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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

HELD:

Thursday, August 9, 2012

LOCATION:

Council Chambers  
Scranton City Hall  
340 North Washington Avenue  
Scranton, Pennsylvania

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR - OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

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CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

JANET EVANS, PRESIDENT

FRANK JOYCE, VICE-PRESIDENT  
(Not present.)

ROBERT MCGOFF

PAT ROGAN

JOHN LOSCOMBE

NANCY KRAKE, CITY CLERK

KATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

BOYD HUGHES, SOLICITOR

1 (Pledge of Allegiance recited and  
 2 moment of reflection observed.)  
 3 MS. EVANS: Roll call, please.  
 4 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.  
 5 MR. MCGOFF: Here.  
 6 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.  
 7 MR. ROGAN: Here.  
 8 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Loscombe.  
 9 MR. LOSCOMBE: Here.  
 10 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Joyce. Mrs.  
 11 Evans.  
 12 MS. EVANS: Here. Dispense with the  
 13 reading of the minutes.  
 14 MS. KRAKE: 3-A. CITY OF SCRANTON  
 15 INVESTMENT REVIEW PRESENTATION BY BNY  
 16 MELLON, ASSET MANAGEMENT RECEIVED JULY  
 17 25, 2012.  
 18 MS. EVANS: Are there any comments?  
 19 If not, received and filed.  
 20 MS. KRAKE: 3-B. AUDIT STATUS REPORT  
 21 FROM ROBERT ROSSI & CO RECEIVED AUGUST 2,  
 22 2012.  
 23 MS. EVANS: Are there any comments?  
 24 If not, received and filed.  
 25 MS. KRAKE: 3-C. TAX ASSESSOR'S

1 REPORT, HEARING DATE AUGUST 22, 2012.  
 2 MS. EVANS: Are there any comments?  
 3 If not, received and filed.  
 4 MS. KRAKE: 3-D. CHECK RECEIVED IN  
 5 THE AMOUNT OF \$10.00, WHICH IS A DONATION  
 6 FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON.  
 7 MS. EVANS: Are there any comments?  
 8 If not, received and filed.  
 9 MS. KRAKE: 3-E. THE PARKING  
 10 AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON FINANCIAL  
 11 STATEMENTS DECEMBER 31, 2011.  
 12 MS. EVANS: Are there any comments?  
 13 If not, received and filed.  
 14 Do we have any clerk's notes this  
 15 evening?  
 16 MS. KRAKE: Yes, Mrs. Evans. We got  
 17 a response from Mark Dougher, the Director  
 18 of Public Works, and he is actually  
 19 responding to various requests sent from our  
 20 office. All of he says, he is working on  
 21 these requests and that all abandoned and  
 22 condemned property in the city please refer  
 23 any questions to Licensing and Inspections  
 24 for property owners, and then he lists  
 25 several -- would you like me to read through

1 them?  
 2 MS. EVANS: Yes, please.  
 3 MS. KRAKE: 1431 North Washington  
 4 Avenue, Licensing and Inspection, zoning,  
 5 city planner, please call them in reference  
 6 to this property.  
 7 Boland Court, water problem fixed.  
 8 Working on East Elm and Electric roadway.  
 9 Wyoming and Linden is up for sale, the real  
 10 estate company will cut this grass. Olive  
 11 Street and Mineral Avenue, the grass was cut  
 12 but he is not sure, he has question marks.  
 13 Mountain Lake Road, they are working on this  
 14 week. Stop sign obviously in the process of  
 15 clean up. Stop sign at Wheeler Avenue they  
 16 will change, and thanks us for telling him  
 17 about it. Basin work at East Mountain they  
 18 are working on this problem. Prescott  
 19 Avenue and Mulberry is a state road, he has  
 20 talked to Turkey Hill about their trucks  
 21 there and he is also called PennDOT. The  
 22 Luzerne Street cleanup is done. Kane  
 23 Street, potholes done. Meadow Avenue,  
 24 potholes he says that's a state road.  
 25 Parker Street Bridge, lane sign, that's also

1 done. And the "Do Not Enter" sign on  
 2 Garfield Avenue done Ash Street he changed  
 3 the stop sign located at Ash and Adams  
 4 Avenue. And then thanks us for the  
 5 requests.  
 6 MS. EVANS: Thank you. And, you  
 7 know, that triggers my memory that I would  
 8 also like to thank acting police chief Carl  
 9 Graziano for responses he has sent to city  
 10 council regarding requests that have been  
 11 sent by citizens to each of us and he has  
 12 taken care of those situations, and so we  
 13 thank him very much for responding in  
 14 writing to our office and letting us know  
 15 that the job is being done. And, thank you,  
 16 Mrs. Krake.  
 17 MS. KRAKE: Your are welcome. Do  
 18 any council members have announcements at  
 19 this time?  
 20 MR. LOSCOMBE: I have one. There  
 21 will be a benefit for Josh Sibio on Sunday,  
 22 August 1, from 1 to 7 p.m. at St. Anthony's  
 23 Park, that's Hill and Cooney Streets in  
 24 Dunmore. There will be food, drinks,  
 25 raffles and live entertainment and the

1 tickets are a \$15 donation.  
 2 Josh Sibio of Dunmore was involved  
 3 in a terrible motorcycle accident on May 31.  
 4 He was life-flighted to Thomas Jefferson  
 5 hospital in Philadelphia and suffered severe  
 6 life-threatening injuries. This young man  
 7 will have may obstacles to overcome in the  
 8 future and his prognosis is still uncertain.  
 9 We are hopeful as being such a strong man,  
 10 only 22 years old, he will have the strength  
 11 to overcome his injuries and fully heal, but  
 12 he has a very long road in front of him.  
 13 Josh served in Afghanistan as a Marine in  
 14 2010 and 2011 so he certainly has the  
 15 strength to get through this.  
 16 Please join us to support Josh and  
 17 his family and donations of food or raffle  
 18 prizes are greatly appreciated. You can  
 19 contact Trish at 969-6062 or Carrie at  
 20 614-6475 to make any donations. Thank you  
 21 very much.  
 22 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else?  
 23 MR. MCGOFF: I just have a very  
 24 brief comment, congratulations to the  
 25 Lackawanna County and to BackCourt Hoops and

1 John Bucci for the successful Three-on-Three  
 2 basketball tournament. Members of the  
 3 council were given t-shirts by Coach Bucci  
 4 for their support of the Three-on-Three  
 5 tournament. It really was a nice event  
 6 Friday evening. A large number of people  
 7 for the basketball tournament and also for  
 8 the First Friday activities. It was really  
 9 active downtown.  
 10 Saturday afternoon a large number of  
 11 people, participants, and, unfortunately  
 12 Sunday got rained out, but all in all it was  
 13 a very, very successful tournament and  
 14 hopefully we can keep it in the streets of  
 15 Scranton for the coming years.  
 16 MS. EVANS: Yes. Thank you.  
 17 MR. MCGOFF: And, by the way, the  
 18 city team beat the county team convincingly  
 19 on Friday.  
 20 MS. EVANS: All right.  
 21 MR. LOSCOMBE: If I could just add  
 22 one thing I forgot to mention on this  
 23 benefit, for those of who are utilize  
 24 Facebook there is a Facebook page called  
 25 "Help Heal Josh Sibio."

1 MS. EVANS: Councilman Frank Joyce  
 2 is unable to attend tonight's meeting due to  
 3 the death of his beloved grandmother.  
 4 St. Joseph's Malachite Catholic  
 5 Church located at 130 North St. Francis  
 6 Cabrini Avenue in West Scranton will hold  
 7 it's annual parish picnic this Saturday,  
 8 August 11, from 4 to 11 p.m. and Sunday  
 9 August 12 from noon to 7:00 p.m. The event  
 10 features authentic Lebanese foods,  
 11 entertainment, raffle prizes and promises to  
 12 be great fun for young and old. For  
 13 additional information please call 343-6092.  
 14 The Scranton sewer authority will  
 15 conduct a public meeting on Tuesday, August  
 16 14, 2012, in the Mellow auditorium at  
 17 Lackawanna college from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
 18 The purpose of the meeting is to present and  
 19 discuss a draft of a combined sewer overflow  
 20 long-term control plan that will meet  
 21 federal and state regulatory mandates. The  
 22 public is encouraged to attend, and that's  
 23 it.  
 24 MS. KRAKE: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS'  
 25 PARTICIPATION.

1 MS. EVANS: Our first speaker  
 2 tonight is Bill Jackowitz.  
 3 MR. JACKOWITZ: Bill Jackowitz,  
 4 South Scranton resident and member of the  
 5 Taxpayers' Association, founder of the  
 6 Legion of Doom. First of all, I'd like to  
 7 offer my condolences to Frank Joyce and the  
 8 family on the passing of his grandmother.  
 9 You know, why do we need a Recovery  
 10 Plan? Really? We have -- you know, I  
 11 brought this before, this is from the old  
 12 Recovery Plan. The old Recovery Plan did  
 13 not work, we all know that. Okay? We all  
 14 know that the old Recovery Plan was violated  
 15 several times. I hope that when and if  
 16 there is a new Recovery Plan drafted I hope  
 17 it's in the Recovery Plan that the only way  
 18 any changes or a Recovery Plan can be  
 19 changed or violated would be with the  
 20 concurrence of the administration and the  
 21 city council and the residents of the City  
 22 of Scranton.  
 23 The residents need to start having  
 24 input in here because right now I personally  
 25 feel that we are not being granted an

1 opportunity. I mean, you know, I still  
2 don't agree with the meetings behind closed  
3 doors, I never will. No one will ever  
4 convince me that's the way to do city  
5 business. I feel that there is more than  
6 five intelligent people in the City of  
7 Scranton and I think the residents should  
8 get involved.

9 I think we should get the  
10 universities involved in this. They have  
11 professors over there in economics and  
12 everything else, political science, I think  
13 we should -- we need to get everybody  
14 involved because the City of Scranton is in  
15 a total mess. I've said this before, it's  
16 not a city in crisis it's a city in ruins  
17 and we really need -- we really need to get  
18 on the ball and to something about this and  
19 I think more than five or six people should  
20 be involved in this process. I think it  
21 should be more open, that is my belief and  
22 I'll stand by that until the day I die.

23 As far as the ideas, you know, maybe  
24 we need to start selling some more city  
25 assets. You know, this may sound silly, but

1 you know what, maybe we need to start  
2 selling parts of neighborhoods, maybe we  
3 need to start selling city hall, police  
4 stations, fire stations. Maybe, you know,  
5 if we need money this badly, borrowed money  
6 is not going to get out of the problem.  
7 Borrowed money is going to get us deeper and  
8 deeper and deeper into the mess because the  
9 more money you borrow the higher interest  
10 rates, the higher your debt becomes. I  
11 mean, quite honestly, our tax base is not  
12 growing, our tax base is shrinking, and we  
13 need to really look at this.

14 You know, I feel, my personal  
15 belief, the people who got us into this mess  
16 is the mayor, past city councils, the city  
17 controller, the business administrators, but  
18 yet who is the people who are trying to  
19 solve the problem? The mayor, city council,  
20 business administrator, I don't know if the  
21 city controller is involved in the meeting  
22 or not, but they are the reason why we are  
23 in the mess we are in. They are the ones  
24 that did all of the behind scene deals.

25 I guess you found out now that Paul

1 Kelly signed a promissory note that no one  
2 seems to know about. How can the city  
3 solicitor sign a promissory note? I don't  
4 think a solicitor should have that power.  
5 Maybe they do. I'm not an attorney, but, I  
6 mean, we have serious problems and the city  
7 the residents of the City of Scranton a lot  
8 of them still don't realize how serious the  
9 problem is. I don't know why they don't  
10 realize it, but they really don't, because I  
11 have people coming up to me with suggestions  
12 but their suggestions are not going to solve  
13 the problems.

14 You know, we need millions. We  
15 don't need hundredes of thousands, we need  
16 millions. And, you know, last week it was  
17 reported we need 20 million by the end of  
18 the year. Where are we going to get 20  
19 million dollars from? I mean, without  
20 borrowing it. Where else are we going to go  
21 get it from? We can't afford to borrow,  
22 that's the problem. We are painted into a  
23 box. I don't know how you are going to get  
24 out of the box. I really feel that city  
25 council is trying and they are doing their

1 best, but I think they are also being played  
2 and I think everything is going to fall and  
3 if it fails it's all going to fall on the  
4 shoulders of the city council. You guys are  
5 going to get blamed for everything.

6 And you know what, there is no way  
7 out. Because you are going to have to stand  
8 tall and accept it because they are going to  
9 say, "City council's budget, city council's  
10 Recovery Plan plan, city council's this."

11 That's the reason they want to get a  
12 Recovery Plan plan and get it signed. We  
13 need more than a Recovery Plan. We need a  
14 Recovery Plan that's going to work. We need  
15 a Recovery Plan that's going to generate  
16 revenue and get us out of this mess. We  
17 just don't need a Recovery Plan for the sake  
18 of a Recovery Plan. I'm glad I'm not in  
19 your shoes.

20 You know, again, we need to really  
21 look at how, how much can the city residents  
22 and taxpayers afford in tax increases? What  
23 can the city afford as far as services go?  
24 Can we afford the 70, 80,000 a year jobs  
25 that it sounds like people are having,

1 firefighters, police officers, so on and so  
2 forth. Do they deserve it? Yes, they do  
3 deserve it, but can we in the City of  
4 Scranton afford it? I don't think we can.  
5 I think we really need to start looking at  
6 these areas because the situation gets worse  
7 every single day. Excuse me, could I get a  
8 little bit more time?

9 MS. EVANS: Yes.

10 MR. JACKOWITZ: Every single day the  
11 situation worsens, you know. I can remember  
12 years ago people coming to this podium five,  
13 six, seven years ago and maybe Janet Evans  
14 might remember this because I think she was  
15 the only one on council at the time, but we  
16 had people coming to this council saying  
17 that Doherty debt is good debt. Do you  
18 remember those statements?

19 MS. EVANS: Yes, I do.

20 MR. JACKOWITZ: Well, if Doherty's  
21 debt is such good debt why are we in the  
22 mess we are in now? We should be happy that  
23 we have good debt. You know, there is no  
24 such thing as good debt. All debt is bad  
25 debt, especially when the taxpayers have to

1 pay for it. And the person who made that  
2 statement, I was going to mention his name  
3 but I'm not going to, he no longer lives in  
4 the City of Scranton. Now, if the debt was  
5 so good why did he leave the City of  
6 Scranton?

7 So, again, I don't know what to tell  
8 you people. I still support you, I'm not  
9 happy with a lot of your decisions, but you  
10 know what, I never will be happy with  
11 everybody's decisions all the time. I still  
12 think we need to get the public involved. I  
13 think we need to have a public meeting with  
14 the mayor, city council, state  
15 representatives and everybody else involved  
16 in this and invite the public, have it at  
17 the West Scranton High School or Scranton  
18 High School and allow the citizens to speak  
19 because I know there is a lot of people who  
20 want to speak but they don't want to come to  
21 city council meetings.

22 MS. EVANS: Thank you,  
23 Mr. Jackowitz. Andy Sbaraglia.

24 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,  
25 citizen of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians.

1 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

2 MR. SBARAGLIA: As you know we are  
3 in a quagmire. Everyone should understand  
4 you're are trying to keep the tax hike as  
5 low as you can. We all understand this. We  
6 also understand that problems seem to be  
7 popping up from every direction.

8 Now, we were told they were making  
9 payments on the medical bill for the  
10 workers, now, I heard you say this. This  
11 was done. Now all of a sudden we find out  
12 there is a \$2 million promissory note that  
13 wasn't paid for and now we are being sued.

14 Now, the question is who in the  
15 administration has the right to get out  
16 promissory notes? They are administrative.  
17 You are the only legislative body there is.  
18 When you give letters of credit out they had  
19 to come to you. They didn't just say to the  
20 administration give out letters of credit,  
21 they had to come before this body.

22 Now, all of a sudden we find out  
23 that promissory notes are being written.  
24 How many are being written? How many were  
25 written? How many more is going to show up?

1 That's your - how could you get at hand on  
2 the problems of the financial picture of the  
3 city without all of these answers and this  
4 administration is sandbagging all of these,  
5 and I don't know what Roseann knew about,  
6 the controller, would the controller know  
7 about an issue of a promissory note? I  
8 think she would. I think it had to go  
9 through her office, too, and I don't know if  
10 that why Roseann wouldn't inform you.

11 The question is the demographics of  
12 the city. We got a huge amount of the city  
13 is tax exempts. Another youth group is on  
14 retirement and the truth is maybe 40 percent  
15 of the city is -- or the whole city, and  
16 that's not good when it comes to a balance  
17 of anything it's not very good.

18 I don't know, maybe your best bet is  
19 to try to get them people in Harrisburg to  
20 push along the deal where all of the tax  
21 going to the school districts would be  
22 abolished and the sales tax would be raised  
23 and maybe the wage tax raised and then the  
24 money we are paying the school district  
25 could then be used to pay our bills. That's

1 a quick fix if you can get it done through  
 2 Harrisburg. Probably quicker than some of  
 3 the others because that bill is already in  
 4 the works and moving. If you can get that  
 5 thing passed that would end your financial  
 6 problems. You would have all of that money  
 7 that we are giving to the school district  
 8 being able to be used by the city. True,  
 9 the people in the Scranton would pay more,  
 10 but we are going to pay more anyway  
 11 regardless of what happens, but I think you  
 12 had should be down there writing them, your  
 13 legislature, your senators and telling them  
 14 to get that bill passed because that would  
 15 help you a lot instead of what we are doing  
 16 now.

17 Like I said, Mr. Rogan you are  
 18 right, some of that might not go through the  
 19 legislature. They might not pass a commuter  
 20 tax or might not pass this and might not  
 21 pass that, but this other one thing seems  
 22 like I have support, and if they have  
 23 support maybe that's your best bet, try to  
 24 get them to pass that then all of this other  
 25 problems would disappear. There would be

1 plenty of money to pay off the bills.  
 2 It's just too bad we don't have  
 3 people that if they get all of that money  
 4 are going to use it wisely, that's the only  
 5 problem. They use it wisely. Thank you.  
 6 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Our next  
 7 speaker is Ron Ellman.  
 8 MR. ELLMAN: Hello, Council.  
 9 Mrs. Janet?  
 10 MS. EVANS: Yes.  
 11 MR. ELLMAN: I ran into Dave at the  
 12 mall Tuesday, he borrowed \$5 from me, said  
 13 you would pay me back tonight.  
 14 MR. LOSCOMBE: With interest.  
 15 MS. EVANS: I'll pay you back.  
 16 MR. ELLMAN: I didn't think I was  
 17 going to get it back. You know, a couple of  
 18 weeks ago I read about Gerald Cross making  
 19 another one of his fantastic statements  
 20 about how well off Scranton is, how great of  
 21 job PEL is doing, but he completely  
 22 overlooked mentioning the nonprofits in his  
 23 statements. Not one word about the millions  
 24 of dollars they have taken off. Not one  
 25 word about the KOZ failures that the mayor

1 and Todd O'Malley infested the city with.  
 2 You know, that medical bunch  
 3 downtown they have been here eight or ten  
 4 years and they have built in Archbald.  
 5 That's your KOZ program that works and God  
 6 forbid if you blame Doherty for anything for  
 7 this man. I guess that's our tax dollars at  
 8 work, that's what we get out of Harrisburg.

9 I just wonder if there anybody out  
 10 there that really believes Mr. Doherty is  
 11 doing any kind of job, and at lunch time at  
 12 the Taurus Club they used to -- he used to  
 13 have a lot of supporters, now they seem to  
 14 be gone, you know, because you just can't  
 15 overlook what's happened to the city, like,  
 16 we are dead and we just don't know it yet.  
 17 We are not buried. This is the city that  
 18 Doherty has built. It's just full of  
 19 poverty and chaos and that's all he has  
 20 created here.

21 Again, let me remind you all of this  
 22 act from the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania,  
 23 the Purely Public Charity Act of 1985. I  
 24 brought this up once before, it's got five  
 25 prerequisites for every single nonprofit in

1 the state and there is hardly a one in town  
 2 that can fit into these. You know, like  
 3 Sister Adrian certainly does and that  
 4 Progressive Center, but just take the  
 5 Intervention Center, there is a nonprofit  
 6 they bought five pieces of property from  
 7 Rinaldi scattered all over town there and  
 8 going off the payroll. This was a crooked  
 9 financial deal and nothing else, you know?  
 10 There is -- it's gone. It's off the  
 11 payroll. You people need to again address  
 12 this. It's from the State Supreme Court,  
 13 Purely Public Charity Act of 1985.

14 You know, I don't know. I just  
 15 don't care. For the last couple of months I  
 16 bet I have talked over to 100 people and  
 17 it's so bad to see people that are losing  
 18 the dream of their life of owning a home,  
 19 and I always forget about these little guys  
 20 that were in businesses like barber shops  
 21 and all of these things that are running  
 22 into. I talk to an electrician today that  
 23 lost his business because he couldn't afford  
 24 the insurance and so forth, it just wasn't  
 25 taxes. It's just so hard on people and here

1 we are with people like Al Boscov getting  
2 everything his way and somebody that works  
3 and works and works losses their business.  
4 It's not right. And what has Al Boscov done  
5 for the city? You know, he hasn't given us  
6 any money back. It's gone. He probably  
7 beat us in Wilkes-Barre and everybody else  
8 out of all of that money.

9 This is just such poor management  
10 and here we are millions of dollars in debt  
11 over the past 25 years and it was only 25  
12 years ago all the city owed was \$1 millions.  
13 I don't know.

14 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Ellman.

15 MR. ELLMAN: You know, it's like I  
16 said, I can't afford all of these taxes and  
17 all on the house and everything else and  
18 when I make these statements here all I do  
19 is hear from one person after another the  
20 middle class and the lower people, I talked  
21 to a guy the other day they are leaving town  
22 from a little cheap apartment. They can't  
23 afford it because the rent got raised.

24 MS. EVANS: Well, thank you.

25 MR. ELLMAN: I realize you are our

1 only tool against all of this and sometimes,  
2 unlike Bill, I get frustrated and all, but I  
3 backed you people and I know you are our  
4 only tool we got against all of the graft  
5 and corruption in this administration and I  
6 thank you.

7 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

8 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you.

9 MS. EVANS: Lee Morgan.

10 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, council.

11 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

12 MR. MORGAN: I just would like to  
13 ask a question first, two questions. One,  
14 this plan was crafted with the help of  
15 council, that's a true statement, is it not?  
16 Is this a true statement that the Recovery  
17 Plan was crafted with the help of council?

18 MS. EVANS: Yes.

19 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes.

20 MR. MORGAN: It was, okay. Now, the  
21 other question I have is that when a public  
22 hearing is held and if the majority of the  
23 people who participate are in objection to  
24 the plan will council vote "no" on the plan?

25 MS. EVANS: Council will certainly

1 consider what has been said during the  
2 public hearing, the final vote will not  
3 occur that evening, but the following week.  
4 I think though it's important to also keep  
5 in mind more people reside in the city than  
6 those who will be attending the public  
7 hearing so we do have to consider everyone.  
8 So in addition to those who speak at the  
9 public hearing, I'm sure each and every one  
10 of us will also be taking a look at our  
11 e-mails, our phone calls, and taking  
12 everything, everyone's voice into  
13 consideration.

14 MR. MORGAN: But this public hearing  
15 will possibly be recorded; is that right?

16 MS. EVANS: Will it be --

17 MR. MORGAN: I mean, it will have --  
18 I believe in my own opinion that the people  
19 who appear there in public to support or not  
20 support this plan, this is a public hearing  
21 of residents and any e-mails you get that's  
22 not a public hearing, and I just think that  
23 they are two totally two distinctively  
24 different things.

25 But I would like to say that I don't

1 know if council and the administration and  
2 state government are Dr. Jekyll or  
3 Dr. Kevorkian, but in both instances the  
4 patient dies.

5 Now, I have read your Recovery Plan,  
6 not your Recovery Plan, but the Recovery  
7 Plan. I can't see any merit to this plan  
8 whatsoever. None. Because what you are  
9 doing is you are raising taxes on people who  
10 are ill prepared to pay them at a point in  
11 our country's history where unemployment is  
12 at historical highs, and my own opinion when  
13 you read about the great depression there  
14 weren't a lot of programs for then and we  
15 had SSI and SSD. Now we have a lot of  
16 things that remediate the downturn in a lot  
17 of different ways or else it would be much  
18 broader and much deeper, but when you look  
19 at this plan, I mean, I just can't see how  
20 anybody could present this plan.

21 And in my opinion I think that the  
22 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania by offering a  
23 \$2 million loan and \$200,000 grant I find  
24 that to be bribery, to be quite blunt. And  
25 the other thing I have a problem with is

1 that we have to be honest and objective as  
 2 to the merits of this plan. Many parts of  
 3 it cannot be implemented because they  
 4 require other legislation to make it  
 5 possible, but in the long and short of it  
 6 all, I mean, I just think that a Recovery  
 7 Plan has to be realistic and I think the  
 8 residents have to be able to pay it, and I  
 9 think that when you look at the average wage  
 10 of the residents in this city, regardless of  
 11 the debt, I don't think it's possible.

12 And when you read this and you talk  
 13 about sale or lease of city assets, well,  
 14 Scranton Sewer Authority or the Parking  
 15 Authority, the Sewer Authority plan was a  
 16 nightmare last time, okay? If we are going  
 17 to privatize and do privatization of DPW or  
 18 anything else to save money I don't see that  
 19 as being a logical solution to our problems  
 20 and considering that our long-term debt here  
 21 on this is \$122 million.

22 I think you really have to consider  
 23 a lot of other things that have been said in  
 24 the newspaper recently. We had five former  
 25 mayors meeting and in my opinion I don't

1 blame Mayor Doherty for all of the things  
 2 that happened here because all of the  
 3 legislation that he passed came through a  
 4 council and they all had an obligation of  
 5 oversight and to make sure they were  
 6 protecting the residents, all right? I  
 7 mean, there is just no way that this plan is  
 8 feasible.

9 More real estate transfer tax,  
 10 people can't even sell their properties and  
 11 then in this plan they are talking about how  
 12 we are being denied in the increase of value  
 13 of city properties. There is no increased  
 14 value in city properties, you can't give  
 15 them away, okay? I mean, you know, you just  
 16 take a look at all of these things that are  
 17 happening, and I have to be very blunt and  
 18 very honest, maybe it would be a blessing to  
 19 tell the state, okay, look it you, come on  
 20 in here and take it over and do whatever you  
 21 want with it because this plan isn't  
 22 workable and I'm really of the frame of mind  
 23 that if this in plan after the public  
 24 hearing that this council votes on it that  
 25 they will pass it and it's not a benefit to

1 one resident in this city. Not one.

2 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

3 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you.

4 MS. EVANS: Doug Miller.

5 MR. MILLER: Good evening, Council.  
 6 Doug Miller, Scranton.

7 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

8 MR. MILLER: I'd just like to again  
 9 continue the discussion on the Recovery Plan  
 10 and basically reiterate a lot of the  
 11 statements I made over the course of the  
 12 last several weeks. You know, last week we  
 13 heard a lot of comments regarding the  
 14 Recovery Plan, some criticism and some  
 15 positive comments, positive feedback, but  
 16 the majority of it directed towards the  
 17 council and recent weeks and the past month,  
 18 I should say, have been mostly been in the  
 19 negative and that's through the media and at  
 20 this podium and, as I stated last week, I  
 21 found the criticism to be unfair.

22 You know, as I have taken the chance  
 23 the last few days I have gone over the  
 24 Recovery Plan and I have read it and I will  
 25 say it's not a perfect plan, but I don't

1 think we ever claimed that it was a perfect  
 2 plan. No plan is perfect, but it addresses  
 3 a lot of the issues that we have both that  
 4 we face today and later on down the road.  
 5 The main issue obviously is the tax increase  
 6 and there is a lot of discussion as to  
 7 whether or not that tax increase should be  
 8 imposed, but I think it's important for the  
 9 residents of this city to understand that  
 10 this tax increase had to happen.

11 But more importantly, we need to  
 12 take a look at the fact that the mayor  
 13 wanted 78 percent tax increase and that the  
 14 fact that this council fought vigorously, as  
 15 I stated, to cut that tax increase as much  
 16 as possible to reduce the burden on the  
 17 residents of this city all that needs to be  
 18 taken into consideration. Yeah, it's easy  
 19 to come up here and say, "Oh, I would have  
 20 done this, I would have done that."

21 That's one of the things in the last  
 22 few weeks that's really frustrating  
 23 throughout this whole process is that we  
 24 have a ton of people that want to criticize,  
 25 whether it's the Scranton Times and their

1 editorials, they are good at their  
 2 editorials, where is their plan? I haven't  
 3 seen one. You know, you have Chris Kelly,  
 4 he has been writing his little articles  
 5 every Sunday sitting behind his computer.  
 6 Where are his solutions? You don't hear  
 7 them. They are going to draw their  
 8 cartoons. What's the editorial's  
 9 suggestions to solve the city's problems?  
 10 They don't have any. All the critics that  
 11 come up here every week, "Oh, you should do  
 12 this, you do that," where is your Recovery  
 13 Plan?

14 We have a ton of grandstanders. We  
 15 have a ton of Monday morning quarterbacks  
 16 but they have nothing to offer. I'm not  
 17 claiming to have all of the answers, I  
 18 certainly will never claim to have the  
 19 answers, but I do know one thing, if I'm  
 20 going to be critical of something I'm going  
 21 to come up with a suggestion, as I have done  
 22 for the past ten years that I have been  
 23 coming here, and I suggest that other people  
 24 do the same thing.

25 As I have stated, I read the plan, I

1 bet you the majority of the people haven't  
 2 and yet they are yapping their mouths making  
 3 comments and being critical yet they  
 4 probably haven't even picked it up. Well, I  
 5 have read it and I am challenging tonight  
 6 all of the critics and all the grandstanders  
 7 to come forward and a let's hear your plan  
 8 if you have all of the answers.

9 You know, I've had to go on social  
 10 media networks and defend the council over  
 11 statements that I made, and I have people  
 12 coming on, "Oh, there is no leadership,  
 13 there is no transparency. "

14 It's funny we should talk about  
 15 transparency, we find out yesterday that we  
 16 are being sued by Blue Cross and Blue Shield  
 17 for a promissory notes signed by Attorney  
 18 Paul Kelly on the city's behalf pledging  
 19 that we would make a payment in full by  
 20 January 5 of \$2 million. Well, obviously  
 21 that didn't happen, but while we want to  
 22 talk about transparency we find out that  
 23 this council was never informed that  
 24 Attorney Kelly signed off. Why wasn't that  
 25 filed. Why was that the case, do we know?

1 And then we want to come up here and  
 2 criticize the council for lack of  
 3 transparency. I mean, it's absurd.  
 4 As I said, a lot of ludicrous  
 5 statements have been made, you know, we go  
 6 onto PEL. I read PEL's letter, they had  
 7 many issues with the plan, but what I find  
 8 completely insulting is the fact that their  
 9 suggestion for all of the issues they had  
 10 was, let's take a guess? What have they  
 11 always come back with, a tax increase as  
 12 always and they are supposed to be helping  
 13 us and moving us forward? Their suggestion  
 14 for everything is a tax increase, I read the  
 15 fairly decent size letter and every issue  
 16 they have a tax increase yet again putting  
 17 the burden on the residents of this city.

18 When is it going to stop? When are  
 19 they are going to come here an advise us in  
 20 good faith to move us forward? They have  
 21 come in here and offered nothing but  
 22 unrealistic expectations, they have done  
 23 nothing positive. As we have been saying  
 24 for weeks now, the debt has increased. Our  
 25 financial situation is worsened since PEL

1 has been here. And they are going to come  
 2 and tell us how to run the city.

3 We have heard a lot about  
 4 bankruptcy. We have had speaker after  
 5 speaker come up here and talk about Chapter  
 6 5 and Chapter 9 and Chapter 11, whatever  
 7 it's been. Bankruptcy is not the solution,  
 8 as I have stated many times before. As we  
 9 have talked about, a 78 percent tax increase  
 10 that will look inviting compared to what  
 11 they are going to come in here and do. You  
 12 are talking about tax increases well over  
 13 100 percent, is that what we want?

14 So I think we come up here and we  
 15 make comments I think we need to take a look  
 16 at the whole picture and understand what's  
 17 truly in the best interest of the residents  
 18 of this city, and as I have stated before,  
 19 when we have people come up here and they  
 20 want to make comments and be critical I  
 21 think it's very important that at the same  
 22 time you have a solution yourself.

23 The commuter tax, I stated there is  
 24 some concerns that we shouldn't be punishing  
 25 people outside of the city. I don't look at

1 it that way. I look at it as we are sharing  
2 services that we, the taxpayers, pay for  
3 which is are public safety, our roads and  
4 bridges each day, and I think it's only fair  
5 that you contribute to that.

6 One last brief comment regarding the  
7 nonprofits. They have made it quite clear  
8 they are not going to contribute. It's time  
9 to hold them accountable once and for all.  
10 I know legally they don't have to give us a  
11 dime. You know, the University, the  
12 \$175,000 they give us each year, as I have  
13 stated before, it's pocket change. That's  
14 lunch money to the "U."

15 But more importantly, we need to  
16 look into the profitable businesses that are  
17 within the University such as the  
18 Chick-fil-A, Quiznos, Starbucks and anything  
19 else that's in there that hasn't been  
20 contributing to the city why aren't they and  
21 if means getting the Tax Assessor's Office  
22 involved, I know they have been reviewing  
23 some things, the county has already stated  
24 they have no interest in it, and I'm really  
25 troubled by that.

1 But the time is now to come up with  
2 solutions and I challenge the critics and  
3 grandstanders come forward and let's hear  
4 your plan. If you have all of the answers,  
5 let's hear what you have. You have been  
6 given more than ample time to come forward.  
7 This chamber is open every Thursday, let's  
8 hear what you have. Thank you.

9 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Gerard  
10 Hetman.

11 MR. HETMAN: Good evening, Council.

12 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

13 MR. HETMAN: Gerard Hetman from the  
14 Lackawanna County Department of Community  
15 Relations. Just a few housekeeping items to  
16 deal with tonight. First, the downtown  
17 drive-in summer movies series showing of  
18 Rocky that was set for 9 a.m. tonight at  
19 courthouse square has been postponed due to  
20 expected inclement weather. A makeup date  
21 will be announced in the near future.  
22 Again, this evening's showing of Rocky as  
23 part of the downtown drive-in summer movies  
24 series has been postponed due to expected  
25 inclement weather and a makeup date will be

1 announced in the near future.

2 Second, Mr. McGoff already mentioned  
3 this in his remarks, but on behalf of the  
4 Lackawanna County Commissioners, we would  
5 like to thank everyone who participated in  
6 or attended the Three-on-Three basketball  
7 tournament this past weekend in downtown  
8 Scranton, along with First Friday and all of  
9 the other downtown events, and also as  
10 Mr. McGoff said, I was there to see it take  
11 place and he lead the charge, the city team  
12 did win handsomely over of the county team  
13 so our congratulations to Mr. McGoff and  
14 everyone from the city who played, and  
15 again, to all of our participants both the  
16 celebrity games and all of the other action  
17 which take place over the weekend at all age  
18 levels and skill levels and everyone we saw  
19 who came out and enjoyed a good time in  
20 downtown Scranton.

21 Just some announcements this evening  
22 regarding several programs. First, just a  
23 remainder as to something we talked about a  
24 couple weeks back. The Lackawanna County  
25 Arts and Cultural Department will present

1 their 2013 Lackawanna County Community Arts  
2 and Culture grant workshop series the next  
3 few weeks. These take place, there is one  
4 workshop during the month of August at each  
5 of the Lackawanna County library system  
6 libraries. Artist and art organizations not  
7 currently receiving grant funding can apply  
8 for up to \$3,000 in grant funds for  
9 community arts and cultural grant projects.  
10 These workshops will cover the types of  
11 projects that are eligible for the grants  
12 and how to write the grant proposals.

13 Applications will be due October 12,  
14 2012, for art projects that will take place  
15 in the 2013 calendar year and the workshop  
16 at the Albright Memorial Library here in  
17 downtown Scranton will take place this  
18 coming Monday, August 13, from 6 p.m. to 8  
19 p.m. Again, that's this coming Monday,  
20 August 13, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the  
21 Albright Memorial Library in downtown  
22 Scranton. Please invite any artists or  
23 anyone who is interested in putting on an  
24 art program to come and take a look and  
25 explore the program for themselves.

1 Second, I would like to make an  
2 announcement that the Lackawanna Heritage  
3 Valley, National State Heritage area,  
4 regarding the upcoming heritage explorer  
5 train excursion. On Saturday, August 18,  
6 the Lackawanna County Heritage Valley  
7 National and State Heritage area will run  
8 the seventh annual heritage train from the  
9 City of Scranton to the City of Carbondale  
10 for the ethnic heritage festival. Ride the  
11 rails for an old fashioned, fun filled day  
12 for the whole family.

13 The excursion is free for children  
14 12 and under. The adults tickets are \$5 and  
15 tickets for seniors 65 years or older are  
16 \$4. Children under 16 must be accompanied  
17 by adult and all passengers, including  
18 children, must have a ticket to ride the  
19 train. Tickets are able at all Lackawanna  
20 County Library System libraries from July 12  
21 through August 17. As seating is limited,  
22 families are encouraged to obtain their  
23 tickets early. For more information about  
24 the Heritage Explorer train please contact  
25 the Lackawanna County Library System at

1 570-348-3003 that's 570-348-3003.  
2 And again, the train leaves I  
3 believe at 10:00 in the morning from  
4 Steamtown National historic site, I think it  
5 returns from Carbondale at approximately 4  
6 p.m. A nice day, it shows off and gives  
7 people exposure to different places around  
8 the country and makes for a nice family  
9 activity.

10 And later in the month, actually the  
11 month of September, Steamtown National  
12 Historic Site will host Railfest 2012 Labor  
13 Day weekend, September 1 and 2. The annual  
14 event is a celebration of railroading in the  
15 past and present and future. Various  
16 displays, programs, demonstrations and, of  
17 course, train rides on both days of the  
18 events.

19 There are a number of items listed  
20 here, I can't go over all of them due to  
21 time, but for more information on the  
22 festivities of Railfest can be obtained by  
23 contacting Steamtown 570-340-5204 from 9 a.m  
24 to 4:30 p.m. weekdays and weekends, and also  
25 their website for Steamtown is

1 www.nps.gov-stea -- excuse me,  
2 www.nps.gov/stea. That's all I have for  
3 evening. Thank you.

4 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

5 MR. HETMAN: No problem. Thank you.

6 MS. EVANS: David Dobrzyn.

7 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening. Dave  
8 Dobrzyn, resident of Scranton.

9 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

10 MR. DOBRZYN: Taxes and so forth  
11 paid. I have a message for people in the  
12 outside, I keep seeing in the newspaper  
13 editorials and so forth on how we are paying  
14 way less taxes than them, well, first of all  
15 our property values are much lower, but city  
16 life is more efficient. Less roads,  
17 bridges, water, sewer, gas lines, less  
18 infrastructure altogether per household.  
19 Less response time and distance for fire  
20 employees, less mileage on the vehicles,  
21 more concentrated taxable property. So  
22 please stop reminding me that will your  
23 \$500,000 home is taxed much higher than my  
24 \$50,000 fiasco that I own.

25 Now, for weeks and months I have

1 been talking in possible years about  
2 outsourcing the trade packs, a lot of our  
3 jobs have gone outside of the area, and  
4 people are on their way backward in wages.  
5 The average working person has lost money  
6 over the years. If you go to school, well,  
7 my wife got turned away from a job for about  
8 \$8,000 a year more because she went to  
9 school for something and they said, "Oh, you  
10 will dump this job as soon as you get a job  
11 offer there."

12 Well she wasn't getting a job offer  
13 so, you know, she was basically penalized  
14 for going to school.

15 On privatizing, every now and then  
16 somebody sees fit to dump a tire on my front  
17 law, and I have to run around and beg people  
18 to take it and pay five bucks to get rid of  
19 it. When I was up the country I had a  
20 couple with 51 bags of trash, blamed us for  
21 it, and my wife convinced the town police  
22 and the mayor that it wasn't ours and showed  
23 them the coupon book, which was about a  
24 \$1.75 a bag then and it went up to two and a  
25 quarter, the last time I paid that was in

1 2000, and that trash did not see a landfill,  
2 by the way. It got hauled out and dumped  
3 somewhere along the countryside, so be very  
4 careful.

5 And as far as the Sewer Authority is  
6 concerned, it might sound like a good idea  
7 but it's my understanding that American  
8 Anglican was milking the situation and not  
9 doing what they were supposed to do either  
10 which resulted in us receiving fines.

11 On the audit, I wonder if that --  
12 well, it probably isn't because we didn't  
13 receive the audit, that promissory note.  
14 Gee, how convenient. Once again, Mr -- and  
15 anybody in the administration, please, get  
16 the audit to these people so they don't have  
17 to sit here and listen to this every week.

18 And on these tax increases it's a  
19 matter of principles. Who gets a 100  
20 percent? Maybe Mr. Rogan did because he  
21 stopped making the pizza and he got himself  
22 a real job after he got out of college, so  
23 he got a two or 300 percent raise, you know  
24 --

25 MR. ROGAN: I still make the pizza,

1 too, Mr. Dobrzyn.

2 MR. DOBRZYN: Nobody gets 100  
3 percent raise over two or three years, so  
4 it's the principal of it and how much they  
5 go up.

6 And, okay, I have also a copy of the  
7 Pennsylvania Constitution on Section 3,  
8 religious freedom: "All men have a natural  
9 and indefeasible right to worship Almighty  
10 God according to the dictates of their own  
11 consciences; no man can of right be  
12 compelled to attend, erect or support any  
13 place of worship or to maintain any ministry  
14 against his consent; no human authority can,  
15 in any case whatever, control or interfere  
16 with the rights of conscience, and no  
17 preference shall ever be given by law to any  
18 religious establishments or modes of  
19 worship."

20 Now, keeping in mind that we have a  
21 bunch of nonprofits or tax exempts that want  
22 to stick their nose into politics constantly  
23 in the area and here we are paying taxes to  
24 keep them and not be compensated for it, so  
25 keep in mind that statement, and I think

1 it's time that they do share in the expenses  
2 of the upkeep of this city.

3 I am, in other words, I'm being  
4 required to support a ministry that I may or  
5 may not find acceptable in my own personal  
6 police. Thank you and have a good night.  
7 Bawk, bawk.

8 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Is there  
9 anyone else who cares to address council?

10 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening.  
11 Marie Schumacher, city resident and  
12 taxpayer.

13 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

14 MR. LOSCOMBE: Good evening.

15 MS. SCHUMACHER: I'd like to start  
16 with just a couple of items with the revised  
17 Recovery Plan, and first and foremost, is  
18 the revised Recovery Plan that will be  
19 discussed at the public hearing next week  
20 going to be revised or is it last week's  
21 still take it or leave it budget?

22 MS. EVANS: There are adjustments  
23 being made to it and it's on going.

24 MS. SCHUMACHER: And when will those  
25 be available to the public so we can make

1 comment on those?

2 MS. EVANS: As soon as they are  
3 complete.

4 MS. SCHUMACHER: Within at least 24  
5 hours prior to the public hearing?

6 MS. EVANS: That would be the goal,  
7 but, you know, there is -- there may be  
8 changes thereafter. I don't know. I'm  
9 hoping that all changes are complete prior  
10 to the public hearing and certainly all of  
11 that will be made available to the public.

12 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, I certainly  
13 hope so. It's going to be hard to comment  
14 on it if we haven't seen it all.

15 Next, is the sales tax that's in  
16 your revised Recovery Plan based on the  
17 Senator Blake Bill 1502?

18 MS. EVANS: I believe so.

19 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. You are  
20 aware that only 40 percent of the amount  
21 that the city would get is available for use  
22 in operating budgets, that 60 percent of it  
23 has to go to homestead and real estate  
24 taxes?

25 MS. EVANS: Yes.

1 MS. SCHUMACHER: And you still stand  
2 by that figure?

3 MS. EVANS: The figures were  
4 actually presented to us by Lackawanna  
5 County.

6 MS. SCHUMACHER: As the total that  
7 we would get or the total --

8 MS. EVANS: As the total that the  
9 City of Scranton would receive, yes.

10 MS. SCHUMACHER: But you were  
11 showing all of that as operating budget  
12 revenue; correct?

13 MS. EVANS: Yes.

14 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, again, if  
15 what we get, if you put the total in and we  
16 can only use 40 percent toward the operating  
17 budget then 60 percent of that has to come  
18 out so --

19 MR. MCGOFF: May I?

20 MS. EVANS: Okay.

21 MR. MCGOFF: There are exemptions  
22 that could increase that 40 percent or that  
23 could increase the amount beyond 40 percent.

24 MS. SCHUMACHER: That are in work  
25 because --

1 MR. MCGOFF: That were in the Bill.

2 MS. SCHUMACHER: -- the copy that  
3 Senator --

4 MR. MCGOFF: That are exemptions in  
5 the Bill that allow municipalities to  
6 increase that percentage beyond 40 percent.

7 MS. SCHUMACHER: So the taxpayers  
8 don't get any help again even though that's  
9 what was billed.

10 Now, that takes me to another point,  
11 it's a slight diversion, but several weeks  
12 ago I did ask the question on how many  
13 letters the city council has sent to our  
14 state representatives, legislators I should  
15 say, not just reps, on the elimination of --  
16 in support of the elimination of the school  
17 property tax relief bills.

18 MS. EVANS: I don't believe that  
19 council has sent any.

20 MS. SCHUMACHER: Interesting. Well,  
21 I do hope that a lot of business owners come  
22 out to next week's public hearing because I  
23 can't believe that they aren't really  
24 concerned and I hope they are not afraid to  
25 come out and speak in public.

1 Now, to other items ongoing, have  
2 the parking bills gone out yet and does  
3 council have a list of the recipients of  
4 those bills for the sales tax?

5 MS. EVANS: Mrs. Krake?

6 MS. KRAKE: Mrs. Evans, I did verify  
7 with our business administrator that,  
8 indeed, the parking bills went out several  
9 weeks ago. Someone must have given the  
10 wrong information, but they have not yet  
11 given us a list of who they were sent to.

12 MS. EVANS: I know that Councilman  
13 Joyce said he was going to look into that  
14 for you, so obviously he hasn't been able to  
15 do so within this past week, but I'm sure he  
16 can address that for you further in the  
17 future.

18 MS. SCHUMACHER: And do we have a  
19 name yet for the rental registration bills?

20 MR. MCGOFF: For, I'm sorry?

21 MS. SCHUMACHER: Rental registration  
22 bills?

23 MR. MCGOFF: I'm sorry, as far as I  
24 know the position that we asked was posted  
25 and as soon as that -- I would assume that

1 as soon as that is filled that they will  
2 send those out.

3 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay.

4 MR. MCGOFF: I'm assuming, I can  
5 check.

6 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. I appreciate  
7 that. Last year's budget had a rather large  
8 attachment showing all of the former  
9 employees that are out on workers' comp, has  
10 the city ever had a program to provide  
11 employment for those people that have  
12 qualified to do something but not the job  
13 for which they are receiving workers' comp?

14 MS. EVANS: I don't know. I think  
15 that would be probably a question for the  
16 Human Resources Office, so if you would like  
17 to address that to them I'm sure they can  
18 tell you.

19 MS. SCHUMACHER: I guess I will, and  
20 a question for Mr. McGoff.

21 MR. MCGOFF: I'm sorry?

22 MS. SCHUMACHER: A question for you.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

24 MS. SCHUMACHER: Who was the third  
25 member of the three-on-three team that

1 wasn't you, Ryan McGowan and Mark  
2 Seitzinger? The one who really sunk almost  
3 every basket he -- -

4 MR. MCGOFF: The one that made most  
5 of the -- scored most of the points, Chris  
6 Boland.

7 MS. SCHUMACHER: Who?

8 MR. MCGOFF: Chris Boland,  
9 treasurer.

10 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. Thank you  
11 very much. And now that we are considering  
12 --

13 MS. EVANS: He is tall.

14 MS. SCHUMACHER: He is more than  
15 tall, he is good. Now that we are going  
16 ahead apparently with the -- we still are  
17 going ahead with changing the classification  
18 of the city to Third Class from 2-A have we  
19 now started a process to find all that  
20 legislation that pertains only to 2-A cities  
21 so we know where we may have to make  
22 changes?

23 MS. EVANS: Actually, that's still  
24 being discussed with the administration, but  
25 right now the priority has been financing

1 for the city and the Recovery Plan  
2 deliberations.

3 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. And if  
4 assuming that you went ahead with the Third  
5 Class would that require a Home Rule  
6 Charter, a new Home Rule Charter Commission  
7 or would we stick with the one we have?

8 MS. EVANS: I don't have a definite  
9 answer to that. I don't know that anyone  
10 does, but it seems redundant to go through  
11 that process since we already have a Home  
12 Rule Charter and we had already chosen the  
13 form of the government for the City of  
14 Scranton.

15 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. Well, I  
16 would hope that we would have a new Home  
17 Rule Charter, I think there are plenty of  
18 deficiencies and not very much teeth in the  
19 one we have where it's important.

20 And then I'll conclude tonight by  
21 sharing the article I told you about a few  
22 weeks ago about the City of Vallejo, it is  
23 now a model for cities in the age of  
24 austerity.

25 MR. UNGVARSKY: Good evening, City

1 Council.

2 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

3 MR. UNGVARSKY: I'm Tom Ungvarsky.

4 MR. LOSCOMBE: Good evening.

5 MR. UNGVARSKY: In speaking with  
6 other people the question often comes up  
7 about how did we get into this mess and who  
8 is to blame. My answer is the voter. When  
9 the mayor first ran for office it was  
10 understandable that people would vote for  
11 him. By the second time he ran I'm sure  
12 there were some kind of questions about his  
13 administration, but the third time he ran  
14 people could see what was happening to the  
15 city and yet we still voted him in, and  
16 that's why I think it's the voter who is to  
17 blame.

18 I want to thank council for the good  
19 fight they are fighting, however, I wish it  
20 was done out in the open before final  
21 passage of this budget. I hope city council  
22 will hold a town hall meeting, not a caucus,  
23 but a town hall meeting with the five of  
24 you, DCED, PEL, and the mayor and if the  
25 mayor doesn't show up then we'll know who is

1 to blame. I just wish that more of these  
2 meetings that you have had with the mayor  
3 you either explain what was going on or you  
4 had them out in the open. Too much has been  
5 hidden from the people of this city and it's  
6 no wonder we can't find or we don't vote for  
7 someone who really would do a decent job and  
8 I thank you for your time.

9 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you.

10 MR. NEWCOMB: Good evening, city  
11 council.

12 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

13 MR. NEWCOMB: Before I get to what I  
14 want to say, three quick things. First and  
15 foremost, I was outside I don't know if  
16 you-- I believe you did, said something  
17 about Helen Cook? I just want to make a  
18 quick note that I knew Helen since I was 15  
19 years old, on my first job I used to bag her  
20 groceries, and this city lost a true asset  
21 this week. She gave back to people in the  
22 city for a long time and I hope she realizes  
23 how she will be missed by many people. My  
24 condolences go to Frank.

25 And we were talking last week I

1 heard somebody say about the Sewer Authority  
 2 and DPW about privatization, I have to say  
 3 in regards to the Sewer Authority, as you  
 4 know, I have been fighting since I purchased  
 5 my house in 2005, about a water issue that  
 6 has plagued our neighborhood for years, and  
 7 I hope it comes to fruition and I have faith  
 8 in Gene Skeleton that it will, but I talked  
 9 to him once if not twice a week over the  
 10 last couple of months and they have a plan  
 11 to fix the problem on Keyser Valley now that  
 12 they have -- they are able to do it with the  
 13 water, they finally own the storm runoff and  
 14 hopefully I'll be able to come back here in  
 15 a couple of months and say that the problem  
 16 is finally resolved, but the conversation I  
 17 had with him the other day it sounds like  
 18 they are going to have a company coming in  
 19 and they got an engineer and they are going  
 20 to fix the problem, so as far as that goes  
 21 with the Sewer Authority I think if we were  
 22 to go to privatization with them it would  
 23 only hurt situations like not only myself  
 24 but major problems throughout the city  
 25 because they have been very, very responsive

1 to me in helping the situation.  
 2 DPW, I don't know if they exist to  
 3 be perfectly honest with you, besides when  
 4 they pick up my trash, no due respect to the  
 5 people that work there, but as far as their  
 6 administration I really don't think they  
 7 exist.  
 8 People are coming up here and saying  
 9 the bad word in these chambers, the "B" word  
 10 bankruptcy. I hate to say it and nobody  
 11 supported this council more than me, I got  
 12 punished for it from this administration for  
 13 supporting people that sit there before me,  
 14 but what's right is right and what's wrong  
 15 is wrong and if I disagree I'm going to  
 16 disagree and move on, but I think,  
 17 unfortunately, as much as I hate to say it  
 18 and nobody hates to see it but me, but I  
 19 think inevitable this point because we are  
 20 in a hole and instead of crawling out of it  
 21 like you guys have been trying to do for the  
 22 last year and a half we just keep digging a  
 23 hole deeper and deeper and deeper.  
 24 And we owe \$2.4 million or \$2.4  
 25 million to the Blue Cross and Blue Shield,

1 we have \$300 million in debt. We have  
 2 \$700,000 that we have to pay in back pay to  
 3 the employees plus 6 percent interest, we  
 4 just keep getting deeper. I have a couple  
 5 of solutions, it's not going to solve the  
 6 city's problems at all, but it might save us  
 7 a couple of million dollars.  
 8 First foremost, sell the darn  
 9 Parking Authority, get rid of. Whatever you  
 10 get for it, take it and run with it. Get  
 11 rid of the Parking Authority. And this is  
 12 the big white elephant in this room and in  
 13 this city and nobody wants to address it,  
 14 and I have many friends in the police  
 15 department and fire department and DPW,  
 16 nobody wants to address it but I'm going to  
 17 address it, we can't afford to pay for  
 18 retired employees health care any more. We  
 19 can't do it. If you retire from the city we  
 20 should give two options, either pay 70 -- we  
 21 pay a certain amount of your health care,  
 22 but we can't afford to pay for your family's  
 23 health care any longer, because currently  
 24 right now if you retire from the City of  
 25 Scranton and you have a spouse or children

1 we pay for their health care. We can't  
 2 afford it anymore. Pay for the employee a  
 3 certain percentage and move on.  
 4 I understand that there is  
 5 contracts, let them do what they need to do,  
 6 but it has to stop. We have 600 retired  
 7 employees currently that we are paying for  
 8 health care for that don't work for the city  
 9 anymore. We have 40 retirees possibly that  
 10 could retire next year, you are going to  
 11 obviously have to replace those 40 people so  
 12 technically you got 40 people going onto the  
 13 payroll and into the retirement plan again.  
 14 You need to take a big black marker  
 15 to the budget and every single person that's  
 16 in that budget that makes more than \$50,000  
 17 a year either has to go or they have to  
 18 decrease their salary. This is something  
 19 that nobody else wants to talk about, but  
 20 it's something simple that somebody brought  
 21 up to me and I said, wow, that's a fantastic  
 22 idea. Currently we have over \$500,000 in  
 23 overtime in the DPW for last year, half a  
 24 million dollars, I'll be real quick. If you  
 25 -- I could be wrong, but if you take DPW and

1 you make two shifts out of the DPW  
 2 Department and you go from 6 to 2 and 2 to  
 3 10 that only leaves you from ten at night or  
 4 11 at night, however you want to do it,  
 5 until 5 or 6 o'clock in the morning for a  
 6 couple of hours to be able to have coverage.  
 7 It makes perfect sense to me that you would  
 8 significantly decrease the amount of  
 9 overtime when you are paying people to come  
 10 in and pave our -- plow our roads and do  
 11 everything else that's necessary to do after  
 12 2:00 in the afternoon. If you don't want to  
 13 do it, then hold privatization over their  
 14 head. Personally I think that privatizing  
 15 the DPW would hurt us because I'm the one  
 16 that has to pay per bag, but things need to  
 17 change and they need to change quick.

18 And finally, I had a couple of other  
 19 things, I'm not going to come to the public  
 20 meeting, but I got my two cents in there,  
 21 two more quick things, I believe that the  
 22 only police cars that we should have in the  
 23 city are the fire chief, the police chief  
 24 and the Department of LIPS should only be  
 25 the three city vehicles besides, of course,

1 police and DPW and fire trucks that we  
 2 should be paying for in the city.

3 I don't believe that the \$4 million  
 4 from the KOZs, I think you need to come up  
 5 with another idea because I think that's  
 6 maybe money, I really do. I can't see how  
 7 the University of Scranton and anybody else  
 8 is going to pass over anymore. I mean, I  
 9 read in the paper, which I hate to say, too,  
 10 but they basically thumbed their nose at us  
 11 and said, "We ain't giving you another  
 12 nickles," so you got \$4 million that you've  
 13 got to find somewhere else.

14 And another pet peeve of mine is  
 15 Engine 7 is West Side that's a mile and half  
 16 from my house that has been closed and  
 17 browned out on a daily basis and when I call  
 18 city hall I'm told that the firemen are on  
 19 vacation. I don't understand how firemen  
 20 are on vacation for almost two months now.  
 21 It's browned out 90 percent of the time over  
 22 the last two months because they don't have  
 23 the manpower to safely -- to put in there  
 24 and that's unacceptable for West Side. The  
 25 people in West Side should be in an uproar

1 that they don't have adequate fire  
 2 protection. It's browned out on 95 -- a 90  
 3 to 95 percent basis. That's unacceptable  
 4 and that needs to change. Maybe we  
 5 shouldn't be giving the grant money back and  
 6 be able to keep the fire stations open and  
 7 actually get something for our money. Thank  
 8 you.

9 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

10 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Jackie, you're  
 11 back.

12 MR. LOSCOMBE: Hey, Chrissy.

13 MR. SLEDENZSKI: You're back;  
 14 rights, Jack?

15 MR. LOSCOMBE: Nice shirt, Buddy.

16 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Thank you. Hello,  
 17 Janet.

18 MS. EVANS: Hi, Chris.

19 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Janet, you know  
 20 who's in the hospital, my sister. She has  
 21 impacted.

22 MS. EVANS: Oh, I'm sorry.

23 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Janet, pray for her  
 24 tonight for me, say a prayer for her Janet?  
 25 All of you say a prayer for her. I really

1 appreciate it. I really will. I really  
 2 will.

3 MR. LOSCOMBE: Okay, Chris.

4 MR. SLEDENZSKI: I want to say happy  
 5 birthday to Gary, his birthday is tomorrow,  
 6 Jack. Happy birthday, Jack.

7 MR. MCGOFF: Chrissy, come here. A  
 8 little gift for you.

9 (Mr. McGoff gives Mr. Sledzenski a  
 10 shirt.)

11 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Thank you.

12 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else who  
 13 cares to address council?

14 MS. KRAKE: 5-A. MOTIONS.

15 MS. EVANS: Mr. McGoff, do you have  
 16 any comments or motions this evening?

17 MR. MCGOFF: Yes, please. I'll try  
 18 and be brief. First on the Recovery Plan,  
 19 just a few quick comments. I think the  
 20 Recovery Plan is a positive step for the  
 21 City of Scranton. I do believe that it  
 22 takes care of four -- or there are four  
 23 things here that are important. There is  
 24 concern, creativity, compromise and  
 25 cooperation.

1 There is a concern for the  
2 taxpayers, for the property owner. A lot of  
3 time and effort was put into trying to  
4 reduce the tax proposal that was made by PEL  
5 and by the mayor and I think that the plan  
6 successfully does that.

7 There is creativity. You may look  
8 at the alternative revenue sources as maybe  
9 being too creative you may feel that, but  
10 something has to be done in order to take  
11 care of the tax percentages and so some  
12 creative means of revenue had to be found.  
13 Yes, there may not be precedent for some of  
14 them, but they are there. We need to -- we  
15 need to make them work.

16 There is compromise. It took a lot  
17 of effort on the part of the mayor and  
18 Mrs. Evans to compromise on some ideas and  
19 to come to some resolution for some of the  
20 items that were included in the Recovery  
21 Plan. I think that is a major step forward  
22 and, as I said last week, I applaud the  
23 efforts of the mayor and Mrs. Evans to do  
24 that.

25 And lastly, and I think the biggest

1 thing that we have, is cooperation. This  
2 plan can be successful if we get the  
3 cooperation of all of the parties involved.  
4 We need to have people work together to make  
5 had plan successful. I truly believe that  
6 if council and the administration work  
7 together that this plan can be a guideline  
8 for recovery and hopefully we will do that.

9 As far as the concerns of PEL, PEL's  
10 response was -- it wasn't an abject refusal  
11 or denial of the plan, I know that in the  
12 letter what they were trying to do was say  
13 that you need to seek hard revenue sources.  
14 As I mentioned last week, you know, their  
15 answer seems to be that the only hard  
16 revenue is, you know, tax increases,  
17 property tax increases.

18 At the meeting with PEL  
19 representatives this past week and I sort of  
20 voiced my displeasure with the letter and  
21 with their response, not that I necessarily  
22 disagreed with all of the letter, I thought  
23 that -- I thought that they were just being  
24 too pessimistic. Rather than looking at  
25 some of the positives that were contained in

1 the plan I believe that they just, you know,  
2 took the negatives and presented us with a  
3 letter that seemed like an ultimatum.

4 And in talking with representatives  
5 of PEL, I do believe that in discussions  
6 with PEL and with some persuasion from  
7 council and the mayor I believe that we can  
8 come to some resolution of the differences  
9 that PEL had and I think in the end we can  
10 get some agreement or get agreement from PEL  
11 and DCED for the Recovery Plan.

12 I think that what we need to do is  
13 we need to find a way to make this work  
14 rather than never giving the plan a chance.  
15 It's a plan, it's something that we have  
16 worked hard at, and let's find a way that it  
17 can be successful.

18 And lastly, I wanted to mention  
19 early, I'm sorry that I'm doing it at this  
20 point, I just wanted to mention the passing  
21 of Mrs. Nancy Smith, aunt of State  
22 Representative Ken Smith. A truly beautiful  
23 lady, you know, resident of South Scranton,  
24 she will be truly missed in the community.  
25 And that's all. Thank you.

1 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Councilman  
2 Rogan, do you have any motions or comments?

3 MR. ROGAN: Yes, thank you. I did  
4 plan on commenting much more on the Recovery  
5 Plan, but I do see that Councilman Loscombe  
6 will be making a motion to table it so I  
7 guess I will wait to see what the final plan  
8 is.

9 As you know, I do opposed the plan  
10 in it's current version, I do have many  
11 questions, but as I also said, I am willing  
12 to listen to the people, my colleagues and  
13 we'll see what comes out of what changes,  
14 for example, and what comes out of the  
15 public caucus most importantly.

16 I just want to comment on a few  
17 items that were brought up and a couple of  
18 other things. I firmly believe that, and  
19 this was brought up over the past couple of  
20 times over the last few months that a  
21 Recovery Plan should be placed in front of  
22 the voters of Scranton on a referendum  
23 ballot. It happened in the past with the  
24 last Recovery Plan, I was upset with the  
25 vote, I didn't support it, but the voters

1 voted for it. So at the end of the day, you  
2 know, regardless of whether you support it  
3 or not it went up to a vote to the full  
4 residents of the City of Scranton and it was  
5 approved. So that is the true seal of  
6 approval or disapproval for a plan, so  
7 that's something I fully support.

8 It was also mentioned, and it's  
9 somewhat on the same topic, but a Home Rule  
10 Charter Commission. Again, something I  
11 fully support. It was brought up to a vote  
12 a few years past, it was shot down. I liked  
13 it a lot what was in that plan. I believe  
14 there should be term limits for elected  
15 officials. I don't believe that we should  
16 be allowed to have a mayor who is there for  
17 three terms, four terms, and the same thing  
18 for council. I believe two full terms is  
19 more than enough. Maybe the federal  
20 government would do the same, but who knows.  
21 And again, that's something that should be  
22 put in front of the voters for a vote.

23 The idea of a town hall meeting, I  
24 fully support that as well. All five  
25 members of council, the mayor,

1 Mrs. Novembrino if she would like to attend,  
2 members of the administration, anyone. I  
3 know, and I fully support the meetings being  
4 on TV, but I know a lot of people are afraid  
5 to come to city council because of it being  
6 on TV, you know, a lot of the e-mails that I  
7 get and I'm sure it's the same for my  
8 colleagues say, you know, I would love to  
9 come to a council meeting, but, you know, I  
10 don't want to be stopped in the grocery  
11 store, but at a town hall meeting maybe at  
12 West Scranton High School or Scranton High  
13 School I think that's a great idea.

14 Next, again, I was very upset to  
15 learn from the newspaper again about  
16 Attorney Kelly signing a promissory note  
17 without knowledge from -- without the  
18 elected officials been given any notice on  
19 it. Obviously the city has to pay its  
20 bills. There is no question that we have to  
21 pay what we owe to Blue Cross, but I don't  
22 know understand where, you know, an  
23 appointed official has the authority to sign  
24 off on that type of note. I may be wrong,  
25 but I do believe that that's something that

1 should be left to the elected officials, and  
2 if it is signed off on by a solicitor the  
3 elected officials should at least know about  
4 at the very least. So I hope that more  
5 information comes to light on that. You  
6 know, we'll see how that plays out.

7 Two other things that were  
8 mentioned, one is an employment plan for  
9 workers' comp employees. It seems to make a  
10 lot of sense to me. You know, for instance,  
11 if you were in, you know, a manual labor job  
12 and you were hurt maybe you can't return to  
13 a manual labor job, but you can do another  
14 job in the same department, maybe of the  
15 clerical nature, and I know Mr. McGoff  
16 mentioned union issues with that, but do  
17 think it's something that should be looked  
18 at instead of paying workers' comp, get them  
19 back to work. I think that's a great idea.

20 Finally, and this is I know  
21 Mr. Lewis has been coming to council and  
22 bringing up bankruptcy every week and a few  
23 other people have mentioned it and before I  
24 elaborate on this I do not support  
25 bankruptcy as of right now, but I do think

1 it's something that council needs to  
2 educated on. I'll be the first to admit,  
3 and it's a very complex proceeding, I do not  
4 know much about a municipal bankruptcy. I  
5 don't know if many of us do. It's a rare  
6 occurrence, it's becoming more frequent,  
7 unfortunately, across the country, but I do  
8 think it's something we need to be educated  
9 on. Hopefully it never comes to that, but  
10 we need to know what would happen.

11 And what I -- the one thing I did, I  
12 didn't read the whole article because  
13 Mrs. Schumacher did just give it to us, but  
14 the one thing I did notice was this town  
15 did, their credit rating dropped, obviously,  
16 after the bankruptcy filing, but they paid  
17 only five cents for every dollar it owned to  
18 bond holders, which I think can be a very  
19 big benefit.

20 Now, do the benefits outweigh the  
21 costs? I don't know. I would hope that in  
22 the future we can have a caucus, I know  
23 there was one scheduled, it was cancelled,  
24 just to discuss what would happen and in the  
25 event that there was a bankruptcy. I'm not

1 saying I support it, because at this point I  
 2 absolutely don't. I think we can get out of  
 3 our problems through the elected officials  
 4 listening to residents and different people  
 5 in the community.  
 6 And one final comment on the  
 7 Recovery Plan and, like I said, I'll hold--  
 8 since it's being tabled I'd hold my  
 9 comments. As far as PEL is concerned, and I  
 10 don't support the plan, but I don't think  
 11 that the city whether you support or oppose  
 12 it should ever be held hostage by a group of  
 13 the Pennsylvania Economy League or has  
 14 absolutely no stake in what happens to the  
 15 City of Scranton. If Scranton succeeds or  
 16 Scranton fails it doesn't matter with PEL.  
 17 Actually, they probably want the city to  
 18 remain in a distressed status because that's  
 19 what is paying their paychecks at the end of  
 20 the day. If Scranton were to get out of  
 21 distressed status they would be gone and  
 22 they wouldn't being get paid by the state  
 23 taxpayers anymore. So, although, I do  
 24 oppose the plan in its current form I don't  
 25 think that what PEL says should really have

1 much bearing on the debate.  
 2 And that is all I have to say for  
 3 now. Maybe some comments on the items as  
 4 they come up for a vote. That's it for now.  
 5 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Councilman  
 6 Loscombe, do you have any motions or  
 7 comments this evening?  
 8 MR. ROGAN: Mrs. Evans, I apologize,  
 9 I do have one more thing.  
 10 MS. EVANS: Go ahead.  
 11 MR. ROGAN: I was contacted by a few  
 12 police officers and residents who have once  
 13 again brought up the condition of the police  
 14 cars in the city. I know that I believe  
 15 Mr. Loscombe and Mrs. Evans did visit DPW  
 16 and I'm glad Mr. Dougher finally took the  
 17 time to reply to some of our letters. So,  
 18 Mrs. Krake, could we please send one asking  
 19 what the hold up is again on repairing the  
 20 police vehicles whether it's a monetary  
 21 issue and they can't afford to purchase the  
 22 parts or if other projects are being done  
 23 first.  
 24 And I heard a story from a resident  
 25 that one of our police officers was driving

1 around the city and he smelled smoke in his  
 2 car so the first thing you think is where is  
 3 the fire, being a good police officer  
 4 looking around no fire. Keeps driving  
 5 around smells smoke, still no fire. Next  
 6 thing you know the vehicle catches on fire.  
 7 So when our police officers can't even  
 8 travel in the community to fight crime, you  
 9 know, that's defeating the whole purpose of  
 10 having a police officer. You could have  
 11 10,000 police officers in the city but if  
 12 they don't have a vehicle to get place to  
 13 place they are going to be ineffective. So  
 14 I hope that the DPW will make it a top  
 15 priority before anything else of getting  
 16 police cars repaired and back on the streets  
 17 to fight crime. And that's is all for this  
 18 time. Thank you.  
 19 MS. EVANS: Thank you. And,  
 20 Councilman Loscombe, I'll call on you now,  
 21 but first I'll ask you if you concur with my  
 22 memory of our visit to the DPW and  
 23 Mr. Dougher. Mr. Dougher said that police  
 24 cars were a number one on the priority list  
 25 in terms of repairs because I know we did

1 question him about that.  
 2 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes.  
 3 MS. EVANS: Is that correct?  
 4 MR. LOSCOMBE: I believe at that  
 5 time they were waiting for cages for some of  
 6 the cars, that's why they were delayed, but,  
 7 yes. He said that's, you know, because of  
 8 the nature of the vehicle it's first  
 9 priority.  
 10 MR. ROGAN: Hope that isn't how fast  
 11 they move on their top priority because --  
 12 MR. LOSCOMBE: Just to second that,  
 13 I know in the past couple of weeks I know we  
 14 passed legislation, Chief Duffy had  
 15 initiated it and acting chief Graziano was  
 16 continuing to follow-up on additional  
 17 innovative ways to get some new vehicles.  
 18 They had one donated, they have got some  
 19 grants for two others and they were working  
 20 -- supposed to be a vehicle that was  
 21 donated, we don't have the legislation yet,  
 22 but it's more or less like an all-terrain  
 23 vehicle for East Mountain rescues and stuff  
 24 like that and West Mountain where they would  
 25 have to go off road which would be a

1 benefit, too.

2 So I know they are actively working  
3 on a new -- but, as Mr. Rogan said, we have  
4 to take care of these existing, also, so I  
5 will follow-up on that. I appreciate that.

6 MR. ROGAN: Great.

7 MR. LOSCOMBE: Next, I would --  
8 maybe I better wait for Mr. McGoff to come  
9 back for the motion?

10 MS. EVANS: Yes.

11 MR. LOSCOMBE: I'm going to  
12 elaborate-- I'm not going to elaborate on  
13 the Recovery Plan tonight, a lot has been  
14 said about. I want to wait for the public  
15 hearing. I do concur and I think we all do  
16 a think a town hall meeting would fantastic.  
17 I mean, it would have to be done previous to  
18 August 23 when we have to pass this, but,  
19 you know, to have everyone's input. I know  
20 a lot of people have ideas.

21 They say there is things in our plan  
22 that aren't workable or whatever, but I  
23 think Mr. McGoff explained that pretty well.  
24 You know, do you take the big bite, do you  
25 pay 80 percent taxes and God knows what else

1 or do you work, as we did, with  
2 compromising, Mrs. Evans and Mr. Joyce along  
3 with the mayor, to reduce the tax bite and  
4 come up with some other revenue sources?

5 They could say they're pie in the  
6 sky or whatever, and the unfortunate thing  
7 is a lot of these sources were presented two  
8 and a half years ago. If they were  
9 implemented then we would be much farther  
10 ahead in the game. Now, we are against the  
11 wall and the administration realizes that  
12 and are willing to pursue them.

13 But, again, if they had acted on it  
14 two and a half years ago it would have  
15 helped us immensely, but these are ideas.  
16 There is no easy way. There is no perfect  
17 plan, it's been said by everyone. I don't  
18 care who comes in here. You know,  
19 bankruptcy, again, is a last option in my  
20 mind. You know, I mean, I look at it  
21 personally, I have financial problems  
22 personally. I don't want to go bankrupt, I  
23 owe those debts. I want to try and work  
24 them out with the people I owe them to. I'm  
25 not going to pass them off. I brought those

1 debts on myself, I want to pay them.

2 We didn't bring the debts on, but  
3 it's been done through previous  
4 administration and council and that would be  
5 a last resort if we have no way out. Again,  
6 it's an option that, you know, I'm sure we  
7 are all studying and we would like to know  
8 more on, but we have been given a time line  
9 and a deadline that doesn't give us a lot of  
10 time to, you know, research everything.

11 Unfortunately, that's not the only  
12 thing all five of us here do. We don't have  
13 a desk job downstairs Monday to Friday from  
14 9 to 5. Most everyone here has to survive  
15 by doing a full-time job, so it is a little  
16 more difficult and we try to get back to our  
17 constituents and we try to get the answers  
18 and we try to -- you know, it's hurtful when  
19 you read letters and editorials or whatever,  
20 especially people from out of town they have  
21 all of the answers, too, for us, you know,  
22 that's why they live out of town, there is  
23 no easy answer. It's taken many years to  
24 get to this point and it's got going to  
25 change tomorrow. There is going to be pain

1 for everybody. Do I like to see the  
2 out-of-town people pay? No, I don't. But  
3 if they could help us out for awhile perhaps  
4 if some of the major employers and  
5 nonprofits in this city contributed their  
6 fair share we wouldn't have to go after the  
7 out of towners. They employ a lot of out of  
8 town people. If they paid their share then  
9 their employees wouldn't have to be asked.

10 And, you know, it's ashame the  
11 comments they make and to sit back and watch  
12 this city wallow the way we are right now  
13 and to sit back real cocky and say, "We give  
14 in-kind services, we do this, we do that."

15 You know, I don't know how they  
16 could sell their students and other states  
17 and out of town in coming to Scranton to be  
18 students in their colleges, you know,  
19 because it's all over the news, it's all  
20 over the nation. You think they would want  
21 to help improve the appearance of their city  
22 to help draw more students in for  
23 themselves, but they don't and the time has  
24 come and the mayor has committed to going  
25 after them and we'll go after them.

1 You know it's ashame that we may  
2 have to embarrass them into contributing a  
3 little bit to us, but it's worked in other  
4 cities. It's worked in Pittsburgh, it's  
5 worked in Rhode Island, and again, I know  
6 there is representatives throughout the  
7 state that are working on a state level  
8 because we are not the only municipalities  
9 in this spot to come up with more teeth to  
10 get the nonprofits.

11 And again, Mr. Ellman brought up the  
12 1985 Public Charity Act, we have already  
13 gone over that. You know, we have been  
14 utilizing that but, you know, it's on county  
15 level we have to work with to get some of  
16 this stuff through, through the county  
17 assessor's office. You know, there is so  
18 many hoops we have to jump through, so many  
19 ropes we have to jump over, everybody sits  
20 back and thinks that you can just do this,  
21 do this and do this, and there is some  
22 nights I sit home scratching my head saying,  
23 boy, if only they knew. If they only knew  
24 what goes on between Thursday and the next  
25 Thursday with the meetings with

1 representatives and meeting our  
2 constituents. I mean, we all get phone  
3 calls, we all get e-mails, we all get  
4 stopped in the stores and restaurants and we  
5 appreciate that because that's how we find  
6 out a lot of what's going on out there that  
7 we are not, you know, accessible to.

8 But you know what it's like trying  
9 to get information from this building,  
10 trying to get cooperation from this  
11 building. It's nice to see we are having  
12 some cooperation now, but what really kicks  
13 you back is when you find out things like a  
14 promissory note you knew nothing about,  
15 different things like are what are keep  
16 kicking us back. We are two steps ahead and  
17 one step back -- or it should be one step  
18 forward two steps back basically is what's  
19 happening.

20 But, you know, the Recovery Plan,  
21 and again, you know, there has been -- we  
22 are having open meetings, but there has been  
23 mention about it being put on a referendum.  
24 I'll tell you right now, it would be voted  
25 down flat no matter whose plan it was. As

1 long as there is a 1 percent increase in  
2 taxes nobody would vote for it. The only  
3 reason they voted for that last one on the  
4 referendum was because there was a promise  
5 of no tax increase and guess what happened?  
6 After it was approved we had a 26 percent  
7 tax increase. I would love to see it voted  
8 that way, but I know, we hear it every day,  
9 "My taxes are going up, I can't afford it.  
10 My taxes are going up."

11 It's the truth. There is a lot of,  
12 you know, tough times out there, but I think  
13 to put that on a referendum with even a 1  
14 percent tax increase it would be shot down  
15 just knowing the mindset, and that's  
16 unfortunate, but that's where we are at.  
17 That's my feeling anyway. I mean, I would  
18 love everybody to have a vote on it, but I  
19 think that's why we were elected to make  
20 those decisions, you know? You can chastise  
21 us or whatever, we all have independent  
22 minds. You know, a lot of times we vote  
23 together, sometimes we don't, we have  
24 different philosophies on different things,  
25 but we all get along in the long run. We

1 all work together here. We are all working  
2 for you. Every one of us. No two people  
3 are the same.

4 But, you know, when it comes down to  
5 the taxpayers and what we need for this city  
6 I think we are all in-sync and we are all  
7 working for the same thing. And I wasn't  
8 going to elaborate on the Recovery Plan,  
9 sorry about that. I get off on a tangent.

10 I just have one more issue to bring  
11 up and that has been at me and I think  
12 Mr. Newcomb mentioned earlier about Engine  
13 7. And, you know, the fire chief and stuff,  
14 he just mentioned numbers and people in the  
15 neighborhoods don't realize, Engine 7 is the  
16 fire engine on Luzerne Street in West  
17 Scranton. As Mr. Newcomb stated, it is  
18 closed 95 percent of the time. I think in  
19 the last 36 days it was closed 33 days.  
20 That covers quite a bit of ground. That  
21 covers the whole west mountain where there  
22 are no fire hydrants or anything. That's a  
23 the first response company for Mt. Dewey  
24 area, Ransom Township off of Division Street  
25 or over off the top of Sekol Avenue past the

1 WWDL. That's the first responding company  
2 for those areas and it's amazing because  
3 there are many fires in those areas that  
4 Scranton was able to stop before the  
5 companies came over the mountain from Clarks  
6 Summit and Newton ransom.

7 But there was a fire again last  
8 week, I believe it was on Dewey Avenue, and  
9 Engine 7 was closed and the damage probably  
10 could have been considerably less. We are  
11 seeing more and more and more fire damage.

12 Engine 15 up in Petersburg closed  
13 for how long now, a couple of years. There  
14 wasn't one voice of uprising over that, but  
15 you know what, when one of those big houses  
16 in the Hill goes up and three or four more  
17 continue down the road you are going to hear  
18 it. Where were they when it was closed?  
19 Everybody thinks it will never happen to  
20 them. Why don't you call somebody that  
21 experienced a fire in their house, they  
22 never thought it would happen to them  
23 either. The unfortunate thing is with all  
24 of these closings it's going to happen and  
25 it's going to happen bad. It's inevitable.

1 These stations that have been closed,  
2 browned out without any kind of workable  
3 plan, no plan whatsoever. Like I said  
4 before, I think they used the dart board  
5 method. Let's close this one, let's close  
6 this one.

7 Fortunately, when Engine 10 was  
8 closed most of the time the neighbors, who  
9 are proud of their neighborhood up there and  
10 rightfully so, got up in arms and then the  
11 administration decided to keep Engine 10  
12 open, but that's a false hope for the people  
13 on East Mountain because now with all of  
14 these other stations closed Engine 10 is off  
15 the mountain most of the time. It's not  
16 there to protect them. They may see it  
17 parked there once in awhile, but if there is  
18 a fire downtown, boom, Engine 10 is there.  
19 If there is a fire in South Side Engine 10  
20 is there. If there is a West Side Engine 10  
21 is gone, so it's gone out of there more than  
22 it's in there.

23 Engine 2 in South Side, you know,  
24 that's stays maintained. Engine 4 right  
25 here on Mulberry Street with all of the high

1 rises, closed most of the time. There is a  
2 truck company active in there and the  
3 assistant chief. Over on West Side on  
4 Engine 8 is closed a lot or Engine 9. Truck  
5 4 is closed. Engine 9 is closed  
6 permanently, so that sometimes they move  
7 Engine 8 over when Engine 7 is closed. They  
8 move Engine 8 from North Scranton over to  
9 North Main Avenue leaving all of the north  
10 end to the Dickson City line and up the  
11 Morgan Highway uncovered. If there is a  
12 fire downtown there is nobody on the west  
13 side.

14 It's a disaster waiting to happen  
15 and everyone has sat back and not made a  
16 peep about it, but God forbid when something  
17 happens it's going to happen and it's going  
18 to be bad and then it's going to be too  
19 late. The administration gave back \$3 1/2  
20 million. You know, I don't know who makes  
21 the decisions. I mean, we have chiefs in  
22 departments, we have the administration, but  
23 we had on the police department last year,  
24 all they needed were two police officers and  
25 they would have had 13 more that were paid

1 by COM-D patrolling our streets, because  
2 they didn't have those two they lost that  
3 COM-D funding for the 14, so we would have  
4 been paying for two and had 15 COM-D  
5 officers on the street. Then the Supreme  
6 Court ruling came, they had to bring back  
7 six police officers. We are paying for six  
8 to have six where we would have been paying  
9 for two to have 15.

10 Somebody is not paying attention.  
11 Now with this SAFER grant giving back this  
12 \$3 1/2 million, the firefighters wrote that  
13 grant, they knew what was required, but  
14 somebody in the top obviously didn't pay  
15 attention because the federal regulations  
16 with that SAFER grant is that each piece of  
17 equipment in the city had to be covered with  
18 four people on a piece of equipment, so we  
19 are back to where we were before. If we had  
20 that SAFER grant everything would be opened,  
21 so we got that grant and we are no better  
22 than we were before because we are mandated  
23 to have four men on a piece of equipment.

24 Somebody didn't to their homework in  
25 the administration and it's going to cost

1 somebody. It's going to cost public safety  
2 personnel or people in this city and I'm  
3 just -- I can't understand the apathy of the  
4 people who have just sat back and let their  
5 neighborhoods be vacated because they think  
6 it will never happen to them, but when it  
7 does happen to them and they are waiting ten  
8 minutes for that company with the water to  
9 arrive a their property then I bet they are  
10 not too happy.

11 You know, you can read in the paper,  
12 oh, the first company was on scene within  
13 two minutes, I have stated this many times  
14 before, there is not going to be any water  
15 on that fire until the engine company gest  
16 there. You could have Rescue 1 there on  
17 scene and you could have a truck company on  
18 a scene, but the truck company could throw  
19 these ladders up and start ventilating, they  
20 have a little bit of water, by the time they  
21 have to lift the ladders to get the hose out  
22 of bed, a waste of time. I said, it's a  
23 pattern, the way it always worked was the  
24 engine company would pull up in front of the  
25 house, the next engine would take a hydrant,

1 if there is only one they would pull the  
2 hose to their own hydrant. They would start  
3 the water immediately on the fire. In the  
4 mean time, if anyone was in there to be  
5 rescued.

6 You know, the fire gear that a  
7 firemen wear isn't fire proof, neither is  
8 their skin. They can't go in that house,  
9 although, many of them will and have without  
10 water being there because they need that  
11 protection. Somebody has to start knocking  
12 down the fire while they are getting the  
13 place evacuated, checking the structure for  
14 people, and the ladders companies are  
15 getting up and getting the roof ventilated  
16 and getting ladders up in case there is  
17 rescues from above, it's a whole pattern.  
18 It takes those three pieces of equipment and  
19 if that engine company with all of the water  
20 takes another ten minutes to get from that  
21 station over, it's deadly. It is deadly.

22 And, you know, I hate to say I'm  
23 going to predict something, but it's  
24 inevitable. You know, the city has had good  
25 response times for many years with the

1 stations they have had and the equipment  
2 they had, they reduced the department under  
3 the first Recovery Plan by 50 men. At one  
4 time the city fire department had 250. In  
5 1983, '82, '83, they reduced it to 200.  
6 Under the first Recovery Plan, I believe it  
7 was, they reduced it to 150 men. Now we are  
8 down to 130. We are 20 short. With 150 men  
9 everything worked. That's why the  
10 firefighters won the 150, they know it will  
11 work and with the four pieces and four men  
12 on a piece mandated by SAFER everything  
13 would be covered, but it's not.

14 We are no matter better today than  
15 we are before we got that SAFER grant. All  
16 they did was take that money, throw some  
17 away, and we are no better, and that's the  
18 truth and it's very disappointing, but I  
19 don't know. I mean, if anybody is  
20 interested or worried they should call the  
21 mayor's office. He is the one that made the  
22 decision. He has management rights.  
23 Council don't. Council didn't make the  
24 decision. We had no say in that. We had no  
25 say in returning the SAFER grant. That was

1 done unilaterally.

2 Now, we had some cooperation going  
3 with the mayor, I just wish he would have  
4 cooperated with us on that aspect. Your tax  
5 dollars pay for your safety, your garbage  
6 pickup, police and fire safety, and to be  
7 able to speak to someone when you come to  
8 city hall with an issue. That's what your  
9 city tax dollars are paying for, and that's  
10 what they should be working for and, you  
11 know, it's unfortunate but that's where we  
12 are at this point.

13 But, I'm sorry, we had another fire  
14 the other day or last week also on Penn  
15 Avenue, a long response time for a company  
16 to get there and the men actually -- if they  
17 had water on a scene they would have knocked  
18 it down. Instead, it got out of control and  
19 I understand that there were many animals in  
20 that house. One of the fire -- after they  
21 were evacuated one of the firefighters heard  
22 something squealing. They believed it was a  
23 child or something in the house. They went  
24 in, pulled out a pig, and it was -- the skin  
25 was falling of the pig, that's how bad it

1 was when they got it out of there so they  
 2 had to put it to sleep, but that's the kind  
 3 of dedication they have. They don't care if  
 4 it's -- there was snakes, fish, anything  
 5 they can get out of the house alive they  
 6 will do it, but when they heard the pig  
 7 squealing, believe it or not, it sounded  
 8 like a child or something, but that's what  
 9 they do. And they are doing it for you, but  
 10 without the right tools it's like sending  
 11 our soldiers into battle with no Humvees and  
 12 no bullets. It's ashamed. And that's all I  
 13 have to say. Thank you.

14 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Loscombe, are you  
 15 going to make the motion?

16 MR. LOSCOMBE: Oh, yes. I forget.  
 17 Thank you. I would ask my colleagues on  
 18 council to consider tabling 6-A, the  
 19 Recovery Plan ordinance, due to the absence  
 20 of the Finance Chair Frank Joyce, and the  
 21 rescheduling of the public hearing to next  
 22 Thursday, August 16, at 5:30. Council would  
 23 like to hear the public input and have time  
 24 to consider it before a final vote is taken.

25 Next week the Recovery Plan

1 ordinance will be in Sixth Order and the  
 2 following week's meeting August 23, will be  
 3 the final vote.

4 MR. ROGAN: Second.

5 MS. EVANS: On the question?

6 MR. ROGAN: Yes, I would just like  
 7 to reiterate, I do oppose the plan in the  
 8 current version. I hope this will give time  
 9 for the changes to be made. And, also, as  
 10 our Councilman Loscombe mentioned, our  
 11 Finance Chair can be here when we hold the  
 12 public caucus.

13 MS. EVANS: All those in favor  
 14 signify by saying aye.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

16 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

17 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

18 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
 19 have it and so moved. And is there  
 20 anything, Councilman Loscombe?

21 MR. LOSCOMBE: I believe that's it.  
 22 Thank you.

23 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Good  
 24 evening. As was just mentioned, a public  
 25 hearing for the revised Recovery Plan has

1 been postponed to Thursday, August 16, at  
 2 5:30 p.m. In addition, we hope to table the  
 3 plan in Sixth Order tonight and place it  
 4 back on the table into Sixth Order at next  
 5 week's council meeting following the public  
 6 hearing.

7 Adjustments to the plan are  
 8 occurring, such as the addition of \$1  
 9 million in permit revenue to be received in  
 10 2013 from Geisinger Community Medical Center  
 11 construction project. However, the absence  
 12 of our Finance Chair slowed the process  
 13 slightly and temporarily. The attendance of  
 14 the Finance Chair is essential at the public  
 15 hearing and as soon as adjustments to the  
 16 plan are complete, Councilman Joyce will  
 17 present them to the public prior to the  
 18 final Seventh Order vote.

19 After reviewing the August 2, 2012,  
 20 letter from the Pennsylvania Economy League  
 21 rejecting the revised Recovery Plan, I asked  
 22 Mr. Joyce to total the tax increases that  
 23 would be imposed if the recommendations  
 24 contained in PEL's letter are followed.  
 25 Mr. Joyce calculated individual tax

1 increases on a single item's basis from  
 2 pages two through five of Mr. Cross' letter  
 3 and he will present his work to the public  
 4 himself next week.

5 However, I would like to present the  
 6 total figures at this time. PEL's  
 7 recommendations to replace a commuter tax,  
 8 sales tax, PILOT payments, refinancing of  
 9 debt in 2013, etcetera, with real estate tax  
 10 increases compounded over three years, 2013,  
 11 '14 and '15 total a 129 percent increase.

12 The average taxpayer based on a \$400  
 13 city tax bill would be \$659 and \$76 after  
 14 year one, and \$916.21 after year two.

15 To some, those increases might sound  
 16 feasible, however, I ask you then to add  
 17 your school district taxes and your county  
 18 taxes to those figures and you will  
 19 understand how significantly you will be  
 20 impacted if the Pennsylvania Economy League  
 21 recommendations are fully implemented.

22 Some like to term the mayor and  
 23 council's joint plan as a fantasy or pie in  
 24 the sky. Those who do who oppose the  
 25 commuter tax, the sales tax and a PILOT

1 program for nonprofits must be prepared to  
2 fill a \$32,925.248 hole in the Recovery  
3 Plan.

4 Further, those who oppose borrowing  
5 will add significantly to that \$33 million  
6 total and must fill an approximate minimum  
7 of \$48 million hole. Will they fill that  
8 \$33 million hole by raising your taxes?  
9 That's what the Pennsylvania Economy League  
10 and some others wish to do.

11 At previous council meetings I have  
12 stated that a 78 percent tax increase was  
13 out of the question. Now we are looking at  
14 a potential 129 percent tax increase  
15 according to PEL. It seems that PEL may be  
16 living in a fantasy because 129 percent will  
17 never, never be collected, let alone 78  
18 percent. Why? Because the taxpayers of  
19 Scranton don't have that kind of income.  
20 Thus, when the tax collection revenue  
21 plummets, and it will, what is PEL's backup  
22 plan? Will they recommend another tax  
23 increase on top of the ones that couldn't be  
24 collected?

25 More than likely, PEL would have to

1 turn to alternate revenue generators, such  
2 as a commuter tax and a PILOT program to  
3 fill their hole and compensate for their  
4 overestimated real estate tax revenue  
5 projections.

6 Consider the following very  
7 seriously. Do we implement and enforce  
8 alternate revenue sources such as a commuter  
9 tax, PILOT program to share the tax burden  
10 for city services and maintain the increase  
11 at 33 percent or should we agree it's pie in  
12 the sky and raise taxes 129 percent or  
13 should we decimate the budget to eliminate  
14 your city services to such a meager level  
15 that Scranton becomes a major hub of crime  
16 and blight?

17 The bottom line is simply this, do  
18 you prefer a 33 percent tax increase or a  
19 129 percent tax increase? It's your money,  
20 your lives, your homes and your city. You,  
21 the taxpayers, must decide and council's  
22 votes should represent you.

23 Next, I received a request from city  
24 residents regarding the Engine 10 firehouse.  
25 The roof has been leaking since last year

1 and the approaching winter snow and ice will  
2 only increase the problem. I would hate to  
3 see this firehouse closed at any time in the  
4 future because the roof has collapsed or  
5 would be in need of extensive repair.

6 Since they are well aware of our  
7 city's financial woes, city residents  
8 suggested that perhaps some roofers might  
9 wish to volunteer or that a local business  
10 might want to donate shingles and supplies  
11 in order to make the necessary repairs and  
12 that city employees and/or professional  
13 roofers may volunteer to perform the labore.  
14 If the repairs are made now, we can prevent  
15 much larger problems in the future.

16 Therefore, Mrs. Krake, please send a  
17 letter to Mr. Dougher, DPW director,  
18 informing him of this matter and proposing a  
19 follow-up on the suggestions of the East  
20 Mountain residents.

21 And, also, please send a letter to  
22 Solicitor Kelly, Ryan McGowan and the mayor  
23 asking if there are any additional  
24 promissory notes and if so identify them and  
25 the dollar amount owed on each, and that's

1 it.

2 MR. HUGHES: If I could just mention  
3 one thing?

4 MS. EVANS: Certainly.

5 MR. HUGHES: Coming from Frank's  
6 grandmother's funeral home last night I came  
7 down Providence Road and I saw where the old  
8 Scranton Transit Company was, there is a  
9 Turkey Hill going up, and I remember one of  
10 the first things I did was look at the  
11 ground lease between the city and BRT Ice  
12 and I took a look at it again and I believe,  
13 I don't know how this is being constructed  
14 from -- I mean, I don't have all of the  
15 information, but I think council should get  
16 it, under Section 2.03 of the ground lease  
17 agreement between the city and BRT Ice it  
18 says that the lessee, which is BRT Ice,  
19 shall pay \$600,000 to the lessor, the city,  
20 as rent for the leased premises. They are  
21 going to make payments of a dollar a year.

22 However, that any unpaid rent under  
23 this paragraph shall be paid by the lessee  
24 to the lessor in a lump sum within 30 days  
25 following the occurrence of the last to

1 occur.  
 2 "I", vacation of the leased premises  
 3 by DPW in total as the date provided for  
 4 hereunder; or two, certification of the  
 5 leased land by the City of Scranton Planning  
 6 Commission as within a redevelopment area as  
 7 that term is defined by law approval, of a  
 8 redevelopment contract for the lease land  
 9 including transfer of the leased land to the  
 10 lessee by the SRA and approval of the  
 11 Redevelopment contract by the Scranton City  
 12 Council.

13 There is basically -- this would  
 14 have meant that the city would have had to  
 15 transfer that parcel to the Scranton  
 16 Redevelopment Authority and then the  
 17 Scranton Redevelopment Authority would have  
 18 had to have come as selected BRT Ice is the  
 19 developer and they would have had to have a  
 20 redevelopment contract, they would then have  
 21 to have the area declared as a -- under the  
 22 Redevelopment Authorities Act as a  
 23 distressed area then they would have entered  
 24 into a redevelopment contract which would  
 25 have had to have been approved by council.

1 Then there would have been a deed from the  
 2 SRA to BRT Ice for that parcel and the city  
 3 should have received \$600,000.

4 Now, I don't know how this Turkey  
 5 Hill is being constructed. I think a couple  
 6 of things should be looked at on this and  
 7 it's basically, you know, for the solicitor  
 8 to look into, but I'm positive that in the  
 9 time that I have been here and council has  
 10 been here for the last two and a half years  
 11 I don't remember a redevelopment contract  
 12 coming from the SRA -- to be approved  
 13 between the SRA and BRT Ice. I think maybe  
 14 Mrs. Krake when she has some time to take a  
 15 look at see that would have had to have been  
 16 done by ordinance where they would have  
 17 selected a developer and we would have  
 18 approved it, and you would have approved the  
 19 development contract.

20 The second thing is I think maybe a  
 21 letter should be sent to Don King to see if  
 22 the city planning commission ever approved  
 23 the former Scranton Transit parcels as a  
 24 redevelopment area. The first step in a  
 25 redevelopment project is to the city

1 planning commission is to determine that the  
 2 area is blighted and then they would have  
 3 proposed that and that would also have to  
 4 come to council and been approved as a  
 5 redevelopment area. Then once it's a  
 6 redevelopment area it then would have been  
 7 conveyed by the Redevelopment Authority to  
 8 BRT Ice.

9 The whole thing just seems, you  
 10 know, I don't know exactly what's going on  
 11 and I think there should be a letter to  
 12 Attorney Kelly, as the solicitor, regarding  
 13 the status of Article 203 of the ground  
 14 lease between the city and BRT Ice. I can't  
 15 quite understand, I mean, this was done a  
 16 long time ago, it was done in 2002 before I  
 17 believe any council members were here, but  
 18 that would seem to be what would have had to  
 19 have happen.

20 And I remember reporting on this  
 21 before it because there was very little  
 22 reality transfer tax on this. There was a  
 23 document recorded in the -- when they  
 24 recorded this ground lease they said it was  
 25 for 200 years and I think the net value of

1 the \$600,000 in 200 years might have been  
 2 like \$15 or \$20, it was only a couple of  
 3 cents paid to the city on the real estate  
 4 transfer tax, but the lease is 99 years,  
 5 there is no right to renew it, but something  
 6 should be looked into this and the city  
 7 should look into it and report back to  
 8 council. I just wanted to report that.

9 MS. EVANS: Thank you very much,  
 10 Solicitor Hughes.

11 And, Mrs. Krake, if you could please  
 12 send those letters as directed by our  
 13 solicitor and remain in contact with him and  
 14 perhaps, Attorney Hughes, you can assist  
 15 Mrs. Krake --

16 MR. HUGHES: Oh definitely.

17 MS. EVANS: -- in the drafting of  
 18 those letters. Thank you very much.

19 MS. KRAKE: 5-B. AMENDING FILE OF  
 20 COUNCIL NO. 56, 2011, AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED  
 21 "GENERAL CITY OPERATING BUDGET 2012" BY  
 22 TRANSFERRING \$178,000.00 FROM ACCOUNT NO.  
 23 01.401.13090.4299 (NON-DEPARTMENTAL  
 24 OPERATING EXPENSES - CONTINGENCY) TO THE  
 25 ACCOUNTS LISTED BELOW TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR

1 LIFE/DISABILITY INSURANCE PAYMENTS THROUGH  
 2 THE PERIOD ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2012.  
 3 MS. EVANS: At this time I'll  
 4 entertain a motion that Item 5-B be  
 5 introduced into its proper committee.  
 6 MR. ROGAN: So moved.  
 7 MR. LOSCOMBE: Second.  
 8 MS. EVANS: On the question? All  
 9 those in favor of introduction signify by  
 10 saying aye.  
 11 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.  
 12 MR. ROGAN: Aye.  
 13 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.  
 14 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
 15 have it and so moved.  
 16 MS. KRAKE: 5-C. ACCEPTING THE  
 17 RECOMMENDATION OF THE HISTORICAL  
 18 ARCHITECTURE REVIEW BOARD ("HARB") AND  
 19 APPROVING THE CERTIFICATION OF  
 20 APPROPRIATENESS FOR POCONO SIGN & GRAPHIC,  
 21 1147 THE HIDEOUT, LAKE ARIEL, PENNSYLVANIA  
 22 FOR REMOVAL OF EXISTING AWNING COVER AND  
 23 INSTALLATION OF NEW, BLACK SYNTHETIC VINYL  
 24 MATERIAL AWNING WITH VINYL LETTERING, WITH  
 25 NO CHANGE TO THE FRAME DIMENSION, HEIGHT AND

1 LOCATION SPECIFICATIONS AT 410 SPRUCE  
 2 STREET, SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA.  
 3 MS. EVANS: At this time I'll  
 4 entertain a motion that Item 5-C be  
 5 introduced into its proper committee.  
 6 MR. ROGAN: So moved.  
 7 MR. LOSCOMBE: Second.  
 8 MS. EVANS: On the question? All  
 9 those in favor of introduction signify by  
 10 saying aye.  
 11 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.  
 12 MR. ROGAN: Aye.  
 13 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.  
 14 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
 15 have it and so moved.  
 16 MS. KRAKE: 5-D. ACCEPTING THE  
 17 RECOMMENDATION OF THE HISTORICAL  
 18 ARCHITECTURE REVIEW BOARD ("HARB") AND  
 19 APPROVING THE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS  
 20 FOR POCONO SIGN & GRAPHIC, 1147 THE HIDEOUT,  
 21 LAKE ARIEL, PENNSYLVANIA FOR THE  
 22 INSTALLATION OF A CUSTOM MADE, DOUBLE-SIDED,  
 23 SANDBLASTED AND CARVED HDU SIGN PANEL, 48"H  
 24 X 42"W X2", MOUNTED ON A CUSTOM WROUGHT  
 25 IRON BRACKET WITH BRASS END CAPS AT 410

1 SPRUCE STREET, SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA.  
 2 MS. EVANS: At this time I'll  
 3 entertain a motion that Item 5-D be  
 4 introduced into its proper committee.  
 5 MR. ROGAN: So moved.  
 6 MR. MCGOFF: Second.  
 7 MS. EVANS: On the question? All  
 8 those in favor of introduction signify by  
 9 saying aye.  
 10 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.  
 11 MR. ROGAN: Aye.  
 12 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.  
 13 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
 14 have it and so moved.  
 15 MS. KRAKE: 5-E. ACCEPTING THE  
 16 RECOMMENDATION OF THE HISTORICAL  
 17 ARCHITECTURE REVIEW BOARD ("HARB") AND  
 18 APPROVING THE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS  
 19 FOR POCONO SIGN & GRAPHIC, 1147 THE HIDEOUT,  
 20 LAKE ARIEL, PENNSYLVANIA FOR REMOVAL OF  
 21 EXISTING AWNING COVER AND INSTALLATION OF  
 22 NEW, BLACK SYNTHETIC VINYL MATERIAL AWNING,  
 23 WITH LOGO IN SHADES OF GREEN AND WHITE, WITH  
 24 NO CHANGE TO THE FRAME DIMENSION, HEIGHT AND  
 25 LOCATION SPECIFICATIONS AT 406 SPRUCE

1 STREET, SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA.  
 2 MS. EVANS: At this time I'll  
 3 entertain a motion that Item 5-E be  
 4 introduced into its proper committee.  
 5 MR. ROGAN: So moved.  
 6 MR. MCGOFF: Second.  
 7 MS. EVANS: On the question? All  
 8 those in favor of introduction signify by  
 9 saying aye.  
 10 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.  
 11 MR. ROGAN: Aye.  
 12 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.  
 13 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
 14 have it and so moved.  
 15 MS. KRAKE: SIXTH ORDER. 6-A.  
 16 Tabled.  
 17 SEVENTH ORDER. NO BUSINESS AT THIS  
 18 TIME.  
 19 MS. EVANS: If there is no further  
 20 business this evening, I'll entertain a  
 21 motion to adjourn.  
 22 MR. LOSCOMBE: Motion to adjourn.  
 23 MS. EVANS: This meeting is  
 24 adjourned.  
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C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes of testimony taken by me at the hearing of the above-captioned matter and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the same to the best of my ability.

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CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR  
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