

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

June 3, 2008

5:30 PM

Chairman Garrity called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Garrity, Gatsas, Shea, O'Neil, Smith

Messrs: P. Tufts, S. Maranto, C. DePrima, K. Sheppard, M. Hopkins,
J. Minkarah

On motion of Alderman Smith, duly seconded by Alderman Shea, it was voted to take item 15 off the table.

15. Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for a transfer of funds in the amount of \$20,000 from various projects for partial funding for a public/private partnership in accordance with the recommendation of the Homeless Plan.

(Tabled 3/18/08; Note: a copy of the presentation from Patrick Tufts, President and CEO Heritage United Way, 10-year Plan to End Homelessness in the City of Manchester as referred by the Board of Mayor and Aldermen on March 4, 2008 has been included.)

Chairman Garrity stated this is the partnership that the City is going to have with the United Way. United Way is funding approximately \$35,000 of it.

Mr. Patrick Tufts, United Way, stated right now the United Way has set aside \$35,000. There is another \$25,000, approximately, available in administrative HUD funding, and now we're here seeking \$20,000 from the City.

Alderman O'Neil asked did you folks have a chance to sit down with Commissioner Martineau since we last met?

Mr. Tufts responded I know that the Mayor has sent a letter to the Commissioner, I believe this week.

Alderman O'Neil stated so it hasn't happened.

Mr. Tufts stated there has been a letter sent from the Mayor to the Commissioner.

Alderman O'Neil asked but no response from the Commissioner?

Mr. Tufts responded not to my knowledge, no.

Alderman O'Neil stated Mr. Chairman that was my concern last time. The Commissioner raised some issues. I was kind of hoping in between it would get worked out. Does any City staff have any knowledge of this at all. I was hoping more than a letter would be sent to him; there would actually be a sit down.

Deputy City Clerk Matt Normand stated Mr. Chairman, my understanding, from when we prepared the agenda, that somebody from the Mayor's office was going to report on item 13 tonight.

Chairman Garrity stated I know that a letter out. What direction do you want to go? Alderman O'Neil, do you want to put it back on the table?

Alderman Smith stated I can understand why the Commissioner is quite upset because they single out the Welfare Department in several items in their plan to end homelessness. And I can't believe the parties didn't get together before this. This has been going on for about two months.

Chairman Garrity stated you will see in your packet under item 13 that a letter was sent to the Commissioner of Welfare by the Mayor's office.

Alderman Shea asked Patrick do you have any problem meeting with Paul Martineau?

Mr. Tufts responded I have no issue meeting with the Commissioner. I see him weekly at Rotary and consider myself to have a very good relationship with him.

Alderman Shea asked so there doesn't seem to be a problem, or there does seem to be? I'm not quite sure where the problem might be.

Mr. Tufts stated my understanding is that the Commissioner took offense to things that were written into the plan. As an add-on to that, the plan was written from the collective opinion of over 25 people. It was not the collective opinion of all of us, but there were providers who participated in the process that felt there were things that needed to be brought to the Commissioner's attention. It is not necessarily my opinion. I have a good relationship with Commissioner Martineau. I would be

more than willing to talk with him and engage him in this process moving forward. He is an important service delivery agent in the City.

Alderman Smith stated like one of the potential barriers to success, he... 'lack of engagement partnership by key City agency,' and he mentioned Welfare there. I can see why he took offense to it. If you didn't have any input, I understand that he was asked for input and then no one followed up on it, and didn't do anything with it. You'd think an agency like the Welfare would work closely with the other agencies, and apparently there was division from day one. That's my opinion of what I read into this.

Mr. Tufts stated my understanding was that the Commissioner was interviewed in a one-on-one interview like many of those who commented on the plan, and I have no further comment from that.

Alderman Smith stated there are three references in this article to the Welfare Department, and it doesn't specify anybody else. It specifies the Welfare Department, and they really engage on a day-to-day basis with the homeless.

Mr. Tufts stated I would say that they do, and I would say that the references made in the plan are the opinion of the folks who made the references, which are many esteemed social service providers in the City. I would look at the plan as a great opportunity for the Welfare Department and these providers to have improved communication. I know that in the few instances I've worked with the Commissioner, as an example during the Pearl Street fires, I had excellent communication with him and he was a vital part of the City's response to that incident. My personal experience with him has been very positive. Again, I was one of 25 people who collaborated on this plan.

Chairman Garrity asked does anybody have a question dealing with the \$20,000 funding for the homeless coordinator? Mr. Tufts has agreed to meet with the Commissioner.

Alderman Shea stated I noticed that the Mayor of Manchester has identified \$20,000 to support this position and he's in the audience, Mr. Chairman. Maybe he'd care to come forward.

Mayor Frank Guinta stated thank you very much for the opportunity to speak. I do think it's a critical amount to invest from the City to try to address the homelessness issue in Manchester. When I took a look at this issue starting about two years ago, at the beginning of the process of creating this document, one of the staggering concerns that I had was not just the City but also the United Way, public and private dollars, were being utilized, I think, to just maintain the number

of homeless people who are amongst us in Manchester. I think the goal and objective of any service provider is to try to reduce the number. And we are, I think, already engaged in the challenge, but having the proper oversight, the change in the delivery system, allowing the private sector and the public sector to work cooperatively, showing to the private sector that the public sector is interested and is invested by way of contributing to this position, suggests that we are very hopeful that we can make some dramatic changes in the City. I would expect that we would hold our own feet to the fire and do everything we possibly can within the financial constraints that we all have to address the problem. So, I certainly hope the Board adopts it. I think it would send a good message, again, not just to the United Way as a funder but to the individuals and corporations who donate to United Way, as well as private corporations who have already contributed to the cost of the homelessness plan and who are willing to contribute financially to address this problem in our City.

Alderman Shea asked Your Honor, have you set aside the \$20,000 for that position? Do you have that in your CIP budget?

Mayor Guinta responded I believe it was put in the CIP, and I believe it was adopted by the Board.

Chairman Garrity stated it was tabled for Mr. Maranto to find some funding. Have you found some funding for that, Sam?

Mr. Sam Maranto, Planning Department, responded the funding was found, but we had some questions and those were answered but the resolutions have been forwarded to all the committees already.

Chairman Garrity stated that was the 2008 budget, this year's budget.

Alderman O'Neil stated there is a reference to a letter. I can't find it in my packet; Alderman Smith can't find it in his. But all the emails say is we should talk. They don't say what the resolution is to the Welfare Commissioner's concerns.

Chairman Garrity asked Mayor Guinta, did your office send a letter to the Commissioner of Welfare?

Mayor Guinta responded I've done a couple of things. I did personally meet with the Commissioner when this issue first arose. He voiced some of his concerns to me, and not only did I note them, but as I stated in the letter that I had drafted and that I wrote this week, if I could go back in time and change a couple of things, I would. But I think it's important for us to move forward. We all acknowledge as service providers that this is an issue that we'd like to address. The Commissioner

has conveyed his interest in being part of the organization that moves forward to assist the homelessness issue. His agency is a central and integral component of that. One of the things that I've verbally conveyed to him is my hope and expectation with now a true homeless plan in document form adopted by the Board and financially supported will allow more funds from the federal government to flow through Manchester. One thing I've stated to the Commissioner is, should that occur, there should be a serious discussion about how some of that money can be utilized through the Welfare Department. And I stated that to him as a means, not only of reiterating my support for his involvement, but my trust and faith in his ability to work with the other members of the community to try to solve the problem. So I'm taking it more as my responsibility to meet with the Commissioner, as opposed to Patrick or somebody else. I am more than willing to take on that responsibility and insure that all parties are working in a much more collaborative and productive fashion.

Alderman O'Neil stated Your Honor, that's fine. I guess what I'm disappointed in, in the two months that nobody has actually sat down with him.

Mayor Guinta stated I did.

Alderman O'Neil stated we tabled this, waiting for a response to his concerns, which we still don't have. Patrick mentioned that there were several...I don't want to quote you so...you mentioned something to the effect that there were several service providers that had difference of opinions with Commissioner Martineau. Do you know, Patrick, can those people be identified and can they sit down with Commissioner Martineau?

Mr. Tufts responded in my role with United Way, I'd be more than happy to convene a group meeting of social service providers in the City, as well as the Commissioner, and facilitate that for better communication. I would not individually identify those providers.

Alderman O'Neil stated that's fine. My issue is, we're being asked to start a new initiative and one of the key stakeholders is not 100 percent behind this. So I have an issue with that, and I'm disappointed that it hasn't been ironed out in two months.

Chairman Garrity stated the Mayor has stated he has met with the Commissioner.

Alderman O'Neil stated but I have no response from the Mayor or from Commissioner Martineau on the results of that meeting, other than there was some email talking about tonight.

Alderman Shea stated just taking a different vein, and his is very important and significant. If we were to fund this particular part of the project, is that going to be ongoing next year? How is that going to break down? Are we committed yearly now to a particular coordinator of some sort?

Mr. Tufts responded in United Way we're making these commitments one year at a time. I've secured the \$35,000 from the United Way, the board of directors, the folks that I work with. We would anticipate being able to bring other funds, outside and private funds, to bear to fund the position moving forward.

Alderman Shea stated just a concern, and certainly it's not a major one is that when a particular project begins, naturally the harder the situation is it's sort of a built-in situation that obviously we were funded in the 2009 budget and therefore can you help us in 2010, and by the way 2011 may be significant, and so forth and so on. It's sort of important to understand, is this an open-ended kind of project that the person who is going to be in charge is going to be renewing three percent the following year? Costs go up, and so on. So I that's where I'm coming from slightly in terms of being concerned about that.

Alderman Lopez stated thank you very much. I sat on the committee's task force among the many people who did serve on the task force. I believe that in the beginning Mr. Martineau thought he was going to be part of the task force, and for some reason that didn't happen. I talked with Mr. Martineau today, and yes, he was upset. He's willing to continue to move forward and provide another letter because another thing that upset him was the \$30,000 we're going to hear about later from the Horizon. But, he's willing to move forward, and he think he's very surprised that you did not sit down with him, and you said here tonight that you would sit down with him. I don't know what reason you didn't sit down. I don't have to go into it. But I can assure you that Mr. Martineau doesn't want to give in to, 'he said this, he said that,' or whatever the case may be. Just so that the Committee realizes, there were some people on the task force that were surprised for that comment. It should have never happened, but it happened. I think Mr. Martineau is willing to get over the water here. I think the most important thing of the ten year plan is that the City of Manchester is not getting enough money from the federal government, and even some of the social agencies that were on the task force are concerned in other areas that they're concerned that they're not going to get the money. So I think what the Mayor is saying is right to the degree that we're going to get more money and the possibility we'd be able to help the City Welfare with this particular plan. Of course there's going to be bugs in it and we've got to work it out. There's no question. I can tell you that one of the areas, and I think you're familiar with it, I think there ought to be a board of director of social agencies so that we can guide and implement the plan because I don't think one person in government can do it. I think it takes all the social agencies to do it.

Mr. Martineau is going to be sending another letter to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen in reference to the subject that he tried to sit down with the chairman and that didn't happen.

Chairman Garrity stated he said he would. We have a lengthy agenda.

Alderman Lopez stated I think the Mayor is right. The Mayor will contact the Commissioner and work it out. And I think he wants to move on. Let's move on in a positive way and see what happens. But I think the ten year plan is a positive thing because we could end up maybe getting another million dollars from the federal government.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman Gatsas, it was voted to approve this item, with Alderman O'Neil voting in opposition.

Chairman Garrity addressed items 3, 4 and 5 of the agenda:

3. Sewer abatement request (91 Laurel Street).
(Note: EPD recommends an abatement in the amount of \$294.30 be granted.)
4. Sewer abatement request (100 Stewart Street).
(Note: EPD recommends abatement request be denied due to lack of information.)
5. Sewer abatement request (181 Grove Street).
(Note: EPD recommends an abatement in the amount of \$313.20.)

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Shea it was voted to approve items 3, 4 and 5.

Chairman Garrity addressed item 6 of the agenda:

6. Petition for Discontinuance of Phillippe Cote Street submitted by Jay Minkarah, Economic Development Director.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil, it was voted to recommend that the petition be referred to a Road Hearing to be held on June 23, 2008 at 5:00 p.m. in the Aldermanic Chambers of City Hall.

Chairman Garrity addressed item 7 of the agenda:

7. Communication from the Manchester Police Department providing information requested by the Committee regarding accidents and calls for service for the Campbell Street/D.W. Highway/Hamel Drive intersections pursuant to a request by the Highway Department for funding of the design and construction of intersection improvements.

Alderman O'Neil moved to refer this item to the Highway Department. The motion was duly seconded by Alderman Shea.

Alderman Shea stated in looking through that, I'm wondering how many accidents...can you comment on that? I didn't notice it was a particularly large amount of accidents, but you could comment please.

Lieutenant Jon Hopkins, Police Department, stated I was able to review the accident reports for 2008, 2007 and 2006 that we still have on file. The accidents, for the amount of cars that drive through that intersection a day, don't seem out of the ordinary to me. Most of them involve rear end type accidents where people were distracted and not paying attention. There were some that were failing to yield at the intersections, and they all had to be low speed because of the lack of injuries.

Alderman Shea asked would you say that the shopping mall is largely responsible for many of these accidents? And I'm not sure during the course how many there are. You mentioned in 2005 there were four accidents and all reported accidents during the course of 2005 there were seven. Four had injuries and three more...

Lieutenant Hopkins asked are you talking about the intersection of Hamel Drive and Campbell?

Alderman Shea responded yes.

Lieutenant Hopkins stated I couldn't put that blame on the shopping center. There's a lot of residential neighborhood up there too. I don't have the information to say who's to blame for the accidents, whether it's the shopping center or it's the residential. I don't have that kind of information.

Alderman Shea asked would you say that over the course of 2005 to 2008 that this is an unusual amount of accidents in this area?

Lieutenant Hopkins responded not for the volume of traffic. That's not bad, if you ask me, driving through there three or four times a day.

Alderman Shea stated I know years back when I wanted to get a red light, there were 35 accidents, and 28 in other section, in one year. And we're talking over the course of three years here – 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008. If the Highway Department were to do this, wouldn't there be some contribution on the part of the people that are impacting the traffic, so to speak, whether it be Shop & Save or some others up there? This seems like it's an awful lot of money for one street. We could find accidents on South Taylor Street. We could find accidents on South Beech Street. What I'm saying is, we have to look at these things from a jaundiced eye and see whether or not there is a necessity for...How much money is he asking for?

Lieutenant Hopkins responded I don't know, Alderman. I just brought the accident information.

Chairman Garrity stated I think it's \$1.4 million.

Alderman Shea stated that's a lot of money for a particular area. Thanks for your report.

Chairman Garrity called for a vote on the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman Garrity addressed item 8 of the agenda:

8. Communication from Pamela Goucher, Interim Director of Planning, requesting extensions of various CIP Projects.

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Smith, it was voted to approve this item.

Chairman Garrity addressed item 9 of the agenda:

9. Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for acceptance and expenditure of \$34,402.00 in funds from golf tournament fund raisers to be used for making improvements to the Derryfield Golf Course under the Parks Improvement Project (CIP #551207).

Alderman O'Neil made a motion to approve this item. The motion was duly seconded by Alderman Smith.

Alderman O'Neil asked do we know what particular project they're going to be used for?

Mr. Chuck DePrima, Parks & Recreation Department, responded specifically they are going to be used for continued construction improvement for the drainage issues on the golf course.

Alderman O'Neil asked what would be the next step? I know you just finished a project on the seventh through twelfth.

Mr. DePrima responded yes, seven through ten. We'd probably like to get down to eleven and fourteen.

Alderman O'Neil stated so the heading for this project description is not necessarily reflective...It says, 'develop property adjacent to the sixteenth hole, construct a new sixteenth hole green complex and construct a Morton type storage building.'

Mr. DePrima stated that's quoted from the master plan which was done for the golf course several years ago.

Alderman O'Neil stated but that's not the intent of these funds.

Mr. DePrima stated right.

Chairman Garrity called for a vote on the motion to approve this item. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman Garrity addressed item 10 of the agenda:

10. Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for acceptance and expenditure of \$729 from the United States Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration to be used to provide health services to homeless persons in Manchester under the Homeless Healthcare Project (CIP #210208).

On motion of Alderman O'Neil, duly seconded by Alderman Gatsas, it was voted to approve this item.

Chairman Garrity addressed item 11 of the agenda:

11. Communication from Attorney Craig Donais, on behalf of Mrs. Shirley Hoitt, requesting the following:
 - Arrange for the reappraisal of Mrs. Hoitt's property in which the situation of the municipal sewerage system is appropriately evaluated; and
 - Expedite plans to implement the Cemetery Brook Basin sewer separation project, and more particularly, expedite that portion of the project that would most quickly improve Mrs. Hoitt's situations; and
 - Install some temporary measure by which Mrs. Hoitt may avoid future backflow flooding until the more permanent changes anticipated above are implemented.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil, it was voted to discuss this item.

Alderman Shea asked Kevin, could you come up? I think this has been a longstanding concern, and you might have some background and research.

Mr. Kevin Sheppard, Public Works Director, stated we received a copy of this letter as well, and we have been looking into this. Back in 1999...actually, this issue has been around for a long time. I believe we replaced that sewer line back in 1999, and I don't believe there's a continuing issue out there. I believe she may be turning the valve, but there may not be a need for her to be turning the valve. We're in the process of just verifying this and we'll be responding back to the attorney regarding this letter. My superintendent has been in touch with either the

homeowner or the attorney regarding this matter, and letting them know that we are looking into it. But I don't believe there is an issue at this point in time.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil, it was voted to table this item.

Chairman Garrity addressed item 12 of the agenda:

12. Communication from Mike Roche regarding his proposal to the Bright Ideas Committee recommending that "after-hour" City vehicle use be eliminated.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil, it was voted to discuss this item.

Alderman Shea stated Kevin, my understanding was that the only people that really are allowed to use their vehicles are the people from the Airport because they were grandfathered in. What happens now? Do certain people in certain departments take...I'll tell you, I was going up in an elevator the other day and some guy said, you know, I see these vehicles. I watch them. They go shopping, and so forth. That's not the purpose of this. Isn't this abuse to you? How do you control something like that?

Mr. Sheppard responded there is an MER policy for the use of City vehicles, on and off hours. It's up to department heads to enforce that with their employees. Alderman Garrity probably remembers a few years ago when we discussed the personal use of City vehicles. That was an issue. Actually, every department reported back to the Board and explained, for every employee that might take a vehicle home, the reason for that. And this Committee went through every vehicle that's taken home by employees. Every department head justified it at the time, and I believe this Committee agreed with that list of employees. As far as abuse, I know in my department, obviously we monitor that and we try to make sure if we hear of any issues of abuse...The cars are to go from work to home or from home to an emergency, and not for stopping at the store for a loaf of bread on the way home. Or they're not for bringing a child to school in the morning. They are City vehicles. So there is the MER policy. I don't have a copy of it with me today, but this Committee as well, back at that time, when we reviewed the MER policy and we updated the MER policy as well.

Chairman Garrity asked what are the consequences when it's not being followed? I see them in every supermarket and Verizon Wireless store. They're in the parking lot.

Mr. Sheppard responded again, that's up to the department head. We'd discuss it with the person initially and then if it continues to be an issue, there are different levels.

Chairman Garrity stated I don't think it's being enforced, personally.

Alderman Shea stated that's really the same. In other words, somehow or other, there can be a policy but you may be really a mean boss and say you'd better not be seen, but somebody else may be buddy-buddy with a guy and the guy decides, well the wife has to go someplace, I'll go down to Shaws and do a little shopping maybe on the way home, stop at the...whatever. And this is a bad morale for people that don't have that, particularly with gas being four bucks a gallon now. So somehow or other some teeth has to be put into this. I don't know whether everyone who is bringing a car home should bring it home if in essence they don't really need it to go to emergencies. I don't know if there should be just a certain kind of ruling.

Mr. Sheppard stated again, a few years ago this Committee went through every department and every person that brought their vehicles home, and they actually agreed to the people that were bringing them home. And these people don't get free use of the City vehicles. It works through the Human Resources Department. They actually pay...it's part of their income.

Deputy Clerk Normand stated three dollars a day is what is charged to the employee is my recollection.

Mr. Sheppard stated but sure, if an employee is out on a job and is driving and he stops to get a soda, I'm not going to have a problem with that. We've had an issue once before and that's been addressed, I know, at the Highway Department. But obviously the department heads can't be everywhere at once, so this is how we find out things, if an Alderman or a resident sees a problem or has an issue, call us. I'm sure department heads take their responsibilities seriously.

Chairman Garrity stated I'll just make a comment: now at four dollars a gallon, maybe the privileges should be just eliminated, period, throughout the City, taking them home. That's my opinion.

Alderman O'Neil stated first of all, we need to make sure that the department heads and deputy department heads are not the problems. We seem to be heading down the road of...you know, the on call. We have many workers in the City who are on call and required to be on call to provide 24 hour service. Secondly, should we just ask the Clerk to send a reminder of the policy to every department head

and they just respond to us that they've got it and they've read it and they agree and understand it. And if they don't they should come in and ask for clarification from the Committee.

Alderman Shea stated I think there should be an item too that there will be some sort of punishment. Maybe before the letter is sent out there should be some sort of stipulation that...

Chairman Garrity interjected that it docks a day's pay or something.

Alderman Shea stated in other words, it's nice to give everyone a reminder, but if the same people...and it's probably just a few. These people obviously aren't going to listen to reason. They're still going to do what...you know, it doesn't concern them at all. It's the conscientious person that would take that. So maybe there should be some kind of situation where someone pointed out that this is being abused, maybe not by everyone, and it's not meant for everyone in particular, but there is consequence, and you won't be able to use your car for a month or two months or whatever, something that will resonate with the people, Kevin.

Mr. Sheppard stated I understand your concerns, but I want to reemphasize that we were appointed director of our departments and I think you have confidence in us running our departments. If we get a concern...I've spoken to many department heads in the past about issues they may have and we take our jobs seriously, and if there are people that are breaking policy, we follow through. I know the Highway Department and several departments do the same thing. If we do not follow through with policy, it is us that have to answer to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. So if there's an issue and you ever heard that we were not following through or you disagreed with us, there's a problem between the department head and the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. I believe every department head takes their job seriously and every policy that the City has passed.

Alderman Shea stated well maybe something should be discussed when department heads meet and so forth, just discussing it and obviously trying to come up with some sort of resolution.

Mr. Sheppard stated there's actually going to be a meeting of some department heads coming up and we can talk about that.

Alderman Shea stated and that could be a topic of discussion.

Alderman O'Neil stated just a reminder...I'd still like my motion to stand and just make sure this applies to everyone who has City cars, not just the low paid person, it's the department heads and deputies and everything else.

Alderman O'Neil moved that the Clerk send a notification to remind all departments of the policy and that the departments respond to the Clerk and say they read it and they understand it. The motion was duly seconded by Alderman Gatsas.

Alderman Smith asked Kevin, how many City vehicles do we have? Do you have any idea in the different departments how many are involved?

Mr. Sheppard responded off the top of my head I couldn't tell you. I don't have a listing with me tonight, but back a few years ago we actually went through all the City vehicles to determine if they were needed.

Alderman Smith stated my point is how many vehicles there are. I was on that committee two years ago and we did thoroughly go through it. But with the cost of gasoline and so forth like that, I'd like to have a track of how many vehicles are in different departments. Some departments might have ten or twelve vehicles, I would imagine, in one department.

Chairman Garrity asked can you get that information to the Committee?

Mr. Sheppard responded sure.

Chairman Garrity called for a vote on the motion. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

Chairman Garrity addressed item 13 of the agenda:

13. Report from the Mayor's Office in response to Welfare Commissioner Martineau's letter regarding the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness, if available.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil, it was voted to receive and file this item.

Chairman Garrity addressed item 14 of the agenda:

14. Update from staff regarding potential opportunities for collaboration with the State of New Hampshire in connection with the impending move of the Manchester District Court, if available.

Mr. Jay Minkarah, Economic Development Director, stated I prepared a memo for distribution to the Committee but it didn't come in in time, so I will give it to you now.

Chairman Garrity stated just for the record, I don't like late memos to the Committee.

Mr. Minkarah stated I'm sorry. I'll summarize everything that is within it verbally. As most people are aware, there has been a lot of discussion regarding the status of the future of the Superior Courthouse facility on Chestnut Street. Just by way of a little bit of background, the existing building...this may not be the right word, but riddled with asbestos. It was used throughout the structure to the point where determination has been made that the core facility has to be moved out of that location so that it can be remediated. It either has to be removed on a temporary basis and relocated somewhere else temporarily so that the rehabilitation and remediation work can occur. Or, the core facility needs to be permanently moved to another location. As we understand it, there has been a state appointed committee that has been meeting and reviewing the different alternatives for what to do with the Superior Court facility. They've narrowed it down to three alternatives that they were looking at seriously. At the top of the list is to temporarily relocate most of the functions of the Superior Court to the Superior Courthouse in Nashua. That would be for a fourteen to eighteen month period while the building is remediated and substantially rehabilitated. And actually they would permanently relocate the family court facility into the District Courthouse on Amherst Street. It is an expensive process. In order to remediate asbestos in this building you're gutting the entire building and really developing a new facility within the shell. They did look at another alternative of building a new courthouse outside of Manchester, actually in Goffstown. And also they looked at the alternative of building a new court facility somewhere else in Manchester. They did look at existing space. They looked at some private property, and it does appear that what really surfaced to the top of that list is the alternative of temporarily relocating the facility to Nashua. However, fairly recently the possibility of working with the City to develop a new court facility on the Pearl Street lot, the large parking lot that we own north of Bridge Street, came to light, came to their attention. Steve Lorentzen who is the administrator of the

bureau of court facilities came down a number of weeks ago, took a look at the site and thought at least in terms of size and location and access, it does appear to have potential. So, we have entered into discussions at the staff level with Steve Lorentzen, as well as Mike O'Connell, who I believe is the administrator of the administrative services division of the state, about the possibilities. We did have a meeting with them on May 16th to talk about what the next steps would be, what are the possibilities, what are the issues involved. There are a lot of issues involved, as you can imagine. What was contemplated, what we've really been talking about is, is there a possibility to swap the Pearl Street lot for the existing Superior Courthouse. And would be have a viable use for that, a municipal use for that? The use that really jumped off of the page was the possibility of using it for a new police station. That seemed to be a need that made sense, so we did include Chief Mara in that conversation, along with the Mayor. We had representatives from the City Solicitor's office, Parking Manager Brandy Stanley because we are talking about a large parking facility, and myself who attended that meeting. There are a lot of issues. First of all, one is, what is the value of the two different pieces of property? If you're going to do a swap, certainly from the state's perspective and I would imagine from the City's as well, you'd have to know whether the values are comparable, so we would need to hire an appraiser to look at both properties. There are some issues regarding both of the properties. We've heard there might be reverter rights on the Superior Court House. The properties for the Pearl Street lot were put together as part of Urban Renewal, I believe, so it's going to take a little bit of work to do the appraisals, but we do have a quote on that, and if we get approval to move forward, we can move forward on the appraisal side. We have scheduled a site walk with the Police Chief so that we can at least look through the building to determine whether it is feasible to use it for a police station. It's a lot larger than the current facility. I think size-wise it works. I think it's about 77,000 square feet, whereas our existing police station is about 41,000 square feet. The proximity is good. There are some other issues. The court house, the property that it sits on, is confined to the limits of the court building itself; they don't own any of the other land around it. We are taking steps to move forward. It is going to be complicated, and the window of time that we have is really fairly short, unless they push out the project timeline. The goal is to get something to the Legislature in this session. I don't know if that's something that we can meet, but I think we're all working to try to do something. As I understand it, there is already a request for funding that has been approved, but that would have to be amended. In sum, there are a lot of issues, but we're continuing to work with all the parties to see if this is something that we could really do. I'm very happy to answer any questions.

Alderman O'Neil stated I applaud it. I think it's good effort for both the state and the City to attempt to work together. Number one, I think we should include our Public Works people in any of the visits to the building. They know our facilities

well. Secondly, I looked over at my colleague who is a member of the Legislature and having served up there myself, I find it hard to believe they're going to solve this problem before the end of their session. That may be staff's thinking; I'd have to believe...I don't want to put him on the spot unless he has some knowledge, but it seems with everything they're wrestling with during committee of conferences up there, this is...

Alderman Gatsas interjected the session is supposed to end tomorrow.

Alderman O'Neil continued so we may have a little bit of time on it. I think it's a good process to go through. At what point will you need to come back to the Board to get some money for an appraisal?

Mr. Minkarah responded my hope would be, although it's certainly something we would negotiate, that the state would cover the cost of the appraisal. I think they'll probably talk to us about splitting that cost. So after we determine that we would probably be coming back with some sort of a request, or where we could identify a source for those funds. The total cost of the estimate was between \$8,000 and \$10,000, so it's not a huge sum of money. In terms of the issues that we have got to address, the most important right now is what are those comparable values and what are the uses.

Alderman O'Neil asked Jay, are there any other resources...City departments that we can bring to the table or ask them to come to help move this exploration forward?

Mr. Minkarah responded I think Public Works does make sense. At this point that is probably the most logical one. One of the things we have to determine is if there are other uses of the building. If it doesn't look like it's viable as a police station or if the Police would only occupy a portion of that building, are there other municipal facilities perhaps that are located in rental space elsewhere that might be appropriate for that building as well, either in addition to the Police or instead of. At that point I would think we would want to bring in those other departments as well.

Alderman Gatsas asked Jay, how about if we have our crackerjack appraisers down at the Assessors to kind of volunteer to go in to do it and give us a number and see if we're...I don't know if the state would object to it. They're obviously experienced, and not as a final number but to save the \$8,000 to \$10,000, if somebody comes in and says one is worth \$50 million and the other one is worth \$2 million, we can end discussions. Maybe we can use them in the initial, as the Chairman had whispered in my ear.

Mr. Minkarah responded sure. I'll make that request.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil it was voted to table this item.

Chairman Garrity stated with your indulgence, gentlemen, I'm going to have Mr. Sheppard come up with some brief new business.

Mr. Sheppard stated as part of the budget process or our budget presentation, we had put together an idea of leasing vehicles versus the purchase of vehicles, realizing that during this budget process money is tight. So we went out and we actually took a look at the opportunity to lease vehicles versus purchasing vehicles. And during the budget presentation I believe the chairman of the committee referred it to this Committee. I apologize that it didn't make this agenda, but I asked the Chairman if I could bring this forward. It's important for us to move forward in purchasing or leasing these vehicles as soon as possible. There is a long lead time for any large equipment. So, Alderman Garrity allowed me to bring this forward tonight. You can see on the second page that what was approved as part of the CIP was those three vehicles: the Traffic bucket truck, the refuse truck and a ten-wheel dump truck. One of the opportunities we looked at was leasing, where the first year lease would be \$190,000 for five vehicles and we would be allowed as well to purchase three vehicles with that same amount of money. I think this is an opportunity at this time. I'm not too sure long term that this is the City's best use of the funds but our vehicles at this present time...we've got maybe five sweepers with one or two sweepers on the road in any one day, because they are aging. I'm concerned this coming winter with the condition of our fleet whether we'll be able to keep the trucks on the streets as well.

Alderman O'Neil stated what you're saying is for accepting alternative two you could lease vehicles and purchase three.

Mr. Sheppard stated correct.

Chairman Garrity asked is alternative two leasing five years and then it's a dollar buyout after five years?

Mr. Sheppard responded correct.

Chairman Garrity asked typically, you'll keep your vehicles ten to fifteen years, right?

Mr. Sheppard responded at least.

Alderman Gatsas stated if I total up the two, it's somewhere around \$698,750 for the purchase of the top three and then the bottom three. Is that correct? It's \$457,750 plus \$241,000.

Mr. Sheppard stated correct.

Alderman Gatsas stated if memory serves me right, if you bonded that for five years, that's somewhere around \$75,000 a year to bond it for five years. If I take a look and go down through your lease program, \$190,550 times five years is \$952,000, plus the \$241,000, I've engaged in somewhere around \$1.2 million for lease and purchase. Why wouldn't we just go bond them?

Mr. Sheppard responded that is an option. Obviously, leasing I don't think you're going to get as good of a deal as bonding.

Alderman Gatsas stated but leasing, you would at lease probably, if we were an entity that could write off the lease as a private industry. The City doesn't have the opportunity to write something off as a lease, so bonding it is probably a cheaper way for us to go. Much cheaper.

Mr. Sheppard stated right. I don't know the numbers, financially, but I probably wouldn't disagree with that thought process. But I understand that during the CIP process, or the budget process, only roughly \$1 million was identified for the MER, so I brought this in as part of my budget presentation as an alternative or an option to be looked at.

Alderman Gatsas stated I guess I would look and see if we could go back in. There is \$1 million that's in there. Leave...I don't know if the Finance Officer is here. Maybe we can talk about this during the full Board when he's here. Withdrawing \$100,000 of it, and just increasing the bonding amount that we're bonding and I think it's going to be much cheaper to do, seriously cheaper to do if you look at the amount going back the other way.

Mr. Sheppard stated sure, these companies aren't...you can get some good lease rates, but I don't think we're going to beat the bonding rates.

Alderman Gatsas stated I don't have a problem opening up a leasing company tomorrow and leasing that equipment to you.

Mr. Sheppard stated that's fine with me.

Chairman Garrity asked can we do that though?

Alderman O'Neil stated send it to the full Board tonight or...

Alderman Gatsas stated I don't know about opening up the budget, but there's got to be an alternative that maybe the Finance Officer can look at, because I don't agree with the leasing. If we were a company and could write off that accelerated lease, then it would make sense. But there's no reason for us to spend \$952,000 on equipment that we can buy for \$457,000, and I think we did some of that. Even if we bought three of them this year and three of them next year, even if we bought them for cash. It doesn't make sense to do the lease.

Mr. Sheppard stated right, potentially you could look at...if you take the \$457,000 and you subtract out the \$241,000 that leaves you with a little bit more than \$200,000. I don't know what the opportunity is to lower the MER by that amount and put that toward a bond payment. I think that's what you have to discuss.

Alderman O'Neil stated in that same line, and I hope I don't add confusion to this, but I became aware over this weekend that we have a more serious problem at the Fire Department. Our intent was to do all of the rust repair and I think the last piece that they sent for rust repair they discovered when they ripped it apart there was more damage to it than first thought. It may cost us \$50,000 or \$60,000 or more to rehabilitate a 20 year old vehicle. So I think in these discussions, I'm sure the Chief would like us to address this sooner than later, but I think in these discussions that Kevin is going to have with Bill Sanders, I think the Fire Chief has to be somehow involved. Our fire fleet is completely falling apart. They decided last year to not move forward with putting \$60,000 or \$65,000 into a piece. They retired it. They may have sold it, and now we have a second frontline piece, not a reserve piece, I believe it's Truck 7, Alderman Shea, from Somerville Street.

Alderman Shea stated well I know that one of the trucks is out of commission there.

Alderman O'Neil stated and the Chief is going to have to make a decision: Does he put \$60,000 into it that he doesn't have, or do we start moving forward with addressing the fire fleet? So, I'd like to see that included as part of the discussion that Kevin has with Mr. Sanders. We've got to come up with a better way of addressing fleet needs because I think we're at a critical, critical period right now.

Chairman Garrity stated I think what's important, the next time this Committee meets, is that we have the list of prioritized items and vehicle requests from each

department. The Committee doesn't have that in front of us, so if we're going to make an informed decision, we should probably have that information in front of us.

Alderman Smith stated Kevin, I'd just like to go back to the Traffic bucket truck. You lease that. What year is that?

Mr. Sheppard responded we just started leasing that earlier this year. It's a 2008-2009 truck.

Alderman Smith asked and we're going to purchase it. Is that correct? Have you purchased it yet?

Mr. Sheppard responded we haven't purchased it yet until the CIP monies are available.

Alderman Smith asked but is the truck a 2008?

Mr. Sheppard responded off hand, I couldn't tell you. It was a lease with an option to purchase, so our lease payments are going to go toward the purchase price.

Mr. Sheppard stated so my suggestion would be, if we bring this to the full Board tonight, it could be...

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

Alderman O'Neil stated just a clarification, Mr. Chairman. The Public Works Director will get together with the Finance Officer, and I'd like to see the Fire Chief included.

Chairman Garrity stated okay.

Alderman Shea stated item 16 on the tabled items, isn't that something that the...

Chairman Garrity interjected we hope to have an answer on that next month.

Alderman Shea asked is the Mayor...

Chairman Garrity interjected just waiting for the gentleman to come back from vacation.

Alderman Shea stated no, but the vehicle that the Mayor is using now, isn't that a donated one?

Chairman Garrity responded no, that is a detective's car in the Police Department.

Alderman Shea asked is he leasing it?

Chairman Garrity responded no, that's a City vehicle.

Alderman Shea stated but, in other words, we're waiting to hear from someone that may be generous enough to...

Chairman Garrity interjected waiting for him to come back from vacation. Maybe this week.

Alderman Shea stated not for the Mayor to come back from vacation.

Chairman Garrity stated no. The Mayor doesn't go on vacation in the middle of the budget season.

Alderman O'Neil stated Mr. Chairman, this week...and I surprised I didn't see anything...there was some...I know communications regarding funding for the Karatsas Avenue project. And I didn't know if we were supposed to be acting on something before the end of the fiscal year or not.

Chairman Garrity stated Mr. Anagnost and I ran into each other downtown. I told him I would try to reach out to him this week and have a meeting with him. He's looking for some HUD funds.

Alderman O'Neil asked and is the request \$500,000 or \$400,000?

Chairman Garrity responded I heard anywhere from \$500,000 to \$1 million.

TABLED ITEMS

16. Communication from Kevin Sheppard, Public Works Director, submitting information regarding the Mayor's vehicle submitted by the Police Department Fleet Supervisor, and requesting to replace same as soon as possible from FY08 MER funds.
(Tabled 3/18/08; Alderman Garrity to report back to the Committee regarding a possible donation from a local auto dealership.)

This item remained on the table.

17. Communication from Mayor Guinta to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen on March 4, 2008 relative to the anticipated FY2008 budget deficit that includes a request for the CIP Committee to review the FY2008 CIP Cash budget for recommendations.
(Tabled 3/18/08; Note: Update from Highway and Facilities Division.)

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil, it was voted to removed this item from the table.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil, it was voted to receive and file this item.

18. Communication from Charles DePrima, Acting Director of Parks, Recreation & Cemetery, proposing to plant a 25'-30' fir or spruce tree in Stanton Plaza to serve as a permanent tree to eliminate the need of a donation every year. Mr. DePrima further proposes spending \$6,500 from the Park Improvement Cash Account (CIP #511408) to hire a company that has the capability to harvest a tree of this size and transplant it at Stanton Plaza.
(Tabled 4/15/08)

This item remained on the table.

On motion of Alderman Shea, duly seconded by Alderman O'Neil, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

Clerk of Committee