



Legislation Text

File #: 21-2107, Version: 1

TO: Mayor and Members of City Council

THRU:

FROM: Karen M. McDonald, City Attorney

DATE: June 28, 2021

RE:
Selection of Redistricting Consultant

COUNCIL DISTRICT(S):
All Districts

Relationship To Strategic Plan:

Executive Summary:

After each decennial census, local governments that elect some or all of their members using districts are required to redistrict in order to ensure the districts are relatively equal in population. At the April 6, 2021, work session, the consensus of Council was to hire a redistricting consultant. The City received responses from two firms with North Carolina connections to assist with this process. Each response is attached.

Background:

After each decennial census, local governments that elect some or all of their members using districts are required to redistrict in order to ensure the districts are relatively equal in population. The Census Bureau is expected to release block-level redistricting counts from the 2020 Census in mid-August 2021. The full set of data will be released by the end of September 2021. The City Council will use the new data to determine if population imbalances exist among the current nine single-member districts. If population imbalances exist, then state law authorizes the City Council to revise the district boundaries to correct the population imbalances.

Although the data will not be released until September, in the interim the selected consultant can begin reviewing the current data to determine where the population imbalances exist. The consultant can also begin working with the members of City Council on understanding the redistricting process. Finally, the consultant can meet with the City Council to understand their priorities and adopt criteria to guide the redistricting process.

Issues/Analysis:

Because of the delay in the receipt of the census data, the City Council's election has been delayed and the time to redistrict has been compressed. Hence, it is important for the City Council to select a consultant in order to begin the process.

Budget Impact:

Unknown at this time.

Options:

1. Select one of the North Carolina firms to assist with the redistricting process.
2. Do not select one of the North Carolina firms to assist with the redistricting process.
3. Provide additional direction to staff.

Recommended Action:

Staff recommends that Council select one of the firms to assist with the redistricting process.

Attachments:

Parker Poe Redistricting Services Proposal
Local Redistricting Service Proposal