

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
(PUBLIC HEARING - FY99 BUDGET)**

May 4, 1998

7:00 PM

Mayor Wieczorek called the meeting to order.

Mayor Wieczorek called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Klock.

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

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

Mayor Wieczorek advised that the purpose of the meeting was a public hearing on the proposed municipal budget as required under the provisions of RSA 44-10 and in satisfaction of the requirements of Section 121(b) of the State and Local Fiscal Assistance Act of 1972 as amended and in the City Charter, which calls for appropriations for the so-called operating budget expenditures and Manchester Transit Authority municipal fund subsidy to be financed through revenues of the General Fund; operating expenses of the Environmental Protection Division to be funded through Sewer User Rental Charges; operating expenses of the Manchester Airport Authority to be funded through Airport Revenue Funds; operating expenses of the Recreation Division to be funded through Recreation User Charges; operating budget expenditures of the Central Business Service District to be funded through the Central Business Service District Fund; and Aggregation Fees for budget expenditures of the Aggregation Program.

The Clerk presented the proposed Resolutions:

“Appropriating to the Manchester Aggregation Program the sum of \$748,445.00 from Aggregation Fees for the Fiscal Year 1999.”

“A Resolution appropriating to the Manchester Airport Authority the sum of \$16,645,500.00 from Special Airport Revenue Funds for Fiscal Year 1999.”

“Appropriating to the Central Business Service District the sum of \$230,000.00 from Central Business Service District Funds for Fiscal Year 1999.”

“A Resolution appropriating the sum of \$3,056,609.00 from Recreation User Charges to the Recreation Division for Fiscal Year 1999.”

“Appropriating the sum of \$9,288,448.00 from Sewer User Rental Charges to the Environmental Protection Division for Fiscal Year 1999” with amendments increasing the proposed total to \$9,575,834.00.

“A Resolution appropriating to the Manchester Transit Authority the sum of \$900,000.00 for the Fiscal Year 1999.”

“Raising Monies and Making Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 1999.”

Mayor Wieczorek stated the budget before you tonight is that which I proposed to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen on March 31, 1998. As you may know, the Mayor's budget is the beginning of the budget process, not the end. Some of the base assumptions that my budget was predicated on such as the tax base, county tax, and various retirement and benefit figures were preliminary estimates based on the best information available at that time. As we continue the process, these numbers will become more firm as information becomes available. The proposed budget before you tonight has an estimated tax rate increase of 4.72% of \$1.47. The increase in costs to this budget is directly attributable to three things. First, there is an increase to maturing debt and interest payments, which are attributable to the money we had to spend in recent years to build a new middle school, build new science labs for the high schools, improved heating/ventilation at West and Central and other important school projects. We are also doing a total renovation of City Hall and the Annex, investing in a city-wide computer upgrade, providing our public safety departments with equipment upgrades and necessary infrastructure maintenance. Second, we have to meet our commitments on previously negotiated labor contracts. Third, we are obligated to fund a 53rd pay period (representing \$811,000) for City employees this year, an occurrence which only affects us every few years. When you take into 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 FY 1998's appropriation (actually, this increase is really \$3.1 million due to the 27th pay period budgeted in FY 1998, which will not have to be budgeted in the next fiscal year). 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. 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 citizens' highest priorities, this budget 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 twelve new vehicles. The Fire Department will finally be able to place Engine #1 back on-line, thus providing for better service to our Center City.

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. Now there are many people, including some of our elected officials, who have stated that they do not like this proposed fee and would prefer to put the cost of resurfacing on the tax rate. If we were to do this, the average person who owns a house valued at \$100,000 would pay an extra \$13 on their tax bill. If the average person owns two cars, under my plan, he would only pay \$10 for a net savings of \$3. More importantly, this would be a dedicated fund so that in good times and bad we would always maintain our roads. As we have seen in the past, when times get tough as they did in 1990, 1991, and 1992, maintenance of roads is one of the first items cut in the budget.

Personnel: The proposed budget would fund the first phase of the long awaited Personnel Reclassification Study. The implementation of this study will bring order to our chaotic Classification System and should save us money over the long run.

Conclusion

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.

Mayor Wieczorek advised that the meeting shall now be open to public comment; that each person when recognized shall come to the nearest microphone, state their name and address in a clear loud voice for the record; that each person shall be given one opportunity to speak and comments shall be limited to three minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak; that once all present have been allowed to speak should there be a topic not discussed those wishing to speak a second time shall be provided the opportunity to do so.

Alderman Reiniger arrived at the meeting.

John Brisbin, 96 North Adams Street, Manchester, NH stated I am the City Library Director. I am going to speak briefly. I have some trustees here to speak on our same issues so I will be extremely brief. I have three points I would like to cover. There are three operating lines, lines in the operating budget which need desperate attention. That is my first point. My second point is that we have two part-time positions that we would like extended to full-time so that we can really bring some efficiency and some quickness to getting new books to tax payers quickly. The third point I would like to make is about the library book budget. The three lines that need attention are lines 419, Service Agreements; 445, Contracts; and 610, Supplies. The increase in these three lines that we desperately need together is \$20,500. The first two cover our GMILCS (Greater Manchester Integrated Library Cooperative System) Program that is a consortium of nine public libraries and two academic libraries in Southern NH. We pool our resources and we share automation costs. The big jump in the costs this year is because we are going to hire a

coordinator, a person and that is going to be great for all of us and especially great for Manchester City Library because it means that it won't be on our back to do that additional job anymore, but it does come out of these two operating lines. The third line, Supplies, jumps way up because the more machines we get, the more technology we have, the more supplies we need to run it. We, thankfully because of the support of the Mayor and Aldermen last year, we got our intranet project okayed and that is in full swing. We just ordered 25 personal computers and we are ordering 15 printers to go along with that. You have supplies that come in behind those printers. We also have cases for our videos, our CD's, our cassettes that make them theft resistant. Those cost \$2 a piece. We have many, many other library-specific supplies costs. Anyways, those three lines, \$20,500, enough said. Second point, the two part-time individuals we would like extended to full-time those are processing and accounting positions and we have such a small engine, the way I describe it to people is we got a Yugo engine that is trying to pull a Greyhound bus. It just isn't working. We have had some excellent cooperation from the Aldermanic Personnel Committee. We have gotten the head of technical services position okayed. This comes in right behind that. These two positions extended to full-time costs \$40,000. That is my second point. Third and last point, the library book budget. In the *Union Leader* today, first of all, I thought I was dreaming. I saw Aldermanic support to increase the library book budget and I have been pushing for that for the seven years that I have been here and it was very nice to see and talking with many of you here I know that there is support there. We want to really just work ourselves into that support and help you and keep moving in the same direction so I thank you for that. But in the *Union Leader* story there was an inaccuracy. It said that we have asked for an increase of \$400,000, which we have, but that it would be a combination of trust funds and City funds. Not true. This is City funds. Our trust fund budget for 1998 is \$59,700. That is all the trust fund income we have. It is all spent down to the last nickel in four traditional areas. This is voted on by our Board of Trustees and approved by them. Those four areas are books, and that is about half of it, \$27,000 this year; programs, not a nickel of City money goes for the great library programs we have 12 months a year. We have cooking demos, we have psychology things, we have do-it-yourself, we have authors, we just had a wonderful Teddy Bear Picnic in the park. All that is supported by trust funds. Seminars and training for our own staff, and furniture and equipment. So that is the \$59,700 separate and completely distinct from the \$400,000 increase that we do ask. That was unanimously requested, that increase, by our Board of Trustees and they can speak on that. That would increase us to \$500,000 for our book line. We have needed it for ages. It has been stuck at the \$100,000 level for over a decade. In 1989, we had more than we do now and at that time it was half enough. Now it is half enough so there is an annual problem and a cumulative problem and lets face it, books are what a library is. Even in the age of technology, it is our technology that gets you to books. It is our, people still by and large use the library for books so we do need that. We realize that we might not get all of that support this year. We hear the Mayor and all of the concerns that he has and we certainly share those concerns as well, but we want to get as far toward a healthy book budget as we can. \$250,000 would be where our line item should be, just for a good year to build a good collection. The other \$250,000 to begin repairing the ravages of under funding for so many years. That was our thinking on that. So I thank you. I

did bring some of our, just to give you examples of what is still on the shelves. For kids, I think we can do better for role models. I was happy, along with another department head from Economic Development, to be a judge at the Science Fair at Webster School for the Water Department, the water related science projects and I was dismayed when I saw that the bibliography that one of the students had included a book she got from the library that was published in 1960. We can't be sending our young people into the 21st century and into the future of science and technology with those kinds of materials. Yes we have some newer materials, but not nearly enough. Thank you very much.

Ed Wade, 720 Cohas Avenue, Manchester, NH stated first of all, I want to thank you all for voting to approve the Parkside addition to the Parkside Junior High School. We appreciate it and so do the students. I am here this evening to ask that the school budget be approved for its original request of \$64.8 million. The current number of students in core curriculum classes at Parkside and many other schools averages 30. Some math classes have 34 and 38 at our school because of the limits of the teaching staff. As you all can imagine, it is difficult to give these students the instructional attention that they deserve. The budget of \$64.8 million will help to reduce class sizes throughout the City and implement many programs. This year, the school district administrators had made it a point not to pink slip a large amount of teachers. I believe that this was a good decision for two reasons. The first is that the City of Manchester will not take the chance of losing quality teachers that the school system will need in the future. Secondly, for the first time in years, pink slip teachers will not be used as pawns in the budgetary justification process. The result of the pink slip decision by the Superintendent imposed on all tax payers, politicians and educators a rationale and temperate climate for these budget hearings. However, it does not lessen the needs of the students in the Manchester School System. As the City of Manchester continues to grow and revitalize itself, it also must make a parallel commitment to the education of the children. That commitment includes a satisfactory and adequate educational budget. A satisfactory budget can only help the City to continue to attract businesses in the future. The slow glacial pace of the school district's dealing with its problems, including class sizes, can be directly attributed to insufficient funding of the needs of students in the past. We can do better for our children of this City. We must do better. The future of this City lies with how much of a commitment we all want to make for the betterment of the children of this City. The children of this City deserve a better fate than they are now receiving. Let us all work to improve the situation. Thank you for listening.

Kathleen Sullivan, 192 South Mammoth Road, Manchester, NH stated I am a member of the Library Board of Trustees and I am also here to reiterate some of the points that Mr. Brisbin made about the need for some additional funding for the library. After a lot of careful consideration, the trustees did decide this year to ask for several hundred thousand dollars more. Most of which was to be allocated toward our book budget. As John Brisbin said, we have been receiving something in the area of \$100,000 for over a decade now. This weekend as I was kind of driving around Manchester and I was thinking about what I would say tonight, it was interesting. I went past some road construction at Mooresville Road. I went past some work that is being done at the reservoir on South Mammoth Road. I went through the new lighted intersection on Cilley Road that John Clayton mentioned in the *Union Leader* today and a couple of other projects and of course the airport expansion and I said this is really good. I am not criticizing the repairs to physical infrastructure, but what we are doing in Manchester and have been doing with the library book budget by level funding it for so long is ignoring the infrastructure of the mind. It is wonderful to drive on good roads. It is wonderful to have updated facilities. It is wonderful to have a modern airport, but what good does that do our citizens and what good do all these things do our kids if we are not giving them the benefit of a good, healthy and adequately funded library. The level funding, you also have to realize, causes an ongoing deterioration because of the increase in costs of books. Like Mr. Brisbin, I brought some visual aids to show the increase over the last four years in the cost of books. In 1994, "All's Fair" by James Carvell and Mary Mattilen, \$24.00; same publisher in 1996, "The Choice" by Bob Woodward, \$26.00, an increase of \$2; in 1998, another non-fiction book, "Slaves in the Family", \$30.00. That is a \$6 increase in the cost of hardcover non-fiction over four years. That is 25%. So when you level fund the library book budget, it is causing deterioration. It is not even allowing us to maintain an equal playing field. So I would just request to the extent that you can squeeze out any money from this budget for library books, we would really appreciate it and I think the residents of the City of Manchester would also appreciate it to show that Manchester supports, not just these physical infrastructure issues, but also the other things that make this City the great City that it is and should be. Thank you very much.

Carlos Gonzalez, PO Box 154, Manchester, NH stated I ran for Alderman-At-Large in the recent past and you probably know me even more than I know you because it is kind of hard for me sometimes to remember the Anglo people. I speak English as a second language and Spanish is my first language. I originally was born in the islands to a humble family; a father who was a librarian and a mother who was a housewife, but I do remember that one of my favorite heroes, one of my favorite humble characters and his name is Abraham Lincoln and I read about him in Spanish and that was in the library. That is why I am here tonight to tell you that we need to emulate leaders like Abraham Lincoln. He was a self-made, natural leader and he used the library like crazy. He didn't have a big university, he didn't have all of these new technologies that we have today and when I remember reading about him, I also remember and I need to be humble about myself because I did that growing up on a tiny island which is called the

Dominican Republic. Lets not forget that without education a City will be what it will be and Manchester is the biggest City and, therefore, it should have the best public library in New Hampshire. About six nearby surrounding towns do have better budgets and allocations in their book budgets and I am calling your attention to that fact. I am going to give you some quotations from Abraham Lincoln because it is important to know that I went to the library section in which there were bibliographies and autobiographies and I went to the history section and I went to the children's section because I am a father and I am very concerned about the new generations, but it really touched me that they are very old looking and when I was looking for Abraham Lincoln books they were from 1945, 1960's and 1970's and I don't mean to be an echo to Mr. John Brisbin, that is the fact. By the way, I invite each one of you to, in a humble way, go to the library and do a little research in those fields that you like and you will see the type of books that are still present. Abraham Lincoln was a leader who believed in democracy and because of that I am here. I am going to tell you a quotation from him, "I would not be a slave so I will not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy. Whatever defers from these to the extent of the difference is not democracy"; and lets talk about faith, "Let us have faith that right makes might and in faith lead us to the end there to do our duty as we understand" and I am going to refer to you, because I believe in God, that when he was going to the inauguration from Springfield, Illinois to Washington he mentioned this in one of his speeches, Farewell to His Town, "Without the assistance of that divine being whoever attended him I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trust in him who can go with me and remain with you and be everywhere for good. Let us confidentiality hope that all will be well." From the Bible, I am going to quote you the Book of Acts and Hebrews. The Book of Acts because I believe that we must be not divided because we must put aside the stereotypes that we put on each other when we label each other either Hispanics, Italian, Irish or whatsoever. Peter, who was a disciple of Jesus in the Book of Acts says this, "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right." From Hebrews I am going to tell you about faith, "Now faith is being sure what we hope for and certain of what we do not speak. This is what the ancient were commended for and without faith it is impossible to please God because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him." I am not here to preach to you. You are leaders and you were elected and you must confidently do what is right and do it for the betterment of the whole City of Manchester. In closing I am going to mention that from Hebrews from the Bible talking about leaders, I am going to quote again from the Hebrews, Chapter 13, "Remember you leaders who spoke the word of God to you. Consider they will come with their way of life and imitate their faith. This will be the same yesterday, today and forever." I believe that leaders are born natural and Abraham Lincoln was one of them and he was an excellent example for me, not because I was Hispanic or because I was Afro or because of any of those labels. He was an inspiration. He touched me from the bottom of a small, tiny library of which my father was a librarian and I read about Abraham Lincoln in Spanish to begin with. I continued to read about Abraham Lincoln in English in Manchester, NH. He was born to a family of humble means and learned a lot from life and by following God. It is not a surprise that in most of his speeches he used the word of God. He was a leader ahead of his own

lifetime. He had a vision of a better world and I am going to tell you that because many people talk about equal rights and such and such and it is not about ethnic groups, it is not about nationalities. Manchester has 52 languages and we need the best library we can get. Fifty-two languages discovered right there in the inner educational system of Manchester. If I am using Abraham Lincoln it is because I want you to know that I do my searching around from when I was a tiny kid to where I am today. We must try to have the best public library because with education we equal a better City. Citizens are a reflection of their education. Nearby surrounding libraries are doing better than the Manchester Library and Manchester is the biggest City. I ask and I encourage you to consider an increase of as much as possible for the public library in Manchester for we must lead as we were called to serve our citizens. Thank you very much.

Alderman Pariseau asked relative to the book budget request from the Library, we show in our budget book that the library requested \$100,000 for books and your recommendation is to give them \$100,000. Where are we getting this \$250,000 now all of the sudden? If you needed the \$250,000, John, you should have put it in your budget.

Mr. Brisbin answered it is in the budget. It is in our budget amendments. It is not in your book. If you look at the book you will see that all we were allowed to put through the HTE system were level funded figures for all operating lines, including books but we had to submit budget amendments, which we certainly did, Alderman, for those things that went above that. They are not reflected either in the April 1 *Union Leader* article which unveiled the Mayor's budget nor are they reflected in the book budget binder, excuse me the City budget binder that I picked up at the City Clerk's Office today.

Alderman Girard asked is this true for all departments that the Aldermen have not received the requests above the current fiscal year's allocations.

Mayor Wieczorek answered I don't know. The budgets I have all looked at all seem to have the numbers beyond that.

Alderman Girard asked well if there is any departmental request information that the Aldermen didn't receive through the budget book, would you have your office forward it to us please.

Mayor Wieczorek stated why don't we take that up on Wednesday when we have the meeting. I don't want to get into a dialogue here with everybody. This is the opportunity for the folks to speak to us and lets get the input from them and then we can have our discussions at our meeting.

Dennis O'Dowd, 40 Dwight Street, Manchester, NH stated I live in Ward 6 and am speaking here tonight in two capacities. One is as a resident of the City which I have been all my life and the other is as President of Weston School PTA. I will keep this brief and to the point. In reference to the proposed City budget, I wish to express my personal, as well as the officers of the Weston School's PTA support for the School Board's proposed operating budget of \$64.8 million and I ask that the Board of Mayor and Aldermen fully fund this request.

Underbudgeting the City School Department will likely have a direct negative impact on our school and the education of our children. The results of this could possibly be compromising effective implementation of the new elementary grade language arts curriculum and the efforts in technology improvements, problems in implementing the new middle school concept, including the opening of the new McLaughlin Middle School, and a shortfall in staff, books and needed supplies. The School Board's budget is one which has been carefully prepared, has considered the needs and priorities of our schools in order to provide an adequate education for our City's student population. Members of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, I respectfully request that when you vote on this budget that you think about the educational needs of our City's young people and vote to appropriate the money necessary to properly maintain our school system and fully fund the Board of School Committee's proposed budget. Thank you.

Walter Stiles, 226 Sagamore Street, Manchester, NH stated I wasn't going to speak tonight but I will speak anyway after listening to John Brisbin. My wife and I are members of the Library Association here in Manchester and have been for a good many years and I just took a look at a couple of the books that Mr. Brisbin passed around and believe you me they are ancient. They are almost collectors items. They are not as old as the City Hall, but I mean they are old. I am not that familiar with all of the ins and outs of what he is looking for because I didn't even have time to read the paper this morning, however, I do support the City doing as much as they can to update the books in the City Library. I mean books are books. As Mr. Brisbin said, that is what a library is all about, books. Hopefully you will be able to do something along that line. I also wanted to tell you that I have a Stiles Garden shirt on here tonight and I want to invite everybody that is here and anybody within the sound of my voice to go to 226 Sagamore Street and take a look at the garden. It is changing by the hour and you are free to walk through. Just walk in. I told Mary Sysyn about it and I told a lot of other people about it. Go up and see the garden. It is beautiful and it is a good example of an inner city garden. Thank you.

Tracy Miller, Hunters Village Way, Manchester, NH stated I don't understand all the arguing that goes between the school system and this system, I just know that in the years that my children have been in the school, the children have been forgotten. When the teachers don't have supplies. If you are an average student in a school in Manchester you are fine. If you need a little bit of help, they don't have time for you because the classrooms are so crowded and if you are a smart child who needs to be challenged, you can't be challenged because they don't have enough time to challenge those because they are with the average kids. Everybody is so concerned with the money and no one is focusing on the children and I am so fed up with

hearing everyone argue every year and no one seems to really care about the children. I mean the junior high can't have Spanish as a language elective. They have to take French. I mean how many people speak French anymore. It is really, really terrible. I am a concerned parent. I just spent \$35 on one school project my daughter has to do. This is the fourth one she has done and I am just so dissatisfied. I am ashamed that there are not more parents here because they are all upset about the way the school system is and to have them not show here is unbelievable and I am just sick and tired of hearing the School Board and all of you argue back and forth and nobody stopping to consider how it affects the children. You have smart kids not being properly educated and you are having kids who just need a little bit of help going on the wayside and you really should stop your bickering about stupid little things, teacher's pay raises and get in there and concentrate on the kids because you have all forgotten about them. Thank you.

Mayor Wieczorek advised that all wishing to speak having been heard.

On motion of Alderman Wihby, duly seconded by Alderman Clancy, it was voted to refer the Resolutions to the Committee on Finance for further consideration, with reports to be made to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen at a later date.

There being no further business to come before the public hearing, on motion of Alderman Wihby, duly seconded by Alderman Pinard, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk