

## COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

**September 18, 2000**

**Upon Conclusion of L & B**

Chairman O'Neil called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen O'Neil, Wihby, Clancy, Cashin, Lopez

Messrs: Deputy Solicitor Arnold, Gene Boisvert, Don Clay, Howard  
Tawney, Harry Tentas, Ray Manseau, Aldermen Gatsas and Pinard

Chairman O'Neil stated I suggest we take up Items 4, 5 and 6. They are pretty routine. Items 8 and 9 are to be tabled. Then we can go into our discussion with the Commissioners.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 4 of the agenda:

**Resolutions:**

"Amending the 2000 & 2001 Community Improvement Programs, transferring, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Two Hundred fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,00) for the 2000 CIP 760100 Crystal Lake Phase I Project."

"Amending the 2001 Community Improvement Program, ATA funds in the amount of Fourteen Million Dollars (\$14,000,000) for CIP 730101 Residential Sound Insulation Program."

On motion of Alderman Wihby, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez, it was voted to approve this Resolution.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 5 of the agenda:

**CIP Budget Authorizations:**

2000	640200	Project Greenstreets-Cash - Revision #3
2000	760100	Crystal Lake Phase I - Revision #2
2001	210201	Runaway & Homeless Youth
2001	251001	Homemaker Services

2001	251701	Manchester Child Care Coordinator
2001	730101	Residential Sound Insulation Program
2001	740001	CSO Abatement Projects
2001	740101	Sewer Infrastructure Rehab
2001	740201	Construct Candia Road (Dry Sewer)
2001	740301	Construction S. Mammoth Road Sewer-Phase IA- Revision #1
2001	810001	Revaluation Project Phase II

On motion of Alderman Wihby, duly seconded by Alderman Clancy, it was voted to approve this request.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 6 of the agenda:

Communication from the Airport Director requesting approval of modifications to the current Airport CIP projects.

On motion of Alderman Wihby, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez, it was voted to approve this request.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 7 of the agenda:

Copy of a communication from the Deputy Finance Officer to Alderman Gatsas relative to funding options for Millyard parking facilities.

On motion of Aldermen Clancy, duly seconded by Alderman Wihby, it was voted to table this item.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 8 of the agenda:

Communication from the Chief of Police requesting the expenditure of \$2,450.00 from previous CIP Police projects to fund a feasibility study of the Police Department firing range.

On motion of Alderman Clancy, duly seconded by Alderman Wihby, it was voted to table this item.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 9 of the agenda:

Communication from the Director of Planning regarding the possible land acquisition of a piece of property on the westerly edge of Wolf Park.

On motion of Alderman Clancy, duly seconded by Alderman Wihby, it was voted to table this item.

Chairman O'Neil addressed Item 3 of the agenda:

Discussion with MTA Commissioners regarding management and labor issues.

Chairman O'Neil stated I see three of the Commissioners here. I would ask them to come forward.

On motion of Alderman Clancy, duly seconded by Alderman Cashin, it was voted to remove Item 10 from the table.

10. Report of the CIP Sub-Committee (MTA) recommending that:
- 1) the Manchester Transit Authority (MTA) become a City department;
  - 2) that the MTA will report to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen on a revised bus scheduled by October 1, 2000;
  - 3) the City's Human Resources Department to facilitate training meeting(s) between management and labor; and
  - 4) address true performance measures.

Chairman O'Neil stated welcome gentlemen. As you know, we have had a lot of discussions in the last few months in several Committees about activities at the Transit Authority. The last time we met we were given legal advice on what we could and couldn't do under the State statute. We asked you here tonight to give us an update on where things stand with regards to solving some of these problems. I would ask the City Solicitor to advise us on what we can and can't do in public session, as well as in non-public session before you comment.

Deputy Solicitor Arnold stated I don't know what the Commissioners plan on presenting tonight. I would just note that if they are going to talk about anything such as dismissal, promotion, compensation or disciplining of any employee or group of employees that probably should be done in non-public session.

Chairman O'Neil stated please proceed, Commissioner, and if we have to go into non-public session we can take a vote on that.

Mr. Boisvert stated we went over our route and we set-up a meeting between Commissioner Tentas, Commissioner Manseau and Louise Gazda and the President of the union. They sat down and went through all the routes and they came up with a recommendation to tweak the routes and make some small changes for the betterment of the riders. They worked well together and everything seems to be in order. Mr. Tentas and Mr. Manseau spent two or three hours with these people and some of the management people and went over the routes. I think we have made quite a few improvements, but before we do anything a copy of what we proposed will go to each one of the Aldermen whose ward will be affected. Like I said, they are small changes. Also, a copy of this was sent to the CIP Sub-Committee on the MTA for their approval. I think things are working well. We worked well with the union and I think we have come a long way.

Chairman O'Neil asked are there any questions from the Committee.

Alderman Lopez asked when you say that everything is going perfect...

Mr. Boisvert interjected I didn't say perfect. I said things are going fairly well.

Alderman Lopez asked do you feel...I think it was tabled for well over 30 days, that some of the issues that were addressed by the Committee to go back and do a lot of these things, have you utilized Human Resources for anybody to come there to help in management aspect or quality management, anything along that line. Have you taken the advice?

Mr. Boisvert answered yes we have. We have talked to the HR people and they told us they couldn't help us because we were not a City department. I talked to Mayor Baines and he said he would look into it and try to arrange something for us to have sessions where we would work on our HR problems.

Alderman Lopez asked is Mr. Clay here. This was offered to you on two occasions if I may say so and the only requirement was that you would have to pay for the people's time. It couldn't come out of HR's budget. I am a little confused.

Mr. Boisvert answered that is not so because our people were willing to have a session with the HR people but HR wanted a union member and a management member at the same meeting and that didn't work out. It was hard for us to get a union member to take part in the program.

Alderman Lopez stated the City has a Quality Management Team in place. It is Board of Mayor and Aldermen sanctioned. I understand that you are separate.

Why has it taken so long if we want to utilize HR? You have to pay for it. There is no question about that. Mr. Clay, we have addressed this...I know that I have addressed this to you at a meeting previously. Do you intend to utilize the HR resources that we have in the City to try to solve some of the quality things that are going on?

Mr. Clay replied if I can get their help, yes. Right after the CIP meeting, I met with Mark and talked to him on the phone and we made arrangements to have a one-on-one meeting to see what was necessary. We had a date set up and he called me the day before the meeting, which was a Thursday, and said I am sorry but I am not going to be able to assist you. We were told to back off and back out. We can't do anything for you. He said that came from the Mayor's Office, but he did say if I can help you one-on-one I will, but our department cannot work with you on that.

Chairman O'Neil asked Howard Tawney to come forward. Howard, what is the opinion of the HR department with regards to whether or not they can provide assistance in this matter?

Mr. Tawney answered we have provided assistance in the past and I am unaware that the Mayor's Office said that we could not. I don't know what else to tell you besides that.

Alderman Lopez stated as you know, I am the Chairman of that Committee and I have talked to the Director of HR and I was at a meeting privately down there before I realized it was Alderman Pariseau's Committee that was taking care of it and I turned everything over to him but at that meeting down there I offered assistance and I think Howard is confirming that. I don't know why the Mayor would say no. That is another issue, but if we can put that aside because the Mayor can say anything he wants...are you willing to have assistance from the HR resources that we have in the City and pay for it?

Mr. Clay responded absolutely.

Alderman Cashin stated I want to be sure that I heard this right. You said that Mark told you that the Mayor's Office told him that he couldn't.

Mr. Clay responded that is affirmative. We had a meeting all set-up, Alderman, and had everything all ready to go on a Friday morning at 10 AM and Mark called me and said that he was going to be unable to do that at this time. He was told that no funding could be used so he cancelled the meeting.

Alderman Cashin stated okay no funding could be used. Did he mention the Mayor's Office?

Mr. Clay answered yes he did. That was right after the CIP Sub-Committee meeting.

Chairman O'Neil stated let's be specific. With regards to funding or the meeting?

Mr. Clay replied they said that they would not be able to assist us.

Alderman Clancy asked, Mr. Clay, you have had no assistance from HR as of yet.

Mr. Clay answered that is correct.

Alderman Clancy asked nothing at all, just communication.

Mr. Clay asked with the HR department. That is all we have had.

Alderman Clancy asked so in the meantime, probably the last 30 to 60 days...I don't know how many days it has been since we had our last meeting, you had no contact except for telephone contact with the HR Department.

Mr. Clay answered correct.

Alderman Clancy asked what about the management or what about the union.

Mr. Clay answered I don't know if they have had any talks with HR or not.

Alderman Clancy asked, Mr. Boisvert, you said that you people talked with some of the bus drivers or...who did you talk to about changing the route.

Mr. Boisvert answered we talked to the President of the union and Louise Gazda. She is the one who has been communicating with you people a few times. She is very well versed on bus routes and changes and so forth and the different aspects of the transportation. She worked with Mr. Tentas over here who is also very knowledgeable about the routes in the City.

Alderman Clancy asked did you get any input from the riders themselves. Did you ask them any questions?

Mr. Boisvert answered yes. Ms. Gazda who was working with us is with them. She is the one who brought in recommendations from herself and the drivers. She said that she talked to the drivers as well.

Alderman Clancy stated but you should have had some input from some of the people riding the buses, like a questionnaire or something like that.

Mr. Boisvert replied I am sure Ms. Gazda...

Alderman Clancy interjected she can't drive all of the buses. She can only drive one bus at a time.

Mr. Boisvert stated but she has been there so many years that she has experience and knowledge of all of the routes very well.

Alderman Clancy replied my contention is, don't you think we should have gotten some input from the riders themselves like have a questionnaire or something.

Mr. Boisvert stated about a year or so ago we had a survey done with the cooperation of the Police Department about ridership. It was given to all of the passengers as they came on board and those were turned in. Maureen Nagle and one of the police officers at the Police Station went through all of the comments and so forth to better our ridership.

Alderman Clancy asked how about the grievances.

Mr. Boisvert answered I think we are down to about three or four grievances right now.

Mr. Clay stated at the moment we have two situations that are scheduled for arbitration and we feel that those will both be resolved before arbitration comes. Other than that, we have no open grievances at all. We have been working very closely with the union in trying to straighten out any and all problems.

Alderman Clancy stated I did get some calls from people about the school buses. They were saying that the buses were running late going to Central High School for the first period and Hillside. Has that been rectified?

Mr. Boisvert replied yes. We have no buses late at Hillside. We have not had a bus late at Hillside except for one bus that had a breakdown. That was going home from school. It wasn't going to school. I am not aware of nor is Pat or Dave that we have had any problems at Hillside at all.

Alderman Clancy asked what about Central High School.

Mr. Clay answered I am not aware of any buses being late there. I talked to Pat about that and she said they haven't had any buses late over there.

Alderman Clancy stated well I did get some calls. I told you that myself. I was talking to some of the members of the School Department and I don't know this woman myself, Pat Goula. They tell me that she does a superb job. I don't know what her capacity is at the MTA but they tell me she does a superb job. I talked to my School Committee counterpart, Katherine Labanaris and she said she does a superb job. What is her job?

Mr. Clay replied she is the Assistant Superintendent of Transportation and she is mainly in charge of school buses.

Alderman Clancy stated well she is doing a good job.

Alderman Wihby stated I got the same phone calls about the Hillside bus. I did call Pat and she talked to the two people that had called me and I guess they weren't necessarily late, they were just getting there two or three minutes before the bell rang and they were rushing to get their books instead of being able to be calm and stuff about it. I guess she verified that they were getting there late. The other thing on Bicentennial Drive is that they dropped off...when the bus broke down the driver said to the kids if you want to walk you can walk. This woman was concerned that we should have a policy that says when they get on the bus they stay on the bus until they get to where they are going. We shouldn't give them the option of getting off the bus.

Mr. Clay replied that is our policy. I talked to the driver this morning on that. She was within a couple of blocks of two kids that lived in that area. Those kids were allowed to leave the bus. Everybody else wanted to go and one wanted to go with a parent and she would not let them off the bus.

Alderman Wihby stated it was a couple of blocks but if you walked the road it is a couple of miles. They might have taken the old back road or gone through the woods but they were on Bicentennial and these people lived off of Union Street. If you cut through that field it is a couple of blocks but if you walk the road it is all the way around River Road and up Union to their house.

Mr. Clay stated our policy is if you are on the bus you stay on the bus until you stop. Even if it breaks down.

Alderman Wihby stated I want to get back on the funding issue. What money was Mark supposed to be...what were they going to fund?

Mr. Clay replied I would assume his money for his department to work on our situation.

Alderman Wihby asked what were they going to do.

Mr. Clay answered I don't know. The initial talk was going to be with just Mark and myself and that had to be cancelled because he was told that he could not do it.

Alderman Wihby asked didn't some Committee or this Board ask you to sit down and work with HR and come up with something.

Mr. Clay answered that was the sub-committee that asked that.

Alderman Wihby asked and no one had a problem with it.

Mr. Clay answered no I do not have a problem with it.

Alderman Wihby asked they didn't either at the time.

Mr. Clay answered no.

Alderman Wihby asked and when that was to take place the Mayor stopped Mark from sitting down and talking to you.

Mr. Clay answered that is my understanding from Mark, yes.

Alderman Wihby asked even the initial meeting when there is not any money involved I mean he is paid salary anyway.

Mr. Clay answered I know. The meeting was all scheduled and the day before he had to cancel it.

Alderman Wihby asked it wasn't because there was a gripe on your side that said you don't have anything to do with us and we don't want to meet.

Mr. Clay answered no. I wanted to meet with them. He sent me over some information and whatnot. Subsequent to that at one of our last Commissioner's meetings we even talked about how we could possibly get our own HR person and we are looking into that.

Alderman Wihby asked what are you looking to do with Mark. What do you want to do with Mark? You guys should be coming to Mark saying here is what we need and this is why things aren't getting done rather than Mark going to you and saying here is what I think you need. What do you want our Personnel Department to do for you?

Mr. Clay replied at this particular moment I am not sure. I would like to sit and talk with Mark and have some kind of a dialogue so we can come out with what the expert thinks would be in the best interest of the Authority.

Alderman Shea stated I know that there are problems...first of all I want to commend the people, Mr. Webster, Mr. Clay, as well as Pat Goula and Louise Gazda because many of the people that have been adversely affected by the initial change of the bus route are now being...are going to be serviced and they appreciate that and they have called and I am hoping that is resolved. I think the main concern that has been addressed or has not been addressed is the problem of morale on the part of the workers. Now, I am not sure exactly how management views this or the Commissioners view it. I think maybe the three Commissioners may view it in three different ways, but the point of the matter is that unless there is some resolution to the relationship between management and labor, these problems are continuously going to fester and become difficult to handle and I think that it is up to the people like yourself, Mr. Clay, to...Alderman Wihby mentioned, you people know what is going on. You know, for instance, that there are morale problems at your particular department and you have to try to the best of your ability to handle these problems and not have a third party come from outside and tell you what to do. You are paid to be the director and the manager of that particular facility. You have to be on top of the problems. What has happened is because of whatever reason we can list, whether it is because you haven't reacted to them or you have been unaware of them or people don't have enough confidence, that is when the politicians have become involved and that has made it difficult for all parties because everyone has come up with their own solution to the problems from getting rid of you people to replacing Commissioners to trying to get the City to take over the department. You have to be aware that when there is a problem you cannot depend on Mr. Webster alone to tell you what the problem is and he perceives it in his life. You have to sit down with the union people in an agreeable manner and maybe you are doing that. I don't know, but the point is that the only reason Aldermen have become involved

is because the people have said that you aren't dealing with them properly. Hopefully, there will be more resolution to the problems. We are sick of hearing from these people. I have a folder filled with problems that people have listed and I am sure other Aldermen have as well. Maybe one of the Commissioners see it in a different light. Mr. Tentas, do you want to comment at all?

Mr. Tentas stated as most of you are aware, I was Director of Attendance and Transportation for the School District for 26 years and one of my duties was to be the liaison for the Superintendent's Office with the bus companies. I used to visit them several times a week. I am sorry to say at this time, and I have been a Commissioner since 1985, I never saw so much turmoil and animosity between management and employees. It hurts me. There is something wrong and I want the record to reflect tonight that I am the only Commissioner who voted against Mr. Clay for General Manager and I am the only Commissioner who voted against Mr. Webster for Superintendent of Transportation. There is something wrong. The animosity is terrible. You have to treat the employees differently. You have to use psychology. I majored in psychology. You don't just threaten people. I want it to be reflected tonight in the minutes that I am the only Commissioner who voted against Mr. Clay and Mr. Webster.

Alderman Shea asked, Mr. Tentas, do you still see the problems existing. Do drivers and other people still call you and complain?

Mr. Tentas answered I get a lot of calls. A lot of people know me. I was very concerned about that Valley bus, especially the corridor from Jobin Drive to South Taylor to Cilley. It is a half a mile. The bus goes by there in the morning, but in the afternoon it goes up Weston Road. So, those people have to walk over to Jobin Drive or get off at Cilley and Taylor. There are a lot of streets in between there. That corridor was very important to the people.

Mr. Boisvert stated we had a special meeting after the last meeting we had with the CIP Sub-Committee and after due and careful consideration, the Commissioners put the administration on notice that we wanted a change in management and we wanted a better relationship between the employees and the employer and we wanted them to use a little more tact and discretion in handling their problems. We sent them a letter stating such.

Chairman O'Neil asked that was from the four Commissioners.

Mr. Boisvert answered yes.

Chairman O'Neil asked do you remember when that might have happened. When did you meet?

Mr. Boisvert answered we met on August 8.

Chairman O'Neil stated I know that Howard wanted to follow-up to a comment that was made earlier.

Mr. Tawney stated I have talked with Mark Hobson to clarify what was said between the Mayor and him. The Mayor had wanted, before Human Resources became involved here, the opportunity to speak with the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to discuss what our role would be before that was to take place.

Chairman O'Neil replied we could define that tonight.

Alderman Gatsas asked could you tell me when that meeting with Mr. Hobson was scheduled. What was the date?

Mr. Clay answered I can't give you the date. It was a Friday. It was directly after that CIP Sub-Committee meeting.

Alderman Gatsas asked would you say it was 45 days ago.

Mr. Clay answered something like that.

Alderman Gatsas stated let's say it was 30 days ago. I will give you the benefit of the doubt and say it was 30 days ago. Would you agree that in that Sub-Committee the emotions were extremely, extremely high?

Mr. Clay answered yes, emotions were high.

Alderman Gatsas asked would you agree that the employees certainly had uncomfortable positions with management.

Mr. Clay answered yes. I am not sure they were all well founded, but yes.

Alderman Gatsas replied that was not my question. With the testimony that you heard or that I heard, certainly they were not happy with management. There was no one employee that stood before us as you would find in some groups because there is always that one employee that management takes good care of, so if he would have stood up and said this is not the way it is...but we did not hear that from anybody that talked to us. Now if your meeting with Mr. Hobson was 30 days ago and the two of you were in the hot bed that you were looking at the Aldermen and understanding the position that this Aldermanic Board had sent a

message, I believe I looked at your budget and you have something in there in the contingency fund. Do you have a contingency fund?

Mr. Clay replied yes.

Alderman Gatsas asked how much is in there roughly.

Mr. Clay answered \$72,000.

Alderman Gatsas asked would you have thought and I certainly would think that the Commissioners if you had brought forward...if you couldn't have met with Mr. Hobson, I would think that you would have taken some proaction instead of a submissive action and waiting and said Mr. Commissioner can we use \$20,000 of this to find somebody to direct it in the correct manner of human resource and management. I don't think this Commission would have said no to you. Did either one of you think of that?

Mr. Clay answered this was brought up at the last Commissioner's meeting and the Commissioners said let's go out and see what we can do on our own since the City is not going to be able to assist us.

Alderman Gatsas asked and that was when.

Mr. Clay answered 8/29.

Alderman Gatsas stated that was about 18 days ago and you still haven't done anything.

Mr. Clay replied I have made some phone calls.

Alderman Gatsas asked who did you call. Be careful because I will just keep following up so if you made them and you remember who you made them to...

Mr. Clay answered Fran Lefebvre I believe.

Alderman Gatsas asked was there any action.

Mr. Clay answered no. We have not come to any agreement.

Alderman Gatsas asked did you speak with her.

Mr. Clay answered we have spoken on several occasions. I have not spoken with her in particular. We have left messages. I did call her office.

Alderman Gatsas asked how long ago was that.

Mr. Clay answered about a week ago.

Alderman Gatsas stated with the situation that you folks are in, I would think if I were sitting in your chair, I would find every single possibility to alleviate the situation. You call somebody and leave a message and a week later you don't hear back so you don't call again? I find that you can make every excuse. Mark Hobson cancelled the meeting. This person did that. When are you going to stand up to the plate and say you know what I guess we have to do something proactively because we have employees...I don't like it. I have women calling me on a regular basis crying on the phone and I don't think that is right. You have to understand one thing. You know maybe the rest of these Aldermen...I was in a different position. I owned a copy that dealt in just what you are talking about. We never had those kinds of reactions.

Mr. Clay replied just because we haven't got a human resources person in there to work doesn't mean we are not working on the issues and working very hard on the issues with the union and through the Commissioners to try to make things much better. They are much better. We haven't dropped the ball. We haven't gone and hidden in the closet somewhere. We definitely are trying to make everything that you heard here to be something of the past. We are involved with the union and the union is a big part of it. We don't have any grievances on the table. We don't have any forthcoming that we know of. We are working through contract negotiations. They are going along fine. We are making an attempt, a big attempt. It is very important to the management team. It is very important to the Commissioners. It is very important to the City of Manchester that we move forward and we are doing our level best to do so.

Alderman Wihby asked somewhere some Committee of the Aldermen said work with Mark and now you are saying that was in the beginning of August.

Mr. Clay answered August 7.

Alderman Wihby stated so on August 7 the Committee told you to work with Mark and you set up a date with him for when.

Mr. Clay replied I would have to look at my calendar. It was within four or five days of that meeting.

Alderman Wihby stated so that didn't go forward. You found out the day before the meeting you said so even if it was the middle of August, it didn't go forward because the Mayor told Mark not to.

Mr. Clay replied that is correct.

Alderman Wihby stated now we had a meeting on September 12. Why wasn't the Mayor telling us on September 12 that he told Mark not to go to the meeting and inform us of what happened? Why would he wait another month?

Mr. Clay replied I have no answer to that.

Alderman Wihby stated I can see if it was since our last meeting that he was going to report something to us, but this was an issue that the Aldermen cared about. We had a sub-Committee formed. There was plenty of input from everybody. There was a lot of heat that everybody was taking and now you are telling me it was because of the Mayor that you didn't go forward to try and resolve some of these issues because he felt that he should come back and report to us two months later? Is that what Mark just told you on the phone, Howard? That the Mayor wanted to come back to talk to the Aldermen? He had an opportunity on September 12 and now we are going to wait three more weeks because he didn't feel it was right to bring it forward to us?

Mr. Tawney replied I don't know what the Mayor's feeling was, but that was the reason Mark was given. It was that the Mayor wanted to come back to the Board of Aldermen to discuss it.

Alderman Wihby stated I think this Board...you know the Mayor is one person and this Board is 14 and I think if you asked 14 Aldermen on this Board what they were trying to do that day and were trying to get resolved, the Aldermen were pretty strong in support of that. I don't think he had any right canceling any meetings and Mark going to a meeting surely isn't an expense to the City and now we are giving the MTA the heat for not having a meeting and not doing anything about it when they were coming to the table. We should have got a notice or something saying that somebody wasn't going forward with that meeting because I was under the impression that you guys were meeting and everything was being resolved and you were getting helped. All we have done is delayed the process and who is hurting out there are the employees.

Alderman Lopez stated for information, Mr. Clay the other issue about the Mayor will probably be taken care of but I am on the Quality Management Team as is Mary Sysyn and we do meet twice a month. We are meeting on Wednesday morning at 8:30 AM at the Water Works. Also, we have and HR Committee

meeting on Wednesday at 5:30 PM. You are invited to come to try and solve this dilemma. I want to offer you that as Chairman of the HR Committee.

Mr. Clay asked is that this Wednesday night.

Alderman Lopez answered on Wednesday from 8:30 AM to 10:30 AM we have a Quality Management meeting at the Water Works and we do that twice a month. Basically, I can give you the details on it. It is just one or two representatives from each department that meet to discuss issues and how to solve them. It has been working pretty good.

Mr. Clay asked is that this Wednesday.

Alderman Lopez answered that is correct.

Mr. Clay replied I will not be able to attend. We are in contract negotiations on Wednesday morning. How often do you have those meetings?

Alderman Lopez replied I will get you the information. Howard, would you make sure that Mr. Clay gets a schedule?

Chairman O'Neil asked, Mr. Arnold, what actions can be taken and directed.

Deputy Solicitor answered given what has been said here this evening, it appears that the wishes of the Mayor were that the Board give direction to Human Resources regarding what their position status should be in trying to resolve these problems and consequently the matter should go to the full Board.

Chairman O'Neil stated Carol just pointed out that this item is tabled by the Committee, not the full Board.

Alderman Cashin stated I have heard all of the negatives here. Let's talk about some of the positives. The last time we met you had something like 100 or somewhat grievances and now you tell me that you are down to 2.

Mr. Clay replied if I might, that was over almost a four year span. It has come down to two grievances a month. We are down to two grievances that are scheduled to go to arbitration but they will more than likely be settled before that happens.

Alderman Cashin responded it seems to me that you are going in the right direction. You tell me that you have a relationship now between management and employees. Is that right?

Mr. Clay replied absolutely.

Alderman Cashin stated you know you are making steps. It has taken awhile to get here and it will take awhile to straighten it out. I don't know what we have to do here tonight. Do we have to make a motion to allow Mark to...

Chairman O'Neil interjected there are two things I think we should do tonight. I am not sure the Committee itself has the power to do it as far as referral to the full Board. That is our process and we can't do much about it. We need to bless, confirm, whatever the action is allowing the Human Resource Department to help facilitate training and meetings between labor and management there. Alderman Lopez brings up a point. We have a Quality Management Team that is made up of a lot of different representatives. If they can be of some assistance on this, I think it is a good idea. I am just going to speak my piece right now. I, like Alderman Gatsas, are sick of the phone calls. I am sick of the letters. I get phone calls at 5 AM or 6 AM and 10:30 PM or 11 PM. My patience is running out with this. I hope what I am hearing tonight is, in fact, true and I will be very pleased if it is true but my patience is running out with this issue. Whatever has to be done...if you have to come in on a Saturday or Sunday to meet with City staff, that is what needs to happen. It doesn't sound like it has been given, in my opinion, the highest priority. There have been almost two months of nothing really, in my opinion, going on. I am just going to speak my piece. That is what I expect to happen.

Alderman Gatsas stated certainly I don't have a problem with employees calling me and neither do you, I am sure. That has nothing to do with it, but we are right back to square one. Alderman Lopez extended the opportunity and your rebuttal was you are busy. I have to believe that somebody in management is available. That you would have at least said that somebody from management will be there. Again, you are there looking for an excuse that you have to be in negotiations. I am not saying that is an excuse that is not legitimate, but I would think you would find somebody for the accommodation he tried to make for you. You are looking for an answer and not thank you we will be there.

Mr. Clay replied I will send somebody.

Alderman Clancy stated, Mr. Clay, we had a meeting here 35 or 45 days ago and now people are saying to me what has happened in that time. What has management and the union done differently? How can you answer that question? What have you done to help the problems?

Mr. Clay replied the biggest thing we did was open up a good line of communication with members of the union and with individuals at the Authority and it has proven to come a long way in helping our problems.

Alderman Clancy asked did you talk to people individually or in a group.

Mr. Clay answered both.

Alderman Clancy asked is everybody satisfied.

Mr. Clay answered I think most of them feel that we are going in the right direction, yes.

Alderman Clancy replied it is nice to say that. I hope so because you know this has been going on too long down at the MTA. They tell me that the management down there is not accountable to anybody in the City. That is the big problem down there. The management down there can do as they please. They have the good ole boys network down there. That is what I hear. I don't want to believe it. I am asking you what have you people done since the last time we had a meeting with the employees. My only contention is I still think you should have gotten some input from the riders about these routes but if it all works out good then that is great. I think we should ask some of the riders what their suggestions would be.

Alderman Shea asked Mr. Manseau or Mr. Boisvert or Mr. Tentas, do you receive any complaints from any of the drivers. Are you aware of any problems that the drivers might have in relationship to the management?

Mr. Tentas answered since I have been a Commissioner I have never received so many calls from the drivers telling me what is going on between the management and employees. As I stated before, the animosity, the turmoil, instead of sitting down and talking to them like a human being, they are gung ho. You are going to do this and you don't get out. That isn't the way to treat people and you are well aware of that, Sir.

Alderman Shea asked, Mr. Manseau, how about you.

Mr. Manseau answered we are not against HR.

Alderman Shea replied my question is have any of the bus drivers, the regular people working other than management...

Mr. Manseau interjected yes. I have met some who were critical of the situation, particularly the signs on the bus and the routes and everything else.

Alderman Shea asked how about treatment by management towards them. Being rude, being “my way or the highway”, etc. Have they brought that to your attention at all?

Mr. Manseau answered no. I have talked to a lot of them but they all talked about the routes.

Alderman Shea asked what you are saying is the night that you came here and listened to the concerns of all of the people working for the MTA that must have come as a complete shock to you. You must have been startled to hear all of those complaints if you hadn't heard any before. I am being open with you.

Mr. Manseau answered I was quite surprised. I think the employees themselves should learn their contract or obligations as well so they understand what they are to do and not to do.

Alderman Shea replied I think that most of the criticism or most of the concerns raised were not so much contractual as it was interpersonal relationships between management and them.

Mr. Manseau stated no one approached me as far as telling me that management wasn't doing him or her well.

Alderman Shea asked and you have been a Commissioner now for two or three years.

Mr. Manseau answered yes.

Alderman Shea asked how about you, Mr. Boisvert.

Mr. Boisvert answered everybody who has called me with concerns I have looked into it.

Alderman Pinard asked were you aware that last year or last fall that there was a petition drive by a blind individual who stood here and spoke of some 500 signatures. Are any of you people aware of that? It was turned in to the previous Mayor. I happen to have and I didn't bring it with me tonight but I have that petition at the house. There are approximately 500 signatures on there criticizing the management and the way the bus company was run then. What I am trying to

say here is those people for some reason were not heard and I don't think that is fair because I think we are all here trying to find a solution to this and all I can hear here tonight is the expression of those people and all I get is excuses. You are not going to solve any problem with excuses. You have to come out and face reality and I think the Committee here tonight...you will see that we don't have an answer any more than we did a month and a half ago. So, I think that you are doing a good job, but Mr. Clay please go to Human Resources. Again I will ask you. Who do you report to? Who do you guys report to? We give you \$950,000 a year or whatever the case may be but you guys don't report to anybody. If you work for somebody, you have to report but you guys don't report to anybody. We can't do anything because Human Resources says we can't do anything. I don't think that is fair to the taxpayers of the City of Manchester. Thank you.

Chairman O'Neil stated my recommendation would be that the CIP Committee recommends to the full Board that the Human Resource Department get involved and facilitate training meetings between management and labor and try to address some true performance measures. That was something that actually came out of the sub-Committee meeting and if necessary the Quality Management Team should get involved to help resolve some of these problems. It is great to hear, as Alderman Cashin pointed out, that there seems to be some movement in a positive direction but there is a lot of frustration by the Board of Aldermen. We spent a lot of time on this issue. More than we really should.

On motion of Alderman Wihby, duly seconded by Alderman Cashin, it was voted to recommend that the Human Resources Department be allowed to facilitate training and meetings between management and staff of the Manchester Transit Authority; and further that the Quality Management Team become involved to the extent they can assist in resolving the issues.

Alderman Lopez asked, Mr. Clay, do you agree with that at your cost.

Mr. Clay answered within reason, yes.

Alderman Cashin asked what cost could there be for Mark going down to the MTA. There is no cost for that. He is paid for 40 hours.

Alderman Lopez answered it is going to be a charge back.

Chairman O'Neil stated I personally think that this is a big enough issue that we need to resolve. We are not talking about this being a \$100,000 project here. It is an important enough issue to the employees of the Transit Authority, both in management in labor, to the Commissioners, to the Aldermen and most importantly to riders that we resolve this. Let's not get hung up on cost.

Alderman Lopez stated just one question and I want to say this with all due respect to the Commissioners. You fully know that you are in control, totally A-Z on the MTA. Is that correct? You do everything and you are responsible for everything.

Mr. Boisvert stated I don't want to mention any names, but sometimes we have trouble with micromanaging and it comes from the upper eschalon. Nobody goes to the Highway Department and tells the guys what plow to take tomorrow morning and which one to take in the afternoon, but we have people that come into our MTA place and try to tell us what drivers to put on what bus. That should stop immediately. That is micromanaging and we don't have to put up with that.

Alderman Clancy asked do you mean you have Aldermen going down there telling them which guys to put on buses.

Mr. Boisvert answered yes.

Alderman Clancy stated they shouldn't be going down there and doing that. You are right about that. That is micromanaging. That is like somebody going to the Fire Department and saying put this guy on this certain engine and this guy on a certain route. They shouldn't be doing those things. Mr. Clay, I know you are going to have contract negotiations on Wednesday. What would it take for you to cancel that and have everybody go to the Quality Management Team meeting at the Water Works on Wednesday morning? That could be done. You could have negotiations in the afternoon.

Chairman O'Neil stated if I may, they probably already have items that they are scheduled to address.

Alderman Clancy replied well they can do it in the afternoon.

Chairman O'Neil stated I am talking about the Quality Management Team.

Alderman Lopez stated these are representatives from each of the departments so having everybody from the MTA there would not be in the best interest of trying to get something done.

Chairman O'Neil stated let's see if the full Board approves it. The Human Resource Department can help in facilitating some positive discussions between labor and management and if necessary down the road, the Quality Management Team and the City can get together to help facilitate some of those discussions. I think that would be a step in the right direction. Just encourage all parties to try to work together to resolve this because it has been very frustrating.

**TABLED ITEMS**

11. Future Year CIP projects.  
(Tabled 8/7/00)

This item remained on the table.

12. 71-73 Manchester Street request submitted by Amoskeag Residences  
(AR) & Elm Street Restoration Project  
(Tabled 6/12/00)

This item remained on the table.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, on motion of Alderman Cashin, duly seconded by Alderman Lopez, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee