

## **Government Study Review Commission Meeting**

February 19, 2025

5:30 p.m. City Council Chambers

Public comment

Agenda

1. Adoption of timetable
  - Publication by February 26, 2025
2. Discussion and Preparation for Public Hearing on March 19, 2025
3. Set Time and Place for March 19 Public Hearing
  - Notification to public

PUBLIC NOTICE

Government Study Review Meeting

City Council Chambers

February 19, 2025

5:30 p.m.

## **Hardin Local Government Review Study Commission**

January 15, 2025 Meeting Minutes

At 5:33 p.m., Chairperson Carolyn Dawes called the meeting to order. Present were Commissioners Carolyn Dawes, Jason Stephenson and Randy Mercier. Also present was Jordan Knudsen, ex-officio member.

No members of the public were present for Public Comment.

Jason moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting of December 18, 2024, and Randy seconded. A voice vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously.

The Chair called up the first order of business, finalizing and adopting the bylaws. Jason moved to approve, and Randy seconded the motion. A voice vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously.

The Chair called the second agenda item, the timeline. Jason discussed interviewing city department heads, and public hearing as well as mailing out questionnaires. Jason discussed having December as the tentative report date. Randy was concerned about how many people would show up. Jason and Jordan continued discussion including pros and cons of self-governing powers. Carolyn also discussed self-governing powers. Carolyn suggested that the first hearing have a presentation on the differences between self-governing powers and general powers. Carolyn also suggested that the presentation include all types of local government, and what we have now. Discussion was also held on how to avoid performance evaluations. Further discussion on first public hearing, March or April? Discussion on Tentative Report and a hearing date.

Jason moved to set February 19, 2025 as the first hearing date, and December 17, 2025 as the hearing date on the Tentative Report and July 15, 2026 as the date to approve the final report. Randy seconded the motion. Discussion ensued about how quickly February was approaching. Further discussion on when to approve final report. Jason moved to amend the motion by striking February 19, 2025 as the date for the first hearing, and inserting March 19, 2025 as the first hearing date. Randy seconded the motion to amend. Chair called for a vote on the motion to amend, passed unanimously on voice vote. Back to main motion (as amended). Further discussion of March 19, 2025 as first hearing date, and December 17, 2025 as the hearing on the tentative report and July 15, 2026 as approval date for final report. Discussion that if final report is done in July, then vote would have to be November of 2026. Chair calls for a vote. Motion passes unanimously on voice vote. Jordan said that he would prepare the timetable for final approval at the next meeting in February.

Further discussion was held on what study commission would do after November 3, 2026 election, if voters adopt a proposed change. 90 day transition planning would proceed.

Jason moved to adjourn, Randy seconded the motion. Voice vote, motion passed.

The meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.



**Local Government Review Study Commission – City of Hardin**

Timetable

**All meetings of the Study Commission are open to the public.**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
November 26, 2024	First Study Commission meeting, City Council Chambers
December 11, 2024	MSU Local Government Center Study Commission Training, Billings, MT
December 18, 2024	Regular monthly meeting of the Study Commission established to be held on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m., at City Council Chambers, 401 N. Cheyenne Ave., Hardin, MT 59034
February 19, 2025	Timetable formally adopted
March 19, 2025	1 <sup>st</sup> Public Hearing – to gather citizen input on the form, functions, powers and problems of city government.
March – December 2025	Draft and adopt a Tentative Report
December 17, 2025	Public Hearing on Tentative Report
July 15, 2026	Adopt the Final Report
August 10, 2026	Provide Big Horn County with ballot certificate if a change is proposed to be placed on the June 2, 2026 ballot.
August – September 2026	If final report proposes alteration of local government, prepare public education materials to help citizens understand the proposal and compare the proposal with existing form, structures and powers
September-October 2026	Approve public education materials, and conduct public forum
November 3, 2026	Election Day – if voters approve a proposed alteration of the government, initiate transition planning for 90 days
January 1, 2027	Study Commission terms of office ends Adopt a transition advisory plan Deposit all minutes and other study commission documents with Big Horn County Clerk and Recorder Submit copy of the final report and any proposed changes to the MSU Local Government Center

REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE STUDY COMMISSION SHALL BE ON THE THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 5:30 P.M., AT THE HARDIN CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 401 N. CHEYENNE AVE., HARDIN, MT 59034