

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
April 4, 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: General Manager Shanley and Assistant Town Attorney Sullivan

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by the Mayor.

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

Eileen Sweeney, 86 Hawthorne Street appreciates the Board's intention to discuss its decision to demolish the School Street buildings at its April 11th meeting. There is a community need for these buildings.

Mary Dunne, 117 Adelaide Road spoke on the decision to demolish the buildings on School Street. She is convinced this was a decision that is not in the best interest of our Town or our children. She urged the Board to reconsider their decision.

Dotty Brindamour, 6 Morse Road asked the Board to rescind their vote on the demolition of the three Cheney buildings. The Board needs to correct this mistake before it's too late.

Sue O'Connor, GMCC stated, in a letter to the Board, the Chamber has asked the hearing on the proposed living wage ordinance be continued until accurate, objective information about its cost and benefits is presented to the public.

Terry Werkhoven, 88 Santina Drive spoke of construction signs on Hartford Road; he agreed with the Chamber that the living wage ordinance needs more accurate information from the Town; and the Bennet complex demolition is not a good move.

Bill Ogden, Branford Street circulated photos of clogged waterways. He informed the Board that he intends to file a lawsuit against the Town. We have to clean up the waterways.

Leslie Frey, 30 Florence Street said the Board made a mistake deciding to take down the three buildings at the Bennet site. There are many valid reasons to save these buildings and she urged the Board to reconsider their decision and making the right choice for Manchester.

Stephanie Knybel, 138 Bobby Lane explained it is important when the 6th grade academy opens to have fields on campus. There are problems with students passing Carter Chevrolet. An area for physical education is needed closer to the Bennet School.

Dan Novak, 142 Croft Drive spoke regarding the living wage ordinance. He asked the Board to do the right thing and kill this proposal.

Jan Johnson, 283 Timrod Road is opposed to the living wage ordinance. We have minimum wage laws; do we need more social engineering? There are economic consequences. Please vote no on the living wage ordinance.

Joe Bernard, 28 Teresa Road complained that water coming from reservoirs is eroding his property. He needs to have this problem remedied. The Town doesn't do anything to help.

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS.

- A. Approval of an ordinance establishing a living wage requirement. A copy of the proposed ordinance may be seen in the Town Clerk's office during business hours.

Director Sheridan explained there are three key components to this ordinance. It has a definition of a service contract, or a tax benefit; it has to be more than \$25,000; it has to be a contract for services, not for supplies or equipment; and it has to be a tax benefit, or an abatement, which is granted by this Board and approved by this Board. Certain tax abatements that are automatic through the State are not applicable. The second piece is a covered employer. Under this ordinance, the definition of a covered employer includes the Town of Manchester but does not include the Board of Education. There is a reason: By law this Board cannot dictate to the Board of Education how much, if at all, it is to pay individuals or persons contracted for services. The definition of a covered employer also exempts non-profits and charitable agencies in Town. It requires that the employer employ more than 25 people. The third piece is the eligible employee definition. An eligible employee is a full-time employee that works year round. If all three of these conditions apply under this proposed ordinance, if a service contract or tax benefit with a value of more than \$25,000 is held by a covered employer who has covered employees working for it, then under this ordinance that employer is required to pay a living wage, which is defined as a salary that will yield a yearly income of 115% of the federal poverty guideline as established by the Federal Government. Right now, that would yield a figure of about \$11.06 an hour. The Federal Government adjusts the poverty guideline every year, so there will be an escalation of that amount over time. If all of the conditions apply, the employer would also have an obligation to report annually to the Town wages that it pays to its employees. The Town administers this proposed ordinance and that would involve generating contract language and reporting forms that the employer would use to report wages. The Town would calculate the annual adjustments to the wage figures, the Town would gather these reports that employers prepare annually, and from that data, make an annual report to the Board of Directors which would analyze the cost of the ordinance and any benefits realized by the application of the ordinance. The Town would investigate complaints of noncompliance and, if appropriate, impose penalties. The employer must offer health coverage or pay \$3/hour in lieu of health insurance coverage.

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

John Tucci, 352 Hilliard Street commented on some of the participants taking positions on this issue who are fighting for poverty and social justice. We are driving down wages by not enforcing the border. You will cause more problems than you solve if you implement a living wage ordinance.

Mary Young, 103 Autumn Street commented on the living wage ordinance. She said this is a respectful wage to pay employees. A living wage ordinance is just the start. She said it is very important to focus on the human cost.

June Pinkin, 22 Santina Drive acknowledged Martin Luther King’s birthday. She’s been a resident for 40 years and supports the living wage ordinance. The Chamber’s cause is not just.

Tony Walters, 63 Dunlop Street supports the living wage ordinance. Morally, it is the right thing to do. As a taxpayer, he questions the Chamber’s motives on this.

Martha DeGiovanni, 215 Kennedy Road said she is pleased to see the living wage issue moving toward a vote. A recent change in the version now before them sets a low standard for health care. It requires an employee to pay up to 33% of their income toward health care, which is a change from 5% in the first proposal. We need a good health care provision.

David Dumain, 86 Tracy Drive supports the living wage ordinance. People cannot survive on Wal-Mart wages. People living in poverty compromise on a daily basis. Manchester should do what is right.

Jackie Campion, 248 Woodbridge Street works with volunteers all the time. A volunteer is worth \$18.14 an hour in Connecticut. We are asking \$11.06 an hour for employees. One of the proposals was a scholarship and that is a terrific idea. Do that in addition to the living wage.

Art Peters, 102 Downey Drive explained people working full time should not live in poverty. The Town of Manchester should set an example and pass the living wage ordinance.

John Taylor, 30 Service Street supports the living wage ordinance.

John Foley, 52 Trebbe Drive encouraged the Board to pass the living wage ordinance.

Bill Ogden, Branford Street said \$11 wouldn’t cut it; it’s a joke. Let’s look at the big picture. Why not take some funds from the Manchester Foundation for Children and give out scholarships for those who want to learn and get ahead.

Joe Bernard, 28 Teresa Road said it’s up to the Board of Directors to go to the Legislature.

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

B. Appropriation to Special Projects as follows:

1. D.A.R.E.....\$475
to be financed by a charitable donation which is gratefully acknowledged and accepted.
2. State Asset Forfeiture\$500
for continuing narcotics investigations, equipment, and/or training to be financed by proceeds from narcotics investigations.
3. Recreation Department Special Activities Fund\$2,499
for players benches at Manchester High School soccer fields to be financed by a donation from the Manchester Soccer Club which is gratefully acknowledged and accepted.
4. Historic Preservation Grant\$12,000
for historic document preservation to be financed by a grant from the Connecticut State Library and authorization for the General Manager to enter into an agreement with the Connecticut State Library.

- 5. Elderly and Disabled Demand Responsive Transportation\$53,631
Expanded Program
to be financed by a grant from the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation and authorization for the General Manager to enter into an agreement with the State of Connecticut Department of Transportation.
- 6. FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter Program.....\$3,432
to be financed by a grant from the Emergency and Shelter Program to offset costs incurred by MACC in providing service to hungry and homeless people.
- 7. Recreation Department Special Activities Fund\$1,500
to be financed by donation from SBM Charitable Foundation, Inc. to support the annual children's fishing derby which is gratefully acknowledged and accepted.

General Manager Shanley gave a brief explanation on item B.5. The State Legislature has approved additional funding for what we know as the Dial-A-Ride Program. The intent of those funds is to provide additional services for seniors and others served through this program. Diane Wicks is present to answer any questions.

Chairman Howroyd opened the floor for public comment at this time. There being no further public comment the hearing on this item was closed.

Director Sheridan recalled approving an expenditure for a new Dial-A-Ride vehicle. Were funds not available for purchase of equipment? Diane Wicks, Senior Adult and Family Service informed the Board that the new funds are strictly for operating expenses and expanded services for all Dial-A-Rides in Connecticut.

- C. Appropriation to Capital Improvement Reserve –\$25,670
Deferred Construction Projects
to be financed by payments under the Town's Sidewalk and Curb Ordinance.

General Manager Shanley explained this is the program where Manchester accepts payment in lieu of sidewalks to be applied to other sidewalks.

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

Joe Bernard, 28 Teresa Road asked why does the Town spend all this money when there are heavy trucks parking on sidewalks. Money is spent on new sidewalks that have already cracked.

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

Director Topping requested Mr. Bernard's sidewalk concerns be directed to Chief Berry.

- D. Discontinuance of the public right of way known as Perrett Place.

General Manager Shanley explained the properties around this road were purchased for the expansion of Manchester High School and will become part of the parking lot. This is the process for abandoning the road as a formal street.

Chairman Howroyd opened the floor for public comment at this time. There being no further public comment the hearing on this item was closed.

4. ADOPTED - CONSENT CALENDAR (with the addition of Item 3.D)

3B. Appropriation to Special Projects as follows:

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- 3C. Appropriation to Capital Improvement Reserve –\$25,670**
Deferred Construction Projects
to be financed by payments under the Town’s Sidewalk and Curb Ordinance.
- 3D. Discontinuance of the public right of way known as Perrett Place.**

Director Peak moved and Director Sheridan seconded the motion with the addition of item 3.D. Nine Voted in Favor

5. REPORTS.

A. Manager’s Report.

General Manager Shanley pointed out the addition of a new business item on the next agenda dealing with improvements at the schools and the need to authorize ED-049 forms.

1. Update on Mass Inoculation Drill.

Mary Roche Cronin, Director of Human Services, with Steve Caron, Public Health Emergency Response Coordinator briefly explained the highlights of the planning for this drill. This drill is part of the Public Health Preparedness Grant that the Town receives. This is a statewide drill and the Town of Manchester is conducting its own regional “POD”. Mr. Caron reported that Manchester and Glastonbury are very forward in their thinking. This drill will test our local infrastructure and our regional and state coordination.

Chairman Howroyd received confirmation from Mr. Caron that, in an actual event, we would be using the Manchester Community College.

Director Hachey, Vice-Chairman O'Neill, Director Sheridan, and Secretary Zingler received answers to questions directed to Mr. Caron.

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

Chairman Howroyd said the living wage ordinance vote would be taken next week.

Secretary Zingler reported the Health, Human and Leisure Services Committee would meet on April 10, 2006.

Director Pelletier requested the presence of Keith Epstein, Facilities Project Manager at the next Board meeting to explain state reimbursements and its impact on Manchester's budget.

Director Spadaccini asked for an update on school projects, the Board of Education's plan for the elementary schools, the CCJEF lawsuit, the authority of the State's Culture and Tourism Board, and the 6-10 million dollar figure to fix the Cheney Building.

Vice-Chairman O'Neill requested the Board receive school project updates every month as well as minutes of the Building Committee meetings.

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION.

ADOPTED - The Board went into Executive Session for discussion of real estate negotiations at 9:30 p.m. and returned at 10:00 p.m. No votes were taken.

Director Hachey moved and Director Topping seconded the motion.

Nine Voted in Favor

RECESS TO SECOND WEEK.

The meeting was recessed until the April 11, 2006 second meeting of the month.

Director Spadaccini moved and Director Hachey seconded the motion.

Nine Voted in Favor

Recess: 10:00 p.m.

vbp

APPROVE:

ATTEST:

Secretary, Manchester Board of Directors