

Picture of County Home Rule Begins to Take Shape

The Jackson county home rule study committee continued to work at the jigsaw puzzle of county government Thursday night in the basement meeting room of the Public Library of Medford and Jackson county.

So far this picture has begun to emerge:

A home rule charter may be desirable to broaden present county powers.

Under strong leadership by the county court county officers might be reorganized voluntarily.

A board of supervisors, under a charter, possibly representing nine districts in the county, is recommended.

A highly trained and educated administrative officer would be necessary with this board.

County Counsel

A county counsel is needed to provide full-time legal advice to county officers.

Personnel and purchasing officers might provide more uniformity and economy of county operations.

Some county officers under the board of supervisors or county court should be appointed, according to people interviewed.

County officers otherwise should be elected and operate on a non-partisan basis.

The present system of checks and balances provides some degree of consistency and protects the citizen.

An attorney well-versed in government functions should inform the committee just what unused powers are available to the county and probable areas of conflict with the state should a home rule charter be instituted.

Give Frank Appraisals

Former County Clerk, Mrs. Curtis L. Hopkins, and County Assessor Ray Schumacher Thursday night gave frank appraisals of the strengths and weaknesses of county government here and made suggestions.

Mrs. Hopkins' presentation was perhaps the most detailed the committee has received in interviews conducted with seven present and former county officials.

Mrs. Hopkins' appraisal was an accumulation of observations during her experience as a county official. County Assessor Ray Schumacher

agreed with many of her points.

Mrs. Hopkins' observations in question and answer form were:

Specific Problems

Q—What specific county problems do you know of that have been referred to the state legislature for action?

A—Many bills are presented by various organizations of county officials. In 1957, I presented bills on behalf of the state clerks' association ranging from procedure in making bounty payments to a Saturday closing for the courthouse.

Q—What items can we do for ourselves more efficiently than on directive from the state?

A—Appraisal and assessment of property, administration of local welfare and allied problems and determining local needs for sanitation and water supply without special elections and formation of countless districts.

Expanding Population

Q—What county problems will develop as a result of expanding population?

A—Sanitation in rural and suburban areas. Problems in water supply, health services, fire protection, police protection, to mention a few.

Q—Would savings result if the need to create special districts were avoided by establishment of home rule?

A—Elimination of special elections, paper work and separate records would result in savings, and provide more efficient administration.

Q—Is there any lack of fiscal capacity or authority under the existing system?

Proved Healthy Brake

A—The present system has proved a healthy brake on over zealous or too easily pressured public officials.

Q—Is meaningful administrative planning hampered by our present system? Or would county government perhaps be more effective if the supervisors could exert more authority over other offices?

A—No qualifications of education, training or experience are required to become a member of the county court. Too often county officials are unaware of the responsibilities that are their's and the relationship to other offices which affect their activity.

A—Would career office officials be an advantage to the county? Should county offices be nonpartisan?

Career Officials

A—Other than the law enforcement and judicial departments, all elective offices should be replaced by career officials, and be appointed on a strictly non-partisan basis.

Q—Would establishment of a central purchasing authority result in efficiency and savings?

A—If selected among properly trained and experienced applicants and paid a salary in keeping with his responsibilities such an officer could save as much as his salary or more.

Q—Do you feel there would be any advantage increasing the number of commissioners, perhaps electing them on a regional basis or even arranging for proportional representation?

Board of Supervisors

A—A board of supervisors should be elected, one from each of nine districts. Each would be paid a daily allowance and travel expenses. This board would replace the county court and special district and service boards.

Q—Are there any offices that you feel should be combined or duties shifted to another office for more efficient administration?

A—Suggested departments of divisions: administrative, assessor, fiscal division, purchasing authority, personnel department, engineering division, election department, health department.

All accounting, bookkeeping and payroll functions now duplicated in several departments should be transferred to a fiscal division. Tax collections should be removed from the sheriff's department and placed under this division. A separate elections department would provide better administration and satisfactory handling of elections, Mrs. Hopkins said.

Engineer Division

Buildings and maintenance, including custodial care and allied services now handled by the county court should come under the engineer division. A centralized microfilm, duplicating and printing service also is recommended.

A director of personnel would be appointed by the board of supervisors and be in charge of interviewing, hiring, classifying and reclassifying all personnel. The increment pay step plan has never been carried out completely which is unfair to chief deputies who have been with the county from 25 to 35 years, it was brought out.

Schumacher disagreed with the central purchasing plan.

No two offices use the same type of supplies, he said.

Avoid Laws

"My only criticism of home rule is that most of the people wanting home rule are trying to avoid some of the more restrictive laws. They cannot avoid these. Some of these laws could be changed under the present law," the county assessor said.

"The thing that concerns me is that we could have 36 different home rule charters in this state," he added.

Schumacher agreed with Mrs. Hopkins that a board of supervisors would provide more representative county government with district representation. County officials with higher qualifications are needed, he added. "This isn't the county of 30 years ago!"

Swimming Tickets On Sale by City

It's still December, but starting next week season swimming tickets for Medford's swimming pools will go on sale in the city hall.

Early? Perhaps, but the city is putting the swim tickets on sale with the idea that they can be used for Christmas gifts.

Persons purchasing the tickets will actually receive a gift certificate, which can later be traded in for a regular season ticket.

The tickets cost \$4 for children under 12; \$5.50 for students ages 12 through 18; \$7.50 for persons over 18 and adults; and \$17.50 for family tickets. Bearers of tickets will also receive free swim lessons.

The swim passes will be good at both the Jackson and Hawthorne park pools.

ACTRESS' CHILD BORN

Los Angeles — (UPI) — Actress Ann Blyth Friday night gave birth to her fourth child, a 6-pound, 9-ounce boy named Terrance. St. Vincent's hospital reported. Both mother and child were "doing fine," attendants said. Miss Blyth is married to Dr. James V. McNulty, a pediatrician who is the brother of singer Dennis Day.



EMERGENCY RESCUE UNIT—The Central Point Volunteer fire department is finishing work on their new emergency rescue unit. The unit is available for use by all Rogue valley areas. Donald Milligan, fire chief, is pictured with the unit. Milligan and the 20 volunteer firemen have installed all equipment. A resuscitator, portable generator and underwater diving lung are included in special emergency devices.

Central Point Firemen Add Last Touches to Mobile Rescue Unit

Central Point—The Central Point Volunteer fire department is adding finishing touches to a new mobile emergency rescue unit which already has saved lives in the Rogue valley area.

The 20 volunteer firemen led by Donald Milligan, fire chief, recognized the need for such a unit about five months ago, and today it is in operation.

Private donations, fund raising projects and savings accumulated by the fire department financed the project. It is available for all emergency rescue operations in the Rogue valley area.

Reason for Unit

Milligan explains the idea behind the unit as the fact that "whenever there was an emergency, we always had trouble getting the necessary

equipment gathered together quickly."

Equipment now available in the mobile unit includes a resuscitator, 1,500 watt portable generator, underwater diving lung, stretcher, first aid equipment, grappling hooks and a set of hand tools.

An oxygen-acetylene cutting torch and hydraulic rescue device are immediate goals for new equipment, according to Milligan. A hydraulic unit can be used to pry apart collapsed metal and wooden wreckage, Milligan said. A torch can cut metal.

The firemen haven't developed the project without research. After they decided to go ahead each man gathered information on rescue operations that had been carried on in all parts of the U.S. Then they figured out just

what equipment each emergency called for. They had a list of basic needs after this research.

Sees Mobile Unit

Milligan had a chance to see mobile rescue units used by the Los Angeles fire department while in the city last August.

His information combined with that of each fireman gave the group an idea of what should be included. They purchased a panel truck as a first step. This was painted red. The resuscitator was then purchased. Most of the other equipment was already owned by the department.

Milligan says the unit has already been used several times in emergency rescues. It is credited with saving at least one life.

Education Officials Visit at Phoenix

Phoenix—Representative of the Oregon state system of higher education visited Phoenix and seniors at Phoenix High school Thursday.

The importance of education beyond high school, career opportunities, costs, scholarships, the mechanics of application and entrance and the importance of adequate preparation for college were discussed.

The sessions are conducted annually by the high school college relations committee with the cooperation of high schools to aid students to better prepare themselves for higher education.

MINE DEPTH

Average depth of U.S. underground coal mines is 190 feet.

Fire Truck Delivered To Roseburg Chief

Joe Jarvis, 1112 Reddy st., Medford, representative of the Coast Apparatus company, Martinez, Calif., last week delivered a new fire truck to the city of Roseburg.

The truck, a 1,000-gallon-per-minute pumper with a 500 gallon tank, replaces one destroyed in the blast in downtown Roseburg more than a year ago.

Fire Chief Don Stormer accepted the truck. Tests will be conducted on the vehicle later.

STUDENTS INJURED

New Brockton, Ala. — (UPI) — Forty-five training school pupils were hospitalized briefly Friday after their school bus hit a slow-moving freight train at a crossing here. The bus overturned, but none of the pupils was hurt seriously.

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