

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

November 25, 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 Murphy.

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll. Fourteen Aldermen were present.

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

**Mayor Guinta** advised that the purpose of the special meeting is to give residents of our community the opportunity to address the Board on items of concern for our community; each person will be given one opportunity to speak; the comments shall be limited to three minutes to allow all participants to speak and any comments should be directed to the Chair. He 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.

**Jonathan Melle**, 30 Hanover Street, stated:

When our tax bills are mailed out, the Mayor and Alderman will have increased taxes this year by 4.7% from last year. The average family will pay between one

hundred and fifty to two hundred dollars more in taxes. The City government is now facing a 1.7 million to 2 million revenue short fall. Some of the costs are overtime pay, as well as different benefit calculations such as retirement, severances, investigation into the City Clerk's scandal. This all cost the City money. I just think if we only work together as a City. If Mayor Guinta did not send out flyers by the New Hampshire Advantage Coalition with the eight Aldermen pictures on the postcard, Senator Betsi Devries picture targeting her as a poster child to rally against. I think the City would not be in this situation. You are the Mayor, and should not have conflicts of interest. You should not target Senator and Alderman DeVries, you should not persecuting e a City Clerk who had no role in what happened. Bringing obscure laws that no one has been convicted of, against the City Clerk, she is going to come back and sue the City. If we are really about efficient, effective and accountable City government, we would not be raising taxes higher than the rate of inflation. There is no excuse for it. This is an economic down turn, home values have gone down, peoples standards of living have gone done, wages have not risen. Yet, we have a Mayor who targets Betsi DeVries instead of a 4.7% tax increase. This is pretty sad. Betsi DeVries won, she is the State Senator. The eight Aldermen had a right to vote the way they did. I just would hope that this is a lesson that you would learn. You took money out of the emergency account and the one time account. So the 4.7% tax increase is just the tip of the iceberg. The City is spending itself into a hole. I hope you guys come up with the \$1.7 million budget deficit. I hope you can come up with a solution so that you do not hurt people. Stop sending out postcards, except for Betsi DeVries, you people are not up for re-election, not till next year. If I had one message it would be to work together and solve these problems to help the average family.

**Glenn Ouellette**, 112 Auburn Street, stated:

To the Board of Mayor and Alderman, Happy Thanksgiving to everyone and to the citizens of this City. In 2007 the Board of Mayor and Aldermen gave the average property owner a sixty-five dollar tax cut. When you gave it away, you did not tell us that you would be taking it back. Then add some 200%, or tax us three times that amount more in the 2008 tax cycle. What is worst, the City has yet at another money crisis, one after another since April of this past year. We are in need of some \$20 to \$25 million to buy a new fleet of vehicles for departments, while you are trying to minimize the cost for the next tax cycle in 2009. Well thanks to you, the members on this Board of Mayor and Aldermen who have been here for years, I am not talking about the new members here. There are people who have been on this Board for eight, ten, twelve and fifteen years. By now I would have thought you had learned how to manage the affairs of the City. A simple thing to follow would be the ten year plan, which is what is feeding the City with crisis after crisis this past year. Back in April, I have been asking this Board of Mayor and Aldermen, to please do the right thing and vote to pass the already finished ten year plan for Manchester. It is now seven months latter, and you still have not got around doing so. You are as government leaders are slowing down the pace of the City affairs till next year's election. This is wrong. The local government should not just move forward and accomplish things in an election year cycle. You were not elected for a one year position, but for two years to manage the City's affairs. As local officials, you lack the sense of governing our City. A long term plan keeps Manchester from wasting tax payers money on a yearly basis. Your lack of a voluntary replacement plan has caused department equipment and vehicles to fall into this crisis mode of disrepair. If a family has two cars, they do not buy two cars in the same year. They buy one, one year and in the next few years, they will trade in one for another. Why can't we do the same thing for the City? Some City owned safety vehicles are being use longer than recommended, than the manufacturers suggest. Twelve to fifteen

years, not twenty to thirty years as some of our vehicles are. This is what happened to the equipment and the six fire ladder trucks in the last two years. That is why we found ourselves with four fire trucks off the road. We definitely needed them with our four alarm fires in this past year. We redirected, in the last two years, \$26,000 in rust repair funds, which ended up costing us \$55,000 to get the trucks back on the road. That is wasteful management. This year's tax hike in the result of your inaction and irresponsible tax methods, which are proven to be more and more unsound and causing all of our City financial crisis. Since 2001, I have personally advocated the consolidation of some City departments. Combining the Planning and Building departments into one, this has been talked about by me and others, going back to the first time I ran for Alderman of Ward 3 against Mayor Guinta in 2001. To date, dollars are still being spent where savings can be had. Then again, I forget, it is not your money that is being mis-managed year after year. It is the people living here who are trying to manage family budgets. We are stuck to pay these unaffordable property taxes, which come each holiday season. Last, the irresponsible budget passed in June for \$3.5 million and was readjusted in July to \$3.6 million, and again raised again in August, to \$3.7 million. This should have sent a warning sign that City spending is out of control. In closing, please let me say that you all should do the right thing tonight, so that you can begin and better manage the people's affairs. Prior to before you start of the 2009 budget, the City will be doomed for more disaster and money crisis month after month. You need to start leading the City together as a Board of Mayor and Aldermen. Begin acting like true leaders, by making the important decisions to inform and provide alternatives to the existing choices. You have acted as a divided Board, without having the political role to muster an accountable vision to move Manchester forward before the start of the upcoming elections in 2009. Please Alderman the need is now.

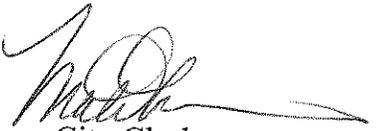
**Mary Randall**, 208 Crosbie Street, stated:

I am the representative of Crosbie Street. We had a disaster in September which effected a lot of homes. We understand today that the vote from CIP was to not bring in the amount of money that the City was going to let us borrow for the pump. We understand that is the vote, and we understand that it is illegal. We just want to express how disappointed we are. We did believe that the City of Manchester was going to assist us. For two months, we have been hoping and believing that we are going to get some assistance from the City. Again this is devastation to our area. I am sure you can understand that none of us can afford an assessment fee of \$12,000. The other thing, which I would like to note, is that while we absolutely understand that the City can not do anything there is some City blame here. We do understand that it is owned by Hooksett and DOT, but there is run off from the City of Manchester that goes into that pond. We just wanted to express our disbelief and understanding. Thank You.

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

A True Record. Attest.

  
City Clerk.