Local Government Review Election

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: February 21, 2014

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW ELECTION

The local government review was initiated by Article XI, Section 9 of the 1972 Constitution and the first review was conducted in 1974. Required every 10 years, the local government review election asks voters to decide if they want to elect and fund a study commission to review their city and county forms of government. At its February 18, 2014, meeting, the Great Falls City Commission adopted Resolution No. 10051 calling for such an election.

At the June 3rd primary election, voters in the City of Great Falls will be asked to vote for or against the establishment of a five member study commission, and the establishment of funding for a study commission not to exceed $125,000, which is the equivalent to approximately 1.6 mills.

If a majority of the electors vote against the study commission and its funding, there will not be a study commission. The opportunity to review the City's form of government will be offered again in 2024.

If a majority of the electors vote in favor of electing and funding a study commission, interested individuals can begin filing declarations of nomination with the Cascade County Elections Office as candidates for the Great Falls Study Commission until 5 p.m. on August 11th for the general election to be held on November 4th. Candidates must be electors of the City of Great Falls, and cannot be elected officials of the local government. There is no filing fee, and the race is nonpartisan.

The funding of a local government study commission shall not exceed $125,000, which is the equivalent to approximately 1.6 mills. That amount will increase property taxes approximately $3.96 on a home with a taxable market value of $100,000 and approximately $7.92 on a home with a taxable market value of $200,000.

The purpose of the study commission is to study the existing form and powers of the local government and procedures for delivery of local government services and compare them with other forms available under the laws of the state. The City of Great Falls operates under the Commission-Manager form of government established by Charter with self-governing powers. The City's legislative body is the City Commission. The Mayor is elected to a two-year term, and City Commissioners are elected to four-year terms. The members of the City Commission are nominated and elected at-large, and the elections are non-partisan. The City Commission appoints a City Manager to direct the day-to-day operations of the City which carry out the policies of the City Commission.

The structural characteristics and the varying relationship between the legislative and executive branches of municipal government in Montana's 129 incorporated municipalities consist of the following: Town Meeting form (1); Commission-Presiding Officer form (2); Commission-Executive Council/Mayor form (114); and Commission-Manager form (12). Of those 129 municipalities, 34 municipalities (including two consolidated governments) have adopted a self-governing charter.

Should the electors vote in favor of having and funding a study commission, the final report of the study commission shall be presented to the registered voters of Great Falls for their final approval or rejection no later than the 2016 general election.

Frequently Asked Questions and additional information can also be located at www.greatfallsmt.net/citycommission .

For more information on this election, contact Lynn Deroche, your local election administrator, at (406) 454-6803, or the Office of the Secretary of State at (406) 444-2034.

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Supporting Documents

Press Release - Local Government Review Election (436 KB) (PDF)

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