



Virginia Redistricting Commission

Citizen Engagement Subcommittee

May 26, 2021, at 10:00 a.m.

Electronic Meeting

<https://virginiaredistricting.org>

The Citizen Engagement Subcommittee (the Subcommittee) of the Virginia Redistricting Commission (the Commission) met virtually with Mr. Richard Harrell, co-chair, presiding.¹ The meeting began with opening remarks from Mr. Harrell. Materials presented at the meeting are accessible through the [*Commission's meetings webpage*](#).

Developing a Public Hearing Schedule

Amigo Wade, Director, Division of Legislative Services

Mr. Amigo Wade discussed three documents provided to Subcommittee members: (i) a proposed public hearing schedule, (ii) the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service region map, and (iii) a draft calendar with tentative public hearing dates. The Subcommittee previously recommended eight in-person public hearings and eight virtual public hearings. The proposed public hearing schedule includes eight public hearings before the maps are drawn and eight public hearings after the maps are drawn. In 2011, eight public hearings were held in all geographic regions except the Northern Neck region of Virginia. A primary difference between the current redistricting cycle and the 2011 redistricting cycle is the ability for citizens to provide public comment virtually.

- Mr. James Abrenio asked how long it takes for maps to be published. Ms. Julie Smith responded that it takes no more than a day to post maps online.
- Mr. Harrell posed a question to the Subcommittee: should the virtual meetings focus on specific regions? Delegate Les Adams responded that the in-person meetings are intended to be regionally focused and geographically separated so that all citizens have the opportunity to comment; however, virtual public hearings could be regionally focused but also include the whole state. Senator Mamie Locke agreed with Delegate Adams but believed that if the Commission conducts regional public hearings then each hearing must be limited to citizens in that region. Senator Ryan McDougle agreed that public hearings should be regional; however, he did not see the benefit of having so many virtual meetings, as the meeting schedule is quite aggressive. Delegate Delores McQuinn inquired whether it is possible to hold in-person and virtual public hearings at the same time. Mr. Wade responded that it is possible, but it would mean that hearings would not be scheduled for all eight regions before and after the maps are drawn. Delegate Adams suggested offering regional open locations for virtual hearings so the public can have access to computers if they do not have such access. The Subcommittee agreed that once the region is decided for each public hearing,

¹ **Subcommittee Members Present:** James Abrenio, co-chair, Rick Harrell, co-chair, Brandon Hutchins, Delegate Les R. Adams, Delegate Delores L. McQuinn, Senator Mamie E. Locke, and Senator Ryan T. McDougle.

Subcommittee Members Absent: Jose Feliciano

Other Commission Members Present: Greta Harris

the location must be scheduled as soon as possible. Mr. Wade suggested that the Subcommittee might consider adjusting its budget if members want to add additional meetings.

Developing Public Participation Guidelines

Richard Harrell, Co-chair, Citizen Engagement Subcommittee, Virginia Redistricting Commission

The Subcommittee reviewed the draft public participation guideline document prepared by staff. Senator McDougle suggested that sign-up should end 10 minutes after each in-person public hearing begins. Senator Locke emphasized the need for a definitive cut-off time.

After the Subcommittee discussed the guidelines, members agreed that the guidelines need more clarity in the language to define what constitutes a group and that the Commission will need an educational document to provide to the public as a guide to what the Commission is looking for in the public hearings.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Commission will be held on June 7, 2021, at 10:00 a.m.

For more information, see the [Commission's website](#) or contact the Division of Legislative Services staff:

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