

**PASQUOTANK COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
OCTOBER 18, 2021**

The Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners met today in a regular meeting on Monday, October 18, 2021 in Courtroom C in the Pasquotank County Courthouse.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lloyd E. Griffin, III, Chairman
Charles H. Jordan, Vice-Chairman
Cecil Perry
Sean Lavin
Barry Overman
Jonathan Meads

MEMBERS ABSENT: William "Bill" Sterritt

OTHERS PRESENT: Sparty Hammett, County Manager
R. Michael Cox, County Attorney
Julie Stamper, GIS Coordinator
Patrice Stewart, Tax Administrator
Lynn Scott, Clerk to the Board

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Lloyd Griffin. Vice-Chairman Jordan gave the invocation and County Attorney Mike Cox led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. Chairman Griffin welcomed those in attendance.

1. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

Vice-Chairman Jordan requested that the agenda be amended to add the following items recommended by the Finance Committee to the Consent Agenda: 1) Approval of Telephonics Grant Modification Extension Agreement; 2) Approval of 911 Grant Agreement; 3) Approval to Purchase Tractor Pull Property and Park Master Plan; 4) Approval of Reclassification of Emergency Medical Services Position; and 5) Approval of Contract for Architecture Services for Commissioners Board Room Project. Commissioner Lavin explained that during the October 4, 2021 meeting the Board called for a Public Hearing on October 18, 2021 on the proposed Schedule of Values for the 2022 Revaluation. He asked that the agenda be amended to add a Public Hearing on the proposed Schedule of Values for the 2022 Revaluation.

Motion was made by Charles Jordan, seconded by Sean Lavin to amend the agenda to add Items #1-5 to the Consent Agenda and to have a Public Hearing on the proposed Schedule of Values for the 2022 Revaluation. The motion carried unanimously.

2. PUBLIC HEARING ON SCHEDULE OF VALUES FOR 2022 REVALUATION:

Chairman Griffin declared the meeting to be a public hearing on the Schedule of Values for the 2022 Revaluation, and he asked if anyone would care to comment on the Schedule of Values.

Chairman Griffin recognized Katherine Lane from Pearson Appraisal Service. Ms. Lane said the purpose of the public hearing is to entertain anyone who has any public comments or questions regarding the submission of the 2022 Schedule of Values. She stated that they will return on November 1st, if all goes well, for adoption of the schedule of values. If anyone has questions or concerns in the meantime, they can contact her.

Mr. George Hague of 2321 Dahlia Drive said he is hopeful the tax revaluation will be tax neutral.

At the absence of further comments, the public hearing was closed.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Chairman Griffin recognized Christina Williams of 3611 Union Street to address the Board. Ms. Williams stated that criticism of government and lack of confidence in our elected leaders is rampant these days even at the local level here in Pasquotank County. She said she supports and thanks the commissioners for having their meetings open to the public. She, however, would like to urge the commissioners to take the floor back from speakers who engage in personal attacks on either the commissioners or the staff. At the point where rudeness enters public

comments, to the point of defamatory remarks, there is no public purpose being met. She appreciates the Boards' willingness to hear everyone's remarks and she hopes that everyone who speaks has brought something relevant and actionable for the Board to make our County better.

4. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

The Board considered the following consent agenda:

a. *Approval of Minutes of October 4, 2021 Commissioner Meeting*

b. *Approval of Tax Releases and Refunds*

The Finance Committee has recommended approval of the following tax release, tax refund, and solid waste fee releases:

Tax Release

		County	City
1.	Advantage Leasing Corporation	227.80	

Tax Refund

		County	City
1.	David John Mannion Jr.	105.34	

Solid Waste Fee Releases

		Parcel ID #	Reason for Release
1.	Mary S. Berry Life Estate	24-B-16	Vacant
2.	Carrie Bernard	P132A-222	Vacant
3.	Freddie A. & Patricia Brewer	33-B-437	Vacant
4.	Linda Bridgman Etal	P6-26	Vacant
5.	Melba Bridgman	P7-16	Vacant
6.	Virginia Brooks	P58-11	Vacant
7.	Nolan Bundy	P6-5	Vacant
8.	Karl F. Clow	P35-39	Vacant
9.	Linda Davenport	P110-58	Vacant
10.	Florence Evans Etal	P126-32	Vacant
11.	Ralph Sylvester & Latonia Monique Flowers	P112-90	Vacant
12.	Toxie Lee & Maggie Gallop	P80-45A	Vacant
13.	George O. Halstead	P95-46	Vacant
14.	Hazel Godfrey	P8A-36	Vacant
15.	Steven R. Harris	P11-9	Vacant
16.	Jacqueline D. Hill Etal	P9-8	Vacant
17.	Jacqueline D. Hill	55-A-15	Vacant
18.	Edward & Jo Ann Jezard Hollomon	P142B-58	Vacant
19.	Capt. Medina Dukes Jones	26-H-6	Vacant
20.	Pamela Bright Lassiter	P133A-58	Vacant
21.	W. D. & Phyllis Looney	P141-134	Vacant
22.	Robert J. Mc Williams	10-H-167	Vacant
23.	Herman Ray Meads Jr.	P58-50	Vacant
24.	Bobbie G. Moore & Miles Harris`	P120-193	Vacant
25.	Bobbie G. Moore	76-H-14A	Vacant
26.	Ella Ernestine Mullen	P36-65	Vacant
27.	Jeff Overton Jr.Heirs	P67-44	Vacant
28.	Elizabeth S. Overton Life Est.	P98-16	Vacant
29.	Reginald Overton Etal	P99-8	Vacant
30.	Elijah Phillips	30-A-18-19	Vacant
31.	Charlie E. Price	P98-3	Vacant
32.	Charlie E. & Blanche Price	32-H-12B	Vacant
33.	Charlie & Blanche Price	55-E-25,26	Vacant
34.	Robert & Frances Ross	P141-173	Vacant
35.	Veronica P. Stallings	P98-31	Vacant
36.	Mary Phyllis White	P77-2	Vacant
37.	Wayne & Carolyn White	P142-12	Vacant
38.	Sam T. Williams Heirs	P77-3	Vacant

c. Approval of Budget Amendments

The Finance Committee has recommended approval of the following budget amendments:

Brd of Elections

Increase	010.0991.4991.00	Fund Balance Appropriated	50,273.00
Increase	010.4170.5500.00	Capital Outlay	50,273.00

Sheriff

Increase	010.0991.4991.00	Fund Balance Appropriated	33,642.00
Increase	010.4310.5311.00	Training	8,900.00
Increase	010.4310.5500.00	Capital Outlay	24,742.00

Inspections

Increase	010.0991.4991.00	Fund Balance Appropriated	29,800.00
Increase	010.4350.5500.00	Capital Outlay	29,800.00

IT

Increase	010.0991.4991.00	Fund Balance Appropriated	25,110.00
Increase	010.4135.5500.00	Capital Outlay	25,110.00

RO Plant

Increase	063.0991.4991.00	Fund Balance Appropriated	331,849.00
Increase	063.7135.5500.00	Capital Outlay	331,849.00

d. Approval of Telephonics Grant Modification Extension Agreement

Jack Enright, Telephonics Corporation Senior Vice President has requested that their Building Reuse Grant be paid out. The grant was originally executed in June 2019 and was to expire on June 20, 2021. Due to COVID-19 related staffing challenges, the North Carolina Department of Commerce has extended the grant until June 20, 2022. The extension has a requirement for Chairman Griffin to execute the modified grant on behalf of the County.

The grant pays up to 50% of all eligible expenses related to building refit costs at their 112 Corporate Drive, Elizabeth City, North Carolina facility, not to exceed \$400,000. The grant also requires the creation of fifty new full-time jobs in addition to the six base jobs existing at grant inception. Telephonics has provided documentation of \$804,000 in eligible expenses. The 5% local match is covered by their use of local contractors/supplies. There are currently thirty-one employees, and they expect to meet their jobs creation goals by the beginning of 2022.

The grant is structured so that you can elect to pay the grant money at any time during the agreement period. Telephonics has also executed a promissory note that protects the County if the job creation goals are not met. The claw back is \$8,000 per job not created/maintained. It also requires payment in 30 days, after which 10% interest is added. The Finance Committee has recommended approval of the Building Reuse Grant modification extension agreement and payment of the \$400,000 grant to Telephonics.

e. Approval of 911 Grant Agreement

In June of 2021, Central Communications applied for a grant through the NC 911 Board. Central Communications Director, Kylie Felton, did a virtual presentation to the grant committee in July 2021 to explain the need and reasoning for the grant request. Acceptance of the grant will allow Central Communications to update radio console equipment at the dispatch positions that are currently end of life and soon to be end of support. It will also add redundancy to the radio system by adding two backup channels on the Wellfield tower site. If the VIPER system on the Navy tower were to be compromised, staff would still have the ability to communicate with field units.

The total project cost is \$603,943.85. Surcharge (911) funds will cover \$272,922.45, and the grant award of \$331,021.40 covers the remaining balance. With approval and acceptance of this grant, staff can begin ordering the necessary equipment and fiber connection to the Viper system in Farmville. The Finance Committee has recommended acceptance of the 911 grant award of \$331,021.40.

f. Approval to Purchase Tractor Pull Property and Park Master Plan

On September 24, 2021, the County's PARTF grant application for \$289,000 was approved. Brittany Shipp, Eastern Region Consultant, indicated that no work on the park should be done until the PARTF grant contract is executed in November. The County's Option to Purchase expires on October 31, 2021. Staff contacted Lisa Winslow, the Tractor Pull property owner, and she agreed to extend the Option to Purchase until December 15, 2021.

To apply for 2022 PARTF funding for construction costs, staff would need to have an application completed and submitted for preliminary review before April 1, 2022. Staff will need to complete a Northern Park Master Plan before submitting the application. In order to be able to apply for 2022 PARTF funding for park construction, the Finance Committee recommended the following:

- Approve the Tractor Pull Option to Purchase extension to December 15, 2021.
- Authorize the County Manager to retain a surveyor to survey the property and subdivide the acreage to the east of the Kyle Shipman property (969 Highway 158).

g. Approval of Reclassification of Emergency Medical Services Position

Based on current EMS system needs, and recently gathered feedback from staff, the reinstatement of a full-time Training Officer is needed. In 2004, the EMS Training Officer position was implemented, and the position operated on either a full or part time basis until 2019. Since that time, the training duties have been assigned to an on-shift Captain as a collateral responsibility. As operational demands on EMS Shift Captains have increased, it has become imperative that training duties be assigned to someone who can be physically present during normal business hours and can concentrate solely on the training needs of PCEMS.

The Training Officer position was previously at a Pay Grade 20. PCEMS is requesting the position be reestablished at Pay Grade 21. The Pay Grade 21 would be in line with the Lieutenant level positions. The Finance Committee has recommended approval to reclassify an existing Paramedic position to a Training Officer at Pay Grade 21 with a salary range of \$41,575 to \$58,613. The reclassification would have no Fiscal Year 2021-22 budget impact.

h. Approval of Contract for Architecture Services for Commissioners Board Room Project

Staff received responses from four architectural firms for the Commissioners Board Room project. The project will involve renovation of the existing Public Defender's Office space in the Courthouse and former DayBreak space in the Edgewood Center, which is temporarily being used by the Boys and Girls Club. The vendor selection team selected Greenville, North Carolina based JKF Architecture. JKF Architecture completed the project which renovated the former Daily Advance building into the ECPC Senior Center.

The project will include: (1) converting the approximately 3,000 square feet Public Defender's Office space in the Courthouse into a state of the art Commissioners Board Room; (2) converting a portion of the approximately 6,000 square feet former DayBreak space at the Edgewood Center into space for the Public Defender's Office; and (3) converting the remaining former DayBreak space to meet a space need for the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Public Schools Technology Division. In addition, the move of the Public Defender's Office will open up two offices which could be used by the Pasquotank County Clerk of Court to meet some of their space needs.

Staff met with JKF Architecture Principal, John Farkas, to tour the Public Defender's Office and the Edgewood Center space. Staff also provided the existing architectural and engineering plans for the Courthouse space. Based upon this information, JKF determined that the corridor wall is a load bearing wall that cannot be removed. The project will require removal of the existing vault in the Public Defender's Office in order to provide enough space for the Commissioners Board Room. The Finance Committee has recommended approval of the contract with JKF Architecture for Architectural and Engineering Design Services for \$109,193 using Contingency Funds.

Motion was made by Barry Overman, seconded by Sean Lavin to approve the Consent Agenda, as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

5. REDISTRICTING – PROPOSED MAP PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION BY JULIE STAMPER:

County Manger Hammett stated that the redistricting has to be completed by November 17th for the 2022 elections. He said Commissioner Perry has requested that an item be placed on the January 17, 2022 agenda to consider restructuring, which will direct staff to prepare options for

restructuring for consideration by the Board for the 2024 elections.

Chairman Griffin called on Julie Stamper to present the proposed Redistricting Map. Ms. Stamper provided the following summary:

Redistricting 2021

The 2020 Census showed a considerable shift in our population. Part of this was due to the decrease in student enrollment at Elizabeth City State University and substantial growth in the Walmart/Tanglewood area with Stockbridge and Tanglewood apartments.

Based on the 2020 Census, the populations in the four commissioner districts was:

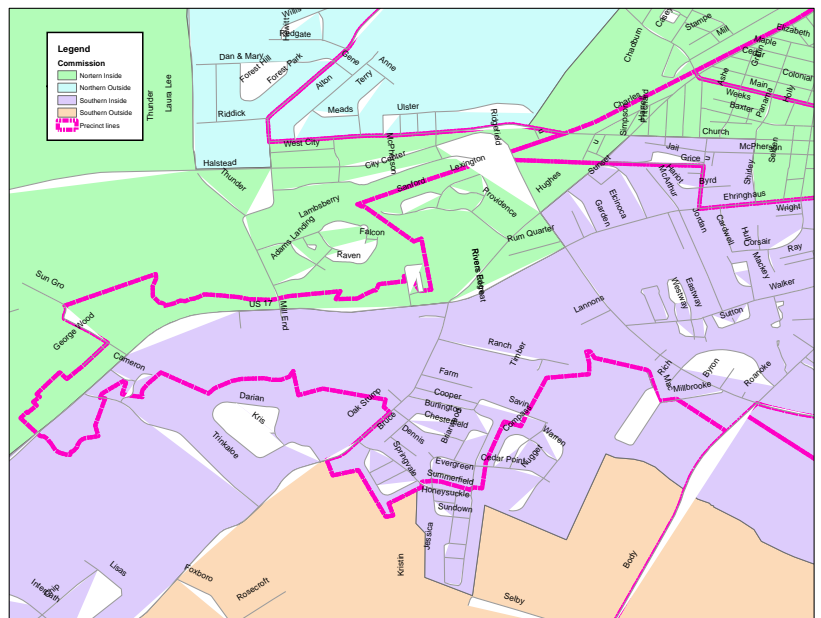
Northern Outside	10,458
Northern Inside	11,129
Southern Inside	9,081
Southern Outside	9,900

With our current total population of 40,568, the “Ideal District Size” is 10,142. Our districts must fall between 9,635 and 10,649. By this metric, the Northern Inside and Southern Inside lay outside those limits and thus Redistricting must happen. Commissioners voted at the September 15th, 2021 meeting for staff to proceed with redistricting.

When looking at the current map and trying to minimize changes and create the fewest ballot styles by staying within current and unchanging voting precincts (where you vote), a few areas stood out as places that needed to be adjusted. This proposal also maintains a majority minority population in the Southern Inside district.

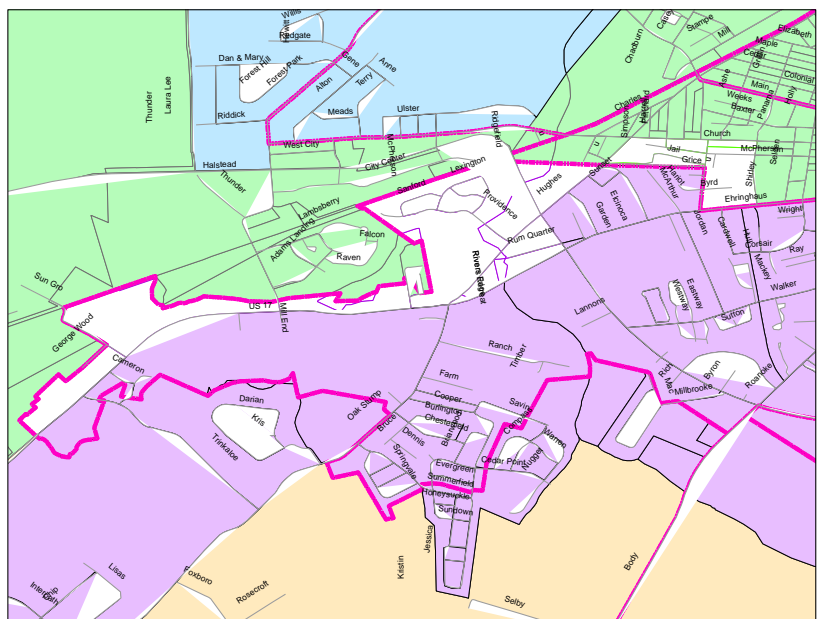
Area 1:

From left to right, moving the area north of 17, the new apartments behind Food Lion (old Farm Fresh), Oxford Heights out of the Northern Inside District, and moving the area around the Pasquotank Water Department and EC Maintenance office out of the Southern Inside District leads to more compact districts while balancing the population.



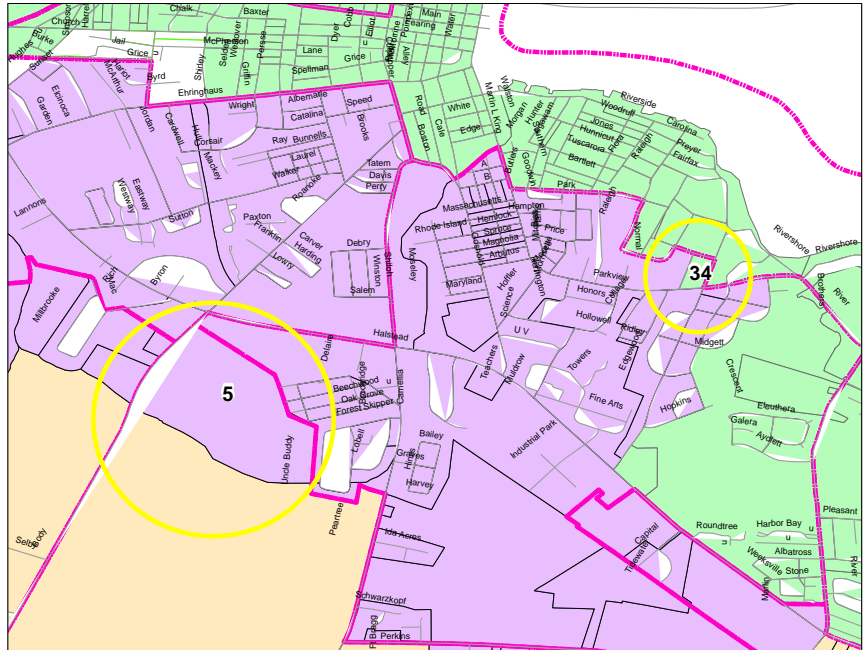
Moving those areas brings 569 people, 337 of them minority, from Northern Inside to Southern Inside.

The change around the Water Department moves 72 people into the Northern Inside District, for a net increase of 497 to Southern Inside and loss of 497 to Southern Outside Northern Inside.



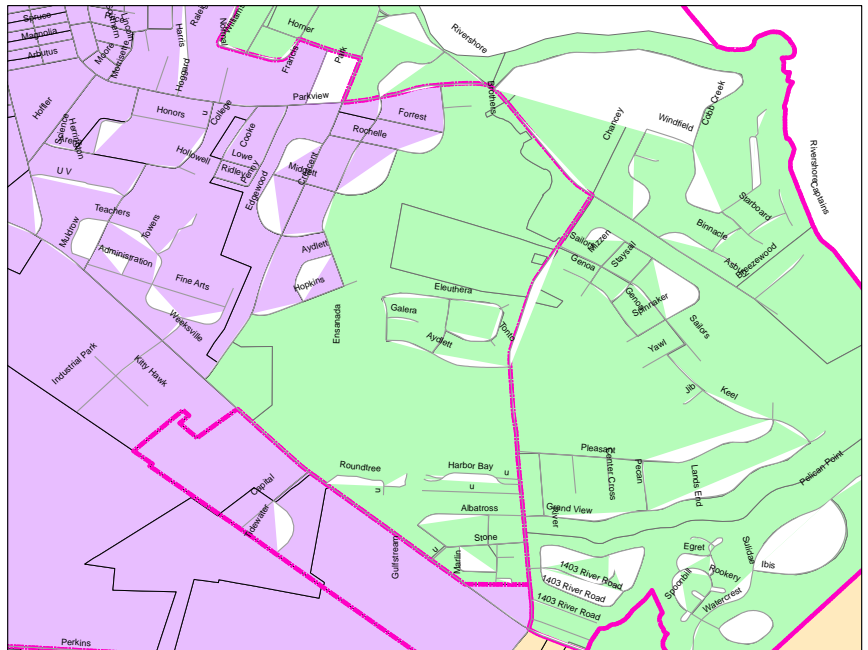
Area 2

2 very small areas were moved to clean up boundaries. One was the largely farmland area bounded by Body Rd, the Oak Grove subdivision and more farm land that has 5 residents, and a block of 34 people bounded by Horner St, Francis St, Parkview Dr. and Park St. No map is shown but they will be moved into the appropriate district.

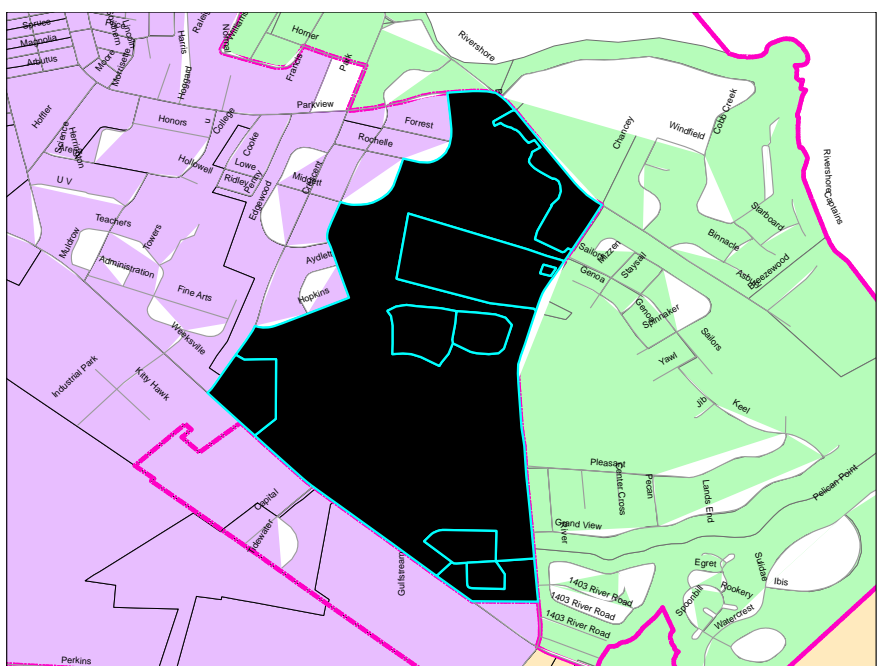


Area 3

This is a larger area but a substantial number of people needed to be moved from Northern Inside to Southern Inside. The area west of River Rd, which has seen a lot of growth and includes Heron's Ridge, Elizabeth City Gardens and Old Coast Guard Housing is currently in the Northern Inside District.



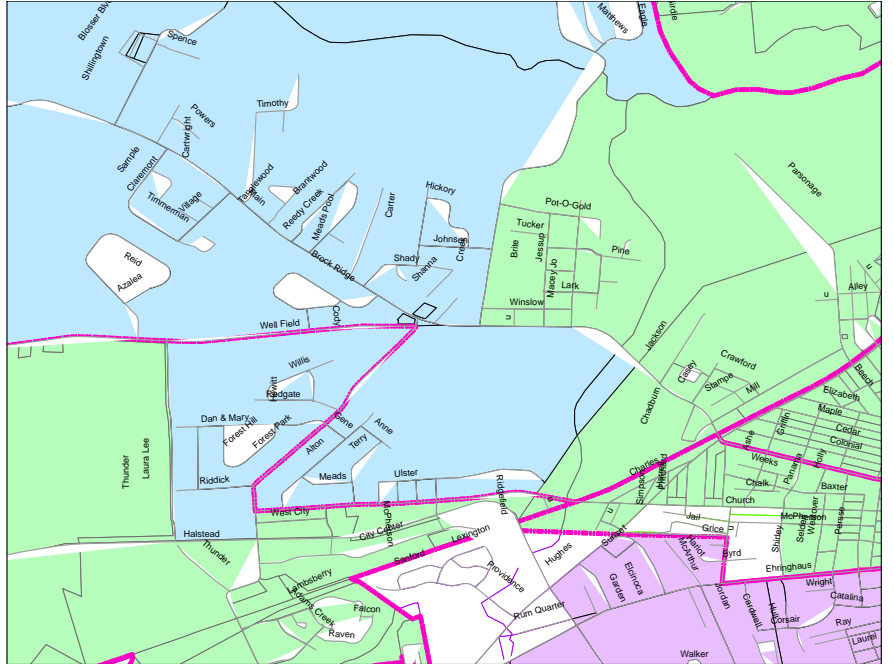
Moving that area moves 877 people, 363 minority, from Northern Inside to Southern Inside to help balance the population.



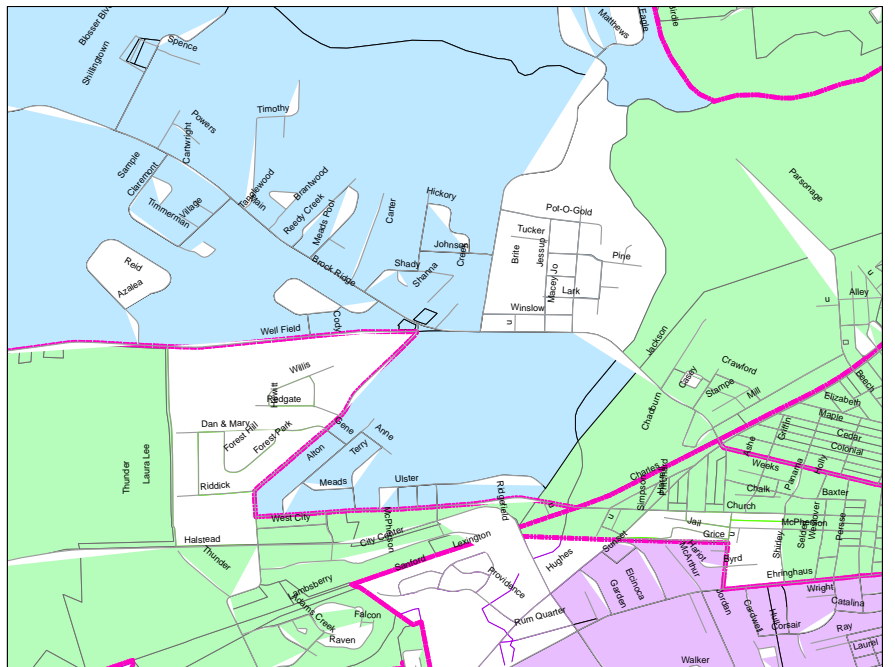
Area 4

Moving the Forest Park subdivision west of Forest Park Rd, from Northern Outside to Northern Inside and to make up for it, moving Brite Meadows from Northern Inside to Northern Outside.

Besides following precinct lines better, the areas are better aligned with their similar subdivisions.

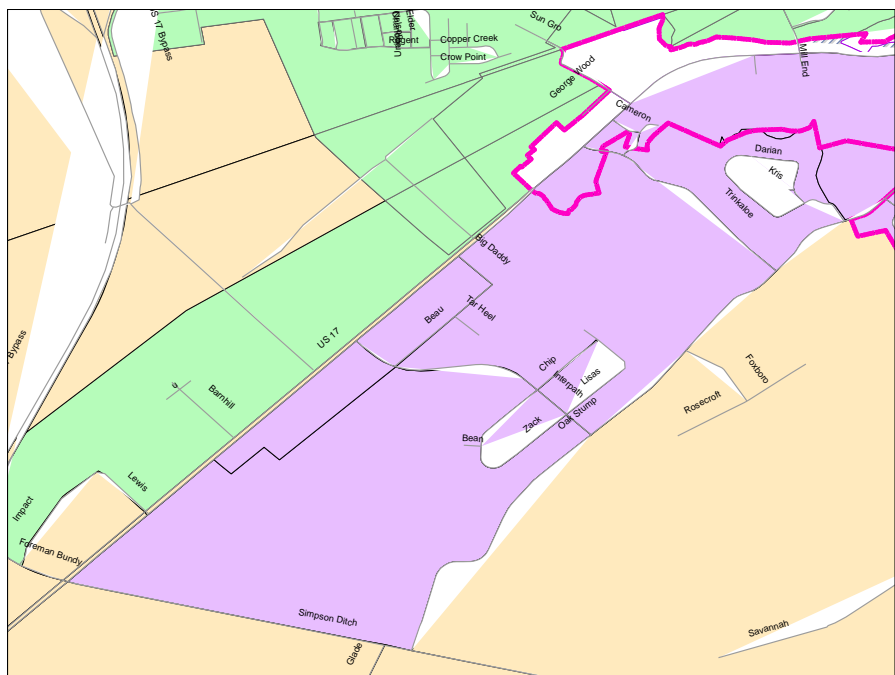


The Forest Park area contains 335 residents while the Brite Meadows area contains 401 people, a net INCREASE of 66 people for Northern Outside.

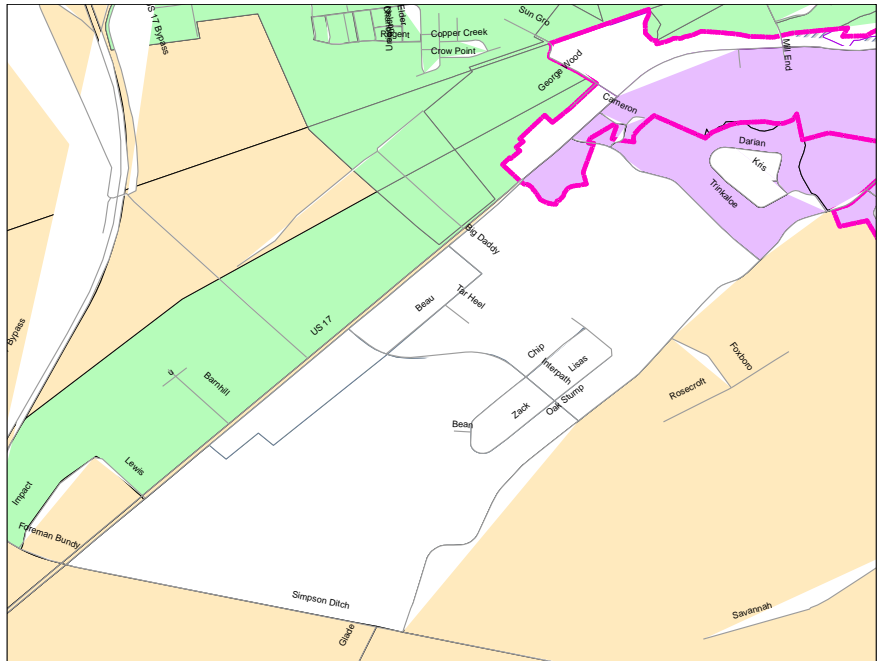


Area 5

The last area to be changed is the Red Oak Subdivision and the area south of 17. This area was moved into the Southern Inside at the last redistricting to give the Southern Inside the needed population numbers, however it is not in city limits and doesn't seem a community of interest with the Southern Inside District.



This change moves 455 people from Southern Inside to Southern Outside.

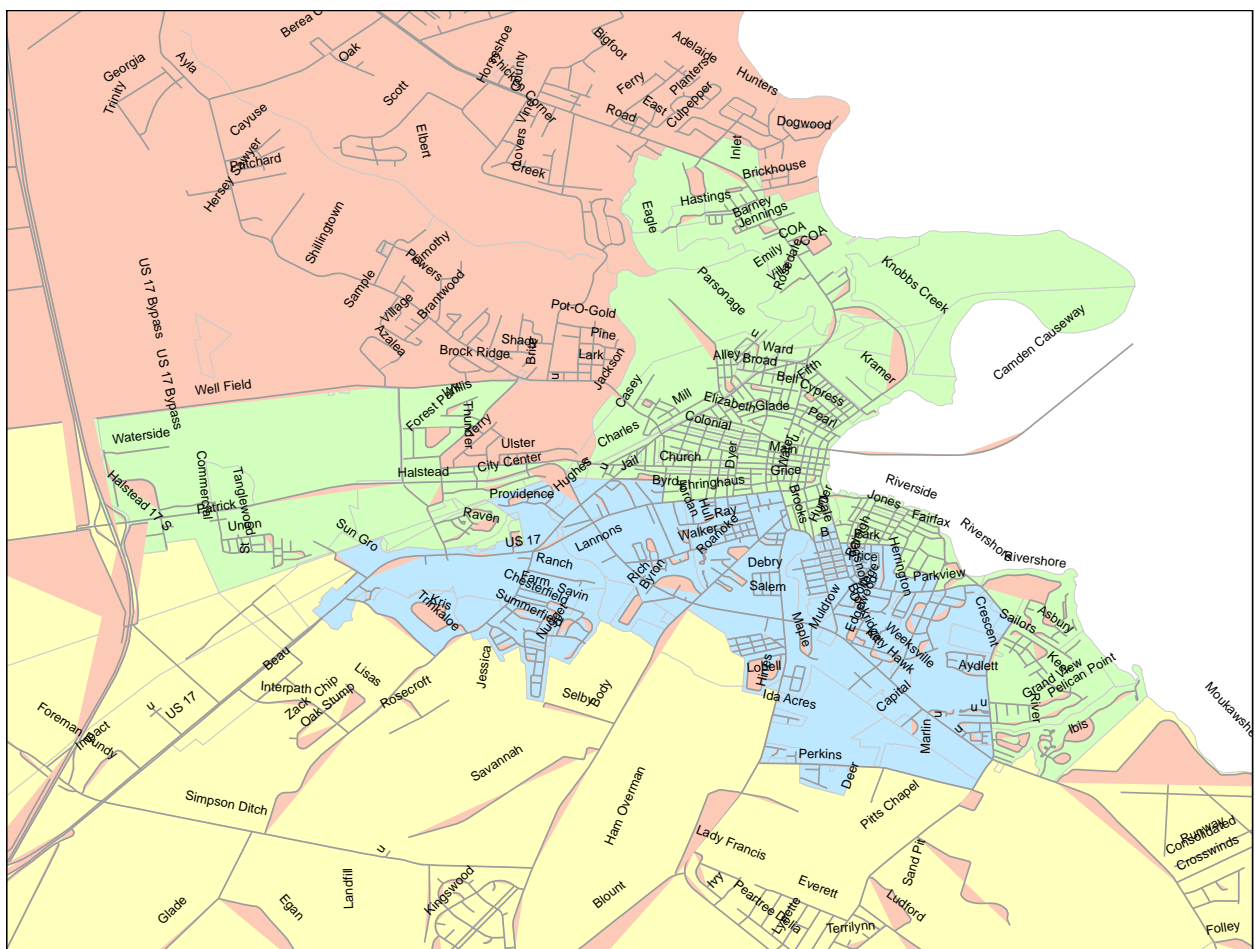


Final Map

After cleaning up the districts based on precinct lines, and making a few minor changes in some areas with no residents, the population numbers with minority percentages are:

	Population	Percent Minority
Northern Outside	10,526	25.4%
Northern Inside	9,653	36.7%
Southern Inside	10,029	61.1%
Southern Outside	10,360	20.6%

The above numbers are within the required 9,635 and 10,649 range while maintaining a majority minority district. While the Northern Inside is close to the bottom of the range, it contains the highest growth areas and in real current population, it is probably closer to the other districts. Projected populations can't be used for redistricting purposes, but keeping it on the low side will keep the balance more even into the future.



Chairman Griffin opened the floor for citizen input and discussion.

Mr. Keith Rivers commended the Board on entertaining the thought of restructuring the Board. He said an at-large system can be used as an oppressive type of voting system. He asked Ms. Stamper if the prison population was included in the Northern Outside numbers. Ms. Stamper answers yes the prison has an approximately 1,000 individuals that were included. Mr. Rivers stated "The prisoners cannot vote and a thought is to look at how to not prison gerrymander, because those numbers are not really true numbers when it comes to persons that can vote." Ms. Stamper said she doesn't disagree, but the law is that they must be counted. She said they count for roughly 10% of the Northern Outside. He asked what percentage of the prison population are minorities. Ms. Stamper said she did not look to see what percentage is minority. She noted that the prison was given its own census block this year. In the previous census, the prison was included in a very large census block that goes from Wellfield Road all the way up to the prison. She had no way to know how many were prisoners and how many of them were general population.

Mr. George Hague of 2123 Dalia Drive asked if the Albemarle Jail is included. Ms. Stamper stated that the census block includes the District Jail and the prison. She explained that there is some movement to count the individuals in the place that they are from because they will not stay here once they are released. He asked if patients in the hospital are included. Ms. Stamper said congregant living facilities are counted, but she is not sure about patients in hospitals, because they are just there temporarily. She explained that individuals are counted by where they lay their heads on April 1st.

County Attorney Cox noted that the proposed map has been approved by outside counsel and meets the requirements.

Commissioner Overman said it is a great advantage that the lines were cleaned up and they fit within the guidelines.

Commissioner Perry said his questions have still not been addressed. He does not understand how there are approximately 40% non-white citizens, and for years there has been only one African American member on this seven member board. Ms. Stamper said she has some slides to help explain it if he would like to see them. Commissioner Perry said yes, you can show them please. Ms. Stamper provided a PowerPoint presentation using apples and oranges to explain how the system works. She explained that the County has 20% minority census blocks. The County would need to have more minority census blocks to be able to create more minority districts.

Commissioner Perry asked is it possible to change the structure of the Board. Ms. Stamper said this will be discussed in January. She said Attorney Cox could answer that question better than herself. Attorney Cox said it is possible. Commissioner Perry said it is his interest to see more than one person that is elected by having participation that allows minorities a better selection of who they want to place on the Board. He thinks it is wrong to have a 40% population of non-white population and not have but one person of color on the Board from time to time. It's not right for his community.

Commissioner Lavin thanked Ms. Stamper for her very detailed presentation. He said as much as he likes to see nice, clean lines, he understands that she is bound by the City's boundaries on the inside. He cautioned the Board about conflating or having the opportunity to conflate the two issues on redistricting versus restructuring. He thinks restructuring is a much longer conversation that they need to have. He said he doesn't know that he is in favor of putting it on the agenda for January's meeting, but he thinks it should be a topic for discussion at the Board's retreat. He thinks the Board will need more time to go into all the specifics in detail. With regard to redistricting, he is glad to see the lines cleaned up.

Chairman Griffin thanked Ms. Stamper for her work.

Mr. Keith Rivers asked if he were to present an additional map or changes how soon would it need to be sent to the lawyer to make sure it meets the legal decree. Attorney Cox stated that the Board is scheduled to vote on the map on November 15, and it must be submitted by November 17th. Mr. Rivers said at this point there is no time for discussion if there are changes. Ms. Stamper said no one has asked for changes. Attorney Cox stated that anyone can submit changes up to that time, but the final version must be submitted by the 17th. County Manager Hammett

suggested if there are any other alternatives that the Board take a look at them at the November 15th meeting. Commissioner Lavin asked if Mr. Rivers should have his thoughts or changes in by a certain date so that outside counsel can review them. Mr. Rivers said he should be able to have them to the Board in a week or sooner. Mr. Hammett said that would be fine. Staff can look at it and send it to outside legal counsel.

Mr. Rivers said it's not just about creating minority majority districts; it's also about having "what we call districts of influence, where the City for example has a 52-53% African American population and they've only had three black mayors." The mayor has to campaign throughout the City. Therefore, African Americans and other minorities have input on whether that person is elected or not. He said when you look at the way the County is structured, with the exception of the Southern Inside, the population is very low, so why would a person run against another person in that district, when they can just run At-large. He said your voice is really not heard. Chairman Griffin noted that the Board's Vice-Chairman is an at-large minority member who was elected in the last two elections.

6. REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Meads attended the Utilities Committee meeting and participated in a ribbon cutting.

Commissioner Perry attended the monthly COA Board meeting.

Commissioner Lavin attended the Regional Economic Summit last week at Elizabeth City State University. He noted that it was a great event. It brought a lot of the players who are interested in economic development locally together.

Vice-Chairman Jordan attended the Library Board meeting. Things are going well. The Board of Trustees was concerned with making sure that COVID protocols are followed. They implemented temperature checks for patrons entering the library. He attended a ribbon cutting for a doctor's office owned by Chesapeake General Hospital. In addition, he attended the Economic Summit.

Chairman Griffin attended the Water Adaptations to Ensure Regional Success (WATERS) Summit in Greenville on October 13th. The summit was hosted by Rep. Greg Murphy, M.D., Rep. David Rouzer, Senator Thom Tillis, Rep. G.K. Butterfield, leading scientific and academic experts, and other state and local leaders. A variety of topics regarding climate change impacts and increases in stormwater challenges were discussed during the Summit. Data from researchers at NC State and East Carolina University was presented showing how extreme rainfall events have been increasing with the greatest changes in precipitation occurring during the fall hurricane season.

Chairman Griffin attended the Regional Economic Summit last Thursday, along with Vice-Chairman Jordan, Commissioner Lavin, Planning Director Shelley Cox, and County Manager Hammett at the K.E. White Graduate Center at Elizabeth City State University. Topics for discussion included regional broadband opportunities, transportation plans including Future I-87 and the mid-Currituck Bridge, tourism, and workforce development. In addition, a regional economic forecast was presented including an analysis of data from northeastern NC counties.

There being nothing further to come before the Board;

Motion was made by Jonathan Meads, seconded by Sean Lavin to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried and the meeting was adjourned at 7:09 PM.

CHAIRMAN

CLERK TO THE BOARD