

COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON

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HELD:

Tuesday, April 28th, 2020

LOCATION:

VIA YOUTUBE

Maria McCool, RPR
Official Court Reporter

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

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

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

1 (Pledge of Allegiance.)

2
3 MR. GAUGHAN: I'd like everyone to
4 please remain standing for a moment of silent
5 reflection for our service men and women
6 throughout the world and for all those who have
7 passed away in our community.

8 Let us also take a special moment of
9 silence tonight for the people in our community
10 and throughout the world who are suffering or
11 who have passed away from the coronavirus. Let
12 us think about them and their families at this
13 time that they may find peace.

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

19 May they find protection and peace.
20 Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by
21 many people suffering from this illness or only
22 a few, let us stick together, endure together,
23 mourn together, persist and prepare together.
24 In place of our anxiety, let us continue to
25 hope and find peace. Thank you. Miss Carrera,

1 roll call, please. Oh, sorry, Miss Carrera. I
2 have to unmute you. There you go. Roll call,
3 please.

4 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Schuster.

5 MR. SCHUSTER: Present.

6 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McAndrew.

7 MR. MCANDREW: Present.

8 MS. CARRERA: Dr. Rothchild.

9 DR. ROTHCHILD: Here.

10 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

11 MR. DONAHUE: Here.

12 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

13 MR. GAUGHAN: Here. Thank you, Miss
14 Carrera. There will be a motion to move Item
15 5-B to Sixth and Seventh Orders for a final
16 vote based on the attached emergency
17 certificate. Mrs. Reed, could you please
18 dispense with the reading of the minutes?

19 MS. REED: Thank you. THIRD ORDER.

20 3-A. AGREEMENT BETWEEN KEYSTONE
21 MISSION AND THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO
22 OPERATE WESTON FIELDHOUSE AS AN EMERGENCY
23 STAY-IN-PLACE HOMELESS SHELTER DURING THE
24 Covid-19 PANDEMIC.

25 3-B. MINUTES OF THE ETHICS BOARD

1 MEETING HELD MARCH 12, 2020.

2 3-C. MINUTES OF THE SCRANTON
3 MUNICIPAL RECREATION AUTHORITY BOARD
4 MEETING HELD MARCH 7, 2020.

5 3-D. MINUTES OF THE HISTORICAL
6 ARCHITECTURE REVIEW BOARD MEETING HELD MARCH
7 12, 2020.

8 3-E. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM
9 MAYOR PAIGE G. COGNETTI DATED APRIL 21, 2020
10 REGARDING RECENT APPOINTMENT OF THE CITY'S FIRE
11 CHIEF.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Mrs. Reed.
13 Are there any comments on any of the Third
14 Order items?

15 MR. DONAHUE: Yeah, I have just a
16 quick comment just to make a few points
17 regarding 3-E, which is correspondence from the
18 Mayor regarding the appointment of Al Lucas,
19 Fire Chief.

20 First off, Council's vote of the
21 appointment of this fire -- of the Fire Chief
22 did not -- would not affect his ability to
23 perform his job functions as either Fire Chief
24 or Emergency Management Coordinator in any way
25 whatsoever. And to suggest so in this time of

1 crisis I think is disingenuous.

2 Secondly, the only justification
3 Council asked the administration for in terms
4 of raising the Fire Chief's salary is simply
5 provided in paragraphs four and five of the
6 Mayor's letter.

7 And lastly, while I agree with the
8 Mayor's point that it does not makes sense that
9 the Deputy Chief makes over \$10,000 more than
10 the Fire Chief, but this issue of director
11 level salaries isn't anything new. In 2017,
12 the Fire Chief salary was 67,228.

13 So the City has made significant
14 progress in raising the Fire Chief's salary.
15 My main issue is I do not believe the
16 administration went about addressing this issue
17 in the right way. The Mayor's transition team
18 could have gave the previous Council salary
19 suggestions when the budget was being adopted.

20 We could have waited until the 2021
21 budget process. Now might not be the best time
22 to give out raises. Or the administration
23 could have simply come to Council, justified
24 their position and Council could have
25 considered legislation amending the 2020

1 budget.

2 I know I as well as the rest of this
3 Council is more than willing to work with the
4 Mayor to get through the difficult times we do
5 have ahead. But being a rubber stamper I don't
6 think is working together. Working together
7 requires building consensus.

8 And I look forward to working with
9 the Mayor moving forward to address the issues
10 that we have forthcoming. That's all I have.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Anyone else on the
12 question?

13 MR. SCHUSTER: Also, I was going to
14 give a response to 3-E as well. I'd just like
15 to say that the correspondence today from the
16 Mayor I think it addressed the original request
17 from Council. And it, you know, put in writing
18 how those funds were to be allocated. Thank
19 you.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Anyone
21 else on the question? Or not on question, I'm
22 sorry. Any other comments for the Third Order
23 items? No? Okay. If not, received and filed.
24 Do any Council members have any announcements
25 at this time?

1 MR. MCANDREW: I have a quick one.
2 It's not an announcement. It's an aftermath.
3 Last Sunday, the FOP and the Scranton Police
4 Department -- I announced it last week. But
5 they did a free pasta dinner on Sunday which
6 was great.

7 My understanding it was a huge
8 success. And, you know, it's tough during
9 these times. So I just want to thank the
10 ladies and gents that were involved with that.
11 That's all I have.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Any other
13 announcements?

14 DR. ROTHCHILD: Yes. Yes, I have
15 two announcements. First off, I'd like to say
16 that I received my mail-in ballot today which
17 I'm excited about so that I could vote in the
18 primary election.

19 And I just wanted to make people
20 aware that they could apply for a mail-in
21 ballot up until the deadline on May 26th. The
22 primary election is officially on June 2nd.
23 That's the date that it was moved to.

24 But it's a really easy way to just
25 apply online in order to receive that mail-in

1 ballot. And then you could just vote from the
2 comfort of your home and follow the
3 instructions so that you could send it back in.

4 So if you're interested in doing
5 that you can go online to votes, V-0-T-E-S PA
6 dot com slash apply mail ballot. So I want to
7 make people aware of that. And the other thing
8 that I thought was important to announce, I
9 know more and more people are using the parks
10 with the weather starting to become nice.

11 And so many people just being
12 home and needing to get out, which is
13 understandable. And they are there to be used.
14 My wife and I, we live just a couple blocks
15 from Nay Aug Park. So we use that park pretty
16 frequently. And I know that the Recreation
17 Authority Board is working to address this
18 issue.

19 But there has been an increase in
20 the amount of litter. I see it all around when
21 we're walking. And you could bring a bag with
22 you and pick it up. But it's easier if people
23 just don't litter and pick it up themselves and
24 clean up after themselves when they are
25 utilizing the parks.

1 We should not be seeing gloves and
2 disposable masks on the ground. That's a
3 hazard at this time where we're trying to
4 control the virus from being spread. People
5 should be extra conscious of taking off those
6 items. And I've also heard that people are not
7 cleaning up after their dogs as much as they
8 should be.

9 And as a dog owner who always makes
10 sure to carry extra bags, that's just a really
11 courteous thing to do. So I would appreciate
12 that if people who were utilizing the parks are
13 just reminded to clean up after themselves.
14 Thank you.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: Anyone else?

16 MR. DONAHUE: Just my weekly
17 reminder if you haven't filled out your census
18 form to please do so. You could do so online
19 at my2020census.gov.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. I just
21 have one. Late this afternoon I received an
22 e-mail from the Mayor that the Mayor and her
23 administration are extending the emergency
24 declaration due to the coronavirus pandemic
25 until May 15th.

1 I did not receive a copy of the
2 actual declaration. I think that was going to
3 be sent to Lori soon. And then we'll put it in
4 Third Order on our agenda for next week.

5 Also, as I have been mentioning for
6 the last few weeks, if anybody would like to
7 comment on any agenda items or any City
8 business, you can -- members of the public can
9 send those comments in writing to our City
10 Clerk, Lori Reed by e-mailing
11 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
15 Council prior to our meeting and is placed on
16 the official record and in the minutes of our
17 meetings.

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

23 Also, I want to note that
24 Mr. Moretti's audit -- the gas card audit is
25 located for public inspection on the City

1 Council's page. There's a link to it. It was
2 not -- there was not enough time to put it on
3 our agenda tonight in Third Order. We received
4 it on Saturday. The agenda was posted on
5 Friday.

6 Or we received it late Friday night
7 and didn't have enough time to put it on the
8 agenda. So it will be on the agenda for next
9 Tuesday. And that's all I have. Mrs. Reed?

10 MS. REED: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS
11 PARTICIPATION.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. At this
13 time I'd ask if a member of Council could
14 please make a motion to accept public comment
15 from the following individuals to be placed
16 into the record and on our official minutes of
17 this meeting.

18 MR. DONAHUE: So moved.

19 MR. GAUGHAN: There's a motion.

20 MR. SCHUSTER: Second.

21 MR. GAUGHAN: There's a motion and
22 there's been a second. On the question? There
23 were four individuals who submitted public
24 comment. They were Johanna Beck, Derek Raines,
25 Marie Schumacher and Fay Franus.

1 As I had mentioned the past few
2 weeks, I have been going through as all Council
3 members have in reviewing the public's
4 questions and their comments. I did receive
5 some responses to the questions that the public
6 had. I'll save those for Fifth Order tonight.

7 Anybody else on the question?
8 There's been a motion. There's been a second.
9 We've been on the question. All those in favor
10 of the motion signify by saying aye.

11 MR. SCHUSTER: Aye.

12 MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

13 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

14 DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

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

17

18 (PUBLIC COMMENT)

19

20 (Johanna Beck)

21

22 Would it be possible for our city of
23 Scranton to post daily positive COVID 19 cases
24 on a daily basis on your website????? I, think
25 this is important information the residents of

1 Scranton should be made aware of. This is not
2 an unusual request as it, is, being done in
3 other states. Some of, the cities in these
4 states alert their residents by e-mail or text
5 messages if they signed up for, it.. Please
6 consider providing this important information
7 by posting it on your website which would not
8 be a complicated procedure. Please present
9 this at the council meeting this week. Thank
10 you very much for your consideration.

11 Johanna Beck, 416 Alder St., Scranton, Pa.

12
13 (Derek Raines)

14
15 My name is Derek Raines, I live at
16 919 Monroe Ave. Scranton PA 18510.

17 First I would like to say how happy
18 I am with our new city administration. Each of
19 the city council members and the mayor are
20 doing a great job, and giving us pride once
21 again in our city.

22 I thank each member of our city
23 government who has answered questions I have
24 sent you.

25 You know who you are. Thank you.

1 It is unfortunate our city has been
2 left with not one but two black eyes.

3 Fortunately each of you are doing
4 your part to improve our image and our town.
5 Thank you.

6 I have three suggestions. Obviously
7 I don't know if they would work but I would
8 like to speak to them anyway.

9 Item number one, during the last
10 Mayor Cagnetti streaming video Mayor Cagnetti
11 suggested paying your refuse fee as soon as
12 possible.

13 I looked online for how I could pay
14 this and I was unable to come to any firm
15 conclusion as to how I should pay it. I would
16 be more than happy to pay it as soon as
17 possible.

18 My wife and I write very few checks
19 each year. We need to come up with electronic
20 transferring etc. I know this is something
21 Mayor Cagnetti is working on.

22 That brings me to my next why don't
23 we come up with a way for people to pay their
24 garbage fee in advance for a discount?

25 For instance I own a double home. I

1 pay \$600 per year for my two properties.
2 Allow a \$25-\$50 per year discount for paying
3 your refuse fee a year in advance.

4 I know my wife and I would be more
5 than happy to help the city by giving it money
6 in advance for something that is truly needed.

7 The next thing I thought of and how
8 the city can make money is to sell copies of
9 the nurse painting that is in the mayors
10 office. Truly a piece of art. I would be glad
11 to pay for a copy of the photograph/print.

12 I've been married to my favorite
13 nurse for over 35 years. My wife is proud to
14 work as a operating room Registered Nurse at
15 Geisinger Medical Center.

16 It is a matter of convenience and
17 quality of life. The city of Scranton needs to
18 do more to attract it's healthcare
19 professionals to the Hill section.

20 I do not know what we as a city can
21 do to incentivize high paid professionals to
22 move into the Hill Section.

23 On the coronavirus, as a retired
24 occupational safety and health specialist, we
25 need to practice all safeguards that have been

1 laid before us.

2 We also need to provide a way to
3 communicate with non-English-speaking neighbors
4 about what is and is not supposed to be done
5 during this crisis.

6 From neighbors having parties, to
7 groups of children playing outside together.
8 The population needs to be made aware of the
9 seriousness of this pandemic, and the
10 consequences of their actions.

11 We cannot afford to reduce our
12 guard.

13

14 Thank you, DEREK

15

16 (Marie Schumacher)

17

18 On 21 March The Times-Tribune
19 published "Scranton parking free during
20 coronavirus."

21

22 It had much information such as the
23 outside operator of the parking system had
24 agreed to provide the first 30 minute of street
25 parking free to help businesses that remain
 open to conduct retail operations and takeout

1 commerce," and during a press conference the
2 Mayor announced street parking will be free
3 going forward, at least during the coronavirus
4 crisis.

5 My question(s) then is (are) is the
6 operator of the parking system providing this
7 at no expense to the City and, if not, is the
8 City committed to reimburse the operator and,
9 if so, would the funding come from the
10 Operating Budget or the Parking Authority. If
11 the City is compensating the Operator when was
12 this approved by Council or the Authority?

13 I believe the Budget approved Plan
14 was if put out to bid the collection of
15 Delinquent Refuse Bill payments; when will this
16 RFP be issues?

17 What is the status of migration of
18 Business Privilege and Mercantile Tax to a
19 Payroll Preparation Tax negotiations with the
20 Scranton School District?

21 When will the list of streets to be
22 paved (other than those funded by OECD) be made
23 public and when will the RFP/Q be published?

24 o What is the City's current Credit Rating?

25 o Has the Other Post Employment Trust Fund been

1 established and, if so, what is the balance?

2 If not, when will this occur?

3 What is the status of the Utility
4 Bill Audit and when will it be available to the
5 public via Third Order of Council's Agenda?

6

7 Marie Schumacher

8

9 (Fay Franus)

10

11 I understand you may be speaking
12 about sending out the garbage fee bills
13 tonight. Have you ever taken into
14 consideration that there is a lawsuit out
15 there claiming the people may have paid too
16 much every year and that if the city loses this
17 lawsuit tax payers will have to be paid back?

18 My point is why aren't you taking a
19 more lenient approach and not charge the
20 taxpayers as much as you have every year. I
21 understand you get \$30.00 off if you pay early.
22 That has nothing to do with what I am talking
23 about. Also if the city loses the city will
24 probably appeal and there will be another legal
25 bill the citizens must pay for. To say nothing

1 of the fact you as council will fight to keep
2 the people from getting paid back because that
3 is what you already did with the fifty million
4 dollar law suit the city lost and now it is
5 being appealed. YOU want the city to win that
6 appeal.

7 You as a council did NOT fighting
8 for the people to get the money back that THEY
9 overpaid. So I can see the pattern here. To
10 say nothing of the fact these very people are
11 still getting charged too much and you don't
12 seem to care-- another \$10 million this year
13 and god knows how much in the garbage fee the
14 people are paying more than they should.

15 What is the story with the
16 collection of delinquent garbage fee bills?
17 Did that company start doing that yet? The law
18 says as you well know but also ignore the DPW
19 does NOT have to pick up the garbage of any
20 property that does NOT pay their garbage fee.
21 A law was also passed to state all residents
22 must put lids on their garbage this preventing
23 any bags being left out for animals to get at
24 causing a health hazard -- therefore allowing
25 DPW to stop picking up the garbage of people

1 Mr. Moretti here. Mr. Moretti, thank you for
2 sticking around. I know that Dr. Rothchild has
3 a few questions for you to wrap the gas card
4 discussion up. I have a few additional
5 questions as well. So, we'll utilize our time
6 now to do that. So, Dr. Rothchild, do you want
7 to pick up with your questions?

8 DR. ROTHCHILD: Sure. It was more
9 of a comment. But I wanted to thank Mr.
10 Moretti and his hard work in putting together
11 this audit and being very thorough with it. We
12 do appreciate the information.

13 It seems like my understanding of
14 the audit and what Mr. Moretti explained is
15 that it's difficult to hold any particular
16 people accountable because it just happened.

17 And this problem occurred so widely
18 with misuse of the gas cards. So I am still
19 like a little unclear on what we do in terms of
20 taxes and how we get that money back if that's
21 something that we were to proceed with.

22 But other than that I think, you
23 know, I'm not surprised by what was in the
24 audit based on the information we had
25 previously.

1 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. Thank you.

2 MR. DONAHUE: I would also like to
3 just thank Mr. Moretti for the job he did.
4 Going back to when, you know, to the fall when
5 we asked that an audit be done, you know, the
6 point of it wasn't for an I gotcha moment. It
7 was to better develop policies going forward so
8 that we wouldn't get into that situation again.

9 And I think this is a pretty solid
10 blueprint on where to begin moving forward and
11 developing a policy and hopefully we could, you
12 know, work with the administration to have that
13 policy developed and implemented. So, Mr.
14 Moretti, thank you for this. I appreciate it.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Okay, Mr.
16 Moretti, I have a just a few additional
17 questions. So the City -- did the City
18 provide you with employee attendance reports?
19 Did you use that in your -- to complete your
20 audit?

21 MR. MORETTI: Bill, the -- during
22 the first part -- first phase of the audit when
23 it came to Fire Chief DeSarno, I needed to look
24 because I wanted to see -- I couldn't figure
25 out when the incident that was reported in the

1 newspaper had happened. So I had data. I had
2 data. It was here, here, and here.

3 So I had asked for attendance
4 controllers to see when was this issued the
5 newspaper was drumming up it happened. When I
6 received it, I was able to kind of back into
7 when it happened. It was over a weekend I
8 recall. Don't hold me to it. I don't have his
9 report in front of me.

10 But I want to say it was like a, you
11 know, Friday to Monday or maybe a Thursday to
12 Tuesday, something like that. When I went back
13 to the attendance controller, he hadn't taken
14 his time off. And so it suggested to me what
15 the heck is going on here?

16 The paper is claiming he was on
17 vacation. He wasn't. When I tracked through
18 the detail of his activity, clearly he could
19 never have been in the City of Scranton because
20 if you're hypothetically on a Monday in New
21 Jersey and a Tuesday in Maryland, on a
22 Wednesday -- you know, it's hard to believe
23 that what you're doing is driving back to
24 Scranton.

25 So that got my antennas up. Then I

1 started asking and looking through some of the
2 other attendance controllers. And it occurred
3 to me he didn't work a full year or he didn't
4 take a vacation a full year.

5 I think we're all -- I think we're
6 all very good workers. And I think we're very
7 dedicated to our rules. But to think that I
8 don't take a vacation or you don't take a
9 vacation or a sick day is odd.

10 And when I looked over several
11 years, I realized there was very little to no
12 time taken. Now what --

13 MR. GAUGHAN: Did you get an
14 employee attendance for -- okay, so that's for
15 former Fire Chief DeSarno.

16 MR. MORETTI: Yes.

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Did you get them for
18 other employees as well that -- how did that
19 work?

20 MR. MORETTI: I think I asked for
21 other employees. I did not ask for every
22 employee because it would be well beyond the
23 scope of what I was engaged to do.

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Right.

25 MR. MORETTI: I did ask for a couple

1 key people. And, you know, and I found on a
2 few people that, yes, they used it during times
3 they were sick. One of them that comes to mind
4 if you wanted to refer to -- but there's
5 others.

6 And again, I always -- I feel like
7 if I single one person out, all of a sudden,
8 I'm making it about them. But, yes, I came
9 across a few people who were sick at the time.
10 It was on their attendance controllers and yet
11 they still used a gas card.

12 So the question I have for you is,
13 if you're sick, you're down. You're not on
14 call. You shouldn't be on call. That would
15 be -- that would be kind of outrageous for even
16 the City or anybody else, private employer
17 including -- ask that you be available. But
18 yet you're filling your gas card.

19 So, yes, I did come across that. It
20 is noted. Although I have to tell you I didn't
21 open up a can of worms with it since it really
22 had nothing to do with the fuel usage other
23 than the fact that I put it down as a very
24 regular item.

25 If you go through the detail of the

1 people that I did look at, I looked at your
2 biggies. I looked at -- the Mayor by the way
3 keeps absolutely no records, which surprises me
4 because --

5 MR. GAUGHAN: You mean Mayor
6 Courtright, correct?

7 MR. MORETTI: Correct. Every
8 position, you know, should keep time even if
9 they are salaried people they should keep time
10 because when it goes to your payroll
11 department, how do they deduct it from their
12 accrued benefit time?

13 MR. GAUGHAN: Yeah, I noticed -- I
14 noticed that in your report and not to go off
15 on tangent here because I realize that it's
16 beyond the scope. But that is something that I
17 think needs -- now the second part of this that
18 really should be looked into because that's a
19 major concern, you know, employees -- certain
20 employees when they leave employment and they
21 are done with their employment with the City,
22 they many times get paid out for that unused
23 time.

24 MR. MORETTI: Because they get paid
25 that time out. And if they are not entitled to

1 it, what is the City paying for?

2 MR. GAUGHAN: Right. Another thing
3 that stuck out to me if you could expand on
4 this a little bit is Car 22, which actually
5 according to your report and according to the
6 fire department officials is not an actual car.

7 So you had stated in your report
8 that receipts of this Car 22 are retained by
9 one of fire captains in the department. Did
10 you review those receipts and are they
11 available for public inspection?

12 MR. MORETTI: I did not review the
13 receipts. Are they available? I don't know.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: I mean, do they exist,
15 I guess?

16 MR. MORETTI: I don't know.

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Do you know if they
18 exist?

19 MR. MORETTI: Well, I'd say to you
20 probably they'll be sketchy because they're
21 several years back. Again, in all due respect
22 to the fire captain, his primary role is not a
23 bookkeeper keeping receipts. What I was
24 concerned about was that he had access to both
25 the card and the receipts.

1 So the obvious question I asked,
2 well, what if the fire captain, you know, gave
3 it to his college son to go down to Florida and
4 hang out for a weekend, who would know? And
5 the answer that came back -- and I appreciate
6 the honesty and the forthcomingness of the
7 folks that I did interview was, we wouldn't
8 know.

9 So here's the reality. Your DPW
10 Director who gets the first -- he's the first
11 line -- he's on your front line when it comes
12 to the invoice. He's not going to know if it
13 was inappropriately used, nor will anybody
14 above him.

15 Your Fire Chief is not going to know
16 if it was inappropriately used. He's not
17 looking at that, nor does he get his activity
18 for the department. So it was a huge red flag
19 in terms of internal control. And it should be
20 immediately ceased.

21 And I think they probably have
22 already taken steps to cease that because, you
23 know, having the card possession and the
24 receipts is ludicrous.

25 MR. GAUGHAN: Now, on some of the --

1 I notice in going through some of the
2 transactions you have next to some of them new
3 vehicle or different vehicle with a question
4 mark. Can you explain that?

5 MR. MORETTI: If you look -- and
6 it's so hard to make out. The mileage clearly
7 was not being input properly. It was actually
8 a conversation I had with Fire Chief Lucas
9 today. It was -- I said, Chief, your mileage,
10 you know, you're saying you only used it
11 this -- your mileage goes from almost a hundred
12 thousand miles to three thousand miles and back
13 to a hundred thousand, 98, 96.

14 Who would know that unless you're
15 sharing your card to which case that's what I
16 believe was the proper answer. But he wasn't
17 alone. Lots of folks shared their card. But
18 here's the thing. If I'm looking at an voice,
19 okay, if you're looking at an invoice and the
20 first thing you open up to is mileage, you look
21 99999, 00000, 99999, you're immediately going
22 to go, whoa, I've got to ask a couple
23 questions.

24 Are they doing this right? Am I
25 missing something? Am I looking at it wrong?

1 I put new car in because those were in my notes
2 as to whether there was a question of is this a
3 new vehicle.

4 But if you look at the reports that
5 I did if you go down just the mileage line,
6 you're going to wonder to yourself, this is one
7 car. What the hell is happening? You can't go
8 from 90,000 miles to 200 miles to 3,000 miles.
9 And that's I think where the -- one of the
10 concerns was that doesn't take a lot to look
11 at.

12 You know, maybe you look at and you
13 don't know every car, every department. When
14 you see the millage listed, you know, you could
15 take a 12 year old and they probably could take
16 a look at that in about two minutes and say,
17 hey, this is -- something's wrong here.

18 MR. GAUGHAN: Right.

19 MR. MCANDREW: Can I rewind back a
20 little bit to Car 22? So you just established
21 and I had this question in caucus. I never got
22 to ask it. I'm glad we brought it up. So Car
23 22 is not a car. It's a card.

24 MR. MORETTI: Yes.

25 MR. MCANDREW: What, that just got

1 passed out to anybody and nobody -- like --

2 MR. MORETTI: Well, I think in
3 fairness they thought they were actually
4 controlling it pretty well by giving it to the
5 fire captain. It doesn't get passed to
6 everybody. But the fire captain has
7 possession.

8 Now, let's say you're a new recruit.
9 And you have to go for a training somewhere.
10 Maybe they give it to you and you put gas in
11 your personal vehicle, which has happened. Or
12 maybe they give you a vehicle that's available
13 and they give you that card in case you need to
14 fill it. That card gets used very often.

15 If you look at the final summary,
16 you'll see that the unassigned cards are used
17 more often than almost every other card
18 combined. So if you started -- if you said,
19 you know what, we don't want to fix the whole
20 thing. We just want to fix a little bit,
21 that's where you start.

22 Get rid of those unassigned cards
23 and you've got at least a good building block
24 to correct your issues. Does that make any
25 sense?

1 MR. GAUGHAN: My last question and
2 kind of comment here, Mr. Moretti, is -- now I
3 didn't -- I know that Fire Chief Lucas had been
4 sending multiple pieces of information today to
5 back up some of the transactions that you had
6 noted in your report.

7 I haven't had a chance to go through
8 all of them because we just got them today.
9 But I would appreciate if you could go back and
10 amend your report to include that only for --
11 and in terms of just fairness because when I
12 first read that report and I saw -- I forget
13 what the one line in there was.

14 It did raise a red flag because it
15 does say in there that, you know, he didn't
16 provide any other documentation to kind of back
17 up some of the items that were on there.

18 So if you wouldn't mind doing that I
19 think -- and only because this is going to go
20 into the official record. And I would like
21 that to be included if you don't mind.

22 MR. MORETTI: That's not a problem.
23 I'd be happy to. Again, I didn't read through
24 everything. But I will tell you that it's
25 probably going to change very little.

1 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay.

2 MR. MORETTI: So far as let's take
3 at one point I did review this. He gave me his
4 personal calendar. And as I said, some of it
5 didn't match the fill-up dates. But it's a one
6 sided checkbook. It tells you what he claims
7 he was doing on certain days. However, in the
8 columns of who he was with there is nobody
9 noted.

10 Second thing is, even the instance
11 which I probably agree with him I think as I
12 said anecdotally the one trip that was made out
13 of state was filled by a diesel vehicle.
14 However, I need to see the approval of the
15 trip, the people who were on the trip to make
16 it where it was a no-brainer.

17 And I'm not so sure he'll be able to
18 present that. So what I will do is, I will go
19 through -- now, what I would like to say on his
20 behalf is sharing of the card was something
21 that was cultural. It was not just him. Do
22 you follow what I'm saying?

23 And I think that to some degree even
24 though it won't change my opinion, in my
25 opinion he was working for someone else at the

1 time that most of these trips happened. It was
2 shared cards and pins across the board.

3 And I'm not so sure it's fair to
4 single him out and say, boy, you know, you're a
5 bad guy. But I don't know that what he gave to
6 me is going to be sufficient enough to change
7 much. However, Bill, I will do that because I
8 think in fairness to the Council, to everybody
9 else, I would like to set the record straight.

10 So let me look at it. I didn't have
11 a chance to review everything. Let me look at
12 it. I'll come back to you and I'll -- I'll
13 come back to the full Council.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. I appreciate
15 that. And last question, we had a former
16 Licensing and Inspections Director, Pat Hinton.
17 I didn't see any information on his usage of
18 his vehicle. Was that -- I know it wasn't
19 included in the report. But did you look at
20 any milage or gas usage?

21 MR. MORETTI: It was the permits
22 director. I just want to be clear.

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Yeah, and the only
24 reason I ask that is just another, you know,
25 fairness. Everyone else was kind of -- their

1 gas usage was examined here. And I did not see
2 his name.

3 MR. MORETTI: We did do one for the
4 permits director. I think I attached it. I
5 didn't look -- when I look, I look at the card.
6 And I look at the vehicle. And I look at the
7 position.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: I could have missed
9 that too. Maybe it was in there and I just
10 missed it.

11 MR. MORETTI: How about this? In
12 the interest of time since I'm already going to
13 review Fire Chief Lucas and the stuff that he
14 sent this afternoon, let me take a look for
15 you. And if need be, I'll find where he left.
16 Do you know what year he left and where the new
17 person picked up?

18 MR. GAUGHAN: You know what, I'm
19 actually -- I apologize. It is actually in
20 here. Although it says -- I'll have to go back
21 and look. Maybe that's my mistake. I think he
22 left 2019 I want to say at some point.

23 MR. MORETTI: Okay. So he probably
24 left after the scope of what I did.

25 MR. GAUGHAN: No, actually so I'm

1 seeing that you have here Tom Oleski the deputy
2 director. But I don't see anything for -- I
3 don't see anything for Pat Hinton.

4 MR. MORETTI: Okay. Let me take a
5 look. And as I said, I will give you an update
6 on Pat Hinton as well.

7 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay, great. I don't
8 have any other questions, Mr. Moretti. I want
9 to thank you for sticking around and taking
10 time out. Does anybody else have any comments
11 or questions?

12 MR. SCHUSTER: I had one more. It
13 was -- I think it was stated that the
14 individual in question said that the card
15 wasn't his or he didn't make those purchases.
16 And it seemed to cover a gap in time of about a
17 year. Were we able to identify what was
18 occurring there?

19 MR. MORETTI: You know it was funny.
20 Let me tell you my instincts and then let me
21 tell you reality and see whether you could draw
22 your conclusion accordingly. My instincts tell
23 me it's very hard to -- for you to use my card
24 I'd have to give you physical possession of the
25 card and my pin number. And that sounds

1 unreasonable, right? Who the heck does that?

2 If you want, you could give me your
3 pin for your bank account. You know, you're
4 not going to do that. Nobody does that. But
5 in this environment when it was culturally, the
6 fact that the Chief was his boss -- if I'm your
7 boss and I ask you can I have your cards and
8 your pin? I need it.

9 Or if I take over your vehicle and
10 you leave your card in the vehicle, and I say
11 to you, hey, I got your card. I don't need a
12 new one. Can I get your pin? I guess my thing
13 is, you can't rule anything out. It's not
14 conclusive.

15 And because of the abundance of
16 sharing of pins and cards, I didn't want to
17 surmise a conclusion. But my intuition tells
18 me that that's probably not realistic.
19 It probably -- for me to -- for you to be using
20 my pin and my card, doesn't sound right in most
21 cases. I don't know if I'm being clear.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. Thank you. Any
23 other questions from anyone? All right, Mr.
24 Moretti, I want to thank you again so much.
25 Stay safe. Stay healthy. And again, we

1 appreciate your time.

2 MR. MORETTI: Thank you. I

3 appreciate it.

4 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Bye-bye.

5 MR. MORETTI: Bye-bye now.

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Mrs. Reed, Fifth

7 Order, please.

8 MS. REED: Thank you. FIFTH ORDER.

9 5-A. MOTIONS.

10 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Councilman

11 Schuster, do you have any motions or comments

12 tonight?

13 MR. SCHUSTER: For Fifth Order,

14 yeah, I do have a few and then some might be

15 just a request for information. So when we're

16 looking back at last week in Third Order we got

17 the Composite Pension Board minutes.

18 And there was discussion on the 18th

19 over the investments there and how volatile the

20 markets were. Do we have any idea, type of

21 update on how the pension fund is fairing right

22 now in this situation?

23 MR. GAUGHAN: That would be -- we

24 can ask Larry Durkin that. I know it goes, you

25 know, because of the coronavirus pandemic, it's

1 ebbing and flowing. It's changing probably
2 every day. But, yeah --

3 MR. DONAHUE: Sorry to interrupt.
4 But I believe there was a pension meeting two
5 weeks ago. So I believe when they approved
6 their minutes from the previous meeting that's
7 when they come to us when they appear on the
8 agenda.

9 So we probably, once they have the
10 next meeting, you know, we might be able to get
11 an update from them. But I think that's the
12 process in which it usually works in which they
13 send it down. We're usually a month late on
14 getting them just because they have to approve
15 them before they send them down to us.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: And they have a
17 financial report I think baked in there that
18 would be in the backup of the minutes.

19 MR. SCHUSTER: Okay. The other
20 thing that also came out of Third Order last
21 week was according to the emergency declaration
22 and it's cited Section 614 E1 of the Code,
23 purchasing, leasing, maintenance and renting of
24 goods, properties and services and supplies
25 could be waived during the emergency.

1 I was wondering -- and I think there
2 was a -- would have been around \$21,000 was the
3 cap. I was just wondering, have we made any of
4 these purchases? Have we procured any services
5 or goods using this emergency declaration?

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Yeah, I don't know
7 that off the top of my head, Mr. Schuster.
8 That's a good question. But, Mrs. Reed, maybe
9 if we could ask Controller Murray. He might
10 know that information.

11 MR. SCHUSTER: And then the last
12 thing was -- it was an announcement. Maybe I
13 should have done it a little bit earlier.
14 There was a notice given to us that there will
15 be a public hearing by DCED.

16 It's going to be advertised in the
17 paper tomorrow for Sunshine. And it says
18 there's a notice hereby given that the
19 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of
20 Community and Economic Development has
21 scheduled a public hearing to receive testimony
22 presented on behalf of the City of Scranton,
23 Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania with respect to
24 the recommendation of Act 47 to consider
25 whether the City's Act 47 determination

1 pursuant to the municipality's Financial
2 Recovery Act of 87.

3 The hearing is going to be held on
4 April 30th, 2020 at 1 p.m. It's going to be a
5 Zoom meeting. And prior to the start of the
6 hearing the department will accept comments
7 from the public via e-mail. And let's see what
8 the e-mail is -- so with this e-mail, I'm not
9 sure what e-mail the public can send in
10 comments to.

11 But there will be an advertisement
12 in the paper. Does anyone else have that
13 e-mail or where public comment could be sent?

14 MR. GAUGHAN: I don't have it. I
15 was actually going to make that announcement in
16 Fifth Order as well. I don't have that e-mail
17 in front of me. I think you're right. It will
18 be in the newspaper tomorrow.

19 I was notified I believe Friday of
20 last week that as Council President they're
21 requesting me to make comment -- public comment
22 on, you know, the City's situation in Act 47.
23 We -- I don't believe that we were provided
24 enough notice.

25 I mean, I literally found out about

1 this last week which I think is so
2 unprofessional that the Council President and
3 the Council was not given enough notice, Mr.
4 Schuster. But I think I'm required to give
5 comment.

6 And then, of course, if any other
7 Council member would like to comment you could
8 do so as well. I can't make the actual meeting
9 because I'll be at work. And I have to teach
10 that day. So I'll probably provide my comments
11 in writing.

12 MR. SCHUSTER: Yeah, sorry for
13 jumping the gun on that. I didn't want --

14 MR. GAUGHAN: That's okay.

15 MR. SCHUSTER: Yeah, I didn't want
16 to miss it tonight. But, yeah, I was also
17 going to say like, you know, I think the
18 administration as well as Council would like
19 DCED to give us a little bit more time.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Yeah, I talked to the
21 Mayor, Councilman Schuster, last week. And she
22 was, you know, even caught off guard a little
23 bit in terms of not having enough time to --
24 not having enough notice. So thank you for
25 bringing that up. Anything else, Mr. Schuster?

1 MR. SCHUSTER: No. That's all at
2 this time.

3 MR. GAUGHAN: No? Okay. Great.
4 Thank you. Councilman McAndrew, do you have
5 any motions or comments?

6 MR. MCANDREW: Yes, I do, a couple.
7 So after last week's executive session with the
8 Ufberg firm, you know, we found out that the
9 acting HR Director even though we don't believe
10 that she was part of the scope of the, you
11 know, the contract or the bidding process or
12 part of it; but we learned that she was getting
13 \$89 an hour.

14 I mean, I don't know any HR Director
15 from 100 miles in any direction making that.
16 So I would like Mrs. Reed if she would do me a
17 favor and reach out to John Murray and ask how
18 many hours a day does she work. How many hours
19 has she works since she's been appointed the
20 acting HR Director.

21 So the gas card audit, very
22 disturbing. I'm sure we all agree. I want to
23 thank Mr. Moretti for, you know, providing us
24 with some more information today and answering
25 our questions. But what's next? I hope the

1 administration takes a look at this.

2 And I know after the last audit with
3 regards to Chief DeSarno, you know, it's like
4 well, we're going to move forward. And I know
5 we are. And I know we're going to change some
6 procedures and create policy, which is
7 fantastic.

8 But, you know, you can't justify
9 something right when it's done wrong. So I
10 hope administration takes a better look at
11 this. I'm going to take a better look at it.
12 And it's unfortunate that the taxpayers will
13 probably not know the magnitude of this audit
14 until a year from now so we can do a
15 comparison. And it might be shocking.

16 So I just hope -- you know, I know
17 the new parameters will be put in place. I
18 hope this is looked at by administration a
19 little deeper then, you know, and we get a
20 chance to maybe have some more dialogue on
21 this. That is all I have. Thank you.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Councilman
23 McAndrew. Dr. Rothchild, do you have any
24 motions or comments?

25 DR. ROTHCHILD: No motions or

1 comments at this time. Thank you.

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

5 MR. DONAHUE: I have nothing at this
6 time. Thank you.

7 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. Great. Thank
8 you. Just a few things I wanted to go over
9 here tonight. First of all, we received a
10 question from a member of the public regarding
11 costs associated with the acquisition and
12 rehabilitation of the Serrenti Center.

13 I had asked I don't know maybe two
14 years ago or a year ago for a breakdown of the
15 cost. I don't know where I put it. I went
16 back and looked through my e-mail. I had
17 additional questions about it. And I don't
18 believe they were ever answered.

19 So, Mrs. Reed, if you can at some
20 point this week just request from the
21 administration a breakdown of the cost of the
22 Serrenti Center, the rehabilitation. There was
23 several, you know, projects that went out -- on
24 up there. I think they replaced the roof, so
25 on and so forth.

1 So I would like that information
2 because I requested it before and I know a
3 member of the public is also curious as well.
4 Also --

5 MR. DONAHUE: And sorry, Bill, not
6 to -- Bill, not to interrupt. But I believe I
7 made just a general request for an update on
8 just the status of Serrenti a few weeks ago
9 too. So, Miss Reed, if you'd be able just to
10 follow up on that one too. I don't think I got
11 a response on that.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: The other item --

13 MR. DONAHUE: Sorry to interrupt.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: That's okay. The
15 other item was the status of the contract with
16 Northeast Revenue Services. I did send a note
17 to Solicitor Hayes to touch base with Solicitor
18 Eskra just to update the Council on what the
19 plan is moving forward in terms of, you know,
20 either -- I believe it was to get out of
21 contract with NRS.

22 And I think we're approaching the
23 exit clause in the contract. I would like an
24 update on that. I also received a call this
25 afternoon about the blighted condition of the

1 900 block of Quincy Avenue.

2 The resident who called me, you
3 know, gave several examples of some of the
4 issues up in the 900 block there. I've been to
5 that block on a number of occasions myself over
6 the last few years. It is severely blighted.
7 And there's several issues.

8 So, Mrs. Reed, if you could please
9 send a note to Mr. Oleski asking him when the
10 department is at full strength again. I
11 realize that we're in the middle of a crisis
12 here. But when they are at full strength and
13 they are able, if they could just keep an eye
14 on that block and maybe do a run through and
15 look out for any violations.

16 We did receive a response which I
17 appreciate from the administration regarding
18 the number of employees who were furloughed due
19 to the Co-void 19 pandemic. And it now stands
20 at 43 employees. And they also did provide a
21 breakdown by department.

22 Based on what Mr. Moretti had said
23 tonight and our previous interest in the
24 attendance reports from the department heads
25 from the last few years, I did request once

1 again to receive the attendance reports for the
2 last few years. So I know the administration
3 is working on that request and I appreciate
4 that.

5 In terms of public comment, so
6 there's a few things -- questions that the
7 public had asked that I want to address here
8 for a minute. So there was one question about
9 does overtime affect the pensions? The
10 overtime does not affect pension payments.

11 Fire and Police pensions are
12 calculated on base pay and longevity.
13 Nonuniform is a set amount depending on years
14 of service. And overtime is not part of either
15 uniform or nonuniform pensions. There was also
16 several questions posed about stormwater
17 management and stormwater management plan.

18 I did reach out to Don King our City
19 Planner. He responded just to give us a
20 general update that Herbert Rowland and Grubic
21 who is the company that the City had contracted
22 with a few years ago to complete a report on
23 stormwater management within the City and to
24 help the City with our pollution reduction
25 plan, he reported that they did complete a

1 draft of our required pollution reduction plan.

2 It's actually located on the City of
3 Scranton's website under the Licensing and
4 Inspection's Department portion of the webpage.
5 The City actually advertised it for public
6 comment. And they had it scheduled for public
7 comment at Planning Commission Meeting on March
8 25th.

9 Mr. King provided me with that
10 agenda as well. That meeting never happened,
11 of course, due to the coronavirus pandemic.
12 Mr. King explained that he reached out to DEP
13 for guidance on how to complete the public
14 review in light of the crisis.

15 And he was told by them to touch
16 base again in early May. He was checking with
17 Herbert Rowland and Grubic on the operations
18 end of the study. And he was going to get back
19 with us on that. So that's a general update on
20 the stormwater management end of things.

21 Also we did receive a question
22 about -- from a resident about the City of
23 Scranton posting the daily positive coronavirus
24 cases on a daily basis on the website. This
25 woman explained that she thought that that was

1 important information that residents of
2 Scranton should be aware of.

3 And the Mayor did get back to me
4 quickly because I had forwarded this e-mail to
5 them to see if there is anything that they can
6 do. They are moving I think in that direction
7 to post information on the City's website. I
8 know that the Pennsylvania Department of
9 Health, if you go on their website you could
10 get information on confirmed coronavirus cases
11 by zip code.

12 It's not really precise because some
13 of the zip codes are Dunmore, Dickson City, so
14 on and so forth. But they are working along
15 with Chief Lucas to get those updates posted.

16 There was some other questions that
17 we just received that I will send to the
18 appropriate departments and try to get an
19 answer to.

20 I did -- I want to make an
21 announcement too. The Mayor is holding a
22 virtual fundraiser to help our neighbors fund
23 our food banks in Scranton. This is a
24 fundraising event addressing food and security
25 in partnership with the Scranton Area Community

1 Foundation. Donations up to \$100,000 will be
2 matched thanks to some very generous
3 philanthropic partners.

4 This will be held Thursday, April
5 30th at 7 p.m. Donations will be accepted from
6 12 p.m., Thursday, April 30th to 12 p.m.,
7 Friday, May 1st at SAFDN dot ORF slash heart
8 dash of dash Scranton or you could mail a check
9 to Scranton Area Community Foundation at 615
10 Jefferson Avenue, Suite 102, Scranton, PA
11 18510. So that's for a good cause.

12 And finally, just to touch on the
13 gas card audit, I want to thank Mr. Moretti for
14 coming in this afternoon to present the gas
15 card audit and take questions from Council. I
16 want to point out a few things here.

17 Number one, if City Council back in
18 the summer of 2019 had never pushed for an
19 audit, many of these issues would never have
20 been brought to light. What the audit ended up
21 exposing is something that was not really a
22 surprise to me. And I don't think it was a
23 surprise to many other people.

24 And, that is, it was a lack of
25 management, a lack of controls and a complete

1 absence of any sort of oversight under the
2 Courtright Administration.

3 To me, when I read through it, it
4 exposed really a downright disregard for the
5 taxpayers of our City. And it is disappointing
6 but again, not surprising based on everything
7 that we now know that went on during the
8 Courtright Administration.

9 The fact that -- one thing that
10 really sticks out to me and that is really
11 concerning is that once Council requested the
12 audit, once Council spoke up on the audit, once
13 the Scranton Times really kind of had broke the
14 whole thing open and had done their
15 investigation as well, gas card usage dropped
16 off substantially. That's concerning, very
17 concerning.

18 What Mr. Moretti had told us tonight
19 was very concerning. And it once again proves
20 to me that this is a cultural issue that we
21 have here in the City where people honestly
22 believe that City Hall exists for perks and
23 extras, taking City vehicles on vacation to the
24 shore, sharing pin numbers, handing out gas
25 cards like they're candy. You know, just

1 because everybody does it, doesn't mean it's
2 right.

3 Just because there's not a policy
4 doesn't mean it's right. You know, signing off
5 on gas card usage reports but not looking at
6 them, processing them for payment but not
7 looking at them, if you or I, anyone who is
8 watching tonight, anybody who's here in the
9 meeting, if we ran our house like this we'd be
10 bankrupt.

11 If I got my report from my bank in
12 and I, you know, just ripped it up and didn't
13 look at it, it defies any sort of logic. And
14 we're talking about a City where we have over a
15 hundred million dollar budget. What's very
16 clear to me is moving forward there has to be
17 significant internal controls, a process which
18 I actually have had numerous conversations with
19 the Mayor and her administration.

20 I know that that process is
21 currently ongoing. I know that there is
22 already -- there already have been steps that
23 have been taken to get this thing under
24 control.

25 What I do think that the

1 administration should do or what I would
2 recommend is now take the time to test all
3 internal controls even outside of the gas card
4 usage.

5 We should work with the City
6 auditors to accomplish this. Because if there
7 was a lack of controls, lack of policies, lack
8 of procedures on the gas card usage, you know,
9 if I was a betting man I would bet that there
10 are other or were other areas that the City was
11 deficient in as well.

12 And as a City that struggles every
13 year with finances, we need to watch every
14 single penny. So I think now that we have a
15 new administration who is actually, you know,
16 paying attention to these things and taking
17 them seriously, I think that we are in a good
18 position to make sure that these types of
19 things don't happen again.

20 I think having several conversations
21 with our City Controller, I think that now
22 they're equipped to, you know, to take this
23 seriously and watch every single penny that
24 comes in. One of the things that I would like
25 to point out is that I believe within our

1 budget this year there is money set aside for a
2 potential GPS system, which I really think --
3 and I've said this since last summer is really
4 the way to go.

5 Not in terms of following employees
6 around or tracking every movement that an
7 employee makes, but in terms of efficiency. If
8 you look at what the state does and what other
9 agencies do, they track their gas usage.
10 They're efficient.

11 They have the ability to save money.
12 In terms of the salt that we use on our streets
13 during snowstorms, there are different --
14 there's different technology now where you can
15 track that and save money on salt. It will
16 help with our stormwater management.

17 I know that that's something that I
18 think DEP is looking at is tracking the salt
19 usage and so on and so forth. So I think in
20 speaking with the Mayor and her administration,
21 the GPS part of it is something that they're
22 moving aggressively towards.

23 I know there has to be a cost
24 benefit analysis done. But I do think that
25 that's important. I think Mr. Moretti

1 summarized this whole issue with two words:
2 Dumpster fire. You know, it's not the most
3 eloquent way to say it. But that's what it
4 was.

5 I think now at this point, you know,
6 we're done going back. We can now move forward
7 in terms of the gas card usage to make sure
8 that this doesn't happen again and make sure
9 that there are controls in place. The days of,
10 you know, trusting someone's word within City
11 government -- you know, trust but you have to
12 verify things.

13 You have to look at them before you
14 sign off on them. That's just basic common
15 sense. And I think as terrible and as
16 disturbing as this was, I think the public
17 should know that we are taking this very
18 seriously. That's why we asked for an audit.
19 As Councilman Donahue said, it wasn't a gotcha
20 thing where, you know, we're going to crucify
21 somebody for doing something when there was
22 obviously no controls.

23 However, moving forward we can't
24 continue to let this happen. We're asking
25 people in the City to pay increasing property

1 taxes, to pay fees, to pay fines. Then we're
2 turning around, they're opening up the front
3 page of the paper and they're seeing people
4 take City vehicles to the shore.

5 It's awful. I mean, if you were to
6 go around and talk to people, they're disgusted
7 with type of thing. So again, as disturbing as
8 it was, I think now we do have a game plan. We
9 have recommendations here from Mr. Moretti.

10 We're going to follow these -- the
11 administration is going to follow these
12 recommendations. We're going to go I think
13 above and beyond that. And I think we'll be in
14 a better position. And that's all I have.
15 Mrs. Reed?

16 MS. REED: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION -
17 AN ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL
18 NO. 59, 2019, ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING
19 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 17, 1994 ENTITLED "AN
20 ORDINANCE (AS AMENDED) AUTHORIZING THE
21 GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO ENACT
22 A WASTE DISPOSAL AND COLLECTION FEE FOR THE
23 PURPOSE OF RAISING REVENUE TO COVER THE WASTE
24 DISPOSAL AND COLLECTION COSTS INCURRED BY THE
25 CITY OF SCRANTON FOR THE DISPOSAL OF REFUSE",

1 BY IMPOSING A WASTE DISPOSAL AND COLLECTION FEE
2 OF \$300.00 FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2020 AND THE SAME
3 SHALL REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT ANNUALLY
4 THEREAFTER." (EMERGENCY CERTIFICATE ATTACHED).

5 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Mrs. Reed.
6 At this time I'll entertain a motion that Item
7 5-B be introduced into its proper committee.

8 MR. DONAHUE: So moved.

9 MR. MCANDREW: Second.

10 MR. GAUGHAN: On the question? On
11 the question, Solicitor Hayes, could you just
12 take a second to run through and explain this
13 legislation and what the administration is
14 hoping to accomplish here?

15 ATTY. HAYES: Bill, what the
16 administration is proposing to do is to push
17 back the deadlines for the garbage fee. The
18 garbage fee will remain at \$300. But what
19 they're doing is essentially (inaudible).
20 Prior to June 15th, you will get a 10 percent
21 discount.

22 If you pay June 15 and September
23 30th, you will pay face value. After September
24 30th, you will have a -- there will be a
25 penalty. So it's essentially pushing back the

1 deadlines for purposes of addressing, you know,
2 the emergency situation,, the financial
3 hardship that people are facing and that is
4 essentially what they are doing here.

5 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. Thank you.
6 Anyone else on the question?

7 DR. ROTHCHILD: Yes, on the
8 question, I'd just like to say I know that
9 since I've been on Council we didn't really
10 have time to address the fee. And this is
11 something that's been discussed for quite a
12 while. And there's some confusion.

13 And we thought that it was going to
14 change this year and be lowered and, you know,
15 put into the property taxes. Obviously, that's
16 not what we're doing. But I do hope that with
17 the following year that this could be addressed
18 and that we could talk -- discuss more what we
19 should do regarding the garbage fee because I
20 don't feel that should stay the way that it is.

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Anyone
22 else on the question? Okay. All those in
23 favor of introduction, signify by saying aye.

24 MR. SCHUSTER: Aye.

25 MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

1 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

2 DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

3 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye. Opposed? The
4 ayes have it and so moved. Councilman Donahue?

5 MR. DONAHUE: I'd like to make a
6 motion to suspend the rules to move Item 5-B to
7 Sixth and Seventh Orders based on the attached
8 emergency certificate.

9 MR. SCHUSTER: Second.

10 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. There's been a
11 second. On the question? All those in favor
12 signify by saying aye.

13 MR. SCHUSTER: Aye.

14 MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

15 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

16 DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye. Opposed? The
18 ayes have it and so moved. Mrs. Reed?

19 MS. REED: SIXTH ORDER. 6-A,
20 formally 5-B. READING BY TITLE - FILE OF THE
21 COUNCIL NUMBER 6, 2020 - AN ORDINANCE -
22 AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 59, 2019,
23 ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE AMENDING FILE OF THE
24 COUNCIL NO. 17, 1994 ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE (AS
25 AMENDED) AUTHORIZING THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE

1 CITY OF SCRANTON TO ENACT A WASTE DISPOSAL AND
2 COLLECTION FEE FOR THE PURPOSE OF RAISING
3 REVENUE TO COVER THE WASTE DISPOSAL AND
4 COLLECTION COSTS INCURRED BY THE CITY OF
5 SCRANTON FOR THE DISPOSAL OF REFUSE",
6 BY IMPOSING A WASTE DISPOSAL AND COLLECTION FEE
7 OF \$300.00 FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2020 AND THE SAME
8 SHALL REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND EFFECT ANNUALLY
9 THEREAFTER." (EMERGENCY CERTIFICATE ATTACHED).

10 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Mrs. Reed.
11 You've heard reading by title of Item 6-A.
12 What is your pleasure?

13 MR. DONAHUE: Mr. Chairman, I move
14 that Item 6-A pass reading by title.

15 MR. MCANDREW: Second.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: On the question?
17 All those in favor of introduction signify by
18 saying aye.

19 MR. SCHUSTER: Aye.

20 MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

21 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

22 DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

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

25 MS. REED: SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A

1 formally 6-A. FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE
2 COMMITTEE ON FINANCE FOR ADOPTION FILE OF THE
3 COUNCIL NUMBER 6, 2020 - AMENDING FILE OF THE
4 COUNCIL NO. 59, 2019, ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE
5 AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 17, 1994
6 ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE (AS AMENDED)
7 AUTHORIZING THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE CITY OF
8 SCRANTON TO ENACT A WASTE DISPOSAL AND
9 COLLECTION FEE FOR THE PURPOSE OF RAISING
10 REVENUE TO COVER THE WASTE DISPOSAL AND
11 COLLECTION COSTS INCURRED BY THE CITY OF
12 SCRANTON FOR THE DISPOSAL OF REFUSE",
13 BY IMPOSING A WASTE DISPOSAL AND COLLECTION FEE
14 OF \$300.00 FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2020 AND THE SAME
15 SHALL REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND
16 EFFECT ANNUALLY THEREAFTER." (EMERGENCY
17 CERTIFICATE ATTACHED).

18 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Mrs. Reed.
19 As Chairperson for the Committee on Rules, I
20 recommend final passage of Item 7-A.

21 MR. DONAHUE: Second.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: On the question?

23 Miss Carrera, roll call, please.

24 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Schuster.

25 MR. SCHUSTER: Yes.

1 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McAndrew.

2 MR. MCANDREW: Yes.

3 MS. CARRERA: Dr. Rothchild.

4 DR. ROTHCHILD: Yes.

5 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

6 MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

7 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes. I hereby declare
9 Item 7-A legally and lawfully adopted. If
10 there is no further business at this time, I'll
11 entertain a motion to adjourn.

12 MR. DONAHUE: Motion to adjourn.

13 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. This
14 meeting is adjourned. Stay safe. Stay
15 healthy. And we'll see everybody next week.
16 Thank you.

17 MR. MCANDREW: You too guys.

18 Bye-bye.

19

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24

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C E R T I F I C A T E

1
2
3 I hereby certify that the proceedings and
4 evidence are contained fully and accurately in the
5 notes taken by me of the above-cause and that this copy
6 is a correct transcript of the same to the best of my
7 ability.

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