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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

HELD:

Tuesday, February 19, 2008

LOCATION:

Council Chambers  
Scranton City Hall  
340 North Washington Avenue  
Scranton, Pennsylvania

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI- COURT REPORTER

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CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

MR. ROBERT MCGOFF, PRESIDENT

MS. JUDY GATELLI, VICE-PRESIDENT

MS. JANET E. EVANS

MS. SHERRY FANUCCI

MR. WILLIAM COURTRIGHT

MS. KAY GARVEY, CITY CLERK

MR. NEIL COOLICAN, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

MR. AMIL MINORA, SOLICITOR

1 MR. MCGOFF: I'd like to dispense  
2 with the reading of the minutes.

3 MS. GARVEY: Third order, 3-A,  
4 INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT FOR THE YEAR  
5 ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2006.

6 MR. MCGOFF: Are there any comments?  
7 If not, received and filed.

8 MS. GARVEY: 3-B. APPLICATIONS AND  
9 DECISIONS RENDERED BY THE ZONING BOARD  
10 MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 13, 2008.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Are there any comments?  
12 If not, received and filed.

13 MS. GARVEY: That's it for third  
14 order.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Before citizens'  
16 participation is there any council members  
17 that have any announcements?

18 MS. GATELLI: I just have a few. I  
19 just have an announcement that this weekend  
20 is a very big one for the cultural center.  
21 They are going to have the Broadway  
22 production "Rent" at the Temple this weekend  
23 on Friday, Saturday and Sunday if anyone is  
24 interested in going and, also, I would like  
25 to congratulate a student of West Scranton

1 High School, I don't know if you saw her  
2 this morning, but she won the "Teen Fight  
3 Fat Challenge," and she going to be on  
4 Montel Williams tomorrow. Her name is  
5 Kaitlyn Watkins and she is a sophomore and  
6 we'd like to congratulate Kaitlyn for such a  
7 great accomplishment.

8 And the only other thing I have is I  
9 have been talking to PennDOT about things  
10 that Bill had asked me about to put in the  
11 roadway. It's like a cone and it has a  
12 picture of a person walking and I'm in the  
13 process of trying to get them for Davis  
14 Street. I spoke to the girl today and the  
15 only problem with it is that we have to find  
16 someone that is willing to put the cones out  
17 and take them back in. They are not allowed  
18 to stay out at night, and I think that they  
19 just want them back there for mass, so I'm  
20 going to call the pastor tomorrow and, Bill,  
21 if you know anybody that is interested in,  
22 you know, doing that they would have to take  
23 responsibility for putting them out say  
24 before mass and then taking them in.

25 MR. COURTRIGHT: I'll ask, I think

1                   it was the people from the church that had  
2                   the concern, so I'll ask the people from the  
3                   church if someone would be able to do that.

4                   MS. GATELLI: And then you can call  
5                   me and we'll arrange to get them for you.

6                   MR. COURTRIGHT: All right.

7                   MS. GATELLI: And anyone else that is  
8                   interested in them, you know, they are to  
9                   help pedestrians cross in a crosswalk area  
10                  that's very busy, so anyone that's  
11                  interested just tell Mrs. Garvey and you can  
12                  call council office and we can see if we  
13                  can't get them for your particular  
14                  neighborhood, and that's all I have,  
15                  Mr. McGoff.

16                  MR. MCGOFF: Let me add one thing I  
17                  wanted to mention last week, but we  
18                  cancelled, the Black History Month dinner  
19                  will be held at Lackawanna College on  
20                  February 28. I'm not sure if they're still  
21                  accepting reservations for that, but it will  
22                  be held and the keynote speaker is Mr. Stacy  
23                  Brown, who is with us tonight.

24                  MS. EVANS: Mr. President, if I  
25                  might? I would like to commend Marie and

1 Dick Lasky for organizing, once again, the  
2 annual Lithuanian flag raising which was  
3 conducted this past Saturday here at city  
4 hall. They did an outstanding job and I  
5 wish them many, many more years of such an  
6 event and great success.

7 MR. MCGOFF: If that's all, the first  
8 speaker, Fay Franus.

9 MS. FRANUS: Fay Franus, Scranton.  
10 First I'd like to ask Mr. McGoff, why wasn't  
11 there a meeting last Friday after it was  
12 cancelled on Tuesday?

13 MR. MCGOFF: The first reason it was  
14 that I could not attend the meeting.

15 MS. FRANUS: Pardon me?

16 MR. MCGOFF: I could not attend a  
17 meeting on Friday night, I had prior  
18 commitments; and the second reason was that  
19 there was nothing on the agenda that seemed  
20 to have any time sensitive -- there was  
21 nothing that was time sensitive on the  
22 agenda, so I didn't think that it was  
23 necessary to reschedule.

24 MS. FRANUS: All right. Those trees  
25 in South Side, let me ask you, do you know

7

1 who is going to get the contract for that by

2 any chance?

3 MR. MCGOFF: Offhand I don't know.

4 MS. FRANUS: Anybody if they know.

5 MS. GATELLI: I don't know if they  
6 bid it out, but if you want you can call the  
7 forester, Anthony Santolli, he might be able  
8 to answer.

9 MS. FRANUS: I know Anthony.

10 MS. GATELLI: He is on Prescott  
11 Avenue.

12 MS. FRANUS: Okay, and he is a nice  
13 man. I also want to say that I contacted  
14 Jeff Brazil about the -- him picking up  
15 those paintings on Mulberry -- on Linden  
16 Street at that fire. He told me he was  
17 there all the time and that he is a public  
18 servant and that's his job. He said if  
19 anybody needs help that's what he is there  
20 for, so I suggest this, anybody in the city  
21 if you need any help moving anything, like  
22 he said, she had paintings out in the street  
23 and she needed help and he said he would do  
24 this any day of the week he said that's why  
25 he is there, that's the kind of person he

8

1 is, if someone needs help he will help them,

2 which is fine. But then I say to everybody  
3 in the City of Scranton, call Jeff Brazil,  
4 348-4180 and say, "I need help. Come over  
5 with your trucks and help me move some  
6 stuff. "

7 What's good for one is good for all.  
8 Now, Mr. McGoff, with your rules about  
9 answering questions in motions, that little  
10 thing failed. Your rules, your new rules  
11 about council members answering people in  
12 motions, maybe you should start taking  
13 account of all the questions that people ask  
14 here that don't get answered in motions  
15 after they ask for them to be answered in  
16 motions. I asked Mr. McGoff two weeks ago  
17 to answer me, he refused, he didn't answer  
18 me, whether he forgot or whatever, but I'm  
19 asking you, why was Mr. Courtright's seat  
20 changed, Mr. McGoff?

21 MS. GATELLI: Can I answer that  
22 question?

23 MS. FRANUS: Yes, please.

24 MS. GATELLI: This is the seat of the  
25 vice-president. Whoever is the

1 vice-president of the zoning board, the  
2 planning commission, whatever board there



3 is, the vice-president always sits to the  
4 left of the president, so that's why this  
5 chair was moved. No other reason.

6 MS. FRANUS: Okay.

7 MR. COURTRIGHT: I disagree. I sat  
8 there are two years and I wasn't the  
9 vice-president and I specifically asked  
10 Mr. McGoff why he moved my seat and  
11 Mr. McGoff said because you asked him to  
12 move my seat.

13 MS. GATELLI: Because the  
14 vice-president as far as I knew always sat  
15 to the left of the president. The zoning,  
16 the planning --

17 MR. COURTRIGHT: My opinion is that  
18 that you are lying.

19 MS. GATELLI: Pardon me?

20 MR. COURTRIGHT: I truly believe you  
21 are lying. I have my own reasons why I  
22 think you are sitting there, but --

23 MS. GATELLI: It is the privilege of  
24 the vice-president to vote second to the  
25 president.

10

1 MR. COURTRIGHT: Who said anything  
2 about voting?

3 MS. GATELLI: I just said it about  
4 voting. That is why the vice-president sits  
5 next to the president.

6 MS. EVANS: If I can maybe interject.  
7 Well, I just wanted to --

8 MS. FRANUS: It's my time.

9 MS. EVANS: Please don't use her  
10 time. I served in the Office of the  
11 vice-president under Mr. DiBileo, I was  
12 seated where Mr. Courtright now sits, I  
13 voted second, not second to last.

14 MS. GATELLI: Well, good for you.

15 MR. COURTRIGHT: Are you trying to  
16 hide your vote?

17 MS. GATELLI: Well, the zoning --

18 MR. COURTRIGHT: Are you trying to  
19 hide your vote?

20 MS. EVANS: We are not zoning.

21 MS. GATELLI: I'm hiding my vote,  
22 Bill.

23 MR. COURTRIGHT: I think so. I  
24 think you are trying to do something  
25 underhanded.

11

1 MS. GATELLI: Yeah, I am.

2 MR. COURTRIGHT: That's my opinion  
3 and I think everybody here agrees.

4 MS. GATELLI: Yeah, they agree, Bill.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Here --

6 MS. GATELLI: The tax collector is  
7 getting to you, isn't it?

8 MR. MCGOFF: Again -- okay,  
9 that's out of order.

10 MS. GATELLI: Really.

11 MR. MCGOFF: It's out of order. I'm  
12 sorry, Mrs. Franus.

13 MS. FRANUS: Pardon me?

14 (Whereupon the audience makes  
15 several comments.)

16 MR. MCGOFF: Excuse me.

17 MS. FRANUS: Let's get back to  
18 everyday life here. Another thing,  
19 Mr. McGoff, you stated two weeks ago that  
20 you didn't think there was anything wrong  
21 with text messaging, well, I beg to differ.  
22 I'm a taxpayer as everybody else in this  
23 city and we are paying all of you up there  
24 not to text message, it's a public meeting,  
25 you are paid to be at council. If you are

12

1 not prepared enough, Mrs. Fanucci, to come  
2 to council without text messaging someone  
3 with possibly the answers or -- well, I

4 don't know why you are laughing, I'm very  
5 serious.

6 MS. FANUCCI: Then don't say silly  
7 things, but I was text messaging my daughter  
8 goodnight, I will continue to do that for  
9 every meeting until I am finished on my  
10 term.

11 MS. FRANUS: Wait, just because you  
12 say it that doesn't mean you should.

13 MS. FANUCCI: I will do that. It  
14 doesn't mean I shouldn't do it, but I don't  
15 think my 11-year-old gave me what to vote  
16 on, but I'll ask her next time.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Thank you,  
18 Mrs. Franus.

19 MS. FRANUS: Is that my time or is  
20 that extended time or was that -- -

21 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

22 MS. FRANUS: Which is what?

23 MR. MCGOFF: Excuse me?

24 MS. FRANUS: Which is what?

25 MR. MCGOFF: That was the five-minute

13

1 time.

2 MS. FRANUS: But Mrs. Evans asked  
3 that it be extended because you took up my  
4 time.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Our rules say that we  
6 are not going to do that.

7 MS. FRANUS: Mrs. Evans asked for  
8 if, are you trying to say what she is saying  
9 doesn't matter? You people up there spoke--

10 MR. MCGOFF: I'm saying we are  
11 following the Rules of Council. Thank you.

12 MS. FRANUS: I was speaking and you  
13 all up there continued to speak and I even  
14 said my time and Mrs. Evans asked for it to  
15 be stopped, so you are breaking your own  
16 rules. You are breaking your own rules. I  
17 could have said point of order, but I chose  
18 not to because I gave you the respect that  
19 I'm asking for, but I'm not getting it.

20 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mrs. Franus.

21 MS. FRANUS: Wait one second, I want  
22 to see what's here. Oh, if you are going to  
23 vote on the taxes --

24 MR. MCGOFF: Excuse me.

25 MS. FRANUS: Excuse you.

14

1 MR. MCGOFF: You asked questions and  
2 you got answers and that used your time.  
3 I'm sorry that you didn't want those  
4 responses.

5 MS. FRANUS: I also asked, wait a  
6 minute, I want to talk and that's when  
7 Mrs. Evans said --

8 MR. MCGOFF: The next speaker is  
9 Jack Powell.

10 MS. FRANUS: Please follow your own  
11 rules from now on, please, and thank you,  
12 Mr. Courtright and Mrs. Evans, for answering  
13 me.

14 MR. POWELL: Hello. My name is a  
15 Jack Powell, I live on Luzerne Street next  
16 to Mr. Skantos' development. Over the last  
17 period of weeks I have heard about  
18 Mr. Skantos and his development and we have  
19 some issues with Mr. Skantos ourselves.  
20 When Mr. Skantos first came to us and bought  
21 the property there was -- it was an R-1  
22 property. He came to us and he asked that  
23 it can be changed for his benefit which  
24 monetarily it was, so he asked if it could  
25 be changed from R-1 to different

15

1 stipulations and variances and zoning  
2 change. He had several meetings with us and  
3 doing the course of the meetings we were  
4 concerned about different areas such as  
5 buffer zones, tree lines, which we

6 stipulated to we weren't going forward,  
7 myself, the Keyser Valley Neighborhood  
8 Association, Mary Alice Burke, all of the  
9 officers.

10 So we went to Mr. Skantos and said  
11 if he went by these rules that we wouldn't  
12 contest his variances. We did it at the  
13 Keyser Valley Community Center, which was  
14 full. We did it at the different meetings  
15 down here planning, zoning, and he agreed to  
16 them along with the person that was doing  
17 the plans for the arrangement.

18 Well, in turn, a period of years had  
19 gone by and I see Mr. Skantos is up here and  
20 he wants you to take his word for this and  
21 that, well, we saw it during the course of  
22 the summer a man out of there with a set of  
23 plans where at Keyser and Luzerne was always  
24 to be kept when he moved his trailer out as  
25 a green or buffer zone. Well, lo and behold

16

1 there is set of plans with three buildings,  
2 six units on this little property. I called  
3 Mr. Wallace up at zoning, spoke with him, I  
4 didn't hear anything further. I went down  
5 to see for myself and I met the two young

6 ladies upstairs, Miss Nole, and there was a  
7 Pat Jennings there and they went to look for  
8 the items I was looking for like pertaining  
9 to Mr. Skantos' properties. He in turn,  
10 they opened up the folder, there was nothing  
11 there but a scrap of paper. Mr. King came  
12 out of the back and asked what I was looking  
13 for, he came out with a set of plans, on  
14 that corner there was no buildings, nothing.  
15 I explained what we are concerned about that  
16 this was a buffer zone, he told me, told me  
17 that he could not build there. The only  
18 thing that could be built it was to remain  
19 and he had to go by the original plans, that  
20 was fine. I went back and told all of the  
21 neighbors. I was sort of their  
22 spokesperson. Everybody was satisfied with  
23 that.

24 I get a call about an hour before  
25 planning meeting, by the time I get here

17

1 there a presentation going on and Mr. King  
2 is there and Mr. King informed the planning  
3 commission of these buildings. I was  
4 assuming it was the last legal building to  
5 be built, which is the brown building of the  
6 picture that you see, and I was more



7 concerned at that time that they were going  
8 to make it rentals. Mr. King had told me,  
9 if he gets the buildings there and he wants  
10 to rent them we can't stop him from renting  
11 them, you are stuck with what you have, I  
12 said that's fine.

13 So, I went down and in the mean time  
14 they passed this motion. Well, they gave me  
15 a set of plans after the meeting, it had  
16 three buildings, six units and was not the  
17 plan that I was given up in zoning. It was  
18 totally different. I went up and met with  
19 Mr. King afterwards and I asked him about  
20 being told this and I said to him, I said,  
21 what about Mr. Skantos agreeing with him.  
22 He said, well, he had to do it at a  
23 stipulated meeting not your meeting because  
24 he could tell you anything he wants. Well,  
25 with that I'm a little upset, so we left.

18

1 But I went to talk to Mary Alice and I told  
2 her about the meeting we were at she said we  
3 got to have a regular meeting. Well, since  
4 that meeting that I had here with the  
5 planning commission I have been trying to  
6 get minutes, two months, none.



8 picture there is arborvitaes planted all  
9 along the back, that was another condition  
10 of the agreement along with keeping it the  
11 buffer was those arborvitaes were planted  
12 and as you can see he started. Thank you.

13 MR. COURTRIGHT: Mr. Powell, I have a  
14 list of complaints for lack of a better of  
15 word that I met with the people back in your  
16 development about a week and a half ago, we  
17 were there for a couple of hours and when  
18 it's my turn to speak we are going to try to  
19 setup a meeting both for their concerns and  
20 also your concerns and we are going to try  
21 to have a representative of the city that  
22 would be much more versed in those type of  
23 things than we are, so I'll speak on it when  
24 it's my turn to speak if you don't mind.

25 MR. POWELL: Very good. Thank you.

20

1 MS. EVANS: And we'll oversee it,  
2 Mr. Powell.

3 MR. POWELL: Thank you.

4 MS. EVANS: We will keep our eye on  
5 it as well.

6 MR. POWELL: Mary Alice said any time  
7 you need her or any of the officers that

8 were there and if we need Keyser Valley  
9 Community Center --

10 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yeah, I spoke to  
11 Mary Alice already.

12 MR. POWELL: Okay. Thank you.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Bill Jackowitz.

14 MR. JACKOWITZ: Good evening, city  
15 council, Mr. President. Bill Jackowitz,  
16 South Scranton. Pennsylvania taxpayers have  
17 a right to know how the Commonwealth spends  
18 their hard-earned tax dollars. Do Scranton  
19 taxpayers have that same right? Community.  
20 The first part of community means  
21 communication. The second part of community  
22 is unity. We have none in Scranton thanks  
23 to our politicians.

24 19th February 2008 could be the  
25 night that Scranton City Council steps up to

21

1 the plate and hits a home run for the  
2 residents of Scranton, Pennsylvania. The  
3 latest economic developments again proves  
4 that the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre area is in  
5 financial ruins. The residents are  
6 suffering through no fault of their own.  
7 Proof: The unemployment went up again  
8 7/10ths of a percent in the month of

9 December 2007. It's up to 5.3 percent,  
10 higher than the state and national average.  
11 I provided each one of you with this  
12 information, I hope you review it and look  
13 at it.

14 The nest egg index, I also provided  
15 with you a nest egg index, ranks  
16 metropolitan areas on their resident's  
17 saving and investment habits.  
18 Scranton/Wilkes-Barre is ranked 455 out of  
19 500. That is 45 away from the bottom. This  
20 should be an embarrassment to all of the  
21 elected officials in the area and especially  
22 the Chamber of Commerce. The reason it fell  
23 72 positions in ranking from 2006 to 2007  
24 Scranton went from 383 to 455 in one year,  
25 but yet we are told on a weekly basis by our

22

1 economic development chairperson in the  
2 mayor that the area is improving. We have  
3 no empty store fronts, we have a beautiful  
4 park system, the business will come or have  
5 already come. If that is not misleading  
6 then I will never know what misleading is.  
7 You do not have to be a rocket scientist to  
8 know that low wages means no savings. If

9                   you make no money, you can't save any money  
10                   and it's proven by that report. I hope all  
11                   five of you look at it and take it to heart  
12                   because it's true and real.

13                   The reason cited for the miserable  
14                   conditions are relatively low wages,  
15                   above-average unemployment, and a cultural  
16                   resistance to thrift. This reinforces a  
17                   negative image that the community already  
18                   has of itself. It is not the community's  
19                   fault, I believe that is the elected  
20                   officials and appointed political officials  
21                   and the Chamber of Commerce who are  
22                   responsible for this. They lack the  
23                   leadership abilities to lead and I provided  
24                   you with that proof tonight.

25                   Salaries here trail pay levels in

23

1                   other northeastern and national markets  
2                   which reduce savings potential. Out per  
3                   capita income is lower in the region, the  
4                   area jobless rate typically runs higher than  
5                   the state and national averages. People are  
6                   going from paycheck to paycheck and they may  
7                   be two or three paychecks away from  
8                   financial ruin. Many citizens in the region  
9                   are tapping their savings for living

10 expenses. Senior citizens are withdrawing  
11 money to live on. I ask city council to  
12 step up and rescind the ordinance that  
13 attaches high fees and penalties on the  
14 residents who fall behind on their taxes.  
15 If you want to punish the slum landlords  
16 then come up with a plan to do just that,  
17 but do not punish the hardworking or the  
18 retired residents of Scranton. Enough is  
19 enough. Put this up for vote tonight and  
20 show the residents that you really are on  
21 their side. Actions speak louder than  
22 words.

23 You may not like or respect some of  
24 the speakers, but this time the speakers are  
25 100 percent correct and three council

24

1 members are 100 percent incorrect. Do the  
2 right thing. Get rid of this ordinance  
3 tonight. Mr. President, I would never ask  
4 you to fetch and retrieve anything for me.  
5 I do my own research. My questions,  
6 Mr. President, when all avenues fail and  
7 before the taxpayer must reach in their  
8 pockets should you as an elected official  
9 step in and assist. You are one record as

10 saying that you can speak to the mayor and  
11 get answers. Councilwoman Fanucci is on  
12 record saying that she meets with the  
13 Chamber of Commerce. She is also on record  
14 stating that Mr. Burke would attend a  
15 council meeting during the month of  
16 September 2006, where is he? Doe he know  
17 where city hall is located at?

18 I always provided provide council  
19 members with copies of my research. My  
20 intent is to help council and keep the  
21 residents truly informed, not to mislead  
22 you. Take the vote tonight, invite  
23 Mr. Austin Burke and the mayor and Chamber  
24 of Commerce to address the council in the  
25 city residents at a public meeting and let

25

1 them know how terrible the economy really is  
2 here. Everything revolves around the  
3 economy and if you don't believe that then  
4 you need to go back to school because that's  
5 the way it is. The economy runs the  
6 government and it runs the city and it runs  
7 the community and, like I said, we have no  
8 communication, there is no unity whatsoever  
9 in this community. You all were elected to  
10 work for the residents, not yourself, family



11 and friends, get your family members and  
12 friends jobs is not what you are here for.  
13 Do the right thing, get rid of the silly  
14 ordinance tonight.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you,  
16 Mr. Jackowitz. Andy Sbaraglia.

17 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,  
18 citizen of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians, I  
19 don't really care where you sit up there.  
20 To me it doesn't matter, but what's in these  
21 things that's the things that matter.

22 And let us go. We see that we are--  
23 you are 5-B we are looking to get -- we  
24 pulled from housing emergency shelter and so  
25 forth and so on over a half a million

26

1 dollars for Skyview and we go and we go to  
2 "E", well, this may be a loan because it  
3 says loan agreement, but I don't know, I  
4 didn't read the thing in-depth to see if  
5 there was a forgiveness clause in it, too,  
6 which there could be.

7 5-F, another \$150,000 for Skyview.  
8 How much taxes does Skyview give us? Does  
9 anyone know how much money we get from taxes  
10 there? Probably not a penny. Probably a

11 nonprofit, but yet we are taking money from  
12 people who want to build homes. There may  
13 be other people that need a roof over their  
14 head and according to Skyview, well, true  
15 you are giving them a roof over their head,  
16 but it's a man who if you looked at the  
17 original deal once we sold Skyview that's, I  
18 didn't recognize, I saw myself fall for  
19 that, I didn't realize we owned Skyview. I  
20 always thought the Scranton Housing owned  
21 it, but apparently Scranton owns it  
22 themselves, just like some of the other  
23 things and they sold it, but when they sold  
24 it they put in for grants for this man and  
25 it comes through, I think he got \$6 million

27

1 or so, big headlines in the paper, big city  
2 developer, biggest in the world. I mean, it  
3 was really laid out in the times, how much  
4 money they got and so forth and so on, but  
5 it comes down to the point we are taking  
6 money, pour it into other places, I don't  
7 know how rundown Skyview was, I really  
8 don't, but for the amount of money we are  
9 taking from other projects I don't know if  
10 could be better spent.

11 I believe that people should build

12 homes in Scranton. I do, even all of them  
13 KOZ homes, I didn't fight them. I didn't  
14 come up and run before the whole council and  
15 say, "Don't do this, don't do that," because  
16 them homes are going to stay and eventually  
17 we are going to get some money out of it.  
18 They may bleed us for awhile, but eventually  
19 we are going to bleed them and we are going  
20 to bleed them good because they are all new  
21 homes.

22 Now, whether they can afford to keep  
23 them I don't know, but eventually we are  
24 going to sock it to them, but Skyview we are  
25 taking almost \$1 million from Skyview out of

28

1 these pieces of legislation, either in loans  
2 or grants. Loans I don't mind, I don't  
3 favor grants especially when they are partly  
4 owned.

5 Okay, let's look for our old friend  
6 parking authority is looking for a million  
7 bucks, I guess you turned down the garage.  
8 I don't know why they borrowed 32 million or  
9 up to 35 million, I thought that was all  
10 incorporated into it, but now apparently it  
11 isn't incorporated into it and they need

12 more money, but when it comes to the parking  
13 authority the truth is I don't think they  
14 are sound. I really don't believe they are  
15 sound, and if you read the legislation when  
16 they borrowed the 30 million, they set up  
17 the slush fund to cover the money apparently  
18 so they say until this generates money, but  
19 believe me it's not going to generate money.  
20 It's going to collapse and it's going to  
21 collapse on the people of Scranton. You  
22 can't just build parking garages after  
23 parking garages and not figure somewhere  
24 along the line these things got to be  
25 repaired. We got more people that we have

29

1 to hire to man them. We got more expense  
2 for medical and for pensions all added on to  
3 the costs. How long do you think this is  
4 going to last before it collapses entirely  
5 or until they have to charge \$1,000 a month  
6 to rent a parking space there. I think they  
7 are up to 85 up there already and climbing  
8 and the reason they have to do that is  
9 because they are not solvent and, believe  
10 me, that was space you give to the Hilton,  
11 it's hurting. Hurting very, very bad. If  
12 you ever figured out how much 120 spaces are

13 worth at \$85 a month and how much money they  
14 are losing in income for the Hilton we'll  
15 never get it back. I don't care even when  
16 that things goes on the tax rolls we are not  
17 going to get it back, it's going to be a  
18 white elephant to us and it's going to sink  
19 us more and more until the police and  
20 parking authority into the hole. I mean,  
21 the building is there. It's there. I mean,  
22 unless we have to fix it up again or  
23 something in 20 years it's just a building  
24 that's going to be there.

25 Now, we get to the Connell building.

30

1 I was told that he wanted to take -- okay.  
2 I won't talk anymore on that. Thank you.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you,  
4 Mr. Sbaraglia. Ozzie Quinn.

5 MR. QUINN: Ozzie Quinn, Taxpayers'  
6 Association. 5-D, Growing Greener. That is  
7 a transfer of one million out of the five  
8 million or that is an additional grant we  
9 are looking for one million? Do you know,  
10 Ms. Fanucci? It's under your -- pardon?

11 MS. FANUCCI: Would you like me to  
12 answer that now?

13 MR. QUINN: Yeah, right now, five  
14 words. One word. Is it a grant or is not a  
15 grant? Is it a grant from the Connell or  
16 not?

17 MS. FANUCCI: It is transfer of the  
18 Growing Greener money that we have received.

19 MR. QUINN: Okay. You answered me.  
20 Now, do you know you don't have to have a  
21 match, but there is a -- you have to  
22 demonstrate a match for that \$1 million and  
23 that's why I'm getting at. I still haven't  
24 gotten that information I asked off  
25 Mr. McGoff last week. I sent a letter the

31

1 day after, it's 13 days from Mrs. Aebli,  
2 under the Right to Know Act I sent it, she  
3 has five working days to answer, she never  
4 answered. So, this is going on three months  
5 and that's why I want know this information  
6 what's going on with this UDAG money and  
7 with these community development block grant  
8 monies because the mayor has a little nest  
9 egg someplace, all right, and he is using it  
10 because this Growing Greener you have to  
11 have demonstrate a matching grant and that's  
12 coming out of the people's money. I want to  
13 know this money can go back into the

14 neighborhood and help these people who are  
15 suffering with taxes. Never mind what Mrs.  
16 Fanucci says about that you can't go back  
17 for seven years, that is nothing but a lie.  
18 That is -- the federal regulations say you  
19 can go back year after year after year.  
20 That might be a local policy, but it's not a  
21 federal and she inferred to me that I'm  
22 going back to the 1980's, no, this is 2008,  
23 and also do you know in 2008, Mrs. Fanucci,  
24 that you can help low income people from not  
25 being foreclosed upon with CDBG funds? Are

32

1 you aware of that?

2 Well, I want to tell you something,  
3 okay, I have the last HUD monitoring report,  
4 the last HUD monitoring report. Now, look  
5 at here, in CDBG you see \$4,876,758, okay.  
6 Of that, we spent \$1,627,457 and change,  
7 which is 37 percent rounded out to  
8 37 percent of our total CDBG, 37 percent,  
9 okay? Do you know how many jobs we created?  
10 Four. What does that even come out? Divide  
11 it. What's the math? One million, what  
12 does it amount to, \$400,000 for one job? We  
13 don't even know if that job is still there,

14 we don't know how much that job was paying,  
15 we don't know anything about that job. Four  
16 jobs and over a million dollars spent, come  
17 on, we got to start looking into this stuff.

18 Do you know how much we spent on  
19 housing? We spent -- the lowest  
20 1.7 percent, the lowest, and I know that you  
21 can use CDBG funds and irregardless of what  
22 Mrs Fanucci says all funds can be coupled  
23 which they are throughout the nation. Sixty  
24 percent of your retirement funds throughout  
25 he nation falls from CDBG for housing

33

1 rehabilitation. Don't listen to these false  
2 things that she is throwing at you. She  
3 doesn't know what's going on, I'm telling  
4 you.

5 And the problem is, the third  
6 highest thing coming out of the OECD is for  
7 administration for paying all of these  
8 people that the mayor is hiring. That's  
9 where our tax money is he going. If this  
10 money can be used, as Mrs. Evans said, out  
11 into these neighborhoods to prepare we  
12 wouldn't have to go borrowing again for this  
13 matching fund. Don't laugh at me, Mrs.  
14 Fanucci.



15 MS. FANUCCI: I certainly didn't.

16 MR. QUINN: She is out of order, and  
17 I'll tell you something, if we could use  
18 this money instead of going ahead --

19 MS. KNIGHT: Mr. McGoff, she is out  
20 of order.

21 MR. MCGOFF: Excuse me.

22 MS. KNIGHT: Correct her.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Excuse me. Be quiet.  
24 I'm sorry, Mr. Quinn.

25 MR. QUINN: Stop the clock, okay,

34

1 please.

2 MR. MCGOFF: And I will. Please  
3 refrain from doing that.

4 MR. QUINN: Unequivocally I want to  
5 say right now I'm not angry, I'm passionate  
6 about this city and I'm passionate of what's  
7 going on in here with this CDBG program and  
8 with this here setting up a resolution  
9 transfer of one million, it doesn't say  
10 transferring. One million dollars and it  
11 doesn't say that we should have to show a  
12 demonstration match. And where is that  
13 coming from, this money that you couldn't  
14 get Mrs. Gatelli and you couldn't get

15 Mrs. McGoff and you didn't -- you couldn't  
16 pinch hit for me and you wouldn't know  
17 sitting over there and sent me up a blind  
18 alley and now all us taxpayers are the ones  
19 that area a suffering. It's too late.  
20 Well, all us taxpayers cannot go spending  
21 this money, and this money for these silly  
22 things when it can be going onto fix  
23 people's homes through the city and fix some  
24 of these streets, you go through these  
25 neighborhoods there is no more curbs. No

35

1 more curbs. It's a shame. It's terrible.  
2 Forget about the downtown, our people are  
3 living in a neighborhoods. They are the  
4 people who paying the taxes, let's go. Now,  
5 when you are paying \$400,000 for one job  
6 that's ridiculous and you don't even know  
7 how much that job is paying or if it's still  
8 here. What are you doing? You are the ones  
9 that passed this and now you passed 2008.  
10 Come on, look out for the taxpayers once in  
11 awhile. Thank you.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Quinn.  
13 Les Spindler.

14 MR. SPINDLER: Good evening, Council,  
15 Les Spindler, city resident. First off,

16 Mr. McGoff, you cannot pick and choose who  
17 you let talk five minutes or longer than  
18 five minutes. At the last meeting two weeks  
19 ago you let Mr. Skantos stay there for well  
20 over five minutes, it was probably closer to  
21 ten minutes and you didn't tell him to step  
22 down, you gave him all that time. You can't  
23 pick and choose, that's discrimination. If  
24 you let one person do it you will have to  
25 let every person do it.

36

1 Now, Mrs. Fanucci, the last meeting  
2 you said when you laughed there is something  
3 blatantly obvious. Well, at that meeting  
4 Mr. Ungarvsky said an 85-year-old woman lost  
5 her house and you laughed. Do you think  
6 that's funny about an 85-year-old woman  
7 losing her house? I don't care if the city  
8 took it, the state took it, the county took  
9 it, it's not funny that an 85-year-old woman  
10 lost her house.

11 MS. FANUCCI: You are darn right it's  
12 not.

13 MR. SPINDLER: If you think that --  
14 I'm talking, keep quiet. Keep her under  
15 control, will you, Mr. McGoff? Keep her

16 under control, I have the podium.

17 MR. JACKOWITZ: She did laugh.

18 MS. KNIGHT: She's laughing all the  
19 way --

20 MR. SPINDLER: She laughed and if  
21 that's her sense of humor she has a sick  
22 sense of humor thinking an 85-year-old woman  
23 is funny when she losses her house. She  
24 acts like a five year old. That's blatantly  
25 obvious.

37

1 MR. MCGOFF: Excuse me, if you are  
2 going to make accusations then you are going  
3 to have to expect a response.

4 MR. SPINDLER: It's on the tape.  
5 The laughing is on the tape.

6 MR. MCGOFF: I said, if you are going  
7 to make accusations you are going to have to  
8 expect a response.

9 MR. SPINDLER: It's not an  
10 accusation, it's a fact. Don't waste my  
11 time, please. Now, Mr. McGoff, as a  
12 representative of the taxpayers of this city  
13 you obligated to ask for an investigation of  
14 city workers using city vehicles at  
15 taxpayers' expense doing private work and  
16 that's what Mr. Brazil did at that fire and

17                   you also said Mr. Brazil acted in good faith  
18                   in an attempt to help a business that was in  
19                   jeopardy. You were told by the assistant  
20                   chief, Mr. McGoff, that that building was  
21                   not in jeopardy. You and Mr. Courtright  
22                   with there and I was standing right by you.  
23                   There is no denying that, so I think there  
24                   should be an investigation into that, that  
25                   that is similar to a warden having prisoners

38

1                   do work at his house and we know what  
2                   happened there.

3                   Another thing, Mr. McGoff, you took  
4                   offense to Mr. Morgan's condemnation of  
5                   basketball coaches. Well, I think you  
6                   should pay attention these meetings more.  
7                   All Mr. Morgan said that he was a basketball  
8                   coach. Mr. Seitzinger, is a basketball  
9                   coach. He never said anything condemning  
10                  about it, all he -- the point that he was  
11                  trying to make was that he wasn't qualified  
12                  to be the head of licenses, inspections and  
13                  permits. He never condemned basketball  
14                  coaches, so please pay attention.

15                  Next, everyone knows 93 percent of  
16                  the firefighters took a vote, 91 percent of

17           them voted to have the chief fired, but the  
18           mayor said it was politically motivated.  
19           These people are looking out for their own  
20           safety. They were ordered to do things that  
21           they were fearful of their safety and the  
22           mayor says this man will be chief as long as  
23           he is the mayor. Well, all this mayor cares  
24           about is Chief Davis bringing in votes. He  
25           doesn't care about the safety of these

39

1           firefighters and Chief Davis should be fired  
2           immediately.

3                     The headline in Saturday's Doherty  
4           newsletter, "City Draws Corporate  
5           Headquarters." Well, the company that's  
6           going into that building, we lost a business  
7           from that building that was here for  
8           16 years, so we are not gaining a business,  
9           we are just replacing a business and the  
10          Scranton Times doesn't talk about the 20  
11          businesses that left the city this past  
12          year.

13                    I'm going to read a quote from the  
14          paper what Mr. Gryzbowski had to say. "I  
15          owned in Scranton," Mr. Gryzbowski said  
16          Friday, "We wanted room to grow. I just  
17          didn't see eye to eye with a lot of city

18 decisions," and I think that's what a lot of  
19 businesses in this city are feeling.

20 Mrs. Evans, at a meeting three or  
21 four weeks ago you brought about some line  
22 painting and the one meeting you weren't  
23 here I brought about, you brought it up in  
24 front of the Steamtown Mall, I brought that  
25 up a long time ago and I have been asking

40

1 for years about lines be painted.

2 MS. EVANS: Yes.

3 MR. SPINDLER: You can be darn sure  
4 that green line will be painted for the St.  
5 Patrick's Day parade.

6 MS. EVANS: Yes.

7 MR. SPINDLER: But lines for safety  
8 reasons, for some reason they aren't getting  
9 painted. Lastly, I see where a shoe store  
10 moved into where Poochie was, but we didn't  
11 gain a business, the business just moved  
12 from the other end of the block. They moved  
13 from a business where they were paying taxes  
14 to a business where they are not paying  
15 taxes. Do they get the KOZ status on that  
16 building? Does anyone know? Well, if they  
17 do they are going from a taxpaying business

18 to a non taxpaying business.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Spindler.

20 MR. SPINDLER: That's all I have to  
21 say. If I wanted to say more I would not  
22 step down. Thank you.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Jean Suetta.

24 MS. SUETTA: Good evening. How are  
25 we tonight?

41

1 MR. COURTRIGHT: Fine.

2 MS. SUETTA: First of all, I want to  
3 commend our firefighters for stopping that  
4 fire from jumping over to the other side of  
5 the alley or half of Providence Square would  
6 have been gone. They did a marvelous job.  
7 Thank you.

8 Now, Bill, Lace Works. You know  
9 when I left here two weeks ago it was foggy,  
10 I was going home over the Albright Avenue  
11 bridge, right on Nay Aug Avenue, this  
12 critter comes out, I thought it was a  
13 raccoon, it was a big rat, a big rat. What  
14 are you going to do about it down there? I  
15 mean, it's a feeding ground for them. We  
16 have kids in the neighborhood. What happens  
17 if one of the kids get bit by the rat? I  
18 mean, this was grandpa.



19 MR. COURTRIGHT: You know what, Jean,  
20 I promise you tomorrow I will call  
21 Mr. Seitzinger and ask him if he can go down  
22 there with me and if we can --

23 MS. SUETTA: I'll meet you.

24 MR. COURTRIGHT: He probably doesn't  
25 meet with you, no, I'm only kidding. If we

42

1 can take a look at, I don't know, we're not  
2 100 percent sure who owns it, but obviously  
3 they are not taking care of it and it needs  
4 to be taken care of so I will ask  
5 Mr. Seitzinger, he has always been receptive  
6 to me and I'll ask him tomorrow --

7 MS. SUETTA: Because they are  
8 parking tractor trailers there.

9 MR. COURTRIGHT: It's a mess.

10 MS. SUETTA: I'm sorry.

11 MR. COURTRIGHT: I'm sorry I didn't  
12 do it this week, it slipped my behind.

13 MS. SUETTA: And I think the roads  
14 over in Iraq are better than Nay Aug Avenue,  
15 I mean it. They are deplorable.

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: I promise you  
17 tomorrow I will call and ask.

18 MS. SUETTA: And DPW, Mr. McGoff,

19 when I was working on DPW we had a  
20 supervisor that was doing reconstruction of  
21 his house and having us remove his trash.  
22 He got fired. You are not allowed to do it.  
23 If that was the case when we got flooded  
24 where were they to help us with ourselves to  
25 salvage what we could? I mean, you do for

43

1 one you do for all. Mrs. Fanucci, have they  
2 started restoration on the Radisson yet?

3 MS. FANUCCI: They have not.

4 MS. SUETTA: No bids?

5 MS. FANUCCI: They have put it out to  
6 bid, but there was nothing. They did not  
7 make any type of progress on the money at  
8 all, no.

9 MS. SUETTA: And aren't you putting  
10 the money in the bank to get interest?

11 MS. FANUCCI: They don't get the  
12 money. They don't receive the money until  
13 the project is ready to go, no, so they  
14 don't have the money.

15 MS. SUETTA: But, Bill, you will find  
16 out for me?

17 MR. COURTRIGHT: I promise you  
18 tomorrow I will call him.

19 MS. SUETTA: And put a

20 recommendation in for our firemen, they did  
21 a fabulous job out there.

22 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yes, they did.

23 MS. SUETTA: They saved the block.

24 Okay, thanks.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Ms. Suetta.

44

1 David Dobson. Daniel Hubbard. Mr. Dobson  
2 is upstairs and says he doesn't wish to  
3 speak.

4 MR. HUBBARD: Good evening, Council,  
5 Daniel Hubbard. I'm just going to start  
6 with a little history. This is July 20,  
7 2007, Scranton Times, "City Council approved  
8 \$35 million bond issue for the Scranton  
9 Parking Authority. Plans call for the  
10 demolition of the Oppenheim parking garage  
11 and building a new \$9 million multi-level  
12 structure on it's North Washington Avenue  
13 site. Construction is supposed to begin  
14 this year."

15 August 12, 2007, "The Connell  
16 building also received a \$5 million state  
17 grant called for developing apartments,  
18 creating office and retail space on the  
19 first floor and second floor and developing

20 underground parking for it's residents."

21 Okay. Same article, Mayor Doherty  
22 quoted, "As far as the Connell building,  
23 that should be underway soon now that is  
24 city council has passed legislation  
25 approving a \$35 million bond for the

45

1 project."

2 So, real quick question before I go  
3 to the next article, was the \$35 million  
4 bond for the parking authority or was that  
5 conveniently given to the parking authority  
6 so that it could be put into the Connell  
7 building project. The mayor is quoted as  
8 saying that the \$35 million bond was for the  
9 Connell building project in August.

10 Now, if nine million of that 35  
11 million was put aside to demolish and build  
12 a new facility in place of the Oppenheim  
13 garage why do they need a million dollars  
14 now out of the fund, the Grow Greener fund  
15 when they already have nine million that you  
16 guys gave them that was part of the  
17 35 million? So as far as I'm concerned the  
18 Oppenheim building garage is a done deal.  
19 The nine million is in place for it, that's  
20 what they needed to tear it down and build a

21 new structure.

22 Today's paper the mayor is quoted as  
23 saying, "There will be parking for the  
24 renovated Connell building and in an area  
25 where we need it."

46

1 Well, is the Connell building  
2 underground parking for their building like  
3 they are quoted as saying in July or is the  
4 city building a parking garage for the  
5 Connell building? Because it's stated right  
6 here in the development plan that they are  
7 going to put an underground parking garage  
8 under the Connell building for the residents  
9 of the building.

10 Now, Mayor Doherty is quoted as  
11 saying today that the parking -- that the  
12 reason you guys have to give this million  
13 dollars to the parking authority is so that  
14 we can use -- we have to use the money now  
15 so we are going to use it for the Oppenheim  
16 building. Who is we? Who applied for the  
17 grant. That Grow Greener grant, five  
18 million grant, did the owner of the Connell  
19 building apply for the grant for his project  
20 or the did the city apply for a grant to

21 give him the money.

22 Now, I mean, seriously there is a  
23 lot of disruption in what's going on here.  
24 You guys passed a \$35 million bond issue for  
25 the parking authority. Of that \$35 million

47

1 bond issue they are supposed to use -- they  
2 are supposed to use it to renovate three of  
3 their existing garages and rebuild the  
4 fourth, which is the Oppenheim garage, so if  
5 nine million was earmarked to rebuild this  
6 facility last year why do we have to give  
7 them a million dollars out of the Grow  
8 Greener, I mean, let's face it, Growing  
9 Greener grant and parking it just doesn't  
10 seem like it kind of flows, you know. I  
11 would think Growing Greener we could use it  
12 to develop green space. Five million  
13 dollars, obviously, then we could probably  
14 get some of that \$60,000 from the trees for  
15 the flood siren.

16 But, seriously, I mean, who is  
17 building the garage for the Connell  
18 building? Is the City of Scranton building  
19 a garage for a private developer who has  
20 already stated that he was building his own  
21 garage underground and if we are building

22 the garage for him with the nine million out  
23 of the 35 million why do we need another  
24 million to go on top of it now? He is going  
25 to use the other 40 million of the grants to

48

1 go to the Connell building project. Well,  
2 why just not use the \$5 million. Where has  
3 the \$35 million gone? Is it gone already?  
4 Is it spent? Have they refurbished any of  
5 the other three?

6 I mean, seriously it's a lot of  
7 money here. With \$35 million you should be  
8 able to refurbish three garages and rebuild  
9 one for nine million. I mean, that's  
10 \$26 million later just to refurbish three  
11 garages, but now we have to give them  
12 another million for the Oppenheim garage  
13 which is in my mind already paid for from  
14 the nine million.

15 Now quick, real quick on this one,  
16 I'm not going to get into a long drawn out  
17 argument over this, but as far as Mr. Brazil  
18 goes and the art gallery, Mr. McGoff, you  
19 saw me at that fire that day and the reason  
20 I know that Mr. Brazil wasn't there all day  
21 was because I helped Laura Craig and her

22 friend unload the entire gallery and carry  
23 the paintings across the street to the  
24 Plotkin shoe department. When the paintings  
25 were placed up against the building across

49

1 the street safe away from the scene of the  
2 fire and away from any problems the mayor's  
3 wife showed up with Jeff Brazil in toe.  
4 Then Mr. McAndrew showed up in a pick-up  
5 truck. Mr. McAndrew and Mr. Brazil and a  
6 DPW worker that I heard Mr. Brazil call on  
7 his phone and tell him to come down there  
8 and help him proceeded to take these  
9 paintings to the Everhart Museum long after  
10 the paintings were safe and away from water  
11 or smoke because I was the one who helped  
12 them carry all the pictures out, and you can  
13 ask Laura Craig that because she asked me  
14 who I was and I told her and I spent two  
15 hours helping them clean that gallery out  
16 and Mr. Brazil was no where to be seen.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Liz Hubbard.

18 MS. HUBBARD: Good evening, Council,  
19 Liz Hubbard, Scranton resident, taxpayer. I  
20 had a couple of things one of which the  
21 question why was, Mr. McGoff, the seat was  
22 changed, but that was covered earlier.



23                   Judy, did you hear anything about the  
24                   skunk removal? Am I going to get a check or  
25                   what is the story?

50

1                   MS. GATELLI: No. As a matter fact,  
2                   I didn't even see a letter in the box, Kay.

3                   MS. GARVEY: I'm sorry, I was writing  
4                   something else, what was the question?

5                   MS. GATELLI: The letter that I asked  
6                   to be sent about the skunks?

7                   MS. GARVEY: Yeah. There was  
8                   something sent about the skunks and did you  
9                   get a response about that?

10                  MS. GATELLI: No, I didn't even see  
11                  my letter.

12                  MS. HUBBARD: I mean, now it seems  
13                  like we have giant rats plus skunks.

14                  MS. GATELLI: I let you know when I  
15                  hear something. I'll talk about it later, I  
16                  don't want to take your time.

17                  MR. HUBBARD: There is a lot of money  
18                  floating around this city for all kinds of  
19                  projects. I think that the city should  
20                  really try to contract with someone and it  
21                  doesn't necessarily have to be the same  
22                  person that did Cottage Avenue and my

23 skunks, but I think there is a lot of  
24 people, people stop me in the grocery store  
25 and mention that they have skunks where they

51

1 live and possums and I, mean, it's  
2 disgusting. We shouldn't have -- I lived in  
3 the country for 25 years and never saw a  
4 skunk, I come to Scranton and they are  
5 everywhere. And I do mean the four-legged  
6 ones. I mean, I know the two-legged ones  
7 have been here for awhile, but it's the  
8 truth. I used to see a bear a week, deer  
9 everyday, never saw a skunk, and now all of  
10 a sudden they are everywhere. So, let's get  
11 the city to do something with some of these  
12 community development block grant funds that  
13 seem to go over other places.

14 Now, the next question is on 5-E and  
15 F, the \$400,000 that's a loan, is that the  
16 same people that are in 5-F? Is all going  
17 to that Skyview?

18 MS. GATELLI: Um-hum.

19 MS. HUBBARD: Now, that Skyview is a  
20 private -- that's not a public housing  
21 development and, I mean, as far as I know  
22 that was built by private developers like  
23 back in the 80's, maybe even the late 70's.

24 Where did the city acquire it? Does anybody  
25 know?

52

1 MR. MCGOFF: I'm sorry?

2 MS. HUBBARD: How did the city  
3 acquire it because didn't the newspaper say  
4 that they sold it to these people? This  
5 sounds to me like these guys are tax shelter  
6 groups because when the tax laws change that  
7 tax shelters you couldn't get them anymore,  
8 the government cut back on them, you could  
9 still get involved in a tax shelter if you  
10 are in that income range where it would be  
11 public housing, low income or elderly and  
12 you just get a great return on your money  
13 until the shelter runs out and by the time  
14 is runs out you are already ready to retire  
15 and don't need the tax shelter, but I don't  
16 understand why the city is giving them the  
17 money to renovate. I mean, I could take  
18 \$100,000 and renovate my property, but I  
19 can't even get a flood siren. So, I mean, I  
20 think you people should really think twice  
21 about giving them this money. If they -- I  
22 mean, it's not a really nice area to begin  
23 with and it isn't a city-owned project and I

24 don't think the city should give them the  
25 money. Anyway, that's it.

53

1 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mrs. Hubbard.  
2 Lee Morgan.

3 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, council,  
4 Lee Morgan, and a member of the Lackawanna  
5 County Taxpayers; and Citizens' Association  
6 and the reason I'm saying that is it I'm  
7 also on the board of the Northeast Public  
8 Access project and I'd just like to say  
9 that, you know, I'm not a spokesman for this  
10 group, but I would just like to say that we  
11 are of the opinion that the transfer of the  
12 operation of Channel 61 and 62 was done for  
13 political reasons and I really find it  
14 troubling what's happened here to be quite  
15 blunt.

16 But I would like to move on and say  
17 that I really appreciate what the Scranton  
18 firemen did in regards to Chief Davis. I  
19 really do honestly believe it's time for  
20 that gentleman to resign and I really find  
21 is a troubling thing when a mayor hires  
22 somebody who is not capable of doing a job  
23 and states to the people that he is going to  
24 keep them there as long as he is the mayor

25

and, like I have said from this podium many

54

1

times before, I really don't know, you know,

2

I really can't tell you how many firemen

3

this city needs, but I can tell you we don't

4

need to cut any and we are looking to cut

5

expenses in the wrong places.

6

I mean, you know. We have -- I have

7

been coming here probably, wow, I don't

8

know, maybe almost two decades and I just

9

find it just so troubling that regardless of

10

who gets elected we just seem to have a

11

total lack of representation. The

12

neighborhoods have been in the shape they

13

have now for a very long time. We keep

14

bringing up on the agenda about how money is

15

being transferred and misspent and nobody

16

has a clue why, nobody has any information

17

about what's going on, and people are going

18

to find out later, but, you know, the worst

19

thing is it that, you know, we even have

20

people that aren't unqualified and you took

21

offense to me saying that Mark Seitzinger

22

was a basketball coach. There is nothing

23

wrong with a being a basketball coach.

24

MR. MCGOFF: It was a joke.

1           it's really not a joke. The real joke here,  
2           and with all due respect to everybody on  
3           council is, the things that this council  
4           itself votes for and propels forward there  
5           is things that are introduced by council  
6           that never should have been introduced and  
7           then later on we are trying to find out how  
8           it got out of the bag and we have so many  
9           questions and absolutely no answers and, you  
10          know, nothing is hypothetical when it comes  
11          to what this council votes to do and we have  
12          so many people here that homes are being  
13          leveraged by this city daily by it's out of  
14          control borrowing and spending and no idea  
15          what this money is being spent for.

16                 You know, Mr. Hubbard has a nice  
17          paper back there, I was reading about people  
18          making dog parks in Hawaii for \$90,000 that  
19          dwarfs the one we have and then other ones  
20          for 55 grand and you just see that there is  
21          no parameters around how much money we are  
22          willing to waste here as if like the people  
23          in this city just have a ton of money and  
24          that's not the case and we are not even  
25          looking to save money here. I mean, it's

1           just wrong what this council is doing and  
2           nothing is funny here.

3                       I mean, the divide I see at council  
4           is, Mr. McGoff with all due respect, three  
5           on this side for the mayor and two on that  
6           side against the mayor, and you know what,  
7           that's no way to run a city and for you to  
8           say that you are not going to get  
9           information for people because it's not your  
10          job to fetch it is just terrible and I hope  
11          you retract that statement and that you  
12          would move as the president of this council  
13          to inform all of the people in this city,  
14          including yourself, on what's actually  
15          happening here on, you know, everybody came  
16          up here and asked about where this money is  
17          going, where that money is going, we asked  
18          questions, we are going to answer them later  
19          or we'll find out next week and the answers  
20          have never really come. Never. Never.

21                      And don't you think it's time for  
22          this council to finally for once let the  
23          people know where their money is going. I  
24          mean, if we are going to sell somebody's  
25          house because they can't pay their taxes

1 don't you think we should try to lower their  
2 taxes?

3 Don't you think for once we should  
4 try to do something about the sidewalks and  
5 the curbs. As I have spoken long -- for a  
6 long time it's time to invest in the  
7 neighborhoods. But, you know, we are not  
8 creating jobs here even with all of the  
9 stimulation that council want to pretend  
10 it's providing to the local economy it's  
11 really not. It's destroying in city.

12 I have people I grew up with and  
13 their children won't even live here and  
14 it's -- there is nothing to wonder about.  
15 We have got a wage tax which is regressive,  
16 our property tax is the same way. We have a  
17 garbage fee, we have all of these fees tied  
18 to our government and then you look at the  
19 people. Sit here and watch the zoning board  
20 or the planning board. If you are going to  
21 watch the zoning board watch them. You  
22 know, we have so many political hats in all  
23 of those boards it's just a shame. It  
24 really is. You know what we need to do, and  
25 I'm not trying to slay anybody, we got to



1 bring ordinary people in.

2 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Morgan.

3 Jim Stucker.

4 MR. STUCKER: Mr. Courtright.

5 MR. COURTRIGHT: Hi, Jim.

6 MR. STUCKER: I went a couple of  
7 times we had to clean our gutters, our  
8 drains, the leaves are still there on Oak  
9 Street and they are blocking the water that  
10 comes down. Remember that water we had,  
11 that heavy stuff, well, there is no drain at  
12 all on Oak Street or on Mark Street. They  
13 put Mrs. Stirna, in front of Mrs. Stirnas  
14 the water is coming down like a river. On  
15 Oak Street that drain that's by the gas  
16 station both sides was blocked. I used to  
17 open them. I don't get no money for it and  
18 I'm not doing it no more. If they paid me I  
19 would do it. I would take a shovel and a  
20 rake and go and do it, but, no.

21 I went to -- I went to these public  
22 works, right, I went to see -- I went to  
23 the, what do you call it, I can't say the  
24 name of it, they are supposed to put signs  
25 up on Market Street, I had to go to the fire

1 station the other day and have them call the  
2 cops come up on Market Street and tell them  
3 there is no signs on Market Street for no  
4 parking on the hill. There is two cars  
5 there on Market Street right on the top,  
6 right by the laundry mat there all the way  
7 down to the bottom on both sides. The  
8 cops -- the cops both called up the DP -- I  
9 can't say the name of it, supposed to call  
10 them and tell them to have signs up and they  
11 said they're not doing it, the city is  
12 supposed to do it, the city is supposed to  
13 put signs up for people not to park on both  
14 sides of the road. There is a lot -- there  
15 is going to be a wreck there on Market  
16 Street I know that, really, really bad.  
17 They told me bring it up to city council to  
18 Courtright about it.

19 MR. COURTRIGHT: Well, we are going  
20 to look into, Jim. Jim, it's tough parking  
21 up there, Buddy, and the businesses need all  
22 the parking they can get so that --

23 MR. STUCKER: There's Stirna's, the  
24 laundry mat, John Mattes' building, all the  
25 way down to the bottom.

1                   MR. COURTRIGHT: They are looking at  
2                   it. They are looking at it, Jim. Hang in  
3                   there.

4                   MR. STUCKER: So, what about on  
5                   Lackawanna Avenue the holes over there are  
6                   so bad the buses, I'm afraid a car or a bus  
7                   is going to go flat on the tires. And on  
8                   Market -- by the Oppenheim and the Globe  
9                   Store, the old Globe Store, they are still  
10                  parking cars there, they are still parking  
11                  the buses. A couple of times the buses  
12                  couldn't get to the curb. I'm afraid  
13                  somebody is going to fall and hurt  
14                  themselves and the buses are going to be  
15                  sued. They got to do something. You got to  
16                  have a ticket girl up there.

17                  MR. COURTRIGHT: Okay, Jim.

18                  MR. STUCKER: So, I hope you keep  
19                  putting signs up that says "No Parking" I'd  
20                  be happy.

21                  MR. COURTRIGHT: We are checking on  
22                  it.

23                  MR. STUCKER: Please.

24                  MR. COURTRIGHT: Okay.

25                  MR. STUCKER: Okay.

1 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Stucker.

2 MR. STUCKER: And I got to get ahold  
3 of Pat somehow. He's going to give me a  
4 ride home I got to see if I can get a cell  
5 phone and call him.

6 MR. COURTRIGHT: Maybe one of the  
7 people out there will let you use their cell  
8 phone, Jim.

9 MR. STUCKER: All right.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

11 MR. STUCKER: My birthday is next  
12 Thursday -- or this Thursday.

13 MR. COURTRIGHT: Happy birthday.  
14 This Thursday? Happy Birthday.

15 MR. STUCKER: Sixty-three.

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: You look good.

17 MS. EVANS: And many more.

18 MR. COURTRIGHT: So long, Jim.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Stucker was the last  
20 speaker to sign in, and anyone else?

21 MR. UNGARVSKY: Good evening, city  
22 council. I'm Tom Ungvarsky and I'm a member  
23 of the Scranton/Lackawanna County Taxpayers.  
24 Part of what we do is by try to inform the  
25 people of what's going on. Last meeting I

1                   came to city council and told you about a  
2                   woman who was in jeopardy of losing her  
3                   home. I was quite disappointed when I  
4                   walked away from this podium because the  
5                   only thing I heard from city council about  
6                   it was that it's not the city that did it,  
7                   Scranton doesn't do it, there was no  
8                   compassion and you had nothing to offer  
9                   about it. I think it's time that you remove  
10                  that immoral act and rescind the statute.  
11                  Does anyone have anything to say about  
12                  removing it?

13                         MS. EVANS: You are referring to the  
14                         ordinance that increased the costs,  
15                         penalties, fines and fees, etcetera?

16                         MR. UNGVARSKY: That is correct.

17                         MS. EVANS: Yes. Well, I hope to  
18                         present that motion again tonight.

19                         MR. UNGVARSKY: Fine, because I  
20                         asked for it at the last meeting and, like I  
21                         say, no one had anything to say about it and  
22                         I thank you, city council.

23                         MS. KNIGHT: Good evening, Mrs. Evans  
24                         and, good evening, McGoff and  
25                         Mr. Courtright. Mr. McGoff, I'm here

1                         tonight to speak with you. I'd like to you

2 to look at me, please. You took this  
3 position and that seat that you are sitting  
4 in, you are supposed to be highly educated.  
5 Hum. I wouldn't want my kids having you as  
6 a teacher.

7 Your council, the two on your left  
8 are on the wrong side of the road. They egg  
9 on the people up there with their smiles,  
10 eating, laughing, talking about people that  
11 are out here on this side of the road and  
12 make comments about them while you sit there  
13 and do absolutely nothing. I would like to  
14 know if you all know the word respect. I  
15 know Mrs. Evans does and I know  
16 Mr. Courtright does. I wonder if you three  
17 do. If you don't, I'd like Mrs. Evans, and  
18 she is a teacher, to teach you that word  
19 because all three of you need it. You have  
20 become -- I thought when Mr. Courtright got  
21 in as president that he would make a five  
22 team group and he has divided.  
23 Mr. Courtright, you were right and Mrs.  
24 Evans was right.

25 I have known this all the time and I

1 have been watching you for TV, I haven't



3 for. And I think it's stinks that you get  
4 \$500 a month. And, Judy, you don't have to  
5 worry about your insurance because you are  
6 getting paid \$500 a month, but the other  
7 poor people out here have nothing. Some of  
8 them are walking around this street with no  
9 insurance.

10 And you are right, Mr. Courtright  
11 and Mrs. Evans, you are left out of  
12 everything that these three others, I can't  
13 even call them people, I can't even call  
14 them council because I have no other words  
15 that I can use for them. And, yes, you will  
16 grin at me the whole time, Sherry, and I  
17 will grin back, but I think it's about time,  
18 Mr. Courtright you took your job and your --

19 MR. MCGOFF: It's Mr. McGoff.

20 Mr. Courtright is to my right.

21 MS. KNIGHT: Mr. McGoff. When you  
22 took your oath the first day you lied  
23 through your teeth to not only to God but to  
24 the father that stood next to you and your  
25 family and the rest of this council out here

66

1 because you have done nothing since you took  
2 over and it is a shame. Don't you have a



3 backbone, a brain of your own? Be a man,  
4 stand up to Mr. Doherty and these two and  
5 his crew? I don't think so. I don't think  
6 you have anything and I don't even know how  
7 the heck you got past teaching and you don't  
8 have to say thank you because I know it's  
9 not coming from your heart.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mrs. Knight.

11 MR. GERVASI: Good evening, City  
12 Council. Mr. McGoff, may I approach,  
13 Council with some handouts?

14 MR. MCGOFF: Sure.

15 MR. GERVASI: City council, my name  
16 is Dave Gervasi, I am a city resident and a  
17 very proud firefighter. What I just handed  
18 you was the press release. We gave it to  
19 the press last week which was the result of  
20 no confidence vote we had on our fire chief,  
21 and listed on here are some of the concerns,  
22 safety concerns, politics, procedures and  
23 management practices of our chief at fire  
24 scenes and/or lack thereof of management  
25 procedures.

67

1 What we are here for tonight is I  
2 have been directed from my membership with  
3 the Scranton Firefighters to be here tonight

4 and, frankly, I didn't need any motivation.  
5 I just want everyone to know what transpired  
6 this week, the truth. On the day we had the  
7 no confidence vote they got a response from  
8 Mayor Doherty and he said, and I read it on  
9 the Times website under their breaking news,  
10 that we had the press conference and he  
11 said, and I'm just paraphrasing, basically  
12 he didn't know much about this and he was  
13 going to keep the chief as long as he was in  
14 there.

15 So, to give the mayor the benefit of  
16 the doubt I picked up the phone and I called  
17 his office and I left a message, about five  
18 minutes later he personally called me back  
19 and I told him what I had read and I found  
20 it hard to believe that he didn't know what  
21 was going on with the incidents with the  
22 chief over the years and I asked him if we  
23 could have a meeting, and he agreed and last  
24 Thursday at I believe 10:30 in the morning  
25 we met with four members of our union, the

68

1 deputy chief, the mayor, I'm sorry, not the  
2 deputy chief, the public safety director,  
3 the chief and the mayor met.

4                   The mayor asks us what our concerns  
5                   were, we highlighted these that we put out  
6                   this press conference, told them of other  
7                   incidents that were maybe nonsafety such as  
8                   insensitive, inappropriate and plain old  
9                   nasty remarks and abuse, verbal abuse of our  
10                  members throughout the years and, frankly, I  
11                  have three witnesses that will say this, the  
12                  chief did not utter a word in his defense,  
13                  the public safety director did not utter a  
14                  word in his defense, even though we did have  
15                  some discussion on different issues, and the  
16                  mayor did not defend him. The mayor simply  
17                  said that, "I will take care of all of  
18                  this."

19                  And we are -- I emphasize this, our  
20                  membership is delighted that the mayor is  
21                  willing to step up to the plate, they are  
22                  going to start meeting on Thursday to  
23                  discuss our safety concerns and the  
24                  difficulties we have been having under  
25                  safety, but one thing he did mention that he

69

1                  was steadfast, he is not removing the chief  
2                  from office.

3                  With that said, we asked him frankly  
4                  what are you going to do with the chief? He

5 is not going to be interfering with the  
6 incident commander at fire scenes any  
7 longer. He is not going to be abusing us  
8 any longer. He is not going to embarrassing  
9 us in the press any longer. What exactly is  
10 he going to do? How are you going to  
11 justify paying this man that basically is  
12 not going to have -- to perform the duties  
13 of chief? And he basically said I'm going  
14 to worry about that, but I'm going -- he  
15 just kept referring to he is going to fix  
16 our situation.

17 And, again, we emphasize we are  
18 delighted that he is taking these concerns  
19 seriously, but, again, I have been directed  
20 to come here tonight, I would like you to  
21 review these things and I don't want you to  
22 take our word for it of these incidents that  
23 happened over the years.

24 We want you to investigate it  
25 because since the mayor is steadfast in not

70

1 removing the chief we all feel that we have  
2 no leadership in this position, that he  
3 cannot handle that position and somebody  
4 competent needs to put in that position. So

5 I'm asking this council since the mayor will  
6 not do that part of it, that we are  
7 requesting and I'm asking this council to  
8 get involved, I'm asking this council to  
9 maybe have a caucus on TV, in chambers,  
10 privately, whichever your preference is and  
11 we will prove to you everything in our press  
12 release is the truth and it's factual, and I  
13 would ask this council that if unless you  
14 condone any of these safety concerns we have  
15 I would ask this council to please have a  
16 meeting with us and if you find that these  
17 awful, awful incidents took place and we  
18 convince you that they are true, we are  
19 asking this council to support us and be an  
20 advocate for us for the removal of the fire  
21 chief and have him replaced with somebody  
22 who is competent and can do the job and can  
23 lead this department.

24 It's not fair to the mayor to have  
25 to play fire chief. It's not fair for the

71

1 public safety director to have to direct our  
2 department and it's not fair to the Scranton  
3 Firefighters to have someone who cannot  
4 handle the job, and I'm asking you this  
5 would you please let us know at this point

6 if it's okay, and I know my time is up, but  
7 I don't want to push it.

8 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Gervasi.

9 MR. COURTRIGHT: Mr. McGoff, could I  
10 say something or would you prefer I wait?

11 MR. MCGOFF: We can address it during  
12 motions, I believe.

13 MR. GERVASI: Thank you.

14 MR. PATILLA: Good evening, Mrs.  
15 Evans, Mr. Courtright. Sam Patilla, member  
16 of the Scranton/Lackawanna County Taxpayers'  
17 Association. First I'd like to commend  
18 Operation Democracy in their quest to seek  
19 that the elections have a paper trail that  
20 can be verified and both can be verified.

21 Secondly, I would like to commend  
22 Scranton Today for keeping us informed of  
23 city business and what's going on. And,  
24 thirdly, I would like to commend the  
25 Scranton Fire Department, especially in

72

1 light of all of the harsh treatment and pain  
2 that they have had to suffer at the hands of  
3 this administration over the years. And as  
4 I was viewing that fire in the Providence  
5 area, the Providence Square area the first

6 thing that came to mind was arson and it  
7 didn't take me by surprise when the news  
8 report came back and said that the fire  
9 department was investigating for arson.

10 Thirdly, I mean, fourthly, I would  
11 like to, you know, from the laymen's point  
12 of view, the naked eye, all of this money  
13 transferring from the parking authority, to  
14 the city, to the housing authority, yada,  
15 yada, yada, to the average person this looks  
16 like money laundering point blank, you know,  
17 Peter robbing to pay Paul to pay Mary to pay  
18 Sue. That's all that it looks like. On  
19 week you are giving money, the next you are  
20 taking money back or are you sitting in  
21 another one. It's looks straight up like  
22 money laundering.

23 Now, I have been speaking to quite a  
24 few of the seniors in the area in reference  
25 to this spend less programs that is going on

73

1 throughout the state and throughout the  
2 nation. Me myself, I throw it back in their  
3 face, because we don't need money to keep us  
4 quiet, you know, that money can be used to  
5 pay off that debt we have in China, the  
6 money could be used that the Commonwealth

7 has to pay off the outstanding debts that we  
8 have here the same thing around Scranton.

9 When I see the stimulus the first  
10 things that comes to mind is Ed Rendell,  
11 George W. Bush, enough said, all right?  
12 They put the Commonwealth and this country  
13 in the predicament that they are, they we  
14 are already in, it's the same thing with  
15 Doherty all right? You cannot continue to  
16 borrow, borrow, borrow. Sooner or later the  
17 banks are going to say no. The people are  
18 going to say, no, and that institution is  
19 going to collapse and it's going to call  
20 around your ears and that's exactly what's  
21 happening here, okay?

22 All these specialities of the  
23 economic business world all stated the same  
24 thing that I stated here, okay, you can't  
25 spend, you can't solve this problem by

74

1 spending money. You have to solve this  
2 problem by reducing, wise reduction, not  
3 lower employee midmanagement, unnecessary  
4 deadweight at the top, that's where you  
5 reduce, that's what you get rid of, that's  
6 what you cut back at.



7                   We, as a city, have to take our  
8                   finances by the throat, not by the reigns,  
9                   by the throat and give them a good shake  
10                  because it's out of control, you know, you  
11                  cannot allow Chris Doherty or anybody else  
12                  to continue to borrow or to loan out our  
13                  money and our debts aren't getting paid.  
14                  The interest doesn't go away. It grows by  
15                  the day and until we had a majority on the  
16                  council who are actually for the people we  
17                  are going to have these problems.

18                 You know, I hear residents  
19                 complaining about skunks. Well, when your  
20                 head is a skunk quite naturally they are  
21                 going to attract the rest of them.

22                 Okay, you want to plant trees, you  
23                 are going to attract critters because while  
24                 you are planting that tree you are not  
25                 taking care of that lot, you are just making

75

1                 another blight, you are just making a home  
2                 for them, all right?

3                 And the city administration as a  
4                 whole, you know, we have good individuals on  
5                 council and the school board and other areas  
6                 within this city, but as a whole we have a  
7                 bunch of pole cats that need to be

8 eradicated because they are driving this  
9 city to bankruptcy and that's exactly what's  
10 going to happen. The state is not going to  
11 be able to bail us out because sooner or  
12 later people are going to wake up and  
13 realize what Rendell is doing. The federal  
14 government is not going to be able to bail us  
15 out because they have already mortgaged us  
16 to China. If they took some of this money  
17 that want and give it to these people, and I  
18 know a lot of people need that money, we  
19 could really use that money, what we could  
20 really use is paying off our debt.  
21 Getting our property back from China,  
22 getting our state back from corporate  
23 America, the health industry, that's how we  
24 get back. Thank you. Good night, Mrs.  
25 Evans and Mr. Courtright.

76

1 MR. MCGOFF: Good evening, Council.  
2 My name is Matt MacDonald, I'm a Scranton  
3 firefighter, I'm also a member of the  
4 executive board for Local 60. I want to  
5 come here tonight, obviously, you have never  
6 seen me before, this is my first time in  
7 speaking. I just want to touch on the no

8 conflict vote that we had. I just want to  
9 say that the vote that we took was not taken  
10 lightly by any of our members. It was not  
11 political in nature, I want to stress that.  
12 It was not meant humiliate or embarrass  
13 anybody. What our -- the vote was for was  
14 our safety and the safety of the citizens of  
15 Scranton.

16 On the last page of the press  
17 release the numbers of the vote are on the  
18 back, it's 93 percent of our firefighters  
19 cast a vote on February 6. Out of the  
20 93 percent that voted 91 percent have  
21 absolutely no confidence in fire chief Tom  
22 Davis. I find these statistics very  
23 troubling as a young firefighter. I have  
24 approximately six years on the job, I have  
25 witnessed Chief Davis give very dangerous

77

1 orders at fire scenes. One, if the  
2 gentleman who was ordered who has less time  
3 on than I did, and this was approximately  
4 two years ago, if he did not take Chief  
5 Davis' order he probably would not be with  
6 us today. He was ordered on a roof that two  
7 minutes after he refused to go on collapsed  
8 which is absolutely ridiculous that a young

9 firefighter had to countermand his fire chief  
10 in that nature on the scene of the fire.

11 Pretty much I'm here for the younger  
12 members of our department, like I said, I  
13 have six years on it. There is  
14 approximately 40 firefighters underneath me  
15 who are afraid of Tom Davis as the fire  
16 chief because of some of his actions on and  
17 off the fire scene. He gives dangerous  
18 orders that young firefighters have to  
19 countermand. It's equivalent to a private  
20 countermanning a general in the military  
21 sense. This is unacceptable for us at the  
22 Scranton Fire Department.

23 Like I said, the younger members are  
24 fed up and they are scared and we beg the  
25 council to have Fire Chief Tom Davis and

78

1 representation from the union to sit down  
2 and discuss these issues that we have  
3 because these are only a few of the issues  
4 that we have with Chief Davis.

5 I know, I was at the meeting with  
6 Mr. Gervasi, we had the mayor stating that  
7 he would take care of it, that's fine, but  
8 we still need leadership in the Scranton

9 Fire Department, leadership that has lacked  
10 over the past six years. We have had none.  
11 We have had no leadership.

12 In this post 9/11 world the fire  
13 service has been asked to take on tasks that  
14 it's never had to before. More dangerous  
15 tasks than we had to before and, frankly, we  
16 need a fire chief who can take on those  
17 responsibilities and I believe along with  
18 nearly 90 percent of our entire department  
19 that Chief Davis is not the man to do that.  
20 Thank you, Council.

21 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you,  
22 Mr. MacDonald.

23 MS. SCHUMACHER: Marie Schumacher,  
24 citizen and member of the Taxpayers'  
25 Association. Originally I didn't plan on

79

1 speaking on 5-D until I heard other speakers  
2 and then I got my notes out because I  
3 attended the Scranton Parking Authority  
4 meeting on 16th of January and their Growing  
5 Greener project was discussed as a solar  
6 canopy which has photo-rotated cells for  
7 producing electricity and also it would  
8 remove the run-off problem. The stated  
9 amount needed was \$22,000 for the design and

10 obtaining a grant and now instead of that  
11 grant we are apparently going to supply the  
12 grant money ourselves from another project.  
13 So, I would suggest that you table this  
14 until Mr. Scopelliti could come down here  
15 for a caucus and explain why this \$1 million  
16 transfer is actually required.

17 Last week Mrs. Fanucci gave a rough  
18 definition -- or two weeks ago, excuse me,  
19 of Ben Franklin's famous quote on insanity  
20 which is doing the same thing over and over  
21 and expecting different results. Less  
22 important than whether our mayor, therefore,  
23 is insane for continuing to pursue the 27  
24 pay period issue for the firefighters after  
25 losing the exact same issue for the police

80

1 is his lack of stewardship of our taxes by  
2 lining the pockets of attorneys to fight a  
3 lost battle.

4 On February 13 the monopoly  
5 newspaper article reported the state police  
6 had cited a downtown restaurant for  
7 operating without a valid permit or license,  
8 a valid health permit or license. The  
9 permit for the restaurant had expired on

10                   October 31 of the prior year. I asked  
11                   myself how many other eating establishments  
12                   in the city are in the same boat? Could it  
13                   be the overseeing department is not properly  
14                   performing this function? Who knows, but I  
15                   would think you people would certainly be  
16                   interested.

17                   Now to move to Nay Aug park and the  
18                   \$305,000 amphitheater which cost taxpayers  
19                   what, \$150,000 a year? I think it was  
20                   usable for two years, maybe three, I could  
21                   be off, but what's the difference whether  
22                   it's \$100,000 a year or \$150,000 a year?  
23                   Why was that amphitheater not insured? Why  
24                   does the general contractor refuse to answer  
25                   questions relative to the maintenance of the

81

1                   tent? Could it be that the \$305,000 of our  
2                   taxes are being flushed down the toilet  
3                   because of poor maintenance? I am strongly  
4                   suspicious that that may be the case because  
5                   the -- otherwise, I see no reason why the  
6                   general contractor wouldn't say that what  
7                   the requirements for the maintenance were.  
8                   That's a lot of money to tear down and flush  
9                   away.

10                   Now to the treehouse. I can't help

11 but wonder why the construction was split  
12 into two pieces? The city contracted for  
13 the foundation, concrete and steelwork to  
14 the tune of \$229,000. Who contracted for  
15 the wood and timber construction, grading at  
16 the roadside for ramp access, permanent  
17 electrical roofing and appurtenances,  
18 specifically excluded from the contract the  
19 city had with that general contractor. Who,  
20 other than the city, is authorized to  
21 protract for fixed assets in a public park?  
22 There will be more on this coming weeks as I  
23 hopefully will get answers to Right to Know.  
24 So far I have been stiffed when I asked to  
25 see a copy of the contract because it

82

1 appears that the Scranton Redevelopment  
2 Authority which may have funded this project  
3 or contracted for the balance of that effort  
4 tells me that a legal review is necessary to  
5 determine whether the record is a public  
6 record subject to access under the Act.  
7 Well, my goodness, a copy of the contract is  
8 pretty explicit in the Right to Know what is  
9 available to the public and I question why  
10 I'm having such a difficult time.



11                   Then, now to Mr. McGoff and his  
12                   direction that citizens should pursue  
13                   answers via Right to Know since it's not  
14                   council's job to fetch information for  
15                   citizens. My success rate on Right to Know  
16                   responses is less than stellar. I brought a  
17                   few of them with me tonight and I'll bring  
18                   them back next week. Thank you very much.

19                   MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Ms.  
20                   Schumacher.

21                   MR. SLEDZENSKI: Hello, Bill.

22                   MR. COURTRIGHT: Hi, Chris.

23                   MR. SLEDZENSKI: Mrs. Fanucci, I got  
24                   a question for you tonight, only you, Mrs.  
25                   Fanucci, only you.

83

1                   MS. FANUCCI: All right.

2                   MR. SLEDZENSKI: The other day I was  
3                   walking at the Steamtown Mall the other day,  
4                   you know, that big store at the mall  
5                   upstairs, it's out of business up there now.  
6                   There is two businesses out of the mall up  
7                   there, they are gone. The old shoe store on  
8                   top, two businesses are gone.

9                   MS. FANUCCI: The mall, I know.

10                   MS. SLEDZENSKI: They are gone.  
11                   Okay. Thank you.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Chris.

13 MS. KRAKE: Good evening, Council, my  
14 name is Nancy Krake. I would like to  
15 explain what a sheriff's sale is to  
16 Mr. McGoff, Mrs. Gatelli, and Mrs. Fanucci.  
17 This is an example of the poster that we  
18 have this month in the City Treasurer's  
19 Office, it comes from the sheriff's office.  
20 These are all of the properties that are  
21 being sold in Lackawanna County. This is  
22 usually between a mortgage company or a bank  
23 and a property owner who are not paying  
24 their mortgage.

25 What Mr. McGoff, Mrs. Gatelli and

84

1 Mrs. Fanucci have done is to expose the  
2 property and homeowners of the City of  
3 Scranton to this action. Every week Mrs.  
4 Gatelli says the county has a sheriff's sale  
5 for delinquent taxes, they do not. They  
6 file a petition for confirmation nisi.  
7 After 30 days they file a petition for  
8 confirmation absolute, the tax claim upset  
9 sale. Mr. McGoff, Mrs. Gatelli and  
10 Mrs. Fanucci voted for and, therefore,  
11 agreed with Mayor Doherty that if you can't

12 pay your house taxes the city should take  
13 you to sheriff's sale and put your property  
14 and homes up for the highest bidder. If  
15 Mr. McGoff, Mrs. Gatelli and Mrs. Fanucci  
16 tried to explain these facts away again this  
17 evening, just remember their disclaimers in  
18 past weeks when they said the fines and the  
19 ordinances and that particular ordinance  
20 would hardly apply to everyone. We have  
21 already seen and heard of many examples and  
22 I am sure your constituents are contacting  
23 you.

24 I would also ask people who incurred  
25 these unjust fines to remember who imposed

85

1 them, Mr. Doherty, Mr. McGoff, Mrs. Gatelli  
2 and Mrs. Fanucci. Unfortunately, this is  
3 the first time a sheriff's sale has ever had  
4 what you allowed the City of Scranton to do.

5 There are five examples on here of the  
6 Portonoff law firm going after people's  
7 property for Mid-Valley School District  
8 taxes, North Pocono School District taxes  
9 and Abington Heights School District taxes.  
10 This is obscene. And you know that the law  
11 firm of Abrahamsen, Moran and Conaboy and  
12 Northeast Credit and Collection who are now

13 doing it for the city are the persons  
14 benefiting from this ordinance. The money  
15 flowing into their coffers from our pockets  
16 will not benefit any city services.

17 Finally, I would like to ask everyone  
18 to remember that no matter what monies these  
19 agencies claim to bring in the same amounts  
20 and most likely more would have been  
21 collected if the City of Scranton had a city  
22 treasurer's sale and/or an amnesty for  
23 delinquent property taxes. I would hope you  
24 could find it in your hearts to amend this  
25 ordinance.

86

1 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else? Fifth  
2 Order. Mrs. Evans.

3 MS. EVANS: Yes. Before I begin with  
4 what I have prepared for this evening, I did  
5 want to address the pleas that came before  
6 us this evening from members of the Scranton  
7 Fire Department. I must admit as they spoke  
8 several questions entered my mind, some of  
9 which were voiced by the speakers, but  
10 again, I, too, am wondering then what are we  
11 paying the fire chief for, the fire chief  
12 who just recently was granted what, a

13 \$13,000 raise in the new 2008 budget? Is  
14 there not a chain of command within the fire  
15 department where complaints, discrepancies,  
16 any matter of concern to firefighters would  
17 be registered, a hierarchy of sorts. It  
18 would make absolutely no sense to me that  
19 the fire chief, that the public safety  
20 director who is above the fire chief, they  
21 would know nothing of what's been going on  
22 for six years. I find that very hard to  
23 believe.

24 I am, as they said, delighted that  
25 the mayor is going to finally provide the

87

1 equipment necessary for these men and women  
2 to do their job appropriately and safely,  
3 not only for their sakes, but for the  
4 citizens of Scranton, but I have to wonder  
5 why was this equipment withheld for six  
6 years? The mayor himself said, you've got  
7 to come to me, I make the call on the  
8 equipment, who gets and who doesn't get,  
9 that's a very telling statement and I guess  
10 I'd like to ask him then why did the fire  
11 department get nothing for six years? Why  
12 did you withhold?

13 But, again, I guess what our primary

14 concern this evening would be the fact that  
15 both of these gentlemen have requested  
16 council to conduct a caucus between members  
17 of the fire department, the fire chief,  
18 perhaps the public safety director and  
19 members of council and I, for one, would  
20 very much like to see that caucus occur. I  
21 am in favor of such an idea. I don't know  
22 that the entire council would be, I can't  
23 speak for anyone but myself, but again, I  
24 would say I will sit down with them and I  
25 don't have a problem doing that at any place

88

1 at any time. Perhaps as other council  
2 members speak this evening they would like  
3 to address the issues, too, or maybe they  
4 would now.

5 MR. COURTRIGHT: Mr. McGoff, if I  
6 may? Mrs. Evans, would you mind? She  
7 interrupts me all the time, so I'm sure I  
8 can get one time. I would just like to say  
9 this, you know, I heard these accusations on  
10 the radio, some of them anyway and now I  
11 have read them through briefly, and they are  
12 strong accusations, some of them are very  
13 strong, and I believe in being fair to all

14 concerned. I don't know whether these  
15 accusations are true or false, I have no  
16 idea, but I certainly think that Chief Davis  
17 deserves the right to defend himself.

18 I would recommend this, and this is  
19 my committee public safety, and if every  
20 council member would like to be there, fine.  
21 If just myself and another, Mr. McGoff or  
22 maybe another representative, fine, but I  
23 would like to see us do this first if maybe,  
24 I'm sure Mr. Davis has these list of  
25 accusations, you know, I'd like to see if

89

1 maybe we can't ask him to come and meet with  
2 some us or all of us, ask our stenographer  
3 to be present and if he can just answer to  
4 each and every one of these to defend  
5 himself.

6 I think everybody has a right to  
7 defend themselves and at that point after we  
8 get his answers maybe then we meet  
9 altogether because there is two sides to  
10 every story, because I got to be honest with  
11 you, if even one, if even one of these  
12 things is true then that's dangerous and I'm  
13 praying that none of these are true, but I  
14 would like to offer him the opportunity, you

15 know, at a controlled meeting where it would  
16 just be, and I don't know if the  
17 firefighters would be opposed to this or  
18 not, where it would just be Chief Davis and  
19 either all of council or some of council to  
20 ask him to answer the questions, and the  
21 only reason I say that to do it that way  
22 first, just first, so that we don't have --  
23 we wouldn't have a back and forth and  
24 arguing session.

25 And then after we got his answers

90

1 then we can see about having a meeting I  
2 would think with all of us, but some of them  
3 are, man, are very serious and if I was  
4 Chief Davis I would want to defend myself,  
5 and I'm sure he does.

6 That would be my suggestion, and I  
7 don't know if the rest of council would be  
8 willing to go along with that, I just felt  
9 that being that it's my committee I needed  
10 to say something on it, so I would ask the  
11 rest of council if you would consider that  
12 suggestion. Thank you.

13 MS. EVANS: I would be very willing  
14 to consider that and since it is a personnel



15 issue I would imagine that would be  
16 protected under the Sunshine Law to be a  
17 closed meeting, would it not?

18 MS. GATELLI: Attorney Minora?

19 MR. MINORA: I think that's correct.  
20 I think that's correct, because it would  
21 deal with hiring and firing and matters of  
22 personnel, so I think it ought to be a  
23 confidential meeting.

24 MR. COURTRIGHT: Excuse me one more  
25 moment, I'm sorry. The only reason I ask

91

1 that it be appropriate to maybe have a  
2 stenographer there so that there would be no  
3 misinterpretation on what was said because,  
4 again, God, these are some serious, serious  
5 accusations and I certainly think the  
6 gentleman has the right to defend himself.

7 MS. EVANS: Well, I would agree with  
8 that and then council could discuss it  
9 afterwards. So perhaps we could try between  
10 now and next week to set a time and a date  
11 for that session to occur.

12 MR. COURTRIGHT: Maybe, Mr. McGoff,  
13 seeing as you are the president, you would  
14 like to poll council outside of here, I  
15 mean, I don't know that we want to -- I

16 don't think you want to discuss it here, but  
17 maybe you can poll us outside and see if  
18 they're willing to do it and if everybody is  
19 if we have three that are willing who you  
20 would you think needs to be there or not be  
21 there.

22 MR. MCGOFF: If we can wait five  
23 minutes after the meeting.

24 MR. COURTRIGHT: Sure, and I'm so  
25 sorry, I keep taking your time, I'm not even

92

1 saying today if you feel comfortable calling  
2 us tomorrow.

3 MS. GATELLI: I said let  
4 Mr. Courtright and Mr. McGoff, it's your  
5 committee.

6 MR. COURTRIGHT: That's fine by me  
7 if that's fine by the rest of you.

8 MS. FANUCCI: That's fine.

9 MS. GATELLI: I don't think we all  
10 need to be there.

11 MR. COURTRIGHT: I hate to prolong  
12 this, but it's a serious issues. If and  
13 when, you know, we would have that meeting,  
14 Mr. McGoff, and we had our answers then at  
15 that point in time maybe we could all meet.

16 I just don't think these questions could go  
17 unanswered because in all fairness to  
18 everybody some people are going to believe  
19 that these are all true, some people are  
20 going to believe that none of these are true  
21 and when something like this happens,  
22 unfortunately, I think you have to answer  
23 them. So, if that's all right with the rest  
24 of the members.

25 MS. GATELLI: How about if I make a

93

1 motion that Mr. Courtright and Mr. McGoff  
2 set up a meeting to discuss these  
3 allegations and then come back to council.

4 MR. COURTRIGHT: That would be great.

5 MS. FANUCCI: I'll second that.

6 MR. MCGOFF: There is a motion to set  
7 up a meeting between Chief Davis and members  
8 of council, selected members of council, to  
9 discuss the allegations made by the  
10 firefighters.

11 MS. EVANS: On the question?

12 MR. MCGOFF: On the question.

13 MS. EVANS: I would be willing to  
14 forego being present at this meeting if  
15 there is a stenographer because I would like  
16 the meetings of that meeting -- the minutes

17 of that meeting, excuse me, made available  
18 to everyone on council.

19 MR. COURTRIGHT: I would feel  
20 comfortable having it without that because I  
21 certainly wouldn't to be held accountable  
22 for what Chief Davis said, you know, let it  
23 be on the record and then every member of  
24 council could have it and if there is  
25 something council needs to do, fine. If

94

1 we're out of our league on this then, you  
2 know, but I'm recommending a stenographer.

3 MR. MCGOFF: The only thing that I --  
4 if we, in fact, ask for this meeting it  
5 being a management issue I'm sure the  
6 meeting would be at the discretion of the  
7 mayor. I don't think that we can compel  
8 Chief Davis himself so the request would  
9 have to go through the mayor and the  
10 Director of Public Safety and whatever  
11 other --

12 MR. COURTRIGHT: I'm sure that's the  
13 proper way to do it.

14 MR. MCGOFF: I would be more than  
15 happy to maybe that contact and make  
16 whatever arrangement is necessary.

17 MR. MINORA: You need to vote on it.

18 MR. MCGOFF: All those in favor  
19 signify by saying eye?

20 MS. EVANS: Aye.

21 MS. FANUCCI: Aye.

22 MS. GATELLI: Aye.

23 MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

24 MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed? The  
25 ayes have it and so moved.

95

1 MS. EVANS: I have several other  
2 matters to address this evening,  
3 particularly in light of my absence due to  
4 an illness on February 5, and I do apologize  
5 to the people for missing a meeting, I was  
6 ill and I ask for your understanding.

7 First, the Scranton Times reported the  
8 city's principle long-term debt is  
9 \$94 million. Following the release of the  
10 2006 audit on February 7, 2008, I obtained  
11 my copy to determine an accurate financial  
12 status. As of December 31, 2006, the  
13 Doherty long-term debt is \$226,925,015.00.  
14 This figure includes principle and interest  
15 as well as the debts amassed by the Scranton  
16 Redevelopment Authority, Parking Authority  
17 and Sewer Authority, and the debt service

18 for capitalized leases. \$227,000,000 in  
19 debt through the year 2033. Please keep in  
20 mind this figure, 227 million does not, does  
21 not include the 35 million plus interest  
22 borrowed in 2007 by the parking authority  
23 nor does it include the proposed \$11 million  
24 plus interest the mayor will borrow this  
25 year. By year's end, we will reach

96

1 approximately 300 million in long-term debt.  
2 Don't allow the apologists from the Scranton  
3 Times and this administration to spin this  
4 figure any other way. If the truth be told,  
5 they know and I know that principal applies  
6 to your pay off today and we all know that  
7 is an utter impossibility for Scranton.

8 Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, do  
9 you worry about your mortgage pay off today  
10 or do you think of your mortgage payments  
11 over 25 years? Do you pay \$25,000 for our  
12 new car today, and if you do you are a  
13 lucky individual, but if you are like most  
14 of us you take a four or five-year loan for  
15 maybe 35 to \$40,000 in principal and  
16 interest, so think critically. Think for  
17 yourselves. Is your life better, safer

18 today for 300 million in long-term Doherty  
19 debt? 227 million in five years, 300  
20 million in seven years, so plan for your  
21 future in our city at least through the Year  
22 2033.

23 Is this the mayor's recovery? His  
24 recovery is a financial nightmare.  
25 Remember, union workers had to changes, no

97

1 changes whatsoever in six years, so you  
2 can't blame them. Health care? It appears  
3 that through at least October of 2007 health  
4 care costs were under budget according to  
5 PEL, the Pennsylvania Economy League, so the  
6 excuses are weak. Does our city need  
7 recovery? Absolutely, yes. Now more, much  
8 more, than we did in 2002, but we need smart  
9 recovery. The former Recovery Plan actually  
10 terminated in 2005 and PEL stated that it  
11 was working on a revised plan in 2007 and I  
12 hope it is.

13 I hope for smart recovery. Halt  
14 wasteful spending, stop the borrowing, sell  
15 union contracts and pay down the debt. And,  
16 as a side note, initial stages of the 2007  
17 independent audit began in January of 2008.

18 Now, in response to Mr. DeSarno's

19 question posed three weeks ago regarding  
20 frivolous spending, I do not approve of  
21 frivolous spending and my record as a  
22 councilwoman reflects that. I have created  
23 three balanced budgets to avoid tax  
24 increases and to halt the borrowing. I did  
25 not vote for any unnecessary borrowing,

98

1 inflated mayoral budgets or questionable tax  
2 increases, and I won't. Further, I will  
3 never agree to contract violations and  
4 wasteful litigations. I will never engage  
5 in bad faith policies or procedures and this  
6 is not a matter of perception. You can take  
7 it to the bank.

8 Next, I wish to commend Cathy  
9 Carrera, city grant's writer, and five  
10 firefighters for obtaining a \$318,000 FEMA  
11 grant for the fire department communications  
12 equipment. Too often credit is misplaced by  
13 the newspaper and the boss receives the  
14 acclaim when the employees have the idea,  
15 they do the work and they bring it to  
16 fruition. So, thank you to Miss Carerra and  
17 to those five very smart firefighters.

18 Now, I was not surprised to learn



19 that the mayor's committee selected Electric  
20 City TV to run Channel 61 and 62, and as  
21 soon as the announcement to seek proposals  
22 occurred the red flag flew. There are a  
23 number of matters that I'd like to bring to  
24 the attention of the public. Electric City  
25 TV who received the committee and hence the

99

1 mayor's nod of approval had requested four  
2 phases of funding. Phase 1, \$300,000.  
3 Phase two, \$200,000. Phase three, \$200,000.  
4 Phase four, approximately \$160,000. I  
5 remember when I think the editorial list  
6 called Scranton Today a ward of the state  
7 when they requested \$25,000 and then got  
8 \$13,000 from city council, so, I'd have to  
9 ask what does this make Electric City TV, a  
10 mistress? The free studio that Scranton  
11 Today was accused of turning down appears in  
12 the Electric City's budget and they would  
13 like \$28,000 to renovate the studio and  
14 \$36,000 in annual maintenance costs.

15 Now, in addition to that, I believe  
16 that Marywood University and the University  
17 of Scranton operated Channel 62 with the  
18 assistance of Scranton Today and no where in  
19 the Electric City proposal do I see any

20 mention of either Marywood or the university  
21 continued involvement with that station, so  
22 that raises a question as well. As far as  
23 I'm aware we seem to be giving almost a  
24 million dollars to an unknown entity on a  
25 promise to deliver without any type of

100

1 accountability or oversight. I'm not  
2 opposed to giving them this money, in fact,  
3 I suggested long ago that the franchise fee  
4 be used to help fund Scranton Today, hence,  
5 Channel 61 each year of their operation, so  
6 this idea comes as no great surprise to me,  
7 but I think when we are talking become a  
8 million dollars worth of ratepayer's money  
9 there should be oversight and  
10 accountability.

11 Therefore, I move that city council  
12 create an appoint an oversight committee to  
13 ensure that Electric City TV follow through  
14 on all of the promises enumerated in their  
15 proposal.

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: I'll second that.

17 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? Who  
18 would comprise this committee?

19 MS. EVANS: I believe the committee

20 should be appointed by city council. I was  
21 thinking, for example, there might be five  
22 members of the committee, and each member of  
23 council could appoint one member of the  
24 oversight committee.

25 MR. MCGOFF: And the responsibilities

101

1 of the committee would be?

2 MS. EVANS: To report to city  
3 council. They will be overseeing what money  
4 is given to Electric City TV, how that money  
5 has been utilized and having in hand their  
6 proposals they will check to see that what  
7 has been guaranteed in return for this money  
8 will indeed occur on Channel 61 on 62.

9 MS. GATELLI: Would they just be like  
10 an advisory committee?

11 MS. EVANS: They are an oversight  
12 committee and then they would report their  
13 findings whether annually or semi-annually  
14 to council.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Again, I don't mean to  
16 belabor it I'm just trying to go through the  
17 process of how it would work and exactly how  
18 the committee -- what we do with the  
19 information received from the committee as  
20 well.

21 MS. EVANS: Well, I think we have the  
22 responsibility then to make sure that,  
23 indeed, they are according to -- what is  
24 reported to us, they are abiding by the  
25 terms of the agreement and if they are not

102

1 then the cable franchise fee should be  
2 withheld at least for a period of time in  
3 which they would be able to perhaps remedy  
4 the situation, but it's a great deal of  
5 money that has never been given to that  
6 television station since it's inception.  
7 Never. This is a first and because it is a  
8 first and because it is such a significant  
9 amount of money there must be oversight and  
10 as it stands there is none.

11 MR. COURTRIGHT: You know, on the  
12 question, I just think that they going to  
13 get such a large amount of money and we  
14 wouldn't give Scranton Today anything, we  
15 gave them \$13,000, I would really like to  
16 see what they are going to do with all of  
17 that money and if, in fact, if we don't have  
18 any type of control over what they are  
19 doing, I mean, who is to say that they will  
20 even come to close to saying what they are

21 going to do.

22 MS. GATELLI: What would be the  
23 ramifications if they didn't?

24 MR. COURTRIGHT: Withhold the money  
25 from them.

103

1 MS. GATELLI: Do we have the power to  
2 withhold the money from them?

3 MS. FANUCCI: We don't have the power  
4 to do that.

5 MS. GATELLI: Does council have the  
6 power to do that?

7 MS. EVANS: I think council does  
8 have, for example, investigative powers and  
9 when things within any department let's say  
10 or with this agreement are amiss I believe  
11 we have the duty and the responsibility to  
12 step in and hold people accountable.

13 MS. FANUCCI: I have no problem  
14 holding them accountable, my problem is at  
15 the end of it all what do we do then? We  
16 have the information, if we don't have the  
17 power to say where the money is going and  
18 where the money is not going then what  
19 happens? What can we do at the end of it.  
20 I have no problem on the idea, I think it's  
21 a good idea, but we have to sit down and I

22 think we have to create something that we  
23 would have as a guideline for us that we  
24 know that if this happens this is what would  
25 happen then, maybe create it in the

104

1 legislation or create in some way that we  
2 have our power and know what our power is,  
3 so I would vote that maybe we table it and  
4 discuss what it is that we would want after  
5 maybe that withhold money or in the next  
6 budget time that we do something, whatever  
7 the ramifications would be, that we would  
8 sit and discuss what we would want those to  
9 be. So, I would like to make a motion to  
10 table it and try to figure out what it is we  
11 want to do if we do get information that we  
12 have the legislation.

13 MS. EVANS: Well, I think basically  
14 you can determine that when you decided or  
15 rather agreed to create the committee,  
16 because we are not, for example, tonight  
17 naming committee members or anything of that  
18 nature, so we are merely agreeing tonight to  
19 create an oversight committee that would be  
20 appointed by city council.

21 MS. FANUCCI: Well, I have a motion

22 to table and that's on the floor, so if  
23 anyone would like to second. That's all I  
24 have.

25 MS. EVANS: Well, you do realize, and

105

1 I have one on the floor though before that,  
2 but you do realize that those monies are  
3 part of the city's operating budget.

4 MS. FANUCCI: I realize that quite  
5 frankly, yes, that's why I said we could do  
6 something in the next budget year, that's  
7 what I'm trying to say. What is that we  
8 could do to withhold money from the next  
9 budget because if the money has already been  
10 provided with the first budget and they get  
11 the money in the beginning we have no power  
12 to go take the money back from them, so it  
13 would be the next budget year is where our  
14 legislation would lie.

15 MS. EVANS: Well, it's coming in four  
16 phases, so let us say they proceed with  
17 phase one --

18 MS. FANUCCI: Well, right, but then  
19 they can't --

20 MS. EVANS: And if they are not in  
21 compliance they don't go into phase two.

22 MS. FANUCCI: I've got a motion on

23 the floor.

24 MR. MCGOFF: Well, I think the idea  
25 of an oversight committee is fine and I also

106

1 think that perhaps we could implement the  
2 idea tonight with the possibility of having  
3 it included in the contractual language of,  
4 you know, the operation of Channel 61,  
5 present the idea, you know, to the mayor and  
6 have it included in the actual contract so  
7 that that committee would exist, you know,  
8 we would have already voted to create the  
9 committee and then if, in fact, we can  
10 include it the agreement.

11 MS. EVANS: I don't know that you  
12 need to include it in the contract though,  
13 this is coming from the city's side of it  
14 and we do have the power to create, draft  
15 legislation and pass it, so what I would  
16 ask, for example, with regard to the  
17 suggestion you made is this, and if the  
18 mayor refuses an oversight committee does  
19 that mean then none will ever exist and this  
20 company walks away with a million dollars  
21 without being held responsible in any way,  
22 shape or form for the five years of their



23 contract?

24 MR. MCGOFF: That wasn't what I had  
25 in mind, but I thought that the most

107

1 effective way of implementing the idea would  
2 be to have it within the contract with ECTV,  
3 is it ECTV?

4 MS. EVANS: Yes.

5 MR. MCGOFF: That that would be the  
6 most effective way.

7 MS. EVANS: I agree.

8 MR. MCGOFF: And if, in fact, that  
9 there is a disagreement then I think that we  
10 can further discuss it to, you know,  
11 implement it in another way, but I think the  
12 first step would be to see if we can't make  
13 it the most effective way and then, you  
14 know, continue from there if min fact mit's  
15 not pertinent.

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: Mrs. Evans' motion  
17 is just to form the committee.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Right.

19 MR. COURTRIGHT: So if we form the  
20 committee we can hash this stuff out.

21 MR. MCGOFF: That's what I said, and  
22 that's what I thought was most reasonable.

23 MR. COURTRIGHT: And I would leave to

24 see it in the contract, that would be great  
25 if you could get it in contract then that

108

1 would appease any --

2 MR. MCGOFF: I don't think there is  
3 anything to stop us from creating a  
4 committee and then we can determine at a  
5 later date what the specifics duties of that  
6 committee would be and how it would go  
7 about.

8 MS. EVANS: And the membership.

9 MR. MCGOFF: Right, and all of that  
10 other stuff. There wasn't a second to your  
11 motion.

12 MS. FANUCCI: No.

13 MR. MCGOFF: To table it. Then we  
14 are on the motion, the motion was made and  
15 seconded to create an oversight committee  
16 for the operation of Channel 61.

17 MS. EVANS: But I had also added, I  
18 believe, that the membership would be  
19 appointed by city council.

20 MR. COURTRIGHT: One member for each  
21 council member.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Okay. Did we add that?  
23 I just want to make sure we have the wording

24 properly so that we are not --

25 MR. MINORA: So the motion

109

1 includes--

2 MS. EVANS: To create an oversight  
3 committee for ECTV.

4 MR. MINORA: Of five individuals  
5 appointed by council?

6 MS. EVANS: Yes.

7 MR. MINORA: And who on council would  
8 appoint them?

9 MS. EVANS: Each council member.

10 MR. COURTRIGHT: Each member would  
11 pick one person.

12 MR. MCGOFF: With one member by each  
13 council member.

14 MS. GATELLI: I think we can stagger  
15 the terms on that.

16 MS. EVANS: But that everyone has a  
17 part in this.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Mrs. Garvey, are you --

19 MS. GARVEY: I'm trying.

20 MR. MCGOFF: I just want to make sure  
21 that we have the wording right and that  
22 it's, you know, it's what we want. And so  
23 basically the motion is, just so we are  
24 clear, to create an oversight committee for

25

Channel 61 with membership to be appointed

110

1

by the five members with -- appointed by the

2

individual members of council. All in favor

3

signify by saying aye.

4

MS. EVANS: Aye.

5

MS. FANUCCI: Aye.

6

MS. GATELLI: Aye.

7

MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

8

MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed? The

9

ayes have it and so moved.

10

MS. EVANS: Thank you. As of today,

11

February 19, I received no response from

12

Mr. Hayes and Mr. Brazil for the written

13

snow removal policy. I hope I'm not to

14

assume that there is no policy or that maybe

15

they withheld the information because they

16

don't like me, but I believe I'm in good

17

company since hundreds of city residents

18

over the years have told me that they never

19

received responses as well or are scolded

20

for their persistence. So, maybe, you know,

21

some of these bosses earning the big bucks

22

need a big broom to sweep them out when they

23

don't answer questions and they won't help

24

citizens with their problems.

1 interrupt, but I did receive this to be  
2 passed on and with you missing the meeting  
3 that you were ill and I neglected to get  
4 this to you in time, but it was received  
5 from them.

6 MS. EVANS: Oh, thank you. So there  
7 is one after all, a draft copy, okay, and  
8 I'm going to go over there and I can let you  
9 know what that contains next week. Thank  
10 you, Mr. McGoff.

11 MR. MCGOFF: And I'm sorry for the  
12 delay in that.

13 MS. EVANS: No problem. Also, I  
14 received numerous e-mails and letters and a  
15 few calls regarding the tree planting in  
16 South Side and some residents noted that the  
17 2,600 block of Cedar area and the 26 and  
18 2,700 blocks of Birney where trees had  
19 damaged sidewalks and I was also asked to  
20 read the following note: "We do not need  
21 any trees on the 500 block of Maple Street,  
22 South Scranton, 520, 524, 526 and 530 Maple  
23 Street where senior citizens unable to clean  
24 leaves and dirt from the trees. We had  
25 trees planting and they uprooted the

1 sidewalks which we had to have repaired and  
2 the leaf truck never showed up, so all of  
3 the leaves blew back on our properties. We  
4 have need better streetlights, better roads  
5 and new lines painted on the streets."

6 Well, I'm not going to go on with  
7 the note, but I was hoping that perhaps  
8 council on behalf of the residents of just  
9 those specific addresses could send a letter  
10 to the Shade Tree Commission and the DPW  
11 notifying them that these specific  
12 residences would chose not to receive a  
13 tree.

14 MS. GATELLI: Can I interrupt? No  
15 one is going to be a getting a tree that  
16 doesn't want one. They are doing a survey  
17 of who wants trees, we have done this before  
18 in South Scranton and the people that didn't  
19 want them we took care of them, so no one  
20 will be getting a tree that doesn't want  
21 one.

22 MS. EVANS: Well, I understood from  
23 the newspaper that there is going to be  
24 sending letters to South Side residents and  
25 these trees can only be planted in low to

1 moderate income areas.

2 MS. GATELLI: Actually, in the  
3 Renaissance area, the redevelopment project.

4 MS. EVANS: So, I had wished that  
5 these people who had contacted me would be  
6 aware that they do not have to accept the  
7 tree if they don't want the tree. The trees  
8 are free. If you don't want the tree, you  
9 need not accept it and I'm sure that there  
10 is a way that you will be able to make that  
11 clear in writing or, you know, if there is a  
12 visit to your home and if you have any other  
13 questions or problems about it you contact  
14 me.

15 Has council had ample time over the  
16 last three weeks to consider the amendment  
17 to File of Council 82, 2007? I know in that  
18 period of time I have received a number of  
19 letters and e-mails regarding the amendment  
20 that I proposed three weeks ago?

21 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yeah, I'm fine.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. To answer I looked  
23 them over as well.

24 MS. EVANS: Then, I would like to  
25 move the amendment tonight. I move to amend

1 File of Council No. 82, 2007, to approve  
2 penalty, interest and fee schedule for  
3 collection of delinquent real estate taxes  
4 by striking 3-J, eight-hundred and no  
5 one-hundredth dollars or the preparation of  
6 and filing of a writ of execution for  
7 sheriff's sale.

8 3-K, the actual filing service  
9 execution and poundage fees, if any, for  
10 service and execution by the Office of the  
11 Sheriff of the County which are in effect at  
12 the time of such filing service and  
13 execution as established by the Office of  
14 the Sheriff of the county or such other  
15 instrumentality of government and shall be  
16 charged with the establishment of such fee.

17 3-L, one-hundred seventy-five and no  
18 one-hundredth dollars for the preparation,  
19 filing and conduct of the proceedings to  
20 effect service of process.

21 3-M, thirty and no one-hundredth  
22 dollars for costs incurred in connection  
23 with the reissuance of writs.

24 3-P, twenty-five and no  
25 one-hundredth dollars for the preparation



1 and filing of any praecipe, petition or  
2 motion to continue a judicial or sheriff's  
3 sale.

4 3-Q, four-hundred and no  
5 one-hundredth dollars for attendance by  
6 legal council at a judicial sheriff or tax  
7 sale.

8 And by striking the following dollar  
9 amounts: 3-A, twenty-five and no  
10 one-hundredth dollar per lien. 3-B,  
11 one-hundred sixty and no one-hundredth  
12 dollars. 3-C, thirty-five and no  
13 one-hundredth dollars. 3-U, and no more  
14 than \$225 per hour commensurate with the  
15 attorney's normal hourly rate and inserting  
16 3-A, ten and no one-hundredth dollars. 3-B,  
17 40 and no one-hundredth dollars. 3-C, 30  
18 and no one-hundredth dollars.

19 MR. COURTRIGHT: Second.

20 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

21 MR. COURTRIGHT: On the question,  
22 before Mrs. Evans had made that motion a few  
23 weeks back Mr. Hazzouri spoke and  
24 Mr. Hazzouri, I don't know if you are  
25 watching, but I've had an avalanche of phone

1 calls since you presented yourself here,  
2 evidently you hit home with other people  
3 that have the same problems, so I thank you  
4 for coming and I think it's time we change  
5 this ordinance.

6 MS. EVANS: And in the interim, I did  
7 stop into the Single Tax Office and had a  
8 very lengthy discussion with Mr. Chuck Cox  
9 who was the internal collector of taxes  
10 prior to the appointment of Mrs. Vitale, and  
11 I also spoke with a representative of the  
12 Single Tax Claims Office of the County of  
13 Lackawanna and they were very helpful and,  
14 you know, neither indicated that sheriff's  
15 sales had been conducted, that tax sales had  
16 occurred, for example, in the city only as  
17 recently as 1998 and houses were never taken  
18 by sheriff's sale and the county provides a  
19 payment plan, the county collects only the  
20 school district library and county taxes,  
21 but they will provide a payment plan to any  
22 individuals who demonstrates need or  
23 extenuating circumstances. Their statement  
24 was it has never been their intention to  
25 take a citizen's home through sheriff's

1 sale, so --

2 MS. FANUCCI: Well, I met with three  
3 parties on this and the city also has that  
4 option, in fact, there were four documents  
5 that went out on this legislation all  
6 stating, "Please call us and setup a plan,"  
7 and I believe and, you know, I don't have  
8 the exact number, but there was something  
9 like 35 percent of the letters that went out  
10 called into the beginning to setup a payment  
11 plan and once the payment plan had started  
12 their process stopped right there. I did  
13 look into Mr. Hazzouri's, exactly  
14 Mr. Hazzouri's after him being here and the  
15 reason his did not was because he never  
16 contacted to say, you know, I'll make a  
17 plan, I'll send you two dollars a week, you  
18 know, nothing. He never made a contact in  
19 years, so that was the problem with  
20 Mr. Hazzouri's. We have also had other  
21 people that we sat down and looked at, I had  
22 gotten tons of e-mails myself and when I  
23 went to and spoke to them on behalf of the  
24 taxpayers, they actually --NCC fixed, you  
25 know, the problem. One was a bad address,

1           they were sending actually their taxes to  
2           the wrong address and they were getting  
3           billed for that, they took care of that.  
4           And what they said was that they have no  
5           problem setting up a payment plan and that's  
6           what the letter stated for the past four  
7           letters, so that was something I was happy  
8           to see, you know, they are not looking to  
9           take the house either. In fact, they have  
10          not implemented the sheriff's sales or taken  
11          over of the house and when the speaker got  
12          up a few weeks ago and stated that the city  
13          was taking this woman's home I knew that not  
14          to be a fact because that had not happened  
15          to anyone in the city. So, that might have  
16          been a little bit of my reaction when  
17          sometimes people get up and misinform the  
18          public of what is going on. So, you know,  
19          we do provide that, too. Nobody in the city  
20          was looking to take the money.

21                   Also, after looking at legislation,  
22                   if you take out all of the fees that are you  
23                   looking to take out the city and the  
24                   taxpayers are still going to be responsible  
25                   for that money. Yeah. Right. So the

2 MS. EVANS: The city doesn't get that  
3 money.

4 MS. FANUCCI: Wait, wait, wait, if  
5 we take the legislation out the city will be  
6 responsible for the fees, meaning that the  
7 taxpayers who do pay their taxes right now  
8 will have to pay those fees because the  
9 motion -- we already got the money, we  
10 received the money. We received the tax  
11 money from the delinquent taxes, we have  
12 already received that and, Mr. McGoff, if  
13 you want it talk about the meeting with NCC  
14 that might be something that you want to go  
15 into so that they can understand a little  
16 bit more about what was said at that  
17 meeting.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Well, just that --  
19 sorry. Perhaps just to back up a little  
20 bit, this legislation was originally passed  
21 to deal with delinquent taxes for the years  
22 2004, 2005 and 2006. When it was passed NCC  
23 sent letters to all of the names that they  
24 received even before they had, I'm going to  
25 say before there was the authority to do

120

1 that, just a letter sent letting people know

2 that these fees and penalties were going to  
3 be enacted and imposed. That was in July of  
4 2007 and within the month of July they  
5 received back, I forget the dollar amount,  
6 but it was a significant amount of people  
7 responded and paid their taxes for those  
8 delinquent years. I should also note that  
9 the claim that many of these letters that  
10 were sent and, again, I don't have the  
11 percentage, but a number of them were to --  
12 were out of the area that a significant  
13 number were out of the area. Then in  
14 November 2007 a formal letter was sent to  
15 those people who had not -- let me backup.

16 If people even made an attempt, if  
17 people contacted NCC at that time after that  
18 July letter, there were no fees or penalties  
19 imposed from this legislation, it was  
20 stopped and any payment plan did not include  
21 fees. In November a formal letter was sent  
22 notifying people that they had 30 days to  
23 respond and at the end of that 30 days that  
24 these penalties would, in fact, take place.

25 MS. EVANS: No, the people were

121

1 charged those penalties.

2 MS. FANUCCI: No.

3 MS. EVANS: Yes, they were. I  
4 have -- I have the evidence at home right  
5 from NCC. They were charged extra. The  
6 bill went from 100 and some dollars up to  
7 several hundred dollars within the 30 days  
8 time limit.

9 MS. FANUCCI: Well, I have the report  
10 from Patricia Cobb and she states that --

11 MS. EVANS: She is the attorney for  
12 NCC.

13 MS. FANUCCI: Right. Right, that the  
14 they collected in three months prior to NCC  
15 they started in April 1 and they put out the  
16 first letter, nothing was changed in the  
17 fees, nothing, until they notified the  
18 people that they had 30 days and if -- and  
19 the fee was not implemented, so that's what  
20 she is saying, and for the 2005-2006 tax  
21 years then they said you have 30 days to  
22 call and make up a payment plan, every  
23 opportunity has been afforded to the  
24 delinquent taxpayer to get advance notice  
25 prior to implementation of any fee and the

122

1 current SRA project was no exception. They  
2 said that they always do that, that that's

3 not a new procedure, they have done that  
4 from day one. In June they alerted the  
5 delinquent taxpayer of the pending sale of  
6 the taxes due to SRA.

7 Now, this is a problem. We  
8 received the money, we sold our delinquent  
9 taxes to a company, they gave us the money.  
10 We did this why? Because we didn't want to  
11 have to raise taxes. We wanted to try to  
12 get some money from people who owed us money  
13 already, this was the delinquent taxpayer  
14 from 2005 to 2007 is included, also. They  
15 did not put the fees on them, but they were  
16 notified. So, you had time to make up a  
17 payment schedule, you had time to say,  
18 "Listen, I have a problem, I'm not going to  
19 be able to do that."

20 They have not put more taxes on or  
21 more money on anyone who has made a payment  
22 schedule, so to me that's what this is about  
23 and we also, you know, since then 25 percent  
24 more money has come into the city in 2007  
25 since we did put these fees on an implement

123

1 them because people knew now that we have a  
2 recourse. Before, the county did have a  
3 reason and a good reason to be able to take



4           your houses because they have legislation,  
5           we did not have legislation, we had nothing  
6           to be able to say we can collect the fees.  
7           That's why they are paying their county  
8           taxes and they were paying state taxes and  
9           they were leaving the city dry, so I don't  
10          believe that any of these fees, you know,  
11          are put out there for people not to be at a  
12          stop.

13                        I mean, it's not like we are just  
14                        saying, okay, this is going, this ball is in  
15                        motion, it's going to keep going and keep  
16                        going and we are going to get all of this  
17                        money and have you no say if you can't  
18                        afford it, if the seniors cannot afford  
19                        this. That's not how it works. They still  
20                        have the right to just like anything else  
21                        when your credit card comes in the mail you  
22                        have to call and makeup a schedule, a  
23                        payment schedule, and as long as you do that  
24                        these fees will never happen.

25                        MS. EVANS: Well, this gentleman who

124

1           was 88-years old was not given the option of  
2           a payment plan. He was given 30 days in  
3           which to pay the initial amount plus the

4 extra let's say \$300 plus by that 30th day  
5 and if not beyond that it jumped up to  
6 \$2000, so there was no payment plan within  
7 that 30-day time period.

8 But, again, I anticipated this three  
9 weeks ago when I introduced it the first  
10 time. I anticipated that, you know, of  
11 course, you are going to seek other  
12 opinions, but I have to say it is a  
13 questionable reference when it's coming from  
14 the very company that's reaping the rich  
15 financial benefits of that piece of  
16 legislation. Of course they are going to  
17 defend it. They are getting very rich off  
18 it.

19 And, you know, senior citizens,  
20 people will talk about get a reverse  
21 mortgage. Well, you know what, there is an  
22 awful lot of working families that are in  
23 these circumstances, they are not old enough  
24 to apply for a reverse mortgage. And senior  
25 citizens, yes, I know very well how

125

1 meticulous they are about paying their  
2 bills, but you can't get blood from a stone.  
3 If the money isn't there the money isn't  
4 there. They are not hiding it under their

5 mattress because they intend to take them  
6 with them over a cathedral cemetery. They  
7 haven't got it. So now we are going to  
8 proceed along with a sheriff's sale which is  
9 something that, you know, to my knowledge  
10 has only been a regular occurrence with, for  
11 example, banks and mortgages and mortgagees,  
12 and we are stepping right into that  
13 territory not to make the city rich, but to  
14 make an outside agency rich.

15 MS. FANUCCI: We received  
16 90 percent--

17 MS. EVANS: We received -- no.

18 MS. FANUCCI: -- of our back taxes  
19 for selling those.

20 MS. EVANS: We received taxes and we  
21 placed a 10 percent annum on top of that.  
22 NCC places a 25 percent on top of that plus  
23 everything in that that legislation.

24 MS. FANUCCI: If a phone call is not  
25 made to makeup a payment plan. So, yes, I

126

1 do feel --

2 MS. EVANS: Why were people not  
3 offered payment plans?

4 MS. FANUCCI: They were are all

5 offered payment plans.

6 MS. EVANS: No, they were not.

7 MS. FANUCCI: Did you make a phone  
8 call to NCC on behalf of that 80-year-old  
9 man?

10 MS. EVANS: No, I didn't, but I've  
11 actually been to -- -

12 MS. FANUCCI: You should have.

13 MS. EVANS: -- NCC since I have been  
14 on counsel.

15 MS. FANUCCI: Yes, once at 4:00, they  
16 told us that you were, but what I want to  
17 ask you --

18 MS. EVANS: Oh, did they? What else  
19 did they say?

20 MS. FANUCCI: I said -- they said --  
21 "Was she here," I asked. I said, "Was she  
22 here," because I wanted to know where the  
23 information you were provided from and they  
24 said you were there.

25 MS. EVANS: Was it John Petulla you

127

1 spoke with?

2 MS. FANUCCI: I spoke to everyone. I  
3 spoke to --

4 MS. EVANS: Oh, John Petulla, yes,  
5 and the attorney.

6 MS. FANUCCI: I said, "Did you speak  
7 to Mrs. Evans on behalf of this  
8 legislation?"

9 Of course I did.

10 MS. EVANS: Well, I am very glad that  
11 they told you about my visit. Did they also  
12 tell you that they threatened me --

13 MS. FANUCCI: No.

14 MS. EVANS: -- with pulling their  
15 business out of Scranton for coming to  
16 complain, question and defend the taxpayers  
17 in the city --

18 MS. FANUCCI: No.

19 MS. EVANS: -- who had been  
20 improperly filed against by them? That  
21 company has been sued several times.

22 MS. FANUCCI: You didn't go on behalf  
23 the taxpayer and that's what I'm saying, if  
24 you spoke on that 80-year-old man, like I  
25 went on three different occasions about

128

1 people since we started this discussion and  
2 they did correct problems, problems that  
3 were wrong address, problems that --

4 MS. EVANS: But the meeting was down  
5 at NCC with his nephew, who is middle-aged,

6 they understand the situation very well.

7 They went to NCC.

8 MS. FANUCCI: And they would not  
9 makeup a payment plan for him?

10 MS. EVANS: No, they would not. No,  
11 they would not. And that was the story I  
12 brought to you on council in December.

13 MS. FANUCCI: Will you provide his  
14 name after the meeting?

15 MS. EVANS: I don't have the  
16 information with me and I would have to ask  
17 the parties involved.

18 MS. FANUCCI: Right. See, if they  
19 will do that.

20 MS. EVANS: And if they want their  
21 name --

22 MS. FANUCCI: Because they really  
23 have been very helpful with people that I  
24 have provided for them to try to get to them  
25 to see if they can come to a --

129

1 MS. EVANS: Well, that would mean  
2 though that for everyone who has a problem I  
3 think you would have to be going down there  
4 and interceding for them.

5 MS. FANUCCI: No, I think that a  
6 phone call to stop your taxes from -- your

7 delinquent taxes from going into fees is not  
8 something that's unreasonable for the normal  
9 taxpayer. I think that the people should  
10 want to do that. I know myself if I get  
11 behind you call. You call and find out if  
12 there is way you can make payments and the  
13 bottom line is that if you can call and stop  
14 the process and it would take a phone call  
15 from what they are saying then these fees  
16 are not going to be tacked on and that's the  
17 bottom line, but I also am happy for the  
18 money we received. I am happy for the fact  
19 that we increased 25 percent of our tax  
20 base.

21 MS. EVANS: You know what, I bet if  
22 we ever had the audacity to pass an amnesty  
23 program for a period of months, I bet the  
24 city would see triple what it does right now  
25 because if people were able to pay just the

130

1 face value of what they owe I think you  
2 would see that money coming in.

3 MR. MCGOFF: They were offered that  
4 opportunity.

5 MS. FANUCCI: From day one.

6 MS. EVANS: When were they offered

7 that opportunity?

8 MR. MCGOFF: When the letter was sent  
9 from NCC.

10 MS. FANUCCI: For 2005, 2006 --

11 MS. EVANS: The face value.

12 MS. FANUCCI: Face value. 2005,  
13 2006--

14 MS. EVANS: So, NCC was not going to  
15 collect their 25 percent fee on top of that?  
16 I doubt that very much.

17 MR. MCGOFF: I'll stand corrected on  
18 that.

19 MS. EVANS: And the city's additional  
20 10 percent.

21 MR. MCGOFF: To date, just to back up  
22 and -- to date, since December, in December  
23 after the 30-day period was over fees were  
24 attached. The only fees that were attached  
25 were the ones that are on here from A

131

1 through E. At this point in time no  
2 additional fees have been attached at all.  
3 The attempt was that the initial fees were  
4 sufficient enough to -- should have been  
5 sufficient enough to encourage people to pay  
6 the delinquent taxes. If not, then, yes,  
7 additional fees would be added, but all of



8                   these have not been attached at this point  
9                   in time, only the first five, and with that  
10                  as a February \$192,000 -- over \$192,000 has  
11                  been collected in delinquent taxes.

12                   I think there is a need, and I said  
13                   this before when the initial legislation  
14                   came along, I think there is a need for  
15                   penalty for people who refuse to pay taxes.  
16                   I think there are -- are there circumstances  
17                   in which there are people that are hurt by  
18                   it, probably, and I think that those can be  
19                   dealt with as they are have been in some  
20                   cases, but I think that removing the penalty  
21                   penalties from the delinquent taxes severs  
22                   no purpose, that people will continue to not  
23                   pay.

24                   MS. EVANS: Well, this doesn't remove  
25                   all the penalties though, Mr. McGoff, I'm

132

1                   not rescinding the ordinance.

2                   MR. MCGOFF: I understand that.

3                   MS. EVANS: I'm amending it to make  
4                   it more reasonable.

5                   MR. MCGOFF: I understand that.

6                   MS. EVANS: There are still, indeed,  
7                   many penalties, costs and fees attached to

8 it because I, too, favor collecting  
9 delinquent taxes. I just don't favor  
10 putting my throat on some -- or putting my  
11 foot on someone's throat and crushing them.

12 MR. MCGOFF: I don't think that  
13 that's happening.

14 MS. EVANS: Well, of course, that  
15 will never happen, that's why it's included  
16 here in writing.

17 MR. MCGOFF: I might also mention  
18 that taxpayers do have the ability to  
19 challenge the reasonableness and validity of  
20 fees and penalties from third party  
21 collectors, the Municipal Claim and Tax Lien  
22 law allows that opportunity, so there are  
23 avenues for people that --

24 MS. EVANS: I'm well aware of that,  
25 but are they going to have the money to hire

133

1 an attorney to go and challenge this if they  
2 don't even have the money to pay for their  
3 delinquency.

4 MR. MCGOFF: I'm just saying that  
5 there are opportunities for people to pay  
6 their delinquent taxes without onerous  
7 penalties being attached. When people  
8 refuse to do that and make no effort to do

9                   that then, in fact, there needs to be  
10                   something in place that will compel them in  
11                   some way to pay those taxes. I don't think  
12                   that that is unreasonable and I think that  
13                   the legislation that was passed is a  
14                   reasonable attempt to collect the delinquent  
15                   taxes.

16                   MS. EVANS: Well, then I just hope we  
17                   are going to be this meticulous across the  
18                   board with all taxes. Wage taxes, those who  
19                   have never paid it, those who live here,  
20                   work out of town and don't pay it, people  
21                   whose files have been pulled, let's be just  
22                   as meticulous to the rich as we are to the  
23                   poor.

24                   MS. GATELLI: I agree with that.

25                   MR. MCGOFF: I would support that

134

1                   wholeheartedly.

2                   MS. FANUCCI: I agree with that  
3                   100 percent.

4                   MS. EVANS: There is an awful lot out  
5                   there.

6                   MS. FANUCCI: How do you -- Mrs.  
7                   Evans, do you really know that for a fact?  
8                   Because you bring it up a lot. Is that

9 factual information because I believe if  
10 that is factual information that that's  
11 something that should be brought forward,  
12 right? I mean, if you know that, that these  
13 are certain individuals out there who are  
14 not paying and that they are being protected  
15 I think you should bring that out.

16 MS. EVANS: And what -- honestly  
17 would what would be done with them? I think  
18 we all know, I mean, it sounds very nice to  
19 do that, sounds like the right thing, like  
20 I'm trying to do the right thing here, you  
21 see the right thing, you see a wrong thing,  
22 you try to do the right thing for people,  
23 but it doesn't happen, so I have very little  
24 faith in a system that's going to go after  
25 those people when it's been ongoing for a

135

1 long time, and, you know, just like I said  
2 that night, and I don't want to belabor this  
3 anymore, when Mr. McDowell would not even  
4 allow these tax auditors to come to a  
5 meeting just to discuss the process, what  
6 does that tell you?

7 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else on the  
8 question? The motion is to Amendment to  
9 File of Council No. 82, 2007. All those in

10 favor?

11 MS. EVANS: Aye.

12 MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

13 MR. MCGOFF: All those opposed?

14 MS. FANUCCI: No.

15 MS. GATELLI: No.

16 MR. MCGOFF: No.

17 MS. EVANS: Sorry, folks. But  
18 tomorrow is another day. Next, I have a few  
19 more issues. If this would be agreeable to  
20 my honorable colleagues council requests a  
21 letter to the University of Scranton and the  
22 Public Safety Department on behalf of Hill  
23 Section residents requesting a proactive  
24 plan an increased surveillance of off campus  
25 students dwellings on March 15, 2008, St.

136

1 Patrick's parade day and I think all of us  
2 did receive a letter from a concerned  
3 resident, I'm just going to give this  
4 briefly, not the entire letter, last year's  
5 parade day celebrated by the off-campus  
6 students that lived in these run-down  
7 dwellings involved almost 24 hours of  
8 drinking, harassment, fights and vandalism.  
9 Hundreds of partygoers, mostly underage,

10 descended on our neighborhood throughout the  
11 morning hours. These student tenant  
12 buildings were full of partiers inside and  
13 on porches throughout the day. Late in the  
14 afternoon, these drunken parties turned  
15 destructive as students, including many  
16 friends from out-of-town spilled out onto  
17 the streets harassing residents in their  
18 homes and assaulting young people walking  
19 home from the parade. And it goes on and  
20 that paragraph ends.

21 Our police officers did their  
22 absolute best to cover dozens of city blocks  
23 around this school that day. The next  
24 morning these students took off for spring  
25 break and you know what happened thereafter,

137

1 I don't want to go into that and incident.

2 But, if council agrees I would like  
3 that letter sent to the University and to  
4 the Public Safety Director. Yes? Thank  
5 you.

6 The mayor recently stated that he  
7 intends to tear down the remaining theatre  
8 structure at Nay Aug park because a  
9 replacement is impractical and before the  
10 door closes on this project I have several

11 questions which require responses from the  
12 administration. I'd like to know the name  
13 of the insurance company and agent that  
14 insured the tent theatre at Nay Aug Park.  
15 Why didn't the city file an insurance claim  
16 to repair the theatre?

17 Also, was the structure insured with  
18 inadequate coverage and if so, why.  
19 Further, why was the tent not dismantled  
20 from the frame during the winter months and  
21 why was a decision made to tear down the  
22 theater one year after the actual damages  
23 occurred? And if my colleagues agree with  
24 my concerns I would like letters sent on  
25 behalf of council to the mayor, Mr. Brazil,

138

1 Mrs. Novembrino and Attorney Patterson  
2 requesting responses to the aforementioned  
3 questions.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Any objection?

5 MS. GATELLI: I just would like to  
6 add one thing, I don't know if you will  
7 agree, but I think the tent should stay  
8 there.

9 MS. EVANS: I do, too.

10 MS. GATELLI: And I have talked to

11 Bob Slessinger from the Scranton Theatre and  
12 it was very successful.

13 MS. EVANS: Yes.

14 MS. GATELLI: So, I would like to  
15 add that in there that the mayor can do  
16 whatever he can to --

17 MS. EVANS: Certainly.

18 MS. GATELLI: Reinstate that tent.

19 MS. EVANS: Um-hum, I agree.

20 MS. GATELLI: And then I agree with  
21 the whole thing.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Any objections to the  
23 letter?

24 MS. EVANS: On --

25 MR. MCGOFF: I would just going to

139

1 ask Mrs. Garvey to do that.

2 MS. EVANS: Thank you. On a related  
3 topic, I would like to know if the treehouse  
4 is insured and by what insurance company and  
5 agent and also I wish to know how it can be  
6 insured with only one entrance/exit.

7 I also have, this was built-up now  
8 over three weeks, some citizens' requests.  
9 The 2100 block of Brick Avenue residents  
10 report that in front of and across from 2158  
11 Brick Avenue both sewers are blocked. And,



12 in fact, I got a call today from the  
13 residents stating that they are working in  
14 the area not on these specific problems that  
15 I'm reporting, but they are working close by  
16 on the same types of problems, so I'm hoping  
17 while they are out there they would get to  
18 this address, 2158 Brick. The street is  
19 beginning to erode causing a dangerous drop  
20 into a column dump and into like Leggett's  
21 Creek, the depression needs to be filled as  
22 soon as possible and residents also request  
23 the installation of a guardrail, if  
24 possible, in this area to prevent vehicular  
25 accidents.

140

1 The 200 block of Hollister Avenue  
2 neighbors report junk cars in the block and  
3 they report that previously junk cars were  
4 removed, but they were later replaced by  
5 others.

6 The 900 block of Myrtle Street  
7 between Quincy Avenue and Hitchcock Court,  
8 there would be trash, mattresses, weeds,  
9 twigs which were thrown on the sidewalks and  
10 curbs seven months ago and part of debris  
11 was even dragged up the hill where it also

12 remains and as a result students have to  
13 walk in the street because they can't  
14 navigate on the sidewalk through the debris,  
15 so the area of residents voice their concern  
16 for school students during the winter months  
17 who were forced to walk into the streets so  
18 if the DPW could please pick up that trash  
19 in both locations as soon as possible.

20 The rear of 730 North Irving Avenue.  
21 Residents of the 700 block of North Irving  
22 Avenue wish to know why repeated calls,  
23 requests, and promises by Mr. Seitzinger  
24 have gone unanswered over the last one and  
25 one half years. The garage at that address

141

1 remains in deplorable condition and poses a  
2 safety hazard. When can they expect action  
3 will occur?

4 The residents of the 1400 block of  
5 Dickson Avenue complain of dust and dirt in  
6 their road from Keystone Block located at  
7 the corner of Glen Street and Dickson  
8 Avenue.

9 And, finally, I have received  
10 reports that the university is demolishing  
11 the old student center, and I'm told that  
12 it's been done without permits. I don't

13 know if that is true or false because I am  
14 not an employee of licensing, inspections  
15 and permits, so I'm hoping that  
16 Mr. Seitzinger can either verify this and  
17 correct it or deny it because it's an  
18 absolutely falsehood, and that's it.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Courtright?

20 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yes. I'll go first  
21 with, we discussed in caucus about Keyser --  
22 the people's concern in Keyser Terrace and  
23 Mr. Powell was here earlier speaking on the  
24 development of up there, and I was there  
25 last week, not this past Saturday but the

142

1 Saturday before with many of the residents,  
2 and they would like to see that we would  
3 have a meeting at the Keyser Valley  
4 Community Center. Thursday evenings seem to  
5 be the night they would be hoping for. They  
6 said anytime 7:00, 7:30 would be acceptable  
7 to them. The question arose, you know,  
8 would all of council be able to be there, I  
9 think all of council with be able to be  
10 there as long as we were in observance and  
11 weren't taking any action. Kay? Kay, I'm  
12 sorry.

13 MS. GARVEY: I'm sorry, I was  
14 conferring with Mr. Minora.

15 MR. COURTRIGHT: I guess we are at a  
16 little bit at a loss for who is doing  
17 Mr. Parker's job right now, but if we can  
18 ask Mr. Brazil if he knows and ask them if  
19 they would be willing to meet with the  
20 residents of Keyser Terrace on some Thursday  
21 evening in the very near future, number one,  
22 as soon as possible so that the thing  
23 Mr. Powell has spoken about doesn't go  
24 forward and is already built by the time we  
25 have the meeting; and number two, I have a

143

1 list and if anybody from council doesn't  
2 have it, I have a list of the concerns that  
3 I received when I was back there and I asked  
4 them to put it in writing for me, and there  
5 are several, and a layman's opinion, my  
6 opinion, there is a lot of problems there,  
7 so if we can try to get that setup as soon  
8 as possible some Thursday evening I would  
9 appreciate that.

10 One other thing, Kay, I know awhile  
11 back we asked to give proclamations to the  
12 West Scranton football team and I believe we  
13 are awaiting for some other seasons to get

14 over, maybe basketball.

15 MS. GATELLI: I think will be next  
16 week.

17 MR. COURTRIGHT: So if we can get  
18 that going I'm sure everybody would like to  
19 see that.

20 MS. GATELLI: I think it's going to  
21 be next week, I'll let you know tomorrow.

22 MR. COURTRIGHT: I got this letter  
23 awhile back and it's three pages front and  
24 back and I apologize, but I can't make out  
25 your writing, most of your letter and I

144

1 believe it's about, I know it's about Park  
2 Gardens, and some kind of parking problem up  
3 there and it's a very lengthy letter, but  
4 you left me no phone number or address or  
5 anything for me to get in touch with you,  
6 and I apologize, but I can't read your  
7 writing and I have tried to ask a couple of  
8 over people to read it and they had  
9 difficulty, too, so if you wrote this letter  
10 if you could call me or if you want to  
11 e-mail it to me you can do that and then I  
12 would be able to read it and I'll try to  
13 help you out.

14                   We have the legislation on Skyview  
15                   this evening. I had asked this in the past  
16                   and it kind of fell on deaf ears now that we  
17                   got a new director over there and maybe she  
18                   would be willing to do this, when we have  
19                   legislation coming down of this magnitude I  
20                   think it's fair to say that the  
21                   administration knows months and months,  
22                   maybe years at a time sometimes, and so--  
23                   which would be Mrs. Aebli now, but before  
24                   Mrs. Hailstone, and I think it's kind of  
25                   unfair to us to give us the legislation, you

145

1                   know, three or four days before we have a  
2                   meeting or whatever the case maybe.

3                   And even I believe Mrs. Aebli, is it  
4                   Mrs. Aebli or is it Miss? Miss, okay. I'm  
5                   old here, I guess, but she even said this  
6                   was a very complex piece of legislation and  
7                   I would ask that they do this, if they are  
8                   going to send legislation such as this  
9                   before to try and give us, you know, a  
10                  couple of weeks notice, hey, this is going  
11                  to be coming down if you have any questions  
12                  so that we can intelligently vote on this.

13                  I'm voting, no, on all of tonight only  
14                  because I got the letter from her today, I

15 did call there the other day she wasn't in  
16 and neither was Lori Reed and Jim, I forget  
17 his last name, but he was very helpful to  
18 me, he tried to answer every question I had  
19 for him, and I then I got an e-mail from Ms.  
20 Aebli just the other day and I hadn't had an  
21 opportunity to get back to her. So I'm just  
22 voting, no, because I don't feel that I'm up  
23 to speed on it, and I'm always leery when we  
24 are giving grants.

25 I just got a letter today, and I

146

1 actually got it here late and I didn't  
2 really read it, I didn't have an opportunity  
3 to, but especially when we are giving money  
4 away in a grant that really makes me think,  
5 but \$400,000 and then another \$150,000 is a  
6 lot of money. It's my understanding it is a  
7 private company.

8 One of the questions that I asked  
9 is, you know, who are the people behind it  
10 because that question is always asked to me,  
11 you know, is it this corporation or that  
12 corporation and I don't think it's any  
13 secret one of the first things they asked me  
14 is do they donate to the mayor? You know, I

15 don't know if they did or not, you know, I  
16 don't know even know their names, but  
17 whatever information they could give me I  
18 would appreciate it. I am going to vote,  
19 no, this evening. If it moves forward I  
20 will certainly talk to Ms. Aebli either this  
21 week and try to get more abreast of what's  
22 going on here.

23 Kay, another thing, I guess my stuff  
24 has built up here as well as Mrs. Evans has,  
25 I asked a long time ago there was a study

147

1 done back on Kane Street and Pittston Avenue  
2 in Minooka and I asked back when Mr. Parker  
3 was here and I didn't get any response to  
4 the study, and when Mr. Brazil first came on  
5 it was only fair to give him some time. I  
6 would like to see the study that was done  
7 back there on Kane and Pittston Avenue as  
8 they continue to get flooded. I know there  
9 is no easy fix, but I would just like to see  
10 the study.

11 I promised the people back there  
12 that I would try to look into it for them  
13 and I'm probably forgetting some of the  
14 things, but one last thing, I believe the  
15 mayor said he doesn't answer, he doesn't



16 like getting my letters on this or he is not  
17 going to answer anymore or whatever the case  
18 may be, but I'm going to ask to send a  
19 letter on this again. For years now I have  
20 been asking about this project that we try  
21 to do on Main Avenue in West Scranton and  
22 Congressman Kanjorski is more than gracious  
23 enough to come in, he walked the avenue with  
24 us, he asked a lot of questions, not only  
25 was he in favor of the project he had some

148

1 suggestions. One of his suggestions was he  
2 wanted to see underground utilities, and as  
3 that moved on I had asked many times were we  
4 still good with that, they said the project  
5 wasn't dead but I got no answers.

6 I stopped the mayor at the National  
7 Night Out this year and I asked him, is this  
8 project dead, I said, I'm not going to just  
9 keep busting you week after week, if it's  
10 dead, tell me it's dead. He said, no, it's  
11 not dead, we weren't going the route of  
12 Mr. Kanjorski, the money was going to be  
13 coming from the state and we would see it in  
14 the state budget, so if you would please  
15 update me so I can update the people on Main

16 Avenue.

17 And the urgency is this, many of  
18 them were interested in repairing their  
19 sidewalks themselves but they don't want to  
20 come in and do whatever they need to do with  
21 them and the project does go through, so,  
22 you know, we kind of got them on hold here.  
23 So, if he does not like me sending him a  
24 letter and he tells you that I will call  
25 him, whatever he wants me to do to make him

149

1 happy I will do it, I would just like an  
2 answer, and I believe that's all I have.  
3 Thank you.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Mrs. Fanucci.

5 MS. FANUCCI: I actually wanted to  
6 speak on two things tonight. I would like  
7 to make a motion in light of the NCC and try  
8 to take a gauge on who is having problems  
9 and who is not having problems, I want to  
10 send a letter to the mayor to implement the  
11 procedure for the Treasurer's Office to log  
12 all calls with the person's name and number  
13 and the problem so that we can get a copy of  
14 that weekly and maybe try to keep, you know,  
15 on top of the situation to see what exactly  
16 is going on. You know what, maybe that way

17 we would know if -- I did make that in a  
18 motion awhile ago that every department  
19 actually started keeping logs and from what  
20 I was told the procedure has to come through  
21 the mayor's office, so I'm going -- he is in  
22 charge of that department, so I am going to  
23 ask that the mayor does implement this and  
24 maybe make sure that he we can receive a  
25 copy of the log weekly, that way we can

150

1 contact, you know, know exactly what kind of  
2 problems are going on and I'm doing that in  
3 the form of a motion.

4 MS. GATELLI: I'll second that.

5 MS. FANUCCI: Thank you.

6 MR. COURTRIGHT: On the question,  
7 I'm for your motion, but I'm just asking  
8 this question, is this where they are  
9 instructed to call is the Treasurer's  
10 Office? Is that the first place they call?

11 MS. FANUCCI: That would be the first  
12 phone call if you are having problems you  
13 would call there first before, you know, to  
14 before you would be directed to NCC and I  
15 know that a lot of problems have come in  
16 through that office because we have been

17 told that, so I would like to know and just  
18 try to find out what citizens are having  
19 problems and I think that if we can stay on  
20 top of that that might be helpful.

21 MS. EVANS: I think, yeah, they get  
22 some calls, but actually the delinquent  
23 taxpayer is directed to call NCC.

24 MS. FANUCCI: Right. Right, after  
25 that.

151

1 MS. EVANS: And, you know, it was a  
2 number of years ago, Mr. Courtright you  
3 might recall, I had asked that NCC take or  
4 keep logs of their phone calls because at  
5 that time we had so many citizens who came  
6 to city council just that once or twice to  
7 talk about NCC and the fact that they had  
8 been abused over the phone, do you recall  
9 that?

10 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yeah.

11 MS. GATELLI: I remember that.

12 MR. COURTRIGHT: I got to say this,  
13 we changed the letter which I think solved a  
14 lot of problems, the letter was a little on  
15 the harsh side back then and it was scaring,  
16 it was certainly scary to some older people.  
17 I got to say one thing, ever since that

18 letter has been changed most of my calls  
19 have been limited. Most of them. Now, with  
20 this new legislation, I got to be honest,  
21 they have started to escalate again.

22 MS. FANUCCI: Well, there is a reason  
23 I'm doing this, I had a few constituents  
24 when I was talking to about the address  
25 being a problem, the address change, the

152

1 first phone call that was made was made  
2 there and, you know, I just think that that  
3 would be a starting ground for us at least  
4 to try and to get it and I would love to see  
5 that in all departments, but just to start  
6 there because that's what we are discussing  
7 tonight and no different than me saying when  
8 I went over to NCC, did you speak to Mrs.  
9 Evans on this, this is our problems. I  
10 mean, you have you to try and stay ahead of  
11 it, so that's what I wanted to do.

12 MR. MCGOFF: We have a motion to ask  
13 the mayor to institute a call log for the  
14 Treasurer's Office, all calls dealing with  
15 delinquent taxes and listing a name, a  
16 contact number and the specific nature of  
17 the problem. All in favor?

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MS. EVANS: Aye.

MS. FANUCCI: Aye.

MS. GATELLI: Aye.

MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

MR. MCGOFF: Aye. All Opposed? The ayes have it and so moved.

MS. FANUCCI: I wanted to speak on a few of the OECD issues we had tonight. The

money -- the Growing Greener money, that is not a new issue of money. It is a transfer from the Connell building project to the garage, the reason being, and I know I have said this 100 times, and when I say it for some reason that people ask for information and when I give it seems like it's not true, but it's a use it or lose it deal. If it's not used soon we will lose that money from the state. That is why it was transferred to the garage because that's going to be the first phase of the project, that seems to be progressing faster than the Connell building, that's what I have been told. A lot of times they have timeframes on the money, you know, and this money was earmarked for the Connell building in the beginning so it's not new money that's being

19 issued.

20 I also want to on behalf of Mrs.  
21 Schumacher, I would like to send a letter to  
22 licensing and permit maybe to Mark asking  
23 him how a restaurant can fall through the  
24 crack with our health department and health  
25 inspector, what has happened there, maybe

154

1 for a little bit of a report so with can  
2 find out exactly how this happened so maybe  
3 we can prevent that from happening again in  
4 the city. And maybe he can give us some  
5 insight on, you know, we have all said that  
6 we would like to see some more people in  
7 that department, so maybe will help us get  
8 some insight on that.

9 And I do want to say one thing you  
10 one thing, you know, in light of the last  
11 few weeks and all of the terrible violent  
12 situations that have occurred I'm going to  
13 ask, Mrs. Knight, when you come up to speak  
14 I do smile and I'm going to smile at you  
15 because I do feel that you are trying to  
16 engage a situation that maybe is not exactly  
17 something that you are intending to do. I  
18 do feel that your tone gets a little bit,

19                   you know, you get excited and you get a  
20                   little bit out of control, so when I do that  
21                   it's to try and deflect the way you are  
22                   going about your actions and speaking. I'm  
23                   certainly never going to stop smiling, but I  
24                   do want to say that I'm going to ask that  
25                   maybe we can tone it down. I understand you

155

1                   have your views and I understand your views  
2                   perfectly, but maybe if we cannot engage in  
3                   such a combative behavior that might be  
4                   something that we can think about. And that  
5                   is all I have. Thank you.

6                   MS. KNIGHT: And can I answer on  
7                   that?

8                   MR. MCGOFF: Excuse me.

9                   MS. KNIGHT: Mr. McGoff, can I  
10                  answer?

11                  MR. MCGOFF: Excuse me, no.

12                  MS. KNIGHT: Oh, I can't?

13                  MR. MCGOFF: No.

14                  MS. KNIGHT: Well, I will see you  
15                  next week, Ms. Fanucci.

16                  MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Mrs.  
17                  Gatelli.

18                  MS. GATELLI: The first thing I'd  
19                  like to remind Kay about the letter



20 concerning the skunks, but more importantly,  
21 if you see any of your neighbors that don't  
22 have garbage cans that is the number one  
23 reason why there are skunks. If there is  
24 nothing for the skunks to eat you will not  
25 have skunks in your neighborhood and mostly

156

1 the people that I talk to that do have the  
2 skunks it usually is a neighbor that doesn't  
3 have a can and the garbage is laying all  
4 over their yard, so, you know, we might want  
5 to have the department of community  
6 development be a little more alert when  
7 there is a garbage complaint because it does  
8 cause the skunk problem.

9 Another item concerning the St.  
10 Patrick's Day parade, it is a problem, it's  
11 a problem every year, and I worked one year  
12 with the Lackawanna County Drug and Alcohol  
13 Commission and we tried to encourage the  
14 taverns not to open quiet so early in the  
15 morning. We were not successful, but I  
16 think it would be behoove this council to  
17 send a letter to the Drug and Alcohol  
18 Commission of Lackawanna County and  
19 encourage them to try to make another effort

20 at encouraging the taverns, I know that we  
21 cannot make them do that, but it certainly  
22 would add to the family atmosphere that  
23 should be at the St. Patrick's Day parade  
24 rather than some of the things we do see, so  
25 I'm going to ask that if everyone would

157

1 agree that we send a letter to the  
2 Lackawanna County Drug and Alcohol  
3 Commission and ask them to contact the  
4 Tavern Association and just encourage them  
5 to possibly not open quite as earlier on the  
6 St. Patrick's Day parade.

7 MR. MCGOFF: Any opposition? Mrs.  
8 Garvey, please make that happen.

9 MS. GATELLI: And the last thing I  
10 want to do is we have a new tax collector  
11 and I think that it is time now for us to  
12 investigate the wage tax. I do know of  
13 people that don't pay the wage tax because  
14 they say they don't live in Scranton and  
15 they have a home somewhere else and they  
16 claim that as their primary domicile which  
17 in my own mind I know that it really isn't,  
18 but I don't know legally the ramifications  
19 if you have several homes what that entails,  
20 but I would like to send a letter to the tax

21 collector and ask her to do an investigation  
22 at her earliest convenience to look to her  
23 auditors for some information and see if,  
24 indeed, there is any evidence that wage  
25 taxes are not being paid and, you know, I

158

1 don't know how far back we can go, but I  
2 would ask for at least the last several  
3 years to start with and if she could respond  
4 to us in, you know, within a month or so and  
5 maybe give us a copy of her audit if  
6 everyone is agreeable with that? Anybody  
7 like to add anything else to that?

8 MS. EVANS: Yes, perhaps the auditors  
9 could explain to her the process that the  
10 city used to follow-up and what their jobs  
11 had once consisted of in terms of the  
12 collection.

13 MS. GATELLI: Of the wage tax.

14 MS. EVANS: And delinquent wage taxes  
15 and why it was discontinued and in what ways  
16 it could be revitalized.

17 MS. GATELLI: Okay. I think we need  
18 to get some answers. And that's all I have.  
19 Thank you.

20 MR. MCGOFF: I'll try to be quick,

21 just two times. First that it was brought  
22 up by a couple of speakers, again, the issue  
23 of Mr. Brazil helping move paintings from  
24 the gallery or from the street outside of  
25 the gallery, I know that someone did bring

159

1 that issue to the District Attorney's  
2 Office, the District Attorney's Office did  
3 respond that there was -- that they did not  
4 feel that there was a reason to investigate  
5 and there was no violation of any law in  
6 what he did. And again, I don't know the  
7 exact circumstances of why Mr. Brazil was  
8 there or did that, but I agree that acting  
9 in good faith to help people in an emergency  
10 is part of what Department of Public Works  
11 should do and for those who said that  
12 perhaps the Department of Public Works  
13 should be available at other emergencies I  
14 wholeheartedly agree, and I would have faith  
15 in Mr. Brazil to be there when his help is  
16 needed.

17 Also, much has been said and we  
18 discussed before the issue of the fire  
19 chief, Mr. Tom Davis, and the issues brought  
20 by the firefighters by the union and the  
21 members of the fire department, I would just

22 like to clarify a little bit, I think some  
23 of the things that have been said, not  
24 necessarily in the letter that we were given  
25 from Mr. Gervasi, but I think some of the

160

1 things that have been said in the public  
2 about Mr. Davis have been absolutely unfair.  
3 I think it's been a case of character  
4 assassination by those people who have some  
5 personal animosity. Mr. Davis is a veteran  
6 of the Armed Forces. He is a 25 or over  
7 25 years serving in the fire department in  
8 the City of Scranton and I think a total of  
9 somewhere around 33 years with the  
10 department in total. He's a man who was  
11 highly decorated as a firefighter, a member  
12 of the union and had rose through the ranks  
13 of the position of assistant chief during  
14 the time he was with the fire department and  
15 I believe he deserves, I'm going to say a  
16 little bit the benefit of the doubt for the  
17 service that he has given to the City of  
18 Scranton over the course of time, and I will  
19 admit to the fact that he is a friend and a  
20 supporter and I do feel that perhaps a sit  
21 down with member of the council and some

22 others would be helpful, but I do want to at  
23 least balance the record a little bit and at  
24 least let people know that Mr. Davis is a  
25 man who has dedicated his life to the

161

1 service of others and citizens of the City  
2 of Scranton. The rest can wait and that is  
3 all I have. Thank you.

4 MS. GARVEY: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
5 AN ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF COUNCIL NO.  
6 49, 2006 (AS AMENDED) ENTITLED, "AN  
7 ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER  
8 APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS OF THE CITY OF  
9 SCRANTON TO TAKE ALL NECESSARY ACTIONS TO  
10 IMPLEMENT THE CONSOLIDATED SUBMISSION SO FAR  
11 COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS  
12 (AS AMENDED) TO BE FUNDED UNDER THE  
13 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)  
14 PROGRAM, HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP (HOME)  
15 PROGRAM AND EMERGENCY SHELTER GRANT (ESG)  
16 PROGRAM", BY DELETING CERTAIN PROJECTS AND  
17 ADDING A NEW PROJECT.

18 MR. MCGOFF: At this time, I will  
19 entertain a motion that Item 5-B be  
20 introduced into it's property committee.

21 MR. COURTRIGHT: So moved.

22 MS. FANUCCI: Second.

23 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

24 MS. EVANS: Yes. We seem to have  
25 significant amounts of money that go unused

162

1 in OECD. You know, time and time again  
2 there is almost a pattern here of use it or  
3 lose it. We didn't use it for this or we  
4 didn't use it for that. Why? I mean, this  
5 just -- does anyone have any questions  
6 besides me why such money seems to linger in  
7 so many instances and very coincidentally  
8 can be taken from that mission and applied,  
9 you know, in a very timely fashion to  
10 another project.

11 So, you know, I have to find it a  
12 bit astonishing that \$550,000 worth of HOME  
13 monies that would never have been needed in  
14 the City of Scranton? That seems like a  
15 stretch, but I think what also concerns me  
16 about all of these pieces of legislation  
17 tonight, in addition to those in the past,  
18 like Mr. Courtright said we are very often  
19 asked to make critical decisions in a very  
20 brief time frame, but more than that, though  
21 we are given back up we are not given the  
22 complete picture, we are often, in fact,

23 always taking the word that this business or  
24 this company is credit worthy. Yes, we have  
25 run a credit report. No, there is no liens

163

1 again them, etcetera, etcetera, and then we  
2 come to find out that either they are or the  
3 business folded and now some other business  
4 is there, you know, and so on and so forth,  
5 and I think in order to feel comfortable  
6 giving out the people's money as freely as  
7 we are asked to do, and it is your money,  
8 you know, to say, well, that's not coming  
9 out of the city budget, that's still your  
10 money, those are your state taxes, those are  
11 your federal taxes that you pay, you are  
12 still paying and you know you pay a lot to  
13 those governmental entities, too, and that  
14 money should be used very wisely and I would  
15 just feel much more comfortable to have  
16 information on all of these companies.

17 Like you said, you would like to  
18 know who the owners are or partners or  
19 whatever, well, I would like to see the  
20 credit history. I would like to see in  
21 black and white a credit history, if they  
22 have ever defaulted on loans, if they have  
23 picked up one business, closed it and moved



24 elsewhere, if they have liens against them,  
25 I don't want the word of OECD anymore, I

164

1 want paperwork.

2           And then I never see any follow-up  
3 once these loans have been awarded and I'm  
4 guilty of awarding plenty of them, believe  
5 me, because I do want to see re development  
6 business in Scranton, but now in my fifth  
7 year on council I want some accountability.  
8 I want some follow-up, I want some proof,  
9 you know, the numbers are there, the jobs  
10 were created, what they are paying, if you  
11 have lived up to the conditions of loans and  
12 grants, you know, we saw no one else was  
13 here, but you were what happened when we  
14 questioned KOZ's and KOEZ's cease with the  
15 state over the Southern Union building. We  
16 still don't have answers to this day about  
17 the Southern Union building. The state  
18 wouldn't even step in and take a look at  
19 that one, so I'm just asking here I want  
20 some written accountable, I want some  
21 follow-up and I want to see something more  
22 than, you know, the people's name. I mean,  
23 I even have to go through Kay here to find

24 out that this loan in 5-E is for 40 years at  
25 a zero percent rate of interest.

165

1 So, I mean, there is an awful lot of  
2 information that I need before I can cast  
3 intelligent votes on these and I think until  
4 all of us start to get that I can't vote to  
5 approve anymore of these things.

6 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else on the  
7 question? All those in favor of  
8 introduction signify by saying aye?

9 MS. FANUCCI: Aye.

10 MS. GATELLI: Aye.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed?

12 MS. EVANS: No.

13 MR. COURTRIGHT: No.

14 MR. MCGOFF: The ayes have it and so  
15 moved.

16 MS. GARVEY: 5-C. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
17 A RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND  
18 OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE  
19 AND ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE  
20 COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, DEPARTMENT OF  
21 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ("DEP") TO ACCEPT  
22 THE ACT 101, SECTION 902 RECYCLING  
23 DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION GRANT IN THE  
24 AMOUNT OF \$69,250.00.

25

MR. MCGOFF: At this time I'll

166

1

entertain a motion that Item 5-C be

2

introduced into it's proper committee.

3

MR. COURTRIGHT: So moved.

4

MS. FANUCCI: Second.

5

MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

6

MS. EVANS: This money would be used

7

for the purchase of additional recycling

8

bins for the citizens of the Scranton.

9

MR. MCGOFF: All those in favor

10

signify by saying aye.

11

MS. EVANS: Aye.

12

MS. FANUCCI: Aye.

13

MS. GATELLI: Aye.

14

MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

15

MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed? The

16

eyes have it and so moved.

17

MS. GARVEY: 5-D. FOR INTRODUCTION -

18

A RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND

19

OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE

20

AND APPLY FOR A GRANT THROUGH THE

21

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, DEPARTMENT OF

22

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (DCED)

23

FOR A GROWING GREENER II MAIN STREET AND

24

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT GRANT IN THE AMOUNT

25

OF \$1,000,000.00. IF SUCCESSFUL,

167

1

COORDINATING THE USE OF THE GRANT FUNDS WILL

2

BE WITH THE SCRANTON PARKING AUTHORITY FOR

3

THE PROJECT TO BE NAMES AS "WASHINGTON

4

SPRUCE PARKING FACILITY."

5

MR. MCGOFF: At this time I will

6

entertain a motion that Item 5-D be

7

introduced into it's proper committee.

8

MR. COURTRIGHT: So moved.

9

MS. FANUCCI: Second.

10

MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

11

MR. COURTRIGHT: On the question,

12

a million dollars, I would like to see a

13

million dollars go into West Scranton into

14

that project I keep talking about. I can't

15

seem to get anything over there, but I'm

16

sick of since I have been on council as

17

Mrs. Evans five years it seems like they put

18

stuff before us and say if you don't use it

19

in a month, two months, three months you are

20

going to lose it, so they paint you into a

21

corner. They wait until they are almost

22

ready to lost the money and then they put

23

the legislation before us and I think, you

24

know, in my opinion that's done purposefully

25

sometimes and I'm sick of it.



1           asked him a lot of questions and to me he  
2           had all the right answers. I know  
3           Mr. Sbaraglia came in and asked him a lot of  
4           questions, so Mr. Saleski actually changed  
5           my mind and I was very comfortable at the  
6           time that everything was going to be taken  
7           care of and I never thought we would be  
8           coming for another million dollars.

9                   MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else? All those  
10           in favor of introduction signify by saying  
11           aye.

12                   MS. FANUCCI: Aye.

13                   MS. GATELLI: Aye.

14                   MR. MCGOFF: Opposed?

15                   MR. COURTRIGHT: No.

16                   MS. EVANS: No.

17                   MR. MCGOFF: The ayes have it and so  
18           moved.

19                   MS. GARVEY: 5-E. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
20           A RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND  
21           OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS FOR THE  
22           CITY OF SCRANTON TO ENTER INTO A LOAN  
23           AGREEMENT AND MAKE A LOAN FROM THE HOME  
24           INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM IN AN AMOUNT  
25           NOT TO EXCEED \$400,000.00 TO GREATVIEW

1 DEVELOPMENT LIMITED PARTNERSHIP TO ASSIST AN  
2 ELIGIBLE PROJECT.

3 MR. MCGOFF: At this time I will  
4 entertain a motion that Item 5-E be  
5 introduced into it's proper committee.

6 MR. COURTRIGHT: So moved.

7 MS. FANUCCI: Second.

8 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? All  
9 those in favor significant by saying aye.

10 MS. FANUCCI: Aye.

11 MS. GATELLI: Aye.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed?

13 MR. COURTRIGHT: No.

14 MS. EVANS: No.

15 MR. MCGOFF: The ayes have it and so  
16 moved.

17 MS. GARVEY: 5-F. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
18 A RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND  
19 OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS FOR THE  
20 CITY OF SCRANTON TO ENTER INTO A GRANT  
21 AGREEMENT AND MAKE A GRANT FROM THE HOME  
22 INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM IN AN AMOUNT  
23 NO TO EXCEED \$150,000.00 TO NATIONAL HOUSING  
24 TRUST-ENTERPRISE PRESERVATION CORPORATION TO  
25 ASSIST AN ELIGIBLE PROJECT.

1 MR. MCGOFF: At this time I'll  
2 entertain motion that Item 5-F be introduced  
3 into it's proper committee.

4 MR. COURTRIGHT: So moved.

5 MS. FANUCCI: Second.

6 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? I  
7 would just like to comment that I voted,  
8 yes, for these proposals dealing with  
9 Skyview and I certainly would like to see  
10 this project move forward to renovate and  
11 redevelop Skyview apartments. I understand  
12 that there are a number of questions that  
13 people have as to the financial arrangements  
14 for it, and hopefully within the next week  
15 or so we can get some answers to those  
16 situations, but I do -- -I really do want to  
17 see this project move forward. All those in  
18 favor of introduction signify by saying aye.

19 MS. FANUCCI: Aye.

20 MS. GATELLI: Aye.

21 MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed?

22 MR. COURTRIGHT: No.

23 MS. EVANS: No.

24 MR. MCGOFF: The ayes have it and so  
25 moved.



1 MS. GARVEY: 5-G. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
2 A RESOLUTION - APPROVING THE TERMS AND  
3 CONDITIONS OF THE CONTRACT BETWEEN THE CITY  
4 OF SCRANTON'S OFFICE OF ECONOMIC AND  
5 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND THE PALUMBO GROUP,  
6 A PLANNING AND DESIGN FIRM, AND AUTHORIZING  
7 THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY  
8 OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO THE  
9 CONTRACT TO RETAIN THE PALUMBO GROUP TO DO A  
10 STUDY TO INCLUDE HISTORIC PRESERVATION,  
11 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEWS AND DESIGN FOR THE  
12 CEDAR AVENUE REVITALIZATION AREA OF SOUTH  
13 SCRANTON. TOTAL COST NOT TO EXCEED  
14 \$90,000.00.

15 MR. MCGOFF: At this time I'll  
16 entertain a motion that Item 5-G be  
17 introduced into it's proper committee.

18 MR. COURTRIGHT: So moved.

19 MS. FANUCCI: Second.

20 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? All  
21 those in favor signify by saying aye.

22 MS. FANUCCI: Aye.

23 MS. GATELLI: Aye.

24 MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed?

1 MR. COURTRIGHT: No.

2 MR. MCGOFF: The ayes have it and so  
3 moved.

4 MS. GARVEY: 5-H. FOR INTRODUCTION --  
5 A RESOLUTION - ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATION  
6 OF THE HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURE REVIEW BOARD  
7 ("HARB") AND APPROVING THE CERTIFICATE OF  
8 APPROPRIATENESS FOR HIGHLAND ASSOCIATES,  
9 LTD, 102 HIGHLAND AVENUE, CLARKS SUMMIT FOR  
10 REPAIR OF THE EXISTING CLOCK AND NEW REAR  
11 ENTRANCE AT GOODWILL NORTH, NORTH MAIN  
12 AVENUE AND THEODORE STREET.

13 MR. MCGOFF: At this time I'll  
14 entertain a motion that Item 5-H be  
15 introduced into it's proper committee.

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: So moved.

17 MS. FANUCCI: Second.

18 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? All  
19 those in favor signify by saying aye.

20 MS. EVANS: Aye.

21 MS. FANUCCI: Aye.

22 MS. GATELLI: Aye.

23 MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

24 MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed? The  
25 ayes have it and so moved.

1 MS. GARVEY: SIXTH ORDER. NO  
2 BUSINESS AT THIS TIME. SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A.  
3 FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES  
4 - FOR ADOPTION - FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 13,  
5 2008 - APPROVING THE TRANSFER OF A  
6 RESTAURANT LIQUOR LICENSE CURRENTLY OWNED BY  
7 N&L VENDING, INC., 143 COUNTRY CLUB ESTATES,  
8 THORNHURST, PA, 18424, LICENSE NO. R-11639  
9 TO POWER MAC, INC. FOR USE AT 1175 KANE  
10 STREET, SCRANTON, PA. THE CURRENT LOCATION  
11 OF ANGELINA'S RESTAURANT AS REQUIRED BY THE  
12 PENNSYLVANIA LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD.

13 MR. MCGOFF: As chairperson for the  
14 committee on rules I recommend final passage  
15 of Item 7-A.

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: Second.

17 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? Roll  
18 call, please.

19 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

20 MS. EVANS: Yes.

21 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright.

22 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yes.

23 MR. COOLICAN: Ms. Fanucci.

24 MS. FANUCCI: Yes.

25 MR. COOLICAN: Ms. Gatelli.

1 MS. GATELLI: Yes.

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MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby declare  
Item 7-A legally and lawfully adopted.  
Thank you again and I'll entertain a motion  
to adjourn.

MR. COURTRIGHT: So moved.

MS. GATELLI: Second.

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

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI  
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER