

COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON

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HELD:

Tuesday, May 5th, 2020

LOCATION:

VIA ZOOM

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 for a moment of silent reflection for our
5 service men and women throughout the world and
6 also for all those who have passed away in our
7 community, especially the now 103 people in
8 Lackawanna County who have tragically passed
9 away from the Coronavirus.

10 Let us think about them. Let us
11 think about their families, those who are
12 suffering from the Coronavirus. Let us think
13 now about the doctors, the nurses, the
14 researchers and all medical professionals and
15 first responders who seek to heal and help
16 those affected and who put themselves at risk
17 in the process.

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

24 In place of our anxiety, let us
25 continue to hope and find peace. Thank you.

1 Roll call please, Miss Carrera.

2 MS. REED: Shall I call roll,
3 Councilman Gaughan?

4 MR. GAUGHAN: I don't know what
5 happened to Miss Carrera, I'm sorry.

6 MS. REED: Okay. Mr. Schuster.

7 MR. SCHUSTER: Present.

8 MS. REED: Mr. McAndrew.

9 MR. MCANDREW: Present.

10 MS. REED: Dr. Rothchild.

11 DR. ROTHCHILD: Here.

12 MS. REED: Mr. Donahue.

13 MR. DONAHUE: Here.

14 MS. REED: Mr. Gaughan.

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

18 MS. REED: THIRD ORDER.

19 3-A. EMERGENCY DECLARATION ISSUED
20 BY MAYOR PAIGE G. COGNETTI DATED APRIL 30, 2020
21 EXTENDING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY TO MAY 15,
22 2020.

23 3-B. PROCLAMATION ISSUED BY MAYOR
24 PAIGE G. COGNETTI DATED APRIL 28, 2020
25 EXTENDING THE STATE OF EMERGENCY IN THE CITY OF

1 SCRANTON.

2 3-C. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
3 STREET CLEANING PROGRAM 2020.

4 3-D. SINGLE TAX OFFICE CITY FUNDS
5 DISTRIBUTED COMPARISON REPORT 2019-2020 YEAR TO
6 DATE APRIL 30, 2020.

7 3-E. RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF
8 COMMISSIONERS OF LACKAWANNA COUNTY WAIVING THE
9 LATE PENALTY FEE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020 COUNTY
10 AND LIBRARY REAL ESTATE TAXES.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Mrs. Reed.
12 Are there any comments on any of the Third
13 Order Items? No comments? Okay. If not,
14 received and filed. Do any council members
15 have any announcements at this time?

16 MR. MCANDREW: I do. I have a
17 couple. Okay, so when I think of teaching or
18 teachers, I think of quote by Fredrick Douglas.
19 And that quote is, "It is easier to build
20 strong children than to repair broken men."

21 So with that said, I'd like to wish
22 all of my colleagues, fellow teachers a happy
23 National Teacher's Day. And, President
24 Gaughan, I'd like to wish you a happy National
25 Teacher's day as well.

1 Also Cinco de Mayo, which is today
2 which is the anniversary of the Battle of
3 Puebla which was a victory in 1862 over the
4 French forces of Napoleon.

5 To those that are celebrating, I
6 would like to wish them a happy Cinco de Mayo.
7 I actually prepared before the meeting a fajita
8 bar for my family. So that's all I have.

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

11 MR. SCHUSTER: Yeah, I -- Kyle, go
12 ahead.

13 MR. DONAHUE: No, go ahead.

14 MR. SCHUSTER: Go ahead, Kyle.

15 MR. DONAHUE: I just have one, the
16 street cleaning program which was in our Third
17 Order, the schedule was announced. And so it
18 will be starting next week and it will be
19 starting in the North Scranton area from Green
20 Ridge Street to Market Street.

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Councilman
22 Schuster.

23 MR. SCHUSTER: I was just going to
24 say that, you know, over the course of this
25 whole event here, I've seen lots of people

1 helping each other out. And one of the things
2 that stuck in my mind this week was I saw that
3 EJ The DJ did a fundraiser on the Friday to
4 help the St. Francis of Assisi Food Kitchen and
5 the United Neighborhood Centers, just to say
6 good job and good job to everyone else out
7 there that's also doing similar events.

8 I know there's a lot of people doing
9 good things for their neighbors. So everybody
10 stick together and continue. Thank you.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: I agree. Dr.
12 Rothchild, any announcements?

13 DR. ROTHCHILD: No announcements.
14 Thank you.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay, thank you. I
16 just have a few. The first, Scranton Municipal
17 Recreation Authority will be sponsoring another
18 free lunch at Nay Aug Park. It will take place
19 on Saturday, May 16th, 2020 at 1 p.m. The
20 Municipal Recreation Authority will serve until
21 300 lunches have been distributed.

22 This a takeout event. Lunches will
23 be distributed at the maintenance building
24 across from the pool. The menu will be
25 hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, cookies and a

1 drink.

2 Representative Marty Flynn will also
3 provide pizza vouchers for the event while
4 supplies last. Everyone is welcome to attend
5 this free event.

6 As I mention every week now since
7 we've been conducting our meetings through
8 Zoom, if anyone would like to comment on agenda
9 items or City business, please send those
10 comments in writing to our City Clerk, Lori
11 Reed by e-mailing LReed@Scrantonpa.gov.

12 Council will accept public comment
13 until the day of our meeting Tuesday at 4:30
14 p.m. Public comment is reviewed by the Council
15 prior to our meeting and is placed on the
16 official record and in the minutes of our
17 meetings.

18 Council's agenda is being posted for
19 public view the Friday before our Tuesday
20 meeting. Our agenda and minutes can be
21 accessed by going to www.scrantonpa.gov and
22 clicking on the City Council page. That's all
23 I have.

24 DR. ROTHCHILD: Bill, I actually --
25 I'm sorry. I had one thing to add that I had

1 forgotten. So the South Side Farmer's Market,
2 they have opened back up but not in the same
3 way and the same capacity. They are doing
4 drive up and preorders.

5 So if you would like to get
6 something from the vendors that are at the
7 farmer's market, you could find the South Side
8 Farmer's Market on their Facebook and more
9 information about it, they are doing it on
10 Saturdays. So this Saturday, May 9th they'll
11 be open for orders.

12 And then you could just come up with
13 your car and they'll bring your orders out to
14 you. And it's a great way to support our local
15 farmers who are undoubtedly also having a
16 difficult time right now.

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. Great. Thank
18 you so much. Mrs. Reed, Fourth Order, please.

19 MR. DONAHUE: Bill, I think we lost
20 Lori.

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, we did. Is Kathy
22 on the line still?

23 MR. DONAHUE: She came back in.

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. We can move
25 ahead with -- Kevin, can we move ahead with

1 Fourth Order? I think Lori just said Fourth
2 Order.

3 MR. DONAHUE: Kathy.

4 MR. GAUGHAN: Oh, Kathy, do you just
5 want to --

6 MS. CARRERA: FOURTH ORDER -- yeah,
7 FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS PARTICIPATION.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. Thank you. At
9 this time I'd ask if someone could please make
10 a motion to accept public comment from the
11 following individuals to be placed into the
12 record and our official minutes of this
13 meeting. They are Patricia Nestor, Marie
14 Schumacher, and Fay Franus. Is there a motion?

15 DR. ROTHCHILD: So moved.

16 MR. MCANDREW: Second.

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Second. On the
18 question?

19 MR. DONAHUE: On the question, I'll
20 be responding to some of Mrs. Schumacher's
21 previous questions during Fifth Order.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. As I
23 mentioned in the caucus, all questions that
24 were posed mainly most of the questions by
25 Marie Schumacher were forwarded to the Mayor.

1 I think Patricia Nestor, hers were mostly
2 comments that were made. So we did review
3 those. And then I don't know -- Fay Franus had
4 a few questions as well. And we will try to
5 get those answered for her. Anybody else on
6 the question? All those in favor of the motion
7 signify by saying aye.

8 MR. SCHUSTER: Aye.

9 MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

10 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

11 DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

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

14
15 (Public Comment)

16
17 (Patricia Nestor)

18
19 I have a friend named Theresa
20 Revilak. Her husband is part of the pastoral
21 staff at Green Ridge Assembly of God Church at
22 825 Green Ridge Street. At the back of the
23 church's parking lot is a shed for clothing
24 donations. Theresa is in charge of that shed.
25 She sorts the clothes out, cleans, and repairs.

1 She then gives them out to people in need free
2 of charge.

3 A lot of people contact her through
4 Facebook. She will post in local groups if she
5 has clothes available. Other times people
6 contact her with requests and she takes care of
7 them as clothes become available. Most of the
8 people she helps are children from newborns of
9 expecting moms to children going through growth
10 spurts to school uniforms.

11 She has helped groups of immigrants
12 from Nepal that came to Scranton as refugees.
13 When the church has free dinners for people in
14 need, she opens the clothing closet for anyone
15 who needs help.

16 Many of the people who contact
17 Theresa from Facebook pick up the bags of
18 clothes off of her front porch in North
19 Scranton. There isn't any personal contact.
20 Recently a kitten was found in her basement.
21 She took care of it for two months and then
22 last week found a home for it.

23 So someone called the mayor's snitch
24 line and reported Theresa for not obeying the
25 city's Covid-19 orders. Several times during

1 the mayor's Facebook live town halls she said
2 that churches should not be holding public
3 services, but if they do, people can report
4 them anonymously at the number she gives out.

5 The church has been having services
6 online, but Theresa has been giving away bags
7 of clothing by putting them on her porch.
8 There isn't any person to person contact.

9 The Scranton Police as well as
10 Animal Control showed up at her house and told
11 her to shut down her operation. The woman gave
12 away a kitten! She gave some clothes to people
13 in need! Last time I checked clothing was life
14 sustaining.

15 The mayor needs to stop asking
16 people to snitch on churches because this is
17 turning into persecution and violating
18 Theresa's freedom of religion as this clothing
19 ministry is part of the Green Ridge Assembly of
20 God Church. Read Jesus's parable about the
21 sheep and the goats if you don't understand.
22 Matthew 25.

23 Theresa is a quiet, timid person and
24 has spent hours crying over this. She did
25 nothing wrong! I'm totally disgusted.

1 1. You need to reign in the mayor
2 from badgering churches. The majority were
3 social distancing even before her proclamation.

4 2. You need to have cops fighting
5 real crime instead of harassing a woman who
6 does nothing but good. She's not spreading
7 disease.

8
9 Thank you for your attention.

10 Patricia Nestor.

11
12 (Marie Schumacher)

13
14 1 - Since the City and Pennsylvania
15 Economy League (PEL) are in agreement on
16 delaying exit from Act 47, my question is how
17 long will this delay last? Are you willing to
18 ask the Department of Economic and Community
19 Development (DCED) to set a new date certain or
20 are you satisfied to allow the date to linger
21 in limbo? I would like to see a vote on this
22 issue by each Council member.

23 2024.

24 2 - In his 30 April 2020 statement
25 at the DCED Public Hearing on the City's exit

1 from Act 47 Gerald Cross, speaking for PEL,
2 compared the City's real property assessed
3 values with the market values over a period of
4 19 years. The question I would like answered
5 regards the market values, was the value 19
6 years ago adjusted to the current dollar value
7 before the calculation was made and what is the
8 source of these market values.

9 3 - Last week's Meeting revealed the
10 City's Acting HR Director is receiving
11 compensation of \$89 per hour. Even allowing
12 for fringe benefits at 50% of salary, the
13 actual salary would be a tad out of line with
14 typical earnings of City directors. Of course,
15 I went to the City's HR web page and found no
16 name for this acting Director.

17 What I did find is there are two
18 openings; one for an HR Director and another
19 for a City Treasurer. May I suggest job
20 openings also be posted on the City's main
21 website? Also, I suspect payments to the
22 Third Party supplier of the Acting HR may have
23 exceeded the professional services limited
24 after which Council must vote; am I correct?

25 Also, the revelation that the

1 current acting HR director is not an employee,
2 rather he/she is a third-party contractor.
3 This brought 2019 to mind when a former HR
4 director still employed by the City was given
5 the additional job of acting HR Director and
6 compensated for the extra effort.

7 City employee Don King has been
8 acting Zoning Director since last year but I
9 don't recall him receiving additional
10 compensation for the wearing of two hats. Does
11 the City has a policy for compensating
12 employees who take on all or part of an
13 additional position?

14 4 - A while back someone on Council
15 announced there might be a Grant available for
16 a Keyser Valley Storm Water Study. Is such a
17 Grant being written and, if so, when is
18 submittal expected?

19 5- In 2018 the State Department of
20 Environmental Protection delivered a
21 Refuse/Recycling Evaluation to the City. Would
22 it be possible to include the request for this
23 Evaluation which, to me seemed a bit skewed, in
24 Third Order?

25 6 - Would you also have placed in

1 Third Order the CATV Revised Contract.

2 7 - What is the interest rate for
3 the 2020 Tax Anticipation Note?

4 8 - What is the status of the ESCO
5 lease?

6 9 - What is the status of the
7 anticipated electronic component drop-off
8 program (Many are using the China Virus
9 downtime to clean house.)

10 10 - What is the termination date of
11 the City's current contract with Keystone
12 Sanitary Landfill?

13
14 (Fay Franus)

15
16 Is Jessica Eskra still getting the
17 \$12,000 raise Mayor Evans gave her last
18 year--Are the other people Mayor Evans gave
19 raises to as well still getting those raises?
20 If so why?

21 What is preventing you as council
22 from doing your work regarding getting answers
23 to many questions, especially Marie
24 Schumacher's? This virus should NOT be
25 preventing each of you from getting the

1 information we are asking of you. You do NOT
2 have to write request for every answer--you can
3 pick up a phone and request it as well rather
4 than have us wait forever to get back to us.
5 Most questions are never answered.

6 Example, Marie asked a question last
7 week that Bill Gaughan said he had the answer
8 to but forgot what it was --BUT never told
9 Marie the answer when he originally got it.
10 You are getting paid by us \$12500 a year --to
11 do what may I ask?

12 Why were the people who used the gas
13 cards illegally not fired? They had to know
14 filling up their personal car is illegal. Did
15 the city ever get the video tapes from the gas
16 stations showing the employees filling up their
17 cars-- and to find out if it was not a company
18 car they were filling up?

19 If I were to do that when I worked
20 at the water company I would be fired
21 immediately. This is why the people in this
22 city do NOT trust council or the city
23 government to do what is right because you
24 never ever ever ever hold anyone accountable.
25 Why is that? Heads should be rolling and they

1 are not--ONLY IN SCRANTON!

2 I would appreciate answers to my
3 questions. All of them--seeing as your
4 meetings last only a half an hour I would think
5 you could find some time to get replies to
6 people.

7

8 Fay Franus.

9

10 (End of Public Comment)

11

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Mrs. Reed, Fifth
13 Order?

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

15 MOTIONS.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Councilman Schuster,
17 do you have any motions or comments at this
18 time?

19 MR. SCHUSTER: I do not.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. Thank you very
21 much. Councilman McAndrew, any motions or
22 comments at this time?

23 MR. MCANDREW: Yes, I do. I have a
24 couple. So last week I requested that
25 Mrs. Reed send an e-mail to the Business

1 Administrator seeking the amount of hours that
2 were billable hours and how many hours the
3 acting HR Director has done since she's had
4 that position.

5 You know, it's \$89 dollars an hour.
6 So this is a lot of money, taxpayers -- you
7 know, expenditures and taxpayers' taxes. So I
8 have yet to hear. I'm still looking to hear
9 that. Mrs. Reed, could you follow up on that
10 for me, please?

11 MS. REED: Certainly.

12 ATTY. HAYES: Councilman McAndrew?

13 MR. MCANDREW: Yes.

14 ATTY. HAYES: I spoke earlier today
15 to the City Solicitor regarding that
16 outstanding request. She indicated to me that
17 they were compiling the information and will be
18 responsive to your request.

19 MR. MCANDREW: Thank you. I look
20 forward to hearing that. Also, as Chairman of
21 Public Safety, I brought this up in caucus.
22 You know, last week after the fuel gas card
23 audit was presented to us, a few people came to
24 me and posed questions. I'm posing the same
25 that regarding the program years ago when there

1 was a program in place where police officers
2 purchased their own vehicles.

3 And this is, you know, to bring
4 vehicles home into neighborhoods. It's a great
5 idea, provide presence of these vehicles in the
6 neighborhoods. My question is -- and I'd like
7 Mrs. Reed if she would please send this to
8 Chief Graziano to try to get an answer for me.

9 But my question is, was this
10 incorporated into the audit that Mr. Moretti
11 did last week or presented last week? And
12 also, if this program still exists, how many
13 cars -- do they have their own cars or separate
14 cars that maybe weren't looked at.

15 If this still continues, I'd like to
16 know how many cars and if it was part of the
17 audit. That's all I have. Thank you.

18 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Councilman
19 McAndrew. Dr. Rothchild, do you have any
20 motions or comments?

21 DR. ROTHCHILD: Yes, I have a few
22 comments. First off, last week I received a
23 complaint from a citizen about a traffic light
24 I believe on Cedar Avenue in South Side that
25 was out of position from a recent storm. And

1 it was difficult to see and to be able to tell
2 the color of the light as a result.

3 And DPW responded very quickly to
4 it. I just wanted to thank them for their work
5 in doing that. I'm sure, you know, it's
6 something may be simple to do, but things like
7 that and the speed of their response I think is
8 really helpful and just, you know, making sure
9 that we have safe working traffic lights is
10 great.

11 And then something else that I
12 wanted to bring up, you know, last week. There
13 were new announcements and a new roll out from
14 Governor Wolf about entering into the next
15 phase in our state. And I think as the
16 government begins to open the state back up and
17 certain businesses, people shouldn't let their
18 guards down.

19 It doesn't mean that any of this is
20 over. There is still a lot of people who are
21 going to get sick, a lot of people who are
22 going to pass away as a result of complications
23 from COVID-19. And we really need to be
24 mindful of that that it's not over. This is
25 going to be a long battle for us and especially

1 up here in the northeastern part of the states,
2 we are I think a lot more heavily affected than
3 some other parts of the country, so things just
4 to be mindful of.

5 And it is tempting to want to go
6 outdoors a lot with the weather becoming nicer,
7 see friends and family when it's been so long
8 that we haven't seen each other. And I totally
9 get that frustration. I think that people need
10 to continue to wear their mask as a safety
11 precaution.

12 And to understand that the masks are
13 to protect other people if you are
14 asymptomatic. You know, we understand if
15 you're not sick, you're not feeling sick you
16 think everything is fine. But you could still
17 have COVID-19 and be passing it onto other
18 people without realizing it. And that's why
19 the masks are so important.

20 And so if you are touching your mask
21 and then touching another surface or if you
22 have your mask and you're wearing it down or,
23 you know, above your mouth and not above your
24 nose, that is still a way that you could pass
25 COVID-19 onto another person.

1 That's why it's very important to
2 wear the mask properly, to avoid touching it,
3 to avoid touching your face. If you actually
4 do have to touch it -- I know I wear them all
5 day long. And it gets very tempting when you
6 have an itch. But afterwards you need to wash
7 your hands immediately so that you don't pass
8 it onto another surface.

9 And I, you know, I did go on a hike
10 over the weekend somewhere that is normally not
11 busy, somewhere that we can, like, bring our
12 dog. And we brought masks just in case. And
13 we were driving up, we realized that there was
14 just this incredible line of cars. And it was
15 later in the afternoon and there was still so
16 many people there and not a single person was
17 wearing a mask.

18 And we put it on when we were in
19 areas that there were people around that we
20 could possibly get close enough to people to
21 catch something or pass something on. So just
22 a reminder even if you're outside if you know
23 that you're going to have the potential to be
24 around people to carry a mask with you.

25 And one last comment, I think that

1 because it's getting frustrating for people
2 that there's a tendency to want to take it out
3 especially on public officials. And those are
4 the people that I think for the most part are
5 trying to help us and to keep us safe and
6 protected as much as possible.

7 I don't think that they have, you
8 know, other wishes than to do just that. And I
9 have seen the ways that especially Dr. Rachel
10 Levine has been treated. And she is our
11 Pennsylvania Secretary of Health. She's
12 extremely qualified for her position.

13 She is actually a friend of mine and
14 has been a past colleague. And I have been
15 seeing a lot on social media even from --
16 locally, names passed around and just terrible
17 things that are attacking her personally.

18 And I just -- I feel like when other
19 people are being attacked we need to stand up
20 for them. I just want to remind people that
21 despite your frustrations at this time you need
22 to be kind to others. And I know there are a
23 lot of people doing that and doing very
24 positive things for the community.

25 And I appreciate that so much. But

1 just a strong reminder to people that, you
2 know, things that you pass around on social
3 media and internet can be very hurtful to
4 people.

5 And I think Dr. Levine is really
6 doing as best of a job as she can and very
7 focused on getting us healthy again and back to
8 normal. Thank you.

9 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Dr.
10 Rothchild.

11 MR. MCANDREW: Councilman Gaughan, I
12 apologize. I missed a couple comments on my
13 list and if I --

14 MR. GAUGHAN: That's okay. You know
15 what, we'll come back to you at the end.

16 MR. MCANDREW: Thank you.

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Yeah. Councilman
18 Schuster, do you have any motions or
19 comments -- Councilman Donahue, I'm sorry. Do
20 you have any motions or comments?

21 MR. DONAHUE: Just to answer some of
22 Miss Schumacher's questions that she posed over
23 the last few weeks, one from a couple weeks ago
24 about she asked when will Council be discussing
25 or begin discussing operating budget expense

1 cuts and possible additional revenue sources.

2 Those conversations have been
3 ongoing and will continue to be ongoing moving
4 forward. The fact that we got our April
5 tax (inaudible) distribution in will give us a
6 little better idea of the impact we have moving
7 forward. So those discussions are going to be
8 ongoing throughout the year.

9 She also -- last week she asked
10 about delinquent refuse bill payments and when
11 will the sale of receivables, when will our RFQ
12 go out for that. My response to that is
13 hopefully soon. It was budgeted. I know there
14 is some concerns about whether, you know, this
15 crisis will impact the overall dollar figure on
16 that and whether we'll get enough of what we
17 put in the budget.

18 I think that is something we still
19 need to put out just to see what's out there
20 and see what's willing to be on there. The
21 status of migrations from the Business
22 Privilege and Mercantile Tax to a Payroll
23 Preparation Tax, negotiations with the school
24 district, I mean, those are still ongoing.
25 That all depends on our Act 47 status.

1 I know the school direct was hoping
2 that Senator Blake could get some revenue to
3 fill a gap -- a collection gap. You wouldn't
4 be paying -- the Business Privilege and
5 Mercantile is paid all in one lump sum.
6 Whereas this would move to -- the payroll prep
7 would move to a quarterly collection.

8 So the school district would be
9 missing at least one quarter. So Senator Blake
10 was supposed to be looking into that. I mean,
11 that's all up in the air now just because of
12 everything else that's going on. She also
13 asked when will the list of streets be paved --
14 will a list of streets to be paved other than
15 those funded by OECD be made public and when
16 will the RFPQ be published?

17 I know that there was, you know --
18 and this was going back two months. There was
19 a draft circulating and that the specs were
20 being put together to be put out to bid. But I
21 think this also goes back to one of our -- you
22 know, one of the previous points about budget
23 questions. So I think that has to be a part of
24 the discussion moving forward.

25 And then lastly, the last answer I

1 have for her is she asked what is the City's
2 current credit rating. And we are BBB plus,
3 which is one realm below investment grade. So
4 I think the goal is to get to investment grade.
5 And that's all I have for today -- for tonight.
6 Thank you.

7 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Councilman
8 Donahue.

9 MR. DONAHUE: Sorry. As we get, you
10 know, answers to additional questions obviously
11 we'll pass them along.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. I just
13 have a few comments. I mentioned this in the
14 caucus. But I think it bears repeating. Last
15 week we received the gas card audit from Mr.
16 Moretti. Al Lucas seemed to be the focus for
17 the report.

18 I want to make sure that it is in
19 the record and that the public understands that
20 we received documentation from Chief Lucas,
21 detailed documentation and a full explanation
22 from his gas charges. And I want to read one
23 statement that he made and is going to be
24 included in the report.

25 We'll take 2018, for example. 2018,

1 Chief Lucas travelled exactly 3,342 miles. 628
2 of these miles are backed up to be a
3 Pennsylvania Municipal League meeting in
4 Cranberry, Pennsylvania -- Cranberry Township I
5 think it is. 104 miles were attributed in
6 Nesquehoning to some sort of training.

7 That leaves 2,610 miles of driving
8 for the year if you remove those two trips.
9 That equals 50 miles a week for City business.
10 The total gas usage for the year 2018 including
11 the two trips is 17.65 miles per gallon. And
12 the average is consistent with the 2016 Ford
13 Escape.

14 Chief Lucas lives roughly 5.6 miles
15 roundtrip from headquarters. Doing the math
16 he would have driven 4.4 miles per day in town
17 between business between the firehouses
18 responding, the Comm Center calls and other
19 things throughout the year.

20 Again, I'm not sure how he became
21 the focus of the whole report. But it is -- I
22 want to make sure that people understand that
23 it's unfounded. I went through the
24 documentation as I know all of my colleagues
25 did. I've had conversations with each one of

1 them about this, I believe, in the past few
2 days.

3 The explanation and the
4 documentation speaks for itself. As I
5 mentioned in the caucus, he provided more
6 documentation and explanation than almost
7 everyone else. And Chief Graziano did as well
8 provide documentation and explanation.

9 Chief Lucas is someone who has
10 integrity and who has a backbone. And I want
11 to reiterate and I know my colleagues agree
12 because they've stated this on the record when
13 we were voting for his appointment that he is
14 doing an absolutely phenomenal job as the Fire
15 Chief in light of all of these different
16 circumstances. So I hope that puts this issue
17 to rest.

18 The second thing that I want to
19 mention as I did in the caucus today is that
20 the State Department of Environmental
21 Protection is moving into its final phase of
22 reviews before it decides whether to approve
23 Keystone Sanitary Landfill's proposed 42 year
24 expansion plan.

25 The DEP did announce I believe last

1 Thursday that it began its technical review
2 phase of the landfill's proposed phase three
3 expansion earlier this month. The review
4 includes a 60-day window for public comment
5 that will close June 30th at 4 p.m.

6 I had requested and all of my
7 colleagues agree that we are going to -- and
8 Solicitor Hayes is going to draft comments, a
9 letter for us that we're going to review prior
10 to next week's meeting. And then we'll make a
11 motion to send public comment.

12 I just want to reiterate my
13 concerns -- many concerns about Keystone
14 Landfill's expansion. And I want to reiterate
15 my opposition. Over the past few years since
16 this issue has come to light and since KSL has
17 decided to ask for an expansion, the people of
18 our region including the great job that the
19 people of the Friends of Lackawanna have done,
20 they've spoken loud and clear about this issue.

21 They do not want the landfill to
22 expand. They are concerned as am I about the
23 impact that the landfill expansion will have on
24 our health and environment. And we know now
25 during the pandemic that we're going through

1 that the public health is so important.

2 I have to wonder when I think about
3 this issue 50 years from now what the future
4 generation will think of a mountain of garbage
5 that towers over our region literally, towers
6 over our region as high as the Empire State
7 Building. Will this be a place where families
8 want to buy a home and actually raise their
9 families and raise their children?

10 We have to ask ourselves what kind
11 of world we want to live in, what kind of
12 community we want to live in. We can either
13 accept the way things are or we can fight to
14 change them. And I think that we should fight
15 to change them.

16 And I think that groups like Friends
17 of Lackawanna, other people throughout our
18 community, they've been speaking up. And it's
19 time that the DEP take notice of this and do
20 the right thing and deny this expansion. This
21 is only going to hurt our region. And I cannot
22 imagine again seeing a pile, a mountain of
23 garbage as high as the Empire State Building.

24 And I don't -- really honestly don't
25 think that we should accept that, is that we

1 just have to do it or the argument that, well,
2 where's the garbage going to go? I really
3 think that we can do better than that. So I
4 look forward to standing together as a Council
5 with the four of my colleagues here and sending
6 this letter again stating our opposition to
7 this expansion.

8 The last thing I want to mention is
9 to kind of piggyback on what Dr. Rothchild
10 said. One hundred three people now in
11 Lackawanna County have passed away from the
12 coronavirus. And if one person that passed
13 away from this virus, it would be a tragedy,
14 but 103 is unimaginable. And it's absolutely
15 heartbreaking.

16 And I know that everyone is eager to
17 get back to normal. But we're not there yet.
18 We are not there yet. So I would ask as Dr.
19 Rothchild did tonight to all those people who
20 may be watching our meeting to -- just because
21 the weather is nice, please stay home as much
22 as you possibly can away from large crowds.

23 Follow the CDC guidelines. And
24 please, please -- I implore people, look at the
25 news sources. People are getting their news

1 from different sources. And a lot of the
2 information that I see travelling around social
3 media is flat out false.

4 So I would implore people to make
5 sure you're researching the sources where you
6 are getting your information from. I think we
7 need to make sure they are reputable so that
8 people aren't taking the words of, you know,
9 people who have no medical background at all.
10 This information's being spread out like it's
11 gospel.

12 We need to pay attention to the
13 medical professionals, the scientists, the
14 researchers, the people who actually have
15 degrees in this type of thing. Otherwise, I
16 think we're really going to find ourselves in
17 continuing trouble over the next few months.
18 And that is all I have. Mrs. Reed?

19 ATTY. HAYES: Councilman McAndrew --

20 MR. GAUGHAN: I know. We're going
21 to get to Mark in Eighth Order right before we
22 adjourn. Sorry -- yeah, I didn't forget you,
23 Mark.

24 MR. MCANDREW: That's okay.

25 MR. GAUGHAN: Mrs. Reed?

1 MS. REED: 5-B. No business at this
2 time.

3 SIXTH ORDER. 6-A. No business at
4 this time.

5 SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A. No business at
6 this time.

7 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. Councilman
8 McAndrew?

9 MR. MCANDREW: Sorry. I apologize.
10 I missed a comment that was on my list here --

11 MR. GAUGHAN: That's okay.

12 MR. MCANDREW: -- and I don't want
13 to get in trouble at my house, so please let me
14 read it. Also, this Sunday being Mother's Day,
15 I would like to wish all mothers, soon to be
16 mothers, grandmothers, single fathers that act
17 as mothers in their capacity, a very happy
18 Mother's Day.

19 This will be a tough one for most
20 because of the stay at home initiative we're
21 all talking about that we have to observe. And
22 it's going to be tough not seeing mothers and
23 grandmothers. But, you know, hang in there
24 guys. Father's Day is right around the corner.
25 That's all I have. Thank you.

1 MR. GAUGHAN: You know, Councilman
2 McAndrew, you just -- thank you for -- not that
3 I forgot about Mother's Day because I didn't.
4 But I too want -- it is. It is very difficult
5 during this pandemic when, you know, haven't
6 seen our families in a while. So I want to
7 wish my mother a Happy Mother's Day as well and
8 my wife who is as you guys know is nine months
9 pregnant.

10 And she's still in the room so she
11 didn't have the baby yet but any day now. So
12 thanks, Mark. Anybody else? Okay, if there's
13 no further business, I'll entertain a motion to
14 adjourn.

15 MR. MCANDREW: Motion to adjourn.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: This meeting is
17 adjourned. Thank you. Stay safe everyone.
18 Bye-bye.

19 DR. ROTHCHILD: Goodnight guys.
20
21
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23
24
25

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
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