

BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN

November 21, 2023 at 7:00 PM

Mayor Craig called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Cavanaugh, Stewart, Long, Fajardo, T. Sapienza, Kantor, Trisciani, Levasseur, Heath, E. Sapienza, Burkush, Barry, Gamache, George-Kelly

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Craig advised that the purpose of the public comment session is to give residents of Manchester the opportunity to address the Board. All people wishing to speak will have up to three minutes to do so and any comments must be directed to the chair.

Any resident wishing to speak will come forward to the nearest microphone, clearly state their name and address when recognized and give their comments.

Richard Irving, Ward 2, stated:

Two weeks ago, Manchester citizens voted for a positive change by selecting Republicans like Jay Ruais for Mayor, Crissy Kantor for Ward 6, Ross Terrio for Ward 7, Ed Sapienza for Ward 8 and Joseph Kelly Levasseur for Alderman At-Large.

Congratulations to them all for being elected. I hope that we can all work together to make our city a better place to live, work, learn and play and stop homelessness, hunger, crime, illegal drugs, lack of affordable housing, graffiti, litter, and give students in school a better education instead of all the woke nonsense. Happy Thanksgiving.

Thank you.

Jason Bonilla, 463 Central Street, stated:

Hola, Buenos Noches. Hi everybody. It is good to see all of your faces. I recognize that a lot of us are ready for the holidays so I am going to keep this short. Typically, I am going to go from a place of...this testimony comes from my heart, my commitment to the center city, my commitment to the City of Manchester and to all of you. I come before each and every single one of you all to talk about Phase I. I am going to be intentional to look at every one of your faces too. We have done the work as a team. Something that was once a dream. I was once one of those renters and now I am the

representative looking in front of you. Our community in the center city needs this. We deserve more. We have been vocal. We are dreamers, leaders, cleaners, teachers, believers and it is time that we do more about passing this. A wise man once said there is no price for education. So, let's be a part of history and aim towards victory. Let us not get distracted and let us focus on our future generation because we know their education will be their liberation. Gracias to everybody and I hope that we vote and pass this tonight.

Ken Tassey, 226 Karatzas Avenue, stated:

I am a member of Manchester's School Board. I am here as a private citizen to address the school board's request for a \$290 million bond for Priority I of the Long Term Facility Plan. I would first like to state that I am a proponent of giving our students and teachers the best possible teaching and learning environment that we can. My reason for being here is really a matter of procedure. Phase I of the plan was voted on and approved by the school board on August 28. Considering the urgency of getting our students into better schools, it has still taken three months for our school board to get this in front of you tonight. When this finally came back to us last Monday to push this to your Board, I voted with the majority and immediately filed for reconsideration. According to school board Rule 2.08, this should not even be on your agenda tonight but here we are. The vote to approve Phase I on August 28 included construction of a new elementary school on the McDonough site, which was amended to read a site to be determined. For months before the August 28 vote, rigorous sessions of surveys from the community were conducted by SMMA, our architects, that would inform the details of the project which included the original selection of McDonough as a site for the construction of a new elementary school. Only one week ago were we a) presented with the Beech Street site for the new elementary school and b) asked to vote on it without the same input from the community. How do the communities surrounding Beech Street and McDonough feel about this change? How do parents and students feel about this change? Does this change the economics of the plan? The reality is that we don't know and that is why I filed for reconsideration. Moreover, although we voted last week to approve the construction of a new elementary school on the Beech Street site, the language in your agenda tonight on page 151 of your packet still reads that the site will be constructed at McDonough. There are questions to be answered and unclear details

that need to be sorted out. If you are going to respect the equity that is built into our rules and procedures, and that is the rules of the school board for reconsideration, please push this back to the school board for more rigorous conversation with the people of Manchester. If you will not do that, I ask you to vote no on this tonight. Thank you.

Rich Girard, 283 Orange Street, stated:

In my time on the school board, I served four years on the Finance Committee, four years on its Building & Sites Committee and two years on the Redistricting Committee. I became very familiar with the district's enrollments and buildings. That said, I am not here to share why I believe this request is completely unnecessary though I believe it is. I am here to share what MGT Consulting and Davis Demographics had to say in their facilities and enrollment studies commissioned by the school board just two years ago. These reports show that all four of the middle schools you are being asked to expand have a total capacity between 630-1,047 seats, that is surplus seats. By 2030, middle school enrollment was projected to fall by another 463 students of 15%. MGT concluded that the space was adequate to the task, including the relocation of the 5th graders. With surplus space and declining enrollment, why would you consider spending more than \$200 million for sizable additions to each of the middle schools that already have surplus space? Also, before you tonight is the request to spend about \$80 million for a new elementary school on park and playground land across the street from Beech Street. This will facilitate the closing of Wilson School, which the district says is too old for modern educational purposes. Thank God Dean Kamen didn't know about buildings being too old before he renovated them for modern uses. Anyway, according to this facilities study which was presented to virtually every member of the current school board, the total amount of money needed to renovate and upgrade each of the city's existing schools is under \$82.5 million. Of that, slightly more than \$3.5 million was identified for suitability renovations, condition renovations and technology renovations to Wilson School. Those same renovations at Beech totaled a little more than \$3.2 million. Why would you spend \$80 million on a new school when the same amount of money could be spent to bring every other school in the city up to speed? A note on that \$82 million. Almost \$17 million of that was for Central, which the study recommended be closed and its student body relocated to West which it said could be renovated for under

\$8.9 million. I note that because the next ask coming to this Board from the school board will be for \$400 million to demolish Beech Street School, which has had several millions of dollars of work done to it in the last 10 years and the JFK Arena to make way for a new high school. Back to Beech and Wilson. According to the most recent state test scores, 91% of those kids at both schools tested below proficient in math and reading. Only 9% were on grade level in either school, more than 1 in 10. As someone who sat for two years on the Curriculum & Instruction Committee, I have to ask how shiny new buildings are going to improve student achievement. A new building will bring no change to curriculum, no change in pedagogy and no change in staff and those are the touchstones of student achievement. For those reasons and more, I ask you to oppose this request from the school board. Thank you.

Peter Argeropoulos, 526 Central Street, stated:

I am a lifelong resident of the city and a proud graduate of the Manchester public school system and I am currently a seventh-grade science teacher down in Nashua. When I am teaching, I always ask my students when they come to class and have statements that they want to make, their claims, they have to defend them with evidence so I wanted to be sure to come tonight with a book I have read, Planning Educational Facilities by Glen I. Earthman. I wanted to read a little bit from page 245 which has a few references here about planning facilities and what that can do for students. So, bear with me for a minute as I go through some of this, please. "Likewise, research findings convincingly argue that classrooms where there is ample daylight and sufficient windows, where the roof does not leak, heat is controlled, educational and scientific equipment is available and working non-educational sounds are controlled, the building is invitingly painted and kept clean and where students are not overcrowded goes a long way to improve learning on the part of the students. Recent research findings have shed some light on the relationship between student learning and the condition of the physical environment in which the student is located." The book then goes on to list 12 citations and I won't read all of the names and has explored the relationship between the variables of student achievement, student behavior and building conditions. All of these researchers found that there was a positive relationship between the condition of the school building and the achievement of students. In each study, the researchers found from 5-17% percentile rank differences between the achievement scores of

students in buildings in poor conditions and students in buildings that are in good condition. In other words, the students in buildings in good conditions had higher mean scores on achievement tests than students and buildings in poor conditions. That is just one expert that talks about, as this book goes on and on how these buildings truly affect student learning and student well-being in our schools and in our classrooms. Thinking about it more simply, when we think about a house, when you go to purchase a house, you are looking for certain things and some of those are the condition that the house is in. We want inviting spaces for our students because here in Manchester for so long we have accepted the status quo and fallen behind. I truly believe that in order to help our community grow and thrive, we need to invest in our students because our students and our families in Manchester deserve it as much as any student throughout the entire state and throughout the entire world. As a teacher, I am fortunate in Nashua to have gone through renovations in my building recently where we had tons of upgrades to our equipment in my science classroom and I have firsthand seen how it positively affects the students in the classroom. Things that help make labs more accessible for students and things that help increase the learning. In addition to that, my wife is also a 6th grade math teacher in Nashua. Next year she will be moving into a brand-new middle school. This middle school is something that our community is extremely excited about and it has upgrades to technology and equipment that are going to help to positively impact students. At the end of the day, I am asking you to please support our Phase I planning tonight because as I said, the students and families of Manchester deserve this as much as anyone.

Vanessa Blais, Ward 4, stated:

I am a member of the Manchester Housing Alliance. I have been asked to read a letter from the membership of the Housing Alliance tonight.

The Manchester Housing Alliance believes that everybody in Manchester deserves a safe, accessible and affordable place to live. Low vacancy rates and escalating rents have made that increasingly difficult for more and more people. Our current zoning ordinances are outdated and overly restrictive and present a significant barrier to developing the housing that the City of Manchester needs to ensure that all who live here can thrive and contribute to the city's success. In the spring of 2022, many of us participated in the Code-A-Palooza public input sessions hosted by Planning and Urban Development collaborative. Under the original timeline, the final ordinance updating our zoning code was to be made

public in the fall of 2022. A year later, we are still waiting. In April 2023, a presentation was made to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen with a promise to deliver the final ordinance in the winter of 2023. Since that time, with the exception of minor adjustments regarding accessory dwelling units, we have not heard anything about when the new zoning ordinance will be presented and available for public review and comment. We have a housing crisis in Manchester. In addition to the people sleeping in shelters and on our streets, hundreds more are sleeping in cars, hotels or on somebody's couch. Hundreds of others are one failed relationship or car repair away from becoming homeless. The people of Manchester are relying on you to make this a priority. We urge you to expedite the process and release the proposed changes to our zoning ordinances so that we can enact our new zoning ordinance and begin building the housing stock that our city needs.

Thank you.

Greg Salts, Ward 3, stated:

I am here to ask you and this Board to issue a press release condemning anti-Semitism. Since the terror attack in Israel, there has been a 500% increase in anti-Semitism. I have witnessed it twice right here in Manchester at two different pro-Palestinian rallies, both on Elm Street. Both times they were chanting "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free." This is a genocidal chant calling for the elimination of Jews in Israel. Check your Twitter Madame Mayor, I sent you the video proof. At both rallies, I stood across the street holding an Israeli flag. From the river to the sea is a racist slogan that Rhasida Talib used during her Capitol Hill insurrection and it is what caused her to be censured by the House of Representatives over it. I want to thank Congressman Pappas for voting to censure her. I also want to thank the alderman in Ward 8 for standing next to me at one of these events. Both protests were organized by a group called The Party for Socialism and Liberation, PSL. They are communists and a hate group. The October attack in Israel was the largest slaughter of Jews since the Holocaust and PSL was celebrating right outside this building. Twelve hundred people were murdered in cold blood. Innocent Jews were beheaded, gang raped, dismembered and sexually mutilated. Families were tied together and burned alive. Eyeballs were gauged out. Children had their hands and feet cut off. One baby was cooked alive in the oven. Two hundred and forty souls were abducted and dragged into the Gaza tunnels, including a nine-month-old baby. That night, October 7, in a show of solidarity, I went to the Manchester Chabad Synagogue with teary eyes. It wasn't easy but with a heavy heart we carried on the annual tradition of Simchat Torah by singing

and dancing with the Torah. Two of my friends who were at that service, Emile and Sonya, both lost relatives at the attack. Shlameek Yohoudi and Abraham rest in peace. Three days after these barbaric atrocities, Madame Mayor you went on Twitter and described the savagery as violence; violence. That is quite an understatement. You concluded that particular tweet by condemning hatred in all its forms. I am sorry. Manchester expects more than a blue light on top of City Hall and a dog whistle to body politics about moral equivalency. Not long ago, Antifa and Black Lives Matter burned a swath across America in a season of hate. Antifa is a terrorist organization. BLM is the most racist organization since the KKK. They are anti-white and anti-Jew and everybody knows it. Now we have another hate group making their noise, PSL. How will this Board respond to their genocidal slogans right outside this building? See something, say something. I saw something and I am saying something. Madame Mayor, the Jewish community is shell shocked. They know what Palestine actually did yesterday in Merrimack. It was a violent act of anti-Jew terror. This is too close to home. I am asking you to lead this body in crafting a response to anti-Semitism. Never again. Never again. Shalom.

Scott Spradling, Ward 10, stated:

It is nice to be here in front of you tonight. I am here speaking essentially as a member of the Board of Directors for the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce in reference to Item 20. In fact, the President and CEO Heather McGrail will also be here to speak to you in a couple of minutes. I come to you with an appreciation and level of excitement in support of your plan for Priority I. To connect the dots, not too many meetings ago at the Chamber, we had a briefing from Maureen Toohey who is the Deputy Executive Director of ARMI and they laid out their very exciting plans for turning the millyard and their projects into what sounds like another Silicon Valley for regenerative science. Really incredibly exciting things. They are believing that once complete not only will they change lives, save lives and do things that perhaps maybe we only watched and read about in science fiction novels and in movies but they will be turning it into real life. Incredible science that is going to happen right here in Manchester. They want to coin the phrase, Regen Valley. We could become a global centerpiece for incredible medical science activity. One of the messages from Maureen to the board though was we need to make sure that we have a robust pipeline of talent

and we have to be homegrown. We have to find ways to improve and invest in our education. That was an aha moment for our board. After they were done with their presentation we spoke and we are in support of this plan. We recognize the need for students. We recognize the value that it brings and we are excited about the possibility of bringing our public school system in alignment with this exciting new development that is happening. We already know workforce demand is incredibly high. We already know that unemployment is incredibly low and we would love to be to grow our talent and keep them right here in Manchester and take this city to a whole new and next level. We have a unique opportunity and I would invite and ask all of you to please seize on that opportunity and recognize the business community stands with you.

Barry Brensinger, 400 Whitford Street, stated:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I am the Coordinator of Manchester Proud. Manchester Proud is little more or less than the citizens of Manchester united and driven by our belief that Manchester's public schools are our community's most essential asset. Everyone in our city benefits from exceptional public schools. Back in 2018, we facilitated as I am sure most of you know a community-driven plan for the future of those schools, now the district's strategic plan; a process that engaged thousands of Manchester residents. At the time, we were frequently asked will the strategic plan include recommendations for the modernization of our school facilities. Our response was while we agree that some of our current schools are antiquated and inefficient and modernized schools are needed to enhance teaching and learning, facilities planning should be done after a strategic plan is in place so that our school buildings can be programmed and designed to embody the district's strategic objectives. Tonight, we find ourselves at an interesting and pivotal moment. The district's strategic plan is, in fact, in place and integrated into the work and goals of our schools. As expressed by Dr. Gillis at her recent state of the Manchester School District messaging, great and promising progress is underway district-wide. The district has since undertaken, as you all know, a facilities plan which will address essential needs for safe and efficient buildings while providing the environments and technologies needed to enable 21st century teaching and learning. The proposed plan is well reasoned, responsive to the needs of our students and community, and the phase before you tonight will have no tax impact. Having spent my career in building, design

and construction, I can assure you that deferring these needed improvements will only compound their cost. Therefore, I urge you to vote yes in favor of the required bonding knowing that Manchester needs great schools to attract and retain young families and the skills and talents needed to drive our economy, support our health and safety, and sustain our vibrant cultural and civic life. Our schools are the smartest investment we can make because when we invest in our schools, we invest in all of us. Thank you.

Robert Tanguay, Bodwell Road, stated:

I was going to sign a song for all you guys but I decided my time is more valuable explaining what is actually happening. I have spoken before the committee. I called the Manchester Police in July 2022. I called to report a crime. It is called 633:4, Interference with Custody. I didn't know the crime was that specific statute. It is also a form of domestic violence. On Friday I went up to the statehouse but before that I went to the domestic violence hearing that is run by coalition members at the Supreme Court. I had that camera, it is VR camera, and I recorded everybody talking about how they were going to get some wiretapping laws and they talked about murders and this and that. They also talked about how they give the Manchester Police money, federal money, to report instances of domestic violence but when I called, I placed a phone call and I have those recordings online, they did not take any report. They told me to go to court to get my rights. It is online. Then later on Friday at about 1:30 PM I went into the statehouse and found a very interesting piece of paper. On that piece of paper, was Robert Tanguay, Public Enemy #1 with lies and legal defamation that was being passed around the statehouse along with the domestic violence coalition which just got \$2.5 million. So, while we have the tax money and we don't want to get the taxes to pay as this other gentleman said, we can get federal money but there is a cost because I have had fictitious filings against me and falsities which have been reported to the police and they don't do anything about it. There are videos about that right now going viral with Officer Whelan. They hired an attorney and are continually depriving me of due process and any police service. Instead, I have to talk to their attorney. Also, at the statehouse I have on video, Your Honor, that the Governor's Administration says that the mayor is in charge of the municipal police. That is on the video. That is on the video and it is also on the video them hiding the evidence of a piece of paper with my bio saying lies about me and that I am crazy and then guess what? Two hours later someone gets

shot in Concord, NH down the street while they are all looking for me. There are also indications and I am not sure if it is the right Barry, but I made phone calls to all of you today and I didn't get many answers but I did get a couple and the couple that I did are quite concerning saying that they are sick of hearing from my state reps and then also people were horridly running away when I have been trespassed from 100 Main Street in NH which has a government building. There are people who are lying and you haven't even responded to my letters, Mayor Joyce Craig. You have not responded to my letters and it is all on record so deep and you have authority while you are in office to respond to it and not use the people's taxpayer dollars to hide the fact that 633:4 Interference with Custody is not only a crime but there is no justification. It is a form of domestic violence that is not being reported. They are botching and hiding evidence. They are hiding evidence. I will take more than my three minutes because it needs to be done. What are you going to do about it Your Honor?

Deb Roux, 97 Springwood Way, stated:

I am here to talk about the \$290 million request from the Manchester School Board. I am asking you all to vote no on that request. I have done some looking around and what I found doesn't warrant new school buildings for students, it warrants a better education for the students inside the existing buildings. Current math proficiency for Manchester public schools is at an all-time low of 14%. Current reading proficiency for Manchester public schools is at 27%. The overall Manchester school district is currently ranked at the bottom 50% compared to the rest of NH. Enrollment in Manchester's public schools has been in steady decline since 2004/2005. Enrollment in 2004/2005 was 17,737 students and enrollment in 2023/2024 is only 12,247 students, a decrease of 5,490 students over the last 19 years. There hasn't been one increase. I did send all of the aldermen a copy of an email that can be added into the minutes so people can see the links where I got this information. As a parent, I am a lot more concerned about the actual education of our students inside the facility rather than what the school building looks like on the outside. I am quite embarrassed by these scores so I ask you as a Board to hold our school board accountable to use the money they have been given, my taxpayer money, to ensure that there are state-of-the-art education programs being used to improve the education of our students and get our test scores up to a proficient level which is 75%. I looked that up according to the Calgary Board of

Education. It says proficient is 75% and we are at 14% and 27% in math and reading. Math is 14% and reading is 27%. I did hear people testify earlier that our schools and our children, their education is the most important priority for the City of Manchester. I guess my question is why has enrollment been going down so much since 2004/2005 and why are the scores so low? What kind of programs are our students being taught and how are they being taught and why are these scores so low? It just doesn't make sense. I think the focus should be on improving the scores of our children's learning rather than focusing on new buildings at this time. I don't know about you but the outside of the building doesn't matter if there is nothing good going on inside of it. Thank you for your time and I ask that you vote no.

Sean Parr, 244 Sagamore Street, stated:

I would like to speak about the Phase I approval of the bonding that you have before you. I would echo the comments of my colleagues, Committee Members Argeropoulos and Bonilla. I agree with them. I think that this has been a long time coming. Our city deserves this. Our teachers and our staff have been doing more with less for such a long time that it is hard to even fathom how much we deserve this and how long we have been waiting for this. I hope that we can count on your vote of support tonight. There is a great alignment between this facility's plan and our strategic plan. I know that we have been working hard to reduce class sizes and that this facilities plan will align well with those plans. I think the time is right and I hope that we can count on your support. Thank you very much.

Griseliz Glenn, Homeless, stated:

I haven't been here since DCYF has taken my children. I haven't been here since they took them into their custody. I wanted to make sure that coming into the holidays and this week is Thanksgiving and my children will be in foster care without their mother and I will be without my children for the first time ever in their lives thanks to City Welfare and thanks to you, Mayor. It seems to me you just took their word for it and labeled me angry and I am just angry for whatever reason and that is what everyone seems to have made the reason for me continuing to make this a big deal and continuing to voice my concerns. From Day 1 that I came here with City Welfare charging me for reimbursement against the statute, you never looked into it. You clearly spoke to them

because you were on the phone when I was being arrested. You just took whatever they told you as their word for it instead of doing your job and looking into both sides of the story and meeting with me because I have continued to say when I came up here that I have proof of everything that I say. I have proof to back-up what I say and witness statements to back up what I say but no one has taken the time to listen to my side of the story and actually look into what it is that I am saying. The statute itself does not define financial hardship so are we supposed to guess at what that means and just let City Welfare determine who they say is in a financial hardship and who is not? It is not defined in the actual statute but it is defined in the PUC guidelines, the PUC rules and regulations. PUC 12.09 defines what a financial hardship is. A financial hardship is anyone who is receiving any local, state or federal funding to make up for low income as a subsidy for low income. That is what financial hardship is in the definition of the PUC that Manchester City Welfare is to abide by. If they have to abide by the definition of financial hardship for the utilities commission because they help people with their utility bills and the actual statute doesn't define what a financial hardship is, why would they not be held to the same definition? They just get to determine based on what they feel and what they think with no actual formula or definition to go by? It is your job to look into what they are doing because every person they put in that family shelter is in a financial hardship by definition and they continue to charge reimbursement from people who do not have any money already and are already in a low-income status in a homeless shelter. Staying in a homeless shelter and being charged reimbursement while they are in a financial hardship. What have you done to look into that because you were on the phone when I got arrested? Nothing right? No one has done anything to look into the city continuing to charge people who are poor who have no money and are homeless for reimbursement to stay in a homeless shelter against the statute, RSA 165 that I continue to repeat. Section 20B says it, financial hardship, but the law does not define financial hardship. The PUC does. Look into it. Give me a call so I can play for you the proof that I have now that my children are in foster care for no reason.

Dam Wright, Manchester, stated:

I noticed that tonight we skipped the Pledge of Allegiance and the usual moment of silence. As somebody who is here representing a community that has lost more people than we can even count, more than we probably know, I would like to just take a

moment, especially after last week losing a long-term friend who died out in the streets after being out here for years and finally succumbing to alcoholism in the cold...his name was Scotty and he was a great guy so if could just take one quick moment of silence, I would like to use my time for that. Thank you. I am not going to say too much about the election. I don't think there were a lot of huge surprises. We knew we were losing a lot of the people that we lost. It is a real shame to be losing Erin George-Kelly from Ward 12. She is the best expert on this Board when it comes to homelessness with her work at Waypoint and elsewhere. I think it is going to be really tragic to lose her. As I speak to those of you who will remain and those who might come in who are hopefully listening as well, I think the importance of expertise is huge. Earlier this month, a lot of you though not all of you, were able to attend the Continuum of Care Conference. We learned a lot there and I learned a lot about some of the upstream stuff that we don't see on the streets so that was great. It was fantastic. A quick shout out to Alderman Kantor for coming and staying the whole time. I would like to have seen some of the other folks from the Republican side there. I am sure there were other things you had to do. To the Board that is going to be here next year, those of you who are here and those of you who aren't, listening to experts on an issue like this is critical. We heard what the National Alliance to End Homelessness had to say. We heard them talk about how housing first is the only way to go. We heard them talk about the right ways to run a shelter are the ways we are seeing over at 39 Beech Street and not what we have seen in the past around the city. These are things we need to take to heart. We have heard about the importance of working together at all levels. These are things that we need to take to heart. The other thing when it comes to expertise is I don't know how many of you have read the recent piece that I put out in Ink Link that was also picked up by Manchester Public Information but we have seen some things with the opioid overdose numbers this year and the fatalities. The overdoses here in Manchester are slightly up and that is a result, of course, of the increasing amounts of Fentanyl. What we are seeing, even after what we saw earlier this year with seven people dying in 48 hours shortly after the eviction of the large camp, is we are seeing a reduction in the amount of fatal overdoses compared to the projections of last year by 19%. That means somebody is doing something right. What are we doing right? We are doing the harm reduction piece right. We are keeping people alive. People are going to overdose. That is going to happen but we are

keeping people alive. Andrew Warner who is the Director of Overdose Prevention, that is his literal title...19% reduction since last year. We had 9% rates of overdoses last month, fatal, and that is half of what we saw in Nashua. We are doing something right. Listen to the experts and follow what they have to say. Thank you very much and Happy Holidays.

Glenn Ouellette, 112 Auburn Street, stated:

I have always supported education because education is important. One of the last elementary schools in this city that we put back together was Beech Street. They had open classrooms and we closed the walls back up. We spent millions and now a few years later we are going to be tearing it down? Where was the plan? Why would you spend \$1 million+ on a school that you are going to tear down? I don't get it. That does not help our kids. Now we have to spend more money to do what we should have done in the first place. When you hear a motion on the school board made and passed and then amended to say the exact opposite of where these schools may be built when the first time it said where they were going to be built tells me that we, the public, are not really being informed here. Which one is it? Are they being built at a certain location or are they not when you are making these amendments? It is time that we do what we need to do to solve our problems but stop wasting taxpayers' money when years later you have to spend it again. It makes no sense. Another thing is in Hillsborough County, rent went up 47% in the last five years. That is 9.4% per year. How many middle class or lower income people who work for a living get a 9.4% increase? Not that many. You can only cut so much in your budget. When you have a property owner who takes your lease and changes it without your permission and signature...why do we allow that here in the city? That is not legal. I can't do that to my lease. They can't do it either. We have some problems and I am sure we can solve them but we need to get together as a Board; this Board and then the new Board come January and try to do a better job at solving our problems without just throwing money at them and two years later throwing more money again or make a different change where you have wasted \$2 or \$3 million. To all of you, I wish you a Happy Thanksgiving. Thank you.

Dennis Higgins, Homeless, stated:

One of the things that I ask people is what bothers them and this is from everybody, there are no public bathrooms anywhere. We are trying to get tourists here and bike here or vacation or whatever and there is nowhere for anyone to go to the bathroom. Someone asked me if there was a place where homeless people could go where they wouldn't get harassed. I said I am not sure about that and that you can't just give land away for stuff like that. I am going to miss Scotty. He was a good guy. He grew up here in Manchester. I didn't know he pitched. He played Little League and I would have talked baseball with him when I saw him. One of the things is you have a shelter down on Beech Street and you have people using down there and nobody has been trained on how to use Narcan. I don't know about you guys but that doesn't really make sense to me at all. If you are going to have a "wet" shelter or a shelter that is easy to get into if you are high or are using, that the staff wouldn't be trained on at least how to use Narcan. I have witnessed instances myself when they call the ambulance and sit and wait while the guy is passed out or overdosing or one of the guests may have Narcan. I think you are just asking for it. I don't know if the city is liable for any of that at all but it doesn't look good. I want to thank both Chiefs for doing outstanding jobs. You guys are really lucky to have both of them. I am not just saying that to kiss anyone's ass or anything. We are really lucky to have two guys that really care about their jobs and care about the people working for them and the people in the city. I am not sure about how this new department is going to work. I hope Adrienne can get some of the federal money that is out there. I think that would be really important because it is going to take some money to get transitional housing. Education is where it is going to be. You have to teach people how to live in a house again and why it is not right to go to the bathroom outside your front door or on anyone else's door. There is so much stuff that you have to train people on. I was talking to some outreach people and they got someone a house and three days later the person had a tent inside the living room where he was living. It is a long process. You have all of this new stuff coming in and are worried about schools and all that but don't drop the ball on this and what you have going. This homeless thing...it is getting tough out there especially this winter. There is nowhere for anybody to go and there is definitely not enough shelter space for everybody. Apparently, it is not legal to be on the sidewalk. The law says that you can camp on the sidewalk or at least stay there but it rolls up every day. I think that is something that we have to look at because you can't just keep moving people

around and expect them to not show up in someone's backyard. I hope everybody has a good Thanksgiving and thank you very much for what you guys have been doing.

Heather McGrail, Presidents & CEO, Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, stated:

I know you heard from Scott Spradling earlier, one of our Board of Directors, so I will keep it brief but I did want to stress that it is my responsibility and privilege to be the voice of the business community. Our Chamber couldn't speak more emphatically in favor of a yes vote for the school board's request. All of the work that we do in workforce development and economic development day in and day out relies on education growing as well in tandem. What Scott spoke about with Regen Valley and the sci-fi that is going on in the millyard is such an incredible opportunity that is at our fingertips for Manchester to truly be an epicenter of bio-fabrication; a truly phenomenal opportunity that is unprecedented. It requires tens of thousands of jobs which require a workforce pipeline which requires investment in schools. I think that from our lens and really from any lens, investment in schools is not something that can be seen as not critical. It is not something that can be approached from a scarcity mindset. We have to think growth and abundance and how we prepare for the future and that is all taking aside what we owe our students. I am only speaking from an economic and workforce lens mostly but when I think about my kids, surroundings and environments do matter so I would definitely also add that on a personal note and urge you to support the school board's request. Thank you.

Camille Crafey, 204 Boutwell Street, stated:

This is my five-year-old son whose name is Jack. I am here to talk about the facilities bond. The main objective I face with clients as a realtor looking in southern NH is something along the lines of, I refuse to send my children to the Manchester school district because although it is more affordable, I cannot squander my child's education. I have clients who would rather live in smaller homes that have bigger price-tags just to avoid their children being enrolled in our school system. How embarrassing is that? My son goes to a school here in Manchester and I can say I actually really love Northwest. I love his teacher and I think they do a great job. However, how can I argue with another parent who is equally as concerned about their child's education as I am about

mine? Someone else went over the proficiency scores. We are looking at 19% in math versus 38% at the state level. Reading is 27% in Manchester versus 52% at the state level. Our graduation rate is 68% versus 92% at the state level. Not all is lost however. I do hear from other parents that they are trying to send their high schoolers to Central, which leads to my next point. Why is it that Central High School is able to get 39% in math proficiency and 59% in reading proficiency where West is floundering at 14% in math and 34% in reading? Can you blame these parents for wanting to essentially escape West High School? If Central is able to create the proper learning environment for better literacy, then where is the disconnect throughout the district? I will tell you that building a brand-new facility and filling it with futuristic furniture will do nothing to raise our student's education levels if they are being taught in the same exact way. You can buy yourself a brand-new Tesla but if you don't know how to drive it, it will likely crash and burn. Additionally, during my time in the Marine Corps, I learned most critical intricate life-saving maneuvers while sitting on the ground in the woods in below zero weather. So, it can happen. One of the main reasons I purchased my home here in Manchester is because I am a veteran, a single-mother, a small business owner and someone who needs to be budget conscious. I asked many times before regarding the school proposal how much is this going to cost each household per year in tax hikes. Let's face it, if you take away the affordability of Manchester, what is it that we are able to offer our residents? Please vote no this evening so we can kick this back to our school board for further clarification and where this money needs to be spent to improve literacy because that is what matters most. Thank you.

Karen Soule, 79 Riverwalk Way, stated:

I wanted to make something come alive to you. I heard Peter Argeropoulos give you information about what facilities mean. Let me give you an example. If you have not been in Wilson School, you need to see that school. It is dark. It is dreary. When we had 90-degree temperatures we had to put fans in all the upstairs classrooms. It is unconscionable. The bathrooms are dirty. They painted them. The boys' room smells. We have been working with them and every time we get it fixed, something else happens. Wilson is in one of our most needy neighborhoods. They deserve better than that. I also had an opportunity to visit Webster for those of you who live in that end of the city. Here again, their HVAC system...it was very hot upstairs in the 4th and 5th

grade classrooms and it was very difficult for the students to learn. I want you to understand that facilities matter and teaching matters also but if you look at what is being proposed, it is not just about the facilities. It is also educating our teachers with professional development so that they are moving our students forward. The key to the future of Manchester is in our students and we have to value our students and give them what they need. The longer we wait, the more students we are going to lose because we need facilities that shine for our students and then our students will be successful. Thank you for listening and we can't afford to do nothing.

*On motion of **Alderman Fajardo**, duly seconded by **Alderman Long**, it was voted to take all comments under advisement and receive and file any written documentation presented.*

PRESENTATION

2. Update on the shelter and engagement center at 39 Beech Street by Adrienne Beloin, Director of Housing Stability.

Adrienne Beloin, Director of Housing Stability, stated I hope to answer tonight your questions about data. We will see what they are after I give you what I anticipate you need to know right now. What I have for you here is a slide that attempts to give a timeline and this is a timeline from my perspective of homelessness services from last winter through this winter, the entire time I have been here in this role with you in Manchester. In winter 2022, one year ago, we were in a situation where we had a large encampment that was deemed to be unsafe and we ended up clearing that encampment. There were about 40 people living there at the time of the clearing. The Emergency Operations Center was activated and the Cashin Center warming station opened. The 2022 PIT count was completed in January and that is the point in time count where we count the homeless individuals. The homeless outreach officer was added to the police team and also my position was filled. In the spring, we moved into winter emergency response where we opened both the Brook and Beech Street shelters. We started doing recruitment and training. This was temporary staff at that time just to remind you because we were only operating on a three-month basis when we first opened the shelter so it was a little unsure what the future would be. We used a

temp staffing agency names Maxim and I just wanted to remind people of that. We also around that time started to redefine our encampment team procedures just to get more bones in place and more structure in the way that we were meeting and the types of meetings we were having. We also established a committee for the department. That is a committee called the Housing Stability Committee. It was established in the spring. Into the summer, we were able to move to emergency shelter extension. So, in the summer we voted to have the shelter extended and we are going to have that shelter in place all the way through June. The Engagement Center fit-up started at that time and took quite a long time so I wanted to mark for you kind of when that started. The extent of the fit-up took quite a bit. There was a staffing transition at that time and that means that the Maxim staffing agency that we were using, it was determined for us that it was more of an expense than we were willing to pay and we ended up changing over the staffing vendor from Maxim Staffing to East Coast Evolution Leadership. That is a company owned by Jake King who was at that time the shelter manager and is now the shelter site manager. So that company has taken over and the kinds of services they provide are really just the staffing. So, it is things like payroll and HR and the operations are still overseen by my department. The Brook Street Shelter for Women closed at the end of June. Around this time too, the ERAP Program, which was sheltering individuals and families inside hotels also closed so that created a new group of homeless that entered our system. At that time, I actually added one staff member, a project assistant that came on board at the end of the summer. Going into the fall, we opened the Engagement Center on 9/27 and the Department of Housing Stability was established on 9/5. We also, with this new permanency and the transition from temporary status to now a more permanent status with the votes that we had here with the shelter and the Engagement Center, were really able to tighten up standard operating procedures within the shelter and the Engagement Center. It was kind of an opportunity to reboot all of that. We did a lot of training. There were a lot of changes that the staff and the people that were staying at the shelter and being introduced to the Engagement Center had to come accustom to and adjust to. One of the examples of that is we had cots at one time and you may remember that is how we started with the Cashin Center and we transitioned those cots into actual bunkbeds so with that there came new rules about what things one can have at the cot and things like that. So, lots of transition and lots of training and lots of trying to establish that and it took time. It is still in the works. The

other major thing is that we introduced the HMIS system which I will be talking to you a lot about today. It is the Homeless Management Information System. It is statewide and countrywide and it is used in every continuum of care that is looking to end homelessness in their community and it is the standard of how you document homeless circumstances, demographics and everything you would need to know to truly assess what your community needs and make the necessary connections to the services that your community needs. HMIS was an easy thing for the city to get on board with. We are not required to use it but we volunteered to use it and that is a standard that I hope to project across the other care providers in our community. I am using kind of what I have been able to do with HMIS as an example and I am going to promote and encourage and help train other providers in our community on how to use this because the more data we have, the better job we can do kind of assessing what our community needs are. Now we are in the winter and we just completed a national consultancy conference. This was a huge event that we held and it was on 11/1 and 11/2. We learned a lot from this event and it is another huge data point that we were able to establish because in preparation for that event, we provided a lot of our own data, not just the data I have to produce but the data from the other service providers. We looked at this as a group and a continuum together and they were able to give us an analysis of what we were doing right and what we were doing wrong and give us their expert opinion. As a result of that, we are now redefining the CoC. The CoC is the Continuum of Care. I am going to do a lot more teaching with this group about that as you have questions and as we continue to talk throughout the year but the CoC is something that has been very separate from other stakeholder communities and we really want to change that divide. We want to put us all together in one group so that we can truly do this together. So, redefining the CoC is one of the challenges that we have before us. We want to create a city-wide data hub that provides data and also coordination of services and we have another PIT count coming soon because it is always done on the coldest night of the year in December. When you are collecting data, it is good to try to have a few questions in front of you that you seek to answer with your data collection and these are just three simple questions that I can't imagine any of us would not agree about. We want to know where are things now. It has been a year that we have been trying to do things a little bit differently or trying to get more pointed information. We want to know who is homeless in Manchester. We want to know if what we are doing is

working. These are some stats across NH and these stats are based on numbers that I have been showing you in Manchester for a long time in that first column. They are numbers based on both our PIT count but also other information that is available to me from our outreach teams like the Fire Department and the squad that goes out or the Police Department and from information that we share together on a weekly basis and also from the Mental Health Center of Greater Manchester because they provide the most robust outreach efforts in and across the city. With that, I have those numbers and I am sticking to it until we have new numbers that will come up in the new PIT count and we can kind of reassess then. This provides you with a sense of the PIT counts in the Nashua CoC. There are three CoC's in NH. Nashua includes part of the county and the balance of state which is the rest. You can see those numbers look very different than our numbers and some of that has to do with the way they are counted. The data is not well counted. That is something that we understand across the state and the PIT count is pretty faulty but these are the numbers that we currently have and it is both an example of the differences in Manchester but also a lack of data that we need to get better focus on. Then it has the NH totals there. I like to include the stat of 788 Manchester school children reported that they were homeless in the 2022-2023 school year. That alludes to a lot of homeless that is invisible and left outside of this chart here. These are numbers served in the past year from the city initiatives. The Brook Street Women's Shelter ran from February through June. It served 45 women and 12 were moved into housing from those efforts. The Beech Street shelter started in February. It is still going strong. We have served 242 homeless individuals throughout that time and 15 of them have moved on to housing. Then we have the Beech Street Engagement Center that opened on 9/27. Since we opened just a month and a half ago, we have had 160 unduplicated people walk through our doors and ask us for services. The number housed is further to be assessed through the data collection that I am about to introduce you to. This is an example of some of the incidents that are reported on at the shelter. I know there has been a lot of interest to kind of get an insight into what goes on at the shelter right. It is a big mystery. We have some processes in place and one of them is writing incident reports and having really clear training and understanding from staff on how to do that. This is a breakdown of the different types of things that people write incident reports about and I review these with our site director. Usually what happens is when someone has an incident, you can see

that some of them have to do with even something like an injury so that certainly isn't a fault of one of the folks that are saying with us but we still mark it as an incident so we can track it and make sure we have handled it appropriately. Other things like aggressive and hostile behavior can sometimes happen and what I would like to report out here is every single one of those incidents comes past my desk and I can assure you that we haven't had extreme episodes of violence. We also have not had one sexual assault or anything of that nature. Usually, the aggressive and hostile behaviors are between guests with each other and usually they result in a restriction of one or more people from the shelter for about 24 hours before they can return and give it another try. In this next slide, you can see this is the report of how our incidents have been collected over time. When you think back to that timeline, right around July/August as we were kind of strengthening our policies and procedures, you can see we had a huge increase in incidents. The reason for that is not because more mayhem is happening at the shelter, it is actually because we are doing a better job reporting on it. So, we have had a higher level of people being compliant with writing incidents and knowing how to write them and document them as such so we have had a huge increase in that which is great. This is a quote from the Police Department "From the Police Department's perspective, the past year has seen improvements surrounding response to homelessness in the city, specifically the coordination around city departments and continuum of care partners has provided an outlet for addressing problems. 39 Beech Street is a valuable resource that has enabled the individuals living outside to have emergency shelter resulting in fewer encampments. Additionally, the Engagement Center has been helpful to direct unhoused individuals to when we interact with them. Prior to the Engagement Center, there were little to no immediate resources we could send people to and now we have that. Lastly, we are encouraged by the path of the Continuum of Care and the systems approach to coordinating all of our resources. Developing this process will be a key to problem-solving." Here is a picture from last winter. You probably recognize some of these pictures from the news stories or even from being there. The Police Department took the picture on the left sometime in the winter and I took the picture on the right and I remember that was December 8 because my phone reminded me so. That was how we were looking one year ago today and this is outside the FIT shelter, the adult shelter, and also outside the Central Fire Station on the corner of Manchester and Pine Streets. This is how it looks right

now. These are pictures taken by both myself and the police. As you know, the Fire Department acts as the coordination point for homeless encampment complaints. These complaints, along with coordinating outreach, enforcement and encampment clean-ups, are discussed at the weekly meetings of the city's NET Team. This team has made tremendous strides towards addressing any and all encampment issues, however, there is still room to improve. Squad 1 has also steadily reported "That although there are still homeless encampments within the city, the amount has been diminishing and the active encampments remain small and not in any one place for an extended period of time. The data provided to me stemming from emergency calls has stayed within the normal range of what we had been seeing. We do regularly respond to the city's shelter but within the scope of what we would expect. Responding to the shelter as opposed to responding to the same individuals if they were on the street or in an encampment where weather and accessibility becomes issues, has reduced the complexity of these emergency calls." Here is a slide that shows the vacancy rate of rental housing units. This is something you are all familiar with with your vacancy rates and how it has gone down over time. This is also something you are very familiar with but it is striking to look at it once in a while to remind ourselves how the median gross rental cost has gone up. This is a quote from the Welfare Department, "As the vacancy rate has continued to decline in recent years, rehousing those experiencing homelessness in the private rental market has become a nearly impossible task. The majority of the Welfare Department's time, efforts and financial resources are directed to addressing or preventing homelessness. In FY2023, 91% of our general assistance budget was utilized on housing related costs. The wind down and eventual closure of the ERAP Program has resulted in our monthly appointments more than doubling. Our expenditures likewise continue to climb. In October, we issued \$53,003 in aid. This is the most assistance issued in a single month since the early 2000's. The local welfare trend here in Manchester is being echoed across the state. The need is great and there is no end in sight." Here are a couple of pictures to remind us how we started out with the Cashin Center back in January. Here we are at the transition point of taking the cots and moving them towards the bunkbeds. Here is the Engagement Center when we started construction on it in the summer. It wasn't ready and those of you that came to the opening on September 27 know that there is still a lot of construction happening even as we are starting to open the doors but we couldn't wait. This is what it looks like

now. The picture on the left is a training that we are doing with staff in anticipation of the opening and here is a more recent picture. I am sorry it is a little hard to see but you can see some of the things that were discussed today in the Ink Link article talking about how the Engagement Center has evolved and that is kind of an active day there. This is something that I wanted to show you about how we are measuring who is homeless in Manchester. This is a sneak peek inside the HMIS system. I am sure many of you, unless you have worked in the field, haven't had a chance to see it. This is an HMIS system that is used across the country and software that I am very familiar with from other communities I have done this work in and it is really the gold standard on how to collect things. This is an example of a test client so there is definitely no client information that we are sharing with anybody here. This is just a test to give you a sense of what it looks like and the level of the sophistication. So, every single staff member just like how you see my name in the corner on the right has their own log-in. It is very specific to them and then they track their work separately on their own which is nice because then I can write reports to actually see the staff activity and how many hours they spent on the site and who is entering what and who is not entering and that can help target some training and some quality improvement. This is an example of a profile. So, when somebody comes into the shelter or the Engagement Center, these are the types of things the staff goes through with them. It is very user friendly in the way that it can be clicked off. The staff report the data. They have the conversations with the guests and the guests tell them their best answers and the staff record it. You can see there is an example there of a unique identifier. We talked about that a lot the last time I was here. This system allows us to track people without having to use their names. We all use unique identifiers as well. Inside the system, it does show us their name so we understand who the people are we are working with but when we run reports, we can use unique identifiers in order to share that information with the state, with other programs and with you all. Here is another example of the other types of data that is collected in the system. These are awkward screenshots that I was able to take to show you the different enrollment standard pieces that we are collecting data on. These are required. You can see that there is every single thing there that you would ever need to know about a homeless individual in order to help them overcome barriers to housing or get connected to resources that they might need. Every single one of those is required to have an answer. They do not let you save the enrollment in the

program unless you have completed an answer for every single one. We have trained the staff on how to ask those questions and how to record those answers properly and a report can be run on every single one of those items. Here is an example of the services we are tracking. I was able to customize our HMIS and other programs can do that to. I would be happy to show them how to do it through the programmers for the state that do this work for us. Basically, I told them every single service I wanted to track that could happen at the Engagement Center and the shelter and they were able to make it really user friendly for the staff. It is a click away. When somebody signs up to get their laundry done at the Engagement Center, staff can go right onto the computer and click that they have had that service and then I can run reports to see how many of those services we provided. This is data that came from the HMIS system and it is specific to the Engagement Center. Something that it shows us here is that there are a number of clients that have come to us, and this is one of the questions we ask in the enrollment, where they were before they came to us. You can see there are lots of different answers there that people can give but the majority of the answers are people who were staying in places not meant for human habitation, which are things like cars, doorways, tents, encampments, and the street. The other most popular answer is people staying in emergency shelters including hotels that programs are paying for. What is significant about this is that some of those folks are staying in our shelter but some of them are staying in the other shelter but the daytime Engagement Center provides another opportunity for them to get connected to services. This is something that I know you are interested in. How do we understand if people have come to our programming and they are not from Manchester? This is a real tricky question to answer across all communities. It is tricky because people have a variety of different answers about what that means to them. If you ask them where they were before they came here, there are a lot of different things they will say back to us like do you mean where I last had an apartment or where I last paid taxes or what is it that you define so it is very, very hard to understand. We do ask them how long they have been homeless and we ask them how long they have been homeless in Manchester and that is a pretty good indication. What you can see here is most of our folks have been in Manchester for a pretty significant amount of time and in their day-to-day life that feels like where they are living right now. Twenty-five percent or less have been living in Manchester for less than three months before they came to us at one of our services. That can

represent a little bit more of the transient population that might have just arrived in Manchester or maybe just came back to Manchester after being away or maybe as hopping around to a few different communities which is also common. What I would like to tell you is that I looked into it and this is really the national average of other communities that have been doing a lot better job than ours in collecting data. That is pretty much the standard. Even in places like Los Angeles where they have a lot of services and the question mark is how many people are coming from outside communities, it is typically around 25% that are not from the local area and the majority of the folks tend to be and that is across the board. This is straight from HMIS reporting which is nice. I can just press the button on this when I want to but this shows us the span of mental health disorders amongst the population that we are serving. About half of our folks have mental health issues; more than half. This is the substance use disorder chart. What is significant here to note is that a number of people staying with us do not have substance use disorders. This is a chart that shows the level of physical disability. You can see that 47% have physical disabilities that are staying with us and coming to our services. This chart here talks about chronic health conditions so beyond physical disabilities but chronic health conditions that need a lot of care. There is also a very significant number there of how many people have those. I would like to share with you that I talked to our shelter staff recently because it was even said today at a breakfast that we had amongst providers and the mayor was there and we heard them say and it really resonated with me that shelters today across communities everywhere, some of them are looking more like nursing homes than we had intended them to look. That is particularly true in NH because we have no interim care in between when people are discharged from hospitals and they come to a shelter. So, people are discharged from hospitals right to a shelter, sometimes right after they have had a surgery or they have had their foot amputated or something drastic like that. We have no medical respite in between. So, the number of folks that we are serving in the shelter that have medical issues is astounding. Right now, a snapshot of who we have in the shelter...if you were to walk in there right now, what you would see is four wheelchairs and seven walkers. You wouldn't see this but I know from the staff that they deal with a lot of folks that have incontinence issues and it is something that has been a barrier for other shelters to take those folks or for housing to take those folks. Sometimes people are deemed not able to care for themselves and then they have nowhere to go but we keep

them at Beech Street because we don't know what else to do. Many of our folks have amputations. Many of our folks have open wounds that are getting dressed and cared for. It is very difficult to take care of that well in the shelter. A few of our folks are on insulin and we keep their insulin in our refrigerator and help manage that for them. We have someone there that is blind. We have several folks that recovered from surgery right at Beech Street. We help them lay down during the day and we assist them to the bathroom and you can imagine that this is not the training that my staff had. This chart shows income levels and is pretty self-explanatory. This is length of stay. I know that is an important one for us too. Why are people staying in the shelter so long? Actually, when we took a look at it I was surprised myself because I see a lot of the same faces when I go there and it is true that we do have a few core folks that have been with us since the beginning when we opened but if you look at this chart, we have had 244 people at the Beech Street shelter since we opened in February and 10 of them have been there over 50% of the time, 8 people have been there over 75% of the time and only 3 people have been there over the entire time. Another way we collect data is when you hear stories and I know that really illuminates things for you so I wanted to give you a couple of stories and they are of a couple of people that have been with us since the beginning. Client #1 is a 59-year-old female with severe disabling medical conditions, as well as mental health issues and a possible undiagnosed developmental disability. She has limited mobility due to her many medical issues. She requires a walker to be able to safely move around her environment. I am just going to pause and assure you that we have received all of the releases that we needed to to share this information and we are definitely providing a lot of information here but the guest has agreed for us to share this with you but not their name. I just wanted to let you know how we are doing this and this was handled through the careful clinical guidance of the Mental Health Center. She requires a walker to be able to safely move around her environment. She has two evictions in her history. One was seven or eight years ago and she has not disclosed why this happened. Her second eviction was from an apartment in Manchester in April 2022 and was due to her medical condition causing her to have difficulty with managing the apartment. She was not able to clean adequately and was evicted as a result. She spent several months in shelters and hotels in both Manchester and Nashua before ending up at 39 Beech Street in April. She also has a criminal trespassing charge in Nashua from April 2023 when she

refused to leave one of the emergency rooms because she had nowhere to go. The case is still pending. She receives SSDI insurance of \$1,300 per month. She has a history of being cat-fished by people claiming to be celebrities who have tricked her into sending them money every month. She has an active case with the Bureau of Elder & Adult Services due to financial exploitation and her difficulties taking care of herself adequately. As a result, she now has Choices for Independent Services in place (CFI), with a case manager from Gateway's community services. However, they cannot provide all of the services she is eligible for in a shelter setting. If she was in her own apartment, she would have assistance with medication management, apartment cleaning, laundry, personal hygiene and grocery shopping. The only services they can provide are a weekly nursing visit to help her manage her many prescribed medications and Meals on Wheels to deliver a specialized meal for her every day. In May 2023, she applied for a spot in the Step-Up, Step-Down Program which is a 90-day transitional housing program for people with mental health disorders run by On the Road to Wellness. She was placed on the wait list and told that a potential move-in date would be in late November. She has worked with the Mental Health Center of Greater Manchester's homeless outreach team since early May 2023 with the primary goal of finding housing. In June 2023, she was approved for a housing choice voucher, formerly Section 8, through the NH Housing & Finance Authority. Due to her medical issues and difficulties with mobility, she requires a first-floor apartment or a building with an elevator. Since she received the voucher, she and the homeless outreach team have applied to dozens of apartments that are under the voucher's cap of \$1,450 a month. Both the outreach team and the client have also responded to countless apartments advertised on Craigslist, Zillow, Apartments.com and other sites, as well as calling all one-bedroom units on the weekly list of apartments that Manchester Housing shares. Apartments listed have already been rented when called or report that they will not take a voucher or they are not on the first floor or in a building with an elevator. Three property management companies have said that they will not rent to her under any circumstances due to her eviction history. She has applied for many elderly and disabled housing units throughout the state and is on several wait lists that are 2-5 years long. She has been entered in the statewide coordinated entry system and has a high vulnerability score which has moved her up to near the top of the list. However, units are not opening quickly enough in programs that use the coordinated entry

process. That is something we will talk more about too. She remains on the wait list. With two evictions in her past and an arrest within the past year, along with her mobility issues, she has many barriers that make it difficult to find housing. I am going to do just one more. Seventy-four-year-old female who has resided at 39 Beech Street since it opened. Prior to that, she had stays at the Cashin Center warming station and at the FIT adult shelter, as well as on the streets. She has mobility issues and requires a walker to safely ambulate. She receives \$1,200/month from Social Security. She has several medical conditions including cataracts that make it difficult for her. Healthcare for the Homeless has referred her for a neuropsych evaluation to assess her for dementia. However, these are booked out for at least nine months. She also has a potentially cancerous mass in her abdomen and has refused to get an MRI for further evaluation. In February 2023, she was assisted in applying for elderly and disabled housing with supportive services through MHRA. She was placed on the wait list with up to a one year wait. She had no vital documents and needed assistance in getting her photo i.d., social security card, naturalization paperwork and her birth certificate from the Province of Quebec. Some of these documents took several months to get. During this time, it was discovered that her daughter and son-in-law, who are also experiencing homelessness, were holding on to her Direct Express card, which is a debit card for social security funds. It appeared they had been using her funds for their own needs. However, she is reluctant to accuse her daughter of stealing. Reports were filed by several agencies. She agreed to cancel the Direct Express and have the checks deposited. Her daughter was able to get access to that. Because of that, she is not able to move forward with getting an apartment and she isn't able to access her funds to get over the threshold of the payment she has to make for first and last. She also can't get any traction on the legal action with her daughter and where her funds have been moved to. This is a major issue and they continue to fight this legally and this is preventing her from getting into housing. These are all the partners that are currently signed up with us. This is a different list than what I provided you before in my prospects of folks that were going to be working with us. These are actually the ones that have come through and signed up with us and are coming actively to the Engagement Center in the last month and a half that we have been open. I wanted to give you a good sense of that to let you know how many people we have on site. These are the services that have been provided. At the Beech Street shelter, we have been

able to count 261 of these types of services even though we weren't an Engagement Center yet. This is just when we were operating as a shelter. Since we have opened the Engagement Center, we have provided 137 of these types of services. Again, my staff are the operations. They get people checked in and do this data collection and clean the bathrooms and monitor the smoke breaks and coordinated all of that. There are only a couple of people on at a time. They have to watch the inside and outside of the building. Everyone else that comes is a case manager. That is the model and that is also a budgetary issue that we couldn't hire case managers in addition to the staff to run the shelter. This is a quote from Healthcare for the Homeless. They are our second largest involved partner. Our first largest involved partner is the Manchester Mental Health. "The Engagement Center is a crucial hub to continue with all of the above and make healthcare more accessible. There are many barriers on the street – transportation issues, sweeps, trust issues, etc. Clients are feeling seen and heard by many resources at one location. HCH has closer contact with community partners. A lot of collaboration is happening." That is from Healthcare for the Homeless. They conducted more than 480 medical visits on-site at Beech Street since February when we opened. They have been on-site with us 120 hours. This is the National Alliance to End Homelessness Event. There were nearly 60 people that came out. It was an invite only event. Thank you to those on the Board that were able to come that day. We really appreciated having you there. It was a huge success by way of people coming to me after and telling me how much they learned and how much they appreciated the findings. This is a presentation about data, not about all of the recommendations that they gave us that day because we would be here all night and we are going to have to break it down in time with each other. The governance board and myself, I am on the Leadership Board as well for the CoC and we are working on it actively and I will have many more updates for you about it. As far as the data goes, this is another huge influx of data that we have been able to capture because of this analysis that we got from national consultants. One of the things we learned is that these are the different types of interventions that communities had introduced to end homelessness and these are the tried-and-true aspects. There is a little definition of each one of them there if you are not familiar but I wanted to bring your attention to the middle column, Emergency & Transitional Housing. The problem that we learned, and I wholeheartedly believe this, is we have way too much emergency housing. We have way too much and by that I

don't mean...there are many people still knocking on our doors both at FIT and the Beech Street Shelter. We have waitlisted all of those places and they are full. I just mean as a continuum we have spent our resources and our efforts providing more shelter than these other programs that are on either side of the shelter column. One of the things that the consultancy has helped us understand is that we have to right size our programming. We have to appreciate that we can't put all of our efforts into sheltering without appreciating that things like prevention and diversion which is having someone find a solution before they even enter shelter, and also rapid rehousing which is putting them immediately in housing. It is almost unthinkable and counterintuitive to think that that could be a solution but it is. We have to be brave as a community and embrace these other programs and figure out how to right-size it for our community so that we have more success than we have had. This is another piece that we learned from the consultancy. The shelters that we are running...you can see on the left is something that you can imagine a lot of shelters run like that and without the service providers at my shelter my shelter runs like that too. What we need to also do is be brave and take a look at how we can change the way that we are doing the work. Even I need to change the way that I am doing the work. Emergency shelter is not the solution. We have to transform what we are doing on-site there and add these other elements in so that we can truly be housing focused. This is my last slide and I will leave it here. It is just an example of what it is like when you come into an old system and you need to make changes and you go through the process of that. I am sure we have all been through things like this in our life where there is a period of confusion and chaos and anxiety and loss and then you kind of get to a point where you understand more of the data and then you have to power through and work together as a team. I truly believe that we are at that moment now and the service providers in the community are fired up and ready to do this.

Alderman Long stated thank you Adrienne for the presentation. So, the shelter itself, from February until present, there were 242 people who utilized the cots?

Ms. Beloin replied yes. Night after night we had 40 beds. Sometimes we went up to 46 depending on what was going on and if someone begged us to take someone who was medically compromised but over time it was that many folks; 242.

Alderman Long stated I am looking at the numbers housed at Brook Street which was 45 women with 12 housed and at the shelter it was 242 with 15 housed. Is there...

Ms. Beloin interjected a difference of why that is. Yes. Brook Street was more successful with housing people. It was a smaller site and in addition to having the operational support to manage that site for 12 beds of women, they also had case managers there that were already trained from the YWCA. They had a focus on domestic violence interventions and a lot of resources there so they were just hitting the ground running and doing the kind of work that other places that we partner with like Manchester Mental Health, they do those comprehensive set-up services that remove barriers to housing, make connections with landlords, move people into housing and that kind of thing. They were more successful. Our Beech Street shelter didn't have case managers on-site. We have operational staff. You can't do both. Even if I wanted my operational staff to be case managers, you can't clean the bathroom and fill out an application at the same time. It is just not practical. So, this model is a way to bring in the community which has a lot of other benefits.

Alderman Long asked is your staff trained in using Narcan.

Ms. Beloin answered absolutely. That is the number one thing and the Fire Department insured that.

Alderman E. Sapienza stated thank you Adrienne for the presentation. Have any of the people you deal with gone on to find gainful employment?

Ms. Beloin replied yes. I don't have a stat on that right now but with this robust collection of data, that is one of the areas that we ask about. What is your income? Can we improve your income? Have you had employment before? What is your employment history? Then we work on those things. I am also looking for a great employment service to come. We do have one listed that is coming but we want to have more. Connecting people to employment is huge.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked so currently you don't have any data on that.

Ms. Beloin responded no. One piece of data that I do have that is preemptive but important is a lot of our folks are disabled and a lot of them are not eligible for employment so that for many of them is not going to be the pathway out of the shelter.

Mayor Craig stated thank you for the presentation.

CONSENT AGENDA

Accept BMA Minutes

3. Minutes from the 9/5 BMA & Finance Committee meetings, the 10/3 BMA & Finance Committee meetings, and the two 10/16 Special BMA meetings.

Approve Under Supervision of the Department of Highways

4. Pole Petitions:
 - 11-1746 Danforth Circle (1)
 - 11-1747 Bodwell Road (1)
 - 11-1748 W. North Street (1)
 - 11-1749 Leda Avenue (1)
 - 11-1753 Porter Street (1)
 - 11-1754 Harvard Street (1)
 - 11-1756 River Road (1)
 - 12-0921 Mason Street (1)
 - 12-0929 Main Street (1)
 - 12-0933 Kelly Street (1)

REFERRALS TO COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE ON BILLS ON SECOND READING AND PUBLIC HEARING

5. Communication from Jeff Belanger, Planning & Community Development Director, regarding an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to clarify certain standards under which disabled individuals may request and obtain variance relief where necessary to accommodate a recognized disability, consistent with state and federal law.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE ON ACCOUNTS, ENROLLMENT AND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

6. Advising that the update on the Revolving Loan Fund has been accepted.
(Unanimous vote)
7. Advising that the Finance Department reports:
 - Accounts receivable over 90 days
 - Aging report
 - Outstanding receivableshave been accepted.
(Unanimous vote)
8. Advising that the Financial Report for the first three months of FY24 has been accepted.
(Unanimous vote)

COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATION/INFORMATION SYSTEMS

9. Recommending approval of the recommendation from the Board of Assessors that no changes be made to the city's current Veterans Tax Credit.
(Unanimous vote)

COMMITTEE ON LANDS AND BUILDINGS

10. Recommending that property located at 1080 Montgomery Street be deemed surplus to City needs and disposed of through a real estate broker.
(Unanimous vote)
11. Recommending that the seven tax-deeded properties attached be deemed surplus and disposed of through public auction.
(Unanimous vote)
12. Recommending that property located on Laydon Street (Tax Map 252, Lot 30) be deemed surplus.

The Committee further recommends that it is in the best interest of the city to convey said property to Bridgette P. Connolly via a Release Deed to be executed by the Mayor.
(Unanimous vote)

Matthew Normand, City Clerk, stated I want to remind the Board that the Lands & Buildings Committee report is part of this consent agenda that is in front of you this

evening and that is the amendment to the Master Development Agreement between the City and the Lansing Melbourne Group.

*HAVING READ THE CONSENT AGENDA, ON MOTION OF **ALDERMAN CAVANAUGH**, DULY SECONDED BY **ALDERMAN HEATH**, THE CONSENT AGENDA WAS APPROVED.*

REGULAR BUSINESS

- 13.** Communication from Kathy Daneman advising the Board of her resignation as a member of the Arts Commission effective December 31, 2023.

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Cavanaugh**, it was voted to accept with regret.*

- 14.** Communication from Stefan Philbrook advising the Board of his resignation as an alternate member of the Planning Board effective immediately.

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Cavanaugh**, it was voted to accept with regret.*

- 15.** Nominations:

Airport Authority

Jeffrey Taylor as a regular member, term to expire March 1, 2024

Arts Commission

Anne Lederhos from an alternate to a regular member to succeed

Jozimar Matimano, term to expire December 1, 2026

Laura Shea as a regular member to succeed Kathy Daneman, term to expire December 1, 2024

Angelo Mullen as an alternate member to succeed Anne Lederhos, term to expire December 1, 2024

Board of Health

Patricia Anglin as regular member to succeed Ellen Smith Tourigny term to expire July 1, 2026.

Chris Moriarty as regular member to succeed Robert Ross term to expire July 1, 2024.

MHRA Board of Commissioners

David Quinn as a regular member to succeed himself, term to expire December 31, 2028

Board of Trustees of the Trust Fund

Michael Walsh as a regular member to succeed himself, term to expire
January 1, 2027

Central Business Service District Board

Michael Craig as a regular member to succeed Peter Macone, term to expire
May 1, 2024

Judi Window as a regular member, term to expire May 1, 2025

Conduct Board

Roland Martin from an alternate to a regular member to succeed
Candace Veziris, term to expire October 1, 2026

Office of Youth Services Advisory Board

Hamisi Juma as a regular member to succeed Michael Worsley, term to expire
January 1, 2027

Hashira Rodriguez as a regular member to succeed Jim Colby, term to expire
January 1, 2026

Cady Hickman as a regular member to succeed herself, term to expire
January 1, 2027

Glory Mukendi as a regular member to succeed herself, term to expire
January 1, 2027

Junior Munzimi as a regular member to succeed himself, term to expire
January 1, 2027

Parks & Recreation Commission

Jen Drociak as a regular member to succeed Tammy Harrison, term to expire
July 1, 2024

Planning Board

Elyza Agosta as an alternate member to succeed Stefan Philbrook, term to
expire May 1, 2024

Senior Services Commission

Patricia Anglin as a regular member, term to expire January 1, 2025

Mary Lynn Edwards as a regular member to succeed herself, term to expire
January 1, 2027

Sean Parr as a regular member to succeed himself, term to expire
January 1, 2027

Water Commission

Liz Kotowski as a regular member, term to expire January 1, 2025

Craig Brown as a regular member to succeed himself, term to expire
January 1, 2027

Gary Hamer as a regular member to succeed himself, term to expire
January 1, 2027

Highway Commission

Mark McKenzie as a regular member to succeed himself, term to expire
January 15, 2027

Kathy Sullivan as a regular member to succeed herself, term to expire
January 15, 2027

Heritage Commission

Heidi Hamer as a regular member to succeed Donald Manning, term to expire
July 1, 2026

John Clayton as a regular member to succeed Aurore Eaton, term to expire July 1, 2026

Zoning Board

June Trisciani as an alternate member to succeed Talia Burghard, term to expire March 1, 2026

(Note: Pursuant to Rule 23 of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, these nominations will layover to the next meeting of the Board.)

16. Confirmations:

Board of Recount

Brian McCoy to replace William Houghton, term to expire November 30, 2025

Don Goduti to succeed himself, term to expire November 30, 2025

*On motion of **Alderman Trisciani**, duly seconded by **Alderman Cavanaugh**, it was voted to confirm the nominations as presented.*

17. Acceptance of public way dedication for Raspberry Lane.

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Stewart**, it was voted to approve.*

18. Communication from Anna Thomas, Public Health Director, requesting authorization to execute a Space Usage Agreement that includes mutual indemnification language with Catholic Medical Center for the use of the William B. Cashin Senior Activity Center.

*On motion of **Alderman Barry**, duly seconded by **Alderman Heath**, it was voted to approve.*

19. Communication from the Board of School Committee requesting approval of the one-year extension to the Certified Instructors Collective Bargaining Agreement.

*On motion of **Alderman T. Sapienza**, duly seconded by **Alderman Cavanaugh**, it was voted to ratify and layover.*

20. Communication from Jennifer Gillis, Superintendent of Schools, requesting approval of a Bond Resolution in the amount of \$290 million for Priority One of their Long-Term Facilities Plan.

Jennifer Gillis, Superintendent, stated thank you for having us here this evening. This is an important moment for all of us. A moment based in months of diligent work. We view this as an exciting opportunity to connect the dots between 21st century

educational programming versus school facilities and the increased and expanding needs of our business community. This bond request for a new elementary school at Beech Street, renovations and upgrades at all four of our middle schools and temporary modular classrooms at six locations will not impact our tax base. What it will do is positively impact the lives and educational opportunities of our students. There is some urgency here which I will describe in a moment but my hope is that you will also see this as an opportunity to dramatically improve our facilities and in turn improve the educational experiences for our students. For years, an investment like this has been set aside and delayed. During that time, our buildings keep aging and complicating our ability to maintain school buildings to the level our students and staff deserve. I would like to quickly cover what the district and the school board believes are the significant benefits to our students' learning and outcomes from this plan. Educational programming. This plan enables us to match programs like Esteem or Career Pathways Lab. Twenty-first century learning opportunities will be available to our students with the physical space to support their learning. Class sizes. While we have made significant progress in this area, we are limited to continued reductions due to our physical spaces. This plan prioritizes decreasing class sizes to align with our targeted policy guidance. Physical improvements. Given our schools were constructed generations ago, this plan makes essential improvements to areas such as air quality, classroom design, indoor and outdoor spaces, furniture, temperature, tech integrations and lighting. Efficiencies. This is an investment that lowers operational costs in the areas of energy and environmental impact in a responsible footprint for Manchester. Community engagement and connectivity. This plan is more than just improving the learning environment during the school day. This is a community investment. We envision using our facilities more frequently for community events. Our city's economy needs this investment for our future growth. There is an opportunity all around us to align with the changing landscape of our business community. ARMI is a perfect and well-documented example of opportunities with potential to change the face of business in Manchester with a burgeoning science and medical hub which needs connections to high quality public education, which is being referred to as Regen Valley. To be a contributor requires updated facilities and partnerships which are now possible. We have public support. Our community forums have shown support for a plan which lowers class sizes at our elementary schools, aligns our 5-8 in middle schools and

provides 2-3 high schools. The Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce and business leaders support this investment as an essential tool for investing in graduates and public education. You might ask why now? There is urgency to this plan because Manchester has lagged behind with regard to progressive facilities maintenance and upgrades and that dates back decades. The average age of our buildings is 75 while a typical facility lifespan is 50 years. Speaking of historic decisions, only in the last couple of years have we as a city and school district dedicated money to maintain and repair our facilities. At this time, we dedicate \$3 million per year to cover more than 20 buildings but that is not enough to keep up with our growing expenses. In addition, construction costs do not go down. This project will never decrease in cost. Based on the estimated annual average construction cost increase of 4% per year, delays to taking action will cost us an additional \$1 million per month. Again, Priority One bonded at \$18 million per year means no tax impact to Manchester. This is what we are asking of you this evening. Permission to bond these funds and move the process forward. This is not about detailed logistics or locations or designs. It is about approving the bond so we can put this long-range facilities priority plan into action. With that, I will ask that we move to the slides.

City Clerk Normand stated the projector doesn't seem to be working right now.

Mayor Craig stated we have the presentation in our packet.

Lorraine Finnegan, Architect and Principal at SMMA, stated we are the design team that has been hired to do the facility long-term master plan. We are about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through that plan. The plan itself, looking at all of the projects, will end roughly at the end of March. We have the Priority One projects and those are the projects being brought before you tonight. The elementary school recommendation is for a new school at Beech Street and when we refer to it at Beech Street in the packet you will see that it is actually at the Sheridan-Emmett Park next to the Beech Street location. There are reasons for that and I will get into those. This new Beech Street school will accommodate all of the Beech and Wilson students. With the closure of Wilson School at the end of this school year, those schools will be housed in a split population in modular classrooms between Beech and McDonough until this new school is built. All

of the Beech and Wilson schools will be at the Sheridan-Emmett Park location. The new school, approximately 107,000 square feet, three stories tall with grades K-4 will accommodate approximately 734 students. The goal to move 5th grade up to the middle schools will occur at the end of the next school year. Investing in center city was critically important to this master plan understanding that the closure of Wilson and the recent closure of Hallsville does impact this center city location. We looked at a walkable community school. We looked at next generation learning environments that would be within the school replacing many of the windowless spaces that currently exist within your schools in the interior classrooms. There is also a potential to recreate green space at the existing Beech Street site and make connectivity through the center city. We had some aspirational images included in our PowerPoint. They are there to show you that education has changed and educational delivery has changed. A lot of the spaces you have in your school are lacking for the educational resources of today. Today we look at project-based learning, student inquiry, student agency, giving these students an opportunity to experience other aspects of learning and other facilities within the building, neighborhood spaces, small group rooms and breakout spaces, dedicated differentiated learning spaces, and outdoor learning spaces. We all learned through Covid that the outdoor classrooms are as essential as the indoor spaces and we need to make sure that there are opportunities for these students to get outside when applicable and learn at their rate and their level but in spaces that are safe and secure. We had an image of a modular classroom included in the PowerPoint and we have a short video if the projector ever decides to work. There is an aversion to modular classrooms and that is because when temporary classrooms are put in place, they are often left there for many years to come. The plan is for temporary classrooms. Approving this bond would move forward the project to do additions and renovations to the four middle schools and a new elementary school. Temporary modular classrooms are essential to allowing us to house the population in much needed space and give swing space some relief while those projects are underway. They are temporary classrooms and they are a lot better than the condition of some of the temporary classrooms you have for buildings that are over 20 years old and were never intended to be there for that long.

Jennifer Soucy, Architect, SMMA, stated with our middle school recommendations, our approach is to stagger the construction. So, we would start with McLaughlin and Hillside and then nine months later begin the design and construction for Southside and Parkside. With each of these projects we are proposing about 20,000 to 40,000 square feet of additions. They vary at each location based on the existing square footage but we are targeting to make sure we are meeting the class size policies of the district at each of those locations. They are not just additions. We are proposing comprehensive renovations to the existing buildings, which is really an exciting opportunity to transform each of these schools into the next generation learning environments and meet the educational goals that we have sort of set forth in all of the visioning that we have done. We did include some diagrammatic plans of each of those locations. I won't go into detail here. They are all conceptual but we have proposed potential modular temporary classroom locations at each of these locations as well. Again, it is all conceptual and we will be going to meet with the principals to finalize locations and all of that. In general, we will have the additions and inside the space we will also be transforming Hillside, Southside and Parkside in particular with existing double loaded corridors. We will really be getting in there to try to transform that space and incorporate some of these team common areas so we can support the team-teaching model that exists right now which is math, science, social studies and English all grouped around a team common area, which is a group collaboration space. So, we really want to try to infuse that in all of the schools.

Phil Poinelli, Educational Planner and Principal, SMMA, stated in a few minutes we will talk about some conceptual sketches of the where for the new comprehensive high school at the Gill Stadium site. What is this all about? This is a new school designed around next generation teaching and learning and will really provide revolutionary opportunities within secondary education for Manchester. Not only as we do that school will it be important for that school but it will also set precedence for the other two high schools as we move forward and schools that really manifest joy in learning. We want these schools to be buildings and facilities that students want to come to and to allow students to learn in ways that suit them. We also want to create authentic and real-world learning opportunities. The next page shows three components of the high schools – two comprehensive high schools and one magnet high school and is the

realization of the secondary component of the 3, 4, 12 model that the Board of School Committee has adopted as a goal. Three high schools, four middle schools and twelve elementary schools. Memorial and MST are seen as a school. The new 2,000 student comprehensive high school as a second and the school for the arts as a magnet school. In fact, what is going to happen is that all three of these schools, because of the types of facilities that will be generated, will all become magnets. They will provide opportunities for students to say this is what my passion is and I want to pursue an education at the appropriate school. All schools are going to have a full range of academics and the concept around learning at a new school can be brought to each of the schools and eventually to the future Phase Two elementary schools as well. What I have just described is beginning to address equity across the district and will offer students access at all levels to meet students' needs and their abilities. We are describing a proposed alternative middle high school for students with profound disabilities and social/emotional challenges. Currently, many of these students are bussed to other communities and even to other states for their education. They spend long periods of time on the bus away from their siblings and away from home and the intent is to shorten their commute, bring them home to Manchester and in the process, there is a considerable cost to educating these students out-of-state and in other communities and this will be able to bring that cost back within the city itself. The next slide shows the educational program for our high school. Those striped lines on the right side of the page are the program components that make up a high school and it is showing different amounts of space. What is important here is to understand that the program will be developed conforming to Manchester policies and state of NH guidelines. Again, there are just a few images, aspirational images, that show spaces and architecture that currently doesn't exist in your schools. What you are seeing is light and airy spaces and the fact that all parts of the schools are being used for education. There is flexibility built into these buildings so that the pentalogies of tomorrow and into the future can easily be accommodated because of that flexibility. What we are doing is creating exciting and joyful spaces for students.

Ms. Finnegan stated within the packet you will find the page with the schedule, funding and cost model. As you progress a master plan, these are projects you don't expect to complete Day 1. You look at it over a period of time and we talked about a 20-25-year

timeline. We looked at what projects need to be in Priority One. All schools will be addressed so if they are not in Priority One that does not mean there will not be recommendations for upgrades. You plan the master plan and the timeline for when projects can occur and what the community can afford and what can be done at every location to provide upgrades over the course of time. The master plan gets revisited as you engage in a project and as you move forward with a project. You make sure you revisit it and that the concept is still the same. We laid out a timeline and a schedule for the master plan with Priority One for years 1-5 and the remainder of the high schools and the elementary schools years 5-20. We identified a potential schedule for construction. We are meeting and working with the capital improvement plan right now because obviously as we are proposing recommendations, we do not want the district to be funding capital improvements that may conflict or not be necessary based on what is being recommended. We did want to give a quick clarification to make sure people understood total project cost because we are only speaking in total project cost. That is the bricks and mortar plus all the ancillaries that are needed including fees for architects and contractors as well as furniture, technology, construction testing, etc. Jumping to the funding opportunities, we met with Bond Counsel on a number of occasions and met with Karen and have gone through different schedules for how these procedures could be bonded.

Karen DeFrancis, MSD Finance Officer, stated the first schedule in your packet shows how Phase One would fit into our current debt service schedule. Looking at the \$306 million project, we would use this year's and next year's \$20 million from the additional adequacy. If you recall, a couple of months ago we came before the Board with an additional \$35 million in adequate education aid. The Board did approve that additional appropriation. We plan to take \$20 million of that and use it towards this project. Again, that would be in both this year's funding and in next year's funding. We would need about \$3.4 million of that \$40 million to pay for interest in bond anticipation notes that will need to be issued to fund the project until the bond is issued. The borrowing on the \$306 million would be reduced by the \$40 million that we expect to use from the adequacy aid. The schedule shows how that \$269.4 million bond would be paid back over 25 years and how it integrates with our current debt service schedule. There will be a few adjustments for some currency IP requests and annually we typically bond

about \$4 million in CIP requests so these bond schedules will be adjusted for that. Phase One of the project increases our debt service by \$17 million annually, which as I mentioned we would pay for with the additional adequate education funds so there would not be an increase in the tax rate due to this project. The second schedule shows how the high school portion in Phase Two, which again we are not asking for approval on tonight, would blend into our debt service. Going from our current debt service schedule at \$11.5 million on an annual basis, the high end if you look in the far right-hand corner, would be in FY28 when that debt service level would be \$46.4 million. That is an increase of \$35 million. Again, we are not asking for that tonight. We are just looking for Phase One, which is the \$306 million project.

Alderman E. Sapienza stated thank you for the presentation. Could you show us the whole plan?

Superintendent Gillis asked the whole master plan.

Alderman E. Sapienza answered yes; everything.

Superintendent Gillis stated the master plan won't be completed until March. Plans of that nature take at least 12 months to construct and we have been fast tracking to get Priority One done knowing that we needed Wilson addressed first.

Alderman E. Sapienza stated to me it is really weird that you are coming to us asking for \$290 million but you are not showing the whole plan. I don't understand that. I hear that the business community is in favor of this. I am quite certain that in the real business world business isn't conducted this way. How often in the business world does somebody go to someone for a loan and say lend me \$290 million just for Phase One and I will get back to you for Phase Two and Three? It doesn't work that way in the business world. I am quite sure of it. I don't understand how you can come to us with a partial plan, just Phase One. What about Phase Two and Three and Four? Is it a secret?

Ms. Finnegan stated it is a two-phase master plan. We knew there were priority projects. We have been through all 21 of the buildings that the district currently has. It is obvious that the Wilson School is the most dire school.

Alderman E. Sapienza stated you mentioned Wilson School. That school is going to be closed regardless, right?

Superintendent Gillis replied correct. Those students will be moving into modular.

Alderman E. Sapienza stated I don't see why we need to keep mentioning Wilson School because it is closing.

Ms. Finnegan stated it is closing but those students need to be rehoused. Those students need to go somewhere and the intention is not to have those students in temporary modular long-term.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked if this doesn't go through, those kids at Wilson are going to have a place to go right like Beech.

Superintendent Gillis answered no. They will have to move to temporary modular classrooms while we look to construct the new elementary school.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked what is the cost for Phase Two.

Ms. Finnegan responded we do not have a cost for Phase Two yet. That is currently being estimated.

Mayor Craig asked and the date that it would start.

Ms. Finnegan answered we are looking at years 5-20. This is years 1-5 and then we have 5-20.

Alderman E. Sapienza stated when I read that the BOSC has approved \$290 million, I say to myself of course they did. The BOSC is highly subjective. Of course they approved the spending but we as aldermen need to be objective. As an alderman, I represent every person in my ward from the newest newborn to the oldest senior citizen and we have to be a little more discerning here. As the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, we can't go ahead and approve \$290 million and then have you say hey we will get back to you for the rest. It just doesn't make any sense to me. How much money has been spent on Beech Street renovations in the last three years or so?

Superintendent Gillis replied in the last three years we have had just under \$1.8 million.

Alderman E. Sapienza stated my last point is I want to be clear about Wilson School. Are you saying that if this project doesn't go through, we are going to have to keep Wilson open?

Superintendent Gillis answered no. We still need to close Wilson. Wilson is in a state that it needs to be closed.

Alderman T. Sapienza stated I want to be clear that this has absolutely nothing to do with the high school. This request tonight has nothing to do with the high schools.

Superintendent Gillis responded correct.

Alderman T. Sapienza stated I also want to be clear that this bond resolution doesn't include removing JFK or Gill Stadium.

Superintendent Gillis replied not at this time; no.

Alderman T. Sapienza asked not with this bond.

Superintendent Gillis responded correct.

Alderman T. Sapienza stated I will never vote for that. I can tell you that right now. I just want that on the record. Thank you.

Alderman Heath stated Dr. Gillis, congratulations. I think this is a wonderful plan. I have traveled around this state and I have seen beautiful schools. I come back...my five grandchildren have gone to Central and have done really well and all graduated but Manchester kids deserve schools that are in great shape; a place that we are proud of. We have all kinds of great things going on in our city. We want a place that people want to move to and want to go. If you look at Dover for example, Dover has a beautiful new high school. There are new elementary schools being built in Nashua. We need our children to have good experiences. I think you put together a fabulous plan and you have talked about the way the adequacy funds can be used, which I think is absolutely commendable. I think this is a great step for our kids. We are working hard in Manchester and we want our city to stand out. We want it to be a shining star. We don't want to hear people say oh you are from Manchester. I taught at Beech Street School. I was there in 1974 when we opened those doors. That school has gone through some really hard times and the children that go there are some of our poorest children. They need a good facility. We need to give them a chance and we need to give them the things that can make them succeed. Manchester kids deserve this and I just want to say thank you for all your work and what you are doing and I will continue to work as hard as I can to get more money in place, hopefully more money for building aid so that you will indeed get that 40% that was promised to you. Thank you very much and please keep on working. I hope ultimately our Board will see the need, Alderman E. Sapienza, for good schools.

Alderman E. Sapienza stated let's see the whole plan. You called me out. I am just asking for the whole plan. We are not talking about the nuclear codes here. We have been talking about this for 10 years. Are you going to close Central or are you going to close West? What are you going to do?

Alderman Levasseur stated you said something, Ms. DeFrancis, and you used your words carefully I think on this particular statement. You said no increase in taxes due to

this project. This project meaning the \$290 million. If the second phase is put in, would that change the word "this."

Ms. DeFrancis responded I don't think I could answer that at this point because a lot of things could happen between now and Phase Two. For instance, the adequate education grant could change. I am not sure if you are aware of the ConVal lawsuit but there was just a ruling that came down on that so we could see a change in adequacy. We could also see a change in the building aid. We could also see changes in our operating budgets where there are some efficiencies possibly due to closing Wilson or if we close another school. So, there are many things that can happen between now and Phase Two. For Phase One which we are asking for, there is no increase to the tax base.

Alderman Levasseur asked without all of the possibilities, the second phase would be a tax issue for property taxes right.

Ms. DeFrancis replied no I can't say that because again there are too many variables.

Alderman Levasseur asked is your thought process that if it was voted on as one package tonight it wouldn't affect the tax rate. If it was all put out today?

Ms. DeFrancis answered I couldn't say that.

Alderman Levasseur stated well it is important that we know that. I don't understand the comment that you did not present the second phase. I watched the meeting and the second phase was presented. It is \$376 or \$378 million which is to build a new high school and it does take out the skating rink. I don't understand the comment that you don't have the second phase ready when you actually presented it to your board. I think the woman sitting in the middle was the one who gave that presentation.

Mayor Craig stated it was a proposal and it is going to be going out...

Alderman Levasseur interjected what is the difference between a proposal and a presentation.

Ms. Finnegan stated what we presented to the BOSC was the high school site selection, which is part of Priority One. Phase Two includes three high schools and eleven elementary schools. We have not presented Phase Two.

Alderman Levasseur responded you presented a new high school.

Ms. Finnegan stated we presented conceptual costs for a new high school at a site.

Alderman Levasseur asked and that cost was \$1.1 billion. You must have come up with \$1.1 billion...that was with all the interest added in.

Ms. Finnegan stated no. You are reading the bonding schedule. We did not present...

Alderman Levasseur interjected right the bonding schedule. It is kind of important to know that. First of all, this Board is voting on something that is not even in writing. They changed the whole plan to Beech Street School being a new school. What you gave us in writing today is Wilson Elementary School will close in the fall of 2024 and Wilson students and staff will be split between Beech and McDonough and a new elementary school will be built at the McDonough site to begin in the fall of 2024. What we have in our packet is exactly what we thought we were voting on today. My understanding is that one of your school board members, Mr. Tassey, filed a motion to reconsider because the plan changed; not a little bit but substantially from what was actually voted on on August 28. My understanding is, and I agree with Mr. Tassey on this, that if you are going to change that plan that dramatically and not build the new elementary school at McDonough that the motion for reconsideration was proper and this should go to another public hearing. This is a major change and the people who are expecting a new school at McDonough and all of these other things that were provided and presented and voted on on August 28 should go back to a public hearing. I doubt that will happen but that is what the process calls for.

Superintendent Gillis stated on August 28 you are correct that the proposal at that time was to look at the new building being at the McDonough elementary school property. The Board at that time asked us to go back and look more towards the center of the city for the new elementary school. We did that and brought that back on November 13 with the change in location from McDonough to Beech. Those school communities have been notified and we have been in contact with them and clear with the BOSC that their request for us to look at a different elementary school location was satisfied when we brought Beech forward on November 13.

Alderman Levasseur asked when you say the community was informed, do you mean the schools themselves or the people who live in that community.

Superintendent Gillis answered the schools themselves and we have been giving all of the information out on our web page and in our communications through family portals and offering ongoing communications with our staff.

Alderman Levasseur asked prior to the public learning about the elementary addition at Beech, other people had already known about it and heard about it. That wasn't the first time it was presented?

Superintendent Gillis replied no. We had been talking about it internally and working with those school communities.

Alderman Levasseur stated well I think you should go back to the people who live on the east side of the river and go through another public hearing but I am just one person so you don't have to worry about that. I don't think that is going to go anywhere. What do we care about process? I just want you to think about this very carefully. Are you building new schools because you think that is actually going to affect grades or help lift our status in the state of NH? I think we are currently 153rd out of 157 statewide school systems.

Superintendent Gillis responded I think we need to be looking at both the building that we house all of the educational programming in as well as everything that is connected

to our students in those buildings. It is our time right now. We have to stop putting students into buildings that are not constructed right now to meet 21st century learning. If you take a look at McLaughlin Middle School, you have that team construction in place compared to the three other middle schools that have long rows running down hallways. We need to modify and improve and match what we are doing inside our schools to what our schools look like on the outside.

Alderman Levasseur stated well if new school buildings are the panacea for all the ills we face with education and our reading scores and our math scores, why didn't the \$110 million spent by Mayor Baines improve our schools or bring more people to our city. When we expended \$110 million, which still is not paid off, we lost Bedford and we lost all the surrounding towns so now we have three buildings that are half empty and I didn't see any scores go up at all. As a matter of fact, our reading, writing and math scores have gone down since we expended that \$110 million on new schools and renovations. I am hearing now that you are going to expand the middle schools when there was a study that came out today that said statewide, we are down almost 40% in the last 18 years on students leaving our public-school systems. What makes you think that all of the sudden we are just going to start getting more and more children? When you presented to us three or four years ago when you wanted to take the 5th graders and put them in with the 6th, 7th and 8th graders, you said that was going to reduce class sizes and help out with capacity issues in the buildings we currently have. You presented this massive plan and the Board followed through on that plan and then a couple of years later you are coming with another plan saying we need expansion of our elementary schools and we need to tear down schools. You guys gave away...well we still have Hallsville School which is standing there empty. It just doesn't seem to me like there is any cohesive, thoughtful plan that is going to solve the major problem we have in this city which are reading and math scores. New buildings don't make people want to read more and they don't make them want to do math better. If I give every kid in this city a brand-new pair of Air Jordans, it is not going to make them better basketball players. I don't understand why you are not coming to this Board and saying this is what we have to do to get our scores up and this is what we need to do to get out of the basement. Instead, you present us with shiny new buildings.

Superintendent Gillis stated I am going to roll way back. Historically, we did not have vertically aligned curriculum and we did not have updated resources or materials in the hands of our students. Over the last 2-3 years, we have placed a true focus on vertically aligning all of the curriculum so that a student who is going to elementary school anywhere in the city is having the same access to the materials in their school as they are across the river. That material then trickles up to the middle schools and they are teaching from the same system that then moves into the high school. We did not have vertically aligned curriculum in most of my career in this city. Now after 2-3 years, we have vertically aligned curriculum. In addition, we also have aligned all of our professional development with our staff to the curriculum and resources that we are placing in our schools. In our Teaching & Learning Committee, you are starting to see that the data is shifting in the right direction. Is it moving as fast as I would like? No. It is really difficult though to move a Titanic when you want to just snap your fingers and think everything is going to start to shift. I also want to remind us that in the middle we had a pandemic which disconnected students from in-person learning. So, we are working to close the learning gap but by doing the vertically aligned curriculum, focused professional development connected to the curriculum and data loops so that we are looking concretely at what our student outcomes are, we are starting to see that needle start to shift. We are seeing incremental gains in both our I-Ready, our SAS scores and our graduation data. I also want to talk a little bit about class sizes. You mentioned that enrollment is going down and you are correct. It has gone down. Our class sizes, however, those expectations have also been reduced. That has created a pinch in all of our schools as we try to get closer and closer to that policy language.

Alderman Levasseur stated one last point. I think one of the more perplexing for me that complicates this project for the amount of money you are going to spend is the belief that we are going to receive \$35 million/year for the next 25 years. I don't understand what that is based on. You are basically telling us...if that money dries up in two years and God knows these boards change here in Manchester and up in Concord dramatically sometimes, what happens when they snap their fingers and say we are not going to send \$35 million? What is our plan for the money then?

Superintendent Gillis asked are you talking about if they change the law and the adequacy funding formula.

Alderman Levasseur stated the law changed and it says they are going to have to send it to us until the law changes again...I understand that the lawsuit would help us out because they are going to increase it from 4-7 but I don't know how that relates to us getting that money on an annual basis.

Ms. DeFrancis stated the current law is why we are getting the \$35 million. That law was just changed and that is why we came before the aldermen and asked for that as an additional appropriation. That law, until legislation changes, which we hope it would not, will provide that money going forward. We anticipate that with the ConVal lawsuit, we would also see the formula change again in the future and get additional dollars.

Alderman Levasseur asked so this is not a temporary \$35 million and another additional \$35 million. This \$70 million isn't like a one-time here is some cash. This is expected to continue for the third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, tenth or whatever year?

Ms. DeFrancis responded yes.

Alderman Levasseur asked so you are planning on using the \$20 million for each of that \$35 million to pay off the bonds so in 20 years you should be able to pay it off minus interest and all of that other stuff.

Ms. DeFrancis answered the bond schedule that we were looking at is \$17 million and change but we are dedicating...

Alderman Levasseur interjected as long as you believe that money is coming, I get it but it is really important though...are you doing the first phase of this project anticipating that you are getting the second phase of this project and the projected cost has been included as one package. We are getting one part of the package today and there is another package that is going to come at some point. When you are putting this money together, is this money included for both packages that we are speaking of today?

Ms. DeFrancis replied the \$20 million that we are talking about in the current adequacy formula is for Phase One.

Alderman Levasseur asked so if the second phase doesn't pass, it is not going to hurt you financially on the first phase. It is not going to change your financial projections?

Ms. DeFrancis responded no. This is just Phase One that we are looking at and we are planning to fund it with the additional adequacy money which is the current formula.

Alderman Levasseur stated for the record, I voted against the Riverwalk in the year 2001. I was the darling of the Chamber of Commerce at the time because I fought like crazy for that civic center. We had a \$24 million bond presented to us for the Riverwalk and the mayor at the time was Mayor Baines and you were here for that back then. You probably don't remember my vote but when I voted against the Riverwalk, I said that the \$24 million should go to our buildings instead. I believed in renovations at the time and still do. I believe we could do a lot more with a lot less money and renovate our buildings and make them 22nd century or 21st century if you wanted to and do a lot of great things for \$300 million. That is where my mind is on where we should be going with the school district but I don't have that power or control as one sitting alderman. I thought it was a good investment. I didn't agree with Mayor Baines at the time for the \$110 million. I thought that \$50 million would have been great to spend on renovations. I didn't think we should expand the high schools. I saw Bedford leaving when everyone thought they could somehow get them to stay. I never saw all the other surrounding towns leaving the way they did. Now when we talk about expansion of our middle schools, I feel the same nervousness about spending this kind of money on expansions at the schools when we could actually create a school at Hallsville and do better renovations but again that is just my one-person vote. Thanks.

Alderman T. Sapienza moved to refer the \$290 million bond resolution for the purpose of closing Henry Wilson Elementary School, constructing a new elementary school near the existing Beech Street School, completing renovations and additions at all four middle schools, and providing temporary modular classrooms to facilitate the

*construction process with oversight provided by a joint committee of aldermen and school board members, not to be used for demolition of JFK Coliseum or Gill Stadium, to the Committee on Finance. **Alderman Long** duly seconded the motion.*

Alderman Long stated we just heard from the Chamber on their conversation with the bio fabrication industry happening in Manchester. I am of the opinion that companies do this all the time. They have 20-year plans and they do it in phases. They don't know what their next five years is going to look like financially. This does happen in business all the time. Also, with respect to the court case regarding the adequacy grant, if we were to get what the court says that we ought to be getting, that would be another \$52 million. My understanding is that SMMA has been working with the Board of School Committee for roughly seven or eight months so this has been happening for seven or eight months. I know I followed it and have been to some of the presentations. With respect to soft costs, the project overseer or the Clerk of the Works is included in those soft costs, correct?

Mr. Poinelli answered right.

Alderman Long asked what about an increase in teachers or other professionals. Do we know what that is for Phase One?

Superintendent Gillis replied with Wilson closing, we would redistribute those staff members to the two locations where we would be locating our students. Then we will continue to look at staffing ratios as we move forward so nobody is losing positions at this point in time. We would just need to redistribute them to cover the student/staff ratio that we have in place.

Alderman Long asked and currently you have that staff and you will continue to review that.

Superintendent Gillis answered correct.

Alderman Long asked with respect to policy, this is the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and I have no say or know what the school policy is. I sat there for 14 months and my God I am happy to be back here because that is a lot to capture sitting on that Board of School Committee. I give you guys kudos for this due diligence. I know it is very difficult. I don't believe for one minute that this is a panacea for academic achievement, however it is absolutely one of those legs that will get us to academic achievement. That is all I have to say. Thank you.

Alderman Levasseur asked can I get a point of clarification on the motion. The motion says that the money will not go to tearing down JFK or Gill? Was that anticipated in this project?

Mayor Craig replied no.

Alderman T. Sapienza stated I see things in the presentation that I don't like. I just want to be sure.

Alderman Levasseur stated well that kind of brings up the next issue. Maybe we should include in this motion an amendment that we will vote against the next phase now.

Mayor Craig stated there is a motion on the table. Alderman T. Sapienza requested a roll call vote. Aldermen T. Sapienza, Trisciani, Heath, Burkush, Barry, Gamache, George-Kelly, Cavanaugh, Stewart, Long and Fajardo voted yea. Aldermen Kantor, Levasseur and E. Sapienza voted nay. The motion carried.

Alderman Levasseur asked are we going to see the second phase in the next two meetings.

Mayor Craig answered no.

- 21.** Budget projections to be submitted by Sharon Wickens, Finance Officer, if available.

Sharon Wickens, Finance Director, stated the fiscal year 2024 general fund expenditure and revenue forecast as of November 21 based on department head estimates is as follows. The current projected general fund operating surplus is \$325,000. This operating surplus relates solely to employee vacancies in a few of the city departments. October health insurance claims were much more in line with budget expectations. Through October, costs are running slightly over plan. This line item will be closely monitored as we head into December. The forecasted surplus does include \$300,000 from the contingency account. There were 18 retirements through November 17 compared with 6 retirements at this same time a year ago. Severance paid through November 17 amounts to \$709,504 compared to \$384,924 a year ago. The severance reserve account is anticipated to have a balance of \$1,670,859.41 after all related entries have been posted. I have also attached departmental overtime reports as of November 11 and a summary by department of severance paid through November 17.

Alderman T. Sapienza stated it is good that the healthcare is back in line. Do you think that is a shift in the trend or is that just that the bills are being held up?

Ms. Wickens responded we were pleasantly surprised with the October numbers. Claims came in slightly below what we had budgeted for the month. It didn't completely erase the first quarter so we are down about \$300,000 or \$400,000 but it stopped the bleeding. Some of that is because there were a few retirees that had high health claims that termed out and a couple of the really high claim costs met stop loss so the bills have stopped coming in. I am looking at November now as they are coming in and it is trending close to October. I still need to see the last two weeks. We will take a look at it again in December and see where we are. I do expect to be over budget this year. These are supposed to be the better months. Come January and February it is just how much will it tick up. We do have a very healthy reserve at a little over \$3 million. We don't know what kind of surplus we will generate. I was able to adjust a couple of revenues with the tax rate so we seem to be in good shape with the budget itself.

Alderman Long asked is it appropriate to bring up the DRA's tax rate so we can get a quick explanation for the public.

Mayor Craig replied sure.

Alderman Long stated we got an email on the tax rate. Sharon, can you speak to that?

Ms. Wickens asked what is it that you want to know about the tax rate.

Alderman Long replied I just wanted to the public to hear what it is. I can say it.

Ms. Wickens stated the tax rate is \$18.86. If you recall, the mayor's budget was \$18.85 and the aldermen's budget was \$18.87 so it came in right in the middle. The aldermen did take care of our significant healthcare shortfall that we had. I think we did really well. We had more surplus than I had expected, which really took care of a lot of things. It took care of the shortfall in healthcare. We were \$1 million more over plan than I even projected in May. Tax completely lost their revenue surplus of \$1 million and \$700,000 of that was Kris-way Trucking being bought by Penske and the revenues were down in June. It just completely imploded. So, our surplus, which was contributed to Meals & Rooms, completely saved us. It also paid for the \$2 million more we had to pay in county tax. I think we are in a decent position. We did need to use \$1.7 million of surplus to get to that tax rate. In the aldermen's budget it was almost \$1.5 million so it was a little bit more that we needed to use but not awful. We will go into next year much better than what I had thought we were going to do at the end of the year. Meals & Rooms saved the day.

Alderman Long asked so what the public cares about more is the tax cap rate.

Ms. Wickens responded the tax cap rate was 4.96%.

Alderman Long stated and the aldermen passed a budget at 3.48% and DRA sent us 3.40% right.

Ms. Wickens replied I think the aldermen's rate was 3.48% and it came down by a penny.

22. Report(s) of the Committee on Community Improvement, if available.

The Committee on Community Improvement respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the request from the Highway Engineer to extend CIP 711418 FY18 Alleyway Repair to December 31, 2023 be approved.

*On motion of **Alderman Burkush**, duly seconded by **Alderman Heath**, it was voted to accept the report and adopt its recommendation.*

The Committee on Community Improvement respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$1,134,000 for CIP 212324 STD/HIV Prevention, CIP 212424 Lead Poisoning, CIP 212524 TB Prevention, CIP 212624 Immunization Grant, and CIP 212724 Covid 19 Immunization be approved and referred to the Committee on Finance this evening.

*On motion of **Alderman Burkush**, duly seconded by **Alderman Heath**, it was voted to accept the report and adopt its recommendation.*

The Committee on Community Improvement respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$338,000 for CIP 412224 2023 EOC Grant Award be approved and referred to the Committee on Finance this evening.

*On motion of **Alderman Cavanaugh**, duly seconded by **Alderman Heath**, it was voted to accept the report and adopt its recommendation.*

*On motion of **Alderman Fajardo**, duly seconded by **Alderman Stewart**, it was voted to recess the meeting to allow the Committee on Finance to meet.*

Mayor Craig called the meeting back to order.

25. Report(s) of the Committee on Finance, if available.

The Committee on Finance respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the Resolution:

"Amending the FY2023 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of One Million One Hundred Thirty Four

Thousand Dollars (\$1,134,000) for the FY2024 CIP 212324 STD/HIV Prevention, FY2024 212424 Lead Poisoning, FY2024 CIP 212524 TB Prevention, FY2024 CIP 212624 Immunization Grant and FY2024 CIP 212724 COVID 19 Immunization."

ought to pass and be Enrolled.

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Cavanaugh**, it was voted to accept the report and adopt its recommendation.*

The Committee on Finance respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the Bond Resolution:

"Authorizing Bonds, Notes or Lease Purchases in the amount of Two Hundred Ninety Million Dollars (\$290,000,000) for the 2024 CIP 713024 School Facilities Project - Phase I (DPW Facilities-Schools)."

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Fajardo**, it was voted to accept the report and adopt its recommendation with the condition that the money not be used for demolition of JFK Coliseum or Gill Stadium.*

- 26.** Report(s) of the Committee on Accounts, Enrollment & Revenue Administration, if available.

The Committee on Accounts, Enrollment & Revenue Administration respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the request from the Chair of the Manchester Arts Commission to release \$264.07 from the Art Fund to reimburse the cost of purchasing exhibition and display materials be approved.

*On motion of **Alderman Trisciani**, duly seconded by **Alderman Cavanaugh**, it was voted to accept the report and adopt its recommendation.*

- 27.** Report(s) of the Committee on Bills on Second Reading, if available.

There were no reports.

28. Report(s) of Committee on Human Resources/Insurance, if available.

The Committee on Human Resources/Insurance respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the request from the Public Works Director for the addition of one (1) Engineering Project Manager, Grade 25, to his complement be approved.

*On motion of **Alderman Burkush**, duly seconded by **Alderman Cavanaugh**, it was voted to accept the report and adopt its recommendation.*

29. Resolution:

"Amending the FY2024 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of One Million One Hundred Thirty Four Thousand Dollars (\$1,134,000) for the FY2024 CIP 212324 STD/HIV Prevention, FY2024 212424 Lead Poisoning, FY2024 CIP 212524 TB Prevention, FY2024 CIP 212624 Immunization Grant and FY2024 CIP 212724 COVID 19 Immunization."

*On motion of **Alderman Heath**, duly seconded by **Alderman Barry**, it was voted that the Resolution ought to pass and be Enrolled.*

NEW BUSINESS

Alderman T. Sapienza asked are we going to get that new zoning ordinance soon.

Mayor Craig asked do you want an update. Jeff, can you please come up.

Alderman T. Sapienza asked is it imminent.

Jeff Belanger, Planning & Community Development Director, stated it is tough to put an exact date on it. It is not imminent. I would say spring is probably a good date for the release of the first draft from staff. We have every available resource going to it. I have two full-time employees and one part-time employee who are doing almost nothing but working on the zoning ordinance. We got a great start from a consultant; a good beginning to this but there is a lot that needs to be done to make it right for Manchester and we have been working tirelessly on that. We are still working on it and we are doing a lot of other things to try to make sure that there is additional housing brought to

the city. You may be aware of this but currently there are about 800 new dwelling units under construction in the city. That is far and away in excess of what we have done in prior years. In the last five years, the year with the most CO's issued was 2022 and it was 242. So, we have 800 under construction. In addition to that, my department along with the Mayor's Office, has been working to bring a lot of ARPA dollars and affordable housing dollars to affordable housing which this Board has approved. As you know we did \$3.8 million recently and \$3.5 million the year before. Hundreds of units are coming on line, affordable housing, not included in that 800 I just mentioned. I take the issue of affordable housing very seriously. We are working hard to address that and the zoning ordinance is a piece of that but not the whole puzzle. To answer your question, we are working as much as we can on it and we are hoping for a release in the spring.

Alderman Fajardo stated I am just wondering, acknowledging everything you just described, if you are having to spend more time on than you were initially expecting because there are a lot more changes than you were planning on. Can you just give us a little detail on making it right for Manchester?

Mr. Belanger responded the short answer to your question is yes. We hired a consultant and like I said they did a good job but there is a lot more that we felt like we needed to do. We got from them what was kind of best practices nationally but we have done a lot of on the ground work in the city. We have driven most roads and we have taken pictures of hundreds of different units and different lots in the city. We are modeling out different ways that the new zoning ordinance could affect different properties. We are using GIS data and doing everything we can to really make sure that what the master plan calls for as improvements to the city and what we think are the parts of the city that people like best can be broadened and expanded and we can replicate that through the regulation of the zoning ordinance which was just not directly touched on by the consultant. They gave us like I said kind of a higher level and we are trying to go very deeply into all of these different issues in the city.

Alderman Fajardo asked is it possible to see the original draft from the consultant as far as like maybe there is a percentage of it that is accepted.

Mr. Belanger answered that issue came up a few meetings ago when someone asked for the release of the draft that the consultant gave us and as I said I would be very happy to release that draft when we release the staff draft but what I don't want to do is make...we have 115,000 people who live here and a lot of homes and a lot of businesses that might see something in a draft from a consultant and they might say oh that is where the city is going and they might make real estate decisions based on that when actually we would recommend going in a different direction and I don't want to cause confusion in the real estate market by doing that.

Alderman Fajardo asked so is it a linear process in terms of are you going start to finish. Are you like 25% of the way done? Could we start to see some of the pages that you might consider...

Mr. Belanger interjected there are a couple of aspects to it. One is we want to improve upon what we got from the consultant. Another aspect is there is frankly a fair amount of deferred maintenance in the current ordinance that needs to be addressed. It is not like all we are doing is tweaking the draft that we got. There is a U.S. Supreme Court case on signs from 2015 that we haven't caught up to yet. There are so many different facets that need to be brought up to speed so I would hesitate to put a percentage on it. We have made dramatic progress and improvement. I was just talking with staff about this earlier this week and we are targeting spring.

Alderman T. Sapienza stated I appreciate the fact that we are customizing it for Manchester and our own people are working on it. The consultant is all done and that is great. I am confident in our own people.

Mr. Belanger responded I appreciate that; thank you.

Alderman Long stated I want to thank the Granite State Organizing Project. They have a leadership training for immigrants. They are a fantastic group of people and a few Saturdays ago as part of that training, they cleaned Sheridan-Emmett Park and I wanted to thank them for that and also thank DPW for the help they gave them. It was great to see. Also, if you are looking to get into the Christmas spirit, on December 3 the

First Congregational Church at 2 PM is having a Christmas Cantata. You will be able to view me in angelic view. It is at 2 PM on December 3. It is a good musical.

*There being no further business, on motion of **Alderman Barry**, duly seconded by **Alderman George-Kelly**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Normand". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

City Clerk