

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

May 4, 1999

**7:00 PM
Aldermanic Chambers
City Hall (3rd Floor)**

Chairman of the Board Wihby called the meeting to order.

Chairman Wihby 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 fourteen Aldermen present.

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

Chairman Wihby 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 to the Chair.

Chairman Wihby 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.

Leona Dykstra, 21 Tennyson Drive, Manchester, in Ward 2 stated:

I have not spoken before this illustrious group, it has been 10 years and I do not come to these meetings to speak on everything that I know. It is very difficult for the job you do and I understand, I have been there. But when I read the paper and it has to do with the taxes and I was really kind of upset when I heard that we were going to have a thirty-two million-dollar Claremont windfall and the taxbill would fall by twenty-five percent. Then found out that there is going to be increases we are only going to get like seven and one half percent. It really disturbed me to the point that I did call the Mayor's Office. He was not there, but I did leave a message to tell him that I was very disappointed and felt that I thought that Claremont decision was going to give tax relief and take care of education. I certainly do support education. When you are going to give us two dollars and forty-four cents out of eight-thirty-two, I do not really consider that tax relief. When I have to read the paper, run to the pharmacy and renew by blood pressure prescription and buy a dozen of antacid, I do not consider that relief either. So I am really concerned, I feel very that it is a very serious matter because we really have not had that much tax relief. If you are going to reduce the taxes by two dollars and forty-four cents,

certainly that is a reduction in taxes. So is a quarter, but I do not consider it tax relief unless you make a major reduction in taxes. Why don't you, the Board of Aldermen, and I know you have to work on it, and the paper mentioned that you are going to cut and I really know that you will probably try to do that for us. And I really feel that if we get the six-dollar break and you guys keep the two dollars that that would be tax relief. And I think that is something we all could use. There is a lot of elderly people in here that cannot pay their taxes. They have had their homes all their lives, they had a good job, but now we get old. I mean, I have a mother eight-nine, we are all going to be getting there. I mean, we don't want to end up owning their property, we want to give them some tax relief. And I think it is important that we think of those people, people like myself, single that has one salary coming in. Not everybody makes, say five thousand a year, no, makes sixty, seventy, eighty or a hundred thousand dollars a year. You know, and they cannot afford their taxes. So I am just hoping that you kind of look at this. We read in the paper that you were going to rewrite the budget and I got a kick out of the fact that you were not going to spend anymore. Well I hope not. I hope that you do rewrite the budget and I hope that you do lower the taxes. There are a lot of people out there that are counting on you. I think that we have a lot of compassion to people on this Board, and I think that they will think twice probably before they do what they plan to be doing now. I know we are not going to get the money right now, it might not happen until December, but you know, we would like a little more tax relief than what you are offering and I know it is a tough decision and even if we just get it this year. And even if it is in December because if the Constitutional Amendment comes on board and the voters overturn that, there will not be a windfall. This is your one opportunity that you have to do a favor to do something good for the citizens of Manchester to lower their taxes, give them some relief because we have been pretty good. I have never been here before to speak against the taxes. I have paid my taxes, but I know you are going to work hard and I applaud you now and wish you good luck in the budget process and hope you take what I have said into consideration. I thank you for your time.

Murray Onigman, 324 Walnut Street, in Ward 2 stated:

When I was at the last meeting we discussed the Civic Center. I am going to discuss a little bit of what I said, but what I did say was reconsider. You had a non-binding proposition. Non-binding proposition and you had your Mayor voted in by twelve thousand, his opponent seventy-five hundred votes, but you also had twelve thousand something and this was a negative vote. They said in that election, no Center, twelve thousand plus. I wonder why the extra four thousand showed up. It was not a vote for the Mayor, it was to vote against the Civic Center and Elm Street was loaded with signs particularly the Chamber of Commerce building. Vote yes, Vote yes, Vote yes. All the guys on the street thought they would do big business with that mausoleum that is coming in. Well let's stop and think for a minute, there is no retail business that was ever down near Boston Garden, I worked there. And there is no retail business down in Kenmore Square because of Fenway Park. I worked there also. So what I am saying is it's easy to raise your hand as an Alderman and say motion to reconsider, that is all I ask you to do. Have it seconded and let's get some facts. I brought out the fact that the debt service was going to be between eight and ten dollars per ticket based upon two hundred events a year and I am saying that those events at today's prices will be more than twenty-five dollars a ticket. This is not a

town that could not pay a buck and a half to have a Yankee team up at Gill Stadium. A double A Yankee team. And they never paid that. You have got to understand that there is a lot of research that has to go on into where and what it is. You are ending up at sixty million dollars to build it. It has got to be a hundred million dollars taking all our rooms and meals taxes for thirty years in the future with no chance of lowering taxes like the previous speaker was talking about. With those rooms and meals tax revenue. Reconsider and also it is tax-free. And I said when I was here last month, that Walter Brown lost the Boston Garden because he owed the City of Boston property tax, but nobody is ever going to get a property tax from this new building for sixty million dollars. That will be largest public priced building in the State and you are letting them come in tax-free, no risk to the...and just now the New England Patriots by Mr. Finneran who said in the paper this week I will not give public funds for private sports. And what has happened, Connecticut got knocked out of their three-hundred and seventy-five million dollar bid and Bobby Kraft is coming up with seventy million dollars of private money, his own. And he is going to put the Patriots...another thing, then I am through for today is that the usage of the terminology minor league hockey is misused. The Boston Bruins' team is where it is at. You have had no hockey team show up like you did the Yankee team shows up, like you had the Manchester Blackhawks show up. They are all gone, bankrupt both of them. You had nobody up to this point come and say I will bring you a hockey team. But do not use the word minor league, not an official team you are ever going to get in Manchester, New Hampshire. Guarantee you. And you show no scrub team even interested in coming here. If you want to address the sixty million plus the hundred million, at thirty dollars a thousand, that is our tax rate, based on sixty million, that is around fifteen to eighteen million dollars a year tax bill over the next thirty years, that is a half a billion dollars. Never billed to anybody, risk being taken by us, the taxpayers. That is a big risk for us to end up with a white elephant. I am saying reconsider, raise your hand, Motion to Reconsider, get it seconded, have a discussion and decide to get some hard facts. Do not go on trips and look at other buildings, that is not hard facts. Hard facts cost and result. Thank you Your Honor. One other thing before I leave, I did go to two of your public meetings and if you were influenced by the public meetings for the Civic Center, fifty percent of the time they were from Candia, Derry, Auburn, they were not us the taxpayer and we are the ones in the City of Manchester that is going to pay for it and they were not going to pay for it.

Thank you.

Diane Chartrand, 2594 Brown Avenue in Ward 8 stated:

I am here this evening representing the homeowners of Brown Ave. regarding a letter that we sent to you, the Brown Ave. Reconstruction Project. This subject should be appearing on tonight's Board Agenda as item number H. First of all, we are all for the Airport Expansion, we know all the good it is going to do for the city and for the state. We have lived on Brown Ave. for over fifteen years and at the time when we moved in, the traffic was pretty minimal, commuter traffic, morning and evening. Now however, since the Airport Expansion it is constant, all hours of the day. As homeowners, we all attended all the numerous meetings for the Airport Expansion plans and finally we were told that although we were not on the actual Airport Expansion plan that when Brown Ave. was going to be addressed that we would be

contacted and our homes would be bought out at the time. They gave us an estimate of seven to ten years that this would happen. However, in March we received a letter from the Highway Department telling us that Brown Ave. was being widened and that it was starting July 1st. This project, we found out, was the result of a traffic study done because of the Airport Expansion. The continuously increasing traffic on Brown Ave. they felt warranted widening the road to four lanes. This will make it, we believe, one of the only four lane residential streets in Manchester. Since the airport has expanded, we have had a corresponding increase in traffic accidents, noise and general speeding. Increasing the road in front of our homes to four lanes will put a virtual highway in our front yards and it will only bring about an increase in the intolerable conditions. The City Planning Department's mission statement promises all citizens a safe, healthy and livable environment. We do not believe that this can be achieved as the situation now stands and we would request that the Community Improvement Committee further study this issue. Thank you very much.

John Hudon, 3516 Brown Avenue, Manchester in Ward 8 stated:

We just found out that our home was supposed to be included in the Airport Property Acquisition program. We would like to relate to you just exactly how this farce of a program is actually operating. Enclosed, and we have copies for everyone, at least we hope we have enough for everyone, we have a copy from a company called O.R. Colan Associates on 1 Harvey Road. This is the company that is handling the Airport Acquisition process for the Manchester Airport. When we got this letter in February, we were pretty excited. We were finally going to be given the chance to find another house outside the adverse effects of the airport. But we found out soon that this program is not going to work the way they are claiming it is going to work for us. When you have a chance to look at the letter from O.R. Colan, I would like to draw your attention to the third and fourth paragraphs of the letter that states that all relevant market data will be analyzed to determine to fair market value of the subject properties. The fourth paragraph states that in addition to the fair market value, owner occupants may be eligible for certain relocation benefits above the fair market value which will enable to resident of the property to live in a similar, mind you, similar home outside the noise contours without added out-of-pocket costs, but they conveniently left out whose out-of-pocket costs they were saving. These statements could not be further from the truth. As I stated earlier, we live at 3516 Brown Ave., we own thirteen hundred and twenty square foot home on just under two-tenths of an acre which translates to fifty feet of frontage by one hundred and forty-five feet depth. So have a sizable lot. Our home is a seven room, three bedroom, one and a half bath, raised ranch, hardwood floors with a walk-out from a finished lower level to a backyard pool with a twenty by thirty brick patio. Unfortunately, the Airport Acquisition Program is not going to allow us to live in that kind of a home any longer. We have, with our buyer-broker, determined the approximate value of our home if it was located outside the realm of the Manchester Airport, which is what O.R. Colan's letter told us they were going to be looking for us. I will spare you the details of the numbers; you can look them up as you go along. On April 30th, this past Friday, we met with Pam and Linda at O.R. Colan's office and we were told that their appraisal of our home was one hundred thousand dollars. They showed us that their appraisal is determining that dollar amount upon examining information showed to us...I am

skipping around here. We realize that O.R. Colan, when they did their appraisals, did not use current market data. One of the homes that they showed us actually sold last summer, and anybody who has any interest in Real Estate would know that the market since last summer has gone haywire. They did not use even comparable homes to ours. They even used homes located in the sixty-five to seventy noise decibel contours to come up with an appraisal value for our home. This is an area we were specifically told we were excluded from looking into for terms of relocating. So they are actually using homes in the noise contour, which have already been devalued because of their proximity to the airport. These homes have been soundproofed, mind you, and we cannot buy them because of where they are. But yet they can use them to evaluate our home. These people in this office do not even know how to calculate gulag, which is the terminology that realtors use to determine living space. We actually gave them a little learning session in how that stuff is done. They are offering us homes pre-fabbed, modular homes, some of them on slabs, some of them have not yet to be built. Electric heat, wood stoves. One of the ones they offered us even has a coal burner in it. We are not going to accept this from the airport any longer. They do have an appeals process, which you will find in their letter, I cannot find it for you now but it has a built in airport win clause in it. Where even if they determine that their values are wrong, and they are going to increase the property values, they take it out of another fund of money that they are supposed to use the help us relocate. So, either way, no matter what they do as far as the funds are concerned, they are not going to give you anymore money. So, if this airport is planning on building the roads that is going to affect these people as well as ours, the access road, the airport entrance road, whatever they are planning on doing, they better plan on putting a little more effort into getting the people who are down there, either out of there or at least give us a chance to go someplace else. Right now, they are not doing it. We have lived in Manchester all of our lives, our families are here, are jobs are here, as a matter of fact I work there. I have been there since 1991, I was there before Mr. Testa arrived and hopefully until today if they find out who I am, I may not be there any longer, I don't know. But, all we are asking is for them to give us a similar home outside the realms of the airport. This airport is an economic dynamo, it is going to wonders for Manchester, it is going to do wonders for the State of New Hampshire. The only people this airport is hurting is the people who have lived there. We were there before the airport was and it looks like we are going to be there long afterwards. Those of us who own property there near the airport, like I said is suffering, our properties are suffering. We are going to band together, we are not taking it anymore. We count as a neighborhood in this city just as much as any other or I should say at least we used to. I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you tonight. And I would like to offer you a little analogy if I would, I would like to offer my apologies to the City of Boston and the Boston Red Sox before I mention them. How would you think the Red Sox would feel if the City of Boston finally approached them and said we are going to have to take Fenway Park but we are going to offer you a similar replacement so that you can play ball someplace else. Right before the Red Sox decide that they found a place to play ball, City of Boston comes up and says I am sorry you have it all wrong. We are not obligated to provide you a similar replacement; we are only going to offer you a functional replacement. So why don't you guys come up to Manchester, New Hampshire and play ball at Gill Stadium? The fact that they only have five thousand seats there and Fenway has thirty-five

is not our problem. All we care about is that it is a place to play baseball and that is all our obligation is to provide you. Thank you.

Alderman Shea asked Mr. Chairman if he could ask a question.

Chairman Wihby responds no we are running out of time, we have six minutes left and three more names.

Kathy Redmond of Makin' it Happen stated:

Thank you. On Friday, May 21st, the Making it Happen Coalition for Resilient Youth will host its second annual parent-child forum for middle school students and their parents. I have a schedule here of last year's forum that I would like to pass out. Some of you attended last year's forum and it was held at New Hampshire College and you saw first-hand how our coalition is working with Manchester's schools and families to build developmental assets in youth. In 1998, two hundred and thirty parents and students participated in this event. Seventy percent rated the workshops as very good or excellent. This year's workshops involve over four hundred students and parents in twenty interactive workshops designed to enhance communication, self-esteem and a sense of community among young people and their families. Students choose from workshops like coping with conflict and anger, how to talk to your parents, and am I too young for stress. Parents attend workshops such as understanding the early adolescent, helping a teen in transition, and building caring communities for our children. Additional workshops bring parents and students together to share their concerns and ideas. Making it Happen at Parkside is a project of the Coalition's family's team; it involves a full year of planning, scheduling, implementation and evaluation. Parents, student, teachers and guidance counselors all work together to ensure the success of this event. We have over ten community organizations represented in this effort. Making it Happen would like to extend an invitation to each of you to join us on Friday, May 21st at New Hampshire College from 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Now, I would like to introduce Katie Stone who attended last year's forum and she can tell you first-hand about her own experience with Making it Happen at Parkside. Thank you.

Katie Stone, 228 Maple Street, Manchester stated:

On Friday, May 29th, my seventh grade class went to New Hampshire College for Making it Happen Coalition for Resilient Youth. At 8:40 we signed in at the athletic complex. At 8:45 Jason Holder, who gave the keynote address, told us about what the day would involve. He had everybody get off the bleachers and pretend we were skiing, playing basketball and jump roping. Mr. Holder told us that he wanted to get everybody involved. His goal is one of the goals of Making it Happen involvement. At 9:25 we went to our first workshop. At 10:50 we went to our second workshop. Some of the workshops that we could have taken were how to get your parents to let you do things, volunteer opportunities and how to get involved in after-school activities. One workshop that I took was volunteer opportunities. In this workshop, we were given a bus schedule. The schedule was to help us choose where we wanted to volunteer if we needed public transportation. We were also given an employer request for child labor that is required for volunteers under eighteen. We got a junior high guide to after-school activities that had volunteer opportunities listed on some of the pages. We also got a list of volunteer rights

and responsibilities and a teen brochure. The brochure had volunteer opportunities for ages twelve to seventeen. We were given all the materials needed to go and volunteer. The workshop influenced me to go and volunteer at the Chandler Pre-School program over the Summer. Personally, I thought the Making it Happen day was very rewarding. All of my classmates were happy with what they got out of the day. Many students said they really enjoyed the workshop how to get your parents to do things. Some are even still talking about it now. Thank you.

Billy Dodd, 181 Mammoth Road, in Ward 6 stated:

It has been a couple of months since I have been down here. All of the information that I get concerning the City comes out of the Union Leader. So I am going to call what I am doing tonight a little thing on creativity and romance in the air. I stopped by a couple of months ago and got a copy of the City Charter. When you go through it, there is a couple of interesting things that I would like to point out tonight. In the pre-embled, one of the sentences in there states that we resolve ourselves and for our children that there will be a representative government which promotes the general welfare and stimulates the harmony and creativity among all its citizens. I would like to give you credit for being the most creativity of all the citizens. Creative in the way that you crafted the wording on your non-binding Civic Center question last November. Several weeks ago there was an article in the paper stated that you did a study about two years ago with regards to the naming rights and how much money it was worth regarding the Civic Center. And I believe at the time that the general election of last November that you had a pretty good idea of how the management contracts were going to be written and that Ogden Management was going to get the monies from the naming rights, the concessions and the parking. In other words, all the profits. You should have included those facts on the ballot question. I think you may have had a different outcome. But there's seems to be a pattern here in that in November of 1996 when the Charter was voted on, Section 804 a specific section in itself stated the City Charter salary of the Mayor shall be sixty-eight thousand dollars. I believe that I read an article in the paper the day after I voted for this, I did not knowingly vote for a thirteen thousand dollar pay raise for the Mayor at that time. Where that was a specific paragraph in the Charter, I think that was a significant change in the Mayor's salary that should have been in the ballot question. You are being creative, like down in the Millyard; you have the idea of turning Arms Park back into green space for your Riverwalk project. It is a bright idea. You want to eliminate four hundred parking spaces when you need more down there and you are considering building a parking garage down there. That is a real bright idea. You were really creative when two months ago when you offered Mr. Testa a forty thousand-dollar pay raise to remain as the Airport Director. Is that part of the good old boy network or what? You wanted to raise him from eighty-eight thousand dollars to one hundred and twenty-eight thousand dollars. He is going down to Philadelphia making one hundred and fifty down there. One of the articles I read in the paper Manchester is going to handle two and one half million people. Philadelphia handles twenty-four million. One-tenth the passengers, but yet you wanted to pay him three quarters of the salary that he is going to making down there. By offering him a forty thousand-dollar pay raise, you arbitrarily set the salary for the new Director coming in or very close to it. Section 902 City Official, Mayor, Alderman, Member

School Committee and the Commissioner of Welfare. 903 financial disclosure within ninety days after the effective day of this Charter, the City Clerk shall prepare a financial disclosure form requiring all City Officials to disclose their own individual business and financial relationships. It says, Mayor, Alderman, Member of School Committee and Commissioner of Welfare. My question is where does Mr. Skip Ashooh fit in with regard to the Civic Center in having to fill out a financial disclosure statement. Does he have anything to gain by his actions with the Civic Center?

Mayor Wieczorek called a brief recess.

Mayor Wieczorek called the meeting back to order.

Mr. Dodd continued his statement:

Thank you sir. I believe two months ago when I was here, Your Honor, I think I made a suggestion that you have these public sessions twice a month. Tonight is a prime example of trying to cram everybody into one-half hour. I think maybe twice a month would be appropriate. Back to Section 903; paragraph D, no City Official shall accept any gift or thing of value. My question is, with all of these trips you are taking to look at the Civic Centers, cleaning services, and what have you like that, who is getting credit for all of the frequent flyer miles that you are racking up? Are you guys getting credit for it individually or can you donate it to a charity or something? Janitorial services; I know when I was going to school down South, grade school, high school, we knew our janitors in school. The teachers knew them and they trusted them. I think instead of running all over the Country and trying to get a cleaning firm to come in here and clean our schools, you have got to be close to what you were paying janitors when you started out trying to save money. I think you would have a lot better peace of mind and your schools would be a lot cleaner if you had people that had a vested interest in their employment by working for the city and keeping the schools clean. The other part of my talk was going to be on romances in the air. It seems that, Mr. Mayor, that you are still romantically inclined and that you are courting the school board with giving them more money than actually requested. I guess you are actually courting all the school vote come this November. But let us do something really creative, put pressure on your state legislators in congress in the senate down in D.C. to get them to fund the special education to the full forty percent that they said they were, instead of the seven or eight percent that I have been told is being funded to New Hampshire. They are going to pay eighty percent of that road going into the airport over here. They are pumping hundreds of millions of dollars a day and they are dropping bombs over in Yugoslavia. Now if they are going to pump all that money in at one hundred percent, why can't they fund the special education one hundred percent to that forty percent that they said they were going to do which would relieve us of some of that tax burden. They make the mandate but they are only going to give you seven or eight percent. If they use that same tactic on the airport road over here, instead of paying eighty percent of the cost and the State coming up with twenty percent, if they said no we are only going to give you fifteen percent that truly would be the road to nowhere, because it would not get built. Start with a little grassroots effort and put some pressure on the people up in Concord to put pressure on the people down in D.C. and get the

special education funded to the full forty percent. Last thing on the Civic Center: I have talked to several of you about what is going on with the Civic Center. One of you told me well I really do not understand what is going on, I am getting all the answers that I want but you are still voting for the thing. I think the one gentleman who spoke up here earlier had a very good suggestion; recall that, sit down and look at it again for what it is really worth. If you are really going to go out there and put fifty million down, why let somebody else put eight or nine million down and get all the profits from the thing? Scale it back a little bit, go for fifty-five million and then hire our own management firm to come in and manage the thing. Then we will be getting the profit out of it not somebody else. Thank you.

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

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

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk