



# Southport Symposium

February 13, 2023



# Introduction of City Manager

**Bonnie Therrien**





- **Over 30 years experience with Municipal Government leadership as Town Manager, Deputy City Manager, City Administrator and Consultant in CT, MA, NC and MO.**



- **First Town Manager in Berlin, CT under a new form of government. Passed by 60 votes.**

- **Worked with municipalities of different populations, diversity, and yearly budget amounts throughout my career.**
- **Adjunct Professor of Public Administration at my Alma Mater.**
- **Masters in Criminal Justice and Public Administration**



# City of Southport Charter



- **Mayor, Elected for Two-Year Term; Mayor Pro-tem**
- **Six-member Board of Aldermen, Elected for Four-Year Term**
  - **Board sets Policy for City**
- **City Manager, who is appointed by the Board, makes sure policy enacted through the actions of Staff**
- **Form of Government-Council/Manager under General Statute**

# Pros and Cons of City Manager Position

## Positive Aspects:

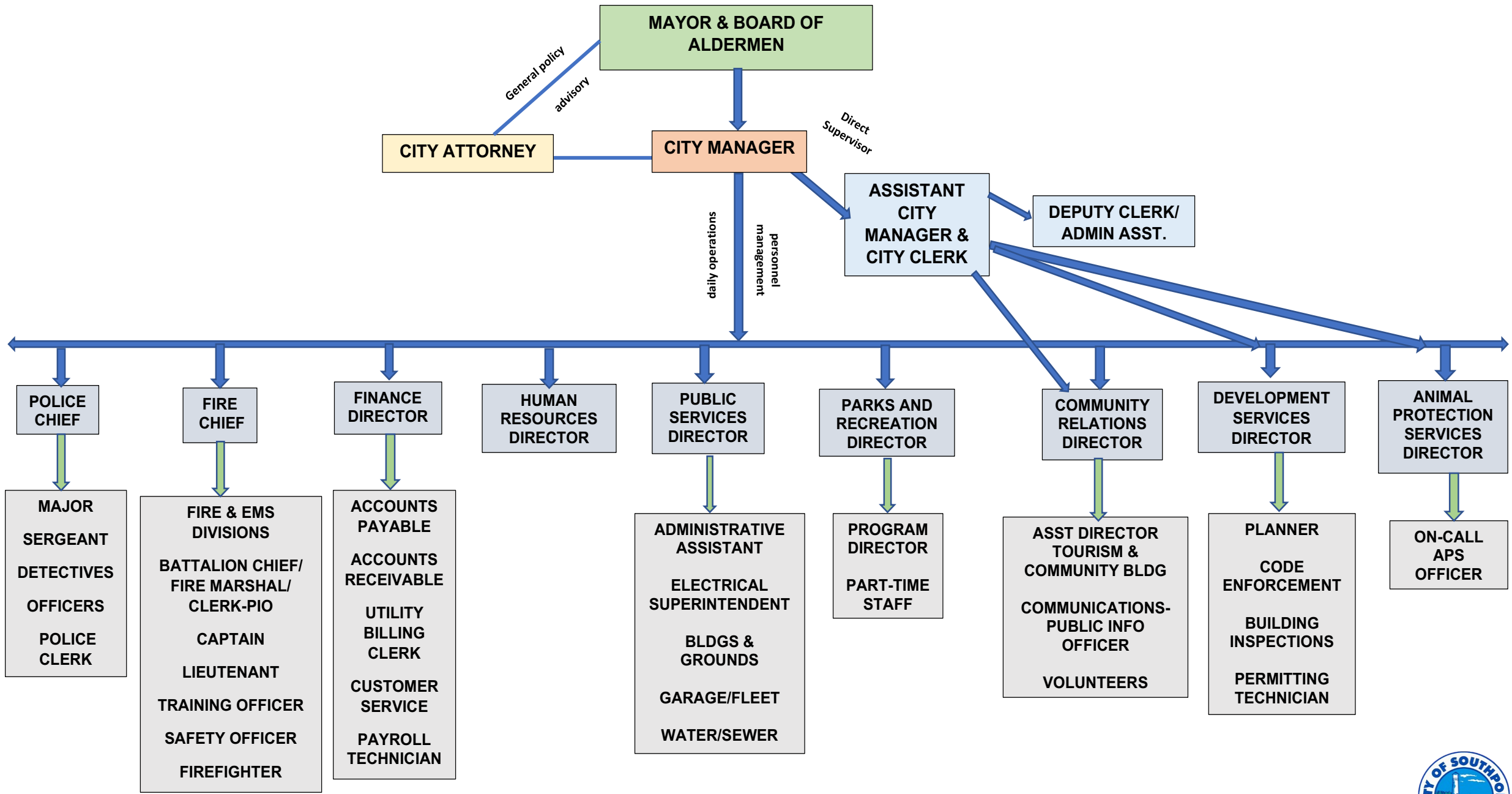
- 1. City Manager is Chief Executive Officer; Mayor/Aldermen are Board of Directors; Runs like a business (EFFICIENT AND FOCUSED). Manager appointed by elected officials.**
- 2. Manager has Professional background, education in local government matters, legalities, finances, and best practices throughout the country. (FOCUSED AND EFFECTIVE)**
- 3. Takes politics out of day-to-day activities by professionalizing municipality with written policies and procedures (FOCUSED AND EFFICIENT)**
- 4. City Manager is the go-between for Elected Officials and staff, thus keeping staff out of the political world.**
- 5. Manager has oversight on hiring and disciplinary matters (FOCUSED)**
- 6. Allows Mayor and Aldermen to concentrate on policy issues and more focused on governing vs. day-to-day activities of the municipality (FOCUSED)**
- 7. Allows consistency of government, projects, etc. so if there is a change in leadership because of elections, allows for stability for the municipality and employees (EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT)**
- 8. Must be non-partisan and does not become involved with politics (EFFECTIVE)**



## **Negative Aspects of City Manager:**

- 1. Not selected by Electors, thus Electors cannot remove the City Manager, only the Elected Officials can do this.**
- 2. The public does not feel as connected to the appointed official vs. elected person.**
- 3. Cost of City Manager and additional position seen as duplicative by the taxpayers.**
- 4. Can slow the action of getting things done as another layer of bureaucracy to approve things, but there are more checks and balances.**
- 5. Hiring of City Manager made by elected officials and not the public.**
- 6. May take some time to become acquainted with business and civic leaders, as well as citizens' groups.**

**Council/Manager Form of Government;  
Most Common Form of Governance in the USA**







**Assistant City Manager  
And  
City Clerk  
Dorothy “Dorrie” Dutton**

- About 13 years of local government experience including tax collection, permitting, planning, utility billing, Town/City Clerk-all in NC
- Completed many certification programs including Certified Floodplain Manager, Certified Zoning Official, Certified Municipal Clerk, NC Notary
- Bachelor of Science in Human Development/Family Studies (plans to complete a Masters in Public Administration)
- Also have experience in organizing municipal community events (movies at the park, festivals)
- Over twenty years of customer service experience-but my favorite is local government





- Acts as an extension of the City Manager to ensure that policies and ordinances are followed by Staff and the public
- Performs high level administrative, technical, and professional work including reviewing bids for needed work, maintaining master list and updating Capital Projects, making suggestions for policy and ordinance amendments.
- Makes recommendations to the City Manager, Elected Officials and staff
- Oversees the Development Services, Animal Protective Services and Community Relations departments
- Prepares reports, reviews contracts, coordinates projects between several departments and outside agencies
- In the temporary absence of the City Manager, the Assistant Manager presides over the day-to-day operations.
- Initiates new policies and procedures to help the City run as smoothly as possible.
- Project coordination and management, as needed.
- Assists City Manager and Finance Officer with City Budget.



## Assistant City Manager



## City Clerk

- The Clerk is one of the few positions that is legislated.
- The Clerk keeps a full and accurate detail (minutes) of the Board's proceedings including the results of each vote, attendance, etc.
- All official ordinances, policies, resolutions and other documents are maintained through the Clerk's office.
- Administer oaths of office when needed.
- The Clerk makes all notices of official meetings of the elected Board, and all officially appointed Boards of the City in the required timeline and format.
- Writes resolutions, ordinances, and proclamations as required by the Board of Aldermen.
- Respond to Requests for Information (Freedom of Information Act)
- Ensures that all state regulations are followed during Board meetings.
- Certifies official documents of the City using the City seal.
- Investigates annexation requests to make sure the property is eligible for annexation.
- Reports all required information is sent to the State and Federal government, as required by law. This includes annexation approvals, resolutions to designated State representatives, and maintains official copies for the public to review.
- Oversees the Deputy City Clerks' work and attendance
- Makes sure each official meeting is attended and minutes are kept for public record.

