

Governmental Task Force – Public Meeting  
July 29, 2013

**Present**

Kelly Allen – Not Present  
Marilyn Coffey - Present  
Michael Cole - Present  
Jim Marshall – Present  
Jack Schrauth - Present  
Tom Shaw - Present  
Bill Wadsworth – Present

**Also Present**

Special Assistant to the City Council- Danny Langloss, Jr.

Jack Schrauth – Welcome to Citizens

Jim Marshall - Review of GTF Meetings thus far

Marilyn Coffey – 3 Key Points in which the members of the GTF agree.

- Complexities of government today require professional leadership
- No governmental system is perfect
- Theme throughout every interview is that the people elected are key to the success of government.

Tom Shaw - Review handouts

“Summary – Types of Government”

Comment: The Commission Form with an Administrator is where the City of Dixon is currently headed. By the end of the year, a City Administrator will hopefully be in place.

Comment: In the Council – Manager Form, the only way to remove the position of manager is by referendum.

“Pros and Cons as Determined by Task Force”

Public Comment:

**Louise Corken, 321 E. Chamberlin St.**

**Q:** What is the timeline for this process? How does the GTF proceed with the recommendation?

**Comment from GTF:** The GTF plans to make a recommendation to the council by end of August. If the task force were to recommend the Council/Manager Form, the first step would be to take the recommendation to the City Council. If the City Council approved of the recommendation, then it would be put to referendum at the next election in Nov. 2014.

However, if the council does not approve the recommendation for the Council/Manager Form, then the citizens could petition to have the form of government placed on the ballot.

**Q:** What would happen to the City Administrator that was hired if the City changed its form of government?

**Comment from GTF:** The functions of an Administrator and a Manager are similar. The main difference in the two positions is the origin of authority. The Administrator would be given authority through ordinance. The Manager is given authority through state statute. So, the person hired could potential stay on with the city.

The role of the GTF is to recommend what the best form of government is for the City of Dixon.

As a task force we feel that it is vital to have citizen input. We have not come to a consensus as of yet. The group is still undecided. The consensus that we have come to is that we need to professionalize our city government and that there is no perfect form of government

**Josie Whaley, 605 Marclare**

**Q:** Why is "Potential for Council to become less engaged" under the Cons list for Council – Manager form of government? I have live in a city that had a city manager and the council was very engaged.

**Comment:** There is a possibility for the council member to have a more disengaged attitude with one central person in charge.

The task force interviewed many cities. One of the cities with the Council – Manager form has what seems to be a disengaged council. The members are more figurative that active.

On the other hand, the City of Rochelle has the Council – Manager form and has a very active Council. Again, it all depends on the people who are elected into office.

The Pros and Cons can be viewed differently depending on how someone views a particular form of government.

**Gene Biggerstaff, 1128 Easter Ave.**

**Comment:** Thank you to the GTF for taking on this role.

**Q:** Which form of government is best for politics and which is the worst for corruption?

**Comment:** Ultimately politics and corruption comes down to the people. The City Manager was established in response to nature of politics and corruption within government. ILCMA states that City Managers or City Administrators will not be involved in politics. There is no way to guarantee against corruption.

**Jordan Bowman, 631 Marclare St. Apt 12**

**Comment:** I'm disappointed that Mayor – Council was not added to the Pros and Cons list. Although I suggested in meetings past, I thought Mayor - Council Form was dismissed too quickly. There are more than two choices.

I have been at most of the meetings. At the start of this process, the Commission form of government was not a form I supported. Through the process that the GTF has taken, I'm now undecided about the Commission form.

**Carol Fisher, 224 Fox Trot Lane**

**Comment:** Thank you for taking the challenge to research and recommend a form of government.

The Commission with an Administrator position is the same form as what we have already. I think that it is time the City of Dixon move into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and adopted the Council - Manager form of government.

**Kathy Lane, 1302 Institute**

**Comment:** I do have issue with one of the Cons under Commission form of government. "No qualifications for elected officials who have executive authority over specific departments." Commissioners don't need specific qualifications to supervise Department Heads. Department Heads are capable of making decisions regarding the needs of their departments.

**David Deets, 804 Chula Vista**

**Comment:** I have lived 37 years in Dixon. The city has thrived under the Commission Form even with the difficulties of the past. I'm in favor of keeping what we have now.

**David Wyman, 720 Washington Ave.**

**Comment:** I lived in Dixon for 5.5 years. All the power is in commissioner's hands. I'm in favor of Council - Manager Form. Having a City Manager will give the Council ability to look toward the future.

**Gary Burger, 125 Fox Trot**

**Comment:** I'm a retired citizen. The city is a medium to large organization and in today's world city administration is a complex business. There is a need for real management and concentration; a need for professional guidance. The person needs to have the authority to do the job through state statute.

**Recommend:** Council - Manager form of government.

**Jill Polivka, 186 Grand Oaks Ln.**

**Comment:** We are talking about the future of Dixon. We need to be professional. We need to break the control cycle. The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again expecting the same results.

**Jim Dixon: 521 S. Peoria**

**Comment:** 3 Points

1. The involvement required of a commissioner makes it difficult for non-retired citizens to hold that position. Commissioners are expected to be available.
2. The Council – Manager Form of government has better oversight. A manager would have more expertise over the day-to-day operations than an elected citizen. The City needs professional management from the top down. Ultimately the Commission form of government is a government with 5 mayors.
3. The Commission form does not operate well with an Administrator. The Commissioners still have ultimate authority over their departments.

**Comment from GTF:** Regarding the City Manager, the Mayor and Council will be in charge of hiring this individual. The person who is the City Manager can be terminated. The position is secure, not the individual. The Council's responsibility is to oversee that position.

**David Deets, 804 Chula Vista**

**Comment:** We all live in the state of Illinois and see how they run our government. State statute stinks! I do not want to have Illinois run our local government.

**Poll of Audience:**

Council Manager Form 21

Commission Form 2

Undecided 27

**Kathy Lane, 1302 Institute**

**Comment:** At this juncture, I think that a poll at this meeting is inappropriate. There are City employees present that are unable to vote.