

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

January 2, 2001

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

Mayor Baines called the meeting to order.

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

A moment of silent prayer was observed. Mayor Baines asked everyone in their thoughts and prayers to keep in mind the Flannery boys and firefighter Dave Anderson and their families.

The Clerk called the roll.

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

Absent: Alderman Thibault

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

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.

Tom Prieto, 1000 Elm Street, Manchester, NH stated:

I am here representing Properties, Inc., a PSNH subsidiary. Tonight before you on the agenda, Item 16, is the rezoning agreement, which I understand that all of you have received. I am speaking here just for a moment because the agreement will speak for itself and we will be available to answer any specific questions later in the evening if you should desire. The highlights are that PSNH is prepared to offer \$700,000 in pre-paid impact fees as part of the rezoning to help mitigate traffic calming issues in the Ward 9 area, specifically around Gold Street. Secondly, our projections are based on analysis of the tax revenue card that if this property is rezoned and utilized to its full potential, there

is an opportunity for the City to expand its tax base up to \$300,000 to \$400,000. Presently, it generates about \$100,000 and we are projecting \$350,000 to \$400,000. Finally, this is the highest and best use of the property. It is currently surrounded by Home Depot, Sam's Club, Hannaford Shop n' Save. It is no longer suitable for industrial purposes. We did hear testimony from Jay Taylor indicating that he thought it would be appropriate. The City is now going through a master rezoning and part of that master rezoning is looking to expand the tax base so that all properties can be utilized to their highest and best potential in order to generate additional tax revenues to support the City's priorities. We certainly believe that this offer shows our good will to support that endeavor so that industrial and commercial properties somewhat mitigate the tax increases to the homeowner residences in the City of Manchester. Again, we will be available to answer any specific questions you have on the agreement, but it speaks for itself.

Russell Spaulding, 321 Gold Street, Manchester, NH stated:

We are in a bit of amazement over this request of Public Service to rezone the property at this time. We were told at certain meetings through the summer that we would have a traffic test, a barrier, a jersey barrier, a rat hole, this and that and the other thing to see if a traffic plan would work before anything was brought before this Board for rezoning. This agreement that I was just handed by Alderman Pariseau, the first line on here is a request to rezone March Avenue properties. I think this is putting the cart way, way before the horse. It is not time for any such talk about rezoning or giving money to the City for this or changing this or changing that. We on Gold Street have petitioned everybody on the street asking if they wanted to rezone the property or not the rezone the property. Everybody except one person voted not to rezone the property until we have our traffic problem solved. For the past three months, we have nothing started and nothing in the planning stages that I know of. In a recent conversation with Mr. MacKenzie, he thinks it is too early to have any talk about rezoning. If you have any questions and I don't see Mr. MacKenzie here but he would answer any questions about the rezoning. I think it is too early to even talk about this or vote on it. I think you should table this or send it back to Bills on Second Reading. It is just way too early for this.

Alderman Pariseau stated the rezoning issue is not coming up this evening. What is being voted on is the Public Service Company's offer of the \$700,000 for traffic calming measures to lay out the railroad right-of-way as an access to South Beech Street down by Linguard. There will be no rezoning of the property until after the traffic calming measures have been implemented for one month. That action, I was informed this evening at the Traffic Committee meeting, will occur sometime this week.

Mr. Spaulding replied we were informed that once these things are implemented we would have a three month trial period and then we would have a little meeting between us in Ward 9 to see if we would accept what the City has brought forward and then we would talk about rezoning. That is why it seems too early to be talking about rezoning.

Alderman Pariseau responded the three-month issue was discussed at that neighborhood meeting that we had in August.

Mr. Spaulding stated as a matter of fact, at the neighborhood meeting we were at I personally asked you would this ever come before the Board and you said it will not come before the Board until the traffic problem has been solved.

Mayor Baines stated I did deviate from our normal procedure because I know this is a hot issue. We are actually going to have a little bit of a recess because we don't have a lot of speakers and you can follow-up with Alderman Pariseau.

Ms. Spaulding stated if you could just keep us a little more informed. Nobody on the street knows anything. We have to read articles in the newspaper to find out what is going on. We never hear about follow-up and we just don't want to be forgotten.

Deputy Clerk Johnson stated a letter was distributed to the Board and the Conservation Commission requested that it be distributed. It is in regards to the Public Service property on March Avenue and lays out certain requests relating to the pond and site plan.

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

First, your Honor, my condolences to the City and Alderman Hirschmann for the loss of a fine firefighter and to the Flannery family for the loss of two sons. Getting down to business, a quote from the December 19th meeting. Just before I came up to speak, one of the Aldermen must have had their mike on and I quote them as saying, "get out the egg timer." I wonder why that Alderman would want to say that just before I came up. I also wonder whether that Alderman can take credit for that and raise his hand and say I said it. Why didn't the Alderman say that just before the kids came up to sing their Christmas carol? A little discourteous. I have to agree with Alderman Levasseur's accounting on the Riverfest money. It seems to me that if his figures are correct on the number that attended down there and the gate fee, they shouldn't be needing \$15,000 to bail them out. I agree with him on that. The see-saw back and forth and the rhetoric on the senior center and whether to put it in the Millyard area or down at the Sears site and there was a statement made well what if it doesn't work, what do we do with a stand-alone building then in the Millyard? The same thing you are going to do with a stand-alone building at

the Sears site. My understanding from talking with Alderman Gatsas is that you are purchasing the Sears building to be able to build a stand-alone building in the backside of the parking lot for the senior center. If you are going to build a stand-alone building in the Millyard or at the Sears building, it makes no difference if it doesn't work out. You have a stand-alone building. Then I am curious as to the article that was in the *Union Leader* on the Chase building being a City-owned building. Why do we need to buy the Sears building and take it off the tax roles to consolidate City departments and save rental money when we have a City-owned building that according to the Destination Manchester Coordinator only 60% of the space has been leased to date. Why aren't we moving some City departments into this building to start with? Why are we looking for another building? Alderman Levasseur on your show last week you were talking about the integrity of the process for the civic center. That leaves a lot to be desired. I don't think you have completely read all of the memorandums of understanding because the integrity and you spoke about the public hearings and everything, but I remember a public hearing at Memorial High School in May of 1998 before we went to the polls in November and a gentleman stood up and asked Mr. Ashooh a question about City revenue from parking garages going to Ogden Management. That was a question that Mr. Ashooh wanted to avoid like a hot potato, but if he would have answered it truthfully he would have told people that an agreement had been signed with Ogden a year and a half before that. That money was going to go to them from our parking garages. So, this whole thing about the integrity of this process stinks. Some of your Aldermen think that the private loan that was taken out for \$9 million, \$10 million or \$11 million, whatever the figure is, we haven't seen a final figure, that that is going to be paid back out of the revenue from the luxury suites at the civic center. If you read your memoranda of understanding, you will find out that SMG bought Ogden's agreement and that under that agreement 60% of the luxury suite money goes to them, 20% goes to the hockey team and 20% comes to the City. Now, the City out of their 20% has to pay expenses, reserve accounts and maintenance on the building. So, where are we going to pay back \$10 million or whatever the figure is out of our 20%. Set this thing straight once and for all and I hope the *Union Leader* guy will do it this time. Here is my checkbook, your Honor. There is \$100 check that will go to any charity that you name or this Board names if you prove me wrong. The City doesn't have to put up anything. Prove me wrong.

Mayor Baines replied we don't bet in these Chambers.

Mr. Dodd stated you are not betting anything. \$100 check to a charity of your choice. Show me somebody else's name on the bottom of that \$10 million note or whatever the figure is that they are responsible for and the City is not in any way. It is not coming out of funds that we received from the civic center, but somebody else is going to be responsible for it because the memorandum of understanding that I have is Ogden

Entertainment was going to put no money into this process whatsoever and SMG bought that contract and all of the obligations that went with it. Prove me wrong and I will give you \$100 to any charity that you want.

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

Mayor Baines advised that this being a special meeting of the Board, no further business can be presented, and on motion of Alderman Pariseau, duly seconded by Alderman Wihby, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk