

## CITY OF WESLACO PUBLIC HEARING

### **Guidelines on Providing Oral Comments at Public Hearings on Redistricting.**

1. Prior to the hearing, all individuals or representatives of organizations intending to offer oral comments should indicate their desire to do so on the sign-up sheet. This sheet will be used to call speakers.
2. The Mayor will convene the hearing, after which, the City's redistricting consultant will preside.
3. The hearings will be videotaped and later transcribed by a court reporter and will become part of the permanent and public record of the City Commission.
4. Speakers are limited to three (3) minutes of oral presentation.
5. **EVEN IF COMMENTS ARE MADE ORALLY, COMMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING, IDENTIFYING THE PERSON SUBMITTING THE COMMENT (name, address, phone number, email address).** Written comments may be submitted instead of or in addition to oral comments. Written comments or written supplementation of oral comments will be considered if received by City Commission before the end of the public hearing.
6. A comment summary form is provided as a convenience for commenters. Although the summary form can serve as a means by which commenters submit their written comments, the form is not intended to discourage making oral comments.
7. ***The public hearing is for the sole purpose of receiving public suggestions and comments on the redistricting of the City Commission. No questions will be taken from the public by the City Commission during the hearing, and the City Commission will not respond to questions at the public hearing.***
8. Questions from the public will be answered by staff of the City if the questions are submitted in writing before the end of the public hearing. *Be sure to include your name, address, phone number and email address.*
9. The following redistricting plan Criteria, adopted by the City Commission, will be used in drawing commissioner districts, and any plans proposed must follow the Criteria:
  1. Where possible, easily identifiable geographic boundaries should be followed.
  2. Communities of interest should be maintained in a single district, where possible, and attempts should be made to avoid splitting neighborhoods.
  3. To the extent possible, districts should be composed of whole

voting precincts. Where this is not possible or practicable, districts should be drawn in a way that permits the creation of practical voting precincts and that ensures that adequate facilities for polling places exist in each voting precinct.

4. Although it is recognized that existing districts will have to be altered to reflect new population distribution, any districting plan should, to the extent possible, be based on existing districts.

5. Districts must be configured so that they are relatively equal in total population according to the 2010 federal census. In no event should the total deviation between the largest and the smallest district exceed ten percent.

6. The districts should be compact and composed of contiguous territory. Compactness may contain a functional, as well as a geographical dimension.

7. Consideration may be given to the preservation of incumbent-constituency relations by recognition of the residence of incumbents and their history in representing certain areas.

8. The plan should be narrowly tailored to avoid retrogression in the position of racial minorities and language minorities as defined in the Voting Rights Act with respect to their effective exercise of the electoral franchise.

9. The plan should not fragment a geographically compact minority community or pack minority voters in the presence of polarized voting so as to create liability under Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. § 1973.

10. The following information would be helpful to the City Commission in your comments:
- a. How do the district boundaries proposed in the redistricting Illustrative Plan(s) now under consideration impact areas of common interest, such as economic, political, cultural, racial, school or ethnic communities or neighborhoods?
  - b. Do the district boundaries proposed in the redistricting Illustrative Plan(s) provide minority voters an equal opportunity to elect the candidate of their choice in the proposed district? If not, why not? Please be specific.
  - c. What other information should the City Commission consider in making its decision in adopting a new redistricting plan?