

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON NUMBER AND APPORTIONMENT OF COUNTY BOARD SUPERVISORY DISTRICTS
Manitowoc County Office Complex
August 31, 2021

Attendance: Chairperson Jim Brey, Supervisors Jamie Aulik, Supervisor Kevin Behnke, Supervisor Susie Maresh, Supervisor Rick Gerroll, Supervisor Rick Henrickson, Supervisor Jim Baumann, Supervisor Rita Metzger, and Supervisor Ken Sitkiewitz. Also in attendance were County Clerk Jessica Backus, Corporation Counsel Peter Conrad, Planning and Zoning Director Tim Ryan, Associate Planner and GIS Specialist Andrea Raymakers, GIS Coordinator Matt Randerson, and Supervisor Dave Dyzak.

Call to Order: Chairperson Brey called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Discussion on potential supervisory district maps:

Chairperson Brey informed the committee the reason for this meeting was because the census numbers were received and they need to discuss how many supervisory districts should be representing the City of Manitowoc.

GIS Coordinator Matt Randerson informed the committee that with the census numbers received for the City of Manitowoc population compared to everyone in the rest of the County it would be impossible to stay under the 10% deviation if we stay with ten supervisory districts for the City. We experimented with a few maps showing ten districts, ten and half districts and some with eleven districts in the City of Manitowoc. The current plan that was created in 2011 was showing a 28.24% deviation unaltered. According to Legislative Reference Bureau's guidelines this would be a lot higher than the recommended 10% or less.

Corporation Counsel Peter Conrad mentioned the main focus for the meeting was to discuss the number of supervisory districts that should be representing the City of Manitowoc. Then everything can fall into place from there.

Supervisor Jamie Aulik questioned if the City of Manitowoc gained population. GIS Coordinator Matt Randerson informed him the City of Manitowoc and Two Rivers lost population, City of Kiel and most Towns gained population. GIS Specialist Andrea Raymakers believed the deviation was not met when the maps were drawn ten years ago. It isn't necessarily if the City lost or gained population, it was that deviation was not met.

Supervisor Behnke mentioned the maps were based on population numbers and trying to keep each district close in population. The Supervisory Districts in the City of Manitowoc and their Aldermanic Districts were drawn the same to keep the maps clean for the voters. Chairperson Brey agreed that was the biggest concern, keeping the maps easy to understand for the voters.

Supervisor Aulik questioned if the City of Manitowoc would want eleven supervisory districts or to create another aldermanic district to make district lines match between the County and City to make it less confusing for the voters. Chairperson Brey mentioned he does not believe the City Common Council would want to expand to eleven aldermanic districts. However, if it came up for discussion at the City level, they would discuss their options at that time.

GIS Coordinator Matt Randerson showed a few plans he had created for ten supervisory districts versus eleven supervisory districts. The main point was the deviation will be higher if the City stays at ten supervisory districts.

Supervisor Aulik questioned if this committee believed it is important for the voters to have the County's ten supervisory districts match the City's ten aldermanic districts, and whether that would be a valid defense in regards to a higher deviation. Corporation Counsel Conrad believed it would provide a base to defend the ten supervisory districts in the City and the higher deviation.

Supervisor Gerroll believed this would be a common sense argument because it is beneficial to our voters. Supervisor Aulik agreed because the more supervisory districts you put in the city the more confused it becomes for the voter to know what supervisory district they belong to, which might not match the aldermanic district. The voters are used to the supervisory district matching the aldermanic district at the spring elections. If they do not match, then the poll workers would have more ballot styles to keep organized and make sure they hand out the correct ballot to the voter. If there are three or four sets of ballots on a table, instead of the one ballot they are used to, this will confuse poll workers and voters.

Supervisor Maresh questioned if there were eleven supervisory districts assigned to the City of Manitowoc, how that affects the rest of the County's supervisory districts since the supervisory district number is set at twenty-five. Chairperson Brey mentioned if the City would have eleven and the rest of the county would have fourteen the districts would all shift.

Supervisor Sitkiewitz questioned what the deviations were when there were eleven districts. GIS Coordinator Matt Randerson had an eleven supervisory district plan with 8.7% deviation and a ten supervisory district plan with 13.95% deviation as two examples.

Chairperson Brey believed problems will arise if eleven supervisory district are created in the City of Manitowoc. He does not want to create any more confusion in a polling location for the city, villages or towns. He advocated for the City of Manitowoc to stay at ten supervisory districts.

Supervisor Gerroll agreed to stay with ten supervisory districts in the City.

Supervisor Sitkiewitz agreed as well to avoid confusion at the polls and for the voter.

Supervisor Behnke mentioned that is why the maps were drawn like they were ten years ago, to make it easier for the voter. It is not political, it is easier for the polls, the poll workers, the ballots, and the voters. The voters are well represented through the twenty-five members of the board.

Chairperson Brey questioned if keeping the ten districts will shift a problem to the other municipalities. GIS Coordinator Matt Randerson informed the committee that he has not seen any major problems. The plans he created follow roads, rivers, and municipal boundaries.

Corporation Counsel mentioned if there are high deviation issues, then we need to work to keep the deviation down, even if means incumbents are no longer in the district.

Chairperson Brey would like to see the lines drawn close to how they are now, with twenty-five supervisory districts and ten of those representing the City of Manitowoc.

Adjournment: Supervisor Sitkiewitz moved to adjourn, seconded by Supervisor Behnke. Motion passed unanimously. The committee adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Backus, County Clerk