

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

March 6, 2007

7:00 PM

Mayor Guinta called the meeting to order.

Mayor Guinta called for the Pledge of Allegiance, which was led by Alderman Forest.

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll. Thirteen Aldermen were present.

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

Absent: Alderman Shea

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.

Karl Tiedemann, 81 Riley Avenue, Manchester, NH (Re: St. Ann-St. Augustin) stated: Mr. Mayor, in October of 2005, five of your fellow Aldermen signed a letter that's caused the Manchester Housing and Redevelopment Authority to put a hold on its proposal to purchase a property that we, the parishioners of St. Ann-St. Augustin Church, have for sale. The reasoning was that, once the property is turned into housing, it would never be St. Ann again. I was rather dismayed by that reasoning, as I kind of assumed that, once the former church was converted into between twenty and forty dwelling units for elderly and adults with disabilities to live independently in service in ????? housing, it would be named, at the very least, St. Ann Housing. The reason the property was put up for sale was that there were not enough parishioners at St. Ann and St. Augustin to support either church. As the Joint

Pastoral Advisory Council set about the agonizing task of deciding which of the two churches would be closed and sold, an intervention, perhaps a divine intervention, occurred. A section of the ceiling of St. Ann collapsed. An inspection concluded that it would not be safe to hold mass in the church. So all the masses and services were diverted to St. Augustin Church. Further analysis showed that the cost to rehabilitate St. Ann surpassed the cost to rehabilitate St. Augustin. During 2006 more of the ceiling collapsed in the former St. Ann Church. During the past two decades membership has declined in both parishes. Declining membership means declining financial support, as former members do not put coins in the collection plate and they most assuredly don't support any fundraising projects at the parish. After all, they left and now give allegiance and support to their new parishes. Both church buildings have deteriorated over time. The sale of the former St. Ann Church will provide the funding to rehabilitate the St. Augustin Church building, where St. Ann-St. Augustin parish now calls home. St. Ann-St. Augustin parish is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of St. Augustin Cemetery, St. Augustin Pre-school, St. Augustin Rectory, St. Augustin Church and the former St. Ann Church building. One-third of the St. Ann-St. Augustin annual expenditures are spent on the upkeep of the former St. Ann Church building. Had the purchase agreement been signed in October of 2005, it would have been born again as a contributing part of our community, instead of a big, empty cavern that eats parishioners', not former parishioners' money. I'm not entirely sure what the Friends of St. Ann Church are trying to do, other than use a government agency to promote returning the property to church status at someone else's expense. The St. Ann-St. Augustin parishioners have deemed that St. Ann Church is no longer serviceable as a house of worship and needs to be sold to save the parish itself. Please honor our decision. Thank you.

Katherine Gatsas, 568 Island Pond Road, Manchester, NH (Re: Crime) stated: Are Manchester taxpayers funding municipal employee crime? I object to my tax dollars funding the salaries of criminal conduct. During the past Public Session, the people's call for justice was clearly voiced. The people expressed violations of ordinances, ignored; building codes, rules and regulations, ignored; violations of State and Federal law, ignored. What's being done to stop municipal employee crime? Allegations of fraud, fraud leading to death, by the code enforcement department. Allegations of discrimination against women; not once, not twice, but many times at the School Department. Allegations of civil rights violated at the Police Department. And at the Fire Department, we have documented reported violations confirmed by Fire Chief Joe Kane. A firefighter, a municipal employee, violated Fire Department rules and regulations, and in so doing, violated New Hampshire law. What's being done to stop municipal crime? When we allow for less than integrity, Mayor Guinta, less than lawfulness, we participate as architects in the building of crime, corruption and chaos. People are objecting to what's going on in this City. Joe Kane has an affirmative duty to report municipal employee crime. Protecting above the law criminality is unlawful. Joe Kane's official indifference is bureaucratic stonewalling. His failure to sufficiently supervise the ranks permits for abuse of power and the victimization of women. And I encourage other women that have been victimized by the Police and Fire to please come

forth. A neighborhood rumor refers to Industrial Park Road Fire House #8 as a country club. Some of us tax payers, the working poor, we can't afford another country club. We tax payers expect lawful conduct from all municipal employees and nothing less. Municipal employees are hired to serve the citizens of this community in a lawful manner, in accordance with department rules and regulations, State law, Federal law, and certainly in accordance with the United States Constitution. What is being done to prosecute the criminals? Mayor Guinta, I place you on notice again this evening that assault against us continues. Thank you.

Dennis Grogan, 315 Canal Street, Manchester, NH (Re: St. Ann) stated: I have a letter here which I have copies, if you wish to distribute them. As you know, St. Ann Roman Catholic Church was closed by the Diocese of Manchester and abandoned by the parishioners of St. Ann-St. Augustin Church. One of the oldest remaining institutional structures in our City, this grand building was constructed in the first decade after the incorporation of Manchester in 1846. Founded by Irish immigrants, who came here from famine stricken Ireland to work in the Amoskeag Mills, the church withstood an 1854 attack by anti-Catholic know-nothings, and has since served as a beacon of immigrant success for over one hundred and fifty years. St. Ann Church truly represents a cradle of the Granite State immigration experience, the Ellis Island of New Hampshire. Unfortunately, as we write this letter, the building suffers from a leaky roof. It threatens its structural soundness. At present we are aware of no proposals on the table to purchase the building. The longer this building remains in disrepair, the more difficult and costly it will be to return it to active use. For these reasons, a group of concerned citizens and preservation-minded individuals formed Friends of St. Ann Church. Friends. Our goal is to preserve St. Ann Church in a way that will respect its architectural integrity, honor its history, and serve the community. To ascertain the best possible way to preserve the structure, Friends is coordinating with experienced professionals, such as the Manchester Historical Association, the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Friends is currently raising money to conduct a re-use study, which we hope to initiate shortly. This will focus first on the building to determine its possibilities, considering its pre-Civil War architecture, its historic significance and its densely populated urban location. Second, the study will identify the needs of the general community, and in particular the needs of the neighborhood residents. We intend to put forth a well-thought-out, feasible proposal and Friends hopes to have your support. This is signed by the all officers of Friends of St. Ann. Thank you.

Richard Duckoff, 380 North Bay Street, Manchester, NH (Re: Building Department) stated: I'm here tonight with a profound sense of regret and I'll be honest with you, disgust, I guess would be the right word. I know at times all of you Aldermen get frustrated with some things, but I've gone beyond that in this particular case. It's disgust. I've gone beyond disgust but to get to that next stage, I don't know what that is yet. And it deals with the fact that at the last Administration Committee meeting that took place, Department head Mr. Leon LaFreniere was sitting where I'm sitting now. He, on the 13th of February, just last

month, the head of the Building Department, was asked repeatedly by the Chairman of the Administration Committee, could you tell us, Leon, how many citations were issued by housing inspectors for zoning violations? I have the minutes, these are the minutes of the Administration Committee meeting and Chairman O'Neil asks as follows: We're already seeing that in 2006 the housing code inspectors wrote 91 citations for zoning issues. Mr. LaFreniere: absolutely. And in the Union Leader the next day, February 14, 2007, LaFreniere told the Committee that his housing code inspectors wrote 91 zoning-related citations in 2006. The facts absolutely refute that. In fact, the housing code inspectors wrote zero citations for zoning issues from April of last year until I actually got the printout on the 23rd of last month. To get this printout, I had to jump through hoops. I had to go to the Police Department to get it. The Police Department had to go...it got bumped down to the City Solicitor's office. And all it is, is six pages. All it does is list which inspectors issued citations during that period for what offenses, for what violations. Very simple. But yet I had to jump through hoops. And why? It wasn't desired that I see this because it refutes what was said. I guess I'm disgusted that a department head would sit where I'm sitting and hoodwink a committee. It was a falsehood. It was a knowing falsehood. You were told what it was thought you wanted to hear. Thank you very much.

Jane Beaulieu, 609 South Main Street, Manchester, NH (Re: Bass Island) stated: I'm here once again to talk about Bass Island. I was not able to make a meeting this afternoon. Of course I probably wasn't invited, but I wanted to give the Lands and Buildings Committee some information about the Nature Endowment Fund. A month ago, when I learned that the money that was set aside from the subcommittee was set aside in the Nature Endowment Fund. I investigated to see where the Nature Endowment Fund was. I went to the Finance Director. He did not know anything about the Nature Endowment Fund. I went to Sam Maranto, who's responsible for CIP money. No Nature Endowment Fund. I talked to Judy Heminger, who's responsible for a lot of bookkeeping in the Planning Department. No Nature Endowment Fund. I believe today Mr. McKenzie spoke about a Nature Endowment Fund and how the money from the subcommittee was set aside in the Nature Endowment Fund. I don't know when that was set up, but it was probably set up perhaps yesterday, because as far as I knew, there was no Nature Endowment Fund established. So I think, I don't know how you can investigate that, but I think some of your Board members may want to take a look at when this Nature Endowment Fund was established. I went over to Rick Cantu, who is the interim director of EPD, who attended several of the meetings when that money was set aside. I spoke with him as well. He said the money was to be set aside in the Nature Endowment Fund but it had not been set aside. It was still in EPD. And this was a couple weeks ago. Mr. Mayor, we did meet about a month ago. I was in the office with you and the Netches and an architect. You were on the phone with Mr. MacKenzie during that meeting...wanted to know if the DOT mitigation money was still there, and the VISTA money still there. And Mr. MacKenzie at that time said it was. So, I don't know who's playing games but I would really like more of the Aldermen...I know Mr. Lopez and Mr. Smith is really trying to look into it, but there is still money set aside for Bass Island. I know

they're working on a Purchase and Sales, there's an appraisal that just came out. We don't need to wait any longer to purchase this piece of property. Thank you for your time and I'd please like someone to look into this Nature Endowment Fund.

Robert Tarr, 318 Spruce Street, Manchester, NH (Re: School Budget) stated: I have a little bit of a different topic to talk to you tonight. I know that the School Board budget is coming up for review. I know that will be coming up in a couple of months. It hasn't gone to the full School Board meeting yet for review. I know many of you have read that there's \$151.7 million in the proposed budget that they're proposing. Tonight I just want to bring a couple of facts to your attention so you guys can keep this fresh in your mind when the School Board presents their budget to you. The first fact is that I work on the ???????? project which is District ???? Improvement and I sit in one of the meetings once a month throughout the whole school year at one of the schools and we work on the master plan. The facts of that is that we sit in this classroom at McLaughlin. It's room 2215, and for 180 days this classroom is not utilized at all. There is no teacher. There are no students. In this classroom they are not being rearranged to another class to accommodate us. It is vacant. Another fact is that McLaughlin had over 850 students this year. Many of the classrooms, again, were very crowded and not enough teachers. The third and final fact that I have for you tonight is that my son, my stepson, is on an IEP, which is an Individual Education Plan. He was told, and this is a fact that was presented to him by several staff. At the beginning of the year he could not receive extra or additional services, due to the fact that the budget was not allowing for additional resource teachers. So I happened to think, if there's no additional resource teachers, why couldn't they have hired at least someone part time or per diem to fill this vacant classroom, and give some of the students like my stepson the additional help he needed? It did not come about. At this current time, the fact is that my stepson has failed his first two quarters, his first semester of school, and is in possible placement for retention for eighth grade, which they may not do because he needs to move on to high school. So as the School Board presents their budget findings for you in the couple months coming up, please keep aware that we do have classrooms that are vacant and students are overcrowded in classrooms. There are no teachers. So when the School Board presents their \$151.7 million – or even more – take into deep consideration that classrooms are not being utilized. West is going to lose 483 students from Bedford. Again, there'll be vacancies. We need to pass this budget as it stands at \$151.7 million, or even \$154 million so that all students receive a decent, quality education.

Barbara Vigneault, Director of Senior Services, (Re: Senior Stampede) stated: Tonight I'm presently announcing the beginning of the April 15th Senior Stampede, which is, as you know, a fund raiser for the Senior Center, the William B. Cashin Senior Activity Center. It's April 15th and it's going to be held at the Gatsas Athletic Complex and the walk will be a two mile walk around Dorrs Pond, and you'll probably be seeing these posters placed around businesses and places people frequent. We would like people to walk and to get sponsors to raise money. The fund is almost at its goal. Our goal is \$500,000 and we're just short of

that, so we're expecting that this Stampede will be successful and bring us to meet that goal. So, we'll want to celebrate that once we do maintain and reach that goal. The major sponsors for the event are important to announce. We have Dunkin' Donuts; the Scrivanos Group; Delta Dental; The Aganost Companies; Manchester-Boston Regional Airport; WFEA; Craig & Gatzoulis, Attorneys at Law; Blue Cross/Blue Choice; Nixon, Raiche, Vogelman, Barry & Slawsky "Good Lawyers"; Brady Sullivan; and Elliot Senior Health Center. And we would like people to frequent the businesses mentioned. We feel that they are major sponsors which is a great contribution, and our fundraising committee has been really successful and they have worked hard. Attorney David Nixon is our chairman and Attorney Mike Craig is the chairman of the Stampede walk. Again, it's Sunday, April 15th. If people would like to walk, they can obtain these sponsorship forms at our office. The number is 624-6533. We'll gladly get them extra copies if they need them. They can fill out these sponsorship forms and get them back to us at the Senior Center at 151 Douglas Street. They can walk for any type of contribution they would like to make. If they would like to be a team of ten people or more, if a business would like to get a team together, they can get their team name on T-shirts. So, there will be give-aways of T-shirts. There will be refreshments and food available, and soups donated by the various restaurants. So, again, if you would like to make a contribution, we do have the sponsor sheet forms and if you would like to participate in the event, it should be fun, it should be a lot warmer than this evening, and so we really hope to enjoy the event. Thank you very much.

There being no one else present wishing to speak, on motion of Alderman Pinard, duly seconded by Alderman Roy, it was voted to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented.

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

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk