

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the January 20 Mayor and Commission session was remote. The meeting could be viewed live at www.accgov.com/videos, on YouTube at www.youtube.com/accgov, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/accgov, and on ACTV Cable Channel 180 or the live ACTV stream at www.acc.gov.com/actvlive

Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia
Mayor and Commission
Special Called Session
Tuesday, January 20, 2022
4:30 p.m.
WebEx

The Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia met this date in a special called session. Present: Mayor Girtz; Commissioners Davenport, Parker, Link, Wright, Denson, Houle, Edwards, Myers, Thornton, and Hamby. No one was absent. Commissioner Thornton came in at 4:35 p.m.

The purpose of the meeting was submitted amended Commission district maps for consideration by the Georgia General Assembly; details are at <https://house-press.com/rep-spencer-frye-releases-proposed-athens-clarke-county-commission-district-map/#more-10359>.

New business –Consider under suspension of Rules

A motion was made by Commissioner Edwards, seconded by Commissioner Houle, to suspend Rules of Commission for consideration of item on this agenda. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Commissioner Link, seconded by Commissioner Davenport, to adopt a resolution to approve and support the adoption by the Georgia General Assembly of the proposed updated Athens-Clarke County Commission district map released by State Representative Spencer Frye.

A substitute motion was made by Commissioner Thornton, seconded by Commissioner Wright, to request the local legislative delegation meet to review and reach a compromise.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wright to divide the question. The motion failed for lack of a second.

A motion was made by Commissioner Thornton, seconded by Commissioner Wright, to suspend Rules of Commission and add to the agenda consideration of a request to ask the local legislative delegation to review and reach a compromise map. The motion passed by roll call vote with Commissioners Parker, Link, Wright, Denson, Houle, Edwards, Myers, Thornton, and Hamby voting YES; and Commissioner Davenport voting NO. (9 YES; 1 NO)

A motion was made by Commissioner Myers, seconded by Commissioner Houle, to call the question. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

There was a roll call vote on the original motion to adopt the following resolution. The motion passed with Commissioners Davenport, Parker, Link, Denson, Houle, Edwards, Myers, and Thornton voting YES and Commissioners Wright and Hamby voting NO. (8 YES; 2 NO)

A RESOLUTION OF THE COMMISSION OF ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY, GEORGIA TO APPROVE AND SUPPORT THE ADOPTION BY THE GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PROPOSED UPDATED ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY COMMISSION DISTRICT MAP RELEASED BY STATE REPRESENTATIVE SPENCER FRYE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, on January 18, 2022, State Representative Spencer Frye, who is a member of the Athens-Clarke County Legislative Delegation, released a proposed updated district map for the Athens-Clarke County Commission (the “Proposed Map”); and

WHEREAS, in conjunction with the release of the Proposed Map, Representative Frye issued a statement outlining the benefits of the Proposed Map which were noted as follows:

- (1) The Proposed Map creates four majority non-white districts and enhances the compactness of the districts;
- (2) The Proposed Map restored several communities of interest;

- (3) The Proposed Map makes the historic Black community on the eastside of Athens whole, which increases the likelihood that they can elect a representative of their choice;
- (4) The Proposed Map reverses the plan to renumber the districts, which would disqualify three commissioners from running for re-election under their current seats;
- (5) The Proposed Map helps our elections office administer the next election accurately and reduces the likelihood of citizen confusion caused by excessive gerrymandering;
- (6) The Proposed Map cuts fewer precinct lines and reduces the number of ballot combinations by a third, or from 41 to 28 which means more savings in printing costs and less opportunity for mistakes; and
- (7) The Proposed Map helps to ensure every Athens citizen receives the correct ballot with the correct slate of candidates.

WHEREAS, based upon the foregoing benefits, the Commission of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia (the "Commission") hereby finds that it is in the best interests of the citizens of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia that the Commission approve and support the adoption by the Georgia General Assembly of the Proposed Map;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Commission of Athens-Clarke County, Georgia and it is hereby so resolved by the authority of same as follows:

SECTION 1.

The Commission hereby approves and supports the adoption by the Georgia General Assembly of the Proposed Map. A copy of the Proposed Map and a Population Summary of the Proposed Map are attached hereto as Exhibits "A" and "B" respectively and incorporated herein by reference.

SECTION 2.

This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its approval by the Mayor or upon its adoption into law without such approval.

Commissioner Thornton stated she wished to change her vote on the resolution from yes to abstain. Mayor Girtz ruled this request out of order.

After additional discussion, a motion was made by Commissioner Edwards, seconded by Commissioner Houle, to adjourn. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

Clerk of Commission