

**Anaconda-Deer Lodge County
Study Commission Special Meeting
6:00 p.m. Thursday, July 23, 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

Members of the Public: Sandy Tocher, Rose Nyman, Gary Wenger, Mike Eldridge

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. Old Business

- A. Drafting of the Tentative Report

Heather Edwards reported that she sent the tentative report to Harold Blattie, Executive Director of MACO, for review. Mr. Blattie reviewed the tentative report in its entirety and provided very helpful feedback. Mr. Blattie provided Heather with the relevant statutes which pertain to ballot language.

The Study Commission addressed Amendment No. 1 which addresses the issue of voting for Commissioners "at-large" in the general election.

Linda Sather expressed concern regarding the term "at-large" as it pertains to Commissioners being voted on by all voters in the general election and suggested to change the term to "all registered voters." Commissioner Hart stated this may not be possible as "at-large" is legal terminology that exists in state statute. Terry Galle suggested having a footnote on the ballot explaining what "at-large" means.

Rose Nyman – 121 E. 3rd: Ms. Nyman commented that the purpose of the primary is to narrow the field.

Adam Vauthier questioned whether Commissioners should be referred to as "nominees" or "candidates" in the proposed ballot language. He suggested the language be re-worded a bit differently as well to read: "for adoption of the amendment to the ADLC Charter to allow Commission candidates to be elected by district in the primary and the two top candidates from each district shall then be voted..."

Heather Edwards stated all ballot language will be reviewed by the County Attorney and Mr. Blattie.

Discussion then centered on whether personnel issues, such as a probationary period, should be included in the Charter with regard to the Manager and Chief of Law Enforcement positions *if* these

positions should become appointed rather than elected. The group determined the probationary period should be twelve months rather than six months, with the positions being evaluated by the Commission.

The Study Commission addressed Amendment No. 2 which addresses whether the CEO shall remain an elected position or become an appointed City/County Manager.

Kathie Miller with the Anaconda Leader questioned why the ballot language does not state that the Commission will appoint the Manager. Adam Vauthier stated the language will be reflected very clearly in the Charter. Heather Edwards stated the language could be added to the ballot.

Terry Galle stated it will be important to have the public be part of the process to set qualifications for the Manager position. Heather Edwards informed the group that if it becomes an appointed position, the Commission will go through the public hearing process to receive public input regarding qualifications. She also added that the Study Commission can put this in its final report as a recommendation.

The Study Commission then addressed Amendment No. 2 which addresses whether the Chief of Law Enforcement shall remain an elected position or become an appointed position.

Heather Edwards posed the question of whether the CEO or Manager should hire the Chief of Law Enforcement and then be brought before the Commission for approval, or go through the public hearing process and hired by the Commission.

Linda Sather stated if the Chief of Law Enforcement is appointed by the Commission more than one person is providing input during the hiring process.

Terry Galle stated requirements for the position are already set in stone by state law. Commissioner Hart clarified his statement and noted the County may still add to the minimum qualifications set by state law. Heather Edwards noted that if the position is appointed by the CEO or Manager, applications are accepted, interviews take place, a recommendation is put before the Commission, and an individual is hired.

Rose Nyman – 121 E. 3rd: Ms. Nyman stated more transparency exists if the Chief of Law Enforcement is appointed by the Commission. She stated the school board interviews the Superintendent publicly, and she believes it is a good way to do it. Ms. Nyman stated it is a complex position and the issue of public safety is at hand.

Heather Edwards suggested adding a sub-option in the tentative report to determine if the voters want the position appointed by the Commission or hired by the CEO/Manager. By consensus, members of the Study Commission agreed to include this in the tentative report.

Heather Edwards informed the group she will make the changes discussed this evening to the tentative report. The tentative report will be released to the public on August 13, 2015. A public hearing on the tentative report will take place on October 8, 2015.

VI. Miscellaneous

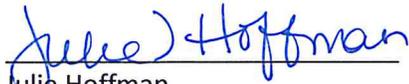
No miscellaneous.

VII. Public Comment

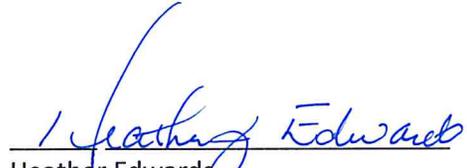
No public comment.

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.



Julie Hoffman
Secretary


Heather Edwards
Study Commission Chair