

SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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HELD:

Thursday, March 12, 2015

LOCATION:

Council Chambers

Scranton City Hall

340 North Washington Avenue

Scranton, Pennsylvania

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR - OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

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CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

ROBERT MCGOFF, PRESIDENT

PATRICK ROGAN, VICE-PRESIDENT

WAYNE EVANS

JOSEPH WECHSLER

WILLIAM GAUGHAN

LORI REED, CITY CLERK

KATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

AMIL MINORA, SOLICITOR

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

3 MR. MCGOFF: Roll call, please.

4 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Here.

6 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

7 MR. ROGAN: Here.

8 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

9 MR. EVANS: Here.

10 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Here.

12 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Here. THIRD ORDER.

14 3-A. MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
15 MEMBERS OF SCRANTON HOUSING AUTHORITY HELD
16 JANUARY 5, 2015.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Are there any comments?
18 If not, received and filed. Any Clerk's
19 notes?

20 MS. REED: Nothing, Mr. McGoff.

21 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Anything
22 from council? Any announcements? Let me
23 just for tonight's meeting there are two
24 pieces of legislation that will be voted on
25 to move to Sixth or Seventh Order, one is

1 item -- make sure I get it right, 5-C which
2 concerns the police -- correction to the
3 wording of the legislation for the police
4 pension fund, that is under an emergency
5 certificate and we will be voting to move
6 that to Sixth on Seventh Order for final
7 vote. The other piece of legislation is 6-B
8 which is the revised recovery plan. There
9 will also be a motion to move that to
10 Seventh Order for final vote.

11 Prior to Seventh Order that will be
12 an opportunity for the public to speak, a
13 second citizens' participation, if you will,
14 but an opportunity to speak to those two
15 pieces of legislation. That would be prior
16 to Seventh Order.

17 Just quick announcements. Scranton
18 Fire Department is having a food drive to
19 benefit St. Francis Kitchen and Food Pantry.
20 This is March 26 to 21st. Donation can be
21 accepted at any city firehouse and any
22 donations welcome. I'm sure that that means
23 that, you know, any type of non-perishable
24 foods would be welcome, and any type of
25 monetary donations will also be welcome so

1 that they can provide that to the shelter or
2 to the kitchen and food pantry.

3 Also, this Saturday, March 14, is
4 the St. Patrick's Day parade downtown
5 Scranton. A couple of things, first of all,
6 expect that there are street closures and
7 that will be traffic delays. We may start
8 to see those on Friday evening as they set
9 up for the parade and certainly on Saturday
10 morning and Saturday afternoon there will be
11 delays downtown or street closures downtown.
12 There is a link on the city's web page for
13 additional information it's STPATparade, St.
14 Pat parade dot com. and you can get
15 information about what streets would be
16 closed, etcetera.

17 Also, each year we speak to this,
18 the St. Patrick's Day parade is a great
19 family event. Do not confuse the parade
20 with some events that may take place after
21 the parade. We welcome, you know, all
22 families to come and enjoy the parade.
23 Hopefully the weather will cooperate. It's,
24 as I said, a great event downtown and we
25 welcome everyone to attend. We also please

1 encourage everyone who comes to the parade
2 or comes to downtown Scranton to celebrate
3 St. Patrick's Day to do so responsibly.
4 This is, again, it's a wonderful for the
5 City of Scranton, please don't ruin it by
6 being unreasonable and taking advantage of
7 the day and that's all.

8 MS. REED: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS'
9 PARTICIPATION.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Joan Hodowanitz.

11 MS. HODOWANITZ: Joan Hodowanitz,
12 taxpayer and resident. What is the status
13 of the 2013 audit?

14 MR. MCGOFF: I have no update for
15 you.

16 MS. HODOWANITZ: It is 284 days
17 late. In 15 days, March 27, the city is due
18 to open bids for the 2014 through 2017
19 audit, assuming they receive any bids. This
20 is very worrisome on many levels. I saw in
21 the paper yesterday a story "Depasquale
22 Warns of Scranton Pension Debt" and he is
23 talking about the investigation his office
24 is conducting into the double pensions and
25 he says his office currently lacks the

1 ability to do forensic audits and would need
2 more resources, and I don't know whether or
3 not the state police have the assets and
4 resources to conduct their own forensic
5 audit, but if ever a city needed a forensic
6 audit that's City of Scranton.

7 In the 15 months or so that I have
8 been attending council meetings and
9 listening to the accounting and finance
10 issues that are plaguing this city it is
11 clear this city needs a forensic audit,
12 which is why it is so worrisome that nobody
13 other than me seems to be concerned about
14 this 2013 audit, and hopefully it will not
15 be a whitewash.

16 I see also on today's agenda that
17 there is an ordinance referring to
18 Mr. Bulzoni, it is Item 5-D, creating and
19 establishing a special city account entitled
20 "EIT contribution for the purpose of
21 accepting a 2.4 percent EIT by Business
22 Administrator Dave Bulzoni."

23 Well, I give him credit for
24 submitting that legislation. However, if
25 the administration thinks it's appropriate

1 to make the LST retroactive to January 1 I
2 think this EIT for Mr. Bulzoni should be
3 retroactive to January 6, 2014. What is
4 good for the goose is good for the gander
5 and I think a lot of people are very upset
6 that they are going to be paying a
7 retroactive tax to fill in a hole that they
8 have not personally dug.

9 And the last thing is this issue of
10 the police union and their retirees and that
11 legislation that you are looking at tonight.
12 I saw an article in the paper where the
13 president of the police union, Mr. Paul
14 Helring, was talking about his members.
15 Mr. Helring noted that many officers in
16 their 40's and 50's still have children in
17 school or college so it is not feasible for
18 them to retire at that age as they do still
19 need to find another job. Where are they
20 going to find a job in Scranton?

21 Well, I will remind President
22 Helring that there are a lot of citizens and
23 taxpayers in the city who are of that age
24 and who also have children and do not make
25 the pay and wages and salary and benefits

1 that members of the police union do.
2 Granted, police officers have what I would
3 call a higher risk in their job duties.
4 Nevertheless, there are citizens and
5 taxpayers who are facing the same expenses
6 for their families at much lower rate wage
7 and salary benefits and so we are all in the
8 same boat, and guess who pays the benefits
9 to the police officers? Ultimately, it's
10 largely on the backs of non-police
11 taxpayers. Thank you.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Ron Ellman.

13 MR. ELLMAN: Hello, Council. It
14 seems like just about every where I go
15 people are complaining about downtown, the
16 mall, the way the city is going downhill and
17 crime. Most of you encounter this at church
18 or school. I encounter it every day when I
19 go over the Taurus Club, it's just politics
20 and it's bad politics and people asking what
21 do we get for our dollar? It seems like we
22 got Bulzoni and Amoroso and Mr. Cross,
23 that's not very much. And four of you
24 purposely broke a law of this city in hiring
25 this gentleman. He shouldn't have even been

1 considered in the first place, but this is
2 on people's mind. This is no different than
3 if one of you had run a stop sign and you
4 wait for that stop sign for that instant,
5 same thing. I thought you were grabbing
6 something to throw at me.

7 MR. MCGOFF: It would be bigger and
8 heavier than this.

9 MR. ELLMAN: There is nobody ever
10 comes up here and wishes you guys would do
11 better than me and wishes the mayor would do
12 better, but you are not. You are letting
13 the people of this city down left and right.
14 These are good people out there. They have
15 reached their limits. Bulzoni sat right
16 there last week telling everybody we need to
17 tighten our belts. We are facing up to a 50
18 percent increase and blah, blah, blah. He
19 went on and on and on Mr. Cross went on and
20 on, the next thing you know the SPA is
21 trying to hire him, a consultant, after a
22 month on the job he can't do what he was
23 hired for. All of the trouble you went
24 through to get him a position he is not
25 capable of doing it. There is no if, and or

1 buts.

2 I went to the SPA meeting, it was a
3 farce. They called the city -- the whole
4 deal is a system. They act like we don't
5 have no say so about the meters or what this
6 or that. I asked when they hire someone a
7 simple question what's the salary? They
8 wouldn't tell me. His salary is going to be
9 added onto what the total price is whether
10 they lease or sell it. They say this isn't
11 going to hurt the taxpayers. We are going
12 to be millions of dollars less than what
13 they owe right now on everything after they
14 sell it so we are going to pay a salary.

15 He shouldn't be allowed to be hired,
16 but this politics just never stops around
17 here. It's impossible, you know? Like I
18 keep telling you, you people just are out of
19 touch with the city.

20 How many of you saw the cartoon this
21 morning, Mr. Cole's cartoon? The only he
22 didn't go far enough as far as I'm
23 concerned. Last week I was trying to find
24 out how much we owe, there is about 26,
25 27,000 taxable properties. Now, put this

1 down, Mr. Rogan, you are good at this, we
2 owe about \$200 million. Last year the money
3 that came in I think we were six or seven or
4 eight million dollars short of everything
5 and this is the city this lady that just
6 spoke wants to spend money on Lackawanna
7 Avenue. They have had their chance
8 downtown.

9 Look at the streets. In fact, I
10 want to thank you people, I broke the other
11 strut on my car. I had to buy two of them
12 to start with so now I'm happy. It's like
13 getting a free one when I pay seven or
14 eight-hundred dollars to have them
15 installed.

16 Like I just said, there is nobody
17 wishes you people more than me, but you are
18 not doing it. You are not doing right for
19 the people of this city anymore. You didn't
20 do nothing expect sit and wait to see about
21 the pension money. You should have let the
22 fight to have that stop -- to have something
23 found out immediately, and it's been weeks
24 on nobody talks about no more. Nobody
25 cares. It seems like it's over with.

1 That's no way to run a city. It would be no
2 time that mall will be off the books and it
3 would be classrooms or something and that
4 would be the demise of this whole downtown.
5 Thank you.

6 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Ellman.
7 Mr. Spindler?

8 MR. SPINDLER: Good evening. Les
9 Spindler, city resident, homeowner and
10 taxpayer. Last week I watched the caucus
11 with PEL and there were many questions
12 asked, but I think the most important
13 question wasn't asked, and I have asked it
14 for years, I would have asked Mr. Cross how
15 is that you have been our recovery
16 coordinator for 23 years and we are in worse
17 shape now than we were 23 years ago? I
18 would ask how does he explain that. There
19 is no doubt that we are in worse shape now
20 than we were 23 years ago. I have the
21 answer, I have stated it here many times,
22 they don't want us to get out of distressed
23 status because then they would lose their
24 cash cow. They are collecting millions of
25 dollars from this city and doing nothing.

1 And I have said it many times, PEL has to
2 go. That's one problem with this city.
3 Every year they come up with different
4 ideas, different ideas, as I said, we are
5 worse off than we were 23 years ago.

6 So I've said it in the past and it's
7 fell on deaf ears, council should look into
8 getting rid of PEL and that would be a step
9 in the right direction because they are just
10 wasting money that could go towards
11 something better off in the city.

12 Potholes. Last year, James May from
13 PennDOT was on Channel 16 saying Main Avenue
14 is going to be paved from Taylor to North
15 Scranton. Well, James May should be a
16 politician because he lied.

17 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Spindler, I was
18 actually up at PennDOT today to discuss that
19 and a few other issues, it is going to be
20 paved. What the delay was they are doing
21 handicap curb cuts all along the route. In
22 order to use the funds they need to do these
23 curb cuts so that's why it was repaired last
24 year, but this year that is going to be
25 paved from the Taylor line to the

1 Expressway.

2 MR. SPINDLER: That's good. Well,
3 it should go further.

4 MR. ROGAN: It's not forgotten
5 about, I drive down that road just as much
6 you do living in the same neighborhood and
7 it's terrible.

8 MR. SPINDLER: I mean, all of Main
9 Avenue is bad. I drove through North
10 Scranton going to Dickson City from Market
11 Street to Parker Street, it's like a
12 minefield. It's ridiculous. There is two
13 areas where you have to go to the other side
14 of the road to get around those potholes and
15 it's a definite safety issue. I mean, you
16 can't go through them they are so deep, you
17 have to wait until a car comes and go around
18 them. It's ridiculous so I hope something
19 is done with that.

20 One more thing, in West Dide the
21 corner of North Sumner and Pettibone, on
22 Sumner there is a stop sign there it's
23 totally white. It's got to be replaced.
24 That's a safety hazard. I have traveled
25 that way all the time so I know there is

1 supposed to be a stop sign there, but stop
2 signs aren't supposed to be all white so if
3 somebody can try and get that taken care of
4 I'd appreciate it. And that's all I have
5 tonight. Thank you.

6 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you,
7 Mr. Spindler. Mr. Bolus.

8 MR. BOLUS: Good evening, Council.
9 Bob Bolus, Scranton. Last week I listened
10 to the people that were here, but I didn't
11 hear one suggestion on how we are going to
12 save any money or make any money. A
13 business can't lose money, neither can the
14 city. They had not one suggestion other
15 than liquidate your assets and still have
16 your debt. If people will buy the Sewer
17 Authority they are buying it to make money.
18 If someone is going to buy the parking
19 garages they are buying it to make money.

20 We haven't looked at one creative
21 avenue, all we have looked at, let's put our
22 head in the guillotine and that's the short
23 way of doing things here. It's like
24 Scranton is falling in the mines and it's
25 sinking deeper and deeper and deeper. The

1 pillars that held up the mines are gone and
2 we are caving, we are going down, and we are
3 not doing a darn thing about changing it.
4 We are not after the nonprofits, we are not
5 after all those who have been taking a free
6 ride on this city, we are not doing a thing
7 to get any revenue in other than sacrifice
8 the people.

9 As Attorney General Kane called us
10 the regular people, that don't have the
11 wherewithal to defend themselves that's
12 exactly what's happening to us. We don't
13 have the wherewithal some people have to
14 survive in this city. You need to make
15 changes, you need to look at the leachate
16 line, make it a host community coming
17 through Scranton and Dunmore, start putting
18 money in your pockets, start taking us out
19 of debt instead of creating an atmosphere of
20 deeper in debt, and that's where we are
21 heading if you liquidate your assets. You
22 will have nothing left to sell but the city
23 itself and maybe it would be a good idea if
24 we put signs coming down the Central
25 Expressway on both entrances that said "City

1 For Sale" and we would be ahead of game.

2 I hate to come in here and be
3 negative, I ran for mayor in this city
4 because I had a belief that this city could
5 be saved. What I see, I don't see any
6 savior out there. I don't see anybody
7 making an effort to do it. You have to make
8 changes, they are hardcore changes, but
9 unless you start looking where we are going,
10 we are not going anywhere.

11 Now, on an issue, a little
12 housekeeping, I'd like to bring up about
13 last week. I brought up about Carrie
14 Newcomb, asked that she would be taken off
15 the board for her comments as a public
16 official. The other issue I have is
17 Mr. Newcomb, who is in the back room,
18 Charlie Newcomb, Jr., took us off the
19 camera, Mr. Miller and myself. We were
20 taken off the cameras last week throughout
21 the whole council meeting as we spoke, which
22 is totally wrong, it's a discrimination
23 against us, everybody was there, but
24 Mr. Newcomb took it upon himself for his own
25 personal reasons to take us off camera. I

1 didn't come here to play a game or be
2 insulted by somebody who takes his personal
3 issues and bring them here publically.

4 Mr. McGoff, tonight I would like to
5 Mr. Newcomb out here and publically
6 apologize to us. This is your council,
7 you're responsible for it, and what he did
8 last week was totally uncalled for, and I'm
9 not going to tolerate an individual like
10 that insulting us at a public meeting that
11 we come here and we speak here because we
12 believe in what we are talking about. It's
13 no more than you were an educator when you
14 spoke before your class if your class just
15 stood there doodling and doing things and
16 not paying attention I could imagine what
17 you would have done to them, okay? And
18 that's what's happening here.

19 We don't come here to waste your
20 time, sure as heck I'm busy enough not to
21 come here and waste my time or the other
22 people that show up here, but I'd like tan
23 apology tonight from Mr. Newcomb. I'll
24 settle for nothing less. He has got to be
25 held accountable, he is a big boy, but he

1 wants to play with that camera and I expect
2 him to come out here and apologize for his
3 actions or I will get an apology another
4 way.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Were the microphones
6 on?

7 MR. BOLUS: The microphone was on,
8 the camera was taken off us.

9 MR. MCGOFF: So you could be heard?

10 MR. BOLUS: I was heard, I was not
11 seen, and this isn't a case that you could
12 put a child in a corner, okay?

13 MR. MCGOFF: So you are concerned
14 that you weren't on TV; is that it?

15 MR. BOLUS: That's correct,
16 Mr. McGoff, but everybody else was.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Is that why you are
18 here?

19 MR. BOLUS: Wait, that annoyed me
20 and that insulted me because everybody else
21 was on and I didn't really like the idea as
22 I was speaking your head was down and you
23 weren't paying attention.

24 MR. MCGOFF: I can hear you.

25 MR. BOLUS: Maybe you wouldn't

1 understand, take a look over here and pay
2 attention to what's --

3 MR. MCGOFF: I can hear if my head
4 is down.

5 MR. BOLUS: Whatever. You were down
6 for the whole five minutes that I spoke and
7 didn't look up once, okay, so --

8 MR. MCGOFF: Did I hear you?

9 MR. BOLUS: I'm asking you now,
10 since you don't want to conduct the business
11 of this council, as it should be, to
12 reprimand an individual who has insulted us.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

14 MR. BOLUS: That's your
15 responsibility. And don't ever thank me
16 again, Mr. McGoff, because you haven't done
17 nothing to be thankful for, and I can tell
18 you that you are running for reelection I
19 hope people pay attention and eliminate you
20 from that seat, and I will get the response
21 from Mr. Newcomb one way or the other and
22 you can take that to the bank.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Mr. Miller.

24 MR. MILLER: Good evening, Council.
25 Doug Miller, Scranton. Before I begin I

1 just, you know, Mr. Rogan, is there
2 something comical that you would like it
3 share with us? I mean, you tend to like to
4 smirk and snicker, you want to share what's
5 so funny tonight?

6 MR. ROGAN: Sure. I thought it was
7 comical when Mr. McGoff asked Mr. Bolus if
8 the point was to be on TV and his response
9 was yes.

10 MR. MILLER: That's amusing to you?

11 MR. ROGAN: That somebody would come
12 to a meeting just be on TV? That's normally
13 not the case for the people that come to our
14 council meeting.

15 MR. MILLER: We don't come here to
16 be on TV years. I've been coming here for
17 12 years, I don't need face time, I come
18 here because I believe in this city and I'm
19 trying to make a positive difference, I
20 don't need to be on TV. The point is that
21 it was quite obvious that there was an
22 intentional move made to take us off the
23 camera, and that was quite clearly a
24 violation of our free sweep, whether
25 Mr. McGoff wants to talk about we could be

1 heard, of course we were heard, but there is
2 various levels --

3 MR. MCGOFF: That is free speech.
4 You were heard.

5 MR. MILLER: Excuse me. Excuse me.
6 There is various levels of free speech,
7 expression, the body language, that we
8 weren't given that same opportunity that
9 everybody else that spoke here was given,
10 but it just so happens that myself and
11 Mr. Bolus were taken off camera for the five
12 or six minutes that we spoke. Yet you,
13 Mr. McGoff, as the council president, won't
14 take responsibility. These are your
15 meetings. These are your public meetings
16 and you have an obligation to get the job
17 done, and Mr. Newcomb should be held
18 accountable for what he did. If he wants to
19 play a game with the camera and he thinks he
20 is tough with the camera that he can hide
21 behind and bully, that's fine. If you don't
22 want to take action and be arrogant about it
23 we'll take -- we'll get an apology and we'll
24 take action outside of these chambers, but
25 it's just really sad that we all just think

1 it's a joke and it's comical, and I'm really
2 disappointed that we have a council seated
3 here that, you know, you should be
4 embarrassed by it.

5 MR. ROGAN: How do you know you were
6 intentionally taken off the camera because I
7 have watched replays of the meetings before
8 where speakers would be talking, I know the
9 one time I watched this about a month ago
10 the camera as on me for about ten minutes
11 and I wasn't speaking.

12 MR. MILLER: No, I guess, you know
13 --

14 MR. ROGAN: Maybe he went out to the
15 restroom or maybe there was personal
16 matters.

17 MR. MILLER: Yeah.

18 MR. ROGAN: The camera operators are
19 all volunteers.

20 MR. MILLER: Yeah. Well, when ten
21 people speak, okay, and two people just so
22 happen for five minutes they are not on the
23 camera, believe me, I know a game is being
24 played, okay? I want born last night,
25 Mr. Rogan. I'm not interested when you're

1 on TV, when you take your bathroom breaks,
2 we are talking about that we have free
3 speech and it was violated and you have an
4 obligation to do something about it. And
5 you can shake your head all you want and be
6 egoistical and arrogant like you are always
7 are, but you have an obligation and if you
8 are not willing to do something about it
9 well then we'll handle it accordingly, but
10 it's pretty sad and pathetic that you can't
11 come to your government and expect them to
12 represent their constituents. That's a
13 problem.

14 But this is what you get when you
15 come here and it's just like talking to the
16 wall and we think it's a joke, we think it's
17 a game, well, want to play the game we play
18 the game, I don't have a problem with it. I
19 have been doing this for a long time and I
20 know how it works and when you are outspoken
21 and you stand up for what you believe in you
22 got to pay the price sometimes and people
23 want to have personal vendettas and when
24 they have access to certain things and they
25 can manipulate and dictate how things are

1 going to go they take advantage of it, and
2 it will be addressed, it will be dealt with,
3 because evidently our leaders here don't
4 want to do something about it.

5 As far as your LST tax, you know,
6 just have to ask ourselves, I mean, are we
7 just really out of our minds here at this
8 point? You know, the recovery plan is not a
9 recovery plan. You know, we want to
10 allegedly suspend the rules possibly and ram
11 this through tonight without any discussion
12 whatsoever on it, but that's just the
13 philosophy we have in this government is the
14 residents of this city's aren't looked out
15 for. We carry the water for various special
16 interests, the administration, that's just
17 basically killing the city and by passing
18 this recovery plan, tripling the LST you are
19 only going to finish this city off once and
20 for all, and we have come to the point where
21 we need to really seriously consider state
22 intervention and receivership or bankruptcy
23 because that's where we are.

24 And the other question I have
25 tonight is we have PEL talking about one

1 thing as far as bankruptcy and then we have
2 the Auditor General Mr. DePasquale talking
3 about the city being in two to four years
4 from bankruptcy, so it seems to me that we
5 are not on the same page here and that's a
6 real problem and we all need to get on the
7 same page very quick or it's going to be
8 over and the residents have had an
9 obligation for a long time to protect their
10 interests and they didn't do that. Felt
11 that friendships and political affiliation
12 and a lot of other irrelevant things were
13 more important and that's why we are where
14 we are today.

15 But other than that I don't have
16 much more to say because I just feel coming
17 here sometimes you are speaking to people
18 who just don't have the right intentions,
19 you know. I'm thankful that we have some
20 common sense with the two individuals seated
21 on the end here, Mr. Gaughan and Mr. Evans,
22 because they are the only ones that really
23 see what's going on here because the issues
24 they brought forward, unfortunately, have
25 fallen on deaf ears to their colleagues.

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

3 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.

4 MR. GAUGHAN: Good evening.

5 MR. MORGAN: The first thing I have
6 here is I would like council to close Ash
7 Street from North Washington Avenue all the
8 way to the top of let's say Prescott,
9 because the road just isn't passable. It's
10 full of ruts and potholes, a lot of the road
11 has just completely disappeared in the
12 center and I just think it's a public safety
13 issue, let alone that, I don't know, I just
14 really can't see how a vehicle can travel up
15 and down that road many times without
16 sustaining an awful lot of damage and I
17 really think that patching it definitely is
18 not the solution.

19 In regard to the city's financial
20 situation, I want to touch on something, you
21 know, when the auditor general gets up in
22 front of the House of Representatives and
23 talks about the city it's not something that
24 everybody in this Commonwealth doesn't
25 already know. This city is dead. All it

1 needs is a viewing. There is no where to go
2 here. You know, we are what we are really
3 doing in this city is we are driving all of
4 the residents into poverty. We are selling
5 their homes at sheriff's sales, we are
6 raising their taxes to a point where the
7 wage base can't sustain the tax rates, we
8 are blaming everybody for what's happened to
9 our city over a long course of time.

10 I really think that there needs to
11 be a forensic audit done for 50 years, and
12 not only do I think that, I think that all
13 of the grant money, state or federal that's
14 come in this city, needs to be investigated
15 and I think that every party and the council
16 that had a vote in any issue needs to be
17 investigated and if wrongs have been
18 occurred then whoever that council member
19 was needs to be prosecuted. If money is
20 owed and a vote was taken in conflict to law
21 I think that we need to start selling
22 councilmen's and mayor's assets. And if it
23 reaches the state representatives, we need
24 to sell their belongings.

25 You know, it's pretty easy to drive

1 the ordinary citizen in poverty and drive
2 them out of their city and that's what's
3 occurred in this city. We bought a pothole
4 machine and we were going to auction it, has
5 that happened yet, Mr. Gaughan.

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Not that I'm aware of,
7 but I will check into that.

8 MR. MORGAN: I'm just really
9 troubled. You know, when I see all of these
10 pretty suits lined up and I see the smirks
11 and the smiles and the disrespect for
12 speakers it doesn't trouble me because I
13 know that we are dealing with individuals
14 who have no respect for the sacrifices that
15 people have made to make these council
16 meetings and freedom of speech function.
17 You know, when we separated ourselves from
18 Great Britain men and woman sacrificed their
19 life to create this country and what's
20 happened to our country now? There is no
21 respect for anybody. The federal government
22 is in debt so far they can't see where they
23 are going. We are intervening in wars all
24 over the world, but we can't take care of
25 the elderly. They are living on social

1 security and can't support themselves and
2 there is children going to bed hungry and
3 all the jobs in this country have been
4 exported out of the country and the people
5 who did that were elected.

6 And, you know, the sad part is I
7 don't blame people for not voting because to
8 be honest with you, like I said once before,
9 it doesn't matter if only two people voted,
10 what obligation do those who are elected
11 have to the residents of this city and this
12 country even if only one person elected you?
13 Don't you have an obligation to do the
14 people's business and conduct it in a way
15 that shelters the citizen and the resident?
16 That hasn't happened in this city.

17 And sale of the Scranton Parking
18 Authority, the first I'm think I'd like to
19 do is thank the Dunmore Council for stating
20 that they have no interest in a public sale
21 of the Scranton Sewer Authority but, you
22 know, if anybody looked what happened to the
23 Scranton Sewer Authority when American
24 Anglican had it, I read that agreement the
25 day it came out, Jimmy Connors was mayor, I

1 went in and asked him not to sign it because
2 it had no benefit to the city, and then when
3 the deal ended you find out that they ran
4 all of the equipment into the ground, all
5 the skimmers, all the motors, everything,
6 right into the ground, and then the city had
7 to pick it up, and because of the
8 incompetent of the council at that time who
9 voted did that lead to the massive increases
10 in the sewer rates in Scranton and Dunmore?

11 I think we need to ask ourselves if
12 it's time to get rid of the pretty suit club
13 and elect people who understand that they
14 have an obligation to the residents whether
15 they vote or not to protect their interests
16 on all levels of government. You know, we
17 can debate a lot of things but the one thing
18 that anybody my age understands this country
19 is going to the wrong way and the city it's
20 going to go into receivership no matter what
21 you do, but to try to pay the fire and
22 police settlement by sale of the city
23 assets, mainly the parking garages, that's
24 not the answer because then the city will go
25 into bankruptcy with no assets. Thank you.

1 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Morgan.
2 Ms. Schumacher.

3 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening,
4 Council. A few short ones before I get to
5 my main topic which is parking meters
6 tonight. I'm really saddened by the number
7 of emergency certificates that this council
8 has had in their very few months or not even
9 two years, not even 18 months, and I think
10 you probably set a record for a whole term
11 and I just find that troubling and I would
12 like to know where, considering emergencies,
13 where is the legislation to hire an auditor
14 for the city's audits? Can't expect to get
15 something done in a couple of months if you
16 are not going to hire somebody.

17 And things I would like answers to
18 during the Fifth Order, I would still like
19 to know the number of trash bills that were
20 sent out and the payments received.

21 I would still like, Mr. Rogan months
22 ago promised to follow-up on the Jersey
23 freight building where we paid well over a
24 million dollars to put a slate roof on that
25 with the promise it was going to be

1 developed and what's going on with the
2 development of that.

3 I would like to call to your
4 attention that on 5-B that that property is
5 assessed at \$30,000 and you're apparently
6 willing to give it away for less than half
7 of the assessed value.

8 And the rest I'll hold, I understand
9 we are going to be allowed to talk before
10 Seventh Order on the emergency ones tonight?

11 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

12 MS. SCHUMACHER: Now, to the parking
13 meters. I, too, attended the Scranton
14 Parking Authority meeting the other evening
15 and I was surprised somewhat that none of
16 you were there. We elected you partly to
17 protect our assets. The parking meters are
18 an asset. They put through a resolution to
19 go out and sell or lease or whatever this
20 consultant comes up with the parking system,
21 which is five -- according to their
22 definition is five garages and 1,100 parking
23 meters. Now, do you realize that we own
24 those? Why are you giving the authority to
25 an Authority? We elected you people to do

1 that? Have you bought into the fact that we
2 are going to sell the parking meters and if
3 so is there a floor under which you will not
4 accept a bid? And if so, how was that
5 framed or calculated?

6 I'd like to go back to before the
7 last recovery plan was coming Mr. Rogan you
8 said, I believe it was the 22nd of November
9 2011, "Again, the sale of the city's parking
10 meters to the Scranton Parking Authority. I
11 don't know why the mayor and PEL keep
12 bringing up the sale of the parking meters.
13 It's the one asset we have left in this
14 city. It's the last thing we should be
15 selling. Now, now, if they came to us and
16 said, okay, well, here is \$100 million it's
17 going to take up to 50 years to recoup the
18 money before we make a profit then I'm sure
19 all of us would consider it. You know, that
20 sum of money could solve a lot of money --
21 solve a lot of money in the city, but when
22 we are selling them for six, seven, eight,
23 nine, ten million dollars it's not worth it.
24 If I had the kind of the credit where I
25 could go to a bank and get \$15 million I

1 would buy the parking meters. Do you see
2 how much money they bring in? Selling the
3 parking meters to the Parking Authority is
4 simply a bailout for the Parking Authority.
5 That's all it is."

6 Now, apparently, you have changed
7 your mind or the council has. How can you
8 possibly allow them to go out and offer to
9 sell something without you people going
10 along with it and passing legislation that
11 says it's okay to do that?

12 MR. ROGAN: Any sale would come
13 before council for a vote.

14 MS. SCHUMACHER: You don't care if
15 there is any -- so you are willing to sell
16 it or --

17 MR. ROGAN: No, please stop putting
18 words in my mouth, that's two separate --

19 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, I'm asking
20 that question.

21 MR. ROGAN: I've always supported
22 selling the garages not the meters.

23 MS. SCHUMACHER: But they are in the
24 process of putting out --

25 MR. ROGAN: And there is nothing

1 wrong with getting bids. Like I mentioned
2 two years ago, if somebody came to us with
3 "X" amount it's something we would continue.

4 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, I'm asking --
5 I think that's -- to be honest, having been
6 in private industry as many of you up there
7 have been, I know a business puts a certain
8 amount aside to bid on things, but if you
9 are not really willing to sell it unless
10 there is a floor I think you need to tell
11 the bidders that then and say, "We won't
12 sell it for less than so much."

13 I don't think you have doing your
14 job for us if you are letting the appointed
15 people do what you people should be doing as
16 an elected officials. Thank you.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Is there anyone else
18 who would like to address council?

19 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,
20 citizen of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians,
21 I'm going to speak a little on this
22 so-called recovery plan. I don't know who
23 it's going to recover, but it's certainly
24 ain't going to be the citizens of Scranton.
25 As you heard Marie speak a little on the

1 parking garage, the reason why they want to
2 include the parking garages and the meters
3 is nobody wants the parking garages. They
4 are dead issue. Even if you could sell
5 them, you couldn't pay off the debt with the
6 money you would get, we all know this.

7 Let's go to the Sewer Authority.
8 They want to take away the catch basins. As
9 you know, the Sewer Authority owns the catch
10 basins. Now, they want to take away from
11 that and form an authority to run the catch
12 basins and where are they going to get the
13 money from? Well, when God sends the rain
14 we are going to charge people for the rain.
15 This is their solution and that's what came
16 from PEL.

17 Let's keep going. You know that
18 they want to lower the taxes on the business
19 community and raise the taxes on the
20 residents 56 percent this is so in the
21 recovery plan. This is what you see in the
22 recovery plan nothing but added debt to the
23 citizens of Scranton. How do you figure
24 into recovery by adding to the debt? You
25 are not solving one darn problem, you never

1 did. You have been sitting there for --
2 some of you have been sitting there for
3 years and never solved one problem, all they
4 did was create another. And what are you
5 going to do by creating two new governments
6 making authorities to run these things. Oh,
7 that's what I didn't mention, they want to
8 take away the DPW, it's part of the DPW site
9 and add another authority because then they
10 won't show up on the books.

11 What a stupid PEL plan and you sit
12 there -- and sat there and said, well, this
13 is the thing that do. You are not
14 Scrantonians. You are becoming a bunch of
15 bobble heads. Just anything they say you
16 are agreeing to it. That's not how you run
17 a city. You got to run the city for the
18 citizens not for the people who work for the
19 city and that's what you are doing.
20 Everything is for the people who work for
21 the city. The people who work for the city
22 put us where we are, the mayor, the council,
23 the police, the firemen and the whole bunch.
24 Do I feel safe? Well, maybe if I had a fire
25 and they were able to come fast enough I

1 would feel safe, but as far as police
2 protection no. I do not feel safe because
3 it's really not safe to walk the streets and
4 it's going to get worse instead of better
5 and you have put a bunch of Draconian fines
6 on people. If they don't have the -- if
7 they are out there and their grass is two
8 inches above what you think they should be
9 they should get a \$100 fine. Hide the
10 garbage cans so nobody can see them, but if
11 you remember -- I guess you don't remember
12 but when they did move the garbage cans and
13 the trash cans from where they were they
14 said if you couldn't bring them out to the
15 street DPW would be glad to come to the back
16 of the yard and bring them out for you. You
17 think they are going to do that now?

18 I don't know where you consider
19 yourselves Scrantonians, I really don't. I
20 guess you are not old enough to become a
21 Scrantonian. Scrantonian is more than
22 sitting there and saying this, that or
23 whatever, and it's neighborhoods. People.
24 I grew up in Scranton when there was a lot
25 of churches. The city of Scranton was a

1 city of churches because we believed in
2 churches and we believed in people. None of
3 yours were there when they had the
4 depression and how it was back then. I was
5 at the end of it, but I was there for part
6 of it because of the war, but then you would
7 see the people how they loved their city.
8 Why do you think I stood here? I paid
9 thousands of dollars into this city? Of
10 course, I wanted my grandmother and mother
11 not have to pay these high taxes so I paid
12 the wage tax, but I would feel bad about
13 this work tax that you are planning to raise
14 to 156 bucks, that's bad because it is a
15 work tax and that's the sad part about it.
16 You can call it whatever you want to call
17 it, but a stinkweed still smells like a
18 stinkweed even if you call it a rose.

19 I'm very sorry for the city. My son
20 is out of the city, thank God. If I had
21 children, any kind of children, I would tell
22 them to leave, too. Thank you.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you,
24 Mr. Sbaraglia. Anyone else?

25 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening, Council.

1 Dave Dobrzyn, resident, taxpayer. I'm going
2 to start from the top tonight and once again
3 call your Senators because that's where a
4 lot of our problems start, the Transpacific
5 trade pack and call the president.

6 Two-thirds of the people who lost their jobs
7 in 2007 or since started back at 30 percent
8 less and I would say in Scranton it could be
9 possibly as high as 50 percent less.

10 Somebody I know, very close to me, used to
11 make 35 a year and now they are making 18,
12 so that's way less wage taxes in your
13 pocket.

14 And once again we have to sue the
15 state and the county under federal law under
16 the constitution that 33 percent takes
17 exempts property is slavery, and that's all
18 there is to it. That's why we have a \$10
19 million hole in our property taxes every
20 year. Every year \$10 million goes out the
21 door to the rest of the county and the state
22 and they get to play Santa Clause.

23 Now, to direct city business. The
24 bridges, anybody ever see a Bobcat, those
25 little loaders? They fit great on the

1 pavement and I think it's about time that we
2 do that for the bridges because I have
3 walked across some of these bridges and, I
4 mean, I was on two feet of ice different
5 winters. This year I didn't, but maybe it's
6 just because I knew better to stay off of
7 them.

8 And dirt banks down in South Side,
9 we are going to be fining people, the
10 subject just came up for untidy yards and
11 untidy porches, well, we have a coal
12 retrieval operation down in lower West Side
13 and it's just been left there like that,
14 bank, hole, bank, hole, and I think that the
15 people involved, I know who owned it, and
16 the people involved could at least afford to
17 bulldoze it over and level it off at the
18 very least, maybe plant a couple of trees
19 for a change. They have a 400 foot dirt
20 bank growing up in a Dunmore obviously.

21 And, once again, I'm going to
22 mention on these pensions, Jack Loscombe was
23 horribly disabled in an accident in a fire
24 fighting a fire and they denied him his
25 pension and it wasn't really a retirement

1 pension it was a disability pension and it
2 should have been given to him and that back
3 money should be given to him and that's all
4 there is to it. It was the most unfair
5 thing that I have he ever seen and any
6 politician that was involved it did
7 contribute to my disdain for them. There is
8 no ifs, and or buts about it I will never,
9 ever like that person again and certainly
10 won't vote for them.

11 And on this adoption of the other
12 recovery plan, if possible amend it that if
13 you don't get the LST tax out of the judge
14 it is null and void and restart all over
15 because it constantly goes to court through
16 a judge from out-of-town and a senior judge
17 and they say no and then we are already
18 signed on for some silly shenanigans, like,
19 selling the Sewer Authority was mentioned.

20 Now, in Allentown there was an
21 article in the Times, and I don't know if it
22 was a misprint or not, it's a lot of money,
23 \$211 million went to Allentown for sale of
24 the sewer plant. How come Mr. Doherty only
25 got \$5 million when he sold it or pushed the

1 sale because he was the councilman that lead
2 the charge? And that's totally ridiculous
3 for some silly amount of money, what are
4 they going to give us magic beans? Maybe.
5 Who knows.

6 And in finishing, once again, I
7 would love to see the audit for 2013, but I
8 don't think you guys have checked the
9 shredder yet. Thank you and have a good
10 night.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Dobrzyn.
12 Anyone else would wishes to address council?

13 MS. REED: FIFTH ORDER. 5-A.
14 MOTIONS.

15 MR. MCGOFF: I'm sorry.

16 MR. NEWCOMB: Good evening, city
17 council. I just wanted to run out real
18 quick because I think I have to address a
19 couple of things that I didn't want to --

20 MR. MCGOFF: Just state your name.

21 MR. NEWCOMB: Oh, sorry, Charlie
22 Newcomb. I am the volunteer for ECTV. I
23 have been doing it for 18 months, give or
24 take. Before the three of you were even
25 here under the last council I volunteered

1 because they reached out to me and asked if
2 I would be interested in helping. Just like
3 it is now, if -- last week I had to go to
4 the bathroom, to be blunt, I stepped out to
5 go to use the restroom and as you can see in
6 council chambers there is four cameras. The
7 camera that is on now people at home can't
8 see me because it's directed at you because
9 I don't know how long somebody at the podium
10 will be two minutes, five minutes, they go
11 over their time, whatever, so I just wanted
12 to address the viscous attacks that were
13 given to me tonight and that let you know
14 that it is not -- it wasn't done
15 deliberately, that is the time that I had to
16 go. You had a meeting that ran long before,
17 I couldn't go in-between, so I stepped out
18 when the meeting started, so I will not
19 apologize because it wasn't deliberate, but
20 I just want to thank you for the opportunity
21 to come and address you tonight because I
22 believe I was treated very unfairly, as
23 usual, by two of the speakers that were
24 here. So thank you for your time.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Newcomb.

1 MS. REED: FIFTH ORDER. 5-A.
2 MOTIONS.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Wechsler.

4 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you,
5 Mr. McGoff. I have a few things now and a
6 few things as they move through the meeting.
7 Some of the concerns that were raised this
8 evening that Ms. Schumacher spoke about, I
9 also have been contacting about the trash
10 bills mailed and the trash bills paid and
11 I'm also quite interested in that and have
12 been following up on that, and I'm also
13 anxious to see what's steps are being taken
14 that the mailing for the 2015 bills when it
15 goes out is accurate and timely so I am
16 working on that.

17 In regards to the questions that
18 were asked about the parking authority
19 meeting that was held the other evening, I
20 think that was on Tuesday, I contacted our
21 solicitor, Mr. Minora, also to check in to
22 see what role council should be playing or
23 not playing in terms of this sale, and he
24 gave me some information tonight and then
25 we'll be firming that up to make sure we

1 don't have another error to make sure that
2 this is done properly and council does
3 participate as it should and where it should
4 so we are following up on that.

5 In regards to some of the other
6 things that were mentioned tonight, and I
7 have never been called a snazzy dresser, but
8 I do take it a compliment for the rest of
9 the suit club here, and I'd be remiss if I
10 did not mention this sports coat, it's not a
11 suit, was purchased at LaSalle's on South
12 Webster Avenue, so this is where I got my
13 sports coat, it's not a suit, and I think
14 the reason why we wear shirts and ties is to
15 show respect for the citizens. I don't
16 think any smarter when I'm working in jeans
17 and a flannel shirt then I do when I'm
18 sitting here, maybe that's another problem,
19 but I think we show respect by wearing our
20 attire, and as I want to make sure you know
21 I wore my St. Patrick's Day tie.

22 Some of the other matters that were
23 talked about this evening, I do take offense
24 and I shouldn't, i always get in trouble
25 when I talk about this, there is no more

1 people committed to the people of the
2 Scranton than I work with on a daily basis,
3 and the other four guys that I work with
4 here. To say that we are not Scrantonians
5 and we're not interested in helping the
6 people that can't be farther than the truth.
7 We spend considerable time here,
8 considerable time during the week, and you
9 may not agree with what we are doing, but I
10 know the votes that I have taken have been
11 in the best interest of the city residents.

12 Another item that I seem to be
13 getting some flak about is that I talk about
14 the neighborhoods a lot. Well, I do talk
15 about the neighborhoods a lot because as we
16 heard tonight how important they are to the
17 city. This week I did attend the
18 Neighborhood Summit that was held at
19 Scranton Police Headquarters. They were
20 leaders from North Scranton and South
21 Scranton and West Scranton and the Hill
22 Neighborhood Association were at the
23 meeting. Each group talked about different
24 projects that they have going on in their
25 certain neighborhoods and they are doing a

1 wonderful job trying to protect their
2 neighborhood and they are committed to doing
3 that and, once again, to say that the
4 neighborhoods are a disaster area and
5 falling apart, yes, we all know that there
6 are problems, but it's a disservice to
7 minimize the work that these groups are
8 doing for their neighborhoods and they are
9 successfully raising money, they are
10 successfully bringing money in the community
11 through grants and other partnerships so I
12 congratulate them on the work they are doing
13 and I really don't think it's fair to say
14 that the neighborhoods aren't being watched
15 by us or by the neighborhood groups.

16 In regards to talking about police
17 protection, Chief Graziano is the chairman
18 of these neighborhood meetings and Chief
19 Graziano and his force they have many
20 different programs that they are
21 implementing to help the city protect.
22 There is a crime and I would rather have our
23 police force protecting me than any other
24 police force in this area. There is a many
25 things that happened that go on that don't

1 make the newspaper, different investigations
2 and so I'm proud of the work that they do.
3 And that's all I have at this time.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Mr. Rogan?

5 MR. ROGAN: Yes. As Mr. Wechsler
6 just said, I want to address a number of
7 items that were brought up by some of the
8 speakers. I wasn't planning on addressing
9 this again, but I guess I'll say a few words
10 regarding the cameras. We have to thank our
11 volunteers who do record this meeting, they
12 are volunteers. Mr. Newcomb is one of them,
13 and as I mentioned when Mr. Bolus was
14 speaking, I remember a meeting maybe a month
15 or so ago under Fifth Order when Mr. Evans
16 was speaking and the camera was on myself
17 the whole time. I didn't hear Mr. Evans
18 complain that he wasn't on camera.

19 MR. EVANS: If I knew I could I
20 would, but --

21 MR. ROGAN: Again, the volunteers
22 they -- sometimes the meetings go long,
23 might have to take a phone call, use the
24 restroom, whatever it may, we thank the
25 volunteers for broadcasting these meetings

1 and it is important that they are on TV.
2 That's something I strongly support.

3 Regarding the comments Ms.
4 Schumacher made with regarding the parking
5 meters, I have never made a statement that I
6 would support selling the parking meters. I
7 have always stated that I support selling
8 the garage. I look at them as two separate
9 assets, actually one that's an asset and one
10 that's a liability. The meters are an
11 asset, the garages are a liability. I was
12 under the impression that one of the ideas
13 to sell the garages was to use the meters as
14 collateral with the banks because from what
15 I have been hearing we are not going to get
16 back out of the sale of the garages what was
17 borrowed because too much money was
18 borrowed, they should have never been built,
19 and we are subsidizing those every year with
20 tax dollars because they are not breaking
21 even. Something has to be done to change
22 that dynamic. Throwing money at the problem
23 isn't going to solve it, and as I have
24 mentioned numerous times, as of a few years
25 ago we owed \$50 million in principal on

1 those garages. If paid out over the payment
2 schedule that would cost the taxpayers \$100
3 million, so anything we can do to pay down
4 on that quicker, just like paying a credit
5 card and not paying the minimum payments, it
6 could save quite a bit of money in the lodge
7 run.

8 Forensic audit was brought up by one
9 of the speakers, that is something that I
10 have always supported and I think in light
11 of the many errors that have come to light
12 regarding the pensions I think it would make
13 sense to at least with the pension boards to
14 do a forensic-type audit and find out
15 exactly what happened. Council did receive
16 some more documents from our request two
17 weeks ago that shed a lit bit more light on
18 where the request to authorize these double
19 pensions came from. We were asked not to
20 comment on these at this point as the
21 investigation is ongoing, but it's certainly
22 not forgotten about. If a few more weeks go
23 by and we don't hear anything, you know, I
24 will be here calling to subpoena past
25 elected officials and one current elected

1 official who was there at that time as well
2 as members of the pension board from that
3 time. It's certainly something we need to
4 get to the bottom of and I hope the
5 investigation will on it's on.

6 I'd like to thank Chief Graziano for
7 a quick reply to a resident complaint
8 regarding a park cars on Snyder Avenue in
9 West Scranton, which is a very tight
10 neighborhood, there is very little parking,
11 and there were three abandoned -- I'm sorry,
12 two abandoned vehicles in that area that
13 have been sitting there for months and
14 months and within a day of contacting the
15 chief an officer was out there and tagged
16 those cars and is taking care of that
17 situation.

18 And, finally, other than the agenda
19 items I would like to wish everyone enjoy
20 the parade. Enjoy responsibly. Please
21 don't drink and drive, call a taxi. And I
22 apologize, I did forget to wear, and I am
23 Irish, Rogan is Irish, and I did forget to
24 wear my green tie but I will wear it for St.
25 Patrick's Day, which is the actual St.

1 Patrick's Day next week. Thank you.

2 MR. MCGOFF: We'll forgive you.

3 Mr. Evans.

4 MR. EVANS: Thank you. First of
5 all, full disclosure, the sport coat I'm
6 wearing tonight is also purchased at
7 LaSalle's sportswear and that's South
8 Webster Avenue in South Side.

9 I'm going to comment a little bit on
10 the public caucus that we had tonight and I
11 would like to thank Michelle again for
12 coming. First of all, it was nice to have
13 some positive images and ideas about our
14 city. Michelle and many others like her our
15 assets to our city and we need to continue
16 to find ways to foster that creative class
17 in our community.

18 I have been involved in the
19 beginning in the Iron District concept and I
20 felt it was time for city council to get a
21 feel for that was all about and what a great
22 idea that is as well and it's very, very
23 doable and that alone is a positive thing.

24 And the old Harrison Avenue bridge
25 concept, frankly, I remember Mayor Doherty

1 several years ago at the site and this is an
2 idea that he both discussed. We both felt
3 the idea we very viable and unique and a way
4 to preserve the bridge, create a pedestrian
5 park and walkway, and reduce the waste and
6 cost of the demolition of the old bridge.
7 Of course, the new Duffy Park that's
8 proposed could be easily incorporated in the
9 design. I have already talked to the
10 Architectural Heritage Association and the
11 Greenhouse project at Nay Aug and they are
12 both on board with the concept and ready to
13 help with the care of the park if it is
14 completed.

15 So I would like to formally ask
16 members of the council if possible can we
17 request a meeting with PennDOT officials to
18 possibly hold another caucus to discuss an
19 update to the current existing bridge
20 project as well as the conversation and
21 concept that we had tonight about the old
22 Harrison Avenue bridge to see what their
23 thoughts are and see if this is something
24 that we can possibly move forward. So I'm
25 not sure how we do that, I guess, you know,

1 it's okay if --

2 MR. WECHSLER: Just one comment on
3 that, tople afternoon there is a meeting
4 with PennDOT at 2:00 to discuss the Harrison
5 bridge and the Duffy Park and the bridge and
6 the whole thing so I would invite you to go
7 to that meeting if you are interested.

8 MR. EVANS: I'll try, I have to
9 rearrange my schedule about that.

10 MR. WECHSLER: It's at 2 p.m.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Where is that at?

12 MR. WECHSLER: It's at the PennDOT
13 office in Taylor.

14 MR. EVANS: Where is that?

15 MR. WECHSLER: Off of Main Avenue
16 and Old Forge. In Taylor, right behind the
17 Olecki Pharmacy right down in that area.

18 MR. EVANS: Okay. All right. I'll
19 try to make that tomorrow. If not, you
20 know, we can still have -- I think it's nice
21 to have the public have an opportunity to
22 hear what the plans are. I don't know if
23 council has ever seen the design for the new
24 bridge.

25 MR. WECHSLER: That's actually

1 what's going to be discussed tomorrow. I
2 think they finally have some -- they had
3 some input from the architectural board and
4 they are working towards getting that, this
5 is I guess the initial presentation of the
6 plan.

7 MR. EVANS: Well, it would be a
8 starting point, I'd like to still have it
9 coming before us and have an opportunity to
10 talk and have the citizens to have an
11 opportunity to see what is going on with the
12 bridge, and again, I don't if this is
13 conversation has ever actually happened
14 about the old bridge, so I think it's time
15 to make that happen. So that's all I have
16 for now.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

18 Mr. Gaughan?

19 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, thank you. I
20 have quite a few items so please bear with
21 me. A gentleman called to report a tractor
22 trailer dumping used tires at 2630 Winfield
23 Avenue and there is a propane tank nearby
24 and the residents were very concerned. Our
25 city clerk, Mrs. Reed, immediately contacted

1 the Licensing, Inspections and Permits
2 Department and hopefully we will get an
3 update on what took place there.

4 There was a problem with a damaged
5 curb in the 3000 block of Colliery Avenue in
6 Minooka that caused flooding when it rains.
7 A resident contacted me, I forwarded that
8 concern to the DPW.

9 Two weeks ago I mentioned about
10 having a caucus on land banks, an idea that
11 has been floated around for the past couple
12 of the months that would help the city fight
13 blight and a tool that was given to us by
14 the governor back in I think 2013. I spoke
15 with representatives from the Pennsylvania
16 Housing Alliance and they are willing to
17 come up for a public caucus Thursday, April
18 2, at 5:30. So I urge everyone who is
19 interested in this idea to be here and to
20 listen to what they have to say.

21 I attended a Greenridge neighborhood
22 meeting Tuesday night and have several
23 concerns from residents to report. There is
24 a vacant and neglected property at 1120
25 Columbia Street. There is an abundance of

1 different animals, including cats, on the
2 property and dangerous dead trees in the
3 yard that could possibly cause harm for the
4 surrounding properties. There is also an
5 issue at 1010 Electric Street. A neighbor
6 had concerns this property was a boarding
7 house and he cited numerous issues with this
8 property. Letters have been sent to
9 Director Hinton requesting information on
10 this property since November but the
11 resident has not heard a reply yet.

12 Student housing was also a major
13 issue in the Marywood University area for
14 residents. The residents would like
15 clarification from LIPS on student housing
16 and single family homes and whether or not
17 this can be considered a common household
18 under the zoning ordinances. Residents
19 informed me that there is a problem with
20 Marywood students duplicating parking
21 permits illegally. There is also an issue
22 in the 1200 block of Woodlawn Street with
23 faded permit parking signs and three permit
24 parking signs have been stolen. The
25 residents would like these and the faded

1 signs replaced. The three missing signs are
2 causing problems for residents who have
3 students parking in front of their homes.

4 A dangerous issue was occurring in
5 the 1100 block of Fisk Street that needs to
6 be addressed. Residents have found metal
7 blow darts in their garages and in the side
8 of their houses. They believe that they are
9 coming from the area of Park Gardens. There
10 are young children in the area and this has
11 become a major safety concern in that area.
12 I have instructed Mrs. Reed to send a letter
13 to the Housing Authority to notify their
14 security team and Police Chief Carl
15 Graziano.

16 Residents also inquired how they
17 would be able get a beat cop in the
18 Greenridge area. They are very interested
19 in finding out more information about that
20 so we will also contact the Chief of Police
21 to discuss this issue further.

22 And finally, a resident reported
23 that tractor trailers are parked on top of
24 the enclosure of the dyke system in the area
25 of Glenn Street and the 1500 block of

1 Dickson Avenue and resident feels that this
2 is a dangerous situation. All of these
3 concerns that I listened to at this
4 neighborhood meeting we are going to try to
5 address and send correspondence to the
6 appropriate departments so I'd like to thank
7 our staff for helping out with that.

8 And, finally, before my comments on
9 the agenda items I would also like to wish
10 everyone a good fun time this Saturday at
11 our St. Patrick's Day parade. I would also
12 like to thank all of the people that put the
13 parade together, it's not easy at all and
14 they should be congratulated for that. And
15 I would say that for all of the Irish
16 immigrants and really all immigrants, why do
17 we march? We march because at one time we
18 could not.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Gaughan.
21 Just I believe that the zoning ordinance for
22 housing is four non-related people living in
23 one structure or one house.

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Yeah, but there is --
25 and that's being violated, I guess all over

1 the place and that's the major, for what I
2 took away from that meeting, that was the
3 major issue in that area was that, you know,
4 besides parking people are buying single
5 family homes and then turning them into
6 student housing dormitories.

7 MR. MCGOFF: That has been addressed
8 to me and I have, you know, brought it up
9 before. It is a very difficult thing to
10 enforce as we all probably know from
11 experience especially in college housing you
12 are never quite sure who is staying in any
13 one place and for how long, but certainly it
14 is an issue that needs to be addressed and
15 should be addressed.

16 A couple of things that -- a lot of
17 things actually. First of all, on the 2013
18 audit that was brought up, the city had
19 received a notice from DCED that they have
20 not received the 2013 municipal audit and
21 financial report that was due April 1 or is
22 due April 1, '14, and what they are saying
23 is that if that's not received then the
24 municipality Scranton will not in compliance
25 with their reporting requirements and would

1 be ineligible for any DCED funding, so that
2 there is pressure being placed on the city
3 and the auditor to have this complete.

4 I know this is a concern, it's been
5 an ongoing concern for many people around
6 and hopefully, you know, this is an
7 indication that the state and others are
8 interested in this being done now, that this
9 needs to be completed, and certainly we do
10 not want to lose any source of the funding
11 especially through DCED and hopefully this
12 would expedite the completion of the audit
13 which has been mentioned is severely
14 overdue.

15 As far as a forensic audit, I have
16 spoke to a person who does forensic audits
17 for municipalities and the one thing that
18 was said to me is that, number one, forensic
19 audits are done when there is an indication
20 of malfeasance, and what they need -- they
21 are not -- somebody is not going to do an
22 audit over a 30-year period. What they
23 would do would be a forensic audit would be
24 for a specific item of malfeasance, a
25 smoking gun, if you will. They need to have

1 something that says, "Here's something that
2 was done wrong over a specific period of
3 time," not just, "Let's go look and see if
4 we can find somebody something."

5 And the other thing is that forensic
6 audits tend to be costly and if the city
7 were to try and, you know, conduct a
8 forensic audit it would be costly to the
9 city to do that for even a short period of
10 time, so while it may sound like a good idea
11 it's really not necessarily a great
12 possibility that this would be done by the
13 city. Perhaps the state or someone else may
14 come in and do it, but as far as the city
15 conducting a forensic audit I don't see that
16 happening merely because of the fact that at
17 this point in time there is not any smoking
18 gun that points to a specific item, and plus
19 we do not have the funding to do that.

20 Somebody brought up about the
21 financial advisor doing nothing or it's
22 costing, every mayor going back as far as I
23 know has had a financial advisor. This is
24 not something new. I believe almost every
25 municipality has a financial advisor and

1 they are working at what they are asked to
2 do, you know, advise the city on certain
3 financial matters including, and I'll go
4 down to including the sale or the
5 monetization of the parking assets.

6 Somebody said, you know, that there
7 is no interest, the fact was that when the
8 RFQ's went out there were 15 different
9 groups that responded. That's been narrowed
10 down now with the RFP that was being sent
11 out I believe to five -- of those five or
12 six of those people that were interested, so
13 there is interest in the garages.

14 The problem that maybe is being
15 brought up is that most of the bids or most
16 of the people interested are interested in
17 both the parking garages and the parking
18 meters, so that they could consolidate both.
19 Now, are we aware of that? Yes. Been aware
20 of that for a number of years that these
21 things would probably be united if there was
22 to be a sale or a lease. Simply by
23 including the meters it increases the value
24 of the sale or lease and that's what we are
25 looking at. That's what they are looking

1 at. I'm sure if there is a way of keeping
2 the parking meters through this process the
3 city would be interested, but going back
4 again, this is not something that's come
5 before council yet. We do not have anything
6 to look at. We need, you know, if there is
7 going to be a sale or a lease then it would
8 come before us and then we could vote yes or
9 no to that, but as far as voting on an RFP,
10 you know, that's not what we are here to do.
11 So that takes care of at least my thoughts
12 on the parking situation.

13 As far as PEL is concerned, yes,
14 they have been here for awhile. Mr. Cross
15 has not been here, again, I would state for
16 the entire extent of this, so to blame
17 Mr. Cross for the entire 22 years is
18 inaccurate. I'm not sure exactly how many
19 years Mr. Cross has been involved, I know
20 it's at least ten, but just so we are
21 straight on that.

22 And parking signs, yes -- or stop
23 sign, yes, the stop signs are in terrible
24 condition throughout the city. Throughout
25 the city you can find signs that are barely

1 I'll say visible as stop sign as far as the
2 color is concerned. One of the problems is
3 that the people that are responsible for
4 taking care of the signs are now picking up
5 refuse and recyclables. They have been
6 taking off those duties because of the
7 manpower issue at DPW.

8 Also, the repainting of the signs or
9 replacing of the signs is costly. You know,
10 it costs money to do that and in the budget
11 yes, is there money to do that, but it's
12 something that becomes, again, an issue of
13 manpower and money at DPW. So, yes, do we
14 need those signs, you know, redone. Please,
15 they will -- it will be addressed. It has
16 been addressed with DPW and hopefully all of
17 those problems, the sign problems, can be
18 taken care of.

19 Nobody's right to speak has been
20 violated by council. Everyone has --
21 anyone, citizens of the City of Scranton or
22 people with an interest in the City of
23 Scranton are allowed to come to the podium
24 and speak to council. No where does it say
25 you have the right to be on television, and

1 if that's why people come to speak because
2 they want to be seen on television then they
3 should get their own television show.

4 That's ludicrous to say that, you know, you
5 have a right to be on television and we are
6 not going to pursue that matter in any way
7 and if someone feels that that's what we
8 should do they are entitled to that opinion,
9 but we are not going to address that issue
10 beyond tonight.

11 As far as the Auditor General, I
12 know I'm going long here, but the Auditor
13 General when he was here in Scranton about a
14 week ago did speak about the idea of
15 receivership for the City of Scranton and
16 what he said was that receivership is not a
17 good idea. He said what receivership does
18 is take power out of the hands of the people
19 and place it in the hands of the receiver
20 and if the receiver doesn't like what either
21 the administration or the council is doing
22 they can simply supercede the power of the
23 city and do whatever they want and that
24 could be raising your taxes, you know, 100
25 percent.

1 They don't care. They are -- the
2 job of the receiver would simply be to put
3 the city or the municipality, you know, back
4 on track for, you know, back on a balanced
5 budget. They don't care how they do it.
6 They are not going to look for other ways to
7 bring that about. The receiver will simply
8 look at the simplest answer and that would
9 be raising real estate taxes or other taxes.
10 So the Auditor General, while he says
11 Scranton may be on the road to that doesn't
12 believe that it's a good idea nor do most of
13 -- I would say all of the members of the
14 council do not believe it's a good idea as
15 do many of the advisors that we have to the
16 city, including PEL and Mr. Amoroso.

17 I'll speak now to the idea of
18 emergency certificates. Yes, council has
19 said that this is not something that we are
20 comfortable with, with which we are
21 comfortable. It has happened I'll say far
22 too often over the months they have been
23 here. I will attribute that to a new
24 administration, a new law department, and
25 the attempt as we are seeing tonight to

1 rectify problems over the past. Not
2 problems, not situations that were created
3 by either this council or this
4 administration. Some of these are problems
5 as tonight goes back to what 1987? And so I
6 applaud -- I'm sorry, I have a problem with
7 my eye. What we are trying to do is just
8 rectify some problems that existed and a
9 number of these things have come under
10 emergency certificates. Do we like it, no,
11 but we do need to deal with some of these
12 problems and we will according to our
13 abilities.

14 Last two things hopefully. The
15 storm water problem, yes, it was something
16 that was brought up, PEL brought up the idea
17 of a Storm Water Authority. This is not
18 something that is being done -- the
19 authority is an idea that's, you know, being
20 proposed by PEL, but the separation of the
21 storm water situation and the compliance is
22 compliance with state and federal
23 regulations. These are things that are
24 being asked of us or told that we need to do
25 by DEP. We need to separate the systems, we

1 need to improve the systems, and be
2 compliant with regulations. This is going
3 to cause money. And if the city can't put
4 this in the hands of an Authority then it
5 becomes the Authority's responsibility to
6 take care of those costs and not the city.
7 Someone may agree with this, but it is
8 something that we need to do by law and we
9 will attempt to find those -- I don't want
10 to see convenient, but the best way for
11 everyone to bring this about.

12 And the last thing, somebody brought
13 up Mr. Loscombe and his pension, that was a
14 situation that was determined, that was
15 finalized by the courts or by an arbitrator
16 and that's not something that was decided by
17 any one person or any group. Was it
18 something that was unfortunate, maybe, but
19 it was not council, it was not this mayor or
20 this administration, it was a decision made
21 by the Court or through a hearing, and I
22 think I'm done.

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Could I make one
24 additional comment --

25 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

1 MR. GAUGHAN -- on something you
2 said? The faded streets signs, I agree it
3 is a major problem. Every neighborhood
4 meeting I have gone to in the past year and
5 a half it has come up. I believe under the
6 Connors' administration they received a very
7 large grant to replace a very large amount
8 of faded street signs so I think maybe we
9 should ask the city to investigate and see
10 if there are any available grants out there
11 from the state so that we can get that done.
12 Thank you.

13 MR. EVANS: Yeah, a quick follow-up
14 to one of the speakers and I think President
15 McGoff mentioned to is the faded stop signs.
16 I mean, that's something of immediate
17 concern. We can't play games with saying we
18 don't have the manpower or what are we going
19 to do or if this guy has to come back from
20 vacation or whatever, we have to find
21 solutions to that today because somebody
22 could get killed and that is serious stuff.
23 So I would say, you know, to Mr. Gallagher
24 tell us what you need. If you need more
25 occasionals, we'll find to give you

1 occasionals. You need to outsource it,
2 we'll find a way to outsource it, but those
3 kind of things cannot be ignored day in and
4 day out because somebody is going to get
5 seriously hurt.

6 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Anyone
7 else? Please.

8 MS. REED: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION -
9 AN ORDINANCE - SALE OF TAX DELINQUENT
10 PROPERTY MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS 630 CLAY
11 AVENUE, SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA, TO JONATHAN
12 OLIVETTI, 201 FRANKLIN AVE, 3RD FLOOR,
13 SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA, 18503, FOR THE
14 CONSIDERATION OF \$16,000.00.

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

18 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

19 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

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

23 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

24 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

25 MR. EVANS: Aye.

1 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

2 MS. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed? The
3 ayes have it and so moved.

4 MS. REED: 5-C. FOR INTRODUCTION -
5 AN ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL
6 NO. 152 OF 1987, AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A
7 REVISED BENEFIT PLAN FOR THE POLICEMEN'S
8 PENSION FUND IN ORDER TO CORRECT AN ERROR OF
9 OMISSION OF SECTION 2 AGE AND SERVICE
10 RETIREMENT REQUIREMENTS. (EMERGENCY
11 CERTIFICATE ATTACHED).

12 MR. EVANS: I make a motion to amend
13 Item 5-C as per the following: In the fifth
14 whereas clause delete the entire paragraph
15 and replace it with the following:

16 "Whereas, the actuarial valuation
17 report of Conrad M. Segal, Incorporated, of
18 January 1, 1988, also provided that
19 eligibility for normal retirement benefits
20 for police officers required attainment of
21 the age 55 and completion of 25 years of
22 service and."

23 MR. ROGAN: Second.

24 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? All
25 those in favor of the amendment signify by

1 saying aye.

2 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

3 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

4 MR. EVANS: Aye.

5 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

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

8 At this time I'll entertain a motion
9 that Item 5-C, as amended, be introduced
10 into its property committee.

11 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

13 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? If
14 this is -- council has decided that if this
15 is moved to Sixth and Seventh Order, as I
16 said, we will speak to it in Seventh Order.

17 All those in favor of introduction
18 signify by saying aye.

19 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

20 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

21 MR. EVANS: Aye.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

23 MS. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed? The
24 ayes have it and so moved.

25 MR. EVANS: I make a motion to

1 suspend the rules and move Item 5-C, as
2 amended, to Sixth and Seventh Order to be
3 considered for final passage based on the
4 attached emergency certificate.

5 MR. ROGAN: Second.

6 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? All
7 those in favor of moving 5-C to Sixth and
8 Seventh Order please signify by saying aye.

9 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

10 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

11 MR. EVANS: Aye.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

13 MS. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed? The
14 ayes have it and so moved. Let me just say
15 that there will be an opportunity to speak
16 to this again, the public will have an
17 opportunity to speak to this again prior to
18 Seventh Order.

19 MS. REED: 5-D. FOR INTRODUCTION -
20 AN ORDINANCE CREATING AND ESTABLISHING
21 SPECIAL CITY ACCOUNT NO. 02.229615 ENTITLED
22 "EIT CONTRIBUTION" FOR THE PURPOSE OF
23 ACCEPTING A 2.4% EIT CONTRIBUTION BY
24 BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR, DAVE BULZONI.

25 MR. MCGOFF: At this time I'll

1 entertain a motion that Item 5-D be
2 introduced into its proper committee.

3 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

4 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

5 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? I
6 would like it make note that this was done
7 at the behest of Mr. Bulzoni so that his
8 contribution would be a matter of record and
9 an account for it would be created.

10 All those in favor of introduction
11 signify by saying aye.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

13 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

14 MR. EVANS: Aye.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

16 MS. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed? The
17 ayes have it and so moved.

18 MS. REED: SIXTH ORDER. 6-A.
19 READING BY TITLE - FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
20 85, 2015 - AN ORDINANCE - APPROVING THE
21 TRANSFER OF A RESTAURANT LIQUOR LICENSE
22 CURRENTLY OWNED BY KOSMART ENTERPRISES, INC.
23 D/B/A PIZZA HUT OF DUNMORE LICENSE NO.
24 R-14852 TO BAR PAZZO, INC. FOR USE AT
25 131-133 NORTH WASHINGTON AVENUE, SCRANTON,

1 PENNSYLVANIA AS REQUIRED BY THE PENNSYLVANIA
2 LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD.

3 MR. MCGOFF: You've heard reading by
4 title of Item 6-A, what is your pleasure?

5 MR. ROGAN: I move that Item 6-A
6 pass reading by title.

7 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

8 MS. MCGOFF: On the question? There
9 is a clarification from last week.
10 Officially, Pazzo was going to move in the
11 500 block of Lackawanna Avenue, apparently
12 an agreement could not be reached between
13 the parties and the they did reach an
14 agreement with the owners or the developers
15 of the Connell building, the lower area, and
16 that is where the restaurant will be located
17 which is 131-133 North Washington Avenue.

18 All those in favor signify by saying
19 aye.

20 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

21 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

22 MR. EVANS: Aye.

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

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

1 MS. REED: 6-B. READING BY TITLE -
2 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 86, 2015 - AN
3 ORDINANCE - AMENDING THE REVISED RECOVERY
4 PLAN FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON PURSUANT TO
5 THE FINANCIALLY DISTRESSED MUNICIPALITIES
6 ACT; AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY
7 OF SCRANTON TO ISSUE AN ORDER DIRECTING THE
8 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVISED RECOVERY PLAN
9 WHICH WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE UPON ADOPTION
10 ATTACHED HERETO AS EXHIBIT "A" IN ACCORDANCE
11 WITH THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 249 OF THE
12 FINANCIALLY DISTRESSED MUNICIPALITIES ACT.

13 MR. MCGOFF: You've heard reading by
14 title of Item 6-B, what is your pleasure?

15 MR. ROGAN: I move that Item 6-B
16 pass reading by title.

17 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

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

20 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

21 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

22 MR. EVANS: Aye.

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

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

1 MR. EVANS: I make a motion to
2 suspend the rules and move Item 6-B to
3 Seventh Order for final passage.

4 MR. ROGAN: Second.

5 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question.
7 I'd just like to recap this whole situation
8 for a minute and how we got here. Last week
9 PEL requested with the administration's
10 urging that city council suspend the Rules
11 and pass the recovery plan tonight in order
12 to be able to get a Court date to obtain
13 approval of the LST increase to \$156 a year.
14 The mayor didn't seem to be that concerned
15 about going to court to get the LST increase
16 when he deliberately postponed the recovery
17 plan to extend contracts for the police and
18 fire departments. If Mayor Courtright and
19 his administration was that concerned about
20 getting a court date the recovery plan would
21 have been on our agenda in late January as
22 scheduled. The mayor basically delayed this
23 whole process by six weeks so he could take
24 of both departments and protect them from
25 the recovery plan. Now, all of a sudden,

1 there is a sense of the urgency with the
2 recovery plan. And, quite honestly, I
3 really resent the fact that the burden is
4 now on this council to change our process
5 because of the complete lack of
6 consideration by the mayor and others. So
7 while I am voting for the recovery plan, I
8 have to vote "no" on this measure and voice
9 my descent on the way that this was done.
10 Thank you.

11 MR. ROGAN: I would just disagree
12 with that characterization. We spoke about
13 this in our caucus and the reason why it's
14 being pushed forward is the law department
15 believed that the time that they could
16 petition the courts prior to the adoption
17 and they later found it had to be -- the
18 petition could not be filed until adoption
19 was made. We did discuss this prior to the
20 meeting.

21 MR. MCGOFF: And just to hopefully
22 finalize, I don't think that I disagree with
23 either Mr. Rogan or Mr. Gaughan. I believe
24 that there was I'll say a manipulation of
25 the process. I also agree that, you know,

1 once the recovery plan came before us that
2 there was a need to expedite this in order
3 to, you know, deal with the LST and that the
4 courts didn't say that they wanted a final
5 plan or agreement so, yes, is there a
6 problem with doing this? Yes. Is there is
7 a need to do it? Yes. So it's in the hands
8 of council, you know, to say yes or no.
9 That's all. Anyone else? All those in
10 favor of moving 6-B to Seventh Order for
11 final passage signify by saying aye.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

13 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

14 MR. EVANS: Aye.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed?

16 MR. GAUGHAN: No.

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

19 MS. REED: 6-C - FORMERLY 5-C -
20 READING BY TITLE - FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
21 87 -105 - AS AMENDED- AN ORDINANCE -
22 AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 152 OF
23 1987, AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A REVISED
24 BENEFIT PLAN FOR THE POLICEMEN'S PENSION
25 FUND IN ORDER TO CORRECT AN ERROR OF

1 OMISSION OF SECTION 2 AGE AND SERVICE
2 RETIREMENT REQUIREMENTS. (EMERGENCY
3 CERTIFICATE ATTACHED).

4 MR. MCGOFF: You've heard reading by
5 title of Item 6-C, as amended, what is your
6 pleasure?

7 MR. ROGAN: I move that Item 6-C, as
8 amended, pass reading by title.

9 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

10 MS. MCGOFF: On the question? All
11 those in favor signify by saying aye.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

13 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

14 MR. EVANS: Aye.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

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

18 MS. REED: SEVENTH ORDER.

19 MR. MCGOFF: As I said, if there is
20 anyone that wishes to speak to the two
21 pieces of legislation that were moved
22 forward they may do so at this time.

23 MS. SCHUMACHER: Yes. First on the
24 one you have moved forward on the pension,
25 what was 5-C at the beginning of this

1 evening, I'm a little confused because when
2 those MOU's were being discussed there were
3 several people who said we couldn't possibly
4 afford to put those off because of
5 arbitration and we went to arbitration and
6 we would lose hands down, so now if I read
7 the Times-Tribune article correctly and
8 didn't skim over it too fast the police
9 union is threatening a lawsuit over this so
10 it's the same -- I mean, we are not afraid
11 of court. We are afraid of arbitrators but
12 we are not afraid of the courts, is that a
13 fair conclusion?

14 MR. MCGOFF: No. This is something
15 that was not part of the contract that we
16 voted upon and approved. This is something
17 that goes back to 1987. It's something new
18 and distinct.

19 MS. SCHUMACHER: But if this is --
20 if this is approved tonight --

21 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

22 MS. SCHUMACHER: And the police
23 union takes the city to court and says it
24 has to be negotiated and we lose how many
25 police officers would then be eligible for

1 the special retirement package that you
2 offered to supposedly six in the MOU?

3 MR. GAUGHAN: I'm not sure about
4 that, but I did -- we did pose this question
5 to the Human Resources Department and I
6 haven't received a response yet, but from
7 what I read in the paper if I guess the
8 number of police officers would be eligible
9 to retire if there was no age requirement at
10 55 would be 27 employees from what the paper
11 recorded, but I can't confirm that.

12 MS. SCHUMACHER: You don't have that
13 from the --

14 MR. GAUGHAN: From the HR
15 Department. No, I don't.

16 MS. SCHUMACHER: I really think we
17 should know that.

18 MR. GAUGHAN: I did request that in
19 writing, yes.

20 MS. SCHUMACHER: And then on the
21 revised recovery plan, I know you are all
22 going to vote for it, but there is several
23 things that trouble me and the message that
24 it sends, and I'll just give you one
25 example, your earned income tax line up

1 item, what this says to me because we have,
2 and I'll round it off to the hundreds of
3 thousands, we have \$24.8 million for earned
4 income tax in 2015, this year's budget. In
5 2020 we only have \$25.4. That is \$600,000
6 so we are saying that the payroll for people
7 who pay the earned income tax is only going
8 go up by enough to cut -- provide \$600,000?
9 That says to me that we are declaring the
10 city economically dead. We are not going to
11 get any new jobs, people aren't going to get
12 raises?

13 MR. EVANS: That's PEL's projection,
14 but I tend to agree with you because I think
15 that --

16 MS. SCHUMACHER: I mean, anybody
17 looking at that that wanted to come into the
18 city and they look what does the city think
19 they are going to do and you've got a
20 relative almost flat --

21 MR. EVANS: Absolutely.

22 MS. SCHUMACHER: -- of earned income
23 tax, that bothers me. That sends a message.

24 MR. EVANS: It bothers me, too.
25 Absolutely because I have been saying for

1 years every time we raise taxes we are
2 actually going to get less in return.

3 MS. SCHUMACHER: Yeah. I mean,
4 there are a lot of other line items that I
5 could use similar comparisons, but those
6 things bother me a whole lot, but I
7 recognize you are all going to vote for it
8 so I'll take my seat. Thank you.

9 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

10 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening, Dave
11 Dobrzyn once again, resident of Scranton,
12 taxpayer. On the first distressed
13 municipalities act, once again, I would like
14 to see the method that some of the
15 responsibilities that Henry Amoroso brought
16 up, we lost in Court on the wage tax, on the
17 commuter tax, and once again, it will be
18 decided by a senior judge who never has to
19 answer to a voter again, and I think it
20 should be contingent. It should be inserted
21 in there that it's null and void if we lose
22 in court on the LST tax. It's time we start
23 to press our end home.

24 And on this pension issue with the
25 police department, one of the things, and

1 POLICE DEPARTMENT BY REASSIGNING TWO (2)
2 CIVILIAN CLERKS TO THE PATROL DIVISION TO
3 ENFORCE PARKING VIOLATIONS THROUGHOUT THE
4 CITY.

5 MR. MCGOFF: What is the
6 recommendation of the Chair for the
7 Committee on Public Safety?

8 MR. WECHSLER: As Chairperson for
9 the Committee on Public Safety, I recommend
10 final passage of Item 7-A.

11 MR. ROGAN: Second.

12 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? Roll
13 call, please?

14 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

15 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

16 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

17 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

18 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

19 MR. EVANS: Yes.

20 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

22 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

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

25 MS. REED: 7-B. FOR CONSIDERATION

1 BY THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS- FOR
2 ADOPTION RESOLUTION NO. 130, 2015 -
3 RATIFYING AND APPROVING THE SUBMISSION OF AN
4 ACT 101, SECTION 902 RECYCLING DEVELOPMENT
5 AND IMPLEMENTATION GRANT APPLICATION
6 SUBMITTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
7 AND THE DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS
8 ADMINISTRATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
9 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ("DEP"),
10 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE
11 CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO AN
12 AGREEMENT WITH THE COMMONWEALTH OF
13 PENNSYLVANIA, DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL
14 PROTECTION ("DEP") AND TO ACCEPT THE ACT
15 101, SECTION 902 RECYCLING DEVELOPMENT AND
16 IMPLEMENTATION GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF
17 \$250,000.00.

18 MR. MCGOFF: What is the
19 recommendation of the Chair for the
20 Committee on Public Works?

21 MR. GAUGHAN: As Chairperson for the
22 Committee on Public Works, I recommend final
23 passage of Item 7-B.

24 MR. ROGAN: Second.

25 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? Roll

1 call, please?

2 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

3 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

4 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

5 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

6 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

7 MR. EVANS: Yes.

8 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

9 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

10 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

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

13 MS. REED: 7-C -FORMERLY 6-B - FOR
14 CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES -FOR
15 ADOPTION - FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 86, 2015
16 - AMENDING THE REVISED RECOVERY PLAN FOR THE
17 CITY OF SCRANTON PURSUANT TO THE FINANCIALLY
18 DISTRESSED MUNICIPALITIES ACT; AND
19 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF
20 SCRANTON TO ISSUE AN ORDER DIRECTING THE
21 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVISED RECOVERY PLAN
22 WHICH WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE UPON ADOPTION
23 ATTACHED HERETO AS EXHIBIT "A" IN ACCORDANCE
24 WITH THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 249 OF THE
25 FINANCIALLY DISTRESSED MUNICIPALITIES ACT.

1 MR. MCGOFF: As Chair for the
2 Committee on Rules, I recommend final
3 passage of Item 7-C.

4 MR. ROGAN: Second.

5 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? Roll
6 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 declare
17 Item 7-C legally and lawfully adopted.

18 MS. REED: 7-D - FORMERLY 6-C - FOR
19 CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES -
20 FOR ADOPTION - FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 87,
21 2015 - AS AMENDED - AMENDING FILE OF THE
22 COUNCIL NO. 152 OF 1987, AN ORDINANCE
23 ESTABLISHING A REVISED BENEFIT PLAN FOR THE
24 POLICEMEN'S PENSION FUND IN ORDER TO CORRECT
25 AN ERROR OF OMISSION OF SECTION 2 AGE AND

1 SERVICE RETIREMENT REQUIREMENTS. (EMERGENCY
2 CERTIFICATE ATTACHED).

3 MR. MCGOFF: As Chair for the
4 Committee on Rules, I recommend final
5 passage of Item 7-D, as amended.

6 MR. ROGAN: Second.

7 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question.
9 I'll be voting "yes" for this legislation
10 tonight in order to correct the error in the
11 1987 police pension ordinance which omitted
12 a retirement age requirement.

13 I would like to take a second and
14 read into the record a letter we received
15 from police union president Paul Helring on
16 March 10. It says, "President Bob McGoff,
17 it was just recently requested by the FOP to
18 the Scranton Police Pension Board about the
19 eligibility requirements for members of our
20 bargaining unit. This was a result of the
21 mandated changes made in the city's
22 ordinances as a result of the Act 205 needed
23 by September 30, 1987.

24 In reviewing the ordinances passed
25 on an emergency certificate September 23,

1 1987, it's required for fire and clerical to
2 have 25 years of service and be the age of
3 55 in order to be eligible for pension
4 benefits. In the police ordinance, there
5 was several changes made to our pension
6 benefits but no age requirement.

7 It was just recently announced that
8 the city council meeting that you intend to
9 make changes to the police ordinance to
10 mirror the other city unions benefits. This
11 action was not bargained between the city
12 and the FOP during our recent contract
13 extension. The FOP is asking city council
14 to proceed with caution when making any
15 changes to the police pension benefit
16 without negotiating the terms with the FOP.

17 We are unsure if you are aware of
18 the 1984 Pennsylvania Supreme Court decision
19 which addresses pension benefits
20 unilaterally being changed after an employee
21 is hired. This action is strictly
22 prohibited and will cause litigation if
23 changes are implemented by the city.

24 If you are any questions, feel free
25 to contact the FOP regarding this or any

1 other issue before your body. Thank you.
2 Paul Helring. Union President."

3 I'd just like to say after reading
4 that letter that the police union should
5 first understand how government works. In
6 Mr. Helring's letter he asked council to
7 proceed with caution when making any changes
8 to the police pension benefit without
9 negotiating the terms first with the FOP.

10 First, council does not negotiate
11 contracts. That responsibility, as we all
12 know after the past few months, lies with
13 the mayor.

14 Second, I'd like to clarify that
15 it's not council's action that would trigger
16 litigation. The mayor has the option to
17 veto this legislation if he chooses to. It
18 would only be challengeable if the mayor
19 implemented it. The executive is the branch
20 of government that executes the legislation.
21 Mr. Helring should be cognizant much these
22 facts before he asks council to proceed with
23 caution, and just to be clear, council can
24 and should pass this legislation.

25 Mr. Helring in his letter to council

1 also threatens litigation if this
2 legislation is passed which, again, I'll
3 point out simply corrects a clerical error.
4 I'm disgusted and outraged that the police
5 union has decided this is the course of
6 action they plan on taking. They must not
7 understand that dire financial situation the
8 city is in and the condition of their
9 pension which is clearly on life support.

10 Many people I have talked to find
11 this recent news unbelievable, but to be
12 honest, I expected it. Mayor Courtright has
13 given every indication during his first year
14 and half in office that he will meet the
15 demands of the police and fire unions at any
16 cost. We need to be clear on who's
17 responsible for allowing the police union to
18 think they can do things like this.

19 For the past 14 months Mayor
20 Courtright laid out the welcome mat in front
21 of his office. Let's remember how anxious
22 Mayor Courtright was to renegotiate the
23 police and fire contracts in advance of the
24 revised recovery plan and provide them
25 protection until 2021. We rarely ever hear

1 directly from the mayor on most issue unless
2 it deals with the unions.

3 For example, the caucus we had on
4 the budget, wasn't here. Caucus we had on
5 the recovery plan, wasn't here. It's my
6 hope that we pass this legislation tonight
7 and the mayor enforces it and doesn't back
8 down. Let the police unions sue and then
9 let the chips at this point fall where they
10 may. I am not sure why the police union is
11 looking to negotiate again. This city and
12 the taxpayers have nothing left to give.
13 Mayor Courtright gave away the store and the
14 shelves at this point are empty. The only
15 thing we have left is to beg the police
16 union not to bankrupt the pensions and,
17 therefore, the city and if 27 employees are
18 allowed to retire early before age 55 my
19 fear is that's exactly what will happen.

20 The delusion and greed that is
21 involved here is both astounding and
22 disgusting. Government should exist to
23 serve the people. In Scranton it seems as
24 if government exists to employ people and
25 pay them money and benefits it can no longer

1 afford. Thank you.

2 MR. ROGAN: Sure. I guess
3 Mr. Gaughan won't miss an opportunity to
4 throw stones at the administration, this
5 came from the city solicitor authorized by
6 the mayor to correct an issue that started
7 when you and I were less than one year old.
8 It's certainly not Mayor Courtright's fault,
9 it's certainly not the fault of anyone on
10 this board. I don't think anybody was in
11 government at the time when this occurred
12 except for maybe the city controller, but
13 there is nobody on this board that was and I
14 don't understand how you criticize the mayor
15 for laying out a welcome mat for the unions
16 when it's his legislation the unions are
17 opposing.

18 I think we all agree that this needs
19 to be done. It should be -- I believe it
20 will be a unanimous vote because it isn't
21 right and the union is wrong. This has been
22 a past practice, there was an error that was
23 made, unfortunately, it took nearly 28 years
24 for anyone to realize that it existed and
25 these are the type of things that keep

1 happening over and over and over and over
2 again and every other week it's one thing
3 after another.

4 This week it's the item that we are
5 dealing with now, two weeks ago it was
6 people that were receiving double pensions
7 for a year. A few years before that it was
8 a business administrator under a previous
9 administration that miscounted for a million
10 dollars, a tax collector misappropriated \$5
11 million. When is all of this stuff going to
12 end? There needs to be some accountability
13 and, unfortunately, with many of these
14 issues they are not. We don't find them out
15 until the people that were there at the time
16 they occurred are all out of office.

17 But I commend the mayor and the
18 solicitor for doing the right thing and
19 fighting the union on this issue. It is the
20 right thing to do and I hope it will pass
21 unanimously and I sure the mayor will sign
22 it into law tomorrow.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Let me just say that in
24 the emergency certificate it delineates the
25 intent of the 1987 ordinance and in the back

1 up to this legislation tonight we have the
2 ordinance from 1987. It goes from Section
3 I, membership, to Section III, age and
4 service retirement benefit. Obviously,
5 there was a Section II that should have been
6 there. For some reason that was not
7 included. There were two other contracts
8 that were approved that evening that had a
9 Section II. One for I think it was the
10 clerical union, and one for fire. Both of
11 them had a Section II or a section that said
12 25 and 55. Obviously, the intent of the
13 legislation was to include that.

14 Also, an actuarial study done in
15 1987 by Bayer also included the 25/55 in
16 their study, so it becomes obvious that the
17 intent of the law was to include that. A
18 clerical error left it out. All we are
19 doing is putting that section back. What
20 was the intent in 1987 and all we are doing
21 is saying, yes, we believe this was the
22 intent of the law and this is how it should
23 be followed.

24 This was done -- this is not being
25 done by council without some advice. This

1 is being done upon the advice of the city
2 solicitor, the council solicitor, I believe
3 the Pension Board solicitor, all agree that
4 this should be rectified at this point in
5 time and that that was the intent in 1987
6 and that the city should enforce the intent
7 of the 1987 ordinance.

8 Did I say anything improper or did I
9 miss anything, Mr. Minora?

10 MR. MINORA: Got it all right.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. I know it
12 was long and involved.

13 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. McGoff, the one
14 point that I would like to bring out all
15 during the debate on the contract in the
16 beginning of the year I believe it was the
17 understanding that the fire union was under
18 the assumption that it was 25/55. All
19 during that debate we never heard anything
20 different than 25/55.

21 And, also, I would also like to
22 point out that I'm sure in the new contract
23 if these people are eligible to retire the
24 new health benefit does not kick in. It's
25 very clear that the health benefit does not

1 kick in until 25 years of service and 55
2 years old so I'm not sure if these --
3 somehow this happened that the retirees
4 would be eligible for health care until they
5 are 55.

6 MR. EVANS: On the question, to say
7 I was angry when I read the front page of
8 the newspaper about the police unions
9 stating that they are going to fight the age
10 requirement for a pension is an
11 understatement. It's two days later and
12 that hasn't changed one bit.

13 Let me recap some things that we
14 need to remember. Number one, the police
15 union signed a contract where they received
16 retiree health care benefits, additional
17 vacation time, enhanced sick day policy and
18 the union president gets a day off each week
19 to perform union duties, all of this while
20 negotiating with a city that was in
21 financial distress on the verge of
22 bankruptcy.

23 Number two, their pension plan will
24 be broke in five years and 50 percent of
25 their members are on disability pensions.

1 Three. The auditor general has
2 predicted that we could be in receivership
3 or bankruptcy as early as two years without
4 drastic changes to our pension plans, and
5 the response from the union representative
6 to this latest pension revelation was, "We
7 are going to put them on the notice that
8 it's illegal because of a clerical error."

9 Really? I commented last week that
10 we have a government that appears to be more
11 employee-centric than citizen-centric. This
12 latest situation has done nothing but
13 enhance that perception. That's all I have.

14 MR. MCGOFF: Final comment, as I
15 said to the newspaper, I believe that given
16 what has been done for the FOP over the past
17 number of years, including the contract that
18 we voted on earlier this year, that it would
19 be a good faith gesture by the FOP to say we
20 understand that the intent of the law was
21 25/55 and let it go at that.

22 MR. ROGAN: I would just add one
23 other item, Mr. McGoff is absolutely correct
24 and in my five years on council there have
25 been two FOP grievances that I strongly

1 disagreed with, this is the second one. The
2 first one was when Chief Duffy was as chief
3 making arrests and the union filed their
4 grievance that they were taking away union
5 police work. While I generally agree with
6 much of what the FOP pushes on that issue
7 and on this one they are certainly wrong.

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 declare
19 Item 7-D, as amended, legally and lawfully
20 adopted and I would hope that the FOP would
21 recognize what we have done and, as I said,
22 make that good faith gesture.

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

25 MR. ROGAN: Motion to adjourn.

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MR. MCGOFF: This meeting is
adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER