HOW DID WE GET HERE?

A HISTORY OF THE CITY MANAGEMENT PROFESSION

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EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT SERIES

AUSTIN, TEXAS

JANUARY 26, 2012

Delivered by Terrell Blodgett
FORMS OF CITY GOVERNMENT

- MAYOR-COUNCIL
  - OLDEST FORM
  - CORRUPTION RAMPANT IN LATE 1800s
  - MAYOR IS POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE HEAD
    -- SOMETIMES EMPLOYS ADMINISTRATOR
  - LARGEST CITIES IN U.S. - NYC, LA, CHI, PHILLY
  - IN TEXAS: ONLY HOUSTON, PASADENA, TEXAS CITY,
    -- CONROE PLUS ABOUT 20 SMALLER CITIES
FORMS OF CITY GOVERNMENT

• COMMISSION

  - GALVESTON FLOOD - 1900
  - SMALL ELECTED BODY (3-5 MEMBERS) PERFORMS
    -- BOTH LEGISLATIVE AND ADMIN FUNCTIONS
  - TOGETHER, THE COMMISSION IS THE LEGISLATIVE ARM
  - SEPARATELY, EACH COMMISSIONER HEADS A DEPT
    -- COMMISSIONER OF FIRE AND POLICE, ETC.
  - FOLLOWING GALVESTON, ADOPTED BY MANY CITIES
    -- IN TEXAS AND NATION (HOU, DAL, FW, SA, AUS)
  - POPULARITY ROSE AND FELL LIKE A METEOR
  - TODAY, PORTLAND, OREGON ONLY MAJOR CITY
  - TODAY IN TEXAS: NO CITY
FORMS OF CITY GOVERNMENT

• COUNCIL-MANAGER, NOT CITY MANAGER GOVERNMENT

  - URBAN GROWTH IN EARLY 1900s, CITIES NEEDED AN EXECUTIVE, NOT A MAYOR WHO TRIED TO FILL TWO ROLES, NOR A COMMISSION WHO SPLIT DUTIES

  - C-M PLAN EMPHASIZES UNITY OF AUTHORITY, POLICY IN COUNCIL, ADMINISTRATION IN MANAGER

• BEGINNINGS

  - UKIAH, CALIFORNIA – 1904
  - STAUNTON, VIRGINIA -1908
  - SUMTER, SOUTH CAROLINA -1912
• ADVOCACY GROUPS
  - NATIONAL MUNICIPAL LEAGUE, NOW NATIONAL CIVIC LEAGUE
  - NCL PUBLISHES MODEL CITY CHARTER, NOW IN EIGHTH EDITION

• MOST EARLY CITY MANAGERS WERE ENGINEERS

• TEXAS FIRSTS
  - AMARILLO
  - FROM 2000 TO 2012, SEVERAL CITIES CELEBRATING 90 YEARS OF COUNCIL MANAGER GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING: DENTON, TAYLOR, SHERMAN, YOAKUM, TYLER, SAN ANGELO, BROWNSVILLE, BEAUMONT, BRYAN, LUBBOCK, LUFKIN, STAMFORD, AND TULIA
• LARGE CITY ADOPTIONS
  - FORT WORTH - 1924
  - WICHITA FALLS - 1928
  - AUSTIN - 1926
  - DALLAS - 1931
  - CORPUS CHRISTI – 1945
  - SAN ANTONIO – 1951
  - LAREDO – 1981
  AND
  - EL PASO – 2004

• LATEST MEDIUM SIZE CITY
  - LEAGUE CITY - 2010
• LARGE CITIES IN OTHER STATES:
  - PHOENIX AND TUCSON, ARIZONA
  - OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA
  - DES MOINES, IOWA
  - SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA
  - KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI
  - CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA
  - NORFOLK AND VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA
ADVANTAGES OF COUNCIL-MANAGER PLAN

• Unity of authority, not divided gridlock
• Professionalism
  - Manager
  - Department Heads
• Continuity
• Objectivity
• Vision
• Separates (for most part) - Policy and Admin
THE CITY MANAGEMENT PROFESSION

• INTERNATIONAL CITY/COUNTY MANAGEMENT ASSN
  - ORIGINATOR - AMARILLO CITY MGR. M. H. HARDIN

• TML - 1913 - ELECTED OFFICIALS
  - MANAGERS STARTED MEETING IN 1916

• TCMA - 1925

• MANY YEARS AGO, MANAGERS’ BACKGROUND BROADENED
  - TODAY - GENERALISTS AND FINANCE AND PLANNING
    BACKGROUNDS AS WELL AS ENGINEERING
THE CITY MANAGEMENT PROFESSION

• GRADUATE EDUCATION FOR MANAGERS
  - SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY, TEXAS A & M, UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS, LBJ SCHOOL-UT, U. OF NORTH TEXAS, TEXAS TECH, WTSU

• CERTIFIED PUBLIC MANAGER PROGRAM - TX STATE U.
  “THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE FOR MANY SMALLER COMMUNITIES”
THE FUTURE

• MOST POPULAR FORM OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
  - IN U. S. - 50% PLUS
  - IN TEXAS - TOTAL HOME RULE CITIES: 350 +
  - COUNCIL-MANAGER: 330 +

• CHALLENGES
  - THERE IS TURNOVER IN MANAGERS
  - DALLAS, SAN ANTONIO, FORT WORTH
  - DALLAS ONLY THREAT
  - MEDIUM AND SMALLER CITIES
  - LAMBERT STORY

• REASONS FOR POPULARITY OF PLAN
  - EFFECTIVENESS
  - MANAGERS’ PROFESSIONALISM
  - YOUR PROFESSIONALISM