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Local government study not very popular

1 Voters in the city of Baker wanted the local government studied as indicated in last year's election. Now it appears they aren't interested enough to attend or question the ongoings of the committee as no outsiders have attended any of the scheduled hearings.

Secretary-treasurer, Cora Moser, said she didn't know how to reach the citizens to get them to the meetings. Cora and members Jim Stark and Bernie Heiser have tried several methods to encourage the voters to come learn about the different forms of government, with little or no response.

"We went ahead on our own and decided to address some issues we thought might be of concern to the citizens. We are investigating the

possibilities of consolidating the law enforcement agencies of the county and city," she said.

"One of the most important things we learned about consolidating is that other cities that have adopted the plan have found it to be successful and a cost saving factor. In some cases, the expense to the city has been decreased more than half."

"We have found that if the two are combined, the director is always the sheriff. Our thoughts were that there are two sides to that situation. It could be good if the elected sheriff is knowledgeable and trained in law enforcement. On the other hand, if the sheriff is not the best candidate for law enforcement, the city and county would be

under his direction for four years."

If the study commission determines there should be a consolidation of these two departments, they would then have the option placed on the ballot for the voters in the primary election, held next June. If the voters decided in favor of combining the offices, the study commission would remain intact until the joining was completed.

If accepted, there would be another group formed which would be a law enforcement commission comprised of citizens who would have the duty of scrutinizing the law agency and the director. They would be a type of police commission.

Along with presenting the voters with the consolidation of the two

departments, will be the option of changing our form of city government from the system presently administered, to another method. Other methods could be strong mayor-weak council; city manager or others.

The study commission has become familiar with all the options and methods of running city government, and which could be placed on the ballot. The two options will be at the discretion of the commission, but they are in dire need for input from the citizens in order to present what the majority of the residents want for the next ten years.

Their meetings are held each month and will be announced.