make sure everybody can have accessibility to what we are talking about.

[APPLAUSE]

All right. As the items on the agenda are completed and no further business, a motion to adjourn is in order. Do I have a motion to adjourn?

Motion made by Commissioner Witjes, seconded by Commissioner Lett.

All in favor raise your hands and say aye.

Aye.

All opposed raise your hand and say nay.

The ayes prevail and the meeting is adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Thank you, everybody.