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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

HELD:

Tuesday, February 9, 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. Our clerk is
15 temporarily absent and we will hold the
16 progression of the meeting until she
17 returns.

18 MS. KRAKE: Please excuse me,
19 Council. I needed to put some things away
20 from the caucus.

21 MS. EVANS: Mrs. Krake, if you would
22 dispense with the reading of the minutes,
23 please?

24 MS. KRAKE: Thank you. THIRD ORDER.
25 NO BUSINESS AT THIS TIME.

1 MS. EVANS: Are there any clerk's
2 notes this evening?

3 MS. KRAKE: Yes, we have some
4 clerk's notes. We did get some replies from
5 our letters. First, we have from
6 Mr. Brazil. Actually, I have to -- this
7 is -- I'm going to start from the beginning.
8 We had a lovely gentleman come into our
9 office and he was in a wheelchair, motorized
10 wheelchair, that is his sole means of
11 transportation in downtown. The wheelchair
12 was damaged at a handicap access cut in the
13 pavement.

14 Now, he was trying to make our
15 office aware of the deplorable condition of
16 some of these cuts, so we had sent a letter
17 to DPW and Mr. Charlie Matthew replied that
18 it was Penn-DOT's responsibility to fix
19 these, so our office made some calls and we
20 found -- we spoke to a lovely person at
21 Penn-DOT, her name is Renee Gentile, her
22 original help was we trying to find help for
23 this gentleman to make a claim for repair of
24 his wheelchair. So she called us back to
25 say that it was the DPW's responsibility.

1 Then she calls again, which was very kind of
2 her, and said that the more she researched
3 it, partially it's our responsibility and
4 partially theirs, so she has since made
5 contact with the gentleman and she will be
6 letting us know and he will also how far
7 this goes and see what the city can do for
8 him.

9 This is also our response from
10 PennDOT. This is in response to our letter
11 February 2 regarding the potholes on Spruce
12 Street and Seventh Avenue. They have been
13 advised by the Lackawanna County Assistance
14 Maintenance Manager, Paul Menendez, that the
15 potholes will be repaired by the close of
16 business on February 5. Also, permanent
17 repairs to the potholes will be completed
18 once the weather permits.

19 We have a response from Eugene
20 Barrett from our letter of February 4: The
21 road cut in the 2500 block of Boulevard
22 Avenue was repaired on February 1. And he
23 says our forces will periodically check the
24 cold patch through the winter months until
25 such time as the asphalt plants reopen and a

1 permanent restoration can occur.

2 On the second part, he tells us that
3 it is his understanding that the DPW
4 recently installed pipes and basins at
5 Conroy Avenue and Erin Street, so we will
6 further question them on that.

7 Also, the storm water problem at
8 Donny Drive between Lake Scranton Road and
9 Elmhurst Boulevard is being caused by runoff
10 down the mountain and onto roads where there
11 are no storm lines or storm basins. Most of
12 the water runs down Elmhurst Boulevard which
13 is controlled by the county. So would it be
14 your pleasure to also ask the county about
15 this, Mrs. Evans?

16 MS. EVANS: Yes. Thank you, Mrs.
17 Krake.

18 MS. KRAKE: And we had had two
19 second requests both to Mr. Seitzinger from
20 the director -- he is the Director of
21 License and Inspections and they were about
22 Wheeler Avenue and Olive Street and 1023
23 Bunker Hill, we have received no response on
24 these.

25 MS. EVANS: I would ask then that

1 you send a memo to Mr. Seitzinger requesting
2 his attendance at a public caucus meeting.

3 MS. KRAKE: Yes.

4 MS. EVANS: And we will schedule
5 that at a date in February.

6 MS. KRAKE: And we did -- we are
7 having some residents stop into city council
8 also. This one is a resident reported loud
9 music to the point of shaking their homes in
10 the vicinity of Prescott and Mulberry. They
11 also report in the past that has been a
12 precursor to illegal activity in this
13 neighborhood. They do call the police, so I
14 don't know that they would want us to do
15 anything, but to just mention it at council.

16 MS. EVANS: All right.

17 MS. KRAKE: We also had residents
18 call and report that the work is finally
19 begun at the property of 1101 Cedar Avenue.

20 And we had two other people stop in.
21 They are requesting that council look into
22 the maintenance of the flood gates in the
23 Lackawanna River, which we have already sent
24 a letter and we are awaiting response. And
25 this, I hope I'm explaining this correctly,

1 concert in memory of former fire chief Gene
2 Yevitch will take place at the
3 Houlihan-McLane Building at the University
4 of Scranton on Friday, February 1st at 7:30
5 p.m. The concert is sponsored by former
6 mayor David Wenzel and his wife Janet. The
7 concert is free and open to the public and
8 dress is casual. Thank you. Dave Wenzel.

9 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Councilman
10 Loscombe. Anyone else?

11 MR. JOYCE: Yes. I also received a
12 note earlier that the Friendly's fun night
13 benefit that was scheduled to benefit the
14 St. Francis of Assisi Kitchen scheduled for
15 tomorrow night has been postponed and will
16 be scheduled at a later date. Once I know
17 what that later date is I will inform
18 everyone.

19 MS. EVANS: Thank you. The annual
20 Lithuanian raising ceremony will be held
21 this Saturday, February 13th at 11 a.m. at
22 Scranton City Hall and hosted by North
23 Scranton's very own Dick and Marie Laske.

24 The Fifth Annual Pet Supply Drive to
25 benefit the Griffen Pond Animal Shelter

1 continues through this Friday, February 12.
2 Donations of pet supplies or gift cards can
3 be dropped off at the first floor of city
4 hall. I ask the animal lovers of our
5 community to donate whatever you are able to
6 help unwanted animals survive.

7 Saints Peter and Paul Church, 1309
8 West Locust Street, Scranton, will conduct a
9 parish pierogi and clam chowder sale every
10 weekend during lent beginning this Saturday
11 and Sunday, February 13 and 14. Pierogies
12 are \$5 per dozen and soup is \$5 a quart.
13 Please call orders into Sandy Paraneck at
14 342-1719. 342-1719. Pickups must be made
15 before or after the Saturday 4:00 mass or
16 the Sunday 11:30 a.m. mass.

17 And finally, I would like to wish
18 everyone a very happy Valentine's Day this
19 weekend.

20 MS. KRAKE: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS
21 PARTICIPATION.

22 MS. EVANS: Tonight's first speaker
23 is Les Spindler.

24 MR. SPINDLER: Good evening,
25 Council, Les Spindler, city resident,

1 taxpayer and homeowner. First, I'd like to
2 comment about the story that Doherty
3 newsletter last February 5 about the mayor
4 vetoing the ordinance repealing the Scranton
5 Library Authority. The mayor made a comment
6 that council's repeal ordinance sets a
7 precedence, 2000 Commonwealth Court case law
8 in Northampton County Township to dissolve
9 the Sewer Authority. Mr. Doherty said that
10 authority was 33 years old and that it had
11 accomplished it's goal of building a sewer
12 system. Well, has our Sewer Authority built
13 the sewer system? So I think, in other
14 words, he is saying that we could repeal
15 this Sewer Authority, also. If he is saying
16 Northampton County can do it because they
17 already built their sewer system, we have a
18 sewer system so I think council should look
19 into repealing our Sewer Authority.

20 Moving on, I commend council for
21 making the cuts in the budget, but there is
22 two things I'm disappointed in that weren't
23 looked into. I have mentioned this in the
24 past, the parking fees. I think we are
25 losing money hand over fist because of these

1 outrageous parking fees. I work in town and
2 see it every day. I have mentioned it
3 before, the 200 of Penn, the 200 of Franklin
4 and the 200 of Mifflin. Franklin and
5 Mifflin are bare all day. There are no cars
6 parked there and the 200 of Penn used to be
7 busy all day, now you can get a spot there
8 almost any time you are there. I think we
9 are losing a tremendous amount of money
10 here.

11 And, also, I think the grant writer
12 for the fire department and police
13 department is very important and I'm
14 disappointed that the grant writer wasn't
15 added into the budget.

16 MS. EVANS: Would you like a
17 response to that?

18 MR. SPINDLER: Yes, Mrs. Evans.

19 MS. EVANS: In terms of the position
20 as grant writer, the city previously
21 employed a grant writer for the police
22 department as you are well aware, but at the
23 same time the administration outsourced
24 those duties to a part-time individual who
25 was an employee of the county so, in fact,

1 the city's grant writer was no longer
2 performing those duties over the course of
3 the last two years. The mayor has proposed
4 in his budget once again outsourcing this
5 position because I believe the individual
6 who had been in that position had been fired
7 and so rather than paying twice for the same
8 position that is a duplication of services.
9 We are in agreement with allowing the mayor
10 to once again outsource that position and
11 those funds are already provided in the
12 budget.

13 MR. SPINDLER: As long as the job is
14 being done.

15 MS. EVANS: Yes, the job will be get
16 done and I'm sure that Mr. Loscombe as
17 public safety chair will keep his eye on
18 that and keep you abreast.

19 MR. SPINDLER: Thank you.

20 MR. LOSCOMBE: If I could just add
21 something, Les.

22 MR. SPINDLER: Mrs. Evans, my time
23 was stopped?

24 MS. EVANS: Certainly.

25 MR. HUGHES: It was stopped. I

1 stopped it.

2 MR. SPINDLER: Thank you.

3 MR. LOSCOMBE: As far as the fire
4 department goes, the firefighters themselves
5 have written for several grants and gotten
6 grants themselves to this point, I will give
7 you the details of that when I get it
8 together, but they have been actively
9 seeking grants on their own.

10 MR. SPINDLER: Thank you. Moving
11 on, last week in the paper I saw a picture
12 of the ribbon cutting for the new garage and
13 I noticed that Mr. McGoff was the only one
14 there representing council. Mrs. Evans, as
15 president of the council I think you should
16 have been there, were you even invited?

17 MS. EVANS: No, I was not.

18 MR. SPINDLER: I guess nor was
19 anyone else on council?

20 MS. EVANS: You can ask them?

21 MR. JOYCE: No, I was not as well.

22 MR. ROGAN: No.

23 MR. SPINDLER: I didn't think so,
24 and it just goes to show the arrogance of
25 this mayor that he just invites people that

1 support him. I think it goes to show he is
2 not going to work with this council and it's
3 a terrible way to run the city. Oh, with
4 the parking garage the restaurant that's
5 supposed to open in there, \$32 steaks and
6 \$48 steaks, who in a distressed city is
7 going to spend money for steaks that cost
8 that much money? You can go to a
9 supermarket and buy half a dozen steaks for
10 that much money, and it's going to go the
11 same way of Molly Brannigan's went. I give
12 it a year and they won't be in the city
13 anymore.

14 And the next thing, is that a KOZ,
15 Mrs. Evans, would you know?

16 MS. EVANS: I'm not 100 percent
17 certain, but I don't believe so, but we can
18 check on that for you, and we'll get that
19 response and report it.

20 MR. SPINDLER: Okay. Something
21 else, last week a gentleman came from the
22 Lackawanna County Little League and he
23 talked about the playground being torn down
24 there, and I knew about this, I was going to
25 come last week but I had other plans. I saw

1 pictures on the website of that playground,
2 that playground was in perfect condition.
3 If there were needles and glass and graffiti
4 that stuff could be cleaned up. That
5 playground was built with taxpayer dollars
6 and I have heard anywhere from 50,000 to
7 \$200,000. Now, if that was destroyed with a
8 bulldozer as the gentleman said, that's
9 taxpayer money that went down the drain and
10 I think that's a crime. I spoke to a person
11 that was active in that little league in the
12 90's and he told me they built a little
13 playground there in the 90's and that was
14 vandalized, so if they saw that was
15 vandalized why would they go ahead and put
16 that much money into another one?

17 MS. EVANS: Well, I think that that
18 was an idea that had the blessing of the
19 mayor just as the dismantling of the
20 playground was also done with the mayor's
21 suggestion and permission.

22 MR. SPINDLER: You took the words
23 right out of my mouth, Mrs. Evans, because
24 in the mayor's 2006 campaign he talked about
25 building that playground there, and I think

1 that's a sin and I have a question here, I
2 want to know if it is true that the mayor
3 and Mark Dougher gave the blessings to have
4 that torn down? Could we look into that?

5 MS. EVANS: Um-hum.

6 MR. SPINDLER: And lastly, when ECTV
7 shows the replays of the council meetings
8 they are shown both on Channel 19 and 21,
9 but when it's live it's only on Channel 19
10 and some people have expressed to me that
11 have trouble picking up Channel 19, but
12 could we ask ECTV if they could possibly
13 show it live on both channels?

14 MS. EVANS: Yes, certainly. In
15 fact, Mrs. Krake, if you could make note of
16 that because under motions I have an
17 additional request for ECTV and we could
18 combine these in a letter.

19 MR. SPINDLER: I put Channel 21 on
20 when it's live and there is nothing else on
21 that station, so I don't see why they can't
22 do it, and I have it in writing.

23 MS. EVANS: Excellent.

24 MR. SPINDLER: That's all I have.
25 Thank you.

1 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Spindler.
2 Bill Jackowitz.

3 MR. JACKOWITZ: Bill Jackowitz,
4 South Scranton resident and member of the
5 Taxpayers' Association. Members of the
6 Taxpayers' Association and thanks to the
7 Times-Tribune originator of the Legion of
8 Doom. The Doherty real people are in a
9 panic. The doomers are getting credit for
10 changing city government. Three new city
11 council members. Good job, Citizens, voters
12 of Scranton. Keep paying attention to your
13 city government. Watch the votes and the
14 vetoes. Pay attention, are they voting in
15 favor of the majority of the citizens or the
16 Doherty real people. See if the Dohertys
17 conduct their meetings in city council
18 chambers with Channel 19 cameras rolling.

19 Last week Mr. Barrett was very
20 evasive, to say the least. Not many answers
21 just a lot of words. I believe that the
22 Scranton teachers and Scranton school nurses
23 are overpaid. They only work about 180 days
24 a year. If I were you, new and improved
25 doomer hypocrites, I would attend the

1 Scranton School Board meeting and voice your
2 opinion instead of hiding behind your
3 computer and blaming council president
4 Evans. I see where you did not mention
5 ex-councilwoman Gatelli's name or Councilman
6 McGoff who is a retired school teacher.
7 Include everybody or just back away from
8 your keyboard. Better yet, attend the
9 meetings and voice your opinion loud and
10 clear. That is the best way, that way there
11 are no misunderstandings who you are. Don't
12 hide behind a name.

13 Who would give up a \$20,000 a year
14 pension to serve on Scranton City Council?
15 By the way, that pension was earned with
16 hard work and dedication to the City of
17 Scranton. Who would be willing to risk
18 their lives for the citizens of Scranton?
19 How about your new and improved doomer and
20 hypocrite. Would you? How would you like
21 being electrocuted while fighting a fire in
22 the City of Scranton which caused permanent
23 damage to your state of health, new and
24 improved doomer hypocrite? Do you think
25 that captain is faking his disability?

1 mention lack of support. According to the
2 Lancaster Democrat, he did not receive one
3 endorsement vote for the governor or
4 lieutenant governor. Apparently, the
5 citizens of the Scranton -- correction, the
6 citizens of the Commonwealth were paying
7 close attention to Mayor/Ex-Governor,
8 Lieutenant Governor Doherty's record as
9 mayor of Scranton. Eight years without any
10 accomplishments except the tree house and a
11 bridge to nowhere.

12 Councilman Joyce, you are doing a
13 great job. People with intelligence have no
14 problem understanding what you are saying.
15 Keep the pressure on the Doherty real
16 people. Again, you did an excellent job.
17 Our last finance chairperson, Councilwoman
18 Gatelli, all she said was she didn't want to
19 be finance chairman, she took the job
20 because nobody else on council wanted it.
21 It's on record many, many, many times.

22 93 percent of the firefighters voted
23 no confidence in Chief Davis. Chief Elliott
24 called his female officers overtime whores.
25 Rise in crime in the City of Scranton since

1 tenure as police chief. Both Chief Davis
2 and Chief Elliott accepted raises while
3 their firefighters and police officers have
4 not received a raise in nine years.

5 Sue Renda is it not have the
6 qualification or the education to be making
7 \$85,000 a year. Nobody should get a \$60,000
8 a year in a three or four year period.
9 Nobody is that good, not even me.

10 Remember, excouncil woman Gatelli
11 and Fanucci they gave 15 minute sermons and
12 said nothing at all except calling citizens
13 names. They were eating candy and speaking
14 with their mouths full of candy.

15 Councilwoman Gatelli was proud of the fact
16 that Comedy Central wanted her to go to
17 Hollywood. Remember those days, new and
18 improved Democrat, correction, new and
19 improved doomer hypocrites.

20 As far as the Mt. Pleasant project,
21 it is up and running. The stoplight has
22 been installed, progress is being made, do
23 you not remember Mr. Ellman speaking about
24 Mr. Burke getting permits for \$19 for a \$19
25 million project while Mr. Ellman had to pay

1 \$44 for his permit? You should have spoke
2 about the 500 block of Lackawanna Avenue
3 which has only four businesses operating,
4 Coney Island, who paid for their own
5 renovation, The Gallery, the Liederkrantz and
6 Buono Pizza. The other ones are vacant.
7 When are we going to get tenants there and
8 also across the street Molly Brannigans
9 still vacant. There is a sign in the
10 window, but they are still vacant.

11 "If you want to avoid penalties pay
12 your taxes on time." Guess who made that
13 quote? It's a quote from Mayor/exgovernor,
14 Lieutenant Governor Doherty. What a
15 wonderful leader. He did create 9,000 new
16 jobs in Scranton single handily, so I guess
17 we should be thankful for that.

18 Liars, cheats, and thieves are on
19 the way out. Fair, honest and open
20 government on the way in. The Legion of
21 Doom which was created by the Scranton
22 Times-Tribune and being carried on by the
23 doomer hypocrites who post on the
24 Times-Tribune website, their motto is fair,
25 honest and open government. Possibly if the

1 city did something for the kids instead of
2 for the Doherty real people all of the time,
3 like maybe allowing them to swim, ages 6 to
4 15, we may not have -- we may have a decline
5 in crime instead of an increase in crime,
6 and I hope to receive a contribution from
7 the hypocrites who post on the
8 Times-Tribune. But even better, why don't
9 you come to a meeting and we could have a
10 five-minute debate. Thank you.

11 MS. EVANS: Thank you,
12 Mr. Jackowitz. Sam Patilla.

13 MR. PATILLA: Good evening, city
14 council.

15 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

16 MR. PATILLA: Sam Patilla, South
17 Side resident and member of the Scranton,
18 Taxpayers' and Citizens' Association.
19 First, I'd like to commend the council
20 majority on the caucus that you held earlier
21 today. You know, I haven't had this feeling
22 since I saw my daughter walk for the first
23 time. You know, this is -- this is
24 monumentous for the citizens and the
25 taxpayers of this city. It really is. It's

1 long overdue.

2 Now, I might need a tetanus shot
3 because I'm going to read something that was
4 quoted in the slime newspaper after I finish
5 saying this, but according to the paper
6 Chris Doherty acknowledged the Library
7 Authority could facilitate the project of
8 building a new library through the ownership
9 of the building with the ability to seek
10 outside funding.

11 Madame President, this question goes
12 directly towards you because I think as a
13 South Side resident the taxpayers and the
14 small business owners who reside in South
15 Scranton really immediate to hear this,
16 okay. The question is can the Library
17 Authority tax the properties in their
18 district, in this case South Scranton, where
19 the proposed library will be located above
20 the taxes on the rest of the population?

21 MS. EVANS: No.

22 MR. PATILLA: So that, see by the
23 quote that I'm reading here that authority
24 can go seek outside funding, but they do not
25 have the ability to tax South Side residents

1 just because that library is going to be
2 located in South Side?

3 MS. EVANS: No. I believe if any
4 tax increase were involved it would be
5 levied on all taxpayers not simply those who
6 reside in South Side and not at a rate that
7 would increase simply because a homeowner
8 owns property in South Side.

9 MR. PATILLA: Secondly, in regards
10 to the reply made concerning the creation of
11 that authority, according to the authority
12 board president, Ann Chilarno, and Albright
13 Library Executive Director Jack Finnerty,
14 better insurance is the main reason library
15 backers have sought the deeds for nearly 20
16 years. Now, I don't know exactly who these
17 questions could be directed to, but I would
18 like to know or for somebody to explain to
19 the viewing audience why the city has never
20 sought better insurance, why the county has
21 never sought better insurance, and why the
22 Library Authority at that time never chipped
23 in to get better insurance for the library.
24 You know, why create a new library or wait
25 all this time and use it as an excuse, you

1 know? I'm used to going out and doing for
2 myself, but if I need something done I go
3 out and get it done. If they need better
4 insurance then why not have fundraisers or
5 something along those lines to secure that
6 funding so they can get the insurance?
7 Don't take the deeds of the library and use
8 it as an excuse to get insurance.

9 Thirdly, also according to Ms.
10 Chilarno, the entire board and Jack Finnerty
11 on behalf of the staff is very committed to
12 the Albright Library political balance
13 aside. Well, I would like for either Miss
14 Chilarno, Mr. Finnerty or both to explain
15 why the library was left stagnant, why two
16 libraries in the surrounding communities and
17 other municipalities grew. You know, I
18 inquired today when was the last upgrade or
19 renovation that transpired in that library
20 and the person that I had to speak to wasn't
21 there today. Like I said, I frequent that
22 library, I'm a patron there and I haven't
23 really seen a whole lot done since I have
24 gotten here, and I don't want them to use
25 that excuse that the new library authority

1 is going to get all of this done when the
2 people who were there beforehand are in the
3 same position.

4 Now, I won't penalize those children
5 in regard to that playground, but I do think
6 that we as taxpayers, you know, somebody
7 should go out there and talk to those
8 residents in that area to find out if that
9 playground was demolished and if so who
10 carted it off and if there were pieces left,
11 if there were equipment left over where is
12 it? You know, taxpayers have a right to
13 know. You know, it's not one person or two
14 people's call. That's taxpayer property and
15 we need to know what happened to our
16 property. You know, for too long you have
17 certain individuals in this city who take
18 taxpayer owned property and they do what
19 they want to do with it and that's not
20 right. Let us know.

21 Again, I'd like to commend the
22 council majority and especially you,
23 Councilman Loscombe, because I know it's a
24 heavy hit, but you instilled in me and quite
25 a few other Scrantonians that you are doing

1 this because it's the right thing to do.
2 It's not because you are getting any type of
3 financial incentive, it's not because there
4 is something going on in the background, you
5 are a man of honor and a man of courage and
6 I tip my hat to all of you. Thank you.

7 MS. EVANS: Mr. Patilla, just to
8 clarify one thing, the authority itself or
9 the board of trustees, if you will, because
10 I don't know in fact that they are truly an
11 authority, they do not have the power or
12 ability to levy taxes. Now, their funding
13 or some of their funding, let us say, might
14 be secured in terms of bonds or loans. In
15 that event, the City of Scranton would be
16 asked to pledge it's full faith and credit
17 for those bonds or loans. By doing so, it
18 then makes the taxpayers responsible for
19 their debt. In other words, in that
20 instance, the authority has absolutely no
21 liability in the event it cannot meet it's
22 financial obligations, and the reason a city
23 is asked to pledge full faith and credit is
24 because the city, in fact, is pledging it's
25 powers of taxation, it's ability to increase

1 taxes in order to make those financial
2 payments on behalf of that authority.

3 The county also, you know, most
4 likely has a role in this, but as you know
5 the county commissioners have indicated on
6 numerous occasions that they do not have the
7 money to support a new library and they will
8 not raise library taxes in order to support
9 that project or to maintain it's operations.

10 MR. PATILLA: The reason I question
11 that, Madame President, is that Friday Marie
12 Schumacher and I were out collecting
13 signatures and I ran across residents who
14 actually live and work in this area where
15 the proposed library is supposed to go and
16 most of the kids deemed the area crack
17 central, you know, and they also had a
18 problem with it being located off an
19 alleyway, you know, and like I said, if we
20 are going to do this we will did it when we
21 can financially afford it.

22 MS. EVANS: Yes.

23 MR. PATILLA: And get the best bang
24 for our buck because I have seen quite a few
25 of the shoddy construction projects being

1 done in this city in the last three and a
2 half years, and that's being nice calling
3 them shoddy and we don't want that. You
4 know, we just want to take care of our
5 children, take care of our city and have
6 respect --

7 MS. EVANS: Yes.

8 MR. PATILLA: -- in the same. Thank
9 you, Madam President.

10 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Patilla.
11 Marie Schumacher.

12 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening,
13 Council. Marie Schumacher, resident and
14 member of the Taxpayers' Association.
15 First, I'd like to speak in support of 7-A,
16 but I did notice at the last page of the
17 mayor's veto message claims that there is a
18 procedural error in that the Home Rule
19 Charter was violated as more than one issue
20 was included. However, the original
21 ordinance, 95 of 2009, also addressed more
22 than a single issue, so does that render the
23 original ordinance 95 of 2009 null and void
24 on it's face?

25 MS. EVANS: Well, it would seem.

1 MS. SCHUMACHER: Certainly seems to
2 me. The second issue goes back a couple of
3 years. I remember the very said case of a
4 Mr. Meeley who stood at this podium who
5 twice had a problem with the city, the first
6 in that his home was condemned and some I
7 believe it was the electric, don't quote me
8 on this, I didn't have a chance to check it,
9 but I believe it was the electric was turned
10 off in his home such that he could not live
11 in it and it resulted in his pipes freezing
12 because he didn't have electricity, his
13 heating system failed and the pipes burst
14 and he ended up with a flooded basement.

15 And I really think there was this
16 article, "Vacant city home damaged by fire."
17 On the 8th of February in the paper, and it
18 again says, "That the building had
19 electrical service, but no gas service."

20 It doesn't speak to water service,
21 but I really think we need a policy on
22 condemned homes that is both sensible and
23 adhered to on a regular basis. If we are
24 going to have some of these condemned homes
25 made liveable, we need to prevent further

1 damage, and I don't know how that gets done,
2 but I think it's sad that only partial
3 utilities are shut off.

4 The next I'd like to go back. Last
5 week, last Thursday I made a visit down to
6 the DEP and among the things I pulled was a
7 report, an inspection report they performed
8 on the Scranton Sewer Authority. This is --
9 most of these pages, this is only three
10 pages of the summary, I'm not going to read
11 it all, but I would like to read select
12 items. It does make some commendations. It
13 says: First of all, almost all of the
14 monies spent since 2002 was for long-term
15 maintenance which with a necessary because
16 of the age of the treatment plant. However,
17 it then goes onto say excessive grit is
18 causing malfunction which cause bypassing.
19 The Sewer Authority has failed to
20 investigate the source of the grit.

21 Now again, I was talking with
22 another residence of the city this week who
23 was complaining about all of the grit that's
24 applied to the road and we have three
25 streets sweepers, but the street sweepers

1 are not getting out to get the grit up
2 in-between storms and then when we do get
3 rain or a heavy melt all of that grit goes
4 into our sewer system, so I might suggest
5 that might be one source of the grit.

6 Then the next page of the DEP report
7 on our Sewer Authority says: The board and
8 upper management is not providing the
9 necessary planning and guidance to the plant
10 personnel so that they can properly
11 implement the nine minimum controls.

12 It also talks about deficient -- one
13 of the deficient items is a new tie flex
14 valve on 03. Unfortunately, I didn't read
15 the instructions before I went down and it
16 says you only get ten copies for free then
17 you have to pay by either check, which I
18 didn't bring a check, or money order and I
19 didn't bring a money order either, so I had
20 to have them mailed, so I'm not sure of the
21 location of 003, but those are the kinds of
22 things that are really important
23 particularly those people that like live
24 down in the Plot. It is my understanding
25 those valves are what keep the water, the

1 sewage water from coming up during a storm,
2 and so even though they have got the levies
3 they could end up getting flooded because
4 they get water through these malfunctioning
5 valves. So those are important items, there
6 are other things, maybe I'll make copies and
7 make this available to you all next week.

8 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

9 MS. SCHUMACHER: But there are a
10 number of deficiencies that I think I'll
11 address with the Sewer Authority at their
12 next meeting.

13 And now, even though I haven't had
14 time to digest all of these items from the
15 budget presentation tonight, I do have a
16 couple of quick questions. Your comment,
17 Mrs. Evans, on the full faith and credit of
18 the taxpayers being behind bond issues, what
19 are the chances that the money that is being
20 removed for the parking citation readers
21 will cause the Parking Authority to default
22 on their bond and we will end up paying
23 anyway because they will default on their
24 bonds? Do you know?

25 MS. EVANS: I don't know the answer

1 to that. I do know that that particular
2 account has been inflated, over funded, each
3 year that I have been on council in that the
4 dollar amount always far exceeded the number
5 of employees, their salaries, their health
6 benefits, their uniform allowance and the 10
7 percent of street parking revenue that is
8 due to the Parking Authority from the city
9 for the Parking Authority's collection of
10 it.

11 What the Parking Authority has done
12 with those extra hundreds of thousands of
13 dollars each year, I do not know. I have
14 been asking that question for six years and
15 for six years neither the administration or
16 the Scranton Parking Authority will respond.

17 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, perhaps you
18 could have Mr. Scopellitti -- invite
19 Mr. Scopellitti here to a public caucus
20 because I'd like to know if it's pay us now
21 or pay us later and I don't know what --
22 which would be expensive, giving them
23 whatever 200 grand now or the default later.

24 MS. EVANS: I should add, and I
25 understand what you are saying and it's an

1 excellent point, I should add though I
2 believe in one of the city controller's
3 reports for the end of the 2009 fiscal year
4 there was over \$200,000 remaining in that
5 account.

6 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay, thank you.

7 MR. JOYCE: I'm sorry, if I might
8 also add, the amount allocated in 2009 was
9 higher than the amount originally allocated
10 in 2010. I believe that the amount
11 allocated in 2009 was about \$850,000 or so,
12 therefore, I know that Mrs. Evans said there
13 was a 200 - or there was about \$250,000 left
14 into that account and I'm assuming that's
15 where they may have come up with the figure
16 that they -- that was sent on council for
17 approval on the original budget of \$650,000.

18 However, the \$450,000 figure in
19 presentation that I gave earlier, that is
20 still actually a slight overestimation of
21 what we are required to provide to that
22 authority.

23 MS. SCHUMACHER: Required under the
24 terms of the ordinance if I understood what
25 your rationale was.

1 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

2 MS. SCHUMACHER: But all I'm saying
3 is if he they were counting on their revenue
4 in their budgeting and if they don't get
5 that they default on a bond, which is
6 cheaper to pay them now or pay them later.

7 MS. EVANS: I agree, but the Parking
8 Authority should be responsibility for it's
9 debt.

10 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, yeah, we need
11 to know -- well, should be, would be, could
12 be, but -- Also, I'd be interested since on
13 the IT what functions may not be continued
14 by the sharing of the one remaining? I'll
15 bring the rest of my questions next week.
16 Thank you.

17 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Joyce, the exact
19 figure in 2009 was \$879,830 and in 2010
20 \$650,000.

21 MR. JOYCE: Right. Thank you very
22 much for providing that.

23 MS. EVANS: Our next week speaker is
24 Doug Miller.

25 MR. MILLER: Good evening, Council,

1 Doug Miller, Scranton.

2 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

3 MR. JOYCE: Good evening.

4 MR. MILLER: I would just like to
5 comment on a few weeks ago a speaker had
6 brought up the issue of possibly putting the
7 city's backup to the agenda either on the
8 city's website or in our public libraries.
9 I was wondering if you had heard anything
10 from the IT department on that matter?

11 MS. EVANS: I don't believe so, but
12 I'll double check at this time with Mrs.
13 Krake. Have we received a response from IT?

14 MS. KRAKE: I don't know if
15 Mr. Miller heard the original response that
16 we gave last week.

17 MR. MILLER: No, I didn't.

18 MS. KRAKE: If you were aware of
19 that? It wouldn't be any different as of
20 today, but just to refresh that point, they
21 said they were working on it. They do feel
22 it's an excellent idea, also, but they need
23 to make PDF files. Most of our legislation
24 originates in this law department so they
25 have to change it at that point and it is

1 something being worked on so it will be
2 available in the future.

3 MR. MILLER: Thank you very much.
4 Regarding the Sewer Authority, last week we
5 heard from Mr. Barrett and I would just like
6 to express my opposition to the proposed
7 flat rate. I certainly don't find it fair
8 as many people have expressed the same
9 response and we have heard it here at this
10 podium. But I would like to thank
11 Mr. Barrett for coming in and he did state
12 that they will take the concerns seriously
13 and into consideration before they go ahead
14 and make a final decision, so we will just
15 have to wait and see what happens there.

16 A few years back council brought our
17 meetings on the road. I'm sure you remember
18 that, Mrs. Evans, you were seated here. We
19 held a meeting in South Side and West Side,
20 and I'd like it see this council possibly
21 consider that for the future. I felt it
22 served a good purpose and it allowed council
23 to gain a better insight on the neighborhood
24 issues, so maybe you could consider that for
25 the future.

1 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Miller, it's funny
2 you mentioned that, I was in the office
3 earlier and a few constituents came in and
4 they mentioned that they had a few problems,
5 but they didn't feel comfortable going on TV
6 and it was myself, Mrs. Krake and the
7 residents were talking, and actually I was
8 going to bring up to my colleagues later
9 that we may consider doing something in
10 addition to our regular meeting in the
11 neighborhoods say one month in West
12 Scranton, one month in South Scranton. It
13 would be more of a neighborhood meeting and
14 the cameras wouldn't be there so if people
15 had concerns they could come with their
16 concerns, but again, we would have to check
17 with our attorney because we have to advert
18 ize it if all of five of us went.

19 MS. EVANS: Or we may actually
20 this -- I'm sorry, we are holding your time,
21 Mr. Miller. We might actually consider
22 engaging the volunteerism of citizens in
23 each neighborhood who would take, let us
24 say, the concerns of their neighborhood to
25 city council and in that way we could have

1 an outreach individual in each area of the
2 city who could keep us abreast monthly of
3 that an area's problems and needs and then
4 we can attempt to address those situations,
5 and this an event I think the individuals
6 might feel very comfortable talking to a
7 neighbor who is also a community activist.

8 MR. MILLER: Thank you, that would
9 be great. Any way you can get people
10 involved, and like you said, Mr. Rogan, some
11 people aren't comfortable coming down here
12 to speak with the cameras and such and any
13 way to get input would be great.

14 Regarding the budget, you know, I
15 appreciate the time that this council took
16 to put together an amended budget. However,
17 I just don't want to see it become the
18 majority versus the mayor. You know, we
19 don't want to get into that political game.

20 Regarding revenues, they were
21 mentioned tonight, a few weeks back I had
22 done some research on revenue in large
23 cities in the country and I actually came
24 across an article by the Phoenix Newspaper
25 and they had created a task force made up of

1 residents in their community, a 25-member
2 task force who took -- spent the summer and
3 brainstormed revenue ideas. In the end,
4 they presented their report to their council
5 and the council actually considered the
6 proposal and actually implemented a few of
7 the ideas into their budget. Something I
8 think here in Scranton we could look at.
9 Perhaps we can get the taxpayers' group
10 involved, maybe our neighborhood
11 associations or anyone that's interested in
12 giving their input on generating revenue for
13 the city, so that's just something I wanted
14 to bring up tonight, and thank you for your
15 time.

16 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

17 MR. JOYCE: Thank you.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Mrs. Evans, excuse me,
19 a clarification as Mr. Miller was talking, I
20 believe that town meetings are not a
21 violation of the Sunshine Law as long as the
22 council members do not discuss any issues
23 brought up, would that be correct or am I
24 mistaken?

25 MR. HUGHES: I'd have to take a look

1 at that. With the Sunshine Law, with the
2 new Sunshine Law that was passed, I believe
3 that council could meet as long as there is
4 never any vote taken. You couldn't have a
5 meeting unless, you know, you actually had
6 the meeting and it was advertised as an
7 official meeting.

8 MR. MCGOFF: Right. I'm just -- I
9 thought that you could have, as I said, like
10 a town meeting, gather information as long
11 as we did not discuss or make decisions and
12 that that would not be a violation of the
13 Sunshine Law and could be held without
14 television, without, you know, advertising
15 etcetera, but --

16 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

17 MR. MCGOFF: -- thank you, Attorney
18 Hughes.

19 MR. MILLER: Thank you.

20 MS. EVANS: Ron Ellman. Oh, I'm
21 sorry, I'm sorry. Before Ron Ellman is Lee
22 Morgan.

23 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.

24 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

25 MR. JOYCE: Good evening.

1 MR. MORGAN: I guess where I'd like
2 to start is for the last couple of weeks I
3 have been going to the neighborhood group
4 meetings and the last one I attended was
5 Tripp Park, before that I went to the South
6 Scranton Neighborhood Association, and what
7 I am basically attempting to do here is get
8 support in the city for a youth and remedial
9 education program, and basically what I'm
10 asking for is council to support that
11 initiative in some manner as I continue to
12 proceed and try to gather enough support to
13 actually make this a reality.

14 I think we have a lot of drug
15 problems and alcohol abuse problems. I
16 think that a lot of them stem from a lack of
17 support of the government to create an
18 atmosphere that helps to hold back bad
19 elements in the community. You can fight
20 all the blight you want to fight, but when
21 people are coming in the neighborhoods
22 selling drugs all summer to kids out of
23 school and all of the other various bad
24 influences I think it's time to do
25 something.

1 I had an opportunity last year to
2 talk to the president of the Scranton School
3 Board, he thought it was a good idea, the
4 judges thought it was a good idea. I think
5 it's time possibly for a council to get
6 involved or at least to attempt to try to do
7 something. I do intend to continue to
8 pursue this idea, and I'd like any support I
9 could have.

10 And on the budget, you know, I know
11 that council took some time to present this,
12 but I do have some questions. We are going
13 to try to put council meetings, the backup
14 to the agenda on the website it seems. I
15 don't know if this IT person is necessary to
16 accomplish that. It may be a good
17 investment to spend the \$40,000 a year to
18 allow the residents of this city to know
19 exactly what's happening here so they are
20 more informed and more involved.

21 I am not -- I see how we are going
22 to try to go in and try to do something with
23 the city solicitor, the part-time solicitor,
24 etcetera, but my question is what litigation
25 is the law department involved in right now?

1 How many hours are they working to pursue
2 that litigation and can we really afford to
3 cut those positions and leave the city open
4 to not having the representation that needs
5 to defend itself?

6 Parks and Recreation. Now, you
7 know, I appreciate everybody looking for
8 cuts, but is it possible that the director
9 and the recreation specialist and the
10 project manager may be necessary and that
11 maybe we are not using them in the right
12 manner? Is it possible that these
13 individuals could be more involved in
14 recreation inside of the city limits?

15 MS. EVANS: We can hold your time if
16 you would like an answer?

17 MR. MORGAN: Go ahead.

18 MS. EVANS: I can tell you that in
19 the Parks and Recreation Department during
20 my six years as a council member, the number
21 of management positions has been, well, let
22 us say greater than the number of worker
23 positions, and so that particular
24 department, in fact, was top heavy in
25 management and very understaffed in terms of

1 workers, so it's like having a department of
2 chiefs with just less than a handful of
3 Indians.

4 In terms of the legal department, I
5 do want those questions answered that you
6 asked this evening, but I can tell you that,
7 for example, beyond the law department, the
8 city employs on a part-time basis Attorney
9 Carl Greco, for example. Mr. Greco through
10 a part-time position has made now
11 approximately a million dollars in payment
12 from taxpayers.

13 In addition, the mayor farms out or
14 outsources many of his cases to law firms
15 beyond any attorneys who were employed by
16 the law department whether it be for labor
17 contract negotiations, whether it be for
18 worker compensation, whether it be for
19 lawsuits involving the city, for example.
20 It's very rare, in fact, that I have seen
21 any city attorneys directly involved in
22 litigation.

23 MR. MORGAN: Well, could I say
24 something on that? In my opinion, law is an
25 extremely complex profession, and I'm not

1 sticking up for attorneys, I just have to
2 say that it's very specialized in some
3 places and it may be necessary that -- and
4 I'm not sticking up for the mayor, I'm only
5 trying to be objective here, it may be
6 possible that the city solicitor says to the
7 mayor, "We don't have the capabilities to
8 handle this case, we have to go to an
9 outside source."

10 And all I'm saying is I think that
11 before we should start making cuts we should
12 be informed as to what these individuals and
13 departments do, and I do appreciate looking
14 at this on the board and seeing the cuts and
15 seeing the dollars and cents, and I do think
16 that restoring the traffic department was a
17 great idea, the sign writer was a great
18 idea. I just think that we really have to
19 really be very careful where we go because
20 we may do more harm to ourselves than any
21 good we may realize.

22 MS. EVANS: Again though, as I said,
23 most of the legal work is already
24 outsourced, but even beyond that if we look
25 down the street to the Scranton School

1 District whose budget is significantly
2 larger than that of the city, who oversees
3 18 or 19 buildings, who employs a far
4 greater number of employees than does the
5 city, the Scranton School District employs
6 only one solicitor to represent it in its
7 numerous actions, and I can assure you there
8 are many that the average taxpayer would not
9 be aware of.

10 MR. MORGAN: Well, I just think that
11 you are trying compare an apple to a orange.
12 I respect your opinion, but the school
13 district is the school district and this is
14 the city, and like I said I'm not sticking
15 up for the mayor, I just think that we
16 should proceed with caution.

17 The other thing is I really can't
18 see how -- I don't see how it's productive
19 to take a \$25,000 grant from the Everhart
20 Museum because I think that's an asset to
21 the city. I just think like what does the
22 recycling coordinator do and is it possible
23 now to increase -- decrease the amount of
24 tipping we are doing if we to try and find
25 out if everyone in this city is recycling?

1 Is that a position that that recycling
2 coordinator could fulfill and is it possible
3 that some of the employees are misdirected
4 by the administration and is it possible to
5 reconfigure their responsibilities in this
6 city to make them more productive so that
7 they yield a revenue into the city.
8 Because, you know, sometimes you try to save
9 a dollar and you lose ten, so I really would
10 hope that this council would reconsider
11 where it's at, go back to these various
12 departments, get information as to what does
13 this person do, what are their job duties
14 and see exactly what the bulk of their work
15 really is because it looks good on the
16 screen, and like I said, I'm not criticizing
17 this council, but I think we need an awful
18 lot more information and I think the
19 residents to deserve it and I do hope that
20 in the next budget we cut the next budget by
21 at least 10 percent or more because I think
22 that is the solution to a lot of the city's
23 problems. But I also think that somebody
24 needs to talk to Austin Burke about creating
25 a green technology light-industrial complex

1 in the Scranton Lace building, and I think
2 that we have to look for answers and we have
3 to try new directions, and that's all I
4 have. Thank you.

5 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Ron Ellman.

6 MR. ELLMAN: Ms. Janet, you treat me
7 like a stepchild here when I was coming up.

8 MS. EVANS: Mea culpa.

9 MR. ELLMAN: Yeah. Well, what could
10 I say. Jack, can I say that? I really -- I
11 want to thank you for your choice. You are
12 a good man, that's a rare choice, you know.

13 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you.

14 MR. ELLMAN: These days as times
15 and, Mr. Joyce, you gave an excellent
16 presentation. I have haven't seen something
17 like that since I used to watch the Tonight
18 Show and they will tell you how to get that
19 car lot down the harbor freeway and so on.

20 MR. JOYCE: Thank you very much.

21 MR. ELLMAN: You know, a lot of it
22 was over my head, but it was very good.
23 It's nice to see, you know, take such an
24 interest so soon and things. I had a lot of
25 people -- I had six eight people talk about

1 your interview last week with was very good,
2 you know, you didn't have much to work with
3 I guess. This man missed his calling in
4 life if you ask me. He should have been a
5 bullfighter the way he was throwing it and
6 dodging and going up and back about things.
7 If there isn't an epitome example of whatnot
8 to be we don't need a Library Authority just
9 look at what he has got mismanaged, just
10 incompetent. You know, I was out with this
11 petition, there is very few people that know
12 what is going on. They don't know the power
13 of the authority. You know, it needs to
14 be -- I told them it's like having an
15 elected office that you didn't elect the
16 people. They have all of these power and
17 once they are in there that's it. I never
18 seen so many people just -- I must have
19 talked to 100 people and I got, I don't
20 know, 50 signatures, but you know, a lot of
21 them didn't live in town. Very few people
22 know what is going on. I don't know how you
23 are supposed to tell them, you can't rely on
24 the newspaper, that's for sure. I guess you
25 read Pat McKenna's article yesterday, the

1 editorial?

2 MS. EVANS: No.

3 MR. ELLMAN: Of course, it's a bunch
4 of bias nonsense why we should have the
5 authority. I always wondered what Pat
6 McKenna would write if he wasn't told to,
7 you know, if he could just speak his mind
8 once in awhile because I read the articles
9 every day. I don't have much use for him
10 myself because he told me off once about the
11 high school. Oh, well.

12 I had somebody ask me the tax status
13 of this new restaurant what it's going to be
14 whether they are given a KOZ and all of the
15 Doherty deferrals of taxes and everything.
16 Does anyone know?

17 MS. EVANS: A speaker posed that
18 question earlier in the evening and we will
19 check into it, but I don't believe they
20 received a KOZ. I seem to recall early
21 during my tenure on council, it was possibly
22 Mr. Wolfington who had come to participate
23 in the public caucus at which he was asking
24 city council to consider a TIFF which is
25 another state program whereby businesses can

1 avoid any tax increases for a set number of
2 years and nothing came of that. There is
3 no -- to my knowledge no TIFF was ever
4 granted, but that leads me to believe that
5 most likely it's not a KOZ.

6 MR. ELLMAN: That's good. I've been
7 pretty optimistic talking about years being
8 a new restaurant business in this town. I
9 walk through the mall and it brings -- it's
10 sad to me what's going on, you know, I don't
11 want too see all of these businesses go out,
12 but if you talk to anyone they tell you the
13 rents over there are just outrageous, you
14 can't make it.

15 That reminds me, I had a man talking
16 to me at a fast food restaurant about --
17 this is a couple of weeks ago, he said the
18 kids are just out of hand, you know, like
19 the newspaper article yesterday. He said we
20 definitely need a curfew, you know. He said
21 you tell them and they just don't pay any
22 attention, and then if someone is injured or
23 hurt riding on a car hood on the property he
24 gets sued. He was telling me all of these
25 problems with these kids. I don't know.

1 You know, if you wanted to cut some
2 jobs I think you ought to get rid of Austin
3 Burke. There is one man that just -- I have
4 asked people what he has done, you know,
5 trying to find out, there is nobody has any
6 big events or things that he has brought
7 here, you know, he hasn't done anything for
8 the city except play golf with people and,
9 you know, drive around in his car with a big
10 salary. He doesn't do anything for this
11 city except pat himself on the back. In
12 fact, I don't know why he wasn't fired when
13 he offered a bribe to the school board. I
14 never heard of such a thing, you know,
15 nothing happens with him. I bet I couldn't
16 offer a bribe to someone and just walk away.
17 How does he get his job? He's just
18 appointed?

19 MS. EVANS: I really don't know,
20 but --

21 MR. ELLMAN: I don't either. I
22 asked somebody --

23 MS. EVANS: But I'm sure he would
24 have applied for the position and
25 interviewed and had been selected based on

1 qualifications -- -

2 MR. ELLMAN: I know he has been
3 around a long time.

4 MS. EVANS: But we have invited
5 Mr. Burke as well as two other
6 representatives of the Scranton Chamber of
7 Commerce to a public caucus. I don't know
8 that we received a response yet, did we,
9 Mrs. Krake?

10 MS. KRAKE: We did receive a phone
11 call by the date we asked them to respond
12 by, but they were going to follow-up with a
13 date that they were available for a public
14 caucus. They kept requesting a meeting with
15 just the president of council, which I know
16 that your wishes were for them to be here
17 for the public.

18 MS. EVANS: Yes.

19 MS. KRAKE: And so that's -- I'm
20 assuming that's why we just haven't heard
21 back again for a date. I will recontact
22 them though.

23 MS. EVANS: Yes, and if you would
24 indicate, please, that I do not wish to meet
25 privately, that's insufficient. The

1 invitation is extended to the individuals in
2 a public forum.

3 MS. KRAKE: Yes.

4 MR. ELLMAN: I don't know -- I was
5 told quite a few years not the garage
6 rental, but the staff doesn't pay for itself
7 in the Parking Authority when you talk about
8 the benefits that they have a truck and an
9 office and all of the care for the meters
10 and so on, that it -- the meters don't pay
11 for that. It's something to investigate
12 about a savings. No one wants to see people
13 fired and all. That's a great sadness to
14 me, also.

15 MS. EVANS: Well, thank you,
16 Mr. Ellman.

17 MR. ELLMAN: I have something for
18 Brother McGoff, people were telling me that
19 the meetings are just no fun no more because
20 there is it no fighting it's all turned
21 business, and I promise --

22 MR. MCGOFF: I'm sure you could
23 change that.

24 MR. ELLMAN: You know, I promised
25 them that it was all right because you would

1 do some soft shoe next week. You can.

2 MR. MCGOFF: That would have people
3 turn off, I'm sure.

4 MS. EVANS: Jerry Chazin.

5 MR. CHAZIN: Chazin.

6 MS. EVANS: What is it?

7 MR. CHAZIN: Chazin.

8 MS. EVANS: Chazin. I apologize.

9 MR. CHAZIN: Jerry Chazin, I'm a
10 person. I'm an apartment owner here in
11 Scranton and the apartment owners need to
12 have an ombudsman which can deal with all of
13 the red tape that the city has. It's an
14 absolutely shame that some of the best
15 housing is now in neighborhoods that are
16 going totally downhill. The Hill Section
17 was a great place, South Side was a great
18 place, it no longer is, and if one wants to
19 be an apartment owner, it's extremely
20 difficult with all of the red tape and all
21 of the stuff that the city had set up and I
22 think it's time for someone to actually tear
23 it all apart and go back to zero and figure
24 out what makes sense to either protect
25 housing or get rid of it, one or the other.

1 All it's doing is allowing people that we
2 don't want to come in here.

3 I think we need to pass a law that
4 says the police need to make certain things
5 available to land -- to apartment owners so
6 we can see who we are renting to. We don't
7 want to have the scum of the earth if we can
8 help it, but nobody can help us. We are on
9 our own and that's not right.

10 I think you need to change laws so
11 that the magistrates which are, by the way,
12 from what I understand the city is part of
13 the deal, they are available to help people,
14 to actually be able to offer some common
15 sense advise and not be told "Go consult
16 your lawyer," which is crazy which is all I
17 get.

18 Now, I'm only an apartment owner
19 here for two years, I have been up here for
20 20. I merged companies and we added 75
21 people at Montage Foods when I was here as a
22 CEO, so things can be done. If the
23 magistrates were open in affect 24/7 and
24 there was a place to go to and you had a
25 tenant that you knew was selling drugs then

1 you could evict him immediately and the cops
2 would come and not tell me, "Gee, you are a
3 smuck for being an apartment owner," which
4 is what I get from the cops all of the time.

5 I had a lady that was getting SSI,
6 and I checked with social security
7 yesterday, and I was told even though she
8 was evicted and even though she took \$2,000
9 worth of my stuff with her there wasn't a
10 thing I could do about that. Now, there is
11 something wrong when taxpayers are paying
12 through social security and her wages
13 quote/unquote can't be garnished? That's
14 crazy.

15 Zoning board. The last time I was
16 in this place was two years ago, I was
17 outvoted 6 to 0 when I took two houses that
18 were crack houses with seven apartments
19 converted them to seven liveable places and
20 then told because a neighbor said I did
21 something wrong the city took them all away
22 and give me two one-family houses and it
23 cost me \$10,000 to get back six apartments.
24 This is crazy. There is no incentive for me
25 to try to do anything. When I had all of

1 the neighbors around me telling me I was an
2 angel. They were drug dealers at these
3 houses, and this is on Wood Street, we have
4 two churches right across the street. I had
5 both of the minister and the priest wrote
6 letters and I was turned down 6/0.

7 I then went to the appellate board
8 and they turned me just the other way
9 around. I got six apartments back, but not
10 to ruffle the feathers of the politicians
11 that took away one apartment, so I bought
12 seven but only got six.

13 Crime. This really got me nuts. I
14 left New York City, one of the reasons was
15 because I was told this is a good place to
16 bring up kids. One, New York City had huge
17 problems just like we are having right now.
18 There's a group called the Guardian Angels,
19 write it down. They are free. They come
20 into neighborhoods if they are invited.
21 They set up vigilantes in effect that are
22 legal and work with the police. These are
23 hugely minorities who want to be middle
24 class, good upstanding citizens and they can
25 take back neighborhoods one block at a time,

1 one house at a time. It can be done, but we
2 need help.

3 We need to involve the media. You
4 guys stink. The Scranton Times is owned by
5 the mayor and most of you guys don't do real
6 stories. If you guys would come out and
7 proactively do things, show the drug stuff
8 on the street. Heroine is now epidemic
9 proportions I've been told by people. I
10 don't hear you guys doing a damn thing about
11 it, and that's the media. Because I think
12 the media could help a huge amount in this
13 city, in any place. This has become -- this
14 has become a situation where the media has
15 taken over common sense and we need a lot
16 more of that. Common sense.

17 There is something on the books
18 called the RICCO laws, R-I-C-C-O or R-I-C-O.
19 That was the way the five crime families
20 were defeated in the New York City. If you
21 are identified with an organization that is
22 a criminal organization you can be taken off
23 the street. We have gangs members that have
24 tattoos and are readily recognizable. Take
25 them off the frigging streets. They can be

1 notified. We can see who they are. Thank
2 you very much, and I'm sorry I'm so
3 passionate, I just happen to give a damn.

4 By the way, I would like everyone in
5 this place to actually ask themselves what
6 is justice because we do not have justice
7 anymore in this country, let alone in
8 Scranton.

9 MS. EVANS: Thank, Mr. Chazin. Carl
10 Kupchunas.

11 MR. KUPCHUNAS: Good evening. My
12 name is a Carl Kupchunas. I'm a life-long
13 resident of Scranton. First of all, I would
14 like to thank Mr. Joyce for his presentation
15 this evening. His presentation was very
16 informative and enlightening.

17 I'm here this evening just to make a
18 few brief comments about the events of this
19 past week. On Thursday night I heard on the
20 local news that Scranton will be getting
21 three new fire engines over three years.
22 This is very exciting news to me. I thought
23 that our mayor can finally be getting his
24 priorities straight. Then on Friday in
25 Scranton's biased newspaper, I read that the

1 mayor vetoed the elimination of the library
2 Board that council passed two weeks ago. I
3 knew nothing had changed with Mayor Doherty.

4 I said this last week and I will say
5 it again, it is ridiculous to spend 16
6 million dollars on a new library when they
7 could renovate the Albright Memorial Library
8 for much worse. Furthermore, yes, a new
9 library can be important only, and if only,
10 the city can afford it. Scranton definitely
11 cannot afford a new library. It is much
12 more important to spend on our police and
13 fire protection and road repairs which are
14 much more important than the library,
15 however, these are very low priorities with
16 Mayor Doherty.

17 Today I read in the Scranton biased
18 newspaper, that the mayor claimed that
19 council did not consult anyone before coming
20 up with the budget cuts. In the last eight
21 years the mayor has never consulted council
22 on very many things. He got his library
23 board passed on a lame duck council because
24 he knew that was the only chance at getting
25 it passed. The mayor had more pork barrel

1 projects passed in the late years because of
2 these rubber stamp councils than a hog
3 farmer in a bacon store. It's time for this
4 to stop.

5 I encourage the new council to keep
6 up the good work they are doing for the
7 people and not be intimidated by our mayor
8 or his favorite few. The first thing you
9 can do tonight is override his veto on the
10 library board and then continue with the
11 budget -- revised budget cuts. It's time
12 for Mayor Doherty's tax, borrow and spend
13 policies to stop and this council can
14 definitely do that and before we know it
15 Scranton will be fiscally responsible again
16 and a city that people want to come to.

17 Thank you very much for your time I
18 really appreciate it.

19 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr.
20 Kupchunas. Mike Dudek.

21 MR. DUDEK: Good evening, Council.
22 My name is Mike Dudek, 608 Depot Street in
23 Scranton. I live in here and down there in
24 the Plot. Now, three little pieces of
25 information I want to get across. I have

1 wrote Mr. Barrett, the executive director of
2 the Sewer Authority, for at least 30 years.
3 He is as fine and wonderful and upstanding
4 gentleman as you would ever meet, but the
5 questioning that -- the question and answer
6 session that we had here proves beyond a
7 shadow of any doubt that if you are going to
8 deal with an authority the last person in
9 the world you ever want to get any
10 information from is the person who holds the
11 title of an executive director of that
12 authority. The reason is because he does
13 not answer to you. He answers to the five
14 or the nine depending on how your authority
15 is structured. He answers to the people who
16 hired him.

17 I think if you are going to try to
18 get answers from the Sewer Authority, a much
19 better approach would be to question the
20 executive board, all of the members of that
21 board, could have put them at this table
22 here and ask them the same questions you
23 asked Mr. Barrett. I think you will have
24 less of a feeling that somebody was trying
25 to evade you because Mr. Barrett knows if he

1 says something that's construed as wrong he
2 could be out the door the next day, so if
3 you are dealing with an authority deal with
4 the board of that authority not the
5 executive director. He has no power. None.

6 Second thing, someone just told me
7 today, and you know I've been hanging around
8 city council for maybe 15 years at least, is
9 there such a thing as a sign statute in the
10 City of Scranton if you own a business and
11 you have a sign that indicates where you're
12 located that you pay a tax on that sign
13 based on it's size? Is there something to
14 that effect?

15 MS. EVANS: I believe there is.

16 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes, there is.

17 MR. DUDEK: I believe, too, there is
18 and I have a wonderful description of that
19 ordinance. It's unconstitutional. No
20 municipality has the right to put a tax on
21 free speech, it's a violation of that
22 business owners First Amendment Right and I
23 don't care if the business as small -- the
24 smallest one I think I have seen in this
25 town is K-O-C-H, Koch or Koch, however you

1 pronounce it, the interior decorators on
2 Palm Avenue at the corner of Palm and
3 Pittston or something as large as Hesser
4 Chevrolet. Hesser Chevrolet only has six
5 big signs on it, the parallelogram,
6 rectangle says Chevy, they have the BMW
7 sign, they have Tom Hesser Chevrolet. If is
8 he paying taxes on all of that, all of those
9 taxes paid and collected are a violation of
10 their constitutional rights.

11 A business place could put --
12 doesn't put a sign out there so much to
13 advertise, but to let the public know the
14 exact location of where he is. It's a
15 matter of public safety for us to know
16 exactly where a building is located, and to
17 put a tax on a public expression in order
18 for people to know where this building is
19 located it flies in the face of
20 constitutional law.

21 MS. EVANS: I don't believe it's a
22 tax, Mr. Dudek, but rather a fee.

23 MR. DUDEK: Okay, I still have a
24 name for that same fee unconstitutional.
25 The only kind of tax or fee or I won't call

1 it a tax or fee, if the sign is electrified
2 that's a separate situation because you have
3 to have the city inspectors make sure that
4 the sign is safely installed. That I can
5 understand because you are -- because you
6 are dealing with safety, but the ordinary
7 use of a sign, I'll tell you something, if I
8 were a businessman in this town and I had a
9 sign on my business place and I was paying a
10 fee or a tax or whatever on it, the first
11 thing I would do is setup an escrow account
12 and put the tax money in there. The second
13 thing I would do is disobey it and take the
14 city to federal court.

15 It is blatantly unconstitutional.
16 You cannot deprive a person of their First
17 Amendment Right to notify the public of
18 where they are located. Simple as that.
19 And, you know, this demonstrates to me the
20 uselessness of the Chamber of Commerce in
21 this town. I mean, how useless is that that
22 an ordinance like that could be passed in
23 town and they have nothing to say about it.
24 It's been done for years and years and years
25 and years and years. I think the business

1 people out to take a good look at that.
2 Some businesses that's a big chunk of
3 change, okay, I wanted to point that out.
4 All of these years this has been going on
5 and there is no basis in law for it to be
6 done. It's unconstitutional. People have a
7 right to express where they're located.
8 Thank you.

9 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Dave
10 Dobryzn.

11 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening, Council,
12 Dave Dobrzn, resident of Scranton, member
13 of the Taxpayers' Association. A thought
14 has occurred to me in the last few years
15 if --

16 MS. EVANS: I'm sorry, Mr. Dobrzn,
17 if I could ask the audience to please remain
18 quiet and allow the speaker to be heard not
19 only by council but by the viewers as well.
20 We ask each time someone comes in that they
21 receive our undivided attention and yours as
22 well and I had asked for that type of
23 reciprocity among all of you. Thank you.

24 MR. DOBRZYN: What I would like to
25 see possibly with the help of the Scranton

1 Times, Times-Tribune is more technical data
2 on the sewer storm replacement, possibly
3 maps, descriptions for storm water
4 separation and so forth because it's a very
5 complex issue and it might take a couple of
6 pages in my opinion to actually educate the
7 public on what we are up against and why and
8 there is a lot of misconceptions flying
9 around and oversimplification and over
10 complications. So, please, especially with
11 the Scranton Times if they would get in
12 touch with Mr. Barrett or whomever and get a
13 whole picture published that we can read and
14 inform ourselves.

15 And on a second note, we are
16 addressing the budget. Please, no tax cuts
17 until deficits are paid back and in the
18 spirit of a true conservative, don't pass it
19 on. Americans need to assume responsibility
20 for officials we elect or failed to vote
21 against. Constantly I see this happening in
22 this country. The senators hanging out
23 filibustering for special deals and whatever
24 and I would like not to see it.

25 Jack, I hope you plan to fight to

1 overturn that ordinance. What I have
2 written here on pension denial, "Future
3 qualified candidates may thank you some day.
4 All too often local ordinances are
5 overturned by the US Supreme Court delaying
6 justice and thereby denying justice."

7 I don't see any reason why somebody
8 should have to give up pension that this
9 they legitimately worked for all of their
10 lives just to hold a position.

11 And on the Library Authority, last
12 week I was out for Texas weenies and just
13 out of curiosity that's directly across from
14 the parking lot -- the lower parking lot for
15 Scranton University. The proposed site is
16 1,500 feet from the lower parking lot of
17 Scranton "U" for the Cedar Avenue and
18 it's so close that if Scranton "U" does
19 decide to jet out in that direction some day
20 it's practically closer than what the
21 Albright Library is in certain areas of
22 Scranton University.

23 I also recommend a dialogue with the
24 board of directors and a study of abandoned
25 central city buildings for auxiliary use.

1 An example, Scranton school board could
2 acquire Bishop Hannon for an administration
3 building and donate the current locale for
4 an auxiliary to the Albright.

5 Also, on ECTV we had Mr. Murphy,
6 Assemblyman Murphy on our local tax issues
7 and I would advise people to try and tune in
8 and listen to what was said. I felt it was
9 very important and it's time that we stop
10 outsourcing all of these tax collections and
11 get somebody in here with a heart.

12 And, finally, a senate joke. What's
13 wrong with us? For years we complained that
14 we needed a supermajority to overturn the
15 direction of the city. Well, look at the
16 Senate. They have a super minority and they
17 did the same thing. What's the matter with
18 us? Have a good night.

19 MR. ROGAN: Andy Sbaraglia.

20 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,
21 citizen of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians,
22 as a member of the Taxpayers' Association I
23 attended a meeting with our state
24 legislatures with your Representative Murphy
25 had about ten people, 10 representatives

1 come to Scranton to discuss our way we
2 collect delinquent taxes. As you know, we
3 have that atrocious add-on to our taxes.
4 With any luck the state legislature looking
5 at that will take into account the
6 penalties. When the penalties far exceed
7 the crime, something is wrong. I don't know
8 how it could have passed council, but they
9 were under the assumption that you could
10 change some of the wording or some of the --
11 or abolish them, but they forget one thing,
12 everything is controlled by contracts and
13 you cannot change a contract. You can
14 delete a lot of things maybe in the contract
15 if they let you, but you know we don't see
16 the contract -- many of the contracts.
17 Thank God, I went out and got one, but the
18 legislature is looking at it and thank God
19 we pointed out that because of the contracts
20 it would be a better solution to separate
21 the taxes of the city tax from the school
22 tax and the county tax is already separated.

23 So with any luck I hope we get some
24 positive action out of the legislature when
25 they find out the enormous penalty is placed

1 on it.

2 MS. EVANS: And, Mr. Sbaraglia, I
3 really want to thank you publically for all
4 you have done in this effort and for all of
5 your input because I think it originated
6 really through the taxpayers' group and then
7 I had gone to Mr. Shimkus and the taxpayers'
8 group invited Mr. Shimkus and myself to a
9 meeting and I think there are a lot of
10 people that worked hard to see this happen
11 and you particularly as well as all of them
12 deserve credit.

13 MR. SBARAGLIA: Well, as long as
14 something is done for the benefit of the
15 people. As you know, I was -- if you
16 watched me at all, I was willing to fight
17 all of the way --

18 MS. EVANS: Yes.

19 MR. SBARAGLIA: -- if I had to
20 because I actually believe, like I told
21 them, I believe in Scranton. I believe in
22 the Scrantonians. I didn't want to live
23 anywhere else in the Commonwealth or in the
24 United States. I actually love it here. A
25 lot of people think I'm a little facetious

1 when they ask me why, I said I can be out of
2 it in ten minutes and that's a positive.
3 You can go right into the countryside ten
4 minutes out of Scranton.

5 Okay, but a little word being it's
6 on the agenda with the library board or
7 Library Authority, whatever you want to call
8 it. You looked at a funding line, but you
9 never looked at the mortgage line. How much
10 could library system be mortgaged for and I
11 know there is a person that -- or a building
12 that -- would like to get that building.
13 It's been in the papers and they make no
14 qualms about it. They are interested in
15 that building, so hence, if I was on that
16 board and would really care little or
17 nothing about anybody I would mortgage it
18 for as much as I could get. They can do it.

19 I can sell off the Silkman House,
20 hey, it's no problem. It's not being used
21 as a library anyway, so it's redundant. And
22 the one on Greenridge Street, that's only a
23 small one. But, you know, it's worth money.
24 Everything is worth money, and I think they
25 are probably looking at that line because

1 that's the only way you can really get a
2 line of credit is by mortgaging the
3 facility, that is probably worth 1 million
4 dollars probably in there and for them to
5 say six million dollars was this great
6 thing, forget it. You can't replace that
7 library probably for 50 million, not six,
8 and besides it's redundant. What good is
9 six million dollars when that beautiful
10 library would be destroyed? The tears of
11 the citizens of Scranton would fall out like
12 rain. That's the gem of the city. Well, I
13 thought I'd talk a lot. Thank you.

14 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

15 MR. JOYCE: Thank you.

16 MS. EVANS: Jean Suetta.

17 MS. SUETTA: Jean Suetta, Scranton,
18 Pennsylvania. I had a dilemma last Tuesday,
19 I had a heating problem. I called the
20 county to help me, blah, blah, blah, to know
21 avail there was no funds. I called Kevin
22 Murphy's office. They are the nicest, most
23 courteous people you ever want to meet.
24 They helped me with my problem and I want to
25 compliment all of them. There is Doreen,

1 there is Ray, there is Tom, there is Dustin,
2 Justin rather, Justin Case, and Kevin. They
3 are the nicest people. You have a problem,
4 go see them. I got that in.

5 All right, the 500 block of
6 Lackawanna Avenue, go down there in the
7 afternoon all your -- excuse me, pickup
8 trucks are parked in the turning lane. We
9 just got that new garage, why can't they
10 park there? Everybody that's working over
11 there all of their pickup trucks are there
12 in the turning lane.

13 And the University of Scranton, they
14 collect \$200 a year from each student to
15 park in the parking lot, do we get the \$15
16 permit?

17 MS. EVANS: That I'm not sure.

18 MS. SUETTA: And Marywood charges
19 \$100, that's up in your neighborhood, but I
20 did come down here to give Kevin Murphy and
21 his crew the tops. They are the best. If
22 you got a problem, go see them they will
23 help you with it. God bless America and God
24 bless Kevin Murphy.

25 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Other

1 speakers?

2 MS. FOWLER: Good evening, Council.

3 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

4 MR. JOYCE: Good evening.

5 MS. FOWLER: You did a great job,
6 Councilman Joyce. I just have one quick
7 question. Patti Fowler, city resident,
8 sorry. My understanding is that the bids
9 that were for the grant writer's position
10 were quite high. I would like to -- I would
11 like an explanation and understanding of
12 council right of refusal to these bids
13 thereby allowing this grant's writer to come
14 back into as a union job. Most notably,
15 this grant's writer position is probably the
16 highest union position that we have and
17 losing is substantial in our union, so I am
18 just here to say I'm asking you -- I'm
19 asking if council has the right of refusal
20 and I'm asking what kind of savings would
21 you realize if you -- do you have the right
22 to refuse the bids and then would there be
23 any savings realized if you took the job
24 versus the bids? Am I making sense.

25 MS. EVANS: I don't believe we have

1 the right of refusal of bids. We are not
2 even involved in the selection process.

3 MS. FOWLER: Okay, that's what I'm
4 asking, I don't know. Okay. So we have to
5 take it?

6 MS. EVANS: I'm not quite sure which
7 party will make the selection, but, yes, it
8 would appear once a contract is signed it's
9 accepted.

10 MS. FOWLER: Okay. So there is
11 really no chance of getting the grant's
12 writer's job back in there?

13 MS. EVANS: Unless at this point
14 they have not signed on.

15 MS. FOWLER: Oh, I see. So you are
16 saying it depends on if the mayor has signed
17 the contract with them. I see.

18 MS. EVANS: I would think so because
19 we wouldn't want to violate contracts.

20 MS. FOWLER: Thank you.

21 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

22 MS. EVANS: Anyone else?

23 MR. TALIMINI: Joe Talimini, city of
24 Scranton. This is no reflection on Roger,
25 but I'm going to bring something out that

1 was in the paper today. Mayor Doherty says:
2 You have three brand new members of council
3 who have no idea how the city works. Well,
4 shame on you. He has been here for 12 years
5 and he has no idea how the city works.

6 And also: We have a president who
7 is amending the 2010 budget and spoke to no
8 one beforehand. Well, I don't know
9 understand that because I know you have been
10 speaking about the budget since I have been
11 coming to these meetings. And I would like
12 to commend all the new councilmen and all of
13 you council, period.

14 Mrs. Evans, you have never been
15 afraid to speak your mind.

16 Pat, Mr. Rogan, I asked you to check
17 into something one time and you jumped on it
18 immediately.

19 Mr. Loscombe, your cooperation has
20 been fantastic for the couple of weeks you
21 have been here.

22 And, Frank, I'll tell you what, I
23 got more out of you tonight than I have
24 gotten out of this mayor since I have been
25 in Scranton, and that goes for all of you

1 councilmen.

2 And going to the last council, I
3 still have questions I'm waiting for them to
4 answer, not that they are capable of it and
5 they are no longer with us, but the point of
6 it is that anybody wants to put you people
7 down it's only because they've got a guilty
8 conscience, that's all I can say, because
9 you four are doing the job that nobody else
10 would have done before and nobody else did
11 do before, and I applaud you for that.

12 Frank, my compliments, that was one
13 hell of a presentation.

14 MR. JOYCE: Thank you.

15 MS. EVANS: Next?

16 MR. MUSTI: Chris Musti. I'm a
17 national energy consultant for American
18 Approved Energy Services. I have spoken in
19 the past to City Councilman Pat Rogan and
20 Frank Joyce about our company and other
21 companies that are out there and I know,
22 Mrs. Evans, you have talked to Stu Renda I
23 believe about -- is it Stu that you talked
24 to about the energy electricity for the City
25 of Scranton?

1 MS. EVANS: Yes.

2 MR. MUSTI: What is happening?

3 Where is that at?

4 MS. EVANS: He said that he would be
5 investing that, possibly putting that out
6 for bid within the first financial quarter
7 and I am awaiting his action on that matter
8 and his decision. Currently, I believe we
9 would, of course, remain with PPL until, you
10 know, he does that work.

11 MR. MUSTI: When I talked to him he
12 said the same thing. The problem I have as
13 a taxpayer is you are paying -- the City of
14 Scranton is paying 30 to 36 percent more in
15 2010 with PPL than they did in 2009 and
16 that's taxpayer dollars, and when you are
17 looking at the dollars you are spending in
18 2010 we are spending a lot more money than
19 we spent in 2009 and that's taxpayer dollars
20 and we can't afford it. We have to start
21 tightening our belts like we did tonight.

22 Councilman Joyce did a great job and
23 you council are doing a great job and I want
24 to commend you for that. As a former school
25 director, I know it takes a lot of time and

1 a lot of hard work to get things done in the
2 City and all of you councilmen are doing
3 that and it's great to see that you're
4 working together to get things done.
5 Hopefully, you will be working with the
6 mayor, too, to get things done and I'm
7 looking forward to talking with you and even
8 if you want to make a presentation on it for
9 you from our company as far as what we can
10 show you as far as savings we would be more
11 than happy to do that.

12 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

13 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Musti, last time we
14 spoke about this about I remember you talked
15 about a poultry country in the area you
16 saved how much money was it that your
17 company saved over PPL? Do you remember
18 offhand?

19 MR. MUSTI: I don't, but I mean,
20 when you are looking at significant numbers
21 like Lackawanna County they are doing six
22 million kilowatts in a period of a year you
23 are looking at a tremendous amount of
24 savings whether it be a year, two years or
25 three years. We have one, two, three-year

1 contracts and agreements and you are looking
2 at tremendous, I mean, I don't know if you
3 looking at least a million or more a year.
4 But, I mean, you are looking a significant
5 amount of numbers.

6 MR. ROGAN: It's something I hope
7 Mr. Renda and the administration would look
8 into because electricity is electricity.
9 You know, we are getting the same service
10 for a cheaper price and that money could be
11 used to pay down debt or to, you know, do
12 other things that could benefit the people.

13 MR. MUSTI: Well, it doesn't matter
14 really whether you go with us or another
15 company, it would be great if you went with
16 us, but no matter who you went with it's the
17 taxpayer dollars and I think the taxpayers
18 deserve to save some money and we are
19 spending a lot of money, more money this
20 year. When you are looking at it right now,
21 you are looking at going into March, so are
22 you looking at January, February, March
23 already that you are spending 30 to 36
24 percent more on PPL than what you did in
25 2009, so that's a lot of money, you know,

1 and you have to -- there is a certain amount
2 of days you have to get in and with the new
3 RFP, the retail energy provider, so the
4 contract, the agreement takes effect and I
5 think it's about 16 days, you give yourself
6 two days leeway so about 18 days from the
7 next meter read date of your bill, so you
8 are looking at least March right now getting
9 in no matter who you go with.

10 MS. EVANS: Well, thank you.

11 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

12 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else
13 here that would like to address council?

14 MS. HUMPHRIES: Praise be Jesus,
15 Mary, Joseph. To all our priests,
16 it's really priests coming up, I have some
17 wonderful news. I ordered everybody shrugs.
18 Mrs. Evans, I promised you I would do an art
19 piece for you of St. Michael, but first I
20 want to thank the Doherty's downstairs, the
21 people that helped me and, of course, seen
22 me to go through a transition. I was
23 evicted because of my faith. Everybody is
24 going to get what they deserve because the
25 people that are behind me, my police

1 department we had to wait because of the
2 things happening, but I'm going to stop
3 right there because it would be going
4 through the courts.

5 What I have to say is this is about
6 love. Sometimes you have to sit back, you
7 got to take it away and you got to sit and
8 think. You got to think of the
9 repercussions of your life here on earth. I
10 don't care if you try to stop or anybody
11 tries to stop me. We have been blessed by
12 the City of Scranton more than anybody would
13 ever know. I tried on so many occasions
14 with the miracle of my documents and all to
15 see that scientists would come here. I love
16 the person and not the sin.

17 Mary Doherty has a stand that I am
18 praying for him, I want to meet with him. I
19 was going over the bridge and my daughter
20 made a sharp turn months ago and a heart
21 fell out of the car, a pure of heart statue
22 from the blessed mother, but every time
23 something is taken away from me God gives me
24 something else and God truly loves me. Even
25 in the times that I have to go to confession

1 we are not perfect, God is only perfect.

2 So it was raining and the road comes
3 to the "Y". One comes to the mall, one
4 comes to the other side of the Providence
5 Road. So I get out and I ask my daughter,
6 and it's raining and I'm soaked, and I said,
7 "God wants me to find something, I just
8 don't know what Mary wants, but there's --
9 that's taken away, God has given me
10 something greater and I can't figure out
11 what it is.

12 So I found two of those magnetics,
13 bring our soldiers home, God bless you
14 soldiers, and the other one was God Bless
15 America. I love my country. People think
16 I'm from another country, but I have so many
17 ethnic backgrounds and people. This is the
18 way I was brought up. I have two
19 Godchildren that are from Pakistan that live
20 in America. I'm going through a lot with
21 the wars and everything that nobody could
22 ever comprehend.

23 So in the process I'm going --
24 running up and down, and maybe God wasn't me
25 to lose some weight, so I look and the

1 blessed mother appeared to me, this is my
2 gift, I have vision, and she told me to
3 start digging and there is water running
4 down and I pick up the -- a little hand with
5 a baby angel. The angel didn't have a face
6 on it, it just had a hat on it. And so I'm
7 taking the flowers with Bishop Martino's
8 mass and the mayor -- I do artwork and I
9 hand it into the church.

10 So at this point I washed a bottle
11 out, I put the baby angel in with the holy
12 water, with the flowers, miracles occurred
13 and I brought it to the Bishop and because
14 of my limited income it costs me a lot of
15 money for the pictures that are handed over
16 to the church that many have not been seen.

17 So I went and I got the pictures
18 developed and what has occurred is so
19 immense to shake the world up of support of
20 life, to love each other, to know that there
21 is a Jesus Christ that was born on Christmas
22 morning, that has come to the world to love.
23 In this bottle there is a woman burying a
24 child having a baby with an umbilicus cord.
25 There is a priest in there. There is our

1 lady of Fatima there. My name is Phyllis
2 Bernadette of Fatima Yasmine. For our lady
3 of Fatima and Prophet Mohammed he abolished
4 abortion.

5 So what does that look like when our
6 country goes to their country and they are
7 doing the work that they do? There is
8 Planned Parenthood. It is the devil's den.
9 It obstructs the mentality of the child, the
10 human being and the soul. This has to be
11 addressed. I am going to go to the United
12 Nations and I am going to bring this up to
13 you right now and I want you to see that you
14 got allowed to see your angel, your angel of
15 love, your angel of light, and your angel,
16 yes, we will not have the peace until Jesus
17 comes, but to try for peace.

18 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Phyllis.

19 MS. HUMPHRIES: You have to turn
20 this in the beginning, the Omega, and there
21 is a wedding band. A man and a woman, not a
22 man and a man, not a woman, not a woman.
23 This is the rule of the commandments of God.

24 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Phyllis.

25 MS. HUMPHRIES: God bless you and I

1 think you are all wonderful. I seen us on
2 TV and I went, "OH, my God, the decorum is
3 so beautiful."

4 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Phyllis.

5 MS. HUMPHRIES: God bless you.

6 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else who
7 wishes to address council?

8 MR. ANCHERANI: Good evening,
9 Council. Nelson Ancherani, First Amendment
10 Rights. I see the mayor sent council a
11 four-page veto notification on the repeal of
12 the Library Authority. It behooves this
13 council to override the mayor's veto. I
14 want everyone to know I'm not against a new
15 library for the City of Scranton. It's just
16 not the right time. I am a member of the
17 library and have used it's services. I'm
18 also a friend of and support the library.
19 There is an alternative to spending 16
20 million dollars for a new library. The
21 alternative is by using an existing building
22 that's centrally located, more than big
23 enough and has plenty of parking. The old
24 Bishop Hannon at Wyoming and Mulberry is
25 perfect.

1 When I said this is not the right
2 time for a 16 million dollar library, I
3 offered the following explanation: We owe
4 approximately \$400 million in long-term debt
5 with the population of the city at
6 approximately 72,000 residents that equates
7 out to approximately \$5,700 per resident.
8 When we say we are saddling our children and
9 grandchildren with debt we mean it. As I
10 said, I urge you to override the mayor's
11 veto.

12 I commend you for opening and
13 amending the 2010 budget. I see there are
14 reduction in wages for various positions in
15 the city. I bet they are the positions I
16 have been calling the favorites over the
17 last six years. Police and fire personnel
18 have not gotten a raise in nine years by
19 this mayor. The raise that we did get was
20 given to us by the courts, not the mayor. I
21 have always said that if the mayor did not
22 give out one raise we would not have a gripe
23 or a complaint.

24 When the police and fire unions are
25 singled out for no raises then no one should

1 get one. Fair is fair. Now the favorites
2 will have their chance to feel like the
3 police and fire personnel have felt for the
4 last nine years put down by this mayor.

5 It is good to see that 95,000 has
6 been taken out of the law department
7 professional services account. That leaves
8 90,000 still in this account. That's 89,000
9 too much in my opinion. The city has a law
10 department that should be handling the legal
11 issues of the city. Legal fees the city has
12 spent on attorneys fighting the unions is
13 well over a million dollars just to satisfy
14 someone's ego.

15 On the issue of amending the budget,
16 I have been advocating doing that since this
17 council was seated. Council stand firm.
18 Continue to think and care about the
19 residents of this city. Some day you may
20 even consider not giving NCC another
21 contract. This contract hurts people who
22 can't pay their taxes during these hard
23 economic times, especially since the Connell
24 building delinquent taxes were over \$500,000
25 and they were forgiven by the city. I hope

1 you will be able to get the city back on the
2 right track.

3 And just to add to Mr. Morgan's
4 argument about specialized attorneys, to
5 point out the union issues, if the contracts
6 between the city and it's unions weren't
7 violated by the city administration, the
8 city wouldn't have spent millions fighting
9 the public safety unions. When in this
10 city's history does anyone remember five
11 unfair labor practices, seven arbitrations,
12 numerous Court appeal cases and a case going
13 to the Supreme Court? These are all going
14 on currently, simultaneously. The city is
15 spending millions of our, we the people's
16 money. Stop the waste. Thank you.

17 MS. KRAKE: FIFTH ORDER. 5-A.
18 Motions.

19 MS. EVANS: Mr. McGoff, any comments
20 or motions?

21 MR. MCGOFF: Please. Just a
22 couple-- a few responses. One, my
23 appearance at the opening of the garage was
24 not at the invitation of the mayor as was
25 indicated by one of the speakers.

1 Also, when Mr. Patilla was talking
2 about the insurance on the library, I was
3 under the impression that the city had
4 limits on the amount of insurance that they
5 could place on structures and, therefore,
6 there was --

7 MS. EVANS: I don't know if it was
8 that or if the city didn't have the money to
9 fund increased insurance?

10 MR. MCGOFF: I thought -- well,
11 whatever. I was under the impression that
12 there were limits on what they could spend,
13 the amount that they could insure the
14 library for and, therefore, they were unable
15 to insure at it's proper value.

16 Also, I believe that with any --
17 with the way the legislation was written
18 that if the authority -- if the Library
19 Authority were to seek a loan or a bond
20 issue that that could only be done with the
21 approval of council? Wasn't that in the
22 legislation?

23 MS. EVANS: In the December
24 legislation?

25 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

1 MS. EVANS: I honestly don't recall
2 only in that I know what you are saying to a
3 point is accurate, but the authorities are
4 also able it seems to borrow without the
5 knowledge and consent of city council as
6 specifically the Scranton Parking Authority
7 has done --

8 MR. MCGOFF: I just asked --

9 MS. EVANS: -- twice.

10 MR. MCGOFF: I was just asking about
11 the Library Authority. I thought that was
12 in the legislation. Also, I thought Mr.
13 Morgan made a couple of interesting -- and
14 Mr. Miller become meetings outside of the
15 council. And while I did mention or talk
16 about the possibility of town meetings
17 perhaps it would be maybe in the interest of
18 council and the administration if there were
19 to be meetings conducted kind of a joint
20 neighborhood association meeting where the
21 representatives of each of the neighborhood
22 associations were to meet with either
23 members of the council or members of the
24 administration or both as an alternative way
25 of presenting neighborhood issues and in

1 this way possibly the idea that Scranton is
2 not just a -- you know, distinct
3 neighborhoods operating independently, but
4 that maybe many of them have common
5 interests and common problems and common
6 situations and that could be dealt. Just a
7 thought.

8 I was happy to receive a phone call
9 from Councilman Rogan concerning the rental
10 registration ordinance as well. That is
11 something that we do have to really push to
12 implement and as the one speaker was talking
13 about I'm still not quite sure what his
14 concerns were with the landlord and all, but
15 certainly I think the rental registration
16 ordinance is a way to go about I'll say
17 cleaning up some of the properties that are
18 now available for rent and also deriving
19 revenue, much needed revenue to the city
20 through that ordinance.

21 Also, I know that a couple of people
22 mentioned a response from the mayor on the
23 veto was that available, is that -- I didn't
24 see it in the backup? Was that available to
25 us?

1 MS. EVANS: Yes. I received a copy
2 of it in my mail.

3 MR. ROGAN: I did as well.

4 MR. MCGOFF: I didn't see one in my
5 mail, maybe I missed it.

6 MS. EVANS: I have a copy.

7 MR. MCGOFF: I would like to see a
8 copy of it, please. Thank you very much.

9 And lastly, I don't know if we would
10 like to do this now or wait until the
11 legislation is introduced on the budget on
12 the questions now or at that time?

13 MS. EVANS: I think now would be
14 appropriate.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. I do have
16 -- it might be quite lengthy actually.
17 First of all, the budget that was enacted in
18 December of '09, whether it's the mayor's
19 budget or the council budget, it was an
20 amended budget, amended by council and
21 approved by a four nothing vote of council.
22 It was a budget that contained no tax
23 increase, no increase in debt and was
24 balanced. It was also a budget that had
25 been reduced from prior years, the total

1 amount of the reduction from prior years,
2 and at the time it was the thought of four
3 members of council that it was a legitimate
4 plan for the Year 2010.

5 With that said, I would like to ask
6 Mr. Joyce, what is the justification for
7 opening the budget under what -- under what
8 premise is this going to be done?

9 MR. JOYCE: Justification for this
10 that I saw and that other council members
11 that I spoke to saw was the overestimation
12 of revenue, revenue that we are bringing
13 into the city. As you know, with such a
14 high unemployment rate some of us felt that
15 the amount of wage tax that was listed in
16 the revenue section of the budget was a
17 little bit high. Also, others expressed
18 their -- the same type of concerns regarding
19 the real estate taxes as well.

20 MR. MCGOFF: Did you seek legal -- I
21 don't want to say that, justification for
22 doing this? I know that the Home Rule
23 Charter lists a number of reasons for
24 changing the budget.

25 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

1 MS. EVANS: Yes. Sorry.

2 MR. JOYCE: Yes. I did seek the
3 legal opinion of our council solicitor and
4 he informed that in previous years there
5 have been instances like this where the
6 budget has been opened in the past. I don't
7 know if, Boyd, if you would care to comment
8 more on that?

9 MR. HUGHES: I reviewed the Home
10 Rule Charter, I reviewed the Administrative
11 Code, I have also had Mrs. Krake review -- I
12 have requested that she review ordinances of
13 the city over the last eight years regarding
14 amendments to the budget after the budget
15 has been adopted by December 15 and I
16 believe that there have been a minimum of 15
17 amendments to the budget after it had been
18 previously adopted making revisions in the
19 budget.

20 As a result, the ordinance has been
21 drafted based on the fact and even though I
22 have not attended the meetings and
23 Mrs. Krake has of the Pennsylvania Economy
24 League, that the figure that is used in the
25 first whereas clause of the ordinance is

1 that PEL states that there is a six million
2 dollar structural deficit for the city.

3 As a result of the reviewing the
4 budget to question as to where that is in
5 there, if there is a six million dollar
6 structural deficit the only way that it
7 could be made up and carried over on the
8 review of the budget it is not stated which
9 means that revenue has to be inflated. As
10 Mr. Joyce said that with the amount of
11 unemployment wage taxes would be down.

12 Also, the realty transfer tax which
13 is imposed every time a property is sold 1
14 percent state, I believe it's 2 1/2 percent
15 for the city, that that amount would be a
16 lot less. In today's paper in the financial
17 section, the business section, it says that
18 January was the lowest amount of realty
19 transfers in quite a considerable time. Of
20 course, they didn't break it down to the
21 city and the county, but when you look at
22 that, that's all revenue item.

23 One thing that nobody knows is not
24 only when, let's say Scranton, Lackawanna
25 County, Pennsylvania, the entire United

1 States is going to come out of this
2 recession. Is it -- could it linger for the
3 rest of the year. Looking at that, that the
4 revenue items when reviewed seem to be
5 overstated.

6 Secondly, if there is a six million
7 dollar structural deficit that the city will
8 incur this year, that it's the duty of the
9 mayor under the Home Rule Charter to notify
10 council and to take action and, in fact, the
11 words of under the Home Rule Charter is that
12 he shall. It's almost right now a month and
13 a half and I don't believe that there is
14 anything from the mayor to council as to how
15 to address the deficit that has been
16 projected by PEL.

17 Based on that, looking at the
18 budget, I mean, there has been decisions
19 made on that right now that the revenue has
20 been reduced by well over \$600.000 and so
21 have the expenditures. It's my opinion that
22 council has the authority to do this, that
23 in accordance with the Home Rule Charter and
24 the Administrative Code and also the council
25 and the mayor previously have done the same

1 at least 15 times in the last eight years,
2 so there is precedent for that.

3 MS. EVANS: If I might add though, I
4 believe that PEL when addressing this
5 structural deficit sees tax increases as the
6 solution to the deficit, to the elimination
7 of the deficit and I believe that Scranton
8 City Council need to exhaust all possible
9 avenues before we entertain any type of tax
10 increase. We should be working toward tax
11 decreases, but of course that's impossible
12 at this point until the structural deficit
13 is eliminated. And there is has been over
14 eight years no movement to decrease that
15 structural -- ongoing structural deficit.
16 The debt has grown. The debt has not
17 decreased. In fact, it's grown
18 significantly, and the goal or the objective
19 of this council is to reduce that structural
20 deficit over a four-year period, hopefully
21 eliminate that structural deficit so that,
22 number one, distressed status can be lifted;
23 and number two, potentially, taxes
24 specifically the wage tax, can be reduced.

25 MR. MCGOFF: When the discussions

1 were held about the supposed overestimations
2 in tax revenues was Mr. Renda contacted to
3 determine how the estimations were
4 originally made?

5 MS. EVANS: No, Mr. Renda was not
6 contacted. I can say that in the last --
7 well, throughout my tenure on city council I
8 have made countless attempts to contact
9 department heads, not only Mr. Renda. I
10 have waited for responses anywhere from
11 weeks to months to currently responses that
12 have never arrived in six years. With that
13 in mind, the fact that the administration
14 had been, let us say, less than cooperative
15 over a six-year history, no, I did not.

16 MR. MCGOFF: I'm not asking you
17 about a six-year history, I'm asking about
18 we're attempting -- you are attempting to do
19 something here that's pretty drastic and yet
20 you wouldn't -- you wouldn't make contact
21 with person who was responsible for --

22 MS. EVANS: Well, the person who is
23 responsible for it I'm sure --

24 MR. MCGOFF: -- making the
25 statements.

1 MS. EVANS: -- I'm sure he was well
2 aware that the budget would be open. That
3 was no secret. That was a campaign platform
4 of this majority. It was discussed at
5 council frequently --

6 MR. MCGOFF: And so it's --

7 MS. EVANS: -- speakers -- please
8 don't interrupt. Speakers --

9 MR. MCGOFF: Well, it's my time.
10 It's my motion time.

11 MS. EVANS: I'm responding to your
12 question. Speakers were addressing those
13 points as we interviewed candidates for the
14 council appointment, that very question was
15 posed to them and all unanimously agreed,
16 yes, they would open the budge. I, for
17 example, informed you weeks ago that the
18 budget would be opened. It was certainly
19 not a secret. I think one would have to be
20 living under a rock --

21 MR. MCGOFF: Nobody said it was a
22 secret.

23 MS. EVANS: -- not to know --

24 MR. MCGOFF: You are not answering
25 the question.

1 MS. EVANS: In that event, I would
2 assume that Mr. Renda or the mayor himself
3 would want to come to council and ask
4 questions. For example, when the mayor
5 sends down --

6 MR. MCGOFF: Mrs. Evans, it's my
7 time.

8 MS. EVANS: Excuse me, when the
9 mayor send down his budget, the mayor
10 doesn't call council and ask for it's input.
11 When the mayor sends legislation weekly he
12 does not call council and ask for it's
13 input. Rather, council contacts the mayor
14 if it is experiencing any problems or needs
15 clarification on any issue. So I would
16 think it behooves the business administrator
17 and the mayor to have contacted city
18 council.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Two points. First of
20 all, during my time as president of the
21 council I spoke with the mayor on any number
22 of occasions concerning legislation as did
23 other members of the council, and simply
24 because you have a history of not receiving
25 responses I still think that it was -- that

1 contacting Mr. Renda would have been the
2 appropriate thing to do.

3 In fact, I think that did Mr. Renda
4 attempt to contact Mr. Joyce?

5 MR. JOYCE: Yes. I actually wasn't
6 able to get back in touch with him though.
7 That was -- he did try to -- he did attempt
8 to contact me later last week actually, yes.

9 MR. MCGOFF: What was the -- might I
10 ask, what was the formula again for the
11 reduction in salaries?

12 MR. JOYCE: For the reduction in
13 salaries basically what was done was the
14 2001 salary of the specified position was
15 used as a baseline and what a 7 1/2 percent
16 pay increase was applied to that 2010 figure
17 to formulate the new value which was used as
18 the salary in the amended budget.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Let me
20 just -- as I said, a number of questions.

21 MS. EVANS: I might just add though
22 that now that council formula has been
23 explained to the public, I would certainly
24 like to know what the mayor's formula has
25 been in the last eight years for the

1 awarding of the significant management
2 raises.

3 MR. MCGOFF: When the discussions --
4 when you held discussions on the budget was
5 there an attempt to contact all members of
6 council to get their input?

7 MR. JOYCE: Regarding the budget
8 because of Sunshine Laws obviously there was
9 only two council members could possibly meet
10 at a time. I have spoke with Mrs. Evans,
11 Mr. Loscombe and Mr. Rogan. I obviously, as
12 you know, I have not spoken with you
13 regarding the budget with the assumption
14 that you were fine with the budget that was
15 originally passed in November. Therefore,
16 that in my mind would be the budget that you
17 would wish to approve. Obviously, there are
18 two new members of council, Mr. Rogan and
19 Mr. Loscombe, and I know that Mrs. Evans did
20 not view favorably as far as the original
21 2010 budget is concerned, therefore, as
22 finance chair I wanted to research more into
23 the budget and see if we could cut costs
24 anywhere and I took upon myself to ask my
25 other council colleagues of their opinion on

1 that as well.

2 MR. MCGOFF: And you took it upon
3 you yourself to exclude me from that
4 discussion?

5 MS. EVANS: You were not excluded,
6 Mr. McGoff, you were aware that would occur
7 but you contacted no one and I think it's
8 only logical to assume here that since you
9 passed the mayor's budget and actually
10 provided amendments to the mayor's budget
11 that you were quite satisfied with that
12 budget and any concurrence with it, and so
13 to believe that you would not have an
14 interest in making further cuts,
15 particularly based on the fact that, you
16 know, historically --

17 MR. MCGOFF: So I wasn't --

18 MS. EVANS: -- cuts were made, I
19 presented other budgets, cuts were made and
20 not one was ever seriously entertained or
21 accepted by council, it certainly seems
22 logical that you have no interest in
23 reducing the costs since you had, you and
24 the other members of your majority had
25 approved that budget and passed your own

1 amendments to it successfully.

2 MR. MCGOFF: So what you are saying
3 is that there was a conscious exclusion?

4 MR. JOYCE: No.

5 MS. EVANS: No, what I'm saying is
6 that you did --

7 MR. MCGOFF: That's what exactly
8 what you said.

9 MS. EVANS: No, that is not what I
10 said and please don't put words in my mouth.

11 MR. MCGOFF: I didn't. That's
12 exactly what you say.

13 MS. EVANS: No, that isn't what I
14 said. I did not say you were excluded, but
15 I might add I didn't hear any calls from you
16 asking to provide input or saying -- or
17 e-mails saying, "Mrs. Evans, you told me
18 that we're opening the budget, here are my
19 suggestions."

20 MR. JOYCE: You know, I'm sorry if
21 you may feel slighted in a way, however, it
22 was under my assumption that you were highly
23 in favor of the 2010 budget as it was,
24 therefore, with that being said, you know,
25 if you do feel slighted at this point are

1 there any cuts or cost savings initiatives
2 that you would like to --

3 MR. MCGOFF: We are going to go
4 through -- I have other questions.

5 MR. JOYCE: Okay.

6 MR. MCGOFF: Thanks. Under the
7 mayor's office for dues and subscriptions,
8 did anyone ask of the mayor's office whether
9 any of these expenditures had already been
10 made?

11 MS. EVANS: In fact, there are a
12 number of positions, Mr. McGoff, that were
13 eliminated by the 2010 budget by the mayor
14 and Mr. Renda, yet, to date, there are
15 individuals working in those positions who
16 are been paid since the beginning of January
17 even though zero or a blank appears in this
18 line item, so I would assume that the mayor
19 would know how to cover his expenses with
20 his inflated accounts in the manner in which
21 he is doing so currently by two months
22 additional spending for employees that he
23 himself eliminated.

24 MR. MCGOFF: I asked if anyone asked
25 him about the dues and subscriptions and

1 whether any of the expenditures had been
2 made.

3 MS. EVANS: And I responded.

4 MR. MCGOFF: I didn't hear you
5 mention dues and expenditures at all. Under
6 confidential secretary, we are reducing that
7 salary by 9,000 or you are asking to reduce
8 it by \$9,360?

9 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

10 MR. MCGOFF: And 24 cents.

11 Justification for that?

12 MR. JOYCE: As I said before, a
13 uniform system was used. In my eyes that
14 justification enough. That was the same
15 system that the mayor used or that was
16 agreed to upon between the mayor and the
17 protective services union, police and fire
18 unions, therefore, in, my eyes if it's fair
19 enough to be used for our city police and
20 city firefighters then why shouldn't it be
21 fair to use for the administrative salaries
22 as well.

23 MR. MCGOFF: So she is going to --
24 so that salary would then be less than what
25 other secretaries receive that are in the

1 union and less than the additional secretary
2 that's going to be added to the clerk's
3 office?

4 MS. EVANS: It's not a union
5 position and we cannot --

6 MR. MCGOFF: Right.

7 MS. EVANS: We cannot touch, as I'm
8 sure you are well aware, wages set by
9 contract. This is middle management, and
10 again, as Mr. Joyce noted there is a formula
11 in place and that formula has been applied
12 and the position created in council office
13 is a union position not a management
14 position.

15 MR. MCGOFF: I understand, but it
16 just seems that it's reducing it below what
17 other secretaries in the building receive.
18 What you are saying is her job is less
19 significant than --

20 MS. EVANS: No, what we are saying
21 if the individual makes the choice to leave
22 the union and to pursue management position
23 then changes in their salary are certainly a
24 likelihood because they are no longer
25 protected by union contract.

1 MR. MCGOFF: In the city clerk's
2 office an addition -- what's the just
3 fication for an additional secretary?

4 MR. JOYCE: Well, council as a body,
5 number one, wanting to know is that the
6 position that was presented was actually in
7 the council's office back in 2001 and
8 actually Mayor Doherty himself was the
9 finance chair at this point and this
10 position was eliminated during his tenure,
11 however, it was when he went into office.

12 As far as this council is concerned,
13 I know myself I plan on putting a lot of
14 strain on our office making sure that
15 various citizens' requests are made or met
16 and handled in a timely manner and,
17 therefore, to ensure that and to bring
18 optimal service to the public from both
19 myself and hopefully council as a body that
20 is my justification for that position.

21 MR. MCGOFF: It seems as though that
22 the clerk's office operated very efficiently
23 in prior years and --

24 MS. EVANS: Well, it probably did, I
25 wouldn't disagree with that, but those

1 council were not truly proactive councils or
2 councils who drafted and enacted their own
3 legislation, so this is a far more
4 aggressive council than the council of the
5 past eight years.

6 MR. MCGOFF: That's one --
7 legislative legal advisor an additional
8 \$3,000? In the past in other budgets that
9 you had presented you had wanted to reduce
10 this amount. Why now an increase?

11 MS. EVANS: Yes, I agree I wanted to
12 reduce it, but this is not simply my
13 compilation of amendments. This is the
14 joint effort of four council people and
15 there is such a thing as negotiation and
16 compromise. Further, the salary increase
17 comes as a result of the formula that was
18 applied to the nonunion positions. For
19 example, it also affected our city clerk who
20 is receiving a pay decrease.

21 MR. MCGOFF: So we went from a
22 reduction last year to an increase this
23 year?

24 MS. EVANS: Yes, because --

25 MR. MCGOFF: Okay.

1 MS. EVANS: -- as I said, we are
2 working -- I'm not working alone this time.
3 I'm working with four members of council who
4 are interested in cutting government costs
5 and are very interested in lifting the
6 distress level by eliminating structural
7 deficit. There has been no movement toward
8 that over the last eight years. In fact,
9 council simply enabled the mayor to grow the
10 debt to unmanageable proportion.

11 MR. MCGOFF: And 3,000 I guess would
12 do that. And advertising under business
13 administration, an increase of \$33,000?

14 MR. JOYCE: Yes. In my opinion, the
15 increase in advertising to the business
16 administration office would allow us to
17 actively seek more competitive bids and I
18 truly believe, as well as some of my other
19 council colleagues, that \$33,000 would be
20 well-spent and will actually bring in more
21 than that in the future.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Aren't things bid now?

23 MS. EVANS: No. For example,
24 professional services don't have to be bid
25 and the city currently has a ceiling of

1 \$20,000, meaning anything that --

2 MR. MCGOFF: Is under 20,000.

3 MS. EVANS: -- is under \$20,000 is
4 not put out to bid. That may change.

5 MR. MCGOFF: The financial analyst
6 that's being eliminated, do you know who
7 that is?

8 MS. EVANS: No.

9 MR. JOYCE: I'm not sure of the
10 individual's name?

11 MR. MCGOFF: Do you know what they
12 do?

13 MR. JOYCE: I have looked at various
14 job descriptions for financial analysts as
15 well as my council colleagues, again, this
16 is a joint decision. This wasn't purely my
17 decision myself.

18 MR. MCGOFF: I didn't indicate that,
19 I just asked that since you made the
20 presentation that I assumed that we knew
21 what the financial analyst did and felt that
22 that job was unnecessary.

23 MS. EVANS: Well, I believe that we
24 have included the addition of an
25 administrative assistant. Furthermore, the

1 remaining employees of that department I'm
2 certain are more than capable of absorbing
3 the duties and responsibility of that
4 position. After all, we are looking to cut
5 the costs of government. It's time that the
6 mayor makes due with less and I think there
7 is certainly every justification for
8 following suit with state government, with
9 county government, all of whom have made
10 significant cuts to their budget whereas in
11 the City of Scranton that has failed to
12 happen now for eight years.

13 MR. MCGOFF: But we didn't contact
14 the business administrator or anyone to find
15 out what that person did or whether they are
16 job could be absorbed; is that correct?

17 MS. EVANS: I believe the job can be
18 absorbed by the other individuals in the
19 office. I believe it's important to reduce
20 the cost of government. I'm sorry that you
21 may not share that vision.

22 MR. MCGOFF: I'm not talking about a
23 vision, I'm just -- since we don't know what
24 the person did I guess we can't be sure
25 whether his work can be absorbed. By the

1 way, I think the man's name is Catarino,
2 just to put a name to a position.

3 MS. EVANS: Was this a recent hire?

4 MR. MCGOFF: I'm not sure. The
5 computer support specialist is being
6 eliminated? Do we know who that is it and
7 what responsibilities they have?

8 MS. EVANS: And then I'll defer to
9 the finance chair, I think rather than
10 having you repeat the same questions, I can
11 give you a blanket statement that covers
12 that. When we were looking to make these
13 cuts each member of council had a budget.
14 That budget contains the names of positions
15 not the names of individuals, hence, we were
16 not looking through a budget in terms of
17 personalities or individuals or political
18 motivation. It's a purely financial
19 decision, hence, the names of the
20 individuals are unnecessary. It's the
21 position that is relevant.

22 MR. MCGOFF: I think the people who
23 are -- whose jobs are being eliminated would
24 think that, you know, the name is very
25 important.

1 MS. EVANS: That would -- that would
2 imply that I would -- I would be selective,
3 that I would want to play favorites among
4 them and certainly that's not the intent of
5 this council. Fairness across the board is
6 the intent of this council and we have
7 applied the same formula to management that
8 management applied to union positions.

9 MR. MCGOFF: So we don't know what
10 the computer support specialist does, but we
11 will eliminate that position?

12 MS. EVANS: I can tell you --

13 MR. MCGOFF: And why not one of the
14 others?

15 MS. EVANS: I can tell you also that
16 if you want to look through the budget
17 transfers that have occurred historically in
18 this matter, specifically in that
19 department, there are significant budget
20 transfers that occur regularly out of that
21 office as there are in so many offices, at
22 many other departments, thereby, indicating
23 that line items have been over funded and
24 inflated allowing departments then to shift
25 money around on a daily or weekly basis.

1 MR. MCGOFF: And the OECD, we are
2 eliminating four positions, deputy director?
3 Why was that chosen?

4 MR. JOYCE: Well, I can only speak
5 for myself, however, this was also a joint
6 decision, however, one thing we must realize
7 is that OECD is a department that consists
8 of no more than I would say -- well, outside
9 of if you include the neighborhood police
10 officers that are included in this
11 department, no more than 25 or so employees,
12 however, there are five directors in a
13 department that -- in this department which
14 only employees about 25 people, therefore,
15 it was the agreement by both myself and the
16 other colleagues that this position should
17 be eliminated.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Why this one? Do we
19 know what the department director does
20 and --

21 MS. EVANS: Do you know what the
22 director does?

23 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

24 MS. EVANS: And so do I, and I'm
25 sure that the director is going to be able

1 to absorb those duties because she has been
2 employed by the City of Scranton for many,
3 many years. There is another elimination in
4 this department, I think specifically
5 assistance stimulus recorder, that was a new
6 creation by the mayor. That's being
7 eliminated.

8 MR. MCGOFF: You felt that was an
9 unnecessary position?

10 MS. EVANS: Yes. Again, I believe
11 that the employees of that office are more
12 than capable of absorbing the duties and
13 responsibilities that are going to be added
14 just as county employees are, state
15 employees are, federal employees are, and
16 the employees of the businesses corporations
17 across the United States of America during a
18 recession.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Economic development
20 specialist, that was an unnecessary
21 position, project coordinator -- by the way,
22 there were two project coordinators, do we
23 know which one is being eliminated or are we
24 just going to flip a coin on it?

25 MR. JOYCE: Okay, basically --

1 MS. EVANS: Well, if you know one of
2 them and you would like to be selective in
3 keeping the one, you know, you can certain
4 certainly provide that input.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Well, since you are
6 eliminating one I assumed that there was --
7 that you would know who was going to be
8 eliminated.

9 MS. EVANS: No, because I do not
10 attach names to these positions.

11 MR. JOYCE: The mayor would be able
12 to make that decision if this is ultimately
13 passed since these are appointed positions
14 in the first place.

15 MR. MCGOFF: And these positions
16 actually do not have any affect on the
17 budget?

18 MR. JOYCE: That is a correct.
19 These are federally funded positions,
20 federally funded from HUD monies, therefore,
21 they are not included in the overall
22 calculations and calculations that were
23 described during the presentation.

24 MR. MCGOFF: So why the need to
25 eliminate the positions if they don't effect

1 the budget?

2 MS. EVANS: Well, I believe that the
3 savings incurred can be better used for
4 projects throughout the City of Scranton,
5 particularly in low to moderate income
6 areas. In addition, there has been, let us
7 say, a pattern throughout the last several
8 years of a number of risky to poor loans
9 given out through that office. As a result,
10 there are many loans that are delinquent or
11 are in litigation or have gone bankrupt.
12 There are also quite a number of loans that
13 have been forgiven by the City of Scranton,
14 so the track record of OECD in terms of the
15 small business loans is at best minimal.

16 MR. MCGOFF: I think we have
17 received reports on any number of occasions,
18 and I wouldn't say many describe the
19 delinquencies. I would say that many would
20 describe the ones that are successful and
21 operational.

22 In the Department of Licenses,
23 Inspections and Permits the deputy director
24 of inspections is an unnecessary position?

25 MR. JOYCE: As a group -- well, many

1 of us felt that this position could be
2 absorbed by the director.

3 MS. EVANS: And it's a created
4 position.

5 MR. MCGOFF: It's the one that
6 basically deals with the blight and
7 demolition; correct?

8 MS. EVANS: It's a created position.

9 MR. MCGOFF: They are all created
10 positions, but that's the primary
11 responsibility of that person?

12 MS. EVANS: Originally they would
13 have been created, yes, but I'm speaking
14 specifically to those that have been created
15 over the last eight years.

16 MR. MCGOFF: Assistant zoning
17 officer unnecessary? That's being
18 eliminated?

19 MS. EVANS: That's another job
20 creation that occurred last year, and as far
21 as I know, there is no one in position.

22 MR. MCGOFF: But we don't need one?

23 MS. EVANS: No, we don't. That was
24 a job creation. That was -- in fact, at the
25 time I believe there was quite a bit of

1 information published in the newspaper that
2 was implying that was a political job
3 creation.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Okay. In the law
5 department first assistant city solicitor
6 being eliminated, do we know what the first
7 assistant city solicitor does and what their
8 responsibilities are? How about the
9 assistant city solicitor part-time, do we
10 know what their responsibilities are?

11 MS. EVANS: Actually, that's a
12 question I was asking for many, many years
13 and never got an answer until finally when
14 Mr. Hickey appeared at a recent caucus he
15 indicated that he oversees all of the bids
16 for the city yet when I examined the results
17 of the bids and the paperwork that is sent
18 from one office to the department that is
19 requesting the service, and therefore, the
20 bid it is the department head who was asked
21 to make the selection. I see Attorney
22 Hickey's name appears no where on any of the
23 paperwork.

24 I think it's important to note, as
25 you are well aware, that the public may not

1 be -- the city farms out a tremendous amount
2 of work to law firms for a variety of
3 reasons, lawsuits the city has incurred
4 unnecessarily, contract negotiations,
5 etcetera. In addition to that, Attorney
6 Greco represents the Scranton Redevelopment
7 Authority and from what I have learned over
8 these years has very often assisted the
9 mayor on a number of issues, and again, he
10 has earned a million dollars for a part-time
11 work.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Did anyone contact the
13 law department to find out what these people
14 did and whether their jobs were
15 significant --

16 MS. EVANS: No --

17 MR. MCGOFF: -- or whether they were
18 needed?

19 MS. EVANS: -- but I can tell you
20 that we contacted the people of Scranton, we
21 contacted the people who overwhelmingly
22 voted for us in the knowledge that this
23 election of these three would create a
24 supermajority that would guarantee financial
25 reform and the fact that, you know, that

1 there is such opposition to this on the part
2 of the administration and it's supporters is
3 entirely predictable because we have seen
4 nothing but unbridled power, unbridled power
5 for the last eight years enabled by a very
6 mayor friendly council. And so, as I said,
7 these responses are anticipated, they are
8 very predictable, you know, the questions
9 that are being asked, but the point --

10 MR. MCGOFF: May I continue to ask
11 them?

12 MS. EVANS: The point remains that
13 we are seeking financial reform.

14 MR. MCGOFF: But you are doing it
15 without inquiring as to whether these
16 positions are necessary or not. And also I
17 believe that the people did elect the mayor
18 for a third time as well, so whether this is
19 a mandate to destroy the budget that was
20 passed, I'm not sure.

21 MR. ROGAN: If I can just add real
22 quick? Calling that, for instance, you're
23 going through the same questioning on each
24 line item which starts off as "Did you call
25 that department," if you call the department

1 and say, "Is your job necessary, what do you
2 think a person is going to say? Of course,
3 they are going to say it's necessary.

4 MR. MCGOFF: No, I'm asking if you
5 consulted with the people and asked what
6 these jobs were and whether they were
7 necessary to the operation of the
8 department. I think that's the responsible
9 thing to do.

10 MS. EVANS: Then I wonder how the --
11 I was not on council nor were you back in I
12 think 2001 or 2002 when nearly 1,000 people
13 were cut by a brand new mayor from a budget,
14 I don't believe he consulted with any of
15 them as to whether they were necessary or
16 not.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Again, Parks and
18 Recreation, we are eliminating three
19 positions, the director, Mr. Dougher,
20 recreation specialists, I think that there
21 are two?

22 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

23 MR. MCGOFF: We'll leave that up to
24 whoever to make the decision?

25 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

1 MS. EVANS: The mayor.

2 MR. ROGAN: It's the mayor's
3 decision.

4 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

5 MR. MCGOFF: I see, and before you
6 mentioned that there were kind of more
7 chiefs than there were Indians, in this
8 budget there are ten union positions and
9 four nonunion currently in the Parks and
10 Recreation Department. Do we know what the,
11 you know, again, the responsibilities of
12 these people are, program manager,
13 recreation specialist, director, and how can
14 we be sure is that these jobs are going to
15 be assumed by the director of the Department
16 of Public Works who is already pretty much a
17 24/7 job?

18 MS. EVANS: Well, in the past that
19 position was held by Mr. Parker who was
20 employed as both a DPW 24/7 director as well
21 as the engineer for the City of Scranton, so
22 I believe that Mr. Brazil's abilities are
23 such that he is going to be able to handle
24 two positions.

25 MR. JOYCE: I just want to ask one

1 question, if you don't mind? Is that okay?
2 Essentially, you know, you are going through
3 everything and asking us, you know, if we
4 contacted that department head and/or if we
5 know who the person is and I understand
6 there is various cuts that were made, and
7 that's justifiable, you have every right to
8 do that, but the one thing I want to ask,
9 you know, on budgets that you voted for in
10 the past, did you exactly know what everyone
11 in the city does as far as their daily
12 operations, as far as their work duties, as
13 far as their workloads and if not, how could
14 you vote to support funding those positions
15 if you don't know what they do?

16 MR. MCGOFF: Well, assuming I was
17 going to eliminate the job, I would like to
18 know what the job was.

19 MR. JOYCE: Okay. Overall from my
20 personal standpoint, you know, I have spoken
21 to various people, some of the city
22 employees, some not city employees, some
23 members that may have been business
24 administrators in the past at other times,
25 people from others in the city, I do not

1 wish to get into the names of these people.
2 I have also spoken to some city employees,
3 mostly -- well, essentially all of the
4 people that I had spoken to wish to remain
5 anonymous for fear of retribution by what,
6 you know, they fear may happen to their
7 position if, you know, word gets out that
8 they have informed me of any news and any
9 information about the daily operations of
10 some of the departments.

11 MS. EVANS: Or lack of the
12 performance within departments or the
13 unnecessary spending that's occurring within
14 those departments. There are quite a number
15 of city employees who have informed council
16 of just these -- just these matters, and as
17 a result council will be closely monitoring
18 the performance and spending of every
19 department for it's budget in November.

20 MR. MCGOFF: In the Department of
21 Public Works we are reinstating positions of
22 administrative assistant traffic repairman
23 and traffic control repairman; correct?

24 MS. EVANS: Correct.

25 MR. JOYCE: Correct.

1 MR. MCGOFF: Instead of what was
2 suggested as subcontracting for the work
3 that these people to?

4 MS. EVANS: Actually, what was
5 intended there was to subcontract the work
6 involving traffic lights and to retain one
7 employee who would then make all of the
8 signs, make the purchases for the signs,
9 design the signs, make the signs, hang the
10 signs and at the same time paint the
11 crosswalks, stand duty as the traffic
12 monitor while painting the crosswalks which,
13 of course, is a physical impossibility, it
14 seems that the system that we have in place
15 is: (A) more efficient; (b) more cost
16 effective; (c) is on duty 24/7 and can be at
17 a location reported by the police, for
18 example, in an intersection where a light
19 has been affected by an accident. They can
20 be out there far more quickly than a private
21 firm that is chosen by the mayor to handle
22 that situation.

23 MR. MCGOFF: I was under the -- and
24 told that there is still -- that most of the
25 work for the signalization and all needs to

1 be contracted anyhow.

2 MS. EVANS: Well, if --

3 MR. MCGOFF: The people that are
4 being reinstated --

5 MS. EVANS: -- they're going to
6 upgrade that. They have been promising to
7 upgrade the traffic light systems now for
8 many, many years and it's never occurred.

9 MR. MCGOFF: No, I'm just claiming
10 that the people being reinstated are
11 basically in the clerical union and if that
12 is electric in nature that needs to be
13 repaired and maintained it has to be contracted
14 out anyhow.

15 MS. EVANS: Well, actually they --

16 MR. MCGOFF: Since they are not
17 competent to do that.

18 MS. EVANS: They are and they have
19 made those repairs up until now.

20 MR. MCGOFF: That's not what I'm
21 told.

22 MS. EVANS: There have been others
23 called in as well, but they, too, have made
24 repairs.

25 MR. MCGOFF: And although we are

1 reinstating the entire department there is
2 no need to reinstate the foreman --

3 MS. EVANS: No.

4 MR. MCGOFF: -- for that department?
5 That Mr. Brazil will take care of that as
6 well?

7 MS. EVANS: Yes.

8 MR. MCGOFF: Okay. He must be
9 Superman.

10 MS. EVANS: Well, he is able to do
11 many things at once, as someone once told
12 me.

13 MR. MCGOFF: I know he is. We'll
14 move on. Recycling coordinator.

15 MR. JOYCE: Again, that was another
16 decision that was made on behalf of the
17 opinions of the four of us and that is what
18 we had agreed upon, yes.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Do we know what the
20 recycling coordinator is responsible for?

21 MR. JOYCE: As far as the
22 responsibilities of the recycling
23 coordinator I have not spoken directly to
24 Mr. Brazil regarding this position, however,
25 I have done some brief research as to, you

1 know, what all -- what some of these
2 positions as well as all of these positions
3 may entail. However, as far as the specific
4 operation of what the recycling coordinator
5 does in the city, I am not 100 percent sure
6 of their daily workload and daily operation.
7 However, this isn't just my decision, this
8 is the decision of three others council
9 fellows.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Understood. The
11 recycling coordinator right now is gentleman
12 by the name of Venus Slocum. Mr. Slocum I
13 believe in the past year has been
14 responsible for DPW receiving something like
15 a quarter of a million dollars in grant
16 money for the department also in --

17 MS. EVANS: He is writing grants?

18 MR. MCGOFF: In obtaining some grant
19 money for the department, yes.

20 MS. EVANS: He is writing grants?

21 MR. MCGOFF: He is responsible for
22 obtaining the grants, yes.

23 MS. EVANS: So is he writing grants?

24 MR. MCGOFF: He may be doing it in
25 conjunction with others, but --

1 MS. EVANS: I don't believe he would
2 be writing grants.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Well --

4 MS. EVANS: But, again, as
5 Mr. Loscombe mentioned, the fire department
6 does write it's own grants and receives
7 them.

8 MR. MCGOFF: Maybe call Mr. Brazil
9 and ask him what the person does. In the
10 Single Tax Office, we are reinstating a
11 number of positions. I'd just like to point
12 out that in the original budget -- in
13 the budget that was passed in December of
14 2009 the current tax collector voted for the
15 budget with the elimination of those
16 positions and, obviously, felt that perhaps
17 they were unnecessary.

18 MS. EVANS: Well, I believe that you
19 know as you're conjecturing here, I have
20 spoken with the tax collector, he does need
21 these positions, but further than that, that
22 was part of a negotiation because the
23 council majority reinstated three of his
24 positions. He then in turn had to vote for
25 the approval of the overall budget or risk

1 the elimination of those positions, however,
2 he has made a very clear that those
3 positions are instrumental in the collection
4 of taxes -- tax revenues that this city,
5 school district enjoy.

6 MR. ROGAN: I would also like to add
7 with all of the problems we've had within
8 the tax office over the last few years
9 that's the last place we should be making
10 cuts.

11 MR. MCGOFF: It's just strange that
12 in one month you agreed that it was
13 agreeable and now we are going to change.

14 Also, the last thing that was in the
15 budget amendments were the expenditures for
16 the Everhart Museum and First Night, did
17 anybody contact anyone in the administration
18 to find out whether these had already been
19 spent or whether this money had been paid?

20 MS. EVANS: First of all, First
21 Night would have been planned throughout the
22 calendar year 2009, it actually begins in
23 2010. I don't know that the mayor has paid
24 for anything or not at this point, but
25 again, you know, as I mentioned earlier, he

1 made cuts to his own budget and yet those
2 individuals have continued to work. He has
3 continued to pay them, so I would think he
4 would be able to solve this but with the
5 understanding that the city will not
6 continue to fund First Night. It has never
7 done so prior to this budget and the city
8 can ill-afford to continue doing so.

9 MR. MCGOFF: I've been told that
10 that amount has already been paid. I don't
11 know how we are going to recollect it.

12 MS. EVANS: Then the mayor will have
13 to find a way to cover it in the same way he
14 is covering the salaries and health care of
15 the individuals who were not let go yet, and
16 again, no dollar amount appears in those
17 line items, so it is appearing from
18 somewhere.

19 MR. MCGOFF: One last thing, I
20 forgot, in the Single Tax Office did we
21 reinstate, by reinstating those three
22 positions did we also include money for the
23 health care and benefits?

24 MR. JOYCE: As far as the health
25 care and benefits, maybe that is something

1 that we actually need to go through if we
2 are going to do reinstate those positions.
3 Maybe we should take a look.

4 MS. EVANS: What we basically did
5 was take a look at what was in the mayor's
6 budget, what he plugged in for each of those
7 items and we simply returned them to the
8 figures plugged in by the mayor's budget.
9 So if there is, you know, anything missing
10 in any of those areas that wouldn't have
11 been covered by the mayor's original budget.

12 MR. ROGAN: And I believe our health
13 care costs would actually go down because,
14 am I right, we are eliminating more
15 positions --

16 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

17 MR. ROGAN: -- overall.

18 MR. MCGOFF: No, I'm just asking
19 that it in order to balance it for each
20 employee it's approximately \$10,000 --

21 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

22 MR. MCGOFF: -- in benefits, but if
23 you haven't included that in the
24 reinstatement and it's not in the salary
25 structure here that --

1 MS. EVANS: That could be a problem.

2 MR. MCGOFF: -- your amendments would
3 be --

4 MS. EVANS: But how is the mayor
5 doing that?

6 MR. MCGOFF: It was a separate item.

7 MS. EVANS: No, how is the mayor
8 covering health care and salaries of the
9 people he has eliminated from the budget?

10 MR. MCGOFF: I don't know which
11 positions you are speaking of so I can't
12 answer that.

13 MS. EVANS: All of the positions
14 that you voted to approve for elimination in
15 that budget these individuals are still at
16 work, so how is the mayor paying for their
17 health care and the salaries when it's not
18 been funded in the 2010 budget?

19 MR. MCGOFF: Again, I don't know
20 which people you are speaking of and I don't
21 know what he is doing to, you know, with
22 that. I'm just asking for in this case.

23 MS. EVANS: Well, that might be
24 something you want to ask him.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Well, this is something

1 I was asking you to as these amendments are
2 being made and I'm just wondering if the
3 \$30,000 is --

4 MS. EVANS: Well, it was based on
5 his figures, so if I you think the figures
6 are wrong that would be the mayor's original
7 figures were incorrect.

8 MR. MCGOFF: When we reinstated the
9 positions at the tax office we also included
10 the \$10,000 above and beyond the salary in
11 the budget. You haven't done that.

12 I guess in closing, the amendments
13 to the budget to me accomplish very little.
14 We had a balanced budget to start and
15 this -- these amendments in no way provide
16 any relief to the taxpayer. To me, it's an
17 unnecessary -- it's an unnecessary measure.
18 I think it's fairly obvious that the
19 positions that are being deleted are all
20 appointed positions. The positions being
21 reinstated are all union positions. In the
22 past I know Mrs. Evans has used the phrase
23 does it pass the smell test, well, I think
24 this kind of reeks of, I'll say something
25 you have rallied against and that's

1 political favoritism and retribution.

2 MS. EVANS: Mr. McGoff, then why
3 weren't the positions reinstated to the fire
4 department and why wasn't the grant writer
5 position --

6 MR. MCGOFF: Excuse me.

7 MS. EVANS : -- reinstated to the
8 police department.

9 MR. MCGOFF: My time.

10 MS. EVANS: They are all union
11 positions and they were not reinstated.

12 MR. MCGOFF: I never interrupted
13 you.

14 MS. EVANS: Why you just did so many
15 times earlier this evening. I was only --

16 MR. MCGOFF: In the past.

17 MS. EVANS : -- returning the favor
18 this evening.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Again, I think that the
20 this is it an unnecessary measure, one that
21 accomplishes nothing other than justifying
22 something that was -- that you promised that
23 you would change the budget and I think it's
24 an attempt to usurp the power of the mayor
25 and to give to council something a power

1 that it really doesn't have, and thank you.

2 MS. EVANS: Mr. Rogan, do you have
3 any comments or motions at this time?

4 MR. ROGAN: Sure. I guess I'll
5 start off on with budget since that's what
6 we have been talking about. I would like to
7 just disagree with what Mr. McGoff just said
8 in closing that this provides no benefit to
9 the taxpayers because when you save hundreds
10 of thousands of dollars of taxpayer money I
11 think that's a benefit to the taxpayers, and
12 as Councilman Joyce mentioned earlier with
13 the recession and unemployment around 10
14 percent we would be foolish to believe that
15 the City of Scranton is going to receive as
16 much money in wage tax as when the
17 unemployment rate was 4 percent like it was
18 a few years ago.

19 This has nothing to do with politics
20 or nothing to do with fulfilling an election
21 pledge. It's the right thing to do, that's
22 why we made this pledge during the election.

23 After going over the proposed
24 changes to the city's budget, I agree with
25 the vast majority of these changes. Cuts in

1 administrative salaries and the elimination
2 of some positions is a good step towards
3 reducing the size of the government and
4 hopefully reducing taxes in the future.
5 Although, I would prefer even more cuts in
6 salaries and the elimination of more union
7 and nonunion positions that are not related
8 to public safety, I will be voting yes this
9 week to these proposed budget changes
10 because I believe this is a great place to
11 begin in restoring Scranton to a fiscally
12 conservative policy.

13 That being said, I am currently
14 looking into a few amendments for next
15 week's meeting. I am concerned that the
16 elimination of our refuse recycling
17 coordinator may negatively affect the job
18 that our recycling coordinator is currently
19 performing. I will look further into this
20 issue for next week's meeting and before
21 offering any amendment to that affect.

22 I also feel that now is the proper
23 time to look into a eliminating city paid
24 cell phones and city paid vehicles for most
25 city employees. As all of you know, the

1 cost of monthly cell phones and leasing or
2 buying a vehicle is very expensive. I do
3 not believe that the City of Scranton should
4 have the burden of providing this perk to
5 some of it's employees. That is, of course,
6 with the exception of the police chief, fire
7 chief, head of DPW and police officers who
8 purchase their own patrol cars. I would
9 support the police chief, fire chief and the
10 head of the DPW to keep their city cell
11 phones and vehicles because they might need
12 to be reached during an emergency.

13 In conclusion, the cuts that are
14 being debated tonight are the first step
15 towards lifting the burden of excessively
16 high taxes on the people of Scranton.
17 Because of decades of tax and spend
18 policies, this cannot be done overnight, but
19 today is the first step towards my goal of
20 reducing government spending and eventually
21 reducing taxes.

22 Moving onto other business, I
23 received -- today I received the January
24 2010 summary report from our Office of
25 Economic and Community Development. Because

1 I received this report just prior to the
2 meeting, and I was spending most of my time
3 going over the proposed budget changes, I
4 will provide my colleagues and the citizens
5 of Scranton with the details of this report
6 next week.

7 I have also received a few citizens'
8 requests this week. I received a question
9 from a citizen that was concerned about the
10 status of the Washburn Street Cemetery.
11 Mrs. Krake, can you please send a letter to
12 Mr. Seitzinger asking him the following
13 questions: Who is in charge of citing
14 property owners for blighted property? What
15 is the current ordinance in this city in
16 regards to overgrown grass, weeds, etcetera?
17 What, if any, are the fines if someone is
18 cited? Will the Washburn Street Cemetery be
19 cited this year if the problem arises once
20 again? Who owns the Washburn Street
21 Cemetery? Do they reside in the city? And
22 finally, does the cemetery pay taxes, if so,
23 how much and are they current?

24 I also have two more requests for
25 the licensing and inspection. First one is

1 the corner -- the house on the corner of
2 Harrison Avenue and Mulberry Street, the
3 sidewalks have been torn up for about three
4 to four months now. You cannot walk down
5 the side of the street without having to go
6 on -- you cannot walk down on the sidewalks,
7 I'm sorry, without going onto the street.
8 Residents report that students for Audubon
9 School walk that way every day.

10 And the house at 459 Phelps Street
11 has been vacant for years. The house is
12 falling apart and should come down. There
13 are kids in the neighborhood and something
14 needs to be done before somebody gets hurt.
15 If you drive by you will see the porches
16 falling apart and the backside of the house
17 is in very poor condition. I will give
18 these to you at the end of the meeting, Mrs.
19 Krake.

20 Also, I received a request from a
21 resident who was wondering what the status
22 of our beat police officer in the Pinebrook
23 is. Mrs. Krake, can you also send a letter
24 regarding that.

25 And also, as Mr. McGoff said, I

1 spoke to him earlier today on the phone
2 regarding the rental registration fee and
3 hopefully we will be working together with
4 the mayor to do this to not only improve our
5 neighborhoods, but to bring in more revenue
6 to the city and alleviate the burden on the
7 taxpayers. That is all for tonight.

8 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Councilman
9 Rogan. Mr. Loscombe, do you have any
10 comments or motions at this time?

11 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes, Mrs. Evans. I
12 do have some citizens' requests that I will
13 be forwarding to Mrs. Krake, and I do read
14 from my paper here. I write notes all week
15 and on Tuesday afternoon I put it together
16 so I don't forget it.

17 My first topic is on the Library
18 Authority. I would like to state once again
19 that at this point in time I stand firm in
20 my opposition to the creation of a Library
21 Authority. My opposition has nothing to do
22 with the board of trustees who I believe
23 have been doing a great job maintaining the
24 library within the county system as they
25 have been. I believe if they are the truly

1 dedicated individuals that they are, they
2 will continue to work with the mayor and the
3 current city council to try to overcome any
4 obstacles with the present library system
5 structure. I would love to see active
6 library branches in every section of the
7 city.

8 These are tough economic times for
9 everyone and I firmly believe that we have
10 to get our own house in order before we take
11 on anymore long-term debt. We have been
12 accused several times of basing our
13 decisions on supposition. My decision is
14 based on facts and history not supposition.
15 There have been numerous articles printed
16 over the last several months regarding the
17 Library Authority and it's purpose. The
18 fact is that an article printed on November
19 22, 2009, stated: Mayor Chris Doherty also
20 supports a 16 million dollar project for a
21 new central library. Plans were unveiled in
22 2008 to renovate and expand the century old
23 Penn Security building in South Scranton for
24 this purpose. With space for the bank and
25 auditorium, lobby and a 200 space parking

1 garage along with a pedestrian walkway. The
2 administration's plan is to pay \$700,000
3 over seven years for the property, the first
4 \$100,000 of which was included in the 2009
5 budget, but that covers just the property
6 and not the expansion. Mr. Doherty and
7 Council Solicitor Amil Minora acknowledged
8 that the authority would have borrowing
9 power as do other authorities, Sewer and
10 Parking, for example. Without it's own
11 revenue, however, it would likely need the
12 city's backing for capital borrowing.

13 Councilwoman Janet Evans has raised
14 concerns not just about the amount of
15 potential borrowing, but about authorities,
16 general lack of accountability to council.
17 Mr. Doherty has said that beyond borrowing
18 the authority would be posed to via for
19 federal and state funding. Mr. Finnerty
20 said all eyes would certainly be on a second
21 round of federal stimulus money if it
22 develops.

23 Now, that's supposition. Lackawanna
24 County funds the operation of the countywide
25 library network of which the Scranton

1 library is a part. Facing layoffs and
2 budget constraints of their own, the
3 commissioners said in 2008 and still
4 maintain they would not raise the county
5 library tax to fund the project.

6 Mr. Doherty said he remains hopeful that
7 could change. Now, that's supposition, but
8 it won't prevent him from moving ahead.

9 Those are the written facts that
10 were not retracted by this administration.
11 As far as the history with the authorities
12 under this administration, there is numerous
13 examples of the authorities being used to
14 circumvent the standard due process.

15 Two examples immediately come to
16 mind are the sale of the South Side Sports
17 Complex. This property was deeded to the
18 city as a permanent public recreation area
19 for all students and it was sold to the
20 University of Scranton. I believe it's
21 still in litigation. The other example more
22 recently is the zoo at Nay Aug Park that was
23 recently leased to Lackawanna College by the
24 Recreation Authority for a dollar a year for
25 25 years with renewal options.

1 It would take a giant leap of faith
2 on my part given these facts and history of
3 the authorities' decisions of this
4 administration to even consider the
5 formation of any new authorities at this
6 time.

7 Budget cuts. I have to admit this
8 is probably by far going to be one of the
9 most difficult duties that I and my
10 colleagues may perform as councilmen. I do
11 know and admire, as many of them do, many of
12 the personnel that will be affected by our
13 decisions. We did not put any names or
14 faces, we looked at the positions. I am not
15 out to hurt anyone and my decisions are not
16 personally or politically motivated. In my
17 interview for my appointment, I made a
18 commitment to open the budget if there was
19 an opportunity for additional cost savings.
20 I believe that a mere \$700,000 cost savings
21 is possible and necessary in these economic
22 times. If city council does not start
23 tightening the budget belt beginning today
24 we are only going to prolong the inevitable.

25 There is little that we can do today

1 but look into the areas that have increased
2 in cost and personnel over the last eight
3 years. We know that the police and fire
4 department costs have not had any negative
5 impact on the budget over the past eight
6 years as there have been no negotiated
7 contracts in that time and the manpower has
8 certainly decreased. Other departments have
9 also been significantly downsized throughout
10 the past eight years.

11 The state government and the county
12 government have taken measures and have made
13 the tough decisions to bring financial
14 stability back to their respective
15 governments and it's time for the city
16 through city council and hopefully with the
17 mayor's cooperation to bring financial
18 stability to Scranton and this is our first
19 step toward real recovery.

20 I don't usually comment on a tax,
21 but I just wanted to respond to something
22 that was in the newspaper today, a comment
23 that was made by the mayor and I quote:
24 They will have to explain themselves. You
25 have three brand new members of the council

1 who have no idea how this city works."

2 No, Mr. Mayor, I believe that it is
3 you who has no idea how the city works and
4 in your eight years in office you have taken
5 us from the surplus to an unprecedented debt
6 level. You have borrowed and spent with no
7 regard for our taxpayers and our future
8 generations. We have empty buildings,
9 rundown streets, and a 25 percent tax
10 increase. We work for the people and our
11 actions over the next several years will not
12 need explanation. It is you who will
13 ultimately have to answer to the people and
14 your employees and explain yourself in the
15 decisions that you have made. Thank you.

16 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Councilman
17 Loscombe. And, Councilman Joyce, do have
18 you any comments or motions at this time?

19 MR. JOYCE: Yes. Before I began I
20 just want to say, you know, Mr. McGoff, I
21 understand that you criticize some of the
22 decisions that both myself and colleagues
23 made in our budget amendments, but you know,
24 just to, you know, establish a point, do you
25 know who the calculator is in the tax

1 office, do you know what they do and why
2 they do it?

3 MR. MCGOFF: No, I do not.

4 MR. JOYCE: Well, why did you vote
5 to cut that position in the 2010 budget and
6 if you are saying that you don't know, you
7 know, what they did aren't you accusing all
8 four of us of being guilty of the same thing
9 that you were guilty of yourself?

10 MR. MCGOFF: I guess that's -- that
11 might be true.

12 MR. JOYCE: Okay. Anyhow, about the
13 budget. Tonight I presented to you an
14 amended budget, a budget in which
15 administrative salary decreases were made
16 and some positions eliminated. The cuts
17 that I presented tonight are a necessity --
18 are a necessary first step towards bringing
19 the city to a more financial state -- or
20 stable financial state rather. The
21 overestimation of the revenue being brought
22 into the city over the past number of years
23 is very evident since Scranton's structural
24 deficit continues to grow. The over -- this
25 overestimation has led the city deeper and

1 deeper into distressed status. It will be a
2 tough climb to remove this label from our
3 city, however, tonight I hope this journey
4 begins with the passing of the amended
5 budget into Sixth Order. I sincerely hope
6 that all of my colleagues consider doing
7 this.

8 Though some of my critics may say
9 that the cuts made in this budget were
10 simply political, however, I disagree. In
11 no way, shape or form were the amendments
12 made to this budget political in any
13 purpose. If they were, do you think that I
14 would have -- that I would be in favor of
15 cutting the salary of our city clerk which
16 was the first position that as a newly
17 elected public official that I ever voted
18 affirmative on to appoint?

19 In today's struggling economy
20 position cuts are a business standard in
21 order to reduce operating costs. More and
22 more people are being asked to do the same
23 not more with less. In the past, the mayor
24 himself has decided to make cuts, in fact,
25 in the original 2010 budget the mayor

1 decided to eliminate two entire departments.
2 With this I must ask a question, how can he
3 consider any of the cuts being made to the
4 budget political when we -- when he himself
5 made cuts as well?

6 The salary reductions that were
7 presented in the 2010 amended budgets were
8 based on an analogous system, a system in
9 which the mayor deemed appropriate in
10 allocating funding for police and fire
11 department positions. Therefore, if he
12 states that the methodology is unjustified
13 he is being purely hypocritical. All this
14 does is put everyone from the unions to the
15 administration on an equal playing field.

16 In addition, for most of the
17 departments where various positions were
18 eliminated causing the absorption of
19 additional duties and responsibilities
20 amongst various employees, their salaries
21 remained untouched, meaning, there is
22 a realization for the strain that some of
23 the cuts may cause on other city employees.

24 Though I did not consult with the
25 mayor directly regarding any budget cuts

1 that I personally decided to make, I do not
2 think that it's necessary that I do. With
3 this being said, I must again ask the
4 question, was there an instance when the
5 mayor came to council chambers to address
6 council members asking for advice regarding
7 his own budgets?

8 In addition, equally important to
9 note is that this budget did not hinder any
10 projects that are currently underway in the
11 City of Scranton. The mayor has put forth a
12 great effort in revitalizing the downtown
13 area to it's current conditions and it's
14 important that some of these projects that
15 were stated or started are actually
16 completed. Nothing to this forth was
17 hindered in the amended budget that,
18 therefore, there is no way that anyone could
19 say that this budget is trying to hinder
20 progress in the city.

21 In conclusion, tonight I would
22 simply like to reiterate that I hope city
23 council takes the necessary first step
24 unanimously to begin controlling spending in
25 the city by voting "yes" to move this motion

1 into Sixth Order. It's a necessary first
2 step that must be carried out to stop
3 increasing our structural debt, and that's
4 all I have for tonight.

5 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Councilman
6 Joyce. Good evening, I wish to clarify a
7 misconception regarding the separation of
8 city and school district tax bills that may
9 have been developed during the Democratic
10 public policy hearing conducted last
11 Thursday, February 4. It seems that some
12 state representatives and local officials
13 feel that issue can be addressed on a city
14 level. I would remind them of the following
15 information: State law governs the Scranton
16 Single Tax Office. The city has no power or
17 authority to institute the separation of
18 city and school district tax bills.

19 File of Council No. 82 of 2007, the
20 delinquent tax ordinance which created 23
21 additional costs, expenses and fees, none of
22 which the City of Scranton receives, is in
23 fact a very tangled web of agreements and
24 contracts among the city, the Scranton
25 Redevelopment Authority, Municipal Revenue

1 Services, and Northeast Credit and
2 Collection and now possibly the county tax
3 office.

4 Hence, it cannot be easily addressed
5 on a the city level and as a result it may
6 never occur. Several attempts to amend in
7 ordinance were made since 2007 without
8 success. Passing the buck to city
9 government isn't the answer.

10 House Bill 1942 affects only
11 Scranton. I'm disappointed that in
12 particular any representative of our
13 neighboring districts might consider turning
14 his back on Scranton and passing the buck.
15 Please contact Representative Smith and
16 Murphy of Scranton, Representative Wansack
17 of the Abingtons and Old Forge and
18 Representative Mushinski of Wilkes-Barre and
19 urge them to pass House Bill 1942 to help
20 the people of Scranton pay their taxes and
21 keep their homes.

22 Further, the Scranton mayor's
23 insensitive statement "To avoid paying the
24 penalties, pay the taxes," demonstrates
25 either a lack of empathy or knowledge of his

1 constituents especially when considering he
2 raised taxes over 25 percent in 2007. His
3 answer is inappropriate and should serve to
4 further convince our state officials to take
5 action and provide relief.

6 Next, council amendments to the
7 mayor's 2010 operating budget were presented
8 during a public caucus earlier this evening
9 by Councilman Joyce, finance chair. Council
10 would like to thank our colleague,
11 Councilman Joyce, for his tireless work
12 throughout the many weeks it required to
13 draft this legislation and for his excellent
14 public presentation of the council majority
15 amendments. He is proving himself to be a
16 highly competent finance chair. I only
17 speak the truth. I don't give compliments
18 idly.

19 I wish to reiterate that council is
20 only amending the mayor's current budget. A
21 comprehensive complete city council budget
22 will be created and presented in the late
23 fall of the year. The first council budget
24 of 2011 will include reforms, new as well as
25 enhanced revenue streams and perhaps

1 additional cuts. During the intervening
2 months, council will monitor the efficiency
3 and cost effectiveness of each city
4 department and will closely observe budget
5 transfers, bidding and spending. If more
6 adjustments are necessary, they will occur.

7 The overall objective of this
8 council begins tonight and will continue
9 throughout the next four years. We will
10 work consistently, fairly and with
11 determination to lower and possibly develop
12 the ongoing structural deficit that has
13 plagued city finances for years in order to
14 achieve the people's goal of lifting
15 Scranton's distressed status and sending the
16 Pennsylvania Economy League back to
17 Harrisburg.

18 These amendments, like other actions
19 taken by this council, are based purely on
20 finances and the maintenance of public
21 services. Three members of this council
22 were overwhelming elected in both the
23 primary and general election. The voters
24 were well-informed of our fiscally
25 conservative platform and our ability to

1 form a supermajority to end eight years of
2 unbridled spending. The results of the
3 election spoke loudly and clearly. We are
4 upholding our pledge to you for financial
5 reform and accountability. We are doing the
6 people's work. To any who may think
7 otherwise or attempt to twist or attack
8 financial reform, you are insulting the
9 voters of Scranton who actively made this
10 choice to stop Scranton's financial
11 bleeding. We hear you, Scranton, and our
12 charge to end the near decade of financial
13 overspending and mismanagement begins
14 tonight.

15 Next, Mrs. Krake, I would like a
16 letter please on behalf of Scranton City
17 Council sent to the Executive Director of
18 the Scranton Housing Authority and to the
19 chairperson of the Scranton Housing
20 Authority. Council respectfully requests
21 that both attend a public caucus on Tuesday,
22 March 2, at 5:45 p.m. to discuss the
23 progress of the Washington Plaza project and
24 the possible conveyance of Housing Authority
25 property to the Commonwealth Medical

1 College.

2 Finally, I have a few citizens'
3 requests for the week: In response to the
4 letter from the President of Northeastern
5 Plastics, Incorporated, please send a letter
6 to the traffic maintenance department
7 requesting crosswalk lines at the corner of
8 Olive Street and Capouse Avenue. School
9 children have a difficult and dangerous
10 walking in this location.

11 Also, parking is too close to the
12 intersection of East Gibson Street and
13 Capouse Avenue making it difficult to see
14 traffic traveling down East Gibson Street.
15 Please review this issue for possible
16 placement of "No Parking" signs at these
17 corners for improved site and safety.

18 Council requests that ECTV provides
19 a consistent presentation of it's daily
20 program schedule which includes the airing
21 times and dates for the Scranton and
22 Lackawanna County Taxpayers' Association
23 meetings. We have received this request
24 from numerous residents and viewers of ECTV.

25 City residents requests an update on

1 a New Jersey central building project
2 located near the Lackawanna Avenue bridge.
3 The owner, Mr. Donahue, previously stated
4 that he held up work until the completion of
5 the new bridge which opened last month.
6 Council would like to know when work will
7 begin and what the current plan for the
8 property is.

9 The street signs at the corner of
10 Cherry Street and Brook have been taking
11 care of and the streetlights that were not
12 working in and near Kirst Court were
13 reported for repair. Again, we thank the
14 traffic maintenance workers for their prompt
15 response to these problems.

16 Linden Street and North Main Avenue,
17 there is a traffic light that looks like it
18 is going to fall and it requires repairs.

19 Another resident requests that on
20 Decker Court the garbage trucks would no
21 longer throw the cans with the cans
22 half-full causing the garbage then to spill
23 and leak onto the roadway, and that's it.

24 MS. KRAKE: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION -
25 AN ORDINANCE - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR

1 AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO
2 EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO AN EASEMENT AGREEMENT
3 BETWEEN THE CITY OF SCRANTON AND LACKAWANNA
4 HERITAGE VALLEY AUTHORITY FOR A SECTION OF
5 THE LACKAWANNA RIVER HERITAGE TRAIL
6 SITUATE IN SOUTH SCRANTON.

7 MS. EVANS: At this time I'll
8 entertain a motion that Item 5-B be
9 introduced into it's proper committee.

10 MR. LOSCOMBE: So moved.

11 MR. ROGAN: Second.

12 MS. EVANS: On the question? All
13 those in favor of introduction signify by
14 saying aye.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

16 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

17 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

18 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed? The ayes
19 have it and so moved.

20 (Mr. Joyce was had stepped out of
21 the room for the vote.)

22 MS. KRAKE: 5-C. FOR INTRODUCTION -
23 AN ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL
24 NO. 97, 2009 AN ORDINANCE (AS AMENDED)
25 ENTITLED "APPROPRIATING FUNDS FOR THE

1 EXPENSES OF THE CITY GOVERNMENT FOR THE
2 PERIOD COMMENCING ON THE FIRST DAY OF
3 JANUARY, 2010 TO AND INCLUDING DECEMBER
4 31, 2010 BY THE ADOPTION OF THE GENERAL CITY
5 OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2010". BY
6 MAKING ADJUSTMENTS TO THE NAMED ACCOUNTS AND
7 LINE ITEMS AS SET FORTH ON THE "AMENDED
8 GENERAL CITY OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE YEAR
9 2010", WHICH IS ATTACHMENT 1 HERETO, AS
10 FOLLOWS: INCREASING APPROPRIATIONS FOR
11 DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURES AS SET FORTH ON
12 PAGE ONE (1) OF ATTACHMENT 1, THE AMENDED
13 2010 BUDGET, DECREASING APPROPRIATIONS FOR
14 DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURES AS SET FORTH ON
15 PAGE TWO (2) OF ATTACHMENT 1, THE AMENDED
16 2010 BUDGET, DECREASING APPROPRIATIONS FOR
17 NON DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURES AS PER PAGE
18 THREE (3) OF ATTACHMENT 1, THE AMENDED 2010
19 BUDGET, REINSTATING CERTAIN POSITIONS,
20 CREATING CERTAIN POSITIONS AND INCREASING
21 SALARIES OF CERTAIN POSITIONS OF THE CITY OF
22 SCRANTON AS SET FORTH ON PAGE FOUR (4) OF
23 ATTACHMENT 1, THE AMENDED 2010 BUDGET,
24 ELIMINATING CERTAIN POSITIONS AND DECREASING
25 SALARIES OF CERTAIN POSITIONS AS SET FORTH

1 ON PAGE FIVE (5) OF ATTACHMENT 1, THE
2 AMENDED 2010 BUDGET, REDUCING VARIOUS
3 REVENUE ITEMS AS SET FORTH ON PAGE
4 SIX (6) OF ATTACHMENT 1, THE AMENDED 2010
5 BUDGET THAT WILL REDUCE ESTIMATED REVENUES
6 BY \$722,777 TO \$77,142,969 AND REDUCE
7 ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES BY A NET \$722,777 TO
8 \$77,142,969 IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN A
9 BALANCED BUDGET.

10 MS. EVANS: At this time I'll
11 entertain a motion that Item 5-C be
12 introduced into it's proper committee.

13 MR. LOSCOMBE: So moved.

14 MR. ROGAN: Second.

15 MS. EVANS: On the question? All
16 those in favor --

17 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

18 MS. EVANS: Oh, I'm sorry.

19 MR. JOYCE: Sorry. At this point I
20 would like to make a motion to amend 5-C as
21 per the following, as I saw that there were
22 a few mistakes in the legislation:

23 As per the adjustments in attachment
24 one entitled "The amended 2010 budget
25 increasing appropriations in departmental

1 expenditures, page one of attachment one,
2 city council capital budget accounts in the
3 amount of \$12,000 and reinstating the
4 position of rental registration assistant,
5 page four of the attachment, attachment one,
6 in the amount of \$33,895 and reducing
7 various revenue items page six of attachment
8 one in the amount of \$45,895 and reducing
9 the estimated revenues by \$676,882 to
10 \$77,188,864 and the expenditures by a net
11 \$676,882 to \$77,188,864.

12 MS. EVANS: A motion has been made
13 to amend 5-C --

14 MR. LOSCOMBE: Second.

15 MS. EVANS: Is there a second.

16 MR. LOSCOMBE: Second.

17 MS. EVANS: All those in favor
18 signify by saying aye.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

20 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

21 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

22 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

23 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed? The ayes
24 have it and so moved. I would now ask for a
25 vote on the original motion of 5-C as

1 amended. All those in favor signify by
2 saying aye.

3 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

4 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

5 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

6 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed?

7 MR. MCGOFF: No.

8 MS. EVANS: The ayes have it and so
9 moved.

10 MS. KRAKE: SIXTH ORDER. NO
11 BUSINESS AT THIS TIME. SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A.
12 FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 9, 2010 - REPEALING FILE
13 OF THE COUNCIL NO. 95, 2009 (AS AMENDED) AN
14 ORDINANCE ENTITLED "SIGNIFYING THE INTENTION
15 AND DESIRE OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
16 SCRANTON TO ORGANIZE AN AUTHORITY TO BE
17 KNOWN AS THE SCRANTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
18 AUTHORITY UNDER PROVISIONS OF THE ACT OF THE
19 GENERAL ASSEMBLY, KNOWN AS THE MUNICIPALITY
20 AUTHORITIES ACT, 53 PA. C.S. 56; SETTING
21 FORTH AND AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF ARTICLES
22 OF INCORPORATION; APPOINTING AND FIXING THE
23 TERMS OF THE FIRST MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF
24 SUCH AUTHORITY; AND UPON ORGANIZATION
25 CONVEYING TITLE TO THE AUTHORITY FOR THE

1 PROPERTIES ON WHICH THE ALBRIGHT MEMORIAL
2 LIBRARY, THE GREEN RIDGE LIBRARY AND THE
3 SILKMAN HOUSE ARE LOCATED; AUTHORIZING ALL
4 OTHER NECESSARY ACTION; AND REPEALING
5 ALL INCONSISTENT ORDINANCES OR PARTS OF
6 ORDINANCES, RESOLUTIONS OR PARTS OF
7 RESOLUTIONS." MOTION TO OVERRIDE OR SUSTAIN
8 MAYOR'S VETO.

9 MS. EVANS: As Chairperson for the
10 Committee on Rules, I recommend that we
11 override the mayor's veto of Item 7-A.

12 MR. ROGAN: Second.

13 MS. EVANS: On the question?

14 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I would just
15 again like to state my opposition to
16 dissolving the authority. Those who are
17 most concerned with the continuation of the
18 library were in favor of this to continue
19 the vibrancy and the operation of the
20 library and it is from them that I take my
21 counsel in establishing the authority in the
22 beginning and, therefore, I believe that it
23 should continue to exist.

24 MR. ROGAN: I would also like to
25 just express my support for this again.

1 This is the fourth time we are voting on it,
2 so I think everyone knows where I stand, but
3 I would just like to reiterate the point
4 that those on the Library Authority and
5 those out there who do support it, however
6 many there are, not one has come to a
7 council meeting to address it, and I have
8 only received one letter in support of it
9 and I have received dozens that are against
10 the Library Authority, so that's why I will
11 be voting to override the mayor's veto.

12 MS. EVANS: Attorney Hughes, would
13 you like to comment on the Forks Township
14 case or the number of topics contained in
15 council's ordinance to repeal or any other
16 topic related to the repeal -- or, excuse
17 me, or any other topic related to the
18 override of the mayor's veto?

19 MR. HUGHES: Well, I know it's late
20 tonight and I know everybody is -- as I
21 stated before, when this ordinance was being
22 voted on that this council as a governing
23 body, as a part of a governing body, has the
24 right under the Municipalities Authorities
25 Act to dissolve the authority and that in

1 doing so that the act does not have to come
2 from the authority, council can do it, the
3 Fell Township case the mayor states that
4 that it had not -- that that authority had
5 completed it's purpose. There was
6 substantial monies and debt that was turned
7 back to the municipality, the entire
8 indebtedness of that authority had not been
9 paid off and as a result one of the things
10 that is required by the act is that the city
11 government can assume governmental function
12 of the authority that it is terminating.

13 I did make a slight error in
14 drafting the original ordinance because as
15 the mayor points out in his letter the
16 Greenridge Public Library was not
17 incorporated with the Board of Trustees in
18 1890. I included both the Albright Library
19 and the Greenridge Library and said that
20 they haven't functioned and they've been
21 controlled by the trustees since 1890.
22 Smaller error, but it was really
23 insignificant.

24 I believe that with the overriding
25 of this, the mayor's veto, that as of

1 overridden tonight that the authority can no
2 longer legally function because it has been
3 dissolved by this action of council.

4 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Attorney
5 Hughes. I just wanted to add, as many of
6 you may be aware, Harrisburg is currently
7 considering Chapter 9 bankruptcy protection
8 together with tax increases and assets sales
9 as options to address 68 million in debt
10 service payments due this year. The 68
11 million that Harrisburg faces in connection
12 with the construction of a waste incinerator
13 is four times what the city of 47,000
14 expects to raise through property taxes and
15 four million more than the city's proposed
16 operating budget. The bond counsel for the
17 incinerator's operator, the Harrisburg
18 Authority, told the city council in December
19 that the city is already in danger of legal
20 action for payments that were misused -- or,
21 excuse me, not misused, payments that were
22 missed last year on 288 million in debt it
23 has guaranteed with it's full faith and
24 credit. This is not a scare tactic. It's
25 cold hard reality. She also said that by

1 skipping payments that are made on behalf of
2 the authority, the city risks being sued and
3 ordered to raise taxes or fees by the
4 insurers of the bond or by the deal's
5 trustee, TD Bank. There is never been a
6 default like this in Pennsylvania municipal
7 history.

8 If you recall, with the Scranton
9 Parking Authority local bankers and bond
10 council appeared before Scranton city
11 council to seek approval for bonds for which
12 the city pledged it's full faith and credit.
13 Some of these individuals stated that
14 authorities never fail to meet their
15 obligations and that the bank would extend
16 money based on the mayor's vision in
17 substitution for city audits and operating
18 budgets.

19 Harrisburg certainly suffers from
20 additional financial drains such as the
21 large portion of nontaxable property on
22 which state government buildings sit.
23 However, it is the debt of the Harrisburg
24 Authority that seems to be the most
25 significant factor driving our capital city

1 toward either bankruptcy or unprecedented
2 tax increases and fees.

3 My purpose for sharing this with you
4 is to demonstrate the powers and dangers of
5 municipal authorities. Scranton is
6 currently home to five municipal authorities
7 which control public house, parking, the
8 sewer system, parks and recreation and
9 redevelopment. Scranton can ill-afford to
10 continue growing such power by creating a
11 sixth authority to build a new library while
12 it remains in dire financial straights.
13 Most often, you see, an authority is created
14 to do that which city government cannot
15 directly do. The taxpayers guarantee much
16 of the debt of these authorities.

17 So under these circumstances the
18 authorities, as I said earlier, the
19 authorities themselves are never held liable
20 or accountable. Authorities may be fast
21 becoming financial albatrosses rather than
22 saviors to their respect municipalities and
23 Scranton can learn a lesson from Harrisburg.
24 Roll call, please, Neil?

25 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

1 MR. MCGOFF: No.

2 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Rogan.

3 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

4 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Loscombe.

5 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes.

6 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Joyce.

7 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

8 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

9 MS. EVANS: Yes. I hereby declare
10 the mayor's veto of Item 7-A, File of
11 Council No. 9, 2010, legally and lawfully
12 overridden.

13 MS. KRAKE: 7-B. FOR CONSIDERATION
14 BY THE COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT -
15 FOR ADOPTION - FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 10, 2010
16 - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER
17 APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE AND
18 ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT OF CLARIFICATION TO
19 LAND USE RESTRICTIONS AND EXCEPTIONS MADE IN
20 ACCORDANCE WITH FEDERAL AND COMMONWEALTH
21 REQUIREMENTS MADE AMONG THE CITY OF
22 SCRANTON ("THE CITY"), THE COMMONWEALTH OF
23 PENNSYLVANIA ("THE COMMONWEALTH"), AND THE
24 UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, ACTING THROUGH THE
25 FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY,

1 ("FEMA") IN REFERENCE TO THE REAL PROPERTY
2 ("PROPERTY") HEREINAFTER REFERRED TO AS THE
3 "HAZARD MITIGATION LAND" IN ORDER TO CLARIFY
4 THAT THE DEED RESTRICTIONS DO NOT PROHIBIT
5 THE CITY FROM ERECTING A FLOOD LEVEE UPON
6 THE HAZARD MITIGATION LAND DESCRIBED MORE
7 FULLY IN EXHIBIT "A" OF THE AGREEMENT.

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

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

14 MR. MCGOFF: Second.

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

17 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. McGoff.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

19 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Rogan.

20 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

21 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Loscombe.

22 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes.

23 MR. COOLICAN: Mr. Joyce.

24 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

25 MR. COOLICAN: Mrs. Evans.

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MS. EVANS: I hereby declare Item 7-B legally and lawfully adopted. If there is no further business, I will entertain a motion for adjournment.

MR. LOSCOMBE: Motion to adjourn.

MS. EVANS: And we thank you all for your participation this evening. 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