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MICRC

07/30/21 9:00 am Meeting

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>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you, as vice chair of the Commission, I call this meeting of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to order at 9:04 a.m.

This Zoom webinar is live streamed at YouTube at www.YouTube.com/MICHSOSoffice/videos.

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Our live stream today includes closed captioning. Closed captioning, ASL interpretation, and Spanish and Bengali and Arabic translation services will be provided for effective participation in this meeting. E mail us at Redistricting@Michigan.Gov for additional viewing options or details on accessing language translation services for this meeting.

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

This meeting is also being recorded and will be available at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC for viewing at a later date and is being transcribed and those transcriptions will be made available and posted at Michigan.gov/MICRC along with the written public comment submissions. There is a comment portal that may be accessed by visiting Michigan.gov/MICRC, this portal can be utilized to post maps and comments which can be viewed by both the Commission and the public.

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

For the purpose of the public watching and the public record, I will now turn the Michigan Department state Staff to take note of the Commissioners present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Good morning, Commissioners. Please say present when I call your name. If you are attending the meeting remotely, please announce during roll call you are attending remotely. And unless absence is due to military duty disclose your physical location stating the county, city, township, or village where you are attending the meeting remotely.

I'll start with Doug Clark.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Present.

- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Anthony Eid?
- >> COMMISSIONER EID: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Brittini Kellom.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rhonda Lange?

Steve Lett?

- >> COMMISSIONER LETT: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Cynthia Orton?
- >> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: MC Rothhorn?
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?
- >> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Janice Vallette?
- >> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Erin Wagner?

Richard Weiss?

- >> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes?
- >> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Present.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Ten Commissioners are present and we have a quorum.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you. You can view the agenda at www.Michigan.gov/MICRC. I will now entertain a motion to approve the meeting agenda.

>> So moved.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Motion by Commissioner Rothhorn, second by Witjes. Is there any discussion or debate on the motion? Hearing none, it is moved and seconded to adopt the meeting agenda. All in favor, please raise your hand and say aye. Opposed, raise your hand and say nay. Agenda is adopted and the ayes prevail.

Without objection, we'll now move to the public comment attending to the agenda topics of our meeting. Hearing no agenda, we'll now proceed with agenda topics. We do not have any individuals signed in to provide live, in-person commentary today, so we'll move directly to the remote in-person commentary. Individuals that signed up and indicated they would like to provide commentary to the commission will be allowed to do so. I will call your name and staff will unmute you. If you're on a computer, you'll be prompted by the Zoom app to unmute and speak. If you're on the phone, a voice will say we would like you to speak. I will call on you by your name. Also, please note if we experience technical or audio issues, or if we do not hear from you for three to five seconds, we'll move to the next person in line and return to you after they are done speaking. If your audio still does not work, you can email Redistricting@Michigan.gov, so you can participate at a later hearing or meeting. You will have two minutes to

address the Commission. Please conclude your remarks when you hear the timer. The first in line to provide public comment is Mr. James Galant. Please allow a moment for staff to unmute you.

>> Do I have permission to speak?

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Yes.

>> This is James Galant with the Marquette County suicide prevention Coalition.

(Pledge of allegiance)

That is what I hope for all of you, you get the liberty and justice for all, while you're actually providing it to everybody else also. Now, I'd like to point out the parliamentary procedure issues that went on yesterday when you had to back pedal on the agenda. Oh, geez, didn't vote on that. You had amendments, okay, the rules require that you properly disclose of all business before you move on to the next. This is the biggest problem we have here, you're starting discussions first. Now they are clearly confused, and the Chair clearly assigned the floor to the Executive Director, which then assigned the floor to Mr. Brace. Mr. Brace just kind of missed his own advice and he has allowed this commission to paint himself into their corner, when he was facilitating the discussion on an action item on the agenda when there was no motion second pending. So, Mr. Brace is now working with this Commission to contravene the Constitution and interfere with the proceedings. He also interfered when he had secret meetings with Commissioner Clark to come up with that flow chart thing. They said, oh, nobody knew about that. Oh, here it is, you're going to rubber stamp it. This is what's happening the whole time. I believe these proceedings are being coordinated by Edward Woods III. In his application, he said he transformed the Board of a nonprofit corporation as the Executive Director. He has no authority to do that, Executive Director is not in his job description or his plan to create a documentary, yet he's doing it. He's going to present that and say look what I got, would you approve this, but we're paying him. How much has he been making this documentary? We need to see that, where he's at, who he's talked to, because he said don't you remember, we discussed that. Yeah, you discussed it at a meeting, hearing no objections, he felt that was his decision that he could move forward on that project.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Your allotted two minutes has ended. Please conclude your statement, Mr. Gallant. Thank you for addressing the commission.

Now that the opportunity for public comment concluded, without objection, we'll hear from individuals who wish to provide a second two-minute comment. Individuals who have signed up and indicated they would like to would now be allowed to do so. We'll use the same process as the first round. First in line to provide a second remote public comment is Mr. James Galant. Please wait for the staff to unmute you.

>> Do I have permission to speak, Madam Chair?

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Absolutely, go ahead.

>> James Galant again, you just dogged me again, Marquette County suicides Prevention Coalition, these are my opinions. This is the problem, as a Chair, coordinating to not follow the rules. This is what they are doing at the Michigan Suicide Prevention Coalition, and you're doing the same thing here. Last week you did -- Rothhorn is not here today. He pointed out you didn't vote on the emergency procurement request. He said, guess what, did we kind of vote on that? I believe Commissioner Lange also pointed out. The Chair is like, well, thank you for pointing out her mistake. Well, you still didn't vote on that procurement, I believe. Didn't come back. Now here you're doing this. This is supposed to instill trust in the community for your processes, and you are completely confused, and now Mr. Brace, I believe, and the other guy, Bruce, have interfered with the proceedings by taking part in debate and facilitating the discussion before there's a motion, before there's anything before the commission. The deliberate assembly part means you're deliberately talking about an immediately pending question. You have to vote, you have to motion second to provide a question to deliberately talk about it. So, you're not bringing the business deliberately. You're winging through it. You're all winging on the fly. This is fly-by-night stuff, and I'm hoping that it's not going to fly all the way to the end to get the brass ring you're trying to change the rules and reset the system. This is just the opposite of what you approved the rules, then you come and do the opposite.

It's very clear now, and my documentary is going to be how to make it so that your best practices do not win the debate at the end of the day. And you dogged me on the extra getting my -- finishing my sentence the last time. Finish your sentence, I didn't get to finish my sentence.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Allotted two minutes have ended. Can you conclude my statement?

>> Don't shut me off before I finish my statement. This is completely opposite of what the people of the state have included in their voted for, the amendment, to have Democrats and Republicans here. I have not been able to verify we have Democrats and Republicans here.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission, your time has ended. We will now move on --

>> Madam Chair, apologies, we had one more individual who signed up that's just joined, if you would allow them.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Sorry, what was the name again?

>> Sure, Roslyn Denning.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: All right, at this point, we will allow Roslyn to speak. Please wait for staff to unmute you.

>> Good morning. Can you hear me?

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, please go ahead.

>> Thank you so much for taking the time to allow me to speak. I want to thank all the Commissioners for the work that you're doing. I'd like to reiterate and re-emphasize the importance of this work of mapping Michigan. I wanted to take time to say something, because yesterday, I watched the meeting, and I felt like there was some mixed signals. Yesterday, I got the impression that the first assignment was to become familiar with the software that's going to be used for mapping. And with that being said, I was expecting each Commissioner to be allowed possibly a week to work through the kinks they were having with the software and not make decisive decisions on which plan would be followed. So, I wanted to bring that point to all of you, that I think it would be important to consider coming up with a date for the drawing completion of the map first. And then look at some of the factors that you're going to consider, whether it's economic recovery, geography, population, communities of interest. Then to establish the number of regions, and to decipher the difference between the district and the region. And then, most importantly, to work as a team, to set realistic deadline dates for each phase of the process that's attainable for everybody, so that the process is equitable and accountable.

And, again, I want to thank you for allowing me to express my concern and my beliefs. And thank you for the work that you're doing.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you for addressing the Commission, Ms. Denning. That concludes our -- excuse me -- public comment for this morning. We will now move to unfinished business, agenda 5-a, determining regions to begin mapping. Without objections, I'll ask Commissioners about their work on the software yesterday, and if they are ready to move forward with creating regions. Hearing no objection, I invite the Commissioners to provide their input and to continue discussion. Commissioner Lett?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Thank you, Madam Chair. I did draw a region, nine regions for consideration, if Kim can bring those up.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Your microphone isn't on, Mr. Brace.

>> KIM BRACE: Sure, I need an agenda for the meeting.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Sure.

>> STEVE LETT: I made nine regions, I made them roughly equal in the number of counties. I think the lowest was six and the highest is ten. It's basically laid out in a grid. Roughly equal size. Numbers 1 to 9. And the purpose simply is to be able to identify an area or region that we're talking about. And make it easy to find. That's all. There wasn't any other reason to make them that way. So, that's it. If it's something that the Commission chooses to use, that's fine. If not, that's fine, too. No better than worse than any we saw yesterday.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you, Commissioner Lett. Any other comments?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: This is Commissioner Witjes. My thought on it, nine regions is, in fact, the better number in my opinion. I've done a couple of them at nine, I

believe, now. And it seems to line up perfectly for the same reasons as what Steve just brought up. Area defined, look at, and start.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Is this your map that Mr. Brace is pulling up right now, Steve? Okay. I'm just curious why you're splitting the upper peninsula, because there's so little population there. Curious your thoughts on that.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Nothing to do with the population. Just an area. Can't read that far --

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Purple and green.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: We're going to work with the green, everybody knows where that is.

>> Can you zoom out a little bit, Mr. Brace?

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: I'm wondering -- there, okay.

>> There we go, sorry about that.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Does this kind of split the Lansing area, or the three counties that comprise Lansing in the same region? I can't tell from that distance.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Didn't even look at this. All this does is kind of divide it up in roughly equal areas, numbering them so that whenever we're working in that county and that area, we say we're in No. 1, everybody knows where to go. That's all it does. Makes no judgment on what county ought to be in what square.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Okay. Thank you, Commissioner Lett.

Anyone else have a plan they want to discuss or any comments on Commissioner Lett's plan? Everyone is really quiet. Go ahead, MC Rothhorn.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: I wasn't here yesterday, I watched the meeting and appreciated my plan was brought forward. I have no strong opinion. I feel it's regional. I have no strong opinion. I'm happy to go with whatever we decide.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Go ahead, Commissioner Witjes.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: I was just going to say, again, that's exactly what these regions are designed for. It's just a place to look and start working. And then if we get tired of one particular area, we can move to another area and start there. And work back up to it. So, it has nothing to do with districts. Just some place to start, look at, and have everyone focus their attention.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Eid?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: It's a fine map that gets the job done for setting regions, for sure. My map that I submitted also had the UP split up into two, just because it's a large land area. Nothing to do with population, as we've said already. The only comment I have is that your district that's light blue and 1 kind of combines the metro Detroit area with a whole bunch of other areas, too. And I know you had nine. My only thoughts would be, well, if we put that up to ten, we could maybe have, you know, Wayne County, Oakland County, and Macomb County as one region, and then the rest of your

light-blue section there in a different one. That might make it easier going forward.

Besides that, it's a great map.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: I like how Doug's test plan No. 5 has open Macomb and Wayne County as a single region. So, you have the high population sort of in a smaller region, because I think that was almost 5 million people, or something like that. I did kind of like that.

Is there any way that we can -- I don't know, I might be exceeding the capabilities with the Zoom, to pull up both of them side-by-side, maybe have them in separate windows. Would you be able to do that and be signed in at the same time, Mr. Brace? I don't know if your software will allow that.

You know what, is it possible for you to take a screen capture of this and then open up the other map, and then open up the screen capture at the same time? That might be able to see them both. Actually, I might even be able to do that. So, let me take a screen capture of this, open up the second map, take a screen capture, and put them side-by-side.

>> The other possibility, Dustin, if you want to get in and look at -- you can call up now, I think I've made everybody administrator. So, you could bring up one of the maps, and we could see your screen and my screen at the same time. As a possibility.

And you were -- Madam Chair, you were talking about the -- Doug's test plan one?

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: I believe it was number five.

>> KIM BRACE: Yeah, that's right. All right.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Witjes?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Mr. Brace, did you say there was a separate link you had to get in, to click in, for administrator?

>> KIM BRACE: For administrator, yes, indeed, and I haven't sent that to everybody. I apologize for that. Well, we can all bounce back and forth between the two plans. I don't know that I can put both of them up at the same time.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: We can view this on the web version, right, we don't need to be logged in through the --

>> KIM BRACE: Right, that's correct, yeah.

So, this is Doug's test plan five. Little bit different configuration. Indeed, he did ten, as opposed to nine. And separated out Wayne and Macomb area in the separate districts. So, that's Doug's.

Going back to Steve's. And that's Steve's.

>> Kim, were there any other new maps made between yesterday's meeting and this morning?

>> KIM BRACE: There was Steve, and then Juanita ended up trying to do a test, I see. But I don't know if she's -- is that a finished map, or? It's a map? Okay.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: I'm still trying to catch on.

>> KIM BRACE: I can bring up what she's got drawn so far. Okay. Just two districts for Juanita yet. She's moving along, though. That's good.

That was the only new one, was Juanita's. And Commissioner Lett's. Any other?

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Go ahead, Commissioner Lett.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: I move that we adopt Doug's plan five. It's a little more detailed than mine, and finer resolved down in the southeast corner, which may make it easier in the long run.

>> Second.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: We have a motion by Commissioner Lett, seconded by Commissioner Witjes, to adopt Commissioner Clark's test plan five that was discussed yesterday. Is there any discussion or debate on the motion?

Okay, seeing no discussion or debate, let's vote on this, but I'm going to ask Department of State to call a roll call vote on this.

>> Happy to, Madam Chair. Commissioners, please indicate your support of the motion with a yes or no. I will call on Commissioners in alphabetical order starting with Doug Clark.

>> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.

>> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Anthony Eid.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Steve Lett.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Cynthia Orton.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: MC Rothhorn.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Janice Vallette.

>> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Richard Weiss.

>> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Yes.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: With unanimous yes, the motion carries.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Thank you, Department of State. All right. So, the ayes prevail, motion is adopted, and we have adopted Test Plan 5 with the ten regions, as the regions with which we are going to use to begin drawing our maps. So, at this point, we can now move on to new business, agenda item 6-a, preparing to begin mapping.

Without objection, I'll ask Mr. Kim Brace to facilitate this portion of the agenda. Hearing no objection, please proceed, Mr. Brace.

>> KIM BRACE: Thank you, Madam Chair. There we go. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

What we're going to do, all yesterday we were using the MyDistricting software. What we want to move to is the newer piece of software, the stand-alone piece of software, Autobound Edge is what it's called. I know we had some issues yesterday. MC, I think we need to make sure you get the software installed on your computer.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: Working on that right now.

>> KIM BRACE: Very good. Figured you'd have a good handle on that one already, or the State would be able to come in and help you on that side. So, that's great.

Was there any other people that had any problems getting the software installed?

>> We have about seven installed right now. I have a list. I sent the list of those who still need it to the -- to DTMB, so they can work with those people today. They no longer have to do that authentication with the VPN, because they'll not approve administrator rights anyway. So, we can go direct with DTMB. All they ask is do not call them for service after they get this installed down. Again, we'll be working directly with Autobound Edge, City Gate, with any technical issues with the software. John Morgan did also offer this morning to provide any one-on-one assistance. So, if people are having difficulty learning how to use the system, he will provide that assistance with you.

>> KIM BRACE: Okay. And we'll be available, both election data services, and Citygate, and I'll send an email to everyone with my contacts and Fred's contacts, so you can get ahold of either of us on that side. If I'm in Manassas, I always say use my land line to call me there, because my cell phone doesn't always get in the rural area that I am in Manassas. But if I'm not in Manassas, then the cell phone is the best way to get ahold of me. So, you may have to try two different numbers, but I should be always available on that side for you.

What we're going to do today is migrate off the MyDistricting software and move over to the autoBoundEDGE software. That's what I think most people now have installed on their system. So, I wanted to go into that.

Now, my start button is different than everybody else's. I have a customized menu of all my different programs that I have. But you also have the capability of coming up and you should have, as one of the Start programs, autoBound EDGE. And within the autoBound EDGE, you'll see autoBound EDGE 2020 as a piece of software to start up. So, going and starting that up, it will bring up the autoBound EDGE desktop, the logo.

As it loads things up into the system, it will come up with a log-in. Nobody needs to put in a password. That's already preset for each of yours. So, just go ahead and log in, in that regard.

And what you will see then is the State of Thumb, as I called it yesterday. And the State of Thumb is going to be the region we're going to be drawing within the next

couple of weeks to get a feel for the software and some of the things that it can do for you. And, so, this is where you want to be at the starting point.

Now, when you first come into the software, you'll notice the active matrix is blank. There's nothing there. In order to bring up the active matrix, you need to go in the right-hand side. I'm going to go through a lot of what's on the right-hand side, so that you can follow through and see how the system operates.

The starting point is the plan management. That's the first button, or tab, that is activated. The plan management has the plan manager, create plan, save plan, incumbents, close plan, and settings on that side.

Also, the system has several different areas of the screen that are important to recognize. First off is on the upper right-hand side, there is a district field and a selected layer field. Once you open up a plan, that ends up being the two fields that you kind of want to keep a close eye on, because that dictates what district you're going to be assigning the populations to, and at what geographic levels. If you remember on the MyDistricting system, we kept you at the county level. We're not going to keep you at the county level. You'll have all the different levels that are available here. So, you can go to individual city blocks and assign, unassign, that sort of thing. So, you'll have free rein, because what we want you to do is basically come up with some district ideas. If you remember from our conversation yesterday, we had set up so there are 15 districts that you want to create. And I'll show you where you can make sure you've got 15. But that's the beginning point that we want everybody to play with at that point.

There are a bunch of other menus here. By clicking on a menu, you can see all the subfunctions there, everything from reports, exchange of data, utilities, and the active matrix itself. So, we'll go through each of those drop-downs as we go forward today. What I want to do is start off with creating a plan.

So, if you click create a plan, it comes up with a screen that says, "create a new plan." Every plan you need at least a short name for it. So, typing in a short name is to help you. I'm going to say, "test plan for training," and call this plan that. So, it needs the short name. You can fill in long names and everything else, and how you want to describe it, if you want to. It's not necessary. And then it comes down to the plan type. The plan type is a field that lets you define what levels of geography you're going to play with. Right now it's set up to be the Congressional, House of Delegates, and State Senate districts. We'll add another plan type for experiment or State of Thumb probably on that side. That would be a separate plan type. Plan type is really a way of dictating how many districts you're going to create. So, if I select State Senate, right now, those are my three options, I'm not going to create 38 districts. That's the default, of course, for Michigan. I want to change this to be 15. So, this is where I dictate and show how many districts I'm going to be creating.

So, setting that to 15, and then you can create. And when you click the create field or create button, it then does a couple of things. One, it brings up this plan. And you'll

notice now that you have an active matrix with data, all the data is blank right now, but the form is there, the matrix is there, so that you can see the various things.

If you remember yesterday, I went through the active matrix kind of extensively. We can play with that again, but it's basically a spreadsheet, a spreadsheet that's connected to the geography that you're assigning. And that spreadsheet shows you totals for the districts that you're making changes to. And that spreadsheet, the rows in that will end up changing with each assignment that you make on that side. So, you can see what's the population that you're shifting into the district. And that's what you're going to be doing. You're going to be putting assignments and geography into a district.

When you do that, it also keeps track of if it needs to come out of another district. So, you'll see just -- not just one district's numbers change. If you have multiple districts, then you'll see multiple districts change. And I'll show you some of the tricks on some of the things that you can look at and see on that side. But, basically, the concept is looking at the map and assigning off of the map, and seeing the impact on the districts down in the bottom and the active matrix.

So, what we're going to do is -- let me move this remote a little bit out of the way there. What we're going to do, if you noticed before, I mentioned the fact that we've got districts and we've got select layers. So, let's, first of all, we're going to create this plan. We've got this test plan, and you'll see in the upper left-hand side of the screen, you see -- let me open up. You see the name of the plan is up there. AutoBound EDGE, dash, mine is "test plan for training," in the upper left. So, you can always know what plan you're working on, on that side. So, that information is there. There's other pieces of information that we'll go through on the side. There is a menu capability. These are some of the things that we'll show you how to set up. You can show different views. Let me move this out of the way here, so we can see. There's a lot of different things, and we'll go through that today, but there's a lot of different things to play with over there on that drop-down menu.

What we're going to do is we're going to start off and we're going to put things into District 1. So, if you click on the district in the upper right-hand side, it will bring up a Select District. You notice that the default is Unassigned. So, if you were to start off and think you're going to be assigning to District 1 and you don't change it here in the select district, it's thinking you're wanting to assign to unassign, assigning to District 0, in essence. So, make sure you're comfortable with where you are and what district you're assigning to.

So, I'm going to start off with District 1. I'm going to select that. And you can keep this window open, if you want to. That's your choice. I'm going to close it, so I'm not using up some of the real estate in that regard. Now you see that I'm going to be assigning to District 1, the number one is up in the upper right-hand side. You can follow along with me in drawing your own plan in this instance, and see what I'm seeing, and see what I'm doing.

The next layer is --

>> Kim, could I interrupt, could you show us again how you got to District 1?

>> KIM BRACE: Yes. Up on District, click with the left-hand mouse, on the district layer there, it will give you this selection tool.

And if you remember, we talked about and were assigning 15 districts. That's what you see all the way down, 1 through 15, plus that unassigned. So, I'm selected to District 1 and set it that way. You always know where you're assigning to in that upper right-hand side.

The next button down, or selection, is selecting what layer you want to work from. Remember, GIS is built on layers. And, so, we're going to talk about those. So, we have a bunch of different layers. When you do Select Layer, it brings up the Select Geography box, and that is where you can decide, do I want to assign at the county level, do I want to assign at the precinct level, do I want to assign at the block level. Now, you may have also townships in yours. If somebody brings up theirs, do you have a fourth layer on Select Layer?

Yeah, I think most of you do. I have not added township on mine, but I need to do that in that regard. So, right now I have three layers on that side, but your default should have the four layers in that regard.

So, I'm going to set it and go at the voting precinct level. And I'm going to select that on my screen to go there. And select it, and you see in the upper right-hand side, my select layer is voting precinct. Or if you select a township or whatever it was you selected, that's going to be in the upper right-hand side.

Now, as you draw and you create districts, what it will do is not only keep track of the populations down on the spreadsheet, on the bottom, but it also keeps the overall plan calculations in the upper right-hand side. So, in the left of the upper right-hand side is the plan deviation. Right now it's set at 200%, because I haven't assigned anything in that regard. Minute I assign something, the plan deviation will start changing. Keep in mind that the plan deviation is the total deviation between the highest populated district and the lowest populated district. Right now, if I assign something to District 1, it's not really going to have, until I assign to District 2, it won't have really an overall plan deviation to calculate on that side.

But when you start adding more districts in, then that plan deviation keeps up with where you are.

And on the right-hand side of plan deviation in orange, it shows what's the largest. That will tell you what are the two districts in your plan that are the largest positive number and the largest negative number from the standpoint of the deviation from the ideal. So, you can always see where you are. Yes, Anthony, Commissioner?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: That's the deviation tab in blue, compares it to the target, correct?

>> KIM BRACE: Sorry, say again?

>> COMMISSIONER EID: You're speaking of the deviation tab over there?

>> KIM BRACE: Yes, on the upper right-hand side. Right over here.

>> COMMISSIONER EID: Okay. Is that the same as what's in the Excel list?

>> KIM BRACE: It is the same, yes. The upper right-hand side is basically taking the synopsis of what you're seeing on the spreadsheet down below and giving it the overall plan itself. There's a couple other ways of showing that, but that's certainly -- this is the quick way of seeing it. John?

>> I was going to add, that's dynamic, too. If you go through, one district that's minus 12 and one that's plus 25, it will score as you draw.

>> KIM BRACE: Right. So, right now, we're going to assign voting precincts into District 1. There's a couple of components to keep in mind in terms of this.

Just like you had when you were doing on the web-based software, you had different layers and levels of the data to get into. You also have the same thing here, in essence. Okay?

Now, if I go and show my entire State of Thumb area, and I want to assign to District 1, I'm doing this down at Edit Tools. So, go down and click on that layer, and it brings up the sublayers. This is the sub-menu that you'll be doing a lot of your work within terms of assigning geography. And there's different ways of assigning geography. And we'll go through that. But, basically, the main component pieces is you have down here about four or five lines down, you see the Assign button. Okay, that is the way that you can assign territory. So, if I click on that, it's highlighted now. So, I'm assigning now. And if I go and select a precinct, it's assigning it to District 1. That's the district I'm putting things into. Okay?

You'll notice in the upper right-hand side, the plan deviation changed, because it's keeping things dynamically. And the largest two districts are District 1, it's the smallest. And they are saying District 2, we don't have a District 2 yet, but that's kind of the overarching what they'll treat that as a District 2 without it being assigned. Again, that will change as we draw on that side.

So, I can assign an individual precinct. I can go and assign another one. And you see now my plan deviation comes down to 197%. With just those two territories. I can go and zoom down in, and when I zoom down in, I start to see other geography. And if I zoom far enough in, I'm down at the level that I can see census blocks. So, now I could, if I wanted to, say that I want to take the territory on the west side of the river here. That's a river, so I can go and assign -- I suddenly assigned not at the block level, right? That's what suddenly happened there, because I'm assigning the whole precinct.

So, I can go down here, and I can say this is an undo last command, and a redo last command down here underneath clear selection. So, I'm going to undo my precinct assignment, and it goes back to blank. In order to get that side of the river, I need to change my levels of geography. So, I'm going to assign this now at the block level on that side. You can do that by the selection up in the box, up in the upper right-hand side.

Or there is another shortcut, and this is this circle that's there. Called the quick tools. If you click on Quick Tools, what it lets you do is change the level that you're assigning. You see right now, I have the three assignments, the blocks, the precincts, or the counties. I can simply change using that tool as opposed to doing the select layer and going to the next menu. I can use this quick tool as a quick way of doing that. I also have a zoom in, zoom out, and a zoom all. All is the entire state. But I did help on that side with some quick tools to help. So, that's another way of getting around. What you'll discover in the software is there's different mechanisms that you can use. So, there's some duplications, so that you can see what is most convenient for you in how you want to operate.

So, I'm going to go at the block level, I set it to the blocks. And if I point, it's not assigning. Why is that? That's because if I look over on my right-hand side, what is highlighted is the word "pointer." It's highlighting just the pointer. It's not assigning. Because it's moved it from the assign, over to pointer. Okay? So, that's where you need to double check to where you are, and now I can assign at the block level, and you see this is two separate blocks divided by a river. Remember the geography I talked to you a long time ago it seems like. These are how you can select and assign. We can do it one by one. You can also click in the upper corner and drag, and you get a box that lets you assign now two pieces. I'm selecting two blocks and assigning those. So, I can select any number of blocks in terms of making that assignment. All right. Here is -- I'll make note of this, because I can see it on my screen. You should be able to see it on your screen. I don't think it picks up on the projector. But there is another stream that goes into this mainstream. But you notice it's a different colored line? It's not a green line. If you see where my mouse is, down at the bottom of these blocks that I've been assigning to. If you collect on one of them to assign, it's going to assign the whole thing. Because there is a line there within the Census Bureau, but the Census Bureau has not defined that line as a block boundary. That's why if I go and unselect again and undo, it's selecting really both of these polygons here. And, again, I don't think the projector is doing a great job in picking up that light gray line. I can see it on my monitor. You should be able to see it on your monitors. On that side. Yes?

>> So, you're saying even though there's a geographical boundary there, which is the gray line, for the Census it's still considered one census block.

>> KIM BRACE: Yes, that's correct. The census is recognizing, it's picking up the territory that is generally a visible feature, which is a stream, or that sort of thing. But in some instances, they are not reflecting that stream. And that's what's happening here in this instance. You'll be able to see the difference. If you look over in this other area, the continuation of the stream comes through here, and that's a grayed line on this side of that street, or the highway system. If you look further along, stream does pick up as block boundaries. It's just some of the quirkiness of census geography sometimes. Hopefully, states and people that are interested in the geography would end up starting

to look at the geography and participate with the Census Bureau's block boundary suggestion program, which takes place in the year and ending in five, generally, where states can go in and say, hey, you missed that stream, I want it to continue over to where it meets. And now for next census, it would be a separate block on that side.

So, what we have is we can assign multiple sets of geography with that drag-and-drop function. If I use the roll button on the mouse, I can zoom in or zoom out in that regard and see where things are.

Now, if I wanted to move the image down, be cognizant of where you are in the menu. I'm notorious for saying, okay, well, I see that, I want to move up and see what there is up above here. So I'll take and drag and, oops, I'm suddenly assigning with a drag-and-drop system. So, in order to do at the block level, where it's saying this error message or warning, is in order to assign, since my assignment layer is the blocks, I need to be zooming into it and be able to see the blocks. So, it's not letting me assign at the block, because I'm zoomed too far out. So, that caught me there, but it means I can go and use my pointer instead to drag the map down. And where I want to go and look at.

Again, it's different layers of geography that you're going to play with and be able to assign.

Now, if you notice, I've assigned a bunch of blocks, two whole precincts, around Sandusky, but nothing within the city of Sandusky, according to the Census Bureau's definition of Sandusky. You can see the outline it is its own set of geography, it is a city, what the Census Bureau calls them, or places. Those are cities in Census Bureau's terminology. The cities are not right now an assignable layer. Cities are much more complicated on that regard. They are not in the normal, what is called the spine of geography that the Census Bureau recognizes. It is an amorphous kind of glob sitting on the side of that spine. And because cities can kind of meander, annex, and make all sorts of changes all the time, it is not a set layer within the bureau. It's kind of an auxiliary layer. We have not put in cities as an assignable layer. You can assign at the block and do the same thing, but because it's a lot more difficult in terms of city geography, keeping track of what's in, what's out, and because you have the potential that in many cities, there are pockets of annexed or non-annexed territory. In Sandusky, here is two little blocks here that I had assigned to -- by doing the voting precinct. This was the left-hand side, those two little blocks are sitting up there as territory from the township, not from the city. So, you can see how that has an impact on that side.

Again, if you wanted to assign the city, you can go in, and at the block level, you can go in and select, reassign. Again, I moved the whole map, because I was on the pointer. Yes, Cynthia?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: I have a question. Just thinking of when we are actually doing the redistricting, how are we going to handle this? It's not contiguous. So -- but the block, you're doing by census block, and that's the lowest we can go.

>> KIM BRACE: You're doing it by census block as it relates to Sandusky. So, if I start selecting a whole bunch of the census block within Sandusky, when I selected a bunch, yes, I do want to. Now you see that it's selected a whole bunch of the census block. It's actually, if I follow, my city boundary is up here. It's also down here, you can see the orange in the District 1. And outside. So, I've got kind of an upper area. So, here's if I go in and assign this polygon here. All right, here's this little piece that's non-city that's being shown as not being assigned. I selected the block that's within the city. Yeah, John?

>> Let me add something that's responsive to that question. The software will allow you to assign something not contiguous. There's a check for that later in the process. So, if the geographic boundary happens to be not contiguous, like you have Grand Blank township and a piece of Grand Blank city is within the township, you can select them and get a district that's not contiguous. At a later point, you can check that, or see it visually and make the change right away. Well, I'm going to choose a different configuration, or I'm going to click the little piece of the city into the township district.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: So, we will have the capability to do that.

>> Right.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Otherwise, I'm thinking we have to change that whole thing and choose a different block.

>> That's right. You can choose it as you see it and make a different choice, but it won't say at that point this is not contiguous, don't do that. It's just going to say this is a geographic feature, select it, you selected it. At a later point, you can, again, observe it yourself, or there is a software check for noncontiguous areas. That will alert you and say, here are four noncontiguous areas, and you can go look at them one after another.

>> KIM BRACE: Right. Okay.

So, I'm going to go forward and do some more assignments within Sandusky here. Keeping aware the city boundary is, yes, I'm sure I want to assign that. What I ended up doing is I ended up -- by doing the drag-and-drop function of assigning, it is selecting any block that you're touching. Okay, so, when I did the assignment, so I missed these blocks down here and here. That's why they didn't get assigned. I can go back in and simply do that and say, yes, I want to assign those also, so I don't have a noncontiguous part of the district in that regard. But it's keeping in mind that you're selecting the polygon, if you are touching that in your box.

I've got these blocks over here that's still within Sandusky, and that is getting assigned. If I move up to the pointer, and I can see where the city boundary line is, basically, it looks like city boundary line comes down here, and that's outside the city. But this is within. So, if I want to select that, I can go and select that piece. And now I pretty closely traced the city boundary, as it's showing from the Census Bureau in that regard.

Again, as John said, there will be checks along the way in terms of noncontiguous. And you can also check whether or not you've picked up everything from the city and what is being recognized.

>> Thank you, could you review again how you're using the pointer as an assignment?

>> KIM BRACE: Right now, I'm using the blocks as the assignment layer.

>> Okay.

>> KIM BRACE: Okay, so, I selected a number of blocks, and I'm assigning them to District 1.

>> How do you select the blocks to assign?

>> KIM BRACE: The selection is either through this Quick Tools up here, or it's selecting the select layer. And assigning at the block layer.

>> Mr. Brace, how do we de-select something? Say you select something that's got too much population, you want to take it back off, how do we take it back off?

>> KIM BRACE: Okay, good question. What you're going to end up doing, is you're going to select a piece of geography, okay, you're not going to assign it. But you're just going to select it. Right now we have assign, but underneath the assign, we have a select box, or select poly. Those are two different mechanisms to select a piece of geography. And you can see assign selected. What you're going to end up doing here is I want to select a piece of geography. Say I want to select this part of the city. It's going to show up as yellow. It is now a selected piece of geography. I can select multiple pieces of geography. One group at a time. But that is a grouping that you can then assign. Okay, so, if I want to take this territory here and don't put it into District 1, I can do this select box, and then assign selected, but now if I assign selected, what's it going to do?

>> It's going to put it back to the same district you're in, unless you change your district.

>> KIM BRACE: Exactly.

>> That's the problem I've been having. That makes sense.

>> Let me just add to that, as well. When you're selecting like that, it's not actually putting it in the district. It's just selecting it. Sometimes some functionality has a what-if box. What if I put this township in, how many, you know, people will I get. It doesn't do that. It's just going to select it after you put it in, then does the calculation.

>> Okay, thank you. Then I have one other question. I thought the other day when you were showing this to us, you had a hover feature, where it was showing total population. How do you turn that on, so you can see before you select what the population is?

>> KIM BRACE: Okay, good question. Let me, first of all, unassign this selected piece of geography. I want to go in and set my district number to be unassigned and do that. Now if I assign the selected piece of geography, click on that, and -- I don't want to clear

the selection. I want to assign to District 2. And now instead of unassigning, I selected it to be assigned to District 2.

>> Okay, just changed the district. Thank you.

>> KIM BRACE: Changed the district on that side. You can clear the selection. I selected it, so it was a selected tool. Before I assigned it, I could have just cleared the selection by the other drop down that you have here. Right now I don't have anything selected, so this clear selection button isn't doing anything for me. But if I were to go and, say I want to select this area right here, again, this goes to yellow. So, it's highlighting the selected, and I can now clear that selection. It's clearing that assignment there. And it should let me -- unassign is what I'm trying to do.

>> Yeah, when I do it, reassign it to another district, but I can't get it to clear it out completely, which is fine, as long as we know to do that. As long as I can change it.

>> KIM BRACE: Yeah, yeah. There's several different mechanisms. I just got to remember which is the mechanism to answer that specific question.

So, I can go in and, again, I'm going to select into District 2, and when I do the assignment now for these geographies here, I can select District 2. Now, let me take you to the bottom of the spreadsheet. We were making assignments at the precinct or at the block level. All the while, on the bottom of the spreadsheet, things have been changing. So, we have right now, I have a District 1, and I have a District 2.

So, if you look at on the bottom of the spreadsheet, you'll see the populations of what I have assigned. In District 1 right now, I have 4,335 people, at least the blocks that I have assigned in District 1. You'll see that on the lower left-hand side of the ACS data. I can also see what the ESRI data shows on the right-hand side of that active matrix. Each of those two sides on that overview tab gives me a number of persons that I'm assigning, but it also then compares that number against the target. What is the target? The target is the ideal district size, within this instance, 15 districts. We selected 15 as the number of districts. So, what I'm trying to create here is 15 districts, each of which have 71,175 people in them. I don't have that yet assigned, but that's the target number that I'm showing. The next column over is the deviation. That is, in this instance, the percent deviation from the ideal. And then the difference column is the raw number deviation. So, both of those are being calculated off of the ideal for that data set. So, on the left-hand side, the data set is the ACS. On the right-hand side, it is the ESRI data. And you can start seeing there's some subtle differences between the two data.

I've got roughly large percentages that are underpopulated. If you notice on the deviation column, that deviation column has not only numbers, and if it's underpopulated, it's red. If it was overpopulated, it would be green. And you see to the right of those numbers, you see an up arrow that's red, which means it's underpopulated and needs to go up. You need to add people to that district. And if it gets too high, then the arrow is going to turn south and say, you know, you need to take things away from me to bring down my deviation on that side.

So, the spreadsheet kind of will give you an overview for the individual districts on where they are, and where they are from the overall plan also on that side.

And if we were to go and, again, if you remember, all of these tabs have different data items on them. So, if you wanted to see what they were in more details on the different areas or districts that you're creating, you can bounce over to the various tabs and see that information. Again, each tab is going to be updated and show the numbers reflecting what you're drawing on the screen. So, I've assigned in District 1 and District 2, and for each of the tabs, I'm getting numbers in District 1 and District 2. Be they raw numbers or percentages. So, I can see all of my data as I go along for whatever districts I'm drawing. Okay?

All right. I'm going to go back up and zoom out a little bit. Indeed, if I go to -- instead of blocks, I'm going to go back up to the precinct layer level. So, I can select voting precincts, and you see up in the left-hand side, it changes from blocks to voting precincts. So, now I'm going to be assigning the voting precinct side of things. So, I can do and go and assign just by selecting. So, I'm assigning all this territory to District 2, because that was my district number that I was assigning to. Okay? Picking up territory, so I'm getting more outside of Sandusky in this district configuration.

One of the things that's happened, though, keep in mind, and you'll see it on my screen, that I ended up selecting when I did that point and click function of selecting different geographies, multiple geographies, I ended up picking up this township here outside of Marlette. So, I picked up that township outside, but I haven't picked up the city of Marlette. So, it is showing as a basic little piece of the township that hasn't been assigned yet. If this was my district and I said, okay, this is it, it would end up showing me I have a noncontiguous piece here. So, I can go and make any assignments I wanted to and select the geography and start building my district on that side.

Again, I'm at the voting precinct. If I wanted to say that I'm set on this side, and I want to take the whole county. Up here above at the very northern portion of the thumb. I want to assign all of that to District 2. Again, selection layer, or the quick tools, set it at the county level, and by having my selected layer at the county, I can now click and select that entire county, all going into District 2. I still need to add more people to it, in order to do this. So, I can experiment, say that I want to take that entire county next door to it.

Now what, you see suddenly is that down here at the bottom of the spreadsheet, it's saying that I've got too many people now in District 2. You see that? My arrow button on my spreadsheet is pointing downward, which means I have too many people. You can quick check that, but indeed what I've got in District 2 is 97,000 people. But my ideal that I'm shooting for is only 71,000. So, I've got 26,000 more people than I should in District 2. Okay? Maybe I don't want to take the entire county. That's one mechanism. I could. I could just undo all of it and then drop down and maybe do it at the town level. Or the township or the precinct in my system. That's one option. So, I can do the undo,

and clear that assignment of the entire county, and go back in and change my layer from the county to the precinct. And now at the precinct layer, I can go and assign multiple precincts to start building what would be building up the number of people in that district.

Maybe I want to go down the side of this county. Not only the top, but down on the side. I'm still 20% underpopulated. So, it's just a matter of selecting the geography that you want to assign to this District 2 to build it out.

So, now that I've done this portion of the county into District 2, I'm within my 5% ideal. You'll see instead of an up or down arrow, the number, the difference, has turned green. And it has got a checkmark to it. You're now within that ideal district size that we talked about. We're within that plus or minus 5 or the overall 10% deviation. So, you can end up seeing where you are at any particular point in time, and whether or not, indeed, the district is coming into shape of how you want the population to be.

So, these are some quick selection capabilities on that side. You've got multiple ways of doing this kind of assignment. As I mentioned, the quick tools, the top of the box, or different drop-down menus here on the right-hand side. All of that is different ways that you can use the information. If I click on the information tool, it will end up now letting me select. So, I just hit the information tool, and I selected a precinct. And what it did is it brought up on the left-hand side the information for that feature. So, if I wanted to see how many people are down here that I haven't assigned yet, I can, with the information tool, select that and see that in that precinct there, you've got all the different population numbers for the whole precinct, all the different characteristics, the different data for the racial groups, it's all there for that particular, in this instance, precinct. So, that is there on the left-hand side by using the information tool.

Select target district. That's letting me select and bring up that set district or select district tool. That's another way of doing that. Again, this brings me back to the box that comes up, what layer of geography do you want to assign with. Again, just a different way of doing that selection piece on that side.

>> Kim, can you review again how to delete a precinct?

>> KIM BRACE: Define a precinct?

>> No, delete it. Say you put in District 2, and you want to reduce the population, so you want to delete one precinct. How would you do that?

>> KIM BRACE: You can either select it as an unassigned, so you're taking it away. So, I can select my select district as unassigned, and then select a precinct here. I can set it to assign/unassign. There I've unassigned that.

>> Where's the unassign?

>> KIM BRACE: It's basically a combination of what district you're assigning to, and this is district unassigned.

>> It's like its own district.

>> Okay, I have to change my district to unassigned.

>> Yep, yep, that's the key.

>> That's why I couldn't do it.

>> Yeah, you could end up doing that and unassigning individually, or with the box, like what we talked about before. So, I can select and unassign numbers of pieces of geography.

Okay. So, selecting or unselecting. Again, it's doable and possible with any levels of geography. Or any territory that you want to do on that side.

And, so, if I want to zoom to a district, I've got, you know, I was going to do 15 districts, I've only got two assigned, but if I want to zoom to a district, I hit there, and it will give me the box, if I go pointer and zoom to a district. Yeah, it's not -- well, I'm not sure where the zoom to district isn't functioning right here. I'll check that out and see what's going on.

Oh, okay, let me change the district from unassigned. I want to zoom to District 1. So, I select that, and now I zoom to the district that I'm assigning to, and now it's zooming to District 1. Okay, that's what it was. So, if I select it as District 2, now zoom to district will set me to District 2, zoom to District 2.

Okay. So, it's different experiments to see what it is, to see how it operates. But, again, different ways. Notice that when I'm zoom to district, it's also giving me an outline of the district. It's showing up in red in an outline for that district. If you notice closely, again, we've got that little piece of the city down here that's not assigned to District 2. So, that becomes a small inside piece that's not assigned, and it gets its own boundary of red around it, because it's that donut hole in the middle of the district.

So that's a whole bunch of the assignment layers. I'm not going to go into overlays quite yet, because that's a whole other piece of capability. Which one?

Oh, okay. Yeah. John pointed out if you want to set your target district, again, it's setting on the district that you're setting to. So, now if I set my -- I can set my target to bounce up. I want to set my target to District 1. And, again, change that district assignment.

>> Yeah, there's three ways to set your target district. There's the one at the very top right, at the very top there where you select the individual district, and also on the edit menu, there's an assign district button. And then there's that quick wheel, where you can also -- you can't change your district assignment, but you can change your level of geography there.

>> KIM BRACE: So, I'm not going to go over the overlay quite yet, because that involves some more geography on that side. And I'm not going to do the smart select quite yet, because that's a little bit more complicated.

>> Mr. Brace? Do you mind if we take a ten-minute recess?

>> KIM BRACE: I was just thinking the same thing.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: All right. Without objection, we will call a ten-minute recess. Hearing no objections, currently 10:35, we'll stand in recess until 10:45, so everybody can stand up and stretch their legs. Thank you very much.

(Recess)

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Call this meeting of the Michigan Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission back to order at 10:55 a.m. Will the secretary please call the roll?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Absolutely, Madam Chair. Commissioners, please say present when I call your name. If you are attending remotely, please disclose your physical location.

I'll start with Doug Clark.

- >> COMMISSIONER CLARK: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Juanita Curry.
- >> COMMISSIONER CURRY: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Anthony Eid?
- >> COMMISSIONER EID: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Brittini Kellom.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rhonda Lange?
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Steve Lett?
- >> COMMISSIONER LETT: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Cynthia Orton?
- >> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: MC Rothhorn?
- >> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN:
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Rebecca Szetela?
- >> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Janice Vallette?
- >> COMMISSIONER VALLETTE: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Erin Wagner?
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Richard Weiss?
- >> COMMISSIONER WEISS: Present.
- >> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Dustin Witjes?
- >> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Present.

Ten Commissioners present and we have a quorum.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: We'll continue our practice of mapping, I'll turn it over to Kim Brace.

>> KIM BRACE: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Okay, I'm going to show you one other function for -- to be aware of. And then I'm going to have John do another function. So that you can hear another piece that's here. Again, we're in the edit tools. Richard had a great suggestion -- wait a minute, hold on. I did it again today. Let me go

and share my window again. Sorry about that. Okay. I changed my mouse size, so that you hopefully can see this mouse a little bit better. And it's now highlighted as a black mouse as opposed to white and white and you can't see it. Hopefully, this will be easier for you to follow.

What I want to do right now is I want to go over to this manage districts button. So, if I select manage districts, what it does is it brings up a menu of different things you can do with districts. This shows all 15 districts of what I'm showing here. And it shows several different pieces. You can end up in this menu, you can do a bunch of different things.

For example, if you want to change in district one from being a purple district to maybe being something in blacker side of things, I can change and select the district color. And change the color on that side. So, I can change any district and any color scheme that I want through this manage districts scheme.

It lets me also do a bunch of other things. It will let you sort on different things, so I'll show you which ones are locked or not. I can select and look at them on different instances. And I can sort them. So, here's -- if you notice, I'm clicking on the arrow button next to the various data items or data things in this manage district. I can sort, select with, do any kind of equations, find the highest, find the lowest, whatever the case may be. I can also see whether or not there's any discontinuousness. Again, the question you had, Cynthia, in terms of the pieces outside of the city, or that sort of thing. It will show up here in the configuration that I've got. I've got in District 2, I've got two holes in there, if you remember when we looked at District 2, we can go back to District 2. Notice when I clicked on it, it zoomed immediately to the district. So, one of the holes is this one here, looks like there's some other piece. I can go and select that and -- I thought that was -- maybe it's not this function. There's another function. But I can see where there are -- yeah, that's in the plan errors. Okay. I can see where there are different pieces on that side. So, manage district is a good thing you can start experimenting with to change colors.

The other thing you can do is if you get a district that you like, you can lock it, so that as you do that push and drag function, if you're dragging into the territory in District 2 that you have locked, it won't change that territory. Okay? So, keep in mind that your locking mechanism is a way of keeping things the way they are, and you don't need to end up making that change. Yes? Cynthia?

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: So, to lock a district, you select on the line and click lock?

>> KIM BRACE: If I'm selecting District 2, say that I'm within 10%, let me go and add a little bit more to the territory here. I want to assign these pieces to -- oops. I didn't want to assign it to District 1. Again, that was because my district number was set to 1, not to 2. So, now if I go and assign here -- I'm going to assign all of that to District 2, and I'm now at 1.4% under. So, that's good. I think that's a good district, where it is. And, so,

what I want to do is go up to manage districts and select District 2. And I want to lock it. That button right there. So, I lock it, and it turns the lock status to true. So, now if I go back and go into territory, and say that I want to assign to District 3, I want to start building District 3, I can assign District 3 to those, and it's starting to build District 3. But if I went and moused over the territory and selected some of this, but also some of that green District 2, watch what happens. When I release it, what it does is, yes, I want to assign. It's not assigning those pieces. Because I had locked District 2. Okay?

So, that way you can end up setting something, hey, I like this for this plan, and lock that district. On that side.

You can lock and unlock at any point in time in the system. So, experiment with that in setting up the district that you want, and continuing on to another district, without worrying about potentially disturbing it and changing it. If the district is not locked, then you're apt to make a change.

So, if I went over and I wanted to assign now to Districts 3 again, that's where I am, and I want to assign this territory here, to District 3, I'm building this out. Notice what I ended up doing. I ended up picking up that little piece of the city there, because my mouse and my box that I drew touched the piece of the city. So, now I've got a discontinuous piece, right?

So, if I go back to manage districts, that's where I'm going to see I've got discontinuousness on that side. It's a way of cross-checking on the fly as you're going forward to potentially find problems on that side.

What you will find as you draw, particularly if you're down at the block level, blocks can be real, real small. They clear out a whole bunch of them, cleared out about 87 million around the country from 2010, because they had too many little, tiny things, like I showed you before, the intersections, or the clover leafs of a freeway. Those were individual blocks. They've cleared those out, but there are still some in there. And if you're down assigning at the block level, it's possible that you could miss a little tiny piece that you couldn't really see, but it's there. The system would know it's there, and would suddenly catch something like that. And that's where there's checks later on that we'll go through to show that.

So, this managed district functionality gives us a lot of different things. You can hide and unhide, you can change colors. You can, in fact, make changes to district numbers. Say you've assigned this to District 3 already, but I don't really want to say that's District 3, I want to change that and renumber it. I can renumber there, and you need to select a blank district number. So, I selected District 3. I want to change that to District 6. By doing that, now that's District 6. Okay?

Now, unfortunately, it's green and sitting next to green. So, it's kind of not contrast-y enough. So, I'll go back into 6 and change the color, and make that more yellowish on that side. Now I can see it better. On that side. So, by just changing color and selecting, I can switch territories between two districts and move back and forth. Or I can merge

two districts together with this function, too. So, that gives you a lot of different capabilities on that side.

So, that's the manage districts side of things, to let you look at different things in that regard.

So, I'm going to turn it over to John for a second. John is going to look at the next function that's there called labeling. Yeah, go ahead and share your screen.

>> So, I'm in a blank plan, thumb working plan version 101. I'm going to talk mostly here about the labeling function, but also before we get to the labeling function, you want to think about what conventions you want to use for naming your plans. We don't have to have an answer today, but think about how you'd do that. For example, you might want to include your initials in it, the Commission's initials don't conflict with each other, for example. So, you could have your initials, the type of plan you're working on, maybe a regional notation, something like that all on the plan's name, so you know what it is. You may have a dozen plans and think I want to show somebody something, but which plan was it. So, the naming conventions are something that you need to think about, but that's down the road.

So, as far as the menus go, we looked at a lot of the plan management, create plans, we talked about that. And now we're on the edit tools. As we go down the list on the edit tools, what I want to talk about is the labeling one. So, down here you have labeling. And you check that box, and the labels turn on. There's probably a default that is going to give you the name of the geography, the geographic level, in this case counties, and then the population.

So, you can see the overview of what the population is for each of the counties in the State of Thumb. Now, if you change your level, again, as if I'm creating a district, I'm going out to the top to select the layer, and instead of counties, I'm going to select township. Now I hit select. And if I zoom in to the townships, the labels pop up with the population of the townships. And this is an important way to kind of know what's next to the areas you're looking at. Again, I'll go to Bay City, below the voting precincts, and it will give me the same information. It's got the name of the voting precinct, which isn't very interesting. It's just a long string of numbers. But below it in the blue, it's got the population of the voting precinct. So, when you're working at the lower levels, that will give you that information.

So, I'm going to go back up to county, I'm going to zoom back out. And you can see what the population of each of the counties are.

Another thing that we want to get used to is using the undo function, because you'll find yourself drawing things, and you'll want to make changes all the time. The undo function is your friend. And Kim has already shown you where that is. It's just the, you know, undo last command.

So, for me, I'm going to start with District 1. We know how to do that. And I'm going to select by county. And what I want to do is I just want to just select a whole county that I know is way over the number. I just want to get an idea of what's in that county.

So, let's look at Bay County by itself, and you want to know what's Bay County look like. So, I can go to assign, and I'm just going to select Bay County. Assigned to District 1. So, now my District 1 is all of Bay County. And down here in the deviation box, with 104,000 people, I'm 46% over. So, it's a surplus of 33,000 people. And I know that. This is not really a valid district, but what it does give me, quickly, is I have a little demographic information down here on just Bay County. So, if you want to know a little information about the whole county, there it is.

You could also, and I'm going to undo that. So, that was nice, that's useful. I know a little bit about Bay County, but I don't really need that right now. So, I undo it and it's gone. But you can quickly get information about an area that way. So, in the same way, I can zoom in, select my layer to be township, and I'm going to select Bay City to District 1. Bay City by itself, so that is 33,000 people, and you can see the demographic information just for Bay City. That's one way you can see what you're doing without actually drawing a district. And I'm going to undo that. Select up to three fields for labeling across census geography. So, on the left side of this box are all these wonderful fields, which you can select any one you want. The default is the name of the geography, so, county or township, or precinct, and then below it is aPOPTOT. So, a population total. That's pretty close to the top of the list here. So, you can customize that. There's apop total. If I want to add it, I add it, and it's going to select and show me that information twice. So, now I've got Tuscola, 52,825, and I've displayed that twice. I don't want that, so I'll go back to labeling, select the apop, and remove it. Hit apply, and now I'm back to the view with the population totals.

You can also do more information on the labels. I don't know, do you want me to do another piece of information, or do a theme at this point?

>> KIM BRACE: You can end up -- you can end up showing a bunch of different things. Go ahead, John, and show other data items.

>> All right. So, again, that's labeling. So, for right now, population is the important thing. The other thing we've got, again, still in this edit, the edit tools menu, you've got thematic. What's thematic? Well, if I click it and turn it on, what did it do? Well, suddenly, I've got a theme of circles. So, it's greater area for greater population. So, now you can see in the State of Thumb which counties are the largest and which are the smallest. So, in this Genesee County, 407,000 people. That's the largest of the counties in the State of Thumb. Saginaw, Bay, those are pretty big, and Huron is only 31,000. And that's a theme.

So, what's in a theme? Just like the labeling menu, I can bring up the thematic menu. And it has all these data fields you could choose from. But right now it's just the total

population, which is fine, because all I really want to do right now is I just want to get an idea of how big these counties are. And this is a visual way for me to do that.

Now, I can do a more complicated theme by giving a denominator to something. So, this is a two-step process. So, what I'm going to do is I'm going to remove the one field, so there's a remove button, so I remove it. Now I got nothing. I hit apply, and there's no themes. It's giving me an error message saying you've got nothing, can't do that.

So, what I'm going to do now is I'm going to go down, and I'm going to look for the African American population, which is here. So, aPOP BL-A. So, I select that and apply. Sorry, add it. Add it, one field. Now if I hit apply, it's going to give me a theme on the African American population. It should be doing that. I don't know if it is doing that. Let's try it. Okay. Now I'm going to give it a denominator. That was just the total number.

Down below there's something called the threshold field. So, the denominator is going to be the total population. So, I have the threshold field and hit apply. Now it should give me the African American percentage. Then I'm going to change my layer to the township level. And then here's what I'm trying to show. So, when I zoom into the Flint area, I see that Flint City has a fairly high percentage of African American, but let's say another township over here, let me find another one, Gaines township has a lower percentage and its area circle is much lower. So, this is one where you can look at percentages using the themes. And now I'm going to turn the themes off. I'm going to go back to the county level. I'm going to zoom out. There's a lot you can do with themes. Sorry, we're just touching the surface on the themes right now. It's important to be able to turn on the labels when you set it for population. It gives you a very good idea of what you need to do in terms of adding and removing population. Let me see, what else?

So I'm just going to assign a couple of county-level districts here. And I already know some of these are, you know, they are more than one district, because it's 70,000. So, you can look, when we talked about painting the Sistine Chapel, you don't necessarily do from start to finish. You want to look at what you're doing. So, if I look at these counties, I can see some of them are over the target population, but some of them are really close to the target population. Look at Shiawassee. If I click on that and want to create a district with just that county. If you look down here in the box, it's 68,000 people, and the target is 71,000. That's right on the money. So, you know, you can do this sort of what-if scenario at the top level, and just see how much population there is in each county, and how does that apply to the districts. Now I'm going to undo that.

So, we talked a little bit about labeling. We just touched on the themes. They are there, but they can be a little complicated. And I just want to get the idea that at the general level, go ahead and look at the counties, go ahead and look at some townships. You can zoom around and get a feel for which ones are heavily populated and which ones are sparsely populated.

So, let me just pause there and see if there's any questions about that part of labeling or just thinking about the counties.

>> When I click on labeling and move those two over, name and total population, add them, but if I click labeling, I still don't get -- actually, it just popped up.

>> Okay.

>> So, never mind. Just took a little time.

>> Now you've got the labels. One thing that can be frustrating is if you're not at the level of geography, you're not going to see it. So, I just changed my level of geography to townships, but I'm zoomed too far out. So, a lot of times in this process, you'll get comfortable with something, and then you'll make a change and go what happened to my menu, what happened to my labels? So, it's important to look and see what did you actually change. So, in this case, I changed my level of geography to township. So, I can't see it until I zoom in. And now I'll get the labels for the population of the townships. So, you know, that's another thing that we'll become aware of.

So, I guess that's all for the moment. We can come back to how to think about the drawing process a little bit later.

>> KIM BRACE: So, what we wanted to do is give you the update as it relates to some broad functions. I'm going to share back to my screen on that regard. So, we've gone through this edit tools and being able to draw districts, see the districts, all of that. This is the main functions you'll be doing for building your districts, is within this edit tools. All of the other drop-down menus are different things you can do, analysis-wise you can do, reports you can do, all of those other kinds of things are additional pieces. Whether or not you have data you want to exchange once you've got a plan, you can exchange it, exchange it with somebody else or whatever. There's some utilities and the setting up of the active matrix.

But I think the main thing that we wanted to get to today is in this edit tools function. And what we wanted to do then is turn it over to you guys to play with. We're here today, and, so, I think what we want to try to do is give you half hour or whatever time to just play. And we'll go around, we'll be here to answer questions for you, see how you guys can manipulate and get a feel for this. And then you can end up asking us questions as we go along.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: All right. Sounds good, thank you very much, Mr. Brace. We will then let the Commissioners play with the software for 30 minutes and ask questions as they pop up. Experimenting. Go ahead.

>> Madam Chair, just a reminder of the Commissioners, for the benefit of our interpreter, when the questions are asked, that their microphones be -- so all members have the benefit of not only the question, but the response.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Without objection, the 30 minutes for the Commissioners to experiment with the software will begin now. Hearing no objections, please go ahead.

>> Hi, this is for the interpreter. If that's for the benefit of the group, I can't hear what's being said. I hear a voice, but I can't distinguish any words.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Commissioner Lett, can you turn on your microphone, please?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: How do you get rid of this?

>> KIM BRACE: Put your mouse right here, and just click. You're into map layers, okay. Can you bring it up?

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Says dismiss down at the bottom.

>> KIM BRACE: Oh, you're locked to the tool bar, that's why. There you go, dismissed. Hidden by the task bar.

>> Yep, dismiss that. Cancel that. Cancel that.

>> COMMISSIONER LETT: Thank you.

>> KIM BRACE: There you go.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: This is Commissioner Witjes. I have ten unassigned areas. This would be the quickest way just to fix it, I would imagine, right?

>> KIM BRACE: Yes, that's correct.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Cool, I'll keep on keeping on.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Okay, just for clarify for the public record, in case anyone wonders what we're doing. The Commission is spending this time familiarizing themselves with the autoBound EDGE software, practicing in a fictitious area of Michigan, which we have deemed to be the State of Thumb, and we are working on drawing districts in that area, just to learn and familiarize the software and become comfortable with it, and coming on and asking questions of our vendors when we have questions about what we're doing.

>> Public is watching?

>> Just a reminder to Commissioners and staff who just joined us, and to Commissioners who are already present. We're still live in the meeting, and, so, any discussion or anything, if you're asking questions, please turn on your microphone, so that members of the public watching remotely are also able to hear and understand what is being said. Thank you.

>> Okay, so, this is how we're going to find the software, from the start.

>> So, hit this?

>> Hey, Kim?

>> Turn on your mic.

>> What about our interpreters?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: So -- this is Commissioner Witjes, by the way. I think I broke it. So, it crashed.

>> Okay. Don't want to create a plan.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: So, these now say they were last accessed at 9:41 in the morning, but I'm unable to open them, because when I do, it will say --

>> KIM BRACE: Close it off.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: So, when I am trying to launch the other one, it does the same thing, or says object reference not to an object or something like that. But I have no idea what that means.

>> Okay, okay.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Will do.

>> Okay, bring it back up again.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Clone it?

>> KIM BRACE: Actually, go up to plan manager and select it, but don't -- let's see if -- so, restore backup.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: That's not good. Backup has not been turned on. For this one, too. Same. That's just that. It's not it.

>> Put her in the queue for next help.

>> KIM BRACE: Yeah, they didn't put everything on there. They gave you software, but didn't put the data side of things.

>> It has the active matrix, the correct -- hasn't come up in the State of Thumb.

>> KIM BRACE: All right, I'll go into settings and take a look in a second. Let me see what I can figure out.

>> Easy question.

>> Not a big deal, I can always make another one.

>> KIM BRACE: Spent all that time last night working on it.

>> I had all the green checks and everything.

>> KIM BRACE: Try a save external, see where that's --

>> You guys have it set, how do I get it set?

>> Got it.

>> You started a plan and had 38. Okay, that's fine.

Okay, go to plan manager. Let's do this. Hit cancel. Close this so, close plan.

>> So, go ahead and import it. Prompts you to save, now create plan or plan manager. Is that the practice one? Go to configure.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: And the crash!

>> Now hit configure.

>> I'm going to run to the restroom real quick.

>> KIM BRACE: If you can work with Anthony, he's got problems on his computer, which may be like what you were dealing with yesterday.

>> Okay.

>> KIM BRACE: So, get him better and synced up.

>> I can do that.

>> One plan. Don't want to use that, 38. It's gone. All right. Now we're going to hit cancel. Now we want to create plans. Now that this is going -- the name of the plan again. Maybe use your initials or something. Long name if you want.

Now under the plan type, hit State Senate and don't hit continue. There you have to change it to 15. Now hit it.

>> I just have a question, John or Kim, I just have a quick question. Do we have to manually save it? Wait until you're at my microphone.

>> Probably a good idea to manually save, but it will also prompt you to save when you close.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: This is Commissioner Witjes. For a public service announcement here, save and save often, because if you don't and it crashes, you're going to lose all your work. So, keep that in mind.

>> You're in the edit menu.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: The way you save is by going to plan management, and then there should be like a save plan link. You're welcome.

>> You can manually save it there. Then if you want to test it, plan save. If you then go to close plan, it will -- it's not going to close. It's going to prompt you first, do you really want to close the plan. Then it should also ask if you want to save it.

>> Thanks.

>> Yeah, they are just trying to find the software on Juanita's computer.

If it didn't download properly, we'll have them reload it. Okay, they are just checking out an error here. Not finding the software. Maybe it has to be loaded again. Checking on that.

>> I figured it out. Go and select your target district, change to unassign, hit done. Then --

>> I'll let them know there's a problem with the download. See if we can download it again.

>> How do you get the colors to work?

>> For the district?

>> For anything.

>> So, you're assigning district one at the township level. Select it. Okay, go over to manage districts. There's a color. Dismiss that, "X" out. Go back to assign. Select township level.

>> Do you remember how to lock?

>> Am I supposed to --

>> It's under -- it's under edit tools. Okay, I see, thank you.

>> Oh, the blues are townships?

>> This is the county, this whole big thing.

>> But I couldn't have this be one district, because it would be way too many.

>> For here, but you could have this one.

>> So, how do we know how many people?

>> That's easy, create a new plan.

>> Population total, okay.

- >> So, Midland County is more population than one district.
- >> It is pretty close.
- >> As I'm navigating, I'm also thinking do I have labels on. That's what I was trying to figure out. I do have the labels.
- >> Right. You have the township, right?
- >> I'm at the county level.
- >> So, change your level to township.
- >> Undo is your friend. Zoom in a little bit.
- >> I'm going to unassign this one. Focus on Midland. So, here's a way to think about midland. You put it in, it's in there. What's the population?
- >> 83.
- >> How much over is it? 12,000, right?
- >> Yep, yep. Midland has enough for 1.17. So, 17% over.
- >> Because the deviation. So, I'm going to repeat what I heard you say. Midland, right, the whole county, 17% more than it needs. So, I'm going to try to find that 17%. Assign it to district one.
- >> One of the other districts. So, that's one way to think about it. So, it's entitled to one whole district and extra population. So, that's a good practice. You're saying right away, I know there's a whole district in Midland County.
- >> In the county, yes.
- >> Now you want to zoom in and look at the population of the townships.
- >> What I'm thinking about, too, the burbs of Midland, the town, and I'm also thinking about that city, right, in the suburb area, and recognizing, okay, we have a county line, which makes it little bit more. Don't want to pick up more, I want to take out. Right, I'm going to paint myself in a corner if I take it out from this corner.
- >> So, you have to take something that's adjacent to one of the other districts. So, you have to take --
- >> So, what I'm asking myself right now, I'm thinking about the data that I can see with using the layers, excuse me, the labels. What I want to do is play with the idea of, okay, got the whole county, but now I also want to play with the city and the burbs. And let me talk myself through this. I'm going to paint myself in a corner, because I can't do anything with these folks up there. In the State of Thumb, no other place. So, I can't do that.
- >> But zoom in to the little piece next to midland city.
There's a small piece of Midland City that's in Bay County. If you zoom in more.
- >> Sorry.
- >> If you want to avoid that, go to pointer.
- >> Madam Chair? I believe that the interpreter, Mr. Morgan, if you could speak more clearly into the microphone, just a little bit louder. I do believe that --
- >> We're trying. Thank you for your patience. Thank you, Toi.

>> And thank you for your compliance.

>> Okay. So, what you see there is that there's a piece of Midland City that's actually in Bay County. So, you can kind of keep the county whole, which is fine. It's already that way. When you go for election purposes, for jurisdiction purposes, that's a township of Bay County. Midland Township of Bay County.

>> Okay.

>> That's just something to be aware of. So, if you zoom back out a little bit, now we're at the township level. Zoom back out. Now look at the townships on the edge of your district. So, look at the southern two townships.

>> When you say townships --

>> Zoom in so I can see the pop. Zoom out. Now, how much do you lose? 2,000. You're going to go a long way, or you can cut Midland City and --

>> Add to this one. Okay, I'm going to play with that. And if I want to extract that 17,000, then I need to get down to the layer, which is the census block layer.

>> Or the precinct layer.

>> Or precincts. Okay, difference is census block versus voting blocks, but precincts will essentially change, correct?

>> No, not for that purpose. They are not going to change for your mapping purposes. They'll change after you've created these districts, ten years, eight years, six years down the road. They'll change the precincts. You're not legally using the precincts as a description that carries forever. It's just a description at the time of creation. And then the county clerks may change the precinct boundaries independent of what you've done.

>> Okay, thank you. So, there's no advantage or disadvantage to using one or the other, but they are both smallest layer?

>> No, no, there is an advantage. The precincts are a higher level of geography than the blocks. So, you don't really want to use the blocks if you can use precincts.

>> Okay, thank you. Okay.

>> Now remember, you've turned off your precinct layer. So, you have to go back down to the -- no, no, layer manager.

>> Yeah. Dismiss the menu, yep, okay. Layer manager, and now turn those back on. Be careful here, don't delete them.

>> Yeah, true, yeah, I want both. Oh, right, actually, I don't want this one on yet.

>> Problem is, you've zoomed in, so you need to maximize your window again. Dismiss that window.

>> Going to have to tag team.

>> What I don't see -- oh, I do see.

>> Okay, but --

>> You should be able to and do it as unassigned. Now it's selected to five. Yeah, unassign. Okay, so let's -- use the assign button. Yeah, that one there.

>> Sometimes assign and unassign is a little bit flakey. That's what you got to just experiment with.

>> Okay, will do. Okay, thanks.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: This is Commissioner Witjes. I think the -- what the problem was, the -- something got corrupted on it, because not even the matrix will load at this particular point anymore. And this is what I -- I did these last night, and then I redid this area today, like at the last 30 minutes or so. And then the whole thing happened when it shut off. Which is fine. I mean, I can just redo it. Not a big deal, but --

>> What may have happened is remember we said save whatever it was in the plan manager of -- we did save external. Looks like you've saved that externally, and that's why you're getting that image there.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Let's see if I can open the one I just did.

>> This is a question to anyone in the room. Does anyone remember how to lock the area? I'll come to you, Cynthia, thank you.

>> COMMISSIONER ORTON: Yes, manage districts. If you just click on Manage Districts, you can select and push lock.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Not a big deal, I'm not too worried about it anyway. I'll just get rid of it and make another one. Not a big deal for me. And I got a weekend. All right, thank you.

>> There we are.

>> One district, population was too high, and I thought it was too low. I read it wrong. I'm going to un-select. Set target district. Unassign.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: We are just about at our lunchtime, everybody. If we want to wrap up what we are doing. Unassign, I'm unassigning townships. If I go in more -- use the pointer. What I think want to do is unassign down here. Unassigning at the township level. And I want to unassign 33,000. Bay City, don't want to get too close. That municipal boundary is the blue, right?

>> KIM BRACE: That's actually a township boundary.

>> Township boundary. Is the orange?

>> KIM BRACE: The orange is either the city or it is also the precinct.

>> Let's see. Under label -- nope. Layer manager, here we go. So, I turned off the voting blocks. I do have voting precincts on. And the townships on. And the counties. The counties are the dotted lines. I think the blue is, because it's larger.

>> KIM BRACE: That is larger. Looks like the township numbers. And I didn't unassign. All right, now I'm down to 15,000. And I'm going to click assign. And I'm unassigning. All right, still got that. So, 11,000. And Saginaw, because I've highlighted Saginaw, and I need 22,000. So, I want to go around there.

(Multiple speakers).

>> I was trying to select this, but it wouldn't select. Because it's part of -- assigned maybe part of the voting precinct to something else. Is that why?

>> So, 7,000 difference. And --

>> Did you lock it or something?

>> Everyone, can I get everyone's attention, please? So, we don't have a lot on our agenda for this afternoon. And, so, I'm wondering, we have a homework assignment from Mr. Brace, but other than that, we just have one piece of correspondence and a General Counsel update and approval in minutes in the afternoon. I'm wondering if the Commission would prefer rather than us taking a lunch break now, we move through the remainder of the agenda, with the goal of being done by 12:30, and then adjourn at 12:30. Okay, can I get a motion? Do I need a motion?

>> I move we continue.

>> Second.

>> Third.

(Laughing).

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Motion by Commissioner Lett, seconded by Commissioner Witjes, to -- rather than continue with the -- take the recess for lunch, we'll continue with our agenda, starting with the homework assignment from Kimball, then move on with agenda items.

>> Madam Chair? Sorry, you were holding the vote.

>> Take the vote.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Okay, so, all in favor of the motion, which is to continue forward without taking the lunch break, please raise your hand and say aye.

>> Madam Chair, is there discussion on the motion?

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, is there discussion on the motion?

>> I have discussion.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Go ahead.

>> So, we could do that, but we have this time now with our vendors and the experts with the software. So, I think something we should consider when making this vote is if Commissioners would rather spend more time doing what we've been doing for the past half hour, while we have them here at our disposal, instead of doing it on our own at home individually.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: So, keep in mind, if we adjourn the meeting, individual Commissioners can still continue to work with our vendors, as long as we don't have a quorum that is meeting with them, we would be able to continue. So, the intention would not be everybody has to leave. If there are Commissioners who want to continue to work with EDS after we are adjourned, as long as it is not a quorum of the commission, that can continue.

All right, ready to vote or continued discussion? Let's vote. All in favor say aye. All opposed say nay. All right, the ayes have it, so we will continue with our agenda item instead of taking a recess at this time, and we will move on to agenda item 6-b, which will be -- actually, let me stop there. So, I think we need to do new business item 6-a-2,

reach consensus on the regions within the State of Thumb, but I don't know if we're ready to do that at this point, so I'll entertain a motion to move that agenda item off to next week, if anyone is interested in doing that.

6-a-2, reach consensus on the regions within the Thumb State. I think we're all still kind of playing. Yeah, all still playing and practicing, so, I don't think we're ready to do that. I think we should just advance that to the agenda next Thursday. So, can I get a motion to that effect?

>> I move to table that item till next Thursday.

>> Madam Chair? Your rules, under your rules of procedure, any items not addressed are automatically carried to the next agenda. So, if you don't take any action to resolve, it's carried over to unfinished business on the next meeting agenda. Certainly, the Commission could entertain a motion to postpone it to the next meeting, if it would, but, again, either would be appropriate.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Okay, we can table it without taking action on it, and we don't need to vote or anything, is that accurate?

>> You could either not address it and it would show up as unfinished business on your next agenda, pardon me, please, or you can have a motion to postpone it to the next meeting.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Let's move on to item 6-b, which is the homework assignment for August 5th. Without objection, I will hand it over to Mr. Brace to assign us that homework assignment. Hearing no objections, please proceed, Mr. Brace.

>> KIM BRACE: Sorry, Madam Chairman, had a mouth full of muffin. What we were looking for everyone to do is to draw districts over this next week. Draw 15 of them. As we said, want you to work off the various geographic levels, including going down to the block level, so that -- the goal is to try to bring your 15 districts, each of them, down within that 10% overall margin. You'll discover that it is going to take some work and some time to figure this out. This is the joys of redistricting. It does take some time to do this. So, it's important for you to start seeing that and start seeing, as you start drawing, you'll see there's lots of different ways of drawing. And that's what we want to experiment with. So, by all means, the goal is to see if you can draw a plan with 15 districts. Maybe you can draw multiple plans with 15 districts.

What we have always found successful is trying to see drawing them from different starting points. So, start the bottom left of the State of Thumb as one plan, and move upwards. And then start at the top and move downwards.

What you'll see when you do that is different directions lead you in different directions. That, indeed, when you get into that middle part of the State of Thumb, if you came up from the bottom, your configuration is maybe set as you go up into that middle, but it's a different configuration than when you come down from the top. That's one of the key components for you to recognize in redistricting. It really is a function of where the starting point is on your side.

So, experiment with that, and see if you can draw a couple of plans. You've got a week to play with and see what is doable with different geography points and different starting points. That's the key to keep in mind as you're working on your plan. Play with both of those. Yes?

>> So, in our homework, are we just using populations and trying to get it within the acceptable deviation, or are we trying to take into consideration some of the actual requirements?

>> KIM BRACE: Good point. It would be good if you start thinking in terms of the actual requirements, but also in terms of part of the homework assignment was also over this last week, is look at the communities of interest and the public comments that have come in. So that as you look at the Thumb region, there are some public comments dealing with that particular region. Certainly, you can sort on different areas of the state. So, look at those comments that came in from the Thumb area to help guide you, because you want to start taking into account some of the comments that have come into you already.

Somebody may have said, you know, from the Saginaw standpoint, you know, how you want to divide that out, or not divide it out. So, start thinking in terms of the circumstances that people may have already commented on to you.

>> So, my next question is, I have, on the public comment portal, this is for anyone. I've read them as they come in, but I haven't figured out how to sort them by area. So, it's really confusing to try to just pick out the geographical location ones.

>> KIM BRACE: I thought Loon had some tags that let you define those.

>> But does that only work if the comment is tagged? So, lots of them don't have tags on them. There's no other way?

>> KIM BRACE: I thought she had also, in her summary, done some degree of kind of clustering them together, in I thought regions, is what I remember reading for at least a couple of weeks.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: This is Sarah Reinhardt with the Department of State. If you use the advanced search feature, you can certainly search by tag, but you're correct, not every submission has a tag. But that can still be a useful feature for finding some of them. But what I would suggest to use, as well, is the keyword search feature. If you type in there "Upper Peninsula," it will result along the submissions that have the Upper Peninsula or are focused on the Upper Peninsula. You could also search for UP or to that affect, and it would pull similar results.

>> Another question, this is probably for Julianne. If they are tagged so they are easier to find, could we put a tag on them, or should we not do that?

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Thank you, Commissioner Orton. So, tagging them as far as the areas that they are speaking about, or -- because I know what we were trying to avoid was the summaries of what the written comments were. And, Moon, if I understand Ms. Reinhardt correctly, Moon's team is doing the tags or is not? Is not?

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: Tags are user optional. So, we had a discussion initially about how tags should be added, and one of the concerns was by adding tags, you might be drawing inferences from that person's map that they would not necessarily apply themselves. For example, you might consider a COI in western Michigan, but the person submitting it may not consider themselves as a part of western Michigan. So, we did not opt to add the tags for them. So, the person submitting can add the tag about what they consider a community of interest.

>> Thank you, Ms. Reinhardt. That was my recollection, as well, consistent with the guidance that we gave Commissioners, about doing that. So, no, Commissioner Orton.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Any additional questions, discussion items?

>> On the homework assignment, I would encourage Commissioners to not necessarily try to perfect a single plan, but look at multiple plans and then you can go back and forth and see what you like to kind of move forward, but if you spend your time trying to perfect a single plan and going over and over it again, it will become cumbersome.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you.

>> KIM BRACE: Yep, good point. So, experiment, and as I think we had said before, is try moving in one direction, and if you get stumped, go change and do another plan, go in the other way.

So, experiment with what might be doable.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: All right, thank you very much.

All right, we will now move on to our new business. Agenda item 7, which is the approval of the minutes. I will entertain a motion to approve the meeting minutes from July 22, 2021, if there are no proposed edits.

>> So moved.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Motion moved by Commissioner Witjes, seconded by Commissioner Lett. Any discussion or debate on the motion? Hearing none, moved and seconded to move the minutes from July 22, 2021, all in favor please raise your hand and say aye. All opposed, please raise your hand and say nay. The ayes have prevailed and the motion is adopted.

Next item on our agenda is staff reports, item 8. Ms. Hammersmith and Mr. Woods provided staff reports yesterday. So, without objection, I will ask General Counsel Pastula to provide a staff report. Hearing no objections, please proceed.

>> MS. JULIANNE PASTULA: Thank you very much, Madam Chair. It was very exciting to see the software getting loaded on everyone's computers, as well as the fictional State of Thumb discussions happening, and the assistance of our consultants. Again, for the benefit of the public, these are -- this was all a fictional exercise to get used to the software and become familiar with the mapping software. When the districts are drawn, they will not -- it will not be conducted in that fashion, when the actual mapping is done. So, this was an exercise to get used to the software.

Moving on, the litigation council RFP, one response has been forwarded for your consideration. Staff will be doing their internal review and scoring the point threshold, as in all the RFPs in the past, and forwarding that to the commission. Because one response was received, the commission may want to consider accelerating the review timing and having the committee meeting earlier than originally suggested. I'll leave that to the commission to decide. And the other update I have is that the draft rules of procedure that Commissioner Lett recommended -- excuse me, that Commissioner Lett requested, be amended. The draft of those amendments will be forthcoming for your consideration.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you very much. Without objection, I will ask Sarah Reinhardt from the Michigan Department of State if she has any updates to share with the Commission today. Please proceed.

>> MS. SARAH REINHARDT: No updates.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you very much. Moving to agenda item 10, correspondence. Dr. Petering presented to the Commission last week. Do Commissioners have any comments or discussion with respect to that correspondence that we received from Dr. Petering? All right. Hearing none, we will move on to our next agenda item, item 11, future agenda items. Without objection, I'll ask Executive Director Hammersmith to share about future agenda items. Hearing no objection, please proceed, Director Hammersmith.

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: Just in collaboration with what General Counsel Pastula just indicated, what I would like to do is put the Committee meeting as the first hour of a scheduled agenda. So, next Thursday, hopefully, or Friday, we can get that on the agenda, if that's okay with the Commission to take one hour out of a regular Commission meeting, so we don't have to schedule a separate meeting, because of the costs involved.

So, if there's no objection, we'll move forward and do that next week, because I think staff will have adequate time to review and get recommendations to the Committee ahead of time.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Any questions or concerns? MC Rothhorn?

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: I would offer it seems wise to expedite. This is important.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Can we get a motion with respect to Executive Director Hammersmith's -- could you repeat what it is you are requesting from us?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: I'm just requesting that we take one hour of the Commission time next Thursday or Friday, probably be the first hour of the meeting that we would take for the Litigation Council Committee to meet and do their work, and then we would have the Commission meeting immediately after that. In order to save expenses on rooms and travel and AV, translation, et cetera.

>> Does that require a motion because it's a separate Committee meeting, is that the idea?

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Go ahead. Go ahead.

>> Thank you so much, Madam Chair. Commissioner Rothhorn, yes. Currently, you have Commission meetings scheduled from 12:00 to 5:00 on Thursday and 9:00 to 3:00 on Friday. So, if the Commission desires to adjust those times or to schedule a Committee meeting, then that would need to be a formal motion and vote. So, that the meeting can be properly noticed for the benefit of the public.

>> COMMISSIONER ROTHORN: So, I'll make a motion to adjust our meeting schedule as commission to allow the committee to meet as expeditiously as possible, with proper notice, et cetera. How about 12:00 to 1:00 next Thursday?

>> I'll second that.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Okay, motion by MC Rothhorn to adjust our meeting schedule, seconded by Commissioner Eid to adjust it to 12:00 to 1:00 next Thursday for a subcommittee meeting, as well as an adjustment of our general meeting, so the subcommittee will be able to meet. Is there any discussion regarding the motion?

>> Madam Chair, for clarity, the motion I have logged is the committee will meet from 12:00 to 1:00 next Thursday, with the full Commission meeting beginning directly after, 1:00 p.m.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Yes, full Commission meeting at 1:00 p.m. All in favor please raise your hand and say aye. All opposed, please raise your hand and say nay. The ayes have it and the motion carries.

All right, moving on to our next agenda item, 12, announcements. Does any individual member have an announcement for us today?

Go ahead, Commissioner Witjes.

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: To reiterate the fact when you're working on your plans this week, to save and save often, because if the program closes, you will lose all your work. So, keep that in mind.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Just for clarity, could you -- oops, looks like I already got clicked out. Could you clarify how we save our plan within the autoBound EDGE program?

>> COMMISSIONER WITJES: Sure, so, on the right side of the screen at the top, plan management. If you click on that, there's a Save Plan button, and that's all you need to hit.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you very much for that, Commissioner Witjes.

All right. Executive Director Hammersmith, do you have any additional announcements?

>> MS. SUANN HAMMERSMITH: I do not. Thank you.

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>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Thank you very much. All right. At this point, all the agenda items are completed, and the Commission has no further business, I will entertain a motion to adjourn.

>> So moved.

>> VICE CHAIR SZETELA: Motion made by Commissioner Witjes, seconded by Commissioner Lett. Any discussion or debate on the motion? All in favor, please raise your hand and say aye. All opposed, please raise your hand and say nay. The ayes prevail, and the meeting is adjourned at 12:28 p.m. Thank you.

(Meeting adjourned at 12:28 p.m.)