

MINUTES OF THE WARD BOUNDARY REVIEW COMMITTEE
EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM
March 25, 2019 – 4:00 PM

Committee Members present: Martin Pepin, Chairman
 Martin P. Dumont, Vice Chairman
 David A. Witham
 Richard R. Michaud

Administration/Staff present: City Manager, Bob Belmore
 Director of Planning and Development, Shanna Saunders
 City Clerk, Trish Harris

Chairman Pepin called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

Review City Charter, Section 1.4 Changes to Ward Boundaries and Review Information compiled by City Staff

City Manager Belmore gave an overview of the handouts that were distributed.

There was discussion regarding the language in the Charter which says the Committee needs to use census data when reviewing ward boundaries. The charter also states that a review shall be conducted. The purpose of this committee is to review the ward boundaries, to determine if adjustments are needed, and to make recommendations of the adjustments, if needed.

Director Saunders stated that she has received information from the SRPC stating that the Census Bureau has recommended boundary changes for Census Geography in Somersworth and possibly splitting one tract into two tracts, so we would have 3 tracts instead of the present 2 tracts.

There was discussion about the number of registered voters in each ward; ward 1 has the most registered voters, and ward 5 has the least. The Number of registered voters does not include individuals under 18, etc. City Manager Belmore clarified that the Charter states that the ward boundaries include consideration of a number of factors such as character and makeup of wards as well as latest federal census data.

There was discussion about State Representative lines and that the State Representative of Somersworth Ward 2 also representing a part of Dover.

After brief discussion, the Committee had the following questions for staff, before moving forward:

Is it possible to find census data per ward?

How do the census blocks affect the ward boundary lines?

How will Tara Fields and Sunningdale residential developments affect the population of ward 4?

Any changes to the ward boundaries would be a change to the City Charter. What is the timeline for that?

Director Saunders said that it is good that we are starting this review right before the 2020 census. Asking these questions now is getting the information we need to move forward.

She said the SRPC has offered to visit and do a tutorial. The committee agreed to have the SRPC attend a future meeting.

Discuss future meeting schedule and follow-up information needs

Staff will follow up with the questions asked.

Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 23, 2019 @ 4:00.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Dumont. Motion passed, 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 4:25pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Trish Harris, City Clerk