

2018 Commission Reorganization Evaluation

- The current commission organizational structures are effective and very efficient. Typically, the commission members spend 10-30 hours per week. There are weekly commission meetings and study session. Additional time and effort is spent in preparation for these meetings. In addition, commission members participate through various community board and activities.
 - The actual commission meetings are the shortest block of time each week.
 - Citizens wanting to know the actual happenings at commission meetings can attend meetings or go to social media. We will add study sessions soon so citizens can see all preliminary discussions and not just the final votes.
- The additional cost to increase the number of commissioners would take away funds that could be spent on much needed infrastructure problems, park renovations and other City priorities.
- The current commission size is working well. An increase in size will create additional management and communication issues without a clear benefit other than being bigger.
- There would be a vast amount of legal and procedural work to increase the commission size that would take considerable time and resources.
- The current focus should be on solving issues to continue the improvement of our community and to grow the population instead of spending the next 1-2 years on reorganization of our commission structure.
- We are in the midst of huge changes in society requiring schools and local government to address problems in much different ways from past generations. For example, the Mercury 7 project of USD 418 has been working with community people to address community issues to be improved.
- Improvement issues will require public/public partnerships between USD 418 and the City of McPherson and others. The City needs to continue strong public/public partnerships with McPherson County, Recreation Commission and State agencies.
- Additionally, there will be continued need for public/private partnerships with the YMCA, Circles, McPherson Hospital, McPherson Chamber of Commerce, Main Street, McPherson Opera House, McPherson Museum, Prairie View, and Central Kansas Foundation.
- The faith-based organizations such as the McPherson Ministerial Alliance, Churches United in Ministry, Mt. Hope Sanctuary, and various Omega Projects are essential partnerships.
- The partnership with the McPherson Humane Society is also important.
- There are other partnerships I did not highlight. These current and future partnerships involve the entire community. Many people are a part of decisions being made but simply adding two more commissioners to one side of the table would not increase the effectiveness of those partnerships.

Our commitment last fall was to evaluate the issue of moving from 3 to 5 members on the City Commission. We have conducted a thorough evaluation. There was a town hall meeting attended by 43 citizens. 8 citizens made comments after the City Attorney presented his written report. 4 citizens made their cases for increasing the size of the commission. 4 citizens made their cases for not changing at this time. Since the town hall meeting - starting in the parking lot, the vast majority of feedback I have received has been to keep addressing issues using our time, financial resources, and human resources utilizing the current City Commission structure of organization.

After weighing the pros and cons, citizen comments, the research by the City Attorney, evaluating the current opportunities for involvement in City boards and partnerships, and the trend for more and more uncontested elections in the region, I will not bring a motion to change the size of the City Commission. I do not believe that such an increase would address any of the needs of this community or be in McPherson's best interests.

I will support the purchase of cameras and software to enable viewing of City Commission meetings, study sessions, planning meetings, and zoning meetings at the convenience of the citizens. I will support the first Monday of each month to hold the City Commission meeting at 5:15 PM to allow citizens to attend in person. If these meetings are well attended, we can consider adding an additional meeting or change to this time on a regular basis. These suggestions would increase citizen knowledge of happenings and background to city issues.

I have represented the City in discussion to "build thriving communities". At a recent meeting on the labor pool CEDBR of W.S.U., it was reported that 3000 people are leaving Sedgwick County for rural communities annually. We are involved with the heartbeat of jobs by having about the best advanced manufacturing center in the central United States. Housing projects are starting this summer. Our schools and consultants in our community are emphasizing STEM programs. Education redesign is utilizing project-based learning to better prepare students for the future. The City has been working with students the last few years doing citizen education and seeking their ideas for amenities they would want in the future. This is where the governing bodies focus should be.

Interestingly, last week, Forbes magazine ran an article "Where Small Town America Is Thriving". McPherson was specifically mentioned as the 5th best small area for jobs in the country. McPherson is on the move. We have been focused on results and not politics. Political wrangling may make interesting news copy, but it does not produce thriving communities. We are a unique community in many ways. Many towns would like to be in our shoes. Let's stay focused on being the best we can be. If you have a passion for servant leadership, run for office, volunteer for a City organization, volunteer at one of the organizations that partners with the City. Follow the City on social media. Your involvement will make us better.