

No Second Majority-White District for Quincy, Florida

Baroody v. City of Quincy
(*Allen Winsor, N.D. Fla. 4:20-cv-217*)

Three days before a city-commission election, a federal district judge denied a claim that the newly redistricted commission should include a second majority-White district.

Subject: District lines. *Topic:* Section 2 discrimination.

A federal complaint filed on April 28, 2020, in the Northern District of Florida challenged a March 26 redistricting plan for Quincy’s city commission.¹ Nine days later, the two plaintiffs—citizen residents of Quincy—filed an emergency motion for a case-management conference and a scheduling order, noting upcoming elections on June 9.²

Judge Allen Winsor set the case for a telephonic status conference on May 12, noting that no injunction motion was pending and posting contact information for the call in the public docket sheet.³ Complying with Judge Winsor’s order, the parties submitted a joint status report on the day before the conference, stating,

The parties understand that Plaintiffs will soon be filing a motion seeking preliminary injunctive relief, and request that Defendants be allowed two (2) weeks from the filing of such motion to respond thereto, and that Plaintiffs be allowed to file a reply brief prior to a hearing upon such motion, to be set at the Court’s convenience prior to the June 9 2020 Quincy City Commissioner elections.⁴

At the status conference, Judge Winsor noted that the injunction motion would be filed on May 15, and he set the case for another public telephonic status conference on May 20.⁵ The May 15 injunction motion argued, “Absent an injunction, hundreds (if not thousands) of White/Anglo voters in existing District 5 will have their vote in the 2020 City Commissioner elections diluted and rendered meaningless because of the color of their skin.”⁶ Judge Winsor set the motion for a courthouse hearing on June 4.⁷

1. Complaint, *Broody v. City of Quincy*, No. 4:20-cv-217 (N.D. Fla. Apr. 28, 2020), D.E. 1; *see* Amended Complaint, *id.* (May 22, 2020), D.E. 18.

“The City of Quincy is the county seat of Gadsden County and home to some 8,670 residents.” Opinion at 1, *id.* (June 7, 2020), D.E. 31.

2. Motion, *id.* (May 7, 2020), D.E. 6.

3. Order, *id.* (May 8, 2020), D.E. 8; Docket Sheet, *id.* (Apr. 28, 2020) (D.E. 9).

4. Status Report at 2, *id.* (May 11, 2020), D.E. 11.

5. Order, *id.* (May 12, 2020), D.E. 12; Minutes, *id.* (May 12, 2020), D.E. 12; Docket Sheet, *supra* note 3 (D.E. 14); *see id.* (minutes, D.E. 16).

6. Preliminary-Injunction Motion, *Broody*, No. 4:20-cv-217 (N.D. May 15, 2020), D.E. 15.

7. Docket Sheet, *supra* note 3 (D.E. 17); *see* Minutes, *Broody*, No. 4:20-cv-217 (N.D. Fla. June 4, 2020), D.E. 29.

On Sunday, June 7, two days before the election, Judge Winsor denied the plaintiffs immediate relief.⁸

For decades, the district lines were essentially untouched. The districting plan enacted in 1974 was the districting plan in place in 2020—at least until March 2020, when the City enacted a new districting plan. . . .

A majority of Quincy residents are black. A minority are White. According to the complaint, it has been this way for more than one hundred years.⁹

Judge Winsor found that the plaintiffs could not show either the feasibility of a second compact majority-White district or that White voters voted as a bloc.¹⁰

Judge Winsor issued a voluntary dismissal on June 19.¹¹

8. Opinion, *supra* note 1.

9. *Id.* at 1–2.

10. *Id.* at 6–21.

11. Order, *Broody*, No. 4:20-cv-217 (N.D. Fla. June 19, 2020), D.E. 34.