

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING
PUBLIC HEARING

IN RE: RESOLUTION NO. 105, 2009 - AUTHORIZING THE
MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE
AND ENTER INTO A MUNICIPAL-MAIN STREET ORGANIZATION
COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF SCRANTON
("MUNICIPALITY") AND SCRANTON TOMORROW
("ORGANIZATIONS") IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDS FROM THE
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ("OCED") TO ASSIST WITH
DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION.

HELD:

Tuesday, February 17, 2009

LOCATION:

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

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI- COURT REPORTER

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

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

MS. SUE MAGNOTTA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

MR. AMIL MINORA, SOLICITOR

1 MR. MCGOFF: I'd like to call this
2 public hearing to order. Roll call, please?

3 MS. MAGNOTTA: Mrs. Evans. Mrs.
4 Gatelli.

5 MS. GATELLI: Here.

6 MS. MAGNOTTA: Ms. Fanucci.

7 MS. FANUCCI: Here.

8 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright. Mr.
9 McGoff.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Here. The purpose of
11 said public hearing is to hear testimony and
12 discuss the following: RESOLUTION NO. 105,
13 2009 - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER
14 APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE AND
15 ENTER INTO A MUNICIPAL-MAIN STREET
16 ORGANIZATION COOPERATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN
17 THE CITY OF SCRANTON ("MUNICIPALITY") AND
18 SCRANTON TOMORROW ("ORGANIZATIONS") IN ORDER
19 TO RECEIVE FUNDS FROM THE COMMONWEALTH OF
20 PENNSYLVANIA, DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND
21 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ("OCED") TO ASSIST
22 WITH DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION.

23 I would like for the public record
24 Mr. Leslie Collins, Director of Scranton
25 Tomorrow is present to answer any questions

1 that council may have during the public
2 hearing. First speaker, Andy Sbaraglia.

3 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia.
4 Citizen of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians,
5 the grants they are seeking from what I've
6 read there was \$250,000; am I correct? Is
7 that the grant -- the amount of the grant we
8 are seeking and talking about \$250,000?

9 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

10 MR. SBARAGLIA: The scope of the work
11 covers the city from one end to the other
12 including picking up gum off the sidewalk.
13 How could they possibly -- all they are
14 going to do with this money is to organize
15 for -- actually for more grants. There is
16 no way in heck they can do that scope. If
17 you look at the scope in there, I don't know
18 if you got it in front of you, there is
19 about 30 items on that scope. There is no
20 way you can do that with \$250,000.

21 They got parking garages and parking
22 meters, everything that you could think of.
23 There is no way in heck this has anything to
24 do with this revitalization other than
25 seeking grants later on or doing other

1 things. They with looking for more money,
2 \$250,000 is nothing. You know it and I know
3 it. So this is only a tip of an iceberg.
4 God knows what they are going to ask for
5 next, but that \$250,000 doesn't cover
6 anything.

7 So, now you can ask her what their
8 further plans on are, this 250, like I said,
9 is only a drop in the bucket, no where even
10 cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce is
11 in there, there is a huge amount of things
12 that you are going to do with this \$250,000
13 and you know it and I know it and they are
14 not going to do it. They are going to do
15 something else, maybe planning this, that or
16 whatever, but at least she should tell the
17 people.

18 That's why I don't like really about
19 you council members. You always keep the
20 people in the dark. Why are you afraid to
21 read off that legislation. I know maybe the
22 meeting will go longer, but at least people
23 will know. I read it, but a lot of people
24 do not read it, and that's the sad part. I
25 wish they could all come down there and read

1 every piece of legislation you put out or
2 every piece that you are going to put out
3 can be drawn from the computer. It should
4 be on there where you can read the back up.
5 That is the most important thing they could
6 do to find out what's happening in the city.

7 But, like I said before, \$250,000,
8 forget it. I mean, you can give it to them,
9 it's something nice to have around the
10 house, but as far as I don't think they can
11 even pick up the gum off the sidewalks with
12 that amount of money. Thank you.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Ozzie Quinn.

14 MR. QUINN: Ozzie Quinn, Taxpayers'
15 Association. Yeah, I'm not clear what's
16 that \$250,000 for? I thought we were
17 talking about one million?

18 MS. GATELLI: Maybe we should have
19 let Ms. Collins speak first. Would you like
20 to do that, Mr. Quinn?

21 MR. QUINN: Yeah. I'm not clear on
22 how much this is all about.

23 MS. GATELLI: Well, there are main
24 street programs --

25 MR. QUINN: I know there is doom,

1 but there is nothing in there --

2 MS. GATELLI: I didn't know if you
3 were familiar with them.

4 MR. QUINN: You have to have a
5 little inside room to know what's going on.

6 MR. MCGOFF: Mrs. Collins, would you
7 care to briefly explain what the legislation
8 is asking?

9 MS. COLLINS: Sure. Absolutely.
10 Good evening. My name is Leslie Collins,
11 I'm the executive director of Scranton
12 Tomorrow. Scranton Tomorrow has applied for
13 the Main Street manager designation through
14 the State of Pennsylvania's Department of
15 Community and Economic Development. The
16 Main Street Program is -- the legislation is
17 for operating funds for a period of five
18 years. It's a sliding scale. It's 50, 45,
19 40, 35, 30 over a five-year period.

20 The Main Street Program really is a
21 comprehensive community-based initiative for
22 downtown revitalization. It has been
23 successful through not only the State of
24 Pennsylvania, but it has been a very
25 successful program throughout the United

1 States for many, many years.

2 The success of the Main Street
3 Program really is based on a five-point
4 approach system, that approach system being
5 that you look at five different focal points
6 throughout your downtown, one of those being
7 organization, which is looking at bringing
8 the downtown businesses together for
9 partnership and cooperative type of
10 enhancements to your downtown.

11 It looks at the promotion of your
12 downtown and it looks at promoting your
13 assets of your downtown. Marketing your
14 downtown businesses whether it be a retail
15 business, a service type of business, a
16 medical facility, it looks at marketing your
17 downtown collectively and in a comprehensive
18 type of manner.

19 It looks at economic restructuring,
20 which is one of the wonderful points of Main
21 Street, which it does open the door for
22 additional state funding, not for Scranton
23 Tomorrow, but for the community, for the
24 downtown as a whole, so the economic
25 restructuring piece would open up potential

1 grants for facades, looking at potentially
2 enhancing \$30,000 worth of facades per year

3 over a four-year period. It's not
4 throughout the entire life of the Main
5 Street Management Project, but four years of
6 that.

7 It also will open the door to
8 additional anchor building grants. It could
9 fund reinvestment type of loans which would
10 be gap financing which would put buildings
11 back on the tax rolls which would create
12 jobs which would prevent deterioration and
13 blight as well.

14 It also looks at the design element
15 of your downtown, so it looks at your facade
16 and improvements, it looks at your
17 infrastructure, your lighting, your
18 sidewalks, your beautification type of --

19 MS. GATELLI: Can you speak a little
20 louder because --

21 MS. COLLINS: Sure.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Is the microphone on?

23 MS. COLLINS: It is. Beautification-
24 type projects where you would look at your
25 lighting, your sidewalks, your plantings in

10

1 the downtown, your facades, and it also
2 looks at a fifth component which is a safe

3 clean and green component, and that pretty
4 much is self-explanatory for that.

5 But, as I said, the Main Street
6 Program has been very successful not only
7 through the State of Pennsylvania, but
8 throughout the United States and it has been
9 successful based on this comprehensive
10 community-based planning initiative of the
11 five points, the five approach system.

12 (During Ms. Collins presentation
13 Mrs. Evans entered council chambers and took
14 the dais.)

15 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Mr. Quinn?

16 MR. QUINN: Thank you. Under the
17 Main Street Program is there a match? My
18 understanding there is a match?

19 MS. FANUCCI: There is.

20 MR. QUINN: Where will that match
21 come from?

22 MR. MCGOFF: We'll take the questions
23 and answer them --

24 MS. FANUCCI: We'll take the
25 questions because there is going to be a

11

1 lot.

2 MR. QUINN: I want to know under the
3 Main Street Program this is actually to hire

4 a coordinator, a manager. It doesn't say
5 that in this description. You are hiring
6 staff? I mean, we are hiring staff.

7 MS. FANUCCI: Right.

8 MR. MCGOFF: Correct.

9 MS. FANUCCI: That's one of the
10 elements.

11 MR. QUINN: Well, who would know
12 that. If I didn't have a Main Street
13 description I wouldn't know that.

14 MS. FANUCCI: But that doesn't have
15 to come before us, Ozzie. That's the
16 state's requirement so we don't have to pass
17 that legislation here, so we only deal with
18 what we have to do as far as legality in the
19 city. That's something that has to do with
20 the state. That's their requirements. It's
21 not our city requirements. So that's why we
22 don't have it in our legislation.

23 MR. QUINN: Kind of crazy if you are
24 having a public hearing on something that
25 you don't know what's going on.

12

1 MS. FANUCCI: I absolutely know
2 what's going on. The problem is that I
3 think you are misunderstanding what our

4 purpose here as a council. It has nothing
5 to do with the state part, it has to do with
6 the city part. So you are asking why there
7 is something missing on the legislation,
8 it's because it does not have to come before
9 us to be passed.

10 MR. QUINN: Yes, but it's going to
11 at some time going through the city to go to
12 the state and not hop them over to the city.

13 MS. FANUCCI: Well, they would deal
14 with them directly. They would deal with us
15 then. After the legislation passes us then
16 they have to meet the qualifications for the
17 state. It doesn't have to do with us and
18 the legislation.

19 (Mr. Courtright enter the council
20 chambers and takes the dais.)

21 MR. QUINN: The money is going to go
22 for the staff.

23 MS. FANUCCI: Some of it. Some of
24 the money will go towards financing the
25 staff.

13

1 MR. QUINN: So then what will be --
2 then what will the staff do, try to get
3 money on other grants?

4 MS. FANUCCI: That would be part of

5 their job, yes.

6 MR. QUINN: Okay. I'm just a little
7 confused about it because of the fact that
8 all of that information wasn't there and you
9 are having a public, you know? Usually
10 there is something at a public hearing that
11 can explain everything.

12 MS. FANUCCI: Actually Mrs. Collins
13 can explain it for us if you would like her
14 to do, but she can explain it, I can explain
15 it, but the thing is that you are asking why
16 it wasn't in the backup, so I was explaining
17 to you why it was not in the backup, but we
18 could definitely go on to explain that if
19 there is a need to.

20 MR. QUINN: Thank you.

21 MR. MCGOFF: Bill Jackowitz. Joe
22 Talimini.

23 MR. TALIMINI: No.

24 MR. MCGOFF: Marie Schumacher.

25 MS. SCHUMACHER: Marie Schumacher,

14

1 city resident and member of the Taxpayers'
2 Association. I am a member of the National
3 Historical Trust that came up with the
4 62-page workbook, and they have a series of

5 I believe it's eight questions here that
6 deal with should we use the Main Street
7 approach and using the Main Street approach
8 may not be for your community if, and I
9 would like answers to these questions:

10 One, you seek a quick fix for a
11 problem; two, a single individual is driving
12 the process; three, a single organization is
13 driving the process, which seem to be the
14 case here. Next one, a single issue is
15 driving the process.

16 Next, downtown state holders are not
17 willing to commit time, talent and money to
18 the process. I'd like to hear some evidence
19 that the state holders are lining up to
20 participate in this program.

21 Next, everyone is sure they know
22 what the problem is, and no one is not open
23 to new ideas; and the final question there
24 is, there is no support from the
25 municipality for downtown revitalization, so

15

1 you will be expected to fund part of this
2 program as part of the downtown
3 revitalization. I think the ratios overall
4 for last year in the State of Pennsylvania
5 they were \$3.47 of private investment for

6 each dollar of state money, so I'd like to
7 know where those -- where all of those other
8 contributors are.

9 And it also notes: The organizer's
10 first job to produce is a list of good
11 reasons to start a downtown revitalization
12 effort to go forward at this time and then
13 to share these reasons with others, and I
14 would like those reasons shared with us
15 others tonight. Thank you.

16 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Anyone else?
17 Anyone else on council? I now declare this
18 public -- you got to be quick.

19 MR. MORGAN: I walked all the way
20 across this thing. Did anybody else see me?
21 Okay, here is where I stand on this issue,
22 Mr. McGoff. I really think there is no real
23 information here. I really think this thing
24 is just being rammed through here. I have
25 listened to all of the things that Ozzie

16

1 Quinn said, listened to all of the other
2 things that everybody else has said, and my
3 opinion is we have spent so much money in
4 the downtown that it's just in my own
5 opinion it's ridiculous. I think this thing

6 needs to be just refused, just turned --
7 completely turned down.

8 Why doesn't Scranton Tomorrow and
9 the city and the state come in with some way
10 to help the neighborhoods? We dump so much
11 money in that downtown that it's ridiculous.
12 The whole town is blowing away and we are
13 wondering if we can hire somebody here to do
14 some more revitalization. And to be honest
15 with you, packets -- in my on opinion
16 packets should have been prepared here so
17 that the residents of this city who cared to
18 be here and know what was happening could
19 have had really a much greater knowledge of
20 what's happening here, because I'll be the
21 first person to say that all I really know
22 is what I'm heard here tonight. Marie was
23 probably the most articulate on the subject
24 at all for that matter, but I question the
25 whole process.

17

1 And, Mrs. Fanucci, you are talking
2 about what you know. Well, if you represent
3 me and you haven't educated me to what's
4 going on here then I don't think you are
5 doing your job. I mean, I'm not be critical
6 of you only, and I think that what we have

7 done in this city for a long time is you
8 have put up something in front of us council
9 hasn't said, well, it's great for us all,
10 and the truth of the matter is that we are
11 spending all of this money in the downtown
12 and what to the neighborhoods?

13 I just think it's time to
14 reconsider, hold this meeting again, prepare
15 some packets, let us know what's going on
16 and why it's happening and where the money
17 is coming from.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else? Anyone?
19 I now declare this public hearing closed.

20
21
22
23
24
25

1
2
3
4
5
6

C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that the proceedings and

7 evidence are contained fully and accurately in the
8 notes of testimony taken by me at the hearing of the
9 above-captioned matter and that the foregoing is a true
10 and correct transcript of the same to the best of my
11 ability.

12

13

14

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25