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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
PUBLIC HEARING

IN RE: FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 83, 2009 - AUTHORIZING  
THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS OF THE CITY  
OF SCRANTON TO TAKE ALL NECESSARY ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT  
THE CONSOLIDATED SUBMISSION FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING AND  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS TO BE FUNDED UNDER THE COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM, HOME INVESTMENT  
PARTNERSHIP (HOME) PROGRAM AND EMERGENCY SHELTER GRANT  
(ESG) PROGRAM.

HELD:

Tuesday, September 15, 2009

LOCATION:

Council Chambers  
Scranton City Hall  
340 North Washington Avenue  
Scranton, Pennsylvania

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR  
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

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CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

MR. ROBERT MCGOFF, PRESIDENT

MS. JUDY GATELLI, VICE-PRESIDENT

MS. JANET E. EVANS

MS. SHERRY FANUCCI

MR. WILLIAM COURTRIGHT

(Not present)

MS. KAY GARVEY, CITY CLERK

MR. NEIL COOLICAN, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

MR. AMIL MINORA, SOLICITOR

1 MR. MCGOFF: I'd like to call this  
2 public hearing to order. Roll call, please.

3 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

4 MS. EVANS: Here.

5 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Gatelli.

6 MS. GATELLI: Here.

7 MR. COOLICAN: Ms. Fanucci.

8 MS. FANUCCI: Here.

9 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright. Mr.  
10 McGoff.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Here. For the record,  
12 I'd like to say that Mr. Courtright did call  
13 and that he will be unable to attend  
14 tonight's public hearing and meeting due to  
15 a personal matter. The purpose of said  
16 public hearing is to hear testimony and  
17 discuss the following:

18 FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 83, 2009 -  
19 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE  
20 OFFICIALS OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO TAKE  
21 ALL NECESSARY ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE  
22 CONSOLIDATED SUBMISSION FOR COMMUNITY  
23 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS TO BE  
24 FUNDED UNDER THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK  
25 GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM, HOME INVESTMENT

1 PARTNERSHIP (HOME) PROGRAM AND EMERGENCY  
2 SHELTER GRANT (ESG) PROGRAM.

3 The civic participation, we'll do  
4 three minutes for participation. Andy  
5 Sbaraglia.

6 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,  
7 citizen of Scranton, fellow Scrantonian.  
8 I'd like to speak on the tax -- on the Kids  
9 Swim Free Program that we put in for a grant  
10 for. Could I approach?

11 MR. MCGOFF: Please. Mr. Sbaraglia,  
12 could I have one for Mr. Courtright? I'll  
13 put it in his box.

14 MR. SBARAGLIA: Sure. No problem.  
15 In the past two years the Scranton  
16 Lackawanna County Taxpayers' Association has  
17 offered nine free swimming events for the  
18 children 15 years old and younger at Nay Aug  
19 Park. These swimming events remain to be  
20 free due to the exclusive donations from  
21 citizens, taxpayers or local business  
22 owners. Due to their generosity on the day  
23 of the event, all children 15 and under have  
24 unlimited access to the pool and slide. In  
25 this city all neighborhood pools are free

1           except Nay Aug Park that is located in the  
2           Hill Section, so for the children in the  
3           East Scranton section of the city that  
4           either need to pay \$3.00 a day or by your  
5           pass or to provide information to receive a  
6           free past to use the pool which sometimes  
7           leads to embarrassing or unsafely swims in  
8           the gorge. If you can help to keep this  
9           community program going, we would greatly  
10          appreciate it.

11                         And we have really taken a lot, a  
12          lot of kids up there. The totals here are  
13          1,114, but actually it's 1,500 kids have  
14          been able to swim at the park. This year  
15          was a bad year because of the whether, but  
16          still 400 children were allowed to swim up  
17          there. And we would like counsel to look at  
18          see if you can look favorable on our  
19          application for a grant for us. We do not  
20          charge any administration fee. Every penny  
21          we get in the grant will actually be given  
22          back to the city in the form of the fees we  
23          pay up at Nay Aug, so actually it's a  
24          win-win situation for the city and for the  
25          kids at the City of Scranton, so somewhere

1 along the line we hope you will look  
2 favorable on that application. Thank you.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Ozzie Quinn.

4 MR. QUINN: Ozzie Quinn, Taxpayers'  
5 Association. I'd like to ask a question,  
6 how much is set aside for housing  
7 rehabilitation throughout the City of  
8 Scranton? If you go through our  
9 neighborhoods there is a lot of homes that  
10 need repairs and there is a lot people  
11 because of our low income and the elderly  
12 that need roofs, heating plans and whatnot.  
13 Can you answer that?

14 MS. AEBLI: Mr. Quinn -- oh, I'm  
15 sorry.

16 MR. QUINN: I'm sorry, go ahead.

17 MR. MCGOFF: You should address it to  
18 council if you would like.

19 MR. QUINN: I think that there is a  
20 dire need for housing rehabilitation, a  
21 comprehensive housing rehabilitation and  
22 what I see here is Lackawanna Housing is  
23 going to do five rehabs. I mean, come on,  
24 five rehabs you can do that in half a block.  
25 You know, we got to do something about a

1 comprehensive -- these neighbors hoods are

2 really going down. People can't afford  
3 record it. Thank you.

4 MR. MCGOFF: That you, Mr. Quinn.  
5 Marie Schumacher.

6 MS. SCHUMACHER: Marie Schumacher,  
7 city resident and member of the Taxpayers'  
8 Association. I, too, would like to speak in  
9 favor of more housing rehabilitation. There  
10 is no money in this year's budget for  
11 emergency utility assistance and I think  
12 with all of the utilities going up it's  
13 going to be needed this year more than ever  
14 before, and I would also like if you could  
15 rearrange the money so that the Kids Swim  
16 Free Program could be funded. Thank you.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Phyllis Humphries.  
18 Phyllis, this is the on -- this is a is  
19 public hearing.

20 MS. HUMPHRIES: I know it's a public  
21 hearing.

22 MS. FANUCCI: On the block grants.

23 MR. MCGOFF: It's on the block grants  
24 only?

25 MS. HUMPHRIES: On the what?

1 MS. GATELLI: The block grants.

2 MR. MCGOFF: Exactly.

3 MS. HUMPHRIES: And then could I  
4 speak?

5 MS. GATELLI: Yeah, later on.

6 MS. HUMPHRIES: Okay, do your  
7 blocking and all and I'm going to do my  
8 blocking.

9 MR. MCGOFF: Lee Morgan.

10 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.  
11 I'd just like to basically say about the  
12 same thing that Ozzie and the tax group has  
13 said. We need a lot more money put into the  
14 neighborhoods for rehab and I would really  
15 like to see the Kids Swim Free Program be  
16 funded and if possible I would like to see  
17 some of the this money be spent for youth  
18 programs in the city and I'd like to see a  
19 council member try to draft something and  
20 try to move some money in a way to help  
21 fight vandalism and gang violence and all of  
22 the other problems we have in the city, but  
23 I really would like to see an awful lot of  
24 money from OECD go into the neighborhoods  
25 and as Ozzie said, now, there is a lot of

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1 blocks with three or four or five condemned  
2 properties in them and I think that if we



3 can move OECD money probably the bulk of it  
4 into programs like that we could really do a  
5 lot of good for the neighborhoods. Thank  
6 you.

7 MR. MCGOFF: Jean Suetta.

8 MS. SUETTA: Jean Suetta. I think  
9 you should have more money for the funding  
10 and I think all kids should swim free. I  
11 know when I was a kid if we had to pay to go  
12 swimming we would be using the Lackawanna  
13 River, which wasn't too good, so get the  
14 kids to swim for nothing, all right? Thank  
15 you.

16 MR. MCGOFF: Ron Ellman.

17 MR. ELLMAN: I'M on the other sheet.  
18 I'm sorry. Anyone else?

19 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Ungvarski.

20 MR. UNGVARSKI: Good evening, City  
21 Council. I also would like to speak on  
22 behalf of the Kids Swim Free. It seems like  
23 it's a win-win situation for the city. All  
24 of this money that you grant to the Kids  
25 Swim Free Program will come back

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1 100 percent, in other words, you will grant  
2 that to the Kids Swim Free Program and Kids

3 Swim Free Program will give it right back to  
4 the Bureau of Recreation. There is not a  
5 penny lost. All of that money will come  
6 back to the city and the kids will be able  
7 to swim free.

8 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else?

9 MR. MCCLOE: Good evening. My name  
10 is Brett McCloe. One of the things that I  
11 think that is missing, if it's about  
12 economic development I think that we  
13 hopefully if there are any grants out there  
14 that can help adults further their education  
15 to actually develop an economy by upgrading  
16 their existing -- their existing -- what  
17 they know how to do, to try to develop more  
18 managers out of the mini-marts or whatever.  
19 Whatever it takes to bring incomes across up  
20 that will develop an economy.

21 I don't know if there are any grants  
22 out there like that, but I know that there  
23 are grants to help people go to school, but  
24 I think there should be something more  
25 citywide based because the city actually

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1 needs adults to upgrade on their whatever  
2 specialty they have. Instead of always  
3 looking for outside sources, maybe the city

4 can do something or the OECD can do  
5 something to help develop an economy from  
6 the bottom up instead of just constantly  
7 depending on entrepreneurs. Let's get the  
8 workers to raise up to a certain level to  
9 get us moving forward, actually not trying  
10 to create well through millionaires or  
11 hundred-thousandaires out of people, but  
12 adding an extra dollar an hour to their pay.  
13 It is creation of wealth. Thank you.

14 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else?

15 MS. FANUCCI: Linda, I have a  
16 question for you. All of the evidence that  
17 we received, would they all meet the  
18 approval of being able to get this funding.  
19 I want to make sure that, you know, this is  
20 not something -- you know, people said in  
21 the audience today, which is a great idea,  
22 we need more housing programs, we need this,  
23 we need that, but without applicants  
24 actually asking for the funding it's not  
25 something we can just create out of thin

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1 air.

2 MS. AEBLI: Right.

3 MS. FANUCCI: So what the applicants

4 we have and our choices, are all in  
5 compliance and would we be able to, you  
6 know, if we choose from this list is  
7 everyone able to receive the funding?

8 MS. AEBLI: We receive over 100  
9 applicants a year. Anyone can put  
10 application in, but that does not mean they  
11 are eligible for federal dollars. The one  
12 big thing you have to -- and I guess it's  
13 more in the public service, and you have to  
14 remember if we get \$3 million a year in CDBG  
15 funding only 15 percent of that funding  
16 could be used on public services, so you  
17 times that, that's 450,000, the majority of  
18 our public service goes to our neighborhood  
19 police patrol. That is a public service.

20 And if you are going to fund anyone  
21 new that we have never funded before in this  
22 day and age you have to -- especially with  
23 the public services, you have to be careful,  
24 they have to document everyone's income, so  
25 the organization has to have security in

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1 place. You are dealing with people's social  
2 security numbers, their income tax returns,  
3 their paystubs, so be very careful when you  
4 select anyone that there is security in

5 place and who is going to see -- oversee the  
6 security of these incomes.

7 MS. FANUCCI: So we are looking at  
8 \$450,000 out of service regardless -- -

9 MS. AEBLI: Correct.

10 MS. FANUCCI: So that's going to be  
11 split up, so if you are deciding on anything  
12 that is not --

13 MS. AEBLI: And I believe we have 300  
14 in for neighborhood?

15 MS. FANUCCI: Right. We have 300 for  
16 neighborhood; right.

17 MS. AEBLI: Correct, and if we have  
18 ten police, I believe we have maybe six or  
19 seven at the moment, but when we have ten  
20 police it goes close to the 400, but we have  
21 additional money from other years, so we  
22 never run out of money.

23 MS. FANUCCI: Okay.

24 MR. MCGOFF: Prior to the meeting I  
25 asked Mr. Mitchell if he would provide me

14

1 with a list of applicants who were not  
2 eligible for funding. That may help us in  
3 our determination if we know that they are  
4 not eligible then we won't --

5 MS. FANUCCI: We won't -- if won't  
6 be included in our decision.

7 MR. MCGOFF: They won't be included.  
8 Rather than going back and forth constantly  
9 with things that are eligible or not  
10 eligible. That would help greatly.

11 MS. AEBLI: No problem.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else? I now  
13 declare this public hearing closed.

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1 C E R T I F I C A T E

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3 I hereby certify that the proceedings and  
4 evidence are contained fully and accurately in the  
5 notes of testimony taken by me at the hearing of the

6 above-captioned matter and that the foregoing is a true  
7 and correct transcript of the same to the best of my  
8 ability.

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