

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

**October 17, 2000**

**7:00 PM**

Mayor Baines called the meeting to order.

Mayor Baines called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Lopez.

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, Hirschmann

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

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

Kevin Devine, 142 Fisk Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I hope you don't mind if I stand but being as short as I am if I sit I will be blocked by the machine. I appear tonight on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Manchester City Library, a Board that I have been proud to serve on for many, many years and a Board that works very hard to shepherd the future and preserve the past of the fine institution that this City has. The Board has asked me to thank the Board of Mayor and Aldermen for their foresight and their vision in having voted to land bank the property known as 2 Bethel Court for the future saving for future expansion of the Carpenter Memorial Library building here in Manchester. We laud the Board in its wisdom and its compassion in electing to allow the tenants of 2 Bethel Court to remain in those apartments until this land is actually truly needed on an eminent basis for a real expansion plan and that plan of course has never come to fruition until this Board, along with the Board of Trustees of the Library has a concrete plan and comes to you with it. However, we view the expansion of the Carpenter Memorial Library building truly important in the long-range planning for the City of Manchester and its

residents. It is a sign of good government that this City's leaders, you men and women on this Board, have voted in favor of preserving not only the past of the City library, but its future. There is a history here that I would like all of you to be sure to know because as Aldermanic members come and go, history does not get passed down. In 1994, the owners of the Hesser College building directly behind the Carpenter Memorial Library offered the City that building on a pure zero cost donation basis. For reasons then in effect, a prior administration, a prior Board was unable to accept that offer. It is sad, but it was unaccepted and that building was then sold in the open market to someone else. That building is no longer available to preserve for any future expansion of the Library. The Trustees of the Library, however, are charged with stewardship of the future of this institution. That is a matter of State law, City Charter and of a contract that the City entered into in the 1800's for the Manchester Athenaeum. With long-range planning in mind, the Trustees, with the financial backing of the Manchester Library Foundation, a private institution, commissioned a needs assessment study in 1995 and it was undertaken by Providence Associates, Inc., a world renown library long-range planning entity. Their study was completed and published in March of 1996 and copies were given to the then Board of Mayor and Aldermen. Every year since then, portions of that study, those dealing with facility needs for the City's library, have been appended to and submitted to the Board's CIP Committee, along with the Library Trustees annual submission for CIP requests. Those submissions, as set forth in 1996, set forth the need for expansion of the facility of the Carpenter Memorial Library. It is sad that there is some misinformation that is apparently floating around and I guess this happens in a large City such as ours, but it was only yesterday that the Board of Trustees at a regular meeting was informed by one of the Aldermen that there is a rumor circulating that another building behind the Library has been offered to the Library Trustees for \$350,000. I can assure you that this was news to the Library Trustees. We have never heard that before so based on that information, I contacted and spoke with Pierre Peloquin, the real estate expert who has donated his time to the City and to the Library Trustees and he indicated that, in fact, the owners of that property advised him and he so advised Mr. Brisbin that the building was not for sale and would not be for sale for many, many years. We ask the Board simply this, that it stick with its plan and its vision and that it not retract its vote. Thank you very much.

Russ & Jan Spaulding, 321 Gold Street, Manchester, NH stated:

We are representing the citizens and the residents of Gold Street. We have a petition that all of you have received, I believe. It is the no to rezoning the certain parcels of land around March Avenue and John Devine Drive from general industrial to general business and we just feel, everybody that has signed this petition feels that rezoning that property would give much more traffic to Gold Street than we desire right now as all of the talks have been going on.

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

I would like to thank the Board of Aldermen and the Mayor for having the public come this half hour and express what I had written on the board, democracy and I am going to question a little bit about democracy and I am going to question a little bit about what has gone on and I don't want my money back, Mayor, for all of the taxes I have paid to the City. I have spent 42 years in Ward 2 and I have paid a lot and I don't want anything else because I have gotten my money's worth. It is the future I am worried about. Getting back to my point, I was flipping the TV thing and I landed on Channel 16 again and there I saw two non-partisan members of this Board who were espousing for a Republican governor for the race. It was the Aldermen from Ward 3 and Ward 12 and all I am hearing is this Republican push. If you are non-partisan, why do you take time on a TV station and start pushing for Republican or let's put it another way...I listened very carefully and you couldn't convince me to vote for him, believe me but on another night I was going along and the Ward 3 Alderman introduces his guest of the evening, a Republican from Ward 1. Are you non-partisan or are you partisan? If you are partisan then why are you sitting where you are sitting? You were elected on a non-partisan basis so why express it and use the public? Anyhow that was part of my point. People have asked me why I call the building that is being put up the street a corporate welfare building. Let me explain one thing on that. I worked, most of you know, for one boss at the Boston Garden. That was Gerry Jacobs. I worked for one boss at Fenway Park. That was Tom Yawkey. Both of my bosses had their money at risk. You have \$125 million of our money at risk up that street. Now, if they were going to lose it, they would lose it. We are going to lose this I am positive with the background I have being in both front office. However, when you look at the overall situation of what we are doing and why I call it corporate welfare, you have substituted into the risk of an individual or a corporation to take the risk and we are not going to send a property tax to anybody our government and this City and it is going to be the highest assessed piece of property. The Boston Garden, with Walter Brown who you might all know, lost the Boston Garden because he owed the City of Boston seven years of property taxes included in all his debts and that is how the Jacobs brothers took over. Therefore, if we are never going to send the property tax and we are going to invest \$125 million...I just got the cut-off sign from your Honor and I want to say this, under a point of personal privilege whether you are using Roberts Rules, Cushing's Manual or Demeters, I am asking for an extension to prove my point.

Mayor Baines replied proceed.

Mr. Onigman stated we are under Roberts Rules of Order and this is a personal privilege. The personal privilege being extended to me is this is my last night to speak on the floor of this Chamber. I will not come back and that is my personal privilege and I want to get my point out. Therefore, you see how we have substituted into the risk of a business, I call it corporate business, corporate welfare, our money and when the group of you went out to

Peoria, Illinois did you check on the fact that in 1984 when that civic center went up for 15 years thereafter Peoria, Illinois had to come up with money to bail out the civic center right up until 1999? Had this ever occurred to you? Are any of you here lawyers or accountants or anything? Did you check this out? So, here we are. We are faced with a coming bankruptcy. Management. How much are you going to pay to have these guys come from Los Angeles? We are the laughing stock of New York with Ogden and the laughing stock of Los Angeles with the LA Kings because we are the country hicks with a bunch of politicians running a sports palace that shows me nothing but failure. I could go on, your Honor. I had to express it and you do have my promise that unless something comes up...I may have a horse come in second down at Belmont and I will be all right but that is okay. Unless something else comes up I will not be back but if something comes up I will be back.

Jeff Michelsen, 45 Falls Avenue, Manchester, NH stated:

I am going to talk about some fuzzy math here a little bit tonight. I came in with some equations in my head about C squared. You know what that stands for and H squared, that is Hackett Hill and D squared, that is a done deal. What I would like to do tonight is to ask the Aldermanic Board to slow down this Hackett Hill development process. I am not sure that many people in Manchester know that we bought 850 acres for \$7 million. Good price. We are planning, apparently I think, to spend tens of millions of taxpayer dollars to develop this. This may have a tie in with what Murray just talked about about corporate welfare. At any rate, I would like to ask that we slow this process down and get some more input from the people in the City who are going to pay this bill and prove to us that it really will work out if we build a corporate industrial park that there will be a return to the taxpayers. It is somewhat dubious to me at this point so that is my fuzzy math for tonight. H squared, done deals, civic centers...there seems to be a tie in there and thanks for your time.

Louise Bergeron, Manchester, NH stated:

I am here representing Southern NH Services and the Fuel Assistance Program and the Weatherization Program and I would like to thank the Mayor and the Aldermen for the invitation to come and talk to you about this important program so that all of you can be aware of how important it is to the City of Manchester and to your constituents. Some of your able staff has already passed out some of the brochures that we have with the information. We have the regular brochure, a Neighbor Helping Neighbor which is another secondary program that we offer and also a flyer that is printed both in English on one side and in Spanish on the other. These brochures are available to you. All you need to do is give me a call. The reason, I think, that you asked me here this evening is because there certainly is a need this year. We can tell by the phone calls and the response that we already are having that there is indeed a need in the community and I would like to tell you that the program will be opening a month early this year from what it normally does. As of October 30, we will not only be taking applications for pre-registration but we will actually be able to

start paying bills. What I think is important for you people to understand is that the process is not a difficult one and it is one that is easily approachable. We will ask people to call ahead, make an appointment and when they come the fuel assistance benefit is based both on their income and on their annual heating cost. The program is not an entitlement. People will have to prove their income. It is documentation that we do need. However, once the benefit is awarded, the benefit amount is then...the client is then notified of the amount that they will receive as well as their vendor. The money is paid to the vendor, not to the client but it is paid to the vendor as the services are rendered. Therefore, if the money is not used it certainly is not given out. We will ask the clients when they call in...we will pre-screen the applications so that they come to us at appointment time. There is no waiting time. We give direct appointment times and people, hopefully, will have what they need to make the process as quick and as painless as possible. We also can do homebound appointments. If there are some of your constituents who cannot come to the office, sometimes we have elderly people who might send their people to do the application as well. The program has already received additional funding from Congress because of the urgency that is known. Therefore, this year we will start the year with extended benefits higher than they were in the past and we also have increased income guidelines so we would urge all of your to urge your constituents to take a chance and apply for the program. We are very conscious of the need in the community. The need last year, truthfully, the City of Manchester's residents received close to \$1.5 million from the Fuel Assistance Program. It is a very significant program and one that is a big help to the City. We hope that by coming here you will get to know who we are, have an opportunity to see what the guidelines are, what the program can do, and then call us if you need help for any of your constituents.

Mayor Baines stated Louise I am going to have you stay there because this was actually going to be a presentation during the Board meeting and I would like to give Board members an opportunity to ask you questions. If people are interested, how would they contact you?

Ms. Bergeron replied the phone numbers are on the back of...

Mayor Baines interjected would you just read them for the people watching this on TV.

Ms. Bergeron stated in Manchester the number to call is 647-4470. The 800 number is 1-800-322-1073. When they call to make an appointment, they will be asked different questions so that people can be told at the time of appointment what they will need to bring when they do come.

Alderman Sysyn stated I wanted the public to know that the office is at 160 Silver Street.

Ms. Bergeron replied that is correct. It is at the corner of Pine and Silver Street. It is on the first floor. It is handicapped accessible.

Mayor Baines stated just to give the Board an indication, a lot of people in the community aren't even aware that they may be eligible for assistance. I ran into a young man when I visited the site of Youth Build this past winter during the worse cold spell we had and he told me that he had been without heat for three days. I called the office and Wayne Robinson made the necessary contacts and by the end of the day they had fuel delivered to their house. They just weren't aware that they had that service available to them. It is very important that we get this message out to the community early. I appreciate you being here, Louise.

Ms. Bergeron stated there are two things I would like to stress. Sometimes some people aren't aware. I had one couple that I personally spoke to where we had done door hangers door to door when we canvassed some streets and they said until they received that they weren't aware of the program. We try very hard. The other point I would like to make and I think all of you ladies and gentlemen can probably help us in that regard is that there are some people who are very proud and are in need and are afraid to come forward and we would like them to know that this isn't charity, this is some of their tax dollars that they have already paid that is being returned to them. It is not an entitlement program. People have to qualify so we would like to tell them to come forward. I have to tell you that I respect the pride that our elderly people have. It has helped them to accomplish a lot in the past generations that they have been through, however, I also see everyday applications of people on fixed incomes and I had one lady who was receiving under \$500 a month who called and said I got extra money for my birthday and I think I will let somebody else who is more needy take the benefit. This person was needy herself. So, I respect the pride that they have but I hope that some of you who know your constituents, who know the people that perhaps are in need, will urge them to come forward.

Alderman Lopez stated in calculating a family of four on the monthly and annual gross, in submitting applications is there consideration of the high cost of things in our economy today regardless of whether they are making \$36,000. Is there a calculation that is deducted in order to come up with that \$36,000? The point that I am making is their leniency for maybe making over but the cost of living is higher?

Ms. Bergeron replied at this point there isn't. Actually the amounts that you are seeing are the new increased guidelines and the State increased them to the maximum allowed by Federal law. We do have a few deductions that we are able to take out. That is why we ask people to come and do the application and then we will see where they are. The other reason we ask people to do that is that we have other programs that sometimes take over if someone is over income for fuel assistance. We may be able to help them with an alternate program,

but if you had asked me that question three weeks ago I would have said there was a waiver process available where we could apply for a waiver, however, now they have increased it to the maximum that once we do the calculations and come to that amount, if they are over income other than alternative programs we really have no place to go.

Mayor Baines stated just so the Board understands what we are doing. This was a regular Board presentation that happened in the public session and that is why I am allowing the extra time right now.

Alderman Clancy asked, Ms. Bergeron is there a deadline where people have to sign-up.

Ms. Bergeron answered the program has been open to application since the beginning of October for new people and it should be ongoing through April 30, however, our concern this year is with the demand that we are seeing and the increased benefit amounts, we are urging people to come forward as quickly as possible. If the money is there, then the program is open through April 30.

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

I am here to speak about the cable contract and Manchester Community Television. I would like not to be here but I will continue to be here to talk about something that I think is important until we see some resolution. I might add onto Mr. Onigman's comments that public access television, through Manchester Community Television, is the reason why Aldermen can leave their hats behind as Aldermen and become public citizens and represent the Democratic party, the Republican Party, the Libertarian party, the Green party, the Communist party...they can represent any party they want under the protection of law of freedom of speech and thought and expression and that, in fact, is the value of public access and community television. I am concerned, based on what I have read in the paper, that you are going to make a decision tonight about the cable contract. I said to you before that I really believe that this is the people's money and this is a 10 year contract and the people should have some opportunity to know some of the details since the negotiations have been private and rumors have been flying. The people should have an option to review that and the paper quoted Chairman Gatsas that he hadn't even had a chance to review it as of yesterday. This is an important decision that I think bears thought by you all and certainly a response before you make a final decision by the public in Manchester. I want to reemphasize that I also feel and I have heard rumor of and again this is a rumor mill simply because all of this has been so private we do not know the details and we can't respond to things but I heard there is not guaranteed funding for Manchester Community Television. You have a guaranteed revenue stream through that contract and Manchester Community Television should have a guaranteed funding for that because it does provide what I said before. It has enabled me entering into my seventh year to represent so many different

organizations and so many different issues, not just political issues but issues of importance to the citizens of Manchester. This is real community communications, our grass roots communication; it is community development at its best whether you like it or not and that of course is a point of contention for everyone. One of the other things I did not see in the paper was any mention of Channel 16. I am really concerned when I don't see Channel 16 there, which represents public access and definitely education and government is very valuable and very important, but the other part of PEG is public and I consider it to be democracy at its best as I have said to you before. I should hope there is some guarantee that public access will continue as you continue Manchester Community Television and you give that decision the kind of thought it deserves and you allow the people to have some say in the guaranteed revenue stream that comes actually from them. Thank you.

Mayor Baines recessed the meeting to call the regular meeting of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to order.

Mayor Baines called the meeting back to order.

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

I was going to call this my two-minute drill and hope to get in both sides of my card, but you gentlemen have been very generous with your time tonight so I shouldn't have any problem getting both sides in. You have all seen these before, the \$50 million bond and the private note from the bank. I bring that up tonight because I was talking with one of the Aldermen recently and that Alderman seemed to think that SMG who took over Ogden's contract, was solely responsible for that bank loan. Well I happen to have a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding that you have all seen before signed by Mayor Wieczorek in September. It is a 26-page document. If you turn to Page 16, Exhibit III, Item 4, Ogden signed a deal that said that Ogden will make no capital investment in the project either initially or through the term of its agreement with the City and further the City assumes full responsibility to fund all capital improvements and repairs. This document right here, I have talked to several people on it and it doesn't matter whether you paint it white and put black stripes on it or vice versa. It stinks from the front page to the back page. If this is the agreement that SMG picked up from Ogden, would somebody please tell me how they got their name on the bottom of those loans from the bank. At this point I would like to ask the Union Leader reporter to please check into this and get a definite answer from somebody because if one of you Aldermen are misinformed, the taxpayers are definitely misinformed. We are paying 100% of this. Enough on that one. The senior center. I have been down to Singer Park and have ridden around. I have been to the Elm Street project and I have been up to Derryfield Park and as far as I am concerned I am still going to stick with the site that Alderman Pinard presented to me that was right across from the Eastgate Plaza. There might be some problems with building there, but those can be overcome. It has a little stream there. The seniors that live

downtown don't want to be in a senior center that is downtown surrounded by buildings, they want to have some open space. That would be a perfect site right across from the shopping center on Hanover Street. There are a lot of services there and the bus route. Parking garage. Several weeks ago, your Honor, you had an article in the paper about the people quite possibly were misled in the whole civic center process about a parking garage and the need for one. The Allen Bradley lot up here would be a very good spot for a parking garage close to downtown. You don't have to take the property away from them and you don't lose any taxable property. You come in at ground level off of Elm Street and you put up a pre-fab process like you did at the airport. Allen Bradley then returns to their ground level parking, which would be beneficial for them. Their employees wouldn't have to deal with the rain and snow and everybody wins. Again, the senior center, Alderman Lopez seems to, from the article in the paper today, be the spokesman for the Board and a lot of you people favor the Singer Park area. That is a bad mix. I am sorry. You want to include the seniors with a park and ride garage that you want to put down there with sporting events, with young people coming and going, the cement plant going in and whatever other kind of industrial rail service we can get in down there? That is a bad mix for the seniors. Hanover Street is your better chance. Special education. You have heard me talk on that one before. Again, I was talking with an Alderman who seems to think that the special education budget for the City was \$5 million. In speaking with a School Board member, in essence, of the \$106 million they get for the Schools it represents about 23% of that. The Federal government is supposed to be funding 40% of that. Way under. 13% is all they are giving. What it boils down to is if you guys are the Board, I expect nothing less of this Board and you, your Honor, as the head, to scream to the politicians in DC and to get the Governor behind you and demand the full funding. What it breaks down to...my rough calculation is about \$2.25 on my tax bill per thousand if they fund that special education. The last thing I want to talk to you about real quick, Artemis Paras back there from Ward 6 mentioned something to me. I know you guys hate to pass new ordinances but here is one you need to look at. Stacking. She knows more about it than I do, but that is basically stopping on the highway and blocking the highway. If you go down South Willow Street between 7 AM and 8 AM, the Sunoco Station across from Dobles has a drive-up Dunkin Donuts window. There is going to be an accident there before long because they stop right on the highway and you are going to be putting something like that across from Weston School. You definitely want to decide not to have cars stopping on the highway.

Aline Lotter, 227 Salmon Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I was here not so long ago also about Hackett Hill and I asked then that you hold a public meeting to address the Master Plan proposal to develop on Hackett Hill and you did. You voted to do so. Rumor has it that that meeting has been scheduled very close to Thanksgiving, sometime in November. I am not quite sure what the date is.

Mayor Baines stated it is November 20.

Ms. Lotter stated I am here to ask you to postpone that until after the holidays. The Master Planners had over a year to put together a very elaborate presentation and their mission was to come up with the best development they could for Hackett Hill and perhaps they have, but they never had to consider the alternative of no development and those of us who are opposed to developing Hackett Hill because of conservation and environmental reasons need a lot more time to prepare a presentation to the public that will satisfy us that the public has got the idea and understands what the issues really are. The environmental value that is at risk here is very important. There is even the Diocese of Manchester who recently recognized this. The last time I was here I didn't announce that I was speaking on behalf of any organization, but the newspapers picked it up anyway so on behalf of the Sierra Club, which I am the Chapter Chair of, I do request not only the postponement, but I ask that we be involved in developing the agenda or the presentation for the meeting to make sure that we have an opportunity to put our case before the people.

Tabitha Taby, 227 Salmon Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am here to talk about Hackett Hill and tell you how it could hurt us like I think if you build roads and buildings on Hackett Hill we would be taking homes from animals and that is probably the main reason why I am up here; to talk about animals. It would be taking some oxygen from us because we breathe off of trees and if you tear down trees it limits the oxygen that we have. That is the main reason why I came up here. The animals and to talk about the trees and that is all I have.

Mayor Baines advised that if there is no one else present wishing to speak, on motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Cashin, it was voted that all comments will be taken under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented.

Alderman Lopez stated, your Honor, at the last public meeting as a correction just for the public to be aware of and I think maybe your office can state this, but there was an indication from one of the persons at the last meeting that there was \$14 million and he gave some examples of how we could divide up that \$14 million to the police station and put it some place else. I do not know of any \$14 million. Do you?

Mayor Baines asked Mr. MacKenzie to clarify that for the record.

Mr. MacKenzie answered there was an early cost estimate for slightly over \$14 million. That number, though, was never appropriated by the Board. That was to be the final cost over several years of allocations, but that was never in total allocated.

Alderman Levasseur stated point of order. The usual way that we go about the beginning of this agenda and after the people speak I noticed that this happened at the School Board meeting last week, number 6, you skipped number 6 and you skipped it at the last meeting and the only reason why I suggest that is because yes it says Mayor Baines advises that if there is no one else present wishing to speak a motion would be in order to take all comments under advisement. Just that first line. A lot of people come in late and don't sign that sheet and if there is somebody out there that didn't have time to put their name on there...

Mayor Baines interjected I apologize.

Alderman Vaillancourt stated I have a question for the City Solicitor about the public input meeting. We had a gentleman who spoke way beyond two minutes tonight that appeared to be directed to come here from the Library or the Library Trustees or something. I am wondering if the purpose of the public forum is for the public to speak or it is a conduit for department heads to get messages to us. If so, I think we need to look at that.

Mayor Baines replied I would like to rule that comment out of order. I know you asked a question but I would like to make a statement that anybody can come to the Board. The gentleman who spoke is a volunteer who serves this community as people do on boards and commissions and that person is entitled to come to speak before this Board as any one in this community is entitled to do so. I was liberal with the time this evening. We didn't have very many speakers when we started and that is the prerogative of the Chair.

Alderman Vaillancourt responded the question was is there any place in the Charter or in the rules of the Board regarding public input and whether it should be from members of the public or as a conduit for department heads.

Mayor Baines replied it is not a conduit. This is a public forum and anybody is entitled to speak at a public forum of the Board. That is the way it is and I hope that is the way it always will be in fact.

Alderman Hirschmann stated for the record could you have the Planning Director, Mr. MacKenzie, state for the public and for everyone actually how many hundreds of acres are going to be placed under conservation up on Hackett Hill.

Mr. MacKenzie replied the negotiated agreement calls for 376 acres to be set aside in perpetuity in a conservation zone. The City is also negotiating with two adjacent property

owners, which would exceed 200 acres in size to purchase for a conservation zone. In total, I believe the preserve when completed will total about 600 acres.

Alderman Hirschmann stated I think it is very important to make sure that everyone hears that over and over again. That out of 800 acres, we are going to conserve 600 acres so there will be plenty of room for animals and trees. The 200 acres that are being developed, if you take a drive up to Hackett Hill, there are parking lots up there that are already paved and that is where the development is going to be.

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

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk