

**ALDERMEN AND COMMITTEES—(Continued)**

each committee as well, and everything which goes before the Council first goes to the Committee. They look it over and make a report to the Council. Then it goes before the Board of Control, and they also look it over and make a report to the City Council. The controller who is on the committee knows why the committee made such a recommendation, and the other controllers explain why the other committees have made their recommendations. Then the recommendation comes to the Council, with the report of the Board of Control. Therefore, there are eight men who know why these resolutions come up at council meeting. Before that we used to have council meetings lasting anywhere from three to five hours. The Council meetings now last just one hour, sometimes go into an hour and a half, and often lasting only half an hour. The resolution goes through without any trouble. Then in the different departments, they are made responsible. The Fire Chief is made absolutely responsible for his department. He hires and discharges every man in the department, and there is no person on the Council who can tell the Chief to take on such a man or to let such a man go. When he makes a promotion, he reports it to the City Council, and they confirm it so far as the paying of the man's salary is concerned. They cannot reject it or fire him. If the Chief says no, he cannot go. At one time our hospital was run by commissioners. They were not as good as the council. The Council has not had any trouble, and they have a surplus out of the estimates for some time.

The men on the utility commission absolutely make no recommendations. The manager of the utility makes all recommendations, fires, hires, discharges. Nobody can interfere. We have now a pretty successful administration of civic affairs. The city council has built a railroad, the first of the hydro-radial system, running from London to Lake Erie, twenty-three miles away, and the city council appoints commissions each year to help run it. They rent it from the city council and pay \$20,000 to the city for the privilege, besides paying a sinking fund on the money borrowed. It was the first railroad of the kind in the province. We will pay all our sinking fund and interest on the loan, we also have a surplus on the loan. On the way it goes through the Town of St. Thomas, and we have many railroads forming traffic agreements with our civic road into the City of London. One road has more than trebled its business into London by coming to us. Where they made \$5,000 before they now make \$25,000. The City of London sells tickets the whole summer long from London to the Lake, 23 miles away, for 30 cents return trip to everybody. On that we run our own power and light, and we are running our own hydro system. We have our committees with a controller on each, and I think it is the best way. The heads of departments are absolutely supreme in their department, and there is no trouble in any department. The chiefs have entire control, and the municipal business is to that extent taken out of politics. They give the best of service. All of our departments are paying, and we have a surplus in every department in the city. Only the salaries are fixed by the Controllers for the heads of departments."

## Straight Commission Government

W. D. L. HARDIE, Mayor of Lethbridge.

My first duty is to apologize for the brevity of this paper. Since the date I promised your Secretary that I would present a paper at this meeting our City's business has been of such a magnitude that I could scarcely get through it and I was entirely debarred from anything but unconscious thought on the subject.

It is not my intention to go into any elaborate discussion of all the phases of Commission Government but rather to give you a few details about that Form of Government and its working in the City of Lethbridge.

To start out with I may say that the Charter of the City of Lethbridge is the same in every respect almost as before the change from Councilmanic Government to Commission Government excepting that the first part of it has been worded to make it clear that Three Commissioners take the place of Six Councilmen and a Mayor, each Commissioner being elected directly by the people to the particular Commissionship he aspires to.

1.—The Mayor is Commissioner of Finance and Public Safety; the last of which embraces the Police and Fire Departments. The Charter describes him as the Chief Executive Officer and gives him considerable control over the other Departments as well as defining his own duties. However, the office of Mayor, as such, is practically eliminated excepting that he still holds the title and performs the honorary functions that are always attached to that office in Canadian cities. Salary \$4,000 per annum.

2.—The Commissioner of Public Works controls the general work of the City done under the Engineering Department and Public Building. He is practically the City's Chief Engineer. Salary \$3,500 per annum.

3.—The Commissioner of Public Utilities controls all income bearing Municipally owned Utilities. He takes the place of the Superintendent or Manager. Salary \$3,500 per annum.

The term is for three years in each Commission and has been arranged so that one Commissioner will come up for election each year.

The Civic Government in all its details is vested in the three Commissioners jointly. The Commissioners collectively form the Council for all Legislative purposes, and for the control of the general policy of the City's administration.

Each Commissioner is given a free hand in the management of his Department, subject to the general policy and legislative authority of the Council.

The population of Lethbridge has been between ten and eleven thousand since the day Commission Government came into effect so that the cost for the Commissioners is about one dollar per capita which is considerably less than the Mayor and heads of Departments cost the City under the other form of Government.

By concentrated attention and management the Commissioners Government saved large sums in operating cost and have saved their salaries many many times over in money transactions. In two years of Commission Government it can be clearly shown that \$300,000 have been saved which would have been impossible under the old form of Government.

The Charter does not go into any definition of a Commissioners duties further than stated in this paper, excepting in the case of the Mayor in which case certain duties are well defined but in the larger sphere he is not hampered by any extended definition of his duties.

But so far as each Commissioner's Councilmanic acts are concerned they are entirely governed by Charter conditions which are pretty much the same in the Lethbridge Charter as in any other City Charter.

Each individual Commissioner, and consequently the Council as a whole, is subject to the Recall.

The Recall consists of a petition presented to the City Clerk signed by 15% of the votes polled at the last just passed election. The City Clerk is required to present the petition to the Council which must order the election to be held not less than thirty days and not more than 40 days after petition is presented.

The Charter also provides for the Initiative through which the voters may by a petition presented to the City Clerk signed as in the Recall, but by 20% demand that a By-law presented to the Council if not conflicting with the Charter, be passed by the Council or failing such passage by the Council it must be submitted to the Voters.

There is also the Referendum. As I understand this in our Charter it is more for the purpose of referring matters to the Citizens about which the Council has doubts as to the wishes of the people, but it also gives the people the opportunity of demanding that any By-law passed by the Council, which it is competent to pass, be presented to the Voters for their ratification. This requires a petition signed by 20% of the qualified voters as in the Initiative.

The Referendum has always been required in Canadian Cities in the case of Money By-laws, so that it is nothing