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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

HELD:

Tuesday, February 2, 2010

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:

JANET EVANS, PRESIDENT

PAT ROGAN, VICE-PRESIDENT

ROBERT MCGOFF

FRANK JOYCE

JOHN LOSCOMBE

NANCY KRAKE, CITY CLERK

NEIL COOLICAN, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

BOYD HUGHES, SOLICITOR

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

3 MS. EVANS: Roll call, please.

4 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Here.

6 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Rogan.

7 MR. ROGAN: Here.

8 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Loscombe.

9 MR. LOSCOMBE: Here.

10 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Joyce.

11 MR. JOYCE: Here.

12 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

13 MS. EVANS: Here. Dispense with the
14 reading of the minutes.

15 MS. KRAKE: THIRD ORDER. 3-A.

16 MINUTES OF THE SCRANTON/LACKAWANNA HEALTH
17 AND WELFARE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD ON
18 DECEMBER 17, 2009.

19 MS. EVANS: Are there any comments?
20 If not, received and filed.

21 MS. KRAKE: 3-B. MINUTES OF THE
22 FIREMEN'S PENSION COMMISSION MEETING
23 HELD ON DECEMBER 16, 2009.

24 MS. EVANS: Are there any comments?
25 If not, received and filed.

1 MS. KRAKE: 3-C. MINUTES OF THE
2 NON-UNIFORM MUNICIPAL PENSION BOARD
3 MEETING HELD ON DECEMBER 16, 2009.

4 MS. EVANS: Are there any comments?
5 If not, received and filed.

6 MS. KRAKE: 3-D. MINUTES OF THE
7 POLICE PENSION COMMISSION MEETING HELD
8 ON DECEMBER 16, 2009.

9 MS. EVANS: Are there any comments?
10 If not, received and filed.

11 MS. KRAKE: 3-E. AGENDA FOR THE
12 NON-UNIFORM MUNICIPAL PENSION BOARD
13 MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 27, 2010.

14 MS. EVANS: Are there any comments?
15 If not, received and filed.

16 3-F. AGENDA FOR THE ZONING HEARING
17 BOARD MEETING TO BE HELD FEBRUARY 10, 2010.

18 MS. EVANS: Are there any comments?
19 If not, received and filed.

20 MS. KRAKE: Ms. Evans, would you
21 like to hear our notes?

22 MS. EVANS: Yes, we are most
23 interested in our clerk's notes.

24 MS. KRAKE: We received many
25 responses this week. The first was to

1 Councilman Frank Joyce in reference to his
2 question about the 2009 municipal annual
3 audit and financial report to DCED. He had
4 asked Roseanne Novembrino, our controller,
5 if we were on track to meet the March 1
6 deadline. Her reply is that the
7 controller's office is always on track for
8 any reporting requirements assigned to this
9 office. Unfortunately, the public
10 accounting firm must complete their audit to
11 enable this office to complete our reporting
12 and DCED is well aware of this fact as well.

13 I would like to request at this
14 time, Mrs. Evans, would you like our office
15 to forward a letter to Rossi & Rossi, the
16 auditors, and ask them when they plan on
17 completing their audit?

18 MS. EVANS: Yes, absolutely.

19 MS. KRAKE: Our next response is
20 from Jeff Brazil, director of the Department
21 of Public Works. It's a response to our
22 letters of January 20 and 21: The potholes
23 in front of Penn Security Bank and Spruce
24 Street in front of Scranton High School on
25 Seventh Avenue are both state highways. He

1 is telling us PennDOT in Clarks Summit will
2 need to be contacted.

3 The potholes in the 100 block of
4 Meadow Avenue as well as 300 block of Boland
5 Court were repaired on this date, that would
6 have been January 22.

7 Also, he says he will see what can
8 be done to the corner of Glinko Street and
9 Annex Corner, so our office has sent a
10 letter to Mr. George Roberts, district
11 executive of PennDOT in Dunmore. We are
12 asking him per Jeff Brazil to repair these
13 roads and he will be letting us know in
14 writing by February 16.

15 MS. EVANS: Very good.

16 MS. KRAKE: Our next response is
17 from Mark Seitzinger concerning our letter
18 of January 29 regarding Field and Grove
19 Street where there is a junk vehicle, a
20 camper and piles of dirt and other debris.
21 He is telling us he would dispatch an
22 inspector this week to find out what the
23 situation is with the property and the
24 vehicles and the at the debris thereon.

25 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

1 MS. KRAKE: Councilman Rogan will be
2 addressing the Crisp Avenue Bridge with us,
3 so we'll leave that for him.

4 1101 Cedar Avenue. Mark Seitzinger,
5 Director of Licensing and Inspections,
6 called the council office today to report
7 that the owner of 1101 Cedar Avenue, Eddie
8 Main from Magnotta Construction called him
9 to say that the permit is posted in the
10 window and construction will start next
11 week. Mr. Main stated they did not begin
12 the work because they were awaiting for a
13 temporary power to start the project. Mr.
14 Seitzinger was glad for this, but he felt
15 the city has stuck their neck out quite a
16 bit for Mr. Main and that's why he called
17 our office directly, so we will continue to
18 be in touch with him to make sure that are
19 starting the project as they said.

20 MS. EVANS: Excellent.

21 MS. KRAKE: I also spoke to the IT
22 Department concerning the backup of the
23 weekly council meeting agendas being posted
24 to the city's website. They are working to
25 format the files that for the most part they

1 receive from the law department and that's
2 concerning any of the legislation that we
3 have. They may be able to download the
4 backup with the agendas as PDF files. We
5 will continue to monitor their progress and
6 in the meantime all of the backup can be
7 viewed in the city clerk's office.

8 Stu Renda, the business
9 administrator, reported to the council
10 office today that the actual cost for the
11 landfill tipping fee for 2009 was
12 \$1,583,135. This was a follow-up to the
13 question referencing the revenue receipt
14 from the refuse fee which current and
15 delinquent which is 4.3 million for 2009.

16 Second requests were sent out for
17 Bunker Hill Street and Wheeler and Olive
18 street and we will report on the status of
19 these at the next council meeting, and
20 that's all we have for today.

21 MS. EVANS: Thank you very much. Do
22 any council members have announcements at
23 this time?

24 MR. MCGOFF: Please. The Scranton
25 firefighters are holding a t-shirt sale to

1 raise money to send care packages to troops
2 in the middle east. Firefighter Tim
3 O'Connor is the chairman of the fundraiser.
4 The shirts -- these are the t-shirts that
5 are being sold. If anyone would like to
6 purchase a t-shirt or hoodie, Mr. Gervasi
7 had one of the hoodies on, but I guess he is
8 not here any longer. The hooded sweatshirts
9 they can e-mail Mr. O'Connor at
10 SFDshirts@hotmail.com or go to
11 www.Scrantonfire.com.

12 I will give this to ECTV and
13 hopefully they will run it on there as well
14 with those websites, so they can you contact
15 them. The t-shirts are \$15 and the hoodies
16 are \$25 and Scranton firefighters thank you
17 in advance for your support.

18 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Anyone else?

19 MR. JOYCE: Yes. On Wednesday,
20 February 10, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
21 Friendly's Restaurant has notified us that
22 they will be donating a portion of their
23 food receipts to the St. Francis of Assisi
24 Kitchen, so if you frequent Friendly's
25 Restaurant I would like to encourage you to

1 go there between those times because you
2 would also be benefiting a great cause.
3 That's all.

4 MS. EVANS: Anyone else? The annual
5 Lithuanian flag raising ceremony will be
6 held on Saturday, February 13th at 11 a.m.
7 at Scranton City Hall and hosted by Dick and
8 Marie Laske, my very dear friends from North
9 Scranton.

10 Attention, Veterans, there will be a
11 very important informational meeting to
12 discuss the closing of the governor's
13 outreach office in Pittston this Friday,
14 February 5, 2010, at 9 a.m. the meeting
15 will held at the DeNaple's building on the
16 University of Scranton campus and speakers
17 will include state representatives Kevin
18 Murphy and Ken Smith as well as other
19 representatives from Harrisburg. It is very
20 important that local veterans attend this
21 meeting.

22 The fifth annual pet supply drive to
23 benefit the Griffen Pond Animal Shelter is
24 being conducted from Monday, February 1,
25 through Friday, February 12. This animal

1 shelter exists solely on donations from the
2 community and receives no government
3 funding. Donations of pet supplies or gift
4 cards to grocery stores, pet stores,
5 Walmarts, etcetera, can be dropped off at
6 the first floor of Scranton City Hall
7 through February 12. Please help these
8 precious animals to survive.

9 Saints Peter and Paul Church, 1309
10 West Locust Street, Scranton, will conduct a
11 parish pierogi and clam chowder sale every
12 Wednesday during lent beginning February
13 13 -- or, excuse me, not every Wednesday,
14 every weekend during lent beginning February
15 13 and 14. Delicious pierogi are \$5 a dozen
16 and clam chowder is \$5 a quart and they may
17 be purchased on Saturdays before and after
18 the 4:00 mass and on Sundays before and
19 after the 11:30 a.m. mass. Please call
20 orders into Sandy Paranick, at 342-1719 and
21 stock up for those Fridays in lent, and
22 that's all.

23 MS. KRAKE: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS'
24 PARTICIPATION.

25 MS. EVANS: Our first speaker is

1 Andy Sbaraglia.

2 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,
3 citizen of Scranton, fellow Scrantonians. I
4 listened to Mr. Barrett's presentation. It
5 brought a lot of questions in my mind. How
6 are the people that sit on the board
7 appointed? I know you have to appoint them,
8 but what are the qualifications to sit on
9 any board other than you're a living, I
10 guess breathing person that lives in
11 Scranton? I assume they must have some kind
12 of criteria for choosing these people and
13 that's important. You have to concur. Does
14 that mean you can disagree? I have never
15 seen anybody disagree up there. At least --
16 well, there is no way you could have
17 disagreed all you want, it wouldn't have
18 mattered.

19 MS. EVANS: Correct.

20 MS. SBARAGLIA: But now it does
21 matter. Now, you can check into the
22 qualifications. All of these things they
23 are doing like sitting there at the Scranton
24 Parking Authority. You watch them take
25 their letter of credit and borrow on it, now

1 they are going to borrow again under a
2 letter of credit. You watch the parking
3 rates go up, you watch the revenue from the
4 parking meters go up and there is a definite
5 reason for that.

6 As you know, them letters of credit
7 with the Parking Authority has all to do
8 with the revenue coming from the parking
9 meters, so hence, if you decrease parking
10 meter revenue, obviously, you can borrow
11 more, but at what point does it collapse and
12 we are -- that's what I said, the board
13 members that's being put on you have to
14 scrutinize a lot better before you pass them
15 on and make sure they are the best for the
16 city because this is where all of the
17 trouble is coming from. They keep saying,
18 "We only respond to our board members,"
19 well, that's bull. They respond to the
20 people of Scranton and anybody -- if we back
21 their money and have to pay if they fault
22 then they are responsible to us and not just
23 to an authority.

24 An authority is not Scranton and the
25 more we should realize it the better we'll

1 be. Scranton is Scranton and every
2 authority should always think of that. You
3 think of the city and that's the most
4 important thing. You don't give away
5 parking spaces 100 parking spaces and then
6 you only got money. And God knows what the
7 Connell building got to say. What happens
8 with the Connell building? God knows what
9 they are giving away there. We know what
10 they give away at the Hilton, at least
11 that's on record.

12 That's what I said, spend more time
13 now that you got the choice, you can do
14 something now and check out the authority
15 members as they come before you and look for
16 the best qualified. That's all I can say.
17 Thank you.

18 MS. EVANS: Bill Jackowitz.

19 MR. JACKOWITZ: Good evening,
20 Scranton City Council. Bill Jackowitz,
21 South Scranton resident, member of the
22 Taxpayers' Association. Simple solution,
23 eliminate all authorities since the
24 authorities are not being paid and they are
25 appointed to these positions, let the

1 elected officials who are being paid who are
2 elected to govern and to legislate let them
3 handle everything. Eliminate all
4 authorities since it was brought out tonight
5 very eloquently they are not paid.

6 I have learned that you never take
7 the word of an elected official or
8 politician. What you do is take a look at
9 their voting record. If the elected
10 official is telling you that he or she are
11 for the citizens and taxpayers but continues
12 to vote against them then that should tell
13 you he or she cannot be trusted. If they
14 tell you that they have no political
15 ambition or agenda and then run for office
16 again that should tell you that they can't
17 be trusted.

18 We all know that we have some local,
19 state and federal politicians that fall into
20 in category. Remembers, words are just
21 thoughts and they mean nothing until they
22 are put into no action. In this case, you
23 are voting on the fact they ran again for
24 office. I urge all concerned citizens,
25 voters and taxpayers to pay closer attention

1 to your local, political environment. For
2 example, Mayor/Governor/Lieutenant Governor
3 Doherty, ran for a third term knowing
4 full-well that he has aspirations to become
5 governor or lieutenant governor. He wants
6 out of Scranton. I feel that he should have
7 passed on the mayor's job and spent his
8 full-time running for governor or lieutenant
9 governor on his own time and the not the
10 residents'/taxpayers' of Scranton time.

11 I imagine that Mayor/ Governor/
12 Lieutenant Governor, is drawing his full
13 salary from the City of Scranton. I also
14 have been told that he has a full-time
15 employee driving him around the state as his
16 campaign for governor or lieutenant
17 governor. This employee also is receiving a
18 salary while not doing the job he was hired
19 to do.

20 Now, County Commissioner/Congressman
21 O'Brien is doing the same thing. If he has
22 aspirations to be Congressman then he should
23 not have run for county commissioner. While
24 he is out campaigning for Congress, who is
25 doing his job as county commissioner?

1 Lackawanna County has many
2 problems facing them just as many as Luzerne
3 County has. The FBI does not have enough
4 agents to cover both counties. That is why
5 I still recommend leasing or selling the
6 Southern Union building to the FBI and the
7 ATF for a training academy. This way
8 taxpayer dollars can being saved and the
9 Southern Union building will be completed
10 utilized thus enhancing downtown Scranton.
11 We need full-time dedicated elected
12 officials in the City of Scranton and
13 Lackawanna County. We also need a battalion
14 of FBI agents to clean the mess up in
15 Luzerne County and Lackawanna County soon to
16 be.

17 Last night I attempted to attend a
18 Recreation Board meeting, but my alternator
19 on my vehicle had a different agenda. I
20 would like to thank Mr. Patilla who did
21 attend, and I would also thank Jack Loscombe
22 and Frank Joyce who attended there, I wanted
23 to be there, but I couldn't be there. From
24 my understanding, the Recreation Board is
25 not that keen on having their meetings

1 televised. Their reason, there are only
2 five chairs at the dais and they have seven
3 board members. What about the table that
4 can easily sit seven members right here to
5 my left?

6 Also, they stated that no child has
7 ever been denied free swimming or use of the
8 slide. If that's the case, why has Sister
9 Adrian Barrett contacted me two years in a
10 row and, I'm sorry, but I can't remember the
11 new sister's name, Sister Mary Grace --

12 MR. MCGOFF: Mary Alice Jacquinot.

13 MR. JACKOWITZ: Pardon me.

14 MR. MCGOFF: Mary Alice Jacquinot.

15 MR. JACKOWITZ: Okay, Mary Alice,
16 she contacted me this year, 2009, excuse me,
17 and said they went to the Recreation Board,
18 they were denied and said they would have to
19 pay the full \$3. It came to the Taxpayers'
20 Association and we paid for 80 kids three
21 years in a row from Children of the Poor out
22 of the money that we collected from the
23 citizens and business people of Scranton.
24 So children have been denied. I can go on,
25 but I'll run out of time.

1 Local unemployment rate hits 9.7,
2 highest in 17 years. We know it's actually
3 higher than that, but yet just two weeks ago
4 the Power of Scranton, small business
5 association, Mayor/Governor/Lieutenant
6 Governor Doherty, County Commissioner Washo,
7 Commissioner/Congressman O'Brien and Austin
8 Burke were patting each other on the back
9 talking about how great of a job we are
10 doing and bringing more work into the area.
11 Again I say, Mr. Burke, retire already.

12 I see where we have a new steakhouse
13 and seafood restaurant moving into the new
14 parking garage located at the 100 block of
15 North Washington Avenue. This will greatly
16 stimulate the local economy. I see where
17 Councilman McGoff attended the ribbon
18 cutting ceremony. Maybe they should also
19 have a closing ceremony at the ghost town
20 mall. 40 percent vacancy rate at the
21 present time. National average at malls, 10
22 percent, but at the same time Cinram is
23 losing jobs that pay the higher wages
24 compared to waitresses, bartenders and hosts
25 wages.

1 One day my hope is that Scranton
2 will wake up and realize the city cannot
3 survive on restaurant, bars and movie
4 theatre jobs. I am waiting patiently for
5 Mayor/Governor/Lieutenant Governor Doherty's
6 state of the city address at the Chamber of
7 Commerce for invited guests only. Citizens
8 are not invited just people from outside of
9 the city, the elite.

10 I know the Times-Tribune will make
11 it sound like the City of Scranton is a
12 24-hour-town that is just bustling with
13 energy and family-sustaining jobs.
14 Hopefully one of these days we will get an
15 investigative reporter who will actually
16 report the truth.

17 A final thought, if Mayor/Governor/
18 Lieutenant Governor Doherty is elected, will
19 he attend meetings with the House of
20 Representatives and the State Senate or will
21 he blow them off like he has city council
22 for the last eight years. It was nice to
23 see Mr. Barrett council chambers. Hopefully
24 the Recreation Authority, Parking Authority,
25 Hosing Authority and any other authority or

1 appointed servant of the people will also
2 cooperate with the new revised Scranton City
3 Council. It was also nice to hear
4 Mr. Barrett admit that they sent the letters
5 without doing any research which shows total
6 irresponsibility on that board, the Sewer
7 Authority Board. Total irresponsibility to
8 send those letters out scaring people. You
9 want to talk about scare tactics, those are
10 scare tactics.

11 MS. EVANS: Sam Patilla.

12 MR. PATILLA: Sam Patilla, Scranton
13 resident and member of the Scranton/
14 Lackawanna County Taxpayers' Association.
15 I'd like to thank Councilman Loscombe and
16 Council Joyce for attending the park and
17 recreation meeting last night with me. Good
18 evening, Madame President.

19 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

20 MR. PATILLA: Okay, real quickly. I
21 questioned the authority, the Park and
22 Recreation Authority on a few items here.
23 The first one is the transfer of the deeds
24 of the property to Lackawanna College of the
25 building formerly housing the zoo and the

1 two adjacent properties which they stated
2 no, but there was no mention if there was
3 any language included within that lease
4 agreement that that could ever occur. You
5 know, somewhere down the line would they
6 ever transfer those properties is it a
7 possibility and there was no mention of
8 that.

9 Okay, real quickly. In regards to
10 the question of Park and Recreation
11 Authority meeting in council chambers, they
12 did say, no, and they did say because there
13 were five of them -- I mean, seven of them,
14 only five council members and I have to
15 correct my friend and road partner,
16 Mr. Jackowitz here. I count seven seats
17 back there, okay? When I first told him I
18 included the council, but I didn't include
19 the seats of the solicitor nor the city
20 clerk. There are seven seats there.

21 And I also make mention when the
22 Taxpayers' Association meets in this chamber
23 we sit at this table and there are a lot
24 more than seven of us. So, you know, that's
25 a poor of excuse of why not to have at least

1 solicitor.

2 MR. PATILLA: I'm sorry, council
3 solicitor. I have a lot of respect for
4 council solicitor.

5 MR. HUGHES: Thank you.

6 MR. PATILLA: Now, I do have a
7 question for city council in regards to who
8 is responsibility for the maintenance and
9 upkeep of all city parks?

10 MS. EVANS: The city and the
11 taxpayers.

12 MR. PATILLA: Which department,
13 Madame President? Would it be DPW? Would
14 it be --

15 MS. EVANS: Both.

16 MR. PATILLA: -- park and rec.

17 MS. EVANS: Parks and recreation.

18 MR. PATILLA: The reason I ask that
19 is because outside of Nay Aug Park the rest
20 of our city parks are war zones, you know,
21 there is nothing for them kids to get their
22 minds off of the environment from which they
23 are trapped, so to speak, you know,
24 basketball, baseball or kickball or soccer,
25 all those things I had as a child when I

1 grew up, you know, mainly because the
2 neighbors provided those things for us to do
3 to keep us out of trouble, to keep us busy.
4 Idle hands or the devil's workshop they
5 always told me.

6 Now, one more thing and I'll close
7 for the night because I have lot of other
8 stuff to do is in regard to the statement of
9 transparency and accountability of the Park
10 and Recreation Authority made by the newest
11 member, Miss Gleason, okay? She stated at
12 the closing of that meeting that the
13 authority didn't have anything to hide.
14 There are as transparent as transparent can
15 be. This is your first day on the job. How
16 can you make that type of statement? You
17 know, you don't know what's going on. This
18 is your first day on the job.

19 Now, I could accept it, you know,
20 that she on a personal note she had said,
21 "Well, my personal experience with them I
22 doubt that there is anything to hide and the
23 transparency shouldn't come into question,"
24 but for her to jump on board and agree with
25 the present and current members of the

1 authority I found it kind of disheartening
2 and kind of shocking.

3 MS. EVANS: Did Ms. Gleason express
4 her desire to hold Recreation Authority
5 meetings in council chambers?

6 MR. PATILLA: Madame President, and
7 the two council members can correct me if
8 I'm mistaken, but my interpretation from
9 what she said and what I heard was that she
10 would basically go along with whatever the
11 rest of the members said. She said she
12 didn't have any problem with it, but she
13 would go with what the authority members
14 voted on, you know.

15 And like I said, seven seats is a
16 lame excuse for not coming before those who
17 are housebound or those who are for fear of
18 a lack of a better term because I still have
19 people come up to me who are afraid of
20 retaliation from the current administration
21 who are afraid to come out in public. The
22 only thing that was stated to me that I
23 would agree with at that authority meeting
24 last night was that the citizens as a whole
25 don't show up at their meetings. You know,

1 many of us didn't show up because we are too
2 busy with the problems that we were having
3 within city council, but now that we have a
4 council that we have our trust in we can
5 branch out and sort of attending more of
6 these meetings that the authorities and the
7 other departments might hold, you know?
8 But, you know, that's a lame brain excuse.
9 Thank you.

10 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Mike Dudek.

11 MR. DUDEK: My name a Mike Dudek,
12 608 Depot Street, Scranton. I live down
13 there in the Plot and I'm going to try to
14 cover two areas as quickly as I can. Mrs.
15 Evans, under the Robert's Rules I'm not
16 allowed to speak to a councilman without
17 your permission. I'd like your permission
18 to speak to Mr. Rogan?

19 MS. EVANS: Certainly.

20 MR. DUDEK: Thank you.

21 MS. EVANS: But you don't need my
22 permission. You can address any council
23 member you so desire.

24 MR. DUDEK: Thank you. I want to
25 thank you very much for asking the most

1 important question you could possibly have
2 asked of Mr. Barrett, the question being has
3 the Sewer Authority considered trying to get
4 more money from the people who supply the
5 leachate coming through the city through the
6 system and you pointed out, and Mr. Barrett
7 pointed out that, no, that had not been
8 considered. Whether or not that's something
9 that's under contract I think it might be,
10 as Mr. Morgan thought and he told me thinks
11 that it might be something under contract,
12 is neither he nor there. If you are going
13 to raise rates on everybody, bring them into
14 the equation, also.

15 And I buttonholed Mr. Barrett on the
16 way out and gave him a suggestion. Take a
17 look at me, I pay \$17 to \$20 a month for
18 water. That's it. I live alone, so 17
19 bucks. If they raise -- and the idea is on
20 the sewer rates for every dollar you spend
21 on your water you spend a dollar on the
22 outpost, that was the predication. Instead
23 of using a one on one formula, I think that
24 as a senior citizen myself and on a fixed
25 income I could live on something like a one

1 to say 1.2. If I'm going to pay 20 percent
2 more than somebody whose got a family of
3 eight is going to be 20 percent more it's
4 going to come out equally distributed as far
5 as making the pain equal, but by making me
6 pay 90 bucks every three months and making
7 that family of eight pay 90 bucks every
8 three months, that's the point that I
9 expressed to Mr. Barrett and he did tell me
10 he would consider it and he would bring it
11 to the authority members.

12 Now, I don't know if the City of
13 Scranton -- if the Sewer Authority is like
14 the SRA, but the volunteer members of the
15 SRA fired a director named Bernie Blierwood
16 50 years ago I think it's the volunteer
17 directors that could take Mr. Barrett and
18 drop kick him any day they want to and you
19 don't have a word to say about it. Such is
20 the life of an authority.

21 Oh, I tried so hard to get you guys
22 not to have a library authority, but that
23 was the old council and that's water over
24 the damn.

25 The second point I wanted to make is

1 Mr. Jackowitz, the second week in a row he
2 came up here and stole my thunder. He
3 talked about economics. He pointed out the
4 Times ran with the story about we only have
5 9.7 unemployment. If we use the rules that
6 were in effect when the Roosevelt
7 administration was calculating unemployment,
8 they calculated the actual numbers of people
9 out of work. The Regan administration
10 changed it so that once you've used up your
11 unemployment benefits you were no longer
12 counted as unemployed. I mean, talk about
13 fudging the numbers. Let's face it, guys,
14 the local unemployment rate is going to be
15 closer to 20 percent.

16 And unlike the great depression when
17 it hit here, and this something to really
18 remember, in the days of the great
19 depression the mines lost some miners and
20 the railroads got leave, but we still had
21 the industry here to reabsorb those workers
22 once the depression started to ease. We are
23 losing the jobs and the employment along
24 with the people who are out of work. We are
25 running into a situation where people are

1 being put out of work and the jobs are
2 disappearing.

3 Get a good look at what happened to
4 Cinram today. They lost a contract with
5 Warner Brothers and something like 28 to 30
6 percent of their CD production is going to
7 go out of the door, not just the workers,
8 but also those jobs. That's what's so
9 insidious about what's happening here in our
10 economy today.

11 So when you have the City of
12 Scranton Chamber of Commerce come in, don't
13 let Austin Burke try to give you smoke and
14 mirrors, he is very good at it.
15 Mr. Jackowitz hit it right on the head.
16 It's not going to be a seafood restaurant
17 that's going to bring this city back. We
18 need a bigger industry than that. The thing
19 about small business is going to drive the
20 economy, baloney. We need key industries.
21 Look at how the City of Pittsburgh what they
22 had to do. They replaced their steel
23 industry. I think a good example would be
24 for us to see how we could emulate the City
25 of Pittsburgh in order to rein vent the City

1 of Scranton.

2 Now, I do not in any way, and I will
3 never, ever criticize Mayor Doherty for
4 trying to bring in Southern Union. That was
5 a good faith effort. Southern Union itself
6 imploded, okay? He didn't implode it, we
7 didn't implode it, this was a private
8 concern that imploded on itself and left us
9 with a shell of a building. I will never
10 criticize him for making a good faith effort
11 to do something for this city, but I will
12 slam forever more the Austin Burke and his
13 crew.

14 I once asked Mayor Connors, who was
15 more portrayed on a full front page
16 presentation of Newsday, the whole paper was
17 a photograph of Mayor Connors sitting on a
18 desk and the caption was "Just who is this
19 fellow anyhow?"

20 We had taken Natwest from Newsday
21 circulation here and brought Natwest up here
22 to Scranton. I asked Mayor Connors, "I'd
23 like you to detail for me everything that
24 the Chamber of Commerce did to help you
25 bring that big job here?"

1 I'm going to quote Mayor Connors:
2 "Nothing."

3 So like I said, be very careful when
4 you dealing with these people. They really
5 don't know as much as they think they do.

6 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Dudek.

7 MR. DUDEK: Thank you.

8 MS. EVANS: Marie Schumacher.

9 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening,
10 Council. Marie Schumacher, city resident
11 and member of the Taxpayers' Association.
12 I'd like to start off with the Library
13 Authority just very briefly. Last year we
14 were told that the sole reason for
15 establishing the Library Authority was so
16 that adequate insurance on the structures
17 could be obtained, yet last Thursday at the
18 first meeting of the Library Authority that
19 privilege of paying for the insurance was
20 passed down to the library board of trustees
21 and I don't know why. I mean, it just blows
22 a hole -- a humongous hole that will sink
23 that authority because they could have
24 leased it from the city then. If that's all
25 it took and they knew that then why didn't

1 they just lease it from the city, so there
2 has got to be something more to it, and I
3 guess that something more really is the
4 really committing to the South Scranton
5 Library.

6 And now I'll move on. The
7 controller's report for December 2009 shows
8 expenditures exceeded revenues by over 5
9 million dollars. How will this deficit be
10 addressed?

11 Two: May I suggest that council
12 obtain minutes of all authority meetings and
13 make them available at one location, that
14 being the city clerk's office at least for
15 the time being?

16 Three: Regarding the invitation to
17 bid for air filtration systems for city
18 hall, fire department, police department and
19 the Department of Public Works, is this due
20 to a new regulation and if so, is it a
21 federal or state regulation? If not, why --
22 two of these buildings are quite new and I'd
23 like to know why this system wasn't included
24 in the specs for the two new buildings at
25 the time they were being built.

1 Four: An article in the
2 Times-Tribune made public details of Brian
3 Murray's finances. The article states a
4 40-city commercial downtown parking lot as
5 one of the assets. Would council please
6 ensure that the \$15 per spot per year is
7 paid up-to-date, and if not ensure that the
8 city files a claim by the March 17 deadline
9 in the hope of recovering any fees owed to
10 the city.

11 Five: When the quarter of a million
12 dollar loan was made by OECD to Alexander's
13 Spa and Salon, council's economic
14 development liaison reported collateral
15 including expensive medical equipment being
16 procured for the medical procedure unit that
17 would occupy the third floor of the
18 building. Since that time, the third floor
19 of Alexander's has been put on the real
20 estate market for lease. I would like to
21 know if the outstanding balance on the loan
22 is now protected by adequate collateral.

23 Six: About four years ago a loan or
24 grant in the amount -- another quarter of a
25 million dollars was made to 407 Cedar

1 Avenue. Yesterday, I drove past 408 Cedar
2 Avenue and it was covered by a "Kevin
3 Haggerty for Representative" banners and it
4 appears to be a political headquarters, so I
5 would like to know if 408 Cedar Avenue is
6 still in business, and if so are they still
7 located at 408 Cedar Avenue.

8 Seven: Months ago we were promised
9 a NIXXI system that would allow us to go
10 on-line and check police reports from our
11 specific areas or wherever we wanted in the
12 city and I would like to know if the safety
13 rep could find out when this system is going
14 to be functional and I would also like to
15 know whether or not the TV cameras that were
16 being installed or procured and installed
17 are being used if they are being functional
18 at this point in time and monitored on a
19 regular basis.

20 And then finally I would like to
21 know also, I guess it would also be the
22 safety person, if a member of council
23 keeping abreast or liaisioning in any way
24 with the Borough of Dunmore with the fire
25 department situation since their solution if

1 something falls through on their fire
2 department seems to be to combine with
3 Scranton to make sure that we know what's
4 going on and we are -- we don't end up, I
5 mean, I don't know how they can cover a
6 shortfall by combining with us if that
7 doesn't mean we pay more and they pay less.
8 So as a taxpayer I have some real concerns
9 and I hope we are keeping on top of that.

10 MR. LOSCOMBE: I did plan on meeting
11 with the Dunmore fire chief and some of the
12 men up there to see what's going on.

13 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. Thank you,
14 they concludes my comments for tonight.
15 Thank you very much.

16 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Carl
17 Kupchunas.

18 MR. KUPCHUNAS: Good evening. My
19 name is a Carl Kupchunas. I'm a life-long
20 resident of the lower Greenridge section of
21 Scranton. The reason I'm here this evening
22 was to hear Mr. Barrett and his reasoning
23 for the unfair distribution of the proposed
24 sewer rate increase. I do realize that the
25 Sewer Authority is under a federal mandate

1 to update the system to new standards which
2 are better for the environment. However,
3 why should light users of the system have to
4 pay the same rate as much heavier users of
5 the system.

6 Like I said last week, all utilities
7 except for cable television are based on
8 consumption. With the recent 30 percent
9 increase in the PPL electric rates, the
10 extremely high cost of gasoline, how can a
11 single homeowner like myself afford the
12 increase in costs? I especially feel sorry
13 for senior citizens who are on a fixed
14 income and may have to choose between paying
15 their utilities or having food on their
16 table and medicine. The flat rate will also
17 not encourage conservation.

18 As responsibility citizens of the
19 world, it is our duty to conserve our
20 natural resources to the best of our
21 ability? When and if the flat rate takes
22 effect it's basically saying use as much
23 water as you want.

24 Also, I'd like to know the annual
25 salary of Mr. Barrett and if the mayor had

1 recently given him a raise. I would also
2 like to know how many new hires have
3 occurred in the Sewer Authority in the last
4 eight years of Mayor Doherty. I know that
5 council cannot change something that the
6 Sewer Authority does, but I do hope that
7 there is enough public outcry so Mr. Barrett
8 can come to his senses. He has to realize
9 this is Scranton, Pennsylvania. It's not
10 Pittsburgh, it's not Philadelphia. It's a
11 lot more affluent down in that area much.

12 The other thing I wish to briefly
13 mention this week is last week I read the
14 Scranton highly biased newspaper that the
15 deeds to the library properties had already
16 been transferred to the nonexistent library
17 board. Also, that the nonexistent board had
18 already had their first meeting. Is council
19 going be able to get these properties
20 transferred back to the city where they
21 should be? Also, who will have to pay for
22 this transfer? I think Mayor Doherty and
23 members of his library board should be
24 responsible for paying this costs not the
25 city taxpayers.

1 I am all for public libraries,
2 however, we do not -- definitely do not need
3 to spend another 16 million dollars for a
4 new library when the Albright Memorial
5 Library can be updated for much less.
6 Spending for important things like police
7 and fire protection, improvement to our
8 roads and filling potholes are not important
9 to Mayor Doherty. I hope the mayor can get
10 his priorities straight. However, I don't
11 think that will ever happen. I appreciate
12 your time and thank you very much.

13 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Cathy Beck.

14 MS. BECK: Good evening, Council.
15 Cathy Beck, Scranton resident and taxpayer.
16 I am here this evening to speak about the
17 Scranton Public Library Authority. I would
18 love to see a new state of the art library
19 constructed, however, not during this time
20 in the financially distressed city and not
21 under the terms that have been set forth.

22 In the Scranton Times-Tribune
23 editorial dated January 22, 2010, the paper
24 is quoted as saying: "Scranton City
25 Council's attempt to dissolve a newly

1 created authority is rooted in supposition
2 rather than an in-depth examination of the
3 underlying issues. It goes on to say that
4 council should embrace the library and the
5 project.

6 Here lies my deep concern. Let's
7 concentrate on what is not supposition, but
8 fact. Number one, the new library was the
9 mayor's grandchild without any input from
10 council or the citizens of the city.

11 Two: The location of the new
12 library was decided without any input from
13 council or the residents.

14 Three: The artists' rendering of
15 the library must have been requested by the
16 mayor since there was no formal committee
17 that were made aware of. Again, without
18 input from council or the citizens.

19 Four: The cost of the project, \$16
20 million is somehow arrived at with no input
21 from council or the taxpayers.

22 Five: The argument was that forming
23 the authority would put the city in a better
24 position to obtain partial outside funding
25 for the library. There was no indication of

1 what possible dollars from outside sources
2 might be available, what the amount of the
3 shortfall might be and where the funds to
4 makeup the shortfall might come from.
5 Again, this was done without any discussion
6 with council or the taxpayers of the city.

7 The county commissioners have
8 already stated that they would not fund the
9 library because they would have to raise our
10 taxes and they were not about to do that.
11 This is a very interesting point because if
12 the county cannot contribute without raising
13 taxes then the full burden of any added
14 expense would fall directly on the shoulders
15 of Scranton taxpayers. Equally interesting
16 is the fact that Scranton Times-Tribune is
17 only suggesting an in-depth examination by
18 this council since the mayor no longer has
19 unquestioned support of the majority
20 council.

21 Let's continue with the rest of my
22 concerns that are not supposition by looking
23 at the history of actions taken by assisting
24 authorities that, by the way, are appointed
25 by the mayor. The Scranton Recreation

1 Authority sold the municipal golf course
2 shortly into the first term of this mayor.

3 Eight: The Scranton Redevelopment
4 Authority sold the South Side Sports Complex
5 to the University of Scranton. Two
6 important notes here, while still on
7 council, Mayor Doherty said he was against
8 selling city assets and would not do so; and
9 secondly, the proceeds from the sales of the
10 golf course that were supposed to be placed
11 in a trust fund for strict use in parks and
12 recreation never got there. The sale of the
13 complex, by the way, is still rightfully in
14 litigation.

15 Nine: The Recreation Authority was
16 also behind the infamous swimming pool fees
17 that became such a heated topic.

18 Ten: The Scranton Parking Authority
19 has floated so many bonds that it had to
20 borrow more money to meet a bond payment due
21 at the end of the last year.

22 Eleven: When Roseanne Novembrino
23 refused to pay a \$240,000 bill for the water
24 slide at Nay Aug Park because she claimed it
25 wasn't bid out properly. The bill was

1 presented to the Scranton Redevelopment
2 Authority for payment.

3 Twelve: The Board of the Scranton
4 Library Authority has been determined to be
5 the same ten members that serve as the board
6 for the Lackawanna County Library System.
7 This requires that four of these members
8 must be residents of Lackawanna that live
9 outside of the City of Scranton. I am
10 certain they are all reputable persons,
11 however, it also means that four votes on
12 any motion come from board members that do
13 not pay the taxes in the City of Scranton.

14 Thirteen: Even if the deed
15 pertaining to the Albright Memorial Library
16 prohibits the sale of the facility, it may
17 not prevent the establishment of a long-term
18 lease to some other entity that would gain
19 significant control over this facility.
20 This possibility cannot be ruled out because
21 we have already witnessed this type of
22 activity.

23 And last, but not least, the Sewer
24 Authority's recent decision to go to a flat
25 rate rather than a current rate based on

1 consumption, a change that has at least
2 temporarily been placed on hold due to the
3 outcry of the ratepayers.

4 In closing, let me state again that
5 cooperation, understanding and an
6 embracement of this library by council
7 wasn't suggested or even considered while
8 the previous council majority had control to
9 enact anything this administration wanted.
10 Out of mistrust created by all of the above,
11 I respectfully request that this council
12 follow the development on what has already
13 been started very, very closely and act in
14 the best interest of the taxpayers of the
15 City of Scranton. Thank you.

16 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Ron Ellman.

17 MR. ELLMAN: Hello, Council. Ronnie
18 Ellman, members of the Taxpayers'
19 Association. I went downstairs before --
20 this morning to the safety office and I
21 couldn't believe -- you can't imagine how --
22 I had a little minor complaint and I just
23 went in there to talk, they were just as
24 professional and helpful and everything.
25 They are to be commended. That's how an

1 office should be run. I mean, I phoned Ray
2 Hayes' office probably a dozen times and
3 never got him. I went there three times and
4 he wasn't there. He never answered a phone
5 call. I just couldn't believe that, you
6 know, the way this place was this morning.
7 They got on the phone and everything about a
8 little minor complaint.

9 I had a little girl, six, eight
10 years old ask me the other day about a
11 saying, and I didn't know what she meant,
12 but last week I used it and expression and
13 what I said was these things will go until
14 today and day come to an end. I don't know
15 what she wanted to know that for, but she
16 did and I forgot what it was. She asked me
17 where I get some of these things I talk
18 about. I plagiarize. I hear all of these
19 things from people. People out there and
20 people here. You know, I'm not smart enough
21 to think of these things. People tell me
22 all of these things. There is so much
23 intelligent conversations, you know, you can
24 have out there. I won't go into that.

25 I would like to talk a minute about

1 the nonprofits. You know, nonprofit means
2 at the end of your business year you just
3 don't have any money, you have spent it all
4 on bonuses and parties, dinners, cars,
5 airplanes and, you know, some of it on the
6 business probably, but I'm the first to
7 concede, you know, like the Salvation Army
8 should be tax exempt and the progressive
9 center, Sister Adrian, but there is hundreds
10 and hundreds of nonprofits on the sheet that
11 are just phoney. It's time, you know, can't
12 we dissolve them and have them all come in
13 here to be reason reinstated or something
14 like that? You can't go on with a fourth of
15 the city like this. It's an impossibility
16 to do it.

17 I had a man tell me the other day
18 about our three new members, he said we need
19 three fighters up there, not three
20 gentlemen. After the questions tonight I
21 believe, you know, I believe there is going
22 to be three fighters up there. Everybody
23 questioned him and I've never seen so much
24 sidestepping and double talk. He ought to
25 get an award, probably could.

1 But to get back to the nonprofits,
2 it means you just don't acquire nothing.
3 You don't have anything valuable. The
4 University of Scranton is a multi-million
5 dollar business. They could start paying
6 some money to the city. There is over 150
7 properties that are taken off the rolls, you
8 know, to build dormitories and that lousy
9 sign they put up where there was a house
10 cost \$100 a week. You know, it's time to
11 put an end to this. They got all of these
12 dumps up there that ought to be condemned if
13 it weren't for their contributions to Mayor
14 Doherty because I have been in one, I guess
15 it has been two years ago. My son and me
16 went in and we were looking for someone, the
17 place should have been condemned, and it was
18 bought by the University of Scranton for the
19 students. It wouldn't past any kind of code
20 otherwise. There's somebody that really
21 gets mad at me when I badmouth this
22 University, but, you know, it's just time
23 they pay their taxes.

24 A couple of years ago now when our
25 believed mayor had that deal with Friendship

1 House for \$240,000 to pave the streets, if
2 they have \$240,000 to give away they should
3 lose their exemption. You know, why should
4 they have -- and that was in the middle of a
5 campaign to raise money for building, which
6 they haven't done nothing, and last month
7 the soup kitchen that I support financially
8 all of the time. They bought a house I
9 think for 130,000 some place. If they have
10 it they don't need to be tax exempt. Let
11 them pay taxes on the house. You have got
12 to help the people of this city do
13 something. You know, you are sure not going
14 to get any help from Mr. Barrett. If he
15 wants to know how to run a business he ought
16 to go over to Mr. Dexter at the Keystone
17 Landfill and go on a tour of the water
18 recycling plant that they take all of the
19 leachate, the garbage water comes through
20 it, and it's dumped into the sewer, it's
21 clean enough to drink. And it costs a
22 minute amount of money compared to what he
23 is talking about, 200 million. They don't
24 care what anything costs. They don't care
25 about the people of this city. He is a

1 disgrace to the people of this city just
2 like the mayor is. They have a double
3 standard that Andy was talking about like --
4 it just doesn't end with this double
5 standard and it needs to stop. Thank you.

6 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Ellman.
7 Dave Dobrzyn.

8 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening. Dave
9 Dobrzyn. Resident of Scranton and member of
10 the Taxpayers' Association. In listening to
11 Mr. Barrett tonight and at other times I
12 have listened to people from the Lackawanna
13 River Corridor Association, and I don't know
14 if anybody is familiar with the Old Forge
15 bore hole? It was drilled back in the 60's
16 down in Old Forge to let mine water out of
17 the mines into the river and the federal
18 government never did anything after that to
19 help us very much with mine reclamation, but
20 that bore hole contaminates that whole river
21 from there on in and it's just basically
22 dead. So if the federal government wants to
23 pull at our nose, I mean, I mentioned this
24 before, we really need to get on them about
25 getting more mine reclamation money. A

1 dollar a ton is charged for every ton of
2 coal that's mined in the country and it's
3 supposed to reclaim mining -- be a mine
4 reclamation fund, but it usually stays in a
5 few states that coal mining is going on at
6 this time, and it's really a shame that we
7 have to spend this kind of money and then
8 only to have the river polluted right down
9 the line to a point where the path water is
10 actually poisonous.

11 And last week I mentioned about the
12 South Side Community Justice Program and a
13 person had his house vandalized by graffiti
14 twice, and the second time around he was
15 cited and he had a \$630 fine leveled against
16 him. Now, the other day in the paper
17 they -- it was made mention that they are
18 going to give him until March to remove this
19 graffiti. But, you know, the man is a crime
20 victim basically and you're penalizing a
21 person that's been victimized by a crime,
22 but I'd like to express some kind of support
23 where somebody shouldn't have to see an
24 immediate fine for this. They should try
25 and work with the property owner. They

1 didn't apply to have their property
2 vandalized, I'm sure they don't consider it
3 a privilege, so somebody from that South
4 Side Community Justice could develop a
5 little more compassion and hopefully they
6 will learn to work with people to mitigate
7 those things instead of fining them upfront
8 for something like that.

9 The corner of the Lackawanna Avenue
10 and Washington I haven't looked at the
11 lights to see if anything was addressed as
12 of recent, but if you need any clarification
13 on that you could possibly contact me, but
14 there is a serious problem there and those
15 lights basically the walk signs need to be
16 altered so that tractor trailers when they
17 are making the turn or whatever or large
18 trucks don't hit them because they are
19 constantly knocked out of whack and pointed
20 the wrong way. People from at police
21 department discussed that with me one time
22 or one or two occasions where -- that's the
23 exit from the mall, exit and entrance from
24 the mall, so it's really a bad traffic area
25 there.

1 And I'd like to talk about, you
2 know, I notice with small businesses in
3 Scranton when we let them in, I mean, we
4 have an Irish bar that went belly up and a
5 few weeks before they finally decided to go
6 belly up another Irish bar opened right up
7 the street and now, I mean, we have a small
8 steakhouse or something opening up, a steak
9 and seafood house. Well, you know, for
10 years Cooper's Seafood House has been in
11 business and they haven't asked the city for
12 anything and what I'm trying to bring across
13 here is we should be a little -- a little
14 remindful of redundancy. I mean, we don't
15 need one business after another mimicking
16 the last guy that moved into town, it's too
17 redundant, and basically they wind up
18 stealing business back and forth off of each
19 other, so nothing is achieved and it's
20 really we want to be very mindful of who we
21 are letting into central city and make sure
22 that we have a variety of businesses and
23 hopefully they will survive.

24 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

25 MR. DOBRZYN: Instead of having, you

1 know, redundancy.

2 MR. JOYCE: Thank you.

3 MR. DOBRZYN: Have a good night.

4 MR. ROGAN: Ken Martin.

5 MR. MARTIN: My name is Ken Martin.

6 I'm a city taxpayer, Scranton. I'm also
7 president of the West Side Falcon Youth
8 Organization in West Side.

9 MR. GORDON: I'm Al Gordon, and I'm
10 also a taxpayer and I'm the vice-president
11 of the West Side Falcons. I wish I could
12 tell you I'm here for good reasons, but I'm
13 definitely not. I never thought anybody
14 would ever say anything bad about my
15 organization or the organization that I
16 truly love.

17 I received some phone calls recently
18 and I believe there is a website under
19 Scranton Political Times public forum
20 message board under Dohertydeceit.com. It
21 brings you up about the playground that used
22 to be down at Lackawanna. I know there was
23 a lot of finger pointing on what I read so
24 I'm here to set the story straight and
25 maybe, I don't know, but anyway.

1 To this Joe, I'm sure you are a nice
2 guy, but I really think you got the story
3 wrong. Minor paint on the playground. All
4 I got to say to you, Joe, what was the
5 picture of on the back wall because me and
6 my wife painted that over twice and both
7 times it came back, and I mean obscene.
8 Nothing that you would ever want a
9 five-year-old or a seven-year-old or any kid
10 to ever see.

11 The way it smelled, it smelled like
12 a sewer. Beer cans, liquor, used condoms,
13 dirty needles. We had a child that was
14 poked with a needle a few ago. It made my
15 organization wake up that the year that that
16 happened with the child being poked with the
17 needle we actually -- imagine this, I
18 actually had to send out flyers when kids
19 signed up for the West Side Falcons what a
20 hypodermic needle looked like and not to
21 touch it. Drug wrappers.

22 We had children that got hurt over
23 there as far as falling from some broken
24 pieces over there and broken bones might
25 have you. There were fires even Joe

1 believes that it can't burn. I got news for
2 you, it does burn to a certain point and you
3 don't have to believe me, I'll tell you why.
4 There was a man that devoted his life down
5 there, somewhat like me and maybe I'll wise
6 up and leave, the man's name was Paul
7 Morcum. Paul was down there, he cut lawn,
8 cut the grass, worked on the tractors,
9 water, whatever you ever wanted Paul would
10 do until the day of the fire at the
11 playground. Paul went over and tried to put
12 it out, firemen showed up, the police showed
13 up and now all of a sudden they were blaming
14 poor old Paul. I really don't know what
15 happened. I know Paul talked to me on many
16 occasions, I know there was an
17 investigation, I don't know if he ever
18 called me. I imagine he would call somebody
19 else to see what was on, but he couldn't
20 believe that he was being investigated over
21 a fire over there.

22 I know it's probably tax dollars
23 that probably went to waste. I know my
24 organization put up lights and security
25 cameras trying to curb the problem. I know

1 the last straw was on the one night late
2 after practice and me being president and Al
3 being vice-president, we never leave early,
4 it was way after 9:00 and there was a ruckus
5 going on over there, you could hear it. We
6 walked over, we told the kids to leave and
7 at that time some kids just don't take no
8 for an answer. The one boy picked up a
9 bolder, cinder block, yelled racial slurs to
10 Coach Al, told him he was going to bash his
11 head in. This is stuff that went on
12 constantly.

13 So to Joe, again, my steps that I
14 took as president of the West Side Falcons,
15 first I contacted Bill Courtright, which I
16 hope I'm allowed to finish.

17 MS. EVANS: Yes.

18 MR. MARTIN: First I contacted Bill
19 Courtright who told me that my maybe my best
20 chance because it was possibly tax dollars
21 that put it up to form a petition, and I did
22 have at that time my secretary of two years
23 ago form a petition, and she works at a
24 Scranton law office so she is quite good at
25 it, and I was about to push forward on it

1 and one of my board members, which I have 14
2 board members, told me I should just see the
3 mayor. And with that there was an opening
4 of the Fidelity Bank on Main Avenue and it's
5 the first time I ever got to meet the mayor.
6 I told him my problem and I told him what
7 was going on over there. I know he probably
8 wasn't happy with me, but he did tell me,
9 "Just take it down."

10 Within a week's time Mark Dougher
11 showed up at the field and in-between us, a
12 few members of my board and the Lackawanna
13 Little League we discussed about taking the
14 playground down. Mark was really interested
15 in -- we were trying to save some stuff as
16 far as some of wood, which we did, I can't
17 say we saved all of it, and I will explain
18 why. The playground was built extremely
19 well. It should have lasted forever if it
20 was well-maintained. It was studded and
21 bolted. It was -- there was a lot just to
22 take down a piece of a board. How these
23 kids managed to take some of it down I do
24 not know, all right, but just to take off a
25 nut and bolt you weren't just taking it off,

1 you were hacksawing it off or you were
2 taking torches to burn it apart. So with
3 that we tried our best and we hardly got
4 anywhere the days that we were over there.

5 Finally it got to a point that I
6 believe another kid got hurt over there, got
7 me a little bit more upset. Somebody came
8 up with the bright idea let's just bulldoze
9 it down and that's what we did. All right?
10 There was somebody that owns a backhoe and
11 also had a dumpster that was delivered to us
12 at no cost to the Falcons, all right, and we
13 proceeded to throw everything out. Now, I
14 can't tell you that -- not everything is
15 gone, but his last pictures aren't a true --
16 true what's their left now. There is even
17 less now. You have to understand, this is a
18 volunteer organization, all right, and
19 everybody has lives, all right? And I will
20 tell you honestly this wasn't the only
21 project that the West Side Falcons took on
22 this year. Most people know we put up
23 stadium lights, all right, and I'll be
24 honest with you, they were delivered and the
25 Falcons took care of the rest. I worked

1 night and day, and I'll be honest with you,
2 we were ready within what was it, a week and
3 a half?

4 MR. GORDON: A week.

5 MR. MARTIN: A week's time. We
6 actually beat PPL. We actually beat them
7 putting up a generator. I can't tell you,
8 again, I'm very disappointed that anybody
9 would smudge by organization that I love so
10 much, and I came here and I'm not pointing a
11 finger at anybody, but I think before you
12 put it in print because we have a website of
13 our own, and certainly if somebody would
14 want to contact me all you'd have to go
15 under is our website which is
16 www.WSFalcons.com and you could easily talk
17 to me, all right?

18 If anybody would have more
19 questions, anybody from city council on the
20 matter because again I do feel bad, my own
21 grandson is mad at me for taking it down,
22 but I didn't want to see anybody get hurt.
23 He lost his dad last week and I'm not going
24 to allow that to happen to him. Again, and
25 I'll leave this if somebody really wants to

1 investigate this thing a little bit more
2 because you don't have to believe me, maybe
3 you might believe five to 600 people that
4 show up at my banquet every year. If one of
5 you council people want to come to my
6 banquet you contact me and you can talk to
7 the people. Thank you for letting me voice
8 my opinion tonight.

9 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Martin,
10 and thank you for the service you perform.

11 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

12 MR. GORDON: A year ago we were
13 having the police there between one and
14 three times a week with that playground
15 being there. This year with it gone we went
16 through all the summer and all through
17 football season and I don't think they have
18 been there yet, and we are still -- I
19 haven't heard anything from some of the
20 police that are in the area, Chief Elliott,
21 and it's very well-straightened out now, but
22 you can't let it go because there are gangs
23 in the area.

24 MS. EVANS: Yes.

25 MR. GORDON: And over in West Side

1 which was proven this year with a kid being
2 killed, so we have to watch out for them.

3 MS. EVANS: Yes. Thank you for what
4 you do. Is there anyone else who wishes to
5 address council?

6 MR. UNGVARSKY: Good evening, city
7 council. I'm Tom Ungvarsky.

8 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

9 MR. JOYCE: Good evening.

10 MR. UNGVARSKY: Last week I attended
11 the Sewer Authority's meeting and while they
12 were quite willing to listen to us and they
13 were very polite, I really don't know that
14 we had any effect on them. They are going
15 to do what they wanted to do anyway. I
16 believe that they already know how much
17 money they want to raise and perhaps we can
18 save them the \$24,000 by just taking the
19 money they need and dividing it by the
20 number of ratepayers because they already
21 know what they are going to do.

22 Now, on the library. Several years
23 ago there was a building down in South Side
24 on the 500 block of Orchard Street. The
25 city bought it for \$250,000. It cost them

1 about \$200,000 to tear it down. At that
2 time I suggested that that building could
3 have been remodeled and turned into a nice
4 library or a meeting place for the younger
5 generation. Right now it's a park and this
6 kind of weather it just sets idle. It's
7 unfortunate that we had to spend that kind
8 of money just to tear it down and turn it
9 into a park. Thank you.

10 MS. EVANS: Thank you,
11 Mr. Ungvarsky. Next?

12 MR. TALIMINI: Joe Talimini, City of
13 Scranton. I know you people have got a lot
14 on your plate, a lot more than I would want
15 on mine, believe me. I have several points
16 here tonight. One of them, I would like to
17 know if Nay Aug Park is considered part of
18 the city parks and recreation program. Can
19 anybody answer that for me? Is Nay Aug Park
20 a part of the city or is it not?

21 MS. EVANS: Yes.

22 MR. TALIMINI: Okay. Because I
23 noticed that they are getting a little
24 preferential treatment, for instance, they
25 are putting out for bids for pool supplies

1 for the city pools, but it's very noticeable
2 exclusive of Nay Aug pool. I mean, are they
3 using different chemicals at Nay Aug pool
4 than they use for the other pools in the
5 city? It doesn't make any sense to me, but
6 I would just like to know why if anybody
7 could find out, and I would like to see the
8 city council introduce an ordinance which
9 would remove Nay Aug Park from any special
10 consideration and would allow free swimming
11 to all the kids in the city.

12 Now, Mr. Jackowitz, Mr. Sbaraglia
13 and the Taxpayers' Association have been
14 raising money, but I want to know how in the
15 hell you tell a seven-year-old kid who asks
16 the question, "Why can't I swim or use the
17 slide for me and my sister?"

18 How do you explain that to him?
19 Perhaps Mr. Doherty or the Recreation
20 Commission might want to go and talk to
21 these kids and explain that to them. They
22 can't go up there and swim because their
23 family doesn't have the three bucks to pay
24 and that is absolutely ridiculous. If this
25 is not the most discriminatory organization

1 that you have in this city, I'd like to know
2 the hell is, and I'm very angry about that
3 because a seven-year-old kid asked me last
4 week, "Why can't I swim and why can't I take
5 my sister swimming at Nay Aug pool?"

6 Well, his father isn't working, they
7 have another one on the way and they are up
8 to their neck in debt because of the
9 taxation in this city and you are going to
10 deprive these kids from the chance to swim
11 and ask a private organization to go out and
12 raise money so they can. Well, I'd like to
13 know why Chris Doherty doesn't take some out
14 of his pocket and do it because he is the
15 one that's responsible for it directly.

16 Now, another factor, and I would
17 like to see this council find out from our
18 illustrious mayor because nobody else seems
19 to be able to contacts him, he created 3,000
20 jobs a couple of months ago. Last month he
21 created 6,000 jobs. I watched him on
22 television in his campaign for governor
23 where he created 5,000 jobs. Now, if his
24 math is that bad how in the hell did he ever
25 get to be mayor of this town?

1 and Play Street. They are part of the city
2 and the public system, are they not? Who is
3 going to maintain them if the City of
4 Scranton closes them off? I mean, the
5 University of Scranton closes them off and
6 by what authority did they close off these
7 streets?

8 MS. EVANS: The city provided the
9 authority if they made an agreement with the
10 University.

11 MR. TALIMINI: Well, you know, I
12 mean, you are taking the city streets away
13 from the city, who is going to maintain
14 them? Is the University going to maintain
15 them or do they expect DPW to maintain them?
16 That's what I'd like to know.

17 In addition to which, it's brought
18 to my attention that the city recently
19 completed a very nice repaving and
20 remodeling for handicap crosswalks in the
21 Plot section which is all well down and
22 good, I have looked at the project, it is
23 all very nice. However, despite
24 considerable advocacy to this city, the vast
25 majority of the people who have wheelchairs

1 and are handicap live right in central city
2 and you tell me that this mayor and this DPW
3 cannot fix these crosswalks? Well, there is
4 something radically wrong with this
5 department and with that mayor if that can't
6 be done. That is sad. This is it not
7 India. We do not have a caste system in
8 this country even though the City of
9 Scranton administration and certain
10 politicians would like to think we do. I
11 think it's about time we got rid of this
12 discrimination and this stupidity and got it
13 all over with. I mean, you are an elected
14 official, and I'm not blaming this council,
15 but you are an elected official. You are
16 elected by the people. You are not elected
17 by the businesses, by the Chamber of
18 Commerce or by anybody else, and by damn
19 Democracy Rises is putting out a petition
20 for a constitutional convention. I have
21 those. Anybody who would like to sign one
22 or like to have a copy of that please
23 contact me because it's long overdue that he
24 we reverse this 1820 policy that we have in
25 this town and in this state. I mean, bring

1 Pennsylvania up to the 20th century at least
2 and bring Scranton up to the 18th century if
3 we can. There is no reason not to. Thank
4 you very much.

5 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Hi, Chris.

6 MR. LOSCOMBE: Hey, Chrissy.

7 MR. JOYCE: Hi, Chrissy.

8 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Mr. McGoff, who
9 gave this to me? Who gave that to me? Who
10 gave that to you think? Who gave it to me,
11 the jacket?

12 MR. LOSCOMBE: I don't know.

13 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Who gave it to me?
14 Kenny Smith gave it me. Your buddy over at
15 Smith's Restaurant. Do you see the jacket?

16 MS. EVANS: I can't read it from
17 here, I'm old.

18 MS. SLEDENZSKI: Janet, we are all
19 getting old. Right, Jack?

20 MS. EVANS: But we are getting
21 better.

22 MS. SLEDENZSKI: Janet, I got a
23 question for you, Fellows Park are smashed
24 right now where I live, Fellows Park where I
25 live, they smashed the bus stop down there.

1 The whole front is all smashed.

2 MS. EVANS: Oh, no.

3 MR. SLEDENZSKI: They smashed it all
4 over, I was wondering if somebody could take
5 care of that for me, Janet?

6 MS. EVANS: Yes.

7 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Okay, thanks,
8 Janet. Thanks.

9 MS. EVANS: You're welcome, Chris.

10 MR. ANCHERANI: Good evening,
11 Council. Nelson Ancherani, First Amendment
12 Rights. Last week council repealed
13 legislation organizing a Library Authority
14 that would have been known as the Scranton
15 Public Library Authority. If you want to
16 call it arrogance, spitefulness, defiances
17 or whatever, the repealed authority had a
18 meeting after they were dissolved. Utter
19 defiance. If it is their intention to go
20 ahead and try, and I said try to borrow 16
21 million dollars to build a new library.
22 Should they lose if it goes to Court it's my
23 belief that they should be held responsible
24 for any monetary monies that are forwarded
25 on their behalf for the construction of the

1 library, like 16 million dollars worth, but
2 then again like someone said it is easy to
3 spend someone else's money. In this case it
4 will be taxpayers' money.

5 Sixteen million is a lot of money
6 when you consider that City of Scranton
7 taxpayers are already on the books for over
8 300 million in long-term debt. When you
9 combine that money with the 35 million plus
10 the one million that the Scranton Parking
11 Authority borrowed two years ago, and their
12 payback being 94 million over the course of
13 their loan with 59 million of that loan
14 being interest, we are at the 400 million
15 long-term debt mark. And if someone tries
16 to use the argument that the Scranton
17 Parking Authority is a separate entity,
18 responsible for their own bills, they have
19 another thought coming.

20 If that was the case, if that was
21 the case that they are a separate entity why
22 are we paying the Scranton Parking Authority
23 1.5 million for Scranton Parking Authority
24 citation issuers, that's just for 2009 and
25 two ten. That blows their theory away. If

1 we apply the same principal for interest
2 from the Scranton Parking Authority loan to
3 the 16 million, the total payback on the 16
4 million dollar loan will be approximately 38
5 million with the approximately 22 million of
6 that being interest.

7 As of 2010, 25 million will be paid
8 out cumulatively by the city in raises and
9 new hires. We can't go on putting on a
10 millionaire front while we have a hobo hind
11 end. We can't spend our way out of the debt
12 we have. We are crippled in debt while our
13 leader is contemplating leaving for greener
14 pastures. He will be escaping our debt if
15 he lands the governor/lieutenant governor
16 job and goes to Harrisburg. We are going to
17 be left to sink with 400 million debt.

18 We are in debt up to our eyeballs
19 and the only hope at this time to stop the
20 bleeding is this council. Help us out.
21 Help the taxpayers. Amend the budget and
22 trim the fat even if it hurts. Take the
23 consultants out of the budget along with the
24 outside attorneys that are not part of the
25 law department. We have a legal department

1 that should be handling the city's legal
2 affairs. Never before has the mayor
3 utilized outside attorneys as this mayor has
4 done.

5 I put in Right-to-Know requests for
6 the amount paid by the city for all of the
7 attorneys not on the law department's list
8 of employees and the total is in the
9 millions. Utilize the city law department
10 attorneys.

11 Just remember, it's easy to spend
12 someone's else's money. Stop the bleeding
13 by this administration if it isn't too late
14 already. We, the people, demand it.

15 And just to expand on what Mrs.
16 Beck said about the 1.8 million left over
17 from the sale of the golf course that was
18 supposed to be put into trust fund to be
19 used for parks, it's now in this 2010 budget
20 as a revenue item. Into the black hole it
21 goes. Thank you.

22 MS. EVANS: Thank you. It there
23 anyone else? Mr. McGoff, do you have any
24 motions or comments?

25 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Just a

1 couple of clarifications maybe. I believe
2 that each authority through it's charter
3 specifies what the qualifications are for
4 membership on this board. Would that be
5 correct?

6 MS. EVANS: I don't know.

7 MR. MCGOFF: I don't think that
8 there is any standard qualifications for
9 membership but that each authority
10 determines for itself what those
11 qualifications are. I believe that's what
12 they do anyhow.

13 Also, I would like to, you know,
14 somebody had commented that outside at Nay
15 Aug there aren't any viable parks in
16 Scranton. Just in South Scranton alone
17 Robinson Park, Barrett Park, Connor's Park
18 are all viable. Other places like Weston
19 Field, Weston Park are certainly, you know,
20 viable and used by citizens, so I think that
21 the parks and recreation people and the
22 parks and recreation -- or parks in the city
23 are quite useful, quite viable.

24 And the last comment, there has been
25 criticism of the Chamber of Commerce and

1 what they have failed to do in the eyes of
2 some, but I would remind people that when
3 the chamber came to council and asked for
4 help with the Mt. Pleasant project, they
5 were rebuked by speakers, council members
6 and ultimately the school board and the
7 potential of three businesses with over 100
8 above minimum wage jobs may have been lost
9 not to count -- not to mention the
10 construction jobs that may have gone along
11 with that, so there have been attempts by
12 the chamber to do things, but ultimately
13 they failed, and that's all. Thank you.

14 MS. EVANS: Mr. Rogan?

15 MR. ROGAN: Yes. Mrs. Schumacher
16 mentioned about the police cameras and I
17 believe, Mrs. Krake, we sent a letter to the
18 chief about that; am I correct?

19 MS. KRAKE: Yes, we did, and we are
20 not due for a reply yet.

21 MR. ROGAN: Okay, so hopefully we
22 can have a reply very soon on that.
23 Mr. Ancherani mentioned about the Library
24 Authority meeting regardless and, you know,
25 a couple of residents actually approached me

1 and asked about the petitions that were
2 ongoing, and as Attorney Hughes said when we
3 passed that it's good to believe in belts
4 and suspenders, so if those who are still
5 circulating if they would continue to
6 circulate, you know, it would go further to
7 backup our plans of dissolving the Library
8 Authority.

9 Many residents have approached me
10 over the last week about the Crisp Avenue
11 Bridge, and I spoke to Linda Aebli and a few
12 other people in the administration this week
13 about it and currently the money is there
14 for the bridge, we have federal fundings for
15 it and right now it's tied up with the DEP.
16 We are waiting on the DEP for that and I'm
17 going to put a call in to them next week and
18 see what the status is, and as a backup,
19 Mrs. Krake, would you please also send them
20 a letter as well?

21 This week a resident approached me
22 who lives on the 600 block of Pittston
23 Avenue and he reports that at 622 Pittston
24 Avenue there is a vacant lot that is owned
25 by the city. He reported that garbage and

1 tree branches have been filing up for
2 months. Residents would also like a "No
3 Trespassing" sign on the property due to pet
4 owners allowing their pets to go to the
5 bathroom on the property and ATV riders in
6 the summer. Nancy, can we send a letter to
7 the DPW on that?

8 Also, I spoke to Mr. Piccolino, the
9 owner of Bueno Pizza, who has a 15 minute
10 parking spot in front of his business. He
11 had told me that people have been parking in
12 that spot for hours upon hours and they
13 haven't been ticketed. Mrs. Krake, could we
14 also send a letter regarding that to the
15 Scranton Parking Authority? And that is it
16 for tonight.

17 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

18 Mr. Loscombe?

19 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you, Mrs.
20 Evans. I have a few items. I have several
21 citizens concerns which I will provide to
22 Mrs. Krake for follow-up.

23 I try to attend as many charitable
24 functions as possible without gaining too
25 much weight, so I get to meet the people out

1 there and hear their concerns. Recently, I
2 attended a chili cook off at the Fraternal
3 Order of Eagles on Meridian Avenue. I
4 believe I told them they should have a fire
5 truck on standby for some of the chili it
6 was so hot.

7 I attended a fundraiser at Keyser
8 Valley Community Center for the Donachi
9 family from the Hill Section who experienced
10 a fire in their home during the holidays and
11 this benefit from sponsored by the Joe
12 Flannery division of the Ancient Order of
13 Hibernians. They had a great ham dinner
14 there and entertainment.

15 I also attended a breakfast
16 sponsored by the Dante Club in South
17 Scranton. I got to speak with some very
18 nice people and listen to all of their
19 concerns and I do have to say that was the
20 best frittata that I ever had.

21 Next item, regarding the Keyser
22 Valley playground, I'd like to thank
23 Mr. Martin and Mr. Gordon, it appears they
24 have left already, for appearing before city
25 council this evening and providing us with a

1 firsthand account of the playground
2 situation at the little league field. I had
3 received several inquiries regarding removal
4 of playground equipment and I contacted
5 Mr. Martin who was gracious enough to come
6 here tonight and appear before council along
7 with Mr. Gordon to provide us with their
8 explanation.

9 I believe that the playground was
10 erected with the best of intentions for all
11 of the children, however, the secluded
12 location of the playground has proven to be
13 a nightmare for the police, the coaches and
14 the volunteers from the field who have made
15 extensive attempts to keep the playground
16 clean and safe.

17 I have personally witnessed the
18 vandalism and illicit activities that went
19 on in this playground as I would escort my
20 granddaughter to the park after her
21 cheerleading practices. To say that I was
22 embarrassed at what could be found there is
23 an understatement. I think Mr. Martin made
24 it perfectly clear who was there.

25 Unfortunately, the park had been

1 taken over by hoods and gangs for their
2 illicit activities and due to it's location
3 they were able to elude the police by
4 running into the woods or along the railroad
5 tracks that border the park. I believe that
6 the coaches and volunteers acted in the best
7 interest of the very children that this park
8 was meant to benefit by removing what had
9 become a very dangerous situation and
10 liability to the city and the organization.

11 Another item, as was mentioned
12 before, Mr. Joyce and myself had attended
13 the meeting of the Recreation Authority last
14 evening and we were welcomed by all of the
15 authority members. My main purpose there
16 last evening was to request the authority to
17 hold their meetings at city council chambers
18 to be televised in order to extend our
19 philosophy of transparency for all
20 government bodies. After some discussion
21 and some valid reasons, the authority has
22 elected to continue with their monthly
23 meetings on the first Monday of the month at
24 7 p.m. at Weston Field. They did agree
25 though that upon council's request they

1 would entertain one or two meetings to be
2 televised from council chambers this year.

3 The authority members also agreed to
4 cooperate with council to answer any
5 questions and to provide us with any
6 information that was requested. And to add
7 to that, their solicitor last evening was
8 directed to gather a list of information
9 that was requested by a letter from council
10 and forwarded to Mrs. Krake as soon as all
11 of the documents requested were compiled.

12 Mr. Joyce and myself were also
13 provided with a tour of the Weston Field
14 facilities by Director Dougher, which
15 appeared to be well-cared for. The
16 authority members each expressed their
17 appreciation that members of council would
18 attend their meeting, stated that they don't
19 remember the last time that council persons
20 was present at a recreation authority
21 meeting. Mr. Joyce took a lot of notes at
22 the meeting and I would leave it up to him
23 to add more information if he so pleases.

24 And finally, there are a lot of
25 rumors abounding that I plan on resigning my

1 position on city council this evening. It
2 didn't take 12 hours after my swearing in
3 for the dark underbelly of local politics to
4 rear it's ugly head. The fact is I am not a
5 politician and I refuse to lower myself to
6 the standards of those who live by the old
7 school political policies that have been
8 brought this area to the forefront of the
9 recent political corruption investigations.
10 I have been raised differently.

11 I did not accept this appointment on
12 city council to see what personal benefits I
13 could reap from it, rather I accepted this
14 appointment with the intention of helping
15 others. I have managed to be resourceful
16 and succeed throughout many difficulties of
17 my life with the help of my family, friends
18 and my faith. I have no doubt that I can
19 overcome any obstacle that is thrown my way
20 and I can assure all of you that I have
21 never bailed out a window no matter how hot
22 the fire got and I'm not about to bail out
23 my colleagues or those of you who have asked
24 me to remain here, although, I may have to
25 apply for one of the 6,000 newly created

1 jobs in this city to help me get by,
2 however, I'm not sure how good of a
3 bartender I might be. Thank you.

4 MS. EVANS: Mr. Joyce?

5 MR. JOYCE: Yes. To begin, I have a
6 few citizens' requests. Number one, I was
7 contacted late last week from a new
8 residents who live on Birney Avenue in
9 Minooka. They reported that over the past
10 three months they have had to replace their
11 driver's side window on their automobiles
12 several times due to careless drivers
13 primarily on Friday and Saturday nights.
14 With this in mind, Mrs. Krake, can you
15 please send a letter on behalf of council to
16 Chief Elliott making him aware of the
17 situation and requesting him to notify the
18 patrolman to be on the lookout for careless
19 driving especially between the 2400 and 3000
20 block of Birney Avenue?

21 In addition to this, I was contacted
22 by a resident of Theodore Street regarding a
23 traffic issue at the corner of Theodore
24 Street and Serene Avenue. The resident
25 explained that cars making the turn off

1 Serene Avenue, do not have a stop sign and
2 when taking the turn in inclement weather
3 often end up in residents' front yards. He
4 informed that requests were previously made
5 to have a stop sign inserted at the corner
6 to prevent this. When I drove up to view
7 the situation, I noticed that a stop sign
8 was, in fact, placed at the corner, however,
9 the positioning of the stop sign does not
10 require traffic coming from Serene Avenue to
11 actually stop and rather requires the
12 traffic from the upper block of Theodore
13 Street to stop which is a dead end street
14 and it contains two houses.

15 I understand that a traffic study is
16 conducted before stop signs are placed,
17 however, residents are concerned that the
18 stop sign may have been placed the wrong
19 way. With this in mind, Mrs. Krake, can you
20 please send a letter to Mr. Brazil asking
21 him to confirm that the stop sign on the
22 corner was correctly placed. Also, if it
23 was not correctly placed, please ask them to
24 provide a date by which the sign will be
25 placed in the correct direction.

1 Number three. Along with this
2 matter, I have been contacted by a resident
3 regarding Meadow Brook Creek Project. A
4 Greenridge resident contacted me last week
5 informing me that this underground waterway
6 was causing deep holes to form in his
7 backyard along with neighbors' yard during
8 rainy weather. Though the city did address
9 the resident's issue by placing two slabs of
10 steel over the eight-foot deep craters in
11 his backyard, this resident explained that
12 there were originally two phases to the
13 Meadow Brook Creek project and understands
14 that Phase I of the project was completed,
15 however, Phase II was not never implemented.
16 His backyard, as he stated, would be
17 effected by Phase II repairs. With this in
18 mind, can you please send a letter to
19 Mr. O'Hora asking him how much funding would
20 be needed to complete Phase II of this
21 project along with how much of this funding
22 would be required to be provided by the City
23 of Scranton.

24 Finally, last week I was contacted
25 by a city resident who informed me that on a

1 continuous basis refuse from a city housing
2 project was ending up in her front yard due
3 to wind blowing loose refuse which is picked
4 out of bags by stray dogs and other animals.
5 When bags are not placed in cans, I could
6 see how this happens. With this in mind,
7 can you please send a letter to the Scranton
8 Housing Authority asking them if they would
9 consider passing a requirement for all
10 residents to place garbage cans outside on
11 trash days in order to alleviate this
12 problem. Also, in this letter, can you
13 please ask whether or not there are any
14 plans to initiate a recycling program
15 throughout Scranton Housing Authority
16 properties?

17 To report, last night, as Jack said,
18 both Mr. Loscombe and myself, we both
19 attended the Recreation Authority meeting at
20 Weston Field. During the meeting, the first
21 topic of discussion was the former Genesis
22 Wildlife Center at Nay Aug Park. As you
23 know, the Genesis Wildlife Center along with
24 the accompanying parking lots were leased to
25 Lackawanna College for a dollar per year for

1 the next 25 years with the option for
2 renewal. Members of the authority informed
3 that Lackawanna College will renovate the
4 center for it's use and maintain the
5 structure for the duration of the lease
6 which according to their eyes they see is a
7 benefit.

8 Though I can understand that there
9 is a benefit and that Lackawanna College
10 will be maintaining the center, and I'm very
11 pleased that the center will be open to
12 Scranton residents as they informed, there
13 is a drawback. The drawback is that an
14 agreement was made to lease this facility
15 for one dollar per year in an amount of time
16 that could be extended longer in duration
17 than most of us may even live. This is an
18 example of nonprofit obtaining the use of a
19 city-owned facility free of charge.

20 Are there benefits of Lackawanna
21 College obtaining the facility? Yes, there
22 are some. However, one must not forget that
23 the benefit of being able to relocate their
24 environmental center from the Moscow area to
25 Scranton in close proximity to their actual

1 campus is also a great benefit for them.

2 A smarter decision could have been
3 made and I firmly believe that the city lost
4 out on an opportunity to generate some
5 revenue. Just because a structure is not
6 presently occupied does not offer sound
7 justification to simply give it away or to
8 simply lease it away to be politically
9 correct. If there is a home in Scranton
10 that needs work and would be a benefit to a
11 neighborhood, if it were fixed up does that
12 simply give a person the privilege to say,
13 "Lease it to me for \$1 a year and I'll
14 repair it?" Though it would be benefit for
15 the neighborhood it would also be benefit
16 for the potential occupant, and I think
17 that's what's being forgotten here.

18 I was informed at the meeting that
19 Lackawanna College approached the city about
20 this facility. Therefore, the city did not
21 approach them. If Lackawanna College was
22 that interested in the facility wouldn't it
23 be logical that they would be willing to
24 reimburse the city some type of funding to
25 acquire it?

1 On other matters, I was informed
2 during the meeting that trees will be
3 replanted to replace the trees that were
4 vandalized a few weeks ago. In addition, to
5 that, Mr. Dougher, Director of Parks and
6 Recreation, informed that he would be
7 looking into purchasing a ten camera
8 security system for the park in an effort to
9 prevent vandalism from occurring in the
10 future in addition to purchasing call boxes
11 to place in specified areas of the park. He
12 estimates that the cost of such systems will
13 be between 15 on \$25,000 and that he would
14 be seeking grants to assist in covering a
15 portion of those costs.

16 On new orders of business, I was
17 also informed that the rates for use of the
18 Nay Aug pool/waterslide facilities as well
19 as the pavilion rates would remain the same
20 for 2010.

21 Last, but not least, it was a
22 suggestion of both myself and Mr. Loscombe
23 to the authority to consider conducting
24 their meetings in a televised forum as to
25 city council members as well as other

1 governing bodies. When it came time for the
2 board to discuss moving to council chambers
3 to conduct their meetings, all members voted
4 to keep the meetings at Weston Field where
5 it is currently inaccessible for ECTV crews.

6 Unfortunately, one of the members
7 that voted in opposition to holding the
8 monthly meetings at council chambers was
9 Mrs. Gleason who from my understanding
10 informed Mrs. Evans that she would support
11 conducting televised meetings just over a
12 week and a half ago when council was voting
13 on her appointment.

14 Some of the reasons that members
15 provided as to why they objected to holding
16 monthly meetings in council chambers were
17 they are seven members and we have five, as
18 some other speakers reiterated, making it a
19 concern for seating. However, there are
20 also other organizations that some speakers
21 noted, like the Taxpayers' Association and
22 the zoning board, that have more than five
23 members that meet in these chambers
24 regularly as well.

25 Also, some people, some of the

1 members discussed that people showed little
2 interest in their meetings in the past and
3 if they are really interested they could
4 simply attend meetings since they are open
5 to the public. Though it is understandable
6 that meetings were open to the public,
7 however, I must ask what about those that
8 are unable attend the meetings? What about
9 the senior citizens who have trouble getting
10 out? What about the people that have busy
11 work schedules and the only way they could
12 possibly see these meetings would be on the
13 TV camera?

14 Those members informed they have
15 nothing to hide and that they would agree to
16 meet in council chambers if there were a
17 large scale issue, I must again ask how does
18 one know what they will be voting on and
19 when a large scale issue will emerge?
20 Personally, I was not informed by this
21 authority of the lease agreement that they
22 were voting on until it was already passed
23 regarding Nay Aug Park, that is the lease of
24 the building to Lackawanna College along
25 with the adjacent lots. By avoiding the

1 camera, it is not offering a chance to see
2 what happens at these meetings. Though I
3 appreciate that they are open to the public,
4 there is some people that just simply cannot
5 attend for various reasons.

6 In closing, it is my recommendation
7 that all of authorities consider holding
8 their meetings in public forum.
9 Unfortunately, the Recreation Authority
10 didn't share that same opinion.

11 In addition, I would just like to
12 add that the primary reason that I voted
13 affirmative to appoint Ms. Gleason was based
14 on the fact that she stated that she would
15 be in favor of holding meetings in a
16 televised public forum. I did not know much
17 about Ms. Gleason so that was pretty much
18 the only basis that I really had. Since
19 this did not happen, I now feel that Ms.
20 Gleason may have simply been telling us,
21 telling some of us simply what she thought
22 we may want to hear.

23 With this in mind, I feel as though
24 greater explanation needs to be obtained.
25 Therefore, if a new person who is not

1 already on a board is seeking to be
2 appointed to an authority board personally I
3 will now require of them a statement in
4 writing as to why they wish to be appointed
5 to the board and what they hope to
6 accomplish along with contact information if
7 myself or any council members seek to ask
8 any questions.

9 Without this, if they do not supply
10 a statement and show that they have that
11 much respect for city council, they will not
12 be worthy enough in my eyes of my
13 affirmative vote, and that's all.

14 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Joyce.
15 Good evening. A very important House
16 Democratic policy hearing regarding House
17 Bill 1942 authored by Representative Kevin
18 Murphy will be held this Thursday, February
19 4, at 1:00 in the University of Scranton's
20 DeNaple's Center, Room 407-A, McIlhenny
21 ballroom. This hearing is crucial to
22 Scranton taxpayers and their property tax
23 bills. House Bill 1942 is designed to
24 provide relief for Scranton taxpayers in the
25 following way:

1 First, it would amend Act 39 of 1935
2 to require that a separate statement or bill
3 be utilized for the collection of property
4 taxes levied by a city of the Second
5 Class-A, specifically, Scranton, from that
6 which is used for tax collections by the
7 school district and county.

8 Currently, our city and school
9 district taxes are combined into one bill.
10 The city's portion is significantly smaller
11 than that of the school district, yet, the
12 city alone is empowered to take your home
13 through sheriff's sale for nonpayment of
14 delinquent taxes since 2007. By separating
15 the city bill from the school district bill,
16 taxpayers are able to pay their smaller city
17 tax bill and hopefully eliminate the
18 possibility of becoming delinquent in city
19 property taxes which could result in
20 sheriff's sales of homes.

21 Second: House Bill 942, would also
22 enable a taxpayer to make installment
23 payments for any fees imposed as a result of
24 the delinquent payment of city property
25 taxes. Presently, the Act only provides for

1 installment payment of actual taxes owed and
2 not any fees imposed as result of the
3 delinquency. Simply, this means that
4 taxpayers whose delinquent property tax
5 bills have more than doubled due to the
6 ordinance of 2007 which imposed 23
7 additional fees to the face value of the
8 actual tax owed, would now receive the right
9 to pay off their debt in installments.

10 In 2007 and 2008, I spoke to former
11 representative Shimkus about these problems
12 and implored him to author a house bill to
13 help the people of Scranton. For whatever
14 reasons, sadly nothing was done. Not one to
15 give up easily I approached Mr. Murphy with
16 this idea during the 2008 state rep campaign
17 and true to his word he sat down with me at
18 my home soon after he was sworn into office
19 and thereafter the House Bill was drafted.
20 He has pursued this problem at my request
21 because he recognizes the importance and
22 urgency of helping our senior citizens,
23 working families, the sick and the poor of
24 Scranton. In the struggling economy where
25 social security increases were cut and

1 joblessness has escalated, Representative
2 Murphy's bill can have a tremendous impact
3 in helping our Scranton taxpayers.

4 I encourage those who are able to
5 attend this very, very important hearing and
6 to let the democratic state representatives
7 know that you need this bill to come to a
8 house vote and to pass. Representative
9 Murphy needs your help on Thursday so he can
10 make this tax relief happen for you.
11 Whether you are current on your city
12 property taxes or delinquent, this bill
13 helps everyone. If you cannot attend this
14 meeting, please call Representatives Smith
15 and Murphy's offices to voice your support
16 for House Bill 1942.

17 Next, council has not yet received
18 the mayor's signature or veto of it's
19 legislation repealing the Library Authority.
20 On more than one occasion Mayor Doherty has
21 acknowledged that all members of this new
22 council love the city and want to see it
23 move forward. In addition, he has
24 recognized the need to work together in a
25 partnership to move the city forward. The

1 new majority has done it's part. We have
2 lived up to our end of the bargain. We have
3 passed every piece of legislation that he
4 has submitted to us. Now it is his time to
5 live up to his end of the bargain by
6 accepting the will of this new majority and
7 the taxpayers of Scranton by moving ahead
8 with dissolving the Library Authority and
9 not wasting taxpayers' precious dollars by
10 fighting or ignoring a legally adopted
11 ordinance.

12 Should the mayor choose to veto this
13 legislation it will be placed on council's
14 agenda for an override vote. Thereafter,
15 council will face any potential opposition
16 or failure to abide by this law as it
17 develops one step at a time. The
18 administration quickly and secretly
19 transferred the deeds to city libraries on
20 January 26 just hours before the final vote
21 to repeal the Library Authority ordinance
22 occurred. While the Library Authority or
23 Board of Trustees of the Scranton Public
24 Library, as they shall be called henceforth,
25 moved with record speed toward it's goal of

1 increased insurance protection for the
2 libraries and the members of the authority
3 and is also reviewing it's finances and
4 legal developments.

5 I find it odd that since it's
6 request in 1993 to from an authority for
7 increased insurance purposes, and during the
8 mayor's eight years in office action was
9 only taken during the last weeks of a lame
10 duck council. Surely the need was always
11 there, but it was never addressed until the
12 mayor decided he would like a new library in
13 South Scranton.

14 The 1993 decision against
15 transferring the deeds to our libraries to a
16 nonelected authority was wise in my opinion
17 and seemingly in keeping with the
18 stipulations of the deed to the Albright
19 Memorial Library. It also appears to have
20 reflected a consideration of the finances of
21 Scranton which was then a newly distressed
22 city.

23 In 2009 and 2010, what has changed?
24 Only the fact that our city is more deeply
25 in debt than ever before while

1 simultaneously there is a large appetite for
2 new buildings and projects the city and the
3 county tax base cannot support. Even if the
4 state which has cut library funding were to
5 step in with economic development grants as
6 it has done so often in the last six years,
7 the city cannot afford to pay it's end and
8 cannot afford to support the day-to-day
9 operations of a new library.

10 This is not a political matter as
11 some will assert, rather, it is a purely
12 financial decision. Any board or authority
13 officer who thinks otherwise should look
14 homeward before voicing baseless comments.
15 I have said it before and I will say it
16 again, I am not opposed to libraries, the
17 expansion of the library system or to
18 construction of a new library. I fully
19 appreciate the role our libraries play in
20 our city, our future and our society.
21 However, I am opposed to the creation of
22 municipal authorities as well as tax and
23 spend policies. The bottom line is that the
24 city cannot afford a library at this time.
25 When the city eliminates it's ongoing

1 structural deficit, lifts it's distressed
2 status and pays down it's debt, I will be
3 the first to support and propose a new
4 Scranton library.

5 Finally, I have a few citizens;
6 requests for the week. A letter to DPW:
7 Please send a street sweeper to Grove Street
8 and Albright Avenue. Residents complain of
9 dirt and debris from a nearby construction
10 site. Continue to clean these streets
11 regularly until construction is complete.

12 A letter to the Sewer Authority:
13 Residents report that a road cut made by the
14 Authority in the 2500 block of Boulevard
15 Avenue has no cold patch. Please repair as
16 soon as possible.

17 Also, a storm drain is blocked at
18 the corner of Conway Avenue and Arial Street
19 in East Mountain causing water to pond and
20 freeze. The homeowner contacted Mr. Brazil
21 and the mayor, but nothing has been done to
22 solve this problem. It appears to require
23 an open back storm drain. Please address
24 this complaint as soon as possible.

25 Also, a storm drain at Donny Drive,

1 Lake Scranton Road and Elmhurst Boulevard,
2 they are overflowing.

3 MR. MCGOFF: It's iced over.

4 MS. EVANS: They are iced over and
5 they are blocked and we would like those
6 cleaned as well, please. Thank you,
7 Mr. McGoff.

8 A letter to the police chief: There
9 is a 30-minute parking sign in front of
10 businesses in the 900 block of Prescott
11 Avenue. Residents report that a few
12 vehicles park in up to three spots all day
13 despite the sign, thereby preventing
14 customers from parking who wish to access
15 the Prescott Avenue businesses. When
16 possible, please have an officer address
17 this illegal parking problem.

18 And I would like to thank the
19 traffic maintenance department for promptly
20 addressing the "walk/don't walk" signs in
21 downtown Scranton after last week's meeting
22 and for changing the handicapped sign to a
23 pickup and discharge sign for a resident of
24 West Scranton. This is the type of work
25 that can be performed quickly and cost

1 effectively by this department of the DPW,
2 and that's it.

3 MS. KRAKE: FIFTH ORDER. NO
4 BUSINESS AT THIS TIME. SIXTH ORDER. 6-A.
5 READING BY TITLE - FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 10,
6 2010 - AN
7 ORDINANCE - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER
8 APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE AND
9 ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT OF CLARIFICATION TO
10 LAND USE RESTRICTIONS AND EXCEPTIONS MADE IN
11 ACCORDANCE WITH FEDERAL AND COMMONWEALTH
12 REQUIREMENTS MADE AMONG THE CITY OF
13 SCRANTON ("THE CITY"), THE COMMONWEALTH OF
14 PENNSYLVANIA ("THE COMMONWEALTH"), AND THE
15 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, ACTING THROUGH THE
16 FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY,
17 ("FEMA") IN REFERENCE TO THE REAL PROPERTY
18 ("PROPERTY") HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO AS THE
19 "HAZARD MITIGATION LAND" IN ORDER TO CLARIFY
20 THAT THE DEED RESTRICTIONS DO NOT PROHIBIT
21 THE CITY FROM ERECTING A FLOOD LEVEE UPON
22 THE HAZARD MITIGATION LAND DESCRIBED MORE
23 FULLY IN EXHIBIT "A" OF THE AGREEMENT.

24 MS. EVANS: You've heard reading by
25 title of Item 6-A, what is your pleasure?

1 MR. MCGOFF: Mrs. Chairman, I move
2 that Item 6-A pass reading by title.

3 MR. JOYCE: Second.

4 MS. EVANS: On the question? All
5 those in favor signify by saying aye.

6 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

7 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

8 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

9 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

10 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed? The ayes
11 have it and so moved.

12 MS. KRAKE: SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A.
13 FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON
14 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - FOR ADOPTION -
15 RESOLUTION NO. 6, 2010 - AMENDING RESOLUTION
16 NO. 173, 2009 ENTITLED "AMENDING RESOLUTION
17 NO. 122, 2009 ENTITLED 'AUTHORIZING THE
18 MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS
19 TO EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO SUPPLEMENTAL
20 REIMBURSEMENT AGREEMENT NO. 040809-F WITH
21 THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, DEPARTMENT
22 OF TRANSPORTATION REGARDING THE LACKAWANNA
23 AVENUE BRIDGE PROJECT FOR THE PURPOSE OF
24 INCREASING THE CONSTRUCTION PHASE OF THE
25 PROJECT DUE TO CONSTRUCTION COSTS OVER-RUNS

1 TO REFLECT LOWER CONSTRUCTION COSTS AS SET
2 FORTH ON EXHIBIT 'AAAAAAA' PROJECT COSTS
3 APPENDED TO SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENT NO.
4 040809-F" BY MAKING FURTHER REVISIONS
5 PURSUANT TO CORRESPONDENCE DATED NOVEMBER
6 13, 2009 FROM PENNDOT.

7 MS. EVANS: What is the
8 recommendation of the Chair for the
9 Committee on Community Development?

10 MR. ROGAN: As Chairperson for the
11 Committee on Community Development, I
12 recommend final passage of Item 7-A.

13 MR. JOYCE: Second.

14 MS. EVANS: On the question? Roll
15 call, please?

16 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

18 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Rogan.

19 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

20 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Loscombe.

21 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes.

22 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Joyce.

23 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

24 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

25 MS. EVANS: I hereby declare Item

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7-B legally and lawfully adopted. Thank you
all for your attendance at tonight's meeting
and I will entertain a motion to adjourn.

MR. MCGOFF: Motion to adjourn.

MR. JOYCE: Second.

MS. EVANS: Meeting adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

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

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER