



Redistricting

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Introduction

- Redistricting is the process by which the boundaries of election districts are drawn.
- The redistricting process occurs every ten years after the decennial census is completed. This time, delays in completing the census resulted in an 11-year gap.
- The redistricting process that Albemarle County is engaged in requires the redrawing of the County's six magisterial districts and the voter precincts within those districts.
- Members of the County's Board of Supervisors and School Board are elected from those districts.

Why is redistricting required?

- State and federal law require redistricting.
- For magisterial districts, state law follows the federal law and requires that the districts be composed of contiguous and compact territory and provide for representation that is in proportion to the population of the district.
- Redistricting addresses population shifts.
- For example, a magisterial district whose population increased since the 2011 redistricting will likely shrink in geographic size, while surrounding districts whose population stayed the same will grow, to preserve proportionality in population among the districts.

What has happened since the 2011 redistricting plan was adopted?

- The County's population increased by 13,385, or 13.5%
- But that increase was not uniform. The increase in each current magisterial district was:
 - Jack Jouett: 8.4%
 - Rio: 21.7%
 - Rivanna: 13.5%
 - Samuel Miller: 8.4%
 - Scottsville: 6.0%
 - White Hall: 23.0%
- The districts above with greater population increases will, in general, have to shrink geographically, while the others will grow.

The current numbers of registered voters, by magisterial district

- Rivanna: 18,503
 - Precincts: Keswick, Stony Point, Hollymead, Free Bridge, Pantops, Baker-Butler
- White Hall: 19,926
 - Precincts: Crozet, Free Union, Earlysville, Brownsville, Mechums River
- Scottsville: 17,626
 - Precincts: Scottsville, Monticello, Stone-Robinson, Mountain View, Biscuit Run
- Rio: 20,468
 - Precincts: Woodbrook, Branchlands, Agnor-Hurt, Dunlora, Northside
- Samuel Miller: 17,374
 - Precincts: Ivy, Red Hill, East Ivy, Country Green, Porter's, Yellow Mountain
- Jack Jouett: 18,498
 - Precincts: Jack Jouett, U-Hall, Gerogetown

What is the purpose of the proposed redistricting guidelines?

- The preliminary redistricting guidelines will guide staff and inform the public of the applicable criteria to be considered for redistricting as staff prepares to develop the 2022 redistricting ordinance.
- Although they are called “guidelines,” many of them are actually statements of state or federal law and are requirements, rather than merely guidelines.

What requirements apply to the redrawing of magisterial district boundaries?

The requirements include the following:

- Establish population equality among the magisterial districts as nearly as practicable, with a goal of having a deviation in population not to exceed +/-5%, in order to assure representation in proportion to the population of the district.
- Maintain geographical compactness in each magisterial district.
- Maintain geographical contiguity in each magisterial district.
- Assure that any change in a magisterial district boundary does not have the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race, color, or status as a member of a language minority group.
- Assure that magisterial districts have clearly observable boundaries.
- Assure that no protected class loses voting strength under the new redistricting plan.
- Use only 2021 census data for the County.

See handout for additional information.

What local guidelines are being considered for the redrawing of magisterial district boundaries?

The local guidelines being considered, and used in the past, are:

- Maintain six magisterial districts.
- Have each magisterial district contain both urban and rural areas of the County.
- Minimize changes to existing magisterial district boundaries.
- Preserve communities of interest, including neighborhoods, within the same magisterial district.
- Avoid the pairing of incumbent members of the Board of Supervisors or the School Board in the same magisterial district.
- Avoid splitting census blocks to assure the accuracy of the census data.

Any comments or suggestions?

What requirements apply to the redrawing of voter precinct boundaries?

The requirements are:

- A precinct may have no fewer than 100 registered voters nor more than 5,000 registered voters.
- Each precinct must be wholly contained within a magisterial district.
- Maintain geographical compactness in each precinct.
- Maintain geographical contiguity in each precinct.
- Assure precincts have clearly observable boundaries.
- Avoid splitting precincts unless necessary.

See handout for additional information.

What requirements apply to the location of polling places?

The state requirements include the following:

- Each precinct has one polling place.
- If a polling place cannot be located within the precinct, it shall be located within one mile from the precinct boundary.
- A polling place should be located in a public building whenever practicable.
- No polling place shall be located in a building that serves primarily as the headquarters, office, or assembly building for any private organization, other than an organization of a civic, educational, religious, charitable, historical, patriotic, cultural or similar nature, unless the State Board of Elections has approved the use of the building because no other building meets accessibility requirements.
- Each polling place shall be accessible to qualified voters as required by the provisions of the Virginians with Disabilities Act, the Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act relating to public services.

What local guidelines are being considered for the locating of polling places?

The local guidelines being considered, and used in the past, are:

- A polling place should be centrally located within the precinct so that the maximum travel time for a voter does not exceed 20 minutes.
- Existing polling places should be maintained, if they satisfy state requirements for polling places.
- Polling places should be located where public transportation is available, where appropriate.

Any comments or suggestions?

The redistricting schedule

- **February 9, 2022**: Staff will report to the Board of Supervisors on the comments received from community organizations and the general public at the January 24 public meeting. The Board will be asked to approve final redistricting guidelines and direct staff to proceed with redistricting work.
- **April 6, 2022**: The Board will hold a work session.
- **April 13, 2022**: If there are unresolved issues from the previous work session, the Board will hold a work session.
- **May 4 or 11, 2022**: The Board will hold a public hearing and adopt the 2022 redistricting ordinance.
- **May, 2022**: After the Board has adopted the 2022 redistricting ordinance, staff will submit the ordinance and supporting documentation to the Virginia Attorney General for certification under Virginia Code § 24.2-129, if required.

Because an ongoing lawsuit against the state could make June primaries necessary, staff will recommend an accelerated timeline to the Board on February 2. That timeline would see the process compressed further, to begin on February 2 and end on March 23.

Why is the schedule so tight?

- This year's timeline is tight, and unique, in that it is both a year late, due to delays in the completion of the U.S. Census and in the state redistricting process. The state's own redistricting followed a new constitutional process for the first time last year.
- Once the Board of Supervisors adopts a redistricting ordinance, under some circumstances, the County could have to submit the ordinance and supporting documentation to the Virginia Attorney General and obtain a "preclearance" of the ordinance under Virginia Code § 24.2-129.
- The preclearance process requires approximately 60-90 days from the date the Board of Supervisors adopts the ordinance.
- In addition to the November 2022 general election, primary elections may be needed. They are scheduled for June 22, 2022. In past years, the General Assembly has moved the primaries to August to accommodate redistricting, but no such bill has yet been introduced.

Any comments or suggestions?

If you want to submit written comments

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