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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

HELD:

Tuesday, December 6, 2011

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

KATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

BOYD HUGHES, SOLICITOR

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

3 MS. EVANS: Roll call, please.

4 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. McGoff.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Here.

6 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Rogan.

7 MR. ROGAN: Here.

8 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Loscombe.

9 MR. LOSCOMBE: Here.

10 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Joyce.

11 MR. JOYCE: Here.

12 MS. MARCIANO: Mrs. Evans.

13 MR. ROGAN: Mrs. Evans called me
14 before the meeting, she said she is going to
15 be a little bit late. Dispense with the
16 reading of the minutes.

17 MS. KRAKE: 3-A. AUDIT STATUS FROM
18 ROBERT ROSSI & CO. AS OF NOVEMBER 29, 2011.

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

21 MS. KRAKE: 3-B. LACKAWANNA COUNTY
22 PLANNING COMMISSION SUBDIVISION AND LAND
23 DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION.

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

1 clerk's notes tonight?

2 MS. KRAKE: We do not have any
3 clerk's notes, Mr. Rogan.

4 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. Do any
5 council members have any announcements
6 tonight?

7 MR. JOYCE: Yes. I would like to
8 make a motion to table the 2012 operating
9 budget for tonight.

10 MR. LOSCOMBE: Second.

11 MR. ROGAN: A motion has been made
12 and a second, on the question?

13 MR. JOYCE: Yes. There is still
14 some information that I would been
15 discussing now with Ryan McGowan, PEL and
16 DCED today and we are still looking for some
17 clarification on some matters that relate to
18 unpaid bills as well as unfunded debt
19 borrowing and we seek to have this
20 information by next week, and also other
21 council members during this time will get
22 into offer extended input.

23 MR. ROGAN: Anyone else on the
24 question? All those in favor signify by
25 saying aye.

1 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

2 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

3 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

4 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

5 MR. ROGAN: Opposed? The ayes have
6 it and so moved and 7-A is now tabled. Are
7 there any other announcements?

8 MS. KRAKE: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS'
9 PARTICIPATION.

10 MR. ROGAN: I would also add, a
11 special meeting for tomorrow will be
12 cancelled because the amendments will not be
13 made tonight. I believe Mr. Joyce mentioned
14 on Monday.

15 MR. JOYCE: Yes, we would be looking
16 tentatively to have a scheduled meeting on
17 Monday in order to make the amendments to
18 the 2012 operating budget and have a public
19 hearing the day after on Tuesday, which is
20 our regularly scheduled meeting, where we
21 will vote on the amendments.

22 MR. LOSCOMBE: The Monday meeting
23 will be 6:30, the same time as our council
24 meeting?

25 MR. JOYCE: Yes, that's correct. If

1 we're all in agreeance with that.

2 MR. ROGAN: It's agreeable to me.

3 MR. JOYCE: Likewise.

4 MR. ROGAN: Citizens' participation.
5 Since there is such a large amount of people
6 here today, I would ask everybody to stay
7 within the five-minute allotted time. Our
8 first speaker is Reverend Kathryn Simmons.

9 MS. SIMMONS: Good evening, city
10 council. My name is Reverend Kathryn
11 Simmons, I'm a life-long resident of
12 Scranton. I have come here these past weeks
13 to talk about legal issues, but I'm going to
14 give you a rest this evening, and I'm going
15 to talk about the residents of this blessed
16 city, and I want to give you two perfect
17 examples of the residents who abide within
18 the perimeter of Scranton.

19 Number one, a homeless gentleman
20 stopped by my home several nights ago to see
21 me, he is a diabetic and in need of food
22 more than once a day. He asked me for a can
23 of beans and some bread to take to the site
24 where he is sleeping right now, and I said,
25 no, I can't do that. I instead warmed him

1 some soup, made him a sandwich and talked to
2 him as he ate about what I could do to be of
3 more help to him. To make this brief, tears
4 were shed between us both and prayers, also.

5 The second example happened on
6 Friday evening. I had a single mom stop by
7 to me see, she works. Some would consider
8 her, I guess, lower/middle income. She had
9 to pay her rent, her car insurance, her
10 electric bill and her son needed sneakers
11 for school leaving her nothing for food, so
12 I put some bags together and sent her on her
13 way. This is not the first time I have
14 helped her, but because of her income status
15 help was not always there and she was
16 embarrassed to go to some places for her job
17 was very public. I told her to come back to
18 me and I would share with her and her
19 children what I could for the coming
20 Christmas season.

21 Though the shelter site is closed at
22 the moment, we on the board of directors
23 know that Father God will help us find a
24 site, but until that site is found the need
25 goes on, and so I'm asking anyone across

1 this beautiful city to help this ministry of
2 the poor, the homeless and the needy. We
3 are in need of food for donations of baskets
4 for persons who have no Access card because
5 they work and because they work they cannot
6 get to a site which gives out food during
7 the day, so they need to come to us in the
8 evening hours.

9 We also need clothing, blankets,
10 towels, wash clothes, soaps and shampoo for
11 we are going to make gifts bags of these
12 things to be given to the homeless for
13 Christmas gifts. Financial donations of any
14 kind will also be accepted. The phone
15 number to contact me for further information
16 is 570-342-4117. In this month of December
17 of 2011, I celebrate humbly 25 years of
18 ministry to those in need. I, and my fellow
19 board members, will not give up nor will we
20 leave anyone unattended even if we must go
21 without.

22 There are people around this room
23 tonight who will soon be, if not already,
24 without jobs and they will come to look to
25 people such as myself to extend a hand to

1 them to help them and we will do that and we
2 will not make them feel as though they are
3 less than they are, and that is a Scranton
4 resident, proud from where they came from.

5 I ask on this night for anyone that
6 can hear me, know that my Father God has
7 showered each of us with blessings on this
8 day by allowing us to have a roof over our
9 head and a bed to lay in. I said to someone
10 not too long ago who is from across the
11 country they asked me to describe Scranton
12 and I said, well, that's pretty difficult,
13 but let me put it to you this way, when I
14 walk around Scranton and I talk to my fellow
15 residents I feel as though I'm walking
16 around heaven and the angels have come out.
17 Let them not forget us this evening. Thank
18 you.

19 MR. JOYCE: Reverend Simmons, if I
20 could just ask you?

21 MS. SIMMONS: Sure.

22 MR. JOYCE: If you would like, we
23 could announce this at council.

24 MS. SIMMONS: You go right ahead and
25 do it.

1 MR. JOYCE: If that's okay with you.

2 MS. SIMMONS: You do it. You do it.

3 MR. JOYCE: And donations, if they
4 be cash, check, do they have to be a
5 specific thing?

6 MS. SIMMONS: Well, if they would
7 call me we'll make arrangements and
8 hopefully by the time they call us we will
9 have a site that will be a drop off site,
10 so --

11 MR. JOYCE: Wonderful.

12 MS. SIMMONS: I thank you very much.

13 MR. JOYCE: You are very welcome.

14 (Whereupon while Ms. Simmons was
15 speaking, Mrs. Evans takes the dais and
16 joins the meeting.)

17 MS. EVANS: Before we continue, I
18 ask that all council speakers would adhere
19 to the five-minute time limit. When the
20 bell rings at the conclusion of the five
21 minutes please finish your sentence and
22 seated.

23 I also ask that audience members
24 remain quiet and turn off cell phones
25 throughout the meeting in order that all may

1 be heard. Personal conversations should be
2 conducted outside council chambers.

3 Our next speaker is Andy Sbaraglia.

4 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia.
5 Citizen of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians, I
6 know we have to pay the debt for the
7 Redevelopment Authority and the Parking
8 Authority.

9 MR. JOYCE: Correct.

10 MR. SBARAGLIA: I think it comes
11 close to \$3 million or so?

12 MR. JOYCE: 3.2 to be exact.

13 MR. SBARAGLIA: How many firemen
14 could we have keep on the job for the 3.2
15 million, have you figured that out?

16 MR. JOYCE: For the \$3.2 million you
17 could reinstate all 29.

18 MR. SBARAGLIA: So we have to look
19 to the mayor for this fiasco. Many times I
20 came before council and told you them two
21 authorities are bankrupt, the people that
22 run them are bankrupt. I asked you to call
23 for their resignation. That was the most
24 prudent thing you could have done, nothing
25 else you can do because this is the mayor.

1 Nothing else you can blame but the mayor. I
2 don't -- and I don't know why you haven't
3 done something. I know you don't appoint
4 the authorities, that I know definite, but
5 anyway, somewhere along the line we should
6 at least do that part to make a formal
7 request for council to have them authority
8 members resign, whether they do or not, of
9 course, you can't do much about it, but at
10 least you have done it. We are taking a
11 loss on all of these public employees
12 because of these two authorities. If you
13 want to let the blame, that's where it is.

14 Now, I looked at your parking, and I
15 don't know how you expect to get money from
16 the Parking Authority. They can't even pay
17 their bonds now. How are they going to
18 ever, ever give you money for any purpose
19 from that legislation you planned in the
20 past, and as you know at one time they had
21 legislation saying that each parking garage
22 would pay \$10, I don't know if you ever got
23 it or not, but anyway, I believe that was on
24 the books.

25 I'm not going to take a lot of time

1 because there is no point to it at this
2 point, but when you get everything back in
3 order and so forth and so on I'll make my
4 comments then. Thank you.

5 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

6 MR. JOYCE: Thank you.

7 MS. EVANS: Bob Bolus.

8 MR. BOLUS: Good evening, Council.
9 Bob Bolus, Scranton.

10 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

11 MR. BOLUS: You know, the first
12 thing we did tonight with the meeting
13 started what do we do? We pledge allegiance
14 to the flag. What you are looking at here
15 are all Americans. That flag represents our
16 freedom and to come here tonight, I just
17 came back, I have been out of town for the
18 last few weeks, and to pull out outside here
19 and see what's happened to this city is an
20 absolute embarrassment that we as Americans
21 in this city have to face.

22 These are people who came here and
23 they risked their lives. I know what it is
24 to be a firefighter. I am one, I'm a
25 volunteer firefighter in the Throop fire

1 department, I drive one of the engines. We
2 know the risks, we know the time it takes,
3 but to see what's happening to the men and
4 women of this city, the police department,
5 the fire department, the DPW, ask PEL and
6 Chris Doherty who is going to plow streets
7 if you hire private contractors. These are
8 dedicated men and women. Yeah, we have some
9 flaws in there, there are some slackers and
10 nobody is perfect, but we pay taxes for this
11 protection.

12 People have sat on their butts long
13 enough in the city, to allow KOZ's,
14 nonprofits to literally take advantage of
15 us. This is our city, it's not their city,
16 to take. The University people don't like
17 to hear it, well, you know, I really have no
18 sympathy for them. They are a business.
19 They charge what they want, they could buy a
20 \$25,000 piece of land and pay \$500,000 for
21 it, but our firefighters and our police
22 department protect them, and they are not
23 paying for it other than a few crummy
24 pennies that they throw out on the table.

25 I have brought up many times over

1 the years, and it's time this council and
2 this administration recognize the fact, we
3 the taxpayers are paying for those fire
4 trucks, police cars, DPW equipment that we
5 are letting them use for nothing basically.
6 You run a business, you take your asset, you
7 evaluate it, it's common business sense.
8 You know what your cost of operation is,
9 what your equipment costs, you charge that
10 amount when it goes out on a service call.
11 That's what our fire department does.

12 The KOZ's, nonprofits need to pay
13 the cost of those pieces of equipment
14 whether you have an automobile accident,
15 that's what you have insurance for. We are
16 not here to support them anymore. That's
17 why we have a problem with our men and women
18 here. That's why we can't pay them. That's
19 why we don't honor that fact and the flag
20 that gives us the freedom we ask for.

21 I had said in the past the ship is
22 sunk, we are in life boats that has holes in
23 them. You need now to stand united and make
24 these changes happen. If it's the
25 reclassification of the city, whatever it

1 takes. You have vacant land, sell it at
2 auction, put the stipulation at 60 days you
3 must start building a home on it, put it on
4 the tax rolls, generate your cash from your
5 assets, you have them. You have the
6 leachate line. Eight years we have talked
7 about it, how many millions could you have
8 brought into this city? How many millions
9 could the fire department and the police
10 department brought in by charging for their
11 services, not throwing some \$15 here or
12 \$150,000, you can't even go to the casino
13 anymore with what the University gives us.
14 Let's be realistic. This is America, this
15 is the real world.

16 The post office can't even afford to
17 keep their people, yet everybody went over
18 there. When Tobyhanna was going to lose
19 that everybody went up and helped Tobyhanna,
20 where are they tonight? Where are they
21 supporting these people and they live in
22 this city? I don't see them anywhere
23 because they got what they wanted, and it's
24 wrong. It's just total wrong to have to
25 come here and see this happening in our city

1 and knowing that people like the University,
2 and I brought it up again and, Mr. Loscombe,
3 you were a victim of two teachers from the
4 University, I know some people on this panel
5 don't want to hear it, Mr. McGoff and others
6 don't want to hear it, but it's the true
7 factual reality.

8 I offered \$50,000 for a piece of
9 land in this city and I haven't seen anybody
10 do anything about making that happen. It's
11 up to you people to do it. We are speaking.
12 These are one voice, these people didn't
13 come to mass in the past because they are
14 criticized, they are union or whatever it is
15 or they are on a free ride. That's not the
16 case. They have a right to voice their
17 opinion and each one should voice their
18 opinion and not let anyone speak for them.

19 We've seen PEL put us in the hole
20 where they put us in, they made hundreds of
21 thousands of dollars. What have we gotten
22 in return? What has Chris Doherty given us?
23 The light show at Nay Aug Park, yeah, it's
24 beautiful. Go to Ocean City, Maryland, and
25 you pay to see the show. You don't drive

1 your car you ride in a tram and everybody is
2 happy to pay, but not in the City of
3 Scranton. They should have LED lights up
4 there.

5 There is lot of ways we could cut
6 costs and we are not doing it and why?
7 There is no excuse. It's not about
8 political futures, it's not about who cares
9 about this or who is going to talk about
10 somebody, it's about what we need to do and
11 if you don't take the bull by the horns we
12 are all deeper and deeper in trouble. You
13 can't borrow to get out of debt, put the
14 meters out on a public bid nationally and
15 see who is out there to come to plate. Go
16 see what others states do.

17 We are just in here giving somebody
18 Monday, to borrow that money and they can't
19 even pay their debts now. Look at the
20 garbage fee we pay. You don't want to put a
21 fee on anybody, well, you can put a fee on
22 us for our garbage that we are paying taxes
23 for. Put a public service fee across the
24 board in the city, 1 percent on whatever you
25 come up with. A public safety figure, 1

1 percent of what the union makes might bring
2 in four or five million dollars.

3 And those are only little
4 suggestions. I'm sure everybody in here
5 could come up, just like they run their
6 household that's how you got to run the city
7 and that's what we are doing wrong, ladies
8 and gentlemen. We need to take and
9 straighten our city out. You have to listen
10 to the people once and for all in this city.
11 You need public safety. Crime rampant, it's
12 all over the place, you don't have to be
13 stupid to see it, it's black and white. No
14 matter how they salad dress it, it's black
15 and white and you cannot take police and
16 fire off the street. I don't care how you
17 look at it.

18 And DPW, you could use those trucks
19 to go publically out and service businesses
20 in the city to generate income. You have
21 the assets, but you need to use your assets
22 wisely and intelligently, and use the people
23 that are here. When you destroy the morale
24 where did you think you are going? You are
25 going down to the toilet so to speak.

1 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

2 MR. BOLUS: And one just quick
3 thing, I do have a Christmas dinner going
4 on, Christmas Day at St. Lucy's and as
5 always everyone is invited. Thank you.

6 MS. EVANS: Wonderful.

7 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

8 MR. LOSCOMBE: Mr. Bolus, what was
9 the time on that?

10 MR. BOLUS: Pardon?

11 MR. LOSCOMBE: The time on the
12 dinner?

13 MR. BOLUS: It starts at 12 to 6,
14 it's an all day buffet.

15 MS. EVAN: Yes.

16 MS. HURCHIK: Good evening, City
17 council. My name is Eileen Hurchik, I'm
18 president of IAM Local 2462. I represent
19 the clerical union workers for the City of
20 Scranton and the Single Tax Office. I am
21 here tonight to ask city council to please
22 put back the three city hall clerical
23 positions and the eight remaining positions
24 in the Single Tax Office that were
25 eliminated as a result of the mayor's budget

1 and city council's budget amendments. The
2 three city hall positions that are being
3 eliminated are the accounts payable clerk, a
4 housing inspector and a building inspector.

5 The accounts payable clerk is
6 responsible for all payments to all vendors
7 in the city. The accounts payable clerk
8 keeps impeccable records of each and all
9 transactions that are made. When any
10 department needs to look up prior spending
11 or has any questions regarding vendors and
12 payments to vendors, the accounts payable
13 clerk provides all of the information. The
14 accounts payable clerk reconciles all of the
15 vendor statements. The accounts payable
16 clerk assists the business administrator
17 with the Right-to-Know requests.

18 What needs to be explained is that
19 the functions of the remaining positions
20 that are in the business administration
21 office approve vouchers, purchase orders,
22 post payments, and do wires. Therefore, if
23 the accounts payable clerk is eliminated, it
24 will destroy the internal control
25 environment or checks and balances of the

1 business administrator's office. I feel it
2 will also open up the city to a possible
3 audit fine next year. Without this
4 position, there are no checks that will be
5 processed or issued.

6 The housing inspector and building
7 inspector positions were vacated during the
8 middle of 2011 when the employees vacated
9 their positions with the city. These two
10 positions were not put up for bid due to the
11 city's budget constraints, however, they
12 were supposed to be posted the beginning of
13 2012. Patty Fowler is one of our housing
14 inspectors and will speak regarding the
15 vacant inspectors positions.

16 The Single Tax Office positions are
17 needed because this office will still be
18 processing well into next year the 2011 wage
19 tax that has been collected. Again, on
20 behalf of myself and all of my union
21 brothers and sisters we would appreciate
22 anything this council could do to save these
23 positions, and I appreciate your time.
24 Thank you very much.

25 MR. JOYCE: Thank you, and your

1 comments will be taken into very heavy
2 consideration as will everyone else's.

3 MS. HURCHIK: I appreciate it very
4 much. We do. Thank you. And, Patty?

5 MS. FOWLER: Good evening, Council.
6 Thank you for the opportunity to speak with
7 you tonight. I'm here to explain the
8 importance of the two inspector positions
9 you have chosen not to fund in this year's
10 budget.

11 I have been the South Side inspector
12 now for approximately two years. In the
13 beginning of those two years, we had two
14 inspectors in South Side, one in the upper
15 part of South Side, which included the East
16 Mountain and, like, all of the -- up from
17 South Side, South Webster up to the East
18 Mountain. The other one had lower South
19 Side, which is a very busy area, and
20 Minooka, which is nice, and I was really
21 busy, let me tell you.

22 So to have one inspector cover that
23 large of an area is not only a huge tax, but
24 at times we can only have -- we can have a
25 few condemnations during the day working in

1 tandem with the police and fire. It's
2 impossible to be in the upper side of the
3 South Side and then called to the lower part
4 of the South Side by another agency and be
5 in both places at the same time. It just
6 can't be done.

7 Inspector jobs are important. Many
8 of your citizens' request refer to inspector
9 work and without them, without enough of us,
10 there is no way to get all of the jobs done
11 the way they need to be done.

12 On another note, in not funding the
13 building inspector position it is basically
14 handing the taxpayers just another tax or
15 fee. If there is no building inspector,
16 when they are required to have a foundation
17 inspection, a footer inspection, framing
18 inspection, and etcetera, without the
19 building inspector they are -- we are
20 forcing the taxpayers to go to get a third
21 party inspection for that particular
22 inspection so that their project or building
23 can further. The project or building cannot
24 further until the third party inspection is
25 signed off on by the building inspector and

1 that is approximately \$250 more that you
2 have to pay on top of the \$150 inspection
3 you pay for us to come up. So it can be
4 quite pricey in a project, you know, of a
5 huge magnitude or some kind of a building.

6 Not funding those positions forces
7 the people who are interested in all of
8 those projects to spend all of this extra
9 money that they may be able to put into
10 another possible project or another building
11 a house or whatever.

12 That's all I have to say and thank
13 you for listening.

14 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

15 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you.

16 MS. EVANS: Ozzie Quinn.

17 MR. QUINN: Ozzie Quinn. Taxpayers'
18 Association. Good evening.

19 MR. LOSCOMBE: Good evening.

20 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

21 MR. QUINN: Good evening. Bringing
22 back the pride, they took that off of the
23 website now they have progressive city. You
24 know what, Mr. Joyce, last week there was an
25 excerpt where you said you were backed into

1 the corner and, yes, you were backed into a
2 corner since 2003 when Mayor Doherty started
3 his spending like a sailor on leave, okay?
4 First he sold the Gerry Park Municipal Golf
5 Course, formerly the Muni, a favorite of a
6 lot of people, and PEL didn't argue, okay?
7 One-time revenue. It then started a series
8 of bond issues, you know, we are still
9 paying for them and we are going to be
10 paying the debt service 2012.

11 We are also paying the debt service
12 for the money that the SRA blew. For
13 anybody thinks that the SRA and the Scranton
14 Parking Authority is autonomous, it's a lie.
15 The debt, we are liable for the debt, the
16 taxpayers in the City of Scranton, as we are
17 right now in the 2011, 2012 and future
18 budgets for as Andy spoke before. Now,
19 that's a lot of money and that could have
20 saved a lot of firemen and a lot of clerical
21 workers. I worked in city hall and I know
22 that people are needed.

23 Now, the City of Scranton is 25.4
24 square miles, 25.2 are built up miles with
25 about 28 individuals per square mile.

1 That's a lot of people and I don't know if
2 the response time is going to be there to
3 save these people, you know?

4 And it really burns me up when I saw
5 last week when President Obama was in town
6 and read in the paper that there were grants
7 available and knowing then that Mr. Doherty
8 did not apply for those grants. Now, to me
9 that's unethical. They all say, don't
10 judge, you can't judge, that's falsified.
11 You can judge anybody you want. If you
12 don't judge you are a fool. Don't condemn a
13 person, but you can judge them. What he did
14 is wrong and unethical. He knew there are
15 grants out there and he didn't care about
16 the firemen and their families. Now, he
17 went just right ahead and prepared his fraud
18 budget.

19 Now, I'm concerned because of the
20 fact that now we have, what, a \$20 million
21 award in front of us because of the fact
22 that, no, Mr. Doherty and PEL they presumed,
23 they'll never, they can't negotiate, we're
24 the bosses here, don't worry, okay? Now, I
25 think the state should pay part of this.

1 Now, I haven't seen anybody or I haven't saw
2 anybody approach State Senator Browning
3 about this, about getting the state to pay
4 part of this \$20 million. They are the one
5 that told us what to do. They should be
6 responsible for it.

7 Now, it worries me because of the
8 fact that, you know, we have all of this
9 money going out this year's budget and next
10 year's budget and the years to come with
11 this debt service. Mrs. Evans, you coined
12 it the Doherty debt, and, boy, it is a debt,
13 you know, and people say, I have heard it, I
14 seen it printed, I've seen on the electronic
15 news, the Parking Authority don't count, the
16 SRA don't care, the hell it don't count.
17 That's our money, you know? And all of that
18 debt if we ever get a 2010 audit, if we ever
19 get it, did we ever get it yet?

20 MR. JOYCE: Not yet.

21 MS. EVANS: Not yet.

22 MR. QUINN: Well, don't be hanging.
23 It's unbelievable. This man should be
24 surcharged for what he is doing on this
25 audit. He should actually be surcharged

1 because of this mismanagement, but, please,
2 please, let's try to look at ways to save
3 these firemen, not from the fact that we are
4 going to say let's just save them to keep
5 them or give them a paycheck, but what I
6 said we have 25.2 square miles and we only
7 got -- and Mr. Gervasi said we need at least
8 17 more firemen, okay, to maintain at a
9 minimum, so please listen to him. He knows
10 more about it than Mayor Doherty does, you
11 know?

12 I'm not sure Chief Davis when he was
13 riding saddle with these people he would be
14 one of the first ones up here, too. He
15 would know, also. It makes me sick to see
16 these people being laid off that are
17 protecting my money and my taxes, my taxes.
18 Nobody else is paying this. It's my taxes
19 and your taxes and these jobs got to be
20 preserved not for the fact that they are
21 going to save a check, as I said, but to
22 preserve the safety and welfare of the
23 people in the City of Scranton. We can't
24 continue.

25 One more thing, I looked at the

1 Bureau of Recreation and it says they
2 maintain 27 parks in the City of Scranton
3 and baseball fields and basketball courts,
4 where the hell are they? Softball fields.
5 I don't know where they are. 27 parks.
6 Thank you.

7 MS. EVANS: Thank you. John Judge.

8 MR. JUDGE: Good evening, city
9 council. My name is John judge.

10 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

11 MR. JUDGE: I'm the secretary for
12 IFF Local 60, the Scranton firefighters.
13 I'm here to represent my brothers and
14 sisters who I work with and discuss, you
15 know, the impact of what's going on. I
16 found it quite odd, I guess you could say,
17 that when I came in here tonight you guys
18 were having a caucus and you were having a
19 caucus with a group of people to determine
20 impact of what their business plan and
21 proposal is going to be on the city, but yet
22 we blindly in this city just cut jobs left
23 and right and we don't ask for the
24 information from the firefighters, the
25 people that know what's going on and what

1 the impact of such deep cuts that are
2 proposed by the mayor will be.

3 I understand that the mayor has come
4 out before and said no matter what happens
5 he has the right to hire and fire, but
6 council absolutely has the obligation to at
7 least try to lessen that impact on the
8 residents of the City of Scranton. It's
9 your job. That's why I voted for the
10 majority of you up there and I'm not afraid
11 to say it. That's why most of my brothers
12 and sisters voted for the majority of the
13 people that are sitting up there because we
14 knew that you took public safety seriously
15 and that's what we want to continue to see.

16 We are hoping that over the next
17 couple of days you will -- I see that you
18 have made a motion tonight to table the
19 budget amendments, I'm hoping that those
20 budget amendments reflect that are going to
21 be presented next Monday a real strong
22 stance on public safety and that you guys
23 take what you have preached for the last
24 several years and what I have listened to by
25 listening and watching these council

1 meetings, you guys were all about public
2 safety and I hope that those amendments
3 reflect it.

4 The impact of the layoffs to my
5 brothers, obviously, that's something huge,
6 but I'll tell you something right now they
7 are resilient. They will get past that, we
8 will all get past that, I'm on that list as
9 well. Ten years I have served this city.
10 My concern is for the safety of the members
11 that I leave behind if I get laid off and
12 the residents of the City of Scranton.

13 Make no doubt about it, and I know
14 that last week there were comments made
15 about, you know, that you don't want us
16 backing council into a corner, listen, do
17 not be threatened by us. We are here to
18 protect the city, we will be long after this
19 as well. I'm hoping that over the next
20 several years that when I have to come to
21 this podium it's for something other than
22 screaming for the safety of the citizens.

23 You know, let us start to
24 concentrate on what's truly important here.
25 Dave Gervasi has spent countless hours

1 fighting to keep this city safe by keeping
2 the firefighters employed, by keeping
3 stations open, by keeping equipment on the
4 road. We need to get back away from that
5 and not have to worry about it so we can
6 start to focus and make our department more
7 efficient, provide better services and more
8 services for the City of Scranton and the
9 residents of the Scranton and I'm hoping
10 that council's amendments next week we will
11 reflect a true stance, whether Mayor Doherty
12 says he can going to fund them or not or
13 listen to you or not, that you send a clear
14 message to him that this council is all
15 about public safety. Thank you for your
16 time.

17 MS. EVANS: Bill Jackowitz. Bill
18 Jones. Doug Miller.

19 MR. HUBBARD: Good evening, Council.
20 First, I'd like to graciously thank
21 Mr. Miller for allowing me to take his spot
22 in line, my schedule is tight and I'm
23 actually away from work right now and I need
24 to get back.

25 My name is Daniel Hubbard from lower

1 Greenridge. I was not able to see or attend
2 the caucus this evening in regard to the
3 Lace Works project, but I understand that
4 when the gentleman was asked about the
5 neighbors how they felt of the project, you
6 guys were informed that the Bull's Head
7 Neighborhood Association is on board. Well,
8 I spoke to a neighbor, and my mother did
9 briefly, that lives across the street from
10 the Lace Works and none of the people in our
11 neighborhood were approached about this
12 project.

13 I'm not really familiar with the
14 details of what is involved with changing,
15 the master plan to suit this project,
16 although, I did catch part of it at the
17 planning meeting, but the gripe I have here
18 is that the Bull's Head and Weston Field
19 Neighborhood Association has gotten
20 themselves involved in several projects that
21 involve lower Greenridge and not their
22 neighborhood. Flood meetings, for example,
23 that didn't even involve the levy on their
24 side of the project, they decided to hold it
25 in Weston Field, obviously, because it's a

1 great space to have the meeting, but then
2 the took center stage on the meetings.

3 This is not a Bull's Head
4 neighborhood project, this isn't a Weston
5 Field project, they are on the opposite side
6 of the river separated by two levies and a
7 river from this building. It is in lower
8 Greenridge and nobody in lower Greenridge
9 has been approached on how we feel about
10 this project.

11 I'll do my research and study up on
12 the plan, the master plan changes that they
13 are requesting, but I just ask council given
14 the past situations in this city involving
15 light and industrial and neighborhoods
16 please step cautiously when involving any
17 zoning that involves light industrial in a
18 neighborhood in this city. I think that
19 there has been -- we are all aware of past
20 situations in this city that involve the
21 similar type of zoning.

22 But I just wanted to come in and
23 just say that the lower Greenridge
24 neighborhood has not been approached by this
25 and that I find it offensive that Bull's

1 Head and Weston Field continuously tries to
2 involve themselves as the neighborhood
3 association involved in the projects on our
4 side of the river and they are not. Yes,
5 Mr. McGoff?

6 MR. MCGOFF: May I ask Mr. Hubbard a
7 question?

8 MS. EVANS: Um-hum.

9 MR. MCGOFF: Is there still a lower
10 Greenridge Neighborhood Association that
11 could be contacted?

12 MR. HUBBARD: There is and there
13 isn't. I mean, we haven't had a meeting
14 since the flood projects went through and
15 everything was okay with that, but the
16 residents still live on Albright Avenue, you
17 know, it's a very small neighborhood, so it
18 can --

19 MR. MCGOFF: My point in asking was
20 if there was someone to whom we could direct
21 --

22 MR. HUBBARD: Direct them to me and
23 I can get a meeting together. If they want
24 to talk to the neighborhood certainly. Send
25 them to me and I will reach out to all of

1 the neighbors. I have our whole entire
2 neighborhood list and I could put a meeting
3 together and talk to the neighborhood about
4 it. I'm interested in -- I want this
5 project to go through in several ways, I
6 want to see something done with the Lace
7 Works, it's a fabulous building, and it's an
8 eyesore just the way it sits now, so I'm all
9 for something being done but I just want to
10 make sure that we are not causing problems
11 in the future by amending the master plan
12 for zoning to suit one project based on the
13 premise that this change in the master plan
14 will facilitate other similar projects
15 within the city, because I'm still holding
16 my breath to see if this project gets off
17 the ground, never mind future projects that
18 we are changing zoning for that we are not
19 even aware of that might, could, possibly,
20 maybe happen in a decade. That's my only
21 thing. I just don't want to see the master
22 plan change to suit one project and have it
23 adversely affect, possibly adversely affect
24 the residents around a light industrial
25 complex.

1 So if you direct them to reach out
2 to me and I can get the neighborhood
3 together and we can have meeting and they
4 can go over it with us, but I just want to
5 make sure everybody is clear, this is not
6 the first time that Bull's Head has done
7 this. I would they would actually stay on
8 their side of the river. It would be nice
9 for once to not have them involved in
10 something on our side.

11 So we kind of stay -- keep our nose
12 out of their business, I wish they would
13 keep their nose out of our business, and so
14 I appreciate that and if you just send them
15 to me and just step cautiously. Thank you.

16 MS. EVANS: I just wanted to add
17 quickly, time is of the essence in this
18 matter, city council I believe has a
19 deadline during which time a public hearing
20 has to be conducted and a final vote taken
21 by law, so I hope that you will be able to
22 schedule a meeting as soon as possible.

23 But in addition to that, I'd like to
24 hand over to you all of the information
25 given to council tonight regarding the

1 change to the zoning --

2 MR. HUBBARD: Okay.

3 MS. EVANS: And the plans to the
4 Scranton Lace project. We have another copy
5 of that, so if you would like to take a look
6 at that and speak to your neighbors,
7 disseminate it through your neighborhood.

8 MR. HUBBARD: Certainly. I'll
9 review this and I'll talk to my neighbors
10 about it and then once I get a good grasp of
11 what I have in front of me here I'll
12 certainly return it back to you guys, so you
13 have both copies, okay/ thank you. Have a
14 good evening.

15 MS. EVANS: You, too. Doug Miller.

16 MR. MILLER: Good evening, Council.
17 Doug Miller, Scranton. Obviously the hot
18 topic tonight is the budget so I'm going to
19 address that this evening. Just to briefly
20 go over a few of the things that,
21 unfortunately, I wasn't able to attend
22 council's public hearing on Saturday but,
23 you know, obviously you took the bull by the
24 horn and reduced a lot of the burden. When
25 we look at the tax increases reducing the

1 mayor's proposed 29 percent tax increase
2 down to 4.8, certainly relieving 1/2 of the
3 burden on the residents of this city on the
4 property tax and also the businesses of this
5 city.

6 But, obviously, the issue that we
7 are still dealing with and it's been
8 addressed tonight is public safety layoffs,
9 and I think a previous speaker said it best
10 tonight, and I have talked about it many
11 times since I have been coming to this
12 podium, we need to take a look at the KOZ's
13 and the nonprofits in this city, the ones
14 that aren't paying their fair share. You
15 know, for years and years and years they
16 have been given a free ride and they have
17 taken advantage of the city while the
18 hardworking taxpayers of this city struggle
19 each day to meet their obligations and we
20 are about to face a 29 percent tax increase
21 and thankfully this council majority was
22 able to comprehend that, the majority of the
23 residents of this city couldn't take
24 something like that on, and you realized
25 that, but when we have the University of

1 Scranton and other KOZ's and nonprofits that
2 have a free ride and aren't paying for the
3 services that the residents of this city pay
4 for, something is not right. It's not fair
5 and we really need to take a close look at
6 this and I know last summer Councilman
7 Loscombe and Councilwoman Evans fought
8 vigorously to get this university to pay
9 their fair share and they didn't want to
10 hear anything. Council was accused of
11 wanting to make deals, the Scranton Times
12 tried making a story out of it, trying to
13 make council look bad, but the bottom line
14 is that people need to realize that they
15 need to pay their fair share. PEL has
16 recommended to the mayor on many occasions
17 that he needs to reach out and his lame
18 excuse is always, well, I have issues to
19 worry about, I have budgets to worry about,
20 well, yeah, you're darn right you do and
21 that's all part of it and he has failed to
22 do it. Why he has failed to do it, because
23 they are all his cronies and he is not going
24 to touch them because he has had that
25 mentality for ten years, but I would just

1 ask council tonight to pursue this even
2 more.

3 The \$175,000 they give us ever year
4 is a joke. It's a disgrace and it's got to
5 stop. We need to continue to pursue it,
6 there is no reason why the University can't
7 give us in excess of millions because that's
8 what they take in each year, and we have
9 heard they bought a property that was worth
10 \$25,000 for a half a million. Are you
11 kidding me? And they can only give us
12 \$175,000 a year? I mean, it's a complete
13 slap in the face, but while we talk about
14 the public safety, as I have said before,
15 this all could have been avoided eight years
16 ago, nine years ago had the mayor been
17 willing to sit down, but he chose not. He
18 once again chose it's my way or no way
19 attitude. That's the philosophy we have had
20 in this town and that's why we are in the
21 position we are in today, and now we have a
22 council majority that unfortunately has to
23 clean up his mess because past rubber stamp
24 councils with their arrogance and their
25 rubber stamping they let this all go by.

1 Everything was swept under the rug and now,
2 unfortunately, you have to deal with it and
3 it's really ashamed and I feel sorry for the
4 job, but at the same time I also don't feel
5 that this council should be pinned in a
6 corner on this issue because you didn't
7 cause this. The guy downstairs did with his
8 arrogance for ten years. He is the one that
9 needs to come forward right here, right now
10 and explain how he intends on covering the
11 city with less manpower, less engine
12 companies and trucks on the road.

13 Council extended an invitation to
14 the mayor, the fire chief and the BA to come
15 forward, and again, they showed their
16 arrogance, a slap in the face, they don't
17 want to hear it. They don't want to come
18 forward to the public and explain
19 themselves. I believe the chief's excuse
20 was he was hunting, and I'm glad to see
21 hunting takes priority over the people's
22 safety, I'm glad to see where he is at, he
23 can't even put house numbers on his home.
24 He goes and puts windows in without permits,
25 we see where is at. He is one of Scranton's

1 finest.

2 We have a BA who hasn't come
3 forward. We have a mayor who has in his
4 budget process, not once did he reach out to
5 this council to ask for their input. You
6 know, Mr. McGoff has talked about the spirit
7 of cooperation. I think if I hear Mr.
8 McGoff make that statement one more time I'm
9 going to be sick to my stomach. Did the
10 mayor reach out to council and ask for
11 input? No. Did this council reach out to
12 the administration? Yes, they did. Once
13 again, showing their willingness to work
14 with the administration and the mayor just
15 again showing his arrogance and his it's my
16 way or no way attitude, and until we get
17 away from that we will never turn the city
18 around.

19 The best day ahead for this city is
20 when that man leaves office, when he walks
21 down the steps of city hall for the last
22 time. That's when we will know it's a good
23 day in the city. And as I said before, it's
24 truly remarkable what one man can do to a
25 city in a short time, ten years, and how he

1 can leave a future so bleak for people like
2 myself and the other young individuals in
3 this city, the future leaders. Thank you.

4 MR. ROGAN: Thank you, Mr. Miller.
5 Ron Ellman.

6 MR. ELLMAN: Hello council. You
7 know, about a month ago I stood here and I
8 said it's time to clean up the Parking
9 Authority and fire some people. Who ever
10 heard of having someone that's losing
11 millions and millions of dollars a \$100,000
12 position and keeping him, you know? This is
13 senseless. It's time to do something. Like
14 Mr. Hughes said, let them go broke.

15 Mr. Scopelliti has had several
16 different jobs in the administration through
17 nothing but cronyism, friendship with
18 people. He has jumped from job to job. You
19 know, if the mayor wasn't protecting him he
20 wouldn't be able to clean toilets in the
21 Parking Authorities. He doesn't know what
22 he is doing.

23 You people just don't seem to put
24 enough emphasis on how bad things are, like,
25 the mayor should go talk -- stand in front

1 of Redner's or Price Rite for an hour and
2 see how popular he is. The story of Chris
3 Doherty is just a story of failure, you
4 know. It's such a good city and it's got so
5 many good people that I talked to during the
6 week, he didn't have to go that way and the
7 city didn't. It's just been those that
8 oversee the city just don't seem to have
9 what it takes to run a city. All I here is
10 one complaint after another.

11 Now my taxes are going to be
12 doubled, I don't have sidewalks, curbs,
13 sewers. People sitting up there on Keyser
14 Avenue haven't paid taxes in 13 years or 11
15 years, whatever it is, they got all of those
16 things. They have all of the benefits from
17 this lousy K0Z programs and my taxes are
18 going to be doubled to help them out. Your
19 taxes. It's just the city is just so misrun
20 it just can't go on, you know. It's just --
21 I guess it's time to quit worrying about the
22 past, like I said, and go start thinking of
23 the future.

24 I just got one little -- two
25 questions, isn't it time for some of these

1 K0Z's to be up already? It's been 10, 11,
2 12 years on some of them? And I never hear
3 nothing being put on the tax rolls and I was
4 talking to a fellow at lunchtime today that
5 told me a family member of his owed a few
6 years taxes and made a tax settlement. This
7 doesn't seem fair to people like you and me
8 that pay their taxes every year for a tax
9 settlement, and I don't know how the
10 legalities of it and how true it was.

11 And I saw where the school board is
12 putting on six new people. It's time this
13 runaway school board somebody needs to tell
14 him the city is just broke. We can't afford
15 a one-on-one situation like they seem to try
16 and shove down our throats.

17 In leaving, I'd just to say it was
18 so nice to see this place full of people
19 that seem to care about our government and
20 all of these new faces out here. I wish I
21 was younger and could have gotten in
22 politics years ago to instead of just
23 standing here, and it makes me really -- I
24 just like to see young faces out here show
25 interest like this.

1 I have several things, but I guess,
2 you know, I said once before this isn't a --
3 I don't mean to belittle Mr. Doherty all the
4 time, so many people had great expectations
5 when he took over and, look, signs all
6 against him now, it's terrible. I just
7 can't in my wildest imagination I can't
8 conceive how anybody could support this
9 administration any longer. They have just
10 -- they have turned this wonderful city into
11 just a nightmare.

12 MR. ROGAN: Thank you, Mr. Ellman.

13 MR. ELLMAN: Well, thank you. I
14 thank you for letting me come up here.

15 MR. ROGAN: Michael Vandort? Is
16 Michael here? If not, Sam Vitris.

17 MR. VITRIS: Sam Vitris. I'm
18 president of International Associate
19 Machinist, Local 2305, representing 92
20 Department of Public Works Employees.

21 MR. JOYCE: Good evening.

22 MR. VITRIS: First of all, I'd like
23 to say that I'm glad and very happy that we
24 tabled the budget tonight to give us all a
25 chance, the members of the Department of

1 Public Works and the Scranton Fire
2 Department, the clerical union, everybody
3 who's jobs was put on the chopping block.
4 It's not a good feeling around the holidays
5 and it's very difficult, it happened to me
6 many years ago around the holidays, when you
7 know you might lose your job. It's a
8 terrific strain on people's lives and I
9 would just hope that city council will keep
10 in mind how important public employees are,
11 whether you are a policeman, you're a
12 firemen, you are a clerical worker or you
13 are a Department of Public Works Employee.

14 When the person needs you the most,
15 whether it's a fire, a crime or you're stuck
16 on the street with a baby in a snow storm
17 and you are looking for a DPW truck to help
18 ya, we need to be there and it's important
19 that city council remembers how important we
20 all are together. We are all one and we
21 need to remember that and hopefully when the
22 smoke clears the impact on the citizens of
23 this city will be no where near as bad as
24 what's proposed. Thank you.

25 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. Sam Dockley.

1 MR. DOCKLEY: Good evening, Council.

2 MR. JOYCE: Good evening.

3 MR. DOCKLEY: You know, I was so
4 tickled pink when I drove up by here tonight
5 and I saw this crowd. You know, my name is
6 Sam Dockley, resident of Scranton all my
7 life, retired captain from the fire
8 department after 32 years of service. It
9 tickled me pink to see these guys out here,
10 Dave and I were talking, you know, this is
11 what we needed. We need more. We need more
12 taxpayers. They should be Washington Avenue
13 on to Lackawanna, all the way up to Gibson
14 Street if they are concerned.

15 But with that, one point I want to
16 make. We aren't supermen, we never
17 professed to be supermen. We are just
18 human, hardworking firefighters that can --
19 we can get hurt bad or we can die. We
20 proved that with Jimmy Robeson a couple of
21 years back. It was an accident, but it
22 happens. I got hurt in a fire, my dad got
23 hurt in a fire, two heart attacks I talked
24 two weeks ago after 22 years, I beat him by
25 ten years, I had 32.

1 But anyway, my point is getting
2 across to the people and the taxpayers and
3 the sum of the people in this room here, we
4 aren't supermen. I wish we were so we could
5 fly from fire to fire. Maybe we could save
6 more lives and houses, but it's not
7 possible.

8 You know, my dad retired at 54, at
9 54 years old, he died six years later. I
10 wish he was around a lot longer, I planned
11 on having him, but it wasn't God's will, but
12 the point I'm getting across, I know I wrote
13 it down tonight, you know, the mayor worries
14 about his budget, he put himself in this
15 predicament by listening to idiots like DEL
16 -- or PEL, I'm sorry, and others, I'm sorry
17 about that mistake, but PEL. We have had
18 them here before in the past, I used to be
19 vice president of our local at one time,
20 Dutchy Maros was president, we threw him out
21 of this town. What do you know about fire
22 fighting and police work? Go back to where
23 the hell you came from and stay there or put
24 on a -- we'll give you turnout gear and a
25 helmet and a pair of boots and a Scott

1 Air-Pack and see what the hell you can do.

2 But they are making a bad example,
3 the mayors are listening to these God darn
4 people and getting themselves in bigger
5 trouble by listening to them, and they won't
6 listen. If a mayor and this cabinet can't
7 run a city they shouldn't be mayor. Why do
8 you have to call outside help in here and
9 give these guys a hard time laying off 29
10 firefighters? They got homes. Up to 12
11 years they are going to get laid off. They
12 got homes and rent to pay, bills to pay,
13 kids to feed, where are they going to get
14 jobs? Where are they going?

15 This guy has no respect or
16 consideration and he never did, 11 years in
17 there. 9,000 jobs, I want him to tell me to
18 my face where he got 9,000 jobs, he won't
19 look me in the face or Chief Davis won't
20 either. Another thing is, I understand
21 through the grapevine he might be closing
22 15, 10, 4, Engine four, Truck 4 at the
23 beginning of the year, and maybe a rescue.
24 My daughter-in-law was in a bad accident
25 four weeks ago on South Main Avenue, it

1 fire." It would be zero out, I don't want a
2 fire, but we'd get them. We had lots of
3 fires back in my day when I came on 1962. I
4 went through seven mayors. I wasn't afraid
5 of them and I ain't anywhere near afraid of
6 this buck, believe me. I got three sons.
7 My wife and I have five children, just
8 another minute or two, please. We had five
9 children, three boys, two girls, they were
10 raised here in this town here, went to
11 school. Most of my grandchildren, 13
12 grandchildren I have, most of them live
13 here. Where are they going when they
14 graduate from school in this town? Our
15 politicians are ruining our cities, our
16 counties, our states and the United States
17 of the America. Let's smarten up. Let's
18 get with it. All the way around the world.

19 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Dockley.

20 MR. DOCKLEY: One last thing, God
21 bless Scranton, the county, the state and
22 the United States of America. Have a happy
23 holiday. I don't want any glory. I don't
24 want any glory. That's off my chest.

25 MS. EVANS: Dave Dobrzyn.

1 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening, Council.
2 Dave Dobrzyn, resident of Scranton.

3 MR. JOYCE: Good evening.

4 MR. DOBRZYN: How did we get to this
5 place is beyond belief, but anything that --
6 this first statement I would like to make,
7 anything you can do to negotiate with this
8 mayor to preserve these public employee
9 please do so. If you have to leave some
10 wiggle room to revise your revisions, that's
11 fine, but we have to have a guarantee that
12 he just won't take the money and run after
13 the first of the year, after the budget is
14 sanctioned and then he can layoff anybody he
15 wants and use the money whatever he way he
16 wants and hire somebody for \$150,000 study
17 of wildlife and the sewer system or
18 something, I don't know, but it's just gone
19 to far, but we have to have assurances no
20 matter what that these people are not going
21 to be laid off and don't just give him a
22 blank check, which I'm sure you're totally
23 interested in not doing, so that's what I
24 have to say on that matter.

25 And it's come up once again about

1 the donations in lieu of voluntary tax
2 service, well, I'll tell you right now,
3 Reverend Pilarz, if you are listening I
4 don't believe what you said last year. I
5 don't believe a word of it and personally I
6 think you need a little cage around that
7 place up there. Let them build up, but not
8 out. No further. That's it. If they
9 actually want to smear the name of honest
10 politicians in this city then it's too bad,
11 we don't need their input.

12 And on privatizing the Parking
13 Authority only, I don't care what happens to
14 them. They have been so ridiculously
15 irresponsible over the years that personally
16 I think the whole situation should be
17 privatized and they should be sent packing.
18 We don't need them. I can park wherever I
19 want and pay if I have to, but I have a
20 choice. With the Sewer Authority, with DPW,
21 I don't have a choice in the matter. I owe
22 a bill at the end of the year or the
23 beginning of the year and that is it and if
24 I don't pay that bill I have liens against
25 my house, and I don't need some corporate

1 degenerates telling me what I have to pay
2 and what I have to pay is five times more
3 than what I wind up paying right now. If I
4 have to pay 25 bucks more that's one thing,
5 but if I have to pay \$1,000 for a \$300 sewer
6 bill in two years, shame.

7 So do what you have to do and try
8 and wrestle -- every last ounce of your
9 strength try to wrestle control over the
10 authorities. Do what you need to make the
11 city work and, by the way, do we have the
12 audit yet?

13 MR. JOYCE: No, we do not.

14 MR. DOBRZYN: Hell no. Thank you --

15 MR. JOYCE: Thank you.

16 MR. DOBRZYN: -- Mayor Doherty, once
17 again because we know that's your stall job.
18 That's all it is so you can't let these
19 people try to work out some of these
20 problems on their own, you just want to work
21 it out your way which doesn't work.

22 And everybody out in the TV land
23 call your congressmen and irregardless of
24 what party you vote for and who is in there
25 right now tell them that the current

1 situation is no longer acceptable. These
2 trade packs have to go and they have to
3 bring jobs back to this country because
4 that's what the bottom line is. We are
5 starting to lose big time on wage taxes and
6 so forth and 3.4 percent wage taxes and any
7 problem to pay as compared to being jobless.
8 There is -- it's just entirely ridiculous
9 how I have seen this country decimated over
10 the last 31 years. First it was
11 robotification and the big factory jobs went
12 down the tubes, now, we all want to
13 outsource the rest. Shame on them.

14 Last week, just quickly, I'm going
15 to end it, somebody mentioned that I never
16 mentioned Edwards, John Edwards with his
17 marital situation and so forth, well, John
18 Edwards is on trial right now and he may
19 lose a lot over it, but he kept his nose out
20 of my marriage and I appreciate that, so if
21 they keep their nose out of my marriage,
22 I'll keep my nose out of them. Bawk, bawk.
23 Have a good night.

24 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else who
25 cares to address council?

1 MR. MURRAY: My name is Joel Murray,
2 I am a resident of Scranton.

3 MS. EVANS: Can you repeat your
4 name, please?

5 MR. MURRAY: Joel Murray. Joel
6 Murray, I'm sorry.

7 MS. EVANS: Spell the last name for
8 me?

9 MR. MURRAY: M-U-R-R-A-Y.

10 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

11 MR. MURRAY: But my brother has been
12 a firefighter and just having him getting
13 laid off, he has a kid on the way, how would
14 you feel if you had a kid? Six minutes is
15 the response time lead to eight minutes, two
16 of those minutes could have saved anybody
17 that was in that house. How would you feel
18 knowing that that two minutes could have
19 been the deciding factor in someone's life?

20 Now, I have never been a public
21 speaker, but this is -- this is ridiculous.
22 Mayor Doherty is spending all this money in
23 this budget and I think that we are not
24 making budget cuts where they should be.

25 DPW, PennDOT, they are doing all of

1 themes renovations to the roads where they
2 don't need to be. The Taylor bridge
3 connecting Taylor to Old Forge, the detour
4 on that, we just put -- what was it,
5 directions, we painted the directions for
6 them to make that right turn or the left
7 turn. You can't go anywhere else. There is
8 no bridge. You are going to have either
9 turn left or right coming from that
10 intersection. Like, is that where our money
11 is going to?

12 And then we layoff 29 firefighters,
13 I think that's ridiculous. I really do.
14 It's not right. We are closing down too
15 many fire stations and I know that I would
16 like to have those two minutes any day of
17 the week and save my life, and here -- and
18 you are laughing up there. Why? I see
19 everybody laughing over there. This is not
20 a laughing matter. Like, I don't think it
21 is. I'm sorry, and that's honestly all I
22 have to say. Thank you.

23 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

24 MR. JACKOWITZ: Bill Jackowitz,
25 South Scranton resident and member of the

1 Taxpayers' Association.

2 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

3 MR. JACKOWITZ: I want to read you
4 something that I read today and then
5 hopefully someone on city council can tell
6 me what it means. "The strength of a city
7 is the combustion engineering that takes
8 place inside of it."

9 Can someone please tell me what that
10 means? "The strength of a city is the
11 combustion engineering that takes place
12 inside of it?"

13 Can anybody tell me who made that
14 quote? It came from the Honorable Mayor
15 Christopher A. Doherty in 2008 when he was
16 interviewed by Mayor TV, and you can
17 actually see it on the Scranton website,
18 just click on the Scranton website and the
19 Mayor TV and it's there, and I don't
20 understand what it means, so obviously no
21 one on city council understands what it
22 means either.

23 So my opinion the strength of a city
24 are the residents and the leadership of the
25 elected officials that the taxpayers and

1 voters elected to lead. That's my opinion.
2 That's just my opinion and it has nothing to
3 do with the combustion engineering that
4 takes place, okay? Now, I didn't graduate
5 from Holy Cross College, but, you know,
6 that's just the way it is, you know. So
7 hopefully maybe someone can explain that to
8 me before the meeting is over with tonight.

9 Unfortunately, Scranton and
10 Lackawanna County we have poor leadership.
11 We have poor elected officials. The only
12 people who I have seen in the last probably
13 last 50 years who actually have tried to do
14 something for the City of Scranton have been
15 you four, Mr. Rogan, Mrs. Evans, Mr. Joyce
16 and Mr. Loscombe. You are the only four
17 people who have I have put any faith or
18 confidence in so far so don't let me down,
19 okay?

20 Now, as far as the mayor goes, the
21 mayor has no credibility in my opinion. Mr.
22 McGoff has no credibility in my opinion.
23 Mrs. Fanucci had no credibility in my
24 opinion. Mrs. Gatelli had no credibility in
25 my opinion, and a few others who have sat on

1 city council because they are the ones who
2 voted blindly for everything that the mayor
3 sent down. It was proven just two weeks ago
4 when Mr. McGoff didn't even read the agenda.
5 That tells me -- what does that tell me, he
6 hasn't been reading the agenda for five
7 years, okay, because he didn't even realize
8 something was on the agenda. He was going
9 to read his talking points from Mayor
10 Doherty until he was corrected, and I must
11 admit that he did stand corrected and he
12 manned up to it, but that just tells me,
13 again, that they didn't read what was coming
14 down, they didn't read the budgets.

15 I remember when Mrs. Evans held a
16 special budget meeting and Ms. Fanucci and
17 Mrs. Gatelli didn't even show up because
18 they had more pressing matters, they claimed
19 to have family matters. One was a birthday
20 party if I remember correctly. Again, no
21 credibility whatsoever.

22 Mr. McGowan, no credibility.
23 Mr. Renda, no credibility. The people on
24 the authorities, Mr. Scopelliti,
25 Mr. Barrett, no credibility. Chief Davis,

1 no credibility. Hunting is more important
2 to Chief Davis than his firefighters. Chief
3 Duffy, no credibility. They should be here
4 at these meetings. Chief Duffy is more
5 involved in making minor arrests instead of
6 standing up and fighting for his police
7 officers and getting new police vehicles.

8 Chief Davis should be getting new
9 fire equipment. He should be getting
10 up-to-date fire equipment for our
11 firefighters, new fire apparatus, but, no,
12 he is more interested in having people being
13 laid off, not standing up for them, not
14 coming to a meeting, and would rather go
15 hunting than to address the citizens of
16 Scranton.

17 I would like to know what Authority
18 Chief Davis and Mayor Doherty used to come
19 up with these reductions in the fire
20 department. I would like to know that, but
21 you know what, I never will because there is
22 no authority. They did it completely on
23 their own, okay? Chief Davis may have been
24 a good firefighter, but in my opinion he is
25 not a good fire chief. My opinion and my

1 opinion only.

2 Now, as far as the DPW goes, I don't
3 want to see anybody laid off. Nobody. But
4 you know what, they have to suffer, too,
5 just like everybody else. The same with the
6 clerical workers. If people need to get
7 laid off, then they need to get laid off,
8 but we don't need to be just laying off
9 police officers and firefighters. Thank
10 you.

11 MR. JOYCE: Thank you and,
12 Mr. Jackowitz, in this budget there is some
13 money for police vehicles because that was
14 one of the expenditure questions that I had
15 in capital expenditures was a certain
16 allotment of money was going to be used for
17 and I was told that they were planning on
18 purchasing some new police vehicles this
19 year.

20 MR. JACKOWITZ: About time.

21 MISS BARCHAK: Good evening. My
22 name is Kayla Barchak. Me and my mother are
23 here this evening to not only show support
24 for the men and women who makeup our fire
25 department, but to publically express my

1 concern of the laying off of more firemen
2 and the closing of more firehouses
3 throughout the city. Just the thought of
4 only having four or five engines being
5 available at any given time every day
6 greatly concerns me. I am 17 years old. I
7 can't tell you how scared that makes me just
8 knowing.

9 MS. BARCHAK: Good evening, Council.
10 My name is Tara Barchak, I'm a Scranton
11 resident, and I have to say with Kayla, my
12 concern is greatly heightened by this
13 layoff. I work very hard and contribute a
14 ridiculous amount of taxes as opposed to
15 friends of mine who live in the outskirts of
16 Scranton and I do so now with the fear of
17 not having the safety of my children if
18 something happens in the middle of the night
19 and there are no firemen there to man a
20 truck to get my house to save my children.
21 That concerns me.

22 I really don't -- I didn't prepare
23 much, I apologize, I came right from work,
24 but all I have left to say is this, I hope
25 that if this happens and these firehouses

1 close and these firemen are laid off I can
2 only hope that someone will make sure, maybe
3 our DPW trucks can be manned with fire
4 extinguishers so that somebody at least can
5 be there if needed when our firemen are laid
6 off as a thanks to them for their dedication
7 for serving this city for so long and saving
8 the lives of many people and businesses in
9 this city. That would be their thanks which
10 is quite sad, and I have to say I am very
11 embarrassed to say that I live in this city.
12 Unfortunately, I am, but thank you.

13 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

14 MR. MURRAY: Good evening, Council.
15 Brian Murray.

16 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

17 MR. MURRAY: I'm a taxpayer and
18 resident and I am number 21 of the 29
19 firefighters being laid off in this budget.
20 I say that because not that I'm trying to
21 plead for my job or any of that because in
22 reality if you were to fund the 17 positions
23 Mr. Gervasi has asked for in reality I
24 wouldn't get my job back. I'm here to plead
25 for the safety of the citizens. I took an

1 oath six years ago, pretty much similar to
2 you to, to protect the citizens of this
3 city.

4 And this evening Mr. Jackowitz said
5 and Saturday that he is not concerned about
6 the people that were in the room, he was
7 more concerned about the people who weren't,
8 and on that note I assembled over 100 people
9 to visit council this evening outside. They
10 weren't firefighters, they were
11 firefighters' families, friends, people that
12 we protect, people that you know, people
13 that have gone to dinner possibly with you,
14 that you have seen on the streets, the
15 actual citizens of this city. Not the 137
16 firefighters.

17 I assembled them out in there in
18 support of public safety, and Mr. Joyce had
19 made a comment that you won't be
20 intimidated, I understand that, I can
21 understand where you are coming from, but in
22 reality if you won't be intimidated by the
23 112 or 113 people that were outside who will
24 get their point across?

25 We need public safety, the citizens

1 of this city pay for primary services, they
2 are paying for us to have our jobs, they are
3 paying for the protection that you are
4 supposed to provide, that the mayor is
5 supposed to provide not to have some
6 authority who can't manage to keep
7 themselves in the black, although they have
8 their own revenue coming in, they can't
9 manage to keep themselves even, all right,
10 or PEL who hasn't anything for us in 20
11 years or just the fact that we have within
12 the next 18 months we will pay more in debt
13 payments than we will for the fire
14 department in this city, okay? That's
15 ridiculous. Absolutely ridiculous. All
16 right?

17 I took an oath to protect these
18 citizens. Whether I'm on the job or not, I
19 will continue to protect these citizens,
20 okay, because I let a job, a reasonably
21 paying job, because this was a noble
22 profession. No one can make money off of
23 what I did, okay? That's why I took this
24 job, all right? Thank you.

25 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Is there

1 anyone else who would like to address
2 council?

3 MS. WOSNEY: Good evening, Council.
4 My name is Katherine Wosney, Scranton
5 resident.

6 MS. EVANS: What is your last name?

7 MS. WOSNEY: Wosney.

8 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

9 MS. WOSNEY: I left work early to
10 come support my friends and firefighters and
11 police officers I don't know. I am resident
12 of the city. I am originally from another
13 town. I was a volunteer in that town for
14 ten years in the fire department. It's
15 something I grew up always wanting. I
16 always thought it was very honorable, very
17 noble, I always looked up to those people as
18 well as many other people that I know, and
19 to hear that there is 29 more being laid off
20 along with the others that were already laid
21 off, that's ashamed. That's a disgrace to
22 this city. The first priority of a city
23 should be to protect it's citizens not to
24 lay off the people who protect it.

25 The people that going into these

1 professions, I was a volunteer -- I didn't
2 go into it for, you know, for a rush or
3 adrenaline, I went into it because I wanted
4 to help others, and that's what most of
5 these ladies and gentlemen do, and to take
6 that away from the city I don't see anybody
7 else stepping up to the plate to do that.

8 The mayor certainly hasn't done
9 that. When he was being reelected he
10 promised no more cuts. He went back on his
11 word, that's ashame, and it's sad to say I'm
12 actually looking to move out of this city.
13 I don't want to be a part of this city
14 anymore because of how embarrassing it is to
15 hear this, and I'm not a speaker, I'm a
16 little bit nervous, but I just wanted to
17 state my opinion, I wanted to show my
18 support for the friends that I have and the
19 people that I have met tonight, and if you
20 could do something about this, I mean, this
21 shouldn't be happening. There is -- there
22 is just absolutely no reason for it.

23 These people are the ones that risk
24 their lives for others without being
25 selfish, without thinking twice. I don't

1 see the mayor doing that, I don't even say
2 him here tonight and it's just the shame
3 overall to see this happening.

4 And I have nothing else to say about
5 it, but I just want to show my support for
6 everybody here and hopefully this could be
7 resolved and these men and women can have
8 their jobs and the city can be safe, and we
9 can go back to the way Scranton should be
10 run. Thank you.

11 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

12 MS. MURRAY: I'm not used to this
13 stuff, so my name is Tracy Murray.

14 MS. EVANS: Murrin?

15 MS. MURRAY: Murray. My son is a
16 firemen.

17 MS. EVANS: Oh, good evening.

18 MR. JOYCE: Good evening.

19 MS. MURRAY: I have a couple of
20 things. One is I don't believe these guys
21 should be laid off. We are taxpayers, we
22 pay you people, we want what we are supposed
23 to get, okay, for our services. I have an
24 example here. Behind my house, right behind
25 my house, there is a home there that's been

1 condemned for ten years. There was hoarders
2 there, living there. They brought the
3 Hazmat team in there, they took out five
4 40-foot dumpsters out of there, okay? It's
5 been boarded up. The past three years the
6 front door has been wide open for anyone to
7 go in there, kids, homeless people. Every
8 single night I pray to God that that house
9 doesn't go up because there is another house
10 right across from it that's condemned, that
11 it doesn't set my house and I wake up the
12 next morning along with my family, okay?

13 You people and the mayor have to do
14 something to keep these guys working. I
15 don't care if you go to the University,
16 there is no reason why they can't pay any
17 money, they can't pay taxes. They would be
18 a big help. We don't have a problem paying
19 the tax that you are given us, but keep the
20 guys on the job. Save them, all right,
21 because I know if someone gets killed, if my
22 house goes up because of that, the city
23 doesn't want to condemn -- or take it down,
24 I am going to hold someone responsible for
25 it, okay? Who that might be personally I

1 don't know. We'll just have to see where
2 this goes. Thank you.

3 MR. JOYCE: Thank you.

4 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

5 MS. SCHUMACHER: Marie Schumacher,
6 city resident and taxpayer.

7 MR. JOYCE: Good evening.

8 MS. SCHUMACHER: This is a sad
9 night, and I'm probably going to be
10 discombobulated because I came here thinking
11 we are going to talk about the budget. I
12 would ask you to reconsider your Monday
13 night meeting since that has long before
14 advertised as the public hearing for the
15 Scranton School Board budget meeting. I
16 think that's equally important, they
17 actually suck up more money than you people
18 do, although, it looks as though you're
19 trying to compete with them, but I do think
20 that people should not have to make a choice
21 between the two meetings. They do have two,
22 but for those of us who plan ahead and
23 selected Monday that's -- it is Monday.

24 Now, just on one quick statement on
25 an agenda item, which is 6-A, I heard awhile

1 back that that building being the Lace
2 Company was essentially going to be torn
3 down except for the clock tower perhaps, and
4 I called LIPS and found out that, in fact,
5 they were just waiting for one more piece of
6 information that they do have permits to
7 tear down the Lace Company building, so I'm
8 having trouble in my brain saying how do you
9 reuse something if you are going to tear it
10 down? To me, that's starting all over, so
11 is there -- within this legislation is there
12 a specific percentage of the original
13 footprint of the building that is to be
14 reused that must be maintained or can you
15 just keep the same footprint and call it
16 reuse because you kept the same footprint,
17 which I don't think is right if you are
18 going to actually reuse a building, so I
19 still have a lot of questions on 6-A.

20 And now I guess I'm really
21 disappointed that 2012 is not going to be
22 the first year of the Recovery Plan. I have
23 asked for some time for a multi-year budget
24 so that all of us can have hope, those who
25 have to pay the taxes, those who would like

1 to start businesses, those who have jobs, we
2 should be able to look at -- I know the City
3 of Lancaster did it, they had a five-year
4 Recovery Plan, I don't think -- I know we
5 can't do it in five years, but I think there
6 are lots of options.

7 I think we need to stop, look and
8 listen. It's sort of like when I went to
9 grade school you stopped and you looked and
10 listened. We have to stop and regather. We
11 have to look around and what others are
12 doing. For instance, Jermyn has an auction,
13 they auction off vacant lots once a month
14 prior to the city council meeting. There is
15 350 total parcels that are attributed to the
16 ownership to the City of Scranton. Some of
17 them, of course, are legitimate city
18 buildings that are being used, some probably
19 have been bought up for flood plane, but
20 that whole list needs to be gone through and
21 those that are available need to be taken,
22 put back on the tax rolls, however it's to
23 be done.

24 With regard to our public safety, I
25 don't know what you can do with 100

1 firefighters. Each of those firefighters
2 will have vacation time, Kelly days, sick
3 days, now how far can you stretch however
4 many there are? You are putting them at
5 risk, you are putting our personal lives and
6 our property at risk and I think we are owed
7 a visit by Chief Davis to tell us how he is
8 going to cover 26 square miles safely with
9 obviously at any day it's going to be less
10 than 100 firefighters. We need to know what
11 apparatus will be retained and we need to
12 know where it will be located, and I don't
13 think I could be convinced that I'll be
14 safe.

15 I believe Mr. Gervasi if they say --
16 if he says we can do it with 117 and I
17 believe that, and that sort of begs another
18 issue, the Ice Box, the \$600,000. I brought
19 all the paperwork that shows that it looks
20 as though maybe some pages were mixed
21 together to make that deed with 198 years
22 that I personally believe no sane person
23 would have voted for, how many would that
24 cover. I will be back, I have a lot, and
25 I'm very upset by what's transpiring on this

1 budget and --

2 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

3 MS. SCHUMACHER: Thank you.

4 MR. JOYCE: Ms. Schumacher, if you
5 would like I could give you a copy of some
6 of the handouts that we have on the Scranton
7 Lace project.

8 MS. SCHUMACHER: Yeah, I'll return
9 them next week. Yeah, thank you, I will.
10 I'll take it and return it next week.

11 MR. JOYCE: No problem.

12 MS. EVANS: Mrs. Krake?

13 MS. KRAKE: 5-A.

14 MS. EVANS: I'm sorry, I thought
15 everyone was finished.

16 MS. FRANUS: Fay Franus, Scranton.
17 First of all, I have to say whatever I'm
18 saying tonight is simply my opinion. Just a
19 speech, freedom of speech. I'm all for
20 protests and rallies and things like that.
21 My son is at Occupy Wall Street in New York
22 every day, so I'm all for freedom of speech,
23 but what I can't understand is why all of
24 these people are here tonight at council
25 outside with the rally tonight versus this

1 afternoon from 8:00 in the morning to 4:00
2 when Mayor Doherty is at work since is he
3 the one that took the firemen out of the
4 budget. I don't understand why they are not
5 there doing the day instead of tonight. I
6 don't understand it.

7 Mayor Doherty last year took the
8 firemen out, he took them out again in
9 August, took them out this December. You
10 put them back in last year and went to
11 Court, the judge said the mayor has the
12 right to take them out. You were asked last
13 week about it, you said it's illegal for you
14 to put them back in.

15 What I see here is last week Dave
16 Gervasi said to Mr. Joyce that you, and I'm
17 thinking he is your friend to all of city
18 council, is culpable. City council is
19 culpable just as much as Mr. Doherty is if
20 the firemen don't get put back in. That's
21 not true. You didn't do this, Mr. Doherty
22 did it. You are not culpable at all. You
23 are there representing the people, not just
24 the unions of this city.

25 I'm a member of a union, not by

1 choice. I do not think any job that
2 taxpayers pay for should have a union, there
3 is no control. The prices just skyrocket.
4 Between the county tax and the city tax and
5 the school tax, there is so many senior
6 citizens in this city I don't know how they
7 are ever going to keep their homes.

8 Here is my concern, I have my home
9 for 40 years, others have them more and some
10 just a little bit less and we have worked
11 all our lives to keep these homes, so the
12 way things stand now the mayor does not want
13 to budge, he said he would not seen any
14 paper, he would not sign any paper saying
15 that he will not take the firemen back out
16 if you put them back in, so there you go.

17 Ryan McGowan told Mr. Joyce a couple
18 of days ago that do not mess with our
19 administrative budget, do not mess with it.
20 The firemen, they are not willing to
21 sacrifice anything. They want everything,
22 they don't want to give anything. Sure, I
23 don't want my house to burn down and I don't
24 want any firemen as well, but I think you
25 have to give and take here. The

1 administration is not willing to give, the
2 unions aren't willing to give. Nothing.
3 They want everything.

4 Now, the firemen more than likely
5 may get \$80,000 a piece for the arbitration,
6 which they have coming to them. They didn't
7 get paid, they had that coming. They start
8 at \$61,000 a year. Not many people get that
9 kind of pay. Here is my question to myself
10 and I'm just wondering, I'm wondering what
11 the odds are of all of the people in
12 Scranton that own their homes, what are the
13 odds that, one, they would lose their home
14 because of high taxes in the county, the
15 city and the school, they would lose their
16 homes or was it a better chance if their
17 house would burn down? I think the chances
18 are that many more people will lose their
19 homes versus their house catching on fire,
20 and if we don't have -- this city is going
21 to be gone. There are going to be
22 foreclosures all over the world -- excuse
23 me, the city, if the firefighters get put
24 back and Mayor Doherty doesn't cut anything.

25 So, Mr. Loscombe, last week you

1 stated at council meeting that even though
2 you're on the safety committee that you were
3 not for just the unions you are for the
4 taxpayers, you were representing the
5 taxpayers, then Saturday you said it was
6 criminal if they don't get put back, so here
7 is the scenario I would like to present.
8 Come time for the vote, hypothetically, if
9 you, Mr. Loscombe, and you, Mr. McGoff, vote
10 against your own council's amendments
11 because you came down to a 4.8 tax increase
12 versus Mayor Doherty's 29 percent. It was
13 great.

14 Now, hypothetically, if you,
15 Mr. Loscombe and you, Mr. McGoff, vote
16 against your council's amendments then it
17 goes to Mayor Doherty. More than likely he
18 would veto that. Now it comes back to you
19 within ten days for an override vote and if
20 you, Mr. Loscombe, and you, Mr. McGoff, vote
21 the same way and it's 3/2 you don't have
22 enough votes for an override, you need four
23 votes. That means that Mayor Doherty's
24 budget would, in fact, take over and that
25 4.8 tax increase that you implemented would

1 be erased, and you still wouldn't be getting
2 your firemen back so what did we win?

3 So you have to decide who you are
4 for, the unions or the taxpayers in the city
5 of Scranton.

6 MR. LOSCOMBE: I don't believe we
7 have a finished budget yet.

8 MS. FRANUS: Well, when you do have
9 it, I'm talking about when the vote comes --

10 MR. LOSCOMBE: I'll explain in
11 motions. I'll let you know in motions how I
12 feel.

13 MS. FRANUS: One more thing?

14 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

15 MS. FRANUS: Nancy Krake, why did
16 you allow Dave Gervasi to speak for at least
17 15 minutes last week?

18 MS. KRAKE: I didn't actually ding a
19 lot of people. I'm assuming I can answer,
20 Mrs. Evans. I don't normally --

21 MS. FRANUS: What's that?

22 MS. KRAKE: Is that okay? I'm
23 assuming I can answer?

24 MS. EVANS: Yes. Oh, yes.

25 MS. KRAKE: I'm sorry, I should have

1 asked Mrs. Evans first. I actually did
2 allow a lot of the speakers to speak a lot
3 longer.

4 MS. FRANUS: You work for the city,
5 not for the unions. And the real estate
6 transfer tax, people will not be not moving
7 into the city because of that. That's not
8 -- the buyers and the sellers they sometimes
9 split that cost. The people will not be
10 moving into this city not because of that,
11 they will not be moving into the city
12 because of the taxes that this mayor has
13 imposed upon them and the county and the
14 school district, not the real estate
15 transfer tax. Thank you.

16 MR. GERVASI: Good evening, City
17 Council. My name is Dave Gervasi, I'm the
18 president of the firefighters' union. I
19 wasn't planning on speaking tonight because
20 I thought maybe we can could have some
21 truthful conversation in the next few days,
22 but I wanted to let Mrs. Franus know that
23 hopefully we can work this thing out.

24 Number one, the firefighters didn't
25 bury the city in debt, neither did the city

1 council.

2 Number two, we have a problem right
3 now that we want to work out and hopefully
4 we can accomplish that.

5 As far as taxes are concerned, I
6 can't speak about whatever taxes, the 4
7 percent that council is presenting or the 29
8 percent that the mayor proposed, but we did
9 do a little research today and the cost of
10 putting firefighters back is going to cost
11 you, Mrs. Franus, about 93 cents a month, so
12 I'm sorry if that burdens your budget.

13 You know, I just hope, I just hope
14 that -- oh, by the way, Mrs. Krake, I'm
15 sorry you had to be asked why -- I didn't
16 think there was a five minute thing at the
17 budget meeting, I was just kind of going
18 through the budget asking my questions and
19 making council aware of what I felt.

20 MS. EVANS: But actually there is a
21 five-minute time limit for all meetings.

22 MR. GERVASI: You know what, I
23 didn't know that during that public hearing.
24 I didn't know that, I'm sorry.

25 MS. EVANS: Yes, that's been

1 established for all of the meetings.

2 MR. GERVASI: Okay, well, then, I
3 would have shut up then if I went too long,
4 but that's all. That's all I have to say.

5 MS. EVANS: You are not the only
6 one.

7 MR. GERVASI: What's that?

8 MS. EVANS: I said you are far from
9 the only one.

10 MR. GERVASI: No, I'm sure. I'm
11 sure. I have a lot to say sometimes, but
12 just so you know, too, Mrs. Franus, that it
13 wasn't just the mayor that didn't fund the
14 firefighters, we got a copy of council's
15 proposed amendments and there is no -- there
16 wasn't one firefighter on top of the 100
17 that was funded so, you know, we were
18 concerned about that, too.

19 So, again, I know this thing is
20 being tabled, I'm hoping that leveler heads
21 will prevail. I hope that the mayor will
22 sit down with council. I hope that we can
23 help in any way, and I just want everyone to
24 know, too, that apparently I guess the blame
25 game is going to be started that it's the

1 firefighters' fault or whatever, but if the
2 city, the mayor and the city council took a
3 moment to maybe ask some people for help you
4 would have found out that we discovered
5 whether, and it's argued, but we discovered
6 and I'm very, very confident that that money
7 is there, probably 1.8 to 2.3 million
8 dollars was found in revenue that apparently
9 no one knew on either side, but we worked a
10 little bit hard and we found that money so
11 there is money to put back in without
12 raising any taxes higher. If anyone else
13 was done on the budget deal it would have
14 cost more of a tax increase, but the needed
15 put the firefighters back in we believe we
16 had covered with found revenue that was not
17 in either the mayor's budget or city
18 council's budget.

19 So all we are trying to do is just
20 say that the money could be there, if
21 everybody works together hopefully we can
22 all work together and get this thing done
23 and have a semblance of fire protection.
24 Thank you.

25 MS. ROSKY: Good evening, Council.

1 Mary Ann Rosky, taxpayer and homeowner.

2 MR. LOSCOMBE: Good evening.

3 MS. ROSKY: First I want to
4 compliment council for the budget
5 amendments. I do like the 29 percent
6 property taxes down to 4.8 and I also like
7 the firemen where you had it was Mr. Gervasi
8 said 17 I believe you guys said 18, and I
9 think there was something else I have, but
10 we'll do that next week.

11 I have to reiterate week after week
12 after week, the first thing that we pay
13 taxes for I believe, okay, is the safety. I
14 mean, what good are houses and people and a
15 town without safety? If you don't have the
16 fire department backing you up in a fire and
17 you don't have the police backing you up
18 when there is major catastrophes going on
19 then what do we have? What do we have?

20 So I do like that Mr. Gervasi's 17
21 firemen additional that is needed. It's my
22 understanding, I don't know, rumor has it,
23 but was Mr. Doherty -- did he get a chance
24 to sign and see the budget that you guys
25 proposed or did he refuse and not sign it?

1 MS. EVANS: It's not even passed, so
2 he is not required to sign it.

3 MS. ROSKY: Okay, until --

4 MS. EVANS: Until it's legally and
5 lawfully adopted. First it will be amended
6 and then there be a public hearing on those
7 amendments.

8 MS. ROSKY: All right.

9 MS. EVANS: And then it will be
10 legally and lawfully adopted by council,
11 submitted to the mayor for his signature or
12 his veto. Should he veto it, will return to
13 council for a council override. If council
14 does not have four votes to override the
15 budget, then the mayor's budget stands and
16 that would mean a 29 percent tax increase
17 and the loss of 29 firefighters.

18 MS. ROSKY: I'm appalled. I just
19 don't understand what it takes for this
20 person -- I can't even -- oh, for Doherty
21 to -- I can't even understand. He could be
22 here tonight. He doesn't need an
23 invitation. He could be here any time and
24 listen and just voice his opinion; am I
25 correct on that?

1 MS. EVANS: Yes, but he would not
2 return phone calls to council, he has spoken
3 to no one on council. He is not willing to
4 city sit down with council, so --

5 MS. ROSKY: No, I've known that,
6 but, I mean, I'm just -- I just I can't
7 believe that you have a mayor and you have a
8 city council and then it was a personality
9 thing, according to the mayor in my opinion
10 I thought I heard on television that there
11 was a personality -- or, TV -- I'm sorry,
12 the newspaper there was there a conflict of
13 personalities, it's not you guys. You guys
14 are fantastic. You will sit with him and
15 reason with him. It may be his personality
16 that is -- you know?

17 And I don't understand, he lives in
18 the city. If his house burned down and his
19 family was inside and the fire department
20 couldn't be there would it phase him then or
21 would he still be, like, la, la, la? What
22 would it take for this person to understand?
23 He doesn't get it. He gets nothing. He
24 doesn't understand safety. We cannot afford
25 29 percent tax hike. That we cannot afford.

1 We can't even afford the garbage fee.
2 That's in our taxes that we pay when we own
3 our homes. That's our taxes, so we are
4 getting fees on top of a tax. That to me
5 shouldn't be either.

6 And people who own their home they
7 already know what's coming, renters should
8 also be aware that with this 29 percent tax
9 hike that landlords can raise or should
10 probably raise their rent, and they will
11 also be affected by it all, so it's not only
12 the homeowners it's the renters, and then
13 you have got insurances, which people have
14 spoken about, homeowners' insurance, well,
15 the less you have in safety the fire
16 department, the homeowners' are going to go
17 up they are going here crying and then
18 what's going to happen then? It's too late.
19 It's too late then.

20 So we have to think about it now.
21 We say 17 -- I'm going to according
22 Mr. Gervasi's number of 17, I'm not sure if
23 you guys said 18.

24 MS. EVANS: We didn't say any
25 number, and I'm not quite sure what number

1 now Mr. Gervasi is up to. It's gone up from
2 17.

3 MS. ROSKY: Okay, whatever. I would
4 say 29. Keep them all. That's my opinion.
5 Keep them all. We need them. We need them.
6 And, you know, everybody needs their jobs.
7 I can't care if it's DPW or clerical.
8 Everybody needs their job, everybody wants
9 their job, but you cut them first. They are
10 the ones that should be cut first, not
11 safety. Not safety. You know, you
12 eliminate one supervisor and I'll come back.
13 Thank you. Have a good night.

14 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else?

15 MS. KRAKE: 5-A. MOTIONS.

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

18 MR. MCGOFF: Yes, I do. First, I
19 guess I'll address the budget since it's an
20 emergency or priority. For the past couple
21 of days I have and I'm sure everyone else
22 has numerous e-mails, phone calls, whatever
23 from the Realtor's Association concerned
24 about the realty transfer tax. In
25 discussion with one of the members of that

1 does not reinstate fire and police
2 positions. I think it's an essential, it's
3 something that we need to do and something
4 that I think that we are morally obligated
5 to do in our position on council.

6 As far as the DPW is concerned and
7 the cuts there, also, I think that it
8 behooves us to search out revenue to
9 reinstate workers so that we can ensure the
10 continued services that we receive from DPW.
11 I personally am pleased with the way in
12 which DPW has operated and my refuse and
13 recyclables are collected on a regular
14 basis, the streets are plowed on a regular
15 basis, and I want to see that that
16 continues. I do not want to jeopardize
17 that.

18 And as far as tax increase is
19 concerned, I am willing to pay for those
20 services. As a taxpayer, as a homeowner, I
21 am willing to pay for services and for
22 things that I feel are necessary. When we
23 talk about tax increases, I think we really
24 have to look at real numbers. 75 percent of
25 all the taxpayers in the City of Scranton

1 pay \$500 or less for real estate taxes to
2 the city. \$500 or less to the city. That's
3 75 percent of the taxpayers. A good portion
4 of them obviously pay less than \$500 a year
5 to the City of Scranton.

6 When you work that out, a 20 percent
7 increase would mean -- or 20 percent
8 increase in taxes at this point would mean
9 \$100 a year.

10 MR. ROGAN: I hope you are not
11 trying to argue that the people of Scranton
12 are under taxed.

13 MR. MCGOFF: I'm just saying that
14 this is the case. You can argue the numbers
15 if you want.

16 MR. ROGAN: Well, you have to
17 include the wage tax as well.

18 MR. MCGOFF: I'm talking real estate
19 taxes.

20 MS. EVANS: Okay, but I think what
21 Mr. Rogan might be referring to as well is
22 it's very narrow minded of you --

23 MR. MCGOFF: No, it's not narrow
24 minded.

25 MS. EVANS: To suggest --

1 MR. MCGOFF: Excuse me, it's my
2 time --

3 MS. EVANS: No, excuse me --

4 MR. MCGOFF: -- to speak.

5 MS. EVANS: And I will allow you to
6 do so.

7 MR. MCGOFF: It's my motions, let me
8 finish.

9 MS. EVANS: And as soon as I'm
10 finished --

11 MR. MCGOFF: You have your
12 opportunity to speak --

13 MS. EVANS: You will be allowed to
14 speak again.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Well, it's my turn to
16 speak.

17 MS. EVANS: I think that you need to
18 consider rather than considering a city tax
19 in isolation, take a look at the entire tax
20 bill and tell me what the combination of the
21 city, the county and the school district is
22 and what that combination will hike up to
23 with an overall 75 percent increase.
24 Perhaps, that's affordable to 1 percent of
25 the city.

1 MR. MCGOFF: Mrs. Evans, may I
2 continue?

3 MS. EVANS: Absolutely. Be my
4 guest.

5 MR. MCGOFF: As I was saying, \$100 a
6 year increase at 20 percent -- or at 20
7 percent, that works out to \$2 a week. As
8 Mr. Gervasi said, there are ways in which,
9 you know, we can implement some things that
10 are not a burden to the taxpayers. Are you
11 willing, are you willing to pay \$2 a week to
12 ensure that we reinstate public safety
13 positions and DPW positions so that your
14 services are not diminished? All I'm saying
15 is I am willing to do that and I am not sure
16 that there are any number of taxpayers that
17 are willing to do that. We are talking
18 about \$2 a week. Most --

19 MS. EVANS: Please allow Councilman
20 McGoff to finish his motions.

21 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

22 MS. EVANS: The public has spoken
23 already and now it is time for the council
24 members to speak. Thank you.

25 MR. MCGOFF: People spend more on

1 lottery tickets and cable TV, probably spend
2 more at Mohegan Sun than they do in a week
3 than they would for insuring that these
4 positions are reinstated and --

5 MS. EVANS: Mr. McGoff, just one
6 second, please. If anyone would like to
7 have private conversations, could you please
8 conduct those in the hallway because I'd
9 like everyone listening to Mr. McGoff,
10 please.

11 MR. MCGOFF: All I'm saying is that
12 I think it's imperative that we seek ways in
13 which we can ensure that our services are
14 provided for in this city. I think there
15 are ways of doing that and in an attempt to
16 make some people sick, I am not going to
17 vote, again, for any budget that does not
18 reflect a cooperative effort between the
19 council and the administration. I think the
20 only way in which we arrive at something
21 that will be effective for 2012, something
22 that will work, is by doing it cooperatively
23 and I am glad that we tabled the budget for
24 this evening so that it gives us the time in
25 which to reflect on the amendments, time to

1 reflect on some of the things that have been
2 discussed over the past couple of days, and
3 hopefully implement some of knees ideas so
4 that it's a budget that can work, and as
5 someone said to me, maybe it's something
6 that disagreeable to all, but often times
7 when you cooperate and compromise you come
8 out with things that are somewhat
9 disagreeable, but also something that's
10 workable.

11 A couple of other issues just very
12 briefly. I noticed we have in our mail the
13 legislation that we voted on last week
14 approving Ms. McAndrew to the Human
15 Resource's position. We voted on that prior
16 to the date that we had asked her to submit
17 the resume. In the letter that we sent to
18 her, we asked her if she would submit the
19 resume by December 5. She did so, but we
20 had already voted to not approve that
21 appointment. I hope there is something that
22 we can do to rectify that situation and to
23 show our approval of that appointment given
24 the fact that her resume is rather
25 impressive.

1 Also, I guess in addressing some
2 other issues that have been ongoing, I guess
3 if you say something often enough and loud
4 enough people are going to think it's true,
5 but that's not necessarily the case. We
6 have been speaking about Chief Davis over
7 the course of the last couple of weeks. I
8 asked what the circumstances were concerning
9 the windows that were in his house. Yes, in
10 fact, he put the windows in before a permit
11 was secured. He went the next day, paid for
12 a permit, and was treated as any other
13 household owner and he paid for the permit
14 and the two windows were that he replaced
15 were taken care of.

16 Also, I was told that in his
17 contracting business that he has never
18 neglected to obtain permits for the work
19 that he has done and that as a contractor
20 his business is recognized by the city as
21 one that does meet the standards and obtains
22 permits in a timely fashion. I think that
23 it's important that sometimes we get all of
24 the facts before we start to denigrate
25 somebody's reputation.

1 There are so many others that don't and yet
2 we want to make an issue of the one
3 institution that does. I find that ironic.
4 And that's all. Thank you.

5 MR. JOYCE: If I may just quickly
6 before Councilman Rogan goes, I will say
7 this, during the whole budget process I have
8 been in contact with all department heads
9 I've made an effort to contact. I have in
10 constant contact with Mr. McGowan, whether
11 it's been through phone or e-mail. I could
12 probably open up my inbox and show you about
13 50 e-mails back and forth. I have also been
14 in contact with PEL and DCED, so when we
15 talk about cooperation, the mayor was copied
16 on all e-mails that I ever sent out to any
17 of these department heads.

18 When I called Mr. McGowan last week,
19 I instructed him to tell the mayor that I
20 wanted to speak with him and also I relayed
21 my cell phone number to Mayor Doherty and
22 the mayor never called me back. So while I
23 do agree, yeah, there has to be cooperation,
24 it has to be on both ends here.

25 And as far as DPW cuts, I know

1 Mr. McGoff you said you were against some of
2 the cuts to the DPW, but all of the union
3 cuts in the DPW were the cuts that you
4 submitted to me, so I was wondering if you
5 were just referring to other cuts?

6 MR. MCGOFF: Not all of them.

7 MR. JOYCE: Not all of them. Just
8 the union cuts were the ones that you
9 submitted to me, however, there were some
10 other cuts through administrative workers
11 that were made in addition to that.

12 MR. MCGOFF: I'm not going to argue
13 with you.

14 MR. JOYCE: Right, I know, but I'm
15 just saying that all of the union cuts that
16 were made were essentially the cuts that you
17 suggested. The other ones were other ones
18 that other council members suggested.
19 That's all.

20 MS. EVANS: Councilman Rogan, do you
21 have any comments or motions?

22 MR. ROGAN: I do now. I didn't plan
23 on saying much tonight since most of my
24 comments were going to be about the budget,
25 but I guess I'll have to give my rebuttal to

1 what most of Mr. McGoff said, by we'll start
2 of with some of what we agree.

3 We both were in conversation with
4 some of the realtors who are upset about the
5 real estate transfer tax increasing, and the
6 idea that was proposed, I believe it was the
7 same one that proposed to both of us, was
8 instead of decreasing the real estate
9 transfer tax to 2.8 percent across the board
10 was leaving it at 2.9 percent and dropping
11 it to 2 percent for single family homes,
12 which would make it easier for somebody
13 going to buy a single family home or sell a
14 single family home. I think it would be a
15 great idea. It doesn't appear that it's
16 legal. Over the next week I would be glad
17 to work with you in any way we can to make
18 that happen.

19 MR. JOYCE: Absolutely.

20 MR. ROGAN: And I think it's a
21 win-win because the revenue actually would
22 be according to the numbers that this person
23 gave us would be almost identical to leaving
24 it at 2.8 across the board because with
25 having it at 2.9 for a business owners and

1 investment properties, we could get the
2 increase income on that level, but with the
3 single family homes it would bring it a
4 little bit less, so it would average out to
5 be about the same, so it would help people
6 trying to purchase a home.

7 MS. EVANS: If I might suggest
8 though, maybe you might want to research
9 other cities and see if there is anyone,
10 indeed, who does or follows that type of
11 procedure because otherwise I think I can
12 almost foresee some discrimination suits on
13 this.

14 MR. ROGAN: Oh, absolutely and
15 that's when I, you know, spoke to Mr. McGoff
16 earlier before the meeting and it doesn't
17 appear initially that it is legal, but if
18 there is any way we can implement it, I
19 think it would be a great idea.

20 Secondly, I'll move onto Mr. McGoff
21 mentioned the refuse is collected
22 efficiently or on-time actually, the
23 question is whether it is done efficiently.
24 You could have a thousand guys down at the
25 DPW and if your garbage is picked up on time

1 every week people aren't going to realize
2 how much money is being wasted, and that's
3 the scenario we are in now.

4 We haven't had many complaints about
5 garbage collection, it's not because they're
6 under staffed, I believe they are over
7 staffed. I firmly believe that if you cut
8 DPW refuse, actually the cuts that I
9 submitted to Mr. Joyce went much further
10 than what was finally proposed, but it
11 seemed that that was the consensus that
12 everyone on the council came to as far as
13 DPW goes.

14 I have to say the argument that the
15 residents of Scranton are under taxed is the
16 most ridiculous thing I have ever heard at
17 one of these meetings. The \$2 a week pitch
18 sound like a bad infomercial that you would
19 see on late night TV. That's exactly what
20 it sounds like. It may only be -- the real
21 estate portion of the taxes is only a small
22 portion of what people pay. We pay the real
23 estate tax, the wage tax, which is the one
24 that kills working people in this city, and
25 that's why so many people are leaving this

1 city. By leaving the City of Scranton, by
2 leaving the City of Scranton to move to a
3 community that has a 1 percent wage tax you
4 get a 2.4 percent pay increase just by
5 leaving the city and odds are the property
6 taxes are lower. Odds are their garbage fee
7 is lower. That's why people are choosing to
8 leave Scranton, it's because of over
9 taxation. That's the problem with the state
10 government and the federal government.
11 That's the problem with government in
12 general is over taxation. Government can't
13 manage the people's money as well as they
14 can manage it themselves.

15 I firmly believe, I have always
16 supported public safety, I always will when
17 it can be supported. I don't believe for a
18 second that if we put the police officers
19 and the firefighters back in that Mayor
20 Doherty would ultimately keep the positions
21 there. We went through this last year.
22 Mayor Doherty slashed police and slashed
23 fire. Just last year council put the
24 positions back in, we cut some positions in
25 the administration, what did the mayor do?

1 At the end of the year he laid off firemen,
2 he laid off cops, but his buddies down at
3 the DPW got to keep their job. If we go
4 down that road with the mayor, I'm afraid
5 that's what's going to happen again. Where
6 we don't get the police and we don't get the
7 fire and he keeps his cronies jobs. That's
8 his track record.

9 If the mayor provided something in
10 writing or went on TV and publically stated
11 something then I think we can all sit down
12 and talk to him, but until that point I
13 don't see how that can happen. I don't
14 trust that the mayor is going to implement
15 this budget the way we want it implemented.
16 If has the right, as unfortunate as it is,
17 he has the right to hire and fire. Council
18 can only appropriate funds. That's the
19 bottom line. We can put in 1,000
20 firefighters and 1,000 cops. He doesn't
21 have to fund them. That's what is so
22 frustrating about this process.

23 You know, I do believe this budget
24 was a cooperative effort between the
25 administration and council. I'm not happy

1 with everything in it, and I don't think
2 anyone in here is, but I think as a whole,
3 you know, we did the best with a bad
4 situation. The bottom line is once -- if
5 this budget as is approved, and I'm sure
6 there is going to be some changes and there
7 is a lot of changes I think we would all
8 like to see, you will still be paying less
9 in taxes than the day myself and this
10 council majority took office, and that's
11 something that's very important to me.

12 And on one final note with the
13 resume issue with Ms. McAndrew, I would
14 apologize for not being more through, and I
15 would definitely reconsider that vote. I
16 wouldn't have a problem putting it up for a
17 vote again and voting "yes".

18 And that is all I have. I will be
19 working with my colleagues over the next
20 week to put in my input on the budget. And
21 I guess since everyone -- it seems to just
22 that everyone is going put out their
23 ultimate, I won't vote for it if this isn't
24 in it, I won't vote for a proposal that
25 increases taxes more than they were when we

1 took office, so that's the bottom line.

2 Thank you.

3 MS. EVANS: Councilman Loscombe, any
4 comments or motions?

5 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes, thank you.
6 Again, like Mr. Rogan I was going to reserve
7 my comments, but some questions were brought
8 up to me this evening, so I would like to
9 clarify my position. I was appointed by
10 esteemed colleagues here two years ago, and
11 I believe I was appointed based on my
12 interview and my experience that was on my
13 resume and then I was gratefully elected to
14 a full term this past November. Just as you
15 wouldn't put a plumber on a medical board, I
16 believe that my colleagues put me in charge
17 of the Public Safety Committee because of my
18 experience as a retired captain on the fire
19 department.

20 I have been asked by a few people
21 and it's been brought to my attention, in
22 this budget am I going to wear a council hat
23 or the firemen's hat, and I have to tell
24 you, folks, I'm wearing the husband's hat,
25 the father's hat, the grandfather's hat, the

1 son's hat, and a council hat. It has
2 nothing to do with the fact that I was a
3 firefighter, if has to do with the fact that
4 your safety is at risk.

5 Now, this council did not put your
6 safety at risk, I happen to know. I know
7 every member of this council has been
8 working round the clock this past two weeks,
9 trust me, because it's hard to get ahold of
10 any of us because we are on the phone and
11 going back and forth. It's not something
12 where you can all sit together because of
13 the Sunshine Act and stuff, but I'm glad
14 they tabled it tonight because I still have
15 some suggestions. You know, I think it's
16 incumbent upon us to protect the health,
17 safety and welfare of the public.

18 You know, morally and ethically I
19 can't approve any budget that decimates our
20 public safety, that's just a fact, and I
21 believe we have some numbers and some ideas
22 that would be able to, you know, I don't
23 even know if it would be called adequately
24 staffed that we have right now, but, you
25 know, to not attempt this, to not attempt to

1 put manning back in the budget is no excuse
2 for us.

3 We did legislation last year, it was
4 turned down by a visiting judge, but it is
5 under appeal. There is no reason we can't
6 budget for it and protect this money in the
7 budget that it can only be used if manning
8 wasn't put back in for overtime or whatever.
9 I haven't spoken to the solicitor on that,
10 but I do believe it's incumbent upon us not
11 to follow suit with the mayor. I do believe
12 he would be legally and liably responsible
13 as much as he would. I touted from this
14 board, from this dais week after week that I
15 would be the first one to go into Court if
16 we have a fatality over this situation.

17 If we don't do anything about it in
18 our budget, I will be going to Court against
19 myself in essence because I have to stand by
20 my word. That's the hat I'm wearing. I do
21 not think this city can be protected with
22 100 people.

23 And, you know, as far as taxes go,
24 we are apologists for the county and the
25 school district every time. Nobody ever

1 complains about the increases that they
2 place on a property. I have an example here
3 of a property in Scranton. This is a
4 property where the land value is assessed at
5 \$1,100 and the improvement is \$6,400, in the
6 City of Scranton they assess differently on
7 both, for a total annual tax bill of say
8 \$1,350. The city portion of that \$229. The
9 school board \$819 right now before any
10 increase. County \$300 before their 38
11 percent increase. Yes, it is a hit, but in
12 this particular case if the county tax
13 increase is 38 percent that's an additional
14 \$9.50 a month for that homeowner. If the
15 school district, and maybe Mr. Joyce could
16 correct me if I'm wrong, their increase is
17 maximized at 2.1 percent unless they go to
18 Court or something?

19 MR. JOYCE: Yes, I believe so.

20 MR. LOSCOMBE: Which would be an
21 additional \$1.43 per month. At a maximum if
22 our tax increase was 29 percent that's an
23 additional \$5.50 a month for that typical
24 homeowner, so combined you are looking at
25 ten, 15 dollars a month. Yes, it is a big

1 chunk. It's a bug chunk, but most people
2 spend more than that on a newspaper.

3 And I'm not -- believe me, I think
4 we are overtaxed all over. I'm not looking
5 to raise taxes I want to reduce them, and my
6 colleagues here have been working hard to
7 keep the taxes down and I do appreciate
8 that, but what I'm trying to show you here
9 is it's an insignificant amount. At what
10 cost is a life, \$1? At 4.8 percent increase
11 that same person is paying 92 cents a month
12 more. At 10 percent they are paying 1.92.
13 So, you know, for a buck or two a month, I
14 think it was stated before, you do the math,
15 a tax increase is forgotten next year. And
16 Mr. Rogan said he wouldn't want the taxes
17 any higher than when he came in, we reduced
18 them by 10 percent when we came last year.

19 Again, I don't want to see them go
20 up. If we can reduce this 4.8 percent to
21 zero with some found money I believe we
22 should do it, but I still believe it is our
23 duty to protect the people of this city,
24 their lives. That's what their tax dollars
25 are for.

1 shown us a plan, nobody else has shown me a
2 plan. We have a plan that we would like to
3 work together and, you know, work on a
4 budget with, and again, to do it without
5 raising any taxes that would be great. But,
6 you know, people I have spoken to feel the
7 safety is a priority. They don't feel two
8 or three dollars a month is a lot.

9 Go to your county meetings, go to
10 your school board meetings. We are the ones
11 that provide all your safety, your police,
12 your fire, your garbage. What does the
13 county provide you? A lot of people pay --
14 everybody pays school taxes but some of us
15 don't have children in school. We are not
16 the problem here, but we have been the
17 apologists for your taxes for years, so take
18 it to those boards and let us do what we are
19 supposed to do and provide the public safety
20 that you so deserve, and that's all I have
21 to say.

22 MR. ROGAN: Mrs. Evans, if I could
23 make one comment, and both Mr. McGoff and
24 Mr. Loscombe make valid points on the issue
25 of the property taxes, but when you look at

1 the taxes you have to look at the tax as a
2 whole. When the instance that Mr. Loscombe
3 used that resident would pay 229 for the
4 city, 819 for the school and 300 for the
5 county. Now, say that person makes \$30,000
6 a year, in wage tax they would pay \$320 into
7 the city, \$300 to the school district, and
8 zero to the county. Add in the garbage fee
9 that's paid to the city, the city taxes are
10 higher than the county taxes at the end of
11 the day.

12 MS. EVANS: They are.

13 MR. LOSCOMBE: But we are not
14 discussing the wage tax.

15 MR. ROGAN: Higher than the school
16 board, I apologize.

17 MR. LOSCOMBE: We are discussing the
18 property tax. That's what the increase is,
19 not the wage tax.

20 MR. ROGAN: I understand that, but
21 the people are also paying other taxes.
22 It's not just the property tax, to the
23 county you just pay the property tax and a
24 library fee, it's like a dollar, but to the
25 school, the school is taking it -- the city

1 is taking it in in all different directions.
2 They are not only collecting property tax,
3 but also collecting an extremely oppressive
4 wage tax which kills the people in this
5 community.

6 MR. LOSCOMBE: There is no doubt.

7 MR. ROGAN: And the garbage fee.

8 MS. EVANS: And LST.

9 MR. ROGAN: They just keep piling
10 on, but that's all, the only point I wanted
11 to make.

12 MR. LOSCOMBE: The city is not a
13 business it's a service and that's the way
14 it should be looked at.

15 MR. ROGAN: It absolutely is a
16 service, but the people can't afford it.
17 The people can't afford, you know, the abuse
18 and waste that DPW and through the
19 administration and, you know, each mayor
20 coming in and hiring more people to take
21 care of his friends, and it's not just Mayor
22 Doherty, and I don't agree with Mayor
23 Doherty, but this has been going on for
24 decades. It's not something that was
25 created overnight and it's not something

1 that's going to be solved overnight, but we
2 need to reduce the size of government.

3 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

4 MR. LOSCOMBE: I'll have more
5 comments next week.

6 MS. EVANS: Councilman Joyce, do you
7 have any comments or motions?

8 MR. JOYCE: Yes, just a few.
9 Regarding the 2012 budget, one of the
10 questions presented into the Scranton Times'
11 article was the reduction of the real estate
12 tax increase and I was speaking with Gerry
13 Cross from over at PEL this morning and I
14 explained to him how I got this figure and I
15 just wanted to explain it.

16 PEL, Pennsylvania Economy League,
17 suggested that we were increasing the line
18 item by 7.5 percent. Last year in the
19 budget it was 12998, 12.998 million, but
20 from Ryan McGowan, our BA, in his last cash
21 flow projection report he projects that we
22 are going to collect \$13.15 million this
23 year from real estate tax collections.

24 As per PEL's own figures, they
25 project that we will receive an additional

1 \$200,000 above this year due to the
2 acquisition of Mercy Hospital, what was
3 formerly Mercy Hospital, a nonprofit, by
4 Community Health Systems, a for profit
5 company. So 13.15 million plus the \$200,000
6 is \$13.35 million.

7 \$647,600, which is the amount that
8 council increased the real estate tax line
9 item, is 4.8 percent higher than the \$13.35
10 million. That's where that calculation came
11 from and I went over that with Gerry Cross
12 this morning from the Pennsylvania Economy
13 League.

14 In regards to the cuts in the DPW,
15 while I do understand that reducing the
16 staffing will place more of a strain on the
17 department, every faction of city government
18 whether it be fire, police, clerical or the
19 administration is taking a cut in this
20 budget. In the words of the Mayor Doherty,
21 we will have to learn to do more with less.
22 The DPW must adopt Mayor Doherty's
23 philosophy and fall in line with the rest of
24 the city. The DPW is not exempt from Mayor
25 Doherty's philosophy.

1 In fact, as per Mr. McGowan, the
2 original plan was to buyout DPW workers, and
3 as he informed me if workers do not accept
4 the buyout DPW employees would be laid off
5 later in the year. He sent me that in an
6 e-mail actually. Therefore, the staffing of
7 the DPW if members were laid off later in
8 the year would be near council's amendments.

9 In the buyout process, which I'm not
10 very much in favor of, there are benefits
11 such a cash payments or other benefits such
12 as health insurance for life. I'm not in
13 favor of benefits such as this.

14 To just give you a fact right here,
15 we are paying out of our city budget seven
16 to eight million dollars for health
17 insurance benefits for retirees, and that's
18 placing a huge strain on the taxpayers,
19 especially when you account for all of the
20 debt service that we are paying, so
21 currently, as Mr. McGowan informed me, there
22 is 638 retirees that we are paying health
23 benefits for that were former employees of
24 the city. This is nearly seven, eight
25 million dollars, and this is the reason why

1 if you take a look at the budget our health
2 insurance costs are between \$15 million a
3 year to \$16 million a year.

4 Now, in the real world today you
5 would hard pressed to find any business that
6 offers health care for life to it's retirees
7 in today's world.

8 Tonight, as I said before, I tabled
9 the budget vote. I have some additional
10 questions regarding unfunded prior year
11 bills and unfunded debt. It seemed like
12 Mr. McGowan made light of this in the
13 newspaper, however, I will say that somehow
14 borrowing \$6.7 million doesn't cover 2011
15 bills according to Mr. McGowan, but leasing
16 the parking meters to the Parking Authority
17 for \$6 million, which is a lesser amount,
18 does. And that was quoted by Mayor Doherty
19 in the November 16 Scranton Times' article.

20 I did attempt to contact Mr. McGowan
21 today regarding these issues, we spoke a bit
22 this morning about different revenue
23 projections that I think some of the folks,
24 I know Mr. Gervasi brought them to the
25 podium and mentioned them, I was speaking to

1 Mr. McGowan about several of those things,
2 however, Mr. McGowan has yet to provide me
3 full concrete answers to all of my questions
4 and I did try to call him about four times
5 today, however, he didn't return any of my
6 calls this afternoon, so the tabling of this
7 budget has nothing to do with the cuts to
8 the DPW, fire department, etcetera, but I
9 just wanted to inform everybody else, as I
10 stated before, I have also been working with
11 Gerry Cross from PEL as well as Mat Domenez
12 from DCED regarding our proposed amendments
13 in the final preparations, and I wanted to
14 give them both credit as they have been
15 helpful.

16 And I also encourage my colleagues
17 here on council to keep coming with
18 suggestions and keep coming with feedback
19 with things that they would like to see. I
20 know Mr. Rogan brought up the realty
21 transfer tax idea and that's very a
22 noteworthy idea if it's something we can do
23 and I would encourage you on correspondence,
24 if there is any written correspondence, to
25 copy our business administrator Ryan McGowan

1 as well as PEL because at the end of the day
2 these are the people are going to set the
3 numbers that would be put into the budget
4 not a member from the Board of Realtors,
5 though, I don't doubt that the Board of
6 Realtors have incorrect projections, but we
7 must be going by what the administration
8 dictates to us as far as what our revenue
9 figures are unless we have some sort of
10 glaring info that tells us otherwise, and
11 that's all for tonight.

12 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Good
13 evening. First, I would like to defer to
14 Council Solicitor Boyd Hughes regarding the
15 reinstatement of firefighters.

16 MR. HUGHES: Yes, Madam President.
17 I think as everyone is aware, if not we will
18 make them aware now, last year when the
19 mayor proposed his budget he cut a
20 substantial number of firemen, I believe it
21 was 28 and also 19 policemen from last
22 year's budget. Council was very concerned
23 about the public safety of that and as a
24 result we drafted a manning ordinance that
25 the fire department would have to have a

1 minimum staffing I believe it was 139, and
2 that the police department would also have
3 to have a minimum staffing I believe that
4 was -- I don't know the exact number, but we
5 passed that and we also put in the budget
6 the funding for the minimum staffing that
7 council established for the police and the
8 fire department.

9 The mayor vetoed that budget, it
10 came back to council, council overrode the
11 mayor's veto, however, the mayor refused to
12 implement and abide by the minimum staffing
13 requirements as established by council. He
14 underfunded or he undermanned both the
15 police and the fire department, ended up
16 laying off police and fire.

17 As a result, the police and fire
18 union filed a mandamus action against the
19 mayor, which I thought was a very good
20 action, I really thought that they should
21 have won that at the local court, however,
22 Judge Thomson who was the judge, a retired
23 judge from out of the area, decided the case
24 and stated that the hiring, firing and
25 discipline of police and firemen is solely

1 an executive decision and that the mayor did
2 not have to abide by council's manning
3 ordinance, and a result he was free as the
4 executive of the City of Scranton to not
5 fill those positions notwithstanding the
6 fact that Scranton Council had established
7 minimum staffing in both the police and
8 firemen, in both and police and fire
9 departments, and also had provided the
10 funding of each of those positions.

11 As a result, there is an appeal
12 pending before the Commonwealth Court.
13 Council feels very strongly about this.
14 They have authorized me to file an amicus
15 curiae brief, it will due on January 3 along
16 with the union's brief before the
17 Commonwealth Court. I don't know when the
18 case -- the brief of the city will be due 20
19 days or 30 days after, which would be
20 February 2. The case will probably won't
21 come up for argument I wouldn't think until
22 April or May and we probably won't have a
23 decision until sometime in the summer.

24 Regardless of what that decision is,
25 I would imagine that if the Commonwealth

1 Court reverses Judge Thomson that the city
2 will probably file a petition for allocatur
3 for review by the Supreme Court. There is
4 no automatic right of appeal to the Supreme
5 Court. If the union losses it and if Judge
6 Thomson's decision is affirmed I would
7 assume that the union would file a petition
8 for allocatur before the Supreme Court.
9 Again, there is no guarantee, that would
10 take time, sometimes if an appeal would be
11 filed and say the decision came down on June
12 1, the petition would have to be filed for
13 allocatur to the Supreme Court by the end of
14 the June, and just to determine if the
15 Supreme Court would even hear the case can
16 sometimes take up to a year. There would be
17 no -- and after that if they would accept it
18 by the time the case is briefed and argued
19 before the Supreme Court that could take
20 another year at least.

21 As a result, right now what the law
22 is that regardless of what council does in
23 order to provide manning, to adopt another
24 manning ordinance for the police and fire
25 department or even without that to put

1 firemen and policemen back in the budget,
2 you know, the mayor right now in accordance
3 with the law has the right to not to abide
4 by council's decision.

5 So, therefore, I mean, we know what
6 the mayor's position is right now with the
7 budget that he just submitted to council on
8 November 14 was to layoff policemen and
9 firemen, and as a result I think that the
10 unanimous opinion of council would be to
11 reinstate them if they could if the mayor
12 would abide by it, but I think based on past
13 practice and the way that the mayor has
14 acted that no matter what council does that
15 the mayor could use his prerogative, and
16 also the law not to man the police and fire
17 departments according to council's wishes.

18 That's where we are. That's the
19 position, and I know that council is very
20 disturbed over the fact that these cuts are
21 made, and I know that Mr. Loscombe is very
22 upset over the fact that there has been no
23 studies of the reductions of the fire
24 department or the police department to say
25 that a fire department can function with the

1 manpower that the mayor has submitted in
2 this year's budget.

3 I think any unilateral attempt by
4 council to reintroduce a manning ordinance
5 and to put positions back in it would be a
6 fait accompli. I think that everybody knows
7 what the mayor's position is that he'll say,
8 "Council did it, but so what I don't have to
9 abide about it because I have a Court
10 decision."

11 Right now that's the law and if
12 another mandamus action would be filed that
13 would be cited as precedent that this is the
14 law of case, this the law of Lackawanna
15 County right now, and it's even though it's
16 on appeal it is the law.

17 And, unfortunately, that's the
18 situation that we are in and unless the
19 mayor, and I think that council has tried to
20 say that they would put the positions back
21 in provided that the mayor would sign
22 something in writing that he would abide by
23 it, and he refused to do that, so as a
24 result it's really be an exercise in
25 futility for council on it's own to try to

1 do this based on the attitude of the mayor,
2 what he has done in the budget, what he did
3 with last year's manning ordinance, and what
4 he has done, you know, overridden council's
5 desire for public safety.

6 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Next, I want
7 to address Councilman McGoff's letter to us,
8 his council colleagues in which he states,
9 "Not reinstating the positions because of
10 the belief that the mayor will not act
11 accordingly is irresponsible on the part of
12 city council. Council should do what is
13 right and place the decision in the hands of
14 the administration. Council should not act
15 on assumptions and speculation. It should
16 do what it knows to be the correct thing."

17 In the December 4 edition of the
18 Sunday Times, Mayor Doherty made his
19 intentions very clear, although, he never
20 called any council member to discuss these
21 cuts or inform them of his decision despite
22 attempts to reach the mayor. Mr. Doherty
23 stated he would give no guarantee in writing
24 to relinquish his right to layoff employees
25 should council restore funding to the

1 firefighter positions. He would also give
2 no written guarantee that he would apply for
3 a federal grant, though he said he intends
4 to do so.

5 Consequently, Mr. McGoff, it is you
6 who is acting on assumption and speculation
7 and behaving irresponsibly.

8 Also, the decision was already
9 placed in the hands of the administration
10 not once but twice. First, the decision to
11 layoff firefighters was made by the mayor
12 and placed in his 2012 proposed budget.

13 And second, he rendered his decision
14 that he will not provide a written agreement
15 to reinstate positions in the Scranton Times
16 for every resident in Northeastern
17 Pennsylvania to see.

18 Interestingly, last year in December
19 2011, this very same time, you would not
20 vote to override the mayor's veto of the
21 budget which fully reinstated police and
22 fire positions, and you would not vote to
23 approve the ordinances which set the number
24 of police and fire for fiscal year 2011.
25 You said what council was doing was illegal

1 and you weren't going to be a party to it,
2 you weren't going to violate the law, and
3 you were proved correct. The mayor not only
4 laid off the police and fire during 2011,
5 but also a Court of law decided that he has
6 the authority to do so.

7 MR. MCGOFF: Was that letter read
8 into the record on Saturday?

9 MS. EVANS: No, that was not.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Okay.

11 MR. ROGAN: I apologize, Mr. McGoff.
12 I know you asked me to read it, we all
13 donated our time to Councilman Joyce, and I
14 apologize I didn't inform you, but none of
15 us spoke.

16 MR. MCGOFF: Well, then it really
17 wasn't to be made public. I intended that
18 to be read into the record, if nobody spoke
19 then it wasn't supposed to be made public.

20 MS. EVANS: Well, it wasn't marked
21 --

22 MR. MCGOFF: So thank you for the
23 confidentiality of that.

24 MS. EVANS: It wasn't marked not for
25 public release --

1 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

2 MS. EVANS: -- as your budget
3 amendments were.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

5 MS. EVANS: Let's see, so it looks
6 like in 2011 you were not morally obligated,
7 but now in 2012 you found your morals. And,
8 you know, in addition to that following a
9 Court decision you have grown bold and have
10 decided to violated the law. You want to
11 speculate and gamble to learn if the mayor
12 will retain firefighters in the 2012 budget
13 after you yourself stated at the council
14 meeting of November 29 in response to
15 Mrs. Rosky's question, and I quote, "The
16 mayor doesn't listen to anyone on council."

17 Thus, Mr. McGoff's letter to city
18 council is nothing short of rhetorical fluff
19 and an egregious example of grandstanding.

20 MR. MCGOFF: When I responded to
21 Mrs. Rosky it was concerning whether he
22 would attend a meeting.

23 MS. EVANS: No, that wasn't correct.

24 MR. MCGOFF: Yes, it was.

25 MS. EVANS: He publically chided his

1 colleagues last week --

2 MR. MCGOFF: If you are going to
3 quote me at least make it in context.

4 MS. EVANS: He publically chided his
5 colleagues last December at council meetings
6 and in the newspaper for doing the very same
7 thing he is doing now. This unprecedented
8 about face doesn't pass the smell test or
9 measure up to the standards of a logical
10 individual.

11 Some council members are doing what
12 we know is the correct thing, as suggested
13 by Mr. McGoff, but I respectfully suggest
14 that in this vital matter, Mr. McGoff is not
15 one of them.

16 Councilman Loscombe would also like
17 council to reinstate the fire department
18 positions and is willing to take the risk
19 that the mayor won't lay off firefighters
20 again. He doesn't want to be blamed for a
21 tragedy and term the cuts to the fire
22 department criminal. I hope my respected
23 and deeply concerned colleague was not
24 accusing his fellow council members of
25 criminal actions, and that he assigns the

1 blame and responsibility where it truly
2 lies, with Mayor Doherty.

3 Jack Loscombe is my good friend and
4 colleague and I ask him sincerely to
5 consider the following questions: The mayor
6 stated for the record that he would put city
7 insurance out to bid in 2011, did it ever
8 happen? The mayor signed legislation for a
9 delinquent tax collector after Mr. Loscombe,
10 Attorney Hughes and I worked out a new
11 contract with that MRS, and then what did he
12 do? Mayor Doherty substituted his own
13 contract in place of council's lawfully
14 adopted one for the firm signature.

15 This same man crossed his signature
16 off on council legislation months after he
17 signed it. Do you remember?

18 Do you recall the negotiations in
19 2010 in an empty Lackawanna County courtroom
20 in which we all participated, except for
21 Mr. McGoff, who voted against our
22 legislation because he felt it was illegal.
23 The mayor sued council for cutting
24 government costs by \$700,000. Do you recall
25 that even after council members returned to

1 the budget the mayor's people, as he likes
2 to call them, the mayor abruptly called off
3 negotiations and refused to settle the case?

4 Now he states that he will not
5 provide any agreement to reinstate
6 firefighters. This is the man you are
7 gambling on. Do you understand the
8 consequences if council approved of what you
9 want to do? The firefighters would be cut
10 from the budget while all other positions
11 will be restored. The mayor will have the
12 sizable extra monies from the fire
13 department cuts to spend in any manner he
14 desires.

15 The people's taxes will jump through
16 the roof and many elderly and poor will lose
17 their homes, and not to fire, but to banks
18 and mortgage companies for nothing but
19 wishful thinking, Jack. Those are also
20 consequences which no council member would
21 be able to live with.

22 Next, DPW union President Sam Vitris
23 said the cuts to the DPW decimate public
24 works adding that, "The appearance of this
25 city is going to be terrible."

1 No division of the DPW has been
2 decimated by council amendments because
3 these sparse cuts were spread throughout the
4 department. If the DPW lost 37 men, as has
5 the fire department, then Mr. Vitris would
6 have real cause for concern.

7 Further, the mayor has said we must
8 do more with less and that government is not
9 an employment agency. The people will get
10 the government that they can afford, as
11 Mr. Joyce said, and here in this I agree
12 with the mayor.

13 Further, I don't know where
14 Mr. Vitris has been living, but the
15 appearance of some sections of this city
16 have been terrible for ten years. Ask the
17 taxpayers about overgrown abandoned lots,
18 scrub board roads, potholes, dirt, cinders,
19 litter and leaves citywide and trash cans
20 throughout into streets where garbage has
21 spilled on properties.

22 When I hear about the DPW many times
23 it's a nightmare, from prostitutes to using
24 city equipment for driver's tests and other
25 personal nonwork related uses, to chronic

1 drug and alcohol problems, to failure to
2 drug test properly. These occurrences give
3 the DPW a black eye which is most unfair to
4 those who work hard.

5 However, Mr. Vitris seems to be
6 hinting to all of us that the DPW intends to
7 perform less service because it lost some
8 workers. If all of these the employees work
9 eight hour days, however, the work will get
10 done. On the other hand, if the worker's
11 fail to timely collect garbage and
12 recycling, plow snow properly this winter
13 and repair police and fire vehicles more
14 quickly, they may find the DPW privatized in
15 the future. A private company will not
16 allow much four or five hour work days and
17 bloated overtime. People who desperately
18 want to work will be very happy to have
19 those jobs and work an eight-hour day.

20 Next, city council placed \$100,000
21 into it's professional services account for
22 legal services. It is not the intention of
23 council to use these monies, however, if
24 Mayor Christopher Doherty ignores, alters or
25 substitutes any legally adopted legislation

1 or removes his signature from council
2 legislation, or violates the Home Rule
3 Charter in 2012, he will find himself
4 rapidly and frequently seated in the
5 defendant's chair in the Lackawanna County
6 Courthouse and that, too, however, must come
7 with the vote of four council members.

8 While laboring on this budget to cut
9 the mayor's tax hikes, I have been bullied,
10 insulted, ignored and threatened by certain
11 city employees, and that's fine, I'm not
12 complaining because it comes from the
13 position of council president whether or not
14 such treatment is warranted. However, I
15 will not be held hostage by Chris Doherty,
16 his administration or any special interest
17 groups. The mayor has his people, the
18 unions have their responsibility to fight
19 for their people, and I have the duty to
20 serve all the people, and that's it.

21 MS. KRAKE: 5-B. APPROPRIATING FUNDS
22 FOR THE EXPENSES OF THE SCRANTON PARKING
23 AUTHORITY FOR THE PERIOD COMMENCING ON THE
24 FIRST DAY OF JANUARY, 2012 AND INCLUDING
25 DECEMBER 31, 2012 BY THE ADOPTION OF THE

1 SCRANTON PARKING AUTHORITY OPERATING BUDGET
2 FOR THE YEAR 2012.

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

6 MR. MCGOFF: So moved.

7 MS. EVANS: Do we have a second?

8 Well, then I would say --

9 MR. JOYCE: I'll second it.

10 MS. EVANS: On the question?

11 MR. JOYCE: Yeah. On the question,
12 I took a look at the Parking Authority
13 budget and I'll tell you what, it's very
14 vague at best. It looks like something that
15 someone in a freshman accounting 101 class
16 would put together, let alone someone who
17 has a college education and has been very
18 well-versed in putting together budgets, so
19 I will be voting "no" until they submit a
20 complete budget that also includes the
21 salaries of all of the employees, benefits,
22 and they have to be itemized here. They
23 can't be in a list, say, salaries of
24 employees, \$500,000 or whatever it may be.
25 I want to know how much each person in this

1 authority is making, because I'll tell you
2 what, the authorities and the authorities
3 alone could be attributed to the layoff of
4 fire and council's layoffs as well to DPW,
5 some clerical worker, administration.

6 I'll tell you what, if they are
7 going to say they want \$1.6 million from us,
8 I'll tell you what, I want a heck of a lot
9 more information from them.

10 So with that, I will be voting "no"
11 and we will be requesting a revised budget
12 from them with details and not just vague
13 figures.

14 MS. EVANS: In addition to that, I
15 know that Attorney Hughes addressed this I
16 believe at last week's meeting, quite a
17 number of financial documents were requested
18 from Mr. Scopelliti, oh, probably about six
19 weeks ago, he has never provided those, so I
20 think it's not simply just a matter of
21 providing a detailed budget in an
22 appropriate manner, it's also a matter of
23 transparency and turning over those
24 financial documents that have been
25 requested, and so until that happens I'm not

1 going to approve this budget either nor am I
2 going to approve -- even if for the first
3 time in their history they provided a
4 detailed appropriate budget, I will still
5 not approve it until we receive the
6 information that we have been requesting
7 probably for the last two years.

8 Mr. Scopelliti will not come to a
9 city council meeting, Mr. Scopelliti will
10 not provide information, the Board of the
11 Parking Authority will not appear before
12 city council or answer questions as well, so
13 I will be voting "no" and as far as I'm
14 concerned that means -- oh, you know, we
15 should add for those of you who don't
16 recall, this budget should have been brought
17 before council for many, many years,
18 decades. That was never done until
19 Solicitor Hughes found that information and
20 for the first time last year we got their
21 budget. Granted, it's a -- it's not a
22 budget. I don't know what one could term
23 it. It's two pages. Can you imagine if the
24 City of Scranton presented a two-page
25 budget?

1 Now, until they begin to comply
2 there will be no budget for them and
3 perhaps, as was discussed before, city
4 council is going to have to start
5 investigating what's going to happen with
6 the Parking Authority, and as Mr. Joyce
7 said, that \$1.6 million that they have their
8 hand out for and not providing evidence of
9 need for it, isn't going anywhere out of the
10 2012 budget. It's plugged in there, but
11 it's not moving anywhere.

12 MR. ROGAN: I would also add, I was
13 happy to let it die without a second, but
14 since we have to talk about it now, I agree
15 with what my colleagues said. You know,
16 this budget it's laughable to call this a
17 budget, I wish the people at home could see
18 it. Its is extremely informal and it looks,
19 like, pretty much like what --

20 MS. EVANS: A club would do.

21 MR. ROGAN: Yeah.

22 MS. EVANS: A high school club.

23 MR. ROGAN: A school club would do,
24 right, and I think the suggestions that
25 council members submitted to Mr. Joyce were

1 in better order than this and they were just
2 suggestions, they weren't --

3 MR. JOYCE: True.

4 MR. ROGAN: -- a working document.
5 You know, this is -- I really wish the
6 people at home could see this, but it's
7 basically if you had a two-page budget and
8 one said salary \$30,000 and the next one
9 said expenditures \$1.6 million, that's
10 basically what this says, so I will be
11 voting "no" as well.

12 MS. EVANS: Anyone else on the
13 question?

14 MR. HUGHES: Madam President, I
15 don't if you want me to comment, but I don't
16 want to take up too much time, we have been
17 here long enough, but I did write
18 Mr. Scopelliti request of council's to put
19 \$1.6 million in the budget for the Scranton
20 Parking Authority because of it's proposed
21 deficit or anticipated deficit for the year
22 2012. I wrote him back, it's a two and a
23 half page letter, they refused and the
24 bonding company -- or put it this way, the
25 trustee, the Bank of New York, Mellon, I had

1 written to the trust officer in charge of
2 the Scranton Parking Authority, I requested
3 all types of documentation, the trust
4 agreements, escrow agreements, requested
5 what the balance of the funds were and
6 various funds that they maintain. She told
7 me that -- I wrote -- I received a letter
8 back from her and she stated that she would
9 not supply that information I was to get it
10 from the Parking Authority.

11 As a result, Mr. Scopelliti wrote to
12 council saying to include in this year's
13 budget \$1.6 million for an anticipated
14 shortfall of the Scranton Parking Authority
15 which resulted in my letter, that was seven
16 weeks ago. To date, I haven't even
17 received, you know, any type of reply.
18 Included in that as Item No. 7, I set forth
19 specifically what they must provide for the
20 budget they were submitting to council,
21 included a line item budget with comparisons
22 to 2011 for the 2012 request, line items of
23 managerial staff, union workers, so that the
24 council would know exactly how many
25 employees the Parking Authority has and what

1 their payments are, and to date we have
2 received nothing. The letter was here, each
3 council person received a copy of it back in
4 October 27.

5 But, you know, just to put \$1.6
6 million in the budget for the Scranton
7 Parking Authority is just like taking \$1.6
8 million and throwing it out on the street.
9 You know, that's about what it would be
10 without any documentation.

11 MS. EVANS: Exactly.

12 MR. HUGHES: That's all I have to
13 say.

14 MS. EVANS: Thank you. These are
15 people appointed by this mayor and yet this
16 council is being asked to take the word of
17 the mayor, just -- not even word, he didn't
18 even give his word. Just trust it. Just
19 trust it. And if a BA says, hey, do it,
20 just trust it. The city is too far gone for
21 that, ladies and gentlemen, way too far
22 gone.

23 MR. HUGHES: I'll just state for the
24 record one other thing that was set forth in
25 the letter, there are two insurance

1 companies that the Scranton Parking
2 Authority has purchased insurance from, in
3 the event they do default on any of their
4 loans the insurance company has to pay first
5 and then they have other recourse that could
6 come. In that request for \$1.6 million they
7 didn't state which of the bonds issues were
8 in trouble being -- in trouble of being in
9 default. As a result, while they could be
10 in default, the Scranton Parking Authority
11 has to give notice to the bonding companies
12 three days before any payments are due on
13 interest and principal, the bonding company
14 will make that payment then they have
15 various recourses.

16 Part of the documentation I
17 requested was copies of those insurance
18 agreements so that we could review them to
19 see exactly what recourse the bonding
20 company would have in the event there is a
21 default, and they refused to provide them.

22 MS. EVANS: Thank you very much.
23 Anyone else on the question? All those in
24 favor of introduction signify by saying aye.
25 Opposed?

1 MR. MCGOFF: No.

2 MR. ROGAN: No.

3 MR. LOSCOMBE: No.

4 MR. JOYCE: No.

5 MS. EVANS: No. The nos have it.

6 That isn't very often said, is it, ladies
7 and gentlemen? The nos have it and the
8 legislation dies.

9 MS. KRAKE: 5-C. AMENDING FILE OF
10 COUNCIL NO. 52, 2010, AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED
11 "GENERAL CITY OPERATING BUDGET 2011" BY
12 TRANSFERRING \$14,300.00 FROM ACCOUNT NO.
13 01.401.13090.4299 (NON-DEPARTMENTAL
14 OPERATING EXPENSES - CONTINGENCY) \$4,000.00
15 TO ACCOUNT NO. 01.011.00071.4140 (POLICE 10%
16 EARLY RETIREMENT) AND \$10,300.00 TO ACCOUNT
17 NO. 01.011.00078.4140 (FIRE 10% EARLY
18 RETIREMENT) TO PROVIDE FUNDING TO COVER
19 THE REMAINING COST FOR POLICE AND FIRE EARLY
20 RETIREMENT PAYMENTS THROUGH THE PERIOD
21 ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2011.

22 MS. EVANS: At this time I'll
23 entertain a motion that Item 5-C be
24 introduced into it's proper committee.

25 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

1 MR. JOYCE: Second.

2 MS. EVANS: On the question? All
3 those in favor of introduction signify by
4 saying aye.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

6 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

7 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

8 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

9 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed? The ayes
10 have it and so moved.

11 MS. KRAKE: 5-D. ACCEPTING A ONE
12 HUNDRED (100.00) DOLLAR DONATION FROM NEI
13 AMBULATORY SURGERY, INC. PRESENTED TO THE
14 CITY OF SCRANTON FIRE DEPARTMENT.

15 MS. EVANS: At this time I'll
16 entertain a motion that Item 5-D be
17 introduced into it's proper committee.

18 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

19 MR. JOYCE: Second.

20 MS. EVANS: On the question? All
21 those in favor of introduction signify by
22 saying aye.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

24 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

25 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

1 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

2 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed? The ayes
3 have it and so moved.

4 MS. KRAKE: SIXTH ORDER. 6-A.
5 READING BY TITLE – FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 59,
6 2011 – AN ORDINANCE- AMENDING FILE OF
7 COUNCIL NO. 74, 1993 (AS AMENDED), ENTITLED
8 THE ZONING ORDINANCE FOR THE CITY OF
9 SCRANTON, BY AMENDING SECTION 306 TABLE OF
10 PERMITTED USES BY DISTRICT; SECTION 307 B.4.
11 TABLE OF LOT AND SETBACK REQUIREMENTS BY
12 DISTRICT; 601.A.5. MIXED-USED ADAPTIVE
13 REUSE; TABLE 6.1 OFF STREET PARKING
14 REQUIREMENTS; SECTION 602.E. LOCATION OF
15 PARKING.

16 MS. EVANS: You've heard reading by
17 title of Item 6-A, what is your pleasure?

18 MR. ROGAN: I move that Item 6-A
19 pass reading by title.

20 MR. JOYCE: Second.

21 MS. EVANS: On the question? All
22 those in favor signify by saying aye.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

24 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

25 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

1 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

2 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed? The ayes
3 have it and so moved.

4 MS. KRAKE: 7-A has been tabled.

5 7-B. FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE
6 COMMITTEE ON FINANCE FOR ADOPTION-FILE OF
7 COUNCIL NO. 57, 2011- SALE OF TAX DELINQUENT
8 PROPERTY MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS NORTH
9 CAMERON AVENUE, TAX MAP NO. 14408-060-040,
10 SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA, TO ROBERT J.
11 GAHWILER AND ELOISE A. GAHWILER, HIS WIFE,
12 526 NORTH CAMERON AVENUE, SCRANTON,
13 PENNSYLVANIA, 18504, FOR THE CONSIDERATION
14 OF \$5,000.00.

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

18 MR. JOYCE: As Chairperson for the
19 Committee on Finance, I recommend final
20 passage of Item 7-B.

21 MR. ROGAN: Second.

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

24 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. McGoff.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

1 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Rogan.

2 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

3 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Loscombe.

4 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes.

5 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Joyce.

6 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

7 MS. MARCIANO: Mrs. Evans.

8 MS. EVANS: Yes. I hereby declare
9 Item 7-B legally and lawfully adopted.

10 MS. KRAKE: 7-C. FOR CONSIDERATION
11 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE FOR ADOPTION-
12 FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 58, 2011- PROVIDING
13 FOR THE PROPER OFFICIALS OF THE CITY OF
14 SCRANTON TO PETITION THE COURT OF COMMON
15 PLEAS OF LACKAWANNA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA,
16 FOR PERMISSION TO FUND UNFUNDED DEBT IN AN
17 AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED SIX MILLION SEVEN
18 HUNDRED THOUSAND (\$6,700,000.00) DOLLARS;
19 AUTHORIZING INCIDENTAL ACTION; AND REPEALING
20 INCONSISTENT ORDINANCES.

21 MR. JOYCE: I make a motion to amend
22 Item 7-C as per the following, by adding a
23 new Section 6, as follows: Section 6: The
24 funds in an amount up to \$6,700,000 to fund
25 the unfunded debt shall be deposited into a

1 special city account established in the 2012
2 budget to be determined to pay for the 2011
3 outstanding bills and the indebtedness as
4 set forth in Section 2 above, and
5 renumbering Section 6 to 9 as Section 7 to
6 10.

7 MR. ROGAN: Second.

8 MS. EVANS: On the question? All
9 those in favor of the motion to amend Item
10 7-C, as amended, signify by saying aye.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

12 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

13 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

14 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

15 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed? The ayes
16 have it and so moved.

17 MR. JOYCE: I would like to makes a
18 motion to table Item 7-C.

19 MR. ROGAN: Second.

20 MS. EVANS: On the question?

21 MR. JOYCE: Yes. The reason I'm
22 doing this is I would like this and the
23 budget to pass together, obviously this is a
24 part of the 2012 operating budget, and we
25 are talking about going with unfunded

1 borrowing versus the sale of the parking
2 meters, which is currently in the 2012
3 operating budget, so just in case someone on
4 council made decide that they would rather
5 see the sale of the meters I just wanted
6 them to both pass at the same date.

7 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else on
8 the question?

9 MR. MCGOFF: I think it's just that
10 the time constraints for this that if the
11 county started the process over a month ago
12 and they are barely -- I think it was maybe
13 today that it was accepted by someone, so --

14 MS. EVANS: They like us had a hold
15 up because they didn't have an audit and the
16 city doesn't have an audit, but --

17 MR. MCGOFF: I'm just saying that
18 the longer that we prolong this the longer
19 the process is going to take, and I
20 understand Mr. Joyce's comments, but --

21 MR. JOYCE: Yes, I --

22 MS. EVANS: If I could just for one
23 second, I spoke with Solicitor Hughes today
24 about this very issue and he is very
25 familiar with borrowing and bonds, etcetera,

1 and it is his opinion that this is not going
2 to occur in December and the money will not
3 be coming into the city in December, that
4 this is something that's probably -- that's
5 not going to be concluded until the
6 beginning of next year and the money
7 received until the early part of next year.

8 MR. ROGAN: I would add, I wouldn't
9 even feel comfortable voting for this until
10 after the veto vote, I'm assuming that a
11 veto occurs. Assuming council passes an
12 amendment, it goes down, the mayor vetoes it
13 and it comes back to council, that veto is
14 not overridden and the parking meters are
15 sold then we are still --

16 MS. EVANS: You are right.

17 MR. ROGAN: -- borrowing the money.
18 I'm not giving the mayor a blank check for
19 \$6 million.

20 MS. EVANS: Right. Okay, I think
21 that's a very good. Then we are table this
22 until probably the first meeting of the new
23 year.

24 MR. JOYCE: From what I understand
25 from speaking with Mr. McGowan, it looks

1 like if we were to do this right now we
2 would probably get the money late January,
3 early February at best. That's kind of what
4 we are looking at right now. There is a
5 meeting tomorrow morning about loans and
6 TANS and the various things, so --

7 MS. EVANS: No, I do agree with you,
8 Mr. Rogan, that no further vote -- this will
9 remain tabled until the override vote on the
10 mayor's budget.

11 MR. HUGHES: Madam President, if I
12 cop, I don't want to delay this meeting any
13 longer, but that legislation was not sent to
14 me until I think it was November 11. I was
15 on vacation, I came back on a Monday, came
16 into the office on Tuesday it was there, I
17 reviewed it. It was done as a resolution by
18 the solicitor's office. In accordance with
19 the Home Rule Charter, it has to be an
20 ordinance. I redrafted it and got it onto
21 council's agenda I believe at the next
22 meeting, so that we have done everything
23 within the time period. If we introduced it
24 as it was drafted by the solicitor's office
25 as a resolution it wouldn't have been valid,

1 because according to the Home Rule Charter
2 to borrow money it has to be by an
3 ordinance.

4 We have acted very timely on this
5 thing, if there is any delay it's been
6 caused by, you know, by the solicitor's
7 office and by the administration to borrow
8 the money.

9 MS. EVANS: But I also think, you
10 know, I don't want to beat a dead horse
11 here, but it is very important to wait until
12 the override vote because if, in fact, it's
13 the mayor's budget that passes then there
14 will be no \$6.7 million borrowing and what
15 will happen is that the parking meters will
16 then go to the Scranton Parking Authority
17 and the city has lost them and all of that
18 revenue each year.

19 MR. ROGAN: If we voted to put this
20 through they would have the parking meters
21 and the mayor would have over \$6 million to
22 build a park or something.

23 MS. EVANS: Right

24 MR. HUGHES: I would say this, that
25 even though that would be in the budget on

1 the -- council could not override the
2 mayor's veto, I do not see how the Parking
3 Authority can borrow the \$6 million to buy
4 the parking meters from the City of Scranton
5 due to their financial condition without the
6 City of Scranton guaranteeing that loan.

7 MS. EVANS: And the City of Scranton
8 visa via city council I feel quite certain
9 will not guarantee that.

10 MR. HUGHES: So this is one viscous
11 circle. It's like a dog chasing his tail to
12 put that in the budget, you know, was mere
13 folly because it has to come back to council
14 to approve the borrowing and guarantee the
15 loan from the Parking Authority for the
16 Parking Authority to get the money to buy
17 the meters from the City of Scranton.

18 MS. EVANS: Exactly.

19 MR. HUGHES: And if they default you
20 are going to be paying back on your own loan
21 to sell the parking meters to the Parking
22 Authority.

23 MS. EVANS: Right. Which is why
24 council eliminated that from the mayor's
25 proposed budget and instead put in the \$6.7

1 million in borrowing, but now I don't know
2 that that's going to happen for the mayor,
3 so --

4 MR. HUGHES: If that would happen,
5 it would be another \$6 million deficit
6 without council's approval.

7 MS. EVANS: That's right, but that
8 will be the mayor's budget and anyone who
9 approves it.

10 MR. HUGHES: Thank you. Good night.

11 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Roll call,
12 please. Or, no, not a roll call, we have a
13 motion. I'm sorry, motion to table. All
14 those in favor signify by saying aye.

15 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

16 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

17 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

18 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed?

19 MR. MCGOFF: No.

20 MS. EVANS: The ayes have it and so
21 moved. If there is no further business,
22 I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

23 MR. JOYCE: Motion to adjourn.

24 MS. EVANS: This meeting is
25 adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER