

COMMISSIONERS APPROVAL

5/ FOSS

CHILCOTT 

IMAN

STOLTZ 

Members Present.....Commissioner Suzy Foss, Commissioner Greg Chilcott, Commissioner J.R. Iman and Commissioner Ron Stoltz

Date.....June 19, 2012

Minutes: Glenda Wiles

- ▶ The Board met at 8:35 a.m. for the following administrative issues:
 - Appointment of an Airport Board Member: Due to the resignation of Frank Kucera, an At-Large position is now empty. **Commissioner Stoltz made a motion to appoint Ray Dieckman to fill the open position with an expiration of December 31, 2014. Commissioner Iman seconded the motion and all voted "aye". (4-0)**
 - Commissioner Reports: The Board discussed legislative issues in Helena which included properties for rent or lease issues across the state.

▶ The Board met at 9:00 a.m. for a discussion of considering adopting an ordinance reducing the Commission numbers from five to three. Present at this discussion was Deputy County Attorney Howard Recht. Commissioner Chilcott stated last year the county work force was reduced and questions were asked of the Board about reducing the number of Commissioners back to three. He also noted Ravalli County is the only county with five Commissioners and the cost to that is approximately \$150,000 annually. He does see some benefits to having a larger number of Commissioners. This issue can be placed on the ballot by ordinance with public input and public vote. Commissioner Iman agreed it is the voters right to make that decision. Commissioner Stoltz felt this ordinance and vote would be a 'jump ahead' of the Local Government Study Commission which will be in place in a couple of years. Discussion included the three year moratorium on any changes through a public vote and satisfying the Montana Statute particularly in light of continuing the staggered terms. (7-3-155 MCA for three year moratorium).

Attorney Recht stated the law provides three methods which can change local government: by initiation of the electorate; a study commission every ten years; or an ordinance passed by the Commissioners placing the issue on the ballot. He stated it is important to make any ordinance clear and concise for the voters and the Commissioners are simply putting forth the question allowing the voters to make the decision on a reduction of Commission number and terms. Terms should be part of the ordinance if adopted which would reduce any litigation threat.

Public Comment:

Dave Hurtt of Florence presented comments (see attached) and supports returning to three Commission Members.

Bill Menager suggested the Local Government Study Commission make recommendations to the citizens for a citizen vote.

Public comment closed.

Commissioner Chilcott stated he would like to move forward with an ordinance to be placed on the November ballot. Commissioner Stoltz would like the newest interim Commission Member on the Board so he can have input. Commissioner Chilcott, delaying this simply reduces the amount of time the public can have input.

Staff input:

Glenda Wiles stated she was appointed by the Board of County Commissioners to be the Ex-Officio Member of the last Study Commission. She attended approximately 115 meetings whereby the public had the ability to have comment. She understands the importance of allowing proper public input so the issue is understood by the voters at the polling booth correctly.

It was agreed the another meeting will be held on June 29th at 9:00 a.m. at which time they will make a decision to place the ordinance on the November ballot.

► Issues not on the agenda:

Bill Menager stated he researched the custom and culture issue for Agenda 21.

► Commissioner Foss and Stoltz attended an official canvas for the primary election. Sheriff Hoffman was also present for this official canvas.