

JUN 12 1996

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**Glacier County Study Commission  
concludes: If it ain't broke, don't fix it**

By Andria Alme  
*Pioneer Press Reporter*

Members of the Glacier County Study Commission, Robert Dobrovolsky, Johnalee Arnoux, James King, Darryl Omsberg and Janine R. Gatzemeier, have completed their studies on local government and presented a final report.

The purpose of the study commission was, according to state law, "to study existing forms 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." The study commission had the power to change existing governmental procedures by submitting proposed changes to the electors.

Those in the study commission sought advice and information from a number of people in the county. Opinions and recommendations were solicited from local government officials, community organizations and citizens. Every department head and elected official in the county was given the opportunity to explain his or her part in local government and to comment on whether or not current procedures are working.

All meetings of the study commission were open to the public and hearings were held to determine citizen opinion. Study commission members listened to the public's concerns and comments on what needed improvement and used this information in their final decision.

The Glacier County Study Commission has concluded that the

Health/Education/Welfare: No recommendation.

County/Reservation Relationship: No recommendation.

Law Enforcement: The study commission recommends the need of a regional jail and supports the idea of same.

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 CEOs of the cities of Browning, Cut Bank and Glacier County should hold at least yearly meetings to coordinate their 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, Blackfeet Tribe and Glacier County together as partners.

Although it may appear very boring to the average person, Omsberg said the study was very educational for those involved. "We learned a lot about how government runs. We all understand the process better." Omsberg agrees that it was beneficial, but it was a long and time-consuming exercise. "I'm glad it's almost over," he commented with a laugh.

The public is invited to a public

The Glacier County Study Commission has concluded 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. According to commission member Darryl Omsberg, the group asked themselves these questions: Is the current method working? What are the positive aspects? What are the negative aspects? "The positives outweighed the negatives," he said.

No changes were recommended to the current form of government. Omsberg stated that changing the government is, "a very complex procedure. Changes would require rewriting the entire government." He went on to explain that there are four basic types of government. They looked at each type and considered it in relation to the needs of the community. "What's working now is actually the best," he concluded.

A number of recommendations were submitted by the study commission. The suggestions were separated into eight basic categories: Taxation, Transportation, Tourism, Health/Education/Welfare, Relationship: County/Reservation, Law Enforcement, County Officials and City/County Relationship. The recommendations are 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.

**Transportation:** There is a need for the County to have valid rights of way for all county roads.

**Tourism:** The County Commissioners should be encouraged to look at transportation within the County to enhance tourism.

The public is invited to a public meeting to be held Monday, June 17 at 7 p.m. at the Courthouse Annex for public input on the final report and recommendations.