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MICRC

05/06/21 1:00 pm Commission Meeting

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>> CHAIR KELLUM: Good afternoon. As Chair of the Commission, I call this meeting of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to order at 1:00 p.m.

This Zoom webinar is being live streamed to YouTube. 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 Michigan to find the link for viewing on YouTube.

Our live stream today included closed captioning. We have ASL interpretation available for this meeting.

If you are a member of the public watching who would like easier viewing watching for the ASL interpreter on your screen, please e-mail us at Redistricting@Michigan.Gov and we will provide you with additional viewing options.

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This meeting is being recorded and will be available at RedistrictingMichigan.org for viewing at a later date.

This meeting is also being transcribed, and those transcriptions will be made available and posted on RedistrictingMichigan.org along with written public submissions.

Members of the media who have questions before, during, or after the meeting should direct them to Edward Woods, III, Communications and Outreach Director for the Commission at WoodsE3@Michigan.gov.

Members of the media should have his contact information.

I'll now call on the Secretary for roll and that will determine whether we have a quorum today.

So for purpose of the public and for the purpose of the public watching and public record, I will turn to the Department of State -- excuse me, not Secretary, to take note of the Commissioners present.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Thank you. Good afternoon, Commissioners.

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Please when I call your name unmute yourself, indicate that you are present and the city or county you are attending remotely from. Doug Clark?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present and I am attending remotely from Rochester Hills, Michigan.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Juanita Curry?

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Present. I'm from Detroit, Michigan.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Anthony Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Good afternoon, everyone. Remotely present from Detroit, Michigan.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Brittini Kellom?

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Good afternoon, everyone. And I'm remotely attending from Detroit, Michigan.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Rhonda Lange?

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

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Steve Lett?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Attending from Grand Traverse County.

>> SECRETARY BENSON: Hi everyone. I want to interrupt real quick. And we have Sally Marsh, of course, is our department representative taking the roll. I'm going to finish taking the roll, and then I actually want to recognize Sally with the work that she has done, if you all will allow that to occur, because I know you have seen her work as well.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: That would be amazing and it's perfectly all right.

>> SECRETARY BENSON: Thank you. Now, were we on Doug?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: No. I've already said I'm present.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: We are on Steve Lett.

>> SECRETARY BENSON: Steve Lett?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Present from Grand Traverse County.

>> SECRETARY BENSON: So with all Commissioners present and a quorum present, I'd like to thank Sally Marsh.

A lot of you know --

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Madam Secretary, I'm sorry, but the whole roll wasn't taken.

I apologize for interrupting you, but there are still some Commissioners that need to say they are present.

>> SECRETARY BENSON: Okay, so the list, okay, we will start over then, how about that?

Because maybe the order I have in front of me is a little different. I have Steve last.

So we have Anthony Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Present; remotely attending from Detroit, Michigan.

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>> SECRETARY BENSON: Thank you. Brittini Kellom?
>> CHAIR KELLOM: Present and remotely attending from Detroit, Michigan.
>> SECRETARY BENSON: Thank you. Cynthia Orton?
>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Present; attending remotely from Battle Creek, Michigan.
>> SECRETARY BENSON: Doug Clark?
>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present. And I'm attending remotely from Rochester Hills, Michigan.
>> SECRETARY BENSON: Dustin Witjes?
>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Present and I'm attending from Ypsilanti, Michigan.
>> SECRETARY BENSON: Erin Wagner?
>> COMMISSIONER WAGNER: Present; remotely attending from Charlotte, Michigan.
>> SECRETARY BENSON: Janice Vallette?
>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Present; attending from Highland, Michigan.
>> SECRETARY BENSON: Juanita Curry?
>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Present; attending from Detroit, Michigan.
>> SECRETARY BENSON: MC Rothhorn?
>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Present; remotely attending from my neighbor's house in Lansing, Michigan with Internet.
>> SECRETARY BENSON: Rebecca Szetela?
>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Present; attending remotely from Wayne County, Michigan.
>> SECRETARY BENSON: Rhonda Lange?
>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Present; attending remotely from Reed City, Michigan.
>> SECRETARY BENSON: Richard Weiss?
>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Present; attending from Saginaw, Michigan.
>> SECRETARY BENSON: And Steve Lett?
>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Still here in Grand Traverse and I'm present.
>> SECRETARY BENSON: Thank you, Steve. And all Commissioners are present. And I appreciate you letting me Zoom in as well just briefly to thank Sally. And I hope all of the Commissioners will join me in thanking Sally.

This is her last meeting in her role as MDOS staff supporting the Commission. And I want to publicly thank her for all of her work on this project and assure the Commission of our departments continue to support to see your important work succeed.

Sally, throughout her time, is the Chair or is, sorry, is the department's representative to the Commission.

And everything from developing the application, including user testing and translation into Spanish and Arabic; overseeing the printing and mailing of 250,000 applications to randomly selected individuals, which was not the easiest logistically but she did it.

She developed an online application portal. She oversaw the processing of nearly 10,000 applications in the midst of a pandemic. The multiple levels of random selections that led to the 13 Commissioners ultimately here today being on the Commission.

She launched the Commission a month earlier than scheduled and supported the Commission and all of its staff for the last eight months.

So will you please all join me in unmuting yourselves, Commissioners, and giving Sally a round of applause and gratitude and thanks for bringing this to reality.

[Applause]

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much, Sally.

>> Thank you Sally.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Thank you. And thanks, everyone. And thank you, Secretary Benson. Really appreciate it.

>> SECRETARY BENSON: Well, we are grateful for you and everything you have done to build this from scratch and now hand it over to the Commission.

And I also just want to say to the Commission your work, as you know, is as important now as ever. And supporting you and your staff remains a top priority for our department and my administration. So we are going to continue to support you in multiple ways.

Sarah Reinhardt and Mike Brady, who you also have worked with and you worked with Sally on every step of the process including the applications and have directly supported the Commission as well since its launch and will continue to be your points of contact.

Mustafa Rasheed will continue to work on technology and procurement and general support. Yvonne Young who will be supporting the in-person public meetings and public comment at the public meetings. And Chad Bassett will also be there still to help with procurement and other details there.

So I'll turn it back to you, Chair, or Chairwoman. And thank you for letting me just stop by and personally thank Sally for the tremendous ingenuity, dedication, hard work and support she's provided this Commission.

And really, I think we all agree that it would not have been the success that it is without her leadership and support.

So thanks, Sally.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Thank you, everybody.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Secretary Benson. That was absolutely wonderful. You can, you know, hijack our Zoom meetings any time. And, Sally, we can't say enough how thankful we are and how much we just appreciate your hard work and

attentiveness. You have helped each and every one of us just continue to be comfortable in the position and figure it out. So I'm sure you are going to do amazing things. And I hope to see you sometime soon in the future. I think you are an amazing person and thank you again, Sally.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: All right. Moving on with our agenda.

Let's see if we can adopt the agenda. As a reminder to the public, watching you can see the agenda at RedistrictingMichigan.org.

I will now entertain a motion to approve the meeting agenda.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: So moved.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I will second it then.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Okay. Who moved it?

It was in perfect harmony.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I did. I moved it.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Steve. So the motion made by Commissioner Steve Lett and seconded by Dustin Witjes is moved and seconded that the agenda is approved.

All in favor signify with a raised hand.

And all opposed?

All right. The agenda has been approved. There is a puppy in the background, so he was trying to vote as well.

Review and approval of minutes.

Are there any edits to the meeting minutes?

Okay, if not --

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I move the adoption of the minutes as presented.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I will second that again.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Motion made by Steve Lett and seconded by Dustin Witjes.

All in favor of approving the minutes signify by a raised hand.

All opposed?

Juanita don't forget to jump in with a verbal vote.

I don't want to forget about you.

So the -- Juanita.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: They unmuted me so I guess I can jump in.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Okay. Do you approve the minutes.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: My PC is messed up and it won't even let me in.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Okay. No worries. I will be mindful and we will all be mindful to make sure your voice is heard today.

So we are patient with that.

So the minutes have been approved.

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Public comments. A few notes about public comment for those of you who are joining for the first time. Because this is a virtual meeting, members of the public had to sign up in advance to address the Commission.

Staff at the Department of State will unmute each member of the public for up to two minutes on a first come, first serve basis. This means members of the public participating in public comment, please note you will have no more than two minutes to address the Commission this morning.

You can also submit your thoughts to the Commission and the public by e-mailing Redistricting@Michigan.Gov. The Department of State will provide your written thoughts to the Commission. By indicating in that e-mail that you would like to submit your written public as public comment, it will be in the online meeting archive for the Commission.

Public comment sign-up links are also posted on Redistricting Michigan social media pages, on Facebook and Twitter at Redistricting Michigan.

And now I would like to recognize Sally Marsh, Michigan Department of State Director, Special Projects, if she is finishing this meeting out with us, I hope. To --

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Absolutely.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Great. Okay. We will call on members of the public to address the Commission. Sally, take it away, please.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Thank you. Individuals who have signed up and indicated that they would like to provide live public comment, will now be allowed to do so.

For those of you participating in public comment who haven't before, just a few quick logistical notes. After I call your name, your screen will change and you will rejoin the meeting as a presenter. Then you will need to turn on your sound and video before you make live public comments. If you experience technical difficulties, we will move on to the next person and come back to you. If your audio or video still does not work at that point in time, you can e-mail the Commission, Redistricting@Michigan.Gov, and we will help you trouble shoot for participation in a future meeting.

So the first person in line to provide public comment is Andrew Nurmi. Please allow a moment for our staff to unmute you.

>> MR. NURMI: Can you hear me okay?

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Yes. You have two minutes.

>> MR. NURMI: Great. Thank you. So I want to introduce myself to the Commissioners. And thank you all for the opportunity to speak here. My name is Andrew Nurmi and I am a law student at Wayne State Law School. I'm also an avid hobbyist and enthusiast about redistricting, especially here in our great State of Michigan.

I've done this a lot in my own personal time. I've drawn our Congressional maps eight or nine times over. I have made four or five versions of State House and Senate maps.

So it's something that I'm really interested in and I truly envy the position that all of you are in. And thank you for the role that you are playing for the citizens of our state in being here.

I'd hope to get the chance to speak to you multiple times throughout this project, but in this first time that I get a chance to talk to you, I just want to emphasize what I believe is really important in our State House and Senate maps is having enough flexibility and competitiveness that either party can win the State House and State Senate and gears that are strong for them.

This is evidenced in 2018. Governor Whitmer had a 10% victory in the state. Regardless of what you think of Governor Whitmer, that is a strong victory and it still was not enough to actually produce the majority in the State House for Democrats, which shows the bias it's currently shown in our maps.

And, you know, we can give examples like in 2010, Governor Snyder won by about 20%.

So even though we think of our state as being very competitive, and it is, we also do have years where one state or one party, rather, runs away with the majority. And we should hope that the State House and State Senate can reflect that majority in the vote by giving a proportional number of State House and Senate seats as great as possible.

So when you do arrive at the end, I hope that you can think about having as many competitive seats as possible so that either party truly has a fair shot, as fair shot as possible as taking State House or State Senate majority.

And my time is almost up, so I just want to thank you for this opportunity and I wish you all well. Thank you.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

Next in line is Susan Smith. Please allow our staff a moment to unmute you. You have two minutes.

>> MS. SMITH: Thank you. Good afternoon, Commissioners. Thank you for this opportunity to address you today. My name is Sue Smith. I'm vice president for Advocacy of the League of Women Voters of Michigan.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization that promotes civic engagement. Today I would like to bring to your attention the confusion that exists among the public concerning the map drawing process in hopes that you can clarify the situation.

During the March 4th Commission meeting, EDS gave a presentation to the Commission in support of its bid for the map drawing contract. During their presentation Mr. Fred Hejazi from City Gate GIS, a partner of EDS, demonstrated how they would draw the District maps if given the contract.

During his ten-minute demonstration, he described the process they use as follows: Start with the current maps, then adjust the current maps based on census population

changes by adding and subtracting precincts to the current map. Once the current map includes the appropriate number of people, add the communities of interest.

Since that time individual Commissioners have stated the Commission did not intend to start with the current maps. Still, EDS spent 20 minutes demonstrating to the Commission their process of drawing the maps in which EDS clearly stated that they started with the current maps.

Given the confusion among the public and the importance of this issue, the League is requesting the Commission to clarify their intent.

Will the Commission instruct EDS to start with communities of interest and not the current maps?

Thank you for considering our request.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Thank you for addressing the Commission.

And that concludes our public comment for today.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, members of the public, who took time out to speak with us today. As always, we listen carefully and take your thoughts seriously. And we hope to continue to demonstrate through our meetings and inclusive discussions of the public that we don't intend on moving ahead until you are well aware and we have all the information that we need.

So our next item on the agenda is the Executive Director report coming to us from Suann Hammersmith. And she always an icebreaker. So, Suann, you are up next.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Thank you, Commissioner Kellom. Good afternoon, everyone. It's great to see all the Commissioners. And we welcome the public individuals who are watching.

We notified the Commission last week that Kristin Taylor would be serving as a consultant through her business Tailored Planning to assist with public hearings and preparations such as making hotel arrangements for the Commissioners, which she is doing right now. She is stopping by our meeting this afternoon so you can meet her, prior to meeting her in person next week.

So I just wanted Kristin to come on. And if Edward would like to say anything about Kristin and the work she is doing, I also welcome that.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Thank you so much, Sue. Kristin is on a short timeframe, so let's just give her the opportunity to meet the Commission and so they have a name with a face and thanking her in advance all the great work she has done getting us coordinated. So if everyone can get a chance to see Kristin. And, Kristin, if you would like to say something, please do so at this time.

>> KRISTIN TAYLOR: Hi, everyone. Thank you for having me. It's an honor to be here. I'm Kristin Taylor, happy to assist you with this event. Whether it be set up for it or hotel, please feel free to reach out to me and use me as a resource to make sure that your event runs smoothly.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much. It's wonderful meeting you, Kristin.

>> KRISTIN TAYLOR: Yes. It's my pleasure. Nice to meet you all. And look forward to putting a face with a name in person soon; of course, socially distanced. We will do the fist bump.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Thank you, Kristin. And starting next week, starting next week in Jackson, we look forward to meeting you in person and getting to know you better. And thank you for working with us to assist with the public hearings, which is a monumental undertaking for a lot of people. So thank you.

>> KRISTIN TAYLOR: It's my pleasure. So thank you.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Secondly, on my report I'm excited to let you know that the notice of intent to award was posted on Tuesday of this week. That was May 4th for the VRA legal counsel contract with Federal Compliance Consulting. So all the bidders have been notified. And will have within five days, if they wish to have or state any objections. And otherwise after five days that contract then can be fully executed.

So we will mail the intent document that has all the scoring on it to the Commission and the final contract when it is signed and ready to come to you. So hopefully in five days.

Also, we are in the process of reposting the executive assistant position, anticipating an average of 20 hours a week. So we have taken it from full time to more of an as-needed basis, which could be anywhere from 10-40 hours in any given week. But we anticipate that will average about 20 hours a week.

And then for ice breaker today I want you to share one word to describe the culture of the Commission. And I would like you not to use the same word if at all possible that another Commissioner has already given.

I know I did not state that on the agenda, so pardon me for changing the rules as we go; but we all can't say the same thing.

So I would like to start with Commissioner Clark today.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I think I would best describe the culture of the Commission is cooperative.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Very good word. And I've seen that also. It's great.

How about you, Juanita?

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I chose role, the role we have to play.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Very important role.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Can you hear me?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Yes. Thank you. Anthony?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: This is going to be a fun one by the end of this. I will go with autonomous. We are an Independent Commission where we don't have to answer to the legislature or any other part of Government. It's truly an autonomous Commission.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Very good. Thanks for sharing.

Brittini, how about you?

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Inquisitive. We ask a lot of questions. We want to know and we want to have our Commissioner hands in things, not a bad thing, so I think we are an inquisitive bunch for good reason.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: That is a good reason and a good thing to be. Commissioner Lett, Steve, how about you?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Collegial.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: I like that word, too. And I've seen that, so it's great. You are a wonderful collegial bunch. Commissioner Orton?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Since I can't reuse any of this, so I will say pioneering like we are blazing a trail. We don't really know where we are going but we are trying to find our way.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: And doing a great job at it I might add, so thank you.

MC, how about you?

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Because we keep showing up after a lot of hard votes, I'm going to say we have a culture of forgiveness. I think, yeah, we keep showing back up.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: It's part of that whole collegial effort that I see.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Yeah, and I just want to echo the cooperative that Doug said too. Cooperatives are in my heart.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Very nice. Thank you.

Commissioner Szetela?

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: I would say optimistic. I think we are all very optimistic about this process.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: That's great.

Commissioner Vallette?

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: I also say optimistic. I think we are all looking forward and we are ready to go and we are all optimistic that it's going to be great.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Okay. Commissioner Weiss?

>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: My word was taken, so I will have to come up with another one. I guess diversified.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: It is. It's a great diversity of people. It's very nice. Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I would have to say that we all feel a sense of honor and duty to do what we are doing and do the best that we can. And we've been doing that and learning along the way.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Very good.

How about you, Edward?

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>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: My word would probably be intriguing.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: It is. It is. Julianne?

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Thank you, Sue. I'm going to go with synergistic, synergy.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: I'm waffling between fair and transparent. That is the commitment I see from you. And it's great to see that commitment. And I appreciate all that you are doing along the way to make this process fair and transparent. So I really appreciate that culture. And I'm happy to turn it back over to Commissioner Kellom.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much. We are now down to unfinished business. And our first item under unfinished business is the issuance of legal staffing. So, yes, MC?

I'm sorry, I skipped the Michigan -- as soon I saw your hand -- I skipped the Michigan Department of State update. Those are important.

So, Sally Marsh, come to us and talk to us about the public comment tool you all have been working so hard on. Thank you, MC.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Thank you, Chairwoman. And hello, everyone, again.

I'm here again to provide you with an update on the public comment portal and give a little bit more of a thorough demo than I have in the past. Moon Duchin from MGGG is here as well to answer any questions you all might have that I can't answer. But I will start sharing my screen and we can take it from there. Can you all see it?

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: No.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Sorry, Juanita. Can everyone else see it, the home page, the Commission home page?

Great. I wanted to start here because this is where the public will be directed when they are directed to the public comment portal. And this link went live yesterday. So people can scroll down here. And under the we want to hear from you Section, click on submit public comment. And then they are brought to this portal.

You will see it looks similar to when I showed you last, but the coloring is meant to match a little bit more with sort of header on the website.

And there is an introductory video. When someone lands here, they can learn more about what written testimony is, what a Districting plan is, or what a community of interest is. I'm going a little quickly, but, you know, this is live right now. If you have not already you can look on your own time and the public can as well. So sorry if I speed through things a bit quickly.

There are some examples here so people get a sense of what each of these things mean.

Then this is the all-important submit form. So just to walk you through, you know, we importantly note here at the top that if the submission portal doesn't work for you, you can also provide that written comment via mail to you all.

And, again, just want to emphasize for the public watching that this comment portal is meant to streamline and facilitate public comment but it's not the only way in which people can participate with the Commission, of course, as all of you Commissioners know, whether in live comment or written comment that is mailed to you all.

So here is the submission form. There are several different types as we've talked about before, so written testimony, a District plan, a community of interest map. A different type of link, whether from other sites, and then a file upload opportunity. And then also an opportunity to comment on someone else's comment, which I will talk about in a minute.

Then once you have provided that link or provided the testimony that you would like to provide as a member of the public, you can enter in tags here. So let's say I wanted to tag Grand Rapids. I could fill that in and it would add the tag to the post. So that is something that people can identify with and they can create their own as well. So if the ones that prepopulate don't work for them, they can create their own. It's sort of like a hash tag, allows you all to filter and search based on that.

People can tell you about themselves as they can right now and then submit their submission. And when they do it will appear in real time at the gallery, which I will show you below.

If someone wants to draw their testimony to all of you, they want to draw their public comment whether a District plan, a partial or complete District plan or a community of interest map, this is a little explainer on how to do that. And then it directs people to District R, which is a mapping software you all are familiar with. I will show you how that works in a second. And I will keep going down the page real briefly.

And then the submission gallery, this is what, you know, I'm hopeful will be really helpful to all of you. So you can filter by tags as I mentioned. So if you want to filter by Grand Haven, if there were any that related to Grand Haven they would appear there.

You can view it by card where you can see the title. You can see the submitter. You can see the type of plan.

You can look at it as a list view. More like an excel spreadsheet almost or just smaller icon view.

And, as you can see here, District plans have a green rim around them. And testimony has a pink rim around them. And communities of interest has a blue rim around them.

So as you look visually, you will be able to see what people have submitted.

Importantly for you, Commissioners, especially, but also members of the public, there is an advanced search that allows you to start with given dates and see all of the submissions that are within a given timeframe. So instead of, you know, in advance of a meeting, you will be able to search for all of the recent submissions, for example. Or if you wanted to go back in time and see all the submissions around a given week and time you could do that here. Also look by keyword, by tag or by author.

So I'll go back up here to the mapping portion just to kind of show you how that works for a member of the public.

So let's say I'm a member of the public and I want to map a community of interest. So I'd click here and it would bring me straight to this map. You all are familiar with this. You have seen it before.

Just to kind of walk through what it's going to look like for a member of the public here. Let's say this is my community right here and I might, you know, name it. I might describe it. Then I would click save once I'm ready to go. And this pop-up appears, which is different than what you all have seen before. And this is a key part for members of the public. So once they draw it and made it how they want it to they can proceed to submit the map.

When they click on that, the unique URL to that submission automatically populates here. And then they can add their submission title and go through the submission form just as I sort of walked through.

So I'm going to stop talking now. I'm sure you all have questions, but just wanted to really provide you with a bit of an overview. And exciting to see that members of the public are already using it.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: I muted myself. Thank you, Sally. That is an amazing tool from what I can see.

I saw Cynthia's hand first and I think I saw MC's hand second, okay.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Thank you, Sally. That does look very user friendly. My question is: The public comment that...the written public comment that we've already received, will that be incorporated somehow? Or how will we use that along with this?

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: So the current written comment that has been received as you know is on the website related to each meeting. So with let's say this meeting and/or a previous meeting, in addition to the agenda and other documents, there is the written public comment for that meeting.

The current plan is to keep it there and then use this portal moving forward. You know, notably most of your public comment so far has not been about exactly where to draw lines, so much as it's been about some of the administrative decisions and really important decisions you all have been working on for several months. But if there was a desire for the Commission to do something else, we could have that conversation.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: MC, go ahead.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: It's similar to Cynthia's. And my question is: There is one or two submissions that we have had. And I was thinking, I wonder if I, for example, took it on my behalf to sort of submit...I think there was a Grosse Pointe, you know, community of interest.

So, for example, I suppose if I as a Commissioner did that on their behalf, that is legitimate; but it might look like it's illegitimate. So it's a true question because I don't

think we want people posing so to speak and posing on behalf of somebody else. So I'm questioning whether that is a good idea or if it's useful because it then contains, yeah, puts it in the same sort of place.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Commissioner Rothhorn, I'm not sure I completely understand your example, your question. Would you mind clarifying?

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Sure. What I'm thinking of me, MC Rothhorn, basically I have we, as the Commission, received this on Grosse Pointe. There was a pretty detailed description. Even West Bloomfield I think gave us a very detailed description of their community of interest.

So what imaging is, oh, if I, as MC Rothhorn, enter that into our new place as a volunteer, that could, you know, have it then it's in the database. But I'm also imagining, well, gosh, it's me submitting on their behalf. I neither live there, nor do I understand it really. So I'm interpreting what their community of interest is.

So I'm questioning whether that is actually a good idea, just, again, to get it into the...what Cynthia's question I think relates to which is like getting it into the database so we can see it all in one place.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: I see your general counsel has her hand raised, so I will let you go ahead.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: I appreciate that, Director Marsh. What I would encourage is that the most direct answer is, no. Please do not input anyone else's public comment into the public comment tool. The Commissioners will have access to look at all the comments again from this point moving forward in the tool. Any previous comments as Director Marsh noted is part of the public record. MDOS has flagged the public comments that are related to mapping and/or communities of interest that the Commission has already received. So I would propose that an e-mail be sent, notifying those individuals of the public comment tool and requesting that they upload their comments, inviting them to make that submission their selves.

Again, their previous comments, their original comment is part of the public record. So the Commission is aware of it and it is included. However, encouraging them to resubmit their comment using the public comment portal I think would be the best manner in moving forward.

But, again, Commissioner Rothhorn, I respect and understand your concern about having those incorporated. And they are flagged and that is the course of action I would recommend.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Any more questions or thoughts about the tool?
Go ahead, Cynthia, and then Anthony.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Well, I would just say I think it would be much easier for us to take those comments into consideration when we are working on this if they are all in one place. So can I suggest that we do what Julianne is suggesting? Reach

out to those individuals who have made some sort of mapping comment and ask them to resubmit into this tool?

Does it need to be a motion?

Yeah, okay, so I make a motion we request that staff reach out to those people and request that.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Cynthia. Do I have a second? I have a second with Erin. If everyone agrees that we have staff reach out and connect with those so that we have a consolidated place for public comments, please indicate with a raised hand for your vote.

All those opposed?

By my count that vote has passed for the...to be adjusted in such a way that public comment is one place and staff will reach out to those that provided comment in the past to ensure that those comments get transferred over to what has been presented to us today.

Okay, thank you.

Oh, Sue, yes.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: I just have a question. When you use staff in the motion, did you mean Michigan Department of State staff that receives the public comment versus the MICRC staff?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Whoever has the ability to do that. I don't know who that is.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: I think since the Department of State receives it all, we only have access to what they send to us like you receive it. So it would have to be the Michigan Department of State staff, I believe.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Yes. And we are happy to do that, Commission.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you. Thank you for that clarifying question, Sue. Anymore? Anthony, you had your hand raised.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Yeah, I had a quick question. If someone submits public comment using this tool, I saw that it said that the e-mail address will be kept confidential, you know, to the fullest extent that we can keep it confidential. Is the city, state and county also kept confidential?

Or is that included in the public record?

For every person who submits a comment?

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Oh, sorry, I was just going to -- sorry, Dr. Duchin, I will just really briefly, Commissioner Eid, and welcome you to add to what I say.

The -- so the language that's included there is very similar actually to what you all agreed to when you filled out your applications to serve as a Commission. You know, public comment is part of the public record. It's a public document. And so, you know, as we have with emails to date, the Department of State, if someone submits, you

know, via e-mail and maybe includes their street address or something to that effect, we do redact that when we post it on the website. So that we can keep those matters private.

Someone can submit public comment to you all using this public comment portal just as they could with an e-mail, which is to say they need to provide their name or identifier and they need to provide an e-mail address. And they are given the opportunity to provide more information to all of you, but they are not required, consistent with the law around public comment and Open Meetings Act.

>> DOCTOR DUCHIN: I was going to add the cards display whatever people put as their city or county if they enter that it's displayed on the card. The e-mail address is not displayed. But the way the e-mail address is used is that in order to submit text-based testimony you have to validate the e-mail address. This was done as a measure to minimize trolling.

And so if you put in...if you submit a public testimony with a text-based entry, you will receive an e-mail with a sort of link to click to verify that the e-mail is indeed yours. That is how e-mail is used in the system. That is the role that it plays. It's not intended to be published.

It's important to note though that there is no identity verification beyond the fact that the e-mail does indeed belong to the submitter. Because the intent is to be just as easy for people to submit public testimony through this tool as it would be for them to come to a meeting in person and come up to the mic. And so the barriers and the kind of information that you need to provide is intended to be similar.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you for that. Julianne, you have your hand raised.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Just very, very briefly to reiterate. This is consistent with our practices, the Commission's practices since its inception. The city, state, this is not private information. Your address, your telephone number, these things would be covered under privacy exemptions. So we are merely being consistent across all of the Commission's platforms and tools how we interact with public data and how we share public...the data of the individual public members. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you, Julianne. Anything else?
Doug?

COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah, this is really more of a legal-type question. You know, we look at our society today and a lot of the social media-type sites are restricting users or adding text or whatever. Do we need to put a statement out there indicating that in some way that we are not doing that?

That we are accepting all comments from individuals within the State of Michigan?

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: General counsel, I'll let you respond to that.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: And I'm not sure, I'm sorry, Commissioner Clark, I'm not sure I understand your question. We inserted the check boxes for people to validate and to acknowledge. Is that what you're referring to?

COMMISSIONER CLARK: No, actually I think that is a good thing to have. But, no, I'm referring to us not allowing certain users to post into the database or reading and editing out their comments, not editing them out, but getting them off the database. I think maybe some type of -- I mean, it's a big issue right now. On social media. And I don't think we should do that, but I think we should make people aware of maybe that we are not doing that, you know. But then the question arises what if we get comments from somebody from Ohio or Indiana?

Or Mississippi?

Are we going to accept those?

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: So what I hear is a freedom of speech issue generally.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yes.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Broadly what you are raising.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Correct, yes.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Again, if there is a mechanism currently to filter or react to those and I believe the answer to that is, no, and Director Marsh and Dr. Duchin can certainly correct me there. But, again, the way that the comments are reacted to and when you overlay the criteria and the analysis that the Commission is going to go through, I guess, again, I guess I'm still unclear as to what your goal is. I apologize.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Should we have a statement as people get into the website indicating that we accept all comments from individuals and you know everybody is welcome to participate on the site and so forth?

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Commissioner Clark, if there is language like that, that you would like to -- if you would like to review what is on the site and you know, if there are you know additional welcoming language that you would like to indicate, that's absolutely an option. I would also mention in all of your public meeting notices, the public is welcome to participate and provide commentary to all of you. So I think, you know, just to sort of reiterate the point you're making. The public is encouraged to provide comment to you all in whatever mechanism through public comment is best for them.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay.

>> MOON DUCHIN: I will speak to what the site currently does. So first, on the submission form we did put in the language subject to content moderation to make it clear that leaves open the possibility that some comments you know, can be reviewed. At the moment there is no censoring every comment goes straight through, but a bad word bleep and swear words will appear with a star that shows they matched a list of words we don't want to immediately publish. Beyond that the rest of how you deal with the comment is up to you as a Commission.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: And, Madam Chair, I certainly thank you again for the clarity Commissioner Clark. And certainly welcoming language stating that I will be

happy to work on that for the Commission. Again, I was not sure if it was welcoming language or what in relation to the first amendment you were looking at, but certainly welcoming language. I have no problem preparing proposed language for the Commission's consideration.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Doug, for that question. So I saw Dustin's hand and I saw Steve then Anthony.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Is there anything in place to prevent like one person from submitting so many things about the same thing over and over and over again in a short period amount of time?

Excessive flooding or anything like that?

>> MOON DUCHIN: We currently store IP addresses and user token, so there is the capacity to do something. Right now we designed it to be as welcoming and as open ended as possible. You know subject to your determinations about how you would like to handle that. But we do store IP addresses and have a lot of security on the back end so that the various kinds of attack have been protected against. Beyond that, again, up to you how you would like to handle that.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you. Steve, go ahead.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: One thing we have to keep in mind, and I think Doug is all alluding do it, we are not a private corporation. We are a governmental entity and thus we are, in fact, censored to the first amendment. Whereas Facebook and Twitter and whoever else out there are not. They can do whatever they like. So we cannot censor e-mails that are coming into us on a pre-censor, which is not a good word, but a pre-censor basis.

On the other hand, as Ms. Duchin has said, we are not going to post the F-bomb and things like that. And we don't want to have a so many come in it's going to crash our website. So those things we can protect against.

But as far as making comments, anybody who wants to make a comment can make a comment. There is nothing we can do to stop it. So putting something on there saying we will take them all it's already there.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Steve. And go ahead, Anthony.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: So I'm wondering based kind of what Doug said how would everybody feel about the possibility of making that city, county, state and zip code identifiers required instead of optional?

That way we know who is sending us these comments or at least that they are, you know, if they are telling the truth from Michigan?

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Rebecca and then go ahead, Sally, jump in.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Just one quick point on that, just to sort of be clear, is that right now through accepting public comment via e-mail it's inherently not required for

someone just to provide that information to all of you. So I just want to, you know, underscore what your general council mentioned, which is that an action like that would be a greater threshold than what you all have had in the past. And I don't know if your general counsel wants to talk on that. It looks like she does.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Actually I would. So my suggestion would be if that is something that the majority of the Commission would like to explore, then I would be happy to look into that. But when we are restricting the ability of people to provide comment based on residency, that raises an entirely different set of considerations.

So rather than taking an action today to say that's what we are going to do, I would prefer if that is an action that the majority of the Commission would like to request be mandatory and that would happen. But, again, the IP addresses, the e-mails are -- the IP addresses are stored and the e-mails are logged. So for flooding purposes you would have to use different e-mail addresses in order to accomplish that. And the other safeguard certainly that Director Marsh and Dr. Duchin weighed in on; but, again, that would -- we would need to examine that requirement further. That we would only be reacting -- to Michigan comments. I'll just stop there.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Yeah, I would be a little concerned about that. I see Anthony, why you asked. I'm going to, Anthony, I'm going to come back to you. So I'm going to get Rebecca, then Rhonda, then Steve, then MC and, then Anthony.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: I was just going to comment that I think requiring people to put in a county or an address is fairly useless because if someone is going onto site illegitimately and they are from Hawaii and trying to make comments, they will put in Detroit, or whatever. Unless we have a way of vetting it and verifying it, there is no point in requiring it because people will put in something to fill out the form to put in their comment. And it's not going to accomplish anything. And we are never going to know anyway honestly.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you, Rebecca. Rhonda?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Mine was basically the same sentiment that Rebecca just said, so that is why I lowered my hand.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Okay.

I think I had Steve and then MC. No, Steve retracts. And, MC, go ahead.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: It's been said. And I just want to appreciate the idea we will have public comment and people in front of us, we are going to have to sort of have our filters on, right? And we will have to listen. And I think the public comment meaning verbal, oral, right versus, you know, the written comment, it's all the same. We just have to have our filters on. And we will figure it out. Between all of us, we are going to figure it out. The threshold we have is let's encourage people. I really appreciate what Dr. Duchin was saying, we can add more; but let's encourage it and we will figure it out. Let's not filter too much.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Yeah, thank you, MC. Anthony and then Dustin.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Just to be clear, I was not suggesting we exclude anyone. I was just saying that if we ask them to identify their zip code or state, the Commission can then, you know, decide amongst ourselves how we want to, you know, view the comments if it's coming, you know, from somewhere else that is not Michigan. So I don't think that would be restricting. People would still have the option to submit comment from, you know, wherever they want to submit comment from.

Now, you know, like Rebecca and Rhonda said, they might be untruthful; but perhaps I'm optimistic but I like to think most people are not untruthful and it might make somebody think twice if they are trying to gain the system if you will.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Dustin.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Excuse me, I was going to say one other thing to keep in mind we are not checking IDs at the door for public comment, so there is nothing stopping someone from Indiana or Ohio or Texas flying in to come to one of our Detroit meetings and giving public comment, pretending they are from said area. So, I mean, it's a good idea to do some safeguardish. But in my opinion, it's not really going to do much for anything.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Any other thoughts?

Final thoughts?

Anthony?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: I agree with what Dustin said. It's true we are not going to be checking IDs; but I think it takes, you know, it would take a whole, whole lot more effort for someone out of state to come and, you know, travel, drive or fly to one of our meetings than it does to you know submit something online. I'm not saying we should or shouldn't do it. I'm just wondering if it's something we should examine.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Doesn't seem like we have any overwhelming thoughts of adding zip code into those sorts of measures. But Julianne did say she was willing to consider, you know, Doug's thoughts as well as some other things. And she has taken herself off mute, so I will let her chime in. No, okay.

So, if there is nothing else, I can turn it back over to you, Sally, or, Moon, for any final thoughts. But it doesn't sound like there is anything else from the Commission either. Questions?

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: I would just say thank you to all of you and hopefully this is helpful as we move forward. Don't hesitate to, you know, let our team know if you have feedback or questions or, you know, issues in using it. It's really meant to be user friendly for the public and user friendly for all of you. So I want to make it something that is really useful.

>> MOON DUCHIN: I will echo what Sally said. We are excited the tool went live. And since the launch yesterday, it has gotten a number of comments and public submissions, so it's going really well. And be in touch with the team if you have adjustments to make going forward.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much. And thank you again for all that hard work. And I'm not in the tech world but know it takes a lot for things to come live and we do appreciate that. Thank you again.

So now moving on to unfinished business. We have the issuance of legal staffing with our general counsel, Ms. Julianne Pastula, and you have the floor.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: It was raised last week at the Commission meeting and the proposal and updated document you have before you today modifies the dates at the header so the posting date, if it's approved, would be May 7 with a week timeframe. And then consistent with comments raised at the last meeting, the term was extended through January 31st of 2022 to accommodate the extension that we are hopeful to receive accommodation for from the Michigan Supreme Court.

The text of the document remains the same as far as what we would be seeking for support in this manner. And last week the request was to get preliminary info on rates and examples. I'll defer to...I know Sue will address the budget issue. Actually I could raise it too.

So as to rates, the research that I did unfortunately none of the staffing companies whose websites I went on provided rates. And, again, my experience is that knowledge that they are out there. We never retained one in the past. Retained an agency like this. So I don't have any personal rate knowledge that I could relate to the Commission.

And, again, I could not find any rate schedules on the websites I checked. As far as examples for use, my current or recent examples would be the prison gerrymandering, the ADA question.

Again, if we would have had the first amendment base line issue as far as restricting based on residency those could be. And also, I have cases flagged across the U.S. that I monitor so notification if any of those had a filing, would be some of the examples I'd like to share.

As far as the budget, what I believe the Executive Director in the packet has provided is a combined line item for the legal staffing and the RFP for litigation counsel. Again, if those items are approved by the Commission, if not it would be amended obviously. But retaining the set aside of the 50 grand for this fiscal year in that regard.

And I don't know if the Executive Director had anything to add relative to the budget for this line item. And I'm also happy to respond to any questions that the Commission has regarding the quote for legal staffing agency.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Any questions for Julianne?
Doug, go ahead.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah, I'd just like to put a motion forward that we move forward with getting the bid requests.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I will second that.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Motion by Doug Clark, seconded by Dustin Witjes.
All those in favor please show with a hand, raised hand excuse me.

And all those opposed?

Sorry I muted myself. So it's been approved, the issuance of bid request for legal staffing agency.

>> MS. JULIANNE: Madam Chair?

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Yes.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: If Ms. Commissioner Curry votes could be announced, if she is in favor in support or not in support.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: I did not see her on my screen at all. Juanita, you can go ahead with your verbal vote for the bid request.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Can you repeat it, please?

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Issuance of bid request for legal staffing agency, giving the go ahead for that, that is what we are voting on.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Uh-huh. Yes, I agree to it.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you, Juanita. So if it's officially a unanimous vote with Juanita Curry included to go ahead and get the bid request for legal staffing.

And was there something else I missed, Julianne?

Or that is going to be included with Sue's for the budget?

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Thank you, Madam Chair. I believe as the agenda progresses, we will get...the budget will be more detailed during Sue's discussion.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Okay, I appreciate that.

Moving on to our second item of unfinished business, the audio visual vendors for public hearings. We will have our communication and Outreach Director Edward Woods, III, come and talk to us about that. Edward, you have the floor.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: If I may just jump in.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: For the first one, procurement, yes, go ahead, Sue?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: If I can, early this week it became apparent that we were probably not going to be able to host a public hearing in Jackson without having the AV contractor on board because they had expenses that they had to meet. They had things they had to buy. And not knowing that they had a contract would slow down the process. So I sent notification to the Commission on May 4th. I have provided for you a report on what was done, why it was done. The total amount of the contract, the contract from Chase Creative is attached to that report. And that total amount is \$7980.94. This was done utilizing the emergency procurement process that is in your procurement policy.

So if there are questions in regards to that, if you want further explanation, I'm happy to provide that.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Any questions or comments, thoughts for Sue on the emergency procurement for Jackson public hiring -- hearing, excuse me, hiring?

Okay, I'll take a motion then to go ahead and vote on this. The motion made by MC Rothhorn. Do I have a second?

Second by Steve Lett. All those in favor of this emergency procurement for the Jackson public hearing for AV, please indicate with a raised hand.

And, Juanita, you can indicate with a verbal vote?

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I'm in agreement with it.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Okay. Thank you, Juanita.

So by my count that is a unanimous vote. And we will go ahead and approve that expenditure. Thank you, Sue. Sue, go ahead.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: I saw Anthony's hand and wasn't sure if he has a question.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: I think he was lingering because we were waiting for Juanita to vote. I assume and don't want to speak for Anthony.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: That is correct.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Erin has her hand up too.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you. I don't see everyone on my screen today. I don't know what is going on. And so, Erin, please go ahead and share.

>> COMMISSIONER WAGNER: My question is for Sue. It said that the itemized invoice was attached. I did not receive that or the one in Jackson.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: I thought it was sent as a separate item. So it was the next item in order on your list of attachments. The vendor is Chase Creative and the event venue is American 1 Credit Union Event Center. We can resend that.

>> COMMISSIONER WAGNER: If you would, that would be great.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Okay, all right, I'm happy to resend that to you, Erin.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Sue. Rhonda?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Are you talking the resolution on that or was there an actual breakdown?

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: There was an actual breakdown.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Okay because I'm not seeing it on mine either.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: It's under seven if you look for seven.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Now I am. Thank you, Rebecca.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: You're welcome.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: All right. Our next thing that we need to bring our attention to is the authorizing the execution of contract with Chase Creative. So whoever is discussing that with us, take it away.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: I can jump in here again also. After we discussed after the meeting it felt that there wasn't maybe enough specificity given to the Commission about the AV contracts. And that what Edward was doing was negotiating with an existing contractor at another public hearing venue to also provide these services at venues that did not have their own AV contractors.

I think what happened during COVID, many of these venues that would have normally had somebody on staff, simply let those people go or did not have those relationships any longer because they were not hosting meetings. So we wanted to be able to provide two resolutions. One with Chase Creative and one with Encore. These are existing vendors at other facilities but they have agreed to take on other facilities. And we have received a discount that in their prices because of the multiple locations.

So that's the background on both of those resolutions. The 0503 and 0504. And we would like to get the contracts in effect as quick as possible so we don't slow it down the public hearing process again. Questions?

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Rhonda has a question. Go ahead, please.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Do we have quotes for those two we get to see?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: The quotes will be about the same as they are in the other venues. I don't know that all the quotes have been negotiated yet. Chase Creative is about the same price as you just saw for American 1. Encore is higher. They are closer to the \$15,000 amount for their services.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: We don't have a breakdown?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: I don't know that all those have been negotiated at this time, but we do want to -- I mean, I have contracts. I'm happy to share a contract, but we have not signed them because we didn't feel that we had the clarity we needed to move forward.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Okay.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Rhonda. I appreciate that question.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: I can provide some context. The one for Warren won't be negotiated until tomorrow because the person had to have minor surgery, but that is it. Everything else is pretty much negotiated.

For the most part, the one for Chase Creative are \$8,000. And then because we are doing multiple ones, they resubmitted it but they cannot confirm Warren until they actually meet with the person who is out on surgery, which will take place tomorrow.

But, I mean, we do have a ballpark figure. But it could possibly be a little less. But right now it's about between 13 and 14,000.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: And this does, the venue determine some of the needs also, so they are unique to each venue. But those ranges I think Edward has negotiated fairly closely.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: MC, did you have a question?

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: I wanted to acknowledge we are doing this because we want to look and sound good to each other as well as to the public. So I just appreciate that this is a lot of like, yeah, a lot of extra expense potentially. Is it extra or is it all in the budget?

Is this all within our range still?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: This is part of your public hearing line item. So when we get to that portion of the budget, you will note we have removed some of that budget. A lot of the bids have actually been negotiated by Edward at a lesser cost than some of the initial bids that we received. So he has been working really hard to keep those costs down.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Thank you, Edward. I noticed and I recognize that we need to -- we are the first Commission. And I just really want to acknowledge, right, we are setting up like the way we look, the way we brand ourselves. Edward keeps talking about brand, this matters. How we sound, right? If we have professional audio and show up and like everybody can understand it and see us in person, as well as we can hear each other. And then people in the live stream it's huge. So I just I think it matters and it's going to cost. So I appreciate it. And thanks for the background, too. The COVID may have impacted these venues that is helpful.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, MC. So do I have a motion to authorize Executive Director to execute the AV contract with Chase Creative as well as Encore so I'm including both.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: So moved.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Separate votes, Madam Chair.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: They are separate resolutions because they are separate vendors and you are trying to be efficient.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Did you notice?

Okay. We will, okay, peel it back. So one vote to authorize the execution of the AV contract with Chase Creative. Do I have a motion?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: So moved.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Okay, Steve Lett made the motion seconded by MC Rothorn. And, Juanita, you will indicate with a verbal vote. Everybody else, can you signify with a raised hand if you are in agreeance?

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I am in agreement.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: All opposed same sign?

So we will go ahead and allow new Sue Hammersmith to go forth and execute the contract with Chase Creative.

And let's do our second vote. Do I have a motion for the authorization with Encore?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: So moved.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Steve. Do I have a second?

Seconded by Vice Chair Rebecca Szetela.

All those in favor, please signify with a raised hand. And, Juanita, you can give a verbal indication.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Yes.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: All those opposed same sign?

All right. And we will be moving on with Encore as well.

Thank you, Commissioners, for those two votes and getting the business taken care of

What do I have next?

Anything else from Sue, Edward?

Before we leave the audio visual vendors for public hearings?

Nothing else. Okay.

Moving on to...do we need a break?

Do we need like a five-minute break?

Okay, let's do you need five or ten minutes?

Five?

Ten?

I would say ten, yeah. So I will see everyone back at 2:27

[Recess]

>> CHAIR KELLUM: All right. We will reconvene after our break 2:27 and calling the meeting back to order and we will get started with new business.

We have a communication and outreach update and I'm assuming that is coming from Mr. Edward Woods, III. So, Edward, whenever you are ready to begin, I will hand the floor over to you.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Thank you so much, Chairperson Kellom. Excited Commissioners to introduce to you the two public relations consultants that are with us. We have Darci McConnell with McConnell Communications and Maureen Saxton with VanDyke Horn. And they are going to come to you in their own way to share with you. And we have been doing a lot of work since we have gotten the contract signed and just really, really excited about the multi-media education campaign that we have with regards to redistricting and just want to share with you some ideas.

We are also going to share with you some experience and expertise so that you know how we are building around the communication and outreach plan that the Commission has approved.

So without further ado, we will start with Darci McConnell with McConnell Communications and then go to Maureen Saxton with VanDyke Horn Public Relations. Darcy, thank you so much.

>> DARCY MCCONNELL: Thanks for allowing me to be here. My firm is turning 17 this year. So I'm excited to be involved in this project. And I really even though our primary focus has been PR marketing crisis management, we have done a lot more community engagement over the last several years. And a big part of what we will do with PC help, Southeast Michigan is outreach to organizations and grass roots engagement. And proud to say we are working on a tool kit we can get to other organizations, you can utilize that, will help us grow the visibility.

And what I'm humbly asking from the Commission is your help. We can't really do the grass roots engagement without your participation. So, you know, I want to line up a presentation at a neighborhood meeting. And in Novi it would be good to have, you know, perhaps Commission Clark there to speak, right?

So we would love to have you speak in your backyard at these meetings.

We need your help to be the voice of this effort. And so I'm asking for that. And I will say that even if you have some trepidation, I'm familiar, and I have my own stage fright sometimes, so I get it. But our firm has worked with thousands of individuals ranging from corporate heads to front line workers, people who never interacted with the public and we helped them to speak our message. So we are happy to provide the prep you need to get you comfortable.

Again, nice to meet you and look forward to working with you. And I will turn it over to Maureen.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you so much, Darci. And look forward to working with you more.

>> MAUREEN SAXTON: Hi. I'm Maureen Saxton and I represent VanDyke Horn Public Relations. It's a Detroit headquartered firm, but I opened their Lansing office three years ago. And my background is initially journalism for a brief while, but it's been primarily a big chunk was in State Government and then in my own small firm for a number of years.

I've been with VanDyke Horn for three years. And let me add we as well do a lot of media training for all the above. From, you know, corporate executive to volunteer. Anyone who wants it, needs it, with any one we are working with, we are happy to provide it. And anything to increase comfort levels.

And I also want to echo Darci on, you know, the communications piece of this effort is so important. We all know that, you know, one, you know, the polling I know came back showing that about 75% of Michiganders do not know what this is all about. So there is quite a bit of work ahead of us. But in the end to be effective it is all about storytelling and telling a good story and telling something that resonates.

And I hope that, you know, I get a chance to meet all of you personally. And that actually I can work with all of you personally. As these meetings move from location to location around the state, I will likely be calling on you. If you live in that location or even if you live around that area, you will definitely be in my sights. You will be -- I will be trying to focus on you. I will reach out to you. But you are the person that that local media would like to talk to because you're one of them.

And, you know, it's not -- it's not 100% that way. But that is often the case, that they really want to speak to a local person. And so I appreciate you doing what you're doing, this great public service, this historic public service. I'm thrilled to be a part of it. If -- you know, this is one for the history books, the very first time. And I look forward to working with you.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: All right. Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Go ahead, Edward.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Commissioner Kellom, if there are any questions that the Commissioners would have for them before they have to leave, they can definitely take them at this time.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: I see Doug has a question and MC is telling you all thank you, extending his appreciation.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yes, I do have a question. Could you talk a little bit about the strategies that you see implementing so that we get more focus on the rural areas in the state?

>> MAUREEN SAXTON: Yeah, I would be happy to start on that. And Darci may want to weigh in as well.

As far as tactics used, I know I was on one of your meetings listening in when it came to billboards. And honestly, I'm really happy that there is a budget to do that especially in areas of the state where a meeting is not being held, which, of course, is most of the state because there is only 16 meetings.

And so, you know, I think that's a very cost effective and effective way to get to drive eyeballs to the website, which then I am watching the progress on the website. It gets better and better every day. And the ease of engaging with the Commission is there.

So, I mean, you know, ultimately if it comes down to you only have a few words, you definitely want to use a phone number where Internet access does not exist. And you want to use a website. And I know that you know, one of our statewide -- one of our statewide engagement organizations is the Farm Bureau and I've worked with the Farm Bureau in the past. I actually worked very closely with a particular agricultural entity that -- and that is how I kind of got to know the Farm Bureau.

But I would like to engage all of you that don't live in the big cities and kind of generate the importance of communities of interest is everyone. So if you are rural, if hunting and fishing is what you feel passionately about, if farming and, you know, the loss of farm land or, you know, there is a Zillion issues having to do with agricultural, then that is your -- that is one community of interest that needs to be highlighted and make people aware of.

It is -- there is no one buttonhole or even five buttonholes for what a community of interest is. So I think that, you know, Doug, in working with the media in areas that are more rural that will be what they're interested, that will be what the readers, that will be what their listeners are interested in hearing about. That will be what drives them to engage.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Thank you.

>> DARCI MCCONNELL: I was going to add to that real briefly. Certainly, on the grass roots outreach side, in addition to the paid advertising, we are going to make sure we reach out to those groups and the different community, rural communities, to see if

we can have people speak at their association meetings, Kiwanis meetings. Whatever the organization is, we will contact some of those media outlets, some of the smaller outlets. And then the hope is, you know, again, as we share the tool kit with strategic partners, they will assist with that as well.

So the rule is not everyone gets their information in the same way, in the same space. So we cover it through all these different angles, we should be able to reach the targets we want to reach.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you, Darci. Rhonda, please share.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Okay. So I don't know if my question might be more towards Edward since the ladies have just joined us, the PR has. So I don't know how much information they have.

But next week we are in Jackson and Kalamazoo and the following week we are in the only two northern rural areas of the state. So I guess my question is what has been done?

I've heard a lot of Farm Bureau, Farm Bureau for a while. My question is what exactly has been done to reach out to the rural communities right now so if they choose to drive to these locations, they have the opportunity to drive to these locations and have their voices heard in person?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: I can answer that. We work with the Michigan State University Extension Centers and the Farm Bureaus to get the word out, the messaging. Michigan State University Extension Center called yesterday and they are scheduling virtual meetings through their District directors. They are setting those up. They made a call or request yesterday, so I'm waiting to hear back when those are going to be scheduled. But he is doing that.

Matt Cap, who is with the Farm Bureau, has also done the same outreach that we've asked for as well and is scheduling those. So those are two things.

The other things that we have done because we are working with our statewide partners to actually get those meetings on the books, we have ads being placed in Jackson as well as in Kalamazoo. Both prints and radio ads are going through with regards to alerting people.

We have news broadcasts. We have already done one news program in the UP.

And in terms of promotion, we have another one on the 12th of May and we have a follow-up on the 19th that has been scheduled in terms of outreach as well. And we are working to get a couple more interviews scheduled with regards to the UP and getting the word out. So.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Okay. I hope you understand where I'm coming from with this. Because, you know, we've had the meetings picked for a little while now. And I have read all kinds of news articles about, you know, the groups reaching out to Detroit and Flint and Grand Rapids. And I've read absolutely zilch about rural areas in my area. And I have pushed it from day one.

And this is why my concern is with it being two weeks away and people in Northern Michigan have to drive way further than the urban areas to get to these so accommodations for work or what have you. It's really a concern of mine that I just have not felt like I've gotten answers to. And I just want to put that out there.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: I appreciate that. We have also done League of Women Voters across the state, which includes a lot of rural areas that we have done. And I can provide you with that list. I'll provide the whole Commission with that list where we have gone across the state and still continue to do so.

This morning I was in Antrim County, for example, for a presentation. So we are doing the rural areas. I'll make sure I do a better job of highlighting that so you have it for your records. But they are definitely not being left behind.

And we are also trying to work with partners who have the street credibility in those areas so that we can come in and present. But I can assure you we are not leaving them behind. And we are doing quite a few presentations in rural areas and eager to do more.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Rhonda, for that question. I think that is an excellent point and worth being raised. And I see Steve you also have a hand raised.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Just a follow-up on those. Rhonda, I did a PSA yesterday up in Marquette on What's Up Michigan. It's just a little two-minute, two, two and a half minute PSA that will run on their public radio station up there from now until we have the meeting.

I've done three League of Women Voters around the Traverse City Area, Leelanau County, Grand Traverse County, and I think two in Grand Traverse County.

So as far as the up north, that being me, just out and about telling them what is going on up here so we are doing something.

>> MAUREEN SAXTON: I can add to that. Northern Michigan public radio station, they are teaming up with WLUC, the largest broadcast television network in the UP, for their interview with the Commission, which will be taped this Wednesday. But it's going to run repeatedly.

He told me the days, but I don't know the times, prior to the Marquette meeting. So that will be -- I was really thrilled to hear of that partnership that I thought that was genius because they -- the WNMU piece gets in -- I'm sure will get into more depth where they might not have the manpower though to kind of throw several cameras at the Commission meeting. I don't know. But I do know it's great.

But the spread and depth of WLUC in the UP, I'm just glad to hear that their cameras will be there and that will touch a lot of people. And this will air prior to the meeting. So it will be public awareness.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you. MC, go ahead.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: It occurred to me one of the things that our consultants might do is also check in with the public comment we received and where they are coming from.

I remember this young woman early on like September, October, who was from the UP particularly and maybe even from a tribe who gave us public comment. And I get the feeling if we reached out or were able to respond to that young woman that we may find an interesting community of interest or there may be somebody there.

I'm thinking of, you know, the Big Bay. There was a clerk from Big Bay who just gave us some public comment too. That may be an interesting place to look.

And I apologize because I meant to actually volunteer to do this. I just haven't found the time to do this. I wanted to give you what I'm asking you to do, but that is why we have excellent staff and people doing this. So, yeah, thank you for doing this.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: And, Commissioner Rothorn, so you know, United Tribal Council just came on board last week and are helping us with that and finally getting them on board to get the word out and they are spreading that word out so thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Edward, you are amazing.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, MC. Rhonda?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Thank you for letting me know some of that. But I also want to stress too when I say rural, I am talking rural. I am talking the little Reed City where I'm from. The Sears where you blink you miss it. The Ursey, the Everett, the Leroy, Luther, these little villages I have not seen outreach to.

I take that back. Reed City, I did do a presentation for Reed City, but they contacted me directly. I just -- I'm worried about these little communities because in these little communities I brought up Idlewild before. That is a community of interest. Historically it's a voting rights act community.

I haven't heard anything about Lake County. I've heard one for Osceola County. I don't know about Wexford County. I'm talking these really rural, Selma that consists of a grocery store, a hardware and a gas station. A huge farming community, that is what I'm talking about when I'm talking rural.

I understand, Steve, Antrim County in Traverse City. I don't -- personally don't consider Traverse City as rural. That is like a medium-sized city to me. It's not your urban area, but it has quite a big population compared to the rural that I'm talking about.

So I just wanted to specify when I'm talking rural, what I'm talking about is truly the rural communities.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Rhonda. No, thank you. Darci.

>> DARCI MCCONNELL: So I feel your pain, Commissioner. And so I have worked to include some of those communities. But I respectfully ask if you're willing to share some names with Maureen and myself so there are places you have top of mind so we make sure we include.

But our intention is not to focus strictly on sort of big urban areas. It's to focus on everywhere.

So, for example, with Southeast Michigan, it's not sort of the traditional of what people think of. I have different places in Monroe County from maybe to -- it's top of mind. But we will welcome any cities you have top of mind as well.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you. If -- Rhonda, is that your hand raised from the last time or a new?

No, it's okay.

I just like to make sure.

I think we have given both Darci and Maureen a lot for a meet and greet in a good way. They know that we are passionate about our communities of interest, especially the folks in rural counties. And I hope that those watching in the public know that is something that, you know, we take seriously.

And so I think that you've heard especially Rhonda vocalize, and not just Rhonda, but in this moment the passion and attention we would like to be comprehensive to all those areas.

And if, Edward, you don't have anything else in this Section, I wanted us to or wanted to have us move along if we don't have anything else for our PR consultants, yep.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Our PR consultants can be excused. We are done. So thank you, Maureen and Darci, for being with us.

I just have a brief update Chairman Kellom just to share with the Commission.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Of course, please.

Thank you, Maureen and Darci, for giving us your contact information.

>> EDWARD WOODS: Great. Thank you so much. I just want to share and remind the Commission of the key findings that was in the report that we paid for from Glengariff, 53% of respondents have heard of the redistricting change. And 24.3 heard of the MICRC. Plurality of voters have no opinion of the Commission. The two strongest testing facts emphasize map fairness and public feedback. No unfair advantaged citizen input and transparency. Our key messages that resonate with voters. New stories and website. Most likely avenues for engagement. And 48.2 believe citizens' participation will have an impact in the redistricting process.

I want to share with you and want to share fairness in the redistricting process.

We have obtained a toll-free number to contact MICRC. It's 1833-you draw. 1-833 you draw. Or 1-833-968-3729.

I would like to thank Commissioner Lange for her contracts with regards to how we can get a toll-free number and make it work. So if you dial that number, it will ring and you will have someone live answer the voice at 1-833, sorry, 1-833 you draw.

I want to jump to three as it relates to fairness. The Commission approved, emphasize that MICRC requires hiring a mapping decisions to include at least one affiliate from the democrats, independent, and republicans.

And there has been a request to separate that. So that hiring decisions to include at least one affiliate and adopting maps to include at least two affiliates.

So, Madam Chairperson, if we can if you see the previous objective three if we can just get a motion to approve the reworded objective three, I would greatly appreciate that.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Do I have someone to approve the motion for objective three? Rhonda. And my screen is split, so do -- I have Rhonda Lange with a motion, do I have a second?

I'm going through, so if I miss you. Second by Vice Chair Rebecca Szetela.

All those in favor of this change of wording that is on screen for objective three, please indicate with a raised hand.

And, Juanita, feel free to indicate verbally.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I agree.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Thank you. All those opposed same sign.

And the vote carries.

We have approved the edited wording for objective three.

Thank you, Edward, for bringing that to our attention.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Thank you so much. Awareness, we will heighten awareness in the redistricting process and working on a kickoff press conference to launch our public hearings. That will take place Monday at 10:00 a.m. There will be a kickoff press conference to launch our public hearings, that will take place Monday at 10:00 a.m. It will be a virtual press conference, and we will send you the link so you can access the virtual press conference to kick it off.

Our statewide organizations are assisting with volunteer recruitment. As we shared earlier at public hearings, we are looking to have volunteers, people in the community, neighbors to say, hey, welcome to our public hearings that actually live in the area where we have the public hearing, so just want to stress that.

Our campaign for billboards, just the initial wave, is we are looking to place billboards in rural areas. So I just wanted to share that. And areas where we are not hosting our public hearings on this first round. So you will see the billboards in rural areas and in areas where we are not hosting our public hearing to increase awareness about the redistricting process.

To get the word out in Jackson and Kalamazoo and we are doing radio and print ad you will hear coming up this weekend in both Jackson and Kalamazoo to get the word out. So just wanted to share that with you as well.

Transparency. The goal is to model transparency in the redistricting process of public hearings. Working a lot with AV contractors. By the Constitution you know we need to have meaningful participation. And those who are attending remotely should have the access to provide comments to the Commission even though we are meeting in person. So we have been setting that up, working with contractors, meeting with contractors,

going over that meticulously to make sure everything works right. And we don't have the feedback, which is very annoys for people whether they are there in person or remotely. Set up and layout with regards to that as well.

I just want the Commission to know that you -- and I will talk a little bit about this later -- but you will get a know before you go, a know before you go e-mail what is happening three days before. So for the public hearings on Tuesday you will get one on Friday. And for the public hearings on Thursday you will get one on Monday. But it's called know before you go. So just want to make sure you're aware of that.

Our Good Fruit video, I've asked the Commission to, for those that are willing, to give me the times on Wednesday and Friday that you're available to go to Good Fruit's video next week because they have some videos, to talk about the state of transparency vignette and others and what makes them successful in the Commission awarding them the contract next week. So if you have not signed up or contacted with me, let's make sure we connect today or tomorrow because they've set aside that studio time.

Just want to reiterate to the Commission that the plan that you voted for in transparency did include objective one, which says create a robust, accessible and user friendly website that promotes and documents the action of the Commission. So that is something that you approved.

And the reason why that is important is we want to make sure we are meeting state guidelines for accessibility. We also have someone from the Michigan Statewide Independent Council who deals with people with disabilities that is checking everything we are doing, both for public hearings as well as the website. Because it may be user friendly to some, might not be to others. So we want to make sure we are mainstream in terms of looking. And that really goes to our transparency and just want to reiterate I appreciate the Commission's support when we did our communication and outreach plan.

Engagement, we are still doing virtual presentations. We are doing a new group for the first time. We are doing Michigan League for Conservation Voters. Dustin, Commissioner Dustin Witjes is doing that tonight. That is not a group we have been able to connect. And really trying to get out and get diverse groups and people to do it.

We are going to start our social media posts and presence with regards to that with our consultants on board. So there are a lot of things, moving parts happening at one time with regards to communications and outreach that we are doing.

Grateful to the Commission for the contractors on board. So that we can expedite things more expeditiously in terms of getting things done

Also, with regards if you have any questions, I can take them. But I do want to make sure the Commission is aware that at these public hearings and the hotels that we are getting everything in order that you may need at these public hearings. We have paper. You know, we have pens. You know, we have masks; you know, gloves. You know

what you need so that you can document what's being said. And so that you can come and you know be refreshed. We will have bottled water available for you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: We have snacks. Sorry to interrupt.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: You know meals are on your own with your great state per diam. We do have a little bit of water that we are able to get away with. And if you want to have snacks on your own, that is fine. But if there is something that you really, really like and you whisper it in my ear, I will make sure and try to make sure if I can afford it, you can have it. Commissioner.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Chocolate.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: I love these subtle hints, so if you guys have any more hints like Commissioner Rothorn, let me know. And we want to take care of you so you are free to do your jobs. And when you come there your badges will be available, when you come. If you are not able to make it, we will be mailing your stuff to your home address so that you can have it.

But just want you to know look out for your e-mail on Friday. If there is something -- it should have your hotel reservation, directions so you know how to get to the facilities. All of that will be a part of that process. So if something is not clear or what have you, call me, e-mail me, we just want to make sure it's clear so we can adjust the know before you go so that you can be completely ready at these public hearings.

We have first aid kits. Just in case you are wondering, we do have a first aid kit and signage. There is a whole lot of moving parts going into executing these public hearings and making sure they are in robust fashion. So just appreciate that.

I will be reaching out. You know, before we talked a little bit about Commissioners hosting some of these public hearings initially. And there was some mixed reactions, so I will definitely loop back to each of you to see if that is still an interest, so no one is surprised as we move forward week by week in the public hearings.

Thank you so much, Commissioner Kellom. If there is any questions, I can take them at this time.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Do we have any questions for Edward?

And, Doug, I see your hand. Go ahead. And then Cynthia.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yes. I would like to publicly recognize Edward for the job he is doing. I think this is really a huge undertaking. The whole communications aspect of the Commission. And I'm very pleased with what's going on. And I commend you for that, Edward.

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Cynthia.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: My question was: You said that we will have a -- where did I write it -- a kickoff press conference. Are Commissioners doing that? Or who is doing that?

>> MR. EDWARD WOODS: We are working on that in terms of doing invites and stuff. So I can give you an e-mail update a little later who is confirmed. And we just started it when we got our contractors on board about how we could do a splash, you know, talk about different things that are happening. But, yes, we do have Commission involvement. We just haven't reached out yet.

And we have third-party endorsers that will be a part of that in terms of third-party endorsement. But I need to get Commissioners confirmed. And I just haven't had a chance to get that done. But, yes, we will have Commission involvement.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Cynthia for that question. MC.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: I wanted to say thank you. I've been getting the e-mails. And Kristin Taylor, I think you introduced her earlier, and she is helping us with this public engagement. Like, yeah, just reiterating what Doug said. And I think Cynthia is getting at, right? We have each step of the way is an amazing event in the planning and so forth. And I'm getting like I'm getting as a Commissioner right now the hotel stuff that I appreciate you're doing, I don't have to do. Just really appreciate that. Thank you for making that easier for me.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Anything else for Edward?

Well, Edward, we all appreciate you doing all of this, as Doug astutely said. This is a tremendous work and I do not envy all the coordinating and things that you have to do so thank you. If we don't have anything else for Edward, we are going to move along in the agenda.

So we have our legal counsel report with Mrs. Julianne Pastula so I will give her the floor.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Thank you, Madam Chair, for the first item, which is the first or the conflicts policy, and while I'm cueing it, I would also like to acknowledge and appreciate Edward for all of the work he has been doing for us.

Here we are. So what was distributed was a draft conflict of interest policy for your consideration. It's intended to supplement existing state law and MICRC policies that deal with both unethical conduct and conflicts of interest. And the premise is that conflicts shall be disclosed and managed or eliminated to the extent practical. And the request is that the policy would be approved or modified as necessary.

And on this slide, there is one red line that I wanted to highlight for the Commission. It's the definition of conflict of interest found on the policy which would be a personal professional political commercial or financial interest or activity outside of the Commission that either compromises judgment, bias in the nature or direction of actions, influences decision making or behavior related to MICRC activities. Or that results in a personal or family member's gain or advancement arising out of Commission business.

Definition of family member I wanted to highlight because it's more broad than I think the common usage of the term. It does include spouse, parents, child, stepchild, but

also anyone else the individual has a close continuing personal or business relationship. It also would extend to siblings and nondependent children if the circumstances exist where they have -- that they would benefit from a particular MICRC action.

And the relevant factors in determining the existence of such a close relationship include the duration, strength and intimacy of that relationship. So I wanted to make sure to highlight that for the public and for the Commission's benefit.

Policy highlights is that individual members of the MICRC staff attorneys consultants and contractors are referred to as agents in the policy. And we are highlighting that the agents stand in the relationship of trust and confidence to the MICRC as it exists as a body as well as the residents of the State of Michigan. That conflicting interest can undermine the judgment or objectivity of agents and compromise their primary obligation to MICRC as a body. And the bias or appearance of a bias may undermine public trust in the Commission.

So, therefore, all direct or indirect potential or actual conflicts of interest must be disclosed, evaluated and found to be substantial or material again addressed to either be managed or eliminated as set forth in this policy.

The policy also outlines activities that the agents shall undertake which is acting in a manner that upholds and advances professional and professional honor, integrity, and the public's trust in both the agents and the Commission's work. Refuse to provide or promise to provide any contract work payment, special attention, preferential treatment, priority, or other thing of or position of value in exchange for gifts, gratuities, favors, promises or other considerations. Refrain from engaging in conduct that could be reasonably perceived to call into question the honesty, integrity, and professional of the agent or the Commission. Compliance with all applicable laws and rules regarding conflicts of interest and transparency of operations in governmental affairs. And faithfully and accurately account for all public funds.

Agents shall not solicit or accept things of value, greater than \$20 for the benefit of any person. Again, person is capitalized. That is a discretely defined term in the policy. Which may influence the manner in which the agents perform their duties.

Shall not misuse public resources. Shall not engage in employment or rendering of services that are incompatible with or in conflict with the discharge of duties. Or that may tend to impair his or her independence or judgment of action in the performance of those official duties.

Participation in the negotiation of execution of contracts or other regulatory or supervisory activities, which the agent has a financial or personal interest. And show favoritism to family members or others.

The general principles, my last final slides are general principles. The two key inquiries to -- relative to the analysis are, first, is it incompatible with the discharge of official duties. Or, two, does it impair the independence of judgment in the performance of your official duties.

And generally a conflict exists when an individual's external interests provides an incentive to impermissibly affect the individual's conduct of his or her MICRC activities.

And I would like to highlight impermissibly that I would like to have added to the policy in this instance under general principles.

And I also wanted to note conflicts can arise naturally just from your engagement and interaction with the outside world. And that the mere existence of a conflict does not imply wrongdoing or that it will necessarily impact your ability to perform your duties related to the MICRC.

The critical, critical point is that they are disclosed and evaluated. And undisclosed potential conflict is far more dangerous than an actual conflict that's been disclosed and managed or abated.

The policy terms are the policy procedures. There is a duty to disclose. Agents must acknowledge receipt of a policy in writing, that acknowledgment form, the draft of it, is attached to the draft policy.

And disclosure of potential conflicts of interests, that form is also attached for your review.

The disclosure would be required upon receipt of the policy after it's adopted. And then in the future as needed for any new, previously unknown or unidentified conflicts that arise. The forms would be submitted to the Executive Director.

Conflict management process. The MICRC staff, based on those disclosure forms, would conduct a review and make recommendations to the Commission regarding the presence of an apparent, potential or actual conflicts and its applicable composed actions to address it.

The Commission would then, by majority vote, determine whether an actual or potential conflict exists. And, if so, set forth appropriate steps to be taken to address that conflict. Or if no conflict exists, the inquiry would be documented but no further action would be taken.

I've provided examples of management mechanisms, would be revising the reporting structure to place the decision making capacity with a nonconflicted agent.

Abstention in voting, which is also part of your rules, divestiture or disengagement of that interest or severing of the relationship that creates that conflict.

Violations of the policy may result in, they are up to the Commission's discretion, adoption of a resolution of censure for staff discipline or termination. Enforcement of contractual terms or conditions that are included on all of the Commission's contracts. Or, again, other appropriate action, which can include, but not be limited to, those remedies provided by relevant state law. I wanted to give the Commission as much discretion as possible in that area.

That concludes my PowerPoint presentation on the summary of the proposed policy. And I'm happy to respond to any questions, concerns or suggestions.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you so much, Julianne, for that, and the work that you did to produce the policy changes. And I think I have Rhonda coming to you and MC with a thought or a question. I don't know. So, Rhonda, you can go first.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Thank you. A couple questions, Julianne. So if this is adopted, then it kind of goes retrospect back so all employees and contractors would fill this out once adopted, correct?

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Correct.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Actuality or appearance was that on page one? Is that where that was located?

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: So that is in the definition of conflict of interest. What I would like to highlight there is the definition of conflict of interest. The actuality or appearance for potential should not have been included in the definition. That was an error on my part.

What we have throughout the actual policy is perceived and an appearance and those types of things. But in the official definition, I don't think it's appropriate to have that subjectivity included when we are examining agent's behavior.

So while that theme is included throughout the policy, again, I would like to extract it from the actual definition of an actual conflict of interest.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: But if there is an actual or in appearance, wouldn't that go to say with the other definitions in there that it could potentially -- what is the words I'm looking for -- reflect on the Commission, call into question the Commission's integrity? Didn't it state something as far as that goes in one of the other areas of it?

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Yes. The perception and the perceived is included in the policy. That was not changed at all. Just in the actual definition of a conflict. So that the remedies or the abatement would need to, again, if there was a relationship with a prospective contractor, then the steps would need to be taken to mitigate that conflict. Or actual steps would need to be taken for the presence of a conflict.

I think the distinction between the analysis of the presence of a conflict and what needs to occur, that the definition is getting to, and the overall policy about avoiding the appearance of bias, avoiding the appearance of conflicts, avoiding the perception of conflicts is maintained in the document itself. Just not the definitions. Was that a fair answer, Rhonda?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: It is. I'm processing it. I don't know. I think the stricter the better in my personal opinion; but that is my opinion. But, yes, you did answer it. I got it.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: You are welcome. And just, again, what I am trying to avoid with that strike through on page one is that someone can accuse a Commission of something that when the analysis is done it is not -- there doesn't exist a conflict. And we are trying to get actual conflicts of interest or actual impact on behavior in this

section here, in this definition, where the perception and how you conduct yourselves is addressed elsewhere in the policy.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: But this is not just for us, this is for staff and contractors.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Correct.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Okay, thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Any other questions or thoughts before we vote?

Okay. Can I have a motion to vote on the approval of the conflict of interest policy? MC will make the motion.

Do I have a second?

Seconded by Dustin Witjes.

So all those in favor of approving the conflict of interest policy, please indicate with a raised hand. And, Juanita, you can give your verbal indication.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: My hand is raised.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: All those opposed same sign.

And the ayes have it.

And looks like we will be moving forward with the approval with the conflict of interest policy.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Madam Chair, my next item to present to the Commission is a -- the proposed litigation counsel RFP.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Sure, go ahead.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: And this would be the proposed statement of work is the document before you. The litigation counsel RFP, we've discussed in the past, and so we are presenting today the proposed statement of work for your consideration. Seeking approval of the document for integration into the standard RFP template that the Commission has been using.

The counsel -- the litigation counsel would provide both legal advice and representation to the Commission, including the defense of the final redistricting plans.

The anticipated contract term is through March 31st, 2022. Which is consistent with other contracts, staff contracts. And I'd like to note that the standard contract terms that we use also has a renewal clause for up to two additional one-year periods at the sole discretion of the MICRC. So the March 31st date, again, would just be included in the contract but can be extended at the Commission's discretion.

The qualification of highlights are the looking for litigation of constitutional or Federal statutory issues, including multi-party and heavily document-intensive cases.

Knowledge and experience in the application of Federal and state law relative to redistricting including our Constitution, the 14th amendment of the U.S. Constitution as well as the Voting Rights Act.

Knowledge and experience with Michigan election laws including statutory deadlines and the relationship between District boundaries and the conduct of elections.

The proposed duties include, I just selected five out of the list, representing the Commission as either a Plaintiff or Defendant in an action. Conducting discovery including the interviewing and deposition of witnesses. Handling appeals. And other legal services as needed.

The key deliverables. And what I would like to highlight here this RFP will be different as we go through it. I actually modified how the key deliverables were structured based on feedback, questions, and revisions from the Commissioners in the past on other RFP.

So our key deliverable 1.1, and I will highlight where the changes are as I talk through them for you, our first key deliverable is litigation experience. What I did is I expanded it out to different Court levels. So the ten most recent cases between -- before the Michigan Supreme Court and Federal Court; any experience before the U.S. Supreme Court; and then legal work performed during the past ten years on behalf of public agencies or state boards and Commissions.

And under each of those sections in the document there is additional, specific information for each of the examples we would be looking for.

Under key deliverable 1.1, we are also asking for past litigation experience and redistricting experience, as well as Michigan election experience. And then inviting the respondent to provide how that cumulative experience will ensure the benefit of the Commission.

Key deliverable 1.2 was maintained. There with slight wording changes relative -- to motivation of working for the Commission and providing litigation counsel services.

The key personnel identifies the individuals that are assigned specifically to our contract. And provides the breakdown of time and experience in their titles that I know the Commission is familiar with seeing in the past from those charts.

And then affirm identity general description. The background of the firm, the information of the firm, and giving really these vendors the opportunity to introduce us to their entity.

Key deliverable 1.3, this is the significant change that I was referring to. I extracted conflicts and disclosures and made it its own deliverable. So conflicts would be adverse to the Commission or the State of Michigan or that were pursued on behalf of an adverse party.

In the past, any disciplinary proceedings or Court sanctions on behalf of the attorney or the firm and requiring disclosures from January 2000 to the present. That would capture two redistricting cycles. Paid or unpaid work-relating to redistricting or election activities. And breakout sections for lobbying, political contributions, as well as work for nonpartisan or partisan organizations.

And the approach was an important inclusion to maintain in this Section. I moved it to this Section, would be the methodology to provide services to the Commission while remaining impartial, unbiased and nonpartisan.

I also included a proposal proposed language to include regarding diversity in one of the -- we have many reserved sections in our template that I would offer to the Commission that we would insert diversity language into one of those reserved sections.

In the past the Commission has acknowledged its commitment and its desirability to enhance diversity in its contracts. This would request information regarding the firm's commitment to diversity and opportunity for them to detail what actions they take to achieve diversity in their firm or their entity. As well as outreach efforts that they undertake and a list of current community activities such as membership and participation in diverse organizations.

And that would be the conclusion of the highlight of the proposed terms and the statement of work. And I'm available to answer any questions or concerns relative to the document.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Any questions or concerns?

And, Juanita, don't forget to chime in if you have any questions because I know your technology is limited right now. Rhonda, I see your hand and then Doug.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: I will be real quick, Julianne. On the diversity, as far as organizations they worked with or donations or what have you, that wouldn't be something though where somebody would be excluded from the job if they hadn't, would it?

When you are doing the evaluation?

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: No, certainly not. It would be if they would like to highlight the aspect of their firm's mission.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Okay, thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLUM: Excuse me, I needed some water. Doug.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Julianne, are we going to -- after we approve this are we going to submit an RFP at this point in time?

Or are we just lining up our ducks in a row to when we need to do that?

These RFPs take a long time to do.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Correct, which is why the statement of work is presented now. The proposed timeline that I would advance is that the RFP be posted on Friday, May 21st. And the questions would occur while we are on the road. I think that is something that we can handle the responses to and get the Commission to review and approve those responses to the bidder questions.

And then, again, the proposal deadline currently is proposed Thursday, June 10th. And so that will allow us the time we need to go through the proposals and then schedule the interviews towards the end of the public hearing process or directly after the public hearings conclude, at the Commission's discretion, obviously.

But that is why we wanted to start it now is to give time not only for the vendors to prepare their responses but adequate time recognizing that the Commission is going to

be on the road, on our pure Michigan tour. So that sufficient time to review those proposals because I expect they will be extraordinarily lengthy given the information that we are requesting.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay, and then we would hire them and but they may not start work until later in the process.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: I believe certainly, Commissioner Clark, the start work date would be when the contract is signed and it would be very nice to have them online in case something does arise. So that we don't anticipate needing them in the immediate future, but it would be very nice to have them lined up for so that when we do need them, they will be ready to go under contract.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay, good, that is what I thought. Can we go back to the diversity slide?

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Yes.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: You don't have to bring the slide up. I don't understand the purpose of that.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Okay, so that was -- did you want me to pull the slide back up?

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: If you would like.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: It's very easy. Excuse me one moment. I did that in the longest possible process that I could. Proposed language for diversity. So this language, Commissioner Clark, where, again, in the past I know particularly for the videographer, for I'm trying to think of the other contract activities that the Commission has gone through. Diversity has been mentioned on more than one occasion. So I suggested this language again, as I indicated to Commission Lange, as an opportunity for people bidding to highlight this activity. If it's part of their mission statement or part of many law firms have programs that they -- outreach programs that they support, that they are very proud of. So this would just be an opportunity, again, to provide information to the Commission about those activities.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: So diversity is nothing we are requiring. It's just that we want to understand how they implemented it within their corporations.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Exactly. And, again, the way that I've captured it is the first sentence. That the Commission seeks to enhance diversity in its contract. It's not in its contracting. It's not a mandate. It's not a requirement. It's not a key deliverable. This would again just be a --

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Like a value almost.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Thank you, Chairperson Kellom.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay, I understand. I appreciate it.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: MC, go ahead.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: I think you said it well, Brittini, as a value. And I was thinking I think we actually get better representation if we find people who have --

who understand that value. The people of Michigan, the citizens of Michigan, will get better representation.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Madam Chair, I wanted to highlight, I know some VRA counsel firms did include their commitment and their activities around that topic. And I thought if we put it in the RFP that would give everybody the opportunity, and some may not have thought to include it or whatever the reason may be.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Yeah, thank you for that consideration. Doug, do you have another question?

COMMISSIONER CLARK: Not a question but a comment. As we move forward with this, after approving it and move forward with it, I expect that we need to form a subcommittee like we did previously with the other RFPs and have them make the assessment. Is that the general understanding of people on the Commission? Like are we going to form a subcommittee?

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: I can speak on behalf of staff.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I know you can. I mean just shake your head "Yes" or "No."

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Yes. We would be proceeding through the procedure that the Commission has used to date. The proposals would be vetted, go through the committee, all of the proposals would be provided to the full Commission for consideration, the process we run through with the other RFP.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: So if we approve this today, can we set up to subcommittee today as well or do you think it's too early to do that?

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: That is completely up to the Commission's discretion. We would not need the subcommittee. The proposals are not due until June 10th. So it would be at the Commission's discretion when they would like to select the committee members, pardon me.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Well, I'd like to put the motion forward that we do select the subcommittee today. That gives them time to prepare and read through the RFP and so forth, which is just a month off. And we are going to be traveling a lot so --

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Can we do the statement of work first?
And then --

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yes. I would expect that, yes, thanks.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Okay, because Dustin was ready to support you, so let me have a motion for the statement of work as presented by Julianne. Rhonda with the motion. Seconded by MC.

All those in favor of, excuse me, the statement of work for litigation counsel please indicate with a raised hand.

Juanita is indicating with a verbal vote. Juanita?

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Yes.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you. And all those opposed same sign.

All right, the ayes have it or the hands have it in this case.

And Doug has also offered or suggested that we handle the subcommittee, that we would be responsible for that. Is there a motion?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I guess I will say so moved this time.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Dustin.

Do I have a second?

Doug is seconding the moment.

All those in favor of a subcommittee being developed raise hand.

Juanita, you can indicate.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Agree.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you. All those opposed?

All right, so we will be developing same process as before a subcommittee for this.

Doug, go ahead.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: And I'd like to be on it.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you. And I think Doug was going to talk what wants to be on it, but I'm not sure. So, Doug, you have the floor.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Exactly, that is what I wanted to bring up. Let's identify the people so they have time to prepare.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Okay. I think we are getting some identifications. We have Juanita and Rebecca.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: No, just a comment. I was going to say who has not been on a subcommittee yet who wants to I think is kind of where we should start because I know a lot of us have had a turn on a subcommittee so.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I think we all have. If you go back to the matrix, I think it's pretty well distributed at this point.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Yeah, we all have.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Rhonda, did you want to sneak your comment in now?

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: I was going to say Doug. Before we did it one independent and one republican and one democrat. So I would like to nominate Doug if he so chooses.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah, I will accept that. And, if you don't mind, I'd like to ensure that we have one of the attorneys on the Commission.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: I heard Juanita recommend Rebecca, so that would be.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: You did not hear me say Rebecca. I said I seconded it.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: I didn't hear that. I thought the second was Rebecca. My apologies. My apologies. Okay, sorry, Juanita. Sorry, Rebecca.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: It probably would be okay, but I wish my thing was -- my computer was working but --

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: I was going to recommend Steve because I just did the voting rights attorney. So I was on the last legal committee, so I was going to recommend Steve. I'm throwing your hat in the ring, Steve.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: If that is the will of the people.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Dustin.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I will nominate myself, but if she wants it, she can go ahead and take it.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I can't hear what you guys are saying. To be on the committee, right?

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Yes.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Yes.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: How many can be on the committee?

>> CHAIR KELLOM: We are making sure we have the representation from the parties.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I withdraw my own nomination if she wants to be on it.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: You don't have to withdraw, do you?

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: You can have four. We had four on the last one, so why don't we have Dustin, Steve, Doug and Juanita.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: You don't have to withdraw. Please don't.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Juanita has spoken. She wants you on it.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I'll do it.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Okay.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I can't get on the computer or see.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: You are doing a great job.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Dustin is in and Juanita is out.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: We are saying both, so four like the last one. We had four last time around.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Can I recommend that Steve be the Chairperson?

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Steve.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Way to dodge that one, Doug.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I don't care. I will be the Chair if you want it doesn't matter.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: It does not matter. I will be the Chair and I will accept the nomination and yield the floor.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay, sounds good.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: We have Steve Lett as the Chair for the subcommittee. And on the for the subcommittee members we have Dustin Witjes, Juanita Curry, Doug Clark. And did I miss anybody?

That is four. Okay, all right, so we are all prepared for the business that should take place in June.

We have handled the statement of work for litigation. Julianne, is there anything else we need to know?

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Just a motion for the committee members, Madam Chair.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you. A motion. Can I have a motion for the committee members?

Who is making the motion?

I'm going to say.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: So moved.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Richard. And those in favor of the subcommittee outlined raise your hand.

All those opposed?

Juanita jump in there with your verbal vote, please.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I vote, yes.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: So it's been approved, those will be done, the subcommittee members with the Chair again being Steve Lett. Thank you.

And now let's move on to administrative issues, that is a heavy title by our Executive Director. And the first item being the recommendation, so you have the floor, Sue.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Nothing heavy there, just the budget.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Issue sounds serious so --

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Okay. We will rename that next time.

I know a lot of our discussion last time was the Commission didn't want to have to give up any of the appropriation that hadn't currently been unspent in fiscal year. So I went back and updated the budget. I put in the April expenses. And I expanded the budget significantly. So you would know exactly what had been spend, what had been confirmed to be spent, and then that subtotal. And then any additional projected expenses to get you to where your current approved budget is.

And I also looked at expenses. And in the far column on the right I made some recommendations. It appears that some of the expenses we had anticipated may not come to fruition. We also know that some expenses will be more than what we planned.

So roughly on the recommendations I refigured the Commissions' salaries. I found additional expense of \$6246. I think it might have had something to do with when people came on board.

In the staff salaries, I found that, that budget was overstated by just over \$2000 originally.

And then started looking at other activities. So we proposed an executive assistant position. I believe that we are going to cut that down to lesser hours. And at this point it will be over a much shorter time period. So I think we can achieve a savings of \$17,700 there.

Looking at general mileage and considering what has been spent, we are seven months into this fiscal year, if I'm counting correctly May, June, July, August and September. We have five months left of this fiscal year and can achieve a savings of \$3908 there.

Reviewing general travel I think there is a savings of \$1843.

For mileage and parking for in-person meetings, when this budget was done, we assumed starting in April we would be meeting in person and we would have those expenses. So that time period has been shortened. Our next regular meetings will occur now after public hearings, other than those meetings we have at the public hearings. So I believe we can find a savings of \$12,500 there.

On the public hearings, Edward has done a phenomenal job of negotiating costs, trying to find economies of scale. And we believe we can take \$40,000 off that budget. Additional a thousand dollars on mileage for the public outreach tours that we can cut back on mileage somewhat.

Actually that's the meals. Because I average between the lower cost and higher cost cities and counties.

And then also on the town halls, we've done many of these; but all of them have been virtual to date so there don't seem to be many hard costs.

And also the upcoming costs will probably be in collaboration with our public hearing tour. So instead of one of us driving to Marquette specifically for a town hall, we are going to already be there for a public hearing. So we are going to try to work in regions where we are to also attend town hall forums should any outside organizations choose to schedule those. So I believe we can save \$20,000 there.

Now, we do or now we do have some additional expenses. In negotiating the mapping contract, the payment schedule is showing nearly, excuse me -- the payment schedule is showing nearly \$40,000 more than what we had anticipated. It was a shot in the dark at the time the budget was built during the negotiation phase. This has become much more clear, and this is the proposed payment schedule. So that will be in addition.

And, also, per legal counsel, your general counsel requests from Julianne, to have approximately \$50,000 set aside for either a legal staffing agency or a litigation counsel, depending on which was more appropriate, that those monies would be set aside.

I think we can also achieve some savings and office supplies, reducing that by \$3362. And all in all the bottom line is by going through and reassessing year to date and projected expenses, we feel we can find an additional savings of \$6631 in the overall budget.

So, I mean, that's the basis of what I've done. And assuming the Commission agrees with these recommendations, then we would adjust the approved budget by the amount stated in that far right column.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Okay, before we vote, or even make a motion to vote due to approved revisions, we had questions or comments. And I see Rhonda first, then Doug. But feel free to continue to think and have thoughts and questions.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Okay. My first question, and you're going to have to remind me was our last approved budget March 31st, is that when we approved the budget?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: That was the last time the budget was presented. I believe it was adopted earlier in March though. Maybe like end of February or first of March.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: I'm seeing on our website it said February 13th and I went to --

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Maybe.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: My archives for the materials we get for that and I couldn't find it. I'm showing the last budget I have got is the March 31st. So I was kind of confused by the numbers on that compared to the numbers on this one. So --

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: I used the March 31. I used the approved budget numbers in the approved budget column.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: So if you use the approved, were those for like the projected on the March 31st?

Where it says projected, is that the amount that was approved on the previous budget?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Projected is a different column. So projected is expenses that I anticipate might come along. The approved budget remains the approved budget.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Okay, I'm not seeing the approved budget then on the March 31st. I'm seeing projected and when it goes through there is some confirmed expenses, but I'm not seeing say like on staff salaries it says confirmed. But then it says go to public, oh, let me go to something else.

Okay. Say communications and outreach, it has a confirmed of \$28,120. But a projected of \$371,880.

So I don't remember what we approved. That's what I'm saying. I wanted to know the budget, what we approved initially. Because looking at this, I'm looking at it like we approved \$371,880.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: So for that budget you would take the confirmed plus the projected and that would be the budgeted amount. The budget was approved, let's see, that is approved. It looks to me like the one I have with the big, approved sign by it says March 11th, although other budgets had been presented earlier with estimated expenses.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Okay. So basically just add those two together and that's what was approved. Can you get me a copy of the initial -- it doesn't have to be right away but the initial one that is approved?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Absolutely. I will send that out but the approved budget column in this should be the budget that you approved. I double checked that as I was doing my work.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Okay, thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Rhonda. Thank you, Sue, I have Doug with a hand raised and then Dustin.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah, one question before I get into the numbers, Sue, you added a number of columns. Could you give us a definition of each one of these columns so we understand what they represent?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Yes. So expended are expenses year to date. And that is starting with your October 1st fiscal year.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay, so that is what we have paid?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: That is what we have paid out, cash out the door.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: So what is confirmed?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Confirmed is expenses we are going to have through the end of this fiscal year.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Including the ones that have been paid?

Or.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: No, no, those are additional confirmed expenses. They are not spent, but they are going to be -- they are going to be spent.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: So then the third column of the first two.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Correct, okay.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: If there is any additional projected, it's added to that to come up with your budget.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay, I understand. Okay.

And then we've got the budget. And then you've got recommendations of the last column?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Correct. And I'm sorry.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: The budget represents the last approved budget.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Yes.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Not what you're suggesting get approved.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: The approved budget is the approved budget column. It says approved budget. That is the budget that this Commission has been working from.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay, good, all right. Let me get to the numbers.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Okay.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Let's take number one, communications and outreach. You have on the May 6th one \$400,000 is the approved budget. But I go back to the March 31st one and we've got \$371,880. So --

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: That is what was projected. It did not count what had already been spent.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: So there is money that had already been spent at that point?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Yes. And that was in the notes. So the next column after your approved budget is notes. And that lists most of the expenditures that we've had to date.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay, yeah, the note on this one just says individual transactions. It does not specify it had already been spent, okay.

Okay, but in your last column you don't have a change of what is it? \$229,000.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: I'm not recommending a change at this time.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: So I'm recommending that we have that budget available to be used during this fiscal year should it be needed.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay, I understand. Then let's go to the consultant's legal staffing and litigation counsel. I mean, we approved something for Julianne today. But this dollar amount has not changed. But you got a \$50,000 amount under a blank line. So maybe if you can walk through that.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Well, it's under the recommended column.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yes.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: The far right column because at the time I did the budget it was not in the previously approved budget, so I could not use the first five columns.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yeah.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: It was not approved budget expense. What I did today was recommend that then I will come back to you and I will adjust the budget assuming the recommendations are approved.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay.

So when I look at the bottom line the approved budget used to be \$2,990,435 and you're recommending we reduce it by \$6,000.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Right now, yeah.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: So it would be --

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: 2983. It's the line above the yellow line, 2983.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay, so we will have more money in the bank.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: A little bit more as a reserve or whatever happens. We are flying blind here and a lot of unknowns in the process because nobody has done it before. And we just want to make sure we have enough.

By the same token, we don't want to return money to the State and any expended funds.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: There is a lot of variable expenses, mileage and meals, and we still don't know. So we need to keep that rainy day fund there in case some of these expenses jump up for some reason.

Okay. Let me see if I had any other questions. No, I'm good. I appreciate it. Thank you.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Doug. Dustin.

Dustin, you are on mute.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Oh, oops, I'm sorry. During the last meeting we were talking about the billboards so does this take into account that particular point as well or no?

I don't want to open up a can of worms here.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: You're not, you're not. Under communications and outreach activities on page two it's, I don't know, half a dozen lines down there is budget there. There is a to date number. And then look at the second to the last column, committed. That went in the committed column.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Got it. Okay, excellent, thank you.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: It's there. It's there. You didn't open a can of worms.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Rhonda.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: First, Sue, I want to let you know I found the budget, so disregard getting that to me. I just flipped through my phone and got it narrowed down so never mind that.

And then my only other question budget wise, we just did the RFP for litigation, so there could potentially be an added expense for litigation if something came up before the end of the fiscal year; is that correct?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: The line item that Doug just talked about, that \$50,000 that wasn't in the budget, that's in the recommended line and that would be for legal staffing and/or litigation counsel as needed. So there is \$50,000 based on these recommendations that would be built in. We don't necessarily anticipate a lot of litigation before September 30th. We are not going to get our census data until then.

So, you know, if you think through the process it would seem to be most litigation is going to come, well, I assume most after the maps are drawn, but there may be some. And we want some in the budget in order to have that ability to, you know, make sure that we can defend whatever we need to be defended.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: So the \$50,000 then, if there was litigation, would go towards that and say the legal aid or whatever Julianne needs with the other one we approved today?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Right. It's all in one line item, just to be flexible for her, because we may need a little bit now. We may get a mapping firm in place and just

decide that a paralegal there could do some of the work that she needs, so that just gives her flexibility.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: Okay, thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: And, Doug, I will give you the floor.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yes, so I'd like to put forward a motion that we approve this budget with the recommendations that Sue has provided in the last column.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Great. Do I have a second?

Steve is seconding the motion.

So right now we are voting for the approval of the revisions that Sue just provided with us. And if you are voting to approve those revisions, please signify with a raised hand.

And, Juanita.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I approve.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you. I hear you all those who do not want to approve those revisions same sign. All right, the vote passes.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: I affirm as well. My camera is being weird.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Anthony, because I did not see you for a while. And thank you for making sure we have you.

Now, Sue it looks like we have discharge consultant procurement committees.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Yes. And thank you for the questions on the budget. And I will get to you then a budget with the revisions so we will update that.

I also taken out the next fiscal year because I felt at this time that had too many columns and created too much option for misunderstanding. So I wanted to make sure we just looked at this fiscal year. And thank you for approving that. And I'll get it updated for you.

Okay. Now, I will move on. So we still have in place our line drawing and redistricting technical services committee and our VRA legal counsel committee. And we thought it was time that we could dissolve those committees and discharge their duties.

The -- you know, the VRA legal counsel is in the very last few days we hope and line drawing is probably a couple weeks behind that, two, three weeks behind that. So at this point we believe anything that might arise would come to the full Commission anyway. So we do not feel there is a need for those committees.

So any questions on that?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: I move we dissolve the line drawing committee.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: You can put them both in one motion if you like, line drawing and VRA legal counsel if you wish.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Julianne wasn't very excited about us doing two at one time.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: She wasn't, and she is shaking her head now.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: I only say it because if someone feels very, very strongly, one of them should still be maintained, that generally resolutions have one

topic, one action. But if it would be just dissolving the committees, those two specific ones since they are not needed any more, any issues would come before the full Commission, we -- the Commission can proceed as planned or as it's stated. I think you have an official reso before you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Yes. Okay, thank you. So we have a motion made by Steve Lett to approve the -- vote to approve the discharge for the committees and seconded by Richard Weiss.

All those in favor of this please indicate with a raised hand. Juanita.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I agree.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Anthony?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Yes.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you. All opposed same sign.

And the vote carries. Thank you, Commissioners.

Next, we have future meetings and agenda items. Still with Sue. So, Sue, take it away.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: In talking with staff, we don't feel that we have a specific need to meet next week. And with the public hearings just getting engaged, we were hoping that maybe all of us would concentrate on the public hearings and making sure that everything was in place for those. And Commissioners were ready to go and ready to begin that process.

So unless there is some specific business that Commissioners have that they would like to bring forth next week, I would make a recommendation.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you. Do I have a motion to vote to approve --

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: It sounds like it would also help the staff concentrate because there is so much information that needs to happen for the staff to do, is that what I'm also hearing Sue? Is that true?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: That would be helpful.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Okay, thank you.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: We want to make sure we have a great start and everything every detail is in place. Edward is great at this, but it's going to be an all hands on deck to make shyer things go well.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: I will make the motion to cancel the meeting although, yeah, I make the motion.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you. Do I have a second?

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I second it.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: And Juanita is second.

All those in favor please indicate with a raised hand to cancel the May 13th Commission meeting.

Juanita and Anthony, you can indicate with a verbal vote.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Aye.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Aye.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: I want to change my vote to a no in case you counted.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Okay. All those opposed?

And the vote carries. It looks like the May 13th Commission meeting will be cancelled.

And then finally we have announcements. Sue, was there something that you wanted us to pay special attention to for announcements or anything for the good of the order? Excuse me.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: One of the things I want to send along are the links to Ted talks about listening. I found some that were really, really fascinating. I thought they were engaging and that is going to be, you know, the job for the next eight weeks is a listening tour. So you know I was hopeful if I sent these along Commissioners might be interested in viewing those between now and the time, we start the public hearings.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: That would be great. Please send them along. Any other announcements?

Anything for the good of the order?

I would just like to take this time also to extend a final farewell and thank you to Ms. Sally Marsh. You are an extraordinary human being. And what a way to end or transition rather than to help with something like this. So you have a special place in my heart and thank you again.

I see, Rhonda, you have your hand raised; but I wanted to make sure our last meeting with Ms. Sally Marsh, so thank you, thank you, thank you.

>> Thank you, Sally. We love you.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Thank you. And, Commissioners, I just wanted if I could quickly say thank you to all of you. It's just been such -- I'm going to get emotional. It's just been such an honor to work with all of you. And so thank you also for your commitment to this work. I know that all of you are up to the challenges that you have ahead of you in the month ahead. In the months ahead I should say.

And thank you for inspiring me and Michigan citizens across the state. I look forward to cheering you on from as just another Michigander who wants to see you succeed so thank you so much.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Sally. I don't say bye so see you later. And we have lots of hands raised. I see Rhonda. I see Doug. I see Steve. So, Rhonda, go ahead.

>> COMMISSIONER LANGE: I'm going to miss you. It's 4:00. I was going to talk about something being placed on our future agenda, but it can wait until our next meeting.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Okay, all right, that's fair.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I would like to tell Sally good-bye.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Go ahead, Juanita.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I want to thank you all of the help you have given me personally in trying to do this computer stuff. You have been a gem. And I want to thank you and I wish you well. And I wish you the best in life and everything you put your hands on to accomplish. I wish you well in it. God bless you, honey.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Thank you, Commissioner Curry.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Steve and then Doug.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Just what the world needs Sally another lawyer.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Thank you.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Doug, go ahead.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Okay. Sally, we couldn't have had a better person doing the job that you did. It's just totally, totally outstanding. In my heart MICRC will now be the Marsh Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission. You are the one that started it up and put it together. And led us to where we are at today so congratulations and best of luck to you.

>> MS. SALLY MARSH: Thank you. Best of luck to you all and I look forward to cheering you on.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Great.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Thank you, Sally. And now since there is nothing else and it's 4:02 can I have a motion to adjourn?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: So move.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Seconded by Dustin Witjes.

All in favor of adjourning?

All opposed?

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: My hand is up.

>> CHAIR KELLOM: Stay on. All right. See you, everyone
Meeting concludes at 4:02 p.m.