

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

April 6, 1999

7:00 PM

Mayor Wieczorek called the meeting to order.

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

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll. There were twelve Aldermen present.

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

Absent: Aldermen Klock and Reiniger

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

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

Scott Laplante, Kristi Isabell, Katie Quint, (Re: "Makin It Happen" City-wide Youth Talent Show):

Ms. Isabell stated we're here representing Makin It Happen, we've will stick to two minutes, we've got an unusual format to do that in, so I'm going to hand this over to Katie Quint.

Ms. Quint sang: Look at me, I will never pass for a perfect bride or a perfect daughter. Can it be I'm not meant to play this part, now I see that if I were truly to be myself I would break my family's heart. Who is that girl I see staring straight back at me, why is my reflection someone I don't know. Somehow, I cannot hide what I am though I've tried, when will my reflection show who I am inside, when will my reflection show who I am inside....

Mr. Laplante stated I'm a volunteer with Makin It Happen. That was Katie Quint and she is one of 78 performers in the City-wide Youth Talent Show that will be featured on Saturday, May 8th from 12:00 to 9:00 PM at Veteran's Park, it's called Kaleidoscope '99. Kaleidoscope '99 is a non-competitive City-wide youth talent show created for and by Manchester youth. Over 35

kids in partnership with local arts agencies are collaborating to highlight Manchester youth talent. Kids between the ages of 11 and 18 who live or go to school in Manchester are eligible to participate. We have over a hundred performance art acts and visual art displays to share with the Manchester community like solo singing, dancing, musical arts, poetry reading and we even have the FIRST Robotics Team coming. We're expecting three thousand to four thousand people to attend this event.

Ms. Isabell stated that is just one of 31 on-going initiatives that Makin It Happen has going on in this City. We are the only organization in the City that devoting all of our assets and all of our time and resources to building assets in all Manchester youth. On the orange sheet that you have, on the flip side of it is a list of collaborators and funders. We've got some grant monies, some corporate funding and feel very supported by the community in bringing a first of its kind effort to the City. So, Scott's got a special invitation to you.

Mr. Laplante stated we're here to invite you to come out to the talent show on May 8th and we want you to play an active role in the day's festivities by manning information booths, announcing raffle prizes and helping with stage production or even sitting in the cheering section. Call Kristi if you're interested and thank you for giving us your time and we hope to see you on May 8th.

Mayor Wieczorek stated, Katie, you're a very talented young lady, very nice.

Lloyd G. Basinow, 503 Amherst Street, Manchester, NH (Re: Funding of Public Education), stated:

A few years ago in court action entitled "John McDonough vs. The City of Manchester" the court ruled that School employees are employees not of the municipality, but of the School District. The City of Manchester accepted the ruling and did not contest it. One can reasonably conclude, therefore, that an employer is the one who pays the bills. We may now take this conclusion one step further on the basis of the recent State Supreme Court decision relative to school funding. The Supreme Court by ruling that public education is the sole responsibility of the State it follows, all school employees are now employees of the State. This makes the State responsible for all teacher benefits and payments into their retirement fund, instead of the local taxpayers. Millions of dollars in special education costs are now fully the responsibility of the State. The ruling of the high court together with the sending out of ink slips throughout the State effectively terminates teacher contracts with individual school districts. All of this raises an interesting legal question: that is, do school districts have the legal power in the future to conclude binding contracts with State employees or must the State now assume all responsibility for educational contracts since it controls the money for education. Additionally, Manchester has a problem with public school accreditation for some of its schools. The State Supreme Court may have answered this question now that the State has the sole responsibility for funding and setting school standards effectively making school district employees wards of the State by court order. I would like to recommend to the Board of Alderman that a special committee should be appointed consisting equally of members from both the Board of Aldermen and the

Board of School Committee. This committee would be charged with making recommendations back to both boards for future actions regarding control and funding of Manchester educational system including any effect of the Supreme Court rulings on those sections of our City Charter applicable to the School District. We don't know what the State Legislature may or may not come in with. On your agenda tonight is a recommendation to the Board that it consider the only possible alternative to the State not acting in time so that local property taxes could constitutionally still be used to fund education. I would hate to see that just received and filed, I would like to see it go into a committee so that it will be available for further checking into to see if it might need to be applied in the future. Thank you very much.

Roberta Sargent, Joliette Street, Manchester, NH, (Re: WJD Softball Field), stated:

I reside on the west side of this City and I am the current President of the West Manchester Junior Deb Softball League. Our League consists of approximately 200 girls ages 6 to 16 to play slow pitch softball on the west side. This year marks our 26th year in existence and I come before you tonight to request some assistance, we need assistance. We are not asking the City to babysit us or to do everything for us, but we do need assistance in a couple of the areas that we don't have the equipment or the resources to obtain the equipment needed. As you can see from the booklets I passed out there are several annoying and costly items that have to be repaired again year-after-year such as lighting fixtures, replacing bulbs, plexiglass to hold in the fixtures at a cost of about \$400 each time we need to repair them. Every year we are faced with similar problems of repairing fences, fields, lights and cleaning up trash. Most of these items we can and do repair or replace year-after-year. What we need though is better security and help with the major league infield and warning track. The security part we are at our wits end trying to solve, but we could use some help in moving some large rocks that are there into position that would make it more difficult for the ATV's to get onto our field. The field problem we need assistance from the City is on the major field. We need the City to cut the infield and warning track and add some stone dust. We need this done and we need it done quickly in order to complete our season in a reasonable time. The activities of the ATV's and cars being on the fields gets worse every year. We've asked the City to block off two access areas for the past two or three years with no results. Each year we are faced with cleaning up trash that people dump there which range from paper to prophylactics. We try with some success at keeping the area free of debris, but it's a never ending battle. The practice fields at Parkside and Gossler Schools one of which were lost because of the expansion are strewn with paper, soda cans and broken glass. Each year we spend several hours a week cleaning. We know litter is not the responsibility of the City, but the point we are trying to make is that we are trying to work with the City and help where we can by cleaning and repairing what we have the ability to do. But, we still need help. Calls to our Aldermen on the west side have been brushed off as insignificant issues. They have bigger issues facing them. This is a very political answer which yields no results and benefits no one. In closing, I'd like to say thank you for allowing me the time to speak to you and hope we can get some cooperation in gaining the assistance we need. Thank you.

Clem Lemire, (Re: Traffic Problem), stated:

Honorable Mayor, Member of the Board. It's been four years and five days since I left your employment and I had promised not to bug you anymore and then come in and speak to you, but an incident happened to me in January, January 27th to be exact. I was driving down Cilley Road/South Beech and a big truck ran a red light and demolished my van, broke my shoulder and caused nerve problems. It's a good thing my wife wasn't in the van with me because she wouldn't be with me today. The problem is speeding and running red lights. Is there something that can be done about it. I'm certain the Police have an awful lot of work to do and I think it's an atmosphere that we should be able to create to get people to slow down a little bit. A mass public relations program would be very beneficial either from the manufacturer's whose workers rush to work every morning, but I really have not perfect answer for it. It is there and I'm certain that all of you gentlemen have...especially after you get hit once you're so cautious that you see this going around all over the City and I know probably that there is not much you can do about it...whether you can lower the speed limited by five miles an hour; that yellow light is supposed to be a "slow down" light and it's been a "speed up" light and I guess that's the problem that occurred to me. Again, I don't know with all of your problems and everything that there's much you can do about it and I hope that somebody would grab onto it and make that as a platform so that in the future we could cut down on some of these accidents and I know it happens because the other day, just to bring it up in closing, at a restaurant a girl was talking to her friends and she says I was driving down Maple Street the other day and I saw a car passing me on the right-hand side and the speeding and as she approached me with a girl who had her cell phone on her shoulder and then she was up to the rear vision mirror putting her eyebrows on and she said she passed me and swerved again and she said she scared me so darn much that I drop my contact in my cup of coffee. So, you can see that it's all over and I would like something done, if at all possible and I would be very happy if there's committee's to work on to come back and help to do something about it. Thank you very much for listening to me.

Murray Onigman, (Re: Civic Center), stated:

Your Honor, I was here two months ago and a lot of people said the mike had turned off and they didn't hear what I said. I'm hear about the tax free building that you're thinking about and passed over the judgment over the rest of us here in the City in this form. Yet, a non-binding referendum and on that non-binding referendum the losing vote was 12,000. In the City of Manchester, all twelve Aldermen total vote is not 12,000 and they won, just sitting here. But, the losing vote was 12,000. You do realize that on your non-binding referendum you have gone ahead with a 50/50 split of the City. Ex-Mayor John Mongan and I agree. You have not looked into the ramifications of a facility of this type and you are bound up with a corporation since 1929 Ogden a \$3.5 billion corporation with 30,000 employees who have been around for a long time and saying "tax-free". You're not going to send out a property tax. I would like to add because of the limit of time, I would like to tell you more about it but I was the first Director of Advertising at Boston Garden in 1975 when the Jacob brothers took over and Sports Service. Walter Brown lost Boston Garden and was in trouble because he owed the City of Boston five years of property taxes, but you're going to put this up tax-free. A \$50 to \$60 million building,

the most expensive non-property tax building in the City on a gamble that you are going to get 200 events a year on which tickets of those events, the debt service has to be \$8.00 a ticket. As former Executive Vice President of the Manchester Yankees in this town, many years ago, we couldn't sell 60 season tickets for \$2.00 a seat to the people of the City of Manchester to watch major league baseball double A Yankee teams with a lot of good players like Ronnie Blumberg and others. My point is reconsider, it's time to reconsider. Thank you, your Honor.

Steve Vaillancourt, 161 Faith Lane, Manchester, NH, (Re: Claremont Solution), stated:

I'm State Representative from Ward 8 and Chairman of the Manchester Delegation. The good news is I am not here to talk about the Civic Center, the best news is I'm not here to sing. The thing I am here to talk about is the Claremont decision and what's going on in Concord. I felt somewhat of an obligation to brief you as to what's happened since the April 1st deadline. I left Concord about an hour and 40 minutes ago and I believe there were meetings behind closed doors between the Speaker and the Democratic Leader of the House to see what they could do to reach an agreement. I think we have to realize, first of all, that the sky is not falling, our schools are not about to close and hopefully we're not about to get to the point where tax bills will not be able to go out on time. The House is scheduled to meet next Wednesday, right now, as it turns out. As I understand it, there is going to be an effort to bring a new bill in this Thursday morning to the Finance Committee. This will be an amendment to one of the finance bills as we work in the House you can't just bring a new bill in, so they're going to amend what turns out to be a bill that you'll be very interested in. It's the bill that gives us authority to raise the Rooms & Meals Tax rate for the next two years again. As you know, the Rooms & Meals Tax at 8% is only temporary, we have to get renewed authority to raise that plus the Telecommunications Tax, plus the Real Estate Transfer Tax every two years. So, they're going to attach the new Claremont bill onto that and bring it in this Thursday. Neil Kirk the Chairman of Finance has told of us on Division IV which deal with Claremont that we should be prepared to work all weekend to try to refine that, if necessary. The reason we did not come to a resolution last weekend, while there are many, we could go through them here but I think we should look to the future, but I think what we have done is reach some common ground. The Speaker has agreed to come up into the \$825 million range for adequacy, the Senate has agreed to come down to that number. I think we have pretty much universal agreement that half of that can be arrived at with a State-wide Property Tax in the \$6.00 range. Although nothing is really dead, completely, I believe the Income Tax is probably dead, I believe the gambling component is probably out of it. So, what we're looking at now are three other possibilities. I should also say that I believe doing nothing is dead if there was anybody that really believed that. One of the possibilities is a Consumption or Sales Tax which is not getting the attention right now. What is getting the attention now is a package of plans that could get us the \$400 million we would need combining with the \$100 million we already spend on education and the \$400 million from the State-wide Property Tax to get us into the \$800-900 million range. I've handed out to you four sheets that will give you an idea of what direction we're going. One sheet is what the Republican Speaker sent to House Republicans which is a menu of various choices. On the back of that is something that Peter Burling has floated to House Democrats which is his plan to raise around \$880 million or at least to get a plan beyond the House that could then go to a Committee of Conference with

the Senate. The other handout I gave you is just basically what each of the particular components of a tax might raise...on the bottom of that is a proposal and this shows how everybody is putting things out these days...of a house member, a back bencher so to speak on finance what he's come up with, I don't think that has the answer and the other thing is the Senate plan you probably heard so much about which was passed by the Senate and defeated by the House last week. I just give this to you to give an idea of what's going on. It looks like what we'll have is some kind of combination and again I wish to express my sorrow that this did not get passed last week. What we had, I think, were the people that wanted an Income Tax so desperately digging their heels, people that wanted to do nothing digging in their heels and everybody unwilling to compromise and tempers flaring to the point where this is kind of a cool down week, a week when things are done behind closed doors. But, hopefully we can come back next week, pass something in the House on Wednesday, let it go onto a Committee of Conference and get this thing wrapped up in two weeks. No guarantees, but I think we're heading in the direction where some kind of compromise is out there. Regarding what a previous speaker said tonight about what the court said, I totally disagree but I won't go into that. Thank you very much.

On motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Thibault, it was voted to take all comments under advisement, and further to receive and file any written documentation presentation.

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

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk