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Libby, MT 59923

(Tues. 2.750)

MAY 24 1985

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Board studies forms of government

At last week's City Government Study Commission public hearing, the various forms of local government were discussed.

Libby now has the commission-executive form — called, in this case, council-mayor. Both the mayor and the members of the council are elected.

There are two versions of the council-mayor form. Libby has what is called a "weak mayor" form, in which the mayor can vote only to break a tie among the council members.

In a "strong mayor" form, the mayor can veto action decided on by the council.

In the commission-manager form, the elected commission or council appoints — hires — a professional manager to be the chief administrative officer.

In the commission form, the elected commission or council

retains most of the legislative, executive and administrative powers and duties of the local government. The presiding officer is the chairman or mayor, who may vote the same as the other members of the commission, and who can be elected for a specific term directly by the voters or by the members of the commission from their own number.

In the commission-chairman form, the elected commission or

council elects from its members a chairman (sometimes called a mayor or president) who serves at the pleasure of the commission.

Libby cannot use the town meeting form because it has a population of more than 2,000.

In the charter form, the city writes its own charter, defining how it will operate, thus allowing greater local control.