

City of St. Petersburg  
**Citizens Redistricting Commission**

**Operating Rules and Procedures**

Adopted August\_\_\_, 2022

1. General

- A. The Citizens Redistricting Commission (RDC) shall elect a Chair and Vice-chair from among its membership during its first meeting.
- B. Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, apply to RDC meetings except as superseded by these operating rules and procedures.
- C. Vacancies on the RDC shall be filled promptly in the same manner as the original appointments.
- D. The RDC shall review the Mayor's redistricting report as submitted to the City Council, and shall prepare and submit its report (the "RDC Report") within sixty (60) days of the RDC's first meeting. The RDC Report shall include, in the form of an ordinance, the RDC's recommendation as to whether and how to redistrict the City.
- E. The RDC shall hold at least one public hearing on the RDC Report prior to final adoption of the RDC Report.
- F. The RDC is a public entity for the purposes of the Sunshine (Open Meetings) Law and the Public Records Law. Members of the RDC are subject to the provisions of those laws.
- G. As a general rule, ex parte communications should be avoided. Ex parte communications mean any communications either written or oral regarding matters before the RDC occurring outside the scheduled public meetings.

2. RDC Meetings

- A. Meetings of the RDC shall be held upon the call of the Chair or any three (3) members of the RDC.
- B. A majority of the membership of the RDC shall constitute a quorum.
- C. Meetings must be held in-person with a virtual option for members of the public.
- D. All meetings of the RDC shall be open to the public, including a virtual option for the public.

E. A sign-in sheet and appearance cards shall be provided for any member of the public who wishes to speak in-person. Virtual participation by the public shall be managed by the City Clerk's Office in accordance with procedures used for other City boards and commissions.

F. Public Comment Requirements:

- i. An opportunity for public comments shall be held at the beginning of each meeting for comments on issues that may come before the RDC but are not on that meeting's agenda. If the aggregate of those initial public comments exceed 30 minutes, the remaining speakers will be permitted to speak in a public-comment period at the conclusion of the meeting.
- ii. There shall be a three-minute time limit for each member of the public, regardless of whether that person is appearing in-person or virtually.

G. Approval Thresholds:

- i. Unless otherwise provided by Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, or these rules, a majority vote of those members present shall be sufficient for RDC action.
- ii. An affirmative vote of a majority of the full membership of the RDC (not including any vacant position) shall be required for final approval of the final RDC Report.

H. Recorded Votes. The votes of each RDC member shall be recorded by the Clerk.

J. Meetings of the RDC shall follow the order of the attached Agenda, unless otherwise modified by the RDC.

K. Meeting materials will be provided to the RDC via email a minimum of 48 hours prior to any scheduled meeting.

L. Any RDC correspondence should be directed to Brian Caper via email at [brian.caper@stpete.org](mailto:brian.caper@stpete.org). All written correspondence is subject to public records.

M. All meetings will be recorded, and minutes of each meeting will be made available to the RDC.

### 3. Redistricting Criteria.

RDC shall consider the following standards and considerations in establishing new Council districts. Although these standards and considerations must be considered and applied as a whole, they are generally listed in order of descending priority within their respective sections.

- a. Required minimum standards:
  - (1) Collectively, the district boundaries must be geographically contiguous so as to cover the entire City.
  - (2) Districts must be based upon block-level data from the 2020 U.S. Census.
  - (3) The district boundaries must comply with all applicable provisions of the following, as each may be amended from time-to-time:
    - (a) The Federal Constitution;
    - (b) Federal law, including the Voting Rights Act of 1965;
    - (c) The Florida Constitution; and
    - (d) Florida law.
  
- b. Other standards:
  - (1) Districts must not be established with the intent or result of either (i) denying or abridging the equal opportunity of racial or language minorities to participate in the political process or (ii) diminishing their ability to elect representatives of their choice.
  
- c. Required considerations:
  - (1) The districts should be substantially equal in population, with an overall range (i.e., the difference in population between the largest and the smallest districts, expressed as a percentage of the target population) not to exceed 4.75%.
  - (2) District should avoid diluting the voting strength of racial or language minorities. If there is a location where a significant number of minority residents reside, their ability to vote as a block should not be diluted by either dividing that population into two or more districts or, if there is a significant minority population in two districts, moving that population into a single district.
  - (3) District boundaries should emphasize integrity and compactness of territory. Contiguity may be achieved by crossing a waterbody. Unusual, “bizarre” or “serpentine” district shapes that are created without furthering a valid underlying public policy purpose should be avoided.

- (4) District boundaries should reflect natural barriers and boundaries, such as those created by geography and topography.
  - (5) District boundaries should reflect artificial barriers and boundaries, such as those created by major highways.
  - (6) District boundaries should reflect the boundaries of existing election precincts.
- d. Other considerations:
- (1) District boundaries should minimize disruption to existing Council district boundaries.
  - (2) District boundaries should be consistent with existing neighborhoods and community boundaries.
  - (3) District boundaries should not divide a community of interest. For purposes of this process, a community of interest is a contiguous population that shares common social and economic interests and that should be included within a single district for purposes of its effective and fair representation. The term does not include relationships with any political party.
  - (4) District boundaries should preserve population cores that have been consistently associated with a particular council district so as to minimize the number of residents whose Council district number is changed following as the result of establishing new boundaries.

## **AGENDA**

City of St. Petersburg  
**Citizens Redistricting Commission**

(Meeting Date)

(Time)

(Location)

1. Welcome
2. Approval of Minutes of from previous meeting
3. Public Comment
4. Follow-up Matters from previous meeting
5. New Business
6. Public Comment
7. Other Business