

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

October 7, 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 Osborne.

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll. There were thirteen Aldermen present.

Present: Aldermen Mark Roy, Gatsas, Sullivan, Jim Roy, Osborne, Pinard, O'Neil, Lopez, Shea, DeVries, Garrity, Smith, Ouellette

Absent: Alderman 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.

**Kevin Verville**, 48 Roysan Street, Manchester stated:

Mr. Mayor and distinguished Aldermen, for the record there is no tax cap referendum. It is a spending cap referendum. This Charter amendment provides for an Aldermen override if more spending is required. I cannot imagine the Manchester Board of Mayor and Aldermen not overriding this Charter amendment to protect police, firefighters, teachers and the most vulnerable of our society. I challenge all of you to hold at least two public hearings, if not more, in your respective wards as well as here at City Hall between now and the November 2009 election as had been previously proposed. These meetings should be spread over several months in each ward so that if questions are raised by citizens and the answer is not at hand, it will allow for answers to be found and disseminated. After all, the reason for the delay to ballot is for voter education right? Mr. Mayor, I call on you to schedule and host these meetings, even if the prospective Alderman of each ward is unwilling to participate. These meetings should also be an open discourse on the subject and not a one time allotment per person as we have here tonight. I hope voter education does not turn into mass mailers and scare tactics from the big unions and party machines one month before the November 2009 election. There have been several speakers here recently, most notably Scott McGilvray, President of the MEA, that point to the effects of tax caps in Massachusetts. Presumably Mr. McGilvray was referring to what is known as Proposition 2 ½. Proposition 2 ½ was passed in Massachusetts in 1980 and was implemented as law in 1982 and has never been repealed by the citizens of Massachusetts. Proposition 2 ½ has a provision for both an override and an under-ride if the residents choose to spend less money. Unlike the Manchester spending cap, which can be overridden by a ¾ majority of the Aldermanic Board, Proposition 2 ½ requires a majority of votes from the general public to pass either an override or an under ride. Any community in Massachusetts that has cut essential services did so by choice by not allocating the money where it was needed most. It is also important to note that the citizens of these communities

chose not to spend more money. They were not forced. They chose to vote against an override. This is what is known as democracy in action. The power belongs to the people and not to the politicians. Who are we to be telling other communities how much money to spend and what to spend that money on? While their choices may not reflect our choices, we need to respect each community's decision on how they chose to govern themselves. Another concern voiced by the citizens of Manchester is that the spending cap will be the new ceiling for spending. I would certainly hope that this would not be true. Each and every year the budget needs to be scrutinized line by line to insure that our money is being allocated in the most efficient manner possible to deliver the maximum value to citizens for money collected and spent. If it is possible to deliver all that the citizens require for less than the maximum the spending cap would allow, I would hope and pray that the Board of Mayor and Aldermen would do so in keeping with their fiduciary duty. I would respectfully ask that future speakers on this topic give the full and true story, not just the cherry-picked facts that support their personal organizational views on this topic. Let us end the partisan and petty politics on this subject and have an honest and open dialogue to really educate the general public on this matter instead of trying to deceive and herd people to our own personal view. In that vein, I challenge all sitting Aldermen to debate their opponent next year to better educate the citizens of your wards and the people of this great City on their choices for elected office. Thank you.

**Glenn Ouellette**, 112 Auburn St, Manchester stated:

I have something to be passed out to the Mayor and Aldermen. No, money does not fall from the sky and neither does it grow on trees. We are in a fiscal, economical recession in this country and don't think that Manchester is not part of this country. We need to restrain ourselves when it comes to spending tax dollars. If we are going to transform Manchester into one city government all by and for the people, then it is vital for the Queen City to have a Board of Mayor and

Aldermen who speak on the people's behalf and with one voice, a voice not an echo. In order to bring about the physical changes needed for all of Manchester, you the Board must do that as a team through a dynamic force in working together for an accountable and responsible change to occur. This year alone we have a recession that is slowly becoming a possible depression of sorts. When our federal government must take measures that have only been used during the Great Depression, one must wonder if the Board of Mayor and Aldermen truly have a clear understanding as you choose to deal with the real issues that matter to we the people. It is clear by the economic recession we are in today that we, too, in Manchester can no longer afford an increase of any kind at this point in time. We have seen increases in just about everything out there grow faster than our annual yearly cost of living increase and that includes the City taxes that you have burdened us with because of your lack of fiscal restraint in the last eight years. It didn't just start this year. To being with, you the Board created programs that had no added service to the people of this City like the Saturday and special event rate parking program. The only benefit that provides to we the people is that we are being taxed again for a program that we don't want and the local downtown businesses are already feeling this recession without you adding any more costs to its customers. To keep on raising the City property taxes yearly without dealing in long term planning to fix the real problems that keep recurring year after year isn't the way to go. It just won't cut it in the real world to solve the present day mess in spending without any long term thinking to plan for the future. This year's taxes are 10.6%. You should not be amazed at that since you passed 3.7% for property taxes, 1.9% for service fees and 5% coming out of our one time account or the rainy day fund. That adds up to 10.6%. It is unacceptable to have a double-digit tax increase in this City. I want to close by saying what really is needed is the political will by you the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to start restricting spending to the minimum and to start solving the real issues that face our City. You could start off by voting in the ten year plan that is now awaiting your

acceptance that has been postponed since April. More on this next time but please for the sake of the people, do start tonight in restraining yourselves in spending our taxes with absolutism. Thank you.

**Jonathan Melle**, 30 Hanover Street #209, Manchester stated:

I helped my friend Calum with raising awareness for the parking tickets on Saturday that started last weekend. I thought I would share some of my interactions with the people that you represent. When I talked to all of the people and handed these flyers out, a lot of people were upset by the Saturday parking. I talked with some business owners and they were upset too. Some of the business owners felt that the City was going to make more money with Saturday parking while the businesses were going to lose money on Saturday. The people didn't think it was necessary to have Saturday parking. In all of the people I talked to, not one person agreed with this Saturday parking. I just wanted you to know that I did some leg work. I am glad the judge in NH Superior Court sided with the eight Aldermen who voted against Mayor Guinta and the NH Advantage Coalition. The spending cap is impractical just like the Saturday parking is needless. You have a lot of mandates and you have all of the bonds and the revaluation that comes up every five years and the county nursing home and the county jail. You have all of these mandates and the spending cap includes them. They are going to grow faster than inflation. I think it would be a good idea for the Mayor and the NH Advantage Coalition to redo the statute for the spending cap. I just want to say that when you are Mayor and Aldermen you should represent the people and you should talk to the people. When you add Saturday parking, the Mayor should have been out on Elm Street Saturday morning and afternoon and all of your Aldermen should have been out there too. You should have been talking to the people and when people got tickets or warnings you should have been asking them how they felt. You should have gone into the businesses Saturday. Next weekend there is another Saturday and in a couple of weeks there is another Saturday. You guys

should do this. When you pass laws you guys should see the impact of what you are doing. I guess my recommendation to the Mayor and the Board is to do that; talk to the people. Also, there is a theory and it is called KISS. This stands for Keep It Simple Stupid. Instead of making needless laws or impractical referendums, my recommendation in closing is just to make it needful and something people want and make it practical and make it work. I want to thank you for your time today and I speak because I care.

**Howard McCarthy**, 105 Randall Street, Manchester stated:

I like to look around and see who is here and let you know who I am. Howard McCarthy is my name. Just to let you know, I kind of miss you people. I haven't been here to voice some of my thoughts for awhile and I guess that is my fault. Did I miss you? Do I have to answer that? Am I under oath? First of all, three minutes is not enough time, Your Honor. In order for me to save this City, I need more time. Do you think you could go to four minutes? I can't ask you for five.

**Mayor Guinta** responded we missed you too, Howard, and because you weren't here the last couple of meetings we will give you some extra time.

**Mr. McCarthy** stated you said you can't talk. I met you at your car one day and you said I can talk but you can't. Is that right? I think we should go to four minutes or something. In three minutes I could blow my nose and sneeze and there goes the minutes, right Matt? So why don't we go a little bit longer? Now I think I have something profound here. Mr. Mayor and all the Aldermen, I watched the opening of this show and I call it a show but you know something, you have a lot of competition. Lou Dobbs is on television at 7 PM. The *Wheel of Fortune* is on and a lot of other shows. Now I have talked to a lot of people. Yes, I have been on the street and by the way I had a very successful day when the Shiner's were here. I sold a lot of ice cream. Do you believe that? Do you know

the opposition that I had here? I had a very successful day. Some of that money is going to be given out at Christmas. That's right. I don't keep all of that money. I did very well and I told Alderman Lopez about it. Okay, I have an idea. When you open this meeting, Your Honor, I want to see more reverence. After all, it's the Pledge of Allegiance. It's a pledge. It's something that you will do or not do and allegiance is fidelity. I would like to see a veteran, a real veteran, open up this meeting. That is somebody that deserves it. You see this hat? Proud to be an American. I was thinking that if a veteran gave the oath it would be much better. I think it would show something that comes from the heart and also a veteran deserves to be heard. He is the one that served this country and for him to give that oath and not have it be an automatic thing...I would like to see him just like when the President takes the oath somebody says a few lines and he repeats that. After all, it is an oath. It is a pledge. I pledge allegiance. Let the group here come after it. I think if a veteran gives it, it will be welcomed. I am not criticizing. I am just making a suggestion. There are other things I would like to say. Also one other thing: If you allow a veteran to do this...and I have spoken to some other people and they think it is a good idea, I personally am a proud American and I would like to give as many hats to everybody who comes here. I think it would be good. I want to change some things in this City. I have a lot to say but will save it for another time. Of course, if I got the four minutes...maybe I took them tonight without realizing it but I have nothing else profound to say except I know all of you people have knowledge but wisdom lingers and so does common sense.

Thank you.

**Carole Carlson**, 677 Walnut Street, Manchester stated:

I am here with my son Matthew. He is actually here earning his merit badge for Boy Scouts.

**Calum McNeil**, 471 Silver Street, Manchester stated:

I want to thank you for allowing me to speak to my government tonight. This is truly the only Board I have access to talk to at any sort of government level. First of all I came here tonight mainly to thank the Police Department. I was in a hit and run accident on my bike. The police were there within minutes and they caught the guy. It was a really, really special thing to be saved by the Police Department. It was amazing. The ambulance came right down and I felt very safe in the City. The guy hit and ran. It was beautiful. The downtown parking issue. I work downtown. I talked to a lot of people. None of them are bothered by a \$.25 raise but what they are more afraid of is a \$50 ticket. This last Saturday when the parking started I wanted to do something about it. It affects me directly. I make less money where I work because of the downtown parking issue because people don't want a \$50 ticket. I spent \$4 at the local coffee shop and printed up some flyers with Peter Sullivan and the Mayor's Office contact information on it. I didn't know that was illegal at the time. I didn't know you had to have a permit to hand out these things. Basically I woke up two and a half hours before work and went downtown and started handing these out to people and putting them on their cars, and as I came back up the street a meter maid was actually taking down my flyers, which was just really ironic to me because when I was walking up the street her flyers were on the windows of cars and I thought it would be really bad if I started taking down her flyers. She probably had a permit for that, which I didn't realize at the time. It is interesting that we have an actual free speech officer in this City who will go out there and take down my piece of information that I am trying to give out to the citizens. That is kind of an interesting thing that we actually pay somebody in this City to take down my free speech flyer with information that I am trying to give out. It is just really scary to me that that is something that is normal. One other correction. I did get the Mayor's phone number wrong on the flyer. I will change that. That was just a simple mistake. What everyone needs to understand out there is that without standing up against

the eight Aldermen who denied the people's right to speak...I am not for or against a tax cap or a spending cap, I just think it is really important that when it comes before people and it is a petition that it goes on the next election ballot. The judge said it herself. You guys violated the spirit of the law; you literally violated the spirit of the law. We don't have an election this time. We have a small election coming up with some members on the Board here running and I hope everybody supports the people who did come out and want that to be on the ballot. I hope everybody comes out and votes for Doug Kruse because he is someone on the School Board who wanted that to happen. He would have respected your vote. He literally is somebody who represents the people. I don't agree with everything he talks about but he is a conservative Republican who has been on the School Board and stands up for what he believes in and I really respect that. If anybody out there does have a problem with the parking, you really have to get in touch with Peter Sullivan and Frank Guinta. These guys are the last two downtown Aldermen who are serving on the Board today. These guys are from Ward 3 where this is being run and it is an unfair tax on you. I work down there, and it is costing me money every Saturday. It is horrible. The only thing we can do as voters and citizens is to get out there and try to mobilize and talk to people. I would just hope that when we all go downstairs and see that nice new electric car that the Parking Division has that we don't think of how we are saving the environment by not driving around. We are creating bureaucracies, folks. We are creating things that aren't needed. Jon Melle didn't say it the best but he said it a lot better than me, definitely. It is not needed. I would just hope that this November you go out and react to what has happened here. React to government not doing what it says it is going to do and not representing you. Vote for Doug Kruse and vote for Mr. Gatsas and just get out there and vote. Thank you.

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

*There being no further business, on motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman Smith, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Shea", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

City Clerk