

CCHS Heritage Notes for 4-15-14

By 1966 the idea of a City Manager form of government was finding favor in Vermillion. It was initially presented to the City Council on December 6, 1965 by Professor William Farber, who was heading the city planning commission at the time. Also in attendance by special invitation was a member of Yankton's city council to explain its very satisfactory experiences under the system.

A few weeks later a petition was circulated in Vermillion advocating the initiation of a city manager system. A citizens committee was set up in support, chaired by Robert Oden with Henry Moeller as treasurer. A special municipal election was set for March 1, 1966. Local news media endorsed approval of the plan and there appeared to be overwhelming popular support in favor of the issue. This was confirmed at the polls by a vote in favor 512 to 264.

On June 16, 1966 the Vermillion City Council hired Michael G. Miller as its first City Manager, with a starting salary of \$11,600. Miller was serving as city manager at Slater, Missouri and held a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of Kansas. He served until the end of 1970.

Subsequent City Managers and dates of service: Charles Kent McClain (1970-1973), Carl D. Weinaug (1974-1983), James W. Antonen (1983-1989), Jeff Pederson (1989-2002), James Patrick (2002-2004), John C. Prescott (2005 to present).

During 1982 a petition was circulated referring the continuation of the city manager system to a public vote and an election date was established of April 12, 1983. There was no concerted effort in opposition and the continuance of a city manager form of government received overwhelming support with 1,077 in favor and 362 opposed.