

**TOWN OF STRATTON
BOARD OF CIVIL AUTHORITY**

Minutes – October 25, 2021

Board members present: Kent Young, Al Dupell, Chris Liller, Greg Marcucci, Kevin Robinson, and Helen Fuller Eddy.

The Town Clerk, Kent Young, called the meeting to order at 7:15pm to consider a draft redistricting plan presented by the Legislative Reapportionment Committee. Said committee created a potential district called Bennington 5, which includes the Towns of Stratton, Sunderland, Winhall, Jamaica, Peru and Landgrove. Districts are redrawn after each ten-year census to comply with each new population count for representation in the Legislature. The reapportionment process is to be completed by the end of this Legislative Session, so that it can go into effect with the 2022 campaigning season for the 2022 Statewide Election in November. Said committee asked that Town BCA's meet to consider and comment on the proposed districts. The committee asked that the Clerk forward BCA comments to them online.

In the discussion, the Clerk stated that he had spoken with Kelly Pajala, our current District Representative. Her town is not within this proposed district and, therefore, this will eliminate her as a choice for our District Representative in the next election. In fact, the district that exists now has been carved up. To summarize the discussion between Kelly Pajala and the Clerk, they had noted several detracting issues with this proposed district. It was pointed out that the BCA should consider that, besides population counts, districts should also reflect economic continuity and other similarities that can be common issues shared by the towns within a given district, so that the district's representative can defend those common factors. The Mountain Towns of the existing district rely heavily on skiing and tourism and represent an economic block that should not be carved up. More specifically, Stratton and Winhall share Stratton Resort and should not be separated into different districts. Another issue is schooling. Currently the existing district is mostly school choice. Currently, the vast majority of Stratton's students attend schools in Winhall and the Manchester area. Jamaica is more oriented toward Townshend. Additionally, geography should be taken into account. Sunderland is isolated from the rest of the proposed district, because the only road between Stratton and Sunderland is closed during the winter months – Sunderland's population is concentrated on its western side, while Stratton's population is on its eastern side – with a vast expanse of National Forrest between. Sunderland should be associated with towns on the western side of the mountains. Lastly, the name – Bennington 5 – does not reflect that Stratton and Jamaica are within Windham County.

Following the discussion, the board agreed for the Clerk to relay these concerns to the Reapportionment Committee.

With no further business, Al Dupell moved to adjourn. Greg Marcucci seconded – all concurred and the meeting adjourned at 7:30pm.

Minutes by:

David Kent Young