**From the Ballot Box – April and May 2010**

In April and May, three cities adopted the council-manager form of government; two via ballot and one by action of the governing body.

**Council-Manager Replaces Open Town Meeting in Bridgewater**

Voters in Bridgewater, Mass. (pop. 25,774), faced two ballot questions on April 24: whether to change the Town’s form of government from open town meeting to council-manager and whether to keep the town meeting form but employ a town manager. The council-manager proposal passed by a vote of 2,959 (54.5%) to 2,462 (45.4%). The second proposal failed with 2,080 (41.8%) in favor and 2,893 (58.2%) opposed. ICMA worked closely with the pro council-manager citizens’ group *Bridgewater Vote Yes on One* by providing information and campaign guidance. The ICMA Fund for Professional Management contributed financial support as well.

**A Resounding Yes for Council-Manager in League City**

Nineteen charter propositions appeared on the May 8 ballot in League City, Tex. (pop. 71,222), and one amendment asked voters if the City should switch from the mayor-council form of government to council-manager. League City voters approved the switch to council-manager government by a margin of nearly 2 ¾ to 1, with 2,027 affirmative (73%) to 750 (27%) dissenting votes. Council-manager government will take effect immediately following the canvassing of votes. ICMA provided information to the pro council-manager citizens’ group *League City Voters for Great Government* and the ICMA Fund for Professional Management made a financial contribution to the group’s campaign.

All 18 remaining amendments, which mostly dealt with aligning League City’s charter with state law, passed as well. Three amendments issues stood apart from the others. One amendment reduced the required number of signatures on a recall petition from 20% to 10% of registered voters but not less than 2,000 signatures. Another requires the city council to review the city charter at least once every two years. And the third amendment provides the mayor with exclusive authority to appoint officers to city board and commissions with confirmation by the city council.

**Bel Aire Council Adopts Council-Manager Ordinance**

On January 5, the Bel Aire, Kans. (pop. 6,797), city council approved council-manager government by ordinance. Because no one filed a petition within the 61-day period allotted to force the issue to referendum, the ordinance was automatically adopted. The city administrator position was replaced by that of city manager and the council hired a new manager on May 4.

For information or assistance in promoting professional management and the council-manager form of government, contact Jared Dailey, assistant program manager, at jdailey@icma.org or 202-962-3557. To learn more about the ICMA Fund for Professional Management, contact Abigail Lundy, fund manager, at alundy@icma.org or 202-962-3594.