

**City of Carpinteria
Ad Hoc District Elections Committee
Special Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, September 29, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting**

Acting City Clerk Barrett noted for the record that this meeting would be conducted pursuant to the provisions of the Governor's Executive Orders N-29-20 and N-33-20 and Santa Barbara County Health Officer's Order in response to the spread of the COVID-19 virus and provided the protocols by which the public would be participating and stated that members of the Committee, staff and any presenters would be participating by video conference.

1. Call to Order/Roll Call.

Councilmember Alarcon called the meeting to order at 4:06 pm.

Committee Members present: Councilmember Natalia Alarcon
Vice Mayor Al Clark

Staff members present: Dave Durlinger, City Manager
Olivia Uribe Mutal, Program Manager
Brian C. Barrett, Acting City Clerk

Others present: Sophia Garcia with Redistricting Partners
Russell Ruiz

2. Public Comment:

Acting City Clerk Barrett noted that written public comment from Russell Ruiz and Donna Downs had been received and distributed to the Committee.

3. Approval of meeting minutes of September 8, 2021.

There was no public comment.

Motion by Vice Mayor Clark, seconded by Councilmember Alarcon, to approve the meeting minutes of September 8, 2021. The vote was as follows:

AYES: Councilmember Alarcon, Vice Mayor Clark
NOES: None
ABSENT: None
ABSTAIN: None

The motion carried unanimously.

4. Debrief about September workshops.

Program Manager Uribe Mutal summarized the attendance of the three public workshops held to inform the community about communities of interest and noted that the workshops were recorded and will be placed on the District Elections website. She anticipated that more people will participate through the process as the City continues to engage residents. She indicated that additional background documents and videos would be added to the District Elections website, including replacing the mention of “re-districting” with “districting” on the District Elections website. She lastly mentioned that Redistricting Partners had previously reported that submitted maps could not be deleted from DistrictR.

There was no public comment.

5. Future Plans

City Manager Durlinger explained that after the three public workshops were held, there are five additional meetings to review maps and the mapping process. He received clarification from Redistricting Partners that four of the five meetings need to be held before the City Council at a noticed public hearing, while the City has discretion to hold one of the five meetings at the Council level or Committee level. He recommended the Committee hold another meeting to go over the adjustments to the district elections schedule and website. He specified that in the next couple of weeks the City will do a mailing to all City households with a placemat-sized map and instructions/background on the district elections process. He noted that the two pre-map hearings in September and October as shown on the District Elections website will be shifted to October and November and asked the Committee if they favored holding the first of the next five district elections meeting at the Committee level or Council level.

The Committee agreed to hold the first of the next five meetings at the Committee level instead at the City Council level.

Ms. Garcia interjected that the two pre-map hearings will inform the public of the process and how they can submit testimony, specifically communities of interest testimony, and that no draft district maps will be discussed until the map hearings beginning in January 2022.

Vice Mayor Clark asked when the 2020 Census data would be incorporated into DistrictR. Ms. Garcia anticipated the data being incorporated by late this week or next week.

Councilmember Alarcon remarked that Mr. Chaffee of Redistricting Partners was to draft a memo regarding the census blocks. Ms. Garcia replied that Mr. Chaffee is working with a lawyer firm to draft the memo and said that Redistricting Partners' general practice is to not split census blocks.

City Manager Durlinger commented that the information on census blocks is important for the Council to know when deliberating on map submittals. He inquired if when the paper maps are submitted and digitized, would they reflect where the public drew the lines independent of the census blocks. Ms. Garcia reiterated that census blocks can't be split in DistrictR and Redistricting Partners would modify the submitted paper map to adhere to City charter, state law and federal law in order to keep the integrity of the submitted map so the Council could use it as a draft map.

City Manager Durlinger addressed his understanding that the Council would have available unaltered digitized maps submitted by the public, even those that didn't comply with census block group lining. Ms. Garcia responded that there will be a breakdown of all DistrictR submitted maps and paper submitted maps to show total population, citizen voting age population, and deviation by district and that those maps that don't follow the law will be identified.

Vice Mayor Clark mentioned one of the census blocks that goes from one neighborhood to another and crosses the creek where houses on one side of the street are in one census block while on the other side of the street the houses are in another census block and thus are in different districts. Ms. Garcia replied that geography is tied to the census data and vice versa.

Councilmember Alarcon opened up public comment.

Mr. Ruiz spoke on the census block issue. He stated the Census Bureau website described what census blocks are, but not what the criteria is for creating them. He inquired why the City has odd-shaped census blocks. Ms. Garcia responded that the Census Bureau creates the census blocks and those census blocks that are small have a higher population while those that are large have a lower population. She noted that when setting up districts, the City must base districts on census data and equal population.

Vice Mayor Clark stated that the 2010 City population was 13,579, yet when he selected all census blocks in the City, the population came to 13,504. He said this was something that he would be checking on the 2020 census data.

Mr. Ruiz requested the City Attorney explain why the City must use census blocks and if census blocks aren't used, what would be the consequences. He observed it was odd that submitted maps can't be deleted in DistrictR and asked if submitted maps would be winnowed out or if all maps received would go before the Council and who would winnow the maps down. He strongly supported the Committee recommend a map and asked how many maps would be received.

Ms. Garcia responded that all maps submitted are public testimony and can't be deleted. She noted that members of the public can specify which maps (communities of

interest or district maps) they have submitted that they wish the Council to consider. City Manager Durflinger added that all maps submitted will be considered by the Council and encouraged the public to submit additional information if there are maps that they have submitted that they don't support any longer. Ms. Garcia reported that Redistricting Partners would make sure submitted maps adhere to the total plan deviation and the traditional districting criteria and modify a map if it doesn't adhere to the required criteria or if the Council directed Redistricting Partners to look at a particular community of interest or change the map based on testimony heard. City Manager Durflinger addressed his understanding that submitted maps would not be modified and all maps would be available to the Council. He described Redistricting Partners would identify and analyze themes in maps and produce examples of maps that follow those themes and comply or nearly comply with the law and give the Council options for adopting a map.

City Manager Durflinger stated that this Committee was formed with the purpose of helping staff establish the district elections process which is complete and the Committee's role is not to recommend maps to the City Council. He suggested one more meeting of the Committee to talk about the district mapping process and the outcomes of the communities of interest.

The Committee agreed with City Manager Durflinger's suggestion.

6. Scheduling of next meeting.

The Committee set the next Committee meeting on October 20, 2021 at 4 pm.

Councilmember Alarcon opened up public comment.

Mr. Ruiz asked for follow up on the issue with deleting submitted maps. Ms. Garcia replied that members of the public can comment on the particular map id or map name which they either wish to uplift or not be considered by the Council and would that would be considered as additional testimony.

7. Adjournment.

Councilmember Alarcon adjourned the meeting at 4:57 pm.


Brian C. Barrett, Acting City Clerk