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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

HELD:

Thursday, March 10, 2016

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:

- JOSEPH WECHSLER, PRESIDENT
- PATRICK ROGAN, VICE-PRESIDENT
- WAYNE EVANS
- WILLIAM GAUGHAN
- TIM PERRY

- LORI REED, CITY CLERK
- KATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK
- AMIL MINORA, SOLICITOR

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

3 MR. WECHSLER: Roll call, please.

4 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

5 MR. PERRY: 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. Wechsler.

13 MR. WECHSLER: Here. Before the
14 meeting I do have a few announcements. This
15 Saturday, March 12, is the St. Patrick's Day
16 parade which starts at 11:45 a.m. The
17 parade route will start at Mulberry Street
18 and travel down Wyoming and Lackawanna and
19 then to Jefferson and down Spruce Street to
20 North Washington Avenue. Please anticipate
21 traffic delays due to the road closures.
22 Colts will offer free to rides to all
23 passengers on all routes on parade day to
24 encourage people to use public
25 transportation and enjoy the day safely.

1 Council will reschedule the next two
2 meetings to Wednesday of each week. Next
3 week's meeting will be held on March 16 and
4 the follow week's meeting will be held on
5 March 23. Both meetings will be at 6:30.
6 On agenda items, there will be a public
7 hearing on Wednesday, March 16th at 5:45
8 regarding Item 5-E on tonight's agenda
9 establishing permit parking on the on side
10 of the 500 block of Clay Avenue. Dispense
11 with the reading of the minutes.

12 MS. REED: THIRD ORDER. 3-A. NO
13 BUSINESS AT THIS TIME.

14 MR. WECHSLER: Do any council
15 members have announcements at this time?

16 MR. PERRY: Yeah, I have an
17 announcement. This Sunday, March 13, begins
18 daylight saving time. When the clocks
19 change it's time to change the batteries in
20 your smoke detectors. When you change your
21 batteries you should also check the back of
22 the detector for a small label which will
23 indicate the date that the detector was
24 made. If there is no label, your detector
25 probably should be replaced as well. When

1 you change the battery, you should push the
2 test button to make sure that it's working
3 properly. If you detector needs to be
4 replaced or if you have any questions,
5 please feel free to contact Sean Flynn, the
6 City's fire prevention officer at
7 570-348-4164 at extension one. And we would
8 like to thank the fire department for
9 providing this information to us today.
10 Thank you.

11 MR. WECHSLER: Anyone else?

12 MR. EVANS: Yeah, I have two short
13 announcements. First of all, the West
14 Scranton Hyde Park Neighborhood Watch will
15 host a public meeting for West Scranton
16 residents on Tuesday, March 15, at 7 p.m.
17 in the lower meeting room of the United
18 Baptist Church at 213 S. Main Avenue,
19 parking in the rear. The meeting will
20 discuss the future community center,
21 Novembrino pool and our parks in the West
22 Side. David Bulzoni, business
23 administrator, will be there to discuss
24 plans for Novembrino pool.

25 Also, I received notification from

1 the Friends of Connor's Park that they will
2 present the first annual Bob McGoff 5K run,
3 one-mile walk. \$20 registration fee, raised
4 proceeds will benefit coaches vs. Cancer on
5 Sunday, August 28. Race starts at 9 a.m. at
6 Connors Park at 515 Orchard Street.

7 Registration is 7:30 a.m. and you can sign
8 up at [runsignup.com/Bob McGoff](http://runsignup.com/Bob%20McGoff). Thank you.

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

11 MR. WECHSLER: Joan Hodowanitz.

12 MS. HODOWANITZ: Joan Hodowanitz,
13 Scranton resident and taxpayer. The 2014
14 audit is now 284 days late and counting.
15 The deadline for the 2015 audit is 82 days
16 from today. I'd like to remind everyone,
17 including all citizens who might be able to
18 attend that the Pension Board meetings were
19 scheduled for Wednesday, March 16. They
20 start at 8:30 in the morning and they the
21 last one is probably the most important,
22 that's the Composite Pension Board meeting.
23 They start at 11, they are held right here.
24 If memory serves, they are never televised;
25 correct?

1 MR. WECHSLER: No.

2 MS. HODOWANITZ: Okay. I know most
3 of you work full-time, but if you ever get
4 the chance it would be a good thing to come
5 and see, I know, Mr. Wechsler, you send
6 Mrs. Reed as your proxy.

7 MS. WECHSLER: Yes.

8 MS. HODOWANITZ: If you can ever
9 attend there are questions to be asked. I
10 am going to pursue with Mellon Bank what
11 happened to \$7 million in US cash
12 equivalence that disappeared from December
13 31 to January 31. One of the things that
14 bothers me is everybody gets a copy of this
15 and nobody reads it, okay? Same thing with
16 the 2014 audit. I'm sure when that comes
17 out it will get filed and that will be the
18 end of the matter. That's very unfortunate.
19 That is our single most important document
20 in the city because it tells us where we
21 stand financially, what's going wrong and
22 how we might correct it, but I'm just an
23 outlier.

24 Mr. Wechsler, may I ask Mr. Perry
25 some questions?

1 MR. WECHSLER: You can ask me the
2 questions, Mr. Perry can decide to answer
3 that.

4 MR. PERRY: Yes, I will cover them.

5 MS. HODOWANITZ: I was listening to
6 Steve Corbett yesterday on his talk radio
7 show and he made a statement to the effect
8 that he had been notified that you were
9 delinquent in paying your 2015 refuse bill
10 so I beat feet to my computer and I pulled
11 up the database and either you or your
12 Doppelganger of the same name, and this is
13 March 8 had a delinquent bill of \$336. Is
14 that you?

15 MR. PERRY: It definitely was not my
16 Doppelganger, I don't believe I have one.
17 Yes, so surrounding that, I was informed
18 about that yesterday and I called up to see
19 because, you know, I do a pretty good job
20 when I do my taxes and keep all of my
21 paperwork together just to see if that was
22 actually accurate or not. They said it was
23 so when I got home from work I got my
24 receipt and I put my 2014 receipt in my 2015
25 taxes so it turned out that I was delinquent

1 so I immediately paid the bill which,
2 unfortunately, cost me an extra \$36 on top
3 of the \$300 which I could have used, could
4 have been a couple of dinners at Maroni's or
5 something so I was a little upset about
6 that, but, yeah, it was brought to my
7 attention and I took care of that.

8 MS. HODOWANITZ: Okay. I'm
9 personally bothered by this because the
10 garbage fee is a sensitive issue with many
11 Scrantonians for obvious reasons and you
12 have all discussed it and you should be
13 aware of this, if not sitting in council
14 this year you should have been paying
15 attention prior years, I don't know about
16 you, but I pay my taxes and I take very good
17 care to make sure I pay my bills. Yes, it's
18 possible to make a mistake, but it sure is
19 embarrassing when a city councilman isn't
20 paying the garbage fee and has to have it
21 pointed out to him.

22 MR. PERRY: Well, I don't think, you
23 know, embarrassing is the word, it was, you
24 know -- it went up paid and I took care of
25 it as soon as I found out. You know, there

1 was definitely no malice involved. I take
2 pride in paying my bills.

3 MS. HODOWANITZ: You didn't receive
4 an overdue notice?

5 MR. PERRY: If I did I would have
6 responded to it.

7 MS. HODOWANITZ: Okay, well, then
8 that's something that the Treasurer's Office
9 out to be fixing. Everybody who is overdue
10 should be getting some kind of notice and I
11 hope that you, Mr. Evans, will point that
12 out to the administration because I'm not
13 happy about this and I don't think you
14 should think that this is a minor thing
15 because it is not. Thank you.

16 MR. WECHSLER: Les Spindler.

17 MR. SPINDLER: Good evening. Les
18 Spindler, city homeowner and taxpayer.
19 First of all, I'd like to send my
20 condolences out to the passing of Jim
21 McNulty. My thoughts and prayers are with
22 Evie and the rest of the McNulty family.
23 Jim might have had his critics, but I think
24 he did a good job for this city and I was a
25 fan of his. Rest in peace, Jim.

1 I haven't been here in awhile, last
2 time I was here was for one of the many
3 times I brought up the \$300 garbage fee,
4 which I have said for years and years I
5 think is illegal because we pay taxes to
6 have our garbage collected, and Councilmen
7 Perry did make comments about it and he says
8 he thinks it should be looked into and you
9 know what it's very refreshing to hear
10 something like that. I have been coming to
11 these meetings for a long time and I have
12 talked about this for a long time and the
13 other only other council person to say
14 something about the garbage fee is
15 Councilman Rogan. No one else mentioned a
16 word so it's refreshing to hear somebody
17 else take my side on it. I hope when next
18 year's budget comes around something can be
19 done because, again, why do we pay taxes?
20 For police, fire, and to get our garbage
21 collected. We shouldn't have to pay another
22 tax so I hope something is done next year.

23 Okay, I think it's a safety issue,
24 Family Dollar on top of Lackawanna Avenue on
25 Main Avenue, used to be Brunetti's Market,

1 anything about that?

2 MR. ROGAN: We did. I talked to
3 Denny Gallagher a number of times about this
4 and they went back and forth with the
5 contractor who is doing the work for the gas
6 company and the gas company was pretty firm
7 that they believe what they did was legal
8 under the ordinance. I certainly don't
9 agree with it, I live a few blocks away from
10 there, you know, that's an instance where --
11 and we have been doing a better -- the city
12 has been doing a little bit better job of
13 working with the utilities to not pave
14 streets prior to being cut up, but I think
15 we need to take a step further in a
16 situation like that. Even if they weren't
17 responsible for paving the whole road,
18 that's a situation where the city should
19 have partnered with them to do a cost
20 sharing and make that whole road paved for
21 the residents of that street, but I did
22 follow-up with Mr. Gallagher on that,
23 unfortunately the gas company wasn't willing
24 to work with us on that.

25 MR. SPINDLER: I don't understand

1 because they did it on Dorothy Street, also,
2 and they paved all of Dorothy Street.

3 MR. ROGAN: Right.

4 MR. SPINDLER: So I don't know
5 understand how they think they have a right
6 to pave half of Farr Street. It's too bad
7 for the residents. I live near there, but I
8 don't live on Farr, but it's too bad for the
9 residents that live there. Maybe they
10 should get together and take the gas company
11 to Court. That's just my opinion. That's
12 all I have tonight. Thank you for your
13 time.

14 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you. Ron
15 Ellman.

16 MR. ELLMAN: Council, look at these
17 guys, they look like they are ready to tell
18 me to shut up and sit down, I haven't
19 started. I talked to my attorney last night
20 around a half hour about last week and I'm
21 going to tell you something he told me, he
22 said that you guys not allowing me to speak
23 last week was probably one of the most
24 fortunate things that ever happened to me
25 because now he is going to take these two

1 fools to court with facts, facts from
2 Mr. Hinton's office and facts from
3 Magistrate Ware's office, facts about for
4 people on my street that they want sympathy
5 for when he has destroyed my whole
6 neighborhood. That's facts, you know. This
7 nonsense, I don't see how somebody could
8 stand and look in front of this camera and
9 say I fell through the ceiling of my garage.
10 There is just something wrong with somebody
11 like that. These are two irrational people
12 that I've had to deal with. They don't care
13 about rational laws. That's over with.

14 I have had several people though,
15 probably six, eight people ask me why I have
16 been limping for six or eight months, it's
17 because some jackass in a truck run into me,
18 I had to go to the hospital, I've had three
19 or four or five doctors that I have taken
20 rehab and a bunch of x-rays, now that's a
21 fact.

22 I've talked about being a bad
23 plagiarist. People mention things to me all
24 week long and sometimes I write them down.
25 I had someone ask me two weeks ago that

1 Mr. Amoroso isn't listed as an employee of
2 the college who pays his benefits and his
3 hospitalization? It's not us, is it?

4 MR. WECHSLER: No, he is a
5 consultant to the city.

6 MR. ELLMAN: I think it ought to be
7 looked into. People what, six or
8 seven-hundred foreclosures and the same --
9 somebody asked me to ask you people about
10 how much Mr. Bulzoni's benefits are when you
11 give him a \$10,000 raise and the city is in
12 such dire straights all the time. I really
13 wish somebody, and not this stuff we'll get
14 back to you and I'll let you know, I wish
15 you'd come back next week and tell these
16 people.

17 Last week I listened to those two
18 ladies, the friends of Lackawanna and they
19 are the troublemakers of Lackawanna. Our
20 garbage rates have already doubled and I
21 think the last thing in the world Scranton
22 needs to do is join their war. You might
23 win a battle or tow, but you'll lose. I
24 know it.

25 Today is my 80th birthday.

1 MR. WECHSLER: Congratulations.

2 MR. ELLMAN: Thank you. I'm getting
3 tired and wore out, this face done wore out
4 three or four bodies but last night I went
5 out to eat at a restaurant up in Dunmore
6 called Mary's up on Erie Street and it's
7 Wednesday and Thursday, I don't mean to --
8 but Wednesday and Thursday it's all of the
9 spaghetti you can eat for \$5. Where in the
10 world, and this is a nice place, very nice,
11 where can anybody get a meal like that for
12 \$5, you know? I couldn't believe it. I
13 wish people would -- it was busy. It was
14 busier than the dickens up there.

15 I guess I need to apologize for some
16 of my statements and some of the things that
17 I have said up here to you. This lady told
18 me a couple of weeks ago, she said, I have
19 never seen her before, she said, "You sure
20 are hateful to those people."

21 Maybe that's true. Let's shake
22 hands and start over again of. That's what
23 me attorney told me yesterday. Thank you.

24 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr.
25 Ellman.

1 MR. EVANS: Good advice.

2 MR. WECHSLER: Lee Morgan.

3 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.

4 The first thing I have here today is I would
5 like to note that John Kahonick, who was
6 resident of the City of Scranton passed away
7 a few weeks ago and, you know, I appreciate
8 the people are noted for having passed, but
9 I just hope we spent a little more time
10 acknowledging ordinary residents of this
11 city who have passed and poured their heart
12 and soul into this city. I think that too
13 often they are overlooked and I think it's
14 tragic, but, you know, what are going to do
15 about that?

16 The other thing I have here today
17 is, you know, driving through west side the
18 other day, well, over numerous occasions
19 there is a house 1811 Luzerne Street for
20 sale for \$16,500. It's amazing. It started
21 at 21,500. I just glanced at it a little
22 bit, seems solid. The roof line is nice and
23 strong, it seems like it's a well-built
24 building, but, you know, the pathetic thing
25 is that people just can't sell their

1 properties in the city and for some unknown
2 reason, which I don't know that because I
3 was never an elected councilman or a mayor,
4 I can't understand how this council or this
5 mayor or previous councils and previous
6 mayors can't understand that the budget has
7 to be cut.

8 Now, I asked the former council
9 president, Mr. McGoff, to cut the budget by
10 30 percent because that seems to be a number
11 that may work, but when we come up here and
12 have audits that have so overdue it's almost
13 laughable, and then talk about having
14 legitimate government in Scranton that's
15 something else that's very laughable.

16 You know, we listen to all of the
17 rhetoric and all of the silliness that takes
18 place in this chamber and it is beyond
19 pathetic, let there be no doubt in anybody's
20 mind about that. We have nonprofits lined
21 up at the gateway for money. Somebody
22 brought the figure forward here that the
23 average Scrantonian makes \$22,000 a year and
24 my question is how can a legitimately
25 elected government think even for 1/10th of

1 one second if they are thinking that this
2 city can absorb anymore tax increases. I
3 have no idea and how this council and
4 previous councils and administrations have
5 continued to hire and hire and hire. It's
6 amazing because all we have seem to have
7 done is subject the average Scrantonian to a
8 poverty rate that's almost unbelievable. We
9 are the I think in the newspaper today it
10 talked about Glenn Lyon but on that list we
11 are 35th in the most distressed places in
12 Pennsylvania and in my opinion, with all due
13 respect to the councilmen, and like I've
14 said before I really don't think that suits
15 make a person, we have no vision and no
16 leadership ability. We are talking about
17 selling an asset like the Scranton Sewer
18 Authority, but the pension fund not only is
19 underfunded, but it's never performed to the
20 numbers that it has to perform to even it
21 was funded completely because nothing is
22 real.

23 And when you look at the oversight
24 authority of council, to take a good hard
25 look at everything that's happening in this

1 city, they are looking the wrong way, but
2 then I guess that must be politically
3 expedient to not be concerned about the
4 average resident.

5 Now, I have a few children but they
6 are not going to live here. Most of them
7 are gone. They graduated from college and
8 they aren't coming here.

9 I have an older child that told me
10 that he thinks Scranton is a slum and he
11 wouldn't live here. Now, he does have the
12 earning potential of a quarter of a quarter
13 of a million dollars a years so I guess he
14 can afford to live wherever he wants, but my
15 real question is why can't this council and
16 why can't this mayor confront the problems
17 we have, stop hiring people politically,
18 stop doing things that are incorrect.

19 You know, like somebody talked to me
20 yesterday about Ron Ellman not being allowed
21 to speak at the last meeting, that's just --
22 that's beyond description because whether
23 the man is signed in on the list or not
24 doesn't matter. If he wanted to wait until
25 the names are off the list he is an American

1 that has rights to speak and when somebody
2 abridges those rights, whoever that person
3 is, it's wrong and the person who did that
4 should have asked their solicitor if that
5 was the right thing to do and maybe it would
6 have changed. Thank you.

7 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you,
8 Mr. Morgan. Is there anyone else who would
9 like to address counsel?

10 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,
11 resident of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians,
12 since the audit was brought up a lot of
13 times people don't realize nothing happens
14 by accident and the audit is held up, there
15 is a reason why it's held up. Maybe
16 Scranton isn't as distressed as people keep
17 saying it is, because if it was that
18 distressed there wouldn't be able to give
19 all of them contracts out like they have
20 been doing. Not only that, they want to
21 even change the bidding for a contract. You
22 have to go over 20,000. Why? It's obvious
23 why. Political kickbacks is the problem.
24 People donate to the party not because they
25 love the party or agree with the party or go

1 out and serve their country and fought for
2 the party like most of the residents
3 Scranton has, I don't know if anyone of you
4 have ever served in the military and that's
5 the problem. You think because you stood up
6 there you're great Americans. You are not.
7 A great American who does things for his
8 country, either serve it, and you really
9 doing a service to Scranton and not to the
10 country by serving up there. That's the
11 problem. Your salary is more than half of
12 what the average resident of Scranton --
13 your -- I don't know if that's taxed. I
14 never inquired because I didn't think -- I
15 wasn't getting it so I didn't have to, but
16 you lost all ways of being realistic about
17 what's going on in this city. We all know
18 why the audit is late, and we all know why
19 the next audit is going to be late. The
20 parties are built on two things, patronage
21 and contracts. This city has built a
22 machine on patronage and contracts, not to
23 the greatness of the city, but to the
24 detrimental of the city.

25 People used to be happy to live in

1 Scranton, now they are not and it's sad. I
2 lived all my life here and I enjoyed the
3 city, I always loved the city for what it
4 offered. Of course, I grew up in a good
5 neighborhood I guess but times have changed.

6 West Side has been denied a swimming
7 pool or years now, money that was put aside
8 for the swimming pools was taken to the
9 paving and now they are taking money from
10 another account that was the gas I think it
11 is that should have been for paving to
12 something else, to contracts, I believe. No
13 one ever came up to me and said, "When we
14 change the lighting in Scranton we are going
15 to save a million dollars over the next 100
16 years," which is probably what we made, but
17 it's 100 years in the future, not in the
18 present. When you give a contract you need
19 a contract within the next two years to
20 really do something. You don't. The
21 original contract never even probably panned
22 out, but I never heard anybody say that when
23 we borrowed a lot of that money for our
24 lighting buying it from the PPL and for the
25 lighting, which we are going to do again and

1 weeks ago a gentleman came here and
2 complained about a water problem, did any
3 council member help him out?

4 MR. WECHSLER: He had -- the issue
5 has been addressed by the city engineer and
6 by the Department of Public Works.

7 MR. UNGVARSKY: Okay, no council
8 member helped him out.

9 MR. EVANS: I have been on his
10 property on four different occasions.

11 MR. UNGVARSKY: Okay. A couple of
12 weeks earlier a woman came to city council
13 with problems about some rent, did any
14 council member look into that?

15 MR. WECHSLER: That rent issue was a
16 contract issue that we could not be involved
17 in. It's a contract with her landlord.

18 MR. UNGVARSKY: I think maybe you
19 can look into it because I believe that
20 apartment was a LERTA building, and city
21 council gave them a break on their taxes.

22 MR. WECHSLER: But not an individual
23 contract, we are not involved with that.

24 MR. UNGVARSKY: I think maybe you
25 better look into it because they would have

1 had to make some kind of concessions to get
2 that tax break. A couple of weeks ago I
3 went down and paid my taxes, naturally they
4 were higher, but they have been higher every
5 year for the last ten years. They have gone
6 up almost 10 percent per year. Now, we all
7 know why they have gone up. Fortunately, a
8 couple of weeks ago Mr. Evans spoke on it,
9 the only one that has spoke on it. This
10 council and other councils have been very
11 generous with the people that they rule
12 over. You people found it easier to raise
13 taxes and fines rather than do what was
14 right by the people of this city. I don't
15 see how you can sit up there and just ignore
16 everything that is going on. You have been
17 advised by the people coming here for years
18 and you have done nothing to help them.

19 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you. Anyone
20 else?

21 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening,
22 Council. Marie Schumacher. I'd like to
23 start tonight by speaking out somewhat in
24 defense if that's that you have to do around
25 here to do around here to do what's right of

1 Mr. Ellman. I would like to point out that
2 the state passed a law, and I'm not even
3 sure that you have incorporated it because I
4 believe that it supercedes the local things
5 but it's at Diesel Powered Motor Vehicle
6 Idlying Act which is effective February 6,
7 2009. Act 124 prohibits the owners and
8 drivers of any diesel powered motor vehicle
9 with a gross weight of 10,001 pounds or more
10 engaged in commerce from causing the engine
11 of the vehicle to idle for more than five
12 minutes in any continuous 60-minute period.

13 Your own code defines noise in this
14 manner: "Any sound which is unwanted or
15 which causes an adverse, psychological or
16 physiological effect on human beings. A
17 sound which disrupts or injures the comfort,
18 response, health, hearing, peace or --" and
19 then it goes on and it talks about
20 residential district and commercial vehicles
21 and it talks about noise in many of the
22 ordinances and the code and it's noise hours
23 are usually 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. and that's it.
24 So I think you need to review your own
25 before you make judgments that hurts someone

1 and I think, as Mr. Ellman has made his case
2 for the fact that he meets the noises that
3 he is hearing at 4:00 in the morning would
4 not be welcome in your backyard or ten feet
5 from your bedroom window perhaps and it
6 might even be against your own code.

7 Next, last week I requested that you
8 send a letter to the BA to impact what is
9 going to be in the Muni -- what is it, Muni
10 Services -- yeah, Muni services reportings.
11 Somebody back talked about some of the
12 hinges that might be in it, I believe it was
13 a note from the business administrator to
14 you all that was attached with it, but
15 everything was in the past, and I would like
16 to state I don't know how many of you even
17 look at the financial reports that the city
18 controller puts out after an audit, but
19 those reports don't just cover the past year
20 they go back seven to ten years so we have a
21 lot of historical information where we lack
22 information and transparency is in the
23 current budget and what you are going to do
24 for the future.

25 And that brings me to the audit. I

1 mean, first of all, the controller cannot do
2 her financial report until she gets an
3 audit. So, you know, we could stand here
4 and talk but I think it's time for some
5 action. Why is this the way it is? I'm
6 going to write a letter to DCED and ask them
7 what they do to follow-up? They came here
8 on was it I think March 24th of 2013, '14
9 and agreed to give us a grant at the request
10 of I believe of PEL because they were
11 blaming the audit tardiness to the fact that
12 the business administrator didn't have
13 enough help so they give him a big raise,
14 they gave another person, they did all of
15 the things, what happened to that? Why are
16 we in the shape we are in? Why aren't you
17 finding that out? If it's the auditor's
18 fault then we need to find -- get the
19 contract out and see if they have breached
20 their contract in any way and find another
21 auditor. If it's an internal problem, the
22 administration need to get it fixed.

23 I mean, we are -- I mean, there is
24 just no reason for this that I could even
25 think of at this point, and we need you

1 people who are you elected to serve us, we
2 need you to go and find out what is the
3 matter. Joan has pointed out that we at
4 least used to get reports, we have added
5 people, we have added extra companies to
6 help and nothing, and are we make a mistake
7 -- and I will quit with this one, but we
8 made the mistake when we asked when the
9 audit was going to be, and I was going to
10 bring the history, but maybe I will do it
11 next week, but probably not, and you said,
12 oh, at the end of the month. We made the
13 mistake, we were stupid. We took it as that
14 month. We should have asked what month of
15 what year. This is not a joke, people. We
16 need that information and we need Muni
17 Services to provide actuals by month and
18 look to the future and the heck with the
19 past. We have got plenty of that. Thank
20 you.

21 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening. Dave
22 Dobrzyn, resident, played hookey last week,
23 I heard a lot of sparks flying. The only
24 thing I would say about the issue with the
25 truck, last week, and Mrs. Schumacher did

1 mention some issues, don't idle the truck.
2 Just get in it, start it up, and pull out
3 because if you are idling for more than a
4 couple of minutes you are going to fill the
5 neighborhood up with smoke and bring on the
6 trouble for yourself and that's all. That's
7 all. I don't idle my car, it's a gas car,
8 and the faster I get moving the warmer it
9 gets in this bad weather.

10 So my dog has been barking all week.
11 He is mad. He said if that license fee goes
12 up any more, I just bought a dog license 35
13 bucks, if it goes up anymore he is going to
14 bite somebody. So, I mean, that's getting
15 kind of expensive and I'm sure people that
16 have little house dogs aren't -- probably
17 aren't even going to be bothering with that
18 and I think in the long run you will lose
19 money.

20 Last week, Mr. Bulzoni was asked on
21 refuse costs, and this is a compliment, I
22 mean, finally somebody mentioned about the
23 various costs and I'd like to see more of
24 it, even breakdown of what it costs. Fuel,
25 truck, wages, insurance, tipping fees,

1 maintenance fees, etcetera, license fees for
2 the trucks because it's not all just I have
3 one little bag, they have to drive up to
4 your house, they have to pick it up, and I
5 sympathize with everybody.

6 Also, if we could call that a tax on
7 our income tax returns most people it
8 wouldn't matter because you get \$6,300 per
9 person deduction, personal deduction, so
10 with all of my medical and my wife's medical
11 and the property taxes we never tip the
12 \$12,600, so it doesn't matter to us, but to
13 some people it might matter, they have might
14 have some way of getting a couple of extra
15 pennies out of that, getting it back.

16 Now, Mellon Bank and the \$7 million,
17 we have to stop this, it has to come to a
18 stop. It can't just keep going missing
19 whether it's a good reason or a bad reason
20 or the stock market changed I don't care
21 anymore. We can't keep taxing us to make up
22 for pension losses in the stock market.
23 It's impossible.

24 Now, I wanted to buy Ford stock out
25 of my wife's 401K and they told me, "You're

1 not qualified."

2 Well, they were qualified enough to
3 lose 6,000 to 14,000, you know, but we
4 weren't qualified to buy into Ford stock for
5 two bucks a piece, several months later it
6 was worth like \$14 or something. That's a
7 \$700 percent return. They probably went out
8 and bought the Ford stock and stuck the
9 money in their pockets for all I know.

10 And a little jest, you know, last
11 year or the year before it seems like I
12 voted for four democrats and four
13 Republicans, how come we only got five guys
14 up there? Does that mean that I get to come
15 up here and blame the least -- my least
16 favorite party on all of the troubles?

17 And one other thing, I have here a
18 card, the river was a big issue, and I'm
19 going to give Kathy this card, this person
20 is an expert on the river. He has been a
21 paid consultant with the Sewer authority and
22 on this rain water business it probably if
23 it continues and we continue to pay more and
24 more and the average homeowner might be
25 paying a bill for a big parking lot, so if

1 it's distributed right it won't be as much
2 of a problem is what it's scaring people,
3 but if it doesn't get distributed right, the
4 costs, it's going to be by how much land we
5 have paid, so I'm leaving this, you could
6 probably invite the guy and I think he would
7 be more than qualified, but call him and ask
8 him.

9 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you. Anyone
10 else?

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

13 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Perry, do you
14 have any motions?

15 MR. PERRY: Yes, I have one. This
16 week I spoke to a gentleman on South 10th
17 Street in the city, and he had a major
18 concern that the street was very, very
19 narrow and it's a two-way street. He
20 actually sent me some photos of a school bus
21 going down that street and there wasn't --
22 there was really no room on either side of
23 that school bus with two-sided street
24 parking and he was concerned for safety and
25 for emergency services and emergency

1 vehicles going -- need to get down this
2 block.

3 So, if we could, if we could send a
4 letter to Mr. Pocius, city engineer, to do a
5 study on this, and I will get to Lori the
6 block or blocks that he has questions on and
7 maybe we can get an answer for him and see
8 if there is anything we could do with that
9 part of city.

10 And lastly, Saturday is parade day.
11 The weather is supposed to be very nice, so
12 I hope everybody comes out. Have fun, but
13 be safe, and please don't drink and drive,
14 always have a designated driver, Uber, there
15 is a lot of options out there, enjoy the day
16 with your family. Thank you.

17 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Rogan?

18 MR. ROGAN: Yes, probably be the
19 quickest comments I'll ever make at a
20 council meeting. Again, enjoy the parade
21 this Saturday, and as Mr. Perry mentioned,
22 please be safe, be responsible. If you are
23 drinking, call for a ride, call for a taxi.
24 As Councilman Wechsler mentioned I believe
25 Colts is running free buses so there is

1 absolutely no reason to drink and drive, but
2 other than that enjoy the parade. Thank
3 you.

4 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Evans?

5 MR. EVANS: Very brief. One of the
6 speakers talked about the garbage fee, I
7 agree 100 percent. We want the comments.
8 If anyone would like to rewind the VCR of
9 last week's meeting you will see that
10 everybody talked about that and we all are
11 in agreement that we need a study to find
12 out what the true cost is once and for all
13 and then make the changes necessary. It's
14 an unfair system. \$300 per family or
15 household is not fair when people are not
16 generating the kind of garbage for a senior
17 citizens as well as smaller families so we
18 really need to take a look at that and we
19 are all in agreement we are supportive of a
20 study to get to the bottom of that once and
21 for all and find out what the true cost is
22 and charge accordingly.

23 On the audit, there is no excuse. I
24 agree 100 percent and I'll be asking the
25 question Monday at the PEL meeting. I want

1 answers, I'm tired of this. We get excuse
2 after excuse after excuse and maybe if we
3 have ask at the PEL meetings what's going on
4 so we are going to get to the bottom of
5 that. I'm really tired of -- you know, I
6 agree. I was told the end of the month and
7 which month is it. It's not February, it's
8 March now and we still don't have the audit
9 so I expect an answer and I expect the
10 correct answer.

11 Finally, I'd like to express my
12 condolences to the William Bill Gerrity
13 family. Mr. Gerrity was a great city
14 councilman, a better citizen and a pillar of
15 his North Scranton neighborhood and I'm sure
16 he will be missed by everybody that knew
17 him. That's all I have.

18 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you. Mr.
19 Gaughan?

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, thank you, just a
21 few comments. First of all, I'd also like
22 to express my condolences to the family of
23 former Scranton City Councilman Bill Gerrity
24 who passed away this week. Mr. Gerrity was
25 a true gentleman who was dedicated to

1 serving the people and the students of the
2 City of Scranton. His accomplishments as a
3 public servant and educator will never be
4 forgotten.

5 Our office this week has received
6 several calls regarding the disposal of old
7 televisions. The Lackawanna County
8 Recycling Center does accept old
9 televisions, but they must be intact. The
10 center is located at 3400 Boulevard Avenue
11 in Scranton and their phone number is
12 570-963-6868.

13 We received this week a streetlight
14 petition for the 200 block of Finney Street
15 in Minooka so we will send that off to the
16 city engineer. Neighbors were also
17 complaining of a streetlight out on Rockwell
18 Avenue in North Scranton and it's been
19 replaced so I'd like to thank Metchulat and
20 the DPW for doing that.

21 Council sent a letter to the mayor
22 on February 8 regarding the foreclosure
23 registration contact that we approved last
24 year. We still have not received legislation
25 enacting the program and I'm not exactly

1 sure what the hold up is so, Mrs. Reed, if
2 you could send another letter and hopefully
3 we get a response.

4 I also received a complaint about a
5 home in the 300 block of North Garfield
6 Avenue that has been vacant for the past few
7 years and we are awaiting a response from
8 the Licensing and Inspections Department on
9 that.

10 And I apologize for not bringing
11 this up in a caucus, but I didn't have a
12 chance, I would like at this time to make a
13 motion to table agenda Item 7-B.

14 MR. EVANS: I'd second that for
15 discussion.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: The reason -- on the
17 question? The reason that I'm asking to
18 table agenda Item 7-B, it's an appointment
19 to the MIDAS board and on March 1 we sent a
20 letter asking the mayor what specific issues
21 arose that made this legislation to
22 reconstitute the board necessary and we have
23 not received a response yet and I'm not
24 exactly sure why so I think we should table
25 this appointment until we get a response

1 from the mayor on this issue.

2 MR. WECHSLER: We have a motion and
3 a second, on the question?

4 MR. EVANS: Is this the first
5 appointment to the board?

6 MS. REED: Yes.

7 MR. EVANS: Do we know how many
8 members are on the board?

9 MS. REED: Five.

10 MR. GAUGHAN: And, again, the reason
11 I'm making a motion to table this, not
12 anything against Mr. Colbassani, but I don't
13 know how we can vote to put somebody on a
14 board and reconstitute a board when we don't
15 even know what the issues are that arose
16 that the mayor sent this legislation down,
17 and again, I'm disappointed that a letter
18 was sent out March 1, this is legislation
19 that the mayor sent down, yet, he refuses to
20 respond to anybody's requests for
21 information.

22 MR. WECHSLER: All those in favor
23 signify by saying aye.

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

25 MR. EVANS: Aye.

1 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed?

2 MR. ROGAN: No.

3 MR. PERRY: No.

4 MR. WECHSLER: The ayes have it
5 three to two, Item 7-B is tabled.

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, and that's
7 all I have this week.

8 MR. WECHSLER: Just a few items here
9 to touch on Mr. Gerrity, I had the pleasure
10 of serving with him for the last few years
11 at the Deutsch Institute Christmas
12 breakfast. Mr. Gerrity and all the court
13 had a huge chair every Christmas and the
14 outpouring of love for him was amazing to
15 see. He will be sorely missed, as we said.

16 I'd like to extend my thanks to the
17 DPW, someone on East Mountain drove up and
18 dropped off a hot tub, threw an eight-person
19 hot tub on the side of road up on East
20 Mountain, and normally we take care of these
21 problems ourselves but the hot tub was so
22 large that it couldn't be picked up so for
23 Dennis Gallagher and Sam Vitris they sent a
24 crew up and required a backhoe. I don't
25 know where the hot tub ended up but I know

1 it's not in council chambers, but the hot
2 tub, the residents called it the hot tub
3 time machine and it's gone and I appreciate
4 the fact that has been removed.

5 Last evening I attended a meeting of
6 the Oakmont Neighborhood Association. Chief
7 Graziano was in attendance and went over
8 several different issues and concerns of the
9 neighborhood. We hear this quite often
10 about speeding and the chief reiterated
11 again that for the most part the speed limit
12 in the city is 25 miles per hour and in
13 order to issue citations a vehicle would
14 have to be traveling ten miles per hour over
15 that so that would be a 35-mile per hour
16 speed in order to enforce any speeding. The
17 chief did send some cars up there to do some
18 monitoring. They are also monitoring some
19 stop signs and I believe working on the
20 requests for installing a stop sign on
21 Pen-Y-Bryn Drive and Watress Drive, I'll be
22 putting that together. That's all I have
23 for tonight.

24 MS. REED: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION -
25 AN ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL

1 NO. 126, 2015, AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED
2 "GENERAL CITY OPERATING BUDGET 2016" BY
3 TRANSFERRING \$10,000.00 FROM ACCOUNT NO.
4 01.080.00083.4550 (DPW BUREAU OF HIGHWAYS
5 CAPITAL EXPENDITURES) TO ACCOUNT NO.
6 01.041.10110.4299 (NON-DEPARTMENTAL SHADE
7 TREE COMMISSION) TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT
8 FUNDING FOR CLEARING OF STUMPS.

9 MR. WECHSLER: 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. EVANS: Second.

14 MR. WECHSLER: On the question?

15 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question.
16 The city forester, Tony Santoli, identified
17 19 tree stumps that need to be removed.
18 Each stump costs approximately \$500 and the
19 funds were available in the DPW highways
20 account because two leased vehicles did not
21 require payments.

22 MR. WECHSLER: All those in favor of
23 introduction signify by saying aye.

24 MR. PERRY: Aye.

25 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

1 MR. EVANS: Aye.

2 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

3 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The
4 ayes have it and so moved.

5 MS. REED: 5-C. FOR INTRODUCTION -
6 AN ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL
7 NO. 126, 2015, AN ORDINANCE "ENTITLED
8 GENERAL CITY OPERATING BUDGET 2016" BY
9 CREATING A NEW REVENUE ACCOUNT NO.
10 01.380.38004 PA LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD LICENSE
11 FEES.

12 MR. WECHSLER: At this time, I'll
13 entertain a motion that Item 5-C be
14 introduced into its proper committee.

15 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

16 MR. EVANS: Second.

17 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All
18 those in favor of introduction signify by
19 saying aye.

20 MR. PERRY: Aye.

21 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

22 MR. EVANS: Aye.

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

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

1 MS. REED: 5-D. FOR INTRODUCTION -
2 AN ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL
3 NO. 126, 2015, AN ORDINANCE "ENTITLED
4 GENERAL CITY OPERATING BUDGET 2016" BY
5 CREATING A NEW EXPENSE ACCOUNT NO.
6 01.080.00083.4370 TRAFFIC SIGN ACQUISITIONS.

7 MR. WECHSLER: At this time, I'll
8 entertain a motion that Item 5-D be
9 introduced into its proper committee.

10 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

11 MR. EVANS: Second.

12 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All
13 those in favor of introduction signify by
14 saying aye.

15 MR. PERRY: Aye.

16 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

17 MR. EVANS: Aye.

18 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

19 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The
20 ayes have it and so moved.

21 MS. REED: 5-E. FOR INTRODUCTION -
22 AN ORDINANCE - ESTABLISHING PERMIT PARKING
23 ON THE WESTERN (ODD) SIDE OF THE 500 BLOCK
24 OF CLAY AVENUE FROM 523 TO 543 CLAY AVENUE.

25 MR. WECHSLER: At this time, I'll

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

3 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

4 MR. EVANS: Second.

5 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All
6 those in favor of introduction signify by
7 saying aye.

8 MR. PERRY: Aye.

9 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

10 MR. EVANS: Aye.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The
13 ayes have it and so moved.

14 MS. REED: 5-F. FOR INTRODUCTION - A
15 RESOLUTION - ACCEPTING A TWO HUNDRED FIFTY
16 (\$250.00) DOLLAR DONATION FROM PROVIDENCE
17 VETERANS MEMORIAL VFW POST 5209 PRESENTED TO
18 THE CITY OF SCRANTON POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR
19 THE K-9 UNIT.

20 MR. WECHSLER: At this time, I'll
21 entertain a motion that Item 5-F be
22 introduced into its proper committee.

23 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

24 MR. EVANS: Second.

25 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All

1 those in favor of introduction signify by
2 saying aye.

3 MR. PERRY: Aye.

4 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

5 MR. EVANS: Aye.

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

7 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The
8 ayes have it and so moved.

9 MS. REED: 5-G. FOR INTRODUCTION - A
10 RESOLUTION - ACCEPTING A SEVEN THOUSAND FIVE
11 HUNDRED (\$7,500.00) DOLLAR DONATION FROM
12 TOYOTA OF SCRANTON PRESENTED TO THE CITY OF
13 SCRANTON POLICE DEPARTMENT TO PURCHASE A DOG
14 TO REPLACE THE DOG RETIRING FROM THE K-9
15 UNIT.

16 MR. WECHSLER: At this time, I'll
17 entertain a motion that Item 5-G be
18 introduced into its proper committee.

19 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

20 MR. EVANS: Second.

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

24 MR. PERRY: Aye.

25 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

1 MR. EVANS: Aye.

2 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

3 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The
4 ayes have it and so moved.

5 MS. REED: SIXTH ORDER. 6-A. NO
6 BUSINESS AT THIS TIME.

7 SEVENTH ORDER. SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A.
8 FOR CONSIDERATION - BY THE COMMITTEE ON
9 RULES FOR ADOPTION FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
10 12, 2016 AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
11 108, 2015, AN ORDINANCE (AS AMENDED)
12 ENTITLED "AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
13 14, 2010, ENTITLED AN ORDINANCE "AMENDING
14 THE ADMINISTRATIVE CODE OF THE CITY OF
15 SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA, SECTION 6-14
16 CONTRACTS, SUBSECTION (A) TO REDUCE THE
17 AMOUNT ABOVE WHICH COMPETITIVE BIDDING IS
18 REQUIRED FROM \$20,000.00 TO \$10,000.00 AND
19 TO REDUCE THE AMOUNT ABOVE WHICH QUOTES MUST
20 BE OBTAINED FROM \$5,000.00 TO \$4,000.00" TO
21 INCREASE THE AMOUNT ABOVE WHICH COMPETITIVE
22 BIDDING IS REQUIRED FROM \$10,000.00 TO
23 \$19,400.00 AND TO INCREASE THE AMOUNT FROM
24 WHICH QUOTES MUST BE OBTAINED FROM \$4,000.00
25 TO \$10,500.00 TO BE IN LINE WITH

1 COMMONWEALTH STANDARDS AND OTHER SIMILARLY
2 SITUATED MUNICIPALITIES WITH REGARD TO
3 BIDDING THRESHOLD" TO CORRECT A
4 TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR IN THE NOW THEREFORE
5 CLAUSE BY CHANGING THE AMOUNT FROM WHICH
6 QUOTES MUST BE OBTAINED FROM \$4,000.00 TO
7 \$10,500.00 TO \$10,500.00 TO \$19,399.99.

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

11 MR. ROGAN: Second.

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

14 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

15 MR. PERRY: 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. Wechsler.

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

1 MS. REED: 7-B has been tabled.

2 7-C. FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE
3 COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS FOR ADOPTION
4 RESOLUTION NO. 12, 2016 - AUTHORIZING THE
5 MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS
6 TO EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH
7 PENNSY SUPPLY, INC. FOR CITY OF SCRANTON
8 2016 PAVING PROJECT.

9 MR. WECHSLER: What is the
10 recommendation of the Chairperson for the
11 Committee on Public Works?

12 MR. GAUGHAN: As Chairperson for the
13 Committee on Public Works, I recommend final
14 passage of Item 7-C.

15 MR. ROGAN: Second.

16 MR. WECHSLER: On the question?

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question.
18 As I mentioned last week, the paving is
19 supposed to start April 1 depending on the
20 weather. I'd like to thank the city
21 engineer John Pocius and our DPW director
22 Denny Gallagher for a great job putting this
23 whole program together and it's desperately
24 needed to help our infrastructure.

25 MR. ROGAN: I would just like to add

1 last week I went after the Scranton Times a
2 little bit for their failure to cover the
3 good news about this paving project and I
4 was glad to see the headline regarding
5 streets getting paved.

6 MR. WECHSLER: Anyone else? Roll
7 call, please?

8 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

9 MR. PERRY: Yes.

10 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

11 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

12 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

13 MR. EVANS: Yes.

14 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

16 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

17 MR. WECHSLER: Yes. I hereby
18 declare Item 7-C legally and lawfully
19 adopted.

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

22 MR. ROGAN: Motion to adjourn.

23 MR. WECHSLER: This meeting is
24 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