

REVISED - BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN

September 7, 2021 at 7:30 PM

The Mayor called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Cavanaugh, Stewart, Long, Roy, Sapienza, Sharonov, O'Neil,
Levasseur, Terrio, Shaw, Gamache, Hirschmann

Absent: Alderman Barry

CONSENT AGENDA

Accept BMA Minutes

1. Minutes from the June 1, 2021 Public Participation and BMA meetings and the June 8, 2021 Special BMA meeting.

Approve Under Supervision of the Department of Highways

2. Pole Petitions:
 - 11-1721 Hall Street (1)
 - 11-1722 Gold Street (1)
 - 11-1723 Hall Street (1)
 - 11-1724 Lake Shore Road (1)
 - 11-1725 Massabesic Street (1)
 - 11-1727 Overland Street (1)

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

4. Sidewalk Petitions
Residential:
 - 60 Trinity Street
 - 53 Trinity Street
 - 3 Tilton Street
 - 470 Merrimack Street

Information to be Received and Filed

5. Update on Manchester School District expendable trust funds.

REFERRALS TO COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

6. Resolutions:

“Amending the FY2015 and FY2019 Community Improvement Programs, authorizing and transferring funds in the amount of One Hundred Twenty Eight Thousand Five Hundred Five Dollars and 53 Cents (\$128,505.53) for the FY 2019 CIP 711819 LED Street Lighting Program.”

“Amending the FY2021 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Six Thousand Dollars (\$6,000) for the FY 2021 CIP 410921 Warm Zone EMS Equipment & Training.”

“Amending the FY2022 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Sixteen Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty Eight Dollars (\$16,738) for the FY 2022 CIP 410622 HazMat Allocation-FLIR.”

“Amending the FY2021 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000) for the FY 2021 CIP 213121 Asthma Home Visiting Program”.

“Amending the FY2020 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Seven Hundred Twenty Six Thousand Two Hundred Six Dollars (\$726,206) for the FY 2020 CIP 212020 System of Care—SAMHSA.”

7. Bond Resolution:

“Authorizing Bonds, Notes or Lease Purchases in the amount of Fifty Five Million Dollars (\$55,000,000) to pay for the 2022 CIP 712722 Various Capital Improvement Projects by the Environmental Protection Division, and for the payment of all other incidental costs related thereto. Projects include but are not limited to: design and construction of upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant, expansion of sewer service area and projects necessary for compliance with the Clean Water Act.”

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

- 9. Recommending that the amending resolution and budget authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$726,206 for CIP 212020 System of Care-SAMHSA be approved.**
(Unanimous vote)

10. Recommending that the summary of abatement requests submitted by Fred McNeill, Chief Engineer be approved.
(Unanimous Vote)
11. Recommending that the amending resolution and budget authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$3,000 for CIP 213121 Asthma Home Visiting Program be approved.
(Unanimous Vote)
12. Recommending that the amending resolution and budget authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$16,738 for CIP 410622 HazMat Allocation-FLIR be approved.
(Unanimous Vote)
13. Recommending that the amending resolution and budget authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$6,000 for CIP 410921 Warm Zone EMS Equipment and Training be approved.
(Unanimous Vote)
14. Recommending that the amending resolution and budget authorizations providing for the transfer and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$128,505.53 for CIP 711819 LED Street Lighting Program be approved.
(Unanimous Vote)
15. Recommending that the bond resolution and budget authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$55,000,000 for CIP 712722 Various Capital Improvement Projects by EPD be approved.
(Unanimous Vote)
16. Recommending that the request to extend the completion date for CIP 213621 Manchester Crisis Response Unit-United in Harm Reduction to 12/31/2021 be approved.
(Unanimous Vote)
17. Recommending that the request to extend the completion date for CIP 411421 Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program to 12/31/2021 be approved.
(Unanimous Vote)
18. Recommending that the request to extend the completion date for CIP 510320 Sheehan-Basquil Park Phase II to 6/30/2035 be approved.
(Unanimous Vote)
20. Recommending that the request from Neighborworks Southern New Hampshire to refinance and consolidate mortgages on three existing properties to one loan be approved.
(Unanimous Vote)

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES/INSURANCE

21. Recommending that the request from the Planning Department for the reclassification of one (1) Planner III, grade 21, to a Planner IV, grade 23, be approved.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Alderman Hirschmann who was absent.)
22. Advising that the request to have healthcare benefits extended for an additional six months for the family of firefighter James McNeil was received and filed.
(Unanimous vote with the exception of Alderman Hirschmann who was absent.)
23. Recommending that the 2006 policy for the selection of City officers be amended with the following language: "A majority of the Screening Committee shall bring forth to the Board of Aldermen a single candidate for nomination after ensuring that references were contacted and a thorough background check was conducted".
(Aldermen Stewart, Barry and Cavanaugh voted yea; Alderman Roy was opposed and Alderman Hirschmann was absent)

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, HEALTH AND TRAFFIC

24. Advising that the request for a waiver of parking fees in the Pine Street Lot for employees of the Hillsborough County Attorney's Office was received and filed.
(Unanimous Vote)
25. Recommending that the following traffic regulations be approved:

NO PARKING ANYTIME

On McDuffie, north side, from Boynton Street to a point 55 feet west

Alderman Barry

On Pearl Street, north side, from Walnut Street to a point 58 feet east

On Pearl Street, north side, from Beech Street to a point 57 feet west

Alderman Roy

STOP SIGN

On Holmes Drive at Smyth Road- SWC

Alderman Cavanaugh

YIELD SIGN

On Countryside Boulevard at the roundabout- NEC

Alderman Hirschmann

SCHOOL ZONE: SPEED LIMIT 20 MPH, 8:00-8:45 am and 2:50-3:35 pm

On Youville Street between Bremer Street and Dexter Street

On Mason Street between Reed Street and Joliette Street

Alderman Hirschmann

HANDICAP PARKING

On Orange Street, north side, from Pine Street to a point 40 feet west

Alderman Long

NO TURN ON RED

On Valley Street eastbound at Massabesic Street

Alderman Terrio

RESCIND NO PARKING ANYTIME

On Laydon Street, north side, from Lovering Street to Brennan Street (ORD 3224)
Alderman Sharonov
(Unanimous Vote)

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

Accept and Remand Funds

3. Donation of \$7,500 from the Digital Federal Credit Union for the Fire Department.

Alderman Sapienza stated I think this is important enough that we recognize that and thank them and not just leave it on the consent agenda.

*On motion of **Alderman Sapienza**, duly seconded by **Alderman Roy**, it was voted to accept and remand the funds.*

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

COMMITTEE ON LANDS & BUILDINGS

8. Communication from Kevin McCue, Heritage Commission Chairman, regarding a proposal for the installation of educational signage regarding the history of Manchester's Black citizens.

Alderman Sapienza stated this is also very important and I think we need to thank the Heritage Commission and Stan Garrity in particular for his good work researching and preserving Manchester's history. Very nice work Stan; thank you.

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

COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT

19. Advising that the request from The Nature Conservancy for \$68,000 to complete the parking lot at the Cedar Swamp Preserve was denied.
(Aldermen Sapienza, Roy and Barry voted yea; Aldermen Cavanaugh and O'Neil voted nay.)

Alderman Long stated I would like to check...I am hearing different things about the American Rescue Plan qualifications and I believe conservation is one of them. I am wondering if we can have somebody like Mr. LaFreniere check and see if we can use ARPA funding to get this \$68,000 for the Cedar Swamp Preserve.

Mayor Craig stated we can but I want to note that this is not city-owned property. If you want him to look into that, we can.

Alderman Long moved to have Leon LaFreniere research whether or not ARPA funding can be used for the parking lot at the Cedar Swamp Preserve. ***Alderman Hirschmann*** duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Hirschmann stated this piece of land is in ward 12. One of the biggest real estate transactions that we have ever done in this city was when we bequeathed to the Nature Conservancy 688 acres of this nature preserve. This parking lot is going to give our constituents access to this. Right now there are only five parking spaces and people are parking all along Countryside Boulevard during heightened times. I think this is very important for the Conservancy to use that parking lot better.

Mayor Craig stated there has actually been a lot of work done already. The parking lot is pretty much there so there shouldn't be any parking in the road now. I do agree that it is something that Mr. LaFreniere can look into and report back to the Board on.

Mayor Craig called for a vote. *There being none opposed, the motion carried.*

REGULAR BUSINESS

26. Communication from Parson Hicks advising of her resignation from the Board of Registrars effective 8/12/2021.

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

27. Nomination(s) to be presented by Mayor Craig, if available.

Mayor Craig stated pursuant to Section 3.14(b) of the City Charter, please find below the following nominations which will layover to the next meeting of the Board.

Police Commission

Manny Content as a regular member, term to expire September 15, 2024

Board of Registrars

Claudia Carr as a regular member, term to expire May 1, 2022

Planning Board

Todd Connors moving from an alternate to a regular member, term to expire May 1, 2023

John Goeman as an alternate, term to expire May 1, 2022

Conservation Commission

Donald Waldron as a regular member, term to expire August 1, 2024

28. Confirmation(s) to be presented by Mayor Craig:

Conservation Commission

Nancy Deol as a regular member, term to expire August 1, 2024

Brenda Noiseux as a regular member, term to expire August 1, 2024

Biram Saidybah to move from an alternate to a regular member, term to expire August 1, 2024

Fire Commission

Michael Doyle as a regular member, term to expire May 1, 2024

Zoning Board

Stefan Philbrook as an alternate member, term to expire May 1, 2022

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

29. Nomination of Carlos Gonzalez and Ken Roy to fill the Ward 12 Board of School Committee Member vacancy.

(Note: Alderman Roy made the nomination of Carlos Gonzalez on behalf of Alderman Hirschmann who was unable to attend the meeting, and Alderman Cavanaugh made the nomination of Ken Roy.)

Mayor Craig stated this is a roll call vote and when you are called you would state the name of the nominee you are supporting.

Matthew Normand, City Clerk, stated since we have two nominees we will do a roll call and the nominee with the most votes will be confirmed.

Alderman Hirschmann stated the honorable Carlos Gonzalez from ward 12 lives on Front Street. He has lived there for 20 or 25 years. He has been involved in everything in ward 12 over those 25 years and many of the things had to do with education. One thing we can be proud of is that Carlos comes from the Dominican Republic and is an

immigrant and is an American and a very proud guy who helped us in many ways is that he is helping the Spanish community embrace Manchester. I have seen that for years. I think our school district would be well-served by him. He is the proud father of two adult sons. He is very quiet and reserved but his sons are a testament to him. His sons are remarkable young men. I have all good things to say about Carlos and I think the school board would embrace him and he would serve well in our school district. I want to thank Alderman Roy for nominating him in my absence because I was exposed to the Delta variant and I couldn't be here at the last meeting. I appreciate that. Thank you.

Alderman Cavanaugh stated I, too, appreciate Representative Gonzalez. He has done a lot of good things. When I got the resumes, I just thought Mr. Roy stood out. I do disagree with some of the testimony I have heard. You have a teacher, educator, principal and administrator in Ken Roy and that is why I brought him forward. I am a proud graduate of the public school system and my three kids graduated from the public school system and I think we have to have people that are going to stand against school vouchers and really embrace public education. That is why I brought Mr. Roy's name forward and I stand by that nomination.

Alderman Terrio stated I am going to vote for Carlos Gonzalez but I do have some concerns. Our standard operating procedure has always been that we defer to the ward aldermen to select the person because they know their ward the best. Now the only time I can think that wasn't done was when there were two nominees in the recent past. There was one that nominated Mike Porter and the other nominated Pat Long but we have had three vacancies this term in wards 1, 2 and 9. Now they are not the people that I would have nominated personally but I deferred because I thought as long as there was nothing morally, legally or ethically keeping the person off the school board, we should defer to the judgment of the ward alderman. I did and again I wouldn't have nominated any of the people that were nominated but if you remember I believe everybody on this Board supported the nominees and didn't interfere and put another nominee up. The first thing is we should keep the process...in talking to Matt I can't think of any time in recent history where somebody else has interjected another nominee. We couldn't come up with anything and I don't think it has happened in

recent history. If we do this, going forward it is going to be political. So if you want your person in there that is great but then it is going to be a messy political nomination process where other people are going to say well it happened last time so we have set a precedent and I am going to nominate a person that I want to be in there and not who the ward alderman wants. That is my first concern. The second thing is the Manchester school district has about 13,500 students. In talking to the school district about our second most spoken language in Manchester, it is Spanish and there are approximately 1,600 families so that is over 10% that receive communications from the school district in Spanish. I think it is imperative that we have somebody that speaks Spanish on the school board for that reason but also when I was on the school board...my wife is from South America and she speaks Portuguese and Spanish. I was getting calls from all over the city to my wife asking if we could talk to an administrator or saying they didn't understand their child's report card, etc. because they knew that my wife was trilingual. I see Carlos has a great asset when we have 1,600 families that speak Spanish. Not only will he be an asset to Ward 12, he will be an asset to all of the Spanish speaking families and the whole ward will know that they have somebody that can communicate with them in their own language. I know for a fact that a lot of things are being lost in translation when dealing with these families. They just don't feel comfortable communicating in a language that they don't understand and don't speak. It is already happening currently. The last thing is in looking at the NH Department of Education, almost half the students in the Manchester school district are students of color. That is over 45%. If you look at this Board, it is completely white. There is nothing wrong with that but if you look at the school board it is also completely white. I think that we should nominate a person of color who, when half our students are students of color, make sense and reflects the diversity in our city and in our student body. I just think that if we look at all of those intangibles, Carlos is the candidate that we should go with. Thank you for your time.

Alderman Levasseur stated I appreciate my colleague's comments regarding Mr. Gonzalez and I agree with his sentiments. What I disagree with him on is whether or not the aldermen automatically just nominate somebody and automatically that person becomes the choice. I disagree with that. I think the alderman at-large positions were meant for somebody outside of the ward to call the aldermen at-large and ask for their

name to be put up. Everyone keeps bringing up the issue of Ward 9. Yes, Barbara Shaw did nominate someone but there were calls made to me by three or four other candidates but in the end they did not want their names brought forward. If they had asked to be nominated and they were qualified, one in particular that I really wish would have gotten on the school board, I would have brought that name forward and I think that is a fair process. I don't believe that one alderman has this plenary authority or power to bring one name in and that's it. I don't agree with that. We don't have elections where only one person can sign up. This is basically an election in a different form and more than one candidate should be allowed. I hope that the boards in the future will be reminded of this. Alderman O'Neil and I are aldermen at-large and we should have some say if somebody should call us but again I think other aldermen may be involved in this too. One of the regrets I had in high school was that I did not take Spanish. I took French so I could get A's because I was brought up in a very French family so I did very well. Spanish is definitely the language I wish I would have learned because as an alderman at-large, I do communicate with people from all over the city and I get a lot of calls from Spanish speaking people and I think sometimes the conversation would be a lot better if I could speak Spanish fluently. I pushed my two sons to take it and hopefully they will take it seriously some day and understand why it is such an important language to know, especially in a city our size and a city with our diversity. I am a little bit perplexed about the issue of the vouchers. If we voted for people based on one single issue, and I know some people do that...I did not know that one candidate preferred them or did not prefer them and I would not hold that against them one way or the other because the school board themselves don't vote on vouchers. It is a state issue that was passed down to the city. As far as Mr. Roy, I am not saying he is not qualified but another teacher/educrat on that board isn't going to change their way of thinking or help them in any manner. I believe they have enough teachers and administrators and people who were involved in the school district. What I would like to see is somebody who doesn't think along the exact lines as a teacher or an edocrat administrator would or does. I would actually prefer somebody from outside and somebody who would be able to bring a completely different perspective to the board whether you like it or not. His demeanor is tremendous. He is very calm and cool and he doesn't raise his voice very often, if ever, and I think he would be a really good addition to the board. I don't think he would speak forever like I am now and I

apologize but we did hire an equity director at a salary of \$110,000. We hired an equity director for a reason. I would assume that the equity director if they were here would probably appreciate the fact that we applied some of that equity to our own school board by putting Mr. Gonzalez on the board. It is only for a couple of months and then there will be an election. Those are my thoughts. Thank you.

Alderman Stewart stated I think Alderman Terrio made some good points and I did appreciate the Board's indulgence when I nominated the school board member for ward 2 back in 2019. I am sure the person I nominated was not everybody's first choice but you indulged me for lack of a better of a word. I do think on principle since I do respect the process that I will be supporting Representative Gonzalez. I do agree with some of the previous speakers too who say that this is a very diverse school district, particularly among the youth and when they look up and see leaders, not just in the classroom but the school board making policy who do not look like them, I can understand why they might be a little skeptical of what is going on. For these reasons, I will support Mr. Gonzalez tonight.

Alderman Long stated as Alderman Levasseur said, in November both of them are running. I will be voting for Mr. Roy. I think the transparency on the answering of the questions in the newspaper helped with my decision. I think that they are both educators so I don't think one is above the other. I met with Mr. Roy early and this year when Alderman Cavanaugh made his nomination for ward 1, there were some members of this Board that wanted to submit another nominee so we hesitated to do that. That is what started this process. This isn't a rule of ours. This is just what we do. That all changes though this year with ward 1's nomination. I will be supporting Mr. Roy.

Mayor Craig called for a vote. Aldermen Cavanaugh, Long, Sapienza, Levasseur, Terrio, Shaw, and Hirschmann voted for Mr. Carlos Gonzalez. Aldermen Stewart, Roy, Sharonov, O'Neil, and Gamache voted for Mr. Ken Roy. Mr. Carlos Gonzalez was appointed as the new school committee member from ward 12.

Alderman Levasseur moved to make the confirmation unanimous. **Alderman Long** duly seconded the motion. Mayor Craig called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

30. Communication from Bosen & Associates Attorneys At Law on behalf of Torrington Properties, Inc. requesting an extension of the buyer due diligence period until November 15, 2021 on the Wellington Hill properties.

On motion of **Alderman Stewart**, duly seconded by **Alderman Roy**, it was voted to approve the request.

31. Communication from Kevin McCue, Heritage Commission Chairman, requesting Board of Mayor and Aldermen endorsement to become a "Certified Local Government" through the NH Historic Preservation Office and the National Parks Service.

On motion of **Alderman Cavanaugh**, duly seconded by **Alderman Long**, it was voted to approve the request.

32. Communication from the Manchester School District requesting a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$10,847,571.
(Note: Communication from Sharon Wickens, Finance Officer, attached.)

Alderman Cavanaugh moved to refer this item to a public hearing. **Alderman Long** duly seconded the motion. Mayor Craig called for a vote. The motion carried with **Alderman Sharonov** being duly recorded in opposition.

33. Communication from the Board of School Committee stating that they are vacating Hallsville Elementary School as of 10/1/2021 and have no further use for it.

Alderman Long asked what action are we taking.

Mayor Craig answered this motion would be to accept the building.

Alderman Long stated well by charter it comes back to us when it is vacated.

Mayor Craig stated it is just a formality.

Alderman Long moved to accept the building. Alderman Hirschmann duly seconded the motion.

Alderman Levasseur stated I am curious as to...they are giving us our building back. I drove by the other day and I was kind of surprised that it was pretty messy. There was a lot of stuff in the courtyard and the windows had stuff on them. Are we responsible for the security and heat or is the school district going to be paying that even though they just decided they wanted to give us our building back?

Mayor Craig responded when they are done with the building on October 1, it is now under the city's purview.

Alderman Levasseur asked so this Board allowed them to get rid of it.

Mayor Craig responded when they use a building they pay for all of the utilities but when they are all done with it it comes back to the city and the city has an opportunity to do something with that building. I will share with the Board even though it isn't final that I think it is critical that we preserve that building. It is a historic building and the use has to be consistent with and benefit the neighborhood. I have been working with Southern NH Services. They visited the building and have gone through it a few times. They are looking at the building for approximately 20 affordable elderly housing units in addition to a Head Start program which I think would be phenomenal for that neighborhood as well as space for a non-profit that services children. Again, from my perspective it is important that we put something in that building that is consistent with the neighborhood and that benefits that neighborhood. When the plans are finalized, it will be going to Lands & Buildings.

Alderman Levasseur asked what about a charter school. Are we going to have...you are going to put out an RFP or are you just going to gift it to somebody?

Mayor Craig answered we can. It is going to go to Lands & Buildings. You can do that if you choose or we can move forward with this.

Alderman Levasseur asked do we have proposals already.

Mayor Craig replied we literally just got notified and we are accepting the building back tonight so no.

Alderman Levasseur stated well you said you had some ideas for it so I am just asking.

Mayor Craig responded it has been a public conversation for about eight months now.

Alderman Levasseur asked a conversation in public where. On this board?

Mayor Craig replied no at the school board and in the newspaper and in the media. It has been pretty obvious that all of the parents know that their kids are not going there anymore but are going to other schools. Knowing that the building at some point was coming back to the city, I reached out to Southern NH Services. They have the elderly affordable housing at the former OLPH site that has worked out well.

Alderman Sapienza stated I suppose if somebody has a good idea they should bring it forward and try to get some support for it. This is a neighborhood school. I just want to point out that the one thing Manchester can offer that the towns around us can't are neighborhood schools. I hate to see neighborhood schools go away. I look forward to finding a good use for this building.

Mayor Craig called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

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

The Committee on Community Improvement respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$11,959 for CIP 212320 Overdose Data to Action Supplemental Funds be approved and referred to the Committee on Finance.

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

The Committee on Community Improvement respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the Amending Resolution and Budget Authorization providing for the acceptance and expenditure of funds in the amount of \$811,413 for CIP 213021 Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity Enhancing Detection Fund be approved and referred to the Committee on Finance.

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

The Committee on Community Improvement respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the request from the property owners at 324-326 Spruce Street for subordination of a City lien in the amount of \$30,000 be approved.

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

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

The Mayor called the meeting back to order.

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

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

“Amending the FY2015 and FY2019 Community Improvement Programs, authorizing and transferring funds in the amount of One Hundred Twenty Eight Thousand Five Hundred Five Dollars and 53 Cents (\$128,505.53) for the FY 2019 CIP 711819 LED Street Lighting Program.”

“Amending the FY2021 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Six Thousand Dollars (\$6,000) for the FY 2021 CIP 410921 Warm Zone EMS Equipment & Training.”

“Amending the FY2022 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Sixteen Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty Eight Dollars (\$16,738) for the FY 2022 CIP 410622 HazMat Allocation-FLIR.”

“Amending the FY2021 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000) for the FY 2021 CIP 213121 Asthma Home Visiting Program”.

“Amending the FY2020 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Seven Hundred Twenty Six Thousand Two Hundred Six Dollars (\$726,206) for the FY 2020 CIP 212020 System of Care—SAMHSA.”

“Amending the FY2020 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Eleven Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty-Nine Dollars (\$11,959) for the FY 2020 CIP 212320 Overdose Data to action (OD2A) Supplemental Funds.”

“Amending the FY2021 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Eight Hundred Eleven Thousand Four Hundred Thirteen Dollars (\$811,413) for the FY2021 CIP 213021 Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity “Enhancing Detection” Funding.”

ought to pass and be Enrolled.

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

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

“Authorizing Bonds, Notes or Lease Purchases in the amount of Fifty Five Million Dollars (\$55,000,000) to pay for the 2022 CIP 712722 Various Capital Improvement Projects by the Environmental Protection Division, and for the payment of all other incidental costs related thereto. Projects include but are not limited to: design and construction of upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant, expansion of sewer service area and projects necessary for compliance with the Clean Water Act.”

ought to pass and layover.

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

38. Report(s) of the Special Committee on Accounts, Enrollment and Revenue Administration, if available.

The Committee on Accounts, Enrollment & Revenue Administration respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that Ordinance Amendments:

“An Ordinance Amending the Zoning Ordinance Chapter 155 of the City of Manchester Code of Ordinances to revise the definition of family.”

“An Ordinance Amending the Zoning Ordinance Chapter 155 of the City of Manchester Code of Ordinances to revise the parking requirement for congregate housing.”

ought to pass and be Enrolled.

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

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

The Committee on Lands & Buildings respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the City accept the offer for 521 Maple Street from Janet Wong with the following stipulations:

- Buyer will pay prorated 2021 taxes as of the date of sale
- Buyer will enter the building permitting process within 30 days of closing
- Buyer will agree to a deed restriction prohibiting congregate housing at 521 Maple Street

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

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

The Committee on Human Resources/Insurance respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the request to update the current class specifications for the Economic Development Director and the Marketing and Retention Specialist and change the job title for the Marketing and Retention Specialist to Business Liaison be approved.

***Alderman Cavanaugh** moved to accept the report and adopt its recommendation.*

***Alderman Roy** duly seconded the motion.*

Alderman Hirschmann asked why are we spending time changing titles for people that don't exist.

Mayor Craig answered we updated the job descriptions and we needed those to get people hired.

Alderman Hirschmann stated we haven't had employees in that department for multiple years.

Mayor Craig replied when we approved the American Rescue Plan package, the funds from that will be going to fund the Economic Development Office. Upon approval of these job descriptions, we will post them and hire the two individuals.

Alderman Hirschmann asked are those positions funded for more than one year.

Mayor Craig responded five years.

Alderman O'Neil asked Kathy the grade did not change correct.

Kathy Ferguson, HR Director, answered no it stayed the same.

Alderman O'Neil stated my concern is that we are not getting people applying for jobs now. Should that have happened?

Ms. Ferguson responded we can advertise it with the range. In many cases we advertise step 1 to step 13 and depending on the applicant and what they are looking for and if they qualify, they might want to come in at step 4 or 5 or even step 1. It is that range and there wasn't enough to change the grade because the integrity of these grades are throughout the whole city. There are a few things that changed for the class specifications but those things didn't constitute a grade increase or decrease.

Alderman O'Neil stated so it will be advertised at the lowest step and that happens regularly and I am afraid people aren't going to look at it. I don't think we are going to get somebody for the lowest step.

Ms. Ferguson replied we can put the salary range if that is something that you request.

Alderman O'Neil stated I think we should. We have to get people not to focus on the...I don't think we are going to get a good candidate at step 1. That is my personal opinion.

Alderman Levasseur asked what is the range going to be.

Ms. Ferguson stated this is a grade 24 and that is non-affiliated and the range is \$72,000 to \$102,000. That is the range for that particular grade.

Alderman Levasseur stated I remember the last person was making \$68,000. Why do we have a Business Liaison? Isn't that the job of the person who is getting the Economic Development Director job? It seems redundant and I don't remember there being a Business Liaison in the past.

Mayor Craig stated there is a Marketing and Communications Specialist in that department as well.

Alderman Levasseur asked there was one previously.

Mayor Craig answered yes.

Alderman Levasseur asked and what is the grade for that position.

Mayor Craig replied grade 18.

Alderman Levasseur asked and that range would be \$48,000 to something I am guessing. When are those positions going to be posted?

Ms. Ferguson stated we can post them tomorrow if you approve it tonight. The range for the grade 18 is \$48,000 to \$68,400.

Mayor Craig called for a vote. There being none opposed, the motion carried.

The Committee on Human Resources/Insurance respectfully recommends, after due and careful consideration, that the request from Ted Kitchens, Airport Director, for the following changes to his complement:

- Eliminate one (1) vacant LAN administrator (2195) grade 21
- Add one (1) Server Administrator (2194) grade 21
- Eliminate one (1) vacant Administrative Assistant II (1060) grade 13
- Add one (1) Property and Contract Coordinator (3126) grade 17

be approved.

On motion of Alderman Hirschmann, duly seconded by Alderman Shaw, it was voted to accept the report and adopt its recommendations.

41. Resolutions:

“Amending the FY2015 and FY2019 Community Improvement Programs, authorizing and transferring funds in the amount of One Hundred Twenty Eight Thousand Five Hundred Five Dollars and 53 Cents(\$128,505.53) for the FY 2019 CIP 711819 LED Street Lighting Program.”

“Amending the FY2021 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Six Thousand Dollars (\$6,000) for the FY 2021 CIP 410921 Warm Zone EMS Equipment & Training.”

“Amending the FY2022 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Sixteen Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty Eight Dollars (\$16,738) for the FY 2022 CIP 410622 HazMat Allocation-FLIR.”

“Amending the FY2021 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000) for the FY 2021 CIP 213121 Asthma Home Visiting Program”.

“Amending the FY2020 Community Improvement Program, authorizing and appropriating funds in the amount of Seven Hundred Twenty Six Thousand Two Hundred Six Dollars (\$726,206) for the FY 2020 CIP 212020 System of Care—SAMHSA.”

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

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Shaw**, it was voted that the Resolutions be Enrolled.*

42. Bond Resolution:

“Authorizing Bonds, Notes or Lease Purchases in the amount of Five Million Dollars (\$5,000,000) for the 2022 CIP 712122 Replacement of Fire Station 9 (Calef Rd Station) (DPW Facilities).”

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

*On motion of **Alderman Roy**, duly seconded by **Alderman O'Neil**, it was voted that the Bond Resolution be Enrolled.*

43. Ordinances:

“An Ordinance amending the Zoning Ordinance Chapter 155 of the City of Manchester Code of Ordinances to revise the definition of “family”. ”

“An Ordinance amending the Zoning Ordinance Chapter 155 of the City of Manchester Code of Ordinances to revise the parking requirement for congregate housing. ”

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

*On motion of **Alderman Stewart**, duly seconded by **Alderman Cavanaugh**, it was voted that the Ordinances be Ordained.*

Mayor Craig stated let's take up new business before we recess the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Craig asked Mr. Gagne to come forward to provide an overview regarding the revaluation.

Robert Gagne, Assessor, asked do you want me to just take questions.

Mayor Craig replied can you give a brief overview of what has occurred over the last couple of years and what has come out over the last week. I feel like there is a lot of misinformation that you can probably correct in a short period of time and we can then open it up for questions.

Mr. Gagne stated we are completing our 2020-2021 revaluation, which is the five-year cycle required to complete revaluations. It has to be at least every five years. That is a constitutional and statute requirement. The last revaluation was in 2016 and this revaluation picks up increases or changes in values since that time. We are aware of the market as it has been for the last year or year and a half. This revaluation was based on the sales analysis for sales between April 1, 2020 and April 1, 2021. We have also taken a look at sales that have occurred since to test whether that initial analysis was reasonable or not and it is. The result is the values that are hitting mailboxes today and probably tomorrow.

Alderman T. Sapienza stated I am hearing a lot of talk from various people and it is the taxes that are driving the rents up. It seems to me that the rents are driving up the value of the buildings because the rents are skyrocketing and buildings become more valuable. Would you say that is correct?

Mr. Gagne answered that is the case. These are income producing properties or investments and the value is based on their potential for producing that income.

Alderman T. Sapienza asked so it is the rents that are driving the value of the building.

Mr. Gagne responded yes rents and low vacancies and the cost of money which is pretty low right now.

Alderman Long stated I spoke to Mr. Gagne today and he has a calculation. He told me what it was twice and I still didn't get it. If it is written down it might be easier. I would ask if he could put that on the website so people can look at what their new value is and do the calculation to get an estimate of their taxes. That is all things equal because it doesn't include the surplus that will decrease the tax rate so it will be lower than what you calculate. My understanding is there are four entities in Manchester that need to send in their MS-1's so he can send his in on October 1. By the way, if he does send that in there is no opportunity for the residences to call Vision Appraisal and get a reduction in their assessed value so that is not a good idea. The Tax Collector, the school district, and Finance have to send them in. In the past we have sent it in in November. Maybe sometimes at the end of October but never at the beginning of October. That can't happen. I know we have gotten some requests to do it in October but that just can't happen.

Mayor Craig asked can we have Mr. Gagne go through why it can't happen. It is easy for us to say it can't but I think the public needs to understand what goes into it and the timeline.

Mr. Gagne stated when I did see that people were asking for that information to be submitted earlier, I did contact Sharon in Finance about what departments had to provide MS forms. I know we get ours in and I have a list of dates that we sent them in in the last 10 years. Last year it was November 12 and the year prior it was November 8. Two years prior to that it was November 2. So it has been early November in those cases and ours is not the last MS form to get to the DRA in most of those years. The last one to my knowledge is from the school district and it is because they are waiting for additional information that they have to have to complete their forms. For example, they couldn't complete their forms until you took action on their item tonight and now

they have to have a public hearing and then take action at their next meeting. They can't complete the MS-1 until they do that and I believe that will be late October. At that point, we are near November 1. I did request an extension for our MS-1 from September 1 until November 1. That is standard practice in a revaluation year. We know that we are going to be running long in finishing the analysis after the hearings. Once Vision is near the end, Mike Hurley and myself really roll up our sleeves and get into the stats to make sure that the numbers we are going to have to live with for five years are to our satisfaction. That takes a few weeks to do. November 1 is a reasonable deadline to get that in. If we had to complete it earlier, we could but I don't believe it would be as healthy a project to do it earlier.

Mayor Craig stated to Alderman Long's point, can you put an example on the Assessor's webpage. I know the cost per \$1,000 is not finalized yet but we know it is going to be less than \$24.66 which is what it is today. I think you have consistently said less than \$18.

Mr. Gagne stated Alderman Long asked about that and I do have some methods to take someone's increase in value and estimate what their tax change is going to be. Again, with all things being equal. Basically I am interested in the impact of this revaluation so my analysis is to plug in that new value into what we did last December when we did the tax bills because that is all of the things being equal with the appropriations and revenues and all of those other things. You want to keep that separate from what is going to happen with the changes in all of those other things this year because there are going to be other changes. The cap increase was 1.87% so the final tax bill is going to have that and the change from the revaluation. All I am concerned with is the impact of the revaluation. I will post an example. I did an example with Alderman Long while we were on the phone today. I looked at my property and the way to make that estimate is to take your new value and divide it by your old value. That tells you how much your value went up. That is going to be a figure like 1.5 which would be a 50% increase. If you take that 1.5 and divide it by the change in the tax base which is 40% or 1.4 and then you will get a number that looks like 1.07. That is a 7% increase. I will put together a .pdf to post on our website because we already have that information there with that example spelled out. The Mayor asked if it would be possible for me to put in

a plug in the figures type of thing. There may be some people in the city that can do that kind of thing but not me. I can do a .pdf and post it. That is a rough way to figure it out. It is also a way to give a rough estimate of the impact of the revaluation on the tax rate. You take that \$24.66 and you divide it by 140%. It comes out to about \$17.60.

Alderman Long stated my understanding is that one of the reasons for the commercial increases is the cash. They are not taking out mortgages but they are paying cash for these.

Mr. Gagne replied I am astounded by how many of these are all cash with no mortgage. You have six family properties selling for \$700,000 and it is all cash and there is no bank financing at all. There is even a good number of single-family homes selling for all cash. The list price is \$360,000 and it is selling for \$420,000 and when it closes it is an all cash sale.

Alderman Long stated my understanding is that now the commercial property is getting more of the tax load. Is that correct when previously it was the residents?

Mr. Gagne stated this is something that has been going on for about six decades now. The demographics and the economics is that there is more demand for residential property and demand is pushing those values up at a steeper rate than commercial properties. I will give you an example of how that works out. You have an industrial property with a five or ten-year lease. It is not going to change a lot in value over those five years because that income is fixed. By the way, I haven't seen too many new industrial or commercial retail leases where the income is 45% higher today than it was five years ago. That is absolutely not the case. So that is the driving factor behind those values going up at a lesser rate than the residential. Some may say that it is unfair but the property tax system requires that all taxpayers pay their fair share. It doesn't say all residential taxpayers and commercial you can dump on. It is all taxpayers pay their fair share. It is blind to what kind of ownership it is and whether it is owner-occupied or elderly or investor. It is blind to that and the abatement and appeal process is blind to that as well. If you don't get the commercial right and they are over-

valued, they are just going to get their money back with abatements and appeals going forward.

Alderman Shaw stated I don't have a question. I was just going to make a comment. I was going to speak to Mr. Gagne before the meeting but I didn't have a chance. I was shocked when I got my assessment. It was a 67% increase. I didn't do any improvements in my house. I didn't do anything to it. Then I started getting calls from constituents who had 64% or 57% or 60% increases and I am thinking the average was 46% so why is everybody in Ward 9 and everybody in Ward 8 because I was getting calls from people in both wards, getting assessments that were so much higher. It is really distressing because a lot of us have owned our homes for many years and are on fixed incomes. A lot of them are young families that have no intention of selling their homes and now they are facing...the only good thing about this is we will have a lower tax rate which is going to help lessen the blow somewhat but it seems to me that the increase is just too much. If you pick out a few names and places around the city, it seems like the south end really got socked. I am very upset about it. I think what the Assessors should do is anyone whose assessment went up over 50% should automatically get reviewed. That is my opinion because something seems wrong. I just don't think that all of these houses...there is no way that I could sell my home for the amount that it is assessed for. It is an old house. It was built in 1929 and it has horsehair plaster walls that have cracks in them and everything. The first thing someone is going to do if they buy their house is change the whole interior. I am happy with it because it is my home and it was my grandparent's and I have been there for years. I know a lot of other people just feel like it is not fair. I don't have a plan on how to address this. I don't know how to go about trying to help these people. I just feel that I am there voice and I have to say something. In my particular case, and I am sure it will happen to others, my mortgage is going to go up because my taxes are paid through my mortgage. My insurance is also going to go up. So there are three whacks in a row. I don't understand how this could happen to so many people and especially the south end which got hit the hardest and I am not sure why.

Mr. Gagne responded I will address several of your points. The first thing you want to do is if you think the number is wrong or you want an explanation of how they got there,

you need to call Vision and make an appointment. They are going to have the data. They are going to say okay what is your property address or what is your code and they are going to look it up and say okay you are in neighborhood 410 or whatever that code is and they are going to pull up all the sales from that neighborhood and look for the ones that are similar in style to your house and tell you what they are. They are going to tell you that this property on this street sold for this amount and they are going to tell you the information they base that on. I will tell you that if all of those examples you gave me were single-family homes, they were more than likely in the very lowest price ranges before the revaluation and I can assure you that those are accurate increases in value because that is what the market is doing. It is driving, especially that lower end...I will give you an example. Laurel Ridge on Calef Road near the fire station, those condos over there, before the revaluation were assessed in the high \$40,000's for the small units to the mid \$50,000's. Those have been selling for \$115,000 or \$125,000 and up. How much of a change in value is that? That is more than double. It is the market that did that, not the revaluation. All we are doing is looking at the sales and looking at the information and applying that to the assessments. If you are in a bungalow or New Englander style home that was a modest value to begin with, chances are the value did go up more than the average and they will address that with you. If there are some things about your property that you feel were listed wrong, you can ask them to take a look at that. If you don't get satisfaction from them, and this isn't just for the aldermen but any taxpayer but if you feel we have the information on your property listed incorrectly we will take a look at it and get it corrected. They will have a lot of information to support those numbers. I mentioned the time period that they looked at those sales. Before coming up here tonight I was working on qualifying more recent sales because part of my job is to look at those sales and determine whether they are arm's length sales. I don't think I saw one sale where the sale price was...certainly I didn't see anything where the sales price was less than the new assessment and a lot of them were significantly more by 10%, 15% or 20%. So those numbers that you got in the mail are already outdated and too low based on the sales that have occurred since April. One of the other things I hear was we are catching this at a peak or on a bubble. That is not the case. We are not at the peak yet. Those values were based as of April 1, 2021 and the latest sales are significantly above that. I have a report for the first quarter of the year and we were at 100%. That is January 1 until April 1. We are at

100%. The second quarter, April 1 until June 30, we are at 96%. For the third quarter after July 1, we are under 90% in those sales. It is not the full period yet but we are already under 90%. That is telling us that our assessed values are 10% or 11% low based on the recent sales. That is the activity out there and that is what we had to base the values on. Call Vision and they will help you out with that. I believe in two weeks when the Committee on Administration meets, I made a recommendation on updating the elderly exemption and disabled exemption and blind exemption amounts so they keep pace with these increases and the individuals receiving those exemptions don't have a dilution in their exemption amounts. It is not going to be perfect and dollar for dollar because we can't take the person that is earning at the highest discount and make everybody get that. The values didn't change at the same rate so if an elderly person is in a house that went up 40%, they are going to be in better shape than an elderly person in a house that went up 50%. That is just it. However, that person with the house that went up 50% also has 50% more value or are in a 10% better position than the house that went up 40%. I know it is not cash in their pocket but if it is accurate that your value went up 60%, you are 60% wealthier in your real estate through this process.

Alderman Shaw asked did you say that you made a suggestion that the...what is the elderly and disabled exemption at right now.

Mr. Gagne answered the base rate for the elderly exemption, meaning the starting point for anyone 65-74, is \$109,500. I don't have that paperwork in front of me but I believe the recommendation is to increase that to \$152,000. That will be in front of the committee in a few weeks.

Alderman Shaw asked which committee did you send it to.

Mr. Gagne replied it goes to the Committee on Administration.

Alderman Shaw asked what about the disabled exemption.

Mr. Gagne responded it is the same. The elderly age 75-79 and 80 and over I have a recommendation for those as well but I don't have that information in front of me.

Mayor Craig stated I want to mention that the phone number for Vision Appraisal is 888-844-4300.

Alderman Levasseur stated there are two silver linings in all of this. You want to try to look at the bright side of this massive revaluation and the massive increases in residential properties. The AG's office stopped the ballot question going to the voters that would have made the school district autonomous and its own taxing authority; thank you. Enough members of this Board voted not to override the tax cap so that will at least give you a lower rate after November. I think it would have been nice to have the number before the November 2 election date because I think fear will be driving a lot of people to the ballot box because they are going to be really worried and concerned. I have a couple of questions concerning the revaluation. I remember during the last revaluation we had a big set-up at Memorial where people could come in and discuss their assessments with Vision. Is that going to occur again?

Mr. Gagne responded certainly for the past year or 18 months, Vision has been doing not in person calls. They have been having phone hearings. We are going to provide an opportunity for an in-person hearing for anyone who wants that. We can't use Memorial because they are already back in school but we are going to use the MEDO office because it is vacant right now.

Alderman Levasseur stated you are going to have a line out the door.

Mr. Gagne responded it will be by appointment only.

Alderman Levasseur stated I don't want people to inundate your office with calls because I know that you don't have enough people to answer the phone, especially at this time but I am directing people to the website. What is the timeframe to request a review? I had a guy call me today and said they put an extra bedroom on his house and a metal roof on his house. He said when he looked at his assessment they added

three things that were completely inaccurate and wondered how he should deal with that.

Mr. Gagne replied the deadline to contact Vision for an appointment is September 16 so roughly two weeks. They are going to hold hearings for as long as they need to hopefully wrapping them up before the end of the month.

Alderman Levasseur asked if Vision doesn't make any adjustments, what is the next step.

Mr. Gagne answered when they get their tax bill they can file an abatement.

Alderman Levasseur asked what is that process and is it listed on the website.

Mr. Gagne replied yes always.

Alderman Levasseur stated okay so it shows the process for the abatement. Do you still only have two assessors?

Mr. Gagne answered yes.

Alderman Levasseur asked do you include one non-assessor as someone who can vote.

Mr. Gagne responded only if needed.

Alderman Levasseur asked if there is a tie.

Mr. Gagne answered right.

Alderman Levasseur asked so if you vote not to grant the abatement is the next step Superior Court.

Mr. Gagne replied there are two venues – the Board of Tax & Land Appeals or Superior Court.

Alderman Levasseur stated I have a few small points that I hope you clarify because I am confused by your statement that rents are what drove the prices on the houses. You don't actually get people's rental income and then decide on somebody's property value on the actual rent do you? You are saying that the rents have increased so the values of the properties have increased?

Mr. Gagne stated yes. We did a rental survey, not for single-family homes because there might be investors that buy single-family homes...

Alderman Levasseur interjected I just want people to know that you are not collecting individual IRS stuff.

Mr. Gagne responded we did send out mailers asking for that information on income properties or investment properties. Not a lot of people responded. It was less than 10% or maybe less than 5%. We have other things we can do like look at rental surveys. NH Housing has those. On some of the bigger apartment complexes we will actually look at their website for their rent levels.

Alderman Levasseur stated but the actual assessed value isn't based on what they are getting for rent. I have a property and my rents are very low so I don't have turnover.

Mr. Gagne replied just like we have to base the single-family assessment on arm's length sales, we have to base the rents for income producing properties on market rates. If your rates are below market, we are not going to value your property on your rates but we are going to use the market rates.

Alderman Levasseur responded I understand that but where are you getting your information on what the rents are. Do you include Section 8 rents?

Mr. Gagne answered only on low income housing properties with rent restrictions. We do have some properties in the city with rent restrictions that are HUD and for those we do have to apply a low income model.

Alderman Levasseur stated I apologize for being naïve but I always thought the revaluation was based on home sales only.

Mr. Gagne stated no. It is based on all of the approaches to value – cost, income and market.

Alderman Levasseur asked so on these properties that are commercial, they were telling you how much they were getting for rent or you are just estimating what the per square footage of rent is.

Mr. Gagne responded we sent out the surveys and then we have some sources of information that we subscribe to where we can get market rates when people don't reply to us.

Alderman Levasseur asked do you by any chance have a total of the commercial value versus the residential value and what those two numbers equate to. I think we were at 60/40. I thought it was commercial paid 60% and residential paid 40%. Did that flip? Is it the same? Do you have a number that you can put to it?

Mr. Gagne answered it has never been 60% commercial. You can go back 50 years and it has never been 60%.

Alderman Levasseur asked has it been the other way around.

Mr. Gagne replied at the 2020 billing, which was the last full year before the revaluation, residential was 60.6% and commercial and industrial was 39.3%.

Alderman Levasseur asked is there going to be a change or is it going to stay the same.

Mr. Gagne answered with the preliminary values that went out in the mail, the residential total is 64.18% or 64.2% and the commercial is 35.75%.

Alderman Levasseur asked what do you consider commercial. Is it units above four?

Mr. Gagne replied yes.

Alderman Levasseur stated so when we are looking at residential and commercial, you are not including a three-family in commercial. That would be considered residential correct?

Mr. Gagne responded yes.

Alderman Levasseur asked do you have a total parcel amount for residential homes compared to commercial properties and anything above four units. Do you have that as a number also? I think in 2001 it was 28,000 single-family homes. I don't know what that increase is.

Mr. Gagne stated right now we have 17,310 single-family homes and 5,620 individual condo units.

Alderman Levasseur asked those are considered residential.

Mr. Gagne answered yes.

Alderman Levasseur asked is there anything else.

Mr. Gagne stated for two-families we have 3,174. We have 1,352 three-families. Parcels that are identified as apartments with 4+ units we have 1,141.

Alderman Levasseur asked and the four units is considered residential also.

Mr. Gagne answered we have it in the commercial bucket.

Alderman Levasseur stated so the numbers you gave me for those four categories are considered residential. What is the total increase percentage wise for those four compared to the commercials that you put into one list? I know I saw 71% and some 46% and stuff. What is the balance of the four categories compared to the one if you have that?

Mr. Gagne stated for single-families, the percent change was 46%.

Alderman Levasseur stated it is okay. I can add them up. I was just wondering what the percentage was for just that and then the other three.

Mayor Craig stated it has to be close to 46% because the majority of them are single-family.

Alderman Levasseur stated when Bob goes to Hannaford and Market Basket, don't shoot the messenger. Vision Appraisal did this work.

Mr. Gagne stated I can tell you who to blame. I do it all the time. I ask people have you ever bought or sold a house. If the answer is yes, it is their fault. Anybody who has been a market participant...we are only looking at what their participation is and what they are doing and applying that to all of the properties.

Alderman Levasseur asked and this is mandated by the NH Constitution correct.

Mr. Gagne answered yes and state law.

Alderman Hirschmann stated I guess everybody realizes right now that the convergence of the revaluation is just at the white hot market for single-family homes.

Mayor Craig responded that is actually not true.

Alderman Hirschmann stated that is true. The convergence of the white hot sales in residential...

Mayor Craig interjected sales have actually gone up since this revaluation was done.

Mr. Gagne stated right and they are still going up.

Alderman Hirschmann stated truth be told, I talk to a lot of real estate people and nobody can buy a house for under \$300,000 in any neighborhood that I know of. What you can do as a public service is recite the appeals process for the citizens whether it be on the website or on the phone or TV. You have to tell people how they can appeal their values because people like Alderman Shaw are very scared. I know that she lives in a 1929 home and she doesn't have granite counters. Other people have that luxury but not every valuation should be based...I think she might be getting shortchanged is what I am trying to say and there are other people like her and I think we have to advocate for those seniors that are getting these high valuations and haven't done a darn thing to their home and just because it is a white hot residential real estate market. The bad thing is Mayor it is not going to be next year and then you are really going to have problems. If you can recite the appeals process somehow and get that message out there that would be great. I know it is Vision giving you the values but they are your vendor and this is our city and we have to help these people understand the true value. What I experienced recently was a gas explosion that totally blew up a house and was a total loss. Surprise, surprise because lumber is \$12 per 2 x 4 and people didn't get the correct replacement cost from their insurance vendor. All of these homes are now under insured because the values are higher than their insurance policy. The public service that I can do is get that message out there. Please insure your homes for the proper value because I have already seen one person and they went to get the replacement cost and they only got 60%. There are all kinds of ramifications like Alderman Shaw said.

Mr. Gagne stated just to be clear, insurance is not based on assessment. It is based on market.

Alderman Hirschmann stated well you have to let your insurance company know what your value is for replacement cost. All I am asking is that you get the message out there regarding abatements.

Mr. Gagne stated we have that information on every tax bill. Every tax bill you have ever gotten has the information on how to file an abatement and there are also links on our website including the instructions and deadlines and the forms are also available. If somebody doesn't have Internet access, they can give us a call and we will mail them one form per property they own.

Alderman Hirschmann stated that is excellent. Last year we were receiving letters here from the Mall of NH. Covid hit and they were petrified about paying their taxes.

Mr. Gagne responded they are under appeal.

Alderman Shaw stated the letter you sent out was very informative.

Mayor Craig stated every taxpayer received a letter specifically talking about this and it is on the website as well.

Alderman T. Sapienza stated I went to the website and saw my property and all of the details so it is a great resource and pretty easy to find.

Alderman Terrio stated I have a few questions. We talked on the phone so some of it I am going to repeat so everyone else knows. The first thing I want to talk about is when I looked at my increase and depending on the tax rate it is going to be between \$300 and \$500 but somebody told me today and it was kind of alarming and I don't think a lot of people know but is it correct to say that the increase on our houses...I thought it was going to be from July 1 through June 30 but I was told that it is going to be due by December 31. So the whole increase is due by December 31 of this year. Is that correct?

Mr. Gagne answered that is correct.

Alderman Terrio stated a lot of people don't know that and I think that is pretty shocking. I just assumed it would be over two tax bills – December and June. My tax bill could go up \$500 and I thought it was going to be \$250 in December and \$250 in June. It is very important for the public to know that the increase is going to all happen by December 31 of this year. A lot of people are going to be whacked, especially people who live on fixed incomes. I just assumed it was going to be over the whole fiscal year but it is actually due within just a few months.

Mr. Gagne stated it covers the whole year but because we didn't know what the increase was going to be on your first bill, we couldn't capture that.

Alderman Terrio stated a lot of us didn't know that and I think the residents of Manchester are in for a shock when they realize that the whole increase is going to hit them on December 31. It is important for people to start planning now because we are going to have a lot of unhappy constituents.

Mayor Craig asked is that consistent with how the City has done these in the past.

Mr. Gagne answered yes that is the way the law is set up.

Alderman Terrio asked do we have any flexibility where we could spread it out over the two tax bills.

Mayor Craig stated that is what I was going to ask. Has your office worked with individuals when they have proven financial hardship?

Mr. Gagne replied it depends on the hardship and the definition is different in state law versus what people might think. What I would say is, and this did come up in former Alderman Porter's letter to all of you, is we always accept requests for consideration but in this case what I would be looking to see is if what they are saying is they are having a hard time paying the increase, then I at least want to see them pay the same amount as last year by the due date. That is only reasonable. If the argument is I can't afford the

\$400 or \$500, at least pay what your bill would have been based on last year and then we would entertain a request to waive interest on the rest.

Alderman Terrio stated just to piggyback on that, does this Board have any power to stretch it out until June.

Mr. Gagne asked which Board.

Alderman Terrio answered the BMA.

Mr. Gagne responded no.

Alderman Terrio asked so we are stuck and this has to happen by December 31 and we have no mechanism or power to change that.

Mr. Gagne replied correct. You don't have any power to defer when the due date is.

Alderman Terrio stated my second thing is when I look at my taxes depending on the \$17.60 per \$1,000, my taxes will go up between 9% and 11%. I haven't looked at the tax cap recently but the tax cap or CPI is about 1.87%. Could somebody make an argument within the tax cap and say look...I assume most people are in the same boat as me with a single-family house so could we make a legal argument that says if the tax cap is 1.87% why is that not being applied to my house individually? I assume you are saying it is a holistic tax cap but could somebody make the argument that it is an individual tax cap and my taxes on my house should only go up 1.87% and not 9% to 11%?

Mr. Gagne responded some states do have a cap on individual property tax bills. This state does not.

Alderman Terrio asked what about the tax cap that Manchester has.

Mr. Gagne answered that is not a cap on individual bills.

Alderman Terrio stated we talked about this today but I want to discuss it again. Our taxes are going up by the tax cap of 1.87% holistically and universally but as you explained to me today, obviously life is unfair and we have a lot of commercial and industrial properties that are getting tax cuts and it is not being squeezed over to people who live in residential properties.

Mr. Gagne stated yes but you can also say it is being pulled over not squeezed over.

Alderman Terrio stated it is still the same amount but the commercial and industrial property owners are getting a tax cut and that is pushing the money over to the residential property owners and they are now paying more taxes.

Mr. Gagne stated it is spreading out the tax burden in a fair manner is what it is.

Alderman Terrio stated I would disagree with you that it is being done in a fair manner.

Mayor Craig asked can we let him explain.

Mr. Gagne stated let's say a commercial owner gets their new value and says man if they had applied this last year I would have said this much on taxes. Well it is too late to do anything about that. It is very likely that those properties paid a little more than they should have last year. We can't do anything about that, however, now that we know there is that disparity we are required by law to fix it and that is what the revaluation is.

Alderman Terrio stated it just seems, and again life isn't fair, but as Alderman Shaw talked about it kind of burns me that we are lowering the taxes on businesses and commercial properties but increasing them on residents. We have no mechanism or power to fix that?

Mayor Craig asked can you explain why you are doing that and why Vision Appraisal...I think it is important because it is not getting through.

Mr. Gagne stated you have to understand that in the State of NH your property tax bill is based on your value. It is a uniform rate and everybody pays the same rate. Some states have a split rate. In Massachusetts they have a residential rate and a commercial rate but in NH that rate is the same for everyone. The only exception is utility properties and that is because they pay a higher state rate to the Department of Revenue. It is market value or the same level of market value at a uniform rate. Really it doesn't have anything to do with the intent to shift the taxes around. The result of leveling the playing field is that that happens and you end up collecting more taxes from residential properties than you are from commercial. Like I said earlier, that has been going on for five or six decades. The economics of the real estate and the push for values to be higher is greater on residential. The other thing to consider is the growth. How much new commercial/industrial growth have you seen? These percentages, when we talked about the 64%/36% versus last year of 60.5% and 39.5%, there has been a lot of growth and new construction in single-family and condos in the last two years and we are picking all of that up. I had done a snapshot of what our tax base increased before we plugged in the new tables and we were up about \$90 million. That is just new pick-ups. The growth that every year you are looking at was about \$90 million. That is in there to and the bulk of that was residential properties like condos and single-families.

Alderman Terrio stated I want to make sure I have my numbers right. 17,000 individual homes, 5,000 condos, about 3,000 two-families, 1,000 three-families and 1,400 four-families. Does that sound right?

Mr. Gagne answered yes.

Mayor Craig stated that doesn't include commercial and industrial.

Mr. Gagne stated I can give you those numbers. Vacant land is almost 1,300 parcels. Commercial is 1,542 and industrial which includes the utility parcels is 526. We have 29 parcels that are in current use and that is open space values. We also have about

320 properties identified as mixed use meaning there is some commercial and some residential like a corner store with a three-family attached or something like that.

Alderman Levasseur stated I have to come back to this because Alderman Shaw brought it up and it just...first of all the tax cap number and the revaluation number are two separate numbers not involved with each other. What your house is assessed at is a completely different number. If it went up 7% or 9%, it is not the same thing as the tax rate. Please keep that in mind because I don't want people to be confused. If your assessment went up 7% or 8%, you are not getting a 7% or 8% tax increase. You are getting a tax number set by the DRA after consultation and votes by this Board but they will set that rate and that rate will be what you pay on your valuation. I don't know how many people are going to see a lower number but it looks like the commercial side will be seeing a better tax bill. In the meantime, I have to tell you that every time I listen to this appraisal process it is just eye opening to me because I hear so many different things. In my whole life I never would have imagined that we were using rental income as a weight in valuations because I will tell you that if people knew that, a lot of places would have given you their rents. I don't believe for a minute that the rental part of it came into effect although you said it did so I will have to agree to that. You tell me and everybody in this city how in the world these properties that are single-family homes could go up the number they did when they don't collect rent. The amount of rental property that we have in this city, and the reason why I asked, compared to 17,310 single-family homes and a total for rental apartments of about 10,000...I don't even want to say that because condos are not rented or 95% of them are not rented. So 17,000 plus 5,000 is 23,000 so 23,000 properties in this city would never have submitted anything to do with rental income because they don't rent their properties. There are exceptions. However, 3,000 and 1,300 and three and four-families and giving you rental income or you are basing rent on those properties. How can you have an appraisal process where some people are including rent and some people are including leases meaning commercial for their rentals yet you are looking at the single-family homes...you can't apply a test to one section of property like you said before commercial and residential all have to be taxed on the same basis. When I hear rental income is being considered, that throws a massive red flag at me.

Mayor Craig stated he doesn't get it for everybody. It is just for the income properties.

Alderman Levasseur stated but that is not the way it is supposed to be done. You don't value property on different criteria.

Mayor Craig asked so you are trying to tell the Assessor how to do his job.

Alderman Levasseur stated you can't use different criteria for different properties. You have to use sale numbers. Assessed valuations are supposed to be based on the sales of properties, the historic sales of properties, and he told me and us that when Alderman Shaw calls Vision they are going to tell her how many houses have sold in Ward 9 and that is how they got their number. Fine. I am cool with that and I get it but you can't tell me that you have rental income as criteria for what are basically considered single-family properties such as condos, two and three-families and then criteria of rental income for commercial properties and then apply all of those numbers into this equation to residential. I will tell you that someone has an equal protection complaint with Superior Court by saying your formula or the formula being used is not being similarly applied.

Mr. Gagne stated the standard is market value. That is the standard. If you take us to court, the standard in the state is market value. The approaches that we use to get to that market value are going to be similar to what an appraiser is going to use when he appraises your property for a bank loan. So on a single-family that is not rented, the sales approach is the approach that is used. They do use the cost approach as well but they calibrate it. So they will start out with costs from Marshall & Swift which is a national publisher of cost figures. They will start with that and then they go to the sales and calibrate it. We do use sales on those income producing properties. The values are based on market information including sales. On those properties, they are actually going to have two approaches completed and they are going to reconcile them. If they plug in the tables for the sales approach and a property comes in at \$2 million and they plug in the information they have for market rates of income, expenses, vacancies and cap rates and it comes in at \$1.5 million or \$2.5 million, they are going to go back and review that property to find out what is off and reconcile it. That is the process.

Alderman Levasseur stated I would be interested to know how many commercial properties were able to send in the information concerning income and offsets and use that in the valuation on the commercial side whereas the homeowner doesn't get the benefit of that whatsoever. I doubt many of these condo, two and three family building owners had any idea about doing that either. We all have expenses if we have properties whether they are rented or not. You said before I started that part of the formula was based on rental income. That is what you said but we are not applying that to everybody.

Mr. Gagne replied no because we are going to apply it the same way an appraiser would.

Alderman Levasseur stated the number should be higher for the...the residential numbers went up really high and the condo numbers went up even higher but they weren't based on anything to do with rents whereas commercial has their automatic increase in there every year and if there is a tax increase most of them say that the tenant has to pay for it. How can they drop like that then?

Mayor Craig stated I think Mr. Gagne started off by saying don't shoot the messenger and I feel like that is what is happening right now.

Alderman Levasseur stated I am not shooting the messenger. He is not the one that applied these approaches. Why is it every time I ask a question you have to attack me? Everybody else asks questions and you don't say a word. Leave me alone and let me do my job.

Mayor Craig stated I am asking you to be respectful.

Alderman Levasseur stated let me do my job as an elected official in this city.

Mayor Craig responded I am asking you to be respectful that's all.

Alderman Levasseur stated I am being respectful. I am asking him...

Alderman T. Sapienza interjected let's move on. We have been over this ground a half a dozen times.

Alderman Levasseur stated this is new ground. Just because you don't want to hear it...I am hearing different applications of formulas being applied.

Mayor Craig stated I am going to recess the meeting.

Alderman Levasseur replied fine if that is what you want to do.

Mayor Craig stated you can ask one more question.

Alderman Levasseur stated I just want the answers to be accurate and I want people to understand. I did not know that this was based on anything to do with rental income. Okay? So it is important to me as I am sure it is going to be important to every single property owner in this city.

Mayor Craig stated this is critically important to all of us.

Alderman Levasseur stated you may not care but I do. I wasn't being disrespectful to Mr. Gagne. I appreciate the job he does. I just want to know how this is applied and if it is being applied evenly across the board, which because it is a NH Constitutional mandate must be applied equally and evenly across the board to everyone. It is a constitutional issue for me.

Mayor Craig stated right that is the point of all of this.

Alderman Levasseur stated it is a constitutional issue and the city better be aware of it. I am sorry if I got a little excited but you are always going after me when I ask a question.

Mayor Craig asked do you have any more questions for Mr. Gagne.

Alderman Levasseur answered no.

Alderman Roy stated I was in contact with Jon Donovan as he and I were some of the original members of the Quality Council and when we were there we started what became the Employees Appreciation BBQ. Just to let everybody know, they are working on it right now. They have set a date for Wednesday, 9/29. Due to the Covid variant that everybody is worried about, they are not sure if they are going to have a BBQ or if it is going to be a boxed lunch. They are still looking for donations from the aldermen and department heads as usual. One of the other things this year is that they are going to allow...usually you put in a ticket for the raffle but they are going to have every active city employee's name in the raffle even if they don't attend the BBQ. I know that Alderman Shaw has been involved with them as well and I know she was at the meeting the other day and she may have something to add.

Alderman Shaw stated I think it is going to be a combination of those who can attend and those who wish to have a boxed lunch can order that and those will be delivered to the departments by a supervisor from the department. This way, we can give everyone a chance to attend who might be concerned about Covid or they can't leave. It is going to give a little more recognition to more people. Those who want to come to McIntyre will still be allowed to I think unless something has changed. Okay so I guess we don't know yet. We are getting a count of how many people want to attend in person and how many people prefer the other option. It will still be an appreciation lunch for the employees one way or the other.

Alderman Roy stated any donations can be given to Jon or to Alderman Shaw.

Alderman Long stated I have a few issues. One is that the Planning Board has two nominations that they submit to the BMA for the Southern NH Planning Commission. I would like to submit full member Don Waldron and alternate member Marcus Ponce de Leon. I know I was asked if we can confirm these so they can make the next meeting

which will be held at the end of the month. Evidently there has been a problem with meeting quorums.

Matthew Normand, City Clerk, stated this Board can just confirm the nomination process that already happened.

*On motion of **Alderman Long**, duly seconded by **Alderman Roy**, it was voted to confirm Don Waldron as a regular member and Marcus Ponce de Leon as an alternate to the Southern NH Planning Commission.*

Alderman Long stated we were all in receipt of the Attorney General's letter with respect to the questions. It is not a matter of the questions but a matter of retaining the authority that I believe the statute gives us with respect to overseeing our charter. This Board has the authority to amend and the letter changes that. With those concerns, I would like to talk about litigation and that should probably be done in a recess. I believe we have a motion to recess after new business.

Mayor Craig stated correct.

Alderman Hirschmann stated when you are driving up Route 293 on the west side heading north, right about at CMC Hospital if you look to the right you see Arms Park and the river wall and there is a homeless encampment there; a big one with about 50 people. They have built staging on the wall and are living over the wall and it is very dangerous. The firefighters would have to rappel down to these people. It is kind of a crazy encampment but as you are driving on the west side you can look over and see it. There are more than 10 people living there all on the wall on these ledges. They are hanging their laundry and I have people calling me. As you are driving by you can see that.

Mayor Craig stated you should contact Schonna.

Alderman Hirschmann stated I am telling you. You are the executive for the city and I am a part-time alderman. Get Schonna to do something.

Mayor Craig stated this Board hired her and I did notify her about it but I would ask any alderman respectfully if you see an issue in your ward step up and let her know.

Alderman Hirschmann stated this is where I want to report it because my constituents can see that we are doing our job and telling you that we want it fixed.

Mayor Craig stated I reported it last week.

Alderman Long stated I have spoken to Ms. Green about that and it is on the schedule to be addressed.

Alderman O'Neil stated for the next Public Safety meeting could we ask Chief Parent to provide...I am very interested in the Squad Program that they started. I don't know how long ago it was but I hear great things about it and I see them out in the community. If we could get a presentation before that committee on what it was set-up for and what kind of data they have that would be great. My understanding is that they are doing a lot of preventive work including with the homeless but I have also seen them respond to motor vehicle accidents and medical calls. I think it is an important tool for the Fire Department going forward. If we can get a presentation regarding information on the program, any data they have to date, what the current and future funding is, the operating budget, federal funding, etc. that would be great. I am hearing good things about it in the community but I don't know a lot about it.

Mayor Craig stated the city received an application for a 79-E for 1211-1217 Elm Street. I would ask for a vote from this Board to refer it to a public hearing on 10/5.

*On motion of **Alderman T. Sapienza**, duly seconded by **Alderman Cavanaugh**, it was voted to refer the 79-E application for 1211-1217 Elm Street to a public hearing to be held on October 5.*

Alderman O'Neil asked where is it.

Mayor Craig answered 1211-1217 Elm Street, the Rex/Lemay building. This vote would be to refer it to a public hearing on 10/5.

Mayor Craig stated Clerk Normand also just notified me that our regular November meeting is on 11/2 which is election day.

City Clerk Normand stated this Board could choose to move it back to 10/29 or move it to 11/9 or they could take a motion to suspend the rule and only have one meeting in November. It is up to the Board.

Alderman O'Neil stated I think everybody would probably want to check their availability if we are looking to move it to October. I know I would. Maybe Matt can send out an email and try to coordinate it.

Mayor Craig stated we can do that.

Alderman Levasseur stated I got a bunch of calls concerning the removal of the cement barriers downtown. Do we need a vote to remove them? I know that enough businesses are ready for them to go and even the busy ones are ready to let them go.

Mayor Craig stated maybe we can have Sara Beaudry talk to the business owners. I know that she coordinated with the businesses.

Alderman Long stated if a business requests removal I would think they would be removed.

Alderman Levasseur asked are we going to let them stay there until they request removal or are they going to be there until 10/15 or 11/15.

Mayor Craig stated I know that last year they wanted them there through Halloween but we are flexible. We are just trying to help the small businesses so if they want them removed we can do that.

Alderman Levasseur stated I knew I was going to get shot at for bringing this up. I am just bringing it up because I got calls on it. I didn't know whether it was the will of the Board as to when they are removed.

Alderman Long stated there is an end date. I remember we voted on a date.

City Clerk Normand stated Kevin Sheppard might know.

Kevin Sheppard, Public Works Director, stated he didn't know.

Mayor Craig stated we can check on that.

Alderman Long stated I know we gave a date. I think it was 11/1.

Alderman Levasseur stated I just know that a lot of people want them gone and I agree with them.

Alderman Long stated if they call DPW they can have them removed.

Alderman Levasseur stated it is not only the business that enjoys the benefit of them, but the businesses next to them would like them gone to.

Alderman Long responded well I didn't realize that. Why do you attack me every time I ask a question?

*On motion of **Alderman Cavanaugh**, duly seconded by **Alderman Long**, it was voted to recess the meeting pursuant to RSA 91-A:2, I(a) for strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining and RSA 91-A:2, I(b) for consultation with legal counsel.*

Mayor Craig called the meeting back to order.

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

Clerk of Committee