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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

HELD:

Tuesday, February 23, 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:

JANET EVANS, PRESIDENT

PAT ROGAN, VICE-PRESIDENT

ROBERT MCGOFF

FRANK JOYCE

JOHN LOSCOMBE

NANCY KRAKE, CITY CLERK

CATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

BOYD HUGHES, SOLICITOR

1 (Pledge of Allegiance recited and moment of reflection  
2 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 MR. CARRERA: Mr. Loscombe.

9 MR. LOSCOMBE: Here.

10 MR. CARRERA: Mr. Joyce.

11 MR. JOYCE: Here.

12 MR. CARRERA: Mrs. Evans.

13 MS. EVANS: Here. Dispense with the  
14 reading of the minutes, please.

15 MS. KRAKE: THIRD ORDER. 3-A.

16 APPLICATIONS AND DECISIONS RENDERED BY THE  
17 ZONING HEARING BOARD MEETING HELD ON  
18 FEBRUARY 18, 2010.

19 MS. EVANS: Are there any comments?  
20 If not, received and filed.

21 MS. KRAKE: 3-B. AGENDA FOR THE  
22 ZONING HEARING BOARD MEETING TO BE HELD ON  
23 MARCH 10, 2010.

24 MS. EVANS: Are there any comments?  
25 If not, received and filed. Before we begin

1 clerk's notes, I just want to welcome this  
2 evening Mr. Cathy Carrera officially to our  
3 city council team and city council office.  
4 She is replacing Mr. Neil Coolican who did  
5 an excellent job for council during my  
6 tenure and we are so happy to have you,  
7 Kathy, and welcome aboard. Mrs. Krake?

8 MS. KRAKE: Yes. Our first letter  
9 is one that we are just sending out even  
10 though the request came awhile ago. I would  
11 like to read what it is since it did take us  
12 awhile to get this one out. This is  
13 resident's requests concerning the cemetery,  
14 the Washburn Street Cemetery, excuse me.  
15 They are asking who is in charge of the  
16 citing of the property owner for blighted  
17 property, what is the current ordinance in  
18 the city regarding overgrown grass, weeds,  
19 etcetera, on the property. What, if any, is  
20 the fine if someone is cited for overgrowth.  
21 Will the Washburn Cemetery owners be cited  
22 if the problem with overgrowth rises this  
23 year, and who owns the Washburn Street  
24 Cemetery, do they reside in Scranton? Does  
25 the owner of the cemetery pay taxes on the

1 property, and if so how much are those taxes  
2 annually and are they current?

3 Ms. Carrera did send that letter out  
4 to today, but I'm following up because this  
5 person requested again the status of it. He  
6 pointed out to me that in the past groups  
7 were organized and these were the families  
8 of the deceased buried there that they  
9 themselves took it upon the group to come  
10 and clean the cemetery and I guess they are  
11 anticipating this happening again this year  
12 especially with spring coming and things  
13 starting to grow again, so we told them we  
14 would follow up on this as best we can.

15 MS. EVANS: Yes, please to, and I do  
16 admire the efforts of all of those  
17 volunteers. It was very kind of them to do  
18 the work that they do, but it's certainly  
19 unacceptable for the owner to ignore his  
20 responsibilities by law.

21 MS. KRAKE: Yes.

22 MS. EVANS: So, yes, if we keep  
23 following through on that.

24 MS. KRAKE: We will. The next are  
25 responses that we received. This is from

1 Donald J. Rinaldi from the 500 Lackawanna  
2 Development Company. He is writing in  
3 response to our letter of January 22. Now,  
4 last week we reported that he had not  
5 received this in a timely fashion. In fact,  
6 we did open this letter on Wednesday morning  
7 at our office and we did have it by the  
8 correct date, so I would like to apologize  
9 to Mr. Rinaldi for that, and we are glad  
10 that he answered in a timely fashion.

11 He says, "Construction on this  
12 multi-phase project is ongoing and all  
13 phases with the exception of new building  
14 construction on the corner of North  
15 Washington and Lackawanna Avenues are  
16 scheduled to be completed in the early  
17 Spring of 2010. The completion of  
18 construction of these phases will allow us  
19 to begin our formal sales and marketing  
20 process to secure tenants for all of the  
21 space. Based upon presale's activity it is  
22 our expectation that all of the space will  
23 be leased within a six-month period. This  
24 has been a very complex project involving  
25 hundreds of people. We could not have been

1           successful on this important project without  
2           the support of city council and we thank you  
3           for your continued support."

4                   MS. EVANS: Thank you. But it  
5           appears, I think I hear you saying that  
6           there are no tenants currently.

7                   MS. KRAKE: Yes.

8                   MS. EVANS: And the project is still  
9           incomplete.

10                   MS. KRAKE: Exactly. There are no  
11           tenants now and we asked them to list them,  
12           obviously he wasn't able to do that, and his  
13           target date for full occupancy is six  
14           months, so we will keep our eye on that,  
15           also.

16                   MS. EVANS: Yes. Very good.

17                   MS. KRAKE: This is very  
18           interesting. Mrs. Evans, Council, the  
19           traffic maintenance department that has been  
20           eliminated in the mayor's budget basically  
21           took it upon themselves before they left to  
22           make sure that the parking -- "No Parking"  
23           signs were taking care of at the  
24           intersection of Harrison and Pine. We had  
25           asked about this quite awhile ago and then

1 we did a second response. We did receive a  
2 response from Director Brazil. He says,  
3 "Harrison Avenue is a state roadway and  
4 marked in accordance to state requirements."

5 That's his response, but the traffic  
6 maintenance department completed the  
7 adjustment that we requested which was  
8 making the distance of "No Parking" farther  
9 from the corner, the way it was explained to  
10 me, and I hope this makes sense, is that the  
11 normal distance is 25 feet on the one side  
12 of the street, he made it 50 and on the  
13 other side he made it 40 to increase the  
14 visibility.

15 MS. EVANS: Very good.

16 MS. KRAKE: This was done by our  
17 traffic maintenance who was told by the  
18 director that we had the leeway to do this,  
19 so that's completed yet we received a letter  
20 from public works saying that it meets state  
21 requirements. I guess the bottom line is  
22 it's done, but it's a little confusing.

23 MS. EVANS: That certainly is, but I  
24 am very grateful to the traffic maintenance  
25 department for their excellent work and it

1 is this council's decision that they  
2 continue working because their services are  
3 vital to the people of Scranton on a daily  
4 basis.

5 MS. KRAKE: I agree. Our next  
6 response is also from Director Brazil. We  
7 had asked about the street sweeper on East  
8 Mountain and we asked that in good weather  
9 all streets that are heavily cindered be  
10 swept. Also, that picnic table and a bench  
11 be removed from the ice at Mountain Lake and  
12 we also asked them to list which streets the  
13 sweeper had been directed to prior to the  
14 last snow storm.

15 The response is: "In response to  
16 your request that all streets be swept in  
17 good weather, please note that the street  
18 sweeper is not out every day."

19 And then he says, "The table and  
20 picnic bench has been removed from the ice  
21 on Mountain Lake," and that's all that he  
22 has responded.

23 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

24 MS. KRAKE: This one also is a  
25 puzzle. We asked Mr. Brazil how the city

1 actively enforces the illegal collection by  
2 the DPW of privately owned and operated  
3 businesses in the city. If this is not  
4 currently being enforced, please state the  
5 reason why.

6 His answer is, "We do not pick up  
7 privately owned businesses. If you have  
8 information to the contrary, please supply  
9 me with this so I may address the  
10 situation."

11 MS. EVANS: Well, from this point  
12 forward any complaints that we receive from  
13 citizens regarding this matter, if we can  
14 keep close track of that and we will  
15 certainly provide that to him.

16 MS. KRAKE: Yes. This letter is  
17 also in response from Mr. Brazil. This is  
18 our ongoing story about the handicapped  
19 accessible curb cut on Spruce and Wyoming.  
20 He tells us that when weather permits we  
21 will look at repairing the handicap  
22 accessible curb at that intersection.

23 However, we did send out, once  
24 again, another letter at Mr. Loscombe's  
25 request because he had a picture of the

1 area, so even though we got this written  
2 response we thought that would drive the  
3 matter home since it really shows --  
4 emphasizes the need for immediate repair  
5 there.

6 MS. EVANS: Yes.

7 MS. KRAKE: And now we have some  
8 letters that we do not have a response from.  
9 The first is to Attorney Kelly, council  
10 requested a letter be sent to him regarding  
11 police promotions and request a list of the  
12 all of the police officers who are currently  
13 on the list for possible promotion. Also,  
14 what is the minimum written oral score  
15 necessary for promotion.

16 MS. EVANS: If you would resend that  
17 with a deadline of Friday, please.

18 MS. KRAKE: We also did not receive  
19 a response from Mr. Seitzinger on our  
20 request for him to attend a public caucus on  
21 March 9 at 5:45 p.m.

22 MS. EVANS: Well, let's contact him  
23 again tomorrow, and I think it will be  
24 important for us to find out whether the  
25 mayor has given him the permission to meet

1 with us or not.

2 MS. KRAKE: Then we had a rather  
3 extensive letter, so I will just sum it up.  
4 It was regarding the federal and state  
5 stimulus money. We had received no response  
6 from Mr. Renda on that. This letter also  
7 included a request about the upkeep of the  
8 Lackawanna County Library if that, indeed,  
9 happened and if the city camera mounted in  
10 the library area was working, and these were  
11 all directed to Mr. Renda who did not  
12 respond.

13 MS. EVANS: I'd like you to keep a  
14 file on each of the departments, please, and  
15 letters that are sent to the department  
16 heads and I'd like that to include not only  
17 the responses that we gratefully receive,  
18 but also, and maybe just as importantly, the  
19 responses that are ignored. I think council  
20 needs to take a hard look at job performance  
21 and patterns that develop from now through  
22 December and then departments can be  
23 addressed as necessary for the forthcoming  
24 budgets.

25 MS. KRAKE: Yes. We have no

1 response from Attorney Kelly regarding the  
2 Nay Aug Park Wildlife Center. This was a  
3 resident's request at how can the Recreation  
4 Authority justify the lease agreement with  
5 Lackawanna College and the Wildlife Center  
6 for \$1 a year.

7 MS. EVANS: We can send that again,  
8 but we might also begin some files on the  
9 authorities as well, each one of the five.

10 MS. KRAKE: And lastly, we have no  
11 response from Chief Elliott concerning the  
12 30 minute parking in front of the 900 block  
13 of -- excuse me, Buona Pizza at 504  
14 Lackawanna Avenue. Now, I realize that the  
15 issue with Buona Pizza is mostly during the  
16 day, but it would be nice to get a response  
17 from the chief.

18 MS. EVANS: Yes. So, let's submit  
19 that again with the Friday deadline and I'm  
20 hoping that these department heads will be  
21 cooperative and that they are not reacting  
22 in a vindictive manner toward council's  
23 decision.

24 MS. KRAKE: That's all I have.

25 MS. EVANS: Thank you. FOURTH

1 ORDER? CITIZENS PARTICIPATION. Bill  
2 Jackowitz.

3 MR. JACKOWITZ: Madam President, I  
4 request a minute to a minute half additional  
5 time tonight, if possible.

6 MS. EVANS: Yes. Can we hold  
7 Mr. Jackowitz's time temporarily until I  
8 tell you to begin the time, please?

9 MR. HUGHES: Sure.

10 MR. JACKOWITZ: You will know when  
11 the time starts. Bill Jackowitz, Master  
12 Sergeant, United States Air Force, retired.  
13 Lance Corporal Johnson, United States Marine  
14 Corp, you fulfilled your obligation to your  
15 country and your enlistment both up to and  
16 including that blank check that you signed  
17 when you became a marine including your  
18 life.

19 All present at council meetings  
20 please if you would, please rise, including  
21 council members. The people at home who are  
22 watching this at home please rise in your  
23 house, if you would, please. The honorably  
24 discharged veterans in the audience please  
25 pay attention to my commends, if you would,

1 please and also the commands who are -- also  
2 the people who are watching at home.  
3 Veterans, active duty military personnel,  
4 national guard and reserve members,  
5 attention. Present arms. Order arms.  
6 Thank you to the Johnson family for raising  
7 such a fine son who was willing to give his  
8 life for his country.

9 Thank you. You can start the time  
10 now and thank you for your cooperation.

11 MS. EVANS: Thank you,  
12 Mr. Jackowitz, for honoring Larry in that  
13 way.

14 MR. JACKOWITZ: What a surprise,  
15 lame duck mayor/ex governor/ex lieutenant  
16 governor/ State Senator Doherty did not  
17 appear in front of Scranton City Council.  
18 Instead, they requested council president  
19 and vice president to come to him. Mayor,  
20 why are you so afraid to face the citizens  
21 of your city that you were elected to lead  
22 not run from.

23 The last time that the mayor showed  
24 up at city council was when he mysteriously  
25 showed up to cast the deciding vote to

1           appoint Mr. McGoff to city council.

2           Mr. McGoff has voted to put the city into a  
3           \$400 million debt, long-term debt ever  
4           since. Plus, Mr. McGoff made the motion and  
5           voted in favor of removing \$1.5 million from  
6           the golf course sale and squandered the  
7           money on the Doherty program. Good job,  
8           Councilman.

9                         Doherty pledges to forego financial  
10           perks if elected to Senate. Doherty pledges  
11           to be sixth councilman, lower wage taxes by  
12           1/10 of a percentage point every year while  
13           serving as mayor of Scranton. Never  
14           happened. He promised to rebuild the  
15           downtown. We have emptier store fronts now,  
16           fewer businesses in downtown, Steamtown Mall  
17           40 percent vacancy rate. I invite the  
18           citizens of Scranton to walk downtown or  
19           better yet drive downtown, just make sure  
20           you avoid the potholes and cave-ins.

21                         If you decide to walk, look up at  
22           all of the empty office spaces located on  
23           the upper floors of the buildings downtown.  
24           If lame duck mayor/ex governor/ex lieutenant  
25           governor/state senator Doherty created 9,000

1 jobs in Scranton single handedly, why does  
2 he not present these jobs to the public?  
3 Instead, he goes to the Times-Tribune  
4 without any proof of job creation and they  
5 print the story anyhow. Why does Scranton  
6 have either the first, second or third  
7 highest unemployment rate in the state since  
8 Mayor Doherty has been mayor of Scranton?  
9 The only jobs that he created were in city  
10 hall and the authorities for his friends and  
11 campaign contributors. Mr. McGoff, possibly  
12 in motions you would be so kind as to  
13 explain why the wage tax collection has  
14 decreased not increased. I will be very  
15 interesting to hear your response with the  
16 new 9,000 jobs the mayor created. Why has  
17 wage taxes decreased, Mr. McGoff?

18 Some day I hope the Times-Tribune  
19 will ask the king to question Taylor, Old  
20 Forge, Moosic, Duryea, ask that question.  
21 When Doherty comes to your door to sign a  
22 petition for the king and ask for your vote.  
23 The mayor takes credit for the medical  
24 school. Mayor, you had nothing to do with  
25 the medical school coming to Scranton. As a

1 matter of fact you almost blew it.

2 Remember? I do.

3 I see where 15 people showed up for  
4 your press conference and supposedly 200  
5 showed up at Kildaire's. I hope nobody got  
6 DUI on your way home from Kildaire's.

7 I also see lame duck  
8 mayor/regiven/ex lieutenant governor,  
9 senator Doherty, you patted yourself on the  
10 back when you are interviewed by WNEP. WNEP  
11 TV you stated that you did a good job. If  
12 you have to pat yourself on the back that  
13 usually means that you have done a bad job.  
14 If you did such a good job why is the city  
15 still distressed -- accomplishments, the  
16 city is still distressed, taxes were raised,  
17 fines and penalties assessed to the  
18 delinquent taxpayers. When Lackawanna  
19 County has an office available to collect  
20 delinquent taxes and the money stays in the  
21 county. If you read today's paper you will  
22 see how much money the county collected in  
23 the state -- in the country, not to a bunch  
24 of lawyers who own a private collection  
25 agency that charges 23 fines and fees thanks

1 to Mr. McGoff, Mrs. Gatelli and Mrs.  
2 Fanucci.

3 \$350,000 dog park while the rest of  
4 the country pays approximately \$80,000 for a  
5 dog park. A tree house, bridge to nowhere,  
6 \$3 swimming fee for kids and leasing the  
7 Wildlife Center for a dollar a year for up  
8 to 150 years. By the way, the taxpayers  
9 must pay for any repairs or roof  
10 replacements.

11 As far as the million dollars the  
12 college would spend, they would have to have  
13 had to have to spend that money anyways. It  
14 was a zoo and wildlife center.

15 When was the last time Chief Elliott  
16 made a traffic stop, a drug bust or went out  
17 on any police calls? How will reducing his  
18 salary hinder public safety? If you do not  
19 like your salary, quit. When was the last  
20 time Chief Davis went into a burning  
21 building or saved someone or hooked up a  
22 hose or setup a ladder in a fire? Again,  
23 how will reducing his salary hurt public  
24 safety? If you do not like your salary,  
25 Chief Davis, quit your job.

1 Chief Elliott and Chief Davis have  
2 been middle managers to help them, captains,  
3 lieutenants, sergeants and so on while the  
4 smaller communities do not have that luxury.  
5 The police chiefs are patrolling and fire  
6 chiefs are fighting fires. Again, I say  
7 until the rank and file officers and  
8 firefighters get their raises, the chiefs  
9 should give back their raises.

10 Mr. McGoff, you can try and spin all  
11 you want. It was a bad deal for the  
12 taxpayers, the Wildlife Center and the zoo.  
13 We could have leased that building, we could  
14 have rented that building or we could have  
15 sold that building to Lackawanna College.  
16 They are a multimillion dollar nonprofit  
17 organization. So you your spin last week  
18 went absolutely no where. Thank you.

19 MS. EVANS: Thank you,  
20 Mr. Jackowitz. Maury Tamarelli.

21 MR. TAMARELLI: Good evening,  
22 Council.

23 MS. EVANS: Good evening, Council.  
24 Janet, I want to thank you first for  
25 announcing the Veteran's meeting that we had

1 over at the University. Thank you very  
2 much.

3 MS. EVANS: Oh, you are welcome.

4 MR. TAMARELLI: And I also want to  
5 thank all of the veterans here in Lackawanna  
6 County that backed me up for over 3,000  
7 senators signatures that I'm fighting the  
8 governor today for the outreach for Mrs.  
9 Ruth Gonzalez. I have Ken Smith, Kevin  
10 Murphy and the rest of the representatives  
11 in Harrisburg now and I'm fighting to keep  
12 this outreach going.

13 MS. EVANS: Yes.

14 MR. TAMARELLI: And I'm going to  
15 Harrisburg the 5th of March to meet the  
16 governor probably, I don't know, and we are  
17 doing all we can. He closed five offices  
18 down in the State of Pennsylvania with no  
19 warning. He was appropriated the money from  
20 the federal government and he put it in  
21 different projects, so that's what we want  
22 to find out why, so I want to thank the  
23 veterans that backed me up on this. This is  
24 the only way I could thank them through this  
25 council and I thank you very much.

1 MS. EVANS: Thank you Mr. Tamarelli.  
2 Mrs. Krake, I'm wondering with the  
3 permission of my colleagues, if there is  
4 anyone who objects you can let me know, we  
5 could write a letter to Governor Rendell  
6 expressing Scranton's City Council support  
7 for the efforts of Mr. Tamarelli and his  
8 group and that we would that these Veteran  
9 outreach centers would continue in  
10 operation. Is that agreeable? Thank you.

11 MR. TAMARELLI: Thank you very much.

12 MS. EVANS: You're welcome. Andy  
13 Sbaraglia.

14 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,  
15 citizen of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians,  
16 well, I see we got under 5-B our dear  
17 insurance came up again on our swimming  
18 pool, okay. And, of course, a disclaimer is  
19 in the policy again, of course, because it's  
20 all this -- I guess Knowells has no  
21 responsibility at all for the pool other  
22 than to be a negotiator in this contract.  
23 Geez, somewhere along the line there must be  
24 a company in Pennsylvania that offers  
25 insurance for something like that. There

1 has got to be. Pennsylvania is -- with all  
2 our amusements parks that we have are they  
3 all out of state or would they consider all  
4 the state are they national, like, All-State  
5 which is, of course, everywhere. Maybe I'm  
6 not saying that they cover that, but I would  
7 like to really know if there is any  
8 insurance company in Pennsylvania that  
9 really would cover something like this, but  
10 as you notice they have to go back for -- so  
11 they can open the pool. We know why it's  
12 being done, maybe it's not the best reason  
13 for being done, but it's being done for that  
14 reason. The pool has to open and they've  
15 got to have insurance.

16 Okay, the South Side complex, and I  
17 know it was brought up again, where -- are  
18 we liable should the federal government  
19 refuse to let that complex go? Who is  
20 liable for the money the mayor collected for  
21 that complex and who has to give it back  
22 should that fall through? This man spent  
23 the money supposedly for a lot of things,  
24 you know, the field that we never got, this,  
25 that and whatever, it's just impossible for

1 a man to spend money like that and what did  
2 you get out of it? I think he spent it up  
3 at Nay Aug, somewhere up at Nay Aug in I  
4 imagine Nay Aug, they sent out bids, of  
5 course, for the greenhouse that's on the  
6 agenda up there, too. You won't see  
7 anything like it, but the bids went out for  
8 the greenhouse.

9 But up at Nay Aug, all of the Nay  
10 Aug buildings are liabilities. You build  
11 something it becomes a liability. You got  
12 to keep it up, so it's a liability. So we  
13 spent all that money on Nay Aug, all we did  
14 is increase more and more liabilities. The  
15 original deed for that calls for amenities.  
16 That's all they wanted up there, the  
17 amenities with that stand and being able to  
18 bring up the stand. I don't know what the  
19 liability insurance could cover on that  
20 stand. Are we covering liability just for  
21 people around the stand or if they got bad  
22 food or stuck with them suing us for bad  
23 food out of that stand. I don't know what  
24 the liability requirements are, I assume you  
25 will look into it, maybe you can vote on it

1 and see exactly what liabilities we incur at  
2 that stand.

3 And as far as a lot of other things  
4 go, I don't know. As far as where we stand  
5 financially, we are never going to get out  
6 of this hole we are in and we are going to  
7 sink deeper and deeper into the abyss  
8 because there is really no way out of it.  
9 He put us in such debt that there is no way  
10 we can get out of this debt other than use  
11 tax hikes which we really don't want.

12 But you know what, maybe we can ask  
13 Harrisburg to come to our aid, our  
14 legislature, and allow 2-A cities to expand  
15 their area. If we can expand out, you know,  
16 we tried this before, it probably won't go  
17 no where, I don't blame it, but to take in  
18 our surrounding communities. You know, if  
19 we took in Dunmore, Taylor, Dickson City,  
20 Moosic, and so forth our population would be  
21 great enough that we could warrant that 2-A  
22 status. You know we should be really be a  
23 third class city. Any common sense would  
24 tell you that population wide, but that's  
25 the only way we are ever going to get out of

1           our hole, we have to spend out. And like  
2           you keep spending they use our services.  
3           Everybody in our surrounding area uses our  
4           services, so maybe they should come a part  
5           of it and maybe we'd get a lot more  
6           complaints that are a lot more in tune as to  
7           what is actually happening because that's  
8           the only way we are going to get out of this  
9           debt and when PEL comes with their  
10          requirements if I read the earlier what some  
11          them wanted, some of the fees they wanted to  
12          raise, and I hate to see what's going to  
13          happen to the people. I really am sorry for  
14          them.

15                   At least in my point in my life if I  
16          want to leave I can. When you hit my age  
17          you can do almost anything and you can leave  
18          quite a few ways, but my home is already  
19          here, and like I said before, I'll always be  
20          in Scranton no matter what. If I live to be  
21          a 100 or whatever, my home is already at the  
22          Cathedral and that's where I'll be going, so  
23          I'm well set, and I thank you for listening.

24                   MS. EVANS: Thank you. Marie  
25          Schumacher.

1 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening,  
2 Council.

3 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

4 MS. SCHUMACHER: First, I'd like to  
5 call attention to the change date for the  
6 Scranton Sewer Authority meeting which  
7 normally would have been tonight. They will  
8 now be meeting next Tuesday. Hopefully the  
9 \$24,000 Ganat-Flemming rate study results  
10 will be presented next week so I hope those  
11 who attended the January meeting will also  
12 attend next Tuesday.

13 Second, the recent Times-Tribune  
14 article on the Mexican black tar heroine  
15 sellers that target cities with many young  
16 white people. I would ask that Mr. Loscombe  
17 inquire whether this scourge has arrived in  
18 Scranton and so advise us next week or --

19 MR. LOSCOMBE: Sure.

20 MS. SCHUMACHER: -- as soon as you  
21 can get that, and now I apologize that the  
22 budget is in Seventh Order and I'm here  
23 tonight with more questions than answers,  
24 but as you know I wasn't here last week.

25 Two weeks ago though I did note that

1 the full faith and credit of we taxpayers is  
2 behind Scranton Parking Authority. Their  
3 bonds have reportedly come close to default  
4 and I had inquired whether or not we are in  
5 a pay me now or pay me later situation in  
6 the Parking Authority of what is being cut  
7 from the budget, I believe it was \$200,000  
8 roughly if that was going cause them to  
9 default on a bond which was cheaper that to  
10 pay now or to pay later and if there is an  
11 answer to that I would like to hear that  
12 during the motions.

13 Then also I attended the February 4  
14 hearing on HB-1942. During Bill  
15 Courtright's testimony there was a question  
16 and answer period, and Mr. Courtright during  
17 that question and answer period had  
18 suggested that the tax office could let the  
19 cities delinquent taxes, I believe it was  
20 the cities because the county collects  
21 everybody else's, but a legislative panelist  
22 asked how many more people will be required  
23 and the response, which surprised me, was  
24 none and, of course, the way my mind works I  
25 thought well, then, maybe they don't have

1           enough to do, so I don't understand why if  
2           the Single Tax Office has the resources to  
3           collect the delinquent taxes with the staff  
4           they have now why we are adding more, I  
5           believe it was four additional employees,  
6           was that? Yeah. So I would like to know  
7           why that is being done.

8                         And then the 2010 controller's  
9           budget was almost the same as that for 2009  
10          which did not include the fund to audit the  
11          single tax office, so why then is this  
12          budget revision unless there is going to be  
13          another waive of revisions, why does the  
14          budget not include funding for the single  
15          tax audit as we all witnesses what can  
16          happen when the Single Tax Office is not  
17          audited?

18                        And then the IT function I believe  
19          there was also a cutback there and I would  
20          like to know what functions will not be  
21          continued because of that and will it effect  
22          putting all of the backup to the agenda  
23          items onto the website by that reduction  
24          because I really would like to see that  
25          happen and it would seem to me it's as

1 simple as requesting anybody this has an  
2 input for the agenda to it electronically  
3 and then it can go right onto the agenda, so  
4 I'm looking forward to the day when all of  
5 that backup except, of course, when there is  
6 blueprints, of course, that would be  
7 impossible.

8 And then the DPW position, I went  
9 back to I believe it was July 12, 2007, when  
10 there was a colloquy, Mrs. Evans, between  
11 you and Mr. Courtright on the fact that the  
12 salary of \$61,700 at this point in time for  
13 the director was -- in essence was too much  
14 because Mr. Parker had been dual-hatted and  
15 he was also the engineer and then this  
16 brought up another question. Mr. Courtright  
17 during that conversation said that he knew  
18 that the actual functions had been reduced,  
19 that the Traffic Maintenance Bureau had been  
20 moved under Chief Elliott yet it still  
21 appears in the budget as DPW, so it would be  
22 interesting to find out where that  
23 department really does reside. But I don't  
24 know why we did not go back on that DPW, and  
25 nothing against Jeff, I like Jeff and I

1 think is he doing a fine job, but if  
2 everybody else is being taken back I don't  
3 know why that one should be a different --  
4 should be different especially since he did  
5 start off with a double salary.

6 See you next week maybe and maybe  
7 not, I may be at the Sewer Authority.

8 MS. EVANS: Maybe just quickly I can  
9 respond to you though, we'll start with the  
10 DPW director and I know that he received a  
11 slight salary decrease based on the formula,  
12 but keeping in mind what you said, we are  
13 including the duties of the director of  
14 Parks and Recreation into the job  
15 description for the DPW director. So, in  
16 other words, there are positions in parks  
17 and rec that have been eliminated.

18 MS. SCHUMACHER: Positions? More  
19 than one?

20 MS. EVANS: Yes. And Mr. Brazil  
21 would be asked to wear both hats. DPW  
22 Director and Director of Parks and  
23 Recreation as is done in many other cities  
24 in Pennsylvania, so that is why you didn't  
25 see a significant salary reduction that

1 reflects the fact that, yes, he is not a  
2 city engineer and, yes, the city is paying I  
3 believe \$50,000 annually to Mr. Swanson for  
4 his services. But, as I said, we are asking  
5 Mr. Brazil to wear more than one hat now.

6 In addition, the Single Tax Office  
7 audit, I had questioned that myself during  
8 the meeting I had with Mr. Courtright and  
9 Mr. Renda and Mr. Renda stated at this time  
10 that the audit would be performed this year  
11 and it would be performed by McGrail, Merkel  
12 and Quinn, the firm that had previously  
13 audited the Single Tax Office because, as  
14 you said, I asked about placing money into  
15 controller's report --

16 MS. SCHUMACHER: There is no money  
17 in there for it.

18 MS. EVANS: -- in order for them to  
19 be able to perform these duties as they  
20 should be doing, but Mr. Renda's answer was  
21 that the audit will be conducted by McGrail,  
22 Merkle and Quinn.

23 MS. SCHUMACHER: But where are the  
24 funds though?

25 MS. EVANS: Where are the funds for

1           that?

2                   MS. SCHUMACHER: I mean, if that's a  
3 controller's function shouldn't they be in  
4 the controller's budget? I'm sorry, I  
5 shouldn't be asking --

6                   MS. EVANS: Well, it's not in the  
7 controller's budget, that I'm aware of, but  
8 we can certainly ask Mr. Renda and see if he  
9 will answer that question for us.

10                   And as far as reinstating the tax  
11 office positions, I know that the Scranton  
12 School District funds 50 percent of those  
13 salaries and the school district passed  
14 their budget in December, they did not wish  
15 to see those positions cut. I have spoken  
16 with Mr. Courtright at length about the  
17 situation, he does not want to see those  
18 positions cut because he feels that they are  
19 imperative to the full and effective  
20 operation of the Single Tax Office and since  
21 that has been a calamity over the last  
22 several years, I think it's very important  
23 that the tax office is running efficiently  
24 and cost effectively for the benefit of all  
25 of the taxpayers and each governing body

1 particularly so that we are receiving the  
2 proper amount of financial dispersement on a  
3 monthly basis.

4 MS. SCHUMACHER: So if I may then,  
5 you are not adding more people you are  
6 restoring four jobs that would have been cut  
7 otherwise?

8 MS. EVANS: Yes. They are being  
9 reinstated. Now, I believe they are  
10 currently or they continue to currently work  
11 at the Single Tax Office and, as I said, the  
12 school district has been funding it's share  
13 and so this is simply a reinstatement on the  
14 city's part for our portion of those  
15 employees.

16 MR. MCGOFF: May I interject?

17 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. Thank you.

18 MR. MCGOFF: I was told that those  
19 four positions weren't eliminated -- or  
20 can't be eliminated at this time, that under  
21 a prior tax collector an agreement was made  
22 between the union and the tax collector that  
23 as long as they were outsourcing a  
24 collection -- a certain, I forget what tax  
25 it was that was going to be collected, that

1           they agreed that they would not -- they  
2           could not eliminate any positions at the tax  
3           office until the contract with that private  
4           contractor was completed.

5                     MS. EVANS: Do we know when that  
6           would be?

7                     MR. MCGOFF: I believe it's sometime  
8           I'm going to say April, but it's this year.  
9           Sometime this year. So those four positions  
10          are still there.

11                    MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay, I thought  
12          they were four in addition to what that was  
13          there now --

14                    MS. EVANS: No.

15                    MS. SCHUMACHER: -- just from the  
16          notes I took three weeks ago, so thank you  
17          very much.

18                    MS. EVANS: You're welcome. Mrs.  
19          Krake, could we send a letter to  
20          Mr. Courtright asking him when that contract  
21          expires and if he anticipates renewal and I  
22          think that will be helpful in terms of a  
23          budget for next year so that we know exactly  
24          where we stand legally in that office. Les  
25          Spindler.

1 MR. SPINDLER: Good evening,  
2 Council. Les Spindler, Scranton resident,  
3 homeowner and taxpayer. Mrs. Evans, I would  
4 like to follow-up on three questions that I  
5 submitted a few weeks ago and I haven't  
6 gotten an answer yet unless I missed it  
7 again. The one is about the playground, the  
8 Lackawanna Little League, did the mayor and  
9 Mark Dougher actually authorize that being  
10 dismantled? Was there in answer to that  
11 one? I submitted it in writing.

12 MS. EVANS: Mrs. Krake?

13 MS. KRAKE: Mr. Spindler, I did  
14 review your letter as of today, we don't  
15 have the answers yet. Some of them -- I  
16 don't want to take up his time, some of them  
17 have been answered in other ways. If you  
18 would be kind enough to call our office  
19 tomorrow I would be able to explain it in  
20 full detail.

21 MR. SPINDLER: Okay.

22 MS. KRAKE: And we will pursue it  
23 further, also, if you want to with each  
24 level.

25 MR. SPINDLER: Another was about the

1 500 block of North Rebecca, that's two-ways  
2 and the rest of the street is one-way, I was  
3 just wondering why.

4 And ECTV, they don't have it on both  
5 channels live, it's just on Channel 19 live.  
6 That was my last one.

7 You mentioned the tax office, Mrs.  
8 Evans, I have a story about that. Someone  
9 that I know went to pay their bill yesterday  
10 and they stood in line a half an hour and  
11 they said the line was out the door and down  
12 the ramp, so for these people to go on-line  
13 in the Doherty newsletter and bash city  
14 council for restoring those four jobs they  
15 don't know what they are talking about.  
16 Those four jobs should be restored, there  
17 were two people working this gentleman told  
18 me yesterday and the line was out the door  
19 and down the ramp, so they cannot lose these  
20 jobs.

21 Another thing, I read in the Doherty  
22 newsletter last week about the Library  
23 Authority had their meeting, is council  
24 taking steps to stop this?

25 MS. EVANS: Currently Solicitor

1 Hughes is in negotiations with Attorney  
2 O'Brien, whom I'm assuming must represent  
3 the Board of Trustees/Library Authority and  
4 we should have an update for you at next  
5 week's council meeting. It's ongoing.

6 MR. SPINDLER: Thank you.

7 Mr. Rogan, I have a question for you, last  
8 week you said you are going to make a  
9 motion --

10 MR. HUGHES: If I could,  
11 Mr. Spindler, let me stop the clock, okay?  
12 I repeatedly stated it, that any meetings or  
13 action taken by the authority unless to  
14 dissolve or what's in legal principles known  
15 as ultra vires, which means they are of no  
16 consequence and as a result I don't see them  
17 really taking any actions, whatever actions  
18 that they would take, legally they have no  
19 right to act other than to dissolve the  
20 authority. As Mrs. Evans said, hopefully I  
21 will have a much more update report next  
22 week.

23 MR. SPINDLER: Thank you.

24 Mr. Rogan, last week you said you were going  
25 to make a motion to restore the recycling

1 foreman's job. Are you still going to do  
2 that?

3 MR. ROGAN: I spoke with the members  
4 of council and there is not support for  
5 that.

6 MR. SPINDLER: Thank you. As was  
7 mentioned before, Mayor Doherty is now going  
8 to run for Senate, he said he is dropping  
9 out of the governor's race, well, he didn't  
10 drop out of the governor's race, the state  
11 democratic committee more or less told them  
12 they don't want them. When it came time for  
13 endorsements, Chris Doherty didn't get one  
14 vote for governor, and it turns out a  
15 gentleman from Philadelphia who didn't even  
16 have his name in for governor got 44 votes,  
17 so what does that tell you?

18 And he said he is running on his  
19 record of job creation. What job creation  
20 has he -- if he created all of these jobs  
21 why didn't he make his announcement at one  
22 of these places where he created all the  
23 jobs? As Mr. Jackowitz said, he did not  
24 bring the medical school here, Senator  
25 Mellow did, and I'm not a Senator Mellow fan

1 but you have to give credit where credit is  
2 due. And Chris Doherty says, "Just walk  
3 around downtown Scranton and what do you  
4 see?"

5 Nothing. You see empty store  
6 fronts, there is no people shopping. If he  
7 is running a job creation I think he needs a  
8 lot of help.

9 Now, yesterday's headline about  
10 Chief Elliott if his pay is cut he will be  
11 making as much as the chief of Tunkhannock?  
12 Well, I'll bet the chief of Tunkhannock  
13 isn't an incompetent sexist because Chief  
14 Elliott has one lawsuit against him for  
15 calling two females officers a name which I  
16 don't want to repeat, and these people he  
17 called these names are wives and mothers and  
18 didn't deserve to be treated like that. He  
19 has another age discrimination lawsuit  
20 against him, that's two lawsuits that I know  
21 of.

22 He has ignored a police report, he  
23 is covering it up that I brought up a long  
24 time ago that ID's two Doherty cronies who  
25 are city employees that stole Gary DiBileo's

1 signs and threw them in the river. Last  
2 week Mrs. Stulgis was here and said about a  
3 few weeks ago 13 police cars were off the  
4 road at one time. How could this man let  
5 this happen? Now, I think this is the best  
6 of all. I have it on very, very good  
7 information from a very reliable source that  
8 we are down a lot of police officers. We  
9 are supposed to have ten beat cops in the  
10 city and we have three. Mr. Loscombe, since  
11 you are public safety chair you might want  
12 to listen to this, we have three beat cops,  
13 should have ten, and Chief Elliott is not  
14 giving the test. Now, this guy shouldn't  
15 only have his pay cut, he shouldn't have a  
16 job. This man should have been fired a long  
17 time ago. I spoke to a postal worker today  
18 and said if he called somebody a name at the  
19 post office that Chief Elliott called these  
20 two women they have zero tolerance. He  
21 would have been fired on the spot. This man  
22 is an sexist, he is incompetent, he is  
23 putting the city in danger, he is not  
24 putting police officers on the force and  
25 this is after a report came out that our

1 violent crime is up 19 percent. This man,  
2 like I said, he doesn't not only deserve a  
3 pay cut, he shouldn't have a job and thank  
4 you and have a good night.

5 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Spindler.  
6 Mr. Loscombe, if you are able could you  
7 arrange a meeting with Chief Elliott  
8 regarding these beat patrol officers and  
9 what we have heard this evening regarding  
10 the test, that the test has not been given  
11 and then perhaps you can report to council  
12 next week.

13 MR. LOSCOMBE: Definitely.

14 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Jean Suetta.

15 MS. SUETTA: Jean Suetta. Hi,  
16 Cathy, welcome aboard.

17 MS. CARRERA: Thank you.

18 MS. SUETTA: I requested last week  
19 about a depression on Albright Avenue right  
20 at the beginning going onto the new bridge,  
21 the depression is still there. They filled  
22 it halfway up and left it and now it's  
23 getting worse.

24 And Chief Elliott, he is getting  
25 \$48,000 a year. You mean to tell me he

1           can't live on that? He wants a raise when  
2           none of our patrolman got a raise in the  
3           last nine years or our fire. I had a lady  
4           call me up today and tell me she made a  
5           complaint to Mr. Elliott about drug dealings  
6           over in South Side and when she called on  
7           the phone he harassed her very bad and the  
8           drug house is 1350 Prescott --

9                   MS. EVANS: Prospect Avenue.

10                   MS. SUETTA: -- Prospect Avenue,  
11           second floor, and he has done nothing. Why?  
12           \$48,000 a year. Do you know how much money  
13           that is?

14                   MS. EVANS: Well, I did think --

15                   MS. SUETTA: I worked hard on the  
16           back of a garbage truck and didn't make half  
17           that and I worked. I didn't sit in an  
18           office. I loaded garbage and he is garbage  
19           and he should be loaded on a truck for what  
20           he is doing. Don't be saying nothing.

21                   MS. EVANS: Well, I believe from  
22           what I have read in the newspaper concerning  
23           the 19 percent rise in violent crime in the  
24           city, that the chief was very anxious to  
25           have citizens' contact him with any types of

1 complaints, reports or leads and so this  
2 certainly isn't the way to encourage the  
3 public to make those reports if what you are  
4 saying is true.

5 MS. SUETTA: Yeah. She's a senior  
6 citizen yet.

7 MS. EVANS: So, Mr. Loscombe --

8 MS. SUETTA: And he treated her like  
9 a piece of shit.

10 MS. EVANS: -- if you would bring our  
11 concern about that as well. Please, Ms.  
12 Suetta.

13 MS. SUETTA: All right.

14 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

15 MS. SUETTA: Well, I get very upset  
16 when somebody picks on a senior citizen  
17 because I also am one.

18 MS. EVANS: Yes.

19 MS. SUETTA: And this morning I pick  
20 up the toilet paper to read, right, and I  
21 read about Kevin Murphy and Frank Shimkus is  
22 saying Kevin Murphy done nothing? He is  
23 full of malarky because Kevin Murphy is a  
24 good man. He didn't lie about where he  
25 lived or anything. He helps the senior

1 citizens. That's all.

2 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

3 MS. SUETTA: My heart goes out to  
4 the Thompson family. I know what it's like  
5 to have an officer knock on the door. I had  
6 three brothers that I lost in the war.

7 MS. EVANS: I'm sorry.

8 MS. SUETTA: You know, and my heart  
9 goes out to them. All right. Thank you  
10 very much.

11 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Brian Mills.  
12 No? Ron Ellman.

13 MR. ELLMAN: Hello, Council. Ron  
14 Ellman, member of the Taxpayers'  
15 Association.

16 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

17 MR. ELLMAN: You all miss me last  
18 week?

19 MS. EVANS: Yes.

20 MS. ELLMAN: Well, we had a -- my  
21 mother-in-law's dog died and it's a big  
22 sadness for us and it died of old age, you  
23 know, he is 19, but I still felt bad then  
24 that afternoon Ms. Rosie and me got thrown  
25 out of a Chinese dollar store and I was in a

1 bad mood about that, and I won't go into  
2 that. It's an interesting story. Now,  
3 tonight I'm sitting here and everybody has  
4 stolen my thunder so far. I can't believe I  
5 was paralleling so many people in my notes,  
6 but, I remember the week before last  
7 Mr. Doherty was singing the praises of  
8 Mr. Joyce's apartments downtown. He said  
9 this is where the city is going. Did you  
10 read the article?

11 MS. EVANS: No, I didn't.

12 MR. ELLMAN: Everybody in the city  
13 probably end up with those two and three  
14 thousand dollars apartments some day. That  
15 seems to be his wish. This man is just so  
16 far out of a tune with the people of this  
17 city. I don't know. Somebody told me he is  
18 a fool. He is not a fool. The fool is the  
19 people that didn't vote this year. That's  
20 why we have bad government.

21 You know, I'm not that bright, but I  
22 wouldn't be afraid to debate our beloved  
23 mayor, boss Doherty. I wouldn't debate you.  
24 I wouldn't debate Mrs. Fanucci, a lot of  
25 people, but he wouldn't worry me. It's not

1           that he is not an intelligent person, it's  
2           just I wouldn't be -- have no fear of  
3           talking to him if you could get him out in  
4           public. It seems like he's a coward. He  
5           doesn't want to come to the people. You  
6           know, he should come around us once in  
7           awhile and see things.

8                        I got another question is -- the old  
9           building that the college got at Nay Aug, is  
10          that a done deal? Is there a loophole that  
11          we can get that building back? I hear  
12          people complain about that crooked deal left  
13          and right?

14                      MS. EVANS: Our solicitor is working  
15          on that.

16                      MR. ELLMAN: That's good. That will  
17          make some people happy because I never think  
18          of that myself because I don't go there, but  
19          that's a shameful disgrace to have that done  
20          with the people of this city.

21                      To change the subject real quick, do  
22          you -- at your school do they have a way of  
23          testing people for dyslexia like I got?

24                      MS. EVANS: I'm certain they do.  
25          I'm certain every school district employs

1 school psychologists who run batteries of  
2 diagnostic and prescriptive tests.

3 MR. ELLMAN: Mine is getting  
4 problematic instead of better in my old age.  
5 I can't -- I just can't see how I went  
6 through almost three-quarters of my life and  
7 didn't know it. I went through school -- I  
8 went through Memphis State University, the  
9 University of Tennessee and I never knew it.  
10 I thought everybody had to read things  
11 backward and turn them around my whole life.  
12 I guess that's why I wasn't an "A" student.

13 But I had somebody ask me that a  
14 couple of days ago when we were talking. I  
15 said nobody ever tested me. That's, you  
16 know, I read things -- I was down at  
17 Edwardsville today trying to find an address  
18 and I was looking at everything in my head  
19 it's all backwards. I got lost and ended  
20 out there in the old part of Edwardsville  
21 where the restaurant used to be. I forget  
22 the name of it. Anyway, I was supposed to  
23 in the other way, but I see these numbers  
24 wrong and I feel sorry for people that have  
25 to go through this. It's a -- it's not that

1           serious, I guess, but it's -- I had  
2           something else here in all of this crap.

3                       Oh, our debt that Andy mentioned,  
4           there is no way this city can support a debt  
5           like we got and you people need to start as  
6           quick as you can because time flies so fast  
7           to see if we can get some state intervention  
8           or something with all of these nonprofits  
9           and these three colleges just sucking the  
10          life blood out of this city. It's just a  
11          terrible thing when the student can afford a  
12          \$3,000 a month apartment and the college is  
13          pleading for money and buying property and  
14          not doing their share. It's just not right,  
15          you know.

16                       I was talking to a boy today. He  
17          was walking past the house and he asked me  
18          some directions, he is going down town. I  
19          told him where the soup kitchen was and  
20          where he can city at night I guess, you  
21          know, I told him I'm not familiar with those  
22          things, but it's a -- it's another great  
23          sadness to see people like this. Thank you.

24                       MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Ellman.  
25          Charlie Newcomb.

1 MR. NEWCOMB: Good evening, council.

2 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

3 MR. NEWCOMB: I just have two topics  
4 tonight. The first one I want to talk about  
5 is something that it really affects me a lot  
6 because I know I see a lot of them in the  
7 city, but especially this home. There is a  
8 home at 340 Horatio Avenue up in the Keyser  
9 Valley section, and why I know this address  
10 very well is because this was my family's  
11 homestead, my mother and favor built this  
12 home from scratch in 1965. If you drive by  
13 there, there has been I don't know how many  
14 orange tags, one taken off, they go back I'm  
15 sure for a couple of years they have been  
16 condemned. There is still a tenant in  
17 there, and I'll tell you what, there is home  
18 about three homes up for sale and it was for  
19 sale in the \$300,000 price range, I don't  
20 know what it is now. But anyway, this home  
21 is deplorable. As I drove by today aluminum  
22 siding is blowing off, it's laying on the  
23 ground. There is junk on the porch. This  
24 place makes Sanford and Son look like the  
25 Taj Maj Hall. I'm going to tell you, it's

1 very deplorable and I do think you have  
2 to -- and I understand people, you know,  
3 sometimes people have trouble with their  
4 properties, but we all have a responsibility  
5 in our neighborhoods and the city to keep  
6 this -- you know, to keep our properties up.  
7 And I'm sure, you know, if some of us have  
8 properties that look like this we would be  
9 in more trouble than others, so I would  
10 appreciate if you would check into, you  
11 know, 340 North Horatio Avenue, just  
12 drive-by yourself and take a look because if  
13 I lived in that neighborhood the blight  
14 hotline would be out of tape because it's  
15 terrible.

16 MS. EVANS: Mrs. Krake, could we  
17 contact Mr. Seitzinger tomorrow and apprise  
18 him of what Mr. Newcomb has said and then we  
19 would like a written report from him as to  
20 how the problem is going to be addressed.  
21 Thank you.

22 MR. NEWCOMB: You're welcome. I  
23 also talked to Mr. Seitzinger and he did  
24 admit that the tag was on there. And the  
25 second thing I would like to talk about it

1 is, I know it's in Seventh Order tonight, I  
2 believe, but the budget. I heard a lot of  
3 talk here the last few weeks, and I'm just  
4 going to give you my opinion on the budget.  
5 As you know, it's no secret, I'll tell you  
6 what, I'm a very conservative person. I  
7 call myself a fiscal conservative. If I was  
8 running the city, county, state or whatever,  
9 I would run it like I do my own household.  
10 If you make \$4,000 a month, you can't spend  
11 \$4,100. It's as simple as that, okay?

12 I go by myself, I'll use myself as  
13 an example. Knock on wood, you know, all I  
14 own is -- I have a home and one car payment  
15 and under \$100 worth of credit card debt.  
16 That's because I choose to live  
17 conservatively, don't live off everybody  
18 else and be responsible to take care of me.  
19 So I'm going to he will you what, as far as  
20 the budget goes I know, you know, in this  
21 day and age a lot of people are talking  
22 about giving up salaries, but I'm sure it  
23 wasn't a personal decision, you looked at  
24 what had to be cut, so I'll tell you I was  
25 really -- everybody up there ran and won an

1 election as a Democrat and when I sat home  
2 and listened to some of these I'll tell you  
3 what I'm very proud of what four of you  
4 anyways, Mr. Rogan, Mrs. Evans, Mr. Joyce  
5 and Mr. Loscombe, even though, you know,  
6 you ran on a Democratic ticket you used  
7 common sense, fiscal common sense,  
8 regardless of what your party is.

9           Unfortunately, Mr. McGoff, the old  
10 way of doing business where across our  
11 nation right now on a national scale you see  
12 what's happening between up in Massachusetts  
13 and everything with Republicans and  
14 Democrats, but all I have to say is if you  
15 are going to save us seven hundred and some  
16 dollars this year and maybe whatever next  
17 year, hopefully 10 percent, maybe it will be  
18 \$7 million, but all I could say is there is  
19 one person out there, and I know she gets --  
20 they really pick on her because they don't  
21 like her, but I give her credit for saying  
22 what she has to say and that's Sara Palin  
23 and Sara Palin made the comment when she was  
24 here and she makes it all the time about the  
25 oil situation: Drill, baby, drill. That's

1 a statement. Well, all I can say when the  
2 budget time comes, stick to your guns and  
3 just remember, cut, cut, cut. Thank you.

4 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Newcomb.  
5 Dave Dobrzyn.

6 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening. Dave  
7 Dobrzyn, member of the taxpayers', resident  
8 of Scranton. In the Times the other day  
9 there is an interesting article, very  
10 critical of you people up there, you know,  
11 vengeful attacks and when I got to the end  
12 of the it I noticed that the person is from  
13 Clarks Summit, so I have a proposal for you,  
14 maybe you can make an ordinance that if  
15 somebody wants to pay a commuter tax to our  
16 city you people can give them the right to  
17 vote here and exclusively in local elections  
18 and maybe that will help things out a little  
19 bit.

20 Okay, it was mentioned about Nay Aug  
21 tonight and I don't know if it's true or  
22 not, it's something I heard, but I heard  
23 that the concession stand pays absolutely no  
24 rent or utilities at Nay Aug Park, so it  
25 might be something to keep under your hat

1 and think about.

2 On the tax office, a few years ago  
3 or a year or two ago, I proposed that the  
4 City before they hand over these tax  
5 delinquents to NCC there should at least be  
6 some last ditch attempt at seeing what you  
7 could do with these people. Maybe they are  
8 confused, maybe they are broke and maybe  
9 they could qualify for reverse mortgage and  
10 pay their local taxes and get out from under  
11 it and use their money wisely and we would  
12 have this problem and the how somebody is  
13 going to pay and \$800 tax when they just  
14 paid off \$800 from last year or \$1,000 and  
15 #2,300 piled on top of that when they have  
16 no money, we should have kind of counseling  
17 and some type of stop measure as a last  
18 ditch attempt before they just get handed  
19 over to Northeast Criminal Conspiracy -- I  
20 mean, NCC.

21 And on chief -- I don't want to be  
22 critical of him, but -- or anybody, but in a  
23 case where the reporting of drugs it might  
24 pay to have a little patience because I  
25 think something like that has to be

1           investigated as to the logic of it, you  
2           know. I don't know if I would appreciate  
3           getting in an argument with a neighbor over  
4           a parking space and have him sell me off to  
5           the chief as a French connection and SWAT  
6           team coming through my door, I don't know if  
7           I would appreciate that either, and a lot of  
8           those hotlines and so forth are  
9           semi-anonymous so you wouldn't even know  
10          where it came from. You would be  
11          suspecting, but you know, like they would  
12          look in an investigation for excessive  
13          comings and goings and things like that,  
14          short visits and so forth, and maybe that's  
15          what they are doing as opposed to just  
16          barging into somebody's house and slamming  
17          the door in with the SWAT team because  
18          that's how the drug offenses are addressed  
19          in the city. So thank you and have a good  
20          night.

21                        MS. EVANS: Thank you.

22                        MR. DOBRZYN: Keep that in mind  
23                        about the -- keep that in mind about the  
24                        commuter tax, I mean, maybe we need to state  
25                        that you donate money to campaign in another

1 city you should be rewarded with a commuter  
2 tax.

3 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Sam Patilla.

4 MR. PATILLA: Good evening, people's  
5 council. Sam Patilla, Scranton resident,  
6 member of the Scranton/Lackawanna Taxpayers'  
7 Association.

8 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

9 MR. JOYCE: Good evening.

10 MR. PATILLA: Madam President, I  
11 constantly inquired over the past few weeks  
12 and months from the council solicitor the  
13 actual power and/or lack thereof of the  
14 Library Authority just to drive home the  
15 point that they are powerless and I don't  
16 know where my friend Les was at that time,  
17 but I know, I think ad nauseam the council  
18 solicitor was like getting a little  
19 perturbed why do you keep asking if I  
20 already answered it, but that's why so that  
21 we would know that they can meet. We can't  
22 stop them from meeting, but they are  
23 powerless, we are not going to pay their  
24 bills.

25 And in reference to what Jean had

1           stated earlier, all right, I received a  
2           message from the same person and I really  
3           tried to advise her not to put that  
4           information out in the public because now  
5           people know where the house is and if the  
6           chief of police is watching it they know who  
7           made that phone call, all right? I went by  
8           the house, Madam President, I made phone  
9           calls to police authorities with and without  
10          Scranton. I gave them all of the  
11          information I get from the tenants and that  
12          I picked up on my own and I just hope that  
13          that case isn't blown now because you don't  
14          put that type of information out over the  
15          air.

16                         Now, in reference to the tax  
17                         positions being eliminated by the Single Tax  
18                         Office, I'm getting kind of old and I don't  
19                         know if it's because I'm Bill Jackowitz's  
20                         secretary or not because my hearing is kind  
21                         of limited, and the thing that struck out  
22                         for me is if those positions couldn't be  
23                         eliminated due to either the language within  
24                         the contract or some type of personal  
25                         agreement why was it placed in the budget to

1           begin with? Wasn't that information  
2           available when that budget was being  
3           comprised? Why wait until we make these  
4           amendments now to bring that up. I mean,  
5           that information should have been brought to  
6           the table when the original budget was  
7           designed.

8                     MS. EVANS: Yes.

9                     MR. SPINDLER: And I don't want you  
10           guys to get too upset because Marie often  
11           calls me to the carpet as well, and she  
12           likes me, you know, and I don't get offended  
13           by it, I don't get hurt by it, she is sharp  
14           as a whip and I have nothing but respect for  
15           her, so in closing that's basically it. You  
16           know, I'm kind of disappointed that that  
17           information about that house was put out  
18           there because we did make calls to the  
19           correct officials to handle that problem and  
20           now if those people listen to or they know  
21           anybody that listens to council meeting they  
22           are going to up close up shop. Thank you.

23                     MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else  
24           that would like to address council?

25                     MR. NEWCOMB: Good evening, city

1 council. Can I approach with --

2 MS. EVANS: Yes.

3 MS. NEWCOMB: -- something and I'll  
4 talk about it in a minute.

5 (Mr. Newcomb approaches the dais.)

6 MR. NEWCOMB: First and foremost,  
7 let me say that --

8 MS. EVANS: Your name, please.

9 MR. NEWCOMB: I'm sorry, Charlie  
10 Newcomb, Scranton homeowner, taxpayer.  
11 First and foremost, let me send out my  
12 sincere condolences to the Johnson family.  
13 The definition of a true hero to me  
14 personally is somebody that puts their lives  
15 on the line and fights for this country and  
16 pays the ultimate sacrifice.

17 I don't have anything against the  
18 DPW director, he has actually been in the  
19 neighborhood a couple of times to look at  
20 our flooding problem. Don't have any  
21 problem with the DPW workers, they're  
22 fantastic when it comes to picking up our  
23 garbage. I was actually going to come to a  
24 meeting and say that the last snow storm our  
25 streets were very well taken care of.

1                   This past weekend I took -- my  
2                   daughter for Christmas received a big Jeep  
3                   to drive around and we were out in the alley  
4                   and as we are driving around there was rocks  
5                   all within the alley and I thought to  
6                   myself, well, somebody might have just come  
7                   and spilled them, you know what I mean, from  
8                   a landscaping truck or so on, and I was  
9                   looked into it further those rocks that you  
10                  see in front of you are were over the city  
11                  on the side of the road, and I made a couple  
12                  of phone calls and it has been said to me,  
13                  and I ask you to investigate because nothing  
14                  surprises me. I stood before this council  
15                  six or seven years ago with a bag of glass  
16                  and I handed it over and at the time  
17                  Mr. Pocius and Mr. Hazzouri looked at me and  
18                  made fun of me and said, "There is nothing  
19                  wrong with using glass on the street."

20                  I said, "Well, in bigger cities  
21                  where they have brains that run the  
22                  operations they use glass, but it's like  
23                  sand, not corrosive pieces of glass that I  
24                  can read what type of beer was made out of  
25                  the glass."

1                   And so they mocked me or whatever,  
2                   so now we are using rocks to mix in with our  
3                   rock salt on our city streets. And a couple  
4                   of weeks ago you had the director of the  
5                   Sewer Authority sit here before you, and I  
6                   received a letter in the mail to tell me  
7                   that our sewer rates interest have to  
8                   increase because they have to maintain the  
9                   sewer stuff, so my question is where does  
10                  all of that stuff go? It goes down the  
11                  sewer drains.

12                  MS. EVANS: Yes.

13                  MR. NEWCOMB: So it just doesn't  
14                  make any sense to me that all this -- when  
15                  you use salt, I checked with PennDOT, they  
16                  use a mixture of salt and sand that they  
17                  said basically disintegrates over a few  
18                  weeks to a couple of months period. These  
19                  rocks aren't going to disintegrate, and if  
20                  you come around with the street cleaner and  
21                  clean them where are they going to go then?  
22                  Don't they drain the street cleaners down  
23                  the sewer? I mean, it's just amazing to me  
24                  that this kind of stuff is happening. I  
25                  could be wrong, hopefully they only used it

1           once, but I don't know if that's the case so  
2           I ask you to look into that.

3                     I also asked that if you get  
4           Mr. Seitzinger here on March 9 that you ask  
5           him about -- if he doesn't respond to the  
6           letter ask him personally about the Washburn  
7           Street Cemetery. And also I would like to  
8           know, and I'll put this in writing and send  
9           it to you about Daron Northeast what the  
10          status is of that because that seems to be  
11          like the big secret that nobody wants to  
12          answer why they are still in operation.  
13          They were supposed to be closed as of  
14          December 31. The old homestead is my  
15          grandmothers which my brother resides in now  
16          and there is trucks going in and out of  
17          there every day and it's a true, disgusting  
18          mess.

19                    I also see on the agenda that 7-C  
20          there is a donation of five AED's for the  
21          fire department, I need to commend the  
22          people of any past year that donated these  
23          to the city because that can only benefit  
24          the people. Hopefully this will be a start  
25          to a QRS system which has gone ignored for

1 years and years in this city which is  
2 another amazing thing to me, but I would  
3 also put in writing I would like to know  
4 what happened to the ones that were in the  
5 police cars. I know they are  
6 nonfunctioning, but I want to know how much  
7 it cost and I put that in writing to find  
8 out to operate them because they were used  
9 in the past to actually save lives. And I  
10 was told a few years ago, we got a letter  
11 from Chief Elliott said that they were too  
12 expensive to buy the pads for and at that  
13 time they were \$1,200 to \$1,400 bucks for  
14 pads and you could use them maybe five or  
15 six times. So I think that's -- I'd like to  
16 see you pay \$1,200 or \$1,400 to be able to  
17 save somebody that is in need for it.

18 I would also like to ask how do you  
19 go about to get a stop sign on a certain  
20 street? Is there a petition that you have  
21 to get? Never asked about that before?

22 MR. MCGOFF: They have to do a  
23 traffic study.

24 MS. EVANS: Yes. They have to do a  
25 traffic study, but I think if you leave all

1 of the information with us, with our office,  
2 we will look into that this week and get the  
3 ball rolling.

4 MR. NEWCOMB: It would be North  
5 Cameron and Price Street. I was involved --  
6 it's only a block away from my house, we  
7 were involved in a very bad accident there  
8 on July because it's only a two-way stop  
9 sign coming east and west and north and  
10 south there is no stop sign there and I  
11 can't tell you how many people think there  
12 is no stop sign either way. We were in a  
13 bad accident in July and there has been two  
14 since then. It's a very bad intersection  
15 and it's a little neighborhood, you wouldn't  
16 think that there is a problem.

17 And one last thing I also wanted to  
18 say that I commend this council from what I  
19 have seen in the last couple of weeks  
20 watching it on TV that I personally feel  
21 that you have gained for steam in the last  
22 five or six weeks that you have been here  
23 than the last council did in four years, and  
24 I'd like to commend Mr. Hughes. I think you  
25 have talked more in the past couple of weeks

1 to the citizens to give them answers than  
2 the last guy did the four or five years that  
3 he was here, so I commend council and the  
4 staff. And I would really like to know  
5 about the rocks because it just amazes me  
6 that if we are using stuff like that that's  
7 acceptable.

8 MS. EVANS: Yes.

9 MR. NEWCOMB: Amazing.

10 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Newcomb.

11 MR. LOSCOMBE: Charlie, you beat me  
12 to the punch. I brought my rocks in  
13 tonight, too. I noticed the same thing.

14 MS. HUMPHRIES: There is the rock and  
15 the rock. This is very emotional for me.  
16 Carl Rigala, Holy Father, I'm going to send  
17 this to them. First I want to tell you  
18 first a beautiful thing. We have a new  
19 bishop, I'm sure of you read. It's Father  
20 Bambera. His Excellency, Father Bambera, I  
21 hope you are watching. I hope that the city  
22 of council, the mayor, we all work together  
23 not for the destruction of life, but for the  
24 support of life and the support of the City  
25 of Scranton.

1 I also want to send my sympathy out  
2 to Father Muldowny's -- Father Muldowny his  
3 mother died, just passed away, their funeral  
4 is tomorrow.

5 I'm very dedicated to my church. I  
6 got to got to confession. Thank God we got  
7 a priest, thank God. I want to speak,  
8 number one, of Pro-Life. I many Pro-Life  
9 and also being Pro-Life it's note only  
10 saving of unborn, I am involved with  
11 environmental, I am a member of the  
12 environmental n New York City. A member  
13 which I hope everybody, they are going to be  
14 in May exploding and trying to break through  
15 the ice for the gas, the oil or whatever it  
16 is, and lot of our beautiful animals are  
17 going to die sooner or later with the oil  
18 spills and what have you.

19 The polar bear is beautiful, even  
20 the wolves are beautiful. I would ask  
21 everybody to try in the City of Scranton to  
22 help Norfake, New York, to stop this. We  
23 have enough destruction of the unborn on our  
24 country. I am allergic to pesticides and  
25 they still where I have live being

1 pesticides from another place. I want them  
2 to evaluate and I want to like to meet with  
3 them what I have and what is being given to  
4 us. Yes, I know, people have bugs and  
5 whatever, yep. I don't have bed bugs. Bugs  
6 were put in there months ago for something  
7 else which I'm facing a Court case right  
8 now, but I know God is going to reign over  
9 this matter. I will be leaving this area.

10 My mission from God was to  
11 investigate, to investigate and to see the  
12 way the people are which they already know  
13 where they watch, God is watching everybody.  
14 Last week I brought pictures up, they were  
15 miraculous pictures. They went into -- I  
16 met with Mayor Doherty a few weeks ago. And  
17 like I says, I'm doing a split right now. I  
18 promised him I would bring the pictures, and  
19 he says he is thinking on it. We got to get  
20 the Planned Parenthood Organization out of  
21 the United States of America because when we  
22 are speaking to other countries that a lot  
23 of countries do the believe in this own even  
24 though it's in their country, I'm going to  
25 point to the United States of America, we

1 got to stop killing these children. What  
2 the terrorist are doing while they are  
3 wrapping bomb around kids and people, they  
4 are actually mirroring and mimicking what  
5 the United States and other countries are  
6 doing. It's got to stop. You want peace,  
7 the true peace will come when Jesus is, but  
8 I'm a staunch person for the unborn. The  
9 damages, the religious damages and what they  
10 have done to me is I held off, but I will be  
11 arresting these people. The police  
12 department had to hold off on some of these  
13 investigations, but I'm not going to cover  
14 for everybody. They'll all have to face  
15 what they did.

16 I'm presenting the City of Scranton  
17 with pictures because the mayor said he  
18 would take them and think about it. And,  
19 Mrs. Evans is gone and I'm going to come  
20 forward because this paralleled our new  
21 Bishop. (Ms. Humphries approaches the dais.)  
22 This is our United States veterans and the  
23 divine mercy of the blood of Jesus Christ  
24 and the sovereign that protect. You've seen  
25 these pictures. They go in a circular

1 motion. We have to turn around and  
2 straighten out what's happened, they're all  
3 in a circular in motion. I'm gifted, it's  
4 through the pictures, God is sending a  
5 message to this world. Mayor Doherty,  
6 wherever you are you said you would get on  
7 your knees and kneel in your bedroom, I hope  
8 you have changed your ways. I forgive you  
9 and I hope everyone here will forgive him  
10 and try to straighten out everything that  
11 has to be straightened out. We have to give  
12 forgiveness no matter what. It's in -- the  
13 key is forgiveness that ever one of you are  
14 going to move forward.

15 We can't look back. God bless you  
16 and thank you. Oh, and the tobacco we got  
17 to get tobacco right out. I have a daughter  
18 that's dying of tobacco. We got to get it  
19 out of the United States. Enough is enough.  
20 Enough is enough. This is it.

21 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

22 MS. HUMPHRIES: God bless yas.

23 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

24 MR. JOYCE: Thank you.

25 MR. ROGAN: Are there any other

1 speakers?

2 MS. DURKIN: Hi.

3 MR. ROGAN: How are you doing?

4 MR. DURKIN: My name is Jessica  
5 Durkin, I'm at North Webster Avenue,  
6 Scranton resident. I'm actually -- I'm a  
7 Fellow with the New America Foundation so  
8 I'm just coming to announce a meeting I'm  
9 organizing next week, March 3, which I  
10 believe is a Wednesday, 7:00 p.m. at the  
11 DeNaple's Center and I'll tell you what I'm  
12 doing. This meeting is going to be about --  
13 based around a report by the Night  
14 Commission on the information needs of  
15 communities in a Democracy and -- by the  
16 way, New American Foundation is a  
17 Washington, D.C. think tank and I'm part of  
18 the media policy initiative, I'm a fellow  
19 with that group, and so we are studying --  
20 we are studying sort of the health of local  
21 news on the community level to kind of see  
22 if, you know, in Scranton. I don't want to  
23 say it's a test case, but we are taking a  
24 look at Scranton and sort of just seeing,  
25 you know, what the needs might be for, you

1 know, to better information venues and that  
2 type of thing. So, yeah.

3 And the report that I would be  
4 presenting, and I'm going to present the  
5 whole report, but some of the highlights of  
6 it, some of the findings and recommendations  
7 of the Night Commission's report is  
8 informing communities, sustaining Democracy  
9 in a digital age. So, you know, a lot of  
10 people got together a few years, people from  
11 the Aspen Institute and a lot of other sort  
12 of thinkers and from a whole bunch of  
13 different areas to kind of asses where the  
14 country was with respect to the media.

15 And, you know, so there is some  
16 findings and recommendations so I will be  
17 going over those and everyone is invited.  
18 You know, public meeting, so I encourage  
19 officials and the public to turn out, yeah,  
20 so I'll make sure I send the date and time  
21 to the offices here so you guys can post it  
22 and stuff.

23 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

24 MS. DURKIN: Sure. I got some stuff  
25 I can hand you guys.

1 (Ms. Durkin approaches the dais.)

2 MR. ROGAN: Is there anyone else who  
3 would like to address council?

4 MS. STULGIS: My name is Ann Marie  
5 Stulgis. I got a call right before I left  
6 and I would like reiterate what Les  
7 mentioned earlier. We are funded for ten  
8 COM-D police officers, and I didn't hear  
9 that we had three, I was just told that  
10 there are two, and since there is no more  
11 minimum staffing and since the city won the  
12 right to put police officers wherever, I am  
13 wondering why we have grant money coming in  
14 to pay for seven, according to my source  
15 eight, more police officers out there on  
16 beats why we are just letting that money sit  
17 idle or are we? Is it being probably used?  
18 Makes one wonder.

19 I also want to congratulate you,  
20 each of you, for the restraint and the  
21 courtesy that you showed last week in  
22 holding off moving the amendments to the  
23 budget. You could have done it in Seventh  
24 Order last week and you were -- the four of  
25 you were respectful enough to invite the

1           mayor here since he chose to go to the media  
2           instead of coming to you first, I thought it  
3           was very gracious of the group of you to do  
4           that.

5                         Unfortunately, true to form our  
6           mayor, who used to call himself the sixth  
7           councilman, failed to take the opportunity  
8           to come here as he promised he would do.  
9           Excuse me, I should put my glasses on. He  
10          has done that -- promised to be the sixth  
11          councilman and he broke that promise just as  
12          he has continued to break his other campaign  
13          promises. If you remember, he promised to  
14          reduce the wage tax and here we are eight  
15          years and counting and he certainly hasn't  
16          to that. Promised to lift the distressed  
17          status. When he promised that we were about  
18          23 million dollars in debt. Now we are over  
19          \$300 million in debt. That's more than a 13  
20          fold increase. He has no intention of  
21          lifting the distressed status because he has  
22          learned something. He has learned to use  
23          that as a tool. He uses it to get his own  
24          way. He uses it to punish people. He has  
25          learned to use the distressed status and as

1 long as he has it to use for himself he is  
2 going to continue to keep us distressed.

3 He has kept absolutely no promises.  
4 We are in debt up to our ears. We have a 19  
5 percent increase in violent crime. We have  
6 overpaid administrators who are not  
7 qualified, have no education for the  
8 positions that they are holding. We have a  
9 public safety department where morale has  
10 ceased to exist yet pay to play is running  
11 rampant in the City of Scranton thanks to  
12 you are your mayor. Yet knowing all of  
13 this, you were each gracious enough to give  
14 him the opportunity to come and really be  
15 the sixth councilman.

16 Unfortunately, it's no surprise to  
17 me that he chose not to do that the right  
18 thing. You see, I believe our mayor can't  
19 handle himself when he is asked direct  
20 questions. He doesn't have the ability to  
21 face people face-to-face and I don't make  
22 that statement lightly, I make that from  
23 experience because in his eight years that  
24 mayor has never once shown up at any labor  
25 relations board hearings regarding the

1 Public Safety Department. The mayor has  
2 never once shown his face at any of the  
3 grievance arbitration hearings in the eight  
4 years he was here, and the mayor has never  
5 once shown himself in any of those Court  
6 hearings. That's over 100 opportunities he  
7 had to show his face and answer directly to  
8 the people that he supposed to represent and  
9 he failed to do so. Thank you.

10 MS. FRANUS: Fay Franus, Scranton.  
11 I just wants to express a few of my thoughts  
12 here. Each year, Mayor Doherty presents  
13 city council with a capital budget and each  
14 year it's pointed out in that capital budget  
15 that it's incomplete and it violates the  
16 Home Rule Charter. Yet, no council has ever  
17 sued the mayor over these very clear  
18 violations. It seems the mayor -- it really  
19 seems he has a lot of issues. He is either  
20 suing over every action that he can't  
21 control in order to take care of making his  
22 army of lawyers fat and happy. Either that  
23 or he completely thinks it's either his way  
24 or the highway. These are situations that's  
25 hurting this city's financial progress.

1                   In time, if he wins this seat for  
2                   Senate I hope he understands that he is  
3                   going to be one loan vote in a ruling  
4                   legislature amongst many experienced and  
5                   qualified Senators. Whose house will he  
6                   threaten to burn down then. Blow down I  
7                   should say, like the wolf. Is he going to  
8                   sue the state senate if they don't comply  
9                   with his needs or they don't give into his  
10                  wish list?

11                  I don't see this mayor negotiating  
12                  or compromising with anybody, with anybody  
13                  that tries to negotiate unless, of course,  
14                  it's in a back room or there is no taxpayers  
15                  in sight for 50 miles. Thank you.

16                  MR. TALIMINI: Joe Talimini. I  
17                  think it's pretty obvious what's going on  
18                  with the mayor and the council. I would  
19                  like to stress that I don't think the city  
20                  is fighting the mayor, I don't think this  
21                  council is fighting the mayor, I think the  
22                  mayor is fighting the city and he is  
23                  fighting the council and he is fighting  
24                  himself.

25                  Yeah, I think it's unreal that this

1 man has no idea what's going on within the  
2 confines of this city and he wants to  
3 compare the salaries of the police chief and  
4 the fire chief with surrounding communities.  
5 He doesn't even know what's going on in his  
6 own community, so how is he going to equate  
7 these salaries with the salaries paid in  
8 Allentown or in Reading or Bethlehem or  
9 Easton or any place else. I don't think he  
10 has ever been to those towns and if he has  
11 it's been for a photo op, I can guarantee  
12 you that. Because I can tell you right now  
13 I lived in Bethlehem for awhile and I saw  
14 what the fire chief did in Bethlehem and I  
15 saw what the police chief did in Bethlehem  
16 and they worked hard. They worked very,  
17 very hard, but there is also an economic  
18 base in Bethlehem, there is an economic base  
19 in Allentown, there is nothing in Scranton  
20 so to equate them with these towns it's  
21 ridiculous.

22 I would implore this council to  
23 stick to your guns, fight this man tooth and  
24 nail, and that includes any of his backers  
25 as well. But it boils down to a very simple

1            thing, you represent the citizens and the  
2            taxpayers of this city. That's what you  
3            were elected to do, that's what he was  
4            elected to do, but unfortunately, he doesn't  
5            understand that part of it. Now, I don't  
6            know who I would have to see at OECD if I  
7            wanted to sell incense to go alongside his  
8            snake oil stand, but I'm sure that somewhere  
9            along the line he could find some backing.

10                    I just find it incomprehensible that  
11            this man can continue on the path he is  
12            continuing on alleging to be an intelligent  
13            leader. I haven't seen any leadership, I  
14            hate to point out that in the newsletter  
15            this week you will find there are letters  
16            from people who are very, very interested in  
17            this city including one gentleman who lives  
18            in Hamburg, Germany, and works for the  
19            United States government in a very sensitive  
20            position. He comes home to Scranton every  
21            once in awhile. The man is a retired Army  
22            Major and he said the streets of this town  
23            resemble tank trails. There are better  
24            streets in Europe and small communities in  
25            Europe and they don't have the economic

1 power that we are supposed to have. There  
2 are people in Europe who control their  
3 governments, they are concerned about their  
4 citizens, they listen to their citizens.  
5 This is the United States. I don't think  
6 this man realizes that Scranton is still a  
7 part of the United States. It is not a  
8 separate entity and if it is let's just  
9 succeed to the damn union and say so because  
10 that's the path we are taking right now.

11 We had a previous council that  
12 completely ignored the citizens of this  
13 community. They ridiculed the taxpayers,  
14 they ridiculed the speakers here.  
15 Unfortunately, they got media backing.  
16 Well, I would like to say that once again  
17 this council is user friendly, this council  
18 has changed the atmosphere in this building,  
19 it's changed the atmosphere in these  
20 chambers and I applaud you for that because  
21 right now it is user friendly council and I  
22 hope you will stay that way and I hope you  
23 will continue to support the citizens  
24 regardless of what this man wants to do.  
25 Thank you very much.

1 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

2 MR. ANCHERANI: Good evening.

3 Nelson Ancherani, First Amendment Rights.

4 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

5 MR. ANCHERANI: To start, on the  
6 agenda, 7-B, I support amending the budget  
7 saving \$700,000 this year, 700,000 may not  
8 seem like much out of a \$77 million budget,  
9 but it's a start. For the last the nine  
10 years raises and new hires have cost the  
11 city cumulatively 25 million dollars,  
12 including this year. This does not include  
13 police and fire whose budgets have remained  
14 fairly even over the past nine years. The  
15 25 million also does not include the  
16 numerous attorneys, that's the outside  
17 attorneys, the city uses to fight the police  
18 and fire unions. Add them up and you can  
19 add millions more to the 25 million.

20 Scaling back in the salaries of the  
21 raises and new hires to 2002 rates and  
22 adding 7.5 percent rate back on is a fair  
23 way to treat city employees. I have said  
24 many times that if no raises were given out  
25 to any city employee favorite, and since

1 none were given to police or fire personnel  
2 it would be fair and balanced. Fair is  
3 fair. Amend the budget and pass 7-B.

4 If the mayor decides he wants to  
5 sue, let him. He appeals everything he is  
6 unable to control and a lawsuit by him will  
7 get him the publicity he needs to show the  
8 residents of this state, county and city  
9 what he thinks of saving money. Let him  
10 sue.

11 In one slime's article the mayor  
12 says, "The Home Rule Charter allows or  
13 permits council to reopen the budget only  
14 for new revenue or to address an emergency."

15 That's total BS. He reopened the  
16 2002 budget that the Connors' administration  
17 enacted. There was no emergency there.  
18 Remember, the mayor himself violated his own  
19 Recovery Plan when more money was spent on  
20 raises than was allowed for 2003, four and  
21 five, and you can see page 64 of the  
22 Recovery Plan for that.

23 Now I would like to comment on the  
24 comment that I quote from the slimes: "He,"  
25 meaning Mr. Doherty, "also maintains the

1 unions," meaning the police, "would have  
2 seen increases sooner if a 2008 proposal  
3 hadn't been rejected by the union."

4 Let me set that notion straight  
5 because that again is total bull. Myself,  
6 I, I was on the police negotiating team with  
7 other police union officials I know. We met  
8 over the period of months at the Hilton and  
9 got to a point where the last meeting was  
10 going to be an initialing of the proposed  
11 pages of what was going to be brought back  
12 to the membership. We had signed  
13 confidentiality papers, but somehow one of  
14 those things ended up on Vine Street prior  
15 -- or after we had signed those papers. It  
16 was like, see this, this is what your union  
17 is turning down, but the meeting nose dived  
18 and talks broke down when the \$85,000 a year  
19 salary Stu Renda presented 17 new pages  
20 saying that that was the way DCED said it  
21 had to be written. We, the police, did not  
22 cause the talks to breakdown, the city did  
23 by attempting to take rights away from us.  
24 That's what they did. They attempted to  
25 take our rights.

1                   A second set of meetings at the  
2                   University of Scranton got to the point  
3                   where hands were shaken. We shook hands  
4                   over a tentative agreement to be taken back  
5                   to the unions. All sides shook hands, but  
6                   the city again caused the talks to break  
7                   down.

8                   A third of set of talks at the  
9                   University of Scranton only made it half a  
10                  day when the city insulted the unions by  
11                  offering a 21 percent raise which would  
12                  equate to approximately one and three  
13                  quarters percent per year for 12 years.  
14                  This was after the mayor had already  
15                  budgeted pay raises and paid new hires at  
16                  least 20 million cumulatively by that year.  
17                  And just for a side note, state mediators  
18                  were there as witnesses for all three  
19                  sessions.

20                  I told my side, the mayor tells his,  
21                  you people decide who is telling the truth.  
22                  I know I am. Thank you.

23                  MR. SLEDZENSKI: Hello, Janet.

24                  MS. EVANS: Hi, Chrissy.

25                  MR. SLEDZENSKI: Hi, Jack.

1 MR. LOSCOMBE: What's up, Chris?

2 MR. SLEDZENSKI: I'll I got to say  
3 tonight, Jack, those guys are downstairs  
4 right now they are doing a good job down  
5 there, aren't they Jack? All of them are.  
6 Especially Dave Gervasi, I'll tell you. He  
7 is a good looking fireman in the City of  
8 Scranton right now and right now a friend to  
9 me. He is a good man down there. Thank  
10 you.

11 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Chris. Is  
12 there anyone else who would care to address  
13 council? Mr. McGoff, do you have any  
14 comments or motions?

15 MR. MCGOFF: Please. Mr. Ellman, I  
16 just wanted to -- I did a little research,  
17 there is a website that famous people with a  
18 gift of dyslexia and listed among those are  
19 Alexander Graham Bell, Thomas Edison,  
20 Stonewall Jackson, George Patton, Winston  
21 Churchill, Thomas Jefferson, George  
22 Washington and Woodrow Wilson, Walt Disney  
23 and Henry Ford so you are in a good company.

24 The only motion I would like to  
25 make, I would like to make a motion to table

1 7-B until a meeting between council and the  
2 mayor can be agreed upon and held.

3 MS. EVANS: Is there a second on  
4 that motion?

5 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

6 MS. EVANS: Since there is no  
7 second, the motion dies.

8 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Then I  
9 assume that we will vote on 7-B this evening  
10 and I will wait until that time to make  
11 comments on the budget amendments. Thank  
12 you.

13 MS. EVANS: Mr. Rogan?

14 MR. ROGAN: Yes. A few weeks ago a  
15 speaker asked me what the current status of  
16 our surveillance cameras were and I received  
17 an e-mail from Chief Elliott last week  
18 saying that the Scranton Police Department  
19 surveillance cameras are still in operation  
20 and are on monitored by the desk officers  
21 where the monitor is located, and they are  
22 also capable of researching incidents where  
23 the cameras are located in the city.

24 I have received multiple citizens'  
25 requests this week. The first one is the

1 stop sign on Quincy and Pine on the side of  
2 the Moses Taylor Hospital by the emergency  
3 room is almost on the ground. Mrs. Krake,  
4 can you please send a letter to the DPW  
5 asking them to repair this sign as soon as  
6 possible because it's an ongoing safety  
7 concern?

8 Secondly, I received a letter from  
9 Minooka residents complaining about a  
10 recently open trucking terminal at 278  
11 Pittston Avenue. The letter reads as  
12 follows: "Recently, a trucking terminal  
13 opened at 2627 Pittston Avenue, Scranton.  
14 We are experiencing trucking noise  
15 throughout the night. What is even worse,  
16 the fumes are entering our households  
17 through windows and doors. As the warm  
18 weather approaches this will only get worst.  
19 We checked the zoning and determined  
20 Scranton has various types of commercial  
21 zones. This particular property does not  
22 permit a trucking depot this in zone, so we  
23 are asking you to please have the  
24 authorities enforce the law and safeguard  
25 our health and safety. Sincerely, Minooka

1 residents."

2 Mrs. Krake, can you please a send  
3 letter to Licensing and Inspections as well  
4 as the zoning board asking if this trucking  
5 terminal is properly zoned and if it is  
6 following all city regulations.

7 I also received an e-mail from a  
8 South Scranton resident who was concerned  
9 about the 300 block of Hamm Court. They  
10 report the 300 block of Hamm Court is a  
11 block which is overcome from the O'Connor  
12 Plaza Apartment buildings which were  
13 appreciatively torn down in 2007. After the  
14 buildings were torn down, the lot was left  
15 empty and some debris and rocks left behind.  
16 The empty lot is currently serving as  
17 grounds for the Lynn Corporation in which  
18 they are currently dirt and equipment. Lynn  
19 is currently replacing the gas lines for our  
20 city. This may be an exceptional idea for  
21 the company to store their needed items  
22 there, but it is an extreme eyesore for the  
23 community. The machines have increased and  
24 made worse the poor condition of the street  
25 and the dirt flows into open windows and the

1 noise is very disturbing.

2 Mrs. Krake, can you please send a  
3 letter to the DPW asking them if there were  
4 any plans to first pave the 300 block of  
5 Hamm Court and if there Court is not  
6 currently on a paving list I would request  
7 that somebody from the DPW should take a  
8 drive by and see the terrible condition it  
9 is currently in.

10 Also, Mrs. Krake, can you please  
11 send a letter to the proper department to  
12 determine who currently owns the vacant lot  
13 in the 300 block of Hamm Court?

14 MR. MCGOFF: I actually know that  
15 some of the property is owned by the city  
16 and they're still awaiting ownership of all  
17 of the lots, so if they could then look to  
18 sell it as one.

19 MR. ROGAN: So right know it's owned  
20 by multiple people?

21 MR. MCGOFF: I believe that the last  
22 time there were two of lots that were still  
23 owned by the private individuals, you know,  
24 by --

25 MR. ROGAN: And the rest is owned by

1 the city.

2 MR. MCGOFF: I believe the rest was  
3 under the ownership of the city.

4 MR. ROGAN: Great, I'll report that  
5 back to them. I have comments on the budget  
6 as well, but I will hold off until we get to  
7 that point. Thank you.

8 MS. EVANS: Thank you.  
9 Mr. Loscombe.

10 MR. ROGAN: Actually, I'm sorry.

11 MS. EVANS: I'm sorry.

12 MR. ROGAN: I received an article  
13 from a resident who wanted me to read it as  
14 council and some of the highlights are there  
15 was a legislative hearing in York and it was  
16 supposed to be about the state and smaller  
17 cities can foster economic development and  
18 create jobs, but it ended up being a plea  
19 from had four mayors to the state to help  
20 keep their cities from falling off a  
21 financial cliff. York, Lancaster and  
22 Harrisburg face the possibility of having to  
23 file for distress label under Pennsylvania's  
24 Act 47, the Municipal Financial Recovery Act  
25 which involved state control. Reading has

1 filed for distress status, the last stop  
2 before cities can file for bankruptcy within  
3 the federal court's.

4 During Thursday's hearing at  
5 Sovereign Bank Stadium, the House Majority  
6 policy committee heard from York's new mayor  
7 Kim Bracey, who urged representatives to  
8 give city such as York options to increase  
9 revenue to avoid falling into distressed  
10 status. She suggested that those would  
11 include a local sales tax, an alcoholic  
12 drink tax, a revamp of tax exempt property  
13 guidelines so nonprofits could pay taxes on  
14 part of the assessed values of the  
15 properties, and a split of the earned income  
16 tax between a person's home town and work so  
17 communities can contribute while they work.

18 The basic gist of it is that the  
19 problems we are facing in Scranton are not  
20 just in Scranton, they are all across the  
21 state and many cities I'm sure has seen what  
22 is happening in Scranton and we have been  
23 distressed for multiple years, over --  
24 almost as long as I have been alive  
25 actually, and we have haven't gotten

1 anything.

2 You know, looking at alternative  
3 ways of revenue are the right way to  
4 approach things these others things are  
5 looking at it and, you know, some of the  
6 things, new taxes I would oppose, but I  
7 think that we should as they are looking for  
8 the nonprofits to increase payments in lieu  
9 of taxes, and that is all.

10 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

11 Mr. Loscombe?

12 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you, Mrs.  
13 Evans. Just to reiterate what Pat said,  
14 there is a movement out there now to look at  
15 taxing PILOTS and it's -- we are not alone  
16 here, so it's starting to mushroom a little  
17 bit more so hopefully down the road there  
18 will be some legislation to back us up.

19 I do have a couple of announcements.  
20 First, I would like to wish my sister, Mary  
21 Ellen, a happy/AOE birthday. She is  
22 catching up to me now.

23 St. Lucy's Church, 949 Scranton  
24 Street, West Scranton, they have their  
25 annual Lenten food sale every Friday until

1 March 26 from 3:00 to 6:30 and the special  
2 bake sale on March 19, walk-ins are welcome.

3 This is another repeat also because  
4 the date hasn't come up yet, but on March 13  
5 the Fraternal Order of Eagles, Area 314 on  
6 Meridian Avenue is hosting a ham and cabbage  
7 dinner. The doors open at 1 p.m. and the  
8 doors will be from 3:30 to 7:30. The cost  
9 is \$8 and tickets can be bought at the door.  
10 There will be DJ there, and they may play  
11 some Irish music.

12 I received another piece of mail  
13 from Bethel AME temporary emergency shelter.  
14 The shelter sees and goose by quickly each  
15 year and is now another date for fundraising  
16 celebration, music and awards. On February  
17 24, 2010, a night for honoring persons  
18 and/or organizations who have helped the  
19 Bethel AME temporary emergency shelter  
20 maintain it's ability to stay active in  
21 offerings it's services to the homeless  
22 population of this wonderful city called  
23 Scranton.

24 All cities, towns and villages have  
25 problems these days with homeless persons

1 and hidden families. What makes one area  
2 stand out from another is how they treat  
3 those in need. Scranton is a leader in this  
4 exhibition of love, compassion and mercy for  
5 those inside it's perimeters needing  
6 support.

7 Because of the willingness to  
8 continue extending the hand of Bethel AME  
9 temporary emergency shelter thus  
10 acknowledging a belief in the work we do,  
11 never allowing race, religion or economic  
12 status to be an interference between us. In  
13 this day and age this in itself are reasons  
14 for honoring a fellow human being or  
15 foundation.

16 Therefore, on the evening of  
17 February 24, 2010, at our annual fundraising  
18 dinner, the Hands of Hope will be presented  
19 to: The Margaret Brigg's Foundation, the  
20 Lackawanna Neighbors, Incorporated, Mr. Ryan  
21 Lecki, WNEP Channel 16, Mr. James Ryan of  
22 the Commonwealth Medical College.

23 For the dignity and compassion and  
24 support of those of Bethel AME temporary  
25 emergency shelter, to our fellow neighbors

1           thus allowing the ability to teach the true  
2           meaning of the hand extended with hope, the  
3           dinner will be held on February 24 at the  
4           Hilton Conference Center, 100 Adams Avenue  
5           from 6 to 9 p.m. All finances raised through  
6           the sales of the tables and seats will be  
7           used for the sole purpose of keeping the  
8           shelter doors active, thus allowing full  
9           service to the homeless population.

10                   The cost is as follows: \$40 per  
11           seat. Table of ten \$400. The night  
12           includes buffet-style dinner, open bar,  
13           music, valet parking and unforgettable  
14           memories. All checks will be made out to  
15           Bethel AME shelter dinner and for further  
16           information you can contact Reverend  
17           Catherine Simmons, shelter administrator.

18                   Right now I have a grant that was  
19           awarded us from FEMA, and I'll read right  
20           from the grant paper and just give a little  
21           description of it. "Dear Mrs. Carrera, on  
22           behalf of the Federal Emergency Management  
23           Agency and the Department of Homeland  
24           Security, I am pleased to inform you that  
25           your grant application submitted under the

1 fiscal year 2009, assistance to firefighters  
2 grant, has been approved. FEMA's grant  
3 program directorate in consultation with the  
4 US Fire Administration carries out the  
5 federal responsibilities of administering  
6 your grant.

7 The approved project cost total  
8 \$24,000. The federal share is 80 percent or  
9 \$19,200 of the approved amount and your  
10 share of the cost is 20 percent or \$4,800.  
11 As part of your award package, you will find  
12 grant agreement articles. Please make sure  
13 you read and understand the articles as we  
14 outline the terms of the conditions of your  
15 grant award. Maintain a copy of these  
16 documents for your official file.

17 You establish acceptance of the  
18 grant and grant agreement articles when you  
19 request and receive any of the federal grant  
20 awards -- any of the federal grant funds  
21 awarded to you. By accepting the grant, you  
22 agree not to deviate from the approved scope  
23 of work without prior written approval by  
24 FEMA.

25 If your SF-1199-A has been reviewed

1 and approved you will be able to request  
2 payments on-line. Remember, you should  
3 request funds when you have an immediate  
4 cash need.

5 If you have any questions or  
6 concerns regarding the awards or how to  
7 request your grant funds please call the  
8 help desk. Sincerely, Timothy Manning,  
9 Deputy Administrator for National  
10 Preparedness and Protection.

11 What this grant is going to enable  
12 us to do is the purchase of three ASD  
13 proximity warning devices, one for each of  
14 the two active area ladder trucks and one  
15 for the backup truck. For those of you who  
16 d not know what these are, proximity warning  
17 devices are used to detect the electrostatic  
18 field of any alternating current power line.  
19 They provide both audible and visual warning  
20 signals to alert the operator and attempt or  
21 ground personnel when the boom comes within  
22 a proximity of an energized high voltage  
23 line. These devices can help verify that  
24 lines aren't deenergized. These devices  
25 were recommended by NIOSH of which I have a

1 complete report here to prevent any serious  
2 accidents in the future, such as the one  
3 that took my dear friend, Captain Jim  
4 Robson's life, on January 6, 2008.

5 I applaud the fire department and  
6 Cathy Carrera for pursuing this grant as  
7 another tool for enhancing the public safety  
8 of everyone and I thank FEMA and the  
9 Department of Homeland Security for their  
10 vision by providing grants for fire  
11 departments in need.

12 My final comments. Yesterday's  
13 Scranton Times' article drew a very limited  
14 or targeted comparison between Scranton and  
15 some of it's Pennsylvania neighbors. It's  
16 primary focus was to contrast salaries of  
17 one position in particular, police chief.  
18 However, it failed to address the loss of  
19 many good experienced Scranton police  
20 officers because of low salaries and even  
21 lower morale.

22 Coincidentally, the article omitted  
23 the questionable job performance of  
24 Scranton's police chief regarding reports to  
25 the Department of Justice and his treatment

1 of female officers. I invite the newspaper  
2 to research the various police chiefs cited  
3 in Monday's newspaper for similar conduct.  
4 The newspaper also presented a limited  
5 comparison between Scranton and Reading, two  
6 distressed status cities. However, while  
7 Scranton has been distressed for 18 years,  
8 Reading was recently declared distressed in  
9 the Fall of 2009. Reading's population is  
10 slightly larger and approximately 80,000  
11 compared to Scranton's 72,000. It has a  
12 2010 budget of \$120 million as compared to  
13 Scranton's budget of \$77 million. This  
14 budget difference of \$43 million explains  
15 the significantly high salaries for the  
16 Reading police chief and police department.  
17 Reading's bloated salaries are part of the  
18 problems that lead to it's recent demise  
19 into a distressed status.

20 It might be more informative to  
21 research the total budget figures, debt  
22 services and PILOTS of other Pennsylvania  
23 cities. For example, the city of Erie has a  
24 population of 103,000, which is 31,000 more  
25 than Scranton. It's budget stands at \$58

1 million compared to Scranton's \$77 million.  
2 Also, Erie's debt service is less than \$4  
3 million which put it at less than half of  
4 Scranton's debt service.

5 In addition, Erie collects \$950,000  
6 in payments in lieu of taxes from nonprofits  
7 compared to Scranton's anticipated \$118,250.

8 These are just a few examples of  
9 many that I can provide you, but in the  
10 interest of time I will not belabor this  
11 point. Why doesn't the Scranton Times write  
12 an honest analysis of the mayor's 2010  
13 budget as well as those dating back to 2002  
14 to see that these budgets were unbalanced?  
15 They won't because once a budget is shown as  
16 being unbalanced the mayor must declare this  
17 to council and the Home Rule Charter allows  
18 council to reduce appropriations.

19 The mayor has no problem violating  
20 the Home Rule Charter through his purposely  
21 fudged operating budget and his incomplete  
22 capital budgets. Although, he has given  
23 each seated council under his tenure grounds  
24 to begin litigation against him, no council  
25 has ever done so.

1                   Although the savings that we have  
2                   proposed in the budget may seem minor to  
3                   some, I believe that the mere \$700,000  
4                   savings will be significant in the long run.  
5                   Just think of it as reducing your debt by  
6                   paying off one credit card at a time.

7                   As far as a contract deal in 2008,  
8                   Mr. Ancherani referred to it and I have some  
9                   information from others that were there, I  
10                  was told that the unions were, in fact,  
11                  close to a deal and had a handshake  
12                  agreement with the negotiators. However,  
13                  the mayor's own words were that, "There was  
14                  no deal until I shake their hands and that  
15                  has yet to happen."

16                  I have personally known our chiefs  
17                  and their families for a long time. Our  
18                  budget amendments are in no way a personal  
19                  vendetta. It is rather a move to pure,  
20                  fiscal accountable. Great employees don't  
21                  always make great administrators. A real  
22                  captain of a ship makes sure that all of his  
23                  men are accounted for before he jumps into  
24                  the life boat.

25                  I thought that was the last one, but

1 I do have one small note I have to mention,  
2 this was passed onto me. Someone had heard  
3 on a national news today that there were  
4 1357 massive layoffs in the U.S.A. in  
5 January, just this month, in January.  
6 Massive layoffs consist of 50 or more.  
7 Mayor Doherty wants to sue this City of  
8 Scranton for the few cuts that we are  
9 making. That's all I have. Thank you.

10 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Loscombe.  
11 Mr. Joyce?

12 MR. JOYCE: Yes. I have a few  
13 comments tonight. As you know, tonight in  
14 Seventh Order council will be voting to make  
15 several amendments to the 2010 budget. At  
16 this point in time, I still feel that there  
17 are two primary misconceptions that are held  
18 by some of the members of the public in  
19 regard to the amendments being made and  
20 tonight I just want to alleviate some of  
21 those misconceptions.

22 The first misconception that I've  
23 heard from some members of the public  
24 through their feedback is that the amended  
25 budget reduces the amount of actual

1 firefighters and police officers that are  
2 protecting the city along with their  
3 salaries. To explain, there were no changes  
4 made to the amount of staff employed in the  
5 fire and police department or the actual  
6 union members salaries as they positions  
7 were under contract and cannot be reduced.  
8 The only changes that were made were changes  
9 to the fire and police chiefs salaries and  
10 that was a reduction in both.

11 As far as the staff reductions are  
12 concerned, reduction in the amount of  
13 firefighters and police officers protecting  
14 us in the city actually occurred in previous  
15 budgets that were passed. To provide a  
16 brief snapshot, there were approximately 157  
17 firefighters and 158 police officers in  
18 2004, in the 2010 budget that was passed  
19 there are 144 firefighters and 146 police  
20 officers.

21 So at this point to elaborate on the  
22 salary of the chiefs, as far as the  
23 reductions are concerned, for the chiefs,  
24 the reasoning is very justifiable. Though  
25 some critics of this budget like to point

1 out about the salary of the police chief and  
2 the fire chief will be lower than other  
3 communities if this budget were to pass,  
4 they also fail to point out that many of the  
5 other communities that they mentioned are  
6 typically not in distressed status. And  
7 furthermore, that the salaries projected for  
8 both the fire and the police chief under the  
9 amended budget would still be higher than  
10 what they were in 2007.

11 Some members of the administration  
12 criticize the cuts to the salaries of the  
13 chiefs as being a potential issue regarding  
14 attracting and maintaining quality personnel  
15 to fulfill these positions and sustaining  
16 them. I do not see while all of a sudden  
17 this argument is being posed and, you know,  
18 I cannot see why some might think it's a  
19 battle coming from the same administration  
20 that set the salary of both chiefs to be  
21 lower than neighboring communities in 2002,  
22 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007.

23 If there would be a major issue with  
24 retaining both chiefs by reducing their  
25 salary, why do they not look for employment

1 in other areas during the first six years of  
2 the administration when their salaries were  
3 actually lower than what is being proposed  
4 in the amended budget?

5 Also, equally important to mention  
6 is that the salaries of both chiefs were  
7 both calculated by using a system analogous  
8 to what was used to determine the pay of  
9 their subordinates being their 2001 salary  
10 and factoring a 7 1/2 percent pay increase.  
11 Therefore, their salaries in the amended  
12 budget were increased from 2001 in direct  
13 proportion to how they are subordinate  
14 salaries were.

15 A second misconception that some may  
16 have, and that I have from some members of  
17 the public, is that the amended budget will  
18 create new union positions. To start, there  
19 were never any newly created job titles in  
20 the budget that were not in the previous  
21 budgets in regard to the union positions,  
22 therefore, there were any never any newly  
23 created union jobs that weren't there  
24 before.

25 Regarding union jobs that were

1 restored, originally there was a restoration  
2 of a secretary in the city council's office,  
3 under careful consideration this position  
4 was removed from the amended budget in a  
5 motion made last week which I believe some  
6 may have missed.

7 In addition, no additional union  
8 positions were added to the budget that were  
9 not present in the 2009 budget.

10 Finally, in regard to the budget, it  
11 is easily seen that the major objectors of  
12 this budget claim that the cuts being made  
13 to the administrative positions are purely  
14 political. This is unfortunate because thi  
15 is really not the case. It is evident being  
16 fiscally conservative with city finances is  
17 mandatory being that Scranton has been in  
18 distressed status for over a decade and a  
19 half.

20 To add to this, current issues  
21 regarding revenue shortfalls are simply not  
22 unique to Scranton. These are issues that  
23 are existent on a national level. As  
24 everyone knows, not just the city, but the  
25 country as a whole is approaching the later

1 stages of the worst economic downturn since  
2 the great depression. As quoted in a Wall  
3 Street Journal, some mayors described the  
4 current state of the economy as a once in a  
5 generation fiscal crisis. It has been  
6 projected by the National League of Cities  
7 that the municipal sector will likely face a  
8 fiscal shortfall of between 56 and 83  
9 billion dollars from 2010 to 2012 which is  
10 stated by them to be chiefly due to the  
11 declining tax revenues.

12 Therefore, to prevent us from  
13 experiencing an increase to our structural  
14 deficit action was taken to reduce the  
15 amount of revenues in the budget in the wage  
16 tax and real estate categories. The amount  
17 of revenue that was deducted from each  
18 category was calculated first by determining  
19 the total revenue from the three tax  
20 categories believed to be overestimated in  
21 the property tax, delinquent property tax  
22 and wage tax. At this stage, the individual  
23 categories were then divided by the sum of  
24 three to determine a percentage that  
25 contributes to the sum -- or that each

1 category contributes to the sum rather.  
2 Those percentages are then multiplied by the  
3 amounts saved in the amended budget to  
4 determine how much revenue to deduct from  
5 each category.

6 In response to the decline in  
7 economic conditions as the National League  
8 of Cities reports in a recent research study  
9 in over 300 America cities, over 90 percent  
10 of cities made spending reductions in 2009  
11 and over 80 percent made spending reductions  
12 in 2010. The amended budget is simply  
13 following along with the response other  
14 municipalities are taking towards addressing  
15 the problems that Scranton and many other  
16 cities are facing nationwide.

17 The major portion of the cost  
18 savings that are being proposed in the  
19 amended budget is due to work force  
20 reductions. In the National League of  
21 Cities research study, it was reported that  
22 67 percent of the cities that were polled  
23 out of the 300 some that responded, reduced  
24 spending by using the same method being the  
25 elimination of positions and the reduction

1 of salaries.

2 In addition to this, 14 percent of  
3 the cities made cuts to public safety  
4 services being police, fire, and other  
5 emergency services. As one can see, the  
6 percentage that made cuts to some of the  
7 public safety services it was rather low.

8 In response to not making cuts to  
9 the actual amount of firefighters and police  
10 officers out there on the streets and  
11 fighting fires every day, you know, other  
12 than the chiefs it could be easily seen, you  
13 know, these cuts already happened as I  
14 described before from 2004 until now there  
15 has been a combined reduction of 25  
16 firefighters and police officers.  
17 Therefore, cuts directed towards those  
18 position that were not previously cut, you  
19 know, other union positions were not  
20 eliminated due to the fact that they have  
21 also been cut in previous budgets. The same  
22 concept is true for both the clerical and  
23 DPW union as well.

24 In addition, none of the union  
25 positions salaries, as I mentioned before,

1           could be lowered since they are all under  
2           contract.

3                         In addition to some of the cuts in  
4           spending that other cities made, 62 percent  
5           of the cities that were surveyed also  
6           eliminated or reduced funding for capital  
7           infrastructure projects which some may see  
8           as hindering progress, and I would just like  
9           to mention that this was not done in the  
10          proposed amendments that will be voted on  
11          tonight.

12                        Finally, the cuts that are being  
13          proposed tonight are not as deep as many  
14          other cities have resorted to. For  
15          instance, Boise City, Louisiana which has a  
16          budget of 50.3 million dollars, which is  
17          much smaller than ours, eliminated 117  
18          positions. East Providence, Rhode Island,  
19          which has a population of 49,000, much  
20          smaller than Scranton in size also decided  
21          to eliminate 11 non fire and police  
22          positions.

23                        Springfield, Illinois, a city larger  
24          than Scranton's size by about 20 or 30,000,  
25          predicts eliminating up to 192 positions

1 next year.

2           Dover, Delaware, a city  
3 approximately half the size of Scranton  
4 decided to reduce expenditures by requiring  
5 employees to take two and a half weeks  
6 unpaid time off in addition to ceasing  
7 funding towards many city improvements  
8 projects.

9           Even the larger cities out there  
10 have been effected by the economy. Larger  
11 cities such as San Francisco have reduced  
12 expenditures in each department by 25  
13 percent.

14           In conclusion, I would just like to  
15 reiterate that the amendments -- or the  
16 amendment being proposed tonight in Seventh  
17 Order that will be voted onto the budget,  
18 you know, this is simply an initial step in  
19 attempting to return Scranton to fiscal  
20 health. What is on the agenda tonight in  
21 final passage is in no way political. It is  
22 what is called being fiscally responsible.  
23 The amendment on the agenda tonight is what  
24 I see as protecting the best interest of the  
25 residents of Scranton in the tough economic

1 times to prevent our structural deficit from  
2 growing, and that's really all I have for  
3 tonight.

4 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Joyce.  
5 Good evening. First, we wish to recognize  
6 West Scranton High School Junior basketball  
7 players Tyler Hughes, Tim Langan and John  
8 Lipowitz who raised over \$3, 700 for the  
9 American Cancer Society in fulfillment of  
10 their senior graduation project. These  
11 young gentlemen are to be commended for this  
12 tremendous project.

13 Also, the West Scranton basketball  
14 team also been chosen as the recipient of  
15 the sportsmanship award by the District II  
16 PIAA officials. West Scranton was selected  
17 over 25 other basketball teams in other area  
18 and will receive it's award on March 7.  
19 This prestigious honor proves that these  
20 young men were a credit to their parents,  
21 their high school and the West Scranton  
22 community.

23 In response to citizens' questions  
24 regarding the \$600.000 owed by the Ice Box,  
25 I will defer now to Attorney Hughes who has

1 researched the issue.

2 MR. HUGHES: Thank you, Madam  
3 President. After a meeting last week I  
4 reviewed all of the recordings in the  
5 Recorder of Deeds Office regarding the Ice  
6 Box, commonly the Ice Box, it's BRT Limited  
7 Partnership. There are 26 documents filed  
8 back to 2002. There was a lease executed by  
9 the City of Scranton and BRT on July 23,  
10 2002, however, that lease was not recorded,  
11 a memorandum of lease consisting of two  
12 pages was recorded in 2006.

13 In reviewing the lease the actual  
14 question that came up was, is the City of  
15 Scranton paying the insurances on that  
16 property? Pursuant to Section 602 of the  
17 lease, it's the lessee's responsibility,  
18 BRT, to pay all of the insurances, property  
19 damage in \$1 million, general liability of  
20 \$1.5 million per accident per person and  
21 \$1.5 million for a total accident coverage.

22 This is a ground lease for 99 years.  
23 It actually renews for another 99 years so  
24 when it was executed in 2002 this ground  
25 lease goes to the Year 2020. The

1 consideration is \$1 per year. There is a  
2 total due in the year 2020 of \$600.000.

3 However, when the ground lease was  
4 recorded or the memorandum of ground lease  
5 was recorded, there is a realty transfer tax  
6 for any lease that's over 30 years, that's 1  
7 percent state, it's a half a percent to the  
8 school district and 2 1/2 percent to the  
9 city. It was not paid on \$600.000. An  
10 actuarial firm in Scranton by the name of  
11 Rainey and Rainey, what's done it's a  
12 reverse cash flow. They went out to the  
13 year 2200 with the payment to the city of  
14 \$600.000. What would it take in current --  
15 what was that value today -- not today, but  
16 in 2002. To determine that, they would take  
17 an assume rate of interest, and if you put  
18 the money in the bank at an assumed rate in  
19 199 years what would give you \$600.000. The  
20 assumed rate of interest was 5.75 percent  
21 for the next 198 years which reduced the  
22 \$600.000 to a value of \$24 in the Year 2000.

23 From a bit of history, I guess  
24 Scranton looked at that when they executed  
25 this ground lease for 198 years because in

1 1636 when the Dutch bought Manhattan island  
2 they brought it for \$24 in trinkets and  
3 beads, so what happened is the City of  
4 Scranton sold the Scranton Transit Complex  
5 down there consisting of approximately six  
6 acres for \$24 in 2002.

7 Whether that will be paid, the  
8 \$600,000 in the Year 2020 -- I mean, 2200 I  
9 don't think any of us will ever know, but  
10 the actual question was and the answer to  
11 the question is the city responsible for  
12 paying the insurances on that property and  
13 the answer is no.

14 The only thing that I could say that  
15 in addition was that the Ice Box pursuant to  
16 the ground lease demolished the buildings.  
17 There was a cost to that. I'm very familiar  
18 with that real estate property down there,  
19 but they did have to pay for the demolition  
20 of buildings and not the city, but it comes  
21 down to the fact that that's the cost of  
22 doing business and the \$600.000 not being  
23 paid for 198 years having a current value of  
24 \$24 in 2002. That's pretty much the summary  
25 of that property.

1 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Solicitor  
2 Hughes. It's certainly very inciteful, very  
3 interesting, when you learn what's really  
4 been going on behind the scenes over the  
5 years and this is only one example.

6 MR. HUGHES: I would add that no  
7 members of council were there in 2002 and it  
8 was one negative vote and that was by Gary  
9 DiBileo. The other four councilmen voted  
10 for that.

11 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

12 MR. HUGHES: That's on the  
13 ordinance.

14 MS. EVANS: Thank you. On Friday,  
15 afternoon, February 19, a letter from the  
16 mayor was delivered to council's office. In  
17 short, the mayor declines council's  
18 invitation to discuss it's budget amendments  
19 and the financial emergency in our city in a  
20 public forum while simultaneously assuring  
21 council that he will take legal action  
22 against it which he firmly believes will be  
23 successful.

24 At this time, I wish to briefly  
25 address several stunning falsehoods

1 contained in the mayor's letter:

2 First, on December 1, 2009, I was  
3 absent from a council meeting due to  
4 illness.

5 Two, I did not propose amendments to  
6 the mayor's 2:010 budget because they would  
7 not have been seriously considered by the  
8 lame duck council. In four prior years, I  
9 presented alternative budgets and amendments  
10 to city council which were ignored.

11 Three, nevertheless, I did in fact  
12 submit numerous questions regarding the 2010  
13 budget to Mr. Renda between November 13 and  
14 December 1, 2009. However, since many of  
15 his responses were either vague or  
16 incomplete, Mr. Renda attended a caucus of  
17 city council.

18 Following the mayor's leadership  
19 example, Mr. Renda refused to appear in  
20 council chambers preferring rather to meet  
21 in the back office of city council away from  
22 the public. I asked Mr. Renda my original  
23 questions and as well as new ones in  
24 preparation for the drafting of the council  
25 amendments to the new year. Again,

1 Mr. Renda at times responded in an allusive  
2 manner or had no answers for me at all.

3 Four, since November 3, 2009,  
4 council members have met with the mayor and  
5 members of his administration on numerous  
6 occasions.

7 Number one, Mr. Joyce, Mr. Rogan and  
8 I met with the mayor in November.  
9 Incidentally, it was after this meeting that  
10 the mayor pushed for the new library in  
11 South Side with us.

12 Number two, Mr. Rogan met with Ms.  
13 Aebli, OECD director, in January.

14 Number three, Mr. Loscombe and  
15 Mr. Rogan met with PEL on February 1, 2010.

16 Number four, Mr. Joyce contacted  
17 Mr. Seitzinger, Director of LIPS, and  
18 Mr. Sweitnicki, director of IT, several  
19 times to discuss their assuming  
20 responsibilities and duties as a result of  
21 council's positional eliminations in their  
22 respective departments, but to my knowledge  
23 his calls were not returned.

24 Next, Mr. Loscombe met with  
25 Mr. Dougher, Director of Parks and

1 Recreation, and Mrs. Sandy Obshinski,  
2 recreation specialist, to discuss council's  
3 budget amendments. Mr. Loscombe also met  
4 with DPW representatives and members of the  
5 traffic maintenance department.

6 Mr. Joyce and I met with Mr. Renda  
7 for 40 minutes in his office on February 13  
8 to discuss financial matters and he provided  
9 little in the way of responses to our budget  
10 questions.

11 Mr. Doherty chose not to be in the  
12 sixth councilman as he pledged he would be  
13 and refuses to speak at a public caucus. He  
14 does not support transparency in government.  
15 Rather, he invited Mr. Rogan and I to a  
16 backroom discussion of financial matters in  
17 his office.

18 You have just heard the numerous  
19 times at which council has engaged in  
20 financial discussions with this  
21 administration. The time has now come for a  
22 public discussion of the taxpayers' dollars  
23 with the mayor. Council chooses not to  
24 operate behind closed doors. We stand  
25 before the public, answer questions and

1 provide justification for our actions every  
2 Tuesday.

3 The Home Rule Charter charges the  
4 mayor to address the deficit and Scranton's  
5 deficit has become a perennial beast. The  
6 fact that the mayor failed to detect a  
7 deficit or failed to take action to reduce a  
8 deficit, does not erase the fact that a real  
9 deficit exists. The mayor's failure to  
10 perform his executive duties should in no  
11 way prevent council from performing it's  
12 duties to take corrective action to minimize  
13 the deficit and balance the budget.

14 In fact, nothing in the Home Rule  
15 Charter prohibits council from amending the  
16 legislation that has already been enacted or  
17 signed into law by the mayor. It expressly  
18 gives council the ability to amend and  
19 repeal ordinances.

20 Mr. McGoff and the mayor point out  
21 that council's budget amendments do not  
22 lower taxes. This is correct. Council  
23 passed the tax rates for the city at it's  
24 first three meetings. How can council lower  
25 taxes when there is a \$6 million structural

1 deficit and an unbalanced budget? That  
2 would be irresponsible and no matter how  
3 many times the mayor, Mr. McGoff, and the  
4 Scranton Times assert that the budget is  
5 balanced, it doesn't make it so.

6 At last week's meeting I pointed out  
7 three items that demonstrate the mayor's  
8 budget is unbalanced: First, there is \$1,6  
9 million missing from the tax office. Two,  
10 the mayor has not funded the positions he  
11 cut in his budget yet these employees  
12 continue to work; and three, overtime for  
13 the Single Tax Office employees is  
14 underfunded.

15 Since that, I have learned three  
16 additional things: First, the city  
17 controller's yearly overtime report states  
18 that the overtime for various departments  
19 significantly exceeded what was provided for  
20 in the 2009 budget by \$691,855.24.

21 Second, \$1.2 million in health care  
22 costs wasn't covered in the 2009 budget  
23 because the BA's Office failed to post  
24 health care payments to the account.

25 Third, Mrs. Moran, the Human

1 Resources Director, offered of late  
2 voluntary layoffs to employees. I now  
3 question if the 2010 allocations for  
4 unemployment will reflect payments to those  
5 who take advantage of her offer.

6 To date, these items have not been  
7 addressed by Mr. McGoff, the administration  
8 and the Scranton Times, rather, they have  
9 been brushed aside and the rallying cry of a  
10 balanced budget continues unabated.

11 It is also important to note that  
12 council eliminated it's two positions of  
13 clerk in council's office and administrative  
14 assistant in the BA's Office in response to  
15 the mayor's concerns. Thus, council has not  
16 created any new jobs in it's budget  
17 amendments. It has also not restored seven  
18 positions in the fire department and one in  
19 the police department.

20 My fellow Scrantonians, council is  
21 not usurping the power of the mayor, rather,  
22 it is exercising it's powers set forth in  
23 the Home Rule Charter. This city council  
24 unlike the mayor and the previous council is  
25 addressing the structural deficit and is

1 addressing an unbalanced budget.

2 Moreover, council's budget  
3 amendments are a first step to reducing the  
4 size of the government and our ongoing  
5 structural deficit. When the deficit is  
6 reduced and the 18 year distressed status is  
7 lifted, only then can the mayor and council  
8 consider tax decreases. Today, one good  
9 action council can take is to help prevent  
10 future tax increases for the residents of  
11 Scranton by cutting the high costs of this  
12 administration.

13 Next, the mayor pulled 31 delinquent  
14 properties from the county's judicial sale  
15 by is bringing in significant sums of money,  
16 particularly for the school district, who I  
17 was told may have realized close to a  
18 million dollars from those sales.

19 Now, as I said, the mayor pulled our  
20 properties out of that process so we  
21 realized nothing. This sale does not  
22 collect all delinquent taxes due, but  
23 properties are purchased and returned to the  
24 tax rolls. By removing the properties from  
25 the judicial sales, the city has enabled NCC

1 to continue to collect the 23 additional  
2 costs and fees attached to a tax  
3 delinquency, thus, keeping NCC satisfied  
4 rather than collecting much needed tax  
5 revenue. So if collection quotas appear  
6 short, the city is responsible to make  
7 payments on the loans taken out by the  
8 Scranton Redevelopment Authority to purchase  
9 the city's delinquent taxes. In other  
10 words, if the delinquent tax revenue may  
11 fall short, the taxpayers will be holding  
12 the bag. This is yet greater justification  
13 for the adjustments made to revenue by  
14 council budget amendments.

15 And finally, I have requests for the  
16 week. Please forward a complaint regarding  
17 permit parking from the Hill Neighborhood  
18 Association to the Scranton Police  
19 Department. Council requests that it be  
20 addressed as soon as possible. And that's  
21 it.

22 MS. KRAKE: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
23 A RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND  
24 OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO  
25 TERMINATE THE EXISTING NAUTILUS INSURANCE

1 POLICY AND EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO A NEW  
2 CONTRACT WITH KNOWLES ASSOCIATES L.L.C FOR  
3 INSURANCE WITH NAUTILUS INSURANCE COMPANY  
4 FOR COVERAGE FOR THE PERIOD FEBRUARY 1, 2010  
5 THROUGH JANUARY 1, 2011 IN ORDER TO CONFORM  
6 WITH THE CITY'S OTHER INSURANCE POLICIES AS  
7 WELL AS PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF  
8 AGRICULTURE REGULATIONS FOR CERTIFICATION OF  
9 THE WATERSLIDES AND POOL COMPLEX AT NAY AUG  
10 PARK.

11 MS. EVANS: At this time I'll  
12 entertain a motion that Item 5-B be  
13 introduced into it's proper committee.

14 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

15 MR JOYCE: Second.

16 MS. EVANS: On the question? All  
17 those in favor of introduction signify by  
18 saying aye.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

20 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

21 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

22 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

23 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
24 have it and so moved.

25 MS. KRAKE: SIXTH ORDER. NO

1 BUSINESS AT THIS TIME. SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A.  
2 FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON  
3 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FOR ADOPTION - FILE OF  
4 COUNCIL NO. 11, 2010 -AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR  
5 AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO  
6 EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO AN EASEMENT AGREEMENT  
7 BETWEEN THE CITY OF SCRANTON AND LACKAWANNA  
8 HERITAGE VALLEY AUTHORITY FOR A SECTION OF  
9 THE LACKAWANNA RIVER HERITAGE TRAIL SITUATE  
10 IN SOUTH SCRANTON.

11 MS. EVANS: What is the  
12 recommendation of the Chairperson for the  
13 Committee on Community Development?

14 MR. ROGAN: As Chairperson for the  
15 Committee on Community Development, I  
16 recommend final passage of Item 7-A.

17 MR. JOYCE: Second.

18 MS. EVANS: On the question? Roll  
19 call, please?

20 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

21 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

22 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

23 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

24 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Loscombe.

25 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes.

1 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Joyce.

2 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

3 MR. CARRERA: Mrs. Evans.

4 MS. EVANS: I hereby declare Item  
5 7-B legally and lawfully adopted.

6 MS. KRAKE: 7-B. FOR CONSIDERATION  
7 - BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE - FOR ADOPTION  
8 - FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 12, 2010 (AS AMENDED)  
9 AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 97, 2009 AN  
10 ORDINANCE (AS AMENDED) ENTITLED  
11 "APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE EXPENSES OF THE  
12 CITY GOVERNMENT FOR THE PERIOD COMMENCING ON  
13 THE FIRST DAY OF JANUARY, 2010 TO AND  
14 INCLUDING DECEMBER 31, 2010 BY THE ADOPTION  
15 OF THE GENERAL CITY OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE  
16 YEAR 2010". BY MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO THE  
17 NAMED ACCOUNTS AND LINE ITEMS AS SET FORTH  
18 ON THE "AMENDED GENERAL CITY OPERATING  
19 BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2010", WHICH IS  
20 ATTACHMENT 1 HERETO, AS FOLLOWS: INCREASING  
21 APPROPRIATIONS FOR DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURES  
22 AS SET FORTH ON PAGE ONE (1) OF ATTACHMENT  
23 1, THE AMENDED 2010 BUDGET, DECREASING  
24 APPROPRIATIONS FOR DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURES  
25 AS SET FORTH ON PAGE TWO (2) OF ATTACHMENT

1           1, THE AMENDED 2010 BUDGET, DECREASING  
2           APPROPRIATIONS FOR NON DEPARTMENTAL  
3           EXPENDITURES AS PER PAGE THREE (3) OF  
4           ATTACHMENT 1, THE AMENDED 2010 BUDGET,  
5           REINSTATING CERTAIN POSITIONS, CREATING  
6           CERTAIN POSITIONS AND INCREASING SALARIES OF  
7           CERTAIN POSITIONS OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON AS  
8           SET FORTH ON PAGE FOUR (4) OF ATTACHMENT 1,  
9           THE AMENDED 2010 BUDGET, ELIMINATING CERTAIN  
10          POSITIONS AND DECREASING SALARIES OF CERTAIN  
11          POSITIONS AS SET FORTH ON PAGE FIVE (5) OF  
12          ATTACHMENT 1, THE AMENDED 2010 BUDGET,  
13          REDUCING VARIOUS REVENUE ITEMS AS SET FORTH  
14          ON PAGE SIX (6) OF ATTACHMENT 1, THE AMENDED  
15          2010 BUDGET THAT WILL REDUCE ESTIMATED  
16          REVENUES BY \$701,486 TO \$77,164,260 AND  
17          REDUCE ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES BY A NET  
18          \$701,486 TO \$77,164,260 IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN  
19          A BALANCED BUDGET.

20                   MR. JOYCE: I make a motion to amend  
21                   7-B as per the following adjustments in  
22                   Attachment 1, the amended 2010 budget:  
23                   Reinstating, creating and increasing certain  
24                   positions, Page 4 of Attachment 1, by  
25                   increasing DPW refuse, standard salary for

1 the first two months of the year for \$6,500  
2 and reducing the various revenue items, Page  
3 6 of the Attachment 1, in the amount of  
4 \$6,500, thereby reducing estimated revenues  
5 by \$694,986 to \$77,170,076 and expenditures  
6 by a net of \$694,986 to \$77,170,076.

7 MS. EVANS: A motion has made to  
8 amend Item 7-B, is there a second?

9 MR. LOSCOMBE: Second.

10 MS. EVANS: On the question?

11 MR. MCGOFF: May I see what you  
12 read? I'm not much of an audible --

13 MR. JOYCE: I have one.

14 MS. EVANS: Would you like to  
15 explain it?

16 MR. JOYCE: Yes, just to clarify for  
17 the recycling coordinator position, this is  
18 to add in two months salary so it's  
19 adequately reflected in the operating budget  
20 that this position would be funded. I made  
21 a motion to do this for a number of  
22 positions last week, but I did leave this  
23 one out after I reviewed everything after  
24 the meeting.

25 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else on

1 the question? I would now ask for a vote on  
2 the motion of 7-B, as amended. All those in  
3 favor signify by saying aye.

4 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

5 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

6 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

7 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed?

8 MR. MCGOFF: No.

9 MS. EVANS: The ayes have it and so  
10 moved. What is the recommendation of the  
11 Chairperson for the Committee on Finance?

12 MR. JOYCE: As chairperson for the  
13 Committee on Finance, I recommend final  
14 passage of Item 7-B.

15 MR. ROGAN: Second.

16 MS. EVANS: On the question?

17 MR. MCGOFF: I guess I'll start.

18 I've give you something to shoot at, I  
19 guess. First of all, I would just like to  
20 again express my opposition to these  
21 amendments, and again, although in 2009 when  
22 the budget was presented -- when the  
23 original budget was presented there were no  
24 objections to it being unbalanced and the  
25 believe that it is balanced budget -- or I

1 still believe that it is a balanced budget  
2 and does not need to be amended.

3 Also, as we review some of the  
4 issues, the authority for amending the  
5 budget is still unclear, does the Home Rule  
6 Charter and Administrative Code provide  
7 council with the power to open the budget?  
8 Obviously, if this is voted in tonight it  
9 has been -- that it will end up in Court, so  
10 rather than meet with the mayor and discuss  
11 it we would rather bring it to -- bring it  
12 into the courts where a judge will determine  
13 what is proper.

14 The justification for the budget,  
15 for opening the budget, was that revenues  
16 were reduced because of over -- or revenues  
17 were being reduced because the business  
18 administrator had overestimated what the  
19 revenues would be, but then a week later we  
20 increased those revenues by \$70,000, close  
21 to \$70,000. Obviously, the estimations  
22 aren't perfect and, you know, what are the  
23 real or what are the estimates that we can  
24 follow.

25 The rational given for the emergency

1 was that there is a structural deficit.  
2 Well, the 2010 budget dealt with the  
3 structural deficit by reducing expenditures  
4 and by increasing revenues the structural  
5 deficit would be reduced. That is how it  
6 takes place. These amendments, while they  
7 may reduce the structural deficit, they are  
8 merely compounding what was already done in  
9 the 2010 budget. I believe the estimates  
10 from PEL have shown that the structural  
11 deficit has decreased. I'm not sure what  
12 those estimates -- I believe they were  
13 supposed to be given this morning, did  
14 they -- I don't know if anybody attended the  
15 PEL meeting, but I was told that those  
16 estimates or the estimates for the  
17 structural deficit had, in fact, gone down.

18 Now, the amendments that were being  
19 made, while it's being said that they  
20 demonstrated fiscal responsibility, some of  
21 them just prove to be illogical. A  
22 reduction of \$200,000 in the SPA citation  
23 issuers, returning it back to I believe it  
24 was the Year 2002, but the increase in this  
25 amount since 2002 was because there was an

1           increased amount of revenue due to the  
2           amount of the number of meters that were in  
3           the city, revenues from the Parking  
4           Authority had, in fact, increased, and the  
5           10 percent management fee had increased with  
6           the increased revenues.

7                         Also, additional workers were hired  
8           to monitor the meters, the additional meters  
9           that were in the city. With these  
10          reductions, the number of -- the amount of  
11          revenue will ultimately decrease. It will  
12          probably result in at least two people being  
13          removed from the Parking Authority, two  
14          people that currently work to collect that  
15          revenue. At a time when we are looking to  
16          increase revenue, this amendment will  
17          decrease the amount of revenue to the city.

18                         Also, expenditures that were in the  
19          budget, some of them have already been paid.  
20          These are not addressed at all by the  
21          amendments. And eliminated positions, all  
22          of the positions that are being eliminated  
23          in the budget are appointed positions, and  
24          the removal of these appointed positions  
25          will seriously cripple the city's ability to

1 manage the departments that they are in.  
2 Parks and Recreation, we are removing three  
3 people, three people from management. These  
4 are people that have operated the various  
5 programs through Parks and Recreation.  
6 These are the people that have provided for  
7 grants to the city for Parks and Recreation.  
8 The coordination of all of the programs for  
9 the city will be seriously hampered by their  
10 removal. What we are leaving is one person  
11 who is a foreman, a work foreman. All of  
12 the other programs -- or all of the other  
13 people were the ones that actually  
14 coordinated and ran the programs through the  
15 Parks and Recreation.

16 Who is going to direct the pools?  
17 We have nine pools, 140 lifeguards and yet  
18 we are not going to have anybody to monitor  
19 that program. It's likely that many of  
20 those pools will not open, and while we  
21 complain about paying for swimming at Nay  
22 Aug, that might be the only pool that's  
23 open.

24 Programs at Weston Field will be  
25 eliminated. Nay Aug events, eliminated.

1           Concerts, movies and again, grants.

2                    OECD has absolutely no effect on the  
3 budget but we are going to remove five  
4 positions. It will seriously cripple the  
5 ability of OECD to deal with the small  
6 business programs and also the stimulus fund  
7 monitoring. Both of these are job creation  
8 departments and yet we want to eliminate  
9 them. Also, it will require a new action  
10 plan to be submitted to HUD which will  
11 probably result in decreased funding to  
12 OECD. So, again, when we are looking for  
13 revenue we are going to reduce it.

14                   In LIPS, we are eliminating  
15 personnel that are responsible for the  
16 removal of blight. Again, something that  
17 enhances communities we want to remove it.

18                   DPW, we are taking away the  
19 coordination of all of the services by  
20 removing people from the foreman positions,  
21 refuse, recyclables, snow removal, all  
22 compromised by these amendments.

23                   The ability of the law department to  
24 do it's job will also be compromised by  
25 these reductions. At a time when such

1 things as frivolous lawsuits, Right-To-Know  
2 letters increasing, we are going to remove  
3 the people that need to deal with these.

4 In human resources, we'll reduce the  
5 salaries of those people, maybe it's  
6 coincidental the one person whose salary  
7 will be reduced significantly is the PEL  
8 coordinator.

9 I do want to note that with these  
10 removals that all of these people will be  
11 eligible for unemployment benefits for 90  
12 weeks which must be paid by the city since  
13 we are self-insured. That doesn't seem like  
14 fiscal responsibility. Also, health care  
15 benefits, COBRA benefits, up to 65 percent  
16 of the benefits will be paid to these people  
17 by the city or must be made by the city.  
18 When reducing the health care costs in these  
19 amendments, I don't believe that this was  
20 accounted for. And so again, the amendments  
21 don't provide even close to a balanced  
22 budget in the end.

23 The reduction of salaries, we use  
24 the formula and while I may at least  
25 understand the formula used for reducing the

1 salaries of the police chief and the fire  
2 chief, I can see some logic to it, I don't  
3 agree with it, but I can at least see the  
4 logic since those unions had not received  
5 wage increases, why are we using the same  
6 rationale for other departments where the  
7 union workers have negotiated contracts and  
8 have received raises through the years?

9 The reinstated positions, we have  
10 talked about some of them. I know it's been  
11 mentioned that some of these positions are  
12 being paid for or some of these people are  
13 being paid in the current positions, this  
14 was being done through a bumping process  
15 which is required by the unions was  
16 completed which I believe was completed  
17 today. These people will be funded from the  
18 positions that they bumped into. It will  
19 end up with the reduction of three people.  
20 Ultimately, these three people will collect  
21 unemployment or have two have opted to  
22 collect unemployment rather than bump into  
23 other positions, one was a forcible  
24 unemployment, but as of now only three  
25 people on unemployment are being paid

1 unemployment by the city.

2 These amendments do not provide  
3 fiscal responsibility. They create an  
4 unbalanced budget, they do nothing to reduce  
5 the structural deficit or very little and,  
6 in fact, are usurping the authority of the  
7 mayor. There is no where in the Home Rule  
8 Charter where council has this authority.

9 Also, council has assumed management  
10 rights which it does not have under the Home  
11 Rule Charter. By announcing that certain  
12 people will be assuming certain positions,  
13 those are management rights. Those are not  
14 things that council has the right or the  
15 authority to do, and as Mrs. Evans has said  
16 in the past and I said before, this just  
17 doesn't pass the smell test. It is  
18 political. As much as people want to say  
19 that it's not political retribution, isn't  
20 it ironic that the three things that the  
21 mayor has touted as his successes are the  
22 ones that are being attacked in these budget  
23 amendments? Parks, economic development and  
24 blight are the three areas that are hit  
25 hardest.

1                   This does nothing to help -- these  
2                   amendments do nothing help the city. They  
3                   destroy a balanced budget that has no tax  
4                   increases, no increased debt, it destroys a  
5                   fiscally responsible plan for the city with  
6                   an irresponsible attempt to control city  
7                   government.

8                   MR. ROGAN: Mr. McGoff, what you are  
9                   saying is you support the status quo over  
10                  the last few decades?

11                  MR. MCGOFF: What I'm saying is that  
12                  I do not support these amendments.

13                  MR. ROGAN: Understood. I would  
14                  like to start off by saying I don't agree  
15                  with 100 percent of what is in these  
16                  amendments either, but I think 95 percent of  
17                  it is good and it's moving in the right  
18                  direction towards fiscal responsibility  
19                  toward the city. And, you know, you present  
20                  a good argument going through position by  
21                  position, but, you know, when you mentioned  
22                  the unemployment, we would have to pay their  
23                  unemployment, but if they are employed we  
24                  have to pay their full salaries.  
25                  Eventually, you know, these will work their

1 way out and we will reap the benefit of  
2 these savings.

3 Also, you talked about looking for  
4 revenue and you have made it clear in your  
5 years on council when you looked for revenue  
6 you like to raise taxes because you already  
7 voted once to raise taxes, but as I said in  
8 the first reading of these amendments, I  
9 believe that these cuts are good start  
10 towards returning Scranton towards fiscally  
11 conservative policies. Although, I would  
12 prefer even steeper cuts in salaries and  
13 positions, this legislation will effectively  
14 get the ball rolling towards eliminating all  
15 wasteful spending in city government. And  
16 as much Mr. Joyce said before, other cities  
17 are making cuts that are much steeper these  
18 than we are considering today. But, as I  
19 said, this is a good start. When it comes  
20 time for the 2011 budget towards the end of  
21 the year I hope to work with council and the  
22 mayor to make even further cuts.

23 And it was reported in the paper  
24 that Mayor Doherty did send a letter to  
25 council asking us to meet with him, and

1 normally I would be willing to meet with  
2 anyone, but when you get a letter one  
3 business day prior to the final vote it  
4 makes it very difficult to setup a time to  
5 meet. We received this letter Friday  
6 leaving only one day in-between for the vote  
7 which Saturday and Sunday city hall is  
8 closed. And, you know, if the mayor was  
9 really sincere about wanting to meet with us  
10 he would have approached us much earlier in  
11 the process than right before the vote.

12 Also, I would just like to address a  
13 letter to the editor that was printed, and I  
14 don't want to make a habit of doing this,  
15 but this run really struck me the wrong way.  
16 It was entitled, "Reshuffling wealth" and it  
17 basically compared what we are doing on  
18 council to President Obama promoting the  
19 redistribution of wealth and it went on to  
20 say that us cutting jobs is some sort of  
21 socialism. I would say that what we are  
22 doing is exactly the opposite of socialism,  
23 we are working to reduce the size of  
24 government and I think we need to do  
25 continue to do that to get Scranton back on

1 a fiscally conservative track and eventually  
2 keep working to reduce or debt and hopefully  
3 reduced taxes in the future. So, therefore,  
4 I will be voting "yes." And that is it.

5 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else on  
6 the question? Well, I might just add that,  
7 Mr. McGoff, you have never voted once  
8 against the mayor's budget, you have never  
9 voted once against the mayor's borrowing.  
10 In fact, you have never voted against any  
11 agenda that the mayor has presented, and so  
12 I feel if you are told a budget is balanced,  
13 you will unquestionably believe that. And  
14 in 2009 you are correct there were no  
15 objections to it's being unbalanced because  
16 what would that have changed? You would  
17 still protest, as would your majority  
18 council colleagues, oh, this is balanced.

19 You site that the mayor has  
20 increased revenue. Well, I would like to  
21 know what they are? I don't see that. And  
22 I think --

23 MR. MCGOFF: Parking and permits.

24 MS. EVANS: The what?

25 MR. MCGOFF: Parking and permits?

1 MS. EVANS: Parking and permits,  
2 that's right. Thank you. Now, I'll  
3 quote -- well, actually before I do that, I  
4 know you were discussing the Scranton  
5 Parking Authority, it's also very true that  
6 quite a significant number of parking meters  
7 have been eliminated throughout the City of  
8 Scranton, whether it be for hospitals,  
9 whether it be for universities, we are down  
10 on those numbers.

11 Now, you say that positions will be  
12 cut in the Scranton Parking Authority, are  
13 you specifically stating that citation  
14 issuers will be cut or will the  
15 administration over there which has grown  
16 over the past few years, will two of those  
17 individuals be cut?

18 MR. MCGOFF: I would say I don't  
19 know, but the reduced amount for the Parking  
20 Authority will probably result in at least  
21 two positions being removed.

22 MS. EVANS: Well, that I think could  
23 be very effective in terms of their top  
24 heavy management. I'm going to quote Mayor  
25 Doherty, "Government isn't an employment

1 agency." Though he doesn't always apply that  
2 philosophy particularly during his election  
3 campaigns. That is when we see typically  
4 rises in numbers in an authority employees,  
5 creations, job creations within city hall,  
6 and I think if anyone really took an  
7 interest in any campaign finance reports you  
8 would see a remarkable correlation between  
9 the contributors and the jobs that we are  
10 talking about here which could very likely  
11 explain why the mayor is willing to take  
12 council and the taxpayers of Scranton to  
13 Court over his campaign contributors.

14 As I noted earlier, the HR Director  
15 has been offering voluntarily layoffs as a  
16 choice and alternative to bumping and that  
17 actually is not reflected in the budget.  
18 And I think that's probably all I have right  
19 now in response to your comments,  
20 Mr. McGoff.

21 MR. MCGOFF: Could I just add one?

22 MS. EVANS: Certainly.

23 MR. MCGOFF: In addition to voting  
24 for a tax increase, we also put into the  
25 budget last year increased revenue from our

1 rental registration, so we did add.

2 MS. EVANS: We did, and I hope we  
3 are getting that, but --

4 MR. MCGOFF: I hope so, too.

5 MS. EVANS: But if the truth be  
6 told, we put that money in there to cover  
7 the tax office positions for the I believe  
8 it was three individuals Mr. Courtright had  
9 asked you to consider, and that's why that  
10 particular revenue line was bumped up. The  
11 money had to balance out from somewhere, so  
12 let's tell the truth.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Well, that's fine.  
14 It's still an increase in revenue.

15 MS. EVANS: Well, I'm hoping it's  
16 going to be, yes, this year and even more so  
17 in the future because I do know that  
18 Mr. McGoff and Mr. Rogan are going to be  
19 working on this together with probably LIPS  
20 and the law department. Anyone else on the  
21 question? Last call. Roll call, please.

22 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

23 MR. MCGOFF: No.

24 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

25 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

1 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Loscombe.

2 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes.

3 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Joyce.

4 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

5 MS. CARRERA: Mrs. Evans.

6 MS. EVANS: Yes. I hereby declare

7 Item 7-B legally and lawfully adopted.

8 MS. KRAKE: 7-C. FOR CONSIDERATION

9 BY THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY - FOR

10 ADOPTION - RESOLUTION NO. 7, 2010 -

11 ACCEPTING THE DONATION OF FIVE (5) AUTOMATIC

12 EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR'S ("AED'S) FROM

13 SANOFI PASTEUR PRESENTED TO THE CITY OF

14 SCRANTON FIRE DEPARTMENT.

15 MS. EVANS: What is the  
16 recommendation of the Chair for the  
17 Committee on Public Safety?

18 MR. LOSCOMBE: As Chairperson for  
19 the Committee on Public Safety, I recommend  
20 final passage of Item 7-C.

21 MR. ROGAN: Second.

22 MS. EVANS: On the question. Roll  
23 call, please.

24 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

1 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

2 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

3 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Loscombe.

4 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes.

5 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Joyce.

6 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

7 MS. CARRERA: Mrs. Evans.

8 MS. EVANS: Yes. I hereby declare  
9 7-C legally and lawfully adopted. I thank  
10 you all for your participation in tonight's  
11 meeting and I'll entertain a motion to  
12 adjourn.

13 MR. MCGOFF: So moved.

14 MR. LOSCOMBE: Second.

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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  
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER