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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

HELD:

Tuesday, March 24, 2009

LOCATION:

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

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR - OFFICIAL 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. JOHN WILLIAMS, SOLICITOR

1 (Pledge of Allegiance recited and
2 moment of reflection observed.)

3 MR. MCGOFF: Roll call, please?

4 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

5 MS. EVANS: Here.

6 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Gatelli.

7 MS. GATELLI: Here.

8 MR. COOLICAN: Ms. Fanucci.

9 MS. FANUCCI: Here.

10 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright.

11 MR. COURTRIGHT: Here.

12 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Here. Dispense with
14 the reading of the minutes. Third Order,
15 please.

16 MS. GARVEY: 3-A. MINUTES OF THE
17 COMPOSITE PENSION BOARD MEETING HELD ON
18 FEBRUARY 25, 2009.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Are there any comments?
20 If not, received and filed.

21 MS. GARVEY: 3-B. CONTROLLER'S
22 REPORT FOR THE MONTH ENDING FEBRUARY 28,
23 2009.

24 MR. MCGOFF: Are there any comments?
25 If not, received and filed.

1 MS. GARVEY: 3-C. AGENDA FOR THE
2 CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING HELD ON
3 MARCH 18, 2009.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Are there any comments?
5 If not, received and filed.

6 MS. GARVEY: That's it for Third
7 Order.

8 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. In caucus
9 Mr. Renda had spoken to us about the audit
10 or investigation done at the Single Tax
11 Office and the report that many of you had
12 read about and perhaps seen on the website,
13 I noticed that Mr. McGovern and
14 Mrs. Vitali-Flynn are here this evening.
15 I'd like to, you know, suspend the rules at
16 this point in time and allow them to speak
17 and to answer any questions that council may
18 have, and also make it a note that Mr. Renda
19 is in council chambers as well. Pleas.

20 MS. VITALI-FLYNN: Good evening,
21 Council, taxpayers. My name is Marilyn
22 Vitali-Flynn. I am the tax collector for
23 the City of Scranton. I'm here tonight to
24 shed some light on the forensic
25 investigative report that was recently

1 discussed in the press. With me is
2 Solicitor John McGovern who will help answer
3 questions regarding the report, but before
4 John takes questions I would like to say
5 that since I have been appointed tax
6 collector I have been working hard to
7 implement some major changes to help address
8 the systematic and long-term problems that
9 have plagued the tax office for decades.
10 Some of these changes are broad in scope,
11 while others are simple changes in work flow
12 and checks and balances.

13 During this challenging economy,
14 keeping Scranton on solid financial ground
15 is more important than ever. I'm proud to
16 say that the tax collection office is
17 operating with much greater efficiency.
18 From the times are doors open in the morning
19 until we close at the end of the business
20 day, my staff and I are working to maximize
21 tax revenue. As a result, we have seen the
22 following revenue increases:

23 Earned income tax revenue has
24 increased 16.5 percent. Real estate tax
25 revenue has increased 8.5 percent. The

1 business privilege tax has increased
2 6.6 percent. Even though the local service
3 tax had been reduced by 37.9 percent, the
4 total increase in yearly revenue collected
5 by the office totals \$4.7 million.

6 On a monthly basis we now report to
7 the city, the county, the school district
8 and Scranton City Council. We have
9 requested for a controller to be put in
10 place that we believe will help to continue
11 these drastic improvements and are asking
12 for the assistance of you, city council.

13 To sum up, our office is open and
14 dedicated to serving you. I or my staff
15 would be happy to answer any questions that
16 concerned citizens may have. Thank you.
17 And now John will take it from there if you
18 have questions.

19 MR. MCGOVERN: Good evening, Council.
20 My name is John McGovern, I'm the solicitor
21 for the Single Tax Office. I'm here tonight
22 to really talk about probably the two
23 primary issues that I'm sure the citizens
24 are concerned about. The first issue is the
25 fact that the city had budgeted \$5.5 million

7

1 and if you attempt to read the report, of

2 course, no where in there do you see
3 \$5.5 million. I would like to make it
4 clear, obviously, we were not part of the
5 caucus so I don't know what to be place with
6 Mr. Renda, but just to update everybody on
7 where we stand at this point, as I said, the
8 city had budgeted \$5.5 million. If read the
9 report you don't see that number. However,
10 if you really got in the report and looked
11 at the details, on page 11 of the appendix
12 it talks about interest. The interest is
13 for 2007 and prior plus 2008 which has not
14 been distributed. The city's share
15 according to the report is \$1,052,000.00,
16 \$1,052,393.00.

17 Second, when you read the report it
18 talks about 888 Funds and 233 Funds. Those
19 funds are for intensive purposes when an
20 individual who is not a city resident works
21 at the -- noncity residents that work within
22 the city if they are local municipality does
23 not have a tax, a 1 percent tax, then the
24 city is under the law entitled to that
25 money.

2 implementation of the new computer system
3 that money was never distributed. According
4 to the report, that money totaled
5 \$2,446,000.00 and some change.

6 Now, as far as that money
7 specifically, the office already has
8 individuals confirming the codes that are in
9 basically the computer system. The problem
10 was that the system held the money there and
11 waited for somebody to do something with it.
12 It never got done. At this point, as I
13 said, those codes are being confirmed if.
14 If the codes are correct then the funds will
15 go to the city. If the codes are incorrect
16 because it should have been Abington Heights
17 or something like that the money will go
18 there.

19 Now, what's important with this
20 money is that it's not going to be
21 distributed in we are just going to deliver
22 a check for hypothetically \$2,000,000 and
23 say, "Here is your 888 funds." When the
24 usual distribution process takes place it
25 will now be included in those funds so the

9

1 city won't get a check that's labeled "Here
2 is your 888 funds," it will be included as

3 part of the regular distribution process.

4 MS. GATELLI: Will you be able to
5 segregate that so we will know that it's the
6 old money coming back?

7 MR. MCGOFF: Well actually the
8 \$2.4 million is just from the year 2005
9 through 2008 at this point. So, when you
10 say old money, there is two sets of old
11 money. There is a prior '05 money, which
12 I'll discuss in a few seconds, and then post
13 '05 money, but when it comes through we will
14 try to label it so that it's identified so
15 when Stu gets the funds he knows where it's
16 coming from but it won't, as I said, it
17 won't just be when you show up with one big
18 check and say, "Here you go."

19 It will be actually part of a
20 process because it's going to take time for
21 people to go through the system to check
22 those codes to confirm first that they are
23 correct or not.

24 MS. EVANS: So if I'm hearing you
25 correctly it will be part of our monthly

10

1 dispersement?

2 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. Yes. No you,

3 according to the report they had identified
4 \$4,489,000.00 as what they call available
5 funds basically. As I just discussed, the
6 city is talking about 1.52 million in
7 interest, potentially 2.4 million in 888
8 funds and that leaves a balance of
9 \$991,000.00 if you just do the simple math
10 in the report.

11 Now, that \$991,000.00 is basically,
12 identified as pre 2005 money. What the
13 belief is that the same errors that were
14 occurring in '05, '06, '07 were occurring
15 prior to that period. The auditors
16 identified all of the way back to 1999 as
17 when this process or this problem in the
18 process started, so in theory again, the
19 city may be entitled to some of this
20 \$991,000.00, so just on my math alone one,
21 two and a half, three and a half, so we are
22 really looking at about the city potentially
23 at the high end of this out of these funds
24 could get about 4 to 4 1/2 million dollars,
25 at the low end it could be in the

11

1 three million dollar range. The exact
2 totals will just, to be honest with you, we
3 will never know because, as I said, once the

4 system starts getting fixed and the codes
5 get fixed it's just going to start flowing
6 out on it's own.

7 Now, where the city is also going to
8 benefit from this is that this mistake
9 should not occur again. It's obviously been
10 identified, it's been a problem for many,
11 many years, unfortunately it was known by
12 some people, but it was never dealt with.

13 Now, with that being said, since it
14 should not occur again as they funds are
15 being accumulated throughout the year they
16 should start being dispersed at that point,
17 so what we are talking about here is
18 millions of dollars over two or three years,
19 well, if it's being handled when it's
20 supposed to in theory the city will see
21 thousands every month. Exactly what the
22 number is it's only going to based upon what
23 the collections are and handling of this,
24 but what will not happen again is that it
25 will not be allowed to just continue to grow

12

1 and grow and grow up until the point that
2 it's in the millions and millions of
3 dollars.

4 Now, that I believe at least
5 addresses the issue of the \$5.5 million
6 question versus what does the report
7 actually say the city is going to get unless
8 somebody has a specific question that they
9 want to ask on that?

10 MS. FANUCCI: Stu, do you?

11 MR. RENDA: John, what about the --
12 in the work in progress, we talked about the
13 12 million, we segregated the seven and the
14 49, in the \$7 million we talk about
15 nonresident wage tax --

16 MR. MCGOVERN: Correct.

17 MR. RENDA: -- of 2.9, could you just
18 address that for us? Is that -- is a piece
19 of that the 888 money or does it belong to
20 other municipalities?

21 MR. MCGOFF: That's exactly what I'm
22 talking about that we won't know on an
23 ongoing basis, it will just be a matter of
24 the city getting it. Once those funds start
25 to be coded properly and claims are made

13

1 against, basically what it works out to is a
2 default, the city is the default. When it
3 doesn't have to go anywhere else and we
4 don't have any evidence that it's supposed

5 to go anywhere else it goes to the city, so
6 included in that number is some additional
7 888 money or 233 money, I just can't tell
8 you exactly what the number is at this
9 point, but what happens is you have to keep
10 in mind what the nonresidents, the way the
11 process works is that tax office collects
12 the money during the year, they get payment
13 from the employers, they get estimated
14 payments in April, in June and September and
15 then in January, we don't get to the W-2's
16 until January or February. It's when those
17 W-2's come in that we are then getting the
18 exact information to code the money to send
19 it where it's supposed to go, so that two
20 point some million dollars which was there
21 at the end of '08 we are now getting that
22 information and it's now being put into the
23 system and coded, so the money is already
24 going where it's supposed to, but some of
25 that, yes, will end up being 888 money or

14

1 233 money and at some point as the
2 distribution process takes over the city
3 will say a share of that.

4 So ultimately, as I was saying

5 earlier, instead of the tax office holding
6 hundreds off thousands of dollars every year
7 that was the city's money, that money should
8 just start going out every year. So the
9 city should see a benefit in those funds
10 during this calendar year.

11 MS. FANUCCI: John, you obviously
12 know more than we do about this situation,
13 but are you satisfied with what came back
14 now, like, your understanding exactly where
15 we are because it seems to me there is so
16 many questions. I feel like we actually
17 lost out and we don't understand worse than
18 when we did when we first started this.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Right. I agree.
20 Everybody expected that on Friday there was
21 going to be a letter or something.

22 MS. FANUCCI: Yeah, really we did.
23 We expected to know.

24 MR. MCGOFF: That the city gets
25 actually "Y", and unfortunately because of

15

1 the way the computer system is setup it
2 doesn't work that way. The only thing I can
3 really add about this process is when the
4 report came out, and it just is background,
5 I am a CPA, also, and I do a lot of tax

6 work, so at least I have a background in
7 this, my concern as I was reading it, which
8 is the next issue that I'll get to, which is
9 when you do the simple math, and this goes
10 to the headline in the newspaper, "City Tax
11 Office missing \$2 million," you don't have
12 to have an accounting background to sit
13 there and do the math and say, "We are
14 missing money, where is that money?"

15 So I did, as this process went along
16 and this information was slowly being fed to
17 us, you know, we were looking at it and we
18 were asking questions. I was going back to
19 the tax office employees, and I was trying
20 to just think the process through as it was
21 going along and I was able at least from the
22 report and from the information I received
23 to have a comfort level in what I was being
24 told, so I would say I was not -- in the end
25 result I agreed with it in the end.

16

1 Now, there is a lot of gray area in
2 the end result and everything and, no, it's
3 not, "Here is your share, here is your
4 share, here is your share and let's move
5 forward," because unfortunately that's not

6 what's there.

7 Part of the presentation that the
8 auditors did the other day, Mr. McGoff was
9 there, what everybody misunderstands is that
10 over the past ten years this office
11 collected in excess of a billion dollars,
12 with a "B". You know, think about it.
13 That's a lot of zeroes, and it's collecting
14 that from taxpayers. Me. These people
15 sitting out here. Some of these people are
16 paying \$2, other people are paying thousands
17 of dollars, there is literally thousands and
18 thousands and thousands of records and
19 entries and checks and money is just coming
20 and going. It's just literally to find a
21 small thing it is the proverbial needle in a
22 haystack. It would be almost impossible to
23 go back and say, we are looking for a \$22
24 that was paid to Mr. Smith during the year
25 of 2007. We are looking for one check in a

17

1 realm of quite possibly what could be close
2 to 100 checks that year. I mean, that's the
3 type of activity that goes through here, so
4 you have to keep that in mind.

5 I understand that millions of
6 dollars is a lot of money, it's a lot of

7 money to me, but if you look at in a
8 perspective of a billion dollars, you know,
9 a million dollars is less than 1/10th of 1
10 percent or something like that? You know,
11 from an accounting standpoint that could be
12 deemed immaterial. Now, they tried to do
13 everything that they could to document as
14 much as possible and with the idea a million
15 dollars is lot of money especially when a
16 city is distressed like this, I understand
17 that, but from my own standpoint in my
18 opinion, it's just my opinion and my
19 professional background, I was pretty
20 satisfied with what came back. I can't tell
21 you that I'm absolutely happy in the results
22 because as I'm going to discuss next it
23 points out that there is some serious
24 problems.

25 But, yes, I mean, the question the

18

1 the newspaper article says "Tax Office
2 missing two million," now, I may not agree
3 that the number was \$2 million, but I can
4 confirmatively state that, yes, there is
5 money -- that 12.2 million dollars or
6 12.3 million that they identified at the end

7 the \$12.3 million was there. When we talk
8 about money missing, it's not that some of
9 that 12.3 million is missing, it's that the
10 12.3 could have been 13.3 or 14.3 or some
11 number in-between there.

12 MS. FANUCCI: Because there was no
13 record of that at all?

14 MR. MCGOVERN: No. Now, this is --
15 this is the more technical part, or like I
16 refer to it the dirty little secret. The
17 scenario is that, yes, there is funds that
18 are unaccounted for, unaccounted for not in
19 the sense that somebody took the money and,
20 you know, somebody is alleging that a crime
21 took place, unaccounted for in an accounting
22 standpoint going back to the fact that there
23 was a billion dollars and hundreds of
24 thousands of checks coming and going and
25 back on forth. It gets to a point where

19

1 when you start trying to look for something
2 the time and effort yo find it just isn't
3 worth it. You wouldn't spend \$100 to go
4 find \$5. It just doesn't work.

5 Now, the big three issues identified
6 on page 23 of the report, and I believe the
7 -- or at least to quote the auditors, the

8 paragraph that starts, "Not surprisingly,
9 the sum," this goes back to, as I said,
10 anybody doing some simple math. If you read
11 through the report you start keeping track
12 of numbers you are going to realize that
13 when we have 4.9 million dollars available
14 at the end it's not -- it should be more.
15 That's the issue.

16 Now, the problem with that four
17 point -- or, I'm sorry, with the 4.9 not
18 being enough, that some of the issues that
19 that they have identified -- that the
20 auditors had identified -- excuse me for a
21 second, was a couple of issues, one being
22 what they call double refunds. There were
23 instances over the last so many years where
24 the tax office issued refunds, the same
25 refund on two occasions to multiple

20

1 individuals, and in some cases when it took
2 place it was many checks. It wasn't just
3 one check that accidently went out, it was
4 string of checks, you know, 100 checks or
5 200 checks that went out. Now, the problem
6 with that is you would have hoped that when
7 the taxpayers had received it they would

8 have said, "I got my --" I already got my
9 \$22, you sent me over another check. "

10 Unfortunately, that didn't happen
11 very often. Now, that happened on numerous
12 occasions, but this is one of the situation
13 where you go back and try to look for it, to
14 start looking for \$22 every time it's just
15 not cost effective.

16 Now, the way that that happened was
17 that they should have been using prenumbered
18 checks. I mean. It's a standard accounting
19 rule. You get a checkbook. It's got
20 numbers on it, it's that's simple. Not at
21 the tax office over the last so many years.
22 The computer assigned check numbers and, of
23 course, there was no safety check in the
24 computer system that wouldn't let you issue
25 the same check number twice, so what would

21

1 happen is we go back now and try to start
2 reconciling everything and we realize there
3 were two checks number 10005, and you say,
4 "Well, why?" And then you find out they
5 were the same people and they both went and
6 they were both cashed.

7 Now, when we found those or if we
8 find them, we obviously will now send a

9 letter to the taxpayers saying, "You were
10 paid twice, please send us back the money,"
11 and we've tried and in some cases the
12 taxpayers have sent the money in, but it's
13 not a situation where we can just sit down
14 and find all of these checks. Once again,
15 there is probably hundreds of thousands of
16 checks, so it's only in doing their work
17 where somebody calls in about a problem and
18 then all of a sudden the tax office realized
19 that issue was there and we can try to go
20 about and get that money.

21 Now, again, that's part of the
22 missing money. If we sent two checks out
23 for \$50 we sent out \$50 more than we should
24 have. Well, it wasn't that person's money,
25 it had could come from somewhere, well, it

22

1 came from the city is where it came from.

2 The second issue that they have
3 identified was what they call estimated tax
4 payments being paid to other municipalities.
5 There is a practice, as I explained, that we
6 don't get the W-2's until the end of the
7 year, but we are getting the money during
8 the year. What would happen is the office

9 would send out estimated payments to outline
10 municipalities because technically it's not
11 fair that we hold their money all year and
12 they have to wait until April to get one big
13 check, so we would send out a quarterly
14 payment almost like anybody that makes
15 estimated tax payments. They pay the
16 government.

17 Well, what would happen on some
18 occasions apparently, was the squeaky wheel
19 got the grease. If you called and
20 complained enough you would get a check.
21 The problem being that this check never made
22 it to the people in the office that were
23 supposed to be handling this to account for
24 it, so we have situations where checks were
25 sent out to outlying municipalities and it

23

1 was never recorded into the system.

2 Again, the problem now -- since I
3 just said that I want to point out something
4 very important here you have to understand,
5 the computer system bank accounts and the
6 bank statements were never reconciled. I
7 mean, does anybody here not -- somebody in
8 your family not reconcile their checking
9 account every month? I mean, it's standard

10 practice.

11 MS. FANUCCI: So they were keeping
12 two different books and books and plus the
13 computer?

14 MR. MCGOFF: The computer was keeping
15 one set of records and doing one thing and
16 somebody else was keeping the bank
17 statements and keeping another balance, and
18 the auditors refer to that in the report, to
19 the point that when they finally, went to
20 even attempt to make a reconciliation the
21 books were showing about two or three
22 hundred thousands dollars more than what the
23 bank statements were showing at that time.

24 MS. FANUCCI: Well, let's go with the
25 books.

24

1 MR. MCGOFF: Yeah. Well,
2 unfortunately, the money wasn't there.

3 Now, the last issue which is
4 probably the most disappointing as a
5 taxpayer and resident of Scranton is the
6 most offending to me, is the fact that we
7 have employers and taxpayers in this city
8 that don't think that they have to pay taxes
9 for some reason. Now, the biggest example

10 here is we have employers, some of which for
11 the last ten years, have filed W-2's for
12 their employees, given us the information,
13 but just don't send us the money.

14 Now, the problem with that becomes
15 if those employees work and/or live anywhere
16 else, there was a policy implemented where
17 just, again, to pick on Abington Heights, if
18 the employee lived up there we would get the
19 W-2, we would send money to Abington
20 Heights, but we never got the money. We
21 never received it. I mean, it's that simple
22 so we are taking Scranton money and sending
23 it away. So the money I pay in is not going
24 to the city, it's going somewhere else
25 because we have a W-2.

25

1 The disappointing part, as I said,
2 apparently some people believe they don't
3 have to pay taxes and there has been a
4 culture around this city by some people over
5 that time period.

6 Now, since Marilyn has taken over
7 and I have been involved we have attempted
8 to collect, start to collect this money, so
9 this is another one of those issues where I
10 can guarantee you there will be money coming

11 in. We will get some of this money back and
12 when that money comes in it's only got one
13 place to go, to the city's share, but I can
14 tell you affirmatively I have filed some
15 private criminal complaints against
16 individual over the past few months, we have
17 made referrals to the District Attorney's
18 Office about this, it's my understanding at
19 least right now that there is two arrest
20 warrants out there for individuals that are
21 these type of individuals and we are just
22 trying to make it clear.

23 Believe me, we have given everybody
24 an opportunity, letters, certified letters,
25 phone calls, I don't take joy in threatening

26

1 to have people arrested but, you know, ten
2 years. Ten years you have been taking
3 somebody else's money and not turning it
4 over to where it was supposed to go. If it
5 was the IRS they would have had those people
6 a long time ago and we would have been
7 reading about them. In Scranton it didn't
8 work that way. I don't know when the last
9 time there was a private criminal complaint
10 filed. I don't know when the last time the

11 DA arrested somebody for this. All I know
12 is that we are trying to get the message out
13 there if you are one of these people and you
14 get a letter you better respond because if
15 you don't respond eventually somebody is
16 going to show up at your door.

17 So that is probably the biggest
18 chunk of this so-called missing money.
19 There has to literally be, you know, a
20 million dollars that's floating out there
21 that is just funds that people just didn't
22 pay. Now, just to add one more part to
23 that, just about this Scranton issue, these
24 very same people I can guarantee you they
25 paid the IRS and they paid the Department of

27

1 Revenue, they just didn't pay us, so0.

2 MS. GATELLI: Is that public record
3 of who didn't pay? Like I see today in the
4 paper there is federal tax liens in it and
5 it lists the people and what they owe.

6 MR. MCGOVERN: That's our problem.
7 In order to put a lien in the paper, I mean
8 it has -- in order for something to become
9 public record there is whole process it has
10 to go through, so like I can't stand here
11 and say, you know, here is list of people

12 that just decide they are not going to do
13 it. The only way I can do that is to either
14 go after them civilly or something criminal
15 happened and once there is something
16 criminal you could read the private criminal
17 complaint, you could read the DA arrest
18 warrant, that type of thing, so you can get
19 the information that way, but until it
20 happens -- now, keep in mind we have been
21 there a year. These things take time, so we
22 are still at the beginning of this,
23 unfortunately, there is no carry over from
24 the previous whatever number of years.
25 Again, I'm looking at people that haven't

28

1 paid for ten years and saying how could this
2 go on, how can --

3 MS. EVANS: People who are city
4 residents who worked outside of the city?

5 MR. MCGOFF: That's a whole -- that's
6 a whole another -- that's a whole other
7 argument.

8 MS. EVANS: Oh, the businesses who
9 have had --

10 MR. MCGOFF: I'm specifically talking
11 about businesses within the city who are

12 withholding money from their employees --

13 MS. EVANS: And kept the money.

14 MR. MCGOFF: And kept the money, yes.

15 MS. EVANS: Rather than turning it
16 over.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

18 MS. EVANS: Plus we also have, let's
19 say, individuals who, as I said, would
20 reside within the city, work outside of the
21 city --

22 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

23 MS. EVANS: -- and never paid wage
24 taxes.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Correct.

29

1 MS. EVANS: And as --

2 MR. MCGOFF: Some of which who have
3 voted in this city, some of which have used
4 a lot of other services of this city --

5 MS. EVANS: Yes.

6 MR. MCGOFF: -- but which claim they
7 don't live here.

8 MS. EVANS: Yes.

9 MR. MCGOFF: And then we are aware of
10 some of those people and I have attempted or
11 are attempting to collect the money from
12 those people --

13 MS. EVANS: And as for the people who
14 would have received double or triple refunds
15 are they being pursued legally?

16 MR. MCGOFF: If, in fact, we can
17 identify them then, yes, the practice is to
18 send them a letter. Now, of course we have
19 a situation where if it happened six years
20 ago we may not be able to collect it because
21 of statute of limitations issues and things
22 like that.

23 MS. EVANS: Yes.

24 MR. MCGOFF: But if it's identified
25 we are more than willing to try to -- to try

30

1 to recoup that money.

2 MS. EVANS: And then my other
3 concern though, and perhaps you were leading
4 up to it, is the fact that allegedly the tax
5 office was using tax monies, tax dollars, if
6 you will, in their operating budget? In
7 other words, they exceeded their operating
8 budget and were using tax dollars to
9 supplement, let's say, what they needed for
10 their operations?

11 MR. MCGOFF: Correct.

12 MS. EVANS: And what will be done

13 about that?

14 MR. MCGOFF: Well, there is an
15 exhibit in the back -- in the, I believe
16 it's -- not the appendix, but the exhibits
17 in which it shows the thing -- the one thing
18 I would like to point out to that if you
19 look at the years 2008 is of all of the
20 years it just explodes. Now, my position on
21 that is because of transparency. Everything
22 that is being spent is being put into that
23 account. The largest, just so you
24 understand, the largest number one item is
25 that computer system and the computer

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1 maintenance company. It's in the hundredes
2 -- it's thousands upon thousands, and when I
3 say thousands not one or two thousand it is?

4 MS. VITALI-FLYNN: \$30,000 a month.

5 MR. MCGOFF: \$30,000 here, \$40,000
6 there. If we are spending that kind of
7 money on the computer system now how is that
8 it -- where did it come from? You know,
9 where was it in the prior year? So there
10 was a concern from the auditors that the
11 prior years that the funds were put
12 somewhere else. In other words, the checks
13 were recorded somewhere else so that they

14 are not on above the line basically. So I
15 will say, yes, the last year there I think
16 it was \$180,000 over budget last year is
17 what it was. When you really get into those
18 numbers you are going to find out that the
19 largest majority of that number is the
20 computers. If we had to spend that kind of
21 money on a computer system last year, and my
22 understanding is nothing changed adverse to
23 the prior years then where are those --
24 where is the line item on those?

25 So one of the other items just to

32

1 keep in mind, too, is we sent out 90,000
2 property tax bills a year, plus the S-1's
3 and the A-1's, they cost money, so I believe
4 those bills collectively are 60, 70,000
5 dollars, so if you look at the universe and
6 say, hey, your operating budget is \$280,000,
7 if we are spending 80 on sending out bills,
8 the property tax bills and all of that kind
9 of stuff, and we are spending between 150 to
10 200,000 dollars on the computer system there
11 is not much left in budget, so anything
12 else, legal fees I think there were 16
13 grievances that we had to deal with when we

14 took over, there were legal bills that kept
15 coming in for those, so if you were to go
16 back and start looking, again, this is the
17 issue of trying to find it, if you can find
18 it and it was recategorized then, yes, we
19 believe those numbers would change in the
20 prior years, but I can only say look at '08
21 and as far as I'm concerned or as far I'm
22 aware I believe everything that should have
23 been on that line was on that line, and all
24 of a sudden we are 100 and some thousand
25 dollars over budget, so something took place

33

1 in the early years.

2 Now, to answer your questions is
3 there anything we can do with that, I don't
4 know where you get the money from. It's,
5 you know, the tax office. It's not like
6 they're a taxpayer and you can say give us
7 back our money. I understand the city can
8 attempt to say "give us back our money," but
9 the way the process works the city pays half
10 the wages --

11 MS. EVANS: The school district.

12 MR. MCGOFF: The school district pays
13 half, the city pays a good portion of the
14 operating budget to 280, the school

15 district, the county pays for the building
16 and stuff like that, so if we're over budget
17 the answer should have been we should have
18 just come and said, hey, we need another
19 \$50,000 from each of you because this is
20 where the numbers are, but I would imagine
21 that this is probably the first time that
22 you are being told that the computer system
23 cost \$150, \$200,000 a year to operate alone.

24 MS. FANUCCI: And then continue the
25 problem.

34

1 MR. MCGOVERN: Yes.

2 MS. FANUCCI: After it got there it
3 didn't straighten anything out.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Two very quick
5 questions, do we continue to use the
6 commingled account?

7 MR. MCGOVERN: At this point we have
8 absolutely -- that -- just so everybody
9 understands, there was 17 bank accounts in
10 this office at the end of 2004. The money
11 would come in and it would be put into a
12 segregated account. In the beginning of '05
13 it was all dumped into one account which
14 caused this issue of not being able to find

15 anything or to identify anything because
16 there was just too much going on in the one
17 account.

18 MS. EVANS: Why did it occur though,
19 was that a human decision, is that something
20 that was tied into the computer system, how
21 does one go from what seems reasonable to
22 have 17 accounts to the merger of so many to
23 a point where nothing is distinguishable?

24 MR. MCGOVERN: There was a consultant
25 report that was prepared before the computer

35

1 system that went into effect and I believe
2 that's where the proposal came and then it
3 was just put into place and the computer
4 system was put into place. The problem is
5 the auditor said great idea, poor
6 implementation is what happened.

7 Now, to answer Mr. McGoff's question
8 can we get out of this, I think the one
9 thing, and Marilyn had talked about we --
10 excuse the use of a term we need a
11 controller in the office, a tax professional
12 -- I'm sorry, accounting professional. Once
13 that type of person is in place with this
14 accounting system once they have a grasp of
15 it the one thing at least immediately what

16 we can do or should do is segregate the
17 operating budget out of it because that
18 should be -- that should never have been
19 included in there and there should never
20 have been a reason why taxpayer funds are
21 being commingled with the tax office funds.
22 That is something simple and that's
23 relatively an easy thing to do once we have
24 somebody there from an accounting
25 perspective.

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1 MR. MCGOFF: Second question, do we
2 continue to use the same computer program
3 and do we intend to continue to use that
4 into the future?

5 MR. MCGOVERN: At this point you
6 spent a lot of money on it and it's -- to
7 throw it away would be would probably be
8 ashamed. The issue --

9 MR. MCGOFF: But if it doesn't work.

10 MR. MCGOVERN: Well, the issue has
11 never been that the computer system hasn't
12 worked the people aren't trained and one of
13 the points that they make in that audit
14 report is from day one when they accounts
15 were set up there should have been two sets

16 of entries, a "due to" on one side and "due
17 from" on the other. From day one when they
18 set this thing up they forget to make the
19 second set of entries which threw the books
20 off \$4 million on day one, so there
21 immediately was a problem, and again, it's
22 human error, it wasn't system error. If
23 somebody understood what they were doing
24 then they would have been fine.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

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1 MS. EVANS: But let us say
2 hypothetically successful implementation of
3 the computer system will you continue to
4 keep a hard copy as well or are you going to
5 be solely reliant upon the computer program?

6 MR. MCGOVERN: When you say a hard
7 copy, a hard copy of what?

8 MS. EVANS: Your records, your
9 accounts, etcetera.

10 MR. MCGOVERN: Well, there always
11 hard company ice of the bank statements.
12 They are always there, again, the problem is
13 they weren't being reconciled with the
14 computer system. There should always be
15 hard copies of the W-2's, the tax returns,
16 the checks, all of those things. They are

17 there, but again, in referencing the checks
18 they come back in a box. They don't come
19 back in an envelope with a hundred in there,
20 they come back in a box with thousands and
21 thousands. Unless you were really -- unless
22 you knew you were doing you wouldn't have
23 any idea what's there. So those records are
24 always available, the problem becomes trying
25 to find what you are missing.

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1 It's just, again, we are looking at
2 three and a half years to four years using
3 this computer system now it's not like we
4 had 30 days, and that's -- just to be quick,
5 one of the other things is a lot of these
6 problems that were occurring could have been
7 discovered on a daily basis by running an
8 exception report, but it just wasn't done
9 so, instead of having five mistakes made the
10 previous day that could have been fixed we
11 have, you know, 15,000 for four years
12 because nobody was ever looking at that
13 problem. They knew it was there, but nobody
14 ever did anything about it.

15 MS. EVANS: Now, the city has
16 allocated in the 2009 budget additional

17 funds for an audit of the Single Tax Office
18 that, as you know, should have been
19 performed by law annually.

20 MR. MCGOVERN: Yes.

21 MS. EVANS: And, of course, it hasn't
22 occurred, I'm not exactly sure why, but in
23 an effort to resolve that situation council
24 did provide funding for such. Now, my
25 question to you is at the point at which --

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1 at this juncture, in other words, are we
2 going to experience difficulty conducting,
3 let us say, you know, an audit this year?

4 MR. MCGOFF: At this point in time
5 any accountant that comes in there will not
6 be able to perform a gap or a guess or any
7 other kind of audit. It just -- the records
8 are still in that much disarray. That's the
9 point about an accounting professional.
10 Ideally, if we can get somebody in there to
11 start cleaning it up it gives them until the
12 end of the year to get it cleaned up, so
13 when an auditor comes in early next year
14 they are able to look at the books and
15 records, unlike Mr. Marks attempted to do
16 for three years and kept saying, "There's a
17 problem here, there's a problem here,

18 there's a problem here," and it never
19 changed. If we can get those problems fixed
20 in theory they should be able to come in and
21 there would be something for them to audit
22 at that point, but at this point there is
23 nothing there for somebody to audit because
24 the information on the computer system
25 doesn't completely reflect what's actually

40

1 taking place.

2 MS. GATELLI: Are you going to offer
3 training for the employees?

4 MS. VITALI-FLYNN: We already started
5 that.

6 MR. MCGOVERN: Yeah. Marilyn has
7 just done that. She has had a few of them
8 to the computer classes with the computer
9 company. Obviously they are aware of some
10 of these issues and as they are identified,
11 and a lot of them were identified by the
12 auditors when they were doing this
13 investigation, they were putting fixes in
14 place at that point, so they were already
15 saying, "Hey, if you just do it this way you
16 don't have this problem anymore."

17 So some of those fixes are in place,

18 others will be in place and as we move
19 forward, you know, hopefully at the end of
20 this year this thing is in good enough shape
21 that somebody can come in and render an
22 opinion.

23 MS. EVANS: Was there no training
24 offered in 2005?

25 MR. MCGOVERN: My upstanding it was

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1 very limited.

2 MS. VITALI-FLYNN: It was a one-day
3 training.

4 MR. MCGOVERN: That's one of the
5 other issues, employees that had worked for
6 there for many, many years the new computer
7 system comes in they were just absolutely
8 frustrated and retired, that was it. So the
9 people that knew how things were supposed to
10 be going once the computer system came in
11 they just threw up their hands and said
12 enough of this and they left.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Any other
14 questions?

15 MS. GATELLI: No, but I know some of
16 us have some more questions. I myself
17 wasn't able to pull the report off of my
18 computer, so I can only get bits and pieces

19 of report and if we have other questions we
20 may ask you to come back again.

21 MR. MCGOVERN: Okay, and if somebody
22 specifically has a question or a problem
23 Marilyn is always available, I won't say I'm
24 always available, but I will try to make
25 myself available and we can hopefully

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1 address some of the issues.

2 MS. EVANS: Will we then not receive
3 the entirety of what is due to the city
4 during the 2009 budget year? In other
5 words, this could be ongoing beyond 2009?
6 I'm not talking become now our traditional
7 distributions, I'm talking about these areas
8 of the 888 account, the interest, etcetera.

9 MR. MCGOVERN: The goal would be that
10 this is resolved during 2009 and then at the
11 end of 2009 whatever money that would have
12 accumulated in an 888 account or 233 account
13 if it's not distributed at least it's
14 identified so the city knows the next month
15 that they are getting it, that type of
16 thing, so ideally it could be much better
17 reporting and ideally this money will be
18 distributed sooner than later. Like, the

19 interest money should be any kind of
20 question. We have the numbers identified,
21 you know, at some point there is going to be
22 an interest check, so we don't desire to
23 have this problem occur again.

24 MS. FANUCCI: Thank you.

25 MR. MCGOFF: I want to thank you for

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1 coming tonight, Mrs. Vitali-Flynn and Mr.
2 McGovern. I appreciate your presence.
3 Mr. Renda, thank you, also, and the
4 information provided hopefully will help us
5 in making decisions into the future, and
6 again, if questions do arise they certainly
7 we will send them to you and thank again.
8 Have a good night. Thank you.

9 MR. MCGOVERN: Have a good night.
10 Thank you.

11 MS. VITALI-FLYNN: Thank you.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Any announcements from
13 council?

14 MS. EVANS: Yes. Please remember in
15 your prayers all those who have died this
16 past week, particularly Thomas F. Barrett,
17 Sr., a retired lieutenant in the Scranton
18 fire department whose son, Tom Barrett,
19 recently retired from the city controller's

20 office and all his dear family members and
21 friends he leaves behind.

22 A bake sale and basket raffle will
23 be held on Saturday, April 4, before and
24 after the 4:00 mass and on Sunday, April 5,
25 before and after the 11:00 mass at Saints

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1 Peter and Paul Church Hall, 1309 West Locust
2 Street in West Scranton.

3 And Fetching Grooming Salon on
4 Boulevard Avenue in Greenridge will be
5 offering Easter pet photos on Saturday,
6 March 28 and Sunday March 29 from 1 to 4
7 p.m. The 5 by 7 photo is \$5 and other sizes
8 will be available. The photos will also be
9 taken by request through this week as well
10 as the following week. Proceeds will be
11 used to purchase canine oxygen masks for
12 local fire departments. The masks come in
13 three sizes and fit various animals. Each
14 mask costs \$50 and will be used for dogs
15 caught in fires or rescue situations.
16 Marilyn Reese, owner of Fetching Grooming
17 Salon, hopes to fully equip the Scranton
18 Fire Department which she says has only one
19 such mask as well as other county fire

20 departments.

21 Now, I know I have two dogs and from
22 going to go door throughout the years in our
23 city I know that countless city residents
24 are dog owners and cat owners, and I'm sure
25 that none of us wants to see any animal lost

45

1 to a fire, so please support this very
2 worthy cause to protect all of our pets.
3 And that's all.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Mrs. Gatelli?

5 MS. GATELLI: This is the final week
6 for the Ryan Mihalchicz memorial pasta
7 dinner announcement, it is Sunday the 29th
8 from 1 to 8 at Novak's Food and Spirits on
9 Boulevard Avenue. Also this Sunday at St.
10 Francis Church, which is my parish, from
11 11:30 to 4:00 there will be a polenta and
12 meatballs or rigatoni and meatballs and
13 adults are \$8.50 sponsored by the Altar and
14 Rosary Society.

15 The West Side Invader Dugout Club is
16 having a night at the races on Saturday
17 April 18, at 7:00 at Keyser Valley Community
18 Center. You can purchase a horse and have
19 some fun and the proceeds will benefit the
20 West Scranton baseball team.

21 dumpsters please call me through the Office
22 of City Council and we can make some
23 arrangements with the DPW, and that's all I
24 have. Thank you.

25 MR. COURTRIGHT: Mr. McGoff, I ask

47

1 you to just give me a little leeway on this,
2 we have seen in the paper in the last week
3 or so and I have been inundated with calls
4 and people coming up to me about fire
5 stations, whether they will be closed, are
6 we going to be moving engine companies, are
7 we going to be moving trucks out, and not to
8 take the side of administration, not to take
9 the side of the firefighters, but to take
10 the side of the residents, they are the ones
11 that are going to be affected by any changes,
12 so I would ask if council would agree to
13 this that we would send a letter to Director
14 Hayes and ask him if he can give us the plan
15 on what they plan on doing with the fire
16 department, who is the architect of this
17 plan, who is the designer, who is coming up
18 with all of these moves and whoever that is
19 what their qualifications are, were there
20 any studies done?

21 MS. EVANS: Mr. Courtright, last week

22 when you were absent we sent a letter to the
23 mayor requesting that information.

24 MR. COURTRIGHT: Okay.

25 MS. EVANS: But we did not receive a

48

1 response from him. That was sent to him I
2 believe March 17.

3 MR. COURTRIGHT: My thought is this
4 if -- certainly if you are going to make any
5 changes it's got to be closely looked at
6 because, you know, one life lost is one too
7 many. I'm not saying that there could not
8 be improvements, I'm sure there could be
9 improvements, but I'm just real concerned
10 about how we are taking these decisions, who
11 is making these decisions and what
12 information they we are getting to make
13 these decisions, so if you send all of that
14 to the mayor and we got no response maybe we
15 could send it to Director Hayes, but I'd
16 like to know who is making these decisions
17 and what their qualifications are. I think
18 if we going to make big changes like that I
19 would be in favor of seeing some kind of
20 professional study done to tell us -- no
21 one, I don't think there is anyone in the

22 city that wants the fire house closed that's
23 near their house. Nobody wants that; right?

24 MS. FANUCCI: But I also want to know
25 where this even came from. Are though

49

1 closing fire houses?

2 MS. GATELLI: I spoke to the mayor
3 because I was concerned about especially my
4 fire house.

5 MS. FANUCCI: Right.

6 MS. GATELLI: You know, it's the
7 only one in South Scranton and I know the
8 one in North Scranton is the only one over
9 there and we fought a long time for that
10 firehouse for many years. Mr. Gervasi knows
11 that, we have 10,000 names and I'll bring
12 them to the mayor's office if I have to, but
13 he told me that no firehouses were closing.

14 MS. EVANS: Well, engine companies
15 apparently --

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: Here's my --

17 Ms. Evans: But first he -- I believe
18 what happened was an announcement was made
19 at city council last week --

20 MS. FANUCCI: And the day of the
21 signs went up so I'm wondering where all of
22 this information came from. There's signs

23 all over the place.

24 MS. EVANS: -- that they were going
25 to close and then thereafter the mayor was

50

1 quoted as saying, "That wasn't true," and
2 then another article came out in the
3 newspaper I believe the following day
4 announcing that engine companies. There
5 would be a difference in staffing followed
6 by the closing of two engine companies, one
7 at headquarters downtown and one on Main
8 Avenue --

9 MS. FANUCCI: Where did that --

10 MS. EVANS: -- across from --

11 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Courtright did have
12 the floor opinion.

13 MS. FANUCCI: Oh, I'm sorry. Yeah,
14 that always happens to you. Sorry. Sorry,
15 Bill.

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: My mother told me I
17 had to be a gentleman to you ladies so --
18 here is my concern, okay, and if it's just
19 engine companies then it's just trucks, that
20 might sound fine to some, but these people
21 have specific jobs when they get to there.
22 Somebody has got to lay the line down and

23 somebody has got to, you know, hook into the
24 fire hydrant, there is so many different
25 things, and to a lay person, oh, the

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1 firehouse is still open. Well, yeah, but
2 who is in that firehouse and what's in that
3 firehouse and who is arriving on scene and
4 who is doing what? And I don't claim to be
5 an expert in that so I'm not going to stand
6 here or sit here and say that, but who is
7 making those decisions? I would hope it's
8 an expert and that's what I would like to
9 see, where that's coming from.

10 I'm not saying you can't make
11 changes, I don't think anybody is saying you
12 can't improve, but let's face it, fires take
13 lives, firefighters save lives, one life
14 would be too many, so I just would really
15 think that this is something that we should
16 be made aware of and if it's not true then
17 none of these engine companies are moving,
18 none of these truck companies are moving and
19 tell us that it's not true, but let's not
20 believe just the newspaper, no offense to
21 the newspaper people, and that's it. I'm
22 done. Thank you.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you,

24 Mr. Courtright. Prior to citizens'
25 participation I would like to read a letter

52

1 that was received this past week. It's,
2 "Dear Scranton City Council, I am writing
3 this letter in response to the March 16,
4 2009, city council meeting and to provide
5 accuracy to the operations of my company,
6 Danielle and Company, Incorporated, and my
7 credentials both personally and
8 professionally.

9 Danielle and Company is a
10 manufacturer of contemporary and natural and
11 organic beauty care products, namely, soaps,
12 body washes, lotions, candles and lip balms.
13 All of our products are made with the purest
14 ingredients to nourish the skin, enhance the
15 senses and protect the earth. I started my
16 company in my home and create my products
17 based on the empirical data that shows the
18 effectiveness of scents on our well-being.

19 To date, my company has grown to
20 occupy a 10,000-square foot factory in
21 Scranton. All of our products are handmade
22 in our facility and we are a family-owned
23 and operated business with all employees

24 being born and raised in Northeastern
25 Pennsylvania.

53

1 We manufacture over 85 different
2 products and they are sold to over 100 spas,
3 boutiques and health food stores in the
4 United States, Canada and Japan with premier
5 locations at Marriott Hotel and Spa, The
6 Ritz Carlton Spa in Florida and many
7 Hallmark stores. We also sell our products
8 at our showroom on Adams Avenue and on-line
9 at www.danielleandcompany.com. Our products
10 have been sold on QVC for Earth Day, have
11 been featured in over 20 national magazines.
12 We are also sold at drugstore.com and
13 amazon.com, MSN.com and provided to shops
14 globally and were chosen to be included in
15 the coveted gift bags at the Billboard Music
16 Awards.

17 Over 40 high profile celebrities
18 have also lathered up in our products, some
19 on that list include, Tony Bennett, Janet
20 Jackson, Paula Abdul, Courtney Love, Howie
21 Mandell.

22 In regards to my personal and
23 professional credentials, I am a recipient
24 of the many academic and professional awards

25

including Young Entrepreneur of the year by

54

1

the Bank of America, the top 20 under 40

2

business leaders in Northeastern,

3

Pennsylvania, Small Business Spotlight

4

Award, top 40 in the 40 successful

5

individuals in Northeast Pennsylvania, two

6

time winner of the pride and progress award

7

for interior design by the Scranton Chamber,

8

I have received the United States Senate

9

Award from Entrepreneurship from Senator

10

Arlen Specter and have been awarded

11

nationally for the best organic product and

12

best in show of the New York International

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gift show and was named top 20 people to

14

know in the global cosmetic industry by GCI

15

magazine.

16

I have presented research at

17

national psychological conventions and I was

18

an invited panelist in alternative medicine

19

magazine. I am also certified in herbal

20

techniques from the il Laboratorio dell'

21

Erborista in Pitigliano, Tuscany, Italy.

22

I have already received a \$30,000

23

innovate research grant from the

24

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in partnership

25

with Marywood University to further research

55

1

and commercialize and customize a scent

2

delivery system and I'm working with

3

Pennsylvania farmers to provide the raw

4

materials we need for our products and to

5

sustain Pennsylvania agriculture. We are

6

also a PA preferred vendor with the

7

Pennsylvania department of agriculture.

8

I have been an invited lecturer at

9

Keystone College, Misericordia University,

10

the University of Scranton, Wall Street West

11

and Economics Pennsylvania, the entrepreneur

12

institute, as well as serving as an adjunct

13

faculty member at Marywood University.

14

I am involved with a number of

15

community organizations including the Great

16

Valley Technology Alliance Board, Scranton

17

Business Alliance, Marywood University

18

Alumni Council, Leadership of Lackawanna

19

County, and am an ambassador to the

20

Lackawanna Heritage Valley program. I was

21

also part of a team to help raise \$20,000

22

for the Children's Advocacy Center in

23

Scranton.

24

I am a national board certified

25

counselor and have been in the field of

1 psychology and human development for eight
2 years. I have obtained a BA in Psychology
3 from Arabian College and a MA in mental
4 health counseling from Marywood University
5 and am currently pursuing a doctoral degree
6 in human development from Marywood.

7 In closing, my company has and will
8 continue to create jobs in the area. We
9 brought life to a blighted plot on Adams
10 Avenue, we are bringing in revenues to
11 increase the tax base for Scranton that
12 support the global economy and we are
13 keeping manufacturing alive in Scranton. We
14 are seen as leaders in both the local
15 communities and national and green and eco
16 friendly movement and are educating local
17 citizens weekly classes at our facility.

18 We invite anyone to come by our
19 facility and receive a personal tour and see
20 firsthand how we are an asset to the City of
21 Scranton and it's citizens. I would be
22 happy to show our citizens the value that we
23 bring to Scranton and how as a young female
24 entrepreneur I chose to stay here because I
25 believe in the people and resources of

1 Northeastern Pennsylvania.

2 I have also reviewed the comments
3 made by speaker at the council meeting and
4 have responded and have provided a response
5 to his false and untrue accusations. Number
6 one, we are not doing aromatherapy as a
7 practice at Danielle and Company and have
8 never made that claim. We have are a
9 manufacturing of bath and body care
10 products. We make products that have
11 specific scents in them and have shown to
12 have an effect on well-being.

13 I am not an aromatherapist and never
14 claimed to be. There is no information on
15 my website that substantiates this false
16 accusation. I have never said that I am
17 trained in aromatherapy and will never be
18 trained in aromatherapy therapy because I do
19 not study aromatherapy. I study aromacology
20 and that is the psychology of scent. I have
21 studied the field of psychology since 2000
22 and have received a bachelor and master's
23 degree. I am trained in certified in
24 psychology.

25 I am trained as a cognitive

1 behavioral therapist and am a board
2 certified counselor," she gives the
3 certification number. "Although I am
4 concerned qualified to be able to practice
5 counseling, psychotherapy and deal with
6 people who have emotional problems, I am not
7 practicing as a therapist. I am devoted to
8 my business and my mental program. I am not
9 offering aromatherapy sessions or cognitive
10 behavioral sessions at my factory and this
11 is not a part of my business.

12 Danielle and Company is not a
13 wellness program and never claims to be. My
14 credentials are with the universities I
15 attended and the National Board of Certified
16 Counselors. I am not a psychologist and
17 never claim to be one, you need a doctoral
18 degree to be a psychologist. I do not have
19 a doctoral degree at this time.

20 The American Psychological
21 Association is for psychologists and I am
22 not a psychologist and never claimed to be.
23 I am not going to hurt a person's emotional
24 or physical life. On the contrary, I am
25 trained and certified to counsel people in

1 the time of need. I must make this point
2 clear. Although, I am able to be a
3 therapist, I am not practicing. Myself and
4 my company are greatly shocked and saddened
5 by the untrue and false accusations made by
6 the speaker. I firmly believe he is
7 misinformed. I have now turned the matter
8 over to my attorneys to ensure my good name
9 and legal rights are protected. Sincerely,
10 Danielle K. Flemming, founder and CEO of
11 Danielle and Company."

12 Thank you for bearing with me. In a
13 reply to me she said that the speaker had a
14 five minutes to speak and she would like her
15 five minutes as well.

16 (Whereupon there were comments from
17 the audience.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Excuse me. Citizens'
19 participation. Dave Schreiber.

20 MR. SCHREIBER: Good evening,
21 Council. My name is Dave Schreiber, I'm
22 president of the Scranton firefighters'
23 union and also a city resident. Councilman
24 Courtright brought up a point tonight that
25 obviously I wanted to touch upon. There

1 seems to be some confusion of what's going
2 on. The mayor has been on record several
3 times, 8-31-08 he is on record stating that
4 he wants to close three to four firehouses.
5 He is also on record reductions in the fire
6 department. We understand that, obviously,
7 things are changing for us. That's not why
8 I'm here. I'm here to educate what some of
9 these proposed cuts are going to be.

10 I was in a meeting two weeks ago
11 when the proposal for Engine 9 and Engine 4
12 were introduced. Director Hayes was there,
13 Chief Davis was there, and Stu Renda. They
14 are looking at closing Engine 4 in this
15 building next door and Engine 9 over in
16 Tripps Park and combining it into a quint
17 unit which is one combined unit. It's a
18 failed experiment from the 70's. It was
19 tried out in several communities, never
20 worked out. That's a vehicle that just you
21 are trying to get too much out of one
22 vehicle, it doesn't work.

23 In basic terms what we need to
24 understand is it's really semantics to say
25 I'm not closing the firehouse, you are

1 closing the fire engine. That engine has a
2 specific job just like the fire truck has a
3 specific job. In a nutshell, you could say
4 Army and Navy, the two combined to do an
5 overall task, but each individual unit has a
6 completely different perspective and
7 assignment. The engine company brings water
8 to the fire, pulls the line off, the crew
9 members go in to start extinguishing. The
10 truck company opens up, starts ventilating.

11 Now, just a room and contents fire
12 you are dealing with temperatures of 2000
13 degrees at the ceiling height. Down near
14 the floor possibly up to 200 degrees, that's
15 why when you go in you need to open up a
16 roof, open up windows, the rescue crew and
17 sometimes the truck crews we are trying to
18 find are victims, we are doing the search.
19 We always assume there is a potential victim
20 in the house.

21 All of these tasks, and I'm being
22 very oversimplified with this, these tasks
23 needs to be done in unison. The second two
24 engine company that's coming in we have one
25 engine company in front of the building

1 putting a line on the fire. The second two
2 engine comes in to bring water to that first
3 engine company and to provide back up lines.
4 If we entertain this concept of a quint or
5 eliminate, even if they not calling it a
6 quint, just a truck company at headquarters
7 and a truck company over in West Side at --
8 over in the 1,000 block of North Main Avenue
9 there is not engine companies there, and
10 it's really folly to go with a concept like
11 that. These companies are the heart of the
12 city, the West Side and in Central City.

13 I myself live on Leggett Street up
14 in North end off of Rockwell Avenue and to
15 put it in perspective from my house, we have
16 a bridge up there that's been a three ton
17 limit for, God, I have no -- I don't
18 remember the last time I have seen something
19 that it's going to be taken care of, it's
20 been ten years or more, fire trucks can't go
21 over that bridge. The route Engine 8, which
22 is on West Market Street, has to go down
23 Providence Square, out North Main Avenue to
24 the Pepsi plant down near Schiff's Foods,
25 come up the back way, down Charles Street,

1 down Rockwell Avenue to my house. Okay,

2 they show up, my house is on fire, my
3 children are trapped inside or my wife, God
4 forbid, that next engine company that's
5 coming to supply them water now, remember
6 that company has three to four minutes worth
7 of water, that next engine company that's
8 coming in is supposed to take the hydrant to
9 supply that engine and back up those people,
10 you want to guess where that engine is going
11 to come from if you close Engine 9 and
12 Engine 4? It's going to be Luzerne Street
13 in West Side and Petersburg Corners. If you
14 have ever driven through our city in the
15 middle of the day or even that distance it
16 could be two in the morning you are not
17 going to get there in a timely manner.
18 It's absolutely ridiculous to think of a
19 concept like that.

20 And, I mean, the mayor is one day
21 there is an article we are not closing
22 stations, well, we are closing stations.
23 Well, now we are going to do a quint, we're
24 not doing quints. It's time to put the
25 cards on the table and say where you going

1 with this and I agree with council.

2 MR. COURTRIGHT: Dave, could I ask
3 you one quick question, who came up with
4 this idea of the quint? Who is the expert
5 telling you this? I'd like to know where
6 this stuff is coming from?

7 MR. SCHREIBER: I have no idea. It
8 was presented, like I said, at a meeting. I
9 was there, I was present and so was Chief
10 Davis, Director Hayes, and Stu Renda. And
11 who? I mean, obviously, I don't think there
12 is anybody capable of coming up with that
13 type of concept and making those wholesale
14 changes to our whole response system.

15 MR. COURTRIGHT: They had to get it
16 from somewhere; right?

17 MR. SCHREIBER: I really don't -- I
18 think it's just trying to figure a way to
19 reduce the amount of persons, the amount of
20 personnel. I truly that's in my heart
21 that's what I believe because I have asked
22 that same question, where is this coming
23 from, you know, and nobody has given me an
24 answer. All I'm hearing is bits, parts. It
25 is an absolutely -- absolutely fool-hearted

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1 to look at it from that point of view to
2 close those engine companies down, and don't

3 just take it from my point of view at the
4 north end, if you are in West Side it's
5 going to be the same thing, Engine 7 could
6 have the house right next to their station
7 over on Luzerne Street, the next two water
8 coming in is going to be South Side or
9 Petersburg with those two stations closed.
10 It's just crazy. It's crazy.

11 Now, you need to remember the cuts
12 in engine companies, Councilwoman Gatelli
13 talked about the petition drive, that
14 petition drive was done for Engine 13, which
15 is long gone.

16 MS. GATELLI: I know.

17 MR. SCHREIBER: We are down to Engine
18 2 back in South Side, that's it. South Side
19 is a huge area and in this city --

20 MS. GATELLI: Too big for just one.

21 MS. SCHREIBER: Pardon?

22 MS. GATELLI: Because we do Montage
23 now, too, with that truck.

24 MR. SCHREIBER: You have to realize,
25 our biggest building area in the city is on

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1 the two mountains. Our footprint as a city
2 is getting wider and wider. If now there is

3 a need for coverage up in the East Mountain
4 and West Mountain more now than ever and to
5 go in an opposite direction and not take
6 that into consideration is just haphazard.
7 There is just too much at stake, and I'm not
8 trying to be alarmist here, but the last
9 time engine companies were closed we had
10 multiple fatalities. You show up, I mean,
11 they had it up near Strazzerri's restaurant
12 with Engine 9 was closed last time, it was
13 about ten years ago. The crew that showed
14 up there you can only do a certain amount of
15 tasks. They had people hanging out of
16 windows, they're trying to put water on a
17 fire, you can only do one task.

18 It may make sense for a bean counter
19 or for an accountant to look at this and
20 say, "Here is how we can cut a few bodies,"
21 but it's absolutely our safety and more
22 importantly the public's safety that's at
23 risk. That's why those signs are out there.
24 That's why people need to educate
25 themselves. This is not an issue that can

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1 be derived from shoot from the hip. It's
2 not political. There absolutely is a
3 scientific way to approach looking at it,

4 and I'm telling you this city is only
5 getting smaller. We still have the small
6 25 square miles and actually population is
7 going up.

8 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr.
9 Schreiber.

10 MS. EVANS: Mr. Schreiber, I just
11 want to ask you, as was stated earlier, we
12 did ask for the mayor's response on what he
13 is basing these decisions, and again, we did
14 not receive a response from him, however,
15 now I understand you met with Mr. Hayes.

16 MR. SCHREIBER: Correct.

17 MS. EVANS: Correct, and so
18 Mr. Courtright wants the letter directed to
19 Mr. Hayes, in the event that there is no
20 current independent study that has been
21 consulted in order to make these types of
22 decisions would you say that it would be
23 wise to commission a study then, an
24 independent study in terms of the fire
25 stations, the manpower in the City of

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1 Scranton, and then wait for those results--

2 MR. SCHREIBER: Absolutely.

3 MS. EVANS: -- before anything would

4 be touched by people are who are not
5 professionals, trained professionals in
6 firefighting.

7 MR. SCHREIBER: Absolutely. I mean,
8 here we are, there's a statement made, I
9 believe it was yesterday that now they are
10 looking at we are ata 142 person fire
11 department, the mayor made the statement
12 130, which is in his right, that's the
13 Commonwealth order. We have no problems.
14 We know we are along for the ride no matter
15 what happens, but there truly is a safety
16 impact on these type of cuts, 130 people if
17 you go from 142 to 130, obviously, something
18 has to give. You are not going to -- to
19 make a statement nothing is going to close,
20 come on. Let's be honest. That's what we
21 need right now is honesty.

22 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Bill
24 Jackowitz.

25 MR. JACKOWITZ: Good evening,

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1 Mr. President, Scranton City Council, Bill
2 Jackowitz, South Scranton resident and
3 member of the Taxpayers' Association. All
4 taxes are paid, two parking tickets were

5 paid, also.

6 ECTV you are doing a good job. Keep
7 showing council members at speakers are
8 speaking. Show both sides. Bionic, believe
9 it or not I care. The City of Scranton was
10 founded in 1866, now in 2009, after a
11 firefighter's death we waited for a safety
12 report to implement procedures that possibly
13 could have been prevented this death. This
14 is not the first Scranton firefighter to die
15 from electrocution. I quote Chief Davis,
16 "The department always had standard
17 procedures for around power lines, though
18 some of them were written down and some of
19 them weren't", that's a quote from the fire
20 chief. "Since Captain Robson's death the
21 department has put the procedures in
22 writing," he said.

23 What kind of leadership is this? No
24 wonder why 92 percent of the firefighters
25 quoted no confidence in the chief. Where

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1 have the mayor, safety director and fire
2 chief been for the past seven years? For
3 that matter, where have they been for the
4 past 103 years? They sure have not been

5 protecting the firefighters and citizens of
6 Scranton. In my opinion this is a disgrace,
7 but more importantly, two Scranton
8 firefighters have lost their life since
9 1906, 103 years. Fourteen firefighters
10 fatalities duty-related. 1 March 1977,
11 Chauffeur Edward Poch, P-O-C-H,
12 electrocuted, aerial ladder, came in contact
13 with power line at the Chamberlin
14 Corporation. It happened before and nothing
15 was ever done to correct it.

16 Scranton City Council meetings are a
17 joke. Week after week the same ten people
18 come before council and ask questions. All
19 they ask for are honest, accurate answers.
20 For the most part, the answers never come.
21 Personally, I have asked 37 questions in the
22 last three and a half years. I have
23 received answers to five of these questions.
24 Three of the answers that I received have
25 been misleading and flat out wrong. I am

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1 not rude. I am frustrated with the rudeness
2 of certain council members answering
3 citizens questions -- not answering
4 citizens' questions. I have been told that
5 I am sarcastic and rude. I have been called

6 out by name by council with no opportunity
7 to respond. I have been called names as I
8 walk away from the podium with no
9 opportunity to respond. That takes courage.

10 I have been interrupted as I am
11 trying to make a point, like I was last
12 week, trying to make a point. Last week it
13 appeared a council member was asleep.
14 Council members carry on sidebar
15 conversations as speakers are speaking and
16 they seem to be writing their
17 autobiographies. They surely are not
18 writing down the questions that are being
19 asked.

20 I have also been searched and made
21 to stand out in the cold to attend council
22 meetings. You may not agree with the
23 speakers or may not even like the speaker,
24 but as an elected official I feel you have
25 the obligation to at least listen to the

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1 speakers. We are only speaking for five
2 minutes. If you as elected officials do not
3 want to attend weekly council meetings then
4 change the Home Rule Charter to monthly
5 meetings or just do not show up, you would

6 be paid anyways. Show some respect to the
7 speakers, at least pay attention, not
8 snicker, laugh and make silly faces. Do not
9 announce that citizens will have time to ask
10 questions and then take the vote before the
11 citizens are allowed to speak and talk back
12 to the speaker. Excuses are like blank,
13 everybody has one.

14 City council meetings are open to
15 the public which means that all citizens
16 have the right to attend these meetings and
17 speak about anything that deals with city
18 government, the state of the city, including
19 the economy, unemployment, the budget and
20 many more topics.

21 Believe it or not, the City of
22 Scranton has been distressed for 17 years.
23 Fire and police have not had a contract in
24 seven years. Taxes have been raised, fines
25 and penalties have been implemented by NCC.

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1 They continue to make mistakes and cause
2 taxpayers undue hardship. Several people
3 have spoken to me about problems they have
4 occurring in the county. I explain that I
5 am not an elected official and I cannot
6 assist them they need to contact Council

7 Members McGoff, Fanucci and Gatelli. After
8 speaking with council members they contact
9 Mayor Doherty.

10 Why do we have a city council
11 anyways? Facts are facts. A firefighter
12 died because of inexperience, unqualified
13 leadership at the top of city government.
14 Now he wants to disband two engine
15 companies. The same leaders are making this
16 decision. No wonder why Northeastern
17 Pennsylvania has the problems. We have,
18 again, as I said, we have no leadership. We
19 only have nepotism. If you know somebody
20 you need not to know anything else.

21 Corruption update: Turnpike
22 commissioners, fired; judge's wife resigned
23 as clerk, \$47,436 a year part-time clerk.
24 Qualifications do not matter, a recent quote
25 from the councilwoman. These signs say do

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1 not vote, quit stealing DiBileo signs. This
2 is a sign of desperation.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Andy Sbaraglia.

4 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,
5 Citizen of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians, I
6 wouldn't necessarily say something on 7-A in

7 fact, I wasn't planning to, but you read a
8 very impressive letter. My question is why
9 does she need the money?

10 Okay, let's get on to it, you read
11 with the insurance, did anybody ever realize
12 why we are going back from this way all the
13 way back to January on the insurance? I did
14 ask that question last week, I was hoping we
15 had an answer.

16 MR. MCGOFF: Do you wish it now?

17 MR. SBARAGLIA: Oh, yeah, sure. Why
18 not?

19 MR. MCGOFF: It's your time.

20 MR. SBARAGLIA: That's okay.

21 MR. MCGOFF: I was told that they met
22 with Mr. Knowles, or with the Knowles
23 Associates whatever in December and went
24 through the needs that they had, the Knowles
25 then searches out vendors for the insurance

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1 and that they only recently received back
2 the information from Knowles and that the
3 legislation was put together when the
4 information from Knowles and Associates was
5 given to them.

6 MR. SBARAGLIA: Can I assume we had
7 insurance coverage from January?

8 MR. MCGOFF: Yes, it was a carry over
9 from the prior year and/or subsequent to.

10 MR. SBARAGLIA: Leeway. Okay. It
11 sounds like a dumb way of doing, but I guess
12 that's the way they do it. Okay, now what I
13 want to talk about mainly is crime. I had
14 two signs stolen from my property, removed.
15 Now, as we all know freedom of expression is
16 very, very important to democracy. When you
17 got thugs running around doing things like
18 that it makes you wonder, are you going to
19 be safe to express yourself or is a rock
20 going to come through your window?

21 This is very important. It's the
22 heart of democracy. When your freedom of
23 expression is taken away from you by anyone
24 whether it's children, this, that or
25 whatever, but this is important because it

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1 was concerted. I don't like concerted
2 efforts to take away rights from people to
3 express themselves, and this is the
4 important thing of democracy, when you lose
5 that you lose everything. When you go to
6 the poles are there going to be a group of
7 people out there saying you can't vote

8 because you don't -- I don't like how you
9 voted or how your sign was in front of your
10 house?

11 This is important. We must get
12 somebody to get these culprits. They must
13 be arrested and the maximum penalty should
14 be imposed on them because this is the
15 basics of all liberties. It's like freedom
16 of speech. When you take them away from
17 people you might as well be in a
18 dictatorship. When you start you start
19 small. If you were ever -- well, Mr. McGoff
20 was a history teacher, I'm sure you realize
21 how the Nazi's took control of Germany, I
22 lived through it and read about it and this
23 is one of the ways he did it, they took away
24 the people's right to speak and they took
25 away their right of expression.

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1 These are basics and, like I say, I
2 would like to see you send a letter or all
3 of you really sit up there and condemn it.
4 Sit up there and say, "This is wrong. It
5 shouldn't be to know," and really that's it.
6 Show where you are when it comes to things
7 like this because you are all in the same
8 boat, what affects one person affects all of

9 us. I thank you.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Ozzie Quinn.

11 MR. QUINN: Ozzie Quinn, President
12 of the Scranton and Lackawanna County
13 Taxpayers' Association, Incorporated. Would
14 you hand these out, please, to council and
15 to the solicitor? I just want to point out,
16 and I'm not going to dwell this, you can
17 vote on this, whatever you want to do, but
18 in the applicant's website she says that she
19 is she is an aromacologist, okay, and to be
20 an aromacologist you first have to become an
21 aromatherapist, and there are the
22 regulations, that's all I have to do with --
23 to say with it, okay? Now, we are going to
24 spend \$25,000 we are going to give to this
25 woman and taxpayers' money?

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1 MS. FANUCCI: It's a loan.

2 MR. QUINN: I see many loans turn
3 into grants here. You know, taxpayers'
4 money, people who have to pay, we saw
5 tonight that there are people not paying
6 their taxes in the City of Scranton. We are
7 paying our taxes, I'm paying my taxes, and
8 the mayor wants to cut out fire engines.

10 come. Please, get rid of that.

11 Mr. Courtright, you are in the right
12 direction. Thank you very much.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Bob Bolus.

14 MR. BOLUS: Good evening, Council.
15 Bob Bolus, Scranton. On 7-A, you know,
16 listening to what I heard here tonight long
17 resume and everything else I believe she
18 should be loaning the city money than the
19 other way around. I mean, you know, in all
20 honesty with that kind of a background and
21 that kind of an expansive program, you know,
22 I think it's shameful to come here and ask
23 taxpayers to pay your way at this point, and
24 I think she should have come here and spent
25 her five minutes just like each and every

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1 one of us had to do. I think we should send
2 our letters to you, Mr. McGoff, and you
3 could read them and we could stay home and
4 watch.

5 On this here -- there is so much in
6 this city going on it's just utterly
7 ridiculous. Last night I was up at the
8 Dunmore council and, you know, the issue
9 came up about the fire department and about

10 volunteers, fire trucks getting to a fire.
11 Well, let me tell you, I'm a firefighter, a
12 volunteer firefighter in Throop, and I drive
13 the fire engine in Throop when I'm available
14 up in the town during the day along with
15 other have volunteers, and to see what this
16 city is trying to do in the size of this
17 city to stop and cut back engines to get --
18 that's your primary and they want to slack
19 off on it. You need water. That's what
20 puts out fires. That's what saves lives.

21 Go down Lackawanna Avenue, you have
22 one-way practically down there. You have
23 the road closing, it used to be two lanes,
24 try to get through the traffic. You know,
25 driving an engine and getting there or any

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1 fire apparatus is not an easy task. People
2 are very ignorant today, they don't pay
3 attention to sirens, lights or anything else
4 that goes on. Now, we want to cut service
5 to the City of Scranton.

6 As Ozzie said, we have to pay a
7 garbage fee to take out our garbage. That
8 should have been in our taxes from day one,
9 which brings up a fee. That's a fee we are
10 paying. When I said put fees on KOZ's,

11 nonprofits, make them pay. That was
12 implemented, why aren't you implementing
13 something else and I have been asking for
14 years to do this. You know, it's time to
15 stop talking and start acting.

16 We have the sewer line, and I
17 mentioned this to Dunmore because they are
18 partnered with Scranton. We have had this
19 leachate line that I have talked about from
20 day one that the landfill runs their flow
21 through. Sure it's treated by the city's
22 sewer authority, however, the line comes
23 through Dunmore and Scranton, go after a
24 host community fee, get four or five bucks a
25 gallon for it. Start taking our debt down

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1 by increasing this tax base and you ignoring
2 it. It's there. Only you could do it.

3 You know, whether the landfill
4 charges or gets charged they pass it on.
5 You go to the gas pump and the gas pumps
6 raise their price five cents, you don't
7 argue, you pay five cents a gallon, so what
8 are you waiting for? You are the people
9 that could do this. You know, this
10 administration has been negligent in a lot

11 of areas and, you know, you keep patronizing
12 them. If you stop and put your foot down on
13 them the mayor won't get away with half the
14 stuff he is doing because you, too, control
15 his money and as long as you give him cart
16 blanch out here we are never going to go out
17 of this mess, we are going to keep getting
18 deeper and deeper.

19 And it was not to see Marilyn here.
20 I have known her for many, many years, and
21 it's nice to see they actually trying to
22 find a solution to the problem, but where
23 was the administration, where were the prior
24 councils? This didn't happen overnight and,
25 you know, we always turn a blind eye in the

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1 City of Scranton and who does it go back to
2 the senior citizens, the taxpayers in the
3 city that are ultimately paying this price.

4 You know, take the businesses. We
5 cut fire protection, we cut services,
6 everybody is paying to be in the City of
7 Scranton but who are they paying? What are
8 we getting into return for it? Look at our
9 roads, look at the condition in the city and
10 we are in the spotlight of the nation, and
11 it just makes you sit here and really,

12 really wonder like what's really been going
13 on here.

14 You know, we can sit and talk and as
15 they've said we come here before council, I
16 have been coming here for many years, and I
17 don't see any changes happening. I see a
18 lot of talk, we want to build a library in
19 South Side, buy a bank building that's
20 falling down and pay millions and millions
21 of dollars. What are we going to do with
22 the library we have here in Scranton, who
23 gets that for free?

24 You know, these are assets. They
25 are not council's, they are not the

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1 administration, past, present or future.
2 You need to sit here and pay attention to
3 the future of this city, and we are not
4 doing that. We are ignoring it all for all
5 the egos out there. For all the reasons
6 that people want to take advantage of the
7 people in this city.

8 You know, they say there is a
9 recession, Scranton stays the same, but look
10 at all of the houses being bought up in the
11 city. They are not being bought by

12 Scrantonians, they are being bought from
13 people all over the country. We are the
14 laughing stock of the nation because we are
15 giving our city away and it's all because of
16 what's happening this city from elected
17 officials who are ignoring the taxpayers in
18 the city. I think we got to stop and draw
19 the line in the sand now. Thank you.

20 MR. MCGOFF: David Dwyer.

21 MR. MURPHY: I'm Mike Murphy, too.

22 MR. DWYER: Good evening, members of
23 council, council staff and citizens. I'm
24 here to share with you, the Community
25 Vegetable Gardens program that we are

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1 implementing through the county. Now, we
2 have 20 sites that we have selected to grow
3 fresh fruits and vegetables to donate the
4 harvest to the local food pantries and to
5 the soup kitchen. You know, the purposes of
6 the community garden is not necessarily just
7 to grow the produce, but it's to raise the
8 public's consciousness of what's actually
9 happening in our community. The number of
10 people working -- the number of the working
11 poor is growing by leaps and bounds today
12 like we have never experienced before and

13 our homeless population is growing
14 tremendously as well and we need to know --
15 really we need to gather together to help
16 raise our brother up instead of pushing them
17 aside and holding a blind eye to them.

18 This past week or two weeks ago I
19 saw a gentleman tossing some things out the
20 door and I said, "Good, we could use these
21 things for our homeless ministry."

22 We have a homeless ministry for
23 girls, and then I saw this girl coming out
24 of the house crying and I went and I
25 approached her and I asked her what was

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1 going on and she had told me that her hours
2 were cut back and that she no longer had
3 enough money to make ends meet, and she had
4 to make a decision could -- she had to make
5 a decision of whether to feed her kids or to
6 pay the rent, so as a compassionate mother
7 she opted and made the wisest choice and the
8 most practical was to buy the food for her
9 kids. But not only did she do that she went
10 to her landlord and she said, please, just
11 accept this and let me work on a way to get
12 the rest of the money. He wouldn't receive

13 it. He kicked her out. He just threw her
14 out and the street. And I approached him
15 and he explained things to him and he wanted
16 to have no part of he just said sue.

17 There is another gentleman who is
18 well-renowned in Glenmaura Country Club, he
19 was the favorite caddy. He served the elite
20 of the community, tragedy hit his household
21 and he ended up in the street and living in
22 a van. This past week he had half of his
23 foot cut off because of frostbite and took
24 -- ravaged his foot and gangrene set in and
25 so they had to take half of his foot. He is

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1 still living in a van.

2 This is happening all over. When
3 you see a car in your neighborhood that you
4 look like somebody is just collecting stuff
5 in there car, that's their home. There are
6 people in abandoned buildings. There are
7 people down the river, you know, last year
8 200 families were displaced that lived on
9 the river all their personal belongings were
10 tossed in the river and had no chance to
11 recover their stuff or no warning that
12 people were coming to throw stuff away. We
13 need to help these people and that's the

14 purpose of a community garden.

15 And Mike Murphy is here, he is a
16 talented gardener and he is going to help
17 this weekend, he is helping us all along,
18 but this weekend we are going to have a
19 training session for volunteers and so we
20 are putting a call out asking for the
21 community to rise up and come out to
22 volunteer and help us with the gardens, but
23 not help us with the gardens, but plant a
24 garden in their own yard and share the
25 produce that comes from those gardens with

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1 their neighbors.

2 We are in communication now with
3 retailers who are going to do -- an Italian
4 promotional market where a consumer can go
5 into a grocery store and buy a head of
6 lettuce and share one with a food pantry or
7 with a soup kitchen or they can take it and
8 donate it to a charity of their own choice.
9 These are things that are happening in the
10 community and as we as a community if we
11 continue to work together we can build a
12 community and through unity we will be a
13 stronger community. Thank you very much for

14 your time.

15 MS. FANUCCI: You had spoken to me
16 earlier about where people could send
17 donations or help you in trying to achieve
18 more, you know -- be able to plant one.
19 Where could they do that? Where can they
20 go?

21 MR. DWYER: Right now they can send
22 -- well, we are going to have a meeting this
23 Saturday, and Mike will talk about that, we
24 are going to have a meeting every Saturday
25 from now on at the Greenridge Assembly of

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1 God Church, Penn State University Urban
2 Farming Community Garden program under
3 Dr. Essinger is instructing us and showing
4 us how to raise gardens and so through
5 Abington Gardens and Mike we will have the
6 training there for people who have brown
7 items to turn them into green thumbs and so
8 it will be an ongoing community effort. The
9 news media and other people are behind it
10 and we just want to share the word and get
11 it out.

12 MS. FANUCCI: Thank you so much.

13 MR. DWYER: Thank you.

14 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Murphy.

15 MR. MURPHY: Good evening. My name
16 is Mike Murphy, I'm a resident of Scranton.
17 I just want to thank you for the opportunity
18 to present and promote this community garden
19 concept and basically I want to try to make
20 a broad general appeal to council, to the
21 City of Scranton, to the residents for their
22 cooperation and support and participation
23 hopefully of what I consider and I think a
24 lot of people are coming to the realization
25 of a worthwhile endeavor and to provide any

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1 information I can as far as where our --
2 planning our implementation and hopefully
3 our future vision will be, and as of right
4 now we have a taken three vacant parcels in
5 the city, one on the 1300 of Capouse and one
6 on the 1300 of Penn and one on the 700 of
7 Myrtle and also some property that's up at
8 the Valley View Terrace Coop and Sister
9 Carlene up there, so what we hope to do is
10 with each of these plots is kind of partner
11 with either school or organizations to
12 develop seedling programs for anything
13 that's within a range of that particular
14 parcel. So what we will hopefully do is let

15 them incorporate that into the curriculum
16 and provide the seedlings for the plots that
17 we have done soil testing on those four that
18 I have mentioned, we have turned earth and
19 hopefully we will have some sort of
20 rototiller, is that my bell?

21 MS. GATELLI: It's Phyllis' bell.

22 MR. MURPHY: Basically we are here to
23 hit up people for help, for resources. I am
24 willing to do a lot things, but we need some
25 equipment. We need maybe the use of some

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1 trucks if we had a place that we could store
2 hay, mulch, compost, that kind of thing. We
3 plan on putting compost areas in each one of
4 these and as and if hopefully if they are
5 successful we would like to incorporate more
6 and more of the city where now some usually
7 vacant and unsightly lots and turn them into
8 something we can all be proud of and that
9 helps us all what we are doing, so I would
10 just need to see that you guys are
11 supportive of that idea and maybe a contact
12 and, like I said, any resources that you may
13 have available, and if you could find money
14 all over the place we would -- but I'm more
15 concerned with just equipment we can use and

16 manpower, seeds and really support. That's
17 it. Thank you.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Joe Talimini.

19 MR. TALIMINI: First of all, I would
20 like to comment on Mr. McGoff's reading of
21 that commercial. If that had been Superbowl
22 time it probably would have cost ab out
23 \$300 million for that commercial, but my
24 compliments on your presentation.

25 I would like to clarify one matter

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1 that's been brought up here on several
2 occasions, and in fairness and justice I did
3 investigate the question about Scartelli's
4 equipment being on DPW property, Scartelli
5 contractor was legitimately awarded and
6 submitted contract -- legitimately awarded
7 and I believe the same bidding process went
8 through and Scartelli for whatever reason,
9 one way or another, was the low bidder and
10 got the contract again this year, so that's
11 clarified, I don't want to hear anymore
12 about that.

13 Comments about the citizens were
14 made last week again by council members, and
15 I think we should just saw a prime example

16 of the contempt in which certain council
17 members hold this audience. I, for one,
18 take offense. Whether or not I agree with
19 Mr. Quinn, I think Mr. Quinn has his right
20 to present his case and to just discard the
21 paper, I don't want to hear that garbage,
22 that's a prime example of what we have right
23 in this city.

24 Now, you know, we have an issue
25 here, we will call it if come money, and I

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1 want you people all to be aware you voted
2 for this 5.5 million dollars that the mayor
3 proposed in his budget. You voted for it.
4 Remember that. It's your responsibility.
5 That's \$5.5 million that nobody knew where
6 the hell it was coming from. Where did he
7 get the idea when he presented his budget
8 that that 5.5 million was coming in when you
9 heard a good presentation tonight. Nobody
10 knew where the money was. We finally got an
11 audit and yet the budget was approved with
12 his if come money which nobody knew where it
13 was coming from.

14 Again, if come money. You know what
15 if come money means? It's there if it comes
16 in, but nobody knew it was coming in except

17 the mayor apparently. And what a surprise,
18 there was no 5.5 million coming. I think
19 it's amazing. And the thing that gets me
20 more than anything else is you are an astute
21 group of people. You are supposed to be
22 elected officials representing our
23 interests. Well, where the hell were our
24 interest when you voted 5.5 million into a
25 budget to be spent not knowing where the 5.5

94

1 million was coming from?

2 Now, I have an answer for this whole
3 situation, I listened to this and it was a
4 very fine presentation appropriately timed.
5 You know, if we turn in this whole mess,
6 this city administration and this tax office
7 situation into an videogame I guarantee you
8 if you put it in Wal-Mart within a week you
9 would find a half a dozen intermediate
10 school kids who could solve these problems.
11 I don't know why we even pay you people.
12 Thank you very much.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Jim Stucker.

14 MR. STUCKER: How you doing,
15 Courtright?

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: Hi, Jim.

17 MR. STUCKER: I see they are doing
18 the house over there on the flats, I seen
19 they ripped it down.

20 MR. COURTRIGHT: Good.

21 MR. STUCKER: A guy named Sammy he
22 was one of the people I fixed it for. Yeah,
23 I fixed the fence. I was down there for
24 three days raking his leaves and all the
25 twigs and stuff, got swept up for him.

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1 MR. COURTRIGHT: That's good, Jim.

2 MR. STUCKER: So are they working on
3 the house on Greenridge? Are they working
4 on it?

5 MR. COURTRIGHT: Not yet, Jim. They
6 boarded it up though. It's boarded up.
7 They haven't torn it down yet, but we will
8 ask them about it for you. Yep, you are
9 right there, Buddy.

10 MR. STUCKER: The light on Mulberry
11 and Capouse on top of the hill there, right,
12 where Mulberry is going this way? Right
13 next to it we have that printing shop on the
14 corner, went there the other day there was a
15 light and that light is not fixed.

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: They did fix it,
17 Jim. It must have broke again. It was

18 fixed.

19 MR. STUCKER: Yeah, it broke again.

20 MR. COURTRIGHT: Okay, I'll tell
21 them about it.

22 MR. STUCKER: Yeah. I just noticed
23 it.

24 MR. COURTRIGHT: All right.

25 MR. STUCKER: So I'm supposed to be

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1 getting another scooter. I think I'm going
2 to buy one. Looking for another one.

3 MR. COURTRIGHT: Jim, Jim, you can't
4 ride the scooter on the street that's why
5 you had to get rid of the last one.

6 MR. STUCKER: They let me do it. She
7 is the one that stole off me.

8 MR. COURTRIGHT: I know she stole it
9 off you, I understand.

10 MR. STUCKER: That's the same one and
11 the cops didn't stop me. The cops didn't
12 stop me from riding down the treat.

13 MR. COURTRIGHT: Jim, we been down
14 this road for about three years, Buddy. I
15 don't know what to tell you.

16 MR. STUCKER: I was riding right back
17 on the street there.

18 MR. COURTRIGHT: If you get the
19 scooter try to ride it on the sidewalk,
20 okay?

21 MR. STUCKER: The sidewalks are bad.

22 MR. COURTRIGHT: I know.

23 MR. STUCKER: Very, very bad. Some
24 of the places are bad, going towards
25 Capouse, the sidewalks are bad, they are all

97

1 tore up, the cement.

2 MR. COURTRIGHT: I know, Jim.

3 MR. STUCKER: Right by that building
4 a couple of time where George Joyce worked
5 on that house on Capouse and Ash, Ash and
6 Capouse, well, they have people living in
7 that house and their yard is all full of
8 junk and garbage. In the backyard and the
9 front yard they are not doing nothing with
10 the houses up there. When the cops up there
11 they had a knife. They put the garbage out
12 in the day and put the garbage out in the
13 street and they picked it up. Well, by the
14 end of day there is garbage all over the
15 yard in the back.

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: Okay, Jim. Capouse
17 and Ash, right?

18 MR. STUCKER: Yeah. Yeah.

19 MR. COURTRIGHT: Thank you, Jim.

20 MR. MCGOFF: Les Spindler.

21 MR. SPINDLER: I never thought this
22 moment would come. Les Spindler, city
23 resident and taxpayer and homeowner.
24 Mr. McGoff, did you check into why Carol
25 Seitzinger has a free parking card in her

98

1 own personal vehicle.

2 MR. MCGOFF: I did not.

3 MR. SPINDLER: Are you going to?

4 MS. GATELLI: I did.

5 MR. SPINDLER: Do have you an
6 answer?

7 MS. GATELLI: I checked into that,
8 Mark's city vehicle was not running and he
9 used his wife's car.

10 MR. SPINDLER: Okay. Mrs. Fanucci,
11 three more unpaid parking tickets from 2006.

12 MS. FANUCCI: What are you talking
13 about?

14 MR. SPINDLER: When is it going to
15 end? Here they are.

16 MS. FANUCCI: I am paid in full
17 up-to-date, paid, couldn't pay anymore. I
18 don't know what you are doing.

19 MR. SPINDLER: These are copies, you
20 can keep them.

21 MS. FANUCCI: Well, thank you. I
22 don't know how it's possible. I was there,
23 I paid everything. I don't know what you
24 are talking about.

25 MR. SPINDLER: Next thing, I want to

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1 comment about the recommendations the
2 federal report made to the fire department
3 and that's a quote from Dave Schreiber.
4 This is Dave Schreiber, president of the
5 city's firefighters' union said, "Many of
6 the recommendations in the report have long
7 been standard practice of other fire
8 departments across the United States. We
9 have been preaching these recommendations
10 for years, he said. We pushed this issue
11 long before Jimmy's accidents."

12 Now, the city has known about these
13 recommendations for years and years and has
14 done nothing. If Mayor Doherty had hired an
15 incident safety officer, that incident
16 safety officer would have known if those
17 lines were live or not, instead he hires his
18 crony friends. Ray Hayes was a police
19 officer and knows nothing about fire safety

20 and he hires a fire chief that doesn't care
21 about the safety of his firefighters.

22 Now, moving on about this subject
23 about engine companies. Mrs. Gatelli, you
24 keep saying how you fight to keep your South
25 Side station open, but you don't just work

100

1 for the people of South Side, you represent
2 the people of the whole city.

3 MS. GATELLI: Well, at the time,
4 Mr. Spindler, I wasn't here. I was just in
5 the South Side neighborhood.

6 MR. SPINDLER: I mean --

7 MS. GATELLI: That's why I did that
8 then.

9 MR. SPINDLER: They are talking about
10 closing engine companies --

11 MS. GATELLI: With Jimmy Connors. I
12 did it with Connors.

13 MR. SPINDLER: Can I speak, please?
14 They're talking about closing Engine 9,
15 which could be in my house in probably 30
16 seconds.

17 MS. GATELLI: Well, I'll do a
18 petition for that one, too.

19 MR. SPINDLER: Then the next one

20 would be Engine 4 which is right here, so if
21 the two of them I don't know --

22 MS. GATELLI: We are not in favor of
23 closing firehouses.

24 MR. SPINDLER: -- where this
25 firetruck is going to come from if my house

101

1 is on fire.

2 MS. GATELLI: Please don't speak for
3 me. I'm not in favor of closing firehouses.

4 MR. SPINDLER: Well, I hope you are
5 telling your friend, the mayor, this.

6 MS. GATELLI: Well, I did tell my
7 friend, the mayor, that. Yes, I did, so
8 don't put words in my mouth.

9 MR. SPINDLER: I'm not putting words
10 in your mouth.

11 MS. GATELLI: I am not in favor of
12 closing firehouses.

13 MR. SPINDLER: I hope you are not.

14 MS. GATELLI: Read my lips.

15 MR. SPINDLER: Not fire houses, fire
16 companies.

17 MS. GATELLI: Fire companies.

18 MR. SPINDLER: They are different.

19 MS. GATELLI: No, I'm not.

20 MS. SPINDLER: Okay. Well, we'll

21 hold you to that promise.

22 MS. GATELLI: You can hold me to it.

23 MR. SPINDLER: The next thing, the
24 mayor keeps saying no crime in the city.
25 Well, last night Channel 16 ran a story

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1 about political signs being stolen and
2 dumped in the Lackawanna river. And it's
3 funny not one of them had Chris Doherty's
4 name on it, I wonder who can be behind that?
5 And Chris Doherty's comment on the news was,
6 "It's a political distraction."

7 Well, a good mayor would say
8 something like, "I don't condone that
9 action. It's wrong. Whoever did it
10 shouldn't have done it," but he just uses it
11 as another political ploy and that's the way
12 he has been for eight years now.

13 Next thing, last weekend in the
14 Doherty newsletter, Chris Doherty's said
15 picking CDTV to run Channel 61 wasn't a
16 political issue. Does he think we are born
17 yesterday or what? He hand picked his own
18 committee, and I guess Tom Welby did the
19 speaking for the committee, Tom Welby is
20 just another Doherty puppet, and the

21 programming under Scranton Today was
22 100 percent better than this programming is.
23 Every time I put Channel 61 up there is
24 shows repeated, repeated from six months ago
25 and will they show an extra council meeting

103

1 on Wednesday or Thursday night when most
2 people can watch? No, they won't. They are
3 arrogant. They don't want to do what the
4 people of this city want to do and I think
5 we should get Scranton Today back. These
6 people are a bunch of bums. Thank you.

7 MR. MCGOFF: Stephanie Gawel.

8 MS. GAWEL: Hi, Council, how are you
9 tonight? I know it's getting long. Well,
10 it's election season, we all know that, so I
11 thought I would go over a few of the things
12 that I thought should have been worked on
13 that we ended up losing and hopefully make
14 people sit and think.

15 I want to talk about things that we
16 ended up missing in the last eight years, so
17 I'm going to start like with one thing at a
18 time. This week it's going to be the South
19 Side complex. Let's just take a look of one
20 take away for now. There is going to be
21 more to follow in another time. The South

22 Side Sports Complex was a jewel. It was
23 used -- I used to just love go by and just
24 look at the pretty green grass. It's such a
25 mess now it's not even funny. The first and

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1 only complex in the city with lights,
2 baseball fields, softball field, basketball
3 Court, tennis and volleyball court, along
4 with the concession. I don't know whether
5 most people know this or not, but the
6 facility was built in the lower flat area to
7 serve the youth of the south and west side
8 area along with adult activities. This
9 administration made a choice to sell our
10 facility to the University of Scranton in
11 spite of the public outcry and dismay. He
12 arrogantly thumbed his nose at the people of
13 these neighborhoods when it was -- and went
14 so far as to take it to Court. He won and
15 the University got what they wanted.

16 The sad part about the saying is
17 that the people don't know that the South
18 Side Sports Complex was dedicated in honor
19 and in the memory of William T. Schmidt.
20 The bronze plaque displayed has been missing
21 and has never been found, no attempt has

22 ever been made to replace it. It's sad
23 enough that the thought enough about this
24 good, well-liked, well-respected mayor that
25 they would honor him with a bronze plaque,

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1 and it was a nice marker, it really was.

2 The give away of the William T.
3 Schmidt complex has been forgotten, lied for
4 four years that would be replaced and is
5 just that, a lie. We are still waiting for
6 the replacement park and the replacement
7 lights and we have no idea where it's going.
8 You know, like we are always worried about
9 the youth and yet we keep taking everything
10 away from them where they have no place to
11 go. I don't understand this man's thinking.
12 To be replaced is a lie.

13 What this administration should and
14 does understand is that the location of the
15 neighborhoods it served. The mayor and the
16 University it serves smells like conflict of
17 interest to me. This is a real, real shame
18 and dishonor to the Scranton Mayor William
19 T. Schmidt and his family. It's election
20 time.

21 I was going to ask again but, of
22 course, Mr. Minora isn't here because I was

23 wondering about my buddy Mr. McDowell that
24 we seem to be having fun, so I'll check on
25 that again and I also be back about more

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1 with more public safety police and firemen
2 and another issues that I think need to be
3 put out there. Thank you very much for your
4 time. Have a nice night.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Phyllis Humphries.

6 MS. HUMPHRIES: Pacha, Freta, salaam
7 aleikum, shalom, (unintelligible) to
8 everybody in the world and here in the City
9 of Scranton. Greetings to the city council,
10 before I start I would like to ask did all
11 of the city council members take their oath
12 to protect and defend the constitution of
13 the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the
14 constitution of the United States. Could
15 you answer that, please?

16 MS. EVANS: Have we taken that? Yes,
17 we have taken the oath.

18 MS. HUMPHRIES: Having said that, I
19 would like to give each member of the city
20 council these documents which I feel will be
21 upheld to each member of the council and the
22 City of Scranton. Thank you very much. I

23 hope you take them home and read them very
24 carefully and ponder the words in your
25 hearts and in your mind, conscience and

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1 soul. Thank you very much everybody and God
2 bless you.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Jean Suetta.

4 MS. SUETTA: My name is Jean Suetta.
5 Bill, why do you laugh? You heard what's
6 his name, you are not supposed to laugh or
7 snicker.

8 MR. COURTRIGHT: I'm trying not to,
9 Jean, but I can't help it.

10 MS. SUETTA: Because you don't know
11 what's going to come out of my mouth.

12 MR. COURTRIGHT: Absolutely.

13 MS. SUETTA: Did we get recyclable
14 bins up at Nay Aug.

15 MR. COURTRIGHT: I do not think so.

16 MS. FANUCCI: Not yet we did not.

17 MS. SUETTA: What would be the hold
18 up?

19 MS. EVANS: You know, Jeannie, I
20 really don't know what the hold up is
21 because, for example, someone told me that
22 they needed a new recycling bin for their
23 home and they called the DPW recently, and

24 they actually got an answer and someone was
25 very, very polite to them and guess what

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1 that recycling bin was delivered right to
2 their house the very next day, so I think
3 right now we have a chance to get an awful
4 lot of things done and I think we can get
5 those recycling bins up he park.

6 MS. SUETTA: You think we are going
7 to get them?

8 MS. EVANS: I think so, it's an
9 election year.

10 MS. SUETTA: You got that right, but
11 what about Planet Aid. Those dumpsters all
12 over the God damn city.

13 MR. COURTRIGHT: Oh, Jean.

14 MS. SUETTA: Sorry. Sorry. Planet
15 Aid. There was a big write up in some of
16 these papers? Are they paying fees?

17 MR. COURTRIGHT: I don't know.

18 MS. SUETTA: Now that's three weeks I
19 gave you. You know, now we got a new one
20 they're putting -- they're white dumpsters
21 and it just says "clothes and shoes" and
22 they are not Planet Aid because Planet Aid
23 are yellow according to their --

24 MS. FANUCCI: Wait, what's the next
25 one? What's the other one?

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1 MS. SUETTA: A white one.

2 MS. FANUCCI: Do know the name on it?

3 MS. SUETTA: There is no name on it,
4 there is no number on it, it just says,
5 "Clothes and shoes." You know, they are
6 sending all of these clothes to that third
7 world country and South Side.

8 And this Danielle place, the one we
9 are going to give the loan to, 7-A or four,
10 whatever it is, do they make sex toys?

11 MR. COURTRIGHT: Oh, Jeannie.

12 MR. MCGOFF: No, Jean, they do not.

13 MS. SUETTA: Because I would be a
14 customer.

15 MR. COURTRIGHT: Jeannie, please.

16 MS. SUETTA: No? What about Jerry --
17 shut up. What about Jerry Langan. You are
18 supposed to shut that off.

19 MR. COURTRIGHT: It's off, but.

20 MS. SUETTA: Why do you keep on
21 pulling it out?

22 MR. COURTRIGHT: I'm trying to turn
23 off -- we sent the letter.

24 MS. SUETTA: And?

25

MR. COURTRIGHT: We didn't get a

110

1 response yet. I don't know what to tell
2 you.

3 MS. FANUCCI: Jean, that wasn't fair.

4 MS. SUETTA: Sherry.

5 MS. FANUCCI: That's not fair, you
6 are going to get me in trouble.

7 MS. SUETTA: I know, it's good. So
8 we are going to find about the recycling, we
9 are going to find out about the fees for
10 Planet Aid, because if they got money to pay
11 the people to put them on their property
12 Scranton should get some money, too. And
13 now you got to -- shut up, Sherry -- and now
14 you got clothes and shoes and, Bill, they
15 don't even pick the stuff up.

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: Jean, how am I going
17 to answer you after all of this that just
18 went on.

19 MS. SUETTA: You don't know. What?

20 MR. COURTRIGHT: Forget it.

21 MS. SUETTA: Give me an answer. I
22 got over minutes.

23 MR. COURTRIGHT: Did we send that
24 to -- letters?

1 you promise to behave I will call
2 Mr. Langan.

3 MS. SUETTA: No. No. No.

4 MR. MCGOFF: It's not worth it.

5 MS. SUETTA: It's not worth it. I'm
6 not going to change for a phone call,
7 uh-huh.

8 MR. MCGOFF: I tried.

9 MS. SUETTA: You have to do more than
10 that.

11 MR. COURTRIGHT: Did we send a
12 letter about the Planet Fitness ones or no?
13 Planet Fitness. Planet Aid.

14 MS. SUETTA: Planet Aid, Bill.
15 Planet Aid.

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: Could we ask license
17 and inspection if they have to have permits?
18 Could we do that?

19 MS. SUETTA: Because, you know, they
20 are taking away from the Salvation Army.

21 MS. GATELLI: They are like those
22 newspaper things that are tied to the polls.

23 MS. SUETTA: You know, they are
24 taking away from the Salvation Army because
25 the Salvation Army can't afford to put out

1 their dumpsters because of the fees and now
2 these people are doing it.

3 MR. COURTRIGHT: We will ask.

4 MS. SUETTA: When we were flooded
5 the Salvation Army helped us, Planet Aid
6 didn't. You are getting all the help, Judy.

7 MS. GATELLI: There is one over by
8 me, Jeannie, it's overflowing and there is
9 bags all around the bottom.

10 MS. SUETTA: That's right and you
11 are getting rodents and everything, yeah.
12 Well, they know it's a third world country
13 over there.

14 MR. MCGOFF: Okay.

15 MS. SUETTA: All right I'm done. I
16 have roll over minutes. You weren't here, I
17 have roll over minutes.

18 MR. MCGOFF: David Dobson.

19 MR. DOBSON: Good evening, Council,
20 Dave Dobson, resident of the Scranton. I
21 was wondering if any response was received
22 on the proposed spray in the East Mountain?

23 MS. GATELLI: We did get a response.

24 MS. FANUCCI: They got it.

25 MS. GATELLI: He is going to notify

1 us what they are using and what they are
2 going to spray. He is missing with Phyllis
3 Mish at Matthew Avenue.

4 MR. DOBSON: I would like to ask
5 council at this time to entertain a motion,
6 if possible, to request that they hire
7 people to go through there and cut those
8 trees and so forth instead of the poison
9 that they want to spray on us.

10 Now, if I were to go out tonight and
11 say I want to get high on some dope and see
12 if I find a dope peddler he was selling me
13 the poison I was asking for hopefully. He
14 wouldn't tell me he is going to inject me
15 with a poison that decides I'm going to have
16 to put up with. So my request is that we
17 just simply have council condemn the whole
18 issue of spraying in populated areas and we
19 don't need their poison. It's poison.
20 That's why they are spraying it. It's
21 outright it's just simply poison.

22 MS. GATELLI: I'm not sure that we
23 would have that jurisdiction, but we will
24 ask Attorney Minora. They wouldn't be able
25 to use anything that was toxic because --

1 MR. DOBSON: Oh, it's toxic.

2 MS. GATELLI: But the herbicides
3 that are toxic are off the market and nobody
4 can use them.

5 MR. DOBSON: Well, I have a little
6 background in chemistry and I venture to
7 said that they wouldn't bother to drink it.

8 MS. GATELLI: The what?

9 MR. DOBSON: They wouldn't bother to
10 drink some of it. It's toxic. Period. And
11 there is no reason why they should be
12 spraying it in any neighborhood; and,
13 furthermore, we don't need any more
14 defoliated strips up and down our landscape.
15 What next, are they going to spray it on
16 West Mountain when they put their power line
17 and ship all out all their power out to New
18 York City?

19 Did you see the letter from Governor
20 Scranton in the paper Sunday? I mean,
21 that's just the ploy to say, well, oh, well,
22 you know, we need to put a big power line
23 in, they have the right-of-way to run
24 through there, so what are we going to have
25 next the big -- a big strip cut out of West

1 Mountain and we are going to use herbicides
2 and we have landslides and everything else
3 from the -- I don't agree with these major
4 corporations just telling us what they're
5 going to do.

6 MS. GATELLI: I agree with you.

7 MR. DOBSON: And there is nothing you
8 people have to be ashamed of except if you
9 don't act on it, you know.

10 MS. EVANS: Mr. Dobson I was, which
11 I'm talk about later, I was actually present
12 at the meeting that was held last night
13 between the residents of Matthew Avenue and
14 representative of PPL, so I'll try to update
15 everyone as best I can and it's still an
16 ongoing issue, nothing has been written in
17 stone at this point and to be -- well, even
18 if it was not nonbinding I would really love
19 to see a letter of disapproval from council.
20 It's like I said, if I went out and bought
21 dope off a dope peddler, I mean, hopefully
22 he would be selling me the poison I asked
23 for, not the poison I was getting told I was
24 getting sprayed with, you know.
25 It's totally ridiculous.

1 And I would like to say last week
2 there were a lot of things, changing the
3 issue, on the parade. Well, in 1972 I met a
4 girl at the parade, four years later I
5 married her, and a couple of years back we
6 used to whoop it up maybe more than what we
7 should have, but I always appreciated the
8 parade and my wife looks forward to it more
9 so than our anniversary. We still are
10 confused, we have to dig up our marriage
11 license whether it's the 3rd or 5th, so in
12 spite of, you know, a few negative things
13 happening and it's sad that somebody gets
14 too intoxicated, but, you know, the last
15 thing we need is an area -- a whole big city
16 full of nothing to do.

17 I lived up the country for 25 years,
18 it's boring. By the time you get home you
19 have a whole countryside full of nothing to
20 do, and people fighting over 400 acres
21 instead of a quarter of an acre of lawn, you
22 know, so thank you and have a good night.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

24 MR. DOBSON: Thumbs up, Mr. McGoff,
25 for defending the parade last week. I think

1 we need to let off some steam in this town
2 instead of after a long winter. Have a good
3 night.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Lee Morgan.

5 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.
6 I have a question for Mrs. Gatelli and for
7 Mrs. Fanucci, and that question is I am just
8 curious, are you going to show up at the
9 Scranton/Lackawanna Taxpayers' on Thursday
10 for the discussion with the candidates?

11 MS. GATELLI: No, I will not be
12 present.

13 MR. MORGAN: Will you, Mrs. Fanucci?

14 MS. FANUCCI: No, I'm actually,
15 having my party that night, so I already had
16 plans, but thank you.

17 MR. MORGAN: I just thought I'd ask
18 so maybe in the people in the community
19 would know whether you were or not since
20 everybody else has replied at this point.

21 MS. FANUCCI: My computer was down,
22 too, and I'm sorry about that. I actually
23 received it today. Thank you.

24 MR. MORGAN: Okay. Thank you. Well,
25 you know, I just want to briefly touch on

1 very briefly on the situation with the
2 Scranton Fire Department, and that is that
3 there seems to have been an awful lot of
4 money for all of the special interests over
5 the courses of this administration, and I
6 don't want to pick on this administration
7 only because this is an election year, but I
8 don't think that any resident in this city
9 should be denied adequate fire protection or
10 police protection and I just think that
11 maybe this council should stand firm and
12 just refuse to have anything done, nothing
13 against what you said, Mrs. Evans, about an
14 independent study, I don't think me
15 personally speaking I'm not interested in an
16 independent study, okay? I want -- I'm not
17 interested in somebody coming here or trying
18 to surmise what we need because evidently we
19 have taken a lot of cuts to the fire
20 department and my own opinion, I'm not a
21 firemen, and I really don't -- I can't
22 really say for sure what we need in the way
23 of fire protection, but the one thing I do
24 know is that we don't need anymore cuts and
25 if there is money for all of these jobs to

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1 be created for everybody else than there is

2 absolutely no way we should cut any fire
3 personal irregardless of politics in any
4 manner whatsoever.

5 And to go over off that subject, I
6 would like to say something on, well, on the
7 Comcast franchise fee because sooner or
8 later council is probably going to interact
9 hopefully with the mayor and try to come up
10 with a plan on how to proceed and, you know,
11 I stopped and I looked in council's budget
12 and I pulled a number of \$780,000 for the
13 franchise fee. Now, that's the figure I
14 took out of your budget, and what I would
15 like to see done with this money even though
16 I think that the next franchise fee should
17 raise much more revenue than that, probably
18 twice this much, okay, and there is a reason
19 for that, and it may not be just with the
20 franchise fee, it may be a one-time gift to
21 our public access channel, plus the
22 franchise fee because when those individuals
23 came in from Comcast they said that they
24 would be give a grant, a one-time grant in
25 the negotiations that they had to plus the

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1 franchise fee, but what I would like to see

2 happen to this franchise fee is I would like
3 see a three-way split on that. I would like
4 to see the public access channel get a
5 third, I would also like to see a youth
6 program get a third and I'd also like to see
7 senior citizens' centers located inside of
8 the City of Scranton get a third, and that
9 way we what do is we take a franchise fee,
10 which the community is paying for, and we
11 disburse it amongst the individuals in the
12 community.

13 The other thing I would like to see
14 as part of this negotiation is a low cost
15 package, an entry package with -- I'm not
16 saying enhanced channels, but maybe
17 educational channels for children, some --
18 the public service Channel 61, maybe a
19 couple of other channels which aren't
20 broadcast channels here in a low cost
21 package for the residents of the city, so
22 that everybody is going to get a benefit
23 from this franchise agreement and not just
24 as a revenue enhancement for the city but as
25 a, I don't know, some kind of benefit to the

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1 general public in the city instead of just
2 worrying about are we going to raise more

3 money can we raise revenue through a
4 franchise fee. I think the money needs to
5 either be spread out amongst the community
6 and for the people who view 61 I think they
7 should get a benefit.

8 Now, I think we have to realize that
9 there's a lot more tied to this franchise
10 fee than most people may realize because you
11 can get phone service through that and you
12 can get Internet service, so they are
13 raising an awful lot more money than they
14 would probably like to admit, and then they
15 are saying we can only get a percentage of
16 the cable revenue, and I just think that we
17 need to structure this so that we realize
18 the amount of profit and business they are
19 doing inside of the city parameters
20 boundaries by having that franchise, and I
21 think it's important for this council to
22 interact with the mayor and get a good deal
23 for all of the residents. Thank you.

24 MS. SCHUMACHER: Marie Schumacher.

25 MS. GATELLI: Mr. Morgan, just for

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1 the record, we did check that out about
2 getting the fees for the Internet and it's

3 against the FCC laws.

4 MR. MORGAN: No, I'm aware of that.

5 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening. Marie
6 Schumacher, city resident and member of the
7 Taxpayers' Association. Last year the
8 Pennsylvania House passed legislation
9 HB-2018 that would provide financial
10 assistant to municipalities for the tax
11 exempt properties located within the
12 municipality. The Bill would distribute --
13 would have distributed the revenue of the
14 Johnstown flood tax to municipalities with
15 high levels of tax exempt property. To
16 qualify, a municipality that assessed value
17 of tax exempt properties must equal-- would
18 have had to equal or exceed 15 percent of
19 the total. Today's Court notes note that
20 the University of Scranton has gobbled up
21 several more properties: 3006, 3008, 3013
22 and 3016 Mulberry Street and 1409 and 1411
23 Linden Street.

24 A recent compilation I did on the
25 past month's worth of obituaries showed that

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1 the Scranton hospital deaths numbered 78 and
2 51 or 65 percent were from municipalities
3 other than Scranton. If this ratio holds

4 true for the entire hospital population
5 Scranton city taxpayers backs are breaking
6 to offset the property tax free hospitals
7 and other nonprofit institutions while the
8 outlining residents benefit both by having
9 the access to our city services and by
10 having lower property taxes in their own
11 communities.

12 Therefore, I urge you to petition
13 our state representative to renew the
14 legislation that was proposed by HB-2018 and
15 to provide the Johnstown flood funds as we
16 are significantly over the 15 percent
17 threshold.

18 Number two: On the wildlife center,
19 there was an article in Sundays
20 Times-Tribune that described an enrichment
21 program to keep animals in the Providence,
22 Rhode Island zoo mentally and physically
23 healthy. As this animal enrichment is
24 relatively new, I'm proud to say our Genesis
25 Wildlife Center has been conducting these

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1 enrichment programs for their animals since
2 their inception.

3 I was also happy to read into

4 today's letter to the editor in the
5 Times-Tribune that federal and state
6 inspectors have certified the Genesis
7 Wildlife Center center and they have passed
8 inspection.

9 Now, the mayor spent the \$175,000
10 that the state allocated for the Genesis
11 Wildlife Center and spent the entire amount
12 on architectural renderings and studies for
13 a new Genesis Wildlife Center. I would like
14 to ask you all when that facility is going
15 to be constructed?

16 Next, the forensic audit of the
17 Single Tax Office. I am disappointed with
18 the audit report, but happy see it was
19 available on-line for all to read. If
20 exceeding a department's budget and taking
21 money from other entity's revenue to cover
22 the losses isn't theft I'd like to know
23 exactly what it is.

24 The other area unmentioned, except
25 tonight it was touched upon, deals with the

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1 \$2 million loss. I cannot believe
2 \$2 million disappeared due to accounting
3 errors. Is it not just as likely that some
4 accounts were marked paid but were actually

5 unpaid for almost a decade? That seems more
6 plausible to me than accounting errors if
7 some accounts were marked paid and, in fact,
8 were not paid and we learned tonight that
9 that, in fact, is the case.

10 Next, the Ice Box, on April 27,
11 2006, the city council tabled a resolution
12 to approve the contract that was drawn up by
13 the Redevelopment Authority. Section 20 of
14 the attached agreement to that resolution
15 stated that time is of the essence in the
16 performance of this agreement, so I would
17 like to know since you all tabled that for
18 some reason if council has requested a
19 revised contract be drawn up by the
20 Redevelopment Authority so that can be
21 executed and we can start receiving the
22 \$600,00 that BRT Ice owes the city and that
23 would go along way to helping balance our
24 2009 budget. Will something be done in that
25 regard?

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1 MS. GATELLI: I did request that
2 from Mrs. Garvey, and I was going to have
3 Mr. Minora review it, but he is not here
4 this evening, so --

5 MS. SCHUMACHER: No, but back in 2006
6 did anybody -- when you tabled that motion
7 and never brought it back did you send it
8 back to -- for whatever reason it was
9 tabled? Did you ask the Redevelopment
10 Authority to come up with another agreement
11 that would be acceptable to council?

12 MS. FANUCCI: Actually --

13 MS. GATELLI: You can't. An
14 agreement was signed by council.

15 MS. FANUCCI: The agreement was
16 signed, yeah.

17 MS. GATELLI: We can't ask them to do
18 another agreement. They signed it for that
19 agreement.

20 MS. SCHUMACHER: I believe that --

21 MS. GATELLI: The developer signed it
22 and city council signed it. We can't do
23 another one.

24 MS. SCHUMACHER: I believe you can
25 ask them to revise that if it's not

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1 acceptable to you.

2 MS. FANUCCI: They actually were
3 doing more than they had to do at that
4 point.

5 MS. SCHUMACHER: No, but they weren't

6 paying. They weren't paying. The original
7 -- what was publicized to the public in the
8 beginning, and then I'll finish up, was they
9 were to pay a dollar a year lease until --

10 MS. GATELLI: For 99 years.

11 MS. SCHUMACHER: No, but until that
12 DPW moved out, and then the 100 -- the
13 original \$600,000 was to and paid. That's
14 what the public was told back then. Now we
15 are being told, no, it's only \$20,000, no
16 interest over 30 years.

17 MS. GATELLI: That's what he had
18 offered us.

19 MS. FANUCCI: He had offered us.

20 MS. GATELLI: I'm sorry I didn't
21 bring it with me.

22 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, something
23 needs to be done and I look forward to
24 hearing about that next week and thank you.

25 MS. GATELLI: I'll bring it with me.

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1 MS. SCHUMACHER: Thank you.

2 MR. MCGOFF: Brett McCloe.

3 MR. MCCLOE: Good evening. My name
4 is Brett McCloe, Scranton taxpayer. With
5 elections just around the corner I suspect

6 the vast majority will be intimidated by the
7 complexities of the issues that face our
8 city. Some will vote for the simplicity of
9 sameness and the promise of shiny things
10 that tend to warp one's perception of
11 progress. Others, will vote for kitchen
12 table logic, fiscal responsibility and the
13 abandonment of the thinking that we could
14 leverage our way out of Scranton's economic
15 difficulties. And most will be too confused
16 and apathetic to vote at all.

17 As citizens of this city, we all
18 have a stake in the outcome of these
19 elections. I could only speak for myself as
20 someone who grew up in Scranton I would not
21 consider myself politically correct, a role
22 model, an altar boy or someone more learned
23 than anyone else, just a citizen who wants
24 to make a difference no matter how small
25 that difference is, so I vote. I won't tell

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1 you who I will vote for, but I will tell you
2 what and why. I vote for extreme fiscal
3 discipline on the part of our city
4 government to ensure that our future is
5 based on our ability to stand competent and
6 unwavering without the crutch of PEL and

7 municipal welfare. I will not vote for an
8 AIG-style mindset that believes city
9 management deserves a raise as Scranton, the
10 company, gets bailed out by state and
11 federal tax dollars.

12 I also have a hard time with the if
13 we don't take it someone else will kind of
14 thinking. It makes us sound like we are the
15 fat kid at the buffet gobbling up all the
16 tax desserts. It's not hard to conceive
17 that what we take for someone's political
18 gain today will hurt us when we need it
19 tomorrow. By then it will be too much too
20 late. We have gladly taken more than our
21 share of the pie and have nothing but empty
22 buildings, "For sale" signs, self-indulgent
23 pork projects and a massive debt to show for
24 it. Have we become the pork capital of
25 Pennsylvania, the AIG of the northeast. I

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1 don't know, but I think it's time we unravel
2 some of this mess that we can't see and that
3 we can't touch.

4 The nature of the state and federal
5 government is changing and at some point
6 there will be consequences for the amount of

7 pork received and lack of fiscal
8 responsibility on the part of our current
9 administration. Scranton cannot afford to
10 wait for a distant train to pay for today's
11 bills. The train, the medical school, and
12 the parks are supposed to be wonderful
13 additions to our city, not the saviors of
14 it. Thank you.

15 MR. MCGOFF: John Judd.

16 MR. JUDGE: Good evening, Council.
17 My name is John Judge, and I'm the secretary
18 for IFF Local 60, the Scranton Firefighters.
19 I think this is probably only about the
20 third time I have been here. Excuse me, I'm
21 just getting over a cold. I just wanted to
22 clear up a couple of misconceptions and some
23 things that President Schreiber hit on
24 today. First one I wanted to clear up,
25 watched on the news yesterday and watched

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1 Mr. -- Mayor Doherty state how he believes
2 that the firefighters dislike him. I'd like
3 everybody in this room, especially council,
4 to not confuse our community activism as a
5 sign of hate, but more of, you know, it's a
6 love of our profession and our community is
7 why we do this. We want to keep ourself

8 safe and we want to, you know, ensure that
9 the safety of the public is first and
10 foremost as well, and you kind of got to
11 look at it from our perspective. Over the
12 past I believe it's seven years I have been
13 on the department I have heard numbers range
14 from where the mayor wants to go with our
15 fire department anywhere from 38 layoffs,
16 which he had said recently shortly after the
17 Commonwealth Court decision came out, and
18 then yesterday I believe on Channel 22 the
19 mayor told him no layoffs, that he was going
20 to go to 130 through attrition.

21 The other things that everybody --
22 and I heard some of the speakers tonight
23 talk about, you know, they don't want to see
24 any fire department layoffs or reductions in
25 numbers, just so everybody is aware this

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1 fire department has already seen eight
2 numbers dwindle. We were at 150 a year ago,
3 we are now at 142 and the mayor has no plans
4 to replace those eight people, so we are
5 actually working below staffing levels that
6 we were working a year ago. So, yes, we are
7 working, you know, less now.

8 The big thing with all of the signs
9 and the company closures, Engine 4, which is
10 the engine here at fire headquarters, and
11 Engine 9 which is the other one that
12 Mr. Renda and also I believe Director Hayes
13 and Chief Davis stated they would like to
14 combine or close, I find it very, I don't
15 want to say funny, but I find it hard to
16 understand how the mayor has invested so
17 much money in the downtown area, but yet is
18 he willing to close the two companies that
19 cover the downtown area. Any box alarm
20 right where we are sitting right now the two
21 engines that are assigned to that initial
22 box alarm are Engine 4 and Engine 9 and now
23 we are talking about closing them and as we
24 continue to sink millions of dollars into
25 this downtown area to revitalize it, in the

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1 same breath we are going to go ahead and
2 shut down these two engine companies. It
3 makes no sense to me whatsoever.

4 I understand the fiscal constraints
5 and concerns that the mayor has to deal
6 with, but we need to be logical about how we
7 do this. If you want to go and open up a
8 new business what do they ask for, the bank?

9 They ask for a business plan. Once you have
10 put that business plan down you go ahead and
11 implement it. You don't implement first and
12 they do the plan, which is what they are
13 trying to do. They are trying to go, all
14 right, we want to have 130 firefighters,
15 now, how do we accomplish it, which
16 companies do we have to close?

17 Anybody who can't understand it at
18 an election time that the mayor is kind of,
19 you know, he is in a difficult position
20 where he doesn't want to tell people he is
21 going to close the engine companies or
22 doesn't want to say he is going to close
23 firehouses, you need to know that. Not on
24 May 20 or whatever the day after the
25 election, we need to know that as a

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1 community now, and how we are going to make
2 that work if he is going to do that.

3 You know, for him to outright say,
4 "I'm not going to close companies, I'm not
5 going to close stations," this close to an
6 election where he is on record on
7 August 31st of 2008 saying, "I'm going to
8 close three to four of the fire stations in

9 this community."

10 It is just very baffling to us to
11 not know what direction this department is
12 heading in. We need to be able to be
13 prepared for what's going to happen so that
14 we can continue to protect and serve this
15 community. I would ask council if you have
16 questions or concerns or want to speak, you
17 know, the firefighters we can come in and
18 make it, you know, kind of spell it out a
19 little bit better to you, President
20 Schreiber only had five minutes to kind of
21 explain to you the difference between an
22 engine company and a ladder company, he had
23 to make it very simplistic though, it's not
24 that simplistic. It's a tried and true
25 tested technique that's employed through the

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1 fire service all over the nation.

2 They have talked about quints, you
3 know, we have people talking about entities
4 and different types of pieces of apparatus
5 that really don't have a full understanding
6 that if you look at some of the communities
7 in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that
8 have tried that, Philadelphia, for instance,
9 Philadelphia attempted to use a quint-type

10 of system, abandoned it because it doesn't
11 work. So we are, you know, if you guys need
12 to know or want to know or be better
13 educated I'm sure that anybody on our
14 executive board would feel, you know,
15 obliged to come in in a caucus, you know,
16 even at your office, anytime. I would be
17 willing to come in and speak to you on the
18 matter. Thank you.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Judge.
20 Other speakers?

21 MR. GERVASI: Good evening, City
22 Council. My name is Dave Gervasi, I'm also
23 a firefighter in the City of Scranton. Just
24 to add what my two colleagues have said
25 earlier, this has been a story that's been

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1 unfolding for seven years. There has been
2 millions of dollars spent on both sides
3 fighting it and being in Court and I just
4 need to let you know our perspective about
5 this. I have been coming to this council
6 meetings probably longer than anybody on the
7 fire department, and we told you a long time
8 ago, prior councils a long time ago, the
9 mayor's intention was always to reduce the

10 amount of firefighters and to close
11 firehouses and more companies. He said it
12 in the Recovery Plan. Why would we have
13 language in the Recovery Plan that says he
14 wants the sole discretion to make any cuts
15 and restructuring of the department. If he
16 had no intention of closing anything why
17 would that be in the Recovery Plan?

18 Back in 2002 he said he is going to
19 reduce the fire department, size of the fire
20 department. In 2004 he said he is going to
21 reduce the size of the fire department. In
22 2005 he actually started talking about
23 layoffs. In 2006 he was talking about
24 layoffs and reducing the size of the fire
25 department.

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1 We weren't coming here because we
2 enjoy it every week, we were telling you
3 this is going to happen. We fought him off
4 for seven years. Now is reality time. They
5 won a portion of the battle he took us on,
6 the war we have been at for seven years. He
7 won a portion of it. And we weren't lying
8 when we said he was going to reduce the fire
9 department. The other night on -- I'm
10 sorry, it was January 9, he finally said it:

11 "I'm going to build superstations."

12 Do you know what that means? You
13 have any understanding what that means? A
14 superstation is going to build a big
15 building on this side of the river and a big
16 building on that side of the river and all
17 of your neighborhood fire stations are going
18 to close. That's his plan. That's always
19 been his plan, and then a week later he says
20 we are going to reduce not to 112 now, now
21 it's 130 because apparently they don't have
22 a plan.

23 The first thing that the city did
24 was we said nobody has the qualifications to
25 make these decisions that he has in the

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1 leadership and it's obvious to everybody,
2 the first thing he said was we need the
3 unions cooperation. He spent nearly
4 \$2 million to get complete utter control
5 with no input whatsoever from the
6 firefighters' union and the first thing they
7 do when they win and they have control is
8 they say, "Can you come and help us?"

9 And we basically told the mayor and
10 the public safety director that would be

11 like us building the gallows that are going
12 to hang our guys and hang the public. They
13 are in charge now, let them be in charge.
14 The other sad part about the whole thing was
15 in the beginning, if you read the Recovery
16 Plan, the mayor said there will be no
17 studies, safety impact studies. He said,
18 "I'm the mayor, I will decide what the fire
19 departments are going to look like."

20 And we said that's probably foolish
21 and that's probably negligent, that's
22 another reason why we fought the Recovery
23 Plan. Now, all of a sudden he wins in
24 court. He is going to do a study. If he
25 told us that seven years ago we wouldn't

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1 have had this labor unrest for the last
2 seven years, but now he is in trouble
3 because now, hey, we are the dummies. Now,
4 he beat us, he wins, take control of the
5 fire department. Frankly, he has nobody to
6 control the fire department, just like we
7 have been saying for seven years.

8 The other sad part, Mrs. Gatelli,
9 I'm sorry, I'm not going to let you off the
10 hook tonight, I understand and I appreciate
11 when you fought for Engine 13 and I know you

12 probably will do for it now if he tries to
13 close the engine company, but I told you for
14 years, I told you at your house when we had
15 meetings at your house, as long as you keep
16 giving Chris Doherty all of the money that
17 railed our budgets for 46 million to
18 approximately \$80 million now, there is not
19 going to be any money for the fire
20 department, and week after week every time
21 he sends legislation up the three of you
22 say, "We got to pay this for the mayor."

23 Now is crying poverty.

24 MS. GATELLI: Excuse me, but I don't
25 pass it for the mayor, I pass because I

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1 believe in what I'm passing.

2 MR. GERVASI: Okay.

3 MS. GATELLI: I'm not doing it for
4 the mayor.

5 MR. GERVASI: So a 17 million dollar
6 loan, a point 5.5 million dollar loan, a
7 70 million dollar loan, I'm not sure if you
8 were on council at that one.

9 MS. GATELLI: No, I wasn't.
10 Mr. DiBileo voted for loans. Mr. Courtright
11 voted for loans.

12 MR. GERVASI: I'm not talking
13 about --

14 MS. GATELLI: You know, I'm not the
15 only one that voted for loans.

16 MR. GERVASI: But you are the one who
17 says you are for the fire department and you
18 want --

19 MS. GATELLI: I am.

20 MR. GERVASI: -- and you're not for
21 closures.

22 MS. GATELLI: And I am.

23 MR. GERVASI: What do you think is
24 causing these closures? It was a rubber
25 stamp of his legislation --

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1 MS. GATELLI: No, I don't believe
2 that.

3 MR. GERVASI: -- that kept giving
4 him money.

5 MS. GATELLI: I don't agree with
6 that.

7 MR. GERVASI: There is only so much
8 money comes in and only so much money can go
9 out. His priority is not the fire
10 department. His priority was bridges to
11 nowhere and treehouses and paying five times
12 more than he should have for a dog park.

13 That's where the money went. No big
14 contracts and an army of lawyers.

15 MS. GATELLI: Since I'm here
16 everything has been bid, Dave, I insisted on
17 that. Everything went out to bid.

18 MR. GERVASI: Our debt payments --

19 MS. GATELLI: I'm sorry, you feel
20 that way, but I don't feel that way.

21 MR. GERVASI: -- went from --

22 MS. GATELLI: I will never fight the
23 firemen.

24 MS. GERVASI: -- 3.45 million dollars
25 a year when he took office to \$16 million a

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1 year today and he has traced --

2 MS. GATELLI: And the school district
3 is the same and the county is the same and
4 the whole country is the same.

5 MR. GERVASI: I'm finished right now.

6 MS. GATELLI: It doesn't mean I'm not
7 for firehouses, and I'm not going to let you
8 say it.

9 MR. GERVASI: But you can't have it
10 both ways.

11 MS. GATELLI: Yes, you can.

12 MR. GERVASI: And what he is doing

13 now, now our debt payments are so high with
14 the debt he created to over \$270 million in
15 debt and now he is crying poverty that he
16 has to save money. So instead of getting
17 rid of your Rolls Royce or your swimming
18 pool he is going to cancel his fire
19 insurance on the people of the city.

20 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

21 MR. GERVASI: It's ashame. Thank
22 you.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Any other speakers?

24 MR. HUBBARD: At this point in the
25 night we are just going to nail it down to

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1 one question and one comment, ECTV
2 programming, I do appreciate the Scranton
3 traffic report at 11:30 at night. Big help.

4 Now, council, and especially Judy
5 since you are the finance chair, what do you
6 guys do to plan -- do you plan to do to plug
7 the hole in the budget?

8 MS. GATELLI: There is not a hole in
9 the budget until December 31. Stu Renda is
10 very confident that we are going to get the
11 money.

12 MR. HUBBARD: He was been confident
13 before the audit that you are going to get

14 it even though the audit said --

15 MS. GATELLI: Right. The money is
16 there. The money is there.

17 MR. HUBBARD: Even the audit said
18 differently and Mr. McGovern said that you
19 are probably not going to see any of the
20 money until 2010 and --

21 MS. GATELLI: No, he didn't say that.

22 MR. FANUCCI: He said 2009 actually
23 if you --

24 MR. HUBBARD: He said the end of
25 2000.

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1 MS. FANUCCI: He said by the year end
2 we will.

3 MR. HUBBARD: By the year end so in
4 my mind there is actually five million in
5 the budget that's not there.

6 MS. FANUCCI: No.

7 MR. HUBBARD: Well, have you received
8 any of it yet?

9 MS. FANUCCI: Well, we just got the
10 audit like two days ago. He said it will
11 come increments, it will come in our normal
12 tax, you know.

13 MR. HUBBARD: He said it will be --

14 MS. FANUCCI: It's not going to com
15 in one lump sum, it's not going to pay us
16 off.

17 MR. HUBBARD: And he said it will
18 come in the regular disbursements.

19 MS. FANUCCI: Yes, every two weeks.

20 MR. HUBBARD: But not this year.

21 That's what I'm here.

22 MS. GATELLI: You are wrong.

23 MS. FANUCCI: You're wrong.

24 MR. HUBBARD: I wasn't coming
25 tonight, guys. I was actually watching this

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1 --

2 MS. FANUCCI: You heard wrong. Dan,
3 you heard wrong so you have should have
4 stayed home. You heard wrong.

5 MR. HUBBARD: Excuse me?

6 MS. FANUCCI: You should have stayed
7 home if that was the only reason you came.

8 MR. MCGOFF: Please.

9 MR. HUBBARD: Mrs. Fanucci, I am not
10 showing you any disrespect.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Please.

12 MS. FANUCCI: And I'm telling you if
13 that was the only reason you were wrong.

14 MR. HUBBARD: I'm not showing you any

15 disrespect. I'm not showing you disrespect.

16 MS. FANUCCI: You are wrong is all
17 I'm telling you.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Please.

19 MR. HUBBARD: That's right. Don't
20 tell me I should have stayed home. I'm not
21 showing you disrespect.

22 MS. FANUCCI: You said you only
23 came --

24 MR. HUBBARD: Your biggest problem is
25 you don't know how to give people respect.

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1 You should sit there and let me finish, it's
2 my time to speak, not yours.

3 MS. FANUCCI: Then don't ask for
4 questions that you don't want answers fro.

5 MR. HUBBARD: I was asking Mrs.
6 Gatelli who is the finance chair, not --

7 MS. FANUCCI: Daniel, you never come
8 here and keep your cool.

9 MR. HUBBARD: Mrs. Fanucci, what are
10 you doing?

11 MR. MCGOFF: Please.

12 MR. HUBBARD: What are you doing
13 right now?

14 MS. FANUCCI: Talking to you, Daniel.

15 MR. HUBBARD: I didn't ask you. I
16 asked Judy. You are not the finance chair.
17 If you are there then maybe Judy should let
18 you have the job.

19 MS. GATELLI: I would gladly give it
20 up.

21 MR. HUBBARD: If I'm wrong then I
22 stand corrected, but that's not your
23 position --

24 MS. GATELLI: Mrs. Evans was smart
25 though, she gave it up for the election.

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1 MR. MCGOFF: Could we --

2 MR. HUBBARD: That's not your
3 position to tell me. That's the finance
4 chair.

5 MR. MCGOFF: -- let Mr. Hubbard
6 finish. Please let Mr. Hubbard finish.

7 MS. GATELLI: I will find out.

8 MR. HUBBARD: There are several whys
9 to the questions --

10 MS. GATELLI: -- exactly what we are
11 --

12 MR. HUBBARD: There are several large
13 questions revolving large sum of money that
14 put into the budget even though there was no
15 audit when the budget was put together. The

16 money in my mind should never been
17 incorporated into the budget until you had
18 an audit telling you whether or not you had
19 the full five million, 1.7, 1.2 or 2.2. You
20 had no idea.

21 MS. GATELLI: There is money in the
22 contingency in this case there isn't,
23 Daniel.

24 MR. HUBBARD: The point is --

25 MS. GATELLI: And I'm confident that

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1 we are going to get it.

2 MR. HUBBARD: The point is that what
3 I'm is saying that the money should not have
4 been put in the budget, you could refigured
5 the budge, the budget could have been done
6 without plugging money in you that did not
7 necessarily know you had.

8 MS. GATELLI: Well, we'll see on
9 December 31.

10 MR. HUBBARD: Right or wrong, when
11 the budget was drafted and it came before
12 council --

13 MS. GATELLI: No, I was confident we
14 were going to get seven million.

15 MR. HUBBARD: Well, I'm confident

16 about a lot of things.

17 MS. GATELLI: That's what we were
18 told.

19 MR. HUBBARD: I was confident I was
20 getting a flood siren. I was also confident
21 that the animal control officer were
22 sanctioned by the state to go after wild
23 animals and they are not. I was also
24 confident that when my neighborhood got
25 flooded Mr. Parker and the DPW would repair

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1 the riverbank and they never did. I was
2 confident about a lot of things in my city
3 government after the 2004 flood.

4 MS. GATELLI: Well, all I can --

5 MR. HUBBARD: And unfortunately none
6 of these things I had confidence in happened
7 so, obviously, I started coming to meetings.
8 We all have confidence in things that don't
9 happen. The point is, is that money wasn't
10 there when the budget was put together, you
11 did not actually have an accurate figure of
12 what you had. You were told that, you still
13 passed it and you now, regardless, please, I
14 don't care what Mr. Renda says because Stu
15 has not been right yet, so when he is right
16 at the end of the year then maybe I'll eat

17 crow on that one, but right now the audit
18 says you are not getting five million.

19 MS. GATELLI: Okay.

20 MR. HUBBARD: There is a hole in the
21 budget.

22 MS. GATELLI: Okay.

23 MR. HUBBARD: Right or wrong? Was
24 the audit --

25 MS. GATELLI: No, I disagree with

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1 you.

2 MS. HUBBARD: You disagree with the
3 audit?

4 MS. GATELLI: He just gave us the
5 report. We are getting \$1,052,000 from
6 interest, and we are getting \$2,446,000 from
7 the 888 funds.

8 MR. HUBBARD: The 888 funds, that's
9 not yet, they still have to go through those
10 to see which ones are going to actually come
11 to fruition.

12 MS. GATELLI: All right, Daniel.
13 Okay, Daniel. You are right.

14 MR. HUBBARD: So the money is not
15 actually there yet. You are counting on the
16 888 funds and yet you have no idea how much

17 of that money you are going to get and he
18 was very clear on that one. He was very
19 clear that the 888 funds still have to be
20 gone through on an individual basis to see
21 what money is there and what isn't there.

22 MS. GATELLI: Okay.

23 MR. HUBBARD: So there is a hole in
24 the budget and it needs to be plugged
25 somehow, so I'm just curious as to whether

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1 we are going to get a tax increase to fill
2 the hole.

3 MS. GATELLI: No, we are not going to
4 get a tax increase.

5 MR. HUBBARD: Hope not. Thank you.

6 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else?

7 MS. ROYCE: Hi. Good evening.

8 Bernadette Royce, West Scranton. I have a
9 quote I would like to share with you, this
10 was from a speech to the International
11 Association of Firefighters on March 16,
12 2009. "I have read the studies conducted by
13 the US Fire Administration that found most
14 fire departments, most fire department are
15 unable to respond to many of the common
16 emergencies with the existing staff they
17 have. I have read another study, the

18 National Institute of Occupational Safety
19 and Health, which I referenced to you the
20 last time I spoke to you that identified,
21 and I want the public to hear this, the lack
22 of staffing is the key cause of firefighter
23 fatality. Lack of staffing."

24 The speaker was a Scranton native, Joe
25 Biden, the current vice president of the

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1 United States. So here is my rhetorical
2 question for the evening, if our vice
3 president thinks adequate staffing of fire
4 departments is crucial enough that he has
5 read these studies, why hasn't Chris
6 Doherty?

7 Mayor Doherty's plans to close the
8 fire companies endangers the lives of the
9 citizens of Scranton and our firefighters.
10 On the news the mayor stated that he alone
11 would decide the fate of the fire
12 department. He sounded like a spoiled
13 petulant child would not share a toy. As a
14 citizen, I was embarrassed.

15 It is time that council intervenes
16 and tells the mayor that Scranton cannot and
17 will not stand idly by putting the lives of

18 her citizens and firefighters at risk due to
19 his animosity and continued irrational
20 crusade against the firefighters. I was
21 pleased to hear that the council is going to
22 ask for what reports and studies he wants
23 and has ordered which to date I don't think
24 he has ordered any, so I'm pleased that you
25 are intervening there. As our council, you

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1 need to ensure that we do not lose our
2 current level of fire protection. Thank
3 you.

4 MR. ANCHERANI: Good evening. Nelson
5 Ancherani, First Amendment Rights. Last
6 week I spoke about the pie chart and the
7 2009 Scranton city budget and how all of the
8 percentages of the pie slices for the
9 individual departments are all inflated and
10 how the differences total approximately 64
11 -- I'm sorry, 24 million.

12 The amount of money budgeted for
13 expenditures in the individual departments
14 do not reflect the percentage listed on the
15 chart. The budgeted amount is less in each
16 of the departments making the percentage
17 lower. I wonder why. As I said, the
18 difference is approximately 24 million. It

19 just happens to be the approximate amount
20 that is listed in the budget as
21 nondepartmental expenditures.

22 Quite the coincidence. In previous
23 years, the difference of the percentages
24 quite coincidentally equal the TANS, tax
25 anticipation notes. Was anyone able to come

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1 up with an explanation as to why that is?

2 The single tax audit and it's fact.
3 Supposedly there is 2 million missing, lost
4 through what is categorized as accounting
5 errors from the 12.2 million that was found
6 in the Single Tax Office. Two million is a
7 lot of money and unaccounted for. The two
8 million was discovered missing by forensic
9 auditing and may never be recovered. That
10 two million was money paid into the tax
11 office by us, all of the taxpayers. We
12 demand an accounting. Can you imagine two
13 million not being recoverable because of
14 sloppy bookkeeping practices?

15 As I said before, because of this
16 money missing and found Scranton money not
17 being dispersed like it should have been
18 taxpayers in the city were raised -- taxes

19 in the city were raised 25 percent and we
20 continue to this day to continue paying
21 25 percent.

22 I never agree with any of the slimes
23 editorialist, but this one time I do, and
24 this is from the Times. Editorial:
25 Investigative city tax office, portrait of

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1 nonchalant incompetence by former office
2 administrator's. Findings that should not
3 be the last word. Taxpayers deserve answers
4 to the questions that have been raised about
5 the collection and disposition of their
6 money. The two million didn't evaporate.
7 Local government leaders should demand an
8 accounting."

9 And the irony of this situation is
10 when \$200 was missing in, and I believe it
11 was one of the licensing departments, a city
12 hall employee faced termination and that was
13 \$200,000, this is \$2 million. It's not
14 chump change.

15 Different note, the police got a
16 raise in pay this last payday. It was not,
17 and I stress, not from the mayor. It was
18 from the courts. Some people in our
19 department had their copays raise. Also

20 without the health care committee meeting
21 and verifying the rates that should be
22 charged for copays. That's a violation of
23 the Court award. One of the categories
24 listed, husband and wife, went up 1,100
25 percent. 1,100 percent. Family went up

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1 200 percent. Single went up 300 percent. I
2 don't mind paying my fair share, but when
3 the city won't supply the figures there is
4 no way that I believe the figures that we
5 are being charged or that were given.

6 Just a little note, some of our
7 members since getting the payraise and the
8 raise in the healthcare copays are now
9 taking home less than they did when they got
10 their raise and they have families. Thank
11 you.

12 MR. MARTIN: My name is Bob Martin
13 and I'm a former resident of the City of
14 Scranton and I live in Peckville now. I'll
15 tell you, it's been a long time since I have
16 been down here, I remember the town they
17 used to run the cameras, the old Scranton
18 Today and what I'm concerned about is, and I
19 wasn't going to speak, but I'm concerned

20 about I wanted to bring up a safety of the
21 police officers, and I'm honoring my
22 standard and I'm concerned there is times
23 when the officers stop a car and they will
24 say around a traffic stop and sometimes they
25 don't get the license plate number and they

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1 step out of the car to check a person out,
2 I'm concerned about that because of the fact
3 that, number one, if you don't check your
4 license plate number out first you don't
5 know whether or not that's a stolen car and
6 you don't know whether or not that person
7 could be a problem. I truly believe, and I
8 don't know what the procedures are and I
9 might be wrong in what I'm saying, but I
10 know I do hear at times when they do know
11 that call back the license plate number
12 because vital information is on that license
13 plate number whether or not it's a stolen
14 car or whether or not there might be a
15 situation where something might be with the
16 person. I know they need to get out and
17 check their license, you know, their -- you
18 get information from that for criminal
19 background or whatever, but I'm concerned
20 about that, and so I was just wondering if

21 somebody could check that out with the
22 public safety.

23 MR. COURTRIGHT: Mr. Martin, what
24 they are supposed to do is when they pull a
25 car over tell them, the COM Center they are

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1 pulling them over, the location they are
2 pulling them over at, run the plate and
3 usually how many occupants are in the car.

4 MR. MARTIN: Yeah, I hear them do
5 that, but like I said there is times when I
6 used to hear them I'm just concerned that
7 they should wait until they get information
8 back on that license plate number before
9 they step out. Sometimes they are stepping
10 out too quick to check something out and I'm
11 just concerned of the safety of the police
12 officers, you know, and that's why I brought
13 that up.

14 And another thing I wanted to bring
15 up, I want to bring praise. I heard Judy at
16 the meeting for the zoning, I'm very happy
17 that Mr. Gallo did not get that tavern
18 because I used to drive for Posten Taxi here
19 in the city and there is one place that I
20 never wanted to go to was Charlie's Bar

21 because it was dangerous. I just felt like
22 there was a -- you never know what was going
23 on with the drug activity and everything
24 that was going on and like they were saying
25 if he got the bar he was only going to be

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1 have a restaurant, but he could have just as
2 well opened up a bar in that situation.

3 Another thing I wanted to bring up,
4 it's very minor, but there is a property,
5 Judy, you might be familiar with it, there
6 is a property up at the corner of where the
7 old Gulf station used to be up there, you
8 know what I'm saying? It seems like it's
9 like an eyesore. I was just wondering why
10 nobody has really done anything with that
11 property, you know what I mean? Do you
12 know?

13 MS. GATELLI: I know it's condemned,
14 but I don't know --

15 MR. MARTIN: Oh, it's condemned?

16 MS. GATELLI: Yeah, it's condemned.

17 MR. MARTIN: Finally, what I wanted
18 to bring up, Bill, back many months ago they
19 had a zoning hearing, I think it was
20 approved, the information, the old liberty
21 restaurant, I think that building was

22 condemned. I remember, I lived in Tennessee
23 for three years and came back and found out
24 that building was -- and somebody told me
25 they were going to open a clothing store or

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1 a coffee shop, do you know? I know there is
2 "For Rent" signs up there, but --

3 MR. COURTRIGHT: Well, they
4 renovated it to two upper floors and two big
5 apartments and the first floor is going to
6 be I believe a chicken fry place, take out.

7 MR. MARTIN: Oh, okay. Okay.

8 MR. COURTRIGHT: But I don't believe
9 there is going to be sitting inside because
10 there is relatively no parking there.

11 MR. MARTIN: Finally, what I wanted
12 to say is I talked to Sherry and I'm glad to
13 meet Sherry and Judy, and I'll tell you,
14 there is one thing I will never come to
15 these council meetings unless I have
16 something good to say. I respect every
17 single one of you up there. It think each
18 one of you is very intelligent and there is
19 another thing, I wish we had a female mayor,
20 you know, somebody that would run the city,
21 but anyhow I talked to Sherry and I want to

22 mention one thing about that I brother, I
23 got some bad news about my brother, he's got
24 early stages of Alzheimer's disease and I'm
25 having a situation with my apartment and I

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1 might be out on the street, and I won't
2 mention names about somebody who said they
3 might help me, but I respect that person
4 that said you will not -- they would try to
5 get an apartment for me, but I'm glad to be
6 here and hopefully I'll be back again.

7 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else?

8 MR. ELLMAN: Ronnie Ellman,
9 homeowner and member of the Taxpayers'
10 Association. Hello, Sherry.

11 MS. FANUCCI: Hi.

12 MR. ELLMAN: We have to quit meeting
13 this way. I have notes, I wasn't going to
14 come tonight to talk, I was just sitting
15 there, but the firemen got me interested.
16 If you needed them like I did that night you
17 wouldn't close any firehouses or take any
18 trucks out of service. I have said it
19 before, they were just so professional and
20 they were there in minutes, it's just ashame
21 that they are treated like second class
22 citizens in this city by the administration.

23 I was at the Giant market before to
24 get Miss Rosie some chicken for her cat, and
25 a lady was talking to me for a minute and

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1 she wanted to know why I come up here and
2 talk with these people and have so much
3 interest in the city. It's by choice. I
4 could have thrown my Bassett hound in the
5 car ears ago and Miss Rosie and went
6 anywhere in the country. I don't have any
7 obligations. I know people, you know, like
8 Los Angles and Denver or San Francisco or
9 Atlanta, I could have went anywhere, I chose
10 to be here because I love this town, you
11 know, and I have interests in it, and it's
12 just ashame sometimes you can see things
13 better when you are not close, like you
14 people are all too close to the city I guess
15 sometimes and I see from a different
16 perspective, and that's why I get up here
17 sometimes and make a fool of myself probably
18 because I'm not a good speaker or nothing,
19 but I have a sincere interest in this city.

20 I had a \$1,500 funeral or 750 cash
21 in Memphis which I sold years ago because I
22 wanted to stay here, be buried around here

23 someplace, I don't know where right now, but
24 it's -- it's just so -- just the waste that
25 goes on and then the firemen and the police

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1 just seem to take the brunt of these things.
2 It's just -- I talked to more people every
3 week since I quit working a few years ago
4 than all five of you put together I know,
5 and I know the feeling of the city. I have
6 people tell me things that just don't come
7 out in the newspaper and that you people
8 don't seem to be concerned with. Every
9 decision you guys make has got a tremendous
10 effect on the city and the people don't just
11 say the vote was 3 to 1 or 4 to 1 or
12 whatever, they say council. Council needs
13 to get together more than they have been
14 doing the past few years because it has a
15 such an effect on the city and so far it's
16 just been adverse, and the city is not in
17 the shape that the administration says it
18 is. Was that my bell? Thank you.

19 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Hello, Bill.

20 MR. COURTRIGHT: Bring it up, Chris.

21 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Hey, Judy, the new
22 football coach position I heard, huh?

23 MR. GATELLI: Yeah.

24 MR. SLEDENZSKI: I'm proud of Joe
25 Garrick, I really am. He is a good guy.

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1 MS. GATELLI: He is going to do a
2 good job.

3 MR. SLEDENZSKI: I hope he does.
4 Well, Bill --

5 MR. COURTRIGHT: Where did you get
6 the hat?

7 MR. SLEDENZSKI: McGoyne.

8 MR. COURTRIGHT: McGoyne gave you
9 that?

10 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Yep. Thank you.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else? Mrs.
12 Evans.

13 MS. EVANS: Good evening. Just two
14 comments before I begin what I had prepared.
15 First, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Mike Murphy, who
16 addressed council earlier this evening
17 regarding the community garden program that
18 he is hoping to institute throughout the
19 city has asked me to announce that the
20 meetings will be held this Friday,
21 March 27th at 8:00; Saturday, March 28th at
22 9:30 a.m., and Saturday April 4th at 9:30
23 a.m. at Greenridge Assembly of God Church

24 which is located at 825 Greenridge Street in
25 Scranton.

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1 One other thing, I think, well, let
2 me ask you this, does anyone know the
3 definition of insanity? I see a couple of
4 hands. What a good class. Well, three of
5 you do. Excellent. Well, according to I
6 believe it was Einstein to continue to do
7 the same action over and over and over again
8 and expect a different result is the
9 definition of insanity and therein lies the
10 reason why I declined the chairmanship of
11 the Finance Committee. I had lead that
12 committee for four years and all of my
13 recommendations, warnings, suggestions fell
14 on deaf ears and I must be a slow learner
15 because it took me four years to figure out
16 nothing was going to change, and so in 2008,
17 January 2008, which incidentally was not an
18 election year, I declined the chairmanship
19 of that committee.

20 Now, yesterday, I met with a group
21 of Matthew Avenue residents and Mr. Beasley
22 of PPL regarding the PPL plan to spray
23 foliage with herbicides in the right-of-way
24 where electric towers are located parallel

25

to Matthew Avenue. Since spraying will not

166

1

occur until summer, PPL representatives will

2

deliberate on the numerous concerns voiced

3

by city residents and PPL ratepayers and a

4

future meeting will be scheduled after a

5

walk through of the right-of-way by the

6

residents, and we do hope for a decision

7

that will be satisfactory and beneficial to

8

the residents of Matthew Avenue.

9

On the financial front, council

10

received a copy of the 2008 independent

11

audit status from Rossi & Company. The

12

auditor states that he has not received a

13

revised proposed timetable for Mr. Renda who

14

had earlier indicated that the March 15,

15

2009, deadline for select information set by

16

the auditor was not feasible for him.

17

Further, responses to 11 memos had not been

18

received from Mr. Renda and a response to

19

audit confirmation had not been received

20

from the Single Tax Office.

21

Although, Rossi & Company intended

22

to issue 2008 audited financial statements

23

by May 31, 2009, the date contained in the

24

Home Rule Charter, it appears very likely

25

that the 2008 audit will not come in on time

167

1

due to the aforementioned delays. I do,

2

however, appreciate the determination and

3

efforts of Rossi & Company, but once again,

4

their progress is delayed by sources beyond

5

their control.

6

And as we all know, a forensic audit

7

report of the Scranton Tax Office was

8

released on Friday, March 20. I was not

9

present at the meeting at the stakeholders

10

at which time the results were released

11

because I was at work, and like Mrs. Gatelli

12

my computer could not open the files

13

available on-line from the tax office's

14

website, thus, I received the hard copy of

15

the report yesterday and I am in the process

16

of reviewing it.

17

I am concerned, however, that after

18

one year's time, which included an

19

eight-month forensic audit, we still do not

20

have concrete numbers or the total amount of

21

tax dollars owed to the City of Scranton.

22

Even more troubling is the approximate

23

\$2 million which was lost or missing through

24

accounting errors, and the lack of

25

accountability for those monies.

1 Both of these findings must be
2 further investigated, therefore, I would
3 like to send letters to the county
4 commissioners, the superintendent and board
5 of directors of the Scranton School District
6 and the mayor proposing that the three
7 taxing bodies jointly request a state and/or
8 federal investigation into the lost or
9 missing, whatever the terminology may be,
10 \$2 million, and the lack of accountability
11 for these lost monies.

12 Now, that's only half of the actions
13 though that I think need to occur. As we
14 know, Mr. McDowell never appeared publically
15 to provide explanations or to answer
16 questions, although, city council subpoenaed
17 his appearance nearly one year ago. It
18 seems clear that at best he will provide
19 select written statements to the newspaper.
20 Possibility the best answers we may receive
21 can come from the current tax collector and
22 her solicitor. This is the people's money
23 and they have the right to information and
24 answers and accountability.

25 Consequently, we as a council may

1 request that Mr. Vitali and Mr. McGovern
2 attend a public caucus in the coming weeks
3 to answer additional questions related to
4 the audit findings and recommendations, and
5 this audit is of unique and critical
6 importance to the city since the mayor
7 plugged 5.5 million dollars of tax office
8 money in his 2009 budget which I did not
9 vote for. I know that a speaker earlier
10 tonight made a blanket statement about
11 council approving that budget. Well, it did
12 not receive my vote, but at this moment it
13 appears there may or may not be a shortfall.

14 As elected officials, however, we
15 need hard numbers. We need them in terms of
16 the 2008 work in process tax payments and
17 the 888 monies both pre and post 2005 which
18 are owed to the City of Scranton and then in
19 the event of any possible shortfall city
20 officials can work toward a solution.

21 This is a not a matter that should
22 be allowed to languish until budget time in
23 November. Our city suffers from an
24 albatross of financial debt and we need to
25 meet financial problems head-on. Now, I

1 was, as many of you were, I'm sure,
2 disappointed that Mr. Scheller, CEO of
3 Northeast Ethanol cancelled his appearance
4 in South Side last week. Apparently, this
5 Ethanol affects more than the residents of
6 Taylor. It is an even bigger issue for
7 Scranton residents since it seems that
8 80 percent of this project will be located
9 in Scranton nearby our river and railways
10 and close, to close for comfort, to our
11 residential areas.

12 It behooves Mr. Scheller to address
13 all of the people of Scranton since we all
14 share the costs of water cleanup, road and
15 infrastructure maintenance and repair, fire
16 and police response, and protection, and we
17 all value our health, safety, and
18 environment. If Mr. Scheller intends to
19 present proposal to Scranton planning and/or
20 zoning I would help that council would
21 invite him to attend a televised public
22 caucus to present his plans to the entire
23 Scranton area for it's consideration. This
24 issue impacts all of us.

25 And, finally, I have some citizens'

1 requests for the night -- or the week, I
2 should say. Fill a large pothole in
3 Donnelly Court near it's intersection with
4 Hickory Street. Clear the tires and litter
5 from Mountain Lake Road is East Mountain,
6 and this is a third request. Residents of
7 Greenridge report that the windows of the
8 long vacant Greenridge Presbyterian Church
9 are being broken. They did contact the
10 city, but nothing has been done. Neighbor
11 report that a six-family apartment house
12 uses the DPW regular garbage collection
13 pickup rather than a dumpster and if,
14 indeed, a dumpster is necessary, please send
15 the appropriate inspector to address this
16 problem.

17 Also, as was noted earlier tonight,
18 and this is a second request, please place
19 recycling bins throughout Nay Aug Park; and
20 over the weekend city residents reported
21 that numerous parade goers, particularly
22 children, lined the concrete island in the
23 500 block of Lackawanna Avenue during the
24 St. Patrick's Day parade creating hazardous
25 conditions. The parade was restricted by a

1 smaller lane, thus coming very close to
2 onlookers who were sitting and standing on
3 this island in the middle of the street, so
4 the parade committee together with city
5 officials should address this issue for next
6 year's parade, and if we could please send a
7 letter to the parade committee which
8 addressed this potential safety hazard, and
9 that's it.

10 MS. GATELLI: I just have a few
11 items. First of all, I would like to make a
12 comment about Danielle and Company. I went
13 to the woman's place of business and saw her
14 operation. It is a manufacturing. She has
15 a very reputable business. I invite
16 everyone to go there. Her loan is to expand
17 her business and have another employee, so
18 it is for job creation that we are loaning
19 her \$25,000. The last time I checked, which
20 was I believe several months ago, every one
21 that has taken out a loan with the city has
22 been up-to-date in their payments.

23 There is a letter that both
24 Mrs. Evans and Mr. Courtright sent out about
25 the light on South Washington Avenue and Elm

1 Street. When I talked to Mr. Courtright
2 about it he said they wanted the green arrow
3 to be on the Elm Street side going west
4 making being a left onto South Washington.
5 I go that way every day and if anyone else
6 goes that way I would like them to please
7 let us know because I think the arrow
8 belongs on South Washington going left onto
9 Elm. There is.

10 MS. EVANS: That's what I meant.

11 MS. GATELLI: Oh, well, Bill said it
12 was the other way from the person he got it
13 from.

14 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yeah, I got it the
15 other way and I also got it in the mean time
16 -- I'm sorry. I got the other way and I
17 also got in the mean time, after I had said
18 it people wanted heading east so they could
19 make a left up Washington, so maybe when
20 they do their study they will just --

21 MS. EVANS: Do the whole thing.

22 MR. COURTRIGHT: Do the whole thing
23 and let us know.

24 MS. GATELLI: And then also I saw
25 that Mr. Swanson was going there to check

1 and I'm wondering why he never went to
2 Moosic Street. I brought that up on
3 numerous occasions going up Moosic and
4 making a left onto Harrison it's impossible
5 to make that left-hand turn, much more
6 difficult than South Washington Avenue is,
7 although, I do agree with that one too. So,
8 if we can also ask him, Kay, if we can
9 please check out the Harrison Avenue one
10 while he checking the lights.

11 I got a letter from OECD, I had some
12 questions about the KOZ's, and I got a
13 response that the state will not approve an
14 application submitted for the extension of
15 the benefits without the approval of city
16 council because the package would be
17 considered incomplete. There are 80
18 properties that were designated in the past
19 ten years and 80 still exist. The number of
20 jobs created within the KOEZ is
21 approximately 1,143. City council can
22 approve or disapprove any property which has
23 met the state's requirements and seeks to
24 have their KOZ extended. So, yes, we do
25 have some authority there.

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1 Also, there was a letter sent to

2 Mr. Brazil last week concerning the
3 intersection of Division Street and the 200
4 block of South Main Avenue and where they
5 have church services at Trinity Church. It
6 is a very bad intersection and I have
7 ordered pedestrians walkways things like I
8 got for St. Joe's and Scranton High and West
9 and they are ready and I will be picking --
10 my husband will be picking them up tomorrow
11 and I will be bring them to the church where
12 they will put them out for every day into
13 the intersection, and anyone else that needs
14 them please call city council. They do slow
15 down the traffic.

16 No one made a comment about the
17 signs being stolen from Mr. DiBileo. I, for
18 one, would like to condemn that action. I
19 don't think that's right. It was done to me
20 when I ran the last time and we paid a lot
21 of money for those signs, and it's just not
22 fair. If someone wants to put our sign in
23 their yard I'm very proud of that when
24 someone has my sign or anyone's sign in
25 their yard. It is their freedom of

1 expression, and I don't think it's right.

2 Someone did say that someone got caught
3 stealing a sign down in Old Forge, so I hope
4 that they can catch -- certainly catch the
5 people that have done this. We do have a
6 right to freedom of expression. We do have
7 a right to do as we see fit. It's very sad
8 though that when I was intimidated on a
9 website last year and we had to cancel
10 meetings and people had to be frisked
11 because I was afraid no one condemned that
12 action and that makes me very sad because I
13 too have a right to sit up here and I have a
14 right to vote the way I feel fit and because
15 a certain group of people don't agree with
16 me and wanted to bully me and intimidate me
17 they put me on a website with a gun and a
18 head blowing off, so I really hope that
19 people would condemn those kind of actions,
20 too, because it's not right, the way it's
21 not right to steal Gary DiBileo's signs,
22 that's not right either.

23 As far as the taxpayer interviews, I
24 will not be attending the Taxpayers'
25 Association interviews. I will participate

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1 in anything with the League of Women voters.
2 I have seen Mr. Quinn, who is the president,

3 hanging political signs in people's yards
4 for some of my opponents and I don't think
5 that I would be treated fairly being that he
6 has already made his choice, and that is the
7 reason I will not be attending. If the
8 League of Women Voters wish to have anything
9 I would be more than happy to go to those
10 events. Thank you very much.

11 MS. FANUCCI: I actually don't have a
12 lot to say tonight. I would like to make a
13 motion, Kay, that we send a letter to Stu
14 Renda and also to Lisa Moran on the health
15 care costs again, but what I'm going to ask
16 for again is individually. I want to see
17 the difference. I want to see before the
18 order, before the change now, and what was
19 being paid per individual, what their buying
20 was, how they were contributing and what our
21 city contribution was and then now what the
22 difference is now after I think March 9 is
23 when it became effective, so what the
24 difference is per single, per family, and
25 the entire thing, and I want to also want to

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1 include dental and all of the options that
2 they have.

3 I also would like to send another
4 letter requesting all of the regular pay,
5 again, for all of the employees, I have done
6 this before, regular pay for all of the
7 employees in the city and what their final
8 payout was, so if you had overtime how much
9 that would be. I also would like to know
10 about the longevity pay, how much that is,
11 and how much you make for that, and any of
12 the arbitration awards that Mr. Ancherani
13 was speaking of tonight, so if you did
14 receive that how much was it, when was it
15 received, are they receiving it timely in
16 that order.

17 As far as Danielle and Company, I
18 can't even believe I have to speak about
19 this again, but I certainly will. After her
20 sending a wonderful letter explaining
21 herself in a forum where she should not have
22 to defend herself, this is not their forum
23 to make you have to defend yourself as a
24 citizen, as someone who is putting money
25 into our city. You know, I don't understand

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1 when someone is saying to you, I'm willing
2 to take a risk for you, I have a passion,
3 I'm going to settle in your city, I'm going

4 to open a business, I'm going to employ the
5 people who live here, and all that I have to
6 take all of you're beatings the whole entire
7 time to try to act like, you know, you have
8 like some authority? This woman is doing
9 what we are offering. It's a loan. It's a
10 loan so that she can better herself and her
11 company and guess what, and the city. Isn't
12 it nice? Small business. Isn't that a good
13 thing? Shouldn't we be happy for this? But
14 yet she has to defend herself and she did
15 it, wonderfully I may add, then four
16 speakers get up and abuse her for doing
17 that.

18 I don't get it. I don't get this
19 forum and the way it's being used on a daily
20 basis and every week we go through this. I
21 will vote for every loan approval. I will
22 vote for every business to open. I will
23 vote for every job creation. Why? Did you
24 look around? Have you been in our economy?
25 This is what we need, and you could put all

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1 the new sidewalks in you want, new streets,
2 new curbs, but guess what, at the end of the
3 day nobody is paying more taxes and then

4 they just deteriorate again! You need to
5 increase your tax base. This is the only
6 way we can do it and it makes me sad that
7 normal citizens who want to invest when
8 people are coming up here and are they
9 investing? Are they giving you more money?
10 Are they deciding that they are going to
11 open businesses? You have to investigate
12 your life into this. You have to go to the
13 banks and also put up your own money. It's
14 not a freebie just like all of these rates
15 we get. They are not freebies. The people
16 still have to put up matches and loans and
17 millions and millions of dollars. Millions
18 of investments in your city, and that's
19 wrong?

20 All right, let them do it in
21 Allentown. Call them up. See how they are
22 doing. Maybe that will help you somewhere.
23 I don't think so. You want to here. You
24 want everything we can get and, you know,
25 people say, oh, well, we are greedy, we are

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1 taking what we can get, you are absolutely
2 right. You are absolutely right. I want
3 you to be able to stay here and live here
4 and I want citizens to be able to go

5 downtown and go into their neighborhoods and
6 be happy because there is so much more than
7 there was four years ago, eight years ago,
8 10 years ago. That's doing our job, so to
9 be bashed for it is just amazing to me.

10 I don't expect everyone to
11 understand or to agree with it, but I do
12 expect you to get up here and to be
13 respectful to the people who are taking a
14 chance on you. That's all. Just
15 respectful. You don't have to agree, you
16 don't have to like it, you can get mad about
17 a coffee shop or mad about a beauty salon,
18 but respect them because they are living the
19 dream. They are doing what we are supposed
20 to do in America, create their jobs, create
21 their livelihood just like all of us.

22 So it gets so frustrating sitting up
23 here sometimes to see what's going on, and
24 to be honest with you, it is only going to
25 get worse for the next six weeks. It is

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1 only going to get worse, and we all know it,
2 but I'm hoping that at some point someone
3 says enough is enough and let's move
4 forward, let's do what's right, let's try to

5 actually do some business and enough of the
6 badgering, enough of the pitting against
7 person against person, against group against
8 group. Let's just move on and try to do
9 what's right, and that's all I have.

10 MR. COURTRIGHT: If I were to go down
11 the list of everybody that has problems with
12 potholes we would be here a whole lot
13 longer, so let see me just say this that I
14 am looking into everyone, of your
15 complaints. I just think that there are so
16 many that we've got a monumental task ahead
17 of us here, so I will do my best. I did
18 speak to the pavecut inspector about
19 Washington Street. I had a couple of
20 complaints the utilities paved many of the
21 roads last year in the City of Scranton at
22 no charge to the city because they dug out a
23 certain percentage of the street. When they
24 paved the length of Washburn Street I
25 believe this guy must have some knowledge of

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1 paving that I don't. He claims that it was
2 too cold out so if you ride the entire
3 length of Washburn Street from Main Avenue
4 to probably VanBuren, I believe, maybe a
5 little bit further where they -- where the

6 road meets in the center, because they only
7 do one strip at a time over there, it's
8 starting to separate already, so I think we
9 are probably going to have a rut down the
10 entire length there, so he said he would
11 check with the company that did the paving
12 and see if that can be corrected.

13 You know, I have stayed away from
14 anything to do with the tax office in light
15 of the fact that we got an election coming
16 up and I didn't want to misinterpret
17 anything I was saying, but I believe now
18 that I have an obligation to say something
19 to the taxpayers and to the citizens of the
20 City of Scranton. A few months back when we
21 had the tax office here they lead us to
22 believe that they found \$12 million, and I
23 think whether it was intentional or not
24 intentional, we were misled to a certain
25 degree because I believe everybody -- or

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1 many people felt, you know, it was like
2 reaching in your pocket thinking there was
3 nothing there and we came out with 12
4 million, and so many people believed there
5 was an extra \$12 million floating around. I

6 am assuming the administration believed
7 there was because they did plug 5.5 in their
8 budget and I'm assuming the council members
9 here that voted for the budget believed that
10 there was \$12 million because they would
11 vote for the budget if 5.5 is in there. And
12 when we see the report, I actually went over
13 it with a gentleman that's a CPA and he has
14 an MBA to try to explain it to me and in
15 laymen's term and when we look at the \$12
16 million now we see that seven million three
17 hundred and some thousand is WIP money, work
18 in progress money, and that leaves us with
19 4.9 million, of the 4.9 million we got
20 \$377,000 -- or, I'm sorry, \$206,000 in real
21 estate overpayments. We have \$654,000
22 representing real estate overpayments, so I
23 don't think anybody really knows exactly
24 what we are going to get and when we are
25 going to get it.

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1 So, again, whether it's intentional
2 or not intentional, and hopefully it wasn't
3 intentional, we have people sitting here
4 saying there is 12 million, all right, and
5 now we are looking at possibly we are
6 mistaken by eight million dollars or more.

7 So I don't know where we are going
8 to come up with money we need. I hope, you
9 know, I know Mr. Renda is optimistic, and I
10 hope his optimism pays off, but I think we
11 are going to have a shortfall and I just
12 think, again, whether it was intentional or
13 not that we were misled and hopefully
14 that's all I say on it between now and
15 election time. Thank you.

16 MR. MCGOFF: Mrs. Garvey?

17 MS. GARVEY: FIFTH ORDER. 5-B. FOR
18 INTRODUCTION - A RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING
19 THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY
20 OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO A
21 CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES WITH
22 THOMAS J. MCLANE AND ASSOCIATES INC. FOR
23 PRELIMINARY PLANNING, DESIGN, PREPARATION OF
24 CONSTRUCTION DOCUMENTS AND CONSTRUCTION
25 SUPPORT SERVICES FOR BILLY BARRETT

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1 PLAYGROUND.

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

5 MR. COURTRIGHT: So moved.

6 MS. FANUCCI: Second.

7 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

8 MS. EVANS: Yes. I'm thrilled,
9 absolutely thrilled about this piece of
10 legislation because it's something I know we
11 have waited for since 2004, I think,
12 Mr. Courtright, that's when I know you asked
13 about Billy Barrett playground, I asked
14 about it, and here we are five years later
15 and finally something is getting done and
16 like I said earlier, God Bless election
17 season and get all you can.

18 MR. COURTRIGHT: I think we have to
19 give some of the credit to the neighborhood
20 association back there and Chris Phillips.

21 MS. EVANS: Oh, yes.

22 MR. COURTRIGHT: He kind of pushed it
23 and that association did and, once again, I
24 think because it was election year.

25 MR. MCGOFF: All those in favor of

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1 introduction signify by saying aye.

2 MS. EVANS: Aye.

3 MS. FANUCCI: Aye.

4 MS. GATELLI: Aye.

5 MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

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

8 MS. GARVEY: SIXTH ORDER. NO
9 BUSINESS AT THIS TIME. SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A.
10 FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON
11 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - FOR ADOPTION -
12 RESOLUTION NO. 113, 2009 - AUTHORIZING THE
13 MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS
14 FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO ENTER INTO A
15 LOAN AGREEMENT AND MAKE A LOAN FROM THE
16 COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL REVOLVING LOAN
17 PROGRAM, PROJECT NO. 150.21 IN AN AMOUNT NOT
18 TO EXCEED \$25,000.00 TO DANIELLE AND
19 COMPANY, INC. TO ASSIST AN ELIGIBLE PROJECT.

20 MR. MCGOFF: What is the
21 recommendation of the Chairperson for the
22 Committee on Community Development.

23 MS. FANUCCI: As Chairperson for the
24 Committee on Community Development, I
25 recommend final passage of Item 7-A.

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1 MR. COURTRIGHT: Second.

2 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? Roll
3 call, please?

4 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

5 MS. EVANS: Yes.

6 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Gatelli.

7 MS. GATELLI: Yes.

8 MR. COOLICAN: Ms. Fanucci.

9 MS. FANUCCI: Yes.

10 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright.

11 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yes.

12 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby declare

14 Item 7-A legally and lawfully adopted.

15 MS. GARVEY: 7-B. FOR CONSIDERATION
16 BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES - FOR ADOPTION -
17 RESOLUTION NO. 114, 2009 - AUTHORIZING THE
18 MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS
19 TO EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH
20 KNOWLES ASSOCIATES, L.L.C., FOR INSURANCE
21 WITH HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT INSURANCE
22 EXCHANGE (HARIE), INDIAN HARBOR INSURANCE
23 EXCHANGE, PHILADELPHIA INDEMNITY INSURANCE
24 COMPANY AND ARCH INSURANCE COMPANY FOR CITY
25 INSURANCE COVERAGES FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY

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1 1, 2009 THROUGH JANUARY 1, 2010 AND TO
2 RATIFY ANY AND ALL ACTIONS AND SERVICES
3 PERFORMED SINCE THE EXPIRATION OF THE PRIOR
4 INSURANCE CONTRACT.

5 MR. MCGOFF: As Chair for the
6 Committee on Rules, I recommend final
7 passage of Item 7-B.

8 MR. COURTRIGHT: Second.

9 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? Roll
10 call, please?

11 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

12 MS. EVANS: Yes.

13 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Gatelli.

14 MS. GATELLI: Yes.

15 MR. COOLICAN: Ms. Fanucci.

16 MS. FANUCCI: Yes.

17 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright.

18 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yes.

19 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

20 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby declare

21 Item 7-B legally and lawfully adopted.

22 Motion to adjourn?

23 MR. COURTRIGHT: So moved.

24 MR. MCGOFF: Good night. Thank you

25 for your participation.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

8

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

15

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CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

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