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1 SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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5 Held:

6 Thursday, December 14, 2006

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9 Time:

10 6:30 p.m.

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13 Location:

14 Council Chambers

15 Scranton City Hall

16 340 North Washington Avenue

17 Scranton, Pennsylvania

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23 Lisa M. Graff, RMR

24 Court Reporter

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1 CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

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3 MS. JUDY GATELLI, COUNCIL PRESIDENT

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5 MR. WILLIAM COURTRIGHT, VICE-PRESIDENT

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7 MS. JANET EVANS

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9 MS. SHERRY NEALON FANUCCI

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11 MR. ROBERT MCGOFF

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13 MR. AMIL MINORA, ESQUIRE, SOLICITOR

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15 MS. KAY GARVEY, CITY CLERK

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17 MR. NEIL COOLICAN, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

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1 MS. GATELLI: Okay. Please stand for

2 the Pledge Of Allegiance. Please remain standing for a

3 moment of reflection. Roll call.

4 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

5 MS. EVANS: Here.

6 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Fanucci.

7 MS. NEALON fANUCCI: Here.

8 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

9 MR. MCGOFF: Here.

10 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright.

11 MR. COURTRIGHT: Here.

12 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Gatelli.

13 MS. GATELLI: Here. Before we start

14 with the regular meeting for this evening, we have some

15 special guests with us tonight. We have the West

16 Scranton Football Team, and they won the District II

17 AAA Championship, so we're here to honor them this
18 evening.

19 Council and I will go down in front of
20 the dais here and I'll read the proclamation, and then
21 each student can come up and get their proclamation
22 with their coach.

23 Whereas, the Council of the City of
24 Scranton is desirous of honoring the West Scranton
25 Invader football Team for winning the District Two AAA
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1 Championship.

2 The 2006 West Scranton Invader Football
3 Team won the first district championship in the
4 school's history, and were also the first team in the
5 school's history to make it to the PIAA State Playoffs.

6 Whereas, the West Scranton Invader
7 Football Team has brought pride to West Side by their
8 actions in the classroom and in the community.

9 The young men who wear the blue and
10 white are examples of student athletes who conduct
11 themselves with class and discipline. They are
12 dignified in defeat and humble in victory.

13 These Invaders are everything our

14 school and community admire, true representatives of
15 West Scranton High School.
16 Whereas, the West Scranton Invader
17 Football Team wish to express their gratitude to head
18 coach, Michael DeAntona, Assistant Coaches Rick Rosser,
19 Meade Beebe, Bobby Dodd, Bob Gentilezza, Bill Phillips,
20 Dave Rebar, Chad Rebar, Jason Tallo, Larry Regan, Andy
21 Butsko, Sr., Andy Butsko, Jr., trainer Tom Noakowski,
22 equipment manager, Anthony Tippy DeNunzzio, manager
23 Tommy Dodd, Calen Wylam, Pat Gerrity and their
24 families, friends and fans.

25 Whereas, the West Scranton Invader

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1 Football Team members consist of Matt McGloin,
2 Shawn Irving, Chris Gentilezza, C.J. Passeri,
3 Shawn Bodtmann, Nick Wegielewski, C.J. Rosser,
4 Gabriel Gilgallon, Jon Smerecky, Chase Passeri,
5 Kyle Farro, Dylan Gonzalez, Alex Levens, Mel Eltora,
6 Devin Gonzalez, Mark Strzelecki, Chris Krouchick,
7 Ryan Noone, Justin Collins, Anthony Monacelli,
8 Brian Courtright, Chris Cadugan, Bob Eisenhart,
9 Rick Clifford, Jason Chuff, Michael Gerrity,
10 Jacob Karboski, Matt English, Mark Matis, Brandon Ward,

11 Justin Jones, Eric Shrive, Anthony Snyder,
12 Hubie Graham, Ron Conrad and Dan Salzman.
13 Now, therefore, be it resolved that on
14 Thursday, December 14, 2006, Scranton City Council
15 wishes to congratulate the West Scranton Invader
16 Football Team, their coaches, teachers and parents for
17 their outstanding achievement.
18 Be it further resolved that this
19 proclamation be made a permanent part of the minutes of
20 this Council as a lasting tribute to the West Scranton
21 Invader Football Team. Coach, would you like to say a
22 few words.

23 MR. DEANTONA: Sure. I know these guys
24 are a little tired sometimes of hearing me speak, but
25 I'm extremely proud of these youngsters. They made it
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6

1 through some diversity this year. We had some tough
2 times. They learned a lot of great lessons that you
3 fight through adversity and you persevere and work hard
4 and good things will happen.
5 And I know you mentioned in the
6 proclamation that they're student athletes, and we take
7 that seriously at West Scranton.

8 More than 80 percent of our football
9 team this year during the first marking period were
10 members of the honor roll at West Scranton High School.
11 So, not only do these kids sacrifice and perform on the
12 football field, but they also perform and sacrifice in
13 the classroom, also. Thank you.

14 MR. COURTRIGHT: If I could just have
15 your attention for one minute. There's several players
16 that aren't here, because they're at basketball
17 practice this evening, and they wanted to thank City
18 Council for giving them this honor. So,
19 congratulations to all. Thanks.

20 MS. GATELLI: Also, before we start the
21 meeting, please, everyone, turn your cell phones off.
22 Thank you. Mrs. Garvey.

23 MS. GARVEY: Third order. 3-A, MINUTES
24 OF THE COMPOSITE PENSION BOARD MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER
25 15, 2006.

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1 MS. GATELLI: Are there any comments?
2 If not, received and filed.
3 MS. GARVEY: That's all there is for
4 third order.

5 MS. GATELLI: Okay. Before citizens

6 participation, I just have a few announcements. If

7 anyone watches The Office on television, it's based on

8 the City of Scranton, and the star from their, Dwight,

9 will be at the Mall at Steamtown Sunday from one to

10 three.

11 Also, starting this weekend at The

12 Cultural Center is The Producers. It is Friday night

13 at eight, Saturday at two and eight, and Sunday at two

14 and seven. And the number for that is 342-7784.

15 On Saturday evening at the Nay Aug

16 Amphitheater, there will be a free movie called It's a

17 Wonderful Life, and that is at 6:30, and the

18 amphitheater will be heated.

19 New Year's Eve, Scranton Tomorrow will

20 be sponsoring First Night again in our downtown from

21 five to midnight.

22 Mrs. Fanucci brought up last week about

23 Lackawanna College, but we didn't make any motions

24 about having a proclamation for them for winning their

25 bowl game, so I would entertain someone make a motion

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8

1 that we honor Lackawanna College at our next meeting.

2 MS. NEALON: I make the motion that we

3 send proclamations and have them come in and present

4 them to Lackawanna College for winning their Sun Bowl,

5 I guess it was called.

6 MR. COURTRIGHT: Second.

7 MS. GATELLI: On the question? All in

8 favor.

9 MS. EVANS: Aye.

10 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Aye.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

12 MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

13 MS. GATELLI: Aye. Opposed? The ayes

14 have it and so moved.

15 I also have another comment, the

16 gentleman that came here last week and spoke about the

17 rats at his house, I got several phone calls about a

18 comment that he made, which I didn't hear, and I'm sure

19 my colleagues didn't hear either, because none of us

20 made a comment about it.

21 It was a racial comment, and it was

22 certainly not acceptable to be made at this meeting. I

23 don't think that he made it intentionally, however, to

24 discredit that particular race, however, I apologize

25 that none of us had heard the comment he made regarding

1 that. So, I do apologize to anyone that was offended

2 by that comment.

3 Also, the rats that he talked about,

4 Ehrlich was there today baiting the property that he

5 was complaining about. So, Mr. Seitzinger was up there

6 three or four times during the week and got permission

7 to have the property -- an exterminator taken care of.

8 So, that's been taken care of.

9 We got a in lieu of taxes check from

10 The Covenant Presbyterian Church for a thousand

11 dollars, so Council would like to publicly thank them

12 for their contribution. And that's all I have. Do you

13 have the sign-in sheet? The first speaker is

14 Doug Miller.

15 MR. MILLER: Good evening, Council.

16 Doug Miller. I want to again commend the students from

17 West Scranton High School for their wonderful

18 accomplishment. Having a smoking ban passed in this

19 city is just the best thing that can happen.

20 Earlier this week an assembly was held

21 over at West where Mayor Doherty signed the ordinance.

22 It was great to see all of the support that the

23 students received. I know Scranton just got a whole
24 lot cleaner, safer and healthier. So, thank you again
25 West Side.

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1 Also, I'd like to congratulate the West
2 Scranton Football Team on receiving their well deserved
3 proclamations this evening. They had a wonderful
4 season, and we look forward to hopefully being even
5 better next year. And like the old saying goes, West
6 is best. So, congratulations, guys.

7 And lastly tonight I just have an
8 announcement to make, on December 25, which is
9 Christmas Day, the 11th annual Bob Bolus Senior
10 Christmas dinner will take place over at St. Lucy's
11 Church in West Scranton from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m., and it
12 is open to the public.

13 It is not a homeless dinner, as stated
14 in the past. It is open to all people. It is a
15 festive occasion for everyone to enjoy, no matter who
16 you are. Just bring your Christmas spirit and your
17 appetite.

18 It's an all you can eat buffet, and
19 everyone is encouraged to also take a takeout dish home

20 with them. This invitation is also extended out to
21 Council, and Mr. Bolus said on Christmas Day, even is
22 equal. There are no politics, just happy bellies,
23 happy faces and happy feet. So, please join us. And
24 if you have any questions, you can call 346-7659.
25 Thank you.

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1 MS. GATELLI: And that's at St. Lucy's

2 Douglas?

3 MR. MILLER: Yes.

4 MS. GATELLI: Okay. Bill Jackowitz.

5 MR. JACKOWITZ: Good evening, Council.

6 Bill Jackowitz, South Side resident, taxpayer, retired

7 United States Air Force.

8 Mrs. Evans, I have a question for you,

9 who elected you to City Council? Please give me the

10 short answer.

11 MS. EVANS: The voters of Scranton.

12 MR. JACKOWITZ: Thank you. Mrs.

13 Fanucci, who pays your salary a Councilperson? Short

14 answer, please.

15 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: The City of

16 Scranton and the voters.

17 MS. GATELLI: Excuse me, Mr. Jackowitz,
18 but the correct procedure is to go through the
19 president to ask a Councilperson a question. They
20 don't have to answer, if they don't feel it necessary.

21 MR. JACKOWITZ: Okay. Madame
22 President, may I ask Council members questions,
23 please?

24 MS. GATELLI: Yes, you can.

25 MR. JACKOWITZ: Thank you. Mrs.

12

1 Gatelli, how does Scranton raise revenue and pay their
2 expenses?

3 MS. GATELLI: Through various taxes.

4 MR. JACKOWITZ: Okay. Mr. McGoff, who
5 elected you to City Council?

6 MR. MCGOFF: Good question. I would
7 say it was a vote of two members of Council and the
8 mayor.

9 MR. JACKOWITZ: Okay. I agree with
10 that. Good answer.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Excuse me?

12 MR. JACKOWITZ: I said I agree with
13 that. Good answer.

14 MR. MCGOFF: Do I get a hundred?

15 MR. JACKOWITZ: You get a gold star.

16 Mr. Courtright, does a citizen have a right to

17 challenge or question their elected officials?

18 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yes.

19 MR. JACKOWITZ: Mrs. Gatelli, should

20 the citizens expect an honest and accurate answer to

21 their questions or expect no answer?

22 MS. GATELLI: A Council member is not

23 obliged to answer a question.

24 MR. JACKOWITZ: Okay. So, if they want

25 to answer it, they can, if they don't want to answer

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1 it, they don't have to, correct?

2 MS. GATELLI: Yes.

3 MR. JACKOWITZ: Okay. Thank you. Mrs.

4 Fanucci, what does a smoking ban and an E-mail have to

5 do with reviewing a proposed budget?

6 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: It doesn't.

7 MR. JACKOWITZ: Then why didn't you go

8 to the meeting on Tuesday? Because what I get out of

9 the newspaper was it was because of the E-mail on the

10 smoking ban.

11 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I'm glad you
12 asked. The reason I did not attend the meeting on
13 Tuesday, I was not planning on attending in the first
14 place, because I had said that it was my daughter's
15 birthday, so I was not planning on attending.
16 But I was coming out of courtesy. I
17 was going to come and listened. We had already
18 listened to the proposed budget, and if there was
19 anything in it that I felt that I wanted to participate
20 in and amend onto the mayor's budget, I was going to
21 come and participate. There really wasn't.

22 MR. JACKOWITZ: Okay. So, you didn't
23 want to hear Mrs. Evans' budget?

24 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I already heard
25 the budget. No, I already heard the budget. We had
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14

1 the proposal the week before. I had already been
2 introduced to the budget, I had a copy of the budget.
3 So, this wasn't really to introduce me to the budget,
4 this was for us -- it was a work session to add, if
5 there was something in the budget, to attach onto
6 Mayor Doherty's budget.

7 MR. JACKOWITZ: Okay. There was just a

8 misunderstanding then that I had and probably a lot of
9 other citizens also did.

10 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Yes. Yeah. No.

11 So, I'm glad you brought that up, because it does shine
12 a lot of light on things. Thank you.

13 MR. JACKOWITZ: Well, I'm glad that

14 you're glad. Approximately \$4 million plus of heroin
15 distributed in Scranton area in the last eight months
16 in dollar amount -- in heroin amount rising.

17 Problems on the rise, especially armed

18 robberies, drive-by shooting, Hilltop Manor, \$77

19 million budget, borrowed money, 25 percent tax hike,

20 American Water, \$800 a day penalty, lawsuit pending,

21 population shrinking, businesses downtown leaving,

22 vacant \$16 million building Southern Union, 13 percent

23 drop of population since the year 2000, and that's a

24 fact, four out of five, 80 percent of Council has been

25 asked to resign or stated that they're thinking of
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1 resignation, one resignation, that's not good, possibly

2 illegal ordinance passed and signed into law, the

3 courts will decide that whether the ordinance is legal

4 or not, lower Green Ridge flood victims still looking

5 for help. Where is the DPW and the Council chairperson

6 on that, getting these people help? They need help in

7 lower Green Ridge and all the flood people need help.

8 City Council more concerned about Janet

9 Evans' E-mail, proposed budget ignored, and I'll

10 rephrase that, because Mrs. Fanucci gave her answer,

11 ignored by two elected Councilpersons, but maybe that's

12 not accurate, so I'll refrain from that. It's the

13 economy, stupid. James Carvelle, remember him?

14 Smokers and non-smokers, D.U.I., \$7,000

15 to \$10,000.

16 MR. MINORA: That's your five minutes.

17 MR. JACKOWITZ: Can I finish?

18 MS. GATELLI: How much more do you

19 have?

20 MR. JACKOWITZ: Oh, about 45 seconds.

21 MS. GATELLI: Go ahead.

22 MR. JACKOWITZ: Higher insurance rates,

23 criminal record, is the risk worth the outcome? Stay

24 home, drink, eat and smoke, or don't smoke in your own

25 house. It's cheaper in the longrun than the D.U.I.

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1 And please, Council, stop the cat

2 fighting. Intelligent citizens see right through the
3 smoke screen. We don't need cat fighting and arguments
4 between Council members. You're here to represent the
5 people. We're all adults. Please let's do that. We
6 have a new year starting in 2007.

7 MS. GATELLI: Mary Ann Wardell.

8 MS. WARDELL: Good evening, Council.

9 I'm Mary Ann Wardell. I would like to first discuss
10 the budget. I realize that the budget is supposed to
11 to be passed and signed by the 15th of December, but I
12 think under the circumstances that an exception should
13 be made, and I think that there are amendments that
14 should be made to that budget before it's passed.

15 The biggest amendment I think is the
16 idea that we're cutting six policemen at a time when
17 homes are being broken into, when people are robbing
18 and neighborhoods, people are so afraid in their
19 neighborhoods, that they're afraid to go out of their
20 houses.

21 We need -- we need more policemen, we
22 don't need less, and we don't -- rather than cut six
23 policemen, I would cut six administrators, because you
24 know what? Bill will know what I talking about. When
25 you talk about value added jobs, policemen are value

1 added jobs. Administrators are not. They add no value
2 to our city, to our product, to our services. The only
3 ones that add value are the people that are there to do
4 the work.

5 I would also like to say, Mrs. Evans

6 sent an E-mail to a person that she knew. That was a
7 private E-mail. And whether or not it was it
8 published, really is not the point. The point is there
9 was nothing in that E-mail that she hasn't said before.

10 And why anyone would get so upset over

11 that E-mail and make it public, I have no idea, but I
12 would suggest that people that live in glass houses
13 should not throw stones.

14 And before you are willing to say that

15 what she did or what she said was unethical, you better
16 stop and think about anything that you may have written
17 or said in private that was unethical that you would
18 not want anyone to see.

19 That was a private E-mail. That had

20 nothing to do with a budget, that had nothing to do
21 with her doing her job for this city.

22 Mrs. Evans is a good Councilperson.

23 She has been a good Councilperson since she took that
24 seat. It is in the best interest of the residents of
25 the City of Scranton to keep her as a Councilperson,
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18

1 because we are sure that she is one of you that is
2 really representing us. Thank you.

3 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Lee Morgan.

4 MS. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.

5 The first thing I have here is, I think two weeks --
6 possibly two weeks ago I had a discussion here with
7 Council about introduction of flawed legislation, and I
8 think that this budget points to that.

9 I mean, I know Mrs. Evans has taken a
10 hit for introducing a proposal to Council, and I'm
11 really troubled that two people didn't come, and I do
12 understand it was your daughter's birthday, and I'm not
13 picking on you in any way.

14 I'm just saying that I think that
15 everyone should have met and tried to find some
16 alternatives to the plan that was introduced by the
17 mayor.

18 The plan stinks. When you go to 7-C
19 and D, we're talking about borrowing \$14 and a half

20 million dollars. I don't see how that could even be an
21 option.

22 The one really troubling thing I have
23 here, and this isn't a criticism of you, Mrs. Evans,
24 but to be honest, Council has the power of subpoena,
25 and I haven't seen it used.

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1 And I've heard every Councilperson over
2 a decade talk about no information, and you still don't
3 have any. And we're just going blindly forward.
4 Just -- I don't know who we're
5 following here, but it's not leading anywhere. And I
6 think that -- I know Mr. Bolus doesn't come here
7 anymore, I don't have a crying towel for him because he
8 didn't get a chance to get an interview for a Council
9 seat, but I'll say this, this Council has no
10 credibility or no integrity, and those statements he
11 made were true.
12 It's time for this Council to do what
13 needs to be done. This legislation never should have
14 been introduced. There has to be budget cuts made.
15 And, Mrs. Evans, I don't think your cuts go far enough.
16 I think that they're just too minute to count at the

17 end of a long day.

18 I really feel that this Council is

19 going to talk about things that are irrelevant. We

20 still haven't even passed legislation in order to

21 protect people from vicious dogs in this city, We don't

22 have a playground program for children.

23 I think this city is just wandering

24 lost. I think that all these residents and their

25 property are for nothing more than to borrow against.

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20

1 We have borrowing after borrowing after borrowing, and

2 that's all I see Council do is borrow more money,

3 remove money from one account to another act.

4 But any legislation that's good for the

5 people of this city somehow falls on deaf ears, and

6 it's time for this Council to open its ears and hear

7 the screams of the people begging for help. And that's

8 your job.

9 And my question is, Is there going to

10 be a subpoena? The's have a subpoena now and let's

11 start studying records to the time for the next budget

12 so that our Council is informed.

13 And then when the mayor sends up

14 legislation, don't introduce it. Let Council introduce

15 a budget, a realistic budget absent of politics.

16 That's all I'm going to ask. Thank you.

17 MS. GATELLI: Ozzie Quinn.

18 MR. QUINN: Good evening. I'm Ozzie

19 Quinn, I'm the president of the Scranton and Lackawanna

20 County Taxpayers and Citizens Association,

21 Incorporated.

22 And first of all, I want to apologize

23 to Mrs. Evans for that personal letter that was

24 published by the newspaper, because of the fact that

25 the person who forwarded that letter to the newspaper,

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21

1 he's not authorized to forward any letter under the

2 name of the Scranton Lackawanna County Taxpayers, okay?

3 The only person who was authorized to

4 do so is myself, the president, only after I concur

5 with our vice president. If we concur, then it's gone,

6 okay, be it an E-mail, a letter or not. So, I would

7 disregard that E-mail as nothing to do with the

8 taxpayers. That is not our thinking.

9 Second of all, in that E-mail, Mrs.

10 Evans did point out about a lawsuit, and there are a

11 lot of people who are out there, as you know, who are
12 against that ban.

13 As a matter of fact, tantamount to what

14 Mrs. Evans said about a lawsuit, we, the taxpayers, are

15 going to at our next meeting discuss the Home Rule

16 Charter in regards to a referendum in the city, not

17 because of right or wrong, but because of the fact that

18 we don't feel a social policy that's so effective among

19 so many people, okay, should be done by just a four to

20 one vote, okay? We don't think that you should have

21 the power to run people's lives like that.

22 Secondly, I accompanied Mrs. Evans, who

23 is the finance chairman, to the mayor's office last

24 Monday with some other taxpayers, and the mayor wasn't

25 in, and the reason we accompanied her was because of

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22

1 the fact that she at last Council meeting said, did you

2 go to the mayor's office, did you go to the mayor's

3 office, why don't you go to the mayor's office.

4 We went to the mayor's office, and she

5 presented to the secretary there 28 questions, 20,

6 questions, okay, and attached are eleven E-mails that

7 she sent out or letters, memos, to department heads in

8 November, and she didn't get any replies on that. May

9 I ask Mrs. Evans a question?

10 MS. GATELLI: Yes, you may.

11 MR. QUINN: Did you receive any reply

12 from the mayor regarding these questions?

13 MS. EVANS: No, I did not.

14 MR. QUINN: That is totally a shame,

15 because you are the chairman of the finance committee.

16 And my understanding as chairman of the finance

17 committee, you are to guide this Council, and if they

18 don't accept your guidance, well, shame on them.

19 The other thing is this here, I want to

20 know, Mrs. Gatelli, the South Side Complex was conveyed

21 over to the University of Scranton about a week and a

22 half ago, and I want to know -- in advance the mayor

23 got \$750,000, okay, the SRA conveyed it, and the mayor

24 spent that money in Nay Aug Park.

25 Now, I want to know, did the mayor plug

.

23

1 in that money, \$750,000 -- the remaining \$750,000 in

2 this budget?

3 MS. GATELLI: I didn't see it.

4 MS. QUINN: Well, you know what, I

5 would ask him to use it to pay off our debt service.

6 This is a hidden \$750,000. He laundered that, and I'm

7 going to say he laundered that through that the SRA,

8 and he used the SRA when they got the \$750,000, the

9 initial one, to use the lights, okay, to put up the

10 lights. There's no light downtown, of course, as a

11 matter of fact. They're all up at Nay Aug Park.

12 But the fact is he laundered that

13 money, and shame on him, but we should use that to pay

14 down the debt service that we owe, probably \$238

15 million now.

16 Lastly, you know, we all speak about

17 the budget here, but, you know, we're concerned as a

18 taxpayers group school, that we're concerned about the

19 school district, we're concerned about the county that

20 two years ago hit us with a 48 percent increase. Now

21 it's down to 38 percent, but it's still an increase.

22 We're concerned what you're going to do

23 if you pass this budget tonight in regards to the

24 mayor's budget without looking to your finance chairman

25 for her advice on eliminating -- increasing or putting

.

24

1 a tax, a property tax, on any of the poor people in the

2 City of Scranton that just can't afford it.

3 Our median income in the City of

4 Scranton is \$28,805. That means half are below that

5 \$28,000 is not making \$28,805.

6 And I think the poverty level of a

7 family of three is \$22,000, so we have a lot of people

8 that are homeowners on the poverty level.

9 MR. MINORA: Five minutes.

10 MR. QUINN: Okay. Thank you. And

11 20 percent are elderly. I ask you, I urge you on

12 behalf of the taxpayers, please do not pass this

13 budget, even though the mayor has to come back, and if

14 it's a three to two not passing it, he will come back

15 and it has to pass four to one. I'm sure you will get

16 that vote.

17 But let's show him that -- let's show

18 the people that stand up for these people out there

19 that cannot afford a tax increase and take the guidance

20 of Mrs. Evans. Thank you.

21 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

22 MS. FRANUS: Fay Franus, Scranton. I'd

23 like to talk about the budget for a second, if I may.

24 Mayor Doherty is going to give us all a big Christmas

25 present 25 tax increase this year, 25 percent next

1 year, and 25 percent the next year, 75 percent tax
2 increase for three Christmases to come. I'm sure we
3 all want to sit here and say thank you, Mr. Doherty.

4 No.

5 Mr. Doherty has borrowed more money
6 than any other mayor in the history of Scranton. He's
7 borrowed over \$100 million. He also has us in debt
8 over \$230 million. He has given -- created jobs with
9 high pay or he's forced other people out of the same
10 jobs that did the same work at lower pay.

11 Now, you have to make a tough decision
12 here, but do it. You know, it's not always easy to do
13 the right thing.

14 Mr. McGoff, you questioned -- I mean,
15 you were told that -- we were told that you got chosen
16 as a Councilperson because you were sort of neutral,
17 well, so far I haven't see one thing that you've done
18 that's neutral. So far you've gone right along with
19 Mrs. Gatelli and Mrs. Fanucci. You have a chance to
20 stand on your own and do the right thing for the people
21 that you claim to represent. Let's see.

22 Last week when Mrs. Evans asked you to

23 go to the mayor because you said you have no problem
24 talking with the mayor, whereas she does, he won't
25 speak with her, even though he said he will, he won't,
.
26

1 you had a choice -- Mrs. Evans must have asked you
2 seven times, and you said if you go with me.
3 If you went yourself and got the
4 answers to those questions for the people, we would
5 like to know. You could have done that. You chose not
6 to. You deliberately chose not to do this, so I only
7 assume that you don't care that the answers get
8 answered for the people. Because if you did care, you
9 would have gotten those questions answered.
10 You chose not to do that. That speaks
11 highly, not of you. It should tell the people where
12 you're coming from, as well. And tonight you have a
13 chance to do the right thing. Let's see what you do.
14 Well, this is true.
15 Now, the mayor's budget and Mrs. Evans'
16 budget, now, if you were out there and you weren't
17 politically connected, if you weren't tied to the
18 mayor, how would you vote if you were just one of us?
19 If you had a budget that doesn't

20 include a pay tax increase or one that does, which
21 would you pick? Common sense would tell you you'd take
22 the one without the pay increase.
23 Sure, it's hard to cut people's jobs,
24 but some of these jobs are lawyers jobs. They could
25 work in private practice. They don't need to be
.
27

1 working for the city.
2 Mrs. Evans' budget wasn't even
3 considered. It will never be considered and never was,
4 and it was never intended to be considered, because
5 this is your ball game, pay to play politics as usual.
6 And tonight there will be a vote to
7 give the mayor his budget. So, we talk for nothing.
8 But we want the people to know where you're coming from
9 that you should never, ever, ever be elected again in
10 the City of Scranton, ever, ever.
11 You sold us down the river big time.
12 Mrs. Evans should have a right to have this budget
13 enacted, not just throw her some crumbs and say I will
14 give you a policeman or we'll give you a dog officer.
15 Give her what she asks for. She's the finance
16 chairman. Don't you respect her?

17 Then another thing, Mrs. Gatelli, why
18 didn't you go to that meeting on Tuesday night? We're
19 paying you to go there. Why weren't you there?

20 MS. GATELLI: Personal reasons, I did
21 not go.

22 MS. FRANUS: Personal reasons? And you
23 said last week that you didn't represent me, well, if
24 that's the case, why don't you send me a check for the
25 money I pay you?

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28

1 And also you said you waved your check
2 for \$625 week after week. I think you should leave
3 your check for \$12,000, whatever your total paycheck
4 is, and give it back to the city, because you're not
5 representing us at all.

6 Every bit of the money you get from
7 Council should be given back to the taxpayers, and you
8 should be given five percent of your school tax, is
9 what you should be giving.

10 And then another thing --

11 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Does that go for
12 Mrs. Evans, too? Anybody who works anywhere, they
13 should give five percent, Fay? Come on.

14 MS. FRANUS: Point of order, Mrs.

15 Fanucci. A point of order. A point of order.

16 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: You're not my

17 president, Fay.

18 MS. FRANUS: Well, I am a person that I

19 am not speaking with you, and I don't have to be your

20 president. You're out of order.

21 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I'm certainly not.

22 MS. FRANUS: You certainly are.

23 MS. GATELLI: You can speak, Mrs.

24 Fanucci.

25 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Fay, you do not

.

29

1 come up here and insult people and come -- if you have

2 something to say that is legitimate or has some merit

3 on the City of Scranton, then say it.

4 MS. FRANUS: I am saying it.

5 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Don't come up here

6 and tell people to give their salaries back. Why don't

7 you give yours back?

8 MS. FRANUS: I don't represent the

9 people.

10 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: You're darn right.

11 Thank you for making that point.

12 MS. FRANUS: That's a riot.

13 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: No, it's true.

14 MS. FRANUS: You are just hysterical.

15 MS. GATELLI: Listen, we're going to

16 stop this.

17 MS. FRANUS: No, we're not. I'm not

18 done yet.

19 MS. GATELLI: Yes, we are.

20 MS. FRANUS: Oh, no, we're not. I'm

21 not done yet.

22 MS. GATELLI: It's getting personal and

23 getting --

24 MS. FRANUS: How is it getting

25 personal? You sat there for two weeks --

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30

1 MS. GATELLI: Officer, would you please

2 --

3 MS. FRANUS: No. I'm not done yet.

4 I'm sorry. You said that --

5 MS. GATELLI: You're out of order.

6 MS. FRANUS: That's your opinion.

7 MS. GATELLI: And I'm the president.

8 MS. FRANUS: Wow, again.

9 MS. GATELLI: You're out of order.

10 MS. FRANUS: No, I'm not. You are.

11 Mrs. Fanucci is out of order.

12 MS. GATELLI: Officer, take her out of

13 the meeting.

14 MS. FRANUS: Well, I'm not done yet,

15 Judy. I'm not done yet. Go ahead. Try it. Is this

16 on film?

17 MS. GATELLI: No, don't arrest her.

18 Just tell her to get down. She's out of order.

19 MS. FRANUS: What happened to a

20 person's first rights -- first amendment?

21 MS. GATELLI: Listen, if you don't be

22 quiet in the audience, you're going to be removed from

23 the meeting.

24 MS. FRANUS: Mrs. Evans, you're doing a

25 wonderful job.

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31

1 MS. GATELLI: We'll adjourn the

2 meeting. Now act like adults. You can come up and

3 make your comments in a respectful manner. The next

4 speaker is John Topa.

5 MR. TOPA: Good evening, members of
6 Council. My name is John Topa, I'm a mortgage broker
7 with First Sunrise Mortgage, and I'm here to talk about
8 the proposed budget with the real estate transfer tax
9 that's on the budget. I have -- would I be able to
10 give a handout to Council?

11 MS. GATELLI: Sure.

12 MR. TOPA: First off, I'd like to say
13 that I'm proud to be living in Lackawanna County, and
14 I'm really happy of the things that the City of
15 Scranton has done to help promote real estate ownership
16 in The City of Scranton, the Keystone Opportunity Zone
17 in Tripps Park, the Office of Economic and Community
18 Development helping out first time homebuyers, I
19 believe they're both fantastic programs, and I would
20 like the city to continue to be proactive.

21 I believe that raising the transfer tax
22 for the City of Scranton, which is already higher than
23 every local municipality, would actually be a setback
24 for the City of Scranton.

25 It is already a lower transfer tax rate

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32

1 at two percent if you buy anywhere outside the City of

2 Scranton locally, and the City of Scranton with their
3 3.4 percent would raise that to 4.9, when you add in
4 the state and the school.
5 I believe that's going to be one more
6 detriment with someone trying to buy a home in the City
7 of Scranton.
8 I noticed in the paper this morning
9 that the mayor said that -- what's an extra \$600?
10 Well, I'd like to say that maybe \$600 might not be a
11 lot to the mayor, but the \$600 is a lot to a first time
12 homebuyer. I see this every day.
13 This money is out of pocket expenses.
14 I see this every day where people are trying to scrape
15 up every last dollar they have to buy a home. And when
16 they have to buy a house in the City of Scranton, they
17 still have to come up with more, and now we want to
18 raise it even higher.
19 These are things that typically cannot
20 be financed into the loan. Now, you can't finance some
21 closing costs, but what I'm seeing more and more of,
22 and I'm sure other mortgage companies are seeing, as
23 well, is more people are getting 100 percent financing,
24 because nowadays they don't have the kind of savings
25 that they used to.

1 And when you get 100 percent financing,
2 that does not cover all your closing costs, that covers
3 your down payment. Your closing costs are still out of
4 pocket.

5 So, this is just going to be one more
6 reason for someone to second guess if they should buy
7 in the City of Scranton, and I don't feel this would
8 put Scranton ahead of everyone else. I believe this
9 will set Scranton back.

10 And in spite of all the strides that
11 Scranton has made, I feel that this in the proposed
12 budget with transfer tax increase would actually be a
13 detriment.

14 Right now the City of Reading just -- I
15 believe just passed a bill that makes it at five
16 percent, so we would be the second highest transfer tax
17 rate in the whole state above Pittsburgh and above
18 Philadelphia.

19 We don't want to have this type of
20 stigma that we have the second highest transfer tax
21 rate in the whole state.

22 I would like to have Council reconsider

23 the budget that Mayor Doherty had in reference to the
24 transfer tax for the City of Scranton. Thank you.

25 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Lee Redmond.

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34

1 MR. REDMOND: Good evening. I would
2 opposed the alternate budget that would eliminate two
3 assistant city solicitors and a legal secretary. It
4 would not be in the city's best interest.
5 The city's legal work still has to be
6 done. The work load would justify the present staff.
7 If ordinances are challenged, their defense by the city
8 law department is manpower intensive.
9 And I say these things with the benefit
10 of over 12 and a half years of experience in the city
11 law department as a first assistant and assistant
12 solicitor.
13 I remember 1990, where for seven
14 months, there was only one solicitor and one assistant
15 solicitor, and there were an awful lot of 12 to 16 hour
16 days.
17 I don't think it is fair to expect city
18 personnel to work 12 to 16 hour days on a sustained
19 basis. Moreover, having a well-manned legal staff

20 would save the city money, compared to what is paid to
21 outside attorneys.

22 The present legal secretary is
23 experienced, performs outstanding work and should be
24 retained.

25 Lastly, I would wish Council and

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35

1 Attorney Minora a Merry Christmas. Thank you.

2 MR. MINORA: Thank you.

3 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Andy

4 Sbaraglia.

5 MR. SBARAGLIA: Good evening, Andy

6 Sbaraglia, citizen of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians,

7 on Page six of your City of Scranton revenue -- budget

8 revenues, they have a notation in here, Note for

9 \$3,557,174 that we're going to get from municipal

10 revenue service. Who knows what the contract is on

11 that?

12 MS. EVANS: Mr. Sbaraglia, I don't

13 think -- well, I'll speak for myself, I don't know what

14 the contract is. I believe you're referring to the

15 sale of delinquent property taxes; is that correct?

16 MR. SBARAGLIA: Well, it doesn't say

17 that there in the budget, it just says what it says.

18 MS. EVANS: Okay.

19 MR. SBARAGLIA: What it actually

20 pertains to you should know because you have to vote on

21 it.

22 MS. EVANS: Well, no. On Page 6, it's

23 under which category?

24 MR. SBARAGLIA: Well, it's on the

25 bottom of notes. Way on the bottom at the note it says

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36

1 --

2 MS. EVANS: Oh, I see. This is a firm,

3 I believe, out of Erie, Pennsylvania and the mayor has

4 been quoted in other newspapers as saying he's already

5 cut a deal with them, and the city will realize that

6 revenue rather quickly in 2007.

7 Now, as far as I'm aware, this has not

8 come before City Council, any type of contract or

9 agreement, but what I question about it is the fact

10 that when the mayor has gone on record discussing a

11 proposed sale of delinquent taxes, delinquent property

12 taxes, to be specific, he said that I believe it would

13 be sold for somewhere between \$2.1 and \$2.5, so that's

14 one of my questions, why then in the budget has he
15 plugged in well over a million dollars more than he has
16 indicated publicly?

17 MR. SBARAGLIA: Has he told you the
18 length of the contract at least?

19 MS. EVANS: No.

20 MR. SBARAGLIA: This could be a
21 ten-year contract? Are we going to get harassed like
22 NCC does? Is this what it's going to amount to, more
23 harassment for the taxpayers?

24 MS. EVANS: It's possible they're
25 questions for the mayor.

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37

1 MR. SBARAGLIA: The simple thing is, if
2 you can't afford to pay your taxes, how can you afford
3 any penalty and harassment on top of your taxes?

4 That's a simple deduction.

5 People who can afford to pay their
6 taxes usually pay their taxes. People in Scranton are
7 good, they pay their taxes, they'll starve to pay their
8 taxes, they will do what they have to pay their taxes.

9 But for some reason or other, we're not
10 getting the taxes paid and we're probably not getting

11 paid in the business district.

12 That brings me to another subject, as

13 you know, in 1990, we used to have a two mill taxes on

14 our business privilege and your other business tax in

15 the city. Now we're down to one percent.

16 And the reason why we're really having

17 trouble paying our bills is because you're not letting

18 the businessmen pay what they're supposed to. We put

19 \$80 million into Central City. Let's get something

20 back.

21 There's no reason why that tax can't be

22 put up. The legislation here called from -- in 1990,

23 they set it at 1.9 mills. And before that it was at

24 two mills, so they had a slight reduction, but nowhere

25 did they have 100 percent reduction.

.

38

1 For some reason or other, since this

2 mayor has taken office, we have gotten 100 percent

3 reduction in that tax.

4 Now we got a problem then with that \$3

5 million sitting up in the bank in Dunmore. I supposed

6 you all know how much interest they're paying on that

7 note.

8 So, the simple thing with that note, if
9 you're getting less than what we're going to pay to
10 borrow this money, I assume we use it. It does not
11 make sense to borrow money at a higher rate than the
12 rate we're getting for deposits. That makes no
13 economic sense.
14 And with that \$3 million, you almost
15 wipe away any tax increase. And they should be able to
16 -- I told you before, that one percent on a million
17 dollars is like \$2,000. So, if you do a million
18 dollars worth of business, chances are you don't lie
19 here anyway.

20 MR. MINORA: Five minutes.

21 MR. SBARAGLIA: And it would be \$2,000.

22 Okay. Thank you.

23 MS. GATELLI: Mike Dudek.

24 MR. DUDEK: My name is Mike Dudek, 608

25 Depot Street, Scranton. I live in The Plot. I think I

.

39

1 decided to come up here and have a little fun.

2 About two or three weeks ago, Mrs.

3 Evans brought the idea up of performing a forensic

4 audit on the City of Scranton, and once those words

5 came out, I don't know who raced faster to attack her
6 between some elements of The Scranton Times and some of
7 the people on City Council, but I think I should
8 explain to you what she means by a forensic audit.
9 The word forensic does not mean
10 criminal, not at all. For instance, if an 89-year-old
11 man at The Veterans Center dies overnight, they will
12 perform an autopsy to find out why he died.
13 If when they turn the body over there's
14 a hole in his chest and there's blood on the bed, a
15 forensic autopsy is going to be performed because that
16 is not a normal way for a person to die.
17 And normally we would think, well, a
18 man must have been murdered, but he very well could
19 also have killed himself. If he had a pen and he moved
20 it the wrong way, anything is possible.
21 In Texas last week, an automobile
22 mechanic was found crushed underneath the car jack in
23 his garage. People thought he was murdered under
24 there. A forensic autopsy found out the man died of a
25 heart attack. He leaned against the lever that

40

1 operated the lift. He fell under the lift and was

2 crushed.

3 A forensic autopsy was performed

4 because he might have been murdered. As it turned out,

5 it was an accident.

6 The same thing applies with a forensic

7 audit. There are some tumors on this budget that the

8 mayor has, some nice financial tumors, and what Mrs.

9 Evans is looking for is to see whether or not there's

10 something wrong here.

11 Now, somebody was waiving the word

12 criminal, it might be criminal. More than likely my

13 way of looking at it is this budget was very poorly

14 crafted. A forensic audit will determine -- it will

15 let the auditor speak to what is wrong about that

16 audit. That's why we need a forensic audit here.

17 Now, it is very possible, and I can

18 speak from knowing some people who work at the

19 Harrisburg Patriot, there is some thought down in the

20 State Capitol that the office that Mr. Casey is

21 vacating could very well be filled by the governor with

22 our mayor.

23 That would mean that one of the five of

24 you will be the next mayor of the City of Scranton.

25 Well, before you run off a cliff and vote the mayor 's

1 budget, you better ask yourself this, if you end up
2 being the mayor of the City of Scranton next February,
3 which budget would you rather operate under? Mrs.
4 Evans' budget or the mayor's budget?
5 Once you answer that question honestly
6 and intelligently, you'll know how to vote. Thank you.

7 MS. GATELLI: Jean Suetta.

8 MS. SUETTA: Jean Suetta, lower Green
9 Ridge. You know, we're getting heavy floods in two
10 rains, heavy rains. Did anybody find the winch?

11 MS. GATELLI: Find the what?

12 MS. SUETTA: The winch to close the
13 bridge.

14 MS. GATELLI: Would you like Mr.

15 Courtright to answer?

16 MS. SUETTA: I don't care who answers.

17 Jesus could answer.

18 MR. COURTRIGHT: Mr. Hubbard had
19 questions, and Kay sent them out for me, and I happened
20 to run into the public safety director, and he answered
21 a lot of the questions for me.

22 There is a plan for the county. They

23 do have the equipment, they're telling me, to close the
24 gates. They cannot allow the average everyday citizen
25 to close the gates due to insurance purposes, somebody
.

42

1 got hurt.

2 They're going to take me there and show

3 me how everything operates under flood conditions, and

4 very possibly after that we will set a schedule where

5 the public can come out and see how they operate.

6 And as far as the gates being closed in

7 the last event, I asked why a siren did not go off over

8 in your area, because I was told if, in fact, there was

9 a flood occurring, that the siren would go off in the

10 plot and they would send either a police car or a fire

11 engine over to your area to notify you.

12 The reason they did not send the police

13 car and the fire engine over there to notify you is

14 there was no expectation of the river going over.

15 I asked why did we close the gates

16 then, and I was told it was just a precautionary

17 measure to possibly make the residents feel even

18 better.

19 I asked about paths for you to escape,

20 and they said there were paths for you to get out of
21 there. They were just some of the answers I got. I
22 can't recall them all. I believe they will put them in
23 writing for me.

24 Sometimes they close the gate with
25 maybe a truck from the DPW and they'll push it closed.

43

1 Originally I believe some of them were meant to be
2 closed from by pulling them closed, but from the ground
3 settling, rising, whatever the case may be, it binds,
4 so they need equipment.

5 MS. SUETTA: It's brand new.

6 MR. COURTRIGHT: Don't shoot the
7 messenger again.

8 MS. SUETTA: If we get flooded again --

9 MR. COURTRIGHT: Who'll clean my cellar
10 this time? Not me. One, two, three, four, five. I'm
11 here. There's heavy rains in two days. Are you going
12 to see that bridge before the two days?

13 MR. COURTRIGHT: Are we going to see
14 what?

15 MS. SUETTA: We're getting heavy rains
16 the next two days. Are you going to be down there to

17 see how it operates within that two days? Today --

18 Friday and Saturday you got to.

19 MR. COURTRIGHT: I haven't had a date

20 when I'm going to --

21 MS. SUETTA: What do we do then? And

22 what escape routes do we have? You can't go down Nay

23 Aug Avenue, you can't go out Green Ridge Street. Where

24 the hell are we going to go? Just tell me where I'm

25 going to go?

.

44

1 I don't want to -- I have the holiday

2 spirit, too. I'm being good, but, please, jump the

3 balls of beaver shit. Get us help.

4 MR. COURTRIGHT: Right. I'm just

5 trying to give you some answers, Jean, that they gave

6 me. They'll give me all the questions to your

7 questions. I happened to run into them. It wasn't a

8 planned meeting. I was leaving City Hall, he was here,

9 and he grabbed me and asked if I'd like some answers to

10 the questions. You know, I'll get them for you in

11 writing.

12 MS. SUETTA: In writing?

13 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yes.

14 MS. SUETTA: Just like Janet is waiting
15 for writing. That's what we're getting over there.

16 MR. COURTRIGHT: I understand it. I
17 understand your frustrations. I'm doing the best I
18 could to get you --

19 MS. SUETTA: I know you are. I seen
20 you down on the riverbank.

21 MR. COURTRIGHT: Right. And I just
22 thought, you know, I could give you some of the
23 answers. As far as not knowing where the equipment is,
24 I'm told they know where it is.

25 MS. SUETTA: Well, why don't they bring
.

45

1 it when they come?

2 MR. COURTRIGHT: The winches, you mean?

3 MS. SUETTA: Nobody knew where they
4 were.

5 MR. COURTRIGHT: I'm being told that
6 that's not true, they do know where the equipment is.

7 Now, you know, that's what I'm being told. Again,
8 don't shoot the messenger, Jean. Come on.

9 MS. SUETTA: I'm not shooting the
10 messenger.

11 MS. GATELLI: Jean, I talked to Mr.

12 Garabino from the Army Corps.

13 MS. SUETTA: I talked to him, too.

14 MS. GATELLI: And he told me that the

15 flood gate isn't going to be closed because the levee

16 is lower than the gate.

17 MS. SUETTA: True. And why don't they

18 build the bank up? Why don't they build the banks up a

19 little bit?

20 MS. GATELLI: Well, they are, but, you

21 know, it takes 100 years.

22 MS. SUETTA: Janet, could I talk to

23 Janet?

24 MS. GATELLI: Sure.

25 MS. SUETTA: All right. I want you to

.

46

1 put your big girl pants on and deal with this

2 situation. You can handle it. Merry Christmas,

3 everybody.

4 MS. EVANS: Merry Christmas.

5 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Charlie

6 Newcomb.

7 MR. NEWCOMB, SR.: Good evening,

8 Council. A few comments and a few facts. Just to
9 finish up where I finished last week about our
10 employees about retiring, just so you know that from
11 1993 and up, anybody that was hired after 1993, their
12 health care doesn't go with them when they retire.
13 That's from 1993 and down, so just everybody knows.
14 Now, we just heard a gentleman before
15 talk about the real estate tax, and it was in the
16 paper, I believe yesterday, somebody put in about, you
17 know, they own a home over in Tripps Park, it was a
18 duplex or something, so apparently I believe that
19 they're renting that house out to somebody.
20 And it said he was looking to buy a
21 house for \$200 to \$250,000 in the city, and the
22 transfer tax on that amount of property, I thought he
23 said, would be, like, \$12,000 if the budget goes
24 through the way it was, and somewhere else it would be
25 five.

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47

1 Well, the question on that is, and I
2 just hope we don't change this because we need the
3 revenue, if -- I think the gentleman spoke about
4 4.9 percent for the real estate transfer tax, well,

5 I'll tell you what, if somebody is buying a \$200,000 or
6 \$250,000 home in the city, I don't think they worry too
7 much about a few extra dollars.
8 But what they have to look at, that's
9 not the point. The point is if you are going to buy a
10 home in the City of Scranton, you're buying it because
11 you love to be here, the first thing, but the second
12 thing is is this, and I challenge anybody to show me
13 the difference, go to the city, go to Clarks Summit,
14 anywhere up that way and find a \$250,000 for what you
15 get and come to the city and buy a \$250,000 home. And
16 I'll tell you what, you're going to compare yourself
17 with a palace to a little ranch for \$250,000 somewhere
18 else. And that's one point.
19 And you're also going to pay
20 3.4 percent wage tax to live in the City of Scranton
21 compared to, you know, somewhere else where you bought
22 that \$250,000 home, you're going to be paying one
23 percent. So, I don't think it's a matter of coming up
24 with the difference in the money. I think the city
25 needs the tax and we should keep it.

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48

1 As far as it goes, I don't want to take

2 up all my time, but does anybody know what the public
3 safety director's job is? I know Mrs. Evans, that was
4 in the paper about in her budget, but, Mr. Courtright,
5 that's your department. Could I talk to him, Mrs.
6 Gatelli?

7 MS. GATELLI: Certainly.

8 MR. NEWCOMB, SR.: What is his job
9 supposed to be?

10 MR. COURTRIGHT: He's supposed to
11 oversee the police department, the fire department and
12 all the public safety for the city.

13 MR. NEWCOMB, SR.: Okay. Thank you. I
14 just want you to know, if he -- I think I've asked this
15 before. He's been at some different scenes and, you
16 know, some different scenes with the policemen.

17 And, boy, correct me if I'm wrong,
18 because I'm sure if I am, somebody else will be, but as
19 far as I understand, our last public safety director
20 was Jimmy Klee, which Mayor Connors was ordered to take
21 that out. He was a policeman, correct?

22 MR. COURTRIGHT: Correct.

23 MR. NEWCOMB, SR.: He had police -- he
24 could arrest people. He could do whatever he had to
25 do. As far as I know, our public safety director right

1 now is a civilian.

2 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yeah, I don't believe

3 has any arrest powers.

4 MR. NEWCOMB, SR.: When he goes to

5 these -- like, we're paying him \$65,000 a year, but

6 when he goes to these scenes and, you know, if orders

7 policemen to do this and do that, they have the

8 authority to say what is to be done, not him, because

9 he's like you or myself, a civilian. We can't

10 interfere with that. So, just take that into

11 consideration when we're paying public safety to

12 oversee something that they really don't have any

13 control of anyway. And, Mrs. Evans -- could I speak to

14 Mrs. Evans, please?

15 MS. GATELLI: Yes.

16 MR. NEWCOMB, SR.: Just a question, if

17 you can answer it for me, please, if you sent me an

18 E-mail regardless of what it was, what kind of day it

19 was or if anybody sent me an E-mail, as a matter of

20 fact of that, and it came from your computer to my

21 computer, and we were out someplace and I ran into Mr.

22 Courtright, and Mr. Courtright said, I read the E-mail

23 that you sent to Janet Evans or Judy or anybody, well,
24 my question to you is, if you send it to me and it goes
25 from your computer to mine, and somebody else found out
.
50

1 about it, how did they find out?

2 MS. EVANS: Honestly, I don't know. It
3 could be forwarded to individuals. I would think by
4 the recipient. I don't know. Maybe people make copies
5 of it. I don't know.

6 MR. NEWCOMB, SR.: What I'm trying to
7 say is if the only way it's going to get forwarded to
8 anybody is if I forward it to them or you forward it to
9 them or you hand it to them.

10 So, as far as I'm concerned, I think
11 that that E-mail should not have nothing to do with,
12 you know, with the budget.

13 And just remember on sending an E-mail,
14 like somebody talked before, if it smells like a rat,
15 looks like a rat, it's a rat.

16 I know underneath this budget the mayor
17 wants 25, 25 and 25 percent.

18 MR. MINORA: Five minutes.

19 MR. NEWCOMB, SR.: Okay. Your budget,

20 there's no tax increase. I just really wish we would
21 take into consideration on looking at these budgets.
22 We do need six more policemen, and we cannot afford any
23 more taxes. Thank you.

24 MS. GATELLI: Chris Pagula.

25 MR. PAGULA: Hello. My name is

.

51

1 Chris Pagula. This is my first time
2 speaking at City Council, so please bear
3 with me.
4 I'm a Scranton resident and a
5 sophomore at West Scranton High. This idea
6 was brought up in my American History class,
7 and we, the class, almost all agreed that a
8 law banning or restricting the use of
9 handheld cell phones while driving would be
10 a good idea.
11 I am here today addressing Scranton
12 City Council to ask you to considering
13 making a law about this issue.
14 Many studies have been done looking
15 at the amount of crashes caused by the use
16 of cell phones.

17 The majority of these studies show
18 that 80 percent of all crashes and
19 65 percent of near crashes are the result of
20 a driver not paying attention to the road.
21 A study done by the Virginia Tech
22 Transportation Institute and National
23 Highway Traffic Safety Administration found
24 the most common driving distraction is the
25 use of a cell phone.

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52

1 This study tracked 241 people in 100
2 different vehicles over a period of one year
3 and found that they were involved in 84
4 crashes, 761 near crashes in 8,295 driving
5 incidents.
6 Another survey showed that in 2005,
7 six percent of all drivers used handheld
8 cell phones, which went up one percent from
9 the previous year.
10 The most noticeable jump was between
11 -- from women, which went up two percent
12 from 2004, and in young adults, which
13 increased two percent from 2004, also.

14 According to the National Highway
15 Traffic Safety Administration, nearly three
16 percent of all drivers at any given moment
17 are on a handheld cell phone.

18 The difference of handheld cell
19 phones and hands free phones are a
20 5.2 percent difference, with six percent of
21 all distractions caused by drivers holding
22 the phone to their ears with only .8 of
23 distractions caused by drivers speaking on
24 headsets.

25 Previous states that have put hand
.

53

1 free cell phone use laws into effect include
2 New York, New Jersey, The District of
3 Columbia and Connecticut. The different
4 fines range from \$100 to \$250.

5 Also, 40 different countries have
6 made law restricting or prohibiting the use
7 of handheld cellphones while driving,
8 including Australia, Germany, Italy, Japan
9 and Spain, while in some countries, the lost
10 of insurance will result.

11 A law banning and restricting
12 handheld cell phone use while driving will
13 drastically lower the amount of accidents
14 and also the amount of fatalities in and
15 around the City of Scranton. I have
16 complete faith in the City Council in
17 getting this law passed.

18 I would also like to thank you for
19 listening to my idea and wish you a Merry
20 Christmas and Happy New Year.

21 MS. GATELLI: Thank you. Angelica
22 Campbell. Chris, just before you leave, I
23 do believe that there is a state or a
24 federal law that you can't talk on a cell
25 phone while you're drive, but, you know, we
.

54

1 will investigate that, but I think there
2 already is one, although it's never complied
3 with.

4 MS. CAMPBELL: Hello. My name is
5 Angelica Campbell. I'm a Scranton resident
6 and a sophomore student at West Scranton
7 High School. I want to talk to you today

8 about gang violence.

9 First of all, what is a gang? A

10 gang is a number of individuals band

11 together with two or more people who share a

12 common interest and bond who are recognized

13 by the community as being known for

14 participating in a criminal activity.

15 Normally a gang with have common names,

16 signs or symbols.

17 Gang members are involved in

18 homicide, robbery, assault, burglary and

19 auto theft.

20 Secondly, how do we identify gang

21 members? Gang members are lurking in our

22 schools, increase in problems at home

23 increase gang membership.

24 Typically gang members have a

25 frequent contact with police. Writings with

.

55

1 letters cross out is another indication.

2 Pictures with displaying of gang signs and

3 weapons are frequently indicated, as well.

4 Members may use a nickname that is

5 gang related. Drinking alcohol and the use
6 of drugs is done. Bragging they are tougher
7 than others is common.

8 Why do people join gangs? The
9 interaction with parents is lacking, self
10 respect is lacking, power is lacking,
11 feeling of belonging is non-consistent.
12 Being careful is lacking.

13 Friendships are weak. To be known is a
14 strong desire.

15 Consequences for being in a gang are
16 many. It will cause danger to both gang
17 members and his or her family. Gang members
18 drop out of school and end up in jail.

19 It will have a normal life effect on
20 the child's life. It will be difficult to
21 find a job.

22 Some gangs members suffer from
23 alcohol or drug abuse. Most end up
24 seriously injured or killed.

25 A way to prevent your child from
.

56

1 gang, this should be a balance between love

2 and discipline.

3 Show them that they are wanted.

4 Spend time with them. Listen to your

5 children. Don't put them down. Put them in

6 extracurricular activities. Support your

7 child when he or she accomplishes a goal or

8 a new stage in life.

9 So, find ways to do better in life.

10 Show your parent that you are better than

11 that. Make them proud of you. Become

12 something in life. It will be easy and a

13 successful goal in achieving things in life.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. GATELLI: Thank you very much.

16 Marie Shumaker.

17 MS. SHUMAKER: Good evening. I'd

18 like to brag that my faith in the DPW was

19 well founded. The streets were much better

20 when I went out than when I came in last

21 week.

22 MS. GATELLI: You're lucky.

23 MS. SHUMAKER: First I want to thank

24 Mrs. Evans for having the courage to try to

25 save us from the tyranny of the nanny state

1 by voting against the smoking ban.
2 Now that Council has chosen to
3 proceed down the slippery slope of
4 protecting us from ourselves all in the name
5 of better health to be sure, what will be
6 next, trans fats?
7 Then what? I'm allergic to several
8 flowers. Will I be able to come here and
9 petition you to pass a ban planting those
10 flowers so I don't suffer an allergic
11 reaction?
12 I would also like to thank Mrs.
13 Evans for taking the time to prepare an
14 alternate budget that spares taxpayers a
15 large increase.
16 It will be most disappointing if you
17 chose to not give this proposed budget
18 serious consideration.
19 I'm also disappointed there have
20 been no other Council members to come
21 forward with so much as a single reduction.
22 You are all aware of the large

23 number of elderly homeowners living on fixed
24 incomes.

25 So, I say to Mrs. Evans, I believe

.

58

1 you're doing the Lord's work and would
2 remind you it was the lord himself who said
3 blessed are you when men shall revow you and
4 persecute you and say all men are of evil
5 against you falsely for my name sake.

6 Their's is the kingdom of heaven.

7 Now, Mrs. Gatelli, last week you

8 were able to tell me the adding Christmas

9 lights at Nay Aug were not in the capital

10 budget, but can you or any other Council

11 colleague tell me what is the mayor's

12 capital budget?

13 Where, for example, is the lighted

14 softball field to replace the Schmidt

15 Complex the mayor gave to The University?

16 Where are the improvements promised to

17 Robinson Park and East Scranton Little

18 League Field in 2003 that were to have been

19 paid with a \$72 million bond floated in

20 2002? Where is the \$1 million reduction in
21 the budget in 2007 and not replaced in out
22 years promised by the Pennsylvania Economy
23 League rep during the September 14 caucus?
24 Why were positions eliminated at the
25 insistence of The Pennsylvania Economy
.
59

1 League during the Connor years reinstated?
2 On November 11, the mayor said we
3 started a conservancy which alleviates the
4 expenses that come with city parks.
5 The real sign up at Nay Aug says the
6 Nay Aug Park Conservancy thanks Wal-Mart for
7 its generous support of the universally
8 accessible tree house starting this winter
9 and launching at this site.
10 Now, unless there's another
11 conservancy, I guess this is trickle down.
12 Whatever doesn't get spent at Nay Aug, maybe
13 it will trickle down to some of the
14 neighborhood parks. I don't know.
15 The mayor's five-year, that's the
16 2005 through 2009 OECD plan showed as an

17 accomplishment. We restored a greenhouse
18 that plays a key educational role in the
19 Scranton School District Best Program.
20 Clearly and admittedly by OECD, the
21 greenhouse has not been restored. On what
22 was that money spent? Why is OECD housed in
23 a high-rent facility, when there is space
24 available in City Hall? This is a
25 distressed city.

.

60

1 Why is another health inspector not
2 included in the budget when more tasks are
3 being added and the current tasks are not
4 able to be accomplished? Remember I've told
5 you that the City of Wilkes-Barre has three.
6 We have one.
7 And Mr. Seitzinger has -- his latest
8 city job has been billed as an anti-blight
9 czar, yet I keep seeing emphasis on how much
10 money he's bringing into the city. How much
11 revenue is in the budget from the
12 anti-blight efforts? Anybody have any
13 answers to any of those questions?

14 MS. EVANS: I can look that up for
15 you, but I do know that consistently each
16 year the city does list what is earned, you
17 know, or anticipated to be earned in terms
18 of citations and tickets, et cetera, related
19 to blight and parking issues, abandoned or
20 junk vehicles, et cetera.

21 MS SHUMAKER: Was there a big
22 increase from last year to this year to next
23 year, 2006 to 2007?

24 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Actually I have
25 all of the citations and how much to date
.

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1 since they started, and I will give you a
2 copy of that before you leave.

3 MS. SHUMAKER: And how much is
4 included in the 2007 budget?

5 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I will show you
6 -- I will tell you as soon as I locate it.

7 I have a lot of papers here. Sorry.

8 MR. MINORA: Five minutes.

9 MS. SHUMAKER: Thank you.

10 MS. GATELLI: David Dodson. Is

11 there anyone else that would like to speak?

12 MS. SCHUMANICH: Madame President

13 and members of Council, my name is Kim

14 Schumanich, and I come to you as a

15 legislative chairperson of the Greater

16 Scranton Board of Realtors and the 700

17 realtor members that we have within our

18 association.

19 I also come to you on behalf of all

20 the homebuyers and home sellers that we

21 currently and have previously and will

22 represent in the future.

23 We've made great progress here in

24 this city with helping to have our clients

25 achieve the dream of home ownership.

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62

1 The increase that is proposed in

2 this budget, a more than 50 percent increase

3 in the current real estate transfer tax will

4 take us back to the weak market that we all

5 experienced in the 1990s.

6 You may not know, but the real

7 estate transfer tax is a highly volatile

8 tax. It depends on market conditions.

9 And realtors will agree the

10 conditions that we are experiencing now and

11 will experience are downward trending. We

12 don't have the strong market that we have

13 experienced in the past.

14 The projection of a \$2 million

15 increase by increasing the city's share of

16 the real estate tax from 2.2 percent to 3.4

17 percent is supposed to be \$2 million, and I

18 believe that is based on a number of

19 transactions that were completed in the

20 2005.

21 You may also not know, but the real

22 estate transfer tax, of course, has a very

23 narrow base. It's a tax on a single item.

24 Not everyone is buying or selling real

25 estate.

.

63

1 Lower income households are the ones

2 who are the most affected. They already

3 spend a higher percentage of their income on

4 housing.

5 The upfront costs are the biggest
6 constraints right now to first-time home
7 buyers, and that upfront cost will be
8 largely made up of real estate transfer tax.
9 In the paper today, I used an
10 example in The Scranton Times of a person
11 who is buying a \$100,000 house, if they were
12 to buy that \$100,000 home in Dickson City,
13 Dunmore, Taylor, Clarks Summit, the real
14 estate transfer tax that that buyer would
15 pay would be \$1,000.
16 If they were to buy that same home
17 at that assume price in the City of
18 Scranton, currently the tax would be \$1,850.
19 The increase would take that number up to
20 \$2,450. It would cost more than twice to
21 buy a home of the same value in the City of
22 Scranton than it would anywhere else here in
23 Lackawanna County.
24 Scranton will also become less
25 competitive for businesses to relocate here.

.

1 Businesses, when they're acquiring property,

2 are looking at the costs associated with
3 that, and transfer tax, of course, is an
4 associated cost, not only for the relocation
5 of a building, but also for their employees
6 that they would hope to bring with them.
7 Of course, remember residents here
8 in Scranton will be facing increased utility
9 costs. They've already seen an increase in
10 insurance costs, and, of course, yet again
11 they get to come to the City of Scranton and
12 pay higher wage tax.

13 I ask you to please consider some
14 alternative sources for revenue here in the
15 budget. Perhaps you would begin to enforce
16 more closely the landlord registration
17 ordinance, perhaps enact an amusement tax,
18 something that is a broader based tax for
19 the city.

20 But I please ask you, don't allow
21 the mayor to balance this budget on the
22 backs of home buyers and sellers in the City
23 of Scranton. Thank you.

24 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

25 MR. GERVASI: Good evening, City

1 Council. My name is Dave Gervasi, I'm a
2 taxpayer, a homeowner, and a member -- a
3 proud member of the Scranton Fire
4 Department.

5 I heard a few comments in the
6 beginning of the meeting and I'd like, if
7 it's okay, Mrs. Gatelli, I'd like to ask
8 Mrs. Fanucci a question, if that's okay.
9 Mrs. Fanucci, I believe you said
10 that you didn't refuse to go to the budget
11 meeting, you had prior engagements with your
12 daughter, I believe you said, so, apparently
13 you were misquoted in the paper today.

14 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I wasn't
15 misquoted. Here's what I said. I said I
16 had already had plans. I had plans, and my
17 colleagues knew I had plans for a week
18 before that, so I was not planning on
19 attending that meeting under any
20 circumstances because of my daughter's
21 birthday.

22 MR. GERVASI: Sure.

23 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: And then when I

24 was asked if I was coming to discuss the

25 budget, I had said that I had already

.

66

1 reviewed the budget, there was nothing that

2 I had found that I was going to discuss,

3 that if we were here to do a work session

4 and if I found something that I wanted to

5 put in the budget, I would have gone through

6 one of my colleagues to put it in.

7 MR. GERVASI: But you didn't flatly

8 refuse to go to that meeting because of an

9 Email?

10 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: No.

11 MR. GERVASI: All right. Thank you.

12 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: They're two

13 separate issues, Dave.

14 MR. GERVASI: I believe so. I

15 believe so. Once again, it seems like The

16 Times is trying to distract everyone with

17 their misquotes and their slanted reporting,

18 because I got the impression that two people

19 were very, very mad over something and

20 refused to go to Mrs. Evans' budget caucus.

21 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Well, Dave, I

22 have to say, I was very, very hurt and very

23 upset about that, but that was a totally

24 separate issue.

25 MR. GERVASI: But that wasn't why

.

67

1 you refused to go --

2 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: No. The budget

3 was a different issue. In fact, when I read

4 Mrs. Evans' comment, I'm, like, well, that's

5 not why I was -- I mean, I was the same way.

6 I think that it was just mixed into one.

7 MR. GERVASI: Okay. Well, thanks.

8 I mean, we all come to an agreement that

9 sometimes you can't believe what you read in

10 the paper.

11 I also have -- I take offense to

12 Attorney Redmond, who was up here before,

13 saying that it would be very unfair to cut

14 some solicitors out of the city's budget,

15 that it would, and I'm paraphrasing, unfair

16 to give -- burden them with additional work.

17 Well, I wonder how he feels about
18 the firefighters who do the same amount or
19 actually more work now with 25 percent less
20 firefighters than we've had, and the police
21 officers, who are probably doing double the
22 work of 1993, with approximately 25 percent
23 less workers, and the clerical workers, who
24 are doing the same amount of work with
25 approximately 40 percent less workers.

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68

1 I think maybe we should worry about
2 the masses, the people who do the work, that
3 actually answer the phone calls and provide
4 services to the city, and maybe not worry
5 about two lawyers. I think he should be a
6 little more -- set his priorities a little
7 higher.

8 Getting back to the Email, I was
9 wondering why people were -- why The Times
10 was sensationalizing that, where Mrs. Evans,
11 I believe, said about the smoking ban that
12 she thought it would hurt a lot of
13 neighborhood bars, which, by the way, I am

14 in favor of a smoking ban, I think it's a
15 good idea, but I also agree with Mrs. Evans
16 to a point that it's going to hurt some of
17 these businesses.

18 And what happened in Erie, there was
19 a loss. I believe that's all you said. I
20 don't think you were encouraging anyone to
21 sue the city, number one; number two, I
22 don't know why everyone was so appalled,
23 especially The Scranton Times about Mrs.
24 Evans' E-mail stating that PEL, the mayor
25 was PEL's boy.

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69

1 Well, if I can maybe just refresh
2 everyone's memory out there, isn't PEL the
3 same organization who's been here for 14
4 years being paid by tax dollars to recover
5 us, and they haven't yet? We're actually in
6 worse shape now than we were.
7 Wasn't PEL the same organization
8 that beat up Jimmy Connors for approximately
9 prom little 12 years for spending as little
10 as \$100,000 on something they thought was

11 frivolous.

12 But this mayor can borrow 70 -- over

13 \$70 million and spend it on no-bid contracts

14 and contracts for his patronage jobs, his

15 bloated work force in City Hall.

16 Where has PEL been since then?

17 Isn't this the same PEL who presented a --

18 did a presentation here a few weeks ago

19 telling this Council that there's no

20 alternative to \$44 million in borrowing?

21 Here we are, I think you gave him

22 \$10 million. I would say PEL is the mayor's

23 boy, or the mayor's PEL's boy, and I think

24 you were quite accurate in your Email, Mrs.

25 Evans.

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70

1 In closing, I'd like to talk about

2 this budget, because the mayor's budget is

3 going to raise taxes by 25 percent, 25 next

4 year and 25 the year after that. That's not

5 a 75 percent tax increase.

6 If you add 25 percent to the 25

7 percent increase and 25 percent more to the

8 25 percent increase, it's over a 90 percent

9 tax increase --

10 MR. MINORA: Five minutes.

11 MR. GERVASI: -- that we're going to

12 be burdened with, that we will be burdened

13 with.

14 Mrs. Evans, I read some of your

15 budget. I think that is the way you either

16 have to increase revenue or cut spending,

17 and you cut spending and you increased

18 revenue, and you should not have to burden

19 these people.

20 I have never come here and lied to

21 this Council in all the years I've been

22 coming to Council.

23 I didn't lie to you last week or the

24 week before when I presented you with a

25 financial analysis that said a tax increase

.

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1 is not necessary because they're fudging the

2 numbers, in my opinion, and everything the

3 mayor and Lenny Kresefski have been saying

4 about the numbers and the deficits in this

5 city was that -- was that they were not
6 accurate and they were -- they did not
7 relate to the numbers that are in the
8 independent audit, and I didn't lie to you,
9 and there is no tax increase necessary, and
10 I think this Council, whoever votes for the
11 mayor's budget, instead of at least an
12 alternative budget, is just as responsible
13 for raising these people taxes, and in the
14 future reducing services in the city than
15 the mayor is himself. Thank you for the
16 opportunity.

17 MR. HUBBARD: Good evening, Council,
18 Daniel Hubbard. First I'd like to apologize
19 if I seem slightly highly aggravated last
20 week. I did kind of go off on Mr. Parker,
21 but unfortunately all roads in this flood
22 control project lead back to the city
23 engineer. Unfortunately that's Mr. Parker,
24 so he's going to be the brunt of the
25 frustration involving this project.

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72

1 As far as the questions that were

2 given to Director Hayes, one, we were
3 promised a flood alarm in lower Green Ridge.
4 I don't want to have to rely on an alarm
5 that is in a community that is 100 percent
6 protected by levees.
7 The reason the alarm didn't go off
8 is because The Plot wasn't going to get
9 flooded. They have levees.
10 Going back to what Mr. Hayes had
11 said about that, let's go back to June, we
12 got flooded on Tuesday. Tuesday night the
13 river receded. The alarms went off in The
14 Plot. The city, the Army Corps saved The
15 Plot with a temporary levee, but that
16 temporary levee was there when the river
17 came surging back up enormously more than it
18 did the day before on Wednesday.
19 The Plot flood alarm did not go off
20 on Wednesday, because The Plot was protected
21 by its temporary levee.
22 On Wednesday, lower Green Ridge
23 received 16 inches more water the following
24 day than we received on Tuesday. It was the
25 difference between a basement and a first

1 floor, which in dollars is the difference
2 between a cleanup and a redo of your house.
3 The first floor, you're tearing
4 walls out; basement, you're scooping mud
5 out, replacing your hot water heater and
6 furnace.
7 That's a huge difference, 16 inches
8 of water more than the day before. No alarm
9 went off, no fire truck, no police car.
10 So, as far as Mr. Hayes stating that
11 when the alarm goes off in The Plot, I'm not
12 expecting it to go off, because The Plot's
13 protected. Why would the flood alarm go off
14 in The Plot? They're protected.
15 So, we're to rely on a flood alarm
16 that's going to be in a community that's
17 protected by levees, when we have absolutely
18 no protection. So, where is our alarm? Do
19 you understand the irony in his statement?
20 MR. COURTRIGHT: I understand
21 completely, and I'm going to go out on a
22 limb, and I believe he told me that he

23 doesn't see an alarm coming to your area in
24 the near future. I could be wrong, but I
25 believe that's what he told me.

.

74

1 MR. HUBBARD: I don't doubt it,
2 because we haven't seen anything in any way,
3 shape or form.
4 I mean, why do we not deserve a
5 flood -- The Plot has a flood alarm. Do we
6 not deserve a flood alarm? We have no
7 protection, so we don't even deserve a siren
8 on a pole that makes noise.

9 MS. GATELLI: I don't think that
10 that decision is up to the City of Scranton
11 in totality. I think that they work with
12 the state and the army corps to make any
13 decisions about any flood projects.

14 MR. HUBBARD: An alarm is not a
15 project. It's a siren on a pole. We're
16 residents of the City of Scranton.

17 MS. GATELLI: I don't know that it's
18 just a siren on a pole. I think it's a
19 little more, you know, costly than that.

20 From what I was told that the alarm
21 on Albright Avenue can be heard on your
22 side, also.

23 MR. HUBBARD: The alarm in The Plot
24 can be heard on our side.

25 MS. GATELLI: No, I'm not talking

75

1 about The Plot, I'm talking about --

2 MR. HUBBARD: On the other side of
3 the bridge.

4 MS. GATELLI: Yes.

5 MR. HUBBARD: Well, they're
6 protected by a levee, as well, with working
7 flood gates.

8 MS. GATELLI: Yeah, but when the
9 river goes up, it goes off anyway, whether
10 they're protected or not. When it hits a
11 certain level, the alarm goes off.

12 MR. HUBBARD: Three weeks ago the
13 river hit the face of the Albright Avenue
14 bridge. 16 inches more, not even, about a
15 foot more, an increase on the river, would
16 have put it over the riverbank on our side,

17 nowhere else.

18 Everybody else would have been

19 probably, I'm going to say, 10 to 15 feet

20 below the top of their levees where they

21 would be in risk.

22 We're 12 inches, another two hours

23 of rain at that rate would have put the

24 river over the bank in lower Green Ridge.

25 We need a flood alarm. It's not a

.

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1 lot to ask.

2 We can't get a riverbank, we can't

3 even get the DPW to close the flood gates,

4 we can't even get the streets closed when it

5 does flood, we can't get the city to come

6 down and help us when we are flooded.

7 The Plot was protected, and I'm

8 glad. The Plot has been taking this for

9 years, but now we're the only community left

10 in Scranton that's part of this flood

11 project that's not protected, and we've got

12 nothing.

13 MS. EVANS: Mr. Hubbard, I recall in

14 June, when the severe flooding occurred --

15 MR. HUBBARD: June 28.

16 MS. EVANS: -- one of your issues

17 was, as you're stating tonight, the lack of

18 a siren. Your side of that area of Scranton

19 flooded severely, whereas, the opposite side

20 really incurred very little, and in some

21 cases no flooding.

22 As a result, even though the river

23 had risen to such a point that it caused

24 devastation to numerous homes on your street

25 and those surrounding your street, no siren

.

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1 went off.

2 As a result, at the flood meeting,

3 which you and I and Mr. Courtright, many

4 Council people attended, a siren was

5 promised.

6 MR. HUBBARD: Yes, it was promised

7 on July 11.

8 MS. EVANS: By the city.

9 MR. HUBBARD: Actually it was

10 promised by Director Hayes personally, not

11 the city, him personally.

12 MS. EVANS: Exactly. And if I

13 recall correctly, the manner in which he

14 stated it seemed to be that it really wasn't

15 going to be that great a problem and that it

16 would be taken care of in the near future.

17 MR. HUBBARD: Well, let's take one

18 from the --

19 MR. MINORA: Five minutes.

20 MR. HUBBARD: -- communities that

21 are protected and put it in ours, because

22 we're not protected.

23 One quick thing, the flood control

24 project, I brought this up before is

25 affecting the realignment of one main avenue

.

78

1 with a side street in our neighborhood.

2 I would like to request that the

3 DPW, whoever, the city engineer, whoever

4 within the City of Scranton is responsible

5 for this that a traffic survey be done on

6 that part of our neighborhood, on Nay Aug

7 Avenue, Ross Avenue and Marion Street,

8 because these changes are being implemented
9 into our community without any input from
10 us. We have no -- whatever ear we talk to
11 it falls on deaf.

12 So, a traffic survey -- before these
13 streets are realigned, a traffic survey
14 should be done. And if it has been done, we
15 would like to see it. If it hasn't been
16 done, I think it should be done before they
17 put undue burden of heavy traffic on a side
18 street in a residential neighborhood.

19 I don't think any one of you would
20 like to have the traffic on your street at
21 home quadrupled or even multiplied by ten on
22 your street at home. I don't think anybody
23 would want that.

24 So, we can't be expected to like it,
25 so I would like a traffic survey to be done
.

79

1 for that section.

2 And seriously, this flood alarm is a
3 big issue. Sooner or later, what's going to
4 happen? I mean, how are we going to be

5 notified the next time this happens?

6 MR. COURTRIGHT: Mr. Hubbard, and if

7 I may, Ms. Gatelli.

8 MS. GATELLI: Yes.

9 MR. COURTRIGHT: Two things came

10 back to mind now since Mrs. Suetta was up

11 here, Mr. Hayes said that in the event of

12 heavy rains, he would have police cars

13 stationed in the Green Ridge Shopping

14 Center, in that parking lot, and they'd be

15 monitoring the river and they would send

16 them over to where you live in your area.

17 The other thing I asked, you

18 mentioned that was there a possibility that

19 there was some kind of plan for that area

20 and that's why they weren't taking care of

21 you? Maybe they were going to take over

22 that area and some big project.

23 And he told me he's not aware of

24 anything to that nature. So, they were two

25 of things.

.

80

1 We had about a 20, 25 minute

2 conversation. I can't recall every single
3 thing we spoke about.

4 MR. HUBBARD: We've been told there
5 are plans in works for the Laceworks that
6 involve a lot more than the property that
7 the Laceworks is on. It involves parts of
8 lower Green Ridge that's in the future.

9 MR. COURTRIGHT: And I asked him,
10 and he said, to his knowledge, no.

11 MR. HUBBARD: And one quick point on
12 the traffic survey, Green Ridge Shopping
13 Center has been purchased, and they're going
14 to expand, and Fidelity Bank just put a
15 large bank on the corner of Ross and Green
16 Ridge Street.

17 So, the expansion of the shopping
18 center, plus the new bank, will increase the
19 traffic that we already have.

20 So, take that increase and put that
21 on top of the other increases and see what
22 we're going to have to deal with.

23 And please, please, the flood alarm.

24 I don't want to have to clean the river out
25 of my living room again.

1 MS. EVANS: And, Mr. Hubbard, during
2 one of the potential flood events that
3 occurred this fall, I did witness the DPW
4 trucks building up a dirt levee prior to the
5 arrival of the inclement weather, which --

6 MR. HUBBARD: That was in
7 September.

8 MS. EVANS: -- I believe was very
9 helpful.

10 MR. HUBBARD: Actually if they
11 didn't do that, it would have went over
12 where they put that dirt. It would have
13 went over. Three weeks ago it would have
14 went over the bank right there. So, they
15 did do something.

16 MS. EVANS: So, what they need to do
17 in the event --

18 MR. HUBBARD: Is continue that.

19 MS. EVANS: Yes, Especially, as Mrs.
20 Suetta stated earlier, we're expecting such
21 heavy rains again, I wasn't aware, but in
22 that event, I think the city certainly

23 should be aware and get out there and have

24 the DPW --

25 MR. HUBBARD: If the city's aware.

.

82

1 I don't think the city could be any more

2 aware than having one remaining neighborhood

3 within its boundaries that continuously

4 floods every time it rains, it's not a

5 stretch to know where that happens.

6 MS. EVANS: And they're aware, but

7 they need to be aware that they should get

8 out there and heighten those levees.

9 MS. GATELLI: I think they're in the

10 process of doing the flood project.

11 MR. HUBBARD: Sure, the Army Corps

12 is in the process, and over the next two

13 years we have to sweat it every single time

14 it rains.

15 MS. GATELLI: Well, so did The Plot

16 and so did the other side of Albright

17 Avenue.

18 MR. HUBBARD: We're all that's left,

19 so we could use a little help. We shouldn't

20 be expected -- just be expected to sit down

21 --

22 MS. GATELLI: No, I understand that,

23 but it does take time.

24 MR. HUBBARD: I understand that, and

25 the Army Corps's mission is flood control.

.

83

1 The city's responsibility is flood

2 prevention. So, any help the city can do to

3 prevent it from happening again until the

4 new levee comes will be greatly appreciated.

5 MS. GATELLI: Okay. Thank you.

6 MS. HUBBARD: Hi, Council.

7 Elizabeth Hubbard, Scranton resident, lower

8 Green Ridge resident.

9 To add something to what my son

10 said, the city never even repaired the parts

11 of the existing riverbank that we have after

12 the June flood where the water did come over

13 and washed away parts of the bank. They

14 were never repaired.

15 So, that's just -- that part is

16 lower. So, I just wanted to comment on

17 that. He forgot or whatever.

18 But it's getting ridiculous that

19 every time it rains or they talk heavy

20 rains, that we have to be in fear of being

21 flooded.

22 I mean, isn't there something the

23 city can do to get the Army Corps moving on

24 our part, because we're taking the brunt of

25 it all, and it's not fun.

.

84

1 I still haven't put my oriental

2 carpets back, because I'm afraid if it gets

3 flooded again, they weigh about 2000 pounds

4 apiece wet, and I just didn't care to drag

5 them out and have them cleaned again, so I

6 left them in storage.

7 But that's no way to live, and I'm

8 too old to be putting up with this once or

9 twice a year. Thank you. Have a nice

10 holiday.

11 MR. DAVIS: Assalaam Alaikum. My

12 name is Jim Davis, I'm from Scranton. First

13 of all, I would like to -- I say to Pedro

14 Gonzalez (UNTRANSCRIBABLE), congratulations

15 to what you have done in this very short

16 period of time as far as bringing your

17 people together, bringing our people

18 together and doing something positive and

19 making this city understand that diversity

20 is more than just a name or a word, it's

21 like infusion, and, therefore, you're going

22 to get people that will work together. I

23 congratulate you, and I pray for your future

24 success, also. That's number one.

25 Number two, I think it's time that

.

85

1 we have a minority representative. I'm

2 looking for a young person, a minority, and

3 I'm not talking about female or male, I'm

4 talking about minority non-white, if I may

5 say so, and I'm going to say so, but I'm

6 looking for a young person that we can give

7 them all the knowledge that we have

8 gathered.

9 I have watched this City Council for

10 nine years. I've got tapes at home. They

11 go all the way back of what has been said,
12 as long as it has been on Channel 61, and I
13 view them.

14 And I know that for a fact when this
15 young lady came up here the other day and
16 she said, This place sounds worse than when
17 I baby sit. I said to myself, Wow, she hit
18 it right on the head.

19 And then everything that flowed from
20 that point has just gotten worse, gotten
21 worse, and gotten worse, and we're still not
22 -- we're not anywhere near a budget.

23 There's no way in the world that you
24 can vote for a budget tonight. You don't
25 know what she said. She's the financial
.

86

1 director. You made her your financial
2 director, and yet you're not going to take
3 her word for what she's come up with as far
4 as a budget? That's ridiculous. That's
5 ignorant at its highest point.
6 If you make someone a financial
7 director, a financial secretary, or whatever

8 it might be, and they have something that
9 they want to bring to you that's going to
10 enhance the budget of the city, and you
11 refuse to listen to it, that means that you
12 did it for no reason at all. You just put
13 her in a no help situation, a no can do
14 situation, which is horrible, which is the
15 way the minorities feel in Scranton, also.
16 So, I'm looking to find a minority
17 that I can put into the place of City
18 Council. The next time we run for City
19 Council, I want to find a minority person
20 that I can run for. I really -- I'll give
21 them all the possibility, all the knowledge
22 that I can gather out there from a bar, from
23 whomever I can. I will put it in his hands,
24 and I know he will be good, because we need
25 someone. We really need someone.

.

87

1 We have two policemen tonight, that
2 means we're getting -- you're double
3 dutching or what? Mrs. Gatelli --
4 MS. GATELLI: Here we go.

5 MR. DAVIS: If your attitude wasn't
6 so bad, we wouldn't need police here. So, I
7 think this is what the kids said to me, what
8 she needs is an attitude adjustment.
9 So, I don't know that that's -- and
10 that's not offensive, that's just a straight
11 statement. You can take it for what it's
12 worth.
13 The kids have a very strong way of
14 posing things and they really cut to the
15 chase, and I like that about them.
16 The young lady that came up here
17 before and tried to tell us about gang
18 violence, I'm so proud of them.
19 I'm so proud every time I see a
20 minority come to this podium and speak to
21 you, because it's not something that you're
22 used to, and I'm very proud of the fact that
23 they have the guts and the wherewithal to do
24 it and feel respected when they come away
25 from here. And I thank you for showing her

88

1 and the gentleman that kind of respect.

2 The last point I had to talk about

3 was, I was sitting in the kitchen the other

4 day washing my dishes, as a matter of fact,

5 and on this channel from WILK. They're

6 saying, Oh --

7 MR. MINORA: Five minutes.

8 MR. DAVIS: Thank you. Mrs. Evans

9 is coming on, this is my last point, too,

10 thank you very much, Mrs. Evans is coming on

11 to tell us about the E-mail, and I said, you

12 mean City Council has gotten on WILK now?

13 We've gotten that famous?

14 You know people are watching this

15 from abroad? They're watching this from all

16 over the city, all over the county, so much

17 so I came to you last week and asked you

18 about giving the citation out to the

19 Lackawanna Junior College, Lackawanna County

20 pulled them up, gave them a citation, just

21 that quick. I never said a word to them,

22 but they heard what was said here and they

23 felt it was necessary to credit our kids

24 with something they can go forward with.

25 So, you don't have to worry about

1 giving them anything. I thank you. I know
2 last time I asked to give a citation was for
3 Mr. Morgan, and he had to go to the hospital
4 and everything else before he could get it.
5 But it took a long time, but so, therefore,
6 I'm withdrawing my request.

7 MS. GATELLI: Well, we already
8 approved it tonight.

9 MR. DAVIS: You did? Oh, my
10 goodness gracious. Well, thank you. Thank
11 you very much. It's been a pleasure again.
12 But, please, use all of your senses. Don't
13 just use part of your senses when you come
14 here. We need all of you. I'm serious.
15 We're in bad luck. We're in bad shape. We
16 really are.

17 You start looking at 25 percent,
18 plus 25 percent, plus -- one guy did the
19 math, he came up with 90 percent. That's
20 horrendous. I'll never be able to afford a
21 house in Scranton.

22 MS. GATELLI: All right. Thank you,

23 Mr. Davis. Have a nice holiday.

24 MR. DAVIS: You're welcome.

25 MR. NOLE: Good evening. My name is

.

90

1 Gunner Nole. I am a homeowner, a resident,

2 a voter, and I'm an irate taxpayer at the

3 moment.

4 If nothing else tonight, I would

5 request, and I hope that tonight would be

6 the birth of a taxpayer rebellion this

7 evening, if nothing else that will come out

8 of this this evening.

9 So, first let me start off by saying

10 to City Council that I admire your courage

11 and your ambition.

12 By passing and signing this smoking

13 ban into law, you have willingly, knowingly

14 violated a state law, but you didn't have

15 enough courage to let the voting majority

16 decide on the smoking ban, instead you

17 rushed it through and you crammed it down

18 our throats, and the City Council takes

19 longer to put up a stop sign than we all

20 deliberated and debated over this smoking
21 ban.

22 But that said, even if the people
23 were to enact a smoking ban, it still would
24 not withstand the scrutiny and possible
25 legal challenge although I suspect it would

91

1 be fought less vigorously. No one would
2 like to go against the will of the people.

3 But just as City Council cannot
4 violate state law, neither can the people.
5 We are a nation of laws. This is not a mob
6 rule.

7 So, Madame President, if you are so
8 confident that you're acting in the best
9 interests of the majority, rescind the ban,
10 avoid a lawsuit and put it to a referendum.

11 Let the people out here decide whether we
12 want a smoking ban.

13 This shouldn't be made by four, five
14 people in a City of 70,000 people. Either
15 way you're going to have to put it on the
16 line.

17 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: You know, I'd
18 like to ask you a question. You're all for
19 people voting and deciding in referendum in
20 the city, is this what this is about?

21 MR. NOLE: That's exactly what I
22 said, yes.

23 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: What is your
24 view on the Recovery Plan?

25 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: That the mayor
.

92

1 had the courage to put that out to the
2 people. First he could have signed it by
3 executive order. City Council insisted that
4 they have a crack at it. They passed it.
5 And that still wasn't good enough, so the
6 mayor let it go to the people.

7 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: And then what?

8 MR. NOLE: And it won overwhelmingly
9 70 to 30 percent.

10 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: And are you for
11 the Recovery Plan?

12 MR. NOLE: I was at the time, but
13 we're not using the Recovery Plan.

14 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: No. I'm asking
15 you about referendum. I know that you're
16 big on putting everything out to the people.

17 MR. NOLE: Yes. Any time the people
18 in the city get to have a voice in their
19 government instead of having your will
20 imposed on them, I'm for that. Whether I
21 come out on the losing side or not, I have
22 to suck it up and go with the majority on
23 that.

24 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I'm glad you
25 answered that. Thank you so much.

93

1 MR. NOLE: Yes, ma'am. But either
2 way on the smoking ban, you're going to have
3 to put it on the line. You're going to have
4 to either put it on a referendum or you're
5 going to have to fight it out in court.
6 Because make no mistake, you will be
7 sued over this. We've already had to sue
8 this Council once before just for the right
9 to speak here.

10 And it seems that it's a repeat

11 occurrences, we have to sue you just to get
12 you to follow the law. We sure as hell
13 can't sue you for money, because you've
14 spent it all.

15 Right now there's about 100 business
16 owners with about half a dozen pro bono
17 lawyers. They're ready to argue this
18 smoking ban.

19 Apparently you've seem to overlook
20 the fact that the business owners are
21 taxpayers, also.

22 So, Attorney Minora, he rendered his
23 opinion on that, so is he going to argue the
24 ban for you in court or are you going to
25 bring in a hired gun for that?

.

94

1 You can answer that after I'm done
2 speaking. He said it will flush. I said
3 let him argue it in court.
4 Okay. Also, I normally don't
5 respond to things that are in the paper,
6 because as we all know, they're not complete
7 or they may not be totally true or

8 deceptive, but the word -- since neither of
9 you contacted me and made comments in the
10 paper, I'll respond to that.

11 You mentioned the word contempt in
12 there, I don't see any contempt. What
13 contempt? Disagreement with a political
14 philosophy or a financial strategy. That's
15 not contempt. That's just sound argument.
16 And if you don't like that, let's call
17 things what they are.

18 Have you ever noticed that the
19 thieves are always trying to hush the
20 watchdogs?

21 So, I realize we're all hypocrites
22 to a certain extent, but some of you may
23 want to go home and rethink your lives and
24 look in the mirror and read up on ethics,
25 since you're the ones that brought it up.

.

95

1 Some of you should be the last ones in this
2 room to bring up ethics.

3 So, and I don't know what happened
4 to everybody's personalities. During the

5 campaigns -- let me make a disclosure here.
6 I voted for Mrs. Evans, Mrs. Fanucci, Mrs.
7 Gatelli and Mr. Courtright. Sir, I never
8 had the opportunity to vote for you.
9 Congratulations on your appointment.
10 I've given money to Mrs. Evans, Mrs.
11 Gatelli, and Mr. Courtright. Sorry I never
12 had time to come to one of your fundraisers,
13 Mrs. Fanucci. But there, I made of
14 disclosure of my affiliations.
15 But at those fundraisers,
16 everybody's personality is so nice, we're
17 going to work together.
18 I don't really care if you get along
19 or anything, but you're going to have to
20 work together and stop being so --
21 MR. MINORA: Five minutes.
22 MR. NOLE: -- vicious. If you'd
23 just indulge me another 30 seconds, sir.
24 MR. MINORA: Ask the president.
25 MR. NOLE: But I want to say hoping
.
96

1 -- hoping is a good thing. All of you hoped

2 you were elected. I hope my taxes won't be
3 raised again, I hope I'll get my \$52 back
4 that I've overpaid for the EMS tax, I hope
5 this city avoids bankruptcy.
6 And let me say this, I am the one
7 that hopes you were sued over the smoking
8 ban. You imposed restrictive legislation
9 without the consent of the taxpayers. You
10 were the ones that drew first blood on this.
11 I don't find anything unethical
12 about hoping for an appropriate and deserved
13 response to your illegal smoking ban, and I
14 don't think you'll get what you're hoping
15 for this evening.
16 So, if it bothers you that someone
17 hopes that you get what you deserve, do what
18 you do best, send them a letter. Maybe
19 someone will answer it. Thank you.
20 MR. MACIEJESKI: Good evening. My
21 name is Robert Maciejewski, and I'm a senior
22 at West Scranton High School, and I just
23 wanted to summarize a letter I sent to The
24 Scranton Times about the smoking ban.
25 I'm not in favor of it. I don't

1 I think it's fair. As Mr. Nole stated, it's
2 illegal. And if the city were to be sued
3 over it, it wouldn't be the fault of Mrs.
4 Evans for making a comment about possible
5 litigation, it would be the fault of those
6 who passed it, that it was illegal, it
7 wasn't clearly researched, it was passed too
8 quickly.

9 And I don't fault the students. I
10 think it was very admirable that they could
11 work together and come up with something
12 that they felt passionate about.

13 And as far as not meeting with to
14 discuss finance with the head of the finance
15 proposed budget, I mean, that's -- I think
16 that's a little immature, but I think there
17 would be better ways to get around things.

18 Thank you.

19 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

20 MR. UNGVARSKY: Good evening, City
21 Council. I'm Tom Ungvarsky. I was going to
22 make a few comments about the budget, but

23 I've kind of changed my mind.

24 I'd like to ask Mrs. Gatelli, did

25 you receive that E-mail intended for Janet

.

98

1 Evans?

2 MS. GATELLI: Did I receive it?

3 MR. UNGVARSKY: Yes, was it sent to

4 you, also?

5 MS. GATELLI: Yes, it was sent to

6 me.

7 MR. UNGVARSKY: Was it the full

8 content or was it edited?

9 MS. GATELLI: It was sent to me by

10 Gunner Nole, not by Mrs. Evans.

11 MR. UNGVARSKY: Did you receive the

12 whole thing or was it edited?

13 MS. GATELLI: Was it what?

14 MR. UNGVARSKY: Edited. Was part of

15 it cut out?

16 MS. GATELLI: I don't know.

17 MR. UNGVARSKY: Okay. Did you

18 forward it to anyone else besides Mrs.

19 Evans?

20 MS. GATELLI: I didn't forward it to

21 Mrs. Evans.

22 MR. UNGVARSKY: Did you forward it

23 to anyone else besides Mrs. Evans?

24 MS. GATELLI: No.

25 MR. UNGVARSKY: You didn't inform

.

99

1 The Scranton Times?

2 MS. GATELLI: No, I did not.

3 MR. UNGVARSKY: Okay. Thank you.

4 MS. GATELLI: They were on the list.

5 They got it from Gunner Nole, too.

6 MR. UNGVARSKY: Okay. I personally

7 do not think it is as big an issue as what

8 our city budget is, and I did attend the

9 meeting on Tuesday night, I took the time, I

10 sat out there for over an hour until we were

11 allowed to come in. I think that meeting

12 was more important than what that E-mail

13 was. Thank you.

14 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

15 MS. HUMPHREY: I heard somebody say

16 something beautiful. Hi, how's everybody?

17 MS. GATELLI: Good.

18 MS. EVANS: Hi.

19 MS. HUMPHREY: I kind of wrote
20 everything the best that I could. Being
21 that I'm -- been a victim of multiple crimes
22 and I heard something about the budget, I
23 feel in my heart as a woman, we need
24 protection from our police department, which
25 they do the best that they could with what
.

100

1 they have, and they really do need a lot,
2 especially with the reports.
3 I had an attack a year ago, and I
4 just got the report. I had-- and the
5 report wasn't -- everything was not in the
6 report, because by the time the police were
7 so exhausted, they came to the hospital, he
8 was, like, leaning this way. We need more
9 police. We need more woman police when
10 there's crimes against woman, because it's
11 kind of very traumatic when a policeman is
12 reviewing a woman with an attack.
13 The other thing is, I heard that

14 there was -- I had a theft of a credit card
15 of a few weeks ago, which they stole my
16 medication, and what transpired is because
17 with the report, you got to take that to the
18 drugstore, which a lot of people aren't
19 familiar with, and so if you don't get that
20 report, you're without medication which
21 could be detrimental to your life for, like,
22 two weeks or so.

23 So, therefore, we need someone that
24 could -- maybe we can get some of the City
25 Council here to get some extra jobs down
.

101

1 there typing up the reports. That's just
2 the other thing that I ask.
3 And the other thing is, I heard that
4 there was a computer that when the police do
5 a police report, like, when they're
6 arresting the traffic or whatever that
7 automatically they can do the police report
8 there, which the police reports went from
9 five to \$15.00.

10 I don't know where this computer is,

11 if there is a computer, but if there is, we
12 really need one for our police department.
13 I don't know what their security is with
14 their coverings and their investments.
15 So, I'm for justice and I'm for
16 safety and I'm for wanting to protect
17 everybody and do the best I could.
18 The other thing is, I passed
19 personal documents here, religious
20 documents, which we're not supposed to talk
21 about religion, but I have an address that
22 they are going to be honored in Washington,
23 D.C.
24 So, I have the address for the City
25 Council, and I would like them to see and
.

102

1 talk with Bishop Martino, and they're going
2 to be sent to -- the place says Mary Mother
3 of God Church, 777, like the number she gave
4 me. And I have the number, the telephone,
5 and you contact Bishop Martino.
6 Hi out there all you bishops,
7 priests and all the people of the City of

8 Scranton. They've been wondering why I'm
9 not here. They thought I was banned from
10 the place, but I've been in Washington for
11 five or six months living there and I came
12 back here.

13 And when I came back, I seen how
14 nice the City of Scranton is coming up with
15 the new restaurants, Italian restaurant, but
16 the only thing is they got to cut the
17 blanket. Now, 695 for a bowl of soup?

18 And it's just the Italian in me. I
19 think that's the only budget that really has
20 to be cut personally at this time. The
21 soup, the Italians, we love Italian soup,
22 don't get me wrong, and the Polish and
23 whatever, but they got to cut the \$6.95 soup
24 deal. There is some beautiful Italian
25 restaurants there.

.

103

1 And the other thing that I want to
2 say is, these businesses that are coming in
3 that they promised that they're going to
4 give people work, but what they do is they

5 bring in their own crews and we're without
6 the people that do want to get jobs.
7 And over the next few weeks I will
8 give the examples of what I've seen. And
9 the police department, if they could come up
10 here.

11 MS. GATELLI: No, we can't do that,
12 Phyllis.

13 MS. HUMPHREY: Could I publicly
14 thank them?

15 MS. GATELLI: Yes, you can.

16 MS. HUMPHREY: I want to publicly
17 thank the Scranton Police Department, the
18 FBI and The State Police and all who tried
19 to assist me in the best way they can.
20 Sometimes we don't get justice in
21 this world, but we get it in a higher state
22 in heaven.

23 But I want to tell everybody, if
24 they have a crime, no matter how much
25 traumatized you are, go straight to the
.

104

1 hospital and you will get a better deal in

2 the justice. I believe in justice, I

3 believe in freedom and I believe in love,

4 and I believe we can --

5 MR. MINORA: Five minutes.

6 MS. HUMPHREY: Five minutes?

7 MR. MINORA: That's it.

8 MS. HUMPHREY: Get some more women

9 policemen and get some policewomen up here.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. GATELLI: Thank you.

12 MS. KRAKE: Good evening, Council.

13 My name is Nancy Krake, and I'm glad Phyllis

14 is back, too. I'm glad everyone gets a

15 chance to speak.

16 Mrs. Evans should not be asked to

17 resign. Any Councilperson who voted to give

18 the mayor a \$10 million without knowing what

19 that money was to be used for should be

20 asked to resign.

21 Any Council member who votes for any

22 tax increase when there is a viable option

23 in Mrs. Evans' budget should be asked to

24 resign.

25 Council members who boycotted the

1 budget session that was held to formulate a
2 Council budget without a tax increase showed
3 extremely petty behavior.
4 Personal feelings should be
5 irrelevant when it comes to doing the
6 people's work.
7 And I wonder if Council ever
8 considered that maybe Mrs. Evans puts her
9 personal feelings aside and comes here week
10 after week representing all the people,
11 despite this mayor's lack of cooperation on
12 her many very serious requests for
13 information on budget issues.
14 This Council should be ashamed they
15 did not back Mrs. Evans and her requests
16 from the administration and the mayor.
17 You have allowed personal feelings
18 against Mrs. Evans to spite every taxpayer
19 in this city for refusing to insist on
20 knowing where the mayor is spending our
21 money. You are allowing a 25 percent
22 increase on house taxes or real estate

23 taxes.

24 I know the taxpayers will see that

25 Councilwoman Evans isn't willing to be

.

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1 bought by this mayor, that she is not afraid

2 to ask questions, she does her work for all

3 of the citizens, and not just for political

4 favors.

5 This Council wants everyone on Mayor

6 Doherty's page. We can see the appointment

7 of Mr. McGoff who made it a three member

8 rubber stamp.

9 Heaven help us if Mrs. Evans

10 resigns, then we would have an appointment

11 and have a lovely four member rubber stamp

12 Council.

13 Saddest of all, the average citizens

14 of this city would lose their most valuable

15 ally.

16 And by the way, as far as ethics

17 goes, Mayor Doherty had a consultant and a

18 very, very big campaign contributor, Carl

19 Greco, sue the city.

20 The mayor and the city solicitor did
21 not oppose the lawsuit in any fashion, in
22 facts, they encouraged it.

23 Carl Greco won and was paid \$135,000
24 for services and a contract the previous
25 Council never approved. Some kind of

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1 ethics. Thank you.

2 MR. SLEDZINSKI: Well, you guys,
3 this is it. Merry Christmas to all you
4 guys. Merry Christmas to you. I didn't
5 forget you either. You know that. I'll
6 never forget you. You know that. Merry
7 Christmas, you guys.

8 MS. FIDATI ADSIT: Good evening.

9 Hi. Annabelle Adsit. I really don't want
10 you to ruin my Christmas by taking on Mayor
11 Doherty's budget.

12 And what I'd like to ask all of you
13 is, well, Janet is missing, in the spirit of
14 Christmas, if everybody, all of you up
15 there, you're all elected officials, and if
16 you could all just shake hands with one

17 another.
18 Be nice. Let's all get along. It's
19 the spirit of Christmas. Let's not harbor
20 all of these things within us, because it
21 does drag you down and make you ill. Let's
22 get rid of all of it. Let's forgive one
23 another, all of our mistakes, and certainly
24 everyone has made one. Everybody has made
25 one. I know I went after Mrs. Fanucci once.
.
108

1 But it's, you know, under the rug. It's
2 just not something that's going to be
3 brought up forever.
4 And although there is something else
5 I have to bring up, but we don't hold that
6 grudge. We don't carry it on, and you don't
7 continue with the same old broken record
8 theme.
9 Let's forgive and forget everybody's
10 mistakes and everybody's animosity towards
11 one another. I would like to see that with
12 all of you up there tonight. Can everybody
13 shake hands? Mr. McGoff, can you start

14 shaking hands with Mr. Courtright and so
15 forth and so on?
16 I mean, you're all adults up there.
17 There is no reason why five adults can't get
18 along, and I'd like to see the better budget
19 chosen.
20 I don't want to be saddled with an
21 increase. I can't really afford it. So,
22 I'd like the budget of Mrs. Evans
23 considered. I like the budget, and I hope
24 you would pass that one, and I'd like to see
25 more police on our city streets, and that
.
109

1 would be a big help, plus we wouldn't have a
2 big increase in our taxes, plus the
3 3.4 percent the mayor brought up is going to
4 kill the city.
5 As a former realtor, I mean, that
6 goes into all of your costs on one line and
7 that brings the total on top of the property
8 that you purchased, thousands of dollars.
9 We're not talking just pennies here. It's
10 thousands and thousands of dollars here, 3.4

11 percent. So, that's very bad for the city.

12 It won't do a bit of good.

13 There is one thing I wanted to

14 mention to Mrs. Fanucci that I know during

15 your summation, oh, quite a few weeks ago, I

16 know you like me, because you blessed me,

17 and during your speech you addressed me as

18 Mrs. Fidati, well, that would be my mother.

19 I'm Mrs. Adsit. Do you recall that?

20 During your summation you had said,

21 Mrs. Fidati can't even keep it together for

22 my speech, God bless her, so you did bless

23 me. I appreciate that. It's in the

24 minutes.

25 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Are you looking

.

110

1 for me to change -- like, what do you want

2 me to say?

3 MS. FIDATI ADSIT: I'm correcting

4 you on my name.

5 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: When was this?

6 MS. FIDATI ADSIT: Mrs. Fidati would

7 be my mother.

8 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: When was this

9 conversation?

10 MS. FIDATI ADSIT: About four weeks

11 ago. You were making your speech and I was

12 sitting in the audience.

13 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Is this how --

14 are we holding hands now and shaking hands

15 and shaking hands and all okay? Yeah, I

16 just wanted to see if we were all on board.

17 Yeah, okay. I'm very sorry for not getting

18 your next name right. Next time I will.

19 I'm sorry.

20 MS. FIDATI ADSIT: I just wanted to

21 make it clear. I'm Mrs. Adsit, the mother

22 of six beautiful children. Okay.

23 And my main theme here is the

24 budget. You know, the mayor has put on so

25 many people in this administration. We

.

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1 can't afford them. He's got a lot of people

2 on board that have been opened up positions.

3 He's made an awful lot of people wealthy in

4 this city that work for the city and we pay

5 their salaries, and some of us would only
6 wish to have a cushy job like that, and
7 they've all been opened up. Mayor Connors
8 didn't have all this.

9 MR. MINORA: Five minutes. Five
10 minutes.

11 MS. FIDATI ADSIT: So, I hope you
12 will in the spirit of Christmas just go with
13 the right budget and do the right thing by
14 the people. Thank you.

15 MR. ANCHERANI: Good evening,
16 Council. I'm Nelson Ancherani, resident,
17 taxpayer, city employee, financial secretary
18 of the FOP exercising my First Amendment
19 rights.

20 I have two questions, one is,
21 Anybody know what a tax anticipation loan
22 is? Is a tax anticipation loan supposed to
23 be used as revenue? Okay. All right.

24 MS. GATELLI: It's revenue just
25 until the taxes come.

.

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1 MR. ANCHERANI: All right. Tonight

2 Council is going to vote on that budget, the
3 mayor's. I have to wonder if anyone up
4 there went over that budget or if they are
5 going to believe, like Mrs. Fanucci, in
6 black and white. It's on paper, so she's
7 going to believe it.

8 But thanks to Mrs. Fanucci, I spent
9 hours going over the budget. It's not black
10 and white. It's gray, very gray.

11 But thank you for inspiring me to go
12 through that. I don't know if I learned a
13 lot, but -- I went over the expenditure pie
14 on Page 7 of the budget.

15 That pie, along with the revenue
16 pie, has different categories, different
17 percentages. I'll take one of them,
18 Workers' Compensation.

19 It's listed as seven percent on the
20 pie. Seven percent of \$77 million is
21 \$5,418,256. There's only one spot in the
22 expenditure part of the budget that lists
23 Worker's Compensation. That amount listed
24 is \$4,100,000, which is 5.3 percent of the
25 budget of that pie.

1 There's a difference of \$1,318,256.
2 I'll take the salaries, because that's
3 listed as 34 percent.
4 34 percent of \$77,403,659 is
5 \$26,317,000. On Page 9 you find the
6 expenditures for eight categories, Page 10
7 you'll find three more categories.
8 For that total it's \$22,671,612.
9 There's a difference, \$3,645,632. I did
10 that with all the categories, every
11 category.
12 Every category that I did on that
13 pie comes out less than what the pie says.
14 In fact, it comes out -- the budget says
15 \$77,403,659, but the amount when you total
16 that up comes out to \$62,213,660 for each
17 category, for all the categories combined.
18 That leaves a difference of
19 19.5 percent in the budget. The reason I
20 asked about a tax anticipation loan, and if
21 anybody knew what it is, I believe it's a
22 loan to hold us through until we get enough

23 taxes in to pay back. That's for salaries,
24 bills, whatever.

25 The reason I ask if it could be used
.

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1 in the budget is because it shows up in the
2 budget. It shows up in revenues. There's
3 \$14,500,000. It shows up in expenditures as
4 \$15,190,000. That should be a part of the
5 pie, because that \$15,190,000 is the part
6 that's missing. It's the part that all
7 these differences add up to, the tax
8 anticipation loan.

9 If that tax anticipation loan was
10 not in that budget, our budget would be
11 \$62,213,660. So, I wish you'd keep that in
12 mind when you're voting on that budget.
13 Maybe if you would consider it, you
14 would find out that Mrs. Evans would help
15 all the taxpayers.

16 But that tax anticipation loan, I
17 believe, should not show up as revenue, and
18 I don't believe it should show up as
19 expenditures.

20 MR. MINORA: Five minutes.

21 MR. ANCHERANI: And somebody just

22 asked if there was a cellular phone law in

23 PA with restrictions on driving, but there's

24 none that I know of, not yet anyway.

25 MS. EVANS: If I could just

.

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1 piggyback on that. I spoke with their

2 teacher tonight who told me that they had

3 contacted both the State Police and the

4 Scranton Police, and both indicated that

5 there are no laws against driving while

6 talking on a cell phone, but thank you.

7 MS. GATELLI: Anyone else? Mrs.

8 Garvey.

9 MS. GARVEY: 5-A, Motions.

10 MS. GATELLI: Mrs. Evans.

11 MS. EVANS: Good evening. I'd like

12 to wish everyone a Happy Hanukah, a joyous

13 Kwanzaa and a very Merry Christmas.

14 In keeping with the season of

15 giving, I remind you of the denim drop this

16 Saturday, December 16, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

17 at the corner of Wyoming Avenue and Olive
18 Street to benefit the homeless. Winter
19 coats and new or used jeans in all sizes are
20 desperately needed.

21 The Community Intervention Center
22 needs our help to clothe the homeless.
23 Please take time out of your shopping or
24 Christmas decorating. Stop by and drop off
25 those coats and jeans that you no longer
.

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1 wear.

2 I also encourage anyone who for any
3 reason will be alone this Christmas to
4 attend Mr. Bolus' annual Christmas turkey
5 dinner at St. Lucy's Hall. It runs all
6 afternoon, and everyone is always warmly
7 welcomed.

8 I also wish to apologize for my
9 absence from the Keyser Valley flood meeting
10 last week. I know residents had asked for
11 me, but I was working on the budget.

12 At this time I would like to read my
13 budget to the people so that they can judge

14 and select which budget they prefer.

15 I received no assistance from

16 Council and no information from the

17 administration and the mayor.

18 In fact, Council failed to push for

19 the financial information I requested, and

20 only Mr. Courtright supported the effort.

21 I developed two proposals, the first

22 is quite brief. On the revenue side, the

23 proceeds from the sale of the golf course

24 which total \$3 million, on the expenditure

25 side, no tax increase, reducing the real

.

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1 estate tax to, which had been, \$2.6 million

2 in the mayor's budget, replacing the six

3 police officers who are being cut in the

4 mayor's budget, and I've added six police

5 officer positions for a total of

6 \$240,066.06, and the implementation of a

7 quick response service or QRS. The start-up

8 costs for that endeavor totals \$71,00 for

9 equipment. There would remain a surplus of

10 \$88,933.94, and, again, no tax increase.

11 Proposal two, revenue, again the
12 proceeds from the sale of the golf course,
13 \$3 million, an increase in payments in lieu
14 of taxes, \$381,750; land payment due from
15 The Ice Box, \$600,000; an amusement tax at a
16 rate or surcharge, if you will, of five
17 percent, \$200,000; a hotel tax at a rate of
18 three percent, \$150,000; a reduction in a
19 budget line item that specifically refers to
20 the payment for the money borrowed last week
21 because it was not \$15 million. The
22 required payment in 2007 will not be
23 \$1 million, it will be rather decreased by
24 \$38,888.89.

25 The Scranton Times rental fee, an

.

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1 annual rental fee for office space at City
2 Hall, \$6,000, and also considered under that
3 are fees for the placement of newspaper
4 boxes throughout the City of Scranton.
5 In the department of the mayor,
6 confidential secretary, salary reduction,
7 \$3,688; public safety, the elimination of

8 the entire department for a total of
9 \$144,110.65; police department, reduce travel
10 and lodging, and this is strictly for
11 administrators, \$2,470; police department,
12 reduce dues and subscriptions strictly for
13 administrators, \$1,750; the police
14 department chief of police salary reduction,
15 \$1,314; the police department, eliminate
16 assistant grants manager, \$13,700.
17 We currently have a grants manager
18 who quite capably, in fact, laudably handles
19 all of the grants for the city. This
20 position was a part-time position, is no
21 longer necessary, since the city has hired
22 within the last year a competent individual.
23 The controller's office,
24 confidential secretary salary reduction,
25 \$5,749; the controller's office, deputy
.
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1 controller salary reduction, \$5,000;
2 controller's office, performance auditor's
3 salary reduction, \$5,000; business
4 administration, BA salary reduction, \$3,850;

5 BA, eliminate senior accountant, \$34,000;
6 BA, eliminate financial analyst, \$34,000;
7 BA, eliminate professional services,
8 \$35,000; BA, eliminate three of five flood
9 positions, \$125,000.
10 Now, those flood positions are very
11 questionable. One of them is a relocation
12 specialist. I know in The Plot the
13 properties long ago were purchased and
14 demolition should have, as well, been
15 completed long ago.
16 I don't know what that position
17 entails at this point in time. Furthermore,
18 we have a flood control manager who is being
19 paid approximately \$18,000, while his
20 assistant is being paid almost double. So,
21 the flood control manager was retained.
22 Human resources, eliminate
23 professional services, \$130,000. That is
24 being transferred to the office of the
25 business administrator to oversee. That
.
120

1 will include consultant costs specifically

2 for a third party administrator of Workmen's
3 Compensation, as well as the -- there's one
4 other that we have to have, the health care
5 consultant which was court ordered.
6 Human resources, eliminate travel
7 and lodging, \$1,000; human resources,
8 eliminate human resources director, \$47,500.
9 There had been in the past a
10 director of personnel who held a similar
11 position at a much lower rate of pay, and
12 many of the personnel issues were handled by
13 each department.
14 Human resources, eliminate
15 confidential secretary \$29,000; information
16 technology, rather than going through the
17 one, two, three, four, five, six cuts that
18 are made there, including travel and
19 lodging, training and certification, dues
20 and subscriptions, professional services, an
21 assistant, a system manager and an IT
22 manager, that has been condensed into one
23 position, and that one individual will
24 receive a budget in order to properly do his
25 or her job.

1 OECD, eliminate director of finance
2 and compliance; OECD, eliminate two economic
3 development specialists.
4 LIPS, which is our licensing,
5 inspections and permits department,
6 eliminate deputy directory safety and
7 conservation; LIPS, Bureau of building,
8 eliminate four greeters.
9 Law department, eliminate
10 professional services, \$200,000, and that
11 barely -- that barely scratches the surface,
12 because we are using numerable outside
13 counsel. For what cases, I am not sure, the
14 number of these attorneys, I am not certain,
15 the amount of money being paid, I am not
16 certain, but I know it's exceeded the figure
17 that's been in prior budgets.
18 Eliminate professional services in
19 the law department, \$200,000; law
20 department, eliminate travel and lodging,
21 \$2,000; law department, eliminate training
22 and certification, \$1500; law department,

23 solicitor's salary reduction, \$3700; law

24 department, eliminate first assistant city

25 solicitor, \$40,000.

.

122

1 That was, and I didn't indicate this

2 as I'm enumerating all of my cuts, but that

3 was, for example, one of the job creations

4 that would have occurred in 2004.

5 Law department, eliminate assistant

6 city solicitor, \$32,900; law department,

7 eliminate confidential secretary, \$29,000.

8 Traffic maintenance, foreman's

9 salary reduction, \$3400; DPW director's

10 salary reduction, \$21,950.

11 We have a salary reduction for three

12 foreman within the DPW each at a rate of

13 \$3,400. The fleet manager salary reduction,

14 \$1,200.

15 The Single Tax Office, tax

16 collector's salary reduction, \$4,150; Parks

17 and Recreation, a director's salary

18 reduction, \$7,700; Parks and Rec, eliminate

19 travel and lodging, \$800; Parks and Rec,

20 eliminate performing arts, \$12,500; Parks
21 and Rec., eliminate Parks and Rec
22 specialists. There are two Parks and Rec
23 specialists, each of whom are paid \$35,000.
24 The Department of Parks and
25 Recreation unfortunately now for a number of
.
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1 years has employed many more administrators,
2 or let us say management positions than
3 there are actual workers. Parks and Rec,
4 eliminate program manager, \$35,000.
5 On the expenditure side, reduce real
6 estate tax income, \$2,600,000. Within the
7 department of police, we will reinstate six
8 police.
9 With the amount of crime that has
10 been escalating within the City of Scranton,
11 this situation must occur.
12 Unfortunately grants were not
13 applied for by this administration. Other
14 cities, almost all cities, in fact,
15 throughout the State of Pennsylvania have
16 received additional police, but not

17 Scranton.

18 The costs for reinstating six

19 police, \$240,066.06. Implement a QRS

20 System, \$71,000. The police department, add

21 one animal control officer at a salary of

22 \$24,441.47.

23 In the Department of Licensing

24 Inspection and Permits, add one housing

25 inspector at a cost of \$25,639, and add one

.

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1 health inspector, \$25,167.

2 The BA's office, add one

3 administrative assistant to at a cost of

4 \$25,586. BA, professional services,

5 \$130,000. That is the transfer that I

6 earlier alluded to from the human resources

7 department for payment of necessary

8 consultants.

9 BA, professional services \$98,000.

10 Human resources, add one administrative

11 assistant to, \$25,586.

12 Law department, add one

13 administrative assistant, one, \$23,946.

14 City Council, professional services,
15 \$125,000.
16 Next, if you will bear with me,
17 please, I'd like to share with you my letter
18 to the editor of The Times-Tribune which was
19 never printed.

20 Editor, I wish to correct
21 misstatements printed recently by The
22 Times-Tribune. To say that my budget does
23 not address revenue is an untruth. To opine
24 that it contains no new sustainable revenues
25 is a deliberate falsehood.

.

125

1 On the contrary, revenue sources
2 include the following, Proceeds from the
3 sale of golf course, \$3 million; a five
4 percent amusement tax, \$200,000; a three
5 percent hotel tax, \$150,000; increase in
6 lieu of taxes, \$381,750; payment due from
7 The Ice Box, \$600,000; annual newspaper
8 rental fee for office space at city hall,
9 \$6,000, and 51 budgetary cuts to salaries
10 which return them to a 2001 level,

11 professional services, job creations, travel
12 and lodging and dues and subscriptions, all
13 of which total over \$5.7 million. It does
14 not, however, include a commuter tax.
15 According to The Erie Times'
16 November 27, 2006 issue, and I quote,
17 Doherty said he is also considering pushing
18 for an amusement tax in 2007 which would
19 place a surcharge on tickets to concerts,
20 athletic events and other entertainment
21 within city limits.
22 Further, and again I quote, Doherty
23 said he believes an amusement tax could
24 bring in as much as \$1 million for Scranton,
25 depending on the surcharge percentage.
.
126

1 The only error occurs in my
2 conservative calculation of potential
3 revenue generated by my proposal to levy an
4 amusement tax.
5 I do not note such tax in the
6 mayor's 2007 proposed operating budget. In
7 fact, there are no new sustainable revenue

8 sources in the mayor's budget.

9 He relies solely upon a 25 percent

10 property tax increase and a realty transfer

11 tax increase.

12 In addition, Mr. Doherty is quoted

13 as saying, you're always looking for

14 one-time revenues that will help cover your

15 nut for the year.

16 I believe the golf course proceeds

17 will cover his nut quite well. My budget

18 offers the mayor an extra year during which

19 either the courts or he can settle municipal

20 contracts.

21 While I hope to increase revenue by

22 pursuing payments from non-profits that own

23 more than quarter of the city's property,

24 Mr. Doherty simultaneously states that other

25 than the University of Scranton, and I

.

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1 quote, Our other tax exempt entities just

2 aren't that large and that the city is not

3 actively pursuing them for payment in lieu

4 of taxes, according to The Erie Times News.

5 Curiously, Mr. Doherty also went on
6 record in The Scranton Times insisting that
7 together Mrs. Gatelli and he would actively
8 pursue payments from non-profits; thus, I
9 increased that particular line item from the
10 mayor's \$118,000 to \$500,000, a difference
11 of \$381,750.

12 On the expenditure side of my
13 budget, I proposed to add six police
14 officers to replace six police positions the
15 city will lose as a result of the
16 administration's failure to reapply for a
17 grant that funded the Cops Ahead Program.
18 Rising crime, particularly in drug
19 sales, robberies and gang-related incidents
20 demands the attention and the addition of
21 police officers to our streets.

22 Also, I propose the addition of one
23 housing inspector, one health inspector and
24 one animal control officer, as well as the
25 implementation of a quick response service

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1 or QRS which will provide a four-minute

2 response time to every city resident in case
3 of a health emergency without hiring any new
4 employees.

5 As a Councilperson, I learned of at
6 least three deaths that occurred in Scranton
7 which very well might have been prevented if
8 assistance arrived more quickly than the
9 over 20 minutes it required for an ambulance
10 to reach those individuals.

11 I have also replaced four
12 higher-paying positions with one
13 administrative assistant, one, two
14 administrative assistants two, and one
15 clerk.

16 I take umbrage with any statements
17 that I have cut city services or that I have
18 further entrenched union control of the
19 city.

20 Six police officers, two inspectors,
21 one animal control officer and four clerks
22 do not make for union entrenched control,
23 rather, they keep our neighborhoods safe and
24 clean and provide administrative services in
25 a much more cost effective manner.

1 Also, I wish to address the
2 controversy that occurred recently during a
3 City Council meeting and this newspaper's
4 allegation of unsubstantiated claims.
5 At the November 30, 2006 meeting,
6 Mrs. Fanucci spoke the word criminal, not I;
7 in fact, the complete tape of the meeting
8 proves that at no time did I use either that
9 word or any other synonymous term, however,
10 I do raise the following issues concerning
11 the mayor's budget, First, the advance on
12 the sale of delinquent real estate taxes is
13 listed as nearly \$3.7 million in revenue,
14 yet the mayor has gone on record at a public
15 caucus meeting in The Times-Tribune and in
16 The Erie Times News stating that this sale
17 would generate \$2.1 million. That's a
18 difference of \$1.6 million.
19 By the way, he has already, and I'll
20 use his quote, cut a deal with Erie's
21 municipal revenue service, according to The
22 Erie Times News. This is without bidding

23 and without the consent of Council, I might
24 add; however, I acknowledge that the
25 precedent was set by Attorney Greco, who was
.

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1 hired without bidding from 2002 through 2005
2 and continued to work without a contract and
3 the consent of Council.

4 Number two, \$10 million has been
5 borrowed through a leaseback agreement with
6 the Scranton Redevelopment Authority. The
7 total debt service is \$23,810,611, according
8 to PNC Capital Markets and the SRA, Scranton
9 Redevelopment Authority, yet Council does
10 not know what entity is to be leased,
11 Council does not know the correct dollar
12 amount of the deficit, nor do we know what
13 comprises the deficit.

14 Third, the administration stated the
15 TAN series B of 2006 was in danger of
16 default without \$44 million borrowing.

17 According to the most recent
18 controller's report, the TAN series B
19 account contains \$9.8 million dollars, the

20 amount of full payment.

21 Fourth, worker's compensation

22 reimbursement to general fund has declined

23 from \$400,000 in 2002 to zero in 2007.

24 Although the city isn't on the hook

25 for the total expense, the administration

.

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1 books the total expense in their budget, so

2 they must book the total revenue. I can

3 only assume that the revenue must be going

4 into a different pot.

5 This administration has governed for

6 five years, which potentially equals \$2

7 million that fails to appear, yet that

8 \$400,000 from 2002 has only been growing as

9 people remain on compensation longer and

10 longer.

11 If nothing else, the people need a

12 clarification of these financial questions.

13 In fact, I visited the mayor's office on

14 Monday, December 11, but he was at a

15 meeting.

16 I left a list of 20 additional

17 financial questions for him, together with
18 several pages of unanswered memos to the
19 department heads.

20 This budget cannot be voted upon by
21 a means of blind trust. The administration
22 must lift the iron curtain of secrecy, not
23 for the chairperson of the finance
24 committee, but for the taxpayers of the City
25 of Scranton.

.

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1 With a 48 percent county tax
2 increase, a 2007 school district tax
3 increase, and a 25 percent city tax increase
4 devouring our incomes, our seniors, our
5 working families and our poor and disabled
6 will be forced to choose among the
7 necessities in life. It is not a matter of
8 politics, it is a matter of survival.
9 Correctly stated, it is a choice
10 between a no tax increase budget and a
11 25 percent tax increase budget.
12 At this time I want to thank all the
13 good people of Scranton who E-mailed and

14 called me and those of you who have stopped
15 me in stores and in cars to voice your
16 support of my budget and your confidence in
17 me as your representative.

18 And I particularly tonight would
19 like to thank the young man in the back, the
20 senior from West Scranton High School, for
21 the wonderful letter to the editor that he
22 wrote. That meant more to me than you will
23 ever know, and I think it's most unfortunate
24 that The Times chose not to print it. Will
25 it? That's wonderful. Hopefully yes.

.

133

1 I sent a private E-mail to a friend
2 in response to an E-mail he had sent to me
3 several days earlier.
4 Somehow, and I'm really not sure
5 how, without my knowledge and consent, the
6 E-mail was sent to the newspaper and two to
7 three Council members.
8 But if anyone would like a copy of
9 the E-mails, I would be happy to provide you
10 with that tonight. I brought it along, and

11 I'll be very happy, as I said to run off
12 those E-mails.
13 And my good friend who posed the
14 question and who may have sent this along
15 did so accidentally.
16 And mistakes often occur, and I'm
17 not angry. And I think, you know, when God
18 can forgive any one of us anything we can
19 do, then what is there to forgive? What
20 would I not forgive?
21 This Council passed an ordinance
22 that violates state law. They did not do so
23 accidentally or without knowledge or without
24 warning. They intentionally violated and
25 broke the law and rolled the dice.
.
134

1 I did not. However, I have always
2 and will always encourage every citizen to
3 petition their government for redress of
4 grievances.
5 And citizens have many ways in which
6 to do so through letters, petitions,
7 referendum and litigation, or they can run

8 for elected office, as I did in 2003,
9 because I was concerned about the problems I
10 saw arising in this city.

11 Now, this sub plot is nothing more
12 than an exercise in pettiness whose purpose
13 is to divert your attention from the
14 borrowing of \$10 million and the mayor's
15 budget which contains a 25 percent tax
16 increase.

17 They hope you'll forget the greatest
18 issues that affect your daily lives to
19 concentrate on nonsense.

20 In fact, every city administration
21 tells people to sue them to get their money
22 or a solution to their problem.

23 For example, Mr. Doherty told
24 Attorney Greco to sue for \$135,000 for work
25 performed without a contract and without the

135

1 approval of Council.

2 Neither Mr. Doherty or City

3 Solicitor Farrell fought this case in court

4 rather, they politely agreed to hand over

5 the money. Should Mayor Doherty resign his
6 office?

7 Friends, my budget is balanced and

8 offers a surplus that can be used to pay

9 debts or money owed to American Water

10 Services.

11 My taxes are levied on entertainment

12 and hotels, not your property. Further, my

13 budget buys the mayor an extra year in which

14 to settle municipal contracts, but most

15 importantly, it gives you, the taxpayers,

16 some relief as you face your county and

17 increase school district taxes.

18 I know that you can't afford a tax

19 increase, I know how hard it is for senior

20 citizens who live on Social Security and

21 contribute to their health care and

22 prescription costs.

23 You are being forced to choose from

24 among the necessities in life. Working

25 families are struggling to pay mortgages,

.

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1 utilities and to feed their children.

2 It all comes down to this, a no-tax
3 increase budget versus a budget with a
4 25 percent tax increase. That's it.
5 MS. FANUCCI: I have a lot of -- a
6 lot of things to say tonight. I'm going to
7 start on the budget. Obviously this is --
8 this is the hot point for the night.
9 I was hopeful to see a budget from
10 Mrs. Evans that would have been great to
11 have some solutions and an increase in
12 revenue.
13 When I got that budget, that is not
14 how I felt. I felt in my heart that this
15 was a decrease in services.
16 I understand that to cut -- make
17 cuts, make cuts, make cuts sounds like it
18 should be a good idea, it is not always a
19 good idea to function on that level as a
20 city. Now, you don't have to like it,
21 again, this is my deal.
22 The hotel tax, let's take that,
23 sounds like a great idea. We cannot
24 implement a hotel tax. The county has done
25 it and is sanctioned by the state.

1 We are not allowed to do that. That
2 revenue source is not available to us. That
3 is one thing. So, that would have been
4 great. It would have been great.
5 Now, listen, why wouldn't it make
6 sense for me to jump on the band wagon and
7 say, What a great idea, look like a hero and
8 say, this is wonderful? It would.
9 It doesn't make sense not to do it
10 if I felt it was a good idea. This is not
11 personal. This has nothing to do with
12 personalities up here.
13 If I thought it was great, I would
14 have jumped on that band wagon in four
15 seconds, and I would have thought I looked
16 like a hero, look what we did as a Council.
17 I didn't feel that way.
18 I'm going to tell you some of my
19 reasons. I'm going to take little
20 departments. The IT Department, sounds like
21 not a big deal.
22 Last week there was a comment made

23 that Scranton High School functions with one

24 IT person. Not true. They have five

25 people. They have a director, a programmer,

.

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1 three technical support and 20 teachers who

2 are able to execute anything that the IT

3 Department tells them, because they are

4 computer people.

5 City Hall alone, our IT Department

6 takes care of the police department and the

7 call logs, DPW, the fire department, and all

8 of the remote locations for the fire

9 department, also Weston Field.

10 They maintain all the PCs'

11 performance, manage the firewalls, the

12 servers, the city controller's office, helps

13 with updating all of their stuff.

14 Three positions we have. All are

15 separate and very specific duties. And if

16 they weren't -- if they can do all of them,

17 they would be at Microsoft. They certainly

18 wouldn't be in the City of Scranton.

19 Let's put it into perspective.

20 Expect one person to run a department is
21 like having one teacher teach all the
22 subjects, plan all the lessons, write and
23 publish the books. It's not realistic.

24 It's not realistic.

25 Our guys in our IT Department, one,

.

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1 200 extra hours that they did not get paid
2 for. One man alone has spent 200 extra
3 hours this year in the office, another one,
4 600, which is a half year of salary. They
5 don't get overtime, they don't get
6 compensated for that. That's what they do.
7 So, that was one thing. When I
8 talked to them, I felt that that department
9 should be here. So, I didn't feel that
10 eliminating that department was something
11 that we should do.

12 Now I'm going to talk to you about
13 public safety. Now, public safety director
14 oversees a lot of fundamental things. In
15 fact, I remember Terry Osborne had called me
16 months ago when the flood had taken place

17 saying how wonderful it was and how much
18 they felt like they were on board because
19 there was one person as a contact person.
20 And they had said to me, I will come
21 and speak about that if you want me to. And
22 I said, No, it's not necessary. We know it
23 was done well, you know, could always be
24 improved on. We know that there's major
25 problems in the flooding areas.

.

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1 That's another thing, public safety.
2 So, Mark Seitzinger, I know there was a lot
3 of questions tonight about Mark Seitzinger,
4 and I'm going to give you some of his facts
5 tonight.
6 Ninety-three citations have been
7 issued from this department just walking the
8 neighborhoods, maximum fine of \$600 if
9 they're found guilty.
10 Sixty inspection notices issued
11 during their walks on housing violations;
12 nine properties have been condemned during
13 these walks; 17 vacant lots have been

14 cleared by the city DPW; six properties have
15 been demolished; 12 stop work orders have
16 been issued when work was being done without
17 permits; 15 properties have been boarded up
18 and secure property; 13 violations for
19 vehicles being towed that were just parked
20 in various areas.

21 They have fielded over 285 phone
22 calls since they started on this endeavor.
23 To me, I'm sorry, but this department is a
24 vital part of our city.

25 I'm big into blight. Get rid of all
.

141

1 the blight. Make them walk the
2 neighborhoods. Keep our cities as clean and
3 as up to code as we can, because it then
4 puts the pressure and keeps the
5 neighborhoods' value up, and that's
6 important to me.
7 I'm not going to sit here and go
8 through every deal I have for the city. I'm
9 definitely going to vote for the mayor. I
10 mean, you knew that coming in here tonight.

11 I don't think that that's something that --
12 you knew I was voting for that budget before
13 you came in here tonight.

14 MS. GATELLI: Please.

15 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: There are some
16 changes, you know, that I believe in, but,
17 you know, I don't think any of you will be
18 surprised on that.

19 Now the smoking ordinance, I have to
20 say, we totally got off track with the
21 smoking ordinance thing.

22 The smoking ordinance is in effect.

23 We can fight all you want. I mean, send it
24 to court, do what you have to do. I mean,
25 that's what it's about.

.

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1 But, but, the issue on the E-mail
2 was not about the smoking ordinance. It
3 certainly wasn't. I was a little offended,
4 and I'm going to tell you why. It was about
5 encouraging someone to sue us.
6 Now, let's bring that into light.
7 Say the law department is extremely weak now

8 because we cut, what, 70 percent of the law
9 department and make them at a
10 non-functioning level, and then by chance
11 someone is suing, just off the cuff they're
12 going to sue, the city and the taxpayers
13 will be a huge disadvantage and they will
14 insure people that are suing will win.
15 That's something.

16 Listen, I don't buy it. We need the
17 lawyers. We're going to be sued. We need
18 people to defend what we have, and that's a
19 taxpayer's right. You are entitled to
20 services, whether or not you believe that
21 they are in your best interest.

22 Because once the suits are done,
23 you'll find out. That is what we found out
24 tonight. Everyone has a right to sue.

25 I'm going to talk about the quick

.

143

1 response system. Great idea, except for
2 right now it's in total violation of the
3 Recovery Plan. We cannot have more
4 contracts, hire more people under the

5 Recovery Plan right now.

6 I am all for taking this as far as

7 it goes. I think we need to do that,

8 because at this stage to act like anybody is

9 going to give in is so silly.

10 If you think that the unions are

11 going to say, Today's the day, I'm taking

12 it, or if he's going to say, Today's the

13 day, I'm taking it, it's just not realistic.

14 If you want to be realistic about

15 it, it is going to stay in litigation and it

16 is going to be fought out. And after the

17 end of it all, we're going to find out what

18 happens.

19 Is that right or wrong? I don't

20 know, but it's reality. You know by now it

21 would have been taken, all the deals would

22 have been made and we wouldn't have this

23 conversation.

24 For us to settle these arbitrations,

25 right now I think we're up to \$6 million

.

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1 extra in our budget. That is really sad,

2 because we don't have \$6 million extra. We
3 don't even have the money to cover what we
4 have.

5 So, that is something that I am very
6 -- you know, I wish we can implement
7 recovery, I wish we can go where we need to
8 go. Right now I don't foresee it happening
9 until the lawsuits are done.

10 I know that it's not right to be
11 candid, because for some reason it doesn't
12 go over very well, but I do know that the
13 people voted for a plan and want the plan,
14 so whatever it takes, and this in no way
15 means that I don't believe that the unions
16 should get what they want or in any way the
17 city should get what they want, it has to
18 play its course, and that's what's going to
19 happen. That's the reality of it.

20 We wish that we can say, you know,
21 give everybody what they want, because at
22 this stage of the game, I would love to say
23 we have tons of money and we can do what we
24 want.

25 This city is a great place to be.

1 We do -- I think we do really well with our
2 services. I believe DPW is doing a great
3 job, the police, the fire. I mean, I think
4 we're pretty, pretty lucky to be where we
5 are.

6 I know that, you know, the flood
7 people aren't too happy in the back there,
8 because I know that you guys have a lot of
9 problems, and I totally sympathize with
10 that. I really believe that you really need
11 --

12 MR. HUBBARD: The public safety they
13 have --

14 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Wait, wait,
15 wait.

16 MR. HUBBARD: Every time --

17 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Maybe -- no.

18 MR. HUBBARD: Every time --

19 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I don't know.

20 You got cleaned out. You can't --

21 MR. HUBBARD: We clean ourselves
22 out.

23 MS. GATELLI: Wait. Please. It's

24 our turn, please. Don't answer.

25 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Listen, I

.

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1 understand the frustrations. Everybody is

2 not going to be happy. There's over 70,000

3 people in this city. Everyone's not going

4 to be thrilled.

5 I think we're doing a good job. I

6 stand behind the people who work in this

7 city, I stand for the people who try to do

8 their job every single day and get up just

9 like the rest of you and work very, very

10 hard.

11 We are all in this together. This

12 is not an I or a you, it is an us. That is

13 why I felt offended when I received that

14 personal E-mail.

15 It was not that I felt that we

16 should not have someone with a different

17 view. I have no problem with Mrs. Evans,

18 and she has no problem with me, as far as I

19 know. I mean, maybe now she does.

20 But, you know, we can disagree up
21 here. It is our jobs to disagree. If you
22 want everyone up here to think the same and
23 feel the same way, none of you are going to
24 get anywhere in this city.

25 You want new ideas, you want people

.

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1 who disagree because then that is when you
2 get the best service, that is when you get
3 what you are paying for. If we all decide
4 to think the same way, this city is not
5 going to go anywhere.

6 I stand behind everything that I've
7 said, everything that I feel, I stand by my
8 votes and how I feel about my votes.

9 I am sorry that in this room I am
10 not real popular. That's okay. That's
11 okay. I told you, I don't think the same
12 way as a lot of you think, and that's okay
13 with me.

14 I do have a lot of people that I
15 feel I represent that I do -- that I do
16 think like. That is how I got here.

17 You have your people, and I think
18 that's wonderful, but do not, do not let the
19 rest of us who have different views than you
20 feel that we don't have a place. We do have
21 a place. This is our city also.
22 And it's not always the squeaky
23 wheel gets the grease. I know that you came
24 in here tonight full of your pages and
25 thrilled to death with your ideas and your
.
148

1 today we're going to say this, this is just
2 -- this is my new one today, I got it, I got
3 it nailed. It's not what it's about.
4 We had to have somebody removed
5 today, which was so sad because she just
6 can't understand you cannot come up here and
7 insult every member of Council and then
8 wonder why you're not getting your results.
9 We want to help. We want to be here
10 together. I am sorry that I had said what I
11 said about Mrs. Evans and how I feel. It
12 does bother me, it will bother me. Whether
13 or not you feel it's wrong, I would ask you

14 to understand and say to yourself, If this
15 was me, if this was Mrs. Fanucci, how many
16 of you would have been up defending me today
17 in this room? Any hands? No. Oh, I got
18 two. Well, thank you. I appreciate that.
19 The sympathy vote.
20 But I know you wouldn't have been
21 there, and that's okay. Just let us move on
22 in the new year in a new spirit and try to
23 do what's best for the City of Scranton.
24 I know that everybody up here has
25 that in mind, not any different than you.
.
149

1 But that's what I want to do. I want to
2 move on and hope for the new year that we
3 can come in here with a new view of ideas,
4 better exchange than we've had in the past.
5 This last year of exchange has been just --
6 it has been like pulling teeth, as my
7 grandmother would say.
8 We can move on and hope that we can
9 come together and move our city the way we
10 want it to be, but do it together. That's

11 all.

12 MS. EVANS: Mrs. Gatelli, as finance

13 chair, if I could just address in one minute

14 just a few statements.

15 First of all, with regard to the

16 hotel tax, it was a representative of

17 Lackawanna County who stated that

18 Wilkes-Barre and Luzerne County both levy a

19 hotel tax and that all that needs to be done

20 is for the City of Scranton to apply to the

21 State of Pennsylvania to levy that hotel

22 tax, as well, and assistance was offered.

23 Next, I did not say that Scranton

24 High School operates with one IT person. In

25 fact, if anyone who was listening to me at

.

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1 last week's caucus meeting would admit I

2 said that currently there are quite a number

3 of individuals.

4 We have Mr. Brazil, who oversees

5 many buildings, not only ours. We have a,

6 I'd say, a coordinator for the building.

7 She has two or three -- two, I believe,

8 assistants.

9 However, what I did say was that for
10 many years the entire computer department of
11 Scranton High School, not only the old
12 Scranton High School, but the new one, as
13 well, that contains, I believe, five to
14 seven computer labs each with 30 computers,
15 and every office that's manned with
16 computers, et cetera. One person handled
17 that for several years and did quite a
18 wonderful job.

19 In terms of the QRS System, it is
20 very easy to implement, in that, all that's
21 required is a memorandum of understanding
22 between the union and the administration.
23 The union has already indicated they are
24 willing to sign a memorandum of
25 understanding and put even a time limit on
.

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1 that in terms of, I believe, perhaps one
2 year.

3 And if at the end of that time
4 period the city finds that it has not been

5 successful or it has run at any additional
6 cost, then they are also very willing to end
7 that memorandum of understanding. It's only
8 the mayor who stands in the way of the quick
9 response system.

10 Also, just a quick last one, Mrs.

11 Fanucci, there really are teachers who teach
12 every subject. They're called elementary
13 teachers.

14 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Yeah, but not
15 all day long every second, every minute.

16 MS. EVANS: Yeah, they do actually.

17 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Do they write
18 the books?

19 MS. EVANS: Do they write the
20 textbooks? Some do. They actually do.

21 They do lesson plans and they make tests.

22 But admittedly, I don't. I have an
23 area of specialization, but if you go into
24 first, second, third grade, you're going to
25 see teachers teaching everything. So,
.

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1 that's it.

2 MS. GATELLI: Multi-tasking. Mr.

3 McGoff.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. I would

5 like to start by saying that I really

6 believe that this E-mail controversy has

7 gotten out of hand.

8 When I was made aware of it, I was

9 offended and I felt that what took place was

10 wrong, but I do not believe that media --

11 the media is the place to address the issue,

12 I don't believe that Council meetings are

13 the place to address the issue. I believe

14 that what happens between us should be

15 discussed among us.

16 I challenged Mrs. Evans last week to

17 be direct. I believe that we have to take

18 the same challenge that if we are not going

19 to be open and honest with one another and

20 to address each other in an open and honest

21 way and directly, that we are never going to

22 accomplish anything as a counsel.

23 MS. GATELLI: I agree.

24 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. I don't

25 believe that a call for a resignation was

1 necessary. I really do believe that the
2 direct way is the best. Mrs. Evans and I
3 talked about the issue, resolved it among --
4 between ourselves, and I felt that we could
5 move onward from there.
6 And I think that in the future --
7 when I took this responsibility, and I know
8 many of you, you know, are going to scoff at
9 what I say, but when I did take on this
10 responsibility, I did so with the belief
11 that I could be open and honest and vote my
12 conscience and listen to what people said
13 and to deal in an honest and fair way.
14 And I think that this was kind of --
15 this has gotten out of hand. And we as a
16 Council need to police our own ranks and we
17 need to start dealing with each other in a
18 better and more equitable way, and that is
19 for everyone on the Council and in the
20 administration of the City of Scranton.
21 On the budget, just very briefly,
22 again, I commend Mrs. Evans for taking my

23 challenge to go to the mayor.

24 I also did go to the mayor. I did

25 also attend the budget meeting that was

.

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1 scheduled last Tuesday, and we sat and

2 discussed the items that Mrs. Evans had

3 proposed.

4 Some of the changes that were made

5 and that we -- I shouldn't say that we

6 agreed to, but some of the -- because many

7 of the votes were two to one, but at least

8 the ones that were discussed weren't

9 reflected in what was read, and there were

10 numerous changes that we as a three member

11 group did, in fact, you know, discuss and

12 considered.

13 With those changes in, you know, in

14 hand and with the mayor's budget in hand, I

15 did go to the mayor and ask him some of the

16 questions that Mrs. Evans had proposed, and

17 I felt that I had walked out with a

18 reasonable assessment of what we had

19 discussed on Tuesday night and what I had

20 discussed with the mayor and feel that there
21 -- are there changes that could possibly be
22 made to the budget, yes, and I hope that we
23 will make some.

24 But I don't think that it requires
25 the drastic changes that were proposed. And
.

155

1 when we get to the discussion on the budget,
2 perhaps those -- I will, in fact, discuss
3 some of that.

4 MS. EVANS: Mr. McGoff, I just
5 wanted to clarify, because I agree with what
6 you're saying, the budget that I read
7 tonight under motions was my original
8 budget.

9 MR. MCGOFF: Correct.

10 MS. EVANS: But this evening under
11 the vote and the mayor's budget, I would
12 intend to read off the list according to all
13 of the changes that were made on Tuesday
14 evening and proposed those as amendments to
15 the budget.

16 MR. MCGOFF: Sorry.

17 MS. EVANS: No, I just wanted to
18 clarify, because I didn't want you to
19 misunderstand that, you know, I wasn't
20 including or considering any of that. That
21 is what will be voted on, not what I read
22 earlier.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. I believe
24 that's perhaps all. Thank you.

25 MR. COURTRIGHT: I guess I have to
.

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1 say something about the E-mail. I still
2 haven't seen the E-mail, so I guess you'll
3 have to give me a copy.

4 MS. EVANS: Do you want the E-mail?

5 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yeah, I guess I
6 should read it at some point in time. I
7 don't -- I've heard what it said, and I
8 don't know. I think it overshadowed the
9 budget. Anyway, we'll move on.

10 Commuter tax, it has been brought up
11 here on more than one occasion over the last
12 three years that I've been here, and I spoke
13 to PEL and they faxed me information on a

14 commuter tax. It's too much for me to read,
15 but I'll try to just shorten it up for you a
16 little bit.

17 We're a AA city, and Mr. Serafini
18 changed Act 47 as it pertains to this city
19 some years ago.

20 And my understanding is this, in
21 order for us to implement a commuter tax
22 again, we would have to raise our property
23 tax extremely high, we would have to raise
24 our wage tax extremely high, we would have
25 to take fees such as our garbage fee and
.

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1 raise them up very high and then go to court
2 and prove that we had done that, and then
3 possibly then they would okay us to have a
4 commuter tax.

5 That doesn't mean I'm going to give
6 up looking into it, but it's a little bleak
7 on the outlook of having a commuter tax so
8 far.

9 Kay, I only have one thing for you
10 this evening. I don't know how many times

11 I've got to say this, Mr. McTiernan said it,
12 I said it, and now last week Mrs. Gatelli
13 said it, 21 Forrest Glen Drive, I don't know
14 why nobody has been up there. That hole is
15 getting worse. And, again, it's not a
16 pothole. There's something wrong with the
17 road.

18 The DPW was up there on Forrest Glen
19 this week patching potholes, but nothing has
20 been done there, to my knowledge. So, if we
21 can just ask Mr. Parker have they gone there
22 and looked at it and I don't know about it
23 or whatever is happening there.

24 My focus has been on the budget.

25 I've got to say one thing first. Whether
.

158

1 you like Mrs. Evans' budget, dislike it or
2 for it or against it, I think she put an
3 awful lot of work into it, you know, so I
4 will give her credit for that, she put a lot
5 of work in that budget. It could not have
6 been easy.

7 I'm sure she had to go to many

8 outside sources to get their information and
9 to get help. So, I commend her for that.
10 What really bothers me, maybe I'm
11 naive, I thought, I really thought, that we
12 were going to be able to take her budget and
13 the mayor's budget and this meeting on
14 Tuesday and try to find some kind of happy
15 ground.
16 We just borrowed \$10 million. Now
17 we got at least a 25 percent tax increase
18 coming. So, I, and Mr. McGoff can tell you,
19 I agree with many of the things in Mrs.
20 Evans' budget, and I disagree with many, and
21 I thought all five of us could have done
22 that and come to some kind of an agreement
23 where at least four of us would have agreed
24 on some kind of a budget that the mayor knew
25 we had a strong hold and this is what we
.
159

1 wanted and this, but that just didn't
2 happen, and that just saddens me. So, now
3 the taxpayers are going to pay.
4 One thing that I was really for in

5 the budget was, I had a problem with this
6 greeter thing that we had. It was put in a
7 year or so ago, and for, I guess, legal
8 reasons hasn't been implemented, now we have
9 it in there this year, and I asked for that
10 to be taken out.

11 And I don't know. I'm going to say
12 this, because it has been said to me so many
13 times, and I really hope Mark Seitzinger
14 doesn't take offense to this, he has helped
15 me every single time I ever asked him, I
16 will give him that, you know, except for the
17 man that came with the rats last week, I
18 thought he had taken care of that and he
19 didn't.

20 But I had asked Mrs. Garvey, because
21 Mrs. Fanucci and Mrs. Gatelli weren't there,
22 I asked if she would write down that Bill
23 Courtright begs you to consider this.

24 And what I begged him to consider
25 was many, many police and fire are insulted
.

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1 by the fact that he holds the title of

2 assistant director of public safety, because
3 they believe that he doesn't have the
4 knowledge to rule over them in the absence
5 of Mr. Hayes.

6 And so, I asked if, in fact, his
7 position remains in the budget, that maybe
8 his title could be changed so that in the
9 event that Mr. Hayes is out of town, that he
10 isn't directing Mr. Elliot and Mr. Davis on
11 how to run their departments.

12 And, Mark, again, I hope you don't
13 take offense to that, but it has been
14 brought up to me on many occasions. So, I
15 don't know if that can be consideration or
16 not.

17 Mrs. Evans put in the six police
18 officers, and I wholeheartedly agree with
19 it, and I wish that we could find the money
20 for it.

21 Even in the last race that I ran,
22 you know, they said that I was the crime
23 czar and that I was always trying to scare
24 the people about crime, well, I hate to say
25 I told you so, but I said there were gangs

1 here and I said they weren't just local
2 gangs, and I'm not going to give any -- I'm
3 not going to say the names of the high
4 profile big time gangs that are here,
5 because I don't want to give them any
6 credit, but they're here and they're here to
7 stay.
8 And last year we had approximately,
9 I think it was, 63,600 some calls. And when
10 I talk about crime, I could spin numbers one
11 way to make them look in my favor, and I'm
12 sure the administration can spin them their
13 way to make them look in their favor, that's
14 the problem with numbers, but I have always
15 said and I'll hold to the fact, you cannot
16 spin the number of the calls that come out
17 of the Comm Center. It's a hard and fast
18 number and there's no way you can alter that
19 number.
20 And we had, as I said, approximately
21 I think it was 63,600 some calls last year.
22 We're going to beat that by a couple, if

23 not, several thousand calls this year.

24 And I'm not doing it to scare the

25 people. I think the people need to be a

.

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1 little bit afraid to look out for these

2 gangs and to look out for their activity,

3 because how do you think the police get a

4 lot of their information? From the people.

5 So, I'm very much in favor of -- if

6 at all possible adding those six police

7 officers that Mrs. Evans put in her budget.

8 I know it's been brought up about

9 Mr. Bolus' Christmas dinner that he has,

10 it's from twelve to six on Christmas Day.

11 My daughter and I have been there

12 the last several years to help out, and I

13 think it will make you appreciate Christmas

14 a little bit more if you take a look at it.

15 And the same with Mr. Bolus, some

16 people like him, some people don't, but what

17 he does on that day is a great thing. So, I

18 encourage everybody to support him.

19 Mary Alice Burke has done a

20 tremendous, tremendous amount of work on
21 flooding, especially in the Keyser Valley
22 and West Mountain areas, and she has
23 gathered facts and she has gathered figures
24 to see if we can get some kind of funding
25 from the federal government or on the state
.

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1 level.

2 And, Kay, I lied, I do have one more
3 thing I would ask you to do, in light of the
4 fact that she's doing all this work, I've
5 got to think that the city, somebody in the
6 city, is looking at compiling some kind of
7 figure, I would hope that they are, so that
8 we can get some state or federal funds.
9 So, I'd say we start with Mr. Parker
10 and ask him if maybe he's doing something to
11 that and he can let us know, and if he is,
12 maybe he can get together with Mary Alice.
13 And she's driven, and I think she's
14 going to do some good for us, and maybe they
15 can get together and put their numbers
16 together.

17 And one last thing, I sound like the
18 speakers, but I did not intend on speaking
19 on this, the QRS, well over a year ago I sat
20 at this table right here, and I think I
21 brought this up once before, with several
22 members of the fire department, EMS
23 personnel, who are supposed to be experts in
24 their field, I can't recall where they were
25 from, maybe even somebody from the Dunmore

.

164

1 area, because I think Dunmore has an QRS,
2 Mr. Hayes, Chief Davis, and myself, and we
3 discussed a QRS, and I think one of the big
4 concerns would have been -- on the
5 administration side, it would have been my
6 concern if I was on the administration side
7 was, would the fire department use the
8 number of calls they would go on to up their
9 stats and say we need more personnel?
10 Well, they agreed from the get-go
11 that they were not going to use -- they were
12 willing to put in writing, they would not
13 use the number of calls they went on to up

14 their stats.

15 And what type of calls were they

16 going to go on? We were having a problem

17 back then, and I don't know exactly if we

18 are still having the same problem now, as

19 Mrs. Evans said, we were having a problem

20 with the ambulance service getting to the

21 calls, and what the police thought and what

22 the residents thought were in a timely

23 fashion.

24 And at that time I asked that we do

25 a thing called posting where they would

.

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1 station -- you know, the Comm Center could

2 tell if there are no available ambulance

3 service in the City of Scranton, and when

4 they do posting, that would mean the ones

5 that are on the outskirts would be Taylor,

6 Dunmore and the Abingtons, they would come

7 to the border at least in Scranton and maybe

8 be able to get there in a timely fashion.

9 But the type of calls they were

10 going to go on that we discussed anyway was,

11 say, for instance, somebody was having a
12 heart attack on Luzerne Street and engine
13 seven is right there, well, if they were
14 equipped, they could -- and the comm center
15 would know, we do not have an ambulance
16 close by.

17 They can go there, they could
18 administer first aid, use the defibrillator,
19 whatever the case may be, until what time
20 that an ambulance got there, whether it be a
21 basic life support or advanced life support.
22 And all of this was agreed upon.

23 Mrs. Evans talked about \$71,000 in their
24 budget from the startup. That was a figure
25 that we talked about, but it was also
.

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1 figured that we really thought could be paid
2 for by grants and possibly by the hospitals
3 helping us, so maybe there would have been
4 no costs.
5 So, with the wind up was, and,
6 again, I've said this before, I asked Mr.
7 Hayes if he thought the mayor would go along

8 with it, and he said yes, and what the
9 answer was that came back, and it's no big
10 secret, was that the mayor was not willing
11 to do this until what time there is a
12 contract with the fire department.

13 So, I believe that's our holdup. I
14 would still like to see us do this if at all
15 possible. And that's all I have, Mrs.
16 Gatelli. Thank you.

17 MS. GATELLI: Thank you, Mr.
18 Courtright. I just have a few things to say
19 about the budget.

20 And I don't know who it was that got
21 up tonight, but they said that no other
22 Councilperson has done anything. And I also
23 want to commend Mrs. Evans for preparing
24 that budget.

25 Years ago when we were neighborhood

.

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1 presidents, we always presented our own
2 budget to City Council, so we have worked on
3 them many moons ago.
4 I'd just like to say that the mayor

5 never went after the non-profits, but he did
6 and he's going to.
7 No one wants to acknowledge that we
8 got \$1.2 million from The Scranton Housing
9 authority. I really consider that an
10 accomplishment.
11 I asked the mayor, and I did it
12 myself, and I don't mean that anyone else
13 here should do it, so don't take it in the
14 wrong way, but as a gesture, I gave five
15 percent of my salary back. It was a
16 gesture. It wasn't any big deal. I admit
17 that. It wasn't a large amount of money for
18 me, but it was a gesture so that he would
19 get the message.
20 When I got his budget, I thought,
21 Well, he's finally getting the message, he
22 reduced them by five percent. Now, is that
23 enough? I'm not sure, but that was the
24 figure that I came up with at the time.
25 And in Mrs. Evans' budget, she takes
.
168

1 them back to the 22001 level, and that's

2 laudable but I would be a hypocrite if I
3 said, Well, yeah, now I don't want your five
4 percent, now I'm taking more. So, I wasn't
5 real comfortable with that. I'm just
6 telling you the reason.

7 Some of the revenues, I'm not sure,
8 are going to come in at those levels. I'm
9 hoping that the in lieu of taxes will come
10 up, but will it come up to \$500,000? I'm
11 not sure of that. The money from The Ice
12 Box, I don't think is going to happen.

13 The amusement tax, now, when I
14 looked up in Erie, they had said \$600,000,
15 and they ended up to get sixty. So, I'm not
16 sure how much of that we're going to get.

17 The Scranton Times office, which
18 they call it, is really a press office,
19 because any press can use that. Over the
20 years it was strictly The Scranton Times
21 that used it or the other TV stations when
22 they'd be here, but The Scranton Times is no
23 longer here, and I don't think that will be
24 relevant at this time.

25 There are many positions that I

1 agree should be looked at. I don't think
2 they're necessary. I all week to try to
3 find out exactly what people did in their
4 positions, but in one week's time, it just
5 wasn't possible for me to learn them all.
6 The public safety department, I know
7 that PEL did take that out, and I fought
8 very strongly at the time as a neighborhood
9 leader that that should remain in there.
10 I wanted Jimmy Klee. Jimmy Klee was
11 a very good public safety director. I'm not
12 saying that Mr. Hayes isn't, but I'm trying
13 to make the point that I did at one point in
14 my life fight for that position to be
15 reinstated.
16 If I don't like the person that's in
17 that position now, that's a whole other
18 story, but I did fight to keep that
19 position, and I'm not comfortable totally
20 removing it because of Mr. Seitzinger. He
21 is doing work in the neighborhoods, work
22 that I have begged the mayor that we need

23 someone, that blight is the biggest concern

24 everywhere I go. It needs to be addressed.

25 My neighborhood in South Side became

.

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1 very bad, as you all know, and I wouldn't be

2 comfortable taking that out of the budget.

3 The B.A.'s office, I don't know

4 enough about a lot of those position. I'm

5 sure some of them could be eliminated.

6 The IT Department, I'm going to

7 disagree with Mrs. Fanucci, because I do

8 think it's a little heavy. By how much?

9 I'm not sure, but I think there can be some

10 cuts made there.

11 The OECD department, the director of

12 finance and compliance, I remember when I

13 was there with Mr. Washo, we were fined by

14 HUD because we didn't have a director of

15 finance compliance. So, I think that that

16 position is needed.

17 The positions in OECD aren't

18 affected but the city budget. And there are

19 two economic development specialists that

20 work in that office, one, I don't know if
21 any of you have ever dealt with her, her
22 name is Fania Blackwell, and she does an
23 excellent job. The other girl, I really
24 don't know.

25 The greeters aren't necessary at

.

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1 all. The solicitors, I believe that when I
2 worked there, and I probably would have to
3 defer to Attorney Minora on that, but I
4 think that we had probably just as many,
5 maybe one more is there than was under Mayor
6 Connors, but we had several paralegals and
7 Nancy Barrasse and Jimmy Mulligan and Lee
8 Redmond.

9 And when I called to find out about
10 their professional service, I know that
11 also, and I don't have a budget from back
12 then, but there were numerous attorneys that
13 worked from outside of the law department on
14 certain cases, and some of that professional
15 service is used for retainers for those
16 attorneys and some of it is used for when

17 someone has an accident or they sue the
18 city, there's deductibles, and some
19 deductibles are \$25,000 and some are fifty.
20 So, some of that professional service is
21 used for deductibles to pay claims for legal
22 services.

23 So, I'm not sure about that total
24 number. It probably could be reduced, but
25 not totally, because we need to pay those
.

172

1 deductibles.

2 As far as George Parker getting a
3 salary reduction, I said before that I had
4 asked for the 25 percent, and I wouldn't
5 feel comfortable now asking them for more.

6 And Mr. Parker does have two duties.

7 When I worked for Mayor Connors, there was a
8 DPW director and there was a city engineer.

9 I believe this is the first time that the
10 jobs have been combined.

11 The flood, the five people for the
12 flood, I agree that there are too many. I
13 don't think that all those people are

14 necessary.

15 Human resources, well, you really do

16 too, too much there. The Single Tax Office,

17 I'm not sure if we can adjust his salary,

18 can we?

19 MS. EVANS: I based that on my

20 reading of the charter and the

21 administrative code, specifically the one

22 you alluded to concerning the mayor and

23 Council and the controller, the city

24 controller. Those are the only positions

25 named.

.

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1 The city, as you know, pays

2 50 percent of his salary.

3 MS. GATELLI: And the school

4 district pays the other.

5 MS. EVANS: Right. So, I was

6 reducing the city's portion of his pay.

7 MS. GATELLI: Okay. So, there is no

8 obligation of a salary, so that would be all

9 right there.

10 Parks and recreation, of course, the

11 director would be my same five percent that

12 I've allude to. And the other people, I'm

13 not sure what their jobs are.

14 I know Mrs. Obshinski does all of

15 the extra activities, because I've been

16 involved with her on a few projects, and she

17 was helping the children with the skate

18 park.

19 The tax increase and the realty

20 transfer tax, I'm not comfortable with the

21 realty transfer tax whatsoever, and I'm

22 hoping that, you know, we can lower that.

23 We certainly don't want to

24 discourage people from buying homes in

25 Scranton. The wage tax is enough to drive

.

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1 them away.

2 The tax increase, although I don't

3 like the thoughts of it, I think it's a

4 necessity. I think we haven't had a -- I

5 know Connors didn't raise them for 11 years,

6 and I believe Mr. Doherty didn't raise them

7 at all, and I think a small increase is

8 necessary as a permanent revenue to help us
9 get out of the financial hole that we seem
10 to always be in.

11 And although I don't like to burden
12 the taxpayers with that, I see the school
13 district does it every year. They had a
14 meeting last night, and I asked if anyone
15 was there, there wasn't one person up there
16 objecting to their tax increase.

17 So, I almost can't understand why
18 every time the city wants to do something
19 that costs money, everybody is against it.

20 I'm against it. I don't want to see
21 people have to pay more, that's not my
22 point, but my point is, we're the ones
23 providing the services.

24 What does the county provide to you?

25 You pay a library tax, so that's extra, so

.

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1 they don't even provide the library service,
2 and they have a new cultural fee that was
3 added several years ago, and no one went and
4 fought that either.

5 But as soon as the City of Scranton
6 wants to raise something, everybody's
7 screaming. What are we going to do when we
8 settle the arbitrations? Where are we going
9 to get that money from?
10 I wish we can settle them, and I'm
11 going to stay on the mayor about that,
12 because that's a big risk we're taking.
13 Either way, either we're going to lose big
14 time or the unions are going to lose big
15 time. Nobody is going to win that one,
16 nobody.
17 And until we all start working
18 together and try to get us out of this
19 financial hole, one time revenues help,
20 they've been helping for the last couple
21 years, that's why he sold the golf course,
22 that's why he sold the South Side Complex.
23 We don't have anything else to sell, maybe
24 Park Gardens.
25 But we need revenue, and we need to
.
176

1 raise the taxes every now and then. Your

2 gas bill went up, your water bill went up,
3 the cable is going up again, the grocery
4 store went up again.
5 I don't want to sound like I like
6 taxes, I don't, but I think that we all need
7 to pay our fair share, we need more police,
8 absolutely, absolutely.
9 I'm in the school every day, and
10 there's problems, problems that the public
11 doesn't know, but they're coming, and
12 they're coming big time, so we do need the
13 police officers.
14 I'm also working for next year on
15 another revenue item that we think can bring
16 in \$1.5 million. It's a new rental
17 registration program. We will add
18 inspectors and clerks that will be strictly
19 assigned to this program. They will not be
20 allowed to do anything but the rental
21 registration.
22 When we went to Bethlehem, we
23 learned about that program, and Rob Farrell
24 is getting the ordinance ready as we speak.
25 We've met several times concerning that, and

1 it won't be long until we get the final
2 document. And I'm - we're hoping that we
3 can bring in at least \$1.5 million on that.
4 All properties will be registered,
5 including single family homes that are
6 non-owner occupied. And that's all I have.

7 Thank you. Mrs. Garvey.

8 MS. GARVEY: Fifth order. No

9 business at this time. Sixth order, no

10 business at this time. Seventh order. 7-A,

11 FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON

12 FINANCE - FOR ADOPTION - FILE OF COUNCIL NO.

13 66 --

14 MS. EVANS: Mrs. Garvey, prior to

15 reading 7-A, as chair of the finance

16 committee, I wish to make a motion to amend

17 7-A as follows: Council amendments,

18 revenue, sale of golf course, \$3 million;

19 increase in lieu of taxes, \$381,750; land

20 payment due from Ice Box, \$600,000;

21 amusement tax, \$200,000; hotel tax,

22 \$150,000; the reduction in the budget line

23 item for the \$10 million in borrowing,
24 \$38,888; Scranton Times rental fee for
25 office space at City Hall and newspaper
.

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1 boxes, \$6,000; the confidential secretary
2 salary reduction in the office of the mayor,
3 \$3,688; public safety, eliminate department,
4 \$144,110; the police department, reduce
5 travel and lodging for administration,
6 \$2,470; police department, reduce dues and
7 subscriptions strictly for administration,
8 \$1750; police department, chief of police
9 salary reduction, \$1,314; business
10 administration, BA's salary reduction,
11 \$3,850; BA, eliminate senior accountant,
12 \$34,000; BA, eliminate financial analyst,
13 \$34,000; BA, eliminate professional
14 services, \$35,000; BA, eliminate flood
15 positions, three of five for \$125,000; human
16 resources, eliminate professional services
17 which were transferred to the B.A. for
18 health care consultant and third party
19 worker's comp., \$130,000; human resources,

20 eliminate travel and lodging, \$1,000; HR,
21 reduce salary to what it was for the
22 director of personnel, \$40,000; human
23 resources, eliminate confidential secretary,
24 replace with administrative assistant two
25 for a savings of \$29,000 -- or excuse me, no
.
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1 -- the administrative to -- yes, it is a
2 savings of \$29,000, and the administrative
3 two position will pay \$25,586; IT, eliminate
4 everything except for one person with a
5 \$70,000 budget, that would entail the cuts
6 of one, two, three, four, five, six line
7 items for \$47,500; \$40,000, \$130,718,
8 \$1,000; \$5,000, and \$15,000; OECD, eliminate
9 director of finance and compliance, \$46,550;
10 OECD, eliminate two economic development
11 specialists, \$64,000; LIPS, eliminate deputy
12 director of safety and conservation,
13 \$34,000; the Bureau of Buildings, eliminate
14 four greeters, \$20,000; law department,
15 eliminate professional services, \$200,000;
16 law department, the following, Eliminate

17 travel and lodging, \$2,000; eliminate
18 training and certification, \$1500;
19 solicitor's salary reduction, \$3700;
20 eliminate first assistant city solicitor,
21 \$40,000; eliminate assistant city solicitor,
22 \$32,900; eliminate confidential secretary,
23 replace with administrative assistant one at
24 a salary of \$23,946, for a savings of
25 \$29,000; DPW, director's salary reduction,
.
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1 \$21,950; DPW garages, fleet manager salary
2 reduction, \$1200; single tax office, tax
3 collector's salary reduction, \$4,150; parks
4 and rec., director's salary reduction,
5 \$7,700; eliminate parks and rec specialists,
6 two positions, for a total of \$70,000; parks
7 and recreation, eliminate program manager
8 \$35,000.

9 MR. COURTRIGHT: Second.

10 MS. GATELLI: On the question? Roll

11 call.

12 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

13 MS. EVANS: Yes.

14 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Fanucci.

15 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: No.

16 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

17 MR. MCGOFF: No.

18 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright.

19 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yes.

20 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Gatelli.

21 MS. GATELLI: No.

22 MS. GATELLI: The budget with the

23 amendments was defeated by 3-2.

24 MS. GARVEY: 7-A, FOR CONSIDERATION

25 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE - FOR ADOPTION -

.

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1 FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 66, 2006 - AN ORDINANCE

2 - APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE EXPENSES OF

3 THE CITY GOVERNMENT FOR THE PERIOD

4 COMMENCING ON THE FIRST DAY OF JANUARY 2007

5 TO AND INCLUDING DECEMBER 31, 2007 BY THE

6 ADOPTION OF THE GENERAL CITY OPERATING

7 BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2007.

8 MR. MCGOFF: I would like to make a

9 motion to amend the mayor's budget, and it

10 would -- the motion would be to use \$1.5

11 million of the money from the sale of the
12 golf course to reduce the realty transfer
13 tax to achieve a commensurate amount as
14 revenue, and also a second amendment to take
15 away the greeter positions that were listed
16 in the mayor's budget.

17 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Second.

18 MS. GATELLI: On the question? Roll
19 call.

20 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

21 MS. EVANS: No.

22 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Fanucci.

23 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Yes.

24 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

.

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1 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright.

2 MR. COURTRIGHT: No.

3 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Gatelli.

4 MS. GATELLI: Yes. The budget with
5 the amendments passed by a vote of 3-2.

6 MS. GARVEY: Okay I have to read it
7 once again as amended.

8 MS. GATELLI: Okay. Go ahead.

9 MS. GARVEY: FOR CONSIDERATION BY
10 THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE - FOR ADOPTION -
11 FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 66, 2006 - AN ORDINANCE
12 AS AMENDED - APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE
13 EXPENSES OF THE CITY GOVERNMENT FOR THE
14 PERIOD COMMENCING ON THE FIRST DAY OF
15 JANUARY 2007 TO AND INCLUDING DECEMBER 31,
16 2007 BY THE ADOPTION OF THE GENERAL CITY
17 OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2007.

18 MS. GATELLI: What is the
19 recommendation of the chair for the
20 committee on finance?

21 MS. EVANS: As chair for the
22 committee on finance, I do not recommend
23 final passage of Item 7-A as amended.

24 MS. GATELLI: Now, what do the votes
25 mean, Attorney Minora?

.

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1 MR. MINORA: Exactly.

2 MS. EVANS: It's reversed.

3 MR. MINORA: They're reversed. No

4 means a yes, a yes means a no. So, in order

5 to pass this, it needs three no votes.

6 MS. GATELLI: Neil.

7 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

8 MS. EVANS: Yes.

9 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Fanucci.

10 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: No.

11 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

12 MR. MCGOFF: No.

13 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright.

14 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yes.

15 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Gatelli.

16 MS. GATELLI: No. I hereby declare

17 7-A legally and lawfully adopted as amended.

18 7-B.

19 MS. GARVEY: 7-B, FOR CONSIDERATION

20 BY THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS - FOR

21 ADOPTION - FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 68, 2006 - AN

22 ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE TRANSFER OF A

23 PARCEL OF LAND ACQUIRED BY THE CITY THROUGH

24 THE FLOOD CONTROL PROJECT TO RONALD F. AND

25 MARY ANN KITLAS AS PARTIAL COMPENSATION FOR

.

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1 THE ACQUISITION OF PROPERTY THEY OWN ON ROSS

2 AVENUE FOR THE LACKAWANNA RIVER FLOOD

3 CONTROL PROJECT.

4 MS. GATELLI: What is the

5 recommendation of the chair on public works?

6 MR. MCGOFF: As chairperson for the

7 committee on public works, I recommend final

8 passage of Item 7-B.

9 MR. COURTRIGHT: Second.

10 MS. GATELLI: On the question? Roll

11 call.

12 MS. EVANS: Did we ever determine if

13 such land can be transferred if it were

14 purchased by the state?

15 MS. GATELLI: It was partial

16 compensation. He sold them a property.

17 MS. EVANS: I understand. It's kind

18 of a barter.

19 MS. GATELLI: Yeah. He got less

20 money and got the land, because they didn't

21 want the land. It's only 16 feet wide.

22 MS. EVANS: But can the city

23 actually convey what the state has --

24 MS. GATELLI: Yes, it's part of the

25 agreement with the state and the Army Corps.

.

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1 MS. EVANS: Oh, that's fine then.

2 MS. GATELLI: Yeah, it's all -- they

3 do those intergovernmental agreements.

4 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

5 MS. GATELLI: Anyone else on the

6 question? Roll call.

7 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

8 MS. EVANS: Yes.

9 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Fanucci.

10 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Yes.

11 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

13 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright.

14 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yes.

15 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Gatelli.

16 MS. GATELLI: Yes. I hereby declare

17 7-B legally and lawfully adopted.

18 MS. GARVEY: 7-C, FOR CONSIDERATION

19 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE - FOR ADOPTION -

20 FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 69, 2006 - AN ORDINANCE

21 - AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF A

22 FIVE MILLION (\$5,000,000.00) DOLLARS

23 PRINCIPAL AMOUNT, TAX AND REVENUE

24 ANTICIPATION NOTE OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON

25 KNOWN AS TAN SERIES A, AWARDED TO COMMUNITY

.

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1 BANK AND TRUST COMPANY; DETERMINING THE FORM

2 AND TERM OF SAID NOTE; AWARDING SAID NOTE;

3 AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE FILING OF

4 CERTAIN DOCUMENTS; AND DIRECTING THE PROPER

5 OFFICIALS OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO TAKE

6 ANY AND ALL OTHER ACTIONS AS MAY BE REQUIRED

7 IN CONNECTION WITH THE ISSUANCE OF SAID

8 NOTE.

9 MS. GATELLI: What is the

10 recommendation of the chair on finance?

11 MS. EVANS: As chair for the

12 committee on finance, I recommend final

13 passage of Item 7-C.

14 MR. COURTRIGHT: Second.

15 MS. GATELLI: On the question? Roll

16 call.

17 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

18 MS. EVANS: Yes.

19 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Fanucci.

20 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Yes.

21 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

23 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright.

24 MR. COURTRIGHT: Yes.

25 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Gatelli.

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1 MS. GATELLI: Yes. I hereby declare

2 Item 7-C legally and lawfully adopted.

3 MS. GARVEY: 7-D, FOR CONSIDERATION

4 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE - FOR ADOPTION -

5 FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 70, 2006 - AN ORDINANCE

6 - AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE AND SALE OF A

7 NINE AND ONE HALF MILLION (\$9,500,000.00)

8 DOLLARS PRINCIPAL AMOUNT, TAX AND REVENUE

9 ANTICIPATION NOTE OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON

10 KNOWN AS TAN SERIES B, AWARDED TO COMMUNITY

11 BANK AND TRUST COMPANY; DETERMINING THE FORM

12 AND TERM OF SAID NOTE; AWARDING SAID NOTE;

13 AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE FILING OF

14 CERTAIN DOCUMENTS; AND DIRECTING THE PROPER

15 OFFICIALS OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO TAKE

16 ANY AND ALL OTHER ACTIONS AS MAY BE REQUIRED

17 IN CONNECTION WITH THE ISSUANCE OF SAID
18 NOTE.

19 MS. GATELLI: What is the
20 recommendation of the chair on finance?

21 MS. EVANS: As chair for the
22 committee on finance, I do not recommend
23 final passage of Item 7-D.

24 MR. COURTRIGHT: Second.

25 MS. GATELLI: On the question?

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1 MR. MINORA: This is a no/yes vote.

2 MS. EVANS: Reverse vote.

3 MS. GATELLI: Roll call.

4 MS. EVANS: Well, the city has
5 borrowed once again, and we all know that,
6 \$10 million, and the pay back amount on that
7 is over \$23 million that we're adding to our
8 long-term debt.

9 Unfortunately, and despite my best
10 efforts, you're all going to be saddled with
11 a tax increase of 25 percent.

12 I fail to see the need for such a
13 significant amount to be borrowed in TAN

14 Series B.

15 I just wanted the people of the
16 city to know, it is true, the city hasn't
17 raised taxes in a very long time, but that
18 doesn't make it right just because everyone
19 else is.

20 All it means is some one of those
21 three taxing bodies has to consider the
22 people they are jointly taxing.

23 And I'm very, very sorry to all the
24 people that the city, for their reasons,
25 refused to give you that relief. I'm also
.

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1 very sorry that we're not going to get six
2 police officers, I'm very sorry that we're
3 not expanding any public services, I'm very
4 sorry that we will not be levying an
5 amusement tax until the mayor decides that
6 he would like to do so.

7 We've missed the boat on an awful
8 lot. We have so many chiefs, not many
9 Indians, and the Indians really do the work
10 at half to a third of the cost, and that's

11 the way it always was, until five years ago.
12 So, again, I just -- I have respect
13 for all my colleagues, and I do especially
14 want to thank Mr. McGoff and Mr. Courtright
15 for spending nearly three hours of their
16 time on Tuesday evening going through my
17 budget one item at a time and discussing the
18 pros and cons of each. I think they did
19 their due diligence to the people of the
20 city.

21 And, again, I think it really is a
22 shame, and I don't think there is a reason
23 that justifies it. That's it.

24 MS. GATELLI: Anyone else? Roll
25 call.

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1 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

2 MS. EVANS: Yes.

3 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Fanucci.

4 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: No.

5 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

6 MR. MCGOFF: No.

7 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright.

8 MR. COURTRIGHT: No.

9 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Gatelli.

10 MS. GATELLI: No. I hereby declare

11 7-D legally and lawfully adopted.

12 Before we adjourn, I'd like to say

13 that I am still interested in the amusement

14 tax. I'd still like to do that, so don't --

15 you know, bring it up again and we'll do it

16 on our own, because I'd like to do that. I

17 don't think it has to be in the budget for

18 us to do it.

19 As far as the police officers, you

20 know we increased the community development

21 by \$200,000, so there will be more police

22 there.

23 And if there's any way we can put

24 them in the budget somewhere, tell me how to

25 do it and we'll do it somehow, if we have to

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1 use UDAG money, because I don't want to

2 appear that I'm not for police officers. I

3 fought for them my whole life, so we will

4 certainly look into that.

5 And some of your other ideas, Mrs.
6 Evans, I don't want them to die, so we'll
7 revive them on our own, if we have to.
8 At this time I'd like someone to
9 entertain a motion that we cancel the next
10 two meetings of December 21 and 28, so that
11 Council members may enjoy their Christmas
12 season with their families. Someone
13 entertain that motion?
14 MR. COURTRIGHT: I'll make a motion
15 that we cancel the meeting on December 21
16 and 28.
17 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Second.
18 MS. GATELLI: On the question?
19 MS. GATELLI: All those in favor.
20 MS. EVANS: Aye.
21 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Aye.
22 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.
23 MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.
24 MS. GATELLI: Aye. Opposed? The
25 ayes have it and so moved.

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1 Now, before, I know it's very late,

2 and I'm not one that stays up late, I'd like
3 somebody else to entertain a motion before
4 we go.

5 I had asked for the last six weeks
6 approximately for people to serve on a task
7 force to study the budget for the whole year
8 and work with it, find ways, talk to people,
9 talk to the cabinet members, and they can
10 assist us with the budget, and I got four
11 people that have agreed to serve on this.

12 So, I'd like someone to make a motion, I'll
13 give you the names there, that we do it now
14 so they can start fresh in January. If
15 anyone else wants to join, just let us know
16 and we will put you on there.

17 MR. COURTRIGHT: Sure. The names
18 are Pat Ackourey -- I'll make a motion that
19 we form a budget task force and Pat
20 Ackourey, Mike Genello, Cheryl Murnin and
21 Don Kershner be appointed to that board.

22 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: I'll second
23 that.

24 MS. GATELLI: On the question? All
25 in favor.

1 MS. EVANS: Aye.

2 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Aye.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

4 MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

5 MS. GATELLI: Aye. Opposed? The

6 ayes have it and so moved. Now I have one

7 more thing. I know I'm being a pain.

8 A very dear friend of mine writes

9 poetry, and I had asked him if he would

10 write a Christmas poem about Scranton, so

11 I'm going to read it before we go. It's

12 called a Downtown Christmas Memory by Jack

13 McGuigan.

14 My mother bundled me in heavy wollen

15 outerwear for the bus ride downtown when the

16 stores stayed open only on Thursday night.

17 I'm sure the crowded bus bubbled

18 with conversation, but all I remember of the

19 slow jerking ride is the steamy window cold

20 against my hand as I finger painted festive

21 electric snowflakes floating past decorated

22 city streets.

23 But when the door opened with its
24 familiar swish clunk in front of the Globe
25 Store, the poetry and the music of
.

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1 Christmastime turned streets and storefront
2 windows into every child's magic kingdom.
3 A landmark in every child's mind,
4 the households trains carried me through
5 mountains and tunnels and villages of
6 imaginary and mechanical adventures, steam
7 engines billowed smoke, hoppers filled up
8 with coal, whistles blew, switchmen moved
9 tracks, trains changed directions in an
10 instant, lights flashed, everything moving,
11 exploding in blurs of colors and sounds.
12 The policeman's whistle harmonized
13 with Santa's little bell and the honking of
14 cars as he directed everyone across
15 Lackawanna.
16 His white glove flurried like a
17 squall of doves hurried us into the Dry
18 Goods for my special treat in the restaurant
19 and the mesmerizing final look from the

20 mezzanine before boarding the bus loaded
21 with passages and dreams.
22 Merry Christmas to everyone, and I
23 hope we have a healthy, peaceful,
24 cooperative new year. Thank you very much.
25 Do we have a motion to adjourn?

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1 MR. COURTRIGHT: So moved.

2 MR. MCGOFF: Second.

3 MS. GATELLI: All in favor.

4 MS. EVANS: Aye.

5 MS. NEALON FANUCCI: Aye.

6 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

7 MR. COURTRIGHT: Aye.

8 MS. GATELLI: Aye.

9 MS. EVANS: Just for the people who

10 remain, I just wanted to make one last

11 announcement, I will not be signing the

12 legislation for that budget. I don't know

13 what effect that has, but I won't affix my

14 signature to a tax increase. Thank you.

15

16 (MEETING WAS ADJOURNED.)

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1 C E R T I F I C A T E

2

3 I hereby certify that the proceedings and

4 evidence are contained fully and accurately in the

5 notes taken by me on the hearing of the above cause and

6 that this copy is a correct transcript of the same

7 to the best of my ability.

8

9

10

LISA M. GRAFF, RMR

11 Official Court Reporter

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