

BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN

February 3, 2026 at 7:00 PM

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

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Kaw-uh, Goonan, Dexter, Fajardo, Bonilla, Kantor, Trisciani,
O'Neil, Terrio, Sapienza, Burkush, Barry, Vincent, Thomas
Library Trustees Vanessa Blais, Patricia Cornell, Israel Piedra, Bob Lord,
Martha Rossignol

Absent: Library Trustees Eleanor Dahar, Ken Snow

1. The Mayor advised that nominations are in order to appoint Cordelia Burpee to replace Trustee Dahar, and to reappoint Israel Piedra, both terms to expire October 2032.

Alderman O'Neil nominated the Library Trustees as advised by Mayor Ruais.

Alderman Trisciani duly seconded the nomination.

2. The Mayor advised that a motion is in order to close nominations.

*On motion of **Alderman Barry**, duly seconded by **Alderman Burkush**, it was voted to close nominations.*

3. The Mayor advised that unless the Board desires to suspend the rules, the nominations will layover until the next meeting.

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

*There being no further business to come before the joint session, on motion of **Alderman Terrio**, duly seconded by **Alderman O'Neil**, it was voted to adjourn.*

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

The Clerk called the roll.

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

Mayor Ruais: Before we get into public comment, if the board would indulge me for a moment. As Manchester knows, we lost a giant in former Mayor Bob Baines. There have been some tremendously eloquent words that have been shared about his legacy that he leaves behind for the city, from the students he touched being principal over at Manchester West to his time as Mayor. We were talking at the the wake of how long that obituary could have been because of his lifetime of service. I think he told me when he swore me in in 2024, that that was the 50th anniversary of when he was sworn in as a board of school committee member. So, a man who has a tremendous lifetime of service to the city of Manchester. Alderman Bonilla reached out last week, and I thought he had a really great suggestion that we have Manchester West High students come and play two songs on his behalf in memory of former Mayor Baines. So tonight, up here we have Manchester West High School musicians and their director, Rebecca Berger, to play a couple songs for us in honor of former Mayor Baines.

[Musical performance]

Mayor Ruais: Thank you all for that beautiful tribute.

PUBLIC COMMENT

4. The Mayor 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. 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.

Troy Micklon, 29 Ode Way: I'm here this evening to continue the conversation about snow emergency parking issues raised at the last meeting by Alderman Terrio. He spoke about how after every storm, there are vehicles that were clearly not moved, forcing plows to go around them, leaving narrow travel lanes with snow and ice in the roadway and parking spaces long after the storm ends. During the discussion, MPD clarified that once a snow emergency ends at 6 a.m., vehicles that were not moved can automatically become legally parked again, even if they were originally interfering with snow removal. After that meeting and seeing the aftermath of this past storm, I researched how other cities handle these situations. Wayzata, Minnesota and Aberdeen, South Dakota use what's called the completion standard. Under this approach, a street is not considered cleared until snow has been plowed as close to the curb as possible. If a plow has to go around a vehicle, that street is still not considered fully cleared and parking restrictions remain in place for that specific spot until work is finished. Other cities focus on snow bound vehicles. In Ogden, Utah, vehicles that are plowed around and left in place are treated as abandoned and removed. Closer to home in Medford, Massachusetts, snow encasement is used as visual evidence that a vehicle hasn't moved, allowing the city to clear the obstruction during post-storm widening. The takeaway is clear; when a vehicle is left in place after a storm, it stops being just parked and becomes an obstruction to public safety and snow removal operations. Manchester already requires all vehicles to be removed during snow emergencies. However, once an emergency ends, there is currently no clear authority to address these vehicles that never complied and were plowed around. As such, I propose the city work to close the 6 a.m. loophole by recognizing snowbound vehicles as a condition-based violation. Specifically, I asked the board to consider defining snowbound vehicles as one that has been plowed around or encased in snow and allow such vehicles to be ticketed or towed until the street is cleared, curb to curb. This approach encourages compliance by making expectations clear. If a resident moves their vehicle, the condition is resolved; if they do not, the city has a clear basis to act so DPW can finish the job. I have handouts here with citations and a draft ordinance for you to reference, and I respectfully ask that you take this step and close the 6 a.m. loophole.

Jeannette Lund, 456 Beacon Street: This is my fourth time to City Hall on this matter. It's about having the sidewalk in my neighborhood plowed. It's never been plowed in 28 years that I've lived there. Am I going to get a rebate on my taxes for that? Mr. Mayor, I spoke

to you last Wednesday. You remember me? We spoke for about 10 or 15 minutes when you were on your way to the bank for a meeting. Nothing's been resolved. I'm sure each and every one of you have your sidewalks plowed every time there's a snowstorm. Now, some of the people on my street and neighborhood are in their 70s and 80s. Do you think we can continue to do this? Be fair here. Something needs to be done. Think about your senior citizens. Why aren't our sidewalks plowed? Children go to school every day to Hillside, Central, McDonough. We pay the taxes that you require from us each and every year. Why can't we have our sidewalk plowed? Why can you afford \$2.5 million for a skate park but we cannot have our sidewalk plowed, Mr. Mayor? Do you have an answer for me? You certainly thought you did last Wednesday. But here we are again. We had a major snowstorm. And guess what? No city sidewalk was plowed. I have neighbors who don't adhere to off the street when there is a parking ban. So therefore, when the plow goes by, they have to lift the wing plow. And guess what? There's a mound of snow in the middle of the street. I have to shovel that also to get out of my driveway. Do you think this is all fun and games? No, it's not. When you're a senior citizen and you start having health issues, it's no fun and games. And all I'm asking for is what everybody else gets because I pay my taxes. So, I ask you, are you going to give me a rebate on my taxes for 28 years? No, you certainly will not, will you?

Glenn Ouellette, 112 Auburn Street: I'm sorry I look different, but the thing is, when I leave here, I go and entertain people. That's my second job. So I don't have time to go back home and change. I want to welcome the new board. This is your second meeting. You should be getting into it. I do want to say that the issues of last year have not changed, Your Honor. I want the neighborhood throughout the entire 26 acres of Valley Cemetery, we want that gate on Pine Street closed. People will not be dying in that cemetery at night of an overdose if they can't get in. If they do go over the fence, it's called trespassing. There has to be a limit. Not too long ago, about three weeks ago, I came home at 1:00 in the morning finding two people on our steps in the front door of Auburn Street, completely fried with needles all over the steps. This stuff has to stop. I want to thank the police chief and the police officers because they have been able to find people in there that are actually selling drugs. We don't want drug dealers in the cemetery either. We don't want trash, we don't want needles, and we don't want poop. Enough! Close the gates. It costs you barely nothing. The police officer goes there in the vehicle and goes through the

entire cemetery and finds nobody there. They locked the door. The next morning, when the police car comes through Pine Street, and they always do, they can open the gate. If we can't enforce the ordinance voluntarily by people's honesty, then we need to take another action, and that is to close that gate. It was built in the 1800s, not just for looks, for protection. And the last issue I want to talk about is the meeting that you just had, the special meeting. I approve of that. If we're going to fix our infrastructure, we need to find money somewhere, no question about that. It doesn't build by itself. And the downtown is growing. And so, we need to fix our infrastructure. And unfortunately, I was hoping we didn't need that garage, but we do, we're running out of space. And so, it is a good idea and I'm glad that it passed. Thank you and good night. Close that gate.

Mayor Ruais called for anyone else wishing to speak.

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

Alderman Terrio: I just want to remind the public that this is not a two way conversation, asking questions of the board or the mayor. You can speak, but it's not going to be a two way conversation. Secondly, I encourage people, if you have a problem in your ward, please contact your alderman and address the problem.

PRESENTATION

5. Presentation from the Department of Public Works regarding roadway resurfacing.

Tim Clougherty, Director of Public Works: There has been a lot of discussion about the condition of our roadways over the past year. And we thought it would be beneficial to provide the board with a presentation that talks about not only what our plans are for the coming year, but also potential funding situations and what our recommendations are relative to roadway resurfacing. Caleb Dobbins is our chief engineer, and he is going to do that presentation now and then we can entertain any questions that may arise.

Caleb Dobbins, Highway Chief Engineer: For some of you, this presentation may seem a little bit familiar from about a year and three months ago when we put it forward to the previous board. There have been some changes, however. So I will go through these as quickly as I can. But in any case, this is to deal with specifically roadway resurfacing and the roadway program that DPW gets CIP for each year. When I start talking about good condition, fair condition, and poor condition, I wanted to put some pictures on this so you can kind of understand. So this is a road that's considered in good condition, basically limited cracking, smooth, no potholes, and good striping, things along those lines. Fair condition is one in which we're working on keeping it in a passable state. So you'll see some crack sealing. That's what's called preventative maintenance. It's in order to try and keep the waters and whatnot from getting down into the road so as to try and increase the longevity of the road. And then these are the roads that you folks probably always get calls about that look like this. This is poor condition. This actually happens to be Bremer Street, which will be resurfaced next year as the end of the current contract that we have. But you can see it's been pothole patched. There's severe cracking. Basically it's in a state that the public is never appreciative of driving on. This is the same slide that was presented two years ago or a year ago. We go out and we look at the roads every two years. We do a cycle where we'll rate them, and this is the ratings per ward. And then at the bottom you will see it's the grand total. So basically a little less than half of the roads in the city are considered to be in good condition. About a third of them are in poor condition. So this is a simplified version of what we go through. What we normally have is about actually eight different categories, but it's a lot easier to depict this as what we call a stoplight version, which is red, yellow and green that people can easily understand. You'll see the distribution is pretty consistent throughout the city. There's no ward that has way more bad roads than good roads and vice versa. That's because as we look at the program we look at condition and we look at what makes sense for the road at the given time based on the funding and whatnot that we're given. So this happens to be ward one only because it's the first ward. So we have maps of each ward that show the condition of the roads in that ward relative to it. Our consultant does this review. They go out with a pavement van that analyzes every single road in the city, and then they go through and it looks at various aspects to that road. And then it rates them based on the conditions. So this is just simply the condition of the roadway. It doesn't have a direct effect. Well, it has an effect, but it's not the only portion of how we decide what roads are

done and when. So pavement condition, which is what this rating was just shown, it's looked at on ten foot increments. Then it's compiled into roadway segments. So in other words, we're not going to say we're going to pave this ten foot section, but not this ten foot section. It's based on a scale from 0 to 100, and the factors that go into that are ride quality, pavement cracking, pavement rutting, and general distress of the roadway. So you can have a road perhaps that rides fairly good but is very rutted and very cracked, which is a sign that road is going to go into deterioration very quickly versus a road that is as shown before and good or even fair condition. So then comes the part of actually trying to decide which roads are going to be done when. So as I mentioned before, pavement condition is absolutely a factor to that. In addition to that, traffic volume and the type of traffic is a portion of that, obviously a high-volume road is going to probably rise higher on the list than, say, a cul-de-sac or a dead-end. Then we look at roadway connectivity. Is this a roadway that perhaps just services a neighborhood, or is it a road, like a Mammoth or a Hughes or South Willow Street that connects portions of the city? Access to services? You know, we have hospitals here in the city. Not only do the citizens of Manchester expect to be able to utilize those hospitals, but we also have folks that come in ambulance services that come in from other towns. So we need to look at how all of that connects into it. Treatment timing. So I'll show you a slide in a little bit where it's very important to try and figure out where on this on a graph is in terms of what you're going to do to it and when. Because if you delay doing something at the right time, it becomes much more expensive to be able to bring it back to the level had you done it at the proper time and then last, as with everything else, funding, we can only do as much as we are funded for. So these programs are done under certain assumptions. And then based off of the funding that we receive, different sections are selected to be addressed. So as I said, this is the treatment timing. So for those roads that were in good and fair condition, what we try and do is we try and get out there, do crack sealing and what's called micro-servicing, which is our ability to keep good roads good, or fair roads fair. Those are lower cost. And as you can see on the scale, they can give us some good response and good results relative to trying to do low cost alternatives. Once a road starts to become very cracked, and you're starting to see some general distresses, then you start getting into something a little bit more expensive, which is what we call a two inch mill and overlay. That's really kind of a rehabilitation. And then further down the line, and I do want to point out how quickly all of a sudden that the steepness of that graph

becomes, because it truly is that in a matter of a few years, if you miss that target of opportunity you start getting into a four inch mill and overlay or a full depth reclamation, which is what's considered basically a reconstruction of the road. It's a very expensive proposition that ends up coming along here. So this graph shows what the projections are. And these are statistical projections based off of the PCI, and then looking at what's expected in terms of the curves on the conditions of the roads. But right now we're sitting at a PCI citywide average of a 63. So that's in the fair category. And in that graph I've shown earlier, about a third of our things are in poor and about half are good. So it makes sense that we're in the fair category. However, if we continue to get funded as we have in the last at least 3 or 4 years of approximately \$6 million a year, you can see what that curve ends up doing or that the expected condition it drops down into to around a 58 which is getting to the point where a 55 is considered poor. So you're looking at perhaps in the next five years or so with the funding that the average condition of the roads in the city of Manchester would become poor. And that's average. So you have brand new roads that we are doing work on. And those are obviously in a good condition. And then you'll continue to have more roads that are added that fall into the poor condition. I just want you to pay attention to the various colors on this map for the roadways. These are the roads that would be on our plan for a five year plan coming forward if we were funded at a \$12 million per year funding level. Again, that \$12 million a year is minutely, incrementally improving the condition of our roads. It brings them from a 63 to a 64. And these are the roads that would be between the ones that are micro-surface as well as the paving, the two inch and the four inch and the reclamation. This is \$6 million. Not as colorful. You'll see that a lot of the streets that are getting addressed on this, what happens is a lot of the neighborhoods and other ones that would perhaps be getting addressed but are lower volume, they fall off of the list because, as I had mentioned, volume and things along those lines absolutely weigh into what we're going to end up doing relative to the funding that we're provided. So what are some of the implications on reduced funding? Number one, it's increased maintenance costs. The crews from operation are out there continually pothole patching. We have a shim program, which right now that program is only addressing roads that are not on the five year, \$12 million plan. So if we get a complaint or we're having an issue where our crews are out continually pothole patching a certain section of road, we will task the operations paving crew to go out and do what we call a shim. This is a maybe 3 to 5 year band aid at best for those

sections of road. But as I said before, these are roads that are not in the five year \$12 million plan. So these are the ones that we feel as though need to get addressed. But right now, to give you some kind of indication just from the ones that we've been given the backlog for that crew is in excess of two years. So the roads that we currently already have identified that need to have work done on them some of those will not be addressed in excess of two years from right now, deterioration rate increases. This is what I had pointed out at the slide where all of a sudden the steepness of that slope increases dramatically, that's what's happening as we get to the point where we don't have the funds to do a two inch mill and overlay. All of a sudden, within a few years or less, that two inch mill and overlay becomes a four inch or a full reclamation. And as you can take a guess that a four inch mill and overlay is twice as expensive as a two inch. And then overall future costs increase as roads continue to get into poor condition, instead of being able to do rehabilitation, everything really falls back into a reconstruction which is far more expensive. And it's been shown statistically throughout the country that the best fiscal policy is to try and keep good roads. Good short term temporary measures. Those are the shims that I had mentioned, pothole patching, things along those lines. And I'm sure that everyone on the board here certainly gets enough input from the public relative to the condition of the roadways that are within their wards.

Alderman O'Neil: Just the same van does all the ratings, right? It's not like you're out there?

C. Dobbins: Yes, it's the same van. It's the same crew, it's automated. It's all electronic. It's all video and it's all consumed and then digested. It takes them a while even after they get all the data in order to go through and actually process it all.

Alderman O'Neil: I know that something the department is very proud of, and I think the elected officials are very proud of, is that Public Works has been using various treatment types to address these challenges. Are you using any one type more than the other? And is there anything that's fallen off that you're not using?

C. Dobbins: Having the consultant that specifically does pavement management is a huge benefit to the department. You know, we look at what's the right thing at the right time

based on the condition. I think of roads very similar to the roof of your house. You know, sometimes you can put another layer of roofing material on. Sometimes you have to take all of the shingles off. Sometimes the wood underneath is rotten and you have to take it down to the rafters. Well, that's kind of what we have here and what we're trying to do is we're trying to keep that roof as in good condition as possible. But the problem is, once you get to that point where it's leaking now, all of a sudden things become more expensive to the point where you're replacing the ceiling in your bedroom instead of just the roof that's on top of your house.

Alderman O'Neil: It would appear, unless I'm reading it wrong, \$12 million is the key ask from Public Works.

C. Dobbins: That would hold the conditions and slightly increase the condition of the roadways that we have today.

Alderman O'Neil: There's no concern, if there's a long term plan, you can get the various contractors to do the work?

C. Dobbins: At this point in time, we have no concern that we would be able to get contractors. Again, we've reached out. We're fortunate to have a number of contractors that have done work within the city between school paving as well as the roadway paving. And again, they have that potential to be able to take care of what's out there.

Alderman Barry: Out of the approximately \$6 million that the city has been getting for roads, how much of that last year was done in-house compared to subcontracting out?

C. Dobbins: The only in-house paving that we're doing right now is the shim program that operations deals with. The cost, out of this program, is only to buy the materials for the program because the labor is already part of the general operational budget as well as the equipment that they own. So it would be hard to compare apples to apples in terms of the cost of what they have done versus the cost of what a contractor does. But again, I would say about \$500,000 goes in materials to that crew. We spend about a \$1 million on the preventative maintenance, the micro-surfacing and the crack ceilings. And then

also in addition to that, one of the things to realize is that all of this money doesn't just simply go to pavement, it goes to curbing, it goes to fixing the ADA tip downs, because we're required to do that by the Department of Justice. It goes to raising and lowering and fixing any of the drainage structures. So about a third of the cost of a normal road actually involves things that are not directly tied to the pavement.

Alderman Barry: So any extra money that you receive, the city work is not going to be doing the work. It's going to be outside contractors that are going to be doing the work. I mean, I know and I've talked to Tim in the past and I don't think the numbers have changed. If anything, it's probably for the worse. We're short at least 40 people over at DPW. And I know we've got a young lady here tonight that spoke about the sidewalk plows. We have eight sidewalk plows, and I was going to talk about this later, but I might as well get it off my chest. We just don't have the manpower. We don't have the manpower, the equipment. We have breakdowns with our equipment. So people think that it may be easy for our city workers to get out there and not only plow our streets, but also do all the sidewalk plowing also with very, very little equipment. We've got 400 miles of roadway in the city of Manchester. And you know, this was a severe snowstorm. And when you get some of your workers, I know one individual I spoke with, there was a few of them that I spoke with, one in particular out of 168 hours in a seven-day work week, he worked 125. I mean, that's a lot of hours for one person to put in. Another guy worked 46 hours straight. Kudos to them. I did receive a few phone calls from ward ten. They were very polite and they're very understanding because it was a severe snowstorm and we did the best we could with what we have.

Alderman Trisciani: I want to get us back to the roads and our discussion here. So if we were able to give you more funds to this project, you're saying you do have the contractors available so the work could get done? There's no barrier to getting it done if you had the funding correct?

C. Dobbins: I mean, the contractors here in the State of New Hampshire, they're looking for more work. I think you're starting to see that the state is starting to pare back due to funding issues that they have on the resurfacing that they have. So we're fortunate to have local contractors; the ability to do the work absolutely exists out there.

Alderman Trisciani: What would the number be to put us in a better position that you would be comfortable with \$12 million? So if we give you \$12 million, that would allow you to do a lot more?

C. Dobbins: Correct and what I'd like to also just quickly mention is there's one other factor on timing that we deal with, which is coordination with the utilities, because that's key. To make sure that we're not paving a road and then somebody coming back literally the next year and having to rip it up. So we have to coordinate with sewer, water, and the gas company in order to do that. So some of the ones that we have on certain years will move a little bit one way or the other, depending on the availability from the utilities. But at this point, we've continually given the utilities our basis as a \$12 million plan to make sure they stay ahead of us.

Alderman Bonilla: I want to ask you about the snow, but I'm just going to hold off a little bit about that one. You compared it to a roof. Wouldn't we take the \$12 million or let's say you got \$6 or \$7 million, turn the red to yellow, ideally. Is that what we would do?

C. Dobbins: We've given various scenarios relative to the \$12 million. Right now our current PCI average is 63. \$12 million over five years will get us to approximately a 64. If you wanted to bring everything basically up to a good condition. Not everything; an average of a good condition. You're looking at approximately \$18 million a year.

T. Clougherty: So the concept that we use isn't to address all the roads that are red. If you notice all the roads that are red as you go down that graph, you had the \$5 signs there. So with the \$5 signs compared to the \$2 signs, you doing 250% less if you're just addressing the roads that are in red, so you're not going to get anywhere close to the number of miles done.

Alderman Bonilla: So you showed us the earlier graphic. That would entail the \$12 million, right?

T. Clougherty: That's correct.

Alderman Fajardo: I guess a quick poll of this board. Has anyone ever said they don't want their streets and sidewalks improved? Raise your hand if you've never heard that. Second follow up. Raise your hand if you hear it a lot. Thank you.

Alderman Dexter: You talked about the tip downs and the other structural work. That's not including the sidewalk itself. It's just the landings. So it's just curb to curb for the road is pretty much what you're covering.

C. Dobbins: Correct. The finding from Department of Justice was that we need to deal with all of the ADA compliant tip downs. Anytime we touch a road and do either a rehabilitation or reconstruction it's our legal obligation to upgrade those tip downs at those intersections. And we are looking at ways of doing it, meeting compliance and trying to do it at the lowest cost as we can.

Alderman Dexter: And then at the same time, are you working on the sidewalks? Is that a separate program or are you trying to coordinate all that at one time?

C. Dobbins: So we have a separate sidewalk program. And if there was a considerable amount of sidewalk within a certain thing and there was funding available in that program, then we would combine them and try and do them exactly at the same time. Hayward Street is one of those ones where the sidewalks in the road are going to need work, and it only makes sense to do them in conjunction with one another.

Alderman Kaw-uh: I really appreciate having a public display, both visually and in terms of the numbers of what it would take. The way I see it is the \$12 million that you're talking about, that would stop the bleed. It would keep us kind of steady. But if people right now are unhappy with the state of the roads, that wouldn't drastically change because the average PCI would still be about the same in five years. Even if we're doing \$12 million, it just means we wouldn't be going into even worse territory. So I don't necessarily have a question for you right now because that's been answered. You said something about \$18 million to actually make meaningful progress. I just want to emphasize that everyone I know hears about this issue from their constituents. And everyone sees it as they drive around the city. And the hard data does back up those anecdotes. And so this board has

a really clear view right now. We can't pretend we don't know what the problem is. The problem is that we are not investing in the maintenance of our roads. We have 400 miles of it. It's not going to be cheap, but the people of Manchester deserve to drive on a road that's not going to destroy their cars. And so I hope we can all agree on that and work in this budget cycle towards something that gets us closer to having actually good roads across the city.

Alderman Trisciani: Rather than referring to the tip downs and the ADA access as something that we're legally required to do, the reality is, it's something we should be doing with our elderly population. I think it was last year of just trying to bring my mother in a wheelchair from the parking garage to the Rex Theater. So these are things that we should be doing regardless of what the Justice Department says and gives us for a standard.

C. Dobbins: Absolutely. And I don't think anyone at DPW is going to disagree with that. I was just simply mentioning that that we have no choice but to address those ones as we come through. We would like to address everything.

Alderman Kantor: Where does the money go when cars get ticketed and towed?

Mayor Ruais: Do we want to save that for new business?

Alderman Kantor: I was thinking if it can go right to the roads that would be great.

T. Clougherty: Are we addressing snow and sidewalks under new business?

Mayor Ruais: Yes, I think we can save that. So let's get through the consent, the nominations, and then under new business, I think we'll call you back up.

C. Dobbins: My contact information is there, I think a lot of you already know how to get a hold of me. So if you have any other future questions, feel free. We have lots of data.

CONSENT AGENDA

Accept BMA Minutes

6. Meeting minutes from the January 20 BMA meeting.

REFERRALS TO COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

7. Bond Resolution:

“Authorizing Bonds, Notes or Lease Purchases in the amount of One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000) for the 2026 CIP C540072026 Parking Deferred Maintenance.”

Resolutions:

“Amending the FY2022 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of One Hundred Eighty-Six Thousand Dollars (\$186,000) for the FY2022 CIP 412522 2022 COSSAP Program.”

“Amending the FY2021 and FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing, appropriating and transferring funds in the amount of Eight Hundred Ninety-Eight Thousand Seven-Hundred Forty-One Dollars and Fifteen Cents (\$898,741.15) for the FY2021 CIP 713221 Weston Road & S. Willow Intersection Improvements.”

“Amending the FY2002 Community Improvement Program, authorizing, appropriating and transferring funds in the amount of Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty-Eight dollars and Seventy-Nine Cents (\$9,958.79) for the FY2002 CIP 811102 Wetland Inventory Evaluation.”

“Amending the FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Three Thousand Two Hundred Forty Dollars (\$3,240) for the FY2026 CIP C330041126 FY26 MPD C.A.R Training(s).”

“Amending the FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of One Hundred Ninety-Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty-Four Dollars (\$199,764) for the FY2026 CIP C330041726 J-ONE Equipment Grant Program.”

“Amending the FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500) for the FY2026 CIP C410021826 NH Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Program - Sponsorship.”

“Amending the FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) for the FY2026 CIP C410021926 FY26 Regional Public Health Network Grant Opportunity - NH Charitable.”

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE ON ACCOUNTS, ENROLLMENT AND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

8. Advising that the update on the Revolving Loan Fund has been accepted.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Terrio and Goonan who were absent)
9. Advising that the Finance Department reports:
 - Accounts receivable over 90 days
 - Aging report
 - Outstanding receivableshave been accepted.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Terrio and Goonan who were absent)
10. Advising that the Monthly Financial Report (unaudited) for the first six months of fiscal year 2026 has been accepted.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Terrio and Goonan who were absent)

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

- 12.** Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorizations providing for the transfer and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$9,958.79 for CIP 811102 Wetland inventory Evaluation be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Goonan and Terrio who were absent)
- 13.** Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorizations providing for the transfer and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$898,741.15 for CIP 713221 Weston Road & S. Willow Intersection Improvements be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Goonan and Terrio who were absent)
- 14.** Recommending the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$2,500 for CIP C410021826 NH Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Program — Sponsorship be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Goonan and Terrio who were absent)
- 15.** Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$20,000 for CIP C410021926 Regional Public Health Network Grant Opportunity — NH Charitable be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Goonan and Terrio who were absent)
- 16.** Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$186,000 for CIP 412522 2022 COSSAP Program be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Goonan and Terrio who were absent)

17. Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$199,764 for CIP C330041726 J-ONE Equipment Grant Program be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Goonan and Terrio who were absent)
18. Recommending that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$3,240 for CIP C330041126 FY26 MPD C.A.R. Training(s) be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Goonan and Terrio who were absent)
19. Recommending that the request from the Fire Chief for authority to accept \$15,833 in Hazmat funds from the State of New Hampshire be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Goonan and Terrio who were absent)
20. Recommending that the request from the Fire Chief for authority to accept a \$25,000 Hazmat Grant from the State of New Hampshire be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Goonan and Terrio who were absent)
21. Recommending that the request from the Fire Chief for authority to accept a \$25,000 Homeland Security grant for an Emergency Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Goonan and Terrio who were absent)
22. Recommending that the request from the Planning and Community Development Director to extend the completion date for various CIP projects be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Goonan and Terrio who were absent)

COMMITTEE ON LANDS AND BUILDINGS

23. Recommending that the request from the Water Works Director to enter into an easement agreement with the Town of Auburn be approved.

(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Kaw-uh who was absent)

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

11. Recommending that the request from Mayor Ruais to conduct an audit of the School District and City Departments and to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Manchester School District be approved.

(Unanimous vote with the exception of Aldermen Terrio and Goonan who were absent)

(Note: Update to the Purchasing Card and Business and Travel Expense Policies as well as the creation of a Gift Card Policy reported out of committee January 20, 2026)

Alderman Sapienza requested that agenda item 11 be removed from the consent agenda.

Alderman Sapienza: It's not so much that I'm opposed to the audit of the schools, it is that I'm looking for clarification of the school audit. What exactly is being audited? I'd like to know before we go forward. I mean, are we auditing usage of the square footage? Are we auditing the cost of phase one? Are we auditing the cost of phase two? Oh, wait, there is no phase two. That's right. I don't think there ever was any plan to have a phase two. Are we just auditing papers and pencils or what? Can you give us a little bit of information?

Mayor Ruais: The scope is in the packet, but we have the independent city auditor here who can talk through it.

Julianne Pelletier, Independent City Auditor: I'm not auditing pens and pencils or paper. I'm going to take a look at the staffing and if there's overlap of staffing. I'm going to look

at the functions of the superintendent's office, finance, payroll, HR benefits, sort of on a high level, not drilling down into their financials like their public auditors do.

Alderman Sapienza: How about something like square footage usage? You know, for example, how much money would have been saved if they closed the high school ten years ago or you know, the feasibility of closing a high school, which has been talked about for a few years now. I kept being told it was part of phase two. And recently we were told, basically there's not going to be a phase two. Are you going to be looking at something like that?

J. Pelletier: I was going to look at their enrollment. How their enrollments declined and what the staffing levels are at for each school.

Alderman Sapienza: Staffing levels, but not really building square footage usage?

J. Pelletier: No. I don't know that I'll have time to drill into that.

Alderman Sapienza: Cost of phase one, is that going to be something you're going to be looking at?

Mayor Ruais: Phase one was the facilities project. No. The scope of work is right here. So the things that they're going to be looking at are central office administrative efficiency, looking at superintendents, finance, HR, purchasing, accounts payable, all that structure in the administrative level, payroll, timekeeping, staffing development. So that's all what the scope of work is going to be. So just one other thing because you asked about it, so the Board of School Committee did a presentation on the efficacy of closing a high school. What they said was in the long term that would save money in the initial first year, it would cost us more money because you'd have to transport students, they'd have to hire new bus drivers, and they'd have to bring in new buses. So in year one, there would actually be a cost to it, but in the out years there would be savings to it.

Alderman Sapienza: Right. And they could have done it five years ago. We'd be five years into it. But you know, every time it's well, we're not going to do it because of this, we're

not going to do it because of that. So I mean, in 50 years, are we still going to have it? I mean, if the enrollment declines by another 50%, are we still going to see each and every year because it's going to cost us money in this first year?

Mayor Ruais: I don't doubt that they should have done it five years ago. I wasn't around.

Alderman Sapienza: Understood. I'm just trying to look at the whole picture here.

Mayor Ruais: And for one of the other clarifying questions that I got on the Board of School Committee side was how long this audit would take and what the independent city auditor has told us is that roughly 90 days is what she's looking for. It may stretch a little bit longer from that, but assuming this passes tonight, it would begin tomorrow. She would not start at the administrative level. She would start in the areas that would not inhibit their ability to get their budget done in the next two weeks.

Alderman Sapienza: Outstanding.

Alderman Bonilla: I just want to get clarification. You had mentioned enrollment, to see if enrollment is declining. You didn't say the enrollment is declining.

J. Pelletier: I saw that enrollment has declined over the last five years when I reviewed their audits. When I met with the superintendent, they explained how the enrollment has declined. But it's not specifically in one school. It's across the entire district. I was going to take a look at if there's shifts that need to happen with staffing or if their class sizes have also gone down. So they could possibly do some adjusting with that.

Alderman Bonilla: The class size was an intentional move with the school board, though. I remember just to have more of an interaction with the students. Alderman Sapienza, if you have time, the School Board will be having a finance and facilities meeting on February 11th to talk about the budget to get better clarification for the future. Is that correct?

Mayor Ruais: Yes that's correct. And then what I had talked about with the Board of School Committee, because of the budget, it's going to be a difficult budget cycle, as we all know. So my intent was in between the passage of the school district's budget and when I do my budget address at the end of March, my intent was to call a joint meeting between the two boards to have a full presentation given by the superintendent that would allow, even if aldermen can't make the Board of School Committee meetings, we would have something together where we could talk through it, ask all the questions similar to what we did in phase one last term.

Alderman Bonilla: So it would be an opportunity for all of us to like ask questions.

Alderman Sapienza: A couple years ago, year and a half ago or whatever, we had a joint board meeting at Memorial High School in the auditorium, and I asked about phase two, and I was told, oh, gee, we're on phase one right now. We're going to get to phase two down the road. So we already had a joint board meeting. We met at the auditorium at Memorial High School. I asked these questions and I was told phase two was coming. As soon as we're done with phase one, they finished phase one. They said, oh, geez, looks like we're not going to have a phase two. So we could have 500 meetings of both boards. If they don't make some decisions, that's on them. And then they turn around and they blame us because we're not properly funding them. It just goes on and on. I, for one, am tired. I'm tired of it.

Mayor Ruais: In the last term there's not been any vote on it, but they did release phase two in the last term. That was the number that we had talked about here in aggregate was over \$2 billion. So they did release that phase two. But it's not been voted on or brought forward. This would just be a meeting on the budget, for FY27, not facilities.

Alderman O'Neil: This discussion has nothing to do with the independent city auditor's work.

Alderman Fajardo: We were just talking about auditing enrollment across buildings and potentially down to the classrooms. I'm just wondering, is that not work that's already happening in the school district, or will you be kind of double checking their work?

J. Pelletier: If I have time. I was just going to look at it at a higher level to see, I'm looking for inefficiencies or that they're operating efficiently.

Mayor Ruais: Ultimately that's going to be a policy question that would arise. And what are we able to fund on the Board of Mayor and Alderman side? What is the budget? She could tell us there are efficiencies. Ultimately we make the determination on what to act upon.

Alderman Fajardo: I wanted to make sure there wasn't redundant work.

Mayor Ruais: So that was one of the things that I have in the letter was there are 6 to 7 audits that are done on a rotating basis. Some of them are annually, some of them are every two years. Some of them are every six years. Special education is one of those. The intent of this work is not to duplicate efforts, but to drill down on these specific items. And Miss Pelletier has worked for a school district before, so I think she has some insight as to what to look for as well.

*On motion of **Alderman Trisciani**, duly seconded by **Alderman O'Neil**, it was voted to accept the committee's report and adopt its recommendations.*

REGULAR BUSINESS

Mayor Ruais: At this time, I will accept nominations for the vacancy in ward nine on the Board of School Committee.

Alderman Burkush: I would like to nominate Stan Garrity for ward nine's vacant seat on the Board of School Committee. Like Bob Baines, Stan has a record of a lifetime of service to the City of Manchester. I believe he'll bring the same sense of commitment and care to the school board. I understand that this nomination would lay over until the next meeting.

***Alderman Goonan** duly seconded the nomination.*

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

24. Confirmations:

Zoning Board of Adjustment

Nick Taylor to succeed June Trisciani as an alternate member, term expiring March 1, 2026

Planning Board

Peter Winslow to move from an alternate to a regular member, term expiring May 1, 2026

Highway Commission

Andre Parent to succeed himself a regular member, term to expire January 15, 2029

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

25. Confirmation of Richard Martinez as Information Systems Director.

*On motion of **Alderman Fajardo**, duly seconded by **Alderman Bonilla**, it was voted to confirm the nomination as presented.*

Mayor Ruais: Congratulations, Richard. It's an honor to have you aboard. I know you're going to continue doing the incredible work that you have been doing for the department.

26. Communication from Jodie Nazaka, Economic Development Director, regarding an application for a Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive, RSA 79-E, for the property at 959 Elm Street.

*On motion of **Alderman Barry**, duly seconded by **Alderman Trisciani**, it was voted to refer the application to a public hearing to be scheduled by the City Clerk.*

Alderman Terrio: Is this in the proposed TIF district?

Jodie Nazaka, Economic Development Director: Yes, it is.

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

There were no reports of the Committee on Community Improvement.

28. *On motion of **Alderman O'Neil**, duly seconded by **Alderman Terrio**, it was voted to recess the meeting to allow the Committee on Finance to meet.*
29. 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 the following Resolutions:

“Amending the FY2022 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of One Hundred Eighty-Six Thousand Dollars (\$186,000) for the FY2022 CIP 412522 2022 COSSAP Program.”

“Amending the FY2024 and FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing, appropriating and transferring funds in the amount of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) for reallocation to FY2024 CIP 611124 ARPA - Brook Street Operations.”

“Amending the FY2021 and FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing, appropriating and transferring funds in the amount of Eight Hundred Ninety-Eight Thousand Seven-Hundred Forty-One Dollars and Fifteen Cents (\$898,741.15) for the FY2021 CIP 713221 Weston Road & S. Willow Intersection Improvements.”

“Amending the FY2002 Community Improvement Program, authorizing, appropriating and transferring funds in the amount of Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty-Eight dollars and Seventy-Nine Cents (\$9,958.79) for the FY2002 CIP 811102 Wetland Inventory Evaluation.”

“Amending the FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Three Thousand Two Hundred Forty Dollars (\$3,240) for the FY2026 CIP C330041126 FY26 MPD C.A.R Training(s).”

“Amending the FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of One Hundred Ninety-Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty-Four Dollars (\$199,764) for the FY2026 CIP C330041726 J-ONE Equipment Grant Program.”

“Amending the FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500) for the FY2026 CIP C410021826 NH Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Program - Sponsorship.”

“Amending the FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) for the FY2026 CIP C410021926 FY26 Regional Public Health Network Grant Opportunity - NH Charitable.”

ought to pass and be Enrolled.

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

*On motion of **Alderman O’Neil**, duly seconded by **Alderman Burkush**, it was voted to accept the committee’s report and adopt its recommendations.*

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

“Authorizing Bonds, Notes or Lease Purchases in the amount of One Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$1,500,000) for the 2026 CIP C540072026 Parking Deferred Maintenance.”

ought to pass and layover.

*On motion of **Alderman Burkush**, duly seconded by **Alderman Sapienza**, it was voted to waive the reading by title only.*

*On motion of **Alderman O'Neil**, duly seconded by **Alderman Burkush**, it was voted to accept the committee's report and adopt its recommendations.*

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

There were no other committee reports.

32. Resolutions:

"Amending the FY2022 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of One Hundred Eighty-Six Thousand Dollars (\$186,000) for the FY2022 CIP 412522 2022 COSSAP Program."

"Amending the FY2024 and FY2025 Community Improvement Program, authorizing, appropriating and transferring funds in the amount of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) for reallocation to FY2024 CIP 611124 ARPA - Brook Street Operations."

"Amending the FY2021 and FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing, appropriating and transferring funds in the amount of Eight Hundred Ninety-Eight Thousand Seven-Hundred Forty-One Dollars and Fifteen Cents (\$898,741.15) for the FY2021 CIP 713221 Weston Road & S. Willow Intersection Improvements."

"Amending the FY2002 Community Improvement Program, authorizing, appropriating and transferring funds in the amount of Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty-Eight dollars and Seventy-Nine Cents (\$9,958.79) for the FY2002 CIP 811102 Wetland Inventory Evaluation."

"Amending the FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Three Thousand Two Hundred Forty Dollars (\$3,240) for the FY2026 CIP C330041126 FY26 MPD C.A.R Training(s)."

"Amending the FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of One Hundred Ninety-Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty-Four Dollars (\$199,764) for the FY2026 CIP C330041726 J-ONE Equipment Grant Program."

"Amending the FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500) for the FY2026 CIP C410021826 NH Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Program - Sponsorship."

“Amending the FY2026 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) for the FY2026 CIP C410021926 FY26 Regional Public Health Network Grant Opportunity - NH Charitable.”

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

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

NEW BUSINESS

Alderman Terrio: First, I received a letter from the Manchester Animal Shelter. I'm assuming that everybody did. So, the Manchester Animal Shelter is funded by donations, but they're operating out of a city building in the city. It is requiring them to spend \$150,000 to come into compliance. They weren't counting on this. They did come up with either approve a specific waiver or identify alternative funding sources. I'm hoping, because they do a very worthwhile service for the city and because it's volunteer funded donations, that we can help them so that the \$150,000 doesn't cripple their budget. That would be the first thing. So, I'm hoping that we can do that.

Mayor Ruais: When I received that letter, I forwarded it over to Department of Public Works. So, they are working with them and we'll have an answer.

Alderman Terrio: And then since legal counsel is here, I've been watching school board meetings, and there's been a lot of discussion about children who are not on free and reduced lunch. Some of them aren't paying for their lunches. There's a massive financial budget hole facing the school. I believe that number is up to \$400,000. So, I was going to ask the City Solicitor's Office if the school board wanted our help, could we help them by saying, for instance, let's say a family rings up over \$100 in unpaid lunches, could we say you can't register your car or you can't get a building permit, you can't get certain things? Can we link those things together for people who aren't paying their lunch account?

Emily Rice, Solicitor: Not under current law.

Alderman Terrio: So there's a New Hampshire RSA that says you can't link those things?

E. Rice: No, but when you can link it, there is a law that's saying that you can.

Alderman Terrio: So there is no law?

E. Rice: There's not a law about school lunches, but there are laws about withholding people's car registrations for other things.

Alderman Terrio: So, it specifically says what you can withhold?

E. Rice: Correct.

Alderman O'Neil: I just want to thank you for leading a delegation of elected officials and school district staff for Mayor Baines wake and funeral. It's been a long time since we had four mayors sitting up front leading the elected officials that made his funeral. I thought it was pretty special. So, I just want to say thank you.

Mayor Ruais: I was a privilege. Mayor Baines became a close friend. But the lives he touched upon the city was just indelible. I was so appreciative of the Board of Aldermen and the Board of School Committee. And actually, the previous mayors as well, who put together a list of things that we would do in the event of a passing that the Clerk was able to share and build from there. So, I thought it was a beautiful tribute to an incredible man.

Alderman O'Neil: Thank you. On behalf of all of us. Thank you.

Alderman Kantor: I wanted to start with the snow removal. We've had a great response with MPD up on Karatzas Ave, and I just want to say thank you. I know it's an ongoing issue, and we need more enforcement. I do want to bring up Troy Micklon's proposal. Where does the ticketing money go and the towing money go? Is it possible to help fund the roads and the overtime with MPD? Maybe it already does that, just questioning if we can direct it there.

Mayor Ruais: I would ask Director Wickens to speak to where those dollars go.

Sharon Wickens, Finance Director: It would come back to the general fund as a dividend. So, it's still a revenue.

Mayor Ruais: It's a revenue. So, we have those dollars to spend. With respect to the ordinance, I think it would probably be most appropriate to go to go to the Committee on Public Safety, Health & Traffic.

Alderman Kantor moved to refer the discussion regarding vehicles that remain on public streets after snow events to the Committee on Public Safety, Health & Traffic. Alderman Fajardo duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Kaw-uh: I am getting déjà vu with this. I feel like there was a discussion about this within the past few years, and the Solicitor probably has some thoughts on that as well. I'm generally in favor of seeing what we can do on this. I just want to make sure that it won't grind to a halt like last time, because I feel like we ran into some legal issues, but I'll support it being referred to the committee for further exploration.

Alderman Bonilla: We've also talked, you've talked, about consolidating these departments, right? So, wouldn't we want to wait until the consolidation of these departments to then rule out how we will better utilize our systems?

Mayor Ruais: I don't see why we couldn't do it concurrently. Just have a discussion on the ordinance. I think we have pretty capable people on these committees to have the discussion, and then we can roll it from there and make a determination on how we want to proceed. I do know that to Alderman Kaw-uh's point, that this was something that was addressed previously, because I had that conversation with the City Clerk that this had been brought up. But I think fresh eyes, new board, I don't think it can hurt to have that discussion. Would it be two votes? Do we have to suspend the rules to take a vote in new business?

Alderman Sapienza: What are we doing?

Mayor Ruais: The new rules of the board state that we're not to consider items under new business unless we suspend the rules in order to do so.

Alderman Kaw-uh: I thought we were referring an item to a committee, which is still allowed.

Mayor Ruais: We are still taking a vote. I am asking for clarification on the best way to proceed, because we're still taking a vote.

Alderman Kaw-uh: I thought that was the intention.

Mayor Ruais: The intention was not to consider anything. We're considering a referral, so I'm just looking to get clarification.

Matthew Normand, City Clerk: A referral to a committee is allowable.

Mayor Ruais called for a vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Alderman Kantor: I want to discuss the last time Troy Micklon came up, he had a discussion about an amendment to rule three to open up responding to the public like the school board. I just think it would be a nice thing to possibly do, as so many people do come forward, and it would be nice to communicate a little bit without being chaotic. So, I would like to bring that up for discussion on how other people feel.

Mayor Ruais: Is that something that we could refer? If we wanted to have that discussion in Administration and then bring it back after consideration among that committee, I'd be happy to do that as well.

*On motion of **Alderman Kantor**, duly seconded by **Alderman Bonilla**, it was voted to refer the discussion regarding the Board of Mayor and Aldermen's Rule 3: Public Participation to the Committee on Administration/Information Systems.*

Alderman Kantor: I know that there was a great thing happening with going out and counting how many people were still homeless and everything, and I was wondering what that number was and if there's a homeless director here.

Mayor Ruais: So that would not come out until the end of the year. So, they take time to aggregate it and build that data, and then it gets released at the end of the year.

Alderman Kantor: Do we have numbers on the actual beds available in the shelters, if there are any?

Mayor Ruais: Yes, I can get that number for you. But yes, between Families in Transition, our shelter, and then we can even go broader than that and look at transitional beds that are available at 1269 or Helping Hands. I can aggregate all of that.

Alderman Bonilla: Mr. Clougherty, would you mind joining us please? I wanted to find a way to address our constituents' concerns about snow removal on sidewalks. I know that many members in our city have questions like that about sidewalks in general. I did also want to emphasize the commitment and hard work that all of our crew members have been doing over the last few weeks, working nonstop. Certain people need better clarification. Are all sidewalks done by the sidewalk machine? You know, if you could just provide us with better insight, most importantly to our constituents.

T. Clougherty: Sure. First of all, I want to recognize the employees of the Department of Public Works. I work with some tremendously hard-working men and women, and I'm very proud of all the efforts that they put forth last week and all the other 51 weeks of the year. But in particular, last week, the snowstorm we had based on the data that I reviewed, is the largest snowstorm we've had in eight years. The volume of snow as well as the rate at which it fell proved to be particularly challenging. Our employees put forth about 5,500 labor hours last week. I know Alderman Barry recognized some of the individuals. Some of those numbers are a little bit scary to me. And then you know, a few days after the storm, last Thursday night I was out there watching them clean Elm Street after we plowed the streets for 48 hours straight. And as soon as the snow was plowed from the streets, we started our sidewalk operation. So, I thank our employees for that hard work. Relative

to sidewalks in particular, I had a major discussion with the mayor after the first storm. Sidewalks are frustrating for not just the public, not just the people sitting at the dais or around the dais, but also the people that are sitting in front of you. They're extremely challenging for everyone at Public Works. This storm was particularly challenging because of the volume of snow that was dumped. We have ten units that we use to clear snow from sidewalks. We usually have about seven on the road. They're extremely maintenance intensive. As you can imagine, anybody that snow-blown their driveway, it's really common for a shear pin to blow or a belt or something like that. And when you're running these units, which we do, as soon as the storm ends, we run them 24 hours a day. And that was my mandate to our employees. Earlier this year, I wasn't thrilled with our response after one of the snowstorms. We all got together, and it's not just guys and girls from Highway, we're also using people in our refuse crews, as well as parks, recreation and cemetery crews. We're also tapping into their equipment that's available. So, I can tell you with 100% confidence that we are doing everything that we can do to clear the sidewalks, that we normally clear with the resources, the human resources and the assets that we currently have. Unfortunately, that takes a long time. I think we're going to be done in a day or two. So, I'm not sure if they're all done yet. But like I said, 24 over seven, since 10:00 on Monday night, we've had sidewalk tractors out. And there are a lot of challenges. We talked about cars that are on the road. There are also other obstacles. People plowing snow onto the sidewalk that's adjacent to their residence or business. That makes it extremely challenging for the individuals that are in these sidewalk tractors because one of the things about the volume of the storm are those ten units, they can either have plows on them or they can have snow blowers. The volume of the snow that we had this past storm required us to use only snow blowers. The V plow would go through the snow light and fluffy and just fluff behind the machine, so it proved to be useless. The V plows will go three, four, five, six miles an hour. Snow plows go one mile per hour. So, 400% or 500% less efficient by using the snow blowers. I've got a lot more that I could talk about, but I'd be happy to entertain any questions relative to the commentary that I provided.

Alderman Bonilla: For future snowstorms, have we ever considered having some sort of community response volunteers to support our elderly and those who are limited with

ability, like leaning on volunteers to help out, clear out sidewalks to support your teams and your crews? Have we ever considered some sort of response team?

T. Clougherty: No, we haven't done that. Certainly not for addressing roads or sidewalks.

Alderman Bonilla: I'd love to see how we could best support you. Our constituent who spoke earlier, I do want to address your concerns. I know that there's several others across the city. But, you know, how do we best support your crews recognizing the constraints, the ten units that we have?

T. Clougherty: I mean, in order to have a timely response to a storm like we had last Sunday into Monday or Tuesday, you'd have to double or triple the amount of equipment. And that would be a pretty significant investment. If that's something the Board wants to entertain, we're happy to take that equipment. I'll make sure that we have butts in those seats.

Alderman Bonilla: Well, I mean, even just shoveling. How do we best help out those who just unfortunately, and knowing your constraints and your capacity, I know you all have that and I do want to respect your crew. They're working hand in hand. I went in one of the plows, and I see that. So however we can help out those who need some shoveling out of their sidewalks or out of their driveways. I'm down to support you in doing something like that. Some sort of response team just to aid you all. I know that the school district opened Thursday last week?

T. Clougherty: They were out on Monday and Tuesday. They were back on Wednesday.

Alderman Bonilla: I feel like for the future, if we are able to just put out an announcement to the city that all you cars, please be cognizant, our crews are working tirelessly, but we haven't gotten to X, Y, and Z sidewalks. I know that you all have a perimeter that's given to you from the district side to cover these sidewalks. What I noticed that day is that tons of kids were walking on Maple, Beech, Valley, and it was hard. There were 3- or 4-year-olds, and it's hard for me to see that. I also know the amount of time and effort your team is doing. So, if we're just able to throw out an advisory alongside Doctor Chmiel that says

please watch out after our kids, be a good neighbor, for the next time. I didn't notice that or see that.

T. Clougherty: I think that's a great suggestion. I didn't witness that myself. Even though there was no school, we still do have pedestrians on the roadways.

Alderman Bonilla: It was around the city and it wasn't just ward five.

Mayor Ruais: I know, I appreciate what you said though when we were talking about it when you had texted me about it, one of the things that I thought of was using Nixle and we could put something out through that to say be cognizant, we're getting to your roads, but recognize that there are people that are in the street. That's something we could do through our emergency operations center. We put out that press release on Friday, I think Friday morning about a 96 hour extended period for the emergency operations center to be open. We could also put out separate ones saying we are getting to the sidewalks. In the meantime, while we're doing that, please be cognizant of people on the roads. So, I appreciate the suggestion.

Alderman Barry: Your guys did a great job. Your employees did a great job with what they had to deal with. I certainly appreciate it. Thank you. When you go out and you do the sidewalks, you concentrate initially on the sidewalks nearer to schools. Right?

T. Clougherty: That's correct.

Alderman Barry: Right. I think that's important, because a couple of the calls that I got were from people that had their kids have to walk out in the street because there was no sidewalk to walk on. And the unfortunate thing is, like Alderman Bonilla said, it'd be great in a perfect world, that everyone pitched in. I mean, I have one person in my neighborhood that he probably does about 150ft of sidewalk. Not just his residence, obviously, but that's his way of pitching in and helping out. And I've seen the opposite where plows that are doing some on the driveway think it's a good idea to take the excess snow and dump it onto the sidewalk. And it creates havoc, especially if God forbid, if we get freezing rain or whatever and it all ices up.

T. Clougherty: It's going to be there until May.

Alderman Barry: Exactly, you guys are some of the lowest paid employees in our city, and they don't get the respect that our first responders get, unfortunately. I think people need to when they're out there, pat them on the back, buy them a coffee or a donut. I think it's important; these guys work really hard. Like I said, those numbers don't lie. And they were doing it because they care about our city. So, thank you.

Alderman Fajardo: Just along the lines of kind of public heightened public awareness, it's a question that I often am asked about. Where am I allowed to put my snow? I know in the case of this storm, it's an absurd amount of snow. It's inevitably going to kind of go everywhere. I see it myself, what you described, about people moving a significant amount of snow into the sidewalks, into the right of way. What's the official guidance? I know it's not technically permitted to put snow in the right of way, but could you maybe speak to that? For anybody who's listening or watching, this is how we can all pitch in and be in it together, especially when we get these crazy storms.

T. Clougherty: Snow that falls on private property should stay on private property, whether that's a residence or a business. I'll heighten the business aspect because there are a ton of businesses, I'm not going to pick anyone in particular, I will just pick a used car lot or a mom-and-pop market on any given street, they typically don't have the real estate to store snow. I had one of my friends call me this week to ask what can private business owners do with their snow? Does the city have a spot for it? We don't. I said, that's the cost of doing business. They need to haul the snow from their business and not block the public right of way, which includes a sidewalk.

Alderman Dexter: What is the number of open seats that you have? Open positions that are not filling those seats right now that would help with this and bring people services quicker?

T. Clougherty: We have about 35 full time vacancies.

Alderman Trisciani: Guidance for businesses, is this something that the private companies they hire to plow can help with, help them with removal or where do they remove snow to?

T. Clougherty: That's up to the private companies to negotiate with landowners in the area.

Alderman Trisciani: So, whoever is clearing it or if there's landowners, they have to find space to do it.

T. Clougherty: That's correct. And that's referred to as snow removal, not snow plowing. Just like we did on Elm Street.

Alderman Kantor: With the enforcement that helps you with efficiency and everything, with plowing, with the proposed snowbound vehicle, I know you're not seeing it right now, but just thinking about it, being able to get the road roads cleared with the vehicles, that would help you time wise.

T. Clougherty: Honestly, what would help us is a higher level of compliance with existing ordinances. Even the ability to remove snowbound vehicles. And there are ordinances that allow the Public Works Director to extend snow emergencies. I don't recall exactly what that language is, but it was put in place 3 or 4 years ago. Fortunately, we haven't had the volume of snowfall in any given storm until last week. So, it hasn't really been exercised, but that ability already exists. The challenge that we have and the police department has is that when you have a vehicle that's snowbound for a couple of days, it's usually hard packed. The owners nowhere to be found. It takes labor to get that vehicle off the road. It's labor that we're taking away from sidewalk tractors or snow removal from Wilson Street or something like that. So, you know, it's a tremendous nuisance. It's a drain on resources. And also, if it's immediately following a snowstorm, that lot at Derryfield is usually full. You get 24 hours or something like that to get your car out of there. But then the tow companies take those vehicles and they move them to their own yard. Well, they don't have a ton of extra real estate either. So, if there are another 200 cars that are on

the road, they're not really interested in loading up their own yards. I think that there's a lot of people that think that it's an attractive revenue generator. But in the grand scheme of things, I think that the deficit outweighs the financial benefit. And if the cars were not on the road, that would make it much safer for everybody.

Alderman Kantor: So, it's all about compliance. But if people aren't, we need to enforce it so that they do it. Once you get a ticket, do you really want another ticket?

T. Clougherty: Those tickets aren't cheap. I learned from the chief that when parking during a snow emergency, tickets are \$150.

Alderman Kantor: They'll think twice about parking on the streets.

T. Clougherty: I know I would.

Alderman Fajardo: One more snow question. A clarifying question, and I think this gets to Miss Lund's concern. I know that when there's a parking ban, that that definitely applies to downtown. Does that stretch out into all neighborhoods, all streets? And could you just clarify that because there will be a random car or two parked maybe too close to a driveway on my street. Is the entire city responsible for getting their cars off the road during an emergency, or is that just truly more for the downtown?

T. Clougherty: During a snow emergency, every every road in the city. And Chief Marr would know more about the particulars of getting a singular car removed. The situation that you're talking about, the ordinances allow the Public Works Director to extend a snow emergency, which would apply to the entire city if need be. And then there are also provisions that allow us to post for no parking areas of particular concern and we will exercise that to do snow removal if roads are narrow.

Alderman Fajardo: I know again, that's another question that I often hear, oh is that just for the downtown. If you're listening or watching and we're all in this together, be mindful of your neighbors. Get your car off the street, and don't obstruct or make it worse for your neighbors. I would say at minimum.

Alderman Dexter: It's my understanding that the downtown area is actually more restricted in that they don't tow until after 1 a.m. in the downtown area because of the businesses and whatnot. I believe that to be the case, Chief?

Peter Marr, Chief of Police: I don't think so.

Alderman Dexter: So contrary to what she was actually saying, the downtown area actually tows less because of the 1 a.m. kind of rule because of the downtown businesses. So, the rest of the city has a longer period than the downtown area.

Alderman Sapienza: I will defer to Alderman Kaw-uh with your PDF to the BMA. I don't want it to seem like the entire board supports this letter. It says here you're going to mention it.

Alderman Kaw-uh: I was going to wait until you had your chance to share. But if that's what it was, I'm happy to jump in.

Alderman Sapienza: I don't like it and I don't agree with it because I take a completely different stance and I don't like the idea of it being put out there like that. It's open to the public, and I just want it to be known that I don't agree with it one bit, but go ahead.

Alderman Kaw-uh: I guess I would ask, what are you disagreeing with? Because I don't believe I offered any sort of opinion on anything.

Alderman Trisciani: It might be good to explain what it is first.

Mayor Ruais: For everyone's awareness, you have it before you, Alderman Kaw-uh asked that something be distributed today regarding the information about what is occurring in Merrimack, and I think you just wanted it for the board's information. But please, I won't put words in your mouth.

Alderman Kaw-uh: So, in the communication that Alderman Sapienza was referring to, I was simply asking that this be distributed to the members of the board in order for us to be aware of what's happening in neighboring Merrimack. To offer verbally some, I guess, more opinion-based stuff, I've been deeply troubled by the developments that are happening in Merrimack, and I want to make sure that this board is aware, given that it does have regional implications where the federal government has planned to basically build a human warehouse in Merrimack that would be under the control of ICE. And they have not been transparent with either the state government or with the local community. And that being said, the packet that's distributed to you all now is from the ACLU. They successfully obtained these documents through a right to know request to the state. And so, I just wanted to make sure that everyone had these because it documents what those plans are in more detail. It allows this board to be aware of what's happening next door. Since we are the largest city in New Hampshire and we are right next door to Merrimack, this does have implications for our community. So that is basically it. I was not going to push the board to take any sort of position on any matter. I just wanted to make sure we were all aware, but I am happy to engage in a conversation or let Alderman Sapienza take the floor again.

Alderman Sapienza: Just briefly, I just want to say I'm not uncomfortable with it at all. In fact, I support the federal law enforcement authorities 100%. So, I just want to make that clear. I don't want to be silent about it and make it seem like I agree with everything. I think you did take a stance with it.

Alderman Kaw-uh: Just verbally now; yes.

Alderman Trisciani: From my experience on the Planning and Zoning Board, this is one of those things that I appreciate you bringing up for awareness, because these types of things can happen in our city without any purview from us. I think the only awareness level is right now to understand that if this happens in Merrimack, this can happen in Manchester, or this can happen in Concord. So, it's something I think we just need to be aware of and remain cognizant of.

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

A True Record. Attest.

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

City Clerk

Meeting Start Time: 7:00PM
Meeting End Time: 8:32PM
Minutes Prepared By: Michael Intranuovo