

SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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HELD:

Thursday, May 4, 2017

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, ESQUIRE - 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.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: I'd like to make a
15 motion that Scranton City Council invite the
16 Auditor General of the State of Pennsylvania
17 to conduct an independent audit of the sale
18 of the Scranton Sewer Authority to
19 Pennsylvania American Water.

20 MR. EVANS: Second.

21 MR. WECHSLER: There's a motion on
22 the floor and a second, on the question?

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question.
24 Transparency and openness have been missing
25 from this deal since it began more than a

1 year ago. I believe that a transaction of
2 this magnitude should be audited
3 independently as a matter of transparency.
4 A complete review of this transaction should
5 be performed to ensure that the financial
6 statements and transactions are accurate and
7 lawful.

8 I'm deeply concerned about the
9 expense of over \$3 million in legal fees.
10 As was reported in the news media, 50
11 lawyers and eight law firms were involved in
12 transaction. Some lawyers paid over \$800 an
13 hour, that's \$6,400 a day. If, as the news
14 media did, compare this to a place like
15 Limerick Township in Montgomery County who
16 sold it's Sewer Authority to Pennsylvania
17 American Water for nearly \$72 million, they
18 only had two law firms involved in this deal
19 with legal fees capped at over -- just over
20 \$200,000. The over \$3 million the Scranton
21 Sewer authority paid in legal fees is 15
22 times more than the \$200,000 paid by the
23 Limerick Sewer Authority.

24 . When I asked for a description of
25 what the 50 attorneys did for the millions

1 of dollars spent, I was sent invoices with
2 descriptions that were omitted because of
3 attorney/client privilege. I find this
4 completely absurd. The clients here are the
5 ratepayers of the City of Scranton and they
6 deserve answers and, quite frankly,
7 redacting that information gives the
8 impression that something else is going on.

9 Also, concerning to me is the
10 expense of the roughly \$12 million from the
11 time a deal was reached between the Scranton
12 Sewer Authority and the Pennsylvania Water
13 Company and the closing in December 31,
14 2016. I have asked for a detailed
15 accounting and explanation of what capital
16 improvements were made with these funds,
17 were these capital improvements necessary.
18 We still have not received an answer from
19 the executive director of the Sewer
20 Authority.

21 So as a matter of the transparency
22 and an a matter of the openness, I believe
23 that an independent audit by the Auditor
24 General of Pennsylvania needs to occur. The
25 audit will work to understand evidence and

1 determine facts and actual or potential
2 conflicts, accountable, transparency, and
3 integrity. I would urge my colleagues to
4 vote yet on this motion. I think the people
5 of the City of Scranton deserve these
6 answers. Thank you.

7 MR. PERRY: Yes, on the question.
8 This sewer -- the sale of the Sewer
9 Authority when this went through several
10 months ago we were expecting something that
11 we didn't get all along. My biggest thing
12 with this has been the \$12 million money
13 that's been missing on quote/unquote
14 mandated work. What was the mandated work?
15 How could we have that itemized list of what
16 the mandated work was? I honestly don't
17 think it was too much to ask on why the
18 taxpayers' money and the ratepayers' money
19 how it was spent and where it was spent,
20 especially since that money was supposed to
21 come right back to the city.

22 So we have been asked for that
23 information from quite some time now and I
24 honestly think that an independent auditor
25 is honestly the way to go to get some of

1 these answers for us. This takes all hands
2 outs of the deal. It takes the
3 administration's hands out of the deal, it
4 takes the Sewer Authority's hands out of the
5 deal and it's going to give us answers which
6 honestly I think we deserve.

7 MR. EVANS: On the question, I
8 repeatedly requested in writing and verbally
9 for the information from the SSA that we are
10 still awaiting for. The work performed, as
11 both Councilmen just mentioned, that was
12 between the signing of the agreement and the
13 closing of the agreement for the sale to the
14 PAWC. There was at least \$9 million of
15 unexplained expenses during that time frame
16 beyond what we now know relative to the
17 attorney fees, etc.

18 The most basic response was the bulk
19 of the money was spent on mandated work. We
20 are simply asking for documentation of that
21 mandated work. Clearly, the entities that
22 required these mandates would have had
23 guidelines reporting as the mandated work
24 was completed, be it the EPA or DEP or
25 whatever is asking for the mandated work at

1 the federal level. I'm at a loss for the
2 lack of information and why it has not been
3 forthcoming, so I would support that motion
4 tonight and ask the Auditor General to step
5 and review this transaction.

6 MR. ROGAN: I would agree with much
7 of what has been said and the thing I really
8 like about the idea of having the Auditor
9 General come in is it's a neutral party
10 versus having the media, which has reported
11 on it at length, having a neutral third
12 party come in and take a look at everything
13 I think would be very likely to get a full
14 report. The taxpayers certainly deserve
15 that so I would certainly vote "yes" on the
16 motion.

17 MR. WECHSLER: Yes, on the question,
18 last week as we started to get further
19 redacted information and we did not receive
20 any further information on the \$12 million I
21 did contact Solicitor Minora to begin to
22 examine the process of asking for this
23 audit, so I do believe that this is the
24 right thing to do. The questions that have
25 come down to city council, even if we get

1 the information I don't believe that we are
2 financial analysts to determine if legal
3 fees are proper or if the \$12 million was
4 spent properly, so I do believe that the
5 Auditor General, who is a well-respected
6 person in our state and has done several
7 audits including many in the city. Just one
8 thing about an audit, if we ask for the
9 audit and he does it we are going to have to
10 be prepared to follow with the finances.
11 There has been a few audits done, one of the
12 school board, one here of our pension plan,
13 and there has been some findings and people
14 have been slow to move to deal with those
15 findings so whatever the Auditor General
16 determines I believe that should put an end
17 to this and, like I said, we should be
18 prepared to follow whatever recommendations
19 he may have. All those in favor signify by
20 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 Mrs. Reed, I guess we will have a
3 Solicitor Minora work on that request for us
4 and we should have that out sometime early
5 next week.

6 MR. MINORA: Will do.

7 MR. WECHSLER: Dispense with the
8 reading of the minutes.

9 MS. REED: THIRD ORDER. 3-A. TAX
10 ASSESSOR'S REPORT FOR HEARING DATE TO BE
11 HELD MAY 17, 2017.

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

14 MS. REED: 3-B. SINGLE TAX OFFICE
15 CITY FUNDS DISTRIBUTED COMPARISON REPORT
16 2016-2017 YEAR TO DATE APRIL 30, 2017.

17 MR. WECHSLER: Are there any
18 comments? If not, received and filed.

19 Do any council members have
20 announcements at this time?

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, I have one. Just
22 another announcements about the Armed
23 Services Day parade to support our veterans.
24 The Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast
25 Guard. It's going to be held in downtown

1 Scranton Saturday, May 20, at 11 a.m.
2 beginning at Vine Street and Penn Avenue
3 continuing to the courthouse. Colts Bus
4 will be running free all day. We are asking
5 all veterans to come out and all citizens of
6 Scranton and the region to come out and
7 support our veterans. Thank you.

8 MR. ROGAN: I have one as well. On
9 Monday, May 15, Lodge 2 of the Fraternal
10 Order of Police and the Scranton Police
11 Department will be conducting an annual
12 police memorial ceremony in front of the
13 Scranton Police Headquarters located a 100
14 South Washington Avenue. This ceremony will
15 begin at 12 noon and it will be honoring all
16 Scranton police officers who have made the
17 ultimate sacrifice having been killed in the
18 line of duty.

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

21 MR. WECHSLER: Fay Franus.

22 MS. FRANUS: Fay Franus, Scranton.
23 Ned Abrahamsen, was he hired by the City of
24 Scranton?

25 MR. WECHSLER: Yes -- or I'm not

1 sure he had been hired, yes.

2 MS. FRANUS: By the city, so when
3 did this come in front of council for a
4 vote? Anything over \$19,000 a year has to
5 come in front of city council for a vote. I
6 don't remember that coming in front of city
7 council.

8 MR. WECHSLER: If you're in
9 reference to the legal fees, that was for
10 the Sewer Authority.

11 MS. FRANUS: That's what I say, who
12 was he working, for the city?

13 MR. WECHSLER: He was working for
14 the Sewer Authority.

15 MS. FRANUS: Well, how come his
16 bills -- how come Ned Abrahamsen's bills
17 went to Jason Shrive when he was worked for
18 the city.

19 MR. EVANS: Fay, he was paid out of
20 the proceeds of the sewer transaction.

21 MS. FRANUS: What's that?

22 MR. EVANS: He was paid out of the
23 proceeds of the sewer transaction.

24 MS. FRANUS: So you are saying he
25 worked for the Sewer Authority.

1 MR. EVANS: My understanding was he
2 was special counsel to the mayor working on
3 the Sewer authority transaction.

4 MS. FRANUS: But did he work for the
5 city because he was working for Mayor
6 Courtright?

7 MR. EVANS: It was my understanding
8 he was special counsel to the mayor. I'm
9 not sure what --

10 MS. FRANUS: Right, so that means
11 that he would have to come -- he would have
12 to have a vote by city council for approval.

13 MR. EVANS: Well, we weren't paying
14 him though.

15 MS. FRANUS: But the city hired him.

16 MR. EVANS: The mayor hired him, but
17 I'll have to ask him.

18 MS. FRANUS: Yes. That's city.

19 MR. EVANS: I'm not defending it,
20 I'm just saying what I know.

21 MS. FRANUS: Well, is there contract
22 that the Sewer Authority had that hired him?
23 Did you know if that's available?

24 MR. EVANS: We are trying to find
25 all that information.

1 MS. FRANUS: You met with them in
2 that room in the back and didn't have --
3 Mr. Wechsler never once had any caucuses in
4 the front room here because Jason Shrive or
5 any of these cronies don't want to be out in
6 the public because they don't want the
7 people to know what's going on. Mr.
8 Wechsler is great for that. He said, "Oh,
9 they don't want to."

10 MR. WECHSLER: Ms. Franus, that's
11 the people that we invite chose not to be
12 here and I need to have meetings, so if they
13 won't attend the meeting it doesn't matter
14 where I have it. If they won't attend the
15 meeting --

16 MS. FRANUS: But you're the only --
17 you are weak and you're a coward because if
18 they don't want to have a meeting out here
19 you tell them, "Look it, then we'll have a
20 meeting there but we have to everything that
21 you say and a transcript and you will come
22 to the meeting," and then we can read
23 everything that that he said. If they don't
24 want to be here in public, you could read
25 everything that they said, but you haven't

1 done that, and there is never a stenographer
2 there either at those meetings, so nobody
3 knows, just your word of mouth or your
4 report what went on at those meetings. You
5 are known for not wanting to have people
6 come here.

7 MR. WECHSLER: That's incorrect.

8 MS. FRANUS: Well, how many times
9 did people go in the back rooms instead of
10 up here? Mr. Wechsler --

11 MR. WECHSLER: We have had many
12 caucuses here and all of the caucuses have
13 been open to the public.

14 MS. FRANUS: Mr. Wechsler, the back
15 room fits about five people. You always
16 have people in the back room, you don't have
17 them out here I'd say 90 percent of the time
18 because you don't want the people to know
19 what's going on and that's a fact. I'm
20 sorry --

21 MR. WECHSLER: You and I disagree on
22 that.

23 MS. FRANUS: Well, we may disagree,
24 but the people see what's going on. You are
25 keeping the truth from the people.

1 MR. WECHSLER: Actually we've
2 provided for information to the city than
3 previous council.

4 MS. FRANUS: I'm speaking now. When
5 you heard that this stuff was redacted did
6 you bother -- did you bother to ask Jason
7 Shrive what law did you know of that gives
8 you the permission to redact these
9 statements? Did you bother to ask that
10 question?

11 MR. WECHSLER: Yes. He told it was
12 client privilege.

13 MS. FRANUS: That's not a law. What
14 law?

15 MR. WECHSLER: It's standard
16 practice in the law --

17 MS. FRANUS: We are the clients, Mr.
18 Wechsler. The taxpayers are the clients.
19 The Sewer Authority works for us to
20 represent us and we, as the taxpayers, want
21 to see what bills -- why they paid so much
22 money, what did they do for this money so we
23 are the clients, so don't try to --

24 MR. WECHSLER: I'm not --

25 MS. FRANUS: -- insult my

1 intelligent.

2 MR. WECHSLER: This is the
3 information that he gives us.

4 MS. FRANUS: I don't care what he is
5 giving you. So you can't say to him,
6 "Well, the taxpayers are the client's --"

7 MR. WECHSLER: We have. We have.
8 That's why we are asking the Auditor General
9 to come in.

10 MS. FRANUS: There should be a law
11 that says he has a right to do that, there
12 is no law. Just him saying the clients,
13 that's a cope out because we are the clients
14 and we want to know and that's what you
15 should have said to him.

16 Now, I also want to know does the
17 Sewer Authority board or executive directors
18 have any liability? They let this go on and
19 didn't question the bills at all, is that
20 malfeasance? Do they have any liability for
21 this? Silence.

22 MR. WECHSLER: I don't understand
23 your question.

24 MS. FRANUS: Does the Sewer
25 Authority board executive directors have any

1 liability because they let all of these --
2 all of these bills being paid and they knew
3 it was astronomical.

4 MR. WECHSLER: I'm not a lawyer, but
5 if they followed the proper procedure and
6 voted on it during a public and advertised
7 meeting and they voted on it --

8 MS. FRANUS: So basically what they
9 are doing is taking care of their friends,
10 the lawyers, and not the people that they
11 are supposed to be helping because you know
12 darn wells those fees are crazy and, Mr.
13 Gaughan, thank you for pointing all of that
14 out to the people. You're the only one that
15 wants to.

16 Okay, where were the board members
17 of the Sewer authority when all of these
18 bills are happening? How come nobody spoke
19 up? I mean, that just goes to prove that
20 these board members are in cahoots with
21 these lawyers and Mayor Courtright.

22 One more thing that Ned Abrahamsen
23 said, the details available upon request
24 without any descriptions service performed
25 of hours work. He said the details would be

1 there if you wanted them, and they were not.
2 So, Mr. Wechsler, you keep doing what you
3 are doing. You voted for as many taxes as
4 Pat Rogan to put the taxpayers under water
5 and have them losing their homes thanks to
6 you and Mr. Rogan, so I don't know what
7 people are going to do. If they vote for
8 you again, they are out of their minds.

9 MR. WECHSLER: Joan Hodowanitz.

10 MS. HODOWANITZ: Joan Hodowanitz,
11 city resident and taxpayer. Fifty-seven
12 days to June 30, the date of the 2016 audit
13 deadline. You know, a lot of people ask me
14 why I'm so frustrated and fixated on audits
15 and it's a very easy answer because audits
16 are one of the vehicles by which the public
17 gets insight into how this city and it's
18 leadership uses our tax revenue and it's
19 very important.

20 I will tell you one thing that's
21 disappointed me, this administration and
22 prior ones, is the unforgivable attitude of
23 the city administrations historically not to
24 want to divulge financial information to the
25 general public, and Fay is right, we are the

1 clients, we are the taxpayers, we are the
2 ratepayers, so I'm going to continue to
3 count down to audits and other documents
4 that are due, which brings me to the next
5 milestone.

6 May 16 I hope every registered voter
7 in the city votes on May 16 in the primary.
8 If you don't like the candidates who are
9 running, write in the name of someone you
10 would prefer, but there is nothing that
11 would put the fear of God into a politician
12 or public official more than a near 100
13 percent turnout of voters during an election
14 and I hope people keep that in mind.

15 Oh, but I will say that I did get
16 the mailing this past week, Pat Rogan and
17 Billy Gaughan, I guess that the realtors put
18 out. I got to say, you know, I'm old enough
19 to be your grandmother, and you two probably
20 look young enough on these mailings to have
21 to be carded, but at least you're involved
22 in the process.

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Mr. Wechsler, can we
24 extend Ms. Hodowanitz time tonight for more
25 than five minutes since she is --

1 MR. ROGAN: I'll second that.

2 MS. GAUGHAN: Keep going as long as
3 you want.

4 MS. HODOWANITZ: Mr. Perry,
5 Mr. Rogan, Mr. Gaughan, I am old enough to
6 be your grandmother. You other two, you're
7 old farts just like me.

8 MR. EVANS: That's enough. That's
9 enough.

10 MS. HODOWANITZ: Shut up. 187 days
11 to November 7 General election and I'm still
12 waiting anxiously to see the results of this
13 wonderful Arcadis study on storm water
14 management. One of the reasons it's on my
15 mind tonight is tonight and tomorrow we are
16 expecting very heavy rains, and I'm a little
17 bit curious as to when this Arcadis study is
18 going to do some kind of abstract look at
19 pipes and lines or it's going to look at the
20 flooding and other problems that the city
21 has had historically, the problems that have
22 lead to Mr. Young's problem, Mr. Kennedy's
23 problems, all of these other people who are
24 suffering every time it rains and
25 Meadowbrook backs up and this thing backs up

1 and that thing backs up. I know that the
2 Arcadis study was not intended to be a
3 comprehensive look at flooding problems
4 throughout Scranton. It seems to me they
5 are intimately tied into the storm water
6 management issue so I hope you can a handle
7 on this and I hope that our citizens are not
8 hurt by tonight and tomorrow's rainfall
9 which is expected to be very heavy at times.

10 Where is the updated Knowells
11 insurance list for insured properties and
12 equipment, do we have that, Mr. Perry?

13 MR. EVANS: My understanding is that
14 the finding are complete and that they are
15 being reviewed by all of the individual
16 department heads now to make sure they are
17 absolutely correct and that should be ready
18 for us within three weeks.

19 MS. HODOWANITZ: Will that list be
20 available to the public?

21 MR. EVANS: Well, if it's made
22 available to us it will be made available to
23 the public.

24 MS. HODOWANITZ: Good, because I've
25 go the original one, I want to do a

1 comparison.

2 Next, Wednesday is the next pension
3 board meetings. I have a conflict, I will
4 not be there, but I will be present on May
5 10 when they open the RFP for da, da, da,
6 the third party administrator. Have we ever
7 found out how the administration nationally
8 advertised this requirement or did they?

9 MR. PERRY: Yeah, I asked that
10 question last week, the correspondence I got
11 back was through the Scranton Times on a
12 post on April 15. I since then asked if we
13 had done any kind of nationally through a
14 website, some kind of governmental website
15 database or appointed job site and I haven't
16 received an answer as of yet, but to their
17 fairness that question, that e-mail was just
18 sent yesterday.

19 MS. HODOWANITZ: Well, but the mayor
20 did announce his nationally recognized third
21 party administrator over one year ago so
22 it's should not be --

23 MR. PERRY: That's true.

24 MS. HODOWANITZ: -- a new thing for
25 them. And, finally, I hope during motions

1 -- well, not during motions, please ask the
2 city to put all of the controller reports
3 back up and the city's website and to post
4 the RFP for the third party administrator
5 and the rest of the RFP for the rental
6 registration we only get page one on.
7 Again, it's a systemic problem of a lack of
8 transparency and disclosure when the
9 administration has promised that this
10 information will be made available to us
11 when we pay for that website. Thank you.

12 MS. CARRERA: Joan, the pension are
13 not next week, it's the third Wednesday of
14 the month.

15 MS. HODOWANITZ: Isn't that next
16 week? Never mind.

17 MR. WECHSLER: Bill Jackowitz.

18 MR. JACKOWITZ: Good evening,
19 Scranton City Council, Kathy, Stenographer,
20 Lori and Amil. You know, I have a 34 years
21 of government service which means I worked
22 for the government for 34 years. My 34
23 years as a government employee I never heard
24 of a civilian employee or an appointee not
25 answering the questions or not appearing in

1 front of an elected official when they are
2 requested, so I'm finding it very hard to
3 believe that people can't come to city
4 council meetings when the elected city
5 council members are inviting them and asking
6 them to return. When I was in the
7 government services, we jumped through hoops
8 for every political elected official that
9 ever came into contact with us to answer
10 their questions and to give them guided
11 tours and do whatever we had to do, so I'm
12 not buying it. I'm not buying your answer,
13 Mr. Wechsler. It may be truthful, but I'm
14 not buying it, okay?

15 MR. WECHSLER: If it's truthful, you
16 have to buy it. We have no authority to
17 make them come here.

18 MR. JACKOWITZ: Yes, you do. You're
19 an elected official. You are elected by the
20 people of the City of Scranton to do their
21 business and to do their work for them so
22 yes, you do. You are an elected official.

23 MR. WECHSLER: You tell me how am I
24 going to get them here if they won't come?

25 MR. JACKOWITZ: You tell them to

1 come and if they don't come you give them a
2 subpoena if you have to.

3 MR. WECHSLER: You give them a
4 subpoena and it's held up for six months.

5 MR. JACKOWITZ: I'm not going to
6 argue with you, okay?

7 MR. WECHSLER: But you are making
8 statements that aren't true.

9 MR. JACKOWITZ: No, they are true
10 because I got 34 years experience in
11 government, how many years do you have?

12 MR. WECHSLER: I have almost 40
13 years.

14 MR. JACKOWITZ: Almost 40 in
15 government.

16 MR. WECHSLER: Government contracts,
17 sir, yes.

18 MR. JACKOWITZ: In government
19 contracts as a contractor. I was an
20 employee. Okay, I'm disgruntled with the
21 legal fees in connection with the sewer
22 deal. Fifty lawyers. Why do we need 50;
23 lawyers? Four lawyers could have done the
24 job. When was the Abrahamsen law firm hired
25 as special council to the city? That's what

1 he was hired as, special council to the
2 city, so when were they hired at \$20,000 per
3 month and at what meetings did you, Council,
4 approve his contract? Did it ever come
5 before council?

6 MR. EVANS: No.

7 MR. JACKOWITZ: Why not?

8 MR. EVANS: Because he was hired by
9 the Sewer Authority.

10 MR. JACKOWITZ: Pardon me?

11 MR. EVANS: It goes back to what Fay
12 said, the Sewer Authority paid him not us.

13 MR. JACKOWITZ: Yeah, but he was
14 hired as special council to the City of
15 Scranton, not the Sewer Authority.

16 MR. EVANS: You have to ask that
17 question to the mayor.

18 MR. JACKOWITZ: Then my next
19 question is I'd like to know for -- well,
20 I'd like to know for next week when he was
21 hired and who approved it, if it has to be
22 part of the city council minutes, so it
23 should be part of the city council minutes
24 if it was -- if he was hired as a city
25 solicitor for the City of Scranton. Okay,

1 did he have a fee agreement? Was there a
2 fee agreement with the city?

3 MR. EVANS: Not that I'm aware of.

4 MR. JACKOWITZ: Pardon me?

5 MR. EVANS: Not that I'm aware of.

6 MR. JACKOWITZ: Where is the
7 contract that says he could charge \$20,000 a
8 month?

9 MR. EVANS: That's what we are
10 trying to find out. We are trying to find
11 all these out.

12 MR. JACKOWITZ: Shouldn't you have
13 found out this beforehand not after the
14 fact?

15 MR. EVANS: Well, the --

16 MR. JACKOWITZ: The horse is already
17 out of the barn, the bill has already been
18 paid.

19 MR. EVANS: Well, the Sewer
20 Authority board is the one that voted for
21 the deal not us and we didn't have that
22 information beforehand.

23 MR. JACKOWITZ: Okay. If not, did
24 the Sewer Authority hire him?

25 MR. EVANS: Yeah, we are trying to

1 find that out.

2 MR. JACKOWITZ: You mean -- again,
3 this should have been found out before all
4 of this was put into effect. You should
5 have known all of this before the sale and
6 before everything happened --

7 MR. WECHSLER: The Sewer
8 Authority --

9 MR. JACKOWITZ: -- not after the
10 fact. Like I said, the horse --

11 MR. WECHSLER: The Sewer Authority
12 conducted the sale.

13 MR. JACKOWITZ: Yeah, but who is
14 paying the rates on it, the citizens of
15 Scranton.

16 MR. WECHSLER: These questions
17 should be addressed to the Sewer Authority.
18 They handled the sale, not the city council.

19 MR. JACKOWITZ: The Sewer Authority
20 is an appointed board, I'm going to my
21 elected officials.

22 MR. WECHSLER: You can come here --

23 MR. JACKOWITZ: You guys are elected
24 officials, they're an appointed board.

25 MR. WECHSLER: We had no authority

1 ni that sale.

2 MR. JACKOWITZ: Again, they are an
3 appointed board, they are appointed by the
4 mayor. They are not going to give you the
5 answers. You are an elected official, you
6 were elected by the citizens of Scranton, as
7 a matter of fact you are running for
8 reelection so I hope people are paying
9 attention to these answers that are given.

10 Is it true that the lawyers for
11 Buchanan, Ingersoll and Rainy, Bill Conaboy
12 is a nephew to Abrahamsen; is that true?

13 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

14 MR. JACKOWITZ: It's a family affair
15 then, in other words.

16 MR. WECHSLER: I don't know that for
17 sure, but I believe he is.

18 MR. JACKOWITZ: Where was the Sewer
19 Authority board? Didn't these board members
20 speak up or the mayor speak up during this
21 sale? Where were the Sewer Authority board?
22 Where were they when all of this was going?
23 Everything was kept hush-hush, everything
24 was keep quiet. Nothing was, you know,
25 nothing was made public. And is it true

1 that the City of Scranton has been
2 distressed for 25 years? Is that a true
3 statement that the City of Scranton has been
4 distressed for 25 years?

5 MR. EVANS: Yeah. Certainly.

6 MR. JACKOWITZ: Is that a yes?

7 Well, if that's the case, how can you afford
8 to pay a law firm \$835 an hour if they're a
9 distressed city, can someone answer that for
10 me?

11 MR. EVANS: We didn't pay it.

12 MR. WECHSLER: It's the Sewer
13 Authority paid that money. The Sewer
14 Authority paid that money, not us. Not us
15 as a body. As a taxpayer --

16 MR. JACKOWITZ: So none of money is
17 taxpayer money it's all Sewer Authority
18 money?

19 MR. WECHSLER: It's all taxpayers'
20 money but the Sewer Authority is the one
21 that spent it, not the city council.

22 MR. JACKOWITZ: I didn't say council
23 did. I'm just saying if we are distressed
24 and it's all taxpayers' money being spent
25 how can we afford to pay \$835 an hour for an

1 attorney? I don't know, most people in this
2 city don't even make \$835 a week and we are
3 paying them an hour. It's all taxpayers'
4 money, remember that. You're an elected
5 official --

6 MR. WECHSLER: I didn't forget that.

7 MR. JACKOWITZ: And it's all
8 taxpayers' money that's being spent and
9 everything is being hidden and swept under
10 the rug.

11 MR. WECHSLER: Just one comment from
12 one of the questions that Mr. Jackowitz
13 asked, and I keep saying this, but the only
14 information that's out about this
15 transaction right now in terms of the legal
16 fees and in terms of the \$12 million spent,
17 those answers were generated by questions
18 asked by Scranton City Council. Answers to
19 those questions were confirmed and followed
20 up with in the meeting Mr. Evans and I had
21 with Mr. Shrive and that information was
22 brought out to the public. So the answers
23 that we are working with right now have been
24 provided by Attorney Shrive, the Director of
25 the Sewer Authority for questions that were

1 asked as a combination of your questions
2 that were generated from Scranton City
3 Council and also the Scranton Times.

4 So we did ask questions, we are
5 trying to find out the answers. The answers
6 that we got aren't satisfactory to us, but
7 we did ask the question and we did get
8 answers. They are not satisfactory to any
9 of us, but I did not see Dunmore Council
10 asking questions, I did not see members of
11 the Scranton Sewer Authority board asking
12 questions, I did not see the administration
13 questions, the question that were asked and
14 the answers that were given came as a result
15 of the information requested by Scranton
16 City Council. We are trying to get the best
17 information that we can. Unfortunately,
18 those people do not work for us. Our
19 subpoena power is limited if we even have
20 it. So I take offense or umbrage that you e
21 are saying we are not to trying to get the
22 answers because we are. We took a step
23 tonight to try and get more answers. We are
24 trying our best to get the information that
25 the people want.

1 Les Spindler.

2 MR. SPINDLER: Good evening,
3 Council. Les Spindler, city resident,
4 homeowner and taxpayer. I was happy to see
5 a problem I brought quite awhile ago, that
6 whole on Dorothy Street near the
7 playground -- near the softball complex,
8 work was started on last week. I don't know
9 if it's finished or not. It was filled in.
10 There is a board that was covering the hole
11 propped up against the storm drain now.
12 Councilman Perry, do you know if that job is
13 done? It doesn't look finished to me?

14 MR. PERRY: I know they were working
15 on it and there was a leak connection of a
16 pipe issue that they had there, but I'll
17 follow-up on it and see if it's a completed
18 project or not.

19 MR. SPINDLER: It looks like
20 everything was just thrown in and since that
21 the soil has sunk and there is a depression
22 there.

23 MR. PERRY: And it's possible that
24 they did do the initial fill and waiting for
25 the ground to settle and do it again, but

1 I'll get the answer, I'll follow-up on it.

2 MR. SPINDLER: Thank you. In the
3 paper yesterday it talked about a debate of
4 the council members that are running again
5 and, Councilman Gaughan, you said you are
6 the only one running who has stood and
7 fought against Mayor Courtright's agenda.
8 Well, my opinion, I think the mayor has done
9 a good job. He didn't raise taxes this
10 year. He got the Supreme Court award for
11 the unions settled, so what would you have
12 done differently?

13 MR. GAUGHAN: What would I have done
14 differently?

15 MR. SPINDLER: Yeah.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: A couple of different
17 things.

18 MR. SPINDLER: You were against the
19 sewer sale, what would you have done if we
20 didn't sell the Sewer?

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Well, I would have
22 looked at the storm water management because
23 I think we put the cart before the horse
24 there. We don't have any idea how much
25 that's going to cost. I would have -- and

1 that's not just me saying that that's two
2 PUC law judges that say we don't know how
3 many storm water management is going to
4 cost. My fear is that it's going to be a
5 significant amount of money. We should have
6 done that study before we sold off the
7 Authority who was taking care of those
8 issues.

9 MR. SPINDLER: Well, what would you
10 do to get the money that we got for the
11 Sewer Authority sale?

12 MR. GAUGHAN: I would have done a
13 study, I don't know because I would have
14 done the study first. How do you know if
15 it's a good deal if you don't know how much
16 you are going to have to spend on storm
17 water management?

18 MR. SPINDLER: I think the mayor has
19 done a good job and I have to disagree with
20 you because I think we are much better off
21 than we were three years ago. As I said,
22 three years ago the Supreme Court award
23 hadn't been paid yet, our taxes were through
24 the ceiling. We got the new lights in the
25 city, streets are being paved, I think the

1 city is better than it was three years and
2 in defense of the mayor he was left a mess
3 by the previous administration, a big mess.

4 Moving on, something I brought up
5 here many times before, with many other
6 councils, dangerous dog legislation. I
7 broke it you previous council, also, and
8 nobody has ever looked into it. Has anybody
9 ever planned to look into a dangerous dog
10 legislation?

11 MR. EVANS: I did try to find some,
12 Les, but I can't find. Do you have some
13 cities that have the legislation currently?

14 MR. SPINDLER: Absolutely.
15 Pittsburgh have it. All you have to do is
16 Google dangerous dog legislation in
17 Pittsburgh.

18 MR. EVANS: Some of them were
19 out-of-state, that's why I wanted to see
20 something within Pennsylvania.

21 MR. SPINDLER: Pittsburgh.

22 MR. EVANS: It has one? All right.

23 MR. SPINDLER: Pittsburgh has it.
24 Just Goggle Pittsburgh dangerous dog
25 legislation.

1 MR. EVANS: I am interested in that
2 so I will look it up.

3 MR. SPINDLER: I did years ago and
4 they have certain rules. People have to get
5 separate insurance, they have to have fences
6 a certain height, and I forget exactly what
7 else, but Pittsburgh has it.

8 MR. EVANS: All right.

9 MR. SPINDLER: There is no reason.
10 I have asked for years and years and years
11 as has Lee Morgan and nobody has ever done
12 anything and something has got to be done.
13 That's all I have this week. Thank you.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

15 MR. WECHSLER: Bob Bolus.

16 MR. BOLUS: Good evening, Council,
17 Bob Bolus, Scranton. Incidentally, I left
18 my camera crew home today. They are in
19 Norway. You know, I have been listening
20 here and I have been listening for a long,
21 long time way before you guys ever came on
22 this council and, you know, I understood for
23 many years, Mr. Wechsler especially, it was
24 a nice speech to blame this one or that one,
25 but we put you in charge as council

1 president, they put you in charge. You
2 should have and understood the
3 responsibility that of that position, went
4 to the Sewer authority meetings, went to the
5 garage and everything else that was being
6 done and got the answers for us. We don't
7 have to go get them, that's what we have you
8 people for. Especially the council
9 president, that's a responsibility if you
10 read the Rules and the understanding of what
11 the duties of the council president are. It
12 was your responsibility not ours and I
13 believe you failed us by not getting us the
14 answers. We shouldn't have to ask you what
15 are the legal fees and what are the one --
16 you guys should have had that.

17 And the sad part of this is none of
18 this would have ever happened if you didn't
19 introduce the legislation to sell before you
20 had the answers of what were legal fees
21 going to be, what was all of the extra stuff
22 that was going to get through into that pot.
23 You guys never asked those questions? Now
24 you are trying to blame and point the
25 fingers. You know there is an old saying

1 the horse left and all you got in your hand
2 is a shovel and you know what's for and
3 that's what we doing here and it's sad
4 because we are not going to undo what's been
5 doing done it's already over with. And we
6 are the ones that are going to suffer and
7 suffer dearly because you guys didn't pay
8 attention.

9 True, they could do what they want,
10 but unless council approved the sale of
11 those properties they couldn't sell it on
12 their own. They had to come through
13 council. Council never got the answers. It
14 was in front of you. Blatantly right there
15 it is and you didn't do it. Don't blame
16 anybody else.

17 You know, and I have heard people
18 pick on Mr. Rogan here and I have heard him
19 pick on other people, but over the years
20 that I have been here I have heard Mr. Rogan
21 at least a few times said he screwed up and
22 made a mistake. I think you are better off
23 admitting we screwed up here, made a
24 mistake, we are not going to get the money
25 back. The \$850 lawyer you could have bought

1 the Bar Association here in Lackawanna
2 County for God's sake. You are not going to
3 see it. It's over. You already wrote
4 checks out.

5 But the sad thing you turn around
6 and gave Basalyga almost \$7 million for the
7 mall. Think of that. The irony you gave
8 him the money to pay for the mall, you never
9 pushed to get a reassessment, what about the
10 taxpayers? You didn't do a damn thing about
11 them. Yet, you gave him all of that money
12 then you sold him the garage for a dollar
13 and like nice guys give him a couple of
14 million bucks to help fix it.

15 Where is the logic? There is none.
16 The guys with the yards that are sunk, water
17 running over, oh, it's going to cost \$13
18 million. Add up all of the million dollars
19 you gave away here, the parking garages, the
20 meter spaces that you sold, now you are
21 paying to clean the snow and, ironically,
22 when I was on Lackawanna Avenue today going
23 down Lackawanna Avenue from the curb out
24 there is nothing and then there is a white
25 line separating the main part of the

1 thoroughfare designating where the parking
2 spaces are. They are called meter parking
3 spaces. They are the ones that they should
4 be paying to plow the snow from and I
5 brought that up, you haven't done anything
6 about it. Yet, you write a check out and
7 approve the check for pay all of the
8 snowplowing without going to them. And then
9 you guys allowed them to become nonprofit.
10 Like, what the hell is the thinking here?
11 We need tax money from other people, not the
12 citizens.

13 My church got assessed and I owe 50
14 grand in taxes on a \$35,000 investment I
15 made in this city. Didn't hear anybody
16 stand up and say what the heck is going on
17 here? When I saved the church and the hall
18 over there for the kids and everything else
19 in this city nobody stood up and said, geez,
20 what's going on here? Yet, you won't do a
21 darn thing and now one of you had sat up and
22 said we better push to reassess the mall.
23 It's worth, 25, 30 million dollars. Those
24 are taxpayer dollars.

25 So when you say transparency or you

1 say I'm independent thinking you are not.
2 You are talking about what's happened it's
3 too late to deal with. When you need to do
4 is deal with the present, the situation that
5 you have there.

6 You know, you have to act beyond
7 your own personal agendas. You have to act
8 on behalf the people of the city. You are
9 asking to be reelected. Mr. Wechsler wants
10 to run again, he wants to be out here. He
11 said he worked in government. Mr. Wechsler
12 had illegal aliens at the plant he worked
13 in. It's history, nobody is lying about it,
14 yet he never took responsibility for it. He
15 said I have no idea, this and that, and he
16 has never taken responsibility for anything
17 else going on here.

18 Mr. Gaughan, you got to take
19 responsibility if you're an independent
20 person. There is no one independent here.
21 You five are one, remember that. You five
22 are one that represent everybody out here.
23 You five represent everything that got
24 screwed up here with the Sewer Authority,
25 and the parking garages. You made it

1 nonprofit.

2 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr. Bolus.

3 MR. BOLUS: You five are one, keep
4 that in mine. You are no independent,
5 Mr. Wechsler isn't on his on, this isn't his
6 council, it isn't his city.

7 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr. Bolus.

8 MR. BOLUS: You answer to us and I
9 please always ask you, Mr. Wechsler, don't
10 thank me.

11 MR. WECHSLER: Then I would ask you
12 to follow the time limit.

13 MR. BOLUS: I'm not here to give you
14 a compliment in any way, shape or form. I'm
15 here to tell you what I think about you and
16 what I think about the lack of service you
17 provided.

18 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr. Bolus.

19 MR. BOLUS: And the arrogance that
20 went beyond --

21 MR. WECHSLER: Your time is up.

22 MR. BOLUS: -- what you have been
23 doing --

24 MR. WECHSLER: Your time is up,
25 Bolus.

1 MR. BOLUS: -- and what you need to
2 reconsider that you represent the people,
3 not Joe Wechsler.

4 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr. Bolus.

5 MR. BOLUS: And please don't thank
6 me because there is nothing I feel great
7 about you and I should be thanked for.

8 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

9 MR. BOLUS: And if telling you the
10 truth is thanking you then I'll take credit
11 for that.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr. Bolus.
13 Lee Morgan.

14 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.
15 Lee Morgan. I'd just like to give my phone
16 number 570-604-1212 and, you know, I'm still
17 looking for three people to run as
18 independents for these council seats, and I
19 really do think somebody non-aligned can
20 do a write-in and win and I really don't
21 think it's much of a stretch, and I did get
22 one call so far so maybe we'll get some
23 more, but I just would like to poll counsel
24 and ask one question is that all right?

25 MR. WECHSLER: No. You can ask a

1 question, but you cannot poll question, no.
2 If they chose to answer, they can.

3 MR. MORGAN: Okay, here is my
4 question, you know, because I have been
5 watching these debates and really they are
6 beyond silly. We are talking about a storm
7 that already passed over and knocked down
8 all the trees and half the buildings are
9 gone because of a lack of ability of council
10 so this question has to do with the --
11 something to do with the Sewer Authority,
12 and my question is I would like every
13 councilman to answer this question today so
14 the voters and the people in this city can
15 have a better understanding of what this
16 council might or might not be willing to do
17 and I would like individual councilmen to
18 petition the PUC to reset the sewer rates in
19 the City of Scranton because the Scranton
20 City Council made an error when it sold the
21 combined system and it gave the storm water
22 collection system money to Pennsylvania
23 American Water. This was a combined system
24 and the rates were set to not only maintain
25 the residential base, but the storm water

1 collection system. So I would like
2 individual councilman to write a letter to
3 the PUC and petition them to hold a hearing
4 and recalculate these rates and redirect the
5 portion that belongs to the storm water
6 collection system to the remnants of the
7 Scranton sewer authority board to build a
8 storm water collection system and maintain
9 one in this city because those rates were
10 combined, and this council made an error and
11 the mayor made an error.

12 About the PUC can correct that error
13 and Pennsylvania water may be very angry,
14 but that's just the way it is, so that's the
15 question I have for individual councilmen.
16 Does anybody want to answer that?

17 MR. GAUGHAN: I don't know. I mean,
18 I can't give you an educated against because
19 I'm not sure what that process is even like,
20 I mean, so I would have to --

21 MR. MORGAN: You have a solicitor.
22 That's a tool. That man right there is a
23 tool like a hammer or screwdriver. Maybe if
24 a lot more questions were asked before we
25 got to the shape we are in maybe we wouldn't

1 be this way now. But, you know, sitting up
2 there smiling and ignoring people, you know,
3 I watch people -- people have watched these
4 debates and they said it's the silliest
5 thing you have ever saw because it's a bunch
6 of illiterates standing there with suits on,
7 sitting there with suits on that don't have
8 an answer for one question. They are
9 fighting over what happened to the Sewer
10 Authority monies and it's like watching
11 third graders. And, you know, the thing
12 that gets me is the people that are having
13 these debates don't they understand what's
14 actually happening in this city? And I
15 respect the League of Women Voters and I
16 respect the neighborhood associations, but
17 you know something it's time to really see
18 just where this city is and arrogance isn't
19 going to help us and ignorance isn't either.
20 And this city is in worst shape than anybody
21 can really imagine because it's out of
22 assets. All of the money that has to go in
23 to the pension plan that still has to go
24 there, and if a judge had a hearing soon and
25 he tells the city that it can't collect

1 certain taxes in it's future it's all coming
2 back to the property owners. Sewer
3 Authority money is gone, the 511's goes out
4 of the window and then what happens? It's a
5 great question and you will see the answer
6 because so many people are just desperate to
7 leave here.

8 When you have people who go out and
9 you are talking about going to the county
10 and asking them for the little bit of
11 information they have from the reassessment
12 they started, but if people are -- if a
13 reassessment takes place what really needs
14 to happen in this city, and if you are
15 realtor, Mr. Evans, you are a realtor, okay,
16 people are going out getting assessments on
17 their homes and finding out they are worth
18 30 or 35 thousand dollars and they are
19 selling them for next to nothing, and then
20 the city or the county or the school
21 district say, oh, that house is worth 100
22 grand, but I just bought it last month for
23 \$30,000, so just because the government
24 needs money and can create false numbers
25 doesn't create prosperity. It's just one

1 more step on that lonely trail to
2 bankruptcy. And you know something, people
3 are leaving this city and they are
4 abandoning their properties like they have
5 for a long time, and we have five members on
6 council who did the silliest things.

7 Mr. Bolus hit on it. The sale of
8 the Parking Authority, the sale of the Sewer
9 Authority didn't shore anything up and it
10 didn't raise any revenue for the city. And
11 another point Mr. Bolus makes, and he is
12 quite correct, is those parking spaces are
13 owned by a corporation, not the city, and
14 they should pay to have them plowed or bring
15 their own plows in. Good luck, gentlemen,
16 and I hope that everyone in the city
17 understands that five councilmen, well, four
18 council members couldn't answer the question
19 on whether to petition the PUC to divide
20 their rates. That just goes to show who you
21 represent. Thank you.

22 MR. WECHSLER: Samuel Gantz.

23 MR. GANTZ: Samuel Gantz. So I'm
24 not here to discuss the Sewer Authority.

25 MR. EVANS: Thank you.

1 MR. WECHSLER: You want to take a
2 shot at it anyway?

3 MR. GANTZ: No, I don't know enough
4 about it. I have a simple question, so I am
5 a third generation Scrantonian, recently
6 moved back to join a practice as a local
7 physician here, and I got a parking ticket
8 outside of my office and I didn't know the
9 new laws, which are apparently, and correct
10 me if I'm wrong, that you are not allowed to
11 park within 25 feet of any intersection; is
12 that correct? Do you know?

13 MR. WECHSLER: It goes by the state
14 law. I'm not familiar with the state law,
15 but if that's what you found.

16 MR. GANTZ: Well, I was told it was
17 a city law, do you know?

18 MR. WECHSLER: Well, the traffic
19 laws are state.

20 MR. GANTZ: State. Therefore, to
21 change any of those the only way to do it
22 would be petition the state legislation?

23 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

24 MR. GANTZ: And what about -- how do
25 we get about this only for a at least where

1 I live in the Hill Section with the
2 alleyways if it's 25 feet, which is what I'm
3 told, then there is maybe one to two legal
4 parking spots on each side of the street
5 which is obviously not enough for those of
6 us who live there.

7 MR. WECHSLER: Yeah, the one thing
8 that the city has done in congested areas
9 they have gone to permit parking where
10 residents have preference, but if you follow
11 the strict rules of the state parking is
12 limited.

13 MR. GANTZ: So there is no permit
14 parking where I live how do I go about that?

15 MR. WECHSLER: You need a petition
16 from your neighbors.

17 MR. GANTZ: To get that done?

18 MR. WECHSLER: Yeah.

19 MR. GANTZ: And then what about the
20 fact that there are many spots that are set
21 up as metered parking or other things within
22 25 feet, how does that work?

23 MR. WECHSLER: Yeah, I would think
24 you would have to bring that to the
25 attention of the city if that's an illegal

1 spot we had have to take a meter out.

2 MR. EVANS: You are correct with
3 that though, there are -- especially
4 downtown and in the Hill Section there is
5 metered parking that is in is violation of
6 that.

7 MR. GANTZ: Yeah, literally across
8 the street.

9 MR. EVANS: Yeah.

10 MR. GANTZ: So some places if you
11 park in the meter there you won't get the
12 ticket, others just kind of --

13 MR. EVANS: I always felt that
14 enforcement should be done on a common sense
15 approach not necessarily the letter of the
16 law, so that is ashame that you are getting
17 a ticket for being that close.

18 MR. GANTZ: Right, okay, I
19 appreciate it. Just a second thing if, may,
20 I don't know this is the right forum either,
21 on the 500 block of Monroe, where my
22 children go to school, it's a one-way
23 street. There are so many people driving
24 down that street the wrong way. There are
25 signs but I was wondering how I could get

1 something bigger, better. All of the
2 college students don't realize it and there
3 are a lot of children in the street there.
4 I don't know if this is the correct forum
5 for that?

6 MR. WECHSLER: Is there a warning
7 sign at the beginning of the block?

8 MR. GANTZ: There is one, it is
9 there, I don't know if there is something
10 you could paint in the street or something
11 because when I go to pick up my kids I would
12 say on average every time I go at least once
13 one car is going down the street the wrong
14 way.

15 MR. WECHSLER: You have more chance
16 of getting a bigger sign than something
17 painted in the street, so we will contact
18 Chief Graziano.

19 MR. GANTZ: If you could.

20 MR. WECHSLER: And have somebody go
21 up and there and take a look.

22 MR. GANTZ: Thank you.

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

24 MR. WECHSLER: Anyone else?

25 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening, Council,

1 Dave Dobrzyn, resident and taxes paid, fees
2 paid. I'm going to reiterate a few things
3 here. In the 300 block of Cedar Avenue take
4 a drive down I think we got a few people
5 from Minooka here right after the gas
6 station, it's ruined even more.

7 And once again on trash, it's time
8 to have a per barrel for seniors where they
9 are given a regulation barrel similar to
10 what we would have for cans and bottles and
11 we could color it yellow or color it red,
12 red connotates something with medical waste
13 so I don't know about red, but at any point
14 there should be if we are going to get a
15 discount there should be an acceptable
16 amount that these people could get a
17 discount, and whether their daughter's
18 marriage winds up on a rock and they have
19 four kids moving in the next week after they
20 get that discount who knows, you know, and
21 tons of trash out there so who knows.

22 And, okay, we keep hearing about the
23 sewer and, of course, well, you know, my
24 concern originally with this council was
25 that we are too accepting of Amoroso and he

1 came from the Chamber of the Commerce and
2 the school paid his first year, Lackawanna
3 College and, you know, his whole sale pitch
4 to the council, I feel sorry for you guys,
5 but it's fall on your swords. If you make
6 it back this time don't be so quick to fall
7 on your swords and don't be so accepting
8 because, obviously, he had a bill of goods
9 that weren't -- wasn't necessarily the
10 greatest thing in the world and who knows
11 whether it will be a benefit or not.

12 I'm going to bring up this medical
13 business again with insurance. This is more
14 of a national issue, but if your local
15 hospital is going broke because they are not
16 being paid for service every emergency room
17 has to take in a patient and all patients
18 are eligible and years ago it was \$21,660
19 per year you were off the hook for care, so
20 keep in mind that that's being figured in
21 your insurance policy because currently the
22 Congress is having a caviar and champagne
23 party over there, gee, I don't care plan.
24 Gee, I don't care health care plan.

25 And when I bring up stuff like this

1 the Parole of Pardons, the bottom line on
2 this is that anybody that was arrested for
3 anything in the past you are thrown in with
4 murderers, rapists, armed robbers with
5 loaded guns, or whatever, the worst of the
6 worst. No matter how minute the crime was,
7 no matter how silly it was, no matter how
8 many years ago you have to go a three-year
9 thing for the Parole and Pardons and you
10 might want to mention some day that you
11 think it's ridiculous to your representative
12 and the law needs to be changed to take into
13 consideration what somebody did or didn't do
14 and stop throwing them in with arches
15 criminals. I mean, that's okay for somebody
16 that's a murderer or whatever, but it's not
17 any good for petty crime or passing a bad
18 check or something like that. It's just
19 silly to have that on their record 30 years
20 later. Thank you and have a good night.

21 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you. Anyone
22 else?

23 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening,
24 Council. Marie Schumacher. Last week, MR.
25 Evans, you said you would get me the amount

1 budgeted for the third party administrator,
2 how much was that?

3 MR. EVANS: I didn't get it. I'm
4 sorry, I didn't get a chance to get that for
5 you.

6 MS. SCHUMACHER: I certainly hope
7 that they used Zip Recruiter for that RFP.
8 And doing a little spring cleaning on some
9 of the old stuff, whatever happened to the
10 Brunetti's Market traffic issue? Has that
11 been resolved and, if so, how?

12 MR. WECHSLER: The legislation died
13 at the end of the year so there is no
14 legislation pending about that.

15 MS. SCHUMACHER: So there is nothing
16 happened?

17 MR. WECHSLER: Status quo.

18 MR. EVANS: Yeah, status quo, which
19 I think is what they wanted was statu quo.
20 The legislation was changing so they didn't
21 want that.

22 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. What about
23 what's the status of the price negotiation
24 for the procurement of the Serrenty Reserve
25 Center and who is doing it?

1 MR. WECHSLER: There has been no
2 activity on that as far as I know.

3 MS. SCHUMACHER: I'm sorry?

4 MR. WECHSLER: There is no activity
5 on that as fare as I know as of right now.

6 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, how long ago
7 was it you passed that legislation? Maybe
8 in the future when you do stuff like that
9 you need to put a time limit on it so we get
10 some action.

11 Did I hear right when Joan was up
12 here that we will have the clean list of
13 insured properties within three weeks?

14 MR. EVANS: That's what I was told,
15 yes. It's being round robined through all
16 the department heads to make all of the
17 information is absolutely correct and we
18 should have an answer within two weeks.

19 MS. SCHUMACHER: On that, did we
20 include all of the vacant properties that
21 are the city's?

22 MR. EVANS: I'll check that. I
23 don't think they were on the original list,
24 vacant properties.

25 MS. SCHUMACHER: I don't either, but

1 I'd like to know if they're not how we are
2 covered for all of those empty lots that we
3 are owning.

4 Now, a couple of weeks ago it was
5 noted that there was going to be a SAPA
6 meeting on the following Tuesday, who of you
7 went to the SAPA meeting and anybody else?

8 MR. EVANS: Myself and --

9 MR. WECHSLER: And representatives
10 from the Zoning Board, Mr. Penetar went,
11 Mr. King went, and I think Mr. Bulzoni went.

12 MS. SCHUMACHER: Mr. King is a
13 member, yeah.

14 MR. EVANS: And Mr. Bulzoni also was
15 there.

16 MS. SCHUMACHER: And what came out
17 of that? I mean, they are our master --
18 that is our master plan and things like that
19 we have been putting off for --

20 MR. EVANS: Yeah, the Zoning Code.
21 They talked about funding available probably
22 in September if we all go in together all
23 the groups that are a part of it and
24 Scranton will know our share of that funding
25 for a new study for a new Zoning Code. So

1 September is the date we are looking at
2 right now for that study. We could probably
3 do it ourselves, but I think they prefer
4 doing it as a group because that's what the
5 intent was in the first place.

6 MS. SCHUMACHER: And what's the
7 target for having that done?

8 MR. EVANS: Well, if the grant is
9 successful in September I think we're
10 looking at probably the first quarter; is
11 that right, Joe?

12 MS. SCHUMACHER: I'm sorry, you
13 turned your head. When?

14 MR. EVANS: The first quarter of
15 2018 would be the target date for
16 completion.

17 MS. SCHUMACHER: And would that
18 include the other issues such as the
19 Airbnb's where we are now --

20 MR. EVANS: Absolutely.

21 MS. SCHUMACHER: -- only -- are we
22 still only going after one resident of all
23 of the Air bnbs?

24 MR. EVANS: I don't know what LIPS
25 is doing as far as that concerned, but

1 that's the whole intent. Now, my
2 perspective is to get all those issues in
3 the new code that aren't presently
4 addressed.

5 MS. SCHUMACHER: What about drone
6 and--

7 MR. EVANS: All of that.
8 Everything.

9 MR. WECHSLER: All of that. Medical
10 marijuana. It's a lot of different issues
11 that have come that didn't exist when this
12 code was written.

13 MR. EVANS: And if I remember
14 correctly I was on the Planning Commission
15 at the time when I helped draft the old code
16 we had public meetings all the time so when
17 the new code is done it should all be done
18 in public.

19 MS. SCHUMACHER: Oh, definitely.
20 Now, pension reform, the trust that is being
21 established is one thing, but having the
22 money sit there unproductively is something
23 else, and I would like to know when you are
24 going to invite Senator Blake and the other
25 two house, Haggerty and Flynn, in here to

1 tell them what it is what we need and what
2 it is we want in pension reform.

3 MR. EVANS: Yeah, that would be a
4 good idea.

5 MS. SCHUMACHER: I mean, they could
6 go to the Chamber of Commerce, they can go
7 all kind of places but I never see them
8 here.

9 MR. EVANS: I mean, I've had private
10 conversations with them all the time, it's
11 one of my favorite issues, but I don't have
12 a problem wit that. If they'd be agreeable
13 to come that was would be a nice --

14 MS. SCHUMACHER: Agreeable?

15 MR. EVANS: That would actually be a
16 good work session to be perfectly honest
17 with you. That would be something that be
18 productive.

19 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, I think more
20 than a work session. I mean, work sessions
21 you have back in the Governor's room and
22 people don't have access. It should be
23 here.

24 MR. EVANS: Well, that's one maybe
25 we can have out here, yeah.

1 MS. SCHUMACHER; and I think that
2 should be done sooner, like. Before your
3 August break certainly because that is very
4 important to all of us. One more quick one,
5 during the last administration, Mr. Rogan,
6 you said you were going to find out we
7 invested -- we, taxpayers, I think at the
8 federal level invested over a million
9 dollars on the slate roof for that Jersey
10 Central Railroad Station and something was
11 supposed to have been done with it and
12 excuse was the bridge wasn't finished and
13 the bridge got finished and you were going
14 to follow up and let us know and I am still
15 waiting.

16 MR. ROGAN: I was actually in that
17 building last week with the owner and
18 basically what I was told is pretty much the
19 same thing the owner owns it and he is
20 hoping to develop it, but it's a private
21 entity. The city doesn't have -- you know,
22 we can't go in and say, "You have to open
23 it."

24 MS. SCHUMACHER: Yes, you can.
25 Learn from your mistakes. When we put over

1 a million dollar slate roof on a building
2 there should be a deadline for which we get
3 a return on that, meaning a business in
4 there and some revenue out of it so learn
5 from your mistakes, please. Thank you.

6 MR. WECHSLER: Anyone else?

7 MS. REED: FIFTH ORDER. 5-A.

8 MOTIONS.

9 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Perry?

10 MR. PERRY: Yes, just a couple of
11 quick things, but I'll touch on the sale of
12 the Sewer Authority, that was a hot topic
13 and the continues to be and has been. I
14 know all of us we had questions every day
15 not just every week on the sale with a lot
16 of intricate questions about the nature of
17 the deal and how it was brokered. Again, I
18 know Councilman Wechsler has said this
19 numerous times, this deal was between the
20 Sewer Authority and American Water Company.
21 We did not have any, any information on this
22 until the deal is finished. There was
23 absolutely -- we knew nothing about any of
24 the particulars. When the deal came out, we
25 ask for particulars like we were going to

1 have them. We weren't happy with the
2 particulars we got and we went back in and
3 got some more. When we got more they were
4 redacted and now this is where we are at.

5 You know, we are just as frustrated
6 as everybody is. With that said, you know,
7 I'm happy to move forward with an
8 independent audit. I think it's actually --
9 it's needed and it's what hopefully we can
10 put this issue to rest and get the
11 information that we want to be shared put
12 online. I really do believe that.

13 A couple of follow-ups from last
14 week. About two weeks ago I put in a
15 request for a speeding device. If you
16 remember, there is a stretch in South Side
17 in Minooka that goes from Cherry Street to
18 Davis Street which is just a continuous road
19 that has no stop signs, no red lights,
20 nothing, and it is just -- it's ripe for
21 speeding. It has been brought up by this
22 council many times. Here is the response I
23 got back from Chief Graziano.

24 "As per your request on Birney
25 Avenue, we recently installed a speed timing

1 device at the 2500 block of Pittston Avenue
2 which is in the same stretch but just on a
3 parallel street and after we collect data
4 there for 30 days we can move it to the
5 Birney Avenue location. In the mean time, I
6 have directed increased enforcement there."

7 So basically what's going to take
8 place by the Scranton Police Department is
9 after they collect 30 days, it's probably
10 been almost three weeks now that that
11 speeding device has been on Pittston Avenue,
12 they are going to move that speeding device,
13 it's just like a radar detector that records
14 the speed as far as drive-by and it tracks
15 the actual speed so they can see if there is
16 actually a speeding problem in that area.
17 They will move that to Birney Avenue. Until
18 the mean time, they are going to put a
19 bigger police presence in that area to see
20 if we can slow down traffic because growing
21 up in that area there is accidents all of
22 the time. There is parking on both sides of
23 the street and there is plenty of children
24 up and down that two-mile stretch so I was
25 happy to see the increased presence going

1 having some issues. His latest issue he was
2 having is with the curb in front of his
3 house not being put back after the water
4 main break. I went to visit on Monday, by
5 the time I got there it was already fixed so
6 he was very happy for that to be replaced by
7 DPW. He then took me on his whole tour of
8 his area. We went on both ends of that long
9 300 yard or 300-yard pipe that has to be
10 cleared out and we spent some quality time
11 together and there was a neighbor with him
12 as well.

13 They are very happy with the work
14 that DPW has put into them, but just by
15 seeing that area it's just a very, very low
16 lying area. Anybody that has ever been out
17 there and familiar with that portion of West
18 Side that comes right off the mountain and
19 Mr. Srebro kind of lives right at that
20 sunken in corner, and that drainage pipe is
21 just -- that's the last ditch effort to move
22 water. That's after, you know, the damage
23 has been done just to move the water and the
24 real issue is how are we going to get that
25 water from Keyser from West Mountain into

1 the creek and get it just away from the
2 homes there. There is many homes that are
3 effected and that's going to be an issue
4 that's going to take a lot of governmental
5 heads to put together. I think Mr. Rogan,
6 it was you a couple of months ago that had a
7 work session with PennDOT, Mr. Pocius, DPW,
8 that might be something that we are going to
9 follow-up on again to get movement on this
10 but because this is going to be a major
11 project and everybody is aware of it, but
12 this is going to be something that just
13 needs to be followed up on.

14 I'll also take a trip up Dorothy
15 Street and I'll cheek in with Director
16 Gallagher to see if that project is
17 finished, but in the recent correspondence
18 I've had with Director Gallagher I perceived
19 that project to be almost 100 percent
20 complete. The disconnected pipe running
21 into into basin was reconnected, it was
22 filled in, and based on what Les was saying,
23 Mr. Spindler, I'm guessing that they are
24 just waiting for that to sink down and then
25 they are going to probably do topsoil, but

1 I'll go on scene and check that out with
2 Director Gallagher.

3 Also, Mrs. Reed, if we could do a
4 letter to Mr. Pocius about that gentlemen's
5 comment about the 500 block of Monroe Avenue
6 if you already didn't make a note of it
7 about the one-way. Maybe there is a better
8 way that we could make that -- beginning of
9 that one-way more noticeable. I know in
10 many parts of the city we have two ways that
11 run into a one-way and if you are not really
12 familiar with the area it does become a
13 safety hazard, so we need to make that very
14 prominent.

15 And, finally, last week I requested
16 to have a meeting with Mayor Courtright
17 about the street signs that was brought up
18 by a speaker last week. He was unable to
19 meet with me last week, but he did drop me a
20 phone call. His intention is to draft an
21 RFP which is going to be -- he feels it's a
22 job that's going to be too big for DPW to
23 take care of, too many street signs, it's
24 just going to take too manhours so he wants
25 to perform a study on it, see what the cost

1 is going to be and how we are going to get
2 this fixed. I gave more information, I'll
3 gladly pass it on to you, but I just want to
4 keep everybody in the loop. The meeting
5 never took place, but he was able to drop me
6 a phone call and let me know that was his
7 intentions. And I believe I have covered
8 everything as of tonight so thank you.

9 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr. Perry.
10 Mr. Rogan?

11 MR. ROGAN: Yes, I'll pick up where
12 Mr. Perry left off on the street signs. We
13 did, as was mentioned last week, we did send
14 a correspondence to OECD to see if street
15 signs were an eligible project for our CDBG
16 allotment, and they are, so CDBG funds can
17 be used for street signs.

18 Now, the catch is they can only used
19 in low to moderate income neighborhoods, so
20 it's the same areas where the city street
21 paving though OECD can be done, the street
22 signs can be done, and I think the most --
23 what would make the most sense is as the
24 streets are being paved when there is
25 problems with the street signs to do it all

1 at once because the work is already going to
2 be done in the area. So if we are going to
3 be putting money into a newly paved street
4 people should be able to know what street
5 they are actually on, so I am encouraged
6 that we can use some OECD funds for street
7 signs in our neighborhoods, so this is
8 something I definitely think the city
9 through the DPW should apply for next year
10 and council ultimately has the say and, you
11 know, on the allocation of those funds so, I
12 think that something we would certainly
13 support.

14 Next, I had mentioned, and this is
15 legislative, but I'll just mention it now,
16 the bid -- I mentioned it last week about
17 the bidding for the streetlight repairs and
18 I do want to thank our city clerk for
19 pulling these previous bids for me, and it
20 does seem that the bids are consistent with
21 previous years. This year is actually a
22 little bit cheaper. They fluctuate between
23 the man hours and the truck hour, so the
24 cost, overall cost seems very reasonable,
25 but the actual spent is what I want to watch

1 because such an investment was put in to put
2 all new streetlights in the City of
3 Scranton. There should not be a large cost
4 of maintenance. They are under warrantee,
5 so there really should be almost very little
6 utilization of this contract, so there
7 should be a significant savings over what we
8 had in the previous years when I know all of
9 us up here were getting calls every day
10 about problems with street lights being out,
11 so definitely will support that so we do
12 have somebody in place to fix issues as they
13 arise, but it should be extremely limited
14 once the project is fully completed.

15 I did get, I don't want to say a
16 complaint, but questions from some people
17 who live in areas that the streetlights
18 still haven't been converted over and I do
19 want to let them know that the project is
20 still ongoing. There are issues in
21 different places that are being sorted out.
22 All the requests that I have received so far
23 have been dealt with in a timely manner so
24 definitely want to thank the contractors for
25 that.

1 And just to reiterate what I
2 mentioned at the beginning of the meeting in
3 regard to the Sewer Authority sale, having
4 the Auditor General's Office come in and do
5 an independent investigation sounds to me
6 like at perfect way to get the information
7 out to the public and to finally put this
8 issue to rest. It shouldn't have taken
9 doing that, it should have just been put
10 out, but I do agree having them come in and
11 do an investigation and it's somebody that's
12 well-respected that's not somebody off the
13 street coming in and doing it, and it really
14 -- I don't want to say it's a no cost to the
15 taxpayers because it is a taxpayer funded
16 position, but is something that I support
17 and I do look forward to hopefully seeing
18 those findings as soon as possible. And
19 that is all for now. Thank you.

20 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr. Rogan.
21 Mr. Evans?

22 MR. EVANS: Thank you. I have an
23 update on several requests that I mentioned
24 last week at our city council meeting. I
25 requested from Licensing and Inspections

1 that they begin a review of the 40 different
2 fees that are charged in their office. The
3 goal is to find ways to reduce, consolidate
4 or eliminate those fees where appropriate
5 with a special focus on the 17 fees that are
6 generating less than \$10,000 per year each.
7 In fact, those 17 fees generate in 2017, the
8 estimate for the budget, \$71,400 or
9 approximately 3 percent of the total budget
10 of the department which is \$2,356,000. The
11 other two fees will generate almost \$2.28
12 million. So the question clearly is \$71,400
13 really worth the continuing ill-will created
14 in the business community and doesn't this
15 simply reinforce the perception or maybe the
16 reality that Scranton continues to be
17 non-business friendly. We need to do a much
18 better job than we are.

19 I discussed this with Director
20 Hinton this week and he agreed to do a
21 comprehensive review of all of the fees
22 presently being charged in Licensing and
23 Inspection. I look forward to working with
24 him to change the dialogue to something more
25 relevant than just 44 fees directed as our

1 business community.

2 Also, I discussed with Director
3 Hinton the proliferation of graffiti in the
4 city. We agreed to confer and discuss how
5 we can attack this problem from several
6 fronts, so I'll keep everybody informed as
7 we move forward with that because it's
8 something that we need really to attack
9 again because it has gotten out of hand.

10 And, finally, my request to the
11 county for the data accumulated through the
12 finished field work for all of the City of
13 Scranton properties from the abandoned 2009
14 reassessment, it is my understanding from
15 the article in the Scranton Times that my
16 request was received and that I would be
17 getting a written response from the county
18 chief of staff. As of today that has not
19 been received.

20 However, we did learn there are 20
21 boxes of material from the reassessment. We
22 have not been able to find out yet if there
23 is an electronic file of the information
24 that we are searching for. I still expect
25 there will be such a file somewhere but I am

1 prepared to go through all 20 boxes to see
2 exactly what the net results of spending
3 \$4.3 million in taxpayer money looks like,
4 and what it is a value of the paperwork and
5 the information in those boxes.

6 So we'll keep everybody informed on
7 that -- we haven't received that letter yet;
8 right?

9 MS. REED: No.

10 MR. EVANS: So I expect that
11 probably soon. We were supposed to -- it
12 was worked on last week by the chief of
13 staff and find out hopefully they are -- in
14 the meantime they found the electronic
15 version so we can get that information to
16 LIPS and continue to do a better job in
17 finding out what properties should be on the
18 rental registration ordinance. That's all I
19 have for tonight.

20 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr. Evans.
21 Mr. Gaughan.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes. Thank you. 524
23 North Rebecca Avenue, I mentioned last week
24 it's a house that the back porch collapsed
25 and neighbors are seriously concerned about

1 it. The house has been condemned now for
2 nearly ten years so we did reach out to the
3 Licensing and Inspections Department.
4 Mr. Hinton got back to us. This house was
5 supposed to be demolished previously but for
6 whatever reason it was not, so we urge
7 Mr. Hinton to put on the demolition list and
8 put it near the top of that list or at the
9 top of that list and he agreed to do that so
10 I want to thank him personally for that and
11 we did send correspondence out to the
12 neighborhood who lives next door alerting
13 him of that update, so I am hopeful that
14 that home gets demolished as soon as
15 possible.

16 We did get a couple of complaints
17 about the 400 block of Mahon Court in the
18 Hill Section about trash being strewn
19 everywhere so we are going to send somebody
20 down from the Licensing and Inspections
21 Department to see if they can take care of
22 that.

23 Also, speeding on Shimf Court behind
24 Cedar Avenue in Minooka. There is young
25 children in this area so we are going to

1 send that complaint out to the Licensing and
2 Inspections Department. We did an update
3 from our solicitor on the I guess you would
4 call it a snafu with the 10 percent discount
5 on the garbage fee. As you know, I have
6 been talking about this now for a few weeks
7 and, again, it seems like someone new pops
8 up every day that came down to the Treasury
9 Department and expecting the 10 percent
10 discount on their \$300 garbage bill and they
11 did not get it for whatever reason, so I
12 would like to request that the
13 administration put in writing what their
14 interpretation is of the ordinance because
15 I'm confused as to why they are turning
16 people away for the 10 percent discount and
17 I would still request that these people who
18 have reached out to me get their \$30 refund
19 as son as possible because I think it's
20 totally unfair.

21 I would like to thank the DPW for
22 taking down the rest of a very dangerous
23 tree on North Irving Avenue. The neighbors
24 in that block, particularly the neighbor in
25 the home right in front, was very happy that

1 that was taken care of. Also, I know I keep
2 bringing this up, and I know there is lot of
3 trees that have to be taken down across the
4 street, but I would like an update on the
5 1100 block of St. Ann's Street. That tree
6 is really dangerous and it looks hike it's
7 going to fall right on a house and it's
8 going to fall down any minute actually. I
9 was up there today, take another look at it,
10 so if we could send something to the city
11 forester again and the DPW.

12 I have not received a response from
13 the mayor about the meeting on the Civil War
14 Museum downstairs. I would like an update
15 from him as soon as possible on that because
16 I am concerned about where that group is
17 going to go or if they are going to stay.

18 We did receive the street sweeping
19 program, the updated list from May 1 to May
20 5 the street sweeper will be in the West
21 Scranton area from the Tripp Park section,
22 Dixon Street to Gibson Street. May 8 and
23 May 12 from Oram Street to Washburn Street
24 including all avenues and streets
25 in-between.

1 I am very happy that my colleagues
2 agreed to support my motion earlier this
3 evening to invite the Auditor General of the
4 State of Pennsylvania in to audit the sale
5 of the Scranton Sewer Authority. I would
6 just like to reiterate my comments from
7 earlier tonight, transparency and openness,
8 in my opinion, has been totally lacking from
9 this deal and, you know, I am deeply
10 concerned about the way that this whole
11 thing went down. My question is, and
12 hopefully we will be able to get this
13 answered, did this deal serve the best
14 interest of the taxpayers and the ratepayers
15 or did it serve the best interest of the
16 select few? And I think it's unclear
17 because it is like and it has been like for
18 the past few months pulling teeth to get
19 information that should be readily
20 available.

21 When you have 50 attorneys on a
22 deal, when you have attorneys making over
23 \$800 an hour that's \$6,000 -- almost \$6,000
24 a day, when you have attorneys making 100
25 and some thousand dollars in a month, which

1 is more than some people make in an entire
2 life, I don't think it's too much to ask to
3 see what they did for that amount of money.
4 And when I received the invoices and saw
5 that everything was redacted because of the
6 attorney/client privilege it's absurd. The
7 whole thing is absurd in my opinion.

8 So, again, I am hopeful that the
9 Auditor General will accept our invitation
10 to come in here and take look at this deal
11 to make sure that is it was in the best
12 interest of the taxpayers and the ratepayers
13 of this city. And that's all I have for
14 this week. Thank you.

15 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr.
16 Gaughan. Just an update on some of the
17 issues that we discussed last week. This
18 evening right before the meeting I received
19 a call from Larry West, who is chief of
20 staff for Senator Blake's office. He had a
21 conversation with DEP today regarding
22 Mr. Young's property in Greenridge. We
23 contacted the DEP to find out if the city
24 would be held responsible if we did any work
25 on that site. The verbal response is not in

1 writing, but it's kind of an indication of
2 how DEP feels is that if we do work in that
3 area and it does not significantly impact a
4 cost benefit ratio that was done prior on
5 that project, if it doesn't change that
6 benefit of doing the full project then
7 probably we will be allowed to get on that
8 property and do some work.

9 I did contact with Mr. Young this
10 evening and we are going to have to get
11 together with all parties concerned and get
12 on Mr. Young's property, and I do believe
13 that this opens the door for us now to at
14 least begin the planning stages of what the
15 scope of work and a cost of what it will
16 take to repair those properties up there. I
17 think this is an encouraging sign. It's
18 definitely not a solution to the problem.
19 It's definitely not the answer that we have
20 been waiting for, but it is the progress
21 that I believe has been made to get the city
22 on Mr. Young's property and to at least
23 begin the evaluation of the project.

24 Mr. West also told me that the major
25 project is still on the active list out in

1 the state. It is being considered to be
2 pushed up in funding, but these projects are
3 long-term projects so for the whole project
4 right now if we were able to get it back
5 started up the earliest that they would be
6 able to get design of that would be June of
7 2018, which is not acceptable for
8 Mr. Young's problem but in terms of the
9 solution for the entire section of
10 Meadowbrook perhaps we can get something to
11 it. Mr. Evans mentioned and I mention all
12 of the time, unfortunately, there is a speed
13 of the government and it's not fast.

14 Another issue that was brought up
15 last week in terms of the Keyser Valley,
16 there is a project out there with an
17 electronic transfer line. We did contact
18 the city planner and I don't like to read
19 from a script but this is what he told us:

20 It says, "Power Line Project. And
21 it it's involving cutting of trees behind
22 Oakwood estates. They are removing those
23 trees for a new power line, an expanded
24 power line. The power line will travel to
25 the Theodore Street power station behind

1 North Scranton Goodwill apartments --" this
2 is the part that I just want people to pay
3 attention to -- "No permits are required
4 because they are public utility."

5 They did provide the plan to the
6 city for courtesy for review and as was
7 provided to me, some information from PPL
8 and I won't read the whole thing but in
9 regards to this based on some case law it's
10 clear that public utilities are exempt from
11 local zoning, subdivision and land
12 development ordinances. Further, under
13 Pennsylvania law, storm water management
14 ordinances are akin to zoning and land
15 developments. The local municipal zoning
16 board has exclusive jurisdiction over these
17 appeals for the determination of the zoning
18 officer and multiple engineers and the
19 administration and any land use or provision
20 thereof.

21 It is disconcerting to me that the
22 public utility is not subject to the same
23 requirements that private citizens are. We
24 are working with Mr. King and keeping our
25 eye on this project. I believe that the

1 water company -- I'm sorry, I keep talking
2 about the water company, the electric
3 company is responsible enough to do this
4 project in a way that will not effect
5 citizens downstream because it was done in a
6 poor manner that may effect their power
7 lines so I do believe they are going to do
8 it with the proper infrastructure, but it is
9 something that we are going to have to keep
10 our eye on.

11 I did have a conversation this week
12 also with the mayor and also with Linda
13 Aebli concerning the street signs. The
14 street signs, from the street signs study
15 done a few years ago and the price tag on
16 that was over \$700,000 to do the street
17 signs, and I believe that study was done
18 before there was a new development back in
19 Minooka and I'm not sure Tripps Park was
20 built yet or not so the cost right now would
21 be significant, probably approaching
22 somewhere between \$800,000.

23 As Mr. Rogan stated, I think this is
24 something that we are going to have work on
25 in stages where we take a certain area of

1 the city that we can use federal funds for
2 and also combine them with city funds and
3 gradually get this process of doing a
4 section of the city at a time.

5 From speaking with the mayor this
6 morning, he is a committed to starting this
7 project, but \$700,000 for a city in
8 distressed status is a lot of money. When
9 we talk about paving and talk about storm
10 water management, street signs are a
11 priority but we have to work in conjunction
12 with those other priorities.

13 Another issue that's been hanging
14 around that there is several complaints on
15 is the elevator in the Linden Street parking
16 garage. As of right now, the elevator is
17 still not working in the Linden Street
18 building. Currently, the plans for the
19 improvements have been approved. They are
20 in the process of awarding the contract and
21 they are going to give out also a request
22 for proposal for the demolition of the
23 current elevator. Best estimates right now
24 talking to NDC, any completion of the
25 project is no better than six weeks away.

1 So it is -- the news to me was not
2 encouraging because that is a problem for
3 people that use that garage, but it is
4 something that is on a radar and we
5 constantly call and make sure that the
6 project isn't forgotten and they are moving
7 along with it.

8 The last thing that I have to talk
9 about is something that I am kind of
10 becoming an expert on is gypsy moths. Gypsy
11 moths have been controlled pretty much
12 throughout the city, but there are still
13 pockets problematic gypsy moths in the city,
14 especially up on the East Mountain area
15 because of the extra wooded areas that we
16 have.

17 The other night the storm shook out
18 a lot of the gypsy moths out of the trees,
19 which is actually a good things. Gypsy
20 moths are killed by moisture and by rain so
21 that is actually a good thing that they do
22 get killed.

23 The county is planning on doing
24 gypsy moth spraying sometime within the next
25 two weeks upon the weather. It can't be too

1 windy, it can't be too rainy, but the county
2 is doing a good job monitoring this issue.
3 I would like to thank -- I did speak with
4 Mr. Wallace before he went away, that's why
5 he didn't get back to you, he went away the
6 last few days, but he did get back to me
7 about the gypsy moths and also Mr. Bill
8 Davis, who is the Director of Parks for the
9 county, got a quick response to this
10 request. That's it.

11 MS. REED: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION - A
12 RESOLUTION - APPROVING IN ACCORDANCE WITH
13 SECTION 147(F) OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE
14 OF 1986, AS AMENDED, A PLAN OF FINANCING OF
15 THE SCRANTON-LACKAWANNA HEALTH AND WELFARE
16 AUTHORITY AND DECLARING THAT IT IS DESIRABLE
17 FOR THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF THE
18 PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON FOR THE
19 SCRANTON-LACKAWANNA HEALTH AND WELFARE
20 AUTHORITY TO UNDERTAKE A PROJECT FOR ALLIED
21 HEALTH CARE SERVICES.

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

25 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

1 MR. EVANS: Second.

2 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All
3 those in favor of introduction signify by
4 saying aye.

5 MR. PERRY: Aye.

6 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

7 MR. EVANS: Aye.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

9 MR. WECHSLER: Aye. Opposed? The
10 ayes have it and so moved.

11 MS. REED: 5-C. FOR INTRODUCTION – A
12 RESOLUTION – AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND
13 OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE
14 AND ENTER INTO A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
15 WITH THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA,
16 DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (“PDA”), DIVISION
17 OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES TO DELEGATE SPECIFIC
18 WEIGHTS AND MEASURES INSPECTION, AND
19 ENFORCEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE CITY OF
20 SCRANTON.

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

24 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

25 MR. EVANS: Second.

1 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All
2 those in favor of introduction signify by
3 saying aye.

4 MR. PERRY: Aye.

5 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

6 MR. EVANS: Aye.

7 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

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

10 MS. REED: SIXTH ORDER. 6-A.
11 READING BY TITLE - FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
12 99, 2017 - AN ORDINANCE - AUTHORIZING THE
13 MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS
14 TO DISBURSE EIGHTY-NINE THOUSAND DOLLARS
15 (\$89,000.00) FROM THE ACCOUNT INTO WHICH
16 REPAYMENT OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT ACTION GRANTS
17 (UDAG) ARE DEPOSITED (UDAG REPAYMENT
18 ACCOUNT) TO BE USED FOR THE PURCHASE OF
19 PAVING MATERIALS FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON'S
20 PAVING PROGRAM.

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

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

25 MR. EVANS: Second.

1 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? All
2 those in favor signify by 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: SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A. FOR
10 CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE -
11 FOR ADOPTION - FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 96,
12 2017 - AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 65,
13 2016, AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED "GENERAL CITY
14 OPERATING BUDGET 2017" BY TRANSFERRING
15 \$296,895.00 FROM ACCOUNT NO.
16 01.401.13090.4299 (NON DEPARTMENTAL
17 EXPENDITURES - CONTINGENCY) TO ACCOUNT NO.
18 01.080.00083.4260 (DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC
19 WORKS BUREAU OF HIGHWAYS - RENTAL VEHICLES &
20 EQUIPMENT) TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT FUNDING FOR
21 THE RENTAL VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT ACCOUNT
22 THROUGH THE 2017 BUDGET PERIOD.

23 MR. WECHSLER: What is the
24 recommendation of the Chairperson for the
25 Committee on Finance?

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

4 MR. ROGAN: Second.

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

7 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

8 MR. PERRY: Yes.

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

10 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

12 MR. EVANS: Yes.

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

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

19 MS. REED: 7-B. FOR CONSIDERATION
20 BY THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS - FOR
21 ADOPTION - FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 97, 2017
22 - CLOSING AND VACATING A PORTION OF AN
23 UNNAMED ALLEYWAY BETWEEN SOUTH MAIN AVENUE
24 AND HALSEY COURT IN THE 1200 BLOCK OF SOUTH
25 MAIN AVENUE.

1 MR. WECHSLER: What is the
2 recommendation of the Chairperson for the
3 Committee on Public Works?

4 MR. GAUGHAN: As Chairperson for the
5 Committee on Public Works, I recommend final
6 passage of Item 7-B.

7 MR. ROGAN: Second.

8 MR. WECHSLER: On the question? On
9 the question, I just have a note that I'd
10 like to read. When the city vacates a road
11 or an alleyway it's only giving the public's
12 right to use it, it's not a transfer of
13 deed. It will be vacated for purposes as
14 stated at a public hearing held on April 22.

15 The vacating this land does not
16 remove any of our city requirements in terms
17 of zoning, planning, it just allows it to be
18 used for development. Roll call, please?

19 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

20 MR. PERRY: Yes.

21 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

22 MR. ROGAN: No.

23 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

24 MR. EVANS: Yes.

25 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

1 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

2 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

3 MR. WECHSLER: Yes. I hereby
4 declare Item 7-B legally and lawfully
5 adopted.

6 MS. REED: 7-C. FOR CONSIDERATION BY
7 THE COMMITTEE ON RULES - FOR ADOPTION - FILE
8 OF THE COUNCIL NO. 98, 2017 - AMENDING FILE
9 OF THE COUNCIL NO. 63, 2016, AN ORDINANCE,
10 AS AMENDED, ENTITLED "AMENDING FILE OF THE
11 COUNCIL NO. 155, 1999, AN ORDINANCE ENTITLED
12 "PROVIDING FOR THE LICENSING AND REGULATING
13 OF CONTRACTORS DOING BUSINESS IN THE CITY OF
14 SCRANTON INCLUDING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
15 GRANTING OF PERMITS AND FEES FOR SAME;
16 PROVIDING PENALTIES AND RIGHTS OF APPEAL" BY
17 ADDING AND DELETING DEFINITIONS, UPDATING
18 THE DEPARTMENT NAME AND DIRECTOR'S TITLE,
19 UPDATING APPLICATION FORMS, THE REQUIREMENTS
20 FOR CONTRACTORS LICENSE, LICENSE FEES,
21 ISSUANCE OF PERMITS, CONFORMANCE TO CODE,
22 REVOCATION, SUSPENSION, DENIAL, PROHIBITED
23 ACTS, STOP WORK, CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY
24 AND TEMPORARY CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY,
25 PERMIT FEES, INSPECTIONS, FINES FOR

1 VIOLATIONS AND APPEALS PROCEDURE AND
2 DELETION OF SECTIONS 17 AND 22 IN THEIR
3 ENTIRETY", BY ADDING UNDER SECTION 1,
4 DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS, THE
5 DEFINITION FOR SPECIALTY CONTRACTOR'S
6 LICENSE; ADDING THE LETTER L, UNDER NUMBER 3
7 IN SECTION 2, CONTRACTORS LICENSE, ADDING
8 SPECIALTY CONTRACTOR UNDER SECTION 3,
9 APPLICATION FOR LICENSE, ADDING M.
10 REQUIREMENTS FOR A SPECIALTY CONTRACTOR; AND
11 UNDER SECTION 6, LICENSE FEES, ADDING THE
12 FEES FOR MASONRY CONTRACTOR LICENSE,
13 RESIDENTIAL CONTRACTOR LICENSE, AND
14 SPECIALTY CONTRACTOR LICENSE.

15 MR. WECHSLER: As Chairperson for
16 the Committee on Rules, I recommend final
17 passage of Item 7-C.

18 MR. ROGAN: Second.

19 MR. WECHSLER: On the question?

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question.
21 I'll be voting "no" on this legislation
22 tonight. I feel it's unnecessary. We're
23 adding another definition and we are
24 charging another fee on the working people
25 of this city and I'm also concerned that

1 language in the legislation which says, "At
2 the discretion of the Director of Licensing
3 and Inspections" is going to give too much
4 discretion and too much power to the
5 director and too much control so I'm
6 concerned about that and I'll be voting
7 "no."

8 MR. WECHSLER: 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: No.

17 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

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

21 MS. REED: 7-D. FOR CONSIDERATION BY
22 THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS - FOR ADOPTION
23 - RESOLUTION NO. 146, 2017 - AUTHORIZING THE
24 MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS
25 TO EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH

1 URBAN ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS, INC. TO
2 PERFORM MAINTENANCE OF STREET LIGHTS FOR A
3 TWELVE (12) MONTH PERIOD FROM MAY 1, 2017
4 THROUGH APRIL 30, 2018.

5 MR. WECHSLER: What is the
6 recommendation of the Chairperson for the
7 Committee on Public Works?

8 MR. GAUGHAN: As Chairperson for the
9 Committee on Public Works, I recommend final
10 passage of Item 7-D.

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-D legally and lawfully
25 adopted.

1 MS. REED: 7-E. FOR CONSIDERATION
2 BY THE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
3 FOR ADOPTION - RESOLUTION NO. 147, 2017 -
4 ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE
5 HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURE REVIEW BOARD
6 ("HARB") AND APPROVING THE CERTIFICATE OF
7 APPROPRIATENESS FOR MARK J. SOBECK ROOF
8 CONSULTING, INC., 15 SOUTH FRANKLIN STREET,
9 SUITE 210, WILKES-BARRE, PA, FOR EXTERIOR
10 MASONRY CLEANING AND RESTORATION AND THE
11 PAINTING OF EXTERIOR WOOD AND METAL
12 ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS AT THE DIOCESE OF
13 SCRANTON'S SAINT PETER'S CATHEDRAL, RECTORY,
14 AND CHANCERY AT 315 WYOMING AVENUE,
15 SCRANTON, PA 18503.

16 MR. WECHSLER: What is the
17 recommendation of the Chairperson for the
18 Committee on Community Development?

19 MR. ROGAN: As Chair for the
20 Committee on Community Development, I
21 recommend final passage of Item 7-E.

22 MR. EVANS: Second.

23 MR. WECHSLER: On the question?
24 Roll call, please?

25 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

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MR. PERRY: Yes.

MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

MR. ROGAN: Yes.

MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

MR. EVANS: Yes.

MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

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

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

MR. ROGAN: Motion to adjourn.

MR. WECHSLER: Meeting adjourned.

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