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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

HELD:

Thursday, March 19, 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

JOHN MINORA, SOLICITOR

1 (Pledge of Allegiance recited and
2 moment of reflection 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. Dispense with
14 the reading of the minutes.

15 MS. REED: THIRD ORDER. 3.A. AGENDA
16 FOR THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS MEETING HELD
17 MARCH 18, 2015.

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

20 MS. REED: 3-B. TAX ASSESSOR'S
21 REPORT FOR HEARING DATE TO BE HELD APRIL 8,
22 2015.

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

25 MS. REED: 3-C. CHECK RECEIVED FROM

1 SCRANTON HOUSING AUTHORITY PARK GARDENS, IN
2 THE AMOUNT OF \$100,000.00 WHICH IS PAYMENT
3 IN LIEU OF TAXES FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON.

4 MR. MCGOFF: I would like to thank
5 on behalf of the City of Scranton the
6 Scranton Housing Authority and Park Gardens
7 for their donation to the city. If there
8 are no other comments, received and filed.

9 MS. REED: 3-D. LACKAWANNA COUNTY
10 SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION
11 REPORTS REVIEWED FEBRUARY 18 AND MARCH 3,
12 2015.

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

15 Are there any announcements from
16 council?

17 MR. ROGAN: Yes, I have two. First
18 one, there will be a meatball dinner on this
19 Saturday, March 21, in memory of Audrey
20 Grace Davis from 12 to 4 p.m. at that
21 Nativity Social Club in South Scranton.
22 Audrey was born three months premature and
23 touched the lives of many in her short time
24 her on earth. For those who don't know,
25 Audry was the daughter of Colleen Bozum and

1 Jim Davis, my future brother and
2 sister-in-law. There will be a DJ and
3 basket raffles at the fundraiser this
4 Saturday at 12:00 at Nativity Social Club.

5 Secondly, the 2015 emergency
6 services charity basketball game, members of
7 the Scranton City Police and Fire Department
8 will take on members of the police, fire and
9 EMS from Luzerne County in a charity
10 basketball game that will benefit the Ronald
11 McDonald House of Scranton. The game will
12 be held Saturday, March 21, 2015, at the
13 Scranton High School with the game tipping
14 off at 4 p.m. There will be basket raffles,
15 DJ, food and drinks. Tickets are sold for
16 \$5 for adults and \$2 for children. Thank
17 you.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else? A couple
19 of quick announcements. First of all, next
20 Thursday at 5:30 that will be a public
21 caucus with the Pennsylvania Municipal
22 League regarding pension reform and bills
23 currently in Harrisburg addressing the issue
24 of pension reform.

25 Related to that, this afternoon

1 there was a public hearing with the Auditor
2 General concerning nonprofits and tax exempt
3 properties and Senate Bill 4, which is
4 before the State Senate at this time. If
5 there are any comments that people may have
6 they may do so through the Auditor General's
7 website, it's www.paauditor.gov. That's
8 www.paauditor.gov, all lower case, if anyone
9 wishes to comment.

10 And finally, Thursday, April 2, the
11 scheduled meeting for Thursday, April 2, is
12 being moved to April 1, to Wednesday night,
13 appropriately April Fool's Day. Sorry. We
14 are doing that because April 2 is Holy
15 Thursday and we didn't want to conflict with
16 any events of that evening. So that the
17 April 2, meeting will be actually be held on
18 April 1, and also along with that, city hall
19 is closed on Friday, April 3. Thank you.

20 MS. REED: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS'
21 PARTICIPATION.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Joan Hodowanitz.

23 MS. HODOWANITZ: Joan Hodowanitz,
24 Scranton resident and taxpayer. I have for
25 quite some time thought that the most

1 serious problem facing the city was its
2 financial crisis, but I have reconsidered
3 that and I think more pressing is our lack
4 of engaged citizenry. You know, I look out
5 here and this place should be standing room
6 only considering the problems currently
7 facing the city. However, I think we are
8 very fortunate in the recent reporting done
9 by the Times-Tribune, not him, I'm talking
10 about Jim and Terry. You, too, probably,
11 but just this last few days, "PA warns city
12 long overdue audit could cost. County Court
13 to hear Scranton's petition for tax hike on
14 April 22." "City Bets Big on Paving."
15 Keeping the citizenry informed goes a long
16 way to an engaged citizenry, but they need
17 to go one step further.

18 The other local element I think that
19 helps keep us informed, if we use them, is
20 the Controller's Office which puts out a
21 monthly report which you see every month.
22 For example, I noticed that the Highways
23 Bureau's salt fund is totally depleted, all
24 \$250,000 so I hope that they are just out of
25 money and not out of salt because I

1 understand we are getting snow tomorrow.
2 We'll see.

3 That having been said, the 2013
4 audit is now 291 days overdue, what is the
5 status?

6 MR. MCGOFF: The Business
7 Administrator has I'll say forcefully asked
8 that the auditor have it completed I think
9 it was prior to April 1 submitted to the
10 city.

11 MS. HODOWANITZ: Because the auditor
12 could have issued a qualified opinion due to
13 scope limitations, he could have done that
14 last year and he really has no excuse.

15 Regarding the Times-Tribune article,
16 "PA Warns City Long Overdue Audit to Cost."

17 Apparently DCED expected an audit on
18 April 1, 2014, almost a year ago. What
19 funds do we stand to lose since we missed
20 that milestone and we are now almost a year
21 late?

22 MR. MCGOFF: Without the audit any
23 grants from the state would be jeopardized.

24 MS. HODOWANITZ: Does that include
25 the grant that funded Mr. Bulzoni's pay

1 raise?

2 MR. MCGOFF: I don't think it
3 affects anything that is current, I think it
4 would be anything that would be available or
5 applied for after that date.

6 MS. HODOWANITZ: Okay. Speaking of
7 which, are we going to challenge this April
8 1 deadline from DCED for the audits? I
9 mean, that's 90 days after the close of the
10 fiscal year. I mean, that really is pushing
11 the envelope, somebody needs to challenge
12 that. Why does DCED need an audit from us
13 90 days after the close of the year?

14 MR. MCGOFF: I don't know,
15 Ms. Hodowanitz, it is just something that
16 exists. I'm sure -- I don't think it's been
17 met.

18 MS. HODOWANITZ: Not only by us, I
19 think most municipalities --

20 MR. MCGOFF: Exactly.

21 MS. HODOWANITZ: -- don't make it.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Why that exists, I
23 don't know.

24 MS. HODOWANITZ: I think that needs
25 to change. They need to get a grip on

1 themselves and change that deadline.
2 However, I understand March 27 is when we
3 open the bids for the audits for 2014
4 through '17 understanding, you know, that's
5 just around the corner I hope the
6 administration has already started crunching
7 the numbers and preparing the necessary
8 schedules, having learned from the 2013
9 audit what they should be doing and if he
10 are not shame on them. That's not an excuse
11 they are going to be able to use for the
12 2014 audit, they have learned by the school
13 of hard knocks they should be crunching
14 those numbers from 2014 right now even
15 before the bid is open and satisfied.

16 With regard to -- back next week.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Ms.

18 Hodowanitz.

19 Lee Morgan.

20 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.

21 I'd like to ask council a question, each
22 member, if I could, and that question is
23 have any of the council members ever read
24 James Madison's "Essay on Property"?

25 MR. MCGOFF: Ms. Hodowanitz -- I

1 left a copy --

2 MS. HODOWANITZ: I brought it back.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Ms. Hodowanitz just
4 returned to me the "Mind of the Founder"
5 which is James Madison on the constitution.

6 MR. MORGAN: Okay. Well, look it, I
7 think that every member of council should
8 really read that "Essay on Property" because
9 it doesn't only deal with physical property
10 it doesn't -- it has to do with everything
11 we have as a citizen, and the reason I bring
12 that up is last week there was some give and
13 take about Mr. Bolus and Mr. Miller speaking
14 at the podium and my question is, you know,
15 pretty simple where do our property rights
16 end as a citizen? And I think that if every
17 American read that, there would be a lot
18 less smirking and smiling from elected
19 officials and they would understand how
20 important our fundamental rights are as
21 citizens and just how far down the road do
22 our own self-destruction we have come.

23 If you read and you understand that
24 the founders of this nation faced off
25 against the strongest power in the world at

1 that time and freed us from the bondage that
2 we suffered under the British Empire, and,
3 well, to be honest with you that's been
4 replaced by the American government and the
5 various branches of government going all the
6 way back to the whiskey rebellion, and I
7 just hope that maybe, you know, we do have
8 students here tonight and maybe they could
9 really look into our founders and where we
10 started and where we are now because I think
11 we are in a very troubling place with
12 mountains of debt, lack of opportunity, no
13 jobs, all our jobs are in other countries, I
14 mean, where we are is just terrible and the
15 city we live in. You know, the
16 vice-president of the United States came
17 here the other day, he left here as a child.
18 I hope he would do a tour of this city and
19 see what it really looks like. All of the
20 vacant property, all of the condemned homes,
21 all of the poverty, and it's poverty on top
22 of poverty just driving this city. It's
23 past the brink of self-destruction. It
24 really is. The great he is think that could
25 happen to this city is a receivership.

1 And, you know, in light of the vice
2 president coming here or even if Hilary
3 Clinton is elected president somebody has to
4 do a very in-depth investigation of this
5 city government for 50 years or more and the
6 people that are still walking around that
7 are still alive we need to put them in jail,
8 we really do because we have seized people's
9 properties, I think we need to look at how
10 properties are condemned in the city and how
11 the list is -- how we come up with a list
12 and how we are going to demolish these homes
13 and, you know, we have -- we just keep
14 regurgitating or own self-destruction and
15 it's really amazing that there is such a
16 lack of opportunity here. Congressmen and
17 Senators don't help us, our state
18 representatives aren't doing anything for
19 us, Act 47 was a shame, revisions to it are
20 a shame and, you know, you have got senior
21 citizens on social security that anybody in
22 their right mind knows with the small checks
23 they receive every month there is no
24 possible way they can pay this rate of
25 taxation on their property, but somehow the

1 people we elect it's missed them all.

2 And when you look at the wage base
3 here and you look at the tax rates for
4 property here it's well beyond that, and
5 then you look at all of the borrowing the
6 city continues to try to do. I mean, really
7 the greatest thing that could happen to this
8 city in regards to the audit is that we stop
9 funding the city in every possible way and
10 finally force this city into bankruptcy and
11 stop throwing good money after bad money.

12 It's just ashame. You can't go up
13 Ash Street, it's like the road doesn't
14 exist. There is potholes all over this
15 whole city and our pothole machine, Mr.
16 Gaughan, what happened to it? Why didn't
17 somebody maintain it? They had no respect
18 for it because somebody else paid for it.
19 Where are we going as a city? Are we going
20 to tax every resident until every leaves?

21 You know, you talk to young people,
22 probably most of these people in this room,
23 they won't come here. When they go to
24 school they will never come back and
25 generation after generation has left, is

1 that anything to brag about? And really, is
2 there anything here to smile about,
3 gentlemen? Thank you.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Just since you have
5 asked us about reading books, I would
6 suggest a book by Charles Beard "An Economic
7 Interpretation of the Constitution." A very
8 good analysis of the founders.

9 Mr. Ellman.

10 MR. ELLMAN: Lee, I think you are
11 talking to a dysfunctional administration.
12 I would like to congratulate the mayor
13 though because I have discovered he is an
14 equal opportunity man, no favoritism where
15 these potholes are because the worst ones in
16 the city seem to be in front of his
17 business. I think that's where I damaged my
18 car.

19 In today's paper this article about
20 paving, if I'm not mistaken, about a year
21 ago the county said they were going to pave
22 from Taylor to Dickson City, something like
23 that last year? How come we got to -- we
24 only got 15, 20 miles of paving to do and
25 they want to use part of this from Parker to

1 the Dickson City line. That's a county
2 road, they ought to be responsible for all
3 of it and that's where I happen to live and
4 I still don't think it should be paved by
5 us. Am I not wrong, Mr. McGoff, you were
6 here last year? It was something like from
7 Taylor to Dickson City.

8 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Rogan has an
9 answer.

10 MR. ROGAN: The state is paving this
11 summer from the Taylor line to the Scranton
12 Expressway. That was the plan that PennDOT,
13 the state, released. The article that was
14 in today there is some, I guess it's up in
15 the air, who is responsible for that
16 particular section of Main Avenue that you
17 are speaking about. From what I have read
18 it is the city's responsibility, but most of
19 the complaints that we get are about the
20 portion in West Scranton where you mentioned
21 in front of the mayor's business, that's all
22 on the state and it is being paved this year
23 as well as handicapped curb cuts fall on the
24 state.

25 MR. ELLMAN: Well, if this is the

1 city's responsibility when that bridge over
2 Legget Creek needs repaired who is going to
3 have to pay it? That bridge is like 100
4 years old. When you walk out there cars
5 going by make dust and dirt fall so it's not
6 here much longer. You are talking about
7 what, a couple of million dollars? Two or
8 three million dollars to repair that?
9 Besides that the street will not be able to
10 be used for a year or so. Look at Rockwell,
11 what's that been a couple of years?

12 Why is Parker Street closed? I
13 walked across that bridge with my dog
14 yesterday, I just don't see nothing wrong
15 it. It's been four or five years and nobody
16 has been able to use Parker Street. One car
17 at a time, they got a traffic light deal.
18 Oh, well.

19 What does Bulzoni know about paving?
20 You know, he needed a consultant to try a
21 sell something, now we are going to have to
22 get him a consultant tonight for paving
23 because this is involved. You might be
24 paying for two inches and get an inch or you
25 there is a whole lot involved with that

1 paving job. You have to move the sewers.
2 He is not the least bit capable of doing his
3 job plus take on this.

4 MR. MCGOFF: That's why we have an
5 engineer, Mr. Ellman.

6 MR. ELLMAN: This isn't his job. I
7 mean, I'm defending him. This is not his
8 job to take on. As much as I disagree with
9 him, this is an involved situation 20 miles
10 of paving. You are talking about almost \$3
11 million. It's a shame. I don't know what
12 it cost when the city was paved about six,
13 eight years ago, the last time I think I
14 seen any big paving, but it didn't seem like
15 it was like that.

16 Well, I guess I have made my
17 alienation speech for tonight. I would like
18 to say that lady last week that gave the
19 program about the city it was so well done
20 and all, but it's a shame that we can't do
21 that. You know, she is just a dreamer
22 thinking that that could be done. That
23 would cost more than this paving job we are
24 talking about, but that was such a good
25 display. It made me sort of feel sorry for

1 her. She is talking about a city with such
2 a deplorable future the way we are going.
3 There is just no money for nothing around
4 here, everything is just declining.

5 I listened this morning to the radio
6 when I was walking the dog and they are
7 ridiculing this plan to try and make the
8 neighborhoods look better. My neighborhood
9 has declined, the house values are probably
10 like \$10,000. It's just gone to pot and
11 nothing is being done except our taxes go up
12 and up and up. I don't know if I mentioned
13 it last week, I know where there is a real
14 nice fixer upper for ten or twelve thousand
15 dollars, the taxes are \$2,400. Who can
16 afford to buy a house and fix it up and pay
17 \$2,400 taxes? That's what's wrong with you
18 guys. You just don't have your finger on
19 things. Thank you.

20 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Ellman.
21 Anyone else who wishes to address council?

22 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening, Council.
23 Dave Dobrzyn, resident, taxpayer. It seems
24 like every week I attend council I start
25 making a list for next week and it just gets

1 too big.

2 I'd like to say on the last week's
3 caucus also, a lot of great ideas but, you
4 know, we invested through New York Life for
5 my wife with an annuity, I don't know if
6 I'll ever live to see it, I got one up on
7 Jesus, I'm back from the dead twice instead
8 of once thanks to my doctors at CMC, but
9 down there on Penn Avenue in front of New
10 York Life it's like driving over a strip
11 mine, you know? So we have to develop our
12 priorities and that's just too much.

13 Now, last week I mentioned Jack
14 Loscombe and I'd like to impress that nobody
15 on this council or the council before or the
16 council before that had anything to do with
17 him being denied his coverage, but there
18 were people in the administration that
19 despite the fact that the man was horribly,
20 horribly injured and permanently disabled
21 some of the same people were running around
22 doubling pensions for people that were
23 probably just going to be a pain in the neck
24 if you had to direct that work force.

25 And I'm glad to see in the paper

1 that the 2013 audit is finally reaching its
2 fruition and we have to get a better way.
3 Hopefully this year will be a better way,
4 the 2014 audit. I mean, it may be late but
5 it's got to stop being late. A month or two
6 is one thing, but that's another.

7 And on these inspections, I'd like
8 to see because of the weather, for instance,
9 now my neighborhood has trash removal on
10 Friday. I have three barrels of recyclables
11 on my back porch. I have about well over
12 100 pounds of newspaper on my back porch and
13 I'd like not to be cited so if we could go a
14 little easy until the end of the April,
15 until people get out there and, you know, I
16 want to see a couple of the shrubs whether
17 they are alive or dead, so if they are dead
18 I'll cut them down. If they are alive, I'll
19 trim them, but, you know, I really would
20 appreciate not getting a fine and every
21 Friday in our neighborhood on that issue,
22 especially with recycling my neighborhood
23 gets the dirty end of the stick because we
24 are Friday.

25 Now, most of the bad weather is

1 over, although there is a prediction for
2 some more, but next year maybe it would be
3 nice if we could take turns in the
4 neighborhoods, even if somebody got slighted
5 like last Friday how about picking it up
6 Monday and letting somebody else do some of
7 the heavy carrying here because it's too
8 much. It's just too much. I have so much
9 stuff laying around my yard that really
10 needs to go and I'm dying to get rid of it.
11 Hopefully, some of it will go tomorrow, but
12 it wouldn't surprise me if I don't wake up
13 and see two inches of snow and recycling
14 sitting there at 4:00 tomorrow afternoon out
15 in front of the house. By the way, there is
16 52 steps to my front door and it's not a
17 party getting it down there.

18 On the parking garages, I agree that
19 they should possibly go. We have to look
20 into it, and the interest if we keep them
21 might just about be break even with or
22 exceed what we -- by ditching them, but the
23 Sewer Authority I hope we are all around in
24 three or four years, I know I have been an
25 opponent of anything to do with the Sewer

1 Authority, as all of those issues that were
2 discussed like the paving issue where you
3 have non-permeable surfaces, yes, if there
4 is a department store or a grocery store and
5 they have a huge lot you are actually paying
6 some money for that water to be processed
7 right now, and they want to start charging
8 people according to impermeable surfaces,
9 and I heard really some plan with the
10 current Sewer Authority and if my bill is
11 about \$1,200 a year, three times as much of
12 what it is now, like I said, I hope four
13 years from now whether you are in office or
14 I see you on the street I'm going to, "See,
15 I warned you."

16 So, finally, once again, they are
17 make a final push on the Transpacific trade
18 pack --

19 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Dobrzyn.

20 MR. DOBRZYN: And keep in mind, that
21 we don't have money to pay the salaries
22 anymore, but contact your government and
23 tell the president forget about it. We're
24 at 10 percent, ten cents on the dollar,
25 that's what we get out of the trade pack.

1 Thank you. Have a good night.

2 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening,
3 Council. Marie Schumacher. Tonight, 5-B
4 tonight the budget, and I'll read it, it
5 says, "The Bureau of Highways will have
6 direct involvement with the completion of an
7 approximately \$2.5 million roadway
8 resurfacing program completed in part
9 through the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
10 assistance from the Pennsylvania
11 Infrastructure Bank Loan Program and the
12 continued deployment of the annual liquid
13 fuels allocation."

14 Now, it's troubling to me, I don't
15 think if there is anything we don't need
16 it's more debt and the budget says total of
17 2.5. Now, the budget also has a revenue
18 line item that has \$1,425,000 for the liquid
19 fuels forecast for this year. So tonight's
20 ordinance it says would increase or debt by
21 \$2.2 million, although, I don't know why
22 it's not \$2.4 because when you add the
23 interest in and we have to pay the interest
24 I think our debt is probably actually
25 increasing by 2.449, but if the budget

1 contains \$2.5 million to be expended on this
2 project why aren't we first applying the
3 \$1,425,000 in the liquid fuels program which
4 would reduce the required borrowing to \$1.1
5 million instead of 2.2? No idea? I would
6 really like to know why that's happened and
7 what's going to happen and what the correct
8 debt number is if it's just the principal or
9 the principal and the interest.

10 Next week I will talk more on the
11 pension issue that's ongoing so I'll save
12 that for another meeting, but I would like
13 to know whether the contribution, total
14 contribution of \$120,000 toward the pension
15 for the clerical employees that are retired
16 under the special circumstances and
17 reportedly had a pension increase of 71
18 percent, not 100 percent, according to the
19 ordinance, was that actually paid in 2003?
20 I know it was authorized by council, but
21 could somebody find that out if that was
22 actually paid? Wayne, can you do that?

23 MR. EVANS: Yeah, I'll have that.

24 MS. SCHUMACHER: Thank you. And,
25 Mr. Wechsler, did you find anything about

1 the trash?

2 MR. WECHSLER: No, I did contact
3 Mr. Beck and Mr. Bulzoni and at this time
4 they have not gotten back to me yet.

5 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. And one
6 little thing, I did see a legal notice again
7 for pool chemicals for the coming swim
8 season for the pools that I guess they
9 intend to open, which I don't know which
10 they are, but excluding May Aug. Now, I
11 would hope that if there is a quantity
12 discount that we are not splitting it just
13 because that's an authority and paying more
14 for both, why it couldn't be bought as a
15 single purchase and split I don't
16 understand.

17 And speaking of authorities, I was
18 concerned when you put the revised recovery
19 plan through in the two readings because I
20 hadn't been totally through it and I was
21 remembering back to a Scranton Sewer
22 Authority meeting back in 2012, toward the
23 end of 2012, and I thought we ought to
24 really address the storm water issue and,
25 indeed, I went back and it's on the report

1 that was prepared by Gnatt-Flemming is on
2 the Sewer Authority's website if anybody
3 chooses to go and look at it, but they did
4 an extensive study and they chose a variable
5 control approach for the long-term control
6 plan and it was the proposed combined -- or
7 CSO related bypass meets all the
8 requirements under Part II C.7 of the United
9 States EPA CSO control policy in regard to
10 maximizing the treatment at the waste water
11 treatment plant. So I don't -- if I may
12 finish this?

13 MR. MCGOFF: Continue.

14 MS. SCHUMACHER: I don't understand
15 why we want to go into establishing -- the
16 only thing I can see is more revenue because
17 the interesting thing if you would look at
18 that report everything was based on the
19 ability to pay. There was a financial
20 capacity analysis was conducted and it's
21 quite interesting and everybody agreed with
22 it and I don't think we can afford to have a
23 separate one and I don't think we need it
24 because I think this plan was approved for
25 20 years, so I don't think that belonged in

1 the revised recovery plan.

2 And if I could just close with this,
3 yesterday's paper the real estate section,
4 this shows how low we have sunk, one of the
5 real estate companies is actually
6 advertising, "Take advantage of the market
7 conditions in Scranton, two large stately
8 homes priced to sell." The story of
9 Scranton. Thank you.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else wish to
11 address council?

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

14 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Wechsler?

15 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you,
16 Mr. McGoff. This week I was contacted by a
17 constituent that had a problem gaining
18 access to an accident report. Through city
19 clerk, Lori Reed, the matter was corrected
20 and the accident report was passed to the
21 constituent.

22 The DPW also performed some
23 temporary road repairs on Mountain Lake.
24 That road is well traveled, the fire truck
25 was having trouble getting around the lake

1 and DPW did some corrections to facility
2 until a permanent repair can be made.

3 I also was contacted a resident
4 that's concerned about speeding on West:
5 Locust Street. This matter has come to our
6 attention a few different times and the
7 police have been dispatched, some tickets
8 have been issued, but for the most part it's
9 an ongoing problem that we have to look at
10 again.

11 Also, upon East Mountain Road there
12 was a road repair or a utility repair was
13 made over the winter for some frozen pipes
14 and right now the pave cut is wide open so I
15 would like to see if the city and the
16 utility can get either a permanent plate put
17 on this or a quick repair to that.

18 Also, Councilman Rogan and myself
19 were contacted today about a problem on
20 Sanderson Avenue. As I read the complaint
21 from the constituent, this is the classic
22 opportunity for the use of our new quality
23 of life ordinance. I know Councilman Rogan
24 did send some correspondence to Mr. Hinton.
25 I will be forwarding this to Chief Graziano,

1 but this type of an issue that this person
2 reported to us is exactly what we are trying
3 to combat. The home next to this person has
4 a lot of trash around it, a lot of abandoned
5 vehicles and it is an opportunity for us to
6 get off the ground running with our new
7 ordinance.

8 On Friday I did attend a meeting
9 with PennDOT concerning the Harrison Avenue
10 bridge and the Duffy Park project. The
11 Duffy Park project, as we talked about
12 before, the statute that is at Duffy Park
13 right now does need some stabilization and
14 it will have to be moved to a place where it
15 stays inside. One of the areas that we
16 discussed was perhaps on the landing here at
17 city hall. City Hall is a well-traveled
18 area, and I think that would be a good place
19 for the statute to go where it would be
20 treated with respect.

21 In regards to the Harrison Avenue
22 bridge project, we did mention to the
23 engineers at PennDOT about the presentation
24 that we had here last week about the
25 pedestrian bridge. At this time it is

1 something that PennDOT as looked at it in
2 the past and at this time they aren't
3 committed to be able to do that type of
4 repair up there right now. The bridge
5 itself is in terrible condition and in the
6 evaluation process they told me that the
7 would look at it again and get back to me
8 with a report, but right now they don't feel
9 that that bridge is stable enough to sustain
10 a pedestrian bridge at this time. It's a
11 very old bridge, it's not a solid bridge,
12 it's full of dirt as it was made back at
13 that time so I am waiting to hear a final
14 answer, a written answer from PennDOT about
15 that bridge project, so the thing with the
16 ideas that are brought up we will have to
17 evaluate every one, each one was great and
18 something to look at, but on some of them we
19 are going to have to be realistic and when
20 we get a final answer of things that can be
21 done or can't be done we will move on from
22 that idea and move onto something else. So
23 that's all I have at this time, Mr. McGoff.

24 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Rogan?

25 MR. ROGAN: Yes, thank you. I was

1 mulling over during the entire council
2 meeting whether I was even going to read
3 this letter or not, but I am. I received,
4 actually Councilman McGoff received a letter
5 today with all of the council cc'd from the
6 City Controller, and I will read excerpts
7 from that letter.

8 "Dear Mr. McGoff, at the last
9 council meeting Councilman Rogan once again
10 publically tried to blame the City
11 Controller's Office for an ordinance enacted
12 by council. Since the beginning of the year
13 when Councilman Rogan's candidate got in the
14 race for city controller Councilman Rogan
15 has been a regular critic of this office.
16 For the last three years he sat mute.

17 Councilman Rogan's attacks against
18 this office and negative innuendoes
19 regarding the controller are for his
20 personal advantage and use of this is
21 becoming a habit."

22 The second paragraph goes onto
23 explain the process of how an ordinances are
24 adopted in the city and that that's
25 council's duty, which is the only part of

1 the letter that is correct. Anyone that has
2 watched these meeting or can go back and
3 check the minutes, the only time I mentioned
4 the City Controller's Office was in regards
5 to the double pension issue that we have not
6 gotten to the bottom of and we still need to
7 get to the bottom of.

8 I have always gotten along with Mrs.
9 Novembrino, I think she is a very nice lady.
10 I don't understand why she believes that
11 this is politically motivated because it's
12 certainly not. In the Fifth Order speeches
13 I gave when I mentioned her office I also
14 mentioned former Mayor Doherty, I also
15 mentioned the various members of the Pension
16 Board. I believe we need to get to the
17 bottom of what happened of this pension mess
18 and council has a role where we have a
19 weekly meeting in public where we can
20 address these issues, and it's certainly
21 something I'm always going to do.

22 I am sorry she feels this way, that
23 she is being attacked, but we need to get to
24 the bottom of what happened and as long as
25 I'm on council I will continue to fight to

1 find out what happened regarding that
2 missing million dollars for the pension.

3 Secondly, Councilman Evans and
4 myself are now members of a committee that
5 the mayor formed and is being chaired by
6 Judy Price, Attorney Judy Price, to review
7 the ordinances in the License and
8 Inspections Office. As we all know, that
9 office is responsible for many ordinances
10 that we constantly receive complaints about
11 from residents and the business community.
12 The first ordinance we are looking to attack
13 and modify is the rental registration
14 ordinance. Over the last few years the
15 rental registration ordinance has become
16 more of a revenue item than it was when I
17 know myself and I know Councilman McGoff was
18 on the board at the time that it was
19 implemented as more of an instrument to
20 crack down on absentee landlords and blight.

21 Currently, we are floating around
22 many ideas to try and get this fixed. It's
23 not something that's supposed to be a cash
24 cow for the city and if you look back to
25 when it was adopted in the minutes I

1 probably said the exact same line when
2 council adopted it, that it should be a tool
3 to crack down on blight and have rental
4 properties throughout the city register and
5 especially when landlords are living in
6 other states when there are issues that
7 happen.

8 That is one of the short-term goals
9 of the committee, but we are planning on
10 doing an overview of many of these
11 ordinances. I'm sure Councilman Evans will
12 talk about this a little bit more, but it's
13 definitely something I'm very optimistic r
14 about and some changes that certainly need
15 to be made in many of the ordinances that
16 affect the business community and the people
17 in the city every day. And that is all I
18 have for tonight. Thank you.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Evans.

20 MR. EVANS: I'll just piggyback a
21 little bit on what Councilman Rogan said. I
22 don't want to get into particulars because
23 we are still flushing out the ideas and we
24 had a brain storming session at that time,
25 but we are looking at our rental

1 registration ordinance and then after that
2 we are looking at the condemnation policy,
3 which is -- in it's own way it's drastically
4 reducing and property values throughout the
5 city, so that's something we really have to
6 took a look at.

7 On the quality of life ordinance I
8 talked to -- according Director Hinton of
9 LIPS the tickets are in and the inspectors
10 have been given -- the inspectors have been
11 given instructions to begin ticketing per
12 the ordinance. I have asked Director Hinton
13 to give me a weekly report on how many
14 tickets are written so we can track the
15 effectiveness of the ordinance and I'll be
16 reporting on those tickets starting next
17 week.

18 Last week we discussed a matter of
19 legislation passed correcting a clerical
20 error in the 1987 ordinance relating to
21 years and service for retirement of the FOP.
22 According to the letter to President McGoff
23 last week from the FOP it stated, "This
24 action was not bargained between the city
25 and the FOP during our recent contract

1 extension."

2 If the FOP would like to negotiate
3 that amendment then I think they should the
4 city should negotiate, but only by reopening
5 the contract that was just passed by this
6 council and starting over. I would be more
7 than willing to debate that contract and
8 this issue again, and based on their
9 unfortunate and recent threats of litigation
10 I have a feeling that there just might even
11 be a different outcome this time.

12 On pension reform, as President
13 McGoff mentioned earlier, next week we will
14 have a public caucus with Rick Schuettler,
15 the executive director of the Pennsylvania
16 Municipal League. Rick will be here to
17 discuss House Bill 316, formerly House Bill
18 1581, which specifically addresses municipal
19 pension reform.

20 As we have come to find out, many of
21 our problems and ultimately the solutions to
22 pension reform begin and end with the
23 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. So if we can,
24 I would like to make sure that members of
25 the administration are invited to sit in to

1 hear this important discussion. Mr. Bulzoni
2 has already indicated that he is very
3 interested in this topic and would be
4 attending. I would also like our state reps
5 and state senator to be aware of
6 Mr. Schuettler visit and the topic of
7 conversation if they would like to be in the
8 audience as well so if we can notify them I
9 would appreciate that. That's all I have
10 for now.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Gaughan.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Just a few
13 items. Last week we discussed faded stop
14 signs throughout the city, we have been
15 getting a lot of complaints about them. DPW
16 Director Gallagher contacted our office and
17 said he is well aware of the situation
18 concerning faded stop signs. He explained
19 that he has one employee in the traffic
20 division and issues with traffic
21 signalization obviously have to be the first
22 priority. Director Gallagher will focus
23 efforts on signage replacement and commented
24 that the location, intersection or address
25 of the missing and/or very faded signs would

1 be welcome and helpful, and a reminder that
2 the number for the DPW is 348-4180.

3 Last week I mentioned several
4 concerns that residents from Greenridge has
5 as I attended a neighborhood meeting last
6 week there. One resident had concerns about
7 trucks parking on the levy in that area.
8 Our DPW director checked with the city
9 engineer, John Pocius, and it was his
10 opinion that the trucks parking there or
11 fine and pose no danger.

12 There was also a concern in the 1100
13 block of Fisk Street in Greenridge about
14 someone having a metal dart blowgun and the
15 metal darts were being found in the side of
16 residents' garages and houses. Our office
17 had contacted the Scranton Housing
18 Authority. Carl Lynott from the Housing
19 Authority got back to us and they have been
20 working with the neighborhood association on
21 this, they have narrowed it down to an
22 apartment building and they are aware and
23 Chief Graziano responded also and he is
24 going to put the patrols on alert so
25 hopefully that is going to be taken care of.

1 There was also a complaint about a
2 1120 Columbia Street in Greenridge.
3 Director Hinton responded to our concerns
4 and the concerns of the neighbors over
5 there. Animal control was sent out and the
6 city forester, Tony Santoli, will be meeting
7 with the homeowner there this weekend and
8 they will try to take down some of those
9 dangerous trees.

10 And I just want to thank the
11 department heads for their responses in a
12 very timely manner, I appreciate it.

13 I mentioned a few weeks ago that
14 Councilman Evans and I were interested in
15 amending the police and fire ordinances that
16 relates to disability pensions. I had
17 requested that Solicitor Minora review
18 specific areas in which I thought we could
19 amend both ordinances. Solicitor Minora,
20 Attorney Shrive, and Attorney Durkin had a
21 meeting this last week to discuss these
22 items. They are in the process of crafting
23 legislation to put safeguards in place and
24 tighten up these ordinances in regards to
25 disability, and I look forward to voting on

1 that legislation. And that is all I have
2 this week. Thank you.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. This
4 evening prior to our meeting there was a
5 public caucus with Mrs. Leslie Collins, the
6 director of Scranton Tomorrow, who is also
7 spearheading the Sesquicentennial
8 celebration for the City of Scranton which
9 will take place in essentially 2016.
10 Mrs. Collins did, however, say that they are
11 really starting in 2015 to build up to the
12 date in April of 2016 and the first kind of
13 opening event for this will be an ethnic
14 festival to be held at Steamtown Mall on
15 April 25. This could be a great event,
16 something that I think all Scrantonians
17 should partake. I think that we can begin
18 to get optimistic about the City of
19 Scranton. This is something that could
20 really unite a city, bring people together
21 and really start to move our city forward.

22 I would also like to mention that
23 there are a number of the students from
24 Scranton Prep in the audience this evening.
25 Some of them are awake, some of them are

1 not, but thank you for your participation,
2 as limited as it may be.

3 Also, it was mentioned that last
4 week Michelle Dempsey was here making a
5 presentation on kind of what is Scranton,
6 you know, and some possibilities and she did
7 present a number of great ideas. What we
8 need to do as a city, these are things that
9 need private interest to implement. I think
10 that we should be doing as a city is seeing
11 how we can create some public private
12 partnerships so that some of these ideas can
13 be brought to fruition, but it's not going
14 to be done without private interest. The
15 city itself can't redevelop them all. The
16 city itself cannot redevelop properties that
17 are privately owned, so a number of great
18 ideas, and hopefully some of these will be
19 brought to fruition through some partnership
20 with the City of Scranton and private
21 interest.

22 Also, apparently there has been some
23 movement by the Governor's Office to address
24 pension -- the pension problems in the City
25 of Scranton. I don't have a number a great

1 number of the details on it, it was at a
2 meeting with the Scranton Times Editorial
3 Board that this was brought forth, and
4 apparently there will be an article in
5 Saturday's newspaper concerning what the
6 governor may suggest for dealing with some
7 ideas for dealing with the city's pension
8 problems. So, please, you know, take the
9 time to find the article and see what it
10 says. I know we are all waiting to hear
11 since we are not privy to any of it prior to
12 this.

13 Lastly, just a letter to was sent
14 from it was signed by a proud to be
15 Scrantonian. It says, "Gentlemen, I'm
16 writing --" it was addressed to
17 Mr. Courtright and myself, Mayor Courtright
18 and myself. It says, "Gentlemen, I am
19 writing to both of you as I am not really
20 sure where to send this letter. I want to
21 commend the group of people who decorated
22 Connors Park, but more importantly have been
23 maintaining the sidewalks this winter. I'm
24 81 years old and every day I walk pass the
25 park and I am grateful for their efforts."

1 Then it continues further down,
2 "Then I find out they are working to put a
3 veteran's memorial in the park and I ask if
4 the city backed their efforts and was told
5 they most certainly did. I understand that
6 this is all volunteer and this is what it
7 makes it special."

8 And then it was, "I don't know the
9 gentleman's name, if you know please thank
10 him for me much."

11 The gentleman this is spearheading
12 most of the work at Connors Park is Mr. Bob
13 Gattens. And this letter was sent by a
14 Mr. Tom Healey.

15 Connors Park kind is kind of
16 interesting situation for us, there is a
17 group in the area that is interested in
18 maintaining and sort of operating the park,
19 and we have talked in the past about the
20 possibility of leasing a city park much as
21 we do lease land to little leagues and some
22 of the I'll say midget football teams. What
23 we are hoping to do is see if we can work
24 out some type of arrangement with this group
25 from South Scranton and maybe make a

1 template for other parks in the city.

2 The people down there are doing a
3 great job. They are fundraising, they are
4 doing all types of the things for the
5 betterment of the park and perhaps, as I
6 said, we can do this with other groups
7 throughout the city and with other city
8 parks. What it does is a keeps the parks --
9 the upkeep of the park better, and it also
10 relieves some of the burden from the city
11 for the maintenance of the park. So,
12 please, I will thank Mr. Gattens, but
13 hopefully we can see more of this taking
14 place throughout the city.

15 And last, I do want to mention that
16 we held a brief executive session, like, a
17 five-minute session, it was to talk about a
18 personnel matters and that was held this
19 evening prior to this meeting.

20 MS. REED: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION -
21 AN ORDINANCE - AN ORDINANCE INCREASING THE
22 INDEBTEDNESS OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON,
23 LACKAWANNA COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, BY THE
24 ISSUE OF A GENERAL OBLIGATION NOTE IN THE
25 AMOUNT OF \$2,242,820.00 FOR SUNDRY PURPOSES;

1 FIXING THE FORM, NUMBER, DATE, INTEREST, AND
2 MATURITY THEREOF; MAKING A COVENANT FOR THE
3 PAYMENT OF THE DEBT SERVICE ON THE NOTE;
4 PROVIDING FOR THE FILING OF THE REQUIRED
5 DOCUMENT; PROVIDING FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF A
6 SINKING FUND DEPOSITORY FOR THE NOTE; AND
7 AUTHORIZING EXECUTION, SALE AND DELIVERY
8 THEREOF.

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

12 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

13 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

14 MR. MCGOFF: On the question?

15 MR. WECHSLER: Yes, Mr. McGoff.

16 Just one comment on this, I congratulate the
17 administration for coming up with a creative
18 way to do this paving. For the most part
19 the city paving has only been able to be
20 done in low to moderate income areas because
21 of the use of money in the OECD program.
22 The benefit of this program will allow us to
23 step outside of those areas and do some
24 paving and some in the areas where people
25 pay some of the highest taxes in the city

1 and could not have their roads paved before
2 so I do thank them for the reference of
3 getting this done.

4 MR. ROGAN: I would just add,
5 Council Wechsler is 100 percent correct and
6 one of the biggest complaints I know I
7 receive and I think all of us receive from
8 people in areas that have been bad roads
9 that don't fall into the low to moderate
10 income is they say, "Well, we have some of
11 the highest taxes in the city and we can't
12 get our road paved."

13 And it's very frustrating for us to
14 only be able to use our federal dollars in
15 certain areas based on the federal
16 guidelines so this money will go a long way
17 to repair many of the roads in the city that
18 are in dire need of repair.

19 MR. MCGOFF: I would like to add to
20 that that contained in the legislation is
21 the interest rate at 1.65 percent. This is
22 exceedingly low and is something that the
23 city has not see in quite a long while and
24 the interest -- we also have an amortization
25 schedule over a ten-year period and it will

1 be paid back with the incremental increases
2 in the liquid fuels account so that there is
3 no money that would be lost from the general
4 budget so that this is a win-win situation
5 in many ways, so we are grateful that this
6 will be done and in addition to this money,
7 the \$2.2 million from the state, there is
8 also funding from OECD for the low to
9 moderate income areas so I believe in total
10 it comes out to somewhere around 2.5, \$2.5
11 million worth of paving in the City of
12 Scranton. Something that, again, we haven't
13 seen in a long while.

14 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? All
15 those in favor signify by saying aye.

16 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

17 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

18 MR. EVANS: Aye.

19 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

20 MS. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed? The
21 ayes have it and so moved.

22 MS. REED: SIXTH ORDER. 6-A.

23 READING BY TITLE - FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
24 90, 2015 - AN ORDINANCE - SALE OF TAX
25 DELINQUENT PROPERTY MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS

1 630 CLAY AVENUE, SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA, TO
2 JONATHAN OLIVETTI, 201 FRANKLIN AVE, 3RD
3 FLOOR, SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA, 18503, FOR
4 THE CONSIDERATION OF \$16,000.00.

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

7 MR. ROGAN: I move that Item 6-A
8 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 eyes have it and so moved.

18 MS. REED: 6-B.READING BY TITLE -
19 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 91, 2015 - AN
20 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: You've heard reading by

1 title of Item 6-B, what is your pleasure?

2 MR. ROGAN: I move that Item 6-B
3 pass reading by title.

4 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

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

7 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

8 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

9 MR. EVANS: Aye.

10 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed? The
12 ayes have it and so moved.

13 MS. REED: SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A. FOR
14 CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES- FOR
15 ADOPTION FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 85, 2015 -
16 APPROVING THE TRANSFER OF A RESTAURANT
17 LIQUOR LICENSE CURRENTLY OWNED BY KOSMART
18 ENTERPRISES, INC. D/B/A PIZZA HUT OF DUNMORE
19 LICENSE NO. R-14852 TO BAR PAZZO, INC. FOR
20 USE AT 131-133 NORTH WASHINGTON AVENUE,
21 SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA AS REQUIRED BY THE
22 PENNSYLVANIA LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD.

23 MR. MCGOFF: As Chair for the
24 Committee on Rules, I recommend final
25 passage of Item 7-A.

1 MR. ROGAN: Second.

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

4 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

6 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

7 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

8 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

9 MR. EVANS: Yes.

10 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

12 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby declare
14 Item 7-A legally and lawfully adopted and I
15 hope this expedites the opening of Pazzo,
16 another fine restaurant for the downtown
17 area.

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

20 MR. ROGAN: Motion to adjourn.

21 MR. MCGOFF: This meeting is
22 adjourned.

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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