

**SPECIAL MEETING  
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN  
(PUBLIC HEARING – PROPOSED FY2000 CIP BUDGET)**

**March 22, 1999**

**6:00 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, Reiniger, Sysyn, Clancy, Pinard, Shea, Girard, O'Neil, Rivard, Pariseau, Cashin, Thibault, and Hirschmann

**Absent:** Alderman Klock

Mayor Wieczorek advised that the purpose of the special meeting is a public hearing upon the proposed Community Improvement Program of the City of Manchester including activities for the 2000 to 2005 period.

The Clerk presented the proposed Resolution:

“A Resolution Approving the Community Improvement Program for 2000,  
Raising and Appropriating Monies Therefor and Authorizing Implementation of  
Said Program.”

Mayor Wieczorek requested that Robert MacKenzie, Director of Planning, make a presentation.

Mr. MacKenzie stated I am going to take a few minutes to explain a little bit about what the CIP is, what the purpose is, why it was established, how it is organized and go through and highlight some of the key projects this year. This presentation should only take about ten minutes. I know that a lot of you are here to make comments on it. Our staff is here; Sam Marento and Bill Jabjiniak are here, along with myself in case the Aldermen have specific questions on the various projects. What is the CIP is the first question. The Community Improvement Program is a planning and financial management tool that integrates all of the Federal and state programs and grants with the community development projects funded by the City which include both bonded projects and operating cash. It looks six years into the future to insure the long-term community development needs of the City are met while trying to minimize tax impacts. Really the CIP started in the early 1970's. At that time, debt service took close to a 1/3 of the operating

budget of the City. There were still a lot of unmet facility needs. Projects and programs were scattered over a number of different types of budgets and the CIP was put together to resolve some of these problems. Specifically, the CIP purposes are first to coordinate improvement projects. Frequently projects, such as a new middle school on the east side for example has impact on a variety of different departments and a variety of different projects from street resurfacing to sewer needs in that particular area. The CIP attempts to coordinate those various projects and throughout the CIP program there are a number of projects that interrelate to other projects. The second is to provide access by the BMA and the public to information on all projects and funding. Again, before the CIP was introduced, many state grants and Federal grants came into the City and there was no one place that you could go in to monitor all of the different programs going on in the City and all of the different projects. The CIP brings all of those together. It provides a hearing process and a regular methodology so that the Board can see every project that comes in and every request. It also provides streamlined accounting procedures. The Finance Department reviews each of the CIP projects, tracks them as they go along and works with the bonding part. The Finance Director is responsible for the bonding under the City. Maximize Federal and state dollars needed for projects. Again, by looking at several different types of programs you can see where you would have to go out and acquire additional Federal or state funds and coordinate between different projects. Sometimes one City department is working on a program that could benefit another City department or could coordinate and both together apply for grants that they would not have otherwise gotten. The City has recently done a lot of collaboration efforts where several City departments, along with non-profits and other groups, have been able to collaborate together and get grants that the City would not have otherwise been able to get. Minimizing the tax rate impact of capital projects. I will get into a graph fairly soon to show you that roughly of the \$48 million proposed in this year's CIP, only about 1/3 of that is related to the City's property tax and that is the bonded projects; general obligation bond and the CIP cash. The intent this year, as it was last year, is to have a relatively neutral impact on property taxes and that is that any additional bond debt proposed would be offset by reduced debt service from previous projects that are completed or reimbursements from the state or additional revenues from new developments coming into the City. It also provides a long-range planning tool for capital needs. This is a six-year plan. The first year of the plan is actually appropriated and authorized by the Board. The future five years gives any City department or any individual or Alderman or general public the opportunity to go in and look and see what the future year projects are. Again, the intent is to hopefully not have all of the projects coming in at the same time, but to spread those projects out so that the impact is relatively stable over time. Finally, it establishes a means of setting overall community development priorities. Again, there are a lot of demands.

This year there was a request for over \$100 million in projects. Clearly, there is not enough money to address all of those particular needs so the best way to do it is to evaluate all projects against each other and it does go through a series of priority setting and recognizing that we have to meet the basic needs first, public health, safety and welfare and there are a lot of other requests. So through the CIP process is the opportunity for the Board to really evaluate priorities and compare them against other priorities. I wanted to talk a little bit about the format of the CIP program. Again, if you didn't get a copy, we do have additional copies. There are

several different sections of the Community Improvement Program. The annual budget, as I mentioned before, that is the first year of the six-year program and it is broken down into five different tables. There is a particular reason for each of these tables and I was going into examples in a minute of each of these. Table 1-1 is Federal, State and Other Grants. Typically, those are specifically earmarked for only certain uses. You don't have any choice. Table 1-2 is also a Federal program. Those are HUD funded projects, but HUD projects, these particular ones, have a little bit more flexibility. There are general guidelines that you have to follow in meeting it, but a community does have an opportunity to have some say in how those monies are used. Table 1-3, there is typically a small portion of the CIP budget that is CIP cash and that comes directly from the operating budget. This year's amount is about \$2.5 million. Table 1-4 is the Bond Projects of the City. Again, those are general obligation bonds. Those are ones that are typically for fire stations and basic public services. Because Table 1-5 are also Bond Projects but they are Enterprise Projects. That includes sewer projects, Water Works projects, Parks & Recreation Enterprise projects. Those are projects and bonds that are paid through user fees. So when you pay your EPD fee each quarter, part of that money goes towards financing bonds so that does not have a direct impact on your property tax rate. Also part of the program is the multi-year CIP program. That is the part that I was talking about for. That goes five additional years into the future to show you what projects are planned or potential projects. The last two parts, the CIP Program Guidelines give you the financial and the planning guidelines that go behind the CIP. The last one, CIP Resolution is actually the formal appropriating resolution of the City and that has been submitted to the Board. The final overhead that I have is a very quick pair of slices of the pie. In essence, this shows where the funds are coming from and in general where the funds are going to. The first one, the where funds come from you can see that roughly 1/3 or a little more than 1/3 are Enterprise Program projects. Again, when you pay your water bill, a portion of it goes to paying bond projects and when you pay your EPD bill. Those are called Enterprise Programs. So 1/3 of the projects this year are Enterprise. Roughly 1/3, the Federal, State and Other and HUD together compose roughly 1/3 and those are Federal funds, State grants and in some cases even private contributions and foundation grants. That is about 1/3. So you have 32% actually that is based upon property taxes and that is the general obligation bond, as I am showing and the CIP cash which is only about 5%. Again, roughly 1/3 is from Enterprise, roughly 1/3 is from grants outside the City and roughly 1/3 is based on the property tax. Where do the funds go? About 38% go towards transportation and environment and that is one of the larger chunks. That, of course, includes \$6 million that the City has to fund as part of the CSO, which is the Combined Sewer Overflow. We are under mandate to correct certain problems in the systems by the EPA and we have to fund that. Again, that is an Enterprise fund. Housing and Community Development. There are several projects in there, which the City does get from the Federal government about \$500,000 each year for example from HUD for housing programs. Many of those this year are being completed by Neighborhood Housing Services as is proposed. They have worked with the City on several programs in the past. Recreation. 9% is actually up quite a bit over what it was a few years ago. There are several programs, from three or four park programs to school site improvements which Parks & Recreation also handles. Public Safety. At 9% of the pie, that includes several projects but primarily the Somerville Fire Station and

planning for improvements to or a new police station. 30% of the pie is education. Much of that is State and Federal grants that the School Department actually goes out and gets. The balance is bond money that is earmarked for several projects. Smaller pieces go towards Community Management, which includes such things as computer systems for the City and other types of management issues and health and human services. Again, that is a fairly small percentage here because it does not have any capital projects. Typically capital projects are larger. These are grants and programs to carry out various activities. I did want to follow-up on a few items I had mentioned previously and give some examples of different projects that we are looking at. I had mentioned the five different tables that the various projects are categorized under. Table 1-1 again is State and Federal grants and to give you an example of what some of those are, Office of Youth Services is getting a grant for alcohol and drug abuse prevention among youth. That is \$50,000. The Health Department is getting a tuberculosis control grant of \$35,000 and the School Departments gets various grants. An example is a hearing impaired program for \$700,000. Table 1-2 which is Specialized HUD Projects, that is about \$3 million in total and some examples of the HUD grants and what they can be used for is Parks & Recreation gets \$70,000 for youth recreation. ACCESS Manchester, which is a group of various individuals, including disabled individuals who kind of prioritize projects, \$430,000 is earmarked for them. New Horizons is a non-profit organization with \$6,000. The largest piece this year under the HUD portion is going to the Economic Development Office for the revitalization of the Chase Building and that is \$880,000. Again, another example of programs that are going to non-profits, Neighborhood Housing Services runs a home ownership opportunities program and \$25,000 would be used to assist in that administration. Moving to Table 1-3, which is the CIP cash portion, again this is typically a project that can't be bonded or there are no other available funds to handle it. A few examples there, that is where the Highway resurfacing program is. This year \$550,000 is proposed. That is up about 10% from last year's program. \$1 million is proposed under the School Capital Improvement Program and that is to address a number of capital projects within schools that can't be bonded. Those have kind of slipped through the cracks over the years. That would include Library improvements in some of the schools or carpeting and painting of classrooms and hallways as an example. Table 1-4 is Bond Projects. This year, there is proposed to be \$12,950,000 in bond projects. Again, just to give some examples of those, Parks & Recreation has a parks improvement program intended for various parks for about \$1.2 million. Within that, the largest chunk is for West Memorial Field at \$625,000. Information Systems has a Y2K contingency and computer upgrade program which is \$500,000. That is to make sure that we are prepared for the Y2K issue when it comes upon us. The City has been working for a number of months on it and this is a contingency that will make sure we address that. As I mentioned before, the Fire Department is looking for \$800,000 and that is proposed in the budget for the completion of the Somerville Fire Station. Some examples under Table 1-5, the enterprise Program, the Highway EPD is proposing Crystal Lake sewers which would come off the new Cohas Brook Interceptor. That would be \$2.5 million as proposed. Parks & Recreation is proposing to make improvements at the West Side Ice Arena for \$150,000. Again, I just wanted to give you some typical examples of what type of projects are in each of those tables. I also have a listing of the proposed expedited projects this year. As many of the Board members know, we are attempting to get ahead of the game.

Typically, the CIP program would not be approved until July 1. That would be too late to do many of the important construction projects that we want to do this summer. We are proposing that those be expedited and hopefully have approval by the Board by April 20 of this year. This would allow perhaps adequate time to address many of the important projects. Again, there are 10 of those. I won't go into detail on each of those but it does include the park improvement program, school recreation and parking facilities, riverfront development, sidewalk improvement program, city space improvements, Y2K contingency, motorized equipment replacement, school capital improvement program, parking facilities improvements and the Somerville Street Fire Station. That concludes my formal presentation. At the present time, our staff will be available either tonight or tomorrow night to answer any questions that the Board might have.

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 give 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.

Carol Birch, Manchester, NH stated I am the new Director of the Latin American Center. I have been asked to talk about what we do and what might happen if we weren't in the community. I wanted to show you our client list, which is well worn. New ones come every day. We are asked to report to the City each month how many new ones come and we do that, but for each one, for many of these people we never know how many will show up, we serve not just the people on this list but their family members as well so you can multiply it. Many of these people are heads of families so these names stand for many more than one person. We who are able to come to meetings like this have a lot to be thankful for. When we go to sleep at night we can feel comfortable because our house has heat. The people we serve must often struggle to provide heat for their families. For that we work with Fuel Assistance. When we speak we assume others will understand us and we will understand their answers. (The speaker said a few sentences in Spanish). When the Hispanics speak, nobody understands them and they do not understand what others say. For that, we offer English as a Second Language classes so people will eventually learn to be independent and as they learn more we offer referral to more advanced education programs in the town. We offer interpreting at the schools. There is a volunteer who comes in and helps people prepare taxes. We interpret for WIC, doctor's offices, medical clinics, health clinics, law offices, courts, wherever we are needed. For example, the other day a woman came in and she was severely injured and she tried to go to the doctor herself and the doctor said she couldn't be seen unless she had an interpreter so I went to the doctor for her. We interpret for very personal medical problems. Someone needed help at the urologist and I interpreted for him and when it was all over the doctor said I hope your agency won't try to bill us because we won't pay so what would this man have been able to do without us. When our kids go to school, we assume that we will be able to work with the school personnel and help our children. The people with whom we work can't do that so we receive calls from many

schools asking us to help with various situations. What would happen if we weren't here? I think there would be greater stress on the medical system, on the hospitals, on the courts, on the legal system because we interpret for them. I wouldn't want these people to be forgotten. They need help and we can help them. Thank you.

Eileen Phinney, 42 Joppa Hill Road, Goffstown, NH stated I live in Goffstown, but I spend my time in Manchester at the Latin American Center. I want to speak about volunteerism at the Latin American Center. If you listened to Carol's presentation, you might have been overwhelmed and it is overwhelming especially if you realize that two and a half staff people do all of this work. The ESL classes, of course, are done by somebody else but all of the services are provided by two and a half staff people plus volunteers. The rest of the work is done by volunteers. I personally volunteer between 20 and 40 hours a week for 27 years since the Latin American Center started. We are often told that we are weak in public relations and that people don't hear about us and that is because we are so busy working in the trenches. My answer is that we are really too busy working for the community. We are very successful and have been very successful in recruiting and maintaining volunteers and our workload is increasing. I am concerned wondering if we would be able to keep up meeting the growing need as the workload increases and what would happen if we can't.

Louis Craig, Manchester, NH stated I am the Executive Director of New Horizons which is located at 189 Manchester Street and I am here to request that the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, through its Community Improvement Program continue its support of New Horizons. Being a homeless shelter, we had 109 people stay there last night. Every night, we feed over 200 people. Last month we handed out well over 800 bags of food to people who live in the inner city. We rely on State funds and we rely on City funds to assist us and grants and fundraising. The question before us, as I understand it, is should the City continue to fund and help non-profit organizations and I have a letter here that I would like to give to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen from City Welfare. Essentially, the letter states that if New Horizons was not supported by the City then City Welfare would be devastated and really the letter is self-explanatory. I would like to just say in addition to what the City Welfare has indicated that we would have an awful lot of homeless people walking the streets of Manchester and we would have a tremendous amount of hungry people living in the inner City, people who rely on New Horizons so I hope that the Board of Mayor and Aldermen continue in supporting us. One final thing I do want to say is that when we seek funds from other agencies like the State, one of the questions they ask is does the City of Manchester support New Horizons. It is a very important question and every time a non-profit seeks fund, that question is always asked and without affirmative response to that question believe me it would be very difficult to receive funds from other agencies so you have helped us in the past and I hope that you continue to help us in the future. Thank you.

Alderman Wihby asked how much money are you looking for.

Mr. Craig answered we are talking \$6,000 and in addition \$10,000 for handicap accessibility to our building.

Alderman Wihby asked the ADA compliance.

Mr. Craig answered yes.

Meghan Brady, 15 Stanstead Place, Nashua, NH stated I represent St. Joseph Community Services. The largest Manchester site is the Carpenter Center located at 323 Franklin Street. I want to thank the Mayor and the Board of Aldermen for allowing me to address you tonight and to talk a little bit about St. Joseph Community Services, better known to you as provider of the congregate and Meals on Wheels Program. We have been doing this service for 22 years and it has been our honor and privilege to meet the needs of the most frail of your constituency during that time. In the 22 years that we have been providing services, we have seen a fundamental change in both need and an increase in that need. When we first started providing these services, we served one homebound meal to every two congregate meals that we served at our sites. In fact, we were mandated to do so under our Federal funding. We are now serving 2.5 homebound meals for every congregate that we serve and we are also seeing an increase in people requesting homebound meals. We have seen a 67% increase in the number of homebound meals served over the last 10 years and in the last three years alone we have seen a 21% increase. So clearly the growing demographics that we have all heard about are seniors, those 85 and older, being the fastest growing segment of our population. We are seeing the need reflected here in the increased request for Meals on Wheel. We receive funding for this program under the Older Americans Act but this is not an entitlement program. In other words when we run out of money before the end of the fiscal year and I have been with this program for four years and we have run out of money every year, we must find a way to raise the necessary funds to feed people until the start of the next fiscal year. In addition, the money we receive under these programs does not cover the cost of an entire meal nor was it ever intended to. It is expected that agencies like this one will solicit support from the United Way, local cities and towns and client donations to make up the remainder. Over the years, we have received annual support from other cities and towns in the county. The City of Nashua, for example, supports us by giving us 30 cents per meal served or about \$21,000. We ask that the City of Manchester support their constituency using the same formula. For the more than 100,000 meals we serve in Manchester under the Older Americans Act Program, that would translate to our request of \$30,590 or only 4.8% of our total Manchester budget for this program. You might be sitting there asking well what else are they doing to help with the funding. We are very aggressive with our volunteer program. In fact, our auditors have pegged that amount saved there that we would have to spend on real wages as \$175,000 a year. We also do two fundraising events that help us raise \$28,000 a year so we are working very hard at containing our cost. Our administrative costs are only 14.1%. I beg you to consider the needs of the most frail of your constituency and ask that you give every consideration to our funding request and I invite any one of you to go out on a Meals on Wheels route and see what is out there. Thank you for your time.

Alderman Girard asked is it appropriate at all to ask any of the speakers questions.

Mayor Wieczorek answered well if everybody starts asking questions...the purpose of the public hearing is to allow people who are out here an opportunity to speak.

Alderman Girard replied I understand what the purpose is. I am just asking if you are going to allow questions.

Mayor Wieczorek responded no.

Mary Sliney, Manchester, NH stated I am the Executive Director of The Way Home, which is located at 20 Merrimack Street. I first want to speak to the importance of the Community Improvement Program's budget in building partnerships in the City and Louis Craig already spoke to you about the importance of that partnership when it comes to addressing the housing needs of some of Manchester's residents. One of the things that I took a look at in preparation for today is how many people do we at The Way Home work with who were referred to us by City Welfare and what would happen if our program were not available to assist them and I was pleased to know that New Horizons was also asking the same question. One of the really important partnerships that we are engaged in is called the Manchester Area Continuum of Care which addresses the needs of preventing homelessness and helping your very low income residents access safe, affordable housing. When the City was required by HUD in order to receive some of these Federal dollars, to prepare a consolidated plan, it was required to include a statement, a description on a continuum of care to address homelessness and my agency, along with several others, worked in very close partnership with the City planners to develop the strategies that are included in the City's consolidated plan. We continue that partnership in working closely with City Welfare to reduce the cost burden to the City because whenever we can prevent homelessness, whenever we can prevent an eviction, whenever we can help someone access what will be for them an affordable apartment, then they are not going to need to fall back on the reliance of the City welfare. The other place of partnership is to take a look at how exciting the growth and the economy is for the City of Manchester and the challenge that it is placing on folks whose incomes are not keeping up. When someone's income is less than 50% of the median income, when someone is earning \$6 an hour or working at the median wage, they may find that they can no longer afford the apartment that they are living in. One of the families that we are currently working with has lived in the same apartment in the City of Manchester for 25 years. Her rent has now gone up from \$335 a month to \$575 a month. This 70% increase from the last three years is because of the exciting growth in the City's economy, however, for her it means she is about to become homeless. Our program will work closely with her to insure that that does not happen and thanks to the support of the CIP budget, we are able to continue to do that. We want to thank the City for giving us this opportunity to work in partnership with you.

Senator Eleanor Podles, Ward 1, Manchester, NH stated I am also a board member of the Meals on Wheels Program and St. Joseph's Community Services. This issue concerns me very deeply. Meghan has eloquently expressed a need for additional funding and I would like to go on record also to support this appeal which is very, very important and I hope that this simple appeal would lead to some kind of contribution from the City of Manchester and it deserves your support and I will give you the reasons why. First of all, it is cost-effective because the seniors and the elderly live in their own homes and also we wouldn't have to have a waiting list because we would be providing services with the extra funding and I would hope that you would act favorable on this appeal and I thank you for listening.

Donna Penn, 451 Medford Street, Manchester, NH stated I am representing the Green Acres School playground. Good evening Mayor, Aldermen and Board. Thank you for letting us share our concern about our playground this evening. On behalf of Green Acres School parents and the surrounding community we are presenting a petition of 571 signatures to the Board of CIP. The petition we present has received strong support in not only our school district and surrounding communities of Green Acres School, but many districts of Manchester as well. As you know, with the construction of the McLaughlin Middle School and its surrounding amenities, Green Acres School grounds have lost two tennis courts, two soccer fields, baseball fields and more importantly to the school, playground equipment and a basketball hoop. Its fields adjacent to the basketball court now after the McLaughlin Middle School construction for better words are no longer grassy but they are mud bowls. The equipment lost was not only important to its school but was valuable to its surrounding and every growing community. To many residents of Bodwell Road, Mammoth Road and surrounding neighborhoods, the playground area is most needed and easily accessed. It is the only playground in Manchester for this area and continues with ongoing development. As parents and as residents of the south and southeast communities in Manchester, we feel it is imperative for the CIP to consider maximum allocation of funding to Green Acres school grounds for the purchase and installation of new playground equipment to Green Acres school as well as to update the school grounds and amenities which were lost during the McLaughlin Middle School construction. You will have to forgive me, as I am very nervous. We feel strongly that the equipment removed at Green Acres for the construction of the middle school should be replaced with new equipment. We also feel that Green Acres school grounds should receive maximum funding for updating the playground, its surrounding area and equipment to meet its surrounding community's expansion of new developments. With ongoing development and continued growth in south Manchester, there needs to be accountability and responsibility to its residents and school district. We feel this is a step in a positive direction. As a parent who takes pride in our community, neighborhood, school and establishments, we support our administrators and teachers, our Green Acres Parent/Teacher Organization is active and involved in our school supporting school functions and providing resources, but we cannot fund new playground equipment on our own or update our playground on our own and are asking for CIP's consideration. We have researched neighboring playground projects and spoken to many City officials along the way and received much support for which we are very grateful and appreciative. We are asking CIP for an allocation of no less than \$100,000 and are requesting the absolute maximum funding to Green

Acres school ground that is play area and equipment can receive. We feel this is urgent and it needs to be addressed. We thank the Board for giving us this opportunity to address our concern and appreciate all consideration. I do have a petition with 571 signatures that I would like to submit. Thank you.

Jean Desany, 1915 Front Street, Manchester, NH stated I am with the Voluntary Action Center. You will find the Voluntary Action Center listed on Table 1-3, Page 1 in the document that was passed out to you tonight. The Voluntary Action Center has been in business since 1974 serving as a recruiting and referral service for all potential volunteers regardless of age or ability to more than 100 non-profits and health and human service agencies in the Greater Manchester community, several of whom I see represented here tonight. Within this framework, we also work with special populations placing clients of several of those agencies into volunteer opportunities, which help improve their job skills and self-esteem. Brent came to us, a charming young man of 20 who suffered brain damage at birth and was raised by a loving single mother. They shared a devotion to dogs and he did volunteer at the Animal Rescue League but he lacked male influence in his life. We placed him with one of the local public safety organizations where he had a chance to roll hoses, scrub fire hoses and hang out with the guys. After about six months of that experience, I got a call that he wasn't a volunteer any more. He had managed to achieve gainful employment at a local supermarket several days a week as often as his schedule allowed. He is one of our success stories. We see many more coming down the pike in the future. So it is that I would like to present this check. This check represents \$2,599,734 worth of in kind services to those agencies in 1998. This does not include the 190,000 hours donated by RSVP members managed from the Voluntary Action Center nor the 3,400 hours spent by two NH Reads Americorps volunteers who are housed at VAC. \$330,580 of this number is directly attributable to the volunteers in the municipal volunteer program which last year consisted of 11 departments participating in 19 locations. Doing such things as the hazardous waste disposal day, manning almost in total the animal shelter, as well as the total of 24,000 hours donated is equivalent to 14 full-time City employees. Manchester is the best little City in the northeast to live in. Let's keep up our reputation and continue to help it grow. I would only ask that you think of the 14 year old girl in an attic during World War II who said how wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world. With your support, we can show others how to do that right here. Thank you.

Robbie Grady, 46 Eagle Mast Way, Manchester, NH stated I am one of Jean Desany's clients. I come to you as a volunteer and Jean has asked me to speak to you tonight to tell you what the process was for me. Imagine moving to a new city. You have left home, family, friends and job behind and you have very few, if any, contacts. What do you do? Well if you are like me you let your fingers do the walking through the yellow pages and you find the Voluntary Action Center and with a phone call and filling out of a survey you tell Jean or someone like her what your skills are, what your goals are and she matches you up with countless and I mean countless, she gave me five pages of choices of agencies in the local area that could use my skills. I was going to be pretty choosy this time around and I was. Right now I am currently volunteering at For Manchester in their administrative offices and next month I will start volunteering at the

Community Resource Center. Now I know when money is tight you are all tuned into the WIIIFM radio station. "What is in it for me?" or "What is in it for Manchester?" Well I will tell you what is in it for me. What is in it for me as a volunteer is I gain new skills, I get an opportunity to improve on the skills that I already have, I make new friends, I feel like I belong and you know when you move that is an important feeling to start feeling like you can belong and contribute to your community and your new home. What is in it for Manchester? Well you get the services of somebody like me. Somebody who has been in the job market for 20 years, has a masters degree, has a resume that includes grant writer, fundraiser, job skills trainer, program developer, executive director of a children's museum. You name it, I have done it. You also get the use of all of those other volunteers who contributed those millions of dollars to Manchester. Good investment? Yes, I think it is. Please continue to support the Voluntary Action Center. Thank you.

Carol Mauceri, 125 Main Street, Newmarket, NH stated I am here to speak briefly this evening about the partnership between my program and the Voluntary Action Center. I am the Regional Coordinator for NH Reads Americorps. We are a statewide, grant funded program providing literacy services in all of the counties. We target children birth through third grade and their families. Currently, we have two full-time NH Reads members in Manchester. They are located and have office space in the VAC office and that is a perfect location for them. VAC works very closely with our members in helping us to determine which sites we should go to to provide direct services. They give us information, tips, contacts, all kinds of materials that they have in their professional library. Currently, our two members are providing services throughout the Manchester community at WIC clinics and Head Start classes, at the MCRC, at the Boys and girls club, at Families in Transition, at the Moore Center and this Thursday they start a new program for Kurdish women and children through the International Center. A big part of our program is working with volunteers. The sustainability of our three-year grant program rests on us finding and training volunteers who will continue the kinds of services that our members have started. That is very instrumental in helping us work on our program. We work with many groups of volunteers. Ten Notre Dame students are being coordinated at the Boys and Girls Club for an after school book buddies program. We have had our members training with the RSVP volunteers in literacy. We have helped to introduce them into Head Start classes. I am reminded of a cartoon that was in yesterday's Sunday Parade Magazine. Noah was standing on the ark. The giraffes, the elephants and the zebras are leaving in pairs. Noah leans over and says who is going to volunteer to stay and help clean up. Volunteers do that kind of thing as well as many other very valuable things. You have heard some numbers and you have heard some amounts of money. It is hard sometimes to measure the impact of programs. The VAC impacts our program favorably and helps us to provide services in many different sites throughout the Manchester area. We served over 2,200 children and 900 families last year. This year, to date, we have serviced 900 children and 130 families. We really think it is important for you to keep in mind when we have tight budget times that the VAC program effects our program and helps us provide services throughout Manchester. Thank you.

Sue Conner, Manchester, NH stated I am the Director of Volunteer Services at Southern NH Services and as such I oversee the Voluntary Action Center. I am here tonight to speak on behalf of the Voluntary Action Center and ask the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to continue to support the VAC as they have in the past. I think one of the key issues I would like to reiterate tonight is this idea of local support leveraging outside dollars. When the VAC came to be a part of my program a couple of years ago, VAC was one person and that was it. Over the last couple of years, because of the level of local support that we receive for the VAC we have been able to leverage that local support with outside foundation support, Federal dollars and state dollars to the point that now we have five employees in the department and the VAC has become a flagship program which has allowed us to even expand into the Nashua area with local support in the Nashua area. This VAC in Manchester is something that all of us can be very proud of. It is one of only three in the State of NH. Whenever one goes for any kind of funding, whether it is state of Federal or private foundation aid, it is very important to be able to answer the question and what level of local support do you enjoy. For that reason, I really urge the Board to continue its long time support of the VAC. Today the VAC houses the retired and senior volunteer program. It houses the NH Reads Americorp Program and we also have a program called Family Matters which came about a year ago because of the strong VAC here in town we were able to attract some money from the Kellog Foundation to do a whole separate volunteer program encouraging families to volunteer. That would not have happened without the local support that we are able to garner. I would like to urge you to continue to support the VAC. As you can see from Jean's check, it is a very, very small investment for a huge pay-off. In closing, I would like to paraphrase a quote from General Colin Powell who says "all of us can do something, all of us can give a dollar, all of us can spend time with someone that doesn't look like us, that doesn't talk like us but needs us in their lives." Please help us to continue to do this work in the community.

Maureen Pascoal, 229 Peak Street, Manchester, NH stated I am Information Referral Manager for the Info Bank Program. The Info Bank is a free information and referral service to people over the telephone and on a walk-in basis that helps callers identify their problem and give them information about community resources that can assist them. We do not maintain information about tourist attractions; commercial businesses, weather or arts events but we can put callers in touch with excellent sources for that information. You might wonder what people call Info Bank about. Some of the questions we get at Info Bank every day range from how can I become a foster parent to is anyone accepting donations of used cars to I am getting evicted and I don't have any place to live and I have children, where can I go to who is the US Representative for District I and the car I bought is a lemon, can I get my money back. It is also interesting to note that some of the businesses and organizations who call or send callers our way include the Chamber of Commerce, the United Way, City Hall, the Elliot Hospital staff as well as CMC staff. Many departments, through the NH Health & Human Services Department and that includes the police department, mental health center and also newspaper reporters calling asking for resources in building and developing different stories. Why should Info Bank exist? Info Bank's location in the Manchester Community Resource Center is very important because it is addressing the public's needs on education, housing and jobs. The City's growth continues to

bring a new dimension of businesses and families from all over the country and along with the growing population and aging of the population, there still needs to be some kind of information base prepared to handle communicating helpful and accurate information on a daily basis. The Info Bank needs the funding from the Community Improvement Program and I would just like to tell you a few interesting facts. Every day, Info Bank receives 25 to 40 calls. 75% from individuals and 25% from businesses and organizations. Our latest data assistance statistics revealed 100% satisfaction in referrals and service. We provide a central reference for anyone in the State of NH or out-of-state on resources available in Manchester and surrounding towns. Given these facts, if the Info Bank is not made available to service the calls, we need to ask the question who will the public depend on for getting information and referral. I would like to pass out a simple fact sheet. I hope you will continue to fund the Info Bank Program. Thank you for your time.

Andy Hamblett, Barrington, NH stated I would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak today on the issue of the CIP funds of non-profits. This is a major concern to the Greater Manchester Family YMCA as we received \$17,000 last year to help fund the YMCA Youth Opportunities Unlimited Program, an after school childcare program serving over 100 youth and families in Manchester's Beech Street and Henry Wilson schools. In fact, we are hopeful that we can expand the program next year to Hallsville or Bakersville School as the needs are so great for the disadvantaged youth and the families of Manchester. 85% of the children in the youth program are at or below the Federal poverty guidelines. If it were not for the Youth Program, we are sure that the majority of these youngsters would be on the streets or home alone unsupervised. This is a time when children are at greatest risk for crime, engaging in sexual activity, drug abuse and other negative experiences that can affect the future of any child. The Youth Program costs \$150,000 to run for the 100 children involved. Cutting the \$17,000 in CIP funds would have a devastating impact because it would affect other State, County and local funds that are leveraged because of your support. Last year, we were told by our major State and County funders involved in a similar program to be run in Manchester that if Manchester did not support the program with any funding at all, support would be pulled. Specifically, that the County and State were willing to supplement local towns efforts to serve its youth, but not totally replace it. This would have resulted in canceling a critically needed program for the youth at risk and dropping out of school. A solution was found and the program is still serving 48 youth at risk. Please also be aware that an additional \$28,000 is contributed directly to the YMCA to run their Youth Program from concerned citizens and businesses because of the fact that we are a non-profit organization. The YMCA believes that services to the needy can be best funded when we all hold hands in the spirit of collaboration in caring for the youth and families of Manchester. Please do not pull your hand away from the YMCA, the County, the State, our local businesses and friends who care to raise up the youth of our city because we are non-profits. Such a decision would only hurt the children and families that need our support the most. Please rethink this initiative and move in a direction of more collaboration and support that will enable even more funds to flow to the non-profit service providers in Manchester. It is in the interest of thousands of children and families who need all of your support. Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Wayne Miguel, 109 Goffe Street, Manchester, NH stated Mr. Mayor and Board of Aldermen, I am the spokesman for today's specific subject about the Skate Park and the main subject about this is drugs. I think the Skate Park would be a great place for kids to hang out. The reason I am saying this is because instead of going out and just hanging around with friends, we can do something that everybody else likes and we don't need to worry about what everybody else thinks. We can be very independent and have fun at the same time. Plus it would reduce crime in a lot of ways. Vandalizing, graffiti, stealing and other unnecessary actions. Not only would it help with crime, but also with families. Instead of involuntary actions on the family, they can take their aggressive anger and skate and also have fun at the same time. Also for the activities of the Manchester Skating Park, with this skate park not only would this park take popularity onto it but it would also have a good reputation for Manchester and the Manchester Skating Park. I know, for a fact, that it is going to be very popular because when I sit at those lunch tables, everybody talks about it. It has been very popular so far and I have been hearing it since the end of last year. Everybody is so excited and I conclude this by submitting a petition. Right now I have 10 kids on this. I can tell you that it is not bad at all and everybody is saying yes to a skate park. Now I have money raised so far and I know people who are very famous. I know people who can donate money. Jeff Sworek from the Pittsburgh Penguins and Bobby Orr. The money you are about to give us you will not regret because it will give the City of Manchester a very good reputation. Once this is settled, I would like to tell you that this money is for a very good cause and the activities that we have are many different competitions, raffles, sponsors and sales. It is also an extracurricular activity. Also, people can relate to it because when kids go up and ask their parents can I go to a skating park, they say no I have to go to work or no I have to go to school. Now it is going to be different because they can just say I am going to hang out with my friends and I can go to Wolfe Park and go to the skating park. It will be very good, also, because since I just said it was an extracurricular activity and it will stop violence, drugs and will be an extra activity for Manchester and get a very good reputation and Manchester will be popular. I also have two pages of signatures of people who are in support of this.

Harold Gulley, Jr., Manchester, NH stated I am from the Salvation Army which is located at 121 Cedar Street here in Manchester. The Salvation Army in this funding proposal is proposing to add one full-time position to our community center department that will result in an expansion and improvement of services to the youth with whom we work particularly those who attend our Kids Café Program. There has been a community-wide effort among the human services agencies in Manchester to address the critical areas of need that were outlined at the President's Summit on Youth held in the Spring of 1997. Approval of this proposal would allow the Salvation Army to continue this initiative by building a site of prominence that will not only bring national recognition to Manchester, but also enhance and strengthen services to a largely unserved segment of the community. It is important to note that without these services we are currently offering, along with the additions and enhancements outlined in our proposal, that many Manchester residents will remain largely unserved. Mentoring, safe places to be during out of school hours, marketable skills and opportunities for giving back to their community are needs that most cannot find answers to anywhere else. Giving every young person the

opportunity to develop into active, informed and committed citizens is what this proposal is all about. One quick example, a young man age 17, bright mind, bringing home grades of A's and B's from high school misses the opportunity or loses the chance of wasting his mind because after playing basketball on the campus of a local college and interacting with a number of college students who volunteer at our agency he has been influenced to rethink his decision about college and he is now seriously considering attending college, something he probably would not have done had he not interacted in a way that he is able to in our program. The Salvation Army has a proud legacy of over 100 years of service in Manchester that has been founded not only on providing quality services, but on a level of efficient delivery that few organizations can match. In 1998, alone, over 150,000 units of service were delivered to more than 10,000 residents of the City of Manchester. It is with this tradition of commitment and professionalism that we warrant your support for this request and I would like to close quickly by echoing the sentiments of a number of other speakers tonight in expressing our view that the City needs to remain a part of this partnership in serving the citizens of this community. It is vital to having a positive effect on the lives of the people who live here and I encourage you and urge you to allow these funds to remain a part of the CIP Program.

Stephen Donohue, Manchester, NH stated I am the principal of Hillside and I am also a resident of Ward 8 and I am joined tonight by members of our PTA and our staff. I would like to address some site renovation issues at Hillside that have been long ongoing. Next year with the full implementation of the middle school concept at Hillside, I anticipate well over 1,100 students and a staff that would grow by some 20 to about 120 people. Together with volunteers and parents in the building regularly, the site's present parking and its access is not adequate for the current staff and needs to match the anticipated growth next year. I have, in the past, been to the CIP Committee and presented to you the deplorable conditions of the parking lot and the site around the school. Ice storms and rain of the past winter, combined with water from the reservoir have done nothing to fill up the holes and craters in our parking lot. Every storm deposits additional soil and sand in that area. Lack of lighting, adequate lighting, challenges visitors at night to find their cars without tripping over the ridges that have been created over the years in our parking lot. The Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Department has done preliminary environmental and engineering studies on the Hillside site. In over 30 years, there has been little major renovation of the site at Hillside. Due to the present conditions and the future needs of the school, I am here to plead with you to support the Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Department request for CIP money to redo the Hillside site. On behalf of the staff, parents and students, I thank you for your consideration.

Sister Margaret Ahern, 647 Canal Street, Manchester, NH stated I am here representing one of my areas of responsibility, the VNA Childcare Center. I know that many of you are aware of the center and what it does and have supported it and I would like to first of all thank you for your continued support and ask that you continue to support it. It is, as you know, licenses for 239 infants and children, 6 weeks old to 5 years and after school until age 12. They receive two hot meals a day, breakfast and dinner, and nutritious snacks but they continue, even though it is said that the economy is much better, they continue to eat three times as much on Monday as

they do the rest of the week which tells you what they don't have on the weekend. It is a program, which is made up mainly of the children of the working core. The parent must be in school, must be working or must be learning a trade and these children are the future of Manchester so it is an endeavor that needs to have partnerships, needs to have support because these are the children who, as Joe Kane when he was Fire Inspector said that these are the children who would be locked in rooms or apartments or out in yards for the day if the VNA Childcare Center didn't exist. I thank you for your continued support and I ask you to remember the VNA Childcare Center as you work on your projects. Thank you very much.

Sal Steven Hubbard, 434 Union Street, Manchester stated I am the Real Estate Development and Asset Manager with Manchester Neighborhood Housing Services at 434 Union Street here in Manchester. I know that you all are pretty much aware of the various activities that the Manchester NHS undertakes. You have been very supportive of us in the past and we are very appreciative, but I would like to give you some information about two very exciting new projects of the NHS. We are requesting funding in this year's budget for those two new projects. They will leverage together literally millions of dollars in additional investment from other sources and will have a beneficial long-term effect on Manchester's neighborhoods and residents. Both projects will provide construction jobs and when completed will provide high quality, affordable housing opportunities to low income families. The first project I would like to bring to your attention is the first phase of our Tree Streets Renewal effort that we are undertaking in the center city. Last summer, the Manchester NHS acquired various properties from a single owner and our request to the City is to impact four blighted buildings that were part of that acquisition. The City's CIP Program also played a major role in that acquisition. The properties are located on the corner of Auburn and Chestnut Streets and at 95 Cedar Street. Currently, these buildings represent a significantly dense residential site. When the NHS bought the buildings, there were 33 families living in the Auburn and Chestnut Street buildings and they were in terrible condition. The building on Cedar Street, known as the Arts Novelty Building, which has been vacant and boarded for several years, also consists of six residential units and two commercial spaces. Our plans for these sites are as follows. We are going to completely rehabilitate the site at 131-137 Chestnut Street for a total of 9 residential units. We plan to demolish two large, really ugly brick buildings at 108-118 Auburn Street which currently consist of 24 residential units. We plan to do some new construction on that site of eight new units of housing and to completely rehabilitate the 95 Cedar Street building into its original six residential units and two commercial spaces. The project represents a density reduction and we are also going to provide parking and open space that is very much needed. The City funds in this project will have a leverage value of about 20:1. It is important to note that our real estate development projects such as the Tree Streets Renewal Project and the Elm Street Restoration Project which was the other project I was going to talk about, have a rippling effect on the neighborhoods surrounding them. Where there are dilapidated and poorly maintained large blocks of buildings, property values suffer, the tax base drops, investment by homebuyers is non-existent and positive commercial investment is nowhere to be seen. As demonstrated by past NHS rental projects, however, the rehabilitation and proper management of large rental properties improves and stabilizes neighborhoods and paves the way for additional investment in

neighborhood improvement. Thank you very much for the opportunity to present this information and thank you for your past and future support of the NHS.

Tom Sapienza, 869 Valley Street, Manchester, NH asked could I give my time to another speaker.

Mayor Wieczorek answered well we don't usually do that because if everybody started on that we would have 10-minute monologues here.

Mike O'Neil, 293 Young Street, Manchester, NH stated I am here tonight representing quite a few people who are on the committee to improve Prouts Park. While I make my comments tonight, I want you to keep in mind that Prouts Park is not only a playground and neighborhood park, but is also a dedicated athletic field and apparently there are no funds to maintain any of the aforementioned. Prouts Park is an old park in this town and as one who has lived across the street from it for the last 40 years, I know every shovel of dirt that hasn't been moved from that park in the last 40 years and I can tell you that it is time. The playground equipment is dilapidated, what little there is left. The basketball court was a good idea 15 years ago but with the changing urban scene it draws an element that doesn't come from our neighborhood and not even necessarily from our town and is a source of gang warfare which has happened lately, graffiti and gang actions and activities after hours including drinking, broken glass, swearing, the street language, the whole mess that goes along with it. They have absolutely no respect for the neighbors or the neighborhood. The sprinkler system that was installed 12 years ago at a cost of \$15,500 when the City was automating sprinkler systems around town has never been activated. At this point, Prouts Park is so heavily used that it is just a dust bowl and all of the people around the park have to deal with a dust problem on top of everything else and this could be eliminated just by activating the system that is already in place. The Babe Ruth League that is there is a wonderful thing and on any given weekend in the spring and early summer there can be up to eight games played on a weekend there and that generates a tremendous amount of trash. More than a few barrels that are there can handle. The City does a wonderful job of picking up the barrels on Monday morning, but by that time it is usually too late and it is just more trash than the two or three barrels that are there can hold. All of the neighbors have to pick it up too on Monday mornings. It is a general mess. It is wonderful to see all of the parents out supporting the Babe Ruth League, but there are no bleachers to sit on. As you can see by the photos that are being passed around, I took those pictures just yesterday so they are very recent and you can see the deplorable conditions of the park. From what I understand, one of the big selling points of the civic center is the ripple effect that it will have in the neighborhoods around there. At least that is supposedly one of the big selling points of it. I am looking for the same effect for the Prouts Park improvement. Obviously on a smaller scale, but everyone of us has their own individual concerns about what is going on at Prouts Park and the decline thereof, but the one thing that unites us is our property values. At one point, Prouts Park was used as a selling point for houses in that neighborhood. At this point, if I was to try to sell my house, I would not use the park as a selling point nor would I even hope that a potential client would see the park. I would schedule the appointments for at night. You have a wonderful opportunity at

this time to bring the park back up to where it was, where it should be. If I dial 911 as a homeowner and taxpayer in this town and said there was a prowler in the neighborhood, I would expect some results, some response. Well we are dialing 911 to the CIP Committee tonight. We are looking for some response. You people have a wonderful opportunity to do this and I want to thank you for your time and support.

Selma Deitch, 1295 Elm Street, Manchester, NH stated I am here first of all to thank you for allowing our program to be on the list for potential programs that will be funded and as I sit here I am always impressed with the articulate people who speak with great emotion about what Manchester needs and I am impressed with the fact that you people can respond. I am here tonight to talk about the Teen Health Clinic that is a new program of Child Health Services. It is for the under served teens who we all see and know don't have access to healthcare, part of the reason being that they don't have insurance and another is that the healthcare that is accessible to them isn't something that they care to go to so we are adapting our program to their needs. The program is located at the YWCA on the second floor. It is a ver attractive space. Children go there, teens go there and see physicians, nurse practitioners, they have mental health services and nutrition support services. We are related to the YMCA in a fitness program and to the Lung Association with respect to a tobacco cessation program and a variety of other resources that we think are promotional to teen health. We certainly work with the schools and other resources that are referring to us. I say that the program takes care of children from A-Z and that is asthma to zits. We hope that you will continue to support us. I am sure if we are successful you will see less children that are dropping out of school. There will be more people in the community that are healthy in that age group. They will also reduce the number of children who use the emergency and less cost for hospitalization.

Ronald Roy, 34 Wilkins Street, Manchester, NH stated I have a few pictures to pass around. I am the Coordinator for Family Consumer Science at West High School. I would like to talk today about the Family Consumer Science food lab and storage area. There are two great problems. One is age and one of them is sewage. The age problem has been noted. I think the four labs, it is a lab with four units, they were put in about two years after Richard Houle graduated from West High School so that would place it somewhere around the mid 1950's so they are about 40-45 years old. The second problem of course is the sewage problem. Over the years we have had spring run-offs and the sewage comes up over the sinks and over the labs and into the drawers and so forth. We have to clean it up and I want to say that PBS did take care of it last July and took care of the valves but last May we had a back-up and the Health Department came and condemned one of our units. What they did is they replaced one of our units with a temporary, I was told a temporary solution. If anybody wants to see it, this is what it looks like. This panel on the drawer fell off just with regular use. It is a very cheaply built thing and it was there, I think, to last a year or maybe two. The pictures that I have are of the four units in the food lab. The first one is just the temporary unit and what it looks like. It looks quite attractive actually except for the front panel. The second picture shows you what the top cabinets look like where the material is just peeling off. The third picture is another one of the food lab areas, just the front panels of these doors. They were supposed to have been polyurethaned after the

incident, but it looks like a very old unit. The fourth unit, and I took a picture of the sink of one of the units and it shows rotted wood and a very interesting electrical wire. The fifth picture has a temporary wall that was put up 10 years ago and this temporary wall has the lighting going from one room into another room. This was supposed to, I think, solve one of the problems. The last three pictures are of our storage rooms and our storage room is a converted laboratory. Two years ago, we finally capped a toilet. We were getting sewer gas so PBS capped that toilet. It is almost impossible to use and you can see in the last picture where all of our dryer, washer, all of our equipment, including our freezer, are all in one tiny area where the electrical wires are. That is the only place you can plug in and the dryer is in a very inconvenient place because the boy's laboratory is directly above it and the Mayor saw this when he visited West and whenever there is an overrun of a urinal, it comes down onto the dryer and two weeks ago that was finally fixed, but this has been a problem. We would like to get the equipment away from the boy's urinal and we can't do that. Basically, the unseen problems are not enough circuits. If you have more than two microwaves going at once you blow a circuit and the teacher has to go and take care of it. Plumbing is inadequate and lastly it has to hit student and staff morale. If you are going in there for eight periods a day, these kids, many of them want to go into the field of foods and they work in these terrible conditions. It must affect their morale and of course the staff morale. I ask you to please look at the pictures and support renovation of that area. Thank you very much.

Richard Maynard, 477 Medford Street, Manchester, NH stated I am a teacher and coordinator at Manchester High School West for 24 years. I am here tonight to speak on behalf of the topic of the restoration of the auditorium at West High School. The existing building, built in 1922 with our wonderful auditorium is now in a dire need of repair and having been at West for 24 years I have seen it deteriorate to just a terrible point of disgrace, not only to the school and our community, and I should probably remind the City Fathers that on the west side, the West High School auditorium is our only municipal meeting place and while we do have wonderful musicals and presentations by our theater program, there are many times that the community does entertain various seminars and open hearings that address the needs of the City of Manchester and I think it is a disgrace to have people come in, like tomorrow we are having an opera presentation, the NH League is coming in, to have them come into our facility to put on a professional presentation in our current state. I am here tonight to just allow you to know that we would like you to recognize our problem and our plight and there will be some people to follow me to give you a little more detail on our situation.

Tim Benner, 1465 Hooksett Road, Manchester, NH stated I am an English teacher at Manchester High School West. I am also the drama director and advisor of Theater Nights, the drama company at Manchester High School West and I, too, would like to speak about requesting funding for the West High auditorium restoration project. Mr. Maynard is a specialist in music and choral and I am theater. Theater Nights is the best drama company in the City of Manchester. We have proved that two years in a row by being the only representative of Manchester at the NHETG State Competition being held this year. We are going again. We just won. That auditorium is the home of the best drama company in Manchester. Our audiences

also prove that we are the best. Not just the audiences of the friends and family of the performers, but independent people who have no affiliation with West High School whatsoever. People that are in other community and regional theater groups who come and comment on our professionalism and our quality. We give free performances to the senior citizens of Manchester and they also tell us how good we are and how good of a company we have but every single person who has ever uttered a word about the quality of the performances on our stage has also noted the deplorable conditions of that auditorium. The paint chipping, the seats falling out, the floor buckling and just today I have come here from rehearsal. We are doing Fiddler on the Roof and my choreographer, who is a student at Manchester West, was giving instructions to the cast and in the middle of her instructions something hit the floor at her feet on the stage. Now any of you who have seen that facility know what I am talking about and on the floor next to her feet was this piece of plaster that fell out of the ceiling. Now this is a tiny piece of plaster. It used to be just chips of paint falling but now we are getting pieces of plaster. I think this is an outstanding example of the need of the West High auditorium to be restored to the glory and glamour that it could be. It is time for that facility to match the excellent quality of entertainment that is being presented in our school. Thank you for your time.

Mike Adams, Manchester, NH stated I am the coordinator of bands at West High School and am kind of completing the trifector here of discussing the auditorium. Something that Mr. Maynard touched on I would like to reemphasize. When we first started talking about the auditorium restoration last year during our 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the building, many stories came to light about how the building before there were permanent seats in the auditorium was used for every imaginable function for the residents of the west side and the students at the school; proms, graduations, dances, occasional meetings of the BMA and anything of importance that happened on the west side happened in that room and it is a wonderful room despite plaster falling. It is that plaster that makes it a wonderful room. It is the fact that it is 75-year-old architecture and thought that was put into that room. My belief is that that room should be the cultural and the educational center of West High School and of the west side and it very simply could be again if we, the adults, help out our students and make that room a place that they can be proud of. I, myself, am a graduate of Central High School and when I got hired to teach back here in Manchester in 1993 the first thing I did was go back to the Practical Arts Auditorium because that is where the best moments of my high school education happened. As the band director at Manchester West, we put all of our performances on in that auditorium despite the fact that our band doesn't really fit on the stage there but I am determined to do it there because I want the best times for my students to be in that auditorium, performing in that auditorium so that hopefully 10 or 15 years from now they will come back, be able to visit that room and have some really nice memories of some performances. I am not really sure that that would happen at this point because of the physical conditions in the room. We try really hard to make beautiful music but when you look at the deteriorating walls from a roof leak and those sort of things it is hard sometimes to get around those things. We, as the adults in the community, can certainly help that and make it a place that they can be proud of and come back to again and again. Thank you very much for your time.

Bob Bersak, Bedford, NH stated I work at 1000 Elm Street at PSNH. What I would like to do is have you use your imagination for a second here. I am sure we have all traveled around and had the opportunity to perhaps go to a town where we wound up at a hotel that we really didn't want to be at. You know the one I am talking about, the one where the mattress is already form fitting because the springs have sprung. The sheets are torn and they are stained and you think well maybe I am not going to sleep here after all and you go into the bathroom and find that there is mold inside there. You find there is a bare lightbulb hanging from the ceiling and the paint is chipped and hanging off the ceiling inside the bathroom. So you say I will go back out and turn on the TV. It doesn't work. It doesn't make any difference because you wouldn't be able to hear it anyway. The acoustics are so bad that all you can hear is the conversation next door and whatever other activities are going on in that room. So finally you realize that it is about 100 degrees inside there because the heat won't go off so you open up the windows, which are, duct tapped because the windows are broken. What I am describing isn't just a motel room; it is the auditorium at West High School. It is Manchester's version of the Bates Motel is where Mr. Adams and Mr. Benner have to educate our kids and where we have to go to watch the productions they put on. I have one son who is going to speak next who recently graduated. He spent four years there. My daughter is a sophomore. Every year, the conditions are getting worse and worse. These kids put in thousands of hours and they put on great shows for all of us, for the seniors and for visitors. We have politicians of national stature that come and address the kids at West and what they see is a deplorable situation. I urge you to try and do what you can to provide funds to fix the problems over at the West High School auditorium. Thank you.

Daniel Bersak, Manchester, NH stated I am a recent graduate of West High School. I graduated last year. Right now, I am going to MIT where I am the President and Director of the MIT Tech Jazz Singers. I spent four incredible years in Mr. Maynard's select choir. My junior year of high school we traveled to Germany, Austria and France and performed for all kinds of audiences and had a wonderful time. I would just like to say how the room in which you hold any kind of a function whether it is performance, whether it is a concert, whether it is anything, has an incredible effect on the outcome of that performance. When we traveled to Germany, we performed in an absolutely amazing auditorium in Munich and that auditorium was probably one of the reasons why we gave an incredible concert. We came back off of a wonderful high, an incredible trip and we came back to the West High auditorium and our hearts sank. It was really a disappointment to have sung in one of the most amazing architectural, wonderful theaters in the world and you come back to West High School where the paint is peeling, where everything is falling apart, where the floor is buckled, where you can't step on certain parts of the stage because it creaks and cracks. It is impossible to do Fiddler on the Roof when the roof is falling down on the fiddler. I mean it is just absolutely amazing. At MIT, I conduct the Tech Jazz Singers and every so often we get to perform in the Cresbie Auditorium. This is an auditorium designed by the architect Iampay. It is internationally renowned. That auditorium has such an affect on our music. It is so different when we go into one of the crummy rehearsal rooms at MIT back in building whatever and perform. When we are out there on the stage in a well lit, very acoustically perfect auditorium, it is just absolutely amazing. Even though I have

graduated, it is important to me that West High School remains the beacon of an incredible music and arts program to NH and to the entire Northeast. Thank you.

Kim Valdez, 27 Shaw Drive, Bedford, NH stated I work out of Child & Family Services at 99 Hanover Street. I hold the position there as the Childcare Coordinator, which receives funding from the CIP. I work closely with local childcare providers, community agencies and City departments on issues related to the development and improvement of childcare resources within the City. Childcare is a necessity for families living and working in Manchester. In order for families to be able to go to work, they need to have someone take care of their children. With the implementation of the Welfare Reform Program, childcare has become recognized as one of the essential services parents need if they are able to make the transition from dependency and government assistance to one of independence and self-sufficiency. Locating childcare is not just a problem for low-income families. Many parents in Manchester are finding that childcare resources are really limited, especially for infants, toddlers and school-aged children. Currently there are well over 10,000 children under the age of 13 in the City needing care that cannot be served in licensed programs due to the lack of space. When parents don't have access to safe, reliable and affordable care situations, they are often forced to quit their jobs or miss work. It has been estimated that NH employers lose between \$12 and \$24 million in revenue annually due to childcare related absences by their employees. As a childcare coordinator, I assist parents in locating and selecting care. I offer monthly support groups for school aged and center based providers in which funding sources, programming issues and current public policy trends are discussed. I also work closely with individuals wishing to start new programs and received a small two-year grant to work closely with non-licensed childcare providers who serve primarily TANIF families. I perform periodic childcare needs assessments and provide relevant childcare data to local government, social service agencies, and childcare programs that are looking to develop new and expanded childcare services. I ask for your continued support for this position. Thank you.

Karen Lesmerises, 153 Buck Street, Pembroke, NH stated I have worked for the VNA in Manchester for the past 16 and a half years. I am speaking in support of the VNA Childcare Center. For the past six years, the Childcare Center has donated floor space for the program I work with, the VNA Parent/Baby Adventure Program. It is a group parenting education program, which exists to prevent child abuse and neglect. Each day we work very closely with many other City programs that receive CIP funds and who work very hard to serve the citizens of Manchester. I thank you so much for all of your support in the past and I have a letter to submit to the Board.

Gale Starr, Windham, NH stated I represent Child & Family Services and am here tonight for the runaway and homeless youth program. For the past several years we have received City funding which has allowed us to access Federal funding under the runaway and homeless youth legislation. It is a wonderful investment for us and for the City because for every local dollar we can access ten Federal dollars. Through that, we have serviced over 400 youth and their families offering them crisis intervention, prevention services, after care services, individual and group

counseling, we also have a host home program which provides temporary emergency shelter. We are very grateful for the continued support and we really hope that it continues. Thank you very much.

Don Clay, 93 Prospect Street, Manchester, NH stated I am the General Manager for the Transit Authority. I am here to speak a little bit about our request for funding this year in the CIP. We presently have four projects that we would like to complete. We have funding for \$640,000. We would like to do \$640,000 worth of projects. There are \$512,000 or 80% of this that can be from Federal funds with a \$128,000 request from CIP or 20% of the total projects. The four projects are first we want to replace three of our elderly handicapped vans. This money comes from CMAQ Congested Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program. We had asked for the three vans. This grant is going to run out on September 30, 1999 so any portion of this money that is not spent by then is lost. We would like to see all three vans, if possible, by this summer. We would also ask for a new roof. Our roof is leaking pretty bad in the old section of the building. Again, we ask for \$40,000 and this was recommended and we thank you for that. Replacement of our lifts in the garage for vehicle maintenance. These lifts are 25 years old. They have seen a lot of wear. They have had some major repairs back about 12 or 13 years ago. We have asked for \$35,000 from the City with a grant of \$140,000 to try to repair or replace these lifts. Our biggest concern at the moment with the lifts is one of safety for both our employees and the environment. Almost all of the plumbing runs under the concrete slab. Right now we have a leak that we cannot find so of course our fears are that we have something going on underneath the concrete and we need to rectify this if possible. The last request was for an update of our computer system. We are asking for \$8,000. We have \$35,000 of Federal funds. We are not Y2K compliant, but this would bring us into compliance by year's end. It is a needed item that we have. It is not modest, but it is a good 80%/20% match and it is good for the City and for the Transit Authority. Also, Mr. Mayor, under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, also known as T21, there is an opportunity for us to use some of our capital monies for operating subsidies so because of that we will submit to you tomorrow an amendment to what we have asked for and that will be a reduction of somewhere between \$248,000 to the City. With that, hopefully we can get in portions of our CIP money that was taken away restored. Anything that you can do for us, we would appreciate. Thank you.

Jill Guiles, Bedford, NH stated I am representing the Homemaker Program from Child & Family Services and asking you for your continued support. Our program provides light housekeeping, laundry, and grocery shopping for the elderly and disabled in this community. Some of our clients need very, very little. Some of them only need every other week. Some of them need more services, maybe five times a week but they need that little so much. Just imagine after six months of nobody being there to clean our their room and get the groceries and their daughter comes in and finds that everything is covered with dust and there is moldy food in the refrigerator and then they decide to put Mom in a nursing home. We keep so many people out of a nursing home and prevent hospital stays. I would just like to share one little story that we have of a lady who lived in inner city Manchester surrounded by buildings that you wouldn't even believe. At one time it had been a farmhouse. She lived there until she was 87 years old

and she had become incontinent and asked us to come and help her do her grocery shopping because she could no longer go to the grocery store. We did that for maybe five or six years just doing her grocery shopping for her and as her condition deteriorated, she wanted to stay in her own home even though she had been offered housing and other places to stay because she had said that she had a stillborn baby and it was still buried in the backyard and she wanted to stay in the home and die with her baby. I just wanted to let you know that she died a couple of years ago at 101 years old in her own home and that is the kind of thing that the Homemaker Program does is keep people in their own homes. Thank you for your continued support.

Maureen Beauregard, Manchester, NH stated I am with Families in Transition at 106 Market Street here in Manchester. We provide housing and services to homeless women and children here in Manchester. I have something in writing for you to take with you and read over later tonight. I just want to say that Mary Sliney already spoke on many of the issues that I wanted to speak to, as did Louis Craig. We appreciate your past support and hope that you support us again in the upcoming year. Thank you.

Robert Baines, 70 Rosemont Avenue, Manchester, NH stated I am Principal of the Bates Motel. I am here to address several issues and urge funding from the Board of School Committee. The first thing I would like to talk about is the general rehabilitation of the Mackin Building, the original building at West. We have people that graduated from our school 60 or 70 years ago and come in and they like coming back in because it hasn't changed at all. The only thing that has changed is the removal of the permanent desk that used to be screwed to the floor. Other than that, it is exactly the same. It is time to upgrade the building. It is 77 years old now. The acoustics are horrible, the paint is falling. It is a mess and it resembles...it sort of reminds me of the comment the Mayor made the other day at City Hall that it used to look like a third world country. Come into some of our schools and especially an old building like the Mackin Building and we still resemble a third world country and you saw pictures of that today. Secondly, I want to talk about the bleachers in the gymnasium. The bleachers are over 40 years old. They are falling apart. They are a danger. It was in one of the reports that you received from Bill Burgess the other day. We have had numerous complaints from elderly people who are spectators at our events who are fearful of navigating those bleachers. We narrowly averted a catastrophe with the removal of the gym divider. It was another testimonial to the lack of proper maintenance of our public facilities. There hasn't been a plan for maintenance of public facilities and it is time to start addressing these things before someone is seriously hurt. I also urge your support of the Family Consumer Area. That is an area where we teach students about food preparation and where we have sewage back up. This is an area that the Health Department has condemned. Come look at it. If you are not embarrassed about it, you don't live in our City. This entire building is a disgrace to the City. I would like to ask for support also for the rehabilitation of the theater. We are probably the only public school that raises hundreds of thousands of dollars to repair our school facility. This occurs a lot in private schools, but we are trying to raise \$175,000 for a fitness center while the City built a fitness center at another school. We are trying to raise money to restore an auditorium where it should be the responsibility of the City. We are the school that raises all the money for restoration of

school grounds. We are the school that volunteered to paint every classroom in the building. It hadn't been painted in 30 years because the City didn't have a plan. I urge you to support the completion of the athletic complex. I was pleased to see that as a priority. It is something we need to get done and not string out over a long period of time to bring that kind of a first class facility to west Manchester and I urge the Board to support these projects. It is time to support them and lets develop a plan to maintain our public buildings perhaps in the same conditions we have treated our City Hall. Thank you.

Connie Roy, 14 Fox Run, Bedford, NH stated I am representing the Friends of Theater Nights. I am Co-President of Friends of theater Nights which is the parent support group for Theater Nights which is the student drama company at West High School. The West High School auditorium, except for the addition of the seating, looks almost like it did in 1922 when it was originally built. Very little attention or money or repairs have been made to the auditorium. As you heard tonight, student performers at West are outstanding. The chorus, the band, the jazz band, the classical band, the theater productions. Ask anybody who attends these performances. Many of our elderly citizens attend and enjoy the performances at West. Sadly, the auditorium is not entire handicapped accessible. Yes, somebody in a wheelchair can get in the door, but there aren't specifically designated areas for wheelchairs. They can sit either way in the front where they can't see or way in the back of the auditorium where they can't hear. A student in a wheelchair or a citizen in a wheelchair has no easy access to the stage from the auditorium. The auditorium also has lots of sound dead spots and these are minimal problems based on what you heard tonight with chunks of plaster falling out of the ceiling. Those are the safety issues, but there are also lots of sound dead spots throughout the auditorium. It needs acoustical treatment so that everyone in the audience can hear what is happening on the stage. Tom Wallis, an architect in Manchester, has volunteered his time to identify what needs to be done. I have his list of renovations that I will make available to you. The price tag is a little over \$200,000. We have already had \$25,000 from PBS earmarked for the painting of the auditorium. Parents are busy raising money for this project from alumnae, students, and parents of current students and local businesses. Ted Heberts for instance gave us \$500. Lots of their music students perform at West High School. Many citizens and businesses that support West in many ways, especially financially, are saying to us that they feel that this renovation project is primarily a City responsibility. They are happy to donate funds, but they think a good chunk of it needs to come from the City. We think the West Side of Manchester needs an auditorium that mirrors the talent that happens on stage. Please consider this on behalf of West High School and Manchester's West Side community. I also have a petition with over 200 names that I will make available as well. Thank you very much.

Warren Hazelton, 8 Sebbins Pond Drive, Bedford, NH stated I am one of the Co-Presidents of the Friends of Theater Nights group. The unfortunate thing about going near the end is that a lot of the things that I wanted to say have already been said. So, I ditto what they said, however, there are a couple of things I want to mention. One that the young man who graduated from West last year brought to my remembrance was that in 1973 I was able to represent the United States in a singing tour in Europe for a month representing the Honor Chorus and I know what it

was like singing in some of the great auditoriums, theaters and cathedrals in Europe. I am not asking for West High School's auditorium to look like one of those auditoriums, but I know what he is talking about when he said that he came from over there and it is so uplifting to sing in places like that, to hear the acoustics and then you come back to a place where the acoustics are terrible and the thing is falling apart. It reminded me of going back to my old high school a few years ago and seeing a play up in Maine and seeing how much that had fallen apart since I had graduated and that high school was only built in 1960, similar to Memorial, yet it surprised me at my first meeting back in September of the Friends of Theater Nights to find out that that since 1922, in 77 years, the only things that as far as I know have been done to this auditorium are the added seating and the extending of the stage. I think it is deplorable that it has been so long. Some of my favorite memories, in fact, a vast majority of my favorite memories of high school had to do with the auditorium of the high school I went to. Both in band and in chorus and also performing in plays and theatres. It brings back a lot of wonderful memories and I am sure that the kids that do perform in that auditorium do have great memories but I would like them to be proud of that auditorium so that when they go back they can be proud that they sang there or that they played there or performed a part. I am asking that the grand old lady that used to be the West High auditorium be restored to some of her former glory. Thank you for your time.

Muriel Dubois, 18 Wentworth Drive, Bedford, NH stated my children have been and are students at West High School and I am Vice President of Friends of Theater Nights and my job as Vice President is primarily to deal with writing grants. Since Friends of Theater Nights was organized a few years ago, we have received nearly \$8,000 in grants from the Bean & Hunt Foundations, the Von Webber Trust and others. We have also received over \$6,000 in local corporate donations. Both of these sums can be added to the amounts raised by our group's annual craft fair. We have also begun to campus West alumnae and they have been very generous so far in their donations. This is an ongoing thing. I share these figures with you in order to show you that we have, from the beginning, sought many different financial resources. Those that have helped us financially have done so because we were working to purchase better lighting and sound equipment for the West Drama Company. They were willing to help us build a costume and prop storage room, however, none of the corporate or private donors will fund things like roof repairs for a building that belongs to the City and lets face it, painting that lovely old theater won't be worth anything if certain repairs aren't done first. Painting that building won't help the acoustics or give us enough safe electric outlets to work with. All of these outside donors see these needs as things that should be addressed by the City of Manchester. They have indicated as much to me when I have approached them for funding. We have a fine Theater Company. They are becoming known outside of the community as well as within. We are asking you to help us reach our goal of refurbishing the auditorium and also to consider what liabilities are now becoming evident by the falling paint chips and the broken chairs before anybody has to deal with that on a more horrible basis. Thank you very much.

Kathy Scully, 1530 Union Street, Manchester, NH stated I am here as Executive Director of the YWCA in Manchester. We operate Emily's Place, a shelter for battered women and their children. We have, in the past, received money from the CIP and we hope that you will consider our request again this year. As Mary Sliney and Louis Craig said, we are also members of the Manchester continuum of care and hope that the City will continue to support services for homeless families.

Carolyn Somma, Manchester, NH stated ladies and gentlemen, as you look around and up at this beautiful ceiling, what pride and joy you must have because I am telling you this is the first time I have walked into this building and I am proud. It is absolutely beautiful. Now I want you to look right there because the most beautiful carving is right in that area, but at Manchester High School West I have the joy of walking into the most beautiful room and in my imagination it continues to be the most beautiful room and I tell my students that some day one of you is going to become so famous and so wealthy that I am going to go to you and ask you to help us restore this beautiful room to its great glory because if you ever have taken a walk in West High auditorium, it is gorgeous and it could be beautifully redone. I ask you to look at what you can do with the CIP money, whatever you can. Hopefully, it will be a good amount. I get a little nervous when I hear about some of our sister schools putting in a fitness center and they got the money from you and here we are rushing around and people are working so hard to raise money. We need to ask you for a little help. Just come to West High. Come to some of our productions. If you haven't already done so, look up at that ceiling. It is exquisite and we would like it to be so. Please do take a look. I am very proud to be in this City and look here and we could have that at West High School as well. Thank you very much.

Shirley Lemire, 42 B Street, Manchester, NH stated I just wanted to say something in support of West High auditorium and that is that they are great in giving to the senior citizens the free productions that they put on and I was appalled at the ceiling when I was there the other week. I graduated in 1946 and it looked like nothing had been done since then. I hope you do something soon.

Dave Cloutier, 175 Cypress Street, Manchester, NH stated I have three kids and we live about 100 feet from the front of Prouts Park and for the past six years my kids and I, you know, I unfortunately had to tell them that we can't go to the park or use it. There are a couple of hundred families around the park that have to tell their kids the same story. There are tons of kids around there and they can't use the park. Unfortunately, it is not just a matter of...it is a few problems but the risk of going down to the park, the kids risk serious injury due to the glass. That is one of the biggest problems but I have made a short list highlighting some of the problems with the park. Number one, it has basketball courts as Mike O'Neil said originally was a great idea 15 years ago but nowadays the people that go to Prouts Park aren't from the area or even from the City. After dark there are a lot of people there. They are driving BMW's from Lowell and Lawrence and doing what they do. There is a lot of drinking and that is the biggest problem we have with the park; broken glass with the activities that happen after hours. Half the

park is completely unusable. You can't even walk down there and if any of you would like to take a walk down there, just take a peek. You can't walk down because it is too dangerous. You will get your feet cut. Racing cars up and down the streets. Our kids can't ride their bikes in the street. We kind of have to stand guard because the cars fly down there at 30 MPH, 40 MPH, or 50 MPH and it is only a block long. The neighborhood kids and the adults can't use the park at all because of the people that now go there. Teenagers that live in the area can't go to the park because they are threatened. We can't go to the park either because we are physically threatened and it is too dangerous. The play area, if we ever wanted to go to the park, has broken equipment with sharp edges that are very dangerous. The seating is broken and dangerous. If you go to watch a good game, you are more than likely to come back with a couple of slivers from sitting down someplace and that is not too pleasant. It is heavily used in the spring, summer and fall. There is no water available at the field. Mike O'Neil provides water for all the sports teams. That is kind of a given. The sprinkler system, I never knew they had one because I have never seen it turned on. For a very small amount of money, they can hook up the existing system to the electricity on the street to get it working. That would do so much to make the park livable and make it green again. It is a dust bowl by the time July rolls around and we get that in our houses. They can't use the park because it is just trashed. Some simple solutions. Take down the basketball courts. That would eliminate the people coming in and hanging out there at night because they don't have anything to do. Put up some basic lighting so that when the police drive by they can see into the park where the courts are and go in if they see people drinking. If we get rid of the problem with the courts, the glass will be gone. In a nutshell, the park, for very little amount of money and effort that the residents around the park are more than willing to do, can really be a place that families can go and play again and we ask for your help to let us do that. We would be more than willing to help. We are just looking for a little help from you. Thanks very much.

Alderman Wihby stated we heard from people on the West High auditorium and I notice on our sheet we have the Practical Arts Auditorium but nowhere on there has anyone ever requested the West High auditorium. Can you explain why the School Board didn't request it? Do they want it done?

Mayor Wiczorek replied it wasn't their highest priority.

Alderman Wihby asked so they did request it. It is not on any of our sheets.

Mayor Wiczorek stated I don't remember if that was on the sheet. I know that we had a lot of things that I would look at to be a higher priority, but the Board of School Committee set their priorities.

Alderman Wihby stated I just want to understand how this process works. We have a list that you funded based on the priorities of the School Board? For instance, Practical Arts is on that list and we didn't fund that either but that was a top priority before the West High auditorium.

Mayor Wieczorek replied I don't remember if that was the number one priority. Do you remember, Bob?

Mr. MacKenzie stated the Practical Arts Auditorium actually didn't come in from the School Board. That was a request from PBS. There have been no requests either by the School or PBS for the auditorium improvements at West High School.

Alderman Thibault stated last July or August, the three West Side Aldermen met at West High School and we were promised by Dick Houle, then PBS Director, \$25,000 that he identified to give us. At the time, we were asked by the powers that be at West High School to just hang onto that money and not spend it right away. That \$25,000, I checked with Dick Houle just a week ago and that \$25,000 is still there for us to paint the auditorium at West High School. The only reason it hasn't been done or looked into is because the powers that be at West High School asked us to hold onto it.

Alderman Wihby stated we are hearing a number of \$150,000 and \$25,000 is there. Where is the other \$125,000 coming from? Is it something that Dick didn't think we needed?

Alderman Thibault replied I don't know but at the time because we were so upset, the three west side Aldermen had gone there to a show and we were so upset and disillusioned with seeing the thing that we asked Dick Houle and he guaranteed us \$25,000 to take care of it. We were going to come back and see if we could get a few dollars more in order to get it painted, but we were asked to hold off by the powers that be at West High School until they got something else going.

Alderman Wihby asked which is the request that we are hearing now from the people that are here.

Ms. Roy stated the Parent Support Group realized that painting wasn't going to do it because of the chunks of things falling from the ceiling so we asked Tom Wallace to come and take a look at it for us and tell us and that is when he identified the list and said if you really want to do this right, don't slap a paint job on this. You might want to take a more serious look at this because there are some more serious issues here so it really was generated with the parents and that is when the \$25,000 was set aside by PBS we were supposed to raise matching funds so we were really trying to raise \$50,000 and then we said wait a minute, is this going to be enough. We got Mr. Wallace involved and he made the list and that is where it all started.

Alderman Thibault replied I know, but we were never told about this.

Ms. Roy responded I sent you a letter about a month ago letting you know that we were working on this and we would have more information available at this hearing. We didn't want you to waste \$25,000 just slapping a paint job on it because it wouldn't have helped.

Alderman Wihby asked how much do you need.

Ms. Roy answered \$200,000 is what was identified. If you take out the \$25,000 that was already earmarked, it is \$175,000 but we are in the process of and I think Muriel noted that we have raised \$8,000 so far and we are still trying to raise more money.

Alderman Wihby asked how much do you think you will be able to raise.

Ms. Roy answered well the thing is that businesses have said to us...

Alderman Wihby interjected I mean can you raise the additional \$25,000 that you thought you could in the beginning.

Ms. Roy replied I think we can continue to try to raise the \$25,000 that we started with so \$150,000 would be a nice chunk.

Alderman Wihby asked, your Honor is that overstepping our bounds if we finance this without the School Board's okay. If we fund this, they can't spend the money on something else.

Mayor Wiczorek answered no, not on the CIP. Let's ask the Planning Director.

Mr. MacKenzie stated I would be cautious that the School Board does prioritize the projects. The Board and our staff have tried to be very careful to try and follow those priorities. They have to weigh a lot of requests from a lot of different schools and then they prioritize their requests. Ultimately, any improvements to a school do have to be approved by the School Board and is normally carried out by the Joint School Building Committee. I believe that there should be some additional communication with the School Board before the Board takes any action in allocating money.

Alderman Clancy stated the Safety Review Board inspected all of the stages in the City of Manchester last year, mainly because one of the outfits that uses the Practical Arts Auditorium said that they didn't want to bring the show back to Manchester that is held every May and we had some concerns so we had people come in and inspect the buildings and the stages in three high schools. It is still on the table as far as the Safety Review Board. They have a meeting this Thursday at 8 AM at 1850 Elm Street.

Alderman Thibault stated on the bleachers at West High School that was spoken about here tonight, as I understood with Dick Houle just a few weeks ago I spoke to him and he told me that they were the first ones to be replaced on the list right now. As far as I know, that is where that is at. The bleachers at West High School are the first ones to be replaced on the list. That is what Dick Houle told me no more than three weeks ago.

Alderman Wihby asked where are they on the list. Are they funded?

Alderman Thibault answered they have been complaining about those bleachers for a long time and I have been complaining to Dick Houle and he guaranteed me that they were the first ones. As a matter of fact, if I remember right, they were out to bid on them.

Mayor Wieczorek stated the budget that we have completed here on CIP, and obviously you are going to be getting the budget, everything that we dealt with was the priorities that we had and we have allocated all of the funds that there are.

Alderman Thibault stated there is some miscommunication here some place, your Honor. I spoke to Dick Houle because I felt that it was a safety hazard and something that had to be done or at least repaired immediately and he guaranteed me that they were put number one to be replaced. They were the first ones to be replaced and if I am not mistaken, they were put out to bid already.

Mr. MacKenzie replied I know there has been a conscious effort to review all three high schools in terms of the bleachers and I know there are issues at Central, at Memorial and at West. I am not sure, unless PBS had some money in their budget, where the funds were for those. I guess we would have to research that a little bit more.

Alderman Thibault stated that is what I was lead to believe.

Alderman Cashin asked, Bob, you said that PBS or anybody never approached you about the auditorium at West High School. Is that what you said?

Mr. MacKenzie answered it is not requested on either the PBS list or the school list.

Alderman Cashin asked how did we get the original \$25,000.

Mr. MacKenzie answered that came through as a special request when there was a matching situation. Typically, the Board would consider matching grants and it was suggested that West High alumnae and others could raise \$25,000 and there was available at the time in the SCIP Program an amount of contingency that could be used for that.

Alderman Cashin asked so there was a request made somewhere, right.

Mr. MacKenzie answered yes for that particular matching amount, yes.

Alderman Cashin stated I can't remember when we had the last inauguration at West High School but it was quite a few years ago. Even then, your Honor, I talked to Dick Houle about the conditions of the auditorium so to say that no requests were ever made, I don't know where the communication is here and I am not going to get involved in that but when you people wanted Memorial done or whatever we are always there and trying to help and you want downtown Manchester down and that is fine we want to help you. Elm Street, we think it is

great but now we are saying to you we need your help. West High School needs help. We can go back to Bob Shaw. I can remember when Bob Shaw was Mayor he wanted to close West High School. I hear people say well there are a lot of people living in Bedford that are sending their kids to West. That is fine, that is great. We are making money on that. That is not a problem and it shouldn't be a problem.

Mayor Wiczorek replied we are not making money on it.

Alderman Cashin responded we are. Your honor, we are getting a percentage above the cost that we should be and if we not, then we are doing something wrong because that is the way it was set up and anybody can correct me that wants to but I know that was the way it was set up. It is a fact. Your Honor, we need help and I know that some people say well this may be political on some people's part and maybe it is. I am not going to get involved in that either, but anybody that can walk into West High auditorium, come back to this Board and tell me that it doesn't deserve some attention, that is fine but if you will just take the time to go over and we talked about \$200,000. I am not sure what the number is but if Tom Wallace says it is \$200,000, I am sure it must be pretty close but all we are asking is that you keep an open mind and before we finalize this budget, please give it some serious consideration.

Alderman Clancy stated, Alderman Cashin, Central High School is in the same predicament and I am sure that Memorial is too because a lot of people having been using the Practical Arts Auditorium because of the condition of the stage.

Alderman Girard stated at the beginning of this meeting I asked if we could ask questions and you said no. While I am sympathetic to the debate that it here, this is a public hearing whose stated purpose has now come to a close. I don't think it is fair to those of us who had questions all along of many of those who presented information that may have been helpful and I am not critical of anyone for raising it. I think this is out of order, your Honor and in fairness to those of us who were not allowed to ask questions, I think this should come to an end.

Alderman Pariseau replied I agree with Alderman Girard.

Alderman Girard stated we have a CIP Committee process. We have a Finance Committee process. We have a process that these debates rightfully belong in through the Board of Aldermen and I don't want to deny anybody here the voice to do that because I am sympathetic to a lot of what is being said but this is a public hearing, your Honor, and there are those of us who weren't allowed to ask questions and it is time that this be brought to a close.

Alderman Cashin stated with all due respect, I didn't ask anybody any questions that gave testimony here but I certainly feel that we have a right amongst ourselves to ask questions and debate the issue.

Alderman Girard asked at a public hearing.

Alderman Cashin answered we have a right. If there are questions being raised, I didn't raise the first question, I believe Alderman Wihby did. What is wrong with that? If we can't debate within ourselves, then we really have a problem.

Mayor Wieczorek stated you are all going to have an opportunity because the budget is going to be in your lap a week from Wednesday.

Alderman Wihby stated there are a couple of issues that...my concern is I didn't ask questions on things that were on these notes but there are a couple of issues that came up that there is no paperwork on and how are we going to sit down tomorrow and fund it if we have no idea what it is costing. I think it is a legitimate question that I asked and I have another one, your Honor.

Mayor Wieczorek asked is it a legitimate question.

Alderman Wihby answered yes it is another legitimate question in order to find out. We heard about a food something or other. Does anybody know how much that is going to cost to fix at West?

Alderman Thibault stated well that is the Home Economic Room. I went down to look at that myself.

Aldermen Wihby asked how much are we talking.

Alderman Thibault stated I talked to Dick Houle about it also and he told me that it was scheduled to be refurbished. He didn't give me a date, though. I guess they did some work there last year that had to be done immediately but there was some work that had to be in progress and it never got done.

Alderman Wihby asked if we wanted to fund that tomorrow, your Honor, how would we know what the number is.

Mayor Wieczorek answered maybe Dick Houle or PBS has some information on it. This is not going to be a free for all. I want you to understand that.

Alderman O'Neil stated the debate that goes on here this evening, if it doesn't prove that we need some professional help with our public facilities, I don't think anything ever will. We need help with our building construction and our maintenance of them. We are going to sit here and spend probably close to \$7 million in FY2000 with no professional help to see these projects through. That is a lot of money, folks. We need to get some staffing to see these projects through so that we can get good answers. We have nobody, nobody overseeing our public facilities.

Mayor Wieczorek advised that all wishing to speak having been heard, the testimony presented would be taken under advisement and considered by 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 Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Shea, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk