

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Charter talk focuses on sheriff's office

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applauded by some members of the audience that numbered 27 — half of whom were county employees or elected officials.

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The committee also heard comments about whether the sheriff's office should manage justice-service programs in addition to the correctional facilities it is responsible for. That subject generated much debate, particularly by a handful of county officials.

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office is well suited for managing programs that are alternatives to placing people in jails.

"Frankly, the sheriff's office has no track record of support for alternatives to incarceration," she said.

Commissioner Sharron Kelley said the Board of Commissioners is so divided about the issue that the question should be brought to the voters. She said the present structure that divides the sheriff's office, community corrections and justice services creates duplication and disputes.

"The notion that the sheriff cannot handle it all is unfounded," she said.

The Oreg 3/22/90

McCoy says county switch unnecessary

By ELIZABETH MOORE

of The Oregonian staff

5/25/90
Four Multnomah County commissioners agree with a proposal to change the county's form of government. Only the county chairwoman, whose job would be changed significantly, disagrees with the plan.

The county's Charter Review Committee is recommending that all administrative duties currently done by the board chairwoman be transferred to a hired county manager. The elected chairwoman would continue to run meetings and be the spokeswoman for the county.

The proposal is expected to be on the November ballot.

Commissioners Pauline Anderson, Rick Bauman, Gretchen Kafoury and Sharron Kelley all support the plan, while current board chairwoman Gladys McCoy objects to the idea.

McCoy said the board has not had enough time to get used to its current structure, which was implemented three years ago. McCoy said that her executive assistant, Hank Miggins, already does the administrative tasks of a county manager.

"I'm not convinced that changing the structure is going to give us any more than what we have now," she said.

Previous to McCoy's administration, an elected county executive was the county's chief administrator.

Commissioners say a new structure would eliminate the dual executive and legislative tasks of the board executive.

"I think it's a real appropriate step," said Bauman. "It's extraordinarily cumbersome to have the executive also serving as a member of the legislative body."

Both Bauman and Kafoury said the executive's role becomes muddled during budget time, when McCoy is required to develop the county budget and then preside over budget hearings.

"It would be like the governor overseeing the House of Representatives, bringing his or her budget in and then chairing the meeting to discuss the budget," Kafoury said.

Steve Larrance, a commissioner in Washington County, likened the job of county manager to that of a ship captain.

Former county executive Don Clark, disagrees with the plan and says the executive role has gone through enough changes in the charter during the past 15 years.

"They ought to leave it alone and let it settle into something," he said.

The charter review committee plans to present a report to the board of county commissioners in August about the county manager and other proposals for the November ballot.

County proposes \$361 million budget

By ELIZABETH MOORE

of The Oregonian staff

Gladys McCoy, chairwoman of the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners, unveiled a \$361.5 million county budget for the 1990-91 fiscal year Tuesday that extended last year's "hold-the-line" attitude on spending for county programs.

McCoy said next year's budget "required more than usual fiscal restraint" because the county is facing increases in labor costs and worker's compensation insurance, and pressure to provide more services to more people.

The hardest hit of the county's five departments was the Department of Human Services, which may be trimmed by \$500,000. The proposed cut is due in part to the Gramm-Rudman federal deficit reductions and losses in some federal and state grants.

Because of the cuts, five staff positions will be lost, and the opening of the new midcounty health clinic will be delayed from this year until next spring, said Hank Miggins, executive assistant to McCoy.

Although several cuts have been proposed in the Human Services

budget, it is still expected to grow from \$81.6 million to \$93.9 million because of continued federal and state funding for specific programs, such as homeless care and alcohol and drug treatment.

However, Jack M. Horner, county director of planning and budget, said that due to a clerical error discovered shortly before McCoy's budget announcement, the county had an additional \$579,000 in revenue.

McCoy said proposals on how to spend the additional money would be presented at Thursday's meeting of the board of commissioners. McCoy said she would plan to spend the money on restoring Human Services programs.

McCoy said the proposed budget took into account long-term planning goals that county officials have been discussing for a year in strategic planning sessions.

Through the planning process, McCoy said, seven program initiatives were identified as priorities by county officials. Most of these programs will require additional funding next year, and Miggins said they likely won't be cut. They are:

- Opening two new school-based health clinics — \$219,000.

- Coordinating county alcohol and drug programs — \$140,000.

- Paying for a study to preserve natural areas and set up recreational programs on Sauvie Island — \$55,000.

- Strengthening the county's affirmative action program to ensure that job opportunities are provided to handicapped persons — \$64,000.

- Continuing a contract with the Housing Authority of Portland to provide sheriff's services at the Columbia Villa housing project — \$255,000.

Another priority budget item will be paid for by the state. The county projects it will get \$2.4 million from the state to hire more property appraisers for the county's Assessment & Taxation Division.

The money needed for another priority, planning future county buildings and programs through a capital-improvements committee and fund, hasn't been determined, Miggins said.

Other departmental changes from the 1989-90 budget are:

- The Department of Justice Services increasing to \$60.2 million from \$53.4 million.

- The Department of Environmental Services increasing to \$77.9 million from \$68.5 million.

- The Department of General Services increasing to \$38.9 million from \$28.5 million.

- The budget for Non-Departmental Services decreasing from \$39.5 million to \$36 million next fiscal year.

The county is counting on carrying over \$54.4 million from the current fiscal year.

Included in the budget are two serial tax levies that will provide \$13.5 million to expand the Inverness Jail next year and \$10.3 million to improve library services and to turn the library system into a county department.

The county budget for this fiscal year, which ends June 30, is \$328 million and required property taxes to be levied at a rate of \$4.62 per \$1,000 of assessed property value — about \$277 for the owner of a \$60,000 house.

The jail and library levies, passed by county voters in the last six months, will increase property taxes to \$5.37 per \$1,000 of assessed value, or about \$322 for the owner of a \$60,000 house.

4/4/90



MID-COUNTY

COMMUNITY
NEWS AND
FEATURES

Multnomah County charter session spotlights sheriff

By BARBARA PESCHIERA

Correspondent, The Oregonian

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the issue that the question should be brought to the voters. She said the present structure that divides the sheriff's office, community corrections and justice services creates duplication and disputes.

"The notion that the sheriff cannot handle it all is unfounded," she said.

Gladys McCoy, chairwoman of the board, said she would like to see the sheriff and the district attorney keep their autonomy but also would like to see programs organized so the county could make a range of services available to criminals.

She said the board members agree that human services and justice services should be linked. She said the sheriff's office has enough responsibility as it is and that the Department of Human Services is too large to function efficiently.

McCoy proposed a system of evaluating people who are arrested to see what services they need in an effort to prevent them from being placed in jails.

Sheriff Bob Skipper said his first choice would be for his office to manage correctional programs in addition to the county's five correctional facilities and patrol duties. However, he said he could operate if community correction programs were shifted to the Department of Human Services.

He said he has wasted much time with commissioners' staff members discussing which programs should be under which departments.

"This gets a little frustrating. It's counterproductive," Skipper said. "I feel we do have the capabilities of identifying the needs of inmates who need help to get back on track."

Proposed Changes in Way County Does Business Eyed

By Patrick Mazza

What the Constitution is to the United States, the charter is to Multnomah County, and in recent months the county has been having its equivalent of a Constitutional Convention.

That comes in the form of a 13-member Charter Review Committee that will propose changes in the way county government does business. The final say is with voters, who will be asked to judge those proposals in the November election.

Perhaps the largest question facing the commission is whether to advise abolition of the county chair position.

Already, as of one week ago, the committee made its first recommendation. The November ballot will carry a measure that would allow the county to hire a lobbyist to represent its views at higher levels of government. At this point, the charter forbids paying a lobbyist.

The review committee, appointed by Portland-area state legislators and convened last July, is due to make all of its ballot proposals by Aug. 3.

But committee chair Ann Porter expects the group will complete those recommendations by the end of May. Just what the group outlines will depend on public testimony made in hearings over the next two or so months.

Perhaps the largest question facing the commission is whether to advise abolition of the county chair position currently held by Gladys McCoy. Though that job has only existed for the past four years, some on the committee prefer a professional county manager hired by the county commissioners or a county council.

"It is just generally more efficient to have a professional manager running the day-to-day affairs of Multnomah County," committee member Casey Short commented. Commissioners "get elected to be policy makers" and "may or may not have administrative capacities."

But another voice on the committee, La Velle Vanden Berg, says the county chair post should be retained.

"It has not been in effect long enough. I would like to see it stay for awhile," she said.

The chair position is the product of a previous Charter Review Committee that put the idea before voters in 1984. Previously, the county had an elected executive who was not part of the county commissioners. But some communication problems caused the committee to recommend that the county's top administrator become part of the board of commissioners.

So far, said Vanden Berg, only a relatively small group of citizens have been making their

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Proposed Changes...

Continued from Page 3

views known on the issue, and she would like to hear from a broader representation. Comments so far split about evenly between advocates of the current set-up and a county manager system, she said.

About that same division prevails within the committee itself, said Porter.

People will have a chance to air their own opinions on the subject at a hearing at 7 p.m. on March 28 in Multnomah County Courthouse Room 602.

The committee's recommendation on the manager vs. chair question will influence two other issues, committee Administrator Bill Rapp noted. Those are whether to shift the county commissioners from full-time into part-time positions, and whether to change the size of the five-person board.

Porter said the third major consideration facing the Charter Review Committee, beyond the lobbyist and county chair matters, concerns the sheriff's office. Some committee members have leaned towards returning to an appointed sheriff, despite a decision by voters in 1982 to make the sheriff an elective office. Committee member Monica Little acknowledged that voters are probably not ready to reverse their 1982 verdict.

"I don't think it would be fruitful to put (an appointed sheriff measure) on the ballot," Little commented.

More likely is a recommendation to place the currently independent Community Corrections Division under the sheriff's purview. The division runs various programs that provide alternatives to incarceration. The sheriff already operates county jails.

"There's a lot of talk now about how to unify the program," Rapp noted.

The committee will hold a public hearing on charter issues surrounding the sheriff at Gresham City Hall, 1333 N.W. Eastman Parkway, Wednesday, March 21 at 7 p.m.

Among other issues on the committee's agenda are:

Salaries for top officials--"Most have not been raised in eight or nine years," Rapp said. "There's pretty much a committee consensus that something needs to be done." Anything the committee recommends would be beyond a proposed cost-of-living increase going to voters in May.

Eliminating election restrictions on county commissioners--They currently are limited to two four-year terms and cannot run for another office for the first three years of a term. "There is some committee feeling toward repealing both of those provisions," Rapp noted.

Future charter review--The current committee was created as a result of a decision by the previous review committee to revisit the issue in 1989. Now, committee members must determine when to begin the process again, and whether charter review should take place at regular intervals.

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Proposed Changes...

Continued from Page 3

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The Oregonian Winter '89

Change county commission?

Now is the time for residents of Multnomah County to start thinking about changing their county government. A charter-review panel is supposed to be appointed by the county's state legislators this spring to place amendments on the May 1990 primary election ballot.

Some changes worth considering include:

- Making positions on the five-member Board of Commissioners unpaid, as are those on school boards and most city councils throughout Oregon. Or making the positions part time and adjusting the pay accordingly. Voter rejection last May 17 of a proposal to give commissioners their first wage hike in six years and give them a salary comparable to that of elected officials of other urban-county governments strongly suggests voters don't believe the job needs to be full time requiring full-time wages.

- Requiring the board to hire a county manager. That would allow part-time commissioners to concen-

trate on policy instead of day-to-day management of county government.

- Electing commissioners county-wide, while requiring each to live in a specific geographic district. That would provide the local representation mid- and East County residents particularly felt was lacking in countywide election but also ensure each commissioner's accountability to all the county's residents.

- Repealing the requirement that the sheriff be elected. His police responsibilities have been diminishing and corrections challenges increasing. Moreover, as an independently elected official, his management and his budget need not be responsive to anybody but an often apathetic electorate once every four years.

Structural changes in government should be made cautiously and with full public debate. Residents should insist their legislators make that their top priority in measuring potential appointees to the charter-review panel.

The Oregonian 5/20/90

Part-time county commission

Voters Tuesday again rejected pay increases for elected Multnomah County officials. What more does the Multnomah County Charter Review Commission need to convince it to ask voters if they want part-time instead of full-time commissioners?

Voters consistently have rejected salary increases for the county commissioners for almost a decade now. But this charter commission has proposed for the November ballot still another, larger pay-increase measure.

Tuesday's election results promise still another voter rejection.

The charter commission instead should offer a measure to make the Board of Commissioners part-time.

A model worth considering for

Multnomah County can be found in neighboring Washington County. It has a professional manager, a full-time chairwoman and four part-time commissioners.

Multnomah County's 13-member charter review panel took half a step in that direction last month. It decided to offer voters a measure Nov. 6 to establish a county-manager form of government. But by deciding to retain the full-time chairwoman and commissioners, the charter group added to overhead. That's not the message voters have been sending.

Voters considering hiring a professional county manager ought to be asked at the same time if they think they need full-time political policy-makers, too.

The Oregonian 5/29/90

Lobbyist presence valued

Lobbyists spent a record \$8.5 million to influence the Oregon Legislature in 1989. Shocked? Well, this is not a cause for concern. On the contrary, a strong, balanced lobbying effort in Salem is to be encouraged.

Lobbyists are a valuable source of information for lawmakers. Yes, many lobbyists approach subjects with a slant and with self-interest. But those biases are easily spotted, if not always declared. That lobbyists may be well-financed should not be viewed as threatening to the process.

Professional lobbyists provide checks and balances to the business of lawmaking. The millions of dollars their organizations spend to influence the Legislature are used, mostly, for manpower, research and studies — resources that legislative staffs cannot possibly match.

Many poorly conceived and often damaging bills, proposed by lawmakers in recent sessions, have been appropriately tabled largely because a sharp-eyed lobbyist spotted some mischief in the fine print that was overlooked by lawmakers and staff.

The Legislature, which introduces approximately 3,000 bills each ses-

sion, cannot possibly handle this workload without the informed scrutiny of thousands of onlookers, including the press, interested individuals and the organized lobby.

It is not especially disturbing that Oregon Government Ethics Commission records show a major increase in lobbying expenditures from one session to another — from \$6.9 million in 1987 to \$8.5 million in 1989.

The growth in lobbying activity usually means that a major, complicated issue, involving many well-organized special interests, was being considered by the Legislature. In 1989, it was the workers' compensation reform package.

Lobbyists, in their annual expenditure statements, must include expenses for meals and entertainment, printing, postage and telephone costs, public relations, education and research and overhead items, such as salaries.

In most examples, the expenses for meals and entertainment — the category where influence-peddling is most likely to have its greatest impact — was a very small proportion of the total lobbying effort.

The Oregonian 6/12/90

Cap county commission cost

Multnomah County's home-rule charter review committee is proposing a November ballot measure offering a county-manager form of government. The panel needs to refine the proposal, lest voters think it would merely add another layer of management and costs.

The county now has a full-time, five-member commission that determines policy and spending. Its chairwoman also is responsible for carrying out policy and managing the county's affairs.

As drafted, the proposed ballot measure would retain all those elected officials and hire a professional manager, too.

From a dollar standpoint, taxpayers might come close to breaking even on the change if the charter were amended to make the Board of County Commissioners part-time, instead of full-time, with an accompanying salary reduction.

Break-even would be even more

likely if some cap were placed on the commission's budget for hiring assistants. Currently, all commissioners have at least three aides to serve their personal county agendas. This abundance encourages them to seek out work and, sometimes, to stick their noses deeper into management than policy-makers ought.

Limiting, or even prohibiting, spending for personal staff members for commissioners would be a strong statement by voters that political policy-making should remain separate from professional management.

Incorporating thrift into the November reform proposals would not be out of place for a charter review committee. In 1979, a charter review committee headed by Portland lawyer Jack Faust froze the budget of the commission for one year so it would have to absorb the costs of its restructuring.

A similar recognition of taxpayer concerns by the charter review committee of 1990 would be welcome.

Charter panel mulls what to ask voters

Manager, lobbyist, raises among areas under examination

By ELIZABETH MOORE

of *The Oregonian* staff

3/7/90

County voters may be asked to decide whether Multnomah County should hire a county manager instead of electing a county executive, whether it should be allowed to have a lobbyist, and whether county commissioners should be granted automatic pay raises.

Those issues are among several the county's Charter Review Committee could pose to voters in November.

The 13-member committee is asking for public views on at least six issues of interest that were raised during a series of public hearings last fall. They will begin holding public meetings this week before completing the charter questions.

The committee is charged with reviewing the county's charter and all aspects of county government and is required to report to the Board of County Commissioners in August. The process last occurred in 1984, and 16 out of 18 proposed changes were approved by county voters at that time.

Committee Administrator Bill Rapp said that the topics of discussion in the latest round of meetings will focus on:

- Exploring whether to switch to a county manager form of government from that of a county chairman or chairwoman who is elected at large and is a voting member of

the board.

- Deciding whether to repeal a rule prohibiting the county from having a paid lobbyist whose duties would include representing the county at the state Legislature.

- Choosing whether to have a full- or part-time board of commissioners and whether to change the current size of the five-person full-time board.

- Exploring the question of having an elected or appointed sheriff and how much to pay that sheriff.

- Determining how long a term should be for a county elected official and when an official should resign if he or she wishes to run for another elected office.

- Deciding how often the charter review committee should meet.

The first meeting will be held at 7 p.m. Wednesday in Room 201 in John Jackson Hall at the Portland Community College Cascade campus. The topic of discussion will be allowing a county lobbyist.

Subsequent meetings will be:

- To discuss the salaries of elected officials and county elections; 7 p.m. March 14 in Room 602 of the Multnomah County Courthouse, 1021 S.W. Fourth Ave.

- To talk about having an appointed or elected county sheriff and what the sheriff's duties should be; 7 p.m. March 21 at the Gresham City Council chambers, 1333 N.W. Eastman Parkway.

- To determine the makeup of the Board of County Commissioners and whether to have an elected county executive or a hired county manager; 7 p.m. March 28 in Room 602 of the Multnomah County Courthouse, 1021 S.W. Fourth Ave.

Stir interest in county review

Putting the cart before the horse has stymied many an effort to move forward. The citizens panel reviewing Multnomah County's Home Rule Charter should keep that in mind as it begins public hearings this month on ideas for change.

First on its agenda ought to be the structure of the Board of Commissioners. Should it be a full-time or part-time board, for example? Should it be three-member, five-member, seven- or nine-member?

Discussing a county-manager form of government makes little sense if the commission chairwoman, elected countywide, is to continue her management function. She can hire an administrator to handle the details now, without a charter amendment.

Talk of removing the prohibition against Multnomah County's hiring a lobbyist also ought to follow debate on changing the structure of the commission. One of the reasons advanced for prohibiting a paid lob-

byist was that full-time commissioners should have plenty of time to do the county's lobbying. They have no management responsibilities, as do Portland city commissioners.

The review commission has tried with minimal success to find out what the public wants changed. That could mean that the public is satisfied with the home rule charter as it exists. Or, it could mean the commission has not made the public aware of its opportunities for change.

The panelists have made clear that they don't want the public to think their minds are closed to any suggestions for change. That's appropriate. But the groundswell of public apathy that has greeted the commission's search needs some agitating.

How about the panel announcing at its first public hearing Wednesday that it will place on the November ballot a charter amendment to change the current five-member, full-time Board of Commissioners to seven part-time members?

The Oregonian

Founded Dec. 4, 1850. Established as a daily Feb. 4, 1861. The Sunday Oregonian established Dec. 4, 1881. Published daily and Sunday by the Oregonian Publishing Co., 1320 S.W. Broadway, Portland, Oregon 97201

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SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 1990

Pay county officials fairly

Three measures on the May 15 ballot would give limited annual cost-of-living pay hikes to elected Multnomah County officials. They're not asking more than what voters reasonably should grant.

Measures 26-3, 26-4 and 26-5 would tie annual pay adjustments for the district attorney, sheriff and county chairwoman and commissioners, respectively, to the percentage increase of the Portland-area Consumer Price Index, but with a cap of 5 percent.

Voters soundly rejected three previous pay-increase proposals, ranging from 12 percent to 36 percent.

A citizen commission recommended the cost-of-living adjustment of up to 5 percent after looking at the responsibilities of the jobs and the hours worked by the county's elected officials. They found the officials rarely worked fewer than 50 hours a week and often put in as many as 70.

The citizens also compared Multnomah County's pay scale for elected officials to those of 11 counties and cities of comparable size and found it to be much lower, though responsibilities were similar.

A Charter Review Commission is looking at the structure of Multnomah County government and may offer voters an opportunity to make some positions part-time. Until and unless that happens, however, the county will be served by full-time elected officials, and taxpayers should pay full-time salaries. At the least, they should be willing to make cost-of-living adjustments.

Commissioners earn \$33,346 a year; the chairwoman \$43,180; the sheriff \$46,000; and the district attorney, who is paid both by the county and the state, \$67,200. The commissioners last received a pay increase in 1981. Sheriff Bob Skipper took a \$12,000 annual wage cut to move from chief deputy to his position as boss.

The Oregonian recommends voter approval May 15 of Measures 26-3, 26-4 and 26-5.



PORTLAND

COMMUNITY
NEWS AND
FEATURES

Three commissioners offer recommendations

County board members give ideas for change to the charter committee

By **ELIZABETH MOORE**
of The Oregonian staff

Three of Multnomah County's commissioners offered an array of suggestions for improving county government Wednesday night, including a recommendation that sheriffs be appointed and that the board of commissioners be reduced from five to three members.

The 13-member county Charter Review Committee listened to the wish lists of Commissioners Pauline Anderson, Gretchen Kafoury and County Board Chairwoman

Gladys McCoy as part of its series of hearings on the Multnomah County charter.

The committee is charged with reviewing the county's charter and all aspects of the county government — a process that last occurred in 1984. If it finds areas that need improvement, it will forward suggestions to county residents for a vote next year.

McCoy told the committee she would like to see a governing body of five elected officials and that there's too much work for three policymakers to handle.

"I think that the system that we have works. If we leave what we have — it will work," she said.

But Kafoury and Anderson recommended that a county manager be hired to serve as county administrator and that commissioners work solely as policymakers. Under the cur-

rent system, the board chairwoman is the county administrator and also must work to help create county policies.

"It's very confusing because the system isn't very clear about what the lines of responsibility are," Kafoury said.

Currently, the board chairwoman formulates the county budget and then presides over the discussion sessions regarding that budget, Kafoury said.

But McCoy said that it is critical to have a chairwoman be a member of the board of commissioners because it creates better communication among board members.

On other subjects, McCoy and Anderson spoke in favor of having an appointed sheriff, instead of an elected one. Anderson said that she would support a plan that would have the sheriff supervising law enforcement in the county and a separate corrections manager

overseeing county jails.

Anderson and McCoy also agreed that the county should be allowed to have a lobbyist at the state Legislature. Existing rules prohibit a county lobbyist and often commissioners travel to Salem to voice support for individual bills, Anderson said.

And the two commissioners recommended that county salaries should not be left to a vote of the public, but should be controlled by an independent salary commission.

"As long as the voters have the option of increasing salaries, it'll never happen," McCoy said.

At its next meeting, the charter review committee will hear testimony from the county auditor, sheriff, and district attorney. The meeting will be at 7 p.m. Oct. 25 on the second floor of the Portland building.

PORTLAND

COMMUNITY
NEWS AND
FEATURES

Three commissioners offer recommendations

County board members give ideas for change to the charter committee

By **ELIZABETH MOORE**
of The Oregonian staff

Three of Multnomah County's commissioners offered an array of suggestions for improving county government Wednesday night, including a recommendation that sheriffs be appointed and that the board of commissioners be reduced from five to three members.

The 13-member county Charter Review Committee listened to the wish lists of Commissioners Pauline Anderson, Gretchen Kafoury and County Board Chairwoman

Gladys McCoy as part of its series of hearings on the Multnomah County charter.

The committee is charged with reviewing the county's charter and all aspects of the county government — a process that last occurred in 1984. If it finds areas that need improvement, it will forward suggestions to county residents for a vote next year.

McCoy told the committee she would like to see a governing body of five elected officials and that there's too much work for three policymakers to handle.

"I think that the system that we have works. If we leave what we have — it will work," she said.

But Kafoury and Anderson recommended that a county manager be hired to serve as county administrator and that commissioners work solely as policymakers. Under the cur-

rent system, the board chairwoman is the county administrator and also must work to help create county policies.

"It's very confusing because the system isn't very clear about what the lines of responsibility are," Kafoury said.

Currently, the board chairwoman formulates the county budget and then presides over the discussion sessions regarding that budget, Kafoury said.

But McCoy said that it is critical to have a chairwoman be a member of the board of commissioners because it creates better communication among board members.

On other subjects, McCoy and Anderson spoke in favor of having an appointed sheriff, instead of an elected one. Anderson said that she would support a plan that would have the sheriff supervising law enforcement in the county and a separate corrections manager

overseeing county jails.

Anderson and McCoy also agreed that the county should be allowed to have a lobbyist at the state Legislature. Existing rules prohibit a county lobbyist and often commissioners travel to Salem to voice support for individual bills, Anderson said.

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Portland will fund centers, but debate goes on

City and county differ on who pays for what under 1983 resolution

By SARAH CARLIN AMES
of The Oregonian staff

3/1/90

Portland Mayor Bud Clark conceded one point to Multnomah County on Wednesday: The city will pay to run the eight senior service centers.

But Clark wasn't giving up the whole game. He and Gladys McCoy, chairwoman of the county Board of Commissioners, still have many rounds to go. For more than a year they have been struggling over which government has to pay for what. The struggle may be quieter after Wednesday's announcement, but it will continue.

Although the senior centers will get city money, the debate now will turn to other programs such as police service, water service, aid to the homeless and anti-prostitution programs.

Commissioners on both sides have become frustrated that the whole range of issues is so far from resolved.

"This is all the same taxpayers' money," said county Commissioner Gretchen Kafoury, who is running for the Portland City Council. "I think it's pathetic and tragic."

"The people don't like to see their leaders arguing," Clark said. "But sometimes that's necessary to get political action."

Clark and McCoy have met several times, but are not ready to agree on much.

McCoy is still wary of Clark. Last year she thought he had promised to keep paying for the senior centers only to realize that Clark was still talking about giving them no money. She would not make any comment on Clark's turnaround on the senior centers until

she talked to him and knew more specifics.

McCoy's press aide, Terri Duffy, said that Clark had promised Wednesday to give "concrete details" to McCoy.

The senior centers are located throughout the city-county area from Southwest and Northwest Portland to as far east as Gresham.

Turf battles and questions of authority are natural as Multnomah County and Portland try to serve overlapping constituencies.

The county's control has been whittled away as cities within it — notably Portland — grew. In some cases, governments offered the same services. To cut costs and duplication, the city and county in 1983 approved "Resolution A."

It said that the city should provide urban services, such as neighborhood parks and policing, and that the county should concentrate on human services and corrections.

While the county still provides many services countywide — jails and health clinics are high-profile examples — it provides others, such as roads or policing, only in unincorporated areas.

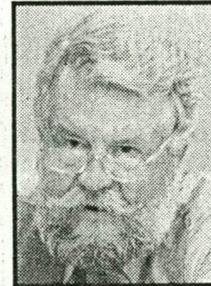
The basis of Clark's argument is this: Portland taxpayers pay just as much county tax as the county residents outside the city pay. If the county offers more services to the non-city residents — which it does — Portland taxpayers are subsidizing services for others.

In many ways, Resolution A is working.

Portland has worked to annex areas within its urban services boundary, although not as quickly as some county officials would like. And the county has given up some sheriff's deputies, who were transferred to the Port-



McCoy



Clark



Kafoury

land Police Bureau. Some human service programs within the city have been shifted to the county, and all roads within Portland are now the city's responsibility.

But as Clark said Wednesday, "We still have to settle some things."

He said that he had accepted McCoy's argument that the county should offer "essential services for those most at need."

But he said the county had helped him change his mind by "coming to the table and . . . giving us some promises down the road — giving some indication down the line that they will take care of some other problems, too."

He would not say exactly how he thought the county had promised to help the city. But the "essential services" definition could be applied to several other human service programs that Clark has said he would like to unload from the city budget.

They would include homeless programs, the Council for Prostitution Alternatives, and a van service that takes intoxicated people to a detox center. The combination of programs costs the city more than \$300,000 a year.

But Clark also has brought up other beefs.

He is not happy that the county board allowed the new Rockwood Water District to cover areas that eventually will become part

of Portland under annexations. The Water Bureau is supposed to serve city residents.

Clark also has complained that the county sheriff's department is adding more deputies and isn't giving up its policing duties.

He criticized the sheriff's department for taking on contract projects — such as patrols at the Columbia Villa housing project, or work for the state Marine Board — in which outside agencies pay for extra deputies. He said that the deputies shouldn't train Rose Festival drivers and escort princesses while Portland police are forced to take emergency calls in Dunthorpe, an unincorporated area.

Such arguments make Sheriff Bob Skipper angry. Portland police turned down the chance to patrol Columbia Villa, and Skipper said that he is hiring new deputies only to replace retiring ones. His deputies answer calls in east Portland proportionally more often than Portland police answer calls in Dunthorpe, he said.

Only 33 deputies — about six cars a shift — patrol a scattered territory with 75,000 residents, Skipper said. Three times as many do other, countywide jobs, he said, such as river patrol or guarding jails.

"I think he needs to come out and have a conversation with me and and say, 'Bob, what have you got?'" Skipper said of Clark. "I feel that a meeting is long overdue."

Clark said he'd like to resolve some of the nagging responsibility questions by April's public budget hearings. He anticipates more top level staff work — the sort of negotiations that his aides did that led to Wednesday's announcement. Full-blown public discussions are not part of his game plan to win agreements.

"I hope we'll get them done outside of that area," Clark said. "But if it is necessary, we will have public testimony."

Panel to seek pay raises for county elected officials

By ELIZABETH MOORE

of The Oregonian staff

A citizen commission has recommended annual pay increases for Multnomah County elected officials.

But the panel says that the county's elected officials must convince voters that they are worthy of the proposed salary gains before such raises are made.

The Multnomah County Salary Review Commission recommended that pay hikes for county commissioners, the sheriff and district attorney be put on the the May 15 ballot.

Multnomah County voters rejected one-time pay increases for their elected officials in 1986 and 1988 elections. The new proposal recommends an annual salary increase of 5 per-

cent or matching the inflation rate, whichever is less.

Salary committee member Keith Crawford said, for example, that if the Consumer Price Index rose 3 percent in 1990 and a commissioner earned \$33,000, the commissioner's salary would increase to \$33,990 in 1991.

Commissioners now earn \$33,346 annually, the commission chairwoman \$43,180 and the sheriff \$46,000. The district attorney, whose salary is paid both by the county and the state, earns about \$67,200 a year, according to his office.

Crawford said all the elected officials reported that they work at least 50 hours a week.

The sheriff last received a raise in 1982, Crawford said. Bob Skipper, who was elected

last May, took a \$12,000 pay cut from his job as assistant sheriff to become sheriff, Crawford said. He said that District Attorney Michael Schruck has not received a raise since 1981.

Crawford said that the five county commissioners have not received a pay raise or annual cost of living adjustment since 1981.

"They are the only people paid by Multnomah County who do not get a cost of living adjustment," Crawford said.

Rand Sherwood, another committee member, pointed out that a survey conducted in November showed that 53 percent of the registered voters opposed granting county elected officials a raise, that is until they were educated about the jobs and pay structure of the commissioners. After learning more about county elected officials, 51 percent of those sur-

veyed said that they would support a pay increase.

"One of the big things we found is that voters really aren't aware of all the duties of the elected commissioners and the chair," Crawford said. Both Crawford and Sherwood encouraged the elected officials to educate the public about their jobs.

The survey showed that voters would support small annual increases instead of a large one-time increase.

Sherwood said that the salary review commission studied the pay scale of 11 counties and cities of comparable size — such as Fresno and Sacramento, Calif. — and it determined that Multnomah County officials are paid much less than persons in comparable positions.

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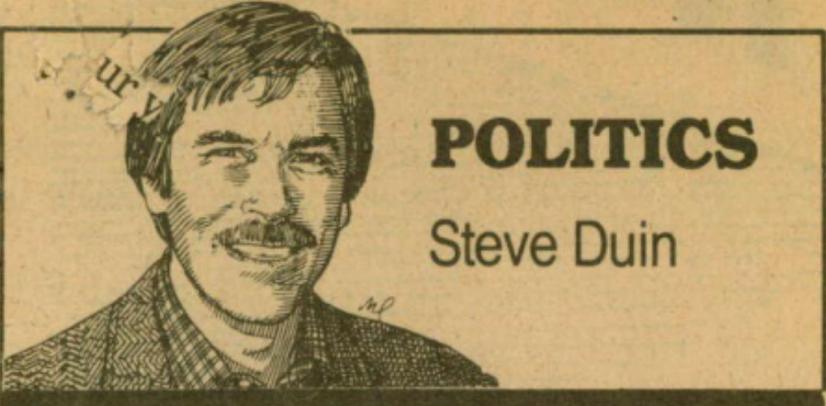
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Lighting a fire under the county chair

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Along came Bauman with a different plan: a new office that would coordinate all justice programs except those dealing with prosecution and incarceration.

Because the board, not the chair, would appoint the head of that office, McCoy opposed the plan. Bauman quickly secured three more votes from Commissioners Gretchen Kafoury, Pauline Anderson and Sharron Kelley and passed the plan over McCoy's objections.

Three months later, Bauman insists McCoy's office has done nothing to get moving on a project that increases his stature at her expense. He's lost patience, and he is not appeased by McCoy's analysis of his temperament.

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Bauman chides McCoy for a variety of managerial sins, then notes, "And there's a growing desperation about the upcoming election. She doesn't have much of a record to stand on, and she's grasping at anything to put in her quiver."

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Other county sources would, insisting that Dolan drove at least two commissioners — Kafoury and Anderson — nuts.

From McCoy's point of view, Bauman won't quit stepping on her heels until he can put his feet up in the county chair. Then again, from where McCoy sits, every Cassius has a lean and hungry look. She has, one commissioner said, "a healthy paranoia about people running against her." That doesn't make for good working relationships.

McCoy's focus is too narrow, and she is frequently caught doing the right thing when the county needs things done right.

But she deserves credit for repairing the Department of Human Services, securing jail space and an additional county prosecutor, hiring some good managers and, in the face of deplorable opposition, promoting in-school teen health clinics.

Only one in six county residents knows McCoy is the county chair, but — according to the county's own polling — she is still twice as well-known as any other commissioner. She should easily regain her seat . . . if the seat still exists.

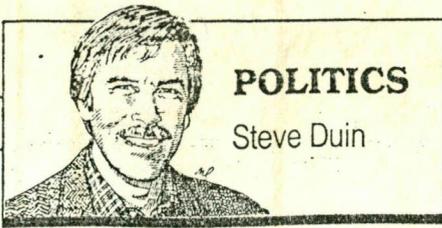
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That way, McCoy — who's up for re-election in May — won't be locked into a new four-year term by the time the committee makes up its mind.

No one is suggesting that there are purely political reasons behind this request. Bauman and Kafoury — who will leave her seat next year — both favor three-member commissions in Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties and an eventual merger of the three county commissions.

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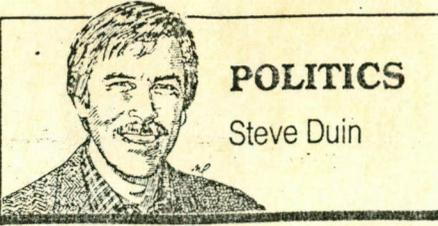
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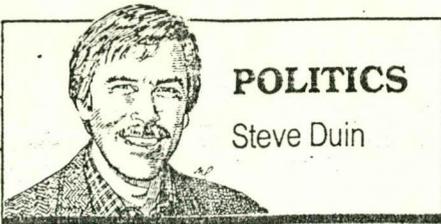
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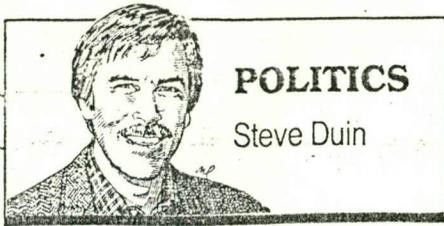
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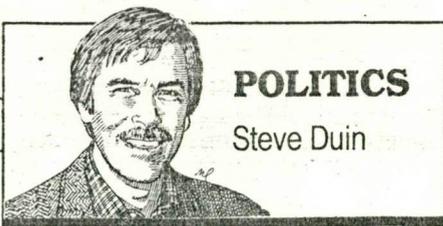
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PORTLAND

COMMUNITY
NEWS AND
FEATURES

Three commissioners offer recommendations

County board members give ideas for change to the charter committee

By ELIZABETH MOORE

of The Oregonian staff

Three of Multnomah County's commissioners offered an array of suggestions for improving county government Wednesday night, including a recommendation that sheriffs be appointed and that the board of commissioners be reduced from five to three members.

The 13-member county Charter Review Committee listened to the wish lists of Commissioners Pauline Anderson, Gretchen Kafoury and County Board Chairwoman

Gladys McCoy as part of its series of hearings on the Multnomah County charter.

The committee is charged with reviewing the county's charter and all aspects of the county government — a process that last occurred in 1984. If it finds areas that need improvement, it will forward suggestions to county residents for a vote next year.

McCoy told the committee she would like to see a governing body of five elected officials and that there's too much work for three policymakers to handle.

"I think that the system that we have works. If we leave what we have — it will work," she said.

But Kafoury and Anderson recommended that a county manager be hired to serve as county administrator and that commissioners work solely as policymakers. Under the cur-

rent system, the board chairwoman is the county administrator and also must work to help create county policies.

"It's very confusing because the system isn't very clear about what the lines of responsibility are," Kafoury said.

Currently, the board chairwoman formulates the county budget and then presides over the discussion sessions regarding that budget, Kafoury said.

But McCoy said that it is critical to have a chairwoman be a member of the board of commissioners because it creates better communication among board members.

On other subjects, McCoy and Anderson spoke in favor of having an appointed sheriff, instead of an elected one. Anderson said that she would support a plan that would have the sheriff supervising law enforcement in the county and a separate corrections manager

overseeing county jails.

Anderson and McCoy also agreed that the county should be allowed to have a lobbyist at the state Legislature. Existing rules prohibit a county lobbyist and often commissioners travel to Salem to voice support for individual bills, Anderson said.

And the two commissioners recommended that county salaries should not be left to a vote of the public, but should be controlled by an independent salary commission.

"As long as the voters have the option of increasing salaries, it'll never happen," McCoy said.

At its next meeting, the charter review committee will hear testimony from the county auditor, sheriff, and district attorney. The meeting will be at 7 p.m. Oct. 25 on the second floor of the Portland building.

Vanden Berg urges all citizens

By E. J. FLANNERY
For the Mid-County Memo

2/90

"It probably all started out when my children went to school," says La Velle Vanden Berg, thoughtfully.

As the mother of six, she has cause to be thoughtful.

"I became involved in a number of associations: PTA, advisory committees, two fund-raising. One thing led to another."

Vanden Berg has worked at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs regional office for 15 years, the past five as personnel officer. Her responsibilities

include hiring, labor relations, employee relations and advising management. On her own time, though, she is still involved in her community here in the Mid-County.

Eight years ago she was appointed to the now-defunct Multnomah County Juvenile Services Commission.

"That sparked my interest," says Vanden Berg. "My first love is young people."

Presently, she is on the board of Open Meadow Learning Center, an alternative school; a board member for Grand Court Living, a complex which is being developed to provide independent living for the physically handicapped; and on the Multnomah County Charter Review Commission. It was in her latter manifestation that she spoke to *The Memo*.

"I became involved in the charter review indirectly through Barbara Roberts. She was on the school board, and because I was somewhat active I came to know her. Through her I became involved in juvenile services. When the charter review came up, Frank Roberts remembered me."

Vanden Berg explains that the review commission consists of 13 members, all appointed by the state senator for that senate district. There must be an equal representation of Democrats and Republicans.

"To understand why the charter is being revised, first you have to look at what home rule is," says Vanden Berg. "Multnomah County adopted home rule in 1967. Before, counties operated as agents of the state, but in 1958 there was an amendment to the state constitution, and in 1973 state law granted all counties powers to expand broad home rule authority."

She goes on to explain that the county then sets up a charter that describes the number of commissioners to be on the board, whether they are to be elected or appointed (in Multnomah County they are elected), their qualifications, tenure, salary, powers and duties. The charter, says Vanden Berg, gives the commissioners power to exercise authority, and Oregon statutes control the functions and duties of the board.

"Any changes in the charter must go to the people. Of course, there may not be any changes," says Vanden Berg. "For the average citizen, it's too complex to take the time to figure it out. That's probably why there is little citizen involvement. If a citizen addressed one or two issues that were of importance to him or her, and contacted the commissioners — right now we are soliciting input on any issue covered by the charter. We want to get a really broad background."

In February, the charter review commissioners decide whether they want to recommend any changes to the voters. There are three possible changes under consideration.

"One, should Multnomah County have a lobbyist? I am not speaking for the charter commission now, this is my own opinion — all other counties, I believe, have a lobbyist, and for a county of our size, where the bulk of the population is, not to have a lobbyist is a pretty sad state of affairs."

to get involved with changing their world



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INVOLVED WOMAN — With a love of people, La Velle Vanden Berg is an active member of the community and wants to see others join in.

"Two, the county chair position has both legislative and executive powers, while the four representatives have strictly legislative duties. Should the chair not have both legislative and executive powers, and should we maybe have a county manager instead of a chair? I think that we need to give the position a little more time to work it out, and maybe not make a recommendation on it this time."

"Three, should the sheriff be elected or appointed? I can see the arguments on both sides of this issue, and I don't have an opinion."

Somehow Vanden Berg has swept through the process and clearly stated the objectives of the charter review commission. She goes on to explain what goes on at the county level of government.

"I don't think the average county resident is aware of the areas county is involved with. We have taxes, elections, animal control, parks, Multnomah County Fair, land use planning, the library, senior services, criminal prosecution, juvenile services, community corrections, mental health, public health," she reels off. "That just gives you an idea. There are five major departments: human services, justice services, environmental services, general services, and nondepartmental services, which is a catch-all for whatever doesn't fall into the other departments."

She forecasts interesting times for Multnomah County in the coming decade and puts in a bid for more individual participation.

"It's actually an exciting 10 years for the decade preceding the turn of the century," says Vanden Berg. "We're growing by leaps and bounds. The East County is eventually going to have more of a voice. We need to be progressive, to be forward-looking, to be innovative. We need to look at perhaps joining forces in some intergovernmental efforts, which would help us both to save money and not to duplicate services."

Vanden Berg says that there are a number of advisory boards looking for volunteers.

"I would love to see more citizen involvement. Call Gladys McCoy's office for information. It involves maybe a meeting a month, but pretty soon you get hooked."

Vanden Berg would like to see the community more fairly represented.

"All too often the more vocal groups and

constituents represent a minority viewpoint, and because they are willing to take the time and effort they can have an impact that far exceeds their percentage of the community. I have to admire them for perseverance and diligence."

What makes Vanden Berg herself run? She says she can't give a single answer.

"There are three areas that are very important to me. Obviously, my family; my children are wonderful children and they are my friends. Next, my work; I love what I do and feel I make a certain contribution by being here. And also my community involvement. It's so rewarding, because in some small way, I am impacting on people who have a need — high-risk youth especially."

The toughest time of her life was the child-rearing years.

"Raising six children, going into it with absolutely no knowledge whatsoever, was one of the toughest times of my life, but also the most rewarding. I was trying to be a good parent and to teach my children a set of values."

All the children are grown now, and there are eight grandchildren.

"My life is very satisfying. I like what I'm doing. I'm a very fortunate person. I look for the good in people, and I have worked hard at becoming the kind of person I wanted to be — an open, caring, somewhat informed person who is willing to change. I'm not sure I succeed 100 percent of the time, but I do work at it."

The one thing she would change in others is the apathy she sees here towards getting involved and having a voice in local issues.

"We don't really appreciate our opportunity in America to help shape events and government. I would love to see people become involved. I would urge any citizen to contact me — I'm in the book — or the charter review commission's administrator, William C. Rapp at 248-3525 to answer questions or take information."

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"There are three areas that are very important to me. Obviously, my family; my children are wonderful children and they are my friends. Next, my work; I love what I do and feel I make a certain contribution by being here. And also my community involvement. It's so rewarding, because in some small way I am impacting on people who have a need — high-risk youth especially."

The toughest time of her life was the child-rearing years.

"Raising six children, going into it with absolutely no knowledge whatsoever, was one of the toughest times of my life, but also the most rewarding. I was trying to be a good parent and to teach my children a set of values."

All the children are grown now, and there are eight grandchildren.

"My life is very satisfying. I like what I'm doing. I'm a very fortunate person. I look for the good in people, and I have worked hard at becoming the kind of person I wanted to be — an open, caring, somewhat informed person who is willing to change. I'm not sure I succeed 100 percent of the time, but I do work at it."

The one thing she would change in others is the apathy she sees here towards getting involved and having a voice in local issues.

"We don't really appreciate our opportunity in America to help shape events and government. I would love to see people become involved. I would urge any citizen to contact me — I'm in the book — or the charter review commission's administrator, William C. Rapp at 248-3525 to answer questions or take information."

Vanden Berg urges all citizens

By E. J. FLANNERY
For the Mid-County Memo

2/90

"It probably all started out when my children went to school," says La Velle Vanden Berg, thoughtfully.

As the mother of six, she has cause to be thoughtful.

"I became involved in a number of associations: PTA, advisory committees, two fund-raising. One thing led to another."

Vanden Berg has worked at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs regional office for 15 years, the past five as personnel officer. Her responsibilities

include hiring, labor relations, employee relations and advising management. On her own time, though, she is still involved in her community here in the Mid-County.

Eight years ago she was appointed to the now-defunct Multnomah County Juvenile Services Commission.

"That sparked my interest," says Vanden Berg. "My first love is young people."

Presently, she is on the board of Open Meadow Learning Center, an alternative school; a board member for Grand Court Living, a complex which is being developed to provide independent living for the physically handicapped; and on the Multnomah County Charter Review Commission. It was in her latter manifestation that she spoke to *The Memo*.

"I became involved in the charter review indirectly through Barbara Roberts. She was on the school board, and because I was somewhat active I came to know her. Through her I became involved in juvenile services. When the charter review came up, Frank Roberts remembered me."

Vanden Berg explains that the review commission consists of 13 members, all appointed by the state senator for that senate district. There must be an equal representation of Democrats and Republicans.

"To understand why the charter is being revised, first you have to look at what home rule is," says Vanden Berg. "Multnomah County adopted home rule in 1967. Before, counties operated as agents of the state, but in 1958 there was an amendment to the state constitution, and in 1973 state law granted all counties powers to expand broad home rule authority."

She goes on to explain that the county then sets up a charter that describes the number of commissioners to be on the board, whether they are to be elected or appointed (in Multnomah County they are elected), their qualifications, tenure, salary, powers and duties. The charter, says Vanden Berg, gives the commissioners power to exercise authority, and Oregon statutes control the functions and duties of the board.

"Any changes in the charter must go to the people. Of course, there may not be any changes," says Vanden Berg. "For the average citizen, it's too complex to take the time to figure it out. That's probably why there is little citizen involvement. If a citizen addressed one or two issues that were of importance to him or her, and contacted the commissioners — right now we are soliciting input on any issue covered by the charter. We want to get a really broad background."

In February, the charter review commissioners decide whether they want to recommend any changes to the voters. There are three possible changes under consideration.

"One, should Multnomah County have a lobbyist? I am not speaking for the charter commission now, this is my own opinion — all other counties, I believe, have a lobbyist, and for a county of our size, where the bulk of the population is, not to have a lobbyist is a pretty sad state of affairs."

to get involved with changing their world



By E.J. FLANNERY/ for *The Mid-county Memo*.
INVOLVED WOMAN — With a love of people, La Velle Vanden Berg is an active member of the community and wants to see others join in.

"Two, the county chair position has both legislative and executive powers, while the four representatives have strictly legislative duties. Should the chair not have both legislative and executive powers, and should we maybe have a county manager instead of a chair? I think that we need to give the position a little more time to work it out, and maybe not make a recommendation on it this time.

"Three, should the sheriff be elected or appointed? I can see the arguments on both sides of this issue, and I don't have an opinion."

Somehow Vanden Berg has swept through the process and clearly stated the objectives of the charter review commission. She goes on to explain what goes on at the county level of government.

"I don't think the average county resident is aware of the areas county is involved with. We have taxes, elections, animal control, parks, Multnomah County Fair, land use planning, the library, senior services, criminal prosecution, juvenile services, community corrections, mental health, public health," she reels off. "That just gives you an idea. There are five major departments: human services, justice services, environmental services, general services, and nondepartmental services, which is a catch-all for whatever doesn't fall into the other departments."

She forecasts interesting times for Multnomah County in the coming decade and puts in a bid for more individual participation.

"It's actually an exciting 10 years for the decade preceding the turn of the century," says Vanden Berg. "We're growing by leaps and bounds. The East County is eventually going to have more of a voice. We need to be progressive, to be forward-looking, to be innovative. We need to look at perhaps joining forces in some intergovernmental efforts, which would help us both to save money and not to duplicate services."

Vanden Berg says that there are a number of advisory boards looking for volunteers.

"I would love to see more citizen involvement. Call Gladys McCoy's office for information. It involves maybe a meeting a month, but pretty soon you get hooked."

Vanden Berg would like to see the community more fairly represented.

"All too often the more vocal groups and

constituents represent a minority viewpoint, and because they are willing to take the time and effort they can have an impact that far exceeds their percentage of the community. I have to admire them for perseverance and diligence."

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Part of the reason behind the proposal is to eliminate a suggested Office of Justice Planning that would have administered county corrections programs. The sheriff and district attorney opposed the proposal, said Hank Miggins, McCoy's executive assistant.

The director of the proposed office would have evaluated long-term justice goals and would have given policy and budget suggestions regarding county justice programs, including programs administered by the sheriff and district attorney.

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Miggins said the commissioners lost their enthusiasm for the idea.

However, Commissioner Gretchen Kafoury, who is the board liaison to justice services programs, said the commissioners may reconsider hiring a person who could provide an objective opinion regarding justice needs but did not oversee either the sheriff or district attorney.

"The board will get back to realizing that they're not getting the information they need," Kafoury said.

Kafoury said the department rearrangements could provide more streamlined services to county consumers.

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She added that county officials had been discussing creating a Health Department for several months because the existing Human Services Department had grown too large.

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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1989

Speak up on county reform

Much of the testimony to date before the Multnomah County Charter Review Committee points to reducing the Board of Commissioners to three from five members. That would be a step backward.

Multnomah County was governed by a three-member commission for most of its existence. Voters endorsed the current five-member commission to cure some of the ills of the smaller body.

The three-member commission fosters politics of personality. It too easily is dominated by one person, and where it is not, a 2-1 split is common. Where the split occurs, and the deciding third vote is absent, decision-making can come to a halt.

Furthermore, five, seven or possibly nine commissioners would be more representative of the diverse interests of this county than would a three-person governing panel. Add a professional manager, hired by a commission created to make policy, not meddle in management, and Multnomah County would be on its way to the efficiencies in public service taxpayers deserve.

A properly designed larger commission wouldn't cost more than a three-member panel. A larger body could be part-time or even volunteer, since the workload could be more broadly dispersed.

Ideally, the larger-commission design also would restrict staffing. A policy-making commission might require some staff to help it analyze

and thus keep rein on complex budget and other proposals from a professional manager. But individual commissioners with only policy-making responsibilities need staff members only if they seek political advancement or to avoid some of the work they ought to be doing.

The Charter Review Committee is aiming for the November 1990 general election, which should give the public time to help shape the proposals.

That is particularly important, since the county's state legislators, who appointed members of the committee, chose mostly persons employed by or otherwise closely linked to government. For example, two work for the county, two for the city of Portland, one for Gresham. Another is a federal employee and another a teacher.

Issues in addition to the number, pay and staffing of commissioners, include whether the sheriff should be hired or elected, whether service should be restricted to two terms, whether elected officials should resign their position to run for another office and whether the county should have a lobbyist, now prohibited.

If one item doesn't stimulate citizens to participate in the reform process, another should. Informed, broad public involvement now might give county government something it has lacked for years: a well-thought-out charter that residents aren't constantly trying to change.

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RAIN AND WIND

Rain and gusty southerly winds to 30 mph today. Showers in the afternoon. Highs, mid 40s; lows, mid and upper 30s.

DETAILS, D6.

SUNDAY

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Major changes in government?

County executive to unveil proposal for tackling growth

by Eric Pryne
Times staff reporter

King County Executive Tim Hill will propose tomorrow that county voters move to establish a regional government to grapple with growth.

In a speech to the County Council, Hill is expected to call for a petition campaign to elect citizen "freeholders" to draft a new "city-county" charter. That charter could shift power significantly among the 150-plus local governments within the county.

A draft of Hill's speech was obtained by The Times. In it, Hill says a new charter should establish a "two-tier" county government.

In such a system, cities and

other local governments would continue to provide many services. The new, second "tier" would be a regional authority, with power to cut across city limits and other jurisdictional lines to address big, growth-related issues such as land use and transportation.

No existing local government in the county has such sweeping power. "The major issues we face today are clearly beyond the reach of any one government," Hill says in the draft of his speech. "Our governmental structure has become part of the problem, rather than the solution."

Any charter that freeholders draft would require voter approval.

The process Hill proposes already is under way in Thurston County. Former state Sen. Dick Hemstad, R-Olympia, a Thurston County freeholder, calls it "a marvelously simple and awesomely powerful tool."

Hill's proposal comes on the

Please see **REGION** on A 7

How Hill's plan would work

Here are the steps supporters of King County Executive Tim Hill's freeholder proposal would have to take to achieve a new form of local government:

- Circulate petitions calling for election of citizen "freeholders" to draft a "city-county" charter.
- Collect signatures of at least 40,000 registered voters, the number needed to put the question on the ballot.
- If the petition campaign succeeds, the County Council sets a filing period for freeholder candidates. Freeholders must be registered voters and five-year county residents.
- The County Council also sets an election date.
- In that election, voters decide (1) whether they want the charter-drafting process to begin, and (2) which freeholder candidates to elect. Even those who vote "no" on the process can vote for candidates for freeholder.
- If voters say yes to the process, freeholders have almost a blank check to restructure local government in the county in their proposed charter.
- The freeholders submit their proposed charter.
- In a second election, voters decide whether to approve it.

*May I have
a copy of
this please*

resist because they fear regional government would limit their autonomy, Benson said. But Bob Neir, a Kirkland city councilman long active in regional forums, said that shouldn't be a problem.

"We already have a relationship with state government," he said of local governments. "They pass the legislation to which we must conform. We could have the same kind of relationship with a regional government — I don't see the problem."

Dave Bricklin, president of the Washington Environmental Council, said he is withholding judgment on Hill's proposal. "There are some decisions best made at the local level," he said, "but we don't leave it up to the people of Wyoming to decide if there should be a Yellowstone National Park. . . . There are decisions that should be made at a regional level."

Pat Strosahl, vice president of neighborhood-oriented Vision Seattle, agreed. "But if the regional body has the ability to impose on people on a wide variety of issues that are better decided at

ers and five-year residents of the county.

The number of freeholders can range in number from 15 to 25 — the County Council makes the decision — and they must be apportioned geographically by legislative district or County Council district.

In drafting a city-county charter, freeholders would have broad powers to revamp local government. Only the county prosecutor's office, the court system and schools would be off-limits.

Conceivably, the freeholders could call for merger of the county and its 29 cities — or creation of 29 new cities. The Constitution sets no limit on how long freeholders can take to draft their proposal before submitting it to voters.

King County voters approved a freeholder-drafted county charter in 1968. But that document dealt only with county government — it had no impact, made no changes in the structure or powers of cities such as Seattle, Bellevue and Renton. A city-county charter could have such scope.

REGION

continued from Page 1

heels of four forums last week to assess whether voters are ready to consider regional government. Those sessions were sponsored by members of the Municipal League, the League of Women Voters and other groups favoring such an overhaul.

In his speech, Hill calls governmental reorganization his top priority for 1990, and pledges his support to citizen groups working toward that goal.

"Our patchwork system of local government frustrates our efforts to provide meaningful management — to improve our transportation system, to protect our environment, and to care for our less fortunate citizens," Hill's speech says.

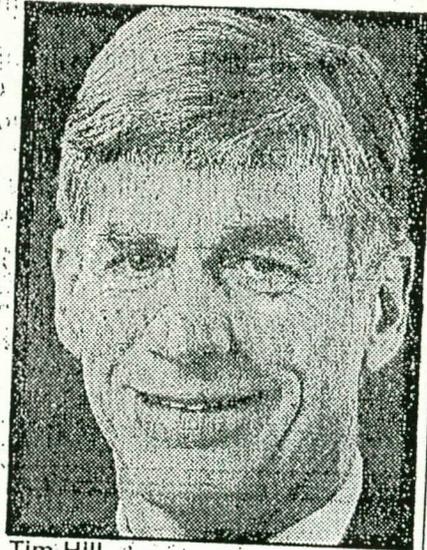
As an example, Hill cites the county's 1985 comprehensive plan, "hailed as the answer to our region's growth problems." Its effectiveness is limited because cities can ignore it, he says.

In his speech, the county executive says he respects local control. "But we must also recognize that on some issues, local control too often means a not-in-my-backyard attitude and the neglect of overriding regional concerns," he says.

Initial reaction to Hill's proposal was mixed.

"I think it's wonderful," said University of Washington professor Brewster Denny, who headed a commission that recommended a nearly identical overhaul process in the early 1970s. "My own deep hope is that this is an idea whose time has come. . . . You can't get more grassroots, more bottom-up, than freeholders."

Seattle City Councilman George Benson said he agrees with Hill's perception of the problem. "I don't know if this is the solution," he said, "but we at least need to look at it."



Tim Hill
To seek "two-tier" government

the local level, that would concern me," he said.

In Thurston County, voters last November elected 15 freeholders and authorized them to draft a new charter by a 60-40 ratio. There, too, the move was fueled by widespread alarm over growth and concern that solutions were beyond the scope of existing governments.

While the Thurston County freeholders have been meeting for only a month, many observers expect they, too, will call for two-tier government.

"City-county" charters were authorized by an amendment to the state Constitution approved by voters in 1972. But such a charter never has been drafted or adopted.

In King County, the process would work like this: 40,000 voters — 10 percent of the number that voted last November — must sign petitions calling for election of freeholders to put the question on the ballot.

Voters then would decide whether to authorize the endeavor and which freeholder candidates to elect. In Thurston County, candidates endorsed by a slow-growth group won 12 of 15 seats.

A PATH TO REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

Frustration, but no outline for change

by Eric Pryne
Times staff reporter

Judging from what was said at four forums last week, King County Executive Tim Hill's call for a regional government to handle growth-related problems could face two significant obstacles:

■ Those who do favor an overhaul in local government structure differ on whether such a big change is politically feasible, and on what form it should take.

■ The people who have led some of the most visible counterattacks against growth are skeptical — if not downright hostile — toward regional government as a solution.

The four meetings were sponsored by the Municipal League, League of Women Voters, King County 2000, the University of Washington graduate school of public affairs, and the county's chambers of commerce. Members of the groups have been meeting for several months to explore regional government.

Tomorrow Hill is expected to call for election of "freeholders" to draft a "city-county" charter that would include some county-wide authority. While the idea did come up at the forums, it was not linked to Hill.

Former Seattle city councilwoman Phyllis Lamphere, who organized the four sessions in Bellevue, Kent, Federal Way and Seattle, said they answered one question for her, but raised several others.

"I think there is a climate for change," she said. "The question is how much, how soon and what

direction."

Plenty of frustration was vented at the meetings, which drew about 300 people. But the forums produced no blueprints.

Katy Johnson of the Sensible Growth Alliance, the slow-growth group that launched new County Councilman Brian Dardowski, said people want more local control. "To advocate regional government is to swim against that tide," she told the Bellevue forum.

Margaret Pageler of Vision Seattle, the group that pushed the Citizens Alternative Plan (CAP) to limit downtown development in Seattle, agreed. As an alternative to regional government, she and Johnson pushed a state planning bill drafted by environmentalists, slow-growth groups and neighborhood activists. It would require cities and counties to adopt comprehensive plans that conform to state-wide standards.

Even supporters of regional government who spoke at the forums weren't of one mind. Hill's predecessor, former county executive Randy Revelle, told the Kent audience he's attracted to the idea of "two-tier" government: A regional authority to handle regional issues such as land-use planning and transportation, county-wide, without regard to city limits; and local governments to deliver local services such as police and fire



Phyllis
Lamphere



Randy
Revelle

protection.

That's just what Hill is expected to propose tomorrow.

"But I think it's doomed to failure," Revelle added, apparently without knowledge of Hill's plans. "I just don't think this region will accept that kind

of dramatic reform before the turn of the century."

Smaller steps might be more realistic, Revelle said.

Craig Gannett, a Seattle attorney active in King County 2000, called for merger of King County and Metro, the county-wide intergovernment federation responsible for sewage treatment and transit, as well as consolidation of many of the county's 100-plus fire, water, sewer and other special districts.

"There is no single government capable of dealing with problems that cross city limits, he said. "People have to have a degree in government just to understand what the mechanisms of government are and who makes decisions."

But Richard Albrecht, a Boeing Co. vice president who helped write the King County charter in the 1960s, said local government is fragmented for a reason.

"We like it that way," he said. "We don't trust any government to do everything for us. We like inefficient government."

And former Seattle City Councilwoman Jeannette Williams said

voters aren't as interested in restructuring government as they are in finding solutions to growth-related problems.

"People are not as upset about Metro as they are about being stuck on the freeway unable to move," she said. "You can't try and change everything overnight."

There was talk of reorganizing the Metro Council, which now has no directly elected members. There was talk of establishing "service districts" to provide day-to-day government for unincorporated areas, freeing the county to focus on regional matters.

There was talk of giving Metro jurisdiction over land-use planning, water supply and other issues. And there was plenty of discussion of the route Hill has chosen: election of freeholders who could, with voter approval, redraw the political map.

Mayors of Federal Way and Sea-Tac, new cities that incorporated last year to gain greater local control, agreed some regional-wide authority may be needed.

"We can improve our local streets," said Federal Way Mayor Debbie Ertel, "but it doesn't do much good if we can't get on the freeway."

The next steps? First, Lamphere said, questionnaires distributed at the four forums to gauge depth of interest in government overhaul will be tabulated. Then the Municipal League, League of Women Voters and King County 2000 will decide what comes next.

And the discussion and debate will continue. Lamphere says she's already been asked to arrange a program for a service club in Kent.