

## District Realignment Meeting, 2/11/21

### Meeting Notes

Attendees: Barrett Mohrmann, Chris Sherman, Dale Simpson, Ryan Thompson, Lisa Murray, Ken Heintz, Roger Hottinger, Jeff Moe, Chris Miller, Deanna Biros, Ron Lime, Chip Herr, Jim Bratton, Scott Sampson, Lois Griffin, Carla Mings, Phillip Freeman, Jeff Gill, James Dockter, Kayleigh Buck

- Chris Sherman started the meeting at 6:05 p.m.
- Scott Sampson led the Pledge of Allegiance, the Scout Oath, and the Scout Law.
- “During our discussion last week, looking at four or five district scenarios, we asked Chip, Lois, David and Ron to meet as a subgroup during the past work and do some refinement of 4B and 4D and choose a compromise between those two. I know they spent a great deal of time Tuesday evening discussing that. I’d like to extend thanks to them for working on that. I believe they could not reach a conclusion. We said take another week to do that. Those of us who have been through woodbadge, we know the phases of team building. Regardless of how that was, I’m encouraged by the fact that we’re all taking this very seriously and coming up with the best possible solution. Maybe a primary and secondary one that we can present to the board.”
- “It was a good open discussion. We realized that some of the key numbers we need to dig in deeper and get the fine details of how we’re going organize. I’m confident we’ll have some recommendations next week.”
- “I was on a national commissioners meeting Sunday evening for a couple hours. This was primarily about national service territories and what’s going on there. In that presentation, there was a slide that stood out. Some of their bullet points weren’t that different from us. I’d like to read some of those out: natural geographical territories, business commerce and highway patterns, total available youth, cultural diversity, existing youth membership, staffing ratios...I think it’s important to not lose sight that districts exist to serve our units and their Scouts. The numbers are certainly important, but there’s more beyond that. It’s the culture and the volunteers in the units. I wanted to lead with that this evening. It struck a chord with me. Alright, anything else key metrics wise that people might have done some work on in the past week?”
- “I think the takeaway from the last meeting was the results of the two surveys will partially determine the recommendations we make. The key factors haven’t changed much. I think our focus will be establishing a procedure to merge existing district staffs, both commissioners and committees. I think developing a clear line of communication to answer their needs and a directory of services for units to use with specific individuals and contacts to use.”

- “I know on existing and potential membership we were looking at making sure that the membership in Columbus city schools not associated with Scoutreach is pulled out and assorted with the districts.”
- “The Columbus City School thing is on our targeted list. It’s over 100 public school buildings and determining where those Scouts are. We built the sheet to feed off of school district data, not school data. Lois went school by school on gradeschools.org and identified parochial schools into our most recent data set. A huge shoutout to Lois.”
- “Lois, thank you for all that work.”
- “The vast majority of what we’ll call traditional units were already associated with a non-Columbus City School school district. The one in Tri-Creek, 759 that Chris Daly is running, they’re already associated with the Whitehall School district. I don’t know what Columbus City School is aligned by a traditional unit because that unit is probably chartered to a church.”
- “The troops in the Clintonville area further complicate the issue because they pull from multiple schools.”
- “The pack is going to have to be associated with one school. That’s a much larger membership conversation, but for the purposes of calculating, we need the packs to be associated with one school.”
- “Aligning them to a single school would be very helpful to see what schools we could and should be recruiting out. Most of the labor in the last 48 hours went on private schools. I filtered each of the counties in the SKC for private schools and found about 83. I have aligned those and their total enrollment to a school district. The surprise for me there is we’re talking about 20,000 total available youth. Some of those schools have 800 students.”
- “Thanks Lois. Those are the details that we recognized we didn’t have a complete picture.”
- “I don’t think there was any update we requested from geography or fundraising. We did get a survey out last night on unit needs and expectations. That went to all of our units. I’m getting emails with questions and comments who are tackling that survey. We put a deadline of next Wednesday on that. We’ll have some data to sort through next week and whatever preliminary data I’ll get that to before next Thursday. That will be a good chunk of data to have. That leads into our primary conversation this evening. It’s beyond just the district boundaries. One of the deliverables we want to make to the board is recommendations to the board for how committees and commissioner teams should look. Early on, we had some discussion about that and it has come back more than once from units and unit leaders. Particularly in light of realigning resources and what we want to accomplish with this alignment. We also have reached out to the area and region for some thoughts on what may be changing in responsibilities at the district level. We don’t have anything back on that. The call I was on Sunday evening suggested the metrics for councils will be changing. I’d like to spend some time this evening talking about expectations and roles in district operations. The district operations handbook is a pretty good place to start. That certainly provides the guidance of what the current expectations are. That doesn’t mean we should blindly follow that. Currently, there are a number of

committees that should be functioning in each district with a vice chair: fund development, activities, membership, civic service, advancement, outdoor program, and training. I'd like to spend a little while brainstorming with everyone on what we think are the roles and responsibilities of the volunteers in each of those committees and what we should be expecting those committees to deliver and how that meshes with support from the professional staff. So, we'll just start at the top. District fund development is the first one."

- "I have one question. What edition of the district operations handbook do you have?"
- "The most current one I could find was 2012."
- "That particular vice chair position seems to be one of the most difficult to fill. That person seems to become de facto the district popcorn chair."
- "That's probably not entirely where it should be."
- "It should be involved in identifying other resources for financial support within the district. It's one of the key measures to be accomplished by a DE. It's a matter of being able to free up the DE for other things they should be tackling."
- "I really think this position is important for volunteers to put themselves in. There's so much opportunity that some 22-year-old won't be able to develop. I can talk to my friends and raise as much as a DE in one year, if the community is properly developed. We need to be properly integrated in our community like any charity. That includes the family FOS program that we do. This is a point of emphasis that a district needs to focus on. I think it's a key position."
- "Not to say anything negative about a young DE, but I can't see them being the sole asker of a CEO that we're looking a contribution from. It needs to be choreographed."
- "We're going to have a three year turnover on our DE. When that new person comes in, they need a team who can introduce them to the right people."
- "Any thoughts on this position on being responsible to lead the district community and family FOS campaigns as well as the day of giving campaign? That community campaign is in many ways what we're talking about with establishing relationships to build funding in the communitiies."
- "One of the roles we hope they would provide in a mentorship. We're going to train them on our sides. Where they'll need the assist is getting the door open. We have a tendency to look inwards when we have a vacancy. When it comes to this finance position, we should ask if this scoutmaster is the right person to do it? I would say we need to look at identifying who should be in that role."
- "It's relationship building."
- "It's awareness in the community of what Scouting is doing."
- "Some people just don't like fundraising. That's not why Scoutmasters are joining. It's such an important role, I don't know why it's put on a person fresh out of school. Why aren't we rethinking how we're doing this?"
- "It goes back to a fundamental disconnect. To the group, who can tell me what the responsibilities of a district camping chair are?"

- “A lot of that has to do with providing opportunities like a spring camporee, a fall camporee, and a summer camp.”
- “No.”
- “It’s mostly about promoting camping opportunities isn’t it?”
- “Yes, this impacts our local attendance at our camps: ensuring that every troop has a summer camp presentation. The people who run camporees and klondikes are the program team. This is no one’s faults. It’s a training issue with district executives. Maybe it’s not as magnified on the finance side. The job of the finance chair is to build a team who supports each of those campaigns. The job of the finance chair has nothing to do with fundraising.”
- “I agree with RT. The district committee is about forming relationships. No one person can get that job done. You can have the most talented DE but they’re going to need backup from their committees.”
- “As we’re going through this redistricting, it’s the perfect time to level set. As we look at these models, what a great opportunity to create those committees that don’t exist in depth. There’s a huge opportunity to redo what we’re doing. It shouldn’t be a on-man band. How much more fun would it be to work with a group of people.”
- “Yes, we can offload the fifteen hats one person is wearing. That’s going to be key.”
- “Let’s go on and do the same thing with membership.”
- “It’s almost the same struggle on membership as it is on finance. You recruit someone to do membership and they think they’re supposed to run signup nights. They think they’re going to have to abandon their family to do this position. Our units have to get off the bench for fall recruitment. They lean exclusively on professionals or just a few people. You end up with three people doing the scout talks for every school. Geographically, that’s going to be great when you have 90 schools.”
- “My thoughts on membership and the districts operations, I totally agree with RT. The district membership chair needs to either gathering the data of what units are doing join nights when. They coordinate that effort without doing that effort. I see this being community based. I’d like to see a point person from each community feeding information to that membership chair who can then make sure we have someone for the Scout talk. Especially with the enlarged districts, we’re going to have to come up with a committee. It’s going to vary on the population density. I know in Tri-Creek we are way too dependent on Barrett. I think that’s an area we need to work on. I’d like to see us alter our dependency from paper flyers and school talks. Tri-Creek has five packs in Pickerington. Many of them are involved in the fourth of July and Labor Day parade. They hand out candies and pencils, but we recruit by school. What if we had a single flyer for all of the packs? There’s a lot of ways to market on social media.”
- “We’ve seen that become a challenge because schools close their doors. We have to become creative.”
- “What we’re seeing in terms of a loss of school access, we want to be intentional on how we lose that phrase. We’re losing access in terms of scout talk. Cub Scout packs are setting booths at a back to school night. Then we get to talk directly to the parent. Lois is

correct that we have to get around the flyers. Peach jar might be the most useless thing invented. I have a filter in my email that sends peach jar directly to the garbage.”

- “I think the membership chair would also be responsible for starting new units and supporting units in need. It’s be nice to see teams devoted to helping new units start.”
- “We have the four pillars of a district. Struggling units and building units is a partnership with the commissioners, but we have to have training and program to support it. We need to prioritize the tasks we have and make sure we get to all of it.”
- “We need to know our superintendents and our principals. We need to have our packs engaged in the schools they recruit from.”
- “We have the best character development program on the planet. If we can build relationships with the educational community, our access issues are going to dry up.”
- “I think that worked with FOS.”
- “There’s a bit of a theme here. The description of the lead at the NST level is membership and building relationships. Anything else on membership before we move on.”
- “To build a little on what Lisa was saying, it’d be nice to have unit positions of roundtable representatives, membership representatives.”
- “We run a council level spring recruitment training. We have almost zero participation on that. It boils down to the relationship piece. We don’t have enough people. There are large communities who filter out requests to come and get training.”
- “I think Deanna is approaching a lot of information in those Scouting family forums. I think it’s an informal training.”
- “Roundtable is where you’re supposed to be getting that additional training. Maybe roundtables need to focus on new leaders. We get the same people all the time. It’s for anyone to come. In our district, we need to revamp it a little.”
- “We’re getting the word out, but people aren’t responding.”
- “Maybe it’s getting the topics that they’re interested in.”
- “I don’t think enough units see the value in roundtable. That’s one of the reason attendance isn’t what we hoped it could be. How about activities and civic service?”
- “There are things that person does that we may have lost sight of. Coordinating Scout Sunday. Maybe a retraining or setting expectations.”
- “I think the problem we have is that people think they have to do all of this and that’s why they’re scared of it.”
- “It’s also community awareness.”
- “Which in turn should help membership and fund development. How about advancement and recognition?”
- “I think we’ve talked a little about that last week. With larger districts, it needs to be more community based with regional teams. The territories are going to be so much larger.”
- “Specific to advancement and recognition, I think the theme of training is there on each of them. Anything on expectations? I think the comment of community-based is certainly there.”

- “I think it’s key to build out a team.”
- “How many districts are focusing on the life to eagle advancement and not much more?”
- “Our district basically only does eagle boards. That’s where we are.”
- “When I was the district chair for Tri-Creek, I think I would have been run out of town if we weren’t adequately staffed Eagle boards of review.”
- “I would argue the life to eagle transition is important, but we need to build the team beyond that.”
- “We do a very good job of supporting the eagle scout process. We have some decent coaching and edification for the Scouts BSA program. If any support of Cub scout advancement exists, it’s because they’re running programs to support advancement.”
- “I never knew when I was troop committee chair that eagle boards of review were a district function. I’m amazed to hear how some of these districts have a pool of volunteers. I wonder if there are other units who don’t know.”
- “If you read the guide to advancement, you’re allowed to do your own boards of review, but you have to have one person sitting in from the district.”
- “There’s a vast disparity of what a unit or a scout can expect when interacting with their district. Your physical geography is totally going to impact what you get as a Scout.”
- “I think we focus very much on the top end. I know there’s a report out there to show how long a Scout has been at what rank level.”
- “That’s what was driving my comment early on. How many districts are looking at the data as a leading indicator of unit health. We know if scouts aren’t advancing we’re going to lose them as members.”
- “I know units are looking at it, but I don’t know about districts.”
- “I think the district advancement committee needs to look at that too.”
- “We still have a training issue. Our advancement chair thought her job was to enter blue cards and hand out badges. The training issue is the underlying question mark that needs to be addressed.”
- “Alright, camping and outdoor?”
- “I think we may have hit the nail on the head of what our camping struggle is. If we have camping chairs, most of them are running awesome camporees, but they’re not doing the camp promotion things. I think this training issue is on the district operations side. It goes back to what we’ve said at every level tonight. Our camping people need a team. We need more district level people conducting these things.”
- “Training? Comments? What should be the role of the district training chair and committee?”
- “Informing troops and packs of training opportunities but also setting up training opportunities.”
- “So promotion and provision.”
- “I think we’ll see that come together.”
- “I think we need to do a better job of expiring the training of Scoutmasters. So often I’ve heard that someone took the training back in 1988. Somehow we need to get those people back to training.”

- “What are you saying about my 1982 woodbadge?”
- “We should also encourage that training chair to pay special attention to new units.”
- “When we start new units, we need to increase our level of expectation. We need to stop putting them together with five kids and five adults. The retention increases by 80% with more families involved.”
- “It’s hard to implement the patrol method at the troop level with only five youth.”
- “As part of this process, we’re really going to have to recruit these people. Actively set up a nominating committee, have coffee with these people, and fill these seats.”
- “Have we talked about commissioner service?”
- “I was going to do that next. Expectations of commissioner service?”
- “It’s spelled out. They’re the unit liaison between the district and council services.”
- “A big part of what Dale and I talked about goes back to the retraining of units and what those commissioners are there for. To unburden the DEs who field a barrage of calls. That should be better handled through the commissioner corps and committees. I think we need to approach that at the training level. We all want to be there to help. We need to redirect them of where to go to.”
- “We need to get them in the habit of going to one contact. Then they can spend time serving the youth in their unit rather than running something down.”
- “The average unit leader isn’t going to go to ten people. They’re going to give up after two and get frustrated.”
- “We need to help keep that to a minimum. That’s putting our DEs in a time crunch.”
- “We should also be helping our units with rechartering. We should be spending about three months out of the year on, prior to December. As well as supporting a healthy roundtable.”
- “We have seven bullet points. Grouping those, three on program side and the fourth on commissioner, do we have people that are passionate that want to go off and come back with something concrete to put in the package that we submit to the board?”
- “What are the groupings?”
- “I was taking the first two, fundraising and membership, the program groupings...”
- “Membership goes hand in hand with commissioner service. In the groupings, I would recommend that they stay side by side.”
- “I think that membership and training go hand in hand as well.”
- “They’re all very much attached at the hip.”
- “I would also recommend we tie in camping and activities. As camping and activities go together, a natural third for that would be advancement.”
- “I think lines of communication for efficiency and defining roles is important.”
- “Keep in mind the way the district structure is broken out now it’s almost ten years old. Maybe we want to force a change. Marketing and communications could become something of its own. Some districts have a communications lead, but it’s not something that’s currently listed by itself.”
- “It kind of just falls under the district chair or vice chair.”

Fund development, membership, commissioner service, communication: Lois, Scott, Roger, Deanna, David Stowe, Ron Lime,

Camping, program, training, advancement: Lisa, Carla, Jeff, Phil, Ken, Chip, Jim Bratton,

- “Take the discussions we had and put together an outline of volunteer and professional expectations. As Ron said, we’re going to have to be aware that we have some rebuilding to do in the district committees. We’ll put this together in our recommendation to the board along with the district boundaries. Going back to four versus five, in part of what we present to the Key 8 Saturday, I may call on a couple of you to explain and answer questions to our thought process. Is there a map and data chart that’s simple that you could send to me and we’ll include in the powerpoint at the Key 8 on Saturday and makes the overview obvious of what we’ve been looking at? That way it’s clear that we’ve been looking at a couple of alternatives. I’m looking for a graphic or two that we can drop into a powerpoint.”
- “My concern is that anything you show will be interpreted as the end result.”
- “That’s why we’re showing a four and five. We want to ask for some feedback and lay the groundwork for what we’re trying to accomplish. Working with those district committees is key to moving forward. This is already out there in the transcription of the minutes. The only thing that hasn’t been posted yet is the vote from last week.”
- “I would lean more toward a simple graphic of all of the categories that we’ve been looking at. If we start showing maps, we need to show a bunch of different ones.”
- “I think what we’re talking about is showing the different analysis points.”
- “We’re going to talk about the background of why we’re doing this and the key metrics. The point that we said we were going to do is throw out a couple scenarios. We felt strongly about showing a four and a five, so we could say we looked at a few different possibilities.”
- “I think we need to do it now. If we wait and only show one option, people are going to wonder why they weren’t brought along the way.”
- “Yes, this is the last time we have to share this message.”
- “We might be better served showing them every scenario we’ve looked at and the direction we’re going in.”
- “I think we need to take all of the maps and put them in a share file for people to look at. I think we should one of each after we talk about it. It’s almost information overload. People are going to be watching this and trying to analyze. You go off in this rabbit hole of questions. And at the end of the day, this group will make a recommendation to the board and the board will make a decision. I wouldn’t run through all of the options.”
- “Early early on, we looked at all options. I want people to know there was broad discussions.”

- Meeting ended at 8:15 p.m. due to the time limits of Zoom.