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1 SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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5 Held:

6 Thursday, March 1, 2007

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9 Time:

10 6:30 p.m.

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13 Location:

14 Council Chambers

15 Scranton City Hall

16 340 North Washington Avenue

17 Scranton, Pennsylvania

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23 Lisa M. Graff, RMR

24 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. SHERRY NEALON FANUCCI

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9 MR. ROBERT MCGOFF

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11 MR. AMIL MINORA, ESQUIRE, SOLICITOR

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13 MS. KAY GARVEY, CITY CLERK

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15 MR. NEIL COOLICAN, 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 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans. Mrs.

6 Fanucci.

7 MS. FANUCCI: Here.

8 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

9 MR. MCGOFF: Here.

10 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright.

11 MR. COURTRIGHT: Here.

12 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Gatelli.

13 MS. GATELLI: Here. Mrs. Garvey.

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

15 CONTROLLER'S REPORT FOR THE MONTH ENDING

16 JANUARY 31, 2007.

17 MS. GATELLI: Are there any  
18 comments? If not, received and filed.

19 MS. GARVEY: 3-B, AGENDA FOR THE  
20 ZONING HEARING BOARD MEETING HELD ON  
21 FEBRUARY 28, 2007.

22 MS. GATELLI: Are there any  
23 comments? If not, received and filed.

24 MS. GARVEY: 3-C, MINUTES OF THE  
25 COMPOSITE PENSION BOARD MEETING HELD ON  
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1 JANUARY 24, 2007.

2 MS. GATELLI: Are there any  
3 comments? If not, received and filed.

4 MS. GARVEY: 3-D, AGENDA FOR THE  
5 ZONING HEARING BOARD MEETING TO BE HELD ON  
6 MARCH 14, 2007.

7 MS. GATELLI: Are there any  
8 comments? If not, received and filed.

9 MS. GARVEY: 3-E, MINUTES OF THE  
10 NON-UNIFORM PENSION BOARD MEETING HELD ON  
11 JANUARY 24, 2007.

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

14 MS. GARVEY: 3-F, MINUTES OF THE  
15 NON-UNIFORM PENSION BOARD SPECIAL MEETING  
16 HELD ON JANUARY 29, 2007.

17 MS. GATELLI: Are there any  
18 comments? If not, received and filed.

19 MS. GARVEY: 3-G, AGENDA FOR THE  
20 NON-UNIFORM PENSION BOARD MEETING HELD ON  
21 FEBRUARY 28, 2007.

22 MS. GATELLI: Are there any  
23 comments? If not, received and filed.

24 MS. GARVEY: Fourth order, Citizens  
25 Participation I, agenda items.

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1 MR. COURTRIGHT: Could I say  
2 something first?

3 MS. GATELLI: Yes. Before we start,  
4 I just have a few announcements, and so does  
5 Mr. Courtright.

6 Sunday at three o'clock at  
7 Lackawanna Junior College and the Mellow  
8 Theater will be the Tony Kenney's Ireland  
9 Show.

10 This weekend The Cultural Center is

11 Sesame Street Live, tomorrow 3:30 and seven,

12 Saturday 10:30, two and 5:30, and Sunday at

13 one o'clock and 4:30.

14 Saturday at the Steamtown Mall from

15 noon to five will be Sponge Bob Square

16 Pants. So, any of you that have little

17 children will certainly be interested in

18 that.

19 On Monday evening, March 19 at

20 seven' o'clock there will be a cable TV

21 advisory meeting in these chambers,

22 March 19th at seven, cable TV.

23 Every Friday at St. Michael's

24 Ukrainian Church at 540 North Main Avenue

25 they are selling homemade pierogies.

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6

1 There's a clam chowder sale every

2 Friday during Lent at the Dente Club from

3 eleven to 12:30 on Friday, and you can call

4 342-1770 to order.

5 There was a meeting, I don't know if

6 anyone noticed, at the Dunmore City Council

7 on Monday evening, and what was under

8 consideration there was a group home for  
9 Keystone Community Resources. If you read  
10 the article in the paper, Council in Dunmore  
11 rejected that proposal.

12 Now, in the City of Scranton for  
13 years we have been told that we cannot  
14 object to group homes in residential  
15 neighborhoods, and we have done so, even as  
16 a neighborhood leader, I can speak to that  
17 effect, that we never fought group homes  
18 because we were told that we couldn't.

19 So, I called Donny King today  
20 concerning this article, because I said, if  
21 they're doing it in Dunmore, why aren't we  
22 doing it in Scranton? Why are we just  
23 accepting it in our neighborhoods?

24 And he said that he would check into  
25 it with the ordinance up in Dunmore, but he

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7

1 claims that if it is challenged by anyone,  
2 they will lose in court, because they do  
3 have the Disabilities Act on their side.

4 So, I will keep you informed of the

5 results I get from Mr. King. But I mention  
6 this, because there are some neighborhood  
7 people that are very unhappy about a group  
8 home in their particular neighborhood and  
9 wondering why City Council isn't fighting  
10 it, and I hope to get them the answer,  
11 because I think Donny is right, that we  
12 really can't, and Dunmore, if they are  
13 challenged in court, would probably lose the  
14 case. But I will keep you posted on that  
15 fact.

16 And I just have one request, Kay, if  
17 you'd call Jeff Mackey again and tell him  
18 that there's a van parked in front of 106  
19 North Cameron Avenue for the last three  
20 months.

21 I have the license number. I will  
22 give it to you later. And that's all I  
23 have. Mr. Courtright.

24 MR. COURTRIGHT: Two things.

25 Evidently Mrs. Evans is sick, I just got

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1 word that she tried to call me. I did not

2 answer my phone, I was teaching, I don't  
3 answer the phone when I'm teaching. So, for  
4 the rest of Council, that's why she's not  
5 here, she's sick.

6 I can count on one hand the number  
7 of times since I've been on Council I  
8 responded to anything in the paper. I don't  
9 make a practice of doing that, but last week  
10 there was an editorial, I guess, in there  
11 about Mr. Parker being here with the snow  
12 removal, and there was also an article in  
13 Sunday's paper about it.

14 And in the editorial it said that I  
15 said the roads were impeccable in past  
16 administrations. I never said the roads  
17 were impeccable, I never said anything  
18 remotely like that.

19 What I said was I thought past  
20 administrations had done a better job in  
21 storms as bad, if not worse, than that.

22 It also said that I offered -- in  
23 both articles I offered no insight into  
24 better street cleaning.

25 I don't know what meeting they were

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9

1 watching, if they were watching any, and I  
2 would offer to give them a tape of the  
3 meeting, I would offer to get them the  
4 minutes of the meeting.

5 I made no less than five or six  
6 suggestions to Mr. Parker, and Mr. Parker  
7 responded to each and every one of them. As  
8 a matter of fact, I believe Mr. Parker was  
9 agreeable to three of my suggestions.

10 They also went on to say, you know,  
11 it was for political gain. I can't help the  
12 fact that we had this storm in a year that  
13 I'm running for office. I didn't do it for  
14 political gain.

15 I think the politics is on The Times  
16 that they know I'm running for office and  
17 obviously don't want me to win, so I guess  
18 I'm going to get pounded each and every week  
19 between now and May.

20 But I thank God for Channel 16. I  
21 didn't see it, but evidently at ten o'clock  
22 news, Channel 16 actually said that I had

23 five -- a five step plan to try to help with

24 snow removal.

25 So, I would just ask the owners of

.

10

1 The Times if they could order their

2 employees to print a retraction and print

3 the truth about what I did say.

4 And I would be happy to supply them

5 with minutes of the meeting or a tape of the

6 meeting. And that's all I have. Thank you

7 for letting me speak.

8 MS. GATELLI: You're welcome.

9 Anyone else? And excuse me, but I just

10 forgot two items. Last week I mentioned to

11 a speaker that came here about students

12 being cited for smoking outside of a store,

13 and I said that the store requested that the

14 students be cited.

15 The students told me that, and I

16 spoke to the store owner, and the store

17 owner did not request that the students be

18 cited. The police officer did that,

19 according to the ordinance, and seven

20 students were cited. So, I just wanted to  
21 apologize to the store for misrepresenting  
22 what was told to me.

23 And, also, a speaker last week said  
24 that the city cleaned the CYC for the boxing  
25 event, and I received a phone call the next

11

1 morning from the contractor that was paid by  
2 Lackawanna Junior College to clean at  
3 Lackawanna -- at the old CYC for the boxing  
4 event.

5 So, I want to clarify that the City  
6 of Scranton did not pay for snow removal at  
7 the CYC. I just want the public to be aware  
8 of that, because sometimes things are said  
9 here, and then we find out later that, you  
10 know, it's not true.

11 So, I apologize for that  
12 misunderstanding, and Lackawanna Junior  
13 College paid a private contractor.

14 And that's all I have. And the  
15 first speaker is Andy Sbaraglia.

16 MR. SBARAGLIA: We're not going to

17 go through the list?

18 MS. GATELLI: What list?

19 MR. SBARAGLIA: All the things like  
20 were -- like the reports to the city and so  
21 forth and so on? We're already into -- we  
22 skipped everything else, huh?

23 MS. GATELLI: No, we did the  
24 reports.

25 MR. SBARAGLIA: You did the reports?  
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12

1 MS. GATELLI: Yeah, Kay read them.

2 MR. SBARAGLIA: You did? That's  
3 odd. I didn't hear it. I'm sorry. I'm  
4 sorry if I didn't hear them reports. Okay.  
5 Of course they were short, but okay.

6 MS. GATELLI: There was at least 12  
7 of them.

8 MR. SBARAGLIA: Yeah. That's odd.  
9 I was standing back there.

10 MS. GATELLI: Seven, of them, I'm  
11 sorry.

12 MR. SBARAGLIA: Okay. Okay. Let's  
13 go on with the 408. We might as well get it

14 through. You know how much the building is

15 appraised at right now?

16 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Yes.

17 MR. SBARAGLIA: What's it appraised

18 at?

19 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: \$170,000.

20 MR. SBARAGLIA: Who appraised it?

21 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: They did not

22 give me the contractor's name who did the

23 appraisal, but it was appraised for

24 \$170,000. That did include the business

25 itself.

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1 MR. SBARAGLIA: By a licensed

2 appraiser, I assume.

3 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Oh, yes,

4 absolutely.

5 MR. SBARAGLIA: Okay. And the

6 equipment that he plans to buy?

7 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: The equipment

8 he plans to purchase are bottling equipment,

9 so he's expanding the business to do wine

10 bottling, which they did not do before.

11 There's also going to be a truck for  
12 sales and distribution, and computers,  
13 printers and office equipment, also.  
14 MR. SBARAGLIA: Okay. So, you don't  
15 have any -- that's already zoned commercial,  
16 I presume?

17 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Right.

18 MR. SBARAGLIA: And he's going to be  
19 doing warehousing, right?

20 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Right, and  
21 bottling, also.

22 MR. SBARAGLIA: Yeah. So he has to  
23 warehouse it. Okay. That's all I wanted to  
24 know.

25 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Okay.

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1 MR. SBARAGLIA: And we ain't going  
2 to blow up in a fire with the alcohol,  
3 right? The building is going to be  
4 protected for that, right?

5 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Yes.

6 MS. GATELLI: Mrs. Garvey. Mrs.  
7 Fanucci.

8 MS. GARVEY: 5-A, motions.

9 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Yes. We're

10 going to be discussing tonight the first

11 thing that we discussed on the agenda was

12 the purchase of this loan and the giving of

13 this loan to this new company who is

14 expanding in the City of Scranton.

15 It is a good deal. We figured out

16 that everything is in check. We are very

17 happy with the way it's going. We want to

18 welcome the new business, because they are

19 expanding, so we're going to call it a new

20 business to the City of Scranton, and

21 especially around this time of year where

22 the holy wine will be used quite often, I

23 believe.

24 And I just want to say that that, as

25 far as I'm concerned, has been a good asset

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15

1 to our city. You know, we want new

2 businesses, and I just want to say thank you

3 for your patience in letting us go through

4 all of the motions to make sure that

5 everything was in check. And that is all I  
6 have. Thank you.

7 MS. GATELLI: Mr. McGoff.

8 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. I would  
9 first like to start by making mention of the  
10 passing of Mr. Luke Murrin. Luke was a  
11 figure in South Scranton for many, many  
12 years.

13 His involvement in Connell Park  
14 athletics and athletics in general in South  
15 Side influence the lives of many children,  
16 many adults since he has been an active  
17 participant in South Side for at least my  
18 lifetime.

19 I would just like to have you keep  
20 him in your prayers. He is being waked this  
21 evening, and I believe the funeral is  
22 tomorrow. Thank you.

23 The second thing I would like to  
24 make mention of or the mayor sort of  
25 preempted us in our creation of a committee

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16

1 to study and perhaps review and formulate a

2 snow removal plan.

3 In, I believe, in his state of the

4 city address he talked about the creation of

5 a committee that would include Public Safety

6 Director Ray Hayes, Mr. George Parker, as

7 well, and myself representing Council and

8 the Department of Public Works or the public

9 works committee, and also to add two members

10 at Council's discretion or Council appoint

11 two members.

12 With that, I would at least -- I

13 would like to suggest that the two members

14 to be appointed be Mr. Courtright, who has

15 expressed an interest in this snow removal

16 plan, and also the second member to be Mr.

17 Thomas Gallagher, who is the Director of

18 Transportation for the Scranton School

19 District and also former chairman of the

20 board of directors at Colts, someone who is

21 knowledgeable of the roadways of the city

22 and the transportation problems within the

23 city.

24 So, at this point I would like to

25 make a motion to appoint Mr. Bill Courtright

17

1 and Mr. Thomas Gallagher to the committee on  
2 snow removal.

3 MS. GATELLI: I'll second that

4 motion. On the question? All in favor.

5 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Aye.

6 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

7 MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

8 MS. GATELLI: Aye. Opposed? The

9 ayes have it and so moved.

10 MR. MCGOFF: And that is all I have.

11 Thank you.

12 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Mr.

13 Courtright.

14 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yes. I just would

15 like to ask everyone to keep in their

16 prayers the family of Lee DePietro, a young

17 boy 21 years old that passed away, and he's

18 also being viewed this evening. So, it's a

19 really, really tough time for them. So, if

20 you can remember them, it would be greatly

21 appreciated.

22 Just one more thing on loans from

23 OECD so that people coming to podium would

24 know for the future, they have to create --

25 when they create a job, for every \$35,000

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18

1 that they borrow, they have to create one

2 job. So, at any time when something comes

3 before us, OECD and the people applying are

4 well aware of the fact that they need to

5 create one job for every \$35,000. And it's

6 been that for as long as I've been here, and

7 I don't anticipate that changing any time in

8 the near future.

9 So, I don't even think they would

10 accept -- I would hope they wouldn't accept

11 an application that is not jobs for \$35,000

12 per job.

13 I received a letter from Mr. Parker

14 about -- I asked about the crossing on Davis

15 Street in Minooka, and Mr. Parker said

16 firstly, Davis Street is a state highway.

17 As I recall, however, this is

18 probably one of the most delineated crossing

19 areas in the city, since it has flashing

20 signals to warn motorists of crossing.

21 There should be no excuse for motorists not

22 stopping in this crosswalk.

23 So, it doesn't appear we'll be

24 getting those little signs in the road that

25 I asked for.

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19

1 And on a better note, I asked about

2 a traffic signal on Mulberry Street when

3 you're trying to take a left on Wyoming

4 Avenue, and if I may, I'll just read what he

5 had written to me, Traffic Planning and

6 Design of Philadelphia who is designing the

7 Scranton Central City Signalization Plan has

8 already submitted their plans to

9 Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

10 for review.

11 I looked at the particular sheet for

12 that intersection at Mulberry and Wyoming

13 Avenue, there is a five-head signal proposed

14 to control the movement of traffic traveling

15 in a southerly direction on Mulberry Street

16 toward Bishop Hannon.

17 One signal head is dedicated left  
18 turn and green arrow. So, I think the  
19 people traveling there will have a hard time  
20 making a left on Mulberry -- off of Mulberry  
21 onto Wyoming will be happy when that gets  
22 done and we'll have a left-hand turn there.  
23 I sent early this morning down to  
24 the Sewer Authority and to DPW asking them  
25 if they can go down in the area of lower  
.  
20

1 Green Ridge in the area of the farmer's  
2 market. An area of the farmer's market,  
3 they dumped quite a bit of snow, and in  
4 lower Green Ridge, I think we all know they  
5 get flooded down there, and there's reports  
6 of a lot of the catch basins being blocked.  
7 And the fear is if we get the rain  
8 that we were going to get, if we get it  
9 tonight that we were supposed to get, there  
10 would be flooding.  
11 So, I don't know the results of that  
12 yet. Hopefully they went down and did  
13 something with that.

14 And one last thing, I ran into a  
15 gentleman, Joe who used to work for the DPW  
16 at Burger King yesterday, and one of the  
17 suggestions that The Times didn't hear me  
18 say was about putting down 100 percent salt  
19 before the storm.

20 And this gentleman Joe said that the  
21 -- you know, Mr. Parker was more in favor of  
22 a liquid, and he suggested that we use the  
23 spray truck that they have down at the DPW,  
24 they have a water truck that sprays  
25 everything out, and he said if Mr. Parker

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21

1 wanted to use liquid, that would possibly  
2 that would be a piece of equipment we  
3 wouldn't have to buy and used.

4 So, Kay, maybe we can send a letter  
5 to Mr. Parker asking if that's feasible or I  
6 don't know if there's any kind of  
7 restrictions where they wouldn't be able to  
8 use that truck.

9 MS. GATELLI: Why don't you wait and  
10 discuss it when you meet with him?

11 MR. COURTRIGHT: All right. Yeah.

12 Okay. So, I'll --

13 MS. GATELLI: It's better than a

14 letter.

15 MR. COURTRIGHT: I'll ask Mr. Parker

16 -- I'll do it in person. I will ask him if

17 that's feasible to use that truck. And

18 that's all I have. Thank you.

19 MS. GATELLI: Thanks, Mr.

20 Courtright. Mrs. Garvey.

21 MS. GARVEY: 5-B, FOR INTRODUCTION -

22 A RESOLUTION - APPOINTING ROBERT SHUMAKER,

23 702 STAFFORD AVE., SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA,

24 18505, AS A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF ZONING

25 APPEALS FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON. MR.

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1 SHUMAKER WILL FILL THE UNEXPIRED TERM OF

2 MARY DUNLEAVY, WHOSE TERM EXPIRES ON JULY 1,

3 2007.

4 MS. GATELLI: At this time I'll

5 entertain a motion that Item 5-B be

6 introduced.

7 MR. COURTRIGHT: So moved.

8 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Second.

9 MS. GATELLI: On the question? All

10 in favor.

11 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Aye.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

13 MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

14 MS. GATELLI: Aye. Opposed? The

15 ayes have it and so moved.

16 MS. GARVEY: Sixth order, no

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

18 FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON

19 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - FOR ADOPTION -

20 RESOLUTION NO. 129, 2007 - AUTHORIZING THE

21 MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS

22 TO EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO A LOAN AGREEMENT,

23 AND TO EXECUTE A PROMISSORY NOTE, IN THE

24 AMOUNT OF \$250,000 BY AND BETWEEN THE CITY

25 OF SCRANTON AND 408 CEDAR AVE, LLC FOR

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23

1 ENTERPRISE ZONE COMPETITIVE GRANT FUNDS.

2 MS. GATELLI: The recommendation of

3 the committee on community development?

4 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: As chairperson

5 on the committee of community development, I

6 recommend final passage of Item 7-A.

7 MR. COURTRIGHT: So moved.

8 MS. GATELLI: On the question? All

9 those in favor.

10 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Aye.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

12 MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

13 MS. GATELLI: Aye. Opposed? The

14 ayes have it and so moved.

15 MS. GARVEY: No, second, roll call.

16 MR. MINORA: Bill, you second it?

17 MS. GATELLI: Roll call.

18 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans. Mrs.

19 Fanucci.

20 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Yes.

21 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

23 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright.

24 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yes.

25 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Gatelli.

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24

1 MS. GATELLI: Yes. I hereby declare

2 Item 7-A legally and lawfully adopted.

3 MS. GATELLI: Citizens

4 participation. Douglas Miller.

5 MR. MILLER: Good evening, Council.

6 Doug Miller. I'd like to start off by

7 reminding everyone that the Scranton Junior

8 City Council is raising funds to purchase a

9 children's handicapped accessible swingset

10 for Nay Aug Park.

11 We want the handicapped children of

12 our city to have something to look forward

13 to this summer, so tonight I'm asking all

14 citizens and businesses of Scranton to

15 support this project by sending a donation

16 to 340 North Washington Avenue, Scranton, PA

17 18503. With your support, you will help

18 make this project a big success.

19 I read today in The Scranton Times

20 that Mercy Hospital has sent memos to all of

21 their employees regarding the support of our

22 citywide smoking ban. It's wonderful to see

23 all the support across our city.

24 The other night I was out at a

25 restaurant with a friend, and it was just

.

25

1 nice to be able to sit and enjoy a meal in

2 clean air. I thought I was dreaming.

3 You know, to walk out of a

4 restaurant feeling refreshed is a good

5 feeling.

6 The smoking ban in Scranton is only

7 going to expand from here. I believe other

8 communities will follow our lead and enact a

9 smoking ban, and I see a statewide ban down

10 the road.

11 Mr. Courtright, I would again ask

12 you to support the smoking ban as you did

13 when it was first proposed. I think you

14 need to stick with your decision.

15 As I said last week, those who

16 disobey the law will be fined. The adults

17 need to set the example here. The law is

18 the law and we all need to follow it. Thank

19 you.

20 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Les

21 Spindler.

22 MR. SPINDLER: Good evening,

23 Council. Les Spindler, city resident. Last  
24 week there was a speaker speaking, Mrs.  
25 Gatelli, and you be interrupted because you

26

1 didn't like what they were saying.

2 I was standing in the back and I

3 said -- a couple times I said that's their

4 opinion. Meanwhile, the DPW director, a DPW

5 worker, looked at me and said, Shut up or

6 I'll slap you in the head.

7 Meanwhile, Dan Hubbard, who was

8 standing next to me was motioning to the

9 policeman to do something, which he didn't.

10 He reprimanded Dan Hubbard for sticking up

11 for me, never said a word to the person that

12 threatened me.

13 So, I don't know what could be done

14 about this, but I don't think that was

15 right.

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: We'll ask Mr.

17 Elliott if he can talk to the police

18 officer.

19 MR. SPINDLER: Okay. Thank you.

20 Next thing, one more time about the  
21 snowstorm. George Parker said the intensity  
22 and makeup of the storm was the reason they  
23 couldn't get it cleaned up good.

24 Well, that's an excuse for the first  
25 day maybe, but it's no excuse why it took

27

1 six days to clean up downtown, when Mayor  
2 Connors said the downtown cleaned up in less  
3 than 24 hours in the blizzard of '93.

4 Another thing, Governor Rendell took  
5 responsibility for the state problems, Mayor  
6 Leighton took responsibility for all the  
7 problems in Wilkes-Barre. Chris Doherty did  
8 nothing. He took no responsibility. He's  
9 not man enough to take responsibility for it  
10 and admit he screwed up.

11 Okay. Moving on. Mrs. Fanucci, you  
12 thought it was funny last week when you said  
13 someone was going to ask you to resign  
14 again. You're so proud of that you said you  
15 deserve an award for being asked to resign  
16 the most times.

17 Well, if you think that's something  
18 to be proud of, I think you have a real  
19 problem, and you definitely do not deserve  
20 to be sitting up there. The only award you  
21 do deserve is a pink slip. And by the way,  
22 Mrs. Fanucci, they're my words, no one  
23 else's.

24 Okay. Mrs. Gatelli, last week you  
25 said PEL sent a response back for that  
.  
28

1 letter?

2 MS. GATELLI: What letter, Les?

3 MR. SPINDLER: The letter about why  
4 this mayor can hire a public safety director  
5 and not Mayor Connors.

6 MS. GATELLI: Yes.

7 MR. SPINDLER: When was that letter  
8 received? I never heard it.

9 MS. GATELLI: That was at least two  
10 meetings ago.

11 MR. SPINDLER: Okay. I think I was  
12 late coming --

13 MS. GATELLI: Yeah. Mrs. Garvey can

14 find it for you. I don't have it with me,

15 Les, but she can find it for you, if you'd

16 like, and you can get a copy of it.

17 MR. SPINDLER: Okay. Because --

18 MS. GATELLI: I think they said it

19 was in the Recovery Plan that was voted on

20 by the voters. I forget what year that was,

21 2002 maybe.

22 MR. SPINDLER: I know that's what

23 they say, but I think it does say somewhere

24 else in the recovery plan where there's

25 certain hires that the mayor can make. So,

.

29

1 I don't know if PEL is really telling the

2 truth.

3 MR. MINORA: Time.

4 MS. GATELLI: Thank you, Mr.

5 Spindler.

6 MR. MINORA: Time's up.

7 MR. SPINDLER: I don't have any more

8 to say, but if I did, I think I should be

9 able to go on longer, because last week you

10 let Sam Vitras talk for five minutes.

11 MR. MINORA: Time's up, Mr.

12 Spindler.

13 MS. GATELLI: Your time is up. Mr.

14 Talamini.

15 MR. SPINDLER: Okay. Well, if you

16 let someone else talk for five minutes, Mrs.

17 Gatelli, I think everyone should be able to

18 talk for that long.

19 MS. GATELLI: That's the discretion

20 of the president, Mr. Spindler.

21 MR. SPINDLER: That's

22 discrimination.

23 MS. GATELLI: Thank you very much.

24 MR. SPINDLER: You're welcome.

25 MR. TALERICO: Joe Talamini,

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30

1 Scranton resident. I don't want to belabor

2 the incident with the snowstorm, et cetera,

3 but, again, I've been inundated, and today

4 another senior citizen got stuck in a

5 handicapped crosswalk, and he called city

6 hall, he called the Council chambers, he

7 called the mayor's office, and he was told

8 very politely that we don't do sidewalks.

9 MS. GATELLI: Where was this, Mr.

10 Talamini?

11 MR. TALERICO: Someplace on North

12 Washington. I guess it was North Washington

13 and Mulberry. He got stuck out there, and

14 that's what he was told. And he was very

15 incensed. I mean, I'd like to repeat what

16 he said, but there are children present.

17 MS. GATELLI: That would be right

18 out here?

19 MR. TALERICO: Absolutely, in a

20 handicap crosswalk.

21 MR. GATELLI: Because some of that

22 is the responsibility of PennDOT, that's

23 only why I'm asking.

24 MR. TALAMINI: Yeah, well, you know,

25 I mean, it's hard to explain to these

.

31

1 people, because they don't have access to

2 City Council, they can't come down here.

3 And when I invited some of the members of

4 the Council to come up there, they were told

5 they couldn't come up without permission  
6 from the Housing Authority. So, you know,  
7 it's a catch 22 situation.

8 MS. GATELLI: Well, they can always  
9 call Pete Williams at the Center for  
10 Independent Living, because he stays right  
11 on top of that.

12 MR. TALAMINI: Okay.

13 MS. GATELLI: If you'd like his  
14 number, we have it in the office, and you  
15 can give it to them.

16 MR. TALERICO: Because a lot of  
17 these people watch Channel 61, I mean, they  
18 depend on 61.

19 MS. GATELLI: Sure.

20 MR. TALAMINI: They can't get down  
21 here --

22 MS. GATELLI: We'll report that,  
23 absolutely.

24 MR. TALAMINI: Because I live there,  
25 they get to me.

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32

1 MS. GATELLI: Okay.

2 MR. TALAMINI: Secondly, I'd like to  
3 know what's been going on with the  
4 subpoenas, if anything, because it's been  
5 two weeks since we were told that they were  
6 going to be in the process, and nothing has  
7 happened to date that we know of.

8 And we will be monitoring the fact  
9 that the subpoenas are supposed to be  
10 issued, and we'd like to know what the  
11 status is, Mr. Minora. You know, we don't  
12 want to belabor that issue either, but --

13 MS. GATELLI: Well, all of Council  
14 has not discussed that with Mrs. Evans, you  
15 know, exactly what we want in the  
16 resolution, so that's what the hold up is.

17 MR. TALAMINI: We would like to be  
18 kept abreast of what's going on with that.

19 And the third item I have, and I  
20 don't know why I'm -- you know, I hate to  
21 refer to this, I lived in the south for a  
22 long time, but it seems like this city  
23 suffers from inbreeding in politics.

24 Every time there's a committee  
25 appointed or anything comes up, it always

1 seems to be the same people from the same  
2 group that's appointed to these committees.  
3 I have no objection to Mr. McGoff  
4 requesting that Mr. Courtright and somebody  
5 else be appointed, but you never seem to go  
6 to the people who vote in the city, and  
7 that's the people what are in, you know, the  
8 minority, you say, but they are in the  
9 majority.  
10 I think a lot of the working people  
11 in this city would like to welcome an  
12 opportunity to serve on a committee and to  
13 give input as to what's going on in this  
14 town, but we don't ever seem to get that  
15 right.  
16 Every time there's a committee  
17 appointed, it's always somebody who seems to  
18 be in the in-section.  
19 And I notice that even in politics,  
20 everything in this town goes -- it seems to  
21 go through OECD, the next step and the next  
22 step and the next step, and it just seems to

23 be prevalent, that every time something goes

24 on in this city, it's the same group of

25 people.

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1 So, you know, we'd like some input.

2 I'm sure there's a lot of people out here

3 would love to volunteer.

4 MR. MINORA: Time. Mr. Talamini,

5 that's three minutes.

6 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

7 MR. TALAMINI: I figured as much.

8 MS. GATELLI: And we certainly will

9 take your input. Anything you have to

10 offer, submit to Council and we will forward

11 it to the committee, absolutely.

12 MR. TALAMINI: Well, we are going to

13 form our own citizens advisory committee and

14 present things.

15 MS. GATELLI: Yeah, you can do that,

16 absolutely.

17 MR. TALAMINI: We're going to ask

18 people, anybody who wants to know, just

19 contact us, we'll be glad to set up our own

20 group.

21 MS. GATELLI: Yes.

22 MR. TALAMINI: Thank you very much.

23 MS. GATELLI: Gary DiBileo. How

24 about John Litwinsky and we can come back?

25 MR. LITWINSKY: Good evening,

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35

1 Council. John Litwinsky, city resident.

2 I'm here tonight to raise awareness and to

3 seek help on an issue. It has to do with a

4 place, a property, The Scranton Rescue

5 Mission.

6 On November 11, 2005, The Scranton

7 Rescue Mission applied for a variance.

8 They're located at 8 and 12 Olive Street,

9 which everyone knows that's only a block

10 from the Scranton High School, half a block

11 from The Ice Box.

12 Their request was to -- the

13 applicant desires to establish a facility to

14 offer shelter to homeless individuals

15 seeking help to revitalize their lives.

16 In this application it's very

17 misleading. It does not state anything  
18 whatsoever about it being a drug and alcohol  
19 rehabilitation center.  
20 Some excerpts from The Scranton  
21 Times, The zoning board, 2005 November,  
22 unanimously denied a variance for the  
23 building. An appeal to Lackawanna County  
24 Court was shot down in July 2006 by Judge  
25 Carmen Minora.

36

1 Some other wording in here, For now  
2 the rescue mission only opens on the  
3 weekends offering those who come by a hot  
4 meal. Is it licensed? That's another  
5 question I have, I'll get to later.

6 Some other quotes, The Reverend Phil  
7 Schultz of Clarks Summit, who wants to open  
8 a mission in Scranton said, The center would  
9 be a transitional living facility for up to  
10 20 homeless men, people with drug and  
11 alcohol problems.

12 They've already moved the beds into  
13 this facility. He's quoted as, It's not my

14 intent to bully my way into a neighborhood,  
15 said the Reverend Schultz, a Philadelphia  
16 area native who moved here recently from  
17 Lexington, Kentucky. Again, he was denied  
18 it twice locally.

19 Here's what really bothers me. The  
20 reverend's admission that the mission could  
21 experience a 70 to 75 percent dropout rate  
22 concerned Mr. Wechsler, who was on the  
23 zoning board.

24 So, a 70, 75 percent of 20 beds is  
25 between 14 and 15 people that don't follow  
.  
37

1 the program.

2 And, again, I question, like, where  
3 do these people go? You know, even at the  
4 zoning board we questioned -- you know, the  
5 thing that really bothers me, it was never  
6 -- the original intention was never on the  
7 application. It was a very misleading.

8 I mean, everyone here knows the  
9 amount of students that travel Olive Street  
10 every day.

11 MS. GATELLI: Mr. Litwinsky, you  
12 know that the zoning board denied that.  
13 MR. LITWINSKY: Yes, but right now  
14 it's at a state appeal in Philadelphia,  
15 which I was told March 7, the state appeal,  
16 that it's already going to go through.  
17 So, several other questions, I mean,  
18 zoning requirements, parking, there's no  
19 off-street parking. We broke our backs this  
20 snowstorm. We go out with the kids, we come  
21 home on the weekends, all the parking spots  
22 are taken by them.  
23 The parcel -- you know, the parcel  
24 that's next to the white house there, that's  
25 owned by the railroad, it's not owned by  
38

1 them.  
2 I mean, the Scranton Police, they do  
3 a great job, they don't need any more  
4 headaches, but I believe our number one  
5 concern should be the children's safety.  
6 This is obviously -- I mean, it's  
7 been denied twice here. It's obviously --

8 MR. MINORA: Time.

9 MR. LITWINSKY: It's a commendable

10 feat -- one minute?

11 MS. GATELLI: No, I can't, but I'll

12 talk to you after. You can call me at the

13 house.

14 MR. LITWINSKY: I'm seeking help

15 from anybody, Scranton school board,

16 teachers, Council.

17 MS. GATELLI: I'll call the zoning

18 officer and tell him what you said.

19 MR. LITWINSKY: They already have it

20 in Philadelphia.

21 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Mike

22 Dudek.

23 MR. DUDEK: I'm Mike Dudek, 608

24 Depot Street here in Scranton. I live in

25 The Plot. There are three things I want to

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39

1 convey to Council.

2 First of all, the newspaper, The

3 Union News, keeps track of the data supplied

4 by the Department of Labor in what they call

5 metropolitan statistical areas, okay?  
6 They use their MSAs for a number of  
7 different things, among other things would  
8 be to determine the number of people  
9 working, unemployed and so forth. It also  
10 helps to track census and population.  
11 And according to the Department of  
12 Labor, the City of Scranton has fallen to  
13 the point where Bethlehem is now larger than  
14 Scranton is, and Bethlehem is larger by  
15 about 3,000 people. I thought we should  
16 know that.

17 To give you an idea about how fast  
18 this has happened, in the last census, we  
19 were larger than Bethlehem, not now. I  
20 thought you should know that.

21 I don't know what kind of spin the  
22 mayor was putting on the speech he had  
23 today, I didn't get a chance to go or to  
24 really read it or to get all of his  
25 comments, but a population fall of this

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1 magnitude does not look good for this city,

2 and this includes the incoming immigration  
3 of people from Latin America. So, this is  
4 not good for the city.

5 The second thing that I want to  
6 bring up is, Mrs. Gatelli, what I -- I'd  
7 like to ask Mr. McGoff a question, would  
8 that be okay?

9 MS. GATELLI: Sure.

10 MR. DUDEK: Okay. Mr. McGoff, this  
11 committee that's being formed, I'm wondering  
12 if we could add one other person to it or at  
13 least get the input for it, you know, for  
14 the snow removal, would it be possible to  
15 add a meteorologist from Channel 16 to that  
16 group of people?

17 And what I'm saying would be any  
18 meteorologist who would be working at the  
19 time in order to get an idea of what kind of  
20 storms are coming.

21 You know, let's face it, this storm  
22 that hit us was unusual. It started as an  
23 ice storm, then we got a lot of snow, then  
24 we got ice. So, the composition of it was  
25 kind of difficult.

.

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1 I think that adding a meteorologist  
2 to the mix would give the people you are  
3 putting together a better opportunity to  
4 plan how to fight the storm. Would it be  
5 possible to consider using the meteorologist  
6 from 16?

7 The reason why I say Channel 16, is  
8 because that's the only TV station of the  
9 corporate limits of the city that does  
10 weather tracking.

11 MR. MCGOFF: I think what we're  
12 planning on doing or the intent of the  
13 committee is to meet first to determine what  
14 other ancillary needs we may have. There is  
15 always the possibility of adding other  
16 members to the committee, also the  
17 possibility of bringing in others to offer  
18 information advice, to the committee.  
19 So, I would wait on -- I'm going to  
20 say I would wait on that until the committee  
21 itself meets, and then we can decide what  
22 might be needed at that time.

23 MR. DUDEK: Fine, but I think you do

24 want to --

25 MR. MINORA: Three minutes.

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1 MR. DUDEK: -- you don't want to fly

2 blind in the storm.

3 MS. GATELLI: Thank you, Mr. Dudek.

4 MR. DUDEK: Thank you.

5 MS. GATELLI: Mr. DiBileo.

6 MR. DIBILEO: Good evening, City

7 Council members, and Kay, Amil, Neil, Lisa,

8 Junior Council.

9 I'm here to talk just a little bit

10 about the proposed medical school in

11 Scranton which is possibly slated for the

12 City of Scranton, but it seems that the

13 consortium that's looking for a place, for

14 the location for the school, seems to be

15 having a little bit of a difficult time.

16 It was written in The Scranton Times

17 February 12, that the school -- that the

18 committee behind the proposed medical

19 college of Northeastern Pennsylvania has

20 decided to start over in a search for a  
21 location and consider all options, even some  
22 outside the city. I'm hearing that possibly  
23 the Glenmaura Industrial Park is a possible  
24 location for the school.

25 And this school will provide just a

.

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1 huge economic development boom for the City  
2 of Scranton, and it's also been written that  
3 this could be the biggest economic boom  
4 since the demise of the coal mining industry  
5 in our city. So, it's just going to do very  
6 good for the whole city in so many ways.  
7 So, we have to do everything in our  
8 power to try to keep the medical school here  
9 in the City of Scranton.

10 I don't think that we could let this  
11 opportunity slip by our fingers, being that  
12 we're this close.

13 City Council hasn't spent very much  
14 time discussing this issue. Now, I do know  
15 that decisions like this are generated from  
16 Harrisburg by governors and senators,

17 however, I think it would be appropriate and  
18 proper and important for the City Council as  
19 a legislative body to pass a motion letting  
20 Governor Rendell and Senator Mellow know  
21 that you support the project and want it to  
22 stay in the City of Scranton.

23 I realize that this would possibly  
24 be just a symbolic symbol, but I think it's  
25 an important one, and I would greatly

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1 appreciate it for the sake of the City of  
2 Scranton if you could entertain a motion and  
3 let the governor and senator know that you  
4 feel it's important as a legislative body to  
5 have the medical school here in Scranton.

6 And thank you very much.

7 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Gary,  
8 although we haven't done it as a body, I  
9 speak frequently to Senator Mellow, I  
10 haven't spoken to the governor, and of  
11 course the mayor, and I said that this  
12 Council wants this in the City of Scranton.

13 So, I mean, although we didn't do it

14 as a formal motion, the feelings have been  
15 expressed, and I expressed them on behalf of  
16 Council, because it's very important for it  
17 to be downtown.

18 MR. DIBILEO: I understand that on  
19 an individual basis people may be letting  
20 the individuals know how they feel, but I  
21 just feel that it's pretty important as a  
22 body itself to let the people in charge know  
23 how you feel as a whole.

24 MS. GATELLI: Okay. Thank you.

25 MR. DIBILEO: I'd greatly appreciate

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1 your consideration for that. Thank you very  
2 much.

3 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Mr.

4 Piccolino.

5 MR. PICCOLINO: Good evening, City  
6 Council. Giovanni Piccolino, partner in  
7 Buona Pizza. Jim and Joanne Salite are  
8 refusing to sell their home they've lived in  
9 for 38 years. They live in a quiet  
10 neighborhood of single family houses in

11 Lakewood, Ohio just outside Cleveland.  
12 The City of Lakewood is trying to  
13 use eminent domain to force the Salites out  
14 to make way for more expensive condominiums,  
15 but the Salites are telling the town, hell  
16 no, they won't go.  
17 But Lakewood's mayor, Madeline Kane,  
18 has other plans. She wants to tear down the  
19 Salites home, plus four apartment buildings  
20 to make room for more than a dozen  
21 businesses.  
22 In short, the Salites fought and  
23 won, because in separate votes, the Lakewood  
24 residents rejected the proposed development,  
25 removed the blight label from the Salites'  
.  
46

1 neighborhood and voted Mayor Kane out of  
2 office.  
3 I'm here to ask City Council to  
4 grant a motion or an addendum that the  
5 residents of the City of Scranton could have  
6 a vote on removing the blight label from our  
7 pizza shop.

8 If they can do it in Lakewood, Ohio  
9 on a separate vote that the residents could  
10 remove a blight label from these people's  
11 neighborhood and their home, why can't we do  
12 it here?

13 MS. GATELLI: Attorney Minora, I'll  
14 let you answer that question.

15 MR. MINORA: Well, we're in the  
16 middle of litigation with the city, right?  
17 You have litigation with the city?

18 MR. PICCOLINO: Right. Obviously  
19 these people also have litigation with the  
20 city. If they have a blight label on their  
21 home and then the residents in the city got  
22 to --

23 MR. MINORA: My point simply is that  
24 while you're in litigation with the city,  
25 I'm not sure that the city ought to be

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1 giving you legal advice. You've got a  
2 lawyer to do that for you, so you've got a  
3 position you'd like to take, and that's  
4 fine, but --

5 MR. PICCOLINO: I'm not asking for  
6 legal advice, I'm asking the Council if they  
7 could support a motion that would allow the  
8 public to vote on the blight of our  
9 building.

10 If they can do it in Ohio, why can't  
11 -- if they can have their people vote on  
12 something there, why can't our people vote  
13 on a business here?

14 MR. MINORA: Our charter provides  
15 for putting things on the ballot. I suggest  
16 you have your lawyer read it.

17 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

18 MR. PICCOLINO: Okay. Thank you.

19 MS. GATELLI: Jim Stucker.

20 MR. STUCKER: We have a little  
21 problem on Providence Square. We had a big  
22 machine come down yesterday with the, I  
23 don't know what you call it, a big machine  
24 with the snow.

25 They went down the street. What

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1 they did, they plowed everything up on top

2 of the sidewalk where they went down.  
3 And the little Bobcat we had there  
4 for two days. He did some of the work in  
5 front of the drugstore. The big machine  
6 came down. They pushed everything up on the  
7 sidewalks, big chunks of snow, and there was  
8 no way for people to get up on the sidewalk  
9 to get -- step there in front of the  
10 drugstore and in front of the restaurant.

11 MS. GATELLI: We'll take care of  
12 that, Jim.

13 MR. STUCKER: And we just had -- a  
14 guy was talking to me last night was in the  
15 bar, well, he was talking to me last night,  
16 he wants me to bring this up with the fire  
17 plugs outside and the handicaps places. We  
18 got to get the snow cleaned, every corner  
19 where people can't get wheelchairs up on the  
20 sidewalk, the gas -- electric wheelchairs.

21 MS. GATELLI: Okay.

22 MR. STUCKER: They're having  
23 problems getting up on the sidewalk with the  
24 snow.

25 MS. GATELLI: Okay. Okay. We'll

1 report that, Jim.

2 MR. STUCKER: Let me see what else.

3 Right off of Providence, right -- where do

4 you call that buildings up at Providence

5 Square up the road, up Luzerne Street, the

6 buildings up there? Heights, Oppenheim's?

7 MS. GATELLI: Bangor Heights.

8 MR. STUCKER: Bangor Heights.

9 There's nobody can get up and down those

10 streets. There's only one way, through the

11 middle.

12 There's no snow up there supposed to

13 be moved, and they didn't remove it. They

14 didn't remove no snow at all. And there's

15 people parking out in the middle --

16 alongside the curb, there's no way people

17 can -- the bus can't get up there.

18 MS. GATELLI: Okay.

19 MR. STUCKER: And over in town over

20 by the Oppenheim, remember last year,

21 remember last year I complained about the

22 cars? They're still parking there. They're

23 still parking there where the bus is at.

24 MS. GATELLI: Okay. We'll send a

25 letter on that, Jim. Thank you very much.

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1 MR. STUCKER: All right. Okay.

2 MS. GATELLI: Robert Matchieski

3 (phonetic).

4 MR. MATCHIESKI: Robert Matchieski,

5 resident. It's apparent that this

6 three-minute time limit, as I said in the

7 past, isn't too -- doesn't seem to be in

8 favor of the people up here speaking.

9 They're taking their time to come up

10 here and offer suggestions or criticisms of

11 this city, and the Council's job, they

12 should at least have the time to express

13 their ideas fully without being cut off in

14 mid sentence.

15 I mean, there's -- I in citizens

16 participation one, there's not usually an

17 overwhelming amount of people who need more

18 than three minutes.

19 So, maybe even if you amend it to

20 the citizens participation two to be five  
21 minutes, that would be better than nothing  
22 as it is now.  
23 I mean, I personally think that five  
24 minutes for both would be, you know, I mean,  
25 at the least will be conducive to what  
. .  
51

1 people need to speak on.  
2 On the smoking ban, this week I was  
3 out at a couple local businesses  
4 interviewing them for an article, and this  
5 ban's really hurting them as it is.  
6 And, I mean, if -- even if the state  
7 ban comes three months, six months, no one  
8 knows how long, it's still too long for  
9 these people who -- livelihoods depend on  
10 their business.  
11 I mean, it's easy for someone to  
12 drive to Moosic or Dunmore to have a beer  
13 and a cigarette than to have to go stand  
14 outside in February or March when it's still  
15 cold out.  
16 The least you can do to show your

17 respect for the local businesses to at least  
18 amend the ordinance to something or hold it  
19 off until the state is in effect.

20 And Mr. Courtright seems to be going  
21 on the right path talking to local  
22 businesses about possible amendments or  
23 modifications.

24 I mean, everyone keeps saying stick  
25 with it who's for the ban, but how long can  
.  
52

1 you stick with something before you realize  
2 that it's a bad idea?

3 You know, if it's hurting  
4 businesses, then it's not worth it. You  
5 know, people know if a certain bar or  
6 restaurant is smoking, they don't have to go  
7 in there if they don't want to be around  
8 cigarette smoke.

9 I mean, I hope that something can be  
10 done to prevent any businesses from closing  
11 over this. Thank you.

12 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Andy  
13 Sbaraglia.

14 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,  
15 citizen of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians,  
16 just a few words on what Gary mentioned.  
17 Was the mayor's interference with this  
18 project that posed a problem to this?  
19 As you know, the majority of them  
20 people wanted that school to be built up by  
21 the hospital or very close to a hospital,  
22 and not in the middle of Central City.  
23 It was the assistance of the mayor  
24 that project was sort of going there. I  
25 suggest if you want to get some action on  
.

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1 it, you contact Mr. Karam, because he's now  
2 the ball player on this project for the  
3 school, and also contact the Moses Taylor,  
4 because I believe their back of the hospital  
5 can be used for a school.  
6 There's enough room there to rip  
7 down some of them buildings and put a school  
8 at Moses Taylor, and it may push the project  
9 a little more into the forefront and not see  
10 it lost out of the city.

11 Okay. The second subject is, it's  
12 March, what are we going to do about free  
13 swimming for the kids? Do we have any  
14 intention now of setting the motions,  
15 anything to do that? Are we just going to  
16 let them go?  
17 Now, you raised the EMS tax, pushed  
18 a huge burden on the people, you put  
19 25 percent onto the house tax. What reason  
20 have you got not to have free swimming at  
21 the pools, being your budget coming from the  
22 controller said they only earn \$30,000 at  
23 the pool?  
24 I don't see any reason of all the  
25 millions you pushed back on the people that  
.  
54

1 you can't have the kids swim free. There's  
2 no reason now. You can't even bring up  
3 money, unless you actually think the kids  
4 are roughians, and that's the reason why you  
5 don't want them to swim free, because you're  
6 going to bring a lot of people in there  
7 because they want to swim, it's hot and they

8 want to go some place to swim.  
9 We tried this last year, we got shot  
10 down. You pushed the tax on us way, way up,  
11 and still the kids ain't swimming for free.  
12 I'd like to see you make motion on it and  
13 get movement on it and let's get it straight  
14 up. Let's get it done now so they can swim  
15 in June instead of waiting for August. I  
16 thank you.

17 MS. GATELLI: Reverend Simmons.

18 MS. SIMMONS: Good evening, Reverend  
19 Cathryn Simmons representing Florence  
20 Midtown Crime Watch.

21 I came here tonight to talk about  
22 two issues, but I'm going to change over one  
23 of them. Let me begin by going back 14  
24 years, when we had a very bad storm in  
25 Scranton and I was called by the mayor and

55

1 asked to come to City Hall. He had just  
2 come in from going through the streets.  
3 Scranton was shut down, you couldn't move  
4 anywhere.

5 And the police had been going around  
6 the streets and they had found seven men  
7 standing on the heating grates downtown with  
8 nowhere to go. That was the beginning of  
9 Bethel AME Shelter. So, we've been shut  
10 down before.

11 So, this tale that this is the worse  
12 storm we've ever had and this is the worst  
13 predicament we've ever been in is -- this is  
14 not true.

15 We've had -- you can't -- you can't  
16 go against mother nature. When she -- we  
17 should have learned that from Katrina when  
18 she levels you with whatever she pounds you  
19 with, you just learn to come along and  
20 abide.

21 But through this storm, I want you  
22 to know that the police department and the  
23 fire department and the DPW workers did  
24 excellent job.

25 I was at the shelter for the days of

.

56

1 this storm, and these men and women did

2 excellent work. The EMS workers, everyone,  
3 there was no one who should be embarrassed  
4 or called up on the carpet about any of  
5 their work. They were out there on their  
6 job and they did exactly what they should be  
7 doing.

8 So, instead of admonishing them or  
9 making them feel like they should be hanging  
10 their heads, we should be glorifying them  
11 and praising them, because they were out  
12 there, when we were sitting home complaining  
13 about how we were going to get our car out  
14 of the driveway.

15 This is a wonderful city to live in,  
16 it truly is.

17 MR. MINORA: Three minutes.

18 MS. SIMMONS: I've lived here  
19 54 years. Yes we have problems like all  
20 other cities do, but we need to come  
21 together in times like these.

22 MS. GATELLI: Thank you, Reverend  
23 Simmons.

24 MS. SIMMONS: I hope we do. Thank  
25 you.

57

1 MS. GATELLI: Amen. Ron Elman.

2 MR. ELMAN: Miss Judy, do you read

3 Garfield?

4 MS. GATELLI: Are we at Hatchy

5 Milatchy or what?

6 MR. ELMAN: You know, Garfield last

7 week was standing on a fence and people were

8 throwing tomatoes and clocks and everything

9 at him. That must be how you guys feel up

10 there.

11 You know, last year I told you how

12 my mortgage got to be \$694 or something

13 because I got behind in the taxes because of

14 my mortgage company, and they said they

15 caught up.

16 Then I kept -- I got a letter from

17 Mr. Harrison. I went down, and he gave me a

18 year, and during the year, the mortgage

19 company said they were caught up. Mr.

20 Harrison said they weren't. I gave him

21 \$1,800 that he told me I needed, you know,

22 to go on that year. And he said there's

23 still some owed.

24 And they kept passing the buck up

25 and back, up and back. My taxes doubled, my

.

58

1 house note doubled. They turned it over to

2 this NCC place out there, and those lousy

3 crooks, they charged me, right here, \$2300

4 and something dollars. There's nothing in

5 writing where the figure comes from. I'll

6 show you. This is awful. This is

7 absolutely deplorable. This is the --

8 MS. GATELLI: Are these copies for

9 us?

10 MR. ELMAN: The city will not give

11 me nothing. This is three years or four

12 years ago. The city won't give me nothing,

13 Mr. Harrison's office, but he sits there and

14 protects Cordaro and Pettinato and these

15 other people that owe \$200,000 and \$40,000,

16 say he needs time to sell the house.

17 I was trying to live in my house, I

18 wasn't trying to sell it. That man should

19 be fired immediately. He has -- the people

20 have lost confidence in this administration  
21 because of people like him. He has no  
22 business being a representative of it  
23 anymore.  
24 He's showing gross favoritism and  
25 there's no way in the world you'll make me  
.  
59

1 believe that he's just being out of the  
2 kindness of his heart giving everybody two,  
3 three years to catch up on their taxes. He  
4 didn't give me ten minutes. You can see  
5 right there.  
6 I got \$2,300 floating around and  
7 nobody will tell me where it is. They won't  
8 issue me nothing from the city, and NCC said  
9 they get a figure from the city to collect.  
10 They said they don't have any paperwork.  
11 You know, you can't say collect  
12 \$2,200 and add your fee on it, but that's  
13 what happened. And like I said, my mortgage  
14 company said -- this is a big national  
15 company. They said my taxes are paid.  
16 They're not trying to cheat me.

17 MS. GATELLI: We will check on it

18 for you, Ron.

19 MR. ELMAN: Well, again, I say they

20 need to fire this Tom Harrison and hire

21 somebody with some credibility, because he

22 doesn't belong in office showing favoritism

23 like he does.

24 MR. MINORA: Three minutes.

25 MR. ELMAN: This is a disgrace for

.

60

1 anybody to go through.

2 MS. GATELLI: Yes, it is. Mr.

3 Jackowitz.

4 MR. JACKOWITZ: Oh, please don't

5 leave, Mrs. Gatelli.

6 MS. GATELLI: I shall return.

7 MR. JACKOWITZ: Bill Jackowitz,

8 South Scranton resident, retired United

9 States Air Force. There will be no

10 questions tonight, only fact, history and my

11 opinions. Please, no interruptions.

12 When the U.S. Constitution was

13 signed on September the 17, 1787, it did not

14 contain the essential freedoms now outlined  
15 in the Bill of Rights, because many of the  
16 framers viewed their inclusion as  
17 unnecessary.

18 However, after vigorous debate, The  
19 Bill of Rights was adopted. The first  
20 freedoms guaranteed in this historic  
21 document were articulated in the 45 words  
22 run written by James Madison that will have  
23 come to know as the First Amendments. This  
24 was 219 years ago.

25 The Bill of Rights, the first ten

.

61

1 amendments to the Constitution, went into  
2 effect on December the 15th, 1791, when the  
3 State of Virginia ratified it giving the  
4 bill the majority of ratifying states  
5 required to protect citizens from the power  
6 of the federal government. That was  
7 216 years ago.

8 The First Amendment insures that if  
9 there's any star in our Constitutional  
10 constellation, it is that no official high

11 or petty can prescribe what shall be  
12 orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion  
13 or for citizens to confess by word or act or  
14 faith therein, as Justice Robert Jackson  
15 wrote in the 1943 case, West Virginia versus  
16 Barnetti.

17 And as Justice William Brennan wrote  
18 in the case New York Times versus Sullivan  
19 in 1964. The First Amendment provides that  
20 debate, I repeat, debate on public issues  
21 should be uninhibited, robust and wide open.  
22 Free speech at City Council meetings  
23 from the Thomas Jefferson Center from the  
24 Thomas Jefferson Center for the protection  
25 of free expression.

·  
62

1 If a local government authority  
2 chooses to allow the public to speak at its  
3 meeting, it must do so in a manner  
4 consistent with the principles of the First  
5 Amendment. It cannot arbitrarily decide  
6 which words may or may not be used.  
7 Public comments session contain just

8 that, comments from the public. And  
9 government officials do not have the  
10 authority -- government officials do not  
11 have the authority to control the lexicon  
12 employed by the public.  
13 While the usefulness of such  
14 comments may vary from speaker to speaker,  
15 all speakers, I repeat, all speakers have an  
16 equal First Amendment right to express their  
17 views.

18 What I'd like to focus on is this,  
19 all speakers have a First Amendment right to  
20 express their views.

21 The 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals  
22 explained in its 1990 decision, *White Versus*  
23 *City of Norwalk*, Citizens have an enormous  
24 First Amendment interest in directing speech  
25 about public issues to those who govern the

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1 city. That includes City Council members

2 and the mayor, they govern this city.

3 Government officials may not

4 silence, I repeat, government officials may

5 not silence speech because it criticizes  
6 them. They may not open a public comment  
7 period --  
8 MR. MINORA: Three minutes.  
9 MR. JACKOWITZ: -- of other topics  
10 and then carefully pick and chose which  
11 topics they want to hear. They may not even  
12 silence someone because they consider him a  
13 gadfly or a troublemaker.  
14 At this time, I would like to  
15 commend Mayor Doherty for --  
16 MR. MINORA: That's three minutes,  
17 Mr. Jackowitz.  
18 MS. GATELLI: Is his time up?  
19 MR. MINORA: Three minutes.  
20 MS. GATELLI: Mr. Jackowitz --  
21 MR. JACKOWITZ: Mr. Courtright has  
22 the right to --  
23 MS. GATELLI: Mr. Jackowitz, you're  
24 out of order.  
25 MR. JACKOWITZ: -- the right to map  
. .  
64

1 out three goals. Thank you very much. I

2 hope you were paying attention, Mrs.  
3 Gatelli. You had conveniently left the room  
4 while you were getting a very important  
5 history lesson.

6 MS. GATELLI: Well, everyone is  
7 important, Mr. Jackowitz, not just you. So,  
8 I don't pick and chose when I have to go to  
9 the bathroom.

10 MR. JACKOWITZ: I did not say I was  
11 important, I said the message that I was  
12 saying was very important.

13 MS. GATELLI: Thank you very much.  
14 You know, it's nice to be important, but  
15 it's more important to be nice. Mr. Dodson  
16 (phonetic). I can't even go the bathroom  
17 that they don't criticize you.

18 MR. DODSON: Dave Dodson, resident  
19 of Scranton. I'd like to talk on the snow  
20 removal. I have a few recommendations.  
21 I seen the first bus that runs up  
22 Crown Avenue today. The first bus, the  
23 Wintermantle bus, ran past -- up Crown  
24 Avenue and Stafford today.

25 We've had numerous senior citizens

1 that have been homebound because they can't  
2 walk the streets and pick things up and they  
3 have nobody to take them or whatever.

4 For instance, a lady next door to me  
5 would hop the bus and go up to Gerrity's,  
6 and then hop the bus back down for her  
7 groceries.

8 So, I feel it's very important that  
9 being on a snow removal committee, that you  
10 consider at least clearing snow removal --  
11 snow routes for busses and get the busses  
12 running much earlier. A day or two is one  
13 thing, but you can't have two weeks worth of  
14 milk and eggs and bread in your  
15 refrigerator.

16 And on Mr. Courtright's  
17 recommendation on the garbage trucks, if  
18 those have dual axles in the rear and  
19 they're not so good for hills, we do have a  
20 lot of valley that could be cleared by  
21 garbage trucks, and then the more qualified  
22 vehicles on the hill.

23 And I'd like to commend Mr.

24 Courtright for his proposed amendments to

25 the smoking ban, and one suggestion that I

.

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1 have is that they lift the smoking ban for

2 taverns to have entertainment after ten

3 o'clock, provided, say, they stop serving

4 food at the 9:30 or something like that,

5 some type of flexibility there so we don't

6 have people unable to make full use of their

7 facilities and their businesses to make

8 money.

9 That's what it's all about. There's

10 no sense in being in business if you're

11 standing there with an empty -- an empty

12 establishment.

13 And also, when approaching our state

14 officials, for instance, in casinos in New

15 Jersey are losing business big time because

16 they enacted a smoking ban.

17 So, we want to maybe offer some of

18 these same considerations if we do get a

19 statewide ban, which I do feel is coming,

20 but it should be slightly flexible. I mean,

21 it doesn't have to be --

22 MR. MINORA: Three minutes.

23 MR. DODSON: All right. Thank you.

24 And if I have something -- also one short

25 thing, the people from lower Green Ridge and

.

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1 Buona Pizza, I think the city could try to

2 work a little more with those people to help

3 them out and diffuse the situation. They at

4 least deserve an alarm system or --

5 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

6 MR. DODSON: -- and all the help you

7 can give them. Thank you.

8 MS. GATELLI: Randy Young.

9 MR. YOUNG: Good evening. First and

10 foremost, I'd like to apologize to Council,

11 and in particular, Mr. Minora and Mrs.

12 Gatelli for the way I represented myself

13 last week.

14 MR. MINORA: That was my brother.

15 MR. YOUNG: I was at the very least

16 inconsiderate and out of line. Secondly,

17 getting back to the smoking ban, which I  
18 created that situation myself by the way I  
19 acted. I was unable to get my point across.  
20 I do not have a problem with the  
21 indoor smoking ban. I am 100 percent behind  
22 that, but when the indoor smoking ban moves  
23 outdoors, then the city has to enact certain  
24 regulations, which we already have  
25 ordinances for, which concern the travel of  
68

1 pedestrians on public sidewalks.  
2 This young gentleman over here spoke  
3 very intelligently and very eloquently, and  
4 I am not against the indoor smoking ban, but  
5 when you put a 20-foot restriction from the  
6 entrance of a property, a public building  
7 and you write citations for that, then you  
8 better have markings.  
9 That's a city ordinance, the same as  
10 no parking zones, handicapped zones, loading  
11 zones, driveways, and private parking areas.  
12 Those areas need to be clearly marked if  
13 you're going to designate a foot area.

14 I do not agree with congregating in  
15 front of an establishment. I don't see why  
16 anybody should have to walk through a cloud  
17 of smoke in order to walk into a store,  
18 okay?

19 I don't -- I don't forego that. I  
20 think that part of it needs to be looked at  
21 and possibly rewritten. All right?

22 I know for a fact there's state  
23 legislature going on right now for the  
24 statewide smoking ban, I also know for a  
25 fact that at this time there is no legal age  
.

69

1 limit for the consumption or use of alcohol  
2 -- not alcohol, tobacco products in the  
3 Commonwealth.

4 Why doesn't Scranton take another  
5 step forward? And now that we have a  
6 representative down there, let's go for a  
7 legal age. You can't buy them if you're  
8 under 18, you can't sell them to anyone  
9 under 18. Let's make it illegal to use and  
10 possess them under the age of 18.

11 Studies have shown that most of the  
12 adults that are smoking today started  
13 smoking between the ages of 13 and 19 or 20.

14 MR. MINORA: Three minutes.

15 MR. YOUNG: All right. Thank you  
16 very much.

17 MS. GATELLI: Anyone else care to  
18 speak before Council?

19 MR. GILROY: My name is John Gilroy,  
20 city resident. Judy, back in June you were  
21 in my neighborhood when we got flooded, and  
22 I told you I had fuel oil in my house from  
23 that abandoned building. Nothing was ever  
24 done. It's eight months now, and that  
25 building is still. There's no windows, it's  
.

70

1 not boarded. That's right on Gordon Avenue  
2 right off Olive Street.

3 MS. GATELLI: What's the address,  
4 Mr. Gilroy?

5 MR. GILROY: It's probably, like,  
6 about 529, 527. It's a big building. It  
7 used to be Gerard's Machine Shop. There's

8 all garbage inside, everything.

9 MS. GATELLI: Sherette's?

10 MR. GILROY: Yeah, the old

11 Sherette's Building.

12 MS. GATELLI: Okay. I did send a

13 letter on that, but I'll --

14 MR. GILROY: I also have Mark

15 Dougher down there in November, and he would

16 said he would get back to me, and nothing

17 ever got back. That was my first.

18 Second thing I want to bring up is

19 what Mr. Litwinsky brought up, he failed to

20 tell you about the garbage that that mission

21 is throwing on their back porch.

22 They're serving food there. They

23 put it in plastic bags and just throw it on

24 the back porch. It hasn't been collected in

25 over a month.

.

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1 You can see it there every day you

2 go by there. It's in clear plastic bags.

3 They bring the food in from Clarks Summit,

4 they serve their food, collect it and just

5 throw it there. It's on a big porch. It's  
6 probably about 20-by-20 porch. You can't  
7 even walk on it.

8 MS. GATELLI: Now, what are they  
9 serving there, lunch?

10 MR. GILROY: Dinner at night.

11 MS. GATELLI: Dinner, too?

12 MR. GILROY: I believe The Fireside  
13 is bringing the food down, because they're  
14 all from Clarks Summit, all these people  
15 come down from Clarks Summit right now until  
16 they can get this other going on.

17 But I'd like to have something done  
18 with that building that burnt five years or  
19 six years ago. And now being if it rains  
20 tonight, I have a potential of getting  
21 flooded again for the eighth time. And it  
22 took me all summer to get the smell of the  
23 fuel oil out of my house, so something  
24 should be done.

25 MS. GATELLI: I'll write again.

.

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1 MR. GILROY: Thank you.

2 MS. GATELLI: As far as that, before  
3 the next speaker comes up, as far as that  
4 rescue mission is concerned, I can't  
5 understand why they're operating when they  
6 don't have zoning approval.  
7 They lost the zoning case and it  
8 went to appeal, and from what I understand,  
9 you're not supposed to open it until the  
10 appeal is decided, so, Kay, if we can send a  
11 letter maybe to Dan Penetar from the zoning  
12 board and Michael Wallace. Have Mike go  
13 down and check the beds and the garbage and,  
14 you know, maybe cite them and give Council  
15 an answer as to why this place is  
16 functioning, when they were denied through  
17 the zoning board.

18 I mean, why do we have a zoning  
19 board if they're not going to abide by their  
20 decision? And hopefully we'll get an answer  
21 in a reasonable amount of time and we can  
22 call the people involved in that particular  
23 neighborhood. Mr. McCloe.

24 MR. MCCLOE: Good evening. Last two  
25 times I spoke before Council I attempted to

.

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1 give Scranton residents a three dimensional

2 view of the smoking ban.

3 In my opinion, the qualities of

4 hospitality, privilege and choice are in

5 jeopardy.

6 I have a few questions about the

7 legality and the total lack of insight

8 regarding this smoking ban. These go to Mr.

9 Minora.

10 Is, you don't have to answer them

11 now, but I will probably call you and get

12 the answers, is a private business

13 considered to be public property just

14 because simply the public chooses to use the

15 services of that business? Does a private

16 business owner have control over the

17 aesthetic quality of the business -- of his

18 business environment?

19 If yes, then wouldn't any law passed

20 by City Council or any government body that

21 benefits the people and hurts the business

22 owner then fall into certain eminent domain

23 clauses?

24 If the business is being affected by

25 a law, shouldn't those who are forced to

.

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1 comply also be able to receive compensation?

2 Was any of that ever discussed? I believe

3 we left ourselves wide open with that

4 particular thing.

5 Does eminent domain only include

6 tangible property? Okay. Because to me,

7 going out to dine is not a Constitutional

8 right.

9 Contrary to popular belief, going

10 out to dine is a privilege. You do have a

11 Constitutional right to not be excluded by

12 race, sex, creed, color, ethnic origin,

13 religion, and I'm sure I missed one or two,

14 but those are the only rights that

15 Constitution provides.

16 I believe, as well as others, if you

17 keep an open mind and concentrate on the

18 spirit of the Constitution and not just the

19 letter of the law, you will begin to see

20 conflicts in Constitutional principles.

21 And if there are any conflicts

22 within these principles, wouldn't it be

23 better to put this -- this law to the side

24 until those conflicts are resolved?

25 Wouldn't it be more progressive to

.

75

1 put the ordinance away and observe its

2 faults instead of repeating the same old

3 White House mantra, stay the course?

4 Those are pretty much all I have to

5 say. I believe if you just take apart bits

6 and pieces of what The Constitution says --

7 MR. MINORA: Three minutes.

8 MS. GATELLI: Thank you, Mr. McCloe.

9 MR. MCCLOE: Thank you.

10 MR. HUBBARD: Good evening, Council

11 Daniel Hubbard, lower Green Ridge resident.

12 Excuse my appearance tonight, but I've spent

13 the day emptying my basement.

14 They're calling for two inches of

15 rain. Temperatures tomorrow will be in the

16 forties, Temperatures today hit 51. It's

17 melting.

18 Now, I understand there's going to  
19 be three pumps available from the DPW in  
20 case there's any serious residual water  
21 backup at the intersection of Nay Aug and  
22 Albright, and that is appreciated, but it's  
23 not nearly enough.

24 How many floods do we have to go  
25 through in lower Green Ridge before the city  
.  
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1 will live up to its promises that it made to  
2 us eight months ago to the day?  
3 Eight months ago we were promised  
4 temporary flood protection. We have  
5 received nothing.

6 A backhoe from Scartelli scooping  
7 off the storm drains isn't going to keep the  
8 river in its banks. We were promised  
9 temporary flood protection.

10 Temporary flood protection means  
11 that that's a reinforcement of the existing  
12 river bank or at least raising the existing  
13 river bank to a level that will afford us

14 temporary protection until the Army Corps of  
15 Engineers project comes in 2008.

16 Now, that project gets puts off

17 every time we get flooded. If we get

18 flooded tomorrow, when will the project be

19 finished, 2010? If we get flooded this

20 summer, when will it be put off again until,

21 2012?

22 How many times does lower Green

23 Ridge have to be inundated with water before

24 the city will live up to its promise that

25 was made by Director Hayes to give us the

.

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1 temporary flood protection, not only that we

2 deserve, that we pay for, a 25 percent tax

3 increase. I'd like to see something.

4 Anything would help.

5 A couple feet on top of the river

6 bank would help alleviate the problems.

7 You're all going to go home tonight and

8 you're going to go into your bed and you're

9 going to go to sleep.

10 That's not going to happen in lower

11 Green Ridge tonight. Nobody will sleep in  
12 lower Green Ridge tonight. We don't even  
13 have the comfort of feeling at ease in our  
14 own homes.

15 The idea of your -- it's your  
16 sanctuary. You should be able to go home,  
17 close the door behind you and leave the  
18 world outside and relax.

19 We don't even have that ability. We  
20 have no way to feel at ease. We are under  
21 tension and stress as a neighborhood every  
22 time it rains.

23 Last week I said what's going to  
24 happen when we get warm days and rain. I  
25 guess I should have kept my mouth shut,  
.

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1 because it was 50 degrees all week this  
2 week. We're getting two inches of rain  
3 tonight, and that's not just here in town,  
4 that's going to be north of us, all the  
5 communities north of us that have their  
6 storm drain runoff, all the urban sprawl,  
7 the mall, Home Depot, Lowe's, Commerce

8 Boulevard, Dickson City, Olyphant, Jessup,  
9 all the melt water from those neighborhoods  
10 goes into the Lackawanna River, then the  
11 Lackawanna River goes into our  
12 neighborhoods.

13 MR. MINORA: Three minutes.

14 MR. HUBBARD: We are the last  
15 remaining neighborhood without a levee. The  
16 city made promises. You need to hold your  
17 end of the deal. We pay our taxes, you need  
18 to hold up your end of your promise.

19 MS. GATELLI: Thank you, Mr.  
20 Hubbard. Mr. Hubbard, were you aware that  
21 there was tax relief for the properties that  
22 were flooded?

23 MR. HUBBARD: For this year.

24 MS. GATELLI: Okay. I just didn't

25 --

.

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1 MR. HUBBARD: I understand that.

2 MS. GATELLI: I didn't know if you  
3 were aware of that.

4 MR. HUBBARD: I understand that.

5 Much appreciated, believe me, but that

6 doesn't change the fact --

7 MS. GATELLI: I know. I understand.

8 I just wanted to make you aware.

9 MR. HUBBARD: We're going to have to

10 pay our taxes next year unless we get

11 flooded again.

12 MS. GATELLI: Okay. Thank you.

13 Next speaker.

14 MR. HUBBARD: I would rather pay my

15 taxes than get flooded.

16 MS. SHUMAKER: Marie Shumaker.

17 Again, reading from the monopoly newspaper

18 on the 9th of February, Councilwoman Sherry

19 Nealon Fanucci reiterated Thursday that

20 administrators provide her with needed

21 answers and that she doesn't think a

22 subpoena is necessary.

23 Council President Judy Gatelli and

24 Councilman Robert McGoff also have said they

25 have few problems getting information from

.

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1 the mayor.

2 From this I must conclude either you  
3 three discriminate on behalf of some  
4 requestors and against others, or the  
5 newspaper report of your access is  
6 incorrect.

7 To determine whether discrimination  
8 or inaccuracy is in play, I challenge you to  
9 prove the resolution to subpoena financial  
10 records may not be needed by providing  
11 answers to the following items by next week:

12 Answers to the budget questions I  
13 raised at Council on January 11, followed up  
14 with an Email to each Council member and  
15 have yet to receive a single answer; the  
16 individual projects included in the 2006 and  
17 2007 capital budgets; advise whether the  
18 health inspector who went to shut down The  
19 Waffle House because of the possibility of  
20 blood throughout the restaurant was the same  
21 health inspector that may have gone open  
22 other restaurants that day without having  
23 gone home to shower and change clothes and  
24 shoes; explain why Wilkes-Barre has three  
25 health inspectors and Scranton only one,

.

81

1 when Scranton has 25 percent more  
2 restaurants and twice as many skilled  
3 nursing and nursing homes requiring  
4 inspection; produce the paperwork that shows  
5 what became of the quarter of a million  
6 dollars the mayor promised to spend on  
7 improvements at Robinson Park in 2003 that  
8 he said were funded the prior year by a \$72  
9 million bond, they have yet to incur.  
10 I couldn't even eat my breakfast  
11 after I read the monopoly paper this morning  
12 and saw how great our parks are. They  
13 certainly haven't seen anything at Robinson  
14 Park.  
15 And then finally, this is off the  
16 subject, those would be by next week or I  
17 would hope to see the resolution.  
18 The timing lights that someone spoke  
19 to tonight, I spoke for -- to the department  
20 of PennDOT, because they had previously told  
21 me that was -- a project was going to be put  
22 out for bid at the end of January.

23 I called to see if it had gone to  
24 bid, and they said, no, it wasn't going to  
25 go out to bid until 2000, the end of 2007.

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82

1 When I asked why, I was told that it  
2 was -- Scranton really wasn't showing that  
3 much interest and they had a lot of other  
4 work.

5 So, I would encourage you to perhaps  
6 let PennDOT know that that light retiming  
7 and the additional lights that will be  
8 provided is important and should be  
9 accelerated. Thank you.

10 MS. GATELLI: Next.

11 MS. MARTIN: Marie Martin, city  
12 taxpayer and resident. This is for you,  
13 Mrs. Fanucci. I have a little bone to pick  
14 with you.

15 You've made two comments that really  
16 haven't been so nice, and I haven't taken  
17 them very well. The first one was when a  
18 waiter came up here and asked you what would  
19 happen to our income, and you said, Oh,

20 well. That was fine. That was your  
21 personal opinion, that -- that was when the  
22 smoking ban was originally an ordinance.

23 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: What was the  
24 question? I'm sorry. I didn't hear you.

25 MS. MARTIN: It wasn't a question  
.

83

1 yet. I said the statements were towards  
2 you. I didn't say I was saying a question  
3 yet.

4 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I couldn't hear  
5 you.

6 MS. MARTIN: I haven't gotten there  
7 yet.

8 MS. FANUCCI NEALON: Okay. Oh,  
9 well.

10 MS. MARTIN: That you had said, Oh,  
11 well to the waiter that had asked you what  
12 happens to our income. That put a little  
13 cut.

14 And then you went further to throw  
15 salt in our wounds when again the question  
16 was raised, and you had said, Well, why

17 don't you go to college and get a better  
18 job?

19 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I have never  
20 said that in my entire life, ever, ever.

21 MS. MARTIN: Yes, you have. Okay.

22 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: That is not  
23 even close to being accurate. I have never  
24 stated that in my entire life, ever. Go to  
25 college and get a better job?

.

84

1 MS. MARTIN: Okay. So, the people  
2 that have told me that and the person that  
3 said that themselves that you said are  
4 liars?

5 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Are absolute  
6 liars, absolute liars. That is the most  
7 ridiculous -- that is probably the most sad  
8 attempt at coming back here that I've ever  
9 seen. I have not --

10 MS. MARTIN: I wouldn't have come  
11 here unless I was told by many multiple  
12 people. I have better things to do with my  
13 time than to attack you about things.

14 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: You're upset  
15 about something that I have never said in my  
16 entire life. Go to college and get a better  
17 job?

18 MS. GATELLI: We can get you the  
19 minutes of the meeting.

20 MS. MARTIN: I don't believe it was  
21 said at a meeting, I believe it was said in  
22 person when this person went up and spoke to  
23 her, and that is what they had told me  
24 personally at my job, which I am a waitress.

25 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Where are you  
.

85

1 working?

2 MS. MARTIN: Chick's Diner.

3 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: And I said that  
4 at Chick's Diner?

5 MS. MARTIN: No, you did not say  
6 that in Chick's Diner. This person told me  
7 that where I work in Chick's Diner.

8 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I never said go  
9 to college and get a job. That is so sad.

10 MS. MARTIN: Nevertheless,

11 nevertheless, in an effort with the ban that  
12 has cut half of my income being a waitress,  
13 whether or not you said the whole college  
14 doesn't matter --

15 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: It does.

16 MS. MARTIN: It doesn't at this  
17 point. I need that job to pay for it.

18 Without that, college is, like, unnecessary  
19 to some people, but to me, to get that job,  
20 I need that work. I need to lose my place  
21 here. I'm sorry. I apologize. I really  
22 am.

23 I want to thank you, Mr. Courtright,  
24 for reconsidering your stand on the issue,  
25 because it has really hurt us. For every  
.

86

1 non-smoker that we have gained, we have lost  
2 at least three smokers.

3 MR. MINORA: Three minutes.

4 MS. MARTIN: And non-smokers that  
5 don't want to come in our restaurant because  
6 there's been an injustice done. So, I thank  
7 you for reconsidering, and I really hope you

8 didn't say that.

9 MS. GATELLI: Thank you very much.

10 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I would never  
11 say that.

12 MS. GATELLI: Thank you very much.

13 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.

14 A gentleman who does this paper came up here  
15 and spoke about politics in this city, I  
16 think his name is Fred Swartz, and I just  
17 think it's time to really realize there's a  
18 lot of different things in play here.

19 Now, we're going to have a  
20 commission to study plowing. Now, nothing  
21 personal, Mr. McGoff, but it's come to my  
22 attention that Mr. Gallagher is a personal  
23 friend of yours, and I find that to be  
24 unacceptable, and the other thing I find  
25 unacceptable is, why isn't there someone on

87

1 that commission that knows about trucks?

2 Okay? Because if you're going to

3 try to figure out a solution of plowing snow

4 in this city, I think we have to face the

5 fact that we don't have the equipment we  
6 need to do the job.

7 And if we need equipment to do a  
8 job, then we should have somebody on that  
9 commission that knows something about  
10 trucks.

11 Okay. Now, we discussed that a  
12 little bit at the tax group last week, and I  
13 tried to get Mr. Bolus to speak a little bit  
14 on it at length, since he had, I guess,  
15 supplied the city with trucks, because he  
16 had a dealership at one time, and I think  
17 that if you're going to try to move snow in  
18 this city or do anything else in this city,  
19 I think you need the right tool to do the  
20 right job.

21 You have people here talking, like  
22 the gentleman from the lower Green Ridge  
23 Association, who wondered when the residents  
24 of lower Green Ridge were going to get their  
25 levees.

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88

1 And I think it's time for people to

2 realize one thing, we keep getting the wrong  
3 people to fill these Council seats. That's  
4 the problem we have. Because the people  
5 that fill these seats were never over here.  
6 They have no idea what the issues really are  
7 in this city.  
8 I've gone through the city getting  
9 signatures, okay? And I'm going to say  
10 this, we've borrowed a ton of money. And  
11 when you knock on somebody's door and  
12 they're crying saying that they can't pay  
13 any more taxes, I'm wondering what the  
14 people on this Council are doing raising  
15 taxes all the time instead of spurring  
16 economic development.  
17 I don't see any real great economic  
18 development taking place here. I see a lot  
19 of money being borrowed. I see a lot of  
20 money.  
21 I asked about the \$10 million that  
22 went to Preferred Produce. I haven't heard  
23 one word about that, not one.  
24 Now we supposedly have the subpoena  
25 bogged down. I have no clue why, because

1 when the vote was taken, it was pretty clear  
2 that we wanted all records from all -- all  
3 the authorities in the city between this  
4 date and that date. I don't think there's  
5 anything left to debate any more. The vote  
6 was taken. The politics in this city is the  
7 reason this city is where it is.

8 Now, it also came to light that  
9 there's over 4,000 vacant units in this  
10 city. That tells you something, and that  
11 the population has dropped to 67,000. That  
12 tells you another thing.

13 People are fleeing this city to try  
14 to escape this Council, this mayor, previous  
15 administrations, and everything is not a  
16 joke, okay?

17 It's like another gentleman who got  
18 up here and asked, well, how come all the  
19 commissions and all the studies are done by  
20 the people that are politically connected?

21 Because you want the answers you want.

22 Council doesn't want the truth, the mayor

23 doesn't want the truth. Walk around and

24 look.

25 MR. MINORA: Three minutes.

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90

1 MR. MORGAN: Thank you.

2 MR. COURTRIGHT: Kay, Kay, if you

3 could, you know what, Mr. Morgan just jogged

4 my memory, and I apologize, when he said

5 economic development, I was wondering could

6 we send the mayor a letter and ask him if

7 anybody in the administration, this has

8 totally nothing to do with what he talked

9 about, but it reminded me of something, is

10 having any communication with Bernie McGurl

11 from The River Walk, are we moving -- is the

12 city looking into that at all? Because I

13 think that's going to bring economic

14 development, and I haven't heard about it in

15 a long time.

16 So, if they could just bring me up

17 to speed, if they're doing anything on The

18 River Walk, I'd appreciate it. Sorry about

19 that, sir.

20 MR. SACHETTI: My name is Mario  
21 Sachetti. I reside in the lower Green Ridge  
22 section, as well. And all we're doing is  
23 we're asking a little bit of help.

24 I have a brother who lives across  
25 the street from me, he's an LS patient, Lou

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1 Gehrig's Disease, you know, he can't get  
2 around, my grandparents live in the  
3 neighborhood, as well, they're 80, in their  
4 eighties. It's just a tough thing to go  
5 through.

6 You know, even a simple thing like  
7 getting the DPW to throw some dirt on the  
8 riverbank just to build it up temporarily.

9 There's a big mound of dirt on Nay  
10 Aug Avenue that they can take from, put it  
11 over there. You know, anything that you  
12 guys can help us out with we would be  
13 greatly appreciated. We don't want to go  
14 through this again.

15 You know, I got grandparents that --  
16 you know, it's too tough on everybody,

17 specially the elderly people, you know? You  
18 know, it's just -- it's a tough thing.  
19 And we were down there tonight  
20 removing snow on our own. DPW had nothing  
21 to do with it. You know, we formed our own  
22 neighborhood association.  
23 And if you guys aren't going to help  
24 us out, then we're just going to do things  
25 ourselves. We'll move the dirt over to the  
.  
92

1 riverbank and put it there ourselves. If we  
2 have to rent equipment, we'll do so, you  
3 know? So, anything you can do, we'll  
4 appreciate.

5 MS. GATELLI: Mr. Sachetti, I just  
6 have one suggestion that might help you.

7 MR. SACHETTI: Sure.

8 MS. GATELLI: There have been other  
9 neighborhoods that have had flood  
10 protection, you know they've had flooding  
11 and they've since had the benefits of  
12 levees, et cetera.

13 And I think it would be a good thing

14 for you to contact them and see maybe how

15 they went about things and how they got

16 things in their neighborhood.

17 Barbara Marinucci in the Bulls Head

18 Section, you have Tom Preambo in The Plot,

19 and Mary Alice Burke. And if you'd like,

20 after the meeting, I can give you their

21 three phone numbers.

22 MR. SACHETTI: Well, I would

23 appreciate that.

24 MS. GATELLI: I think that they

25 would be very good to help you.

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93

1 MR. SACHETTI: But this is the whole

2 reason -- I, you know, I thought that's what

3 you people are for. I thought that you guys

4 would be able to help us out.

5 MS. GATELLI: Well, we're

6 legislators, but they've been through it and

7 they possibly know ways to expedite the

8 situation, because they've done it before.

9 They have much more experience than any one

10 of us up here, and I think they would help

11 you.

12 MR. SACHETTI: Okay. I just thought

13 you were our connection to --

14 MS. GATELLI: Well, you are our

15 connection to the administration, but these

16 are people -- these are neighborhood people

17 that may be able to help you. I don't think

18 it with hurt to call them.

19 MR. SACHETTI: No, it wouldn't. Any

20 phone numbers you can give me, I'd

21 appreciate that, and I'll look into that.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Sir, I will reiterate

23 your concerns.

24 MR. SACHETTI: I know you've been

25 working on it .

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94

1 MR. MCGOFF: I will call tomorrow.

2 Beyond that, I don't know that we can

3 promise any immediate response, but I will

4 reiterate your concerns and talk to the

5 people at DPW and in the flood management.

6 MR. SACHETTI: I appreciate that.

7 All I'm saying is there's a pile of dirt

8 here, and you've got the riverbank right  
9 across the street, you know what I mean?  
10 And it's just a matter of, you  
11 know, in my eyes, a front end loader, take a  
12 little bit of dirt from here, go across the  
13 street, dump it off there, where the  
14 riverbank was damaged from the previous  
15 flood, you know, and where it's down low  
16 near where they dug it out to put in that  
17 gate, you know.

18 MS. GATELLI: Okay. Thanks, Mr.

19 Sachetti.

20 MR. SACHETTI: Thank you.

21 MR. GERVASI: Good evening, City

22 Council. My name is Dave Gervasi, I'm a  
23 resident, taxpayer, homeowner in the City of  
24 Scranton.

25 I have to come here every now and

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95

1 then to counter what you read in the  
2 newspaper because of their gross  
3 inaccuracies and, in my opinion, deliberate  
4 inaccuracies.

5 A few issues, three, to be exact.  
6 Mr. Courtright, I did read that article that  
7 you had nothing to say to help with the  
8 solution of the snow removal, when it was  
9 exactly six things you brought up, and I  
10 believe Mrs. Evans brought up a few, but you  
11 read in the paper that you had nothing to  
12 add, so that was inaccurate.  
13 There was an article, I believe it  
14 was today or yesterday, about Standard and  
15 Poors and the tough time we're having being  
16 recovered for the last 14 years, and they  
17 basically said that Standard and Poors said  
18 the reason for it was the city must fully  
19 implement and follow the Recovery Plan.  
20 Well, if anybody has seen the  
21 Recovery Plan, it's about as thick as a  
22 phone book, and the two little sections that  
23 have to deal with the police and fire  
24 department are about seven pages each of  
25 that entire thing.

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96

1 So, maybe The Scranton Times should

2 find out why the mayor didn't implement many  
3 of the things that were in the Recovery Plan  
4 and maybe ask questions of why he may have  
5 violated his own Recovery Plan.

6 And by the way, the part they left  
7 out, they usually left out the second part  
8 of the story, where Standard and Poors  
9 lowered our bond rating because of excessive  
10 borrowing and out of control spending.

11 Let's talk about that for a second.

12 They want to blame not being able to knock  
13 down the amount of people that work in the  
14 fire department and the police department  
15 and the city unions, when today it costs  
16 less to run the fire department than it did  
17 ten years ago, and the police department,  
18 and the clerical union, it's much less than  
19 it was ten years ago, because they knocked  
20 off 30 of those people, and the mayor hired  
21 20 people at higher salaries, and the mayor  
22 lost \$5 million in the American Water  
23 Company arbitration, and he's approaching a  
24 million dollars in legal fees to all the  
25 arbitrations against our unions that he

1 lost, every one but two, but that fight is  
2 not over yet, and then they have the nerve  
3 to raise our taxes, and three members of  
4 this Council went along with it and didn't  
5 even give Mrs. Evans' budget a second look,  
6 and they raised our taxes 20 percent, he has  
7 the nerve, the man who borrowed \$77 million  
8 and spent it, has the nerve to blame the  
9 implementation of the Recovery Plan on the  
10 police and firefighters for our city's  
11 financial woes, when it's cheaper today than  
12 it was ten years ago to run or departments,  
13 and we have received nothing.  
14 If the mayor is real concerned about  
15 how much money we make, I'll be happy to  
16 show him my paycheck today and my paycheck  
17 from five years ago, and you'll see there's  
18 no difference. So, not knock it off,  
19 Scranton Times, and get a little more  
20 accurate.  
21 There was also an article in last  
22 week about a Philadelphia Police Department

23 arbitration.

24 MR. GERVASI: Can I finish my

25 thoughts, Mrs. Gatelli?

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98

1 MS. GATELLI: Yes.

2 MR. GERVASI: Thank you.

3 Philadelphia police arbitration where it

4 says it's going to be really good for the

5 City of Scranton, because it looks real good

6 because the Philadelphia City beat up their

7 police in arbitration.

8 Well, I called -- actually I Emailed

9 Mr. Brown, Stacy Brown from The Scranton

10 Times and I told him it was inaccurate, and

11 PICA and Act 47 are like comparing apples

12 and oranges, and by the way, the arbitration

13 was remanded back to lower court, and the

14 lower court denied it again, so the

15 Philadelphia police won that arbitration.

16 On top of that, I sent him a copy of

17 the court order, and you still haven't seen

18 anything in the newspaper about it.

19 So, in closing, please, don't listen

20 to what you read in the newspaper, it's

21 extremely inaccurate. Thank you.

22 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

23 MR. BATTLE: Hi. My name is Mike

24 Battle, I'm a Scranton resident. I'm also

25 talking about The Scranton Rescue Mission.

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99

1 I guess I just want to tell Council

2 how much urgency we feel there is about

3 this. We have the feeling, apparently since

4 they're running their program, their website

5 in December said they closed down the

6 building.

7 They apparently have beds in the

8 building, I've been told, by other

9 neighbors, all right? We have a sinking

10 feeling that they think the fix is in.

11 And there's going to be a hearing,

12 and I'm not going to name names, but there's

13 a feeling that a politically family sold the

14 building and is perhaps shepherding it

15 through the zoning process. I don't know if

16 it's true or not, but it's one of our fears.

17 But there is a hearing in  
18 Commonwealth Court next Wednesday at 9:30.  
19 And I don't know whether any of the  
20 neighbors here are sure that the city will  
21 representation for that.  
22 I hope it's not the case that The  
23 Rescue Mission is counting on just rolling  
24 over because of lack of any opposition, and  
25 I wish Council would make sure that  
.

100

1 whichever solicitor's responsibility  
2 includes responding to this.  
3 I mean, these people lost at the  
4 zoning hearing, they lost in county court.  
5 It baffles us why they're acting as if it's  
6 a done deal and they can start the program.  
7 I mean, there's a lot of anxiety here about  
8 this.  
9 And, I mean, as I said at the zoning  
10 hearing, we're in a light industrial area.  
11 We don't expect to be Green Ridge, and, you  
12 know, we accept that, all right?  
13 But the thought of having a

14 continual turnover with people with serious  
15 drug and alcohol problems in our  
16 neighborhood, dealing with that on a  
17 long-term basis, it's very scary.  
18 And we never had that. And, I mean,  
19 we accepted all the things -- there was a  
20 machine shop there, there's a body shop. I  
21 mean, and all of the neighbors, we accept  
22 it. I never heard a complaint, but there  
23 should be a line drawn somewhere, and I hope  
24 Council will help us drawing the line.

25 The other thing is, I mean, Scranton

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101

1 has so much available real estate in the  
2 downtown business area, why these people  
3 picked this area in a neighborhood that,  
4 although it was kind of like gasoline alley  
5 was, very largely residential, and why they  
6 persisted, it doesn't strike me as very  
7 charitable, and I have a, as I said, a  
8 sinking feeling that they have a feeling --  
9 and you can look at our houses, you can tell  
10 that none of us have the resources to hire

11 private counsel.

12 So, I guess the specific thing I'm  
13 asking Council is, will you please make sure  
14 that the city is represented and the zoning  
15 board at that hearing and that these people  
16 do not win by default? Because that --

17 MS. GATELLI: Yes, we will.

18 MR. BATTLE: Because I can't imagine  
19 on the merits of their argument, I can't  
20 imagine they would win.

21 But lacking legal representation at  
22 that hearing, perhaps they're thinking  
23 they're going to win that way. I don't know  
24 how else they expect to get a -- overturn  
25 the variance.

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102

1 I mean, they were refused twice, and  
2 on its face, it's not a house of worship.  
3 And that's the relevant permitted use in  
4 light industrial zone that we have.  
5 We're not asking a lot. We  
6 understand that if a business comes in  
7 there, we're not going to complain, but this

8 particular form of activity --

9 MR. MINORA: Three minutes.

10 MR. BATTEL: -- is scary. Thank you.

11 MS. GATELLI: Thank you very much.

12 Kay, when you talk to Attorney Penetar

13 tomorrow, will you ask him if we were being

14 represented at that hearing and call me?

15 MS. HUBBARD: Hi. My name is

16 Elizabeth Hubbard, resident in Scranton,

17 lower Green Ridge.

18 The responsibility of flood

19 prevention is the city's. The Army Corps'

20 is flood protection -- do I have it right --

21 control, I'm sorry. The city needs to

22 prevent the flood.

23 You told Mr. Sachetti that we should

24 talk to the other neighborhood associations?

25 Well, it took The Plot 25 years to get some

.

103

1 help, and the only reason they got that was,

2 I believe, that Joe McDade open the river

3 corridor and got the Army Corps involved to

4 get the levee project pushed through.

5 Well, until they get the levee in  
6 our neighborhood, the city needs to do  
7 something to protect us.  
8 I mean, my husband is 81 years old,  
9 I don't know if he can take another flood.  
10 There's a lot of elderly people in the  
11 neighborhood, and I'm appalled that it took  
12 this city two weeks to clean the storm  
13 drains in our neighborhood.  
14 They just showed up yesterday, and  
15 they were there for a very brief time.  
16 Fortunately we have a neighbor that had  
17 access to machinery, he got a lot of the  
18 snow piles, because the city did nothing to  
19 do away with them.  
20 It's just every time it rains, we  
21 cannot be worried about this. They promised  
22 us they would build up the bank behind  
23 Laminations. They really didn't do anything  
24 with that, and they never repaired the banks  
25 on Nay Aug Avenue.

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104

1 Now, I spoke to you today about that

2 manhole that was filled with dirt and mud.

3 MS. GATELLI: They've been there.

4 MS. HUBBARD: Well, they didn't

5 clean it out since '04.

6 MS. GATELLI: No, they've been

7 there, and they'll be there tomorrow.

8 MS. HUBBARD: Well, they better,

9 because it's still covered with snow at five

10 o'clock today when I went by there.

11 MS. GATELLI: I think it's a

12 sanitary sewer, so it won't affect storm

13 water. I think it's -- I was told that it's

14 possibly a sanitary line.

15 MS. GATELLI: Well, the sewage has

16 to be blocking up somewhere, because that's

17 a solid block in that hole.

18 MS. GATELLI: I will let you know as

19 soon as they get there.

20 MS. HUBBARD: That's since the '04

21 flood.

22 MS. GATELLI: They were both there

23 today, the city and the Sewer Authority.

24 MS. HUBBARD: Well, they better get

25 it cleaned out. I mean, it's there since

105

1 '04 without a cover, a manhole.

2 MS. GATELLI: I know, but you just  
3 told me today.

4 MS. HUBBARD: I know that, Judy.

5 MS. GATELLI: You know, I did the  
6 best I could.

7 MS. HUBBARD: Daniel brought it up  
8 at another meeting a couple weeks ago, and I  
9 think Mike Dudek has spoken about it several  
10 times about that blue barrel in that hole.

11 I mean, they put it there -- the  
12 barrel in there, I guess, so nobody would  
13 lose a tire in it.

14 But that manhole cover has been gone  
15 since '04, and the Sewer Authority never  
16 replaced it.

17 MS. GATELLI: Okay.

18 MS. HUBBARD: So, I just hope it  
19 doesn't rain as much as they say.

20 MS. GATELLI: I hope not. Anyone  
21 else?

22 MR. BECK: Good evening, Council.

23 Wayne Beck, city resident. I wasn't even  
24 coming this evening, but at seven o'clock  
25 the live coverage from 61 disappeared, but I

.

106

1 understand it's back on now, but as long as  
2 I'm here.  
3 I'd just like, rather than beat a  
4 dead horse, Mr. Courtright, I'm glad you  
5 brought up and responded to the article that  
6 was in the paper, because the first thing I  
7 said to a friend of mine sitting next to me  
8 when I read that was, I don't remember any  
9 word that even resembled the words that they  
10 used describing your explanation of the  
11 condition of the city streets in prior  
12 storms impeccable. Nothing resembled that  
13 definition.  
14 And you did, I didn't know it was  
15 six until Dave pointed it out, you did bring  
16 out a number of points that you think should  
17 be considered.  
18 But this is the same newspaper that  
19 wrote the article about the Council members

20 that opposed the previous -- or the prior  
21 budget, the proposed budget, without coming  
22 up with any suggestions on their own, when  
23 there were at least 30 that were brought off  
24 of that dais.

25 So, again, you've got to be careful

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1 of what you read in the paper and do your  
2 own research.

3 And similar to what Dave said, I've  
4 been reviewing the two very thick voluminous  
5 volumes of PEL, both the 1992, I believe it  
6 was, and the 2000, and I know that 2000 is  
7 the only one that means anything right now,  
8 but there does seem to be significant  
9 differences in what you read and what's  
10 being heard and what's actually in the PEL  
11 plan.

12 So, I will present my, at least  
13 opinion, of that one when I finish that  
14 investigation of the research.

15 But the other thing I'd like to say  
16 is that on a couple of occasions recently

17 Mrs. Evans had asked about the South Side  
18 Sports Complex and where the replacement  
19 field was going to be, and I know her  
20 intentions are good, but I don't even know  
21 if anybody remembers that there was a  
22 memorandum of understanding that was  
23 mandated by Senate Bill 850, Senator  
24 Mellow's Senate Bill 850 that required an  
25 agreement to be drawn and followed between

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1 the University of Scranton and the Scranton  
2 Redevelopment Authority, and that required  
3 that a lighted ASA approved field be ready  
4 and running by April of 2005.

5 Now, I'm sure the obvious answer is  
6 going to be, well, it was in litigation and  
7 we weren't about to do anything back then,  
8 but The \$700,000 deposit money was spent  
9 rather quickly.

10 We're a month away from April of  
11 2007. I don't believe there is a field  
12 available yet. And talks of certain fields,  
13 even if it was Rockwell, which the neighbors

14 oppose, and I don't blame them, is not an  
15 ASA acceptable field really, because right  
16 field slopes, it is not lighted, it  
17 certainly does not have the attributes of an  
18 ASA approved field.

19 And I'm wondering if there are any  
20 sanctions or any penalties to be faced by  
21 the city or one of its authorities if they,  
22 in fact, are in violation of something  
23 that's mandated by a Senate Bill.

24 I'm not saying there is, but I'm  
25 still playing ball and I want a field ready  
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1 for this year, a lighted field, acceptable  
2 ASA. And The University, by the way, was  
3 supposed to contribute \$100,000 towards that  
4 field.

5 MR. MINORA: Three minutes.

6 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

7 MR. BECK: Thank you.

8 MS. GATELLI: Amil, would you check  
9 if there is a memorandum?

10 MR. MINORA: I know there's been a

11 great deal of litigation, and all of it has  
12 been dismissed, and it included the Senate  
13 Bill 850, which removed restrictions for the  
14 sale.

15 All of those cases have been  
16 dismissed. There's been three or four of  
17 them. I have to go back and dig through a  
18 lot of litigation paperwork, but I will see  
19 what I can do.

20 MS. GATELLI: Yeah, see if it's  
21 still a valid agreement. Thank you.

22 MS. KRAKE: My name is Nancy Krake.  
23 I work in the city treasurer's office, and I  
24 would just -- after Mr. Elman's remarks, I'd  
25 like to educate everybody a little bit.

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1 You can still pay your 2006 city  
2 real estate bill in the treasure's office  
3 until March 31. That's very, very  
4 important. If you're able to pay, you will  
5 save the 25 percent that NCC is allowed to  
6 charge on top of the interest and penalty  
7 that accrues monthly.

8 The interest and penalty does go  
9 back to the city. So, even though you're  
10 paying it, you will get something back for  
11 your money.  
12 The 25 percent per this  
13 administration by ordinance was changed from  
14 the Connors administration to go on top of  
15 those amounts.  
16 So, that money strictly goes to  
17 Northeast Credit and Collection, who, by he  
18 way, contributed to the mayor's campaign.  
19 Mr. Elman is not unusual. Most  
20 people's first knowledge that they are  
21 delinquent is after they've already gone to  
22 Northeast Credit and collection. That is  
23 also per ordinance.  
24 If this Council would like to do  
25 something, they can change those ordinances.

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1 I don't think that's fair. We never did it  
2 before. That was a little gift from the  
3 Pennsylvania Economy League, and the money  
4 does not go to the city.

5 It's incredible, and it's been going  
6 on for six years. I think it's time for a  
7 change, especially since we've got another  
8 25 percent handed to us by three members of  
9 this Council, Mrs. Fanucci, Mrs. Gatelli and  
10 Mr. McGoff. And that's in the form of a tax  
11 increase on the very same taxes we're  
12 talking about tonight. Pretty ironic.  
13 We're stuck with that tax increase for a  
14 year.

15 The mayor's promised to double our  
16 taxes per the Pennsylvania Economy League,  
17 and basically blamed them. That's going to  
18 happen over the next two years.

19 I hope Mrs. Evans is feeling better,  
20 and I hope she's back soon. Mr. Courtright  
21 is our only advocate sitting here tonight,  
22 and this is really a shame for all the  
23 citizens of Scranton that not one of you  
24 even made a remark on what I just said.

25 I'm sure you don't find it sad or

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1 heartbreaking at all, but for most of the

2 citizens, it's very sad and very

3 heartbreaking. Thank you.

4 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

5 MR. SLEDZINSKI: Hi, Jud.

6 MS. GATELLI: Hi, Chrissy.

7 MR. SLEDZINSKI: Close your eyes,

8 Bill. You can't see me. You can't even lok

9 at me, Bill.

10 MS. GATELLI: No, he's not looking.

11 MR. COURTRIGHT: Oh, thanks, Chris.

12 Very nice.

13 MR. SLEDZINSKI: I'll pull it down a

14 little bit. I'll pull it down a little bit,

15 Bill.

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: Put it up, Chris.

17 Okay. There you go.

18 MR. SLEDZINSKI: Hey, Judy, you know

19 that bridge where they plowed Saturday? It

20 was your idea, wasn't it?

21 MS. GATELLI: Yes.

22 MR. SLEDZINSKI: Good job, Judy.

23 I'm proud of you, Judy. Keep it up, will

24 you?

25 MS. GATELLI: Thanks, Chrissy. Mr.

1 Ancherani, we always know when it's the end  
2 of the night.

3 MR. ANCHERANI: I'm the closer.

4 Good evening, Council. Nelson Ancherani,  
5 resident, taxpayer, financial secretary of  
6 the FOP exercising my First Amendment  
7 rights.

8 Recently I ran into a friend of mine  
9 who informed me that I'm repetitious when I  
10 come here to speak.

11 My reply, if I got answers to the  
12 questions I ask, and for that matter, if  
13 other speakers got answers to their  
14 questions, there wouldn't be any need for  
15 repetition. We ask questions, we expect  
16 answers. Because we don't get answers  
17 doesn't mean we are going away.

18 Bob Bolus left, but others are in  
19 the wings waiting to take any of our places,  
20 and they will have more questions. Danny  
21 Hubbard is one such example.

22 You Council were elected by the

23 voters accepting Mr. McGoff who was  
24 appointed by a tie-breaking vote casted by  
25 the mayor to fill a vacancy on Council. You  
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1 are our representatives. You should have  
2 answers to our questions.

3 Three of you up there appear to have  
4 an open door policy into the mayor's office,  
5 the other two appear to be shut out.

6 We, the people, taxpayers, don't  
7 have the luxury of being able to have the  
8 open door policy to the answers to our  
9 questions.

10 We look to you, and if you don't get  
11 the answers for us, we come back week after  
12 week looking for them. You might as well  
13 get used to it, we're not going away.

14 Example, I've been asking at  
15 different meetings over the last four months  
16 why the tax anticipation notes are included  
17 in the budget revenues and expenditures,  
18 when clearly if you read the budgets, you  
19 will see where it says excluding tax

20 anticipation notes.

21 I'm still waiting for an answer.

22 Repetition? Yes. Answers, please. This is

23 the sixth year since The Recovery Plan was

24 voted on.

25 Voters who never read the plan

.

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1 approved it with the threat of a tax

2 increase if it wasn't approved.

3 It was the Council speakers at that

4 time, myself included, who predicted that a

5 tax hike was coming, regardless of whether

6 or not The Recovery Plan was approved.

7 Here we are six years later and we

8 are faced with the first huge tax increase

9 that was predicted years ago, a 25 percent

10 increase for this year and two more years of

11 25 percent increases each year.

12 This is acknowledged by PEL and the

13 mayor, and it is predicted that they will be

14 voted for by the same three Council members

15 who voted in favor of this year's increase,

16 Mrs. Gatelli, Mrs. Fanucci, and Mr. McGoff.

17 That is unless the Council make up  
18 changes. These three 25 percent tax  
19 increases will cumulatively total out to  
20 very slightly under 100 percent increase.  
21 I will go further and predict that  
22 since we have an almost \$300 million  
23 long-term debt for at least 28 more years --

24 MR. MINORA: Three minutes.

25 MR. ANCHERANI: -- that excludes any  
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1 borrowing and record budgets, that we will  
2 have many more huge, huge tax increases --

3 MR. MINORA: Three minutes.

4 MR. ANCHERANI: Can I just finish  
5 this?

6 MS. GATELLI: Finish your thoughts.

7 MR. ANCHERANI: -- to pay back that  
8 debt. I predict it. Mark my words, the tax  
9 man cometh, and he's looking to ravage our  
10 wallets and make us poorer than we already  
11 are.

12 More repetition? I will never

13 forget our city employees soldiers that

14 served in Iraq, and the unacceptable  
15 treatment that they are getting from our  
16 city, and I hope the people out there never  
17 forget either. I'm still waiting for that  
18 answer. Thank you.

19 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Anyone  
20 else? I'd just like to make a few comments  
21 before I adjourn the meeting.

22 Many of you keep asking the same  
23 questions over and over and over, and I just  
24 need to tell you that you can write a letter  
25 yourself. You can write and request

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1 information under The Freedom of Information  
2 Act. You are much more powerful than you  
3 think you are. They must respond to those  
4 requests.

5 The Freedom of Information Act is  
6 being made stronger in the federal  
7 government. I've been reading about it.

8 So, I know we ask questions for you,  
9 but you can also ask questions for yourself.  
10 And you need to know that we don't

11 just answer the questions for the 20 or 25  
12 people that come here every week, we get  
13 E-mails, we get phone calls, I go to visit  
14 people's homes to see their problems.  
15 So, sometimes your question might  
16 not get answered right away, only because  
17 there are other people.  
18 Not to discredit you that you're not  
19 important, you're all important, but you're  
20 not the only people that come to us and ask  
21 us questions.  
22 So, just be a little patient if  
23 we're not back to you in the next week with  
24 your answer, because there are a lot of  
25 people that call and a lot of E-mails.  
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1 Also, Mrs. Krake, if you can give us  
2 a copy of those ordinances, we would  
3 certainly take a look at them, of those  
4 ordinances that you were referring to.  
5 Well, if you can give her the number of the  
6 ordinance and Kay can get copies for us for  
7 next week.

8 MS. GATELLI: And as far as the tax  
9 increase, yes, I did vote for a tax increase  
10 for the City of Scranton. It was the second  
11 tax increase in 17 years.  
12 I do believe that it was going to  
13 help us and help us for the future. I do  
14 not want my city to go bankrupt.  
15 If you go for bankruptcy, the first  
16 thing they tell you is to raise the taxes.  
17 So, I didn't do it to hurt the citizens of  
18 this community, I did it, because in my  
19 mind, it's going to help and it's going to  
20 help us out in the future. It is the second  
21 tax increase in 17 years, once under Connors  
22 and once under Doherty.  
23 I don't intend to ever vote for it  
24 again as long as I sit up here. It was a  
25 one time shot, and it's over. I gave the  
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1 mayor the benefit of doubt, and I want to  
2 see him cut, and he did take some cuts in  
3 his administration, as I asked.  
4 And I will work for the citizens of

5 this community, and I will not vote for  
6 another tax increase as long as I sit up  
7 here. I make you that promise right now.  
8 But I did it in good faith, and I  
9 know every week my name gets mentioned, yes,  
10 I did raise your taxes, because I think the  
11 city is the only taxing body that provides  
12 you with services. The other taxing bodies  
13 don't.  
14 And I think we need to pay for that,  
15 and I think we need to pay for our police  
16 and firemen, and I think they need a raise,  
17 and I will continue to advocate for that  
18 with the mayor.  
19 We need to pay for services. We  
20 provide the services to the citizens, not  
21 the other two taxing bodies, who, by the  
22 way, raise your taxes every year, and I  
23 don't see any of you at those meetings.  
24 So, I find it ludicrous that you  
25 come here every week and say my name, and I  
.  
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I don't see you at any other meeting fighting

2 tax increases.

3 You should be everywhere, and you

4 should be where they raise them every single

5 year. With nobody in the audience, how

6 could that be? It makes me wonder why you

7 come here and you don't go there.

8 And that is how I feel, and I

9 promise I will never raise your taxes again

10 as long as I'm sitting here, but I felt that

11 it was necessary to try to get us on the

12 right path. Thank you very much. Anyone

13 else? Can I have a motion to adjourn.

14 MR. COURTRIGHT: So moved.

15 MS. FANUCCI: Second.

16 (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.

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LISA M. GRAFF, RMR

11 Official Court Reporter

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