

GENERAL INFORMATION CONCERNING CITY MANAGERS AND CITY ADMINISTRATORS

1. *What is the difference between a City Manager and a City Administrator?*

A municipality's charter describes the duties of the city manager or city administrator and, consequently, the differences between these two positions can vary from one city to the next. Generally speaking, however, a City Administrator is a mayoral assistant whose duties are defined from time to time by the Mayor and Board. Under a city administrator form of government, the mayor usually retains the duties of CEO for the city and the mayor oversees the work of the city administrator. In contrast, the mayor's role in a city manager form of government is largely a ceremonial one – with the city manager answering directly to the city council.

2. *Who hires and fires a city administrator or city manager?*

A city manager is usually hired directly by the city council – and can be terminated by a majority vote of the council. A city administrator is usually hired by the mayor – with the approval of the city council. Once hired, a city administrator can be fired by the mayor – usually with the consent of the council.

3. *Can a City Manager/Administrator Vote on Matters Before the Council?*

No. Not even in the case of a tie vote.

4. *Is the City Council just a "rubber stamp" for the City Manager/Administrator?*

No. A City Manager/Administrator's duty is to propose policies and methods to improve the operation of municipal government. The Council's job is to cross-examine the Manager's or Administrator's proposals and to assure that they are consistent with community standards, goals, etc. City Council members are free to vote against the manager's or administrator's proposals.

5. *What are the qualifications for a city manager or city administrator position?*

Every town can set its own job qualifications for these positions. Most managers and administrators have a college degree in public administration, but many come from a variety of other backgrounds including engineering, law enforcement, business administration, planning, and finance.

6. *How many Tennessee communities employ a city manager or city administrator?*

There are approximately 110 cities in Tennessee that employ either a city manager or a city administrator.

7. *Do small towns employ city managers or city administrators?*

Yes. Consider the following chart:

TENNESSEE TOWNS EMPLOYING CITY MANAGER/CITY ADMINISTRATOR

<u>Population</u>	<u>No. Towns Having City Manager/Administrator</u>
1 - 500	7
501 - 1,000	9
1,001 - 2,000	11
2,001 - 3,000	13
3,001 - 4,000	10
4,001 - 5,000	9
TOTAL	59

More than half of the Tennessee municipalities employing a city manager or city administrator have a population of less than 5,000. And a quarter of Tennessee city managers/administrators work for towns having fewer than 2,000 people.

8. *Does the Public have any input into the city manager/administrator selection process?*

Many city councils have found it helpful to appoint a city manager selection committee to help them sort through applications and to evaluate the candidates for the position. The selection committee is often made up of private citizens.

9. *How long can a town expect a city manager/administrator to remain on the job?*

The average length of time a city manager/administrator spends working for a community is approximately 6 years. There are, of course, numerous examples of city managers/administrators who served longer or shorter terms.

10. *What are the main reasons city managers/administrators leave their jobs?*

The reasons are many and varied, but may be categorized as follows:

- a) A desire to earn more money and have more responsibility in a larger community.
- b) A desire to seek less responsibility and stress in a smaller community.
- c) Accepting a job in the private sector where salaries are generally higher.
- d) Termination by the mayor and/or city council.

11. *What reasons would a city have for terminating a city manager?*

Again the reasons are many and varied. However, in most instances where a city manager is terminated by the city, it is not for violations of policy or misconduct, etc. Instead, it sometimes happens that the city council (or mayor) simply disagree with the manager or administrator over the direction or goals of the city. In such instances, it is usually best that the manager be replaced with someone who shares the council's ideas for managing the city.

12. *Are there any Tennessee cities employing a city manager/administrator which are similar to Dresden?*

Yes. Consider the following list:

<u>CITY</u>	<u>POPULATION</u>	<u>POSITION</u>
Waynesboro	2,228	city manager
Dover	1,442	city administrator
Mt. Pleasant	4,491	city manager
Munford	4,708	city manager
South Fulton	2,517	city manager
Clifton	2,699	city manager
Bolivar	5,802	city administrator
Tazewell	2,165	city administrator
Sparta	4,599	city administrator
Savannah	6,917	city administrator

13. *How much money would a city manager/administrator at Dresden be expected to earn?*

The MTAS 2002/2003 Salary and Fringe Benefit Survey of Tennessee Municipalities indicates the following information concerning city manager salaries:

SALARY RANGES OF TENNESSEE CITY MANAGERS/ADMINISTRATORS

<u>Population</u>	<u>Salary Range</u>
Under 2,000	\$22,637 to \$24,370 (Includes numerous part-time jobs)
2,000 to 3,999	\$51,826 to \$55,572
4,000 to 7,999	\$60,856 to \$68,698

Dresden might reasonably expect to pay an annual salary of \$50,000 to \$60,000 for a city manager/administrator, depending upon experience, education, etc.

14. *Can a city manager/administrator fire other city employees?*

It depends upon how the City Charter is written. Some city managers have this authority, others don't. The Dresden city charter could be amended to include, or exclude, this provision.

15. *What does it mean for a city manager/administrator to be "non-partisan?"*

A city manager/administrator is supposed to remain completely neutral in the political process. Accordingly, the manager/administrator will not support (or work to defeat) candidates for local, state, or national office. The ideal city manager keeps his/her politics to himself and does not become an active participant in the politics of the community.

16. *What role does a mayor or councilman have in a town employing a city manager/administrator?*

Particularly with the city administrator form of government, the mayor and council continue to play active roles in the running of the local government. In such towns, the city administrator may be looked upon as the mayor and council's business manager – working with the town's elected officials to see that their policies are being implemented.

A city manager generally serves in communities having a "weak mayor" form of government – where the position of mayor is largely ceremonial.

Whether a city manager or a city administrator, the town's elected officials remain in control of the city government and oversee the performance of the city manager/administrator.