

Minutes from the Dutchess County Complete Count Committee Meeting on October 9, 2020

The Dutchess County Complete Count Committee held a brief virtual meeting on October 9, 2020. Attending were committee members, John Penney and Mario Johnson, along with Eoin Wrafter, Commissioner of Dutchess County Planning and Development.

The meeting was called after the U.S. Census announced it would be extending the count from October 5 until October 31, although there are still court cases regarding the matter that could change that date again.

Penney said he spoke with Greg Bisanz, Area Census Office Manager of Pawling Area Census Office/Field Division/New York Region, U.S. Census Bureau. The bureau has essentially finished the door-to-door count in this area and is spending time reviewing the work to see if more field visits are necessary. Bisanz said the census is still open online and through the phone if people want to fill it out. His office covers Dutchess, Ulster, Sullivan, Rockland, and Orange counties. Bisanz told Penney census workers knocked on 248,000 households of people who didn't self-respond. Bisanz said that the Census Bureau has been to households' multiple times and believes it has exhausted options to reach more people in the door-to-door operation.

Johnson, who also worked in the field for the Census Bureau, said the bureau made numerous visits to households in the area to get them to respond to the census. Penney said he would confer with other committee members to see if any further efforts could be made to reach those who might not have filled out the form.

Penney, Johnson, and Wrafter agreed there might be some community events coming up where more people still could be reached, although such events have been severely impeded by the COVID-19 pandemic. Penney said that as of October 9, the national self-response rate was 66.8 percent, the state self-response rate was 63.9 percent and the Dutchess County self-response rate was 66.8 percent. For the Dutchess County area, the census says the "nonresponse follow-up operation" -- the effort to count households that did not respond online, by phone, or by returning their completed questionnaire -- is 99.9 percent complete.