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1 SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

2

3 (SNOW REMOVAL CAUCUS)

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6 Held:

7 Thursday, February 22, 2007

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10 Time:

11 6:30 p.m.

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14 Location:

15 Council Chambers

16 Scranton City Hall

17 340 North Washington Avenue

18 Scranton, Pennsylvania

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24 Lisa M. Graff, RMR

25 Court Reporter

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1 CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

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3 MS. JUDY GATELLI, COUNCIL PRESIDENT

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5 MR. WILLIAM COURTRIGHT, VICE-PRESIDENT

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7 MS. JANET EVANS

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9 MS. SHERRY NEALON FANUCCI

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11 MR. ROBERT MCGOFF

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13 MR. JOHN MINORA, ESQUIRE, SOLICITOR

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15 MS. KAY GARVEY, CITY CLERK

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17 MS. SUE MAGNOTTA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

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1 MS. GATELLI: Okay. Please stand

2 for the Pledge Of Allegiance. Please remain

3 standing for a moment of reflection. Roll

4 call.

5 MS. MAGNOTTA: Mrs. Evans.

6 MS. EVANS: Here.

7 MS. MAGNOTTA: Mrs. Fanucci.

8 MS. FANUCCI: Here.

9 MS. MAGNOTTA: Mr. McGoff.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Here.

11 MS. MAGNOTTA: Mr. Courtright.

12 MR. COURTRIGHT: Here.

13 MS. MAGNOTTA: Mrs. Gatelli.

14 MS. GATELLI: Here. Would someone

15 make a motion to suspend the rules?

16 MR. MCGOFF: So moved.

17 MS. EVANS: Second.

18 MS. GATELLI: All in favor?

19 MS. EVANS: Aye.

20 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Aye.

21 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

22 MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

23 MS. GATELLI: Aye. Opposed? The

24 ayes have it and so moved. We will be

25 suspending the rules this evening because we

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4

1 have some of the administration here. I did

2 speak to George Parker today and asked if he

3 would come to discuss some of the problems

4 that we had with the snowstorm, and he so

5 graciously agreed to be here with us.

6 And I spoke with Mayor Doherty at

7 about a quarter to five, and he told me that

8 Chief Elliott and Chief Davis would also be

9 here.

10 I also talked to Dave Shreiber this

11 afternoon and discussed with him some of the

12 fire department issues regarding the fire on

13 Acker Avenue, and he also stated to me that

14 he would be in attendance at tonight's

15 meeting.

16 So, we will have this caucus with

17 Council and Council members can ask

18 questions. Dave, you can sit up here, sur.

19 No, the public cannot ask questions during a

20 caucus. A caucus is just Council with the

21 cabinet members.

22 I would also like to ask Mr. McGoff,

23 being that that is his committee, public

24 works is his committee, if he would work

25 together with Mr. Parker in a plan that we

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1 can all live with to address some of the

2 problems that we're having, and we need as

3 much input as possible from Council members,

4 the public, anyone who has any ideas and

5 suggestions of better ways in which to

6 address a snowstorm of this magnitude.

7 As you all know, the state had a

8 problem with the highways being closed, and

9 I just caught the tail end of the news

10 tonight. They had hearings in Harrisburg

11 concerning some the reasons why they weren't

12 prepared for the storm.

13 I've been down to Wilkes-Barre,

14 Wilkes-Barre is in the same shape that we

15 are. I've been up to Jessup and Archbald,

16 and they're in the same condition we are,

17 too.

18 So, I think that there were some

19 probably some extenuating circumstances with

20 the ice that we had, however, I am not in

21 any way saying that the streets are

22 acceptable.

23 I have been in touch with Mr.

24 Parker, Mr. Elliott, I talked to Sam Vitras

25 as late at one o'clock in the morning almost

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6

1 every night during the storm telling him of

2 people that were calling my home.

3 They were very receptive. Everyone

4 complaint that I got was addressed. People

5 that didn't get their complaints addressed,

6 we can apologize, but Council is not

7 responsible. We're only a conduit to the

8 administration.

9 And some people didn't get their

10 areas covered that I did give, one is here

11 tonight, and I see her in the back, my dear

12 friend Miss Julie, and I did give that

13 address several times.

14 I think they don't realize it's a

15 street, and that's -- that's a problem, too,

16 you know, when they go somewhere and they

17 don't realize that that is actually a

18 street, that people need to get there for

19 their garages, et cetera.

20 I did go with the mayor and Mr.

21 Parker the night after the storm when the

22 Council meeting was cancelled and I took

23 them to places where I had received

24 complaints, and we visited each one of them,

25 and Mr. Parker had those addressed during

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7

1 the night.

2 The pack master was already in

3 Minooka when we got there working on certain

4 areas back there that weren't done.

5 So, I have to say that I did get
6 cooperation from the administration,
7 however, there's definitely a problem when
8 you have to drive down the street and all
9 you do you is back up. I've done more
10 backing up this week than I've done my whole
11 life.

12 And, you know, it's hard for people.
13 Some people can't back up, and you have to
14 when there's only one lane open.

15 So, yes, there was a problem, and
16 all the screaming and yelling and hollering
17 is not going to rectify it. We know there's
18 a problem. I think Mr. Parker agrees
19 there's a problem.

20 The mayor spoke with me this
21 afternoon and said, yes, there was a
22 problem, but get as much input as you can,
23 have everyone contribute, and we're going to
24 work on a plan to try to do it better the
25 next time.

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1 So, that's about all I have to say.

2 Mr. Parker, would you like to start, and,
3 you know, maybe say what some of the
4 problems you've seen during the storm or any
5 particular issues that you would like to
6 discuss? And thank you all for being here,
7 Mr. Shreiber, you also. Thank you.

8 MR. PARKER: I believe the foremost
9 problem with the storm was the storm itself
10 and the makeup of it.
11 The storm was in phases. The type
12 of precipitation was in layers. Initially
13 we had a granular-type of storm which would
14 have been really fine, would have been
15 really easy to move, but that was followed
16 by approximately five hours of sleet, and
17 then there was another snowfall on top of
18 that, which I believe the television station
19 said was failing at the rate of one and a
20 half inches per hour.

21 Once a storm continues for that many
22 hours, it becomes that much more difficult
23 to remove it, for a number of reasons.
24 Number one, you have traffic running over
25 material you're trying to remove; number

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1 two, the number of hours takes its toll on
2 the people driving the equipment, and number
3 three, you will eventually get some type of
4 breakdown on a vehicle, whether it's
5 something as minor as a windshield wiper or
6 something more serious as an axle in a
7 transmission.

8 The storm was difficult to combat.

9 The storm, in my estimation, was the most
10 difficult I ever had to deal with, which
11 concludes 28 years with the Department of
12 Transportation.

13 It was most the difficult one to
14 deal with since I've been with the City of
15 Scranton. When I first came into this
16 position we were under a snowfall condition
17 at that time, however, the composition of it
18 was easier to remove than this was or has
19 been and still is.

20 We dispatched people to combat the
21 storm at eight o'clock on the night of the
22 13th, and we have had people for at least

23 five days working around the clock. When I
24 say around the clock, I mean in shifts, of
25 course.

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10

1 We still have not finished cleaning
2 up areas, mainly courts. We still have
3 areas where we need to do what's called a
4 cut back to move the snow even further back
5 from the lanes, and we understand that we
6 still need to do more work.

7 MS. GATELLI: Okay. Does any

8 Council members --

9 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Parker, could you
10 briefly delineate what the standing plan is
11 for snow removal, how it's approached, and
12 perhaps what adjustments you may have made
13 during the course of the storm to alter the
14 plan?

15 MR. PARKER: Okay. Initially when a
16 snowfall begins, depending on the rate that
17 it's falling, let's say a normal snowfall,
18 we immediately call out at least six trucks,
19 that being for each north, south, east and

20 west section of the city, one for East
21 Mountain and one for West Mountain.
22 As the storm begins or as the storm
23 continues rather, we bring out up to 15
24 trucks. That is the size of the fleet that
25 we have.

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11

1 We then continue as many hours as it
2 takes during the storm to remove material
3 from the roads. And depending on whether
4 it's a deep heavy snow, in other words, you
5 keep trying to remove, if it's a storm of
6 short duration and small depth, as they pass
7 by with the plows, they immediately apply
8 anti-skid and/or salt. The amount of time,
9 of course, that it takes depends on the
10 length of the storm.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Might I -- I'm sorry.

12 MR. PARKER: Go ahead.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Is there an order in
14 which streets are addressed or certain
15 routes are addressed during the course of
16 this?

17 MR. PARKER: Yes, there are. As you
18 are aware, some of the streets within the
19 City of Scranton are state highways, of
20 course, they are being cleaned by the
21 Department of Transportation.

22 And the only reason I bring THAT UP
23 IS, those are your primary routes through
24 the city.

25 The additional what may be deemed by
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1 people to be primary routes that are city
2 owned streets are the focus of our first
3 concern. The primary routes, such as roads
4 to hospitals or routes used by emergency
5 vehicles to the hospitals, routes for fire
6 equipment that are primary routes to a
7 section of the city.

8 We then look at routes for -- that
9 are used by school busses, et cetera, and
10 traffic to schools. And once you get
11 through them, then you are into all your
12 side streets, et cetera.

13 Once you are able to complete them,

14 you begin addressing courts and allies.
15 This is not to say we don't address any
16 courts and allies in a shorter period of
17 time, there is an emergency that we are
18 informed of, for example, by the police
19 department, the fire department, and/or
20 communication center, then we will probably
21 address that court, but we do not do it in
22 that order normally.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

24 MR. COURTRIGHT: I have a couple
25 things, Mr. Parker. I had called Mr. Parker

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1 when the snowstorm first started, as Mr.

2 Elliott knows.

3 I know a lot of police officers, and

4 two called me that haven't called me once

5 since I've been on City Council and they

6 said they hadn't seen any plows out, could I

7 check, and I called Mr. Parker and I asked

8 him. He said he had 11 plows out and three,

9 I believe, private contractors.

10 So, I didn't call back. If I knew

11 that I could get you to plow certain
12 streets, I would have certainly called you
13 again. I'll do that the next storm.

14 MR. PARKER: I'm sorry. I didn't
15 hear you.

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: I said, I didn't
17 know -- Mrs. Gatelli got you to plow certain
18 streets, I didn't think you were taking
19 requests from us, or else I would have
20 absolutely gave you some requests. I got
21 hundreds of them.

22 But what I did was I am going to try
23 to stay on a positive note, because I know
24 we could do a lot of finger pointing.

25 I went to former city officials this
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14

1 past week, former DPW people this past week,
2 and these were the suggestions that were
3 given to me, and if you feel they're good,
4 I'd ask you to implement them, if not, maybe
5 you can explain to me at a later date why.

6 One of the main things they told me
7 was that we need to go back to the way we

8 used to do things.
9 I'm 49 years old, I've never seen
10 the roads this bad in all the years I've
11 lived in this city. And this is -- these
12 are former city officials and DPW employees.
13 They said we need to go back to
14 putting plows on garbage trucks. Who knows
15 better the streets of this city than the men
16 that are picking up the garbage every day?
17 And that would almost double the fleet,
18 they're telling me.
19 One that was a song sung by
20 everybody I spoke to said that in the event
21 of a storm that we know is coming, that
22 their recommendation was to go out with not
23 a mix of anti-skid and rock salt,
24 100 percent rock salt, put it down even
25 before the storm hits.

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1 If, in fact, the storm doesn't hit,
2 you look bad, but they said what they had
3 done in the past, they put it down, and if
4 we get 10, 15 inches, obviously it's not

5 going to melt the 10 or 15 away, but it
6 makes it much easier to plow afterwards.
7 For Mr. Elliott, Dave -- I'm sorry I call
8 Dave Dave, because I know him, so I call him
9 by his first name.

10 Chains on the police vehicles, I
11 know in this administration no more, and I
12 understand the reason why, damage possibly
13 to vehicles.

14 But, in my opinion, when we have a
15 situation like we did this last week, maybe
16 the first day or two the people of this city
17 are dependent on us, public officials, to
18 take care of them, because, you know, do for
19 them what they can't do for themselves.

20 So, I would ask if we have an event
21 like this that we consider putting chains on
22 at least some of the police cars so they can
23 get to where they need to get to.

24 I know we had a lot of them stuck,
25 and I'm trying to go as quickly as possible

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16

1 here.

2 Snow emergency routes, I didn't see
3 it, I don't know if it was you, Mr. Parker,
4 or the mayor or somebody said that we
5 haven't followed the snow emergency routes
6 since the sixties.

7 I spoke to Mayor McNulty, he said in
8 1986, he was still doing it. They had
9 signage. I remember the signage. So, I
10 agree, too, that maybe we should have the
11 emergency routes posted mainly for the
12 hospitals and whatnot, what roads are the
13 emergencies that are going to be getting
14 done first so cars can get off of those
15 roads.

16 And I think everybody agrees, I
17 think somebody said you also mentioned this,
18 the alternate street parking, odd/even
19 parking.

20 And it was asked to me, wouldn't
21 that be an inconvenience to the neighbors?
22 And I thought, well, better to be
23 inconvenient for one or two days than nine,
24 such as we are now.

25 One big problem, and I think this

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1 should be addressed very soon, I don't want
2 to really speak on the fire, because that
3 was a tragedy and I'm not going to talk
4 about that, but one thing I heard -- I was
5 there, I was at the fire, and as you all
6 know you could hear the Comm Center talking
7 over the loud speaker, and when the Comm
8 Center had to say, could you send -- I
9 believe they're calling a command car to
10 send a squad car to the DPW to ask them to
11 get a salt truck up there at the fire scene
12 because they can't get through to the Comm
13 Center, it baffles me why the Comm Center
14 doesn't have a direct line as they would --
15 I mean, they can get Chief Elliott, they can
16 get Chief Davis any time they want.
17 You know, and that -- I think if you
18 listen, you'd hear that probably 100 times
19 during this storm the Comm Center would say
20 to the police or fire, whoever is calling
21 them, we can't get through to the DPW, the
22 phone must be off the hook or whatever.

23 So, I think we need a dedicated
24 line. I think that needs to be done
25 immediately.

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1 If the police can't get a hold of
2 the DPW, then we're in some serious trouble.
3 They're not calling for jokes, they're
4 serious and they're calling in, it's a
5 serious situation, possibly an emergency.

6 And I don't want to take up -- I
7 know everybody has things to say, and I
8 don't want to, you know, step on anybody's
9 toes here, but they were just some of the
10 things. I have other things that I'll
11 discuss with you at a later date.

12 I do believe that we need to have a
13 committee, and obviously Mr. McGoff, that's
14 his committee, and maybe one other of us,
15 and maybe some citizens and see what we
16 could or can't do.

17 MS. EVANS: Mr. Courtright, I
18 believe you should be on that committee as
19 chair of public safety, and perhaps your

20 partner could be Chief Elliott and approach
21 it from that point, as well as through the
22 DPW.

23 MR. COURTRIGHT: I would be happy to
24 do that. There was one other thing, and
25 when she spoke, I lost my train of thought.

19

1 That's all right.

2 Well, let me just say this, I don't
3 know how much heat, sleet, hail and snow
4 came down at what time, I know it was bad,
5 but I can recall during the Connors
6 Administration two blizzards, all right, and
7 then during the McNulty, I believe, 20 to 21
8 inches, and somehow we handled it.

9 So, maybe we need to take a step
10 back and take a look and see what they did
11 differently than what we're doing now.

12 And, again, I'm not trying to point
13 fingers, I just don't want to see happen any
14 time in the future, whether it's this
15 administration or a future administration,
16 have the problems that we have existing now.

17 There's still, still a lot of places
18 that are bad, I believe, where you can't
19 make turns.
20 As far as DPW, you can only ask so
21 much of a worker. They can only work so
22 many hours. And I know some people are
23 upset with the fact that we use private
24 haulers, but I think in a storm of this
25 magnitude, we need to use private haulers.

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1 A man can't drive 24 hours, you
2 know, he's going to end up getting in an
3 accident.
4 I would hope that, and I don't know
5 if you have this, do you or do you not have
6 private haulers on standby that we call as
7 soon as we know this event is going to be
8 and say, you know, we want you to be ready
9 to come out.
10 And one last thing, and I'll let the
11 rest of you speak, I don't know what ton
12 trucks you call them, but the little red
13 trucks I always see Sam Vitras and Ernie

14 DeStefano driving in, to me they're
15 virtually worthless on big streets.
16 I could see small streets and
17 allies. We need those big type trucks
18 coming down to plow a snowstorm like this,
19 and that's why I think the garbage trucks
20 could possible handle this.
21 I understand there's going to be a
22 cost for putting rigging and whatnot on the
23 garbage trucks, and I'm not asking for the
24 garbage trucks to be used in every single
25 storm event, just in a major one, such as
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1 this. And I'm sure they'll cover whatever I
2 didn't. I thank you for listening.

3 MR. PARKER: May I address some of
4 these issues?

5 MS. GATELLI: Yes.

6 MR. PARKER: First of all, we're
7 open to any suggestion from Council or the
8 public or whomever. We're open to working
9 with people, working with Council, to get
10 better solutions to any problem that we have

11 in the Department of Public Works.
12 I can tell you that when I was with
13 PennDOT, I worked on a snow task force in
14 Pike County for nine months with the county
15 commissioners or their representatives,
16 people from the general public, et cetera,
17 and I know these things are beneficial, and,
18 again, I'm very willing to do that.
19 I'm willing to work with you, sir,
20 Mr. Courtright, Mr. McGoff, who, I believe,
21 is the designee for public works, also, and
22 work with both of you and whomever you
23 designate.

24 With regard to your first suggestion
25 with plows on the garbage trucks, I believe
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22

1 that is more successful in a place such as
2 New York City, where you have flat areas.
3 It is very difficult to do snowplowing with
4 a pack master, so to speak.
5 We have a lot of hills in Scranton,
6 and trying to push snow with one of those
7 vehicles is difficult.

8 Relative to 100 percent salt prior

9 to a storm, while I agree with the concept,

10 I would not agree with the material.

11 Prior to the storm, placing salt, it

12 will be blown off the road and be in the

13 gutter line before precipitation gets on top

14 of it.

15 You are probably aware of or have

16 probably seen the liquid distributor-type

17 trucks that are used by PennDOT. That, to

18 me, would be an excellent concept to use in

19 Scranton for this reason.

20 MR. COURTRIGHT: We don't have that,

21 though, correct?

22 MR. PARKER: Understood. But I'm

23 not saying we shouldn't buy one. In

24 actuality, that type of an application and

25 that type of a truck would work better on a

.

23

1 city street than it does a state highway,

2 because when it is placed on a state

3 highway, you probably seen it, it's many

4 hours before the storm.

5 As the high speed of vehicles, a lot
6 of that gets blown away. I know it's not
7 granular, but it still gets blown away.
8 Tires track it up and it leaves the
9 pavement.

10 Where you have low speed limits,
11 such as 25 miles per hour in the city, that
12 will remain on the pavement where you want
13 it for a longer period of time.

14 So, yes, I agree that an application
15 prior to the storm is good, however, it
16 would have to be something liquid.

17 Chains on the police vehicles, I
18 will not address, that is not my business.

19 Snow emergency routes, I'm very
20 familiar with snow emergency routes, I
21 remember them when I was a kid, we had signs
22 -- there was signs on the poles, top half
23 was red, bottom half was white, and all the
24 language was there.

25 I don't know if there are any of

.

24

1 those remaining --

2 MR. COURTRIGHT: I couldn't find

3 them.

4 MR. PARKER: -- on any utility

5 poles. I do believe they are excellent, and

6 our own city code provides that snow

7 emergency routes can be used and marked by

8 the Department of Public Safety Director and

9 Director of Department of Public Works.

10 I would very much like to sit down

11 with people and designate what those routes

12 are. They may all already be in some

13 archives somewhere actually designated, so

14 there's no effort at all. Putting them back

15 into effect, I think, is an excellent idea.

16 Alternate parking, I was interviewed

17 by a reporter on December the 6th of 2006

18 regarding snow removal efforts, and one of

19 the things that I pointed out to him and

20 asked him to put in the article was a

21 request to people of the city to voluntarily

22 do this for the good of the people trying to

23 remove the snow, as well as the citizens

24 themselves.

25 Isn't it a lot easier to know that

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25

1 on an odd day if you don't park on that side
2 and there's a snowstorm, the Department of
3 Public Works will try to plow that and you
4 don't spend hours digging out a parking
5 space. Conversely, if it's an even day, the
6 reverse.

7 If the storm lasts for a couple days
8 or is difficult to remove, you may have to
9 do it for a couple days.

10 But, in my opinion, that
11 inconvenience is worth all of that labor to
12 say nothing of the mounds of snow that are
13 left now, which are turning to ice.

14 Relative to the comments by former
15 officials of the city, I take them as good
16 points. I will tell you again, however,
17 that even the blizzards that were in the
18 past, and I will speak of anything from late
19 1960s on that I was aware of from a work
20 standpoint, this particular storm was the
21 most difficult to deal with because of the
22 composition, and I won't keep reiterating

23 that.

24 MS. GATELLI: Anyone else?

25 MS. EVANS: Yes. Indeed the

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26

1 composition of the storm was very trying,
2 but the weather predictions were also made
3 well in advance. I remember hearing them,
4 oh, at least 48 hours in advance and that
5 there would be a change over to sleet and
6 freezing rain and then a change over, once
7 again, to heavy snow that would continue
8 throughout Wednesday. Now, in advance of
9 that storm, was anything placed on the
10 roads?

11 MR. PARKER: No, there was not, for
12 the reason I stated before. Placing
13 anti-skid material, which is like sand,
14 granular and/or salt as we buy it and store
15 it, like you see in the bins, would not
16 remain on the pavement. The vehicles
17 driving over it would just keep blowing it
18 off to the gutter line.

19 The only thing that would work in a

20 situation like that is what I was saying
21 before, liquid material, which is sprayed
22 onto the road, and it will last for several
23 hours, and then as the storm begins to fall,
24 begins to form a water film underneath it.

25 MR. COURTRIGHT: Mrs. Evans, could i
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27

1 interrupt you for one second? I'm sorry.

2 Is that a possibility that there's any
3 funding for us to be able to get that type
4 of vehicle or is that -- like, is there any
5 type of grants that would be available for
6 that or are we just going to have to come up
7 with that in a capital-budget-type-thing?

8 MR. PARKER: I will say that I am
9 not aware of any grants. That doesn't mean
10 we can't look into that.

11 MR. COURTRIGHT: I think we all
12 agree, that that's something this city could
13 certainly use.

14 MS. EVANS: Well, actually I don't
15 know why the city doesn't have it. If Mr.
16 Parker is aware that the other materials

17 that are available to the city are of
18 absolutely no use, why are we prepared then
19 with nothing?

20 MR. PARKER: Well, I say of no use
21 prior to the storm.

22 MS. EVANS: Prior to the storm, yes.

23 Could you tell me, please, how many shifts
24 were working on February 13 and 14th, and
25 how many men per shift?

28

1 MR. PARKER: We made our first call
2 out, I believe, at eight o'clock p.m. on the
3 13th, which was approximately the time the
4 storm began.

5 We had persons driving anywhere from
6 13 to 15 trucks with plows for 24 hours a
7 day, I believe, into the 15th, and maybe
8 even the 16th. And I don't mean to be
9 factitious but I'm starting to loose track
10 of days. But we did have people, suffice it
11 to say, 24 hours a day.

12 MS. EVANS: 24 hours a day from
13 February 13 at 8 p.m. to February 15

14 approximately. And do you know how many DPW

15 workers were employed on those days during

16 those shifts?

17 MR. PARKER: Some of them worked

18 more than eight hours a day, some of them

19 worked 12, some of them worked longer.

20 We were to the point by the 14th

21 that we were doing callouts of pack master

22 drivers, also, to supplement the people in

23 the roads and highway sections in order so

24 they could get some sleep.

25 So, at any given day or any given

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1 hour, there were 13 or 15 people driving

2 plows and trucks, plus you have to include

3 loader operators.

4 MS. EVANS: So, you said you had, I

5 believe, 15 trucks out 24 hours a day.

6 That's our entire fleet, our entire force in

7 terms of snow removal?

8 MR. PARKER: Because of the amount

9 of equipment, yes. Now, in addition to

10 that, we supplemented those people with

11 subcontractors.

12 MS. EVANS: Yes. Do you know how
13 many contractors? I believe it was stated
14 in the newspaper that ten were hired and
15 that we had 12 trucks on the road, 12 DPW
16 trucks.

17 MR. PARKER: They were brought out
18 at different times, so at any given time, I
19 don't know how many were out. There were in
20 excess of 15 that were probably about 20, if
21 you count contractors.

22 MS. EVANS: Do you know how many
23 trucks the city utilized, let's say, ten
24 years ago for a snow removal?

25 MR. PARKER: I do not.

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1 MS. EVANS: Perhaps we can get the
2 information later, maybe from Mr. Vitras,
3 but I had heard it numbered in the thirties,
4 which might begin to explain why the snow
5 removal was more efficient years ago.

6 Can you tell me, please, why the DPW
7 continued to collect trash on Wednesday,

8 February 13?

9 MR. PARKER: If I can, may I go back

10 to your other statement first --

11 MS. EVANS: Yes.

12 MR. PARKER: -- relative to the 30

13 trucks. The only way that I can see that

14 the department could operate 30 trucks would

15 be have 30 operators. We don't have that

16 many operators. So, maybe in those years,

17 there were that many people working that

18 could do that.

19 Your question relative to collecting

20 refuse, in the initial hours of the storm,

21 we had people reporting to work, those who

22 were in the highway section, those who were

23 in the refuse and recycling section.

24 After every snow removal vehicle was

25 manned, I took the stance that we're not

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1 going to send everybody home. Let's at

2 least make an effort to collect some of the

3 refuse, we would be that much less far

4 behind than we would be if we didn't, so

5 that was the only reason.

6 MS. EVANS: Well, I'm not an

7 engineer, but I would believe that the men

8 would be better used in some capacity

9 towards snow removal, rather than trash

10 collection.

11 But I do believe the DPW workers did

12 a sterling job and continue to do so, and I

13 realize that they take orders from

14 superiors, and they are doing what they are

15 told to do, they are going where they are

16 told to go.

17 MR. PARKER: Please understand, when

18 you talk refuse and recycling, you have,

19 say, 10 or 11 refuse trucks and four or five

20 recycling trucks at any given time, so let's

21 use the number 15, in order to put those

22 trucks on the road, you need 45 people, you

23 need a driver and two collectors on each

24 one.

25 If the drivers are being used for

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1 snow removal, the other 30 people, there's

2 no sense sending them home.

3 You can't shovel it with laborers,

4 so in the effort to get some refuse

5 collected and recycling, that's why it was

6 my decision to send them.

7 MS. EVANS: But I think, again, as

8 Mr. Courtright already mentioned, there were

9 for many years plows on, I don't know if you

10 want to call them pack masters, and in that

11 event, you know, certainly if we were still

12 as well equipped as once we were, those men

13 wouldn't have to go home, they would have

14 work to do, and it would be work that was

15 critical at that point in time.

16 MR. PARKER: May I also add, in the

17 years you're talking about, and I don't know

18 exactly when they were, but they may have

19 been in the days when refuse was being

20 collected in dump trucks, too, not pack

21 masters.

22 MR. COURTRIGHT: I'm talking about

23 pack masters, and I hate to interrupt you

24 again, but you've done that to me, so I

25 don't feel too bad.

1 MS. EVANS: Absolutely.

2 MR. COURTRIGHT: I'm not going to
3 put Mrs. Garvey on the spot, but her street
4 didn't get plowed until Saturday after the
5 storm, the 2200 of Ballau.

6 And I'm not going to say any refuse
7 workers names, because I don't want to get
8 anybody mad at their coworkers, but they're
9 saying that if it was a guy driving a pack
10 master. He knows which way to get to her
11 street.

12 You had a plow truck one block away
13 from her street that wouldn't go down it
14 because they were afraid of getting stuck.
15 And I don't know if the guy wasn't familiar
16 with the area or not.

17 That's why I thought if somebody
18 driving a pack master, they're in that area
19 all the time, who better knows than that
20 individual?

21 MR. PARKER: Well, you need to
22 understand, too, that the driver who's

23 driving that plow truck is aware of what
24 conditions he can attempt to do something.

25 Understand that those persons

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1 driving those plow trucks are familiar with
2 their areas, also. We don't keep sending
3 people to different sections of the city.
4 Most people have a designated area,
5 and once we have a snow call out, they know
6 automatically what area they're going to;
7 for example, you're going to Green Ridge or
8 you're going to North Scranton or you're
9 going to East Mountain or you're going to
10 Keyser Valley.

11 Each operator, for the most part,
12 unless people are sick or whatever, are
13 going to the area during the storm seasons.

14 MR. COURTRIGHT: Okay. Sorry.

15 MS. EVANS: That's okay. Were there
16 prearranged locations designated for the
17 deposit of snow?

18 MR. PARKER: Once we were hauling,
19 we were -- we had, in previous years at

20 least during my tenure, used the South Side
21 Complex, a portion of Nay Aug Park and the
22 farmer's market, and this year we also used
23 the land The Ice Box on Providence Road.

24 MS. EVANS: It's my understanding
25 that some of the subcontractors, when they
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1 approached the South Side Complex, they were
2 turned away by another contractor, who's
3 employed by both the University of Scranton
4 and the City of Scranton, and they were told
5 this is the University's property, and get
6 going.

7 They then travelled to the area of
8 the farmer's market to try to deposit the
9 snow. Once again, they were told, this is
10 private property, get going. And then at
11 that point, and from that, let's say, point
12 in time forward, the snow was taken to the
13 area of the Riverfront Sports Complex for
14 all deposit.

15 MR. PARKER: Okay. May I give you
16 my version of that story?

17 MS. EVANS: Certainly.

18 MR. PARKER: Thank you. We asked in
19 advance relative to departmenting snow at
20 the South Side Complex. All the time that
21 the city was hauling snow, we were hauling
22 it to the South Side Complex until such time
23 as we couldn't fit any more there.

24 We then began hauling snow to the
25 real estate owned by the farmer's market.

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1 We hauled snow there during one night.
2 I did receive a call the next
3 morning asking me that we no longer haul it
4 there.

5 We then began to haul it to the area
6 of the -- the open area in front of The Ice
7 Box and the sports complex property, and
8 that was by permission, also.

9 As I said, prior years, we had also
10 hauled some to Nay Aug, the area --

11 MS. EVANS: Was Nay Aug utilized?

12 MR. PARKER: I did not use Nay Aug
13 this year, and for the simple reason, I

14 didn't really want to use it other years

15 because of the hauling distance.

16 MS. EVANS: Because of the, I'm

17 sorry?

18 MR. PARKER: Hauling distance, plus

19 the fact you're constantly climbing hills.

20 MS. EVANS: Well, it appears --

21 MR. PARKER: Well, it could be used.

22 MS. EVANS: Yes, I believe it should

23 be used. And I find IT troubling that

24 citizens tell me Nay Aug was nicely cleaned,

25 they had no probably walking their dogs, but

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1 they couldn't, you know, people on the

2 streets couldn't get out of their homes to

3 go to work.

4 So, I don't -- and I have to say,

5 though, I also heard that A good deal of

6 that work was performed by Parks and

7 Recreation, not the DPW.

8 But I do think, again, that's

9 unfortunate. Why isn't Parks and Recreation

10 then working hand and hand with the DPW to

11 clear the streets?

12 I don't think Nay Aug is the

13 priority, and I do believe Nay Aug is the

14 perfect depository for the snow.

15 I think it has been alluded to

16 earlier that selective snow removal has

17 occurred; in that, individuals are able to

18 present lists to either the DPW or lists are

19 given to contractors to go to specific areas

20 for snow removal.

21 And though I do agree with what you

22 originally stated in terms of your snow

23 removal plans, you know, the state --

24 PennDOT clears K routes. The city, well,

25 you were saying the state clears the

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1 state-owned streets, the city clears the

2 city-owned streets and you begin with the

3 main arteries, and that would cover those

4 areas in which school buses travel, those

5 that could be travelled by public safety,

6 the areas of hospitals, et cetera, and I'm

7 certainly in agreement with that.

8 But I have to say, I don't believe
9 in the capacity of anyone from a mayor to a
10 Council member to any city employee getting
11 special or preferential treatment for any
12 blocks over other blocks.

13 I know of one time since I've been
14 seated that I made a phone call about this,
15 and it was during a snowstorm, and I spoke
16 with Mr. Vitras, and I asked him, and it was
17 in the evening, I had been contacted by an
18 individual who's husband was ill and he was
19 scheduled for a surgery to go in for a
20 surgery at 5 a.m., and they were snowed in,
21 and it was imperative that he be at that
22 hospital for that surgery with this
23 particular surgeon, and Mr. Vitras was
24 wonderful, and it was taken care of
25 immediately, and they were able to get to

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1 the hospital.

2 But outside of that, I believe that
3 everyone in this city living on every street
4 and every court and every alley and every

5 place deserves the same treatment.

6 MS. GATELLI: They do, Mrs. Evans,

7 and I know you're referring to me when

8 you're saying that, but when I got the calls

9 at my house, they couldn't get -- reach the

10 DPW, and I felt that I had to tell Mr.

11 Parker the people that were complaining.

12 As a matter of fact, two of them

13 were dialysis patients that were snowed in

14 and couldn't get to dialysis, so they were

15 medical emergencies.

16 MS. EVANS: When it's a medical

17 emergency, I can certainly agree with that,

18 but --

19 MS. GATELLI: Well, I am going to

20 continue to report any phone call that I

21 get.

22 MS. EVANS: And I know, like Mr.

23 Courtright said, we were all inundated with

24 phone calls, I received letters, as well,

25 and people are telling me they missed days

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1 of work, that actual residents went out to

2 clear their own streets, residents helping

3 residents.

4 Those who happen to own their own

5 trucks or plow trucks getting out there

6 utilizing those, using their own shovels and

7 their own labor to get things done that were

8 not done for these people by the City of

9 Scranton, whether it's through the DPW or

10 any of the subcontractors. And I really

11 don't agree.

12 As much as we all heard the

13 complaints and the pleas of countless

14 citizens, I don't believe in preferential

15 treatment, and I don't believe in political

16 treatment either. Everyone sitting here

17 pays taxes.

18 MS. GATELLI: And they all deserve

19 their phone calls to be answered, Mrs.

20 Evans.

21 MS. EVANS: Yes, they do, but they

22 all deserve equal treatment, not because

23 it's my friend's mother.

24 MS. GATELLI: I was out there and I

25 was shoveling for my neighbors.

1 MS. EVANS: And I was, believe me, I
2 travelled the city, as well, and I was very
3 surprised at what I saw in some areas that
4 were pristine compared to areas of West
5 Scranton, where people are still digging
6 out.

7 There's even differences in Green
8 Ridge. I don't think anybody's fooling
9 anybody here. And I think it goes above
10 you, Mr. Parker.

11 I believe that the mayor missed the
12 boat here, and he knew the weather
13 predictions, and he could have made your job
14 much easier by speaking to the people of the
15 city by virtue of the media and asking them
16 to stay off the streets, asking the downtown
17 to close on Wednesday, asking the people of
18 the city to remove their vehicles from the
19 downtown area, asking the people in the
20 neighborhoods to put their cars in their
21 driveways, their garages, saying as you
22 noted earlier, on odd numbered days, we're

23 going to be clearing odd street sides, even
24 numbered days, even numbered sides. It will
25 continue for as long as necessary. If you
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1 choose to remain in that parking space, you
2 will be plowed in. That's an unfortunate,
3 but that's what is going to happen. And we
4 need you to be cooperative, we need to you
5 remove those vehicles, we need you to stay
6 inside so the DPW can do its work 24 hours a
7 day around the clock until we have this
8 situation in hand. But none of that was
9 done.

10 It seems like a reaction to
11 everything. And I don't know how much would
12 be done right now if it were not for the
13 people of Scranton who are reacting
14 passionately to this, because they, like
15 myself, have lived in this area all our
16 lives and we've never seen this before,
17 never.

18 MR. PARKER: Again, I will
19 reiterate, I have never dealt with a storm

20 such as this in my experience.

21 Number two, I will reiterate that

22 albeit it was not a headline article, I had

23 made the suggestion --

24 MS. EVANS: And I read that article.

25 MR. PARKER: -- to the citizens on

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1 the odd even parking.

2 MS. EVANS: And I was pleased when I

3 read it.

4 MR. PARKER: It is on the 6th of

5 December.

6 MS. EVANS: And I even noted, I

7 remember, I noted on Tuesday to my husband,

8 we're going to follow the odd and even days.

9 Mr. Parker said this was going to be, at

10 least I understood it this way, this was

11 going to be a policy, and I thought that

12 that was a very, very wise decision.

13 But then again, I don't remember

14 anything coming from the mayor telling us

15 about that either.

16 And it just seemed that, you know,

17 eventually what happened was the downtown
18 became the priority, but the people don't
19 live downtown, they live in the
20 neighborhoods. They're not going downtown
21 if they can't get out of their house. They
22 couldn't even get to work. Do you know how
23 much this has cost the people that live in
24 this city?

25 MR. PARKER: This happens in

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1 emergencies, and your notable remark before
2 relative to people helping out and pitching
3 in, that helps in emergencies, too.

4 Relative to the downtown, you must
5 also recognize that a lot of those are your
6 primary routes getting you from one section
7 to the city to the other.

8 We had areas where, even know the
9 snow was plowed, some lanes were either half
10 opened or not opened at all, which just
11 strangulates the city during rush hours in
12 the morning and rush hours at night. That
13 was the purpose for that concentrated

14 effort.

15 The concentrated effort in a snow
16 removal will always be your primary roads
17 first, and it doesn't help if you can get
18 out of your neighborhood secondary street
19 because that was addressed first, if when
20 you get out on the primary road, you can't
21 go.

22 MS. EVANS: And I would agree with
23 that. I stated earlier that I believe your
24 plan is appropriate in the approach to
25 streets in various orders, but I think what
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1 we've been doing is jumping from place to
2 place, too, by request, and unless it's an
3 emergency, it's got to be approached
4 uniformly.

5 MR. PARKER: Well, also you need to
6 know that during a storm, and this went on
7 for days, and when people get frustrated
8 about trying to call the departments because
9 the lines are flooded with calls.

10 We were taking calls, taking each

11 call, separating them in sections of the
12 city so that when we would send people, be
13 they our own department of public works
14 persons or contractors, we would have lists
15 by sections of the city. Go to this
16 section, start on these streets, do these
17 streets and get them done.

18 MS. EVANS: So, you didn't assign
19 them?

20 MR. PARKER: Pardon me?

21 MS. EVANS: In other words, you're
22 waiting for calls? You don't assign the
23 trucks and say, I want you -- you're in this
24 section, you're in this section, you're
25 going to --

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1 MR. PARKER: No, this is well into
2 the storm, well into the storm when things
3 were getting more --

4 MS. EVANS: No, I'm talking about
5 all of these days, not just the 13th.

6 MR. PARKER: In any snowstorm, yes.
7 In any snowstorm the drivers have their

8 assignments, they know which roads they're
9 supposed to plow first, yes.
10 MS. EVANS: I can tell you,
11 gentlemen, while I have you both here, that
12 I also received some calls from residents
13 stating that when they called your
14 departments to report on snow conditions or
15 to ask for help, now I'm not saying this
16 happened every time, because this is only a
17 handful of people compared to all of the
18 complaints I fielded, but senior citizens
19 who had told me that those answering the
20 phone when they finally did get through had
21 treated them very harshly.

22 And certainly we're all frustrated,
23 and everyone here gets frustrated in their
24 job, I'm sure, at least once a day, but
25 that's no reason to take it out on other

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1 people.

2 And I know in my job, I can't take
3 it out on other people. I'm going to keep
4 my good attitude and my wits about me at all

5 times, and so I would just ask you if you
6 could pass that along in your departments,
7 that, you know, when you are, and I do
8 understand you had to be flooded, if we were
9 flooded, I think combined we pale in
10 comparison to the calls you had to field.

11 But please remind everyone, these
12 are taxpayers, and they deserve services,
13 and let's treat them all with respect.

14 MR. ELLIOTT: If I can mention just
15 one thing there, we have a new automated
16 system at the police desk that used to be
17 you can dial 348-4134. When you dial that
18 now, it goes in an automated system, you
19 know, you push a certain number for a
20 certain office you want to get in touch
21 with.

22 But a lot of times we're receiving
23 complaints. I'm not pushing the blame on
24 anybody, and I will look into this, every
25 time we get a complaint, we look into it,

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1 but we have to understand that the police --

2 people call 911 and they call three
3 348-4141, and the same with the fire
4 department, and they are not talking to
5 police officers, they are talking to
6 dispatchers from Lackawanna County.
7 Now, every time I've talked to Tom
8 Dubas, he's been great and he's addressed
9 any problems or concerns we had, and I will
10 give him a call tomorrow and see if he can
11 look into this.
12 Because all of those calls are taped
13 that come in there. He looks at them --
14 every time we got a complaint, he pulls the
15 call right up and we actually listen to the
16 call to see if it was an officer.
17 A lot of times the Comm Center will
18 transfer a call over to our desk, and
19 sometimes it's an officer, sometimes it's a
20 dispatcher, so I will look into that.
21 And like you said, when you're
22 getting over and over the same type of
23 calls, and, you know, we're trying to pass
24 them onto where they belong to DPW, so it's
25 just non-stop all night.

1 The frustrations I can understand
2 the officers having, but like you said, you
3 can't treat people that way, and neither can
4 we. So, I will look into it and I'll talk
5 to the supervisors and also Tom Dubas.

6 MS. EVANS: Thank you very much.

7 And I think lastly I'd just like to say that
8 I don't know that it's really Mr. Parker
9 that can provide all of this, but I really
10 would like a list of all the overtime
11 beginning on February 13 to date, also all
12 of the invoices and paid bills for all of
13 the contractors that were hired by the city.
14 And, you know, I'm not as concerned
15 about the financial end of it, as I am about
16 the fact that I want to be certain that full
17 forces were going at all times.

18 MR. PARKER: You will surely know
19 that when you see the bill.

20 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

21 MR. COURTRIGHT: One last thing. I
22 want to try to clear something up. I don't

23 know if the individual that spoke to Mrs.
24 Evans about favoritism is the same one that
25 called me.

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1 I got a call from a person I know
2 that was working for a private hauler, and
3 he said they were handed a list that did not
4 come from you, and I'm not going to say a
5 name where he said it came from, and he told
6 me where they were sent to, and I went
7 there, and sure enough, that's where they
8 haul from. But he specifically told me the
9 list did not come from you. And I'm not
10 going to say who he said it came from, I
11 don't want to start a war here.

12 MR. PARKER: I'm sorry. I don't
13 think I understand what you're saying.

14 MR. COURTRIGHT: A private hauler
15 that was hauling snow for the city, one of
16 their employees is a friend of mine, and he
17 called me and pretty much said that just
18 about the same story that she just said. I
19 wasn't going to say anything.

20 MS. EVANS: Well, I was told two
21 lists, but they're not from you, Mr. Parker.
22 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yeah, they said two
23 lists, two different people, lists of where
24 to go and haul snow away from, and he said
25 it did not come from you.

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1 And I just went to two of the
2 locations, I wasn't going to be riding
3 around the city looking to see where they
4 hauled snow from, and sure enough he was
5 right, you know, but I just wanted to clear
6 it up that he specifically said it did not
7 come from you. So, I'm not going to point
8 the finger at you for that one.

9 MR. PARKER: That still doesn't mean
10 it doesn't concern me, because it does.

11 MR. COURTRIGHT: And that's why I
12 bring it up so maybe you can address it, you
13 know.

14 MR. PARKER: Again, our sites for
15 hauling, with the exception of the farmer's
16 market, which I did not call anyone in

17 advance, I ran out of room at te South Side
18 Complex in the middle of the night and
19 directed the trucks to, not only directed
20 them to the farmer's market, sent equipment
21 ahead --

22 MR. COURTRIGHT: It's not the site
23 I'm talking about, it's the site they went
24 and took the snow from. They were getting
25 favors, is what he's telling me.

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1 I'm going to Dave Elliott's house
2 because so and so told me, and it wasn't
3 Dave Elliott, so --

4 MR. ELLIOTT: I was the last
5 driveway plowed.

6 MR. PARKER: Not only were we making
7 lists for drivers to make sure they were
8 going to where they should be going, we were
9 dividing them by section of the city and we
10 were also keeping a separate list of where,
11 both of you referenced emergency calls,
12 where there were maybe someone has to go for
13 dialysis the next day or someone who had

14 surgery in two days and we were trying to
15 keep those on a separate list so they
16 weren't mixed in with the whole pile.

17 MR. COURTRIGHT: I was just trying
18 to clear you of that one. I know you have
19 enough on your head. That's it. I'm done.

20 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: My concerns, we
21 definitely know that we did not handle this
22 the best that we could, and we have to learn
23 to get down to business and figure out what
24 we can do to make it better, not that we
25 were pointing fingers or looking to point

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1 fingers, because there's really not a way to
2 duplicate a storm next time to say that this
3 storm is going to be the same as next.

4 We definitely have a lot of issues,
5 though, on the way and procedures and the
6 way we handle them.

7 Right now my concern is the
8 visibility with some snow piles around. You
9 know, we did clean downtown. I think it's a
10 good thing, because with a lot of

11 pedestrians and cars, my concern was
12 accidents and pedestrian problems going on
13 because the visibility was so bad.

14 This is what I think we need to
15 address in the rest of the city, not as much
16 -- I mean, I'm not saying let's take all the
17 snow and pile it wherever we can find it,
18 but we need to find places right now just
19 for our corners. I'm more worried about the
20 corners of the streets than I am anything
21 else right now.

22 Some people still aren't dug out, so
23 I don't know about even and odd sides at
24 this point, because we still have cars that
25 are still in heaps of snow, and I think that

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1 that's probably a problem for the drivers,
2 too.

3 I don't know, I'm not a driver, but
4 I can imagine that you're trying to plow and
5 there's all cars. I don't know where you
6 would even put the snow.

7 We need to figure out a way and a

8 system for our corners and our visibility
9 sections where we know our children -- we
10 said schools and places where we have our
11 kids and places on the way to hospitals and
12 things like that, but it seems that the
13 corners of the city on a lot of the streets,
14 when you're coming out on Harrison Avenue or
15 coming out on those very busy streets, the
16 visibility is not there for you to even get
17 to where you need to get.

18 And right now that's my only
19 concern. We can't change what we've done,
20 but we need to address what we have now.

21 And are there any plans for that?

22 And what can we do to make that an easier
23 transition?

24 MR. PARKER: By virtue of the
25 transition while it's taken place during the

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1 storm, our concentration both yesterday and
2 today has been to continue to try to open
3 allies and courts and also remove snow from
4 corners where we do have a real visibility

5 problem.

6 There are other corners that are

7 piled, but you can still -- you know,

8 drivers' positions to see over the top of

9 the snow. Those we're not going to remove

10 just to remove it.

11 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Do we have any

12 idea when we can expect to see more of

13 visibility? How long do we think it's going

14 to take in the state that we are?

15 I know our guys have to be

16 exhausted. I can't even imagine after what

17 they've been going through, the timing. And

18 I have to say, I'm going to commend what

19 they've done, because it's been amazing to

20 even be able to tackle such a storm.

21 But how are we going to say to the

22 people who keep calling us? What can we

23 say? Here's a target time, we're hoping

24 this is a done issue by when? I mean,

25 waiting for it to melt is not really -- with

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1 the amount of inches we've had.

2 MR. PARKER: I will tell you in all
3 honesty, I cannot give you a date, and I can
4 tell you it for this reason, in the areas
5 where we cannot plow snow by virtue of the
6 fact that it is too deep to plow or it's too
7 much ice in it or there's no place left or
8 right to plow to, such as 16-foot wide
9 allies, in areas where we have snow that is
10 two feet deep, and in some places higher
11 than the plow blades, and in some places
12 where snow has been purposely deposited by
13 people, which that is a whole other subject
14 --

15 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Right.

16 MR. PARKER: -- and some places we
17 have that six or more feet deep. The only
18 way to get it out is to take it out with
19 front ended loaders or backhoes. That is a
20 very time consuming effort.
21 When you look at a parking lot for a
22 shopping center and say, Well, gee, that's
23 all clean. Well, that's fine. You have all
24 the room in the world to work.
25 If you're talking a 16-foot wide

1 court, you have to drive the vehicle in,
2 scoop it up, back it out, put it in the
3 truck and just keep doing that. You can
4 take up to an hour or more just to do one
5 plow of the court.

6 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I think anybody
7 that's tried to shovel the snow realizes
8 that it was not -- even the ice was
9 ridiculous.

10 MR. PARKER: It's a very time
11 consuming effort.

12 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Another issue
13 that I've gotten phone calls on, not only
14 the ice, but people throwing the snow and
15 cleaning off their spots and throwing it
16 back into the street again, is that a
17 problem? Is that something that DPW, we
18 should be talking about?
19 People are furious, calling me
20 saying, you know what, they just plowed my
21 street and now the guy dug out and threw all
22 of his snow back onto the street again.

23 So, as far as the city is concerned,
24 maybe we need to be more conscious of not
25 trying to undo what we're doing.

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58

1 I know it's hard, I know it myself.

2 You're trying to dig out, you don't know
3 where to put the snow.

4 What is the policy on that? Is

5 there a policy? There's an ordinance,
6 correct?

7 MR. PARKER: It's more than policy.

8 It's an ordinance, yes. You're correct.

9 It's more than a policy, it's an ordinance,
10 that persons are not allowed to throw snow
11 into the street. In the city code, I
12 believe there's also an ordinance.

13 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I'm going to
14 commend our people in this situation. This
15 has been a very difficult, difficult storm.

16 I can't even believe the amount of ice and
17 snow that we've had. And how many days,
18 four days that the kids -- I mean, it seems
19 like the kids have been off forever. But

20 next time we need to have a better plan in
21 effect.

22 And I don't think that saying that
23 the guys didn't do their job -- there was no
24 way. I mean, you can have -- they were out
25 24 hours a day. In fact, I know someone

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1 who's married to one of the DPW guys, and
2 she said, you know, I haven't seen my
3 husband in four days. He just has not been
4 home. He lays his head on the pillow for
5 five seconds and he's back again.

6 And this is something that we want
7 to make their job easier, too. I mean,
8 that's what it's about. It's about trying
9 to do the right thing for all of us so that
10 they aren't burdened and exhausted all of
11 the time, also.

12 So, this is something that I think
13 the idea that Bill had to sit down and make
14 a committee and do the right thing, sit down
15 and decide what we can do to make this
16 easier is a great idea. I think that would

17 help a lot.

18 MR. PARKER: I welcome that
19 opportunity, and I will work with them. As
20 I said, I worked on a snow task force for
21 six months in Pike County with the
22 Department of Transportation over this exact
23 same issue, a little different because
24 there's different levels of government
25 involved and different states involved.

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1 There are things that can be done,
2 absolutely, to make this whole situation
3 more workable and also better for the
4 citizens of the city.
5 And, again, some of it is going to
6 take some cooperation, and, you know,
7 changing of ways we do things.
8 People are going to be
9 inconvenienced, but, again, in my mind, that
10 inconvenience for a day or two is a lot more
11 or a lot better, excuse me, than
12 inconvenience for a week or more.
13 MS. EVANS: I agree with that, that,

14 yes, we need a plan, and, yes, the citizens
15 have to cooperate with that plan, but I
16 think, also, we need to put our financial
17 priorities in order, because people deserve
18 basic services like snow removal, leaf
19 removal, trash collection, public safety,
20 and I think those are the areas that should
21 be the city's priority giving the DPW what
22 it needs to do the job to take care of the
23 people of the city. And that's far more
24 important than tree houses and bridges and
25 consultants.

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1 You know, I think the job of
2 government is to take care of the people, as
3 was said earlier, to take care of the people
4 who can't take care of themselves.
5 And that's certainly not your realm,
6 gentlemen, the financial realm, but it is
7 something I believe that has to go hand and
8 hand with the plan.

9 MS. GATELLI: We've got several
10 complaints in the office today from Minella

11 Place, so if you could mark that down and
12 check it out for tomorrow.
13 Also, we might want to contact Mr.
14 Fiorini, because we've gotten numerous
15 complaints about sidewalks not being
16 shoveled, especially near schools, and the
17 children are walking in the street.
18 The complaint I got was near South
19 Scranton down on Elm and Maple Street, and
20 none of the sidewalks are cleaned down
21 there. So, if you want to -- maybe, Kay,
22 you can call Mr. Fiorini tomorrow and ask
23 him if he's getting complaints about
24 sidewalks not being shoveled. He needs to
25 cite those people, and he can under the BOCA
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1 Code.
2 MS. EVANS: I think, though, you
3 might want to be careful with that, in that,
4 some of these -- I'm not saying, I don't
5 know any of these individuals, but there are
6 often cases of senior citizens who are
7 unable to clear their sidewalks.

8 And I will tell you what, it's very

9 difficult today to find teenagers or

10 children who are willing to do shoveling,

11 you know --

12 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Especially this

13 snow.

14 MS. EVANS: -- for any amount of

15 money, so many of them are left to their,

16 you know, their own devices, and certainly

17 they're too elderly or not in the best of

18 health so that they can actually perform

19 those duties and responsibilities, and I

20 certainly don't want to see those

21 individuals fined.

22 MS. GATELLI: Well, the ones I'm

23 talking about are all businesses, so they

24 should be able to clean their sidewalks.

25 One is an assisted living, and the sidewalks

1 on the bridges.

2 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yeah. Do we have

3 any timeline on at least one side for the

4 Lackawanna Avenue and Linden Street bridge?

5 People are walking out on the road.

6 MR. PARKER: I don't have a

7 timeline. The people that I have removing

8 snow manually or with a snow blower --

9 MR. COURTRIGHT: They're going to

10 need a backhoe now or something. It's

11 frozen there.

12 MR. PARKER: Their first effort was

13 the areas of bridges where we have flood

14 protection gates, in order that they would

15 be freed of ice and snow in case we have to,

16 for some reason, close them.

17 But I am aware of the bridges. We

18 have a list of the bridges that we're

19 required to clear, sidewalks, and we're

20 methodically doing it. They're not all done

21 obviously.

22 MS. GATELLI: And I just had one

23 more question, when you talked about the
24 liquid that's put on the streets, I do see
25 PennDOT doing that on Pittston Avenue and
.
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1 Cedar Avenue, well, it didn't work this
2 time, because they were more horrendous than
3 the side streets. Pittston Avenue wasn't
4 cleaned for three days. So, you know, I
5 don't know about that liquid thing, if it's
6 going to work.

7 MR. PARKER: We can get into a lot
8 of technical conversation here, but
9 generally it does work, okay? It generally
10 does work.

11 MS. GATELLI: Okay. Does anyone on
12 Council have any other questions?

13 MR. PARKER: One of the main things
14 relative to that question, and we won't get
15 into it any deeper, but the temperatures
16 that you had.

17 On the nights of the storm, I
18 believe the temperature was about six
19 degrees or ten degrees.

20 When you get into applications of
21 salt, I believe they're only good to
22 16 degrees, and once you get below that,
23 unless you have sun working with you, you're
24 not going to see it work. If it's nighttime
25 and you have salt, it's not going to melt.

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1 MS. GATELLI: Okay. Does anyone
2 have anything else? Okay. Thank you very
3 much. We will just take a five-minute
4 recess before we continue with the regular
5 meeting.

6 (RECESS WAS TAKEN.)

7 MS. GATELLI: Call the meeting back
8 to order.

9 MS. GARVEY: Third order. 3-A,

10 AGENDA FOR THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

11 MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 20, 2007.

12 MS. GATELLI: Are there any
13 comments? If not, received and filed.

14 MS. GARVEY: Fourth order. Citizens
15 participation, agenda items only.

16 MS. GATELLI: Mrs. Franus.

17 MS. FRANUS: Fay Franus. I was just
18 wondering on the agenda, this property on
19 Cedar Avenue, you're going to give this loan
20 for \$250,000, I'm just trying to figure out
21 why would you give somebody a loan for
22 \$250,000 when that property isn't worth that
23 much? I can't understand this.

24 I mean, the property is nowhere near
25 worth \$250,000, so what's the --

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1 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: The business.

2 It's for the business, also. It's the
3 business, it's new equipment, it's business,
4 it's operating costs, it's everything. It's
5 not just property.

6 MS. FRANUS: So, that's what makes
7 the difference?

8 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Right.

9 MS. FRANUS: All right. Thank you.

10 MS. GATELLI: Andy Sbaraglia.

11 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,
12 citizen of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians,
13 we're on the agenda, 7-A. Do we have all

14 the answers to that question? In other
15 words, we know who their participations are
16 in this LLC? Who are they?

17 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: It is just one
18 gentleman. The person who's listed is the
19 only -- there are no partners in this
20 business whatsoever.

21 MR. SBARAGLIA: Okay. And you said
22 the collateral is the building?

23 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: No, I said the
24 collateral -- they used the building as part
25 of the collateral, but it's a personal --

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1 the personal guarantee for the loan is
2 usually also part of it.

3 MR. SBARAGLIA: Definite in it?
4 Because that building is not worth \$250,000.

5 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: This is primary
6 -- this is a primary loan, not a secondary
7 loan, also.

8 MR. SBARAGLIA: I understand that.

9 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Right.

10 MR. SBARAGLIA: But the building is

11 not worth \$250,000, we know that.

12 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Right, but it's
13 also for the business. You're purchasing an
14 existing business that already has an
15 established client list and also has been in
16 business a long time, so there's a lot --

17 MR. SBARAGLIA: That has nothing to
18 did with the building that we would get. We
19 would not get -- if this guy folded, we
20 would not get -- all we would get is the
21 building.

22 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: No, we would
23 get all -- no, that's not true, that's not
24 accurate. We would get all the equipment
25 that we are purchasing also that's part of
.

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1 this. The new equipment is part of this
2 loan.

3 MR. SBARAGLIA: He's not planning to
4 make wine. All he's planning to do is buy
5 wine, go around to the churches. He has a
6 bunch of dealers -- I mean --

7 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: They still are

8 purchasing a lot of equipment.

9 MR. SBARAGLIA: -- sell it to the

10 churches and so forth.

11 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: They are still

12 purchasing a lot of new equipment, and that

13 is part of this loan package.

14 MR. SBARAGLIA: What type of

15 equipment would they need other than trucks

16 if they're going to get a -- and I doubt if

17 they're even used trucks, because usually

18 when you buy from a winery, you have stuff

19 delivered. Are you telling me this is going

20 to be a warehouse?

21 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Am I saying

22 it's a warehouse?

23 MR. SBARAGLIA: That's what you're

24 telling me.

25 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: No, I wasn't.

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1 I never said that.

2 MR. SBARAGLIA: Then what equipment

3 would you need?

4 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: They are doing

5 sales out of there, they're doing everything

6 out of there. It's not a warehouse.

7 MR. SBARAGLIA: Well, then you're

8 talking about just business machines mainly,

9 equipment.

10 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I said

11 equipment is part of this loan also, yes.

12 MR. SBARAGLIA: And we would get

13 outdated equipment probably if this loan

14 foreclosed, right? The building is not

15 worth \$250. I don't -- what is your

16 appraisal on the building?

17 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I don't have an

18 appraisal on the building.

19 MR. SBARAGLIA: Well, that would be

20 the first thing, find out what the appraisal

21 is on the building, what we would get if

22 they went under, plus the amount of money

23 they plan to spend on equipment.

24 You're not just giving this guy a

25 blank check because he's a good old guy that

.

70

1 know somebody down the line.

2 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I don't believe
3 that was the case anyway.

4 MR. SBARAGLIA: Even these salesmen
5 that he may be hiring, they don't even have
6 to be in the state.

7 If you're familiar with churches at
8 all, you know that they use very limited
9 amounts of wine, okay? They have a little
10 cup full that you get, not all churches,
11 some churches, that he drinks when he does
12 the host. That's all he uses that wine for.

13 This is not a drinking wine deal, it's only
14 an amount that's even mixed with water.

15 So, hence, your business would have
16 to be many, many states to make a viable
17 business, and you would have to have people
18 --

19 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: It is already a
20 viable business. It has been a viable
21 business for years and years and is --

22 MR. SBARAGLIA: He wouldn't be
23 selling it if he was.

24 MR. MINORA: Time, time. Time is
25 up.

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1 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: No, that's not
2 true. He passed away.

3 MR. SBARAGLIA: Well, even so, his
4 family would be there.

5 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Ozzie
6 Quinn.

7 MR. QUINN: Robert Ozzie Quinn,
8 President of Scranton and Lackawanna County
9 Taxpayers and Citizens Association, Inc.
10 I'm here to speak on 7-A, also, in regards
11 to -- may I speak -- first of all, I want to
12 thank you, Mrs. Evans, for protecting the
13 taxpayers in regards to the services they
14 get from the City of Scranton. I'm glad you
15 look out for us. Thank you very much.

16 MS. EVANS: You're welcome.

17 MR. QUINN: May I speak to Mrs.
18 Fanucci? Ms. Fanucci, how many jobs are we
19 going to get from this \$250,000 grant?

20 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I believe
21 there's eight new positions being created.

22 MR. QUINN: Don't you think there's

23 supposed to be 12, one for every 20,000?

24 That would give you 12.

25 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I don't know.

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1 I know that they had met the criteria by the

2 state, so then it is 12. Whatever it is,

3 they had met their criteria.

4 MR. QUINN: I understand it's eight,

5 and they're not meeting the criteria.

6 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Well, they had

7 to or they would not have gotten loan

8 approval.

9 MR. QUINN: Let's forget about that.

10 What I want to do is because when this

11 ordinance was introduced some three weeks

12 ago, I asked that I wanted to get from the

13 OECD Sara Hailstone how many jobs were

14 created by all the loans that were given out

15 by OECD, what kind of jobs were created, you

16 know, other than restaurant workers and

17 waitresses and waiters, and also how much

18 are they getting, some were getting three

19 dollars an hour, not the minimum wage,

20 depending on their taxes -- on their tips,
21 and other items in regards to that.
22 It was all written down, and Mrs.
23 Evans made a motion or asked for it all be
24 sent as a part of a letter that was sent to
25 Mrs. Hailstone three weeks ago. Has anybody

73

1 heard from Mrs. Hailstone? What is she
2 doing, recreating the file?

3 This is annoying when a taxpayer
4 comes up and asks for something, three
5 weeks, when something should be in the
6 computer that she could just print out.

7 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: As far as this
8 is concerned, though, I did answer those
9 questions for you three weeks ago.

10 MR. QUINN: I appreciate that.

11 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: And that is why
12 we actually did put this loan on hold was
13 because we did not have the information we
14 needed.

15 MR. QUINN: Well, you still don't
16 have the right information. But I want to

17 ask you, Mrs. Gatelli, what's going on with

18 this letter? I want to know what's going

19 on. Where is our taxpayer money going?

20 MS. GATELLI: Mr. Quinn, that's not

21 on the agenda.

22 MR. QUINN: It's on the agenda as

23 part of this.

24 MS. GATELLI: We will answer at

25 public participation.

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1 MR. QUINN: Well, I'm not going to

2 be around for this here, because it's part

3 of this agenda. And, you know what, I don't

4 want to get into an argument with you, but

5 you cut me out arbitrarily, and that's not

6 right, you know, just because you make an

7 opinion in regards to not on the agenda.

8 MS. GATELLI: Attorney Minora, is

9 that on the agenda?

10 MR. MINORA: No.

11 MR. QUINN: It's a part and parcel

12 of the agenda, isn't it?

13 MS. GATELLI: No, it isn't.

14 MR. QUINN: Well, I still want to
15 know when we're going to get that letter,
16 okay? And I'd appreciate if you'd follow
17 up, Kay, through Mrs. Gatelli and find out.
18 Again, I don't think she's -- I think she's
19 recreating this file. Thank you.

20 MS. SHUMAKER: Marie Shumaker. I'm
21 here to speak to the resolution that was
22 ordered prepared two weeks ago for the next
23 Council meeting.

24 I'd like to start by reading from a
25 newspaper article from the 9th of February,
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1 Councilwoman Sherry Nealon Fanucci
2 reiterated Thursday that administrators
3 provide her with needed answers and that she
4 doesn't think a subpoena is necessary.
5 Council President Judy Gatelli and
6 Councilman Robert McGoff also have said they
7 have few problems getting information from
8 the mayor, however, Councilman Bill
9 Courtright said he favors the subpoena.
10 From this, I must conclude either

11 you three discriminate on behalf of some
12 requestors and against others or the
13 newspaper report of your access is
14 incorrect.

15 To determine whether discrimination
16 or inaccuracy is in play, I challenge you to
17 prove the resolution to subpoena financial
18 records may not be needed by providing
19 answers to the following items --

20 MS. GATELLI: Mrs. Shumaker, I don't
21 believe this is on the agenda either.

22 MS. SHUMAKER: Resolutions are on
23 the agenda.

24 MS. GATELLI: No, not -- the
25 subpoena is not on the agenda.

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1 MS. SHUMAKER: The resolution is on
2 and it was ordered two weeks ago. It was
3 ordered on the agenda for the next Council
4 meeting.

5 MS. GATELLI: It's not on the
6 agenda.

7 MS. SHUMAKER: It was ordered to be

8 prepared --

9 MS. GATELLI: It's not on the

10 agenda.

11 MS. SHUMAKER: Okay. Then I will

12 revert to the property. What is the answer

13 to how you can give a 25-year quarter of a

14 million dollar loan from a pot of money

15 which is the enterprise zone which is

16 designated for a term of seven years? So,

17 how can a seven-year program give a 25-year

18 loan?

19 MS. GATELLI: The money is available

20 for seven years in an enterprise zone.

21 You're able to use that money in a

22 seven-year period. People can apply for

23 that.

24 But the length of the loan does not

25 mean that you can't use it longer than seven

.

77

1 years. You can only apply in the seven year

2 period.

3 MS. SHUMAKER: Even though the

4 program goes out of existence in seven years

5 conceivably.

6 MS. GATELLI: Yes, absolutely.

7 MS. SHUMAKER: Okay. Thank you.

8 MS. GATELLI: You're welcome. Randy

9 Young.

10 MR. YOUNG: Good evening. Randy

11 Young, 17-plus years resident and taxpayer

12 of Scranton in West Side. First of all, I

13 want to commend DPW on the work they did.

14 MS. GATELLI: Mr. Young, this part

15 of citizens participation is for agenda

16 items only.

17 MR. YOUNG: Okay. Well, I'm not

18 sure. I'm trying to find out what the

19 agenda is. What my complaint is is the

20 smoking ban.

21 MS. GATELLI: Yeah, that will be for

22 the public participation.

23 MR. YOUNG: Okay. What my complaint

24 is, the way it's being carried out.

25 MS. GATELLI: Sir, you're not

.

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1 allowed to talk about that now. This is

2 just for agenda items. Did you sign the
3 other sheet?

4 MR. YOUNG: I signed in. This is my
5 first time at Council meeting.

6 MS. GATELLI: Okay. I'll put you on
7 the other sheet. And that will be
8 momentarily, because the agenda isn't very
9 long.

10 MR. YOUNG: I mean, what's on the
11 agenda? What can I address?

12 MS. GATELLI: The loan is basically
13 --

14 MR. YOUNG: All right. Just the
15 loans?

16 MS. GATELLI: Yeah.

17 MR. YOUNG: All right. The loans,
18 to my knowledge, and through my contacts at
19 the attorney general's office are being
20 scrutinized at this point, okay?

21 MS. GATELLI: What loans?

22 MR. YOUNG: All the loans. Somebody
23 is going to have to be accountable for \$10
24 million that City Council has failed to
25 provide where it went.

1 I've been watching Council for over
2 three months, and the questions keep coming
3 up time and time again, where did the money
4 go? Mrs. Evans has tried to find out, and
5 she's been stonewalled.

6 MS. GATELLI: Sir, that's not on the
7 agenda either. The loan is for 408 Cedar
8 Avenue.

9 MR. YOUNG: All right. Then what I
10 need to talk to you about, which is the
11 smoking ban and the way it's being carried
12 out --

13 MS. GATELLI: Sir, you'll have to
14 talk about that later. It's not on the
15 agenda.

16 MR. YOUNG: I will talk about to you
17 later. I apologize for taking your time.
18 Mrs. Evans, I thank you.

19 MS. GATELLI: You're welcome.

20 Anyone else?

21 MR. JACKOWITZ: Bill Jackowitz,
22 South Scranton resident. I wasn't going to

23 speak on this item tonight, but now I have

24 to.

25 I'm very familiar with this

.

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1 business, I'm very familiar with the Bowen

2 family who owned that business. I've been

3 in that business many times. I know what

4 they do.

5 Supposedly right now they have 100

6 contracts, that was stated about two or

7 three weeks ago from Council.

8 My question is, Mrs. Fanucci, you

9 said eight employees, then you changed it to

10 12. What is the exact number, eight

11 employees or 12 employees?

12 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I did have all

13 this information. I do not have the

14 write-out with me, that's why I didn't

15 answer the question correctly. I do know

16 they complied with whatever it is.

17 I thought it was eight off the top

18 of my head and that's why I said eight.

19 When he said they needed 12, I said,

20 whatever the number is, I know they
21 complied, because I know they had to comply
22 to be able to get the loan in the first
23 place.

24 So, whatever the proper -- he's
25 saying that we needed 12, then I'm trusting

81

1 him. But I know they had the proper new
2 employees, because when I looked into it in
3 the beginning, they had it. So, that was --

4 MR. JACKOWITZ: Isn't being prepared
5 for the meeting part of your responsibility
6 of a Council member? Because this item has
7 come up two or three times.

8 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Quite frankly
9 when I addressed it three weeks ago --

10 MR. JACKOWITZ: Excuse me.

11 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Are you asking
12 me a question?

13 MR. JACKOWITZ: No, I'm not.

14 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Oh, okay.

15 MR. JACKOWITZ: I was making a
16 statement. Okay. My second one is you said

17 we were going to sell the equipment that is
18 in the building. Like I said, I have -- if
19 they don't pay back the loan.

20 I have been in that building, okay?

21 Are we talking about telephones, fax
22 machines, copier machines? What are we
23 talking about, fork lifts? What are we
24 talking about?

25 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Is that a

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1 question?

2 MS. JACKOWITZ: Yes, that's a
3 question.

4 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Oh, that's a
5 question? It's new equipment that they're
6 purchasing. I don't know what the new
7 equipment is. That's what I stated.

8 I'm not saying we're going to buy --
9 it's not the old equipment we're selling,
10 it's the new equipment that they'll be
11 purchasing with the loan.

12 Now, as far as addressing and being
13 prepared for the Council meeting, this is

14 something I did three weeks ago.

15 MR. JACKOWITZ: I hope my three

16 minutes is not being used, because --

17 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: It is being

18 used. If you're asking me a question, it's

19 being used.

20 MR. JACKOWITZ: Well, no, you're

21 giving me political spin right now.

22 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Excuse me?

23 MR. JACKOWITZ: You're giving me

24 political spin right now.

25 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: You know what

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1 --

2 MR. JACKOWITZ: I asked you about

3 the equipment, what type of equipment. You

4 did you give me an answer.

5 MS. GATELLI: There are personal

6 guarantees in the loan, too.

7 MR. JACKOWITZ: I understand that.

8 MS. GATELLI: Attorney Minora -- the

9 other Attorney Minora discussed that at the

10 last meeting, your brother.

11 MR. JACKOWITZ: But it would seem to
12 me that we would have all that information.
13 This has been brought up for three weeks
14 now, and people have asked what type of
15 equipment? What are we going to do? We're
16 talking about \$250,000.

17 MR. MINORA: Typically UCCs, UCC2s
18 would cover all new equipment, as well as if
19 the existing equipment is not encumbered, it
20 would typically be encumbered with either a
21 first or a second lien with the city having
22 a position on both sets of equipment, as
23 well as a personal guarantee, which is the
24 full faith and credit of that individual
25 beyond their business, which means their

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1 personal assets, as well. Time is up.

2 MR. JACKOWITZ: You're still not
3 answering my question. My question is, what
4 type -- it's a simple question, what type of
5 equipment are we talking about? Are we
6 talking about fax machines, telephones?

7 MR. MINORA: Time is up.

8 MR. JACKOWITZ: I understand that,

9 but a lot of my time was used.

10 MS. GATELLI: Mr. Morgan.

11 MR. MORGAN: I'd just like to add to

12 this debate that we have. I won't say it's

13 raging, because I really don't think that

14 Council has answered any of the questions

15 that was really asked. We're skirting

16 questions by people's time being up and then

17 questions aren't answered when they walk

18 away from the podium. I think that's a

19 disgusting thing for this Council to do, to

20 be quite blunt.

21 We're talking about \$250,000 here,

22 all right? We had first position on The

23 Hilton Hotel. Uh, that worked out really

24 good. We don't know what kind of equipment

25 we're buying, okay?

.

85

1 We do know that the building isn't

2 worth \$250,000. And what happens if they

3 don't hire these people? And then we're

4 talking about a personal guarantee. Did you

5 ever try to get blood out of a stone?

6 I mean, that's the kind of

7 malfeasance that this Council has allowed to

8 happen for a long time.

9 And this legislation needs to be

10 voted down until somebody can come up with

11 some real answers.

12 And I don't care if it was two weeks

13 ago, three weeks ago, a month ago. There

14 aren't enough answers here, to be quite

15 blunt. As a matter of fact, there are very

16 few answers here, and \$250,000 is a quarter

17 of a million dollars, so let's get a reality

18 check. Thank you.

19 MS. GATELLI: Anyone else?

20 MS. KRAKE: Hello. My name is Nancy

21 Krake, and I think it's become abundantly

22 clear that we need to see documentation,

23 since we're not even sure if we have eight

24 positions or 12 positions. We need

25 documentation to prove the number of jobs,

.

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1 if they qualify, how they qualify, what the

2 salaries will be, who will be checking to

3 see if they maintain these levels.

4 And I'd also truly like to know what

5 the business is. I think we're entitled to

6 know that.

7 Even though everyone's saying --

8 claiming to know what it is, we're not

9 getting that answer. It's obviously not

10 manufacturing, which you can understand why

11 they would need lots of equipment.

12 It sounds as if it's distribution

13 and wholesale. So, it really doesn't make

14 much sense at all for what this amount of

15 money is for.

16 So, if someone would be kind enough

17 to get us documentation on these issues, I

18 think it would be a lot easier for people to

19 understand why they're requesting this

20 amount of money. Thank you.

21 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

22 MS. KRAKE: Oh, and I'd also like to

23 say something that isn't on the agenda that

24 should be on the agenda and that used to

25 always happen under the Connors

1 Administration, and it probably would be a
2 reason why there would be things on the
3 agenda.

4 Every single time there's a fund
5 transfer, all fund transfers should be on
6 the agenda for Council's approval before
7 they happen.

8 It's very clear that this mayor
9 played a lot of games with last year's
10 budget, and I'm sure he did with this year's
11 budget and we're going to see it all unfold.
12 It would be very nice to see it before it
13 happens. Thank you.

14 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Anyone
15 else?

16 MS. GARVEY: 5-A, motions.

17 MS. GATELLI: Mrs. Evans.

18 MS. EVANS: Good evening. I ask
19 you, please, to remember in your prayers
20 Xander Browning, the sweet boy who died in
21 the West Scranton fire, his mother and
22 brother, and the other two individuals who

23 are hospitalized with severe burns.

24 I also ask for your prayers for

25 Jessica Reap, an eleventh grade student at

.

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1 Scranton High School, who remains

2 hospitalized awaiting a heart transplant.

3 On a lighter note, I do have some

4 good news to offer, on Wednesday,

5 February 21, Scranton High school won the

6 championship of the scholastic scrimmage

7 which is sponsored by the United States Army

8 and WVIA TV.

9 This is the second consecutive year

10 that my students have won this academic

11 competition, and I'm extremely proud of each

12 of the following, Team Captain, Lauren

13 Mersh, team members, Mark Cannon, Rachel

14 Fogley, and Michael Garzarella, a former

15 Junior Council member, in fact, and our

16 alternate Nathan Stevens. They are a credit

17 to our school, their families and our

18 community.

19 I also wish to offer my gratitude,

20 admiration and deep respect for the police
21 officers, firefighters and ambulance
22 personnel who worked tirelessly at the scene
23 of Tuesday's fire.

24 And I'd also like to thank Mr.
25 Santolli for a tree removal on Depot Street

.

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1 several weeks ago. This is a dedicated man
2 who truly works for the people. He
3 dedicates his own time and talent without
4 ever receiving so much as a penny.

5 On the other hand, however, we have
6 city employees who still won't answer
7 questions.

8 I sent a letter to Mr. Wallace, I
9 believe, close to a month ago on behalf of a
10 business owner in the City of Scranton. His
11 business is located in a commercially zoned
12 area.

13 And he did what Mr. Wallace directed
14 him to do. He's been waiting for an answer
15 since August. Mr. Wallace will not call
16 him, will not send letters, and I want an

17 answer for this gentlemen.

18 I've also been asked to publicly

19 thank the Scranton Fire Department on behalf

20 of the homeowners for the impressive highly

21 professional and caring response to the fire

22 on Phelps Street two weeks ago.

23 Also, I thank Paul O'Malley,

24 director of buildings and grounds for the

25 Scranton School District, for the snow

.

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1 removal on Olive Street leading into

2 Scranton High School. This is a major

3 pedestrian thoroughfare for many of our

4 students.

5 Now, just to further illustrate the

6 need for a quick response service in

7 Scranton that the mayor vehemently opposes

8 because he failed to negotiate a contract

9 with the firefighters, for the second time

10 it took an ambulance approximately one half

11 hour to respond to a call from Parker

12 Street, same house. The ambulance personnel

13 could not locate the home, yet again.

14 This was a senior citizen in a
15 diabetic comma. With an QRS system, the
16 firefighters would have responded in a
17 matter of moments.

18 They are in the city, located in the
19 city, and they know the city, they know the
20 streets, they would be there.

21 I had received an E-mail from a
22 volunteer at the zoo who describes the
23 woeful full conditions, including a lack of
24 water for the animals and adequate funding.

25 Kay, please send a letter to Mr.

.

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1 Brazil regarding the lack of water at the
2 zoo, could he please take corrective
3 measures, let us know what they are.

4 Also, I encourage all of you who
5 enjoy visiting the zoo, to send donations to
6 the zoo director, not to the administration,
7 to the zoo director.

8 The citizens of Scranton have been
9 hit with a 25.56 percent tax increase, yet
10 they don't receive more services for their

11 money.

12 As was evidenced by the snow removal
13 over the last week, the mayor has his hand
14 in our pockets instead of handing us the
15 services that we deserve, the services for
16 which we pay.

17 The snow removal efforts obviously
18 were a debacle. And let us not blame the
19 DPW workers, they go above and beyond, but
20 rather their superiors for lack of effective
21 strategies.

22 This was costly for many citizens
23 who weren't able to report to work for days.
24 Residents join their neighbors to clear
25 their own streets throughout our city.

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1 Mail delivery ceased, and in some
2 areas of South Side, residents had no mail
3 on Tuesday of this week.

4 How much does Mr. Parker's
5 ineptitude have to cost the people before
6 the mayor wakes up and smells the coffee?
7 And how much more does this mayor

8 have to cost all of us in terms of lack of
9 emergency management, whether we're talking
10 snow removal or flood response, incessant
11 borrowing and spending and taxation?
12 The city should have a plan that
13 includes some of the following measures, and
14 I believe what Mr. Courtright enumerated
15 much earlier should be part of this,
16 informing the public via the media that the
17 downtown area will be closed, vehicles
18 should be removed immediately from the
19 downtown area, throughout city
20 neighborhoods, vehicles must be parked in
21 driveways and garages, even numbered sides
22 of streets will be plowed on even numbered
23 days, and odd numbered, on odd number days,
24 any vehicle remaining will be plowed in, DPW
25 will be on the streets 24 hours per day

93

1 during snow emergencies and trash collection
2 will halt during emergency snow removal,
3 additional contractors will be hired on an
4 as need basis, equally as important all

5 streets, courts and alleys will be

6 addressed.

7 There should be not exist lists of

8 politically preferred citizens or areas, and

9 the snow should be deposited at Nay Aug

10 Park.

11 Nay Aug doesn't need snow removal,

12 our homes and streets do. And to that end,

13 I move that all the overtime of DPW and the

14 invoices and payments to all snow removal

15 contractors be submitted to Scranton City

16 Council by March 7, 2007.

17 MS. GATELLI: I'll second that.

18 MS. GATELLI: Did you make it as a

19 motion?

20 MS. EVANS: Yes, I did.

21 MS. GATELLI: On the question?

22 MS. GATELLI: All in favor.

23 MS. EVANS: Aye.

24 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Aye.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

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94

1 MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

2 MS. GATELLI: Aye. Opposed? The

3 ayes have it and so moved.

4 MS. EVANS: And that's it.

5 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Mrs.

6 Fanucci.

7 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: At this time,

8 I'm going to say that I have nothing to

9 report on. We have been very busy with our

10 snow and our conversations and everything

11 we've been trying to do to get the city to

12 where it needs to be.

13 We are hoping that -- that's amazing

14 to me. I want to commend our guys for

15 working very hard in trying to get what they

16 need to get finished for us.

17 We have been trying to make this

18 city the best place that it can be, and I

19 know they worked as hard as they can work to

20 do the best job that they can.

21 I don't think anyone is asked to

22 work more around the clock for their jobs to

23 do well and do it for us, and they've been

24 doing it.

25 I know that it's not acceptable, I

1 I know it can always be better, and I know
2 there's a lot of complains, and we have had
3 a lot of problems, but I do believe that
4 working together and sitting down and
5 figuring out the best way to go about this
6 in the future will help not have the past
7 repeat itself.

8 So, that is what we're going to do.

9 That is our job. A lot of people -- I know
10 we got tons of phone calls on this, and, you
11 know, we are -- we're a legislative body, we
12 are not really in charge of making these
13 phone calls and passing these phone calls
14 on, but I think it was our responsibility to
15 do so.

16 You know, when you get people
17 calling you saying, You know, I'm trapped in
18 here and I'm trying to get to work, and you
19 can't just not pass that on.

20 Whether or not our guys were out
21 there working hard and made a pass through
22 someone else's property, I had heard that,

23 and this is hysterical, that people were
24 over checking out my property to see if I
25 had my snow removed and if my street was
.

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1 cleaned.

2 In fact, I had two neighbors call me
3 and say that there was a guy parked outside
4 spending so much time looking at my
5 property, and all he wanted for him to get
6 out of the car to help her out. She said, I
7 wish to God somebody came. He was worried
8 about across the street instead of worried
9 about what was going on in front of your
10 house.

11 Unfortunately I did not get to
12 shovel my sidewalks on time, because I was
13 not there, but I did shovel later on.
14 But for everyone who was checking
15 out my properties, next time you come and
16 check out my properties, please help out my
17 neighbors, they'd be thrilled, especially if
18 you have a truck.

19 We did work together. Everybody

20 worked together in this storm, and that's
21 what it's about, and that's what Scranton is
22 about. We're about helping each other out
23 when things fall short.

24 And unfortunately we can't plan what
25 nature is going to bring us, but I'm happy

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1 to say that we live in a great place and
2 we'll figure it out in the future, and I'm
3 convinced of that.

4 And I know we're all dedicated up
5 here to making sure that you get what you
6 need from us. And that is something that we
7 will try to make sure happens in the future.
8 And that's all I have right now.

9 And, oh, yes, I'm going to be asked
10 to resign again tonight, so there has to be
11 some type of award for me. So, if anybody
12 has a reward for someone who's asked to
13 resign, like, so many times at one Council
14 in the next -- please, you know, fill out
15 the reward. Maybe Stacy could print one up
16 and put it in The Times for me. Thank you.

17 MS. GATELLI: Mr. McGoff.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you very much. I

19 will be very brief, realizing that there are

20 a number of people that wish to speak this

21 evening.

22 The only thing I would like to add

23 to the question of snow removal and the plan

24 for snow removal, I would like to, and I

25 meant to mention it to Mr. Parker, I would

.

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1 like to see that when a plan or whatever

2 plan there is that is in effect, and if

3 there's a new plan developed, that the plan

4 for snow removal be published so that the

5 public is aware of the order in which

6 streets are cleaned, the process that will

7 be used, the number of trucks that will be

8 used, and that this plan be published

9 possibly on the web page of the City of

10 Scranton so that people can access it and be

11 aware of how this process takes place. And

12 that is all. Thank you.

13 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Mr.

14 Courtright.

15 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yes. I asked most
16 of my questions when Mr. Parker was here. I
17 think the idea of forming a committee is
18 good. Obviously Mr. Parker thinks it's a
19 good thing. And I would ask Mr. McGoff,
20 because that's your committee, when we go
21 about forming this, that maybe we can put
22 two firefighters and two police officers on
23 there. They're out on the roads all the
24 time, and they might be of service, and that
25 we take one of the drivers for the DPW that
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99

1 does the plowing and also have them on
2 there.

3 I'm always for the guy that does the
4 work to have an input. Nobody knows better
5 than the guy doing the job. So, when we
6 form that, if we can try to request that.

7 I'm not quite sure who I send this
8 to, Kay, I'm guessing maybe Mr. Fiorini. I
9 was down at police headquarters on a matter
10 today, and I just wrote down some of the

11 problems that they're telling me they're
12 having down there with the building.
13 And the thing that concerns me, it's
14 a new building, and I'd like to keep it in
15 as good of shape as possible for as long as
16 possible.

17 In the men's room, the door lock is
18 broken off on one, they've got broken
19 urinals. I've seen, for myself, more than
20 one broken window in the cells from
21 residents in those cells banging against the
22 window, I guess.

23 And the clocks are all supposed to
24 be synchronized in that building so that,
25 you know, when they're making out their
.

100

1 reports and whatnot, everybody is going off
2 the same clock, and they're telling me all
3 the times are different.

4 So, I will give you that list. And
5 I think it's Mr. Fiorini, I'm not quite
6 sure, who handles that.

7 And Chief Davis is here, maybe

8 something for you to think about. A buddy
9 of mine was down in the Allentown or
10 Allentown area and was talking to a
11 firefighter down in that area, I don't know
12 if it was Allentown per se, but in that
13 area, and I guess he said what they do when
14 there's a fire in the wintertime, they have
15 a truck, maybe I guess it would be similar
16 to that attack truck that you guys have, and
17 they put a plow on that, when there's a bad
18 storm, and that truck goes out in front of
19 the fire trucks.

20 I don't know if that's a good idea,
21 bad idea, something you want to entertain,
22 he brought that up to me, and I told him I
23 would mention it to you, and coincidentally
24 you're here tonight. I didn't know you guys
25 were going to be here tonight.

.

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1 But if you think that's a good idea,
2 or if not, so be it. And that's all I got.
3 Thanks.

4 MS. GATELLI: Thank you, Mr.

5 Courtright. I spoke with Senator Mellow's
6 office, and I was informed that The Senate
7 passed the dollar a week for the EMS Tax, so
8 we're happy about that, and we'd like to
9 thank Senator Mellow for using his influence
10 to push that through.

11 Also, this Sunday there was an
12 article in the paper about three people that
13 live on River Street. I don't know if all
14 of you saw it, but they all have sons in
15 Iraq. One was Dan and Mary Theresa
16 Trichillo, with their son Joseph, Jack and
17 Joanne Fallon with their son Kevin, and Dave
18 and Agnes Jones with their son David.
19 And it was a wonderful article, and
20 we hope that their sons all come home
21 safely.

22 I'd like to send a letter to Mr.
23 Fiorini to board up a house at the corner of
24 Wayne and Hill Street, and also he boarded
25 up a property at 3244 Pittston Avenue, but

.

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1 the Bilko doors remain open and there's

2 people entering the property, so we'll send
3 a letter also on that.

4 There's a storm drain in the rear of
5 that property in the court. I know it can't
6 be cleaned now, but we will send a letter to
7 the Sewer Authority to see if they can clean
8 that drain in the spring and trim the trees
9 also in the rear of that property, because
10 the cars are being scratched when they go
11 by, when it's possible. I know we can't do
12 this all with the snowstorm, but when we an.
13 Also, if we can send a letter to
14 Marty Crofton, because I've gotten
15 complaints about car mechanic shops that are
16 parking abandon cars without license plates
17 and registrations on the streets around
18 their business, and it certainly did hamper
19 the snow removal when these cars are on
20 neighborhood streets when there's a business
21 in the neighborhood.

22 So, I'd like you to ask Marty
23 Crofton if he could check out 838 Birch
24 Street and 2503 Jackson Street. Those were
25 the two properties that I got complaints on.

1 Mr. Courtright said Jeff Mackey would be
2 more appropriate to take care of that.

3 I'd like John to remind Amil to
4 prepare the amusement tax ordinance so we
5 can start collecting some revenue.

6 I got a letter from Frank Andrews,
7 and his was about the EMS Tax, and he said
8 he also wanted to let us know that a
9 statewide smoking ban is headed to The
10 Health and Human Services Committee, of
11 which he is a member, and it has bipartisan
12 support, and Frank is co-sponsor of the
13 legislation.

14 I got notice from the city assessor
15 or the county assessor that, and I got some
16 calls on it, and I'd like to clarify it with
17 some people that when the flood came last
18 June, there was an advertisement in the
19 paper from the county asking you to submit
20 forms if you would like your taxes reduced
21 for the year -- for one year because you
22 received flood damage.

23 So, I do have a list, I'm not going
24 to publicly address the list, but people
25 have received tax breaks that were in the
.

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1 flood area.

2 Now, it had to be a designated
3 disaster area. There are people that got
4 flood ed, but if you were not in the
5 specific designated disaster area, then you
6 were not eligible.

7 And some of those people did contact
8 me, and I'd like them to know that if they
9 weren't in that area, then they're not
10 eligible.

11 Also, some people, I guess, missed
12 the ad when it was in the paper, and I don't
13 know if they're still eligible. I don't
14 think so, but you can call Wayne Evans at
15 the assessor's office and maybe file an
16 appeal of some sort and maybe you will get
17 some recompense from that action.

18 But, Wayne is aware of my concerns,
19 and he will be waiting to hear from anyone

20 that's interested in asking any questions,
21 if they haven't already applied.
22 I got a letter from Chief Elliott.
23 There was a speaker at a recent Council
24 meeting saying that South Scranton was
25 ignored for the abandoned cars, and indeed

.

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1 it was started in South Scranton, the
2 abandoned cars, with our Community Justice
3 Task Force. There were 974 vehicles were
4 tagged in 2006, so that's just for your
5 information.

6 And the last thing I have to talk
7 about is the snowstorm, and I'd like to
8 thank Sam Vitras for all his cooperation.

9 They were called on Saturday
10 concerning Acker Avenue. There was an
11 elderly woman that had to get out on that
12 particular block, and Landis Street was
13 another one where a woman had to get out,
14 and they had the pay loaders there on
15 Saturday evening.

16 Also, the Sewer Authority should be

17 thanked because they participated in the
18 snow removal, and I didn't hear anyone
19 mention that they did that.
20 Also, I'd like to thank Jeff White,
21 who happens to be one of my neighbors, and
22 he did a lot of plowing for a lot of people,
23 and he really should be commended for that.
24 When people called, I would call
25 him, and he would graciously go and didn't

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1 charge anybody, and helped to get people
2 out.
3 Also I got an E-mail from a
4 gentleman who helped in the Hill Section.
5 His name was Brian Grossi, and he did the
6 whole court, Stipp Court, near his home.
7 I know we can't compensate them, but
8 they can at least get some recognition for
9 doing that.
10 Also, Paul Casey, he did a lot of
11 work up on South Irving Avenue. And to all
12 the volunteers who helped shovel or helped
13 their neighbors, they're to be commended.

14 And I just wanted to thank the fire
15 department for their action at the fire, the
16 police department, especially Jill Foley and
17 Melissa Forcett, who had been doing their
18 community patrol at the time, and also for
19 all of the neighbors that helped out there.
20 And we'll continue to keep them all in our
21 prayers. And that's all I have. Thank you.

22 MS. GARVEY: Fifth order, no

23 business at this time. Sixth order, no

24 business at this time. Seventh order, 7-A,

25 FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON

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1 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - FOR ADOPTION -
2 RESOLUTION NO. 129, 2007 - AUTHORIZING THE
3 MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS
4 TO EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO A LOAN AGREEMENT,
5 AND TO EXECUTE A PROMISSORY NOTE, IN THE
6 AMOUNT OF \$250,000 BY AND BETWEEN THE CITY
7 OF SCRANTON AND 408 CEDAR AVE, LLC FOR
8 ENTERPRISE ZONE COMPETITIVE GRANT FUNDS.

9 MS. GATELLI: What is the

10 recommendation of the chairperson for the

11 committee on community development?

12 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: On chair on

13 community development, I recommend final

14 passage of Item 7-A.

15 MR. COURTRIGHT: Second.

16 MS. GATELLI: On the question?

17 MS. EVANS: Mr. McGoff, do you have

18 the backup available? Did we get the

19 appraisal on that building?

20 MR. MCGOFF: I have the resolution

21 here, but I don't see --

22 MS. GATELLI: You don't have the

23 backup?

24 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: The appraisal.

25 MR. MCGOFF: The appraisal is there.

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1 MS. EVANS: I think at this time

2 we'd be better served -- I know that this

3 has been tabled before, but I'd like to

4 table it once again until we can obtain that

5 information.

6 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I'll second

7 that. That's fine. You know, we've gone

8 this far with it. I mean, I feel bad for
9 the people trying to get the loan, but for
10 some reason this seems to be very
11 contentious. It's funny that, you know, we
12 spend millions and millions of dollars on
13 something and we don't get anybody, but, you
14 know, one little guy tries to buy a business
15 and it seems to be the biggest thing that's
16 ever happened. But, no, it's no problem.
17 MR. COURTRIGHT: On the question,
18 Kay, you know who seems to be really helpful
19 over there is Lori Reed. Maybe you can ask
20 her to write up something for us. She's
21 pretty good.

22 MS. GARVEY: Yep.

23 MS. GATELLI: All in favor.

24 MS. EVANS: Aye.

25 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Aye.

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1 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

2 MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

3 MS. GATELLI: Aye. Opposed? The

4 ayes have it and so moved.

5 MS. GARVEY: Eighth order, citizens

6 participation. General city issues.

7 MS. GATELLI: Douglas.

8 MR. MILLER: Good evening, Council.

9 Doug Miller. I'd just like to -- I'd just

10 like to start off by clearing up an issue

11 that was raised recently regarding myself

12 speaking here.

13 I just want everyone to understand

14 that when I address Council, I am speaking

15 on my beliefs and not the beliefs of the

16 Junior Council.

17 We all have the right to speak here.

18 Some choose to, some choose not to. So, I

19 just want to clear that up for the record.

20 You know, I didn't want to have to

21 mention this, but sitting here observing

22 tonight's meeting, and with all due respect,

23 you know, I just want to express my concern

24 on the way business is run here.

25 You know, I just feel -- I'd like to

.

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1 see a night that we go through a meeting

2 without the snickering and the sarcasm and
3 making a mockery of these meetings.
4 You know, you are the adults, and I
5 think a good example needs to be set here,
6 and that's why we're here, to discuss
7 business.
8 So, I just wish we can go through a
9 meeting, you know, on a serious level here.
10 And that's all I have on that.
11 This past week or weekend, I should
12 say, I read an article in The Scranton Times
13 regarding possible changes to the smoking
14 ban.
15 And, Mr. Courtright, a friend said
16 to me over the weekend that when someone
17 takes the time to make a decision, they
18 should not retreat it.
19 And I would hope you support this
20 ban, as you supported it when it was first
21 proposed.
22 I understand this ban is hurting
23 business, but as we all know, business is
24 generally slow this time of year, and it's
25 going to take smokers a lot of time to get

.

111

1 used to that.

2 I don't feel Council should retreat

3 the smoking ban. The students from West

4 Scranton High School proposed it and it

5 passed 4-1.

6 As Mr. Minora says, the law is the

7 law, and we all must follow it. The adults

8 who are disobeying the law are not setting a

9 good example for the kids in this city. And

10 how do they expect kids to follow the law?

11 I guess when teenagers go for their

12 permits and the law says you can only be on

13 the road until eleven o'clock, well, I guess

14 we teenagers should stay on the road until

15 two in the morning, or I guess little kids

16 should smoke and drink. Why should they

17 have to follow the law?

18 You know, so tonight I'm asking

19 Council and the mayor to continue forcing

20 this ban and setting a good example for

21 everyone.

22 And lastly tonight, I would like to

23 express my sympathy to the victims of the

24 deadly fire that took place on Tuesday

25 afternoon, and I would ask everyone to

.

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1 please keep these families in their prayers.

2 Thank you very much.

3 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Ray Lyman.

4 MR. LYMAN: Raymond Lyman. I want

5 to talk about the snowstorm. I had some

6 problems on Phelps Street. The problem

7 because of the snow was because of the stop

8 signs, they're blocked on the bottom down by

9 The Avenue Restaurant, the snow blocked the

10 signs, the stop signs.

11 And then up by -- on the front of

12 Phelps Street by my house, by the printer,

13 you know where I'm talking about, that stop

14 sign, too, was blocked by snow.

15 The DPW never came down on our

16 street. And we're paying taxes, and I think

17 it's kind of ridiculous, and I'm not going

18 to pay any taxes until that's done. And

19 that's one thing.

20 Number two is, the DPW signed their
21 contract and they got a \$1500 bonus, and my
22 question is, why wasn't the snow not plowed,
23 not only my street, but all these other
24 courts and alleys, and each one of these DPW
25 workers got \$1500, signed on contract, and

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1 each one of them, but yet the firemen and
2 police and clerical workers never got their
3 contract signed? I think that's kind of
4 ridiculous.

5 Now, this wasn't the blizzard of
6 '93, this was just a small snowstorm, and
7 yet The Scranton Times on 22 and 28, George
8 Parker and Chris Doherty said all the roads
9 were passable. It's a crying shame, and yet
10 I'm asking tonight, I want a federal
11 investigation done by the federal attorney
12 general for an investigation done, and I
13 want the state to investigate why the
14 incompetence of this mayor, this City
15 Council and his cabinet, why this wasn't
16 done.

17 Since the state is doing it with
18 PennDOT, I want heads to roll. We had a
19 medical emergency happen on my street when
20 that Tuesday a woman had an ambulance was
21 stuck in the road, five men pushed the
22 ambulance to get it off the ice, and I think
23 it's ridiculous.

24 And we had cars that were trapped on
25 the road, and not a plow came. A guy -- a

114

1 printer had to use his plow to put a --

2 MR. MINORA: Time. Time is up.

3 MR. LYMAN: -- to plow the street

4 for us on Phelps.

5 MS. GATELLI: Thank you, Mr. Lyman.

6 MR. LYMAN: And I think it's kind of

7 ridiculous. Now, I have --

8 MR. MINORA: Time is up.

9 MS. GATELLI: Your time is up, Mr.

10 Lyman.

11 MR. LYMAN: I got one more question.

12 MS. GATELLI: No. We have a lot of

13 people here, and I have to stick to the

14 rules.

15 MR. LYMAN: Okay. Thank you.

16 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Andy --

17 oh, do you want to go next?

18 MS. FRANUS: Fay Franus, Scranton.

19 Judy, did you get the response to my

20 question from a couple of weeks ago, what

21 did Mr. Doherty, Mayor Doherty, do with the

22 \$10 million for the tax anticipation loans?

23 MS. GATELLI: No, I didn't.

24 MS. FRANUS: May I ask why?

25 MS. GATELLI: Because I didn't have

.

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1 a chance with the snowstorm. I'll have it

2 for you for next week.

3 MS. FRANUS: Is it possible that

4 this money is being used for money, other

5 than what it's supposed to be used for? Is

6 this why maybe I'm not getting answers?

7 MS. GATELLI: I don't believe so.

8 MS. FRANUS: Will this all be in

9 writing?

10 MS. GATELLI: Yes.

11 MS. FRANUS: Maybe contractors are
12 getting paid cash.

13 MS. GATELLI: Mrs. Garvey, would you
14 please do that memo to the mayor tomorrow?

15 MS. GARVEY: What do you want the
16 memo to --

17 MS. GATELLI: About the \$10 million
18 loan. I'll talk to you tomorrow about it.
19 I don't want to take up here time. Go
20 ahead.

21 MS. FRANUS: I said, is it possible
22 the contractors have been getting paid cash
23 for the snow removal?

24 MS. GATELLI: I couldn't answer
25 that. I don't think so.

.

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1 MS. FRANUS: Could you check into
2 this?

3 MS. GATELLI: Who would pay them
4 cash?

5 MS. FRANUS: That's why I'm saying,
6 I'm wondering where this \$10 million is
7 going.

8 MS. GATELLI: Well, I don't think

9 that they can spend that money.

10 MS. FRANUS: You don't think. Well,

11 I think it's worth checking into. Mrs.

12 Evans, you're in the finance, I wish you

13 would look into this.

14 Also, I've gotten a couple of phone

15 calls this past week, Mrs. Gatelli, people

16 from South Side telling me that they had

17 their driveways and their streets plowed on

18 your behalf under your direction.

19 MS. GATELLI: No driveways.

20 Driveways are not allowed to be plowed.

21 MS. FRANUS: Their street

22 specifically. You were telling -- I know

23 you went to the DPW, that's one thing to go

24 with the DPW, but to go --

25 MS. GATELLI: I didn't go with the

.

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1 DPW.

2 MS. FRANUS: Who did you go with?

3 MS. GATELLI: I went with the mayor

4 and Mr. Parker.

5 MS. FRANUS: Okay. Well, my point

6 is you went to specific places.

7 MS. GATELLI: Yes, I went where I

8 got the complaints.

9 MS. FRANUS: Well --

10 MS. FRANUS: Because I kept calling

11 and calling and --

12 MS. FRANUS: What I was told -- -

13 MS. GATELLI: Well, don't believe

14 everything you're told, Mrs. Franus.

15 MS. FRANUS: Well, I do believe

16 certain things I'm told, and I'm going to

17 repeat what I was told.

18 MS. GATELLI: Well, go ahead, repeat

19 what you were told.

20 MS. FRANUS: Certain addresses,

21 streets were plowed for specific people at

22 your, you know, because of you doing a favor

23 basically, when other people didn't get this

24 favor, but not only, and here's the kicker,

25 not only did they get their streets plowed,

.

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1 but for getting their street plowed, they

2 signed petitions for your husband for school
3 board.

4 MS. GATELLI: No, that's not true,
5 Mrs. Franus. That is absolutely -- my
6 husband doesn't even have a petition for
7 school board.

8 MS. FRANUS: Is he not running for
9 school board?

10 MS. GATELLI: I don't think that's
11 any of your business.

12 MS. FRANUS: Is it your business
13 when you asked me where I worked? Anyway,
14 all I'm saying is this --

15 MS. GATELLI: No, it's not true,
16 Mrs. Franus, and stop making up lies about
17 me.

18 MS. FRANUS: I'm not making up lies.

19 MS. GATELLI: Yes, they are lies.

20 MS. FRANUS: That's your opinion.

21 MS. GATELLI: They're lies. That's
22 your opinion. They're lies.

23 MS. FRANUS: Well, here's the point
24 --

25 MS. GATELLI: And you come here

119

1 every week and you lie.

2 MS. FRANUS: When the date comes,

3 Mrs. Gatelli, for petitions --

4 MR. MINORA: Time is up.

5 MS. GATELLI: Your time is up.

6 MS. FRANUS: -- if the names on the

7 petitions are the same thing as the streets

8 you had plowed, this will prove my point.

9 MS. GATELLI: Andy Sbaraglia. Oh,

10 come on.

11 MR. STUCKER: My name is Jim

12 Stucker. I live on Providence Square. On

13 Market Street, we have a lot of problems

14 there.

15 I live on Market Street, and the bar

16 and the barber shop and the drugstore,

17 Leonard's Drug Store, we have a blue car in

18 front of the drugstore, there's no way we

19 can get the plow down there.

20 Leonard's Drugstore. There's a blue

21 car, that's all I know. They left it there

22 all summer, all winter. Maybe you can get

23 somebody to come over with a tow truck, have

24 the cop come over there and have it towed

25 out of there.

.

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1 MS. GATELLI: What street is that,

2 Mr. Stucker?

3 MR. STUCKER: Market Street,

4 Providence Square.

5 MS. GATELLI: Where Leonard's

6 Drugstore is on.

7 MR. STUCKER: Yeah. And we got our

8 laundromat parking open, and we got the

9 Taurus Club open, so a lot of people get in

10 there, we have a hard time getting -- people

11 can't get out of there after you get in

12 there at Taurus Club. So, that's run by the

13 city, the laundry mat and the Taurus Club

14 parking lot.

15 I want to know why can't the state

16 -- the state owns our road, I'd like to know

17 why can't the state come down.

18 Maybe one of you can talk -- talk to

19 his workers, one of his guys, runs the state

20 trucks. I seen the state truck going up and
21 they didn't even have a plow on it.
22 So, maybe if you can get with the
23 state, maybe you can get a hold of him and
24 tell him to come down Market Street and get
25 it open. We have nowhere to park. The

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1 trucks are double parking. There's going to
2 be a wreck there, a beer truck, water truck,
3 everything.

4 And I talked to Judy, some guy got
5 me on the phone with some guy, a black
6 pickup, he had a plow in front of it. He
7 got a hold of Judy, and she talked to him,
8 and she turned around and he gave me the
9 phone for him to talk to me, she got to talk
10 to me.

11 They said that Mayor Doherty got on
12 the phone, cell phone with me, and Doherty
13 called up -- well, he is supposed to give
14 him \$20 to give to me, Mayor Doherty, for
15 doing his hedges last year.

16 MS. GATELLI: I'll see if I can get

17 you the money, Mrs. Stucker, okay?

18 MR. STUCKER: All right. We don't
19 have our side streets plowed. We can't get
20 the garbage out.

21 MS. GATELLI: Okay.

22 MR. STUCKER: That's right off Oak
23 Street and Market Street, that alley, that
24 alley there. It's only one way. All right?

25 MS. GATELLI: All right. We'll send
.

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1 it in. Thank you.

2 MR. STUCKER: Yeah.

3 MS. GATELLI: Ozzie Quinn. Ozzie
4 Quinn. Oh, I'm sorry. Andy. Well, they
5 went all out of order. I apologize. And
6 then Ozzie Quinn is after --

7 MR. SBARAGLIA: I guess you already
8 know my name, so there's no sense in
9 repeating that again.

10 We seem to always have trouble in
11 this city. In the beginning of the year it
12 was taxes, now it's snow. It will never
13 end.

14 I saw the gentlemen that were here
15 explaining how we got into this predicament,
16 but we didn't get the man that was really
17 responsible for this predicament, the mayor.
18 Why wasn't he here to explain his
19 actions during this crisis? I lived in this
20 city all my life. I'm 68 years now. The
21 only time I ever left it is when I served my
22 country. That was it.

23 And I've been through a lot of
24 snowstorms, and I walked to school in a lot
25 of snowstorms, but the thing of the whole
.
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1 situation was, maybe the city was a little
2 -- had more people, maybe we had more money
3 then.

4 We had two collections, maybe we had
5 more trucks even, because it's a long time
6 ago, but I know we used to pick up ashes
7 then, so we did have ash trucks, as well as
8 garbage trucks.

9 Now, too, I remember the pack
10 masters having snow plows and plowing out.

11 I also remember odd and even parking.
12 But the mayor did not declare a snow
13 emergency soon enough to get the ball
14 rolling. Most of these problems that
15 occurred has occurred because of the mayor.
16 Where he was? I don't know. I
17 don't know what conditions there was up in
18 Moscow either. That's the bad part about
19 having a DPW director living outside of the
20 city.
21 You touted this man when he was
22 appointed to this position, how great he
23 was. We had glass poured on the streets
24 last year, which didn't quite work out good.
25 And as far as I know, DPW has not
.

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1 improved in the four years or five years
2 that man has been in charge.
3 We still got problems, many, many
4 problems, and I can't understand in the life
5 of me why you should be responsible for
6 potholes.
7 You should be down there and all of

8 these authorities that are using money, or
9 coming out of the -- any of the offices
10 asking for money to get all available
11 information.

12 You should not be calling up DPW and
13 saying you have to fix a pothole. That's
14 his job. If he can't do his job, get rid of
15 him. There's no question about that.

16 Any person that is in a position of
17 authority that can't do his job, should be
18 removed. It's ridiculous.

19 I hear you many times speaking about
20 this street, that street. It shouldn't be.

21 You're legislative. You're not responsible
22 for every pothole in this city. You're not
23 responsible for everybody that wants to
24 complain. That should go directly to the
25 man in charge, to the mayor. That's the

.

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1 person who should be there. That's the man
2 that should be available to all the people
3 in Scranton.

4 MR. MINORA: Time.

5 MR. SBARAGLIA: Okay. I thank you.

6 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Ozzie

7 Quinn. Michael Osborne.

8 MR. QUINN: Good evening, Michael

9 Osborne, city resident. I have three

10 things. I'm going to go through them pretty

11 quickly.

12 The first one is we were all just

13 subjected to a pretty high increase in our

14 cable rates, which is going to correspond

15 with an increase for the city and franchise

16 fees.

17 Now, Council has over the last

18 couple of months talked about getting money

19 for Channel 61. I would like to suggest

20 that you look at the budget and what this

21 increase in fees is going to mean to the

22 increase in the franchise fee.

23 The city, originally when this

24 contract went into effect, got about

25 \$200,000 a year in franchise fees. That's

.

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1 increased by more than 300 percent. It's up

2 to about \$750,000.

3 And what bothers me is it's just a

4 fee, it gets passed on us directly. The

5 city provides us no service for that money.

6 And I would like to suggest with

7 this corresponding increase that we

8 calculated, I think the average increase was

9 listed about 2.6 percent, but it's probably

10 over eight, which would translate into about

11 \$35,000 extra a year. I would like to see

12 you amend the budget to that figure, and I

13 think that money should be dedicated

14 directly to Channel 61, because I think they

15 provide a service to the city.

16 The second thing is the snowstorm.

17 It was very severe, but it just amplified

18 the problems that are true within the city

19 for every snowstorm.

20 My street, I know it's not the worst

21 in the city, but it's probably in the lower

22 part of it, the lower percentage, because

23 very rarely do we get plowed in any

24 snowstorm.

25 In fact, I was happy Mrs. Evans

1 mentioned Nay Aug, because in past holiday
2 seasons when we've had snow on the ground,
3 I've slipped and tripped across my road to
4 get to my car to drive it up around the
5 light show just to remind my car what dry
6 pavement looked like.

7 I approached Council several years
8 ago, I thought it was a good idea about the
9 web page being update to show the plowing
10 routes. Several years ago I showed them
11 samples of web pages, other cities, how they
12 do it, the priority.

13 And I certainly understand priority
14 of streets. I would just like to know where
15 my street falls, my specific block. I
16 thought that would have been a good question
17 for someone to ask DPW tonight, not just
18 what areas the plow in, but I think there
19 should be a list. I'd like to know that my
20 street is part of a list, that somewhere,
21 even if it's it the last street, that
22 someone's looking at a list and they know

23 they have to plow it.

24 The last thing is this three-minute

25 time limit. I know there's a large crowd

.

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1 here tonight, but typically -- I mean, three

2 minutes, it's hard to address much in three

3 minutes.

4 I'd like to see it go back to at

5 least five. Personally, I'm against any

6 time limit. And I think if Council went

7 back -- in fact, I challenge you to go back

8 --

9 MR. MINORA: Time.

10 MR. OSBORNE: -- go to the library

11 and look at The Home Rule Charter meetings

12 from --

13 MR. MINORA: Your time is up.

14 MR. OSBORNE: I understand. They

15 had no time limit, they weren't just

16 speeches, they were discussions between the

17 residents and the Home Rule Charter, and the

18 world didn't stop spinning, the universe

19 didn't explode. They got their work done.

20 People had the opportunity to talk --

21 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

22 MR. OSBORNE: -- and I think that's

23 what we should do here.

24 MS. GATELLI: Mr. Talamini.

25 MR. TALAMINI: Joe Talamini, and

.

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1 I've only got a couple things tonight. I'm

2 not going to hammer away on this ridiculous

3 situation we had with this snowfall, but I'm

4 also not going to circumvent it either.

5 We had a fatal accident, fatal fire,

6 and according to our city officials, and I

7 will quote, There is nothing to indicate the

8 recent snow conditions hampered response to

9 the fire. That's by Ray Hayes, the

10 Department of Public Safety.

11 However, the official Scranton Fire

12 Department website, and I quote again,

13 Incoming units were hampered by heavy

14 traffic and deplorable road conditions

15 following the snowstorm. That's point

16 number one.

17 Point number two, Mr. Courtright, I
18 agree with you 100 percent, I, too, listen
19 to my scanner. I heard the calls from the
20 police department asking for DPW. There
21 were calls the other night during a water
22 main break where they were asking if DPW
23 could come out and salt the roads.
24 DPW advised the police department
25 that was not their problem, it was the water
.
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1 company's problem. The police officer
2 called back and said, This is an emergency
3 situation, we need to get somebody down
4 here. They had blocked off Wyoming, they
5 had blocked off Washington, several other
6 blocks because the water was gushing out and
7 was freezing. DPW did not see fit to come
8 down.
9 Finally, somebody from the water
10 company showed up, they had a truck on the
11 site. They did do something about it.
12 Again, I have heard the police calls
13 time and time again during the snowstorm

14 saying they knew DPW trucks were out, they
15 knew the plows were out, but they hadn't
16 seen any they. That tells me a whole lot.
17 I don't know what you people are
18 listening to or what you're watching, but
19 that tells me a whole lot. I listen to my
20 scanner quite often. That's all I have to
21 say about that.

22 All I can say, again, is I'm sorry
23 this happened. We had to have a tragedy
24 like this to wake the city up. Let's not
25 sweep it under the rug, let's remember it

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1 for what it is. We lost a kid for no reason
2 whatsoever. Thank you.

3 MS. GATELLI: Bill Jackowitz.

4 MR. JACKOWITZ: Bill Jackowitz,

5 South Scranton resident and taxpayer,

6 retired United States Air Force.

7 First of all, I want to let you know

8 that I lived in the midwest for 15 years,

9 North Dakota, Minnesota and Wisconsin, and

10 believe it or not, we had snow there, a lot

11 more snow.

12 This snowstorm here was nothing, and

13 I never in my life experienced a situation

14 like this where nothing was done. The DPW,

15 the police department, the Scranton Fire

16 Department, all the workers should be

17 commended, all the citizens of the City of

18 Scranton should be commended.

19 The elected officials, the

20 politicians, and the directors and the

21 appointed officials should be ashamed of

22 themselves, because they did absolutely, and

23 I repeat, absolutely nothing. I was also

24 stuck on the interstate for seven hours, and

25 the state was a failure, too.

.

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1 I can spot a bad politician and

2 leader five miles away. Just follow the

3 power and the money trail, it will lead you

4 right to their front door.

5 Thanks to Mrs. Fanucci, Mrs. Gatelli

6 and Mr. McGoff taxes went up, services went

7 down.

8 Now the city only plows the middle
9 of the street. It is up to the residents to
10 remove the snow from the remainder of the
11 street.

12 According to Mr. Parker, Moscow
13 resident, If you can drive without getting
14 struck, if other people have driven over
15 ahead of you, it's passable.

16 Also Mr. Parker stated, Scranton's
17 flood control project should work.
18 Shouldn't that be will work, not should
19 work? Those are really encouraging words.

20 Mr. Doherty also had encouraging
21 words, It is what it is and we deal with it.
22 The citizens did deal with it. The leaders
23 sat back and gave the newspaper quotes.
24 Some citizens took Mr. McGoff's
25 advice and called Mayor Doherty. They were

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1 allowed to listen to the mayor's secretary's
2 voice on the voice mail. That also is very
3 encouraging during an emergency.
4 State and city government failed

5 miserably. Fifteen inches of snow, three
6 inches of ice stopped the politician from
7 accomplishing their number one job or
8 priority, providing for the safety of all
9 people under their jurisdiction, but the
10 people took care of each other. Election
11 results, when you rearrange the letters lies
12 let's recount.

13 Thank you, Veterans, for allowing me
14 to speak. National Guard had to bail the
15 politicians out again.

16 Where would we be without the
17 military, police department, firefighters,
18 DPW workers?

19 Mayor Doherty negotiate, get the
20 contracts signed, restore some order and
21 leadership back.

22 MR. MINORA: Time.

23 MR. JACKOWITZ: Mrs. Gatelli, Mrs.
24 Fanucci, and Mr. McGoff, talk with the
25 mayor. We, the citizens, want to play and

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1 work with us.

2 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

3 MR. JACKOWITZ: So, please work with
4 the citizens.

5 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

6 MR. SPINDLER: Good evening,
7 Council. Les Spindler, city resident. Two
8 weeks ago after I was done speaking, Mrs.
9 Fanucci left her seat, went out into the
10 hallway, proceeded to ask someone to ask me
11 to go out in the hallway.

12 She said she knows who's writing my
13 speeches, and every time I put my glasses
14 on, I'm reading something someone wrote.

15 Even if that were true, there's
16 nothing against reading something that
17 someone else wrote, is there, Mrs. Gatelli?

18 Is there anything in Council's rules to
19 prevent me from reading --

20 MS. GATELLI: I don't think so.

21 MR. SPINDLER: Okay. Thank you.
22 What is wrong is what Mrs. Fanucci said
23 next. She told me to stop talking about why
24 PEL is letting -- there's witnesses, Mrs.
25 Fanucci, so don't make faces.

1 Witnesses heard you say -- tell me
2 to stop talking why PEL is letting Mayor
3 Doherty have a public safety director and
4 they didn't let Mayor Connors have one.
5 That's a total lack of
6 responsibility on your part. It's
7 unethical, it's unprofessional, and you
8 should resign immediately.
9 I will not be intimidated,
10 especially by someone like you. You're a
11 joke to that seat, and you should resign
12 right now.

13 MS. GATELLI: Please, please. Mr.
14 Spindler, please.

15 MR. SPINDLER: She was out there
16 trying to intimidate me, Mrs. Gatelli.

17 MS. GATELLI: I know, but, please,
18 let's not call anybody --

19 MR. SPINDLER: I will not --

20 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Mr. Spindler,
21 you were intimidated by me?

22 MR. SPINDLER: I'm talking. Don't

23 use my time.

24 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Were you

25 intimidated by me?

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1 MR. SPINDLER: I shouldn't use my

2 voice loud, you might run away crying again.

3 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: That's a lie.

4 MR. SPINDLER: You might run away

5 crying like you did once before. I

6 shouldn't raise my voice.

7 There were witnesses that heard you,

8 so you can't say you didn't do it. And Mrs.

9 Evans' husband is one of them. He told me

10 tonight he heard you.

11 Next thing, I know, Mr. Courtright,

12 with all due respect, I hope you don't give

13 in to these bar owners that are calling you.

14 It's not time to panic. We have to

15 give this smoking ban time. I was in

16 Kelly's last night, and they haven't lost

17 any business.

18 If you have a good product, people

19 are going to come to your place. And the

20 waitress told me last night, if it wasn't
21 for yesterday being Ash Wednesday, there
22 would have been more people there.
23 Same with The Glider Dinner, they
24 said their business was slow in the
25 beginning, but now it picked back up.

.

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1 The Farr Tavern is a couple blocks
2 from my house, on the weekends, you can't
3 get a parking spot around there. So, I
4 think we have to give this time and not make
5 any amendments to the smoking ban.
6 Lastly, on the snowstorm, there's
7 one word that describes why the city streets
8 weren't done well, it's incompetent. We
9 have an incompetent mayor, we have an
10 incompetent DPW director that doesn't live
11 in this city. Maybe if he lived in the
12 city, he'd care about the way the city is
13 run.
14 When Mayor Connors was mayor, in
15 '93, we had 19 inches of snow, in '96, we
16 had 21 inches of snow, and the streets were

17 cleared in a day or two.

18 Mayor Doherty was on the 22 news

19 with Dave DeCosmo Wednesday night. He said

20 we're going to get the Sewer Authority

21 trucks out tonight and the streets will be

22 cleaned. Well, that didn't happen until six

23 days later.

24 I think we have to get --

25 MR. MINORA: Time.

.

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1 MR. SPINDLER: -- competent people

2 to run this city.

3 MR. MINORA: Time is up.

4 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Jean.

5 MS. SUETTA: Hi. You people know

6 you can't walk on the 100 or 200 block of

7 Green Ridge Street?

8 MR. COURTRIGHT: I asked for them to

9 be cited.

10 MS. SUETTA: CVS, Auto Zone, the

11 whole nine yards.

12 MR. COURTRIGHT: You told me

13 Hollywood Tans.

14 MS. SUETTA: Hollywood Tans, CVS,
15 Auto Zone. They all got millions, how come
16 their sidewalks aren't cleaned?
17 They cleaned the parking lot right
18 out on Gardner Avenue for all the snow.
19 When had 17 cars stuck on our corner and a
20 Pepsi truck, that's how much snow he plowed
21 out. If I knew his name, well, you know I
22 have a short temper.

23 MR. COURTRIGHT: No.

24 MS. SUETTA: Is he going to be
25 cited?

139

1 MS. GATELLI: I don't know, Jeanie.
2 I went there, too, and they weren't shoveled
3 all the way up to North Washington Avenue.

4 MS. SUETTA: Yeah, I know. There
5 was a lady walking down yesterday walking
6 with a little boy and pushing a carriage on
7 Green Ridge Street because the sidewalks
8 aren't done.

9 MS. GATELLI: I know.

10 MS. SUETTA: What are we going to

11 wait for, another fatality? I hope not.

12 They tried to clean them now. They can't,

13 it's a solid block of ice. Why did they

14 wait so long?

15 Now I contacted the UN Thursday,

16 called the mayor's office, I got the

17 secretary's recording. No response.

18 Fiorini was supposed to do

19 something. They should be cited. They

20 should be cited for pushing the snow out on

21 the street. Shake your head.

22 MS. GATELLI: We notified them.

23 MR. COURTRIGHT: I believe I asked

24 Sue and Sue called down. All I can do is

25 ask, Jean.

.

140

1 MS. SUETTA: And DPW did do a good

2 job, because I'm an ex-DPW. Now I'm going

3 to choke. Goodbye.

4 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Daniel

5 Hubbard.

6 MR. HUBBARD: Good evening, Council.

7 The last thing I said at the last Council

8 meeting as I walked away from the podium was
9 somebody needs to be held accountable.
10 Accountability is a big word. It's
11 a pretty simple concept. It's really hard
12 not to get aggravated.
13 The incompetence at the head of the
14 DPW is a joke. Mr. Parker allowed the city
15 to be drowned under 18 inches of snow. So,
16 at least now the rest of the Scranton
17 understands what the residents in lower
18 Green Ridge goes through when we get flooded
19 by three feet of water and nothing happens.
20 Accountability somewhere has to be
21 placed ed in this administration, whether
22 it's with you, Mr. Parker or the mayor.
23 We had two major floods. Nothing
24 has been done since 2004 to repair the
25 riverbanks in any way, shape or form.

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1 Nothing has been done to address any
2 of the concerns of the residents of lower
3 Green Ridge in regards to the DPW and what
4 Mr. Parker is responsible for as the head of

5 that department to maintain or repair

6 existing flood structures that are the

7 city's responsibility.

8 And I mean the riverbank from Green

9 Ridge Street all the way past the DPW

10 facility on our side, past Laminations.

11 That needs to be fixed.

12 I'm not waiting until 2008 when the

13 Army Corps says they're going to have the

14 levees done.

15 In 2004, they told us, Don't worry,

16 you'll have your levees in 2006. We got

17 flooded in 2006. Now they're telling us,

18 Don't worry, you'll have your levees in

19 2008.

20 So, what happens when we get flooded

21 this summer coming? What happens? We got

22 20 inches of snow on the ground, three

23 inches of ice. It's not going anywhere any

24 time soon. It's over 40 degrees today and

25 raining. It's still there.

.

142

1 So, what happens when all this

2 runoff and all this melt starts to hit the
3 river? Where are we going to be, under
4 water again? Who's responsible? Somebody
5 in this city needs to take responsibility
6 and be held accountable for the lack of work
7 done for any emergency situation that pops
8 up in this city.

9 And you know what, this time it cost
10 a life. What's next? A drowning in lower
11 Green Ridge, somebody trapped in their
12 basement and they can't get out and they
13 drown? Somebody slips and falls and hits
14 their head and their house fills with water,
15 they drown? Where is the accountability?
16 Where is it?

17 He sat here tonight. He didn't take
18 any responsibility. He wasn't held
19 accountable for any of this.

20 This goes back since he took office.
21 The flood of 2004, the flood of 2006, the
22 snowstorm of 2006. Is this the first time
23 we got snow in Northeastern Pennsylvania?
24 I mean, is this global warming
25 change the climate now that we're receiving

1 snow and this is a giant surprise to Mr.

2 Packer?

3 Holy God, we got snow. Wow. He

4 lives in Moscow. He got snow months ago.

5 Is it something new to him? Where am I

6 going to be when this melts?

7 None of the storm drains are cleared

8 in lower Green Ridge. The dirt in the storm

9 drains hasn't been cleared in lower Green

10 Ridge.

11 Mr. Parker doesn't care. Where is

12 the responsibility? Who in this

13 administration is responsible for --

14 MR. MINORA: Time.

15 MR. HUBBARD: -- the lack of

16 services to the residents of Scranton? Who

17 is to be held accountable for what happened

18 Tuesday night? Where does it fall?

19 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

20 MR. HUBBARD: Somebody is

21 responsible.

22 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

23 MR. HUBBARD: In the definition of
24 accountability in the dictionary under
25 government, participant or elected official,
.

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1 you are held to basically to the citizens.

2 You have to be held accountable to the

3 residents that put you in your offices.

4 MS. GATELLI: Mr. Hubbard, your time

5 is up.

6 MR. MINORA: Time is up.

7 MR. HUBBARD: I don't care.

8 MS. GATELLI: Well, we care.

9 MR. HUBBARD: I don't. And when the

10 river is in my living room in another month

11 when this melt, where are you going to be?

12 MS. GATELLI: You're out of order,

13 Mr. Hubbard. You're out of order.

14 MR. HUBBARD: A child died.

15 Somebody needs to be held accountable.

16 MS. GATELLI: Mr. Piccolino.

17 MR. PICCOLINO: Giovanni Piccolino,

18 partner in Buona Pizza, taxpaying citizen in

19 Scranton. Did you guys hear anything about

20 the so-called offer for us yet? Of course

21 not.

22 Okay. Anyways, the main reason why

23 I'm here, I'm going to invite all of you

24 guys tomorrow, because the associated press

25 is going to come and do our story

.

145

1 nationwide.

2 And why do you think a big media

3 entity like that will come to a small town

4 pizza shop like ours? Probably because it's

5 an absolute atrocity what this mayor is

6 trying to do to us.

7 It's making national media

8 constantly. It just seems like it's always,

9 oh, we don't know, we don't know.

10 So, if you guys want to come and

11 show your support for us tomorrow, we will

12 be more than happy to give you guys a slice

13 of pizza.

14 And Mr. Doherty can come down and

15 have a slice of pizza, too, maybe answer

16 some questions for the associated press so I

17 don't have to continually answer his
18 questions.
19 That's it. And another thing, I got
20 a good idea what they can do with this snow,
21 maybe put in the Southern Union Building.

22 MS. GATELLI: Julie Jones.

23 MS. JONES: Good evening, Council.

24 Julie Jones. I haven't been here for a
25 while, but from watching the meetings on TV,

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1 I feel like I need to come.
2 Just from watching the meetings, if
3 I were to stand here and address Council
4 this evening, I think I would say, Mrs.
5 Evans, Mr. Hazzouri, Mr. Murphy, Mr.
6 Courtright and Mr. Pocius, because that's
7 what I feel like is sitting up there.
8 That's exactly what I feel like.
9 And if I offend anybody by that, I'm
10 sorry, but it is what it is. Isn't that
11 what the mayor says? So I'm saying it is
12 what it is.
13 The snow removal, I won't ponder on

14 this, because we had representatives here
15 this evening.
16 We live on a dead end street.
17 Because we live on a dead end street, I've
18 heard it time and time again at these
19 meetings, we don't qualify for snow removal
20 and we don't qualify for paving.
21 So, maybe if we don't qualify for
22 snow removal an we don't qualify for paving,
23 then maybe all the people that live on dead
24 end streets in the City of Scranton could
25 get a tax decrease, because I think with our
·
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1 taxes going up, we deserve that.
2 Mrs. Evans said park in your
3 driveways, park in your garages so there
4 could be snowplowing. I can't get to my
5 garage. I'm in the middle of the street
6 parked.
7 Now, as of when I left my home this
8 evening at six o'clock, my street is still
9 not plowed. There's an elderly woman that
10 lives next door to me. She has Hospice,

11 visiting nurses, Meals on Wheels. She
12 hasn't seen anybody since before the storm.
13 That's disgusting. I'm sorry. That's
14 disgusting.
15 And what scares me most is I parked
16 my car today, got out, got to my porch, my
17 car, my minivan, which I consider a little
18 heavier than a car, rolled a block down
19 Genet Street and landed in front of a
20 church, because it couldn't hold on the ice.
21 Now, what if there was a pedestrian,
22 a child, somebody coming through that
23 intersection, it's Lent, people going into
24 church, and guess what, I'd be the one
25 getting sued, not the mayor.

.

148

1 But it's the mayor's fault, because
2 my street is not plowed. I called Mr.
3 Courtright, I called a bunch of people, I
4 got no response.
5 And I don't want to hear that
6 they're doing their best. I waited and
7 waited. Today was the last straw.

8 I have a phone call into Channel 16.

9 They plan on coming out to my house. And

10 you know, what I hope they do, because I

11 have had it. I'm there 12 years, and I have

12 never had it plowed.

13 MR. MINORA: Time.

14 MS. JONES: That cannot be three

15 minutes.

16 MS. GATELLI: Time flies when you're

17 having fun.

18 MS. JONES: Can I say one last

19 thing?

20 MS. GATELLI: Yes, go ahead. Mrs.

21 Wardell you can come next. Go ahead, Mrs.

22 Jones, finish up your thoughts.

23 MS. JONES: Okay. I'll be really,

24 really -- I'll speak real fast. I also

25 would like to address something else. We

.

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1 all have to come here and respect all of

2 Council, just like Mr. Miller had said.

3 Well, from what I've seen on Channel

4 61, it needs to start working both ways

5 starting tonight.

6 When you run for political office

7 and are appointed, you become open -- you

8 become an open public book.

9 All five of you are here to listen

10 to us, not to yell back or laugh or snicker

11 at us.

12 I can say when this occurs, Council,

13 you are out of order. And to sit there and

14 say you do not respect someone is totally

15 out of line.

16 So, from here on in, I think you

17 really need to sit there, listen to the

18 public, see what we have to say, and if any

19 comments come your way from this point on

20 that you do not like, you are a political

21 figure in this city and you should sit there

22 and suck it up instead of striking back at

23 the public.

24 And Mrs. Fanucci's snickering and

25 laughing at the public needs to come to a

.

150

1 stop, Mrs. Gatelli. And you are the one

2 that can take care of that problem. Thank
3 you.

4 MS. WARDELL: Good evening, Council.

5 Mary Ann Wardell. A few weeks ago I
6 believe, Judy, that you told me when we were
7 talking about PEL and we were talking about
8 the safety director position that had been
9 eliminated by PEL for Jimmy Connors and it
10 was reinstated, did I hear you correctly
11 that you said that you and Mrs. Fanucci and
12 several others have voted to keep that
13 safety position? Did you?

14 MS. GATELLI: No. I read a letter
15 from PEL, because we wrote to them and asked
16 them the question, and I don't have it with
17 me, but I believe they said it wasn't in
18 that Recovery Plan, but it was in the
19 recovery than that the people voted on in
20 2002 maybe, or whatever year they voted on
21 it. That's what PEL's answer was.

22 MS. WARDELL: I misunderstood.

23 MS. GATELLI: We didn't vote on it
24 at all.

25 MS. WARDELL: Do you think that we

151

1 are getting the money, our money's worth

2 from this safety director?

3 I just paid \$1800. I just paid my

4 taxes, and it was \$1800, and I don't think

5 I'm getting my services for the money that

6 I'm paying.

7 I live down on Depot Street. We had

8 one plow come down there on Saturday. He

9 got stuck on my corner. He turned around,

10 he left, he never came back.

11 There are streets down there that

12 have not been plowed. There's a bridge down

13 there, Sanderson Avenue Bridge, that about

14 35 kids have to walk across to get to Morris

15 School. They're walking on the road. These

16 are little children that are walking on that

17 road. We need something done down there.

18 And that needs to -- even if they just clear

19 one side, that needs to be taken care of.

20 I would also like to say that I

21 think the firemen did a wonderful job over

22 there on Acker Avenue, and I have to say, I

23 partially hold this administration
24 responsible for the death of that child.

25 It sickens me to have to say that,

.

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1 but I believe --

2 MS. GATELLI: Excuse me. I have to
3 stop you there, because I -- it's such a
4 tragedy and everyone is mourning.

5 MS. WARDELL: Yes, it is a tragedy.

6 Yes, it is.

7 MS. GATELLI: I don't think that we
8 should blame anybody for a child's death.

9 MS. WARDELL: Well, I think -- I
10 most certainly think that if those roads
11 over there had been cleaned --

12 MS. GATELLI: No, I disagree with
13 you.

14 MS. WARDELL: -- I think our
15 response time would have been better.

16 MS. GATELLI: The DPW union head is
17 here, he will tell you. That's not fair to
18 blame somebody for a child's death, Mary
19 Ann.

20 MS. WARDELL: I said partially.

21 MS. GATELLI: No, no partially or

22 not.

23 MS. WARDELL: And what you heard

24 here tonight --

25 MS. GATELLI: That's serious.

153

1 MS. WARDELL: -- is more spin. You

2 heard more spin from Mr. Parker --

3 MS. GATELLI: Yeah, but we have the

4 workers here. The workers are here.

5 MS. WARDELL: I'm not talking about

6 the workers. I'm not talking about the

7 workers. You're talking about spin. That

8 was spin from an incompetent man that's been

9 in this job for five years, and we got spin

10 on Hollow Avenue, and we got spin on

11 everything else from him. He's never

12 responsible for anything. He doesn't take

13 accountability for anything.

14 Just like Dan said, there's no

15 accountability here. Nobody answers for

16 anything. We just point the finger at

17 somebody else.

18 Somebody's got to stand up. Even

19 the governor stood up and said, Hey, you

20 know, we're responsible for this.

21 Did you see the mayor do that?

22 You'd never see the mayor do that, because

23 you never see him say he ever made a mistake

24 or ever did anything wrong.

25 MR. MINORA: Time. Your time is up.

.

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1 MS. WARDELL: Thank you.

2 MS. GATELLI: Lee Morgan.

3 MR. MORGAN: Can I go after the next

4 speaker, and that way I won't tie you up?

5 I'm going to come down.

6 MS. GATELLI: Okay. Mike Dudek.

7 And, Mr. Vitras, if you'd like to come up

8 and respond to that, please feel free.

9 MR. DUDEK: Mike Dudek, 608 Depot

10 Street, Scranton. I live in The Plot. Two

11 points I want to make. First of all, it has

12 been very well documented tonight, the work

13 that was done on the snow was very hard and

14 very well done by those that were available.
15 I would just like to know how many
16 people worked with the department of the DPW
17 when Mayor Connors was mayor and how many
18 people work in that department now, because
19 I think that's where the problem is.
20 We have too many people acting as
21 advisors and not enough people out there as
22 workers. And this is the blame that we lay
23 at the feet of the administration, and this
24 is the blame that I lay at the feet of the
25 administration, and for this blame, I back
.
155

1 what Mrs. Wardell was saying, clear and
2 simple.
3 The second point I want to make, in
4 1946, we elected a man named Mr. Hanlon as
5 mayor, and we've had nine mayors since him.
6 In 1946, the City of Chicago elected
7 Richard Daily. And from that time, Chicago
8 has had only four mayors, Richard Daily,
9 Harold Washington, for one term, Jane Burne
10 for one term, and Richard Daily's son, who's

11 the mayor now, four mayors since 1946.
12 Do you know what did in Mayor
13 Washington after one term? A snowstorm.
14 Mrs. Burne ran on one issue, a Chicago
15 snowstorm. She resurrected it from when it
16 had happened two years previously and
17 actually won the mayoralty of the City of
18 Chicago based on one snowstorm.
19 That's what's going to happen here.
20 There will be people that will lose elected
21 positions because of this snowstorm.
22 One other thing I want to bring up
23 totally divorced of the snowstorm, the
24 county commissioners are entertaining the
25 idea of building a factory here in
.

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1 Lackawanna County that could employ a lot of
2 people once it's built.
3 Why don't we go after the same
4 individual and build it in Scranton? The
5 person I'm referring to is Paul Sorvino.
6 The factory he wants to build is a movie
7 studio.

8 A movie studio is a factory
9 operation, the kind of operation that cannot
10 ever be outsourced to China or Mexico or any
11 place else.

12 We are letting the ball drop by not
13 putting together a package for Mr. Sorvino
14 to bring him into the city.

15 Why not build that -- build the
16 movie studio here in the city instead of
17 letting the county commissioners put -- let
18 him put it in any borough or township or
19 whatever they please? Why do we complete
20 for it? Just a thought. Thank you.

21 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

22 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.

23 The first thing I have is that if you go to

24 The Scranton Times website,

25 www.Scrantontimes.com, you can see the

.

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1 communication center's communicates with all

2 the departments involved in response to the

3 tragedy in the city.

4 The other thing is, on February 27,

5 the Lackawanna County Citizens and Taxpayers

6 Association is going to have a meeting.

7 We'd like to invite the mayor and anybody on

8 Council who'd like to come so that we can

9 have an open discussion on responses in this

10 city to the storm and to basic services, and

11 we hope that you would come.

12 The other thing I have here is, I

13 went to Lisa Moran's office, I believe, last

14 week and requested a copy of Mr. Mark

15 Seitzinger's resume, which I have here,

16 okay?

17 My zoning board hearing is on the

18 28th, and I'd also like to ask everybody who

19 watches 61 to -- I'd like them to view that

20 to see how I believe the mayor abused his

21 discretion as a public leader in this

22 community by targeting me, and I think that

23 that will come out in this zoning hearing.

24 But I'd like to say that when you

25 look at this Mr. Mark Seitzinger's resume,

.

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1 he's a basketball coach, he's an athletic

2 director and assistant admissions director,
3 and he has no real experience in anything
4 whatsoever.

5 And I just think that it really
6 helps you, in my opinion, if your father
7 works in Mellow's office and it can open a
8 lot of doors for you. And I think that
9 that's the major problem we have in this
10 city.

11 We've worried about politics too
12 much, and I think what's going to happen
13 when we get into this zoning hearing, if
14 this attorney that's going to represent me
15 here decides to follow this course of
16 action, is you're going to find out that all
17 these warrants were illegal, that Mr.
18 Seitzinger abused his authority by showing
19 people a badge and telling them he could
20 kick my doors in because the mayor told him
21 to.

22 And I just find it to be a very
23 disgusting thing, and I think that the
24 trouble we have here in the city we have to
25 recognize is, when we had this meeting here

1 about this, I guess you'd have to say the
2 tragedy, there's so much disinformation
3 here. There has to be some reality.
4 I'm not really interested in
5 photo-ops with the mayor and other public
6 officials talking about conquering the
7 snowstorm, because in reality, you have to
8 understand that these pack masters weigh
9 38,000 empty with a plow on them. They have
10 two live axles. They can take any hill this
11 city has.
12 We don't have the equipment to do
13 the storm that we were faced with, because
14 this administration has blamed other people
15 for their problems and skirted all the real
16 issues to borrow a ton of money and look
17 good.
18 And for the people who try to stand
19 up and speak the truth, I guess you sic
20 their pit bull on them, okay?
21 This Council hasn't done a lot of
22 things it should have did. There's still no

23 dog ordinance in the city that I'm aware of.

24 MR. MINORA: Your time is up.

25 MR. MORGAN: Thank you. Bye.

.

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1 MS. GATELLI: Mrs. Shumaker. Is she

2 here? How about Charlie Newcomb, is he

3 still here, Sr.?

4 MR. NEWCOMB, SR.: Long night. Good

5 evening, Council. Just on -- I appreciate

6 Chief Davis staying here listening for the

7 meeting, I wish the other officials would

8 have stayed and listened to what the people

9 had to say.

10 But as far as it goes, I'm going to

11 say one thing on the tragedy, from what I

12 understand, the response time was within a

13 few minutes, like three or four minutes, so

14 I think the only thing to blame for that

15 tragedy, unfortunately, was whatever caused

16 the fire.

17 I believe the firemen did an

18 excellent job, and unfortunately there was a

19 tragedy involved, but I don't think there

20 was a lot of other things to blame it on.

21 The other thing is, Mr. Courtright,

22 I'm sure you read in the paper, I put an

23 article in the newspaper about the smoking

24 ban last week. No? Okay. Well, one thing

25 I don't do is I don't do is I don't

.

161

1 apologize for my opinion, and the opinion

2 that I put in there, so that's why I'm here

3 in case you didn't read it, was about you

4 were talking about you want to redo the

5 smoking ban or you're looking at it a little

6 bit, the only thing I have to say about the

7 smoking ban is this, is when you had public

8 hearings and everything on it, people had a

9 chance to come and speak.

10 One person that owned a business,

11 salesmen in Dunmore that sold cigarettes in

12 Scranton, if this many people that were here

13 tonight, and what I say is, it goes in

14 numbers, you know, volumes are in numbers,

15 strength in numbers, if all these business

16 owners came forward for the smoking ban, I

17 believe it might have been a little bit
18 different, because they would have told you
19 how much business they're losing and
20 everything else.

21 But nobody came here and said it.

22 So, I think if you're going to make any kind
23 of changes on the smoking ban, the only
24 thing what I just experienced, and believe
25 me when I tell you, it came down to a couple

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1 times where, you know, we almost got into
2 some -- you're going to have to start -- if
3 you want to make a change, it's not being --
4 the business owners are blamed with it.

5 So, the only thing you're going to
6 have to do is change is you're going to have
7 to make them responsible for the people that
8 are in their business smoking, and then
9 maybe, you know, they'll look at it a little
10 bit different.

11 As far as the snowstorm goes, when
12 Mayor Connors was mayor, 1993, we had 21
13 inches of snow. It was removed and put down

14 there where Daron Northeast is, but you
15 can't put it there now, because that's not
16 vacant, and he had it removed in, like, 17
17 and a half hours.

18 All I could say is the
19 administration -- I don't blame any of the
20 DPW drivers or nothing because they did the
21 best they can do with what they had, but all
22 I can say is from what I experienced with
23 the state 47 hours of the highway closed and
24 the City of Scranton, how deplorable it was,
25 if we ever, God forbid I use the word ever,

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1 have a 9/11 here or Katrina or something of
2 that disaster, we are in serious trouble.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

5 MR. MCCLOE: Thank you. My name is
6 Brett, Brett McCloe, and I'm a lifetime
7 resident of Scranton, Pennsylvania, and I'm
8 also a waiter, and I was here two weeks ago,
9 and I said I'd be back, and I'm back.

10 Two weeks ago I talked about

11 hospitality, privilege and choice. Tonight
12 I'm going to talk about three things that go
13 hand and hand with hospitality, privilege
14 and choice. These three things are the
15 foundation of our society and the very
16 reason we are a nation today. These things
17 are life, liberty and the pursuit of
18 happiness.

19 Life and hospitality are inseparable
20 due to the fact that we are social
21 creatures. Hospitality compliments life and
22 makes life and makes life worth living.

23 Liberty and privilege cannot exist
24 without each other. Without privilege, what
25 exactly are you at liberty to do? And

.

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1 choice is the bare essence of free will and
2 the pursuit of happiness.
3 Last week we were told to take a
4 deep breath as if we were being prepped for
5 a politically correct lobotomy and that we
6 were being progressive by this smoking ban.
7 What's so progressive about cut,

8 copying and pasting legislation from Los
9 Angeles, New York or New Jersey? If others
10 are framing our decisions for us, what
11 exactly is your job?
12 The people of Scranton should have a
13 problem with this. America does not start
14 in Los Angeles and New York, it starts here,
15 in Scranton, Pennsylvania. As the saying
16 goes, all politics is local.
17 Let's not adopt the Washington
18 mindset that the ends justify the means, but
19 instead let us focus on a means to come to a
20 justifiable end by letting hard work,
21 compromise and the willingness to seek
22 alternatives lead the way.
23 To be truly progressive means you
24 don't skip over steps, you come to any
25 collusion. As a math teacher would tell its
·
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1 student, show your work.
2 The smoking ban is no longer an
3 issue, it's the thought process that allowed
4 you to come to that collusion that is

5 important.

6 Too dimensional political thinking

7 has made the free market obsolete by

8 deciding the acceptable levels of

9 hospitality, privilege and choice.

10 So, in my opinion, I believe it's

11 time to reverse engineer this smoking ban

12 and insist on putting in place mechanisms

13 that lead to cleaner indoor air standards.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Anyone

16 else?

17 MR. VITRAS: I'm Sam Vitras, 727

18 Eynon Street, Scranton, Pennsylvania. Okay.

19 I guess snow is the most popular thing

20 tonight, but, you know, I guess I'll do a

21 timeline of the fire, and 1 p.m., our trucks

22 arrive in the area plowing ice and salting

23 in the Archbald Street area where it's just

24 a few blocks away from where the fire was.

25 We start on South 9th, we continue

.

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1 onto Snyder, and we continue onto Corbett

2 Avenue, where it is directly behind this --
3 actually Corbett Avenue is the rear of the
4 fire.
5 We noticed fire coming out of a
6 doorway of that home, and we call it in to
7 our dispatch, and we also tried using our
8 cell phones, and everybody must have been
9 calling at the same time, because we
10 couldn't even get an answer from 911.
11 We jump out of our trucks, me and my
12 partner back there, Ernie DeStefano, and we
13 run into the backyard.
14 And I'm telling you, the house was
15 fully engulfed in that area of that Acker
16 Avenue home. And you stood there and you
17 didn't know what to do, other than look to
18 try and get in, but you were hesitant,
19 because the magnitude of the fire that was
20 coming out of that home.
21 And we ran around to the front of
22 the home looking for another way in, and
23 there we noticed the whole family on the
24 front porch. And we're, you know, screaming
25 to the family to get off the porch,

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1 screaming to them. Finally they start to
2 move, and then we make our way around the
3 other side of the home.

4 By that time, we run into another
5 gentleman there screaming frantically, and
6 we all were, that I saved one and I couldn't
7 get another one out.

8 Now we could hear the fire engines.

9 This is all within a couple minutes. We can
10 hear the fire engines getting closer and
11 closer and closer, and now we say to each
12 other, we're blocking the entrance for them
13 to get in here on Corbett Avenue, so we move
14 our trucks and then we make our way back
15 around.

16 And those firemen were there pretty
17 quick, and they were putting water on that
18 fire pretty quick. But I -- to say that --

19 MR. MINORA: Time.

20 MR. VITRAS: -- the fire trucks were
21 or the snow impeded the fire trucks from
22 getting into just that area of the Archbald

23 Street area of where the fire was, I only
24 can speak of, because I was there. They did
25 not -- the snow did not impede them from
.

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1 getting into that area.

2 Naturally you can't go 60 miles an

3 hour down Archbald Street or up Landis

4 Street, because it's a very tight area to

5 begin with, not to mention when you got

6 17-inch snow walls all over the place.

7 So, I mean, it's a very difficult

8 area with no snow, let alone 17-inches. But

9 they were in there.

10 And from what I'm told, because my

11 -- the exact time that school was getting

12 out and traffic on Luzerne Street and Main

13 Avenue, I mean, it was clogged, and it

14 always is.

15 What made it even harder is there's

16 not many places -- like, if you hear a fire

17 truck or an emergency vehicle coming, you're

18 able to pull over to the side of the road,

19 but in this case, it's harder because

20 there's so much snow around. It makes it
21 more difficult to do. And a lot of them are
22 state roads.

23 You people are talking about, and
24 I'm sorry if I'm going over.

25 MS. GATELLI: That's okay. You can

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1 go over.

2 MR. VITRAS: But you people are
3 talking about removing snow. Okay. We're
4 doing that. We're removing snow wherever
5 they want snow removed.

6 Like today we were in courts, and,
7 you know, but the first place you got to
8 start, trust me, is on the state roads.

9 You've got to remove snow from the state
10 roads, because that's where the traffic is
11 going it's quickest.

12 On the side roads, you only move at
13 a very minimal speed, but when you're coming
14 up Mulberry Street and you have to come
15 around a snow mound or you're coming down
16 Harrison Avenue or Luzerne Street, you got

17 to start with your main roads and remove the
18 snow first for safety reasons. That's where
19 you start first. And that's the
20 responsibility of the state.

21 You can't expect us to remove the
22 courts, the schools, the streets. I mean,
23 there's -- you want to do all that, you
24 better double our manpower and you better
25 double our equipment. I mean, and you're

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1 talking money. So, you got to be realistic
2 and you have to understand you work with
3 what you have.

4 MS. GATELLI: Maybe, Mr. Vitras, you
5 can sit down with these gentlemen when they
6 meet with Mr. Parker.

7 MR. VITRAS: And I would be glad to
8 do that. Over the years -- I mean, it's my
9 third blizzard, and everybody told me,
10 you'll never see another one like the one
11 you had in '93. Well, I just seen two more.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

14 MR. YOUNG: Randy Young, West Side

15 resident. First of all, let me apologize

16 for my ignorance on --

17 MS. GATELLI: No, that's perfectly

18 all right.

19 MR. YOUNG: Like I said, this is my

20 first time here. I'm tired of all the

21 finger pointing at DPW. They did the best

22 they could with what they had. Their two

23 major constraints, number one, was their

24 budget, which is mandated by the mayor and

25 by Council, and Mr. Parker had to work

.

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1 within that budget.

2 The second problem they had which

3 they still have and nobody bans to stand up

4 and say it are the people that live in this

5 city who are park their cars out in the

6 middle of the street and that prevents the

7 city from coming in and removing the snow

8 and pushing it back further and widening the

9 roads.

10 I don't know about the rest of you,

11 but we as a neighborhood got together the
12 night before the storm and the following day
13 and we cleared our area. We worked with the
14 city. Enough said on that.

15 My other issue is the smoking ban.

16 I am not against the smoking ban, I am
17 against the way it's written, and I am
18 against the way it's being enforced.

19 Right now, to my knowledge, there
20 have been a little over a 100 citations
21 issued. 80 percent of those have been
22 issued to young people between the ages of
23 15 and 20, all right, and parents are paying
24 up.

25 Every citation has been issued for

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1 smoking within 20 feet of the entrance to a
2 public building. No citation has been
3 issued, to my knowledge, for smoking inside
4 the building. Now, is the city trying to
5 collect money from the parents, or what?

6 All right?

7 Maybe Mr. Minora can answer this

8 question, on what date was the ordinance
9 which was voted upon and passed publicized
10 in the newspaper?

11 MR. MINORA: I'm not certain.

12 MR. YOUNG: I am. It never was.

13 All right? You know you have to do that ten
14 days before you can enact that?

15 MS. GATELLI: Mrs. Garvey advertises
16 those in the newspaper, and she did so.

17 MR. YOUNG: No. The only
18 advertisement that came in the newspaper was
19 the smoking ban was passed.

20 MS. GATELLI: No. The ordinance is
21 in the legal ads.

22 MR. YOUNG: Well, I called The
23 Scranton Times today and they were unable to
24 give it to me.

25 MS. GATELLI: How long does it have

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1 to be advertised, Kay?

2 MS. GARVEY: The ordinance is
3 advertised in the introduction phase. When
4 it's introduced in fifth order, the

5 ordinance --

6 MR. YOUNG: Could you give me the

7 exact date, please?

8 MS. GARVEY: Pardon?

9 MR. YOUNG: Could you give me the

10 exact date, please?

11 MS. GARVEY: I don't remember the

12 date of the introduction. I'd have to look

13 in the file for that.

14 MR. YOUNG: All right. When you get

15 that, could you please let me know?

16 MS. GARVEY: Sure, if you want to

17 leave the information with Sue where I can

18 contact you.

19 MR. MINORA: Your time is up, sir.

20 MR. YOUNG: Also --

21 MS. GATELLI: What else would you

22 like? Go ahead.

23 MR. YOUNG: Any constraints on city

24 streets restricting or involving the public

25 passage of the traveling public must be

.

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1 signed. You have to have proper signage on

2 there.

3 People are being arrested on a
4 policeman's word and being cited that they
5 were within 20 feet of a business.

6 MS. GATELLI: Okay. Thank you very
7 much.

8 MR. YOUNG: All right? Why is that
9 happening?

10 MS. GATELLI: Well, I'm going to
11 answer you just from my experience at West
12 Scranton High School, because the children
13 smoke across the street in front of a store,
14 and the store owner doesn't want them
15 smoking there.

16 MR. YOUNG: Was there a complaint
17 filed by the store owner?

18 MS. GATELLI: Yes, there was, to the
19 resource officer, and he then cited some of
20 the students. I can't answer for any other
21 school, but I know at our school, the store
22 owner now that the ordinance passed, was
23 able to do something about the kids smoking
24 in front of her store.

25 MR. YOUNG: Is there any signage or

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1 any way for these students to know where
2 that 20-foot boundary is?

3 MS. GATELLI: I'm not sure about
4 that.

5 MR. YOUNG: I am. There's nothing.

6 MS. GATELLI: Well, if they're 15,
7 they shouldn't be smoking anyway.

8 MR. YOUNG: Excuse me, ma'am, but
9 there is no state law against the
10 consumption of tobacco products.

11 MS. GATELLI: All right. I'm not
12 going to argue with you. Thank you.

13 MR. YOUNG: You don't have to argue
14 with me.

15 MR. MINORA: Your time is up, sir.

16 MS. GATELLI: Next person. There's
17 no parking over there, Chrissy.

18 MR. SLEDZINSKI: I know. I know.

19 Bring it down or bring it up, Billy, you
20 think?

21 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yeah, bring it up,
22 Chris.

23 MR. SLEDZINSKI: Well, guys, I want
24 to thank you guys for a good job. Tommy,
25 Dave, all you guys downstairs. Good job on
.

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1 the fire Tuesday. Thank you, guys. Good
2 job. Good job, guys.

3 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

4 MR. GERVASI: Good evening, City
5 Council. My name is Dave Gervasi, I'm a
6 citizen, resident, homeowner in the City of
7 Scranton.

8 There's a lot of passionate people
9 here tonight for a lot of reasons. There's
10 certain subjects that I will not touch on
11 because we don't really know certain answers
12 to certain questions.

13 What I will say is, and I'm probably
14 going to inflame some people, because when
15 we complain about services in the City of
16 Scranton, we have no one to blame but
17 ourselves.

18 And the reason why I say that is we
19 voted for a Council years ago that got us

20 into distressed status.

21 We, the unions, the citizens, the
22 elected officials at the time trusted the
23 Pennsylvania Economy League and the state to
24 come in and have a quick recovery, and
25 because we trusted them, the first recovery

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1 plan gutted the DPW, gutted clerical, 50
2 firefighters, 30 police officers, and we
3 said it was okay, we're going to give it a
4 shot. We're going to try to save the city
5 and recover the city financially.

6 The promises were never kept. Since
7 then, our budgets have risen millions of
8 dollars a year, our services have been cut,
9 and frankly the last five years our budgets
10 have risen at an accelerated rate. They
11 want to cut more of your firefighters.

12 But who do we have to blame for
13 that? We can't put the blame just on Chris
14 Doherty. We voted for him.

15 Nobody took the time to read the
16 Recovery Plan which will enable him to do

17 this. It's our fault, all of us.

18 And union reps have come here year
19 after year, especially my predecessors, Mike
20 Ferke, Paul Bernardi, Terry Osborne, and
21 have warned the citizens of the City of
22 Scranton about the incompetency and the lack
23 of knowledge to recover this city from the
24 people and our plan coordinators who have
25 done it, and no one listened frankly, and we

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1 even bought into it twice, the unions. We
2 bought into it twice and we trusted them.
3 Now as things get worse, as our
4 taxes are raised, as our services are cut, I
5 have one question to ask everyone, have you
6 seen the politicians' budgets be cut, have
7 you ever seen more middle managers in the
8 City of Scranton than you do now?
9 You've seen less firefighters than
10 you ever did, you've seen less DPW workers
11 than you ever did.
12 All I'm trying to say is we come
13 here and we've tried to tell the truth to

14 the people in the City of Scranton and to
15 our elected officials, some listened, some
16 did not, and it bothers, it really bothers
17 being a part of -- employed in the city
18 where our chief has to do the same job with
19 less money and less resources, and the chief
20 in the police department has to -- is
21 expected to keep crime down and keep
22 everything states quo with less money and
23 less resources.

24 And I'm not blaming our chief or
25 their chief or this mayor or the last mayor.

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1 It was the recovery system.

2 MR. MINORA: Time.

3 MR. GERVASI: And it didn't work.

4 May I finish my thoughts?

5 MS. GATELLI: Yes.

6 MR. GERVASI: I think we need to all

7 look at this together and come together as a

8 community and realize that this recovery

9 process hasn't worked and it's been a

10 miserable failure. And I think if we all

11 sat down and worked together, we can settle
12 our problems.

13 And, please, I ask the residents of
14 this city to please do not blame the DPW
15 workers for the snowfall. They're working
16 with 30 less people, 20 less trucks than
17 they had ten years ago.

18 And just like the mayor said, it is
19 what it is. The people wanted this recovery
20 process, they wanted these recovery plans,
21 the Council made them -- allowed them to
22 come in here, and we're going to sit here
23 and complain that you're not getting proper
24 services.

25 It is what it is, and we're all

.

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1 responsible for it, including the unions,
2 because we bought into this once, and it's
3 got to end someday. And that's all I have
4 to say. Thank you.

5 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

6 MS. GATELLI: And by the way, Mr.

7 Gervasi, I agree with you. I agree that

8 it's time everybody sits down and tries to
9 move forward, instead of the constant
10 bickering and animosity. I'm ready. I
11 don't know about anybody else. Mrs.
12 Stulgis.

13 MS. STULGIS: I'm Ann Marie Stulgis,
14 and a Scranton resident. And I don't think
15 Dave would mind if I spoke for him, and I'm
16 speaking for us, also. We've been ready for
17 five and a half years.

18 I caught the diatribe tonight. I
19 thought there were two very important things
20 missing in Mr. Parker's speech. The first
21 was that it didn't start with once upon a
22 time, and the second was that it didn't end
23 with and they all lived happily ever after,
24 because that's about how much truth was in
25 what he said.

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1 I enjoyed particularly when he said
2 that today they concentrated on all the
3 courts.

4 Well, I'll tell you what court they

5 concentrated on, they concentrated on the
6 500 block of Moir Court. Take a ride up.
7 It's absolutely beautiful. There is no snow
8 in the 500 block of Moir Court, there is no
9 snow in the lower half of the 700 block of
10 Olive Street, up the lower half, up to Moir
11 Court from Jefferson Avenue.
12 The same with Vine Street. The 500
13 block of Jefferson Avenue tonight, the
14 police were calling for a DPW truck and none
15 was available, because they were cleaning
16 the 500 block of Jefferson Avenue.
17 Now, you wonder why they were all
18 there? ESPN is coming to town. There's
19 going to be a big boxing match tomorrow
20 night at the former CYC.
21 So, the residents be damned, but,
22 boy, we'll look good on national TV, won't
23 we? It's pathetic.
24 The big piles of snow that are on
25 everybody's corner that make it very
.

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1 dangerous, the big pile of snow on Olive

2 Street at Madison Avenue, where every
3 morning we watch that school bus have to
4 back up twice to turn south onto Madison
5 Avenue, that's still there, but there are no
6 piles of snow at either end of Moir Court.
7 It's perfectly cleared.
8 This is a travesty, it is
9 ridiculous, and it's all a show. To go up
10 there, and I invite anyone to take a look up
11 there tonight when you leave here. It's
12 only a few blocks away.
13 I walk it, so it certainly wouldn't
14 hurt anybody to just drive by and take a
15 look. You will see Moir Court is beautiful,
16 and while there's piles of snow at the main
17 intersections, there are no piles of snow
18 between Moir and Jefferson in the 500 block.
19 That's a once upon a time.
20 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.
21 MR. ANCHERANI: Good evening, Nelson
22 Ancherani, resident, taxpayer, city
23 employee, financial secretary of the FOP
24 exercising my First Amendment rights.
25 Everyone by now should have received

1 their tax bills. Since 2002, a number of
2 Council speakers have predicted this
3 increase, 25 percent. Well, they didn't
4 predict the amount, but 25 percent for the
5 first year. Two more years it will be at
6 least 100 percent, total out to 100 percent.
7 I want to emphasize that this
8 increase came about. Even though the
9 unions, who the mayor's been blaming for our
10 dire financial straits, have gotten nothing.
11 The city is almost \$300 million in
12 long-term debt, but with this year's budget
13 and the loans, the city will have taken in
14 in revenues and loans \$500 million. That's
15 half a billion dollars. That's a lot of
16 money. So, I think we should get some
17 services for that.
18 There was an article in The Times,
19 which I don't buy, I was able to get it,
20 though, Philly Ruling Could Foreshadow
21 Scranton Arbitration, and that's by Stacy
22 Brown.

23 A ruling in the police arbitration
24 case in Philadelphia has Scranton officials
25 thinking they might prevail in their appeal
.

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1 of an arbitrator's \$2.4 million award to the
2 police and firefighter unions.

3 Scranton's police and firefighters
4 separately were awarded \$2.4 million last
5 year. The city is appealing both awards.

6 Down here it says that the ability of the
7 city to pay and provide basis services.

8 Well, they're saying \$2.4 million.

9 They forgot about the \$9 million
10 cumulatively that they paid out in raises
11 and new hires.

12 Just for an example, the director of
13 public works, the salary in 2001 was
14 \$39,800. It increased in 2002 to \$65,000.

15 \$147,000 extra since 2001 for our DPW
16 director. A lot has been said tonight.

17 Mr. Farrell got a \$7200 raise, and
18 he's still getting that. And plus, they got
19 a new city solicitor at \$40,000, Plus

20 they've got all those legal services that
21 are fighting the union, and for whatever
22 else they deem necessary.

23 So, \$2.4 million. That's nowhere
24 near the \$9 million and the total of all
25 these attorneys and the DPW director.

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1 MR. MINORA: Your time is up, sir.

2 MR. ANCHERANI: Thank you.

3 MS. GATELLI: You're welcome. No

4 one else? Can I have a motion to adjourn?

5 MR. COURTRIGHT: So moved.

6 MR. MCGOFF: Second.

7 (MEETING WAS ADJOURNED.)

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1 C E R T I F I C A T E

2

3 I hereby certify that the proceedings and

4 evidence are contained fully and accurately in the

5 notes taken by me on the hearing of the above cause and

6 that this copy is a correct transcript of the same

7 to the best of my ability.

8

9

10

LISA M. GRAFF, RMR

11 Official Court Reporter

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