

BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN

March 18, 2025 at 7:00 PM

Mayor Ruais called the meeting to order.

Mayor Ruais called on Alderman T. Sapienza to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

A moment of silence was observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

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

Absent: Aldermen Goonan, Barry, Thomas

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.

Deb Roux, 97 Springwood Way, stated:

I am here again to talk about our lovely monument to the forefathers. You will remember that last month I donated a print poster to the Mayor and I hope you found a nice place to hang it. Today I am going to be donating this book to Alderman Kantor and I also included a sign in/sign out sheet for all of you to take the opportunity to read it. I highly recommend you do. This monument represents the only type of government that has ever been formed that promotes liberty and it promotes liberty by showing us what makes up a form of government that promotes liberty – faith, morality, law, and education gives you liberty which is the fifth statue on this monument. When you have a form of government that promotes liberty, it is a government of the people, by the

people and for the people. The people in this form of government are the sovereign and their government works for them. It is so important for everybody in a position like you to understand what all of this means and you can even share it with the people in your community as well. It sits in Plymouth, MA right by Plymouth Rock. It stands 81' tall overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. It has two panels on it and I want to quickly read them. One reads "erected by a grateful people in remembrance of their labor, sacrifices and sufferings for the case of civil and religious liberty." When you first walk up to the monument, that is what you first read. Behind the monument, which represents what they are trying to say to the rest of the country, and it is a quote by Governor William Bradford, is "thus out of small beginnings greater things have been produced by his hand that made all things of nothing and gives being to all things that are. As one small candle may light a thousand, so the light here kindled has shone unto many yea in some sort to our whole nation let the glorious name of Jehovah have all the praise." I just hope you all take a chance to read it. I am going to be following up with an email to all of you to invite you on a trip to the monument. I am organizing a trip on April 27 and we will go and visit the monument and get a tour of the Town of Plymouth. It is a lot of great history and I hope you guys enjoy reading it. I thank you, Alderman Kantor, for taking care of this book and keeping track of where it is at.

Rick Glatz, 611 Silver Street, stated:

I would just like all of you to imagine, just imagine if every citizen in Manchester could watch these meetings and be part of this community. I am here to advocate for trying to get it on You Tube for everyone in this community. I know we can get it on Comcast and some other things but I think if we get it on You Tube you would have more participation and isn't that what makes a democracy work; when people are involved?

Mark Hayward, 302 Prospect Street, stated:

I am a semi-retired journalist and a fierce advocate for the First Amendment. I am here representing the New England First Amendment Coalition and myself. First, I want to applaud the Board for having these public participation sessions. You don't limit subject matter, you give a reasonable time for people to speak and you allow non-verbal communications such as signs. However, your Rule 3 does have some shortcomings and I would encourage you to remove them so you can strengthen this public

participation process. My first concern is prohibitions of speech. You have some prohibitions against vulgarity and profanity and the text of the First Amendment doesn't include any such exceptions. The First Amendment doesn't say speech has to be polite or speech has to be informed. It guarantees that speech is free and it has no restrictions such as the ones you have in Rule 3. Also, this is an issue of...it is rarely an issue here. People come here and they model good behavior. I don't really see why it is necessary. Third, what if there is a violation? These are rules and you can't arrest someone right? Are you going to force someone out? How is that going to look on the news? In summation, you have a rule that is unnecessary, unenforceable and unconstitutional. Like they say, if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Another issue we have is with signs. I applaud you for allowing signs and we recognize like the rule does that some can be obstructive or can be a security issue. If that is the case, we ask that if the sign is ordered removed that whoever does so like the mayor or whoever is presiding state on the record a reason for doing so. We at the New England First Amendment Coalition have proposed some changes. I think you guys have copies of it. If it comes up for consideration tonight or at some point in the near future, I would encourage you to change your rule and adopt our suggestions. Thank you very much.

Dana Dexter, 69 W. Merrimack Street, stated:

I am here on behalf of the Merrymaking on West Merrimack Street planning team, also known as the Merry Makers, to express our deepest gratitude for your support in making the second annual Merrymaking on West Merrimack a resounding success. Held on December 8, 2024, and I know we are late but you have had some busy meetings so I waited for a better meeting for you, it was held in the heart of the historic Amoskeag housing district. This event brought together nearly 450 attendees, 53 local businesses and artisans and countless community members to celebrate the holiday season, promote local businesses and highlight the rich history of our neighborhood. Your approval of funding through the CEAG grant was instrumental. It allowed us to expand the events reach, provide free admissions and activities for families, and invested in equipment that will ensure the event's sustainability in the years to come. This funding, combined with the support of local sponsors, made it possible for us to foster meaningful connections and directly benefit underserved children and families in our community. Additionally, we were incredibly thankful for the Proclamation

recognizing Merrymaking on West Merrimack. This thoughtful gesture elevated the significance of the event inspiring both attendees and organizers alike. It underscored the city's commitment to supporting initiatives that build community and create positive impact. This year's event saw remarkable growth. Attendance was more than doubled from 2023 and the business participation increased by at least 96% reflecting the strong momentum and enthusiasm generated by this effort. Highlights included a holiday craft market with local artisans, free arts and crafts for children, and a collaboration with Toys for Tots that collected nearly five large boxes of toys for local families in need. Looking ahead, we are eager to build on this year's success by expanding offerings for families, engaging more local businesses and deepening our partnerships with community organizations. With your continued support, we believe that Merrymaking on West Merrimack will not only remain a cherished tradition but also grow as a cornerstone of the community engagement in Manchester. On behalf of the Merrymakers and everyone who attended, volunteered or benefited from this event, thank you for your leadership and investment in events like these that bring our community together. We look forward to continuing this partnership and making Manchester an even more vibrant and connected city. Thank you.

*On motion of **Alderman O'Neil**, duly seconded by **Alderman Levasseur**, it was voted to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented.*

CONSENT AGENDA

Accept and Remand Funds

2. Donation of \$2,500 to the Fire Department from the Digital Federal Credit Union.

Information to be Received and Filed

3. February OYS Report.

REFERRALS TO COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

4. Resolutions:

“Amending the FY2023 Community Improvement Program authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000) for the FY2023 CIP 211723 Opioid Litigation Settlement Trust.”

“Amending the FY2023 and FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing, appropriating and transferring funds in the amount of Two Hundred One Thousand Dollars (\$201,000) for the FY2025 CIP 611125 Hope for New Hampshire Recovery: Hope Connections.”

“Amending the FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount One Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000) for the FY2025 CIP 611225 447 Union Street Community Engagement Training Center.”

“Amending the FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount One Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000) for the FY2025 CIP 611325 231 Merrimack Street Affordable Housing Program.”

“Amending the FY2019 and FY2021 Community Improvement Program, authorizing, appropriating and transferring funds in the amount of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) for the FY2021 CIP 711221 Sheffield PS Force Main.”

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

- 5.** Recommending the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$500,000 for CIP 211723 Opioid Litigation Settlement Trust be approved.
(Unanimous vote)
- 6.** Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorizations providing for the transfer and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$100,000 for CIP 711221 Sheffield PS Force Main be approved.
(Unanimous vote)
- 7.** Recommending that the request from the Library Director for an extension to the completion date of CIP 712424 Carpenter Library Interior Abatement & Painting to June 30, 2026, be approved.
(Unanimous vote)

8. Recommending that the request from the Planning and Community Development Director to change the administering department for CIP 810725 SNHU Arena Capital Improvements from Finance to DPW-Facilities be approved.
(Unanimous vote)
9. Recommending that the FY25 Second Quarter ARPA Funds Report be approved.
(Unanimous vote)
10. Recommending that the request from the Fire Chief for permission to donate a vehicle to Hope for NH Recovery in support of its Hope Connections program be approved.
(Unanimous vote)

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES/INSURANCE

11. Recommending that the request from the Public Health Director to change the funding structure of the department's Information Technology Support Specialist position from 100% federally funded to 50% City funded and 50% grant funded be approved.
(Unanimous vote)
12. Recommending that the request from the Library Director for the following changes to the department's complement:
 - Add one (1) Business Administrator position, grade 20
 - Un-fund one (1) existing Accountant I position, grade 16be approved.
(Unanimous vote)

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, HEALTH AND TRAFFIC

13. Recommending that the request from Stark Brewing to use a portion of Arms Lot that consists of nineteen (19) parking spaces for outdoor seating at a cost of \$1,260 be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Alderman Goonan who was absent)

JOINT SCHOOL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

14. Advising that the Manchester School District Priority I status and financial report for February 2025 submitted by LeftField has been accepted.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Terrio and O'Neil who were absent)

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

REGULAR BUSINESS

- 15.** Communication from Ted Kitchens, Airport Director, advising the Board of his resignation effective April 4, 2025.

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

- 16.** Communication from Thomas J. Craig advising the Board of his resignation as a member of the Manchester Public Television Board of Directors.

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

- 17.** Communication from Erika Connors advising the Board of her resignation as a member of the Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Commission.

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

- 18.** Nomination:
Senior Services Commission
Adam Langlois to fill a vacancy as a regular member, term to expire
January 1, 2028
*(Note: Pursuant to Rule 23 of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, this nomination
will layover until the next meeting of the Board.)*

- 19.** Confirmations:
Board of Health
Lara Quiroga as a regular member, term to expire July 1, 2028
Mary Seigle as a regular member, term to expire July 1, 2025
Zoning Board of Adjustment
Robert Breault as a regular member, term to expire March 1, 2028
Matthew Robert Carnevale Jr. as an alternate member, term to expire
March 1, 2027
Planning Board
Peter J. Lennon as an alternate member, term to expire May 1, 2027

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

- 20.** Communication from the Central Business Service District (CBSD) Advisory Board requesting an adjustment in the collection rate to \$400,000 and no changes to the boundaries of the CBSD for the upcoming fiscal year.

***Alderman Fajardo** moved to approve. **Alderman Long** duly seconded the motion.*

Alderman O'Neil stated I have some questions. The one concern, and I don't want to call it a complaint, over the years is that the services provided don't always get to the outlying part of the district when those are some of the businesses that pay the largest amount. What have we done in this pilot to address that?

Jodie Nazaka, Economic Development Director, replied that is a great question and that is something we absolutely heard over the last couple of years; that ratepayers in the far south end towards Elliot at River's Edge and the ratepayers in the far north end on North Elm Street weren't getting the same level of services that everyone in the downtown was. With this new street team program that we brought on, it went from two elderly employees to six employees operating on a six-day work week. They were able to beef that up from five days to six days and they were able to stretch out so now instead of just focusing on the downtown, we all it the movie theatre floor effect where they would clean an area in the downtown when they first got in and the second they move on from that area they are hitting it again first thing in the morning. So, they were never able to spread their efforts out to those other areas of the district. Now that there are more street team members, they can hit those areas. They have created a grid of the CBSD and every day they hit different sections of that grid. They do have more calls for service in the downtown area so you will see them more often in that, we don't call it the priority zone, but it is the more visible zone in the downtown area. Every day the whole district though is getting hit. We do get calls for service in all areas and often times myself or Eric are getting those and we send them right over to those locations no matter where they are in the district. With this new program, because there are more staff members on any given day, we can send them to the areas that have been historically neglected.

Alderman O'Neil asked are we tracking that at all.

Ms. Nazaka answered yes.

Alderman O'Neil asked so you can show when they were by Salmon and Elm or by South Elm Street.

Ms. Nazaka responded yes. Actually, I was just working with the team on that today. We are supposed to be getting heat maps. They track every time they have, let's say, a piece of large debris that they are picking up on Salmon & Elm. They would put that in and track exactly where they are picking up so then we can put that on a heat map and start tracking that in our reports. We are tracking that we just haven't started implementing that in our reporting yet but that is something we have been tracking so then we can go back and see that this area is a hot spot so we want to share that with the Police Department and DPW. These are areas that we either want to have the trash guys maybe take a bigger focus on when they are going through with the trash trucks or this is an area where we are seeing a lot of the needles that we are picking up so maybe we can have the police focus on that area. So, we have been tracking all of that stuff.

Alderman O'Neil asked and those areas are eligible for the same service that they get out in front of City Hall – graffiti removal or needle pick-up or just general garbage or whatever it may be.

Ms. Nazaka answered yes.

Mayor Ruais called for a vote. *The motion carried with Alderman Kantor being duly recorded in opposition.*

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

Sharon Wickens, Finance Officer, stated the FY25 general fund expenditure and revenue forecast as of March 18 based on department head estimates is as follows. The current projected general fund operating surplus is \$1,308,000. The operating surplus is comprised of an expenditure deficit of \$492,000 and a revenue surplus of \$1,800,000. The expenditure deficit relates primarily to Police and Public Works overtime. The expectation is that both of these expenditure deficit numbers will continue to improve before fiscal year end. The revenue surplus relates to interest income, motor vehicle registrations and an increase in permitting. The school district has provided the city with a permitting fee schedule for the Priority I project which shows a projected \$867,000 in permits to be issued before fiscal year end. Health care insurance costs are performing favorably against budget through February. The forecasted surplus does include \$200,000 in contingency. There were 24 retirements through March 14 compared with 25 a year ago. Severance paid through March 14 amounts to \$1,157,071 compared to \$941,814 a year ago. The severance reserve account is anticipated to have a balance of \$771,283 after all related entries have been posted. I have also attached a departmental overtime report as of March 7 and a summary by department of severance paid through March 14.

Alderman E. Sapienza stated you mentioned some surplus and some deficits. What is the greater number?

Ms. Wickens responded the greater number would be revenue. We have more surplus revenue than deficit.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked do you have a number or what the bottom line is.

Ms. Wickens replied the revenue surplus is \$1.8 million and the expenditure deficit is \$492,000. When you net them, you have a total surplus of \$1.3 million.

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

Mayor Ruais called the meeting back to order.

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

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

“Amending the FY2023 Community Improvement Program authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000) for the FY2023 CIP 211723 Opioid Litigation Settlement Trust.”

“Amending the FY2023 and FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing, appropriating and transferring funds in the amount of Two Hundred One Thousand Dollars (\$201,000) for the FY2025 CIP 611125 Hope for New Hampshire Recovery: Hope Connections.”

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ought to pass and be Enrolled.

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

25. Report(s) of the Committee on Administration/Information Systems, if available.

There were no reports.

26. Report(s) of the Committee on Lands & Buildings, if available.

The Committee on Lands & Buildings respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the Mayor be authorized to execute the Amendment to the Use of Premises Agreement between the State of New Hampshire-Department of Health and Human Services and the City of Manchester for the Tirrell House through June 30, 2027.

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

27. Resolutions:

“Amending the FY2023 Community Improvement Program authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000) for the FY2023 CIP 211723 Opioid Litigation Settlement Trust.”

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

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Terrio**, it was voted that the Resolutions ought to pass and be Enrolled.*

NEW BUSINESS

Alderman T. Sapienza stated we had a public speaker tonight from the First Amendment Coalition who talked about Rule 3 of the Board and submitted recommendations. I think we should *send those recommendations to the Administration Committee for review.*

Alderman Long *duly seconded the motion.*

Alderman E. Sapienza asked didn't we already discuss this.

Mayor Ruais answered yes. I believe it was March or April of last year and we voted on the new language. I think the vote may have been 12-2.

Alderman E. Sapienza asked so we are going to reopen it.

Mayor Ruais stated well we have a motion to send the recommendations to committee to discuss and then theoretically we could address it again.

Alderman T. Sapienza stated I would like to note that the First Amendment Coalition is a very well-respected organization and I think we should take their comments seriously.

Alderman Morgan asked what are we recommending.

Mayor Ruais replied we can send the language around to the entire Board. I remember when we had these conversations it was something that the Clerk and I along with the Solicitor's Office and I believe Alderman Long who brought in some recommendations from what they do at the state house worked on. This was a very well thought out and thoroughly discussed thoughtful approach. I certainly respect your opinion if you want to discuss it further. We can do that but I don't believe we need any additional amendments. If the Board wants to consider it, that is fine.

Mayor Ruais *called for a vote. Alderman E. Sapienza requested a roll call vote. Aldermen E. Sapienza, Vincent, Morgan and Terrio voted nay. Aldermen Burkush, Long, Fajardo, T. Sapienza, Kantor, O'Neil and Levasseur voted yea. The motion carried.*

Alderman Kantor stated I have a comment on what we were just talking about and feeling safe in this room. Back in January, February and March, I did not feel safe. This has to do with the cease fire. Having been raised Jewish, and I know my fellow Jewish

friends and family did not feel comfortable being here. The threat was real. I just need to put that out there because that was not okay.

TABLED ITEMS

- 28.** 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.

- 29.** Report from the Committee on Lands & Buildings recommending that the request from Alderman Morgan to name the soccer field at Sheridan-Emmett Park after Thamba Mbungu be approved.

(Unanimous vote with the exception of Alderman Long who abstained)

(Note: Tabled on November 19, 2024.)

This item remained on the table.

*There being no further business, on motion of **Alderman Terrio**, duly seconded by **Alderman E. Sapienza**, it was voted to adjourn.*

A True Record. Attest.



City Clerk