

# Town of Fairfax



## **BOARD OF CIVIL AUTHORITY MEETING MINUTES – NOVEMBER 4, 2021**

The meeting was called to order by Peter Fitzgerald, Chair at 3:05 p.m. at the Town Office, 12 Buck Hollow Road, Fairfax, VT 05454 with Sue Mitchell, Randy DeVine, Judy Cleary, Gary Gilbert, Robert Horr, Marjorie Ellsworth, James McGuinness, Steve Cormier, Alan Maynard, Deborah Woodward, Lynn Parah, and Barbara Murphy, State Representative were present.

D Woodward informed the Board that Bruce Corliss has asked for another abatement in May 2022 for when he is back in town. He has new information to share. Deborah also informed the Board that around May, she would setup an appeal training that is highly recommended with the Reappraisal being close to completion in May. She also asked the BCA to think about who they would like to appoint as our BCA Clerk for the Appeals. We can appoint someone in May.

The board discussed the Proposed House District Map by Legislative Apportionment Board. They did not want to be branched over to another County. They were all in agreement of the following:

Changing to FRA-2, FRA-7, and LAM-5. District(s) reviewed that the BCA recommends keeping as proposed as none. This BCA unanimously recommends, rather than reapportioning part of Fairfax, to combine all of Fairfax with Fletcher and Fairfield to create a two-representative district. If necessary, this BCA would also be amenable to acquiring some constituency from FRA-8 (Georgia) in an effort to help the state balance districts. The House of Representatives Tentative Reapportionment Proposal (TRP) outlay of FRA-7 is problematic for a number of reasons. Title 17: Elections; Chapter 043A: Periodic Reapportionment (17 V.S.A. § 1903) standards were not adhered to in the current TRP. The standards in particular that this BCA feel are not reflected in the TRP are preservation of “communities of interest” including “patterns of geography, social interaction, trade, political ties, and common interests” as well as preserving “contiguous territory”. Specifically, the outlay of FRA-7 not only disrupts the contiguous territory of the Town of Fairfax, it cleaves off the most vibrant areas. The section the TRP is looking to move to LAM-5 is the hub of commerce and social interaction for Fairfax. Folks from all parts of town connect in this exact area of town to get their prescriptions, drop off mail, get hardware, deposit a check, get a pizza, grab a cup of coffee, and much more. This alteration

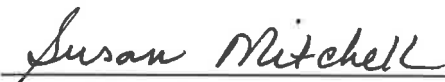
also crosses county and school district lines, further discounting Fairfax's communities of interest.

This BCA also understands that Fairfax has outgrown being a one representative town. We contend that much of this growth and vibrancy is found in the area that the TRP looks to annex away from Fairfax in this TRP. Disjointing the town in this way seems unconscionable to this BCA and we therefore submit a friendly alternative. In an effort to keep Fairfax intact, keep county lines intact, and truly preserve communities of interest, we have voted unanimously to propose keeping the 2012 apportionment for Fairfax and adding the towns of Fletcher and Fairfield to create a 2-representative district. *\*Please find the attached map.* This should bring the census numbers into line as needed in the reapportionment process. This BCA has also voted to include a reapportionment of some of the Georgia constituency in an effort to bring the census numbers even further in compliance should that be necessary. This may aid the Vermont State Apportionment Board with Georgia's growth and current reapportionment to Milton. In the eyes of this BCA, moving those Georgia constituents to the district proposed here would also keep county lines and communities of interest intact. Lastly, our proposal keeps intact educational communities of interest in that the Franklin West Supervisory Union includes Georgia, Fairfax, and Fletcher schools. These areas share students, teachers, families, and even sports teams.

Again, we feel this recommendation for reapportionment is more consistent with the 17 V.S.A. § 1903 standards and keeps one of the few quickly growing areas of Vermont intact from a town, county, and community standpoint.

A motion was made by B Horr to propose a two-member district consisting of Fairfax, Fletcher, Fairfield, and part of Georgia and seconded by A Maynard. The Floor was opened for discussion and there was none. The motion to propose a two-member district consisting of Fairfax, Fletcher, Fairfield, and part of Georgia was passed by a show of hands.

A motion was made by J Cleary to adjourn the meeting and seconded by J McGuinness with all members in favor. The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.



Susan Mitchell  
Justice of the Peace



Attested on November 9, 2021  
Deborah Woodward  
Town Clerk/Treasurer