

COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON

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HELD:

Tuesday, March 31st, 2020

LOCATION:

VIA YOUTUBE

Maria McCool, RPR
Official Court Reporter

1 C O U N C I L M E M B E R S :

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- WILLIAM GAUGHAN, PRESIDENT
- KYLE DONAHUE, VICE PRESIDENT
- MARK MCANDREW
- JESSICA ROTHCHILD

- LORI REED, CITY CLERK
- KATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK
- KEVIN HAYES, COUNCIL SOLICITOR

1 (Pledge of Allegiance.)

2
3 MR. GAUGHAN: Please remain standing
4 for a moment of silent reflection for our
5 service men and women throughout the world and
6 also for those who have passed away in our
7 community, especially Father Joseph Sica.

8 And I'd also like to take a special
9 moment of silence tonight as well for people
10 throughout the world who are fallen ill with
11 the coronavirus, those who have tragically
12 passed away in our community, in the State of
13 Pennsylvania, in the United States of America
14 and in the world.

15 Let us think about them and their
16 families at this time that they may find peace.
17 Let us also take a moment of silence to think
18 about the doctors, the nurses, the researchers
19 and all medical professionals and first
20 responders who seek to heal and help those
21 affected and who put themselves at risk in the
22 process.

23 May they find protection and peace
24 whether we are here at home or abroad
25 surrounded by many people suffering from this

1 illness or only a few. Let us stick together.
2 Let us endure together. Let us mourn together,
3 persist and prepare together. And in place of
4 our anxiety, let us continue to hope and find
5 peace. Thank you. Okay, Miss Carrera, roll
6 call, please.

7 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McAndrew.

8 MR. MCANDREW: Present.

9 MS. CARRERA: Dr. Rothchild.

10 DR. ROTHCHILD: Present.

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

12 MR. DONAHUE: Here.

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Present. Thank you,
15 Miss Carrera. Mrs. Reed, could you please
16 dispense with the reading of the minutes at
17 this time?

18 MS. REED: THIRD ORDER.

19 3-A. MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
20 OF THE MEMBERS OF SCRANTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
21 HELD FEBRUARY 3, 2020.

22 3-B. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM
23 CITY COUNCIL SOLICITOR KEVIN HAYES, ESQUIRE,
24 DATED MARCH 10, 2020 REGARDING VACANCY ON
25 SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL.

1 3-C. MINUTES OF THE CIVIL SERVICE
2 COMMISSION MEETING HELD DECEMBER 5, 2019.

3 3-D. MINUTES OF THE HISTORICAL
4 ARCHITECTURE REVIEW BOARD MEETINGS
5 HELD FEBRUARY 13 AND FEBRUARY 26, 2020.
6 HARB Meeting Minutes 02-13 & 2-26-2020.pdf.

7 3-E. MINUTES OF THE ETHICS BOARD
8 REORGANIZATION MEETING HELD JANUARY 9, 2020.

9 3-F. CONTROLLER'S REPORT FOR MONTH
10 ENDING FEBRUARY 29, 2020.

11 3-G. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM
12 CITY COUNCIL SOLICITOR KEVIN HAYES, ESQUIRE,
13 DATED MARCH 17, 2020 REGARDING PUBLIC MEETINGS
14 DURING THREAT OF CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19.)

15 3-H. MINUTES OF THE NON-UNIFORM
16 MUNICIPAL PENSION BOARD MEETING HELD
17 FEBRUARY 19, 2020.

18 3-I. MINUTES OF THE SCRANTON POLICE
19 PENSION COMMISSION MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 19,
20 2020.

21 3-J. MINUTES OF THE COMPOSITE
22 PENSION BOARD MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 19, 2020.

23 3-K. AGENDA FOR THE NON-UNIFORM
24 MUNICIPAL PENSION BOARD MEETING HELD
25 MARCH 18, 2020.

1 3-L. ORDER RECEIVED FROM LACKAWANNA
2 COUNTY COURT OF COMMON PLEAS DATED MARCH 17,
3 2020 REGARDING CONTINUATION HEARING FOR CITY OF
4 SCRANTON REQUEST TO INCREASE LOCAL SERVICES TAX
5 FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020.

6 3-M. CORRESPONDENCE SENT TO MAYOR
7 PAIGE G. COGNETTI DATED MARCH 19, 2020
8 REGARDING CITY EMPLOYEES FURLOUGHS.

9 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Mrs. Reed.
10 Are there any comments on any of the Third
11 Order items from any of the Council people
12 present? If not, received and filed. Do any
13 Council members have any announcements at this
14 time?

15 MR. DONAHUE: I have one. Just a
16 reminder that tomorrow is Census Day. Everyone
17 should have got their census forms in the mail.
18 You could either fill out the form and return
19 it via mail or you could go online and fill it
20 out. So I encourage everyone to do that.
21 There's a lot of money at stake with the
22 results of the census.

23 And just a quick thing, if you're
24 responding online, you cannot save your
25 progress. So once you start, you have to

1 finish. Otherwise you have to start all over,
2 just a reminder there. So please everyone get
3 their census forms filled out because tomorrow
4 is Census Day. Thank you.

5 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Anyone
6 else have any announcements?

7 MR. MCANDREW: Yeah, I have a quick
8 one. I would love to be able to announce that
9 there's a church picnic coming up or a chicken
10 dinner. But unfortunately at this time there
11 isn't any because of this horrible global
12 health crisis.

13 But I just want to say everybody
14 stay safe out there. And this shall pass and
15 we'll be happy to announce these events in the
16 future. Thank you.

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. I have two
18 announcements. First, as I mentioned at the
19 top of the caucus, a public hearing will be
20 held next Tuesday, April 7th at 5:45 p.m., for
21 Item 5-B on tonight's agenda. It is the Office
22 of Economic and Community Development's
23 Five-Year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action
24 Plan for 2020.

25 Obviously this will not be like any

1 other public hearing that we've have had in
2 terms of coming to Council Chambers and
3 speaking at the public hearing. So what we're
4 going to ask people to do is it will be
5 advertised in the newspaper.

6 If you would like to comment
7 specifically on Item 5-B, OECD's Five-Year
8 Consolidated Plan and the Annual Action Plan
9 for 2020, please send your comments to Lori
10 Reed our City Clerk at Lreed@scrantonpadotgov.

11 And we will take those comments up
12 and until next Tuesday, April 7th at 4:30 p.m.
13 Usually when we have those type of public
14 hearings for the Five-Year Consolidated Plan,
15 we receive many comments from the head of the
16 Women's Resource Center, a lot of the
17 recipients of our grant funding.

18 So we would encourage those people
19 who would usually come to our meetings to
20 submit their comments in writing to us and we
21 will include those in the official record of
22 the Council.

23 The second announcement I have, if
24 there are any groups or organizations offering
25 any free services or assistance to someone in

1 need during this national emergency and you
2 would like to have that information available
3 on ECTV you could e-mail ChrisECTV@gmail.com.

4 The wording of your e-mail is
5 exactly what they will publish. So if you have
6 any groups or organizations that you're
7 offering free services, make sure you get that
8 to ChrisECTV@gmail.com.

9 The last announcement I'd like to
10 make is, our meeting right now is
11 live-streaming on YouTube. I'm not sure how
12 many people we have watching. But it's also
13 because of the work -- and I want to personally
14 thank Mark Migliore and Chris Bolton from ECTV.
15 Because of their work, we're also streaming
16 this live on ECTV Channel 19 as well.

17 So we are making every effort to get
18 this out to the public, to have the public
19 involved even though obviously these are
20 unprecedented times. And those are all the
21 announcements that I have. Mrs. Reed?

22 MS. REED: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS
23 PARTICIPATION.

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Lori. At
25 this time I would like to make a motion that

1 City Council officially accepts and places the
2 comments received from the following
3 individuals into our official record to be
4 fully included in our minutes.

5 And those people are Norma Jeffries,
6 Gary Colvin, Thomas Coyne, Patricia Nestor,
7 Mara Pugliese, Andrew Staerker, Sammy Narwicz,
8 Maggie Perry, Jeannie Davidson and Daria
9 Vogel -- Daria Vogel. There's been a motion.
10 Is there a second?

11 MR. DONAHUE: Second.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: On the question? On
13 the question, so Mrs. Reed our City Clerk has
14 been keeping a tally of all the public comment
15 that we get. So we've been asking the public
16 to send their comments into Lori Reed at
17 Lreed@scrantonpa.gov.

18 We did receive comments from those
19 people that I just mentioned. We are reviewing
20 these comments. We are taking anything anybody
21 sends from the public, we are obviously taking
22 very seriously. There are some people who just
23 simply wanted to get their thoughts to the
24 Council, which is great. And they wanted to
25 comment on the crisis going on or something

1 related to City business.

2 There are also some people who have
3 posed very specific questions to the Council.
4 We have those e-mail addresses of the people
5 who did pose specific questions. And we will
6 over the next few days take the time to try as
7 best we can to get answers to those questions.

8 We will get in contact with those
9 people and will make sure at our public meeting
10 that we announce the fact that we did get
11 answers to those questions or those concerns
12 that people have, okay?

13 Anyone else on the question? All
14 those in favor signify by saying aye.

15 MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

16 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

17 DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

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

20
21 (QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC)

22

23

24 MS. NORMA JEFFRIES: Question:

25 Since the Library is closed and the use of

1 their computers is not available, hiring
2 documents are so often sent via e-mail with the
3 documents printed, signed, uploaded and
4 e-mailed back to the prospective employer.

5 Any idea as to any source that is
6 available for those hoping to gain employment
7 where they can use a computer? I have let
8 someone use my printer and scanner to complete
9 the hiring process.

10 Any sources available or should be
11 available for job seekers. I tried checking
12 the office supply stores to see if they were
13 open, did not see anything on their website.
14 I will be on the call but was not sure if the
15 mics would be open for questions.

16 Thanks

17 Norma Jeffries

18
19 MR. GARY COLVIN: I noted in
20 today's Times/Tribune the quasi conclusive, but
21 not certified, results of the selection process
22 to fill the open Council seat. It is obvious
23 that selectee will not be me.

24 I had hoped to bring three concerns
25 I had to Council, not, I must admit, sure that

1 Council was the appropriate body, but looking
2 for a way for further discussion. I decided to
3 present them to you in hope you would pass them
4 on perhaps encouraging Council members to see
5 value in them leading to some discussion.

6 (1.) Create a resolution on behalf
7 of this Council to present to the current
8 County Commissioners urging a county-wide
9 reassessment.

10 (2.) Create a rule that anyone
11 presently sitting as an elected Scranton City
12 or Lackawanna County or Scranton School Board
13 official be prohibited from applying for
14 appointment to fulfill an open elected seat for
15 any of these three entities without first
16 resigning from the position now held.

17 (3.) Create a rule prohibiting
18 cross filing for Council openings.

19 I am not sure that items (2) and (3)
20 are even something that Council can address. I
21 am sure that Council can resolve item (1)
22 should it choose to.

23 Items (2) and (3) are a thorn in the
24 electorates' side. Positive strides have been
25 made by that electorate to revitalize County

1 and City government. Removing items (2) and
2 (3) from the election process furthers that
3 revitalization.

4 Sincerely,
5 Gary Colvin, Scranton, PA.

6
7 MR. THOMAS COYNE: Good Afternoon, I
8 was prepared to present at the last Council
9 session, but the interruption seems to have
10 closed the session without input.

11 I would like to officially submit
12 the following on paper. Once we get another
13 council meeting if we get to community input I
14 will repeat it there.

15 Attached is the information I am
16 officially presenting and asking on record.
17 Thanks again,
18 Thomas Coyne.

19 Attachment: Scranton City Council,
20 Today I have one simple question and two
21 separate points of urgency for City Council.

22 1. In reading the Act 47 exit
23 documents, I noticed some concerning verbiage.
24 Based on that, rather than just asking, *IF* the
25 former Fire Chief was given a payout, on

1 retirement, for the sick/vacation days accrued,
2 review of the Act 47 documents reflects this:
3 "The Coordinator recommends that the City not
4 increase the amount of annual sick days or the
5 amount of annual buyout of unused sick days
6 beyond the amounts currently provided."

7 During the chief's tenure,
8 specifically during the time of employment
9 under review, where the Fire Chief was not
10 recording time used, was there an annual buyout
11 provided during the same period and for how
12 many days?

13 2. An immediate concern, there has
14 been a confirmed case of the Coronavirus at the
15 University of Scranton. A Student who lives
16 off Campus was noted that on 3/14 attended
17 parties on 400 block of Clay Avenue, well
18 within the two week infection period.

19 What has the university done to
20 coordinate this exposure with the city, to
21 identify both the student, and everyone at the
22 parties? When and if, what date, the
23 University of Scranton DIRECTLY notified the
24 city of this incident, and how is the
25 university currently coordinating with the

1 city, especially dealing with potential
2 students who may not want to come forward and
3 admit they attended because they are underage
4 and drinking was occurring?

5 3. Though also critical for the
6 city, and being forward looking, the Mayor in a
7 press conference noted her intent to move
8 forward to keep Scranton in the Act 47
9 Distressed City Status.

10 The mayor stated the budget was at
11 risk. And we know it was already at risk by
12 not cutting back or putting in escrow, the 10
13 million legally challenged, but still marked as
14 collectable in the 2020 budget. Her extension
15 was due to the Virus and its effect on the
16 potential loss of revenue to the city due to
17 the shutdown.

18 Act 47 requires both a yearly and
19 five year going forward budget and that is well
20 known to be impossible with both the
21 coronavirus impact and the pending Act 511
22 court case. (We hope to not lose is not a
23 financial plan.)

24 Scranton entered the Distressed City
25 Status on January 10, 1992. We are now 28

1 years into a 5 year plan.

2 The Act 47 exit plan had specific
3 ways to reduce the city's cost. Unfortunately
4 there seems to be a lack of ability or desire
5 to get specific numbers that can be used in
6 evaluating and reducing cost.

7 People have suggested a 30% cut and
8 been told it is unreasonable or we have nowhere
9 to cut. I have three specific areas the city
10 can harvest relief, but only if numbers can
11 support the changes.

12 We have a budget disclosure of
13 monthly trash cost supplied to council in
14 January. But it has been asked for clarity if
15 this included employee, vehicle, gas, and
16 building costs, but a breakdown or clarity was
17 never provided. Does this include the
18 employee, equipment, gas? Or is this provided
19 number just collection and dump fees alone?

20 I would like to request a breakdown
21 of monthly average cost of trash route, both
22 all costs and separated out, employee, vehicle,
23 gas cost or gallons used, recycling route, both
24 all costs and separated out - employee,
25 vehicle, gas cost or gallons used.

1 I have asked and been promised a
2 copy of the current contract with the landfill,
3 last updated by Jimmy Conners' administration.

4 I also asked, if, in that contract
5 the city is obligated to use the landfill
6 exclusively for recycling?

7 Lastly, the city has at the end of
8 this year, the expiration of collective
9 bargaining for both the fire and police
10 departments. Though I support both
11 departments, I also must support the city's
12 continued viability and the undue burden of
13 taxes based on a 3%+ yearly increase.

14 With the 12/30 expiration looming,
15 it is unwise for the city to delay in both
16 evaluation and negotiation to the last minute,
17 because doing this removes bargaining power the
18 city has by turning it into a critical must act
19 now.

20 It has been stated by council in
21 interviewing to fill the open council position,
22 two years goes by fast on a council seat.

23 Eight months goes by even faster.

24 Thank you for your time.

25 Thomas Coyne

1 tcoyne@afg-media.us

2

3

MS. PATRICIA NESTOR:

4

<https://www.facebook.com/106415517582654/posts/142867093937496/>.

5

6

According to this video, Greyhound is still running buses between New York City and Scranton. Martz has suspended this service for two weeks but Greyhound continues.

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Like the one guy who speaks at council says, some people only understands lawsuits.

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Can we get a lawsuit, class action, or otherwise to get them to stop? New York City is a Covid 19 hotspot. And they are ignoring government warnings to stay in their homes. If coming from NYC, they aren't quarantining for 14 days if they continue to go back and forth on the bus. They are bringing this awful disease to Scranton.

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Thanks,

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Patricia

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People are using PPE, personal protective equipment, like rubber gloves and surgical masks in public, to the stores or

1 wherever they go. After use they are not being
2 properly disposed. Instead they are being
3 carelessly littered on the ground, thrown out
4 of cars, etc. I had to pick a dirty surgical
5 mask off my front lawn on Green Ridge Street.

6 Can we quadruple fines for littering
7 during pandemics or anyone who litters items
8 that are used as a barrier against germs? If
9 someone is coughing into their mask, then
10 throws it in my yard, they are putting me at
11 risk.

12 If they throw their dirty gloves
13 into the supermarket parking lot, then someone
14 else has to pick them up. They obviously don't
15 care about the health and safety of others, so
16 make them pay.

17 So Martz put buses on hold.
18 Greyhound still has one way buses from New York
19 City to Scranton. Is the Navy going to send us
20 a hospital ship? Are we going to get 30,000
21 ventilators?

22 How about the National Guard build a
23 temporary quarantine center right there at the
24 bus station. Make Greyhound pay for it. That
25 seems reasonable.

1 Yours truly,

2 Patricia

3 I watched the Mayor's Facebook live.

4 Is she on Greyhound's payroll?

5 Yours truly,

6 Patricia

7

8 MR. ANDREW STAERKER: My concern is

9 the travel of these residents to northeast pa.

10 I view this as non essential travel and

11 strongly believe our local government should

12 enforce the people to self quarantine along

13 with taking their names and home address for

14 accountability purposes.

15

16 MS. DARIA DILEO-VOGEL: Good

17 afternoon, I sincerely hope that you and your

18 loved ones are all healthy.

19 I am one of the furloughed employees

20 from the City of Scranton's clerical unit. I

21 have worked for the City for twenty years. I

22 love my job and I understand that times are

23 chaotic and uncertain. I was impressed and

24 grateful for your words to the Mayor (letter of

25 March 19).

1 My biggest fear is the loss of our
2 health care coverage. Since the City of
3 Scranton is self insured, I am praying that the
4 Mayor continue our policies until our great
5 nation can come through this crisis. This is a
6 public health crisis and our health is so
7 important to all of us at this most trying
8 time.

9 Please do what you can to protect
10 our health insurance coverage. I am grateful
11 for any influence that you may have in this
12 matter.

13 God Bless you and yours.

14 Sincerely,

15 Daria Vogel

16
17 MS. MARA PUGLIESE: I know you are
18 probably getting inundated with calls and
19 e-mails in regard to the City furloughing 24
20 individuals. I read your letter and I am
21 grateful for the support. We are accepting at
22 this point the status of furlough as long as we
23 are going to be called back to work.

24 The group that has been furloughed
25 is very concerned regarding their healthcare

1 insurance being cancelled at the end of April.
2 Please don't allow this to happen. We are
3 eager to return to work and continue our
4 service to the City of Scranton.

5 Sincerely,
6 Mara Pugliese

7
8 MR. SAMUAL NARWICZ: Hello, Mrs Reed
9 and Honorable Council. Below are some
10 questions per the article in the Tribune:

11 1) Does Council have any recourse
12 to stop Mayor Cagnetti from exploiting this
13 crisis as an excuse to lay off workers in
14 various city departments and keeping Scranton
15 in "distressed" status?

16 2) Has politics played a role in
17 who Mayor Cagnetti chose to lay off? It seems
18 like this is all politically motivated on the
19 Mayor's part.

20 3) Why is Mayor Cagnetti allowing
21 part-time workers in some departments while
22 laying off full-time workers in other
23 departments?

24 4) Does Council agree with Mayor
25 Cagnetti's decision to close firehouses?

1 Sammy Narwicz

2 Scranton

3

4

5 MS. JEANNIE DAVIDSON: Dear Council,
6 As you know from my last e-mail the concern the
7 employees of the city of Scranton have, not
8 only have we been furloughed without pay, which
9 in itself could be questioned, but now we are
10 facing losing our insurance.

11 In the midst of a pandemic, our
12 employer is taking our insurance away. I
13 understand that many people are going through
14 exactly what we are going through. The issue
15 here is that other employers had absolutely no
16 choice to close their business or furlough
17 their employees.

18 With our Administration, it was a
19 choice. It was an unfair choice. We as the
20 employees know that you as council are doing
21 what you can to help us, or at least get our
22 concerns made known.

23 Thank you,

24 Please stay Healthy

25 Jeannie Davidson

1 MS. PERRY: Good Morning, City
2 Council. As we currently face this global
3 health crisis it is understandable that the
4 economic impacts will be broad and devastating.
5 Many City clerical workers have been furloughed
6 as a result of the possible economic fallout
7 the City of Scranton may face due to COVID-19.

8 As of right now the furloughs are
9 indefinite and the clerical workers were
10 informed their employee health insurance will
11 only be valid until the end of April. Based on
12 the fact that we are all dealing with a
13 pandemic and are all at risk, this is very
14 nerve-wracking for the furloughed employees,
15 many of whom have worked for the City for
16 decades.

17 After April, those still furloughed
18 will only be able to continue insurance through
19 COBRA, an expensive option for workers who are
20 already only receiving a portion of their pay.

21 Is there any way that these
22 dedicated employees can continue to receive
23 their employee health insurance without the
24 additional cost of COBRA while furloughed? I
25 understand that this is an exceptional request

1 but we are living through an exceptional time.

2 Respectfully,

3 *Maggie Perry*

4
5
6 MR. JOSEPH HEALEY: Hello and thank
7 you for still providing public meetings to the
8 best of your abilities for everyone.

9 Our question is concerning garbage
10 collection. The issue of citizens feeling we
11 pay an outrageous fee to a PRIVATE company for
12 services pales in comparison to the egregious
13 and unscrupulous business practices of said
14 private company.

15 As recently reported in the Times
16 yet again, we are made well aware of their
17 flagrant usage of slave labor (not to give
18 prisoners "something punitive to do") but to
19 exploit and profit handsomely from a partially
20 slave labor workforce.

21 Even if you do not empathize with
22 the exploitation of our prison population, you
23 should be outraged that these free labor
24 services are utilized for the benefit of only
25 ONE particular private company in our area.

1 Last time I checked, I don't
2 remember free labor being farmed out to the
3 restaurant, retail, construction, or any of the
4 other public or private services provided
5 throughout the city.

6 We would like a full explanation of
7 just exactly how this one particular privately
8 owned business hit the jackpot with no
9 accountability.

10 In addition, the citizens would like
11 a full explanation of the scientific reasoning
12 that they are using which now allows them to
13 dump all "blue recycling" directly into the
14 landfill, while at the same time continuing to
15 handle "red recycling" as per usual?

16 If the city cannot directly run our
17 own sanitation department, there are still
18 plenty of other private companies who can and
19 council in conjunction with the Mayor's office
20 need to explore these options (contract or not)
21 asap.

22 Even amidst all that is going on
23 now, this should still be a top priority for
24 the city to aggressively address as they will
25 be counting on hiding behind a national crisis

1 to give cover to their outrageous exploitation
2 of the entire city!

3 Thank you for all you do, and thank
4 you for your time in addressing our concerns,
5 Citizens of West Scranton

6
7 MS. FAY FRANUS: Council members,
8 Fay Franus Scranton. I believe Mayor Cagnetti
9 is doing a superb job looking out for the
10 citizens of the city -- saving the taxpayers
11 money by furloughing employees of the city.
12 These are tough times and Mayor Cagnetti has
13 taken steps that are very necessary. I'm sure
14 it was not an easy decision but when you are a
15 leader you must make these types of decisions.

16 I want to know why city council
17 members feel Mayor Cagnetti should NOT furlough
18 these employees? I say this because you as
19 council members are also suppose to be working
20 for us -- we pay you to do so yet you want to
21 add pressure to the mayor by writing her asking
22 her NOT to do this, which is not right.

23 You should be standing by her and
24 giving the mayor all the support you can and
25 remember that YOU REPRESENT US. WE should be

1 your first and only priority! We have lost
2 jobs ourselves by the thousands.

3 My next comment is I do NOT feel Tom
4 Schuster should be appointed to city council.
5 Mr. Schuster JUST got ELECTED to the Scranton
6 school board in November. I believe that is a
7 slap in the face for every person who voted for
8 him and wanted him to win that seat on the
9 school board. I am tired of people using the
10 school board as a stepping stone to get on city
11 council.

12 We need people who are not
13 politically connected. I truly felt another
14 applicant, Amber Viola has wonderful
15 qualifications and would serve this city very
16 well. She has an extensive background--she
17 supervised many people under her while in the
18 armed services.

19 By appointing "school director"
20 Schuster you are maintaining the same cronyism
21 and old boys club that Scranton is sick and
22 tired of. It is time to rethink this
23 appointment if indeed you want to appoint Tom
24 Schuster. When people are elected to a
25 position whether it be school board or city

1 council they should serve the term they GOT
2 ELECTED for NOT jump ship to further their
3 political career.

4 It is no wonder many don't apply for
5 council positions because they know full well
6 the odds of them getting chosen are slim
7 because they know your mind is already made up
8 when you see your friends wanting this
9 position.

10 You have a chance NOW to change
11 politics as usual in Scranton by not appointing
12 Tom Schuster. Thank you.

13

14 (END OF PUBLIC COMMENT)

15

16 MR. GAUGHAN: And we're going to go
17 back to Mrs. Reed now. Mrs. Reed?

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

19 MOTIONS.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Mrs. Reed.

21 MR. DONAHUE: I'd like to make a
22 motion to nominate a person to fill the
23 position vacated by former Scranton City
24 Councilman Pat Rogan to serve for the remainder
25 of this year and all of next year 2021 with

1 said term scheduled to expire at 12 noon on
2 January 3rd, 2022.

3 MR. GAUGHAN: A motion has been made
4 to fill the position vacated by former
5 Scranton City Councilman Pat Rogan. Is there a
6 second?

7 MR. MCANDREW: Second.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: This motion is simply
9 to place a nomination on the table. All those
10 in favor of introduction, signify by saying
11 aye.

12 MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

13 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

14 DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye. Opposed? The
16 eyes have it and so moved.

17 MR. DONAHUE: I make a motion to
18 nominate Thomas Schuster to fill the unexpired
19 term of former Scranton City Councilman Pat
20 Rogan for the remainder of this year and all of
21 next year 2021 with said term scheduled to
22 expire at 12 noon on January 3rd, 2022.

23 MR. MCANDREW: Second.

24 MR. GAUGHAN: On the question?

25 DR. ROTHCHILD: Yes, on the

1 question. I just want to reiterate some of the
2 concerns that I had for this appointment of
3 Mr. Schuster. And I do know that he is
4 certainly capable. Because of his position on
5 school board, I'm opposed to his appointment.

6 I feel that it will be detrimental
7 to the school board. I think that we had other
8 qualified candidates that would be well-suited
9 for the position as well. So for those
10 reasons, I think that I'm opposed. Thank you.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Anyone
12 else on the question? I would -- sorry. Did
13 someone else want to on the question, Kyle or
14 Mark?

15 I just want to say on the question,
16 so as I mentioned last week, my vote is going
17 to be for Tom Schuster. As the other Council
18 members sat in on the interviews a few weeks
19 ago on Saturday, I thought everyone did a good
20 job.

21 And it was a difficult choice. It
22 was not an easy decision by any means. I
23 thought all six people did very well. But the
24 City in my opinion faces some very unique
25 challenges. And after listening to the

1 interviews and looking at everybody's resume,
2 it was my belief that Mr. Schuster is the best
3 equipped at this time to help this City Council
4 address them.

5 One of the things that I look at is
6 Mr. Schuster's record on the school board. I
7 don't think Mr. Schuster should be knocked for
8 being in public service or being on the
9 Scranton School Board.

10 The Scranton School Board as we all
11 know gets a bad rap because of all the things
12 that have gone there over the last few years.
13 But Mr. Schuster stuck out to me as one of the
14 people who really exposed the mismanagement of
15 the district.

16 The other thing that stuck out to me
17 was he had a great interview. I thought he
18 answered the questions, had an understanding of
19 the issues that face the City. And he also did
20 a really great job as the chairperson for the
21 Budget and Finance Committee over at the school
22 board.

23 So he demonstrated his independence
24 as a public servant. He demonstrated the fact
25 that he always pushes for transparency and

1 openness which is something that this Council
2 and myself personally has kind of hung our hat
3 on. And I believe that he will be the best
4 person for this position. And that's why he
5 has my vote. Anyone else on the question?
6 Okay. All those in favor of the motion signify
7 by saying aye.

8 MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

9 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

10 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye. Opposed?

11 DR. ROTHCHILD: Opposed.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. The ayes have
13 it and so moved. Mr. Schuster will be our
14 new --

15 MS. REED: Mr. Gaughan, excuse me.
16 We need a roll call vote.

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Oh, I'm sorry. Thank
18 you, Mrs. Reed. Kathy, I'm sorry. Can you do
19 a roll call?

20 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McAndrew.

21 MR. MCANDREW: Yes.

22 MS. CARRERA: Dr. Rothchild.

23 DR. ROTHCHILD: No.

24 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

25 MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

1 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

2 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes. Okay. So the
3 motion passed three to one. Mr. Schuster will
4 take his seat next Tuesday. He has been in
5 contact with Mr. Hayes in terms of getting
6 sworn in and how that whole process will work.

7 I want to congratulate Mr. Schuster
8 on his appointment. And I think he will work
9 well with this Council. Okay, now, we'll move
10 to comment from the Council members.
11 Councilman McAndrew, do you have any motions or
12 comments tonight?

13 MR. MCANDREW: Yes, I do. So I'm
14 glad the Mayor came and explained some of the
15 rationale, not that I agree with all of it but
16 at least she explained some of the rationale
17 regarding the furloughs. And hopefully we're
18 going to establish more dialogue with the fire
19 department.

20 Also, a couple things were brought
21 to my attention this week. So, of course, the
22 U.S. Families First Coronavirus Response Act,
23 which offers paid sick leave where they don't
24 have to exhaust their sick time. So I hope
25 we're following that within the City because it

1 applies to the public sector. I'm sure they're
2 aware. I'm just making a point of it.

3 Also, you know, I forgot -- or I
4 remembered that we're self-insured. So they
5 brought up healthcare before. So like the
6 school district, we're self-insured. So when
7 your benefits lapse, you get an extra 30 days
8 because they are paid 30 days ahead.

9 That's how I remember it. I hope
10 maybe we can look into that with the City. So
11 if they say at the end of April they're over,
12 that means they get another month. I'm almost
13 positive that's how it works with self-insured
14 bodies. Let's please look into that. Maybe
15 Solicitor Hayes and/or Miss Reed can pose that
16 question to administration.

17 Something else was brought to my
18 attention today. So I know, you know, we're
19 under a shutdown and, you know, essential
20 businesses can operate. We kind of have a
21 handle on what they are.

22 But a couple people came to me over
23 the course of this week and said what about
24 ChemLawn? Supposedly, you know, there's people
25 out there fertilizing grass, these companies,

1 is that allowed and who is policing that?

2 I guess there's still some
3 contractors out there maybe building a deck for
4 somebody. I don't know if they are doing it on
5 their own. I'm sure that would be okay. It's
6 your house. It's your property. It's your
7 deck.

8 But I believe that some of this is
9 occurring -- only because it's been brought to
10 my attention. I'm just, you know, passing it
11 forward. Where are we at? Who's supposed to
12 police that? Who enforces that? I think we
13 need to look into that. And is there a vehicle
14 to report this?

15 I know maybe we report, you know,
16 certain issues with LIPS but -- or where do we
17 report someone that's, you know, maybe
18 violating the shutdown? You know what I'm
19 talking about. So if someone could look into
20 that for me too, please?

21 MAYOR COGNETTI: Is it possible to
22 answer that? I don't want to go out of turn.

23 MR. GAUGHAN: I actually --

24 MR. MCANDREW: --

25 MR. GAUGHAN: No, that's okay, Mark.

1 Mark, do you have anything else?

2 MR. MCANDREW: No, but please
3 answer. I'm glad you're still here, Mayor.

4 MR. GAUGHAN: No, that's okay. What
5 I'd like to do -- what I should have done is in
6 Fourth Order, Mayor, I was going to give you
7 the opportunity to speak. So if you don't
8 mind, we'll run through everyone's comments.
9 And at the end of the meeting when we ask for
10 any further business if you wouldn't mind
11 addressing that. That would be great if you
12 can. I appreciate it. And now, Dr. Rothchild,
13 do you have any motions or comments?

14 DR. ROTHCHILD: I don't. I think I
15 would just like to say people need to continue
16 to stay at home and adhere to the orders that
17 Lackawanna County was given by the Governor.
18 It's, you know, it's really important that we
19 try to flatten the curve where the
20 coronavirus -- there are a lot of vulnerable
21 people out there that we need to protect. But
22 then there are lot of us, you know, it could be
23 me. I could -- I could easily die from it too.

24 There's plenty of young people
25 without health issues that are really suffering

1 from this condition. So it is really important
2 that you're just going out for the essentials
3 and this might answer part of Councilman
4 McAndrew's concern too. I think the State
5 Police are enforcing those rules.

6 And just take extra precautions if
7 you are going to the grocery store. I still
8 see people going into stores with, you know,
9 children or older parents with them. So try to
10 go alone if you are going shopping or to use
11 delivery services. Thank you.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. Great. Thank
13 you, Dr. Rothchild. And, Councilman Donahue,
14 do you have any motions or comments?

15 MR. DONAHUE: I'd just like to
16 acknowledge first and foremost our doctors, our
17 nurses, our healthcare professionals, our
18 police, fire, public works employees, grocery
19 and pharmacy store employee and anyone else
20 that continues to show up to work every day and
21 provide necessary life sustaining services
22 under the current cloud of uncertainty, I think
23 they deserve a huge debt of gratitude for the
24 courage and heroism. And I really just want to
25 say thank you for all you do. And that's all I

1 have.

2 And I just urge everyone to stay
3 home, practice safe social distancing. To be
4 quite honest, this is going to get worse before
5 it gets better. But I think we'll get through
6 it. And we'll get through it together. That's
7 all I have for right now.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. Thank you. I
9 just have a few comments. First, I was going
10 to do this last week before we were
11 interrupted. But I want to thank our City
12 Clerk, Lori Reed; Kathy Carrera who does a
13 great job in our office; Kevin Hayes our
14 Solicitor; all of the Council members for
15 trying the best that we can to work through
16 these difficult circumstances to ensure that we
17 still have public meetings.

18 As everyone knows, this is not an
19 easy time for anyone. And being a government
20 body trying to have meetings and trying to
21 figure this all out has been quite the task.
22 But I want to thank Lori and Kathy for all that
23 they've done.

24 And I also want to thank again Mark
25 Migliore and Chris Bolton from ECTV who I've

1 been on the phone with back and forth just
2 trying to figure all this out. And they have
3 done a tremendous job. And they're a
4 tremendous, tremendous asset to our community.

5 The second thing I want to mention
6 briefly is we received via e-mail today from
7 the Mayor, which I appreciate, the Act 47
8 coordinator's recommendation to the Secretary
9 DCED for the City of Scranton in terms of their
10 recommendation on whether we are going to exit
11 or not exit Act 47.

12 I have not -- this is I think about
13 21, 22 pages. I have not had the opportunity
14 obviously because we just received it. I think
15 everyone just received it late this afternoon.
16 I have not had the opportunity to go through
17 this fully.

18 But I did go towards the end. I
19 didn't read through the meat of the document
20 but it looks to me and, Mayor, at the end of
21 our meeting here we didn't have time in the
22 caucus, but if you want to comment at all on
23 this I would appreciate it. It looks like they
24 are not making a definite determination that
25 they are going to recommend our exit from Act

1 47 due to the coronavirus crisis.

2 So without reading through the
3 document I can't really comment on it fully.
4 But this will be in Third Order next week so
5 that the public could take a look at it and
6 we'll go from there.

7 My final comment tonight is just in
8 terms of everything that's been going on in our
9 community here in Scranton and really
10 throughout the country and throughout the
11 world. These are usual times to say the least.
12 They're difficult times.

13 And my heart goes out to every
14 single person who is suffering from the
15 coronavirus, all the people that have
16 tragically passed away. I personally think of
17 the nurses, the doctors, all of those front
18 line medical professionals who are working long
19 hours to take care of their patients. This is
20 not a joke. It is not a hoax. It's not
21 something that any of us should take lightly.

22 And I think in our community at
23 least we are not taking it lightly. We need to
24 work together as a community. We need to work
25 together and we are working together as a

1 Council with Mayor Cignetti. We need to make
2 sure that our most vulnerable are taken care
3 and they are not forgotten.

4 Each one of us in the City needs to
5 do our part by staying home as much as we
6 possibly can, staying away from large crowds of
7 people. And I know as I'm speaking to all of
8 you tonight in this meeting, all of you who may
9 be watching on YouTube or watching on Channel
10 19, there are those who are rightly anxious.

11 And there are those who are afraid.
12 And there are those who have not seen their
13 loved ones in weeks. I haven't seen my parents
14 since February -- although I talk to them and
15 FaceTime them. But it's different not being
16 able to see them in person.

17 There are those people in our
18 community and throughout the world and in the
19 United States who have not seen their
20 grandchildren, who have not seen their sisters,
21 their brothers, their daughters. That part of
22 it really, really is bothering me. And I'm
23 sure it's bothering all of you.

24 There are those out there who are
25 out of a job, who have been furloughed, who now

1 on top of the coronavirus crisis you have the
2 added burden of worrying about money, worrying
3 about health insurance, worrying about all of
4 these different things. And all of us
5 including myself wonder when is this going to
6 end and will we get through it?

7 And the message that I want to relay
8 to all of you tonight is that we will get
9 through this. We're going to get through it
10 together as a City. We're going to get through
11 it together as a state. We're going to get
12 through it together as a country in the United
13 States of America.

14 Now, I was reminded a few days ago
15 of the story of Jonas Salk. And I just want to
16 relay the story to you because I think it gave
17 me hope when I read this story. And I'm hoping
18 that it will give some of you hope who may be
19 listening and watching out there as well.

20 So Jonas Salk was born in 1914 in
21 New York City. And he was the eldest of three
22 sons to Russian-Jewish immigrants. And he was
23 the first member of his family to attend
24 college. And he earned his medical degree from
25 the New York University School of Medicine in

1 1939. And he became a scientist/physician at
2 Mt. Sinai Hospital.

3 In 1947, Salk was appointed the
4 Director of the Virus Research Laboratory at
5 the University of Pittsburgh School of
6 Medicine. And with funding from the National
7 Foundation for infantile paralysis, now known
8 as the March of Dimes Birth Defect Foundation,
9 he began to develop the techniques that would
10 lead to a vaccine to wipe out the most
11 frightening scourge of that time, paralytic
12 poliomyelitis, otherwise known as polio.

13 Now, those of us who are my age and
14 younger, we don't remember polio. We don't
15 remember that scourge. But there is some like
16 my parents and those who are older who do
17 remember it and who were possibly affected by
18 it.

19 Now, contrary to the eras prevailing
20 scientific opinion, Jonas Salk believed that he
21 had a vaccine composed to kill the polio virus
22 that could immunize without risk of infecting a
23 patient.

24 And he ended up administering this
25 vaccine to volunteers who had not had polio

1 including himself, his lab scientist, his wife
2 and all of their children. All of them
3 developed antipolio antibodies. And they
4 experienced no negative reactions to the
5 vaccine.

6 In 1954, national testing began on 1
7 million children ages six to nine who became
8 known as the polio pioneers. And on April
9 12th, 1955, the results were announced. The
10 vaccine was safe and it was effective. In the
11 two years before the vaccine was widely
12 available, the average number of cases of polio
13 in the United States was more than 45,000
14 people.

15 By 1962 that number had dropped to
16 910. Jonas Salk was held as a miracle-worker.
17 He never patented the vaccine. He never earned
18 any money on his discovery. He preferred it to
19 be distributed as widely as possible.

20 His career was amazing. He went
21 onto find other breakthroughs against diseases
22 that affected so many millions of people
23 throughout the world. And in 1995 he passed
24 away at the age of 80. And his famous quote
25 was, "Hope lies in dreams, in imagination and

1 in the courage of those who dare to make **dreams**
2 into reality.”

3 The reason that I wanted to tell
4 that story tonight at this Council meeting is
5 because I don't want people in the City to stop
6 hoping. I know that everybody is anxious
7 including myself. And everybody is scared and
8 afraid and asking that question of when is this
9 going to end? Will we get through it? Because
10 early on it seemed like there was no light at
11 the end of the tunnel.

12 There is light at the end of the
13 tunnel. We have some of the best scientists
14 and researchers in the world. We have every
15 scientist and researcher in the world working
16 on this day and night. So my message to you
17 tonight is let's not stop fighting. Let's not
18 stop hoping. Let's not stop believing. Let's
19 continue to work together as community, as a
20 country, and as a world. And we will beat this
21 virus eventually.

22 We will get back to our normal
23 lives. We'll be able to visit with our parents
24 and grandparents. And I think we'll be
25 stronger and a better community for that. And

1 that is all I have for tonight.

2 MR. MCANDREW: Great job, Bill.

3 MR. GAUGHAN: Thanks. Now, I will
4 usually say if there is no further business;
5 but I want to turn it over to Mayor Cagnetti
6 now. Mayor, if you want to address any of the
7 issues that came up?

8 MAYOR COGNETTI: Good
9 evening/afternoon. I'm not quite sure what it
10 is. But, Councilman McAndrew, to answer your
11 question about if you see something that you
12 think might be either a nonessential activity,
13 nonessential business, please don't call 911.

14 Things like that are not
15 emergencies. But we do want to know about
16 that. So specific to if you see a nonessential
17 business opening -- that is open and you are
18 curious about it, you can give us -- shoot us
19 an e-mail at Scranton311@scrantonpa.gov or call
20 570-348-4101. That would be for businesses or
21 any other entity.

22 However, when you're specific to
23 contract work which is what Councilperson
24 McAndrew raised, you could submit questions
25 about that to -- or excuse me, call

1 570-348-4193. You're welcome to e-mail the
2 Scranton311@scrantonpa.gov. But for a phone
3 number, 570-348-4193.

4 That will take you to our
5 inspections department and they could walk you
6 through that. We have -- we've gotten some of
7 those complaints. I would say though and this
8 is the -- message that will echo what all of
9 you have said.

10 Scranton is doing an incredible job.
11 We know that we haven't seen the peak here by
12 any measure. But people are really staying
13 home. To the extent that we can be successful
14 with this, I mean, we are not seeing the
15 numbers that maybe we could have had we not all
16 come together as a city and as a community to
17 stay at home and heed those warnings.

18 So please everyone out there, please
19 do continue to stay home. It is saving lives.
20 And it's weird out there. It looks strange to
21 have those empty streets. But that's a sign
22 that people are listening and doing it. And I
23 also, you know, you guys have already thanked
24 everyone.

25 I want to reiterate that we're so

1 grateful to all of our healthcare workers, to
2 our first responders, to all of the City
3 employees, all of the employees -- the families
4 all across the City that are going through a
5 difficult economic time.

6 This is hard on every single family
7 in a different way. We're trying to continue
8 to get resources out to the public through the
9 website, through Facebook, through the town
10 halls that I'm hosting. Obviously, you, City
11 Council, are doing your part as well. I have a
12 new -- we're just developing it today.

13 I have one PDF that I'll send to you
14 guys this evening so that you could distribute
15 it to your e-mail lists. We're trying to get a
16 really comprehensive set of information whether
17 it's looking for social services, looking to
18 volunteer, looking for help with business, SBA
19 loans, things of that nature.

20 So we're trying to get all the
21 resources in one place. So we'll send that to
22 you guys tonight. And to the Act 47 point --
23 sorry, to circle back to the technical stuff,
24 so it's Pennsylvania Economy League and DCED
25 from the state. We've been in touch with DCED

1 leadership in the last couple of days.

2 And they've been really helpful in
3 their approach to this. And we are
4 appreciative of them for that. So you guys
5 will see that there's -- they're really taking
6 both PEL and its response and DCED and our
7 calls are really focused on the impact that
8 this virus and this economic situation are
9 going to have on not only on our City's
10 finances but that of all of the other Act 47
11 cities across the state.

12 So we appreciate them being helpful.
13 And I think the letter that you see there is a
14 real sign of hope that we've got a partner down
15 in Harrisburg that will help us work through
16 some of these issues. So thank you guys for
17 having me again. Stay home and stay wise.
18 That is -- it really is working. And I
19 appreciate you guys -- your leadership at this
20 time.

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Mayor.
22 Thank you for coming tonight and participating.
23 We really appreciate it.

24 If there's no further business, I'll
25 entertain a motion to adjourn. Is there a

1 motion to adjourn?

2 MR. MCANDREW: I'll make a motion to
3 adjourn.

4 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. This meeting is
5 adjourned. Stay safe everybody.

6 MR. MCANDREW: Thank you.

7 DR. ROTHCHILD: Take care.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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3 I hereby certify that the proceedings and
4 evidence are contained fully and accurately in the
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6 is a correct transcript of the same to the best of my
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