

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

April 15, 2008

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

Mayor Guinta called the meeting to order.

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

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen M. Roy, Gatsas, Sullivan, J. Roy, Osborne, Pinard,
O'Neil, Lopez, Shea, DeVries, Garrity, Smith, Ouellette,
Domaingue.

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.

Glenn R. J. Ouellette, 112 Auburn Street, Ward 3, stated:

You wouldn't come to us so we came to you. We're passing out the only information that you're probably going to get now because not one of our City officials showed up at very important hearing that the State of NH was holding last week at MCAM TV: Health Endowment, about how to take care of the health problems in this state. If you check out that book you'll notice if you add up all the columns for Manchester we get about \$750,000 of that state and federal funding. That's three quarters of a million dollars. Lord forbid that if they decide to cut they'll cut ours because none of our representatives were interested enough to show up. This evening I wanted to talk about tax cuts but there is something that has become more important. As a member of MCAM and a producer at MCAM TV, I want to tell you that I'm not a felon and I do have a cup sitting down at the shows that I do. It's ice tea; it's not wine or something else. When you swallow your foot sometimes the foot is too big and you swallow the canary. I just want to put things to rest in a polite way. There are no felons at MCAM TV 23. There are no drunks or people getting drunk on the set. It's a public access TV station. When you have a talk show and you're introducing all the seven farmers who grow wine in our state, that's not being a wino. And to set the record straight, it is MCTV or Dr. Sullivan that is building the station above a bar, who hosts a program on the educational station in a bar. And across the hall from the second floor above that bar is an office for counseling sex offenders. So I do not think that our studios are not safe for the kids. We have a lot of high school students who come to our studios and some of them produce their own shows. It is a safe environment for everyone; it is time to quell, to cut it out right now. This City does not need any more bad mouthing from anyone. Your Honor, I've seen yourself and other officials of this City slap hands on less things said. Let's work for the City; I'm proud of the City; and I want to keep it one city, not a divided city. I represent over 200 producers of MCAM. I'm their elected official. I'm elected by

them and for two years I've bitten my tongue. We don't need this bad mouthing so please keep it together and keep it positive for the City of Manchester.

Joe Briggs, 105 Burnsen Avenue, stated:

I'm a producer and board member for MCAM. I'm here today to request that MCAM's allocation of the Comcast franchise fee be increased one half percent and authorization granted to create a separate religious and cultural channel. Manchester is served by two access centers. MCTV, the City's government and educational access center, has performed its role reliably and professionally under the leadership of its director, Dr. Grace Sullivan. However, MCAM, Manchester's other access station, has a different mission: that of becoming the voice, the conscience, the pulse of Manchester. In two short years MCAM has become the country's largest and most successful access center in terms of producers, the awards for shows, innovations in service delivery, and the quality of its productions. More importantly, MCAM has brought home the bacon for Manchester by defining our values and defending our position as the first in the nation presidential primary. We've extensively covered each of the New Hampshire presidential debates, capturing the spirit, emotion, and determination of the candidates and have given voice to the many supporters and protesters alike. Through live broadcasting of town hall meetings, rallies, conventions, issues seminars, candidate debates and in depth interviews, MCAM has demonstrated the New Hampshire advantage to all those aspiring to the nation's highest office, as well as those who simply want to access and influence it. The resources and activities of MCAM's Millyard studio, the producers and staff, have been directly responsible for filling hotel rooms, renting cars and driving business to downtown restaurants and shops. The investment in MCAM has worked to establish in this City as the hub of political and intellectual activity. It has planted the seed in the minds of many influential visitors to ask, 'Why not Manchester?' when considering locations for future meetings, seminars, and investments. To be sure,

MCAM is in need of some fine tuning, and the board and its employees have a plan to remix its line-up to attract more sponsorship and further integrate the services into the community, and to achieve a consistency of production quality. However, given our population, refugee placement status and inherent cultural diversity, we need a separate channel just for cultural and religious expression. The current mix discourages sponsorship, the physical mandate unique to MCAM. MCAM welcomes the Mayor's suggestion of recombining the operations of MCTV and MCAM in order to synergize the facilities and equipment costs. MCAM was spun out of MCTV in order to extend the hours of operation and access. The Commercial Street facility can now comfortably accommodate both operations. The current division and competition for the same budget is already resulting in the duplication of services, blurring of programming types, and creating confusion. We can once again harness the combined pride, creativity, dedication and resources, and direct them into a single world-class media resource that both MCTV and MCAM have already demonstrated they are capable of providing. Whether the funding comes from recombining the two facilities or granting the request of one half percent of the franchise kickback it is paramount that MCAM receive an immediate funding increase in order to meet its operating expenses and add a new cultural channel. Thanks you.

Howard McCarthy, 105 Randall Street, stated:

I was here the other day and I spoke quite a bit, so I don't think you want to hear me again. You don't know me, and that's a shame. What I want is very plain. You see, common sense is my game. Two weeks ago you had a meeting here with the Gold Star Mothers. That meeting was very disturbing to me. And the reason for that is those Gold Star Mothers wanted to put a monument possibly in front of the Radisson. And there was a lot of opposition about whether it would go to Stanton Park or Veterans Park. I just wonder if you people really know who you were opposing. These are the Gold Star Mothers. They gave everything. They

gave their sons. What more could they give? Finally, something was resolved and I guess the monument is going there. But it was quite disturbing for me that these were the Gold Star Mothers. If I was at that meeting, I would have said, 'What do you want? You've got it.' I was thinking that...you know, I'm a celebrity now. That's right. I have my own show on MCAM. Somebody downstairs, one of the volunteers, actually asked me for my autograph. I asked her name, and I said okay, and I said thanks. You just inflated my ego. And she said thank you. Anyway, I was wondering if you people really know...I want to tell you something, or ask you something. Do you know what your actual ratings are? Very low. I ask a lot of people if they ever watch this program. Many say no. Some say sometimes. Some say...right in this building...not if I can help it. But you have to understand they work here all the time. I am trying to increase the ratings here, and I will, and I promise you I will not oppose you. After all, I've started to become popular. Does it sound like I'm bragging? Well I am. Thank you.

Kathleen Carswell, 388 Amherst Street, stated:

I live in Ward 4, and I would like to bring a couple of issues that are very big in our ward to be addressed. First, myself and other taxpaying citizens would like to meet with the judges and anyone else who has input on the fines that are for the prostitutes and the johns in the Manchester area that are given. They are very, very low. These girls personally have told me...because I walk the streets every night to keep them out of my neighborhood. They told me they do at least two tricks and that pays their fine. Please up the anti on the fines. Make them very high so they'll move away or it will solve it. And could we also, please, put the pictures back into the newspapers. Put their photos in there, the girls and the gentlemen that come around. Mayor Guinta, we ask again this time in front of the whole Board because we came to you back in the spring of last year for your help and we have not received any kind of help or response from that meeting. We are

not going to spend another year chasing the prostitutes and johns for the third year in a row. It must stop, please. Our Police Department can only do what they can with the laws and the fines the way they are now. We need to change them and we need to change them now. So, with anybody's help, we are more than willing to sit down. I have many people in our neighborhood who are willing to sit; we are willing to go up to the State House to see what we can do to change. All we're asking is for someone to please help us, point us in the right direction, give us some guidance, and let us know what we can do to really make an impact on the City because it is beginning to be a horror show. And I know personally I'm getting tired of it. You've seen me three times now, four with our other meeting. Second, this issue bothers me the most, and I can't believe the City is letting this happen. How can we let two families with single family mothers in a Habitat for Humanity building duplex on the corner of Amherst and Dutton Street live three houses away from a known drug dealer; they are back neighbors of the rooming house of the prostitutes that I chase out nightly. You're already setting them up to fail way before they ever get a chance to start a new beginning. I personally worked on one of the boards for the Habitat for Humanity. I've also participated in helping rehab some housing, so I know what it's all about. But these two women do not deserve this. They should be informed of what they're getting into before they signed those contracts. That to me is very unfair unless you have somebody sit down there and let their children be out there to be safe playing. And last, I would like to say it's nice to see you, Mr. Alderman Roy of Ward 4, since we have not seen you in five months in our neighborhood. We've made two calls to you, and we would like to ask if you would please come down the hill to meet with us sometime. It would be quite nice, if you need some guidance from seasoned Aldermen on the Board, find out what you need to do, that would be great. We've called. I've gotten one phone call back and other neighbors got one phone call back, and that's all we've gotten. We have issues. We need some help, and we don't see you. And we would just like to ask you to spend some time to

meet with us. I'll close with a saying from a very smart woman, my grandmother. 'Actions speak louder than words.' So please show the people of Manchester some real action. Thank you very much.

June Craig, 1661 Belmont Street, stated:

I am the secretary of MCAM's executive board since 2004. This hearing this evening is timely in view of the mounting concerns of the MCAM family of producers and the executive board. MCAM is a non-profit agency assigned by the City of Manchester to conduct the public access of the Comcast one percent funds. We are given annual funds, and we have used them as best and as frugally as possible with an eye to progress. We have struggled to be a well-equipped studio, ready for the use of the citizens and non-profit agencies. Of course we are well aware of the wonderful progress MCTV is making, and we are essentially happy for them and for the students of Manchester as well. The one small kink that brought me here tonight is the ability of MCTV to solicit potential public access users and offer to do all the production for them. The recent article about Paul Boynton being approached by MCTV and offering to have the work done for him was written in the article. To me this seems to be an infringement on MCAM's originally intended purpose. MCAM has been going about its business to bring about a great facility and provide opportunities for the citizens of Manchester, only to have our purpose and progress seemingly invaded and ignored. I understand Mayor Guinta has assigned an Alderman to look into the MCTV and MCAM issue. I look forward to a hearing from that delegate to discuss MCAM's situation. Thank you for your time.

Al Heidenreich, 53 Lincoln Street, stated:

I am a producer at MCAM. I'm not on the board of directors. I produce a show. I did it at MCTV, and when they split I moved down to MCAM because it means Manchester Community Access Media, and that is so that anyone can produce a

show and it's divorced from the educational channels and the government channels. And I think they should be separated. However, if putting them together solves the problem, I certainly would not be against that. However, in looking at the funding that the board of directors tells me about and what I hear and read about, it appears to me that it's unfairly distributed so somebody has been assigned to it, as Ms. Craig just said, and I hope that it gets taken care of because I think it's a very necessary function of the City. It gives almost anybody an opportunity to come on and have their opinions heard. The name of my show is *In My Opinion*. I have had probably 200 guests over the past four or five years and you name it, all walks of life. And they are welcome to come on and express their opinion even if they don't have a show. We provide an access for them. So I think it's very important and contributes a great service to the City. However, I didn't come here for the funding. I heard the others speak so I thought I'd get my two cents in. What I came here about is, I read an article in the paper last Sunday; I actually just glanced at it and I kind of just blew it off because it was to me so ridiculous. Sometimes that's what gets the attention of people. Several days later I had a number of people mention it to me, so I went back and read the article several times. It got my blood boiling because if you really delve into it, what the article said was...and I will mention Grace's name only because her name was the only name that came up in the article. She was quoted more or less as saying that she was against the MCAM facilities because it was run by a bunch of felons, and it was plural, characters, and whatever else. And they were all plural. When you use the plural context, that includes me, and I resent that one hundred percent. Half the people in this room have been on my show, and I'm sure they don't want to be interviewed by a felon. I think the remiss part of this whole thing was when these accusations were made...and that's what they were, nobody questioned it. I didn't see in the article where anybody on the board questioned, who are these felons, and would you name some names. And also, there were no names mentioned and none of us were able to defend ourselves, so that's why we come

down and talk like this. So I think that we are owed an apology. I don't know if Mr. Brooks is here from the Union Leader, and I don't want to criticize the newspaper and paint everybody with the same brush, but investigate the facts first and let's find out who we're talking about here, and don't print these things and throw us all into a group that we don't belong in. Thank you very much for your time.

Calum McNeil, 471 Silver Street, stated:

Hello Board. I want to thank everybody for letting me speak to the only board that I'm allowed to speak to in this government place. And thank you again for letting me come out and talk to my government. I really appreciate that. I've been giving you guys as much break as I can, but I have to come out and represent, like everyone else behind me. This all comes down to Grace. It's so hard to talk about that. If we go back to the history of the School Board, and some people here who are from the School Board, actually know that real history. And Frank knows about it too. The reason that her studio is still at the Tech, her studio is still there, is she lost her offices. The reason she lost her offices is she's so hard to manage. She is ridiculous. When I was covering the election of you folks, when I was covering you guys trying to get re-elected, I went around and talked to other people with the last name Sullivan. Nobody here that I'm talking about. Three people, I mentioned Grace's name and asked, 'What do you think about the TV studio and what can we do to make this better?' They actually explained that they weren't actually related to her. They are so embarrassed by her actions that we have to have this, the whole City of Manchester stopping and waiting because the director of our community access, our education and government access, is so ridiculous. We'll just go through what she did to Frank Guinta during the last election with him not being able to come to the Donovan debate, and her playing that 32 times. The debate where he destroyed Donovan, she played it once. She played that debate once. Partisanship does not belong in the government-paid

mass media. That is why this is such an important issue. We'll just go over a couple of things. There are no rules as far as what she puts on her TV station. None. It just comes out of her head. She makes it up. She's going through the process of making some rules up, but she still hasn't done it. It's been how many years she's been doing this job? 15? 16? I don't know what to say about this. She destroys your history, your legacy. She is responsible for maintaining the tapes of these meetings, maintaining the history of what you honorable people are doing, what you great leaders are doing right now. She destroys them. I believe the time that she holds the tapes, I'm not quite sure, it's three or four months, but she destroys the tapes. They're not kept for posterity. It's very cheap and easy to do this, but she destroys it, your history. There's so much to talk about Grace. I can't believe that the Mayor, after what happened to him last election, didn't take action on that. I really think he has to work through the School Board. He has a very powerful position as chairman of both this Board and the School Board. He really needs to step up in leadership and really take down that partisanship. As far as other issues, we need to lower the fines for the whores and the johns. Why don't we have a TV show? Why doesn't this lady come on a TV show and tape record the words of johns? That would be great. I would love to see that. I think that would be great, about 11:30 or 12:00 at night on a Sunday. That would be really fun to watch. Mr. Lopez did a commercial at MCAM. It came out perfect. I really loved it. It came out beautiful. I don't think that he could have done such a good job at Grace's spot. I have much to talk about. The only felon we have at MCTV was trying to be president. That was it. And we won't mention his name. We all know who it is.

Ginger Ferrier, 521 Pine Street, stated:

My comments are not meant to disrespect anyone on purpose. However, the people we the citizens rely on to serve us well do not appear to be doing so. I sent an option packet to every Alderman and Alderman at large. No response. MCAM

has given much to this community, most importantly the continuation of freedom of speech, our constitutional right. There is an impression that some within this City government want MCAM to fail, or worse, be forced to unite with MCTV. MCAM is a place where most who go or volunteer through their programs are treated with professional courtesy and respect. Joe inspires people who want to produce a show to do so within the confines of proper comportment. From Joe there is no bullying, no condescending attitude, and no disrespect. There has to be a healthy climate of co-workmanship in any scenario. However, a merger with MCTV would kill the possibility that currently exists at MCAM and for certain morale would drop to zero. Opinions would not be allowed other than of those in charge. The other impression that is circulating, which may or may not be true, is that some Board members do not want the Comcast public access band for MCAM but for the City Hall itself. How true this is remains to be seen. Perhaps another reason for trying to merge these public access stations is to stifle freedom of speech, to censor dialogue and show content. This too is against constitutional rights. How much more will this City take from its citizens? We have no more bus service on Saturdays pending. Much revenue would be lost to the businesses that benefit from shoppers on Saturdays. What about wheelchair passengers? How would they get around if not by bus? Who comes up with these supposed solutions? Does anyone who comes up with these ideas take a bus or need a bus to get to their destination? Surely not. A car is their mode of easy accessible transportation. So how can they know how vital public transportation is to the citizens of Manchester east, west, north, and south; to Veterans from the VA Hospital; to shoppers to the Mall and other businesses along South Willow and Valley Street? We voted for you and trusted you to do the best for us as a community. However, this does not appear to be the outcome of having done so. When will equality ever really be practiced in this City? The perception is that those who are supposed to benefit our community as a whole have limited their attention to a chosen few.

Pastor Max Darbouze, Grace of God Revival Church, stated.

We are located right here in the downtown. Our church leaders, we have a TV show at MCAM. What I would like to say, it is very important not to judge people by the way they look. There's a proverb that says, 'Don't judge a book by its cover.' I believe the rumor we heard may not be true. We have to investigate that first to know if it's true before we make any decision. MCAM is a very good station, and I'm well known in this City by the Haitian community, and I never heard there was another TV station like it in the City. I never heard that. I never heard the Haitian people say, 'Hey, we have another TV station.' Everyone knows about MCAM, and I would like to ask the Board if you can see it is very important for young people in the City. There are people that are very creative. Joe is very helpful training young people to be producers, and if there is any information that can help the committee, they email it to us. And that's very important for the City of Manchester to have this kind of station where people are united and where they put people together. No matter who you are, they always welcome you. If there is a problem, someone has an issue, I can understand that. People change. We cannot look at the past. We can fix the future but we cannot fix the past. If there is somebody who has committed a crime, that is the past. Now we can move forward. I could understand that because we have a minister that used to be in jail. They change their life. I know a pastor who was a private detective for over ten years in New Hampshire, and I used to be a CEO too. I know people change. Don't listen to people who try to play politics and say, 'Hey, I want to have another station.' I would like the Board to keep MCAM going. It's going fast. We see a lot of progress at the station. Thank you very much.

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

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk