

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

**July 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.

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

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

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

Murray Onigman, 324 Walnut Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I think I will start off this particular two-minute session by saying one thing. 120 seconds I have got and I will say that I have been a Manchester resident for 40 years. I have paid in taxes over \$100,000. This includes automobiles, property, pole tax, everything you can think of including water tax. That is \$40,000 more than your salaries that are going to be paid this year by the City to be an Alderman. My point is simple. You made a decision to accept and go ahead with a non-binding referendum. I have referred to it before and 12,000 property owners and voters voted against it and 12,000+ voted for it. So looking at 50% of the City saying no, you went ahead. I just want to point out, I have very little time, that in the *NY Times* on Sunday they are putting up a building. The city and county under a 10 year contract with the team will get 25% of the income from advertising concessions, 75% of the price of luxury box seats and \$1 from every ticket sold. We know that \$10 of every ticket sold on this new civic center with its 100 or 130 dates, whatever you go, have a \$10 interest and payment tax due on every ticket that is being sold. You are harnessing our citizenry with that kind of a beginning. When Tom Yawkey built Fenway Park and when the owners of the Boston Garden, Walter Brown, went into the garden, they had a city of Boston property tax. You are giving an entrepreneur from New York, a \$3.5 billion corporation, the opportunity to come in at no property tax and based on \$30 per

\$1,000, that is our rate, that would be \$15 million a year on a \$50 million building. That is a half a billion dollars. This is little Manchester. This isn't the city of Boston. What are we doing? Have you got the facts? Are you being bamboozled with this New York outfit that wants to come in here? There is a story in the *Boston Globe* today about the parking situation in New Jersey at their new building. They expect four blocks of their streets to be taken over and they are looking at \$6 per parking spot. Come on. I was Vice President of the Manchester Yankee team and we couldn't sell, in this City, for \$1.50 an AA Yankee seat and we had winners and by winners I am talking about men who ended up on the Yankee team. We drove them out of the town busted. I wasn't the owner. I was Vice President. We have lost on the Manchester hockey team. We have lost on all of them and there is no team pushing for a civic center. What are you going to do with your 100 dates? How are you going to return money to the City? Why aren't you going to do like Newark is going to do and this building cost \$37 million and here they talk about the cost overruns have been overblown and it has been tremendous in Newark, NJ. We are just little Manchester. We are not Newark, NJ. We are not Boston. There is my point. Basically, I don't want to repeat but the fact that 12,000 voters said no, I am asking for two things. Nobody on the Board of Aldermen has agreed. I would like a motion to reconsider and seconded and debated and to put it on the ballot again because last time I was here they ran out of ballots at the polling places and there was a tremendous no vote that was coming in and we didn't let it occur because the yes vote signs were everywhere in the City. Yet 12,000 said no way. I think my point is simple to all citizens of Manchester. If I put up my \$100,000 over the past 40 years and you are going to take...what are you going to do for the next 30 years, get a half a billion loss on no property tax? You have already taken away \$100 million on our future Rooms & Meals tax that we could use for reducing our property tax. Thank you.

Billy Dodd, 181 Mammoth Road, Manchester, NH stated:

After the treatment that the public got here last month more than ever a candidate for Ward 6 as Aldermen. First of all I want to start off by saying there was a nice article in the paper today about the Riverwalk. I want to applaud Mr. Reiniger there for his efforts in the Riverwalk and the way things are laid out in here, that looks like it is going to be a very positive thing for the City and I throw my support behind it whole heartedly. Getting back to what I got caught up in last month, I don't do windows and the golden goose. Cleaning the schools. I would like to know how on God's green earth, out of all the bids that were put in to clean the schools how the City came up with \$4.5 million, the highest bid. It seems like the City didn't want the job and they also wanted to be able to turn around and say well we got ServiceMaster in for \$3.1 or \$3.2 million. Look how much money we saved you over the \$4.5 million. We don't need a profit margin as City employees. You do it for what it costs. ServiceMaster has a profit margin in there. They are going to make a profit. My big question is how many of these 91 or 95 custodians are going to be full-time employees. I would almost be willing to bet that probably at least half of them are going to be part-time. Who is going to provide your two-way radios so that your head custodian in the daytime can keep in touch with the principal? Who is going to supply the two dozen or three dozen snowblowers that you are going to need, one for each school so that they can keep the sidewalks clean 50' out? They are going to be doing all of that

for \$3.1 or \$3.2 million, but yet it was going to cost us \$4.5 million. It just doesn't make sense. The golden goose. Mr. Mayor, a couple of months ago on Mr. Pinard's TV show you were on there talking about the airport access road and the work being done out at the airport and you said it was the biggest economic project undertaken in the State. I will quote you. You said, "If it is the golden goose we should pluck it and keep the eggs." Well, I have to ask you Mr. Mayor as far as the civic center is concerned who is getting plucked? There is an article that I dug up at the Library. On the 26<sup>th</sup> of February in 1998 it quotes a Mr. Rousseau from Ogden Management. It says that one of the reasons they are getting such a large profit margin on the civic center is because the cities aren't in the business of taking risks, we are. They don't want to give up the parking revenue. They look at that to be somewhere around \$750,000 a year. Ogden is counting on revenues from luxury boxes, club seating, parking, advertising, rent, concessions and other sources to flow into the operating budget. They are putting up \$8 million. We are putting up \$50 million. My big question is if they are in the process of taking risks and that is why they are going to get such a large profit margin, in the civic center Phase II budget, if they are in the process of taking risks, why does Ogden management show up in your Phase II budget for over \$330,000? Fees, expenses, marketing costs of \$174,000. Material costs of \$90,000. If they are taking risks, why aren't they putting some of their money up out of their \$8 million to cover that? Are they going to turn around and repay us with part of our own money, \$330,000 worth? Why did they get a \$10,000 fee in March of 1999? For taking a risk, take it off their \$8 million. I collect antiquarian books. Here is one on the Merrimack River. It was written in 1869 by J.W. Meter and he talks about the downtown area here and all of the activity that was going on on the river. He talks about the wilderness area being where the Library is, Amherst and Elm, Lowell, Union Street and everything like that and how they sold for 26 cents a foot, 15 cents a foot, 9 cents a foot and those people thought they were really getting a bargain today, but he lived a couple of hundred years too early because the biggest bargain of the century is the Chandler School for \$1. That absolutely makes no sense at all. To sell a building for \$1. The Holy Academy is going to go in there and rehab that building to state standards, they are going to rehab it to City code and they are going to put a school in there tax free. Why can't we do the same thing? What about the Brown School? Why can't you rehab those buildings and put in first and third grades there? You could alleviate some of the pressure off some of the other schools. If they can rehab it for a school, why can't we? In closing I just want to thank Mr. Pinard for the information that you gave me and I promise that in the next two years as a constituent and as your Alderman I will return the favor.

Mayor Wieczorek stated just let me correct you on one item that you made a misstatement regarding the airport access road. I did not say that was the most important economic development project. I said the airport was. There is a big difference between the airport and the airport access road.

Mr. Dodd replied it was all in the same context.

Mayor Wieczorek responded I just wanted to straighten it out so that people don't have any misunderstanding.

Steve Vaillancourt, 161 Faith Lane, Manchester, NH stated:

I am the State Representative from Ward 8 and Chairman of the Manchester delegation. I have heard the words bamboozled and golden geese and I thought I was reading a Richard Lessner editorial but there is hope for both of you gentlemen. Maybe you will get the job when Joe McQuaid goes looking. I thought I would talk to you about the final days and weeks of the Legislature. We are home cooling our heels now or trying to anyway. I have a packet of material that I have for you, including some articles written by some of the best writers in the State. Norma Love, Associated Press, Kevin Landergan, *Nashua Telegraph and Concord Monitor* editorial and Sarah Canig who is very talented and works at the *Concord Monitor*. Norma Love says that it was an historic year but a hateful year full of bitterness that is sure to resurface in the future. I hope that you will read these and get some enjoyment out of some of the things that have happened. I thought I would put together a top ten prediction list for you of things that are still to happen. As you know perhaps, the Senate is supposed to come back in session in the middle of August to try and fill the \$100 to \$130 million hole in the budget. Donna Sytek says she will call the House back in session probably after Labor Day. The number one prediction is some people have said that this is only a temporary solution, the \$825 million funding for the Claremont problem. \$825 million coming back to the cities and towns. I wish once again to dispel that. This is a solution that I believe is going to be permanent and if anything expanded in the future. However, the \$6.5 million that was lost to Manchester because of the discrepancy in funding versus elementary and high school students, that is something that is going to be lost to Manchester forever. So while you are getting \$36 million, you could have had \$43 million. That really is a major loss that could have lowered the tax rate another \$170 on a \$100,000 home. My number three prediction is that the lawsuits that have been filed by the property poor towns, Claremont and the like, they are not going to work. \$825 million is sufficient. Number four, the lawsuits that have been filed by the property rich towns like Portsmouth, Moultonboro, and Waterville Valley, and they are not going to work. They are finally getting what they should have been paying all along. Prediction five is the \$100 to \$135 million hole in the budget will not be filled this year. Not in August, not in September and probably not until this time next year. Number six prediction and I hope it is not true but gambling will not come about with this Legislature. Number seven prediction is there will be no income tax. Number eight is there will be no capital gains tax. Number nine, if you are going to buy a new automobile, buy it sooner rather than later because if anything happens it will probably be an excise tax of 3-5% on automobiles. Number ten, while it appears safe right now that your Rooms & Meals tax incremental increase of \$5 million the first year of the biennium and \$10 million the second year of the biennium coming back to the cities and towns is safe, that is for your civic center and I think these gentlemen might be interested in that, keep in mind that when this was voted on in Division I of Finance which handles that part of the budget, the vote to take the money away was 5-5. I suggest you go out and get a mighty good insurance policy to cover that civic center money. Finally, I would just like to say that I congratulate the civic center people for selling the 32 suites at \$37,500 each, but of course as we all know the City of Manchester and the taxpayers of Manchester will not benefit a penny from that money as with the naming rights, the pouring rights, the parking rights and everything else it will go to Ogden

so good for Ogden, not good for us. Finally, just on the airport I went to the meeting down in my area in Ward 8 when they were talking about not the access road but the new road entrance into the airport. There is a lot of confusion down there as to what the airport people are taking and what the State is taking for the new access road. I talked to Bob Barry of the Department of Transportation today and he says that most of the widening of Hazelton or Brown Avenue has nothing to do with the airport access road. So people in the Hazelton Court and Hazelton Avenue area, don't worry about what the State is doing but again I think we should ask that the State coordinate or that the City airport people be urged to coordinate through the State because there is a lot of confusion down there. Thank you very much.

There being no one further wishing to speak, on motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman Clancy, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk