

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

**May 5, 2009**

**7:00 PM**

Chairman Lopez called the meeting to order.

Chairman Lopez called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Sullivan.

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,  
O'Neil, Lopez, Shea, DeVries, Garrity, Smith, Ouellette, Murphy.

**Chairman Lopez** 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. 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.

**Richard Molan**, 125 Tennyson Drive, stated:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Board. I want to say I really like the new hairdo of Alderman Murphy. I appear here tonight, not only as a citizen, but as the legal representative of the Manchester Professional Firefighters Association, Local 856, the Manchester Association of Fire Supervisors, Local 3020, the Manchester Police Patrolmen's Association, as well as the Manchester Association of Police Supervisors. I have been authorized by their leadership to appear here tonight to request that this board authorize a representative group, however they may choose, to meet with these four public safety organizations to discuss issues and ways and means that we might alleviate some of the costs, anticipated labor costs, in the upcoming budget. We are obviously very concerned about these matters. We want to preserve the safety services for the citizens of Manchester that we all enjoy and we know that there may be means out there by which we can accommodate the city's budget, hopefully, so that it might make it easier to adapt a budget that would reach those means. I'm also instructed to request the Board, or to say that our request to meet with you is conditioned on one proviso. That provision is that the matter of mandatory furloughs be taken off the table. This matter, with all due respect to the City Solicitor's office and so on, we believe has legal complications to it as well as practical complications. We're willing to discuss options of that, but we believe that frankly we would be wasting a lot of time, as time is of the essence, if we have to discuss that issue. So, we make that proposal, that we do sit down and do it with all expediency to meet the Board's schedule.

**Chairman Lopez** stated just one question. Do you have any letter in writing, so that there is no misinterpretation?

**Richard Molan** replied no, I do not at this time. This was a matter that just came to fruition today.

**Chairman Lopez** asked could you forward that letter?

**Richard Molan** replied I can provide it to you in the morning.

**Chairman Lopez** stated thank you very much.

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

Good evening. I hope that this City begins to live within its means. I and many other citizens in this City watch these proceedings. To think that you are even considering the possibility of opening the pools three days a week and Crystal Lake, after a large investment is being finished there as well, two days a week. Are you trying to tell us that we cannot afford to maintain what we already own? If that is so, why do we keep building? We need to maintain what we already own before we build anything else. That's how it is in our households, with our families in this City, and that's how it should be here on the Board. This Saturday, there is going to be a rally in front of the Empire Theatre at 87 Massabesic Street at 11:00. It is to save our theatre. It is one of the few last remaining old theatres in the USA. It's the only one left in the City that's in operation. The other one is on Second Street, and it was turned into a restaurant, and it is now for sale. It seats 298 people. We have a group of people who are interested in reopening it as a theatre, as a movie theatre, as well as theatrical theatre, as it has both stage and movie screen. Please, we need your support. This will be a good thing for the City. It's hard to consider a City of 110,000 plus does not have a theatre. This, again, will be at 11 o'clock at 87 Massabesic Street. Bring your own signs. There will be no march as well because we did not want to pay the \$300 that was required. It's shameful that you have to pay \$300 when the City is already self-insured, for one hour. That's not democracy. We want to be heard. Also, there's going to be a free rally here at City Hall on May 19<sup>th</sup> from

5:00 to 6:30 PM. And the reason for that is what happened last night. I recommended years ago that one town meeting in a city of this size is just not sufficient. It may meet the law, but it borders. We have four big high schools in this City. We have Trinity. We have West High School. We have Memorial High School. We have Central High School. There is no reason that in one week's time, you can't hold four meetings to represent the four regions, east side, north, south, and west of this city. Now the major reasons why we only had 200 people last night is 55% of the population in this City is over 45 years old. Many of us can't drive and the buses don't work after 6:00 PM. Thank you.

**George Pettigrew**, 494 Amherst Street stated:

Good Evening. What I want to do is talk about the quality of life in the City of Manchester. I live in what used to be a relatively quiet neighborhood, where people kept their houses up, yards clean, paid their taxes and received standard city services. Now, we still receive the standard city services; however, we need some additional help. I think it's in the form of enforcing zoning regulations and noise regulation, whether the source is from neighbors, automobiles or motorcycles. The zoning regulation, noise regulation law needs to be enforced to maintain the integrity of the neighborhoods. I live in single family residential zone neighborhood. We are currently having a problem with a rented house in that neighborhood. There are registered and unregistered vehicles parked all over lawn. The zoning law says there is no front yard parking, but that doesn't seem to matter. Commercial trucks are parked on the lawn or left in the street. Single family residential zone calls for no commercial vehicle parked overnight or especially on lawns and in street. And there is a possibility of an auto repair business being operated from that location, which is illegal. That said, for the record, the Building Department had been informed and the case is being looked at. But I also wanted to say at this time that I've received nothing but positive feedback in support from the Building Department. Unfortunately, the guy who

answered the phone, I know him, so that's the guy I call. He's been getting the majority of the calls. Alderman Jim Roy is also aware of the situation. Unfortunately, everything takes time. Reducing their time should be a priority and would be beneficial for the City of Manchester as a whole. The other area of concern is noise, whether the source is, again, neighbors, automobiles or motorcycles. I believe the City of Manchester bought and paid for noise abatement equipment that was supposed to be used for the enforcement of local state laws. I would like to know what the status of that equipment is in that effort. I believe that was purchased last year or the year before in the budget. I would still like to know what the status of that is. When I can hear a motor vehicle from half a mile away, I want to say that no one is enforcing that law. I realize that in this economic environment, budgets are scrutinized very carefully. But these efforts should already be part of an existing budget, and staffing should be in place to do that enforcement. The enforcement of the existing laws and regulations would greatly improve the quality of life in the City of Manchester. Thank you.

**Roger L. Paradis**, 33 Karin Street stated:

I am a 30 year retired firefighter. My father worked as a firefighter for about 20 years. I have a son working on the Fire Department. I have been everywhere about this health insurance issue. I didn't attend the big meeting last night, because I figured everybody would be there and I would let some more intelligent people handle it. But, I got letters today. I got letters from people promoting Cigna. I got phone calls telling me that this isn't over yet. So without having heard last night's meeting, I'd like to give my two cents here. I've been to my unions. I've been to all the people. I've been to the Health and Human Services here at the City Hall about this issue. Everybody agrees. Let me explain. When the City and the media says, "retired group two employee," that is Police and Fire. Media says they lump this. What most people don't understand is there are different groups of retirees. And the most vulnerable are being treated abysmally

and nobody wants to bring this out; nobody wants to talk about it. Now, I can pay my bills. But I know people over the age of 65 that send their whole pension check here to pay their health insurance to the City of Manchester. The City of Manchester is in health insurance, so they can stop blaming Cigna and they can stop blaming Anthem. I'm speaking for people like my father who went 15 years with the Fire Department without getting a pay raise. I understand what the city can do in hard times. Now you've gone completely the other way. You're billing people like me for a Medicare subsidy, a subsidy that's supposed to pay for 20% of our bills. You're billing me and my wife over \$8,000 a year, out of pocket. You're billing my pension system for over \$6,000 a year. My pension system is having arithmetic problems now, ladies and gentlemen, and you're giving my son, God bless him, I love the Fire Department, you're giving him health insurance nearly for free. Are you people here doing arithmetic? It's not coming from Cigna. It's not coming from Anthem. It's coming from you people. You've got young group two municipal employees, one in their twenties, making \$100,000 a year. You're giving them free insurance for their families and you're doing this to the most vulnerable. You know, insurance is supposed to be a pool, so most people pay for the vulnerable. Now you've segregated the most vulnerable, the youngest employees. All they want is a subsidy to Medicare. And you're driving them broke. I'm not going to go broke. Now, most of the people I joined the Fire Department with, ladies and gentlemen, some of them were illiterate. That's why they're not here. Some of them have trouble reading. You hired them for nothing, coming out of the Great Depression. I'm going blame you bean counters because many of you think they had an answer. I have been waiting for somebody to make sense of it. You'll straighten it out, this is so outrageous, and you'll straighten it out. So I'm here tonight to put in my two cents. I hope for God's sake that somebody is going to do something about this. I have a hard time to speak about issues. I get tired of waiting. You've got to forgive me. But, you

know, you go to school with the Catholic nuns for 12 years, they'll teach you right or wrong or they'll take your head off. Thank you.

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

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk.