

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

April 07, 2009

7:00 PM

Mayor Guinta called the meeting to order.

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

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

Absent: Alderman DeVries

Mayor Guinta advised that the purpose of the special meeting is to give residents of Manchester the opportunity to address this 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. 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.

Eric Sawyer, 40 Wilmot Street, stated:

I want to speak this evening as chairman of Access Manchester and also personally to bring the taxi fares back to what they were. The two-thirds increase was particularly harmful. To give you an indication, this is a personal experience. A thirty dollar visit to the Elliot hospital went to fifty dollars. Doing that eight

times a month changed the taxi fare monthly bills from \$300 to \$400. That's a \$100 increase on a disability income which is pretty hard to swallow. Two-thirds was too much of an increase at one time. An increase might be in order but certainly not two-thirds. Thank you.

Glenn Ouellette, 112 Auburn Street, stated:

Now, the Highway Department did a great job in the last three years in completing Green Street. It is too bad that the Board of Mayor and Aldermen decided to save taxpayers' money and skimp on the job. On Friday night and again last night that area flooded. Every time we have a rain that's hard it floods. It's a brand new street. They did not put the proper size culverts in there. That wasn't saving taxpayers' money. Tonight I want to speak about the taxi services. The Board of Mayor and Aldermen caused yet another city crisis. It was created by your past tax and spend policies that have become reckless. Remember, it isn't the taxi companies that came in front of you in June of 2008 and asked for a ninety cent raise. They asked for a fifty cent raise but you as a body decided to give them ninety cents, and now the Committee is about to recommend to the full Board to get rid of the entire ninety cents. That is a bit extreme. I can see you cutting off the forty cent bonus that you gave them but that wasn't your money to give away. These are people and their families we're talking about. We are affecting people's lives. One of the reasons the taxi fares are so expensive is because you gave them that extra forty cents which they did not ask for, so please do not penalize them by removing the entire ninety cents. Leave them their fifty cents so they too can provide for their families and take away the bonus that they never even ask for. That is the right thing to do, not to go from one extreme to the other. We have a department head that throws away a perfectly good working machine that's worth \$20,000 and then needs to replace it, or if it's not replaced, that department head cannot maintain an archive of the Aldermanic meetings. Let me tell you what one person did, and it's not me. It's someone throughout this community. For \$15

they created *manchesternewhampshire.info*. You can go there and it lists all the Aldermanic meetings as they appear. This will be the third one. It's \$15 for a lifetime, and it's archived. For \$60 more it would include the School Board meetings and the other committee meetings. That's a lot less money than \$20,000 or \$40,000. That's a budget savings. Waste exists in our government. I've said it for years on end since 2000. We can easily find 5% in every department that can be eliminated, and by doing that you can avert a massive layoff. Remember we're talking families here. What should have been done years ago is finally being done.

Katy Easterly, 19 Morrison Street, stated:

I'm here in support of an increase to the Manchester Transit Authority budget. I think it's very important for a city the size of ours to have a robust and vital transportation system, and I don't feel that the system at its current budget is robust enough and serves the needs of our community. So, reducing the budget for the system I think would really hurt a lot of the residents here in Manchester. I have a personal story about this which relates to my sister-in-law who recently emigrated here from West Africa. Within a month of her arrival in Manchester she got a job and her job was at McDonalds in the mall. At first her schedule was such that I could bring her to her job on my way to work and it worked pretty well, but then she wanted to be able to extend her hours and work at a time when I wasn't able to bring her. Unfortunately, the bus did not travel to the mall past 7:00, and her shift ended at 9:15. When I called the Transportation Authority and asked if there could be a change to this, they said they weren't able to add routes, and that they were actually reducing the routes they had because of the budget crisis that they're in. I think it's very important for a city such as this that welcomes immigrants and is a growing city to really have a supportive transportation system that allows people without the means to have a personal car to get around in the city. I'm here to support an increase to the budget and

definitely to speak against a decrease in the budget as it has been proposed. Thank you very much for your time.

Howard McCarthy, 105 Randall Street, stated:

Here I am again. I just wondered, Your Honor, if Matt Normand would not say thirty seconds. If you could give me another minute or two tonight, I'd appreciate that. It's really for the benefit of this city because, Your Honor, I have the solution to this budget, and I don't want to go through another two months, into June, hearing all this nitpicking, or 'you can't do that and you can't do this'. You can. Anyway, I had a fit of sneezing today. If I go into that, it's going to count against my time, so maybe you can overlook that. As Alderman O'Neil said, "Howard, you've got to get right to it." Well, Alderman O'Neil and I are two different people. I like to dance around things before I hit you with a sledge hammer. So anyway, Your Honor, I look at your recommendations with this budget and I think you have some pretty good stuff, and I think you're on the right track, but when I hear all this little nitpicking coming up, 'oh you can't do this and you can't do that', I don't think that's the way to go, and I think we ought to forget it. Now, I passed out some gifts here, but they're not just for you. I passed them out to as many people as I could. In a way, if I just gave it to you, that would be a bribe. What I'm really looking for is another two or three minutes on this thing because I can't possibly get everything across in three minutes. You know, there are other cities and towns that give five minutes. That's not too bad. You know, you people take all the time in the world to solve problems, but I only have three minutes to save the city. So anyway, I've got to look at my notes because I've got too much in my foolish head here. Basically speaking, Your Honor, what I'm proposing is no layoffs and no furloughs. The reason for that is these are dire times, and no time for people that possibly could lose a job. I want to propose that everybody keeps working and donates a week's pay to the city. If you take a furlough and do nothing, you've accomplished nothing. If you keep working and

keep the city running for all the amenities that we have here, that's the way to go. A week or two ago I got a commendation here that was absolutely mind-boggling. On it, Your Honor, it says, 'I hope other people take your lead.' Now if you're sincere about that, go ahead and do it. I personally...I'm targeting especially the city workers, for the reason that they should help their own. If one person's job is not in dire straits here, he would appreciate someone else helping him if he was. If he was going to get laid off, he would appreciate some help. Anyway, everyone should try to help one another. Anyway, no matter what I've got down here, I can't seem to get to the point but that is the...I suppose I'm acting like the Man of La Mancha and the impossible dream, but this is a possibility that something could go like this. And all that nitpicking that you people are very good at, I don't want to go through that till June. One other thing, I was going to sing a song tonight, but if you watch my show on Friday night at 6:30 on channel 23, I'll be singing a great song. I'm not singing it, Your Honor, but it's *Love is in the Air*. Everywhere I look around love is in the air, every sight and every sound. And I don't know if I'm being foolish and I don't know if I'm being wise, but it's something that I must believe in, and it's there when I look in your eyes. The whole thing here, everybody, it's love. It's the only thing that's free. Thank you.

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

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk