

SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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HELD:

Thursday, May 18, 2017

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:

JOSEPH WECHSLER, PRESIDENT

PATRICK ROGAN, VICE-PRESIDENT

WAYNE EVANS

WILLIAM GAUGHAN

TIM PERRY

LORI REED, CITY CLERK

KATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

AMIL MINORA, ESQUIRE - SOLICITOR

1 (Pledge of Allegiance recited and moment of reflection
2 observed.)

3 MR. WECHSLER: Roll call, please.

4 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

5 MR. PERRY: Here.

6 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

7 MR. ROGAN: Here.

8 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

9 MR. EVANS: Here.

10 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Here.

12 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

13 MR. WECHSLER: Here.

14 MS. REED: THIRD ORDER. 3-A.

15 CONTROLLER'S REPORT FOR MONTH ENDING APRIL
16 30, 2017.

17 MR. WECHSLER: Are there any
18 comments? If not, received and filed.

19 MS. REED: 3-B. MINUTES OF THE
20 SCRANTON FIREFIGHTERS PENSION COMMISSION
21 MEETING HELD APRIL 19, 2017.

22 MR. WECHSLER: Are there any
23 comments? If not, received and filed.

24 MS. REED: 3-C. MINUTES OF THE
25 NON-UNIFORM MUNICIPAL PENSION BOARD MEETING

1 HELD APRIL 19, 2017.

2 MR. WECHSLER: Are there any
3 comments? If not, received and filed.

4 MS. REED: 3-D. MINUTES OF THE
5 SCRANTON POLICE PENSION COMMISSION MEETING
6 HELD APRIL 19, 2017.

7 MR. WECHSLER: Are there any
8 comments? If not, received and filed.

9 MS. REED: 3-E. MINUTES OF THE
10 COMPOSITE PENSION BOARD MEETING HELD APRIL
11 19, 2017.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Are there any
13 comments? If not, received and filed.

14 MS. REED: 3-F. AGENDA FOR THE
15 NON-UNIFORM MUNICIPAL PENSION BOARD MEETING
16 HELD MAY 17, 2017.

17 MR. WECHSLER: Are there any
18 comments? If not, received and filed.

19 Do any council members have
20 announcements at this time?

21 The annual Armed Forces Day parade
22 will be held this Saturday, May 30, at 11
23 a.m. in downtown starting at the Gino Merli
24 Veteran's Center at Mylert Street and Penn
25 Avenue. The County of Lackawanna County

1 transit system will offer free rides to all
2 groups on Saturday in celebration of the
3 annual parade.

4 The 30th annual LRCA Riverfest 2017
5 will be held this Saturday, May 20, from 10
6 a.m. to 6 p.m. A full day of activities,
7 music, food and vendors are planned for
8 Sweeney Beach recreation area, 41 Poplar
9 Street.

10 MS. REED: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS'
11 PARTICIPATION.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Joan Hodowanitz.

13 MS. HODOWANITZ: Joan Hodowanitz,
14 Scranton resident and taxpayer. I hope you
15 can see my t-shirt, Swingin' on Vine. It's
16 one of our annual fundraisers for the
17 Albright Memorial Library. This is a week
18 from tomorrow, Friday, May 26, and I'm
19 announcing it a week early to give people
20 time to purchase tickets at any one of the
21 libraries Albright or the Nancy Kay Holmes
22 branch in Greenridge or the Library Express.
23 If you purchase tickets in advance it's \$15.
24 If you buy it at the door it's \$20. This is
25 outside between the library and Lackawanna

1 College. There will be tents so you don't
2 have worry about the tornado coming through,
3 but for \$15 you can buy your ticket in
4 advance, all the beer, wine, margaritas,
5 food you can eat and drink. You have to be
6 over 21 to attend this event. If you are a
7 downtown Dennison like I am, the end of the
8 night you can just crawl home, you don't
9 have to worry about a thing. You will be
10 crawl home at the end of this. It's
11 wonderful thing. There will be live music.
12 Paul Labelle and the Exact Change with
13 vocalists Tara Michelle, so it's going to be
14 a wonderful night. There is so much food.
15 There are so many desserts. We moved the
16 desserts into the library's first floor and
17 it's just like chocolate from one end of the
18 room to the other. You can eat more than
19 \$15 worth in desserts alone. So come, have
20 a good time, it's a win-win for everybody.

21 There is supposed to be RFP bids
22 open tomorrow, two of them, one for the
23 Sewer Authority audit at 10 a.m. down in the
24 Sewer Authority's Office, I guess it's
25 across from the mayor, and the other one is

1 supposed to be the long anticipated, God
2 help us, third party administrator for the
3 pension plans. Now, I missed the pension
4 meetings on Wednesday because I was at a
5 number of county meetings instead, but Marie
6 went and she says, "Guess what?"

7 And I said, "What?"

8 She says, "As of yesterday, they had
9 no bids for the third party administrator,"
10 so I am anxiously awaiting what we are going
11 to hear when we come at 10:00 tomorrow
12 morning to see has anything come in in the
13 last 48 hours. I mean, I hope that the
14 mayor has a Plan B and he has promised us
15 for over a year a nationally-recognized
16 third-party administrator, but we shall see.

17 MR. PERRY: Ms. Hodowanitz, I'm not
18 sure whose information is correct, hopefully
19 it's my information, when I answered your
20 questions from two weeks ago the information
21 I got from the HR Department was that there
22 are already three bidders in and that was --

23 MS. HODOWANITZ: Marie will comment
24 on that I'm sure, but like I said, that was
25 the information currently that came out of

1 the Pension Board, so I hope there is
2 something.

3 Speaking of things overdue, do we
4 have an updated Knowles Insurance list yet?
5 No. I would think we would. It's what,
6 seven weeks but that's okay. I was looking
7 at the City's website before I came down and
8 thank God there are now two controller
9 reports on the website, March and April, so
10 at least, you know, we are making progress
11 there. On the other hand, the list of the
12 RFP's on that website, the rental
13 registration still a one-page document which
14 is a cover sheet for what they should be
15 putting out for their proposal, and I dearly
16 love to see what they are putting out on
17 that bid for rental registration, but have
18 we gotten any hint or anything yet on the
19 cost to repair the Nay Aug tree house yet
20 are we working on that? Summer is fast
21 approaching. Okay. And have we gotten any
22 look at the reassessment data from the
23 county about -- any news?

24 MR. EVANS: I have talked to the
25 director of the Assessment Office so I'm

1 going to go over there in the next few weeks
2 and take a look at the boxes and see what is
3 there. I'm still hopeful there is
4 electronic data that they haven't been able
5 to find yet.

6 MS. HODOWANITZ: Oh, before I
7 forget. Congratulations, Mr. Gaughan, Mr.
8 Rogan. Mr. Wechsler, I really do think you
9 need to be running for future offices.

10 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

11 MS. HODOWANITZ: You've got too much
12 talent to be wasted. Okay, and one thing
13 really bothers me, and I don't hear enough
14 discussion about it and that is what's going
15 to be the impact on city operations and the
16 city budget and the city's credit rating and
17 it's future if the Scranton School Board
18 goes down the drain? I would like to start
19 hearing some thoughts on that in the future.
20 We are about to come out of distressed
21 status and we are ignoring a 800-pound
22 gorilla in the room. Thank you.

23 MR. WECHSLER: Jessica Serrenty.

24 MS. SERRENTY: Hi. I'm Jessica
25 Serrenty from Clarks Summit, but I'm here on

1 behalf of the Scranton Public Library
2 hopefully to encourage you after Joan just
3 spoke about Swingin' on Vine. I'll tell you
4 a few more details about it. Tara Michelle
5 is a guest vocalist this year. She is
6 well-known for working with Lauren Hill and
7 John Legend, but she is a Scranton native so
8 we are very excited to welcome her back to
9 this area and excited to see her talent come
10 to the stage.

11 We have some great raffles and great
12 food coming this year, so we hope you would
13 join us. Some of our food sponsors we have
14 Cooper's Seafood House, yes, we are hoping
15 that they bring the crab cakes, we keep
16 asking, and we have the area Indian cuisine.
17 We have Rita's Ice and we have pizza from
18 everywhere, so it's a lot of fun and I hope
19 you can join us for Swingin' on Vine.

20 And then I have one second
21 announcement is actually about the Friend's
22 book sale, the Friends of the Scranton
23 Public Library will be holding their book
24 sale from June 6 through June 11 at the
25 marketplace at Steamtown outside of Crunch

1 Fitness. They always have a great selection
2 of fiction, non-fiction, children's books,
3 and this time they have a lot of audio books
4 so if you are interested it is handicap
5 accessible. Thank you. Look forward to
6 seeing you hopefully next Friday.

7 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you. Gerard
8 Hetman.

9 MR. HETMAN: Good evening, Council.
10 Gerard Hetman from the Lackawanna County
11 Commissioner's Office. To begin, our annual
12 bike safety fair event originally scheduled
13 for last Saturday May 13, has been postponed
14 due to inclement weather last weekend. The
15 new date is Saturday, June 24, 11 a.m. to
16 1:00, once again at McDade Park. The event
17 will feature bike safety lessons from the
18 Scranton police and the Pennsylvania State
19 Police and as always all children in
20 attendance will receive a free bike helmet
21 courtesy of PNC Bank and all children will
22 be entered at the door to win a free bike to
23 be raffled off that day compliments of
24 Strife, so we look forward to seeing
25 everyone there. We thought with the bad

1 weather forecasted last week, as it turned
2 out it was pretty cold and wet on Saturday
3 morning, we look forward to seeing everyone
4 who would have attended later in the summer
5 in June.

6 Second, just a reminder, the fifth
7 annual Lackawanna County Job Fair comes up
8 next Thursday, May 25, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at
9 PNC Field. I'm happy to announce that we
10 have 85 employers as of today registered to
11 attend the event. That's by far the most we
12 have ever had. We have companies big and
13 small from all sectors of the private
14 industry that you can imagine. Lots
15 different folks under one roof for job
16 seekers to visit with. As I mentioned last
17 month, we have moved it earlier to try to
18 accommodate student age populations. We are
19 looking for internships and also summer
20 work. We have seen more of that in the last
21 few years, so we are happy anyone is
22 welcome, of course, but we just try to move
23 it to accommodate what we see as a growing
24 demographic that attends the event each
25 year.

1 Third, the Lackawanna County Parks
2 and Recreation Department is seeking
3 lifeguards for the 2017 summer season. All
4 four county parks now feature swimming
5 facilities that are open during the summer,
6 so that's increased or need for lifeguards
7 from some of our past quotas in past years.

8 Lifeguards must be at least 16 years
9 of age or older. They must be certified in
10 lifesaving by the American Red Cross. For
11 more information or if anyone is interested
12 please contact our Parks and Recreation
13 Department at 570-963-6764. And, also, as
14 we enter the heart of the summer months our
15 camps, clinics and leagues for our Parks and
16 Recreation Department, many of them are open
17 for registration at this time. That
18 includes our Youth Soccer League that runs
19 in all three county parks for boys and girls
20 ages 5 through 14. Our youth tennis clinic,
21 that's at 11 locations throughout the
22 summer, boys and girls, ages 8 through 16.
23 Our adult tennis league at McDade Park for
24 ages 21 and older, and also our gymnastics
25 clinic that's at United Sports Academy, for

1 boys and girls ages four through 16. Those
2 are the bulk of them. We will see a few
3 more as we go into the fall. Most of them
4 are now open for the summer. You can call
5 570-963-6764 to register for any of these
6 programs or for more information on them.
7 That's all I have for this evening. Thank
8 you.

9 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you very much.
10 John Foley.

11 MR. FOLEY: Thank you, gentlemen.
12 I'll try not to take up all my time. A
13 couple of issues, first, I sent a letter to
14 Mr. Wechsler. It went out by way of e-mail
15 last night, called the attention, and I hope
16 it was shared with all of the council
17 members --

18 MR. WECHSLER: John, excuse me one
19 second. What e-mail address did you send
20 that to because I have not received the
21 letter.

22 MR. FOLEY: I e-mailed it to you.
23 And in the letter it indicates that there
24 was \$468,000 worth of office equipment and
25 vehicles purchased between August 2016 and

1 December. One would question why would
2 anyone buy office equipment and vehicles
3 knowing it was going to be sold in December.
4 Very simple. It also calls into question
5 all of the capital expenditures for the nine
6 months into December of roughly \$12 million,
7 whether those expenditures were required.

8 In the letter I made a suggestion
9 that this body recommend or enact an
10 ordinance to dissolve the Sewer Authority.
11 You are being stonewalled, it will continue
12 using attorney/client privilege where you
13 could just dissolve the Authority then all
14 of the records would revert back to you.
15 With that, you would have Jason Shrive
16 report to you or abolish the position. Your
17 choice.

18 It will be interesting to see if one
19 or more individuals that are there today on
20 council would make a recommendation to
21 dissolve the Authority, and if you don't
22 want to then the taxpayers have to ask
23 themselves why doesn't council want the
24 answers when the issue is very simple.
25 Dissolve it.

1 The Sewer Authority audit, someone
2 mentioned it, the last one I found was March
3 31, 2015. I don't know whether the March
4 31, 2016, audit was issued yet. If it is,
5 would loan me a copy, but if it wasn't then
6 I find that problematic because the 2015
7 audit March 31 was issued in August 2015.
8 '16 audit is not issued yet and you guys
9 have a real problem, and I would suggest
10 that whoever is going to do it in '16 wasn't
11 done that you have the 2016 and then you
12 have an audit as of the December 31, or you
13 can do it as of March 16, 2017. Do them
14 both together. Insist that they be released
15 before the November election.

16 I have taken an opportunity to look
17 at the mayor's campaign reports for 2013,
18 '14, '15 and '16. I have analyzed and
19 broken them down differently than other
20 people look at them, maybe the sky in my
21 world is probably different than everybody
22 else's because I'm the audit person, but in
23 looking at the information it has raised
24 several questions based on the contributors,
25 an awful lot of vendors with the city, some

1 of which relate to other matters that I'm
2 looking at in the city. At some point, I'll
3 find the nexus and I will put it in writing
4 to you folks. At some point, I am going to
5 share that analysis with Greenridge
6 Neighborhood Association so if you wish to
7 see it, it will be up on their website for
8 everybody to have an idea where the money is
9 coming from to fund the campaign of public
10 firms. I did not look at any of the
11 campaign reports for council members, nor do
12 I have any intentions of doing it, but I
13 would say that the council ought to take a
14 look at that information then you make a
15 judgment as to where you believe the city
16 should go.

17 Last item, at some point, I'm
18 probably going to meet with the unions.
19 I'll meet with fire and police. It's
20 important to me that they understand what
21 has happened to the city over the last ten
22 years. They need to know what the true
23 liability of the pension plan is because
24 it's not in your audited financial
25 statements, and then they have to understand

1 how much should have been deposited into the
2 pension plan that was not put into the
3 pension plan. You can't kick the can down
4 the road anymore. So, gentlemen, with that,
5 have a great evening.

6 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Foley, I would
7 ask would you try to send that e-mail again
8 and also copy Mrs. Reed on it because I
9 checked my e-mail right before I came to see
10 and I have not received it yet.

11 MR. FOLEY: What I will do, when I
12 get back to the lake I will send it out this
13 evening.

14 MR. WECHSLER: Just copy Mrs. Reed
15 on it, too.

16 MR. FOLEY: I would be more than
17 happy in the future to send it to every
18 council member, I just don't have your
19 e-mail addresses.

20 MR. ROGAN: They are all on the
21 city's website actually.

22 MR. FOLEY: If you get it through
23 the city, it could take you forever. I can
24 get it to you if you give me your personal
25 e-mail address because I send it to all the

1 trade associations, neighborhood
2 associations. I apologize to everybody.
3 Everyone have a great evening.

4 MR. WECHSLER: The city e-mail is
5 slow. If there's an attachment, sometimes
6 it doesn't let you send it. Bill Jackowitz.

7 MR. JACKOWITZ: Good evening,
8 Scranton City Council, Kathy, stenographer,
9 Lori, Amil, good evening to all of you.
10 Well, the first stage is over where we had
11 the primary election. I'd like to
12 congratulate Mr. Gaughan for his victory and
13 I'd like to congratulate Pat Rogan on his
14 victory. Although, Pat, it was awful close,
15 so I hope you learned something from this.
16 You need to get back to supporting the
17 people again. You need to get behind the
18 people and not the city council president
19 and the administration like you have been
20 doing. You need to get behind the people
21 and start supporting the people because the
22 people are paying attention. They are
23 paying attention to what's going on and what
24 people are voting on and what their votes
25 are for and what they stand for and

1 everything else. So a word to the wise,
2 Pat, if you are planning on going for a
3 higher office or remaining on city council
4 you need to get back into the swing of the
5 things like you were a few years back.

6 Okay, Sewer Authority meeting
7 tomorrow afternoon at 4:00. I hope a lot of
8 people --

9 MR. WECHSLER: That's been postponed
10 until the 24th.

11 MR. JACKOWITZ: It's been postponed.
12 Okay, thank you for that information. I
13 wasn't aware of that, you saved me a trip
14 down here, I appreciate that. Okay,
15 speaking of the Sewer Authority, Mr. Foley
16 sure comes up with a lot of information. He
17 is putting a lot of time and lot of research
18 into this, you know, maybe it wouldn't be a
19 bad idea to dissolve the Sewer Authority if
20 that's at all possible, you know, because
21 authorities are no good. Authorities run
22 amuck and no one controls the authorities
23 and they basically do what they want to do
24 when they want to do it, and so far the
25 authorities have gotten us taxpayers in a

1 lot of trouble and with the help of city
2 council, and not only this city council but
3 the city councils in the past.

4 So we need to really look at this
5 because the taxpayers and the ratepayers
6 can't afford much more of this. I mean, I
7 got my water bill today and I went into
8 sticker shock. You know, I mean, it's
9 crazy. So, you know, we really need to do
10 this. We need to start -- we got what, six
11 months left before the general election? A
12 lot can be done in the six month period of
13 time, we can accomplish a lot of things and
14 make it easier for the new administration
15 coming into office in January and for the
16 new council members coming into office in
17 January. We can make things a lot easier
18 for them if you guys would buckle down and
19 do some hard work between now and the
20 primary election in November.

21 And just remember the mayor is not
22 always right, okay? You can't support the
23 mayor on everything because he is not always
24 right. There are times where you have to
25 vote against the mayor and, you know, when

1 those times come about you need to do it,
2 you know, because that's life. No one is
3 always right, no one is perfect so we need
4 to really take our time now and really
5 concentrate on our votes coming up between
6 now and November and now and January because
7 the city cannot afford too many more
8 mistakes. We have too many mistakes going
9 on right now. The Parking Authority was a
10 mistake, the Marketplace was a mistake, the
11 Sewer Authority was a mistake and the
12 taxpayers ended up paying for all of this
13 and guess what? As far as I know, there are
14 not many taxpayers in Scranton that have
15 gotten pay raises. You know a pay raise --
16 pay is pretty stagnant in this area but the
17 bills keep coming in. They have their own
18 bills they have to pay and now they have to
19 pay the city bills that really taxpayers are
20 not responsible for making those bills, the
21 elected officials are and the appointed
22 officials.

23 And I still believe that an
24 appointed official does not tell an elected
25 official what to do. An elected official is

1 just that, he ran for office or she ran for
2 office, was elected by the people to do the
3 work of the people, where an appointed
4 official is just that. Someone who is a
5 friend of someone or a relative to someone
6 and they were appointed to the job. So I
7 really expect my elected officials to stand
8 up for the citizens and taxpayers of this
9 city and do your best job that you are
10 capable of doing and dont' just cave into
11 the mayor because the mayor wants this and
12 the mayor wants that. Mayors have been
13 wrong in the past and that's why we are
14 coming on 9,000 days of being distressed
15 because the mayor has been wrong in the
16 past.

17 As a matter of fact, the mayor, not
18 this mayor but the past mayor, was the one
19 that got us into in all this mess basically
20 and the mayor before him, and if council
21 would have listened to the people in the
22 past people have come up here with lot of
23 good ideas and lot of the good ways to solve
24 things but we have always been ignored for
25 the most part. Occasionally, somebody take

1 one of our suggestions and runs with it and
2 it usually works out for the good, but for
3 the most part we have been ignored. Thank
4 you.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Anyone else?

6 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening, Council.
7 Dave Dobrzyn, resident, taxes and fees paid.
8 First, I'd like to offer condolences and
9 congratulations and I have little addition
10 to that, once again, we held an election,
11 primary and we had extremely poor
12 participation. If you didn't show up last
13 Tuesday, for shame, and please feel free to
14 show up informed.

15 Last week we had an issue on rehab
16 down at the old Pennswood Manor and it's
17 been contentious with the neighbors for
18 several years and they tried to sneak in
19 this there without zoning board approval,
20 but what I would like to say on rehabs is we
21 need a lot more of them and some type of
22 study should be done to keep our rehab here
23 because we have quite a few problems with
24 the opioid epidemic and other things and
25 alcohol and so forth so it's really

1 important that these people be given a
2 chance outside of the criminal system to
3 rehab themselves. Basically, the criminal
4 system does nothing but to punish people and
5 offer them no answers other than more
6 joblessness and maybe even more worse yet a
7 job at dealing drugs once you get out
8 because they put a roof over your head.

9 Last week I made a mention of
10 Channel 16 and I may have been mistaken on
11 it, but there was a letter which I,
12 unfortunately, lost in the letters to the
13 editor that had several statements that were
14 a concern and, furthermore, we have shell
15 companies of shell companies of shell
16 companies buying and selling everything
17 imaginable and the result is that you never
18 really know who is buying it and who owns
19 it. For instance, back around 2009, 2008,
20 Fox News took their own reporters to court
21 over bovine growth hormone in dairy products
22 and many, many experts testified this is no
23 good to have in dairy products, but Fox one
24 the Supreme Court and the decision was that
25 the news doesn't necessarily have to be

1 true. So take it from there. The news
2 doesn't have to be the truth. Oh, well.
3 Big Brother is watching.

4 The Sewer once again, Sewer
5 Authority, I hope that we limit the comp or
6 salary for the legal representatives of that
7 Authority. I think a six-figure salary is
8 plenty enough and if it's not we don't need
9 to get billed an hour work to find a
10 paperclip, excuse me.

11 Today I think it was in the paper
12 once again the county has their name on a
13 building up on Wyoming Avenue and my only
14 question is how many tax exempts do we have
15 to have before the City of Scranton winds of
16 -- wises up and goes to Federal Court that
17 we should not have 35 percent tax exempt
18 buildings. We cannot any longer afford it.
19 We are putting grandma out of her house and
20 subsidizing one government building and one
21 politically oriented religious institution
22 and one more college or whatever and poor
23 grandma is out in the snow. So we really
24 need to wise up because this is getting down
25 to the wire.

1 I'm tired of paying \$650 for an
2 undevelopable lot and then I see we have a
3 land bank where the some -- the lot to
4 people for nothing. That lot was tax
5 delinquent for 40 years. So it's time. We
6 really have to do something on this property
7 tax. If they want to compensate us fine,
8 buy whatever you want, buy the whole town,
9 but please compensate us or by 80 percent or
10 buy 80 percent paid in settlement of the
11 property tax to replace them. Thank you and
12 have a good night. Next.

13 MS. SCHUMACHER: Marie Schumacher.
14 Last week you had a rather lengthy
15 discussion on Pennswood Manor even after Tom
16 Welby said that the building had been sold
17 or picked up at one of the sales and would
18 soon have a new owner and who stated that he
19 was not interested in the current tenant.
20 So I would certainly think he would have to
21 be evicted and that would be the end of it.

22 However, and I was going to wait
23 until the minutes came out this -- of the
24 meeting, but it bothered me so much all week
25 that I wanted to share it because I hope I

1 never hear what I heard last week again
2 because at the end a councilman stated that,
3 you know, if this doesn't work and they
4 don't get out by the date we should send --
5 go after them on a quality of life. To me,
6 that's targeting. I think that should be
7 foreboden, but then again, we have gone
8 after one b&b operator and no other despite
9 the fact that there are many and I haven't
10 heard any data on when SAPA, if at all, is
11 going to help and come up with new
12 suggestions and to modernize, but, okay,
13 enough on that, but that really bothers me.

14 The 2015 audit has been out for
15 quite sometime and I have been following up
16 with the controller to get the financial
17 report because there is lots and lots of
18 information in the financial report that is
19 not available any other place, and it keeps
20 not ready, not ready, and the reason is
21 because there is a discrepancy between the
22 business administration -- Business
23 Administrator's Office and the Controller's
24 Office. Now, this has been on for months.
25 This is crazy. We are going to get both the

1 towards six officers. Now, I don't know if
2 that -- really means, again, I don't want to
3 put words into it that they had certain
4 stipulations and it just so happened that
5 based on those stipulations six officers
6 fell into that category, but again, I'll
7 find out the exact answer for you.

8 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay, I would
9 appreciate knowing that because that has a
10 tremendous impact on the pensions, as was
11 brought up yesterday at the Composite Board
12 the representative from the office that
13 develops the MOUs was there and he used the
14 word ridiculous a whole bunch of times
15 before I had to leave, so we need more
16 information.

17 I hope -- oh, and the third party
18 administrator, there's lots and lots of
19 questions were raised in that regard, also,
20 and it was asked if the controller, to whom
21 I believe the bids are supposed to go,
22 stated there were no responses, so I don't
23 know unless they went to HR, but I don't
24 know why the HR person, of course, wasn't
25 here.

1 On another issue, the Scranton
2 Parking Authority lease agreement, how much
3 were we supposed to give to Steamtown 300?
4 Was there anything other than -- I know
5 there was a 285,000 -- or \$2,850,000 we were
6 going to share in the cost of the renovation
7 of the Electric City garage, which we gave
8 them for a dollar, was there anything else
9 that we were --

10 MR. EVANS: Well, there is a lease
11 agreement between Steamtown and NDC for so
12 many parking spots in the Steamtown Mall.

13 MS. SCHUMACHER: But NDC pays that.

14 MR. EVANS: Yes.

15 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, there have
16 been some things floating around stating
17 that we have paid not Steamtown 300, but
18 Mr. Basalyga, \$4.2 million. I would like to
19 know if that's correct. Thank you.

20 MR. WECHSLER: Anyone else?

21 MS. REED: FIFTH ORDER. 5-A.

22 MOTIONS.

23 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Perry?

24 MR. PERRY: Yes, thank you,
25 Mr. Wechsler, I have a couple of small

1 things to cover. The first thing is I
2 received a couple of complaints 120 Columbia
3 Street. There is condemned house there.
4 DPW was there recently and they did take the
5 grass back, but there is a bigger issue of
6 some lattice work that is broken and it's
7 being used as homes for feral cats and
8 skunks and raccoons and things of that. The
9 questions that the neighborhood had was has
10 the owner of that house been contacted to do
11 some repairs on that to prevent that?

12 Now, you know, anybody who has a
13 condemned house in the neighborhood it is
14 very frustrating, as I know, the
15 condemnation process is long and lengthy and
16 sometimes it's too long, but there is a
17 process and guidelines that the city has to
18 follow before they can go and actually seize
19 the property and do things on their own. So
20 with that being said, I just want to make
21 sure that there has been ever attempt made
22 to get ahold of the owner to do some minor
23 repairs on that home just to prevent the
24 animals from collecting there and living
25 there. You know, the situation as we know

1 on the condemned house it never gets better,
2 it just gets worse, so I just want to cut in
3 off before it does get worse.

4 I had some information on the
5 dumpster that DPW is going to put out to
6 collect electronics. I know there was some
7 discussion came out, Gerard was here today
8 asking to probably put some input to as
9 well. The county also is looking to do
10 something very similar to what Mr. Welby
11 said last week and so right now the city and
12 the county and all of the really local
13 municipalities in Lackawanna County are
14 going to start to work in concert to get
15 this taken care of.

16 The particulars and dates aren't set
17 yet, but there are going to be collection
18 dumpsters and there is going to be a time
19 and place that we are can get rid of our
20 electronics that we can store up that break
21 that, you know, the garbage men won't take
22 but there is nothing you really can do. I
23 have one in my garage, I'm sure a lot of you
24 guys have computers and things that you
25 can't get rid of so there is going to be an

1 avenue for us to get rid of and we're going
2 to work with Lackawanna County to get that
3 done.

4 On the agenda tonight is 5-F. 5-F
5 is a gift that was given to us by Amos
6 Towers. Annually they do write us a check
7 to the fire department and, you know, I'm
8 very grateful for that and I don't want to
9 see, the money is going to come on Monday,
10 so I made a phone call to Amos Towers. I
11 called and I talked to Louis Dansico, who is
12 the head of the towers and, you know, he was
13 just very happy with the service that the
14 fire department gives the high rise and
15 other people, you know, with a lot of needs
16 and the fire department never let's them
17 down with responding and taking care of all
18 the issues, so this is just their way of
19 giving back to the city and just letting us
20 get something that we might have a need on
21 the table.

22 So after that conversation, I
23 wondered what the need on the table was, so
24 I gave our fire department a call. I called
25 Chief DeSarno. He wasn't able to give me a

1 call back, but one of his underlings, I
2 guess you could say, Al, gave me a call back
3 and he explained to me that they want to get
4 a piece of the equipment for one of their
5 older engines that's -- it's kind of like a
6 water can, I guess is the best way to put
7 it. It mounts on the ground right to the
8 pumper truck and it will shoot water I think
9 a rate of about 150 gallons every 10 seconds
10 and that's going to be used at, you know, to
11 get at places where maybe it's unsafe for a
12 firemen to get at. They can reach it right
13 from the ground. That piece of the
14 equipment was about \$2,800-\$2,900. The rest
15 of the grant -- or the rest of the grant,
16 the rest of the donation will be used just
17 for extra hose for the department. The
18 other two new engines that we have came
19 already fitted with that type of can and now
20 the older model that we have also is kind of
21 up to spec with the rest of the engines that
22 we have.

23 And I believe that's it. Oh, one
24 final piece. Mrs. Rador was here last week
25 about an issue with some storm drains being

1 clogged and we got a response back from DPW
2 that those drains have been cleared out and
3 cleaned and actually that part of Washington
4 I believe is going to be getting paved this
5 summer and that should also further help
6 clear out that issue of just the sediment,
7 and the leaves and everything else
8 collecting there along with a better leaf
9 picking up system I may add that the needs
10 to happen coming this fall. That's all I
11 have today, Mr. Wechsler.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

13 Mr. Rogan?

14 MR. ROGAN: Yes, just a couple of
15 brief comments. I know the Armed Forces
16 parade was mentioned today, I hope to see
17 everyone downtown this weekend. It's one of
18 my favorite days of the year, unfortunately,
19 the attendance isn't what it should be many
20 years for that parade, but it has been
21 picking up over the last few years and
22 hopefully that will continue. I am looking
23 forward to the parade.

24 Pennswood Manor was brought up again
25 tonight and there was a number of

1 correspondence that was sent out regarding
2 that property and I did speak with Chris
3 Kayes, the president of the South Side
4 Neighborhood Watch, the neighborhood
5 association following the meeting and we are
6 very hopeful that this long and drawn out
7 process regarding this rehab that's been
8 causing lot of problems in South Side will
9 finally be coming to an end, so we are very
10 hopeful that that will very quickly come to
11 an end.

12 I did get a -- I did speak to
13 residents in the same neighborhood Mr. Perry
14 did over in Greenridge so I won't belabor
15 that point, and it's been a long week so I
16 will be very brief. And, finally, I would
17 just like to thank the residents of the
18 Scranton for their support in the election
19 on Tuesday. Thank you very much.

20 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr. Rogan.
21 Mr. Evans?

22 MR. EVANS: Thank you. As you know,
23 I requested a review by the Licensing and
24 Inspection of the 17 permit fees that
25 collect a total of approximately \$71,000

1 over the course. I renew that any of these
2 fees and permits that may no longer be
3 necessary. I also discussed the possibility
4 with BA Bulzoni to bring an RFP for a third
5 party to review all of the fees the city is
6 currently charging. This review will give a
7 neutral, comprehensive and long overdue view
8 of all of the city's ordinances and/or fees.

9 However, I was received a response
10 today from BA that he met with Mr. Hinton on
11 the list and his department has completed a
12 partial review of the ordinances and
13 associated fees, so at this point since the
14 process has started we will await to see
15 what review brings when completed to
16 determine if they should look for a detailed
17 valuation by a third party will be
18 warranted, I think it probably will be, but
19 make no mistake about it I'm not looking for
20 modest change here and there. We are trying
21 to move the needle to a more user and
22 business friendly city and that cannot be
23 done without real change in how we do our
24 business.

25 One more brief comment, for those

1 unnecessary fees, unnecessary permits that
2 is driving out small businesses and not
3 allowing businesses to come into this town,
4 so I'm sorry, but that's I have for tonight.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr. Evans.
6 Mr. Gaughan?

7 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, thank you. A
8 couple of citizens' request that I received
9 this past week. There are large potholes on
10 Crisp Avenue and Jackson Street and Crisp
11 Avenue and Frink Street so we will again
12 send that to the DPW. Rachel Place in West
13 Scranton between South Hyde Park and South
14 Sumner Avenue is in really rough condition
15 and needs to be patched and hopefully we can
16 request and put on the paving list.

17 The closure of the tree house, I
18 have asked several questions about that.
19 What maintenance has been done on the tree
20 house since January 2014 and when it was
21 annually checked during the winter what was
22 the report from 2014, '15, and '16 on the
23 tree house.

24 The corner of 201 Seymour Avenue and
25 Ariel Street is also in very rough

1 condition. Neighbors in that area would
2 like that patched and also put on the paving
3 list. 2900 block of Penman Avenue also
4 needs to be patched and put on the paving
5 list. There is also a lack of storm drains
6 in that part of Minooka that is causing
7 flooding to people's yards and eroding their
8 sidewalks, so we will send something to the
9 DPW about that.

10 Mrs. Schumacher brought up about the
11 retirement incentives from the police
12 contract, I believe, I'd like to again send
13 this question to the administration, I have
14 now asked four times for this going back
15 almost two years, was an actuarial study
16 ever completed to determine the impact off
17 the retirement incentives included in the
18 police and fire contract and what impact it
19 would have on the pension funds. Again, I
20 have asked for this now four or five times
21 and I still have not received an answer to
22 that question.

23 The Scranton Sewer Authority meeting
24 that was supposed to be held this Friday was
25 cancelled and rescheduled for next

1 Wednesday, May 24, at 4 p.m. in the
2 Governor's Room, which is next to council
3 chambers. It's my believe that it should be
4 held at a more reasonable time, in council
5 chambers, and it should be televised. It's
6 my belief that 4 p.m. people are still
7 trying to get out of work, very difficult
8 for people to get here and these sewer
9 authority meetings are very, very important.

10 Also, there was no reason given for
11 why the meeting was cancelled and
12 rescheduled. The bottom line here is the
13 name of the game here is stonewall. Where
14 are the invoices, where are the answers,
15 where is the accountability? I think, and
16 it seems to me, over the past few months
17 that the Scranton Sewer Authority is hoping
18 to delay, provide a delay tactic and delay
19 the meetings so that people will forget
20 about it and not show up. I would again
21 urge everyone in the City of Scranton, every
22 ratepayer, every taxpayer to attend this
23 meeting and demand that the Scranton Sewer
24 Authority board invite the Auditor General
25 in to audit the sale of the Scranton Sewer

1 Authority.

2 Last week, I asked Mayor Courtright
3 to join this council in calling on the
4 Scranton Sewer Authority to, again, invite
5 the Auditor General in to audit this
6 transaction. I wanted to know what his
7 stance was on this issue. He appointed the
8 board members of the Authority, the
9 executive directors, and former city
10 solicitor, and not surprising, the mayor has
11 not responded. His silence on this matter
12 is absolutely deafening.

13 If we start to connect the dots here
14 it becomes very clear that the mayor will
15 not take a stand on any important issue that
16 faces this city, whether it be the expansion
17 of the landfill, leachate, and now the audit
18 of the sale of the Scranton Sewer Authority
19 and I have to ask myself why. Why is he
20 silent? Could it be because some of the
21 individuals who have made and donated or
22 have made money on the transaction given
23 handsomely to his campaign coffers. Where
24 is he hiding on this issue? The people of
25 this city have spoken loudly and clearly

1 they want answers. It's time for the mayor
2 to join this council and the rest of the
3 City of Scranton in demanding that the
4 Scranton Sewer Authority invite the Auditor
5 General in to do a full review of this
6 transaction.

7 It remains unclear to me whose
8 interest this deal served? Was it the
9 ratepayers or was it certain individuals?
10 Still very unclear.

11 Also, tonight, it's come to my
12 attention, according to some media reports,
13 that city officials appear to have ignored
14 their own rules to give a cleaning contract
15 to the family of two Scranton police
16 officers. An attorney in the media reports,
17 and I quote, "It appears that the bidding
18 procedures are now being used in a
19 manipulative way to make sure that certain
20 contract ends up being awarded to a
21 preferred vendor. When the city should have
22 secured three quotes they only secured one
23 quote and it happened to be for the family
24 of two Scranton police officers."

25 The city solicitor in this media

1 report said that the contract now for
2 cleaning police headquarters will now have
3 to go out to bid in June or July, I believe.
4 So I have several questions here.

5 Number one, I would like and I have
6 asked earlier this afternoon for a copy of
7 the quotes or quote, I'd like to know if
8 this was negotiated with the clerical union?
9 Was this a violation of the clerical
10 contract? Because from what I understand
11 the city always had a maintenance worker
12 clean the Scranton Police Department
13 Headquarters. So my other question is where
14 did this maintenance person go and what is
15 this maintenance person doing now?

16 And I don't have all of the details
17 from this, but just on it's face it seems
18 like if you work for a department in the
19 city, if you work for the police department,
20 the mayor is going to make sure you either
21 get a contract or you get a loan from the
22 city and it reminds me of the \$250,000 loan
23 to the business of a -- another business of
24 Scranton police officer, Roll Call,
25 \$250,000.

1 redacted and also supporting the motion to
2 bring in the Auditor General so I do thank
3 him for his intention and hopefully he can
4 sway the board to follow that idea.

5 I did speak to Larry West this week
6 concerning the progress that's happening
7 with Mr. Young's problem and also with the
8 general progress being made of the creek and
9 that project to Meadowbrook back to the
10 front burner and hopefully we will get
11 something later this summer.

12 I would like to congratulate
13 Councilman Rogan, Councilman Gaughan and
14 also Mr. Donohue on their victories in the
15 primary on Tuesday. As we can see, except
16 for Mr. Gaughan did a wonderful job, the
17 amount of spread between second to fifth,
18 where I was, was very close. I thank
19 everyone that came out and supported me all
20 year.

21 I actually had a conversation with
22 Mr. Donahue about three years ago and I
23 talked to him and I said to him, "Kyle, if I
24 do the things that I'm supposed to do on
25 city council I might not win again."

1 And that came to fruition. I look
2 at what we have accomplished as a council
3 and getting the city to the brink of being
4 out of distressed status. We did have to
5 make tough decisions on the contracts, on
6 the arbitration award, on the Parking
7 Authority and also on the sale of the Sewer
8 Authority. Looking back at what happened,
9 council had to did lot of heavy lifting on
10 all of these projects. We would have liked
11 some more input from the administration,
12 especially on the Sewer Authority deal, I
13 was forced to have a meeting that brought
14 out a lot of the results that we are working
15 on today, and I still stick to the fact that
16 the information that's available on the
17 Sewer Authority right now came as result of
18 a meeting that I scheduled, but like I said,
19 I did make decisions that probably cost me
20 my future return to council.

21 I could have stayed on the sidelines
22 and not been a council president, but I
23 determined that that was something that I
24 had to do to get us through these last three
25 years of my term. I thank the opportunity

1 for serving the public and do thank everyone
2 who supported me, and we will continue for
3 the next few months to try and make the best
4 of my remaining time here. That's all I
5 have. Thank you.

6 MS. REED: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION -
7 AN ORDINANCE - AUTHORIZING THE SECRETARY OF
8 TRANSPORTATION TO ACQUIRE RIGHT-OF-WAY
9 NECESSARY FOR THE WEST LACKAWANNA AVENUE
10 BRIDGE DOCUMENT NO. 04M173 AS PART OF THE
11 CITY OF SCRANTON OWNED BRIDGE PROJECT.

12 MR. WECHSLER: At this time, I'll
13 entertain a motion that Item 5-B be
14 introduced into its proper committee.

15 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

16 MR. EVANS: Second.

17 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All
18 those in favor of introduction signify by
19 saying aye.

20 MR. PERRY: Aye.

21 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

22 MR. EVANS: Aye.

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

24 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The
25 eyes have it and so moved.

1 MS. REED: 5-C. FOR INTRODUCTION -
2 AN ORDINANCE - AUTHORIZING THE SECRETARY OF
3 TRANSPORTATION TO ACQUIRE RIGHT-OF-WAY
4 NECESSARY FOR THE ELM STREET BRIDGE DOCUMENT
5 NO. 04M171 AS PART OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON
6 OWNED BRIDGE PROJECT.

7 MR. WECHSLER: At this time, I'll
8 entertain a motion that Item 5-C be
9 introduced into its proper committee.

10 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

11 MR. EVANS: Second.

12 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All
13 those in favor of introduction signify by
14 saying aye.

15 MR. PERRY: Aye.

16 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

17 MR. EVANS: Aye.

18 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

19 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The
20 ayes have it and so moved.

21 MS. REED: 5-D.FOR INTRODUCTION - AN
22 ORDINANCE - AUTHORIZING THE SECRETARY OF
23 TRANSPORTATION TO ACQUIRE RIGHT-OF-WAY
24 NECESSARY FOR THE NORTH MAIN AVENUE BRIDGE
25 DOCUMENT NO. 04M172 AS PART OF THE CITY OF

1 SCRANTON OWNED BRIDGE PROJECT.

2 MR. WECHSLER: 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. EVANS: Second.

7 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All
8 those in favor of introduction signify by
9 saying aye.

10 MR. PERRY: Aye.

11 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

12 MR. EVANS: Aye.

13 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

14 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The
15 ayes have it and so moved.

16 MS. REED: 5-E. FOR INTRODUCTION - A
17 RESOLUTION - RATIFYING AND APPROVING THE
18 SUBMISSION OF A PENNSYLVANIA RECYCLING
19 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE APPLICATION SUBMITTED
20 BY THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
21 TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL
22 PROTECTION ("DEP") FOR A TECHNICAL
23 ASSISTANCE GRANT TO CONDUCT A
24 RECYCLING/REFUSE PROGRAM EVALUATION, AND
25 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE

1 CITY OFFICIALS TO ACCEPT THE GRANT FUNDS
2 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$7,500.00 FOR THE
3 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING COMPANY SCS
4 ENGINEERS SELECTED BY DEP TO PROVIDE
5 TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO MUNICIPALITIES FOR
6 THE PAY AS YOU THROW (PAYT) COLLECTION
7 PROGRAM.

8 MR. WECHSLER: At this time, I'll
9 entertain a motion that Item 5-E be
10 introduced into its proper committee.

11 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

12 MR. EVANS: Second.

13 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All
14 those in favor of introduction signify by
15 saying aye.

16 MR. PERRY: Aye.

17 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

18 MR. EVANS: Aye.

19 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

20 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The
21 ayes have it and so moved.

22 MS. REED: 5-F. FOR INTRODUCTION -
23 A RESOLUTION - ACCEPTING A DONATION OF THREE
24 THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED NINETY-NINE
25 (\$3,799.00) DOLLARS FROM AMOS TOWERS

1 MANAGEMENT ENTERPRISES, INC. PRESENTED TO
2 THE CITY OF SCRANTON FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR THE
3 PURCHASE OF MUCH NEEDED EQUIPMENT FOR THE
4 FIRE DEPARTMENT.

5 MR. WECHSLER: At this time, I'll
6 entertain a motion that Item 5-F be
7 introduced into its proper committee.

8 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

9 MR. EVANS: Second.

10 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All
11 those in favor of introduction signify by
12 saying aye.

13 MR. PERRY: Aye.

14 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

15 MR. EVANS: Aye.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

17 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The
18 ayes have it and so moved.

19 MS. REED: SIXTH ORDER. 6-A. NO
20 BUSINESS AT THIS TIME.

21 SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A. FOR
22 CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES -
23 FOR ADOPTION - RESOLUTION NO. 150, 2017-
24 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE
25 CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO

1 PHASE II MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)
2 BETWEEN THE CITY OF SCRANTON AND THE
3 NATIONAL RESOURCE NETWORK TO PROVIDE SUPPORT
4 FOR THE CREATION AND ORGANIZATION OF A TASK
5 FORCE TO ASSIST SCRANTON TOMORROW AND
6 PROVIDE ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE.

7 MR. WECHSLER: As Chairperson for
8 the Committee on Rules, I recommend final
9 passage of Item 7-A.

10 MR. ROGAN: Second.

11 MR. WECHSLER: On the question?
12 Roll call, please?

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

14 MR. PERRY: Yes.

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

16 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

17 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

18 MR. EVANS: Yes.

19 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

21 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

22 MR. WECHSLER: Yes. I hereby
23 declare Item 7-A legally and lawfully
24 adopted.

25 If there is no further business,

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I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

MR. ROGAN: Motion to adjourn.

MR. WECHSLER: Meeting 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.

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER