

**Morningside Area Community Council Monthly Meeting
May 3, 2017 DRAFT Minutes
VFW Banquet Hall, Morningside**

I. Introductions and Welcome. Called to order 7:06 Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Secretary's report. Outstanding draft minutes will be presented next month.

III. Treasurer's Report. Henry presented his report on current finances. Checking balance is \$8,022.18. Savings balance is \$2,363.53.

IV. Public Safety Report. Zone 5 was represented by our two community liaison officers.

A. One incident involving a man with a gun was reported in the area of Neglect and Portland St. It was determined that though he was acting erratically

V. Elected Officials

A. Ernest presented for the city, applications are open for lead filters from the city, with priority given to families with children and expectant mothers.

VI. A motion was made and order was suspended to allow for a presentation from Fair Districts Pa.

Anna Fisher presented for Fair Districts PA.

PA constitution stipulates that districts must be "compact and contiguous."

PA state redistricting is decided by a 5 person commission (which reflects the party composition of the legislature) which rarely meets officially, seemingly to circumvent sunshine laws. She outlined the unique opportunity of the certainty of redistricting coinciding with the likelihood of a 50 seat reduction in the PA state house. Since the incentive to protect individual seats will be largely moot, it may be a rare opportunity for the legislature to support reform.

Types of gerrymandering include: "sweetheart" which is collusionary between the parties to create safe seats. "Packing" is the more common form now, where the party in power distributes the districts to maximize their number of safe seats, at the expense of fair representation of the districts' population.

US Congressional redistricting is a legislative act. The majority party introduces the maps, they are voted on and signed into law by the governor.

PA Districts 7 and 12 were reviewed. District 16, a rural district that was stretched to include central Reading, the 5th largest city in the state.

PA went from a 10/11 to 5/13 Democrat/Republican in the US House after the “Redmap 2010” initiative of Karl Rove. Both Republicans and Democrats have ongoing similar initiatives planned for PA.

What has changed is the amount and accuracy of the data that is available to rig the maps, the more accurate mapping technology, and the rise of outside money. Pass campaign finance laws are the 43rd most permissive of the 50 states.

A lawsuit was brought challenging the existing district maps for “compact and contiguous” violation. The suit was won, but the legislature simply stalled in redrawing the maps until time had run out before an election and the judge was forced to accept marginally improved maps.

The proposed solution requires that two nearly-identical bills be passed (one each in the house and senate), in two successive years, to put a referendum on the ballot. If it does not happen in 2020, it may happen in 2030.

Fair District PA Priorities were outlined. SB 22, HB 722 are the two bills they are supporting, both are in committee.

VII. Adjournment at 8:27pm.