

**MUSKEGON COUNTY APPORTIONMENT
COMMISSION 2011
MINUTES**

Hall of Justice
990 Terrace, 4th Floor
Muskegon, MI 49442
Wednesday, May 9, 2011
1:00 p.m.

Tony Moulatsiotis, Muskegon County Treasurer, Chairman
Tony Tague, Muskegon County Prosecutor
Nancy A. Waters, Muskegon County Clerk
Steve Markel, Democratic Party Chair
Christina Achterhoff, Republican Party Chair

Tony Moulatsiotis, Muskegon County Treasurer, Chairman, Presiding.

The meeting was called to order at 1:08 p.m. by Chairman Moulatsiotis.

Roll Call:

Present: Tony Moulatsiotis, Tony Tague, Nancy A. Waters, Steve Markel,
Christina Achterhoff

Absent: None.

Also Present: County Commissioners Scott Plummer, I. John Snider II, Marv Engle, Anthony Longmire and Rillastine Wilkins, Equalization GIS Thomas Van Bruggen, City of Muskegon Heights Councilwoman Bonnie McGlothin, Chief Deputy County Clerk Marcia Wilkes, Secretary to the County Clerk Jeanne Pezet, Kay Punter, Jim Riley, Eric Rothoff and other public citizens.

APPROVE MINUTES:

Although the agenda did not include approval of the minutes, Commissioner Waters noted one correction has been made to the minutes posted on the website to show on page 24 that Commissioner Tague was excused following the lunch break rather than absent.

COMMUNICATIONS:

In follow up to the software issue, the bill for the Autobound had not been processed so no refund was processed. The bill for the \$600 for the ArcView License has been processed.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Tammy Jager asked that the number of Commission Districts not be reduced and that the current County Commissioners is the best representation for the Citizens of Muskegon County.

Jim Riley asked why Apportionment Commission is making spending an issue instead of the best plan.

Commissioner Moulatsiotis responded that he knows the current economy is tight and cannot ignore the costs.

Commissioner Waters stated she has remained open minded to approve the best plan that provides the best service, to which Commissioner Achterhoff agreed.

Commissioner Tague noted he and other Elected Officials and Department Heads work closely with County Commissioners. All Management recognize that cuts have to be made but he is not aware of any animosity towards the Administration or the Board of Commissioners. Since Muskegon County is a very diverse community, his focus is to see that every area is represented and has a voice.

County Commissioner Snider echoed Apportionment Commissioner Tague and stated the decision should not be based on finance but should reflect the various makeup of this county and that the current 11 County Commissioners provide a good representation of the cross-section of Muskegon County.

County Commissioner Plummer urged the Apportionment Commission not to make money an issue.

Charles Nash agreed with County Commissioner Snider and Apportionment Commissioner Tague, to be sure the community is represented. He further urged that they keep an odd number of County Commission Districts with equal populations.

Eric Rothoff noted he had submitted two plans but was unable to access the free tools. He further congratulated the Apportionment Commission on their transparency.

Chairman Moulatsiotis noted the costs are only for County Commissioner pay and benefits, but the number of splits also impacts the local municipalities for election costs.

OLD BUSINESS:

As a follow up to the return of the Autobound software, the software was returned and the bill of \$4,340.00 had not yet been processed for payment so there was no actual refund. A purchase order has been processed to pay \$600 for the License upgrade for the GIS portion.

The Apportionment Commission began reviewing newly submitted plans, beginning with those prepared by Thomas Van Bruggen GIS/IT Support. Mr. Van Bruggen noted the criteria for the plans were: 1) keep population equal, 2) keep municipalities whole, 3) that Muskegon Heights would be able to be represented by a minority.

Plan 7-3: In this plan the City of Muskegon, the City of Norton Shores and Muskegon Township each have two Commission Districts. Commissioner Achterhoff noted she was not in favor of this plan. Commissioner Waters noted that the population split for the City of Muskegon may not favor two minorities being elected to future County Boards of Commissioners. Commissioner Tague noted he liked that the City of Muskegon had only two Commission Districts.

Plan 7-4 It was noted that Muskegon Heights maintains requirement for majority/minority. Again, the City of Muskegon has two Commission Districts. Discussion ensued regarding the river flats area. It was noted that the change between having the boundary line on the north side or the south side would be a population change of 251.

Plan 8-2: This plan is not acceptable because it exceeds the deviation requirement. City of Muskegon and City of Norton Shores would each have 3 Commission Districts, but Muskegon Charter Township would only have one.

Plan 8-3: Norton Shores would again have 3 Commission Districts. Commissioner Waters state she would oppose an 8-District plan and believes there should be an odd number of Commission Districts. All County Commissioner's present also opposed an even number of Commission Districts.

2011-21 **ELIMINATE PLANS 8-1, 8-2 AND 8-3 FROM CONSIDERATION**

Moved by Waters, seconded by Achterhoff, to eliminate plans 8-1, 8-2 and 8-3 from consideration.

Voice Vote

Motion Carried

Plan 9-3: The target population for a 9 Commission District Plan is 18,729. This plan pushes the 11.9% deviation with an 11.8% deviation. There are 2 Commission Districts in Dalton Township and the City of Muskegon and City of Norton Shores would again have 3 Commission Districts.

County Commissioner Plummer asked about voting precinct lines. Mr. Van Bruggen showed current precincts but noted precincts will likely need to be changed regardless of the plan that is adopted. He also noted the program used for Apportionment can also be used to assist the local clerks drawing their precinct lines. Apportionment Commissioner Waters hopes to address this issue with the City and township clerks. Apportionment Commissioner Achterhoff added that area Clerks have expressed this as a concern.

Chairman Moulatsiotis asked Mr. Van Bruggen if any of the citizen submitted plans.

Apportionment Commissioner Waters stated that Plan 11-2 was submitted by Attorney James Waters, but Commissioner Waters has no prior information about the plan and will view it for the first time at this meeting.

Apportionment Commissioner Markel submitted Plan 9-2 as a public citizen of Muskegon County.

Plan 9-2: This plan has a 8.6 deviation. The City of Muskegon would have 3 Commission Districts and 2 Commission Districts for the City of Norton Shores, City of North Muskegon, and Holton Township.

Plan 11-3: Though Mr. Markel did not have a map for this plan, a spreadsheet was submitted

Commissioner Waters asked Commissioner Markel, which of the two plans that he submitted would he prefer and recommend. Commissioner Markel stated he wanted a map that matches the common denominator which the 11-3 plan does in theory. He further noted he would like to work with Mr. Van Bruggen to tweak the plan and create the map.

County Commissioner Longmire asked what the concern was for the City. It was noted that for each election, a different ballot style is required for each Commission District. When you add school districts, it could split for each of those, too, adding to the ballot costs for the municipalities.

County Commissioner Engle noted that, outside of regular Board meetings, County Commissioners are members on many boards and if there are less than 9 County Commissioners, it may cause difficulty for Commissioner to attend meetings. Chairman Moulatsiotis suggested only one County Commissioner attend a committee or board meeting and report back to the Full Board to cut down on time and travel for County Commissioners.

Eric Rothoff submitted two plans for consideration.

Plan 7-2: Similar to the original 7-1 plan but it would be a better fit to flip Dalton and Fruitland. He stated some areas are more similar and should be grouped together.

Plan 11-4: Tried to keep no more than 2 County Commission Districts per municipality. He noted he was not able to access the free tools so was not able to get the data he wanted.

Mr. Waters plan was reviewed, although he was not in attendance. Discussion of Plan 11-2 appears to be identical to Plan 11-1.

Discussion ensued. Apportionment Commission Waters noted she was not in favor of any of the 9 District plans but did like the 11 or 7 District plans.

It was also pointed out that the City of Muskegon County have five County Commissioners, none of which might live in within the City of Muskegon. It was noted that people who run for County Commissioner should be representing the entire County of Muskegon, not favoring their district or where they reside over other parts of the County.

Discussion continued regarding eliminating some plans from consideration and decide which plans will be considered at the Wednesday, May 11th meeting.

Apportionment Commissioner Waters noted seven seems too few to fairly represent Muskegon County and the decision made will impact our County for 10 years.

Apportionment Commission Tague noted that smaller government seems to be the way things are going.

Chairman Moulatsiotis stated he would entertain any motions for 7 District plans to be considered at the next meeting.

2011-22 **KEEP PLAN 7-1 FOR REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION**

Moved by Achterhoff, seconded by Waters, to keep Plan 7-1 for review and consideration at the next meeting.

Voice vote

Motion Failed

2011-23 **KEEP PLAN 7-3 OR REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION**

Moved by Tague, seconded by Moulatsiotis, to keep Plan 7-3 for review and consideration at the next meeting.

Voice vote

Motion Failed

Chairman Moulatsiotis noted any plan that is considered on Wednesday may still be tweaked.

2011-24 **KEEP PLAN 9-2 FOR REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION**

Moved by Markel to keep Plan 9-2 for review and consideration at the next meeting.

Motion Failed due to lack of support

2011-25 **KEEP PLAN 9-3 FOR REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION**

Moved by Moulatsiotis, seconded by Tague, to keep Plan 9-3 for review and consideration at the next meeting.

Voice Vote

Motion Carried

2011-26 **KEEP PLAN 9-1 FOR REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION**

Moved by Markel to keep Plan 9-1 for review and consideration at the next meeting.

Withdrawn by Markel

2011-27 **KEEP PLAN 11-3 FOR REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION**

Moved by Waters, seconded by Markel, to keep Plan 11-3 for review and consideration at the next meeting.

Voice vote.

Motion Carried

Discussion about the similarities between Plan 11-1 and Plan 11-2, to treat them as Plan 11-1.

2011-28 **KEEP PLAN 11-1 FOR REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION**

Moved by Tague, seconded by Achterhoff, to keep Plan 11-1 for review and consideration at the next meeting.

Voice vote.

Motion Carried

Chairman Moulatsiotis noted there will be one 9 District Plan and two 11 District Plans to be considered on Wednesday, May 11, 2011.

NEW BUSINESS:

None.

Schedule of Commission Meetings

The next meeting of the Apportionment Commission was scheduled as follows:

Date: Wednesday, May 11, 2011
Time: 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Place: Michael E. Kobza Hall of Justice
Board of Commissioner Board Room
990 Terrace, 4th floor
Muskegon, MI 49442

All meeting notices will be posted to the County Clerk's Apportionment page at:
<http://www.co.muskegon.mi.us/clerk/apportionment.htm>.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Tammy Jager thanked Commissioners.

Chairman Moulatsiotis stated he thought a decision may have been made today so would like to recognize Jeanne Pezet and thank her for her contributions to these proceedings and the Commission presented Ms. Pezet with a lovely floral arrangement. Ms. Pezet thanked Commissioners.

ADJOURN

2011-29 **MOVED TO ADJOURN**

Moved by Achterhoff, seconded by Waters, to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 3:24 p.m.

Tony Moulatsiotis, Chairman

Nancy A. Waters, County Clerk

NAW/TM/jmp

Please address comments to the County Clerk by calling (231) 724-6316 or by email at clerk@co.muskegon.mi.us

<http://www.co.muskegon.mi.us/clerk/apportionment.htm>

Preliminary Minutes of May 4th to be approved May 9, 2011.