

SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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HELD:

Thursday, July 7, 2016

LOCATION:

Council Chambers

Scranton City Hall

340 North Washington Avenue

Scranton, Pennsylvania

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR - OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

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CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

JOSEPH WECHSLER, PRESIDENT

PATRICK ROGAN, VICE-PRESIDENT

WAYNE EVANS

WILLIAM GAUGHAN

TIM PERRY

LORI REED, CITY CLERK

JAMIE MARCIANO, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

AMIL MINORA, SOLICITOR

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

3 MR. WECHSLER: Roll call, please.

4 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Perry.

5 MR. PERRY: Here.

6 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Rogan.

7 MR. ROGAN: Here.

8 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Evans.

9 MR. EVANS: Here.

10 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Gaughan.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Here.

12 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Wechsler.

13 MR. WECHSLER: Here. Dispense with
14 the reading of the minutes.

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

16 AGENDA FOR THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS
17 MEETING TO BE HELD JULY 13, 2016.

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

20 MS. REED: 3-B. TAX ASSESSOR'S
21 RESULTS REPORT FOR HEARING DATE HELD JUNE
22 22, 2016.

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

25 MS. REED: 3-C. TAX ASSESSOR'S

1 REPORT FOR HEARING DATE TO BE HELD JULY 13,
2 2016.

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

5 MS. REED: 3-D. SINGLE TAX OFFICE
6 CITY FUNDS DISTRIBUTED COMPARISON REPORT
7 2015-2016 YEAR TO DATE JUNE 30, 2016.

8 MR. WECHSLER: Are there any
9 comments? If not, received and filed.
10 Do any council members have
11 announcements at this time?

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, I have two. The
13 Minooka Lions are having a raffle to raise
14 funds to install a gazebo in the Billy
15 Barrett playground on Colliery Avenue in
16 memory of Attorney Mark Walsh who passed
17 away three years ago. It will be held
18 Saturday, July 16. The project will also
19 commemorate the Lion's centennial
20 celebration. The drawing will be at 12 noon
21 and tickets are \$20. Tickets are available
22 from any Lion's member or by calling Betsy
23 Walsh, president of the Minooka Lion's Club
24 at 570-591-4537.

25 Also, please keep in mind that

1 Spruce Street between Adams Avenue and North
2 Washington Avenue will be down to a single
3 lane starting Monday July 11 at 8 a.m. This
4 traffic pattern will be in place for four
5 weeks. PPL will be replacing, upgrading and
6 adding new concrete top to a manhole. Thank
7 you.

8 MR. WECHSLER: Yes, I have two.
9 First one is there will be an addiction
10 awareness rally held on Sunday, July 17,
11 2016, at Lackawanna County Courthouse
12 square. As we all know the opoid problem in
13 our is becoming quite dramatic, if you read
14 in the paper this week we also lost another
15 young person to drug abuse. This particular
16 rally is in memory of Sammy Henehan, who
17 also suffered from this terrible disease so
18 please everyone come out so we can combat
19 this problem.

20 I was asked to announce for anyone
21 that on Tuesday evening there will be a
22 meeting of Greenridge neighborhood
23 Association. That will be at 7:00 p.m. and
24 that will be at the American Legion on
25 Deacon Street. Anyone else?

1 MS. REED: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS'
2 PARTICIPATION.

3 MR. WECHSLER: Joan Hodowanitz.

4 MS. HODOWANITZ: Joan Hodowanitz,
5 city resident and taxpayer. First, a couple
6 of thanks are in order to all of the city
7 workers who helped carry off the wonderful
8 events on July 3 for the Fourth of July
9 celebration. It was well executed, well
10 done and they deserve kudos for that effort.

11 Also, even though in a perfect world
12 every road would be newly paved, thank the
13 people who have been paving downtown or
14 elsewhere around the city. It's nice to see
15 those roads paved over and it makes the city
16 looks so much better and I'm sure it's best
17 for the drivers so thank you for that, too.

18 Today is July 7, you're probably
19 thinking about the August recess coming on a
20 hot, humid day like today. After today
21 there are only three more meetings that you
22 will have and you can see in today's agenda
23 that the calendar is getting light. With
24 that in mind, I would also remind you that
25 as of today the 2015 city audit is now 37

1 days late by Home Rule Charter and I'll be
2 watching that when you come back after
3 recess to see how that is progressing. I'm
4 still intensely curious about what kind of
5 bill PFM is going to give us for their work
6 on the monetization of the Parking
7 Authority. Correct me if I'm wrong, they
8 are also involved in the monetization of the
9 Sewer Authority, are they not?

10 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

11 MS. HODOWANITZ: They do have a
12 four-year contract that runs through March
13 of 2018 and I hope we don't have to wait
14 until April of 2018 to find out what the
15 bill is.

16 MR. WECHSLER: They are being paid
17 at the end of the each agreement being
18 reached so --

19 MS. HODOWANITZ: Okay, September
20 they should be paid.

21 MR. WECHSLER: Yes, they are not
22 going to invoice us, they are getting fees
23 from the --

24 MR. EVANS: They will be paid at
25 closing at both of those so probably

1 mid-August for parking.

2 MS. HODOWANITZ: Well, good, because
3 I would like to see that in the September
4 Controller's report.

5 Also, coming up around the corner is
6 the ever popular 2017 operating budget, and
7 I hope we are all contemplating those
8 numbers and what should be going up and what
9 should be going down. Have you heard
10 anything on Mellon's replacement as the
11 pension fund manager and trustee?

12 MR. WECHSLER: I contacted Business
13 Administrator Bulzoni this week, there are
14 currently five firms that they are
15 evaluating and no final decision has been
16 reached.

17 MS. HODOWANITZ: Okay. Remind the
18 general public that next Wednesday, July 13,
19 starting at 8:30 in the morning are the
20 pension board meetings and if I recall
21 correctly from this morning's paper that
22 Monday examiners come hear the double
23 pension dispute. Whether that will be an
24 open or closed hearing I'm not sure. I
25 suspect it will be a closed hearing.

1 Hopefully this whole issue of the double
2 pensions will come to a close this fiscal
3 year and not drag out into the future.

4 And the article about the parking
5 profits far off, you realize I'm going to be
6 91 in 2040, if we don't see until then I
7 want to live long enough to see some kind of
8 proceeds come back, but it brings up the
9 issues, a question, Renaissance 500, that
10 sign is still up about the Delilah's
11 Gentleman's Club, is that really coming to
12 downtown Scranton?

13 MR. WECHSLER: No, really it can't
14 because there is a park nearby so it would
15 violate every zoning law.

16 MS. HODOWANITZ: Okay.

17 MR. WECHSLER: So I think right now
18 it's just an attention getter for someone.

19 MS. HODOWANITZ: It is an attention
20 getter.

21 MR. EVANS: That particular building
22 is not part of the Renaissance 500, that
23 actually was condoed and owned by a separate
24 individual.

25 MS. HODOWANITZ: But we are still

1 not going to bring gentleman clubs back to
2 --

3 MR. EVANS: No, it would be also
4 impossible because it wouldn't be allowed
5 where there is residences and there is
6 homeowners within that block.

7 MS. HODOWANITZ: Well, good. Good.
8 Thank you. Have a good night.

9 MR. EVANS: Thank you.

10 MR. WECHSLER: Albert Young.

11 MR. YOUNG: Good evening, Council.
12 Albert Young, Scranton resident. Back on
13 March 31, 2016, we came to council with a
14 problem that has plagued us for many years.
15 After few appearances, council addressed
16 this as an emergency problem and since then
17 you have been in contact with DEP. About
18 five weeks ago we were notified that the
19 draft letter was supposed to be in print and
20 was supposed to be sent to us but was not.
21 Last Tuesday we saw the mayor and the
22 solicitor at lunch and we stated that we had
23 yet to receive this letter. Well, that
24 night at 5:30 in the evening the secretary
25 called and said that she had just finished

1 printing out the letter and it would be sent
2 out the next morning. That was June 27. We
3 received a letter on the 5th of July.

4 After reading the letter, which
5 contained a bunch of the legal jargon, I
6 give it to two different lawyers to read.
7 This has been recommended to me by a friend
8 and thank God I did. They both called and
9 both stated, "Please, do not sign that
10 letter."

11 Gentlemen, I was not born yesterday
12 and apparently legal thinks I was and no one
13 apparently has read my first proposal when I
14 sent it in to council back in early April.
15 That proposal clearly states 1713-1715 Young
16 property and 1717 Kennedy property. The
17 Kennedys are working parents and are
18 required to work nights and sometimes are
19 called out of town. Because I'm retired,
20 I'm the one that's basically doing the
21 fighting for this whole project.

22 Now, as far as this letter goes,
23 after receiving it, I don't know whether you
24 have it in front of you, but if you don't
25 take notice, if you do I would appreciate

1 you taking notice to it.

2 Paragraph two, who is going to asses
3 the problem?

4 Paragraph three, the whole thing is
5 ludicrous. They, the city, will not pay for
6 reseeding or paved repair. Chris and I --
7 Chris is my next door neighbor, and I have
8 no problem with reseeding, but I have about
9 ten feet of blacktop that's either in the
10 hole or washed away because of the massive
11 flooding in the past.

12 Paragraph four, hold harmless
13 agreement. My foot. The coverage belongs
14 to the city or now and not me and -- this
15 should be in this agreement should be
16 eliminated.

17 I'm going through the second page of
18 the agreement, the entire page should be
19 eliminated. It has to go. Number one, we
20 are not leasing the property to anyone.
21 Number two, the city wants us to give up all
22 rights for recall or to sue if the company
23 that they hire botches the job and it goes
24 south in a few years. It also states if
25 there is injury while on our property we are

1 liable to the city or the contractor.

2 Number four, if for any reason there is
3 damage to the contractor's property while on
4 site, again, it is our problem. Not going
5 to happen.

6 Now, when I was in business I had to
7 provide workmens' compensation for all
8 employees. That's the law. So this only
9 shows someone has no clue as to proper
10 procedures upstairs. The contractor must
11 provide enough insurance, that is liability
12 and comprehensive, to cover damages if any
13 occur of. Again, this is mandated by law to
14 perform work in this city.

15 If Legal Department in this city
16 does not get with the program, as they have
17 stated they have 60 days to complete their
18 date started June 28, then I guess I have no
19 recourse to do something that I did not want
20 to do and I stated here at council, I do not
21 want to sue the city, but I guess my
22 recourse is going to be sue the city and the
23 Sewer Authority if there is nothing done.

24 Gentlemen, there was a lawsuit
25 against the city for \$100,000 back in the

1 90's.

2 MR. WECHSLER: Go ahead.

3 MR. YOUNG: And that lawsuit was
4 settled and won by the plaintiff. This
5 person only had the problem for four or five
6 years, not 47 years, and if there is any
7 further estimates needed I certainly would
8 like to have a complete copy of these
9 estimates for comparison because I know what
10 I got and I don't know what else is going to
11 be given. I'm sorry, gentlemen, but thank
12 you for your time.

13 MR. EVANS: Thank you. Attorney
14 Minora, can you do us a favor by next week
15 can you review the letter that was sent to
16 Mr. Young? How I'm confused is they seem to
17 be putting all the liability on him, and if
18 we hire a contractor the contractor should
19 have all of the liability insurance for all
20 of the work he does on-site, so if we could
21 take look at that and find out.

22 MR. MINORA: I'll review it.

23 MR. EVANS: Thank you.

24 MR. WECHSLER: Ron Ellman.

25 MR. ELLMAN: Hello, gentlemen. I'm

1 going to read something so I don't make too
2 many mistakes. My friend Bob Benke was
3 murdered over two years on Wyoming Boulevard
4 by a speeding car and according to
5 witnesses -- well, a witness that I talked
6 to, no attempt was made to avoid or stop
7 with, you know, like, skid marks. My friend
8 through his cane up at the last couple of
9 seconds so you could just imagine the terror
10 that went through his mind knowing this was
11 going to happen. This is a terrible
12 occurrence.

13 And what about the charges? None.
14 Nothing done about this and in over two
15 years. Mr. Quinn, I think he was from
16 Honesdale or someplace out of town, he just
17 figured this is being swept under the rug
18 and it has been. This is inexcusable.
19 Mr. Benke attended the little church on
20 Olive Street and they had services and took
21 up a collection to bury him. Nothing was
22 said from his family. Nothing to contribute
23 to his burial. It's inexcusable the way
24 this went off. This man was treated like
25 roadkill or something by this city, by the

1 DA's Office. I phoned twice and the lady at
2 the desk told me I'm not a member of the
3 family, this is none of my concern and hung
4 up two times. That's our tax dollars at
5 work. You shouldn't have to be a member of
6 the family to have something done about this
7 to be able to talk to someone about it.

8 In the paper it seemed like the
9 newspaper tried to portray him as a homeless
10 panhandler. This couldn't be further from
11 the truth. I have known this man for almost
12 15 years and he always had an apartment. He
13 used to watch television and talk about
14 politics when I'd see him. He had an
15 income. He was like thousands of people in
16 this city, but he is being treated, like I
17 said, it's being swept under the rug. As
18 far as I'm concerned, Mr. Quinn slaughtered
19 my friend and nothing, nothing is being done
20 about it from this D.A.'s Office.

21 You know, they got so many people in
22 there working that they step on each other's
23 toes and I got to be told it's none of my
24 concern when I'm asking about it debt like
25 this. This is unconscionable. Well, you

1 want to know where I'm going, to Mr. Benke
2 was a citizen of this city and deserves some
3 kind of justice. This needs to be brought
4 to Court. It's deliberately being avoided
5 being brought to Court. How would anybody
6 out there, how would any of you want if
7 there was an incident like this related to
8 your family to have it whitewashed like
9 this, never brought to Court because of
10 financial status of these people compared to
11 Mr. Benke.

12 We used to call him Flea Market Bob
13 because I used to see him at rummage sales
14 and he used to buy western books all the
15 time. Very good man. Always had nice words
16 to say, he didn't even used to bad mouth the
17 councils when we'd talk or the mayor and
18 always was congenial, and if this murder,
19 and that's what it was, if this murder isn't
20 addressed immediately I will go to
21 Harrisburg in my car and see Mrs. Kane or
22 somebody but I'm not going to let it drop,
23 and nobody should let the death of somebody
24 in this city drop by a speeding car going
25 twice what the posted speed limit is on

1 Wyoming. I guess you people -- well, not
2 you people, I guess the DA's Office is
3 waiting for the young lady that witnessed
4 this, unfortunately, to drop dead from old
5 age, and I wish council could do something,
6 I don't what, but I wish council could do
7 something that bring this before the people
8 and the courts. Thank you.

9 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you,
10 Mr. Ellman. Anyone else?

11 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,
12 citizen of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians, a
13 lot of people have been stopping me and
14 asking about the parking agreement. I told
15 them I'm not a lawyer, I can't actually tell
16 you what legally should be done about this
17 parking agreement, but if you find that it
18 bothers you so much I explained you should
19 contact the federal officials. You should
20 contact the Auditor General. You should
21 contract the Attorney General and ask them
22 to look at this contract and then you will
23 get an answer, but I cannot give you an
24 answer. I don't like many of your
25 provisions in this contract, whether it's

1 legal or not legal that's up to the Courts
2 to decide, not mine. Like you keep saying,
3 you are not lawyers and neither am I, but to
4 give up \$150 million over the life of this
5 contract isn't very smart.

6 In the paper today they said you
7 won't get a penny from this deal until
8 almost 20 years from now before they might
9 have money to be able to give out. How you
10 can say this is nonprofit is beyond me, but,
11 obviously the Courts have to decide what is
12 a profit and what is nonprofit. If they
13 decided it's a profit then the city, state
14 and federal government will get a share of
15 whatever is generated. If they decided it's
16 a nonprofit then we are all at a loss and we
17 have to come up with another \$150 million or
18 maybe \$200 million down the line to make up
19 for this contract.

20 But, like I said, to the people, I
21 don't like it but there isn't much I can do
22 about it. You could if it bothered you so
23 much do it. Go contact your state
24 officials, federal officials and let them
25 look into this contract. I'm sure there is

1 a lot of things in this contract that the
2 state doesn't like or the federal government
3 may not like or the Attorney General might
4 like. Namely, money that belongs and should
5 come to the city isn't coming, or to the
6 state or to the federal government. How
7 they can ever decide to lease our garages to
8 a nonprofit is beyond me.

9 Like I said before, there is so many
10 things that stand out as a red flag this
11 these contracts that only a state, federal
12 commission can look into it and really say
13 whether it's above board or below board, and
14 I'm sorry to say that's what should be done.
15 Whether you believe in it or not believe in
16 it, the people of Scranton have to believe
17 in it and they don't. Thank you.

18 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

19 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening, Marie
20 Schumacher. Since completion of the full
21 year of Lackawanna County property
22 transactions in mid-March, 730 properties
23 have been transacted of which 177 or 24
24 percent were Scranton properties. Keep in
25 mind I believe we have a 46 percent of the

1 properties in the county. Of these 177
2 Scranton transactions, 42 percent were sold
3 below the common level ratio. Think about
4 that, gentlemen. 42 percent of those
5 transactions below the CLR. We have not
6 only lost our parking assets, but we also
7 have also lost significant property value in
8 addition to other losses, which I'll address
9 sometime before your break, I hope.

10 Mr. Rogan, will you be providing the
11 number and locations of the No.16-99
12 demolitions currently out for bid during
13 Fifth Order as I requested?

14 MR. ROGAN: I have it on my to-do
15 list, I do have to do that prior to the
16 meeting, but I didn't forget it.

17 MS. SCHUMACHER: What about the
18 rental registration? I was upset to hear
19 tonight in the meeting that rental
20 registration is being canned and being
21 kicked down the alley one more time.

22 MR. ROGAN: Well, it's not being
23 kicked down the alley, Councilman Evans and
24 myself have been actively working on this
25 for quite awhile and we want to see it done

1 more than anyone.

2 MR. EVANS: If you what know
3 happened was we asked Director Hinton for
4 one last input into this, he gave us the
5 input and now we are meshing that with the
6 ordinance that we have. That's where we're
7 at.

8 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, I'll tell
9 you, you have gone and gotten emergency
10 certificates how many times? Probably you
11 guys hold a record, you could still do it in
12 July.

13 MR. EVANS: That's true. That's a
14 possibility.

15 MS. SCHUMACHER: Until waiting until
16 September. Mr. Gaughan, during Fifth Order
17 will be please provide the increase in the
18 recycled materials since we added a person
19 to DPW for that purpose?

20 MR. GAUGHAN: I don't have that
21 information with me tonight, but I can get
22 it.

23 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. Next week?

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Hopefully.

25 MS. SCHUMACHER: I thought that

1 person was supposed to come in for a caucus
2 and brief us.

3 MR. GAUGHAN: Right, they gave us
4 a-- Dave Bulzoni gave us a report and an
5 update, I think I read that maybe three or
6 four weeks ago, I don't exactly know what
7 happened with her coming in for a caucus.
8 I'm sure we can try and schedule that.

9 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay, but you will
10 hopefully have the numbers next week, and
11 then what about when the storm drain at
12 Snook Street and Seymour and the corroded
13 drain pipe that that drain goes into that it
14 feeds be corrected?

15 MR. GAUGHAN: I don't. I sent it
16 along to the DPW and I have not heard back.

17 MS. SCHUMACHER: How many follow-up
18 calls have you made?

19 MR. GAUGHAN: One.

20 MS. SCHUMACHER: Maybe you want to
21 increase that number. That's a dangerous.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Keep in mind, I
23 understand that it's dangerous, but keep in
24 mind all I could do is say, "Here's the
25 problem." I can't make them go out and do

1 it because they don't work for me,
2 unfortunately, but I am trying to get the
3 situation resolved.

4 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay.

5 Mr. Wechsler, would you please provide the
6 initiation cost of that Court award bond?

7 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

8 MS. SCHUMACHER: There is an
9 issuance cost, how much was that?

10 MR. WECHSLER: I will get it for
11 you. I don't have all of the information up
12 here on my table.

13 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. And, also,
14 could you please provide the dates of the
15 four executive sessions that were held on
16 the parking assets lease?

17 MR. WECHSLER: We'll have to have
18 Mrs. Reed go back and check.

19 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay, whatever, I
20 would like to have those dates, thank you.
21 Mr. Evans, you have advocated against
22 replacing the business privilege and
23 mercantile taxes with a payroll tax until
24 the business privilege and I call it B-Po
25 collections have been increased, would you

1 please share the dollar amount of those
2 taxes that would satisfy you?

3 MR. EVANS: As far the increase is
4 concerned you mean?

5 MS. SCHUMACHER: Uh-huh. What
6 level?

7 MR. EVANS: Well, basically how it's
8 worded now is effective January 2018 is when
9 we want to go over to the payroll tax, so
10 whatever it is at that point in time is what
11 it is so it doesn't matter what it is. If
12 it's 25 percent increase or 50 percent
13 increase, we are going to cut it over, at
14 least that's my idea of what's going to
15 happen.

16 MS. SCHUMACHER: Why not 2017?

17 MR. EVANS: We are not ready to do
18 it.

19 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. I'll hold
20 the granddaddy for next week.

21 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening. Dave
22 Dobrzyn, resident. I didn't bring anything
23 with me, but please call your Congressman
24 and tell them to cancel the Transpacific
25 partnership. If they're Republican, tell

1 them you are sick and tired of being called
2 a 47 percenter. If they are Democrat, tell
3 them you are still waiting for that
4 government cheese that they promised many
5 years ago, and the free computer service so
6 you can sit at home and the money will be
7 given back.

8 Once again, keep in mind "Free
9 Lunch", a book by David K. Johnston, how the
10 wealthiest people stick the average jerk
11 with the bill. There is also another book
12 "Perfectly Legal," that's on taxes, and one
13 of the punch lines in the book is that if
14 you applied for earned income tax credit,
15 which is for working poor people signed by
16 Ronald Reagan, nonetheless, you're 56 times
17 more likely to be audited by the IRS. And
18 then there is a "Fine Print", which is kind
19 of the vague, it's about some crummy
20 business practices and lack of regulation on
21 railroads and so forth.

22 I have been wanting to do this for
23 awhile and we talked about a vibrant
24 downtown and everything and, of course, we
25 have been though all kinds of consternation

1 over the whole works and Steamtown, our
2 museum, stands ignored by city government at
3 this time. I have asked in the past through
4 several councils to at least send -- lobby
5 the powers that be, your senators and
6 congressmen, to get some money to them.
7 They have been frozen since 1992 at 5.2
8 million operating and then they were
9 sequestered 10 percent of that two years in
10 a row so that puts them down, you know,
11 close to another million dollars, then they
12 have projects that aren't being completed
13 and I'm the only one that can speak on this,
14 we can't get somebody from the park over
15 here because they are not allowed to, they
16 are federal employees, so they cannot
17 discussion the park with you, but it was
18 supposed to be a jewel of our downtown,
19 attract all of these people, restaurants on
20 hotels and some of their equipment, mainly
21 the steam engines have been off the tracks
22 and in the repair garages, quite frankly,
23 too long.

24 Now, the last statement on the
25 Parking Authority that I hope to make,

1 mistakes were probably made, but -- with
2 default, but there are two garages that
3 should have never been built. They should
4 have been refurbished. We tore them down
5 after spending a lot of money studying them
6 and our former mayor was really big on
7 studies. Another thing that came to mind, a
8 few years ago the animal refuge up at Nay
9 Aug was told they were going to have to move
10 and a guy brought some little animals in
11 here to show council, it might have been
12 pre-Janet Evans council, and they told me
13 that the mayor had pledged \$50,000 a year
14 for three years and instead spent the money,
15 \$50,000 a year three years plus another 25
16 for the fourth year on a study of the
17 feasibility of having wildlife refuge at Nay
18 Aug. Well, now, it is only hearsay, but I
19 don't think the man was lying and if that's
20 true shame, for shame. So, you know, some
21 people aren't the sense that the newspapers
22 and whomever decide, Chamber of Commerce,
23 whomever decide to put them out.

24 And also, on info from the mayor, if
25 you think you have problems with

1 Mr. Courtright, who is nothing compared to
2 -- there were done deals that council had no
3 information on and it was hurry up and pass
4 this and because it's going to be a problem.
5 Thank you and have a good night.

6 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you. Anyone
7 else?

8 MR. MCKEON: Hi. Good evening. Don
9 McKeon, resident. My concerns are very few,
10 I'm just here, I want to build on what Joan
11 said about being complimentary to the city
12 on a lot of the paving that's been done so
13 far, and especially in the downtown area,
14 and that's primarily my concern here. A lot
15 of my concerns are really cosmetic in nature
16 and probably could be addressed quite
17 easily, but there is certain things that I
18 don't -- image is very important, we want to
19 present our city as being very clean and as
20 beautiful as possible, and I think there is
21 some effort that's needed in our immediate
22 downtown area just to make a better
23 impression, and I'll just give a few
24 examples.

25 I know that for the past few years

1 anyway, Scranton Tomorrow used to plant
2 flowers on the islands on Mulberry Street,
3 and I guess they decided they weren't going
4 to be able to do that anymore so right now
5 they are pretty much covered with weeds and,
6 of course, that's a very negative impression
7 from anyone entering our city from Mulberry
8 Street. A lot of the trees that line the
9 streets on Lackawanna, Wyoming especially,
10 first and second hundred block are either
11 dead or dying and they are not replaced, you
12 know, very quickly, so that makes a negative
13 impression.

14 That, I don't know what you would
15 call it, it's some kind of a round enclosure
16 over some utility boxes in the 700 block of
17 Wyoming Avenue. It's a dome-type structure
18 that's been marred with graffiti for a long
19 time. I know in the past DPW would on
20 occasion paint over it, it hasn't been done
21 in a long time, but it's very noticeable.
22 That whole block in the 200 block, I don't
23 have to tell you, is in need of
24 redevelopment. I don't know if anyone
25 actually is looking into that concern, I

1 mean, there are missing bricks in the
2 sidewalks, missing benches, busted street
3 lamps, but I don't read about anything, you
4 know, happening to try and address that.
5 It's probably the worst looking block really
6 in all of downtown. Many of the lampposts
7 have been replaced and look really good so I
8 think that should be addressed.

9 And speaking of graffiti, I just
10 noticed this, it may be a very recent thing,
11 but coming into town from Moosic Street
12 going on the viaduct under the bridge there
13 is a huge tag, that must have just happened,
14 with the statement, "We are the kids who run
15 this town." Now, I hope that, you know,
16 proper people have been notified of that and
17 that's obviously as you enter into the city,
18 the downtown, that's what you are seeing.
19 It's a huge tag with that statement, and
20 also some of the concrete barriers along
21 there are tagged in the same way.

22 And then just coming here tonight I
23 pulled into the alleyway here and the
24 building that formerly housed Tink's, which
25 has been renovated, has a huge tag visible

1 on the side of the building. So that's
2 always been a pet peeve of mine --

3 MR. EVANS: Don, as you know, as
4 well as I -- Don, over here. Don.

5 MR. MCKEON: Where?

6 MR. EVANS: Right over here.

7 MR. MCKEON: Oh, I'm sorry.

8 MR. EVANS: No, it's hard to hear,
9 but I know you as well as anybody that the
10 city has an ordinance against graffiti
11 that's on private property.

12 MR. MCKEON: Oh, I know.

13 MR. EVANS: So that has to be
14 enforced by LIPS and the property owner is
15 obligated to take it off in a certain time
16 frame and they have to go out and make that
17 happen.

18 MR. MCKEON: Right, and I understand
19 how that works, I'm just bringing it to your
20 attention to make sure that you guys are
21 aware of and that, you know, make sure that
22 it is addressed in the proper fashion, you
23 know, especially, again, anywhere but
24 primarily when it's downtown, you know, we
25 have to be conscious of the image that we

1 set and I think we need to address it as
2 quickly as possible so there are really
3 beautification things, you know, some of
4 them can be remedied quite quickly, but I
5 don't know if there an active downtown
6 business group that even, you know,
7 addresses those type of things, and maybe
8 you guys can answer that, but I don't really
9 know. So that's my primary concern and
10 possibly you could just, you know, forward
11 that to the appropriate people, okay.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: We definitely will.
13 Thank you.

14 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you. Anyone
15 else?

16 MS. REED: FIFTH ORDER. 5-A.
17 MOTIONS.

18 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Perry?

19 MR. PERRY: Really all I have this
20 week is just, again, to gloat on the city's
21 paving project. It's getting -- I mean,
22 paving potholes have been a problem in our
23 city for quite awhile and in the rustbelt
24 part of country and everywhere, we are no
25 different, but just to see so many streets

1 get done so quickly is something that I
2 haven't seen in my lifetime, so I'm very
3 happy about that. And even on a more
4 personal level, Kane Street which if anybody
5 is familiar runs from Colliery Avenue to
6 Stafford Avenue up to the post office is in
7 Minooka section where I grew up was always
8 an issue, always an issue, and for 45 years
9 that street went without any maintenance
10 whatsoever and every now and then you would
11 see somebody drive out and put some cold
12 patch in it, but it got so bad the cemetery
13 had limited access because Kane Street was
14 the main inroad, and, I mean, when I drove
15 by and saw that getting milled the other day
16 I was floored. Even though I saw it on the
17 project list, you know, it's one thing to
18 see it on a project list and then another
19 thing to actually see it happen.

20 So, again, I can't say enough good
21 things about this paving project that we
22 have and I hope that we continue with going
23 forward. That's all I have this week.

24 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

25 Mr. Rogan?

1 MR. ROGAN: Two brief items. As
2 Mr. Perry mentioned, I also brought up last
3 week the paving, over the last month I have
4 probably had more compliments from residents
5 regarding street being paved than I had on
6 my entire time on council and I think a big
7 part of that is because in past decades the
8 downtown, although much money was bumped
9 into the downtown for other items, the
10 paving was always neglected, so it is great
11 to see paving come to the downtown. There
12 is much more that needs to be done and
13 hopefully next year we'll be able to find
14 more money to do even more paving.

15 Secondly, Mr. Dobrzyn brought this
16 up a number of times, and I agree, with my
17 colleagues' agreement, would we be in favor
18 of sending a letter to Congressman
19 Cartright, Senator Casey and Senator Toomey
20 asking for increased funding for the
21 Steamtown National historic site. It really
22 is a hidden gem in the City of Scranton that
23 many Scrantonians don't even know it's there
24 or they haven't stopped by to see it. If
25 you love history the way I do, definitely

1 put that on your to-do list along with the
2 coal mine tour and many of the other great
3 historical items that are in the city, but
4 with my colleagues' agreement if we could
5 send that letter to request that increase in
6 funding. And that is all. Thank you.

7 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

8 Mr. Evans?

9 MR. EVANS: Thank you. A couple of
10 things, first of all, I want to clarify the
11 transfer from the mercantile business
12 privilege tax to the payroll tax, one of the
13 issues is the fact that it was discovered
14 that the school district was not a part of
15 this and we want to get the school district
16 to be part of it because they are the
17 predominant taxpayer when it comes to these
18 nuisance taxes so Senator Blake is working
19 on that with some of his colleagues to get
20 the legislation that we need to allow the
21 school district to participate so we can
22 roll the entire business privilege and
23 mercantile tax over at the same time.

24 As far as what Mr. McKeon said, I
25 know I have had conversations with several

1 downtown business owners about creating a
2 business improvement district downtown that
3 would be properly funded that would allow
4 for some employees and some volunteers that
5 would go out in the day and clean the
6 streets and sweep up and plant flowers and
7 eradicate graffiti, so that conversation is
8 ongoing so hopefully that will be something
9 that will happen in the near future.

10 But I'd also like to comment on some
11 positive things that happened over the
12 weekend, or last week. First of all, I want
13 to thank the young person by the name of
14 Allison from Moses Taylor Hospital who took
15 time out of her day to attach a note at the
16 yarn bombing at the Harrison Avenue bridge.
17 She just wanted to tell those involved with
18 the project that every time she drives by
19 back and forth from work that it just cheers
20 her up every day so she took the time to do
21 and leave the note for those who were
22 involved in that project so I thought that
23 was very, very nice of her.

24 And a big thank you to the county
25 and the city and all of the sponsors that

1 made the July 3 celebration on courthouse
2 square such a success. Now, I spent the
3 evening with approximately 10,000 friends
4 and family and strangers on a beautiful
5 summer night that collectively listened to
6 patriotic music by the great Northeastern
7 Philharmonic and saw a fantastic fireworks
8 display, so as we celebrated our country's
9 independence day.

10 And then just yesterday I attended
11 the unveiling of the little free library at
12 Connors Park in South Side so I'd like thank
13 and recognize Bill Moran who designed, built
14 and donated the Dr. Who inspired tardis to
15 be used for the free library, it really is
16 something special, and to Bob Gattens from
17 the Friends of Connors Park, and Katie
18 Carney from UNC who took that idea and ran
19 with it and brought it to completion, as
20 well as Mayor Connors and Susie Connors who
21 were the first in line with bags full of
22 books to donate for the little free library
23 in South Side. Too often we live in a
24 community that can be dominated by negative
25 comments and negative thoughts. We need to

1 know and enforce the idea that there are so
2 many great people out in our community doing
3 great and positive things each and every day
4 without fanfare just quietly trying to make
5 Scranton a better place. So my comments
6 this evening mostly dedicated to them.

7 But one final comment, if I may, I
8 was struck by Chris Kelly's article about
9 Ozzie Quinn the other day. First of all,
10 Ozzie, if you are watching all of the best
11 and get well soon, our thoughts are with
12 you. Secondly, Ozzie in many ways embodies
13 what Scrantonians are all about. Here is a
14 man literally fighting for his life, himself
15 and for his family but at 79 years old he is
16 fighting for us to because all he really
17 wants to do is get back to work helping his
18 city and helping his beloved Hill Section
19 neighborhood. So thank you, Ozzie, for all
20 you have done and the past and all of you
21 are going to do in the future. That's all I
22 have tonight. Thank you.

23 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

24 Mr. Gaughan.

25 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, thank you, just a

1 few items. First of all, over the last
2 month and a half we have received several
3 stop sign requests so I would like to just
4 run through a few of them. We received
5 determinations from the city engineer. Aker
6 Avenue a stop sign was requested. The 900
7 and 1000 blocks of Aker Avenue are being
8 recommended to be designated as a one-way
9 going southbound so we should see an
10 ordinance on that soon.

11 The 1100 and 1200 blocks to the
12 Taylor line will remain a two-way road so
13 that was approved.

14 The stop sign request for Prospect
15 and Fig Street that was denied by the city
16 engineer and also Capouse and Woodlawn a
17 stop sign request was also denied.

18 We received a request for a light
19 that was out at Sheraton Place and North
20 Garfield Avenue so we had sent that along to
21 the DPW and Walsh Electric.

22 Also, I received numerous calls
23 about a vacant lot in the 600 block of Beech
24 Street that is overgrown, has various
25 materials stored on it, neighbors are very

1 concerned so we sent that along to Licensing
2 Inspection.

3 Also, have received and have been
4 receiving since I have been on council not
5 so much complaints, but requests that we try
6 to do a better job coordinating the street
7 cleaning schedule so that residents know
8 when that machine will be on their street.
9 Many people are unaware when the street
10 sweeper will be coming on their street and
11 they leave their cars in front of their
12 homes so my suggestion was when I first was
13 on council, and has been to the mayor and
14 his administration, to post signage on
15 telephone polls or maybe do robo calls which
16 are relatively cheap to the residents
17 wherever the street sweeper is going to be
18 because it would make sense to give the
19 people operating these machines more room to
20 clean curb to curb, and just a remainder
21 that the street cleaning schedule is posted
22 on the city's website in anyone wants to
23 take a look.

24 Also, received concerns from
25 neighbors in East Mountain about catch

1 basins being covered with debris and
2 dangerous intersection of Meadow Avenue and
3 River Street so we will pass that along.
4 Also, if my colleagues would be in agreement
5 I would like before we recess in August to
6 present a proclamation to Mia Nonneberg, a
7 North Scranton resident and swimmer for the
8 University of Alabama. She has been in the
9 paper recently and she competed and did
10 extremely well in the US Olympic trials so I
11 do think we should honor her for
12 representing the city so well. And that's
13 all I have this week. Thank you.

14 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you,
15 Mr. Gaughan just a follow-up on some of the
16 comments that have been made. The event on
17 the third of July was just a fantastic event
18 for the people of our area. As Mr. Evans
19 stated, there was thousands of people
20 downtown and I did not see one problem. I
21 didn't see any nonsense at all. It was a
22 great family event and I think everyone that
23 was involved in it should be very, very
24 proud of what they did.

25 I understand that there will be

1 several films shown this year, Scranton
2 Tomorrow is putting on a program, they have
3 invested in some quality movies, I think
4 Star Wars is going to be shown on the
5 courthouse square, so these family events
6 are what we are about and we hear so much
7 problems with the city, these things are
8 working.

9 I also attended the mayor's Fourth
10 of July ceremony at Nay Aug Park. There
11 were more people there than normal, but not
12 as many as should be there. I take great
13 pride in going to these and being able to
14 celebrate these events with our veterans.
15 They do such a great job and they are very
16 loyal to the country and to the city and to
17 themselves as a whole and they are
18 dwindling, a dwindling lot, so if you ever
19 have a chance I think you should participate
20 in one of these ceremonies and just shake
21 the hand of the men and women who have been
22 out there and done it for us before.

23 Over the past two months we have
24 been talking about the unpaid garbage fees
25 in the city. We have been contacting

1 Northeastern Revenue Service and through the
2 work of the administration and council
3 legislation has been passed that we are able
4 to start filing liens against people who
5 don't pay their garbage fees. Right now
6 liens have been filed for the years of 2011,
7 through 2013. The number that I was
8 provided was 2,420 liens that were filed
9 with the city with the Clerk of Judicial
10 Records last week. People who are on the
11 lien list will be getting copies in the
12 mail. The total dollar value represented by
13 these liens is \$1,400,068 which is a huge
14 amount of money for a city like our own. We
15 are very limited in what we can do in terms
16 of collecting these, but I'm very happy,
17 very proud that this council and
18 administration has taken these steps to make
19 everybody pay the garbage fee. Everyone
20 that's up here has paid their fee, people at
21 home and here everybody pays and then I do
22 think that it's only fair that people pay
23 theirs.

24 This is something that we are going
25 to continue to keep doing. There is going

1 to be another group for the 2014 and 2015
2 and for people that don't pay that those
3 liens will be filed and be completed by the
4 end of the year. So, once again, I am very
5 happy to say that we are trying to do our
6 best and make sure that everybody takes care
7 of their responsibility. And that's all I
8 have tonight.

9 MS. REED: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION -
10 A RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND
11 OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE
12 AND ENTER INTO AN ADDENDUM TO THE CONTRACT
13 BETWEEN THE CITY OF SCRANTON AND THE
14 EFFICIENCY NETWORK, INC. (TEN) AS ENERGY
15 SERVICES COMPANY (ESCO) FOR THE CITY OF
16 SCRANTON STREET LIGHTING IMPROVEMENT
17 PROJECT.

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

21 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

22 MR. EVANS: Second.

23 MR. WECHSLER: On the question?

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question.

25 This is just simply to provide clarification

1 and details on this project. We are -- this
2 company is guaranteeing roughly around
3 4\$50,000 in utility savings each year. We
4 are also -- this company is going to be
5 replacing 6,178 fixtures with LED lights
6 throughout the city, 51 fixtures are going
7 to be added and 276 poles in the downtown
8 will be refurbished. Thank you.

9 MR. WECHSLER: All those in favor of
10 introduction signify by saying aye.

11 MR. PERRY: Aye.

12 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

13 MR. EVANS: Aye.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

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

17 MS. REED: SIXTH ORDER. 6-A. NO
18 BUSINESS AT THIS TIME.

19 SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A.

20 FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE
21 ON RULES FOR ADOPTION - RESOLUTION NO. 51,
22 2016 - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER
23 APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE AND
24 ENTER INTO A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CONTRACT
25 WITH LABELLA ASSOCIATES, P.C. FORMERLY CECO

1 ASSOCIATES TO SERVE AS CITY ENGINEER FOR THE
2 CITY OF SCRANTON FOR THE PERIOD OF TWO (2)
3 YEARS FROM JUNE 15, 2016 THROUGH MAY 31,
4 2018.

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

8 MR. ROGAN: Second.

9 MR. WECHSLER: On the question?
10 Roll call, please?

11 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Perry.

12 MR. PERRY: Yes.

13 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Rogan.

14 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

15 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Evans.

16 MR. EVANS: Yes.

17 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Gaughan.

18 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

19 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Wechsler.

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

23 MS. REED: 7-B. FOR CONSIDERATION BY
24 THE COMMITTEE ON RULES FOR ADOPTION -
25 RESOLUTION NO. 52, 2016 - APPOINTMENT OF

1 AARON W. WHITNEY, 200 WATRES DRIVE,
2 SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA, 18505, AS A MEMBER
3 OF THE MUNICIPAL INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT
4 AUTHORITY (MIDAS), EFFECTIVE JUNE 24, 2016.
5 MR. WHITNEY IS BEING APPOINTED TO A TWO (2)
6 YEAR TERM THAT WILL EXPIRE ON JUNE 24, 2018.

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

10 MR. ROGAN: Second.

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

13 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Perry.

14 MR. PERRY: Yes.

15 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Rogan.

16 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

17 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Evans.

18 MR. EVANS: Yes.

19 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Gaughan.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

21 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Wechsler.

22 MR. WECHSLER: Yes. I hereby
23 declare Item 7-B legally and lawfully
24 adopted. If there is no further business,
25 I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

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MR. ROGAN: Motion to adjourn.

MR. WECHSLER: Meeting adjourned.

C E R T I F I C A T E

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

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER