

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

City of Zephyrhills

Local Government 101

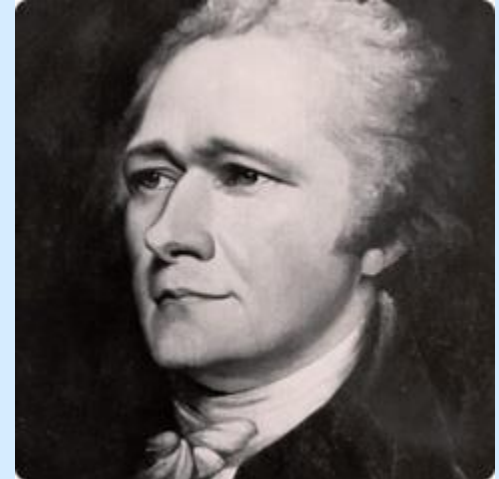
January 29, 2018

Fear of too much power

The Founding Fathers sought to prevent the concentration of power in a strong national (centralized) government. States are used as a counterweight to that power.

“A fondness for power is implanted, in most men, and it is natural to abuse it, when acquired.”

Alexander Hamilton,
The Farmer Refuted, 1775



Federalism: a widely recognized feature of American government

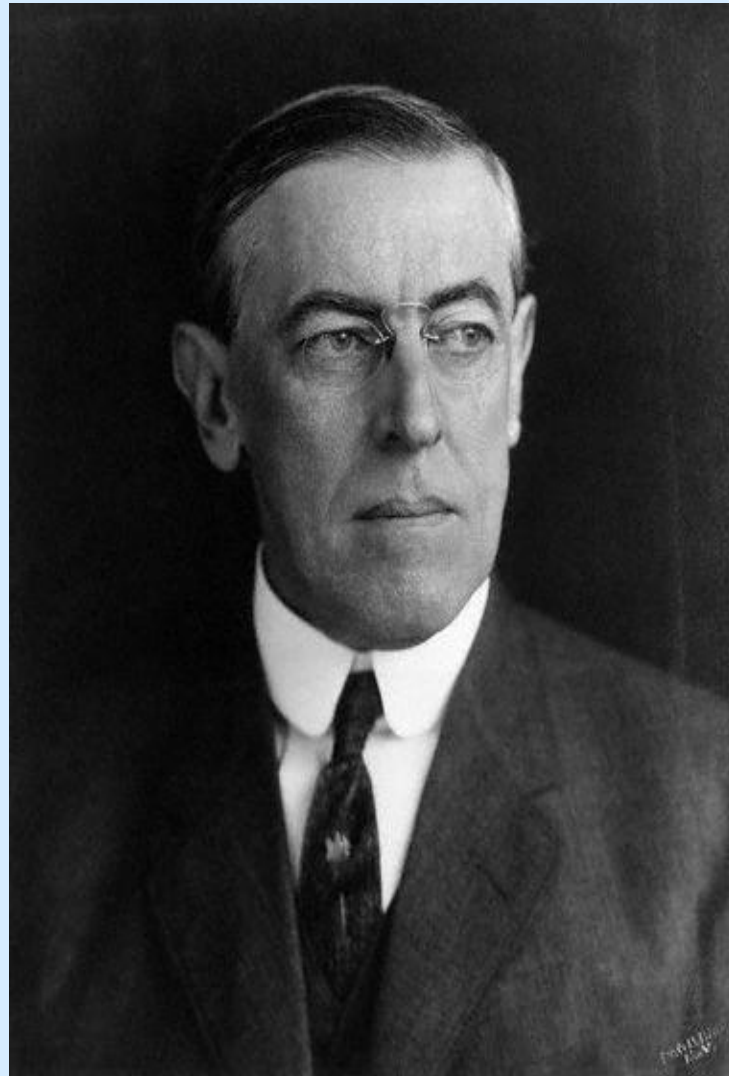
- State governments exist *independently* of each other in the same territory while commanding loyalties of the same individuals as citizens of both the state and nation.
- ***Local governments are creations of states.***
- ***County governments are subdivisions of the state.***

**“The Study of
Administration”**

Political Science
Quarterly
1887

“Father of
Administration”

Woodrow Wilson



Professional Administrators

- Wilson sought relief from ***spoils system*** and politicians' abuse of government.
- Coincides with enactment of merit hiring and civil service reforms – Pendleton Act of 1883 requires federal hiring be based on merit rather than political ties.
- His essay is considered a landmark feature of the study and practice of public administration.

Trained “Bureaucracy”

- A trained **bureaucracy brings expertise** to the job with the fortitude to oppose popular opinion when necessary.
- Wilson argued that “the field of administration is a field of business. It is removed from the hurry and strife of politics.”
- Wilson links civil service reforms as only the beginning to a “fuller administrative reform.”

Reform Movement



- The reform model embraces council-manager government, **non-partisan ballots**, at-large elections, separation of municipal elections from state and national elections, merit systems and the democratic ballot processes of initiative, referendum and recall petition.

Types of Local Government

Basically 2 types of local government in the United States:

- ***Council-manager***
- ***Strong mayor***

Florida examples:

- Tampa, St. Petersburg, Orlando have strong mayors
- **Zephyrhills**, Temple Terrace, Sarasota have city manager form.

- Larger the city, more likely to have strong mayor form – New York City, Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles are prominent examples.



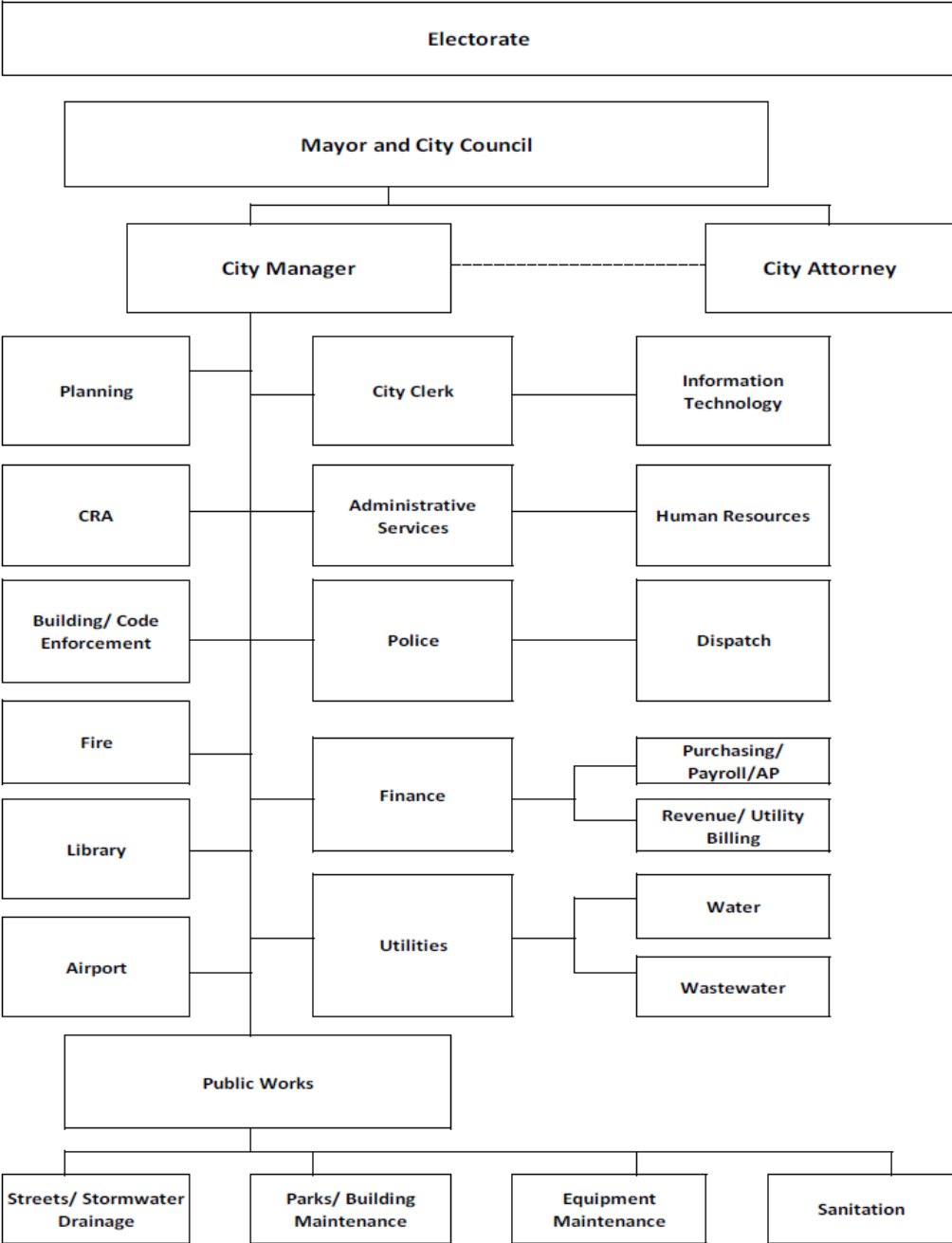
- Dallas and Phoenix are two anomalies of larger cities operating with council-manager forms.
- Citizens decide type of government through public initiatives and charters.

Elected City Council and Mayor

- There are five elected members of the Zephyrhills City Council – the council president is the head elected official.
- Council and Mayor terms are for three years, per the City Charter.
- The Mayor is elected independently of City Council and does not have a vote. The Mayor does have veto power over an ordinance.
- Council is the law making body for the City of Zephyrhills; it sets policy and approves the annual budget.

City Charter

- The Charter is the city's "constitution" and establishes how the city is organized and operates.
- Changes to the Charter must go before the voters in order to be enacted.
- Included in the Charter are rules and regulations for the local government: such as establishing terms for Council, election organization and how the city manager is hired and fired.

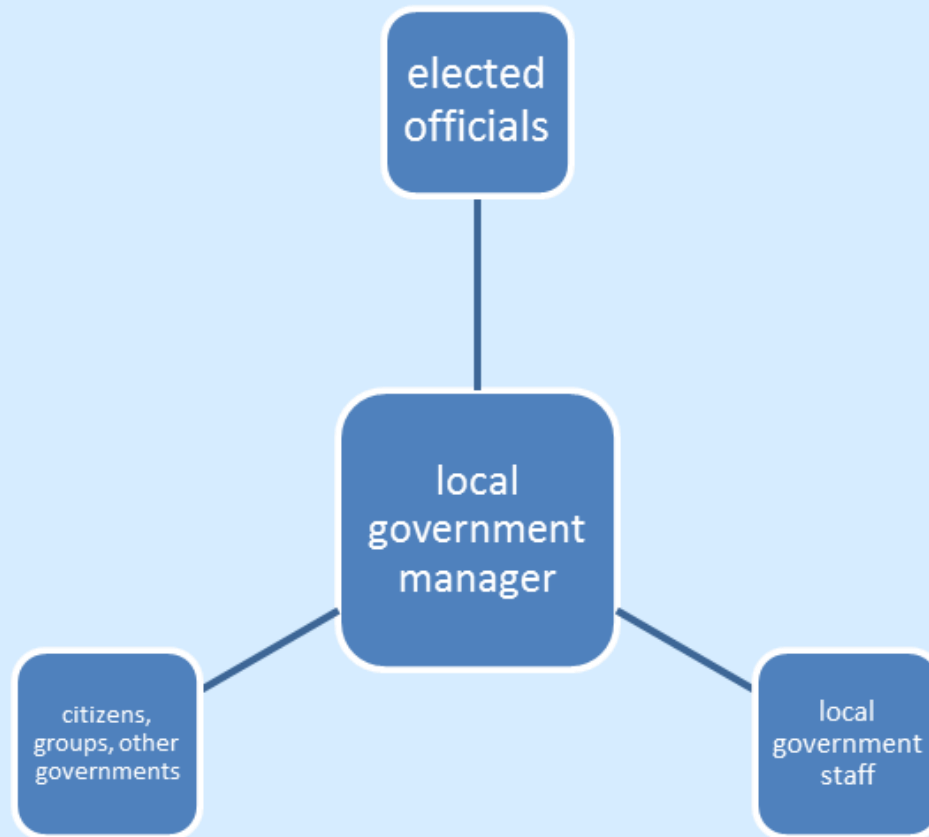


Manager as Leader

- City Council members appoint (and terminate) city managers.
- Managers are the administrative leaders; council members dominate the policy arenas.
- Managers were meant to be “***neutral competents.***”
- Over time, these two roles have blurred.

As community leaders, local government managers interact with three key sets of actors:

- The local government manager works for and interacts directly with the ***governing board*** and mayor.
- The manager also handles a wide range of interactions with ***people and organizations*** within the city or county and outside it.
- The city manager is the head of the administrative organization and as such shapes the way local government ***staff members*** deal with each other and with citizens.



Multiple Contacts and Partners

- Chamber of Commerce
- Main Street members, organization leaders
- Rotary and Kiwanis
- Business leaders
- Civic leaders
- Economic development



Government Interaction

- County (or other city) officials, county administrator, county commissioners, county staff (attorneys, planners, transportation planners, animal control, **emergency management**)
- Elections office, clerk of court, sheriff
- Property appraiser, tax collector
- Neighboring city mgrs., School Board
- State Representatives/Senators
- State employees – Department of Transportation, Department of Environmental Protection, Southwest Florida Water Management District, historic officer, etc.



City Clerk's Office

- The city clerk is the official record keeper of the city and maintains all city documents, council minutes and responds to requests for public records.
- The clerk works with the city manager and Council to prepare Council meeting agendas and is responsible for advertising and scheduling public meetings.
- The clerk also is responsible for conducting municipal elections, qualifying candidates and working with the Elections office to locate the polling place and other election activities.
- The clerk's office oversees operation of Oakside Cemetery and the public use of city facilities, such as AHCC.

Strong Mayor

- Strong mayors are elected independently of city councils
- They are the chief executive officer of their city – public face
- Typically hire a CAO to for day to day activities
- City councils are weak – have little authority outside budget approval and zoning/land use issues
- Still impact local government – representative role

County Government

- In Florida, county government form is similar to council-manager with some significant differences.
- County administrator serves as chief administrative officer for the elected Board of County Commissioners.
- They *do not supervise* the 5 constitutional officers: sheriff, tax collector, property appraiser, supervisor of election and clerk – however, these officials must rely on County Commissions for budgets.

County Services

- In addition to responding to increasing service demands from growth and urbanization, counties provide wider variety of services (than cities):
 - Medicaid
 - Health and aging services (nutrition)
 - Welfare
 - Housing and rental assistance
 - Regional transportation issues
 - Major service providers (w/s, fire, roads)