

SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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HELD:

Monday, December 3, 2018

LOCATION:

Council Chambers

Scranton City Hall

340 North Washington Avenue

Scranton, Pennsylvania

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR - OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

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CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

PATRICK ROGAN, PRESIDENT

TIM PERRY, VICE PRESIDENT

WAYNE EVANS

WILLIAM GAUGHAN

KYLE DONAHUE

LORI REED, CITY CLERK

KATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

AMIL MINORA, ESQUIRE - SOLICITOR

1 (Pledge of Allegiance recited and  
2 moment of reflection observed.)

3 MR. ROGAN: Roll call, please.

4 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

5 MR. PERRY: Here.

6 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

7 MR. DONAHUE: Here.

8 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

9 MR. EVANS: Here.

10 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Here.

12 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

13 MR. ROGAN: Here. Please dispense  
14 with the reading of the minutes.

15 MS. REED: THIRD ORDER. 3-A. CHECK  
16 RECEIVED FROM SINGLE TAX OFFICE IN THE  
17 AMOUNT OF \$310,491.81 WHICH REPRESENTS  
18 PAYMENT OF AMUSEMENT TAX, 3RD QUARTER FROM  
19 LIVE NATION WORLDWIDE, INC.

20 MR. ROGAN: Are there any comments?  
21 If not, received and filed.

22 MS. REED: 3-B. SHARED SERVICES  
23 COMMITTEE REPORT DATED NOVEMBER 27, 2018.

24 MR. ROGAN: Are there any comments?

25 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, just one comment

1 on this. I just want to read the report --  
2 it's only one page, this came out of the  
3 shared services committee that was formed  
4 several months ago. The members of the  
5 committee were myself, Councilman Donahue,  
6 Katie Gilmartin and Paige Cagnetti from the  
7 school board and I just want to read what  
8 the initial report says.

9 "Over the past several months,  
10 members of Scranton City Council and the  
11 Scranton School Board have met to discuss  
12 services that could potentially be shared  
13 between the city and the district. The  
14 shared services committee comprised of City  
15 Councilman Kyle Donahue and Bill Gaughan and  
16 school directors Paige Cagnetti and Katie  
17 Gilmartin. It establishes a list of areas  
18 of focus and called on administrators from  
19 the city and the district to share their  
20 input.

21 In addition to the goal of realizing  
22 cost savings to benefit Scranton taxpayers,  
23 the group endeavors to increase  
24 efficiencies, improve productivity and  
25 convey a collaborative spirit between the

1 city and the district. The entities are  
2 interdependent. The outlook of one cannot  
3 improve if the other is trending in the  
4 opposite direction.

5 The following list reflects issues  
6 discussed and areas identified as potential  
7 opportunities for collaboration. The  
8 committee will continue to work with city  
9 and district administrators, prioritize  
10 these items, define plans and assess  
11 possibly savings. Under finance we discuss  
12 delinquent tax collection, payroll tax  
13 conversion, real estate tax discount period,  
14 the ten-year citywide LERTA for improvements  
15 in new construction --" which is obviously  
16 on our agenda tonight and I think at our  
17 last school board meeting they actually did  
18 discuss this. I think it's going to be on a  
19 future agenda at the school board.

20 "Property tax exemptions and the HUP  
21 test. Under purchasing, gas procurement  
22 cards, health care, pool supplies,  
23 chemicals, etcetera, printer and copier  
24 services and maintenance, technology. Under  
25 operations, crosswalk safety, pothole repair

1 and recycling, and under fundraising and  
2 community development complete Count Census  
3 Committee, Electric City Shock soccer field  
4 project and grant writing services."

5 And I do want to thank all of the  
6 department heads from the city and the  
7 department heads from the school district  
8 who took the time over this past summer to  
9 meet with us with this committee. A lot of  
10 great ideas were shared. We kind of  
11 whittled them down to the list that I just  
12 read. This could expand, it could get  
13 smaller than that. I won't expand on each  
14 one specifically, because I don't want to  
15 take up too much time but, again, and then  
16 we met with Mayor Courtright and the  
17 superintendent Dr. Kirjan and it went really  
18 well. I think there is a commitment from  
19 both the city and the school district, an  
20 actual commitment to engage in shared  
21 services and I'm hopeful for the future and  
22 that we will actually see cost savings in  
23 2019 and 2020. Thank you.

24 MR. DONAHUE: I would just like to  
25 add to that that, you know, I think at some

1 point the relationship between the city and  
2 the school district became extremely  
3 strained and I think this was the first step  
4 in the process to start building trust so we  
5 sort of concentrated on the low end route  
6 for lack of a better term at first in order  
7 to start building a better relationship  
8 between the two bodies.

9 MR. ROGAN: If there are no other  
10 comments, it's received and filed.

11 MS. REED: 3-C. AGENDA FOR THE  
12 HOUSING APPEALS REVIEW BOARD MEETING HELD  
13 NOVEMBER 29, 2018.

14 MR. ROGAN: Are there any comments?  
15 If not, received and filed.

16 Do any council members have  
17 announcements to make?

18 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, I have two. I  
19 announce this every year, it's a very good  
20 benefit and it was called Friends of Shannon  
21 McDonough "Splashing with Compassion." They  
22 had their inaugural polar plunge in 2014.  
23 Since then, Friend of Shannon McDonough has  
24 donated to over 33 young individuals  
25 battling cancer right here in northeast

1 Pennsylvania.

2 They are going to hold their sixth  
3 annual polar plunge on Saturday, January 26,  
4 2019, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Montage  
5 Mountain in Scranton, PA. They are calling  
6 on caring businesses and individuals alike  
7 to support their community event. You can  
8 visit [www.Facebook.com/](http://www.Facebook.com/friendsofshannonmcdonough)  
9 [friendsofshannonmcdonough](http://www.Facebook.com/friendsofshannonmcdonough) if you are  
10 interested in learning more about this  
11 event.

12 Also, received an announcement today  
13 about a winter coat drive at Tripps Park  
14 Elementary School and it reads, "Did you  
15 know there are almost 600,000 homeless  
16 people in the United States? Did you know  
17 15,000 of them live in Pennsylvania? Did  
18 you know homelessness exists in Scranton?  
19 Did you know even some of our friends at  
20 Isaac Tripp Elementary school are in need?

21 My name is Brennan. I am a third  
22 grade student at Issac Tripp Elementary  
23 School. I recently saw many homeless people  
24 struggling to stay warm on a cold day. I  
25 realize that not just homeless people need

1           our help but a lot of people in our  
2           neighborhoods do, too. My goal is to  
3           collect 50 winter items to donate to babies,  
4           children, teenagers and adults all over  
5           Scranton. Please help me help those in need  
6           by donating gently used winter coats, hats,  
7           gloves, scarves and blankets. Thank you for  
8           the sharing the warmth.

9                         Donations are going to be collected  
10           for this drive throughout the month of  
11           December. All sizes are needed and you can  
12           place any donations inside the box near the  
13           main entrance of Tripp Park Elementary  
14           School.

15                        MR. ROGAN: This evening's council  
16           meeting will be our last meeting for 2018.  
17           Historically when the budget is passed  
18           council recesses for the remainder of the  
19           year. Meetings are expected to resume on  
20           Monday, January 7. However, if something  
21           comes up that requires legislative action  
22           council can schedule a special meeting.

23                        And one last reminder that bagged  
24           leaves will be collected next week, the week  
25           of December 10 instead of newspapers.

1 Please bag your leaves and leave them out on  
2 your scheduled recycling day for DPW to pick  
3 up. Newspapers will not be picked up this  
4 week. It will be dedicated to leave pickup  
5 only.

6 MS. REED: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS'  
7 PARTICIPATION.

8 (The following speakers offered  
9 public comment as follows: John Litwinsky  
10 spoke on city business. Les Spindler spoke  
11 on agenda items and city business. Joan  
12 Hodowanitz spoke on agenda items and city  
13 business. Lee Morgan spoke on city business  
14 and matters of general concern. Ron Ellman  
15 spoke on matters of general concern. Marie  
16 Schumacher spoke on agenda items and city  
17 business. Dave Dobrzyn spoke on city  
18 business and matters of general concern.  
19 Jay Walsh spoke on matters of general  
20 concern.)

21 MS. REED: FIFTH ORDER. 5-A.  
22 MOTIONS.

23 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Perry, any motions  
24 or comments?

25 MR. PERRY: Yeah, a couple of

1            comments. The hill section parking has come  
2            up the last couple of weeks and we did speak  
3            a little bit about it last week. Chief  
4            Graziano got back to us, as I said. I have  
5            also spoken personally with the police  
6            officers and some of the enforcement people  
7            in that area so that problem is going to be  
8            taken care of. There will be extra  
9            ticketing going on, extra care going on to  
10           those dangerous intersections.

11                        Also, as far as the budget goes, I  
12           want to thank PEL, the Pennsylvania Economy  
13           League, for coming in today. We asked them  
14           into our caucus. They are the overseer of  
15           our finances since we went into Act 47 and  
16           they were very pleased with our budget.  
17           This is the third year in a row that we have  
18           no tax increases and we were on a plan to  
19           exit our Act 47 in three years. They made  
20           the note of it. I believe they even made a  
21           note that we are a year ahead of schedule as  
22           far exiting that. We are exactly where we  
23           should be if not a little ahead. They are  
24           looking for as far as the budget goes is the  
25           city financially stable and could we write a

1 budget that at the end of the year makes  
2 sense and they go back, they during our  
3 caucus today they had information from '16,  
4 '17 and current information from '18 in our  
5 2019 projections and they were pleased with  
6 all of the numbers that they have as I am.  
7 I'm proud of our budget for no tax increases  
8 and also getting our bills paid. It's one  
9 thing not to increase taxes, it's another  
10 thing to put off things that need to get  
11 done and I think you have a seen a lot of  
12 improvements.

13 We have done a great job in our city  
14 with the grants and getting money from state  
15 and federal agencies. We have also done a  
16 lot with liquid fuel money, getting roads  
17 paved. We've done a lot from our gambling  
18 money that is coming in, our lighting  
19 program that we did last year, so it's a  
20 feasible budget, it's workable budget and  
21 it's one that I'm proud to vote for today.

22 Also, I just want go over -- my  
23 brother is a little -- he is not quite a  
24 public eye, he is kind of private, but I'm  
25 going to give a congratulation to my brother

1 and sister-in-law, they just brought a new  
2 baby into the world today so I want to  
3 congratulate them and say thank you and  
4 welcome aboard and, you know, I can't wait  
5 to go visit them tomorrow and I love you  
6 guys.

7 Also, I just wanted to do a nice  
8 happy and safe holiday season to everybody,  
9 have a healthy new year and we'll see you in  
10 a couple of weeks.

11 MR. ROGAN: Thank you, Mr. Perry.  
12 Mr. Donahue, any motions or comments?

13 MR. DONAHUE: Yes. Although, I do  
14 believe that the city's financial condition  
15 has improved considerably in recent years, I  
16 still believe we have a lot of work to do to  
17 make sure we exit Act 47 in the best  
18 possible position.

19 In terms of economic development, I  
20 think we need to -- we need a more coherent  
21 vision which incorporates the work being  
22 done by Scranton Tomorrow, the Chamber,  
23 Scranton planning and neighborhood and civic  
24 organizations along with city and state  
25 offices of economic development into one

1 long-term economic development strategy.

2 And also in terms of refuse, we did  
3 receive a report laying out alternative  
4 collection options. From my perspective  
5 those options were nonstarters.

6 Realistically I believe the way we collect  
7 garbage isn't the main issue. What we do  
8 with garbage once it's collected is it's not  
9 economically or viably for the long-term  
10 health of this city or this region to keep  
11 dumping waste into a landfill without any  
12 viable alternatives. I also believe the  
13 situation is made worst by the fact that the  
14 owner the landfill also runs the recycling  
15 center. As a city, and more broadly as a  
16 region, we must begin to explore ways to  
17 dramatically increases recycling while  
18 exploring environmentally sound alternatives  
19 to the landfill. The era of Northeastern PA  
20 being a dumping ground for the Mid-Atlantic  
21 region must come to an end.

22 And, also, on that note there are  
23 complaints in the last week or so and over  
24 the weekend of an odor in the Greenridge  
25 area that possibly originated at the

1 landfill so I urge anyone that has smelled  
2 anything out of the ordinary to call the  
3 State Department of Environmental Protection  
4 at 800-541-2050 to report any odors.

5 And besides just wishing everyone a  
6 safe and healthy holiday season, that's all  
7 I have.

8 MR. ROGAN: Thank you, Mr. Donahue.  
9 Mr. Evans, any motions or comments.

10 MR. EVANS: Yes, thank you. First  
11 of all, I do agree with Ms. Schumacher about  
12 the Home Rule Study Commission, it's about  
13 time so hopefully in 2019 we could have that  
14 conversation.

15 Also, I'd like to recognize the  
16 passing of George H.W. Bush. A true  
17 gentleman who lived an extraordinary life  
18 who taught us about civil discourse and  
19 decency in public life. He is a personal  
20 hero of mine. 41 will be missed. Our  
21 country and our world are a better place  
22 because of his service to this nation.

23 Also, last year I had a good friend  
24 and a local developer give me a copy of this  
25 book right here it's called "Walkable City.

1           How Downtown Can Save America, One Step At a  
2           Time." The author is a gentlemen by the  
3           name of Jeff Speck. It's a brilliant book  
4           on how to make our downtowns in our  
5           communities not only more walkable but more  
6           liveable. While reading this book, I had  
7           dozens of ah-ha moments throughout the book  
8           and moments where I felt, "Yes, we can do  
9           this" and "Yes, we have to do that."

10                   After reading the book, I bought six  
11           more copies and passed them out to people in  
12           the community that I felt would not only get  
13           the concepts of the book but would also  
14           become strong advocates for the type of  
15           change described in the book. But I felt we  
16           needed to do more so to continue to move the  
17           dialogue forward so for the last year I have  
18           been working on getting Jeff Speck, the  
19           author, here for a lecture and with the help  
20           of Scranton Tomorrow, Lackawanna County, the  
21           Greater Scranton Board of Realtors, the  
22           University of Scranton and many others it as  
23           happening. Jeff Speck will be at the  
24           University of Scranton at Lahey Hall on the  
25           second floor in the Kane Forum next

1 Wednesday, December 12, at 6 p.m. Doors are  
2 open at 5:30 p.m. The public is invited and  
3 there is no charge for the lecture. The  
4 lecture is called "Towards a more walkable  
5 Scranton."

6 So I would ask anyone that is  
7 interested in walkability of the downtown  
8 the City of Scranton, urban planning,  
9 etcetera, to please try and attend. Again,  
10 this book is a must read for anyone that  
11 cares about sound planning principles and  
12 the future of our city.

13 So as an early Christmas present to  
14 my colleagues I purchased a copy of the book  
15 "Walkable City" for each of them. They will  
16 be in our council office tomorrow for  
17 pickup. I also have an extra copy for an  
18 citizen that would like to read it, and  
19 we'll have a copy at our council office for  
20 anyone to sign out and return so other  
21 people can read it as well. The book also  
22 is available at the Scranton Public Library.

23 So I hope to see everyone on the 12,  
24 please do your best to attend this very,  
25 very important discussion. That's all I

1 have for now.

2 MR. ROGAN: Thank you, Mr. Evans.

3 Mr. Gaughan, any motions or comments?

4 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, thank you.

5 First, just two updates on issues that I  
6 have spoken about here in the last few  
7 weeks. The first one is Froud Avenue on  
8 East Mountain there was some serious runoff  
9 issues with water. Mr. Gallagher did report  
10 that the DPW is going to take a look at it  
11 possibly to try to divert the water and he  
12 thinks it takes direct water possibly from  
13 Fig Street which is a direct shot to Froud  
14 Avenue o, they are going to look at that so  
15 I appreciate it.

16 Also, Mr. Flynn, who had reached out  
17 to me about Murphy Court in Minooka, the DPW  
18 said they had going to look at it in the  
19 spring to possibly build a curb up because  
20 the ground is too cold now and he had some  
21 more to the note so we will forward that  
22 along to Mr. Flynn. I appreciate the  
23 response from the DPW director.

24 Also, I spoke to Mr. Young, Al  
25 Young, the other day. Mrs. Reed, if we

1           could just a get an update from the Law  
2           Department, if possible, on who received the  
3           contract to do the work on the Meadowbrook  
4           Creek project. I was under the assumption  
5           that it was Kreiger Construction and I don't  
6           know if that has changed so if we can get an  
7           update on that I'd appreciate it.

8                         Also, just as Mr. Litwinsky, who  
9           spoke about the Keystone Rescue Mission, he  
10          left this file here, just looking through  
11          it, and he had sent me an e-mail with actual  
12          video clips from some of these incidents,  
13          it's amazing that this establishment is  
14          allowed to operate after all -- if you look  
15          at the police calls here from 2016 to 2018  
16          as recently as November 22 it's 17 pages of  
17          police calls and incidents plus all of the  
18          different photos and videos that I have seen  
19          of it, so I think something really has to be  
20          done here. That's why I would encourage a  
21          meeting, if possible, and maybe council can  
22          facilitate this or -- Mr. Perry is chairman  
23          of the public safety, could facilitate a  
24          meeting between Mr. Litwinsky, the  
25          neighbors, Chief Graziano and the Licensing

1 and Inspections Department because I think  
2 we have to look at how this establishment is  
3 allowed to operate with all of those police  
4 calls.

5 I'd also at this time like to make a  
6 motion that Scranton City Council place our  
7 updated Ethics Code legislation on it's  
8 January 7, 2019, agenda.

9 MR. DONAHUE: Second.

10 MR. ROGAN: On the question?

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes. I have been  
12 talking about this now for quite a few  
13 months. I would have liked to get this done  
14 before the end of the year but that wasn't  
15 possible, but I have been working extremely  
16 hard to update our Ethics Code, so I would  
17 like, and I make this motion so that I can  
18 get a commitment from everyone on council to  
19 put this on the agenda for the first meeting  
20 in January.

21 MR. PERRY: Yes, on the question.

22 I'll second that Mr. Gaughan worked  
23 extremely hard on this ethics bill and this  
24 legislation I'm in full support of passing  
25 it through and getting it on our agenda

1           January 7. I think it's important that in  
2           the City of Scranton, especially with local  
3           politics, that from time to time we need to  
4           update our ethics as times change and it's  
5           just more of a way to keep -- just to keep  
6           more transparent in days where, you know,  
7           not everybody is not as trusting as we want  
8           to be so let's get a nice even playing  
9           field, especially when it comes to  
10          contributions and, you know, other things in  
11          our city as far as pay-to-play or anything  
12          else that we have going on. It's an  
13          important thing and I support it.

14                 MR. ROGAN: Anyone else?

15                 MR. EVANS: Yeah, on the question,  
16          one of the reasons it's important is, number  
17          one, our code is dated 1976 and the state  
18          went about superseding our code in 1998 by  
19          their legislation so effectively we have  
20          been without a code since 1998, almost 20  
21          years, so we have all committed to getting  
22          this legislation on in January and I think  
23          we are all pretty much committed to getting  
24          it passed. We feel it's that important and  
25          if this is the first piece of legislation we

1 pass in 2019 then it's going to start the  
2 year off on the right foot.

3 MR. ROGAN: All those in favor  
4 signify by saying aye.

5 MR. PERRY: Aye.

6 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

7 MR. EVANS: Aye.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

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

11 MR. GAUGHAN: That's all I have.  
12 Thank you.

13 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. Quite a few  
14 things actually. A lot was brought up  
15 today. I guess I'll follow up pretty much  
16 where Councilman Gaughan left off regarding  
17 the rescue mission. I agree wholeheartedly  
18 with comments that were made, and I'm trying  
19 to be as sensitive as I can to what their  
20 goal is. I am all for giving somebody a  
21 hand up but not a handout. It appears,  
22 especially from these police reports, that  
23 there is drug use going on in the rescue  
24 mission, in and around the area. It may  
25 have started with the noble goal but there

1 are a number of problems in the  
2 neighborhood. It's been outlined to us the  
3 police are there on a regular basis, two,  
4 three, four times a month so something  
5 certainly needs to be done. My preference  
6 on a first step of action would be to look  
7 to see how are nuisance property ordinance  
8 applies to nonprofits. It's not something  
9 that we typically encounter.

10 Normally, our nuisance ordinance  
11 pertains to rental properties, landlords,  
12 bar owners, it's not every day when somebody  
13 comes with this type of a complaint against  
14 a nonprofit but there are certainly major  
15 issues that have to be addressed. Nobody  
16 should have to live like this in our city  
17 and it's also, as was mentioned by the  
18 speaker, right by our school. Scranton High  
19 School is right down the road. So, you  
20 know, I'd be happy to help anyway I can. I  
21 appreciate Mr. Perry taking the lead. I  
22 know he will do an excellent job on this and  
23 we will work with the neighbors to get some  
24 relief for them over there.

25 Another item that was brought up at

1           our public hearing and during the meeting  
2           was the ten-year LERTA and the litany of the  
3           questions about procedures regarding the  
4           LERTA. This is actually already in place  
5           just on a three-year version. So as far as  
6           how it's going to be implemented and  
7           structured, that's already been ongoing.  
8           This is just taking that three-year plan and  
9           turning it into a 10-year plan so I know  
10          there were some questions regarding  
11          condominium conversions and that's something  
12          that we put in the legislation to encourage  
13          landlords to go from big rental buildings to  
14          condos. When you condo a building out it  
15          does increase the value, it increases the  
16          tax base and you create homeowners.  
17          Condominium owners are homeowners just as  
18          you or I in a single family home. So more  
19          to come on the LERTA when we get there, but  
20          it is a very promising piece of legislation.

21                   A number of questions were also  
22                   brought up regarding the budget and, again,  
23                   I'll comment more on that when it comes up,  
24                   but just to put it into perspective for  
25                   those who have not seen a copy of it, the

1 city budget is 135 pages with thousands of  
2 line items, so to go through the budget line  
3 by line there are certain things that people  
4 are not going to agree with or may not  
5 understand, but it has to be looked at on  
6 the whole. If you want to look through  
7 every line item there are going to be --  
8 like I said, things that are going to be  
9 over budget, things that are under budget,  
10 but on the whole this is a very sound budget  
11 for the City of Scranton, and most  
12 importantly, and I can't belabor this  
13 enough, that it does not raise taxes for the  
14 third year in a row.

15 Three years ago when taxes didn't go  
16 up some people just said there is an  
17 election coming up in two years. The next  
18 year, well, it's an election year. It's not  
19 an election year. Not one of us up here is  
20 running for office. Nobody in this building  
21 is running for office and the taxes are not  
22 going up and that's because the last series  
23 of budgets that were presented and passed by  
24 council were sound budgets, and many of the  
25 same objections and concerns that are being

1 raised today were raised last year, the year  
2 before, the year before. It's one of those  
3 things when a document is so large, being  
4 135 pages and thousands of line items, if  
5 you went to find something to complain about  
6 in it you can find it, but you have to  
7 overlook 90 good things to find the ten bad.

8 I'll have to more to say on the  
9 budget when that comes up but just because  
10 that was brought up quite a bit from the  
11 podium tonight I wanted to address some of  
12 those issues.

13 And, finally, I'd just like to wish  
14 everyone a Merry Christmas. A healthy,  
15 happy and safe new year. Thank you.

16 MS. REED: 5-B. NO BUSINESS AT THIS  
17 TIME.

18 SIXTH ORDER. 6-A. NO BUSINESS AT  
19 THIS TIME.

20 SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A. FOR  
21 CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE -  
22 FOR ADOPTION - FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 38,  
23 2018 - APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE EXPENSES  
24 OF THE CITY GOVERNMENT FOR THE PERIOD  
25 COMMENCING ON THE FIRST DAY OF JANUARY, 2019

1 TO AND INCLUDING DECEMBER 31, 2019 BY THE  
2 ADOPTION OF THE GENERAL CITY OPERATING  
3 BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2019.

4 MR. ROGAN: What is the  
5 recommendation of the Chair for the  
6 Committee on Finance?

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

10 MR. PERRY: Second.

11 MR. ROGAN: On the question?

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question.  
13 First of all, I just want to say that no  
14 budget is perfect and I certainly understand  
15 that. You will never find a budget that is  
16 100 percent perfect or that makes everyone  
17 happy, and over the past few weeks I was not  
18 questioning the integrity of the budget  
19 process, and I'm certainly not trying to  
20 find fault with every little thing in the  
21 budget, I do think it's the responsibility  
22 of council to go through every single line  
23 item because that is our job. If we look at  
24 it just simply as a whole I don't think we  
25 are doing our due diligence, but what I'm

1           trying to do is marry up the proposed budget  
2           with the bigger picture of recovery.

3                         In my review of the budget, I  
4           proposed several questions, a few pages  
5           long, and I believe that my questions are a  
6           part of a good budget process in which  
7           elected officials analyze, scrutinize and  
8           question everything. Again, not just to  
9           question things for the stake of finding  
10          something wrong, but because it is our  
11          duties as elected officials to do this, to  
12          analyze things, to scrutinize things, then  
13          and only then do I think you can have an  
14          actual Democratic process where if the  
15          administration proposes something we vet it,  
16          we analyze it, we scrutinize it and then I  
17          would feel comfortable certainly voting for  
18          it.

19                         I take this process extremely  
20          seriously. It's my belief, and I have said  
21          this before, that council is supposed to be  
22          a check and a balance on the strong mayor  
23          form of government that we have. I received  
24          responses to my questions from the  
25          administration that I posed a week and a

1 half ago and I appreciated that and most of  
2 them were in detail, they were a few pages  
3 long, and I know that, you know, the  
4 business administrator and others are busy  
5 and they have great responsibilities in  
6 their position and I don't take it lightly  
7 when a council member asks dozens and dozens  
8 of questions and they take the time to  
9 respond to that.

10 However, I did take issue with  
11 several questions that I did not feel were  
12 answered in full or where I felt the  
13 responses were not clear. Last Friday I  
14 sent a very clear follow-up to the  
15 administration and today I received a less  
16 than professional response from Mr. Bulzoni.

17 In Mr. Bulzoni's memorandum to Mrs.  
18 Reed and myself, I won't go through the  
19 whole thing, but he basically questions  
20 whether or not I prepared my own questions  
21 and my own correspondence to Mr. Bulzoni.  
22 He says, "Since one might question whether  
23 the councilman prepared the communication  
24 dated November 30, 2018, which presents  
25 itself as an ethical dilemma in combination

1 with 11 pages of previously prepared  
2 responses, I find a further venture of some  
3 sufficient labor of questionable value."

4 Then he paraphrases General George  
5 S. Patton, "I don't cover the same ground  
6 twice."

7 You know, I have to say that I found  
8 this response to be extremely  
9 unprofessional, and I take Mr. Bulzoni as a  
10 very professional person. I'm not naive  
11 enough to believe that I'm a financial  
12 expert and I know all of the answers. I  
13 went to the University of Scranton for  
14 secondary education, I have a masters in  
15 that, and I also went for history and  
16 communications. I don't have a degree in  
17 finance nor do I pretend to, but I do write  
18 my own questions. I do seek advice from  
19 friends of mine who are professionals in the  
20 field. I think anybody who does their due  
21 diligence would certainly do that.

22 This is not an insult to me though,  
23 it's an insult to all off the people that I  
24 represent and that we all represent, the  
25 taxpayers of the City of Scranton. This

1           isn't council's money, it's not the  
2           administration's money, it's the taxpayer's  
3           money. Instead of ignoring, sidestepping or  
4           insulting the people of this city, the  
5           administration should just simply answer the  
6           questions that were posed. This is what is  
7           wrong with our government here in the City  
8           of Scranton and at some points over the past  
9           few years a lack of transparency. People  
10          are generally afraid, I think, to question  
11          things and when they are rebuffed they give  
12          up. I am not giving up. I will continue to  
13          question things even in the face of response  
14          that I feel are unprofessional.

15                 The mayor is asking us to approve  
16          this budget without being completely  
17          transparent, again, and I won't go through  
18          all of it, but I posed very specific  
19          questions that I believe needed verification  
20          based on the original correspondence that  
21          was sent and I did not get that.

22                 One of those was the net interest  
23          cost associated with the pension note that  
24          was passed by this council a few weeks ago.  
25          I asked had that borrowing been included in

1 the 2019 budget. Mr. Bulzoni gave a  
2 response, I didn't find it sufficient and I  
3 didn't find it clear. I also brought this  
4 up to PEL in the caucus earlier tonight. It  
5 says that an amount of \$576,027 is due in  
6 2019 on June 1. I don't see that expense  
7 located anywhere in the 2019 budget. A  
8 cause of concern, my question was not  
9 answered.

10 On the mercantile and business  
11 privilege tax I asked very specific  
12 questions about that, I did not get a  
13 response. We are saying that we are going  
14 to see a \$400,000 increase in collections  
15 from what was budgeted in 2018. The city  
16 give a response, and I appreciated that. It  
17 says that we have identified 600 accounts  
18 subject to a failure to file notice via the  
19 audit process, and then I'm told to draw my  
20 own conclusions relative to collection  
21 activity as warranted.

22 I asked that -- or I commented that  
23 it appears as the city is using this  
24 information to budget a significant increase  
25 in business tax collections, but 600

1 accounts failed to respond to audit letters.  
2 I don't believe that's enough to warrant a  
3 major increase in collections and we are  
4 already lagging behind, as far as I can  
5 tell, this year. So I asked just for  
6 clarification, "Has the Single Tax Office  
7 and/or Turnkey provided the city with an  
8 estimate of 2019 additional tax collections.  
9 Please provide this information."

10 There is also additional questions I  
11 had on intergovernmental reimbursements,  
12 overtime costs that concern me, new hires,  
13 an assistant Parks and Recreation director,  
14 project major in the Law Department and  
15 secretary in LIPS. I didn't -- there may  
16 just be a disagreement there but I didn't  
17 see the need for those positions.

18 There is also an expenditure in here  
19 for the Keyser Valley pumping station. I  
20 asked questions about that months and months  
21 and months ago, very specific, never  
22 received a response. I asked again, didn't  
23 receive a sufficient response.

24 So, again, this is why I'm asking  
25 these questions and for follow-up. If my

1           questions were answered sufficiently, I'd  
2           probably be inclined to vote for a budget  
3           that does not have a tax increase.  
4           Certainly I think any budget with a tax  
5           increase is a good thing. You don't want to  
6           raise taxes on the people of this city. I'm  
7           simply doing my due diligence. I did not  
8           appreciate the response from Mr. Bulzoni and  
9           the administration questioning whether or  
10          not I came up with my own questions, and at  
11          this time I'd like to make a motion that we  
12          table this budget until these important  
13          questions are answered.

14                   MR. DONAHUE: Second.

15                   MR. ROGAN: On the question?

16                   MR. GAUGHAN: On the question. Just  
17          to note, we have until December 15 to pass a  
18          final budget. I don't see the rush in  
19          passing it tonight, especially in light of  
20          some of the issues that I have brought up.  
21          And let me just make another point, you  
22          know, I'm not asking these questions to  
23          belabor this budget, I'm not asking these  
24          questions, you know, to find something  
25          that's wrong in the budget, I'm literally

1           doing my due diligence. This is over a \$100  
2 million budget. I don't have the financial  
3 expertise to understand everything in it,  
4 which is it why I asked very specific  
5 questions. Didn't accuse anybody of doing  
6 anything, didn't say anything was wrong, all  
7 I did was state my concerns and ask  
8 questions and ask for clarification which is  
9 what I would assume any public official  
10 would do with a budget of this magnitude.

11                 So I just ask that we table this  
12 budget so that we can get clarification to  
13 these answers and, again, we have until  
14 December 15 to pass a final budget.

15                 MR. ROGAN: Anyone else on the  
16 question?

17                 MR. DONAHUE: Yes, just very quickly  
18 just to expand a little about on what Billy  
19 said, I don't think there is any reason  
20 whatsoever to not take our due diligence,  
21 take our time. We have the time to do it.  
22 There is still four weeks left in the year  
23 which we are getting paid for I believe we  
24 should do our due diligence on this.

25                 MR. ROGAN: Just a quick comment,

1            regarding Mr. Bulzoni and responses that we  
2            have received back, I do know that there was  
3            a very lengthy list sent to Mr. Bulzoni from  
4            Mr. Gaughan that was replied and then a  
5            reply was sent to him, I think it was  
6            Friday, and he did send a reply back this  
7            morning, but I do want to comment that for  
8            anyone that's saying there is not enough  
9            time, Mr. Bulzoni has been at our disposal  
10           any time day or night and I believe, I know  
11           I have talked to him on weekends, I'm sure  
12           other members on the board have as well. I  
13           just think to drop another 50 questions the  
14           business day before we know the final vote  
15           is going to be is a delay tactic and is  
16           trying to create is reason to vote against  
17           what is very sound proposal.

18                            So I think we should have the final  
19                            vote. The bottom line is to the taxpayers.  
20                            Your taxes don't go up and your services are  
21                            getting better, and this is really the third  
22                            year in a row have had this debate about  
23                            know tax increase budget so I'm proud to  
24                            have voted for the last two and to vote for  
25                            this one as well, and just a reminder for my

1 colleagues the vote is on the motion to  
2 table. Is there anyone else?

3 MR. GAUGHAN: Right. With all due  
4 respect, Mr. Rogan, not to belabor this  
5 point, I was only given the responses to my  
6 initial questions last week so, of course, I  
7 need time to review them, and I responded in  
8 kind on Friday. I was not under the  
9 assumption that this would be council's  
10 final meeting on the budget. I would have  
11 just assumed that if, you know, council  
12 people, myself, because I'm the only one  
13 apparently asking any questions up here,  
14 that had additional questions that we would  
15 table it because in my review of past  
16 councils I don't think any council in the  
17 last few years last ever ended on December  
18 3. They have gone to December 10, December  
19 15, even past December 15.

20 Again, I'm simply asking for  
21 clarification on certain items that I asked  
22 about. I think they are important, not  
23 trying to belabor the point. I think this  
24 budget with no tax increase is a good thing  
25 but I think there are certain items in here

1 that were not answered that I think are  
2 important, so that's why I made the motion.

3 MR. ROGAN: Anyone else?

4 MR. DONAHUE: I would like to just  
5 add to that, I did sit down with Mr. Bulzoni  
6 and also the mayor and they went through and  
7 answered my questions adequately and I just  
8 feel that each and every one of us should  
9 have that opportunity.

10 MR. ROGAN: All those in favor of  
11 tabling, signify by saying aye.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

13 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

14 MR. ROGAN: No?

15 MR. EVANS: No.

16 MR. PERRY: No.

17 MR. ROGAN: No. The nos have it and  
18 it remains on the agenda.

19 MR. EVANS: On the question, so now  
20 we're back to the original legislation, so  
21 first of all, I'd like to thank BA Bulzoni  
22 for coming in last week for our public  
23 caucus. Mr. Bulzoni has always been  
24 forthcoming and available to all of us for  
25 questions not only on their budget but on

1           any matter within its purview. I appreciate  
2           Councilman Gaughan's due diligence in asking  
3           some very important questions. They were  
4           very similar to many of the questions I had  
5           asked Mr. Bulzoni personally throughout  
6           several conversations I had with him during  
7           and after the budget's formation, but it was  
8           good to get additional information in  
9           writing as support for the budget and it  
10          actually has lead me to support the budget  
11          even more actually.

12                    At this point, I'm confident and  
13           ready to support the budget. I continue to  
14           be comfortable with the openness and  
15           transparency of the BA Bulzoni's budget  
16           process and, quite frankly, there is much  
17           heavy lifting to support a no tax increase  
18           budget but with that said it might be much  
19           more difficult a task to create contingency  
20           plans if we do not receive favorable rulings  
21           in any of the current lawsuits underway.

22                    I'm sure this city council would  
23           make themselves available for any  
24           discussions related to putting a so-called  
25           Plan B together and working with the

1 administration. The storm water issue has  
2 come up, it couldn't be any clear that the  
3 present mode of operation relative to storm  
4 water management is failing. The weather  
5 over the last year has crystalized that for  
6 all of us so we are all anxious to see the  
7 results of the storm water study by Arcadis  
8 to get moving on this front. There is  
9 presently \$500,000 set aside from the sewer  
10 proceeds for seed money to get started with  
11 whatever direction the study seems  
12 appropriate so I don't see much of an impact  
13 on the 2019 budget relative to storm water  
14 funding.

15 So tore now I feel the budget is  
16 solid, the assumptions and revenue  
17 projections and expenses are solid, so I  
18 would be voting "yes" for a no tax increase  
19 this evening.

20 MR. ROGAN: Anyone else? Roll call,  
21 please?

22 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

23 MR. PERRY: Yes.

24 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

25 MR. DONAHUE: No.

1 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

2 MR. EVANS: Yes.

3 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

4 MR. GAUGHAN: No.

5 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

6 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare

7 Item 7-A, the no tax increase budget,

8 legally and lawfully adopted.

9 MS. REED: 7-B. FOR CONSIDERATION  
10 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE - FOR ADOPTION -  
11 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 39, 2018 - AMENDING  
12 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 6, 1976 ENTITLED "AN  
13 ORDINANCE (AS AMENDED) IMPOSING A TAX FOR  
14 GENERAL REVENUE PURPOSES ON THE TRANSFER OF  
15 REAL PROPERTY SITUATE WITHIN THE CITY OF  
16 SCRANTON; PRESCRIBING AND REGULATING  
17 THE METHOD OF EVIDENCING THE PAYMENT OF SUCH  
18 TAX; CONFERRING POWERS AND IMPOSING THE  
19 DUTIES UPON CERTAIN PERSONS, AND PROVIDING  
20 PENALTIES", BY IMPOSING THE RATE OF THE  
21 REALTY TRANSFER TAX AT TWO AND TWO TENTHS  
22 PERCENT (2.2%) FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2019 AND  
23 THE SAME SHALL REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND  
24 EFFECT ANNUALLY THEREAFTER.

25 MR. ROGAN: What is the

1 recommendation of the Chair for the  
2 Committee on Finance?

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

6 MR. PERRY: Second.

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

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

10 MR. PERRY: Yes.

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

12 MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

14 MR. EVANS: Yes.

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

17 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

18 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare  
19 Item 7-B legally and lawfully adopted.

20 MS. REED: 7-C. FOR CONSIDERATION BY  
21 THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE - FOR ADOPTION -  
22 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 40, 2018 - AMENDING  
23 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 7, 1976, ENTITLED  
24 "AN ORDINANCE (AS AMENDED) IMPOSING A  
25 MERCANTILE LICENSE TAX OF 2 MILLS FOR THE

1 YEAR 1976 AND ANNUALLY THEREAFTER UPON  
2 PERSONS ENGAGING IN CERTAIN OCCUPATIONS AND  
3 BUSINESSES THEREIN; PROVIDING FOR ITS LEVY  
4 AND COLLECTION AND FOR THE ISSUANCE OF  
5 MERCANTILE LICENSES; CONFERRING AND IMPOSING  
6 POWERS AND DUTIES UPON THE TAX COLLECTOR OF  
7 THE CITY OF SCRANTON; AND IMPOSING  
8 PENALTIES", BY IMPOSING THE MERCANTILE  
9 LICENSE TAX AT ONE (1) MILL (.001) FOR  
10 CALENDAR YEAR 2019 AND THE SAME SHALL REMAIN  
11 IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT ANNUALLY  
12 THEREAFTER.

13 MR. ROGAN: What is the  
14 recommendation of the Chair for the  
15 Committee on Finance?

16 MR. EVANS: As Chairperson for the  
17 Committee on Finance, I recommend final  
18 passage of Item 7-C.

19 MR. PERRY: Second.

20 MR. ROGAN: On the question? Roll  
21 call, please?

22 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

23 MR. PERRY: Yes.

24 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

25 MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

1 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

2 MR. EVANS: Yes.

3 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

4 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

5 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

6 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare

7 Item 7-A legally and lawfully adopted.

8 MS. REED: 7-D. FOR CONSIDERATION  
9 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE - FOR ADOPTION -  
10 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 41, 2018 - AMENDING  
11 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 8, 1976, ENTITLED  
12 "AN ORDINANCE (AS AMENDED) PROVIDING FOR  
13 THE GENERAL REVENUE BY IMPOSING A TAX AT THE  
14 RATE OF TWO (2) MILLS UPON THE PRIVILEGE OF  
15 OPERATING OR CONDUCTING BUSINESS IN THE CITY  
16 OF SCRANTON AS MEASURED BY THE GROSS  
17 RECEIPTS THEREFROM; REQUIRING REGISTRATION  
18 AND PAYMENT OF THE TAX AS CONDITION TO THE  
19 CONDUCTING OF SUCH BUSINESS; PROVIDING FOR  
20 THE LEVY AND COLLECTION OF SUCH TAX;  
21 PRESCRIBING SUCH REQUIREMENTS FOR RETURNS  
22 AND RECORDS; CONFERRING POWERS AND DUTIES  
23 UPON THE TAX COLLECTOR; AND IMPOSING  
24 PENALTIES", BY IMPOSING THE BUSINESS  
25 PRIVILEGE TAX AT THE RATE OF ONE (1) MILL

1 (.001) FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2019 AND THE SAME  
2 SHALL REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT  
3 ANNUALLY THEREAFTER.

4 MR. ROGAN: What is the  
5 recommendation of the Chair for the  
6 Committee on Finance?

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

10 MR. PERRY: Second.

11 MR. ROGAN: On the question? Roll  
12 call, please?

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

14 MR. PERRY: Yes.

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

16 MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

17 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

18 MR. EVANS: Yes.

19 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

21 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

22 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare  
23 Item 7-D legally and lawfully adopted.

24 MS. REED: 7-E. FOR CONSIDERATION  
25 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE - FOR ADOPTION -

1 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 42, 2018 - AMENDING  
2 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 11, 1976, ENTITLED  
3 "AN ORDINANCE (AS AMENDED) ENACTING,  
4 IMPOSING A TAX FOR GENERAL REVENUE PURPOSES  
5 IN THE AMOUNT OF TWO PERCENT (2%) ON EARNED  
6 INCOME AND NET PROFITS ON PERSONS,  
7 INDIVIDUALS, ASSOCIATIONS AND BUSINESSES WHO  
8 ARE RESIDENTS OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON, OR  
9 NON-RESIDENTS OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON, FOR  
10 WORK DONE, SERVICES PERFORMED OR BUSINESS  
11 CONDUCTED WITHIN THE CITY OF SCRANTON,  
12 REQUIRING THE FILING OF RETURNS BY TAXPAYERS  
13 SUBJECT TO THE TAX; REQUIRING EMPLOYERS TO  
14 COLLECT THE TAX AT SOURCE; PROVIDING FOR THE  
15 ADMINISTRATION, COLLECTION AND ENFORCEMENT  
16 OF THE SAID TAX; AND IMPOSING PENALTIES FOR  
17 THE VIOLATIONS", BY RE-ENACTING THE  
18 IMPOSITION OF THE WAGE TAX AT TWO AND FOUR  
19 TENTHS (2.4%) PERCENT ON EARNED INCOME FOR  
20 RESIDENTS AND ONE (1%) PERCENT ON EARNED  
21 INCOME FOR NON-RESIDENTS OF THE CITY OF  
22 SCRANTON, FOR WORK DONE, SERVICES PERFORMED  
23 OR BUSINESS CONDUCTED WITHIN THE CITY OF  
24 SCRANTON FOR THE YEAR 2019 AND THE SAME  
25 SHALL REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT

1 ANNUALLY THEREAFTER.

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

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

8 MR. PERRY: Second.

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

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

12 MR. PERRY: Yes.

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

14 MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

16 MR. EVANS: Yes.

17 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

18 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

19 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

20 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare  
21 Item 7-E legally and lawfully adopted.

22 MS. REED: 7-F. FOR CONSIDERATION  
23 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE - FOR ADOPTION -  
24 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 43, 2018 - AMENDING  
25 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 78, 2017, AN

1           ORDINANCE AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL  
2           NO. 100, 1976, ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE (AS  
3           AMENDED) LEVYING GENERAL AND SPECIAL TAXES  
4           FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 1977", BY SETTING  
5           THE MILLAGE FOR THE YEAR 2019 AND THE SAME  
6           SHALL REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT  
7           ANNUALLY THEREAFTER" BY AMENDING SECTION 1  
8           REVERTING BACK TO THE MILLAGE RATES FROM  
9           2016 WHICH ARE .232521 MILLS LEVY ON LAND  
10          AND .050564 MILLS LEVY ON ALL BUILDINGS AND  
11          BY ELIMINATING THE DEDICATED MILLAGE FOR  
12          DEBT SERVICE CONTAINED IN SECTION 2 AND  
13          REPLACING THE DEDICATED MILLAGE FOR DEBT  
14          SERVICE WITH A DEDICATED DEBT PERCENTAGE OF  
15          32% OF REAL ESTATE TAX REVENUES COLLECTED ON  
16          A CURRENT YEAR BASIS.

17                   MR. ROGAN: What is the  
18                   recommendation of the Chairperson for the  
19                   Committee on Finance?

20                   MR. EVANS: As Chairperson for the  
21                   Committee on Finance, I recommend final  
22                   passage of Item 7-F.

23                   MR. PERRY: Second.

24                   MR. ROGAN: On the question? Roll  
25                   call, please?

1 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

2 MR. PERRY: Yes.

3 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

4 MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

5 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

6 MR. EVANS: Yes.

7 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

10 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare  
11 Item 7-F legally and lawfully adopted.

12 MS. REED: 7-G. FOR CONSIDERATION  
13 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE - FOR ADOPTION -  
14 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 44, 2018 - CREATING  
15 AND ESTABLISHING SPECIAL CITY ACCOUNT NO.  
16 02.229636 ENTITLED "SSA PENSION" FOR  
17 RECEIVING FUNDS FROM THAT PART OF THE SALE  
18 OF THE SCRANTON SEWER AUTHORITY PROCEEDS  
19 USED FOR THE PENSION OBLIGATION NOTE  
20 (TAXABLE SERIES OF 2018) AND THE  
21 DISBURSEMENT OF PAYMENTS ON THE PENSION  
22 OBLIGATION NOTE (TAXABLE SERIES OF 2018).

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

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

4 MR. PERRY: Second.

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

7 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

8 MR. PERRY: Yes.

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

10 MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

12 MR. EVANS: Yes.

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

16 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare  
17 Item 7-G legally and lawfully adopted.

18 MS. REED: 7-H. FOR CONSIDERATION BY  
19 THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE - FOR ADOPTION -  
20 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 45, 2018 - CREATING  
21 AND ESTABLISHING SPECIAL CITY ACCOUNT NO.  
22 02.229637 ENTITLED "SSA FUNDS" FOR RECEIVING  
23 THE REMAINING BALANCE OF FUNDS FROM THE SALE  
24 OF THE SCRANTON SEWER AUTHORITY FOR  
25 DISBURSING FOR FUTURE CITY PROJECTS.

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

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

7 MR. PERRY: Second.

8 MR. ROGAN: On the question?

9 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question,  
10 for 7-H and the few other items remaining I  
11 asked specific questions about these  
12 legislative items, received no response,  
13 surprise, surprise so I'm going to vote for  
14 it because we are just creating a special  
15 city account but, Mrs. Reed, if we could  
16 send that again, specifically with this one  
17 I think we may have a document some place if  
18 you can find it in the file a few years ago  
19 where they delineated where we were going to  
20 use all of the Sewer Authority funds for  
21 future city projects. I was just asking for  
22 an update, I wasn't sure if that had changed  
23 at all over the last year or two. Thank  
24 you.

25 MR. ROGAN: Anyone else? Roll call,

1                   please?

2                   MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

3                   MR. PERRY: Yes.

4                   MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

5                   MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

6                   MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

7                   MR. EVANS: Yes.

8                   MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

9                   MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

10                  MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

11                  MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare  
12                  Item 7-H legally and lawfully adopted.

13                  MS. REED: 7-I. FOR CONSIDERATION BY  
14                  THE COMMITTEE ON RULES - FOR ADOPTION -  
15                  FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 46, 2018 - AMENDING  
16                  FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 138, 2017 AN  
17                  ORDINANCE "AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER  
18                  APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE AND  
19                  ENTER INTO A PENSION TRUST AGREEMENT WITH  
20                  THE COMPOSITE PENSION BOARD TO HOLD  
21                  APPROXIMATELY \$22,910,531.56 OF THE PROCEEDS  
22                  FROM THE SALE OF THE ASSETS OF THE SCRANTON  
23                  SEWER AUTHORITY IN TRUST UNTIL SUCH TIME AS  
24                  PENSION REFORMS HAVE BEEN ENACTED" BY  
25                  PERMITTING THE CITY TO TRANSFER FUNDS

1           REQUIRED PURSUANT TO THE ORIGINAL TRUST  
2           AGREEMENT TO THE COMPOSITE PENSION BOARD  
3           THROUGH THE ISSUANCE OF NONELECTORAL DEBT IN  
4           A PRINCIPAL AMOUNT OF APPROXIMATELY  
5           \$22,910,531.56.

6                       MR. ROGAN: As Chairperson for the  
7           Committee on Rules, I recommend final  
8           passage of Item 7-I.

9                       MR. PERRY: Second.

10                      MR. ROGAN: On the question? Roll  
11           call, please?

12                      MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

13                      MR. PERRY: Yes.

14                      MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

15                      MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

16                      MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

17                      MR. EVANS: Yes.

18                      MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

19                      MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

20                      MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

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

23                      MS. REED: 7-J. FOR CONSIDERATION  
24           BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE - FOR ADOPTION -  
25           FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 47, 2018 - CREATING

1 AND ESTABLISHING SPECIAL CITY ACCOUNT NO.  
2 02.229638 ENTITLED "STREET LIGHTING  
3 LEASE RESERVE FUNDS" FOR THE RECEIPT AND  
4 DISBURSEMENT OF STREET LIGHTING LEASE  
5 RESERVE FUNDS.

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

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

12 MR. PERRY: Second.

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

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

16 MR. PERRY: Yes.

17 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

18 MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

19 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

20 MR. EVANS: Yes.

21 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

23 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

24 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare  
25 Item 7-J legally and lawfully adopted.

1 MS. REED: 7-K. FOR CONSIDERATION  
2 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE - FOR ADOPTION -  
3 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 48, 2018 - CREATING  
4 AND ESTABLISHING SPECIAL CITY ACCOUNT NO.  
5 02.229639 ENTITLED "HIGHMARK HEALTHCARE  
6 RESERVE" FOR THE RECEIPT OF HIGHMARK  
7 HEALTHCARE FUNDS AND DISBURSEMENT OF THESE  
8 FUNDS FOR CITY OF SCRANTON HEALTHCARE COSTS.

9 MR. ROGAN: What is the  
10 recommendation of the Chairperson for the  
11 Committee on Finance?

12 MR. EVANS: As Chairperson for the  
13 Committee on Finance, I recommend final  
14 passage of Item 7-K.

15 MR. EVANS: Second.

16 MR. ROGAN: On the question? Roll  
17 call, please?

18 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

19 MR. PERRY: Yes.

20 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

21 MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

22 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

23 MR. EVANS: Yes.

24 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

25 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

1 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

2 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare  
3 Item 7-K legally and lawfully adopted.

4 MS. REED: 7-L. FOR CONSIDERATION  
5 BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES - FOR ADOPTION -  
6 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 49, 2018 - AMENDING  
7 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 21, 2016 AN  
8 ORDINANCE ENTITLED "DEFINING AND AUTHORIZING  
9 TAX EXEMPTIONS FROM REAL PROPERTY TAX IN  
10 ORDER TO IMPROVE DETERIORATING REAL PROPERTY  
11 IN CERTAIN AREAS IN THE CITY OF SCRANTON,  
12 ESTABLISHING AN EXEMPTION SCHEDULE AND  
13 PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING EXEMPTIONS, AND  
14 PROVIDING FOR NON-PERMISSIBLE EXEMPTIONS AND  
15 LIMITING AMENDMENT THERETO" TO EXPAND THE  
16 ELIGIBLE AREAS, INCREASE THE DURATION OF  
17 EACH EXEMPTION, AND TO LIFT THE CAP ON EACH  
18 EXEMPTION.

19 MR. ROGAN: As Chairperson for the  
20 Committee on Rules, I recommend final  
21 passage of Item 7-L.

22 MR. PERRY: Second.

23 MR. ROGAN: On the question?

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question,  
25 I just want to reiterate my comments from

1 last week. I know there is some opposition  
2 to this legislation. I look at it this way,  
3 you know, if we do nothing, you know, if we  
4 don't offer any incentive then we are just  
5 probably going to remain where we are now  
6 which I think is in neutral. Maybe in ten  
7 or 11 years or 20 years when we look back at  
8 this maybe it won't have the effect that we  
9 think it will, but when the Chamber of  
10 Commerce came in presented data from other  
11 communities that showed they did make a  
12 difference and it did move the needle in the  
13 right direction so that's the reason that  
14 I'll be voting for it.

15 MR. ROGAN: Just to also reiterate  
16 some of what I mentioned, I strongly support  
17 this legislation and I really want to give  
18 you a thank you to the Chamber of Commerce,  
19 they have a representative here today. They  
20 really took the lead on this issue. One  
21 point I want to make that actually isn't  
22 just pertaining to this is much work is  
23 being done outside of what you see on  
24 television. There were many meetings  
25 between members of council and the Chamber

1 and I know they are actively working with  
2 the school district now, I'm going to be  
3 working with the county as well, but large  
4 pieces of legislation such as this take  
5 time. Unfortunately, it's not something  
6 that somebody has an idea and the next day  
7 it's implemented, we wish it was that easy,  
8 but I really want to thank the Chamber for  
9 their leadership on this issue.

10 I'm hopeful that the school district  
11 will follow suit and pass this piece of  
12 legislation, the County as well, but it  
13 really is something that I'm very proud to  
14 support or get the economic engine in the  
15 city moving, hopefully encourage development  
16 not only in our downtown but also in our  
17 neighborhoods, and I think this legislation  
18 along with the budget that we pass tonight  
19 really represents a turning point for the  
20 City of Scranton where we are going from  
21 being reactive addressing constant issues  
22 over and over again to being proactive and  
23 creating a program that is hopefully going  
24 to grow the city and grow our tax base which  
25 is the key component of this plan, so I'm

1           strongly in favor and hopefully in 10 years  
2           I won't be sitting here and none of us will  
3           be sitting here where we can look back and  
4           say this was a very good thing that got the  
5           city moving in the right direction.

6                       MR. PERRY: Yeah, on the question.  
7           I'm in favor of this. I know when we spoke  
8           with the Chamber I was really impressed with  
9           the presentation, the data from other cities  
10          and the fact that the Chamber is actually  
11          standing behind this, is going to help move  
12          this forward for us. This is our second  
13          swing at a LERTA we had. We actually have a  
14          three-year one in place now, it really  
15          didn't do anything so what I'm expecting out  
16          of this ten-year LERTA and what I'm  
17          expecting from us as a city is more updates  
18          to -- within city hall so we can get that  
19          out to the residents of the city to see how  
20          this is working for us, what is it doing to  
21          our permit revenue, what is it doing to new  
22          construction. If not on a monthly basis  
23          like Mrs. Schumacher said on a quarterly  
24          basis, but I don't want to see this program  
25          kind of start hot and fizzle out. I want to

1 keep updates so we can keep abreast of this  
2 and communicate that up to everybody on what  
3 this program is actually doing for us.  
4 That's all.

5 MR. ROGAN: Anyone else?

6 MR. EVANS: On the question. Excuse  
7 me, several weeks ago my comments on the  
8 subject I called this legislation bold and  
9 dramatic and for our city it certainly is  
10 because I know the status quo has brought  
11 you us to where we are today. Yes, we are  
12 better off financially than we were a few  
13 years ago, but growth is basically  
14 nonexistent and the numbers, especially our  
15 assessed valuation of real property, clearly  
16 shows that lack of the growth. If you do  
17 not grow your community or have a limited  
18 growth you cannot sustain government at the  
19 level that our citizens expects and  
20 deserves.

21 When you do not grow, your city  
22 expenses will continue to rise and you have  
23 no alternative to raise taxes to balance  
24 your budget. The one-time revenue sources  
25 are gone, so now it's pretty simple. When

1           you are out of money, you better start  
2           thinking. This legislation is about  
3           thinking about tomorrow. With an influx of  
4           new construction, jobs will be created, wage  
5           taxes will be paid, home ownership will  
6           increase, building permits will be granted  
7           and additional commerce will be created, and  
8           then in year 11 when the LERTA properties go  
9           online, new property taxes will be received.  
10          Taxes in most cases that would have never  
11          happened without this incentive, and then  
12          again in your 12th and 13th and 14th and  
13          15th and so on and so forth. Some day we  
14          may not need this type of legislation, but  
15          today is not that day.

16                   MR. ROGAN: Anyone else? Roll call,  
17                   please?

18                   MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

19                   MR. PERRY: Yes.

20                   MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

21                   MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

22                   MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

23                   MR. EVANS: Yes.

24                   MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

25                   MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

1 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

2 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare  
3 Item 7-L legally and lawfully adopted.

4 MS. REED: 7-M. FOR CONSIDERATION  
5 BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES - FOR ADOPTION -  
6 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 50, 2018 - AMENDING  
7 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 22, 2016 AN  
8 ORDINANCE ENTITLED "DEFINING AND AUTHORIZING  
9 TAX EXEMPTIONS FROM REAL PROPERTY TAX IN  
10 ORDER TO STIMULATE RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL  
11 AND OTHER BUSINESS ACTIVITY IN CERTAIN AREAS  
12 IN THE CITY OF SCRANTON, ESTABLISHING AN  
13 EXEMPTION SCHEDULE AND PROCEDURES FOR  
14 OBTAINING EXEMPTIONS, PROVIDING FOR  
15 NON-PERMISSIBLE EXEMPTIONS AND LIMITING  
16 AMENDMENT THERETO" IN ORDER TO EXPAND THE  
17 ELIGIBLE AREAS, INCREASE THE DURATION OF  
18 EACH EXEMPTION, AND TO LIFT THE CAP ON EACH  
19 EXEMPTION.

20 MR. ROGAN: As Chairperson for the  
21 Committee on Rules, I recommend final  
22 passage of Item 7-M.

23 MR. PERRY: Second.

24 MR. ROGAN: On the question? Roll  
25 call, please?

1 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

2 MR. PERRY: Yes.

3 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

4 MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

5 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

6 MR. EVANS: Yes.

7 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

10 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare  
11 Item 7-M legally and lawfully adopted.

12 MS. REED: 7-N. FOR CONSIDERATION  
13 BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES - FOR ADOPTION -  
14 RESOLUTION NO. 90, 2018 - AUTHORIZING THE  
15 MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS  
16 TO EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT BETWEEN  
17 THE CITY OF SCRANTON AND THE SCRANTON SCHOOL  
18 DISTRICT WITH JOSEPH M. ALU AND ASSOCIATES  
19 TO PERFORM THE SCRANTON SINGLE TAX OFFICE  
20 INDEPENDENT AUDIT FOR FISCAL YEARS ENDING  
21 DECEMBER 31, 2017 AND DECEMBER 31, 2018.

22 MR. ROGAN: As Chairperson for the  
23 Committee on Rules, I recommend final  
24 passage of Item 7-N.

25 MR. PERRY: Second.

1 MR. ROGAN: On the question? Roll  
2 call, please?

3 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

4 MR. PERRY: Yes.

5 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

6 MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

7 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

8 MR. EVANS: Yes.

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

10 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

12 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare  
13 Item 7-N legally and lawfully adopted.

14 MS. REED: 7-0. FOR CONSIDERATION  
15 BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES - FOR ADOPTION -  
16 RESOLUTION NO. 91, 2018 - AUTHORIZING THE  
17 MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS  
18 TO APPLY FOR AND EXECUTE A GRANT APPLICATION  
19 BY THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO THE LACKAWANNA  
20 HERITAGE VALLEY NATIONAL AND STATE HERITAGE  
21 AREA PARTNERSHIP GRANT APPLICATION FOR  
22 CONSTRUCTION ON THE WENZEL TREEHOUSE REPAIRS  
23 IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1,000.00.

24 MR. ROGAN: As Chairperson for the  
25 Committee on Rules, I recommend final

1 passage of Item 7-0.

2 MR. PERRY: Second.

3 MR. ROGAN: On the question? Roll  
4 call, please?

5 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Perry.

6 MR. PERRY: Yes.

7 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

8 MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

10 MR. EVANS: Yes.

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

14 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare  
15 Item 7-0 legally and lawfully adopted.

16 Prior to adjournment I have one  
17 announcement that I forgot to mention at the  
18 beginning of the meeting. Mr. Bolus wasn't  
19 able to make it here tonight but he does  
20 want us to announce that his Christmas  
21 dinner will be held again this year on  
22 Christmas Day at St. Pat's in West Scranton  
23 from 12 to 6 p.m.

24 Anyone in the city who is it lonely  
25 at on Christmas or just wants some company

1           is welcome to come for a free meal and we  
2           want to thank Mr. Bolus for his continued  
3           generosity for hosting this event for the  
4           25th year in a row.

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

7                        MR. PERRY: Motion to adjourn.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes of testimony taken by me at the hearing of the above-captioned matter and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the same to the best of my ability.

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CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR  
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER