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LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

Place of Meeting: Room 437

Date Meeting Held: 1/20/72
Hour Meeting Held: 10 a.m.

Committee Chairman: Oscar L. Anderson

MINUTES OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

SUBJECT OF MEETING: General

Roll Call:

Anderson, Oscar L., Chairman	Present
Blend, Virginia H., Vice-Chairman	<u>Present</u>
Arness, Franklin	<u>Present</u>
Ask, Thomas M.	<u>Present</u>
Erdmann, Marian S.	<u>Present</u>
Jacobsen, Arnold W.	<u>Present</u>
Payne, Katie	<u>Present</u>
Rollins, George W.	<u>Present</u>
Simon, Clark E.	<u>Present</u>
Sparks, M. Lynn	<u>Present</u>
Speer, Lucile	<u>Present</u>

INTERESTED PERSONS TESTIFYING:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Occupation or Title</u>
John Kuglin	Great Falls Tribune
Dennis Curran	Lee Newspapers
Irvin Hutchison	Liberty County Times, Chester
Mrs. Erv Gypler	Citizen
Howard Hammer	County Commissioner, Ravalli
Earl Daley	County Commissioner, Valley
Dale Skaalure	County Commissioner, Hill
Burt Hurwitz	County Commissioner, Meagher
Ralph Armstrong	County Commissioner, Gallatin
Don Gibson	County Commissioner, Dawson
Milo F. Dean	County Commissioner, Cascade
Dan Mizner	Mont. League of Cities and Towns
Tom Phillips	Mont. League of Cities and Towns
Opal Eggert	Elected County Official's Assoc.
R. D. Zinnecker	County Commissioner's Assoc.

The minutes of the January 19 meeting were considered. Mrs. Payne moved that the minutes be approved; motion carried.

This Committee has been assigned two Delegate Proposals, No. 5 and No. 6, both introduced by Mrs. Payne. The Chairman mentioned that there are no changes in our Committee assignment. If people want to give testimony on other Articles or Sections, we can hear them, but we should tell them it is not in our jurisdiction. He explained the labeling of proposals and gave the tentative deadlines as follows: February 3 - Citizen Suggestions, February 5 - Delegate Proposals, February 15 - draft of article, February 16-19 - recess, and February 26 - final article ready to introduce.

Mrs. Payne said we will have a short resume of all that happens in each committee meeting so that every delegate will be informed of what is going on in other committees.

The Chairman introduced the Committee members to the County Commissioners who were present (listed on page 1). He also introduced Mrs. Eggert. He explained Committee procedure to them and said the deadline for their proposals is tentatively set for February 5.

Mr. Zinacker stated that the Association will be looking for more home rule so they can take care of local problems. The Chairman said this would probably be correctly termed residual power, which pertains to counties. The Association represents all counties except Petroleum. He thinks the counties should have legislative powers, but there should be a limitation of residual powers.

In answer to the question whether there should be unification for the best overall management of a county, Mr. Skaalure said they should abolish certain offices and let the commissioners employ a qualified person. The Commissioners want more supervisory control. He thinks there are too many restrictions.

Items discussed were:

Efficiency and cooperation between county offices. The Commissioners were all in favor of this.

A "county manager" plan.

Number of commissioners and whether they should be elected at large.

Welfare requirements and other problems pertaining to welfare.

Leaving the number and structure of offices to the Legislature rather than putting it in the Constitution, or leaving it to the locality to decide. Many were in favor of a county manager plan.

Problem that with sparsely populated counties it is difficult for the people to pay for their government.

Should taxing authority come from the Legislature or should the power be that the county can tax what the Legislature assigns to them.

The Chairman called a recess at 12 noon. The Committee will reconvene at 1:30 p.m., and all witnesses are invited to return.

The meeting reconvened at 1:30 and all witnesses and Committee members were again present.

There was a discussion of whether commissioners should be elected from districts or the county at large. The consensus was to leave it as it is.

County seat location was discussed. This item was alright as it is. The Commissioners thought that consolidation of counties should be left as it is or to local option.

Intergovernmental cooperation is already done in many counties.

The Commissioners were very dissatisfied with the restriction in Section 4 against increasing their salaries while in office. They would like to see it eliminated. Some of the Commissioners

did not feel that they should set their own salaries, however.
There was a long discussion about the disparity in salaries.


The Chairman asked that if people have a position on any of these things that they be submitted as written testimony or proposals and presented next week at the formal hearings.

The Commissioners felt that Article 19, Section 6 is alright as it is.

There being no further business it was moved and seconded that the meeting adjourn.

Time of adjournment: 3:40 p.m.


OSCAR L. ANDERSON, Chairman


PAT ROMINE, Secretary