

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

November 24, 2009

7:00 PM

Mayor Guinta called the meeting to order.

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

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

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

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.

Mayor Guinta 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.

Glenn R.J. Ouellette, 112 Auburn Street, stated:

I remember not too many months ago that you foreclosed on their loan and you lost, you forgave \$19.8 million to Wall Street Towers. That is more than \$4 million. That is a big chunk of change. The rates kept going up. Who will pay the increase? The 40% decrease brings us back to a 2007 budget. That is two years down the road. MCTV's current PEG funds were due five months ago and MCAM's contract funds were due two months ago. Yes, for the Aldermen who have been called by their constituents you have told them and you are correct, yes all PEG stations are now receiving a monthly check. Half truth. You are giving them 40% less than the contract calls for. That does not pay the increase in electricity or the rent. Eventually as those of you who have a mortgage or you rent know, if you don't pay the increase you get thrown out on the street. It is not any different with the City or some of its departments. MCAM's contract calls for an audit every year. That is in our contract with the City but this year we cut the budget so that expense is not there. How do you provide for an audit but not provide the income that is supposed to pay for that audit that is part of our contract? The problem caused by the City by cutting the contract. Is the money there? Yes it is. You have already received the \$1.4 million. After all, every City subscriber pays a monthly 5% franchise tax fee. Remember the City is not a franchise. The PEG stations that you operate is the actual franchise. The City is a government entity in charge of funding those. The City claims that waste exists within the stations. You know what ladies and gentlemen? I don't doubt that. You know I am a stickler for wasting of funds and I am going to end here but a 40% decrease? What department budgets have you cut in the last two years 40%? That is a steep cut. The Board of Mayor and Aldermen can't even cut a total of 5% of its total budget. In 2007 you had a \$2.4 million deficit. In 2009 it is \$2.8 million. So please, clean up your house. We are supposed to be doing the people's will. I am not trying to be a tough guy here. I am giving you the facts. When Congress wrote this bill there were two intentions. One that PEG stations

existed. They need to operate and that is why they allow for the funding. Two, whatever funds were left went to the City. In Manchester, it seems to be the other way around. You take what you want and leave the rest. If you cut MCTV and MCAM, it applies to both, by 40%, you are literally going to be closing them down because they will not be able to pay the increase in lights or rent. I will close with this statement. This month we would have been able to save \$1,600 if we would have bought a six month supply of DVD's that we use at our studio. Since we did not get our upfront money, we were not able to do that. So yes waste exists but in this case it exists on your part by not following the rules that you signed yourself. Thank you. Do your job.

William Boudreau, Sr., 102 Bridge Street, stated:

Good evening. I am too a person who has his own TV show over at MCAM. It is called the Boudreau Night Show. I am new there and what I do is I get the young people to come on my show and try to see what they have for talent. You just called my niece's name. She didn't want to come up and talk. We had a show today and I brought her on. She draws and I wanted to show the public the talent she has in art. We did that show and I had another guy by the name of Andrew who for the first time came on my show and wanted to do some rap. So what I am trying to do is get talent to come on MCAM and show the City what we have for talent out there and try to explore their future that they might get out of being on the TV program. I am hoping that the committee can see to not let this station close down because there is a lot of potential. Donna does a lot of shows. I have been watching them. She goes to different businesses and she chose different restaurants in town on Elm Street and she has gone to Londonderry and she has gone on Elm Street to a music place that teaches kids music and different instruments and stuff. So the public is getting to see what we have in Manchester and they wouldn't see that if we didn't have this station operating and us doing

what we are doing. So I hope you consider trying to not let the station close.
Thank you very much.

Jay Syrene, 3440 Brown Avenue, stated:

I first started at the PEG access channels back when I was in high school. MCTV was instrumental in me receiving \$40,000 in grants to go to college. Now I am active. I have a show at MCAM. I have met numerous state representatives and state senators, including some of you in this room, but I am not here to talk about myself or my show. I am here to talk about the importance of public access stations to the City and to Manchester in particular. Now we have school board meetings and I feel that openness and transparency in government is essential to democracy. Without that, what do we have? Now unfortunately every single citizen in Manchester is unable to attend these meetings. The public access stations give the people in Manchester an opportunity to view these. If you guys consider yourselves good Aldermen or good Alderwomen then you should revel at the fact, you should revel at the opportunity to be able to be seen on television and let your constituents see how good of a job you are doing. Why do we need to keep the public access stations open? Like I said for free and open government and also for the voice of the people. You know MCAM is a voice for...I wouldn't be active at all in the community at all if it wasn't for all of the public access stations. It has steered me to start a TV show and my own non-profit organizations. We as a City need to be able to hear these meetings. Like I said a free and open society needs transparency. Government can't be done under the cover of darkness. It has to be done in the light of day. The people who watch MCAM and who produce shows at MCAM, we are the people who are active in the community. We are the people with concerns and voices who want to know more and to shut off that outlet is really to shut off the voice box of the people of Manchester and without that what do we really have? Manchester is a great city and if we continue down this road and start shutting off things as important as our

public access stations we can then refer to Manchester as a once great city. It is immensely important I think to have these public access stations. You don't owe it to the particular producers here. You don't owe it to me but I would think the City of Manchester would honor its agreement. You owe it to the people of Manchester. You owe it to free and open democracy. I would gladly give up my television show in a heartbeat for MCAM and MCTV to remain open. I think it is that important to Manchester. I will be contacting the Aldermen to see if you are opposed to it or what your concerns are. I know there was some talk about the contract. That is not the fault of the stations. The stations didn't do that. It was an agreement between the City and the stations and a contract was signed. Whether you think that contract is good or bad or whatnot, it is still a contract and it still needs to be honored. I mean if we don't have our word as a city then what do we have and if we don't have our word or the voice of the people I think we will be sad. Thank you for your time.

Stephanie Lewry, Intown Manchester, stated:

I am the Executive Director of Intown Manchester. Intown Manchester is getting ready to produce the annual Christmas Parade and I am here to give you a little update on that. Four years ago we were approached by some other volunteer organizations that had been running the parade for awhile and they asked us to please take over the event because their volunteers had burned out. With about two and a half weeks notice, we managed to get down there and get that parade organized and we discovered that it was the most wonderful community event. There was so much goodwill in that parade that we went back to the Board of Directors at Intown knowing that somebody was probably going to need to take over the production of that parade the following year. The Board suggested that we go ahead and make a commitment and see what we could do to grow this parade into something that actually has some economic spin-off for our City. So we embarked on a plan to see how we could grow it and see if it was even

possible. We began to be students of parades. My four children are grown and I have not watched a TV parade in years but I began watching the Macy's parade and the Rose Bowl parade and suddenly I got very inspired because I saw that Manchester could do a Macy's type of parade. We could actually pull off a parade that will be an economic spin-off for our City. So over the past few years we have been making an effort to grow the parade, the quality of floats, and the number of participants and so forth. It is all free. Anybody can be in the parade who wants to be in the parade. We made a deal with WMUR. They said if we could get it off of a football weekend they would be willing to sell us the air time. So serendipity happened and we ended up with a wonderful underwriter, Fairpoint Communications, who gave us a two year underwriting deal and this is the second of two years. We all know that Fairpoint is having a little difficulty now but we do have their full support and the funding that goes with that support. WMUR is working with us. We had our first production meeting last week with WMUR and this parade is going to be on live on Saturday, December 5. It will be taped on December 5 for broadcast on December 6 on Channel 9. So I want all of the Aldermen and School Committee members to come down and march in the parade and be a part of it. We are inviting all of Manchester and the surrounding communities to come down and watch and then go home and watch it on Sunday afternoon as well. I just also want to say that this would not have happened without the wonderful volunteer support that we have from all of the parade participants who do this year after year after year to the Manchester Fire Department who participates in the parade and has a boot drive and the Police Department who is helping us and has done so year after year to organize the parade. There are no City charges and no City funds involved in this parade. So I hope all of you will come down and let's see if we can really turn this into NH's version of a Macy's Day parade.

R.J. Norton, 43 South Elm Street, stated:

Back in 1989 I began to produce a weekly television show down in Milford. I drove down to Milford once a week and did my weekly show down there and then when Grace Sullivan, Ray Wieczorek and a bunch of other people opened up MCTV up here, I produced a weekly show there and then went MCAM broke off I continued on there. In 1996, I decided to videotape as many events as I could at the turn of the century right up from 1996 to 2001. I went about doing that and I am editing that now. I have been editing for a couple of years. Some of the events I videotaped was in 1996 the Riverfest down in Arms Park, the Bicentennial Parade, which was a great, great parade, the First Robotics competition up at the Derryfield, Bill Clinton with 2,000 screaming people at Gill Stadium, Vaudeville's Vice Presidential candidate, Jack Kemp, the empty burned out and abandoned property that was throughout the town, the mills on fire, mostly empty and abandoned, Ollie North for President at a Christian Coalition meeting, an Optima Health meeting, CMC combining with the Elliot Hospital, the most contentious issue of that era, the ice skating rink that was up at the Plaza Mall, and the civic center. I taped the shopping center before it was torn down and I taped about every third day of the civic center being built. The first Latino Festival, the first Gay Parade, the candidates for the 2000 elections, including Elizabeth Dole. I taped her at the Glendi Greek Festival. I taped most of the Glendi celebrations and the Bobby Stephen's St. Patricks' Day events and Bob Baines victory celebration. The point of all of this is that I wouldn't have all of these events on videotape for future generations if it wasn't for Congress voting again to support public access. Please support MCTV and MCAM. I am sure that some younger folks than me, I am 70 years old, will continue on doing what I have been doing. Thank you.

Mary Georges, 18 Blodget Street, stated:

I am going to say Happy Thanksgiving because in two days it will be Thanksgiving. I don't want you to close the public access stations or MCAM because I love my show and the community of Manchester loves my show. There are a lot of people who don't want the show to change. I can give you an example. I had one of the young boys who went back to school. He stopped drinking and stopped taking drugs and went back to Boston College. Since high school he was taking drugs and drinking and working at a pizza place here in the city but because of my show he called me and he talked to me and I gave him advice and he went back to college. I think it is very important like one of the guys said here tonight that it is important that the citizens have an active voice and I know I have an active voice and my voice is very important to the City and the community. I know one of the directors for MCAM came to tell me that I need to speak to the community about coming to vote before the election for the Mayor and Aldermen. He kept telling me that my voice was very active for the community so I should tell the people to come to vote. I did it. I go outside City Hall and talk to people. I think public access is very important. I have a religious show. I talk to people and I am asking you please, I need to be active. If there is a way and you can do like you did before just make sure that the public access stations can continue to operate. We need them. Please. I don't want the public access stations to close. Thank you.

Zane Knoy, 105 Beverley Drive, stated:

I got here early so I decided to take a little walk around the neighborhood and I walked on to Hanover Street and it was pretty dark and I looked up and about six of the lights are out on Hanover Street. I don't know who to tell but I just wanted to tell you guys lets get the lights on on Hanover Street. It is right next door here. We might be missing something.

*There being no one else present wishing to speak, on motion of **Alderman Pinard**, duly seconded by **Alderman Arnold**, it was voted to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented.*

*There being no further business, on motion of **Alderman Smith**, duly seconded by **Alderman Shea**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk