

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

December 1, 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 Arnold.

A moment of silence was observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

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

Absent: Alderman Pinard

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:

Good evening. I am going to try to stay away from this microphone because it seems to be that it is too loud. Some people's voices carry I guess. Well we all made it through Thanksgiving I can see. Now we are in the Christmas season. Let's see if we can have a little peace and understanding here in the City. I am glad to hear that some of you tonight are going to have a second opinion and think about putting back Elm Street the way it used to be between West Auburn and Valley. That was a big mistake to make to begin with and at the taxpayers' expense. That is what happens when we don't have a ten year plan. To keep things straight, from West Auburn Street to Valley Street that is what you consider, according to the City Planning Department, the Warehouse District and not the Gaslight District. So I don't know how you got it wrong. I can't understand why the public was not notified that a big hump was being brought in and one lane was being taken away. Now we have these three large tall yellow and black signs that do not make the City any prettier. It probably cost you I don't know how much to put it there and it will cost you at least half as much to take it off. I having been here 23 years now have never seen the Highway Department work on Saturdays and Sundays other than when there was an emergency. They were doing this project on a Saturday morning. That is at time and a half? I hope not. Please, the little resources that we have we need to expend them wisely. Reportedly you had a meeting last night about MCAM and MCTV, the two PEG access stations. I am sorry that I don't see it on the agenda tonight. We were told that a decision would be made tonight. I am hoping that it is, as we are past December 1st. Remember the rates have gone up and so has the electricity and we can only go so long with not paying the full rent. A 40% cut is very steep. We need to start treating people alike. I want to wish you all a Merry Christmas and don't forget the parade this Saturday. This is a great City. Let's make it greater. Let's stop and think and finally pass a ten year plan. I hope that under the new

administration and Mayor Gatsas that he insists that a ten year plan is passed at least before June 2010. Thank you.

Howard McCarthy, 105 Randall Street, stated:

Matt Normand is passing out more gifts. Once again, it is not a bribe because I am giving gifts out in back of me. This will not be a repeat of my last performance. I don't know if I will ever live that down. I don't know if you remember it but anyway I don't want to talk about it because you will have to forgive me for making maybe an error in doing what I did. However, I just want to reiterate a little bit and I want to relate this to Mr. Ted Gatsas. Are you listening Ted? I said something about that picture that was taken back almost 80 years about what happened to me and my mother and all of that. That loving touch brought that story to my mind because that is what my mother did. She touched me and told me that I would live. I have taken the liberty, Ted, of having that picture developed, or should I say I bought it from the *Union Leader* and I am going to give it to you because I think you will relish and love that picture and I will say to always love your mother and cherish her because you are only going to have one. Now let's get down to business. Here is a picture of Ted Gatsas right on the front page of the *Manchester Express*. There is one thing you have Ted that no one can take away from you – that smile. Unfortunately for me I have no teeth except two so I can't smile like you do. So that story about the schools and everything, I don't really want to comment about that except that I will have to think about it. The only thing I can see is that possibly you are on the right track and you are going to save the City money. The only thing is when I was in high school I was a freshman and then a sophomore and it seems to me you are cutting that out but I don't want to talk that much about it because I don't know that much about it. After all, I am a politician. So I will think about it. I just want to say one thing to you again, Ted Gatsas. One of the great men of Greek heritage was Hippocrates and Hippocrates was the father of medicine and his first rule was, 'Do no harm'.

If it is going to hurt people, think about that. Always think about whether you are doing something good or doing some harm. Now I don't know but I do envy that picture and I just wonder if some day I am going to have my picture on the front page of some paper or even the back page. I will take either one. Thank you very much and good night.

Calum McNeil, 471 Silver Street, stated:

I appreciate the opportunity to speak. This is my only real chance to talk to my government and I really want to thank you guys for allowing me to come up and speak to you. Tonight I am just going to concentrate on MCAM and MCTV and how amazing those two separate organizations and entities are. Grace does do an amazing job over there. I talk to a lot of people about what she does and a lot of people she has helped. One of my friends, a kid that I didn't even know she had helped, actually went to school on a letter she wrote for him. He got a \$40,000 scholarship. Over and over again I hear great things that Grace has done on a personal level of actually helping the people of Manchester just every day get a better step forward in life. Jim Roy, I am not going to call you out on anything bad but you had brought up a problem with somebody who had a liaison position who was helping out kids and questionable pay and all of that stuff. I know that stuff happens and there is some good and bad about that. I am not trying to call attention to that too much but Grace has done a lot of really good things that we really can't account for. The problem we have with MCTV and MCAM is that a lawyer and a judge got together and said these entities can't be like this. That happened for a reason. Joe Kelley and Steve Vaillancourt are those reasons, political problems with Grace and those two people. That is what the problem is. Jim Roy, when you asked the question the other day of why there are two entities, we have somebody who is trained as a doctor to teach people about TV and how the operation of TV works. We don't have somebody who is trained on how to handle free speech in a small local setting. Joe Briggs has a different approach

and that is why he is able to deal with that in a different way. It is so important to keep this department head and department head position. She is helping a lot of people. I have no problem with that. That is something you guys have to look and see and talk to people and say, 'Hey, is this lady really helping everybody out like I hear she is? Let's keep her there.' I have no problem with that but when someone is getting 450 calls about MCAM we know we have to support this. Having eight people come up and talk about a dog barking and having zero people talk about the tax cap, we have to really address what the voters want. I realize there is real frustration about educated voters and a real ignorance among uneducated voters and it makes it really hard to govern but when people have a voice we just have to let them have that voice. Howard McCarthy is a great guy. Glenn Ouellette is a great man. We also have to recognize that MCAM and MCTV are great educational points beyond what we see here. You can learn a lot from those two entities just by getting involved in them. I just don't want to see public access leave Manchester. I do want to see free speech from the government sponsored mass media. That is really important. I just want to say again that free speech and non-partisan air time by a government sponsored mass media is really what we are looking for here. That is what you are going to get the 350 calls for. One guy has a religious show and is beating a tambourine and nobody understands it but there are three people from some country who watch it and that is important to them. That is something we have to just let happen. Thank you.

John Alexion, 110 Blackstone Street, stated:

Thank you and good evening. I saw a couple of good positive things happen in the last month or so just reading the newspaper. Alderman Osborne, I just want to thank you for getting the playground equipment for the handicapped child. I think where there is one, there is a lot more and it is good if we can get them out to be able to participate in life. That is a wonderful thing. One thing that I just want to come down and voice my concern on is that I heard there is going to be a proposed

transfer of roughly \$89,000 from the School Maintenance budget to fund Weed 'n' Seed. Weed 'n' Seed is an important program for the City but I think we are funding the Police Department and these funds should already be in their mainstream budget to be able to fight crime and to take care of the problems that we are having in the community and we should be utilizing those resources first before we start tapping other areas of the City budget. These are the noble causes. The other proposal that I picked up on that might be coming before this Board is the fix of the moisture problem up at Station 8. Granted this is a problem as well, but one thing that I didn't like was hearing about possibly bonding \$12,000 to do a fix, which was just to put some insulation in and install a couple of fans. That is only 1/10,000 of our City budget. This is something that we should have enough cash on hand for. This goes into something else, our fiscal cash management program in the City. We need to be able to watch what our budget is without resorting to bonding, especially at \$12,000. This should be money that we have set aside. That is all I have to say tonight. You folks have a great holiday season. Thank you very much.

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

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk