

Five Things You Need to Know about Council-Manager Form of Govt

1. Invented in the USA 100 years ago in response to illegal and unethical patronage practices
 - a. People ran for office in order to place family and supporters in city jobs – with no qualifications
 - b. Decisions were made for reasons other than what was in best interest of tax payers
 - c. Lots of corruption
 - d. The Council Manager form mirrored the new, efficient system from industry: Board of Directors and Stock Holders and CEO.
 - e. Focus on competence and merit

2. “Some people say...” Pros and Cons of Council-Manager form
 - a. Why does it take so long? It takes the city too long to decide things.
 - i. System is designed to take time to ensure that all sides are heard
 - b. Why can't government be more like business and decide things faster?
 - i. Government ends up responsible for those things that society and the community value –but are not profitable.
 1. Libraries, parks, public roads, animal control, etc
 - ii. Citizens often value effectiveness over efficiency.
 1. Consider pizza delivery vs fire service. Chances are that one or two location of a pizza delivery co are enough for your community. That's efficient. But fire service is different – same community probably needs more than one or two fire stations because that is most effective
 - c. Difference from strong mayor system:
 1. Cynthia worked in a strong mayor system. Every time Mayor changed, top 12 dept heads changed as well (political appointments) Merit was not the main reason for appointments
 2. Appointees were expected to campaign for mayor and donate

3. Council-Manager form requires understanding of what is policy and what is management. Remember the Stockholders, Board of Directors, and CEO model:
 - a. Manager focuses on policy recommendations and best advice, as well as options. Once Council acts, manager works to implement as efficiently and effectively as possible.
 - b. Success requires collaboration of the elected officials, and Mayor is usually a peer of Council Members with only small number of additional authorities or abilities (such as nominate people for committees, run the meetings, guide the agenda, represent city, cut ribbons)
 - c. “One is the Loneliest Number:” Have to have support of colleagues to get things accomplished

4. Public Meetings are a kind of “theater with a message” to the whole world – what is the message that your council conveys?
 - a. Always been true, but even more so now that meetings are streamed and social media shares everything
 - b. If council is serious collegial – what is that message?
 - c. If council is scrappy and rude – what is that saying?
 - d. What message do you want your council to convey?

5. Manager's role in the day to day operations:
 - a. Conveys M&C direction to staff.
 - b. Allocates resources to accomplish M&C direction.
 - c. Develops team/staff
 - d. Projects and watches over revenues and expenditures (budget) for organization.
 - e. Represents City at community events, State and Federal matters.
 - f. Works with community organizations in partnership to further M&C direction.