

BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN

October 1, 2024 at 7:00 PM

Mayor Ruais called the meeting to order in joint session with the Library Trustees.

Mayor Ruais stated we are going to do something a little bit different tonight. On the school board side, we have kids come in all the time and lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Tonight, we wanted to try something different and have Troop 118 come up and lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance. Let me tell you a little bit about Troop 118. Tonight, we welcome a special group, Boy Scout Troop 118 of Manchester led by Scout Master, Alderman Norm Vincent. They meet Monday at St. Anthony of Padua Parish. They welcome all youths, age 11-17 or 10 years old and in the 5th grade if they register on or after March. The scouts are taught character, citizenship, leadership, values and fitness. Their activities include camping, volunteering and team building. Alderman Vincent has been Scout Master Vincent since 2015 and he is proud to say the troop has had eight Eagles under his watch with two more scouts who will make Eagle in 2025. The Troop 118 scouts who are joining us tonight to lead the Pledge of Allegiance are Cameron Youst, Lucas Miller, Max Holtz, Camden Calderara, Dan Mumford, Josh Mumford and Kyle Laroche.

A moment of silence was observed with Alderman Burkush asking everyone to remember Nancy Bridget Deol who was a Ward 9 Clerk, battled breast cancer and passed away this week at the age of 45 and Alderman Morgan asking everyone to remember Sharyn Kelly, Kevin McHugh and Joe Matola, all Ward 1 residents who recently passed. Mayor Ruais stated I would also like to recognize Sheila Francis Day, the mother of Chief Aldenberg. Chief, our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family during this time.

The Clerk called the roll.

Board of Aldermen

Aldermen Morgan, Goonan, Long, Fajardo, T. Sapienza, Kantor, O'Neil, Levasseur, Terrio, E. Sapienza, Burkush, Barry, Vincent, Thomas

Library Trustees

Vanessa Blais, Patricia Cornell, Israel Piedra, Robert Lord, Martha Rossignol, Ken Snow

Absent: Library Trustee Eleanor Dahar

Mayor Ruais advised that a nomination is in order to reappoint Robert Lord, term to expire October 2031.

*On motion of **Alderman O'Neil**, duly seconded by **Alderman T. Sapienza**, it was voted to reappoint Robert Lord to the Library Board of Trustees, term to expire October 2031.*

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Fajardo**, it was voted to close the nominations.*

*On motion of **Alderman O'Neil**, duly seconded by **Alderman Long**, it was voted to suspend the rules and confirm the nomination.*

*There being no further business, on motion of **Alderman Barry**, duly seconded by **Alderman Levasseur**, the joint meeting was adjourned.*

Mayor Ruais called the regular meeting of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Morgan, Goonan, Long, Fajardo, T. Sapienza, Kantor, O'Neil, Levasseur, Terrio, E. Sapienza, Burkush, Barry, Vincent, Thomas

Mayor Ruais stated I would like to take a personal privilege as I have in the past few meetings to offer some recognitions to some outstanding members we have in our community. I would first like to call out the Manchester Cal Ripken Team. I have a Resolution.

WHEREAS Manchester loves baseball and the city celebrates America's pastime from its youth leagues to the Fisher Cats, and

WHEREAS the city's 12 and under Cal Ripken All-Star Team is made up of the best players for their age group, and

WHEREAS the team won the NH State Championship with a 13-5 win over Londonderry, and

WHEREAS the team went undefeated in the preliminary round of the New England Regional Tournament with a 3-0 record but unfortunately lost to the eventual champion, Bethwood, CT, and

WHEREAS head coach Josh Bernier credits the determination of his 12 year olds for coming together quickly, practicing in 90+ degree heat and embracing their wonderfully diverse personalities which were a big part of their success, and

WHEREAS the players learned valuable life lessons on and off the field representing their parents, themselves, Manchester Cal Ripken and the city with utmost respect, attitude and sportsmanship, and

WHEREAS the 12 and under all-star roster includes Jackson Bernier, Camden Bergeron, Ryan Bernard, Carter Buchan, Max Ellison, Emmett Goonan, Ronan Hill, TJ Carvalhas, Owen Labrie, Charlie Labranche, Connor Mills, Cole Nelson, Austin Noyes, Jackson Sage and batboy Carson Mills, and

WHEREAS the team lead by Coach Bernier and Assistant Coaches Patrick Sage, Trent Ellison and Jake Mills was cheered on by all the parents and friends who are the backbone of every team,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mayor Jay Ruais, congratulate the 12 and under Cal Ripken All-Star Team for a state championship and a gutsy New England Regional Tournament defined by outstanding play and sportsmanship and thank the players for proudly representing their hometown, the City of Manchester.

Mayor Ruais stated now we have OYS staff. Would Mario Pena and Jeff Gore please come forward. Tonight, we want to recognize the outstanding contributions of our staff from the Office of Youth Services. Mario Pena has dedicated 15 years of service to the City of Manchester and his impact on the lives of youth through programs such as Boys to Men, the OYS Summer Open Court Basketball Program and various leadership initiatives has truly been transformative. His recent promotion to In School Youth Services Program Manager is a testament to his exceptional work in the community. Please give a round of applause for Mario. Jeff Gore has served the city for 26 years with the majority of his career spent as a Community Outreach Worker before being promoted to Youth Services Counselor last year. Jeff's dedication to Manchester's youth, his innovative approaches to mentorship, and his longstanding involvement with basketball programs have made him an invaluable asset to OYS and the City of

Manchester. It is clear to everyone who works with Mario and Jeff that they have gone above and beyond in their support of our young people. We are grateful to know you and know the impact you are making in their lives is real and long lasting. Jeff, thank you.

Mayor Ruais stated Assistant Chief Starr, please come forward. I understand your family is going to be joining you.

Resolution.

WHEREAS firefighting is a calling for those with the courage and commitment necessary to save people and to protect property, and

WHEREAS John Starr joined the Manchester Fire Department as a firefighter on March 11, 1996, and

WHEREAS through his hard work, bravery and determination, John was promoted to Lieutenant on February 1, 2004 and Captain on May 3, 2015, and

WHEREAS through his leadership and dedication John earned the rank of District Chief on August 8, 2020 and Assistant Chief on December 31, 2023, and

WHEREAS John served as Chairman of the Public Relations Committee for IAFF Local 856 from 2015-2020, and

WHEREAS John also served on the Sick Leave Bank Committee from 2015 to 2024, serving as Chairman for four years, and

WHEREAS John recognized the emotional toll firefighting can take on its members, he headed the creation of a department mental health program including a peer support team from 2021 to the present,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jay Ruais, Mayor of the City of Manchester, on behalf of the citizens of Manchester, do hereby recognize and honor Assistant Chief John Starr for always being willing to answer calls for help for 28 years and for his exceptional service, dedication and contributions to our city and wish him a fulfilling and very well-deserved retirement.

Mayor Ruais stated I have one last announcement to make before we get into the public comment period. As most of you may know, we launched an initiative about 10 days ago to effectively end Veteran's homelessness in the City of Manchester. In the 10 days since this initiative has been live, we have already housed four veterans. There

are four veterans who will go to sleep tonight with a safe and stable roof over their heads because of the work of our community partner, Harbor Care, and our selfless employees, Irina Owens and Owen Westover and all the help of all of our community partners that are putting their shoulder into this. Thank you.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Ruais 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 must sign up with their name, address and topic prior to 7 PM. Once called, they will have up to three minutes to speak and any comments must be directed to the chair and concluded when their time is up. If the Clerk calls their name and they are not present to speak, they will not be given a second opportunity. Any resident wishing to speak will come forward to the nearest microphone, clearly state their name and address when recognized and give their comments.

Freeman Toth, 697 Hall Street, stated:

I have been a resident and taxpayer here since 2003. I am here to speak about the proposed SSP ordinance and would say that both as a social work professional and a service provider and a person with lived experience, I would caution you to layer on restrictions without carefully considering the unforeseen consequences of those additional restrictions. As somebody who used to find needles in the park up near Manchester Falls or the observatory, however you grew up referring to it as, I don't anymore. My dog, Otto, and I used to find them all the time. In 2019, the Queen City Exchange opened and I have noticed an improvement where I live. I can also tell you as a manager of a homeless outreach program and somebody who co-runs an SSP that we have seen tremendous successes in these programs in mitigating the public health and safety issues to keep our parks safe and clean. People have higher rates of engagement with services and we are able to make rapid connections to services that folks need to survive and thrive. Again, just be very careful before pushing for something like a one-to-one exchange. I know it seems like a good idea but really what can happen is when you start restricting...within reason of course because I don't think anybody wants to handle out needles in school parking lots but when you start

restricting where service providers and provide services then you limit the ability for participants to engage with the services. It is a service providers' duty to provide those services where the participants are and to eliminate those barriers to access of care. I can tell you as someone who lost people to overdose and addiction, that I was definitely kind of not for these types of programs but after seeing the in-person success, I can tell you that they work. Please be very careful before you add additional restrictions. Please let the service providers provide services.

Kristin Toth, 697 Hall Street, stated:

I have been a homeowner, resident and taxpayer for 20 years. I love the city and I love the community but the SSP ordinance as presented is going to have little to no impact, little to no positive impact on our community. I think that statistics show that the likelihood of an increase in negative outcomes is highly likely should this go through as presented. I think transparency and accountability is very important. We all agree on that but not to the degree where it impedes the mission of the program itself, which I fear will be the outcome should this pass as presented. Respectfully, I would like to strongly request careful consideration surrounding the limit of boundaries being imposed by this ordinance.

Kathleen Carswell, 385 Amherst Street, stated:

First, the needle issue which I was very happy to see in the paper. I help my neighbors and we found five needles in one little patch of area when he was cutting his bushes down because people come up from Bronstein Park to shoot up in my neighborhood and in my parking lot. I see them all the time. It is an endless problem. The second issue I have is under Article 9, Section 9.01 of Manchester's Ordinance mandates that public officials maintain honest and ethical behavior and avoid conflicts of interest. I am here asking that you take Alderman Levasseur off the Board immediately for his conduct in ruining one person's life and then going and ruining another person's life. I don't know when it is going to stop. I don't know how many more people down the line he is going to do this to but myself and other people I have talked to in the city think it is very inappropriate. It doesn't take more than a couple of people...because he doesn't like what they say about somebody else, not even in regards to him. It is just inappropriate and he is an attorney and knows better. The next thing is I have been

waiting since July, Mayor, to get an appointment to sit down with you for at least ½ hour to one hour. I have some great suggestions to help with the City of Manchester and some ideas to maybe address some issues we have going on. My alderman can also probably sit with us. I still haven't received a phone call or text message back and I gave all my information. I think waiting three months is kind of... Mayor Gatsas stood on the other side of the wall and told his receptionist to get rid of me when I went to make an appointment to sit down with him and I personally heard it out of his mouth and that was after they did the soundproofing. They didn't do a very good job I must say. Then I went to Mayor Craig and it took me three and a half years to get an appointment to sit down with her regarding the problems in my neighborhood. My final thing is I also called over a week ago to ask for a phone number from your office and they said they would get back to me in an email and I have not received any email with the Conduct Board phone number. That is what I was looking for because I want to address some things through them if I could. Thank you for your time.

Joan O'Brien, Concord, stated:

I am the President of the Animal Rights League. We are based in Concord but we have members all over the state including Manchester. Thank you, Mayor Ruais and members of the Board, for letting me speak tonight. I am here to bring your attention to an event that takes place in Manchester that is dangerous for both animals and people. What I refer to is the Professional Bull Rider's event that has been performing at the SNHU Arena since 2019. I have spoken with some of you serving on the Public Safety, Health & Traffic Committee and/or the Community Improvement Committee, and was advised to come before the full Board. Bull riding is not a sport. It is a business where profit comes before the well-being of animals. The tour promoters call the bulls athletes but they don't consent to be there and they are put in harm's way every time they enter the ring. Bulls are peaceful herd animals. They don't want to be subjected to large crowds, loud music, or pulsating lights, nor do they want to be in trailers pulled around the country. Tour promoters will tell you that the bulls are born to buck but they don't stand around just bucking. What causes them to buck is that the flank strap is pulled so tightly around their abdomen that it is an irritant and there are spurs pressed into their sides. To get rid of this, they have a desire to free themselves of these irritants and it can cause them to buck beyond their capacity which can lead to broken legs and

broken backs, which are not uncommon. Seeing is believing. I wish I could show you a one-minute video of bulls breaking their legs at PBR events. I am going to leave a letter that has the link in case anyone wants to watch that themselves later. Bull riding also puts spectators and the community at risk. In June at a rodeo in Oregon, a bull jumped into the stands and rampaged through the crowds and injured three people. Just last week at a rodeo at a mall in North Attleboro, MA, eight bulls escaped. They were able to get them all after a day but these are large powerful horned animals and somebody could have easily been hurt. Regarding that bull escape, comments from the public on social media expressed sympathy for the bulls. People felt very sorry for these animals who must have been confused and scared running around western Massachusetts. I won't read those comments but again they are in this letter that I am going to read with you. Many cities around the country have passed ordinances to prohibit bull riding and/or rodeo events. I have included a partial list of those places in my letter and I am hoping that Manchester will consider doing the same. Thank you.

Brandon Lemay, 36 Lynx Way, stated:

I am just here to talk about the proposed SSP facility/needle exchange ordinance that is being proposed tonight. One thing I just want to really reiterate is that when we are passing any policy, I want us to think about unintended consequences that a policy can bring about. One example that I like to use is that in 2012 the Obama administration wanted to make sure that cars produced fewer CO2 emissions so they passed regulations on certain mileage that trucks had to have. Now this resulted in trucks getting bigger and actually less fuel efficient in some ways. So, a well-intended policy ended up having negative consequences. I believe that this ordinance as written right now has unintended consequences that will result in worse public health and public safety. I was just playing around with Google Maps today because this ordinance says that they can't be set-up within 750' of a church, park, playground, library or daycare center. I just went to Google Maps and went to any park I could see on the map or any church that I knew because I know the city well and I just did 750' parameters. What this effectively does is really limit where in the inner city these exchanges can be set up but in places where this won't be prohibited would be places like Ward 8 where I live. We don't have a lot of churches or parks or daycare centers around. I think that this policy would reduce services altogether and if not it would relegate those services to

places where a lot of the unhoused folks don't currently go. It could potentially incentivize exchanges to set-up in different places, potentially residential neighborhoods, or the unintended consequence could be there be more needles and more diseases like Hepatitis or other communicable diseases that could be shared via dirty needles. I just want us to think carefully about this. I would like to see some sort of amendments...I am not an expert in substance use or anything like that and I don't have any good suggestions myself but Mr. Mayor I know that you are in contact with some great people that do so please I would ask that you work on this ordinance a little bit. I think it has good intentions and I would like to see some of those intentions seen through but I don't believe this ordinance does that.

Mandy Lancaster, Waypoint, stated:

I am the Director of the Homeless Youth & Young Adult Department and here to support syringe programs in the Queen City and I am asking the Mayor and aldermen to reconsider the revised ordinance as it is written. At Waypoint, we are deeply committed to evidence-based interventions that promote the health and well-being of the entire community. While I agree with others that came before me that this seems well-intentioned, I also believe that there has been some collective sigh from those of us who are in the service industry as we followed the opioid epidemic and it has been widely reported that there have been reductions in overdose deaths in the city and throughout the state. I am asking those of you to see the Queen City Exchange as an asset to this community, which is perhaps reflected in the decrease in overdose deaths in this community rather than a threat. I would further encourage you to please consider rather than limiting access to supportive syringe programs and safe places to dispose of needles...I hear that that is a concern and I wonder if another solution might be to add additional sites and locations where people that use drugs can safely, easily and accessibly dispose of used syringes. Certainly, it is happening in large cities throughout this region. If we have the will to do so, we could act in that way. We have seen firsthand at Waypoint how access to comprehensive care, which means harm reduction services, can transform lives. It is where pivotal decision-making can happen. The syringe support programs are an essential part of that care continuum in helping individuals regain stability and move toward safety and recovery. By supporting SSP's in the city, we are not just addressing a public health issue but we are affirming our

commitment to the dignity and well-being of every member within this community. It is very well researched that SSP's decrease the transmission of disease in communities so again I urge you to consider that and the unintended consequences that would occur in this community if you are to limit SSP's. We just urge you to please support and allow for the expansion of SSP's to create a healthier, safe and more compassionate community for everybody in Manchester. Thank you.

Sarah Jones, Waypoint, stated:

I am the Program Manager at Waypoint. I am here speaking on behalf of Waypoint in support of SSP's. I want to affirm that we support and want to encourage the bill as presented right now. It is important that SSP's exist in this community. They are a vital point of contact for people across the city who are using drugs to be able to come in contact with providers who care about them and who can help them find services and solutions. I know that for us in the youth and young adult program, we recognize that and we see it every day. We believe in the comprehensive care provided. We also recognize that SSP's are a vital point in decreasing overdoses across the city by disseminating Narcan in the hands of people who are mostly the first responders. Backtracking and not having SSP's available does a disservice to the whole community by decreasing the safety of everybody.

Evelyn Lanigan stated:

I was born in 1963 in Manchester. Some of you I went to school with. Many of the people in Manchester know me. I am here because this has been the worst summer that I have had. I live at 15 Elm Street directly across the street from Bakersville School. I graduated from nursing school in 1987. I have literally been serving the public my entire life and 20 years of that was doing school nursing working for the Manchester Health Department. I have a squeaky-clean record and I have never been arrested but this year alone from June until now I have been on the phone with Manchester Police so many times, they are probably sick of hearing from me. I have had panhandlers, homeless people, and people on my steps when I am at work having lunch and leaving their trash. Recently I was talking to the crossing guard who is a friend of mine and she is concerned because there are panhandlers at school dismissal when the kids are crossing the street; literally 10' away from where she is with her sign.

I don't know if I am the only one in the City of Manchester that says what is wrong with this picture. I serve the homeless people and I belong to One Church formally known as Manchester Christian Church. I serve the homeless people and I donate to homelessness and I know it is a huge problem but my reason for coming today is number one so you have a face to go with the voice and the emails that I have sent and secondly, I want to encourage you guys to collaborate. This is becoming a crisis that really needs a solution, not a short-term solution but a permanent solution. I currently work at Hillsborough County Nursing Home and was forced out of retirement because my husband had a massive heart attack and he passed away. This situation has been so stressful that I thought I was going to have a heart attack. One night I was down at the police station at 10 PM. I worked with a nurse today who told me she lives in Goffstown and her camera showed a homeless person in her yard and going up her driveway. She said the guy was blatantly flipping the bird at the camera and it was a Manchester resident so I believe Goffstown police called Manchester and brought the person back to Manchester. I don't know what can be done but it is a huge issue and really a crisis at this point in our city. If we want this to be a good place to raise a family and live, we need to all be involved. Thank you for hearing me.

Madeleine Turner, 36 Charleston Avenue, stated:

This problem has been going on for a long time. I called four years ago and spoke to Joyce Craig who was then the mayor and I have been trying to get in touch with the current mayor without success. My problem is the drinking water in Manchester. Now there is a serious issue with fluoride. Fluoride that is being put in our water is toxic waste. I am not a chemist but I know people that are scientists and have told me that yes this is true. Personally, I think it is affecting people's IQ's and contributing to the homeless population. That is my opinion. Take it or leave it. I am just a citizen who has lived here all my life. I also have a concern with the Police Department because I called the other day and nobody showed up. They sent me a text asking how the quality of my service was but I had no service. I called again and spoke to somebody. Now nothing was done. We have people speeding in our neighborhood and children playing in the streets and we are afraid. I am a grandmother with two small grandchildren that play in the street with the neighbor kids. This is an issue. For the police not show up...after speaking with neighbors they agreed that the police just turn their head and do nothing.

I am not trying to point any fingers. I just think that the children need help. Now the only way that is going to happen is if somebody addresses the water problem and the safety of the city. Now I don't know what can be done. I sent emails and I tried to call the mayor with no return call so here I am trying to represent the citizens in my neighborhood that I grew up with. I have lived here over 60 years and was born in the neighborhood and would like to stay but I don't know. It is getting worse. We pay a lot of money in taxes with no apparent means of making changes. The Water Department just won't budge and that fluoride needs to come out. We can't filter it out. We are forced to buy bottled water. I was born with an immune problem which unfortunately some people understand now that Covid hit. I don't know what can be done. I just hope somebody hears me and somebody can do something.

Jessica Margeson, Manchester Street, stated:

Tonight, I am here to talk about housing but after hearing everything before me, I did want to add one thing that hasn't been spoken of when it comes to the needle exchange program. You don't think about the person that is wanting that needle to use. We instantly want to say no to that and I get that but think about the person they are going home to or who else is affected by not knowing they have an issue. We are not doing it just for them. We are doing it for their loved ones and hopefully not have a disease be spread that they have no clue about. Another thing I commonly hear on the streets is that if there are more areas to drop the needles that are a safe spot, that would be useful. I know we don't want to advertise them but getting more spots for them to safely dispose of them would be useful. I want to get right to housing and transitional housing. We have a huge need as I have spoken about multiple times. In the past few months, I have taken on a part-time job at the local shelter to try to increase my knowledge of those entering and why they are entering and what is going on and what are the roadblocks to get rid of. I recently had a family that was locked out. I had ages from 21-71. For the 71-year-old the first thing we looked at was Hillsborough County Nursing Home. Not many people know but that has a one year wait list. So, we have elderly having to go to shelters because they can't even get into nursing homes quickly enough. The amount of people that stay in their vehicles because of an emotional support animal is huge. They would have much better luck if we had some type of transitional housing where they had a room to shut the door and go to bed at night.

They would be able to have their emotional support animal if needed because honestly, I couldn't figure out how to have 40+ support animals in a building. I get it. There are plenty who have a job and need some type of help to save money the same as I. I, myself, had to stay in my car for seven weeks during the winter until I found a place that I was able to rent. Not everybody has a room and to be able to save up enough money to get in with the lack of resources out there to help someone, it is a really big issue. We need transitional housing and we need a savings program. I have one bank possibly interested but if I had the City of Manchester approaching these banks, I think a lot more could be created. They need somewhere where they can put 30-40% of their income that comes in in a savings account that hopefully could be matched so once they reach their goal and is matched, they will rely a lot less on local community resources and those can be reserved for those that don't work and don't have that. Out of 2,400 units being built in this city, we have to remember that only 420 are at 30-80% AMI and those at 30% are even less. We need more of that and we need transitional housing so the shelters can work more on those that have no access out.

Rick Blais, 733 Chestnut Street, stated:

First of all, for some positive things in this city, we got some great news. I was in a meeting today with regards to the future zoning and I think you are all headed in the right direction. Secondly, going back to the needle exchange program, personally I feel that the accountability piece has to be there. People who are never held accountable will never make changes. Period. End of story. I think if you had a container, they could have like a metal box or something where they could deposit their needles during the week or something. Now when they come, they can exchange their box and get some needles. I am not a big fan of that but they have to be held accountable for something. The other thing is I was talking to Anna about this but back in the spring I was coming out of the Bridge Street Café and I had my granddaughter with me and I saw some people chatting. My granddaughter was standing beside me and some guy came up to her literally with a hand full of needles. I saw it out of the corner of my eye and grabbed the guy's arm and broke it off and asked what he was doing. He apologized but then I remembered the needle exchange program. I didn't think anything of it but this was right on Bridge Street to a 14-year-old kid. They didn't know I was the grandfather. Lucky, I knew about the needle exchange program because he

probably wouldn't be here today nor would I. When it comes to messing with my grandkids, you don't want to do that. Those of us who are grandparents know what I am talking about. I think you have to work on that bill more and there has to be an element of accountability. My tax dollars are going to it and I want to see some results. I appreciate all you do.

Rebecca Smith, Spruce Street, stated:

I am here to talk about the rezoning suggestions. I attended some of the community input hearings over the summer. I am not sure where you are in the process of accepting or making changes to the proposed plan. I wanted to raise the point that under the current zoning there are very few restrictions in the central business area along Elm Street and that was suggested to be divided up into a number of different zoning types to reflect the current character of the city. I actually disagree with that suggestion. I think that having the flexibility within the zoning that these different characteristics could develop is a strength and I would suggest even extending that down some of the main thoroughways of this city. West maybe between Kelley and Main Street, east down Spruce and Lake, which is the area I live in and maybe even on South Beech and South Willow Streets. I just think that it is difficult for any committee or one person to know what the future holds and more often allowing more flexibility in the code can allow for interesting innovation. I know that people are concerned about the character of their own neighborhood and the look and feel of the city and I think those concerns can be addressed by allowing the Historical Society to do their preservation, which they already do in the mill area and also some very light codes around what materials may be used on the exterior of the buildings. Overall, I think that more flexibility in the uses would be great, specifically in my neighborhood in Ward 5 near the tree streets there was a proposal to cap the number of units that can be in an apartment building or a multi-family. I think given the concerns raised this evening about the homelessness and housing supply in the city that that would restrict the possibility of studio apartments or even dormitory style housing for college students or those who cannot otherwise afford a whole apartment. I would personally prefer less regulation rather than more spending for affordable or transitional housing. Thank you.

Dam Wright, Manchester, stated:

Thank you all for recognizing the passing of Nancy Bridget. I was close with her. I was also close with Brittany Greathead who recently passed after lengthy struggles with homelessness, addiction, and mental health. There are a lot of people that don't get mentioned for these moments of silence and I am going to take a moment of silence for Brittany. There aren't too many people in this city who hate finding needles on the ground more than me. You know why? I pick them up. I don't just stand there and say oh gross or call the police. I actually pick them up. It is not that hard. Cover your hand and don't touch the sharp end. When I find needles on the ground, it sucks. When people talk to me about how to reduce that, the number one thing we can do is put out public sharps containers. They don't have to be ugly. You can pretty them up the way we have all of these trashcans with the artwork on them on Elm Street. You could even put advertisements on the side of them to promote diabetes related charities and things like that. That would be a significant reduction in the number of needles. The other thing you can do is support and enable the Queen City Needle Exchange. They have removed, since their inception, 1.7 million used syringes from the streets of this city while, by the way, 1.9 million is what they distributed. When we talk about one-to-one ratios, I am glad that we are off that topic generally but that is what we are talking about. 1.7 million have been taken in and 1.9 million have gone out in the Queen City since its inception. I know that there are members on this Board who don't make a huge secret about the fact that they would be happy if the addicts just die off. I see your social media so yes, we know that. This isn't just about the addicts and this was brought up earlier to a certain extent but I would really like to drive this home. Some of us have jobs where again picking up needles is a standard thing and dealing with people who might be covered in blood is a standard thing. This includes myself and the Police Department and EMS workers. Bottom line is this. The more you inhibit the needle exchange, the less we are going to get needles off the street. There are going to be more needles on the street because of this. Those needles are going to be more infected with Hepatitis and HIV and people like myself, first responders, and children are going to be more at risk because of this. I implore you, as was asked before, not to change your minds but to take some time to really do your research and think about this before children, who are the most likely people to accidentally stumble across a needle, end up with the repercussions of these decisions. That is the main point I have to

make. I hope you think of the children and the first responders and I hope you take your time.

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Accept BMA Minutes

2. Minutes from the August 6 BMA, Special BMA, and Finance meetings.

Accept and Remand Funds

3. Donation of \$100 from Fred and Kathryn Besch to the Fire Department in memory of Ingo Hartmann.

Approve Under Supervision of the Department of Highways, subject to funding

4. Green Streets Tree Canopy Program
 - 232 Prospect Street (2) Right-of-Way
 - 190 Oak Hill Avenue (1) Private Property
 - 2367 Elm Street (1) Right-of-Way
 - 1178 Union Street (2) Private Property

REFERRALS TO COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

5. Resolutions:

"Amending the FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$60,000) for the FY2025 CIP 211425 School Based Dental Program - Medicaid."

"Amending the FY2024 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Forty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$45,000) for the FY2024 CIP 212124 Oral Health Program"

"Amending the FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Three Hundred Seventy Five Thousand Dollars (\$375,000) for the FY2025 CIP 410625 Substance Abuse Reduction Initiative."

"Amending the FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) for the FY2025 CIP 410725 Project Safe Neighborhood - NICS 2025."

"Amending the FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Thirty-Eight Thousand Three Hundred Dollars (\$38,300) for the FY2025 CIP 410825 Highway Safety Grant."

"Amending the FY2022 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Ninety-Nine Dollars and Seventy-Nine Cents (\$7,899.79) for the FY2022 CIP 811122 ARPA - Community Event and Activation Grants."

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE ON ACCOUNTS, ENROLLMENT AND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

6. Advising that the Finance Department reports:
 - Accounts receivable over 90 days
 - Aging report
 - Outstanding receivableshave been accepted.
(*Unanimous vote*)
7. Advising that the City's Monthly Financial Report (unaudited) for the first month of FY25 has been accepted.
(*Unanimous vote*)
8. Advising that the update on the Revolving Loan Fund has been accepted.
(*Unanimous vote*)

COMMITTEE ON BILLS ON SECOND READING

9. Recommending that Ordinance Amendment:

"Amending Section 70.57(B) Parking Lot Rates of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Manchester by amending subsection 4(c) Myrna Lot."

ought to pass and be referred to the Committee on Accounts, Enrollment & Revenue Administration.
(*Unanimous vote*)

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

10. Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorizations providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$60,000 for CIP 211425 School Based Dental Program-Medicaid be approved.
(*Unanimous vote with the exception of Chairman Morgan*)

11. Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorizations providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$45,000 for CIP 212124 Oral Health Program be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Chairman Morgan)
12. Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorizations providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$375,000 for CIP 410625 Substance Abuse Reduction Initiative be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Chairman Morgan)
13. Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorizations providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$50,000 for CIP 410725 Project Safe Neighborhood NICS-2025 be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Chairman Morgan)
14. Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorizations providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$38,300 for CIP 410825 Highway Safety Grant be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Chairman Morgan)
15. Recommending that the request from the Airport Director to extend CIP 712423, Air Service Development, to June 30, 2027 be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Chairman Morgan)
16. Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorizations providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$7,899.79 for CIP 811122-ARPA Community Event and Activation Grant (CEAG) be approved. The Committee further recommends that the remaining balance of that project's funds, totaling \$15,936.21, be evenly distributed between the Mill on the Green Condominium Association and the Safari Youth Club upon submission of necessary application documents.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Chairman Morgan)

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES/INSURANCE

17. Recommending that the request from the HR Director for the following changes to the department's complement:
 - Add one (1) part-time Administrative Assistant, grade 13
 - Unfund one (1) part-time Administrative Assistant I, grade 12be approved.
(Unanimous vote)
18. Advising that KGA, Inc. has been selected as the city's new Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider effective February 1, 2025.
(Unanimous vote)

COMMITTEE ON LANDS AND BUILDINGS

19. Recommending that the request from Fuss & O'Neil for an agreement to allow encroachment into the city's right-of-way at 351 Chestnut Street be approved.
(Unanimous vote)
20. Advising that the request from the Chief of Parks, Recreation & Cemetery to:
- Remove all the wooden posts and signs in the Gill/JFK area;
 - Install a large sign on the exterior of Gill Stadium, of a style in harmony with this historic facility, to include the names of all contributors and a way-finding map to the tree they sponsored; and
 - Make available to family members the existing name plate, should they so desire it.
- was received and filed.
(Alderman Levasseur, Long and Goonan voted yea; Alderman Vincent voted nay; Alderman Thomas was absent)

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

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

JOINT SCHOOL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

21. Advising that the Manchester School District Priority I status and financial report for August 2024 submitted by LeftField has been accepted.
(Unanimous vote)

Alderman E. Sapienza stated I feel a little odd about accepting anything about the school buildings' progress when we still don't know what is up with the high schools. We don't know what Phase II is. We were told a long time ago at the joint meeting at Memorial High School...I asked specifically what the plan was for the high schools and we were supposed to find out in March. We are now in October and we still don't know. I know it is kind of routine here but I just feel a little odd about accepting anything from them. I want to know what the plan is. Are West and Central going to remain for another year or another two years or five or ten years?

Alderman Terrio stated I am on the Joint Committee. I understand Alderman E. Sapienza's concerns but this financial report that we received is specifically for the work

that has been approved and released. I understand he has concerns about the high schools and the future of those but this report is just the work that we approved and that is going forward.

Mayor Ruais stated to your concern, Alderman E. Sapienza, we have a school board meeting on Monday and I would be more than happy to talk to the folks about what the latest update is on that and get back to you on when we can expect to see the resolution on the high schools.

*On motion of **Alderman O'Neil**, duly seconded by **Alderman Barry**, it was voted to accept the report and adopt its recommendation.*

REGULAR BUSINESS

- 22.** Communication from William Bevelaqua advising the Board of his resignation as a member of the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman O'Neil**, it was voted to accept the resignation with regret.*

- 23.** Nominations:
Board of Health
Ashwini Saxena to fill a vacancy as a regular member, term to expire
July 1, 2025
Zoning Board of Adjustment
Craig St. Pierre to be elevated to a regular member, term to expire
March 1, 2027
(Note: Pursuant to Rule 23 of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, these nominations will layover to the next meeting of the Board.)

- 24.** Confirmations:
Planning Board
Stephen Meno to move from an alternate to a regular member, term to expire
May 1, 2026
Robert Gagne to fill a vacancy as a regular member, term to expire
May 1, 2027

Conduct Board

Andrew Boyle to succeed himself as a regular member, term to expire
October 1, 2026

Amanda Quinlan to succeed herself as an alternate member, term to expire
October 1, 2027

Heritage Commission

Juliet Smith to fill a vacancy as an alternate member, term to expire
July 1, 2026

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman O'Neil**, it was voted to
confirm the nominations as presented.*

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

The Committee on Community Improvement respectfully recommends, after due
and careful consideration, that the Amending Resolution and Budget
Authorizations providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the
amount of \$3,735,653 for CIP 410925 SAFER be approved.

*On motion of **Alderman Burkush**, duly seconded by **Alderman Long**, 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 \$100,000 for CIP 710425 Cemetery Brook Tunnel Project be
approved.

*On motion of **Alderman O'Neil**, duly seconded by **Alderman Long**, 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 \$3,000,000 for CIP 712425 Feasibility Study Impact of Raising Level
of Lake Massabesic One Foot be approved.

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

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

Mayor Ruais called the meeting back to order.

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

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

"Amending the FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$60,000) for the FY2025 CIP 211425 School Based Dental Program - Medicaid."

"Amending the FY2024 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Forty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$45,000) for the FY2024 CIP 212124 Oral Health Program"

"Amending the FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Three Hundred Seventy Five Thousand Dollars (\$375,000) for the FY2025 CIP 410625 Substance Abuse Reduction Initiative."

"Amending the FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) for the FY2025 CIP 410725 Project Safe Neighborhood - NICS 2025."

"Amending the FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Thirty-Eight Thousand Three Hundred Dollars (\$38,300) for the FY2025 CIP 410825 Highway Safety Grant."

"Amending the FY2022 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Ninety-Nine Dollars and Seventy-Nine Cents (\$7,899.79) for the FY2022 CIP 811122 ARPA - Community Event and Activation Grants.

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

29. Report(s) of the Committee on Public Safety, Health & Traffic, if available.

The Committee on Public Safety, Health & Traffic respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the request from the Mayor for a proposed

ordinance amendment regarding syringe service programs and needle disposal be approved and referred to the Committee on Bills on Second Reading for technical review.

Alderman Long moved to accept the report and adopt its recommendation. ***Alderman Vincent*** duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Fajardo stated I just want to acknowledge all of the input from the community. I do plan to support this going to Bills on Second Reading and I would encourage any organization that is associated with providing exchange services in the city to please come before this Board and help us understand if, in fact, we are mis-stepping. It would be helpful to have data for more insight as to the evidence that the program will continue to have the positive impact that I do know it is having. Given all of the concerns that have been shared, I do think it would be helpful. I know that invitation has been put out before but I am just going to put it out there again because I think who better to ask for information and data then those who are providing the services.

Mayor Ruais stated we have discussed suspending the rules to Ordain this tonight.

Alderman Vincent moved to amend the motion and include suspending the rules and Ordaining this evening. ***Alderman Levasseur*** duly seconded the motion as amended.

Alderman Long stated just so the public knows, since former Mayor Craig was here, we have been asking these entities to sit with us and have a conversation so we know what they are doing. That hasn't happened. It amazes me that we decide to make an ordinance amendment and we are now getting all of their communications. That is originally what we wanted from them. We wanted that communication. They are providing services in the City of Manchester and we need to know what those are because we are doing the same things. To help those in need of this, we all need to know what is going so we can help them. Mayor Ruais sat with some people that were interested in this that had concerns. One of them was the Harm Reduction Coalition, who by the way certifies through DHHS all the entities that are doing these programs. The fact that their communication to them didn't happen, that is not on us. We are open and the mayor listened to their concerns and adjusted the ordinance. I just need people

to know that the City of Manchester is responsible for these programs. We have to make sure they are being done in cooperation with what the City of Manchester does so we are not on separate pages spending money on different issues.

Mayor Ruais stated I think that is an incredibly important point. I think one of the things we have talked about is the lack of transparency and accountability. We don't know what is going on in our city because reports are filed with the state. Therefore, we don't have the data and we don't know where these are operating and we don't know who is operating them. I think this is a really great first step to get that data and that information so we may then have informed decisions after that. I understand that there was a letter that went out on Friday voicing some of the concerns with the initial ordinance as proposed. I am nothing if not a communicative and collaborative individual so I was happy to meet. I think we made some responsible alterations to it. I agree with the point that you are making that we as a city have a right and obligation to know what is going on in our community and from there, we can make decisions based on the data we get.

Alderman Fajardo stated it seems like there is also a communication breakdown at the state level if it takes a right-to-know request to get data. I am not sure if it is worth extending the same invitation to DHHS to come address this Board as well.

Mayor Ruais responded this is one of the things that I think Director Thomas had expressed to me in the past and she was talking with Alderman Goonan and previously Chief Goonan about this. It should not take a 91-A from the City of Manchester to get this information.

Alderman Fajardo asked is that the policy of the state.

Mayor Ruais answered I will let Anna speak to that but I think the most important thing is making sure that we as a city know what is going on in our community.

Anna Thomas, Public Health Director, stated I think this has been a long-standing issue with DHHS on a whole host of things by the way. I don't want to make the Harm

Reduction Coalition the culprit in this. I think they are a contractor of DHHS. Where the barrier is is that communication is not coming directly to this community because quite frankly the law says they don't have to. There are other programs standing up in this community that we don't even know anything about. We are not notified that they are going to be operating here. They only have to register with DHHS and supply reports. There are individuals who are not registering either. There is kind of a whole array. We have had a very good cooperative relationship especially in the most recent years with the Harm Reduction Coalition. We partner with them in their work. I fully agree with you that they should be invited to come to this table and talk about what they do so you all can have a deeper appreciation for that. I think we have reached a good place as a starting point with this ordinance. I think this clarifies the expectations of our community. We are not telling them they can't do it because the law wouldn't allow us to do that anyway but we are saying for this community this is what we would prefer. I think the accountability issue is one of the biggest barriers in this whole scheme and I think this allows us to at least have transparency which we don't have now.

Alderman Fajardo responded thank you. I guess I then would want to extend encouragement to everybody who wants to speak on this issue to also send their concerns up to our state representatives because it seems like there is opportunity there as well. I would also say that I hope this is the start of the conversation and that if there are ways to fine-tune this, especially if we are starting to see negative impacts from it, that this Board will be open to amending it as needed to insure that it is having the intended effects.

Alderman Thomas stated I think that this ordinance needs a review every 30-60 days to see how it is going. I think that the programs need to be giving the information to Director Thomas and she can give it out to us or whoever needs it. I do want to limit the items in the kits that they are giving out. There should be some things in the kit but there are some things I don't believe should be in them and I think we can talk about that more at a different time. I do want to know how many days a week this is going to be done, at what times, and everything like that. People need to know. I also want to know, like Alderman Sapienza asked earlier, how many needles is someone getting at a time. Is it a two day a week thing and they are getting so many needles every two

days? I think it is very important to know how many we are getting back from a person. I also want to say that I know I have heard a lot of people come in front of us and talk about the needle exchange programs going away. We just had a meeting with my committee and we have so many resources in this city that people don't talk about enough. I just want to point that out. You don't need to be getting needles to get treatment.

Mayor Ruais stated to address your comments, I couldn't agree with you more on the data side. That is all included in this ordinance – time, date, location, numbers. That is all part of the information that we will be requesting from the organizations assuming this ordinance is approved. I think having us operate off of data allows us to make informed decisions, which we will get with the passage of this. I also want to point out, and I believe Alderman Vincent made this point as well at the previous meeting, that we would be the first municipality in the state of NH to undergo this. To me, first of all it is an incredibly important first step for the city to take but we are also leading the way in the state and there is nothing that suggests that we couldn't come back and make revisions. I think we should have an iterative process. If the data tells us that we need to iterate and alter or change course in whichever manner, the data can help drive those decisions but again, not to underline this but we don't have any data and our director should not have to file a 91-A request from the state to get that.

Alderman E. Sapienza stated I think we are all pretty much on the same page here. Could you just elaborate briefly? Your proposal here calls for ultimately a one-to-one needle exchange but it would just be a few months down the road, correct?

Mayor Ruais stated the initial ordinance amendment I was going to bring forward had a one-to-one exchange. After talking with Director Thomas and hearing some of the concerns that were raised, we are mandating an exchange, which is not mandated right now through our ordinance process because we have nothing dictating what is going on in our streets today. What I am saying is we are going to mandate an exchange but I don't think that we...

Alderman E. Sapienza interjected a one-to-one exchange.

Mayor Ruais replied no we are mandating that an exchange occurs but what I don't want to do is just act with an arbitrary number. I want to get data back that tells us how much we are giving out and how much we are getting back and then we can make an informed decision. Director Thomas spoke about this in the first meeting and her concerns with the spread of infectious disease with the restrictions so I don't want to go too far too fast. We are the first municipality in the state to do this and I think we should make decisions after we have data. As Alderman Thomas said and as I have repeatedly stated, this by no means has to be the last word on the matter. I just don't think we should operate without information and right now the City of Manchester has none.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked so you are proposing some flexibility here right.

Mayor Ruais answered yes. I think we need flexibility to begin and then we as a Board can make determinations after once we have information coming in.

Alderman Terrio stated I am going to oppose this as written. I am disappointed that the original proposal which was a one-to-one exchange has been changed. I understand the reason we do needle exchange and I support the concept of them. The reason we do needle exchanges is to prevent communicable diseases like HIV and Hepatitis but the problem is we heard during public comment that 1.9 million needles were handed out and 1.7 million were turned in so that is 200,000 dirty needles left behind in the city. That is almost two dirty needles for every man, woman and child in the City of Manchester. A one-to-one needle exchange would require the people to...I went down to the train tracks with the Fire Department and observed a needle exchange taking place and if I remember correctly if somebody said I am using three times a day they would give them like 21 needles for the week and if someone said five times they would give them 35. If we did a one-to-one needle exchange, these people are trained and professionals and they would get the dirty needles back and they would be disposed of in a safe way. I support the needle exchange because we want to prevent HIV and the spread of Hepatitis but we know that people with HIV and Hepatitis are using dirty needles and disposing of them...we now have up to 200,000 that have been thrown

around our city. Obviously not all 200,000 but some of those needles are dirty with HIV and Hepatitis so people can step on them or touch them and get infected. We are damned if we do and damned if we don't. If we don't give out the needles then one of the bad things is people will use dirty needles and maybe share with other people and spread communicable disease but on the other hand if we don't require one-to-one and get some of these dirty needles back, they are going out in the community on the ground. We have cleaning people and DPW picking them up. I am not sure about the 750' from a school. I live on the corner of S. Cypress and Brunelle. I could probably throw a stone to Jewett Street School. It doesn't really matter where you give the needles out because there is no needled exchange near my house yet there was a dirty needle in front of my house. My house is like a highway for kids. I live right near Jewett Street School and Southside and I live on the backside of Memorial. I have kids in the morning walking by and some slob threw a dirty needle in the street. It really doesn't matter where you give out the needles because they are mobile. We have a dilemma. Do we try to have harm reduction to reduce the spread of HIV and Hepatitis on one hand or do we try a one-to-one and try to reduce harm and prevent other people from getting stuck by a dirty needle? I am disappointed that you took the one-to-one out and I will be opposing it for that reason. Thank you.

Director Thomas stated I hear you alderman and that is why we have to have this conversation. You all need to decide where you need to land on this as a community. There are lots of different methodologies but I will tell you that the evidence shows that when you limit it to a one-to-one, you are not going to reach everybody that you need to reach. That is just the harsh reality. There is a risk. If we do that what happens if we have an HIV cluster or whatever? Do we take steps back? I am just cautionary about it. I also want to remind you that this is one of many interventions that we are trying to do to get control of the needles on the streets. You got a letter handed to you tonight from Director Gomez about the clean-ups they are doing on various walkways. We have taken our Director of Overdose Prevention and his team and they are now doing a couple of hours a week of clean-up. They are going out each week even though he is supposed to be preventing overdoses. He is adding that to his day. We are doing enhanced sweeps if you will. We have tried to do some education with the leagues. We have gotten posters out to all of the places. In the midst of all of this, I want to remind

you about the success we have had preventing overdoses. I am talking a dramatic decline for a city this size. It is not by accident or by chance that has happened. That is because of these concerted efforts. Has it involved needle exchange? Absolutely but that is also an opportunity to give our Narcan and other lifesaving tools. We are now on track...for the last two years just so you know we have reduced overdoses by 25% and fatalities by 44%. It was not unusual for this community to have 90 people die in a year from overdoses and we have reduced that to less than 45. I just bring that into the full picture because we are obviously trying to pull levers here to control what we are hearing as chief complaints from all of your constituents which is they don't want to see the needles and they don't want them in the recreational areas and in the ballfields. I have kids and I don't want my kids around those things either. That has to be a priority. We cannot do harm reduction to try to prevent harm on the individual if it inflicts harm on the community. There is a balance you need to strike and that is going to be your call on that one-for one. I knew that was going to probably be the toughest area in this to start with and that is why I like the pace of the Mayor saying let's start it and let's get data to the committee and bring it to the full Board so you guys can see what is happening and get a full picture. Then in a month or two we can reevaluate and if we have to then tighten the reins, let's do it. I would prefer a softer landing but again that is your judgment call.

Mayor Ruais stated I don't want the perfect to be the enemy of the good. We live right around the corner from each other, Alderman Terrio, and I totally get everything that you are saying. I run down the Massabesic trail and I certainly don't want to see any needles there either. I don't think the perfect should be the enemy of the good. If we look at what is included in this right now, there is no requirement to do any level of exchange in the city. This ordinance does it. There is no requirement for them to file paperwork and tell us the who, the what, the where, the when and the why. There is nothing like that. We will have no information if this is not supported. There is no requirement that this not be outside of playgrounds, libraries and daycare facilities. There is no requirement right now from a city standpoint to distribute educational materials. There is no prohibition against safe injection sites here in the City of Manchester. There are no fines associated with not complying with anything that we have here in the city. I don't think that the perfect should be the enemy of the good. If

we do have to come back and tighten the reins as the Director said, then I think we should do that with data. I don't think that we should ignore all of the good things that are in here because of one thing that I don't think we should be making decisions on without additional data. Again, I appreciate where you are coming from but I would just say please keep an open mind. I think there is a lot of really good stuff in here. I think this is the first step in an iterative process. To Alderman Fajardo's point, we should have them come back and testify and tell us the kinds of things they are doing but I think we lose that opportunity if we don't show that we as a city are willing to step forward and saying we want to have this dialogue but here are the parameters. Right now, it is the wild west. There are no parameters.

Alderman Terrio stated I know that you believe in evidence-based, peer reviewed data. I believe, if I heard correctly during public comment, that somebody suggested a safe injection center. That is extremely unpopular with the public.

Director Thomas replied I agree.

Alderman Terrio stated with that being said, what does the data tell us about safe injection centers on overdoses and transmissible diseases.

Director Thomas answered I can get you all of that data as a follow-up. In context, they are not widely carried out across the country but where they are, they have seen better outcomes. I will never as a director recommend that for this city. The city is 33 square miles. It is not a big geographic area. If we start layering services like this, it is going to show up in your streets and in your neighborhoods. It is just too condensed here. We are not a big New York City where it is spread out and you can absorb some of that or embed it in facilities that are designed for that. It is extremely costly to run those things. In my tenure, I don't anticipate ever seeing that come forward as a recommendation. Maybe 50 years from now as the city progresses but I don't think it is necessary at this point. I think there are other tools that we have in our toolbox that we are using that as I mentioned are making a difference.

Mayor Ruais stated in the latest data, we had a 23% reduction in overdoses and a 25% reduction in overdose fatalities.

Director Thomas responded correct for this year over last year.

Alderman Levasseur stated we talk about harm reduction for the individuals who are using these drugs. I was under the impression that the whole reason for us bringing a needle ordinance forward was for harm reduction for the citizens of the city. We keep forgetting about the people who live here and the people who have to play in our fields and walk along our streets. I get pictures at least once a week from some individual in the city of a needle in some location. In this report that just came out from Mr. Gomez, they had four clean-ups I assume in the month of September at a cost of \$10,361. One was at Bass Island, one at the Piscataquog Rail Trail, multiple alleys north of Valley between Pine and Hall, and Merrill Street South Back and they recovered 557 needles. It is not only the 557 needles but the \$10,361. If we are doing that every month, that is extra work that is done on weekends by a specialized crew because the mayor instituted a plan to do a lot more clean-up. Five hundred and fifty-seven needles were picked up. My concern has always been that our children and the citizens walking and running and doing everything are the ones that we have been concerned about. We spend more time being concerned about 150-300 drug addicts who are using these needles than we do about the population of 110,000 or more. I am confused because I thought the whole thing was to do a one-to-one. The people say they don't want a one-to-one and that is because they are not bringing those needles back. The last time you were here, Alderman Kantor brought this issue up and we had a one-and-a-half-hour discussion. Thank you, Alderman Kantor, because it looks like you got through to people. The number came out at 450,000 needles and we get back about 45,000. That is about 10%. Assuming 300 people are using those needles, that is 1,500 needles that one person would use. Assuming it is 600, that is 750 needles that someone would use. I am sure Dam Wright who I know is on top of this and really does hate the idea of people leaving their needles around and I mean it because I have been out there with him, would be surprised by that but maybe he is not because he realizes how many people are using them. A one-to-one exchange is the way to do the reduction, maybe not in harm to the individuals who are doing it but it makes them responsible for

something. In other words, if you want 35 needles, bring your 35 needles back. You are basically just letting them do whatever they want without any accountability or any repercussions. This will reduce the amount of needles going out dramatically. They will not be able to give them 50 needles if they don't give back 50 needles. You say there is a one-to-one exchange now or there was a thought of that. I knew it wasn't being followed. I have watched needle exchanges and seen people who come in with some. It is mostly people living at home and not living on the street who come and make the exchanges because they have better facilities to be able to store those needles. I have a few questions based on the ordinance. I thought the ordinance was very well done in easy English by the way. Thank you to the Solicitor's Office. They did a great job on all of this. Sometimes this legalese is tough to read even for an attorney. I am concerned about one issue and that is money for enforcement. So your department, Anna, is in charge of enforcement and of course Police and Fire are always engaged in this, probably Fire more than most. Where is the money going to come from for you guys to inspect? Most needle exchanges that I have witnessed have always been on the weekends, especially the one big one in the downtown area. Where is the money going to come from for you guys to inspect or can you not inspect or will you make some sort of adjustment in your budget?

Director Thomas replied that is an excellent point because it will be an added expense but you are talking about two to three programs. It is not like I am adding another 500 restaurants or something like that. We would bring this through the Environmental Health branch, which is already inspecting facilities for a whole host of things whether it is daycares or other institutions, even the schools or food establishments. They are very well skilled in knowing what to look for. We would devise guidelines that those inspectors would go out and use compared to this ordinance and the way we want to see them.

Alderman Levasseur asked do you have the manpower now to do this.

Director Thomas replied if it is only three and I am not going to go and inspect them every single week but we will ask probably in the process as this gets enacted to have them provide us with their plan. That is usually what we do with restaurants and others.

They give us how they plan to operate and the hours and all of those things and then that allows us to have a dialogue about where they are going to operate and we can go and visit them and kind of spot check that information.

Alderman Levasseur stated my concern is okay you are going to have an inspector and I was of the belief that it was going to be a one-to-one so my biggest concern was if you have an inspector there it will be a one-to-one and if there is not an inspector there it will not be a one-to-one. I believe, and it may be my hope and dream and never happen but my belief or hope would be that if it really is one-to-one that the people who want needles may go up and pick up 30 on their way to the needle exchange in areas they know they are.

Director Thomas responded some do by the way.

Alderman Levasseur stated that is great and that would help our departments, etc. My concern is if we are going to enforce a one-to-one, which is not in this ordinance and I think that is a mistake, then this would work for us. I think it would be a boost for the people who live in the City of Manchester and are concerned about it and most are that that is at least being implemented and inspected. I agree that it wouldn't be done all the time but spot inspectors are just as good as not because the people who are getting spot inspectors are not sure when it is going to happen and you don't have to show up in a uniform. It could be a plain clothes inspector or whatever. We know how that works and I think it would work well for you because they would always have to be concerned about it. My other issue very quickly and I don't mean to take up too much time is on the days and hours of operation. We are going to be able to propose hours so if we say it is going to be two hours on a Saturday or Sunday, they would have to follow that and that would give you a better ability to inspect because you know where they are going to be and have to be. Is that a provision that can be enforced?

Director Thomas answered I guess our approach to this is we don't want to be confrontational. We want to be partners in this and I think as long as we have open communication, we shouldn't have any problems.

Alderman Levasseur asked are they going to be confrontational.

Director Thomas replied I don't think so.

Alderman Levasseur stated okay then that should solve that issue. Quickly, it says "shall operate to an exchange only basis whereby an SSP participant shall receive sterile needles and needle units only by..." and that is where I thought it was a one-to-one, this particular section under 91.87. I thought that meant an SSP shall operate on an exchange only basis where an SSP participant shall receive sterile needles and needle units only providing the SSP with a used one. That doesn't mean one-to-one like I thought it did.

Mayor Ruais stated initially it did and after the conversations that I had back to my previous point, I felt like we should start by just mandating the exchange.

Alderman Levasseur asked has this been struck out. Am I reading the old one?

Mayor Ruais stated what I sent over this morning and what I emailed you last night...

Alderman Levasseur interjected this was just handed to me tonight.

Mayor Ruais stated that is the updated one.

Alderman Levasseur stated that is why I thought it was still in there because it says it or at least I am interpreting it that way.

Mayor Ruais responded the initial ordinance specifically stated one-for-one. This does not. This just mandates that an exchange occur and right now that is something again that we don't do. To respond to one question you had before, right now we don't know the times, dates, locations, personnel, volunteers or any of that. We don't have any of that information. We couldn't find this if we wanted to unless we proactively reached out. Passage of this allows us to start doing those inspections. Right now, we have no insight into what is going on. Again, I would go back to what I said earlier. I get that the

number is the big sticky wicket here. I don't think that the perfect should be the enemy of the good. I think this is a good place to start and we can always revisit it.

Alderman Levasseur stated it says they can only operate in the city if they are registered with the NH Department of Health & Human Services. Can we not register them here in our own city? Do we not have that ability because it is a state statute or can we do so? I would like to have them registered in our own city?

Mayor Ruais replied that is part of this ordinance. They will have to register with us. Should this pass, they will have to register with us and we will only register those that are registered with the state of NH.

Alderman Levasseur responded it doesn't say that they have to register here. It just says they can only operate if registered with the NH DHHS. It says "SSP's shall operate in the city only if registered with the NH Department of Health & Human Services." We can check to see if they are registered with DHHS but if a new one opens up or comes in and they are just a group of nice people who want to do a needle exchange and not registered, we would have to find out on a Saturday or Sunday but we could at least check in Manchester so they should be also...they can be registered in both places but I think they should be registered in Manchester.

Mayor Ruais stated if I missed that, that is on me. I couldn't agree with you more. The whole intent of this was that they would be registering with the City of Manchester.

Alderman Levasseur stated maybe we need to amend it to add that in.

Director Thomas stated under Section 91.84, essentially what we are asking in that is they are supplying to us everything they are supplying to DHHS to register. Essentially, they are registering in a sense with us.

Alderman Levasseur stated I have a note there that says by when. Do we give them a set time period like January 1 or November or December?

Director Thomas replied that is a good point. Maybe within 30 days or something.

Alderman Levasseur stated I hate to be a stickler. Maybe we shouldn't do this all in one swoop tonight. Maybe it should go to a committee to work out some details so we do it right. I don't want to end up getting sued.

Mayor Ruais stated we worked with the Solicitor and the group that had concerns. I think if you want explicit language in there that says you have to register with the city, I don't think that is a problem of all.

Director Thomas asked where did you get your data because I don't have the same numbers that you have based on my right-to-know request.

Alderman Levasseur answered that was just a discussion we had in this Chambers when somebody said there were 450,000 needles given out in the City of Manchester and we only got back 45,000. I don't know what the numbers are. I know there are a lot of people who pick them up like Dam so there are a lot that have probably gone missing. The needle exchange organization should be telling us. That should be a requirement in this ordinance like we gave out 10,000 needles and brought in 2,000. I don't think it is something that is a bad thing or something mean-spirited toward them. I just think it helps us with our information and then we know there are 8,000 needles out there somewhere. Some people throw them away on their own or maybe they bury them in the ground. They are there and we don't know that information.

Mayor Ruais responded that is another great point. I know that they do pick-ups but I don't have any problem stating explicitly that they shall pick up.

Alderman Levasseur replied or they should just tell us how many they got and how many they exchanged.

Mayor Ruais stated that is part of the data collection that we don't currently have that we will should this pass. That is the data on how many they have handed out and how many they collected.

Alderman Levasseur stated if we are not going to require one-to-one, we really want to know that. I would love to see us do a one-to-one because then we would know they are abiding by that. Again, I am talking about harm reduction for people who live here.

Mayor Ruais stated the way you started it I thought was perfect because that was the entire intention of us bringing this forward. It was because of Alderman Kantor's concerns and the hour and a half discussion we had that month and because of the conversation that Alderman Terrio and Alderman Burkush were present for in Ward 7 when we had the meeting about the winter warming station and we heard for two hours straight about needles. All of the conversations that I have had at all my town halls and all of the concerns that have been expressed by this Board, that was the genesis and driving force of us and the Solicitor's Office doing yeoman's work putting this together. The meeting on Monday morning with the coalition and the whole driving force is harm reduction for the community and making sure we are being responsive to their concerns in seeing these on the ground.

Alderman O'Neil stated I came in today supporting one-to-one like many of my colleagues. There was a revision that I want to applaud you for, Your Honor, and I believe multiple conversations today with Director Thomas. I will use my term because I am not as wise as you Your Honor but this is a step in the right direction. It may not be perfect but it is a step in the right direction and I think the Director will agree with that. One of the things that Anna hit home not only today but in previous conversations with her was you can't just think about this with drug use. We have Hepatitis C and HIV. We have to think of this as a good public health policy. That was important to me and I appreciate the time Anna has spent talking to me about this. I was trying to write down something very quickly when you were speaking to the committee. You said something about evidence-based data and five times more likely if they participated. Can you go over that again?

Director Thomas responded part of the evidence that has been shown across the country when these models are done well is that the constituents who access these services are five times more likely to end up in treatment and three times more likely to

quit using altogether. It is the fact that you are building a trusting relationship with someone who is probably at the lowest point of their life and it is that trust that you build up over time and you start getting them to a healthier place and making healthier choices. If giving them clean needles is the first step in that direction, it might lead to let's screen you for HIV or let's get you in the door to this counselor or this treatment provider. It is a relationship that you build with that client over time and that is why they are so successful. It is founded on trust.

Alderman O'Neil stated I appreciate that. I have learned a lot about the Harm Reduction Coalition. It has some very credible people involved with it. I heard today and we don't have to go into this tonight but about Queen City Exchange.

Director Thomas replied that is part of the Harm Reduction Coalition umbrella.

Alderman O'Neil asked so those people are part of the Harm Reduction Coalition.

Director Thomas answered that is correct. It is one of the many programs that they have in the state. They are the sole source provider for DHHS to provide these services in multiple communities.

Alderman O'Neil stated one of the things you did point out Anna is that we need to make sure but there may be one or two rogue groups out there handing out needles. That scares the heck of out me and I know it does you as well. I am very disappointed in the state that the director had to go through a right-to-know request. I flash back and Alderman Long will remember this but that Orange Street day center. I have never seen anything out of control. The state had no idea they were funding it and no idea what was going on. It was the most out of control place I have ever seen in my life. SNHU had to hire police officers in the parking lot it was so out of control. We need some help from the state. I do appreciate Anna's help with the youth fields, as well as the Parks Department. I think we still have a way to go because they are out there picking them up. Hopefully we are at least getting them in a good container. I am scared to death that they are around kids in this city and where they go. I appreciate the effort in trying to get the youth groups to be more diligent about what they are doing

like checking the dugouts first before the kids go in. I appreciate you taking the time. We had a very good discussion tonight and I think Anna will agree but I don't want to speak for her. This is not perfect but it is a step in the right direction.

Director Thomas responded agreed.

Alderman Kantor stated I totally agree that it is a step in the right direction and I am really grateful because this has been heavy on my heart since May 2023. I am concerned about the children and everyone walking through the parks and the people who are suffering from addiction. I still don't believe in handing out needles at all. I want to list the things that are my concerns. I really would prefer the one-to-one exchange but I am grateful that we are at least talking about it and going to make something happen. Passing out needles enables people to break laws and it keeps people from seeking real help that can be life changing and positive to help rebuild their lives and relationships. People still get diseases from sexual activity, etc. and when we are using drugs, we don't necessarily make the best decisions and we could do other things that aren't good for our community as well. When needles are used, there are complications such as overdose, bacterial fungal disease, strep and staph infections, abscess and this actually prolongs their pain and suffering of their deeper issues and the traumas that people have gone through. To me, I don't really believe in the needles at all. Also, this has been a burden on DPW and on all of us in Manchester. They have picked up 6,374 needles from 7/15/21 until 8/19/24. That means that 6,374 needles were on the ground that could have potentially been touched by anyone and that is not okay. That is where disease is created as well. We can twist this any which way we want but we have to look at all of the facts. Our loved ones are suffering and we need to help them as best we can. I do really appreciate you bringing this forward and everyone working on this. I also want to know who we hold accountable for when things go wrong and the needles cause things to happen? Our first responders have been there helping people and what they have to witness mentally and physically...who is held accountable when we pass out these needles? Who is paying for it? ER's? The long waits? We can't get our children in to see the doctors in a timely fashion because people are overdosing left and right. Who is paying the medical bills? Are we responsible because we are saying yes to the needles or is the state responsible for

passing out the needles? I want to know who is going to be held accountable if someone uses drugs with the needles and harms someone. Who is responsible for that?

Mayor Ruais stated the state authorized this in 2017.

Alderman Kantor asked so do we hold them responsible if someone gets harmed. Do you know what I mean? If someone who uses drugs goes out and harms someone because they used that needle with the drugs...I just feel that it is enabling and I really have to share that. I am grateful that we are moving forward.

Alderman T. Sapienza stated I keep hearing it is a step in the right direction. Well, it might be a small step in the right direction to try to get some information for the Health Director but it is not a step in the right direction to reduce the number of needles on the ground. To run a victory lap saying that we are accomplishing all of this stuff...it says in there that there won't be any safe use areas. Well, there are no safe use areas now so that is not an accomplishment. To say that it is an exchange now and it wasn't an exchange before. Big deal it is an exchange. The ground is littered with needles. All you have to do is pick one up and bring it there and they will give you as many needles as you desire apparently. We are rushing it. It might be a step in the right direction but it is premature and we are rushing it. We heard from the experts that you need a proper place to put them. That is not in here. I think we are doing this so we can feel good but we are not addressing the problem. We might be helping the director get some information but we are not addressing the problem of too many needles. You talk about getting data? These people are going to hand out a bunch of needles and they are going to tell you they collected the same amount or whatever they tell you but we are still going to have the city littered with needles. That is the data. The city is littered with needles. This is not going to reduce that.

Mayor Ruais responded I would respectfully disagree with that. I do think that this is going to allow us to have oversight, transparency and accountability into the programs that we don't currently have. Right now, we have no way to talk to them and work with them to reduce the number of needles that are going out. Right now, we don't know

what kind of educational materials are being shared to go in and say let's get you into treatment and stop engaging in what you are doing right now. Right now, there is no requirement at all for an exchange within our city. We don't know the groups that are operating in our city. There is a penalty mechanism to be enforced in here whereby now if we do find that there are now, to Alderman O'Neil's point, God forbid there are other organizations that are doing this, we can find them and penalize them. I understand and appreciate where you are coming from. I do think there is a reason why no other municipality has done this. I do think this is a good, positive first step in that direction and if we want to get stricter down the line, we have that opportunity but we can't do it without any information. We don't know who is operating here and we don't know how many needles are being collected and we don't know how many are being distributed and we don't know where they are or when they are. All of that gets solved with this.

Alderman T. Sapienza stated nothing gets solved with this. That is my point. The needles on the ground don't get solved with this. You will get some data and I will agree with you on that.

Alderman Fajardo stated I agree that yes, we are still going to have needles on the ground so it occurs to me...you are saying we can get stricter over time and sure we can but I am thinking we should probably be practical over time. I know it is written today that collections should not happen and it is the question I asked you earlier about them not being in public. I think the points that you raised about having kiosks, sure in places where kids are yes that makes sense but at the same time why wouldn't we put them where the kids are? I understand your point as well. What is the line between enabling or harming? We could split hairs all day but at the end of the day we have two problems. One, we have a communicable disease public health issue that we need to keep making progress on through needle exchange and we have a needle on the ground problem. I am wondering can we also talk about some kind of practical implementation.

Mayor Ruais responded I absolutely hear your point on the boxes and I hear Alderman T. Sapienza's point about being practical. I think the Director mentioned earlier and I

heard this in my meeting yesterday that there is a study that is going to come out from Dover about a pilot program they did where they had boxes, not kiosks, and I think again this is the point about data. I recognize and appreciate what you are saying, alderman, but this is the point about data. That data that we will get from Dover will show us how successful the efficacy of that program is. That would allow the Board to then make an amendment to this ordinance. Like I said, it is an iterative process. This does not have to be perfect but I do think it is a step forward and we can absolutely revisit it.

Alderman Morgan asked assuming we pass this tonight, what is the timeframe of moving towards one-for-one.

Mayor Ruais answered Alderman Thomas mentioned this earlier. The coalition is required to report to the state on a quarterly basis if I am not mistaken. The next quarterly report that they give to the state, we would have...what is included in this ordinance is that they provide us with what they provide the state and that includes data collection and number of needles going out and number of needles coming in. As soon as that next quarterly report is filed, assuming that this passes, we will have that data. Assuming this doesn't pass, Director Thomas would have to file another 91-A and go bang on a door in Concord to get that information.

Alderman Goonan stated I spoke to Anna and we kind of reminisced about how it was back in 2015/2016 just after the Spice epidemic and we became the epi center of opioids and overdoses. We talked forever about how there was absolutely no oversight. The state would have harm reduction people come in and we had no idea where they were or what times they were here. We were constantly going out there and taking pictures and asking do you know about this. I just think that communication was always the issue and just the mere fact that we are now able to get that data and are talking to the coalition, and hopefully we can start talking to the state, but I don't think you guys realize how huge this is if you weren't in the middle of it pulling your hair out. I really commend you for talking to the Harm Reduction Coalition and getting their buy-in. I think that is just the start. Just sharing information is going to be groundbreaking for us because we have never seen that before. I think this is a good first step. I appreciate

all of the work that you have done getting the two sides together and getting some buy-in. I think it is going to be great for the city.

Alderman Long stated as far as the 91-A, I asked them for the same information and I got it. I didn't know how many needle exchange programs were here. I assumed one but they told me there were more than one. There are actually two. I only got the report from one. Like she said the report didn't state...we should know how many people are using these programs. We don't know that number. That would be very helpful to us. I am assuming any state rep can get the information. I was a little perplexed over what the information was. The bill in 2017 had five or six criteria in it and I didn't see any of those being met and we are meeting those criteria when we appropriate money for this initiative. If the state is doing it, why don't we put our numbers together and that will help us to get better. I am seeing an issue with language right now. I don't know the harm it will do to send this to Bills on Second Reading. That meeting would happen in two weeks and then we could pass the whole thing in two weeks. It wouldn't have to go to Accounts. I think we should at least look at the language. I know I have read it a couple of times.

Mayor Ruais asked which part of the language.

Alderman Long answered I am hearing people say that some of the language is not in there.

Mayor Ruais stated the two things that I have heard, and correct me if I am wrong, but require them to register with the city and require them to pick up, which I think we could easily do.

Alderman Long replied that is two that we found now. We have been looking at this since Thursday. I think it would be good to send it to Bills on Second Reading who looks at language. Also, I am not sure of this but my understanding is that there is a major cost in disposing of needles. Is that correct?

Director Thomas answered yes.

Alderman Long stated okay so if we put up boxes the coalition saves money because we have to pay to dispose of them. Again, having that communication so that we both could do what is in the best interest of those in harm right now is my priority. This program is working and I am hearing that 3%-5% get enough help where they went to recovery. That is the best number I have heard.

Alderman Thomas stated I just want to mention that almost all of us have a concern about where they are and what is happening so why wouldn't we make it a fixed area as in maybe the Health Department parking lot. Really if you think about it, you have testing right there and you have overdose prevention right there with the team. You can monitor everything that you want and they are not there seven days a week. You will know everything that is going on. Regarding the boxes, it might sound simply as in let's put all of these syringe needle boxes in the city but I hate to say it but you can be in Dunkin Donuts parking lot and see that the addicted individuals are going to cigarette canisters and emptying them into their backpack and taking off. I am not really sure how the boxes are going to work if that were a thing. I do suggest looking into a fixed area. I know they have vans and everything but even if a van is going into Veteran's Park, that doesn't mean that only the people right around Veteran's Park are using it. People are coming from other areas of the city.

Director Thomas stated that is an excellent point because there are actually a couple of locations in the state that operate in collaboration with hospitals and The Doorways. That is kind of why we spoke to this in the ordinance to say it is an either or. I think most people would agree that this would be in a fixed facility if we could but I think the reality is that as we are doing this work now the goal is to meet people where they are at. Right now, there are a lot of people who are not accessing a fixed facility for health care or otherwise. This is the first step to reach those individuals and I think eventually get them linked. We have all of these partners that are trying to work together to get them linked to The Doorways and other services. I am not opposed to the Health Department but I think it is a little far north to where the population is now. There are lots of health departments across the country that do provide these services. I am not opposed to it at some point and I agree with you that there is a way to leverage

resources together but I think right now the bulk of the need is a little...we are actually driving out to that with our preventative public health van to meet them in those services.

Alderman Thomas asked so we are going out to meet these people. Are these people high risk in that they already have HIV or Hep C and you want to make sure you are giving them clean needles? I am really hoping that you are not just taking a van to where people just want to use type of thing.

Director Thomas answered I don't know. It is actually two-fold. We do know of those who have tested positive but we are also screening and trying to find those who may not know they are positive. So, it is a proactive approach as well so we can identify people and get them into treatment.

Alderman Barry stated I appreciate everything that you have done on this topic and everything this Board has done not only now but in the past. We tried to tackle this issue and I especially appreciate our health director. I am hoping that the governor is going to be advised of the frustration that one of his departments has put us through. It shouldn't have to be that she has to submit a right-to-know but because Alderman Long is also a state rep he gets the information just by asking. We should be able to get that. Hopefully the governor will be advised of this and talk to his department.

Alderman Levasseur moved to amend the motion and add the following to 91.84 (C): "An SSP shall register with the Manchester Health Department within 30 days of registering with the NH Department of Health & Human Services." Also, on the issue of notification of needles, I have been told by the Solicitor and City Clerk that there is already a requirement for all of these needle exchanges. It is a box and something that has to be filled out by the SSP itself and sent to the state but now under our ordinance they have to send it to us. That requirement will at least be given to us and it doesn't have to be codified because it already is in the language. It is not perfect but it is enough. It is just a matter of whether there is follow-up. So, if we know they are doing it on a Sunday, we expect that report in 30 days. I don't know if that has to be put in there or it already is. I think it is a month, right?

Director Thomas responded for all of the programs it has report submission on April 30, July 31, October 31 and January 31.

Alderman Levasseur replied so quarterly then. Okay so that requirement is already settled. The only issue is you don't agree with the one-to-one exchange which I obviously do but this ordinance is something we can move forward with, look at the data and then maybe implement that by the summer or something.

Alderman Barry stated what Alderman Levasseur was referring to with the 30-day notice, if they are not authorized to come here in the city and they do it on their own why wouldn't they have to go through permit process.

Mayor Ruais asked to operate in the city.

Alderman Barry answered yes to start handing out needles just on their own. We have someone that is authorized by the State of NH that is working with us but then you have some other groups coming in and doing it also. Do they have to go through a permit process? That would force them to notify the city.

Mayor Ruais stated I believe the permitting process was discussed during the period that we were having this conversation.

Katie Broderick, Solicitor's Office, stated right now I don't believe there is any statute requiring a permit process statewide. I think the discussion was that there would be some impediment to that. I can talk to you further if you would like.

Alderman Barry stated I think maybe this should go to Bills on Second Reading to iron some things out and make sure we are doing this properly.

Alderman Long asked so you are saying even if someone is not certified with the state they can be registered with the city. I don't think somebody should be able to come in with being certified by the state. Instead of registering, when they are certified with the

state, they should have to register with us if they are going to be providing services here?

Mayor Ruais stated that is what is in the ordinance now. Before they can come here, they have to be certified with the state. They can't come here unless they have been authorized by the state.

Alderman Long stated okay so when you register with the state you then have to register with the city.

Mayor Ruais stated that is what Alderman Levasseur just added.

Alderman Long stated I am wondering if we want them to register within 30 days after they get certified by the state. I can register with the state but not be certified and then the registration is out the window.

Director Thomas replied there is no certificate at the state. It is just a registration. You fill out a form and that's it.

Alderman Levasseur stated if I am hearing your concerns accurately, Alderman Barry, if somebody is doing this without the proper registration with the state, we have a fine of \$100/day up to \$1,000/day for each day and each day is to be considered a separate day. So, if they are doing it for two days, it could be a \$2,000 fine. So, if you come in here and we find out that you are just two people who want to exchange needles but you haven't registered with the state, part of the ordinance allows for a fine. Also, my added language was a friendly amendment to the ordinance on the floor.

Mayor Ruais asked could you repeat your amendment.

Alderman Levasseur moved to amend the ordinance Section 91.84 (C) and add "An SSP shall register with the Manchester Health Department within 30 days of registering with the NH Department of Health & Human Services."

Alderman Long asked so the motion is to refer this to Bills on Second Reading.

Mayor Ruais answered no. The motion before us is to suspend the rules and Ordain as amended.

Alderman Barry duly seconded the motion to amend.

Mayor Ruais called for a vote. The Clerk noted the motion is to suspend the rules and Ordain as amended. Alderman Terrio requested a roll call vote. Aldermen Terrio and T. Sapienza voted nay. Aldermen E. Sapienza, Burksuh, Barry, Vincent, Thomas, Morgan, Goonan, Long, Fajardo, Kantor, O'Neil, and Levasseur voted yea. The motion carried.

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

There were none.

31. Report(s) of the Special Committee on Alcohol, Other Drugs & Youth Services, if available.

There were none.

32. Letter of Intent from United Therapeutics Corporation, regarding the purchase and sale of approximately ten (10) parcels of real property commonly known as Hackett Hill.

Mayor Ruais stated I am going to skip this item until the end of the agenda.

33. Resolutions:

"Amending the FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$60,000) for the FY2025 CIP 211425 School Based Dental Program - Medicaid."

"Amending the FY2024 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Forty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$45,000) for the FY2024 CIP 212124 Oral Health Program"

"Amending the FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Three Hundred Seventy Five Thousand Dollars (\$375,000) for the FY2025 CIP 410625 Substance Abuse Reduction Initiative."

"Amending the FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) for the FY2025 CIP 410725 Project Safe Neighborhood - NICS 2025."

"Amending the FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Thirty-Eight Thousand Three Hundred Dollars (\$38,300) for the FY2025 CIP 410825 Highway Safety Grant."

"Amending the FY2022 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Ninety-Nine Dollars and Seventy-Nine Cents (\$7,899.79) for the FY2022 CIP 811122 ARPA - Community Event and Activation Grants."

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman O'Neil**, it was voted to waive the reading by titles only.*

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Fajardo**, it was voted that the Resolution sought to pass and be Enrolled.*

NEW BUSINESS

Alderman E. Sapienza stated I have a few quick questions for Chief Aldenberg. I am trying to get a better understanding of the relationship between the MPD and the federal law enforcement authorities. For example, when an arrest is made and it is determined that somebody is here illegally and an illegal immigrant, do the Manchester police notify the federal law enforcement authorities.

Allen Aldenberg, Police Chief, answered yes. We have had a longstanding policy which is actually a model policy shared across the state. I will read it to you. If an officer believes a person arrested is also an undocumented individual, the arresting officer may notify ICE and they may consider placing an immigration hold on the individual under the following circumstances: 1) if the person is arrested for a felony; 2) if the person was arrested for a misdemeanor involving violence or a misdemeanor that poses a threat to public safety; 3) if the person arrested is a previously deported illegal

individual; or 4) if the person is an NCIC and personally actively wanted by ICE for violating immigration law. We fully cooperate with federal immigration authorities when appropriate.

Alderman E. Sapienza replied that's great. So, we have open communication with the federal law enforcement authorities?

Chief Aldenberg responded yes, I have active task force officers at DEA and FBI and we fully cooperate with our federal law enforcement partners. We have a great relationship and zero concerns about it.

Alderman Levasseur asked are those reported anywhere. If you do have that situation are there any statistics kept?

Chief Aldenberg asked when we have an individual that meets that criteria.

Alderman Levasseur answered yes.

Chief Aldenberg stated it would be part of the officer's report and I can try to capture that data.

Alderman Levasseur stated I am just wondering if somewhere it is captured. I see statistics all over the place about how many came in that were murderers and all of these other things so I don't know how they are collecting that data and how it gets found out. I am not looking for any individuals or an individual number at this time. I was just wondering if when you report it to ICE if they are keeping that information somewhere.

Chief Aldenberg responded there is definitely documentation when we notify ICE.

Alderman Levasseur asked I am just wondering if they would be able to provide...so we know for a fact that you made say 36 arrests of undocumented...not that we report it in

the paper and I have never seen anything like that in a report but I was wondering if there is statistical data that shows that.

Chief Aldenberg responded I could find out for you.

Alderman Kantor stated we had a Chill Fest series this past August and we have one more concert on October 12 at The Hill at McIntyre. It is from 5 PM until 7 PM. All are welcome. It is a free concert. It is an incredible band, Shiloh Battles. It is the greatest band you have never heard of and I hope you guys show up because it is important to heal our community and music brings joy. Who doesn't love The Hill at McIntyre?

Alderman E. Sapienza stated I just want to let everyone know that you can always visit the court at 35 Amherst Street to see how it operates. We are all involved in this community. It is free and open to the public unless it is a juvenile case. We are open five days a week for anyone who wants to observe.

Mayor Ruais stated I went there earlier and he had to wand me in and it was packed.

Alderman E. Sapienza stated there is a lot going on there and it is not a bad way to spend a few hours. It can be eye-opening.

Alderman Morgan stated I would like to discuss the new Manchester logo and slogan. Can we have Jodie come up? I want to understand the process of how this new logo came to be and where it is going. I don't think it came to the Board for our review. If I am incorrect, I apologize.

Jodie Nazaka, Economic Development Director, stated you are correct. I can't stress enough that this is not the city logo. This is an Economic Development Office initiative. If it was to be fully adopted by the city as a standardized logo for business cards and letterhead and all of that, we have already discussed it with some of our department heads in meetings with the Mayor that it would then have to come before the Board. Right now, this is just an economic development tool that we are using to help promote the city. The truck that drives downtown for the street cleaning team is utilizing it. It is

an opportunity to better identify them as the street cleaning team and we at MEDO have adopted it and have it on our business cards. Other than that, if it was to go forward, it would be brought before the Board.

Alderman Morgan responded I fully understand that any logo or slogan you bring forward not everyone is going to like. We have heard that you can't see the H in Manchester and the slogan people may or may not understand but it is one of those things where whatever you put out there some people may not understand. I understand your approach. The only thing I ask is that you use a Manchester company for the branding. Maybe utilize some of the great local advertising companies to fully implement that moving forward.

Ms. Nazaka replied that is a great point and I am glad you mentioned it. We did go with an outside firm to do more of the research and the strategy part of it specifically because it was a firm that specializes in municipal branding and they kind of know the process. We have already started utilizing local firms to do some local content. One in particular we just worked with to do a video to build some civic pride in the city. You are absolutely right and our plan was always to use the outside firm to do the grunt work and then utilize the local firms to do the more asset building, photography, videography and all of that stuff.

Alderman Vincent stated I want to put out a thank you. West side, Ward 11, had its Rimmon Heights Block Party a few weeks ago. I thank the Mayor and Chief of Police and Fire Chief.

Mayor Ruais stated we got dunked.

Alderman Vincent replied that is correct. They participated and I wanted to take a moment to thank you all for that. It is a big deal. The Rimmon Heights Club works hard to try to encompass the west side. A lot of people think the west side is forgotten but trust me, we are just over the river. The other thing is I wanted to thank the Mayor and the Board for welcoming my scouts. That was a big deal. I can tell you a lot of them were really shy and really nervous. They performed well and I will certainly commend

them on their performance. Again, thank you for allowing that to happen. It is a big deal for a group of boys like that. I do preach a lot of values and I do preach and talk a lot about what we do here and how we try to make a difference in the city for the community as well. I will end by saying it was a tough decision tonight on this needle ordinance. A lot of us had a lot of concerns. I am concerned about the one-for-one but again I think the greater good is to get to that point and it takes time. Past Boards have worked on making this happen. I applaud you for coming forward with that Mayor. It is a big step and I do hope that we get the data we need and that we take care of this issue. It is not just about the people in the city and it is not just about the users, it is us as a community and I think as elected officials we owe it to the people of this city to do what is best for the city. I think this is a genuine good move and I look forward to seeing it progress down the road.

Alderman Long stated I just want the public to know that regarding homeless people moving out to other wards, we are looking at avenues to stop that. It is not being forgotten. We are thinking about how to stop that. All of us are getting calls from residents seeing people walk around their property and I know businesses outside of Elm Street have also called. It is not forgotten.

Alderman Fajardo stated I just wanted to say thank you to DPW, the Police Department, the Manchester School District Transit Department, and Alderman T. Sapienza for attending the neighborhood meeting that we had in Ward 4. It was after-hours and city staff showed up. It was a pretty interactive conversation and I have heard a lot of feedback from attendees in that neighborhood. It meant a lot to see so many staff members there to address their issues. Also, speaking of Public Works, this letter from Director Gomez about the Saturday clean-ups...thanks to your department for working on Saturday and doing this extra work. As much as we are talking a lot about problems that we have, I think there is a lot to acknowledge in all of the work that gets done. Thank you.

Alderman Barry moved to enter into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II(d) for consideration of property acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are

*adverse to those of the general community. **Alderman Vincent** duly seconded the motion. The motion carried on a unanimous roll call vote.*

Mayor Ruais called the meeting back to order.

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Vincent**, it was voted to seal the minutes.*

- 32.** Letter of Intent from United Therapeutics Corporation, regarding the purchase and sale of approximately ten (10) parcels of real property commonly known as Hackett Hill.

***Alderman Burkush** moved to authorize the Mayor to sign the LOI with United Therapeutics Corporation. **Alderman T. Sapienza** duly seconded the motion. Mayor Ruais called for a vote. The motion carried with Alderman O'Neil duly recorded in opposition.*

TABLED ITEM

- 35.** Report from the Committee on Community Improvement recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorizations providing for the transfer and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$400,000 for CIP 610625 80 Merrimack Street (Residence at Chestnut Phase II) be approved.
(Unanimous vote)
(Note: Tabled on September 4, 2024.)

This item remained on the table.

Mayor Ruais stated there is one other item of new business that I forgot to mention so I am going to ask Alderman Levasseur to appoint members to the Special Energy Committee to have a discussion surrounding community power. I have had a number of groups come to me since the beginning of this year to talk about the potential of us moving towards community power. I think there are a number of groups that are doing this work so it would be beneficial if that went through the committee structure to provide a recommendation to the Board.

Alderman Levasseur stated if anybody wants to be on the committee, just send me an email.

*There being no further business, on motion of **Alderman E. Sapienza**, duly seconded by **Alderman Vincent**, 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