

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

February 6, 2007

7:00 PM

The Mayor called the Special Meeting of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to order.

The Clerk called the roll. Thirteen Aldermen were present.

Present: Aldermen Roy, Gatsas, Long, Duval, Osborne, Pinard, O'Neil, Lopez, Shea, DeVries, Garrity, Smith, Forest.

Absent: Alderman Thibault

Mayor Guinta 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 three minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak and any comments must be directed to the Chair.

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

Katherine Gatsas, 568 Island Pond Road, Manchester NH (Re: Crime) stated: The reality of chemicals used as weapons permeated the world's consciousness when King Saddam Hussein murdered innocent people with chemicals. In Bangalore, India, men throw kerosene upon the bodies of innocent women and then ignite those women's bodies with fire. These men are punished with prison sentences, as reported by the New York Times. On Island Pond Road, here in Manchester, New Hampshire, a man trained and experienced with toxic chemicals fills an Indian pump with volatile hydrocarbon solvents and assaults my home. To heighten his terror, he threatened to chemically disfigure my face. Kelly Ayotte knows his threats and wrongful conduct is a crime punishable by New Hampshire law. I have been before this council numerous times, asking for action and it has fallen upon deaf ears. These assaults injure us and we fear for our safety and our lives. Police Chief Jaskolka and Fire Chief Joe Kane have demonstrated their official indifference to my complaints. I believe they are guilty of cover-up, patriarchal oppression, denial of civil rights, and abuse of power. My political enemies have attempted to discredit and dishonor me with their splendor, possibly colluding with Jaskolka's and Joe Kane's cover-up. The assault escalates, Mayor Guinta. We need protection. I filed these complaints with Kelly Ayotte, New Hampshire's Attorney General, Hillsborough County Attorney Marguerite Wageling, and with you, Mayor Guinta, Manchester's mayor. Thank you very much.

Robert Tarr, 318 Spruce Street, Manchester NH (Re: Tax increase) stated: On behalf of my landlord, residents, and business owners of the City, in light of the recent sewer tax increases about to fall upon us in April, we're asking this Board tonight, and Your Honor, to look at open negotiations with the EPD and to ask if they can have a reduction of a tax increase, not of twenty-five percent, but of fifteen percent. Following the fiscal years of 2008, 2009 and 2010, an increase of twenty percent and then ask for a negotiation of an extension into the following year of 2011 with the additional remaining fifteen percent. Again, the tax increase, it seems to burden all of us, not just only us residents as myself, but as my landlord has stated and others have stated to me, this increase of twenty-five percent, not only causes their property taxes to go up, it also raises the rent for us residents and it makes it a burden for everyone across the board. So I'm hoping tonight that you guys, you folks, you ladies and gentlemen, will look into partially reducing the amount of the tax rate of twenty-five percent to the recommendations that we have given you tonight. We hope you have listened to us and we hope you'll carry through. Thank you.

Jane Beaulieu, 609 South Main Street, Manchester NH (Re: Bass Island) stated: I've got some information to relay to the Mayor and Board of Aldermen in regards to Bass Island and the **Nech ?** property. All environmental study documents are in and there is clean-up needed for surface contamination on the Nech property, which is approximately \$5,000 dollars. The adjacent property study indicates ground water contamination and the plume from the contamination traveling. Immediately I recommend we purchase the Nech property at today's assessed value and work on purchasing the adjacent property. Through the partnership with DES and EPA in their ground fields program, we could get financial assistance to rid the site of the underground storage tank and contaminated soils. I want to make note that on August 13, 2003, I posed a question to the Planning Board at that time at that meeting. I posed questions about hazardous materials on that site and there was no response from the Planning Board at that time. They said that the site was clear of any environmental issues. Today we find out that there is groundwater contamination that does exist on that piece of property that I was concerned with in '03. And also I want to just make note, and this is addressed to Alderman Forest, the papers that I flail are documents and these documents are documents from DES, Trust for Public Land, New Hampshire Preservation Alliance, EPA, PWA, Manchester Conservation Commission, Office of the Mayor, and on and on. So these are official documents and not just flailing paper. So if you could discuss in the near future the purchase of the Nech property, I would greatly appreciate it. Thank you.

Richard Duckoff, 380 North Bay Street, Manchester NH (Re: Code Enforcement) stated: I'm still here to address the issue of Code Enforcement in the Building Department. Many people look at the Building Department as a department they attack because the process is so slow on permits. I'm not here to talk about that issue. I'm here to talk about zoning enforcement. And I'm here to talk about the meeting that was chaired by Chairman Osborne

on August 1st, the meeting that really pierced the bubble and got things started. And then followed up by the Mayor who quite correctly initiated the NET program, and that's how it all got started. Sometimes good things come out of committees, and that's where things can start. I'm going to quote what Mr. Sink stated. He said, "The issue is probably, as you know, that there's a lot of non-compliance out there in terms of zoning ordinances." Now, I'm going to agree with Mr. Sink. He also said that Glenn is quite competent at his job. He knows the zoning ordinance. He knows how to enforce it. Mr. Osborne said the City is letting the infrastructure slide. It's as simple as that. Then there was a comment here where Chairman Osborne brought up the issue of the amount of time that was spent in the office by Mr. Gagne. Mr. Gagne responded and he stated, and I'm quoting him, according to the minutes, "Obviously I'm in the office. I have reviews for Building Board of Adjustment, huge amount of my time, along with, you know, making calls, going to the counter, helping people who are coming in to see me. So as Alderman Osborne said, ninety percent of my time I'm in my office. When I do get out, it takes a long time to get to those inspections that are all piled up, and all the paperwork and everything." Now I did the mathematics. Ten percent of your time out of the office comes out to forty-eight minutes. And I did that without a calculator. That comes out to forty-eight minutes, and it takes a certain amount of time to get to the car. I don't know how long. You can judge by yourself. So what we have here is we've hired somebody to help somebody else who is spending maybe thirty minutes, according to his own testimony, inspecting. My suggestion is this: and I'm not being unfair in any way, shape or manner. My suggestion is that the problem when you have a decline in neighborhoods, a decline in neighborhoods breeds blight and blight breeds crime. You cannot be against crime if you're for a decline in neighborhoods, or if you ignore the decline in neighborhoods. This has to be handled and we are behind the curve of the rest of the cities in this state, the progressive cities in this state as far as enforcement of zoning ordinances. We don't need to be there. We have an opportunity, the situation has been shoved to the forefront, and it can't be allowed to slide back. A hundred and fifty complaints have gone into the Zoning Department and more will be coming. I only want to say this: that I want to believe that the zoning inspector is not the problem. He's the symptom of the problem. The problem is the culture that's gone on and on and on. He's been allowed to happen. And who allowed it to happen? It wasn't Frank Thomas. It wasn't Kevin Sheppard. I don't know who it was, but I know it wasn't those two. And what I suggest is that the process continue and the problem be fixed. There's ways to do it. And I suggest that it's so bad that there be part timers that go out, that formerly worked for the Building Department, to go out on Saturdays, part time. Two people or 1.05 people cannot clean this up in two years. It's that bad. It needs somebody to go out on Saturdays to work at it part time to bring it back to where it should be. This has been allowed to fester and now it has erupted into something really bad. And I pray that this Board and that this Mayor really tackle this because there's an opportunity for the City. This can be a real plus. Thank you.

Mayor Guinta stated before we close, we do want to just make a quick announcement. If Dick Marston and Mike Babineau could come forward, as well as the West Side Aldermen.

Dick Marston said thank you for allowing me to speak in front of the Aldermen and what have you. What we have done is something that is long overdue in the City of Manchester on the West Side, and we've had a lot of support from people in the City as far as the Aldermen that we've talked with, and the Parks and Recreation Department has been on our side. And last but not least, we had to go to Little League headquarters and we are officially combined into one league on the West Side of Manchester. That is to say Southwest and West have recombined back to one league, and it's going to be a tremendous year for the kids on the West Side. We're going to utilize both of the ballparks that are there, and we are now going by the name of Manchester West Side Little League. And we thank the Mayor and the Aldermen and the City of Manchester for allowing us to put this together.

Mayor Guinta stated thank you very much. We appreciate it. I think this is really a smart move for the West Side. I'm looking forward to...I remember actually last year, I took my kids to both of the games and unfortunately, one of them, they started getting a little rambunctious and were crying, I think, during the father's words, so we'll be able to combine that and hopefully get them off to their naps before they start acting up. This is a good thing for the West Side and a good thing for the City. We appreciate the amount of effort and time and commitment that it has taken, not just by the two leagues but by the Aldermen from the West Side as well. So thank you all very much for doing this. We appreciate it.

Alderman Forest stated Dick Marston, is the original president of the West Little League; Mike Babineau is the original president of the Southwest. Dick makes it sound real easy, like all they had to do was write Williamsport. This has been an ongoing thing for these two men and a group of people of both leagues for almost three years now. It took this long to get this done. So it's not something we did over the weekend. This is something that they've been trying to do for three years and Little League finally let them do it.

Mayor Guinta asked can we get a quick picture?

This being a special meeting of the Board, no further business was presented and on motion of Alderman Roy, duly seconded by Alderman Pinard, it was voted to adjourn

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk