

From January 13 meeting

1. Council President Tom Schuster had the following queries:

- a. Related to the Item 3A budget transfer for new salt purchase on the January 13th agenda, may the administration please clarify the reason for the transfer.**
 - i. The budget transfer to cover the purchase of road salt was programmed and received in FY 2025. 2025 was a particularly active snow season beginning in January with a new storm season cycle beginning the first week of December.
- b. Regarding Item 3A on the evening agenda. Mr. Schuster asked if the \$40K moved from pave cuts to water is related to a savings arrived at by the third-party contract?**
 - i. While the new pave cut process is working well, the reason for the change order is tied to increased water costs.
- c. Due to what appears to be an increase in potholes this winter, does the city plan to have an aggressive pothole repair list for 2026?**
 - i. DPW will continue to fill potholes as weather permits with cold patch until the batch plants reopen in the spring, allowing for a more permanent restoration. Pothole filling is always a high priority for DPW.

2. Councilman Sean McAndrew asked the following:

- a. Regarding the Fidelity Bank building purchase, the Council unanimously approved a Motion by Councilman McAndrew requesting a comprehensive due diligence report be performed by the city including, but not limited to, engineering, environmental and financial inspections prior to any closing on the bank building. He advised the agreement calls for a 45 Day inspection and due diligence period that must occur prior to the closing. Mr. McAndrew asked that the city please provide Council with all findings by formally presenting to City Council and to receive affirmative Council approval before the authorization is granted to proceed with the sale.**
 - i. A building assessment report is attached for review.
- b. Regarding the development of the Police Department Realtime Crime Center, is the LSA Grant monies for this project approved or still in the application process?**
 - i. The LSA grant is in the application process. Council approved the City's application by a 4-0 vote on November 25, 2025. Whether or not this grant application receives the state-level support necessary to receive a final award, the City is committed to its ongoing effort to enhance the Scranton Police Department's analytical capacities as public safety continues to be a top priority.
- c. May City Council please have a status and projected finalization date for the Clover Field Project?**

- i. The Clover Field project is in the design phase.

d. May City Council please have an updated listing of pave cut permits that were completed from 2019 through 2025?

- i. In 2025, we completed registration and tracking of 739 pave cuts which are in varying points of the process. So far in 2026, we have received 47 pave cut permits/requests. As Council may be aware, the process to reliably track pave cuts through OpenGov is relatively new. The absence of a tracking process limited our ability to hold utility companies accountable after they need to cut into Scranton's roads. As part of the process created in 2025, we identified nearly 250 open pave cut cases from 2024 that were added to the system for tracking. Digitization of old records continues.
- ii. The city has prior records of revenues received from pave cut inspections from 2016 to 2024. We provided them on November 13, 2025, and they are included below with actuals from 2025 and as a courtesy for new members.
 - 1. 2016: \$548,089
 - 2. 2017: \$218,038.05
 - 3. 2018: \$459,643
 - 4. 2019: \$276,262.30
 - 5. 2020: \$443,218
 - 6. 2021: \$152,742.21
 - 7. 2022: \$159,605
 - 8. 2023: \$88,134
 - 9. 2024: \$19,572
 - 10. 2025: \$198,948.60
- iii. Council should note: In July 2019, the Courtright administration settled a lawsuit filed by UGI in 2015 that challenged a June 2015 City ordinance imposing new rules and fees on pavement cuts and inspections in the City. The City agreed to reduce the pave cut and inspection fees to PennDOT standards and provide UGI with a \$100,000 credit against future pave cut fees and inspections to be allocated over 5 years. The City currently abides by PennDOT standards and reduced fees to lawfully acceptable rates.

e. Regarding Item 5D on the evening agenda, Mr. McAndrew asked how many resumes were received and how many interviews were conducted for the DPW Director position.

- i. The city received nearly two dozen applications for the DPW Director position. Some of the applicants applied for multiple city positions. Based on job qualifications, 5 applicants were interviewed. One applicant was offered the position but declined due to the salary. The city restarted the application process, and Mr. Cusick applied and was recommended.

f. Please provide Council with an updated listing of accounting related to the ARPA funds. Please include for each award to include the business name, the total

amount, the place of the performance and the overall status of the award.

Regarding the ARPA funds, Council President Schuster additionally asked if the city may advise with a list of any businesses or entities that were awarded money but did not receive that money? Was any of the unused money reallocated?

- i. The City reports quarterly to the US Treasury and submits a comprehensive report to Council each quarter. These are on the City website, and the last report is attached for your convenience. In regard to business awards, we attached a spreadsheet of those grants and their status. To answer the last part of the question, four total businesses were awarded and ultimately did not receive funds. This was reported to Council in the August 25, 2024, and January 9, 2024, reports (attached). The first two businesses, Unison Workforce and Autobahn Title & Tag, were announced as Wage Boost grant recipients in July 2023. Following additional review, the City discovered that the employees designated to benefit from higher wages were deemed ineligible due to either partial ownership of the business or possession of equity stock in the company. The third business, Pocono Liquidations, applied and were awarded while they operated in Scranton. Prior to receiving funds, the business moved out of the City. Based on the grant guidance, they were then deemed ineligible and did not receive funding. The funding was subsequently reallocated. As a note, much disinformation has been spread online regarding Pocono Liquidations. The business was eligible to apply at the time they did, and they did nothing wrong. While we hope all businesses remain in Scranton, we wish them well and hope the misinformation being spread about their business ceases. The fourth business, the Creative and Performing Arts Academy of NEPA (CaPAA) was awarded a Wage Boost grant in July 2023. They encountered organizational difficulties around November 2023 and decided that they were unable to utilize this award.

3. Councilman Mark McAndrew asked the following:

- a. **May Council have the latest update on the HUP Test. Mr. McAndrew and Mr. Schuster asked for the most recent listing of those that qualify or do not qualify for non-profit status. It was also stated that information was provided to the Scranton School District and both asked if any information has been received back from the district to the city?**

- i. The Assessor's Office initially sent a letter of inquiry to nonprofits in May 2025 requesting verification of tax-exempt status. In September 2025, the Assessor's Office was in the process of drafting a second letter to nonprofits who did not respond to the initial mailing when the Assessor's Office informed the City that they were too busy with reassessment to complete the letter until the County reassessment was completed. The City set up and conducted a meeting with the Lackawanna County Assessor's Office on 1/6/26. The Assessor's Office is currently drafting a second letter that will be sent to nonprofits that did not respond to the May

2025 letter or provided incomplete information.

b. Mr. McAndrew asked if the City Administration and Reilly Associates may reach out to Norfolk Southern Railroad and PennDOT and see if there is a solution to the truck accidents and damage to the bridge and road area. Mr. McAndrew asked if all parties (city, railroad and PennDOT) may possibly consider implementing the attached height clearance curtain apparatus system, currently used by the City of San Antonio, Texas, with all parties contributing to both the cost of the installation and the maintenance.

- i. City officials and Reilly Associates have had a number of meetings with PennDOT. As you know, this is a state road. PennDOT recognizes the issue with height clearance and is working on a plan to address it. As a first step, PennDOT has designed and will deploy additional signage. Reilly has researched and sent PennDOT recommendations for additional solutions including adding chimes/curtains to an existing mast arm of current PennDOT infrastructure.

c. Regarding the Social Contract, LLC consulting firm contracted by the city, Mr. McAndrew asked for an update and any recent reports provided by the firm. Mr. McAndrew also asked for a Council caucus to include the city administration and Social Contract, LLC company.

- i. Social Contract, LLC, in partnership with the City, County, and Scranton School District, along with a planning committee comprised of multiple agencies and community partners has developed recommendations for advancing a community violence intervention plan titled “Pathways to Safer Communities.” The draft plan is currently undergoing final edits by the aforementioned partners and is expected to be forwarded within the next few weeks.

While the “Pathways to Safer Communities” plan is being finalized, the City, School District, and County discussed and agreed to execute an extension of their contract with Social Contract, LLC. City, County, and School District officials meet on a weekly basis as a core team to advance the work and to provide guidance and clarification for other stakeholders in the community. This extended engagement will support the launch of an independent nonprofit organization to serve as a backbone organization for the violence reduction initiative. Guided by a Board of Directors, with input from the partners including the School District, City, and County, the backbone organization will hire a director to oversee operations, drive collective impact efforts, manage shared measurement systems, and facilitate continuous communication among partners within the violence reduction ecosystem. This structure reinforces the understanding that reducing violence requires a whole-community approach, with residents, nonprofits, government, schools, health systems, and law enforcement collaborating through a collective impact and public health framework.

A Council caucus can be scheduled based on the availability of the City Council, City Administration, County, School District, and representatives from Social Contract, LLC. Please provide dates/times for scheduling.

4. Council Vice President Patrick Flynn asked:

a. Mr. Flynn asked that Council please be provided with the city road pave list for 2026, if yet available?

- i. The pave list for 2026 is under review with the City engineer. If council has any roads they wish to add to the review, please forward them to the project management office.

b. Mr. Flynn expressed concern and interest in the lack of a “zero dollar” ambulance contract available to the city. The councilman asked if the city may revisit the discussions with PA Ambulance related to providing their services to the city.

- i. Chief John Judge can meet with Councilmember Flynn, as well as the chair of the committee on public safety, to discuss this complex issue.

5. Council member Dr. Jessica Rothchild asked if the federal Immigration & Customs Enforcement department has enlisted the use of city SPD cameras during their recent enforcement efforts in the city. Dr. Rothchild also asked what role, if any, the city is taking related to enforcement by I.C.E.?

- a. The City of Scranton and the Scranton Police Department have received no requests for access to our public safety system from ICE in any capacity. ICE operates independent of SPD when they work in Scranton. SPD mainly enforces the Pennsylvania Crimes Code, the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code, and City of Scranton ordinances. It does not have jurisdiction to enforce federal immigration statutes.