Anaconda-Deer Lodge County
Study Commission Meeting & Public Hearing
6:00 p.m. Thursday, June 11, 2015
Courthouse Courtroom

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

Others Present: Julie Hoffman, Secretary and Kathie Miller, Anaconda Leader

I. Call to Order

A. Heather Edwards called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

A. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. The minutes from the Study Commission Meetings of April 9, 2015 and May 14, 2015 were reviewed.

Linda Sather moved to approve the minutes from the Study Commission Meetings of April 9, 2015 and May 14, 2015; seconded by Adam Vauthier.

Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Financial Report

A. Heather Edwards presented the Financial Report and informed the group she is clarifying the publication line item.

Marty Mavrinac – 615 E. Commercial: Mr. Mavrinac informed Heather Edwards the Study Commission did not vote on the financial report. Ms. Edwards stated the financial report is for informational purposes only.

IV. Public Hearing

A. Public Comment Regarding the Form, Functions, Powers, and Problems of Government in Order to Detail any Proposed Amendments to the City/County Charter

Heather Edwards stated the purpose of the public hearing and noted the 3-minute time limit on comments.

Rose Nyman – 121 E. 3rd: Ms. Nyman stated Anaconda-Deer Lodge County does not have a policy which imposes a time limit on public comment. Heather Edwards informed Ms. Nyman the Study Commission adopted its Policies and Procedures at its February 2015 meeting which allows for a time limit on public comment. Ms. Edwards reviewed the Policies and Procedures and noted the time limit is 5 minutes for public comment.

Heather Edwards opened the public hearing at 6:07 p.m.

Gary Wenger – 904 Rickards: Mr. Wenger stated he would like to see the qualifications for the CEO be more stringent than what is presently required. He would like qualifications in place whether the CEO remains an elected position or becomes an appointed position. Mr. Wenger clarified that he would like to see the CEO become an appointed position.

Rose Nyman – 121 E. 3rd: Ms. Nyman stated several of the comments from the survey questionnaire sounded like they came from someone who attends Commission meetings. She felt like some of the comments were more applicable to the County's Administrative Code rather than the Charter. Ms. Nyman suggested Department Heads provide monthly reports to the Commission and suggested the Commissioners be available at the courthouse during the week. Ms. Nyman also stated the CEO position should have qualifications whether elected or appointed, but stated she is in favor of the position being appointed.

Marty Mavrinac – 615 E. Commercial: Mr. Mavrinac stated he is in favor of the Commissioners being elected at-large and the CEO being appointed. He also expressed concern with regard to the town's infrastructure and blight. Mr. Mavrinac stated he believes the Commissioners should follow Robert's Rules of Order. Commissioner Hart informed Mr. Mavrinac that Anaconda-Deer Lodge County has not officially adopted Robert's Rules of Order.

Heather Edwards called for public comment three additional times. After no further public comment, Ms. Edwards closed the public hearing at 6:20 p.m.

Linda Sather thanked everyone for attending the public hearing and stated she appreciated the comments and input.

Terry Galle stated he spoke with residents of the West Valley who feel like they do not have a voice and suggested getting surveys out to those residents.

Linda Sather suggested Terry Galle keep some surveys in his car to distribute to community members who feel they are not being heard.

Commissioner Hart stated it seems like the community is having a hard time grasping what the Study Commission is and its function. He stated the majority of comments from the survey are out of the scope of what the Study Commission can do. Commissioner Hart noted that many comments pertained to personnel issues which the Study Commission cannot take action on.

Heather Edwards stated although the Study Commission cannot resolve personnel issues, the Clerk and Recorder is elected in other counties so if members of the community are concerned about that position, it is up to the Study Commission to look at it and determine whether or not it should be elected. In addition, she stated the Study Commission is charged with doing a supplemental report and this type of information is something that can be put in the report.

Marty Mavrinac – 615 E. Commercial: Mr. Mavrinac stated qualifications should be set for both the CEO and Chief of Law Enforcement.

Commissioner Hart stated if the positions are appointed qualifications can be set. However, if the positions are elected the County cannot supersede election laws and mandate qualifications.

Heather Edwards stated it is the responsibility of the Study Commission to obtain public comment and input and put forth a tentative report to the public. She stated qualifications would be part of the Charter. She will follow up with the Montana Secretary of State's Office to determine whether the County can impose qualifications on elected positions.

V. Old Business

A. Memo to Previous Study Commissioners (DRAFT)

Heather Edwards informed the Study Commission that it was difficult to determine previous Study Commission members who still live in Anaconda. She reported that Jim Bach recently passed away. Ms. Edwards will clarify if Ed McCarthy and John Durkin are still in Anaconda and invite the previous members to the next meeting.

Terry Galle suggested having the next meeting at Old Works.

Dan Tocher suggested inviting former CEO's to the next meeting as well.

Commissioner Hart stated it will be to the Study Commission's advantage to get input from former members on how they dealt with some of the same issues the current Study Commission is dealing with now. With regard to Mr. Galle's suggestion of holding the next meeting at Old Works, Commissioner Hart stated that all meetings are open to the public and members of the business community may attend.

VI. New Business

A. Drafting Tentative Report (must be adopted by August 13, 2015)

Heather Edwards informed the members of the Study Commission the Tentative Report must be out by August 13, 2015. She stated it must include information about proposed ballot language, findings and conclusions, advantages and disadvantages, and economic impact. She stated she is hoping to get information together at tonight's meeting in order to have a draft report available at the next meeting. Heather Edwards stated depending upon what types of changes are made, either the form of government will be amended or the charter will be amended. She stated the current form of government is a Commission Executive form of government. If the CEO is appointed, our government becomes a Commission Manager form of government. Ms. Edwards suggested each member come up with what they would like to see in the tentative report and hold a special meeting to discuss those findings. Ms. Edwards proposed holding a special meeting on June 25, 2015.

VI. Miscellaneous

Dan Tocher apologized for missing the last meeting.

Linda Sather stated the Chief of Law Enforcement is accountable to the Attorney General, as well as the County Commission. Commissioner Hart stated if the position is appointed it will have oversight by the Commission as well.

Heather Edwards asked if members wanted to continue to use county email accounts and if not she will cancel them.

VII. Public Comment

Rose Nyman – 121 E. 3rd: Ms. Nyman stated she found it disheartening that the discussion regarding Commissioners being elected at-large (that was discussed by the Commissioners) was more or less centered on campaigning, cost and time and not really about serving the people and voting on issues.

Connie Ternes Daniels: Ms. Daniels stated she is impressed by how folks thought about at-large versus district. She stated she thought the question was a bit confusing on the survey but the responses came through loud and clear.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Julie Hoffman
Secretary

Heather Edwards
Study Commission Chair