

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

December 4, 2007

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

Mayor Guinta called the special meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Roy, Gatsas, Long, Duval, Osborne, Pinard, O’Neil, Lopez,
Shea, DeVries, Garrity, Smith, Thibault

Absent: Alderman Forest

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 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.

Mr. Robert Tarr, 318 Spruce Street #3, stated: I came here tonight to speak about the proposed raises that Mr. Bernier has brought before this Boards, item D. I agree not to have these raises. Due to the references in Mr. Bernier's letter when he says that your job is frequently a thankless job, that it demands your attention 24/7, seven days a week, he goes on to say that the out-of-pocket expenses related to the positions, and there's also time spent away from family. If we consider the aldermanic positions as well as what Neighborhood Watch groups do, we pretty much do the same thing. We're out there 24/7, seven days a week, thankless job, in all kinds of weather, including the incumbent weather today, where I walked on many of the sidewalks...they weren't even plowed. I was surprised. Out of pocket expenses...every month I'm spending over \$300 on supplies, paper, flashlights, batteries, and so forth. Do we get compensated? No. Do we want to get compensated? No. We do this because it's part of our public service to our community and to our police force and to the City to make sure that our streets are safe, the elderly are taken care of, and things are done. If we are to vote on raises for the Aldermen and so forth, I think it should go before the public in a non-binding referendum in the 2009 election, just as we did in the 2005, when we asked about the raise for the Mayor's position, if we wanted to raise that. Ultimately, and through the public participation of that non-binding referendum, it was voted that no, the Mayor should not receive a raise. So again, when we look at this item D, look at it carefully. I hope that tonight you guys do not support it, not that you guys don't do a great job, but I think that many times you do a great job with the City. You have done some wonderful things. Of course, raising taxes was not one of them. But you have done many, many things. I think through your supporters who have re-elected you for this next two year term, I think that shows that they thank you for your support. So I can't see how it can be considered a thankless position. So again, I hope you vote no tonight for these aldermanic raises and mayor raises, and I hope you would put in a non-binding referendum in 2009 and let the public speak. Thank you.

Russell Hobbs, 23 Country Club Drive #2, stated: I'm addressing you tonight because of the flagrant violation of the snow emergency ban. When cars don't move as ordered by

law during snow emergencies, streets aren't properly plowed. Country Club Drive and other streets aren't properly plowed. When they're not cleared properly, it creates extremely dangerous situations. Country Club Drive is a narrow, winding street. I went out this morning about ten o'clock. There were still ten cars behind snow banks. Another 20 to 30 parking spaces had snow unplowed because they couldn't get around these other cars. There were probably six or seven cars double-parked because they couldn't get into a parking space, which created a very serious traffic hazard. And I'm sure this is happening throughout the City, not just on this one street. In fact, when I came down tonight there were still five cars behind snow banks. Fortunately, what helped the situation is the management across the street in Washington Park Apartments does come through when they can and push the snow back. However, there are so many other places where cars are still there so they couldn't push it back, it's still a mess. Once it freezes up, it's there. Last year there were cars every snow storm, unless they happened to be towed, which is only one to two times, they were there every single snow storm. And they wouldn't move for months at a time. The only time we've had relief is when they did tow all of the cars. In several situations I talked with the Highway Department last year. They said we had so many cars up there we couldn't tow them all. Something's wrong. And the laws need to be changed. I propose, number one, you tow the cars. If you can't tow them all, and I'm sure there's a lot in the City that you can't tow because they say the lots are full, then change the ordinance. Put a fine, the same amount as if they were towed, and ticket them. You might have a special ticket because I've heard them talk...well, we've already got the tickets printed for the Police Department. Make a special ticket for this. And ticket them all. I know the Police Department is busy, but we have a lot of meter maids. You could drive them up there, two or three meter maids, and any other area of the City where you've got the problem, and ticket them all. We had a problem in our condominium a few years ago. As a member of the board of directors, we were talking with our lawyer, and we said what can we do to make people enforce the law? He said hit them in the pocketbook. If you hit them hard enough, they're going to obey the rules. And we do. In our parking lot, when

we need to have cars moved, the first thing we do is call the towing company. It costs them \$130 to get their car back. This year because a few people were slow in moving them, we also imposed a \$100 fine for the first offense and it goes up \$50 every offense. We haven't had anybody violate our rules this year. And if the City were to do something similar, they would get action, because this is the first storm, the streets are still a mess, and if this stuff freezes...Now another thing that could be done, is if you can't get this through in time, tell the Highway Department within a couple of days after a storm, get up there post the street just like Elm Street is posted tonight, and get the crews up there and clean the street. They don't do that. I talked to the Highway Department...well people don't move their cars. Well if you make it a point they're either going to move them or you're going to make them pay. They don't move them. The big thing is, you need to get some action. We need relief. And we're appealing to you. And if we don't get it, I'll be back again till we do get action. Thank you.

Tammy Simmons, 142 Parker Street, stated: I'm here to speak about the possibility of increases for the Mayor and this Board of Aldermen and the School Committee. My problem with it is less to do with the actual numbers and more with the process. I think the voters of Manchester voted for candidates who signed up under the system that we have in place, with the salary that we have in place, and they voted for you accordingly. I think for the Board to vote in a raise within a month after the election is just absolutely absurd. I think you'd be doing a great disservice to the voters and I think overall it's just not a good way to send a message back to the people that okay, now you've put us in office, now we're going to vote ourselves in a raise. I'd rather see it go on a referendum in the future election, put it before the people, let them decide. If they think that you're underpaid, and perhaps they will think that you're underpaid, but I think that they should have the opportunity since it's money coming out of their pockets, to decide if what we're paying you is what we think is sufficient, and give people the opportunity...if we're going to increase it to any amount more than it is, let that be put in place before the next City election so that people that are signing up for those elections know what the

deal is before they put their name on the ballot and before those voters vote for those same people. The other thing I'd like to mention at the same time just because it has come up, the mention of health care and health care costs, and I'm curious if that is public information that's available on the City website or anything as to who gets what health insurance benefits and how much it's costing the City, because it would be kind of nice if we had a very transparent system so that the taxpayers can look at, you know, Real Pinard, and say he gets this much salary and this much in health insurance benefits out of our tax pocket, and maybe Mike Garrity gets a different amount because he might have a different family make-up. And I think the taxpayers should be able to see that information because they might be quite surprised to find out just how much money we are spending on some things, even though the base salary may only be \$5,000. That's all.

Calum McNeil, 471 Silver Street, stated: I just want to thank you guys and to point out how special this is that for three minutes I get the whole City of Manchester to look at me and listen to me. This is the real only chance that a private voter really has a chance to come in front of the government and represent himself. I just want to thank you for allowing me to do that. I want to point out a few things: It's a \$14,000 per employee, that's the average amount the insurance in Manchester costs, my past friend voter. I think it's \$5.6 million Dennis Kucinich would save just the City taxpayers if he put his single payer program in. I don't want to plug anyone specifically, but the voter just talked about it so... \$14,000 per employee. I think I can check that on the website, but anyway...I just came here to talk to you guys about a couple of things. It's a really important time that we are the biggest voting block in the biggest, most important state, New Hampshire. Everybody knows that there's two races in the Primary: there's a democratic race and there's a republican race. We need to say yes, we're a republican and we have this, but what are we voting for the democratic side? How are we placing our support? Because the polls say that actually a republican can't vote in a democratic primary and a democrat can't vote in a republican primary. So I ask Mr. Guinta to put his democratic support behind Kucinich for president, just because he'd save \$5.6 million for

the taxpayers of the City. And, you know, he doesn't, you know, there is quite a bit of democrats in the City who are Frank's supporters. Another thing that has come up is the partisanship of (channels) 22 and 16. I don't know if you guys are School Board watchers, but that's half of the City in what they pay. We would pay half for the City and we pay half for the school system. This Board oversees the budget of them. Frank now has very significant board members on that board. If you have any influence there, we need to really have fair and transparent broadcasting from 16 and 22. Again, I'm sorry that I'm being broadcast on that channel with my knit cap on. I did ride my bike down here today. The bathroom is in the basement. I didn't have a chance to comb my hair before coming up here, but hopefully Grace will give me a good shot, instead of behind the head shots and let's say, Frank being invited to a debate and decline in going and having it played...I was quoted 32 times by an employee of her. I didn't check the number. I also was quoted at sixteen. I haven't gone back and done my research. But that debate was played 16 or 32 times; one of those two numbers is right, on her channel. This is ridiculous. Clear bi-partisanship. I'm not looking for local accountability. Why are we fighting over the breadcrumbs, folks? Let's look at the big picture here. We have a massive chance to really step forward with the leadership in Bedford, the leadership in Manchester. Get behind your Board here. Influential two years coming up; real changes coming on. Make your connections count. I'm not looking for local accountability. I don't want to throw rocks while I'm standing inside the glass house. I don't want to blow down the cards. I want to make sure the City grows in a very productive, clean way. I thought I've followed the rules as far as everything I've done. I try not to...the rules as they were portrayed to me as far as what I need to do here. I really hope there's no honest, legal, politically motivated attack against me right now, or else those rules would then...That would be very bad and I would feel very...I would feel like my free speech was being infringed on, if there was a politically-motivated attack. Please don't let that happened. And again, \$5.6 million; Dennis Kucinich for president. Tammy, \$14,000 per person is what we pay.

Billy Dodd, Ward 7, stated: Once again, I don't know how to follow. First of all I'd like to give my condolences to the family of the gentleman that lost his life in the fire this morning. And also, thanks to the firefighters for the outstanding job they did down there in trying to rescue him. It's a sad situation. A couple things in the paper: One of them is about the housing project up off of Kartzas Avenue with Mr. Anagnost up there. I'm looking through here and I see where the Board of Mayor and Aldermen gave him a half million dollars on a low interest loan. Now the last couple of loans you gave this gentleman – one for the Chase block was zero percent; for rehabbing McQuade's building it was zero percent. So I have to assume that your low interest loan on this half million dollars is also the same thing, zero percent. At the same time it's money you could have used for something else that's adding to our tax base. I think when you start to deal with the Jac Pac property...I've said it before...I think that one is going to come back to bite you in the butt. It's going to cost you a lot of money. The question is why? Why do different things happen? And here's the book that you guys should read. It's called Freakonomics. It's about why do people do things to their advantage and it's not really legal or fair? And one of the first things that they compare in here is why are schoolteachers and Sumo wrestlers alike? And it's because they cheat. But thank goodness our teachers don't do that, and what they're talking about is teachers that cheat on test scores to improve the standing of the school so that they get a pay raise. And our schools seem like they're falling on the No Child Left Behind list every year, so we don't have to worry about that. But why do different people do things? School superintendent...why did he do what he did and why isn't somebody else doing something about it? And if you go in and look up the RSA's, at the very least you could charge him with fraud because he instituted a document which required somebody else to do something which was going to give him monetary gain. Now, he did this without the School Board or yourself, Mayor, knowing about it. What happened to the official document last year when it came down to where you did give him his pay raise? Did that make it over to the human resource person in the School Department or did that one get thrown in the trash? But you caught him by...He got kind of greedy. He did it last year

and he thought he'd do it again this year. But definitely fraud. Signs. Why do we have signs around? Your pilot program. Your \$80,000 pilot program. Did anybody compare the cost of the sign package that you already have up that I mentioned to you before? We already have these signs that point the way around. You need to check and compare the cost of those two. Signs. Your Honor, why do you have a parking sign on this side of the building that says Mayor parking and one on Spring Street? Are you driving two cars at one time or I don't know. But you could eliminate that sign and the incentive to eliminate it would be we would be able to write another parking ticket. Pay raises. Yeah, you guys deserve more money. I have no problem with that. You've got your department heads and what have you making more than the Mayor, which is absolutely ridiculous. You guys do a lot of work. I know my Alderman, Mr. Shea, and I know Mr. Pinard over here, they do a lot of work. They could use a little more money for expenses and gas and what have you. I don't have any problem with you guys getting a small raise, not a quadruple raise. A sign of the times is the snow banks. Are you guys going to break out that \$300,000 snow melting machine that we have or is it going to sit in mothballs at the Highway Department again. Break it out and spring will come a lot quicker.

*There being no one else present wishing to speak, on motion of **Alderman Pinard**, duly seconded by **Alderman Shea**, 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 Smith** it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk