

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

**May 1, 2000**

**6:30 PM**

Mayor Baines called the meeting to order.

Mayor Baines called for the Pledge of Allegiance.

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll

Present: Aldermen Wihby, Gatsas, Levasseur, Sysyn, Clancy, Pinard,  
O'Neil, Lopez, Shea, Vaillancourt, Pariseau, Cashin, Thibault,  
and Hirschmann

Mayor Baines advised that the purpose of the special meeting is a public hearing on the proposed municipal budget as required under the provisions of RSA 44-10 and in satisfaction of the requirements of Section 121(b) of the State and Local Fiscal Assistance Act of 1972 as amended and in the City Charter, which calls for appropriations for municipal operating budget expenditures, School District operating budget expenditures and Manchester Transit Authority municipal fund subsidy to be financed through revenues of the General Fund; operating expenses of the Environmental Protection Division to be funded through Sewer User Rental Charges; operating expenses of the Manchester Airport Authority to be funded through Airport Revenue Funds; operating expenses of the Recreation Division to be funded through Recreation User Charges; operating budget expenditures of the Central Business Service District to be funded through the Central Business Service District Fund; Aggregation Fees for budget expenditures of the Aggregation program; and all Meals and Rooms Tax Revenues received in excess of \$454,927 in FY2000 to be held in a Civic Center Fund for payment of the City's Obligations under the Financing Agreement

The Clerk presented the proposed Appropriating Resolutions:

"A Resolution Appropriating to the Manchester Aggregation Program the sum of \$652,609 from Aggregation Fees for the Fiscal Year 2001."

"A Resolution appropriating to the Manchester Airport Authority the sum of \$32,247,000 from Special Airport Revenue Funds for Fiscal Year 2001."

"Appropriating to the Central Business Service District the sum of Two Hundred and Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$230,000) from Central Business Service District Funds for Fiscal Year 2001."

"A Resolution appropriating the sum of \$10,900,822 from Sewer User Rental Charges to the Environmental Protection Division for Fiscal Year 2001."

"A Resolution appropriating to the Manchester Transit Authority the sum of \$663,330 for the Fiscal Year 2001."

"A Resolution appropriating the sum of \$3,149,254 from Recreation User Charges to the Recreation Division for Fiscal Year 2001."

"A Resolution appropriating to the Manchester School District the sum of \$108,007,425 for the Fiscal Year 2001."

"Raising Monies and Making Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2001."

"Appropriating all Incremental Meals and Rooms Tax Revenue Received by the City in Fiscal Year 2000 and held in the Civic Center Fund, for the payment of the City's Obligations in Said Fiscal Year Under the Financing Agreement."

Mayor Baines stated now, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to paraphrase the budget message that I delivered to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and also give a backdrop to the budget prior to accepting testimony this evening. With this budget, all Manchester citizens, led by their elected officials will take yet another step on the road to fiscal stability for our community. The path will be tortuous in places, but the rewards at the end of the journey --a restored tax base, streamlined expenditures, a cogent approach to educational spending, and the rebirth of financial integrity through careful planning -- will be great. However, you must understand that Manchester is faced with considerable financial limitations in this era of unparalleled economic opportunity. In the years to come, regrettably we will be playing a game of catch up. In order to take advantage of the opportunities that this economic situation will, we hope, continue to provide, we must alter our course and more importantly we must alter our thinking. The shortsightedness that led us to spend all of last year's Claremont windfall in one swoop will be a memory. Henceforth, we must begin to engage in the process of strategic planning which we will talk about more in the months ahead. Through the budget process, as I have closely analyzed certain past practices, I had the sense that while a necessity like the roof remained untouched, if we look at the City government like a roof there were some problems with the foundation. We spent \$30 million in one shot without considering alternatives such as a capital reserve fund (a savings for the future). It was an indulgence that the City could ill-afford and makes the challenges we face during this process more difficult than they need be. However, that is the situation we face. We need to recapture our tax base. As the economy has boomed, our tax base has remained flat because the City has failed to pursue business, especially retailers, in a manner that balanced neighborhood preservation with the need to infuse city coffers with increasingly larger amounts of tax dollars. We also need to cut unnecessary spending. We have asked for efficiencies from all departments across the City and we told them that we do not need to continue looking at doing it the old way. Comments such as, "that's the way we have always done it" should not longer echo through the halls at City Hall Plaza. The schools present a very interesting challenge and we will talk about that more in just a few moments. We have presented the community with a proposal for schools that we feel will enable the School District to maintain steady progress. However, it also needs restraint, fiscal integrity and strong accountability which has not always been the case pertaining to the School District. As a lifelong educator, I am constitutionally unable to allow Manchester's children to suffer, however, we also have budget realities that face us and it is a daunting challenge for all of us who have a responsibility to look after all of the citizens of our community. The budget that we

are presenting this evening is in allegiance to the principles that I have brought to this office of Mayor. Fiscal prudence, the need for strategic planning and the recognition of the centrality of the role of the schools. This is not a partisan document. We have engaged in the process of developing a budget, I believe, in a non-partisan way. So, we anticipate over the next six weeks that we will finalize a budget and deliver a good budget to enable our community to continue to prosper and grow but also will be the cornerstone of financial stability and integrity, which is very important to all of us. So, it is a journey we are on together and we welcome the opportunity to listen to all of you this evening and take all of your comments under advisement. I would now like to show you the backdrop of the budget that we are presenting this evening. If you look on the chart in front of you, you are looking at department expenditures and salaries that are negotiated settlements. A lot of that is contracts that were negotiated in the prior fiscal year. It also represents the implementation of the Yarger Decker Pay Equity Study. As you can see, we are talking about a fixed cost going up from \$41.8 million to \$45 million. That is just salary alone and implementation of Yarger Decker. You can see on the operating side that I have scaled back in my proposal expenditures of approximately \$1 million on the City side below what they had to operate this fiscal year. That is money that I had direct control over in terms of asking the departments to bring about fiscal restraint. If you look at department expenditures percent change by year, the salary again pre-negotiated and implementation of Yarger Decker up 8.85%. Operating expenses are reduced in my proposal almost 5%. The School District with an appropriation last year of \$100.5 million and under my proposal this year it goes up to \$108 million. However, having said that, I have reduced their request by almost \$4 million. The School District percent change is 7.39%. If we were to give them the full appropriation, we would be asking for an increase in excess of 11%. If the School District's proposed \$112 million is adopted, the tax rate would increase by an additional \$1.12 just on the School side. If every department's budget were adopted as presented to the Mayor and ultimately to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, we could be looking at a tax rate increase of \$6 or \$7 per thousand. Health insurance presents a significant challenge, not only for us in City government but people in private business as well. We are looking at from FY00 approximately \$6.6 million in health insurance expenses, this is the City side alone, to almost \$7.4 million with the same coverages which are mostly things that have been negotiated in contracts. Health benefits percent change. Fixed costs that faced us when we assumed office of almost a 13% increase. City revenues. What is happening with City revenues over this period of time? Look at FY00 in millions and look at what we are looking at in FY01. City revenue percent change by year. In FY00 up 6.81% and projected as we speak down almost 5% less revenue coming into the City. Look at what has happened with the valuation. A lot of people have to get a good sense of this when you look at how do you build a foundation on which the tax base can support the burden of increased expenditures such as some of the things that I already talked about today. As you know, if you look at where the tax base was in the Year 1990 and what happened in 1995 and where we are going in 2000 again we still have not brought the tax base back to where it was in 1990. This year alone we are projecting under \$1 million in increased revenues from the tax base. Now if that had gone up in more of a fashion of \$2 million or \$3 million, obviously that would minimize the impact on the tax rate. Every \$1 million of expenditures that we look at on the City side increases the tax rate approximately 28 cents so that is why we said

for example if you look at the School District and we increase it by \$4 million that is over \$1 increase on the tax rate. Every \$1 million of increased expenditures is another 28 cents on the tax rate. Assessed valuation of properties, if you look at the trends here, 1997, 1998, 1999 and how it is increasing. Here we are in the most robust economic times in the history of America with the largest community in the State of New Hampshire with a flat tax base. Everyone should be asking the question why. I know I am. If you look at the red line, that is what happened with salary expenses. Again, prior to this fiscal year, prior to my arrival at the Mayor's Office, look at what was happening with revenue and then we are going to see the tax base, which is flat. That creates the financial challenge of developing a budget to preserve vital services to our community, police and fire protection, great quality of life in our neighborhoods with our parks, our streets, our sidewalks, the sewers and with our schools and projecting the future of our community by wisely investing in our schools that creates a very significant challenge to all of us. That is the situation that we present to you this evening. It is a very challenging situation with a budget that is very, very tight and hopefully we can gain some insights from all of you to enable us to make better decisions over the next six weeks and finally adopt a budget by the second Tuesday in June. That concludes my budget message.

Mayor Baines advised that the meeting shall be open to public comments; 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 allow 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.

Representative Peter Leonard, 35 Andrew Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am not here as a School Board member. The schools are getting overloaded and we have to start thinking of building new schools in the future because of the population of Manchester. Also, special education costs are out of sight because of these doctors that want to give them titles, which have of them shouldn't even have titles that we are in a bind from the City level and the State level on it. We need to have every resident in the State, including Manchester, to write to their representative in Washington to fully fund special ed and ESL because of the population of foreigners that they dump into New Hampshire. We need help now on those two items by the public to do it because if we don't, the tax rate or property tax is going to go up and up and I am not for that and I am not for a State income tax either. Thank you.

Mark Isenberg, 461 Lowell Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am here to speak on behalf of Intown Manchester this evening and by being the first such person to appear I get to announce who else will be following me. Ladislau Lala of Lala's Hungarian Pastry; Doug Gherlone, a property owner at 77 Market Street; Mike Grady of Sports Fans Heaven; Scott Aubertin of First Sign Company, Kelly Rose of Venetian Canal Espresso Café; David Marsh of Apex Photo; and John Dunn of Fitzzi's Deli and Wine Bar. I am a commercial real estate broker with Stebbins Commercial Properties here in Manchester. One of the properties that we represent is the block long building at 18-72 Hanover Street. It is 100,000

square foot building referred to as the theatre district or the opera block. It is a mixed-use building with 41 residential apartments, 9 retail locations and also an office component as well. We have been at full occupancy for a number of years, seven years at the very least, in the office component and in the residential component and the retail, as the Mayor has alluded to, has been a difficult nut to crack so to speak. The building is maintained in a first class fashion. It is on the National Register of Historic Places. It has had two owners in the last 14 years. The owners are continually renovating the building and keeping the building to the very highest level of any property in the downtown area. I actually look at it as an exemplar of what retail could achieve if we had the constituents to support the appropriate businesses. What Intown Manchester has done for us is to provide financial programs to allow us to renovate the exterior of the building. We have put up wrought iron perpendicular signage to try to increase the visibility to the various retailers who inhabit our building. We have also put in new awnings. We have lighted the exterior of the building with architectural lighting and it truly is a beacon in the downtown area and one that I would like to see emulated in other locations. Also Intown Manchester is the agency that sponsors and runs the Shuffle Downtown events that take place eight Thursdays of the year throughout the summer. This is in conjunction with the Farmer's Market. I would just like to say that Intown Manchester has a specific mandate to help new businesses downtown, which will then lead towards increasing our tax base and the vitality of our downtown. Thank you.

Doug Gherlone, 204 Chase Way, Manchester, NH stated:

I am managing partner of Amoskeag Residences and we strive for affordable housing and restoring historic structures within the City. I have the unique opportunity to stand before you and support an additional tax on my property, which is what happens with the funds that go to Intown Manchester and I fully support it. Not always. The first meeting I went to I went with fire in my eyes determined to slay the dragon that was going to pick my pocket, but as it turned out Rich Davis and the excellent people there have instituted a number of programs with the blessings of the banks and from City government and as a result we were able to completely restore the property at 77 Market Street to its original look, including redoing the entryway, redoing the only full mansided roof left in the entire Amoskeag historic housing district, and as such we have just purchased another building on Manchester Street and fully intend to restore that completely to the housing that it once was and again make it affordable to the people of this City. Intown Manchester is a snowball rolling down hill and gathering momentum from all of the good things that have occurred and I would urge the Board not to plow any of that snow out of the way now but let them do their job and do it well. We, being my wife and I, are very pleased by the type of programs that are there and would encourage the support of the Board to see that Intown Manchester survives and expands. Thank you.

Ellen Healy, 8 Sybil Lane, Litchfield, NH stated:

I am President of the Manchester Education Association. I have come here this evening to speak to you about previous tax dollars and you all have the figures. After looking at the Mayor's proposal on the screen, we are all enlightened. I guess my question to you all is where is the money? I don't know what happened to the money, but I do know one thing. That is that

we, the teachers that I represent and the teachers at my alma mater, Central High School, work very hard to provide your children and the children of your constituents with the very best education possible. Sometimes we are working under very extreme, adverse conditions. You probably all read in *The Union Leader* this year how the plants in my classroom died because we didn't have heat. We ended up fixing the heating system in my classroom by putting duct tape on the windows. It is really a novel idea, unfortunately I removed the duct tape to get some air in one day when we had a warm spell and now that it got cold again the kids are freezing so we had to get a couple of rolls of duct tape and redo the windows. However, in your deliberations and I know it is not easy and I know that you will all devote a great deal of thought to the entire process as you go through this budget process, please I ask you do not forget the children, do not forget the taxpayers and also do not forget the employees – the teachers who work for you because without us your children have no future. Your children one day will be sitting where you are sitting today. They, too, will be making a lot of decisions. It is not easy to undo many years of neglect and I am not saying that it is fair that you should be the ones to do this, but please give it your best shot. Thank you.

Stan Stone, 244 Day Street, Manchester, NH stated:

What I have is a School Board issue, but I want to bring it to your attention because I am not sure all of you are aware of it. The School Board, in their restraint and fiscal conservatism to their athletic committee, we understand have decided to eliminate Freshman soccer and basketball for the upcoming school year, but not football. Just soccer and basketball and I don't really understand that since Manchester, being the largest City, our children in soccer didn't have middle school teams even though we tried to get some through the Athletic Director at that time who basically said you already have too much soccer, you don't need a middle school team when towns like Bow, Hooksett, Bedford, Litchfield, Goffstown and many other towns in Southern NH have a middle school team. Our children did not have that available and had to deal with only playing travel soccer to get their competition. Now they want to eliminate freshman soccer. I don't understand that. Maybe I am missing something here but if you take the schools that feed into Manchester, they are going to be sending about 6,700 children that play soccer into the Manchester school system who can't play high school soccer. That is five to fifteen times more than any other sport you can name in this City and they are getting a bum wrap and I don't really understand that. Also, there is the value of the social transition in these children, sports athletes, going from middle school into the high school system. I know it is a School Board issue, but the secondary and tracery effects and I will use two examples why I think sometimes the Administration of the City and School Board only look at what is happening now. Back in 1983 when we moved here, a neighbor of mine went to the City and the Mayor at that time and said you better think about the school, they just put 36 homes in the subdivision where we live and 98 went up two years later in another subdivision in 11 months and you better think about all of these children and these young families coming in here and the Mayor at that time said and the Aldermen backed him up, natural attrition will take care of that and it didn't. The other issue is an Exxon Station was going to be put in near us and my 10-year-old son came and spoke against it. The traffic it was going to create. You voted it down and they sent a lawyer there to do a traffic count. It is in there now but now at Shop n' Save they

have to hire a policeman to control the traffic that is there. You have to think what is going to happen beyond the immediate to go beyond that.

Kim Joseph, 97 Sunnyside Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I came here to briefly speak a little bit about the freshman sport situation. After hearing Mr. Stone speak, my daughter was fortunate enough to go to a middle school, St. Joseph's, where we have more sports than anybody – golf, volleyball. These kids play everything and my daughter wrote something in her own words to say this evening. She played volleyball for the first time in the eighth grade and she has played soccer since she was five and as a parent I enjoyed watching her play volleyball more than any soccer game I have ever watched because it was her first time playing it and it was great to see her do something that she wasn't that experienced with but after playing this past season at St. Joseph's, I really feel that if she wanted to she could probably play high school volleyball so it just goes to show you what one season of a sport can do for a teenager. Now my daughter, Emily, will read in her own words what she thinks about it.

Emily Joseph, 97 Sunnyside Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I think that freshman sports are important because they give confidence to those students who aren't quite ready to play JV and it gives them a chance to perform in front of their peers. Also, if the kids don't make the team at all it could ruin their chance of ever excelling in that sport and they might not want to play that sport anymore. Sports also give students a chance to stay out of trouble by having something to do after school instead of going home and getting themselves into trouble with drugs, alcohol and other things. Thank you.

Scott Aubertin, 250 Commercial Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I own First Sign and Corporate Image on Commercial Street in Manchester. I am here speaking on behalf of the Intown Manchester Program. I hope to give you a quick overview of how Intown Manchester has helped me in my business and how I have been able to help them. Basically, when a customer calls me and says that they are moving to the downtown area, one of two things happens. Either they say Intown sent me to you or gave me your name or I say go see Intown. I think that the services they provide help these people moving into the downtown area streamline the process and make it a lot easier to get in and get their signage taken care of and all of the other aspects of opening their business. Of all the signs that I have done down there, I don't think I have done any where Intown Manchester hasn't had some input giving them financial assistance and giving them direction and acted as a little bit of a design and review committee to make sure that the signs that are on Elm Street are really effective and look a lot nicer than what we have had in the past. I personally have seen a major improvement. I started in business in Manchester about the same time as the Intown Program was established. Most recently, I was the recipient of a grant by Intown Manchester to go to a business course, an 11-week intensive course on developing a business plan which has really helped me out a lot and I can't thank them enough for that because it was really something I needed more than I knew that I needed. What that is doing is supporting the infrastructure underneath the businesses on Elm Street and in the downtown area and that is where it comes in where you

don't even see it all the time. It is underneath. It is the things they do that aren't in the newspaper and aren't out on the surface. Thank you very much.

Rich Davis, 123 Pleasant Street, Manchester, NH stated:

We won't take much time to reintroduce ourselves this evening. As you know, Intown Manchester Management, Inc. is a not-for-profit that operates to manage, maintain, promote and develop downtown in concert with the City of Manchester and its various agencies. Our current contract period goes until June 30, 2002 and just to repeat, none of the money used to fund this contract actually comes from the general fund budget of the City of Manchester. Funds are raised only by special assessment or by the CIP budget for special programs. My organization has asked for time at the May 16 meeting of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen when you meet as a Finance Committee to brief you on our organization, our contract, our services and so forth so I won't take any more time to do that this evening. Mark has introduced to you a number of people. I thought you would find it interesting to hear from them and from their perspective what they think about downtown, how they see its future and also to hear a little bit from them as to what is involved in starting their businesses, finding locations, building up their business, fixing their facades and fixing the buildings themselves, promoting their businesses and hopefully growing their businesses. Again, this is in partnership with the City of Manchester. We could not do it without Bob MacKenzie and his office. He is our contract manager and we could not do it from year to year without your help and support. Thank you very much.

Donna Karwacki, 1125 Bridge Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am here speaking on behalf of the elimination of the freshman sports as well. I was very surprised to hear from that as I know that the deterioration of schools has been occurring and four to a locker and things like that have been a bad subject, but the sports to me as a Freshman coming in from eighth grade...my daughter and her friends I know are all eagerly awaiting and looking forward to coming in and trying out and knowing that they are at least going to make a team. If they don't make JV or varsity, they at least have the freshman team to fall back on. A lot of their friends are looking forward to maybe trying a sport for the first time. Field hockey or something like that as a freshman. They come into a school and they have nothing to do if they are not good in drama or art or not an exceptional student and sports is their thing what are they going to do as a Freshman. I am afraid that a lot of these kids are going to get lost in the shuffle and they are not going to be able to excel in anything in particular. A lot of these kids have a lot of energy that they need to burn off. If they are not burning it off at school with an organized sport run by a responsible adult, they may be out in the streets getting into something that is not so good for them. I know on behalf of my daughter it has helped her self-esteem immensely. It has given her a lot of leadership qualities being involved in sports. She plays about five or six different sports and enjoys them all. She may not excel in every single one, but she tries. There are more qualities to playing a sport than I can possibly mention and I know that a lot of people are aware of that. My daughter attends St. Joe's Junior High right now as an eight grader and like I said all of her friends are looking forward to coming in and making memories from Freshman all the way through Senior year as they have in seventh and eighth grade. They are eagerly awaiting it and they can't wait to come to high school, but I am afraid that if these sports

are eliminated these kids are going to get lost and I know that my daughter is also here to speak. I ask you to please not cut the freshman sports. I am afraid it is going to do a lot of damage. Thank you.

Mayor Baines stated the Board of Mayor and Aldermen will not decide what gets cut on the School side and we do not have any longer a separate athletic budget which we used to appropriate prior to the court decision separating the School from the City. Also, it is my understanding on the School side that no definitive decisions have been made about any of these cuts just so people know that.

Abby Karwacki, 1125 Bridge Street, Manchester, NH stated:

If those sports are being cut next year I think it would minimize the amount of kids who will be involved in extra curricular activities. Some might not even try out for JV sports for fear of being cut. I also know that a lot of my friends want to play sports when they get to high school and they are thinking of not trying out for the sport that they want to now and I really think the sports should remain as they are now and nothing should be changed. It is good to know that if you don't make JV as a freshman there is also a freshman team to fall back on. It can also give you the experience you need to make the JV team as a sophomore. I think that is important to have.

Selma Deitch, 300 North Adams Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am the Director of Child Health Services and I feel like I have been here since you people were born. I am here because we need the \$129,000 that we asked the City for this year because out of a greater than \$1 million budget that takes care of multiple needs of a population in Manchester that is not otherwise served. We take care of over 1,000 children from infancy through adolescence. Why is it different this year? Well, there is a changing population in Manchester. It also takes more dollars to make things happen and there is a greater need from the members of our staff for services paid for out of medical insurance money. Medicaid covers about 85% of our population, but only 15% of our needs are paid for out of Medicaid.

Healthcare is far more than what the good old doctor gets paid. There are services that we think are terribly important in order to make healthcare work for the population we serve. That means not only the physicians, but the social workers and the nutritionists and the transportation people. Twenty-two years ago Henry McLaughlin stood before this group and he was then the Superintendent of Schools in Manchester. He was my classmate at Central High School and he presented our request for the first time because we were sure, as we spoke to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, that if our program was successful we would reduce the numbers of children with special needs who entered the Manchester school system and I still fully believe that I think we can probably show you the children for whom that was important. Because of our model, we find it terribly important for people to recognize the time it takes us to plan the kinds of services that the children we see for an acute illness or chronic illness need in order to comply and follow-up for what is so costly to define when a family comes into the clinic. The community we know is changing. There is more talk about the numbers of people who speak different languages, but the fact of the matter is that many of those people come with children

with special needs. Yes, we have people from different countries. Yes, we have people from Lowell and we have people from Lawrence and we have people from New York, but mostly there are generations of people who have been here in Manchester for a lot of years that we see and I think it is important to recognize that. Yes, we help people apply for insurance but many of them are not eligible for insurance. The insurance, as I say, does not cover what we are looking for. We need more public funds and we thank you for understanding the need for healthcare adapted to children's needs for a growing and not decreasing population of children in Manchester. Thank you.

Joan Bennett, 75 Kearney Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I would also like to address the potential cutting of freshman soccer and basketball. I think it is ironic that this potential proposal is being considered in a year when Central and West had two of the top boy's basketball teams in the State of New Hampshire, including the State Championship team but keeping Freshman sports intact is far more than keeping a winning tradition intact. As our high schools grow larger, it is even more important to give freshman opportunities to become part of their school and to find a way to belong. Sports do this. They are part of the total education of students. As important as being in the classroom, in the band, on a stage or working as part of the school newspaper. If there are no more freshmen basketball and soccer teams, very few freshmen will make JV teams. Opportunities to become a meaningful part of the school will be lost for over 200 freshman in this City next year. It is important to remember that over 80% of our student athletes make the honor roll. Sports encourage kids to do well in school. I am speaking tonight as a parent of an incoming freshman, but also as a former coach, having coached basketball at Webster School for five years, as well as two years at Pinkerton Academy as the girl's Freshman basketball coach. It is a story of one of my Webster players which best demonstrates why sports are important to the total good health of kids. As a sixth grader, this boy on my team finally made the basketball team and he was so afraid of failure he almost didn't try out. He worked hard all season and improved tremendously making an incredible mark on the court. At the end of the season, his mother thanked me for giving her son an opportunity. He had been in therapy before this, but after playing basketball he no longer needed to be in therapy because he finally had excelled in something and he was doing better in school. He felt good about himself. He finally had an opportunity. He believed in himself and was no longer a doubter. He was a believer in himself. Ironically, this boy will be a freshman at Central this fall. I encourage you to fully support the School budget because if you cut it freshman all over the City will be denied opportunities. Freshman sports strengthen the total educational experience of students. Please give them this opportunity. Thank you.

Chris Dodd, 113 North Eastgate Way, Manchester, NH stated:

As we all know, Manchester was ranked the #1 place to live in the Northeast and we are all very proud of that, but with that reputation brings some added things to look at with new people moving in, increased costs and increased budgets. Unfortunately in the past we haven't planned for that too well and with the budget tonight, looking at over \$260 million I would ask the Board to take an aggressive look at cutting for this year, FY01 and possibly beyond, and putting aside a

contingency fund which is something that should have been done with some of the money last year; the over \$30 million that came in. Civic center and other projects have contingency funds put aside in case something happens and what we are looking at this year is an increase in education and as much as I would hate to see a cut in public education and other portions of the budget, I would ask the Committee to take a look at putting aside a portion of the funds from the budget, cutting back and putting aside funds and gaining interest on bonds or something of that nature that could pay the community back as well. Looking through another portion of the raising monies and making appropriations, there is about \$97 million being appropriated for that and of that I can see that there is one section significantly lacking. Of that is Elderly Services, about \$230,000. The elderly in this community make up over 35% or 40% of the community and I think that is an asset that we are overlooking. Maybe looking at some of the elderly as volunteers and with all of the refugees and immigrants coming to this country teaching English as a Second Language class and drawing on them. A lot of times with the rise in costs, a lot of the elderly can't really afford that and maybe giving some compensation to them for teaching these classes and drawing on those who were teachers in the past is a good idea. Lastly, with moving back to New Hampshire I mentioned that I had been away for some time and moved back and I am often asked why did you want to move back to New Hampshire, it is cold up there, you have lived in other places. It comes back to again that it is the #1 place to live. I grew up here and I am proud to live here and if the taxes do go up...I am trying to save as a young person right now to buy my first house and come up with that income but the taxes keep rising. I ask that you take a look and take an aggressive approach. We don't want to see the cuts but unfortunately it looks like it does have to happen. Thank you.

Patricia Cornell, 787 Montgomery Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am a lifelong resident of Manchester. I have been a taxpayer on the West Side for 22 years and a guidance counselor at Parkside for 23 years. I want to again ask you to fully fund the School budget. The number of discipline problems sent to the office has gone down 300 even though we have 60 or more new students in the building. The teachers have been able to more creatively deal with different problems that come up. It has given me more free time to be able to move towards more comprehensive guidance and get into classrooms and talk to the students about things like career education and career development and self-esteem. We are a very active Kids Voting School and Community of Caring and we have had student forums, brought in motivational speakers and gotten to do a lot of really nice things like that. With the new staff there are tons of activities going on after school that didn't happen before because people just didn't have enough time. A lot of these things are volunteer activities that people don't get paid for that we wouldn't be able to do if we weren't fully funded. I just want to ask you again to fully fund the School District budget. Thank you.

Joan Flurey, 234 Holly Avenue, Manchester, NH stated:

As a 14 year Manchester schoolteacher at Parkside, I have been part of a great approach to education. As directed by our school committee, the middle school concept was adopted approximately five years ago. As we strive to achieve excellence in the middle school process, we at Parkside are now at the idea level. With Parkside's addition, as well as staff increase, we

are now quite successful. Presently, I serve as the teacher representative to the New England League of Middle Schools. I believe that our district will benefit from my position, as I will keep the Manchester schools up-to-date with all of the New England opportunities for middle schools. It is vital that we maintain the present teaching staff to implement the middle school philosophy. I urge you to encourage equity for all four middle schools. I realize that this Committee does not authorize the cuts to the School budget, however, I urge you to accept a school budget that will promote success to all of the Manchester school students.

Kelly Rose, 6 Country Club Drive, Manchester, NH stated:

I am co-owner of Venetian Canal Espresso Café and I would like to take a moment to address the issue of the budgeting for Intown Manchester. It has come to my attention that the Board isn't sure if they should fund this or not and I am not quite sure why it is not already understood how vital these people are. I wrote down a few things that Manchester does for the City in case not everyone is familiar with this. They take care of the Farmer's Market. They direct the Hanover Happenings. They set up the "Light Up the Night" contest. They have the antique car show that is coming up this summer. They sponsored the Christmas window contest this past Christmas. They have done a tremendous amount of work for the City and my partner and I have also participated in the fast track program that they sponsor. It is hard to name all of the things that Intown Manchester does for the City. I would like to say that our corporation and our crew is 100% behind the funding of Intown Manchester and I hope that this is understood clearly. Thank you very much.

Maxine Mosley, 76 Sherburne Street, Manchester, NH stated:

There are so many things to talk about and I promise to stay well under my three minutes. A couple of things I would like to address and that is first of all I want to thank the Board for your hard work. Not one of you is on this Board because you are not trying to do the best job for the City of Manchester and I thank you for that but I am here to ask you to reconsider and to look hard at the budget that was brought forth to you by the School District. I believe that this budget was a fair assessment of what we need to provide adequate services for our students. We have had years of neglect in this district and in this City and part of that if you look at it and you look at McLaughlin Middle School where I work, a brand-new facility, the latest and brightest jewel that we have that will be overcrowded in September. We are going to portables. We cannot house the students that are coming in and I will tell you that we will have more students than the original prediction. Then we go to Central High School. That in itself should be the absolute jewel of this City. This is the largest school district in the State and that school should typify what we stand for. My daughter will be going there as a freshman. If I have to send her to a school with double sessions, I along with a lot of other parents will not be happy. Not only for that but also for a school that is not heated adequately and certainly is not a pleasant place to go to school. Thank God for the teachers who do their job. As an educator I would like to share a few thoughts with some Aldermen on this Board. Mr. Levasseur, I and none of my colleagues will apologize for the amount of money that we make. Not only do we earn it, we are not in the top 25 districts in the State of New Hampshire and we will not apologize any longer for saying that we are underpaid because we are. Finally a quick thought to big Daddy. Alderman

Hirschmann, I can't let it go. I was at the meeting last night. As a counselor when a student comes to me and they are coming from an abused home I make a report and one of two things happen. There is intervention or the courts remove the child. The courts remove the child. Thank you for your deliberations.

Reverend Daniel Georges, 403 Brooks Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am here on behalf of my church members and also the Haitian Community Center to support the ESL teachers and the students because this is only one chance the children from overseas have to learn English and to make progress and to be a good citizen and save this country. That is why I am here and I have my son who is from Haiti and he is in an ESL program at Hallsville School. I think the ESL program is a good thing for all of the children from overseas. Thank you very much.

Kathy Brooks, 105 William Gannon Road, Manchester, NH stated:

I believe I am here tonight to ask you to reconsider your budget this year for education. Thank you so much for the education and the opportunities that my children have and so many students have in this City. Two of our neighbors have moved out of our neighborhood because they didn't feel there was a commitment to education and I hate to see that happen because a strong City is based on a strong school and an excellent school system. Another concern that we have had is how the budget will affect, if you cut that many millions of dollars, how will it affect the schools and having student athletes I would be terribly disappointed to see any students not able to participate in sports because sports builds character and discipline and so many other qualities that I can't even begin to list. Derryfield requires that students are involved in two different sports throughout the year so I think we can see the importance there is between academics and the extracurricular activities that are possible. Please, I ask you to reconsider how the budget is allocated and I would ask that education not be cut. Thank you.

Ed Wade, 720 Coral Avenue, Manchester, NH stated:

I am the principal at Parkside. I am here this evening to support an adequate educational budget for the children of Manchester. I feel strongly that quality education depends on two factors. A decent student-teacher ratio and reasonable space in which to teach. We are fortunate to have experienced both of these factors at Parkside this school year after 10 years of overcrowding and understaffing and I would like to have every student and teacher in Manchester to have the same opportunity as we did this year. Parkside is in this position this school year only because a united front of parents, elected officials including some of the Aldermen sitting before me and educators banded together to reduce the student-teacher ratio and to block portable classrooms for Parkside. As a result of these efforts, Parkside now has 22 beautiful rooms. I stood before you two years ago and I said the same thing. Portable classrooms, called modular classrooms now, are testimonials to poor City planning. Portable classrooms in Manchester have not been temporary solutions to our classroom space problems. Past experience in Manchester has proven that they are long-term solutions. As an educator, portables disconnect students and teachers from the main body of the school and create schools within schools. As a taxpayer and soon to be retired principal, portables are economically unsound because, your Honor, they are

financially draining and include unanticipated costs. I urge that in the future City planners, educational leaders and elected officials do a better job of planning for the education of its students. The City will be a much better City for it. Thank you for listening.

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

Sitting here tonight I heard a lot of things that I heard last year. Four of you people here didn't have an opportunity but the rest of you did last year to take some of that approximately \$32 million that we got free from the State. You weren't obligated to do anything with that money, but you could have set aside \$10 million and do the same thing again this year and you could have been building a pretty nice school with \$20 to \$22 million. That would have alleviated the overcrowding and portables that a lot of these people have been talking about. That is something you should have thought of. When you go through your budget, the only thing I am going to ask you to do is look at the wants and the needs. Wants can come any time at all, but what you need is what you need to look at seriously. It is interesting to see that we need the civic center that is on the front page, but if there is a *Union Leader* reporter here I hope he will get it right for once that you guys funded the civic center at 100% and not 80%. McLaughlin School. You heard a lot of people talk about that. The gentleman before me mentioned planning. There needs to be a better plan between you ladies and gentlemen and the School Board. Plan what you are going to do. You got out of your game plan last year when you put your middle school program ahead of your game plan. Now portables are what you have to use. How long will the portables stay at McLaughlin? Good question. I think they are going to be there for awhile. So, just look at things through your budget here. I think for the multi-million-dollar budget that the City has what you handed out here tonight is a pretty poor excuse. Nobody in here can look at this thing and make a reasonable judgment as to what you people are going to be spending money on. There is nothing to compare it to with last year and this year. I think maybe next year you should look at maybe putting this packet together a little bit more concisely so that people can make informed decisions. If you don't start doing things like that, they will start making informed decisions come election time. Special education you have heard talked about tonight. Mayor Baines, I am going to charge you with leading the bandwagon on this one. This entire Board should get together with the School Board, with the State Legislature and demand from the Federal government that they fully fund the 40% that they are supposed to. New Hampshire right now only gets about 12%. It is funny that the former Miss New Hampshire is the one down in Washington leading the charge when you people signed on to it way before her.

Bryan Murray, 16 Wedgewood Lane, Manchester, NH stated:

I have heard a lot of pleas tonight for less cuts, however, I have some difficulty understanding that looking at a 6.7% increase. That is not a cut. As a matter of fact, as a taxpayer I feel that it is an excessively large increase. Our previous Mayor a few years ago capped his budget increase at the CPI and only was made a liar when the School overspent and he in fact had to bring it above the CPI. It appears that we are looking at the same thing again this year and when a request comes in for \$112 million, which is about \$8 million more from your budget than they had last year, I don't understand how, again, that is a cut. It is a very significant increase. If you

fund \$112 million, a 12% increase goes beyond the realm that any taxpayer is willing to bear. As a taxpayer, I feel that you have lost my faith over the past year by really bringing to light a lack of strategic and operational planning. There have been numerous examples of poor planning. Schools misbuilt, mis-sized. We have seen many examples of a lack of internal control procedures at a City level where we have a \$1.4 million sum of money missing between the City and the School side, which may lead us to state of déjà vu a la two years ago, which could in fact result in overspending by the School District. We have over \$500,000 of funds that haven't been collected from parking garages and I have heard many people come in here from Intown Manchester asking that that be funded, but have you established measures of effectiveness for your programs, for your procedures, for your departments to really ascertain if, in fact, they are viable. They come up and site nebulous examples of what they have done for the City, but can you tell me how much tax money they have brought into the Central District based on the increased tax rates that the people are paying in the Central District? I don't think you can. Thank you.

Linda Heath, 27 Fernand Street, Manchester, NH stated:

Honorable Mayor and Board of Aldermen, on behalf of the Association of Manchester Principals, we ask that you support the School District's budget for FY01. As we all know, our children are our number one priority. Our district continues to service children in the most dedicated way. In fact, SchoolMatch recently commended the hard-working professionals in our district. As principals, we feel that we have been most responsible in preparing and developing our school budgets. Our budgets were based on student needs. They each are specific for the successful learning environment of each of our schools. Our concern is that if the School District budget is reduced, that reduction will be critical to student services. Our educational foundation is solid. Join us in advocating for Manchester's children as we look to the future in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Kathy Scalingi, 298 North Bay Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am a teacher at Parkside. I have had a great day today. I know it is Monday, but I will tell you why. The kids on my team at Parkside have been participating in the stockmarket game worldwide. It is a game. You break the kids into teams and you give them a hypothetical \$10,000 and they get to trade it on-line. The neat thing about this game is you can use it and you can combine all sorts of disciplines. Math, that is pretty obvious. Social studies – I got to do a lot of economics. English – I got to talk about the Depression. Science – Bio-Tech stock. We even had art involved. The kids did calligraphy and did a tickertape and we decorated the room with that. At Parkside we are really doing it all in terms of middle school. We are working in teams because kids at this age need that support. We are working across the curriculum because we have to show kids the connections. We are using technology in the classroom because the kids have got to learn a little bit more than just how to play Ninendo. So anyway, why did I have such a great Monday? My kids came in first and second Statewide in the stockmarket game worldwide. Pretty good. They get a trip to Boston. They get a free lunch. If you change that student-teacher ratio at Parkside, we can't do neat stuff like this. Please don't take teachers from Parkside. Thank you.

Stephen Frink, 602 Coral Avenue, Manchester, NH stated:

I am here to speak on behalf of the freshman cuts in soccer in basketball. I heard it said that you don't make that decision, but we have been told that the School Board has cut these programs because there is no opposition. Well, there are a lot of soccer parents here tonight and that is because we just found out about this and we want to make our opposition known. A lot of people have already spoken and said these programs merit funding and I won't go into that any further. That is why we are here and we will carry the battle on to the Athletic Department and the School Board meeting. We want you to be aware that there is an opposition to that. There are thousands of children who play soccer. Some of your kids played freshman soccer and we would like our children to have the same opportunity. Thank you.

Lee Cooper, 71 Oriole Drive, Manchester, NH stated:

I am a Student Assistance Program Coordinator at Parkside Middle School. I am here this evening to tell you about the vital role that student assistance plays in middle and high schools and why eliminating these programs will be devastating to the students and families of Manchester. As of this date, two schools have been notified that their programs will be eliminated as of this fall. That would be Southside and Parkside. For those of you who are unfamiliar with student assistance, it is a comprehensive school-based program that deals with counseling and education for substance abuse concerns of students. The primary goal of our program is the prevention and early intervention of alcohol and substance abuse related problems that confront so many of our students. Services are provided to students who exhibit behavioral and academic problems or who would otherwise exhibit signs of stress that could easily lead to the use of illegal substances. These students may already be living through the negative experience of substance abuse in their homes. Throughout the year, we maintain a wide array of support groups for children of alcoholics, for students who actively abuse alcohol and other drugs and for students who need an ongoing support group to maintain sobriety. The group sessions conducted by SAP coordinators are informational and supportive in nature, provide an atmosphere of safety and understanding and promote growth and change. All the coordinators involved in the Student Assistance Program are deeply concerned at this time, but the two middle school programs have already been cut. Students in the middle schools by virtue of their age are most in need of what Student Assistance has to offer. 67% of students at Southside Junior High School who took part in drug intervention groups indicated that they had either discontinued or significantly reduced their abuse as a direct result of their participation in the group. On the average, 75% of students who participate in various SAP groups say they are less likely to use physical violence as a way of resolving conflicts and student evaluations reveal that they have developed healthier ways to deal with life's challenges by up to 65%. Please don't let these statistics mislead or overshadow the fact that these numbers represent children – our children. The children in our schools. Your children and my children. Think about that. If a SAP Coordinator is the only avenue your child has to express their concerns or get help for drug and alcohol abuse, don't you want us to continue doing what we do? In our community and in our schools we make a huge difference and even if you don't feel that we are doing something important, the students certainly do. Within the first two and a half months of school

this year, 500 students, actually over 500 students referred themselves to my program so they could get help not only with drug and alcohol abuse but violence and conflict resolution and anger management. If you don't feel it is a necessary part of their education, I certainly do. I don't want my children going to school with other children who are having problems with substance abuse and/or violence problems. I want to make sure that the school is safe for my children and your children as well. Thank you.

Ladislau Lala, 353 Webster Street, Manchester, NH stated:

Good evening. I am here to speak to you on behalf of Intown Manchester and probably my shop wouldn't be on Elm Street. I thank you for Intown Manchester because it has brought a lot of business downtown and it is an asset for the City. Probably a lot of people don't see it, but there is a lot of work in bringing back some life to downtown.

Robin Tafe, 138 Huse Road, Manchester, NH stated:

I am here to say just a few words to support the Mayor's proposed budget for education. We need to provide our City students with the quality education they deserve. Students bloom in safe environments and small class sizes and under teachers who are dedicated. The programs that we offer now would be in danger if the Mayor's budget is not supported. We must strive to maintain the programs you have heard about today and move ahead. Please consider our City's youth an investment and support the Mayor's request to move forward in education. Thank you.

Scott Bailey, 147 Huse Road, Manchester, NH stated:

I am a first year teacher at Parkside. The reason I am here is to get support for the Mayor's budget. I am little bit more fortunate than the woman who spoke earlier from Central. I don't have to tape my windows when it is cold out. I actually got a brand-new classroom this year. The reason I came into Manchester was for the direction it seemed to be moving in. They built a brand-new middle school. They put a new addition onto Parkside and the philosophy was there for the middle school. Things are going great at our school. We have great class sizes. Student-teacher ratios are terrific. In my class alone I am able to do science labs that I otherwise wouldn't be able to do if the class ratios were higher. I am also able to take my kids into the Library and give them all Internet access. Things are working out great over there and I would hate to see the budget be cut and kids missing out on this opportunity. Thank you.

John Dunn, 118 W. Merrimack Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I operate Fitzi's Deli and Wine Bar on Hanover Street. I am here to speak to you in favor of Intown Manchester. Two years ago I chose to locate my business in downtown Manchester because I saw a new energy downtown. Previously I had worked at the Center of New Hampshire and I was actually working there the day that the Federal regulators came walked out of the Center of New Hampshire, walked down the street and locked up five banks on Elm Street. We have come a long way since then. I think recently a lot of that is due to the efforts of Intown Manchester. Intown Manchester didn't come out and knock on my door and recruit me to come to Manchester to open my business, their work did. The work they are involved with. I remember a day last summer when I was coming back from a delivery and I came down the

alleyway and there was Rich Davis and Stephanie and Linda with grubby clothes and hats and T-shirts on and they had paintbrushes and they were painting over the graffiti that was sprayed over the buildings. This is the sales force for Manchester. These are the people who are out there convincing people that Manchester is a nice place to come to and open up a shop. I am involved on two different committees that Intown Manchester is very involved with. One is the Hanover Street Coalition, which has created Hanover Happenings Thursday nights during the summer. We have three stages of live entertainment. This past summer we had great attendance and we are looking for even greater attendance this summer. The other committee is the Downtown Retail Development Committee. It is a group of downtown merchants who are starting to work together realizing that as an individual business we have a small voice, but if we all work together we have a greater voice and Intown is the catalyst making this happen. Right now, we are considering a second location. We would like to put it in Manchester, but if the Mayor and Board of Aldermen look at Intown Manchester as an effort that is not worthwhile, give me a reason why I should come to Manchester for my second location. Thank you.

Katie O'Connor, 1178 Union Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am a junior at Central High School. I am one of the captains of the field hockey team for next year. Throughout Manchester field hockey provides over 100 girls with the opportunity to participate in athletics. This opportunity is very important because it gives a sense of belonging, purpose and also it is a positive activity for the youth in our City. Over the past four years, local players and our coach, Jenn Briggs, have worked hard to make the field hockey program a successful one. This program is important to me and my teammates who are with me here tonight. We would all appreciate your understanding on this issue. I ask you not to cut the funding for our team. Thank you.

Katherine McCarthy, 27 Windmere Drive, Londonderry, NH stated:

I am the English as a Second Language Coordinator for the Manchester School District. I would like to speak to you tonight about our English as a Second Language Program. As you know, the ESL Program has grown and continues to grow steadily. The program has seen an increase of 1,100 ESL students in less than three years. Under the leadership of our Superintendent, Mr. Tanguay, the District has shown commitment to the ESL Program by hiring additional teachers and tutors. In the past two years, we have tripled the number of staff who serve the ESL students. That is commendable, but let us not stop here. Since we have been averaging approximately 400 new ESL students per year for the past three years, we desperately need additional staff to help provide direct instruction to these students. No longer is teaching English language learners just a matter of language instruction. Teachers are faced with new challenges daily. Educational, cultural, social and linguistic issues must be dealt with on a daily basis. We are constantly looking for innovative ways to meet the needs of all English language learners. Ten years ago, one year in a self-contained classroom was probably sufficient. The students had enough language to successfully make the transition into the mainstream classroom. No longer is this the case. The demographics have changed. Students are coming from war torn countries such as Bosnia, Kosovo, Sudan, Somalia, and Rwanda where interrupted or no formal education is the norm rather than the exception. Some of these students

will soon be exiting the self-contained classroom and will be entering the mainstream classroom. The mainstream teachers, however, are not properly trained to deal with all of the aforementioned issues. In order to address some of our concerns, the Office of Civil Rights paid for a consultant from Boston University to work with a team of ESL teachers and me on structuring how we deliver services to English as a Second Language students. We met throughout the year to discuss ways to best meet the needs of these students who exit the self-contained classrooms and are placed in the mainstream. The restructuring plan called for ESL specialists to work in collaboration with mainstream teachers on ways to modify curriculum and on teaching techniques and strategies. We must provide the necessary support for these students when they enter the mainstream classrooms. Without this much needed support, they will not succeed in a regular education classroom. Right now, we are merely playing catch-up and trying to put a Band-Aid on the schools that need the most help. This is not good enough. According to the Office of Civil Rights compliance plan, every limited English proficient student in the district should receive at a minimum one-class period per day of ESL instruction. This is impossible to do given the current teacher-student ratio. My point here is please fully fund the School budget and give our students the quality service that they so deserve. Thank you very much.

Michael Grady, 669 Elm Street, Manchester, NH stated:

My wife Karen and I have owned and operated Sports Fan Heaven/Collector's Heaven for the past 20+ years on Elm Street and I can tell you really good reasons why you want to keep Intown Manchester going. Over 20 years ago we began in a store directly across from City Hall that was six floors, totally deteriorated. The walls were down. The floor and the ceilings were falling down eventually to our floor and we moved out because it was gone and the owner had to do something about that building. We have now moved into a new building in the past six months and we are doing the same thing. The building is 100 years old. It was allowed to deteriorate from the third floor down. We are trying to bring it back to make it a better tax base for the City and I think the tax reason for Intown Manchester is definitely a factor because without Intown Manchester we would not have a business today as far as my wife and I are concerned. When we were told that the civic center was going to go into our former home, we didn't know what we were going to do. We were devastated and then we found that this building was going to be available and we tried to bring it up to make it better downtown. We were only able to do this with the help of Intown Manchester. Rich Davis sat down with me many times and explained to me what was possible in the area and told me that Citizen's Bank had programs for downtown businesses and local businesses that were possible at lower interest rates than I could go out and get anywhere else to make it affordable. Rich Davis was always there to answer any questions. If you look at downtown Manchester in the last three to four years, many of the buildings down there are better looking and more appealing to everybody who travels up and down Elm Street. Please continue to help Intown Manchester to keep Manchester looking good.

Leona Dykstra, 21 Tennyson Drive, Manchester, NH stated:

I kind of agree with a comment that Ellen Healy mentioned when she said where is the money. I was here last year and spoke on the budget and I was very happy that we were going to be able to fund education because I supported it and I was also happy that we would probably be getting more money back and we got the \$37 million. I and a lot of others talked about probably getting more than the \$2 off per thousand, but we didn't get it and I am sure whatever I say tonight or anybody else does I think that many times having served on the Board of Aldermen their minds are already made up. Right now you are talking about the different raises that are going on. You know everybody said we had so much money and then some of you Aldermen came out and gave yourselves an \$11,000 raise. I don't know how you dare question anybody who gets a raise after you took \$11,000 in one swipe. Of course the people spoke out and you didn't get it. If I was on that Board I wouldn't take it and I still think it was a wrong thing to do and a lot of people are talking about it and I don't think they are going to forget about it. Your Honor, you talked about the rewards that we were going to receive from this budget. Well, I don't really consider higher taxes or higher mortgage payments rewards. If there are other rewards that is fine and I hope it works out for you. We are looking again at revaluation and some houses are going to be going down and others are going to be going up. So, if your revaluation goes up, your taxes are going up. We are looking at county. Well for the first time in many years, Mr. McDonough is not going to be able to say county taxes are going down. They are going up, but slightly. Once you go through the negotiations and if the State comes after the YDC money it is possible that the county taxes will be going up. So, you are looking at revaluation, county taxes and of course the City is over \$2 again. The Aldermen will probably bring it down a little bit, but I don't think it is going to be too much. Then you are looking at the State. I served for nine years as a State Representative. Nothing is cast in concrete. If they can't fill that deficit and they can't close that gap, I guarantee you that they are going to raise the statewide property tax. So, with a combination of all of this, we are going to certainly have a problem. I think that common sense would dictate to the previous Board that benefits go up, insurance goes up and things go up. When I was in the State we had a rainy day fund and it worked out fine. It was irresponsible of the past Board not to put money aside thinking that these things might happen. I am in support of education. I believe that we should support it. I believe that we should have our taxes at least stay stable. I am not even asking for you to cut them. I am asking you to leave them the way they are and see what you can do with it. I know that it is a big task, but I hope you do something with it because there are a lot of unhappy people. Now, your Honor, you asked me or I think you asked everyone to take a journey with you. I don't know where that journey was going but I hope it is not to the center of the Earth because I saw the movie and not many people survived it. I hope it works out and I hope you all work very hard. Please consider elderly people and people on fixed incomes. Keep those taxes down and take care of education.

William Dugan, 111 Wheelock Street, Manchester, NH stated:

First of all, I would like to echo the sentiments of Alderman Shea from last week indicating the need for a gifted and talented program in the School District. Rather than tilt the windmills like Don Quixote, this year I engaged in more constructive activities joining members of the Parker

Varney PTG and looking at the needs of that school's facilities. Principally we have identified three areas that we spoke on in a number of forums. Those include carpeting, renovation of lavatory facilities and replacement of doors and windows. Now we have addressed the School Board on numerous occasions. Members of this group have addressed the CIP Committee in the public forum and we have had some success. We got included on the CIP budget for the School District. Hopefully those funds will not get eliminated in your final adjustments. Moving on to the School Districts FY01 operating budget, the School Board has presented a budget of \$112 million. Mayor, you have identified this as an 11+% increase but it strikes me that a couple of weeks ago the Senate Select Committee on education funding and adequacy was meeting right here in Manchester and one member, I believe it was Senator Johnson of District 3, also indicated that his district was submitting a budget request that showed a 10% increase in the school's operating costs. Now certainly District 1 schools are a lot different from the ones in Manchester. This has been identified in more than one presentation this evening. Manchester provides a number of diverse services to a very culturally diverse population. Now it is no secret that education is a key component of sustainable development. Mr. Mayor, you have addressed this in your speeches pertaining to the new Manchester. The Board has discussed this in terms of development issues pertaining to the Millyard and downtown Manchester. A number of political programs appearing on MCTV have also addressed this issue. From the public comments tonight and at previous forums, it is readily identifiable that the public is aware that education is a key to sustainable development. From my observations at the many School Board meetings and School Board committee meetings, there are an equal number of fiscal conservatives on that board as there are on this board. The School Board has presented a proposed budget of \$112 million. I do not think that this budget is inappropriate. Thank you.

Sandra Rogers, 531 Weston Road, Manchester, NH stated:

I am a selectman in Ward 8, mother of two and a homeowner. My comments are supporting the Mayor in his efforts to support education tonight, but specifically my comments on education are for the special education issues and the quality of special education. Through the years, I have had two children that have been in need of special education assistance and I have seen the student-teacher ratio increase. I have seen classrooms in back of auditoriums and in closets. I have even spoken at the House to try and increase funding for special education. I just want to warn you all that if we don't comply with federal regulations, we are going to lose our funding for it. We really have to look into the federal regulations before we lose the funding all together. One thing I was wondering whether you have looked into or not is Manchester seems to be the heavy for these small towns here and I was wondering if the other small towns like Allentown that use our Manchester schools if we could increase the tuition rates that we charge them or possibly not help them at all. If we are going to be forcing them into building more of their own schools like Bedford is doing, let's go for it. Why should we be the heavy and have to pay for this any longer? I know that they pay to use our services, so why not increase it. Lastly, no one has really mentioned tonight the need for our police and our fire department and the funding for these. The last article that I read in the paper was the fact that you had slimmed down the Police Department so they couldn't increase the facility that they needed. Granted, eliminating programs like D.A.R.E. is not the way to do it because our children do need to stay away

from...other people have spoken tonight about the drug infested streets. We also need the policemen there to protect us from the perils that are out there. The Fire Department, I mean you put them on a slim budget and cut out their equipment that they need they are not going to be able to buy a helmet or be able to get a coat when they need it. You really have to take that into consideration because they are people that you don't realize that you will need them and what happens if we don't have them when we need them.

Telena Ardic, 82 W. Brook Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I want to talk about the cutting of the ESL program at Hillside Middle School. I don't think that the ESL program should be cut because when I came to America nine months ago, I couldn't speak English but now I speak English pretty good because of the ESL lessons and the help from the ESL tutors. I think that many other children that come from different countries should get help from ESL tutors because many children don't understand English. The only thing I have to say is please don't cut the ESL program because we really need their help.

Mayor Baines stated first of all, congratulations for the beautiful job you have done learning English. You should be very, very proud of yourself.

Winston McCarty, 1514 Wellington Road, Manchester, NH stated:

I am a State Representative. I would like to applaud you, Mayor Baines and the Honorable Aldermen for the time and hard work you put into your job, but I do want to remind you that it has been said and you have heard it before that no city, town or state ever taxed themselves into prosperity. I also want to say that we can move ahead with better efficiencies and new technology. We heard from a teacher tonight who had to tape the windows at Central High. I would hope that by this time we would have had all of our City buildings energy efficient. They should be. If we haven't, it should be a goal. Also, I would hope that we have all of our City employees working efficiently with the tools they need, whether it is the books and the videos or the teacher in the school or whether it is the tools or methods that the janitor needs to do his job efficiently or whether it is the man down at Public Works. Does he have the right equipment to do this job? Lastly, I would hope that we would start putting some lasting quality into our highways. Thank you.

Vldana Kapedanovic, 184 Roysan Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am a student at Memorial High School. About a year ago I was an ESL student too and the ESL tutors helped me a lot with English.

Mayor Baines asked which country did you come from.

Ms. Kapedanovic answered Bosnia, but I lived in Germany for many years. The ESL tutors helped me with English and my homework and my grades were very good because of them. I don't think they should cut this program because there are many children coming from other countries, especially other continents. They don't know the new rules about school because the

schools in Europe are different. The ESL tutors help a lot and explain things very slowly so that we understand.

Anne Sanderson, 34 Gilhaven Road, Manchester, NH stated:

I am the Director of the International Institute of New Hampshire located at 315 Pine Street in the inner City. I am really here to ask you tonight to remember that we are a City built by immigrants. My family has lived here for 100 years, but they arrived as immigrants. I am asking you to continue to support the immigrant population in our City. To provide equal opportunity to our immigrant children in the schools, and to provide and support those of us who have social service agencies asking for CIP grants that provide services for the immigrants. I work mostly with refugees. They are a very small number compared to the number of immigrants that are here, but all of these people need your support. I think we need to remember that they are such a vibrant part of our community that they wove the tapestry that we are living today. It is very important that they continue to live and grow. They become taxpayers, homeowners, and voters. I am just asking you to please try to remember them when you are making your decision.

Mayor Baines stated I would like to thank your agency for the wonderful support you gave to that family that dealt with that tragedy with that young baby from Sudan. That is something that you should be very, very proud of and we thank you for providing that kind of support.

Katie Powers, 3 Vassar Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am a junior at Central High School. I have been a member of the Central High School Alpine Ski Team for three years now and it has been an incredible experience. Being part of a sports team at Central is about much more than the sport itself. It is about displaying ones individual talent and gaining a sense of pride for ones self and ones school. Every single student in this district has their own talent and they should be able to display it whether it is in the arts, a drama club, music program or a sports team. I ask that when you are reviewing the budget you make sure the Manchester schools are adequately funded. Making cuts to the school budget could result in making cuts to the school's sports teams. I ask that you carefully look at the many programs that make a school successful and try to adequately fund the school budget so that things such as sports teams won't have to be cut. Thank you.

Jean Jeudy, 134 Calef Road, Manchester, NH stated:

I am a taxpayer and I am a registered voter. I am speaking on behalf of all Haitian children about ESL classes. The ESL classes are really important for the kids who come from another country because it is really hard for them to speak English when they come here. Remember that kids are the spirit of the future. Please don't cut any hours in those classes. Thank you.

Linda Garrish, 7 Irwin Drive, Manchester, NH stated:

I am an elected State Representative from Ward 1. I didn't intend to be here tonight because I expected to be testing for the Red Cross and that got cancelled so I had an opportunity to come here. I don't have a written, prepared statement but having listened to people I felt obligated to

say a couple of things. One, I find it a great irony and in fact a great honor to be standing in my alma mater but also in the Arthur J. Mirabli Auditorium, which highlights one of our best teachers in the Manchester school system and a teacher who represents exactly the teachers that you heard here tonight and exactly the teachers that are in all of our schools that spend hour upon hour preparing and dedicating themselves to teaching our students. Arthur Mirabli was one of those people. He taught many of them who have come back. Many of the other teachers that were in Memorial High School like Bob Baines, our Mayor, were here and have come back and came back to teach in our system. I ask you to think hard about what education is all about. I never thought that 10 years after I started to speak at nearly every City budget hearing that I would be here 10 years later in good times when the recession was over, when more people were working, when we weren't worrying about all of our money and suddenly we are cutting schools again. For 10 years the school system has struggled and I ask you to look for one frivolous dollar. I ask you to look in the past 10 years for one dollar that was misspent and for all of the dollars that were not spent and I ask you when you think if it is not in good times that you are not going to fully and adequately fund education then when, in fact, is that going to be. I ask you to think about stop passing the blaming buck and stop squabbling about who did what, when and where and if we have an accounting problem and if we have an information systems problem then let's get it fixed, but you know when you blame the school system you end up blaming and hurting our students. Not one ESL student, not one special needs student, not one high academic achiever, not one underachiever or average student, not one athlete, not one musician, not one artist, not one student that needs special services and needs guidance, and not one disruptive student should be negatively impacted by your decision. This is a time when we need to listen and do what is right for our students and fully fund education as it has been recommended to you. I ask you also not to think about cutting the many other smaller programs like Child Health Services and all of the other programs too numerous to count. Those are very special programs that in the last 10 years of difficult times have picked up the slack and picked up what we couldn't do. Once again, would you please fully fund education and spend a little bit of time in our schools and think about that 180 days it takes at least one hour, not two, to prepare for every hour of class time. Visit our schools and you will see. Thank you.

Robert Barry, 51 W. Elmwood Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I have heard all of the special interest groups tout their individual programs and their achievements this evening, but I have not heard my main concern addressed. Most of those speaking were from the Manchester Education Association asking for more money and more members for their organization. Manchester hosts thousands of out-of-City students. Taxable land must be set aside to build more and larger schools for these students, more members of the MEA must be hired to teach them and this leads to higher salaries, higher taxes, etc. We should stop taking these students unless the true cost plus can be recouped. We Manchester taxpayers are directly subsidizing the budgets of Bedford, Auburn and every other town that sends students to Manchester because their tax base is not reduced by school buildings and ours is. We should stop taking students from outside, thus reducing MEA membership, reducing the tax and the salary burden, and therefore reducing the tax rate. Thank you.

Dick Lamy, Parkview Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am here to ask you tonight to not raise my taxes. I don't want you to raise your taxes and I don't want you to raise their taxes. It is about time you did something different for a change. I can't believe you took all of the money you had and spent it all. Some of you really should be ashamed of yourselves. As far as the help that these people need at the school, maybe it is time, it is long past due that all City employees pay their own health insurance. It is due. We can't afford it anymore. It is our money. We are the taxpayers. The only other thing I would like to tell you is that probably since I have owned my own home in Manchester I think I have been spending somewhere between \$70,000+ on the school side since I have owned my home and if you want to ask me if my education in the Manchester school system was worth \$70,000 or \$80,000 – you answer that question.

Lorraine Lamontagne, 215 Holt Avenue, Manchester, NH stated:

First of all I want to say congratulations to Parkside for doing a great job. I also would like to talk about Intown Manchester. I think we have a Chamber of Commerce here in town that should be doing what Intown Manchester is doing. They have a lot of members and I think it is a waste of money for the citizens of Manchester to pay for this. I think the Chamber of Commerce should be more actively involved. The other thing is that when I was on the School Board and coming here at public hearings people were always complaining about cutting sports but you never heard anyone complain about the lack of textbooks or cutting educational programs in the schools. I am really sick and tired of that. You can complain about cutting sports, but I think you should also complain about cutting ESL. The City of Manchester was fined by the Federal government several years ago for not doing an adequate job teaching their ESL students and we have to do it. We are under a mandate. The special education kids. The Federal government doesn't give us much money and they expect us to teach these children. The thing is that the ones who suffer when you cut the regular school budget are the average children in the classroom and the gifted children because you cannot cut the ESL program and you cannot cut the special education program. I think if any cuts are to be made the only thing left is sports. For myself, I think that academic programs are a lot more important than sports. Thank you.

John Rist, 192 So. Mammoth Road, Manchester, NH stated:

Currently, I am the principal over at Central High School. Before I talk about the schools, I want to talk about the Fire Department that has been great and responsive to every need I ever called them upon and if they say they need their budget, they need their budget. If the Police say they need their budget, they need their budget. Specifically though, I want to talk about education. Since 1982 when I came to Manchester I have been proud to be an educator. I have been an educator my entire adult career. I have never been embarrassed by the fact that I am an educator until this year. Until I went to Central High School and I saw the wind coming through and the snow coming through the windows. I saw children sitting at desks that are broken where the metal frames come through the plastic. I saw that there weren't enough books for our kids. Kids coming up to me and shaking my hand and saying thank you for getting me a book. That is absurd. It is absurd. I have never been embarrassed until this year when I saw a student

taking their mid-term exams with their hats and gloves on because the furnace doesn't work. That is ridiculous. I have never been embarrassed until I saw some of the cafeteria tables that our children have to sit at to have their lunch that are broken. It is ridiculous. I have never been embarrassed until this year. Teachers at Central do the best that they possibly can and we are looking at a very severe situation with overcrowding. The Mayor is talking about \$108 million. \$108 million is a step backward. \$112 million is status quo. Show some courage on this budget. Show some courage. Thank you.

Frank Smith, Westwood Drive, Manchester, NH stated:

I am on the opposite end from that gentleman. I believe that \$108 million for the School District is more than generous. An 11% increase is outrageously overestimated. My income doesn't go up 11% every year. My income only goes up 3% and you are offering them 8%. I believe that is more than enough. As far as the other departments, everybody has come to you with their wish list and everybody wants this and wants that but they don't know how to get it funded. Property taxes in Manchester are high enough as it is. I have to put away 1/4 of my take home pay every month just to pay my property taxes. I think enough is enough. If everybody else was putting away 1/4 every month, I don't see how we could survive especially if we are looking at a \$5 or \$6 per thousand increase. It is too much to be asking from the people. Granted the schools do need help and you need to fix windows and furnaces and stuff, but let's do it gradually. This school is very nice. At least it looks it from here. Let's do it gradually and not all in one year. Each department came in with their wishes. The Fire Department wants a new FireHouse and the Police want a new Police Station, but that is going to take property away from income and the revenues for the City. The City can't afford to lose property. We lost a big chunk of property for the civic center, yet we have property sitting out there that is not doing anything. Bridge and Elm has been sitting there for 10 years now. We have other properties out there doing the same thing. We have buildings out there owned by the City and doing nothing, yet you are spending almost \$250,000 a year on rent. Why not move those departments into the vacant properties? I think the City really needs to consider how we are spending the money and not just look at everybody's wish list. A wish list of having a West Side Library. We only need one. The river is not a divider. The river does not divide the City into two. We want this and that on the West Side because the East Side has it. Assess it. We really need to consider how to start increasing revenue. It is nice to have a wish list, but you can't meet them all.

Mayor Baines advised all wishing to speak had been heard. On motion of Alderman Wihby, duly seconded by Alderman Pinard, it was voted to refer all comments to the Committee on Finance for further consideration with the appropriating resolutions, and with reports to be made to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen at a later date.

There being no further business to come before the special meeting, on motion of Alderman Sysyn, duly seconded by Alderman Levasseur, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk