

Richland County Rules and Resolutions Committee & Ethics Board

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Agenda Item Name: Amended Redistricting Timetable, Creation of Redistricting Committee

Department	County Board	Presented By:	Shaun Murphy-Lopez
Date of Meeting:	8/5/21	Action Needed:	Resolution
Disclosure:	Open Session	Authority:	Committee Structure, Section D
Date submitted:	8/4/21	Referred by:	None

Recommendation and/or action language:

1. Recommend a motion, to present a resolution to the County Board to amend Resolution No. 21-17, adjusting the redistricting timetable.
2. Recommend a motion, to present a resolution to the County Board creating a Redistricting Committee, with direction to retain the County Board's current size of 21 supervisory districts.

Background:

In January 2021, the County Board adopted Resolution No. 21-17 to establish a timetable for drawing supervisory district boundaries after the 2020 census data was released. Soon after that resolution was adopted, the U.S. Census Bureau announced it would be delaying release of data due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) held a series of virtual meetings, with the outcome that a change in state law would be proposed, delaying redistricting for two years. The Wisconsin Legislature passed Assembly Bill 369 to accomplish this proposal, but the bill was vetoed by Governor Evers on July 9, 2021. These developments require Richland County to carry out the process of redistricting before County Board supervisor candidates begin circulating nomination papers in December 2021 for the upcoming February and April 2022 elections.

On July 19, 2021, the WCA hosted a meeting where a preliminary redistricting timeline was presented (see Attachment A). These dates are suggestions based on the WCA's understanding of the anticipated release date for the Census data and how the process for redistricting operates under current statute:

- August 23: Counties begin drafting tentative plan; publish/post notice of hearing
- September 15: Counties contemporaneously hold public hearing, adopt tentative plan, and transmit plan to municipalities
- October 18: Municipalities transmit ward plan back to counties; counties publish/post notice of hearing
- November 3 – 10: Counties contemporaneously hold public hearing and adopt final plan
- November 23: County and municipal clerks publish Type A notice

The timetable established in Resolution No. 21-17 followed an earlier timeline recommended by the Wisconsin Counties Association in a handbook for the 2021 redistricting cycle (see Attachment B). The timeline was as follows:

Step #	Months	Action
1	February – March	Determine the Board size and appoint a redistricting committee
2	March	Establish guidelines for redistricting
3	April – May	Develop a tentative plan

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4	June – July	Create municipal wards
5	August – September	Finalize and adopt the redistricting plan

Due to the compressed timeline, it is recommended that Resolution 21-17 be amended to include the new dates suggested by the WCA, and that a separate resolution be adopted establishing a Redistricting Committee. Both proposed resolutions are included in this document.

At the February meeting of the Rules & Resolutions Committee, members reviewed a report on County Board size in peer counties (see Attachment C). The committee also reviewed the effect of reducing the size of the County Board on the number of people represented by each Supervisor, as well the number of committees/boards/commissions on which each Supervisor may serve. The committee made a motion to develop a survey for the County Board on this topic. But at the March meeting, the development of a survey was postponed indefinitely because of the potential 2-year delay in redistricting.

If the general consensus of the Rules & Resolutions Committee is that a reduction in the size of the County Board does not have significant advantages, it is recommended that the resolution establishing a Redistricting Committee provide direction that the size of the Richland County Board remain at 21 for the purposes of redistricting for the 2022 – 2031 decade.

A Resolution Amending Resolution 21-17 which Established a Timetable for Drawing Supervisory District Boundaries

WHEREAS at its January 19, 2021 meeting the County Board adopted Resolution No. 21-17 establishing a timetable for drawing supervisory district boundaries after the 2020 census, and

WHEREAS the U.S. Census Bureau delayed the release of population data until August 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and

WHEREAS Governor Evers has vetoed a legislative bill to delay redistricting for two years, and

WHEREAS the Wisconsin Counties Association has updated its suggestions for a timetable to draw supervisory district boundaries.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Richland County Board of Supervisors that the timetable in Resolution 21-17 be amended as follows:

Step 1	February – March <u>August</u> 2021	Determine the size of the County Board and appoint a redistricting committee
Step 2	March <u>August</u> 2021	Establish guidelines for redistricting
Step 3	April – May <u>August – September</u> 2021	Develop a tentative plan
Step 4	June – July <u>September – October</u> 2021	Create municipal wards
Step 5	August – September <u>October – November</u> 2021	Finalize and adopt redistricting plan

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, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its passage and publication.

A Resolution Creating a Redistricting Committee

WHEREAS Wisconsin State Statute 59.10 requires that county governments redistrict following the federal decennial census, and

WHEREAS the Wisconsin Counties Association has published guidance on redistricting for the 2021 cycle, and

WHEREAS this guidance recommends the appointment of a redistricting committee tasked with the responsibility of drawing district lines, and

WHEREAS this guidance also recommends including one or more representatives of municipalities, as well as citizens, on the committee, and

WHEREAS the actual drafting of redistricting plans will be done by county staff, based on guidelines established by the committee.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Richland County Board of Supervisors that the Redistricting Committee is hereby created, with the composition of the Committee being as follows:

1. One citizen of the county
2. Three County Board supervisors (one of whom shall serve as chair)
3. Three municipal clerks, one each from a city, village, and township, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the one citizen member and three County Board supervisors shall be appointed by the County Board, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the three municipal clerks shall be appointed by the County Clerk, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this committee shall follow the timetable and steps established in Resolution No. 21-17 and amended in Resolution No. 21-xx, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this committee retain 21 County Board supervisory districts, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its passage and publication.

Attachments and References:

Attachment A: WCA Proposed Redistricting Timeline
Attachment B: WI Counties Association County Decennial Redistricting Handbook
Attachment C: County Board Size

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Financial Review:

(please check one)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	In adopted budget	Fund Number	County Board
<input type="checkbox"/>	Apportionment needed	Requested Fund Number	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other funding Source		
<input type="checkbox"/>	No financial impact		

Approval:

Review:

Department Head

Administrator, or Elected Office (if applicable)