

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING
PUBLIC HEARING

IN RE: FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 95, 2009 - SIGNIFYING THE INTENTION AND DESIRE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO ORGANIZE AND AUTHORITY TO BE KNOWN AS THE SCRANTON PUBLIC LIBRARY AUTHORITY UNDER PROVISIONS OF THE ACT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, KNOWN AS THE MUNICIPALITY AUTHORITIES ACT, 53 PA. C.S. CHAPTER 56; SETTING FORTH AND AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION; APPOINTING AND FIXING THE TERMS OF THE FIRST MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF SUCH AUTHORITY; AND UPON ORGANIZATION CONVEYING TITLE TO THE AUTHORITY FOR THE PROPERTIES ON WHICH THE ALBRIGHT MEMORIAL LIBRARY, THE GREEN RIDGE LIBRARY AND THE SILKMAN HOUSE ARE LOCATED; AUTHORIZING ALL OTHER NECESSARY ACTION; AND REPEALING ALL INCONSISTENT ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF RESOLUTIONS.

HELD:

Tuesday, December 15, 2009

LOCATION:

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

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

MR. ROBERT MCGOFF, PRESIDENT

MS. JUDY GATELLI, VICE-PRESIDENT

(Not present.)

MS. JANET E. EVANS

MS. SHERRY FANUCCI

MR. WILLIAM COURTRIGHT

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. Ms.
6 Fanucci.

7 MS. FANUCCI: Here.

8 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Courtright.

9 MR. COURTRIGHT: Here.

10 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Here. Notice is hereby
12 given that a public hearing of Scranton City
13 Council will be held on Tuesday, December 1,
14 2009 -- well, that's not right, December 15
15 at 10 a.m., in council chambers. The
16 purpose of said public hearing is to hear
17 testimony and discuss the following:

18 FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 95, 2009 -
19 SIGNIFYING THE INTENTION AND DESIRE OF THE
20 COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO ORGANIZE
21 AND AUTHORITY TO BE KNOWN AS THE SCRANTON
22 PUBLIC LIBRARY AUTHORITY UNDER PROVISIONS OF
23 THE ACT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, KNOWN AS
24 THE MUNICIPALITY AUTHORITIES ACT, 53 PA.
25 C.S. CHAPTER 56; SETTING FORTH AND

1 AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF ARTICLES OF
2 INCORPORATION; APPOINTING AND FIXING THE
3 TERMS OF THE FIRST MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF
4 SUCH AUTHORITY; AND UPON ORGANIZATION
5 CONVEYING TITLE TO THE AUTHORITY FOR THE
6 PROPERTIES ON WHICH THE ALBRIGHT MEMORIAL
7 LIBRARY, THE GREEN RIDGE LIBRARY AND THE
8 SILKMAN HOUSE ARE LOCATED; AUTHORIZING ALL
9 OTHER NECESSARY ACTION; AND REPEALING ALL
10 INCONSISTENT ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF
11 ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF
12 RESOLUTIONS.

13 Speakers will be allotted three
14 minutes time on the item. Mary Theresa
15 Patterson.

16 MS. PATTERSON: Good morning,
17 Council. I'm here in my capacity and have
18 the privilege to serve as the solicitor for
19 the City of Scranton, and we are here this
20 morning in support of the ordinance. The
21 reason for the ordinance is for the
22 libraries to own their own buildings.
23 Presently the library is governed by a Board
24 of Trustees originally established by a 1890
25 city ordinance which provides for the board

1 to manage the Albright Memorial Library.
2 There does not appear to be a trust
3 agreement or any other governing document
4 for the trustees.

5 There are three library properties,
6 the legal title to which is held in the name
7 of the City of Scranton, namely, the
8 Albright Memorial Library, the Greenridge
9 Library and the Providence Library and the
10 library in Providence which was known as the
11 Silkman House is no longer being maintained
12 as a library.

13 The 1890 deed whereby the Albright
14 Memorial Library was conveyed to the city
15 provided that the management and control of
16 the above may be changed at any time to
17 conform to any general laws passed by the
18 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania regulating free
19 public libraries when accepted by a majority
20 of the trustees as therein provided. City
21 council has the legal power to create a
22 municipal authority under the terms of the
23 Municipal Authorities Act.

24 The option is to transfer the title
25 and would be to transfer the title to these

1 properties to a nonprofit corporation. That
2 would take the control from city council and
3 the mayor or the city council could
4 establish a municipal authority and transfer
5 title to those properties to that authority.
6 That would keep the properties under the
7 control of city council. It would open it
8 up to transparency, it would be subject to
9 the Right-to-Know, and it's books and it's
10 records and his documentation.

11 The existing library board has
12 recommended that city council create a new
13 municipal authority to be known as the
14 Scranton Public Library Authority. Once the
15 authority has been formed the city would
16 convey title to those three properties, the
17 Albright, the Greenridge branch and the
18 Silkman House in accordance with the act.
19 These properties would be conveyed subject
20 to the conditions that appear in the chain
21 of title for each property, namely, that
22 they be used for library purposes only.

23 More specifically, in the 1890 deed
24 with the Albright Memorial Library there is
25 very restrictive language that states that:

1 For the establishment of a free public
2 library for the use and benefit of the
3 citizens and residents of the City of
4 Scranton. That chain of title will follow
5 the property, therefore, the property must
6 always be used as a library for the use and
7 benefit of the citizens and residents of the
8 City of Scranton.

9 The new public library authority
10 will have it's own board consisting of ten
11 members. These members -- thank you.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Joseph O'Brien.

13 MR. O'BRIEN: Members of council,
14 thank you very much. My name is Joseph
15 O'Brien, and I'm an attorney that has been
16 working on this project with the city
17 solicitor and I would like to indicate why
18 this is such a good idea to do it this way.
19 I think the most important thing that I know
20 council is very interested and the mayor is
21 very interested and members of the public
22 are very interested to making things have
23 accountability to the taxpayers and doing it
24 this way makes the library much more
25 accountable to the taxpayers than it's ever

1 been.

2 By having the library operate as a
3 public authority, it makes it subject to the
4 sunshine law. It makes it subject to the
5 Right-to-Know law. It makes it subject to
6 the provision that requires an annual report
7 to the Department of Community Affairs of
8 it's finances and maybe subject to the
9 provision of the law that allows the
10 Department of Community Affairs to audit the
11 library on a periodic basis. It also make
12 the library subject to the rules on bidding
13 of contracts and all of the other rules that
14 are part of your life as councilmen that
15 make the city so transparent. These are all
16 now going to apply to the library.

17 It also makes the library eligible
18 for government grants and things like that.
19 At the present time the library has operated
20 for many years or over 100 years it's
21 operated very successfully, but this is
22 going to bring this library, the library
23 system under -- into the public light, so
24 that members of the public, members of the
25 press, members of the government who are

1 interested in their operations and want to
2 make sure things are being done properly can
3 do so.

4 At the present time the library
5 situation is very ambiguous, it's not clear
6 whether it's subject to any of these laws or
7 not, it's using -- it obtains funds from
8 Lackawanna County, so this will ensure that
9 there is much more accountability in the
10 library operation that there has ever been
11 before, and that's why I believe from a
12 legal point of view that making a library
13 authority is very good idea. Thank you.

14 MR. MCGOFF: Jack Finnerty.

15 MR. FINNERTY: Mr. McGoff, if I may,
16 I'd like to defer my comments until the end,
17 if I may?

18 MR. MCGOFF: Absolutely. Andy
19 Sbaraglia.

20 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,
21 citizen of Scranton, fellow Scrantonian.
22 The library as it now has existed belongs to
23 the people of Scranton, all of the people of
24 Scranton. You want to give it to another
25 group of people, not necessarily in the best

1 interest of Scranton. As an authority you
2 know they can hire their own people, it's a
3 separate government. They can hire their
4 own people, they are going to hire their own
5 lawyer, they can mortgage the whole system
6 if they wanted to, they are completely
7 independent of you, so you are giving up
8 your rights and that's the bad thing about
9 it that you would give up your rights to
10 oversee the library system as it now is
11 constituted. Some people think that it's
12 bad, they do a terrible job now they are
13 going to do a much better job as an
14 authority.

15 The history of authorities in
16 Scranton is very bad. No where -- no where
17 has the authorities in Scranton really been
18 for the people. They are mainly for their
19 own agenda, and this is the same. They have
20 an agenda and they will constitute an agenda
21 and the main agenda is a new library. We
22 know this, this whole thing is going to be
23 directed toward the new library. We know
24 this. I don't know why you would even
25 consider giving up, never mind that, would

1 would you let somebody steal public access
2 is what you are about doing. This is what's
3 been done. You could use that word. You
4 are giving what belongs to the people of
5 Scranton to another group that doesn't
6 necessarily in the best interest of Scranton
7 and that's about the size of it.

8 We can't afford another authority
9 and that's basically where we stand now.
10 Another authority, you know they can
11 mortgage the library, they can hire people,
12 they got their own lawyer and there is not a
13 darn thing you can do about it and I don't
14 care how much public scrutiny there is there
15 is not a darn thing you can do about it. I
16 don't care if you can find out this and
17 that, the only way you can ever do anything
18 is if you can prove fraud.

19 I mean, they can say we are doing
20 this for the betterment of the city, like
21 they all do. Everybody does it for the
22 betterment of the city, but not the
23 betterment for the taxpayers, and that's the
24 bottom line. If you don't give a darn about
25 the taxpayers do what you are going to do

1 and let the taxpayers do what they must do.
2 That's all I can say about it.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Terry Brennan.

4 MS. BRENNAN: Good morning, council,
5 and people of Scranton. I bring these
6 notes, but I don't even have to look at them
7 because I have been in the same position for
8 the last 40 years hoping that the City of
9 Scranton would help the Scranton Public
10 Library. We get no money from these people.

11 MR. MINORA: Excuse me, could you
12 state your name?

13 MS. BRENNAN: Terry. T, as in Tango,
14 E-R-R-Y Brenann. B for Bravo, R-E-N-N-A-N.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Continue please.

16 MS. BRENNAN: There is just so much
17 to say about libraries. It has nothing to
18 do with building a new library in South
19 Side, Bullshead or anywhere else because
20 this is not going to happen. This is a big
21 fairytale. No one has the money, the state
22 is not going to give us money, I don't know
23 about federal funds, but what we do need is
24 this \$700,000 that the city is committing,
25 we would love it to be committed to a

1 parking lot which possibly could be exactly
2 where the -- where the Midtown Apartments is
3 on the west side and have tiered parking
4 there for the library and that would also go
5 for the Cultural Center. We cannot stand
6 any longer going around the block, around
7 the block to go to the library or to the
8 Masonic Temple or if you have purses or a
9 cane and you are all the way down by Holy
10 Family Church hope you would see the
11 overture -- or hear the overture or the
12 first act of a play. This is to nonsense.
13 We are taxpayers for the library and for the
14 cultural center and we should have someplace
15 to park in order to be able to get there,
16 that's number one.

17 As far as South Side and being a --
18 being an anchor and so on and so forth for
19 the library, we would love to have an
20 anchor, and that would be industry for South
21 Scranton. I laugh when I hear that people
22 are interested in a library there, they're
23 more interested in getting flight jackets as
24 well and going out around the street and
25 they would love industry. They need jobs

1 there. Just because we don't have any space
2 in the library doesn't mean it should go to
3 South Side or as one said, why not
4 Bullshead, why not someplace else?

5 What I would propose most humbly is
6 to use any money that we could possibly get
7 for a parking -- for a parking space and I
8 said the Midtown would be perfect and to
9 utilize the administration building as a
10 troika to the other two buildings. Now,
11 that would mean not disassembling anything
12 on the outside of the exterior or the only
13 elevator that is there that could act as a
14 sculpture. Don't through that out as junk
15 the first minute you would get there.

16 We would do what we can to get the
17 school of architecture free with their
18 students to have wonderful ideas new that
19 would be green, that we would use, also,
20 up-to-date that would be good for them next
21 100 years. What -- oh. Thank you very
22 much.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Wayne Evans.

24 MR. EVANS: Good morning, Council.
25 My name is Wayne Evans, I'm president of

1 South Scranton Residents Associations. I'm
2 here to today to voice my support and the
3 support of our organization for the proposed
4 library authority.

5 By many accounts, the new authority
6 would be created and beneficial for the
7 library within the City of Scranton allowing
8 increased managerial flexibility, more
9 accountability, as we have heard, as well as
10 creating a mechanism, if I understand
11 correctly, to increase the current deficient
12 insurance coverage at the Albright Memorial
13 Library.

14 It should also be noted that our
15 position is that the Albright Library always
16 remain true to it's current mission that it
17 should always be a city public library for
18 all of our citizens. The discussions of
19 opening a new library in South Side or in
20 Scranton have little bearing on the
21 continued use of the new Albright or the
22 existing Albright library other than to
23 enhance it's use by allowing it to function
24 in a more productive way.

25 While our organization fully

1 supports efforts for a new library in South
2 Side, we feel that the proposed library will
3 be able to stand on it's own merits, that
4 when fully discussed in a proper public
5 manner, that the benefits of that project
6 and location will be fully understood by the
7 majority of Scrantonians. Thank you for
8 your time and happy holidays.

9 MR. MCGOFF: Marie Schumacher.

10 MS. SCHUMACHER: Marie Schumacher,
11 city resident. Questions raised by this
12 ordinance that should be answered before
13 taking a final note include the following:

14 One, the second whereas notes that
15 the city owns the property formerly used as
16 a public library known as the Silkman House.
17 The deed to this property was conveyed
18 specifically subject that the said premise
19 shall be used in a whole or in part for
20 library purposes and shall be maintained as
21 a branch of the Scranton Public Library,
22 SPL. Since the city has not complied with
23 the premise, does it even retain title to
24 this property?

25 The fourth whereas states a

1 provision of the deed for the Albright
2 Memorial Library as management and control
3 may be changed at any time to conform to any
4 general laws passed by the Commonwealth of
5 Pennsylvania regulating free public
6 libraries. Unless a bill number is provided
7 at this hearing, I must assume that such a
8 statute does not exist and this is a lie.

9 The fifth whereas states the
10 trustees of the SPL have recommended that a
11 new municipal authority be created. This is
12 a blatant lie. In a public meeting held
13 yesterday of the county library board, it
14 was revealed that the president of the board
15 and several trustees were called to a
16 meeting to advise them of the ordinance
17 establishing an authority on the 27th of
18 September by the city law department.

19 Further, the ordinance backup
20 contains minutes of an emergency meeting of
21 the SPL to approve a resolution giving
22 approval to city -- to council to create an
23 authority not to request an authority. What
24 becomes of the Scranton Public Library Board
25 of Trustees? Will this board be dissolved

1 and if so does Article 12 of their by-laws
2 require liquidation of their assets?

3 The elephant in the room is, of
4 course, the belief by many that the true
5 purpose of the establishment of the
6 authority is to raid the funds held by the
7 SPL for use to buy property in South
8 Scranton and contract for blueprints for a
9 library to be built on the South Scranton
10 property. The county is on record as saying
11 they cannot afford another library for
12 Scranton, so if the Albright collection
13 should be moved to a new library the empty
14 Albright would be right ripe for sale or
15 lease, something the majority of the people
16 I believe do not desire.

17 In closing, to ensure the faith you
18 have expressed that this scenario can't
19 happen and you want to approve this
20 ordinance, please put your money where your
21 stated faith is and incorporate the
22 following into the authority charter and
23 articles of incorporation as an amendment.

24 The Albright Library, Greenridge
25 Library and Silkman House may be not be

1 sold, leased or mortgaged. Such action will
2 cause the deed or deeds to be returned to
3 the City of Scranton for \$1.

4 Two -- may I? Last one.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Finish.

6 MS. SCHUMACHER: None of the funds
7 currently held by the SPL may be used to
8 procure property or contract to design of a
9 new library building without a note of
10 approval by both the Scranton City Council
11 and the county board of commissioners.
12 Thank you.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Heather Tomlison.

14 MS. TOMLISON: Heather Tomlison,
15 resident of Scranton. I'm not an elegant
16 speaker so my comments are actually more
17 directed as questions. The Lackawanna
18 County library system already has the
19 infrastructure with multiple libraries,
20 including Abington and the other and outside
21 of the area of the City of Scranton, so
22 would this ordinance actually disassociate
23 the Scranton library from the Lackawanna
24 County system and that would create quite a
25 few problems, I think, within like the

1 interlibrary loan and the grant structure
2 and the funding structure that already
3 exists in the state.

4 Funding has already been cut for the
5 library through the state, so we could end
6 up having to pay for -- if that is the case,
7 we would end up having to pay for this
8 through higher taxes and the City of
9 Scranton which are already nice chunk of
10 your income as it is. That's really it.
11 There are better things to use money for in
12 the City of Scranton than something that
13 already is working in my mind pretty well.
14 Thank you.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Stephanie Bressler.

16 MS. BRESSLER: Good morning. My name
17 is Dr. Stephanie Bressler. I'm a resident
18 of the city residing on East Gibson Street.
19 I'm also currently working as the Elm Street
20 manager in South Side Scranton. The
21 Pennsylvania Department of Community and
22 Economic Development, as you probably
23 already know, has designated an area within
24 South Side as an Elm Street community and
25 contracted with the United Neighborhood

1 Centers of Northeastern Pennsylvania to
2 implement the South Side revitalization plan
3 developed during a public planning process.
4 I speak today in support of the ordinance to
5 establish the Scranton Public Library
6 Authority.

7 The trustees of the Scranton Public
8 Library have recommended this authority be
9 created for the purpose of owning and
10 operating public libraries in the City of
11 Scranton. According to the ordinance, these
12 powers would be extended to "Other library
13 branches created at any time in the future
14 by the authority."

15 The establishment of the authority
16 would facilitate plans for building a
17 library at Cedar Avenue and Alder Street.
18 The South Scranton revitalization plan
19 recognizes the pivotal role the proposed
20 library would play in implementing a
21 comprehensive neighborhood renewal strategy.
22 While the plan covers an approximate 30
23 block area of South Scranton, it places a
24 particular focus on the Cedar Avenue
25 commercial corridor which is the main

1 gateway to the city's downtown.

2 Redevelopment of this corridor is critical
3 to the revitalization of the historic South
4 Side neighborhood. The library would anchor
5 a central position in this corridor
6 complimenting several sites that are now
7 candidates for development as mixed use
8 projects. These developments will generate
9 momentum for private sector investment.

10 As envisioned by the plan, the
11 library would promote lifelong learning by
12 providing space for satellite and local
13 colleges and Universities. It would
14 establish the sense of place and community
15 that would encourage participation in civic
16 mindedness from South Side residents.

17 According to the project for public
18 safety, new libraries are anchoring major
19 urban revitalization projects throughout the
20 United States. The positive impacts off
21 local and economic development have even
22 spawned a new literature on library return
23 on investment. Just as importantly,
24 libraries have become vibrant public places
25 and programmable space for sharing

1 information, ideas and experiences as
2 evidenced by the role of the Albright
3 Memorial Library that is has increasingly
4 assumed.

5 An authority comprised of citizens
6 knowledgeable about and committed to the new
7 roles of public libraries, would provide
8 leadership for developing these places for
9 civic, cultural and social exchanges. Thank
10 you.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Any other speakers?

12 MS. FRANUS: Fay Franus, Scranton.
13 I have heard much tonight -- today about
14 South Scranton revitalization. Well, we,
15 the taxpayers, I live in Bellevue, people in
16 East Mountain, West Side, North Scranton,
17 all over Scranton will be paying the taxes
18 that this authority will bring about and the
19 debt they occur. They claim they won't
20 incur debt, I don't believe it and as Mrs.
21 Evans said, once you get an authority it's
22 pretty hard to get rid of it and I doubt
23 very much that you can.

24 I would hope that everybody would
25 pay attention and think about this and don't

1 do it, but I know this is not going to
2 happen because the three you, Mr. McGoff,
3 Mrs. Fanucci and Mrs. Gatelli have an agenda
4 here and we could talk here until the cows
5 come home and you are going to vote "yes,"
6 so the public hearing is just a formality.

7 I mean, we are all wasting our time,
8 the ink is already dry on the papers and I
9 don't know why everybody is so keen on
10 helping Judy Gatelli and South Side. The
11 squeaky wheel gets the grease or the money
12 or whatever, but you can bet there is an
13 agenda going on here and there is going to
14 be a lot of deals once this authority thing
15 is passed you people should be following
16 this to see what's going to happen because
17 there is going to be a lot of closed doors,
18 a lot of things going on.

19 The taxpayers are the ones that have
20 to pay for this and all the money they are
21 going to be borrowing. We owe, the
22 taxpayers already -- the city is in debt, we
23 don't have anywhere near the money to cover
24 the debt we are, let alone more debt from
25 this. We do not need a library in South

1 Side. If you are going to have a library it
2 should be centrally located not just to
3 satisfy a small segment of people in the
4 city. They have already gotten enough. I
5 think they have to start concentrating on
6 the whole city and all of the taxpayers and
7 not just a select few and I think it's
8 outrageous that this city council --
9 remembers this city council are taking care
10 of certain people and not the taxpayers
11 which they are supposed to be representing.

12 This vote should be "no" and I hope
13 the rest of the taxpayers in the city don't
14 sit down and take this. I hope we all get
15 up and fight you no matter which way you
16 vote because this is not going to happen
17 anymore. Your days of ruling the people are
18 over and I think it's going to start today.

19 MR. UNGVARSKY: Good morning, city
20 council. I'm Tom Ungvarsky, and I'm a
21 resident of the City of Scranton and this is
22 my library card. I do use the Scranton
23 Public Library and I'm well satisfied with
24 the Scranton Public Library. It's beyond me
25 why after 100 years of the Scranton Library

1 being in operation all of a sudden in the
2 last three weeks we have to push through an
3 authority on people.

4 If city council votes this in, you
5 will have no control over who runs that
6 authority and I understand that several
7 members on that authority are not even from
8 the City of Scranton. I think it's time you
9 started doing what's right for the people of
10 this City of Scranton and not for the people
11 with political interests. Vote "no." Thank
12 you.

13 MR. PATILLA: Morning,
14 Mr. Courtright, Mrs. Evans. We have
15 heard --

16 MR. MCGOFF: Please state your name
17 for the record.

18 MR. PATILLA: Sam Patilla, and I'm a
19 South Side Scranton resident, but I'm also a
20 patron of the Albright Library. We have
21 heard statements to the effect of satellite
22 office being created in the various
23 colleges, I have been here four years, they
24 have had plenty enough opportunity to do
25 that, why wait until now, the formation of

1 when I walk out of this council the final
2 vote is going be three-two, but hopefully,
3 hopefully within three weeks the people's
4 council can revisit this and put it back in
5 order and cancel this because we cannot
6 afford this, all right?

7 You have all of these suits back
8 here. A couple of them showed up throughout
9 the month while this item was placed on the
10 agenda, but most of them are just here today
11 for the first time because they have
12 something in it. It is not met for the
13 taxpayers, okay? We don't get anything out
14 building a new library in South Scranton,
15 all right? We need to concentrate on the
16 filth. The dirt and the litter, the
17 prostitution and the crime in that area
18 first before you bring in new construction
19 of any kind, all right?

20 We are not giving monies to the
21 small businesses in that area to help them
22 promote jobs. We are not giving them money
23 to help them see an increase from the red
24 and bring them up into the black. No. We
25 are helping a certain few, many who are not

1 even Scranton residents, put money in their
2 pocket, put Scranton taxpayer money in their
3 pockets to benefit the few, not the
4 majority.

5 Like I said, you are not going to be
6 able to satisfy everybody's whim, you can
7 never make everybody happy, but the majority
8 of the people of the Scranton have already
9 spoke. We have already voted down this way
10 of government. The past election we sent
11 Mrs. Fanucci and Mrs. Gatelli on your way
12 because we don't want this way of government
13 anymore, all right?

14 And this is a lame duck
15 administration pushing this garbage through
16 and hopefully there is something within the
17 law that will allow you to revisit this in
18 three weeks so we can just wash our hands of
19 this and move towards that's actually going
20 to be help the City of Scranton. Something
21 like increasing the fees on all of the
22 attorneys that do business, increasing the
23 fees on the banks, increase the fees on
24 people that have money, get the money from
25 people who have it. Stop taking it from

1 people who don't.

2 MR. SPINDLER: Good evening, Council,
3 Les Spindler. Good morning or not good
4 evening. First of all, this is really an
5 inconvenience, I had to take an earlier
6 lunch today, but I felt it was important to
7 come here. As I stated last week,
8 Mr. Courtright wasn't here and Mrs. Gatelli
9 still isn't here, but I'm sure she'll be
10 here to put her "yes" vote in when it comes
11 time for the vote.

12 As I said last week, you people are
13 elected to represent the whole city, not
14 just the part of the city that's going to
15 benefit from the library in South Side. A
16 library in South Side won't benefit the
17 people for the rest of this city. The
18 Albright Library is centrally located,
19 people from all over the city can go there
20 and it would be an injustice to the rest of
21 the people in this city to put this library
22 authority through just to benefit South
23 Side, and I know that's why Mrs. Gatelli
24 will vote for it.

25 You have to think of the rest of the

1 people in this city that it will be a
2 definite injustice and hopefully you will
3 vote "no", but like other people said I
4 doubt you will because you all have your
5 agendas. And it's funny how the last couple
6 of years Mrs. Gatelli said, "Oh, after the
7 budget is passed we take a recess."

8 It's funny how this year after the
9 budget was passed there was no recess.
10 That's because Chris Doherty has got his
11 agenda to get pushed through before the lame
12 duck council is finished and you can see the
13 handwriting on the wall, but it seems like
14 when it benefits the mayor you people don't
15 want to recess for the rest of the year and
16 that's an injustice to the people of this
17 city. I hope you vote "no." Thank you.

18 MR. FRISBEE: My name is Kenneth
19 Frisbee and I live here in Scranton and I
20 came here to address the council and my
21 fellow citizens here who pay taxes. I have
22 paid taxes in Scranton here for over
23 45 years, I never complained, but now I'm
24 going to complain because we are going to
25 build a new library or we are talking about

1 building a new library. They closed one in
2 North Scranton. My children used to go down
3 there. They closed it because they said no
4 one was using it. Now we are going to build
5 another big one in South Side. I think it's
6 terrible. I think it's about time for the
7 government to pull in their reigns, stop
8 spending money. Look at our -- look at our
9 country is in debt, our city is in debt, our
10 school board -- school district is in debt.
11 In this morning's paper, school board is
12 going to raise taxes next year, I don't
13 think there is year that goes by that either
14 the county, the city or the state, you know,
15 or the school board don't raise taxes.

16 There again, I'm not complaining. I
17 think it's a privilege to live in a country
18 like we have, but it's about time to stop.
19 Stop building, pull in your reigns, please.
20 I'm retired, okay? I'm living on social
21 security. When I worked I could afford to
22 pay taxes. Now, I take \$500 a month to pay
23 for my wife and I insurance. Her social
24 security check is only about \$650. Come on.
25 Cut us a break here. When you guys retire

1 you are going to see exactly what I mean.
2 Save your money, you are going to need it
3 because they don't take breaks -- they don't
4 give people that retire breaks, believe me.

5 When you get a cut when they go
6 shopping in the stores sometimes they give
7 us a 5 percent discount, I appreciate that,
8 but the taxes are killing us. Please. And
9 all we are going to do is just have to raise
10 more taxes, more taxes, more taxes. We just
11 can't do it anymore. Reign it in. Don't
12 spend anymore. Cut what you can cut, but no
13 more building.

14 I heard people say, well, they are
15 going to build because there is a lot of
16 money to be passed around, contracts and
17 such, I don't know about that. I really
18 don't care. All I care is you are taking
19 money out of our pockets and we can't afford
20 it anymore. My plant left, they went to
21 China and I had to retire, so please, reign
22 it in.

23 I know it might be going in one ear
24 and out the other, I don't know. I hope it
25 isn't, so please pay attention to the

1 taxpayers.

2 MR. DOBRZYN: Good morning, Council.
3 Dave Dobrzyn, resident of Scranton, taxpayer
4 and so forth. The thought occurred to me
5 this week that the current proposal for a
6 library is seven blocks from our current
7 location and as aforementioned I felt that
8 there is plenty of business space right over
9 on the corner, the corner of Adams and
10 Mulberry, caddy-corner from the library as
11 far as the block goes. You could rent a
12 whole floor there if you had to.

13 And if we were really going to take
14 a library seriously, I mean, that library if
15 it's built in a location that I think it is
16 it's practically a court, and top of it
17 there is no guarantee that that neighborhood
18 is ever going to really improve and with the
19 current economic conditions people get
20 crazier and crazier, so it's liable to
21 degenerate further or delipidate further.
22 So, you know, shame on the state legislature
23 and if that's the sole purpose of this then
24 my sincerest apologies, but a South Side
25 library actually if you think of it, I mean,

1 if you really wanted to consider it as South
2 Side Library have it possibly up at the top
3 of the hill on Pittston Avenue or something
4 where that old Gulf station was or something
5 like that, way back there something much
6 more convenient to people in South Side than
7 two blocks out of town because that all it
8 basically is, two city blocks out of town.
9 I could walk from that location to the
10 library in less than 15 minutes, bad heart
11 and everything else.

12 So, you know, these people don't
13 have big money, I don't know how anybody
14 thinks that an Elm Street project is going
15 to -- going to be feasible right now. It's
16 so many blocks and look at all of the
17 millions we have put into Lackawanna Avenue,
18 you know, and you are talking about an area
19 that's 10 or 15 times the size. It just --
20 I don't feel at this time it's feasible and
21 I'm willing to listen and interested in what
22 everybody has got to say, and once again,
23 shame on the state legislature. They are
24 supposed to be pro-education. Well, I was
25 out in the world for 30 or 40 years and in a

1 trade where I could clearly see reading
2 impediments constantly stranded in the way
3 of automobiles being fixed, so time for the
4 next guy. Thank you and have a good day.

5 MR. FEENEY: My name is Rose Feeney.
6 I'm a taxpayer and I live in South Scranton.
7 I am an avid member of the library. I mean,
8 I have my membership and just as the
9 gentleman said formerly it's a well-run
10 library. They have maintained it and their
11 board always conducted all of their
12 employees with the most considerate help to
13 all of us.

14 Now, the Albright family gave it to
15 us in the city to be used for our benefit,
16 our education, not to being controlled by an
17 authority that can do with it what they
18 feel, how they feel, employ whomever they
19 want. I believe that is a bad decision. I
20 am disappointed in the trustees who they
21 agreed to do it, they did not recommend it,
22 they did not ask for it, it was a quick
23 emergency meeting especially to get this
24 accomplished for the administration benefit.

25 Please reconsider. Do not approve

1 an authority that will take the Albright
2 Memorial Library out of the reason that this
3 family gave it to our people of the city.
4 Thank you for listening.

5 MR. FINNERTY: Good morning, Council.
6 Jack Finnerty, lifelong Scrantonian and
7 director of Scranton Public Library. Just a
8 couple of things that I want to point out
9 this morning. First of all, it was
10 wonderful as director of the library to hear
11 that magnificent endorsement of the
12 library's performance and it's staff. Thank
13 you very much for that.

14 But let me assure the previous
15 speakers and everyone else that the board of
16 trustees of the Scranton Public Library
17 takes it's responsibilities very seriously,
18 so when they were presented with this
19 proposal they certainly gave it ample time,
20 discussion. I can tell you that the
21 discussion was both lengthy and pointed.

22 At the end of that process, the
23 Scranton Board of Trustees, which is
24 historical, in fact, it dates back to 1890
25 has, in fact, unanimously endorsed the

1 creation of a Scranton Public Library
2 Authority.

3 I would also like to use this
4 opportunity to maybe put to rest what I
5 would call assumptions or perhaps
6 misinformation. The issue of a new library
7 whether it be South Scranton or whether it
8 be somewhere else in the City of Scranton or
9 for that matter in Lackawanna County, is
10 something that requires the approval of the
11 Lackawanna County Library report on location
12 and on funding. These are two separate
13 issues.

14 I would argue at some other time at
15 great length and in a public forum, the
16 rationale for a new library, again,
17 somewhere. There is no address that's been
18 determined, not even one that is favored at
19 this point. I would argue that we need a
20 new public library, not to replace the
21 Albright, but to add to it, to give us an
22 opportunity to provide better services with
23 better parking, with total handicapped
24 accessibility, but that's a separate issue.
25 There is nothing in today's legislation that

1 either guarantees or necessarily facilitates
2 the creation of a new library.

3 The other thing is, I can also
4 assure you that the Scranton Public Library
5 Board of Trustees has no interest whatsoever
6 in ever vacating the Albright building. It
7 is a local treasure. It has served the
8 people of this city since June 1, 1893, and
9 by all accounts has done a reasonably good
10 job. That's an understatement. We want to
11 continue to provide library service to all
12 of the residents from that location and I
13 thank you for your time.

14 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Finnerty.
15 Anyone else? I now declare this public
16 hearing closed.

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

C E R T I F I C A T E

1
2
3 I hereby certify that the proceedings and
4 evidence are contained fully and accurately in the
5 notes 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.

9
10
11 _____
12 CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR
13 OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25