

12-362. Same; studies, hearings and notice; preliminary and final plan; election. (a) The commission shall prepare and adopt a plan addressing the unification of the city and county or certain city and county offices, functions, services and operations. The commission shall conduct such studies and investigations as it deems appropriate to complete its work. Such studies and investigations shall include, but not be limited to, studies of the costs and benefits of unifying the city and county or certain city and county offices, functions, services and operations.

(b) The commission shall hold public hearings for the purpose of receiving information and materials which will aid in the drafting of the plan.

(c) Within one year following the appointment of all members of the commission, the commission shall prepare and adopt a preliminary plan addressing the unification of the city and county or certain city and county offices, functions, services and operations it deems advisable. Copies of the preliminary plan shall be filed with the county election officer, city clerk, each public library within the county and any other place designated by the commission. Copies of such plan shall be available to members of the public for inspection upon request. The commission shall hold at least two public hearings to obtain citizen views concerning the preliminary plan. Notice of such hearings shall be published at least twice in a newspaper of general circulation within the county. Following the public hearings on the preliminary plan, the commission may adopt, or modify and adopt, the preliminary plan as the final plan.

(d) Within 30 days of the last public hearing held on the preliminary plan, the commission shall adopt its final plan. The final plan shall include the full text and an explanation of the proposed plan, and comments deemed desirable by the commission, a written opinion by an attorney admitted to practice law in the state of Kansas and retained by the executive director for such purpose that the proposed plan is not in conflict with the constitution or the laws of the state, and any minority reports. Copies of the final plan shall be filed with the county election officer, city clerk, each public library within the county and any other place designated by the commission. Copies of such plan shall be available to members of the public for inspection upon request. The commission shall continue in existence at least 90 days following the submission of the final plan pursuant to this subsection.

(e) (1) The final plan shall be submitted to the qualified electors of the county at any primary, general or special election. If the statutorily mandated duties of an elective office are to be eliminated or if the office is to be eliminated and the duties transferred to a nonelective office, the question of elimination of such duties or office shall be submitted to the voters as a separate ballot question. Such election shall be called and held by the county election officer in the manner provided for the calling and holding of elections pursuant to K.S.A. 10-120, and amendments thereto. Such election may be conducted by mail ballot. A summary of the final plan shall be prepared by the commission and shall be published once each week for two consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation within the county. If a majority of the qualified electors voting on the plan who reside within the corporate limits of the city and a majority of the qualified electors voting on the plan who reside outside of the corporate limits of the city vote in favor thereof, the unification plan shall be implemented in the manner provided by the plan. If a majority of the electors who reside within the corporate limits of the city or a majority of the qualified electors who reside outside of the corporate limits of the city vote against such plan, the proposed unification plan shall not be implemented.

(2) Any proposed unification which eliminates an elective office shall provide that the elimination of such office shall become effective upon the date of normal expiration of the term of such office.

(3) If the final plan provides for the unification of the city of Horace with the county or the unification or elimination of any of the offices or powers, duties and functions of such offices of the city of Horace and a majority of the qualified electors of the city of Horace voting on the plan do not vote in favor thereof, the city of Horace and officers thereof shall continue in existence and operation as if no unification had occurred.

(4) If the commission submits a final plan which does not recommend the unification of the city and county or certain city and county offices, functions, services and operations, the provisions of this subsection shall not apply.

History: L. 2006, ch. 187, § 3; L. 2007, ch. 1, § 1; Feb. 22.