

ITEM NO. 22-

**TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF PEORIA, ILLINOIS, IN COUNCIL,
ASSEMBLED YOUR COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE to Whom
was Referred a POLICY SESSION on REDISTRICTING
COUNCIL DISTRICTS and Provide Direction to Staff as
Appropriate.**

A Policy Session was held on Tuesday, February 1, 2022, beginning at 6:00 P.M. by electronic means through Zoom, with Mayor Ali presiding, and with proper notice having been posted.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed the following Council Members were present: Allen, Cyr, Grayeb, Jackson, Jensen, Kelly, Oyler, Riggerbach, Ruckriegel, Velpula, Mayor Ali – 11. Absent: None.

Others present electronically were: City Manager Patrick Urich, Assistant City Manager Kimberly Richardson, Interim Corporation Counsel Chrissie Kapustka, City Clerk Stefanie Tarr, Deputy Clerk II Courtney Coe, Network Administrator Paul Peterson, Community Development Director Joe Dulin, Senior Planner Josh Naven, Assistant Community Development Director Leah Allison, and interested citizens.

**Communication from the City Manager and Finance Director with a Request to
hold a POLICY SESSION on REDISTRICTING COUNCIL DISTRICTS**

Mayor Ali opened the Policy Session at 6:06 P.M.

Handouts containing the Redistricting Map Version 2.3 and an updated Redistricting Version Comparison Report were distributed to all Council Members.

City Manager Patrick Urich said three new versions of the Redistricting Map were created in response to the Council's direction at the January 18, 2022, Policy Session - Versions 2.1, 2.2, and 4. He said Version 2.3 was derived after having received feedback from Council Members Riggerbach and Grayeb.

Senior Planner Josh Naven said Versions 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 had north to south orientations for the Districts, had boundaries following major thoroughfares, and he noted the Fourth and Fifth Districts remained relatively the same through each of those versions. He said Version 4 most closely resembled the current District Map, with the First District running parallel to the riverfront, the Second and Third Districts aligned on the First District's north boundary in the center of the City, and the Fourth and Fifth Districts located in the north, similar to the other versions presented. He described the neighborhoods shared between two Districts in Version 4 and why the boundaries ran through those communities in order to achieve population criterion, despite Council's request to keep neighborhoods intact in a single District when possible. City Manager Urich added that Staff prioritized the unity of neighborhoods but weighed the condition against the requirements, such as population variations. He said despite the fact that Versions 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 split the Moss-Bradley neighborhood across two Districts, the vertical orientation of the Districts allowed for areas of concern to be represented by multiple Council Members to expand available time and resources.

Council Member Cyr said the Fifth District boundaries in Versions 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 were very similar but Version 2.3 was his preference. He said the ease of explaining boundaries along main streets in the City was a benefit.

Council Member Riggerbach said he appreciated the efforts of Senior Planner Naven and City Manager Ulrich with drafting map Version 2.3, such as keeping neighborhoods intact and the alignment of District boundaries with main thoroughfares.

Council Member Grayeb said the Council was responsible for deciding on a Districts Map that would represent the future of the City. He said it would be difficult for Council Members to shift focus, constituents, and community projects, but he said the changes were necessary to move forward. He said Version 2.3 was an excellent map because it minimized splitting neighborhoods between multiple Districts and took other Council considerations into account from the January 18, 2022, Policy Session. He said he had proudly represented the Second District for many years, and he said he would continue to serve the community regardless of how the maps were drawn. He said it was important to focus on the future of Peoria. He noted the importance of contiguity in a District and said there were many different factors to consider with Redistricting. He concluded by stating Version 2.3 would be a good decision.

Council Member Jackson said she appreciated Council Members Grayeb and Riggerbach's suggestions that resulted in Version 2.3. She said it would bring significant changes to the First District, but she said it would benefit the City as a whole, while community projects and citizens would be well represented. She said she favored Version 2.3 and she wanted to assure First District citizens she would continue to represent them to the best of her ability.

Council Member Oyler said the advantage for At-Large Council Members was the broader view of the decisions, since they would not be impacted by the changes. He said Version 2.3 was based on geographical boundaries and said it provided clear definitions for citizens. He said he preferred to move forward with Version 2.3.

Council Member Ruckriegel said after considering the qualifications and challenges, he appreciated the efforts and results of Version 2.3. He said aligning District boundaries with main thoroughfares was beneficial, and he remarked on the difficulties of containing all neighborhoods in a single District, noting the Moss-Bradley neighborhood was split between two Districts in Version 2.3 but continuity would persist. He concurred with Council Member Oyler for the Council to continue with conversions on Version 2.3.

Council Member Jensen said she preferred Version 1 that was presented at the January 18, 2022, Policy Session, because it kept the neighborhood of Moss-Bradley intact in a single District. Senior Planner Naven described the boundaries proposed in Version 1, the neighborhoods that were shared between multiple districts, and compared the existing District Map with Version 1. Mayor Ali said she was concerned the First District in Version 1 contained many challenges and areas requiring attention, noting it would be beneficial to share the weight with additional Council Members to represent the community to the best of their abilities.

Council Member Riggerbach shared concerns regarding Version 1, including utilizing side streets as boundaries and dividing the East Bluff across three Districts. He said he supported Version 2.3 because it better addressed those concerns.

After thanking Staff for their efforts during the Redistricting process, Council Member Allen said the Fourth District did not change greatly and said he was in favor of Version 2.3 because represented diversity and provided clear boundaries. He said it was important to consider the long-term effects of the Council's decision, and he concluded he would support Version 2.3.

Council Member Ruckriegel explained the importance of collaboration with County and Municipal Governments and how considering District boundaries could reflect increased

successful alliances. He said improving collaboration with other governmental entities would combine resources for projects of mutual benefit for the community. He said he was in favor of Version 2.3.

Council Member Oyler moved to direct Staff to bring Redistricting Map Version 2.3 to a subsequent Regular City Council Meeting for consideration for approval; seconded by Council Member Ruckriegel.

Approved by roll call vote.

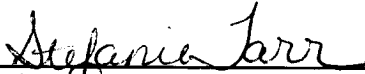
Yeas: Allen, Cyr, Grayeb, Jackson, Jensen, Kelly, Oyler, Riggerbach, Ruckriegel, Velpula, Mayor Ali – 11;

Nays: None.

City Manager Urich said a Public Hearing regarding the proposed Redistricting Map Version 2.3 would be held at the Regular Joint City Council and Town Board Meeting on Tuesday, February 8, 2022, and an item would be placed on the February 22, 2022, City Council Agenda for the Council to consider for adoption.

Mayor Ali and Council Member Kelly thanked Council and Staff for their work regarding Redistricting.

Mayor Ali closed the Policy Session at 6:48 P.M.



Stefanie Jarr, RMC, CMC, City Clerk
City of Peoria, Illinois

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