

2005 CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE

A G E N D A

November 20, 2006 - 7:00 P.M. - City Council's Office - City Hall - City of Dover

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

1. Discussion - Form of Government

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Mayor-Council

Characteristics include:

- Separation of powers between directly elected mayor and city council
- Mayor has executive powers while council has legislative powers
- Mayor is directly elected to office, often full-time and paid

This form tends to be in older, larger cities, or in very small cities, under 25,000 population. It is most popular in the Mid-Atlantic and Midwestern parts of the US. Depending on the city charter, the mayor could have weak or strong powers. Cities with variations in the mayor-council form of government are:

- Los Angeles, CA;
- Houston, TX;
- Topeka, KS; and
- Minneapolis, MN.

Council-manager

Characteristics include:

- City council oversees the general administration, makes policy, sets budget
- Council hires a city manager to carry out day-to-day administrative operations
- Often the mayor is chosen from among the council on a rotating basis

This form is common in cities of population over 10,000, mainly in the Southeast and Pacific coast areas. Depending on the city charter, the mayor could have weak or strong powers. Some examples are:

- Phoenix, AZ;
- San Diego, CA;
- Salt Lake City, UT; and
- Rockville, MD.

Commission

Characteristics include:

- Voters elect a individual commissioners to a small governing board
- Each commissioner is responsible for one specific aspect, such as fire, police, public works, health, finance
- One commissioner is designated as chairman or mayor, who presides over meetings
- The commission has both a legislative and executive functions

The commission form of city government is the oldest form of government in the US, but exists today in only a few cities, such as:

- Sunrise, FL; and
- Fairview, TN.

Representative Town Meeting

Characteristics include:

- All citizens can attend and participate in town meeting discussion
- Individuals are chosen by the general electorate to represent them in voting
- Each town meeting must be announced with a warrant that provides the date, time, and location of the meeting and specifies the items to be discussed
- The selectmen are responsible for implementing policy

The town meeting is lauded as the purest form of democracy since it allows all voters a say in how the town is run. However, it is quite rare, mainly found in small municipalities in the New England states, such as:

- Bowdoin, ME; and
- Lexington, MA.

Sources:

DeSantis, Victor S. and Tari Renner. "City Government Structures: an Attempt at Classification" *State and Local Government Review*, vol. 34, no. 2, (Spring 2002).

Forms and Structure of Municipal Government in the United States, presentation by William R. Barnes to the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities on October 24, 1991 in Edinburgh, Scotland.

Frederickson, H. George, Curtis Wood, and Brett Logan. "How American City Governments Have Changed: The Evolution of the Model City Charter" *National Civic Review*, vol. 90, no. 1, (2001).

Frederickson, H. George, and Gary Alan Johnson. "The Adapted American City: A Study in Institutional Dynamics." *Urban Affairs Review* vol. 36, no. 6 (July 2001).

National League of Cities. *Choices of the Citizenry: Forms of Municipal Government*. Washington, DC: National League of Cities, May 1989.

Svara, James H. "The Shifting Boundary Between Elected Officials and City Managers in Large Council-Manager Cities" *Public Administration Review*, vol. 59, no. 1 (January-February 1999).

Svara, James H. *Two Decades of Continuity and Change in American City Councils*. commissioned by the National League of Cities, September, 2003.

National League of Cities

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Cities in the United States are sometimes categorized as having either "weak" and "strong" mayors. Most "strong" mayors are in the mayor-council form of government, and are directly elected by citizens to that office. Most "weak" mayors are mayors in a council-manager form, and are elected by and from the council.

The distinction is in the level of political power and administrative authority provided by the city charter to the mayor. In actual practice, there is no sharp line between "weak" and "strong" mayors. Rather there are continua of authority and power, along which cities are spread.

Yet, it is useful to contrast the differences.

Characteristics of a "weak" mayor:

- The council is powerful, with both legislative and executive authority
- The mayor is not truly the chief executive, with limited power and/or no veto power
- The council can prevent the mayor from effectively supervising city administration
- There may be many administrative boards and commissions that operate independently from the city government

Characteristics of a "strong" mayor:

- The mayor is the chief executive officer, centralizing executive power
- The mayor directs the administrative structure, appointing and removing of department heads
- While the council has legislative power, the mayor has veto power
- The council is relieved of day-to-day administration

Sources:

DeSantis, Victor S. and Tari Renner. "City Government Structures: an Attempt at Classification" *State and Local Government Review*, vol. 34, no. 2, (Spring 2002).

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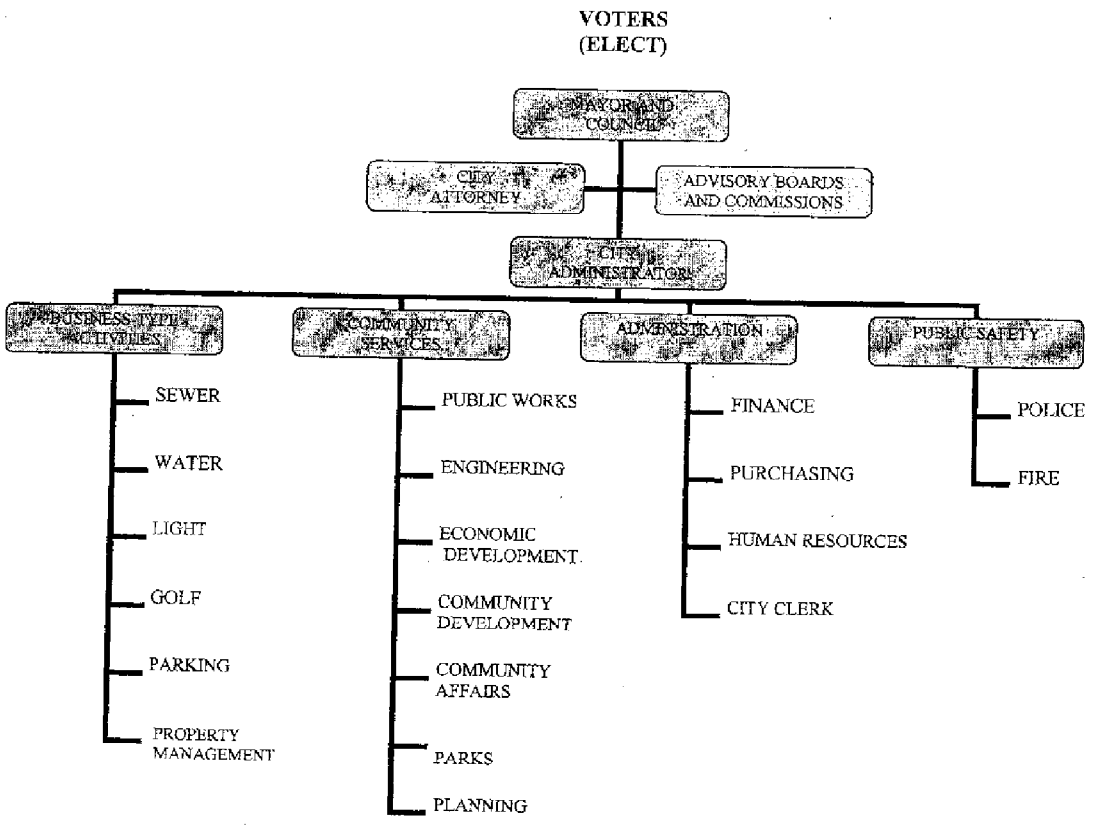
Svara, James H. *Two Decades of Continuity and Change in American City Councils*, commissioned by the National League of Cities, September, 2003.

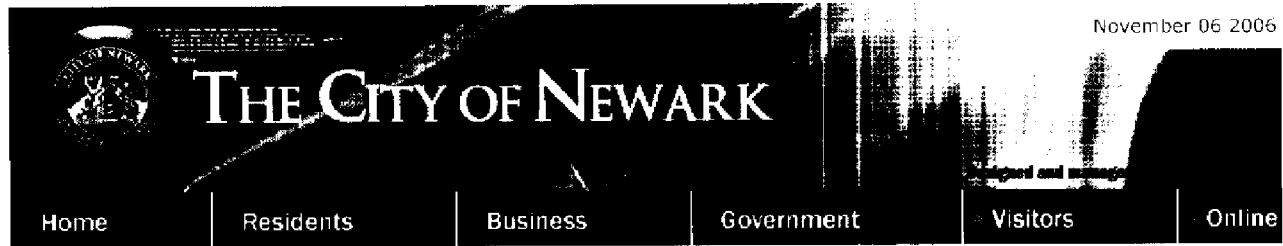
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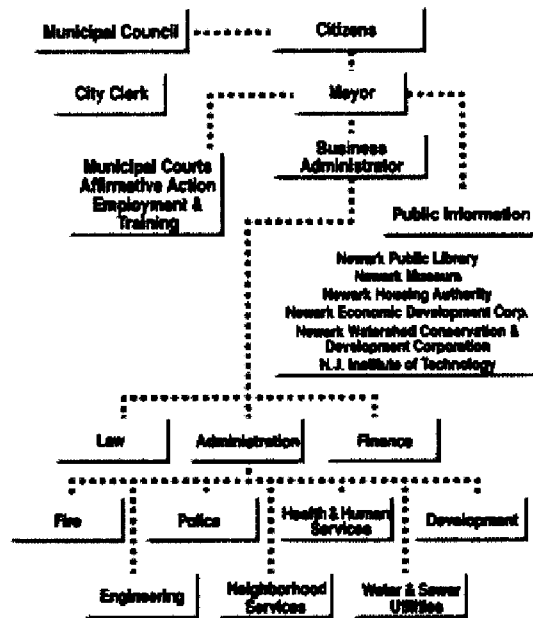
Hagerstown, MD Council/Manger
Pop 36,687

CITY ORGANIZATION CHART (By Department)



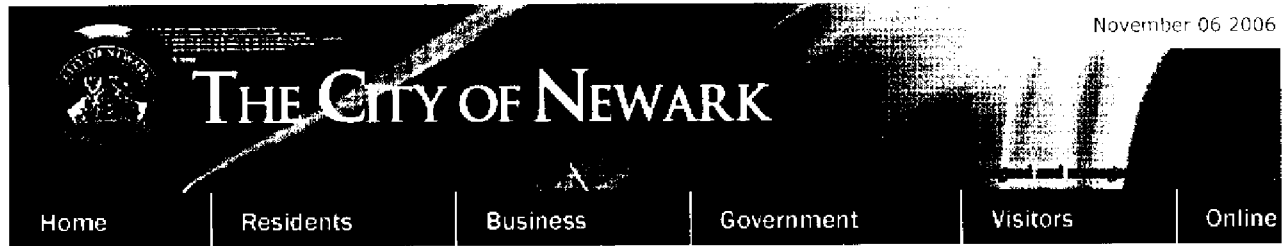


City Organization Chart



- City Organization Char
- Meet the Mayor
- Meet the BA
- Meet the Municipal Cou
- Voter Registration
- City Directory
- Municipal Agenda

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City Government

CHARTER OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, NJ

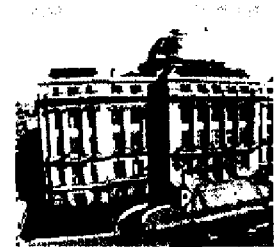
FORM OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

NOTE :

Effective as of July 1, 1954, the voters of the city of Newark, by a referendum held on November 3, 1953 and acting pursuant to the Optional Municipal Charter Law (R.S. 40:69A-1 et seq.), commonly known as the Faulkner Act, adopted Mayor-Council Plan C as the form of local government. The general provisions pertaining to mayor-council plans of government are found in Article 3 (40:69A-31 to 40:69A-48), and regulations specific to Mayor-Council Plan C are covered in Article 5 (40:69A-60.1 to 40:69A-60.7) of this Act.

Pursuant to this Plan, 9 council members are elected on a nonpartisan basis at the regular municipal election or at the general election for terms of 4 years: one council member from each of 5 wards and 4 council members on an at-large basis. The mayor is also elected for a term of 4 years.

Section citations in this Charter, e.g., 40:69A-13, refer to sections of the Revised Statutes of New Jersey, Title 40, Chapter 69A, as amended.



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