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ADLC study commission to take closer look at charter

By Cathy Young
Leader Staff Writer

The Anaconda-Deer Lodge County Study Commission voted Thursday to further study the county's charter form of government before conducting additional public hearings.

"I think we should continue to study and focus in on the (current) charter," commissioner member Mike Grayson said, "and see if we can fine-tune some things in the charter."

Tom Radonich agreed, saying that he thinks "people are happy with the charter form of government."

The study commission, elected in November to study the current form of government and decide whether any proposed changes should be placed on the 1996 ballot, will now turn its attention to the various provisions and conditions of the charter itself.

"We can take the charter article by article, reviewing what is presently there, making suggestions and changes that we can do to make it better," Radonich said.

Sid Beausoleil, the only member of the audience to speak during the meeting, said "the administrative code is there I think the changes are going to have to be made. I don't think changing the charter is going to make much of a difference — the administrative code is how the whole (government) operates."

"I don't know whether it's the responsibility of the study commission to look at the administrative code," Radonich replied. "The study commission didn't draft the administrative code — that is not a part of the charter itself. We're here to address the charter at this time."

Commission members decided to begin interviewing county employees, department heads and local

volunteer boards and organizations to get ideas on what governmental changes might be wanted. Two public hearings conducted by the commission brought mostly comments about whether departments heads and other county officials should be appointed or elected.

Commission Chairperson Jake Maciag and Radonich will staff a booth during the county courthouse's Open House from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursday, April 6, to answer citizens' questions about the study process and distribute copies of the county charter.