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CITY MANAGEMENT

by  
James L. Summers

CITY MANAGEMENT

A Paper

Presented To

The Faculty of

Eastern Illinois University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science in Education

Plan B

by

James L. Summers

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## CHAPTER I

### THE RISE OF THE CITY MANAGER PLAN

From the very beginning of the United States of America and the adoption of its Constitution, the American people have firmly believed that a system of checks and balances in their government--national, state and local--is essential for the successful functioning of that government. Because of this firm belief, the only form of city government to be developed in the United States up to the end of the nineteenth century was the decentralized mayor-council form of government.<sup>1</sup> The fact that this form of government was sufficient to carry out its functions in a reasonably efficient manner was enough to satisfy the people whom it governed. During the last few decades of the nineteenth century, however, there was a sense of growing dissatisfaction concerning the municipal governments. This was true especially around the larger cities which were controlled by party organizations. The main interest of these organizations was to stay in office. They used their offices and the funds of their offices in any way they chose to satisfy this purpose. Most people came to look upon holding public office or entering politics as if it were something dirty. Because of this feeling, only members ready to accept this public stigma were willing to run for public office. With the turn of the twentieth century, it became apparent that the mayor-council form of government was insufficient to handle the more technical problems which were arising with the rapid growth and complexity of the American city. Therefore, at this time there

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<sup>1</sup>Clarence E. Ridley and Orin F. Nolting, The City Manager Profession (Chicago: 1934), p. 1.

was a loud cry for reform in municipal government. The problem was looked at in two ways and two solutions were offered. First of all was the cry to "throw out the crooks" and elect honest men to office. The other idea was to completely change the "form" of municipal government.<sup>2</sup>

As far as changing the form of government was concerned, there were many proposals, the most attractive of which were the strong-mayor form, the commission form, and the city manager form. The mayor-council form of government had worked to the turn of the century; but, from that point on, the American system changed in that in the larger cities the department heads were becoming skilled technicians and the need for better management became quite apparent.

The first new form of government to show that the system was turning toward management was the strong-mayor form. In this form, an elective mayor appointed all department heads except the controller, and appointed all employees of the departments without the consent of the council. The reform leaders of this time realized that most elected officials could not be expected to be skilled technicians. Therefore, they hoped that a strong mayor would have enough insight to appoint skilled technical helpers and administrators as department heads. The popular sentiment was in favor of "more business in government."<sup>3</sup>

This idea of more business in government was carried out to an even higher degree, however, in the development of the commission plan of local government. The commission plan originated in Galveston, Texas, in 1901. Galveston, being located on an island two or three miles off of the mainland,

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<sup>2</sup>Harold A. Stone, Don K. Price and Kathryn H. Stone, City Manager Government in the United States (Chicago: 1940), p.1.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

was virtually engulfed by a tidal wave on September 8, 1900, creating a severe crisis, which demanded brains and energy. The officials in charge of the city's government were incapable of supplying either. Instead, they took advantage of the situation and turned the tragedy to their own personal profits. The people were completely disgusted with the inefficiency of their municipal government. They therefore set out to form a new type of government and in 1901 put into effect their new plan. It completely ignored the traditional mayor-council form and set up an all-powerful commission of five members instead.<sup>4</sup>

There was one main feature of the commission plan which was quite different than those of its predecessor. It entirely did away with the idea of the separation of powers. All of the authority in this plan lay in one small governing body, and the members of this body were the only elected officials of the government. Also all of the members or commissioners were elected on a non-partisan ballot. This was aimed at ousting or destroying any party organization or "machine" which might be striving to control the government.

It is easy to see that the commission plan was another step toward running government as if it were a business. It still differed from business in one very important aspect, however. The commissioners were still heads of departments instead of delegating these positions to sub-ordinates. The commission plan was praised for three main features: its simplicity, the abandonment of the checks and balances system and concentration of authority in one small governing body.

Taking into account all of the improvements which were initiated by the

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<sup>4</sup>Austin F. MacDonald, American City Government and Administration (New York: 1956), p. 188.

commission form, it was still not so good as it was hoped it would be. It had three main faults which pointed out the need for still further improvement. First of all, it scattered the administrative functions and responsibilities among several elected officials, the individual commissioners. Although there were three, five, seven or nine commissioners, the usual number was five. The second major fault was that the elected commissioners were seldom trained technicians or administrators; therefore these essential traits were missing in the offices where they were needed. The third fault was that the commissioners often had diverse administrative interests. This often led to a prejudiced consideration of legislative proposals.

From 1909-1917 the commission form grew very rapidly and it looked as if it would swamp the entire nation. However, after 1917, the commission form failed to make much headway. Today it is having a very difficult time in merely holding its own and there is very little reason to doubt that the commission plan is about finished as a form of local government.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps the main reason for the decline of the commission plan is the fact that it is being replaced by a younger rival, the city manager plan. Of course this replacement works two ways. The reason the city manager plan came into being was that the commission plan had too many weaknesses and the city manager plan was a correction of some of these. The chief defect of the commission plan was the absence of a distinct executive authority, and the obvious remedy was for the commissioners to hire a manager, selected by them because of his professional qualifications, to perform the executive functions. The connection between these two plans is so close that the city manager plan has often been referred to as the commission-manager plan.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 204.



The early framers of the city manager plan were not really trying something new, they were merely trying to improve the commission plan.<sup>6</sup>

The city manager plan of local government came to life in Staunton, Virginia, in 1908. The city, of about five thousand people, in that year was receiving high taxes but still had a debt of five hundred thousand dollars. The debt would not have seemed so formidable except that the city was bankrupt and saw no way in which to alter this condition. The streets were mud ruts and the sewer, fire and police protection was quite inadequate. The payroll was filled with political opportunists. At a council meeting a councilman by the name of John Crosby suggested hiring a general manager in the same sense as a business corporation hires a general manager. The manager would do all of the administering and the council would do all of the legislating or policy setting. The council agreed to the idea and hired a professional engineer as their city manager. He immediately fired the political opportunists who were incompetent. Staunton began to climb out of debt and the city manager form of local government was born.<sup>7</sup>

A small town the size of Staunton was not a sufficient testing ground. The experiment helped to arouse interest in the new general manager or city manager plan, but its success was not conclusive proof that the new plan would work for a city of larger size.

In the spring of 1913, Dayton, Ohio, was struck with a very devastating flood. The flood caused the loss of 84 lives and 128 million dollars worth of damage to property. The effects of the flood helped to show how ineffective the mayor and council of Dayton really were. It had been known as the "deficit city" before the flood and after the flood, the city was

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<sup>6</sup>Thomas Harrison Reed, Municipal Government in the United States (New York: 1934), p. 202.

<sup>7</sup>K. Detzer, "Businessmen at City Hall" Readers Digest (May, 1958), pp.153-160.

helpless. The people adopted the city manager plan to try to pull themselves out of the hole. Shortly after the city manager plan was adopted, Dayton ceased to be known as the "deficit city".<sup>8</sup> During the first seven years after the adoption of the plan the city instituted a number of reforms. They ran all of the way from employing police women to establishing an eight-hour day for all city labor.<sup>9</sup>

When Dayton, a city of 125,000 people, adopted the city manager plan, it attracted nation-wide attention. The demand for more business in government became widespread. The adoption of the city manager plan by Dayton was one of the greatest advertisements for the new form of local government. It served to dramatize the plan just as Galveston had dramatized the commission plan.

After Dayton adopted the city manager plan on January 1, 1914, the plan spread rather rapidly. The following table shows the effective dates of manager charters and ordinances which were permanent all over the United States.<sup>10</sup>

<u>Year</u>	<u>Charter</u>	<u>Ordinance</u>	<u>Total</u>
1908	---	1	1
1912	1	2	3
1913	5	2	7
1914	12	7	19
1915	16	5	21
1916	12	2	14
1917	14	1	15
1918	17	5	22
1919	22	4	26

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<sup>8</sup>Roger Hewes Wells, American Local Government (New York: 1939), p. 73.

<sup>9</sup>The Story of the City Manager Plan, National Municipal League, Undated, p. 6.

<sup>10</sup>Reed, op. cit., p. 206.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Charter</u>	<u>Ordinance</u>	<u>Total</u>
1920	21	10	31
1921	41	5	46
1922	22	5	27
1923	26	2	28
1924	10	1	11
1925	18	4	22
1926	14	3	17
1927	17	5	22
1928	11	5	16
1929	17	---	17
1930	12	3	15
1931	13	3	16
1932	15	2	17
1933	12	---	12
	<u>348</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>425</u>

There were two main reasons for this rather rapid spread of the manager plan. The first reason was that the people were disgusted with the misgovernment common under the old system. The people were in the mood for a change in their governmental form. The second reason, the reason the change was made to the manager plan instead of to some other plan, was that there was promise of the manager plan's eliminating the evils apparent in the pre-existing plans.

## CHAPTER II

### GENERAL FEATURES OF THE MANAGER PLAN

What are the main features of the manager plan which set it apart from other forms of local government? There are hundreds of points which would all help answer it. Here, however, are some of the basic points which identify the manager plan.

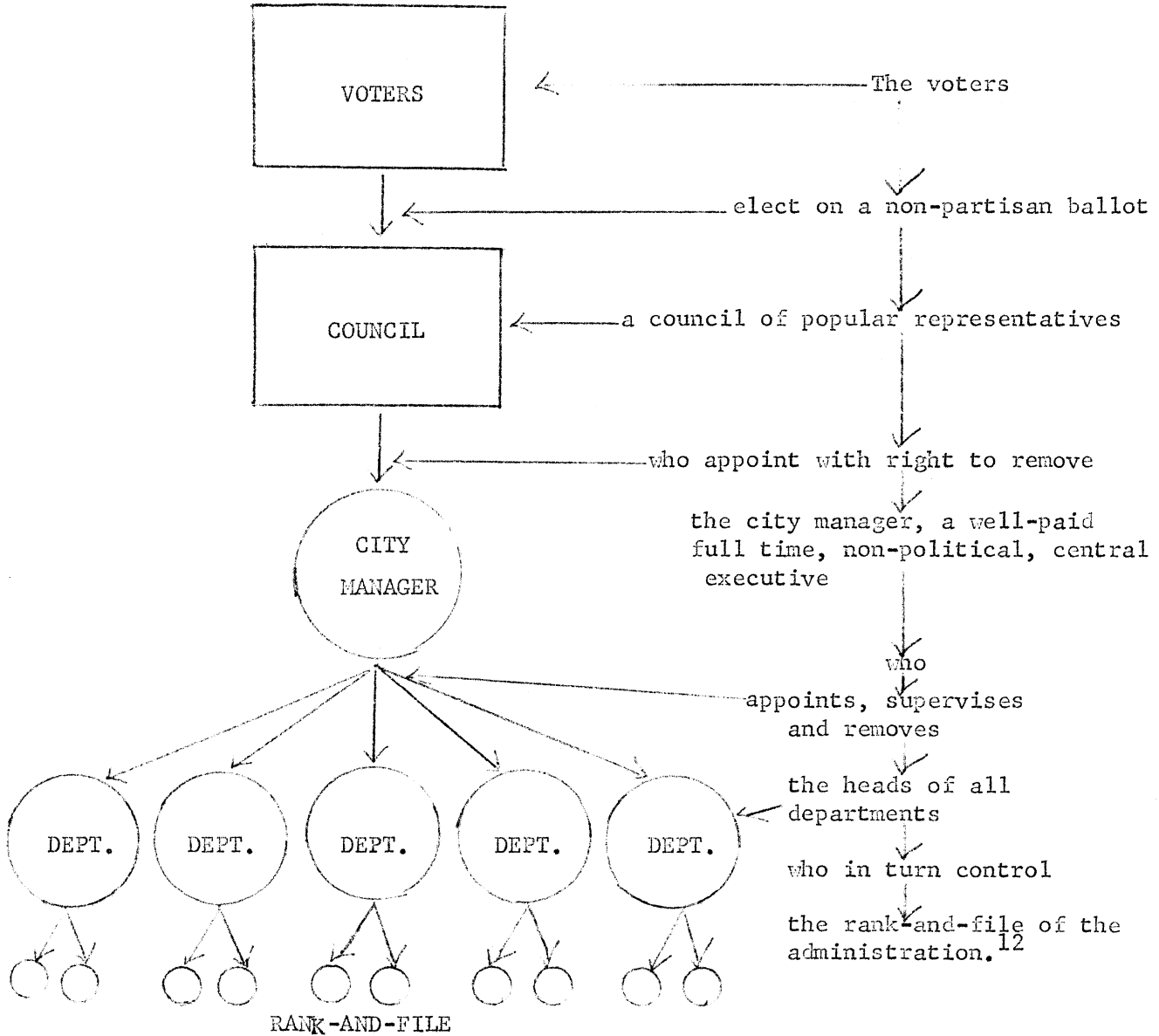
The basis of any form of local government in this country is the voters. They begin by electing the council who keep the process going from there. "The voters elect on a non-partisan ballot a council of popular representatives who appoint, with the right to remove, the city manager, a well-paid, full time, non-political central executive who appoints, supervises and removes the heads of all departments who in turn control the rank-and-file of the administration."<sup>11</sup>

In the following illustration there are two main points which command attention. First is that the council is elected on a non-partisan ballot, and the next is that the city manager is a non-political executive. Both of these points show the desire to stay away from or get ride of, the spoils system. For this plan to work correctly the city manager must be clear and stay clear of all political ties. Without the obligation to appoint fellow party workers the city manager will be free to appoint well-qualified men as department heads and as other city officials. Another feature which makes the job of appointing city officials easier for the city manager is the fact that he need not be a citizen of the community or state. There are no residence requirements for a city manager. Therefore, he does not have to worry about not appointing personal friends because, when he is first hired,

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<sup>11</sup>Ridley and Nolting, op. cit., p. 14.

he usually does not have any personal friends in the community.



<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

Perhaps the most important feature of the city manager plan is the definite separation of powers which exists between the council and the manager. There is complete separation of legislative and executive functions. The council, usually ranging from three to nine members with five being the favored number, is strictly the legislative body. The council is the lawmaking body and is directly responsible to the people. The council has two functions. First it is the job of the councilmen to pass the ordinances and resolutions which are necessary for the efficient running of the city. Their duty is to determine and set policy for the local government. Secondly, it is their responsibility to select the city manager. The council has the task of holding the city manager responsible to the effective management of the city. Also the only tie the people have to the city manager is the council. The people can talk to the city manager any time they please but if the manager goes against the best interests of the people only the council has the power to remove the manager. However, the council has no administrative power.

All administrative functions of the city are under the control of the manager. No one else, including the council, should try to take a hand in the administration of policy. That is the entire responsibility of the manager. It is necessary for the council and the manager to work in close conjunction on many items but neither should try to take over any of the work of the other. The manager is usually required to attend all council meetings and he joins into the discussion at these meetings but he has no vote. He attends the meetings because he is charged with keeping the council informed of everything that is happening in the city. The manager is responsible for carrying out the policies of the council but he is out of line if he tries to help determine the policy.

Under this plan the pin-pointing of responsibility is quite clear. If any department head fails in his responsibilities, it is easily spotted by the manager and he is removed. If the city manager falls short in his responsibilities, it is easily spotted by the council and his removal takes place. If the council does not live up to its responsibilities, the councilmen are removed at the polls by the voters.

It is important to remember that there is a mayor in the city manager form of government. Unlike the mayor-council form, the mayor in the city manager plan is merely the presiding officer of the council. He is a regularly elected member of the council but he usually receives a little higher salary than the other councilmen. One of the main functions of the mayor is to preside at many civic meetings and dedications. Thus, he relieves the city manager of these tasks and affords the latter more time to concentrate on the more important task of running the city.

The city manager plan is an adaptation of a private business corporation. That is, the voters are the stockholders, the council is the board of directors, and the city manager is the general manager.<sup>13</sup> It also resembles the make-up of the school district. They compare in that the school board, like the council, is popularly elected. The superintendent, like the city manager, is professionally trained. The city manager plan correlates with business operations to a higher degree than any other form of local government.

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<sup>13</sup>Wells, op. cit., p. 73.

## CHAPTER III

### THE QUALIFICATIONS OF A CITY MANAGER

The heart of any city manager plan is the city manager himself. What are the qualifications needed for a man to become a successful city manager? Just as the form of city manager government may vary in detail from city to city, so do the qualifications of a successful city manager. It seems obvious that the larger cities demand men with more experience than the smaller cities. This does not necessarily hold true in all cases, however. The qualifications fall into two categories: (1) personal qualities and (2) training and experience qualifications.

Personal qualities come first. There have been published many lists of personal qualifications, some long and some short, and naturally they overlap to some extent. Two such lists follow. The first lists these qualifications:

1. A city manager should be honest.
2. A city manager should be forceful. One wavers and he will run into difficulty.
3. A city manager should be tactful. The city manager has to meet many people. He should always be tactful.
4. A city manager should be industrious. The city manager does a tremendous load of work and must be industrious to keep up with it. If he falls behind he may never catch up.
5. A city manager should have vision. To successfully manage the affairs of a city takes the ability to see and plan ahead.
6. A city manager should have a sense of humor. A crabby manager seldom succeeds.



7. A city manager should be loyal to the interests of the city as a whole. He should never play politics.<sup>14</sup>

The second list contained the following as necessary qualifications for a successful city manager. They contain both personal and experience qualifications.

- A. Administrative ability. A city manager must take a group of people with many independent thoughts and co-ordinate them into a well-trained organization.
- B. Background knowledge. A city manager should have some training in engineering, planning, law, finance, sociology, psychology, philosophy and management. As many of these as possible are needed.
- C. Courage of convictions.
- D. Direction-giving or direction-making ability.
- E. Energy. A city manager must keep fit and take time out for a rest and relaxation once in a while.
- F. Foresight.
- G. Good government (desire for). Any city manager must believe in what he is doing.
- H. Honesty.
- I. Integrity. A city manager's actions must be as good as or true to his word.
- J. Judicious actions. The city manager should be a prudent man whose decisions are based on sound judgment.
- K. Know how and know why. A city manager must be a jack-of-all trades.
- L. Leadership. A city manager must have the ability to win co-operation.
- M. Membership. A city manager should be a member of the International City Managers Association and any like state or local organizations.

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<sup>14</sup>Ridley and Nelting, op. cit., pp. 41-42.

- N. No. A city manager must know how to say it.
- O. Open-door policy. A city manager's office should be open to all visitors.
- P. Public relations expert.
- Q. Quality of workmanship. This must be a city manager's goal.
- R. Resourcefulness.
- S. Self-confidence.
- T. Technical assistance. A city manager must have the ability to use it.
- U. Understanding.
- V. Vision.
- W. "We". A city manager must inspire teamwork.
- X. The unknown. A city manager must be ready for it.
- Y. "You". A city manager must make others feel important.
- Z. Zest. A city manager must have zest in everything he does.<sup>15</sup>

These are the personal qualifications needed by a city manager if he is to be successful. It is quite clear that to find these in any one man is very difficult, if not impossible. However, a successful city manager is a man who has a good number of these qualities. They lead toward a smooth administration.

In addition to the personality qualifications of a good city manager, there is the experience qualifications. These fall under three headings: education, experience and age.

As is true in all professions, experience plays a large part in determining how successful a city manager will be. A man without some

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<sup>15</sup>B. H. Cruce, "What it Takes From A to Izzard to be a Successful City Manager", American City (June, 1953), pp. 108-109.

experience should gain the experience necessary by becoming the city manager of a very small town. As he grows in experience he can move on to larger towns and cities.

Adequate education is a distinct advantage to the success or failure of a city manager. "A broad college or university training in the social sciences is highly desirable and almost essential to the greatest success."<sup>16</sup> Questionnaires which have been sent out to city managers in office show that the large majority of them agree that a college or university education is a chief requirement for success as a city manager.

Very few cities' charters establish age limits for their managers. It is quite impossible to say whether a young, middle-aged or old man is better qualified for the position of city manager. It is possible to say, however, that the vitality of the young and the maturity of the old are assets to the success of the city manager. Therefore the majority of the managers hired are a compromise between the two and are middle-aged, between the ages of thirty-five and fifty-five.

The city charters sometimes say the city manager must be competent, a qualified administrator, possessed of business and executive ability and the like. These statements mean nothing, however, because they are impossible to define. Some charters require a man with previous experience as a manager or assistant manager. Other charters require engineers. Most cities do not prefer politicians but since politician is a term hard to define, this means little. It clearly does mean that a manager should have no political ties which would keep him from the efficient carrying out of his responsibilities.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Ridley and Nolting, op. cit., p. 43.

<sup>17</sup>Leonard D. White, The City Manager (Chicago: 1927), p. 282.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE TRAINING OF THE CITY MANAGER

Where are the men who become professional city managers supposed to acquire the many qualifications which are needed to secure the right jobs? The answer to this question lies in their training. Many of the characteristics are picked up at home, in church membership and in fellowship with others. However, the characteristics requiring specialized skills require specialized training for a man to grasp them. This specialized training is of two types. First there is formal education and second there is on-the-job experience. Let us look at formal education first.

There are colleges and universities which offer graduate work in municipal administration. For example, the University of Michigan offers a one-year graduate course to any engineering or social science student who wishes to become a city manager or municipal administrator. It offers such courses as municipal administration, public finance, accounting, city planning, highway construction and sanitary engineering. These courses are usually listed under political science. A college background in social science has an obvious value to a successful city manager. It is unfortunate that there are not more colleges and universities which offer graduate studies in this field. There are many successful city managers who began with a degree from one of these college courses. Many of the schools offering such a program include a requirement for graduation that the student serve an internship, much like that of a doctor, as an assistant to some city official. Of course the school procures these positions and

the students work for no pay or very little pay. Then too, there are courses offered by the International City Managers Association. These are of two groups: one is used to refresh or add to the knowledge of people already in city service and the other is used to train those who are not in city service but would like to be.<sup>18</sup>

There are many statistics which show the growing role of the colleges and universities. Of 1,233 city managers in office in 1957, 58% had bachelor's degrees. An additional 20% had one or more years of college but received no degree. That makes a total of 78% with some college training. In the early 1930's only 68% had any college training.<sup>19</sup> These figures show the increase in college training among the present day city managers. This increase is very encouraging but still more effort is needed on the part of cities and universities alike to encourage men to go into the field of municipal government or administration.

In its early days the city manager plan was usually adopted with the idea in mind that an engineer would make the best manager. However, a man with a background in engineering alone is not enough. The task is also one of human engineering. The manager must be able to handle people. Also such areas as finance, police, recreation and health fall outside of the field of engineering. The public soon came to realize that some knowledge of the true objectives of municipal government must be had by any manager who wished to be successful. He must have executive ability. Engineering is valuable background as long as it is supported by a knowledge of the basic rudiments of municipal organization and administration. This trend away from engineering can be shown with statistics.

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<sup>18</sup>Ridley and Nolting, op. cit., p. 52.

<sup>19</sup>"Education of City Managers" American City (May, 1957), p. 203.

Prior Occupation of Managers - 1927<sup>20</sup>

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Number</u>
1. Engineering and allied activities	398
2. Business or executive classes	103
3. City employees and department heads	67
4. Clerical	22
5. Legal Profession	16
6. County officials	16
7. Educators	15
8. Skilled trade	15
9. Promotion experts	14
10. U. S. government positions	6

It is easy to see that in the 1930's 75% of the managers holding bachelor's degrees had degrees in engineering. However, of the 714 city managers holding bachelor's degrees today, only 39% of these degrees are in the field of engineering.<sup>21</sup> The trend of today is toward degrees in political or social science.

The other type of training is on-the-job experience. Here the universities should take a hand and try to sell their graduates to public officials. Then these graduates can serve as apprentices, working as assistants to a city manager or some other administrative figure in the municipal government. The graduate would work for a very small salary. After a certain amount of training, he could find a job as a city manager of a small city and, as his experience broadened, work his way up to larger and larger cities. A good example of this can be found in the Phoenix, Arizona intern program. This program is five years old and in that time fifteen men have gone through it. Five of them are now city managers. The rest are either in the armed forces or working outside of city government. There are three men appointed each year. They are selected from applicants

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<sup>20</sup>White, op. cit., p. 335.

<sup>21</sup>"Education of City Managers" op. cit.

who have worked or are working for graduate degrees in municipal administration. They work for twelve months at a salary of two-hundred and fifty dollars per month.<sup>22</sup> This program not only helps young men to get a background for going into the city manager profession, but also keeps new ideas and theories flowing into Phoenix. This keeps the administration up-to-date. Such programs are a great help in the training of city managers. The only problem is that there are not enough of them.

Of course the best training any city manager receives is by transfer or promotion from smaller cities to larger cities. Each new city contributes to the education and training of a successful city manager.

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<sup>22</sup>Phoenix Intern Program Trains Future City Managers; American City (October, 1955), p. 220.

## CHAPTER V

### THE SELECTION OF A CITY MANAGER

The task of selecting a city manager is perhaps the most important duty of the city council. It is their responsibility to choose a qualified, unbiased person who shall run their city in an efficient manner. To do this is quite a task. They must consider his personal traits and qualifications, experience in management, and anything else which might have a bearing upon whether or not he will be successful. Every city has different qualifications and a man who is successful in one city many times is not successful in another city. Practically all cities have one requirement, however, which is the same. A candidate must belong to the International City Managers Association. This organization publishes a list of all members who are looking for a job. The city councils may obtain this list and if interested in any person on the list can make contact with that person. The methods of selecting a city manager are usually patterned on fairly similar terms from city to city.

First of all, a candidate makes application except when he is sought out and invited by the city council. Then, his references are checked and he is personally interviewed by the city council. The council then weighs the merits of each candidate and makes its final selection.

A good city manager will not consider taking the position of city manager however, unless the city council is willing to inform him of certain conditions. Some of these conditions are.

1. The specific requirements of the position as embodied in the charter and the qualifications decided upon by the council.



2. The attitude and views of the council with respect to the relation between the council and the manager.
3. A list of department heads, boards and commissions appointed and removed by the manager or council or both; those elected by the people, and those appointed and removed solely by the manager.
4. Certain financial information about the city's government.<sup>23</sup>

Any city manager worth his salt will require this. He will not consider a job unless he knows how he stands before he takes the position.

The council should do everything in its power to choose an expert administrator. After the selection has been made the manager should be given ample time to prove whether he is going to be successful or not. Some city charters go so far as to say that after he is hired he cannot be removed for the first six months.

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<sup>23</sup>Ridley and Nolting, op. cit., pp. 59-60.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CITY MANAGER

What are the responsibilities of the city manager? What are his main functions in the city government? These are the types of questions which need answering at this point.

The responsibilities of the city manager are many and varied. He is first of all responsible to the council, for they hired him and if he is fired, they will fire him. If a city manager does not live up to what was first expected of him, the council has power to remove him. He is hired to see that they receive as many varied services as is necessary to uphold the highest of standards. He has the revenue which was furnished by the local population to see that the standards are held high. He is also responsible to the International City Managers Association. He is expected to uphold the goals and ethical practices of that organization. In other words, the city manager is responsible for the fulfillment to the utmost of his ability the task for which he is hired, the management of a city.

The job of a city manager is just as it implies, one of management. There are goals of management which the city manager should be responsible to carry out. Some of these goals of city management are: "to make our conduct of affairs technically sound, politically responsible, politically acceptable, professionally approved and socially constructive."<sup>24</sup> The meaning of these to a city manager should be:

1. "Technically sound"--the city manager and his staff should always be aware of new technical advances and put them to use.

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<sup>24</sup>L. Gulick, "Goals of Management," Recreation (December, 1955), pp. 482-485.

Still another area in which the manager has a lot of responsibility, is that of financial administration. This includes the making of a detailed budget and the execution of this budget. In order to keep the budget balanced the manager must be a man who can handle mathematics. It seems needless to say that any public official who is intrusted with public funds should manage or control those funds in accordance with the best interests of the public. Any official who used those funds in a inefficient manner should be held responsible. Therefore, it is quite evident that the proper administering of those funds is of utmost importance. A successful city manager must be and will be very diligent when he is administering those funds. The manager should at all times be aware of the best and latest accounting and bookkeeping methods. If he should ever be accused of mishandling funds, he can go right to the account book to defend himself.

Still another responsibility of the manager is to report to the council and to the people. The task of reporting to the council is very important. The city manager is, in most cases, in a better position to see what is needed by the city than the council. When a change is needed by the city, a change in policy, the manager should inform the council of the need and then leave it up to them as to whether or not the change will be made. He fulfills this responsibility by attending all council meetings and by making these reports.

The task of reporting to the people is also essential. They want to know what is being done for them. The manager should maintain an open-door policy as far as his office is concerned. He should hold an interview with any citizen asking for an audience. It has been said that "one-fourth of the manager's day is spent in interviews."<sup>25</sup> The task of

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<sup>25</sup> Nolting, Orin F., Management Methods in City Government (Chicago, 1942), p. 2.

reporting to the people may be accomplished through many media. The manager may use the newspapers, radio or television to keep the people informed of what the city is doing and why. An uninformed public is very likely to be an unsatisfied public.

The next large responsibility of the city manager is one of handling personnel. He has the task of recruiting competent men as department heads and various other sub-ordinate positions. The main problem in the handling of personnel lies in keeping the morale of all city officials at a high peak. If morale is low when the manager takes over as head of the city administration, he must build morale. To do this it may be necessary to remove some men and hire others. The manager must take all officials in the administration and weave them into a closely knit, smooth-running organization. This is more difficult than it may seem. The main task is to instill a sense of confidence and co-operation among the various city employees.

Still another responsibility of the manager is one of using apprentices in the management of the city. It may seem that the city is foolish to hire and pay the salary of an outside college student who knows little of what makes the city run efficiently. The big tendency here is often to use local men, whenever possible, as apprentices in cities where an intern or apprentice program is being used. This is quite a natural tendency but it is actually defeating the purpose of the program. The purpose is to train men to be qualified city administrators. If they are serving as apprentices in their home community, however, all of their prospective experiences are influenced by their previous knowledge of the community and are not of as much general value as they would be if experienced in a strange community. If there are to be enough competent city managers to

usually belongs to at least a few of these organizations. In many places it is considered mandatory for the manager to belong to the professional organizations.

Perhaps the best way to summarize the city manager profession is to examine the code of ethics which was adopted by the International City Managers Association in 1924. It was adopted in order that the city managers might maintain a high standard of professional conduct. The code is as follows:

1. The position of city manager is an important position and an honorable position, and should not be accepted unless the individual believes he can serve the community to its advantage.
2. No man should accept a position of city manager unless he believes in the council-manager form of government.
3. In personal conduct a city manager should be exemplary, and he should display the same obedience to law that he should inculcate in others.
4. Personal aggrandizement and personal profit secured by confidential information or by misuse of public time is dishonest.
5. Loyalty to his employment recognizes that it is the council, the elected representatives of the people, who primarily determine the municipal policies, and are entitled to the credit for their fulfillment.
6. Although he is a hired employee of the council he is hired for a purpose--to exercise his own judgment as an executive in accomplishing the policies formulated by the council; and to attain success in his employment he must decline to submit to dictation in matters for which the responsibility is solely his.
7. Power justifies responsibility, and responsibility demands power, and a city manager who becomes impotent to inspire support should resign.
8. The city manager is the administrator for all the people, and in performing his duty he should serve without discrimination.

9. To serve the public well, a city manager should strive to keep the community informed of the plans and purposes of the administration, remembering that healthy publicity and criticism are an aid to the success of any democracy.
10. A city manager should deal frankly with the council as a unit and not secretly with its individual members, and similarly should foster a spirit of cooperation between all employees of the city's organization.
11. No matter how small the governmental unit under his management, a city manager should recognize his relation to the larger political sub-divisions and encourage improved administrative methods for all.
12. No city manager should take an active part in politics.
13. A city manager shall be known by his works, many of which may outlast him, and, regardless of personal popularity or unpopularity, he should not curry favor or temporize, but should in a far-sighted way aim to benefit the community of today and of posterity.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., pp. 127-128.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FUTURE OF CITY MANAGEMENT

From the turn of the century until today it has become increasingly apparent that local government is growing more and more complex. The city manager plan was adopted to handle these complexities in a businesslike manner. It has handled the situation with a good deal of success. "By instituting business practices and professional standards of conduct, the council-manager plan gives better services, stretches the tax-dollar and stands as a non-partisan bulwark against sticky-fingers at city hall."<sup>33</sup> "The reason the city manager plan works is that its basic object is to administer and manage the municipal corporation as a business."<sup>34</sup> Since the municipal government is a corporation, it simply makes sense to run it like a business. There is no reason to assume that the cities are going to quit growing complex. There is, on the other hand, no reason to assume anything other than that the city manager plan will be capable of handling these complexities. Business handled the growth of the large corporations and the city manager plan will handle the growth of the cities.

The future of management of cities appears to be very bright. There is evidence of a growing trend toward professional careers in municipal government. More than one-half of the 220 city managers appointed in 1954 were earlier managers or assistant managers in other cities. Added to this are the men who come into city management from other public administrative

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<sup>33</sup>Readers Digest, op. cit., pp. 158-162.

<sup>34</sup>Business Week, op. cit.

offices. Together they form 82% of the total city manager appointments. This high percentage of city managers came from governmental and managerial backgrounds.<sup>35</sup>

There is still other evidence which points toward a bright future for city management. Today more than one-fourth of the cities over ten thousand population have city managers. In recent years 80% of all cities adopting new city charters chose the city manager form of government. At the present rate of increase, the city manager form will pass the mayor-council form of local government in number within the next ten years. If this becomes true, the city manager form will become the dominant form of local government.<sup>36</sup>

The future also looks bright when an examination is made of the salaries received by city managers. The salaries are certainly not exorbitant, but they are high enough to encourage ambitious, hard-working men to enter the profession. The city managers salaries vary from city to city. In communities of less than five thousand population, the average salary for a city manager is about five thousand dollars. The salaries increase with the size of the cities and the average salary for city managers in cities of 100,000 population or more is \$22,350 a year. It seems to be the general opinion of city councils that a skilled, professional manager, during his first few months on the job, will usually save the city more money than he is paid in a year.<sup>37</sup> With this incentive, capable men are entering the profession and it is difficult to see how the city manager plan can keep from becoming the leading form of local government in this

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<sup>35</sup> "Growing Profession of Managing Cities," American City (April, 1955), p. 151.

<sup>36</sup> Business Week, op. cit.

<sup>37</sup> Readers Digest, op. cit.



country.

There are numerous factors upon which the continued growth and popularity of city management depend. Some of these are:

1. The caliber of men chosen as city managers must be high.
2. Expert administrators must be chosen and political considerations ruled out.
3. Prejudices against out-of-town men must be set aside.
4. There must be training schools to prepare apprentices.<sup>38</sup>

All of these factors seem to be growing in acceptance over the nation. The city manager plan has met with success in most of the cities in which it was adopted and the plan is constantly growing in popularity with the people.

The constant rise in the number of city manager plans adopted is a very promising sign for the future. With the constant additions of city managers the people are becoming better educated as to what the plan involves. If one city adopts it and it is successful, the neighboring cities are likely to grow envious and adopt it for themselves. Therefore, the successful adoption of the plan has been and will be the best advertisement for it. The more publicity it gets the more growth it is likely to achieve as long as the advertisement is one of success. The city manager plan has been very successful and therefore the future can hold nothing but further success.

The profession of managing cities is becoming one of the most respectable professions. People are not looking upon city managers as

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<sup>38</sup> MacDonalld, op. cit., p. 223.

politicians in the old sense of the word and are therefore trusting them with more and more responsibilities and are paying them more and more generously. As things stand at the present time, city management is here to stay. As a profession it ranks along with those of law, medicine, the church and teaching. There should be and will be more men going to this profession. It offers fine opportunities to young men seeking what has come to be considered a worthy, respected, well-paid occupation.

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