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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

HELD:

Wednesday, March 16, 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 moment of reflection
2 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. Does Council
14 have any announcements?

15 MR. EVANS: I would like to make a
16 motion to take from the table File of
17 Council No. 10, 2016.

18 MR. ROGAN: Second.

19 MR. WECHSLER: On the question.
20 This ordinance appeals a prior ordinance
21 that changes the requirements for taking the
22 master electrical and master plumber's
23 license exams. This legislation will be
24 placed in Seventh Order for a final vote.
25 Anyone who wishes to speak on this

1 particular piece of legislation may do so
2 during Fourth Order in citizens'
3 participation. All those in favor signify
4 by saying aye.

5 MR. PERRY: Aye.

6 MR. EVANS: Aye.

7 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

8 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed?

9 MR. GAUGHAN: No.

10 MR. WECHSLER: The ayes have it and
11 so moved.

12 MR. EVANS: I would like to make a
13 motion to take from the table File of
14 Council No. 11, 2016.

15 MR. ROGAN: Second.

16 MR. WECHSLER: On the question?
17 This ordinance pertains to the licensing and
18 regulating of contractors doing business in
19 the city. This legislation will be placed
20 in Seventh Order for a final vote. Anyone
21 who wishes to speak on this particular piece
22 of legislation may do so during Fourth
23 Order, citizens' participation. All those
24 in favor signify by saying aye.

25 MR. PERRY: Aye.

1 MR. EVANS: Aye.

2 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

3 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed?

4 MR. GAUGHAN: No.

5 MR. WECHSLER: The ayes have it and
6 so moved.

7 MR. EVANS: I would like to make a
8 motion to take from the table Resolution No.
9 11, 2016.

10 MR. ROGAN: Second.

11 MR. WECHSLER: On the question?

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question,
13 I appreciate Solicitor Shrive sending over
14 some information that I requested last week
15 on the reconstituting of the MIDAS board.
16 He sent a letter to Solicitor Minora
17 explaining the issues that arose and why
18 they were reconstituting the board, however,
19 I do take issue with one statement in the
20 letter. Mr. Shrive says, "While I have no
21 problem providing the additional information
22 requested with regard to the reconstitution
23 of MIDAS, I do not expect future board
24 authority or commission appointments to be
25 unnecessarily held up. As you know,

1 council's role in that process is merely
2 advisory in nature and all appointments are
3 effective as of the date of the mayor's
4 appointment letter. Other appointments to
5 MIDAS will be forthcoming."

6 I take issue with the statement that
7 the appointment was unnecessarily held up.
8 I asked a question two weeks ago about why
9 they were reconstituting this board and I
10 never got an answer so I think that this
11 council at some point needs to take a stand
12 when you ask legitimate questions about
13 legislation and do not get an answer to them
14 I don't think we should vote on them. Thank
15 you.

16 MR. EVANS: On the question, I felt
17 last week our actions were appropriate and I
18 stand by our vote last week.

19 MR. ROGAN: I wasn't going to
20 address it last week, I guess since it's
21 being brought up again, the information was
22 in the backup provided, some of it was. I
23 was ready to vote then, you know, it was in
24 there that the board needed to be
25 reconstituted to finish up unfinished

1 business.

2 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, but the question
3 that I asked none of that information was in
4 the backup.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Anyone else? This
6 resolution pertains to the appointment to
7 the Municipal Industrial Development
8 Authority Board. This legislation will be
9 placed in Seventh Order for a final vote.
10 Anyone who wishes to speak on this
11 particular piece of legislation may do so
12 during Fourth Order Citizens' Participation.
13 All those in favor signify by saying aye.

14 MR. PERRY: Aye.

15 MR. EVANS: Aye.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

17 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

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

20 Next week's meeting will held on
21 Wednesday, March 23rd at 6:30 p.m. City
22 Hall will be closed next Friday, March 25,
23 in observance of Good Friday.

24 An executive session was held this
25 evening to discuss a matter of litigation.

1 Dispense with the reading of the
2 minutes.

3 MS. REED: THIRD ORDER. 3-A. TAX
4 ASSESSOR'S RESULTS REPORT FOR HEARING DATE
5 HELD MARCH 2, 2016.

6 MR. WECHSLER: Are there any
7 comments? If not, received and filed.

8 MS. REED: 3-B. MINUTES OF THE
9 LACKAWANNA COUNTY LAND BANK MEETING HELD
10 FEBRUARY 12, 2016.

11 MR. WECHSLER: Are there any
12 comments? If not, received and filed.

13 Do anyone council members have any
14 announcements at this time?

15 MS. REED: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS'
16 PARTICIPATION.

17 MR. WECHSLER: Joan Hodowanitz.

18 MS. HODOWANITZ: Joan Hodowanitz,
19 resident and taxpayer. As you're probably
20 aware, the 2014 audit is now done. I
21 received a phone call yesterday from Jim
22 Lockwood informing me that it was completed,
23 I had not seen it and managed to download a
24 copy from his hyperlink early this morning
25 and I understand there is a copy available

1 in the City Clerk's Office for review. My
2 first surprise, well, let me back up. I was
3 not amused sitting in your informal caucus
4 to see the attitudes and a statements you
5 exhibited on the completion of the audit.
6 This is probably the single most important
7 document that is produced during the year.
8 It helps you -- it should help you assess
9 the city's financial problems and help the
10 city chart a course to recovery, but what I
11 was hearing, and maybe you were joking, was
12 "Well, is the BA supposed to give us a
13 briefing?"

14 "I don't know."

15 "Are we supposed to do anything?"

16 "No, we are not supposed to do
17 anything."

18 You know, it's like Marie and I were
19 talking about this earlier, like Third
20 Order, "Any comments? If not, received and
21 filed," and down it goes to the basement. I
22 do hope that you are going to take the time
23 to read, analyze, discuss, and act on the
24 findings of this audit. If not, I would ask
25 you all to resign. This is not a funny

1 matter.

2 Now, first question that I have, and
3 you don't have to answer, it's rhetorical,
4 is if the audit became available yesterday
5 for the first time and Mrs. Reed just got
6 her copy yesterday, why is it dated March 4?
7 Where has it been since March 4? That's 11
8 days, and this is a late document. I have
9 been in this building going to the BA's
10 Office, the Mayor's Office, the Controller's
11 Office and the City Clerk's Office saying,
12 "Anybody seen an audit recently?"

13 No one saw the audit. Somebody knew
14 it was done. Now, last year, if I recall,
15 this was an exit briefing for the mayor and
16 his staff, no exit briefing this year? No
17 one cares to ask? Okay. If you look -- I
18 have only begun reading it, it's 125 pages
19 and it's got problems. It's got problems
20 not only describing the city's finances but
21 the documents itself has issues. Now,
22 remember, we have paid Rainey & Rainey to
23 hold the hands of the people upstairs in the
24 BA's Office, this should be a letter perfect
25 document with no inconsistencies. I have

1 only skimmed the first 15 pages, this is
2 what I found. On page two, part of the
3 management's discussion and analysis, "The
4 city has elected," elected, "Not to include
5 the Parking authority financial statements
6 in the financial statements. As such,
7 information has been excluded."

8 Well, that's an explanation.
9 "Additionally, the Parking Authority is in
10 receivership."

11 If you go on down to page 30,
12 "Summary of significant accounting policies.
13 The city has concluded that the following
14 organizations should be presented in the
15 City's financial statements," should be
16 presented. "The Redevelopment Authority,
17 Sewer Authority, Parking Authority."

18 Okay. Now, unless you think that
19 that's not a significant issue there are two
20 adverse findings, adverse opinions in this
21 audit report, okay? An adverse opinion, in
22 case you only have three or six credits in
23 accounting, is like a cancer. You need to
24 do something about it. It's a material
25 finding. A significant risk. One has to do

1 with the pensions, and I'll get to that in a
2 moment, the other one has to do with the
3 lack of financial statements from the
4 Parking Authority. You have the same
5 adverse opinion last year. Everybody said,
6 "Well, that's Mr. Washo's fault, he won't
7 give us the financial statements."

8 So I guess we are going to have an
9 adverse opinion until Mr. Washo and the
10 Parking Authority goes away, but the
11 document isn't even consistent in itself,
12 okay? For this we hired Rainey & Rainey and
13 we gave Mr. Bulzoni a \$10,000 raise.

14 The other significant adverse
15 finding had to do with the pension funds.
16 "The net pension liabilities discount rate
17 that they have been using 8 percent,
18 accounting principles generally accepted in
19 the United States off America require that
20 net pension liabilities discount rate --"
21 I'm going to continue, "Be calculated at a
22 single rate that reflects both the long-term
23 expected rate of return," and they use 8
24 percentage, "and the yield for 20-year tax
25 exempt general obligation municipal bonds,"

1 and it goes on.

2 At the end it says, "Management has
3 not reported the net pension liability using
4 a single blended discount rate that reflects
5 both the long-term expected rate of return
6 and the yield for the 20-year tax exempt
7 general obligation municipal bond and
8 governmental activities and accordingly has
9 not reported an expense for the change in
10 that liability. The amount by which this
11 departure would effect the liabilities, net
12 positions and expenses of governmental
13 activities is not reasonably determinable,"
14 they can't figure out what the number should
15 be. "What is estimated by management the
16 city estimates --" I heard you the first
17 time, "The city estimates --"

18 MR. WECHSLER: Well, we are being
19 generous with the time, so please --

20 MS. HODOWANITZ: "By management to be
21 material."

22 You need to sit down and read this
23 document. If you don't understand it I
24 suggest you go up to the University of
25 Scranton and talk to the professors who

1 teach governmental accounting, but I do not
2 wish to hear, "Oh, what do we have to do?"

3 "Nothing."

4 "I have three credits in
5 accounting."

6 MR. WECHSLER: It was six. It was
7 six.

8 MS. HODOWANITZ: That was
9 inappropriate.

10 MR. WECHSLER: It was six. Paul
11 Casparro.

12 MR. CASPARRO: Thank you, Mr.
13 President. I'm here to talk about the
14 electrical licensing ordinance. My name is
15 Paul Casparro, president, business
16 representative of IBEW Local 81. My address
17 is 1720 McDonough Avenue in Scranton. I
18 stand before you in opposition to the
19 changes of the City Ordinance No. 155. The
20 City of Scranton should not allow journeymen
21 contractors to pull permits to work on
22 residential buildings, one and two-family
23 dwellings and townhouses. Safety for the
24 citizens of the Scranton is first and
25 foremost. The Codes in the City of Scranton

1 have been strict for a number of years.
2 Contractors had to take their tests to get
3 their license, and rightfully so. Why would
4 we lessen the ordinance and allow people who
5 can't pass the test to be able to pull
6 permits to do electrical work in the city?

7 Would you go to a physician or a
8 surgeon who couldn't pass medical exams?
9 I'm concerned if we let these unqualified
10 people get permits and do electrical work
11 houses burn down, people die, who is going
12 to be responsible? Does council have
13 liability insurance to cover these losses?
14 Does the mayor have liability insurance to
15 cover these losses? Or how about Mr. Hinton
16 who is proposing these changes? How can
17 they live with themselves if something
18 happens? How can you go back and tell these
19 families?

20 I was behind a police car today on
21 the way back from lunch and it read, there
22 was a sticker on the back of the car and it
23 read, "Be Part of the Solution." That's
24 right, be part of the solution not the
25 problem. Someone told me once you can never

1 go by wrong by doing the right thing. Thank
2 you.

3 MR. WECHSLER: Tom McNulty.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Good evening. Thank
5 you, Mr. President. Before I give my
6 remarks I would like to say something
7 regarding the comments regarding my brother
8 Jim and his passing, those words that you
9 spoke were truly, you know, they were from
10 heart. Our family really appreciated them
11 and I know Evie did and I just want to thank
12 all of you for saying that and I got to tell
13 you something, and I hope I don't take too
14 much of the time, but in these council
15 chambers hearing that from you guys knowing
16 the legendary vice that used to have with
17 council is unbelievable, but I really mean
18 that, thank you very much.

19 I came here tonight to talk about
20 this proposed legislation of the journeymen
21 contractor's license. My concern is that I
22 have been in the electrical industry for
23 over 50 years now and during that time I
24 served as an apprentice through the ropes to
25 become a contractor. With that said, I have

1 a vast amount of experience. The last 16
2 years of my career I have spent with the
3 National Electrical Contractor's Association
4 and my job with that association is the head
5 of the Education and Safety Departments, and
6 I'm going to tell you something, gentlemen,
7 you know, whether you are dealing with a
8 downtown building or whether you are dealing
9 with a home, okay, the potential for
10 disaster is there, and the idea of removing
11 a test for electrical license is beyond me.
12 I can't even understand it, and I mean that
13 sincerely. I deal with the State of New
14 Jersey, I deal with Delaware, I am all over
15 the place and I'm telling you those
16 restrictions are even tougher than this so
17 why would you want to make it easier?

18 And we have nothing to do with the
19 test. That's done by a third party, we have
20 no control over that test. If you pass it,
21 you pass it. If you don't, you don't, go
22 back to school and you learn it. That's
23 what this is all about, it's about a safety
24 factor, and the idea of just eliminating a
25 test because some guys says he didn't do

1 well on tests he gets nervous. Well, let me
2 tell you something, the test is an open book
3 test. You got the National Electrical Code
4 book sitting alongside of you, you have
5 questions from the code, the idea is if you
6 can find those answers in the code, and the
7 reason behind that is to make sure that you
8 are doing the work properly.

9 The other thing is, the other part
10 of that test is schematic drawings. You
11 know, now, individuals say, "Well, I'm good
12 with my hands, but I can't memorize it."

13 You don't have to memorize it. If
14 you do it with your hands you can draw it
15 because you already drew it in your head, so
16 that idea of the testing requirement just
17 simply doesn't hold water. So what I'm
18 asking you is this, a electrician told me
19 years ago told me, and this is when I was a
20 young guy, he said, "Kid, one thing you got
21 to remember with electricity, always respect
22 it and never get comfortable with it," and
23 that legislation you have is definitely very
24 comfortable and it's dangerous. Thank you.

25 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

1 MR. WECHSLER: Rick Schraeder.

2 MR. SCHRAEDER: Good evening,
3 Council. Thank you for the opportunity to
4 come here and address the issues that we
5 have tonight which has to do with the
6 electrical ordinance that's being introduced
7 and voted on tonight. I'll tell you there
8 is a couple of things in there that are very
9 upsetting, one of them being to do away with
10 the advisory and the licensing board. You
11 have an advisory and licensing board, and
12 maybe they haven't met but that wasn't
13 because of the people that sat on them
14 boards. We have a member here tonight that
15 sits on one of them boards that has called
16 over here for meetings. I think what we
17 need to do is we need to have them
18 professionals on them boards. I don't think
19 anyone would say that they are qualified to
20 do a job they are not qualified to do. Who
21 is going to make the decision if someone
22 should be barred from doing work in the city
23 because of past practices that they did that
24 ended up either causing a fire or causing
25 loss of property or worse yet causing loss

1 of life, so I think that we need to have
2 people on licensing and advisory boards that
3 are professionals in their fields, that know
4 what's going on in their fields that they
5 would be able to say if somebody is
6 qualified if somebody did break the codes
7 that are out there, the National Electrical
8 Code and specifically in electrical for
9 being the Bible for doing electrical work in
10 the United States, and we have Paul Casparro
11 who sits on the National Electrical Board as
12 one of the chairmen of one of the panels.
13 So we are fortunate to have him there and we
14 are fortunate to have a training facility
15 here for training on premises.

16 We have a state and federally
17 approved apprenticeship program. We believe
18 that them licensing and advisory boards not
19 only need to be in place where they are, but
20 I think that we need to have them regularly
21 scheduled and set up for them to meet on a
22 regular basis to make this city safer for
23 the residents.

24 And I can also tell you I heard
25 that, you know, it's a little easier in

1 other areas to get electrical work done and
2 they want to make it more friendly. I don't
3 want to make it more friendly if it's going
4 to burn the town down. I think, you know,
5 the question here is the residential and
6 townhouses, every one of you knows most of
7 the fires in the City of Scranton are
8 residential. Most of the lives that are
9 loss in fires in the City of Scranton are
10 residential.

11 So I ask you why do you think there
12 isn't many fires in industrial and
13 commercial? Standards are higher, you have
14 contractors, licensed contractors doing that
15 work that have skin in the game. They
16 understand that their reputation is on the
17 line. They understand that they have to
18 perform and do things well or they are not
19 going to continue doing work. If you lower
20 the standards here, and I'm not saying that
21 there wouldn't be a lot of people that were
22 qualified, but if there is one or two more
23 that get in that aren't we are going to have
24 a real issue and everyone has to do some
25 soul searching if we didn't lower the

1 standards would we have had this problem.

2 It's very important that we worry
3 about the safety and the welfare of the
4 citizens here in the City of Scranton. I
5 also heard that the other areas might be a
6 little more lenient, and I can tell you I
7 checked with the business manager from
8 Allentown he says, "Rick, I can't believe
9 what you are telling me. Right now we are
10 fighting to get an electrical licensing
11 program like you have up in Scranton and you
12 are telling me you want to regress and go
13 back and make it less safe for the residents
14 that live in the city?"

15 He says, "I can't believe what I am
16 hearing."

17 I said, "Well, I can't either, but
18 it certainly some of what we are being
19 told."

20 So we certainly want to see that
21 there is testing. We want to see that
22 people are properly trained for doing these
23 jobs. We want to hold them to a higher
24 standard and if it means that, you know,
25 holding them to the higher standard that as

1 many people can't do the work here so be it,
2 but let's have qualified people here doing
3 the work that they were meant to do.

4 I think that we also have to take a
5 look at, you know, opening up the doors to
6 people that maybe don't have the proper
7 training that they have. To just say that
8 we can get W-2's that they worked for -- and
9 I know we are going to ask them if they
10 actually did electrical work, but there is a
11 lot that were out there, they might have
12 been opening swimming pools, they might have
13 been cleaning gutters out, they might have
14 been cutting grass, maybe they did a little
15 bit of electrical work, but I certainly
16 don't know if these are the people you are
17 going to want to go out and be wiring the
18 places where you, your loved ones live. I
19 mean, we are talking about the lives of
20 kids, we are talking about our parents'
21 lives, we are talking about people that
22 maybe wouldn't be capable of doing something
23 if a fire did erupt so I certainly ask you
24 to consider this when you are taking I
25 couldn't you are vote tonight.

1 I'll close with safety is the number
2 one thing and I believe that each and every
3 one of you feel like that in your heart so I
4 ask you to please not vote to change
5 something that we can work with and make
6 this town safer for our people to live. I
7 don't want to go by the adage, you know, if
8 it's not broke break it, so hopefully you
9 will vote against this tonight. Thank you
10 for your consideration tonight.

11 MR. WECHSLER: Fred Leber.

12 MR. LEBER: Good evening. Thank you
13 for your time. My name is Fred Leber. I am
14 the owner of Leber Electric, Incorporated.
15 It's a family-owned electrical contracting
16 business located in Scranton, PA, since
17 1954. I am a licensed master electrician in
18 Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, and Hanover
19 Township. I have taken tests for all of
20 these cities and I can assure you the test
21 in Scranton was not the toughest.

22 I am a member of the Local 81, IBEW
23 where I serve as a member for the Joint
24 Apprenticeship Training Committee. I
25 dedicate my time to this cause for no other

1 reason than to ensure the members of Local
2 81 are the best educated and qualified
3 electricians for the job. Initially, my
4 father served as a trustee for the same
5 committee for over 30 years.

6 I also serve as a board member for
7 the National Electrical Contractors
8 Association where I attend quarterly
9 meetings in Philadelphia throughout the year
10 to help improve the industry. Finally, I
11 served on the Scranton Licensing Board for
12 12 years with the Doherty administration. I
13 feel our services were greatly utilized for
14 more than just licensing, and I know that
15 the board would be more than willing to help
16 you in the future.

17 With all of that said, I can assure
18 you I have the experience and the knowledge
19 to look at this from all aspects. For this
20 reason, I am respectfully requesting you
21 vote "no" to changing regulating the masters
22 license exam and qualifications needed to
23 perform work in the city. I cannot stress
24 enough that I feel -- I cannot stress enough
25 that I feel by supporting these changes you

1 are lowering the standards set forth by
2 previous council members and other
3 experienced professionals in the industry
4 who worked hard to bring this program to
5 where it is today.

6 Furthermore, making these changes
7 you are jeopardizing the safety of the
8 residents of Scranton. How can you justify
9 allowing anyone with less experience and
10 knowledge to complete construction without a
11 master electrician responsible for that
12 project? I realize that the afterthought is
13 to allow the inspection process to catch
14 errors, but I stand here before you today to
15 tell you the inspectors can't catch every
16 single problem out there.

17 Furthermore, I understand there is a
18 concern over competitive pricing being the
19 reason behind some of these changes, but
20 what I don't understand is how that relates
21 to someone taking and passing an exam to
22 prove they have the knowledge, skills, and
23 ability to perform the work. Please, I ask
24 you vote "no" to these changes and let us
25 work to raise the bar to continue to make

1 Scranton a safer place for all the residents
2 of the community. If the goal is to make
3 improvements, let's work together to find
4 the solution to make the necessary
5 improvements. Thank you for your time.

6 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you. Is there
7 anyone else who would like to address
8 council?

9 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia.
10 Citizen of Scranton, fellow Scrantonian. We
11 all know this legislation didn't have to
12 come up at all. If it came up, it's because
13 you wanted it to come up. It has nothing to
14 do with the safety, it has to do with money,
15 permit money. That's all this piece of
16 legislation is changing the way they get
17 their licensing money and that's the trouble
18 with this, everything in this city is done
19 for money.

20 We are due to receive a bad, bad
21 deal with the police and firemen. Six
22 people caused the problem, that's all, the
23 mayor and council. The mayor could have
24 gave them their raise any time they wanted
25 to, and I'll tell you who was on council,

1 Mr. McGoff, Fanucci and Gatelli. They sat
2 on council. The police came many times
3 before council, now we are going to be stuck
4 with 42, 43 or whatever amount of money for
5 -- I guess it's something in the 32 or 36
6 something in that area and we can't sue
7 them.

8 The Democratic party elected the
9 council, it also elected the mayor much the
10 Democratic party and PEL is responsible for
11 that. Can we sue them? No. That is the
12 problem with the law, we can't sue you for
13 your incompetence. They say you are
14 incompetent because you put them in there.
15 They have a right to think that way. If we
16 are stupid enough to keep voting you in we
17 are stupid enough to keep getting these huge
18 increases and surprises.

19 Now, let's talk about Novembrino
20 Complex there. There is a pool in South
21 Side, there is a pool in North Scranton,
22 there is a pool down in I guess Capouse.
23 There is a pool up at Nay Aug for the hill.
24 West Side does not have a pool. West Side
25 is the most populous area in the city but

1 you three don't care. There was no reason
2 why Novembrino couldn't have been fixed. I
3 would rather see Novembrino fixed than
4 something done for Mr. McGoff. That was a
5 joke, but you don't know because you weren't
6 there. The only person that was there was
7 Mr. Rogan. He saw what happened, what they
8 did and how they did it.

9 Believe me, people should be out
10 there, I guess in the old days you would
11 have been tarred and feathered but we don't
12 no that anymore. You are the poorest excuse
13 for a council that I have ever saw. You are
14 even worse than McGoff and Fanucci and
15 Gatelli. At least you knew what they were
16 saying, but you try to cover everything up
17 and that's not right.

18 Why do we need a splash park at
19 Novembrino? Why can't the pool be fixed?
20 It's certainly can if you put your effort
21 into it and look at where the money is
22 going. I would rather see Novembrino fixed
23 and somebody get a contract to say use the
24 red can for papers, the blue can for bottles
25 and then the rest of the garbage and we give

1 somebody a contract for that. We also gave
2 somebody a contract to say the light
3 changes. Make sure it changes from red to
4 green and yellow. We need a \$5,000 contract
5 for that. What do you think, we are stupid?
6 You would never change the way the bidding
7 process was changed unless there is somebody
8 making a bundle out of it and that's the
9 whole thing.

10 Money, I keep telling them, my com
11 padres there, look for the money trail.
12 That's where it all is. Everything happens
13 for the money, not necessarily for the
14 betterment of the city, it's just too bad it
15 does it that way, but I've been coming here
16 for almost 20 years and there haven't been
17 changes. I fought everybody on that council
18 and I will fight them until I move up to the
19 Cathedral, but I have less and less respect
20 for people that should know better and puts
21 politics above the city. Thank you.

22 MR. ROGAN: Before the next speaker
23 I would just like to respond to one item
24 that was mentioned regarding the pool, as
25 mentioned I was on council when that pool

1 was closed on the West Side, nobody wants to
2 see that pool open or splash park more than
3 me. Every time that there has been an
4 opportunity to fund free swimming for kids,
5 pools, I have been an advocate for it.

6 Regarding the legislation tonight
7 dedicating the gazebo in honor of Bob
8 McGoff, that legislation has nothing to do
9 with the Novembrino pool. This is a simply
10 just to honor Bob McGoff and the good work
11 that he has done in his neighborhood and for
12 the city. The Novembrino pool funding has
13 nothing to do with the legislation that we
14 are going to entertain.

15 MR. BETTOR: Good evening. My name
16 is Art Bettor and I live at 1928 South
17 Webster Avenue, Scranton. I have worked
18 under a master plumber who is registered for
19 16 years. I have helped my journeymen for
20 over ten years, worked for him, never a
21 problem. I have passed my master test in
22 Wilkes-Barre, was able to pull permits
23 because I hold a master license in
24 Wilkes-Barre and now they are saying you
25 can't pull permits because you guys aren't

1 honoring it, a Wilkes-Barre license. You
2 guys haven't offered the test here. They
3 have now through a third party so I'm hoping
4 that you vote "yes" to that, you know, and
5 it's a third party inspection and they are
6 here to inspect everything.

7 As far as, you know, for fires and
8 deaths, that could be anything. Look at
9 Sandone tire. That was a commercial
10 building that burnt so I'd like you to
11 consider your vote and think about it and
12 appreciate it. Thank you for your time.

13 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

14 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.
15 Lee Morgan. Well, I'm glad to see a lot of
16 people here today. I had hoped they were
17 talking about a host of different issues,
18 but, well, whatever brings people forward I
19 think is important, but I'd like to say
20 something about the Novembrino project to
21 start off with. You know, that project is
22 just a total waste of money, it really is
23 when you look it what's going on here, but I
24 guess the city has to spend the money
25 somewhere and, you know, let's not forget

1 that the Capouse Avenue pool has been closed
2 for a long time and, you know, I believe a
3 lot of the things that Andy comes here and
4 says about patronage and money and politics
5 and, you know, it's just a real shame that
6 community development money has been wasted
7 in this city for decades, probably hundreds
8 of million of the dollars and, you know, it
9 doesn't really matter to most people but
10 when you are senior and they are sheriff
11 sale-ing your house or, you know, just
12 taking a look at the blight in the city and
13 getting ready to fund more money into the
14 downtown and all the nonprofits from Adams
15 Plaza all the way across the political
16 spectrum, the University of Scranton and all
17 of the rest of them waiting for state money
18 I guess the last person that really matters
19 is the average citizen.

20 You know, I talked to a gentleman
21 today who has got a rather bleak future for
22 himself because he only -- he has lost most
23 of his heart function and he is worried
24 about paying his taxes and keeping his home
25 and he is a month younger than me, and you

1 take a look at the crimes that this council
2 and these administrations have perpetuated
3 against the residents of this city and they
4 have been continual with no respect for
5 anything because this pork barrel money is
6 coming from Harrisburg and Washington and
7 they know they are wasting it, and to be
8 honest with you the council itself knows
9 they are wasting it, but it's political and
10 it's important that it's done.

11 You know, Mr. Corbett today brought
12 an issue up, and I don't know if the Finance
13 Chair knows about this or the Council
14 president, but they are talking about a city
15 policeman making \$132,000 with \$45,000 in
16 overtime and, you know, you take a look at
17 fire and police judgments, the Court award,
18 and you look at this council and say -- and
19 previous councils why weren't the budgets
20 cut every year to pay that money and now we
21 are allegedly talking about a \$32 million
22 settlement.

23 The people in this city are out of
24 money and we look at this council and we
25 wonder how long can this corrupt politics

1 continue? How long can we grind the old and
2 the poor into the ground to support a
3 political system that's based on patronage
4 and corruption? And it's not my opinion,
5 it's the people's opinion in this country,
6 and when you take a look at our country and
7 you go back to the 1760's, closer to 1770,
8 the American people decided they weren't
9 British and they weren't putting up had this
10 corruption and they were going to stand up,
11 and I just had have to ask my government
12 that if people started running sheriffs and
13 police officers away from sheriffs sales and
14 started shooting people and there'd be
15 mayhem on the street would all of this end?

16 Is that what it's going to take some
17 day, to have a mass uprising by people to
18 throw the political hacks off our back? And
19 does it have to come to that or don't you
20 realize that even if only one person in the
21 community voted for you and everybody else
22 stayed home don't you have an obligation to
23 protect the whole community? Everyone? And
24 is everybody entitled to a government that's
25 aimed at making their life better instead of

1 stealing their assets when they are senior
2 citizens with reverse mortgages or, you
3 know, just selling just tax increases over
4 and over again. Where does it end?

5 And where do the lines for the
6 serfdoms end? You got the county, you got
7 the school district, you got the city, and
8 they are all separate taxing bodies. When
9 is it going to end? And, you know, I think
10 it's important for this council to tell the
11 residents in the City of Scranton if there
12 is a city policeman making \$132,000 a year
13 and why that's taking place and I think it's
14 important for the council to come forward
15 and explain where the \$32 million is coming
16 from. I think it's important for the
17 council to cop forward and tell the city how
18 we are going to sell the Scranton Sewer
19 Authority and how we are issuing all of
20 these contracts and all of these millions
21 and millions of dollars and the people are
22 out of money.

23 So any day that this council wants
24 to do this in the light of the public eye
25 here would it be a beautiful day. Thank

1 you.

2 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

3 MR. LOCKWOOD: Sean Lockwood, 1213
4 Providence Road in Scranton. I have two
5 issues, one for the change that has --
6 change the number of apprentices a master
7 could supervisor from three to four
8 apprentices, I believe the state ratio is
9 actually four journeymen to one apprentice
10 so I don't know if that's legal that you can
11 actually change that.

12 Also, as far as the electrical
13 licensing to lower the standards, inspectors
14 don't see everything, they can't see through
15 walls, you know, and you got people even
16 with swimming pools in your backyard go out
17 and wire them, people jump in that pool
18 before they are inspected. They are filled
19 with water. I personally, I wouldn't want
20 to be the first guy in that pool. I don't
21 want to take that chance.

22 Fires, people mentioned deaths, you
23 could also be electrocuted, it doesn't only
24 have to be fire so it's something that I
25 hope you guys realize. Thank you.

1 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

2 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening, Council.
3 Dave Dobrzyn, resident. Okay. I guess I
4 would continue with the contractors. There
5 should be a convenient way of taking tests.
6 In the automotive industry there is ASE,
7 automotive service excellence, and some
8 factory training which is kind of a scam.
9 You have to be part of the click or
10 whatever, but at least with the ASE you can
11 sort of bypass the system and get a
12 verification there, but it's important that
13 people do know what they are doing when
14 they're -- I had a roof done and the owner
15 of the company I'm fine with, but his boys
16 left a big space that I could see the
17 daylight up along my chimney, some leak
18 repair, so it's just something that needs to
19 be considered.

20 Now, we pay \$34 million in back
21 wages to our police department and did
22 anybody see the Scranton Times? Mr. Quinn,
23 you will get points for this, fuel tax being
24 funneled off for townships that cancel and
25 layoff their police departments, and then

1 they are subsidized by the state police with
2 police coverage and most of those
3 departments or many of them, I lived up in
4 Susquehanna County, the only time they had
5 somebody on patrol was Friday and Saturday
6 night because they could whack you with a
7 \$3,000 fine for DUI because everybody wanted
8 to drink and drive or whatever, but even
9 those are being laid off and it's just
10 ashamed. I hope there is something that we
11 can look into doing something about it
12 because that, as far as I understand any
13 taxes collected for highway and fuels taxes
14 are supposed to be used by the constitution
15 of Pennsylvania for road repair and
16 construction.

17 And my dog is still barking about
18 that \$35 licensing fee. You know, he said
19 if it goes up to \$40 you can count on him,
20 he is coming over to water everybody's
21 flowers, so please no more with the \$40, \$35
22 dog licensing, it's not right.

23 And our audit, I hope things improve
24 this year with it and I think Joan pretty
25 much put it the way it needs to be and it's

1 really gotten worse every year as far as
2 delivering it. It used to be around
3 Christmas time so maybe we'll get a
4 Christmas present.

5 And once again on parks, I could say
6 I wish I would see swimming pools instead of
7 changing everything around. I wonder if
8 turning all of these parks into somebody
9 else would cost more than what it would
10 repair the swimming pool and we never did
11 get -- if we got a lifeguard training course
12 for summer a lot of these high school kids
13 getting out of high school and stuff could
14 serve as lifeguards and train maybe down at
15 Weston Field, and I don't know if they could
16 be indentured to work for you, but it
17 probably would be a good job for them.

18 On the trash, once again,
19 Mr. Bulzoni scored one with me the week
20 before last because his analysis pointed out
21 that fuel, trucks, wages, insurance, tipping
22 and inspections and maintenance and repair
23 take up a lot of the money that might save
24 to pick up one little bag, you know. We
25 have one little bag but if you really look

1 into it a lot of those other costs are
2 fixed.

3 And I did my good deed, started my
4 good deeds this spring, I caught two cats
5 and had them neutered in my neighborhood and
6 caught them live and please support St.
7 Cats.

8 And keep in mind on the river with
9 that storm water situation, that card I gave
10 you that person spelled out in a half hour
11 in the parking lot everything that you would
12 need to know and so if you could get him in
13 here to talk about it, it could clear up a
14 lot of misunderstandings or whatever. Thank
15 you and have a good night.

16 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening,
17 Council. Marie Schumacher. A couple of
18 quick questions and then some comments, were
19 the three years of the landfill abatement,
20 2013 through 2015 or were they 2014 through
21 2016? The audit of 2014 shows that there is
22 \$598,290 remaining in the refuse debt so I
23 believe 2015 is a little -- other checking I
24 did 2016 was the last year of that
25 abatement.

1 MR. EVANS: Yes.

2 MS. SCHUMACHER: And then how much
3 of the 2016 TAN was used to repay the money
4 that was borrowed to make the borrowing --
5 the full MMO payment last December?

6 MR. EVANS: We'll find out.

7 MS. SCHUMACHER: And this is a third
8 try at asking about -- asking this body to
9 write a letter to the business administrator
10 saying what we really need from MUNI
11 Services is actuals for every line item of
12 the budget every month so we know what's
13 going on and I would hope someone would take
14 that on very, very soon.

15 Third, the Times-Tribune article on
16 the receipt of the 2014 audit states that
17 the 2015 audit is expected by the end of the
18 year. This is unacceptable. It is needed
19 in time for the 2017 budget review and
20 approval cycle so I hope you have started to
21 try to determine whose fault it was that
22 this hasn't been done now, that the 2014 is
23 so late and either find a way to fix it
24 before so we have it by September.

25 And now onto the mayor's statement

1 on settling the police and fire judgments.
2 Mayor Courtright said that, "The City of
3 Scranton is finally putting behind --
4 putting one of it's worse financial legacies
5 behind it."

6 Really? Is it only me that thinks
7 me -- I mean, it's a good thing that that is
8 done, but it will not be put behind us, it's
9 going to be put out in front of us for 20 or
10 30 years and our children and maybe
11 grandchildren will repaying that borrowing
12 for what has been done. It is definitely
13 not behind us. Then he goes on to say, Once
14 and for all in doing away with the
15 administration's police and fire union that
16 paid judgment that threatened to skyrocket
17 taxes," I think that's already happened and
18 I think it will continue to happen because
19 we are now going to have 30 odd some million
20 dollars worth of borrowing, so I don't see
21 how that his comment has any validity.

22 Onto the next, "It will -- it has
23 not been destabilizing --" "And the
24 destabilizing of our budget."

25 Stability is not really the budget

1 issue, our budget has been pretty stable for
2 a lot of years and we end up in the hole
3 every year. Balance is the budget issue and
4 that's why I want you to start watching
5 every penny that's spent and we know about
6 it and don't have to wait for two years to
7 find out how badly we did.

8 Then the next one is that our assets
9 threaten now to skyrocket and then to have
10 our assets sold out from under us. Well,
11 our assets are being sold out from under us.
12 Didn't Mayor Courtright himself decide it
13 sell our biggest asset and coincidentally
14 create a big liability in regard to the
15 storm water management?

16 And then the final one in that chain
17 was drive our city into bankruptcy. That's
18 supposedly what this saves us from. There
19 is no guarantee that our city will not end
20 up in bankruptcy unless, of course,
21 receivership is being considered a separate
22 status.

23 Then moving on down, "Today, more
24 than two years in my administration's
25 constant work we are announcing that a

1 liability amounting to more than a quarter
2 of the City's budget is finally off our
3 back."

4 Again, it's sort of the same as the
5 last one, it is a true liability amounting
6 to more than a quarter of our City's budget
7 is finally off our back. I don't think so.
8 We are now having debt instead of -- the
9 only thing that's changed is that we are not
10 collecting or accruing more interest at
11 \$100,000 a month and I will finish up this
12 analysis next week. Thank you.

13 MR. WECHSLER: Is there anyone else
14 who would like to address council?

15 MR. ELLMAN: Hello, Council. I'm
16 still in my no fighting rules. Did anybody
17 inquire about my question about benefits for
18 Amoroso?

19 MR. GAUGHAN: I didn't inquire
20 because there are no benefits for him. He
21 is not an employee of the city.

22 MR. ELLMAN: Okay. In today's paper
23 Mr. Bulzoni relates that the audit needs to
24 be as early as possible because being late
25 results in difficulty to obtain financing

1 and favorable interest rates or terms. What
2 about his not paying taxes? To me, that
3 causes plenty of difficulties, too.

4 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Ellman, Mr.
5 Bulzoni pays the city wage tax.

6 MR. ELLMAN: He what?

7 MR. WECHSLER: He pays the city wage
8 tax.

9 MR. ELLMAN: Wage tax, nothing like
10 my property taxes and my school taxes, is
11 there?

12 MR. WECHSLER: So you are incorrect.
13 He does pay wage tax.

14 MR. ELLMAN: To me that's just -- he
15 doesn't have any business in the city
16 because he doesn't participate in paying
17 taxes, but we've already gone over that.
18 I'm not going to fight with you anyway.

19 Last week Keystone Community
20 Resources took a house off the tax rolls, a
21 \$350,000 piece of property. How many people
22 have to pay house taxes to cover that not
23 just this year forever? When is this going
24 to end? The week before, the Cancer Society
25 took a house off for \$125,000, and I'm not

1 bit, about the friends of Lackawanna County
2 wanting us to join their fight, again, I'm
3 asking you to stay out of this fight, our
4 garbage rates have doubled. This reminds me
5 many years ago in Memphis they built all
6 around the airport then these people wanted
7 the airport closed and it's the same thing,
8 I think it was Sedwick (ph) brought all of
9 that cheap slag pile around the landfill and
10 built those houses now they are complaining.
11 I remember -- I don't know if any of you
12 were there but I used to take my kids up and
13 Dunmore to ride their scooter behind the
14 Turnpike Garage at the end of the street.
15 There was slag piles and that's what they
16 built on and the landfill was across the
17 street, it didn't just open. This is a bad
18 situation I know, but they are after the
19 wrong people and I think we ought to keep
20 out of it.

21 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr.

22 Ellman. Thank you.

23 MR. ELLMAN: You know, to me this
24 city is just composed of the best damn
25 people you could find anywhere. They just

1 don't come no better than the people in this
2 city. I have told you many times I'm here
3 by choice, I don't have to be here like some
4 people born here and just never left.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you,
6 Mr. Ellman.

7 MR. ELLMAN: But you people --

8 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Ellman --

9 MR. ELLMAN: -- you're not doing the
10 best job for these people out there that put
11 you in those seats.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you,
13 Mr. Ellman.

14 MR. ELLMAN: Thank you.

15 MR. REEDY: Good evening, Gentlemen.
16 My name is Nick Reedy, I'm a Scranton
17 resident, IBEW employee. I want to have you
18 vote "no" for the licensing, to change the
19 license. I came up through the years of
20 '69, 70's when you had no standards then and
21 when you got back to the standards I think
22 it was back in '81 that you got rid of all
23 of that shenanigans that was going on with
24 all of the wiring that was going though and
25 that was a good choice and we made -- me and

1 my brother went down and got our license so
2 we can work in the city and I think it's a
3 bad idea that you guys to do that because I
4 saw the shenanigans that were going back
5 then and we were complaining about what we
6 saw and we seen. The guys tap out knob and
7 tubing. Come on. You are not -- guys are
8 just going to get all of the shenanigans
9 back again? I have been doing this work a
10 long time. I'm 60 years old, I have been
11 doing electrical work for a long time and I
12 do it right. I work for a lot of these
13 companies that are here, Liber, Noto and
14 Avarone and there is a lot of companies and
15 we do it right. We come up and make them do
16 it right and make their job safe for
17 everybody. I don't want to see our city
18 going back down to what we did in the early
19 70's so I'd like to see you vote "no" for
20 the lowering of standard of the electrical
21 license. Thank you.

22 MR. JONES: Bruce Jones, McDonough
23 Avenue, Scranton, PA. I'd just like to say
24 on the proposed ordinance change for the
25 licensing I agree with it just for the

1 safety and quality aspects, especially a
2 contractor working with air conditioning and
3 refrigeration the gases are very deadly and
4 dangerous and I don't agree with it. Thank
5 you.

6 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you. Is there
7 anyone else?

8 MS. REED: 5-A. MOTIONS.

9 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Perry, do you
10 have any motions for comments this evening?

11 MR. PERRY: No, I'll reserve my
12 comments for the time to vote.

13 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you. Mr.
14 Rogan?

15 MR. ROGAN: Yes, just a couple of
16 comments and I'll also speak on the agenda
17 items as they come up to vote. Two items
18 briefly, one that was mentioned from a few
19 of the speakers regarding the Supreme Court
20 award regarding our police and fire,
21 unfortunately, we were left with a bad
22 situation from the previous mayor. He chose
23 to fight our police and firefighters instead
24 of negotiating and making a deal and you saw
25 what happened. Unfortunately now, we have

1 to deal with Mayor Doherty's legacy, this
2 tens of millions of dollars as was noted
3 added debt to the city's books. Luckily,
4 once it is paid out we will stop paying that
5 \$100,000 a month in interest. I know for
6 myself I'm interested, I know this week we
7 are hoping to get more details on what
8 exactly the settlement is, but I know since
9 day one that the police and fire unions have
10 given quite a bit back to the city. I
11 believe the initial award was \$48 million
12 and they agreed to cut that in half to \$24
13 million, and from the sounds of it there
14 were further negotiations which we haven't
15 been made aware of that the bodies have to
16 vote so I'm looking forward to seeing the
17 final deal, and as was mentioned, get this
18 monkey off our back, get it paid off and
19 move forward.

20 Secondly, in our caucus I know a
21 number of us on council were contacted by
22 concerned residents regarding issues of
23 speeders near school bus stops and in
24 particular when the bus stops that the drop
25 off children and cars were going around so a

1 few years ago there were some programs
2 batted around to put cameras on these buses.
3 Now, obviously, the city doesn't control the
4 school buses, that's done through the school
5 district, but one of the programs is similar
6 to if you see red light cameras on streets
7 not in Scranton, we don't have them, but a
8 lot of larger cities did or if somebody runs
9 through a red light they get a ticket in the
10 mail. I'm not advocating for that, but what
11 I am advocating for is a similar program
12 which has been done in other places across
13 the country to put cameras on the buses to
14 activate when the stop sign opens up, and if
15 were somebody to pass that stop sign they
16 would be recorded and ticketed. I think
17 that would go a long way to help resolve
18 this problem so people are aware, you know,
19 that you can't go around a school bus. When
20 you take a driver's license exam that's the
21 first thing that they teach you, that you
22 can't go around a school bus.

23 So, Mrs. Reed, if you would could
24 send a letter to the school district asking
25 maybe set up a meeting between a couple of

1 members of council and somebody from the
2 board to look into an intergovernmental
3 cooperation on that. Obviously, the actual
4 putting the cameras on the buses would have
5 to be done by the district but the ticketing
6 end would have to be done through the city. I
7 think it's something we definitely need to
8 explore for the safety of the children
9 within our city and I would like to thank
10 our police department for their quick
11 response. There was an incident at a school
12 bus stop last week and one of the parents
13 was able to get the license plate number of
14 the person who almost caused a fatality.
15 Luckily everyone was spared, but the police
16 department did respond quickly and I believe
17 the person was cited so great job for them
18 on that.

19 And I will comment on the agenda
20 items as they come up. I would like to wish
21 everyone a happy St. Patrick's Day tomorrow
22 and wish my mom a happy birthday. My mom
23 was born on St. Patrick's Day. That is all.
24 Thank you.

25 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you. Mr.

1 Evans.

2 MR. EVANS: Very brief comments. On
3 the award settlement, of course, the devil
4 is in the details and I'm going to wait
5 until the rank and file has had an
6 opportunity to vote on this and when council
7 gets an opportunity to comment we will have
8 something in front of us and at that time I
9 will have plenty to say on that issue.

10 On the Novembrino pool, my
11 understanding is that the neighbors and the
12 residents and the neighborhood leaders from
13 West Side do not want the pool opened. They
14 prefer the concept of a splash park.
15 Sometimes, you know, some of the commentary
16 here kind of likes to tell people how to
17 think, but the reality is after listening to
18 the neighbors that's what they want, that's
19 what the leaders want and that's what we're
20 going to go with at this time.

21 Another speaker mentioned taxing the
22 properties that are being purchased by
23 nonprofits and immediately taken off the tax
24 rolls. I will say during my brief stint as
25 the director of the Assessment Office I

1 instituted a policy that when a property was
2 sold no matter who the owner was it was made
3 taxable. And if the entity was a taxable
4 property they had to come into the
5 Assessor's Office and prove why that
6 property should be taken off the tax rolls.
7 Shortly after I left the policy reverted
8 back to what it was before, which is the
9 current policy is when somebody buys a tax
10 exempt property and they are a known
11 non-exempt or non-profit they are
12 immediately taken off the tax rolls, so it's
13 a very simple fix. Maybe something we could
14 talk to the county about it, we are going to
15 have meetings with them on our tax abatement
16 program and it will be something I bring up
17 with them at that time.

18 For now, that's all I have.

19 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

20 Mr. Gaughan?

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, thank you, just a
22 few items. First, I received this week a
23 number of the complaints about mac or
24 potholes in the 3,000 block of Colliery
25 Avenue so the office sent that request to

1 the DPW. On the issue of the award
2 settlement, I am also going to be waiting to
3 hear more details on it. The mayor, as we
4 know, issued a press release late Friday
5 night that a settlement was reached,
6 however, it was short on details. I know
7 that the bargaining unit still have to
8 approve the settlement, but I'm not sure why
9 the mayor would jump to issue a press
10 release without everything be finalized. I
11 have do have many questions that hopefully
12 will be answered in the next few weeks.

13 We did talk in the caucus about
14 legislation that we are working on for the
15 Young Lungs Program in conjunction with the
16 American Lung Association. This legislation
17 would ban smoking in outdoor parks
18 throughout the city where children are at
19 play and the American Lung Association will
20 put up signage at no cost to the city in all
21 of the parks.

22 I did have a chance last week to
23 speak with George Kelly from Lackawanna
24 County Economic and Community Development
25 Office regarding the countywide land bank

1 initiative. They are having monthly
2 meetings, they are getting up and running
3 and we are waiting for an intergovernmental
4 cooperation agreement from them so I look
5 forward to seeing that and getting that
6 squared away. And other than that, I will
7 hold my comments until motions -- until the
8 legislation. Thank you.

9 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you,
10 Mr. Gaughan. Very briefly, just to echo
11 Mr. Evans' comments about the Novembrino
12 pool, the Novembrino pool complex did become
13 a problem with the neighbors. It was a
14 center for a lot of police activity,
15 unnecessary police activity because it was
16 meant to be a swimming complex and not a
17 hang out. In regards to the splash park,
18 the splash park offers a lower maintenance.
19 It also does not offer as an attraction to
20 the elements that were at the park
21 previously.

22 One of the speakers talked about
23 lifeguards. Last week I spoke to Parks
24 director Brian Fallon and tried to get his
25 interest in a program that we could do

1 combined with the Scranton School District.
2 One of the problems with the summer pools is
3 the lifeguard program. Mr. Fallon and I
4 discussed the possibility of establishing a
5 program, including the school district,
6 where lifeguarding would be taught as an
7 elective in the gym class. The city seniors
8 both have access swimming pools at both high
9 schools and it this would also be an
10 opportunity for as they graduate with the
11 increase in the amount of water parks in the
12 area, including Montage and the ones that
13 have been built in the Poconos, and also
14 within our swimming pools I think it would
15 be a great opportunity to provide children
16 coming out of school with their certificate.

17 To touch on some of the comments
18 that were made about the audit, it was me
19 that made those comments. I do have my
20 degree from the University of Scranton, but
21 I only have six credits in accounting and
22 that's what I have. I do believe that
23 allows me to read the audit, but I'm also
24 interested in besides having it dropped in
25 our office, I believe there should be an

1 exit interview either by Mr. Bulzoni or
2 someone from the administration or from the
3 company that prepared the audit. Dropping
4 it off in my mailbox and having me read it I
5 think does a disservice. I should be
6 explained the findings in the audit so I
7 could deal with them also, and if I don't
8 get that from anyone here, I will seek help
9 outside of city hall because I do agree with
10 the importance of the audit. And that's all
11 I have for now.

12 MS. REED: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION -
13 AN ORDINANCE - DEDICATING THE GAZEBO LOCATED
14 IN CONNORS PARK, 515 ORCHARD STREET IN SOUTH
15 SCRANTON IN HONOR OF ROBERT E. MCGOFF, JR.

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

19 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

20 MR. EVANS: Second.

21 MR. WECHSLER: On the question?

22 MR. EVANS: On the question, first
23 of all it's very appropriate that this
24 legislation is introduced one day before St.
25 Patrick's Day. We all know how much Bob

1 loved his Irish heritage, and I would like
2 to personally thank the Friends of Connors
3 Park for thinking of our colleague Bob
4 McGoff and honoring him in such a thoughtful
5 way. That's all I have.

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question,
7 I would like to say this is a much deserved
8 honor for our former colleague Mr. McGoff,
9 who we all miss very dearly. Thank you.

10 MR. ROGAN: I would agree with my
11 what colleagues mentioned and, Bob, I know
12 you are watching us and I apologize, I
13 forgot to wear my green tie the day before
14 St. Patrick's Day, but I will have it on
15 tomorrow, and I know Councilmen Evans
16 mentioned, there is also going be a 5-K
17 walk/run in honor of Bob McGoff, and I'm not
18 a runner, as you can tell I'm not in the
19 best of shape, but I think the walk element
20 of that might be something that we can all
21 do. Thank you.

22 MR. PERRY: Yes, on the question.
23 When Connors Park was raising money my
24 family donated a brick with our family's
25 name on it and it's an absolute honor to

1 know that, you know, that's going to be part
2 of the pathway leading to Mr. McGoff's
3 gazebo, and I think it's a great thing for
4 South Side, for Scranton and for the McGoff
5 family.

6 MR. WECHSLER: Yes, I'll finish it
7 up. I agree with my colleagues' statements,
8 we all know Mr. McGoff's love of Connors
9 Park. The gazebo will be an integral part
10 of that and I would also like to thank Mr.
11 McGoff and former council president Bill
12 Gerrity for the fine weather that they gave
13 us for the parade on Saturday. So the two
14 council presidents in heaven did a fine job
15 for us.

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

18 MR. PERRY: Aye.

19 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

20 MR. EVANS: Aye.

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

22 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The
23 ayes have it and so moved.

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

1 NO. 165, 2003, AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED
2 "REGULATING THE PLANTING, MAINTENANCE AND
3 REMOVAL OF TREES ALONG STREETS, HIGHWAYS,
4 AVENUES, LANES, ALLEYS AND PUBLIC PARKS AND
5 PLACES WITHIN THE CITY OF SCRANTON,
6 INCLUDING PRIVATE PROPERTIES" BY AMENDING
7 SECTION IV PERTAINING TO THE LICENSING OF
8 VENDORS OF TREE SERVICES, CHANGING THE TITLE
9 OF SECTION IV, DELETING THE LICENSING FEE,
10 ADDING REGISTRATION INFORMATION REQUIRING
11 APPLICABLE PERSONS, FIRMS AND CORPORATIONS
12 BE REGISTERED WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S
13 OFFICE AND ADDING WORKER'S COMPENSATION
14 INSURANCE.

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

18 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

19 MR. EVANS: Second.

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

23 MR. PERRY: Aye.

24 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

25 MR. EVANS: Aye.

1 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

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

4 MS. REED: 5-D. FOR INTRODUCTION - A
5 RESOLUTION - RE-APPOINTMENT OF MARIO
6 SAVINELLI, 500 NORTH CAMERON AVENUE,
7 SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA, 18504, AS A MEMBER
8 OF THE BOARD OF THE SCRANTON REDEVELOPMENT
9 AUTHORITY FOR AN ADDITIONAL FIVE (5) YEAR
10 TERM. MR. SAVINELLI'S CURRENT TERM EXPIRED
11 ON FEBRUARY 4, 2016. HIS NEW TERM WILL BE
12 EFFECTIVE MARCH 4, 2016 AND WILL EXPIRE ON
13 FEBRUARY 4, 2021.

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

17 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

18 MR. EVANS: Second.

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

22 MR. PERRY: Aye.

23 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

24 MR. EVANS: Aye.

25 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

1 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The
2 ayes have it and so moved.

3 MS. REED: SIXTH ORDER. 6-A.
4 READING BY TITLE - FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
5 13, 2016- AN ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF
6 THE COUNCIL NO. 126, 2015, AN ORDINANCE
7 ENTITLED "GENERAL CITY OPERATING BUDGET
8 2016" BY TRANSFERRING \$10,000.00 FROM
9 ACCOUNT NO. 01.080.00083.4550 (DPW BUREAU OF
10 HIGHWAYS CAPITAL EXPENDITURES) TO ACCOUNT
11 NO. 01.041.10110.4299 (NON-DEPARTMENTAL
12 SHADE TREE COMMISSION) TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT
13 FUNDING FOR CLEARING OF STUMPS.

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

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

18 MR. EVANS: Second.

19 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All
20 those in favor signify by saying aye.

21 MR. PERRY: Aye.

22 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

23 MR. EVANS: Aye.

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

25 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The

1 ayes have it and so moved.

2 MS. REED: 6-B. READING BY TITLE -
3 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 14, 2016 - AN
4 ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
5 126, 2015, AN ORDINANCE "ENTITLED GENERAL
6 CITY OPERATING BUDGET 2016" BY CREATING A
7 NEW REVENUE ACCOUNT NO. 01.380.38004 PA
8 LIQUOR CONTROL BOARD LICENSE FEES.

9 MR. WECHSLER: You've heard reading
10 by title of Item 6-B, what is your pleasure?

11 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Chairman, I move
12 that Item 6-B pass reading by title.

13 MR. EVANS: Second.

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

16 MR. PERRY: Aye.

17 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

18 MR. EVANS: Aye.

19 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

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

22 MS. REED: 6-C. READING BY TITLE -
23 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 15, 2016 - AN
24 ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
25 126, 2015, AN ORDINANCE "ENTITLED GENERAL

1 CITY OPERATING BUDGET 2016" BY CREATING A
2 NEW EXPENSE ACCOUNT NO. 01.080.00083.4370
3 TRAFFIC SIGN ACQUISITIONS.

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

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

8 MR. EVANS: Second.

9 MR. WECHSLER: On the question?
10 Yes, on the question for myself, this is
11 something that we put together with the
12 administration quite quickly. The money
13 came in from the Pennsylvania Liquor Control
14 Board and we are setting it up in the
15 programs to purchase those new stop signs
16 for the city and it was something that was
17 handled quite effectively. Thank you.

18 All those in favor signify by saying
19 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: 6-D. READING BY TITLE -
2 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 16, 2016 - AN
3 ORDINANCE - ESTABLISHING PERMIT PARKING ON
4 THE WESTERN (ODD) SIDE OF THE 500 BLOCK OF
5 CLAY AVENUE FROM 523 TO 543 CLAY AVENUE.

6 MR. WECHSLER: You've heard reading
7 by title of Item 6-D what is your pleasure?

8 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Chairman, I move
9 that Item 6-D pass reading by title.

10 MR. EVANS: Second.

11 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All
12 those in favor signify by saying aye.

13 MR. PERRY: Aye.

14 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

15 MR. EVANS: Aye.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

17 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The
18 ayes have it and so moved.

19 MS. REED: SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A. FOR
20 CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
21 FOR ADOPTION RESOLUTION NO. 14, 2016
22 ACCEPTING A TWO HUNDRED FIFTY (\$250.00)
23 DOLLAR DONATION FROM PROVIDENCE VETERANS
24 MEMORIAL VFW POST 5209 PRESENTED TO THE CITY
25 OF SCRANTON POLICE DEPARTMENT FOR THE K-9

1 UNIT.

2 MR. WECHSLER: What is the
3 recommendation of the Chairperson for the
4 Committee on Finance?

5 MR. EVANS: As Chairperson for the
6 Committee on Finance, I recommend final
7 passage of Item 7-A.

8 MR. ROGAN: Second.

9 MR. WECHSLER: On the question?
10 Roll call, please?

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

12 MR. PERRY: Yes.

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

14 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

16 MR. EVANS: Yes.

17 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

18 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

19 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

20 MR. WECHSLER: Yes. I hereby
21 declare Item 7-A legally and lawfully
22 adopted.

23 MS. REED: 7-B. FOR CONSIDERATION
24 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE FOR ADOPTION
25 RESOLUTION NO. 15, 2016 - ACCEPTING A SEVEN

1 THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED (\$7,500.00) DOLLAR
2 DONATION FROM TOYOTA OF SCRANTON PRESENTED
3 TO THE CITY OF SCRANTON POLICE DEPARTMENT TO
4 PURCHASE A DOG TO REPLACE THE DOG RETIRING
5 FROM THE K-9 UNIT.

6 MR. WECHSLER: What is the
7 recommendation of the Chairperson for the
8 Committee on Finance?

9 MR. EVANS: As Chairperson for the
10 Committee on Finance, I recommend final
11 passage of Item 7-B.

12 MR. ROGAN: Second.

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

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

16 MR. PERRY: Yes.

17 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

18 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

19 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

20 MR. EVANS: Yes.

21 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

23 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

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

1 adopted.

2 MS. REED: 7-C, PREVIOUSLY TABLED -
3 FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES
4 - FOR ADOPTION - FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 10.
5 2016, REPEALING FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 52,
6 2006, AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED - "AMENDING FILE
7 OF THE COUNCIL NO. 155, 1999 TO CHANGE THE
8 REQUIREMENTS FOR TAKING THE MASTER
9 ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR'S LICENSE EXAM AND TO
10 CHANGE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR TAKING THE
11 MASTER PLUMBERS LICENSE EXAM."

12 MR. WECHSLER: As Chairperson for
13 the Committee on Rules, I recommend a final
14 vote on Item 7-C.

15 MR. ROGAN: Second.

16 MR. WECHSLER: On the question?

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question.
18 I'll be voting against this legislation
19 tonight. I am disappointed that Mayor
20 Courtright and his administration would even
21 consider lowering the standards to do
22 electrical work in this city. I don't
23 believe that we can sacrifice the safety of
24 our residents in order for convenience or
25 making things easier.

1 In the legislation, the mayor has
2 added an alternate means to attain a master
3 license in the city because some people are
4 poor test takers. This is one of the most
5 absurd things that I have ever seen since I
6 have been on city council. As a gentlemen
7 mentioned tonight, would anyone trust a
8 surgeon to operate on them if they found out
9 that they couldn't pass their licensing test
10 but the hospital decided to let some friends
11 write letters of recommendation for them
12 because they were poor test takers? I
13 Wouldn't. Would anyone want their child in
14 a classroom with a teacher who couldn't pass
15 their licensing test? I wouldn't.

16 This legislation, in my opinion, is
17 a slippery slope. If we start here by
18 lowering the standards what's next? Where
19 else will we end up lowering the standards?
20 In this legislation the mayor is advocating
21 the Plumbing, Mechanical and Electrical Code
22 Advisory Board be eliminated because the
23 Board hasn't been utilized in ten years.
24 Whose fault is that? In speaking to some
25 people who were on this Board, I don't

1 believe that that statement is true, that it
2 has not been utilized in ten years. It
3 would be up to the administration to make
4 sure that the Board is utilized.

5 It also says that time and oversight
6 of the Board would be difficult to manage,
7 which I don't believe. I'm not sure in this
8 building that you could find enough people
9 with time on their hands to perform this
10 duty.

11 I strongly believe that we should
12 have qualified licensed men and women
13 performing work in this city. We should not
14 lower our standards for something that has
15 this great an impact on the safety of the
16 public, and I would urge my colleagues to
17 vote against this legislation and if it
18 passes tonight I would urge Mayor Courtright
19 to reconsider and veto this legislation
20 should it pass. Thank you.

21 MR. EVANS: On the question, I will
22 take a slightly different perspective of
23 this, for the record, I appreciate Director
24 Hinton's efforts to streamline and enhance
25 the contractor licensing process and I also

1 appreciate the lobbying efforts of the IBEW
2 and their comments as well as the comments
3 from the independent electrical contractors
4 but I am confident that this legislation
5 will not only create a better climate for
6 contractors in the city it will also
7 increase the competition as it is ultimately
8 good for the consumer and those consumers
9 happen to be citizens and property owners of
10 Scranton so I will continue to support
11 initiatives like this that would promote an
12 open market place for services.

13 I feel the city guidelines for
14 licensing in the city are still competitive
15 and comprehensive with other cities of our
16 size throughout the Commonwealth.

17 Additionally, through the use of a
18 third party inspection service I'm confident
19 that permitted work in the city will be safe
20 and done perfectly or properly for all of
21 our residents. But with that said, because
22 of the dialogue concerning this ordinance I
23 believe there are several issues worth
24 exploring outside of this ordinance that may
25 require further study or discussion. I

1 think there should be discussion on
2 developing a residential property only
3 electrical test since most of the properties
4 in the city consist of older, residential
5 housing style.

6 I also urge the administration to
7 list licensed contractor in the city on the
8 city website. This will differentiate
9 licensed and unlicensed contractors
10 operating in the city and give our citizens
11 a valuable resource to review when choosing
12 a contractor. I would also like to explore
13 a more competitive environment for third
14 party inspections and a rate structure for
15 those services, and finally, I would like to
16 see possibly through additional legislation
17 that all licensed contractors in the city be
18 required to put their names and city license
19 numbers on their work vehicles. This would
20 help the License and Inspections Department
21 identify work being done by non-licensed
22 contractors in the city and also continue to
23 differentiate licensed and unlicensed
24 contractors for the property owner hiring
25 contractors working on their properties.

1 That's all I have on the matter at this
2 time.

3 MR. ROGAN: I have a number of
4 comments and I guess I'm not going to make
5 any friends tonight. I know a lot of you
6 out there, unfortunately, we're on the
7 opposite side of this issue. From day one
8 when I first read this legislation I
9 believed it was a good thing for the City of
10 Scranton to open competition and to make it
11 more -- make the city more business friendly
12 not only for contractors who are looking to
13 do work in the city but more importantly for
14 the residents in the City of Scranton that
15 often times have a hard time getting
16 contractors that can do work in the City of
17 Scranton or who are willing to do work in
18 the City of Scranton.

19 Before I get into my comments, I do
20 want to read a section that I believe I read
21 last week, this is right out of the
22 legislation, no interpretation added to
23 this. This is the requirement for the
24 journeyman's license. "The applicant must
25 produce their W-2 forms for four years of

1 employment under a master contractor. In a
2 case where W-2 forms cannot be provided,
3 field experience along with letters of
4 recommendation shall substitute. Letters of
5 recommendation shall include two letters
6 from licensed contractors that they worked
7 under, three customers that they performed
8 work for, and a letter of recommendation
9 from a contractor in another field. All
10 recommendations shall be notarized."

11 The second part is, "After
12 successfully passing the proper examination
13 or the submission of a certificate of
14 completion or diploma from an accredited
15 trade school and a letter of recommendation
16 from the applicant's internship and employer
17 the applicant shall be granted a
18 journeyman's license."

19 Now, it's not as easy as some may
20 say to get a license under these new
21 regulations. There still are many criteria
22 that need to be met. Myself or any of my
23 colleagues up here that don't work in the
24 trades can't go out tomorrow and open up
25 shop as an electrician or a plumber or any

1 of these trades.

2 A couple of other items that were
3 brought up tonight and some that weren't,
4 the issue of public safety has been brought
5 up numerous times and there isn't anybody on
6 this board that talks about public safety
7 more than myself. The newspaper often
8 criticizes me for being too close to the
9 public safety unions within the city, but I
10 support public safety. Throughout this
11 process not one firefighter in the City of
12 Scranton has contacted me to ask me to
13 oppose this legislation and I'm friends with
14 a large number of them.

15 Also, tonight we heard from another
16 electrician who said he has been doing
17 electrical work for 14 years but can't get
18 licensed in the City of Scranton. Now, I
19 would let somebody work on my house that has
20 been licensed in another city and has been
21 doing work for 14 years and our legislation
22 requires four years of prior employment
23 under a master contractor. For the
24 residents out there, think of being in a
25 position for four years, would you consider

1 yourself new after four years on the job?
2 And not only four years on the job but
3 having to complete proper examinations or
4 the submission of a certificate of diploma
5 from an accredited trade school in addition.

6 In addition, the final item which
7 has been mentioned is the third party
8 inspections. All electrical work that is
9 permitted and done properly through the city
10 needs to have a third party inspection.
11 It's not myself or another -- somebody else
12 in the government doing the inspection, this
13 is a third party independent person who is
14 checking this work to see if it's done
15 properly. That is a very good safeguard and
16 that's something that I don't think anyone
17 on the board would propose eliminating.

18 Because of all of those items, I
19 agree with my colleague, Councilmen Evans,
20 and Director Hinton, that we need to open up
21 our licensing process to make the playing
22 field more fair to other contractors. I
23 have had a number, through the last five
24 years I have been on council, of people who
25 want to do work in the City of Scranton who

1 are working in other towns, they want to
2 come here and to work but because of the
3 reputation the City of Scranton has of not
4 being business friendly and having such a
5 big government and big bureaucracy that they
6 can't get licensed, they can't come in and
7 do the work they want to do and a lot of
8 times when they do they get harassed, in
9 their opinion, by some inspectors, and the
10 inspectors serve a good purpose, but the
11 City of Scranton does not have a good
12 reputation in regards to these matters
13 within the public and within the community
14 at large.

15 I believe that this legislation is a
16 good first step. There are other items that
17 can be done. Councilmen Evans mentioned
18 some of them, I would like to see a list of
19 all of the licensed contractors in the city
20 put on the city's website as well not only
21 so the city -- so people can check to see if
22 the contractor they are calling is licensed,
23 but also to give the licensed contractors
24 the recognition they deserve unlike many of
25 them that are doing work on nights and

1 weekends unregulated without pulling permits
2 within the City of Scranton, and anyone that
3 lives in the city knows there is a ton of
4 unlicensed work being done in the City of
5 Scranton after hours and on the weekends.
6 There is not one person that can deny that.

7 Because of all those items, I will
8 be voting "yes" for this legislation and I
9 do believe it will be a good step towards
10 making Scranton more business friendly and
11 getting more competition for the residents
12 who did need these services.

13 MR. WECHSLER: Just for some of the
14 reasons that Councilman Rogan just mentioned
15 is one of the reason I will be voting
16 against this legislation this evening. When
17 I took a look at the initial qualifications
18 for demonstrating proficiency, the issue of
19 evaluating W-2's and references and things
20 like that just came to me something that's
21 going to be very difficult to demonstrate.
22 I'm sure that there are people that would be
23 able to meet that requirement, but I think
24 there may be more that are not. To echo the
25 fact that people may be poor test takers I

1 don't think is an acceptable reason to
2 provide them with the ability to do work in
3 the city.

4 Also, when I first heard about this
5 ordinance I thought it would have to do more
6 with commercial work than residential work.
7 Some of the things that were brought to my
8 attention is there is some larger projects
9 that are beginning in the city and some of
10 the selected contractors can't work in the
11 city because they don't have licenses.
12 That's a totally different issue. Here we
13 are talking about residential work that has
14 to be done properly in order to prevent any
15 major safety hazards.

16 I also believe that the boards
17 should be reappointed. One thing that I
18 learned during this process is that the
19 expertise is here to provide training and
20 also to provide accurate testing and
21 qualifications of the members, but once
22 again as we went through this process that
23 we started early in January to make sure we
24 could get all of the information that we
25 could get and to echo some of the sentiments

1 that Mr. Evans has made, and even speaking
2 with the members of the professional group
3 here, we think there should be something
4 that we can develop residential
5 qualifications, but right now that test is
6 not exist nationally so there really isn't
7 anything that Scranton can do to make a
8 residential journeymen license because the
9 test does not exist nationally.

10 I understand some of the concerns
11 that were mentioned, finding qualified
12 workers to come to your home is difficult.
13 Some jobs are too small, some jobs are
14 sometimes too big, and people aren't
15 interested in doing them, but basically for
16 me as we went through this I haven't seen
17 the need demonstrated to upset the process
18 that's in place right now. Thank you.

19 MR. PERRY: Yes, on the question. I
20 had many questions on this legislation. I
21 mean, my paper is marked to death. Every
22 copy I got I want to make sure -- I went out
23 and I found as much information as I could,
24 I wanted to make sure we are making the
25 right decision for the city.

1 I had two major questions with this,
2 proof of insurance and proof of competency.
3 Proof of insurance was an easy answer, the
4 general liability was \$500,000, personal was
5 a million dollars so that set my mind at
6 ease. I wouldn't want anybody working on
7 anybody's house without insurance. The
8 other one, proof of competency was something
9 else that I wanted to get in to deeper. You
10 know, there is lot of jargon, there is lot
11 of technical terms that, you know, I'm not
12 an electrician, I'm not a plumber, I'm a
13 restaurant manager so to me what's the
14 difference between a four-year journeyman, a
15 master electrician, if you can do the job
16 you can do the job. With that said, you
17 know, reading -- I think Pat already went
18 over this Section E, "After successfully
19 passing the proper examination or the
20 submission of a certificate of completion or
21 diploma from an accredited trade school and
22 a letter of recommendation from the
23 applicant's internship and employer the
24 applicant shall be granted a journeymen's
25 license."

1 So basically they went to school and
2 they passed. Now, while I understand that
3 sets a level of competency, but does it live
4 up to our standards? And that's a question
5 that I'm really asking. Does it live up to
6 our standards? All schools are different,
7 all certificates mean different things. I
8 know, you know, what's the harm of
9 administering a residential exam before
10 issuing a license? That was one thing that
11 stayed with me for the last couple of days.
12 I would like to know if we are going to give
13 someone a license to do work in the city
14 that they are up to our standards, and
15 that's something that I really, really feel
16 is important.

17 As Chair for Public Safety, I feel
18 that I have an obligation to make sure we
19 are acting as safe as possible. I'm looking
20 forward to this legislation coming back with
21 a test before we give them their license,
22 whether be a master, a journeyman, whatever,
23 again, if they can do the job they can do
24 the job. I'm going to vote "no" on this
25 tonight and that is for the sole reason that

1 I believe that we owe the citizens of the
2 Scranton a test that we administer before we
3 can give someone a license. I just don't
4 feel that a school certificate and four
5 years on the job is quite enough.

6 MR. GAUGHAN: On the question, I
7 would agree with Councilmen Perry and just
8 say that W-2's and letters they don't
9 replace the test. They also don't replace
10 -- I took a tour of the IBEW facility two
11 weeks ago. They don't replace five years of
12 school you have to go through. So, again, I
13 mean, I just don't understand this
14 legislation coming down to us, making things
15 easier but it's not making things safer.
16 So, again, that's while I'll be voting "no."

17 MR. WECHSLER: Anyone else? Roll
18 call, please?

19 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

20 MR. PERRY: No.

21 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

22 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

23 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

24 MR. EVANS: Yes.

25 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

1 MR. GAUGHAN: No.

2 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

3 MR. WECHSLER: No. I hereby declare
4 File of Council No. 10, 2016, defeated.

5 MS. REED: 7-D - PREVIOUSLY TABLED -
6 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 11, 2016 -
7 AN ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL
8 NO. 155, 1999 - AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED
9 "PROVIDING FOR THE LICENSING AND REGULATING
10 OF CONTRACTORS DOING BUSINESS IN THE CITY OF
11 SCRANTON INCLUDING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
12 GRANTING OF PERMITS AND FEES FOR SAME;
13 PROVIDING PENALTIES AND RIGHTS OF APPEAL" BY
14 ADDING AND DELETING DEFINITIONS, UPDATING
15 THE DEPARTMENT NAME AND DIRECTOR'S TITLE,
16 UPDATING APPLICATION FORMS, THE REQUIREMENTS
17 FOR CONTRACTORS LICENSE, LICENSE FEES,
18 ISSUANCE OF PERMITS, CONFORMANCE TO CODE,
19 REVOCATION, SUSPENSION, DENIAL, PROHIBITED
20 ACTS, STOP WORK, CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY
21 AND TEMPORARY CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY,
22 PERMIT FEES, INSPECTIONS, FINES FOR
23 VIOLATIONS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE AND
24 DELETION OF SECTIONS 17, 19, AND 22 IN THEIR
25 ENTIRETY.

1 MR. WECHSLER: As Chairperson for
2 the Committee on Rules, I recommend final
3 vote on Item 7-D.

4 MR. ROGAN: Second.

5 MR. WECHSLER: On the question?
6 Roll call, please?

7 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

8 MR. PERRY: No.

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

10 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

12 MR. EVANS: Yes.

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: No.

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

16 MR. WECHSLER: No. I hereby declare
17 File of Council No. 11, 2016 defeated.

18 MS. REED: 7-E - PREVIOUSLY TABLED -
19 FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES
20 - FOR ADOPTION - RESOLUTION NO. 11, 2016 -
21 APPOINTMENT OF JOSEPH SAMUEL COLBASSANI,
22 ESQUIRE - 1211 DIVISION STREET, SCRANTON,
23 PENNSYLVANIA, 18504, AS A MEMBER OF THE
24 MUNICIPAL INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
25 EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 24, 2016. ATTORNEY

1 COLBASSANI IS BEING APPOINTED TO A FIVE-YEAR
2 TERM THAT WILL EXPIRE ON FEBRUARY 24, 2021.

3 MR. WECHSLER: As Chairperson for
4 the Committee on Rules, I recommend final
5 passage of Item 7-E.

6 MR. ROGAN: Second.

7 MR. WECHSLER: On the question?
8 Roll call, please?

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

10 MR. PERRY: Yes.

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

12 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

14 MR. EVANS: Yes.

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

17 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

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

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

23 MR. ROGAN: Motion to adjourn.

24 MR. WECHSLER: Meeting adjourned.
25

C E R T I F I C A T E

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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