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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

HELD:

Thursday, October 26, 2017

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
- KATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK
- AMIL MINORA, ESQUIRE - SOLICITOR

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

3 MR. WECHSLER: Roll call, please.

4 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

5 MR. PERRY: Here.

6 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

7 MR. ROGAN: Here.

8 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

9 MR. EVANS: Here.

10 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Here.

12 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

13 MR. WECHSLER: Here. This evening  
14 we are going to have the great privilege if  
15 issuing a proclamation to the family of  
16 Frank Naughton. Will the family please come  
17 down to the front of the room. I also would  
18 like, there is three former city clerks here  
19 as well if they would like to come down as  
20 well. We have John Pocius, Jim Wintermantle  
21 and Kay Garvey who are also here to show  
22 their respects for Mr. Naughton.

23 "WHEREAS, the COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF  
24 SCRANTON is desirous of honoring "FRANK J.  
25 NAUGHTON" for this years of service to

1 SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL as the CITY CLERK; and

2 WHEREAS, "MR. NAUGHTON" was married  
3 for 64 years to his wife Alice until his  
4 passing on July 12, 2017. He and Alice are  
5 the parents of five children - Jim, Mary  
6 Alice, Tim, Nancy, and Erin, and sixteen  
7 grandchildren; and

8 WHEREAS, "MR. NAUGHTON" began his  
9 career with the City on October 14, 1968  
10 during the administration of MAYOR JAMES J.  
11 WALSH, and;

12 WHEREAS, "MR. NAUGHTON" had  
13 dedicated himself to the Office of City  
14 Council/City Clerk and has served with  
15 numerous City Councilpersons; and

16 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by  
17 the Members of Scranton City Council that on  
18 Thursday, October 16, 2017, the Council  
19 wishes to honor Mr. Naughton by naming the  
20 City Clerk's Office on the second floor of  
21 the Municipal Building, the "FRANK J.  
22 NAUGHTON - CITY CLERK'S OFFICE" as grateful  
23 recognition of his outstanding  
24 contributions.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this

1 Proclamation be made a permanent part of the  
2 Minutes of this Council, as lasting tribute  
3 to "FRANK J. NAUGHTON".

4 When we heard of Mr. Naughton's  
5 passing, we thought we wanted to find a way  
6 to honor him because of the great work that  
7 he has done. I'm on council four years and  
8 we are still talking about Mr. Naughton's  
9 great contributions to the city. Many of  
10 the procedures and processes that we still  
11 follow were established by Mr. Naughton and  
12 they haven't changed because if Frank did  
13 it, Frank did it right and that we still  
14 follow today. And, thank you, he will never  
15 will be forgotten in this council office.  
16 Thank you.

17 MR. POCIUS: Would it be out of line  
18 if I would like to just say a few words?

19 MR. POCIUS: Sure, go ahead.

20 MR. POCIUS: Everyone here, I had  
21 the privilege of working for Mr. Frank  
22 Naughton for eight years, my first eight  
23 years on city council. Mr. Naughton knew  
24 more about city government, the Home Rule  
25 Charter and any vestige of knowledge he

1           would have. He didn't always agree with us  
2           and we didn't always agree with Frank, but  
3           if you did it his way it was the right way,  
4           and I say to this day I talk to many city  
5           clerks in my later years on council and even  
6           to the clerks after I left council and they  
7           would call me with questions and I would say  
8           if Frank Naughton -- find something that  
9           Frank Naughton did was similar and follow  
10          that down to the exact science and you will  
11          have a perfect ordinance that's  
12          unchallengeable.

13                         Frank was a great man. He served  
14          under a lot of mayors and a lot of different  
15          councilmen, but he should be proud of this  
16          honor because there will never be another  
17          one like him. Great people pass through,  
18          Jimmy, Kay and Lori, but Frank was one of a  
19          kind. He set the plate for himself. I  
20          appreciate the opportunity to say these kind  
21          words to you people and it comes from the  
22          bottom of my heart. I really, really  
23          appreciate all you did for the city because  
24          his heart and his head were always in the  
25          right place and it was for the City of

1 Scranton, it's citizens and taxpayers.

2 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you for coming,  
3 everyone. Dispense with the reading of the  
4 minutes.

5 MS. REED: THIRD ORDER. 3-A.  
6 AGENDA FOR CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
7 HELD OCTOBER 25, 2017.

8 MR. WECHSLER: Are there any  
9 comments? If not, received and filed.

10 MS. REED: 3-B. TAX ASSESSOR'S  
11 RESULTS REPORT FOR HEARING DATE HELD OCTOBER  
12 12, 2017.

13 MR. WECHSLER: Are there any  
14 comments? If not, received and filed.

15 Do any council members have  
16 announcements at this time?

17 MR. PERRY: Yes, I have two  
18 announcements to make. The first  
19 announcement is for Alex Hero's. I spoke a  
20 little bit, and also Councilman Rogan did  
21 last week, Officer Hallock was diagnosed  
22 with a rare form of leukemia and he has wife  
23 and a brand new baby boy and we are having a  
24 fundraiser for him. It's going to be  
25 Saturday, November 18. It's going to be

1 from 6 to 10. It's going to be at the  
2 Scranton/Dunmore FOP Lodge which is on 401  
3 Railroad Street in Scranton. It's \$15 a  
4 person. It includes food, beverage and it  
5 will be the regular novelties, baskets,  
6 50/50, t-shirts, bracelet sales. Chris is a  
7 great officer who is in time of need and so  
8 is his family and let's show him the support  
9 that he gives us every day when he goes out  
10 on the job and let's be there for him and  
11 his family. Thank you.

12 And one other announcement to make,  
13 as part of a national prescription drug take  
14 back day on October 28 the Scranton Police  
15 -- which is this Saturday, Scranton Police  
16 Department is participating to provide a  
17 convenient, safe and responsible means of  
18 disposing of prescription drugs. Unused or  
19 expired prescription medications may be  
20 brought to police headquarters at 100 s.  
21 Washington Avenue on the 28th from 10 a.m.  
22 to 2 p.m. And, again, this is a national  
23 prescription drug take back day and we all  
24 know what the issues going on right now in  
25 our country and this is a good step to get



1           them off our streets.

2                   MR. EVANS: I have one. There will  
3           be a dedication of the gazebo at Connor's  
4           Park in South Side at 11 a.m. on Saturday.  
5           The gazebo will be formally named for Bob  
6           McGoff at that time. I would urge all of  
7           Bob's many friends to try and attend this  
8           great honor for our friend and colleague,  
9           Bob McGoff.

10                   MR. WECHSLER: According to a  
11           release by PennDOT, the Harrison Avenue  
12           bridge will be closed this weekend as  
13           contractors work on tying in the new bridge  
14           to the new side of the bridge. Closure will  
15           take place from 7 a.m. on Saturday, October  
16           28, to 4 p.m. on Sunday, October 29.  
17           Emergency vehicles will be able to pass  
18           through the work zone with the assistance of  
19           the Scranton Police. A detour will be  
20           posted from Harrison to Spruce to Mulberry.  
21           The new Harrison Avenue bridge is scheduled  
22           to be open to traffic next month with the  
23           old bridge being torn down next year.

24                   Also, please be aware tomorrow that  
25           there will be some road closures within the

1 city due to the funeral of Attorney Mary Ann  
2 Grippo. There will be a procession from  
3 Lackawanna College to the cathedral where  
4 her funeral will be held.

5 A memorial service has been planned  
6 for Congressman Joe McDade this Saturday,  
7 October, 28, at 10 a.m. in the McAliney  
8 ballroom on the first floor of the DeNaples  
9 Center on the campus of the University of  
10 Scranton. The service is open to the  
11 public.

12 I would like to repeat something  
13 that we announced last week about the  
14 recycling of yard waste and the bags. The  
15 Recycling Department has purchased bags for  
16 yard waste and leaves. These bags will be  
17 available at the DPW location on 101 West  
18 Popular Street. These bags are available  
19 now until the supply is exhausted. The pick  
20 up schedule will be as follow:

21 On Monday, they can be picked up  
22 from 2 to 5, on Wednesday they can be picked  
23 up from 2 to 7, and on Thursday they can be  
24 picked up from 2 to 5. There is no charge  
25 for bags. Just show proof of Scranton

1           residency. They will be picked up by the  
2           DPW on your regular trash date starting  
3           November 1, 2017. Any questions please call  
4           570-348-4165.

5                   MS. REED:   FOURTH ORDER.   Citizens'  
6           participation.

7                   MR. WECHSLER:   Before we begin  
8           citizens' participation, I would like to  
9           make a request that comments please be  
10          restricted to agenda items. I'm trying to  
11          discourage political attacks at the podium.  
12          I can't stop you from making them, but  
13          please respect the fact that candidates are  
14          out there doing their best. I don't believe  
15          that it does anyone any good to issue  
16          personal attacks against any of the  
17          candidates, whether you are for them or  
18          against them. So I would respectfully ask  
19          you to keep your comments to agenda items or  
20          policies and please don't issue personal  
21          attacks. It's a reflection on you more than  
22          a reflection on the person that you are  
23          attacking when we ask you not to do that.

24                   Gary St. Fleur.

25                   MR. ST. FLEUR:   Good evening.   My

1 name is Gary S. Fleur, Scranton resident.  
2 Within the past week, a lawsuit was  
3 concluded that concluded the fact that there  
4 was a cap that Scranton has not maintained  
5 at least for the past ten years. This is  
6 along the lines of several lawsuits, one in  
7 which the Sewer Authority posed a question  
8 one in which there is a rental registration  
9 fee, it's also called into question and a  
10 garbage fee. For the next year, if we tally  
11 these lawsuits together the likelihood that  
12 the City of Scranton can be facing upwards  
13 of \$100 million in costs they must recoup or  
14 find some way to pay off.

15 Now, my question or comment is in  
16 light of these things what sort of policies  
17 and strategy could possibly be the case for  
18 the city council or the mayor? If we are  
19 going to be honest, if just one of these  
20 things pans out the city would be out a  
21 functioning budget for the year. For  
22 instance, the Act 51 lawsuit. Part of the  
23 penalty is that they do not collect taxes  
24 past a state cap. The current year loan  
25 hasn't had ten-year overage for the next

1 year we will be able to have \$10 million and  
2 anyone who paid into that cap will have to  
3 be responsible for refunding of up to three  
4 years. Based on my calculation, we are  
5 talking about 30 to 50 million from that  
6 lawsuit alone. Currently the city is  
7 appealing it, spending tax dollars to  
8 attempt to continue to tax the people.

9 It seems that the City of Scranton  
10 is only focused on finding more revenues,  
11 and there's never a discussion of cutting  
12 spending. I know they say they do, but then  
13 I do my research and there is a city called  
14 Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. They have the same  
15 size roughly of Scranton 75,000 people.  
16 When I look into their budget, they somehow  
17 manage to operate their city of 75,000 at  
18 \$72 million, while Scranton required upwards  
19 of \$140 million. So that's basically that  
20 Scranton requires two Bethlehems in order to  
21 operate its city.

22 Now, what are the cost drivers that  
23 are driving the city? What is about the  
24 city that makes it so expensive to live  
25 here? Countless people who work downtown do

1 not live in the city. Businesses flock just  
2 to neighboring places just outside of the  
3 corridor to this city because of the tax  
4 structure. Property investors do not want  
5 to invest in the city because they say even  
6 though the houses are cheap they don't want  
7 to be hit with the taxes or their  
8 improvements because the house languished in  
9 value because they haven't been kept up  
10 because of property taxes.

11 My question or comment to you,  
12 gentlemen, is in all honestly being  
13 forthright and honest what are you going to  
14 do next year? How is not the city -- how is  
15 the city not going to go bankrupt? How is  
16 the city going to do without revenue? If  
17 the sewer deal is reversed that's a \$160  
18 million right there, then you add in the  
19 other lawsuits there is absolutely no way  
20 that the city is not going to into  
21 bankruptcy.

22 Furthermore, within the first  
23 quarter there were two bonds that were  
24 passed in the past 15 years that cannot be  
25 refinanced. That's another \$25 million. If

1 we are going to be honest, gentlemen, if we  
2 are going to be forthright, proper  
3 statesmen, proper public servants, we have  
4 to be honest with people and tell them that  
5 that as things stand the city is definitely  
6 going into bankruptcy, it's just a matter of  
7 when. If the city is to unlawfully tax  
8 people to make it through for the year, if  
9 it needs to bring break laws through garbage  
10 fees or rental registration or shake people  
11 down to make due then it's all an indication  
12 that the city's budget is not sustainable.  
13 Why is Bethlehem help able to run a city  
14 with a population size of Scranton at \$72  
15 million when we need \$140? Where is the  
16 extra \$70 million coming from? What in the  
17 city that requires that? I would love to  
18 know. I'm sure you gentlemen owe the people  
19 of Scranton an answer.

20 In fact, let's lay down the cards  
21 for the next year. If this happens and  
22 these lawsuits come to Scranton's doorstep,  
23 because my lawsuit has already won, what is  
24 the city going to do? Find more revenue  
25 sources? Raise property taxes? Tax the

1 people more? Why can't you cut spending?  
2 Be honest. What about the budget that  
3 requires another \$70 million? More  
4 borrowing, more sale of public assets. What  
5 about the city that requires it? Why can't  
6 you cut spending? Why can't we lower taxes?  
7 Why can't we do the right thing and just  
8 file bankruptcy already? Thank you. Have a  
9 good day.

10 MR. WECHSLER: John Foley.

11 MR. FOLEY: Hello, gentlemen, good  
12 to see you again. I'm struggling with a  
13 cold so if I lose my voice I will end  
14 abruptly. I'd like to make first a couple  
15 of comments, maybe do some fact checking and  
16 then you received letters before I went on  
17 holiday with respect to the union pension  
18 plan, specifically to the recovery plan, but  
19 first a couple of remarks.

20 Everything I know about you guys  
21 leads me to believe that you are honest and  
22 decent individuals, that you have been  
23 elected primarily by your party and with  
24 some help of family and friends. There is  
25 no job description for your positions and as



1 a result many, if not all of you, do not  
2 have the depth and breadth of experience in  
3 significant financial matters or to run a  
4 business the size with the number of  
5 employees in the City of Scranton. So no  
6 different than prior council members you had  
7 to rely on information that you have  
8 received from the mayor and the cast of  
9 players around the mayor, business office  
10 manager, financial advisors and your  
11 lawyers. How is that working out for you?

12 I've sent a number of letters  
13 outlining the problems that I identified  
14 with the city, most of which are on the  
15 Greenridge website, and I will not go  
16 through them again, but least to say there  
17 are number of issues that you need to start  
18 taking into consideration.

19 Now, let me move on. I did a little  
20 fact checking, great article in the Monday  
21 Times on -- I even forget where the mayor  
22 and Jim Mulligan were, but needless to say,  
23 Mulligan said that the Sewer Authority deal  
24 was \$195 million and the net proceeds were  
25 \$183 million. The only dispute I have with

1 that, if somebody had run a cash flow  
2 analysis including the capital expenditures  
3 they would have known that it was not \$195  
4 million deal it was a \$183 million deal.  
5 Just a minor, minor thing. But that tells  
6 me the people who did the transaction knew  
7 or should have known that it was \$183  
8 million deal.

9 I looked at the comments that the  
10 mayor had on Ned Abrahamsen's fees, he said  
11 that the Sewer Authority pay. That they did  
12 not have to go through the bidding process.  
13 Well, I totally disagree. I disagree  
14 because the mayor and I believe Jason  
15 Shrive, who is the former city solicitor,  
16 said that the city hired him. That, yes,  
17 the Sewer Authority did pay Attorney  
18 Abrahamsen, but they paid Attorney  
19 Abrahamsen on behalf of the City of Scranton  
20 so let me put it i simplistic terms. Let's  
21 say the city was supposed to get a million  
22 dollars and the legal fees were \$200,000,  
23 the transaction would have been a million  
24 dollars worth of distribution of the city  
25 and \$200,000 in legal fees. Legal fees are

1 the cities. They are not the Authorities,  
2 even the Authority wrongfully recorded them  
3 on it's books. If there is any disagreement  
4 either -- with anybody in this  
5 administration or any of the advisors I  
6 would be more than happy to go hand-in-hand  
7 to the Pennsylvania Institute of Certified  
8 Public Accounts, of which I'm a member, and  
9 to resolve the issue there, but I don't  
10 believe anybody is going to take me up on  
11 that offer.

12 The recovery plan, I believe is  
13 voluminous, it's weighty, there's a lot of  
14 recommendation in here that will never, ever  
15 be taken into consideration, but they are in  
16 there and have been put into the city over  
17 the last five years, but let me deal with  
18 it. The net income slash deficit for 18  
19 through 20 has been minimized by one  
20 significant reduction in costs, the pension  
21 for the 2017 year is supposed to be \$19  
22 million and each one of the years '18, '19  
23 and '20 it drops to 13 million and the  
24 explanation is the elimination of COLA. Has  
25 anybody bothered to tell you the unions that

1 the only way they are getting -- the city is  
2 going to stabilize is because of the  
3 elimination COLA, no other reason? I think  
4 the union ought to know that because,  
5 frankly, the city negotiated with the union  
6 in good faith and as a result of that the  
7 benefit was provided. The city has an  
8 opportunity to fund the pension plan they  
9 never did. Mulligan said that the tax  
10 increase should have been 26 percent, I  
11 think it should have been much higher than  
12 that and it will be higher than that as you  
13 look into the future.

14 Last thing, Act 11, the trash an  
15 registration fees are going to tank the  
16 city. It will not be a bankruptcy, it  
17 cannot -- Pennsylvania won't allow it. You  
18 will have a receiver in here. The report  
19 issued by PEL is issued June 30, 2017.  
20 Shortly after that, Judge Gibbons ruled  
21 against the city. To my knowledge, PEL has  
22 not stepped to the plate and updated their  
23 report because if they did there would have  
24 to be a fire drill here as to what is going  
25 to happen pending the resolution of that.

1 With that, gentlemen, I am going to the  
2 lake, have dinner with my wife, and I'm  
3 going to take the Irish cure for my cold.

4 MR. WECHSLER: Please drink some for  
5 us, too. Joan Hodowanitz.

6 MS. HODOWANITZ: Joan Hodowanitz,  
7 city resident and taxpayer. I know that the  
8 Scranton School District is a separate  
9 taxing authority, but I read with great  
10 dismay or I started reading the Auditor  
11 General's report. It's 110 pages long, it  
12 is not an easy read mit's appalling. And I  
13 bring it up because in my opinion within a  
14 year the school district is going to be in  
15 receivership whether the city is or not. I  
16 think that's where it's going. I think  
17 whether or not that happens they are going  
18 to have to raise taxes substantially and I  
19 think that combination of factors is going  
20 to impact on the city's credit rating and  
21 it's going to cast a pall over bringing  
22 business in the city. If I were a business  
23 person, I wouldn't want to come here and  
24 send my kids to the Scranton school  
25 district. I'm sorry, no offense to you,

1 Mr. Gaughan.

2 Oh, here's my \$5, does anybody got  
3 the Knowel's insurance list? How about the  
4 Arcadis storm water study? You guys are  
5 passing up perfectly good money. Whatever  
6 happened to the third party administrator,  
7 which we call the intermediate medical  
8 examination coordinator, is that still  
9 floating around upstairs?

10 MR. WECHSLER: It is. Right now  
11 they are seeking some comments from the  
12 union -- from the unions.

13 MS. HODOWANITZ: Well, you know,  
14 that surprises me since on October 21, last  
15 Saturday, what do I see in the legals but an  
16 RFP for the landscape architect and  
17 engineering design of the Linden Street  
18 green space, which you have tabled the  
19 transfer of that deed. Is that not like the  
20 court going before the horse?

21 MR. WECHSLER: That's just the bid  
22 process. No contact has been awarded yet.

23 MS. HODOWANITZ: Well, I hope they  
24 award no money if they award a contract  
25 because I would like to see --

1 MR. WECHSLER: They do want to keep  
2 the project moving in case it gets done by  
3 the end of the year so that's just a bid.  
4 That's all it is.

5 MS. HODOWANITZ: Well, if you're  
6 ambitious let them worry about the third  
7 party --

8 MR. WECHSLER: The third party is  
9 done. It just has to be instituted or  
10 accepted.

11 MS. HODOWANITZ: Also, I don't know  
12 if you seen this in the paper a couple of  
13 times, Colts has this little ad and it says,  
14 "Colts wants to know where you want to go?  
15 Where would you like Colts to have service?"

16 Now, I know, again, that's a county  
17 service but a lot of people in Scranton like  
18 myself don't drive and are dependent on the  
19 buses either to get to work or to the store  
20 or to medical appointments, you name it,  
21 okay? And I was thinking, you know, bus  
22 number 26 goes to Mohegan Sun in Luzerne  
23 County. You know it goes right past the  
24 airport but doesn't turn into the airport so  
25 I hope that a lot of the residents in

1           Scranton will take some time that if the bus  
2           doesn't go where you work or where you have  
3           a doctor's appointment or you have a nursing  
4           home or whatever, a school, okay, and you  
5           need to get class, or the hours are wrong,  
6           let Colts know what kind of service you  
7           want, okay, because they owe it to us.

8                     And, finally, kudos to Glynis Johns.  
9           Have you seen the editorial that was written  
10          on her suggestion about honoring blacks  
11          contributions to the City of Scranton? You  
12          mentioned last week that you thought this  
13          was a good idea, I sure hope that you follow  
14          through with it because I think it's  
15          excellent. Thank you.

16                    MR. WECHSLER: Fay Franus.

17                    MS. FRANUS: Fay Franus, Scranton.  
18          Mr. Wechsler, I'm sure you have the right to  
19          say whatever you want but I totally  
20          disagree. I don't think you should be  
21          telling people only speak on agenda items, I  
22          think you should be encouraging people to  
23          speak here. With what you said tonight,  
24          that's intimidation. We have a right to say  
25          whatever we choose. You may not like it,





1 it. It did not go through our office.

2 MS. FRANUS: Well, it says here that  
3 it was supposed to be attested to but it  
4 didn't have to -- it doesn't have to go  
5 through council for the city clerk to sign  
6 something.

7 MR. WECHSLER: If it's a contract it  
8 does.

9 MS. FRANUS: Pardon me?

10 MR. WECHSLER: If it's a approved  
11 contract by council it does, yes.

12 MS. FRANUS: I didn't say that. I  
13 said did the contracts for Ned Abrahamsen  
14 gets signed by Novembrino and the city  
15 clerk?

16 MR. WECHSLER: No, because they  
17 weren't voted on by council. The city clerk  
18 only votes for council.

19 MS. FRANUS: That's not true.  
20 Sometimes the mayor and you may sign  
21 something and the city clerk may sign  
22 something but it doesn't have to be approved  
23 by council. I don't know if you don't know  
24 that. That's not necessarily true. It  
25 doesn't have to be --

1 MR. WECHSLER: I have never signed  
2 anything that was not voted on by council.

3 MS. FRANUS: Doesn't mean it doesn't  
4 happen.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Well, it did not  
6 happen in this case for sure. The city  
7 clerk did not authorize any payments to  
8 Mr. Abrahamsen.

9 MS. FRANUS: Well, so again, the  
10 mayor violated the law again, so what the  
11 mayor did is he violated the trust of the  
12 people, violated the law, but you know what  
13 there is no consequences. There is no  
14 penalties. The most I think it is if you  
15 take it to court and do all of this other  
16 stuff it's like a \$300 fine or at the most  
17 90 days in jail but nobody is going to do  
18 that, so what happens is the mayor continues  
19 to do things only illegal and nobody --  
20 there is no repercussions, the only way we  
21 had to do anything, it's our only hope to  
22 get back any kind of right, trust for the  
23 people, is in the voting booth on November  
24 7. That's the only one day we have to voice  
25 our opinions to make a difference in the

1 city because right now we can't trust the  
2 mayor to do anything right.

3 Mr. Rogan, did you get that  
4 information I asked you about?

5 MR. ROGAN: I did.

6 MS. FRANUS: I want to know who  
7 authorized the trees to get cut down on Lake  
8 Scranton.

9 MR. ROGAN: It was authorized by the  
10 DPW and the Shade Tree Commission.

11 MS. FRANUS: Who told the DPW to cut  
12 them down?

13 MR. ROGAN: The reply -- what the  
14 DPW director told us what they were -- the  
15 city was receiving complaints about not  
16 being able to see off the overpass.

17 MS. FRANUS: Yes.

18 MR. ROGAN: And that's why they were  
19 -- trees were cut.

20 MS. FRANUS: So the DPW were the  
21 only person that gave the go ahead on this?

22 MR. ROGAN: And the Shade Tree  
23 Commission, Mr. Santoli.

24 MS. FRANUS: Why wouldn't they just  
25 top them off?

1 MR. ROGAN: I'm not an expert in  
2 that field.

3 MS. FRANUS: Why were they told to  
4 leave them there instead of taking them  
5 away? Did this not have to go in front of  
6 city council for a vote?

7 MR. ROGAN: It did not come in front  
8 of us.

9 MR. FRANUS: No, but should it have?

10 MR. ROGAN: If it was over 19,000.

11 MS. FRANUS: Was it?

12 MR. ROGAN: I didn't get copy of the  
13 bill, I could try and get it for you.

14 MR. WECHSLER: No, this was internal  
15 work by the DPW. We don't vote or approve  
16 the work that the DPW director did.

17 MS. FRANUS: Are the taxpayers  
18 paying for it?

19 MR. WECHSLER: It's part of their  
20 work at DPW.

21 MS. FRANUS: What about the  
22 taxpayers, whose paying for this?

23 MR. WECHSLER: It's the same as if  
24 they go trim trees on any other street or  
25 fill a pothole. We don't authorize that.

1                   That's part of the DPW.

2                   MS. FRANUS: This was over 20 trees  
3                   though.

4                   MR. WECHSLER: That's his  
5                   responsibility. He decided to do that.

6                   MS. FRANUS: Who is he?

7                   MR. WECHSLER: The DPW director. He  
8                   received complaints, he cut them down. He  
9                   checked with Mr. Santoli, who is the expert  
10                  on trees in the area, and I don't think of  
11                  anyone to ask than Mr. Santoli why should we  
12                  could and how should it be cut and that's  
13                  what happened. We don't approve the daily  
14                  work of the DPW.

15                  MS. FRANUS: I also think, Mr.  
16                  Wechsler, you should check out the city law  
17                  because apparently you don't know, because  
18                  as I said before, the mayor, a member of  
19                  council and the city clerk can sign  
20                  something without council's approval and  
21                  having something in front of council to  
22                  approve.

23                  MR. WECHSLER: Lee Morgan.

24                  MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.  
25                  Lee Morgan. Well, I think tonight the first

1 two speakers did a really excellent job of  
2 putting things in somewhat of legitimate  
3 focus tonight on what the city's actually  
4 looking at, and all of this could have been  
5 avoided with a legitimate city council and a  
6 group of voters in the city who really  
7 wanted to turn this city around, and it just  
8 never happened because people in this city  
9 have been mislead for so long you don't have  
10 to get the magic Kool-Aid, you don't have to  
11 use the magic flute on them, nothing. They  
12 are just completely out of their mind. The  
13 residents of this city are so easily mislead  
14 it's just remarkable, but the one thing they  
15 are not going to be mislead about, as  
16 probably the future holds, is all of this  
17 mismanagement and all of this money that's  
18 spent. If it has to be repaid, it's coming  
19 out of the same people so the residents are  
20 going to pay all of this money back after  
21 the city misspent it, and not only did they  
22 lose their assets, but the people they voted  
23 for and the way they voted withe spaghetti  
24 dinners and silly little signs in people's  
25 yards has lead to the total collapse of a

1 city and it's just amazing that something  
2 like that could actually happen. And you  
3 have to ask yourself why didn't the Auditor  
4 General come in here and start investigating  
5 all of these deals and all of the other  
6 things that have taken place here, and why  
7 don't they bring the Attorney General in and  
8 start prosecuting.

9 I would be thrilled to see a city  
10 council member who did something incorrectly  
11 go to jail for 90 days. I think it would be  
12 a good -- it would show that the system is  
13 trying to function. If a mayor committed a  
14 crime, throw them in jail. Find out where  
15 all of the money came from and all of the  
16 contributions for public office and if  
17 people have committed a crime, put them in  
18 jail. Don't only go off the drug dealers  
19 and the petty criminals, let's clean up the  
20 whole situation here. You know, I wonder  
21 what -- as crazy as this sound, I wonder  
22 what the President of the United States  
23 would do if somebody mailed him a letter and  
24 talked about a Democratic stronghold like  
25 Scranton, Pennsylvania, has squandered and



1           mismanaged federal money and state money and  
2           shown total disregard for it's residents  
3           over an extended period of time and I wonder  
4           if he would send somebody here to  
5           investigate. Maybe some of the people that  
6           were elected would look a lot better with  
7           different kind of suits on because, you  
8           know, it's really beyond pathetic where we  
9           find ourselves.

10                         And, you know, for all the parents  
11           who have children in the Scranton School  
12           District, don't kid yourself. Your children  
13           have been shortchanged of an education  
14           because the Scranton School District  
15           squandered millions and millions of dollars  
16           and they weren't concerned about education,  
17           they were playing the political game just  
18           like other city council has done for  
19           decades.

20                         And, you know, when you take look at  
21           all of the silliness you have done, whether  
22           it was the Sewer Authority or the parking  
23           garages or a whole host of grant money being  
24           squandered and mismanaged, or the South Side  
25           Sports complex or Nay Aug Park, the

1 residents lost all of that because they had  
2 faith in a government they elected.

3 And, you know, I really think the  
4 council itself, including this council, you  
5 owe an apology to the residents of this city  
6 because as these Court cases spin you are  
7 going to find out what the difference is  
8 between an opinion of your solicitor and  
9 law. But in ye end, the people really hurt  
10 were the residents and their children and  
11 the future of this city because the people  
12 in this city haven't learned one thing to  
13 control your future you have to be control  
14 your past and they have done neither and  
15 they still don't get their mind around it  
16 and who wins this next election is  
17 irrelevant because the city is financially  
18 going to collapse and it's something that I  
19 have talked about. I remember a few council  
20 races ago I brought up what was going to  
21 happen with the city pensions. A couple of  
22 the candidates who happened to win thought  
23 it was comical and said should we have a  
24 yard sale? Well, maybe you should have.  
25 Thank you.

1 MR. WECHSLER: Bob Bolus.

2 MR. BOLUS: Bob Bolus, Scranton. It  
3 was interesting evening last night watching  
4 the debate as to who is going to run or  
5 wants to run this city. When I was here  
6 last week I brought up that I been contacted  
7 the Attorney General's Office regarding Jim  
8 Mulligan and the money that he received for  
9 health insurance. There was an issue called  
10 insurance fraud and we are hearing all sides  
11 of it.

12 Well, this is a letter I received  
13 October 16 from the Office of the Attorney  
14 General, anti-trust section. Mr. Bob Bolus,  
15 Birch Street, Scranton. "Dear, Mr. Bolus:  
16 The Office of Attorney General would like to  
17 thank you for your letter dated October 5,  
18 2017. I have been assigned to review the  
19 information you have supplied. If I have  
20 further questions, I will attempt to contact  
21 you --" at my phone number that I gave  
22 him -- "that you provided. Sincerly, Norman  
23 W. Barling, Senior Deputy Attorney General."

24 Now, the sad part of this is you are  
25 sitting here, I listened to transparency in

1 and out, I know what side of the fence you  
2 are on anyway, but that's neither here nor  
3 there, you represent the people in this  
4 city. Would you, Mr. Gaughan, now request  
5 the Attorney General to investigate this  
6 issue? Would you do that on behalf of the  
7 people?

8 MR. GAUGHAN: I don't even know to  
9 what issue you are referring.

10 MR. BOLUS: I'm referring to Jim  
11 Mulligan getting the insurance money from  
12 the Sewer Authority and the Sewer Authority  
13 has been a big issue that have known about  
14 transparency here and everyone has, the  
15 solicitors and all. Let's step back a  
16 moment on transparency. There is your  
17 solicitor right there. When you have a  
18 legal question or issues that you think  
19 about you ask your solicitor. If your  
20 solicitor advises you to do something, you  
21 do it, don't you? Because that's why he is  
22 sitting here. Well, the mayor did the same  
23 thing with the Sewer Authority. The mayor  
24 had attorneys. The Sewer Authority had  
25 attorneys, and the water company had

1 attorneys. They all sat there and said it  
2 was okay to do what he was doing. He went  
3 on the advice of the attorneys to go ahead  
4 and what he is doing.

5 Now, if the attorneys are wrong they  
6 are the ones that would be held accountable,  
7 not the mayor of the City of Scranton. And,  
8 remember, you all signed the recovery plan  
9 to sell the Sewer Authority, the parking  
10 garages and all of the other stuff that's  
11 going on here so, you know, to sit and  
12 criticize when you have a solicitor if your  
13 solicitor said, "Wait a minute, guys, you  
14 can't sign this until you know more about  
15 this or more about that, a little more  
16 in-depth research on it other than just  
17 thank you."

18 So it's hard for me as a resident of  
19 this city to see the school district putting  
20 the screws to everybody here, doing the same  
21 thing the Sewer Authority does with Jim  
22 Mulligan where he took money -- or not money  
23 but insurance that he didn't pay for and he  
24 wasn't entitled to because he wasn't a paid  
25 employee, but to clear that matter up I went

1 to the Attorney General's Office. Something  
2 you should have did if you wanted  
3 transparency cleared up. Does anybody here  
4 require or going to request the Attorney  
5 General to further look into this?

6 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Perry asked  
7 Attorney Minora to look into that.

8 MR. WECHSLER: Okay, you've asked  
9 your solicitor then if you should do that.  
10 That's exactly my point. You cannot answer  
11 may question without first asking your  
12 solicitor, the same thing Mayor Courtright  
13 did. He asked the solicitors, he asked his  
14 attorneys and on their advice he went ahead  
15 and moved forward. If you people didn't  
16 think that was a legitimate thing, you could  
17 have filed an injunction against him and  
18 stopped it. So you have a lot of power that  
19 you didn't bother to use, but the criticism  
20 all wrong here, and that's what upsets me.  
21 That's why I come here. I have more  
22 important things to do than come here, but  
23 this is my city as much as it is yours or  
24 anyone else's.

25 And to sit back and watch, I came

1 out of Leahy Hall last night, do you see the  
2 food court there? Shouldn't the University  
3 be paying taxes? It's not higher learning  
4 there. They should be paying taxes, they  
5 are a business. They compete with Chick's  
6 Diner and every other restaurant, Abe's and  
7 all. Shouldn't they pay tax? They got a  
8 Chick-Fil-A, shouldn't they pay taxes? Or  
9 are you going to learn how to cook chicken  
10 or how to cut a bagel there last night.  
11 It's not higher learning. You should be  
12 pushing to bring the city back in on the  
13 economic values. File a fee on them. Make  
14 them pay their fair share.

15 You want to pull the city out of  
16 debt, you can't bury it anymore on bad  
17 assets and yapping about this and yapping  
18 about that, you have a mayor, you should be  
19 supporting the mayor and that's what makes  
20 this thing go around. You can't support  
21 someone who was a lawyer who knowingly took  
22 money, not money, but health insurance and  
23 can't plead ignorance on it. The law is the  
24 law on and it's for everyone, including Jim  
25 Mulligan. Everybody is putting the screws

1 to the city, it's now time for  
2 accountability. You should send a letter to  
3 the Attorney General, I'd have more respect  
4 for you. Thank you.

5 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

6 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr. Bolus.  
7 Glynis Johns.

8 MR. BOLUS: Oh, may I say one more  
9 thing, I'm sorry?

10 MR. WECHSLER: No.

11 MR. BOLUS: No, no, this is -- I  
12 have clinical psychologist here --

13 MR. GAUGHAN: Mr. Bolus, your time  
14 is up.

15 MR. BOLUS: Wait.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Your time is up.  
17 Would you afford this to anybody else? Your  
18 time is up, sit down.

19 MR. BOLUS: Gaughan, you want to  
20 learn something instead of --

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Mr. Bolus, your time  
22 is up. Sit down.

23 MR. BOLUS: A clinical --

24 MR. GAUGHAN: We don't afford Mr.  
25 Bolus more opportunity than -- -



1 MR. BOLUS: -- the mayor --

2 MR. GAUGHAN: Than anybody else.

3 MR. BOLUS: This is a clinical  
4 psychologist --

5 MR. BOLUS: Please sit down now, Mr.  
6 Bolus. Thank you.

7 MR. BOLUS: -- on PTSD -- now, if you  
8 want to do anything intelligent to the  
9 people in this community, the Fire  
10 Department and the police, you will attend  
11 the meeting tomorrow morning which you're  
12 being appointed to at 10 a.m. at the  
13 Commissioner's Office. And don't be so damn  
14 smart, you don't know everything.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: I was also taught  
16 don't get into a fight with a skunk because  
17 you come out smelling like one. Thank you.

18 MR. WECHSLER: Hi, Glynis.

19 MS. JOHNS: Hello. Good evening.  
20 First, I would like to say that was -- not  
21 that, but when you had the presentation  
22 honoring somebody at city council so I hope  
23 and look forward to the moment when the  
24 people when I have brought up to suggestions  
25 get honored here in the city, so that is

1 something that I see happening for the  
2 people, but I recognize and it's cool that  
3 happens here in the city.

4 So today I'm not here to speak about  
5 my research, I'm here to talk about the  
6 Scranton School District because that's also  
7 a pending issue for myself, and as other  
8 people had came up here and said that the  
9 city is failing the students here, and it's  
10 honestly very tragic. I now work for the  
11 Scranton School District so I get to see  
12 some of these students and how their  
13 education is being facilitated or not  
14 facilitated and the fact that there are many  
15 high school students that can't do simple  
16 division adding, subtracting or working with  
17 fractions is devastating to me because these  
18 students are not ready to leave high school  
19 and get into the real world.

20 So with that being said, I was very  
21 curious about what sort of research that the  
22 city has done when it comes to students,  
23 demographics, GPA scores, performance,  
24 teacher demographics, things like that. So  
25 I looked on the Scranton School District

1 website, there is not that much. The only  
2 data that they have is for PSAA's and all  
3 the standardized tests. As we know, across  
4 the country standardized tests are not  
5 always the best way to gauge students  
6 economic performance.

7 So I took it upon myself to reach  
8 out to the school board and I spoke with a  
9 woman who is a policy advisor, we have been  
10 corresponding with e-mails back and forth  
11 all day and I asked her if there is any data  
12 that the city has done on demographics,  
13 education, GPA retention, graduation rate,  
14 things of that sort, and I told her that on  
15 the website they only had the standardized  
16 test scores and those statistical data  
17 available, but that's not what I'm looking  
18 for because it's scattered among grades and  
19 it's not indicative of the inside of the  
20 district that we are in that these people  
21 are paying taxes for.

22 So she sent back the same PDF's of  
23 the documents that I was looking at, and so  
24 I just want to know why the city if we see  
25 that people are very upset about what is

1 going on in the schools why are we not going  
2 out to commission our own data so that way  
3 we can better these programs. Why are we  
4 not talking to the teachers and the students  
5 and the parents at the school and finding  
6 out why those things are not working. Why  
7 can't we look up on the internet the  
8 Scranton School District and see how many  
9 students are in each school, what's the  
10 demographic breakdown because then we can  
11 really see the disparities in learning and  
12 education and who is getting those things,  
13 because I can see it and I'm a product of  
14 the school district. I'm a product of my  
15 brothers being shunned out of the school  
16 district, and like you said, there is always  
17 of these students here who literally are  
18 leaving not knowing how to write a paper for  
19 college and that's disgusting. And we talk  
20 about building businesses, from where? All  
21 of these students are leaving because the  
22 city is not doing anything for us.

23 So I really would like to see if the  
24 school board can put together some sort of  
25 data on the city so that when we can

1 allocate funds where they need to be, bring  
2 better programs. I know it's time to start  
3 reevaluating budgets so maybe we can do that  
4 and see where the students are lacking. We  
5 are falling underneath the state  
6 requirements and the standardized tests so I  
7 am going to guess that it its probably the  
8 same outside of the standardized tests. Why  
9 aren't we talking to the students and seeing  
10 what they need?

11 It's 2017, these people are doing  
12 things that are too old. When I was in the  
13 school they were using the same textbooks in  
14 middle school and that was 15 to 13 years  
15 ago so I think we need to do better. We are  
16 in 2017, technology has advanced. These  
17 students are not looking at being in the  
18 classroom the same way, almost a quarter of  
19 a century ago.

20 So that was may main concerns for  
21 today and because, like I said, we are  
22 starting to get new local government,  
23 budgets are starting to be developed, I  
24 think we really need to get in these schools  
25 and figure out what's going on, figure out

1                   how these students can get a better  
2                   education because at the end of the day  
3                   that's all we have. Thank you.

4                   MR. WECHSLER: Thank you. Anyone  
5                   else?

6                   MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening.  
7                   Marie Schumacher. First, I'd like to ask  
8                   Mr. Rogan to provide the status of the PCP's  
9                   release of the information that they have  
10                  gathered on the double pension?

11                  MR. ROGAN: I met with Attorney  
12                  Minora I believe it was two weeks ago in  
13                  your office, Attorney Minora? We put in  
14                  another call to the state police. We are  
15                  kind at a log jam right now trying to get  
16                  them to release the information.

17                  MS. SCHUMACHER: I thought it was in  
18                  Court. I thought it was this Court.

19                  MR. ROGAN: Well, there was an  
20                  agreement. Attorney Minora can address it  
21                  better than I can, but we may wind up back  
22                  in Court.

23                  MR. MINORA: We had a hearing on the  
24                  state police motion to quash based on CREA,  
25                  which they have on their side to withhold



1 Judge Gibbons an appeal on the Act 511  
2 issue, but I do have an issue if the city  
3 decides to appeal when the Supreme Court has  
4 already ruled that Home Rule Charters do not  
5 supercede limitations imposed as state laws.  
6 It is a chilling thought to me, indeed, that  
7 the city does not have any kind of a ceiling  
8 that they can tax us however much you want,  
9 you know? The old thing. It it's a 1040  
10 what's at the bottom line, give it to us.  
11 You know, this is crazy. I don't think we  
12 should be wasting anymore money and I think  
13 we should just face the facts.

14 And now on the piece of business  
15 that is tabled, and I hope tabled still from  
16 what I heard earlier tonight, I was appalled  
17 when I picked up the paper and Saturday and  
18 then again on Sunday, there is costs with  
19 that. How much does it cost per square  
20 inch, Lori probably knows, for every one of  
21 those legal notices. That's a cost that  
22 maybe wouldn't have to be expended. Why  
23 they are so anxious to get going I don't  
24 know because I don't think it is the job of  
25 government to provide a park for every



1 person who wants a park. I mean, you have  
2 higher obligations to us, one of which is  
3 allowing us to keep our homes and keep the  
4 cost down. I just really cannot believe  
5 that they have gone ahead with that unless,  
6 of course, maybe some of you, three of you,  
7 have already committed to voting in favor of  
8 that legislation.

9 I mean, let's look really at the  
10 situation, the green space. As I say, it  
11 doesn't have to all be provided by the  
12 government and it's not. There is much  
13 publically owned already in existence parks.  
14 We have the courthouse square. We have the  
15 half lot right here next to the city hall.  
16 We have that humongous park that I have  
17 never seen anybody in the 500 block of  
18 Lackawanna Avenue. There is another park  
19 planned for down by the intermodal center,  
20 all of this is for downtown. What about the  
21 rest of the city?

22 On the private side, there is a  
23 beautiful park in the 200 block of Wyoming  
24 avenue, which would be -- which is right  
25 next to this Wyoming Avenue lot that

1 everyone is so anxious to buy. May I finish  
2 this? Thank you. And the University of  
3 Scranton has a beautiful green space right  
4 off Linden Street. I mean, there are plenty  
5 of green spaces in this city already, and if  
6 it's people that really want it who live  
7 down there I say where are they? Has  
8 anybody been to this podium and said we  
9 really need this green space at that spot?  
10 I haven't heard them.

11 And I like green space, too, but the  
12 difference between me and what's happening  
13 here is my green space is my lawn. I pay  
14 taxes on it, I maintain it and I think it's  
15 wrong for people who already have a lot of  
16 parks to demand another park that should be  
17 paid for by the rest of the city and  
18 maintained by the city. Thank you.

19 MR. WECHSLER: Anyone else?

20 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening. Dave  
21 Dobrzyn, resident. Taxes paid, fees paid.  
22 Okay. First of all, 5-F I would recommend  
23 that you support that very strongly and  
24 support ECTV as they have for years now  
25 produced unbiased and uncensored accounts to

1 many functions and you can view it on  
2 channel 19. Now, as far as Scranton, I'm  
3 going to talk on general policy after this,  
4 I'm not talking up any candidate or bashing  
5 any candidate in Scranton I wish that  
6 somebody would look into taking our  
7 situation to Federal Court. We are not  
8 allowed to reassess, the county doesn't want  
9 to do that. We have a County Commissioner  
10 campaigning against it. As far as our  
11 school system is concerned, the Scranton  
12 Times had an article and basically I'm the  
13 type of person if you can show me how to  
14 extricate 10 million undocumented people  
15 without causing a humanitarian catastrophe  
16 my hat would be off to you, but we have a  
17 lot of English second languages and so forth  
18 piling in and I'm not exactly sure with our  
19 school district and our community if the  
20 federal government is offering any support.  
21 They get to be the nice guys, we get to pay  
22 the bill so it's driving up school costs and  
23 that's tying in. And the lawsuits, are  
24 these fees being paid by plaintiffs? You  
25 know, we have landlords that owed boo-coo

1           bucks, \$18,000 one landlord was listed in  
2           the paper years back when Doherty was still  
3           in office about a year before he left and  
4           basically reassessment would invalidate  
5           their complaint on a lawsuit, so these fees  
6           you can't keep piling it on the tax -- under  
7           the property taxes. I have no desire to pay  
8           for 40 by 170 lot \$1,000 a year tax on it.  
9           Forget about it.

10                       We have tax exemptions galore,  
11           candidates running around promising tax  
12           cuts, tax exempts. Every tax exempt that  
13           wants to move into the city. Two of my  
14           doctors are down on the other side of  
15           Wyoming Avenue on the other side of the  
16           prison and, you know, this place is being  
17           bought out from under them so they are  
18           trying to look for a place and the one place  
19           that the foot and ankle doctor wants to move  
20           to doesn't have a bus going by, so what am  
21           I going to do, walk three blocks in a cast  
22           or whatever?

23                       And I have a little message for both  
24           parties, the party behavior of both parties  
25           has been atrocious. Voter intimidation

1 Mr. Turizi of the Pennsylvania Assembly  
2 announced that Romney was assured reelection  
3 back in 2012 or a sure deal because of voter  
4 registration and difficulties that they  
5 themselves created. Now, that was supposed  
6 to be so a voter could identify themselves  
7 not to ensure the election, through the  
8 election to Romney.

9 Now, on the democrat side last year  
10 we had 450 super delegates, I'll finish with  
11 this sentence, super delegates pledge  
12 before, before one democrat vote primary was  
13 cast. That's not right. If you guys want  
14 to put signs up already, you two, you are  
15 fine to put signs up.

16 And, by the way, the slumlord that  
17 bought the house next door has a sign up, I  
18 don't think I'll be voting for the guy and I  
19 don't know what he promised to Mr. Slumlord.  
20 Thank you and have a good night.

21 MR. WECHSLER: Anyone else?

22 MS. KRAVITZ: Hi. Marge Kravitz,  
23 Scranton. I'm little bit nervous.  
24 Taxpayer. I'm so disgusted with people  
25 coming up here and putting Gaughan down.

1 Mr. Gaughan, you are the only one up there  
2 that will look at the person constantly.  
3 Mr. Perry, you are down here writing.  
4 Mr. Rogan, you have your eyes closed.  
5 Mr. Evans, you are writing something I don't  
6 know what. Mr. Wechsler, I don't know about  
7 you, but Mr. Gaughan you are the best.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

9 MS. KRAVITZ: And I know you will  
10 get elected. And, Mr. Rogan, a year ago I  
11 private messaged on Facebook and you told me  
12 you are going to get back to me about a stop  
13 sign on the corner and you never did.  
14 Mr. Gaughan, I private messaged you on  
15 Facebook to help out with a stop sign, you  
16 answered me one, two, three, in a matter of  
17 minutes.

18 And, Mr. Rogan, you did vote for the  
19 garbage tax to be raised \$300. I only have  
20 one bag, one bag of garbage a month and I  
21 have to pay \$300 so I don't know when  
22 someone comes up here to put Mr. Gaughan  
23 down I get very upset.

24 What about Courtright? What about  
25 all of the millions of dollars that is

1 missing? Don't they care about that? They  
2 just care about Mulligan with the health  
3 care. That's ridiculous. That's all.

4 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

5 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

6 MR. WECHSLER: Anyone else?

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

8 MOTIONS.

9 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Perry?

10 MR. PERRY: Yes, thank you, I have a  
11 couple of things. And, yes, I do do a lot  
12 of writing during the speaking and that's  
13 only because I'm taking notes about what the  
14 speaker is saying. For instance, Ms.  
15 Hodowanitz, you brought up the Arcadis  
16 study. As of right now, Ms. Reed, if we can  
17 get back with a date with Arcadis and  
18 American Water, they are supposed to get  
19 together with the dates as of today I didn't  
20 see anything in my inbox saying the meeting  
21 has been set up, but I am like all of us  
22 awaiting with baited breath on that.

23 Let's see what else I wrote. I want  
24 to say thank you to Director Gallagher and  
25 the DPW, I had a stop sign that was out of

1 whack that didn't have any reflectivity, it  
2 was homemade. That was already replaced  
3 even before I made the announcement so they  
4 already noticed it before sometime in the  
5 mean time from that information getting to  
6 me and me getting it to the podium, so thank  
7 you for that quick turn around.

8 Iron furnaces. I had a chance to  
9 stop briefly at the iron furnaces over the  
10 weekend for their seventh annual bonfire and  
11 it was everything it always is. It was  
12 packed, it was hot, and it was a good time.  
13 I was very happy to stop by.

14 And, lastly, which I probably could  
15 have started with, but I'll end with this  
16 either way, I just want to congratulate the  
17 Naughton family. He is very, very respected  
18 person around here and as he was for the  
19 very long time and it's a well-deserved  
20 honor for him and his family to have the  
21 clerk's office named after him. I just want  
22 to again say congratulations and thank you  
23 for the hard work that was put in by  
24 Mr. Naughton and he won't be forgotten,  
25 obviously. That's all I have today. Thank



1           you.

2                       MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr. Perry.  
3           Mr. Rogan?

4                       MR. ROGAN: Yes, picking up with  
5           Mr. Perry left off, that was a very nice way  
6           to start a city council meeting with the  
7           ceremony for Mr. Naughton and his family. I  
8           haven't had the -- didn't have the privilege  
9           of working with him, unfortunately none of  
10          us ever did, we are fortunate to have a very  
11          good city clerk. Lori Reed is doing a great  
12          job following in the footsteps of many great  
13          city clerks that have done a lot for our  
14          city, so it was a very nice ceremony to  
15          start the meeting tonight.

16                      Just three items I want to read off.  
17          The first one is on the vote regarding ECTV  
18          that Mr. Dobrzyn brought up. I support this  
19          100 percent, it's critical these meetings  
20          remain on television so the public can see  
21          what's going on. I have always supported  
22          cameras in our council meeting and I think  
23          it really gives the public a chance to see  
24          what's going on in the meetings, a lot of  
25          people can't make it out to our council

1 meetings.

2 In addition to council, ECTV covers  
3 a number of other events that very helpful.  
4 I attended the mayoral debate last night at  
5 the University of Scranton and I really have  
6 to give ECTV credit and within hours of that  
7 debate ending it was on Channel 19. The  
8 debate ended at I think 7:00 and by 9:00 it  
9 was up on ECTV. So I encourage everyone to  
10 check out those debates that are on ECTV and  
11 how county meetings are governed, so I do  
12 want to give a shout out to ECTV and  
13 certainly to support that legislation  
14 tonight.

15 This week I did have a couple of  
16 residents in West Mountain talk to me and I  
17 know Mr. Gaughan talked to the same  
18 individual who is having a lot of problem  
19 with storm water runoff and, obviously, that  
20 is the beginning of the problem that's going  
21 down to Keyser Valley. I did discuss with  
22 Attorney Minora looking into the possibility  
23 of some type of action against Newton  
24 Township, which is sprawling. There are a  
25 number of new homes up there and every new

1 homes that's built is creating more and more  
2 water off on top of the mountain. It is  
3 coming down West Mountain and into Keyser  
4 Valley, so I think that's something we need  
5 to look into if there is a possibility of  
6 actual cooperation with it and put some  
7 retention ponds on top of the mountain. So  
8 that's something we will be continuing to  
9 work on.

10 And, finally, I want to talk a  
11 little bit about the school board and school  
12 district and it's funny that the timing is  
13 very odd that the last week I spoke about  
14 shared services between the school district  
15 and the city and not knowing that the  
16 Auditor General was going to be coming in  
17 and issuing this report regarding the school  
18 district, but it really makes me, you know,  
19 what I said last week even more important  
20 that it is critical that the city and school  
21 district work together and find ways to save  
22 money whenever we can. Last week I  
23 mentioned garbage which, for instance, the  
24 city garbage trucks drive by every school in  
25 the city and the city is much better at

1           doing garbage than the school district is.

2                       On the other side of the coin, the  
3 school district has a very large maintenance  
4 staff, much larger than the city's. That  
5 type of cooperation can prevent the city  
6 from having to put out to bid cleaning, for  
7 instance, at different facilities. There is  
8 a number of ways, I believe, that the school  
9 district and the city can work together. I  
10 know this is something that been talked  
11 about for a long time and hasn't happened,  
12 but I did bring this up in caucus and with  
13 my colleagues agreement I would like to send  
14 a letter to the school district formally  
15 asking to begin setting up an  
16 intergovernmental committee between the city  
17 and the school district. I did meet with  
18 their solicitor this morning. I talked to  
19 one of the school's -- the school board  
20 solicitor and he seemed very receptive to  
21 the idea and I think we have to -- this is  
22 something that has to really be explored.  
23 As I said, it's been talked about for a long  
24 time and numerous reports, but it is really  
25 something that I think we need to do and



1 after Mr. Naughton, he was a very, very good  
2 man.

3 Also, I will concur with what  
4 Councilman Rogan said about the school  
5 district. I think it's a very good idea and  
6 think that there are a lot of synergies that  
7 could be exploited to the benefit of both  
8 governments.

9 So a couple of things. I have  
10 previously identified at least 15 fees that  
11 I think are being charged by the city that  
12 are generating less than \$10,000 per year  
13 each for a total revenue of \$61,600. So I  
14 have asked LIPS on numerous occasions for  
15 justification for those fees as well as if  
16 there any that are actually needed through  
17 state mandate. The response to that request  
18 for over the last six months has been no  
19 response, so I think it's safe to say  
20 whether it's perception or reality, that we  
21 have been sending a negative message to our  
22 business community through excessive fees,  
23 taxes and red tape and we have to find a way  
24 to change that narrative.

25 Also, we are nearing our budget our

1 time and I want to make an informed decision  
2 on what to do with these fees? My  
3 inclination is to, like anything else, get  
4 rid of them all, but I want to make sure  
5 that that's justified and I need that  
6 information from LIPS ASAP. Some of the  
7 fees may be required. There could also  
8 duplication of existing state fees,  
9 licensing and requirements. So, Ms. Reed,  
10 if you can send another memo to Deputy  
11 Director Oleski asking again for the  
12 justification for the fees and I'll give you  
13 a list of the fees and anything else  
14 tomorrow.

15 I would also ask another request  
16 again for LIPS, I need a spreadsheet, and I  
17 have asked for this before, for the year  
18 2016 and the year-to-date 2017 showing the  
19 amount of quality of life tickets issued  
20 each and every month. How many were issued  
21 by LIPS inspectors and how many were issued  
22 by the Scranton Police Department through  
23 our COM-D patrol program. What is the  
24 collection rate of the tickets and how many  
25 tickets were turned into citations, and also

1           what is the success rate at the district  
2           justice level?

3                       When I brought this idea up to the  
4           city I felt it could be successful and could  
5           turn the corner on blight in the  
6           neighborhoods that it can be an effective  
7           tool to fight that fight, but I remain  
8           concerned that the fees are still too high  
9           and that the policy of ticketing multiple  
10          offense at the same time has created a  
11          situation that is driving property owners to  
12          the magistrate for appeal instead of simply  
13          just paying the ticket and correcting the  
14          problem.

15                      So I remind some that LIPS is not  
16          and should not be considered a profit  
17          center. The fees may be adjusted downward  
18          and something to be looked at in 2018 but,  
19          again, we need the data to make that  
20          decision and make an informed decision.

21                      City Council, on a different topic,  
22          months ago agreed with concurrence from the  
23          administration that money from the sewer  
24          transaction would not be put into the  
25          pension plans until certain conditions were



1 met. Primarily the hiring of a third party  
2 administrator and a trust agreement that  
3 spelled out guaranteed pension reforms such  
4 as a reduction of the rate of return. Well,  
5 we felt, as we still do, that to achieve  
6 even a modest amount of pension reform that  
7 was a minimum requirement. I would remind  
8 the administration, the unions, and the  
9 pension board that the clock is full  
10 ticking. In order to be assured that the  
11 money is put into the pensions in 2017,  
12 legislation should be to city council with  
13 the third party administrator as well as the  
14 trust agreement over the next few weeks,  
15 most likely no later than November 16.

16 Also, I would like to know that  
17 there have been comments made over the last  
18 few months about the positive return that  
19 the pensions could have received if the  
20 money was put in the pension sooner. I  
21 can't disagree with that, but I would like  
22 to have that, all of our conditions met by  
23 June which was the original target date,  
24 however, that did not happen. So at this  
25 point, we must continue to be willing to

1 forego that short-term gain or guarantee of  
2 long-term reform, something government needs  
3 to be doing more of, thinking long-term.

4 In fact, one of my favorite  
5 subjects, which I didn't talk about too much  
6 last week, the reassessment tomorrow.  
7 Additional information on that, fair and  
8 equitable assessment to assure that tax  
9 burden is properly spread among all property  
10 owners. The uniformity clause of the state  
11 constitution stipulates, "All taxes shall be  
12 uniform on the same class of subjects."

13 So what happened when assessments  
14 are not done regularly? Inequities to the  
15 tax base develop, overall tax base  
16 decreases. Decreased tax base makes it a  
17 harder for local governments to provide  
18 services we depend on like public works,  
19 public safety and, of course, education. So  
20 what are the local government consequences  
21 of inaccurate data assessments?  
22 Municipalities like everybody else to keep  
23 up. Municipalities might bump up against  
24 the millage cap that renew revenue  
25 generation and result in service cuts.

1 Municipalities are unable to secure an  
2 accurately occurring growth and value that  
3 would prevent tax decrease. And what is the  
4 impact of market versus county assessed  
5 value change from 1995 to 2016? Tax  
6 increases historically would have been less  
7 necessary if increased values are properly  
8 captured through an up-to-date assessment.  
9 Revenue loss in the past through  
10 inaccuracies could be recouped and what is  
11 the economic impact of an outdated  
12 assessment? Old assessments often result in  
13 higher millage that can scare off  
14 businesses. For example, Lackawanna County  
15 has a 28 mill rate. Luzerne County has a 1  
16 mill rate. Relative values of both rates  
17 being the same, the perception of higher  
18 millage is the drawback of attracting new  
19 businesses. Outdated assessments also  
20 invite appeals. Large highly valued  
21 businesses in particular typically seek  
22 appeals. Reduction of the values can mean  
23 increases and inequity for the other  
24 property owners, a significant loss of  
25 revenue to local governments and ease

1                   stabilization of the tax base.

2                   Business incentive for new  
3                   construction and renovations. New  
4                   construction and certain renovations often  
5                   bear a higher assessment more reflective of  
6                   market value.

7                   Now, all of the information I just  
8                   discussed was part of the presentation to  
9                   the League of Women Voters by the  
10                  Pennsylvania Economy League. There are some  
11                  would call that information biased. I found  
12                  that information to be not only unbiased but  
13                  extremely factual. So I hope it was helpful  
14                  as you make your decision to vote yes or no  
15                  on reassessment in less than two weeks.

16                  And, finally, I would like to make a  
17                  brief comment on the presentation and  
18                  request from Glynis Johns last Thursday  
19                  evening. First of all, I thank you for  
20                  bringing this to our attention. It  
21                  certainly is recognition that is long  
22                  overdue. As with any issue like this, the  
23                  issue always becomes who is going to take  
24                  the lead and who is going to step up and be  
25                  the nominated local sponsor as well as cover

1 the costs associated with the process of  
2 getting the markers placed if and when the  
3 application is successful. While city  
4 council must continue to be supportive of  
5 the initiative, we don't have the resources  
6 to take the lead on this and, quite  
7 honestly, I'm not sure the city can shepherd  
8 this in a timely manner without creating  
9 another bureaucratic layer to the process.  
10 But, again, the administration also needs to  
11 be supportive of this initiative and I would  
12 expect that to happen.

13 As I mentioned last week in my  
14 discuss on historic preservation in the  
15 downtown, I was previously a former  
16 president of the Architectural Heritage  
17 Association and I am currently a board  
18 member of that same group. So I approached  
19 several members of the board and the  
20 Architectural Heritage Association has  
21 agreed to be the nominator and local sponsor  
22 and will collaborate with Glynis to move in  
23 forward. And they have always committed to  
24 be responsible for all costs associated with  
25 creating and placing these markers once

1 approved by the Pennsylvania Historical and  
2 Museum Commission.

3 So, Glynis, your graduate thesis has  
4 just moved from the conceptual stage to the  
5 it's going to happen stage. So  
6 congratulations. That's all.

7 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr. Evans.  
8 Mr. Gaughan.

9 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, thank you. First  
10 of all, I just want to thank Mrs. Reed for  
11 putting together the event we had to honor  
12 Mr. Naughton, former city clerk for 20  
13 years. Not only was he a wonderful city  
14 clerk but he was a great husband, a father,  
15 and he was a great family man, and I thought  
16 standing in front of his family you could  
17 see the look their faces in the only did  
18 they miss their father and Mrs. Naughton  
19 misses her husband, but this was their life.  
20 Mr. Naughton spent a lot of time in city  
21 hall and I think that that was a wonderful  
22 tribute to a wonderful man.

23 Last week I brought up several  
24 concerns about the Greenridge Senior Housing  
25 Apartment off of Dickson Avenue, and since I

1 have mentioned that I have had several other  
2 people step forward, one person I haven't  
3 been able to get back to, I left her a  
4 message and she hasn't called me back yet.  
5 Another person is sending me letter with  
6 even more concerns so people seem to be  
7 coming out of the woodwork on this issue,  
8 and just to briefly rehash where we are,  
9 quite a few years ago the Greenridge Senior  
10 Housing apartments were built with a tax  
11 abatement and it was supposed to be for  
12 affordable senior housing. Now there are  
13 senior citizens who are paying, apparently  
14 paying 11, 12, 13 hundred dollars a month,  
15 paying extra money to live next to the  
16 elevator, among a number of different  
17 things.

18 So we did discuss this issue in the  
19 caucus, Mrs. Reed was kind enough to get us  
20 some documents and I would like at this  
21 point to make a motion that Scranton City  
22 Council sends a letter to the Area on Aging  
23 relaying the concerns of residents of the  
24 Greenridge senior apartments on Dickson  
25 Avenue regarding a lack of affordable senior

1 housing.

2 MR. ROGAN: Second.

3 MR. WECHSLER: There's a motion on  
4 the floor and a second, on the question?

5 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question.  
6 I would like us to send this letter, number  
7 one, so that it's documented; and, number  
8 two, and some people may think, you know,  
9 why is city council getting involved in  
10 this, nobody else is stepping up to the  
11 plate to help these people. From my  
12 experience talking with these elderly people  
13 there afraid to make any kind of move. They  
14 are afraid to speak out because of possible  
15 repercussions, getting kicked out of the  
16 apartments and other things. So I think  
17 this is a good first step to making the Area  
18 on Aging aware of it and then take it from  
19 there.

20 MR. WECHSLER: All those in favor  
21 say aye.

22 MR. PERRY: Aye.

23 MR. EVANS: Aye.

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

25 MR. ROGAN: Aye.



1 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The  
2 ayes have it and so moved.

3 MR. GAUGHAN: I would also like to  
4 request any documentation related to  
5 approval for the Greenridge senior housing  
6 apartments tax abatement from the Tax  
7 Assessor's Office, and I would also like to  
8 request that we invite the Affordable Senior  
9 Housing of New York and Clover Management,  
10 who is currently running the complex, to a  
11 public caucus to address residents'  
12 concerns. So hopefully we can get that  
13 letter out immediately.

14 I was speaking with Mr. Young, who  
15 has been coming to these council meetings  
16 now for over a year regarding the hole in  
17 his backyard and he is very disappointed  
18 because they were told that when the project  
19 starts they going to start on the street, so  
20 they are not going to start at his house to  
21 fix that issue. So, I mean, you know, 19  
22 months ago we did deem that an emergency so  
23 I would hope that they would make his  
24 property a priority because there is a major  
25 hole in his backyard.

1 I would also like an update,  
2 Mrs. Reed, if we could reach out about the  
3 tree house. You know, I had several people  
4 approach, my wife and I were walking around  
5 Nay Aug Park not too long ago and people  
6 were wondering what the timeline is for  
7 fixing the tree house and opening that back  
8 up again.

9 Also, 1342 Bryn Mawr Street, several  
10 residents had reached out to me about  
11 illegal dumping there, that is a property we  
12 found out that's owned by the Lackawanna  
13 County Land Bank so we have been getting in  
14 touch with Ralph Pappas from the county,  
15 hopefully we'll have an update on that next  
16 week.

17 Regarding Mr. Rogan's recommendation  
18 about shared services, I would agree with  
19 that, with the school district, and I am  
20 going to speak on that tonight, but I would  
21 also think, and I also believe, that one of  
22 the recommendations that should be  
23 immediately followed by the Scranton School  
24 School Board and the administrator up the  
25 street is the same recommendation that the

1 Auditor General made this week. I'll be a  
2 little bit nicer, but to get their heads out  
3 of their rear ends. I think before you can  
4 form any kind of committee they need to do  
5 that first, and I think that's very  
6 important. So before we talk about working  
7 together I think it is time, as my  
8 grandmother would say and Mr. DePasquale, to  
9 get their heads out of their rear ends.

10 The recent audit of the Scranton  
11 School District and comments by the Auditor  
12 General, one of which is that it's the worst  
13 audit that he has ever seen, are extremely  
14 concerning for a number of different  
15 reasons. The audit demonstrated that there  
16 is a culture of incompetent, political  
17 backroom deals and decades of general  
18 disregard for what is good for the taxpayers  
19 of Scranton that in my opinion has infected  
20 both the school board and in some ways the  
21 City of Scranton. When we talk about  
22 political pay-to-play, when we talk about  
23 the no-bid busing contract with the  
24 DeNaples, when we talk about health  
25 insurance for a person who is not even an

1           employee of the school district, and on a  
2           city level when we talk about handing out  
3           \$200,000 payments with no contract, just a  
4           handshake, go on your way, see you later,  
5           here's the payment.

6                     I'm bringing this up because the  
7           current dysfunctional state of the Scranton  
8           School District and potential receivership  
9           will have a devastating effect to the City  
10          of Scranton's potential economic growth and  
11          our already weak tax base. A city is only  
12          as strong as it's school district and our  
13          school district at this point financially is  
14          not strong because there are people that are  
15          inept and who have been leading the school  
16          district and who have been, you know,  
17          running around, like I said, with politics  
18          in mind rather than good government.

19                    As I travel around the city, people  
20          are disgusted and this is making them even  
21          more sick to their stomach what's going on.  
22          If the school district continues to  
23          flounder, we run the risk of becoming a city  
24          with a very bleak future, with young people  
25          leaving and moving to the suburbs, which has

1 already been occurring at a very alarming  
2 rate over the last few decades, and putting  
3 even more pressure on an already  
4 overburdened, elderly tax base that cannot  
5 afford to keep paying for other people's  
6 ineptitude.

7 As the school district struggles,  
8 Mayor Courtright has been painted a very  
9 rosy picture of the city's finances and our  
10 possible exit from Act 47 without seeming to  
11 have a concern over the fact that there are  
12 several potential lawsuits and unanswered  
13 questions that could have a catastrophic  
14 impact on future budgets, and I brought this  
15 up before. The mayor has said on more than  
16 one occasion that he does to the have a Plan  
17 B. City administration doesn't have a Plan  
18 B. This is unacceptable. If you don't have  
19 a Plan B in a private sector and something  
20 goes wrong, you are out of a job.

21 The mayor has told us to trust the  
22 lawyers, again, unacceptable. This  
23 certainly does not inspire any confidence  
24 that we expected to trust the mayor's  
25 attorneys after what we have seen go on here

1 over the last four years with the Scranton  
2 Sewer Authority deal, the stonewalling for  
3 months, and again, no bid oral contracts.  
4 These are the same lawyers who have had  
5 their hand in the piggy bank now for the  
6 last four years, but, we are supposed to  
7 breathe a sigh of relief and thank them for  
8 their service.

9 We do not want to be in the same  
10 position as the school district a year or  
11 two from now and certainly want to do  
12 everything we can to stave off a potential  
13 receivership. We need to have a Plan B and  
14 prepare for the potential that the city may  
15 lose one of these lawsuits. For example,  
16 the Act 511 case. Judge Gibbons, who is one  
17 of the most respected jurists in the area,  
18 has ruled twice now against the city. The  
19 trash lawsuit, rental registration, we  
20 cannot ignore this and the mayor is doing.  
21 If we don't at least prepare for the  
22 possible storm that may be coming, then  
23 we'll get wiped out.

24 I would like to ask that we have a  
25 public caucus or a work session with the

1           mayor and his administration to formulate a  
2           Plan B, to formulate a task force and to  
3           layout all of the options on the table in  
4           the event that the City of Scranton loses  
5           one of these lawsuits, which as I said  
6           earlier, I think would be catastrophic on  
7           future budgets. What effect will it have?  
8           Where are the projections? How will we  
9           account for any lost revenue if we lose the  
10          trash lawsuits, if we have to pay any of  
11          that money back? If we lose the lawsuit  
12          that's in Court now with the Scranton Sewer  
13          Authority and we have to pay any of that  
14          money back. I'm not blaming anybody for any  
15          of these issues, I'm simply saying we should  
16          at the very least be prepared and right now  
17          we are being told by the mayor of this city  
18          we don't have a Plan B, trust the attorneys  
19          that is not acceptable. Thank you.

20                   MR. WECHSLER: Thank you,  
21           Mr. Gaughan. Everything that has been said  
22           this evening about lawsuits, as Mr. Gaughan  
23           has said, we all share the shame concerns  
24           with that. Here is the reality, come  
25           November 16th we need a budget, we need to

1 pass that budget by the end of the year.  
2 You are not allowed to make a Plan B budget.  
3 You are allowed to change the budget in 2018  
4 by a slight percentage.

5 In regard to Judge Gibbons, he has  
6 decided in this case, what he has not done  
7 is he has not given the citizens or the city  
8 a remedy of what we should do if these taxes  
9 are out of line. We cannot pass the budget  
10 thinking that maybe we will owe a million  
11 dollars or two million dollars. The only  
12 alternative for Plan B is to meet our  
13 obligations as they are established is to  
14 have a huge property increase, property tax  
15 increase. That is the only alternative that  
16 we have right now with this budget. The  
17 budget, the cost of the budget, the  
18 expenses, they are set. You may be able to  
19 cut a little bit, but you are not going to  
20 be able to cut enough that if you eliminate  
21 the Act 511 tax there is no other  
22 alternative for this budget than to have a  
23 huge property tax increase. There is no way  
24 around it.

25 One thing that is forgotten is part



1 of the Act 511 taxes come to us because  
2 there was a remedy offered to us by the  
3 House of Representatives and the Senate, the  
4 state. They gave us an increase in the LST  
5 tax. Every year we have to go to the LST  
6 tax and have it approved by a judge, which  
7 has happened. So the city has done the  
8 remedies that were offered to the city. The  
9 city has taken advantage of those remedies  
10 and I agree with Mr. Gaughan that we do need  
11 a Plan B, but unfortunately we can only pass  
12 a Plan A by the end of the year. So unless  
13 we want to take a look at the budget and  
14 hope that -- and hope that we are right or  
15 hope that Judge Gibbons is wrong, the only  
16 other alternative instead of that is to take  
17 a look at the budget and put a huge property  
18 tax increase. There is no other way around  
19 it.

20 So, unfortunately, I believe we have  
21 to go with the revenues that we have  
22 currently, and the sad part is we are going  
23 to have to hope that the city prevails in  
24 this suit. Now, there is several other, as  
25 has been discussed, there are several other

1 cities in the state that have the same type  
2 of problem. Part of the problem is the fact  
3 that we haven't had a reassessment. It has  
4 a huge impact on our city. So, once again,  
5 I don't disagree with what Mr. Gaughan is  
6 saying but come the end of the year we need  
7 to pass the budget. The people can vote  
8 against the budget and say they should have  
9 had a Plan B, but in reality we need a  
10 document to work on and it has to be  
11 approved and that's kind of where we are,  
12 unfortunately. If the city does not  
13 prevail, I think the consequences will be  
14 more in 2019 than in 2018. 2018 budget you  
15 won't know if you go over the amount until  
16 somewhere later in the year, but 2019 will  
17 be aware where the rubber meets the road for  
18 this and I'm concerned also.

19 Today I attended two different  
20 events today. We hear a lot of discouraging  
21 words about Scranton from the podium there,  
22 some of people today they should have  
23 attended the mayor's prayer breakfast, which  
24 was a meeting of several different faiths,  
25 several different groups, a lot of young

1 people there, a lot of business people  
2 there, very upbeat. The Scranton Night  
3 Rhythms sang three different selections.  
4 They have a wonderful voice and a wonderful  
5 teacher, and we heard some discouraging  
6 things, rightfully so, about the Scranton  
7 School District this evening, but the  
8 representatives from Scranton High were  
9 awesome and at the end they received a  
10 well-deserved standing ovation.

11 I also attended today the  
12 presentation by Pennsylvania Northeast  
13 concerning the location of the Amazon  
14 facility in Northeastern, Pennsylvania. It  
15 was an effort by all different counties. It  
16 was one of the 238 submissions that went in  
17 which the main thing, we talked about this  
18 before, even though we may not see anything  
19 from Amazon because we are up against some  
20 pretty large cities, it did represent the  
21 first time in a long time except when the  
22 Tobyhanna Army Depot faced closure and all  
23 governments came together, all business  
24 people came together, and came up with a  
25 great plan. There was input from the local

1 colleges, the local Chamber of Commerces,  
2 governments, and they put together a very  
3 significant package. I am going to request  
4 that they provide -- it's a huge about 500  
5 page binder, I am going to ask that they put  
6 one and have in the City Clerk's Office for  
7 review if anyone would like to see it. It  
8 is too big to put on our website, it would  
9 crash the website, but I would like to offer  
10 congratulations to everyone that was  
11 involved in it, my colleagues as well one of  
12 our letters was highlighted as a support  
13 letter so for as much disparaging things  
14 that we hear from the podium, and everyone  
15 has a right to their opinion, today when I  
16 attended the meeting at the Scranton  
17 Wilkes-Barre airport the attitude was much  
18 better about the success of our area than we  
19 hear sometimes here and I think we are a  
20 little hard on ourselves sometimes, I don't  
21 think we step back and appreciate what we  
22 have and the contributions that everyone can  
23 make in our area. That's it.

24 MS. REED: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
25 A RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND

1 OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE  
2 AND ENTER INTO AN ADDENDUM TO THE  
3 COOPERATION AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN THE  
4 CITY OF SCRANTON ("CITY") AND THE DEPARTMENT  
5 OF MILITARY AND VETERANS AFFAIRS ("DMVA") TO  
6 FURTHER AMEND THE COOPERATION AGREEMENT TO  
7 PERMIT THE SCRANTON POLICE DEPARTMENT'S  
8 FORCE ENTRY TACTICAL TEAM TO CONDUCT  
9 EXPLOSIVE ENTRY TRAINING ON THE  
10 LEACH RANGE PROPERTY.

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

14 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

15 MR. EVANS: Second.

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

19 MR. PERRY: Aye.

20 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

21 MR. EVANS: Aye.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

23 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The  
24 ayes have it and so moved.

25 MS. REED: 5-C. FOR INTRODUCTION - A

1 RESOLUTION – AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND  
2 OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE  
3 AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH PETROLEUM  
4 TRADERS CORPORATION TO PROVIDE 80,000  
5 GALLONS (MORE OR LESS) LOW SULFUR DIESEL  
6 FUEL TO THE CITY OF SCRANTON DEPARTMENT OF  
7 PUBLIC WORKS FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1,  
8 2018 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2018.

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

12 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

13 MR. EVANS: Second.

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

17 MR. PERRY: Aye.

18 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

19 MR. EVANS: Aye.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

21 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The  
22 ayes have it and so moved.

23 MS. REED: 5-D. FOR INTRODUCTION –  
24 A RESOLUTION – AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND  
25 OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE

1 AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH D.G. NICHOLAS  
2 COMPANY TO PROVIDE THE CITY BULK OIL  
3 DELIVERED FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2018  
4 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2018.

5 MR. WECHSLER: At this time, I'll  
6 entertain a motion that Item 5-D be  
7 introduced into its proper committee.

8 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

9 MR. EVANS: Second.

10 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All  
11 those in favor of introduction signify by  
12 saying aye.

13 MR. PERRY: Aye.

14 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

15 MR. EVANS: Aye.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

17 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The  
18 ayes have it and so moved.

19 MS. REED: 5-E. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
20 A RESOLUTION - APPOINTMENT OF THOMAS  
21 GALELLA, SR., 112 PELLER AVENUE, SCRANTON,  
22 PENNSYLVANIA, 18505, AS A MEMBER OF THE  
23 BOARD OF THE SCRANTON HOUSING AUTHORITY.  
24 MR. GALELLA WILL BE REPLACING BILL EAGAN  
25 WHOSE TERM EXPIRED SEPTEMBER 27, 2017. MR.

1 GALELLA WILL BE APPOINTED TO A FIVE  
2 (5) YEAR TERM EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 12, 2017 AND  
3 WILL EXPIRE ON SEPTEMBER 27, 2022.

4 MR. WECHSLER: At this time, I'll  
5 entertain a motion that Item 5-E be  
6 introduced into its proper committee.

7 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

8 MR. EVANS: Second.

9 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All  
10 those in favor of introduction signify by  
11 saying aye.

12 MR. PERRY: Aye.

13 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

14 MR. EVANS: Aye.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

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

18 MS. REED: 5-F. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
19 A RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND  
20 OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE  
21 AND ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
22 BY AND BETWEEN THE CITY OF SCRANTON  
23 ("CITY") AND ELECTRIC CITY TELEVISION  
24 ("ECTV") SETTING FORTH THE TERMS AND  
25 CONDITIONS REGARDING THE OBLIGATIONS OF ECTV



1 TO THE CITY AND THE DISBURSEMENT AND USE OF  
2 EDUCATIONAL AND GOVERNMENTAL ("EG") CAPITAL  
3 GRANT FUNDS.

4 MR. WECHSLER: At this time, I'll  
5 entertain a motion that Item 5-F be  
6 introduced into its proper committee.

7 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

8 MR. EVANS: Second.

9 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All  
10 those in favor of introduction signify by  
11 saying aye.

12 MR. PERRY: Aye.

13 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

14 MR. EVANS: Aye.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

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

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

20 SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A. NO BUSINESS AT  
21 THIS TIME.

22 MR. WECHSLER: If there is no  
23 further business, I'll entertain a motion to  
24 adjourn.

25 MR. ROGAN: Motion to adjourn.

MR. WECHSLER: Meeting 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