

Advantages of the Commission-Manager Plan

1. It creates a single-headed administrative establishment and thus permits expertness in administration in the point where it is most valuable, i.e. the head.
2. It permits comparative permanence in the office of chief executive.
3. It abandons all attempt to choose administrators by popular election.
4. It fixes absolute responsibility for every administrative act.
5. It ensures team work among all departments.
6. It makes possible effective co-operation between the civic government and all civic and philanthropic agencies.

Limitations of the Commission-Manager Plan

1. As all the administrative power is concentrated in the hands of one man, he could be used as a perfect "tool" for any "machine" or faction if it dominated the Commission or Council.
2. Until the profession of City-Manager becomes a universally recognized field of expert endeavor, there will be great difficulty in finding men of sufficient calibre and training to fill such positions for large cities.
3. Large cities require strong heads for each department. It might be difficult to get satisfactory administrative heads willing to work under one manager unless much larger salaries were paid than could be obtained in the present state of public opinion.

The next bulletin of this series will outline the Canadian Mayor-Council type of Municipal Government, and it will also briefly sketch the same type with Administrative Board modifications.

EFFECTIVE-CITIZEN CO-OPERATION

WHAT IS EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS SHOULD
BE EACH BODY'S BUSINESS

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Forms of City Government—Story No. 2

Commission-Manager or City-Manager Government

Unless a constructive social policy is adopted and unless methods of scientific business management are introduced, the adoption of a new form of government by a municipality will, in the long run, be no improvement.

—Bruere, "The New City Government."

Commission-Manager or City-Manager Government

Although Commission Government must have been considered an improvement on the Mayor-Council type, inasmuch as no cities which adopted it ever reverted to the old method, yet it did not altogether bring the success expected. Many began to ask why, if this form was supposed to be analogous to a business organization, it did not place all the administration under one manager, with the Commission or Council in the position of the Directors, elected by the people or shareholders. This scheme was tried in Staunton, Virginia, in 1908, and later in Lockport, N.Y., but had its first real trial in Dayton, Ohio, where it was adopted in 1913. It became known as the Commission-Manager or City-Manager Government and made great headway, being adopted by many cities previously operating under Commission Government, as well as many additional cities in the United States and Canada.

What the Commission-Manager Plan Is

There is a single elective Board, called a Commission or Council, representative, supervisory and legislative in function.

a—The members of the Commission or Council, ordinarily five in number, are usually elected at large, although they may also be chosen by wards. They give only part time to municipal work, receiving nominal salaries or none.

b—The term of office of the Commissioners is, in the majority of cases, two years, although frequently provision is made for overlapping tenure, thus ensuring continuity.

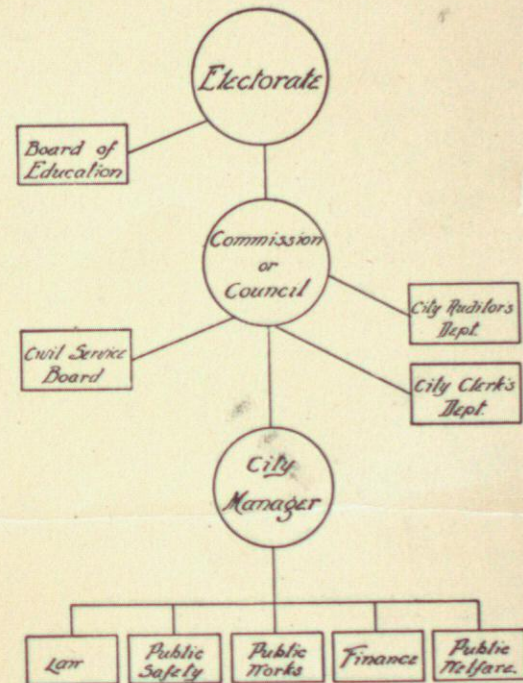
c—The Mayor is a member of the Commission. He acts as Chairman and is the official head of the city. He is usually elected to the office but, in some cases, the Commissioner receiving the highest number of votes receives the office.

There is a chief executive officer or city manager. He is appointed by the Council or Commission and holds office at their pleasure. This manager appoints and controls the remaining city employees, except such officials as the City Clerk and City Auditor, and is the responsible head of municipal administrative activities. Civil service provisions are usually made part of the city charter.

a—The City Manager need not be a local resident, but should be selected on account of his peculiar fitness and ability to manage the affairs of the city. His salary is determined by the Commission or Council.

b—The Departments of the City Clerk and City Auditor usually remain under direct control of the Commission or Council. The School Board is also a separate organization elected by the people.

The Initiative, Referendum and Recall, as defined in Bulletin No. 80 on Commission Government, are, in most cases, put in operation along with the Commission-Manager Plan.



NOTE—These divisions may vary in different cities in order to conform to local needs. They may be of greater or less number, but the underlying idea of one administrative head is the same.