

# **PUBLIC NOTICE**

## **City of Hardin Government Study Review Commission Meeting Agenda**

January 21, 2026

5:30 p.m. City Council Chambers

Call to Order

Public comment

Agenda

1. Approve Minutes of previous meetings:
  - a. November 19, 2025
2. Tentative Report due February 18, 2026
  - a. Updates on status of Tentative Report
  - b. Hearing on Tentative Report February 18, 2026.
    - i. Time?
3. Resolution of Vacancy
  - a. Jason Stephenson

Adjourn

**Local Government Review Study Commission – City of Hardin**

Time table

**All meetings of the Study Commission are open to the public.**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
November 26, 2024	First Study Commission meeting, City Council Chambers
December 11, 2024	MSU Local Government Center Study Commission Training, Billings, MT
December 18, 2024	Regular monthly meeting of the Study Commission established to be held on the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 5:30 p.m., at City Council Chambers, 401 N. Cheyenne Ave., Hardin, MT 59034
February 19, 2025	Timetable formally adopted
March 19, 2025	1 <sup>st</sup> Public Hearing – to gather citizen input on the form, functions, powers and problems of city government.
February 18, 2026	Draft and adopt a Tentative Report
February 18, 2026	Public Hearing on Tentative Report
July 15, 2026	Adopt the Final Report
August 10, 2026	Provide Big Horn County with ballot certificate if a change is proposed to be placed on the June 2, 2026 ballot.
August – September 2026	If final report proposes alteration of local government, prepare public education materials to help citizens understand the proposal and compare the proposal with existing form, structures and powers
September-October 2026	Approve public education materials, and conduct public forum
November 3, 2026	Election Day – if voters approve a proposed alteration of the government, initiate transition planning for 90 days
January 1, 2027	Study Commission terms of office ends Adopt a transition advisory plan Deposit all minutes and other study commission documents with Big Horn County Clerk and Recorder Submit copy of the final report and any proposed changes to the MSU Local Government Center

REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE STUDY COMMISSION SHALL BE ON THE THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 5:30 P.M., AT THE HARDIN CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 401 N. CHEYENNE AVE., HARDIN, MT 59034

## Hardin Local Government Review Study Commission

November 19, 2025 Meeting Minutes

At 5:31 p.m., Chairperson Carolyn Dawes called the meeting to order. Present were Commissioners Carolyn Dawes and Randy Mercier. Commissioner Jason Stephenson was absent. Also present was Jordan Knudsen, ex-officio member.

Members of the public present: none

Public Comment: none.

Carolyn moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting of October 22, 2025, and Randy seconded. A voice vote was called, and the motion passed unanimously.

Website Update:

Carolyn stated that she emailed the website builder, but did not get a response by the time of the meeting. Carolyn wondered if having a website was still a good idea. Carolyn asked Jordan if the City had resources to build a website, and Jordan answered no. Carolyn suggested a prize or gift card to those that respond to a survey. Carolyn suggested a postcard mailed to voters with a survey link.

Carolyn asked permission of the commission to use another 15 minute phone call to the MSU Local Government center. Randy and Carolyn consented to the request.

Randy suggested that the commission follow up with the website builder again.

Randy suggested submission of a QR link in the Briefs to do a survey

Randy asked if the City website can have a link to a website or QR survey code. Jordan answered yes.

Carolyn agreed that a QR code in the Briefs was a good idea.

Amendments to Time Table:

Discussion on whether the December 18 deadline for the tentative report is achievable. Carolyn moves to amend the timetable so that the Tentative report is due February 18, 2026, and that the hearing on the Tentative Report should be held on February 18, 2026. Randy seconds. A voice vote is called, and the motion passes unanimously.

Vacancy of Jason Stephenson:

Jordan reports that Jason has not attended a meeting of the study commission since July, which is four months. Jordan reports that pursuant to Montana Code § 7-4-4111(8) (2025), the office is considered vacant if an elected official does not discharge their official duties for three consecutive months. Jordan suggested that at the next meeting, the commission pass a resolution of vacancy of the position, and that Jordan prepare it for the next meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 16, at 5:30 pm, according to Jordan.

Randy then moved to adjourn, and Carolyn seconded the motion. A voice vote was called, and the motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

Approved this \_\_\_\_\_ day of January, 2026.

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Carolyn Dawes, Chairperson

**RESOLUTION NO. 2026-01**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF HARDIN LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW STUDY COMMISSION, CONFIRMING THE VACANCY OF THE POSITION OF COMMISSIONER.**

WHEREAS, the City of Hardin Local Government Review Study Commission is comprised of three commissioner positions, which are elected positions; and

WHEREAS, Jason Stephenson, an elected commissioner, who last attended a meeting of the Commission on July 16, 2025, has been absent from four consecutive meetings, and has failed to discharge the duties of his position for four consecutive months;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF HARDIN LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW STUDY COMMISSION:

That the elected position of commissioner held by Jason Stephenson is vacant due to his absence and failure to discharge the duties of his office for at least three consecutive months pursuant to Mont. Code Ann. § 7-4-4111(8) (2025).

Be it further resolved, that the Commission formally requests the City Council of the City of Hardin appoint a person to fill the vacancy.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City of Hardin Local Government Review Study Commission , and APPROVED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of January, 2026.

YEA VOTES \_\_\_\_\_

NAY VOTES \_\_\_\_\_

CITY OF HARDIN

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Carolyn Dawes, Chairperson