

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
(PUBLIC PARTICIPATION)**

October 6, 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 Thibault.

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

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

Mayor Wieczorek advised that the purpose of the special meeting is to give residents of Manchester the opportunity to address the Board on items of concern affecting the community; that each person will be given only one opportunity to speak; that comments shall be limited to two minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak and any comments must be directed to the Chair.

Mayor Wieczorek requested that any resident wishing to speak come forward to the nearest microphone, clearly state their name and address when recognized, and give their comments.

George Chaprass, 69 Lucille Street, Manchester, NH stated Mr. Mayor, you have a copy of the truth-in-lending statement. Every mortgage must have one. It is the law. Truth-in-lending, Mr. Mayor, is truth in taking. Taking the people's money to build a hockey rink. Truth in lending is truth in telling. Will you instruct your financial advisors to complete the essential items on this truth in telling statement and summarize what the first five line items in this statement. Namely, annual percentage rate, interest, finance charge, commissions, amount financed, principal, total of payments which I estimate between \$94 million and \$127 million, payment schedule over 30 years, how much each year. Plus, life cycle costs. Mr. Ashooh and Mr. Stearn have assured me that Ogden will pay all else operations costs, maintenance costs, insurance, non-mortgage insurance, and what else, what contingencies. Any exclusions from this, any excesses on the inclusions, what of excesses on whatever limits there may be. Exclusion costs. Excesses cost. Who pays? How? Can interested citizens study Ogden and Enron contracts before they are executed? I have nothing further but I would like, if possible, to have some answers now. At the end of the meeting, these tables will explain what I said. Thank you.

Mayor Wiczorek stated your time is up and we are not going to get into a debate here. This is the opportunity for people to speak, we are not going to have a dialogue or we will never get started at 7:30 PM. Thank you.

Jon Gross, 429 Medford Street, Manchester, NH stated the State has passed additional aid that is going to come to the City of Manchester in the amount of \$7.5 million. The intent of this aid is to go to education. It is clear. It is black and white. There is no gray area on it, yet because of the way the government work, the money is going to go into the general fund. That is a fact. In the 1990's, Aldermen decided that other kinds of aid would go where they wanted it to go rather than the general fund and it would be squirreled away for the centerplex or a future civic center. I want to make sure that the \$7.5 million, a windfall, a windfall for education, should go where it has to go. We know we are \$1.5 million in a deficit. It needs to be retired. Real simple. You have \$7 million coming. All semantics could be it is coming in July. Well lets take money out of Rooms & Meals tax and replace it with it when it comes in July. It is \$7 million extra dollars. Not planned on. Not planned on at all. What I am asking tonight is for each Alderman to do what they don't like to do. I want them to take a stance. I want to know who is really for education. Each Alderman here says I am for education but I can't vote for that budget. I am for education, but I it is going to raise the tax rate. Well if you are for education, here is \$7.5 million extra dollars targeted for education. Stand up. Show that you are for education. Retire the \$1.5 million. Go through with the money we need. Put the money away to open up the middle school next year. Do what you are supposed to do. Don't use the money for some development somewhere. Highway funds are probably the only funds that come into the City that are targeted for Highway. Everything else goes to the general fund. Do what is right. Do where the money is supposed to go. Put it in education and do it tonight.

Murray Onigman, 324 Walnut Street, Manchester, NH stated at Memorial I waited three hours, from 6:30 PM to 9:30 PM and had to leave. Now I have got two minutes but I will try to get it out. I have been a taxpayer to this City for 38 years. I started out with stock and trade tax and I went into house tax eventually and two automobiles for those 38 years and in that time it has cost me \$50,000. My present valuation on my home is \$100,000. That is \$3,000 or more per year for the next 30 years. That is \$100,000. I want to bring out a point. During this time I worked at the Boston Garden and I worked at Fenway Park. I worked for two guys who, Tom Yawkey and the Jacobs Brothers, but before them was a guy who took a chance at the Garden and Tom Yawkey took a chance at Fenway Park and do you know what they all got while they owned those buildings? A property tax. Now you are proposing, and I have watched four of your public hearings, to own this complex of \$50 million plus another \$50 million to come from Rooms & Meals tax over 30 years. I said I have been here 38, but over the next 30 years. I will never make the end of that one, but you know what? There is more involved here than the Rooms & Meals tax over the next 30 years bringing it up to \$100 million. We are not going to collect the property tax. Rate \$31 per thousand. \$50 million valuation, \$15 million tax, 30 years, a half a billion dollars. Do you mean to tell me that this Board of Mayor and Aldermen

are going to agree to go with this? You are making the biggest mistake in the world to go with Ogden who was founded in 1927 and they are a \$3.5 billion outfit. To let them in for \$10 million, and I got stories that I can tell each and every one of you privately about the operation at the Boston Garden and Fenway. I will not divulge it here. If you want to ask me, you all know me, come and talk to me about it. You will hear deals that will curl your ears, like I threw out five hot dog companies, made a deal with one and they had to make an agreement under the advertising because I was Director of Advertising at the Boston Garden and the deal was seventy-six cents a pound for dogs for a whole year. It was in the contract for your advertising and you are letting in Two Park Place, New York, Ogden. Think again, my friends and if you want to talk to me, talk to me.

Kathy Philbert, 176 Laurel Street, Manchester, NH stated Mr. Chair, Board, this is the number one City. Well this is the best of times. I keep hearing about our City and the economy and how wonderful it is. What I am saying is if this is the best that we can do for our students we are really missing the boat. Our children sit in high school math classes with 40 students in a class. This isn't teaching, this is baby-sitting. Some classes have no books. My son, who is sitting in a math class with only 24 for which I am grateful, has no books. It has been a long time since I have been in a math class and find it very impossible to be able to help him with any problems he may have while doing his homework because I don't have a book to refer to and neither does he. Two of his classes were canceled this year. As a senior, that is really exciting. He was one of hundreds in the boat. The classes that were canceled were Tech Prep, some Science classes, some English classes, some Math classes. Really wonderful things. They couldn't even go pick up a new class until the following Monday because there were so many students that had no schedule at all. When the time finally came, because our classes are so overcrowded, he had three wonderful choices and I am not belittling the classes that were available to him but when you had an Advanced Drafting class canceled, the idea of NH History, Mythology, or Leather and Lace, Leather and String rather, excuse me. That is a whole other ballgame. It just doesn't fit the bill. They are good courses but they just don't cut it and they are not going to help our students prepare for School-to-Work and we are applauding a wonderful \$540,000 grant that the City just received for School-to-Work and this involves not only kids going out to work right after high school, but preparing them for college for their eventual employment. Now I am really concerned about where that money will end up and how it may be spent because we have lost all these tech ed classes and not every student can go to the Skill Center. A wonderful place, the School of Technology, but not room for all of our students, especially not in senior year. Well I can't imagine how many at-risk students walked into their classrooms, found not only no books for them but no desks either. How many walked out the door and we all recognize that drop-outs are not the way to go for the number one City. I would like to just finish by making a challenge that this number one City which got its designation as a Greater Manchester, I would like to challenge you Mr. Chair and this Board to join with the same Chamber of Commerce to make sure that the money, that new \$7.5 million that is coming in, makes our schools as good as all of the feeder schools for the Greater Manchester area. Not

one class over 25, plenty of books, plenty of teachers, it is time to stand up and make the center of this Greater Manchester as good as the bedroom communities. Thank you.

Raymond Buckley, 161 Faith Lane, Manchester, NH stated a dozen years ago, the people of Ward 8 elected me to the Legislature and over the years I have been very grateful to them and how I have repaid them for sending me to Concord is by bringing monies back to Manchester. Whether it is the sewage treatment facility monies that we have gotten in, the kindergarten monies, landfill, construction progress, all added up to millions of dollars. About two weeks ago, I was very proud to be one of those Legislators that cast a vote that sent an additional \$7.5 million to Manchester's future, Manchester's children. I have already expressed this to Alderman Pariseau, but I want to make sure that the School Board knows and understands and appreciates and particularly Alderman Pariseau and Alderman Reiniger, the two Aldermen who spoke out and said that money was not going for Manchester's children. I, as a Legislator, was absolutely offended with those remarks. That money was intended for the children of Manchester to make sure that they have quality education. Now maybe Alderman Pariseau and Alderman Reiniger think that the class sizes in Manchester are too small. Maybe they think that our books are too new. Maybe they think our facilities are too up-to-date and they think our drop-out rate is so insignificant that we don't need to worry about it. But as a Legislator who sat on that floor and proudly cast to send \$7.5 million back to my City, I am ashamed that there is any responsible adult in this City who would dare say that the money is not needed for the education of the children. That is the sort of attitude and why people in Concord don't want to send money back to the cities and towns and I have been trying to fight that mentality for years and I cannot believe that the majority of you would go along with the two Aldermen that publicly said that and I join with Jon Gross in trying to encourage you to make a public statement today, tonight, on what you are going to do about that \$7.5 million because folks, if you are not going to send it to the kids, I might as well put in a piece of legislation to let some other community have it. If you are not going to take it for the children, let some other community have it. That money isn't free money. That money isn't money that is just being tossed down here so you can use it for whatever amusements that you may find. That money was sent down here to educate the children and improve their education and their future and I am offended as a Legislator that anyone who sits on this Board would dare suggest that that money not be spent for education. Thank you.

Alderman Wihby asked, Ray, is the money coming after July 1 or is it coming this year.

Mr. Buckley answered it is coming after July 1 but the point is that if there are people sitting on this Board who are saying that they are not going to use it for the kids, then what is the point of sending it to Manchester at all. If it is going to go to the civic center or some other...Livingston Park or something like that then lets send that money, that state aid needs to go towards kids.

Lloyd G. Basinow, 503 Amherst Street, Manchester, NH stated it is useless to continue withholding over \$3 million in a special civic center fund you have created for a facility that won't be built for many years to come. This City has many more real important priorities than a playhouse for the rich and downtown private business interest. While many of you are willing to commit the City to \$96 million in debt service for a useless civic center that won't return one cent to the general revenue fund of the City, you don't bother to tell the people that very shortly, under an order from the federal EPA, we must spend over \$100 million, principal and interest, to upgrade our sewer treatment and sewer system to separate ground water from sewage. In the coming months, waste treatment quarterly home owner bills will more than triple. The elderly people living on fixed incomes and low income families could lose their homes while you use Rooms & Meals funds for a civic center instead of providing tax relief. The Manchester Taxpayer's Alliance to protect public funds, believes that the withholding of Rooms & Meals revenue for an unnecessary civic center constitutes a serious misappropriation of public funds when other City services remain inadequate or non-existent. There is no legitimate reason why the residents of Southeast Manchester in the area of South Mammoth and Bodwell Road should have to wait five or more years to have a fire station constructed in their area in order to enjoy ample fire protection. The thousands of families living in this area are being deprived, it is their right as citizens of this community, of sufficient fire and police protection. These people are paying high enough taxes just like everyone else, but are not receiving the City services they deserve. We additionally call upon the Board to terminate the present surcharge you placed on motor vehicle registration and to use the civic center funds for the purpose that money was sent back to Manchester. That money should be used for sidewalk and street repair. Since you have \$96 million for a civic center, then you have enough money without raising taxes to build a fire station, provide ample police protection throughout the City, to fully repair and maintain all of our streets and sidewalks and to cancel the \$1.5 million deficit in the school budget. Otherwise, if that is put onto next year's budget, it will add 42 cents to the next tax rate. Thank you.

John White, Manchester, NH stated I am quite confused and somewhat perplexed because I served six years on the House Education Committee and when we discussed foundation aid under RSA 198:34, it stated that the State is to share in the cost of public elementary and high school education and that money is to be distributed through the Ogenblick formula which uses such raises as weighted pupil, equalized school tax rate, revenue per weighted pupil, state average equalized school tax rate. All schools, all to be used for education purposes and yet I have heard that there are several of you at this table who have been saying that is not where it is going to go, it is going to go into the general fund for other uses. I also voted for the bill by

Senator John King regarding Meals & Rooms taxes and to change the amount that would be received by the cities and towns by about 8% to 40% over a period of years. That money was to be used for tax relief. That was how it was purported. That is why it passed unanimously in the House and Senate. It was to go back to the towns to provide property tax relief. What happened here? It has been ferreted away into a special account and not one dime has been spent for property tax relief or to provide anything for the property tax payer. It is all placed in a special account for a civic center. So why am I confused? Why am I perplexed? Well maybe one of you can give me an answer.

Ellen Healy, Manchester, NH stated for those of you who may not know me, I represent the thousand teachers in Manchester as President of the Manchester Education Association. I am here this evening to speak to you about two issues. First is the School Department deficit. We have heard all kinds of figures banded about. I have heard that the School Department is \$1.5 million in the red. Depending on who I speak with, I have even heard that the overall City deficit is \$700,000 and given the revenues, that there is an \$800,000 surplus. Figures can lie, liars can figure. I don't care what the figures are, but I am here to ask you to help resolve this issue. It is demoralizing for teachers. It is demoralizing for students and it is most importantly demoralizing for the parents, your very own constituents. Someone has to exert some leadership and resolve the budget deficit that we now face. I don't have a solution. I leave it to you. You are the elected officials. We trust you and we all ask that you find a way to resolve this issue immediately. I also come before you this evening to think about the recently negotiated teacher's contract. In that contract, we have been working for the past three years to include a better insurance plan which I am sure you are all aware of. Need I remind you, this contract has not been passed yet by either the Board of School Committee or by this group. We had fully hoped that you would approve it this evening. This is not to be. However, I have been told that you as Aldermen and all non-affiliated personnel in this City, will receive the insurance benefit that I have been working on for three years along with three other people and we have been working very hard to do this. You can, tonight, agree to give the teachers the insurance benefit immediately, beginning November 1, just as you will have it. It isn't fair, ladies and gentlemen. How can you possibly look at the teachers in this City knowing full well that you are getting a benefit that we have worked three long years to get and you know, you are just sitting there, this is fine. I am not saying don't get the benefit, but we have been working so hard and yet we are not going to get it. Thank you.

Walter Stiles, 226 Sagamore Street, Manchester, NH stated I am here to talk very briefly regarding the civic center. I was over at Memorial here awhile ago and I am for the civic center. However, I would like to make a suggestion. I understand that Enron and Ogden Corporation have committed \$11 million for this project and the overall project will cost \$57 million. So that leaves \$46 million to be raised somehow. I think, frankly, that there are enough people in the upper Massachusetts, lower New Hampshire area that would be glad to subscribe to a public offering, a bond offering, a stock offering or a combination of both, to the tune of \$46 million. I

have talked to several people and I talked to a fellow yesterday, in fact he was a young mailman, and he said he would be tickled to death to do it. He would love to have ownership in the civic center and I have talked to other people as well. So I think that...I understand the Green Bay Packers, for example, is publicly owned and I think that if people had an ownership in this civic center, that the attendance would be better because they would say well golly, so and so is paying tonight, I got to get down there and the attendance would be better and it wouldn't necessarily all be sports. It would be other things as well. So hopefully, you might possibly consider a public offering so that the local people, the people in the lower New Hampshire area and northern Massachusetts area can invest in this operation and make it a total success.

Don Welch, 147 Boutwell Street, Manchester, NH stated I am a State Legislator. For two years, up in Concord, I want to commend both Republican and Democratic representatives that have sent money back to this City for education. There is a thing called Legislative intent. The intent of that money is to help the kids in this community get a fair education. I can't see this money going elsewhere. Rooms & Meals tax. Legislative intent to reduce property taxes. I would like to know what is going on, Mr. Mayor. I think we all worked too hard, on both sides. I am asking you, please do the right thing here. Thank you.

There being no one else present wishing to speak, on motion of Alderman Girard, duly seconded by Alderman Pariseau, it was voted to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any documentation presented.

This being a special meeting of the Board, no further business can be presented, and on motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Thibault, it was voted to adjourned.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk