

Roosevelt County  
2006  
Local  
Government  
Review

**THE COUNTY OF ROOSEVELT  
GOVERNMENT STUDY REVIEW COMMISSION  
FINAL REPORT**

To the Citizens of Roosevelt County:

The Roosevelt County Government Study Review Commission elected by the citizens on November 2, 2004 presents this final report to the citizens of the county.

The purpose of the study commission, as defined in state law, is "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."

In the conduct of their review the study commission has sought advice and information from a number of people in the county. Opinions and recommendations were solicited from county government officials, county department heads, employees and citizens. All meetings of the study commission were open to the public. Public hearings were held to determine citizen opinion.

As a result of discussions held with people and groups mentioned, the Roosevelt County Government Study Review Commission has concluded that there is a general consensus that the existing county commission form of government has served this county well and will continue to do so in the near future.


The study commission recommends the following amendment:

1. Change the election process from partisan to non-partisan elections.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Larry L. Panasuk, Chair & Elected Member

  
Wally W. Good, Elected Member

  
Clyta M. Dillon, Elected Member

Roosevelt County Government Study Commission 2004-2006

# FINAL REPORT

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# I. LETTER TO THE CITIZENS OF ROOSEVELT COUNTY

*To the Citizens of Roosevelt County:*

The Roosevelt County Government Study Commission elected by the citizens of Roosevelt County on November 2, 2004, present this final report to you, the citizens of Roosevelt County.

The purpose of the study commission, as defined in state law is "to study the existing form and powers of a local government and procedures for delivery of local government services and to compare them with other forms available under the laws of the state." After completing these two phases of the study it is the responsibility of the study commission to submit a final report recommending no change, or propose an amendment to the existing form of government or offer an alternative form of government to the qualified electors.

In every phase of this review this study commission sought advice and information from as many people in the county as possible. Opinions and recommendations were solicited from county government officials, county employees, county department heads, and citizens at large. All meetings of the study commission were open to the public. Public hearings were held and public input was solicited by a survey published in the Herald News and through one-on-one interviews and conversations with citizens of the community.


Our recommendations reflect the thoughts and opinions of those who participated in public hearings, those who attended our regular meetings, and those who responded to surveys, in addition to the independent efforts of this study commission.

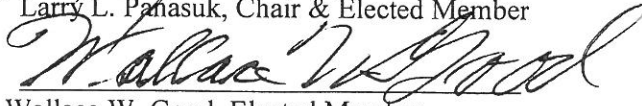
As a result of discussions held with people and groups mentioned, the Roosevelt County Government Study Review Commission has concluded that there is a general consensus that the existing county commission form of government has served this county well and will continue to do so in the future, at least until the next study commission is formed. Roosevelt County is currently experiencing low-to-negative growth in population and business at this time, and therefore, has little need for a change in government. We, therefore, recommend that the county commission form of government be continued for the county.

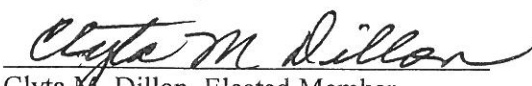
In this final report we present our recommendation for one amendment to the form of government. We believe the citizens of the county desire, and will benefit, by non-partisan county elections. We also recommend an addition to the Roosevelt County Policy and Procedure Manual to formalize the leadership role of the Commissioners in the writing and review of annual goals and objectives of all of the Commissioners and Elected Officials.

The question of adopting this amendment to the existing form of government will be placed on the November 7, 2006, ballot.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Larry L. Panasuk, Chair & Elected Member

  
Wallace W. Good, Elected Member

  
Clyta M. Dillon, Elected Member  
Roosevelt County Government Study

## II. REPORT SUMMARY

The Roosevelt County Study Commission, having thoroughly studied our present form of county government and the alternative forms of government available to the counties under state law, recommends the following:

1. The question of whether or not elections shall be conducted on a partisan or nonpartisan basis shall be submitted to the voters of the county as an option as authorized in 7-4-0413 MCA.

2. The question on the option shall be submitted to the voters of Roosevelt County on November 7, 2006.

3. The Roosevelt County Commissioners shall consider initiating a process in the Roosevelt County Policy and Procedures Manual of setting annual goals and objectives by the Commissioners and by the Elected Officials for improving the efficiency and communications between and for their respective offices, and for reaching benchmarks on important projects within their respective responsibilities. When the Commissioners adopt policy and procedures, all other elected County officials are required by law to follow those policies as authorized in 7-4-2110 (5) MCA.

### A. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY COMMISSION

The study commission collected information through various avenues. The first several months were spent conducting individual interviews with each elected official and appointed department head. The interviews included questions about the functionality and responsibilities of the departments in which they work, about their place in the chain of command, about any problems or concerns they had in completing their responsibilities and their suggestions for improvement.

For the most part, the employees conveyed positive comments, a dedication to serve the public, and viewed their departments as responsive to the citizens of Roosevelt County. Lack of funding and limited budgets were major concerns, but neither department heads nor elected officials believed a change in government was needed, with the exception of the type of election (partisan/nonpartisan). On this topic they were unanimously in favor of nonpartisan, although in varied strength of opinion.

The study commission collected and reviewed the current budget, the Policy and Procedures Manual, the current year's audit report, the list of Boards and members, the organization charts, the Capital Planning document, and the progress-to-date and plan for bringing Roosevelt County's information and communication into the Internet realm. (Examination of the computer literacy of the officials and their communications to the public was a specific item of review suggested by the Local Government Center at Montana State University in the study team's training and in the handbook material.) These documents were satisfactory or updated upon request. Only the long-range planning and the lack of a web site were noted as areas of concern.

Public Opinion - A public survey was posted in the Herald News, Searchlight and Wotanin Wowapi and 19 responses were received, with the government officials receiving mostly middle-of-the-road marks. One survey respondent wanted County Manager form of government. More than half of the surveys appeared to be from the eastern part of the county as they complained about the roads and sheriff protection in the eastern part of the county. Five survey respondents complained about the sheriff dept.; five survey respondents complained about the roads. Throughout the course of the study review, public input was received by individual commission members, mostly through phone calls and face to face conversations. The major spoken concerns were about the conflicts among the officials in the court house, or of observed wasting of time in the court house or the sheriff's department.

Whereas the manager/commissioner form of government would address these problems, the idea met with emphatic opposition by about 98% of the citizens approached. It is the opinion of the study group that Roosevelt County activities and size do not warrant adding another layer of administration, and that the manager/commissioner form of government is not the best solution for this county at this time. Furthermore, during the public meetings held on the preliminary recommendations, the court house employees insisted that the conflicts in the court house could and should be resolved by better in-house communication and not by changing the form of government. The study team was unable to get many opinions from citizens outside the court house sphere of influence during the public meetings, but one-on-one conversations after the meetings filled the gap.

In the case of road maintenance, the Roosevelt Commissioners volunteered in their interviews that roads were always a problem and cause for complaints no matter how many times they graveled or graded the roads or how fast they removed the snow after large storms. It should also be noted that during the study period, the road supervisor was terminated and the sheriff decided to run for a Commissioner seat instead of running for sheriff again. At the time of this report, one of the Commissioners was managing the road department.

The Commissioner form of County Government has served Roosevelt well for many years and the study commission does not believe another form of government is needed at this time. The County Commissioners have already combined the offices of Sheriff and Coroner, Treasurer and Assessor, Clerk of District Court and Superintendent of Schools, and Clerk & Recorder and Public Administrator. The County elects its three Commissioners for 6 year terms with staggered terms so only one Commissioner is up for election every two years. The Commissioners are elected by district in which the candidate must reside and which are apportioned by population. The apportionment in 1999 was mandated by and overseen by the Federal Department of Justice, Civil Division, to ensure that the Native American population was properly represented. The subsequent updating of the apportionment as a result of the 2000 census report was made in compliance with the given rules.

On the other hand, there are definite concerns in the County and among Roosevelt County government employees, both elected and hired, that improvements are necessary in the overall management of official County business. Of particular concern is conflict resolution among the County's elected officials. While the County Commissioners claim they do not have administrative authority over another elected official, they too are accountable to the citizens of

the County for each County employee, elected or appointed. This was a problem which the study commission wrestled with throughout the study, as had the 1984-6 study commission. The 1984-6 Study Commission recommended the formation of the Policy and Procedures Manual which subsequently was established.

By seeking advice from the Local Government Center at Montana State University, this 2004-6 Study Commission confirmed that overall coordination, communication and accountability of all other officials of the County are the responsibility of the Commissioners. This is effected via personnel policies and procedures adopted by the County governing body in the County's Policy and Procedures Manual, as defined in 7-4-2110 (5) MCA. When the Commissioners adopt policy and procedures, all other elected County officials are required by law to follow those policies.

To quote the MCA:

“7-4-2110. Supervision of county and other officers. The board of county commissioners has jurisdiction and power, under the limitations and restrictions that are prescribed by law, to:

- (1) supervise the official conduct of all county officers and officers of all districts and other subdivisions of the county charged with assessing, collecting, safekeeping, managing, or disbursing public revenue;
- (2) see that the officers faithfully perform their duties;
- (3) direct prosecutions for delinquencies;
- (4) when necessary, require the officers to renew their official bonds, make reports, and present their books and accounts for inspection; and
- (5) require the officers to supervise staff in a manner that complies with personnel policies and procedures adopted by the county governing body.”

## **B. COMPARISON OF EXISTING FORM OF GOVERNMENT AND THE PROPOSED FORM**

### **1. PARTISAN AND NONPARTISAN ELECTIONS**

The County of Roosevelt holds elections on a PARTISAN basis, thus requiring citizens to vote on only those candidates whose party affiliation is the same as their party affiliation in a primary election. The winning candidate from each party then advances to the general election, where all citizens vote among those candidates advancing.

In NONPARTISAN elections candidates run for office in direct competition against each other, without declaring a party affiliation. If **three or more** candidates file to run for a particular office, their first election would be held on the primary election. The two candidates with the most votes would be advanced to the general election. In the case of three candidates, all the citizens would vote among the three in the primary election. All the citizens would vote among the two candidates advanced to the general elections.

### **2. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION OF NONPARTISAN ELECTIONS**

Since 1976, fifty-one local governments in Montana have adopted nonpartisan elections. In the previous attempt in 1986 to change the election process of Roosevelt County to nonpartisan, the public voted for Non-Partisan Elections of all County Officials (2,042 to 867) and voted to change the County Treasurer from Elected to Appointed by the Commission (155 to 122). However, the first option on the ballot to keep the government the same or to change the government (1,883 to 1,338 votes) overrode the second & third options, or sub-options, as they are called. Therefore, the government remained the same after that election.

As a result of interviews and discussions with people and groups mentioned, the Roosevelt County Government Study Review Commission has concluded that there is still a desire to have nonpartisan elections at the local level. Local issues and community spirit, not national politics, seem to be the motivation for candidates to run for office; and the motivation for the voters is to elect the candidate on his/her own merits, and not by his/her party affiliation. Furthermore, no one came forth in favor of and giving reasons to keep the elections as partisan. We do not know if nonpartisan elections will be an encouragement for more people to run for public office, but we do not believe it will hinder anyone considering becoming a candidate for public office.

Once elected, the Official serves all the citizens of the county, and party affiliation does not seem to affect the carrying out of their responsibilities, which are more administrative in nature rather than creation of policy.



## C. SUPPLEMENTARY PROPOSAL

### 1. RECOMMENDED ADDITION TO THE ROOSEVELT COUNTY POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

As a result of interviews and discussions with the people and groups mentioned, and in the examination of the documents provided, there appears to be **three areas of concern** that must be addressed by the Roosevelt Commissioners and Elected Officials. These concerns can and should be addressed, not by a change in the government, but rather in the Roosevelt County Policy and Procedures Manual.

Accordingly, the Study Commission, in an effort to empower the Commissioners as “consensus builders” of all County employees, elected as well as appointed or hired, recommends the following administrative measures for consideration by the County Commissioners to be adopted in the Roosevelt County Policy and Procedures Manual:

1. Establish a process by which overall goals and objectives for improving the efficiency of the County organization (both in time and dollars spent) and effecting cooperation between departments are stated and reviewed on an annual basis. The process shall include setting goals for improving communication, physical surroundings and the atmosphere in which citizens are served, as well as goals for computer literacy of all employees. Formation of goals and measurable objectives from each of the other Elected Officials, as well as the Commissioners, should be included in the process.

At least these specific communication projects, among others to be self identified, should be addressed in the first year.

- a) Creation of a County web site by which both the employees of the County and the citizens of Roosevelt County will have access to the postings of all County officials.
  - b) Ensure the use of the web site as a vehicle by which the citizens of the County will be informed of County business decisions and concerns of the Commissioners.
2. Establish levels of professionalism expected from Commissioners and Elected Officials, which may include attendance at meetings, cooperation between departments, uniform requirements, discipline and documentation of employee behavior, expansion of the grievance policy, or other policies necessary to address possible problems in the future.
  3. Establish a process for defining long range project objectives with identified benchmarks and capital expenditures for steps in achievement in the current year and future years, to ensure that each project will get the focus it needs to be completed. Review progress quarterly.

At least these specific projects, among others to be self-identified, should be addressed in the first year.

- a) Consider the building of the jail expansion and drug treatment center.
- b) Consider the life expectancy of the County Nursing Home and its replacement.

## 2. RECOMMENDED IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The study commission was advised to recommend that the first session of setting measurable objectives and long-range timelines would best be facilitated through the help of a professional trainer experienced in that area. An outside party leading the session should have a positive affect on focusing the group and the individuals on the new process and in identifying objectives and goals that would have a positive affect on each of their offices. In subsequent years, the previous year's goals and objectives would guide the current year's input, with continued training or facilitating provided as needed at the option of the Commissioners.

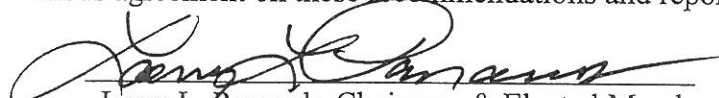
The sessions should include the three County Commissioners and the five elected officials: Clerk & Recorder/Public Administrator, County Treasurer/Assessor, County Sheriff/Coroner, County Attorney, and Clerk of District Court/Superintendent of Schools. The Commissioners should establish goals for themselves as a group and also individually, as well as for the overall efficiency and cooperation of all the departments of the elected officials. The five elected officials should establish annual objectives for themselves and their departments which would include steps to achieve the overall goals.

These objectives would be reviewed as a group to ensure compatibility and efficiency. The following year, each member would evaluate their own accomplishments to the group, and establish their next year's objectives, which again are reviewed as a group to ensure compatibility and efficiency.

Facilitators or training/workshops which were recommended by Jane Jelinski, Director of the Local Government Center at MSU-Bozeman, for Commissioner consideration are:

1. Professional Development Center. They are part of the Department of Administration and have a whole catalog of classes they provide. Commissioners may view their webpage - [pdc.mt.gov](http://pdc.mt.gov) or call them at 406-444-3819. Jane has used their services many times and has always been satisfied.
2. Community Mediation Center, 104 East Main St., Bozeman, MT 59715, phone 406-209-0613. According to Jane, they have a very good reputation.

We, the Study Commissioners of Roosevelt County, have unanimous agreement on these recommendations and report.

  
Larry L. Panasuk, Chairman & Elected Member

  
Wallace W. Good, Elected Member

  
Clyta M. Dillon, Elected Member

Roosevelt County Government Study Commissioners

### III. APPENDIX

EXHIBIT A: Certificate establishing the existing form of government

EXHIBIT B: Certificate establishing the proposed form of government

EXHIBIT C: Certificate establishing election date

EXHIBIT D: Certificate establishing form of the ballot

EXHIBIT E: Certificate establishing effective date of the proposed amendments

EXHIBIT F: Public opinion questionnaire & tabulation of results

EXHIBIT G: Communication Plan

EXHIBIT H: Final Report Presentation

**EXHIBIT A**  
**CERTIFICATE ESTABLISHING**  
**THE EXISTING FORM OF GOVERNMENT**  
**FOR ROOSEVELT COUNTY**

If retained by the voters, the government of Roosevelt County shall be organized under the following provisions of MCA 7-3-111 which authorizes the elected county official form of government.

7-3-111. Statutory basis for elected county official government. (1) For the purpose of determining the statutory basis of existing units of local government after May 2, 1977, each unit of local government organized under the general statutes authorizing the elected county official form of government shall be governed by the following sections:

- (a) 7-3-401;
- (b) 7-3-402;
- (c) 7-3-412(2);
- (d) 7-3-413(1);
- (e) 7-3-414(1);
- (f) 7-3-415(2);
- (g) 7-3-415(2);
- (h) 7-3-416(2);
- (i) 7-3-417(2);
- (j) 7-3-418;
- (k) 7-3-432(1);
- (l) 7-3-433(1);
- (m) 7-3-434(1);
- (n) 7-3-435(1);
- (o) 7-3-436(1);
- (p) 7-3-437(5);
- (q) 7-3-438(6);
- (r) 7-3-439(6);
- (s) 7-3-440(6);
- (t) 7-3-441(6);
- (u) 7-3-442(6)

This form has terms of 4 years for all elected officials except commissioners who are elected to 6-year terms. The commission consists of three members.

**CERTIFICATE ESTABLISHING  
THE EXISTING FORM OF GOVERNMENT (cont'd)**

**7-3-401. Commission form.** The commission form consists of an elected commission (which may also be called the council) and other elected officers as provided in this part. All legislative, executive and administrative powers and duties of the local government not specifically reserved by law or ordinance to other elected officers shall reside in the commission. The commission shall appoint the heads of departments and other employees, except for those appointed by other elected officials.

**7-3-402. Nature of government.** Local governments that adopt this form shall have general government powers.

**7-3-412 (2). Selection of commission members.** The commission shall be elected by district in which candidates must reside.

**7-3-413(1). Type of election.** Local government elections shall be conducted on a partisan basis.

**7-3-414(1). Chairman of commission.** The chairman of the commission shall be elected by the members of the commission from their own number for a term established by ordinance.

**7-3-415(2). Administrative assistants.** The commission may appoint one or more administrative assistants to assist them in the supervision and operation of the local government.

**7-3-416(2). Terms of the commission members.** Commission members shall be elected for overlapping terms of office.

**7-3-417(2). Size of commission and community councils.** The size of the commission shall be three and community councils to advise commissioners may be authorized by ordinance.

**7-3-418. Terms of elected officials.** The term of office of elected officials may not exceed 4 years, except the term of office for commissioners in counties adopting the form authorized by Article XI; section 3(2) of the Montana constitution may not exceed 6 years. Terms of office shall be established when the form is adopted by the voters.

**7-3-432(1). Legal officer.** A legal officer (who may be called the county attorney) shall be elected.

**7-3-433(1). Law enforcement officer.** A law enforcement officer (who may be called the sheriff) shall be elected.

**CERTIFICATE ESTABLISHING  
THE EXISTING FORM OF GOVERNMENT (cont'd)**

7-3-434(1). **Clerk and recorder.** A clerk and recorder shall be elected.

7-3-435(1). **Clerk of district court.** A clerk of district court shall be elected.

7-3-436(1). **Treasurer.** A treasurer shall be elected.

7-3-437(6). **Surveyor.** A surveyor shall not be included in this form as a separate office.

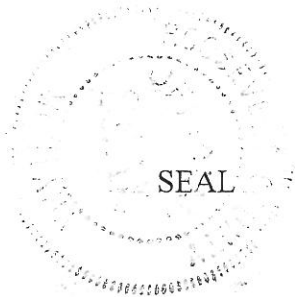
7-3-438(6). **Superintendent of schools.** A superintendent of schools shall not be included in this form as a separate office.

7-3-439(6). **Assessor.** An assessor shall not be included in this form as a separate office.

7-3-440(6). **Coroner.** A coroner shall not be included in this form as a separate office.

7-3-441(6). **Public administrator.** A public administrator shall not be included in this form as a separate office.

7-3-442(6). **Auditor.** An auditor shall not be included in this form as a separate office.



We, the Study Commissioners of Roosevelt County, do hereby certify that this is the existing Plan of Government as established by Section 7-3-111 MCA.

In testimony whereof, we sit our hands.

Done at Wolf Point this 5<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2006

ATTEST: Cheyl A. Hansen  
Clerk & Recorder of Roosevelt County

Larry L. Panasuk  
Larry L. Panasuk, Chairman & Elected Member

Wallace W. Good  
Wallace W. Good, Elected Member

Clyta M. Dillon  
Clyta M. Dillon, Elected Member

Roosevelt County Government Study Commissioners

**EXHIBIT B**  
**CERTIFICATE ESTABLISHING**  
**THE PROPOSED FORM OF GOVERNMENT**  
**FOR ROOSEVELT COUNTY**

Upon approval of the majority of voters, the government of Roosevelt County shall be organized under the following provisions of MCA 7-3-111 which authorizes the elected county official form of government.

7-3-111. Statutory basis for elected county official government. (1) For the purpose of determining the statutory basis of existing units of local government after May 2, 1977, each unit of local government organized under the general statutes authorizing the elected county official form of government shall be governed by the following sections:

- (a) 7-3-401;
- (b) 7-3-402;
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- (h) 7-3-416(2);
- (i) 7-3-417(2);
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- (m) 7-3-434(1);
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- (t) 7-3-441(6);
- (u) 7-3-442(6)

This form has terms of 4 years for all elected officials except commissioners who are elected to 6-year terms. The commission consists of three members.

**CERTIFICATE ESTABLISHING  
THE PROPOSED FORM OF GOVERNMENT (cont'd.)**

**7-3-401. Commission form.** The commission form consists of an elected commission (which may also be called the council) and other elected officers as provided in this part. All legislative, executive and administrative powers and duties of the local government not specifically reserved by law or ordinance to other elected officers shall reside in the commission. The commission shall appoint the heads of departments and other employees, except for those appointed by other elected officials.

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**7-3-413(2). Type of election.** Local government elections shall be conducted on a nonpartisan basis.

**7-3-414(1). Chairman of commission.** The chairman of the commission shall be elected by the members of the commission from their own number for a term established by ordinance.

**7-3-415(2). Administrative assistants.** The commission may appoint one or more administrative assistants to assist them in the supervision and operation of the local government.

**7-3-416(2). Terms of the commission members.** Commission members shall be elected for overlapping terms of office.

**7-3-417(2). Size of commission and community councils.** The size of the commission shall be three and community councils to advise commissioners may be authorized by ordinance.

**7-3-418. Terms of elected officials.** The term of office of elected officials may not exceed 4 years, except the term of office for commissioners in counties adopting the form authorized by Article XI; section 3(2) of the Montana constitution may not exceed 6 years. Terms of office shall be established when the form is adopted by the voters.

**7-3-432(1). Legal officer.** A legal officer (who may be called the county attorney) shall be elected.

**7-3-433(1). Law enforcement officer.** A law enforcement officer (who may be called the sheriff) shall be elected.

**7-3-434(1). Clerk and recorder.** A clerk and recorder shall be elected.



**CERTIFICATE ESTABLISHING  
THE PROPOSED FORM OF GOVERNMENT (cont'd.)**

**7-3-435(1). Clerk of district court.** A clerk of district court shall be elected.

**7-3-436(1). Treasurer.** A treasurer shall be elected.

**7-3-437(6). Surveyor.** A surveyor shall not be included in this form as a separate office.

**7-3-438(6). Superintendent of schools.** A superintendent of schools shall not be included in this form as a separate office. In Roosevelt County, this position is combined with the office of Clerk of District Court.

**7-3-439(6). Assessor.** An assessor shall not be included in this form as a separate office. In Roosevelt County, this position is combined with the office of Treasurer.

**7-3-440(6). Coroner.** A coroner shall not be included in this form as a separate office. In Roosevelt County, this position is combined with the office of the Law Enforcement Officer.

**7-3-441(6). Public administrator.** A public administrator shall not be included in this form as a separate office. In Roosevelt County, this position is combined with the office of Clerk and Recorder.

**7-3-442(6). Auditor.** An auditor shall not be included in this form as a separate office. Roosevelt County does not have a population large enough to require an auditor.



We, the Study Commissioners of Roosevelt County, do hereby certify that this is the Proposed Plan of Government approved by the study commissioners of Roosevelt County.

In testimony whereof, we set our hands.

Done at Wolf Point this 5<sup>TH</sup> day of May, 2006

ATTEST:

Cheryl A. Hansen  
Clerk & Recorder of Roosevelt County

Larry L. Panasuk  
Larry L. Panasuk, Chairman & Elected Member

Wallace W. Good  
Wallace W. Good, Elected Member

Clyta M. Dillon  
Clyta M. Dillon, Elected Member

Roosevelt County Government Study Commissioners

EXHIBIT C

CERTIFICATE

ESTABLISHING THE DATE OF THE ELECTION  
AT WHICH THE ALTERNATIVE FORM OF COUNTY ELECTION  
SHALL BE PRESENTED TO THE ELECTORS OF  
ROOSEVELT COUNTY

The alternative form of election proposed by the Local Government Study Commission shall be submitted to the voters of Roosevelt County on November 7, 2006.

We, the Government Study Commission of Roosevelt County do certify that this is the date of the general election approved the Government Study Commission of Roosevelt County.

In testimony whereof, we set our hands.

Done at Wolf Point this 5<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2006

ATTEST: Cheer A. Hansen  
COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER

Larry L. Panasuk

Larry L. Panasuk - Chairman & Elected Member

Wallace W. Good

Wallace W. Good - Elected Member

Clyta M. Dillon

Clyta M. Dillon - Elected Member

Roosevelt County Government Study Commissioners

**EXHIBIT D**  
**CERTIFICATE**  
**ESTABLISHING THE OFFICIAL BALLOT FOR**  
**THE NOVEMBER 7, 2006 GENERAL ELECTION**

Instruction to voters: Place an "X" in the boxes which express your preference.

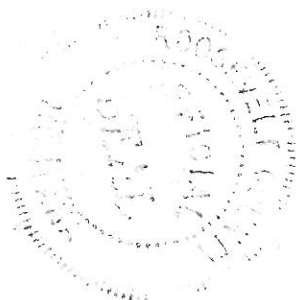
OFFICIAL BALLOT ON THE ALTERNATIVE TYPE OF LOCAL ELECTION  
PLEASE VOTE ON THIS ISSUE

1. Vote for one

County government elections:

Shall be conducted on a non-partisan basis

Shall be conducted on a partisan basis



We, the Government Study Commission of Roosevelt County do hereby certify that this is the official ballot approved by the Government Study Commission of Roosevelt County.

In testimony whereof, we set our hands.

Done at Wolf Point this 5<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2006

ATTEST: Chester A. Hansen  
COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER

Larry L. Panasuk - Chairman & Elected Commissioner

Wallace W. Good  
Wallace W. Good - Elected Commissioner

Clyta M. Dillon  
Clyta M. Dillon - Elected Commissioner

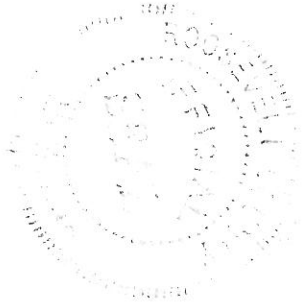
Roosevelt County Government Study Commissioners

**EXHIBIT E**

**CERTIFICATE**

**ESTABLISHING THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE PROPOSAL IF APPROVED**

If the alternative form of election is approved by the electors on November 7, 2006, it shall become effective as of the filing for the next election which will begin January 1, 2008.



We, the Government Study Commission of Roosevelt County Wolf Point do hereby certify that these are the dates of the general election and the effective date of the election change as approved by the Study Commissioners of Roosevelt County.

In testimony whereof, we set our hands.

Done at Wolf Point this 5<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2006

ATTEST: Cheryl A. Hansen Larry L. Panasuk

COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER Larry L. Panasuk - Chairman & Elected Commissioner

Wallace W. Good  
Wallace W. Good - Elected Commissioner

Clyta M. Dillon  
Clyta M. Dillon - Elected Commissioner

Roosevelt County Government Study Commissioners

## EXHIBIT F PUBLIC OPINION QUESTIONNAIRE

### HOW'S ROOSEVELT COUNTY GOVERNMENT DOING???

A once-every-10-years citizen study of county governments has been underway since January 1977. The Study Commissioners, Clyde Dehlin from Wolf Point, Larry Panasak from Burnville and Wally Goswami from Wolf Point, have held seven public meetings during which interviews of each of the county officials have been conducted, completing Phase I of the study.

So far, the interviews have produced a consensus from the officials that no changes need to be made in the form or function of any of the officials in the government, with the exception of possibly changing the election of officials from a partisan to a nonpartisan ballot. All officials stated a concern about the constraints of his/her budget, the Sheriff's department being, in our opinion, the most critical.

Your input is needed to complete Phase II of the study. What is your opinion of how the County government is taking care of business???. How are they doing???

- 1) How responsive to your needs do you find your County Government?  
 Very Responsive  Responsive  Somewhat Responsive  Not Responsive.
- 2) Do you find that County Government Officials and Department Heads are cooperating in meeting your needs and the overall needs of the County?  
 Very Cooperative  Cooperative  Somewhat Cooperative  Not Cooperative
- 3) Are your County Government Officials looking toward the future?  
 Yes, Definitely  Yes, Somewhat  Not really
- 4) How fair is the County Government in dealing with all of the residents of the County?  
 Fair  Somewhat Fair  Not Fair.
- 5) Is law enforcement adequate and responsive?  
 Adequate/Responsive  Somewhat Adequate/Responsive  Not Adequate/Responsive.
- 5 a) Do you feel safe in this community?  Yes  Somewhat  Not Really
- 6) Are roads in the County generally adequate and properly maintained?  
 Adequate/Maintained  Somewhat Adequate/Maintained  Not Adequate/Maintained
- 7) Would you like to see your county road paved?  Yes  No  No, Too expensive

8) Do you think any of these elected positions should be changed on the ballot? Circle your answer.

Position	Stay Elected	Stay Partisan	Change to No Party Affiliation	Change to Hired by & Supervised by the Commissioners
8 a) County Attorney	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
8 b) County Clerk-Recorder	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
8 c) County Treasurer	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
8 d) County Sheriff	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No
8 e) Clerk of District Court/ Superintendent of Courts School	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No

9) Do you have any other comments or recommendations that you would like your County Government/Review Study Commission to consider?

10) Would you like the Study Commissioners to meet with a group of citizens or organization with which you are involved? If yes, who & when?

Quest.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	TOTAL	Count	AVG	
1	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	47	19	2.47
2	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	1	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	49	19	2.58
3	2	2	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	2	43	19	2.26
4	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	2	36	18	2.00
5A	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	1	2	2	3	3	41	17	2.41	
5B	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	3	2	3	28	14	2.00	
6	2	2	2	1	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	42	18	2.33	
7	3	1	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	36	16	2.25	
8a	E	A	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	A	A	E	E	E	3A	15E		
8b	E	A	E	E	A	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	A	A	A	A	A	6A	12E		
8c	E	A	E	E	A	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	A	A	A	A	A	A	6A	12E		
8d	E	A	E	E	A	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	A	E	A	A	A	A	6A	12E		
8e	E	A	E	E	A	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	A	A	A	A	A	5A	13E		
9	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	
10																							

N - P

8a

N - P

8b

N - P

8c

N - P

8d

N - P

8e

8 NonP

0 P

8 NonP

0 P

7 NonP

1 P

6 NonP

2 P

8 NonP

0 P

\*Comments

2

wants County Manager form of government.

4

don't forget Eastern, esp. law enforcement

5

paved roads nice, but too expensive &amp; no money avail.

5

East is shorted on law enforcement

6

Sheriff &amp; Road dept. not managed well. Waste taxpayers dollars.

7

Roads are Not Adequate, depending on where you live.

7

Co Comm. should remember Wolf Point is NOT Roosevelt Co.

8

Law enforcement not adequate on 911 call.

8

Roads are Not Adequately maint or graded properly--like irrigation ditches--should be crowned to let water runoff.

11

Grade county roads

14

Sheriff should be held accountable, due to activity &amp; budget. Should be hired &amp; superv. by Comm.

14

Law breakers should be given sentences.

15

Get the new library/co bldg done in Culbertson

16

McCabe Hwy is falling apart

18

Roads

19

Better connections to the East end

## EXHIBIT G.

### THE COMMUNICATION PLAN FOR THE REPORT

The Report Summary & availability of Final Report will be published in the four local newspapers: The Herald News, Searchlight, Wotanin Wowapi, and the Fort Peck Journal (2 weeks each).

The full Final Report will be made available from June to November 7, 2006 at the following locations:

- Wolf Point Library & Senior Center
- Culbertson Library & Senior Center
- Poplar Library & Senior Center
- FPCC – Poplar & Wolf Point
- Roosevelt County Courthouse Bulletin Board
- Tribal Headquarters Bulletin Board
- Culbertson County Building Bulletin Board
- Bainville Community Center
- Froid Senior Center

In addition we plan to combine the making of a televised summary report with the Wolf Point City Government Study Team, if they move forward on a production. We plan to televise the following parts of our Final Report Presentation:

- Report Summary
- Comparison of Existing and Proposed Voting Alternatives
- Reasons for Recommended Change

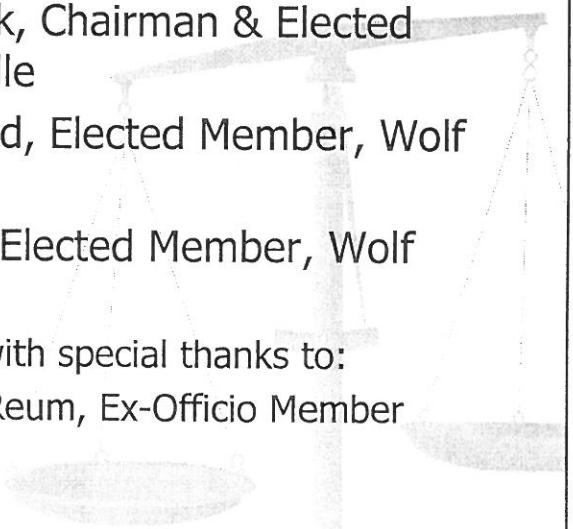
The airing of the reports is normally six times a day for three days. We expect to run the report twice---one three-day viewing when finished and the newspaper reports are made, and another three-day viewing prior to the election on November 7, 2006. The airing will cover cable subscribers in Wolf Point, Poplar and Culbertson. The expenses will be shared with the city study group.



# FINAL REPORT

Roosevelt County Government  
Study Commission  
2004-6

## Unanimously Adopted by:

- 
- Larry L. Panasuk, Chairman & Elected Member, Bainville
  - Wallace W. Good, Elected Member, Wolf Point
  - Clyta M. Dillon, Elected Member, Wolf Point

and with special thanks to:  
Donna K. Reum, Ex-Officio Member



## I. Letter to the Citizens

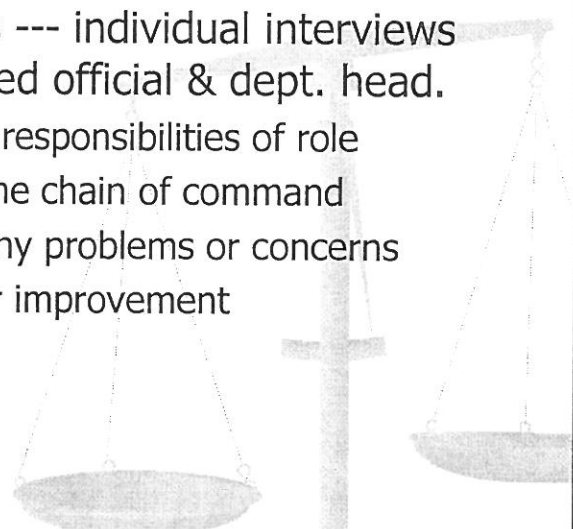
- Purpose:
  1. "to study the existing form and powers of a local government and procedures for delivery of local government services and
  2. to compare them with other forms of government under the laws of the state."
- Responsibility at completion:

Submit a Final Report recommending no change, or propose an amendment or alternative form of government.

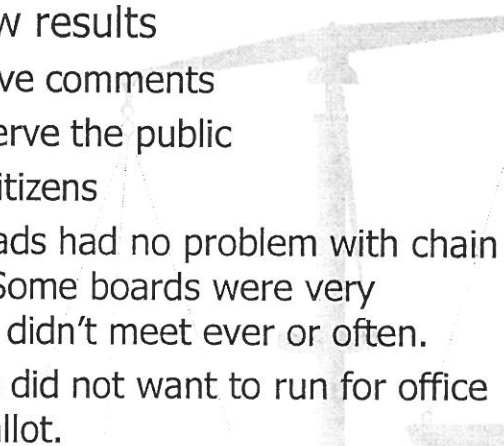
## Letter to the Citizens (cont.)

- Summarize study process
  - Interviews—open to the public
  - Questionnaire—Herald News, Wotainin & Searchlight
  - One-on-one citizen interviews & conversations
  - Repeated interviews—open to public
  - Two well-attended public meetings on Prelim. Report
- Recommend "No Change" for Commissioner form of government
- Recommend nonpartisan election option on Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> 2006 ballot.

## II. A. Finding of the Study Comm.

- Several months --- individual interviews with each elected official & dept. head.
    - functionality & responsibilities of role
    - their place in the chain of command
    - discussion of any problems or concerns
    - suggestions for improvement
- 

## A. Findings

- Overall interview results
    - generally positive comments
    - dedication to serve the public
    - responsive to citizens
    - department heads had no problem with chain of command. Some boards were very involved; some didn't meet ever or often.
    - elected officials did not want to run for office in a partisan ballot.
- 

## A. Findings

- Commission reviewed:
  - organization charts
  - current budget
  - last financial audit report
  - capital planning document
  - Board member lists
  - electronic communication capability & skills
  - Roosevelt Co. Policy & Procedure Manual
  - existing law defining form of government option
  - citizen questionnaire limitations & uses.

## A. Findings

- Public Opinion Survey
  - 19 responses—over ½ from eastern area
  - Gov Officials received middle-of-road marks, except for looking toward future (27% Not Really)
  - 1 supported County Manager form of government
  - Eastern citizens wrote in complaining about sheriff protection and road maintenance (5 & 5 comments)
  - Law enforcement – 6% adequate, 47% somewhat, 47% Not Adequate
  - Roads – 6% adequate, 56% somewhat adequate, 39% Not adequate
  - Stay elected 67%; Appoint 33%
  - Stay partisan 10%; Nonpartisan 90%

## A. Findings

- Public Opinion at Preliminary Report meetings – overwhelming support for nonpartisan elections and no change to appointed positions.
- Public Opinion: via citizen calls and face-to-face discussions to Study Commissioners
  - need for accountability of elected officials
  - support for Appointing vs Elected
  - expressed concern about the court house conflicts
  - discussion of County Manager as a solution to lack of accountability

## A. Findings

- Conclusion – Commissioner form of County Gov. has served Roosevelt Co. well in past and should do so in the future.
- County Commissioners have already combined the offices of
  - Sheriff & Coroner
  - Treasurer & Assessor
  - Clerk of Dist Court & Superintendent of Schools
  - Clerk & Recorder & Public Administrator.No other consolidations are recommended.

## A. Findings

- Law 7-4-2110 (5) MCA defines Commissioners as responsible for overall coordination, communication and accountability of all other officials of the county
- Definition of standards is achieved through the adoption of policies in the county's Policy & Procedures Manual.

## B. Comparison of Existing & Proposed Form of Elections

- Study Commission recommends changing to nonpartisan elections for the county government
- Reasons:
  - Nonpartisan elections were favored by electorate in 1986 on the sub-option vote (2,042 to 867)
  - Interviews & discussions indicate that local issues are influenced more by local citizen's direct input than by party affiliation.

## C. Supplementary Proposal

- Interviews & discussions reveal 3 areas of concern:
  - overall communication & cooperation within departments and awareness of level of professionalism that is perceived
  - completion/progress on identified projects
  - need for bringing Roosevelt County public information up to levels of today's advanced technology capability---website completion

## C. Supplementary Proposal

- Study commission concluded that a change in government form was not necessary to address these concerns.
- Rather, they can be addressed in the Policy & Procedures Manual.

(to be discussed at end of presentation)

# Appendixes

- Exhibit A. Certificate Establishing the Existing Plan of Government
  - MCA 7-3-111 sections 7-3-401 thru 7-3-442 with 7-3-413 (1) being elections conducted on a partisan basis.

## CERTIFICATE ESTABLISHING THE EXISTING FORM OF GOVERNMENT

**7-3-401. Commission form.** The commission form consists of an elected commission (which may also be called the council) and other elected officers as provided in this part. All legislative, executive and administrative powers and duties of the local government not specifically reserved by law or ordinance to other elected officers shall reside in the commission. The commission shall appoint the heads of departments and other employees, except for those appointed by other elected officials.

**7-3-402. Nature of government.** Local governments that adopt this form shall have general government powers.

**7-3-412 (2). Selection of commission members.** The commission shall be elected by district in which candidates must reside.

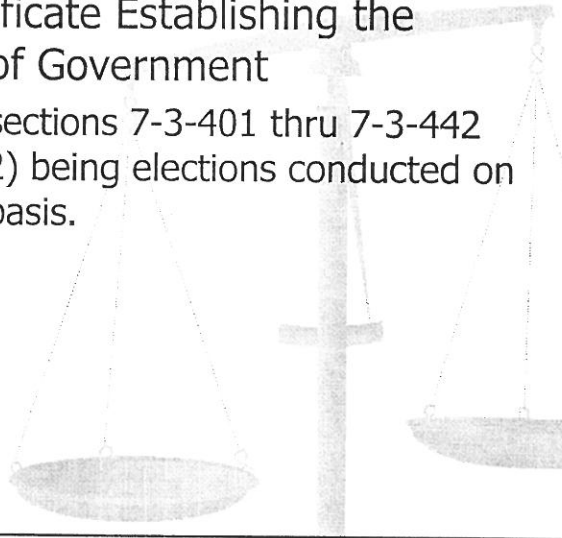
**7-3-413(1). Type of election.** Local government elections shall be conducted on a partisan basis.

**7-3-414(1). Chairman of commission.** The chairman of the commission shall be elected by the members of the commission from their own number for a term established by ordinance.

**7-3-416(2). Terms of the commission members.** Commission members shall be elected for overlapping terms of office.

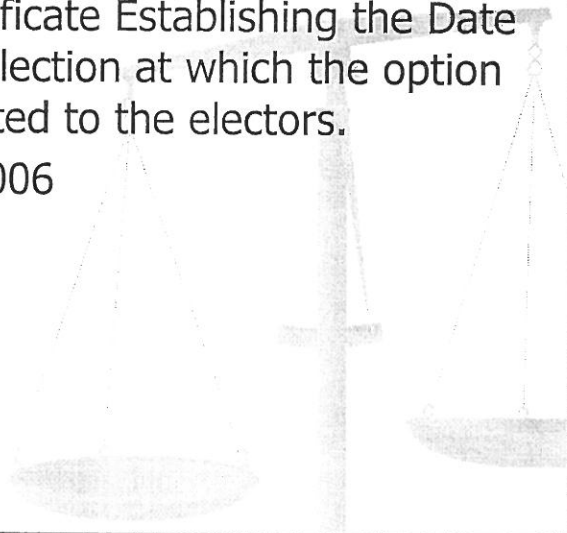
## Appendixes

- Exhibit B. Certificate Establishing the Proposed Plan of Government
  - MCA 7-3-111 sections 7-3-401 thru 7-3-442 with 7-3-413 (2) being elections conducted on a nonpartisan basis.



## Appendixes

- Exhibit C. Certificate Establishing the Date of the Special Election at which the option shall be presented to the electors.
- November 7, 2006





## Appendixes

- Exhibit D. Certificate Establishing the Official Ballot for the November 7, 2006 Special Election.

Local government elections:

Shall be conducted on a partisan basis.

Shall be conducted on a nonpartisan basis.

## Appendixes

- Exhibit E. Certificate Establishing the Effective Date of the Proposal if Approved
  - January 1, 2008
- Exhibit F. Public Opinion Questionnaire & tabulation of results
- Exhibit G. Communications Plan
- Exhibit H. Final Report Presentation

## G. Communication Plan

- Publish the Report Summary & availability of Final Report in 4 local newspapers (2 weeks each)
- Full Final Report available at the following:
  - Wolf Point Library & Senior Center
  - Culbertson Library & Senior Center
  - Poplar Library & Senior Center
  - FPCC – Poplar & Wolf Point
  - Roosevelt County Courthouse Bulletin Board
  - Tribal Headquarters Bulletin Board
  - Culbertson County Building Bulletin Board

## G. Communication Plan

- Shared televised report with the Wolf Point City Government Study team.
  - Schedule airing when reports are complete and again before election week
  - at Wolf Point, Poplar, Culbertson

Other suggestions??

## End of Report

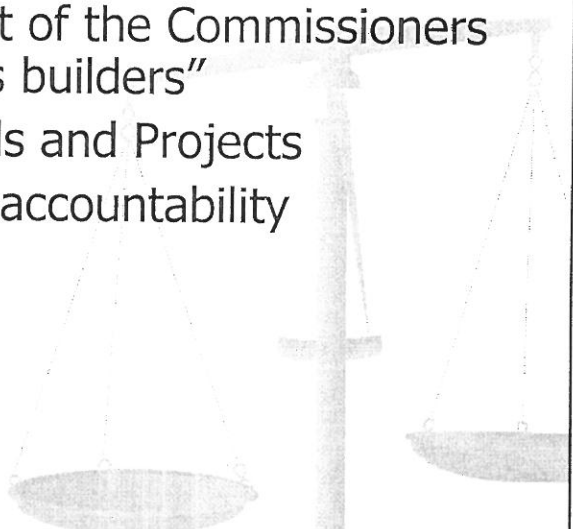
- The three study commissioners agree unanimously on the report and recommendations. There will be no minority reports.
  - (now back to the Supplementary Recommendation and the Recommended Implementation Process)

## C. Supplementary Proposal

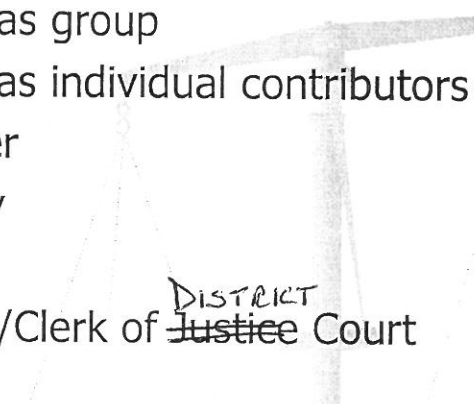
- Study commission concluded that a change in government form was not necessary to address these concerns.
- Rather, they can be addressed in the Policy & Procedures Manual.

(to be discussed at end of presentation)

## Look to the Future.....

- Empowerment of the Commissioners as "consensus builders"
  - Focus on Goals and Projects
  - Focus on self-accountability
- 
- A faint, light-colored illustration of a pair of scales of justice is visible in the background of the slide. The scales are centered vertically and horizontally, with the pans hanging from a central beam.

## The players:

- Commissioners as group
  - Commissioners as individual contributors
  - Clerk & Recorder
  - County Attorney
  - Sheriff
  - Supy of Schools/Clerk of ~~Justice~~ <sup>DISTRICT</sup> Court
  - Treasurer
- 
- A faint, light-colored illustration of a pair of scales of justice is visible in the background of the slide. The scales are centered vertically and horizontally, with the pans hanging from a central beam.

## Recommended Additions to the Policy & Procedures Manual

1. Establish annual process for setting goals and objectives of Elected Officials & Commissioners
  - generally: improve efficiency, cooperation, communication, computer literacy, physical surroundings, & atmosphere in which citizens are served.
  - specifically: Creation & use of web site

## Recommended Additions to the Policy & Procedures Manual

2. Establish standards of professionalism expected for Elected Officials & Commissioners
  - generally: attendance at meetings, cooperation between departments, uniform requirements, discipline & documentation of various types of employee behavior, etc.
  - Think of how to ward off future problems based on your experience.

## Recommended Additions to the Policy & Procedures Manual

3. Establish a process for defining long range project objectives with identified benchmarks and capital expenditures for current and future years.
  - generally: projects underway & foreseen
  - specifically
    - jail expansion & drug treatment center
    - life expectancy of the County Nursing Home & its replacement

## Recommended Implementation Process

- 1<sup>st</sup> session is most difficult -- recommend that you hire a facilitator/trainer
- All players must attend and establish goals and measurable objectives for themselves and their departments
- Resulting objectives are reviewed as a group for consistency and compatibility

## Recommended Implementation Process

- Self-evaluation occurs at established timeframes, ie quarterly.
- Annual evaluation is shared as new year's objectives are identified and again, shared as a group to ensure consistency and compatibility.

## Look to the Future.....

- Empowerment of the Commissioners as "consensus builders"
- Focus on Goals and Projects
- Focus on self-accountability

As a result, overall effectiveness should be improved.