

**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**January 10, 2006 – 7:00 P.M.**  
**LINCOLN CENTER HEARING ROOM**

**FIRST MEETING OF THE MONTH**

**PRESENT:** Chairman Howroyd, Vice-Chairman O'Neill, Secretary Zingler, Directors Hachey, Sheridan, Topping, Spadaccini, Peak and Pelletier

**ALSO:** Acting General Manager O'Neil and Town Attorney Darby

**1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER.**

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Chairman Howroyd.

**John Garapolo** invited the Board of Directors and Town staff to attend the Tenth Annual Fenix Memorial Bowling tournament to be held on February 25<sup>th</sup> at the Vernon Bowling Lanes. This tournament is sponsored by the Manchester Lions Club to benefit the Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation.

**2. OPENING OF MEETING TO ELECTORS OR TAXPAYERS WHO WISH TO BE HEARD ON ANY SUBJECT WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS.**

**Andrea Weber**, 88 Church Street thanked Acting General Manager O'Neil for his assistance with the removal of the hazardous tree. She would still like to see a tree ordinance passed.

**Janet Irwin**, 97-99 Summit Street supports Mrs. Weber's concerns for removal of her neighbor's tree. Tree limbs continue to pose a danger. A tree ordinance is needed.

**Joseph Rafala**, 58 Hawthorne Street stated the Manchester Land Trust has removed \$1,320,600 of assessed property value from active tax rolls. They are in violation of an agreement with the Town forgiving \$33,161 in back taxes and interest.

**Eric Prause**, 303 Keeney Street serves on the Cox Advisory Committee. He made the Manchester community aware of the services available from Cox Communications.

**Leslie Frey**, 30 Florence Street is not in favor of a tree ordinance. She spoke of salary approvals for the Town Manager, the Bennet project, the Spruce Street Block Watch, the walking trail, and the need for a power outlet and phone jack in the high school pool office.

**Fred Spaulding**, 18 Myrtle Street mentioned a similar situation as Mrs. Weber. He supports a tree ordinance. The Town should not overlook safety.

**Terry Werkhoven**, 88 Santina Drive explained flooding on Girard Street is nothing new. Water flow is restricted by the size of pipe used. The Town should correct this area.

**Don Guinan**, 149 Ludlow Road is opposed to the monopole to be erected in the Ludlow/Garth Road area. This is a profitable deal being forced on the neighborhood.

**Eileen Sweeney**, 86 Hawthorne Street said proposed acquisition of properties around Bennet is not an effective use of dollars. She is opposed to the Manchester Land Trust walking trail.

**Wayne Sweeney**, 86 Hawthorne Street opposes the use of the old Cheney rail line as a greenway. There was no consideration given to the property owners abutting this land.

**Walter Twachtman** represented Carol Rice of 144 Garth Road. A proposal to expand the use of a right of way on her lot to gain access to a cell tower is a total distortion of the purpose and misuse of the right of way. Mrs. Rice supports her neighbors in opposition.

**Dorothy Brindamour**, 6 Morse Road spoke in opposition of Item G. on the Board's January agenda. The purchase of more land for the Bennet project is not a good idea.

**Dan Moran**, 145 Chestnut Street spoke of the Town's inappropriate tax lien deal, Cox Cable's unreasonable rules regarding the use of the studio, and the Bennet land acquisition.

**Linda Civitello**, 148 Hawthorne Street opposed the proposed walking trail. It will present additional noise problems, lack of privacy, and potential increase of vandalism and crime.

**Milt Perlman**, 3 Sanford Road stated the two bond referendums for the schools were somewhat undervalued. In addition, he stated \$1500 to sue the State for education funding is not going to destroy this town.

**Bill Ogden**, Branford Street talked about the referendum on the walking trail, the public's need to know what is going on, the deal made with Lydall, and the proposed antenna tower.

**Chairman Howroyd** explained the Town is not a participant in the Cheney Rail Trail property acquisition.

**ADOPTED – MOTION TO EXCEED THE ONE-HOUR TIME LIMIT AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS.**

**Secretary Zingler moved and Director Topping seconded the motion to adopt.**  
**Nine Voted in Favor**

**Tom Stringfellow**, 183 Hillstown Road acknowledged Dr. King's holiday. He died for all Americans. People of color should reach out; the world is bigger than what we know.

**3. PUBLIC HEARINGS.**

- A. Appropriation to Special Grants Fund – Human Services
  - Manchester Early Learning Center .....\$331,828.00
  - for child care programs to be financed by a grant from the State Department of Social Services, and a resolution authorizing the General Manager to enter into and amend an agreement with the Department of Social Services for calendar year 2006.

**Acting General Manager O'Neil** explained this is annual grant from the State Department of Social Services to assist the Manchester Early Learning Center in funding their pre-school programs.

**Chairman Howroyd opened the floor for public comment at this time.**

**Tom Stringfellow**, 183 Hillstown Road commends and supports this appropriation.

**There being no further public comment the hearing on this item was closed.**

B. Appropriations to Education Special Grants as follows:

1. Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Grant.....\$111,001.00  
to be financed by a grant from the State Department of Education.
2. Tech Prep Grant .....\$7,987.00  
to be financed by the Manchester Community College Tech Prep program.
3. Out-of-District Magnet School Transportation Grant.....\$46,800.00  
for the 2005-06 fiscal year to be financed by a grant from the State  
Department of Education.
4. Opportunities for the children of Verplanck Elementary School .....\$3,000.00  
to be funded through a contribution by the SBM Charitable Foundation.
5. Student incentives at Verplanck Elementary School .....\$500.00  
to be funded by a grant from Exxon Mobil Corporation.
6. "Reflections on the Sea" project at Martin Elementary School .....\$1,350.00  
to be funded by a grant from the Connecticut Association for the Gifted.
7. Bowers School Student Author Center .....\$5,000.00  
to be financed by a contribution from the Bowers School PTA.

**Chairman Howroyd opened the floor for public comment at this time.**

**Tom Stringfellow**, 183 Hillstown Road is supportive of all seven appropriations listed in Item B.

**Milt Perlman**, 3 Sanford Road asked where does this money appear in the school budget?

**Bill Ogden**, 137 Branford Street said he hopes we know what we are doing with the State lawsuit.

**There being no further public comment the hearing on this item was closed.**

**Chairman Howroyd** explained that the Town receives in the neighborhood of \$30 million for all State grants, of which the majority is education funding.

**Pat Brooks**, Business Manager offered an explanation of how grants are received and processed.

**Director Topping** questioned Item 3.B.4, Item 3.B.5 and Item 3.B.6. Ms. Brooks replied that Item 3.B.4 was written by the principal for transportation of students after evening events. Item 3.B.5 was written by the principal for individualized incentives designed to motivate students and student achievement. Item 3.B.6 is money provided to support special science field studies for fifth grade students.

**Director Spadaccini** questioned Item 3.B.3. Ms. Brooks replied the average transportation cost per student is somewhere between \$1600-\$1800.

**Secretary Zingler** questioned Item 3.B.1. Are we hiring any new staff to support this grant? Ms. Brooks explained this grant would not be doing that. It will be used to purchase materials, to purchase equipment and to improve career services, technology, family and consumer sciences and business education.

**Director Peak** questioned Item 3.B.3. Ms. Brooks replied there are currently 39 students in the Magnet Schools. It takes a portion of the budget to support students going to Magnet Schools.

C. Appropriation to Special Projects as follows:

1. Police Community Relations Grant account .....\$15.00  
for community based projects and/or programs to be financed by a donation from Ben and Doris Matos which is gratefully acknowledged and accepted.
2. Police Activities League.....\$26,957.00  
to offset the salary of the Executive Director of the Police Activities League to be financed by an Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant from the Department of Justice.

**Acting General Manager O’Neil** explained Item 3.C.2 is a grant to assist with the salary for the Executive Director of PAL.

**Chairman Howroyd opened the floor for public comment at this time.**

**Bill Ogden**, 137 Branford Street questioned the salary for the Executive Director.

**Tom Stringfellow**, 183 Hillstown Road supports the grant for Item 3.C.2.

**There being no further public comment the hearing on this item was closed.**

**Director Sheridan** requested the addition of Item 15.A. to the Consent Calendar.

Director Spadaccini commented that Item 15.A. requires further discussion.

**4. ADOPTED – CONSENT CALENDAR.**

A. Appropriation to Special Grants Fund – Human Services

- Manchester Early Learning Center .....\$331,828.00  
for child care programs to be financed by a grant from the State Department of Social Services, and a resolution authorizing the General Manager to enter into and amend an agreement with the Department of Social Services for calendar year 2006.

B. Appropriations to Education Special Grants as follows:

1. Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Grant.....\$111,001.00  
to be financed by a grant from the State Department of Education.
2. Tech Prep Grant .....\$7,987.00  
to be financed by the Manchester Community College Tech Prep program.
3. Out-of-District Magnet School Transportation Grant.....\$46,800.00  
for the 2005-06 fiscal year to be financed by a grant from the State Department of Education.
4. Opportunities for the children of Verplanck Elementary School .....\$3,000.00  
to be funded through a contribution by the SBM Charitable Foundation.

5. Student incentives at Verplanck Elementary School .....\$500.00  
to be funded by a grant from Exxon Mobil Corporation.
  6. "Reflections on the Sea" project at Martin Elementary School .....\$1,350.00  
to be funded by a grant from the Connecticut Association for the Gifted.
  7. Bowers School Student Author Center .....\$5,000.00  
to be financed by a contribution from the Bowers School PTA.
- C. Appropriation to Special Projects as follows:
1. Police Community Relations Grant account .....\$15.00  
for community based projects and/or programs to be financed by a donation from Ben and Doris Matos which is gratefully acknowledged and accepted.
  2. Police Activities League.....\$26,957.00  
to offset the salary of the Executive Director of the Police Activities League to be financed by an Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant from the Department of Justice.
- 15C. Acceptance of donations (\$2,125.00) to the Manchester Public Library which are gratefully acknowledged and accepted.
- D. Approval of revised job descriptions for Fire Department as follows:
1. Assistant Fire Chief
  2. Battalion Chief – Operations or Support Services
  3. Fire Inspector
  4. Fire Marshal
  5. Lieutenant
- E. Approval of a newly created job description for Deputy Fire Marshal.

**Secretary Zingler moved and Director Hachey seconded the motion.**

**Nine Voted in Favor**

**RECESS.**

The Board took a brief recess at 8:53 p.m. and returned at 9:05 p.m.

**Secretary Zingler moved and Director Sheridan seconded the motion.**

**Nine Voted in Favor**

**4. REPORTS.**

**Acting General Manager O'Neil** requested Jack McCoy, Chief Information Officer come forward to provide an explanation of the wireless possibilities in Manchester. Mr. McCoy displayed a graphic footprint map of the Town of Manchester. He explained how we could cover the entire town using anchor points for a fiber optic network. Mr. McCoy reported that there are two possible ways to accomplish the task. In summary, one is to partner with a telephone company or the other case is to build it ourselves. He presented an overhead displaying what the Town will be getting involved in over the next five years, and explained how the Town is leveraging its technologies.

**Director Hachey** received clarification from Mr. McCoy that the Town's cost would be roughly \$122,500 for basic equipment and \$140,000 for labor.

**Secretary Zingler** is excited about getting Internet access to everyone and bypassing cellular

carriers.

**Director Pelletier** commented that the concept of partnering is good.

**Director Topping** stated residents in the Garth Road area might be disturbed with thoughts of a tower in their neighborhood. Mr. McCoy assured Director Topping there are no plans for this.

A. Manager's Report.

**Acting General Manager O'Neil** confirmed there was a recent rent increase at Bennet Senior Housing for January, February and March. He also commented on the feasibility of tax payment options for qualified elderly residents, the limited access at Mary Cheney Library, the frustration of processing claims from flooding in October, Mrs. Weber's tree situation, a living wage ordinance, the impact on the police department of retiring police officers, the status of the possible use of fuel cells with upcoming school projects, the problem with tape recording of the Parkade Forum, technical problems with Channel 16, and policy for use of the Hearing Room and Channel 16 facilities for public forums.

**Director Pelletier** received confirmation from Acting General Manager O'Neil that the Planning and Zoning Commission meetings would be televised. Also, she reported the road paint is worn near Olive Garden at Buckland Hills. She also noted the lack of notification to the Board of Directors regarding the Town's commitment to the Board of Education in a lawsuit. She asked who authorized the Town's involvement.

**Acting General Manager O'Neil** responded that in early October he received a request from the Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding (CCJEF) to put this item on the Board's agenda. He stated that under no circumstances would this item be put on the agenda until such a time it was deemed appropriate. It was shipped off to the Board of Education for their consideration. Chairman Howroyd also agreed that this item belonged with the Board of Education. The Town is clearly not a participant in the lawsuit.

**Director Spadaccini** asked if the Board of Education has independent standing as a plaintiff apart from the Town of Manchester. Town Attorney Darby responded that he does not know the answer. His initial reaction is that there could be independent standing.

**Director Spadaccini** suggested that important Town individuals receive ethics handbooks. Mr. Pellegrini responded there is no primer given to commission members but they are made aware of the basics through an orientation.

**Director Hachey** stated he was confused with Director Pelletier's request for clarification. The Chairman and Acting General Manager have already confirmed that the Town is not a participant in the lawsuit. Director Hachey hoped that no director on either side of the table is saying that someone committed \$10,000 to an organization.

**Acting General Manager O'Neil** announced a Policy Briefing Meeting for January 24, a Chamber of Commerce reception for the Board of Directors on January 26, and Board of Education budget workshops scheduled for January 19, January 24, February 1 and February 8.

**Acting General Manager O'Neil** reviewed the history of the Thornton property delinquencies and how the Board arrived at an agreement last month to sell the tax liens. As a result of the Board's action taken last month and the approval of that agreement, the transaction has been completed. The buyer of the tax liens has purchased all eleven properties and paid off all the past due base taxes.

**Director Hachey** stated, from the beginning, he was upset that we were not respectful to the minority system of government. We should take minority opinions and actions into consideration when we deliberate matters such as this. Acting General Manager O'Neil explained the Town and buyer were under certain time constraints. At the time, the staff felt it was a good calculated business judgment.

**Chairman Howroyd** stated the Board debated this issue for one and one-half hours last month. The Acting General Manager pointed out it's a moot issue in terms of this particular property. Going forward with future tax lien agreements is really the policy issue that is before this Board and the issue has been decided.

**Director Hachey** respectfully disagreed with Chairman Howroyd and asked to continue discussion about the mechanics of this issue.

**Town Attorney Darby** explained he was pleased with the deal when it was put together. He realized that the Town backed away from interest and penalties, but the real issue is that these taxes have been outstanding for a long, long time. The Town would not go forward with foreclosure; the properties were not clean. It was a fair deal.

**Director Sheridan** said the impression is that this decision was made without any detailed information. That is not so. A lot of homework was done, and this was the right way to go. Foreclosure was never a real possibility, and waiting it out was not a realistic possibility.

**Director Pelletier** respects the majority's decision. The vote stands as it stands.

**Director Topping** believes in the proposal; it was in the Town's best interest. He respectfully disagrees with Director Hachey's statement that we were all remiss.

**Director Spadaccini** suggested that foreclosure could have been a realistic possibility. Maybe we should amend our tax policy to state that, as a matter of course, these things will go to a public RFP if we decide to do a tax lien sale, unless such bidding is waived by the Board of Directors.

**Director Peak** said tonight's goal was to clarify some facts. The minority party disagrees with the vote taken last month. They have voiced their comments and now it's time to move on. We need to learn from our mistakes.

**B. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS BY BOARD MEMBERS REGARDING  
ITEMS ON THE AGENDA THAT MAY NEED ADDITIONAL INFORMATION  
FOR THE NEXT MEETING.**

**Vice-Chairman O'Neill** asked for additional information on New Business Item 15.F. Referring to Item 15.G., she requested Board members take another tour of the structures on the Bennet site.

**Chairman Howroyd** stated that Louise Guarnaccia is looking for direction from the Board so they can begin a preliminary design, given some of the financial constraints associated with the project.

**Director Sheridan** asked for a copy of the RFP, which identified various sites the Town would have available for installation of a pole.

**Director Zingler** requested the Town Engineer provide a report on the structural condition of the Bennet buildings.

**6. RECESS TO SECOND WEEK.**

The meeting was recessed until the January 17, 2006 second meeting of the month.

**Secretary Zingler moved and Director Topping seconded the motion to adjourn.**

**Nine Voted in Favor**

**Recess: 11:03 p.m.**

**vbp**

**APPROVE:**

**ATTEST:**

---

**Secretary, Manchester Board of Directors**