

Study Commission Releases Findings

No Changes In County Government Recommended

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Of The Western Breeze

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After discussions with numerous residents and groups throughout the county, the Glacier County Government Study Commission feels the present form of county government that has been in existence for more than a century should remain in place.

Said a release from the commission: "The Glacier County Study Commission has concluded that there is general consensus that the existing county commission form of government has served this county well since its organization in 1889, and will continue to do so in the future. We, therefore, recommend no change in this form of government.

The commission, which was elected by the voters on Nov. 8, 1994, compiled its information and listed a series of recommendations. A public meeting will be held on Monday, June 17 at 7 p.m. at the Courthouse Annex to receive public input on the final report and recommendations that were offered. The final report will then be adopted on Tuesday, June 25 at 7 p.m. at the Courthouse Annex. The recommendations, which were divided into eight categories, were as follows:

- Taxation - The county commissioners should look at a way to restructure taxes in Glacier County to reflect more fair and equitable values within the county and within the state.
- Tourism - The county commissioners should be encouraged to look at transportation within the county to enhance tourism.
- Transportation - There is a need for the county to have valid right-of-ways for all county roads.

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- Law Enforcement - The study commission recommends and supports the idea of a regional jail facility.
- County Offices - The County Attorney should be a full-time position, not part-time. Elected officials and department heads should continue to hold monthly meetings. County elections on a non-partisan basis are recommended.
- City/County Relationship - The Chief Executive Officers of Browning, Cut Bank and Glacier County should hold at least yearly meetings to coordinate any administrative problems they may have. The Blackfeet Tribe should also be included in these meetings. The Tribal Council would be the tribe's representative. Economic diversity should be promoted by the cities of Browning, Cut Bank, the Blackfeet Tribe and Glacier County together as partners.
- Health/Education/Welfare - No specific recommendations.
- Relationship: County/Reservation - No specific recommendations.

The purpose of the study commission, as defined by state law, was "to study the existing form and powers of our county government and procedures for delivery of local government services and compare them with other forms available under the laws of the state." If a change was deemed necessary, the study commission could submit such proposed changes to the electors. In completing its review, the study commission sought advice and information for a number of people across the county. Opinions and recommendations were solicited from local government officials, community organizations and citizens. All meetings of the commission were open to the public, and hearings were held to determine citizen opinions. Committee members were Robert Dobrovolny (chairman), Johnalee Arnoux (vice chairman), James King, Darryl Omsberg (ex-officio) and Janine Gatzemeier (secretary).