

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

December 16, 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 fourteen Aldermen present.

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

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. Any resident wishing to speak come forward to the nearest microphone, clearly state their name and address when recognized, and give their comments.

Warren Bouchard, 106 Myrtle Street, stated:

Good evening, members of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. At the last meeting of the Board, a vote was taken to rename the Granite Street Bridge, to honor Senator Judd Gregg. I am present here to voice my objection to this vote and the lack of opportunity for the public to comment before the decision was made. Why was there such a push for a name change without some lengthy and appropriate discussion? Where is the harm in seeking public input to this decision? I hope, Mr. Mayor, that you will encourage at least some of the members of this Board to vote to reconsider this decision. I understand the appreciation that this Board wishes to express to Senator Gregg for the role he

played in obtaining funds for the bridge and the access project. Having said this, to name the bridge after a Senator, who as never been a resident of this City, is totally inappropriate. There are so many other citizens who have resided in this City and who have made significant contributions to this City, that are deserving of this honor. I will only take another moment and ask you to consider the following: Josaphat Benoit, served this City as Mayor for eighteen consecutive years, certainly he could have been considered to receive this honor. No less than thirteen Manchester Firefighters died in the line of duty while serving our City. The Granite Street Bridge, could be named after this group of Firefighters by calling the bridge Firefighters Memorial Bridge. These Firefighters range from Thomas Gorman, who lost his live in 1896, to James Pigeon, who lost his live in 1968. There were thirteen Firefighters, who served this City, who deserved recognition. There are also three Police Officers, who have died by gun fire in the line of duty, in this century. I went back and did some research and there were some before that time, but there were three in this century. Inspector William Moore, Officer Ralph Miller in 1976, and of coarse Officer Michael Briggs. Why not name the bridge after citizens of the greatest generation that we have seen? The soldiers and sailors who left their beloved City to go and fight in the Second World War, the bridge could be called the Veterans Memorial Bridge. Perhaps, it may be difficult for some here to take a step back and reconsider this decision, it may not be so. Please step-up and do what is right, not what is politically expedient. Thank you, for the opportunity of speaking to you this evening.

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

Hi, happy holidays, I speak here often. I made a complaint against my Ward 3 Alderman Peter Sullivan, and I hope that it would be sent to the conduct board. I know you will consider the complaint. I feel that my Alderman Peter Sullivan, is trying to intimidate me from speaking out and participating in my local government. I am a disable veteran, I honorably served my Country in uniform, and I do not like it, that an elected official would, harass and intimidate me for exercising my rights of free speech. All I want to do is work with all levels of government from local, state, and federal. I want to have the right input to try to make our society a better place. We have a city government, with a city charter, and it has article 9, standards of conduct. Article 9, is the avoidance of conflict of interest, and public perception of ethical and honest conduct of public affairs, are essential. This code is adapted to further these purposes and to proceed before a conduct board when a citizen makes a complaint. I understand a lot of people want to dismiss my complaint, on legal technicalities. I do not accept that. The

Alderman slandered me in the newspaper. I would like your apology. Peter, you said "I would also point out that Jonathan Melle has a history of destructive and unstable actions". Where did you get that information? Why did you send Manchester Express that statement? You were reprimanded in a letter dated December 1, 2008, by Will Infintine, for tearing up my Manchester Express. At any rate, I am not here to pick on anyone. I believe in honest and ethical government. I believe in freedom of speech. I believe that if you guys, do not hear from citizens such as myself, and many others you are not doing your job, you would be in an oligarchy or an autocracy. A Board of fifteen tyrants basically. You have to hear from your constituents. I do not understand why my Alderman would attack me like this. I just want to say that I won't accept legal technicalities; I want this sent to the conduct board and I want answers. Thank you.

David Bigelow, 335 Laurel Street, stated:

Good evening, Mayor and Board of Aldermen. I am a tax paying homeowner. During the last property revaluation, my property tax increased 50% and it as increased every year since. I am here tonight to get a little return on my investment, at little cost to the city. If there is a substantial cost, I or other people like me would raise funds so that there is not a tax increase to the City. Anyone paying attention to the local news would probably know what I am about to ask for. What I want is an off-leash recreation area for me and my dog Katelyn. I would not expect you to know who my dog Katelyn is, she may think otherwise. I would want an off-leash recreation area where I could play with my dog Katelyn, without breaking any rules of the City. A more familiar term for what I am asking, is a dog park. I want a park or area, where I could do off leash recreational activities without breaking any City rules or ordinances. Part of your job, is to make Manchester a better place to live. Dog parks are a quality of life issue that can only help Manchester and do nothing to hurt it. In 1985 a dog park, was established in the United States, since then, there are two thousand dog parks. There are seven in New Hampshire and one in the planning stages in Nashua. Given the fact that Manchester is behind the times in getting a dog park, the advantages to that can be answers to any concerns that Manchester might have about dog parks, the solution has already been found. For example, liability, many city and towns control their access to the dog parks through a registration process. A part of that process is to have people sign a liability waiver. Dog parks have been shown to help communities and decrease dog related problems. The national council on pet population study policy is based on nation wide averages. The

study would find Manchester has a population of 110,000 people, then there are 14,872 households own dogs. In those households 39,710 people live in those households that live with dogs or 36% of the Manchester population. That would also mean that there are 23,795 dogs that live in those households, of which Manchester only has approximately 10,000 licensed dogs in the City. A dog park would get people in the City to license their dogs; only licensed vaccinated dogs would be able to use the park. The city already owns the land, let us use it. In closing I would say, if you are going to build a dog park for the dogs, is like saying you are going to build a golf course for golf balls. This is about people and their dogs, and yes, in this case Katelyn does tell me how to vote. Thank you very much.

Glenn Ouellette, 112 Auburn St., stated:

I do not know if I can beat that. Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year, to all of you and to the City of Manchester. I have here tonight a magnetic postcard to put on your refrigerator. It reads as follows: Manchester property taxes in 2008. Property taxes 4.7 %, City service tax fees total of 1.9%, rainy day funds and one time accounts 5%, for a total tax in 2008 of 11.6%. That is unacceptable and then to find out the first quarter of the year you are 1.72 percent in the hole. I also have a Christmas post card. For those who think I have chewed more than I can handle, I guarantee you, I have not, and either have the people. One of the major problems is Manchester... you do things without fair hearings. You shove things down people's throats. We need to stop doing that, this is a City and yes we elect the officials to do the work. There are certain things that people should have a say in, the bridge is one of them and the dog park is another. Why don't you have a public hearing? When we pay for our dog and cat tags you accept our money. That is a tax. What do we get for it? A City our size should have a dog park. Will Manchester's garbage smell any better in 2009? Will the City be cleaner by eliminate a waste disposal with tax dollars? This is what you are proposing when it comes to tag and bag. You are going to start charging per bag and tag another service tax fee of one or two dollars per bag. We say no, this has been tried in the last twelve years. There are two things, which I have told the Board for months now, what you do not do with tax payer's money. You do not fool around with their parking and you do not fool around with their garbage. You have already fooled around with our parking, and you're created a mess. It is costing us more money now, then what you are actually collecting. This means the tax payers will have to be holding the hole. The same thing will happen here. Do you really believe that you the elected officials, are going to take that \$1.4 million and share

it as a tax cut to the people. Most of us do not. You are going to put it somewhere else. What are you going to do with that \$4 million that you are anticipating to pick-up? The revenue that you are trying to pick up is the wrong type of revenue. Merry Christmas and thank you.

Mayor Guinta stated before the 7:30 meeting begins, would Grace Sullivan please come forward. I want to thank Alderman Pinard, who was going to join me up here but is a little under the weather, this evening. Alderman Pinard brought to our attention MCTV honorable mention, for its fifteen years of service to our community. Recently, the Alliance for the Community Media provided an honorable mention in 2008 for MCTV based on their service. Alderman Pinard, if you want to come forward, I had a great idea on behalf of the City of Manchester honoring MCTV. Alderman Pinard, has an honorable plaque, which I want to read about access MCTV anniversary connecting you to a community. The plaque was given to Grace Sullivan from MCTV, on behalf of her employees who cover the City so well. We want to honor you, thank you, and commend you, for your commitment to the community. Thank you, if you want to come forward.

Ms. Grace Sullivan, MCTV Director, stated thank you very much Aldermen and Mayor. This video is about the fifteen years MCTV has been serving the community. I can think of no better of a time, then last Friday, during the power outage. It is a real privilege to work for the City, to work with the Fire Department, Police Department, and see the Aldermen come in on that Friday with the senior citizens. The City pulls together along with the non-profits. It has been an honor, and privilege to serve the City.

Mayor Guinta stated we also have one more presentation that we can get in before the 7:30 meeting. I recognize Aldermen and Senator Ted Gatsas.

Alderman Gatsas stated Dave Nixon, would you come forward please, you can bring you wife it is okay. David, it is an honor and a pleasure, I have a Senate proclamation, which I am sure you are familiar with. The yeomen's work that you did for the seniors of Manchester, raising \$500,000, for the capital contribution fund certainly was a yeomen's job. I can tell you when I first heard that we were looking at raising \$500,000, I said that is going to be a tuff job. Then they said Dave Nixon was going to lead the charge and I said that job just got an awful lot easier. With that, I have a Senate proclamation, and I am sure the citizens, and the

seniors of Manchester, are humbled of what you have done for them to help them forward.

State of New Hampshire

A Resolution

Be it known, that the New Hampshire Senate, hereby extends its congratulations to David Nixon, in recognition in his tireless efforts and success in raising \$500,000, for the William B. Cashin Senior Center capitol campaign. And be it further known, that the New Hampshire Senate, extends its best wishes for continued success and this resolution be dually signed. David Congratulations.

Mr. David Nixon stated thank you very much my good friend, Ted Gatsas. In any project it is worthwhile. An awful lot of people contributed to this and I accept this in there names. I am speaking of such people as Barbara Vigneault, Director of Elderly Services, her husband Mike, Alderman Mike Lopez, Alderman George Smith, Alderman Ted Gatsas, and retired Alderman Armand Forest among many others. It was a worthwhile project and it is a happy place. We are all going to get to the point, where the Cashin Senior Activity Center will be meaningful to us. Another thing I would like to say is that we had a little trouble getting the funds started, Mayor Baines and I were wooing consciously the Singer family. I brought the five brothers over there to show them what a great place it is, and we were loosely talking about \$50,000, \$100.000. The next morning we found out they named the Senior Center after Bill Cashin, God Bless him. That money went out the window. I have to tell you, I have got to know Bill Cashin in the course of this fund raising effort and he as been very generous with his time and with his funds. All I can tell you, if it makes Manchester a better place for all of us who worked so hard for it, I am glad to have you enjoy it. Thank you very much Senator, I appreciate it.

Alderman Gatsas request Peter Lely, the soccer coach, for the State Champion Class L for the girl's soccer team. I think, he has some of his players here and we certainly going to do a proclamation for the entire team. Can we have Sandra Nuse, Lindsey Johnson, Gordon Nuse, and Elizabeth Belanger, come forward? Certainly, when athletics participated and certainly get accolades for all being on the state team this is certainly a good time to recognize them. I know that Ms. Belanger is up here and she must take after her mothers' athletic skills, certainly, not her fathers, because I played sports with him. But again, I want to congratulate you all. I have a proclamation, and I believe you are coming to the

State House, so that we can recognize the full team up there. When you make the All State Girls Soccer Team that was pretty impressive. Having four girls from one team, we can understand why Central was number one in class L champs. Again, congratulations. I will only read one of these because they are all the same.

State of New Hampshire

State Senate

Be it known; that the New Hampshire Senate extends its congratulations to each one of you, in recognition in making the All State Girls Soccer Team, Class L. And further be known, that the New Hampshire Senate extends its best wishes for continued success and this resolution be dually signed. Congratulations and best of luck in the future.

Mayor Guinta stated thank you very much, for those presentations and again congratulations from the Board as well.

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

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk