



# Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission

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**Commission members:**

Jim Regnier  
Presiding Officer  
P O Box 299  
Lakeside, MT 59922

Jon Bennion  
89 Whitetail  
Clancy, MT 59634

Joe Lamson  
612 Touchstone Court  
Helena, MT 59601

Pat Smith  
405 South First West  
Missoula, MT 59801

Linda Vaughey  
2505 Southridge Drive  
Helena, MT 59601

**Staff:**

Rachel Weiss  
Research Analyst  
Joe Kolman  
Research Analyst  
Julianne Burkhardt  
Attorney  
Dawn Field  
Secretary

## MINUTES

August 14, 2012

Room 172, State Capitol  
Helena, Montana

Please note: These minutes provide abbreviated information about committee discussion, public testimony, action taken, and other activities. To the left of each section in these minutes is a time designation indicating the approximate amount of time in hours, minutes, and seconds that has elapsed since the start of the meeting. This time designation may be used to locate the referenced discussion on the audio or video recording of this meeting.

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Hard copies of the exhibits for this meeting are available upon request. Legislative Council policy requires a charge of 15 cents a page for copies of the document.

### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Jim Regnier, Presiding Officer  
Jon Bennion  
Joe Lamson  
Pat Smith  
Linda Vaughey

### **STAFF PRESENT**

Rachel Weiss, Research Analyst  
Joe Kolman, Research Analyst  
Julianne Burkhardt, Attorney  
Dawn Field, Secretary

### **AGENDA & VISITORS' LIST**

Agenda, Attachment #1.  
Visitors' list, Attachment #2.

### **COMMITTEE ACTION**

The Districting and Apportionment Commission:

- approved amendment a1\_PS\_0813 - HD 15 compromise;
- adopted the Framework Plan, as proposed by Commissioner Regnier, for northwest Montana;
- approved amendment a2\_JL\_0813 - Whitefish/Columbia Falls/Hungry Horse adjustments;
- approved amendment a4\_JL\_0814 - Ravalli County/Pinesdale adjustment;
- approved amendment a5\_LV\_0814 - Orchard Homes and central Missoula; and
- approved amendment a6\_JL\_0814 - Missoula compromise.

**Note: Throughout the meeting, the commissioners viewed maps on a screen in the meeting room and discussed district lines. To view the official record of the meeting (the audio/video recordings) please visit [leg.mt.gov/districting](http://leg.mt.gov/districting).**

### **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

- 00:00:00 Commissioner Regnier called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. The Secretary took roll, all members were present (Attachment 3).
- 00:01:21 Commissioner Regnier recapped the work done at the previous day's meeting, saying that tentative votes were approved for five of the six majority-minority districts. He said that Commissioner Bennion wanted to work on a compromise to keep Ronan intact and off of the Flathead Reservation and Pablo intact and a part of the Reservation. He said that Commissioner Bennion and Commissioner Smith worked on a compromise proposal for HD 15.
- 00:02:31 Commissioner Smith explained the compromise he and Commissioner Bennion were able to reach for Pablo and Ronan, which focused on keeping the population deviation as small as possible and not reducing the Indian voting age population, while keeping them in their own districts.
- 00:04:45 **Commissioner Smith moved to approve the compromise adjustment to HD 15.** Commissioner Bennion said that he thought the compromise accomplishes the goals of both plans because it will keep communities together, will protect voting rights, and is not based solely on race. He said he will support the motion.
- 00:05:30 **Rachel Weiss, Research Analyst, Legislative Services Division (LSD),** asked to discuss a procedural issue of how to formalize the amendment process in order to maintain an orderly process and a clear record. She said that she and Mr. Kolman created an amendment form and naming process and explained how the process would work. She said that suggestions from the Commissioners are welcome. After a brief discussion it was agreed that the naming process would be used.
- 00:10:06 **Commissioner Smith restated his motion to approve his amendment, renamed as a1\_PS\_0813 (EXHIBIT 1), to HD 15 in Communities Plan, as described.** He spoke to the motion, saying that it would keep Pablo whole in HD 15 and Ronan whole in HD 13. **The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.**

00:11:05 Commissioner Regnier reviewed the Commission's discussion the previous day on northwest Montana. He presented what he referred to as "The Framework Plan" for northwest Montana, involving mainly Lincoln, Flathead, Sanders, Mineral, and Lake Counties. He went to the podium to discuss his proposal and referred to a map displayed on the screen during his presentation.

00:13:01 Commissioner Regnier discussed plans for the following areas:

00:13:15 Kalispell, Evergreen, and southwest Kalispell;

00:14:24 Whitefish, Columbia Falls, and Hungry Horse;

00:15:49 HD 10/Big Fork and the Swan Lake area;

00:16:15 HD 11/Lakeside, Somers, Lakeside, western Kalispell;

00:17:47 HD 12/Sanders County, including Marion and Kila;

00:18:49 HD 13/Polson, Rollins, remaining west shore communities;

00:19:38 HD 14/Arlee, Ronan, Charlo, Ravalli, and would enjoin HD15; and

00:20:08 HD 17/Mineral County/Plains and several other towns.

00:20:34 **Commissioner Regnier moved to consider the Framework Plan as discussed for this portion of northwest Montana.**

00:21:04 Commissioner Lamson discussed his position on the proposal and his concerns about the Hungry Horse/Columbia Falls/Whitefish area. He explained an amendment that would take care of his concerns without making major changes. **He moved to approve his amendment a2\_JL\_0813 (EXHIBIT 2).**

00:23:13 Commissioner Bennion discussed his position on the Framework Plan and Commissioner Lamson's amendment. He said that agreement probably could be reached but that he is concerned about the fact that the majority of tentative votes taken so far have been adopted straight from the Communities Plan. He said that as the process moves forward, he wants to incorporate concepts and models in the Criteria Plan.

00:27:24 Commissioner Regnier said that he presented his plan because he has lived in this area and this proposal makes sense for the area. He assured Commissioner Bennion that the Criteria Plan would be considered as the process continues.

00:29:54 **Commissioner Regnier made a substitute motion to incorporate Commissioner Lamson's changes into his Framework Plan motion.**

00:30:11 After discussion, it was agreed that Commissioner Lamson would withdraw his motion and would then move to amend Commissioner Regnier's motion, if approved. **Commissioner Lamson withdrew his motion.**

00:30:29 **Commissioner Regnier restated his motion to adopt the Framework Plan for northwest Montana (districts 1-14, and 17).**

00:31:03 Commissioner Bennion noted that he may propose modifications at a later date for two districts in Sanders County, which may affect Missoula districts.

00:32:16 **Commissioner Regnier's motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.**

00:32:38 **Commissioner Lamson moved to approve amendment a2\_JL\_0813 amending house districts 3, 4, 5, 6 (Whitefish, Columbia Falls, and Hungry Horse). (EXHIBIT 2). The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.**

00:33:44 Commissioner Regnier said that the Commission would deal with Missoula after a short break. He recessed the meeting at 9:35 a.m for a 10-minute break.

**BREAK**

00:41:38 Commissioner Regnier called the meeting back to order at 9:45 a.m. He asked to begin discussion of Ravalli County and then Missoula. He noted that the Communities Plan map and Criteria Plan map for that area were displayed on the screen.

00:42:29 Commissioner Bennion discussed the Criteria Plan districts for that area and pointed out that the districts were based on a map submitted by citizens in Ravalli County. He said that the Criteria Plan places Pinesdale with Hamilton and said that there aren't major differences between the two plans.

00:44:11 Commissioner Lamson said that a plan was also submitted by local residents in that area. He said, based on public comment from that area, that Pinesdale was placed in a district with Corvallis and that the Communities Plan also recognizes that because Hamilton is more urban and defined than other districts in that area, combining it with Pinesdale would dilute Hamilton's voice. He said that would be his amendment to the Framework Plan.

00:46:31 Commissioner Regnier asked to view Corvallis in the Communities Plan. Commissioner Regnier and Commissioner Lamson discussed the proposals and referred to maps displayed on the screen in their discussion on how district lines would be changed.

00:48:12 Commissioner Bennion said that Hamilton remains intact in the Criteria Plan and that he thought Pinesdale residents use the Hamilton post office. He questioned Commissioner Lamson's statement that Pinesdale would dilute Hamilton's voice, considering Pinesdale's small population.

00:49:03 Commissioner Regnier asked if the revised amendment had been received by Legislative Services. Ms. Weiss said that staff did receive the amendment and would display it as quickly as possible.

00:49:30 Commissioner Regnier recessed the meeting for a 5-minute break to allow staff time to load and display the proposal.

**BREAK**

- 01:00:28 Commissioner Regnier called the meeting back to order at 10:02 a.m. Mr. Kolman reviewed the amendment and said the green dashes on the map indicate the amended lines. Commissioner Lamson said that the amendment would preserve Hamilton's community of interest and correctly place Pinesdale in a district with Corvallis. He said that he hoped Commissioner Regnier would accept this compromise to the Framework Plan. Commissioner Regnier clarified that the amendment would affect house districts 85, 86, 87, and 88. Commissioner Lamson said yes.
- 01:03:01 **Commissioner Lamson moved approval of amendment a4\_JL\_0814 - Ravalli County/Pinesdale (EXHIBIT 3). The motion passed on a 3-2 voice vote, Commissioner Bennion and Commissioner Vaughey voted no.**
- 01:03:31 Commissioner Regnier said that the Commission would next address the Missoula area. He said that he wanted to have an in-depth discussion on both the Community Plan and the Criteria Plan before any motions were made.
- 01:06:46 Mr. Kolman stated that he was experiencing technical difficulties and needed a short break to take care of the problem. Commissioner Regnier recessed the meeting, saying that Mr. Kolman will advise the Commissioners when the computer is back in service and that the meeting will resume at that point. Commissioner Regnier recessed the meeting.
- BREAK**
- 01:17:07 Commissioner Regnier called the meeting back to order at 10:18 a.m. Commissioner Regnier noted that both plans were displayed on the screen and that discussion would begin with the Criteria Plan.
- 01:19:55 Commissioner Bennion presented the Criteria Plan for the Missoula area, beginning with the downtown districts and extending outward.
- 01:22:12 Commissioner Regnier asked Commission Bennion to confirm that the University district would be in HD 94 in the Criteria Plan. Commissioner Bennion said that was correct. Commissioner Bennion discussed HD 95 and pointed out that in the Criteria Plan, population deviations were kept very low, districts are very compact, communities of interest were kept together, and traditional neighborhood boundaries were respected.
- 01:23:36 Commissioner Regnier referred to a violet-colored district and asked if it lies north of Broadway. Commissioner Bennion explained that the area has two central districts and that adjustments could be made, if needed.
- 01:24:43 Commissioner Regnier asked about the Target Range area. Commissioner Bennion said because it is a census district, it should remain intact. He discussed using Reserve Street as the boundary line, saying that it makes sense, particularly for Clerks and Records. He classified it as a very suburban district with the lowest deviation of all districts in the area.
- 01:25:52 Commissioner Regnier asked about the Frenchtown/Evaro area. Commissioner Bennion said some small changes may be needed in this district to lower the

population deviation but that it otherwise fits the adopted criteria fairly well. He said this is where he would make the modifications to the two Sanders County districts in order to adjust the population deviation rates. He discussed the changes that would have to be made.

- 01:27:16 Commissioner Lamson presented the Communities Plan and how it would apportion Missoula districts.
- 01:29:29 Commissioner Lamson said that he has a compromise plan for the Missoula framework to address concerns about the Target Range and Orchard Homes districts, as expressed by Commissioners Bennion and Vaughey, and Missoula citizens.
- 01:30:20 Mr. Kolman pointed out that Commissioner Lamson's amendment is displayed on the right side of the screen. Commissioner Lamson discussed his amendment and said it reflects a good understanding of how Missoula functions and where people live.
- 01:35:09 Commissioner Vaughey referred to public testimony given by former Representative Dan Kemmis about the importance of a person's place and his clear belief that a person's sense of place has little to do with where they shop or recreate, but rather, where they live. She said Mr. Kemmis implored the Commission to keep that in mind when drawing the new districts. She also recalled testimony from a young man at the Missoula hearing who cautioned the Commission to pay attention to the appearance of districts. She said that while Commissioner Lamson's amendment modified the current districts somewhat, she could not support another "wagon wheel" map when there is an opportunity to draw districts that are much more compact and better reflect how Missoula residents live.
- 01:38:40 Commissioner Lamson said he, too, was touched by Mr. Kemmis' comments but would beg to differ on this issue. He discussed his position further and said, that with a few exceptions that have been addressed, the Communities Plan properly reflects Missoula citizens' lives and that the people of Missoula are proud of their districts and don't have a problem with how districts are drawn.
- 01:43:06 Commissioner Regnier commented that he also noted Mr. Kemmis' testimony and the young man's testimony about the appearance of districts. He discussed his recollection of their comments and his own opinion that the appearance of a district is an important factor. He referred to the Seeley Lake district and said it was difficult for him to imagine a community of interest between the Rattlesnake area and Seeley Lake.
- 01:44:58 Commissioner Lamson responded to Commissioner Regnier's concerns and listed a number of commonalities between those two areas.
- 01:48:14 Commissioner Bennion stated that the amendment is not a compromise but a slightly modified version of the Communities Plan, and that if this was an example of a compromise, the Commissioners faced a very long week. He said

that the Criteria Plan is a much better starting point because this particular area has been very divided in testimony and he thinks it is because politics, not the best interests of the citizens, have been considered.

- 01:50:56 Commissioner Regnier asked to view the Orchard Homes district in the compromise amendment and in the Criteria Plan. He briefly discussed each map and asked if there would be a way to reach an agreement. Commissioner Lamson responded, saying that Republicans have blatant advantages in Ravalli County and Kalispell, yet the Missoula districts are being criticized for being politically motivated. He discussed Missoula's population as having a lot of people in a small area and the effect of being a major regional trade center.
- 01:55:55 Commissioner Smith discussed his opinion on the relevance of geography and a community's history of growth in the districting process, and how Missoula's unique geographical confluence of mountains, valleys, and rivers has shaped its transportation system and neighborhoods. He said it would be a mistake to apply a block-like template to Missoula's natural spoke-like pattern. He also discussed Missoula's strong support of the Communities Plan, saying that the few concerns expressed were addressed in Commissioner Lamson's amendment.
- 01:59:21 Commissioner Bennion said it is clear that the compromise offered by Commissioner Lamson is simply a modified version of the Communities Plan and that he intends to fight hard for his ideas. He said he would like to prepare an amendment to the Criteria Plan in response to Commissioner Lamson's amendment and that he did not foresee many unanimous votes if the process continues as it has.
- 02:00:43 Commissioner Regnier listed the areas of major disagreement as previously discussed:
1. Target Range area;
  2. Seeley Lake and the Rattlesnake;
  3. rural district stretching from Florence to Frenchtown; and
  4. northwest Missoula district stretching to the Bitterroot.
- Commissioner Regnier asked Commissioners Lamson and Smith if they could accommodate any of the requests to create a plan for the Missoula area that all of the Commissioners could live with.
- 02:02:22 Commissioner Lamson rebutted Commissioner Bennion's statements and said he thought there had been plenty of compromise.
- 02:06:09 Commissioner Regnier said the Commissioners must take into consideration citizens who don't align with either party and that districts must make sense to them too. He said while he recognizes the importance of the testimony given and the political arguments, he can see why people have issues with certain district lines.
- 02:06:56 Commissioner Bennion said his position is that he does not want to use the Communities Plan as the starting point for every district. He said that he wants his and Commissioner Vaughey's ideas heard, as well as others who provided

testimony at the hearings. He said that while there are fundamental differences, the Commission must follow the criteria and not political preferences.

02:09:05 Commissioner Regnier said he would have difficulty voting for either plan as currently constructed. He suggested that both sides continue to work toward compromises over the lunch hour. The Commissioners discussed how best to proceed.

02:16:47 Commissioner Regnier recessed the meeting at 11:18 a.m. for the lunch break and said the meeting would reconvene at 1:00 p.m.

#### **LUNCH BREAK**

04:30:29 Commissioner Regnier called the meeting back to order at 1:31 p.m. He said work would resume with a discussion of compromise amendments for the Missoula districts.

04:31:10 **Commissioner Bennion moved approval of revisions to the Criteria Plan a5\_LV\_0814 - amend Orchard Homes district and adjust central Missoula districts for deviation (EXHIBIT 4).** He discussed the changes that would affect the Orchard Homes district and revisions to adjust for deviation in other districts.

04:33:38 **Commissioner Lamson moved approval of an amendment to the Communities Plan that would address the issues of concern a6\_JL\_0814 - Missoula compromise districts 2 - adjust boundaries, deviations (EXHIBIT 5).** He explained the changes that would mainly affect the Seeley Lake district but would ripple through surrounding districts to a lesser degree.

04:38:51 Commissioner Lamson said that he sincerely appreciated the movement on the Orchard Homes area but referred to his amendment (EXHIBIT 5) and said that the "spokes" were gone and that changes were made in every district in the urban core and surrounding districts.

04:40:57 Commissioner Smith commented that the Missoula compromise amendment (EXHIBIT 5) keeps Bonner and East Missoula together and that the Criteria Plan amendment (EXHIBIT 4) does not.

04:41:24 Commissioner Vaughey and Commissioner Lamson discussed how the "spokes" were reduced in the Missoula compromise amendment (EXHIBIT 5).

04:42:46 Commissioner Regnier asked Commissioners Bennion and Lamson to each comment on the other's proposed amendment. Commissioner Bennion discussed the importance of using Reserve Street as a boundary line and the difference in the neighborhoods on either side. He said he could probably live with Commissioner Lamson's amendment but that it is not ideal and that he is still digesting some of the changes proposed for the Seeley-Swan districts. He discussed the neighborhoods kept intact in the amended Criteria Plan and said that those neighborhoods are fractured in the Communities Plan amendment.

04:46:14 Commissioner Smith recalled testimony from Sen. Cliff Larsen regarding Missoula's north side districts and significant Native American population.

- 04:46:53 Commissioner Regnier asked to see the southwest section of the Communities Plan compromise amendment. Commissioner Lamson discussed the old district lines as compared to the amended lines and said that adjustments had to be made for population equality purposes.
- 04:48:32 Commissioner Lamson discussed HD 10 as it encompasses the university district in the Communities compromise plan.
- 04:49:54 Commissioner Regnier asked to view the Criteria Plan amendment and asked to view rural district HD 100 encompassing Lolo. Commissioner Bennion discussed the district boundaries and rationale for its design, saying that he wanted to keep certain neighborhoods together.
- 04:51:21 Commissioner Bennion pointed out that both the original and amended Criteria Plans are more compact than the original or amended Communities Plan.
- 04:52:33 Commissioner Smith commented on Frenchtown and the major growth occurring along I-90 and the river between Missoula and Frenchtown.
- 04:53:18 Commissioner Regnier said that he would recess the meeting to allow both sides to study and discuss the revisions further. He recessed the meeting at 1:55 p.m.
- BREAK**
- 05:00:39 Commissioner Regnier called the meeting back to order at 2:03 p.m.
- 05:00:42 Commissioner Vaughey said that the amended Criteria Plan (EXHIBIT 4) is far more compact than the original or amended Communities Plan. She said that there is a marked difference in deviation almost all of the districts and discussed several specific examples. She said that the mandatory criteria on population deviation is first and foremost consideration. Commissioner Lamson responded to her comments, saying that the courts have addressed this issue. He discussed several of the districts and said the key issue to keep the deviation within the legal limits, which the Communities Plan does.
- 05:04:51 Commissioner Smith commented that he and Commission Lamson have made many changes to accommodate Commissioner Bennion's and Commissioner Vaughey's concerns.
- 05:05:15 Commissioner Vaughey said that one of the reasons the Criteria Plan keeps deviations so low is because voting results were not considered when drawing the district lines. She said certain lines were moved to reflect neighborhoods while taking into account public comments about the growth area.
- 05:06:35 Commissioner Lamson questioned Commissioner Vaughey's statement that no voting results were used in drawing district lines. He discussed his opinion that a primary GOP goal for Montana is to design strong Republican districts by pushing as many Democrats as possible into the smallest areas possible. He discussed several specific districts and the strong testimony from Missoula residents in favor of the Communities Plan. He said that the amendment offered Commissioner Smith and himself was very accommodating to the concerns

discussed by Commissioners Vaughey and Bennion. Commissioner Vaughey objected to Commissioner Lamson's statements that attributed motives or the use of voter patterns to draw district lines in the Criteria Plan and that she considered neighborhoods and deviation only.

05:11:03 **Commissioner Bennion restated his motion to approve a5\_LV\_0814 - amended Criteria Map for Missoula (EXHIBIT 4). The motion passed on a 3-2 voice vote, Commissioner Lamson and Commissioner Smith voted no.**

05:12:30 Commissioner Regnier said that the Great Falls districts would be next, rather than the Bozeman/Gallatin County districts. He recessed the meeting at 2:15 p.m. to allow reconfiguration of the computer and map files.

**BREAK**

05:24:12 Commissioner Regnier called the meeting back to order at 2:26 p.m. He said that the Commission would use much the same process as it did for the Missoula area, using both the Criteria Plan and the Communities Plan for the basis of discussion, before moving onto voting.

05:25:12 Commissioner Lamson said that the Communities Plan in Cascade County received overwhelming support at the Great Falls hearing and that testimony was strong because the Communities Plan recognizes the character of Great Falls' neighborhoods and trade centers. He said he has concern about the plan submitted by the Chamber of Commerce in particular and said his goal in the Communities Plan was to minimize the loss of one house seat in Great Falls/Cascade County.

05:27:25 Commissioner Lamson discussed the Fox Farm Road area, as designed in the Communities Plan.

05:28:22 Commissioner Regnier recalled testimony at the Great Falls hearing from Black Eagle residents who were very supportive of the Communities Plan. Commissioner Lamson reviewed the Black Eagle district and noted that Commissioners Bennion and Vaughey redrew their district lines to reflect those concerns.

05:29:33 Commissioner Lamson reviewed the Malmstrom military base as part of the Great Falls community, including the urban area around it where many employees of the base reside.

05:30:30 Commissioner Regnier noted that there is a glaring difference between the two plans in the configurations of the downtown districts. Commissioner Lamson discussed the long and narrow design of the district as drawn in the Communities Plan and said that the lines create a competitive district and that there is support from Great Falls legislators, residents, and business people for the districts as drawn. He said that the Great Falls/Cascade County districts have a long history of mixed community that includes the air base, the refinery, organized workers, transportation, and regional trade for the surrounding area.

- 05:34:46 Commissioner Lamson and Commissioner Regnier discussed the Fox Farm area and where Malmstrom is connected with the central Great Falls district.
- 05:36:48 Commissioner Vaughney discussed access in the Black Eagle district. Commissioner Lamson said that most neighborhoods along the river have ample opportunities to move back and forth, so the river is not a dividing factor.
- 05:38:42 Commissioner Regnier asked Commissioner Bennion to speak to the Criteria Plan for Great Falls. Commissioner Bennion said that there are some similarities between the Communities Plan and Criteria Plan but that the big difference between the plans is in the northwest part of Cascade County. He said that what is done in that part of Cascade County could have drastic effects on Choteau County and into central Montana. He explained how the Criteria Plan was drawn and said that it is more compact than the Communities Plan and uses extremely low population deviations, which would allow for greater freedom for adjustments needed later in the process. He noted that Neighborhood Council maps were consulted as part of the process.
- 05:44:11 Commissioner Lamson said that many of the Neighborhood Council districts were drawn in the 1970s and 1980s, and that populations have changed dramatically since then. He questioned the value of the information as being relevant to the districting process.
- 05:45:42 Commissioner Bennion said one of the adopted discretionary criteria is neighborhood commissions in following the lines of political units and that they provide good information. He said, in response to Commissioner Lamson's comments about strangely configured districts in the Criteria Plan, that HD 24 in the Communities Plan has very bizarre lines and characterized it as guitar-shaped.
- 05:46:59 Commissioner Regnier said that while he would agree that HD 24 is an unusual-looking district, it is so because of its unusual demographic population. He discussed HD 24 further and stated that from his perspective, he did not have a problem with it because it connects Malmstrom with a Great Falls urban district.
- 05:49:54 Commissioner Vaughney noted that the Great Falls Neighborhood Councils were created by a 1997 ordinance and that they are still in use.
- 05:50:12 Commissioner Regnier asked if the Fox Farm district is the same in the Criteria Plan as it is in the Communities Plan. Commissioner Bennion said it is not and explained how it differs. He said he is open to changes on the Criteria Map and would give serious considerations to the suggestions made, but wanted to see a "less goofy" looking HD 24. He said he thought there is a better way to incorporate Malmstrom into a Great Falls districts than as currently drawn in the Communities Plan.
- 05:51:49 Commissioner Smith recalled the very strong support for the Communities Plan at the Great Falls hearing and the discussion of the east-west growth patterns in the city.

- 05:53:23 Commissioner Lamson discussed a comparison of the two plans and said that the Criteria Plan would dilute the urban vote by tying urban areas to rural districts. He said that he also is concerned about a ripple effect and that the Communities Plan will honor county lines and has distinct advantages for dealing with regions outside Cascade County. Commissioner Bennion responded to Commissioner Lamson's comments by saying that he was glad that county lines would be respected but that the process is getting to the point where moving lines will have huge ripple effects, which will be difficult to deal with in districts with little or no wiggle room.
- 05:57:38 Commissioner Regnier said that he, too, recalled the very strong testimony for the Communities Plan at the Great Falls hearing and because of that, would likely support the Communities Plan or some version of it in a tentative vote. He said he would hold off a vote until the next day to give Commissioner Bennion time to draft an amendment, if he wished.
- 05:59:04 Commissioner Lamson discussed compactness in the Communities Plan and said that for the most part, all of the districts are very compact. He said that the population losses in Cascade County were taken into consideration when drawing the district lines.
- 06:00:00 Commissioner Regnier said that a vote would be delayed until the next day in order to allow Commissioner Bennion and Commissioner Vaughey to work on an amendment. He said the Commission would recess for a short break and begin work on Gallatin County and Bozeman when it reconvenes. The meeting was recessed at 3:02 p.m.
- BREAK**
- 06:19:01 Commissioner Regnier reconvened the meeting at 3:20 p.m. He pointed out that the Communities Plan and the Criteria Plan were both displayed on the screen. Commissioner Lamson said he had a compromise amendment to offer based on the original Communities Plan and testimony given at the Bozeman hearing.
- 06:22:15 Ms. Weiss noted that the proposed amendment does not include the northern part of Gallatin County and that it would be assigned as needed in order to deal with ripple effects occurring elsewhere in the County.
- 06:22:45 Commissioner Lamson discussed a compromise plan for Gallatin County, beginning with the Big Sky area (a7\_JL\_0814 - EXHIBIT 6). He discussed several particulars relating to Big Sky and said that it is a large and fast-growing area, and has more in common with Gallatin County than it does with Madison County.
- 06:26:08 Commissioner Lamson discussed the compromise plan for the Bozeman-Belgrade area. Commissioner Regnier asked how Belgrade and Four Corners fit into the compromise plan. He recalled testimony from residents that Four Corners wants to be out of the Belgrade district. Commissioner Lamson indicated they were not separated.

- 06:28:26 Commissioner Lamson said that there was very strong Republican testimony in favor of the Option 1 plan submitted by the Gallatin County Clerk and Recorder Plan but that the Criteria Plan appears to have incorporated more of the Option 2 Plan submitted by the Gallatin County Clerks and Recorders. He discussed his concerns about the Plan, saying it would create very strong Republican districts because it also includes rural parts of Park County also.
- 06:30:56 Commissioner Regnier asked to view the districts in downtown Bozeman as drawn in the amendment. Commissioner Lamson explained the downtown districts and that the intent was to stretch out to connect urban and suburban neighborhoods. He discussed several specific districts of importance to the Democrats.
- 06:32:11 Commissioner Regnier asked about 19th Street and HD 5. Commissioner Lamson responded to his questions, saying that both are fast growing urban-suburban districts. He noted that the growth and economy in Gallatin County is very robust.
- 06:36:56 Commissioner Regnier asked to view the university district. Mr. Kolman displayed the map. There were no comments or questions.
- 06:37:32 Commissioner Bennion discussed the Criteria Plan for Gallatin County and Bozeman. He said that the Gallatin County Clerk and Recorder submitted two options and that Option 1 did receive very strong support. He said while the Option 1 map was his preference also, the Option 2 map ended up fitting into the statewide plan much better. He noted that the only difference between the two was that the Option 2 map included a rural part of Park County. Commissioner Bennion discussed additional details of the Criteria Plan.
- 06:41:19 Commissioner Bennion discussed the Criteria Plan for Big Sky, saying that the local maps submitted kept neighborhoods and communities of interest in tact, and that he relied heavily on that when drawing the district lines.
- 06:42:31 Commissioner Regnier asked about Bridger Canyon and Bridger Bowl areas. Commissioner Bennion reviewed the district lines.
- 06:44:01 Commissioner Regnier asked about the area lying in the western boundary of the district that includes Bridger Bowl and the relationship between the two. Commissioner Bennion said the boundary line was drawn based on the mountain range and that the goal was to keep communities together. Commissioner Lamson commented on the notion of there being a community of interest among the communities in that district and his opinion that the main purpose of that district is to create a political advantage for Republicans.
- 06:46:16 Commissioner Vaughey commented on the area in question, saying that while the areas are isolated and rural and each has its own unique flavor and interests, they do share commonalities with one another.

- 06:48:35 Commissioner Lamson asked to view the map showing the Bridger area and said he would argue that the Bridger area has much more in common with Gallatin County than it does with Park County or other rural districts.
- 06:50:19 Commissioner Regnier and Commissioner Lamson discussed several areas and how they would be placed within the districts, specifically Willow Creek, Three Forks, Jefferson County, Madison County and Big Sky.
- 06:52:18 Commissioner Regnier asked about the county line between Bozeman and Bridger Bowl. Commissioner Lamson noted that the district is much more compact in the Communities Plan than it is in the Criteria Plan and recognizes the county line. He said that the Criteria Plan does not do that.
- 06:55:17 Commissioner Bennion said that the Criteria Plan makes sense for the area because it is based on a locally produced map and that it respects county lines, geographical boundaries, and communities of interest.
- 06:56:46 Commissioner Regnier said staff needs time to make adjustments to the maps so the meeting would be adjourned until the next morning. He said that the Commission would finish dealing with Gallatin County and then would resume discussion of Cascade County. Commissioner Lamson suggested moving onto Toole, Liberty, Hill, and Fergus Counties after that.
- 06:58:00 Commissioner Bennion suggested beginning the next day's work with Cascade County and moving into the HiLine area and eastern Montana before going back to Gallatin County. He said that decisions made about Havre in particular, would affect Richland, Dawson, and Wibaux Counties. Commissioner Lamson did not support Commissioner Bennion's suggestion.
- 07:00:46 Commissioner Regnier adjourned the meeting at 4:01 p.m. He said the Commission will resume its work at 9:00 a.m on Wednesday, August 15, 2012.

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