

ALASKA REDISTRICTING BOARD

BOARD MEETING

Anchorage, Alaska
June 14, 2011

1 P R O C E E D I N G S
2 (Anchorage, Alaska - 6/14/2011)

3 (On record)

4 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: Let's call the meeting to order,
5 please. The roll call of members.

6 MR. BICKFORD: John Torgerson.

7 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: Present.

8 MR. BICKFORD: PeggyAnn McConnochie.

9 MS. McCONNOCHIE: Here.

10 MR. BICKFORD: Marie Greene.

11 MS. GREENE: Present.

12 MR. BICKFORD: Jim Holm.

13 MR. HOLM: Here.

14 MR. BICKFORD: Bob Brodie.

15 MR. BRODIE: Present.

16 MR. BICKFORD: Mr. Chairman, all Board members are
17 present.

18 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: Thank you. We have staff here and
19 we're represented by counsel although he's outside of the room
20 at the moment, but he's in the building. We have item three,
21 approval of the agenda.

22 MS. McCONNOCHIE: Move for approval of the agenda.

23 MR. HOLM: Second.

24 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: Is there additions or corrections
25 to the agenda?

1 (No comments)

2 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: Hearing none. All in favor,
3 please signify by saying aye.

4 IN UNISON: Aye.

5 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: Opposed.

6 (No opposing votes)

7 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: So, by 5-0 vote the Board has
8 adopted the agenda for today. The next item is a ceremonial
9 signing of the Proclamation of Redistricting. Just for those
10 on TV Land or radio we did sign the official Proclamation
11 yesterday because our timeline for 90 days constitutional
12 requirement was yesterday. So the official one is done and
13 ready to go, but today we're going to sign five original copies
14 and each Board member will get a copy. Before we do that I
15 wanted to point out the key accomplishments that this Board has
16 done throughout this redistricting process. I hope we can all
17 use these talking points when we go back to our individual
18 homes and areas that we'll be able to highlight these
19 particular things.

20 Item one. The Board made a priority to uphold the
21 integrity of the public process. Public hearings were held in
22 32 communities. All of these are records as far as I know of
23 any other board that had this kind of public input.

24 Use of technology, social networking and online
25 outreach allowed the most open redistricting process in Alaska

1 history. 34,000 emails were sent, 26,000 impressions on
2 Facebook and Twitter, live audio streaming of all Board
3 meetings and webinar access to our Board meetings.

4 The Board worked as a team and made its decisions as a
5 team. Five Alaskans from different backgrounds, perspectives
6 and regions of the state were able to achieve a balance and
7 consensus in the end. The final plan was approved by unanimous
8 vote. The Proclamation was approved by unanimous vote.

9 The Board took its constitutional statutory
10 requirements very seriously. The lowest overall range between
11 districts deviations in Alaska history. For the House, between
12 the highest and lowest, is 8.47 percent. For the Senate, it's
13 7.54 percent. Substantially lower in the urban areas of
14 Anchorage/Fairbanks, particularly Mat-Su.

15 The Board made protection of Alaska Native voting
16 rights a top priority, going to extraordinary lengths to build
17 a plan that complies with the requirements of the Federal
18 Voting Rights Act. The Proclamation meets the requirements of
19 the Voting Rights Act by creating the required number of Alaska
20 Native Influence and Effective Districts for the House, which
21 are District 34, 36, 37, 38, 39 and the Senate Districts are R,
22 S and T.

23 Working closely with the Alaska Native community to
24 build a non-retrogressive plan and offered ample opportunity
25 for public testimony, planned presentations and general input

1 on configuration of Alaska Native districts.

2 Fellow Board members, this is great what we've
3 accomplished throughout this what seems like years but it's
4 only been a 90-day process. So what I thought we'd do today
5 after -- I wanted to read that into the record for those on the
6 teleconference, but what I'd like to do today is have, maybe
7 starting with Board Member Greene and then PeggyAnn, come up
8 and sit here and sign the five Proclamations and then move over
9 to Bob and Jim and then I will sign them at the last and then I
10 will hand them out to the Board members.

11 With that, Marie, if you would come over. There's lots
12 of pens here.

13 MS. GREENE: It's with great honor I'm going to start
14 the signing of this Proclamation.

15 MS. McCONNOCHIE: It wouldn't be a Board meeting
16 without Jim and John breaking into song.

17 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: Some kind of song anyway. Thank
18 you. Appreciate all your hard work. Mr. Holm, Mr. Brodie,
19 whoever.

20 MR. HOLM: I'll be glad to.

21 MR. BRODIE: I'm glad these aren't checks.

22 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: You did print our agenda on one of
23 your checks, didn't you? Thank you for all your hard work.

24 MR. HOLM: Thank you.

25 MR. BRODIE: I could smile for one of them.

1 (Laughter)

2 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: Thank you for all your hard work.
3 As I'm signing this, I'm thinking of some of the challenges
4 that we faced and I couldn't help but think about the death of
5 Ron and how he would have been -- he would have been very happy
6 to be here and see this operation going on today. Thankful for
7 Taylor and Jim stepping up and taking over such difficult
8 times. Again, we proved that we're just a Board to reckon
9 with. We've handled -- we've met diversity and went around it.

10 All right. Anybody want to make any speeches. Have
11 you got anything you want to say. We do have a press release
12 that Taylor put together. Has that already went out?

13 MR. BICKFORD: Yes.

14 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: So you all had some quotes in
15 there. I do want to add, Taylor, for our Proclamation for
16 District 40 -- or not our Proclamation but our talking points.
17 Member Greene pointed that out. I think you were talking about
18 Influence -- but anyway, House District 40 is certainly a piece
19 of that.

20 Next -- I'm not sure there is a next. I have a motion
21 that I'd like somebody to make. Just the first motion there.
22 This is to authorize just in case there are any parties that
23 wish to file suit against the Board for our actions here today,
24 this will be a motion authorizing counsel to accept the
25 services from whatever.

1 MS. McCONNOCHIE: Mr. Chairman. I move that we
2 authorize Michael White of Patton Boggs to accept the service
3 of any lawsuits for the Redistricting Board.

4 MR. HOLM: Second.

5 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: It's moved and seconded that we
6 adopt this resolution authorizing Michael White to receive
7 service of any legal issues. Is there discussion on the
8 motion?

9 (No comments)

10 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: All in favor of adoption of the
11 motion please signify by saying aye.

12 IN UNISON: Aye.

13 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: Opposed.

14 (No opposing votes)

15 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: So by 5 yeas to 0 nays votes the
16 Board has adopted that resolution. Next, I'm just going to
17 entertain the motion to adjourn and whoever would like to make
18 that motion it's my intent that we would meet again at 10:00
19 a.m. Monday, July 18th, 2011, at which time we will more than
20 likely go into executive session and discuss legal issues that
21 might be before the Board.

22 Just a reminder to the Board that we are a constituted
23 board for redistricting purposes. According to the
24 Constitution we are to be as Board members until the
25 Redistricting Plan has been approved by the courts. The reason

1 for saying that is we're still under the requirements of the
2 Open Meetings Act, so more than two of us cannot get together
3 throughout this interim period, as much as we may want to to
4 sit around and talk about good ol' days, we are under the
5 guidance of the Open Meetings laws, so no more than two can get
6 together.

7 MR. BRODIE: Mr. Chairman. You're assuming that two of
8 us can stand each other still after this.

9 (Laughter)

10 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: I never make those kind of
11 assumptions, but just in case you get lonesome and you don't
12 know what to do with your life and you want to draw a map.

13 MR. BRODIE: There you go. I'm going to take my
14 computer home and I'll start working on Arizona or something.

15 MR. BICKFORD: 2020.

16 MR. BRODIE: We can be consultants.

17 MR. WHITE: You can draw the Congressional District.

18 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: As a last, I want to let the Board
19 know I planned to draft the resolution for the Board's
20 consideration for the July 18th meeting, although it doesn't
21 need to be then, but the intent is to lay out some of the
22 difficulties that we envision the board of 2020 might have
23 drawing legislative districts under the same constraints that
24 we're under.

25 If you assume we have 100,000 population, the district

1 size grows to 20,256 per district. I can only imagine the
2 difficulty we would have had this time -- it's hard enough with
3 17,755, but if we would have had 20, these maps would certainly
4 be a lot -- I'm not even sure it would be possible. And that's
5 assuming 100,000 growth.

6 I have already committed to some of our rural
7 legislators and other Native leaders, including Ms. Greene,
8 that I would help as much as I can as the Chair or past Chair
9 of this Board to work on a constitutional amendment that would
10 keep our House district sizes smaller and to allow for growth
11 of our state and not having this sort of the same issue we have
12 now.

13 In any degree, I just want to let you know that I was
14 going to be working on that and have hopefully a resolution
15 that would involve -- at least start picking apart and
16 wordsmithing and then we'll send it to the governor and the
17 legislature sometime throughout the process. We have 10 years,
18 of course, to work on it, but that time will go by really
19 quick.

20 Mr. Holm.

21 MR. HOLM: Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that and I think
22 that we all realize the difficulty we had was trying to stay
23 within just 40 House districts when the possibility was it
24 could have passed the 44 House districts. Though a lot of us
25 don't like adding that cost to the state, it seems to me like

1 that would have been a very important integral change in how we
2 worked if that was a possibility.

3 So I appreciate your thoughts there and I hope we can
4 get
5 better information out to the public so that they understand
6 the difficulties that we have.

7 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: Well, they'll only learn that
8 through a public outreach that all of us Board members now
9 have, having gone through this process. Again, it's something
10 that we don't like them to start thinking about.

11 The last one, I don't think you can go to the
12 Constitution and amend it every 10 years because of growth in
13 the state, so it has to be a futuristic, forward-thinking
14 constitutional amendment that would last for generations, at
15 least more than one, because the voters of Alaska just don't
16 want to see a constitutional amendment every 10 years, adding
17 the number of legislators. In some cases, they don't like the
18 ones they have now, so why do they want to add more.

19 (Laughter)

20 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: That's an editorial comment. But,
21 to any degree, we.....

22 MR. WHITE: Not an official.....

23 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: Pardon me?

24 MR. WHITE: Not the official position of the
25 Redistricting Board.

1 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: Exactly. Thank you, legal.
2 Anyway, I think you got the idea where I want to go with it and
3 I do want everybody to know I am committed to doing that for
4 Alaska and for the future to maintain the Native voting power
5 in the state.

6 MS. McCONNOCHIE: We certainly appreciate it, Mr.
7 Chair, that the difficulties we had would have been helped in
8 some minor way if we would have had some direction from the
9 previous board. In the next 10 years, the new board coming in
10 will appreciate our efforts in the meantime and any information
11 we can give them.

12 MR. BRODIE: I think we should all take notes on what
13 we saw was the strong points and the weak points in the process
14 from the processor to the computer to make it faster so you
15 don't have to sit there while it ground away. Some of the
16 processes that you mentioned before, under which part of the
17 government our procurement process should come to expedite our
18 business.

19 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: We have started such a book, so
20 the next board will have a leg up. We didn't even get the
21 archives until four months after we were constituted. The old
22 records were hard to get. Anyway, we got them now, but there
23 was a lot of issues that we had to learn on the cuff. Mr.
24 Holm.

25 MR. HOLM: Mr. Chairman. I, too, would like to thank,

1 in his absence, Ron Miller. I thought Ron Miller did a
2 yeomen's task for us for a good period of time and though
3 Taylor picked up in great measure after and finished, I think a
4 lot that we accomplished was because of Ron Miller. I really
5 enjoyed the time that I spent with him on traveling the state.
6 We all were served well by him.

7 MS. GREENE: Mr. Chairman.

8 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: Yes.

9 MS. GREENE: One comment I would like to make is with
10 regards to the public. What I really appreciated about the
11 public hearings was we not only took the time to receive
12 testimony but there were many sites just responding after we
13 recessed and then just responding to questions about the
14 process, redistricting process, educating the public and I
15 think that's something we can also include and not wait until
16 the 10th year to start informing the public as to what the
17 Alaska Redistricting Board is responsible for, but doing that
18 earlier.

19 There is a planning committee in place and I think
20 that's something this committee can do to help in preparation
21 for the next board's challenge and the challenges that they
22 will face. Educating the public was what I really appreciated
23 about going out to the communities and responding to their
24 questions and helping them understand why we're there and why
25 we're doing this, what we're charged to do and just responding

1 to their comments and questions.

2 MR. BICKFORD: Mr. Chairman. If I could just take a
3 moment to speak on behalf of staff and just thank each and
4 every one of you for the process that we all experienced
5 together and getting to know each and every one of you over the
6 course of that process and I think that redistricting in Alaska
7 is an extraordinarily complicated thing to begin with and we
8 faced a unique set of challenges that we could not have
9 overcome if it wasn't for us all coming together after the
10 death of Ron and some of those challenges that no other board
11 has ever faced, not to mention the demographic issues that we
12 had to deal with. I think we can all be proud of the map that
13 was put together.

14 To the same point, I think we need to be proud and
15 think really hard about the process that we can conducted and
16 that you conducted because, like the Chairman pointed out, it
17 was the most open process we'd ever seen and in many ways the
18 best process we've ever seen.

19 I just want to thank you on behalf of Jim, Mary, Eric,
20 the whole team, just for guiding us through. We couldn't have
21 had a better Board. So thank you.

22 MS. GREENE: Thank you.

23 MS. McCONNOCHIE: Thank you.

24 MR. WHITE: Mr. Chairman. Having been through the
25 process last time and so I've been able to compare it with this

1 time, I feel confident in saying that the transparency of this
2 process was extraordinary, that the public input that was
3 received by far and away the greatest in the history of Alaska
4 redistricting, the number of people testifying doubled. If you
5 go back and look at the transcripts of the 2000 process, the
6 meetings were mostly -- there was one or two people there.

7 Here we've had a dozen to two dozen people at regular meetings.

8 This process, as the Supreme Court has described it as
9 herculean, I think we all, each and every member of this Board,
10 now understands what the Supreme Court meant when they said
11 that. I am extraordinarily proud to serve as counsel for this
12 Board and I go forward in this plan not only from a legal
13 perspective but also from a personal perspective believing that
14 I can defend this plan. There are no perfect plans, but I'm
15 extraordinarily proud of the effort that this Board put in and
16 I look forward to defending this plan, assuming we get a
17 lawsuit.

18 Hopefully on July 18th I'll come back and report to you
19 that everybody saw the wisdom in your decisions. But I wanted
20 to thank you for the opportunity to get to know each and every
21 one of you and I consider that I've made five new friends that
22 I will hold dear for the rest of my life. Well, more than
23 five.

24 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: Six, seven.

25 MS. McCONNOCHIE: Which five?

1 MR. WHITE: I've still got to -- you know, these guys
2 will be around a lot.

3 MR. BRODIE: So nothing has been filed yet?

4 MR. WHITE: Nothing has been filed yet, yeah. Happy to
5 report.

6 MS. McCONNOCHIE: I think something also needs to be
7 mentioned. I think the public needs to be thanked. I think
8 the groups that submitted plans for the whole entire state, and
9 I just saw Leonard come in somewhere, those people really -- in
10 organizations really need to be thanked. Whether it be the
11 Rights Coalition, the AFFR, AFFER, urban caucus, it was helpful
12 in being able to have everyone provide us their visions of how
13 it should be. It gave us something to work from.

14 I don't think we could have come up with a plan as good
15 as the one we came up with if we didn't have the input from all
16 these groups, so I thank them for all the work they put in and
17 all the hours that they spent providing us with updates.
18 That's great.

19 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: And we adopted many of their
20 ideas. Regionally, of course, not entire maps, but they all
21 had little pieces that we liked. So that's a good point.

22 MR. BRODIE: It's hard to believe that the first one of
23 us was appointed June 25th of 2010. We've been into this for a
24 year. Sometimes we thought it would never end, but it still
25 went by quickly. I know that I walked around here in a black

1 mood sometimes. I was upset with people and I'm sure people
2 were upset with me. I think it's because we cared so much
3 about what we were doing and it was never personal. So I want
4 to thank everybody for your indulgence.

5 It was a pleasure working with everybody. I think it's
6 a product of how much we cared about the state and our fellow
7 Alaskans that we arrived at this document. I think, as we
8 said, we alluded to Ron Miller. His family is not here right
9 now to witness this. They're in the Ukraine visiting family,
10 but I'm sure they'll hear that we finished the process that he
11 helped start.

12 Thank you very much and I look forward to seeing you
13 guys for the next -- could be another month or it could be
14 another year. We'll muddle through and we'll get it done. So
15 thank you for all your help.

16 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: I predict also this will be the
17 first Board that doesn't have any lawsuits filed against the
18 plan. I've said that from day one. We didn't work this to try
19 to have people file lawsuits against us. We worked this for
20 all the reasons we just heard. Public testimony to make it
21 right, to make it work with what we're dealt and we've done
22 that. I hope they don't waste trees trying to take us on.

23 Anything else to come before us?

24 (No comments)

25 CHAIRMAN TORGERSON: With that, we will stand adjourned

1 until 10:00 a.m. Monday, July 18th, 2011.

2 (Off record)

3 (END OF PROCEEDINGS)

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I, Salena A. Hile, hereby certify that the foregoing pages numbered 2 through 18 are a true, accurate, and complete transcript of proceedings, transcribed under my direction from a copy of an electronic sound recording to the best of our knowledge and ability.

Date

Salena A. Hile, Transcriber