

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN**

March 31, 1998

Mayor Wieczorek called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Wihby, Klock, Reiniger, Sysyn, Clancy, Pinard, Shea, O'Neil, Girard, Rivard, Pariseau, Cashin, Thibault, Hirschmann.

A report of the Committee on Finance was presented recommending that:

“Amending a Resolution ‘Approving the Community Improvement Program for 1999, Raising and Appropriating Monies Therefor and Authorizing Implementation of Said Program’.” as further amended

ought to pass and layover.

Deputy Clerk Johnson noted a suggestion that Alderman Shea's request in Finance Committee to amend be taken up as a motion to amend the report

Alderman Shea asked for \$15,000 seed money for the Anti-Graffiti Committee.

Mayor Wieczorek replied out of contingency.

Alderman Shea responded if you want to take it out of contingency for this year that is fine.

Alderman Hirschmann asked what does that represent. I thought it was \$3,000.

Alderman Shea answered the Anti-Graffiti Committee was not given any money other than the \$3,000 given to the Intown which was to remove the Anti-Graffiti within the Intown area. I think Rich Davis is here if you want to talk to him. I am not sure if there is a matching for that or not, but what I would like is seed money for the rest of the wards so that if there is Anti-Graffiti in Ward 12 you can call and get that removed.

Alderman Hirschmann asked who is going to control the money.

Alderman Shea answered this is why I wanted to get it under a budget so that it would be controlled by...if it is in the CIP budget it would be controlled by the Finance Office, wouldn't it.

Alderman Hirschmann asked who is going to encumber that money if he wants it to go to this committee.

Mr. Clougherty answered when the Board takes an action to deal with contingency at the following Finance Committee meeting we come back with the actual resolution. By that time we would have worked out with CIP or the appropriate departments where that money should be transferred rather than tonight telling you exactly where it would go. If it is the Board's intention to make \$15,000 available, we will come back with that resolution at that time and you can take a look at the considerations.

Alderman Shea asked who is going to set-up the control of it. Is your office going to take care of that?

Mr. Clougherty answered the Anti-Graffiti has been controlled through Regis' office in the past and we would probably look to the Office of Youth Services as the primary source, but without having talked to Regis at this point, if there is some other suggestion that he has then we would entertain that and incorporate that into the resolution that will come to you next week.

Alderman Shea moved to take \$15,000 out of contingency for FY98 for the Anti-Graffiti Committee. Alderman Wihby duly seconded the motion. Mayor Wieczorek called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Alderman Wihby moved to accept the report of the Finance Committee. Alderman Cashin duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Girard stated there is almost \$2 million in the CIP to do road reconstruction, road resurfacing and sidewalk work. In the request that the Highway Department forwarded to you, your Honor, they asked for \$125,000 to do an infrastructure management plan. I spoke to the Highway Department today and basically that would entail hiring someone to come in and do an inventory of all of the City streets, sidewalks and right-of-ways so that we would know the condition of the roads, the sidewalks and where we do and don't have sidewalks and curbs. Rather than just spend the money that has been allocated, I wonder whether the Board would consider taking some of the money that has been allocated toward resurfacing to fund that study so that we can develop a prioritized list of needs and have the department address them as they show up in the study.

Alderman Pariseau stated I believe we already had the opportunity to conduct an inventory. We have been instructed to go throughout our wards, make a list of streets, they sent people out from their department and resurveyed the area and then made a recommendation as to whether they agreed with our assessment, whether it was poor, fair, good or whatever. I don't think we have to go out and spend more money to hire another person to take inventory.

Alderman Girard replied as I understand what the Highway Department told me today, it would go beyond the process that the Aldermen currently go through now. In other words, every

street, every sidewalk, every curb in the City of Manchester would be inventoried and put into a prioritized listing so that the department could address everything by need. It is a more objective process which would allow the City to plan better for future road and sidewalk and curb work.

Mayor Wieczorek asked if the Highway Department has requested that from anybody.

Alderman Girard answered it was in their request to you as part of their CIP budget, your Honor.

Alderman Rivard stated that has come before the Highway Commission on several occasions and didn't draw much support so while we consider Alderman Girard's proposal, I just want you to know that the commission dealt with that on several occasions and didn't think it appropriate to fund it.

Mayor Wieczorek called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Distribution of operating and enterprise budgets with budget message from the Mayor for informational purposes pursuant to Section 6.03 of the City Charter.

Mayor Wieczorek delivered a budget message as follows:

“Members of the Honorable Board of Aldermen, City Department Heads, citizens of Manchester, I present to you tonight my proposed budget for FY 1999.

In my Fifth Inaugural Address last January, I warned our elected officials to be on guard against the temptation to repeat the mistakes of the past and overspend the hard earned money of our constituents. While times are prospering, the local economy is robust, and the value of our tax rate is growing at a moderately strong rate, the cost of providing quality services to our citizens still outpaces our ability to pay for them.

Thirty days ago, my Budget Team and I were presented with departmental budget requests that, combined with rising insurance rates and our need to invest in our capital budget, totaled a 17.14% tax rate increase. That number was no small increase to deal with and I believe the drafting of this year's budget to be among the most difficult during my tenure as Mayor.

Today, my Budget Team can present to you a projected tax rate of \$32.63. This represents an estimated increase of \$4.72% or \$1.47. Though I am not terribly happy with this increase, I want to thank all of the departments who worked in concert with my

office to develop these figures. I am very pleased with the cooperation I received from the departments this year. As a result of their efforts, I am convinced that we have presented the best possible budget given the numbers we had to work with. I am sure they will continue to work with me and with this board to make further reductions where possible without significantly impacting necessary services.

The increase in costs to this budget is directly attributable to the following:

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|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Maturing Debt & Interest | \$3,569,532 increase |
| 2. Pay Raises | \$1,549,319 increase |
| 3. Capital Spending Increase | 360,000 increase |
| 4. Insurance & Benefits | 117,460 increase |
| 5. 53rd Pay Period - City | 811,000 increase |
| <hr/> | |
| Total | \$6,407,311 increase |
| Total Tax Rate Increase | \$6,372,475 |
| Percentage of Total Tax Rate Increase | 101% |

When you take in consideration the items above that we have to fund, this is essentially a flat budget.

What's Inside

School: This budget appropriates \$59,465,000 to the School Department. This figure represents a \$2,007,538 increase over FY1998's appropriation. Above and beyond this figure, I have earmarked \$1,374,685 in the Salary Adjustment Account for pay raises and step increases for our teachers. I also want to point out to this Board that as of today, I have not received an adopted budget proposal from the School Board and am using the very best numbers at my disposal to recommend a bottom line for them. It is my opinion that this allocation is fair and will allow our schools to continue to provide a quality education.

Public Safety: Always one of our citizen's highest priorities, this budget fully funds the needs of both the Police and Fire Departments. The Police Department will receive one new dispatcher position, new practice ammunition that will protect the health of our officers, and ten new cruisers to replace their oldest models. The Fire Department will finally be able to place Engine # back on-line thus providing for better service to our Center City. Both Chiefs find their appropriations acceptable.

Roads & Infrastructure: As you are aware, we have funded \$500,000 in the CIP for street resurfacing. This amount will allow us to pave nearly 12 miles of our badly neglected roads. In order to pay for this without affecting property taxes, I am proposing a new street resurfacing surcharge of \$5 per car. This surcharge is allowable under state law and will be fairly distributed on those who use our roads. Should this Board not

approve of this surcharge, I recommend that they cut additional monies out of the entire budget rather than raising property taxes or repaving fewer roads.

Conclusion

Next Tuesday, I will present a more detailed budget to this Board. It will contain line item expenses, performance indicators, and personnel complements. As always, I want to emphasize to this Board and the people of Manchester that this is the starting point of the budget process, not the end. I fully expect this Board to work very hard over the coming weeks to find better ways to provide quality services at a lower cost.

I must warn you tonight, though, that I will not accept or approve of any tax increase over 4.72%.

I want to thank my budget team for the hard work and long hours they have committed to me in bringing in this budget. I especially want to thank Chairman of the Board of Aldermen, David Wihby, for his assistance in this process and I look forward to working with him and the Board over the coming weeks to present a final FY 1999 Budget.”

Alderman Wihby stated on the \$5 rate, did we pass something last year that says it has to go to a different committee. We talked a couple of years ago about any time there was an additional revenue it would have to go to a committee and all that other stuff. Is that law?

Solicitor Clark replied if I recall correctly, the Board adopted a policy that when you are going to add a new fee that you send it to a committee and I don't know the exact name of the committee. The Clerk would have to look it up for review.

Alderman Wihby moved on referring the \$5 surcharge to a public hearing and committee.

Alderman Thibault duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Rivard asked what the anticipated revenue was.

Mayor Wieczorek answered \$500,000 and that would go into the Highway Department budget so that we can use it for road resurfacing.

Alderman Rivard asked \$5 across the board no matter what kind of vehicle it is.

Mayor Wieczorek answered it doesn't matter what kind of a car or truck you have. It is just \$5 per motor vehicle. It was just passed by the Legislature this year and I think it is effective May 17 of this year.

Alderman Clancy asked how much money are we going to have all together for resurfacing.

Mr. MacKenzie answered last year the number was \$450,000. This year there is \$500,000 in CIP and \$150,000 in the Highway Department's operating budget for a total of \$650,000.

Alderman Shea stated the rooms & meals tax money. What are we using in that regard?

Mayor Wieczorek replied we took \$200,000 out to put into road resurfacing for this year.

Alderman Shea asked are we storing away an additional amount of money for the rooms & meals for some project in the future. We are adding surcharges to people to use our roads and we are not using the rooms & meals tax as it was so designated to help people. That is what I don't understand.

Mayor Wieczorek answered it is designed to help a lot of people.

Alderman Shea stated I will publicly say that I am against a surcharge per se. I am for using the rooms & meals tax as it should be used which is to help people in terms of roads, school improvements and other things.

Alderman Girard stated you just said there was \$200,000 taken out of that rooms & meals increment fund. Did that go toward funding the road resurfacing in the CIP or is that in the general fund?

Mayor Wieczorek replied it is going to the Highway Department's general fund.

Alderman Girard responded so the \$200,000 is going into the general fund side of the Highway Department budget and you said there was \$125,000 in the Highway Department budget for road resurfacing. Where is the other \$75,000?

Mr. MacKenzie stated as the Mayor knows, we are trying to take some of the street reconstruction which has, in the past been paid off by bond, and helped employ some of the existing employees and trying to move that back to the operating budget where it was originally. So, this year \$200,000 which was bonded previously is going back to the general fund side so that, along with the extra \$150,000 in resurfacing...in the Highway Department's operating budget there is about \$350,000 for both resurfacing and reconstruction. I would assume that the rooms & meals could offset either or both of those amounts.

Alderman Shea stated was there a vote at one time by the Aldermen to put a certain amount of rooms & meals tax money aside. I thought that was \$400,000 at one time. Was it ever voted to put any money aside?

Mayor Wieczorek replied yes, the last two years we took \$200,000.

Alderman Pariseau stated I think he is referring to the base, your Honor of \$454,937.62. That is what the City is using every year to help with the tax rate. The increment is going somewhere else.

Alderman Wihby stated the way that the budget was done this year coming over from the School Department was not right. I still think that the School Department Administration should make the budget, the School Board should vote on that budget and then it should come to the Aldermen. My understanding is that the School Board hasn't even seen the numbers that we were working with the Superintendent's numbers. I don't think that is right. I think that if we get a number we should get it from the School Board members and that should be the number we are looking at or the Mayor is working off of, not the School Administrations.

Mayor Wieczorek called for a vote. Alderman Hirschmann being duly recorded in opposition, the motion carried.

There being no further business to come before the special meeting of the Board, on motion of Alderman Sysyn, duly seconded by Alderman Clancy, the meeting was adjourned.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk