

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
JANUARY 13, 2009 – 7:00 P.M.
LINCOLN CENTER HEARING ROOM

SECOND MEETING OF THE MONTH

PRESENT: Mayor Spadaccini, Deputy Mayor Peak, Secretary Pelletier, Directors Tweedie, Beckman, Zingler (7:11 p.m.), O'Neill, Kissmann, and Farina

ALSO: General Manager Shanley and Town Attorney Naab

7. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mayor Spadaccini.

8. AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS.

A. Resolution honoring Robbie Rickert for 14 years of service to Town programs.

Mayor Spadaccini presented Robbie Rickert with a Proclamation thanking her for her fourteen years of service and dedication to Manchester Soccer Club.

Tom Crockett, representing the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, thanked the Board of Directors for honoring Ms. Rickert. She is a leader who is well respected by the entire community and a terrific person.

Ms. Rickert thanked Mayor Spadaccini, the Board of Directors, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, her husband, her sons, Carol St. Germain, the Recreation Department, the Parks Department, and the many volunteers.

9. ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.

- A. **ADOPTED** - Minutes, November 19, 2008 – Special Meeting
- B. **ADOPTED** - Minutes, November 25, 2008 – Policy Briefing Meeting
- C. **ADOPTED** - Actions, December 2, 2008 – Regular Meeting
- D. **ADOPTED** - Minutes, December 2, 2008 – Regular Meeting
- E. **ADOPTED** - Minutes, December 3, 2008 – Special Meeting
- F. **ADOPTED** - Minutes, December 16, 2008 – Special Meeting

Secretary Pelletier moved and Director Kissmann seconded the motion.

Eight Voted in Favor
(Zingler not yet present)

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

Eric March, Jr., 52 Weaver Road, apologized for his aggressive behavior at the last Board of Directors meeting. He explained that he is trying to save the Town money and is frustrated because it seems no one is listening. Mr. March believes he can save the Town money on electricity costs, utility poles, and LED technology.

John Weedon, 142 Lamplighter Drive, spoke in favor of an Agricultural Commission. Agriculture is big business, with Hartford County Farmers pumping \$93 million into the economy in 2002 and Connecticut farmers generating \$563 million in receipts in 2007. An Agricultural Commission would be a valuable tool to provide a voice for the farmers in the area, identify potential farm land, and promote local farming.

Bonnie Schuetz, 12 Conway Road, requested more information on a recent problem with Bennet Academy's roof and Mr. Shanley answered her questions. Ms. Schuetz mentioned concerns with snowplows putting snow back into driveways after people shovel. She thinks that some programs will need to be cut in the next budget year. Ms. Schuetz asked if anything is being done with the Linden Street building the Town recently purchased.

Janet Heller, 452 Adams Street, spoke in favor of establishing an Agricultural Commission. She is a vegetable gardener and an advocate for sustainable agriculture. An Agricultural Commission could promote the two farmers markets we have in Manchester, helping local farmers thrive.

Bettylou Sandy, 38 Somerset Drive, spoke in favor of forming an Agricultural Commission. She said such a commission could coordinate efforts of many groups in Town, including additional community gardens, children's programs, teen center programs, and Heritage Day. Additionally, MACC and Foodshare could benefit from local agriculture.

Fred Lea, 176 Gardner Street, spoke in support of an Agricultural Commission. Manchester is in the process of possibly losing two more farms. Mr. Lea gave a history of farming in Manchester. He said that farm land is not just idle land. It is land that it is being farmed and it is important that this land be saved.

Aldo Enrico, 57 Bissell Street, said he thought the NRZ formed in the Spruce Street area gives the impression that the neighborhood has serious problems and labels it as a problem community. He believes turning the Spruce Street Fire House into a learning center is not in the Town's best interest and suggested keeping the children at the school and allowing them to use the cafeteria instead. Mr. Enrico realizes the Town has received \$700,000 in grants, but said that is only a portion of what it will cost to keep programming going.

Leslie Frey, 30 Florence Street, thinks the demolition of Bentley School will be regretted in the future. She supports the multi-family moratorium and thinks looking at the reuse of vacant properties is a good idea. She believes that many of the problems Manchester now faces are due to multi-family dwellings with absentee landlords. Ms. Frey spoke about problems with people putting garbage at the curb any day of the week, despite the change to Monday pickup, and also mentioned people failing to shovel their sidewalks. She hopes the Town focuses on enforcing ordinances pertaining to these issues. Ms. Frey said there is no neighborhood interest in a youth center on Spruce Street and suggested taking advantage of the two schools in the neighborhood.

11. COMMUNICATIONS.

Director Tweedie referred to a letter the entire Board received from Mary Walsh regarding two issues brought up at the Spruce Street Block Watch meeting. After a presentation and lengthy discussion, the majority present at the meeting decided against the NRZ. The Block Watch feels

that the space at the Spruce Street Fire House should remain as it is. Bennet Academy is a better and safer venue for after school activities.

Director Zingler received an e-mail from a citizen with concerns over the way the Reminder News is being delivered. It is being thrown into the street rather than delivered to the door. General Manager Shanley said the property maintenance people are in the process of addressing this complaint; he will follow up.

Mayor Spadaccini received a memorandum that says the State is allocating \$80,000 to Manchester for school heating assistance. He received a request from Doug Smith of the Hockanum Linear Park Commission. Bigelow Brook runs behind a property on Adams Street where a house was recently demolished and he is requesting that the Town purchase that piece of property. Mr. Spadaccini received an e-mail from Detective Larson requesting help and support in renaming a portion of Route 30 in memory of Captain Reeves. Referring to the letter from Mary Walsh mentioned earlier, he explained that the NRZ was an opportunity to empower the residents of the neighborhood and was proposed because the residents of the neighborhood felt they were not being listened to. It was never intended to stigmatize the neighborhood or exert any will. If the neighborhood does not want the NRZ, he will respect that decision.

Secretary Pelletier has been attending the Spruce Street Block Watch meetings and has heard the main concerns to be landlord/tenant relations, trash, upkeep of property, changing the image of the neighborhood, and even redesigning the way it is formed. Comments from Town staff have deemed redesigning the neighborhood as a very expensive proposition. This is where the NRZ came into play. She does not believe the NRZ has been used as a political pawn; Board members made sure not to attend NRZ meetings so as not to exert political pressure. Ms. Pelletier sees there is no overwhelming interest in the NRZ and will respect that.

Director Zingler referred to the letter from Mary Walsh and reviewed the timeline of discussions, meetings, and votes regarding the Spruce Street Fire House. It had unanimous support from previous members of the Board of Directors, five of whom are still sitting on the current Board. He will get a copy of a report generated in November of 2006 regarding the Spruce Street Fire House to Ms. Walsh.

Director Beckman commented that he liked the idea of the NRZ and that it was there if the neighborhood wanted it. At the one Spruce Street Block Watch meeting he did attend, it seemed as if people were cut off from speaking. He would like to get a complete opinion from residents of the area as to what would be the best use of the Fire House.

There was some further discussion among Secretary Pelletier, Deputy Mayor Peak, Directors Zingler, Beckman, and Farina about the Spruce Street Fire House and the timeline of events.

Mayor Spadaccini said he has no opposition to a Youth Center in the Spruce Street Fire House but other options are being discussed. He said the bottom line is that he doesn't want to spend \$700,000 of taxpayer money in these financial times without taxpayer consensus.

12. REPORTS.

General Manager Shanley reported that the Linden Street building has been studied for hazardous materials, materials have been removed, the roof has been replaced, the oil tank has been removed and a new one put in place, an architect has been engaged, and the project is ready to go out to bid. Mr. Shanley will try to do as much work as possible with Town staff to save money.

Mayor Spadaccini mentioned the status report Board members received from the Public Works Department. An incredible amount of construction was completed on roads and sidewalks in 2008, such as sidewalk replacements, extensions, cracksealing, extensive water and sewer work, and the Park Street Bridge.

13. PRESENTATION OF BID WAIVER REQUESTS.

There were no bid waiver requests.

14. ACTION ON ITEMS OF PUBLIC HEARING.

3D.REMOVED - Approval of an amendment to the Town of Manchester's Code of Ordinances, Chapter 79, Article II, Section 79-3 to provide that the alternate representative to the Regional Council shall be the General Manager instead of the Deputy Mayor. (A copy of the proposed amendment may be seen in the Town Clerk's office during normal business hours.)

Secretary Pelletier moved and Director O'Neill seconded the motion.

Nine Voted in Favor

15. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

A. REMOVED - Appointments to Boards and Commissions which have members with terms expiring in October and November 2008:

<u>Board/Commission</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Term Expiring</u>
Emergency Medical Svcs. Council	Vacancy (Fire Dept. representative)	November 2011

Secretary Peak moved and Deputy Mayor Peak seconded the motion.

Nine Voted in Favor

B. APPROVED - Approval of a contract for the proposed sale of 1083 Tolland Turnpike.

Secretary Pelletier moved and Director Tweedie seconded the motion.

Nine Voted in Favor

C. Discussion of current ordinance regarding payment in lieu of sidewalks and curbing.

Attorney Stephen Penny, representing Anthony Alibrio, Sr., said his client has two issues with the Town's payment in lieu of sidewalk and curbing policy. He questioned whether it is legal for

the Town to apply the exaction for curbing on a State highway and whether it is fair and appropriate for the Town to apply this exaction when a higher level of government will not allow curbing at this location. Attorney Penny described his client's position, which is that this exaction is unfair and inappropriate. He requested that the Board of Directors agree to refund his client's payment.

General Manager Shanley explained that the reason this issue is before the Board of Directors is because of the lack of clarity. The Planning and Zoning Commission referred the issue to the Board of Directors to decide if the money should be returned to Mr. Alibrio. He suggested the first question that needs to be answered is if the State is prohibiting curbing at this location. The next question is whether or not the Town of Manchester will ever put curbing at this location. He pointed out the broader implications in any decision made.

Mayor Spadaccini, Deputy Mayor Peak, Secretary Pelletier, Directors Kissmann and Beckman, General Manager Shanley, and Mr. Carlino debated this issue, taking into consideration the letter from the State of Connecticut, past practices, the intention of the ordinance, and the possibility of drainage installation. It was the consensus of the group that the ordinance needs to be reviewed.

D. APPOINTED - Appointments to citizen committee to review energy audit
(2-R, 2-D, 1-Youth):

Eric Prause (D)	505 Cat Tail Lane
Carl Stafford (D)	71 Broad Street
John Weedon (R)	142 Lamplighter Drive
Jane Czaprowski (R)	49 Academy Street
(No action taken on Youth appointment.)	

Director Farina moved and Director Beckman seconded the motion.

**Eight Voted in Favor
(Kissmann out of the room)**

RECESS.

The Board of Directors took a brief recess at 9:37 p.m. and returned at 9:48 p.m.

Director Beckman moved and Director Tweedie seconded the motion.

**Eight Voted in Favor
(Kissmann out of the room)**

16. NEW BUSINESS.

E. TABLED - Appointment of a Constable (R), with a term expiring November 2009, to fill the vacancy left by Collins D. Johnston, II.

Secretary Pelletier moved and Director Beckman seconded the motion.

Nine Voted in Favor

F. ADOPTED - Resolution regarding Reconstruction of North Main Street from Stock Place to North Street project.

General Manager Shanley stated that the project will cost a total of \$3.46 million and the local share will be \$389,100.

Deputy Mayor Peak moved and Director Kissmann seconded the motion.

**Eight Voted in Favor
Tweedie Abstained**

G. Discussion: Northwest Park Pavilion Fees.

General Manager Shanley explained that Town staff is deep into the budget process and the Recreation Department is recommending a change in fees to rent the Northwest Park Pavilion. Mr. Shanley would like approval of the Board of Directors now so anyone planning for rental of the facility in the upcoming season would be aware of the new rates.

Mr. Sprague said when the fee structure was adopted in 2002, there was discussion about keeping the fees low. This year, it has become a concern that rental fees are not covering costs. He presented a draft fee schedule to the Board of Directors for its consideration.

General Manager Shanley added that the idea of the increase of fees is to make sure that when the facility is used, the organization using it pays 100% of the costs associated with its use so the Town is not subsidizing the rental in any way.

Mr. Sprague said there are currently 11 reservations for the coming year and there were 2 inquiries today. Going forward, if approved, he would like to use the new fee structure as soon as possible.

ADOPTED - Motion to suspend the rules to allow for action on Northwest Park Pavilion Fee Schedule.

Director Farina moved and Director Kissmann seconded the motion.

Nine Voted in Favor

ADOPTED - Motion to adopt Northwest Park Pavilion Fee Schedule as presented.

Director Farina moved and Director Kissmann seconded the motion.

Nine Voted in Favor

H. Discussion: Building Reuse Committee and Strategic Plan for Case Mountain Lodge.

Director Zingler explained that in a discussion during a recent Building Reuse Committee meeting, members thought it was imperative to get feedback and direction from the Board of Directors. The Committee does not want to demolish the buildings but wants them to be used in the future. It understands there are no funds available but wants to apply for grants. Since applications for grants will take staff time, the Committee wanted to be sure of the Board's desires.

There was some discussion among Mayor Spadaccini, Deputy Mayor Peak, Secretary Pelletier, Directors Tweedie, Kissmann, and O'Neill, and General Manager Shanley about access,

handicap accessibility, the feeling of neighbors, having Cheney Tech students work on the property, hiring of a caretaker, liability, deed restrictions, and the security of the property. Mr. Shanley will look at strategies for physical barriers to deter people from entering.

ADOPTED - Motion to suspend the rules to go beyond eleven o'clock.

Director Tweedie moved and Director Farina seconded the motion.

Nine Voted in Favor

- I. Approval of Resolution establishing an Energy Improvement District in the Town of Manchester.

Deputy Mayor Peak explained that the purpose of the Resolution is to authorize the establishment of an Energy Improvement District within the municipality. There is a group of business owners in the Industrial Park interested in this opportunity. It is important to acquire tools to retain businesses thinking of relocating and to attract new businesses to Manchester. The Industrial Park experiences brown outs, which cause loss of production. An Energy Improvement District would have its own Board that could create a plan for a miniature power plant.

AMENDED - Motion to amend Item 2: Boundaries, by removing the words “be coterminous with the boundaries of the Town of Manchester.” and replacing with “include the area zoned as the Manchester Business Park, which includes properties on Sheldon Road, Utopia Road, Progress Drive, Colonial Road, Mitchell Drive, Parker Street North, Sanrico Drive, Jamie Lane, Mark Lane, Sandra Drive, Charis Road, Elvree Street, and Karen Drive.”

Director Farina thought it was premature to pass this resolution and asked what businesses approached the Board of Directors to request this District. Mr. Peak responded that three businesses from the Industrial Park came to a Board meeting and spoke during public comment. Mr. Farina thought the idea to narrow the boundaries of the District was a good one.

Director O’Neill expressed concerns over who is responsible if the companies involved in the Energy District go out of business.

Deputy Mayor Peak said that the whole intention is to make businesses less likely to leave Manchester. The Town is not committing any resources to the Energy Improvement District. The District itself would be responsible.

Director Zingler asked who would be responsible for any outstanding bonds if the District fails. Attorney Naab said he has no experience in bonding, but his impression is that if the bonds are issued by the Energy Improvement District, it would be their Board that is responsible.

Mr. Desmarais explained that there would have to be some security behind the bonds. The person funding the bond would be taking a big risk and would likely have an underwriter put together a package.

Director Zingler said the idea is growing on him but before he votes in favor he would like to see a provision for green renewable technology.

Mayor Spadaccini read the State Statute involved and it clearly states that the municipality will not assume any obligation. It is an enabling resolution.

Director Kissmann likes the concept but wondered whether this would be considered a utility. He needs more answers before he can vote on this matter.

Secretary Pelletier has heard of vacancies in the Industrial Park and one of the top concerns is the high cost of energy in the Northeast. The Town will not have any liability, it is simply voting to allow the establishment of an Energy Improvement District.

Director Beckman will support this motion. He realizes some concerns about noise and pollution have been brought up, but there are already regulations and ordinances on the books for those concerns. He likes the idea of the District and what it can do for businesses.

Mayor Spadaccini noted that the State Statute says that the Connecticut Siting Council would supersede the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Deputy Mayor Peak moved and Director Beckman seconded the motion.

**Seven Voted in Favor
O'Neill Voted in Opposition
Kissmann Abstained**

FAILED - Motion to table Item 16.I.

Director Farina moved and Director Zingler seconded the motion.

**Four Voted in Favor
Zingler, O'Neill, Kissmann, Farina
Five Voted in Opposition
Spadaccini, Peak, Pelletier, Tweedie, Beckman**

ADOPTED – Motion to adopt Item 16.I as amended.

Mayor Spadaccini said he thinks Deputy Mayor Peak explained the potential of the District well and he is glad that the scope was narrowed. This is one more aspect that can be used to market Manchester.

Director Zingler said he thinks it is a good idea, but will be voting against it because he doesn't feel he has all of the information he needs to make an informed decision.

Deputy Mayor Peak moved and Director Tweedie seconded the motion.

**Five Voted in Favor
Spadaccini, Peak, Pelletier, Tweedie, Beckman
Two Voted in Opposition - Zingler, O'Neill
Two Abstained - Kissmann, Farina**

J. Discussion: Five Year Strategic Plan on Economic Development.

Director Farina said he met with the Economic Development Commission and the Chamber of Commerce to discuss the idea of developing a five year plan and both are receptive to the idea. Mr. Farina would like to hold an economic workshop and talk about the issues. He ultimately envisions something like the Youth and Families Master Plan, getting people engaged and involved. He envisions the use of performance measures to develop tasks, set benchmarks and target data, and identify the methods of implementation. Many cities have five year plans and he passed around two examples for other Board members to review. The idea behind the five year strategic plan is to ensure the prosperity of our town by looking at the big economic picture. This would be a roadmap for the Town's future.

Secretary Pelletier said the Board recently received a comprehensive report on the Economic Development Commission's strategic plan. The Economic Development Commission recently had a workshop in which it talked about branding. It is her understanding that a strategic economic plan for the Town is the Economic Development Commission's constant charge.

Director Farina would like to charge the Economic Development Commission with developing a five year plan. It can research and formulate a way to go forward with a plan of action. Mr. Farina thinks the Town is going at it piecemeal and a strategy should be in place.

Deputy Mayor Peak thought the discussion and resulting actions from the Economic Summit were very successful. He did hear comments that the Town should have a direction and strategy. Industries that are well represented in Manchester and slated to grow are the healthcare and manufacturing sectors and that should be the focus. Mr. Peak would like to form working groups between now and the next economic summit in order to provide deliverables at the next summit.

Director Beckman said he briefly reviewed the handout and a lot of it looks like what Manchester has been working on. Helping small business has been an outward goal of the Board of Directors.

General Manager Shanley has met with Manchester Community College to discuss the small business entrepreneurial office.

Director Zingler said he thinks Director Farina is on the right path. The Town has several pieces of the puzzle in place and the strategic plan he proposed will put the pieces together in a cohesive manner. Mr. Zingler has learned from the Youth Plan that we really have to think ahead. He recommends bringing a charge to the Economic Development Commission, having them make a formal recommendation to the Board of Directors and then the Board can take it to the next level.

Director Farina believes the piecemeal approach will only get us so far. The next logical step is to create a five year strategic plan. Board members come and go, but a strategic plan will give us continuity.

Director O'Neill suggested that Mr. Farina put his thoughts on paper and the Board could review this at another time.

Mayor Spadaccini said this was a valuable discussion and he is glad all Board members are directing their energy toward Economic Development. He listed several things that were accomplished so far and wondered how we best target the limited staff resources we have. He agreed with Deputy Mayor Peak that it would be better to narrow our focus on target objects than cast a wide net. Mayor Spadaccini thinks the Economic Development Commission should be tasked with moving the Town's objectives forward.

K. Discussion: Agricultural Commission.

Director Farina thought the four speakers who spoke during public comment said it best and said it all. This is a quality of life issue. He would like to hear fellow Board members' opinions and, if favorable, he will bring a mission statement and resolution to the Board.

Deputy Mayor Peak said he was surprised at the number of people who spoke and he heard a valuable community focus on preserving farms. He believes farming has declined for reasons stronger than an Agricultural Commission can reverse and therefore does not want to charge such a commission with developing farming as an economic strategy. A commission may help existing farmers. Mr. Peak suggested charging the Conservation Commission with helping farmers.

Director O'Neill said that an Agricultural Commission goes beyond saving farms. It would encourage local and community gardening and ways to preserve farming. She asked that minutes of the meeting held at the Police Department in November or December go out in the mail log.

Director Beckman thought it was a good idea to discuss building up American industry and agriculture. At this time, it is probably not a good economic avenue but he is curious to learn more.

Director Kissmann said he is supportive of an Agricultural Commission based on the input. He thinks it will help express the positive side of what is left in Town.

Secretary Pelletier heard the speakers say things like protect and promote and giving farmers a voice. She supports the commission if individuals are volunteering.

General Manager Shanley suggested that the ability to provide Town staff to a commission is limited at this time.

Mayor Spadaccini is glad to see enthusiasm, but he also had a concern about staffing. He wondered if there has to be a formal commission and suggested letting interested parties meet at the Town Hall.

L. Endorsement of Legislative Priorities for upcoming Legislative Session.

ADOPTED - Motion to adopt the Manchester Board of Directors Legislative Priorities for the Connecticut General Assembly 2009 containing the three items so enumerated in Item 16.L, with the addition of the words in parentheses "or delay" to the first item, and furthermore adding the proposed amendments regarding hotel tax, sharing tax revenue with a regional economic development plan, and

endorsement of the New Haven-Hartford commuter rail with a proposal that it extend to Manchester.

Mayor Spadaccini moved and Director Kissmann seconded the motion.

Nine Voted in Favor

M. Creation of on-line suggestion box.

Director Tweedie said that any time or place this Board can save money, it should. If somebody has a good idea, the Board should listen. He would like input from taxpayers and employees. The ability to be anonymous is important and all suggestions should be forwarded to the Board of Directors.

General Manager Shanley said this project is almost complete and will be launched this week. There will be a place on the Town's website for input.

Director Zingler asked that word get spread through a press release and Manchester Matters.

N. Discussion: Training and FOI rules for Boards and Commissions.

Secretary Pelletier said that the Boards and Commissions need training from Town staff on an annual basis. This year the training will likely need to take place in the spring, but should continue annually in early January.

17. COMMENT AND DISCUSSION BY BOARD MEMBERS ON ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA OR OF GENERAL CONCERN.

Director Zingler mentioned an accident on Hilliard Street resulting in the death of a Manchester citizen. One of her family members has suggested guardrails be placed at the location of the accident and he requested that the Highway Division look at that stretch of the road with this suggestion in mind. Mr. Zingler mentioned the sand and salt pile available to Town residents and the fact that private contractors are raiding the pile for their private businesses. He recommended an ordinance that includes a hefty fine for violating the rule that the materials not be used by private contractors.

Attorney Naab believes that there are plenty of State Statutes currently in effect that apply to people stealing.

General Manager Shanley related the argument that people are perfectly within their rights to take from the pile because they are serving Manchester residents.

Director O'Neill related a concern from a resident about a road that cuts through to Parker Street by the church. That road was always intended to be a through road but there is a fence that the church keeps locked. With the bad weather, the only way to get up to that development is up a very steep hill. Director Kissmann said he believes that is a private drive. Director O'Neill would like to know if that should be a through street or if it is dead-ended.

Mayor Spadaccini said that it was this time last year that he received an e-mail from Congressman Larson's office with requests for funding proposals. He suggested contacting the Congressman's office.

18. ADJOURNMENT.

The meeting was adjourned until the February 3, 2009 Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors at 7:00 p.m. in the Lincoln Center Hearing Room.

Director Beckman moved and Director Farina seconded the motion.

Nine Voted in Favor

Adjourned: 1:08 a.m.

gem

APPROVED:

ATTEST:

Secretary, Manchester Board of Directors