

City of Lewistown Study Commission  
August 31, 2015  
Lewistown City Complex

Attendees included Dick Krillenberger, Darryl McKenzie, Alexzandra Dunnington, Dick Ellestad, Gayle Doney. Melody Scott performed the duties of recording secretary.

**Call to Order:** Krillenberger called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Roll Call of Members Present**

**Disposition of Previous Meeting Minutes:** Ellestad moved to approve the August 14, 2015 minutes. Dunnington seconded.

**Budget-Paid Expenses and Current Balance:** The new fiscal budget for the city has not yet been approved so there are no current numbers. As of the end of June, the amount available was \$2029 and the amount spent was \$3784. Krillenberger submitted a claim to be paid for copies he has made for meetings. Dunnington made a motion to pay Dan Clark in the amount of \$687.45 for his training time plus travel expenses. McKenzie seconded the motion.

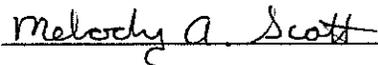
**Dan Clark, Director of the MSU Local Government Center:** Dan Clark shared a description and a reason for his job and also detailed what the job of the study commission is. He explained that he can not give legal interpretation as he is not an attorney but that he would try to help make sense of what the state laws say. He started by sharing a history of the voter review process. Clark shared during the creation of the 1972 constitution, the idea for the voter review concept was created to allow an opportunity to pause and review the momentum of a town. This is an opportunity to stop and decide whether to change to continue in the same direction. Every ten years, there is an option on the ballot to create a study commission which essentially means the public gives permission to raise the taxes to do so. Clark reviewed past years votes towards creating study commissions for Lewistown. The first study commission was in 1976 but their suggested change in government failed to get enough votes. In 1996, the study commission presented an item on the ballot to change the city government, which passed. In 2004 the study commission felt that the form of government did not need to be changed. Clark presented what the options for city government are and explained how each work. He also explained the difference between self governing and general powers. Self governing can exercise any power not prohibited by the state law or charter. General can only exercise powers given by state law and charter. Clark encouraged people to consider whether general or self governing powers are a better choice for Lewistown. Forms of government presented included Manager, Commission/Executor, Commission or Commission/Presiding Officer. The concept of county/city was also discussed. Currently there is no mayor/manager form in Montana. The closest is Missoula which has administrative assistant to assist the mayor. The larger the city is, the bigger the salary option has to be to attract people to the position. It is expensive to get someone to want to manage a city. Running and managing a city is different than doing your own personal budget. Clark explained that part of the role of the study commission is to talk to city officials and the public on how to improve the operation of the local government. This will allow the study commission to look ahead to the future and make recommendations on what will be best for the town's future. Clark shared his personal history of being a city mayor. He explained that local business people do not want to run for office as public opinion can affect their business. Decisions that local government makes today will have effects seventy to one hundred and fifty years down the road.

The city commission needs to articulate where they want Lewistown be and look like down the road in order to attract youth to stay and raise their families. Tom St. John shared his thoughts on the public's disappointment about no ability to hire or fire the manager. Lewistown is very apathetic. Clark asked if the apathy will change if the government form changes. The answer was no. Discussion was held on how a change of government would take place. The study commission would have to make a termination plan. Clark mentioned that in Montana, it is very hard to attract good managers. He also mentioned the public tends to be a silent majority. If they like what the government is doing, they stay silent and uninvolved. When they do not like what the government is doing, they will show up to meetings and get involved.

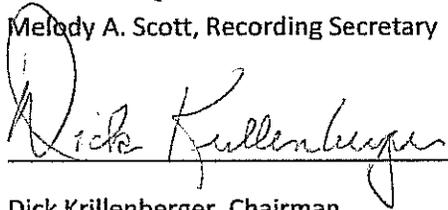
**Open Public Participation:** Jack Biehl spoke about the apathy of the public.

**Committee Member Comments:** Doney thanked Dan Clark for coming to speak. Krillenberger shared that the upcoming study commission meetings will include reviewing the Whitefish, Dillon and Polson charters.

**Adjournment:** Meeting dismissed by Krillenberger at 8:58 pm.

  
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Melody A. Scott, Recording Secretary

  
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Dick Krillenberger, Chairman