

BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

January 6, 2026 at 12:30 PM

The Mayor called the meeting to order.

The Mayor called for the Pledge of Allegiance, this function being led by Alderman Kaw-uh.

A moment of silence was observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Kaw-uh, Goonan, Dexter, Fajardo, Bonilla, Kantor, Trisciani, O'Neil, Terrio, Sapienza, Burkush, Barry, Vincent, Thomas

1. The Mayor advises that a motion is in order to adopt the rules of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen.

Alderman Terrio: Your Honor, I support most of the rules. But I do have a concern, actually opposition, to rule three's changes. I'd like to keep our public discussion the way it is.

Alderman Kaw-uh: I was one of the folks who brought forward the change to rule three. For everyone's awareness under rule three, public participation, one of the requirements of the previous board was that a member of the public must register name and topic with the City Clerk prior to the session beginning; that, in this proposed set of rules, is struck. The reason for it is because in the past for the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, and also presently for the Board of School Committee, if a member of the public is here but has not signed up before the meeting start time, they were previously provided an opportunity to speak, and I think that it's incumbent upon us as elected officials to listen to the public and give them a chance to speak and make it as easy as possible for our constituents to bring forward their thoughts and concerns. I would respectfully request that everyone support this change with the acknowledgement that it is still up to the mayor's discretion as to how long those individuals may speak for and other such things.

Alderman Trisciani: I absolutely agree that we are elected officials and everybody should have the right to speak. In my understanding, from talking to the Clerk, is the sign up for registering the name and the topic is really just more an issue for the minutes and the challenge of trying to understand who is signing up so that we can

make sure that's recorded properly. I do have a challenge with the last sentence with the mayor reserving the right to select speakers. I think that we as elected officials shouldn't be choosing who is allowed to speak to us. This is a public forum. This is the forum of the City of Manchester, and people should be allowed to speak to us on whatever topics they choose to bring up for the three-minute time period.

Alderman Terrio: May I suggest, if the Board is willing, we move on the balance and then we further discuss rule three. I would move that we adopt all the rules except for rule three at this time.

Alderman Barry: Well, I think we still need to discuss it.

Mayor Ruais: I think the idea was if nobody has concerns with the balance of the changes that are made here, we can move on the balance and then come back and have the discussion on rule three.

*On motion of **Alderman Goonan**, duly seconded by **Alderman Bonilla**, it was voted to approve the proposed rules, with the exception of rule 3.*

Matthew Normand, City Clerk: If I could make one comment on that, that sentence that is struck through on your agenda, if the Board is of a mind to follow the request of Alderman Kaw-uh, I would just ask that as was said by Alderman Trisciani, the sign-up portion of that still be maintained in the rules. It would look like, "a member of the public must register name and topic with the City Clerk", period. Leave that intact. If the Board's will is of a mind to strike this prior to the session beginning, just strike that.

Mayor Ruais: I appreciate that because I think the conversation that we've had is that there isn't a municipality that doesn't require sign ups before a meeting.

M. Normand: I'm not aware of a public body that doesn't have sign ups of some kind.

Mayor Ruais: The cleaner way to do it, if the Board wanted to hear from anybody that was in the meetings, we could go back to what we originally did prior to April of last year, and just say when the public comment period is done and everybody that has had the opportunity to sign up and speak has done so, I will then ask if there is anybody else that wishes to speak. If the Board is in favor of something like that, we could just return to how it was in early 2024. So all those in favor of allowing for the mayor to then say, once public comment has been completed with the list that the Clerk has, to say is there anybody else wishing to speak? Effectively, we'd be mirroring the rules of the School Board.

Alderman Terrio: To clarify, I understand the part where you're going to ask if there is anyone else wishing to speak. Are they still going to be required to sign up by 7:00PM?

M. Normand: I think that you still strike "prior to the session beginning"; you strike that portion of the sentence.

Alderman Terrio: So when do they have to stop signing up?

M. Normand: They're going to sign up before so they can get called.

Mayor Ruais: Then they'll state their name.

M. Normand: If there's anybody left after I've gone through the list, the mayor will ask if there is anybody remaining wishing to speak.

Alderman Barry: Just for clarification, we're still going to have a sign-up sheet until seven when the Clerk takes it away. If there's anyone after everyone's finished speaking, we go through that list.

Mayor Ruais: Correct. How it works now is the Clerk says the list is done. I'll then look at the audience and I'll say, is there anybody remaining that has not had the chance to speak that wishes to and then they'll come forward.

M. Normand: Maybe we just leave that sentence as it's written, with the understanding that you're going to ask the public if there's anyone else.

Mayor Ruais: Is everybody okay with that?

Alderman Kaw-uh: As long as that's the understanding.

Mayor Ruais: So are there nominations now for Chairman of the Board?

Alderman Kaw-uh: Do we have to move on rule three?

Mayor Ruais: I'm sorry. So all those in favor of making the alteration to rule three, as I described it, that we will allow for the mayor to ask if there is anybody additional in the public that wishes to speak that has not had a chance to do so?

*On motion of **Alderman Kaw-uh**, duly seconded by **Alderman Goonan**, it was voted to*

receive and file the proposed changes to rule 3 as presented, with the understanding that after the speakers listed on the public comment sign-up sheet have all been given an opportunity to speak, the mayor will ask the audience if there is anyone else present wishing to speak.

2. The Mayor entertains nominations for Chairman of the Board, term to expire January 2028.

Alderman O'Neil nominated ***Alderman Barry*** for Chairman of the Board, term to expire January 2028. ***Alderman Terrio*** duly seconded the motion.

Mayor Ruais: Are there any other nominations? If there are no other nominations, is there a motion to close nominations?

*On motion of **Alderman O'Neil**, duly seconded by **Alderman Kaw-uh**, it was voted to close nominations.*

Mayor Ruais: Nominations are now closed. I ask the Clerk to conduct a roll call vote, at which time each alderman present will state the name of their preferred candidate. The nominee receiving a majority of votes from the aldermen-elect will be confirmed as Chairman.

*On a unanimous roll call vote, **Alderman Barry** was confirmed as Chairman of the Board, term to expire January 2028.*

Mayor Ruais: Congratulations, Chairman Barry. I look forward to working with you.

3. The Mayor presents committee assignments, with first named as chair.

Mayor Ruais: The Chief of Staff is now going to distribute committee assignments, with the first named as committee chair.

*This being a special meeting of the Board, no further business can be presented and on motion of **Alderman Vincent**, duly seconded by **Alderman Barry**, 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

Meeting Start Time: 12:30 PM

Meeting End Time: 12:39 PM

Minutes Prepared By: Michael Intranuovo