

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

February 2, 1999

7:00 PM

Mayor Wieczorek called the meeting to order.

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

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

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

Absent: Aldermen Rivard and Pariseau

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.

Wayne Treamer, Manchester, NH stated:

I request that the Aldermen and the City of Manchester change their do nothing policy in regards to the pumping stations. It was the City of Manchester and the developers who applied this idea of pumping stations in these Associations, not the homeowners who are expected to maintain them. I am outraged to find that the City can offer no assistance to these Associations when they cannot afford some of the major repairs. The City has people on their payroll who can repair these pumps and access the State and Federal funds that the Associations do not have access to. We pay the same taxes and sewer bills as other homeowners in the City and they do not have to bear these additional expenses. I feel the City should at least offer a tax abatement to the homeowners of these Associations to aid in covering some of their additional expenses of maintaining and repairing these pumping stations. It is very frustrating when you call your Alderman and he says there is nothing he can do to help you and there is no one to blame but you for buying that home. Perhaps the City can take a look at the different sizes of these Associations and understand that the smaller Associations just cannot afford the burden of these major repairs and in the worst case scenario, the replacement of these pumping stations, maybe

they can offer to assist financially, repair or take over the smaller Association pumping stations. These pumps are getting older and someday will need replacement and I know that fourteen homeowners will not be able to afford the cost of \$50,000 to replace these pumps. Thank you, in advance, for taking this into consideration.

David Boutin, Manchester, NH stated:

Mr. Mayor and members of the Board of Aldermen, what I am here to talk about tonight involves the downtown and what brings me here is that today in the paper the Environmental Protection Agency announced a \$3 million grant program called Anti-Sprawl or Smart Growth. Let me just read to you what it said here. It says over the next two years the money will be used to help local and state governments develop smart growth programs to direct development away from the suburban swell towards cities or village like concentrations that preserve open space and reduce people's dependence on cars. On the sheet, I listed downtown as the subject and I wanted to just put something on the table for you folks to consider which is we have a downtown that has some empty buildings and has a lot of upper floors that are empty and I think that directing this to the appropriate department and applying for the grant, I think there is a strong argument that the City of Manchester can make that we are improving the environment around the City by putting together some kind of program, maybe it is a revolving loan or whatever, that creates an incentive for people to: 1) purchase those buildings, and 2) to redevelop them, particularly the upper floors so that the young people who work downtown can actually live in town, reduce the numbers of cars that we use. We had a project back a few months ago where the Planning Board actually approved the building being converted for first floor retail offices and the upper floors being converted into apartments. Unfortunately, as the developer proceeded along, he determined it was too expensive to do. If we could provide some low interest cost money and maybe a revolving loan isn't the only way to do it. Maybe there are other ways of doing it. I like the revolving loan idea because then it creates a pool of money afterwards that we can use for other things in the downtown to create a better quality of life and attract people to live here on a year round basis. I think that the City could make a very strong argument for getting a grant and pursuing something along this line. So I wanted to just bring it to your attention and hopefully if you agree with me it will get directed to the appropriate department to pursue. Thank you.

Alderman Girard asked if Mr. Boutin could provide a copy of the article to the Board and he did so.

Murray Onigman, 340 Walnut Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am here because I live at 340 Walnut Street in Ward 3. We had a non-binding referendum in November. Non-binding. The no vote was 12,080. The yes vote was a little over 25,000. There was no publicity for a no vote but the yes vote had signs everywhere in Manchester and we all saw them but we didn't see the no signs anywhere. So based upon that, upon the non-

binding referendum we went from \$150,000 to over \$2 million and we have gotten very committed to a \$30 million building that the City will own with no property tax bill sent to anybody. The City is going to do this all on the Rooms & Meals tax. We can't touch it. We are at \$100 million. Nobody gets a tax bill. You can't sit here and say yes to this thing when almost half the City is saying no, but you said okay spend the \$100 million but it is more than that. That is half a billion in uncollected taxes, but there are no property tax owners to ask for the money. Ogden Corporation has been around since 1929. The plan was, I think, something that was never researched regarding the risk to us taxpayers and also to the City. We have a \$50 million building, half a billion-dollar risk, and no property taxes so what do we do. Ogden is getting a deal and I think the Board of Aldermen should look into what the whole real deal is. Having worked in the front office of the Boston Garden and the front office of Fenway Park for five years, there are behind the scene deals that you should look into. This is heavy, heavy stuff and before you risk our money for 30 years please look into this deal and what is happening.

Mayor Wieczorek advised that there being no one else present wishing to speak, on motion of Alderman Girard, duly seconded by Alderman Wihby, it was voted to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented.

Mayor Wieczorek advised that this being a special meeting of the Board, no further business can be presented, and on motion of Alderman Pinard, duly seconded by Alderman Reiniger, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk