

GOVERNMENT

In the spring of 1901 where the thriving town of Burlington now stands, there was one store and post office, a small hotel, and one saloon. No side walks were on the streets. One had to travel around and between big fir stumps, and the trails became very muddy at times.

Thus was Burlington when it became incorporated a city June 7, 1902. The population was slightly over three hundred, that number being the required number for incorporation.

The first council convened on this day with F. W. Weideman, the first elected mayor, presiding. The council, which was the first governmental body of any kind in Burlington, consisted of the following members: Mike Hogan, William Hurley, Z. Orfield, O. Pease, and David Koch. Into the hands of these men fell the duty of the first political organization. The first council had a big job in starting the ball rolling in establishing a local government. Its actions were as follows: William Cressey was appointed first town clerk; Shauger was chosen to be first city attorney; The Burlington Journal was made official paper of the city; Sam Slater was appointed town marshal; B. M. Albertson, police judge; and George Knutzen was made first town treasurer.

The clerk's salary was set at five dollars a month and thirty cents an hour for over time and $16\frac{1}{2}$ cents per man for registration. The marshal's salary was fixed at fifteen dollars a month with one dollar added for every arrest and conviction; he was also made street commissioner at two dollars a day.

The city council met in a small wooden building where the jail now stands until 1925, when bonds for the new City Hall were issued. This new building was greatly needed and provided Burlington with a community hall. The bonds to construct the building were issued to a value of seventeen thousand dollars.

Thus, our government established, we continued on as a fourth class city until December 29, 1934, when the resolution was passed by the city council for Burlington to become a third class city. A census conducted by J. N Groven proved our eligibility for advancement with the population being 1,656 persons, 1600 being the required number.

On October 16, 1935, many changes took place as result of our advance from a fourth class to a third class city. All governmental offices, such as town marshal, town clerk, city attorney, and treasurer, became elective instead of appointive. Burlington being a fourth class city received no state funds for general improvements. In February, after we became a third class town, this was changed. Our council formerly consisted of five members, but now the number is seven with six elected from wards and one councilman-at-large.

This change from fourth to third class has been the only major change since the first organization in 1902.

During all the years Burlington has been growing, our local government has shown efficiency and good judgment in furthering its growth.