BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN

December 16, 2025 at 7:00 PM

The Mayor called the meeting 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: Before we get into the public comment period, if the board would indulge me, I have a few recognitions I would like to make for our last meeting this term. John Fortier, our IT Director, please come forward. We made this unfortunate notice to the city last month that you'll be leaving us. This being the final meeting, I wanted to make sure we had formally recognized you for your service to the city of Manchester, to New Hampshire, and of course, to the United States. I have a resolution: Whereas John Fortier honorably served his country in the United States Army from August 1983 to August of 1987, continued full time service with the Army National Guard, and was activated for Operation Desert Storm from November 1990 to July of 1991, serving as a medevac crew chief, and Whereas, Mr. Fortier devoted a total of 15 years to active duty Army and full time Army National Guard service, demonstrating dedication, professionalism, and commitment to public service. And whereas, he began his career with the city in August of 1999 as a microcomputer support specialist and advanced through the roles of land administrator, network manager and Director in 2019, through his knowledge, leadership and hard work. And whereas, he has served the city for 26 years, providing reliable leadership over the city's technology systems and ensuring daily operations ran smoothly. And whereas his dedication was clearly demonstrated when he was called to resolve a major system outage on the morning of his daughter's wedding, successfully restoring critical systems and payroll operations under extraordinary pressure, I'm sure. And whereas he leaves the city with a lasting legacy of service, reliability and institutional knowledge. Now, therefore, be it resolved that I, on behalf of the City of Manchester and its residents, extend sincere gratitude for your years of honorable military service and your 26 years of dedicated service to the city, recognizing your leadership and lasting contributions to municipal operations, and congratulate you this evening on your retirement. Wishing you and your family continued happiness and success. I would also

like to take a few moments to thank some of our board members as well. Alderman Chris Morgan, I want to thank you for your years of service to the city within youth sports and your service to the Board of Aldermen in this previous term as well. These jobs, as we all know, can be difficult. They can be long hours. And I want to thank you for your service to the city of Manchester, both in your professional side with youth development within the city and your term of service here on the Board of Aldermen. And next we have Alderman Tony Sapienza. I want to thank you for your ten years of service on this Board of Alderman. I've always appreciated the opportunities that we have had to work together. I appreciate your advocacy, particularly when it pertained to our city workers. I know that that's what you do on the professional side within the unions, and your voice has always been a respected one and an appreciated one on this board. And I want to thank you for your service. Alderman Levasseur, I deeply appreciate your service to the city of Manchester for the eight terms that you have served on this board. I also respect and appreciate your background as well. Having put yourself through law school, opening a successful legal practice, opening multiple restaurants across the city, and of course, serving the city in this capacity as alderman for 16 years, for eight terms. I deeply appreciate your contributions to the city and the opportunities that we have had as well to work together. I want to thank you, Joe. And last but not least, Alderman Long and Senator Long as well. Alderman, over the last two years, I've had a real deep appreciation both for your institutional knowledge for the city, but the opportunities that we had to work together and sit down in my office and work through challenges on the board, it was always real important to me that we were able to sit down. And there were times when you say, I can't do it like this, I'm working with aldermen and I'm hearing that they want to go in this direction, but the opportunity to sit down and surrender our egos and have it be about the city and not about any kind of political games on the outside, but working together to move things forward for the city of Manchester. I always knew that when I was talking to you, it was going to be an honest and forthright conversation about what could be done, what couldn't be done, and I appreciated the opportunities that we had to work together. And I look forward to continue working with you up in Concord in your State Senate capacity. So, thank you for your service to the city.

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.

Glenn Ouellette, 112 Auburn Street: Merry Christmas and happy New Year to you all, especially the Aldermen that are not coming back. Maybe in the future, you never know what might happen. I'm going to stick to my guns. That problem that we have in the cemetery is not only in the cemetery, it's now bordering our community where I live. Last Wednesday, me and a woman who was also coming out of work, we had a hard time getting into our apartment on Auburn Street because they were occupying the steps and they were high. They had needles all over the steps and drugs, and they were doing the dance. And we all know what that is. We need to have a curfew. They are not honoring it. We found drug addicts in there that go in there and sell their drugs to their clients. That's not what that cemetery is there for. I still say that if there's no one in the cemetery during the curfew hours, no one is going to overdose or die. There'll be no trash. There'll be no needles, there'll be no poop piling up and there will be no stones turned over. We have to do something about it since they won't honor it. I and a lot of our neighbors in the neighborhood want those fences closed during the curfew. It's so simple. It costs very little. There's a police car that goes in there half an hour before curfew with two people in it. They make sure there's nobody in the cemetery, and they lock the gates in the morning when they come by. When it gets light, they open the gates. We need to enforce the laws or the criminals are going to run our city. So, I ask you again, close those doors during curfew. That's why they were put there to begin with. We just don't put up gates just for the heck of it. So please do that. Thank you for allowing me to sing; Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all, and I'm looking for the city to continue to grow. We are on a good growth path right now. And remember, housing is the answer to a lot of our problems. There's a lot of housing being built, but there's not enough affordable housing. I'm going to court on Christmas Eve to be evicted. Even though my rent is paid for. They're not

returning the checks after 25 years. It's a little bit too late. They've never missed a payment. We can't be doing that to our seniors. I've seen too many seniors outside that are 80 and 90, that are walking the streets at night because they've been evicted, because all they have is Social Security, and that doesn't pay the rent anymore. We're better than that. These people have lived here all their lives and they've worked. I'm still working. It doesn't make any sense. You are a good citizen and you're still being evicted.

Tom Bozoian, 336 Vinton Street: First, thank you, Your Honor, for nomination for the Parks Commission. I think I'll bring a unique perspective to that, having coached and played in these fields and courts my entire life and working alongside the parks division in my professional career as well. So thank you for that. And hopefully I'll get everybody's support on that. I am here to talk about the skate park a little bit and the parks in general. I bring a unique perspective being around it my entire life and seeing things, how things have changed. I think parks, the division itself has adapted. Now we're looking at pickleball, right? Who even heard of pickleball when we were kids? And that's like a big thing. And you know, this summer I saw cricket being played on our fields where baseball used to be played. So, you know, if you talk about a skate park or whatever you're talking about you have to adapt, right? I know the price tag is an issue with everybody, and I'm not privy to all the bonding information. I did watch a little bit of it. But, you know, if you look at that park, when I was a kid, that place was active with Little League, right? And active with softball. There were many, many leagues at Wolfe Park and at Lally Sullivan. That thing was active every single night. Since the basketball courts were brought in there, it has become more active. And the more activity, the less crime. And we saw that happen at other parks when it was less activity and Babe Ruth went away and baseball kind of went away, until the pickleball courts and the redesign of the playground over there and in the parking lot. They were having some rough times over there with some vagrants and such. But, you don't want that. You want activity. I'm not a skateboarder, but I just want to see it because Alderman O'Neil said he was going to skateboard if this thing happened, and I got to see that. Hopefully you guys look and find the funds for it if everybody's talking about private funding. Get somebody to pay for the whole thing or you can get somebody to come in and pay for upkeep and maybe do trees or bricks or innovative things that parks will think about.

Michael Cirelli, 1051 Union Street: I'm here to show support for building the skate park here in Manchester, New Hampshire. Skateboarding has been a part of my life for the last 38 years. I'm a skateboarder, photographer, and have spent most of my career photographing professional skateboarders in New England. During that time, I've had the opportunity to photograph many of New Hampshire's amazing skateboarders. And I've also had the opportunity to photograph Tony Hawk for a lot of the skateboard magazines that are out in California. Building this park would be a wonderful opportunity for the community, the kids, and the skateboard community. Without skateboarding personally, I would have never picked up a camera at the age of 16, gone to college for photography, got a master's degree in photography, built my photography business here in Manchester, became a photography teacher in the public schools for the last 24 years, and now I'm a professor at SNHU. Skateboarding has given me direction as a kid, and I want these kids in Manchester to have the same opportunity that I did.

Richard Plante, 53 Patterson Street: I'm a retired Army warrant officer, having served over 41 years in the Army and the Army National Guard. My wife and I have lived on Patterson Streets for some 48 years, where we raised our two sons who attended city schools. Both graduated from Manchester High School West and earned degrees at UNH and Keene; both played t-ball, minor league baseball, and major league baseball. I'm here tonight to ask for your support by voting in favor of the skate park at Lally Sullivan Complex. A project such as this one is long overdue. This past summer, I watched upgrades being made at Livingston Park and the immediate area. Why not consider the same for Wolfe Park and the Lally complex, which are very old and in serious need of construction related work? The complex, as proposed, will be a win-win for the city of Manchester. I must commend the Parks Department for keeping these fields clean, and well maintained. Without use, what is their value to our community? Why not repurpose the entire complex and convert it into a state of art complex for the people of the entire city to use? The Little League fields are abandoned. The area kids who choose to play baseball today are forced to go to South Little League, or they've just lost interest in America's game. For those who play basketball, the courts were replaced entirely a few years ago. This court is a first class, extremely popular in the spring, summer and early fall. You should drive by and visit the court some evening. On any given night, you might see anywhere from 25 to 40 young men or women playing basketball. And that doesn't include the spectators. And

they all play until dark. The best part? The players and spectators were all having fun. The first step in repurposing this complex is already done. Softball players use Wolfe Park heavily with upgraded lights and grounds. The potential for increased use will grow. A first-class facility will draw spectators and players to this park, and I'm also confident that the businesses and restaurants, gas stations in the Second and South Main Street area will also benefit. Another win-win. The skate park, I followed this project since it was first proposed when my wife and I attended the very first meeting, I must say the room was filled with enthusiasm and excitement when the design team briefed us on the scope of the project. The city needs to invest in a skate park other than a small skate park at Rock Rimmon. There is no place in the city of Manchester where the kids or adults can skate safely. The only alternative they have is to skate on city sidewalks and streets. I believe the skate park can be slightly misleading. The proposed park will also be available for other groups such as roller bladers and BMX riders. This opportunity is about our community. A famous quote from Kevin Costner is if they build it, he will come. And in our case, if you build it, they will come. This project is definitely needed in the city of Manchester.

Nick Lavallee, 251 Fremont Street: I'm here tonight to speak in support of the Wolfe Park Master Plan, specifically phase one B and the proposed funding. A modern skate park at Wolfe Park will create a safe, well-designed space for skaters while bringing new energy to an important community space. Skate parks encourage positive youth engagement and bring families and activity into our parks. While I don't personally skateboard, I believe in the culture that surrounds the sport and the community that skateboard builds. Although I can't do a kickflip to save my life, I have built lifelong friendships with skaters, several of which are here tonight and many of which are watching live on Manchester TV. Bonding: this project allows Manchester to move forward now, rather than delaying a high impact amenity that will only become more expensive over time. As I learned more about the full Wolfe Park Master plan, I was genuinely impressed. Our last speaker just mentioned this. It's thoughtful, well-rounded vision that includes things like walking paths, basketball, and pickleball courts. I want to give credit to our parks and rec department and everyone who helped shape this plan. Very impressive. Approving the funding is a chance to show leadership and a real commitment to recreation and long-term planning here in Manchester. I thank you, and I hope you guys make the right decision on this.

Robert McKahan, 42 Peacock Hill Road, Weare: I am a former resident at the English Village Condos on the west side. I am a Trinity High School graduate. I am currently raising four boys in Weare, New Hampshire. Skateboarding has been such a positive thing for my son Alex especially, my second born. It teaches him that with persistence, anything is possible. That persistence allows him to build self-confidence, one mastered trick at a time. Having a safe space for kids to skate would be so amazing for all the kids in the Greater Manchester area, which is why I'm here even though I'm no longer a resident. It's what brings us back. He's currently skating at the MPAL building once a week, which is an amazing experience. But as the speakers have said, our only outdoor park is in Rock Rimmon. Even though we don't live in Manchester, having a skate park in Manchester would bring us to the city more often as we can see the positive impact that skateboarding has on our son. Our son has been bullied in school. Skateboarding gives him an outlet where he can feel free. It also gives him the community that is supportive and encouraging. If you've ever been on a skate park, the gnarly tricks, everybody's building on them. Everybody's seeing what tricks can be done, what more can be done. You know, this isn't just affecting kids his age. It's affecting older kids, even adults. I think Alderman O'Neil, that would be amazing what I heard earlier, if we can get you on a skate park because it's what brings out the kids in us. It's what gives us life. Breathing that air, getting outside, getting outdoors. It's all about expression, young and old, while moving your bodies in a healthy way and challenging your limits and pushing beyond voting in favor of this skate park is voting for the next generation of kids who need a place to be themselves and to know themselves. And who knows? As the photographer spoke before, maybe the next Tony Hawk is in the city or in this state or in this community. And they all learn these tricks in the great city of Manchester.

Alex McKahan: Skateboarding has meant a lot to me, and building this skate park will mean that I will have a bigger and better skate park to skate at that is closer to where I live. It'd be a lot better to be building this park, and I'd have more fun and be able to learn more tricks and do what I like to do most because skateboarding is something that I enjoy a lot.

Karen Balban, 1460 Lake Shore Road: I live at 1460 Lakeshore Road. I've lived there for 25.5 years. I chose this area for its rural character, safety, and quiet atmosphere. I'm here to respectfully oppose city business on Lakeshore Road near the water treatment plant. Increased traffic and service vehicles create safety risks as Lakeshore is now a narrow road with limited shoulders, sidewalks and visibility. This will affect the residents as well as the pedestrians, cyclists and runners who frequent the area. Lakeshore also serves as a corridor for wildlife; deer, turkeys, turtles and other wildlife regularly cross the road and travel along it. Increasing traffic volume and vehicle speed raises the risk of vehicle-animal collision. Development would also disrupt the natural habitat that wildlife come to depend on. Residents invested here expecting a rural setting. Introducing a city business that changes the character, may impact property value, cause a financial burden on taxpayers, and it sets a precedent for further development. I'm not opposed to development. I'm opposed to the wrong place. I respectfully urge the board to place this project in an area already intended for commercial use.

Marcus Gould, 654 Proctor Road: I'm also here to talk about the Water Works project off of Lake Shore Road. And just to reiterate what was said, it's a residential area, and I don't think we should be adding any more commercial type buildings to the area. It's definitely going to decrease property values in the area. There's already a traffic problem there, and I would already want to talk to law enforcement about more traffic control in the area. And if they do see that, they have to put the new project there, then I would suggest, at the very least, that they go directly out to Candia Road from the building and not meander through Proctor Road and all the other neighborhoods there.

John Rainville, 118 Constant Street: The last five years, I've had the privilege of serving as executive director of the Manchester Police Athletic League. I've worked in youth services in Manchester for just shy of 30 years, and I also have a seven-year-old son who has taken up skateboarding recently. So, I'm here tonight to speak in favor of the skate park. In summer of 2021, MPAL started a year-round indoor skate park at our community center downtown. I just wanted to share a little bit about what I've learned about the skate community in that time. The first thing that impressed me is it's not the fringe sport that some people think; it is very popular. We've had 288 individual youth come through the program, and in the time that we've been running this program that looks like about 20

kids per session on average each week that come into our building. And some of those are very regular, coming three, four times a month throughout the year. And in addition to the kids coming through the program, I currently have 14 active adult volunteers that are coming regularly to share their skills with youth for free, volunteering their time to help kids learn skateboarding and get better, and just the fact that we have no other program at MPAL that has that many volunteers behind it. The fact that there's 14 volunteers coming in, adults ranging in age from 18 to 50, just kind of gives me an idea that the entire skate community is, in fact, much larger than that for the people that aren't yet volunteering. But the other thing I've realized is that these skaters in the community are taking care of each other. And I have no doubt that there's a huge commitment to taking care of a skate facility built in Manchester and then in addition to watching out for the property itself. They'll help build a culture that takes care of it; they are very supportive of kids out there. As the director of MPAL, I can attest that the park would get a lot of use. We would certainly be sending kids there regularly, taking field trips there, close proximity to our building. As a dad with a kid who has got an interest in skateboarding, my own experience just kind of shows me that there's a lot of demand out there. My little guy wanted to go to the park this summer. I'd have to drive out to Milford or out to Portsmouth. And he was on crazy schedules. I'd be there at eight in the morning and eight at night. There are always people at the park, families and people of all ages. There's definitely a lot of use. And this isn't just skateboarding. We see people on scooters out there, people doing BMX, bike riding, some roller bladers. Even so, it's a larger community than just skateboarding. You know, as the executive director of a nonprofit, I know it's hard to commit this kind of funding. But there's almost never a good time. This is something that Manchester needs now, and I hope that you'll consider approving this.

Kim Hughes, 17 Oak Street: I turned 75 the day before yesterday and I have moved 36 times in my lifetime. In 2005, I was lucky enough to move into my historical house and I have been there 20 years, the longest I've ever lived in any house. I was a special ed teacher for 44 years, and I've been to 48 states, and I've been married 52 years to David from Colebrook, New Hampshire. As you can tell, I love numbers, and I am speaking tonight to ask that you leave our neighborhood as an R2 rating, which is a really nice number. Please don't extend the R3 rating eastward up our hill towards Belmont. The next move that I'd like to move is across the street to Mount Carmel Nursing Home in 20

years or so, when I'm really old. I appreciate you listening to my spiel, and it's nice that you respect your elders. Keep our neighborhood as it is, please. It's an oasis for families and friends and marvelous properties. Don't be cutting up the historical houses and making them into 4 or 6 apartments or whatever else. There's no parking.

Josh Swett, 99 Saint Marie Street: I am here for the skate park. It was late summer afternoon in 2001, when my friend and I found an old skateboard in the basement of his new house, and within five minutes I was hooked. We spent the entire night trying to learn new tricks, which neither of us could do. But that was the moment I realized why I'd only ever been average at the sports I played. I tried hard, but my heart wasn't in it the same way it was when I stepped on a skateboard. I was 12, and for the next three months I did odd jobs for neighbors to buy my first board. As time went on, I learned a few tricks and made some new friends. And most importantly, I found a passion that would shape my life. I became a regular at the two skate parks of my hometown of Goffstown. One was close enough to skate to and one stayed open all winter. One of the greatest things about skateboarding is that you can do it when it works for you. You learn to manage your own time, motivate yourself, and push through failure; skills that carry into every part of life. And those parks changed my life. The same odd jobs I bought my first board with helped me save for a school trip to Spain, where I skated spots I only ever saw on videos. When I turned 16, skateboarding to school and work became my entire world. The determination I learned through skating helped me succeed at my jobs because I had clear goals, I wanted to afford my next board, my next trip, and my next opportunity. Those were defining years for me, and none of that would have happened without accessible skate parks. Places that gave me a chance to discover something that kept me active, motivated, and connected to a positive community. Right now, we are not giving kids in Manchester that same opportunity. Team sports don't work for everyone, and anyone who skates will tell you they learn more about teamwork at a skate park in one month than they ever did in years of organized sports. From the outside, it may look chaotic, but skaters understand flow, communication, and a shared responsibility. You learn to look out for one another. People say, just go skate Rock Rimmon. It remains far too small to meet the needs of this community. Others argue that private fundraising alone should build a park, but that's an unrealistic goal, especially within the timeline the city envisions. Another concern is raised is infrastructure and yes, roads and housing matter, but there's

only so much asphalt that can be laid in a given year. Funding for a skate park doesn't delay infrastructure projects. The real delay for the past several years was that there was a lack of agreed upon locations. And now we have one and it's time to move forward. If this fails tonight, can the city at least commit to reserving this land for the time it takes to raise the necessary funds? Manchester promotes itself as a city that values art and nightlife. Young people, especially art students, can tell when that message is purely performative. Skateboarding and art have always gone hand in hand. The culture of the murals, the creativity. Look at Cat Alley; it was once an otherwise unnoticed space, transformed into a destination through artistic expression, and a skate park can do the same. Imagine a yearly art contest where high school students in New Hampshire, Institute of Art students, paint murals directly onto the ramps. The park becomes both a place to skate and to live in canvas. And there's also a simple financial truth. If we don't build the skate park now, we will pay significantly more for it when we build it in ten years. Voting yes tonight is fiscally responsible because it saves taxpayer money while delivering real value now, and it opens up the door to future events and partnerships like this in Boston, host contests sponsored by brands such as Monster and Red Bull. These events draw visitors, support local businesses, and showcase the city in positive light. Skateboarding is now an Olympic sport and Manchester public schools already have skateboarding clubs. I personally introduced 288 kids to skateboarding. Imagine how many more people will come out of the woodwork when this park exists. Imagine how many people would be given the same chance I was to discover a passion that keeps them active, focused, and connected. Tonight, I'm asking you to vote yes. Vote yes to give kids a safe place, an inspiring place to grow. Vote yes in resilience and creativity and community. And vote yes because waiting will only make this project more expensive for everyone. And by voting yes, you can support local businesses, skate parks, professional builders and locals that will pour their heart into it.

Matt Juno, 130 Edward J. Roy Drive: I've been here my whole life. I've traveled around the country, skateboarding, snowboarding, all that. The thing that skateboards bring to communities is inclusion. So, it doesn't matter how you look, who you are, what you're doing. You're included. It promotes creativity. It promotes active lifestyles outside. As much as I agree with Josh on the art thing, you do notice most skate parks now are self-policed where you don't see graffiti, you don't see those things. You have older

generations like me and guys from the Manchester Fire Department that are at these parks all the time. I mean, I travel around the State of New Hampshire to go to skate parks. And you know what I see? I see families, I see kids outside without their phones in their hands. I see kids without their iPads, and I see kids that are actually going out and trying to do something, whether it's on a scooter, a bicycle, a skateboard, or even now where roller skating is getting big again, you see a lot of even the roller derby people out there. I think bringing a skate park to Manchester is going to really improve the quality of life for everybody, because even Alderman O'Neil, I'm building you a skateboard right now. You have to drop in. Alderman Kantor, you've asked me to teach you to skateboard, right? So, I think this is something that's going to be positive for the whole city. And not only that, but the state, because you look at what Portsmouth has done and they did it on a bond measure the same way we're trying to do it here. And that park now, the skate park was one of the best guys ever in the skateboard community around New England. We need this because this is going to not only bring better people to our community, but it's also going to build the community that we already have for not only kids, young adults and adults that can't afford to get into organized sports, because it's a free place to go. I mean, I'll give a kid a skateboard any day of the week if they need one. And that's the community that you're going to build. And I think this is something we need to do. I do appreciate you guys listening to me and I thank you. Hopefully we get this.

Dalton Odom, 329 Lake Ave: I've been skateboarding for 15 years, and I've been volunteering as a skateboard coach at Manchester Police Athletic League for around two years now. And I'm not too good at writing things down, so I'm just kind of going from the top of my head. But skateboarding has instilled something in me, and I get to, no pun intended, see it on a weekly basis get instilled in these kids, and that's perseverance, love, community, and service. And it's an amazing thing. Two years ago, I lost 60% of my vision due to a very rare eye disease. I still continue to skateboard. I still continue to help those kids because it not only helps me, but I see the heart those kids have, the courage, and see them face their fears. And it's not only just been in skateboarding for me, but it's transformed into all aspects of my life. It's helped me grieve my blindness tremendously. I'm the first blind student at Manchester Adult Education Center, the My Turn Education Center. I've been a house manager in Sober Living for the past four years. Last year I ran in the CMC marathon and I had one of my best friends navigate with me. All these different

things. I've been able to compete in five Jiu jitsu tournaments and get my blue belt, all because, no one ever taught me any of that stuff, it was just the skateboarding community and the kids cheering me on. They would always say, it's not how hard you fall. It's about how you get up. And I continue to live by that. And it's taught me perseverance. And I see those kids have that same perseverance, whether they come from broken homes or they didn't fit in with sports or whatever it may be, or they're getting bullied at school and they come there and it's a safe place for them. Manchester is in dire need of a skate park. I'm originally from Baltimore, Maryland, and we have skate parks, and I get to see how it transforms people's lives down there and brings them together. Up here, it would be a very nice thing for the community. Those kids fill my heart and it's always amazing when you get pulled to the side by one of their parents and they share with them how it's been changing their kids' lives and their own family's lives, and it's been bringing unity into them and their environment. And the same type of thing happens at a local skate park, and it brings a community together. And most of all, it brings the youth together. It keeps them away from trouble and out of bad things. The only time I'd focus on my grades is if my dad told me he was going to take my skateboard away, and it helped me get by and do all the things I needed to do.

Richard Girard, 283 Orange Street: The zoning ordinance before you tonight states its purpose is to conserve property values by preventing the harmful encroachment of incompatible uses, and by providing for the elimination of those uses that adversely affect neighborhood character development and value of property. If that were true, I wouldn't be here. I live in an R-2 district which was established to "maintain the integrity of existing moderate density neighborhoods that are nearly fully developed with a mix of single- and two-family structures". The only business use allowed is a bed and breakfast and the maximum unit count per building is two. For some reason my neighborhood and others like it across the city were changed to MX-1. Not only does this allow for units in any building, it adds over 80 new business uses; yes, 80. Do you think the value of your property or the character of your neighborhood would be conserved by having a restaurant move in next door? How about a dry cleaner, a laundromat, a sign shop, a sporting goods store, or a print shop? Won't character change when existing single- and two-family homes get chopped into three- and four-unit buildings, and cars are piled up on yards and sidewalks because there won't be any additional off-street parking to handle

this ridiculous increase in density and business use? And by the way, when those bedrooms disappear, where will families go and what will happen to the availability and affordability of their housing if they have kids? R2s will become the R3 I left years ago, and the R3s that get converted to MX2s are going to become like downtown if you allow those staggering density and use changes. How does any of this conserve neighborhood property values or character? Incompatible uses are being added, not removed. The planning director told Manchester Ink Link this rewrite was going to provide missing middle housing. He specifically mentioned needing more duplexes. Why then does it eliminate R2 neighborhoods in favor of the quads and 80 new business uses of the MX1? Such changes will be attractive to big absentee landlords. The well-documented increase in crime and poverty that comes with more density and more uses discourages owner occupancy, and encourages less desirable uses. Any comparison of the current R2 and R3 districts clearly demonstrates this. The demographic differences are undeniable. The director also said this rewrite uses form-based planning, an approach more focused on building appearance than use, which is why density and use explodes into residential areas. It's an ideological approach pushed by left wing Washington, DC based organization called Smart Growth America that prioritizes people over vehicles, equity in land use, and climate overall. It's on their website, and probably why pedestrian and bike paths are listed as primary uses in every zone, alongside renewable energy production and solar farms, which are allowed in the Rs zones. There is no example of this approach working to make communities more affordable or neighborhoods more livable anywhere in the country. None. If there were, they'd be prominently on display. They're not. This approach has always accelerated flight of middle class families to surrounding towns because it's hostile to what they want. What I sent you a month ago documented this beyond any doubt. In closing, two quick points. First, to rebut the argument that zones are being changed because of past variances. Let's be honest, there will always be someone seeking a variance to push for more intense uses. Second, for those who believe we should follow the experts, remember this: experts built and crashed the Titanic, amateurs built and piloted the Ark. Will you crash or pilot the good ship, Manchester?

Blaise Blouin, 236 Karatzas Avenue: This is in reference to the parking on Karatzas Ave. It's been an ongoing issue, I guess for the last 15 years or so. But it's excessively getting worse and worse day by day. The last storm was evident that we're back in the cycle

again. We've tried starting this earlier in the year, like in July, to discuss it because we knew we're in New England. Well, we're there and it's happening again. The street is not labeled no parking on both sides of the streets. Everyone is apprehensive to tow cars when they leave them there. There are safety issues. There are delivery issues. There are mail issues, which becomes a federal thing. The kids get off the bus, the kids safety is jeopardized coming up the street. The cars are parked everywhere. The vehicles are coming down. There's not two-way traffic. It's one way traffic. And best yet, you're depending on the road being clear and they're sliding into each other. There's been so many issues and opportunities for hazard. We're just fortunate it hasn't happened yet. So, we've asked now to do no parking tow zone to hopefully intimidate someone. Because if you have rules and you don't enforce them, what good is it? Everyone knows the lip service. We met with Crissy several times and Faye; they're both empathetic. They can see it. They've walked it. They see it for themselves. I ask you to really consider what are we doing here? We need enforcement. Because if you're saying no parking, but you let them park, everyone knows and they're laughing at you. It really is a safety issue. It's not an environmental issue. It's really all safety for the residents. If there was an emergency vehicle, it wouldn't happen. It just wouldn't happen. The other day, for the first time in 22 years, I had to call the fire department. At 5:30 in the morning, I woke up. Alarms are going all over my house. I have no clue. First of all, you're disoriented, right? I couldn't figure out what was happening. I had to push the dime and call the fire department. If that was in a situation where there was snow and the cars were parked on the street, that wouldn't have happened. They wouldn't have gotten up there. There's no vehicle, no ambulance, no anything. So, we're compromising someone's health, we're compromising standards. We're compromising safety. If we don't do this, it sounds like a very small thing, but it could be potentially very big. And who wants to own that? Think of it. If it was your neighborhood doing that, it's just too much.

Ryan Haas, 71 White Rock Hill Road, Bow: I grew up in Manchester. I went to high school in 1994. I'm here to petition for the skate park. It's absolutely warranted. It's been about 30 years. I was a great athlete. I got cut from Manchester West High School sports. I felt like a zero. I started skating with a bunch of my friends down at the warehouse behind Dunkin Donuts. It was a rundown building. We took materials out of dumpsters, and we built ramps, and we hung out there after school. Many other kids that didn't have super

families, didn't have a lot of money to enroll, got declined for their club team or their local athletic club, and threw in the towel on basketball, baseball, soccer, football, whatever it was you played. There's a lot of camaraderie that comes with skateboarding. There's a lot of leadership and diversity. When you feel that you can't do anything, you don't want to hunker down and sit at home and play Sega or Nintendo, but you go out after school and you hang out with your buddies at the park. They look after everybody, look after each other, especially the older guys. There's no bullying. There's none of that garbage. It's absolutely warranted at this time. I highly recommend for the future of our children, this skate park. It's an alternative for those that are not accepted in sports or their local networks or their whatever it is they endeavor to do. It gives them an alternative. And as everybody else kind of from the skateboard community understands, they police each other as well as the space.

Max Belanger, 31 Mill Road: I grew up in Nashua, but spent a lot of time skating in Manchester. I helped work on the Rock Rimmon Park, and during the build, I was like, this is too small. It's kind of like a slap in the face, which I get budget and all that good stuff, whatever. I went to Gill Stadium Park as a kid, and I know the stigma that that park had with the violence and the drugs. And going back to what the first guy said, people doing drugs and stuff, like so many kids that I know that went to high school with that didn't have an activity or a space to go to, or they would fall into this opiate epidemic that has been going on since I was in high school. I'm 34. I graduated in 2009, and I grew up at the park in Nashua, and we didn't put up with that. If there was someone nodding out or doing anything we said leave. It creates a positive environment. And I've traveled all across the world because of skateboarding and there's no age gap to friends that I have. I'm friends with 15 year old kids and friends with 50 year olds. It's a very inclusive thing. I guess what I'm trying to say is it creates a positive environment, lifelong friendships, traveling aspirations, and from the Gate City to the Queen City, I hope we can make this happen.

Stephen Light, 28 B Street: I've lived in this neighborhood now since 1991. I've seen a lot of good things come around, and I believe that the skate park is another opportunity for advancement in the city. It's a very positive thing. It's a community of not only young kids, but young adults and adults that all come together for a couple of purposes: to be creative,

be positive, and all inclusive. The skateboard community from what I know of it, is a very, very tight community. They look out for each other, they create opportunities for advancement for all kinds of good, positive things to happen. We just need to find the right way to get this taken care of and get it on the board, get it done. And I think both from a financial standpoint and everything else, this will definitely be just a complete win win for our city. The park itself will be located in a very convenient area. It's right off the highway where they're proposing to build this, which gives very easy access to anybody coming out here from any other city to skate at this park. I believe it's going to be an all-around positive thing for the neighborhood and for our city.

Jessica Margeson, Ward 4: I run the New Hampshire Tenant Union. In case any alderman would like to also attend a future meeting, they are held on the first Tuesday of every month on zoom. A link can be found by emailing me or on Facebook on the New Hampshire Tenant Union page. It may surprise you to find out that tonight I am not here to speak on affordable housing. Tonight, I am here to speak on the need for more very affordable housing, for the very low and extremely low-income housing, and for the need to change the language when speaking or addressing this need, so as not to distract from the goal of creating housing that everyone from our most vulnerable to a large portion of Manchester's workforce can actually afford. Too often, tenants now have to decide between rent and transportation, rent and food, rent and medicine. I could go on and on with this list, but I'm sure you get the point. The majority of our housing being built currently and for the past four years, has predominantly been built for 100% area median income. In fact, the last reported numbers are a little around $2,000 for 100% AMI and a little over $400 for those at 30% to 80%. In fact, 100% area median income is considered middle class, not low income. We are addressing the needs of the middle class and failing to recognize the needs of the low income and the very low income. Also, I feel that while the new zoning rules may not address all we wish it did, we see it as a positive step forward and ask the board to vote to pass tonight for the new updated zoning plan so that we may have another way to increase housing.

Patrick Beauzile, 288 Orange Street: I'm not a lawyer. I don't pretend to be one. But I know the laws out there are to be observed. I live at 28 Orange Street. I've been there for 32 years. I don't know much about zoning, but what I do know is if there is a law, it's got

to be respected and observed. Now, to give you an idea of what I'm talking about, let's suppose for a moment I'm driving a Ferrari on I-93 at 220 miles an hour. And the cop stopped me. To satisfy my desire, do you think the cop is going to say we're going to build you a bigger highway? Or will the cop say, sir, you're in violation. You know what will happen. The cop will say go on the race track because we're not going to change the law because of you. We know that. Let that sink in for a moment. If I was the mayor or the governor of New Hampshire, would you change the law for me? Someone put a business next to my house. Would you let that ride or would you do something about it? Think about that for a moment. I know I won't get an answer, but you can think about that. This is what's happening on Orange Street. Big companies come and they do whatever they want. And they're changing the law because of them. That's what you call power. As citizens, we follow the law. We don't act and ask for permission. We do follow the law. So, I would encourage you, friends, to think about that and do the reasonable thing for the city of Manchester, and for the neighborhood of Orange Street.

Mark Larochelle, 265 Myrtle Street: I'm speaking tonight about 265 Myrtle Street. So, I'm speaking specifically about our area being rezoned from R2 to MX1. I saw the map about a month or so ago, it came across my email. I'm looking at it, and I was really surprised and dismayed to see that somehow the lines have been redrawn to our particular neighborhood. From where I live or from some of the streets other folks spoke about, such as Orange Street, if it's fully developed already, as you probably know, mostly two families, there's been variances over the years. Pretty reasonable ones, I think, where someone converted a top floor to a studio apartment, that type of thing. But if you look east, north and south, it's all houses everywhere, people living there. Now that people have bought into that neighborhood, and no reasonable person in that neighborhood is going to want this change to have the possibility of the fairly increased density. I'm looking at C, dwelling multifamily. It doesn't really say 4 or 6, we know single family and two family is obviously clear, but multifamily isn't. So, I'm hopeful that maybe that could be reconsidered. Taking another look before you ultimately pass this one, a lot of people here spoke about the skate park. I'm not a skater myself. I tend to be in favor of it. I guess the bottom line is you took one away four years ago. I watched a lot of these meetings and, I am familiar with the names of all the folks on the board. So, I just want to wish the best for the outgoing aldermen. And good luck to the ones that are coming in.

Alyson Cobb, 65 West Merrimack Street: In 2023, my neighbors and I held the first Merrymaking on West Merrimack with the goal of getting to know our neighbors and recognizing one of the city's most beautiful and uncelebrated neighborhoods, the Amoskeag Millyard Housing District. That first year, over 150 people came out on a cold and rainy day to celebrate with us, which reinforced the idea for us that people wanted to see this within our community. At our third annual event just over a week ago, we welcomed over 1,100 people to kick off the holiday season. The event featured the best of Manchester, from live music to delicious food to activities for all ages. Over 75 local businesses were involved through sponsorships, onsite presence, donating raffle prizes and helping us to promote the event. We were also excited to welcome back the Fire Department, the Library Bookmobile, and the real star of the show, Millie from the Manchester Police Mounted Patrol. This event creates a safe, family friendly environment that brings together longtime residents, new neighbors and visitors to our city. This reinforces downtown Manchester as a welcoming destination and strengthens social connections that support neighborhood stability and public safety. Planning an event of this size is not easy, nor is it cheap. This event is a labor of love planned by myself and eight of my neighbors, who volunteer countless hours to make this event possible. We come from different backgrounds, but are motivated by our shared passion for engaging and strengthening our community. We were fortunate enough to receive a Community Event Activation grant from the city in 2023 and 2024. However, this year we transitioned to fully community raised funding while remaining committed to keeping the event free and open for all to increase our ability to raise funds. We founded a 501 nonprofit called the Downtown Manchester Neighbors Network through the support of 16 local businesses that share our vision for a vibrant downtown community. We successfully raised the over $15,000 that cost to hold this event. Finally, I want to thank the various city departments who supported the event, including Public Works, Police, Fire, Health, and the Clerk's Office. Their assistance with snow removal, road closures, health and safety compliance and permits were essential to making this a safe event for all. We look forward to meeting in the New Year to start planning for 2026 and we hope that Merrymaking can be used as a model for how resident led events can complement the city's broader goals around economic vitality, community well-being and local pride.

Dana Dexter, 69 West Merrimack Street: To further what my colleague Allison just spoke on, As Merrymaking has grown, it has naturally moved into a different category in terms of planning and permitting. While attendees experience the music, food and community in one day of the event, there is significant coordination happening behind the scenes around permits, safety planning, traffic management and health requirements to ensure everything runs smoothly. As organizers, we have gained a clearer understanding of how important it is for those requirements and expectations to be identified early in the process, particularly as standards in public safety considerations continue to evolve. Beginning those conversations earlier helps avoid last minute pressures and allows adequate time for planning and ultimate support and a safer, more successful event for everyone involved. Looking ahead, we are eager to engage earlier with the city departments during the permitting process so that parties have clarity, sufficient lead time and shared expectations as it gets underway. I want to offer a sincere thank you to the Manchester Police Department, Fire Department. City Clerk's office, Health Department and DPW. Your willingness to work with us and support this event played a critical role in making it possible. Some of the most memorable moments of the day came directly from you. Millie, the police department's comfort pony, was without question one of the most popular attractions, and the fire department's touch a truck drew families all afternoon. Those moments mattered as they created connections, especially for children, and showed the community a very human side of city services. Events like Merrymaking matter because they activate downtown as a neighborhood, not just as a destination. They bring residents, business and visitors together in a way that feels authentic and welcoming and helping experience downtown Manchester as a safe place to gather, not just pass through. At a broader level, these kinds of shared experiences build community pride and economic vitality, and they are often what distinguished good communities from the very best ones. As this is the final meeting of the current Board of Mayor and Aldermen, I want to thank you for your service to Manchester. Looking ahead, on January 6th, I will have the honor of joining this board as the ward three alderman. I am very much looking forward to continuing this kind of collaboration and working with the city residents and organizers to make thoughtful, well-planned community events possible.

Rob Silva, 93 Gordon Street: Please bear with me. I'm not a professional speaker and I did not write notes for this one. I'd like to draw attention to a project that is being proposed.

It's meant to be built on wetlands. It's a large-scale development; 30 units in total and five townhouses in an area that's only supposed to have single family homes. To piggyback off somebody else that spoke earlier, it seems like rules only apply to regular people. So, this developer with deep pockets seems to be getting this project to come through or being pushed through rather rapidly with very little pushback. And it's kind of alarming. For wetlands, you're not supposed to be able to build on that. Nobody's done it in this particular area in 300 years. For some reason he's getting this. You're not supposed to build all these different houses in single family areas. But for some reason, that's happening now. As a building engineer, I've looked at these architectural renderings and there are serious problems with the actual design itself that the city needs to be aware of, and everyone needs to be aware of the way they have this set up. I wish I had it in front of me so you could see it. They plan on building retaining walls in those wetlands, which stop the water from going back into the wetlands where they're building. They also want to take out thousands of trees that are absorbing all of the wetlands. That water has nowhere to go except to the surrounding areas and those neighborhoods that have built up around those wetlands. Now, this ties into a bunch of different categories. I know that this would normally be the conservation committee, and they've already kind of looked at this. The planning committee has already kind of looked at this, but if this does in fact cause damage to the surrounding areas that were already built around these wetlands, because those wetlands exist, there's no plan in place right now for any infrastructure for improving the DPW system, adding any drainage, excavating, infilling, dredging, diverting the water to anywhere else that will cost the taxpayers millions of dollars in infrastructure and makes this a Trojan horse deal. If people don't actually take a really close look at this and the whole plan is being worked on, or we're moving forward with this even though the developer is the only one that did a wetlands impact survey. They paid for it. And of course, they're getting favorable results before this thing moves forward. The city really should conduct its own wetlands impact survey and make sure you're not wrecking everybody's neighborhoods and everybody's houses. That's a lot of potential lawsuits, and insurance companies are only going to cover you for flood insurance once or twice.

Robin Masters, 19 Medford Street: I'm piggybacking on what Rob was talking about. That same area, 30 units. We're interested in opposing or a modification of the proposal. This is not affordable housing. It's new construction. It's a high property value area R1B close

to 93. We've talked about that before, but this project would increase the tax base, but it's offset by a huge infrastructure cost and potential legal matters, especially due to the flooding. The wetlands are at the bottom of Medford Park and the water tanks and old reservoir on Mammoth Road, with piping issues and leaking into the abutting properties. As he said, the DPW said the current infrastructure is insufficient to handle more water. The proposed development includes cutting down trees that absorb water, adding foundations and weight, adding retaining walls to protect the property and the church, which directs excess water plus refuse from 30 units toward Gordon and Ruth Ave. Ruth Ave is at a lower elevation than the proposed development area, and it's already flooding. They only have one sewer. They need at least three more to manage this. Gordon Street abutters already have flooding. It seems that the city is going to pass this, and residents are not satisfied that their input was heard regarding serious potential flooding, huge infrastructure needing impartial studies for drainage, and the whole traffic issue is another whole thing, but we're focusing on the water issue. It's not clear that all the affected areas were examined. We have 338 names on a petition opposing this and all Manchester taxpayers will be affected by infrastructure and legal costs. The city and representatives could have legal liability and personal liability for negligence since they were appraised of the hazards of this project. In conclusion, the citizens systematically are excluded and are concerned about major risks disregarded, insufficient checks and balances at the December 4 planning meeting. Yet, on the other hand, we feel like things have been coming together in terms of supporters and information to protect the people and land, and I feel assured that the city will do the right thing and oppose this plan, or at least consider a modification for half of the area, 4.66 acres that is not on designated wetlands.

Melodye Smith, 389 Pearl Street: First off, I just wanted to say thank you to all the aldermen for doing such a wonderful job for the city of Manchester. And thank you for all your hard work. But tonight, I specifically want to talk about the gratitude that I have for our Alderman Joe Kelly Levasseur. For years, he has been more than an elected official. He has been a voice for the unheard, a champion for the underdog, and a steady, principled force when it mattered most. Public service is not easy. It demands courage, clarity, and a willingness to stand up even when standing up is the harder choice. Time after time, he chose the harder path. The right path. He spoke truth when silence would have been simpler. He pushed for fairness when resistance was strong. He fought for the

people who needed him the most, not because it was politically convenient, but because it is who he is at his core. He showed us what leadership looks like, even when it is rooted in integrity. He listened. He truly listened to his constituents. He met people where they were, whether that meant walking the neighborhoods, attending late night meetings, or answering tough questions with honesty and respect. He carried our concerns into every chamber and every conversation, refusing to let them be ignored. I'll be honest, my heart is heavy knowing that he won't be our voice at City Hall. His absence will be felt deeply. We are losing not only an advocate, but a steady and moral compass that guided the city through challenges and change. But tonight is not simply about what we are losing. It is about what he has given years of service, a legacy of courage, and countless moments when he reminded us that there are good people in public service that truly do make a difference. So, Alderman Levasseur, thank you. Thank you for every long night, every difficult decision, every time you stood up when others sat down. Thank you for believing in us and never forgetting who you served. You have made the city better and you have made us better. Though your time in this cycle of office is over, your impact will continue to shape the city for years to come, and we hope truly that this is just an intermission time in your service to the city and from the bottom of my heart and on behalf of a grateful community, I just wanted to say thank you.

Kim Tufts, 1568 Lake Shore Road: As a concerned resident and abutters to the proposed Water Works Administration vehicle building, we live at 1568 Lake Shore Road and have, for the past 25 years, raised our three children who attended the Manchester schools. We want to share how deeply this proposal affects our neighborhood, our neighbors, and the surrounding environment that we love so much. I'm not sure if you've all driven down Lake Shore Road. It is a beautiful place. This is a quiet residential area that many of us chose specifically for its peace, natural setting, and proximity to wetlands and wildlife habitat. The introduction of a large vehicle facility would bring significant truck traffic noise; we already have vibration, diesel emissions, and daily operational activity to streets that were never designed for this level of use. This would dramatically change the character of our neighborhood and impact the day to day lives of our residents. Of particular concern is the disruption of the wildlife and wetlands. According to the EPA, wetlands are critical ecosystems that support wildlife, protect water quality and reduce flooding. We already have a very high water table as we are right across from Lake Massabesic. Construction

and ongoing heavy vehicle use near wetlands can permanently damage these systems, fragment habitats, and displace the beautiful wildlife that we enjoy. Many of us regularly see our deer, birds and other wildlife in the area. This project threatens that natural balance. As a realtor, there is also a real concern about property values. Studies consistently show that proximity to industrial or fleet facilities, increased traffic routes, and noise pollution can negatively impact our home values and buyer perception. For the homeowners who have invested their life savings into their homes, many of which we all have lived there for numerous years, it is a serious and lasting concern. This neighborhood has pushed back many years ago if you can remember, when this was proposed initially, and those concerns still stand. We respectfully ask the city to reconsider this location and explore alternative access points or sites that would route traffic away from residential streets, such as Candia Road rather than Lake Shore Road, Island Pond, or Proctor Street as a cut through. We understand the need for city infrastructure, but we also ask the decisions be made with care for our residents, environmental preservation, and long-term community impact.

Chris Evans, 595 Chestnut Street: I'm here to talk about the zoning proposals changes. I grew up here in the city on the west side and the north end, then the east side. I've watched the city evolve, grow, change, and it continues to grow. At 18 years old, I got my real estate license and have been a real estate broker ever since, and an investor, property owner. I work with the New Hampshire Association of Realtors Public Policy, where we advocate for housing needs for all people, all ages, all incomes, all abilities. The community development team has been amazing to work with and interface with. They've had amazing dedication and effort and putting together this new zoning ordinance. I am in support of adopting this newly updated zoning. There is no zoning ordinance that can make all people happy. There's always going to be fear of change. There are people who are going to predict catastrophe, the outer zone is going to be flooded with this and everybody's going to die. But what's important is that there is growth. There is going to be a future here. The city is leading the efforts in the state in the housing and economic success of this state. Mr. Belanger said that this is a living, evolving document and that the city will continue to monitor the results and make corrections and course changes as it goes. I think that's important that everybody looks towards the future. I'm working on a couple projects right now in Manchester where the zoning changes, if

adopted, would allow a couple new duplexes and four rental housing uses, which are going to be dedicated towards housing for nursing nearby the Elliott Hospital, and another development if this is passed, which might allow 50 more compact homes. So, I thank all the city and the staff and the volunteers for all your efforts, your vision for our future. There will continue to be growth. I encourage adopting the ordinance. This is important for our city, for the state, for the residents, for a vibrant, successful future.

John White, 178 Milford Street: I'm here to show support for the skate park. I think it's an extremely important asset that the city of Manchester needs. It supports all ages and all demographics. It's quite frankly disappointing that the largest city in the state has the smallest skate park. I came from the town of Plymouth where there were no skate parks. We got kicked out of the college campus every week, and the community there, when I was a teenager in high school, helped get a local park built that is a pretty decent size for a small town of 5,000 people. Since then, I've been involved when I was way older, inviting teenagers to go speak at the Derry Town Hall to get that skate park built. And it's in a great location that won't have some of the problems the old Manchester skate park had. It helped make Manchester a destination city. There's a lot of local businesses surrounding that. People travel to go to skate parks. I know people all over New England drive up here from Connecticut, go to a skate park in Portsmouth, then go out to dinner afterwards before they make the long trek home. I just think there's so many reasons that it's extremely necessary for everyone in and around our community.

Cassidy Stephens, 194 Spruce Street: I am Cassidy Stephens, and that's my dad, Arnie Stephens, and we're here for the skate park.

Arnie Stephens, 194 Spruce Street: I'm Arnie. I'm a father of three kids. I work hard, but being a single father, I don't have a lot of money. I pay my bills. I do what I have to do, but we can't really afford to go out and eat, go out to the movies, and we don't have tons of things to do. We just moved here not even two years ago. My daughter didn't really have friends. I heard about MPAL, so I started to take my daughter there. And that's when she started learning skateboarding, which encouraged her brother, too. They love it. And one thing that we don't love is that we can only do it for an hour a week. I really think this would be incredible for the community for the next generations. I'm sure all of you have

kids or grandkids or nieces or nephews who are just stuck behind a controller getting addicted to gaming. We want better for our kids and our grandkids, I hope, and I think that this is the best thing for them.

Troy Micklon, 29 Ode Way: I have two topics for tonight. The first is my opposition for the skate park, though I don't have an issue with the city having one or its location. Rather, my opposition is in regard to the prioritization of our use of our tax dollars. I've been to Wolfe Park and have seen the poor conditions of the baseball fields, their dugouts, other structures there. We should focus on what we have and plan on keeping as outlined in the master plan, rather than building something else first. This park is going to cost us millions of dollars. In comparison, a non-profit is opening an indoor skate park in Nashua this winter, where they're going to be paying $60,000 a year in rent and utilities and $30,000 on ramps and construction costs. That is going to be used year-round while ours will be used only for a fraction of that time, and for a significantly larger amount of money. We could use that money towards other priorities that residents constantly raise, like our education system, reducing housing costs, providing more resources to our first responders, and other needs such as helping the homeless. For my second topic, we all know that a new board is going to be sworn in soon and I want to again congratulate all those that won their re-elections, including Alderman Burkush. And more importantly, I want to thank those that won't be returning, regardless of political party or views on different issues. You put yourselves out there to serve the city and its residents. And for that I once again say thank you.

Mark Biggar, 3 Eagle Nest Way: First and foremost I'm here in support of the skate park. I've been an instructor at MPAL for just two years now. I have seen many kids come in through there, much similar to myself. I know you guys are probably going to yawn at this, but when I was about 13 years old, and I didn't have any other sports, any other friends, I was just kind of like that goofy kid that made fun of everybody. I still kind of am. When I was 13 years old, my parents split and I was living in Londonderry. I would skate six and a half miles to my skate park. When I went there I just met a bunch of weird dudes. We all hung out. We all found similarities. And during that time frame, my parents were going through a nasty divorce. I didn't want to be home. The one thing I wanted to do was be around my friends. So, it gave me that outlet to. I'd skate 13 miles round trip, not to sound

like my grandfather, through the snow, back and forth, uphill. I used to do that religiously. And to the last guy that spoke I can tell you, many a time I had a shovel in my hand, I'd have it strapped on my back with my backpack, and we would all shovel out the entire skate park just so we could skate and spend time together. I think this skate park in Manchester is so needed. I see communities like Portsmouth and even Londonderry, but the biggest thing is the upkeep and everything, we really do police it ourselves. As the older group of the skate park, we kind of keep everybody in check by just spreading positivity, making sure people aren't doing ridiculous things at the skate park like they were doing possibly in the 1990s. So, we have a better sense now of what that looks like. I think Manchester needs a skate park. It's long overdue. And Rock Rimmon is terrible. It's the worst park ever. It's like two feet long. I wouldn't go and shovel that, ever.

Ken Tassey, Karatzas Ave: In case I run out of time at the end, let me thank everybody for your service. For those incoming, congratulations. And we look forward to you doing a great job in Manchester over the next couple of years. I'd like to especially thank Joe for his service for many years being on the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, and also to Matt Normand and his crew for their great service for the city. On this third day of Hanukkah, I'd like to express to our Jewish brothers and sisters in Manchester, as difficult as it may be, wishes and prayers for a peaceful and blessed season with family, friends and loved ones. We have your backs. Tragedies such as what we've just witnessed in Sydney, Australia, and the violent, inexcusable treatment of Jewish students on American campuses over the past two years by radical Marxist students and university staff, should be a wakeup call to all of us. Extremism doesn't appear in a vacuum. It is organized, promoted and planned. Marxism cannot thrive without finding or manufacturing two groups to pit against each other. It exploits any difference between any two groups. Jews against Muslims, rich against poor, black against white. And now, right here in Manchester's classrooms, putting stuff in kids heads that causes them to question their own position among their peers and to question their own parents' position in society as being either an oppressor or a victim in the now publicized wheel of power and privilege. For example, and this is not stuff that I'm just concocting here, this is right in the worksheet that was slipped into a class talking about snorkeling and scuba diving. Non-English speaking against English speakers, undocumented against citizens, dark against white, large against slim, homeless against property owners, trans non-binary against cisgender

men. It's just a divisive ideology. Nobody wants to fight. Nobody in Manchester wants to hurt kids or put anybody at a disadvantage. Only Marxism requires it and those who subscribe to that ideology. I hope that as we enter the Christmas season of love and giving and charity, that we can reflect honestly about where we stand, either on the side of resentment, division and chaos, or on the side of love, forgiveness and cooperation. Thank you again, and I wish you all a Merry Christmas.

Justin Parker, 63 Blodget Street: I'm here to talk about how skating changed my life and how a new skate park can do the same for so many others. I started skating when I was 16. At that point in my life, I was mostly staying at home. Not really connected, not sure where I fit in. Skateboarding changed that almost immediately. Through skating, I met some of the best, most supportive people in my life; friends that will last a lifetime. People who looked out for me, encouraged me and gave me a sense of belonging. Because of skateboarding, I made real friends. I got outside, I stayed active and learned how to work through frustration and failure. I got my first steady job through skaters I met. These weren't just hobbies or tricks. This was community, mentorship and opportunity. I'm 18 now and I can honestly say skating helped shape who I am today. It kept me busy, motivated, and connected to positive people. It gave me something constructive to focus on in a place where I felt welcome. A new skate park isn't just concrete ramps, it's a safe space for kids and teens to gather, to be active, to build confidence, and to form healthy relationships. It keeps young people engaged and creates a positive outlet that doesn't cost families thousands of dollars to participate in. I truly believe your support can help change lives, just like skating changed mine. I hope you'll consider voting yes not just for skaters like me, but for the next generation who needs a place to belong.

Jacob Gary, 612 Bell Street: I'm here to talk about the new skate park. Skateboarding has done a lot for me out through my life. I come from a single mother home that didn't have a lot of time or a lot of money to allow us to go to sports or do things or take us places. And growing up in Manchester without a skate park, I had to find my own way to skate to get around while being hassled and it was not a safe environment for a kid growing up to learn and to build an environment. Whereas yes, eventually I was able to get to a skate park and able to get an environment where it was safe. But we don't have one in Manchester for kids to feel necessarily safe, that they can go to consistently and feel like

they have a group and a home. And that's just my outlook on it. I don't want to waste any more time for anybody. Thank you very much for listening.

Aaron Derry, 5 Eagle Nest Way: I'm 29 years old, and I've spent most of my life here in southern New Hampshire. When many people hear skateboarding, they picture problems, damage, disruption, kids getting into trouble. I totally understand where that perception comes from, but I would like to say that my life tells a very different story. To be honest with you, I wouldn't be here today without skateboarding. Currently I work in robotics and I'm finishing my MBA this August with the hopes to be an adjunct professor in the next couple of years and long before classrooms, careers, and credentials, skateboarding taught me how to fail, how to persist, and how to believe in progress when something feels impossible. My first trick took months. I fell more times than I could count, but each time taught me something. That cycle of effort, failure, learning, and eventual success shaped how I faced my challenges today. When something feels out of reach, I don't quit, I try again. Skateboarding also gave me peace. The skate park was a place of focus, community and belonging, a place where kids looked out for each other and learn discipline without being told. A skate park isn't a nuisance to manage. It's a space to guide energy, build resilience and create positive outcomes. And I have to say, I'm living proof of what that can become. Thank you all for listening and for considering what this could mean for our city.

Jimmy Lehoux, 220 South Hall Street: It's been five years since I've been here, and I don't miss it. Thank you for the opportunity tonight to speak to you about our family's experience building what may be one of the city's first detached accessory dwelling units under the new law. I want to begin by acknowledging the city departments involved, from zoning to building assessment. The staff we worked with were professional, collaborative, and helped us as we navigated what was clearly new territory for everyone. Early on, zoning candidly acknowledged that detached ADUs have been legalized before detailed ordinance were fully in place. With their guidance, we navigated the ordinance process and ultimately obtained two variances, one for height and one for square footage. With my experience in the construction field and the strong support of the building department, the project moves smoothly from permitting to completion. The process took about nine months, and our children moved into the ADU on Thanksgiving of 2024. We pursued this

project primarily as parents. Our oldest son recently returned from four years of service in the Army and is now an electrical apprentice. Our youngest son is in his second year as a plumbing apprentice. In the middle of the housing shortage, this ADU allowed our children to live independently, continue their education, and remain in Manchester without adding strain to the city's housing supply or utilities. From a permitting and construction standpoint, this process was a success. The one area that caught us completely off guard and something we never anticipated was the tax implications. As of July 2025, our property tax on our 1600 square foot ranch was $6,800. After the ADU was assessed using the 2021 evaluation matrix, our total tax bill rose to $12,000. The assessment breakdown was as follows. Primary residence: $222,100. 909 square foot accessory dwelling unit: $243,000. Land: $123,200. This result is difficult to justify. The ADU, a secondary structure intended for family housing, was assessed higher than our primary residence. We fully expected an increase, but we did not expect an assessment framework that may unintentionally discourage ADUs. Under the current structure, in giving future financial liabilities the city is preparing to take on, future reassessments could push our taxes towards $15,000 within just a few years. At that point, long term family use becomes financially unrealistic and rental use may become the only viable option simply to afford the taxes. This outcome undermines the purpose of ADUs and has broader implications, particularly for seniors, veterans, and working families who might otherwise use ADUs to stay connected while addressing a housing need. One potential solution would be to create a family use ADU assessment classification, one that recognizes detached ADUs occupied by immediate family as secondary to the primary residence, and applies a reduced or modified assessment rate while they are used for that purpose. If someone asked me today whether they should build an ADU in Manchester, I would hesitate and encourage them to wait and see how the board proceeds on this issue. Not because the concept is flawed, but because the financial consequences are uncertain and potentially very unsustainable. In the information I handed out there is much more detailed analysis that would have taken me well over the three minute mark. I encourage you to take a few minutes to read it and look at the supporting documents I provided with it. My wife and I would be happy to share additional details, collaborate on any solutions, or invite any of you on this board or the future board to be seated to visit our ADU firsthand and see the tremendous and positive impact this has had on our family, but the taxes are crushing us.

*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.*

PRESENTATION

2. Presentation from Parks & Recreation regarding the proposed Skate Park at Lally Sullivan Complex project.

Mark Gomez, Chief of Parks, Recreation & Cemetery: With me is Kate Waldo. She's our park projects manager. Kate handles most of our capital projects pertaining to parks and cemeteries. We're here tonight to present on the skate park, which a lot of the speakers this evening have come to talk about, but also on the broader master plan developed for Wolfe Park, of which the skate park is one element. Many people in this room already know that Kate has done a tremendous job guiding the development of the master plan over the past year and a half, along with our consultant, T.F. Moran. And she's going to handle the presentation. We'll both be available to answer any questions at the end.

Kate Waldo, Parks Project Manager: It's my pleasure to talk about this amazing park on the west side. And that's the perfect place to start because that's how it started. It started as being called the West Side Park. We've got maps of its designation since the early 1900s. With that, the history just grew, and I think that we need to take a moment here to really mark how deep this park is ingrained into the fabric of Manchester and west Manchester. We've got the Lally field, which was named after a gentleman that enlisted from the west side, in World War Two and was killed in action. We also have the John Sullivan Field who you might remember from the west side. He was a huge advocate of the Little League, and we have a field named after him. And we do have a monument in the middle between the two fields that commemorates these two gentlemen. Another piece of history is we have a marker on some of the amphitheater style bleachers on the the Wolfe Park softball side to Luther Coop Cooper, who was an umpire for 30 years out there. And then, last but not least, we also have a tree out for Lou D'Allesandro, who I know is known to most people for his work supporting the 20th district, but he also was a strong proponent for basketball, and was a men's basketball coach for Southern New Hampshire University. So, there's a lot of history that we don't want to lose. When we look

at Wolfe Park, this is a park that was vibrant in the 1950s. And since then, we've got some significant issues that have been identified with the infrastructure. The structures themselves have some failures going on with foundation. What you're seeing here is pavement that is pretty significantly deteriorated. We've got two buildings that are at the point of really needing to be removed. We do have other places that are out of compliance. And then we have definitely some safety issues that are there, and drainage issues. There's a high-water table in this area. We also have a lot of surface ponding. So, what you're seeing here are the little league fields that exist, and also the softball field on the other side. We were out there on a very cold day so what you see is actually frozen water on the surface because it doesn't drain away. The softball field is a very unique size in New England, so it's a very important place to keep it. It is known within the state for competitive play. We've also with the leagues on the baseball side, we do have some unique features on that side, too, which I'll be getting to in just a moment. Another issue that has been recognized is Harvell Street that bisects the park. It connects some very busy roads. We have an interstate off ramp right in front of it. People cut through. It makes it a real challenge for pedestrians moving back and forth from the sides of the park. We are also looking at the paving. There's not any wayfinding, so there's no signage for the park itself. So, when we have people coming for these tournaments out of town, there's not really anything that says you're here. So, with looking at everything that was going on, we did talk to the leagues that were active at the park. We talked to the community. We have kept a list of demands. We consulted our recreation group to see what is the needs within town. And what we've come to is youth baseball is on a decline. The league has surrendered the buildings that are there. They're not using the fields anymore. And we've got new sports, new recreational opportunities emerging that right now in the city of Manchester we can't meet. The need for skateboarding is one of those. And when we talk about skateboarding here, we're not just talking about the skateboarders, we're also talking about the BMX bikes, we're talking about scooters, inline skates. So, it's everything that we're looking at. Pickleball is another one where we really cannot keep up with the demand of that sport within our city.

Alderman Terrio: That slide says it is the third most common reported interest for high schoolers. What are the first two?

K. Waldo: I would have to go back and research this. This was data that we pulled from National Parks Association. I would have to go back and look at that. I can get that for you, though.

Alderman Terrio: So, that's national. It might not be local.

K. Waldo: That is national.

Alderman Terrio: So just to clarify, we don't know what Manchester kids are at with that data.

K. Waldo: We wanted to do a systematic approach to what needed to happen at Wolfe Park and the Lally Sullivan side. So, we did receive funding from the Board of Mayor and Aldermen for a master plan. And with that, we did a site assessment. We had professional engineers do a site assessment, and we also formed a steering committee, which we had aldermen representation on it. We also included the police department's community affairs representative that also went to each of our commissions. So, we have the Arts Commission, we had the Conservation Commission, we had the Heritage Commission. And then, of course, we had members of the Parks and Recreation team as part of this. We did select the skate park designers for the firm. This was a group that actually came recommended from our community skate park folks. It was a competitive process, which we did have 4 or 5 proposals. And these guys were really hungry for it. They gave us a great proposal. It was the most responsible one, and we were delighted to be able to go with them. We also started our community meetings, which we've had four in total. And the first one TF Moran led that one. And we did have an opportunity for everybody in attendance, which there was a quite a large group to write on pieces of paper what they would like to see in the park, what amenities they would want, what they don't want, what they would like to keep, what would they like to do away with. That was the basis of a lot of the formation of how the master plan grew. We started working on the overview of that, started working on the skate park design, which we presented in our next community meeting. And then from there we moved really and started focusing on the skate park design itself. Those meetings were incredibly well attended. We did want to make sure that we were hearing from the community. You know, we heard loud and clear that the

skate features that we've had in the past and that we currently have now don't necessarily meet the needs that they were wanting. So, we wanted to make sure that we heard directly from the people that would be using this and that we were incorporating it. And again, the designers that were part of this were part of the skate community. They grew up in Nashua. They skated Manchester. So, it was something where they were really committed to doing the best product moving forward. We also worked at looking at the drainage strategy, so we've met with our EPD to make sure that we were really coming up with the best plans for this. The master plan itself was completed in mid to late December. We did receive full cost at that point, a cost estimate for the full renovation of the park itself. We continue to tweak a little bit on the skate park, but then had 90% construction documents, so that skate park is ready to go as far as designs go. They have been stamped by professional engineer. They've been given the nod from the skate community themselves, which brought us to this last round of CIP funding, which we did get $500,000, which thank you for that. And we chose to focus first on the existing infrastructure, which was the softball field. And so, at this point, we've been working on getting full construction documents for the master plan and prioritizing getting the work done on that, on the softball side. So that brings us up to where we are right now in this process, for this funding. What you see here is some of the renderings of what the full park could potentially look like moving in the future. The softball field renovation, the skate park, pickleball courts, lighting was something that was discussed a lot. We want to make sure that we are keeping this bright, visible, even the location of the skate park. When MPD was talking to us, they wanted us to have it by the street so they can pull into the parking lot, have clear line of site. There are even parts about how we did some of the features of the skate park, and you'll see more of that with it. Traffic calming measures were a part of this safe crossing. And one of the things that we are really excited to see was that there is a way to connect both sides of the park, and that's through that circulation path. It's almost exactly a half a mile path. So, people can do their walks and hopefully be able to circulate the full park with it. We will be preserving these historical markers. These are just some other renderings of the different features that we have in there. You can see here the overview of it. Some of the pedestrian features, we are looking at potentially doing some bump outs, enhancing our crosswalks, doing that wayfinding signage. That's the circulation path over to the left, the bank of pickleball courts, also surrounded by the circulation path. And then in that little corner there, that's the

monument, which we have a close up of. And then to your right over here is the skate park with a new parking lot and lots of lights. The renovation of the softball field, we are going to be doing under drainage to that field. We are relocating the foul lines. We're going to be replacing fencing, moving the backstop, those bleachers that are historical but beyond repair. Unfortunately, we looked at trying to keep those and fix what we have, but engineering wise they just weren't able to do that. So, we will be removing those and replacing them with safe bleachers for that area. Expansion to the playground, we're looking at swings. We're looking at a picnic area, looking at a kiosk for communication. Another unique feature of the park is one of the fields is a particular field that's very multi-use for multiple ages, multiple levels of leagues. So, what we want to do with that is fix the drainage there, fix the dugouts, repair that. And that's what you see as the renovated youth baseball over here. And then that's the garden monument area for the Lally Sullivan monument. We're going to be keeping that. So, the highlight of conversation today is the skate park. So right now, what we are looking at is a 20,000 square foot skate park, which for the size of the community, this is the recommended size. You need a skate park that is large enough that people can get enough speed, and also be able to avoid each other. We wanted to make sure that we build it for all ages and all levels. So, you'll see that there's pockets of features and there's also ways to be able to go around the whole piece. We wanted to appeal to the multiple styles of skating. One of the things that was really cool that came out of this is we also wanted to give a historical nod to the city of Manchester. So there's a lot of stuff that's incorporated in this that were historical features that were throughout the town that either were removed or maybe had a scape blocker put on and people wanted to see it really brought back into this park. So, I'm going to play a video and I'll do little highlights as we go through this. You can see that it can be clearly seen from the parking lot. You've got enough of some staging areas so people can take off there. You've got various different features. So, you've got your wave rail, which is a famous Manchester skate area with some stamped bricks. You've got a nice plaza area for tricks and for catching some speed; lots of ledges and rails to be able to move through this. So, there is a combination of these street features with the bowls. And I can tell you that the bike guys seem to get really into these bowls. I'm not as familiar with it myself, but I can't wait to see this being used here. It does allow enough fast areas and slow areas, and one of the things that they talked a lot about is you wanted to be able to see people as you came around. Some of the parks that have been skated in the local area,

that was one of the parts that seemed the most difficult about them is that you didn't know who was coming around the corner. We worked really hard to make sure you could see for safety. There's a little nod to some stairs. And we also wanted something that could be at a competition level. So, this is a place where people will want to come and do competitions and bring in some of that economic support to the area. As it pans out, you'll be able to see how it fits in with the park. You can also see that we've had to do some build ups and build downs so that we kept the lines of sight. But also, you can see the drainage features that are in and around this that add to this, plus the lights. We want to make sure that this is well lit, the parking lot and the skate park and the features that are around this. So, looking at the phases, this is the last slide. Phase one A is what we're in right now. So, this shows you everything that we are doing with the funding that we've had at this point. Phase one B is what we're talking about. With this potential new funding, there is demolition of the maintenance building, of multiple fields that haven’t been used in quite a while. We would be looking at building the skatepark, building the new parking lot, adding lights for the parking lot, adding lights for the skate park and a significant amount of drainage improvements and stormwater management which this area is very much in need of because there are wetlands behind it. We want to make sure that we are being good stewards of those wetlands. So, the stormwater, even now we need to be looking at that moving forward. We do have two other phases of potential work at this park. We would be looking at building those pickleball courts, finishing the circulation path, doing that garden that we talked about. There is a concession building that at this point has been abandoned by the league, and they've turned it back over to us that we want to redo the restrooms in there and make sure that they're ADA compliant. We also are looking at traffic calming and the sidewalk improvements. And this is when we'd also be looking at doing on the softball side, the parking lots there. And then again, more drainage, more stormwater management. Phase three. This is when we are going to really be focusing on that baseball field that exists, and that's when we would be renovating it. We'd also be doing the playground expansion, and we would also be doing the wayfinding signage and looking at improving the last of the pavement that's already there. So, this is a combination of taking care of what is there with looking at how we can build into the future of this park and meet needs within Manchester.

Alderman Burkush: As you know, I voted against the project a couple of weeks ago. I had some questions, and one of them was the expediency of moving it mid-budget. And we've had the conversation. If either one of you would answer, does it make financial sense to move the project now?

M. Gomez: I think timing wise, obviously the sooner we get the funding, the sooner we can begin building the project. Generally speaking, we like to bid out projects in the winter. It gets us better pricing, gets us better scheduling. So, the main advantage of moving forward earlier in this case would be to try to get the construction to occur in 2026.

Alderman Burkush: My follow up issue that I had was exploring the possibility of grants or public-private partnerships. And in the past couple of weeks, it's become apparent that there are significant sponsors that are available out there. We met with some last week that said that they were willing to work on other sponsors. We've discovered that CDBG funding is available. There's a Tony Hawk Grant also out there. So, although the bond in my mind is $2.5 million, I'm thinking that that we could reduce at least probably the cost by $250,000 with these 2 or 3 initiatives that we've got coming. That would make it a lot more comfortable for me and for taxpayers if we can reduce whatever we can to reduce the $2.5 million bond.

Alderman Levasseur: I think if you're going to vote on one phase, then you should be voting on all three phases, or at least know what the cost is going to be for all those three phases before you vote on the major part of the first phase. The first phase, I'm assuming all that work has already been done with the money you've received or is it underway?

M. Gomez: It's currently underway, so we're developing the final design and construction specs to be able to put the project out to bid. And then also the specs for the softball field work itself.

Alderman Levasseur: Are you in budget on the first phase with the money that you were given, or are you going to be over budget?

M. Gomez: Yes, we're on budget.

Alderman Levasseur: You're staying inside the budget on that one. What's the cost going to be for the next one? For all the phases, so that we'll know what the total cost is.

M. Gomez: So, the entire project cost is $5.4 million. As was stated, we received $500,000 this year. And then the estimated cost for the skate park is $2.5 million. So, you've got an additional $2.4 million.

Alderman Levasseur: So, it's $5.4 plus $2.4?

M. Gomez: No, it's $5.4 million total for the entirety of what's being recommended under the master plan. Of that $5.4 million, $2.5 million would be for the skate park and the associated storm water management improvements that are required. And then there's the $500,000 we've already received so that those two together is $3 million. And that leaves $2.4 million for the remainder of the project to complete all the recommended elements that are in the master plan.

Alderman Levasseur: Well, interest rates have just dropped, I think a half a point. So, I don't understand why if you're going to go out and bond a project, you're going to only bond this one at $2.5 million and not do it all at the same time. First of all, you said obviously expediency is important. Taxpayers want to know what the bill is going to be. If you don't come back in another year or two years and say, now we want the money for phase two, it's going to be more expensive. As you know, costs aren't going down. If it's every year, you're going to come in for another million and a half or $2 million for the rest of it. Is that the plan?

M. Gomez: The plan has been to request money in phases.

Alderman Levasseur: When is the completion of the phases envisioned? When will phase one be done?

M. Gomez: Phase one A we anticipate to occur over the course of the next nine months or so. Were we to get funding this evening, our hope would be to be able to complete that

in 2026, no promises. The work has to go out to bid. We have to see what kind of pricing and scheduling, etc., we get, whether we run into any road bumps along the way once construction begins. But that would be the goal to complete it in 2026. I think probably worst-case scenario, we're extending out into early 2027, probably in the springtime. And then in terms of phase two and phase three, I'm probably going to defer to Kate as to whether she has any guesses as to how long those phases would take.

K. Waldo: With those phases, I would think that each of them would be a new year. So, a new fiscal year for them to be completed. Mark explained how I was thinking in my mind, if we went through a phased approach, that each fiscal year, we would be putting forward a CIP for the next phase.

Alderman Levasseur: But you could do phase one B and phase three at the same time.

K. Waldo: Absolutely.

Alderman Levasseur: Right; because they're separate areas. And then phase two would be kind of in the middle of those two.

K. Waldo: Absolutely.

Alderman Levasseur: I'm not sure why this is being delayed for three separate years. I don't believe the cost is going to go down. And then when you come back here in two years for the third part of it, it's going to be more money. I'm not sure what the strategy or the financial constraints are. If you're going to vote on something, you should be voting on it in full as one project. It seems kind of sneaky to do one phase and then a year later, come back with another one and push it off to other boards. Either vote for it as a whole project or don't is my suggestion. So, is there a reason? It's not financially constraining you to go out for the $5.4 million because you said you have around $17 million for next year, right?

Sharon Wickens, Finance Director: Well, you wouldn't want to do a bond resolution if the work wasn't going to be done for another year or two. You're beginning to pay interest on

bonds as soon as you issue those bonds. If they can't get to the work for two years, you want it to be done in phases.

Alderman Levasseur: But you can go out and bond the money ahead of time and have the money there. I don't think the Civic Center was built in one year.

S. Wickens: Once a bond resolution is passed, even if it hasn't gone out to bond, the clock begins ticking by the IRS as to how quickly you can spend that money and penalties and so forth. So, we're constantly monitoring the bond projects to make sure they're being spent down. You bond something and you hold on to it for two years, that's not a good thing.

Alderman Levasseur: We are bonding out projects pretty far out for school renovations that are taking years.

S. Wickens: Keep in mind they they knew that they weren't going to be able to spend the money quickly. So, they issued a bank note for one year. Then they paid that off with a new bank note that they just issued for $80 million, paid off the first bank note. They're going to go out for the $231 million, which that's what the project's going to end up costing. At the end of the day, it won't be the $290 million that we did a bond resolution for. It'll be $231 million, and they feel that they can spend that within about two years.

Alderman Levasseur: I just want everyone to know that this is what the cost is currently in this year, and what it's going to be will probably be an additional $600,000 or so if you phase it out. I just want people to know that that's what they're voting on. They're not voting just on a skateboard park. They're voting on a major project which is based on your pictures. The grass is going to be really green and pretty. Do you have irrigation put in for this already as part of your pricing?

K. Waldo: We do for the ball fields.

Alderman Fajardo: I had similar questions about timing and budget for phases two and three. I'm triple checking, the skate park will be completed in 2026 unless it needs to stretch into spring 2027?

M. Gomez: Our goal would be to complete it in 2026. I can't sit here today and commit to that.

Alderman Fajardo: But that's generally feasible?

M. Gomez: It's potentially feasible. Yes.

Alderman Fajardo: I'm pleasantly surprised. So, phase two, we would be looking at 2027-2028? Then phase three would be 2028-2029?

M. Gomez: Yes, something like that.

Alderman Fajardo: Phase one A is the field to the left?

K. Waldo: It is to the right. The singular ball field is the Wolfe ball field that we're focusing on right now.

Alderman Terrio: Are we voting on this bond at the end of this presentation or under regular business?

Mayor Ruais: That is up to the board. There's Item 33 on the agenda, that is the bond resolutions for different things. But there's an opportunity if members wanted to, to vote on it while the presentation is fresh and questions are being asked.

Alderman Terrio: If that's the case, then I'll speak on it now. I was going to wait until regular business. I really think we need to keep a tight control on spending. So, if you just look at this, it's $2.5 million now, but then it's $5.4 million total. The city, we're spending hundreds of millions of dollars on a sewer pipe. The school is spending, $230 million. But after with bonding, that's going to be close to $500 million. Water Works wants to spend

$35 million. And then we add this. We already know we're kind of maxed out on our bonding. It's going to start affecting our bonding rate now. So, we're affecting the affordability of people to live in the city. I know this is a small part of it, but we keep on adding more money to our bond. We had Mr. Lehoux speak about how his tax rate doubled by adding an ADU. I think we're starting to price people out of the city as far as their homes and apartments. For somebody like me, it doesn't really matter. I have a little bit less in my retirement account; I have a little bit less in my savings account; not a big deal. But we have a lot of poor people in the city, and we have a lot of people on fixed incomes. I have three constituents. I have one woman, she was paying her mortgage and her husband died. They were both on Social Security. She lost her house. She's gone. I don't know what happened to her, but she's no longer in her house. I have another woman, a constituent, on Social Security. Her apartment was sold to a new investor. The rent skyrocketed because he paid a lot less. The old landlord owned it for many years, didn't charge much rent. So, she called me up crying. She can't live like this anymore. So fortunately, I put her in touch with City Welfare and now she's getting by. But she's just getting by with City Welfare. I have another constituent. Same thing. Elderly man. He and his wife are on Social Security. The wife died. He still has a mortgage. The wife died, and now he's struggling to pay his mortgage. So, I know this is just one small thing, and it is a nice thing to do, but we have all of these things that we keep on saying yes to, and we're adding more to the bottom line. New Hampshire is a wealthy state, but Manchester is probably one of the poorest municipalities here. I don't think we should do this. But that being said, I would propose if we do this, we can pay for it. Actually, the aldermen can pay for this and the way they can pay for this without affecting the city taxpayers is we spend $240,000 per year on our medical and dental benefits. Multiply that by 20 years. That's $4.8 million. So, we can pay for all of the phases by giving up our benefits. The aldermen can pay for this. By giving up our medical and dental benefits, we can pay. I'd bond all of it now if this board, and I'm going to make the proposal, if we give up our medical and dental benefits, we can pay for all the phases right now and it won't cost the taxpayers money.

Alderman Terrio *moved that health and dental care benefits be removed from the members of the Board of Aldermen in order to raise the necessary funds to pay for the*

Manchester Skate Park at Lally Sullivan Complex. ***Alderman E. Sapienza*** *duly seconded the motion.*

Alderman T. Sapienza: Where's that number come from about giving up the health insurance?

Alderman Terrio: It costs the city $240,000 a year for the medical and dental for all our benefits. If you multiply that by 20 years, that's $4.8 million. But the health care benefits and the dental benefits are going to increase. So, it's actually going to be over $5 million after 20 years. So, if we give up those benefits, we could pay for all the phases of this park.

Alderman T. Sapienza: What I'm saying is some aldermen don't take the insurance. So, giving it up doesn't save any money.

Alderman Terrio: That's true; those people aren't costing the city money. But collectively, this board costs the city $240,000 per year for our benefits. So, it's just simple math. If we give up the benefits, we can pay for this park.

Alderman Fajardo: In 20 years.

Alderman Terrio: Yes, correct. That's what the bond is going to be. The bond is going to be for 20 years. So, this is going to be at the same time as the bond. If we give this up, over 20 years we pay the bond off.

Alderman Fajardo: We would need to wait 20 years to realize the $4.8 million savings. So how would you propose that the work move forward? And did you say $240,000 a year? Do you think that that could be sustainable for the project?

Alderman Terrio: Sharon, what would be our bond payment per year if we bonded the whole thing? Per year, what's the bond payment?

S. Wickens: It was about $240,000 I believe.

Alderman Terrio: So this would be a wash. We wouldn't charge the taxpayers anything. The money we would save on our benefits would pay for the bond.

Alderman Levasseur: It would be a Christmas present from us.

S. Wickens: Alderman, the payment would be about $182,000 a year. I'm looking at my notes now. For the $5.4 million, it's about $80,000 per million dollars, it would be about $432,000. But the problem would be is Parks and Rec would need this money now. So, we'd still have to go out and bond.

Alderman Levasseur: We're saying we're going to bond it.

S. Wickens: So that would be savings on the health insurance line.

Alderman O'Neil *requested a roll call.*

Alderman Long: So how will we take in medical costs and paying on a bond? Where is the savings? How is that doing that? We're saving on medical costs; I don't take medical. But you're saying we're saving $240,000. How does that $240,000 of medical go into paying for the skate park?

Alderman Terrio: So instead of the city paying the $240,000 for our benefits, they'd use that money, that savings, to pay for this park.

Alderman Long: How do they do that?

Alderman Terrio: Instead of paying it to the medical and dental, they pay for the park and take the money.

Alderman Long: So, we take health money. So, we take health money and put it in the general fund to pay for the park?

Alderman Terrio: Yes.

Alderman Long: No. It is money we don't have. It's health money.

Mayor Ruais: Health care costs are a snapshot in time per year. Every year the claims could be different. So, it can result in different totals. Is that accurate?

S. Wickens: That is a true statement.

Mayor Ruais *called for a vote. The motion failed on a roll call vote, with Aldermen O'Neil, Levasseur, Burkush, Barry, Vincent, Thomas, Morgan, Goonan, Long, Fajardo, and T. Sapienza voting nay, and Aldermen Terrio, E. Sapienza, and Kantor voting yea.*

Alderman Kantor: I believe in sacrificing, but my big questions are, first of all, my heart says absolutely, yes, I believe keeping the kids very busy is essential. The problem is making sure people stay in their homes and their rents don't go up. So, questions about competitions and league fees. You had mentioned that, which sounds excellent. Will you charge?

M. Gomez: Well, for those instances if we had a special competition where the skate park was reserved for it, we probably would charge a fee. If it was reserved for exclusive use by some sort of league, then we would probably charge a small fee. It depends on who's looking to reserve it. You know, we try to support the low-cost youth leagues in general. We don't charge them fees. But by and large, I think for the kind of competitions you're envisioning, yes, we would probably charge a fee.

Alderman Kantor: Who is responsible for the maintenance? And what's the impact of the maintenance on the taxpayers?

M. Gomez: Yes, it's a great question. So, our maintenance staff and Parks and Recreation would be responsible for maintaining it. I know Kate's put together some preliminary estimates on what the additional costs would be per year. I think we're just looking at a couple thousand dollars. Obviously, over time, your maintenance costs increase on

anything that you build. One of the things that we've discussed internally, I know Alderman Burkush earlier brought up the potential for having some donations. We've certainly discussed internally the possibility of having, if it were acceptable to the board, selling some naming rights associated with the skate park itself to help fund a long-term maintenance fund. I think everything's on the table in order to offset any of those costs.

Alderman Kantor: The other thing is the bathrooms are in phase two. Is that correct?

K. Waldo: So, there are bathrooms on the softball side that we are doing this round. That building itself is structurally problematic. And that was identified by our engineering team. So, it needs to be removed and we are replacing that with a simple two-bathroom utility building for the softball field, but also would be accessible to anybody using that area. We do have another building which is currently a concession building. That's the later phase, especially when we start looking at the pickleball courts and having closer access to restrooms for that.

Alderman Kantor: So, people will have a bathroom at the beginning?

K. Waldo: Absolutely.

Alderman Kantor: There was mention about a graffiti wall. Is that in any of your designs yet?

K. Waldo: So that was something that was discussed that the Arts Commission brought up. Some of the other folks brought that up. You know, we do have the Arts Commission on the steering committee, and we've talked about how do we bring in a facilitated art. We have found through practice that when we have something that is considered artistic and valuable by the community, then it doesn't get tagged. It's respected for the most part. And I think that that stands true with probably what we would see in this part, too.

Alderman Kantor: I was thinking if there's graffiti, then more would come. So, I guess my big concern is protecting that park where I don't feel like there's enough protection and

enough maintenance in the parks with the needles and people drinking and doing drugs and sleeping. I still have an issue with us not 100% protecting the parks as is.

Alderman Levasseur: So is there a curfew on that park? There'll be a fence around it? They won't be able to go skateboard 24/7.

M. Gomez: There'll be a curfew. I don't believe the design calls for a fence around it at all, but there'll be a curfew from dusk to dawn. Just like in our other parks.

Alderman Levasseur: The last one where it was not in the right spot, there was a lot of land around it. There wasn't a lot of residential on top of it. There was a two way lane going one way to get traffic through. Is anybody using the softball fields? If they were just softball fields alone, is there a full schedule for both fields?

M. Gomez: Yes. The softball fields are used quite a bit.

Alderman Levasseur: It's still being used?

M. Gomez: Yes. It's the youth baseball diamonds on the other side that are not really used at all these days.

Alderman Levasseur: I'm just afraid. I've seen what happened to the skateboard park that was paid for by volunteers that was built. That was done nicely. I drive home all the time on that road and I just have to tell you, it really was a blight. After a few years, it was just a blight on the neighborhood. It made the inner city look way worse than it is, because there's some really nice parks there. I just keep closing my eyes and thinking of Wolfe Park, where I played a lot of softball for many teams for many summers. And it's such a nice area over there. I just think a skateboard park is just going to end up turning into what happened on Maple Street. And so, if it was just the baseball parks and the pickleball courts and the lighting and the grass and all of the fix ups, I think it would be a really beautiful spot there. I'm not sure, and I put this question out there without knowing the answer, but I wonder if Livingston Park in the neighborhood up there would care for a skateboard park up there? Or do they think maybe that wouldn't be appropriate in that

location? I just don't think this location fits a skateboard park. In the long run, it's going to look really great when it's there for the first year or two. But in the long term, maintenance falls apart. Police are busy, kids get obnoxious, rambunctious. You know, I've had a lot of people come in here tonight and say, oh no, skateboard parks won't get any graffiti on there because we watch out for them. Well guess what? You saw what we did to the one on Maple Street, and it became a blight. I don't want to see that whole area and that whole section turn into just another blight and destroy everything else that's going to be put there. Because I think the skateboard park is a problem. If you took that completely out of this project, you could bond it tonight and build those phases. Without it, I think it would be a really nice place that would last for a lot longer of time. Those are just my comments. I hope I'm wrong. I'm sure it's probably going to pass, but I hope I'm wrong, but I don't think I am.

Alderman Barry: Can we move item 33 up right after your presentation is over so that we can vote on the skateboard park? And my understanding is Alderman Burkush has a motion, then I'll call for a roll call after.

Mayor Ruais: I think the one thing I would add on bonding, because I know that's been a topic of conversation in the first budget that that I introduced back in 2024, we cut bonding by about 12% to 15%. And correct me if I'm wrong, but it was something in that range. We ended up at around $11.5 million for that year. Next year coming up, we have $4.5 million for MUNIS, $3.5 million for MER, a million for technology and a million for infrastructure. I believe that's what we had talked about. So that's about $10 million. So, my commitment would be that we would go and do what we did in 2024, for FY25 and say that we're going to keep that bonding number as low as possible to make up for any concerns that there may be on this board for bonding. But that was my commitment when I first came into office, was that we were going to reduce that and put that forward. So, concerns for that, we can address that in my budget next year.

Alderman Burkush *moved to approve Bond Resolution for the 2026 CIP C650050926 Manchester Skate Park at Lally Sullivan Complex in an amount not to exceed $2.5 million with the expectation that supporters of the park are going to raise at least $250,000 from grants and private sources.* ***Alderman Barry*** *duly seconded the motion and requested a*

roll call vote. The motion carried, with Aldermen Barry, Vincent, Thomas, Morgan, Goonan, Long, Fajardo, T. Sapienza, O'Neil, and Burkush voting yea, and Aldermen Kantor, Levasseur, Terrio, and E. Sapienza voting nay.

CONSENT AGENDA

Accept BMA Minutes

3. Minutes from the November 17 Special BMA, November 18 BMA, and December 3 Finance and BMA meetings.

Information to be Received and Filed

4. Communication from the Office of the City Solicitor, providing an update regarding lawsuits filed against the City.

5. Communication from the US Department of Labor advising that it has chosen to exercise its option to renew the New Hampshire Job Corps Center lease.

REFERRALS TO COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

6. Resolutions:

"Amending the FY2023 and FY2024 Community Improvement Program, authorizing, appropriating and transferring funds in the amount of Twenty Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy-Two Dollars and Seventy-Five Cents ($20,772.75) for the FY2024 CIP 510524 FY24 School Deferred Maintenance."

"Amending the FY2024 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Forty-Two Thousand Six Hundred Dollars ($42,600) for the FY2024 CIP 610824 Easterseals NH -Tenant Based Rental Assistance."

"Amending the FY2023 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of One Million Fifty-Nine Thousand Ninety-Four Dollars and Seventeen Cents ($1,059,094.17) for the FY2023 CIP 611523 Healthy Homes Production Grant Program."

"Amending the FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Twenty-Nine Thousand Three Hundred Thirty-Nine Dollars ($29,339) for the FY2026 CIP C330041626 FY25 HSGP SWAT/SOU Equipment."

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE ON BILLS ON SECOND READING

7. Recommending that Ordinance Amendments:

"Amending Section 91.631 Eligibility Requirements for Municipal Curbside Collection by authorizing Public Works to revoke eligibility for cause."

"An Ordinance amending the Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 155 of the Manchester Code of Ordinances, to increase from three (3) to four (4) the number of units permitted per lot for new construction without an increase in required lot area in zoning districts that permit multi-family uses; to reduce parking requirements for multifamily uses in the R-3, C-1, and RDV Zoning Districts; to reduce landscaping requirements and parking setbacks; and to remove the requirement that accessory dwelling units receive a conditional use permit, among other amendments."

be received and filed.
(Unanimous vote)

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

8. Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the transfer and expenditure of funds in the amount of $20,772.75 for CIP 510524 FY24 School Deferred Maintenance be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Alderman Terrio who was absent)

9. Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of $42,600 for CIP 610824 Easterseals NH - Tenant Based Rental Assistance be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Alderman Terrio who was absent)

10. Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of $1,059,094.17 for CIP 611523 Healthy Homes Production Grant Program be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Alderman Terrio who was absent)

11. Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of $29,339 for CIP C330041626 FY25 HSGP SWAT/SOU Equipment be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Alderman Terrio who was absent)

12. Recommending that the request from the Fire Chief for authorization to accept grant funds in the amount of $33,000 for the purchase of hazmat equipment be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Alderman Terrio who was absent)

13. Recommending that the request from the Fire Chief for permission to apply for a Homeland Security Grant in the amount of $25,000 be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Alderman Terrio who was absent)

14. Recommending that the request from the Fire Chief for permission to enter into an agreement with Rosenbauer and E-One for the purpose of apparatus replacement be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Alderman Terrio who was absent)

15. Recommending that the request from the Planning & Community Development Director for extensions of various CIP projects be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Alderman Terrio who was absent)

16. Recommending that the request from the Park Projects Manager to extend six (6) CIP projects to June 30, 2028 be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Alderman Terrio who was absent)

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES/INSURANCE

17. Recommending that the request from the Fire Chief for the following changes to the department's complement:

- Updating the title of Fire Prevention Inspector I to Deputy Fire Marshal (Grade 115)
- Updating the title of Fire Prevention Inspector II to Assistant Fire Marshal (Grade 117)
- Remove one (1) vacant Electronic Systems Technician I (Grade 113)
- Add one (1) civilian Fire Inspector (Grade 112)
- Add one (1) civilian Fire Services Data Analyst (Grade 112)

be approved.
(Unanimous vote)

18. Recommending that the request from the Chief of Parks, Recreation & Cemetery that the position of Urban Forester (Grade 117) be added to the department's list of exempt positions eligible for overtime and standby pay for purposes of emergency responses be approved.
(Unanimous vote)

COMMITTEE ON LANDS AND BUILDINGS

19. Recommending that the request from the Parking Manager to install a mural on the Amherst Street side of the Victory Parking Garage be received and filed.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Alderman Thomas who was absent)

20. Recommending that the request from the Moher Family for the city to find a fitting way to honor the memory of Inspector William Moher be received and filed.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Alderman Thomas who was absent)

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, HEALTH AND TRAFFIC

21. Recommending that the following traffic regulations be approved:

NO PARKING ANYTIME

On N Russell Street, both sides, from Whitford Street to a point 400 feet south.
Alderman Morgan

On Dunbar Street, both sides, from Sundial Avenue to a point 755 feet south
Alderman Burkush

SCHOOL ZONE- 20 MPH SPEED LIMIT

On Putnam Street between Blucher Street and Dubuque Street
Alderman Vincent

RESCIND NO PARKING ANYTIME

On N Russell Street, both sides, from Whitford Street to Arah Street (ORD 10922).
Alderman Morgan
(Unanimous vote)

22. Recommending that the following traffic regulations be received and filed:

NO PARKING ANYTIME

On N Russell Street, both sides, from Whitford Street to a point 340 feet south.
Alderman Morgan

RESCIND NO PARKING ANYTIME

On N Russell Street, both sides, from Whitford Street to Arah Street (ORD 10922).
Alderman Morgan
(Unanimous vote)

23. Recommending that the request from the Parking Manager that the No Parking signs on both sides of Zaratzas Avenue be changed to read No Parking Tow Zone be received and filed.
(Unanimous vote)

24. Recommending that the request from the Chief Engineer at TFMoran, Inc. for the following improvements at the Pearl Street Lot Development site:

- Marked crosswalk across Orange Street at its Elm Street intersection;
- Marked crosswalk across North Church Street West Back at its intersection with Pearl Street;
- Removal of ten (10) on-street parking spaces on North Church Street East Back.

be approved.
(Unanimous vote)

*On motion of **Alderman O'Neil**, duly seconded by **Alderman Long**, it was voted to approve the consent agenda.*

REGULAR BUSINESS

25. Nominations:
Parks, Recreation, and Cemetery Commission
Tom Bozoian to fill a vacancy as a regular member, term to expire July 1, 2027
Colin Manning to succeed himself as a regular member, term to expire July 1, 2028
Erin Loomis Laughlin to succeed herself as a regular member, term to expire July 1, 2028
Water Commission
Patricia Cornell to succeed herself as a regular member, term to expire January 1, 2029
Garry Haworth to succeed himself as a regular member, term to expire January 1, 2029
(Note: Pursuant to Rule 23 of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, these nominations will layover until the next meeting of the Board.)

26. Confirmations:
Senior Services Commission
Sheryl Ramsay to succeed Veronica Schlender as a regular member, term to expire January 1, 2029

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

27. Budget projections to be submitted by Sharon Wickens, Finance Officer, if available.

S. Wickens: Based on estimates provided by department heads, the projected general fund operating surplus for fiscal year 2026 is $388,000. This surplus consists of an expenditure surplus of $297,000 and a revenue surplus of $91,000. Some departments are currently showing slight expenditure surpluses due to employee turnover, while revenue surpluses primarily stem from meals and rooms and IT services invoicing. This forecasted surplus includes a $125,000 allocation from the contingency account. As of December 15th, there have been 16 retirements compared to 14 during the same period last year. Severance payments through the state totaled $573,205, down from $720,666 a year ago. Following the posting of all related entries, the severance reserve account is projected to hold a balance of $2,151,096. I have also attached a department summary of severance paid through December 15th in the departmental overtime report as of December 5th.

Alderman Levasseur: A little late on this one, but on the bond that just passed for the skateboard park, does the $250,000 have to be received before you go out for bonding? Because that's part of the motion. If you don't get the $250,000, you can't go bond and then hope. Because if you bond, then we're on the hook for the $250,000.

S. Wickens: Well, it's my understanding that the resolution passed for $2.5 million.

Alderman Levasseur: But it's predicated on the raising of $250,000.

S. Wickens: Then I would only be going out to bond for $2,250,000.

Alderman Levasseur: So just you would cut $250,000 out of that?

S. Wickens: It would.

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

Mayor Ruais called the meeting back to order.

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

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

"Amending the FY2023 and FY2024 Community Improvement Program, authorizing, appropriating and transferring funds in the amount of Twenty Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy-Two Dollars and Seventy-Five Cents ($20,772.75) for the FY2024 CIP 510524 FY24 School Deferred Maintenance."

"Amending the FY2024 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Forty-Two Thousand Six Hundred Dollars ($42,600) for the FY2024 CIP 610824 Easterseals NH -Tenant Based Rental Assistance."

"Amending the FY2023 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of One Million Fifty-Nine Thousand Ninety-Four Dollars and Seventeen Cents ($1,059,094.17) for the FY2023 CIP 611523 Healthy Homes Production Grant Program."

"Amending the FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Twenty-Nine Thousand Three Hundred Thirty-Nine Dollars ($29,339) for the FY2026 CIP C330041626 FY25 HSGP SWAT/SOU Equipment."

ought to pass and be Enrolled.

*On motion of **Alderman E. Sapienza**, duly seconded by **Alderman Burkush**, it was voted to waive the report's reading.*

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

31. Report(s) of this evening's remaining committees, if available.

The Committee on Lands and Buildings respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the request from the Mayor that the Municipal Complex on Valley Street be named in honor of former Mayor Gatsas be approved.

*On motion of **Alderman O'Neil**, duly seconded by **Alderman T. Sapienza**, it was voted to accept the report and adopt its recommendations.*

Alderman O'Neil: What is the process? I've had at least one business person reach out to me to see how they can get involved with it.

Mayor Ruais: My understanding in the conversations that I've had is that this will all be covered by private donations, or if there are those that are interested in helping to offset that cost, I'd be more than happy to have those conversations.

Alderman O'Neil: Do we know what the plan is, though? If somebody's drawing something up?

Mayor Ruais: I don't want to speak out of turn for the folks that are working on it.

Alderman Fajardo: I just was curious. You were starting to mention the design, and I saw in your memo that the design would come back for awareness by the board or actually approval by the board?

Mayor Ruais: What's the proper course of action for that? Tonight is just the naming rights. We will come back with a design for approval from the board.

Matthew Normand, City Clerk: That's up to the board if the board wants to make approval, or if they want to just see what the rendering looks like, it's up to this board.

Alderman Fajardo: I would like to approve it.

Mayor Ruais: We'll keep that in mind as we go through the process into the next board. And certainly, we'll take that into consideration.

*On motion of **Alderman Fajardo**, duly seconded by **Alderman T. Sapienza**, it was voted to have the Board of Mayor and Aldermen approve the rendering for the Ted Gatsas Municipal Complex*.

Alderman Long: The police department is named after Officer Briggs.

Mayor Ruais: I had this conversation, actually, with Director Clougherty because he had discussed the Public Works building and potentially naming that in honor of an individual

as well. So, this would be for the complex, but it wouldn't in any way affect the Michael Briggs building or anything we did with the subsequent buildings in there.

> The Committee on Lands and Buildings respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the request from the Tax Collector to deem the Henry Wilson Elementary School property surplus be approved.

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

> The Committee on Administration/Information Systems respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the recommendation from the City Clerk to unseal and make public the meeting minutes of the Committee on Lands & Buildings from July 02, 2024, and February 18, 2025, be approved.

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

> The Committee on Administration/Information Systems respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the proposal to increase the Aldermen’s salary to $9,000 be received and filed.

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

> The Committee on Administration/Information Systems respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the conflict of interest proposal submitted by Alderman Terrio be received and filed.

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

32. Resolutions:

"Amending the FY2023 and FY2024 Community Improvement Program, authorizing, appropriating and transferring funds in the amount of Twenty Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy-Two Dollars and Seventy-Five Cents ($20,772.75) for the FY2024 CIP 510524 FY24 School Deferred Maintenance."

"Amending the FY2024 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Forty-Two Thousand Six Hundred Dollars ($42,600) for the FY2024 CIP 610824 Easterseals NH -Tenant Based Rental Assistance."

"Amending the FY2023 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of One Million Fifty-Nine Thousand Ninety-Four Dollars and Seventeen Cents ($1,059,094.17) for the FY2023 CIP 611523 Healthy Homes Production Grant Program."

"Amending the FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Twenty-Nine Thousand Three Hundred Thirty-Nine Dollars ($29,339) for the FY2026 CIP C330041626 FY25 HSGP SWAT/SOU Equipment."

*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 T. Sapienza**, it was voted that the Resolutions ought to pass and be Enrolled.*

33. Bond Resolutions:

"Authorizing Bonds, Notes or Lease Purchases in the amount of Twenty-Three Million Six Hundred Thousand Dollars ($23,600,000) for the 2026 CIP C500071126 Pearl Street Parking Garage."

"Authorizing Bonds, Notes or Lease Purchases in the amount of Four Hundred Thousand Dollars ($400,000) for the 2026 CIP C650051026 Al Lemire Field Lighting (Derryfield Park)."

"Authorizing Bonds, Notes or Lease Purchases in the amount of Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars ($250,000) for the 2026 CIP C650051126 Pony League Baseball Field Lighting."

"Authorizing Bonds, Notes or Lease Purchases in the amount of One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars ($150,000) for the 2026 CIP C650051226 Livingston Park Field Lighting Improvement."

Alderman Terrio requested that Bond Resolution Authorizing Bonds, Notes or Lease Purchases in the amount of Thirty-Five Million Dollars ($35,000,000) for the 2026 CIP WCA24.2026 Administration Building and Vehicle Storage Garage be voted on separately.

Mayor Ruais called for a vote on the balance.

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

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

Bond Resolution:

"Authorizing Bonds, Notes or Lease Purchases in the amount of Thirty-Five Million Dollars ($35,000,000) for the 2026 CIP WCA24.2026 Administration Building and Vehicle Storage Garage."

Alderman Terrio: I would note that I've received a lot of emails and we had public comment against moving this building there.

Alderman Levasseur: Since the vote was already taken to name the municipal complex after Ted Gatsas, does that mean that that no longer exists? Or if you vote against the Water Works building the new one, is it going to still stay the same?

Mayor Ruais: If Water Works goes to another area, the one that's existing there still falls within that complex.

Alderman Kantor: I wanted to discuss the the way into Manchester Water Works and the effects on ward six residents. I know you've been a great neighbor, and I just want to be even better neighbors. And I want to protect the neighborhood in that area. Continuing that street that you can already use at Water Works and going directly to Candia Road, I

feel is essential for the whole area. First of all, it's kind of crazy that we're building on wetlands and the Massabesic area. You can't have a car lot down there but we're going to bring in more trucks down in that area. We're going to disrupt it. And I mean, you just Google the impact of building on wetlands and it is insanity. And we're pretty much okay with it. Never mind disrupting people's quality of life. I know you think it's not going to be an impact, but it will be a big impact. It's important that we protect the wildlife and the quality of life of other residents, and all neighborhoods should be protected as well. Besides the fact it's going to cost everyone more money. I mean, to me, we're taxing people and I know it's not going to change our tax rate, but it's going to affect businesses and families. And we're being taxed out of everything. This is a want over a need. I just don't think it's good for the neighborhood. And it needs to have direct access right out to Candia Road. If it's moving forward, asking for that street when you're spending $35 million, we should have a direct line right out to Candia Road.

Phil Croasdale, Water Works Director: We can't have a direct line out to Candia Road, as you know, because we took a drive around last week. We do have a gravel road that comes out 400 yards up the road, almost to Kalisz Street. I did go out there and look at the area. There used to be a power line that went to Kalisz Street, so potentially we could probably extend that gravel road to Kalisz Street. And then we could get the vehicles off at that point. I mean, as far as the traffic goes, all of our vehicles are big trucks, our excavator, loader, pipe truck. Everything has been going out there since 2011, when the municipal complex was built. And we were forced to move all of our distribution material out to that site. Now, to address the traffic issues that were concerns of the neighbors, I did send you a spreadsheet. I don't know if you had a chance to look at that. You asked about traffic and the traffic impact from the waterworks, and I'll just summarize it really quick for everybody because I know it's getting late. Based on 90 employees that work at the waterworks, 35 of those employees are already out there. So, we're talking about 55 employees. The 55 employees, myself, 44 in distribution and ten in finance and administration work out of the Lincoln Street property right now. But out of those people that work out of Lincoln Street, 31 of them on a regular basis, will travel out to Lakeshore Road to do business. So, we're already out there back and forth now. So, you're really talking about 23 more vehicles, 23 people that work at Lincoln Street that would be moved out to the on a permanent basis out to this new facility. As you know, I think as anybody

who would visit Lake Shore Road could see that there's very low traffic all hours of the day. I think, as you said, we've been very good neighbors. We maintain the roads in the sense of keeping them clean. I have our personnel drive the speed limit five miles an hour less. I asked them to do that. The neighborhood thinks there's a traffic problem out there, and I would agree with them. There's a traffic problem, but it's not quantity. It's quality. And when you talk about quality, you're not talking about traffic coming from the Manchester Water Works or our personnel. You're talking about people that are going too fast up and down Lake Shore Road and that's out of our hands. That's more of a police issue, I think. We're going to see very low impact from us moving our facility out there. We have staggered hours to begin today. We have staggered hours to end the day. So, you're not going to see a rush of traffic in and out at the beginning of the day or the end of the day. You're not going to see any difference after 3:30 in the afternoon. You won't see any large vehicles after 3:30 in the afternoon out in that area, because they'll all be in the truck barn because the day ends at 3:30 for our distribution crews. And weekends aren't going to change. I really have to disagree with you when you say it's more of a want than a need. We need to move out there. Our facility, we haven't outgrown our facility at Lincoln Street. It shrunk us around it. We used to have seven acres of land. Now we're down to a parking lot and a building. We can no longer operate efficiently and effectively and really serve our customers in a manner in which they're accustomed to through Lincoln Street on a long term basis. We have been around for 155 years. It's going to be around for another God knows how long, as long as we're using water and taking it from the lake. For us to move out there and be as one cohesive department. I think it's in the best interest of the city of Manchester, and our department. I certainly work with the neighbors. I'm very accessible. You can tell the neighbors that I'm very approachable and we work with them now for all kinds of different issues that they have. I think we've gone to great lengths to try to make the place look better. You talk about wetlands, the reason there's going to be a wetland impact, is because we could have moved the facility further to the north up Lake Shore Road, but we would have had to put it right on the street and talking to the neighbors, they didn't want to see that. They wanted to see us setback. So, we're going to be set back in a better location, set back near our distribution facility. We will impact the wetlands, but we're working with the Department of Environmental Services, where right now we've come to an agreement where we're going to put about 20 to 40 acres into conservation easement to offset that wetlands impact. That's how you

work it with the Department of Environmental Services and the Wetlands Bureau is that you can build on wetlands, but you have to mitigate that. And you do it through three ways. We can do it three ways: pay a fee, a conservation easement, or build another wetlands. And we're going to do both with the conservation easement, because we're going to look for a piece of property that is 50/50 that's already a wetland and a wooded area, so that eventually that wooded area could work itself into the wetlands area and it'll be under conservation easement, so it'll be protected for perpetuity. I could go on and on about all the impacts and things going on.

Mayor Ruais: You said that this was expected to be a 2% annual increase, which worked out to be about $1.25.

P. Croasdale: Yeah, the increase increases are going to be 1% in 2027, 1% in 2029, and 0.5% in 2031, which amounts to about $2 on the quarterly bill.

Mayor Ruais: So $8 a year?

P. Croasdale: $8 a year for the first one, then an additional eight dollars and then an additional four dollars.

Alderman T. Sapienza: Phil, last Tuesday, after a freezing cold night, I woke up on Valley Street to a giant puddle half frozen in the street. It was a water leak. One call and you guys were out there. You fixed it in half a day. But what was really impressive was the ice that was created and the way you guys cleaned it up was unbelievable. And it was really high-quality professional work because, you know, I'm thinking my driveway is going to have a giant ice sheet in it and the street had ice in it. You guys salted. You came back. You scraped it out. Remarkable job.

*On motion of **Alderman Vincent**, duly seconded by **Alderman Barry**, it was voted that the Bond Resolution ought to pass and be Enrolled, with **Aldermen Kantor and Terrio** being duly recorded in opposition.*

34. Ordinances:

"Amending Section 33.024, & 33.026 (Fire Prevention Inspector I) of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Manchester."

"Amending Section 33.024, & 33.026 (Fire Prevention Inspector II) of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Manchester."

"Amending Section 33.024, 33.025, & 33.026 (Fire Inspector) of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Manchester."

"Amending Section 33.024, 33.025, & 33.026 (Fire Services Data Analyst) of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Manchester."

"Amending Section 33.026 (Fire Marshal) of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Manchester."

*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 T. Sapienza**, it was voted to Ordain.*

TABLED ITEMS

*On motion of **Alderman O'Neil**, duly seconded by **Alderman T. Sapienza**, it was voted to remove all items from the table.*

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.

*On motion of **Alderman T. Sapienza**, duly seconded by **Alderman Long**, it was voted to receive and file.*

36. 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.

*On motion of **Alderman T. Sapienza**, duly seconded by **Alderman Long**, it was voted to receive and file.*

37. Ordinances:

"Amending Chapter 92 (Fire Prevention) of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Manchester in order to align with RSA's 47:22, 153, 155-A and 160-C:6."

"Amending Chapter 117: Food Service Establishments of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Manchester by making changes to reflect the new food code and increasing various fees."

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

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Barry**, it was voted to Ordain.*

38. Proposed Zoning Ordinance of the City of Manchester.

***Alderman Burkush** moved to Ordain. **Alderman Vincent** duly seconded the motion.*

***Alderman Kantor** requested a roll call vote.*

Alderman Terrio: There were some concerns from citizens about density. I guess we can tweak this going forward, right? I mean, if we say if we find that something's not working how easy is it to change?

Jeff Belanger, Planning & Community Development Director: It would be the same process that we've gone through recently. Any change requires a public hearing, but that's not insurmountable. I would fully expect that in a year or two years, we might come back to you and say we've been administering this for a little while and there are a few things we want to just tighten up. That's perfectly reasonable.

Alderman Terrio: They were talking about MX1. Would people be grandfathered so if we made it MX1 and a business moved in, we wouldn't be able to go back to R2.

J. Belanger: It would be MX1 with this new zoning ordinance, it could go back to R2 should the board want to do that. I'll explain MX1 for a minute to address the concern that was

brought up, because I think it seemed like there were a number of people with the same concern. So, we have created these two-page summary sheets that are on our website. We handed them out at every committee meeting that we did, all the 12 community meetings that we did last summer. And they all have a description of each district. And so, MX1 is this one that I'm holding right here. And it shows that there are only businesses permitted on specified streets in the MX1. MX1 is supposed to be almost entirely a residential district. There are just specified streets. These are streets that you would expect a business to show up on, such as Union, Elm, Pine, Maple, the major streets. Only on those streets and only on corner lots of those streets and only with a conditional use permit from the Planning Board could a business locate in the MX1. So, there are numerous hoops to get through. I didn't catch all the addresses during public comment. I caught Mr. Girard's address, 283 Orange Street. We looked at it, there wouldn't be able to be a business located within more than two blocks of his house in the MX1. So that's roughly the way the MX1 works. I'd be happy to talk more about it. I think there was some confusion about it, so I wanted to clarify that.

Alderman Levasseur: Quickly, on the issue of the gentleman who came before us on the increase in his taxes. Now, that's not your job. It's a building; just like you put a shed on or a pool. You have to pay more. I'm not happy about that, by the way. But anyway, when you build an ADU is it possible that you can include some information when somebody does actually apply that the valuation is going to be added to your property that you currently have. It might be a shock to somebody and someone may say they didn't realize. I don't know what their normal size for an ADU is, I don't know what the size of the last gentleman's was.

J. Belanger: It was 960 or 990ft².

Alderman Levasseur: Maybe a 700 square foot ADU gets you the same thing, and it's a third of the cost of your taxes increasing.

J. Belanger: Kristen goes out to the front counter all the time, along with Glenn, and a number of other people. We engage in a lot of conversation with folks. We help them through the process. I think he was pleased, he said, with our process.

Alderman Levasseur: Nothing wrong with the process.

J. Belanger: There's a lot of conversation that happens there. I'd be happy to speak with our staff.

Alderman Levasseur: A little sheet that you add into your packet, so you don't come back here after a year and say, oh, I didn't realize. He wants an exception for whether or not it's your mom or your grandma or your relative, that maybe that would be an exception. But that's not your purview or your department. That would be an aldermanic board that would make that tax policy decision. And then whether or not you have to jump through the legal hoops to get in and do that.

J. Belanger: Correct.

Alderman Levasseur: I'm just wondering, you say that a lot of ADUs weren't built like we thought there would be. You said, I think the last meeting you said, I thought we were going to get inundated with ADUs, but we haven't.

J. Belanger: I wasn't so much predicting that.

Alderman Levasseur: You were surprised.

J. Belanger: There were comments while the legislation was working its way through the State House that we're going to see a lot of this and that was not just the most recent, but there was also ADU legislation 4 or 5 years ago that just hasn't come to pass.

Alderman Levasseur: Although the laws made it easier to build an ADU there are still a lot of requirements as far as tying into sewer and water. All those costs are born into your final cost. I have not had anybody else bring that issue up to me since they were allowed. This one came out of left field and it's a big hike. And people should be made aware of what they're going to encumber when it happens.

J. Belanger: Agreed. We'd be happy to help with that.

Alderman Levasseur: I think it's just a small notation or something, somewhere to just remind people so they can't come back at us or you.

J. Belanger: Got it. Thank you.

Alderman O'Neil: When I spoke to Mr. Lehoux, I was blown away with what he told me about the taxes. But it's a detached ADU. I'm aware of two attached. I know one because they're very complimentary of Kristen. She was very helpful in them getting through the process. Didn't mention a thing about property taxes going crazy on them. I don't know how this is getting looked at by the Assessors, and I can't get my head around it that the two that are attached, that wasn't the issue there. The issue was that they had to replace their five eighth water line to a three quarter, and there was all kinds of fees, Water Works fees attached to it, like almost $2,000 or something that they didn't expect. But they're very complimentary of Kristen and her help getting through the process. And it's done. What I just can't get my head around is somehow I think they're a good thing. Are they getting looked at differently if they're detached versus attached?

Mayor Ruais: I'd be happy to call up the Assessor and ask them to do a presentation on this at the next meeting, or have them submit a one pager to the board if we didn't feel a presentation was necessary. I think initially I can ask them to come up with some info to to share with the board. And then we can take it from there if there's action that the board wants to take. I thought the suggestion that he made is something worth considering. If it's a family member, I think we can absolutely have that conversation on the board.

Alderman O'Neil: Did either of you hear anything like this previously?

J. Belanger: No, I have not.

Mayor Ruais: That's certainly something that the board can consider going forward. And I'd be happy to compile information from the Assessor.

Mayor Ruais *called for a vote. The motion carried on a roll call vote, with Aldermen O'Neil, Terrio, Burkush, Barry, Vincent, Thomas, Morgan, Goonan, Long, Fajardo, and T. Sapienza voting yea, and Aldermen Kantor and E. Sapienza voting nay. Alderman Levasseur was duly recorded as abstaining.*

Mayor Ruais: Thank you, Jeff and Kristen. I appreciate all of your work over the last few years to get this to fruition, and thank you to your entire department and all the work that you did on the community meetings, answering questions from both the city at large, the aldermen, etc. This was an incredible process. I appreciate all the work you put into it. Thank you.

NEW BUSINESS

Alderman E. Sapienza: I'd like to offer a response to some of the comments that were made at last week's Board of School Committee meeting that referenced what they refer to as their budget shortfall. They basically were blaming this board. It's time for the Board of School Committee to take some responsibility. It's time for them to step up. It's time for them to show some leadership. I don't know how many years ago they should have closed one of the high schools. They did not. They could have closed West or Central or for that matter, I suppose, Memorial, although Memorial was built in 1960. They should have closed a high school five years ago, six years ago, seven years ago, four years ago. But they didn't. They dithered. They didn't want to make the hard decisions. They didn't want to upset people. That's phase two, and they were on phase one. They didn't do it because of this. They didn't do it because of that. They didn't do it. And it's time for them to show some leadership. And by leadership, I don't mean for them to throw their hands up and say, well, gee, this situation we find ourselves in, this budget deficit, it's all the fault of the aldermen or words to that effect. So, I just want to make that clear. It's time for them to show some leadership and make the hard decisions. And, Merry Christmas.

Alderman Barry: Alderman T. Sapienza's niece Angelina couldn't make the meeting tonight, and she wanted to thank Uncle Tony for serving. And furthermore, I'd like to also thank the outgoing alderman. I certainly appreciate all your work. And it certainly meant a lot to me. And it is a tough job. And unfortunately, you get a lot of flack for it. So, thank you guys.

Alderman Long: I just wanted the board to be aware that earlier this year, the board voted to approve a 79-E for the building that houses the Bonfire Restaurant. Due to the property owner's negligence, specifically failing to heat the upper floors of the building and leaving windows open during freezing conditions, a pipe froze and burst, causing catastrophic damage to Bonfire as a result. A locally owned business that has operated successfully in this location for eight years has been displaced and will likely never return. While there is no action from the board to take at this time, I just wanted to note for the record that should the property owner fail to act on the approved 79-E improvements within the one year approved period, the board retains the authority to rescind its approval.

Alderman Terrio: So, is that part of the ordinance already so we can revoke it?

Alderman Long: Correct.

Alderman Terrio: Within a year?

Alderman Long: Well, it's part of RSA 79-E.

Alderman Terrio: Within a year. So, if it happens outside of the year, we can't revoke it?

Alderman Long: No, I believe you could revoke it at any time. The statute allows for it.

Alderman T. Sapienza: I just want to thank the residents of ward five for giving me the opportunity to serve on this board and represent ward five. I wish the incoming alderman, Alderman Jason Bonilla, very good luck and all the new alderman and all alderman on the board and also the school board. I wish the school board good luck too, and good luck to you, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Ruais: I'm going to need it, but you can come back and swear at us now. We made sure we were able to change that rule.

Alderman T. Sapienza: I am going to come back. I'm going to be polite.

Alderman Kantor: The many concerns that constituents had about water issues, and when people develop their land and there's an impact on it, and there was something and I was wondering if Jeff could come down and clarify something. Water issues are a big issue. I know that a while back you had mentioned there was a certain date that allowed that it was the responsibility of the new builder if it impacted neighbors. Do you remember?

J. Belanger: Oh, I remember the conversation. I'm trying to remember the date, and I'm sorry. Off the top of my head I might not be able to do that, but I could look it back up and get it to you.

Alderman Kantor: So could you explain that because I think it's really important. And is that something that you can give people that are building, if you impact your neighbor negatively with water, they can sue you and you are responsible. Isn't that what it boils down to?

J. Belanger: Yeah, there's a couple different angles to that. I mean, one angle is just the common law of trespass, which if someone flows water onto someone else's property, that can be a legal issue that is not for the city to get involved in. Obviously, that's a civil matter between adjacent property owners, but there is language in the city's building code. The local amendments to the city's building code that addresses water flowing onto other properties if it comes as a result of new development. Like I said, I don't recall the date when that was instituted, and so anything before that is grandfathered. But there is language to that effect.

Alderman Kantor: Is there a way you can get a notice out to people if they're developing? Because there was that date where you people aren't responsible, but then do you know.

J. Belanger: Yes, we can certainly counsel people to that effect. This should not be happening. It should not be happening that a new project is built and someone is flowing water onto someone else's property in a way that exceeds the rates that it currently does. There's a difference between rate and total volume. I mean, total volume can increase that is allowed, but rate cannot increase. So, someone cannot slope their land in a way

that that significantly changes the flow of water and impacts someone adjacent to them. I can talk to our building inspector. I can talk to other folks who deal with general contractors, and we can get the word out.

Alderman T. Sapienza: What's the status of that project?

J. Belanger: Melrose and South Mammoth, that is going to the planning board this Thursday. It's continuing.

Alderman T. Sapienza: So, it's continuing.

J. Belanger: Yes. So, the folks who brought that up, the best thing they could do is make those same comments to the planning board. That is the board with jurisdiction over that application. This board just does not have jurisdiction over that at the moment. It's the planning board that has the jurisdiction.

Alderman T. Sapienza: Because you know that those wetlands have been there since before I was a little boy. I mean, it's a mess out there to put buildings on it. That water has got to go someplace. You don't need to be a genius to figure that out. It's going to go in all those people's property.

J. Belanger: I don't have all the documents in front of me. I'm assuming that there was a study done about how the drainage would get collected. I just haven't looked at it recently. So, I don't know.

Alderman T. Sapienza: Is it true that the builder’s study is the only study?

J. Belanger: I believe that is usually how the process works. So that is probably true.

Alderman T. Sapienza: Is that vetted by the highway department?

J. Belanger: Yes, it is. They all are. And if the planning board felt that it was inadequate, they have the legal authority to request a third-party review. I think someone brought that

up. One of the commenters said we'd like independent review. The planning board can certainly do that if they feel it's warranted. That's their call.

Alderman T. Sapienza: But the highway department will look at it to make sure it's not flooded.

J. Belanger: That is part of every development review.

Alderman Fajardo: On the same topic, I am looking at the the application before that's going to come before the planning board this week. It's 54 pages and I'm going to read it. But I'm wondering, it looks like they've already received a pretty hefty number of variances from the ZBA.

J. Belanger: They did get variances. Yes.

Alderman Fajardo: And what is the ZBA taking into consideration regarding what you were just describing as far as water?

J. Belanger: That's usually more of a planning board review than a ZBA review. So, two separate boards that have two separate review processes. ZBA is more limited in its scope. Planning board has a broader authority to take much more engineering-related issues, water drainage related issues into account.

Alderman Fajardo: For the people who came to speak to this board tonight, bring your comments, those same comments to Thursday's planning board meeting. What time is that?

J. Belanger: At 6:00PM.

Alderman Fajardo: If I have questions after going through this, then should I reach out to you, or should I reach out to the planning board chair?

J. Belanger: You can reach out to me.

Alderman E. Sapienza: When we hear wetlands, which we heard a lot about tonight, there's a federal concern here. Am I right or wrong?

J. Belanger: Here in New Hampshire, it's the state. The US Army Corps of Engineers does regulate navigable waters, which includes wetlands, but really it is New Hampshire. It is the State Department of Environmental Services that regulates wetland impacts.

Alderman E. Sapienza: So, any developer, no matter what the city might say, the city might greenlight it from A to Z. But the state could come in and say, well, no, we're flagging it.

J. Belanger: Depending on the development, there can be a number of different angles through which the state can need to issue a permit and block a development. It could be state DOT, it could be state DES, for example. So, in this case, yes, if there is a wetland impact and proposed, the state can say no. It's up to them. The line is the state regulates the wetland itself. Municipalities regulate the border around wetlands. So in Manchester with the ordinance that we have as of right this second and with the ordinance that we will have in a few months, they all have a setback around them, depending on which ordinance we're talking about. They require a certain amount of setback from structures, other things to protect the wetland, but that is municipally regulated because it is not the wetland itself. The wetland itself is regulated by the state.

Alderman E. Sapienza: The state could come in here and red light any of these developments.

J. Belanger: They obviously have criteria.

Alderman E. Sapienza: Anywhere there's a wetland.

J. Belanger: Where they meet the criteria for the state to say no, this is unacceptable. Yes. But there are criteria that they apply.

Alderman Fajardo: I just was made aware that the public comment hearing for this particular application has already closed.

J. Belanger: As I was sitting here thinking, I thought that might have closed.

Alderman Fajardo: Yes. So, what is the right channel for people who have concerns that haven't yet been heard for them to follow?

J. Belanger: If the public comment has been closed then they can attend and watch the proceedings of the business meeting, but they cannot provide any additional evidence. The time to submit evidence has been closed.

Alderman Fajardo: Oh, so not even, for example, through an email?

J. Belanger: The planning board cannot consider further evidence if it's been closed. I apologize for the confusion. I forgot where it was in the process.

Mayor Ruais: For evidence, but somebody could voice their displeasure with the project if they wanted to.

J. Belanger: The planning board cannot receive further testimonial evidence either if the project is closed, which I believe it is. I think the next meeting is what it is. The hearing is closed. I'm looking at my date here. The hearing is closed. It's the middle of the month, so the hearing is closed. So, there is no further opportunity for public comment.

Alderman Fajardo: Is there an opportunity for any of us to weigh in?

J. Belanger: It is the planning board that has jurisdiction over the application. It is not this board.

Alderman T. Sapienza: Has the highway department certified that this project is not going to flood the streets?

J. Belanger: I would need to look. Off the top of my head, I just don't know.

Alderman T. Sapienza: I just know that property, and I know that wetland. I've seen it. It's been there my whole life. And it's absurd to me what they're putting there.

Tim Clougherty, Director of Public Works: I also don't possess the totality of our subdivision.

Mayor Ruais: We'll get you that information tomorrow morning first thing.

Alderman T. Sapienza: As the director of the Department of Public Works, you're probably concerned about them flooding the streets.

T. Clougherty: I'm concerned about every subdivision that goes in and its effect on the public right of way and the adjacent properties. That's why we have a process that we go through.

Alderman T. Sapienza: So, your department does look at that?

T. Clougherty: Yes, we do.

Alderman Fajardo: If I may, Alderman Goonan, I know that you're the aldermanic rep on that board. If maybe you could just convey during your hearing that there was some concerns that were raised.

Alderman Goonan: Thank you. Yes, we went through the whole process. We listened to several meetings of public input, as well as the experts. And I think they're ready to vote.

Alderman Kantor: I was just wondering about the $250,000 for the skate park. When does that need to be raised by? Is there a date that needs to be raised by?

Alderman Barry: As soon as we get it. So, you can start tomorrow. I'll start tomorrow. We can all start tomorrow.

Alderman Kantor: I was actually going to say I will help you fundraise, but you don't have to say it that way, Alderman Barry.

Alderman Barry: I am going to be. We've already started. We've actually already started fundraising.

Alderman Kantor: I didn't know if there was a specific date that it had to be in to get approved. And if we don't reach the $250,000, I'm being hopeful. I'm just questioning.

Mayor Ruais: I appreciate what you're saying. I don't think that it was contingent upon a specific date, but that the idea was that it was contingent upon it being raised.

Alderman Barry: Sharon just said it's going to go up by July or August, so we've got a good six months to tackle it.

Mayor Ruais: And you would welcome the assistance from Alderman Kantor.

Alderman Barry: From everyone.

Alderman Kantor: I will assist.

Alderman Barry: I know you will.

Alderman Levasseur: I want to say thank you to Melodye Smith for coming out and giving me your beautiful words, shared by millions across America and for some reason, millions more in China. I don't know why, but China's a big fan of mine for some reason. What I really want to say is thank you to the department heads who have always made me look good. Any time there's been a problem or an issue for my constituents, I've answered them. And with my powers that I have, I'm able to send that email right over to a department head and magically it gets fixed rather quickly. So, you make all of us aldermen look really good. You've made me look really good for the last 16 years. Actually, 14 years plus two a long time ago. So, thank you to the department heads, to all

of the aldermen that I've served with, even though it's been a little bit bumpy for me during those years. I also want to wish all the new board members coming in, good luck. I'll be watching and just enjoying the pain and suffering you all have to go through. Thank you very much.

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

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk

Meeting Start Time: 7:00PM
Meeting End Time: 10:28PM
Minutes Prepared By: Michael Intranuovo