

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

August 5, 2008

7:00 PM

Mayor Guinta called the meeting to order.

Mayor Guinta called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Sullivan.

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

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

Absent: Alderman Garrity

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.

Howard McCarthy, 105 Randall Street, Manchester, stated:

I don't know if you know me, but I know you. I've been here a few times, and I'm beginning to think that some of the things that I've said in the past, I don't think you really listen to me. I'm calling myself Mr. Zero. I've made a few suggestions off and on. Nothing has been done. So I guess I'll just keep on making suggestions. What I want to say is that I have a Bible here. If I were to ask you the question, what would you do if you were in the Carol Johnson affair? If I asked you the question, if something like that happened to one of your relatives, because there is a relative involved here, what would you do? How would you react? Don't you think the first thing you would do is want to chastise your loved one? But at least you'd be thinking maybe, what should I do here? How will I handle this thing? And I think everyone here would want to protect your loved one and still make sure that he was punished. And that's exactly what happened with Carol Johnson. I wrote down a couple of things. Carol Johnson is completely innocent. I did meet her and she's a wonderful person and she's hurting. And, she's innocent of any wrongdoings. Her decision came also with a discussion with others. She took that course of an internal type of decision. She didn't go shouting it to the world. Who has to know everything that goes on? This is an internal thing. Anyway, I think that she did the right thing. I would not pursue this thing. I think you should call the hounds off, and I think you ought to return her to her rightful position. I'm kind of messing this thing up. I just wanted to say that she's a wonderful person and she's hurting, and she's innocent. I'll leave it at that. Also, there are a few things I'd like to talk about myself, but I don't have the time in three minutes. I was thinking, sometime I would like to debate you people, especially the ones who opposed me in my endeavor in going on the street. I am going on the street pretty soon. Thanks a lot.

Keith Murphy, 1826 Front Street, Manchester, stated:

Last month I appeared before this Board in opposition to the proposed parking plan. Ms. Stanley has, to her credit, reached out to the downtown business owners over the past month and there have been changes which have nearly eliminated any harm to my business that I believe were posed by this plan. And while the effect to my business is now very small, I do still believe the plan is too complex. I'll give you one example. In the Arena district, the Event fee will be effect from two hours before an event starts until an hour after it starts. Saturday, October 4th, the circus will be in town. There will be three shows – an 11:00, a 3:00 and a 7:00. Legally this means that you must pay a fee to park in the Arena district from 9:00 to noon, 1:00 to 4:00, and 5:00 to 8:00. But, if you park before 9:00, or between noon and 1:00, or between 4:00 and 5:00, or after 8:00, there is no fee. If your car is parked during that time, you're grandfathered in and you're not liable for the fee, even if you leave your car there for the rest of the day, because the parking agents will keep track of exactly which cars are parked where and when. Now, as confusing as that may be for you to hear, imagine that all you want to do is visit a merchant in the Arena district and listening to somebody explain those rules to you. And this is not a fluke. Every single kids' show at the Arena, every circus, every ice show, has multiple shows per day, as well as the high school graduations. It will be entertaining for me to watch that district being enforced in its current language. However, the plan as enforced today is much better than it was last month and I want to thank you, and I want to thank Ms. Stanley for being so responsive to my requests and to my input. Thanks for your time.

Glenn Ouellette, 112 Auburn Street, Manchester, stated:

For those members of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen who voted last month to increase the cost of parking downtown, thanks for making parking in the center city unaffordable again. I can afford to shop downtown, well I could. I can even

pay for the family meal, a few cocktails, the kids' ice cream, a suit and tie. I may be at George's. But when it comes to the cost increase in parking, it breaks the bank in this energy crisis time and recession. I guess I'll be shopping at the Mall now. It's free parking after all. Do you get the message? If there's one thing I've learned in Manchester in 22 years of living here - 18 years downtown - it's that you don't mess with people's garbage and you don't mess with Saturday parking downtown. You've dealt a blow, I think, to the businesses and definitely to the shoppers. You're telling shoppers to get out of town and go shop somewhere else. And that is not a good message for a city that has spent eight years trying to make downtown Manchester a destination place. In the next two years, if your plans continue, as your ten year plan on mass transit and parking continues, it will be a disaster. It will be a ticket out of town. Money does not fall from the sky. Try telling that to our local elected Board of Mayor and Aldermen. It's time to tell our Board of Mayor and Aldermen that the sky may not be falling yet, but that our pockets aren't overflowing either. In fact, thanks for their help in raising our property taxes. This year alone it was a whopping 3.7% increase. Plus, there was the decision to increase the MTA bus fares by 25%. The local City and Airport taxi fares are up some 90%. In fact, they gave them 40% more than what they asked for in the first place. Can you imagine? But it's not their money that they are spending. After all, it's ours. Not to mention the added cost of a Special Event parking district at 100% at the rate of one dollar per hour. Who knows? It hasn't been decided yet. Besides, the everyday cost of parking downtown is also up 50% to maybe 100%. Presently it's fifty cents an hour. You've already voted for seventy-five cents, and there is mention here tonight that you're going to raise that to a dollar an hour, a 100% increase in a year of a recession. Go figure. It's just a beginning of what is to come, without receiving better rendered services from this City. In fact, isn't it true that these added increased parking fees are based mostly on a created need caused by the additional cost to be spent in implementing the increased operations of these new and expanded programs?

True. Isn't it also true that without creating these new expanded charges, Saturday parking and the Special Event rate programs that the City would not need to increase any additional enforcement officers and overtime? Isn't it true that some \$15,000 are planned to expand meter kiosks in the newly created Special Events district? Is it also true that most of these meters were bought at the opening of the Verizon Arena in 2000 and 2001? In fact isn't it true that these seven year old meters are all paid for and in good operating condition? Are the Board of Mayor and Aldermen elected to create new programs that waste taxpayers' money or to look out for other communities by selling our old working meters to Keene, for example, at a loss, and spend thousands more to purchase new kiosks? To install kiosks in front of our elderly and disabled high rise...don't say that you're not doing it. You've already painted the markings in front of the high rises. You're breaking a seven year promise to the inner city that those attending the Verizon events would not park in our residential neighborhoods. But aren't you forcing the event-goers to park their cars there since you've made parking unaffordable downtown? And my last statement is next you'll be putting kiosk meters in front of our homes. Where does it end? Won't you please re-think your madness?

Thank you.

Stephanie Lewry, 70 Park Avenue, Manchester, stated:

I'm here on behalf of the Board of Directors of Intown Manchester. I would like to let you know that the board of Intown Manchester wishes to lend a vote of confidence to the street parking plan proposed by Parking Manager Brandy Stanley. This plan changes our current all for one and one for all price system and recognizes that parking management is an economic development tool that can be used to make more parking available for more users. This plan underscores the need to make the most desirable places available for short-term uses, encourages the long-term parkers to move into spaces designated for long-term use, and it offers options for consumers wishing to find less expensive parking. While there

may be certain elements of the proposal that may seem less agreeable than others, businesses should agree that this plan acknowledges the various needs of downtown businesses and attempts to address those needs in a fair and equitable way. It's worth a try, and I hope you will vote for it. Thank you.

Andrea Hoben, 190 Oak Hill Avenue, Manchester, stated:

I'm here to talk a little bit about the letter of interest for McIntyre Ski Area. I understand leasing the land in the existing footprint of the ski area...I'm just wondering, what exactly is it that the City wants to lease out? It seems a little vague. I had called Chuck DePrima who told me it was all of the land in Weston Observatory and McIntyre Ski Area, whereas Jay Minkarah, when I picked up the letter of interest, told me it was just the existing footprint of the ski area. So what exactly is it that we're talking about leasing out? I'm concerned because I see this area as a valuable natural resource in the City, and I'd like to see it remain a conservation area, not an entertainment park, which is how the City's master plan for the parks is hoping to develop the area. Weston Observatory did a lot of work in its time on park beautification. He put aside funds for the Observatory so that it would become an educational resource for the benefit and enjoyment of all of our citizens. There are a lot of walking trails up there. People use it quite a bit. There are native plants, birds, joggers, track teams. I live on that street and I see the traffic coming and going. What I'd like to see is to just bring the area back to its historic purpose and historic use, open the main gate during daylight hours to reopen the viewing area. I know that the City attempted to do that earlier this year and within 48 hours some of my neighbors complained because they were concerned about no one from the Police Department monitoring the area. There wasn't a plan for police or bike police to go in and watch the area or to post signs for afterhours parking to tow cars that are outside of that gate. The only people that I see monitor the area are the Water Works that come by once or twice a day. Last year when the roof was being fixed on the Weston Observatory, that gate was

open pretty much every day through all of that construction, and how many police reports did we see of problems in the area? I don't think that the current activity from the Police Department backs up keeping it locked up. In terms of cutting down some trees to restore the view, it's not that we have to cut down the entire park. It's just a twenty foot section directly in front of the park from the tower down to where the former parking area was at the reservoir. It's something that could maybe be done by volunteers. We've got a prison team that's doing park work. It's something that they can do, and to me it looks like it's just a couple of days of work. It's not a lot of money to fix that up. I just want to restore it to the place that a lot of older people from the community used to spend time in their youth. Thank you.

Jane Beaulieu, 609 South Main Street, Manchester, stated:

Thank you for giving me a few minutes to talk to you. I received a phone call from the last speaker, Andrea Hoben, and she opened up my eyes to what is going on today or what will be happening in the future. There was a request for a proposal for a company to come in and take over McIntyre Ski Area and it would be a lease. I think the idea for a request to talk about what potentially could be there is a good move. But, I really think that before the City acts on one of these proposals we should really take a look at the Enterprises. We should look at the McIntyre Ski Area, the skating rinks, Gill Stadium, and look to see if we could perhaps hire one individual that has a master's degree in business that could operate these Enterprises and operate them at a gain. The problem with the Enterprises in the past was there was never one person responsible for maintaining all of these areas that had a degree in business. There just was not the right person. I do believe, before the City entertains leasing the area out to someone that is looking to give the City money, I think we should look at the terms. Is it going to be a ten-year lease? Is it going to be a 20-year lease? Is it going to be a 30-year lease? Cannon Mountain last year or the year before was looking...many

people were looking to lease the state ski area to a private company. They looked within their management and found someone that could manage Cannon and they did an incredible job this year with the staff that they had. It is operating much more efficiently than it was. In regards to what Andrea was talking about, in this master plan that was developed by Peter J. Smith in 2006, called *The Greening of the City*, it does group McIntyre Ski Area, Weston Observatory, Derryfield Park. They mention another nine-hole golf course and a putting green. We need to maintain the green space that we have. We really need to operate these Enterprises efficiently and really kind of make sure that if there are any lease agreements made with any individuals, it's very thought out and it's not just for immediate gains because we, the residents, would like to participate in more conversation about the leases that may happen there. Thank you for the time. There is going to be a bike tour scheduled for September 14th. You'll be seeing these posters around. It's the first Manchester regional bike tour. The Manchester Regional Trails Alliance, which I am the chair of, has organized this tour and the money that we will be raising will be going into the trails funds for the expansion and redevelopment of the Piscataqua trails. You'll be seeing more about that in the future.

Mike Farrington, 1 Stark Street, Manchester, stated:

I have a small gift store at the corner of Elm and Stark. I'm here to speak about the parking ordinance. I spoke last month also. I still have questions. I met with Brandy Stanley. I have not spoken with Mrs. Lewry right across the street, so I don't believe she speaks for me. I still disagree with this parking ordinance the way it stands. I guess I'd like to focus a little bit more on the science which I wasn't able to gather all the answers for. How do we know this is going to succeed if we're betting on this? It's not worth the chance if we don't know it's going to succeed. Is there another city that has a model like this? It's too complex. All of these changes at one time, just before the holiday season for the

retailers downtown, which we bank on to get through for the year. We're not retailers meaning gift shops. There are now more pawn shops than gift shops on Elm Street. How do we know? This Event rate isn't going to be determined by visitors across all of Manchester. It's just in that specific area. How are we going to market this plan? What is that cost? Is there signage? A website? Web pages? E-mails? How are we going to do that? I haven't heard anything of that yet. How do we, in order to spur commerce, parking meters...the reason they exist is to enforce limits in parking. We can't enforce the two-hour parking limit. How does this work? The hours between 8:00 and 5:00, the infringement on this limit, is from office employees. They're going to stick with what they know. They're not going to move their cars. They're going to pay the extra quarter and life goes on as it is. If we can't enforce it to our own limit, there's no chance of this succeeding. They're not going to go to the back streets where they're worried about their cars. They're going to keep doing what the norm is until 5:00. There are very few cities that go past 6:00. There are very few cities that have special event rates. It's too complex as far as where the zones are, where hours are different, where days are different, and where rates are different. Because I have a gift shop, I'm concerned with the implementation of this being September 1st, with very short dollars of what's in the end of this, considering the marketing plan, getting the public used to it, all the forgive-me's for it to be put in place. Let the retailers get through the holiday season before this is implemented if you want to take a chance. Until I hear more science or more data on what the City is doing with such a complex structure for parking, let us retailers survive through this holiday season and then go forward from January 1st. Thank you.

Calum McNeil, 471 Silver Street, Manchester, stated:

I want to thank everybody for coming out tonight and thank you for allowing me to speak at the only venue I have to talk to my government. Thank you for letting me come out tonight. I grew up in Goffstown. I love that place. I've lived here

for a long time and I grew up here for 18 years. I had two friends that died in Iraq. That's why I got all involved in this whole stupid 911 attack. I'm here tonight to ask you to take all the wind out of my sails. Reduce me to just ashes here. All I'm asking is that you guys actually sign off a referendum to support reopening of the 911 investigation. Let's take all the power away from me right now, because I'm trying to expose something. It's kind of stupid, but I'm trying to do that. So, I'm just asking tonight that at the next Board meeting I'll come up with a quick referendum. We can do it with Betty Hall, a representative who talks about this all the time. And, we can have something come out of Manchester, much as Austin, Texas. Oklahoma has now voted to secede from the Union in their house, just in case you guys don't know that. It's not being talked about in the media. The last time I was here I talked about how Newton's law of gravity pretty much dictates the fact that the 911 attack did not happen the way the government says it did. I got such a great response on that, I tried making a quick model for everyone here. I want to warn everybody that this is not the real Twin Towers here. It's just a simulation of the Twin Towers. If we were to take a bowling ball and a feather and drop them in a vacuum, you're going to find the bowling ball and the feather hit the ground at the same time. The mass of the object does not affect how fast the object falls. It's a very, very simple thing, Newton's law of gravity. The object falls and slows down because of air resistance or conservational momentum. We'll take a bowling ball, apply Newton's law of gravity, drop it from the top of the World Trade Center in a vacuum, and it takes 9.8 seconds to hit the ground. I'm sure everyone saw the Twin Towers fall. One fell in 10.2 seconds. The other fell in 10.4 seconds. We go back to the bowling ball. We apply Newton's law of gravity or as everyone knows it, a terminal velocity, to the bowling ball. It takes 26 seconds for the bowling ball to hit the ground. How did gravity, the one thing, the law that's the same everywhere, no matter where we are on this planet, somehow allowed the buildings to fall the speed that a bowling ball would fall in a vacuum. You imagine the air resistance slowing down the bowling

ball to 26 seconds to hit the ground, and then you imagine the compacting floors. I think the floor has more resistance than that. It should take a minute and a half for them to fall. So quickly, what to do about this...investigate it. Learn I'm right, and then kind of come out and support me. Talk to everybody you know and let's get behind this. We've got to get over this hump. A lot of us lived through JFK and all that stupid stuff. I don't think the best way is to sweep it under the carpet. Let's just look at it in the face, be done with it, and be done with it quickly. Thank you guys and thank you for letting me come out and speak tonight. I really appreciate that. I think we need to not have Saturday parking. It would be really good for the downtown businesses.

Barbara Vigneault, Director of the Senior Services Department, stated:

I'm here tonight to announce our sixth annual golf tournament of the Friends of the William B. Cashin Senior Activity Center. That will be held on September 11th and it will be held at the Derryfield Country Club. I just want to comment that the community has been really, really supportive of this event. We have some wonderful major sponsors. The businesses in the community have come out in full force, and I just wanted to mention some of the sponsors that we have had: SUPERTIX; Nixon, Raiche, Vogelman, Barry & Slawsky; The Union Leader; Custom Clubs; Craig & Gatzoulous Law Office; Anthem; Manchester-Boston Regional Airport; Merchants; Southern Wine and Spirits of New England; Fair Point Communications; QUIRK Hole In One Sponsor; George's Apparel; Pinard Waste Systems Inc; Harris Trophy; and Catholic Medical Center. The golf tournament will begin with registration at 7:00 and an 8:00 shotgun start. We're looking right now for golfers, so if you know of any golfers, we would appreciate your referring them to me. I have a little golf sheet here that I can send to them. It will be a captain and crew format, and we're going to be having awards, and at the Derryfield we will have lunch included in the \$100 fee for golf. If people know of anyone they would be able to refer to me, my number is 624-6533, and I'd like to

also thank three of the Aldermen here who have been serving on this committee and have done great things to help us out, Senator Gatsas, Alderman George Smith and Alderman Mike Lopez. They have served on this committee and the chairman is Dave Nixon and the co-chair is Attorney Mike Craig. His father, as many of you know, was police chief years ago and that's Louis Craig. It's a great time. All the guys and women come out and play golf, so you're invited to join us for that event. Thank you very much.

Kathy Staub, 374 Laurel Street, Manchester, stated:

I'm here tonight in my capacity as president of the Manchester Coalition for Quality Education. I'm here to tell you how pleased I am that you took the time to listen to the Mayor's Youth Advisory Council presentation on the dropout rate in the City. It would be very tempting to think of the dropout rate as being the schools' problem, but it is a key factor in economic development, incidents of crime and the demand for social services. According to *The Silent Epidemic*, a report released in 2006 by the Gates Foundation, dropouts are more likely than graduates to be unemployed, in poor health, living in poverty, on public assistance, single parents with children who drop out of school, and they are eight times more likely to be in prison or in jail. So it's not just Dr. Brennan's problem, it's also Tim Soucy's problem, it's also Chief Mara's problem, and it's also Paul Martineau's problem. According to the State Department of Education, in Manchester in 2005 there were 364 students who dropped out of school. In 2007 the number was 371. That's a significant number of students, and as you can see by the numbers, it's not going to go away on its own. It's estimated that dropouts earn about \$9,200 less per year than high school graduates. Those 371 students who dropped out of school might have brought an additional \$3.4 million into our local economy. That's provided that they could find jobs. Most of them can't. And even worse than those who are unemployed are the ones that become involved in crime. Studies estimate that the lifetime cost of each youth who drops

out of school and moves into a life of crime and drugs range from \$1.7 to \$2.3 million each. The problem, as I said, is not going to go away by itself. I think that it's really important that everybody in the community take responsibility for it. I think there has been a lot of blame going around; people keep trying to avoid responsibility for the problem, and I'm very pleased to hear that you are all on board with doing your part. I'd also like to invite you to the dropout prevention work group. Our next meeting is on August 26th, and it's at 3:00 pm at the Health Department. This is a group of community members, educators, and youth service providers who have been talking about the dropout rate and investigating the various problems that there are and potential solutions. We certainly would invite you. We can't do it alone. We need everybody to be there and everybody to be on board with moving forward and figuring out a way to resolve this. That's all I have to say and I thank you very much.

*There being no one else wishing to speak, on motion of **Alderman M. Roy**, 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 Smith**, duly seconded by **Alderman Domaingue**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk