

COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON

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HELD:

Tuesday, April 21st, 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
- THOMAS SCHUSTER

- 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 now 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.

8 As we have been the past few weeks,
9 let us once again take a moment -- a special
10 moment of silence tonight for the people in our
11 community and throughout the world who are
12 suffering or who have passed away from the
13 coronavirus. Let us think about them and their
14 families at this time that they may find peace.

15 Let us think now about the doctors,
16 nurses, researchers and all medical
17 professionals and first responders who seek to
18 heal and help those affected and who put
19 themselves at risk in the process.

20 May they find protection and peace.
21 Whether we are here at home or abroad,
22 surrounded by many people suffering from this
23 illness or only a few, let us stick together,
24 endure together, mourn together, persist and
25 prepare together.

1 In place of our anxiety, let us
2 continue to hope and find peace. And we will
3 get through this. Thank you. Miss Carrera,
4 roll call, please.

5 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Schuster.

6 MR. SCHUSTER: Present.

7 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McAndrew.

8 MR. MCANDREW: Present.

9 MS. CARRERA: Dr. Rothchild.

10 DR. ROTHCHILD: Here.

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

12 MR. DONAHUE: Here.

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Here. Thank you, Miss
15 Carrera. Mrs. Reed, please dispense with the
16 reading of the minutes.

17 MS. REED: Thank you. THIRD ORDER.

18 3-A. PROCLAMATION ISSUED BY MAYOR
19 PAIGE G. COGNETTI DATED APRIL 14, 2020
20 EXTENDING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IN THE CITY OF
21 SCRANTON.

22 3-B. EMERGENCY DECLARATION ISSUED
23 BY MAYOR PAIGE G. COGNETTI DATED APRIL 15, 2020
24 EXTENDING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY TO APRIL 30,
25 2020.

1 3-C. MINUTES OF THE NON-UNIFORM
2 MUNICIPAL PENSION BOARD MEETING HELD MARCH 18,
3 2020.

4 3-D. MINUTES OF THE COMPOSITE
5 PENSION BOARD MEETING HELD MARCH 18,
6 2020.

7 3-E. AGENDA FOR THE NON-UNIFORM
8 MUNICIPAL PENSION BOARD MEETING HELD
9 APRIL 15, 2020.

10 3-F. CONTROLLER'S REPORT FOR MONTH
11 ENDING MARCH 31, 2020.

12 3-G. BREAKDOWN OF THE ELIGIBLE
13 SALARIES FOR THE LIQUID FUELS ACCOUNT
14 FOR THE MONTHS OF JANUARY, FEBRUARY AND MARCH
15 2020.

16 3-H. MINUTES OF THE SCRANTON POLICE
17 PENSION COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING HELD MARCH
18 18, 2020.

19 3-I. FUEL CARD ANALYSIS RECEIVED
20 FROM OFFICE OF THE CITY CONTROLLER
21 DATED MARCH 23, 2020.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Mrs. Reed.
23 Are there any comments on any of the Third
24 Order items at this time? Okay, if not,
25 received and filed. Do any Council members

1 have any announcements at this time?

2 MR. DONAHUE: Just one briefly, just
3 my weekly reminder that if you haven't filled
4 out your census information to please do so.
5 You could fill out that information online at
6 my2020census.gov. And that's all I have.

7 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Anyone
8 else have any announcements?

9 MR. MCANDREW: I have two actually.
10 So this Sunday, April 26th from 1 to 5 p.m.
11 Scranton/Dunmore Fraternal Order of Police
12 Lodge 2 and the Scranton Police Department will
13 be hosting a free pasta dinner. This dinner is
14 takeout only via drive-through located at 401
15 Railroad Avenue in West Side. Please enter on
16 Railroad Avenue side. Limit of four dinners
17 per vehicle. Great job, guys.

18 Also, this week actually tomorrow is
19 National Secretary's Day also referred to as
20 National Administrative Professional Day. I
21 would like to wish our very own Council
22 secretary, Lori Reed a happy National
23 Secretary's Day and thank her for all the hard
24 work she does for us.

25 I would like to also wish all the

1 secretary administrative professionals that are
2 still working on the front lines during this
3 pandemic and I wish them the same and
4 especially the ones that were recently
5 furloughed from the City.

6 Please know that I appreciate all of
7 you and will be thinking about you all this
8 week. Thank you. That's all I have.

9 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Anyone
10 else have any other announcements?

11 Okay, I have two quick ones. First,
12 if there are any groups or organizations who
13 are offering free services or assistance to
14 someone in need during this national emergency
15 and you'd like to have that information
16 available on ECTV, please e-mail
17 ChrisECTV@gmail.com. The wording of your
18 e-mail is exactly what they will publish on
19 Channel 19.

20 Finally, if anyone would like to
21 comment on any agenda items or City business,
22 please send those comments in writing to our
23 City Clerk, Lori Reed by e-mailing
24 Lreed@scrantonpa.gov. Council will continue to
25 accept public comment until the day of our

1 meeting Tuesday at 4:30 p.m.

2 Public comment is reviewed by the
3 Council prior to our meeting and is placed on
4 the official record and in the minutes of our
5 meetings. Council's agenda is being posted for
6 public review the Friday before our Tuesday
7 meeting.

8 Our agenda and minutes can be
9 accessed by going to www.scrantonpa.gov and
10 clicking on the City Council page. And that's
11 all I have. Mrs. Reed?

12 MRS. REED: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS
13 PARTICIPATION.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Mrs. Reed.
15 At this time I'd ask if someone could please
16 make a motion to accept public comment from the
17 following individuals to be placed into the
18 record and our official minutes of this
19 meeting.

20 MR. DONAHUE: So moved.

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Is there a second?

22 DR. ROTHCHILD: Second.

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. On the
24 question? Okay, on the question, those
25 individuals who have submitted public comment

1 are Fay Franus, Norma Jeffries, Marie
2 Schumacher and Tom Edwards.

3 We did receive all of their comments
4 this afternoon -- earlier this morning and this
5 afternoon. I have them right here with me. We
6 have -- I have reviewed all of the comments and
7 I know my Council colleagues have as well.

8 So what I am going to do again is to
9 make sure that any of these questions that have
10 been posed to Council get to the proper
11 department in the administration. And then we
12 will -- as soon as we get the answers to them,
13 we will give those answers to members of the
14 public.

15 And these will be made part of our
16 official minutes and part of the record.
17 Anyone else on the question? All those in
18 favor of the motion signify by saying aye.

19 MR. SCHUSTER: Aye.

20 MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

21 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

22 DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye. Opposed? The
24 eyes have it and so moved. Mrs. Reed?

25 (Public Comment)

1 (FAY FRANUS)

2
3 I would like to know why I have NOT
4 received any replies from one council person to
5 my questions since March 31st meeting? What
6 possible reason do you have for not responding?

7 You all chose to be public servants.
8 My question is--when will you start doing so?
9 Fay Franus

10
11 (NORMA JEFFRIES)

12
13 2 items from me if I can get a
14 response:

15 1) I checked the Monday and Tuesday
16 Legal Announcements, and do not see any posting
17 for the upcoming meetings. Has this changed?

18 2) The article in the Times Tribune
19 Monday April 20, 2020 regarding Kiosks: Kiosks
20 coming downtown but timing is a little unsure.
21 Tentative locations have been ID'd. Since this
22 project has not been on anyone's radar for 18
23 months, I am sure Mayor Cagnetti and Council
24 President, Mr. Gaughan will take a good look as
25 to whether this is really a good addition to

1 the city. I know that this could raise revenue
2 for the city, but only if the advertisers find
3 it generates more business. I just think it is
4 bad timing and know that the Mayor and Council
5 will take another look at the contract. In
6 addition, the selected locations of these
7 Kiosks raises a few questions for me: A) are
8 these really the best locations? B) are there
9 numbers to support these selections?

10 3) Since these Kiosks will be
11 operational 24/7, I wonder just how much usage
12 will they receive on weekends. Possibly
13 this project should be included with the
14 Walkability Study that is coming.

15 Norma Jeffries
16 City Resident.

17
18 (MARIE SCHUMACHER)

19
20 #1 To clear up an apparent
21 misreading: I requested the CONTRACTUAL due
22 date of the HRG Contract product and nothing
23 more... So again I ask what is the contractual
24 delivery date of the HRG contract report?

25 #1 When will Council begin

1 discussing Operating Budget Expense cut(s) and
2 possible additional Revenue sources?

3 #2 Does overtime affect employees
4 pensions?

5 #3 Do street sweepers have odometers
6 and, if they do, what is the reading on the two
7 new street sweepers?

8 #4 Are expenditures related to the
9 (former) Serrenti property off the books? If
10 the expenses related to the Serrenti property
11 are part of the Operating Budget what accounts
12 have been impacted by this acquisition and in
13 what amount(s).

14 #5 Please explain the following
15 Police Department 2018 expenditure increases
16 over those of 2014:

	Dollars
17	
18	Standard Salaries 732,387
19	Other Salary (Misc.) 227,681
20	Professional Services 18,628
21	City Pension 9,047,506
22	Service & Main. Fees 30,960
23	Training & Certification 40,325
24	Capital Expenses 254,959
25	

1 (TOM EDWARDS)

2
3 Can Council address next years
4 property taxes? No one is working and then
5 we're just going to be expected to plop down
6 full payment?? It needs to be addressed to the
7 public by council. Even if there is no plan
8 yet.

9 Also...Citizens participation
10 questions should be aired. 20 minute time
11 limit.

12 Thank you

13 Tom

14
15 (END OF PUBLIC COMMENT)

16
17 MS. REED: FIFTH ORDER. 5-A.

18 MOTIONS.

19 MR. GAUGHAN: Councilman Schuster,
20 do you have any motions or comments at this
21 time?

22 MR. SCHUSTER: Nothing at this time.

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Councilman
24 Schuster. Councilman McAndrew, do you have any
25 motions or comments at this time?

1 MR. MCANDREW: No, not at this time.
2 Thank you.

3 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Dr.
4 Rothchild, do you have any motions or comments
5 at this time?

6 DR. ROTHCHILD: No, I don't. Thank
7 you.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: And, Councilman
9 Donahue, do you have any motions or comments at
10 this time?

11 MR. DONAHUE: Just briefly I want to
12 urge residents to continue to stay home to
13 practice social distancing to only go out if
14 you absolutely need to. I know we're all
15 anxious to get back to normal. I know I am.
16 But, you know, it's not about, you know,
17 whether -- I know from my perspective I've had
18 this conversation with Councilman Gaughan this
19 afternoon.

20 The scariest part about this virus
21 to me is that you could have it and not show
22 symptoms. So whether or not, you know, you
23 survive -- I might be able to survive it. You
24 know, everyone else might be able to survive
25 it; but, you know, we might be giving it to

1 someone who can't.

2 So I think we have to just continue
3 to practice what we've been practicing. And I
4 urge everyone to observe patience in that. I
5 know it's not easy to do. But I think it needs
6 to be done for the betterment of everybody
7 else. That's all I have.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Councilman
9 Donahue. I just have a few comments. First,
10 Council received an update from Art Moretti
11 today on the gas card audit report. This is
12 something that really has been evolving over
13 the past few months.

14 Mr. Moretti reported to Council
15 today that the draft report is complete and has
16 been sent out for final review. Final review
17 is a two-day process which includes review of
18 the schedules, work papers and narratives.
19 Should there be no significant issues,
20 Mr. Moretti expects to release the report on
21 Friday.

22 Council had previously requested
23 Mr. Moretti's participation in a future meeting
24 once the report was received. So if Council
25 does receive that report Friday, I had asked in

1 caucus to have Mr. Moretti in for our caucus
2 next Tuesday so that we can have him present
3 that report and ask any questions.

4 And certainly if we receive it
5 Friday, that will be placed in Third Order on
6 our agenda so the public could review that as
7 well. So that's an update on the gas card
8 situation. The other thing that I just wanted
9 to mention, for anyone in the public that has
10 any questions at this time regarding City
11 operations or the City's coronavirus response,
12 anything really related to the coronavirus, you
13 could send those requests and those questions
14 to Scranton311@scrantonpa.gov or you can call
15 570-348-4101.

16 The Mayor and her administration
17 have set up this system to field any sort of
18 questions on any of the operations of the City
19 at this time and our response to the
20 coronavirus pandemic.

21 Also on the City's website
22 Scrantonpa.gov, there are a number of lists of
23 resources for people who are in need of food or
24 shelter, help with their utilities, services
25 for veterans, so on and so forth.

1 So if you have access to a computer,
2 please utilize the City's website. There is a
3 ton of information on there. And if you don't
4 have access to the computer you could call,
5 again, 570-348-4101.

6 As Councilman Donahue mentioned, I
7 just want to caution people again in the City
8 to please follow the guidelines set forth by
9 our medical professionals here in the state.
10 Governor Wolf has extended the shelter-in-place
11 order until May 8th, which we all know.

12 And we have to follow this for the
13 safety of not only ourselves but of everybody
14 else. The news of the amount of deaths in the
15 nursing homes is just -- I can't even -- there
16 are no words for it and the heartache that goes
17 along with that.

18 So we need to again, not only worry
19 about ourselves but worry about everybody else.
20 I could not believe my eyes yesterday when I
21 saw the utter selfishness and ignorance of
22 people gathered in large crowds down in
23 Harrisburg to protest Governor Wolf's orders.

24 Every single one of us wants to get
25 back to normal and eventually we will. But for

1 now we have to stay home. We have to stay away
2 from large crowds as much as we possibly can.

3 For the most part from what I've
4 seen, the people of Scranton have done a
5 relatively good job in listening in to the
6 guidelines and the shelter-in-place order. But
7 we can't become complacent. And, you know, my
8 concern is -- and I talked to the Mayor
9 extensively about this that, you know, on May
10 8th everyone thinks that they can just go out
11 and go back to normal.

12 It's going to be a gradual process
13 hopefully. But this isn't a one size fits all
14 situation. And we can't treat it like that.
15 So we need to continue to do our part. We need
16 to continue to have hope as well although that
17 is difficult.

18 There are a number of agencies.
19 There are a number of people in our City that
20 are out there willing to help you if you have
21 mental health issues or if you're in need of
22 food or shelter, please call the number that I
23 gave you before or go to scrantonpa.gov or send
24 your questions or concerns to
25 Scranton311@scrantonpa.gov and someone will put

1 you in the right place for that because, you
2 know, I just went for a ride with my wife and
3 kids just to get out of the house yesterday.

4 And you see people walking around
5 and you wonder if they are in the same
6 situation as I am where we can order food and
7 have it delivered to our house. There's many
8 people in our City who can't do that.

9 There's many people in nursing homes
10 who haven't seen their family. There's many
11 elderly people who live by themselves. So we
12 need to look out for each other during this
13 crisis. And I think that we are. We're doing
14 a good job with that and I hope that we will
15 continue to do that. And I'm confident that we
16 will get through this.

17 MR. DONAHUE: I think Bill froze
18 there for a minute. So we'll give him a minute
19 to get back.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: I'm frozen again,
21 yeah. I don't know where I left off.

22 MR. DONAHUE: It was right at the
23 end if you want to --

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Yeah, well, all I'm
25 saying is -- yeah. Thank you. I was just

1 saying that, you know, as long as we continue
2 to do our part, I'm confident that we can get
3 through this crisis. And before I freeze again
4 I'll shut up and we can move on. Mrs. Reed?

5 MS. REED: Thank you. 5-B. No
6 business at this time.

7 SIXTH ORDER. 6-A. No business at
8 this time.

9 SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A. No business at
10 this time.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Mrs. Reed.
12 If there is no further business, I'll entertain
13 a motion to adjourn at this time.

14 MR. DONAHUE: Motion to adjourn.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: This meeting is
16 adjourned. Thank you.

17 MR. DONAHUE: Hold on. I think
18 Kevin wants to --

19 MR. GAUGHAN: Oh, sorry, Kevin.
20 You're muted.

21 ATTY. HAYES: Did you announce the
22 executive session?

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Oh, yes, I'm sorry. I
24 have that written down over here. Council did
25 have an executive session -- so we -- Council

1 had an executive session at 4:30 today for the
2 purpose of obtaining updates from the City's
3 labor solicitor on personnel matters and
4 litigation.

5 And now that I think of it too, Mrs.
6 Reed, this was advertised in the newspaper as
7 well, correct?

8 MS. REED: Yes, it was in the Sunday
9 edition of the Times.

10 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. All right.
11 Okay. Thank you. And thank you for reminding
12 me, Kevin. I appreciate that. Okay, if there
13 is no further business, I'll entertain a motion
14 to adjourn.

15 MR. DONAHUE: Motion to adjourn.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: This meeting is
17 adjourned. Stay safe. Stay health. See
18 everybody next week. Thank you.

19

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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2
3 I hereby certify that the proceedings and
4 evidence are contained fully and accurately in the
5 notes taken by me of the above-cause and that this copy
6 is a correct transcript of the same to the best of my
7 ability.

8
9
10 _____
11 Maria McCool, RPR
12 Official Court Reporter
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