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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

HELD:

Tuesday, April 27, 2010

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:

JANET EVANS, PRESIDENT

PAT ROGAN, VICE-PRESIDENT

ROBERT MCGOFF

FRANK JOYCE

JOHN LOSCOMBE

NANCY KRAKE, CITY CLERK

CATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

BOYD HUGHES, SOLICITOR

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

3 MS. EVANS: Roll call, please.

4 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Here.

6 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

7 MR. ROGAN: Here.

8 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Loscombe.

9 MR. LOSCOMBE: Here.

10 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Joyce.

11 MR. JOYCE: Here.

12 MS. CARRERA: Mrs. Evans.

13 MS. EVANS: Here. Dispense with the
14 reading of the minutes.

15 MS. KRAKE: THIRD ORDER. 3-A.

16 MINUTES OF THE SCRANTON-LACKAWANNA HEALTH
17 AND WELFARE AUTHORITY'S REGULAR BOARD
18 MEETING HELD MARCH 18,2010.

19 MS. EVANS: Are there any comments?
20 If not, received and filed. Clerk's notes.

21 MS. KRAKE: Thank you. First, I
22 have responses. We have a response from
23 city forester Anthony San tolli. This is
24 concerning our letter of April 22 concerning
25 the knocking out of the electrical service

1 caused by tree limbs. He tells us that he
2 would like to bring us up-to-date on vacant
3 lot at 915 Clay Avenue. There is no house
4 on the property there. He says PPL did
5 state that the two trees in the middle of
6 the property pose a potential threat to the
7 wires in question. We are still going to
8 proceed to have this declared a public
9 safety hazard situation and will seek to
10 have the trees removed with a lien placed on
11 the property.

12 MS. EVANS: Very good.

13 MS. KRAKE: Number two, PPL stated
14 that they see nothing that warrants the
15 removal of trees from the lot next to the
16 property at 915 Clay Avenue. PPL suggested
17 that the complainant call the following
18 number 1-800DIALPPL for detailed information
19 concerning the situation. The local
20 representative of PPL, Mr. Steve Lepchack,
21 urged the complainant to make the call per
22 PPL's policy. He tells us he will continue
23 to update us on how things are proceeding.

24 We have several responses from Mark
25 Seitzinger, the Director of Licensing and

1 Inspections. First is concerning the South
2 Side Shopping Center and the emptying of
3 dumpsters. Director Seitzinger says: This
4 is something that has happened in the past
5 in other locations and the dumpster company
6 was receptive of our request to begin
7 emptying the dumpsters at a later time. We
8 will certainly speak with the South Side
9 Shopping Center and the dumpster company to
10 resolve this issue as soon as possible.

11 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

12 MS. KRAKE: Also, concerning Yank's
13 Garage, he says, "Yank's Garage seems to be
14 the source of the problem according to our
15 letter and there are paint fumes in the air
16 that the citizens are concerned about
17 there."

18 Director says: "I will send an
19 inspector and also the zoning officer out to
20 the property to make sure that the business
21 is in full compliance with all city
22 ordinances. These inspectors will be sent
23 out this week and will report back to me
24 with their findings so that council can be
25 updated."

1 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

2 MS. KRAKE: "In reference to 618 East
3 Elm Street, since the time of our letter the
4 property has within been razed by the City
5 of Scranton. At this point the crews are
6 working on the property to ensure that it is
7 safe for the neighbors and that the brook is
8 protected as well."

9 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

10 MS. KRAKE: "Concerning 1023 Bunker
11 Hill Street, the property is a condemned
12 property and was condemned as unfit in June
13 of 2008. We are have attempted to contact
14 the owner for the property and we have been
15 unsuccessful in doing so. The owner's
16 listed address is also 1023 Bunker Hill
17 Street and there is no forwarding address.
18 Upon further investigation into the
19 property, there were two mortgages on this,
20 one which was satisfied and one which was
21 not satisfied. The mortgage company who
22 held the mortgages is no longer in
23 existence. Even though they are not in
24 business any longer, we have attempted to
25 contact the parent company and they are

1 looking into the situation for us at this
2 time. We are hoping for an answer from the
3 parent company this week so we maybe able to
4 proceed and have the demolition as soon as
5 possible."

6 MS. EVANS: Very good. And,
7 Mrs. Krake, if they do receive responses
8 this week could you let me know right
9 away --

10 MS. KRAKE: Yes.

11 MS. EVANS: -- that the demolition is
12 going to occur?

13 MS. KRAKE: Yes.

14 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

15 MS. KRAKE: We received a response
16 from Robert Scopelliti, executive director
17 of the Scranton Parking Authority. The
18 first part of his response doesn't answer
19 our question entirely, which Les had pointed
20 out to me in the past, so I will follow-up
21 on that, but I will read his responses: The
22 new Vietnamese restaurant does not have an
23 agreement in their lease to allow workers
24 and patrons to park for free.

25 Number two, the Scranton Parking

1 Authority is currently working with the
2 Scranton Tomorrow on a program to offer it
3 to the downtown businesses. The program
4 will allow downtown businesses to purchase a
5 prepaid voucher that equates to one hour of
6 parking in our garages. The cost is
7 absorbed by the business. We currently have
8 a small handful of businesses currently
9 doing this and seem to be working well. We
10 will announce this when all aspects are
11 worked out.

12 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

13 MS. KRAKE: And we have several that
14 were not answered by the date council had
15 requested: One is from Director Seitzinger
16 concerning the property on the corner of
17 Wyoming and Linden. The other is from
18 Director Aebli concerning the loan agreement
19 made with The Aroma Cafe and whether that --
20 the status of that loan.

21 Next from the treasurer, Brian
22 McGowan, I did speak to him on the phone,
23 but I think we still respectfully request a
24 written response concerning whether
25 recyclables at commercial establishments are

1 picked up on the city or not and what are
2 the rules and/or exceptions.

3 MS. EVANS: Okay.

4 MS. KRAKE: From Director Brazil we
5 have 15 unanswered requests from council.
6 We have one from -- actually, we have two
7 from the Director of the Parks, Mark
8 Dougher. The first was concerning the
9 flooding problem at the Sloan Little League
10 Field on the side of the Parrot Avenue, that
11 is unanswered, and also our second request
12 to him concerning the dismantling of the
13 playground or any structures at the
14 Lackawanna Little League located at Dewey
15 Avenue and Jackson Street. And we also have
16 one more from Director Seitzinger that's
17 unanswered. That was concerning a vacant
18 multi-family dwelling located at 1309
19 Jackson Street.

20 MS. EVANS: Well, I think
21 Mr. Seitzinger's letter we can hold because
22 he has indicated that he will be coming in
23 for a caucus and so I'm sure we can pose
24 those questions to him in person. We, I
25 believe, also asked Mr. Brazil to attend a

1 caucus or we should.

2 MS. KRAKE: We did.

3 MS. EVANS: And we can hold those
4 items for that dialogue. In terms of
5 Mrs. Aebli though, if we could please send
6 that to her again, we would like the written
7 response to that and if there is an issue
8 involving that let's do a Right-to-Know.

9 MS. KRAKE: We will do that. That's
10 all we have.

11 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Do any
12 council members have announcements?

13 MR. ROGAN: Yes. The West Scranton
14 Invaders Boy's Baseball Club will host a
15 Night at the Races April 20, 2007, to 11
16 p.m. the Keyser Valley Community Center.
17 The admission is \$10 at the door. You must
18 be 20 years or older to attend.

19 MR. JOYCE: The Scranton School
20 District Exceptional Athletes Committee,
21 formerly known as the Scranton Special
22 Olympics, will be holding his annual
23 fundraising on Monday, May 17 from 7 to 10
24 p.m. at Stirna's Restaurant in North
25 Scranton. To provide some background on the

1 Exceptional Athletes Committee, this
2 organization is solely responsible for the
3 development and execution of the athletic
4 events for students with special needs who
5 attend school in the Scranton School
6 District from grades K through 12. Money
7 raised at the fundraiser is used to purchase
8 adapted equipment and also help to support
9 athletic events, helps to support dances and
10 other social events as well. Tickets for
11 the event are \$35 per person and can be
12 purchased the night of the event at the
13 door. Light fare and beverages will be
14 served throughout the evening, and there
15 will be raffles for baskets as well as gift
16 certificates. Those who are interested and
17 want to know more information may contact
18 Ann Genet at 348-3471 or Marilyn Graziano or
19 Gerilynn Neserkauskis at 348-3481, and
20 that's all.

21 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

22 Mr. Loscombe?

23 MR. LOSCOMBE: I would just like to
24 extend my congratulations to Bishop Bambera
25 on being elevated to the tenth bishop of our

1 Dioceses and hope I hope he keeps us and our
2 city in his prayers. That's all. Thank
3 you.

4 MS. EVANS: Thank you. The weekly
5 schedule for street cleaning is as follows:
6 April 26 to 30, Arthur Avenue to Taylor
7 Avenue and May 3 to 7 Hemlock Street to
8 Locust Street.

9 The North Scranton Rotary Club will
10 conduct it's annual fishing derby on May 8
11 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at South Abington
12 Park. There will be trophies and gift
13 certificates for children. I'd like to
14 thank Mr. Dick Laske for his dedication to
15 this program and many others such as the
16 annual Lithuanian flag raising and, of
17 course, for his homemade sauerkraut. And,
18 Dick, my friend, you are the best.

19 The Scranton Lackawanna County
20 Taxpayers' Association will conduct a forum
21 for Democratic candidates seeking the
22 position of State Representative in the
23 112th District this Thursday, April 29, at
24 6:00 p.m. in city council chambers. We
25 commend the Taxpayers' Association for

1 hosting these events to better inform the
2 voters of our area prior to each election
3 and we request ECTV to air all candidate
4 forums as often as possible before May 18,
5 2010.

6 The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation will
7 sponsor a Great Strides Wilkes-Barre Walk
8 this Saturday, May 1, at Kirby Park in
9 Wilkes-Barre. Check-in time is 9:30 a.m.
10 and the walk begins at 10:30. Jason
11 Tomavitch, grandson of Angie Tomavitch, is
12 one of our local children afflicted with CF.
13 Donations will fund the CF Foundation's
14 efforts to assure that the development of
15 the means to cure and control Cystic
16 Fibrosis and to improve the quality of life
17 for those with this disease.

18 Finally, the Scranton Public Library
19 proudly presents "Up dikes Pennsylvania"
20 with journalist Frank Fitzpatrick on
21 Thursday, May 20, in the periodical's room
22 within the reference department at 6:30 p.m.
23 Pulitzer Prize winner John Updike was born
24 and bred in Pennsylvania and before his
25 death in 2009 he published over 60 books

1 including "Rapid Run." His writings include
2 fiction, short stories, poetry, literary
3 criticism, nonfiction and exceptional
4 sport's commentaries. He wrote regularly
5 for the New Yorker magazine and is
6 considered one of the most important
7 American writers of the 20th century.
8 Mr. Fitzpatrick has contributed stories on
9 "Updike" in the Philadelphia Inquirer and
10 national public radio. He is the author of
11 three books and was a 2001 Pulitzer Prize
12 finalist. Tickets to the event are
13 available at the circulation desk of the
14 Scranton Public Library, 500 Vine Street in
15 Scranton, and that's it.

16 MR. MCGOFF: Could I add one thing?

17 MS. EVANS: Absolutely.

18 MR. MCGOFF: I couldn't find it at
19 first, and it's marked that this was just
20 received yesterday. It's the
21 Scranton-Wilkes-Barre Regional Dialogue on
22 Public Education. It's going to be held
23 tomorrow at the University of Scranton
24 DeNaple's Center at 6:30 -- from 6:30 to
25 8:30. What it is, it says that it's a

1 collaborative discussion moderated by
2 professional facilitators in order to
3 identify issues, priorities and ideas for
4 our public education system. Following this
5 discussion, these will be shared with
6 candidates for governor and state
7 legislature and other elected and community
8 leaders. It says bring your experience,
9 voice and friends to make this a productive
10 effort. I realize it's short notice, but I
11 think one of the really important issues
12 confronting our state and our country at
13 this time, and it's somewhat being ignored,
14 is public education and how it's functioning
15 and also how the "No Child Left Behind Act"
16 has influenced public education throughout
17 the country. Certainly this would be a
18 worthwhile -- if this is a concern and
19 something that you would be interested in
20 this seems like it would be something
21 worthwhile. That's Regional Dialogue on
22 Public Education tomorrow evening at the
23 DeNaple's Center from 6:30 to 8:30.

24 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. McGoff.
25 Mrs. Krake?

1 MS. KRAKE: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS'
2 PARTICIPATION.

3 MS. EVANS: Our first speaker this
4 evening is Bob Martin.

5 MR. MARTIN: Good evening, Council.
6 Bob Martin, citizen, FOP representative of
7 the finest police officers in the State of
8 Pennsylvania. I come before you tonight
9 basically to inform you and the taxpayers of
10 what the status of our labor relations are
11 and maybe you can give us some assistance
12 with this matter and I just want to begin by
13 on April 16 we received another arbitration
14 award in regards to Elite Brokerage, it's
15 the health care manager for the City of
16 Scranton and the city has been ordered to
17 seek out a new health care manger, a more
18 competent one, one that's more equitable and
19 profitable to the Health Care Containment
20 Committee which we chair, or we share a
21 chair on that committee, "we" being the
22 unions.

23 And on Friday another award was
24 issued in our favor for the health care
25 paycheck contributions, the city

1 administration levied -- raised our health
2 care costs out of our paychecks, our
3 paycheck contributions last March, without
4 any regard to the contract language on how
5 that was to applied and the procedures that
6 were to take place in order to -- and, of,
7 course, run it through the Health Care Cost
8 Containment Committee, none of that was
9 done. The arbitrator recognized that and
10 handed down the decision Friday that they
11 are to refund our health care costs paycheck
12 contributions with interest. I have no
13 indication from the city what they are going
14 to do at this point, whether they are going
15 to appeal, that seems to be the norm. As we
16 know historically we win, they appeal, we
17 win again, they appeal again and the spiral
18 just continues to go upward, but the lawyers
19 get rich and the taxpayers are bearing the
20 burden, and I just want to read an excerpt
21 from the -- it's part of the Commonwealth
22 Court ruling of February 6, 2009, seven
23 judges en banc, and the Commonwealth Court,
24 it's from page 23 of the Court order, and it
25 says: "We reject the City's contention that

1 the specific year wage limitations and total
2 adjustment limits remain in effect
3 indefinitely."

4 Once again, "We reject the City's
5 contention that the specific year wage
6 limitations and total adjustment limits
7 remains in effect indefinitely. The plain
8 language of the provisions does not support
9 the argument, rather, the plain language of
10 the 2002 Recovery Plan indicates that the
11 wage limitations and total personnel cost
12 adjustments apply in the years 2003, 2004,
13 and 2005 only. Because an award of wage
14 increases of 3.5 percent in 2006, and 4
15 percent in 2007 does not conflict with a
16 clear, specific provision of the 2002
17 Recovery Plan, the wage increases may be
18 awarded perspectivevely. Citing the City of
19 Farrell, Act 47 prohibits clear, specific
20 limitations of the Recovery Plan from being
21 violated, expanded or diminished.

22 As a result of our conclusion, the
23 orders are amended to expressly vacate for
24 2003, 2004, and 2005, to vacate the 5.5 wage
25 increase effective December 31, 2005, and to

1 make 3.5 wage increase effective the date of
2 the award of April 7, 2006; the wage
3 increase of 4 percent effective January 1,
4 2007, is confirmed."

5 Seven judges in the Commonwealth
6 Court basically said there are no provisions
7 in the Recovery Plan to stop wage increases
8 beyond 2005. And again, we are in an appeal
9 process, they are appealing Judge O'Brien's
10 award or Court order of November 18. They
11 have a stay. We are probably -- our
12 attorneys are telling us that we are
13 probably only a couple of weeks away from
14 the Supreme Court, that's as far as it can
15 go. We are at the end of the line here and
16 it's only in regards to the stay, but we are
17 at the end of the line here and if the stay
18 is removed then we will move forward to the
19 Unfair Labor Practice and the administration
20 will lose, and at that point I'm told that
21 the Labor Board can impose interest on those
22 wage increases that they are now appealing.

23 I'm just trying to get this to the
24 point where it keeps spiraling up, lawyers
25 are getting rich and the taxpayers are going

1 to bear the burden. All of these things are
2 appealed, the SIT award is looming, and we
3 gave that, we gave that to the
4 administration in October of 2008 and those
5 pay raises, those pay increases, were about
6 25 percent. We came to an agreement, this
7 is the negotiation session at the University
8 of Scranton with the infamous handshake.

9 We gave back the 1.5 million dollar
10 -- the potential, potential for the SIT and
11 we still have -- we have still have
12 arbitration looming over the backpay for
13 2006, '7, '8, and '9. And I see the
14 taxpayers' bearing this whole burden. At
15 some point I'm requesting assistance from
16 you, I have no idea if you can help us or
17 not, at least turn up the heat, get the
18 treasure on, my bottom line is make them sit
19 down at the table, make them negotiate so we
20 can have a fair and equitable contract.
21 That's our goal. We know that's the only
22 answer, that's the only legitimate answer to
23 this problem and appealing and appealing and
24 appealing does not solve the problem at all
25 it's just going to continue to spiral.

1 MS. EVANS: I think I hear you
2 saying that from the union position you do
3 not know if the administration intends to
4 appeal the health care decision.

5 MR. MARTIN: We don't know whether
6 we are going to appeal either one of these.

7 MS. EVANS: This is what most
8 recently came down from the Courts.

9 MR. MARTIN: Yes, Friday, Friday
10 afternoon.

11 MS. EVANS: I think that maybe,
12 Mr. Loscombe and myself, he is the chair of
13 the public safety, I think two of us may
14 want to have a discussion with the mayor and
15 learn what the City's intentions are with
16 regard to an appeal to this health care
17 award. I understand what you are saying,
18 it's an award with interest, and so every
19 day that we fail to act the interest is
20 compounding, and the citizens they can't
21 afford it.

22 MR. MARTIN: It's the taxpayers that
23 are going to bear the burden at some point.

24 MS. EVANS: Yes.

25 MR. RINALDI: At some point.

1 MS. EVANS: Because this has been
2 put off for so many years.

3 MR. MARTIN: At some point we are
4 going to have to pay the piper, it's all
5 going to come back at some point and it's
6 not our intention from our perspective to
7 burden the taxpayers with this. I still
8 think the only legitimate outcome is to sit
9 down and negotiate a fair contract.

10 MS. EVANS: I agree.

11 MR. LOSCOMBE: Probably the amount
12 of fees they have paid the attorneys to this
13 point would have covered all of the awards.
14 It's crazy.

15 MR. MARTIN: Oh, it is. It is
16 completely out of -- completely out of
17 control.

18 MR. LOSCOMBE: Our council has been
19 anticipating this since day one because the
20 inevitable is going to happen and that's why
21 we worked on the budget prior, went to Court
22 over it, and I mean we see it. There is not
23 anywhere else we can tap and it's more than
24 well and due that you guys receive what you
25 have coming to you. It's been nine years

1 now and --

2 MR. MARTIN: I mean, the Courts are
3 telling us we are due. I mean, what the
4 Courts are telling is due is beyond belief.
5 I think the taxpayers should have to bear
6 that burden.

7 MR. LOSCOMBE: I agree.

8 MR. MARTIN: Because the numbers,
9 Judge O'Brien, his award -- his Court order
10 immediately gave us 27 percent. Our
11 attorneys are telling us that that can grow
12 to 37 percent and they are confident that's
13 what the -- because I just read the section.
14 There is nothing to stop that. Nothing to
15 stop that in the Recovery Plan, so I don't
16 know what their argument is going to be when
17 we get before the Commonwealth, I mean,
18 that's still under appeal, but the pay
19 raises, I mean, we are asking to just give
20 us the O'Brien pay raises, what he offered
21 in his order in November 18th.

22 MR. LOSCOMBE: I agree with Mrs.
23 Evans that as soon as we can possibly get
24 together with the mayor and discuss this we
25 have to get somewhere.

1 MR. MARTIN: These are only the more
2 poignant ones. I mean, there is lot looming
3 out there, you have the processing ULP
4 coming up which is the Unfair Labor
5 Practice, I don't know if you're aware of
6 that, how much the public is aware of that.
7 The processing center is run by the county.
8 This administration entered into an
9 agreement with the county that they would
10 process the prisoners that we arrest. The
11 taxpayers of Scranton are paying the
12 Scranton police officers to go out and they
13 go out and they do an extremely good job
14 keeping the streets safe, they make arrests,
15 and now the county is dictating that we
16 bring those prisoners to the processing
17 center and they are collecting a fee.

18 Now, there is an argument between
19 the fee that they are collecting. I have
20 heard two different numbers. One is they
21 are collecting \$150 per processing and the
22 other figure is \$300. Now, we delivered
23 over 225 criminal arrests to the processing
24 center last year. If it's the \$300 figure
25 that's three-quarters of a million dollars

1 in revenue that the county is enjoying from
2 the fruit of our labors as the police
3 department and the citizens of Scranton.
4 The citizens of Scranton are paying for
5 this. Our argument is why are aren't we
6 doing that? We have a facility. The city
7 spent three and a half million dollars to
8 build the building, a brand new building, we
9 have all of the equipment, we have enough
10 room in the facility to do whatever they are
11 doing in the processing center. Our
12 facility is just as big if not bigger. We
13 could hire the people if we needed a couple
14 of extra people to run the people that are
15 going through there. And we provide them
16 with the -- without the support of our what
17 our police officers provide in terms of the
18 criminal arrests every year, the processing
19 center is going to fail.

20 MS. EVANS: Well, what concerns me
21 most about all of this is that when I
22 questioned members of the administration
23 about funding for these types of awards in
24 the event the city would lose, I was told
25 they have no plan and no preparation has

1 what point in time all of us, it's ragtag,
2 some of it is sitting on the doorstep of the
3 Supreme Court, but what I fear most is that
4 as the awards, if the O'Brien award and then
5 ultimately the 2008 award is upheld, those
6 are extremely significant numbers and it's
7 going to be extremely difficult to find that
8 money to cover it and my problem is going to
9 be when we get that close to the -- when we
10 get that close to the end what am I going to
11 say to the men and I represent after they
12 have been put through what they have been
13 put through for the last nine years how I am
14 going to turn to them and say, "Come on,
15 Guys, now we have to be compassionate."

16 We want to finally sit down and they
17 are going to say, oh, okay, they are going
18 to say, no. I get people coming to me, no,
19 back off, some of my people don't want me at
20 the podium, back off and let the Courts deal
21 with them because it looks like we are going
22 to come out at the end of the day. They are
23 not going to get any more of their
24 management rights, seven judges give them
25 what they are going to get and I don't see

1 any of that changing.

2 MS. EVANS: Mr. Martin, just one
3 last question thought, you alluded to this
4 earlier, is it still possible at this point
5 in time, and at this let's say legal moment
6 for both sides, to sit down and hammer out
7 an agreement and avoid Supreme Court
8 hearings?

9 MR. MARTIN: My estimation the
10 answer to that question is an absolute yes.
11 It's never too late. It's never too late to
12 sit down a negotiate, and I don't know if we
13 can stop the entire train because there is
14 some questions now that our state rep --
15 when I state representative, I mean, the FOP
16 state lodge is being involved in with the --
17 we have challenged the Act 47
18 constitutionality once again. It has been
19 challenged already, it's being upheld as
20 being constitutional, the state lawyers --
21 the state FOP has taken that case from us.
22 They are paying the full bill and they are
23 telling me that there are some significant
24 changes that they think that could probably
25 be overturned and Act 47 found

1 unconstitutional. That would be a
2 devastating blow to the citizens and
3 taxpayers of Scranton after all of this time
4 because it would be all thrown out.
5 Attorney Hughes I'm sure can allude to some
6 of it. If that were ever to come to
7 fruition that that would be devastating for
8 everybody.

9 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Martin.

10 MR. MARTIN: Thank you.

11 MR. JOYCE: Mr. Martin, if you don't
12 mind I just have two quick questions for
13 you. What is the interest rate, when you
14 mentioned the interest that the city would
15 have to pay and the wage increases?

16 MR. MARTIN: Six percent would be
17 levied by the Labor Board from my
18 understanding.

19 MR. JOYCE: Okay 6 percent, and when
20 was the agreement between the administration
21 and the county that arrests would be
22 processed by the city rather than the
23 county?

24 MR. MARTIN: That's unclear to me.
25 I don't know exactly at what point. It

1 originally started as a trial basis and we
2 participated, of course, we were never
3 asked, the union was never asked to
4 participate in any of that negotiations, we
5 started going there. We actually had work,
6 it was extra duty for some of our officers,
7 I worked extra duty there and it continued
8 good from the inception, it continued to
9 deteriorate to the point where we weren't
10 getting the work and we weren't getting, you
11 know, the prisoners and the county kept
12 taking over more and more, and if you
13 remember the incident with the gentleman
14 that held the courthouse and barricaded for
15 a number of hours, of course, we severed
16 participated in the processing center at
17 that point, it was about a year, and then
18 the following year in July they said, okay,
19 we are going back in. We were ordered to
20 start taking our prisoners there and then
21 all of a sudden they said, well, and I had
22 some meetings with the district attorney
23 over it and he said we would always have
24 work there, but once we started back the
25 second time, and I believe it went full-time

1 in January, they told us we don't have any
2 work. So none of our officers are working
3 there at all. At all. We don't get extra
4 duty, we are not getting anything. Well,
5 our contract said we must be paid our
6 regular base hourly rate to work an extra
7 job and they refused to pay that rate, they
8 said they will pay it lesser rate and, of
9 course, we don't get any work out of it at
10 all right now.

11 MS. EVANS: Mrs. Krake, could we try
12 to get our hands on that agreement if,
13 indeed, it does exist and if it doesn't I'd
14 like to know unequivocally that it's nothing
15 more than a verbal agreement.

16 MR. MARTIN: I have no idea.

17 MS. EVANS: For how many years has
18 this been ongoing?

19 MR. MARTIN: About four or five now.
20 Probably 2004 or early 2005.

21 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

22 MR. MARTIN: Thank you again.

23 MR. JOYCE: Thank you.

24 MR. HUGHES: Madam Chairman, if I
25 could, I certainly don't want to give

1 Mr. Martin any advice, but, you know, I just
2 heard about this decision tonight, but there
3 is no automatic right of appeal to the
4 Pennsylvania Supreme Court, the only one
5 that has an automatic right of appeal to the
6 Pennsylvania Supreme Court is in a capital
7 murder case. They would have to file a
8 petition for allowance of appeal, the
9 Supreme Court would have to I believe out of
10 every hundred cases that a petition for
11 allowance of appeal is filed there is only
12 like three or four out of 100 that are
13 selected to be heard, and so that depending
14 how fast the Supreme Court would rule, if a
15 petition for allowance of appeal is filed
16 and how long it would take them to rule on
17 the petition could take anywhere from six
18 months to two years depending on the case.
19 I mean, I have had some that were pending
20 for close to a year and a half, some were
21 decided within eight or nine months, I think
22 the mall the petition for allowance of
23 appeal that was filed by Delkowitz to go to
24 the Supreme Court from the Commonwealth
25 Court decision I think that came down about

1 six months and it was denied and there was a
2 lot of issues involved in that because there
3 was a collateral case from Pittsburgh that
4 had accepted, the Supreme Court had accepted
5 almost on the same criteria, but they denied
6 the one involving Scranton.

7 And then ultimately the other case
8 that was at the Supreme Court they had
9 affirmed a decision, so there is no
10 automatic right of appeal in this case,
11 which might be more reason to have an
12 expeditious meeting on that as you
13 suggested.

14 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Attorney
15 Hughes. Andy Sbaraglia.

16 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,
17 citizen of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians,
18 5-B I see looking they're for a grant for up
19 there at Fellow's Park I guess it is.
20 Didn't I read something about money being
21 allocated to that project maybe six months
22 ago at Fellow's Park.

23 MS. EVANS: There had been work done
24 previously, yes, and this I believe is going
25 to be for a parking lot, new playground

1 equipment, they will be replacing what's
2 there now. There is quite a number of
3 items, street lighting, and it requires 50
4 percent match from the city and I believe
5 that would be provided through OECD.

6 MR. SBARAGLIA: Well, I have nothing
7 against fixing up that park, but to tell you
8 the truth I found nothing wrong that park
9 before. That was a beautiful park. I mean,
10 they had all kind of affairs there and all
11 of sudden now we find the need to really
12 pour a lot of money into it. The
13 streetlights, I don't know it's real bright
14 in that area there, isn't that right across
15 from the bank? Yeah, the bank is right
16 there. I don't quite understand it, but I
17 guess if the money is available through a
18 grant you can't deny it, can't say that
19 needed more than any or project in the city?
20 I wouldn't know. But apparently they are
21 back at this Fellow Park again, but I just
22 want to bring out to the people that we did
23 spend a lot of money in that park six months
24 ago and now we are looking for money into
25 that park.

1 Nay Aug must be finished. No, I
2 guess not, Hanlon's Grove is coming up and
3 you know, of course, they put out bids for
4 the greenhouse, that was done maybe two
5 months ago or something like that, I didn't
6 see anything else on it, I guess that's --
7 but I did know they put out bids for it.

8 Now, you say when you call up and
9 ask them what they are they are going to do
10 about all of these awards that's being
11 putting on the city that they have no plans,
12 well, obviously you don't realize the mayor
13 has a plan. He ran for governor, lieutenant
14 governor, now he runs for state
15 representative, he wants to get out of the
16 city before all of these things came down,
17 and I don't blame him. Leave somebody else
18 to handle the problem he created.

19 I came to a lot of these meetings
20 long, long before any of you sat up there,
21 Brian Reap was a nice man. When they were
22 coming across with this first deal where
23 they were going to lay off all of these
24 policemen because they're gonna to change
25 their way of medical care, Brian Reap said,

1 "Why not wait until they are 65 and they go
2 on social security and then we do what we
3 have to do with them," and that was a
4 suggestion I thought that made a lot of
5 sense. Instead, he got all of them people
6 retired, appointed a bunch more people,
7 instead of our medical bills being small
8 they skyrocketed because now you got all of
9 the them people who retired were replaced.
10 We didn't gain nothing under that deal plus
11 we lost a lot of experience.

12 No, I say the city has been
13 mismanaged for quite a few number of years.
14 No common sense at all. It's just too bad.
15 Thank you.

16 MS. EVANS: Thank you,
17 Mr. Sbaraglia. Giovanni Piccolino.

18 MR. PICCOLINO: Good evening, City
19 Council. My name is Giovanni Piccolino,
20 business owner and homeowner in the City of
21 Scranton. I'm going to take a little -- as
22 I was sitting there I just of how ironic it
23 was that the first gentleman speaking up
24 here, Mr. Martin, you guys, me being the
25 owner of Buona Pizza and Mr. Sbaraglia all

1 are in litigation -- or, well, not
2 Mr. Sbaraglia, at least not yet, with the
3 current administration. What a massive
4 waste of a lot of money.

5 MS. EVANS: Yes.

6 MR. PICCOLINO: Very, very, very
7 sad. Any ways, on that note. I got a quick
8 question to pose for you guys, would you not
9 agree that probably pretty much St.
10 Patrick's Day is the busiest day in downtown
11 Scranton for businesses and everything?

12 MS. EVANS: Absolutely.

13 MR. PICCOLINO: And this year was
14 kind of a washout, but not a total washout.

15 MS. EVANS: Um-hum.

16 MR. PICCOLINO: Would you guys be
17 happy with the fact that if you were a
18 business owner that you did not have to pay
19 out overtime to your employees on your
20 busiest days of the year?

21 MS. EVANS: Yes.

22 MR. PICCOLINO: Any ways, well, that
23 being -- just saying that, like the Scranton
24 Parking Authority meeting I went to, it was
25 just very, very bizarre. I got there 15

1 minutes early to try, you know, to get
2 there, the door was locked. There was a
3 gentleman who was around -- it was about 25
4 after five so he was either five minutes
5 late or -- five minutes early or ten minutes
6 late, he was banging on the door. They
7 eventually let him in. The same gentleman
8 when I went to this meeting, which if the
9 public were to attend you couldn't fit more
10 than three or four people, I'm not even
11 quite sure why this board exists, the same
12 gentleman was just texting and texting the
13 whole entire time. There was a lot of yes
14 nods and then it was over.

15 I really would urge the public --
16 oh, not to mention they did cancel the May
17 meeting which would be the other meeting I
18 was supposed to attend, so they are going to
19 have two June meetings for some reason right
20 off the bat there. So I would urge the
21 public to attend one of these meetings and
22 just to see how bizarre they are. They
23 don't make any sense why an authority would
24 even exist. You know, being a businessman
25 they were all thrilled of the fact that they

1 didn't even pay overtime to their employees
2 on the busiest day of the year. I thought
3 this was bizarre, I would be upset.

4 Okay, two, I'm not quite sure if
5 there is anything to be done, our pizza shop
6 for about the 15th time this week Thursday
7 our hearing was continued, you know, and
8 this is -- again, this like a big burden, I
9 know we paid our attorney, Mr. Hughes is our
10 attorney, to come from here, but it's a very
11 expensive process. We are going on almost 3
12 1/2 years, 15 continuations, thousands of
13 dollars later that the taxpayers are going
14 to have to pay for what, to try to still
15 remove us? I don't get it. And at the same
16 time we can't even move forward because
17 we're stuck in like amuck. I'm pretty sure
18 we going to win, it's almost cemented, but
19 it's just like we're stuck in a rut here.
20 We are a long-time business and we feel this
21 administration just keeping ignoring us and
22 not doing anything for us.

23 Now, with the present council to
24 show our gratitude to the present council
25 for one little small thing, our parking

1 spaces in front of the pizza shop have been
2 great for three months with the Parking
3 Authority, the Scranton policemen and also
4 for Coney Island the last couple of weeks.
5 To show our appreciation, we would like to
6 give two \$500 scholarships at the end of
7 every year on behalf of Buona Pizza to two
8 students that are local high school students
9 that are going to stay in the local college
10 that the city council members could, you
11 know, you get to pick them. I would like to
12 call the grant "To Stay in Stride." We want
13 to stay in the area and stride, you know.
14 We want to be the focal point and I urge all
15 of the other businesses in the town, the
16 ones that have gotten grants and loans and
17 everything who've gotten nothing but
18 rejection from the current administration to
19 do the same, to try to get our kids to stay
20 local and stay here and we need youth. You
21 know, I look around town, everything is
22 empty. I walk all the time from the pizza
23 shop, our back alley, Bogart Place, this new
24 project, it's funny, they think they are
25 going to rent out these spaces, there is

1 like 12 or 15 leases available, the whole
2 block is empty, you know, what are they
3 going to do open up more restaurants?
4 Martini's Bar just closed, that was another
5 one, and did they get money from OECD?

6 MS. EVANS: I don't believe so. I
7 think that was --

8 MR. PICCOLINO: On Spruce Street.

9 MS. EVANS: -- that was 2009 and I
10 believe that council voted against that.

11 MR. PICCOLINO: Right. We don't
12 need any more coffee shops and restaurants
13 and stuff like that, we need industry, we
14 need good jobs. We need people to stay in
15 the area. We don't need these baloney
16 boards and all of these things that people
17 aren't elected to and just appointed to
18 because the main reason I asked that
19 question and the thing I got out of it was I
20 think they were happy of the fact they
21 didn't have to pay overtime because maybe
22 it's just more for them to keep, you know,
23 so I don't know. Thank you very much, have
24 a good night.

25 MS. EVANS: Thank you,

1 Mr. Piccolino.

2 MR. ROGAN: Thank you, Mr.
3 Piccolino.

4 MS. EVANS: And thank you so much
5 for those scholarships for our local
6 students. It's an excellent, excellent
7 program and it's wonderful to see business
8 actually taking an active part in halting
9 the brain drain. Thank you.

10 MR. PICCOLINO: It's nice to see
11 some people that care about the businesses
12 downtown.

13 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Piccolino, I echo
14 what Mrs. Evans said, it's great what you
15 are doing for the people of this city, and
16 as somebody who was younger who chose to go
17 to school in Scranton and I'm going to stay
18 in Scranton, you know, I think that's the
19 big part of, you know, why your business has
20 been there so long because businesses in our
21 city give back and we thank you for doing
22 that.

23 MR. PICCOLINO: No problem.

24 MR. LOSCOMBE: And I would like to
25 commend you and your vision and on the other

1 issue it's the same MO with the city between
2 contracts and illegal issues just drag it
3 on. Eventually, someone is going to have to
4 pay, so I would like to see what we can do
5 to get yours moved along also. Thank you.

6 MR. PICCOLINO: You're welcome.

7 MS. EVANS: Bill Jackowitz.

8 MR. JACKOWITZ: Bill Jackowitz,
9 South Scranton resident, member of the
10 Taxpayers' Association. I'd also like to
11 congratulate Mr. Piccolino, I think that's a
12 great idea for scholarships. Mr. Morgan has
13 brought this idea up several times, I
14 believe that honor students and high honor
15 students from Scranton should be offered the
16 opportunity to get scholarships at all
17 colleges in Scranton, Marywood University of
18 Scranton, and Lackawanna, I think they
19 should offer some free scholarships to
20 Scranton students especially if they are
21 honor students and high honor students,
22 maybe it will keep some people in this area
23 because when the next census comes up you
24 are going to see a big drop again.

25 Also, Sergeant Martin wrapped up the

1 last eight to 12 years into one big bundle
2 tonight. This has been going on for eight
3 to 12 years. The last three city councils,
4 not counting this one, you know, are at
5 fault. The mayor, his eight years and four
6 years in city council he is at fault. It's
7 all going to come to an end and the poor
8 people of Scranton are going to end up
9 paying all of these awards and arbitrations.
10 Speakers like us, the Legion of Doom, as we
11 have been called, and hypocrites and
12 everything else, we have been talking about
13 this, we have been ignored, the last council
14 wouldn't even answer our questions, they
15 ignored us like we weren't even here and now
16 it's all going to come to an end and it's
17 just too bad.

18 Monday's editorial about Lackawanna
19 County was very interesting, I almost had to
20 feeling that they were speaking about
21 Scranton only in reverse order. Mayor
22 Doherty has sued city council for attempting
23 to bring fiscal responsibility back to
24 Scranton city government all because of few
25 of his campaign contributors and family

1 friends were going to lose their jobs or
2 take a pay cut, but yet the same Mayor
3 Doherty is campaigning on fiscal
4 responsibility and reduction of unneeded
5 jobs. Only in Northeastern Pennsylvania,
6 would somebody campaign for exactly what
7 Doherty's records shows, what he did to the
8 City of Scranton in the last eight years.

9 I cannot overstate the fact that he
10 has taking Scranton City Council to Court
11 for the exact same reasons that he is now
12 campaigning for senate for. Mind boggling
13 at least. Scranton, Pennsylvania, has been
14 among the few governments to react to
15 economic crisis in the same manner as
16 private sector. Scranton has done just the
17 opposite, they have hired more people, given
18 friends and campaign contributors pay raises
19 even after the firefighters voted 93 percent
20 no confidence in the fire chief a \$13,000
21 raise and the police chief who has
22 embarrassed the city several times and now
23 has possibly an appearance in federal court
24 he also got a \$13,000 pay raise while the
25 rank and file firefighters and police

1 officers have not received any raises from
2 the Doherty administrations in over eight
3 years, but they are about to get them from
4 the Court. I really believe they are going
5 to get them from the Court and the poor
6 citizens of Scranton are going to suffer.

7 The city government could save a
8 substantial amount of money by consolidating
9 offices into a single office. That is a
10 what is being done in private sector and
11 also in most states and municipalities
12 governments with the exception of Scranton.
13 The single department head could oversee
14 specific aspects of the department and
15 report to one boss not two or three. The
16 boss in the City of Scranton is Mayor
17 Doherty. He was elected to be the chief
18 executive for the City of Scranton. He
19 wants the power associated with being the
20 mayor, but he will not accept the
21 responsibility.

22 Mayor, when was the last time you
23 attended a council meeting, held at town
24 hall meeting so citizens can ask you
25 questions about the city and the decisions

1 that you have made? Maybe never. As far as
2 council, the last time was when you cast the
3 decisive vote for Councilman McGoff.

4 Attorneys and authorities should not
5 be ruling the City of Scranton. Get rid of
6 all of them. Abolish all of the authorities
7 unless you want your city completely under
8 the control of nonelected political cronies
9 who have no experience but have money for
10 the right family name. During the court
11 hearing all of these so-called valuable
12 department heads and workers were sitting in
13 the courtroom not to testify but I guess to
14 waste the day away at taxpayers' expense.

15 It is always a difficult task to
16 tell somebody that these positions -- that
17 their position is no longer needed, but you
18 know what, that is the real word, not
19 Doherty fantasy world. Do the right thing,
20 Mayor, make the cuts, trim the budget and
21 actually improve the appearance of the
22 neighborhoods. Forget about the medical
23 college, you had nothing to do with the
24 college coming to Scranton. It will be
25 years before Scranton residents see the

1 benefits of the medical college.

2 Also, the downtown, bring in some
3 business and family sustaining jobs, not
4 parking garages. Unemployment has not
5 improved under your eight years as mayor it
6 actually has gone up several percentage
7 points. And please, do not blame the
8 current situation on these numbers. They
9 were high before the country recession
10 started.

11 Also, we all know why the mayor is
12 running for governor, lieutenant governor
13 and senator, he is running to get out of the
14 City of Scranton because he knows these
15 awards are coming down so anyone, my advice,
16 anyone who accepts the mayor position think
17 twice about taking it. Think twice about
18 taking that job if by chance he happens to
19 win. Think twice about it.

20 MS. EVANS: Thank you,
21 Mr. Jackowitz. Lee Morgan.

22 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.

23 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

24 MR. MORGAN: I think the first thing
25 I would like to say tonight is that I think

1 the medical college is probably the best
2 thing that's ever happened to this city, but
3 I'd like to see it expand into
4 pharmaceuticals, maybe a dental school,
5 maybe a school of nursing, and I'd like to
6 see a rapid expansion, that's only my
7 opinion. I think that would be a good
8 thing.

9 I think will McGoff said something
10 important tonight when he talked about the
11 meeting at the DeNaple's Center tomorrow.
12 You know, it's my understanding that there
13 is a waiting list for kindergarten space in
14 the Scranton School District. I think we
15 have got a lot of problems with public
16 education. I think that -- I think that if
17 the people in the city would find it
18 important enough to go there tomorrow, I
19 think that maybe if they raise their voice
20 maybe we could really do something. I think
21 we have to find solutions to educational
22 problems we have, and I think the only way
23 we are going to find them is if we really
24 start to discuss them. I pay a lot of
25 attention maybe to silly things, but I do

1 have some questions. Are there going to be
2 movies at Nay Aug Park this summer?

3 MS. EVANS: I don't know.

4 MR. MORGAN: Could somebody find
5 out?

6 MS. EVANS: Certainly.

7 MR. MORGAN: Okay, the other thing I
8 have, what's going on with the Comcast
9 contract?

10 MS. EVANS: Negotiations are still
11 ongoing as far as I know because council has
12 not received any indication that the
13 contract has been, let's say, agreed upon by
14 the mayor.

15 MR. MORGAN: But it would have to be
16 ratified by council.

17 MS. EVANS: Yes. I believe so, yes.

18 MR. MORGAN: Don't you think that
19 maybe the council should ask for some grants
20 from Comcast on top of the franchise fee?

21 MS. EVANS: Actually, when we spoke
22 with Attorney Cohen, who is representing the
23 city in the negotiations with Comcast, we
24 did provide him with items that we believe
25 the city and the residents of the City of

1 Scranton should receive. We don't know how
2 successful that negotiation is going to be,
3 but we did make those requests during our
4 meeting.

5 MR. MORGAN: Well, myself and a
6 couple of other people sat through a meeting
7 with them and the city's board and their
8 representatives said that they can give one
9 or two grants on top of the franchise
10 agreement, and that's why I'm saying that
11 maybe we should pursue something like that.
12 And I hope that the council would try to
13 take that money out of the budget, like I
14 stated before, and split it between senior
15 citizens, the public access channel, and the
16 youth remedial education program in the city
17 because I really think that the funding that
18 we receive from that contract should go to
19 the citizens in lawful wage instead of being
20 devoured by the budget because I think it
21 can enhance the lives of the residents of
22 this city and do a great benefit for the
23 residents, so I just open that council would
24 really consider trying to move that money
25 out of the budget, try to convince the mayor

1 that it's a good idea because I think it
2 would really show some leadership and it
3 would really help the residents of this
4 city. And other than that, that's all I
5 have. Thank you.

6 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Morgan.
7 Dave Dobrzyn. .

8 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening, Dave
9 Dobrzyn.

10 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

11 MR. DOBRZYN: Member of the
12 taxpayers', resident of Scranton. I have a
13 question that possibly could be answered
14 during motions, this recent -- these recent
15 blight inspections what would be penalties
16 and fines and so forth, would there be
17 initial fines or future fines for
18 noncompliance and so forth, and I would also
19 like to make a comment on that. You know,
20 we have -- we have residential blight, but
21 what about industrial blight? Are we just
22 going to let the same old -- same old people
23 go time and time again and, you know, I know
24 it's not your call on all cases, so maybe we
25 could prompt somebody to start looking into

1 some of these abandoned structures and so
2 forth that -- or operating structures we
3 have three people that are living in a
4 certain neighborhood that's always been an
5 issue.

6 Now, on that 500 block issue we have
7 heard from Mr. Piccolino, and I agree with
8 him, and also Coney Island they paid to have
9 their own sidewalks, they paid to have their
10 own building, and that guy would not fix the
11 light and the very edge of the sidewalk, I
12 don't know what you call that, but if you
13 drive by there you see a big empty space and
14 a bunch of yellow ribbons and so forth, but
15 no work. It would seem to me for \$28
16 million he would be generous enough to make
17 that look nice at least.

18 And one of the things I have noticed
19 about downtown, and I don't know what could
20 be done about it because the meter people
21 probably go home at 5:00, but when people
22 park down there after hours they will take
23 up two meters. They will park right in the
24 middle of two meters and so anything that
25 could be done to help that out because some

1 days I get a space right away and -- well,
2 he's not here anymore, but he can tell you
3 I'm there every Friday for my pizza and
4 other days I just wind up zooming around and
5 zooming around and zooming around.

6 And I felt I hit on a really good --
7 I had a brain storm last week, the Chamber
8 of Commerce. I think it's time for us to
9 have a Scranton Chamber of Commerce and
10 Greater Lackawanna County Chamber of
11 Commerce, and hopefully some day, you know,
12 you can't -- the wish lists are big and, you
13 know, I'm not criticizing anybody up there,
14 but it would be interesting and I think it
15 would be better to have somebody with
16 Scranton merchants and Scranton's interest
17 at large instead of having people from out
18 of town looking to locate. I feel that that
19 Chamber of Commerce is just using us as a
20 land bank.

21 I disagree with that statement where
22 there is no available land for development,
23 industrial development. If you go down to
24 the end of Washington Avenue in South Side,
25 I mean, there is plant that used to make

1 B-24 wings during World War II and the
2 Murray Plant, it stands there empty and even
3 if you have to level it, but I don't feel
4 that the Chamber of Commerce is doing
5 anything seriously to promote any kind of
6 development in this town. It seems like
7 everything is up valley or down valley or
8 Cinram or whatever and now they are moving
9 out anyway, so and we are getting the
10 proverbial wrong end of the stick.

11 And finally, last week I kind of
12 blasted Mitch McConnell with my golden
13 parrot award, well this week in interest of
14 fairness the Republicans have gotten \$51
15 million so far this year from the banking
16 industry and the Democrats have gotten 65,
17 so I hope that the Democrats are at least
18 smart enough to take the money off of them
19 and use it for their election and stick it
20 to them. So thank you and have a good
21 night. Next week.

22 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Dobrzyn.

23 MR. DOBRZYN: What's that?

24 MS. EVANS: We just said thank you.

25 MR. JOYCE: Thank you.

1 MR. DOBRZYN: Next week I'll address
2 the Supreme Court and their Citizens United
3 for the golden parrot. Thank you. Have a
4 good night.

5 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else who
6 wishes to address council?

7 MR. BOLUS: Good evening, Council.

8 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

9 MR. BOLUS: Bob Bolus, Scranton.

10 MR. JOYCE: Good evening.

11 MR. BOLUS: I would like to
12 congratulate Bishop Bambera. Hopefully now
13 maybe some of the cronyism and some of the
14 things that have taken place with the
15 Diocese will be put to the side and maybe
16 people will once more proud to say they are
17 affiliated with the Catholic church, and I
18 believe he is the person to do it.

19 What brought me here tonight is an
20 issue that I have had on East Mountain. The
21 individuals have come here before council,
22 Mr. Hartman and Slotterback complaining
23 about the driveway and easements that we
24 have there. There ws an issue over
25 containers that we put there. Gene Hickey

1 was going to represent the city giving
2 basically free legal city services to
3 Mr. Hartman to have these containers removed
4 through an injunction. However, we
5 developed a major water leak that we have
6 had up there, I haven't had water service to
7 my home properly for the last few months
8 because of everything that went on up there,
9 and it's been worked on and worked on.

10 So yesterday I was asked by one
11 authority that does the leak detection if
12 they could have access so we removed the
13 containers voluntarily, there is no court
14 order to do it, and lo and behold here comes
15 Mr. Hartman in a sewer authority vehicle
16 that he employed by, and I was at the Sewer
17 Authority already today raising the
18 complaint, and he comes driving down the
19 easement that's supposed to be an easement
20 specific to myself and it's in Court to make
21 that determination, drives right across it,
22 drives over it and drives into his house.

23 The issue I have here before
24 council, and I have brought it up in the
25 past, before he was issued a building permit

1 the city was fully aware there is a 16 1/2
2 foot legal deeded waterway. It's not an
3 easement or a right-of-way, it's a legal
4 waterway that's deeded to the city. They
5 allowed him to build, it was part of a
6 subdivision that was created, we challenged
7 it, the city was aware of it, they said they
8 did not own it.

9 Patterson, who is the solicitor
10 here, I met with her personally, she said
11 "We don't own it." Went to Jim Nasser, he
12 said he can't do nothing about it unless the
13 city tells him he could put it up for sale
14 because we are looking at buying it to leave
15 the property up that area the way it was.
16 Well, lo and behold they give Hartman a
17 building permit to build right over the 16
18 1/2 foot waterway. It goes from East
19 Mountain Lake, it's been there in existence
20 for over 100 years. There are two exits to
21 the lake there to have water, one is on my
22 property and one is this waterway. Well, he
23 went ahead and built on it. He received
24 prior to that a certified letter from me
25 telling him that he builds at his own risk

1 and he went ahead and did it because of the
2 cronyism in the city and people turning
3 their head and allowing him to go do it.

4 In his building permit, his plans
5 before you could have that you had to show
6 access to be able to get into your property.
7 Well, he had access on Birch Street, but yet
8 they allowed him to build a house with his
9 garage facing this easement without ever
10 having approval or permission to be able to
11 go on it. It's a major legal issue.

12 As of today, I told the Sewer
13 Authority he is driving down the road.
14 During the week I was sitting at my home,
15 out in the driveway with the mailman, we
16 were you talking and waiting for the water
17 company to show up and up the street comes
18 Hartman and this is midday, around noon,
19 1:00, and comes driving up real slow, drives
20 by his house in the Sewer Authority vehicle
21 that they give them and, of course, I was
22 done talking and I headed out. Well, of
23 course, I went down around East Mountain
24 Lake out toward Seymour Avenue over towards
25 Moosic Street which I went down Moosic

1 Street and he continued over to the Oakman
2 Park. He called up complaining and asking
3 the cops to come out and arrest me for
4 following him.

5 Now, there is nothing more absurd
6 than anything I have ever heard. Here is
7 guy using a vehicle that we are paying for,
8 they want to do a rate increase. They give
9 him a private vehicle, they give him a
10 building permit to build in the city across
11 a 16 1/2 foot piece of land that had to come
12 before this council and, Mr. Hughes, you can
13 correct me if I'm wrong, before you can
14 allow somebody to build on city-owned
15 property don't they have to come before the
16 council and get permission?

17 MR. HUGHES: Anything that involves
18 a transfer of property or creating of any
19 property rights has to come by council and
20 has to be approved by ordinance.

21 MR. BOLUS: Well, it's never come
22 here before the council and he has built
23 this home there, and I'm asking council now
24 to look into this situation. If he has to
25 remove his home so be it. He has title

1 insurance, somebody should have paid
2 attention what was going on, but we can no
3 longer continue to have selective
4 enforcement or the cronyism that's taking
5 preys in this city, especially a guy that's
6 threatened physical violence up there,
7 threatened to move my vehicles off an
8 easement. I have been up there 24 years, I
9 didn't move into their neighborhood, they
10 moved into mine, and I'm asking council to
11 please look into this matter that this could
12 be rectified because it's out of control.

13 And also I need to look into the
14 ordinance of containers that are parked
15 throughout the city that Gene Hickey raised
16 an issue about and they are CVS where you
17 see them with PODS on them, that's the type
18 of business we have. We are a large
19 supplier of rental containers or as they are
20 called trailers without wheels, whatever
21 they want to call them, throughout New York,
22 Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and we have them,
23 we have them up there, but they were trying
24 to make this an issue that I can't put a
25 container on private property yet they can

1 be parked all throughout the city.

2 So there are a lot of issues with
3 cronyism that's going on in this city and I
4 need the city to really look into this
5 because this matter now is out of control.
6 Especially violating the rights of taxpayers
7 taking property that could have been put up
8 for sale generating tax dollars in this
9 city.

10 One more thing, if you saw
11 everything in the city in the paper this
12 week about the gas line that went from
13 Alliance Landfill, it was the newspaper, we
14 should be receiving a royalty as a host
15 community for that gas line. It's a private
16 enterprise and we should be receiving money
17 there no more than we should be receiving,
18 as I said, for the leachate line that comes
19 from the landfills through this city as a
20 host community and receive royalties on it
21 that could bring millions of dollars into
22 this city, and I think we need to start
23 going there. And I will support you and
24 help you in any way you need to help you get
25 this job done, but giving land away and

1 doing what they are doing in this city just
2 like they are doing up on East Mountain now
3 is ridiculous and that's why I came here
4 tonight.

5 MS. EVANS: Thank, Mr. Bolus.

6 MR. BOLUS: Thank you.

7 MR. JOYCE: Thank you.

8 MS. EVANS: And, Mrs. Krake, maybe
9 we could see if there are any ordinances on
10 the books concerning these large containers
11 and their placement throughout the city,
12 please.

13 MS. KRAKE: Yes.

14 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else who
15 would like to address council?

16 MR. ELLMAN: Hello, Council.

17 MS. EVANS: Hello.

18 MS. ELLMAN: Ronnie Ellman. I
19 thought I would enhance your evening with my
20 presence. I went to sit with a sick friend
21 today and when I got home Miss Rosie gave me
22 an ultimate putdown, she said you look worse
23 than 40 miles of Scranton streets.

24 I was told last week that Scranton
25 fire trucks are answering calls in Dunmore

1 because of their problem with, you know,
2 that doesn't bother me, but it could be a
3 no-win situation for either place if a truck
4 was tied up here or there and needed
5 somewhere else which was what the people
6 that told me brought up.

7 And I don't know if you know it, but
8 NCC moved out of the city. See, they could
9 suck everybody's blood up here but they
10 don't want to stay here and pay. Can't they
11 be fired or something?

12 MS. EVANS: They have a contract.

13 MR. ELLMAN: Well, I knew they had a
14 contract.

15 MS. EVANS: And apparently the mayor
16 renewed that contract, it didn't come before
17 city council for it's approval, but I
18 believe that it's probably going to run
19 through this year and 2011 as well.

20 MR. ELLMAN: Well, I have no love
21 for them anyway. And I had a couple of
22 people wondering what the price would be on
23 the fire truck that's on the agenda. When
24 you have a lease to buy something usually
25 you are paying a whole lot more than, you

1 know, purchasing it otherwise.

2 And I had something here about
3 Mr. Doherty, well, I picked it out of his
4 article about these tens of millions of
5 dollars. It's bright. All of this money
6 that was supposed to be paid for building
7 permits it says \$40.3 million. On this
8 sheet no matter who figures it and how you
9 figure it that's about half the money that
10 should have been paid on 40.3 million and
11 this ought to be investigated immediately.
12 That's money gone from us. It's senseless,
13 you know. It's right here on the sheet from
14 the tax base, like I talked about a couple
15 of months ago when I was going to go get a
16 permit.

17 And the medical school they're just
18 bragging here about getting 40 million and
19 20 million and 120 million and 500, all they
20 do is brag about all of the money they are
21 going to have and that they have presently.
22 In the mean time, they still want to take 20
23 acres of houses. Twenty -- I was told this,
24 20 acres of houses would be, you know, let's
25 just say 75, 80 houses approximately. If

1 you figure 700 to \$1,400, now this is what
2 was told to me by somebody from the city,
3 you could average out \$1,000 a house at the
4 most you are talking about \$100,000 in loss
5 revenue, why can't they pay that small
6 amount when they are sitting here bragging
7 about having hundreds of millions of dollars
8 coming in in 15 years that they are talking
9 about -- or ten years, they will have alumni
10 not even paying them. They don't want to.
11 They are just like the University.

12 The other day they are bragging
13 about the parking lot for Lackawanna College
14 where the old hotel Scranton used to be.
15 Across the street was a three-story
16 apartment building, why don't we charge them
17 by the bed if they want to have, you know,
18 \$1,000 a year a bed. They want to make
19 dormitories out of everything. You have got
20 to do something. You got to.

21 Today's paper got another house off
22 the taxes, \$67,000, you know, on cedar. You
23 know, I said it last week the people's
24 ability to pay to pay this tax burden it's
25 just reached a peak. It's just not there no

1 more, you know, I just hear it every time I
2 go out. It goes, "What are we going to do?
3 What are we going to do."

4 You know, it's up to you people to
5 put an end to all of this blood sucking from
6 these organizations like NC, I paid my taxes
7 twice I think it's five years ago I still
8 haven't gotten nothing back. I have been
9 all over town, I hired a lawyer, everything
10 has been erased or it's not there. I never
11 heard so many excuses. I could write a book
12 about my \$2,400 I paid them people.

13 I was going to say something about
14 Mr. Doherty. To me, Mr. Doherty is just a
15 political foe and I have -- I don't mean to
16 demean him in any other way, I said this
17 once before, he has a lot of good attributes
18 I wish I had, so, you know, when I'm up here
19 bad mouthing him it's not a personal thing
20 at all. I don't even know him. I tried to
21 get close to him last year in a car show he
22 kept moving away, but you couldn't hold that
23 against him.

24 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Ellman.
25 Is there anyone else who would like to

1 address council?

2 MR. ANCHERANI: Good evening.

3 Nelson Ancherani, First Amendment Rights.

4 Well, the 16th of April is behind us. It's

5 now 11 days since council's brief had to be

6 into the court, still no opinion has been

7 handed down in the mayor's lawsuit against

8 council for amending the budget. Stay the

9 course, hang tough. We, the people, are

10 grateful, our wallets are grateful. Any

11 amount of money that you save the taxpayers

12 is great.

13 Mr. Joyce, excellent presentation on

14 the professional services line items in the

15 various city departments. \$6,014,510 has

16 been budgeted since 2002 with the law

17 department beating all departments with a

18 total of \$1,905,000. Next highest is the

19 business administration department with

20 \$995,516, and that's since 2002.

21 I still can't get over the mayor's

22 statement that he made in the slimes about

23 him favoring trimming budgetary fat

24 department by department. He sues city

25 council for cutting budgetary fat and now

1 somehow he found fiscal responsibility. Why
2 doesn't the mayor drop the lawsuit if he
3 wants to trim budgetary fat? That would
4 show the taxpayers he has their best
5 interests at heart. Let's see if he does
6 drop the lawsuit in favor of saving \$700,000
7 for the taxpayers. If I were a betting
8 person I would bet he won't drop it.

9 Now, back to the budgetary fat.

10 Southern Union headquarters 16 million, sold
11 for six million I believe. Aventis-Pasteur
12 eight million. Are they still there? The
13 Hilton Parking Garage \$11,500,000. It's
14 good for rooftop parties. Is that usually
15 filled? Medallion Parkway \$8 million.
16 \$267,000 wasted when they started
17 reconstruction or repairs on the Old Casey
18 Parkway and then they declared it unsafe.

19 New police headquarters \$3,500,000.
20 Floors separating, cracks in the walls,
21 parking lot not finished, the paving is not
22 finished. New DPW headquarters \$3,500,000
23 add \$1 million for construction and over
24 \$8,745,000 paid back in leaseback for the
25 DPW. I don't know the who, just says

1 leaseback, payback. Bryn Mawr Commons
2 \$2,500,000. Was there ever any pay back on
3 the lien for the demolition of the existing
4 property, the first property? Ice Box, \$25
5 million, we are still owed \$600,000.

6 Okay, Nay Aug Park, \$1.9 million. I
7 don't know, I don't see where improvements
8 for 1.9 is, maybe for the dirt. Hanlon's
9 Grove Amphitheater, is that the one that was
10 damaged? Rose garden fence \$20,000, where
11 is it? Wildlife Center, \$50,000. For four
12 or five years we paid \$50,000 a year for the
13 Wildlife Center only to throw them out.
14 Approximately \$250,000 spent. Davis Trail,
15 \$707,391 only to have raw sewage going over
16 that trail.

17 I'll get back to some more. 300
18 million to 400 million long-term debt.
19 Connors' administration left \$3.3 million
20 surplus. Borrowed \$35 million for the
21 Scranton Parking Authority. We are going to
22 pay back 59 million in interest. Fiscal
23 responsibility. I said the 267 wasted on
24 repairs to the Casey Parkway.

25 25 million in raises and new hires

1 positions since this administration took
2 over. The 5.5 million American Anglican
3 arbitration loss resulting in a 56 percent
4 rate hike. Thank you.

5 MS. EVANS: Thank you,
6 Mr. Ancherani. Anyone else?

7 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Hello, Janet.

8 MS. EVANS: Hi, Chris.

9 MR. JOYCE: Chrissy.

10 MR. LOSCOMBE: Chrissy.

11 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Hi, Jackie. Janet,
12 I got a favor to ask you, just only you.

13 MS. EVANS: Oh, boy. Thank you.

14 MR. SLEDENZSKI: They're bad, Janet.
15 They're bad at South Sides, you should see
16 the roads up there. Potholes everywhere.

17 MS. EVANS: Okay, Cedar Avenue and
18 Cherry Street.

19 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Jack, those guys
20 downstairs, Jack, they are doing a good job.
21 Thank you.

22 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Chris.

23 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you, Chris.

24 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else?

25 MS. KRAKE: Mrs. Evans, before you

1 begin 5-B motions, I forgot to read the
2 letter from the Pennsylvania Economy League
3 would you like that read tonight or held
4 until next week?

5 MS. EVANS: Let's hold until next
6 week.

7 MS. KRAKE: That's fine.

8 MS. EVANS: And then we can discuss
9 that --

10 MS. KRAKE: Thank you.

11 MS. EVANS: -- at more length. Thank
12 you. Mr. McGoff, it is your turn.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you very much. I
14 would like to say a number of people had
15 mentioned the installation of Bishop
16 Bambera. I was honored to be in attendance
17 at yesterday's ordination and installation
18 at the Cathedral and I have really believe
19 that Bishop Bambera is the right man for the
20 healing that needs to take place in this
21 Diocese and certainly wish him the best of
22 luck in this endeavor.

23 Secondly, O'Connor Place which has
24 been spoken about here in the last couple of
25 weeks has been cleared by the company that

1 was working there or using that as a site,
2 construction site. It has been cleared,
3 it's back in the I'll say original
4 condition. It's a cleared lot now. It's
5 certainly not perfect, but it was left in
6 pretty much the condition it was when
7 they -- when they arrived there. Everything
8 has been removed, the land was leveled again
9 and hopefully, you know, some improvements
10 can be made on it.

11 The only thing that I think really
12 needs to be done, and I know it's being
13 looked at by Mr. Seitzinger and Mr. Brazil,
14 Hamm Court is still in pretty bad condition,
15 number of, you know, large potholes and so
16 on from the traffic that has been through
17 there and they are looking for a means to
18 rectify that situation as well, but it is
19 cleared and taken care of.

20 Also, prior to the meeting I had
21 received the is the Lesses family.

22 MS. EVANS: Lessasi.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Lessasi, the plaque
24 that they had been looking for that had been
25 at Nay Aug at the zoo apparently was removed

1 by the Genesis Wildlife people when they
2 left that building and they took some of the
3 stuff and that plaque had been given to Mark
4 Dougher or to Parks and Recreation and it
5 was in his possession. It's now been
6 returned and the city has offered since that
7 building is now closed rather than put the
8 plaque back in a building where it will not
9 be, you know, wouldn't be seen, the offer is
10 that they would, you know, be more than
11 willing to display it somewhere else, you
12 know, at Nay Aug Park in an appropriate
13 place where it can be seen by visitors to
14 the park, so I assume it may be returned to
15 the family and then we can find out what
16 they would, you know, wish to do with it and
17 maybe in coordination with Parks and
18 Recreation find an appropriate place for the
19 plaque.

20 MS. EVANS: Yell, I'll be in contact
21 with them tomorrow about that. Thank you
22 though.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. The other
24 thing that was mentioned tonight on the was
25 it Lackawanna Little League or the

1 playground at Lackawanna and the equipment
2 that had been removed, I have been told that
3 and the gentleman that came here and spoke
4 about that, I forget when it was, but they
5 apparently were given I'll say the tacit
6 permission to remove the playground
7 equipment and I guess some of it was -- it
8 was removed and some of it was for want of a
9 better term recycled and used to, you know,
10 used for benches, tables, things around that
11 park area, the Little League and the Missy
12 Field and that type of thing, but it was
13 dismantled and it was, as they had spoken
14 that evening, with the -- somewhat with the
15 permission of the city with the parks and
16 recreation, but it was then again, you know,
17 used, some of it at least, used for other
18 purposes.

19 The last thing, again, I didn't --
20 it was brought up last week and we got into a
21 discussion about the voluntary pay
22 reductions, I did check with some people and
23 whatever year that was they -- you were
24 right in the fact that they did receive
25 their full pay. Some people voluntarily

1 then returned a portion in terms of a
2 donation, but there was whether you want to
3 call it a pay reduction or a voluntary
4 reduction or just a donation to the city,
5 but some people, Mrs. Gatelli being one at
6 this time and I think there were some other
7 people in the city that did the same thing,
8 gave path of their salary and donated it
9 back to the city. Thank you.

10 MS. EVANS: I just wanted to comment
11 on that though, that I know that in other
12 cases, setting aside these -- the pay
13 increases/decreases, whenever anyone makes a
14 donation to the city or anyone of it's
15 departments it has to come before Scranton
16 City Council to be accepted, I don't know if
17 it's by -- I can't recall if it's by
18 resolution or ordinance, but I do recall in
19 the last seven years having voted on such
20 legislation when donations have been made,
21 for example, to the fire department or to
22 the police department, so there is still
23 kind of a lingering question about all of
24 that, but that's neither here nor there, and
25 it is now time for Mr. Rogan and his

1 comments and motions.

2 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. Last Friday
3 I met with Chief Elliott and several other
4 members of the police department regarding
5 possibly changing our sex offender law in
6 the City of Scranton and, unfortunately,
7 through the research that we have done it
8 doesn't appear that we could amend the
9 ordinance, but I'm going to give some
10 information to Attorney Hughes to look over
11 because our ordinance was the same as the
12 one in Allegheny County and, as I said
13 before, it was struck down, they said it was
14 unconstitutional, unfortunately, the ACLU
15 challenged their law so the police
16 department is fearful of enforcing ours
17 because we would not want to be get sued the
18 ACLU as well.

19 But I was informed that there are
20 approximately 80 sex offenders in the City
21 of Scranton and the police department knows
22 each and every one of them and they are
23 keeping track of them, so Chief Elliott and
24 the other officers are really -- they are
25 really doing a good job following these guys

1 and making sure everyone in our neighborhood
2 are safe.

3 And also regarding the sex
4 offenders, I spoke to Tom Tell last week
5 from Kevin Murphy's office, and I have to
6 give him a call back so we could setup a
7 meeting, I know Kevin Murphy is working on
8 something as well at the state level, so
9 that would be good.

10 And I also have a few citizens
11 request for the week: I received a few
12 pictures and an e-mail from a resident about
13 the Washburn Street Cemetery, and I know
14 last year it was problem and it was becoming
15 overgrown in the spring and the summer
16 months and he was hoping that we could, you
17 know, do something about this now so it
18 doesn't get overgrown as it was last year.

19 So, Mrs. Krake, could we please send
20 a letter to Chief Elliott and to
21 Mr. Seitzinger regarding the Washburn Street
22 Cemetery.

23 Also to Mr. Seitzinger, the house on
24 the corner of Wheeler and Olive Street has
25 been abandoned for years. The residents

1 didn't give me an address, I'll swing by
2 tomorrow to check before we sent out the
3 letter, and they also say the grass hasn't
4 been cut in previous years and there is
5 sometimes snakes in the area and a lot of
6 children walk through there.

7 MS. EVANS: Yes, that's ongoing
8 because I know that maybe it even is the
9 individual who reported it to you, neighbors
10 tend to trim that grass themselves because
11 it's become such an eyesore and I know even
12 my husband has done that in the past when we
13 couldn't get anyone else to do it, so if you
14 can get that taken care of, kudos.

15 MR. ROGAN: Well, we will certainly
16 be trying. And finally, could we send a
17 letter to Mr. Brazil requesting a stop sign
18 at the corner of Mineral Avenue and Olive
19 Street. When I was down there, I'm sure you
20 saw the article in the paper about the
21 blight in that neighborhood, the residents
22 also told me when I realized when I was
23 pulling out that there is no stop sign for
24 either street and they said the residents on
25 Mineral Avenue know to stop, but if somebody

1 happens to be driving by that doesn't know
2 the area we wouldn't want an accident, and
3 that is all. Thank you.

4 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Rogan.
5 Mr. Loscombe.

6 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes. Thank you, Mrs.
7 Evans. Just a couple of things, I can note
8 the frustration of Sergeant Martin and I can
9 assure you that the frustration is shared by
10 all uniformed employees. After nine years
11 of going to the table, coming close to an
12 agreement only to be rejected has taken it's
13 toll on the moral, and I can understand --
14 and also through the constant appeals, and I
15 can understand if he was asked if they could
16 go to the table again, he mentioned that he
17 would be willing to, but I can understand
18 the reluctance after all of this time that
19 the men in uniform would have to try to
20 negotiate again when they have been turned
21 away so many times. So I just hope we can
22 come up to some quick resolution to this and
23 I'm looking forward to my meeting with the
24 mayor and Mrs. Evans to see if we can
25 expedite this a little bit thereby saving

1 everybody some money in the long-run.

2 I stopped at a council office I
3 believe it was Thursday last week, and it
4 was myself and Mrs. Krake and I ended up
5 having an impromptu meeting with Mark
6 Seitzinger, he happened to stop down for
7 some stuff, and he was gracious enough, he
8 spent about two hours with us. We went over
9 a lot of different issues at that time, some
10 that were current that I was actually
11 looking for answers to. I still didn't get
12 the responses, so I'm going to have to stop
13 and contact him tomorrow and just get some
14 of that information, but he will be coming
15 to a future caucus here, also.

16 And one of the most recurrent themes
17 of the complaints received, we receive as
18 council persons, is the abundance of
19 condemned, vacant and blighted structures in
20 the city and also the rapidly growing amount
21 of rental units in nonowner occupied
22 structures. For several years now this
23 administration has concentrated nearly all
24 of it's efforts, including financial
25 resources, into the downtown. Now don't get

1 me wrong, I'm in no way against a vibrant
2 downtown, but all of this has come at a
3 heavy cost to the neighborhoods which have
4 been neglected over the past several years
5 with very few exceptions.

6 As you may have read in the
7 newspaper this past week, Councilman Rogan
8 met with the neighbors on Mineral Avenue
9 with who have experienced an explosion of
10 condemned, vacant and blighted properties.
11 Although this is an unusually large
12 neighborhood cluster of these problem
13 properties, this situation is not limited to
14 that one area of the city. As my fellow
15 council persons and myself respond to
16 citizens' concerns throughout the city on a
17 regular basis, we have personally witnessed
18 the neighborhood decay. Nearly every block
19 that we have visited bears an example of
20 blighted property. Mr. Seitzinger is quoted
21 in the article as stating that there are
22 more than 400 condemned properties citywide.
23 I would venture to guess that that number
24 may be almost doubled with all of the
25 blighted properties included.

1 City council realizes that this
2 problem has reached epidemic proportions in
3 our city and that this is why we have been
4 actively working to address these issues
5 throughout ordinances such as our rental
6 registration ordinance, our noise
7 ordinances, open burning ordinances just to
8 name a few. We realize that this situation
9 has taken several years to reach this point
10 and it will take some time to enforce the
11 proper remedies.

12 In order to enforce these ordinances
13 properly, it requires a great deal of
14 resources and intergovernmental cooperation
15 all while following the proper legal
16 channels. We are not alone in this state
17 with this situation and we have not
18 reinvented the wheel with our ordinances.
19 We have and will continuously be researching
20 similar ordinances from other municipalities
21 and will ultimately seek to provide the best
22 practices to be followed in Scranton both
23 legally and ethically.

24 With that this mind, the Chairman on
25 Community Development, Mr. Rogan, and myself

1 as Chairman on Public Safety, will be
2 working together along with input in our
3 other council members and creating a strong,
4 condemned and vacant property and blight
5 ordinance that will give our municipal
6 departments the proper tools to revitalize
7 our neighborhoods and make them clean, safe,
8 and family friendly neighborhoods that
9 Scranton was once noted for. The ordinance
10 may provide the tools for the revitalization
11 of some vacant property along with the
12 ability to demolish unsafe structures in a
13 more timely manner.

14 In the mean time, I would request
15 that all of our municipal departments along
16 with the residents make an extra effort in
17 being vigilant to report and rectify any of
18 these problems that they may encounter. You
19 know, we are referred to as the electric
20 city, but as you realize the cost of
21 electricity is continually rising. I
22 remember a time when we were known as the
23 friendly city and that cost us nothing, so
24 let us strive together to bring our city and
25 especially our neighborhoods back to the

1 friendly times. That is all I have.

2 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Loscombe.
3 Mr. Joyce, any comments or motions?

4 MR. JOYCE: Yes. Last week I gave a
5 brief presentation on the amount of funding
6 allocated to fund professional services over
7 the past nine years and in that presentation
8 I explained that this amount was slightly in
9 excess of six million dollars. A few weeks
10 ago, council had asked the administration to
11 draft legislation to put professional
12 services out to bid and it's been one of the
13 hopes of this council that by working
14 together that we could draft appropriate
15 legislation and to put as much professional
16 services out to bid as possible, and I know
17 that Attorney Hughes has been in
18 conversations with Mary Theresa Patterson,
19 who is the city's attorney. And, Attorney
20 Hughes, I would just like to ask, are there
21 any updates from the last week as far as
22 your conversations with Attorney Patterson?

23 MR. HUGHES: Yes, Mr. Joyce. I put
24 together a proposal that I thought to be
25 included in the legislation, I faxed that to

1 Solicitor Patterson I believe it was on
2 Thursday as to what would be included within
3 the legislation for the bidding of the
4 services. It would require the bidding of
5 any services by anyone who has a license
6 issued by Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,
7 Department of State or requires a license to
8 practice, such as lawyers, we are not
9 registered by the Department of State, but
10 the Department of Bureau of Professionals
11 Affairs, but we have a licenses issued by
12 the Supreme Court and the Disciplinary
13 Committee, so anyone that has that type of
14 license, any of those types of services
15 would have to be bid. She has that, I
16 believe that that should be put into
17 legislation to come down to council. I
18 think I furnished a copy of that. Nancy, it
19 did I send a copy of that to you?

20 MS. KRAKE: Yes.

21 MR. HUGHES: Yes, I also faxed it to
22 Mrs. Krake.

23 MR. JOYCE: Okay. Thanks for the
24 update. I have a few citizens' requests. I
25 have been contacted by a resident of Frank

1 Street who informed me that there are many
2 disturbances in the 2600 block and the
3 beginning of the 2700 block creating subpar
4 traveling conditions for residents.

5 Mrs. Krake, could you please send a letter
6 to Mr. Brazil asking him to address the
7 situation; and in addition could you please
8 ask him to provide a date by which council
9 can expect work to be completed?

10 In addition, I have also been
11 contacted by a Keyser Valley resident who
12 informed that the area of Dewey Avenue
13 behind the Lackawanna Little League field is
14 heavily torn apart making it difficult to
15 navigate to and from the field as well as
16 causing damage to cars. Also, upon visiting
17 this street, I noticed that the stop sign at
18 the end of Dewey Avenue right before one
19 would turn onto Jackson Street is upside
20 down. It appears to have detached a bit.
21 Mrs. Krake, could you please add this to my
22 letter to Mr. Brazil and ask him to
23 adequately address these two situations that
24 I just mentioned and also to provide a date
25 of completion.

1 Also, a Birch Street resident has
2 also informed me that the stop sign on the
3 corner of the Birch and Cedar has been
4 knocked down and to inform --

5 MR. MCGOFF: Just to -- I talked to
6 Mr. Brazil today, they had received a notice
7 that was down and they were sending someone
8 out to repair it.

9 MR. JOYCE: Okay. Wonderful because
10 I know that's a rather heavily traveled area
11 and this resident was concerned, so I'm very
12 happy to see that that will be addressed
13 appropriately.

14 In addition, I have been contacted
15 by a few residents residing on the 200 block
16 of North Everett Avenue. Residents have
17 informed me that the road conditions on this
18 street are subpar, they are many cuts, many
19 potholes and they have also informed me that
20 most of the roads around them as well as
21 subsequent blocks of their street have been
22 paved, however, theirs has yet to be
23 addressed. So, Mrs. Krake, if you could add
24 to the letter to Mr. Brazil and request him
25 to notify council if this block is scheduled

1 to be paved at any point in the near future.

2 A Cedar Avenue resident has
3 contacted me and informed me that the
4 property across the street from Pennswood
5 Manor, I believe the address is 924 Cedar
6 Avenue, had been in a fire sometime ago and,
7 furthermore, that the windows are boarded up
8 and this place is becoming a hangout for a
9 lot of the local teenagers in the
10 neighborhood which in turn is creating quite
11 a safety issue. This resident expressed
12 their concern and they do not wish to see
13 any of the local teenagers end up getting
14 hurt.

15 With this in mind, Mrs. Krake, if
16 you could please send a letter to
17 Mr. Seitzinger asking him to contact the
18 owner to the determine if any repairs will
19 be made and if repairs are not scheduled to
20 be made could you please ask him if this is
21 a property that is scheduled for demolition
22 and any point in time.

23 Finally, I have been contacted by a
24 Bellevue resident who had informed me that
25 the properties at 220 and 214 Fourth Avenue

1 have been -- they have condemned notices on
2 the homes and they are boarded up, they have
3 been that way for quite sometime and since
4 there are only five homes on this block this
5 is creating quite an eyesore for many
6 residents in the community considering that
7 40 percent of the block is condemned.

8 So, Mrs. Krake, if you could please
9 add to the letter to Mr. Seitzinger asking
10 him to contact the owner of both of these
11 addresses and ask any repairs are scheduled
12 to be made and if not are these properties
13 also scheduled for demolition at some point
14 in the future. And that's is all I have at
15 this time.

16 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Joyce.
17 Good evening. This afternoon I received a
18 promising update from State Representative
19 Kevin Murphy concerning House Bill 1942, the
20 separation of the City of Scranton and
21 Scranton School District tax bills.

22 According to Representative Murphy,
23 a final vote occurred in the House of
24 Representatives today and the bill passed
25 unanimously 194 to 0. It will now go to the

1 State Senate for a vote and Representative
2 Murphy will keep me updated. Representative
3 Murphy's bill is crucial to the taxpayers of
4 Scranton because it will allow for separate
5 payment of your small city real estate tax
6 as well as a payment schedule, thereby,
7 helping to prevent the loss of your home by
8 sheriff's sale as ordered by city law.
9 Representative Murphy was also highly
10 instrumental in obtaining the permit for
11 work at the Crisp Avenue bridge, a much
12 needed project that the city allowed to
13 languish for years.

14 In addition, he worked tirelessly to
15 address the flooding problems on North
16 Cameron Avenue. I applaud Representative
17 Murphy for this tremendous work that he has
18 accomplished during his first term in
19 Harrisburg and I thank him and his staff for
20 the many ways in which they have helped our
21 citizens. Residents of not only the 113
22 legislative district, but also throughout
23 our area are fortunate to have
24 Representative Murphy on our side.

25 Now, Representative Murphy needs our

1 help. When a date is scheduled for the
2 Senate vote, I will be asking all
3 Scrantonians to contact Senator Mellow's
4 office and urge him to support this bill.

5 Further, I understand Kevin Murphy
6 sent four or five house bills that received
7 unanimous to very nearly unanimous
8 bipartisan support in the House to the
9 Senate and these bills which benefit
10 veterans, senior citizens, and children have
11 been stalled in the Senate for some reason.
12 In the meantime, let's call Representative
13 Murphy's office to thank him for his
14 dedication and service to us all. Veterans
15 and seniors should also ask Mr. Murphy's
16 staff for bill numbers and then contact
17 Senator Mellow to support these bills and
18 get them on a fast track.

19 Next, regarding the legislation for
20 bidding of professional services that
21 Mr. Joyce mentioned a few minutes ago, we
22 would like to see this issue hammered out
23 and presented to city council for approval
24 prior to the primary election, particularly
25 in the event that election results may cause

1 the mayor to change his statements that
2 professional services should be put out to
3 bid and to maintain his penchant for no-bid
4 contracts.

5 Next, the legislation regarding the
6 management and maintenance of the Lackawanna
7 River Heritage Trail that was introduced in
8 Fifth Order at last week's council meeting
9 was pulled from tonight's agenda. The
10 legislation contained errors made by the law
11 kept and was are returned to it for
12 revisions.

13 Now, while reviewing and questioning
14 the aforementioned legislation, I learned
15 that the administration failed to pay it's
16 annual cash contributions for the last few
17 years and as a result currently owes
18 approximately \$18,000 to the Lackawanna
19 Heritage Valley Authority at a rate of
20 \$6,000 per year. I have heard that Stu
21 Renda, business administrator, may have
22 stated that the city has the money to pay
23 this delinquent bill, however, I wish to
24 know from what operating budget account or
25 specific account the \$18,000 will be drawn.

1 dirt and dust created by this facility
2 continue without regard for residential
3 neighbors who tell me they are unable to
4 sell their homes because of the close
5 proximity to this business, hence, there is
6 no way for them to escape the problems that
7 they have been enduring. Council has
8 forwarded correspondence more than once to
9 Daron and the Licensing, Inspection and
10 Permit's Department in 2010. Nothing has
11 been done this year.

12 I have recent photos of the dust and
13 dirt blowing from this business property,
14 and I am going to pass these to my council
15 colleagues at this time. Imagine never
16 opening your windows in warm weather, never
17 having the ability to sit on your porch or
18 enjoy your backyard. Imagine your vehicles
19 and shrubbery and landscaping covered with a
20 film of dust. Most of all, imagine dust
21 clouds in your eyes and nose and on your
22 clothes from windy weather conditions as you
23 enter and exit your own home. No one should
24 have to live like this.

25 Council requests that a

1 representative of LIPS contact the owner and
2 direct him to wet down the property daily
3 and refrain from operating forklifts prior
4 to 7 a.m. and after 10 p.m. Having received
5 many reports from council not only in 2010
6 but also throughout the past four years,
7 another warning seems unsuitable. If the
8 business fails to take corrective measures
9 citations should be written and enforced.
10 Our city is riddled with similar
11 neighborhood problems and all must be
12 addressed, however, the issues have Daron
13 Northeast have a lengthier history than many
14 others and once and for all the problem has
15 to stop.

16 Finally, I have citizens' requests:
17 A city resident reports a water runoff
18 problem in Lavelle Court which damages her
19 property. She asks that this court be paved
20 to alleviate this problem. Although she
21 spoke to Mr. Brazil, DPW director, he wasn't
22 able to visit the location to address the
23 problems as he had promised. Please add
24 Lavelle Court to the 2010 paving list, and
25 for Chris Sledenzski we want to fill

1 potholes on Cedar Avenue and Cherry Street,
2 and that's it.

3 MS. KRAKE: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION -
4 A RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR
5 AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO
6 EXECUTE AND APPLY FOR A GRANT THROUGH THE PA
7 DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL
8 RESOURCES (DCNR) IN THE AMOUNT OF
9 \$50,000.00; IF THE APPLICATION IS
10 SUCCESSFUL, ACCEPTING AND DISBURSING THE
11 GRANT FUNDS FOR THE RESTORATION/RENOVATION
12 OF FELLOW'S PARK IN THE CITY OF SCRANTON.

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

16 MR. JOYCE: So moved.

17 MR. LOSCOMBE: Second.

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

20 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

21 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

22 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

23 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

24 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed? The ayes
25 have it and so moved.

1 MS. KRAKE: SIXTH ORDER.

2 MS. EVANS: I know we have no
3 business at this time, Mrs. Krake, but I
4 would like to ask Solicitor Hughes to
5 explain in more depth the withdrawal of the
6 ordinance for the Lackawanna Heritage Valley
7 Authority.

8 MR. HUGHES: Madam President and
9 Council, after the question raised last week
10 regarding the ordinance that was sent down
11 regarding the Lackawanna Heritage Valley
12 Authority, and your request to have
13 Mrs. Solfanelli appear here tonight, she
14 called me on Wednesday, I think I got back
15 to her on Thursday, she explained that the
16 agreement that had been submitted was not
17 the proper agreement and we discussed the
18 issue regarding the trail and the
19 maintenance of it. She wanted to thank
20 council for inviting her to council.

21 I went over with her, I said that
22 the legislation should be withdrawn, as it
23 was tonight. There is letter here from
24 Solicitor Patterson dated April 27, which is
25 today, it was hand-delivered requesting

1 withdrawal of the legislation.

2 The ordinance will be redrafted,
3 submitted to council along with the proper
4 agreement to be approved by council for the
5 amount of maintenance fees. However, I
6 would want to inform council from this
7 standpoint that right now the Heritage Trail
8 is 1.5 miles, the Authority charges \$4,000 a
9 mile for maintenance, yearly maintenance,
10 that's a total of \$6,000 for this year, it
11 has not been paid for the last two years and
12 that's the \$18,000 that was referenced.

13 However, they have grants to extend
14 the trail for another 5.5 miles. That would
15 make the total amount of mileage in Scranton
16 seven miles which means that in the future
17 the amount that would be in that agreement
18 for the city to reimburse them for the
19 maintenance would be \$28,000. When the
20 agreement comes down, I don't know how the
21 \$4,000 a year maintenance is figured. The
22 reason that they are maintaining it, there
23 is agreement between the mayor and the
24 council to maintain it -- or, I mean the
25 authority, is because the city never

1 maintained it, so the Authority of
2 Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority stated
3 that they would maintain it for the rate of
4 \$4,000 per mile per year.

5 Once the agreement comes down I can
6 take a look at it, but when the new trial,
7 if they do get these grants, if the trail is
8 extended to it's full length of seven miles
9 the maintenance agreement would be \$28,000
10 per year.

11 MS. EVANS: And as we discussed, I
12 would ask that perhaps you could discuss
13 this with Attorney Patterson that council
14 would like to have language added to that
15 and in the event that the city's financial
16 portion for maintenance and management of
17 the trail would exceed whatever the set
18 dollar amount is then those allocations or
19 that bill would have to come to the
20 governing body for approval. It just could
21 not be automatically billed to the city if
22 let us say the expenses exceed the given
23 amount in the agreement.

24 MR. HUGHES: I believe that the
25 Authority will be drafting the agreement and

1 sending it to the solicitor's office. The
2 solicitor's will then do the -- would then
3 do the ordinance approving the agreement. I
4 don't know what's going to go into the input
5 for negotiating the agreement, but certainly
6 when that agreement comes down we would
7 review it and we could amend the legislation
8 so that the agreement could only be executed
9 if these amendments were put into the
10 agreement itself.

11 MS. EVANS: Very good.

12 MR. HUGHES: That would be the way
13 to do it. I would could tell, you know, I
14 don't know if the city is negotiating this
15 agreement with the authority or if the
16 authority is just drafting the agreement
17 saying it's \$4,000 per mile, but certainly I
18 think that that amount would have to be put
19 in the budget every year as a line item
20 which would have to come to council for
21 approval.

22 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

23 MR. HUGHES: As I said, there has to
24 be some way to determine how the \$4,000 per
25 mile per year figure came out. I have no

1 idea.

2 MS. EVANS: Nor do I. Thank you,
3 Attorney Hughes.

4 MR. HUGHES: You are welcome.

5 MS. KRAKE: SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A. FOR
6 CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES -
7 FOR ADOPTION -RESOLUTION NO. 13, 2010 -
8 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE
9 CITY OFFICIALS TO ENTER INTO A MUNICIPAL
10 LEASE AND OPTION AGREEMENT WITH FIRST
11 BANKERS CORPORATION FOR THE LEASE PURCHASE
12 OF A PIECE OF FIRE APPARATUS, A KME MODEL
13 PANTHER CHALLENGER CUSTOM PUMPER TRUCK, FOR
14 USE BY THE CITY OF SCRANTON FIRE DEPARTMENT.

15 MS. EVANS: As Chair for the
16 Committee on Rules, I recommend final
17 passage of Item 7-A.

18 MR. ROGAN: Second.

19 MS. EVANS: On the question? Roll
20 call, please?

21 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

23 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

24 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

25 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Loscombe.

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MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes.

MS. CARRERA: Mr. Joyce.

MR. JOYCE: Yes.

MS. CARRERA: Mrs. Evans.

MS. EVANS: I hereby declare Item
7-a legally and lawfully adopted. And I
will entertain a motion to adjourn.

MR. MCGOFF: So moved.

MS. EVANS: Meeting adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER