

**Anaconda-Deer Lodge County  
Study Commission Meeting  
6:00 p.m. Thursday, April 9, 2015  
Courthouse Courtroom**

Present: Heather Edwards, Dan Tocher, Linda Sather, Terry Galle, Adam Vauthier, Kevin Hart

Others Present: Commissioner Mulvey, Commissioner Lux-Burt, Commissioner Vermeire, Commissioner Smith, Julie Hoffman, Secretary

**I. Call to Order**

- A. Heather Edwards called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

- A. Linda Sather moved to approve the minutes from the March 12, 2015 meeting; seconded by Adam Vauthier

Motion carried unanimously.

**III. Financial Report**

- A. Heather Edwards presented the Financial Report to the members of the Study Commission. Expenditures for February included printing and set-up fees for e-mail accounts.

**IV. Old Business**

- A. Department Head Meeting – Board of County Commission

Heather Edwards provided an update to the Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Commission. Ms. Edwards informed the Commission that members of the Study Commission attended training in Bozeman in December. She stated the Study Commission has also spent the past few months meeting with various Department Heads. She informed the Commission that the Study Commission is in the process of doing a survey to get input from the community with regard to the Charter and our form of government.

Commission Chair Hart stated he believes the biggest concern is with the way Commissioners are elected – by individual district versus at-large. Commission Chair Hart also commented on the process of filling vacancies for Commissioners, the CEO, and the County Attorney.

Commissioner Lux-Burt stated she believes the process of the Commission appointing individuals to fill a vacancy works well. She stated she would like to see the CEO be an appointed position to ensure certain qualifications are met. She stated the CEO is responsible for budgets, personnel issues, Union contracts, taxes, and infrastructure projects. She feels most people do not realize how much responsibility the CEO has. She went on to state she would prefer Commissioners continue to be elected by individual districts. She stated the Commission is very fair in looking at the community as a whole when making decisions. However, she pointed out that different issues affect rural areas and even within the rural areas (West Valley versus Opportunity) the issues may be different. Lastly, Commissioner Lux-Burt stated she did not feel comfortable setting her own salary.

Commissioner Smith agreed with Commissioner Lux-Burt with regard to Commissioners being elected by individual districts. He stated he always has the best interests of the community at heart, not just his district. He stated all the Commissioners are open-minded and it takes a majority vote to pass anything.

Commissioner Mulvey stated she likes the idea of Commissioners being voted for "at-large" during the election. However, she liked how Commissioner Lux-Burt put the individual district choice in perspective. She agreed with Commissioner Lux-Burt regarding setting her own salary.

Commissioner Vermeire stated, as a voter, he would prefer electing Commissioners "at-large."

Terry Galle stated it is important to clarify the difference between individual districts and at-large to ensure the public understands the difference.

Commission Chair Hart informed the Commissioners and the Study Commission that the previous Study Commission changed the Charter from "at-large" to individual districts.

Linda Sather stated it was confusing the way it was worded on the ballot in 2005.

Rose Nyman, 121 E 3<sup>rd</sup>: Ms. Nyman stated she feels the decision whether or not Commissioners are elected "at-large" or by individual district should be made based on what is best for the community. She suggested that the County mandate that each Commissioner become certified through MACO within 13 months of being elected. She expressed concern that the Board of County Commission does not follow open meeting laws or use parliamentary procedure during its meetings. She also expressed concern regarding ordinances, board vacancy advertising, and stated she believes the County is focused too much on infrastructure and is not focused enough on the needs of the residents. In addition, Ms. Nyman expressed concern regarding the CEO position being appointed. She stated a small group of people (the Commission) would be responsible for selecting the CEO.

Commission Chair Hart stated the certification training is excellent. He stated the training takes two years. The first portion of the training is offered in December following elections. The second portion is offered the following year. Commission Chair Hart stated it would be difficult to mandate the training in the Charter as MACO provides the training. He stated if MACO would cease to exist, the training would cease to exist as well.

Terry Galle asked if the people choose to have an appointed CEO if there would be a process put into place for the public to be involved. Heather Edwards informed Mr. Galle that the Commission would go through the applications and would hold public meetings with the potential candidates.

#### **B. Civic Meetings – Updates from Various Group Meetings**

Linda Sather informed the group that she and Heather Edwards attended the Children's Fair at Lincoln School and handed out a lot of questionnaires. She stated there was some confusion regarding the Elks Club so that meeting will need to be rescheduled. Linda Sather is still trying to get a hold of AOH. Linda Sather informed the group that Pad & Pencil offered to have surveys available at their store.

Dan Tocher suggested meeting with the government class at the high school. Heather Edwards will set it up and she and Adam Vauthier will go.

Adam Vauthier volunteered to take some surveys to Local Development.

Linda Sather will contact the Metcalf Senior Citizen to set up a time to meet with them.

**V. New Business**

No new business.

**VI. Miscellaneous**

Terry Galle stated he appreciated learning about the requirements for the County Attorney.

Kevin Hart announced the passing of Raymond Gallick.

**VI. Public Comment**

Rose Nyman, 121 E 3<sup>rd</sup>: Ms. Nyman inquired into the date of the Public Hearing. Heather Edwards informed her it is scheduled for June 11, 2015. Ms. Nyman commented that animals should not be allowed in the courthouse unless they are service animals.

**VII. Adjournment**

Linda Sather moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m.; seconded by Dan Tocher.

  
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Julie Hoffman  
Secretary

  
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Heather Edwards  
Study Commission Chair