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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

HELD:

Monday, April 22 , 2019

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:

PATRICK ROGAN, PRESIDENT  
(Not present.)

TIM PERRY, VICE PRESIDENT

WAYNE EVANS

WILLIAM GAUGHAN

KYLE DONAHUE

LORI REED, CITY CLERK

JAMIE MARCIANO, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

AMIL MINORA, ESQUIRE - SOLICITOR

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

3 MR. PERRY: Roll call, please.

4 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Perry.

5 MR. PERRY: Here.

6 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Donahue.

7 MR. DONAHUE: Here.

8 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Evans.

9 MR. EVANS: Here.

10 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Gaughan.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Here.

12 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Rogan. (Not  
13 present.)

14 MR. PERRY: Please dispense with the  
15 reading of the minutes.

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

17 MINUTES OF THE HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE REVIEW  
18 BOARD MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 21, 2019.

19 MR. PERRY: Are there any comments?  
20 If not, received and filed.

21 MS. REED: 3-B. CONTROLLER'S REPORT  
22 FOR MONTH ENDING MARCH 31, 2019.

23 MR. PERRY: Are there any comments?

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes. Mrs. Reed, I'll  
25 get together with you after the meeting, I

1 have a few questions about the controller's  
2 report. I can't seem to find where I put it  
3 right now but I'll get together with you  
4 after the meeting. Oh, I know what it was.  
5 There was a capital expenditure in here I  
6 just want clarification on, Recreation  
7 Resource, Inc., for \$104,674.50. If we  
8 could just get together with the city  
9 controller to find out what that was.

10 And there was one other thing, grant  
11 match from Medico Industries for \$514,892.  
12 If could just find out clarification on that  
13 as well. Thank you.

14 MR. PERRY: If there are no other  
15 questions, received and filed.

16 MS. REED: 3-C. MINUTES OF THE  
17 SCRANTON FIREFIGHTERS PENSION COMMISSION  
18 MEETING HELD MARCH 20, 2019.

19 MR. PERRY: Are there any comments?  
20 If not, received and filed.

21 MS. REED: 3-D. MINUTES OF THE  
22 NON-UNIFORM MUNICIPAL PENSION BOARD MEETING  
23 HELD MARCH 20, 2019.

24 MR. PERRY: Are there any comments?  
25 If not, received and filed.

1 MS. REED: 3-E. MINUTES OF THE  
2 SCRANTON POLICE PENSION COMMISSION MEETING  
3 HELD MARCH 20, 2019.

4 MR. PERRY: Are there any comments?  
5 If not, received and filed.

6 MS. REED: 3-F. MINUTES OF THE  
7 COMPOSITE PENSION BOARD MEETING HELD MARCH  
8 20, 2019.

9 MR. PERRY: Are there any comments?  
10 If not, received and filed.

11 MS. REED: 3-G. AGENDA FOR THE  
12 NON-UNIFORM MUNICIPAL PENSION BOARD MEETING  
13 HELD APRIL 17, 2019.

14 MR. PERRY: Are there any comments?  
15 If not, received and filed.

16 MS. REED: 3-H. TAX ASSESSOR'S  
17 RESULTS REPORT FOR HEARING DATE HELD APRIL  
18 10, 2019.

19 MR. PERRY: Are there any comments?  
20 If not, received and filed.

21 MS. REED: 3-I. AGENDA FOR THE CITY  
22 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING TO BE HELD APRIL  
23 24, 2019.

24 MR. PERRY: Are there any comments?  
25 If not, received and filed.

1 Do any councilmen have any  
2 announcements at this time? I have two.  
3 This is just a reminder that refuse and  
4 recycling collection will be one day behind  
5 this week. DPW worked on Good Friday and  
6 were off today.

7 Next Monday, April 29, at 5:15  
8 council will hold a public caucus with the  
9 city's recycling coordinator to discuss the  
10 city's recycling program and recent  
11 developments and changes to recycling made  
12 at the county level. There has been a lot  
13 of questions about it and to be honest a lot  
14 of confusion so they will be in here and  
15 hopefully clear a lot of that up for us.  
16 Thank you.

17 MS. REED: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS'  
18 PARTICIPATION.

19 (The following speakers offered  
20 public comment as follows: Fay Franus spoke  
21 on city business. Marie Schumacher spoke on  
22 city business. Joan Hodowanitz spoke on  
23 city busines. Les Spindler spoke on city  
24 business. Bill Pilonas spoke on matter of  
25 general concern. John Maro spoke on matters

1 of general concern. Gerard Hetman spoke on  
2 matters of general concern. Ron Ellman  
3 spoke on matters of general concern. Lee  
4 Morgan spoke on matters of general concern.  
5 Neil Ackman spoke on city business.)

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

7 MOTIONS.

8 MR. PERRY: Mr. Donahue, any motions  
9 or comments today?

10 MR. DONAHUE: Yes, just quickly, one  
11 thing I didn't get to in our caucus I didn't  
12 get to ask Northeast Revenue, Ms. Reed,  
13 would you be able to follow-up with them and  
14 see if they could send us a breakdown of  
15 their interest and costs that they charge.  
16 The city gets the face value and the  
17 penalty, but then they collect -- also  
18 collect interest and costs on their end so  
19 just a breakdown of that.

20 And, also, we got an update on the  
21 street sign management system that the  
22 company came in, drove streets and they are  
23 waiting for the data to be put into an  
24 online system so the city could review to go  
25 through and start getting the street signs

1 changed out with the right reflexcivity, and  
2 that's all I have this evening.

3 MR. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Donahue.  
4 Mr. Evans, any motions or comments tonight?

5 MR. EVANS: Yeah, I'd like to comment  
6 briefly on NRS. NRS is the agency that  
7 collects the refuse fees for the City of  
8 Scranton so we met with them early this  
9 evening. Now, it was somewhat informative  
10 but it has not changed my mind that the  
11 whole process is broken and has been broken  
12 ever since we went to a refuse fee instead  
13 of keeping the cost embedded into our tax  
14 base as it always was prior to that, so I  
15 want to preface my remarks by saying that  
16 I'm not going to discuss the \$300 fee that's  
17 currently in litigation, I'm not going to  
18 discuss if it's fair, if it's accurate,  
19 should it be more or should it be less, I'm  
20 going to talk about the process of  
21 collecting the fee.

22 Like many of our fees and taxes,  
23 like the rental registration fee and the  
24 business privilege and mercantile tax, the  
25 refuse fee has been another example of



1 historically having a poor collection  
2 response. Currently the collection rate, as  
3 we heard tonight, is approximately 75  
4 percent. Our delinquent tax collection rate  
5 for property is around 90 percent. It seems  
6 that we are continuously chasing our tail  
7 trying to find ways to increase the  
8 collection rates and we never quite seem to  
9 keep pace as to what they actually should  
10 be, but there is something fundamentally  
11 wrong when the tax or fee is not collected  
12 at the rate it was designed for, either  
13 through a lack of competence, poor systems  
14 or maybe it was just a bad idea in the first  
15 place. I happen to think the refuse fee and  
16 the business privilege and mercantile tax  
17 are both bad ideas. Over the years, I think  
18 that line of thinking has been proven out  
19 over and over and over again.

20 Now, we have plans to fix a ladder  
21 by replacing the business and privilege tax  
22 and the mercantile tax with a payroll tax  
23 hopefully by 2020. It's a broader and more  
24 fairer distribution of that revenue and far  
25 more collectible, but how do we fix the idea

1 or the collection of the refuse fee that has  
2 been broken for decades. Whenever 25 of  
3 those that should be paying are not paying  
4 the fee at all. We continue to try to mend  
5 a broken system and never achieve the  
6 results we expect.

7 And let's not forget all of those  
8 efforts to collect this fee comes with an  
9 expense. The expense related to its general  
10 collection which includes the mailing of the  
11 bills or receiving payments at city hall.  
12 We have the expense related to the  
13 collection of the delinquencies and we have  
14 the expenses related to a poor performing  
15 recycling program because those that  
16 actually do recycle do so because they think  
17 it's the right thing. There is no incentive  
18 whatsoever for the citizens of Scranton to  
19 recycle.

20 So what do we do? Well, first of  
21 all, we have to recognize that when  
22 something is not working as intended you  
23 make changes. The status quo is not  
24 working. So what are the options? Well,  
25 besides keeping the status quo, here are

1           several options I think we might be able to  
2           address the situation or at least look at.  
3           Number one, should we fully embed the entire  
4           \$300 trash fee back into the property tax  
5           bill? This should eliminate some of the  
6           expenses mentioned involved and increase the  
7           collection rate to parallel the collection  
8           rate of 90 percent on delinquent property.  
9           With this option, the city has the ultimate  
10          tool. You don't pay your taxes, you could  
11          lose your property.

12                   Number two, we could partially embed  
13          an amount in the property tax bill that  
14          could account for a baseline that would  
15          safely cover some of the expense related to  
16          trash collection while also shifting to a  
17          modest per bag fee expecting increased  
18          recycling and reduced expenses to make up  
19          the difference. This could be called a  
20          hybrid plan.

21                   And, three, we could go to a  
22          slightly higher per bag fee than option two  
23          and not embed anything additional in the tax  
24          base and save to increase recycling as well  
25          as reduce expenses to balance what is

1           needed.

2                       So as I mentioned earlier, we could  
3           just stay the course and chase delinquencies  
4           and complain about the \$300 fee and go  
5           around and around with the same issue year  
6           in and year out. I guess what I'd like to  
7           know is really what the majority of citizens  
8           want. We hear from citizens every week and  
9           we have a clear of what some of the citizens  
10          want, we need to know more. We need to know  
11          what people are thinking so I'd like to see  
12          a greater response on what they really want  
13          us to do with this issue. That's an opinion  
14          I think needs to go away, but I'm not  
15          endorsing any of those options at this  
16          particular moment, but what I am endorsing  
17          is a change from a broken system to a system  
18          that is more cost effective that works for  
19          all of us and is more inherently fair across  
20          the board.

21                      So hopefully we should all be  
22           interested in hearing from the public as to  
23           what they might prefer. I'm certainly  
24           interested in hearing other ideas on this  
25           issue that we may not even have thought of,

1 but most of all we need to talk about this,  
2 to come together on a plan, come together on  
3 a strategy, to move forward in a world where  
4 we don't have \$16 million owed to the city.  
5 We need to keep repairing -- we have to stop  
6 repeating the current mode of operation and  
7 process over and over and over again and  
8 expecting a different result. That's the  
9 definition of insanity. So we need to move  
10 ahead, come together, come up with a plan,  
11 come up with a strategy and work together to  
12 solve this thing, but I do know one thing  
13 the current process, the current systems,  
14 the current concept doesn't work. That's  
15 all I have for tonight.

16 MR. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Evans.  
17 Mr. Gaughan, motions or comments tonight?

18 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes. Just to address  
19 I know -- I think the gentleman left,  
20 Mr. Ackerman, regarding the swimming pool at  
21 Nay Aug Park. City council, we don't have  
22 any authority over Nay Aug Park. That is  
23 the Recreation Authority so even if the  
24 majority of council were against closing  
25 that pool we really don't have any say in

1           that. That I think -- I don't know if they  
2           have to take a vote at the Recreation  
3           Authority, I wasn't here two or three weeks  
4           ago when Mr. Gattens and another gentleman  
5           came in --

6                     MR. PERRY: Yeah, Mr. Gaughan, they  
7           said it was a unanimous vote.

8                     MR. GAUGHAN: Okay, so there was a  
9           vote and it was unanimous, thank you, but we  
10          don't have any control over that, but I do  
11          understand his comments. I did talk to  
12          Mr. Gattens about this. You know, the more  
13          I talk to people about this issue it would  
14          be my hope, and I don't know if it's  
15          possible, to hold off on filling in the pool  
16          until you can get funds for a splash park or  
17          whatever they want to do only because I  
18          think he is -- he has a good point in that  
19          when they do fill that pool in there is  
20          going to be a huge overcrowding issue in the  
21          smaller pool, so I think he brought up some  
22          very good points tonight.

23                    Mrs. Reed, if we could send  
24          correspondence, I know we did months and  
25          months ago but I talked to a gentleman that

1 lives on Linwood Avenue, we also received an  
2 e-mail from Mr. Welby from Marty Flynn's  
3 office about this issue, but this family  
4 that lives on Linwood Avenue is having some  
5 serious storm water runoff issues. It's  
6 gotten to the point now where it's literally  
7 washing away his home and his driveway so  
8 they are afraid they are going to lose the  
9 bottom portion of their house after speaking  
10 with him this afternoon, so if we could send  
11 a correspondence to the DPW just asking them  
12 if they would address that issue. The  
13 gentleman that I talked to used to work for  
14 PennDOT. It's his belief that it wouldn't  
15 be that big of a deal to fix it. They might  
16 have to add in pipes or something to that  
17 effect so if we can send that I would  
18 appreciate it.

19 Also, the street sweeping schedule,  
20 I know I mentioned it last week, I'll  
21 mention it again. North Scranton area,  
22 Greenbush Street to Market Street April 29  
23 to May 3 and Market Street to Ravine Street  
24 May 6 to May 10. Last week I mentioned  
25 about alternate side of the street parking

1 so that the street sweepers could actually  
2 sweep the streets. As I mentioned last  
3 week, it's very difficult to have an  
4 efficient street sweeping program when you  
5 don't have a plan like that in place because  
6 when people are parked in front of their  
7 homes it's impossible to actually get to the  
8 curb. So we didn't receive a response. I  
9 doubt that anything is going to be done this  
10 year, but moving forward as I mentioned last  
11 week, and I actually got some responses from  
12 people who watched the meeting last week who  
13 agreed, it makes no sense to have a street  
14 sweeping program without some type of  
15 alternate side of the street parking whether  
16 it's, you know, on a trial basis, tried in  
17 the neighborhood, I don't know, but there  
18 are many cities throughout Pennsylvania and  
19 throughout the United States that  
20 successfully have an alternate side of the  
21 street program for their street sweeping  
22 operation.

23 Also, I received a note from a  
24 gentleman, something interesting that I want  
25 to bring up, and I want to forward this to



1 the mayor and the administration. There was  
2 a -- mayors throughout the area, and this  
3 actually goes along with earth day and the  
4 two people that spoke earlier, the articles  
5 from the Pocono Record, and it says, "Mayors  
6 Commit to Future of Solar Energy" and I  
7 think down in Stroudsburg the mayor was able  
8 to acquire through an LSA grant a solar  
9 powdered trash compactor. This comes from  
10 Waste Management, it's solar powdered, it  
11 helps keep public spaces clean and it can  
12 reduce trash collections by up to 80  
13 percent.

14 But I think a few weeks ago when  
15 they had the conversation about renovating  
16 city hall, I really think we need to move in  
17 the direction of having a major citywide  
18 green initiative to reduce costs and to  
19 become more efficient. One of the ways we  
20 can do that is looking at our DPW and some  
21 of the aspects there.

22 So, Mrs. Reed, I would like to  
23 forward this article and there is actually  
24 two articles here to the mayor and the DPW  
25 director to see if they would be interested

1 in doing that.

2 Also, sent a letter last week to the  
3 mayor about the Ethics Board. I think all  
4 five members of council objected to the  
5 mayor's pick, although, we didn't vote on it  
6 the mayor sent us a little, Dennis  
7 D'Agostine, who is the chaplain for the Fire  
8 Department. Unfortunately, I'm sure  
9 Mr. D'Agostine would have did a great job,  
10 wasn't questioning that last week, but it  
11 does violate, as our solicitor pointed out  
12 in a letter to the city solicitor, it  
13 violates the ethics legislation that you  
14 cannot be on the Ethics Board if you are a  
15 member of any city committee.

16 I did pose a letter to the mayor  
17 though last week simply asking if he is  
18 advertising for these positions for the two  
19 picks that he has and is he publically  
20 soliciting resumes and applications. We are  
21 going on weeks now with -- we have our two  
22 picks, the city controller has a pick, we  
23 are still waiting on the mayor. So, you  
24 know, unless the mayor is advertising for  
25 these positions and soliciting these resumes

1 and applications as council did I think it's  
2 going to be difficult to find two people. I  
3 think you should open it up publically and  
4 then see who submits a resume and  
5 application. I think that only makes sense.

6 On the public caucus, I think it was  
7 underwhelming myself. I do appreciate the  
8 city solicitor coming and Mr. Beck and the  
9 representatives from NRS. As I mentioned in  
10 the caucus, if I don't pay my Comcast bill  
11 they shut my cable off. If they don't put a  
12 lien on my house then I still get to watch  
13 TV. If i don't pay my electric bill, they  
14 shut my lights off. If I don't pay my gas  
15 bill they shut my heat off. So at what  
16 point, and I posed this in the caucus, at  
17 what point, like, what is the incentive for  
18 anyone to pay this trash fee? 75 percent of  
19 the civic minded people in this city are  
20 paying \$300 and you have a quarter of the  
21 population who is kind of thumbing their  
22 noses.

23 Now, I know that there are some  
24 cases where people fall on hard times, they  
25 can't come up with the money, that is

1           understandable, but if you go through that  
2           list, as Mr. Evans pointed out, and you see  
3           out-of-town landlords like the one from New  
4           York who owes 120 some thousand dollars how  
5           are they allowed to still do business in  
6           this city?

7                        So, again, if I'm Jane Smith and I'm  
8           80 years old and I'm paying \$300 a year and  
9           I look at this list of people who are not  
10          paying why should I pay? Put a lien on my  
11          house. Big deal. There has to be something  
12          else. One of the of the ideas that was  
13          brought up was not picking up the garbage.  
14          I don't think that's a terrible idea. As I  
15          mentioned last week when Mrs. Franus brought  
16          it up, I would need to see a detailed plan  
17          from the administration on how they would  
18          enforce that. Will there be garbage all  
19          over the place? I don't know, but I'll tell  
20          you what, it's an incentive for people to  
21          pay the fee if you are not going to get your  
22          garbage picked up. The city has to get  
23          serious about this.

24                        So I would, Mrs. Reed, to send a  
25          letter to the mayor because I think we need

1 leadership on this issue from Mayor  
2 Courtright on, number one, whether or not he  
3 is going to reevaluate the contract with NRS  
4 and whether we are going to continue with  
5 NRS. The contract re-ups every year.  
6 They've had it since 2012. I mean, when is  
7 that going to give? You know, we are  
8 questioning it tonight but is that just  
9 going to continue to have the refuse, they  
10 have the tax delinquent real estate taxes  
11 and they have the rental registration, so  
12 that's a concern.

13 The other thing I would like to know  
14 from the mayor is and, you know, the  
15 administration here tonight answered it, you  
16 know, somewhat, what is the plan? Are we  
17 just going to continue to lien properties  
18 and as Councilman Evans said run in circles  
19 and just keep doing the same thing over and  
20 over again? Because if we do that it's a  
21 slap in the face to all of the 75 percent of  
22 the people like Mr. Spindler and  
23 Mrs. Schumacher and others who pay the \$300  
24 every year.

25 So I am more than willing and I know

1 my colleagues are more than willing to  
2 working tonight with the mayor and  
3 administration but something has to change  
4 and I think the first thing we should do is  
5 reevaluate the contract with NRS. One of  
6 the things I brought up tonight, questions I  
7 brought up was whether or not we can bring  
8 it inhouse and take out the middleman. In  
9 other words, why can't the Treasury  
10 Department do that work? If we have to hire  
11 two or three more people let's see a plan  
12 from the mayor and maybe that's an  
13 alternative that we go with.

14 I mean, what's the incentive for NRS  
15 to collect the trash fee? They just sit  
16 back, I had this conversation with  
17 Councilman Donahue today and they tack on  
18 penalties and interest and that's it and  
19 they wait. Maybe they pay, maybe they  
20 don't, but again, there is no, no, no,  
21 incentive. If you can't pay a \$300 fine  
22 garbage fee and you owe \$40,000 lien my  
23 house. What do I care for if you lien my  
24 house? I'm probably not going to sell it  
25 anyway? So I think that's what people on

1 the street and the city are saying. At  
2 least that's what they're saying to me and  
3 I'm sure to some of my colleagues.

4 So is this a complex problem? Yes.  
5 When the newspaper did an analysis, when the  
6 fee went from 178 to 300 that's when the  
7 delinquencies went up so I think that has a  
8 part of it, too, and of course the lawsuit  
9 has come into play as well. But we do need  
10 leadership from the administration and I do  
11 think that something has got to give and we  
12 need to change because if we are not going  
13 to enforce it and we are not going to take  
14 it serious then Mrs. Hodowanitz brought up a  
15 great point, when the storm water fee comes  
16 why pay that. Why pay it? I mean, you are  
17 going to put a lien on my house? Big deal.  
18 So we have got to get serious about it.  
19 Otherwise, we are going to run in circles  
20 and, you know, it's not fair to the 75  
21 percent that pay it. That's my spiel for  
22 this week. Thank you.

23 MR. PERRY: Thank you, Mr. Gaughan.  
24 Yeah, I have a couple of things, the first  
25 thing Mr. Spindler brought up that missing

1 curbing on Dorothy Street if we could have  
2 Director Gallagher take a look at it, I'm  
3 not sure, I'm not really familiar with that  
4 cut out that you are speaking of, but I'm  
5 sure it's there if you can just take a  
6 drive-by or send somebody up there and see  
7 if it's an easy fix or just putting in some  
8 asphalt curbing and just easing that little  
9 ponding issue and flooding over there that  
10 would be fantastic.

11 As far as the garbage, I'm going to  
12 echo what everybody said up here already,  
13 but I'll give you some of my personal  
14 opinions, maybe go a little bit deeper on  
15 that. I want to thank the city treasurer  
16 and solicitor and Northeast Revenue Service  
17 for coming in today, but, you know, this  
18 issue there is two problems right now what's  
19 going on. It's trying to collect what  
20 hasn't been collected already and how are we  
21 going to get better and collecting in the  
22 future. You know, we are at that zero point  
23 in the graph right now where we have a lot  
24 of catching up to do and if we don't fix our  
25 problem we are never going to get better at



1           it in the future.

2                       I believe it was Mr. Evans talking  
3           about embedding that into the property tax.  
4           That is something I am absolutely 100  
5           percent for. There is a couple of different  
6           ways to go about it. I think we talked  
7           about the hybrid program a little bit, I  
8           think that would just put more undo pressure  
9           to go buy bags and to put those out. While  
10          that would help generate recycling in the  
11          area, one of the better programs or better  
12          part of the programs that we have in the  
13          City of Scranton with our garbage collection  
14          is we can pretty much put out whatever we  
15          want, the garbage men will take it. That's  
16          a luxury that we have. We are paying for it  
17          right now, but it's a luxury that we have  
18          and if we can get more people to pay that  
19          same piece of the pie instead of having less  
20          pay more mentality like sometimes the City  
21          of Scranton has we would be much, much  
22          better off and that's something I would like  
23          to see is it getting embedded into the  
24          property tax where it has more teeth because  
25          right now this lien system is a joke. It's

1 just on there and it's forgotten about and  
2 that's it.

3 And I have no faith in the lien  
4 system. We brought this up during the  
5 caucus. If does protect our interest but  
6 what interest? It doesn't protect our  
7 interest this year, it doesn't protect it  
8 next year, it protects them down the road  
9 when all else fails and the roof falls in  
10 and they sell their house or pass away or  
11 whatever then that money once the property  
12 changes hands then we'll recoup some of  
13 that. Where we will be then? What other  
14 issues will we have? You know, right now we  
15 have roads that need to be paved and we have  
16 a building that needs to be repaired and we  
17 have things to do and we need some more --  
18 we need some harder and faster answers for  
19 this.

20 Something I'm for of going back I  
21 brought up, I know, Mr. Spindler, you and I  
22 are kind on the opposite sides of the fence  
23 on this, but I think we need to get some of  
24 these people who owe some big bills to start  
25 paying, start getting on a monthly program

1 and if they are on that monthly program I'm  
2 willing to negotiate with them on what bad  
3 debt they have that might be alleviated. We  
4 are not talking about somebody that owes  
5 \$500 or \$600, but if someone owes our city  
6 \$60,000 I'm willing to take \$45,000 off of  
7 them instead of just letting that collect  
8 and collect and collect because to me that's  
9 ghost money. You know, that's bad debt,  
10 that's money -- how are we going to get  
11 that? So if there is the way to find it  
12 that's what I would like to do.

13 You know, and I think Mr. Gaughan  
14 touched on this, I lost my confidence in  
15 Northeast Revenue. I am not saying they are  
16 not a competent company, they are not the  
17 best that we can do for a city. We are the  
18 customer. They are not the customer, we are  
19 the customer. I think we should be  
20 auditioning people to do this. There are  
21 other companies that do this. If they were  
22 a credit card company they would out of  
23 business because they are not doing enough  
24 to protect their interests so I would like  
25 to see bids opened up. This is a

1 year-by-year contract which gets renewed  
2 year by year and I think we should take a  
3 serious look.

4 I think inhouse is an excellent  
5 idea. I think Mr. Beck should be -- he  
6 should be in on this. He should put  
7 together his ideas of what it would take for  
8 our department to do it inhouse as well as  
9 we can find third party people that --  
10 people that are more successful in doing  
11 this and let's hear from them, have them sit  
12 down, what are some actions? When are the  
13 last time you had debts this far back and  
14 this tough to collect what did you do and  
15 what is your record and how did it outcome  
16 and how it did it benefit your customer?  
17 You know, let's ask those questions, let's  
18 get different people in here, let's get them  
19 bidding on themselves to get our services  
20 because that's what we have right now. We  
21 have a great service and that is our garbage  
22 fee and they should be fighting to get it  
23 not be complacent and not doing they should  
24 be doing and that's not collecting the fee.  
25 I'll get off my soapbox there.

1                   I try to keep personal and business  
2                   aside, but I'll do a little personal  
3                   tonight. Tonight is my wife's birthday and  
4                   I just want to say happy birthday to her.  
5                   As most of you know, she was in the fight of  
6                   her life last year and this is her very  
7                   first birthday after ringing the bell at the  
8                   cancer center and this is her first year  
9                   that she is actually having a birthday that  
10                  she is cancer free and I'm just so proud of  
11                  her, all of the hard work she did. It was a  
12                  struggle for her and God bless here she is  
13                  stronger than I could ever hope to be and I  
14                  just want to -- you know, she watches every  
15                  Monday, you know, sometimes watches and I  
16                  come home -- "Why do you go back every  
17                  Monday? You get yelled at all of the time."

18                  And it's because we love it. We  
19                  love to help and sometimes we take our licks  
20                  but that's fine, that's what city government  
21                  is and we do our very best I can tell you  
22                  that, and I just want to tell you, Lori, I  
23                  love you and thank you for everything and  
24                  I'll see you soon. That's all I have  
25                  tonight.

1 MS. REED: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
2 A RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND  
3 OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE  
4 AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH KOHANSKI &  
5 COMPANY, PC TO PROVIDE THE CITY OF SCRANTON  
6 INDEPENDENT POST AUDIT FOR FISCAL YEARS  
7 ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2018, DECEMBER 31, 2019,  
8 DECEMBER 31, 2020 AND DECEMBER 31, 2021.

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

12 MR. EVANS: So moved.

13 MR. GAUGHAN: Second.

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

17 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

18 MR. EVANS: Aye.

19 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

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

22 MS. REED: 5-C. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
23 A RESOLUTION - APPROVING THE FINANCING BY  
24 THE SCRANTON-LACKAWANNA HEALTH AND WELFARE  
25 AUTHORITY OF CERTAIN CAPITAL PROJECTS FOR

1 THE BENEFIT OF MARYWOOD UNIVERSITY, A  
2 PENNSYLVANIA NOT-FOR-PROFIT CORPORATION;  
3 DECLARING THAT IT IS DESIRABLE FOR THE  
4 HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE OF  
5 THE CITY OF SCRANTON, LACKAWANNA COUNTY,  
6 PENNSYLVANIA, AND THE AREA SERVED BY  
7 MARYWOOD UNIVERSITY TO HAVE THE PROJECT  
8 PROVIDED BY AND FINANCED THROUGH THE  
9 AUTHORITY; DESIGNATING THE MAYOR OF THE  
10 CITY, OR, IN THE MAYOR'S ABSENCE, THE  
11 PRESIDENT OR VICE PRESIDENT OF THE CITY  
12 COUNCIL, AS THE PERSON TO ACT ON BEHALF OF  
13 THE CITY COUNCIL AS THE "APPLICABLE ELECTED  
14 REPRESENTATIVE" WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE  
15 INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986, AS AMENDED;  
16 AUTHORIZING SUCH MAYOR OF THE CITY OR THE  
17 PRESIDENT OR VICE PRESIDENT OF THE CITY  
18 COUNCIL OF THE CITY TO TAKE CERTAIN ACTIONS  
19 ON BEHALF OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY AS  
20 SUCH "APPLICABLE ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE";  
21 AND AUTHORIZING OTHER NECESSARY AND  
22 APPROPRIATE ACTION.

23 MR. PERRY: At this time, I'll  
24 entertain a motion that Item 5-C be  
25 introduced into its proper committee.

1 MR. EVANS: So moved.

2 MR. GAUGHAN: Second.

3 MR. PERRY: On the question? All  
4 those in favor of introduction signify by  
5 saying aye.

6 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

7 MR. EVANS: Aye.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

9 MR. PERRY: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
10 have it and so moved.

11 MS. REED: SIXTH ORDER. 6-A. NO  
12 BUSINESS AT THIS TIME.

13 SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A. NO BUSINESS AT  
14 THIS TIME.

15 MR. PERRY: If there is no further  
16 business, I'll entertain a motion to  
17 adjourn.

18 MR. EVANS: Motion to adjourn.

19 MR. PERRY: This meeting is  
20 adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

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CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR  
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER