

CUCA 1977

CITIZEN'S COMMITTEE ON MANAGER GOVERNMENT
FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Citizen's Committee on Manager Government unanimously recommends to the Town Board that it favorably consider the adoption of the manager form of government for Yorktown.

The council manager form of government provides for overall professional management in municipal affairs and enables a local government to meet the needs and desires of its citizens in a democratic way. Professional management brings to the town an accumulation of experience and a set of skills which better enables the town to cope with rapidly changing technological conditions. Because of his professional background, a manager is better equipped to deal with the increased complexities of modern day municipal services and interdepartmental and intergovernmental relations. He is better equipped to understand and implement the methods of providing for a more effective and more equitable delivery of services.

The committee believes that Yorktown has reached that point in its growth where the administration of town affairs could significantly benefit from professional management. The chief administrative officer of Yorktown must administer a \$4 million budget and provide services to 32,000 people. This involves the administration and supervision of over one dozen departments and a day to day involvement in a multitude of different problems.

While we recognize that not even a professional manager can be an expert in all these fields, we believe that a qualified manager, trained in public administration, and experienced in solving similar problems in other communities, could deal with these issues more efficiently, effectively, and expeditiously than someone without such a background.

Under a manager government, the manager would be hired by the Town Board on the basis of his qualifications and experience, not for his political leanings. He would retain his position as long as his performance was acceptable to the elected Town Board. The manager's responsibilities would be to supervise the various departments of the town government, carry out the policies and guidelines of the Town Board, and administer the budget.

The Supervisor, freed from administrative responsibilities, would become a part time official, devoting his time to policy matters as well as short term long range planning. He would remain the elected political leader of the community .

The Town Board would also be freer to devote its time to policy and planning matters as many of its administrative chores would be transferred to the manager.

Under manager government, department heads would be appointed by the manager and would be directly responsible to him.

In addition to the benefits of the manager plan cited above, we would expect:

- a consistent professional approach to be used in the execution of Town Board policy, especially in the area of employee relations.
- a reduction of political influence in the administration of the town departments.
- responsiveness to citizen needs on an equitable basis, with due regard to the town's overall resource limitations.
- efficient operation of the town's financial matters.
- continuity in administration through periods of political transition.
- comprehensive background information would be transmitted to Town Board members prior to their reaching policy decisions.
- greater interest on the part of residents to run for a part time Supervisor's position.

It is true that the town could be faced with a poor manager, unresponsive to the needs of the community and unable to carry out the policies and guidelines set down by the elected Town Board. This weakness in the manager system would be mitigated, however, by the fact that the manager would serve at the pleasure of the Town Board and could be fired at any time if and when he ceased to have the confidence of the elected Town Board.

We believe that the manager form of government would be responsive to the wishes of the community. Not only would it provide for the speedier removal of an ineffective executive officer, but it would also facilitate and expedite the work of the elected Town Board in its policy making deliberations.

The manager would be accessible to the entire community to answer question, investigate complains, and receive input on the wishes of the community. As the chief administrative officer of the town, the manager would have to be more than a 9-5, Monday-Friday bureaucrat.

The committee also considered the danger of the Town Board becoming a rubber stamp of the manager, an argument frequently used against manager government. We believe, however, that the existence of an informed and active electorate should prevent this situation from happening.

The committee found it difficult to demonstrate that manager government would result in either a significant increase in costs to the town, or in a significant decrease in the tax rate. However, extensive studies of manager government have supported the contention that manager government should result in better and more efficient municipal services.

The committee believes that although the Yorktown Town Board should not rush into the hasty adoption of manager government, it should not delay its active consideration of this alternate form of government. If the change to manager government is made in the near future, the town would be in a position to benefit from professional management as soon as possible.

Information about manager government must be disseminated throughout the community and the support of key political and civic groups, as well as individuals in the community obtained. A Town Board resolution indicating the board's general agreement with manager government would go a long way towards stimulating the interest of the community in the issue, as well as helping to win their support for the idea.

Date _____ Susan Stetson, Chairman _____
Alan Fowler _____ Steven Curley _____
Charles Meyer _____ David Frayne _____

STRUCTURE OF A MANAGER GOVERNMENT

Selection of Officials

A. Councilmen

Four councilmen, elected by the people for four year terms, would serve on the Town Board. The position would be part time.

B. Supervisor

The supervisor, elected by the people for a two year term, would be a member of the town board.. The position would be part time.

C. Manager

The manager would be hired by the Town Board and would serve at its pleasure.

Duties of Officials

A. Town Board

1. To establish all town policies
2. To adopt laws and ordinances
3. To approve the annual budget
4. To set the tax rate
5. To hire and fire the manager and to set his salary

B. Supervisor

1. To provide political leadership
2. To provide leadership in the formulation of policy
3. To preside over meetings of the Town Board
4. To represent the town in ceremonial functions
5. To interpret town board policy to the people of the community.

C. Manager

1. To see that all laws and ordinances passed by the Town Board are enforced.
2. To supervise all town departments in accordance with policies set by the Town Board.
3. To appoint and remove department heads in accordance with civil service regulations.
4. To prepare the annual budget and submit it to the Town Board for its approval.
5. To make recommendations to the Town Board concerning town affairs.

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