

**SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON
JOB CREATION/JOB RETENTION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

June 19, 2012

6:00 p.m.

Chairman Arnold called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Arnold, Ludwig, Long, Katsiantonis

Absent: Alderman Corriveau

Messrs: J. Minkarah, R. Gagne, M. Leroux

Chairman Arnold addressed item 3 of the agenda:

3. Update from Jay Minkarah, Economic Development Director, on economic development projects.

Mr. Jay Minkarah, Economic Development Director, stated not a whole lot to report since the last time that we met. We still have a number of different projects going on. We still see an increase in overall activity in the city which is nice and an increase in inquiries so that is positive. We have been to a lot of business openings, which you have probably have noticed, especially downtown. They are increasingly popular. The biggest project we have right now are the apartments at 300 Bedford Street. That has gotten underway in a big way over the past couple of weeks. We have a 70,000 square foot medical office building that just came in

to the Planning Board off of Wellington Hill Road. That will be another significant project assuming it gets approved. There are several smaller construction projects that are also happening. That is just some of the overall activity. There are a couple things that I think are worth noting, most significantly, if you have been following the unemployment figures, they are down again, most recently 5.2% for Manchester. That is a fairly substantial drop over last month, which was 6.1%, but more significantly over last year at this time which was 5.7%. It is nice to see that trending in the right direction. We are definitely seeing an overall improvement out there which I think is encouraging.

Chairman Arnold stated thank you, Jay.

Chairman Arnold addressed item 4 of the agenda:

4. Communication from Alderman Arnold regarding economic development incentive programs and required enabling legislation.

Chairman Arnold stated this item came from a memo I had sent to Mr. Minkarah and Mr. Gagne. I think I indicated in the memo that I hoped to commence a discussion about it no later than July. Do you have stuff to report tonight?

Mr. Minkarah replied if I may, there are just a couple things that I wanted to mention. We have 79-E which I would like to talk about, but I do want to mention that there are a couple other incentive programs that are out there that are probably just worth everyone knowing about. We do currently have the ERZ, the economic revitalization zones. That is a State program. We have 17 census tracts in Manchester that are designated as ERZs so that means that anybody who is making a significant capital investment in those areas that results in new job creation can get a State tax credit. I think there is some room for improvement in

that statute and I'm happy to talk about that if you'd like. We do have some of our local programs that are worth noting, things like our revolving loan fund. I would characterize that as an incentive. We had our façade improvement code compliance grants as well as our Section 108 loans. I'm happy to touch on any of those, but if I could I would like to expand on the 79-E and what is if I could. Manchester is actually the first community to adopt the provisions of RSA 79-E. What that essentially is, a property owner in the downtown are who is making substantial improvements with approval by the board could avoid paying property taxes on the value of those improvements for a certain period of years. The statute allowed for up to five years for pretty much a standard rehab and then if you did affordable housing or historic preservation you could go all the way up to 11 years. We had that program in place for a couple of years. Some of the buildings that took advantage of that in Manchester were 30 Amherst Street, where Consuelo's is; 20 Concord Street, the building where Firefly is on the first floor; also where the Merrimack Restaurant used to be, 788 Elm Street; and the most significant, Pandora. There were a lot of issues with it. It really was a one size fits all statute for the whole state. Just as an example, the threshold to qualify was that the work that you did had to be 15% of the assessed value or \$75,000, whichever is less. If you look around Manchester, almost anything qualifies for that downtown. We had a number of concerns and the aldermen rescinded that a couple of years ago and then worked with former senator Betsi DeVries to make some pretty substantial changes to that statute, which we did get passed with the help of the rest of our delegation. Manchester has not yet re-adopted the statute to reflect those changes so if there is any interest in what an ordinance like that might look like with the changes that have been made, we would certainly be happy to come forward with a draft.

Alderman Long stated Mr. Minkarah, you would know in the Economic Development Office what would be an incentive. Anything goes. If there is an idea with which you think we could have enabling legislation, what you feel will bring these businesses in, then we need to come up with what language we are looking for or what issue and then I can send it to legislative services and they can come up with some language. Also, if I could follow up on something... With respect to 79-E, is there a list of properties that we have used this on, how many more years they have of tax free status and what monies we would have gained if we didn't use this program? I would be interested to see... If we are looking to implement this and I read the current statute so I'm assuming it is with the changes and it seems reasonable.

Mr. Robert Gagne, City Assessor, stated it is the properties that Jay mentioned and they have varying expiration dates. I think we may have one or two coming off after this year.

Alderman Long stated if we could get a list of those properties, their savings and how many years they have gotten this tax break and when it expires would be great.

Chairman Arnold asked Jay or Bob, is there a reason why the board should not reenact the 79-E program? I guess I dovetail into that because the recent... It is my understanding that a majority of the board voted to repeal it in the first place so the enabling legislation up in Concord could be fixed. If that has been done, is there a reason why we would not choose to incentivize this particular type of rehabilitation development in the city?

Mr. Minkarah replied from my perspective, no, because I think what the changes in the legislation did was give us far more discretion and gave us the ability to tailor an ordinance to Manchester's needs. Before, we were in a position where whatever the statute said is what you had to do. At this point, because of our ability to craft something that really meets our needs and would only be applicable under the circumstances that the board wishes, then I think it would be appropriate to bring it back and I think we could certainly construct something that would be in line with the board's goals that basically didn't have an exception that swallowed the rule which is really the previous problem.

Chairman Arnold stated if we could get the figures on those property owners who are still in the program and if we can continue our discussion specifically about 79-E at next months meeting as well. Should we defer the remainder of our conversation about proposals for new enabling legislation until that time or were there others that you were prepared to present to day?

Mr. Minkarah replied I'm happy to do either. It probably would be best to defer, but I could just touch on a couple areas where I would probably look at which are changes to the ERZ statute. I will just say very briefly that one of the things that I think is a little bit out of sync with it is that it is based on capital investment that you make that result in job creation. What we are finding is, for a number of the companies that we are looking to attract today, say some of the high tech firms, IT types of firms or software companies, they are not capital intensive so even though they can be bringing very valuable jobs to the community, they are not buying a lot of heavy, expensive equipment as an example. It is harder for them to take advantage of the credit. Oftentimes, who can take advantage of the credit is questionable. As an example, if you are coming into a building and the landlord is making the physical improvement, doing the office fit-up, the credit is really not as valuable as it might be. I think we need to look at how it applies a little bit

more flexibly and who can take advantage of the credit. There are other states, other types of programs, where credits are transferable. That is not the case here. Those are some of the things that I would like to look at.

Chairman Arnold stated I would like to see information about other states as well at our subsequent meeting. Anything else, Mr. Gagne?

Mr. Gagne replied only that I am not aware of any programs other than 79-E that would apply to the property tax side of the equation.

Alderman Long stated I'm wondering if it would benefit this committee if... You had mentioned crafting an ordinance with respect to 79-E. You would know what requirements would suit our goals in this. I'm wondering if, at the next meeting, you could get just a draft as to what you believe would enable us to be more successful and then we could start the talking points from there.

Mr. Minkarah stated I'd be happy to.

Chairman Arnold asked could you also get a copy of the ordinance that was repealed in 2009 so we have it as a comparison?

Mr. Minkarah replied yes. I can get you a red line version of the statute as well so you can see how it was changed.

On motion of Alderman Ludwig, duly seconded by Alderman Long, it was voted to table this item.

Chairman Arnold addressed item 5 of the agenda:

5. Communication from Jay Minkarah, Economic Development Director, regarding the closing of Hanover Street.

On motion of Alderman Ludwig, duly seconded by Alderman Katsiantonis, it was voted to discuss this item.

Alderman Long stated first of all, I am in favor of this. I think it would benefit the city. However, that meeting that I was at, there were some businesses that were concerned. Can this be done? I know one of the businesses, the trophy shop, his concern was when we would close. As long as it wasn't after a certain timeframe on Friday or Saturday... He didn't want it closed until after 5:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. on Saturday. The businesses that had issues, is there any resolve in their mind?

Mr. Minkarah replied the businesses that were concerned about Saturday I don't think had a problem with the evenings. I don't think anybody necessarily threw out an exact time, but they tend to close, I don't want to speak for any business, but most of them are certainly closed by 5:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. so they didn't have an issue with evening hours.

Alderman Long stated I know one of the businesses. We are not closing from the Citizen's Bank access headed west. Those businesses, Runner's Alley, was one of the businesses with concerns, but that business won't be affected because that street won't be closed.

Mr. Minkarah stated I don't want to speak for them and I am reluctant to, but they expressed a concern about closing on Saturday during the day. They didn't seem to have an issue with the evening. Whether it would matter to them or not if it was only that first section, I'm reluctant to say or speak for them, on that issue. I think the bigger issue was for people being able to find their store.

Alderman Long stated there are three businesses that I am thinking of: the Endicott Building across from the Palace, the trophy business and Runner's Alley was the other issue. Was there someone else? I don't recall at the first meeting I went to that there was anyone else.

Mr. Minkarah stated those seemed to be the ones that expressed concerns that I recall.

Alderman Long asked is there a solution for all three of them or two of them or one of them that you see?

Mr. Minkarah replied I actually think we have one of those property owners here in the audience, but it seems to me, and I hate to speak for other people, but it seems to me that if the street remains open during the day they didn't have a concern. Evenings seemed to be the concern for those businesses. If it were evening only, I don't think that they would have an issue. Is there another way to close it during the day and address their issues? That is possible. I'm reluctant to speak for other people.

Alderman Long asked if it was only closed in the evening, that would be more palatable?

Mr. Minkarah replied that is my understanding.

Chairman Arnold stated I share Alderman Long's interest in pursuing the pilot program recognizing that there are very legitimate concerns of the business owners on the street and the property owners as well. I guess I'll yield to my colleagues on the committee to address further topics of discussion and concerns, but to me, when I read the cover letter and read the minutes from the informational meeting, I didn't get the impression that these concerns presented an insurmountable obstacle. Maybe we do a pilot program where it is just evenings during summer weekends to see what works, see what doesn't work, maybe we expand it after working with the local businesses to accommodate whatever their needs are. I hope that we don't simply take the conveyance of concerns as indications that this could not possible work. I know in other communities where it has worked are very proud of that accomplishment and I think it goes a long way to increase foot traffic and give people yet another reason to come downtown and enjoy everything we have to offer.

Alderman O'Neil stated I hope everyone received a packet from Assistant City Clerk JoAnn Ferruolo. She had actually reached out to the folks up in Burlington, Vermont. Church Street has been very similar to this for a long time, 30 years maybe. They have four city blocks and they make it work. It is a lot more defined than we were looking for in this pilot program, but when you mention Church Street to people from around the country, if they have been to Burlington, Vermont, they know where it is and I think that is what we are hoping to gain here, a street that gives us some special identity and is pedestrian friendly. In my opinion, it is great that it mixes some restaurants with retail shops as well as the great Palace Theater. Like you, I know there are some issues to work through, but I hope we can attempt to work through them with the pilot program and refine it as needed as it moves forward. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

Alderman Long stated first of all, there are some parameters that I would like. If the board approved this, the expansion of the businesses would only be the parking lots. I know in other cities they have put platforms over the parking lots, equal to the sidewalks, so they can extend that. It would also need to be approved by Police and Fire. I don't know if we could set what we would like to see, because I would be looking to start this within the next couple of weeks. We would need approval from Police and Fire as to how this would be barricaded, how fire apparatus would have access to it. Personally, from going to Hanover Street late at night, I don't see why we have vehicles there. There are just too many people walking around with the restaurants and the Palace. I would be very interested in implementing this on a pilot basis, maybe for four to six weeks and reevaluate it in August. Again, there are parameters that I would like: police detail would be a must for the restaurants; expanded, like I said to the parking spot; I don't know if both sides could be done. If Fire says to us that we can only do one side of the street because we need the room, then that takes care of that and we do one side of the street. As far as drop off to the Palace, I spoke with Mr. Ramsey and he has no issue with dropping off on the corner of that access road to where Citizens Bank is, he has no issue with dropping off there. It is a 30 foot walk to the Palace. Evenings only, I don't have an issue with that, if those details are going to work. I don't know if those details are going to work. I don't know if we are going to be using a jersey barrier, I don't know if that works coming to pick it up and take it away every day. I don't know how that works. Maybe we could use something else. Alderman Arnold and I spoke with a person who said that they have plastic barricades that you fill with water. I don't know if the businesses may want to help get one of them. You put it in by hand, you fill it with water, you empty the water, you take it out by hand. That would make it a lot more doable. Having all those details... We don't know if the police would sign off on this. If they have

issues what are those concerns and can they be addressed? Also, what are fire's issues and can those be addressed?

Chairman Arnold stated Jay, I realize, even though you are running point on this, it involves a lot of departments. I cannot imagine that there is not an alternative to having two jersey barriers brought in with a crane every weekend or if we are just doing it on evenings, coming in on Friday at 5:00 p.m. I have to imagine that there is a legitimate alternative to that, which I would think would also go to the public safety issue of making sure that first responders could get in if need be. Those are my two cents on that issue.

Alderman O'Neil stated regarding what the barricade or what is put at Chestnut Street to block it, keep in mind... I spoke with the fire chief today about this issue and he told me he can go on record that he has no opposition to it. Whatever goes there has to be able to be moved fairly quickly in case there is a fire or something. Jersey barriers might not be practical. In most of these other cities that have these, it is some type of gate. For the pilot, we may not be able to afford that. We have to come up with something temporarily and then if it moves to a permanent action, we are going to have to put something that can be moved, like some type of gate. Did I hear that we are going to have a police detail? In no other city that does this have I seen a police detail. Faneuil Hall, Church Street... I was disappointed that that has been the focus of this, getting police details there. I do want to follow up... I know the parking consultant was in last week and he met with some of the committee chairs, the aldermen at large as well as the downtown aldermen and he did mention that he has seen, as Alderman Long as suggested, that they take the parking spaces and put platforms out and then it comes back out after the season is over and the parking spaces are back to generate revenue over the colder weather. I was very interested and maybe Denise could reach out to him to get... I think he said that was in a resort place in Michigan. The police detail thing bothers me. I

personally don't think that it is required. I don't want to see the cost of who is paying for this defeat the attempt at this.

Chairman Arnold stated I hear where you are coming from, Alderman O'Neil, yet even if it is not a concern shared by everyone, I think because it is a pilot program, maybe err on the side of caution. That may be the opinion of some, but it might not be shared by all. If we discover that there is no real need to have a detail down there maybe eliminate the requirement but again, those are just my thoughts.

Alderman Long stated I agree with you. This is a pilot program. I want patrons to know that they are not allowed to take drinks at midnight and start walking the street. I'll err on caution. I would rather have this detail ahead of time instead of three weeks from now and say we have a major issue with people walking around with booze and we need to get a detail. From the beginning, let them know this is acceptable and this is not acceptable. If a couple weeks go by and there is not an issue and we don't need the details, we don't need the details.

Alderman O'Neil asked would you agree, where we have outdoor seating now, that there are no issues with people getting up and walking away?

Alderman Long replied those aren't evening bars. Penuche's is a bar in the evening when dining is done.

Alderman O'Neil asked are Margaritas, Shaskeen, and the Rover all open until 1:00 a.m.?

Alderman Long replied yes, they are. Actually, there is always a detail downtown.

Alderman O'Neil stated it is not a detail; it is the regular complement. My point is that I don't want to see money defeat this.

Alderman Long stated Penuche's agreed to...

Alderman Ouellette interjected we are going to have the same discussion in about 20 minutes.

Chairman Arnold stated Alderman O'Neil, my response to that would be, because we are dealing with a change, perhaps over the transition in the pilot program, use a detail.

Alderman Ouellette stated I was hoping that too much time is not spend on safety issues because we will be taking it up at the next meeting. I'm a little concerned that... Was it at the meeting at the Palace when all the issues came up in April?

Mr. Minkarah replied many issues came up, yes.

Alderman Ouellette asked has there been a follow up meeting since then?

Mr. Minkarah replied no.

Alderman Ouellette stated today is June 19th. I guess I'm wondering why we haven't followed up on those issues before we bring this to the board to approve a pilot program?

Mr. Minkarah replied I think from the staff perspective, we're not sure what the follow up would be. We got input and we presented the input to the board, but I wouldn't know what to go back to the people who attended the meeting with. I

think there was some expectation that there would some sort of plan developed or a response, but I don't know what that is.

Alderman Ouellette asked who is implementing this? Who is bringing this forward? The Office of Economic Development?

Mr. Minkarah replied the mayor submitted a letter to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen requesting that a task force be put together. At this point I am not sure who would be designated for being responsible for implementation.

Alderman Ouellette asked so there was a task force put together for this?

Mr. Minkarah replied yes, primarily made up of staff. It was the Economic Development Department, City Clerk's Office, Intown Manchester and the Police Department.

Alderman Ouellette stated and the staff hasn't gotten together to discuss this issues?

Mr. Minkarah replied we did. We got together to discuss the issues that were raised internally as well as a result of the meeting with the Hanover Street businesses and property owners and then submitted those findings to the board.

Alderman Ouellette asked what you are asking the board to do it close Hanover Street, exactly when to when?

Mr. Minkarah replied staff isn't making a recommendation to the board to close Hanover Street or not. It is the pleasure of the board. What we did was raise what some of the issues and concerns were, should the board decide to move forward.

Alderman Ouellette asked what are the times that the street is going to be closed, if the board moves forward?

Chairman Arnold replied I guess it would be at the discretion of the Board of Aldermen, possibly with a recommendation from the Committee on Public Safety, Health and Traffic in order to ameliorate the concerns of some of the local business owners if we didn't do the entire weekend and that would be one avenue.

Alderman Ouellette stated Public Safety, Health and Traffic does really not have the purview... It doesn't get into the day to day operations and their concerns of the businesses; it is how we are going to close the streets and how we are going to maintain safety.

Chairman Arnold stated I'll guarantee that a recommendation comes out of this committee detailing that and then the Committee on Public Safety, Health and Traffic can deal with those issues.

Alderman Ouellette stated I'm just curious as to what the times are. I guess my recommendation would be, if the goal is to close the streets from noontime until 1:00 a.m., I think the pilot program should mirror what the goal is so that way we can really judge and gauge the actual success of the pilot. If the pilot program only starts from 4:00 or 5:00 p.m. on and the real goal of the situation is to be closed from noontime on, I think that in your discussions you should decide exactly what we want the final product to look like and mirror that.

Mr. Minkarah stated if I could interject on the time issue. Internally we did talk about timing and the thinking was that on Friday, it would make sense to probably

close the street actually at 6:00 p.m. so at least rush hour traffic could get through and that would probably require having all cars parked on the street off by 4:00 p.m. so we would probably want to look at some kind of temporary signage or hood the meters. It could close at 6:00 p.m. and if it were closing for the whole weekend, then probably it would stay closed until 5:00 or 6:00 a.m. on Monday. If it were opening up again Saturday morning, it would have to do the logistical move, but could probably do something very similar on Saturday; parking off the street by 4:00 p.m. and closed by 6:00 p.m.

Alderman Osborne asked are we going to be asking questions here on the business aspect of it with the businesses and when it comes to the committee, which I'm on, of Public Safety, Health and Traffic, are we going to get into the public safety of it? Is that what you are saying? I have a lot of questions I can ask right here. I can keep you here for a while. We have to split up into two different committees here. I want to know what is what because I want to ask these questions. If I don't ask anything now I want to be able to ask them in the Committee on Public Safety, Health and Traffic. It seems like you are covering everything here, outside of what time it is going to be.

Chairman Arnold stated it is up to you, alderman. We are happy to let you ask whatever questions you have right now.

Alderman Osborne stated I don't need to want to right now, but as long as I can say what I am going to say in Public Safety, Health and Traffic I'm fine with it. What would you like? Would you like to ask questions now?

Chairman Arnold replied go right ahead, alderman.

Alderman Osborne stated let's start it this way here. I've spent a lot of time on Hanover Street in my life. I have owned two businesses on Hanover Street, 95 and 101, and that is right in that area. It is right in between Chestnut Street and that alley so I know that street very well. I know that the businesses then, the parking was at a premium. That was the biggest problem. Today it is even worse. The question I have is, number one, I didn't get a list of all the businesses that were there, number one, I don't have any idea... I know there is the trophy shop and a few others, but what is the list of all the businesses that are there? What about rentals, upstairs over that?

Mr. Minkarah replied I don't have a list, but we could certainly put one together if the board wishes.

Alderman Osborne stated you are involving different businesses, you are involving rental upstairs over these businesses and the main thing here is, why are we... I have no big problem with it, don't get me wrong, but it puzzles me why we are trying to do this for that short period of time. You need to have a study on something, but is that going to hurt you? Is it going to do any good? What is it for? Is it to have better retail or is it for entertainment?

Mr. Minkarah replied if the question is directed at me, I think as I understand it, the concept is to create something that would be a draw or an attraction in downtown Manchester so it would be about entertainment, it would be about dining, it would be about retail and it would be about creating something that would become a center of activity.

Alderman Osborne stated I think the only center would be on Hanover Street. That would draw in that area. If you are going to have entertainment on that street alone, I don't think people are going to go up to Bridge and Elm Streets because they are going down to Hanover Street. That is my opinion. I don't think it is going to make a big business for everyone down there by doing that on that one street. That is my opinion. Again, if I have to decide on a thing like that I like to know the whole picture of it, whether it is just the traffic part of it or the safety end of it, I would like to know the other safety aspects like the renters. You don't have any idea how many people rent on top of these retail businesses at all?

Mr. Minkarah replied I don't have a total number. There are commercial renters and I think there are about 47 apartments in the opera block.

Alderman Osborne asked have all these people been notified?

Mr. Minkarah replied no, we notified all the property owners and the street level businesses. We didn't notify every individual. We certainly did hope, though that the property owners would get the word out to their tenants or speak on their behalf.

Alderman Osborne stated I think a lot of these people might be not liking this a couple nights a week, listening to all this music and all this going on. I'm looking at the whole picture now. You can take it from there. I can go on and on if you want. I'll leave it for Public Safety, Health and Traffic.

Chairman Arnold stated we will come back to you, alderman.

Alderman Long stated just a comment. We did meet with the owners of the apartment buildings, Red Oak, Ron Dupont and he said that his tenants would love this idea. I'm not in touch with his tenants, I'm not sure if you are, alderman, but he is and he said that this is why his tenants are moving into his apartments. He said he would love the idea of not worrying about traffic when they go out. Jay, that is what Mr. Dupont told us at the meeting we had.

Mr. Minkarah stated that's correct.

Alderman Osborne asked how many tenants is that? What is Red Oak? They own where machinist used to be? What building are they in?

Mr. Minkarah replied I believe it is 47 units.

Alderman Osborne asked those are the only units? On the other side of the street?

Mr. Minkarah replied on the other side of the street, I couldn't say for certain, but I don't believe that there are any residential tenants on the other side of the street.

Chairman Arnold stated for what it's worth, Alderman Osborne, what I envision is giving individuals throughout the city a reason to come downtown. I realize that we won't have enough time, if we are going to do any pilot program this summer, to line up all of the details such as entertainment. I was talking to some individuals earlier in the week and someone said why don't you get a climbing wall or have different kinds of entertainment if you are going to do this. There is a local watering hole that does a standup mic for amateur comics. There could be any number of entertainment opportunities, but where we are approaching the end of June, I just don't think we have the time on our side to get that done this year. What we could do this year is move in the direction of a pilot program and by next

year, when individuals in the city say let's go downtown, maybe they don't know where they are going to go eat or stop for a drink and maybe they do park as far away as Bridge Street and just roam downtown and go in and out of the shops. That is what I see, an opportunity through a pilot program of Hanover Street. That is what I hope for.

Alderman Osborne stated so the only thing that is going to bring them there is entertainment.

Chairman Arnold stated I don't know that that is the only thing that is going to bring them there, and I think heading down the direction of expanding opportunities for retail and restaurants on the street is a step in that direction.

Alderman Long stated the pilot program I am looking at, if the details work, is the Friday evening closing at 6:00 p.m. and cars are out by 4:00 p.m. and Saturday the same thing. Clearly that would be entertainment purposes only, it wouldn't be businesses because we are accommodating the two businesses that don't want their business interrupted so we would close at 6:00 p.m. As far as the Endicott Building, I don't know when their tenants leave. I don't know if they are affected on Friday or Saturday night. The owner is here so we could get that information. You are right, Alderman Osborne, the pilot program, if we are closing at 6:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday would clearly be for entertainment purposes because the retail businesses would be closed, unless they determine they will stay open. As far as rock climbing walls or what have you, I don't know if it is the City's responsibility to organize that. If I am a business owner on this street, I would do whatever is possible to join in with the other businesses to look to see what will draw business. I don't know if it is the City's responsibility to get rock climbing walls or a band. Let these businesses organize or Intown Manchester could speak

with them and get them organized to do what they feel is in the best interest of the businesses on the street.

Chairman Arnold stated I agree that it is not the City's responsibility to handle all this stuff. My comments are geared towards what I envision as the opportunity here. I don't think all of the responsibility should be placed on any one entity. It certainly shouldn't be all Intown or just the individual businesses owners. Collectively, though, I think there is a certain opportunity here.

Alderman Long asked do they need a liquor license?

City Clerk Matthew Normand replied not necessarily; it depends on what they are doing. If they are just going to expand their current operations and food service and maybe liquor service, they would not necessarily need a special permit from us. If they were going to bring in entertainment or other activities, that is something that we would have discussions about.

***Alderman Long** moved that a pilot program for the closing of Hanover Street be implemented for July 13, 2012 through August 4, 2012, with the following conditions:*

- *Signoffs be obtained from the Police and Fire Departments*
- *Hanover Street closes at 6:00 p.m. on Friday and reopens at 7:00 a.m. on Saturday*
- *Hanover Street closes at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday and reopens at 7:00 a.m. on Sunday*
- *Cars are to be off the street by 4:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday*
- *Police detail is to be hired by the restaurants/businesses on Hanover Street*

- *Businesses are permitted to expand only as far as the parking spaces on the street, with approval of the Police and Fire Departments*
- *The task force assigned to the street closing will evaluate the program and report to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen at their meeting on August 7, 2012*

The motion was duly seconded by Alderman Arnold.

Alderman Ouellette asked this has no regard to weather? Not matter if it rains or snows, we are putting the barricades up?

Alderman Long replied right.

Alderman Ouellette stated I just don't want people thinking that they aren't doing it because it is raining so I'm going to try to drive down this street.

Alderman Long stated we may want to have an end date to evaluate this. Is there a regularly scheduled meeting for us in August?

City Clerk Normand replied the first Tuesday in August.

Alderman Long stated so the 7th.

Chairman Arnold asked how many weekends is that?

Alderman Long replied four. That would be four weekends and then we could evaluate it. It would go through Saturday, August 4th and then we could reevaluate it on the 7th and if there is not an issue we will continue it through September.

Alderman Ouellette stated I didn't hear an answer to my question. Regardless of weather?

Chairman Arnold replied I'm happy to answer. It is my understanding, alderman, that yes, it will be regardless of weather.

Alderman Ludwig asked who are we going to leave the evaluation process up to? Let's say we are going to hold a meeting. Are we all going to be expected to go there and view what is going on and have our own opinions in terms of whether this is successful or not or are we subject to what people are going to come forward and say about it? I'm not sure we are going to get a really good cross section in terms of an assessment. Jay might go one night and it might be fairly decent and Alderman Long might go another night and it might not be so great. I would just like to know how that process may take place.

Mr. Minkarah stated if I can throw out a suggestion, I also think that there are going to be some logistical issues that are going to have to be dealt with along the way so it might make sense to keep the small group together, Economic Development, City Clerk's Office, Police Department, Parking and Intown and just keep that as a steering committee to have some oversight, watch how things are progressing and report back to the board, if that makes sense. We could of course expand on that, but if that makes sense, that is what I would suggest.

Alderman Ludwig stated that works for me. At least we know someone is overseeing weather their concerns are coming forward or people are saying this is working out to be a great thing, whatever it is that comes forward, it goes to a place that can get back to us.

Chairman Arnold stated also, Alderman Ludwig, it would be my hope that all policy makers of the city at some point patron this pilot program downtown.

Mr. Moe Leroux, Owner of Odd Fellows Building, stated I guess one of my concerns is getting fire trucks down the street. If we are going to have entertainment or stages, we need to allow fire apparatus down the street. My concern is the regulating authority on the street that you are closing off. Who is going to be able to expand into the street? Who is going to make sure that the bars that are expanding into the street have insurance? The details are a little vague on what I see on my end. The other concern I have is in terms of spacing and the logistics of who is going to close the street down and who is going to open it back up. The neighbors have concerns regarding... I have multiple tenants on Saturday who use the space. I have rehearsal halls that I rent out to five or six different dance schools and it is all random. Closing the street down on Saturday is definitely going to be an issue so keeping it to the Friday and Saturday night does work on this end. The controlling entity needs to be narrowed down in terms of who is doing what and say you can't be here, you can be here.

Chairman Arnold stated it is my understanding that the City is basically taking a lead on this. I would expect that the barricade, unless there is a better idea out there, would be set up and removed by City staff. If the barricade comes from Public Works they would drop it off at a certain time. Parking would be let in to assist with removal of cars and placement of temporary signs. In terms of the insurance and the issues with the businesses, we don't require a license for them to continue their regular activities. I'll defer to the city clerk.

City Clerk Normand stated maybe I wasn't clear, but there are licenses in place currently which do have requirements. It is a little more complicated without a point person from Hanover Street to communicate with, but we can certainly go

through and talk to the businesses that may be interested in expanding out on the street and complete their file in terms of insurance requirements and make sure that is taken care of.

Mr. Leroux stated and the last thing is logistics. Someone mentioned the platforms which probably make sense so you don't have a tripping hazard, but my concern is... They mentioned leaving them during the summer months. I guess the question is, is that just going to be on the Friday and Saturday night or during the whole summer because now you are creating parking issues for the rest of the street?

Alderman Long replied to that question, no, they would remove those during the week. Fire is going to have to sign off on this. If Fire says it is not workable, it is not going to happen. Who is looking at their insurance? They need to get licenses from the State liquor commission so they can expand their license. They are the ones who are responsible for that. The City is responsible for making sure they have liability insurance, unless they are coming to us for a license and then we would check that. In this case there is no extended license unless there was entertainment in the street and if the business entity decided to have entertainment then they would have to come to city hall and get the proper licensing. From what I understand, you are saying that Friday and Saturday at 6:00 p.m. isn't an issue. That is all it would be, Sunday to Friday until 6:00 p.m. would be normal like it is now.

Mr. Leroux asked open during the day on Saturday?

Alderman Long replied correct. You are not at issue with the 6:00 p.m. on Friday and Saturday? I don't believe the other businesses... There were only three businesses that had issues. This time schedule suffices those businesses.

Chairman Arnold stated we are happy to continue to evaluate the concerns on an ongoing basis as we move forward.

Alderman Roy stated two points. Number one, on a regular day when you have vehicles parked on the north and south side of Hanover Street, the emergency apparatus can get down the street so if you put platforms or just tables to the limits of those parking spaces, that apparatus will still be able to get down the street. It shouldn't be an issue. The second point I have is that you certainly aren't going to put jersey barriers up and take them down every day. A suggestion might be that we put up those wooden horses that the Police Department has and then someone, maybe Intown or the merchants, could decorate them with window boxes with flowers in them so they aren't an eyesore. That is just a thought. Someone with more decorating ability than me could probably come up with something better, but that's just what I was thinking sitting in the back of the room. In my opinion, for what it is worth, I think that closing it down like this might be a little cumbersome. Personally, I would like to see it closed for the weekend, but if that is too big of an issue to get by this year okay, but it would be less of a headache as far as logistics go, breaking down and setting up everyday if you just closed it from 6:00 p.m. on a Friday night to 6:00 p.m. on a Sunday night. That is just my opinion.

Alderman Katsiantonis stated I think we are making a little issue a big issue; we are making it too complicated. My suggestion is that Jay and Intown Manchester be involved, get together, see what you guys are going to do, come back with a proposal and then we will decide what we want to do. Right now we have Jay in charge, the committee in charge, the traffic committee in charge and the five departments in charge. If we sit here today, tomorrow... Whenever we want to start this event, we are not going to be done because everyone comes up with one

idea of what we would have to do. We are not going to make everyone happy, but my opinion is that Jay and Intown should be in charge, solve the problem and come with a proposal so we can vote on it and its over.

Alderman Osborne stated I don't have any ideas with this, I just have questions. Basically, I am still a little confused why this block is chosen for this particular situation. You had how many people at Veterans Park for Chilifest? Why can't the same thing be held at Veterans Park rather than this little block? What is the value to that? I can't comprehend that one. If you are only going to do it for just weekends and it is just a pilot program and you don't plan on making this a larger event... Even though I don't think you could make it 24/7 because it ain't ever going to happen, right?

Mr. Minkarah stated I think it is an evolutionary process, but I think the concept, and I don't want to speak for anyone else, but this would be put forward as a pilot program and if successful, it would become something that would be more permanent.

Alderman Osborne asked successful in what way? I don't know what you mean by 'successful'. What is successful about it? It is a big cost, there are a lot of liabilities, it is a short run. What are you going to do, close all of Elm Street next? I'm just a little confused about it. What do you mean?

Alderman Long replied I can answer those. I would love to do what Alderman Roy suggested. I would love to do that, but I don't believe we gave enough notice to these two businesses that are having issues. To put them out on Friday and Saturday I have an issue with that, so this is the best that we could come up with. At least in their long term goals, they know there is a possibility of Hanover Street shutting down for the weekend. In other communities, Alderman Osborne, it has

been very successful when they have shut down streets, there have been complaints like there is no tomorrow and then two or three months later it has been very successful. People would much rather walk. I don't know if you have attempted to use a crosswalk on Elm Street lately, but I have on several occasions and it is not fun watching out for cars. If I am able to go somewhere, a show at the Palace, eat at one of their restaurants, use their businesses on the other side of the street without worrying about vehicles going by, I would enjoy that a lot better. We talk about walkable neighborhoods and then when we attempt to make 200 feet walkable, we have all these issues that come up. I see this as going on the weekends, as Alderman Roy had suggested, and I also see other streets, if this is successful, being shut down. It is not out of my mind that Elm Street would be shut down because the issue we have with Elm Street and these side streets are people still believing that they can park in front of the business they want to go into. In the world according to me, I believe that we ought to, when I go downtown, even though I live downtown so it is unfair to say because I am going to walk anyways, but if I am coming from Hooksett, I want them to have the mindset that they are going to park in the garage, take a circulator and go wherever I want. If I am going to XO I am not going to park in front of XO. I am going to park in whatever parking lot and take a circulator to get to XO. The more we set that mindset, I think the better off the downtown will be and we won't have these issues of parking. An establishment with two or three parking spots in front of it and we are battling with meters to get the four cars rotating. This is foolish. We are spinning our wheels on four parking spots. A long vision, I see Elm Street being walkable.

Alderman Osborne stated that is one thing I said a long time ago. If we are going to do it, we might as well do Elm Street and get it over with. There are a lot of ifs, ands and buts about it. Can I ask one question, Jay? All these bullets here, all these problems, are these all solved?

Mr. Minkarah replied I think that from what I am hearing in the motion that is being made... I'll back up. Those aren't necessarily problems, they are considerations. Those are things that need to be considered.

Alderman Osborne stated there are a lot of things that make sense, that's for sure.

Mr. Minkarah stated I think in the motion that I heard, most everything is addressed and some of the more minor points that aren't I think are easily addressed. I mentioned that if you keep a small group in place to deal with things like trash receptacles, those are detail types of things that we can address as we go forward.

Alderman Osborne asked they all agree now who is going to be paying the expenses of whatever has to happen there, all these businesses and whoever is going to decide to do all this, the barriers? All the expenses involved, the police details, whatever it is going to take? Are they all on the same line or are you going to have some issue with that? It is not easy. I'm not trying to say that I am totally against it, I'm trying to tweak this. I can't see it being cost effective right now. It is nice to have Elm Street and close it all down and walk up one side and down the other like I used to do in the 1950s. We'll go on to Traffic pretty soon, I hope.

Alderman Long stated Jay, this was going to be implemented on the 13th. Are you able to meet with this group to determine these details, make sure Fire is okay with it? If there is parking on both sides then obviously it is okay. Also with Police and Highway with respect to how we are going to block it off? Could that committee meet and do you think that you can meet by then and have this resolved by the 13th?

Mr. Minkarah replied I think two-thirds of the committee is in this room right now so absolutely. I'm sure we can pull something together before the end of this week.

Chairman Arnold called for a vote on the motion that a pilot program for the closing of Hanover Street be implemented for July 13, 2012 through August 4, 2012, with the following conditions:

- *Signoffs be obtained from the Police and Fire Departments*
- *Hanover Street closes at 6:00 p.m. on Friday and reopens at 7:00 a.m. on Saturday*
- *Hanover Street closes at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday and reopens at 7:00 a.m. on Sunday*
- *Cars are to be off the street by 4:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday*
- *Police detail is to be hired by the restaurants/businesses on Hanover Street*
- *Businesses are permitted to expand only as far as the parking spaces on the street, with approval of the Police and Fire Departments*
- *The task force assigned to the street closing will evaluate the program and report to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen at their meeting on August 7, 2012*

There being none opposed the motion carried.

City Clerk Normand stated Mr. Chairman, we could do a phone poll of the board. The board isn't set to meet until July 17th, but we could probably do a phone poll. We could wait for the staff committee to meet to make sure there are no other issues that weren't thought of, but then we could poll the board.

Chairman Arnold stated that works for me.

*There being no further business, on motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Ludwig**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Hornum". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

City Clerk