

For Public Comment
DRAFT Recommendations by the Redistricting Subcommittee to the County Board for Establishment of a 2021 Redistricting Process

NOTE: The Redistricting Subcommittee of the Executive Committee of the County Board is seeking comment from the public on these draft recommendations before it finalizes its recommendations for incorporation in an Ordinance Amendment, which will go before the County Board. The following are recommendations made to date by the subcommittee. The date above each recommendation refers to the meeting date on which the motion was made.

BACKGROUND

“Redistricting” is the process of redrawing voting maps that occurs once every ten years to reflect changes in population over time. Information from the U.S. Census is used to determine population, and Dane County is then responsible for drawing county board districts.

In 2014, Dane County voters overwhelmingly supported impartial, nonpartisan redistricting as a result of an advisory referendum. In response, the Executive Committee of the Dane County Board of Supervisors approved a motion creating a Dane County Redistricting Subcommittee to make recommendations for the 2021 redistricting process. This committee began its work in the summer of 2015.

The subcommittee, which has met eight times (as of 11/17/15), has developed two sets of possible criteria: one set for the *process* of making decisions about redistricting; and another set to be considered when *drawing* the maps. The subcommittee has also made several other recommendations for structuring the advisory body and process that it will submit to the County Board in the form of an Ordinance Amendment. The subcommittee desires to receive input from the public regarding these recommendations and criteria, how important or unimportant they are to the public, and whether any additional criteria or recommendations should be considered.

A. Possible Criteria for Mapping Process

- Independent
- Impartial
- Fair
- Accountable
- Transparent
- Timeliness with respect to state statutory process*
- Public engagement
- Early and ongoing communication with municipal clerks for input throughout the process

B. Possible Criteria for Map Content

- Equal population*
- Racial, ethnic, or language minority representation* and communities of interest*
- Contiguity*
- Compactness*
- Geography and natural boundaries, such as rivers, lakes, etc.
- Political boundaries such as cities, villages, towns, school districts, or districts thereof
- Neighborhoods
- Incumbency

* Required by state or federal law

C. Establishing a Citizen Redistricting Commission

The committee's draft recommendation is that the county establish an impartial redistricting commission consisting of 9 or 11 citizen members.

Such a commission should include the following in the composition of the citizen members: 1) Non-Madison cities and villages; 2) Towns; 3) City of Madison; 4) Gender diversity; 5) Racial and ethnic diversity; and 6) Geographic diversity.

The committee's draft recommendations for eligibility criteria for citizen members are:

- a. Must be a Dane County resident
- b. Not a member of the Dane County Board or employed by Dane County, including consultants
- c. Not a registered lobbyist before Dane County
- d. Not in an official position with a partisan organization (nor have been for the past year)
- e. Not a participant in the State of Wisconsin 2011 partisan redistricting process
- f. Must be impartial, which includes refraining from engagement in any political party activity or supporting the election or defeat of any candidate or referendum during their tenure on the commission, and that they will not engage in supporting the election or defeat of any county candidate in the spring primary and general election immediately following redistricting.
- g. Have a basic familiarity with maps
- h. Potential conflicts of interest, including any financial interest coming from Dane County, must be disclosed.

The committee's draft recommendations for selection of the citizen members of a redistricting commission are as follows:

- 1) The City of Madison, Dane County Towns Association, and Dane County Cities and Villages Association will each submit to the Dane County Board Chair a list of no more and no less than three (3) candidates that meet the eligibility criteria for membership on an impartial citizen redistricting commission. The Dane County Board Chair will select one (1) candidate from each of the submitted lists to serve as a member on an impartial citizen redistricting commission. The Dane County Board Chair will set a deadline by which the parties must submit their lists of candidates. If the City of Madison, the Dane County Towns Association, or the Dane County Cities and Villages Association does not submit its list of three (3) candidates by the deadline, it will forfeit its opportunity to submit candidates for selection to the commission.
- 2) "Recommend that the Dane County Board Chair make six (6) or eight (8) additional citizen appointments to an impartial citizen redistricting commission after the opportunity to serve has been communicated through a recruitment process which is structured to contact broad and diverse sections of the Dane County electorate. The interested persons shall apply. Applications shall be screened initially by County Board staff to remove any applicants that do not meet the eligibility criteria. The Dane County Board Chair will then make the final appointments of members to an impartial citizen redistricting commission."
- 3) The committee should not include ex-officio county board supervisors. Supervisors will be allowed to participate and provide input to the same extent as input as taken from the public.