

THE CITY OF NEWPORT

RESOLUTION

OF THE

COUNCIL

No.

WHEREAS: The provisions expressed in the Voting Rights Act and the concept that voters should choose their representatives rather than representatives choosing their voters should be a guiding principle in the processes of the drawing of voting district lines; and

WHEREAS, Section 3-7 of the Charter for the City of Newport requires that the City be divided into three wards for purposes of election of City Councilors and the School Committee;

WHEREAS, Section 3.7 states that under “the direction of the City Council, the ward lines shall be drawn by the Canvassing Authority in such a manner as to preserve as nearly as may be convenient, consistent with well-defined boundaries, with an equal number of residents in each ward;

WHEREAS, Section 3.7 further requires that this be done each year when the General Assembly shall re-determine the state representative and senatorial districts;

WHEREAS, the General Assembly is at present in the process of determining the Senate and representative district lines based on the 2020 Census and it is expected that the General Assembly will vote on and approve the same in or about January of 2022;

WHEREAS, the drawing of the City’s ward lines will need to be done after the General Assembly has determined the Senate and representative district lines and at present, the City is not able to draw the ward lines using in-house staff;

WHEREAS in the past, the City has issued requests for proposals for outside service providers experienced in the drawing of voting district lines to assist the Canvassing Authority with drawing the new ward lines;

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests of the voters of the City of Newport that new ward lines be established as early as possible after the state district lines are established and before candidates must declare for office for the City Council or School Committee in June of 2022;

WHEREAS, the process of developing and issuing request for proposals to assist the Canvassing Authority in drawing the ward lines should be begun as soon as practicable in order to have a vendor selected or in the process of being selected by the time the State confirms the voting district lines;

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the voters of the City of Newport that information be provided by the City via its website and also by way of informational public meetings as to the process involved in the drawing of the ward lines;

WHEREAS, to enable the public to be able to review and also be heard on the drawing of the ward lines, there should be at least three public meetings held in the evening to allow the public to review and provide comment on the proposed ward lines. NOW THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED: that a request for proposals be prepared and issued to the fullest extent possible by January 1, 2022, calling for responses to the requests for proposals by the end of January, 2022 with a vendor selected within two weeks thereafter;

RESOLVED: that the City begin public outreach via the City website providing information on the procedure to be followed in drawing new ward lines pursuant to the provisions of the Charter and that the Canvassing Authority be directed to hold a public informational meeting also to advise the public as to the procedure and process involved in drawing the ward lines. BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED: that at least three public meetings be held in the evening for the determination of proposed ward lines to allow the public to review and comment on the same and that the Canvassing Board meeting at which the Board is to consider and recommend to the City Council the proposed ward lines also be held in the evening hours.

ANGELA MCCALLA
JAMIE BOVA

IN COUNCIL
READ AND PASSED

LAURA C. SWISTAK
CITY CLERK