

**SPECIAL MEETING  
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN  
IN JOINT SESSION WITH  
BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**February 19, 2009**

**7:00 PM**

Mayor Guinta called the special meeting of the joint Board of Aldermen and School Board to order.

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

A moment of silence was observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

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

School Committeemen O'Sullivan, DeBlasi, Herbert, Soucy, Gelinas, Kruse, Beaudry, Avar, Dolman, Fischer, Kelley, Gagnon Langton

Absent: Aldermen Garrity, Murphy  
School Committeemen Craig, Labanaris

3. Discussion relative to the FY2010 budget process.

**Mayor Guinta** stated thank you, members of both Boards, members of the public and those of you in the audience for attending today's meeting. First and foremost, I want to reiterate that the document that has been handed out is not the budget proposal by me. That budget proposal will not actually be made until toward the end of March. The purpose of the meeting today is to give both Boards and the public an idea of the fiscal challenges before us, the decisions that we have to make as Boards, as well as our departments and our unions and union representatives who can work with us to try to get through the challenging times we have. I thought it would be better to give everyone a bit of advance notice as to where we sit today, about five to six weeks before the actual budget address. What is before you is the current fiscal year budget summary sheet with its current tax implication, as well as a full complement for both City and School's fiscal year 2010 budget summary, and what the tax implication would be, should that budget pass. That obviously is a 12% tax impact. There are two additional lines that we have included, considering the Governor's proposal that he submitted last Thursday to the Legislature. The first line has no impact. That's assuming all of the stimulus money that he's proposing in his budget would actually flow to Manchester. The column to the far right, which represents almost an 18% tax hike, would be if the funds did not flow to the City of Manchester through the stimulus package. I thought it was important that both Boards have an opportunity to see the decisions and the challenges that I as a mayor who has to submit a budget will have to go through, as well as both Boards are going to have to contemplate. I've also attached about a page and a half of recommendations and ideas as to where I'm going and what I think our goals should be as a city. First and foremost, I want to reiterate that this is a full complement budget for both the City and the School Department, and that tax impact would be 12.05%. Anything less than this would probably result in layoffs on sides, school and city. How we work as a Board, how we work as a community, to try to resolve these issues will dictate what kind of layoffs we will be considering. At this point the best projection I could give you would be that the most for both the City and the School Department would be 200 individuals. There are many things that we can consider to reduce that number. I think that is an absolute

priority that we should have as a City, trying to minimize the number of layoffs that we would have as a community. I do intend to work with both Boards to come to a budget that has zero tax impact to the people of this City. I don't say that lightly. We are in a recession. I feel that people in our community do not have the financial means to continue to give at this point. I also feel that the challenging time and the recession that we are in is going to last more than just one budget cycle. I think it's going to last several. I think that we need to prepare as a City for the long term and how to get through these challenges and also meet the requirements that we have to educate our kids, to keep people safe, and to provide services in the City. Secondly, I think that as we prioritize, one of the challenges and one of the issues we are going to have is where to cut. But I do believe that public safety and the strides that we've made in public safety should be a top priority of this City. We as a Board have worked closely together to rid our City of the criminal elements, criminal elements that I don't believe we should invite back. So it's going to be a further challenge for us to maintain a certain level of public safety in the City, given the resources we have and the reduction of resources we have for the second consecutive year. So there are several policy initiatives that I have considered and evaluated, and believe that we as a city must consider and evaluate through the course of the budget process. None of them are going to be pretty. Many of them are going to require sacrifice from everyone in the City, but nonetheless, I felt that every member of this Board should have advance notice of some of the ways in which we can consider minimizing the number of layoffs, thusly allowing us to continue to provide services in our City. The first is work furloughs, placing every City worker on a one-week furlough in fiscal year 2010 could save the City as much as \$1.1 million. And let's note that every 1% on the tax rate is roughly \$1.9 million. For every point we come down, we've got to save \$1.9 million. City department heads would determine an internal policy of implementation after consultation with their employees and with the approval of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. The intention is not certainly to shut City government down for any particular week but to stagger unpaid time off throughout the course of the year. Secondly, I have notified the union heads that after meeting with the

department heads today and both Boards today, I'd like to initiate meetings with all members of the unions, as well as non-affiliated representatives, and I'm establishing a course of action and inviting Alderman Lopez and Alderman O'Neil to join me with city staff to meet with these union representatives to discuss how we can minimize layoffs in the City and how we can work as a community to forge ahead through the challenging times. I feel that we also must work with MCAM and MCTV to renegotiate the existing contract and payment plan. The current projections show that the funds flowing to these respective stations will more than double in the next fiscal year to around \$860,000. Given the challenges that we have, I feel that this is going to be a challenging but necessary decision that we will have to make, and I certainly hope that representatives from MCTV and MCAM will work with us through the challenging times that we have. Another way of trying to increase and improve revenues to the City, at least for the short term, is looking at payments in lieu of taxes from some of the non profit communities in our City. I'm directing the Assessor to contact City non profits and other tax exempt property owners to consider making payment in lieu of taxes to the City. This is not an issue that I considered until the last several weeks when it was clear to me that we are going to have a continuing financially challenging period of time before us. We've got to assess and determine how we can invite those non profit organizations who are financially viable to help us and assist us through this point. I would consider recommending a closed period of time should they be willing to assist us and try to focus those particular resources directly toward public safety. Employee buyouts is another area that we have been contemplating for the last six weeks. I do not feel that we could have an employee buyout in fiscal year 2009 for two simple reasons: number one is we have not appropriated dollars and therefore would meet substantial legal requirements. And secondly, there's not enough time in the course of fiscal year 2009 to realize savings, due to payoffs that we would have to make. I do feel that we should consider it for 2010, which would require us to have a budgeted item in the 2010 proposal and adopted budget. And it would have to take effect in the beginning of fiscal year 2010, and it would likely require almost every position to remain unfilled that is vacated.

We've talked about consolidation and mergers in the past, and I feel that we've done a good job as a City, having two done so far that I believe have and will continue to improve service in the City. I am likely to bring forward one consolidation. I'm not ready or prepared to bring it forward this evening, but in the coming weeks I will bring an additional consolidation or merger, at least one, to this Board for your consideration. I think that we also will have to consider reducing the workweek for employees in the City. Many state and city governments have reduced the number of days that government is open to the public in order to maximize utility savings. I think that we should consider this, especially in conjunction with potential staggered work furloughs. I'm not sure that this would work for the course of 52 weeks, but I think that there are times during the course of the year when there are certain operations that may not require being open five days a week. Capital spending suspension is another recommendation I am bringing to this Board. The majority of the bonding approved in the last two months that has neither been expended nor committed would be suspended. That would save us significant debt service and interest on maturing debt. I believe that we'll have to reevaluate the most recently adopted proposal for equipment purchases. This proposal would exclude equipment that has already been ordered. I have two other points. This morning when I met with department heads...we met for about an hour...I went through the challenges that we're having. I do believe that as a city we'll get through this. I believe that we've got a good team in place as it relates to our department heads as well as our employees, but I asked the department heads to talk with the employees, to prepare employees because I feel whatever decisions we make we must be respectful and mindful of the personal decisions that we make that have an impact on those who serve our community. The decisions that I've made to this point have not been easy. They've been made with a heavy heart, but the reality is that two consecutive years of reductions in revenue combined with the recession that we're experiencing makes it impossible to have the same way that we do business continue. We do have to think very differently than we've thought ever as a city, and I am very much willing to work with both Boards, as well as all department heads and employees and our unions to, in a very amicable and

cooperative way, provide the best service we can, provide as much as possible, understanding and sympathy to the individuals who would be impacted by the decisions we would have to make. I would hope that we all could work in a team-like approach. This is a reality, not a philosophy. I thought it would be better that we all have a clear understanding of the challenges before us. We have five to six weeks to contemplate and consider what kind of budget we want to work with. I will make every effort as I make decisions and recommendations to consider all points of view, to understand the decisions and how they affect, not just our employees, but the citizens of the City. But make no mistake, I want people to understand that I feel this is a very challenging budget, not one of political ideology but one that focuses on the reality of the times. And I do want to make mention of our employees who I think serve this City admirably and with great dedication. The decisions that I or members of these Boards make are decisions that we have to make as elected officials, as members of Boards of Directors, so to speak. We understand that they are tough decisions, that they have personal and financial impact on families. In my opinion, the best approach is to minimize the number of layoffs so that we don't negatively impact those who work so hard for our City. But I will ask that employees understand, prepare, and let's hope that as a community we can make final agreement toward the middle of this summer on how we can best address the services required and the expectations of our citizens. At this point I would open it up to any comments or questions from members of either Board, but what I can say is at the beginning of next week we'll start setting up meetings with department heads again, as well as union representatives, to have discussions as to how we can best move forward over the coming weeks.

**Alderman Lopez** stated one comment I'd like to make is if we follow the course of action that we have in the past as far as presentation of budgets and going to committees, there's a lot of time that's going to be wasted. So, I would hope that, even if we have to have a meeting every week to solve some of these problems, that at least the Board of Mayor and Aldermen have those meetings. At the same time, I think we need a lot of

answers to a lot of these questions, and I hope that your staff is going to be prepared to answer these questions. Secondly, when you say a zero budget, looking at approximately \$4 million in revenue that we lost this year, so that's another \$4 million to come off the spending for departments. So, I don't believe that we can continue to wait, whether department heads are prepared before you present your budget, and I would hope that your budget is presented, along with the School Board, sooner than later because I think there are very important issues that have to be taken up, especially with the School Department. There are a lot of unknowns. I notice that you have \$156 million in the budget there. I presume that you're counting on the \$7.4 million in education coming from the State. I think we have to know concretely from the School Department what they're looking at as soon as possible. And I would hope that they would meet, and not wait until the end of next month to try to give us a number because I don't think it would be fair. I think the pink slips are due and they can answer that question because it's a question I have for the School Department, when the pink slips are due, so that we don't run into the situation as we did in previous years. So those are the comments that I'd like to make, but I think it's important for department heads to identify, not personnel but positions, right away, and see where we're going with this thing because if we wait till later we're just going to get bogged down. And my last comment is, if we can put all of these pieces together with 52 cards and then make some concrete decisions, then I think that we can get over this hurdle.

**School Committeeman Kruse** stated I just want to reassure the gentlemen that the School Board will be prepared to present a budget on March 9<sup>th</sup>, the second Monday of the month, as has been our practice. We are working on the budget presently. The Finance Committee is set to pass its final budget either on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or the 4<sup>th</sup> of March, and then it will go to the full Board. One thing that we would ask, if at all possible, is certainly you folks have a much bigger task than we do in terms of trying to put together a budget for the whole City. The sooner we know what number the Aldermen are going to be able to appropriate to the School Board, the sooner we're going to be able to resolve

any issues that do occur. The earlier we can inform people that their job is indeed going to remain, the better it is certainly for those employees and for the District. So I would urge you, as you go forward with your hard work, to do the very best you can to get the School budget number as quickly as you possibly can for us and for our employees, and I thank you.

**Mayor Guinta** stated I would add that one of the challenges that we have this year that we haven't had in the past is that the Legislature will likely be working until late June before a final budget is adopted. There are several pieces of legislation that have varying effects, all of which appear to be, as best as I can tell, on the table in Concord. I don't think we'll get an accurate reflection or picture for a couple of months. That doesn't mean that we'll wait for those numbers, but I'm not even 100% certain, for example, that the \$7.4 million that's slated to be received by the City, which is supported by the Governor, would actually be materialized. I know that there's legislation that would potentially affect that amount. So this is going to be a bit of a different kind of challenge. We also don't know as of yet when actual stimulus money that could be used will be received by the State or the City. As soon as that information is brought to our attention, I assure you I will bring it to both Boards' attention, but I don't have a firm commitment on a date as of today. So there are challenges there in terms of revenues that we could consider that we won't have great certainty about certainly before the March budget presentation.

**Dr. Henry Aliberti**, Superintendent of Schools, stated I don't know whether you or your colleagues could offer us suggestions, advice, and recommendations. We're certainly going to need to submit our budget well before that information is available and certainly a large part of that information affects our budget directly. So the budget that we submit to you in the beginning of March is necessarily going to be one that does not come with the benefit of having all of the information that will be had mid-calendar year when you folks have to make your final determination. So I guess some guidance from the Board

of Mayor and Aldermen would be helpful to us, either tonight or in a subsequent contact about what you would like us to do in terms of presenting something to this Board, given that we won't have all of our information either.

**Alderman Lopez** stated I think that the School Board did a very good job last year and I think when the Mayor presented a \$140 million budget, you went \$140 million all the way up, and I think that the School Board would prepare that. If we got \$140 million, what that would entail, all the way up to whatever number you decide to present to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen as your budget.

**Dr. Aliberti** asked is the \$140 million the number that you're seeking to have us start with?

**Alderman Lopez** responded no, I'm saying last year that's what you did. The Mayor gave you \$140 million and you said if you got \$140 million this is what you would have to do. And then you went to \$141 million, \$142 million, \$143 million, with the positions that you would have to get rid of and the programs you would have to get rid of. I think that would help us, starting at \$140 million.

**Alderman Ouellette** stated I want to echo the sentiments of my good friend from the School Board. I remember one year the Board of Mayor and Aldermen were able to do that in a very difficult year. It did make for a much cleaner budget season for us in terms of moving forward at the School District. It gave us a lot more time to plan and reallocate funds and make a much smoother transition in terms of accounting purposes starting the new school year. Your Honor, my question is, if we were to appropriate a number, let's say before the 15<sup>th</sup> of May, for my question purposes, if information from Concord comes down, could we then, before the second Tuesday in June, come back and change that information?

**Mayor Guinta** responded I think if we have new revenues...I'm looking at the Solicitor...we can reopen the budget.

**Alderman Ouellette** asked if things go toward the negative, could we then change their bottom line appropriation? I agree with you, Your Honor. That would present a great challenge, not knowing what's going forward. I'm on the side of that I would like to see them have a number before the 15<sup>th</sup> of May. I believe that's when the pink slips must go out by. The 10<sup>th</sup> of May? It is a very difficult year, Your Honor, and I think that, going forward, I think the employees of the City are going to do their best to work with us. And I know that, talking to the few people that I've talked to, layoffs is of grave concern to the union heads. We just want to keep that in mind as we move forward.

**Alderman Shea** stated thank you for your presentation. What I'd be concerned with is, in due course of time, the bullets that you have, trying to get some sort of figure as far as what type of financial resources we would receive. In other words, you have, for instance, in the first, the work furlough, \$1.1 million. Once there are meetings with unions and non-unions, it would be helpful of course to get that particular type of resource to us, and then when we try to renegotiate and so forth, and we're also primarily interested in how much the nonprofits are willing to give back to the City for services they do receive. So I think that all of these are very helpful, but I think that we have to set some sort of a timeline so that we can gather that information and try to formulate a budget predicated upon that.

**Mayor Guinta** stated my hope in having this meeting this evening was to give us all a bit of a head start before my budget presentation, so we can begin discussions about the policy decisions that have to be considered by both Boards. To the extent that we can have those conversations with the impacted entities, both affiliated and non-affiliated, between now and when I propose my budget I think is something that is important to occur and something that will occur. That will hopefully give us some flexibility as a

board and some answers as to how we can best try to address the other revenue shortfalls in our budget.

**Alderman Shea** asked do you have any preconceived idea as far as how much this would tend to help out or is it something that's nebulous at this time?

**Mayor Guinta** asked in terms of sitting down with the affiliated and non-affiliated representatives?

**Alderman Shea** responded no, all of these things grouped together, all of the bullets themselves.

**Mayor Guinta** stated I don't have a calculation. These are things I wanted to get out to both Boards tonight...

**Alderman Shea** interjected so you don't really have any idea how much you might be able to...

**Mayor Guinta** interjected I have an idea of what some of the individual items would save. Obviously a work furlough for one week is \$1.1 million. Again, sitting down with MCAM and MCTV, I couldn't give you an answer because I need to hear their responses as to opening up that contract and renegotiating it. I'm thinking it would be several hundred thousand dollars.

**Alderman Shea** stated if not more, because you have \$1.1 million in the first one.

**Mayor Guinta** stated I'm saying just for the MCAM and MCTV. The buyouts, we're hoping to save significant six figures, if not more, hopefully in the one million to two million dollar range. Consolidations would probably be in the lower six figures, but

again, there's a savings there. Reduction of the work week, it really depends on how many departments are affected. If it's just buildings that we're focusing on...but just on energy costs alone you could save maybe \$100,000 to \$200,000. If there are salaries tied to that, you could save significantly more. The capital spending, that's a \$6 million proposal. If you eliminated 100% of it, that would be \$900,000 savings in our budgeted line item for maturing debt. Obviously we wouldn't be eliminating all of it because there have been some orders placed, so it would be no more than \$900,000.

**Alderman Shea** stated just by way of...I'm not sure if this is redundancy or not, but you have work furlough, number one, and then when you turn the page you have reducing the work week.

**Mayor Guinta** stated they are two separate things. Work furlough, that proposal would be a one-week essentially unpaid vacation where every employee would not work an additional week during the course of the year and would not be paid for that. The second item, reducing the work week, would be reducing the number of hours worked for the remaining 51 weeks of the year.

**Alderman Shea** stated so it is conceivable that someone would have a work furlough and be willing to take, in addition to that, a reduced work week.

**Mayor Guinta** stated correct. These are measures that I'm suggesting, rather than laying off that individual. Considering that the unemployment numbers are increasing in the State, we want to try to save as many jobs as possible. These are the alternatives that I would ask employees to consider. I have not shared this with many people, just the department heads and this Board, but with the reality of the economic times, people would rather have a job and get paid less than get paid zero. It's a very difficult time to find new employment. I recognize that and understand that, so these are things that I'm hoping we will consider as a Board, and we get feedback from our employees to see what

would be reasonable for them. And again, this wouldn't necessarily be forever. We would have to assess on an annual basis when changes would end up being made.

**Alderman DeVries** asked could you explain for me how the work furlough program is going to work for Police and Fire? I'm assuming that's not extending to the School District. Or do you envision that also for teachers?

**Mayor Guinta** responded no, I don't think it would really apply to teachers because you can't not have them in the classroom.

**Alderman DeVries** asked so how would that work with Police and Fire?

**Mayor Guinta** responded Police and Fire, the department heads would have to address the additional week that they wouldn't have access to employees through scheduling through the course of the year. Now I know that there are overtime implications to that, which is why we need to sit down with representatives of the unions to discuss the ancillary issues that are attached to a furlough.

**Alderman DeVries** stated so it's possible that that wouldn't work for our departments that have mandatory minimum staffing like Police and Fire. It may be applicable to others in the workforce.

**Mayor Guinta** stated I think we have to figure out ways to make it work.

**Alderman DeVries** stated I would like to hear more details on that plan when that evolves because it's eluding me right now on how that...if you have to replace somebody in a position if they're not there and there's a cost of overtime.

**Mayor Guinta** stated sure, well again, I spoke to the department heads today. I'm speaking to the Boards today. I've got another five weeks or so before I give my budget. This gives me an additional five weeks to talk with, not just the employees, but the department heads about how this would actually work. The obviously more challenging departments would be Fire and Police. The notion here was to give you the ideas which at this point I've evaluated and feel are worthy enough for your consideration. Some of the issues in terms of scheduling would still have to be worked out. But this is the purpose of having this discussion today rather than at the end of March.

**Alderman DeVries** stated talk is good, Your Honor. Could you answer for me as well the number that you have included here for the stimulus dollars? What exactly went into that?

**Mayor Guinta** responded the Governor's budget addressed three main areas that I have concern with that are identified on this sheet. The Rooms and Meals tax revenue to the cities, he said he was going to suspend. The profit sharing he said he was going to suspend, the revenue sharing, and also reduce the State portion of the Retirement System from 35% to 30%. Those three items are identified...take the column that says Impact to Governor's Budget with Stimulus. The \$4.4 million under Finance is the Rooms and Meals. The \$9.5 million in parenthesis would be the stimulus money he would be sending to us.

**Alderman DeVries** stated that's what I'm asking, Your Honor. I'm looking for what went into that number. How did you come up with the \$9.5 million?

**Mayor Guinta** responded adding those three numbers together they equal \$9,185,440.

**Alderman DeVries** stated so it's possible that the stimulus dollars might exceed that. You haven't seen a detail on exactly how the different formulas that are going to be funded might funnel down, for instance, to the schools, all the Title One.

**Mayor Guinta** stated this does not include Title One money. There is additional Title One money. It's not included here because it's a grant item as opposed to a budgeted item.

**Alderman DeVries** stated so it is possible, and thank you, Your Honor, that that number might look substantially different, hopefully by the time we see your budget.

**Mayor Guinta** stated I'm not sure. That's up to what the Governor wants to send and what the Legislature chooses to adopt. It certainly could look different. It could be that number, it could be higher, or it could be lower.

**School Committeeman Beaudry** stated I would like to ask the Aldermen as a whole if \$140 million is where they truly want us to start because our administration has been working diligently at the \$146 million level, which is level funded. So if we're looking at \$140 million we have to do a lot more work, and we've already had a couple of budget sessions in the finance committee, looking at what the \$146 million will do with the School District, and it's not pretty. We have \$5 million just in salary, benefits and retirement. That's not counting what it's going to cost for operational costs. So if the Aldermen and the Mayor want us to look at \$140 million, we have a lot more work to do. In my personal opinion, I don't know how the School District is going to operate at that level.

**Alderman Ouellette** stated I think the appropriate number to start at, Your Honor, is to wait for your budget to come out and the number that you give the School District is the appropriate number. That's where we started from last year, and I think that is the point

that Alderman Lopez was trying to make. If we don't have significant number of members of this Board to change your number, that's the number that they're going to live with.

**Alderman Smith** stated I really think that some of the budgets we've passed in the past few years have been inflated as far as revenue. I know you're meeting with department heads. I'd like to ask all of the department heads to be realistic in what you project for revenues because it's a cost and I guess we are short a couple of million dollars in revenue.

**Mayor Guinta** stated yes we are.

**Alderman Smith** stated I think that if you're meeting with department heads you should get a realistic figure and have them be accountable for that figure they give to us.

**Mayor Guinta** stated so far the best estimates that I've included here are the estimates that have been submitted by the departments. Obviously revenue projections do fluctuate. It's very difficult in January, when these numbers were submitted to me for some of the departments to give me an actual projection. I would hope that these are conservative numbers and they might actually improve a little bit, but again, trying to predict and project what's going to occur in the next 12 months in the current economy is also a challenge that typically the department heads haven't had to consider. For example, in the next couple of weeks we'll get estimates from Presidents' Day weekend from the auto dealers as to how they did. We typically haven't asked for that information but we are now, so we can at least get an idea if there is an indication of additional buying. That will probably help Joan Porter a little bit in trying to finalize the number. I can assure you any revenue that I propose in the budget will be a conservative number.

**School Committeeman Beaudry** stated Mayor, if I can just continue, because we do have to give the Board of Mayor and Aldermen a number, so I would like, as a member of the finance committee and the Superintendent is sitting here, and they've been doing a lot of work. We have worked on the \$146 million. Do they actually want a number that goes down to as low as \$140 million? If that's what the Board wants then we're going to have to do a lot more work in the next few weeks to get that number where you want it.

**Alderman Lopez** stated I used the \$140 million and Alderman Ouellette was correct. If the Mayor is willing to give you \$146 million and work from that number, then do that. I was using the \$140 million as an illustration. So the Mayor has the opportunity to tell the School Board to start with \$146 million. That's his option.

**School Committeeman Gelinis** stated I think this is probably an opportunity to express what I've expressed to you in the past. If the school administration and the Mayor could work together on a budget at an earlier time and possibly come up with a figure that both the school administration and the Mayor can agree on so that in the future we can avoid these different figures and hopefully as a Board work on it together. Your prior statement that this is a reality not a philosophy is well taken, but I think we all have different philosophies on how to meet the challenges of this reality. So if the school administration and the Mayor work together prior to your budget message, I think all of us would have an opportunity to know where we are going.

**Mayor Guinta** stated well I can certainly say for the Superintendent that he has been very vigilant in asking me my opinion on that very number. He has demonstrated his willingness to try to properly prepare and advise the School Board, as well as the District that he leads. I have been at this point just unable to give him a very specific number because of some of the uneasiness about the revenues that we may or may not receive. I would hope to be able to...we will certainly be speaking on a fairly regular basis, as we have been, about the budget. To the extent that I can give him a sneak peek as to where I

think I'm heading, I will do the best I can to do that, but I can tell you that the Superintendent has been working very diligently in trying to get that information from me. The other day he called me at 7:30 in the morning on my cell and asked me if I had a number yet, so he's asking.

**School Committeeman Kelley** asked if the stimulus package comes down for special education funding are we confident that we are going to get that number before May 10<sup>th</sup>?

**Mayor Guinta** responded I believe before May 10<sup>th</sup> there will be an answer. Bud Fitch, as you know, is going to be responsible for overseeing the stimulus for the state of New Hampshire. We've contacted the Governor's office. We plan to contact Bud, as well as others, about specific dates as to when we'll get money and dates as to what kind of money we'll be able to access. To this point, that information has not been shared. I think they're still trying to iron out those numbers and those dates, to be quite honest. We would like them just as quickly as you would, and when I do have some sort of indication by which New Hampshire would receive money and the municipalities and towns will have money, I will share that with both Boards.

**School Committeeman Dolman** stated I have a question about the stimulus money. Have we any idea about the guidelines for the stimulus money? Do we know what we can use it for? I know the purpose is to get people working so that they'll spend money. I'm a little disappointed if we're going to create jobs and at the same time lay off people in other jobs. Are we really serving a purpose? Have we gotten guidelines yet about the stimulus monies and how we can use them?

**Mayor Guinta** responded we have not received the guidelines yet. I know that Bud Fitch, as well as the Governor's office, is going through that document to determine what those guidelines are. They have not been shared as extensively as I think anyone would like by the federal government. The best information I received as of today is that those

guidelines are being reviewed at the State level, and as soon as they have a clear understanding of the guidelines, they will be sharing them with the communities in the State. I think that's one of the challenges here. What money can go to communities and for what purpose can you use those funds? These are very important questions to have answered. Are there any other questions or comments? Thank you all very much for being here and thank you for your anticipated work during the next several months.

*This being a special meeting, no further business was presented and on motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman DeVries, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk