

Final
STAFF SUMMARY OF MEETING

COLORADO REAPPORTIONMENT COMMISSION

Date: 08/22/2011

ATTENDANCE

Time: **06:02 PM to 07:37 PM**

Atencio X

Place: Pueblo Community College

Berry X

This Meeting was called to order by
Atencio

Carroll X

Jones X

Loevy X

Nicolais X

Salazar X

This Report was prepared by
Jessika Shipley

Tool E

Witwer X

Webb E

Carrera X

X = Present, E = Excused, A = Absent, * = Present after roll call

Bills Addressed:	Action Taken:
Welcome and Introductions	-
Public Testimony	-

Note: This meeting summary is not an official record of the commission or of the meeting. It is not intended to serve as a transcript or minutes of the commission meeting. The audio recording of the meeting is the official record of the meeting. This summary may be used as a guide to the audio recording. To access the audio recording of a commission meeting, visit the Colorado Joint Legislative Library located in the State Capitol, Room 048 (basement/ground floor level). You will need to note the date, time, and location of the meeting to access the audio recording. Copies of the audio recordings may be obtained at the library if you bring with you blank, recordable compact discs or a flash drive. Librarians are on site and available to assist you with accessing an audio recording.

06:02 PM -- Welcome and Introductions

Commissioner Atencio welcomed the audience. Each commissioner introduced themselves.

06:07 PM

Jeremiah Barry, Colorado Reapportionment Commission Staff Director, provided an explanation of the redistricting process in Colorado. He responded to questions from the audience.

06:17 PM

Commissioner Atencio made brief remarks about the unique nature of the maps of Pueblo and the San Luis Valley due to the federal Voting Rights Act. She explained that the commission began the process of drawing maps with the region that includes Pueblo and the San Luis Valley. Pueblo County is too large for one House or one Senate district.

06:20 PM -- Public Testimony

Commissioner Atencio explained the process of testifying. The following individuals provided comments:

06:23 PM -- Jerry Denney, representing himself, expressed dissatisfaction with the proposed map. He explained that the proposal splits communities of interest. He suggested that the commission start over again and draw a different map.

06:25 PM -- Daniel Davis, representing himself, spoke about conversations he has had with people in his community of La Junta in recent days. He summarized the conversations by commenting that politicians do not care about the people of his community. He expressed his opinion that the commission ignored the interests of southeast Colorado by excluding Las Animas County from proposed House District 64. He discussed the differences between the current and proposed Senate districts that include southeastern Colorado. He indicated that a single Senator cannot represent all of the values and needs of the communities in proposed Senate District 31. Mr. Davis responded to questions from the commission. He expressed his opinion that the districts should stay more similar to the current boundaries. Discussion ensued about the best ways to meet the needs of the communities in southeastern Colorado.

06:37 PM -- Marie Vernarsky, representing herself, spoke about the portion of Fremont County that is included with proposed House District 21. Discussion ensued about the population of Fremont County in proposed House District 21, which approximately is 5,000 people.

06:39 PM -- Jack Rink, representing himself, spoke about communities of interest in southeastern Colorado. He expressed his opinion that there is a strong community of interest between Fremont and Pueblo Counties. He discussed the prison industry, schools, economic and social activities, and transportation routes.

06:43 PM -- John Werme, representing himself, urged the commission to pay more attention to communities of interest. He expressed disappointment that three commissioners did not attend the meeting. He indicated that the east side of Pueblo and the San Luis Valley do not belong together. He provided personal details of his life.

06:47 PM -- Theresa Trujillo, representing the Colorado Latino Forum and the Colorado Progressive Coalition, expressed support for the proposed House and Senate maps of Pueblo County. She spoke about testimony she provided to the commission on May 31, 2011, about Pueblo County. She indicated that the proposed maps honor the needs of the Latino community in Pueblo County.

06:50 PM -- Suzanne Morgan, representing herself, expressed her opinion that the portion of proposed House District 62 that comes into Pueblo County only includes low-income neighborhoods. She indicated that the proposed district bypasses more affluent areas of the city. She stated that the proposed map is appalling. She urged the commission to try again. Ms. Morgan also expressed disappointment about the inclusion of Elbert County with proposed House District 64. She asked the commission to keep Fremont, Pueblo, and Custer Counties together. Discussion ensued between Ms. Morgan and the commissioners about the constitutional requirements for House District 62 and Ms. Morgan's preferences for the counties on the eastern plains.

07:01 PM -- Representative Edward Vigil, representing himself, spoke about House District 62. He discussed the history of the common interests of Pueblo County and the San Luis Valley. He talked about the needs and interests of the people of proposed Senate District 31.

07:06 PM -- Gary Hill, representing himself, read a letter from the Las Animas County Commissioners (Attachment A). He expressed his opinion that pairing Las Animas County with Pueblo County will assure that Las Animas County will not be fairly represented in state government. He indicated that Senator Grantham has done a good job of representing his district.



Attachment A.pdf

07:13 PM -- Barbara Ludwig, representing herself, spoke about the importance of water and Highway 50 in the interests of southern Colorado. She provided suggestions for creating a more equitable Senate District. She discussed water, education, and economic factors.

07:16 PM -- Senator Kevin Grantham, representing himself, thanked the commission for bringing the proposed map on the road. He expressed that Fremont County should be kept whole in the House and the Senate. He indicated the Las Animas County has strong common interests with the counties in proposed House District 64. He reiterated that Fremont County should be kept whole, but if it cannot be kept whole, the district lines between House Districts 60 and 21 should be redrawn. He suggested that the school district lines make more sense. He discussed swapping Elbert County for Las Animas and Kit Carson Counties in House District 64. He stated his opinion that the loss of Fremont County from Senate District 31 is not beneficial to any of the communities included in southeastern Colorado. He expressed doubt that one person can practically represent Holly and Creede and all of the communities in between. Senator Grantham responded to questions from the commission. He commented about a map that was proposed by constituents in Logan County on Saturday, August 20, 2011.

07:37 PM

Commissioner Atencio thanked the staff for their efforts and adjourned the meeting.

Las Animas County



Board of County Commissioners

Gary D. Hill
Commissioner
August 16, 2011

James Vigil
Commissioner

Mack Louden
Commissioner

Colorado Reapportionment Commission
1313 Sherman Street, Suite 122
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Commission Members,

We, the Board of County Commissioners of Las Animas County, wish to express our opinion regarding the proposed plan to incorporate Las Animas County with eastern Pueblo County in the configuration of House District #47.

The objective of reapportionment is to group local jurisdictions into communities of interest such as similarities in population, economy and social composition so that their voice can be sufficiently represented in the State Legislature. The current plan would essentially eliminate representation of Las Animas County in the House of Representatives in the State Legislature. The population of Las Animas County would be diluted by the population of eastern Pueblo County.

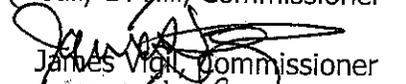
We in rural Colorado are already at a representation disadvantage and the current plan as drawn increases Las Animas County's disadvantage in having a voice in the General Assembly.

Las Animas County has been properly incorporated in the past with other counties of southeastern Colorado in the Legislature because of the similarities of the counties in this region of this State.

You are respectfully requested to reconsider the alignment of Las Animas County with Pueblo County and reconfigure the boundaries of representation for southeastern Colorado to incorporate Las Animas County with its neighboring southeastern counties in this Region.

Respectfully,


Gary D. Hill, Commissioner


James Vigil, Commissioner


Mack Louden, Commissioner