

J S

823

.2

.L 8

UC-NRLF



⌘B 583 610

LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.

GIFT OF

Des Moines

Class

The Des Moines Plan
of
Commission Government

DIGEST AND REFERENCES



COMPILED BY
EDWARD C. LYTTON
MAYOR'S SECRETARY



DES MOINES, IOWA
SEPTEMBER, 1910

JS823
.2
.L8



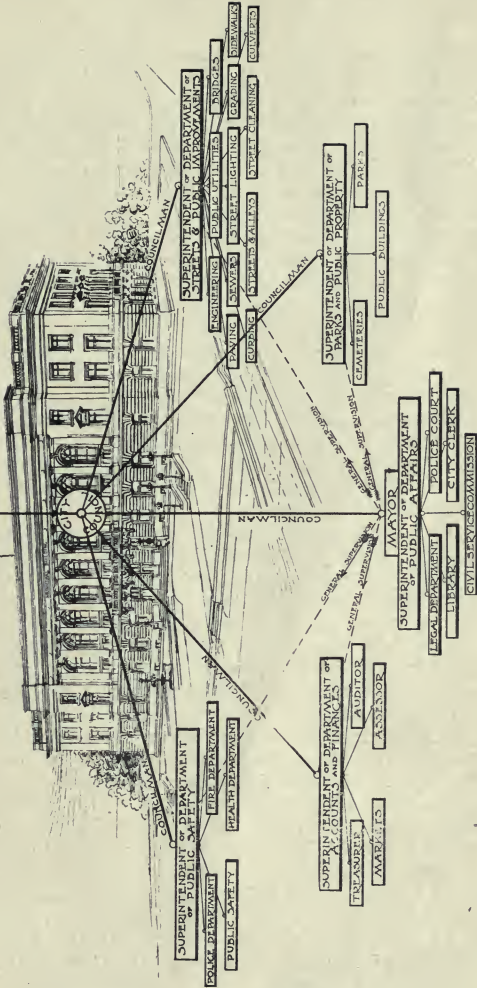
LIBRARY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA

Esifer



New Municipal Building in course of construction on river front. The first building erected in the United States, designed especially for the business of a Commission Governed City

ELECTORATE
 INITIATIVE
 REFERENDUM
 RECALL



DES MOINES PLAN OF CITY GOVERNMENT



Digest of The Des Moines Plan

By Mayor James R. Hanna, Des Moines, Iowa

The Commission form of government abolishes ward lines, party politics and the old division of city officers into legislative, executive and judicial departments. In place of this it substitutes a board, consisting of the mayor and four commissioners, who manage the affairs of the city just as a board of directors manage the business of a bank or any large corporation, who are invested with all the powers of city government and who are elected by the people of the whole city, but without any party designation. These five men divide the duties of the city government among themselves into five departments of Public Affairs, Accounts and Finances, Public Safety, Streets and Public Improvements, and Parks and Public Property. They then elect all the subordinate officers necessary to the conducting of the city business, such as Chief of Police, Police Judge, City Clerk, City Engineer, City Treasurer, City Auditor, etc. These subordinate officers may be discharged at any time for any misconduct or lack of attention to duties. All other subordinates except common laborers are selected under civil service rules administered by a Civil Service Commission, and are removable only for misconduct or lack of attention to duties, or activity in political matters.

The four councilmen and mayor act as the administrative heads of their respective departments, and also constitute the city council and as such legislate for the city.

The councilmen under the Des Moines plan are elected for a period of two years and in the following manner:

Any citizen who can secure the signatures of twenty-five voters vouching for his character may become a candidate for mayor or commissioner. From among these candidates the two receiving the highest number of votes for mayor in the primary become candidates for mayor in the final election, and the eight receiving the highest number of votes for commissioner become the final candidates for commissioners. Then in the final election, occurring two weeks later, the one receiving the highest number of votes for mayor becomes mayor and the four receiving the highest number of votes for commissioners are elected to these offices. These five men at their first meeting proceed to elect the subordinate city officers and the new council is then ready to conduct the business of the city.

It will be seen that directness and simplicity are the main characteristics of the Des Moines plan of commission government. The great purposes are to make the city government feel responsive to public opinion and also to make it efficient in administration. To carry out these two fundamental ideas two other great principles have directed nearly all the details

of our charter, viz: to confer upon the governing body great power, and to hold the governing body strictly responsible for the right use of that power. Publicity and efficiency are thus the watchwords of the Des Moines plan.

Candidates must make a public statement of their campaign expenses, there can be no secret meetings of the city council, every ordinance appropriating money must be on public file for seven days before it becomes effective, all franchises must be submitted to a vote of the people for approval before they become operative, officers must have no secret obligations to public service companies in the way of passes, special rates, or free services, etc. These specific provisions for publicity have created a general spirit of bringing everything in connection with the city government out into the open light. Campaigns are conducted practically altogether in open meetings, hundreds of which occur in every city election. Every meeting of the city council is minutely reported in the daily newspapers. The result is that the public opinion is well informed and intelligent, and it moulds the action of the city council, and the power of this public opinion is rendered still more effective by the existence of the provisions for the initiative, referendum and recall.

Having thus provided for intelligent, active and effective public opinion that makes the city government feel entirely responsible to it for its every act, the next thing of importance, indeed the great object, is to give the city officers every possible means of efficient administration. They are, therefore, given every power of city government, legislative, executive and judicial, so that they can make no excuse for not doing their full duty. The result is a prompt, efficient, business-like administration of municipal affairs. That would seem to be something like the fulfillment of democracy, when you can have intelligent public opinion making itself felt in a business-like administration of public business.

205698

List of References to Some of the Best Articles Written on The Des Moines Plan of Commission Government

- Berryhill, James G.
Des Moines plan argument.
(Register and Leader, Des Moines, February 9, 1909.)
- Bradford, E. S.
Commission government in American cities.
Commission government in Houston.
(In Municipal journal and engineer, vol. 25, Aug. 5, 1908,
pp. 174-175.)
"Difference between this and Galveston plan."
Galveston plan successful.
(In Municipal journal and engineer, vol. 24, June 3, 1908,
pp. 694-695.)
(Address E. S. Bradford, Dept. of Commerce and Labor,
Washington, D. C.)
- Campbell, R. A.
Commission system of municipal government—Des Moines
plan.
(In American political science review, vol. 1, Aug., 1907,
pp. 621-626.)
- Cheeseborough, E. R.
The success of the Galveston experience.
(In National municipal league. Proceedings, 1906, pp. 181
193.)
- City government by commission: a symposium on the Gal-
veston, Newport and Des Moines plans.
The Galveston plan, by William Bennett Munroe; Newport
plan of city government, by F. E. Chadwick; The Des
Moines plan, by Silas B. Allen.
(In Chautauquan, vol. 51, June, 1908, pp. 108-141.)
- City government.
(In Outlook, vol. 92, Aug. 14, 1909, pp. 865-866.)
- The City Hall.
(Bulletin of the League of American municipalities; pub-
lished monthly by Municipal Publishing Co., Des Moines,
Iowa. Discussions of practical operation of the Des
Moines plan and other commission systems in each
issue since January, 1909; also information as to prog-
ress of this plan of government in fifteen or twenty
other American cities; back numbers obtainable from
publishers.)
- Debate on the Commission form of government.
State University of Iowa vs. University of Minnesota.
(Published by The Forensic league, Iowa City, Iowa.)

- Dehoney, C.
Breaking down ward lines in cities.
(In World Today, v. 18, p. 487-90, May, 1910.)
- Deming, H. E.
The government of American cities; a program of democracy.
New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1909. 323 pp.
The Galveston plan: pp. 97-101, 123, 161.
- Des Moines plan of city government.
(In World's work, vol. 18, May, 1909, p. 11,533.)
- Dillon, S. J.
The "Des Moines plan."
(In National magazine, vol. 26, Sept., 1907, pp. 710-714.)
The Des Moines plan of city government.
(In Overland monthly, vol. 50, Oct., 1907, pp. 324-328.)
- Eliot, C. W.
Municipal government by commission.
(In South Atlantic quarterly, vol. 8, April, 1909, pp. 174-183.)
- Fuller, A. M.
Municipal government by commission.
(Address A. M. Fuller, Meadville, Pa.)
- The Galveston idea.
(In Bliss, W. D. P., ed. New encyclopedia of social reform, pp. 529-530. New York, 1908.)
- The Galveston plan of city government.
(In Municipal engineering, vol. 32, April, 1907, pp. 255-258.)
- Garvin, L. F. C.
Better city government.
(In Arena, vol. 41, January, 1909, pp. 38-41.)
- Goodyear, D.
Example of Haverhill.
(In Independent, vol. 66, January 28, 1909, pp. 194-195.)
- Government of cities by commission.
(In Municipal engineering, vol. 34, Mar., 1908, pp. 160-162.)
- Haskel, H. J.
The Texas idea; city government by a board of directors.
(In Outlook, vol. 85, April 13, 1907, pp. 839-843.)
- Hamilton, John J.
The Dethronement of the city boss.
Pub. by Funk & Wagnalls, New York. \$1.20 net; postpaid \$1.30; 285 pages. An analysis and history of the Des Moines plan, with showing of results in many cities; text, court decisions, etc.)
- Horn, P. W.
City schools under the commission form of city government.
(In Educational review, vol. 37, April, 1909, pp. 362-374.)

James, G. W.

Two successful experiments in civic government: Galveston and Houston, Texas. 1. Galveston. 2. Houston and its city commission.

(In Arena, vol. 38, July, 1907, pp. 8-13; Aug., 1907, pp. 144-149.)

Jones, Neal

A city on a hill.

(In Circle magazine, July, 1909; a description of the Des Moines plan and results obtained by it.)

MacFarland, Henry B. F.

Address on the commission form of government.

(Published by board of commissioners, Washington, D. C.)

MacGregor, Ford H.

City government by commission.

Address before Wisconsin league of municipalities.

(Pub. by Municipal reference bureau, Univ. of Wisconsin extension, Madison, Wis.)

Moorhead, F. G.

Bringing dead cities to life.

(In Technical world, vol. 12, Feb., 1910, pp. 621-628.)

Municipal government.

Two discussions before the Economic club of Boston.

(Pub. by Economic club, Boston, Mass.)

Municipal government by commission.

(In Nation, vol. 83, Oct. 18, 1906, p. 322.)

Niday, J. E.

The Business idea in municipal government.

(Address J. E. Niday, Asst. City Attorney, Houston, Texas.)

Plan vindicated by year's work.

(Register and Leader, Des Moines, Iowa, March 28, 1909.)

Proceedings of the Providence conference for good city government and the thirteenth annual meeting of the National municipal league.

Robbins, E. Clyde

Selected articles on the commission plan of government.

(In Debater's Hand book series.)

Published by H. W. Wilson Co., Minneapolis, Minn.

Russell, C. E.

Sanity and democracy for American cities.

(In Everybody's magazine, v. 22, pp. 435-47, April, 1910.)

Sampson, Henry E.

Des Moines plan of city government.

(In Century magazine, vol. 74, Oct., 1907, p. 270.)

A year under the Des Moines plan.

(Pub. by Greater Des Moines Committee, Des Moines, Iowa.)

Slosson, W. B.

Government by commission in Texas.

(In Independent, vol. 63, July 25, 1907, pp. 195-200.)

Spread of the commission plan.

- (In Outlook, vol. 89, July 4, 1908, pp. 495-497.)
Spread of the Galveston plan.
(In American monthly review of reviews, vol. 36, Nov., 1907, pp. 623-624.)
Spread of the Texas idea.
(In Outlook, vol. 86, Aug. 3, 1907, pp. 707-708.)
Texas idea.
In Outlook, vol. 85, April 13, 1907, pp. 834-835.)
The Story of the short ballot cities—an explanation of the success of the commission form of municipal government.
(Address Richard S. Childs, Secretary, The Short ballot organization, 383 Fourth Avenue, New York.)
Three great experiments. (Galveston, Tex.; Des Moines, Ia., Newport, R. I.)
(In Independent, vol. 64, June 18, 1908, pp. 1409-1410.)
Turner, George K.
Galveston: a business corporation.
(McClure magazine, vol. 27, October, 1906, pp. 610-620.)
New American city government—The Des Moines plan—A triumph of democracy and its spread across the United States.
(In McClure's magazine, vol. 35, May, 1910, pp. 997-108.)
Various articles regarding the Des Moines plan of city government published from time to time in the Register and Leader, Des Moines Capital, Des Moines Daily News and Evening Tribune, newspapers published in the city of Des Moines, Iowa.
Wealth, Pub. by Greater Des Moines Committee, Des Moines, Iowa.
Williams, C. A.
Governing cities by commissions.
(In World today, vol. 11, Sept., 1906, pp. 943-946.)
Wisconsin University. University extension division. Dept. of debating and public discussion.
Commission plan of city government.
Madison: Pub. by the University, 1908. 6 pp. (Bulletin of the University of Wisconsin, serial No. 259; General series, No. 141.)
Wise, W. W., and Sampson, Henry E.
Articles favoring and opposing the Des Moines plan.
(Midwestern, January, 1910.)
Wise, W. W.
Article opposing the Des Moines plan.
(Register and Leader, Des Moines, Ia., June 3, 1909.)

The Following Cities Have Voted Favorably Upon the
Adoption of the Commission Form of
Municipal Government

ALABAMA

Montgomery
Birmingham

CALIFORNIA

Berkeley *Sacramento*
Los Angeles
Riverside
San Diego

COLORADO

Colorado Springs
Grand Junction

GEORGIA

Atlanta (under consideration)

IOWA

Des Moines
Cedar Rapids
Keokuk
Burlington
Sioux City
Fort Dodge

IDAHO

Boise
Lewiston

KANSAS

Kansas City
Coffeyville
Leavenworth
Wichita
Hutchinson

Independence

Anthony
Cherryvale
Topeka
Parsons
Pittsburg
Emporia

LOUISIANA

Shreveport

MASSACHUSETTS

Taunton
Haverhill
Gloucester
Chelsea
Boston (modified)

MISSOURI

St Joseph

MINNESOTA

Mankato

NORTH DAKOTA

- Grand Forks
Fargo
Minot
Mandan
Bismark

NEW YORK

Buffalo
Mount Vernon

NORTH CAROLINA

Charlotte

OKLAHOMA

Guthrie
Ardmore
Muskogee
El Reno
Tulsa
Sapulpa
Claremore
Enid
McAlister

SOUTH CAROLINA

Columbia

SOUTH DAKOTA

Yankton
Sioux Falls
Huron
Pierre
Dell Rapids
Vermillion
Rapid City

TEXAS

Galveston

Houston
Palestine
Waco
Fort Worth
Austin
El Paso
Dallas
Denison
San Antonio
Greenville
Sherman
Beaumont

TENNESSEE

Etawah
Memphis
Bristol
Clarksville
Richard City

WASHINGTON

Tacoma

WISCONSIN

Eau Claire



THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST DATE
STAMPED BELOW

OCT 19 1916

here

OCT 19 1916

(214)

DEC 7 1916

DEC 12 1916

SEP 29 1919

MAR 25 1921

MAY 16 1922

MAY 1 1924

J3223

L8

Lytham

205698

