

SINE DIE MEETING OF SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL

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HELD:

Monday, January 4, 2010

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:

MR. ROBERT MCGOFF, PRESIDENT

MS. JUDY GATELLI, VICE-PRESIDENT
(Not Present)

MS. JANET E. EVANS

MS. SHERRY FANUCCI

MR. WILLIAM COURTRIGHT

MS. KAY GARVEY, CITY CLERK

MR. NEIL COOLICAN, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

MR. AMIL MINORA, SOLICITOR
(Not present)

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

3 MR. MCGOFF: Roll call, please?

4 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

5 MS. EVANS: Here.

6 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Gatelli. Ms.

7 Fanucci.

8 MS. FANUCCI: Here.

9 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright.

10 MR. COURTRIGHT: Here.

11 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Here. Dispense with the
13 reading of the minutes. Third Order.

14 MS. GARVEY: There is no business at
15 this time, however, I would like to say a
16 few words, if I might?

17 MR. MCGOFF: Please.

18 MS. GARVEY: I would first like to
19 express my gratitude and appreciation to all
20 of you for affording me the opportunity to
21 serve as your clerk for the past four years.
22 It has been a great educational experience
23 and opportunity that I will never forget and
24 I'm sure that I will take many of the
25 lessons learned with me wherever I go.

1 I have enjoyed my experience as city
2 clerk and I hope that you feel as I do that
3 I have served you all fairly and with
4 respect and dignity that you all deserved
5 while maintaining a sense of professionalism
6 for the office each and every day, making
7 sure that you were well prepared for each
8 meeting and that the citizens were always
9 welcomed in our office and were always
10 treated with kindness. I thank all of you
11 for having the confidence in me and respect
12 in my position.

13 I would also like to thank Lisa
14 Graff and Cathene Nardozzi, who were are
15 stenographers over the last four years, and
16 Scranton Today and ECTV for always being
17 there on a moment's notice.

18 I owe most of my thanks to probably
19 the two most important people that have been
20 with me and for me every step of the way and
21 that's Neil Coolican and Sue Magnotta. I
22 thank you for the great job you do to keep
23 our office functioning on a daily basis
24 because the clerk can only be as good as
25 their office staff allows them to be and I

1 couldn't have asked for anyone better to
2 share the office with. We worked as a team
3 and I couldn't have done it without you, and
4 knowing you were there and made all of the
5 difference in the world. I thank you for
6 your unending support, most especially for
7 your friendships. I will miss both of you.

8 Last, but definitely not least, my
9 thanks to my family and especially my
10 husband for sticking with me through it all
11 and your confidence and your never ending
12 support meant a great deal to me. Thank
13 you.

14 MR. MCGOFF: I know on behalf of all
15 of the members of council we to want to
16 thank Mrs. Garvey for her service to the
17 community and to the council. I know
18 personally that I could never have done this
19 office -- or done this job without her
20 assistance and she will be missed.

21 I also have a letter of resignation
22 from Attorney Minora. It says, "Please
23 accept this as my letter of resignation
24 effective 11:45 a.m., January 4, 2010."

25 And also on behalf of council, I

1 would like to thank Attorney Minora for his
2 service to the city and to council. He has
3 been invaluable in his assistance and so we
4 thank him.

5 Citizens' participation. Fay
6 Franus.

7 MS. FRANUS: I would also like to
8 thank you, Kay, for just a good job that you
9 have done. You have been wonderful and all
10 of the people appreciate everything you have
11 done for them, and all the requests they
12 have made, you have been great.

13 Sherry, I'm going to miss you, I
14 really am. I wish you all the best.

15 Billy, same with you. I'll see you
16 at the tax office and wish you all the best
17 and I wish Judy the best and the new council
18 as well.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Marie Schumacher.

20 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good morning. Marie
21 Schumacher. I also would like to thank Kay.
22 The office has always been extremely
23 responsive and that's certainly appreciated
24 and thank all of those who serve even though
25 I did not always agree with. You are

1 welcome to join us on this side, I'm sure.

2 I would just like to remind those
3 who are staying that as of the middle of
4 December I got -- I obtained figures from
5 the county assessor's office that showed a
6 30.1 percent of the assessed value of the
7 City of Scranton is held by nontaxable
8 property holders. So on behalf of the 70
9 percent that are left to pay the bills I
10 would ask that you to be thoughtful as we go
11 forward. The utilities are hitting
12 everybody and I feel very bad for an awful
13 lot of people, so please remember what's on
14 the shoulders the 70 percent. Thank you.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Ron Ellman.

16 MR. ELLMAN: I just wanted to thank
17 council for everything that they done the
18 past years for the city and if I've offended
19 anybody I'm sorry about it with my big
20 mouth, and I'd like to say one thing, I went
21 to Mr. Bolus' dinner, and this city is so
22 fortunate to have people like Mr. Bolus and
23 the Burnes and the ones that have the --
24 that the YMCA is named after in Dunmore.
25 There is just so many others that have

1 helped this city that, you know, I used to
2 go to the soup kitchen sometimes and they
3 have a sign up there who donated that day
4 and it's so many people that you never hear
5 about, you know, that are in the limelight
6 and how this fool Kevin Lynn could badmouth
7 this city and Mr. Bolus is just beyond
8 comprehension. You know, and I realize that
9 like many people his mouth opens about an
10 hour before his peasize brain engages, but
11 this was a wonderful thing for the city and
12 I hope Mr. Bolus continues it for, you know,
13 a long, long time and I hope you people
14 leaving will support us. Bye-bye, Sherry.

15 MS. FANUCCI: Bye-bye.

16 MR. ELLMAN: Bye-bye. I'll see you
17 around anyway.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else wish to
19 speak? Mrs. Evans. I'm sorry, Mr. Gervasi.

20 MR. GERVASI: Good morning, city
21 council. This is a great day. Mrs. Evans,
22 I want to congratulate you and I wish you
23 all of the luck in the world. I don't want
24 to say much to you today because we are
25 going to have lots of time to talk to you

1 over the next year.

2 I just want to say to Mrs. Fanucci,
3 I know we didn't agree on a lot, but I want
4 to thank you for stepping up to the plate.
5 I want to thank you for taking that job on
6 and all of the things that -- the good that
7 you did.

8 MS. FANUCCI: Thank you.

9 MR. GERVASI: I especially wanted to
10 thank Mr. Courtright. He is going to be
11 leaving here and I know Mr. Courtright for
12 awhile now and I think he is going to make a
13 terrific tax collector. I think you are
14 going to see that place completely
15 straightened out, but I just want to thank
16 you, Bill, for being a friend to all of the
17 public safety employees and all of the
18 employees the City of Scranton. It's been a
19 very contentious eight years for us, but you
20 have always taken the time to listen and we
21 have had our issues and you have been a true
22 advocate for public safety in this town and
23 you are going to be missed. Now just get to
24 the tax office and get us more revenue.
25 Thank you very much.

1 MS. EVANS: I'd like to take this
2 opportunity to recognize outgoing
3 Councilwomen Fanucci and Gatelli. It's
4 unfortunate that Mrs. Gatelli chose not to
5 attend this meeting. Four years ago Mrs.
6 Fanucci, Mrs. Gatelli and I made history
7 together by being the first female majority
8 elected to city council in the history of
9 Scranton. I was already the third woman and
10 Mrs. Fanucci and Mrs. Gatelli were
11 respectively the fourth and fifth women ever
12 elected to serve on Scranton City Council.
13 I am certain that we all feel great pride in
14 this accomplishment.

15 Mrs. Fanucci was instrumental in the
16 passage of the citywide smoking ban which
17 was one catalyst for a statewide ban. In
18 addition, Mrs. Fanucci maintained a courage
19 of her convictions. She truly believed in
20 what she was doing. She was an avid
21 supporter of downtown development and what
22 she saw as the city's progress.

23 Mrs. Gatelli served at the first
24 female president of Scranton city council
25 and as the second female vice-president. As

1 everyone knows, she was a staunch supporter
2 of her neighborhood's concerns and progress
3 throughout her term. I wish them both well.

4 And to former solicitor Minora, he
5 always conducted himself as a gentleman
6 toward me. He made efforts to answer my
7 questions regarding city issues and to
8 obtain long requested vital information
9 concerning managerial salaries and benefits
10 from Stu Renda.

11 To Kay Garvey, our trusted and
12 diligent city clerk, thank you for all of
13 your assistance and tireless work on my
14 behalf. You drafted countless requests and
15 letters which I sought for the residents of
16 the City of Scranton, and I know I have kept
17 you busy, often times too busy, throughout
18 last six years. You have been the
19 consummate professional even under trying
20 circumstance. You have raised the bar for
21 the next city clerk and our office and I
22 will miss you.

23 Council's loss, however, is the tax
24 office's gain, and there is no doubt that
25 you will continue to serve the taxpayers in

1 your meticulous, exemplary manner.

2 And finally, I have saved the best
3 for last. Bill Courtright and I first ran
4 together for city council and won in 2003.
5 We have served together as council
6 colleagues for the last six years and have
7 been perceived allies. During our tenure,
8 we have seen eye-to-eye on numerous issues.
9 In short, Bill Courtright was a very good
10 councilman and he will be missed in these
11 chambers. He was a man of respect and
12 accountability and he leaves very big shoes
13 to fill for Councilman Joyce and Rogan.

14 I know that as the new tax collector
15 he will build on the good works started by
16 Mrs. Vitali and increase tax collection for
17 the city coffers. Our tax dollars will be
18 in good hands. Bill, I wish you good luck
19 and I thank you for your service on Scranton
20 city council.

21 MR. MCGOFF: Mrs. Fanucci.

22 MS. FANUCCI: First, I want to begin
23 by thanking everyone for giving me the
24 opportunity to serve. It has been wonderful
25 four years and I'm going to say to the new

1 incoming council members when I was out
2 where you are four years ago looking at us,
3 a council up here, I was thinking that in
4 four years who knows what can happen, who
5 knows the changes I can make and who can
6 believe what we can see the difference in
7 the city, and I'm sure you are doing the
8 same thing.

9 I can sit here now saying that I
10 leave here with no regrets. I did what I
11 felt I could do and I'm happy with the
12 progress we did make. It is an honor and a
13 privilege to be able to sit up here and I'm
14 sure you will feel the same way and I wish
15 you all the best of luck in your new
16 endeavors.

17 Remember, I'm still going to be a
18 taxpayer and I'm still going to be out there
19 and you are still my representatives and I
20 I'm sure you will make us all proud.

21 I want to thank obviously the office
22 and Kay and Neil and Sue. I mean, none of
23 us could do any of this if it were not for
24 you. So often the people in the background
25 are the people who do the majority of the

1 running around and the hard work and for
2 that you have been invaluable and I just
3 want to thank all of you so much for all of
4 your work.

5 And for my fellow council members, I
6 want to say that it's been an honor. It's
7 fun. It was a privilege to see how this all
8 works out and some of you who have gone and
9 some of us will go onto other endeavors and
10 this will always be the foundation that
11 started whatever my belief system is and how
12 I can serve or what can I do in the future.
13 This will alter my foundation and you are
14 all a part of that, and I want to thank you.

15 And to my family, of course, without
16 them this wouldn't have been possible nor
17 would I have even wanted to do it, so I want
18 to thank them for all of your support and
19 for giving me the foundation to believe that
20 I can make a difference and thank you very
21 much.

22 MR. COURTRIGHT: I usually don't
23 write everything down, but I had to make
24 some notes this time. I'd just like to
25 thank the people in the City of Scranton for

1 allowing me to be your councilman for the
2 past six years. It truly has been an honor
3 and a privilege. I would like to say even
4 though I wouldn't be a councilman anymore,
5 I'll still be a public servant and I'll be
6 available to you if you need any help so
7 please don't hesitate to call me.

8 I'd like to thank Sue and Neil.
9 Without Sue and Neil the legwork that gets
10 done each and every day wouldn't get done,
11 so it's thanks to them for doing our labor
12 each and every day, I thank you.

13 I'd like to go back to when I first
14 got on council and thank Jay Saunders. He
15 was the city clerk when I first got there
16 and it's a little overwhelming when you
17 first get here, you don't know what's going
18 on, he guided me through the waters and he
19 was not only a city clerk to me, but he
20 became a friend and I thank him.

21 Mark Walsh who was and still is my
22 good friend and served as solicitor for my
23 first couple of years on council and due to
24 an illness he had to leave, and I'm happy to
25 say that Mark conquered his cancer and he is

1 doing well now, so I thank Mark for all of
2 his very, very picky details that kept us
3 out of trouble, sometimes I thought a little
4 too much detail, but he kept us out of
5 trouble and I thank him.

6 When Mark left I had never met Amil
7 Minora before, and he came in the office
8 with Mark and Amil became our new solicitor
9 and I thank Amil for all his good work and
10 for all of his friendship.

11 I'd like to thank each and every
12 council member that I have served with over
13 the last six years: Mr. John Pocius, Bob
14 McTiernan, Judy Gatelli, Sherry Fanucci, Bob
15 McGoff, Gary DiBileo, who ws the council
16 president for my first two years, and the
17 person that I served with for the last six
18 years, Janet Evans, thank you.

19 I'd like to thank each and every
20 employee of the City of Scranton that helped
21 me each and every day when we are trying to
22 solve all of these problems that they put
23 before us because I don't think unless you
24 sit here you can imagine the calls and the
25 letters you get and you can't do it alone,

1 so without the employees of the City of
2 Scranton helping us we couldn't get it done.
3 I know I certainly couldn't have.

4 To the stenographers, Lisa and
5 Cathene, my hats off to you. I don't know
6 how you keep on typing when there is three
7 and four of us talking at one time. There
8 is only supposed to be one of us and somehow
9 you did it and I thank you for that.

10 And last, and certainly not least,
11 Kay. Kay is a person that kept this council
12 going and kept us in order. Without her,
13 that wouldn't have happened. She is one of
14 the hardest working and most honest and
15 sincere people I ever met in my life and I
16 thank you, Kay. I think the city and this
17 council owes you a great debt of gratitude
18 so I thank you so much.

19 I usually don't speak this long. To
20 the multitude of people that helped me win
21 the elections. Nobody sits in an elected
22 office without so many people that helped
23 them and I'd like that thank each and every
24 one of you. It would take me forever to
25 name you all and I would be afraid that I

1 would miss someone, so I just want to say
2 thank you to all of you, you all know who
3 you are.

4 There is one individual though that
5 I have to single out. It's a man that
6 walked every step of the way with me every
7 time I ran and that is Eddie Weidman. Eddie
8 is a true friend and I thank him.

9 To my family, and my sister
10 Charlotte, my sister Barb and my brother Bob
11 I thank you for all your love and your
12 support. To my children, Billy, Patrick and
13 Lindsey, I know that me being on council was
14 very difficult for you at times and I thank
15 you for standing by me. To my mom, who
16 taped and watched every single council
17 meeting, thanks mom and I love you.

18 I truly believe that sitting in
19 public office is more difficult on our
20 families than it is on yourselves, so to my
21 wife of 29 years, Kim, I thank you and I
22 love you and I could not have done any of
23 this without you. Thank you.

24 And if I may, maybe a little envy to
25 the new council coming in, I think if you

1 vote every vote what you think is best for
2 the people of the city and not for any one
3 individual or any one group, I don't think
4 you can go wrong. I think if you vote for
5 the people I don't think you can go wrong
6 and that's what I tried to do the six years
7 that I have been here, so I wish you the
8 best of luck, you are in for the ride of
9 your life and I thank you each and every one
10 of you. Thank you.

11 MR. MCGOFF: I, too, would like to
12 thank the outgoing members of the council.
13 I owe a great debt to Mrs. Gatelli and
14 Mrs. Fanucci for all of the assistance that
15 they have given me over the three years that
16 I have been here. I really truly thank my
17 fellow rubber stampers for their assistance
18 and I will miss their being here and I think
19 the city is going to miss the service that
20 they have given and I hope that they will
21 continue to be part of the City of Scranton
22 and part of the development of the City of
23 Scranton.

24 I'd also like to thank to
25 Mr. Courtright. I sat next to

1 Mr. Courtright for three years on either
2 side and through those three years he has
3 kind of taught me the ropes of being on
4 council and I will miss his counsel and it
5 was always welcome and appreciated. Thank
6 you.

7 I've already, you know, expressed my
8 thanks to Kay and to Attorney Minora, they
9 will be missed. And that is all.

10 MS. GARVEY: FIFTH ORDER. NO
11 BUSINESS AT THIS TIME. SIXTH ORDER. NO
12 BUSINESS AT THIS TIME. SEVENTH ORDER. NO
13 BUSINESS AT THIS TIME.

14 MR. COURTRIGHT: Motion to adjourn.

15 MS. FANUCCI: Second.

16 MR. MCGOFF: So moved. Thank you.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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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