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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL

HELD:

THURSDAY, JANUARY 29, 2015

TIME:

6:30 P.M.

LOCATION:

Council Chambers

Scranton City Hall

340 North Washington Avenue

Scranton, Pennsylvania

AMELIA NICOL, RPR

COURT REPORTER

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CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

ROBERT MCGOFF, PRESIDENT

PATRICK ROGAN, VICE-PRESIDENT

WILLIAM GAUGHAN

JOSEPH WECHSLER

WAYNE EVANS

AMIL MINORA, SOLICITOR

LORI REED, CITY CLERK

KATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

1 MR. MCGOFF: Everyone please rise
2 for the Pledge of Allegiance.

3 (Pledge of Allegiance.)

4 MR. MCGOFF: Please remain
5 standing for a moment of silence for
6 our servicemen and women throughout
7 the world and also for all of those
8 who have passed away in our community
9 during this past week.

10 (Moment of Silent Reflection.)

11 MR. MCGOFF: Roll call, please.

12 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

13 MR. WECHSLER: Here.

14 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

15 MR. ROGAN: Here.

16 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

17 MR. EVANS: Here.

18 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

19 MR. GAUGHAN: Here.

20 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

21 MR. MCGOFF: Here. Mr. Evans,
22 we're going to do that motion if you
23 will, please.

24 MR. EVANS: All right. I would
25 like to make a motion to table Item

1 7C, file of the No. 73, 2015, until
2 February 5th due to special legal
3 notion requirements of the intention
4 to impose a tax increase according to
5 the Pennsylvania statute.

6 MR. ROGAN: Second.

7 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

8 (No response.)

9 MR. MCGOFF: Again, as Mr. Evans
10 said, this is the millage increase
11 needs to be advertised three times and
12 in order to allow time for that
13 advertising we needed an extra week.
14 So that we're tabling it for this week
15 and it will be back on the agenda for
16 next week.

17 All those in favor of tabling
18 Item 7C signify by saying aye.

19 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

21 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

22 MR. EVANS: Aye.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed? Ayes
24 have it and so moved. Dispense with
25 the reading of the minutes.

1 MS. REED: THIRD ORDER. 3A.
2 CONTROLLER'S REPORT FOR THE MONTH
3 ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2014.

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

6 MS. REED: 3B. TAX ASSESSOR'S
7 RESULTS REPORT FOR HEARING HELD
8 JANUARY 7, 2015.

9 MR. MCGOFF: Are any comments?
10 If not, received and filed.

11 MS. REED: 3C. AGENDA FOR THE
12 CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING HELD
13 JANUARY 28, 2015.

14 MR. MCGOFF: Are there any
15 comments? If not, received and filed.

16 MS. REED: 3D. MINUTES OF THE
17 SCRANTON-LACKAWANNA HEALTH & WELFARE
18 AUTHORITY REGULAR BOARD MEETING OF
19 NOVEMBER 20, 2014.

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

22 MS. REED: 3E. MINUTES OF THE
23 COMPOSITE PENSION BOARD MEETING HELD
24 DECEMBER 10, 2014.

25 MR. MCGOFF: There are any

1 comments? If not, received and filed.

2 MS. REED: 3F. AUDIT STATUS
3 REPORT FROM ROBERT ROSSI & COMPANY
4 RECEIVED JANUARY 27, 2015.

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

7 MS. REED: 3G. TAX ASSESSOR'S
8 REPORT FOR HEARING TO BE HELD FEBRUARY
9 18, 2015.

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

12 Anything from council?

13 MR. ROGAN: I have two
14 announcements. The first one, once
15 again for the 2015 tax season the
16 United Way of Lackawanna and Wayne
17 Counties is partnering with the
18 University of Scranton to offer
19 volunteer income tax assistance. This
20 program is to prepare returns for
21 eligible taxpayers clearly for free.
22 There are no fees or charges. In
23 order to qualify you're taxable income
24 for a family needs to be less than
25 \$51,000 for the previous year and this

1 program will run from February 1st
2 until March 29th. You could schedule
3 the program on-line through e-mail or
4 the most convenient way is by calling
5 the hotline at 570-504-0614. If
6 you're interested in checking it out
7 on-line, it is on the United Way's
8 website which is www.uwlc.net.

9 And also this is also a very
10 successful program that focused on
11 West Side last year and this year it's
12 going to focus on North Scranton,
13 Paint the Town. It's brought to you
14 by Neighbor Works Northeastern
15 Pennsylvania and Habitat for Humanity,
16 Lackawanna County. What they do is
17 they get a group of volunteers for low
18 to moderate income households and
19 they'll paint your house for free.
20 Like I said, this year they're going
21 to focus on North Scranton so the
22 qualifications are you have to live in
23 North Scranton, you have to verify
24 that you are of modest income which is
25 under 80 percent of the area medium,

1 own the home that you live in and
2 legitimate difficulty maintaining your
3 home, whether it be financial or
4 physical. To learn more, you can
5 visit www.wnnepa.org or call Ellen at
6 570-558-2490. And these are two great
7 programs that I would encourage you to
8 take advantage of. Thank you.

9 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else?

10 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, I just have
11 one. There will be a benefit for Pat
12 Walsh of Minooka on Friday, February
13 13th, at the Divine Mercy Parish Hall
14 in Minooka from 5 to 11 p.m. Tickets
15 are \$10 and can be purchased at the
16 door. All donations will help the
17 Walsh family offset hospital expenses
18 due to a recent illness. There will
19 be beverages, light fair, basket
20 raffles and entertainment. If you
21 would like to make a donation to help
22 Pat, checks can be sent to the Minooka
23 Lions Club, P.O. Box 4071, Scranton,
24 PA, 18505. Thank you.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else?

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(No response.)

MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

MS. REED: 4TH ORDER. CITIZENS
PARTICIPATION.

MR. MCGOFF: Marie Schumacher.

MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening,
council. Marie Schumacher, taxpayer.
Agenda item 7M. The gifts are
guaranteed but not one of the gifts is
guaranteed. If it works, it may be
okay. But if it doesn't work, oh,
well. Do you really believe that the
taxpayers have sufficient or most
taxpayers at least have sufficient
funds to cover the oh, why; oh, well.
If the question is do the potential
benefits outweigh the risk, I say no.
They may not even be sufficient. Why?
Because not enough backup information
has been provided to the public to
make a valid determination. To do so
would require filing right to know
requests, waiting for the data which
could take up to 30 days and then
analyzing the data. Obviously that

1 can't happen in two weeks. Why the
2 urgency to ram this through in one
3 week? Further, we do not know how
4 this fits into the revised recovery
5 plan. The constitutional issue is
6 huge for the taxpayers' pockets. Not
7 one of you is willing to even take a
8 stab of how we will be able to achieve
9 a truly balanced budget by the time
10 the Act 199 alarm goes off in August
11 of next year. Proponents make this
12 sound wonderful by stating the seven
13 digit potential savings for the entire
14 seven year life of the contract rather
15 than the potential savings for each of
16 the seven years of the contract. Yet
17 it's entirely possible that the Act 47
18 coordinator could recommend
19 receivership within the next two
20 years. It seems ludicrous that you
21 would enact a contract that not only
22 extends seven years into the future
23 but guarantees the gives for those
24 seven years even if the gets don't
25 turn out as anticipated and we are in

1 receivership. Is there anyone of you
2 willing to state even the 2015
3 savings. I am extremely concerned you
4 are not acting in the best interest of
5 the taxpayers by setting one of
6 largest components of the budget
7 expense in concrete through 2021. My
8 recommendation is to give Mayor
9 Courtright the authority to amend the
10 MOL only if the termination date is
11 2018 instead of 2021 and specifies the
12 names of the six officers and spouses
13 affected by the health care payment by
14 the taxpayers. This would eliminate
15 the unresolved issue of past
16 practices, give almost three years of
17 actuals to show the hard statistics on
18 gives and gets and allow the mayor to
19 negotiate a contract in 2017 based on
20 facts and not assumptions. This would
21 also reduce taxpayer's vulnerability
22 should receivership be recommended
23 after the Act 199 alarm goes off. You
24 are putting a great deal of stress on
25 a lot of residents some of whom are

1 elderly and trying to live to fixed
2 incomes. Residents who work long and
3 hard to buy their homes, who
4 contributed in working lifetime and
5 now they find they can lose their
6 homes because they are no longer
7 afford the government rent. They are
8 stressed. And let's not forget the
9 young people trying to pay a mortgage
10 and a raise a family. May I suggest
11 that anyone of you that votes in favor
12 of passage tonight pledge to resign
13 from whatever political job you hold
14 at the time verification that the gets
15 have been overstated is validated.
16 Thank you.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Joan
18 Hodowanitz.

19 MS. HODOWANITZ: Joan Hodowantiz,
20 taxpayer. I'm happy to see that the
21 administration's Information
22 Technology Department has put on the
23 city website the published version of
24 the 2015 operating budget. This is
25 the one that was sent to the printer

1 and the one that is available in the
2 City Clerk's Office. I don't know
3 when it was posted. I saw it sometime
4 this morning so either last night or
5 this morning it was posted. I would
6 hope that if the budget is amended,
7 that any amendments to it would also
8 be posted on the website so that
9 citizens do not have to go to the City
10 Clerk's Office to view it or have to
11 make copies. I did not want to wait
12 until it was finally posted so I paid
13 \$14.50 for the Excell spreadsheets.
14 And I can afford to do that. Most
15 citizens can't come down here and be
16 throwing money away like that so let's
17 hope that in the future all documents
18 like operating budgets, audits
19 amendments and things of that nature
20 are ultimately posted on the website
21 as soon as they become available
22 because the public has a need to know.

23 Yesterday I attended three of the
24 four pension board meetings, the
25 police, the clerical union and

1 composite board and once again I was
2 the only citizen here, and we know
3 that the distressed pension plans are
4 the 800 pound gorilla in the room.
5 And it would be nice to see more
6 citizen interests in those meetings.
7 I understand a lot of people can't go
8 because it's in the middle of the day.
9 But also now as a retiree who lives
10 downtown that there are a lot of other
11 retirees that live downtown that could
12 easily come and listen to what goes
13 on.

14 One question came up in my mind.
15 I asked Attorney Durkin this question
16 and wasn't able to get much of an
17 answer so I would like to ask you
18 council members and perhaps Attorney
19 Minora would have the answer. What
20 happens to the municipal pension plans
21 in the event of receivership,
22 bankruptcy or dissolution of the city,
23 do they go into limbo, are they null
24 and void or are they sacrosanct and to
25 honored until the end of time. Does

1 anybody know?

2 MR. MCGOFF: I do not have that
3 information at this time.

4 MS. HODOWANITZ: Attorney Minora,
5 would you know?

6 MR. MINORA: If you're asking the
7 pensions going receivership or the
8 city going into receivership?

9 MS. HODOWANITZ: If the city goes
10 into receivership, what happens to
11 municipal pensions.

12 I guess he wants you to turn on
13 your microphone.

14 MR. MINORA: I'll be glad to look
15 into it for you. My recollection in
16 Harrisburg when it went into
17 receivership was that the pensions
18 were not interfered with, the
19 receivership. But that may have been
20 just the result of that plan rather
21 than the receiver's authority to do
22 that or not do that.

23 MS. HODOWANITZ: Yeah. It seems
24 some people have the impression that
25 they're automatically null and void

1 and I don't think that we need to
2 assume that at all. I think that
3 whatever happens with the city,
4 whatever contracts we have, whatever
5 pension plans we have, I think, you
6 know, we're probably going to be held
7 to them. So I would like to know that
8 answer because like --

9 MS. EVANS: I'd like to make a
10 brief comment, Joan, that that is my
11 understanding is that debt payment,
12 it's always going to have to be made.

13 MS. HODOWANITZ: Yeah. As Marie
14 said, you know, we have to think long
15 term in terms of the citizens or what
16 kind of tax burden they can look for
17 to five, ten years down the road.

18 I was happy to see in the latest
19 status of the audit from Rossi that
20 we're down to nine outstanding items.
21 However, two of those items are from
22 the Scranton Parking Authority and I'm
23 still amazed that, you know, that they
24 come and ask the city for help with
25 four million dollars and yet they

1 cannot reconcile their accounts for
2 2013, nor can they give us any audited
3 financial statements. I know that Mr.
4 Walsh is acting as receiver but maybe
5 he should ask for help and maybe we're
6 seeing the light at the end of the
7 tunnel, maybe we'll have this by April
8 1st. But that would be ironic. That
9 would be April Fool's Day so who
10 knows.

11 The last thing I have is -- well,
12 I'll come with that next week. Thank
13 you.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Ms.
16 Hodowanitz.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Gerard Hetman.

18 MR. HETMAN: Good evening,
19 council. Gerard Hetman from
20 Lackawanna County's Community
21 Relations Department. Good to see you
22 again this week. To begin this
23 evening I'd like to followup on an
24 item that Mr. McGoff and Mr. Evans
25 asked about at last week's meeting,

1 that being the idea of a Lackawanna
2 County Fair. I should note that
3 before I get to the most recent
4 developments, this is an idea that has
5 been discussed by all three
6 commissioners and by members of my
7 department since I've been on the job
8 which will be three years as of March
9 6th. And it has always been kicked
10 around. It's never been off the table
11 but it's never had the momentum behind
12 it to really take off and have a
13 serious look. But as many of you may
14 be aware at yesterday's commissioner's
15 meeting, Wednesday, January 28th,
16 Lackawanna County Commissioners by a
17 vote of three to zero passed a
18 resolution to form a committee to
19 study the idea of starting a
20 Lackawanna County Fair. I believe I
21 speak for the commissioners when I say
22 it doesn't hurt to at least take a
23 look at the idea to study maybe with
24 some other county fairs do and how
25 they operate and to see if it would be

1 feasible to start such an event here
2 in the Lackawanna County. I should
3 also note that this is the very
4 beginning of the process. It's the
5 most basic step that can be taken. So
6 as the concept develops and as the
7 committee develops, we'll certainly
8 keep council and the public informed
9 of how that's progressing and
10 certainly I'm sure there will be
11 opportunities for citizens as well as
12 elected official and municipal
13 governments to give input and possibly
14 explore ways to partner to evaluate
15 the possibility of a county fair. So
16 we will be in touch and we will keep
17 you abreast of the developments.

18 The second item is we would just
19 like to remind folks of, we get a lot
20 of questions about this program at the
21 end of the year as we go through the
22 budget process so we just wanted to
23 discuss it with all of our municipal
24 governments. That is, the county's
25 Community Reinvest Grant Program.

1 And, again, this is a program that's
2 funded now for 2015 for the third
3 straight budget cycle. To date we
4 have see 57 projects around Lackawanna
5 County receive reinvest funding, 14 of
6 those have been located within the
7 City of Scranton. The projects that I
8 have seen among the 57 projects,
9 approximately \$905,000 in county funds
10 distributed. This has been used by
11 the community groups that use that
12 funding. So we believe it's
13 approximately four million dollars in
14 additional funds through matching
15 grants, loans and other fund that have
16 been secured after we have awarded the
17 reinvest funding to those projects
18 from Lackawanna County. And, again,
19 the project span a wide gamut of
20 applications, playground restorations,
21 particularly sometimes upgrades to
22 restaurant facilities to ADA
23 assessment standards, updates to Missy
24 League, Little League fields, as well
25 as outdoor recreations such as

1 playgrounds and trailer upgrades. I
2 know we have a host of good community
3 groups here the city that we invite
4 them, some of them, many of them have
5 already applied for that funding in
6 past cycles or have ongoing
7 applications and we would welcome
8 applications from them in the future
9 for any projects that they deem
10 feasible. And again we believe while
11 \$500,000 of the program is funded at
12 is an expense under county government
13 of significant size, the commissioners
14 believe in this investment in the
15 community. We've been able to fund
16 this while again keeping the fund
17 balanced in county government, in our
18 Economic Development Department which
19 administers this has been able to do
20 this at a very basic level of staffing
21 which, again, keeps the county
22 staffing at a whole level, through it
23 the lowest since 1999. So any groups
24 in the community that would wish to
25 explore applying for the Reinvest

1 Grant can do so by contacting
2 Lackawanna County's Economic
3 Development Department at
4 570-963-6830.

5 And then just two very brief
6 items regarding the ongoing weather.
7 First, our Code Blue Cold Weather
8 Awareness Initiative is back in force
9 for the 2014-2015 winter season. We
10 do have Cold Blue Alert active as of
11 this moment which at any time the
12 temperature is below 20 degrees, I
13 mean, the wind chill, for instance,
14 any period of time, we issue one of
15 those advisory and folks can visit
16 Lackawannacounty.org, the county
17 website. We have a host of links and
18 information on there for many
19 different agencies and organizations
20 around our community that help people
21 to deal with the cold in terms of
22 their personal health as well as the
23 health of their pets and also
24 personal, things such as taking care
25 of your automobile and your home

1 plumbing during extreme cold.

2 Last but not least McDade Park
3 for many, many years we know folks
4 have gone sledding there, was
5 technically against the rules. But
6 now for the second year the park's
7 recreation staff have built a
8 designated sledding and sled riding
9 area at McDade Park. It is open
10 during normal park hours from dawn to
11 dusk. There is no charge to use the
12 sledding hill and just the folks abide
13 by all of the normal parks and
14 recommend regulations at the park when
15 they come to use the sledding
16 facility. So that's all I have for
17 this evening. And thank you, ladies
18 and gentlemen.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you very much.
20 Les Spindler.

21 MR. SPINDLER: Good evening, Les
22 Spindler, city resident, homeowner and
23 taxpayer. I'm going to talk about 7M.
24 Now, two councilmen up there are very
25 vocal against 7M and they said they

1 wonder what's going to happen in the
2 future. Well, as Councilmen Wechsler
3 said last week, we can't worry about
4 the future. We have to worry about
5 right now. If 7M doesn't pass now,
6 you might as well put a fence up
7 around the city and close it off
8 because the union is making
9 concessions. And if this isn't
10 passed, the mayor wants to sit down
11 with the firefighters union. If this
12 isn't passed, I don't think the mayor
13 has a chance to sit down with the
14 firefighters' union. This is what
15 happened in the previous
16 administration.

17 Where were your voices during
18 previous administration, Councilmen
19 Gaughan and Evans? Well, Councilman
20 Gaughan, I don't know about you but I
21 know Councilman Evans was a support of
22 of the previous administration so
23 you're partially at fault for this
24 problem because it's Chris Doherty
25 that put us in this situation. If he

1 did what Mayor Courtright did and sat
2 down with the police union, we
3 wouldn't be here right now. But he
4 tried to break the unions and it
5 backfired. We lost every arbitration
6 and that's where we are right now.

7 Councilman Evans, you brought up
8 22 million dollars it could cost the
9 city in the future. That's funny you
10 brought up 22 million because that's
11 because what we owe the firefighters
12 and the police because of Chris
13 Doherty and it was 44 million. They
14 cut it in half. So that was a
15 concession right there. So maybe if
16 you spoke up the last previous 12
17 years, we wouldn't be here right now.

18 Oh, another thing. You said since
19 2010 city tax has gone up over a 100
20 percent. Again, who was the mayor
21 when this all happened? Chris
22 Doherty.

23 So, again, I will finish in
24 saying that they should be passed
25 tonight. We can't worry about what's

1 going to be happen in 2021. The city
2 needs a fix right now and I think this
3 is a good start. If this is passed, I
4 think that the firefighters will go
5 along with it and whatever other
6 unions are going to negotiate. So I
7 think this is a must thing for that to
8 pass this tonight. That's all I'm
9 going to say about that.

10 Just a couple other things.

11 There was an article in the paper
12 tonight about Business Administration
13 Bulzoni, not tonight. It was in the
14 morning paper. I know there's a city
15 ordinance or whatever that the city
16 employees have to live in the city but
17 I think Mr. Bulzoni is very qualified.
18 I worked with him for many years.
19 He's a very smart person. In past
20 years we had people from the city in
21 that position and I don't think they
22 had the qualifications that Mr.
23 Bulzoni had. As proof is when a few
24 years ago when the city went for the
25 commuter tax, the Business

1 Administrator went with two different
2 figures to the court system and that's
3 why it was thrown out for unqualified
4 people. I think Mr. Bulzoni is
5 qualified and he should get a waiver
6 and live outside the city.

7 Lastly, I live on the corner of
8 Boulevard Street and North Rebecca.
9 Two years ago the signs were stolen.
10 They were put back up and recently a
11 truck hit the sign and half of it fell
12 down now. If someone could get in
13 touch with DPW and possibly get
14 another sign up there, the corner of
15 Boulevard Street and North Rebecca
16 Avenue. When they put the sign up it
17 said North Rebecca Street. It's North
18 Rebecca Avenue. So if they can get a
19 new sign up, correct it like that, we
20 appreciate it. And that's all I have
21 tonight. Thank you for your time.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Alex
23 Burnell.

24 MR. BURNELL: Good evening. Alex
25 Burnell, taxpayer. I'm here primarily

1 to formally introduce myself to City
2 Council. I've never had an
3 opportunity per say to speak at a
4 council meeting previous to this. But
5 I would also like to apprise everyone
6 of a situation, a matter that I think
7 is of grave importance to the
8 foregoing stability of the City of
9 Scranton. A good city in my opinion
10 should be run like a good business.
11 It should foster entrepreneurship, it
12 should welcome with open arms
13 investors, ideas, investment capital.
14 Los Angeles has an entire department
15 called the Los Angeles Business
16 Council and it does precisely that.
17 It works through the city with
18 businesses and with landlords. So
19 they work together. So they're not
20 enemies. They work in a unified
21 collective fashion and it has done
22 wonders for the City of Los Angeles in
23 terms of revenue generation and tax
24 dollar generation. And that's it.
25 That's that. I believe the city's

1 condemnation policy specifically is
2 written in a way which makes it
3 capable of being used as a weapon for
4 abuse of power and it is have a severe
5 a ravaging effect on the city and on
6 its ability to attract investors, even
7 local investors and even banking
8 capital. Most glaring there is a
9 female housing inspector who works for
10 City of Scranton. She has had the
11 unilateral right for many years to
12 arbitrarily and capriciously cite,
13 fine and condemn any house that she
14 personally sees as unfit including
15 houses that absolutely unquestionably
16 are undeserving of condemnation in my
17 opinion. I have personally seen
18 people in tears because of her
19 actions. Condemnation means the
20 person must leave their own home and
21 they cannot return or they will be
22 deemed a trespasser on their own
23 property. And even if you appeal the
24 condemnation, during the appeal
25 process the property continues to stay

1 condemned. I know many good people
2 who work for the Department of
3 Licensing. I'm not here to criticize
4 them at all. But my goal here is to
5 plant the thought, to plant the idea
6 that we must not give oftentimes
7 uncertified, unlicensed people the
8 Gestapo like authority to
9 discretionarily choose whether people
10 can continue to live in their own
11 homes. It is making homeowners
12 homeless, it is killing the City of
13 Scranton and I believe it is killing
14 property values. I would invite
15 council to think about the concept of
16 permitting through a law or ordinance
17 condemnation only as an absolute final
18 last resort, not merely when some
19 housing inspector decides by herself
20 as judge, jury and executioner that
21 our property rights should be taken
22 away from us. Even then people
23 deserve a reasonable opportunity to
24 cure the problem and an opportunity
25 for due process including a stay of

1 condemnation during that appeal
2 process if they choose to appeal. I
3 am honestly fearful for retaliation
4 for even raising this concern at
5 council tonight but I feel that it's
6 important that this situation is
7 publicly known both to council and
8 also to the public in general. If
9 anyone wishes to discuss this with me,
10 I've created an e-mail account for
11 this very situation and for any other
12 ideas that you might have for the City
13 of Scranton and that is
14 savescrantonpa@gmail.com,
15 S-A-V-E-S-C-R-A-N-T-O-N-P-A@gmail.com.
16 Thank you.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr.
18 Burnell.

19 MS. EVANS: Mr. Burnell, if you
20 have a second. Several of the
21 councilmen have already discussed
22 this. We definitely plan on looking
23 at the rental registration ordinance
24 and the condemnation policy again in
25 the very near future so hopefully you

1 can participate in that discussion.

2 MR. BURNELL: I appreciate your
3 feedback. My compliments to all of
4 you. I realize this is hard job so my
5 shout out to all of you.

6 MR. GAUGHAN: And I would just
7 comment, Mr. Burnell, that it is a
8 major issue. In fact, I think it was
9 yesterday I was walking out of City
10 Hall and I ran into somebody who was
11 having a difficult time rehabbing the
12 property that was condemned and, you
13 know, his feeling was the property
14 shouldn't have been condemned. And I
15 do think that we are condemning
16 properties at a rate that doesn't make
17 any sense. So as Councilman Evans
18 said, we are looking into it and we
19 hope to take some sort of legislative
20 action in the near future.

21 MR. BURNELL: I appreciate the
22 feedback. Thank you all.

23 MS. EVANS: If I can make one
24 more comment. I don't want to belabor
25 the point but the condemnation policy

1 as it stands now is from a realtor's
2 prospective is driving down values in
3 the city --

4 MR. BURNELL: I agree completely.

5 MR. EVANS: -- And we have to
6 correct that soon.

7 MR. BURNELL: I completely agree
8 with you. I've seen it firsthand from
9 banks, realtors and investors.

10 MR. EVANS: Thank you.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr.
12 Burnell. Lee Morgan?

13 MR. MORGAN: Good evening,
14 council. The first thing I have here
15 is the last gentleman that spoke here,
16 absolute truth, big problem,
17 condemnation problem just is out of
18 control. Now, the person they're
19 talking about, I want to keep
20 personalities out of it but, you know,
21 we're just destroying our own city and
22 then we're having the feds and anybody
23 else give us money to tear everything
24 down and everybody is trying to get
25 out of here.

1 You know, I read this contract --
2 well, not this, just the memorandum
3 here. You know, and I have to ask one
4 question, does Scranton really have a
5 legitimate government. I mean, you
6 know, you may have been elected but to
7 even bring this up for a vote, it just
8 proves how seriously flawed our
9 government really is. It's just --
10 it's beyond belief. I mean, we're
11 going to tie the hands of the next
12 mayor if Mr. Courtright doesn't win.
13 So he's going to get stuck with a
14 contract that he may not want, okay.
15 You know, we're talking about rates
16 for new hires here. It's my opinion
17 that if you're a policeman and you get
18 appointed by the City of Scranton, why
19 should you wait all these years to
20 come up to rate. I think that once
21 you prove you're competent, you know,
22 I just can't see how rank and file
23 members of the union would have ever
24 even agreed to something like that
25 because if I'm doing the same job

1 everybody else is doing and I'm taking
2 the same chances everybody else is
3 taking, I'm wondering why I'm not
4 getting paid.

5 MR. ROGAN: Well, Mr. Morgan,
6 that's why it's a union concession.

7 MR. MORGAN: Yeah, they're giving
8 a new hiree, they're feeding him.
9 He's the one taking the concession,
10 nobody else, Mr. Rogan.

11 MR. ROGAN: The current hirees
12 are paying more to the pensions and
13 there would be drastic reductions in
14 overtime.

15 MR. MORGAN: Look it, I just
16 don't think it's proper to ask
17 somebody who is coming on the force to
18 take elongate the amount of time it
19 takes them to get the rate. Okay?

20 You know, the city that's in
21 distressed status can really afford
22 more vacation time? I mean, can the
23 afford any of these costs? But, you
24 know, one of most troubling things
25 this contract is, we're going to keep

1 trying to retain the failed pension
2 system we have. Why aren't we going
3 to a 401K. You know, when I come up
4 here and I see you guys go pretty
5 suits on, I really mean it, because it
6 doesn't show me that you have any
7 depth of understanding of the
8 legislation that stands in front of
9 you. You may have got elected. But,
10 I mean, I have to ask myself, you
11 know, does the mayor and the council
12 owe the city's unionized work force a
13 favor, I mean, to ram this through
14 because this council hasn't proven to
15 me that they have any real
16 understanding of anything that is
17 going to take place here but what
18 we're going to do is, we're going to
19 put more of a tax burden on the
20 residents who live here and I then you
21 know what we need to do and that's why
22 I'm asking if we have a legitimate
23 government here. You may have been
24 elected here but is it legitimate?
25 Are you capable of dispensing your

1 duties? Okay. Look at the amount of
2 people in this city on welfare, food
3 stamps, school lunch, the amount of
4 the deterioration of the city, okay,
5 willingness to try another
6 privatization of the Scranton Sewer
7 Authority which failed the last time,
8 privatization of parking garages.
9 Sure, all these people are going to
10 come forward, but you know something,
11 they're going to make money. They're
12 going to take tons of money out of the
13 city. And my question is why? Why
14 can't we put people in those positions
15 and return that money to our treasury.
16 How can a company come from outside
17 the area come in here, loot the city,
18 take all the money out of here and,
19 you nope I like to say one more thing
20 you know, I'd like to say one more
21 thing, too, is that you know the last
22 council did us a major favor. They
23 forced the Scranton Parking Authority
24 into receivership and stopped the city
25 from borrowing and we've got a mayor

1 now who seems to think he's going to
2 fix everything, we're going to borrow
3 all we can, we're going to go right
4 down the same destructive force we
5 followed before. We've got senior
6 citizens living in the city who can't
7 in many instances afford to live.
8 We've got a serious problem with a
9 city in serious decline. You know,
10 and, you know, Mr. Wechsler, getting
11 rentable vouchers for the North
12 Scranton project, we've got so many
13 vacant rental properties in the city,
14 it's obscene. You know, we keep
15 talking about bringing people into
16 this city that are allegedly
17 investors. No, they're not. They're
18 carpetbaggers, okay, and the problem
19 here is we keep electing people as if
20 we have a legitimate government. But
21 20 plus years under Act 47 and then
22 the legislature meets and comes up
23 with a new plan that doesn't even
24 address the problems. I mean, isn't
25 our state legislature doing such a

1 wonderful job? It's ridiculous and
2 this is ridiculous. I really think
3 that this thing needs to be voted no,
4 go back to the table. Let's move to a
5 401K, okay, and let's get some things
6 really done here and start turning the
7 city around until we've been on this
8 course of action and there will be
9 nothing left of the city just like
10 there is now. Thank you.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr.
12 Morgan. Bob Bolus?

13 MR. BOLUS: Good evening,
14 council. Bob Bolus, Scranton. You
15 know, sometimes you just think even
16 come back here and even come before
17 you guys. On 7H with the garbage fee,
18 I said it's a taxation without
19 representation. It's a fee on
20 everybody but you didn't pass it
21 across everyone. Let the K0Z
22 nonprofits, all the exempt, they're
23 not included in it. So you gave a
24 free ride again. It should be tabled
25 and you should look at it and look at

1 it logically. Take the burden off
2 some of the people in the city. 7M as
3 I said from day one, that agreement
4 has more holes in it than swiss
5 cheese. It's not realistic. Mr.
6 Evans, Mr. Gaughan, at least you used
7 some common sense. You put it to the
8 side. You don't need to rush to
9 judgement in this city. Look at this
10 pension, look at everything we're
11 doing, look at the people on Workmans'
12 Comp and they go out and get another
13 job and we're still paying for that.
14 Did you modify that? No. You didn't
15 look at any of the issues that are
16 costing us a fortune. So come to
17 work, trip and fall, go out on
18 Workmans' Comp and go get another job
19 doing the same darn thing. That's a
20 heck of an agreement. You're killing
21 the city, you're killing the taxpayers
22 and the sit here and say we're going
23 to look all the way out where it goes
24 rather than look at a short term with
25 this, put it year to year. Find out

1 where we're going here. What you're
2 doing here is you haven't learned from
3 the past. You haven't the slightest
4 clue what the past did to this city.
5 And remember something. Mr. McGoff,
6 you're a knowledgeable person.
7 Remember one thing, the past is gone,
8 the present is now and the future
9 belongs to no one, including you and
10 everybody else sitting on this board,
11 everybody sitting in the audience.
12 Don't handicap the people of the
13 future with something that's as poorly
14 written and constructed on just a
15 total waste and a haste to judgment
16 rather than sit, modify and as I've
17 asked you and requested, don't give us
18 the backroom smoke and mirrors stuff
19 in your caucus. Put it out here in
20 front of the people, those that watch
21 these cameras. This is your
22 responsibility. Tell the people the
23 truth, put it out here, not what they
24 read superficially. That's your
25 responsibility. Openness, honesty and

1 transparency and right now you're not
2 doing any of that. You're just
3 blowing smoke. You're putting the
4 cheese steaks out here without cheese
5 on it. You have too many holes.

6 Mr. Rogan, you can laugh at it,
7 put your expertise on this stuff here,
8 you looked at it superficially, you
9 made an opinion that was personally.
10 You didn't make a factual one. A
11 factual one you would not sign that
12 agreement. You would not give the
13 upper hand to somebody else in the
14 unions, whatever. These guys work
15 their butts off. Nobody is taking it
16 from them, okay. But don't let the
17 system be abused at everybody's
18 expense, especially as far out into
19 the future as you guys want to put
20 this. It's not your responsibility to
21 put the responsibility on someone in
22 the future that has to live with this
23 mistake. We've lived with mistakes
24 for last 12 years. We've been in
25 embarrassed over the last 12 years and

1 you've done nothing about it. So you
2 haven't learned anything.

3 I brought up the other day, I was
4 at the commissioner's meeting about
5 the mall and Mr. Wansacz brought out,
6 well, you know, you better study more
7 about what you're doing here or there.
8 Well, let me set it straight. We met
9 with the people that owned the wall,
10 I've already looked at what I need to
11 do, I already know about legislation,
12 already know that there's only so many
13 license created, but keep in mind
14 something, everybody can smirk,
15 everybody could laugh but you guys are
16 killing the city. But if you do that
17 contract, you're killing it. But if
18 you don't pay attention, the people
19 who want to invest their money and not
20 cost you guys one bloody cent and
21 ignore it by the Herculon task as Mr.
22 McGoff said and not send a letter to
23 the legislators. We know they have to
24 make the change. I know where they've
25 got to go, I know where they've got to

1 do. But keep in mind one thing, they
2 have the power to do anything they
3 wanted. They created a gaming license
4 for a felon in this state and
5 embarrassed all of us. They can do
6 anything they want to do if they have
7 the support of the people or the
8 opposition to what they're doing, they
9 can create a license for the City of
10 Scranton. Unless you guys got a
11 better idea how you're going to save
12 this city and I haven't seen it yet,
13 this paper that you're doing right
14 now, it's just putting another nail in
15 the coffin.

16 I spoke to one councilman here
17 about the landfill and he said he had
18 his own opinion what's going on.
19 Well, remember something, I gave you
20 guys lab reports and not one single
21 one of you bothered to check it out.
22 I want to know if you are guys are
23 going to show up at the DEP meeting
24 and represent us, the people of the
25 City of Scranton and challenge this

1 landfill for many, many reasons.
2 Those reports I gave you said it's
3 chemically dangerous. Yet you haven't
4 done anything to make your own
5 personal opinions but your own
6 personal opinion means nothing. It's
7 what the legislature. You're here to
8 represent people, each and everyone of
9 you. And I'd like to poll all of
10 you's tonight because you were voted
11 by the people, not by your fellow
12 councilmen here.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr.
14 Bolus.

15 MR. BOLUS: Mr. McGoff, are you
16 for the landfill or against it?

17 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr.
18 Bolus.

19 MR. BOLUS: I asked you a
20 question. I have that right. It's a
21 public meeting and I asked you a
22 question.

23 MR. MCGOFF: And I've answered
24 this into the --

25 MR. BOLUS: Typically that you

1 have, Mr. McGoff. You don't know what
2 the truth is and you don't know how to
3 represent the city.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

5 MR. BOLUS: Don't thank me.
6 Thank yourself.

7 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else who
8 wishes to address council?

9 MR. MILLER: Good evening. Doug
10 Miller, Scranton. I had no intention
11 of speaking tonight but after
12 listening to some of the comments
13 tonight from some of the previous
14 speakers, I just want to kind of
15 piggyback on some of the previous se
16 comments. You know, I thought Miss
17 Schumacher, Ms. Hodowanitz, Mr.
18 Morgan, Mr. Bolus made a lot of valid
19 points. You know, the idea, a
20 statement was made earlier that kind
21 of prompted me to come up here that I
22 found quite baffling was the idea
23 that, you know, the decisions that we
24 make today aren't effecting the
25 future, that we need to worry about

1 today, not the future, I just find
2 that to be totally absurd because
3 everything we do today impacts the
4 future. Of course, we're concerned
5 about the task at hand today but
6 ultimately we're worried about what
7 the city is going to be 10, 15, 20
8 years down the road and that's
9 ultimately when we make decisions,
10 we're focused on the future because
11 that's what it's about.

12 The idea of criticizing Mr.
13 Gaughan and Mr. Evans for using some
14 common sense and realizing that this
15 is very difficult situation and it's a
16 contract or memorandum of
17 understanding that I think you can
18 agree some of us aren't really in
19 tuned with how this works and we're
20 not all qualified to really dissect
21 that document so it takes some time to
22 do some research and ask valid
23 questions and I think those two
24 gentlemen have the right to take that
25 time to review that because they

1 understand it's a serious issue. I
2 personally am not interested in rubber
3 stamping legislation, rubber stamping
4 contracts and memorandums of
5 understanding because that's what get
6 the city in trouble and that's what
7 has gotten to where we are today. So
8 for those two gentlemen to use some
9 common sense I commend them for that
10 because we really don't see that often
11 in our government and I'm not
12 interested in lap dogs and I'm
13 interested in people carrying the
14 water for an administration. I'm
15 interested in independent people who
16 are who are going to take the time to
17 do their homework and they're going to
18 admit when they don't understand
19 something. They're not going to
20 pretend to know, they're not going to
21 give their opinion, they're going to
22 get fact. I'm not interested in fairy
23 tales, I'm not interest fictitious
24 plans. I'm interested in fact and
25 reality because the reality is we need

1 to do something quick before this city
2 dies. As I've said before, we're on
3 the life support right now and we're
4 determining when we're going to pull
5 the plug and that's where we are right
6 now. That's the reality. Now, in a
7 dream world, delusional world, that's
8 not where we need to be. We need
9 leadership and we need it now. We
10 don't need smoke and mirrors. You
11 know, I've expressed my displeasure e
12 with the idea. It's not the first
13 time that I've talked about the idea
14 of having caucuses in the backroom.
15 It's not where it belongs. It belongs
16 out here because remember one thing,
17 that camera right there doesn't lie
18 and these meetings caucuses, serious
19 matters belong out here. Mr.
20 Abrahamsen should have came forward,
21 Mr. Courtright should be here. We've
22 been looking for him for a long time.
23 Mr. Bulzoni should be here. I mean,
24 these are discussions that should take
25 place right at this table here and

1 that's something that just really
2 upsets me is where is the
3 transparency, where is the
4 accountability. We haven't seen it in
5 over a year and really there's no sign
6 of it any time soon and that's what
7 I'm very fearful of is what kind of
8 government do we have here. And, you
9 know, we can go back and, you know,
10 point finger the Mr. Doherty for
11 things that went on and, you know, I
12 was, of course, critical of the
13 previous administration but we've
14 turned the page to a new chapter now.
15 We're now moving forward. We're going
16 into the future. We have a different
17 administration now if we don't know
18 that. And Mr. Courtright took on the
19 challenge to put his name on the
20 ballot, to be the leader of the city,
21 he understands the financial
22 challenges we face. He served on
23 council for six years, he was in the
24 Tax Office for four years. He put a
25 plan together. He stated that he was

1 going to turn the city around. This
2 is his obligation now. Now, it's his
3 turn to come forward and solve the
4 problems of this city. We're not
5 interested in what went on in the
6 previous administration. We're
7 worried about right now in the future
8 and that's where we need to be and I
9 believe that this document tonight
10 should be tabled once again because I
11 still feel that there's some serious
12 questions that need to be answered and
13 that this should not just be rubber
14 stamped through because we have a
15 history of doing that because we want
16 opt to just want to carry the water
17 for administrations and that's not
18 leadership, that's just being a
19 political lap dog and we've had a lot
20 of those around here for decades. So
21 do the right thing, follow your
22 colleagues lead here, use some common
23 sense for a change and do the right
24 thing are the taxpayers, the seniors,
25 the future generations of this city,

1 those who want to have an opportunity
2 here, that want to succeed. Look
3 around. There's no opportunity here.
4 And when you rush to decisions and you
5 rush to judgment, that's when you're
6 just going to drive the nail in the
7 coffin deeper and deeper and there
8 won't be a tomorrow. Do the right
9 thing.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr.
11 Miller. Anyone else?

12 MR. DOBZYN: Good evening. Dave
13 Dobzyn, resident of Scranton. In my
14 neighborhood we have a blight problem
15 caused by the City of Scranton DPW.
16 On the east side of Crown Avenue trash
17 is getting picked up on a spotty
18 basis. If you go up Crown Avenue or
19 up any of the side streets like Alter,
20 Willow, all the others, the recycling
21 was not removed. I would think with
22 \$300 a year trash fee if we have to
23 pay overtime, then that's what we have
24 to do because these people should not
25 have -- the one on Willow has four

1 barrels of recycling sitting in front
2 of it and there only problem is to
3 haul it back in off the street and
4 wait another week and a half. So
5 that's not acceptable. And also the
6 trash is not being picked up by
7 certain -- in certain places, not
8 courts, places. My court was fine.
9 The place, it wasn't picked up.

10 And I'd also once again like to
11 mention that we have salvage towing
12 companies and I'd like to get the city
13 to get it on a website that if you
14 have a clunker in your yard, instead
15 of getting a fine for it, you can get
16 as much as -- I've gotten \$200 for
17 literally junk, wouldn't start,
18 wouldn't run, locked up engine, \$200.
19 So, you know, when I'm done with the
20 car, it's done. Take my word for it.
21 I don't like buying new cars because I
22 don't like being in debt.

23 Also I'd like to see some kind of
24 an attempt at getting our quality of
25 life website regulations on the

1 website. You can't expect everybody
2 to know everything that's on that
3 especially if they have 15 points or
4 17 points or whatever they have. And
5 the wrong time for them to find out is
6 when they're getting a citation over
7 it and I've also read in the paper
8 today that several -- a large number
9 of people in the Hill section do
10 need -- have already received
11 citations. So we need to get that on
12 a website just like we've got for the
13 budget on the website and I guess
14 lieutenant colonel has a lot more rank
15 than I do but that's -- we really need
16 to have that on the website. People
17 are asking me and I don't know so I'm
18 going to have to go down the library,
19 I guess, hash it all out down there.
20 And despite the fact that the city
21 gets money off of me every month
22 for -- as a royalty for cable.

23 And once again there was a person
24 here that discussed certain issues
25 with zoning and condemnations, well,

1 if you wonder there's a person that
2 speaks here every week, he has a house
3 that's about twice the size of mine.
4 I have six rooms and a few small
5 others, a big basement and an attic.
6 But he tried to become a landlord, a
7 live in landlord and he was banned
8 from doing it. He lives at the end of
9 Stafford Avenue right after you go
10 down the hill, he just spoke here.
11 And if you wonder why people have sour
12 attitudes at times, he and his son are
13 living in this house and it's
14 humongous. I mean, it is a large
15 house. And an extended family once
16 owned and maybe a son and kids and who
17 knows maybe even the grand kids lived
18 all under the same roof. So it's a
19 shame that a house like that because
20 it's empty for a year or it never was
21 is being used for that purpose because
22 it's totally unproductive.

23 And once again call your state
24 assemblyman and tell him to forget
25 about playing with the state

1 constitution to liberalize tax exempts
2 and especially public employees if you
3 want to a raise. And also call the
4 government, your federal
5 representatives in Washington over
6 trade pacts. Fifty percent of wage
7 loss equals 50 percent wage tax loss
8 and that's where we are losing big
9 time because people have gone
10 backwards over the years. It's a
11 shame. On the police contract I would
12 say sort of ouch on the raises but the
13 insurance and stuff is a concern. It
14 is a concern. You've got to lock that
15 in to whoever it's going to involve or
16 otherwise we might be headed for more
17 trouble. Thank you and have a good
18 night.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr.
20 Dobzyn. Anyone's else who wishes to
21 address council?

22 MS. O'MALLEY: Good evening. My
23 name is Barbara O'Malley. I'm a
24 taxpayer and resident of the City of
25 Scranton.

1 MR. MCGOFF: Welcome back, Mrs.
2 O'Malley.

3 MS. O'MALLEY: Nice to see you,
4 too, Mr. McGoff.

5 I'm here tonight to talk about
6 7M, the police contract. This is
7 really an extension of a conversation
8 that I had with fellow taxpayers and
9 citizens last night at dinner when we
10 were discussing this. And overall
11 there's concerns about the contract.
12 But the biggest concern that's been
13 expressed is related to the extension
14 of health care benefits for employees
15 hired after January 1st, 1994, who
16 have 25 years of service. And our
17 question is really simple. Why can't
18 those employees be named in this
19 contract so that it's not open ended?
20 That would afford protection to the
21 citizens and the taxpayers of
22 Scranton. Without that, without that
23 language in the contract from what I
24 read in the newspaper and projections
25 and I understand that there are

1 projections, it's not set in concrete,
2 but it could open the door to
3 tremendous expense in 2012 and going
4 forward. And it seems to me that it
5 would be reasonable to include that.
6 And I don't understand why. I don't
7 understand what the issue is, why that
8 can't be in there. And I have read
9 the newspaper and I haven't seen -- I
10 haven't seen an explanation for and I
11 was hoping that one could be offered
12 tonight.

13 Mr. McGoff, you and I both have
14 worked with children and when you work
15 with children. Investing in the
16 future. I know that it's -- you know,
17 I'm a teacher of a preschool children
18 so 2012 are or 2021 doesn't seem that
19 far off to me. And when I work with
20 them everyday, I'm thinking about
21 them, I'm thinking about their future.
22 I'm thinking about where they're going
23 to be. So it is unconscionable for me
24 to say I'm worried about today and not
25 what's going to be happen in five or

1 six or seven years. And I think as an
2 educator that has to be in your DNA as
3 well. So I am asking, one, why this
4 language can't be included in it and
5 protect the citizens of this city. I
6 think that's your responsibility and
7 to do that I would assume that this
8 would have to be tabled until such
9 revisions and I would appreciate an
10 explanation and I would hope that it
11 could be tabled. Good evening.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mrs.
13 O'Malley. Anyone else who wishes to
14 address council?

15 (No response.)

16 MS. REED: 5th ORDER. 5A
17 MOTIONS.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Wechsler.

19 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr.
20 McGoff. Last night I was able to
21 attend two neighborhood meetings, one
22 ins West Scranton and I made it to the
23 end of the Hill Neighborhood
24 Association meeting. The West
25 Scranton meeting was quite interesting

1 because there was a new beat patrol
2 officer there whose been on patrol for
3 about 17 -- I think 20 days he's been
4 on there. I think he represents what
5 we're looking for in our beat patrol
6 officers. To date he's written
7 several warnings to homeowners. He's
8 issued several parking citations and
9 also made one drug arrest and this is
10 the focus of what we like to see from
11 our beat patrol officers.

12 I did not have an opportunity to
13 hear what was discussed at the Hill
14 Neighborhood Association meeting but I
15 was quite impressed by the crowd that
16 was there. I got there around 8:30.
17 I think there was still about 100
18 people at the meeting. Once again
19 these are people that are interested
20 in their neighborhood and are working
21 independently to make the City of
22 Scranton a better place and I just
23 want to tell them how much I
24 appreciate their efforts.

25 My other comments will be shared

1 later on. Thank you.

2 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. Just a
3 few brief comments and I will hold
4 most of my comments as well for when
5 the votes come up.

6 Two items. We did receive two
7 letters, one from Commissioner Patrick
8 O'Malley regarding the city
9 revitalization improvement zone and
10 this was well publicized in the paper.
11 This is something that Senator Blake
12 has been working on and although me
13 and Senator Blake don't see eye to eye
14 on many things this is one we do.
15 With the problem with why Scranton
16 can't take advantage of this
17 opportunities is our classification,
18 that Scranton is still considered a
19 Class 2A city, the one in the state
20 which at the time everyone thought it
21 would be a benefit because Scranton
22 only legislation could be passed. But
23 in this scenario Scranton is being
24 left out of a program that really
25 can't help the city. So with my

1 colleagues agreement if we can send a
2 letter to Senator Blake and also to
3 the state asking that the city be
4 included, Class 2A cities be included
5 in this program. Is that agreeable?

6 MR. MCGOFF: Fine.

7 MR. ROGAN: Great. And secondly
8 we received a letter from Colt's
9 regarding an issue where there's a no
10 parking sign that's missing at a bus
11 stop at the corner of Spruce Street
12 and North Washington. I know there is
13 a shortage of signs, of no parking
14 signs going out to different areas of
15 city but this is an area that I
16 certainly believe needs to be
17 addressed quickly. So if we can pass
18 this along as well. I do see that
19 it's from the Executive Director of
20 Colt's. So this is a pressing need if
21 cars are parking in front of this bus
22 stop, they can't legally tow them
23 without a sign. So just one other
24 issue to bring up and I will hold the
25 rest of my comments for this evening.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Evans?

3 MS. EVANS: Nothing at this time.
4 I'm going to reserve comment till
5 agenda items.

6 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Gaughan.

7 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. I would
8 like to make a motion that we table
9 agenda Item 7M, the memorandum of
10 understanding between the Fraternal
11 Order of Police and the city of
12 Scranton until the adoption of the
13 city's 2015 revised recovery plan.

14 MR. EVANS: Second.

15 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the
17 question. I'm making this motion
18 tonight in light of our receipt of a
19 draft copy of 2015 revised recovery
20 plan from PEL that we received this
21 week. The revised recovery plan will
22 appear in our agenda next week and
23 representatives from PEL, our recovery
24 coordinator will attend a public
25 caucus here in council chambers. In

1 the revised recovery plan there are a
2 number of workforce mandates or costs
3 containment mandates as it relates to
4 collective bargaining. Some of these
5 mandates include the sick day policy,
6 retiree health care, elimination of
7 minimum manning, longevity pay,
8 elimination of past practices, among
9 other things. The recovery plan
10 explicitly states that the work force
11 provisions shall only be applicable to
12 collective bargaining agreements
13 executed after the adoption of the
14 revised recovery plan. I believe it
15 would be extremely irresponsible to
16 pass this contract tonight in advance
17 of the adoption of the revised
18 recovery plan. If we do this, we
19 would essentially be circumventing our
20 own recovery plan and binding
21 ourselves to a contract for the next
22 six years guaranteeing that we would
23 not be able to implement any of the
24 workforce mandates that are afforded
25 to the city in the revised recovery

1 plan. I would urge my colleagues to
2 table this legislation until after we
3 have adopted 2015 revised recovery
4 plan and had a chance to have a public
5 caucus with our recovery coordinator,
6 PEL. And my question would be to
7 everyone, how can we bargain a
8 contract against our own recovery
9 plan. Thank you.

10 MR. ROGAN: I would just respond.
11 We are -- this contract wasn't
12 negotiated outside of our own recovery
13 plan. The plan you're referring to is
14 only proposed. We will be having a
15 caucus next week and maybe it will
16 pass, maybe it won't. If we don't act
17 prior to this plan, the current
18 contract will go on for three years.
19 So it will be three years where
20 basically we'll be under the old
21 contract without the increased pension
22 contributions, without the lower
23 starting salaries, without the manning
24 changes to reduce overtime. So I
25 think these actions need to be taken

1 now to save us money. I think we do
2 need to move forward with the vote.

3 MR. MCGOFF: I would just like to
4 also comment on the mandates that are
5 in the recovery plan are for estimated
6 savings that could be achieved during
7 the course of the recovery plan. It
8 was stated by the recovery plan
9 coordinator that the estimated savings
10 in this proposed contract would be
11 within the parameters of their
12 mandates. And if that were true, then
13 it would be perfectly acceptable. In
14 both cases we're looking at estimates.
15 PEL is estimating what could be saved
16 through their mandates. We're
17 estimating the contract and if there
18 are estimates for what could be
19 achieved in savings through the
20 contract changes. Again, it comes
21 down to, you know, which estimates do
22 you feel comfortable with. So --

23 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. McGoff, I'd
24 like to just echo a little bit of what
25 you're saying. The problem with the

1 PEL plan is that there's mandates but
2 there's no plan to meet the mandates.
3 The contract that's in front of us is
4 a plan to meet those mandates prior to
5 the plan being issued.

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Just to respond. I
7 don't understand this whole thing.
8 We're going to pass a contract that
9 violates our own recovery plan --

10 MR. ROGAN: It does not.

11 MR. EVANS: It violates the
12 current recovery plan --

13 MR. GAUGHAN: It violates the
14 current recovery plan and -- I mean,
15 next week we're going to introduce a
16 revised recovery plan with specific
17 mandates, we're going to be going
18 against our own recovery plan. I
19 mean, this is the point, then why do
20 we have a recovery coordinator, why do
21 we have a plan? Let's just throw
22 everything out the window. To me it
23 doesn't make any sense. Let's wait
24 until we get PEL in front of us, the
25 recovery coordinator and until the

1 public can see what's in this revised
2 recovery plan.

3 MR. ROGAN: The city can pass
4 whatever they want in a recovery plan.
5 It's just a piece of paper. A
6 contract --

7 MR. GAUGHAN: Well, obviously
8 because we never -- it just seems that
9 we never follow it.

10 MR. ROGAN: And that's why we
11 have a 20 plus million judgement
12 against the city. To that point it's
13 already been ruled that Act 111 is
14 superior to Act 47 unfortunately. So
15 if the city does move forward with the
16 recovery plan and we can put in there
17 to save 50 percent from union
18 concessions, it doesn't mean it's
19 going to happen. It has to be
20 negotiated between the administration
21 and union and ratified by council. So
22 you can put whatever you want in a
23 recovery plan. It doesn't mean it's
24 realistic to receive that concession
25 from the union. This plan is in front

1 of us. The items in the recovery
2 plan, the unions may say they don't
3 want to do that, the administration
4 may say they don't want to move
5 forward with those. And then we wine
6 up in arbitration and then we would be
7 stuck holding the bag with another 40
8 million dollar tab like we did in the
9 past and actually still owe that bill
10 from the last time we went down the
11 same path.

12 MS. EVANS: I would say that in
13 my opinion the contract language and
14 the recovery plan should at least be
15 in sync. History has told US in the
16 past that when we try to implement
17 bits and pieces of recovery plan and
18 not there have been others, that's
19 when we fail. Listen, our financial
20 situation is fragile and so is our
21 recovery so at this point I concur
22 with Councilman Gaughan we should
23 delay on the contract, any contract
24 approval until our plan has been
25 present and voted on.

1 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else?

2 (No response.)

3 MR. MCGOFF: All in favor of
4 tabling Item 7M signify by saying aye.

5 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

6 MR. EVANS: Aye.

7 MR. MCGOFF: Opposed?

8 MR. ROGAN: No.

9 MR. WECHSLER: No.

10 MR. MCGOFF: No. Motion is
11 defeated.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: And that's all I
13 have until agenda items. Thank you.

14 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr.
15 Gaughan. A couple of just very quick
16 comments. First of all, as far as Mr.
17 Bulzoni and the resident's requirement
18 is concerned, that is at this point in
19 time an administration initiative as
20 to whether they will put a waiver
21 forward or, you know, ask for his
22 change of residence or ask for his,
23 you know, resignation. That is their
24 decision. I would say that we would
25 comment when appropriate legislation

1 is before us. I think it would be
2 preemptive to make any comments before
3 a decision is made by the
4 administration.

5 As far as one of the comments
6 about salary schedules for the new
7 hires, it doesn't really have to do
8 with the contract as such but there
9 are many professions as Mr. Gaughan
10 knows, you know, teacher contracts all
11 have salary schedules based on
12 longevity. That's not an uncommon
13 thing to do. Many professions do
14 that. You know, the more years you
15 serve or the higher, you know, the
16 more experience you gain, your salary
17 increases. So to say that that's
18 something that's, you know,
19 inappropriate I think is a little bit
20 off base.

21 And as far as the landfill
22 question that's concerned, every
23 council member has already stated what
24 their position is on the landfill.
25 And as a matter of fact, council has

1 sent a letter to DEP voicing their
2 opinion on the landfill. So the
3 comments that council has done nothing
4 on that are again somewhat
5 inappropriate. We have taken action
6 as is appropriate to our duties.

7 And the last thing, a number of
8 people have commented about road
9 conditions, especially concerning pave
10 cuts where maybe work has been done on
11 a street and one of the problems that
12 occurs during the winter is a
13 subsidence, you know, of those
14 patches. If, in fact -- and I know
15 that they have been working to take
16 care of some of these situations but
17 if there is a severe case of a
18 subsidence and pave cut somewhere in
19 your neighborhood, please, you know,
20 make a call to DPW and make them aware
21 of that so that they can contact the
22 appropriate people to take care of the
23 situation. I don't believe that the
24 city is responsible for all of those.
25 That sometimes it's the responsibility

1 of the -- whatever entity it has that
2 actually did the work on that street
3 so they would be made aware of it so
4 they can rectify the situation. And
5 that's all I have for now other
6 comments for the legislation.

7 MS. REED: 5B. FOR INTRODUCTION
8 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING FILE OF THE
9 COUNCIL NO. 58, 2014, AN ORDINANCE
10 ENTITLED "GENERAL CITY OPERATING
11 BUDGET 2015" BY CREATING A NEW
12 EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT NO.
13 01.401.15333.4299 ENTITLED
14 NON-DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURES OPR TSF
15 TO DEBT SVC LANDMARK RESERVE ACCOUNT
16 AND TRANSFERRING FUNDS FROM ACCOUNT
17 NO. 01.401.15319.4299 NON-DEPARTMENTAL
18 EXPENDITURES OPER TSF TO DEBT SVC
19 SCRANTON PARKING AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE
20 FOR MONTHLY DEBT SERVICE PAYMENTS TO
21 LANDMARK BANK.

22 MR. MCGOFF: At this time I'll
23 entertain a motion that Item 5B be
24 introduced into its proper committee.

25 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

1 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

2 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

3 (No response.)

4 MR. MCGOFF: All those in favor
5 of introduction signify by saying aye.

6 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

7 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

8 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

9 MR. EVANS: Aye.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed?

11 (No response.)

12 MR. MCGOFF: Ayes have it and so
13 moved.

14 MS. REED: 5C. FOR INTRODUCTION
15 AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND
16 OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO
17 EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO A LEASE
18 AGREEMENT WITH NORTHEAST INSPECTION
19 CONSULTANTS ("NEIC") FOR THE FORMER
20 SUPPLY ROOM IN THE LICENSING,
21 INSPECTIONS AND PERMITS DEPARTMENT
22 (LIPS), FOURTH FLOOR, CITY HALL TO BE
23 USED FOR THIRD-PARTY INSPECTIONS.

24 MR. MCGOFF: At this time I'll
25 entertain a motion that Item 5C be

1 introduced into its proper committee.

2 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

3 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

4 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

5 (No response.)

6 MR. MCGOFF: All those in favor

7 signify by saying aye.

8 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

9 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

10 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

11 MR. EVANS: Aye.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed?

13 (No response.)

14 MR. MCGOFF: Ayes have it and so
15 moved.

16 MS. REED: 5D. FOR INTRODUCTION
17 A RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR
18 AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS
19 TO EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT
20 WITH NORTHEAST INSPECTION CONSULTANTS
21 (NEIC) TO PROVIDE THIRD PARTY UCC
22 ENFORCEMENT FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON
23 FOR A PERIOD OF THREE (3) YEARS FROM
24 FEBRUARY 6, 2015 THROUGH FEBRUARY 6,
25 2018.

1 MR. MCGOFF: At this time I'll
2 entertain a motion that Item 5D be
3 introduced into its proper committee.

4 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

6 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

7 (No response.)

8 MR. MCGOFF: All those in favor
9 signify by saying aye.

10 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

13 MR. EVANS: Aye.

14 MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed?

15 (No response.)

16 MR. MCGOFF: Ayes have it and so
17 moved.

18 MS. REED: 5E. FOR INTRODUCTION
19 A RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR
20 AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS
21 TO EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO A
22 RIGHT-OF-WAY AGREEMENT WITH PPL
23 ELECTRIC UTILITIES CORPORATION ("PPL")
24 IN ORDER TO ROUTE POWER TO THE COLTS
25 INTERMODAL TRANSPORTATION CENTER ALONG

1 LACKAWANNA AVENUE AND CLIFF STREET IN
2 THE CITY OF SCRANTON.

3 MR. MCGOFF: At this time I'll
4 entertain a motion that Item 5E be
5 introduced into its proper committee.

6 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

7 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

8 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

9 (No response.)

10 MR. MCGOFF: All those in favor
11 signify by saying aye.

12 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

13 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

14 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

15 MR. EVANS: Aye.

16 MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed?

17 (No response.)

18 MR. MCGOFF: Ayes have it and so
19 moved.

20 MS. REED: 6TH ORDER. 6A. NO
21 BUSINESS AT THIS TIME.

22 7TH ORDER. 7A. FOR CONSIDERATION
23 BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES FOR ADOPTION
24 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 71, 2015
25 REPEALING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 50,

1 2014 ENTITLED "CREATING AND
2 ESTABLISHING SPECIAL CITY ACCOUNT NO.
3 02.229613 ENTITLED "LIQUID FUELS" FOR
4 THE RECEIPT AND DISBURSEMENT OF THOSE
5 FUNDS RECEIVED FOR THIS PURPOSE".

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

9 MR. ROGAN: Second.

10 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?
11 (No response.)

12 MR. MCGOFF: Roll call, please.

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

14 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

16 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

17 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

18 MR. EVANS: Yes.

19 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

21 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby
23 declare Item 7A legally and lawfully
24 adopted.

25 MS. REED: 7B. FOR CONSIDERATION

1 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE -FOR
2 ADOPTION FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 72,
3 2015 AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
4 58, 2014, AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED
5 "GENERAL CITY OPERATING BUDGET 2015"
6 BY ESTABLISHING SEPARATE "03" FUND
7 ACCOUNTS TO DEFINE ACTUAL LIQUID FUEL
8 EXPENDITURES THROUGH THE "03" FUND
9 DESIGNATION; BY REDESIGNATING FUNDS
10 FROM CERTAIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC
11 WORKS AND DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING,
12 INSPECTIONS AND PERMITS ACCOUNTS
13 LISTED BELOW TO THE "03" ACCOUNTS; THE
14 DEPARTMENT, BUREAU AND LINE ITEM
15 DESCRIPTION WILL REMAIN THE SAME.

16 MR. MCGOFF: What is the
17 recommendation of the Chair for the
18 Committee on Finance?

19 MS. EVANS: As Chairperson for
20 the Committee on Finance, I recommend
21 final passage of Item 7B.

22 MR. ROGAN: Second.

23 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

24 (No response.)

25 MR. MCGOFF: Roll call, please.

1 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

2 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

3 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

4 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

5 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

6 MR. EVANS: Yes.

7 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby
11 declare Item 7B legally and lawfully
12 adopted.

13 MS. REED: 7C PREVIOUSLY TABLED.
14 7D. FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE
15 ON FINANCE FOR ADOPTION FILE OF THE
16 COUNCIL NO. 74, 2015 AMENDING FILE OF
17 THE COUNCIL NO. 6, 1976 ENTITLED "AN
18 ORDINANCE (AS AMENDED) IMPOSING A TAX
19 FOR GENERAL REVENUE PURPOSES ON THE
20 TRANSFER OF REAL PROPERTY SITUATE
21 WITHIN THE CITY OF SCRANTON;
22 PRESCRIBING AND REGULATING THE METHOD
23 OF EVIDENCING THE PAYMENT OF SUCH TAX;
24 CONFERRING POWERS AND IMPOSING DUTIES
25 UPON CERTAIN PERSONS, AND PROVIDING

1 PENALTIES", BY IMPOSING THE RATE OF
2 THE REALTY TRANSFER TAX AT TWO AND
3 NINE TENTHS PERCENT (2.9%) FOR
4 CALENDAR YEAR 2015 AND THE SAME SHALL
5 REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT
6 ANNUALLY THEREAFTER.

7 MR. MCGOFF: What is the
8 recommendation with the Chair for the
9 Committee on Finance?

10 MS. EVANS: As Chairperson for
11 the Committee on Finance, I recommend
12 final passage of Item 7D.

13 MR. ROGAN: Second.

14 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

15 (No response.)

16 MR. MCGOFF: Roll call, please.

17 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

18 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

19 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

20 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

21 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

22 MR. EVANS: Yes.

23 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

25 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

1 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby
2 declare Item 7D legally and lawfully
3 adopted.

4 MS. REED: 7E. FOR CONSIDERATION
5 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE -FOR
6 ADOPTION FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 75,
7 2015 AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
8 7, 1976, ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE (AS
9 AMENDED) IMPOSING A MERCANTILE LICENSE
10 TAX OF 2 MILLS FOR THE YEAR 1976 AND
11 ANNUALLY THEREAFTER UPON PERSONS
12 ENGAGING IN CERTAIN OCCUPATIONS AND
13 BUSINESSES THEREIN; PROVIDING FOR ITS
14 LEVY AND COLLECTION AND FOR THE
15 ISSUANCE OF MERCANTILE LICENSES;
16 CONFERRING AND IMPOSING POWERS AND
17 DUTIES UPON THE TAX COLLECTOR OF THE
18 CITY OF SCRANTON; AND IMPOSING
19 PENALTIES", BY IMPOSING THE MERCANTILE
20 LICENSE TAX AT ONE (1) MILL (.001) FOR
21 CALENDAR YEAR 2015 AND THE SAME SHALL
22 REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT
23 ANNUALLY THEREAFTER.

24 MR. MCGOFF: What is the
25 recommendation of the Chair for the

1 Committee on Finance?

2 MS. EVANS: As Chairperson for
3 the Committee on Finance, I recommend
4 final passage of Item 7E.

5 MR. ROGAN: Second.

6 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

7 (No response.)

8 MR. MCGOFF: Roll call, please.

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

10 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

12 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

14 MR. EVANS: Yes.

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

17 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby
19 declare Item 7E legally and lawfully
20 adopted.

21 MS. REED: 7F. FOR CONSIDERATION
22 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE -FOR
23 ADOPTION FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 76,
24 2015 AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
25 8, 1976, ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE (AS

1 AMENDED) PROVIDING FOR THE GENERAL
2 REVENUE BY IMPOSING A TAX AT THE RATE
3 OF TWO (2) MILLS UPON THE PRIVILEGE OF
4 OPERATING OR CONDUCTING BUSINESS IN
5 THE CITY OF SCRANTON AS MEASURED BY
6 THE GROSS RECEIPTS THEREFROM;
7 REQUIRING REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT OF
8 THE TAX AS CONDITION TO THE CONDUCTING
9 OF SUCH BUSINESS; PROVIDING FOR THE
10 LEVY AND COLLECTION OF SUCH TAX;
11 PRESCRIBING SUCH REQUIREMENTS FOR
12 RETURNS AND RECORDS; CONFERRING POWERS
13 AND DUTIES UPON THE TAX COLLECTOR; AND
14 IMPOSING PENALTIES", BY IMPOSING THE
15 BUSINESS PRIVILEGE TAX AT THE RATE OF
16 ONE (1) MILL (.001) FOR CALENDAR YEAR
17 2015 AND THE SAME SHALL REMAIN IN FULL
18 FORCE AND EFFECT ANNUALLY THEREAFTER.

19 MR. MCGOFF: What is the
20 recommendation of the Chair for the
21 Committee on Finance?

22 MS. EVANS: As Chairperson for
23 the Committee on Finance, I recommend
24 final passage of Item 7F.

25 MR. ROGAN: Second.

1 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

2 (No response.)

3 MR. MCGOFF: Roll call, please.

4 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

6 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

7 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

8 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

9 MR. EVANS: Yes.

10 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

12 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby
14 declare Item 7F legally and lawfully
15 adopted.

16 MS. REED: 7G. FOR CONSIDERATION
17 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE -FOR
18 ADOPTION FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 77,
19 2015 AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
20 11, 1976, ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE (AS
21 AMENDED) ENACTING, IMPOSING A TAX FOR
22 GENERAL REVENUE PURPOSES IN THE AMOUNT
23 OF TWO PERCENT (2%) ON EARNED INCOME
24 AND NET PROFITS ON PERSONS,
25 INDIVIDUALS, ASSOCIATIONS AND

1 BUSINESSSES WHO ARE RESIDENTS OF THE
2 CITY OF SCRANTON, OR NON-RESIDENTS OF
3 THE CITY OF SCRANTON, FOR WORK DONE,
4 SERVICES PERFORMED OR BUSINESS
5 CONDUCTED WITHIN THE CITY OF SCRANTON,
6 REQUIRING THE FILING OF RETURNS BY
7 TAXPAYERS SUBJECT TO THE TAX;
8 REQUIRING EMPLOYERS TO COLLECT THE TAX
9 AT SOURCE; PROVIDING FOR THE
10 ADMINISTRATION, COLLECTION AND
11 ENFORCEMENT OF THE SAID TAX; AND
12 IMPOSING PENALTIES FOR THE
13 VIOLATIONS", BY REENACTING THE
14 IMPOSITION OF THE WAGE TAX AT TWO AND
15 FOUR TENTHS (2.4%) PERCENT ON EARNED
16 INCOME FOR RESIDENTS AND ONE (1%)
17 PERCENT ON EARNED INCOME FOR
18 NON-RESIDENTS OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON,
19 FOR WORK DONE, SERVICES PERFORMED OR
20 BUSINESS CONDUCTED WITHIN THE CITY OF
21 SCRANTON FOR THE YEAR 2015 AND THE
22 SAME SHALL REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND
23 EFFECT ANNUALLY THEREAFTER.

24 MR. MCGOFF: What is the
25 recommendation of the Chair for the

1 Committee on Finance?

2 MS. EVANS: As Chairperson for
3 the Committee on Finance, I recommend
4 final passage of Item 7G.

5 MR. ROGAN: Second.

6 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

7 (No response.)

8 MR. MCGOFF: Roll call, please.

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

10 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

12 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

14 MR. EVANS: Yes.

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

17 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby
19 declare Item 7G legally and lawfully
20 adopted.

21 MS. REED: 7H. FOR CONSIDERATION
22 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE -FOR
23 ADOPTION FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 78,
24 2015 AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
25 17, 1994 ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE (AS

1 AMENDED) AUTHORIZING THE GOVERNING
2 BODY OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO ENACT
3 'A WASTE DISPOSAL AND COLLECTION FEE'
4 FOR THE PURPOSE OF RAISING REVENUE TO
5 COVER THE WASTE DISPOSAL AND
6 COLLECTION COSTS INCURRED BY THE CITY
7 OF SCRANTON FOR THE DISPOSAL OF
8 REFUSE", BY IMPOSING A WASTE DISPOSAL
9 AND COLLECTION FEE OF \$300.00 FOR
10 CALENDAR YEAR 2015 AND THE SAME SHALL
11 REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT
12 ANNUALLY THEREAFTER.

13 MR. MCGOFF: What is the
14 recommendation of the Chair for the
15 Committee on Finance?

16 MS. EVANS: As Chairperson for
17 the Committee on Finance, I recommend
18 final passage of Item 7H.

19 MR. ROGAN: Second.

20 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

21 (No response.)

22 MR. MCGOFF: Roll call, please.

23 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

24 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

25 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

1 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

2 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

3 MR. EVANS: Yes.

4 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

5 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

6 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

7 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby
8 declare Item 7H legally and lawfully
9 adopted.

10 MS. REED: 7I. FOR CONSIDERATION
11 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE -FOR
12 ADOPTION FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 79,
13 2015 AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
14 145 OF 2007 ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE
15 RENAMING THE EMERGENCY AND MUNICIPAL
16 SERVICES TAX ("EMST") TO LOCAL SERVICE
17 TAX ("LST")" AND BY IMPOSING A
18 WITHHOLDING OF \$52.00 FOR THE CALENDAR
19 YEAR 2015 AND THE SAME SHALL REMAIN IN
20 FULL FORCE AND EFFECT ANNUALLY
21 THEREAFTER.

22 MR. MCGOFF: What is the
23 recommendation of the Chair for the
24 Committee on Finance?

25 MS. EVANS: As Chairperson for

1 the Committee on Finance, I recommend
2 final passage of Item 7I.

3 MR. ROGAN: Second.

4 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

5 (No response.)

6 MR. MCGOFF: Roll call, please.

7 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

8 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

10 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

12 MR. EVANS: Yes.

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

16 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby
17 declare Item 7I legally and lawfully
18 adopted.

19 MS. REED: 7J. FOR CONSIDERATION
20 BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES FOR ADOPTION
21 RESOLUTION NO. 115, 2015 REPEALING
22 RESOLUTION NO. 103, 2014 APPOINTMENT
23 OF KRISTIN JENKINS, 818 CAPOUSE
24 AVENUE, SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA, 18509
25 AS A MEMBER OF THE SCRANTON MUNICIPAL

1 RECREATION AUTHORITY. MS. JENKINS
2 WILL BE REPLACING ANTHONY MARINUCCI
3 WHO RESIGNED EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 2,
4 2014. MS. JENKINS WILL FULFILL THE
5 UNEXPIRED TERM OF MR. MARINUCCI WHICH
6 WILL EXPIRE ON JUNE 17, 2015. MR.
7 MARINUCCI RESCINDED HIS RESIGNATION.

8 MR. MCGOFF: As Chair for the
9 Committee on Rules, I recommend final
10 passage of Item 7J.

11 MR. ROGAN: Second.

12 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

13 (No response.)

14 MR. MCGOFF: Roll call, please.

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

16 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

17 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

18 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

19 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

20 MR. EVANS: Yes.

21 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

23 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

24 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby
25 declare Item 7J legally and lawfully

1 adopted.

2 MS. REED: 7K. FOR CONSIDERATION
3 BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES FOR ADOPTION
4 RESOLUTION NO. 116, 2015 APPOINTMENT
5 OF KRISTIN JENKINS, 818 CAPOUSE
6 AVENUE, SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA, 18509,
7 AS A MEMBER OF THE SCRANTON MUNICIPAL
8 RECREATION AUTHORITY. MS. JENKINS
9 WILL FULFILL THE UNEXPIRED TERM OF
10 MARCIE RIEBE WHOSE TERM IS SCHEDULED
11 TO EXPIRE ON MARCH 1, 2016.

12 MR. MCGOFF: As chair for the
13 Committee on Rules, I recommend final
14 passage of Item 7K.

15 MR. ROGAN: Second.

16 MR. MCGOFF: On the question.

17 (No response.)

18 MR. MCGOFF: Roll call, please.

19 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

20 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

21 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

22 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

23 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

24 MR. EVANS: Yes.

25 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

1 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

2 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby
4 declare Item 7K legally and lawfully
5 adopted.

6 MS. REED: 7L. FOR CONSIDERATION
7 BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES FOR ADOPTION
8 RESOLUTION NO. 117, 2015 APPOINTMENT
9 OF JUDE J. MCANDREW, 745 NORTH BROMLEY
10 AVENUE, SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA, 18504,
11 AS A MEMBER OF THE SCRANTON MUNICIPAL
12 RECREATION AUTHORITY. MR. MCANDREW
13 WILL BE REPLACING JACK DELEO WHO
14 RESIGNED JANUARY 6, 2015. MR.
15 MCANDREW WILL FULFILL THE UNEXPIRED
16 TERM OF MR. DELEO WHOSE TERM IS
17 SCHEDULED TO EXPIRE ON DECEMBER 31,
18 2017.

19 MR. MCGOFF: As Chair for the
20 Committee on Rules, I recommend final
21 passage of Item 7L.

22 MR. ROGAN: Second.

23 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?
24 Just one question. Have we received a
25 resume from --

1 MS. REED: Yes, Mr. McGoff.

2 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Roll

3 call, please.

4 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

6 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

7 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

8 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

9 MR. EVANS: Yes.

10 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

12 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby
14 declare Item 7L legally and lawfully
15 adopted.

16 MS. REED: 7M. FOR CONSIDERATION
17 BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES FOR ADOPTION
18 RESOLUTION NO. 118, 2015 AUTHORIZING
19 THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY
20 OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO A
21 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BY AND
22 BETWEEN THE CITY OF SCRANTON AND LODGE
23 NO.2 OF THE FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE.

24 MR. MCGOFF: As Chair for the
25 Committee on Rules, I recommend final

1 passage of Item 7M.

2 MR. ROGAN: Second.

3 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

4 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the
5 question. I will voting against this
6 legislation tonight for several
7 reasons. When I first heard the news
8 that the police union had opened their
9 contract, I was genuinely encouraged
10 as I think everyone on council was and
11 realize that it is very rare for any
12 union to open up their contract. My
13 initial encouragement solely turned to
14 doubt and confusion. The
15 administration's lack of transparency
16 after it held its press conference
17 January 7th touting savings was simply
18 ridiculous. Trying to get information
19 and backup documentation was pulling
20 teeth and became very frustrated.
21 Over the past two weeks I've submitted
22 numerous specific questions to the
23 administration concerning the
24 revisions to this contract. I asked
25 their responses to be provided in

1 writing and as of today, I have not
2 received one response. This is
3 outrageous and truly unacceptable. As
4 I've mentioned for the past two weeks
5 as we've debated this contract, the
6 whole purpose for asking for
7 concessions was to address the city's
8 financial crisis with the goal of long
9 term structural change that would
10 result in long term savings. I was
11 under the assumption that the mayor
12 and his administration understood that
13 Scranton is in no position and under
14 no obligation to offer additional
15 benefits or concessions that would
16 cost city taxpayers in the future.
17 Apparently my assumption was wrong.
18 There are revisions to this contract
19 which I feel will be costly to the
20 city in the short, immediate and how
21 long term. Just to briefly recap.
22 The health care provision in this
23 contract, the mayor agreed to give
24 back healthcare benefits to employees
25 and their spouses hired after January

1 1st, 1994. The contract has been
2 debated and discussed the past two
3 weeks is extremely ambiguous and may
4 cost the city dearly in the future.
5 And I think Mrs. O'Malley who got up
6 to speak before hit the nail on the
7 head. Why can't we put the six people
8 who are targeted for this health care
9 in the contract? No one has been able
10 to answer that question and that is
11 truly concerning. And I asked that
12 question in the caucus two weeks ago
13 and the city's labor attorney said,
14 "Well, we know who the six people
15 are." And my response was, "Well,
16 then why don't we put that in the
17 contract." And I don't know
18 understand that part. The mayor
19 agreed to give a nine percent raise to
20 employee from 2017 to 2021. The mayor
21 revised the sick time policy to
22 include a more generous payout and the
23 cap has been taken off how many sick
24 days an employee can accumulate. In
25 the 2015 budget Mayor Courtright added

1 over a million dollars in
2 discretionary expenditures, salary
3 increases, new positions and
4 departmental expenditures and the
5 salary increases that I calculated
6 were not contractual. If the savings
7 from the police contract are realized
8 at a million dollars, the city ends up
9 coming out even as it will be used to
10 pay for the mayor's increases in his
11 2015 budget. So this whole thing ends
12 up being a wash and we really don't
13 save any money. The real danger in my
14 opinion of passing this contract is
15 the long term effect I believe it will
16 have on the city and the city
17 taxpayers. As I mentioned earlier in
18 my motion to table this legislation,
19 council will be introducing a revised
20 recovery plan next week. There are
21 numerous workforce mandates in the
22 recovery plan that directly contradict
23 some of the revisions that the mayor
24 has made to the police contract. For
25 example and probably more importantly

1 the healthcare mandate in the revised
2 recovery plan states that any
3 collective bargaining agreement
4 executed after the adoption of the
5 revised recovery plan shall not
6 provide any retiree healthcare
7 benefits to any current or future city
8 employee who retires from city
9 employment for the period 2015 to 2018
10 and indefinitely thereafter unless
11 modified in the subsequent revised
12 recovery plan. So we are
13 contradicting ourselves by passing
14 this contract in light what it says in
15 our own recovery plan. There also is
16 a sick day mandate in the revised
17 recovery plan that says, "A city
18 employee will be eligible for a sick
19 day buyout of a maximum of 120 days
20 only upon an employee's death or
21 retirement at the rate of 50 percent
22 of the employee's base salary or base
23 hourly wage at the time of death or
24 retirement. So, again, directly
25 contradicting our own revisory

1 recovery plan by what we included in
2 this contract. Passing the police
3 contract tonight as I just said will
4 directly contradict the revised
5 recovery plan we will be introducing
6 next week. On what planet and in what
7 universe does this make any sense.
8 It's obvious that the passage of the
9 police contract tonight is an attempt
10 to do an end around the revised
11 recovery plan in Act 47. We have
12 bargained against ourselves and our
13 own interests and this is in my
14 opinion insanely irresponsible. The
15 other damaging long term effect as I
16 mentioned last week is extending the
17 contract until 2021. As I explained
18 last week we are shackling ourselves
19 financially past the Act 47 deadline.
20 We are tying the city's hands in 2017
21 when the city must apply for a three
22 year extension and prepare a
23 three-year exit plan to get out of Act
24 47 distressed status. This extended
25 contract will be in effect for an

1 additional year after the final Act 47
2 deadline of 2020 which, again, makes
3 absolutely no sense. And let's not
4 forget what the Amoroso plan which
5 Mayor Courtright adopted last year
6 says and this is also included in the
7 revised recovery replan. Each
8 stakeholder must genuinely give
9 something and become a true part of
10 the recovery effort. There cannot be
11 any stakeholders who benefit unusually
12 from any of the proposed changes or
13 really any who simply do not share in
14 the burden. I would hope that my
15 colleagues can see that this is not a
16 good deal for the city and its
17 taxpayers in the short term,
18 intermediate term or the long term.
19 Extending this contract until 2021 in
20 light of the revised recovery and our
21 Act 47 distressed status defies logic.
22 We are essentially lobbying against
23 ourselves by passing this contract and
24 we are intentionally skirting our own
25 revised recovery plan. The citizens

1 of Scranton simply cannot afford
2 contracts like this anymore. After
3 reviewing this contract if this is
4 what Mayor Courtright considers
5 concessions, then I formally retract
6 my request to proceed with similar
7 negotiations with any of the
8 bargaining units. Having seen these
9 revisions, I prefer that the
10 administration retain the current
11 terms of the other contracts because
12 quite honestly I don't know if the
13 city can afford another Courtright
14 concession like this one. Thank you.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else?

16 MR. WECHSLER: Yes, Mr. McGoff.
17 There's a perception that when the new
18 administration was installed in 2014
19 that the bargaining units were going
20 to give drastic concessions that would
21 cut salaries and benefits.
22 Unfortunately the city unions are
23 under contract until 2017. At this
24 time they are not obligated to give us
25 any changes in the contract. Without

1 working together we will have to wait
2 two more years to negotiate new
3 contracts and there are no guarantees
4 that city would do any better in
5 negotiations or arbitration than the
6 deal that has been proposed. That is
7 why I am voting for this contract.
8 Together the administration and the
9 Chief of Police have worked together
10 to develop a plan that offers savings
11 and efficiencies. Chief Graziano has
12 reviewed police reports' statistics
13 and changed scheduling to make
14 policing more effective. He has
15 eliminated several supervisory
16 positions, he has been successful in
17 getting parking enforcement staff in
18 place, he has implemented a sick time
19 policy that encourages the system not
20 be abused. These changes to the
21 contract do come with some cost to the
22 city. There is more vacation time and
23 more time off for the FOP President.
24 There is also additional healthcare
25 for up to six workers in the new

1 agreement. I share the same concerns
2 that my colleague do about this point.
3 The new contract may have more
4 eligible retirees at a larger cost.
5 One thing to remember, though, is this
6 coverage has been negotiated in and
7 out of contracts in the past. It will
8 have to be bargained for again in 2020
9 because of any additional burden to
10 the taxpayers. If we do nothing,
11 things stay the same. The FOP does
12 not agree to share personnel, the new
13 parking enforcement does not begin,
14 the new employee hire schedule is not
15 implemented and increased employee
16 contribution does not occur. Also,
17 the FOP continues forward with three
18 grievances pending against the City.
19 In addition, the other bargaining
20 units do not come to the table and we
21 do not see one dime in savings or
22 increased revenue. Going forward the
23 administration, FOP and council have
24 to continue to work together to
25 improve other issues that effect

1 costs. The current pension ordinance,
2 not the contract which sets age and
3 years of services requirement must be
4 evaluated for improvements that apply
5 to new hires. The process of
6 reviewing disability claims must be
7 changed to protect the city from
8 future abuse. We must continue to
9 look at ways that technology helps
10 reduce costs and increase efficiency.
11 The reality though is if we are not
12 able to fund the pension, this
13 contract or any other steps we take
14 won't matter. The taxpayers cannot
15 afford another double digit tax
16 increase. Even with the savings we
17 are discussing tonight, receivership
18 is quickly approaching unless we make
19 significant financial improvements
20 within the next two years. Thank you,
21 Mr. McGoff.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else?

23 MS. EVANS: Well, like my fellow
24 councilman, I love our city and I want
25 to see it prosper but according to the

1 draft recovery plan the operating
2 budget debit is projected to increase
3 to -- from 8.5 million to 2016 to 19.5
4 million in 2020 if we don't make
5 drastic changes and then the retiree
6 healthcare component of the MOU will
7 start to kick in only worsening the
8 situation. We have a roadmap to make
9 those things not happen. It's called
10 the Amoroso plan and revised recovery
11 plan. In fact, the draft in current
12 recovery plans by the way do not
13 endorse retiree healthcare benefits.
14 While we may receive short term
15 savings as projected in the MOU, they
16 will be eradicated by long term fiscal
17 distress. When all 99 eligible police
18 officers and I'm sure soon to 63
19 eligible firefighters begin to take
20 their retirements, they will be
21 receiving retiree health benefits for
22 them and their spouses. It can be
23 estimated the costs to the city over
24 34 million dollars with today's
25 healthcare cost. Beginning the 2019

1 to 2020 timeframe when the Class of
2 January 1, 1994, and beyond reaches 25
3 years of service. The City of
4 Scranton over the decade from 2020 to
5 2030 when most if not all eligible
6 retirements will take place could be
7 paying out upwards of 40 million
8 dollars even with a modest increase in
9 healthcare costs. Does anyone really
10 think that this is something that can
11 be absorbed in future budgets? There
12 are months that the city can't even
13 pay its light bill and we are going to
14 accept the premise that we will be
15 able to absorb 40 million dollars or
16 more with little or no impact. And
17 let's not forget the savings expected
18 from lower starting salaries for new
19 hires which is part of the MOU will be
20 dramatically offset on the backhand
21 when they receive healthcare when they
22 retire. Yes, as I read it, it does
23 not appear to be exclusion for all new
24 hires to be receiving healthcare when
25 they retire. So not only do new

1 retirees have retiree healthcare
2 benefits, there is no pension reform
3 for that group in the MOU. And on the
4 pension issue if anyone has been
5 listening for the past six months they
6 know or they would know that I have
7 been an extreme advocate for pension
8 reform. I have more than telegraphed
9 that message to anyone that would
10 listen. Over and over again this
11 council and the administration have
12 heard the words pension reform as part
13 of my weekly comments. To have a
14 contract that does not address this or
15 at least new hires is disheartening
16 and simply another lost opportunity.
17 Pension without reform and retirees
18 healthcare or the legacy cost that we
19 simply cannot afford when we should be
20 doing everything in our power to
21 reduce future legacy cost, we are
22 actually making it worse. We are
23 mortgaging our future, we are kicking
24 the can down the road and we are
25 insuring that we can never be

1 financially solid long into the
2 future. As we know, the definition of
3 insanity is doing the same thing over
4 and over again and expecting a
5 different result. The city has been
6 at this crossroads before and many
7 times took the path of short term gain
8 versus long term planning and solvency
9 and here we are again except today
10 there will be no more do overs, no
11 more second chances. Today is the day
12 we vote to continue on the road to
13 recovery or in my opinion we vote to
14 create a much surer path to
15 receivership and bankruptcy. I will
16 be voting for recovery. I will be
17 voting no.

18 MR. ROGAN: I would just make a
19 few additional comments, some things
20 that were brought up and some that
21 weren't. The first one and I think
22 this is a very important point that
23 has been lost in all the discussion is
24 the actual operation of the Police
25 Department, the service that the

1 residents of the Scranton see in their
2 neighborhoods and in the downtown.
3 One item that wasn't brought up is
4 through changes in the manning, the
5 Police Department with Chief Graziano,
6 they were able to bring back the
7 Street Crimes Unit with is a very
8 important unit for cracking down on
9 crime in the city. Just today another
10 unit in the Scranton Police Department
11 arrested an individual of Scranton and
12 one from New York for criminal
13 attempt, conspiracy, possession of
14 drugs with the intent to deliver and
15 nearly \$30,000 worth of narcotics.
16 That's because of the good work of our
17 police chief and our officers in our
18 Police Department. It's not because
19 of a contract or because with an issue
20 an arbitrator ruled. It's because of
21 the good work that they are doing. We
22 have great people in our Police
23 Department and we a great chief.
24 These union concessions give the chief
25 much more flexibility in how to deploy

1 those officers. As Councilman
2 Wechsler mentioned Chief Graziano did
3 a map of the areas where there are
4 high crimes and what times those
5 crimes are and he's going to deploy
6 the Police Department during those
7 times so there are more officers in
8 neighborhoods that have a higher crime
9 at those times. Under this current
10 contract the city has to have the
11 same -- have to have the minimum
12 amount of officers on every shift
13 whether it's 7 a.m. on a Monday
14 morning or whether it's 12, 1 o'clock
15 at night on a Friday night. Now, I
16 think anyone with common sense knows
17 that much more crime takes place on a
18 Friday night at midnight than on 7
19 a.m. on a Monday morning. These union
20 changes gives our chief the
21 flexibility to deplore those resources
22 as they're needed. Chief Graziano at
23 length explained how he plans on
24 changing deployments to help the city
25 and the chief has done a great job.

1 He deserves to be commended for
2 working with the FOP to formulate a
3 plan that not only saves the city
4 money despite what the newspaper and
5 others will tell you and it also keeps
6 the protection at or above where it
7 current is which is the most important
8 issue. Everyone who watches these
9 meetings knows my philosophy on
10 government that public safety is the
11 reason why government exists. If
12 government keep the people safe, it
13 has done its job. This agreement
14 helps keep our Police Department
15 intact, it helps keep our
16 neighborhoods safe. Compare Scranton
17 to similar sized cities in
18 Northeastern Pennsylvania, compare the
19 crime, compare the neighborhoods and
20 decide where you would want to live
21 and I guarantee you, you will say
22 Scranton because our neighborhoods are
23 much safer than comparable cities. So
24 other items that were brought up that
25 I disagreed with, the item of many

1 people keep saying, well, why can't
2 the six people receiving the
3 healthcare being named? And this is
4 one item where I agree with the
5 individuals who are against this
6 contract. That was the city's give to
7 get all these savings. But if the six
8 people were named in the contract,
9 those very same people would be saying
10 why is the favor being given to just
11 six people. And that's exactly what
12 those individuals who oppose this
13 would be saying. In addition, those
14 who opposed the contracts, the
15 concessions speak of the dire
16 financial situation in the City of
17 Scranton currently and I
18 wholeheartedly agree with them. We
19 are in dire financial straights.
20 Taxes have gone up dramatically, the
21 city's budget every year have been
22 distressed. Even three years ago city
23 employees were making minimum wage
24 because the city ran out of money.
25 There is no question that our budgets

1 are hurting right now. For anyone to
2 think letting this contract ride out
3 for three more years without any
4 savings whatsoever is a practical
5 thing to do isn't looking at the next
6 three years that we have to get
7 through budgetary as far as the
8 budgets go. In addition, if we do go
9 without making any changes, three
10 years from now we may have another
11 stalemate like we had in the past.
12 The repercussions from that labor
13 stalemate we're still paying over 50
14 percent increase in salaries for
15 police officers because of the
16 previous administration's failure to
17 sit down and negotiate a fair deal.
18 Some are upset that there are raises
19 from eight, nine percent in this new
20 deal and they're upset about that.
21 Obviously would we like to see less,
22 of course we would as a cost saving
23 measure but in comparison to what a
24 arbitrator would award, the savings
25 are astronomical. As Councilman Evans

1 mentioned insanity is doing the same
2 thing over and over again. I don't
3 believe we can continue down the old
4 path that Mayor Doherty did fighting
5 the unions. This is a plan where both
6 sides gave some, the unions gave much
7 more than the city did, and we will
8 save millions of dollars through the
9 course of this contract without
10 jeopardizing the safety of Scranton's
11 residents and that is most important
12 part, the safety of all of you out
13 there and that is why I will be voting
14 yes.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: I would just like
16 to make one additional comment. This
17 debate isn't about the job that the
18 police officers do in the city. I
19 think personally we have one of the
20 best Police Departments in United
21 States. That isn't what we're
22 debating up there. We're not debating
23 how safe our city is because I do
24 believe that our police officers do a
25 wonderful job. No one on this council

1 has called into question the
2 employees. What we're calling into
3 question is the contract that we have
4 in front of us. And I believe as a
5 councilman and as a legislature, it's
6 our fiduciary responsibility to make
7 sure that those that come after us
8 have it better than we have it now.
9 Where are the concessions for the
10 people of the city. That's the
11 question that we're forgetting about.
12 Where are the concessions for the
13 people that continually are asked to
14 go back into their pocketbook. A
15 million dollars in savings was touted.
16 It's questionable as I mentioned and
17 look at the back end as Mr. Evans
18 mentioned with the healthcare. All of
19 us agree that that's a big concern.
20 So then why are we passing this? Why
21 are we passing this contract? That's
22 a major concern. We're going to end
23 up right back where we started.

24 MS. EVANS: One quick comment if
25 I may. I do agree with Councilman

1 Rogan. There are some great things in
2 this contract. I think the work that
3 Chief Graziano did was fantastic. The
4 manning situation, the personnel
5 situation, his ideas were great for
6 the department and great for the city.
7 I'm a reasonable person. It's not
8 going to take much for me to say yes.
9 All I wanted to see was pension reform
10 and the six people named on the
11 retiree healthcare. It's that simple.
12 That's all I'm looking for. And
13 everything else can stay. It's --
14 otherwise it's a fairly decent
15 contract but those two things are
16 critical to our long term financial
17 health. Thank you.

18 MR. MCGOFF: I will weigh in. As
19 I see it as I've said it to the
20 newspaper, I believe that what this
21 comes down is a decision as to whether
22 you believe that the estimated savings
23 contained in the contract proposal
24 outweigh the estimated expenditures
25 that could be included in the contract

1 or vice versa. In both cases we are
2 looking at estimates. Unfortunately
3 many of the things that are included
4 are at this point in time not
5 quantifiable and so we have to deal
6 with this idea of estimated savings or
7 estimated expenditures and how they
8 will effect our decisionmaking. What
9 I've personally take a look at is go
10 beyond the estimates and look at the
11 actual changes. For me, yes, you
12 know, could there have been greater
13 pension concessions? Perhaps. But we
14 did get an increase in pension
15 contributions which I think is
16 significant moving forward. We did
17 get a change in manning and new
18 wages -- wage concessions for new
19 hires. These things will create
20 savings. How much, that's again an
21 estimate but they are actual changes
22 and that will produce something. And
23 also as Councilman Rogan mentioned I
24 think the big thing is the department
25 reorganization. Not only will it

1 provide some savings but as Councilman
2 Rogan said it does increase the
3 ability of the Police Department to
4 provide for our public safety which I
5 think is part of, you know, what we're
6 looking at this evening. As far as
7 the argument that it contradicts the
8 revised recovery plan, yes, in words,
9 yes, but the revised recovery plan,
10 the mandates in the revised recovery
11 plan, as I said before, are put there
12 to estimate what savings could be
13 achieved and the estimates for savings
14 that were provided by Chief Graziano
15 and mentioned by the members of PEL,
16 those estimated savings are within the
17 parameters of the mandated savings
18 that would be included in the revised
19 recovery plan. So that even while the
20 wording may contradict, the actual
21 young numbers are well within what the
22 recovery plan was looking to do. And
23 so, you know, I don't see a conflict
24 with the recovery plan and if those
25 mandates -- if those savings are meant

1 through the contract, then the revised
2 recovery plan can take some effect
3 that, you know, that changes do need
4 to be made. I think that my personal
5 belief is that the current contract
6 over the course of the next three
7 years is not sustainable. I believe
8 that we do need changes and I believe
9 that the changes that are included in
10 this proposed contract will help us
11 meet some of the budget problems that
12 we currently have and I think that
13 that becomes our primary
14 responsibility. We need change now
15 and we need to meet these changes now
16 or I think the failure of the city is
17 more imminent under the current
18 contract than it is under the proposed
19 contract. Anyone else?

20 (No response.)

21 MR. MCGOFF: Roll call, please.

22 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

23 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

24 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

25 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

1 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

2 MR. EVANS: No.

3 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

4 MR. GAUGHAN: No.

5 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

6 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby
7 declare Item 7M legally and lawfully
8 adopted.

9 If there is no further business,
10 I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

11 MR. ROGAN: Motion to adjourn.

12 MR. MCGOFF: This meeting is
13 adjourned.

14 (Proceedings concluded at
15 8:26 p.m.)

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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 taken by me of the above-cause and that this copy is a correct transcript of the same to the best of my ability.

Amelia Nicol, RPR
Court Reporter