

SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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HELD:

Tuesday, July 6, 2010

LOCATION:

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

AMELIA NICOL - OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

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CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

JANET EVANS, PRESIDENT

PATRICK ROGAN, VICE-PRESIDENT

ROBERT MCGOFF

FRANK JOYCE

JOHN LOSCOMBE

NANCY KRAKE, CITY CLERK

JAMIE MARCIANO

BOYD HUGHES, SOLICITOR

1 (Pledge of Allegiance)

2 MR. EVANS: Please remain
3 standing for a moment of reflection
4 for our serviceman and women
5 throughout the world and for all of
6 those who have died in our community
7 in the last week.

8 Roll call, please.

9 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. McGoff?

10 MR. MCGOFF: Here.

11 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Rogan?

12 MR. ROGAN: Here.

13 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Loscombe?

14 MR. LOSCOMBE: Here.

15 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Joyce?

16 MR. JOYCE: Here.

17 MS. MARCIANO: Mrs. Evans?

18 MS. EVANS: Here. Dispense with
19 the reading of the minutes.

20 MS. KRAKE: Third order, no
21 business at this time.

22 MS. EVANS: Clerks notes, please.

23 MS. KRAKE: We had a response
24 from the Scranton Housing Authority,
25 Director Gary Pelacucci who tells us

1 the Board of Commissioners for the
2 month of July will be held July 12th,
3 2010. At that meeting the Board of
4 Commissioners will review the minutes
5 for approval. If the minutes are
6 approved by Tuesday July 13th, we can
7 provide your office with a copy. The
8 Scranton Housing Authority is always
9 desirous of keeping the citizens
10 informed and anyone to visit our main
11 office to review the transcript of the
12 minutes but also upon request receive
13 a courtesy copy.

14 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

15 MS. KRAKE: And that's the only
16 response this week but we do have a
17 third request to Business
18 Administrator Stu Renda concerning the
19 audit that was not responded to. Nine
20 requests to Director Seitzinger that
21 were not responded to and four
22 requests to Director Brazil that were
23 not responded to.

24 MS. EVANS: We'll maintain those
25 in the files, please.

1 MS. KRAKE: Yes.

2 MS. KRAKE: Fourth order.

3 MS. EVANS: Well, actually we're
4 going to do some announcements first.

5 Do any council members have
6 announcements?

7 MR. LOSCOMBE: The only thing I
8 have is St. Patrick's Church festival
9 to be held this weekend, Friday and
10 Saturday. I believe it's from five to
11 11 p.m. Gene Dempsey will be there
12 Friday, his orchestra and Old Friends
13 on Saturday. And that's all I have.
14 Thank you.

15 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr.
16 Loscombe.

17 Weekly schedule for street
18 cleaning is as follows: July 5th
19 through July 9th, Jackson Street to
20 Pettibone Street, including North
21 South Road on July 12th to 16th
22 Washburn Street to Elm Street in West
23 Scranton.

24 The sixth annual Union Festival
25 will be conducted this Saturday,

1 July 10th from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Nay
2 Aug Park in Scranton. This enjoyable
3 event celebrates the many cultures
4 within our community and provides
5 family entertainment by local and
6 featured performers as well as games,
7 arts crafts, local arts and delicious
8 ethnic foods. The Community
9 Development Block Grant, Home Program
10 and Emergency Shelter Grant Program
11 2011 applications for federal funding
12 are currently available at
13 www.scrantonpa.gov/deparment/oecd and
14 then hit applications. Submit one
15 original and one copy on/or before
16 August 6th, 2010, to OECD, 538 Spruce
17 Street, Suite 812, Scranton,
18 Pennsylvania, 18503.

19 St. Peter's Lutheran Church will
20 host a Friendly's Family Fun Night on
21 Thursday, July 15th, at Friendly's in
22 Dunmore to benefit three-year-old
23 Emily Donovan. At age 20-months she
24 was diagnosed with a cancerous brain
25 tumor, has since undergone surgery and

1 radiation and currently receives
2 chemotherapy. Emily will be
3 travelling to St. Jude's Hospital in
4 Memphis for further treatment. Please
5 help Emily and her family by
6 supporting this very worthy event.
7 And that's it.

8 MS. KRAKE: Fourth Order,
9 citizens participation.

10 MS. EVANS: Our first speaker
11 tonight is Andy Sbaraglia.

12 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia, a
13 Scrantonian. Today I speak as a
14 cochairman of our Kids Swim Free
15 Program which we held on July the 3rd.
16 We had 440 kids we pay for out of that
17 affair. But that wasn't the point.
18 Then I went down there to the Rec
19 Authority. As you know, two pools
20 were closed, okay, during the hottest,
21 maybe during the hottest part of the
22 summer and I posed a question, you
23 knew the pools were closed. Why
24 didn't you at least offer reduced
25 rates that the kids can use at Nay Aug

1 because that's what it's there for.
2 Nay Aug is not a cash cow. But the
3 Rec Authority is using it as a cash
4 cow and that's not right. As you
5 know, they planned to build a
6 pavilion. And the reason why they're
7 building that pavilion is because we
8 will pay for it and then will get the
9 money that it generates. Is that
10 right? How much are we actually
11 losing at Nay Aug with this authority?
12 That money that is being generated out
13 there could all be placed in the
14 general fund. I'll give you a copy of
15 their audit. I don't know if you got
16 it but I had the girl prepare a report
17 for the month and you can see it's
18 marginal. I don't see how anything
19 could be so marginal as that report.
20 I mean, they're working on something
21 that like some bucks a month over what
22 they're spending. That authority
23 had -- well, you know, we've been
24 talking about it for years. That
25 should have never been started just

1 like the library. There are certain
2 things that should have stood where
3 they were. The Parks Department could
4 have very well deal with what that
5 authority does. And there's no reason
6 for it other than the fact that it's a
7 separate government. Another
8 government within the government and
9 that's not good for the city. And
10 even we're going to be under such a
11 mounting debt that our grandchildren
12 still won't be able to pay and I don't
13 think I can pay now. I just feel
14 sorry for the people that want to live
15 in Scranton and have children in
16 Scranton, to let them stay in Scranton
17 because the debt is being so great
18 that there's no way that they can
19 surmount it without having to heavily
20 penalize the citizens, the Scranton
21 taxation. And we all know taxation is
22 regressive. As you know, when people
23 make it good in Scranton, they get
24 out, for some reason they get out. I
25 was one of the chief construction

1 workers that stood because I love the
2 city and I loved it all my life so I
3 was willing to take the penalty
4 because I understood why we had to do
5 what why were doing. To keep elderly
6 people in their home, we took on the
7 burden of wage tax and it's a heck of
8 a burden. But it keeps your
9 grandmother in her house. But now
10 it's becoming so great that that won't
11 work anymore and we're going to be
12 taxed somewhere along the line and
13 when all the money with -- well, take
14 the South Side Complex, we're going to
15 end up paying that back to the
16 university eventually because I don't
17 know that the federal government will
18 ever let it go. As you know, that
19 happened up there at the -- there's
20 federal money in there and they're not
21 really anxious to have things that
22 were set up -- used forever being sold
23 off. So henceforth that's why we're
24 still covering the South Side Complex
25 because of the federal money. But

1 these things are there. But to turn
2 Nay Aug Park into a cash cow is a slap
3 to all the people that gave to that
4 place. They gave it up for a reason.
5 They gave up good primary land for a
6 reason, and they wanted it to be free.
7 As you know, the original lease called
8 for only amenities to be up there.
9 That's it, amenities, not what they
10 turn it into. They consider
11 everything an amenity now, I guess.
12 And then the people -- even with the
13 improvement of that bath house, it's a
14 joke. The one they torn down is way
15 better than the one they put up. But
16 yet we're stuck with these things.
17 Bad decisions all along. And they're
18 continuing bad decisions. I just hope
19 that you can correct some of them
20 before the sky falls like Chicken
21 Little said. Thank you.

22 MS. EVANS: Lee Morgan.

23 MR. MORGAN: Good evening,
24 council. The thing I have -- I really
25 agree with almost everything that Andy

1 said tonight at the podium and I hope
2 the people would really consider his
3 statements here tonight. I think they
4 were on point and very relevant. Has
5 city council decided to meet with the
6 Scranton/Abington Planning
7 Association?

8 MS. EVANS: At this time council
9 will not be meeting with them but any
10 council member is free to contact them
11 independently.

12 MR. MORGAN: Okay. I thought it
13 would be a good thing for them to come
14 in here and give a presentation, allow
15 61 to film, take relevant questions
16 from council. I still think that has
17 a lot of merit for the city. I just
18 hope that more of the people on
19 council would feel the same way. We
20 definitely need a change in direction
21 here.

22 You know, it was in the newspaper
23 today that there's going to be grant
24 money used to demolish homes in the
25 city. The federal government gave a

1 grant for \$292,000 to demolish homes,
2 and I just think that maybe a long
3 time ago and maybe now we should
4 really consider trying to find an
5 avenue to sell those properties if
6 they could be renovated and the same
7 thing with all the empty properties in
8 the city. I mean, this is just a
9 small number. There's an awful lot of
10 homes in the city that have curtains
11 on the windows and so forth and so on
12 but nobody lives there. There's a lot
13 of abandoned properties in the city.
14 I commend that the City of Scranton
15 can keep tearing properties
16 considering the situation we're in.
17 We have a lot of vacant lots in the
18 city that aren't maintained. I can
19 name them. As a matter of fact, I
20 have one right next to my property
21 that is not maintained by the city and
22 just that it's counterproductive to
23 tear properties down because if they
24 can be salvaged, people can live in
25 them. You know, there was a

1 presentation tonight, I just think we
2 need an awfully large amount of
3 economic development in this city. I
4 think we need to change our focus.
5 You know, if you see all the condemned
6 homes everywhere, and I just think
7 that maybe we should consider off
8 setting these properties, do something
9 with them. I mean, all these
10 condemned homes. They're just a
11 breeding ground for trouble. And I
12 just think that the council should
13 really try to do something about it.
14 What you can do? I really don't have
15 an answer for you at this point other
16 than sit down and try to discuss it,
17 come up with a solution, but sooner or
18 later all we have in the city is
19 parking lots. I mean, you know, we
20 keep trying to redevelop the downtown.
21 Everybody talks about the downtown,
22 look at the neighborhoods. I mean,
23 there's even more properties for sale
24 now in the neighborhoods that I ever
25 remember. And, I mean, the

1 neighborhoods, we need a major
2 infusion of cash to bring all these
3 structures up to code, to create a
4 better quality of life for the
5 residents here. That's why I think
6 it's so important for the city's
7 Chamber of Commerce and the council
8 and the mayor to work together to
9 create economic development. There's
10 answers up there. It's going to take
11 all five council members, the mayor
12 and all these knowledgeable
13 individuals that we have in this city
14 to make it happen. But I just think
15 that we need to try to find a
16 solution. Thank you.

17 MR. LOSCOMBE: Mr. Morgan, you
18 remember our meeting with the -- with
19 our state representatives, as far as
20 blighted properties, there was and
21 discussed -- we're still in the
22 process of working out a program to
23 save some of those dwellings that are
24 indeed structurally sound. It would
25 take a city engineer to go through

1 them indefinitely. I mean, that's an
2 idea, I believe, we all have and I
3 don't think we should go in and
4 bulldoze everything down. So we are
5 working on that, but it's not
6 something that's being done overnight
7 because there's certain stipulations
8 that have to be applied and --

9 MR. MORGAN: No, I'm not up here
10 to say that I didn't think council is
11 doing anything, you know, but when you
12 come to council as long as I have,
13 it's been a long time, there's been a
14 lot of discussions but we still keep
15 turning properties down and we still
16 keep getting gaps in the neighborhoods
17 where there's weeds and overgrown
18 properties and people are dumping
19 their tires there. You know, I would
20 like to say that in places people are
21 growing gardens in some of them. I
22 think that it's an excellent idea
23 because the lots are maintained and
24 people are growing vegetables that
25 live in the neighborhoods, and I guess

1 whatever is left is donated to St.
2 Assisi's Kitchen or other places and
3 there are answers there, and I didn't
4 come here to day to say that I don't
5 council is not --

6 MR. LOSCOMBE: No, no. I just
7 want to remind those that didn't know
8 about it or whatever but we are
9 working on -- we're not looking to
10 just go in and bulldoze everything
11 down.

12 MR. MORGAN: No. I appreciate
13 all you're doing --

14 MR. LOSCOMBE: I just want to say
15 is we want to save the property as
16 much as possible.

17 MR. MORGAN: Thank you.

18 MR. LOSCOMBE: I just have one
19 more quick question. On the SAPA plan
20 what do you see as a benefit to us,
21 the SAPA?

22 MR. MORGAN: Because I think it's
23 going to bring economic development
24 into the industrial areas of Scranton
25 because it's going to stop sprawl of

1 industrial parks on farmland. It's
2 going to be a really major economic
3 boost to this city. When you sit
4 there and you went to the
5 presentation -- I think some people in
6 this room went there and whether they
7 agree with me or not, you know, I
8 think it would be a very positive
9 thing. And I think that the climate
10 in Harrisburg, now we all have a state
11 story -- so we'll going to do some
12 things ourselves and all answers
13 aren't simple but, you know, you go
14 down to North Scranton Lane, off Davis
15 Street or you go over by where
16 Kentucky Fried Chicken, down there
17 where Capital Records was, we have a
18 lot of land to rebuild. And that's
19 why I thought to bring Mr. Austin
20 Burke here was so important because
21 when you get business and government
22 to work together, we can really move
23 something. And we're not competing
24 with the outlying areas for
25 development money because it's all

1 been rezoned in a fashion that makes
2 it positive to bring development into
3 the city, and once you create an
4 economic engine where you create jobs,
5 you bring people into the
6 neighborhoods because they invest in
7 these condemned homes and they bring
8 them up to the code and they move in
9 and then everything starts moving
10 together. It's not going to happen
11 tomorrow, it's not going to happen a
12 week from now. It's going to be a
13 long range thing, but I think it's
14 very positive, and I just hope that
15 you can appreciate my viewpoint and
16 that's why I think it's so important
17 to sit down with these people that put
18 this together, you know. I mean, like
19 I said before, when I went there and
20 asked some tough questions, they got
21 kind of angry, but you know what, they
22 have a plan and I think it has merit
23 and I think it's important to the city
24 to listen to other people's ideas and
25 I just hope that you would invite them

1 here and maybe change their mind and
2 really give the city a shot in the
3 arm. Everybody can't have their way.

4 MR. LOSCOMBE: Well, the reality
5 is, I don't have anything against the
6 plan per say but based on the
7 conditions that we're under right now,
8 there's no benefit to us to pay for a
9 plan that's not going to benefit us.
10 There's no guarantee what they send
11 down to us like I explained last week
12 that's coming to us when we have
13 neighborhoods on both sides of that
14 and have a lot of better tax rates.
15 Look at all the KOZs, KOEZs and grants
16 that we've given out over the last ten
17 years, what do we have to show for
18 it --

19 MR. MORGAN: You know, Mr.
20 Loscombe, you know, that's why the
21 Scranton School District shot down the
22 KOZs the last time. The city now, I
23 believe, in my own mind is beginning
24 to make change in direction. It's
25 going to take time. Things aren't

1 going to be done overnight but, you
2 know, we have to address the
3 situations we find in the
4 neighborhoods. And as long as people
5 continue to flee the city with no
6 economic hope of major development in
7 these industrial zones, you have to
8 understand that if this was going to
9 happen, we have mass transit right
10 here in the city. People can get on a
11 bus and go to any developed industrial
12 area in this city and work. And once
13 you create an economic engine which
14 creates jobs and wealth, then you will
15 turn the city around. And that's the
16 problem here. All the young people
17 are leaving, and we need to create an
18 opportunity for them to stay. And I'm
19 50-years-old so you can't create it
20 for me. You know, but look at all the
21 children that are being born here
22 and --

23 MR. LOSCOMBE: The KOZs and
24 KOEZs --

25 MR. MORGAN: Well, they took the

1 free money and ran.

2 MR. LOSCOMBE: That's why we have
3 to look at this a little bit closer.

4 MR. MORGAN: And that's why I
5 think we should have a discussion with
6 them and maybe we'd all open our eyes.
7 But I think it's a positive thing and
8 I agree with you that we can't give
9 anymore away and I think the Scranton
10 School District made that point
11 extremely clear to everyone involved
12 and there's a change in direction and
13 I think that this council can take a
14 change in direction and make positive
15 things happen for this city, and I
16 think you're in the driver seat and
17 you can do it, but it can only happen
18 through dialogue, and I just hope you
19 would reconsider it. Thank you.

20 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you, Mr.
21 Moran.

22 MS. EVAN: Marie Shumacher.

23 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening,
24 Marie Schumacher, city resident,
25 member of the Taxpayers Group.

1 I'm disappointed a little bit
2 that nobody asked what the occupancy
3 percentage is at the 317 project of
4 Mr. Joyce while he was here.

5 MR. LOSCOMBE: I meant to ask
6 that. It was one of my questions that
7 I have and something else came up. I
8 apologize.

9 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. And then
10 before I forget, I guess it is safe to
11 assume, I did look at the drawings for
12 the 6-8 project and that drainage
13 pipe, does that go into another
14 drainage pipe or does it go into that
15 retention pond, and if it does, has it
16 been checked with the PennDOT to make
17 sure that the water that gets carried
18 under 307 in Roaring Brook is
19 sufficient to handle additional load?

20 MR. LOSCOMBE: I believe when
21 that was designed, it had to get the
22 Pettinato approvals from their
23 engineer that -- I don't have that
24 here tonight with me. I did have it
25 last week but --

1 MS. SCHUMACHER: So it has
2 been -- we can assume that's been done
3 okay. Thank you.

4 Next, I want to apologize. Last
5 week after I left, I had a call from
6 Mrs. Tice whose home is the first of
7 those homes that I spoke of last week
8 there in the flood mitigation area and
9 she was very upset and the minutes
10 aren't available yet. I don't think I
11 said that their home was -- their
12 compensation for their home was
13 overpriced. I really believe what I
14 said was that it was a factor of eight
15 over the assessment which is usually
16 fives and that's what I based the rest
17 on. So I do apologize. I know it
18 must be -- I mean, I feel bad for
19 those people that have lived in their
20 homes and built their homes and lived
21 in them for a number of years and put
22 a lot into it and now they're being
23 forced to sell or accept the
24 consequences and I know that's not
25 easy and I certainly didn't mean to

1 hurt anybody's feelings on it. I wish
2 it could be avoided.

3 From there, where do we go? I
4 guess perhaps with the biggie. That
5 is the decades of overdue property
6 reassessment. To their credit former
7 majority Commissioners Cordaro and
8 Munchak boldly stepped up to the plate
9 and began the process. Unfortunately,
10 Commissioners Washo and O'Brien have
11 put this project on hold. Last week
12 PEL presented a chart comparing the
13 total assessed valuation to purchasing
14 power that shows a 32 percent lost in
15 purchasing power in the current year.
16 Not only is this wrong, but I also
17 recall reading a letter to the editor
18 of a property owner wondering whether
19 they could have saved their home if
20 their taxes had been lowered because
21 of reassessment. Now, that's sad and
22 it's impossible to address with
23 certainty without the completion of
24 reassessment but I'm hopeful that
25 council will decide to send a letter

1 to the commissioners asking them to
2 complete the reassessment as rapidly
3 as possible and get that back on
4 track. Nobody likes it. I know it's
5 considered a third rail, but two
6 commissioners at least took that first
7 step, and I think it's time that we
8 take that next step. It's going to
9 have to happen sometime, and I think
10 it should be done and completed as
11 soon as possible, but it should be in
12 a correct manner and not follow the
13 Luzerne county pattern.

14 Next, I would ask that another
15 communication be sent, this time to
16 our esteemed state representatives and
17 senators. I believe it's time to
18 request a change to the State Capital
19 Fund. When Ken Smith appeared before
20 the taxpayers group and he was
21 questioned on giving -- make a million
22 dollars to the university for their
23 Mulberry Street fiasco -- that's my
24 choice of words, not those of the
25 questioner. But his answer was that

1 the University of Scranton was the
2 only entity prepared to accept the
3 funding. By that, he was referring to
4 50 percent matching funds that are
5 required. Now, I ask you, what
6 municipality or authority would have
7 three and a quarter million dollars
8 sitting around so they could accept a
9 seven and a half million dollar gift
10 from the state taxpayers. Now, I ask
11 you which is more important, that the
12 university beautify a city street on
13 their -- close to their properties or
14 whether one of our many streets that
15 haven't been paid for 40-plus gets
16 paved. This is an abuse of state
17 taxes in my estimation. The U gets
18 multi-million of the taxpayers of
19 which they aren't one and they, in
20 turn, give the city a paltry \$110,000
21 in lieu of taxes a year. This
22 nonsense has got to stop.

23 Another capital project that
24 could use some help is -- may I
25 finish -- is the Sewer Authority where

1 expenses have been mandated to comply
2 with the Chesapeake Bay project but
3 they have not been paid for by the
4 federal government. If the state
5 insists on giving away money for
6 capital projects, they should accept
7 municipalities and certainly some of
8 the authorities from the 50 percent
9 match, and I hope you so inform our
10 state representatives.

11 Now, before I have a stroke, I'll
12 switch topics. Awhile back the
13 Scranton Tomorrow executive director
14 appeared before you to request
15 approval of a main street grant
16 application. Council approved that
17 application. The grant was received
18 and now I believe it's time that you
19 invite the executive director back to
20 tell us how this main street grant
21 will be spent and I'll hold the rest
22 for next week. Thank you.

23 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Ron
24 Ellman.

25 MR. ELLMAN: Hello, council.

1 Yesterday I was at Harbor Freight and
2 a fellow asked me how I could go on
3 week after week after week attacking
4 everybody and get away with it. I
5 have a formula. I told him I had a
6 formula. Don't say nothing up here
7 you can't back up. That's very
8 important because that's why no one
9 ever confronts me, I guess, and know
10 your enemy which is not hard around
11 here and you pick your time and place.
12 That's my formula. He wonders why I
13 haven't got punched in the head or
14 something probably, you know. That's
15 another thing.

16 In the paper -- I forget what day
17 this was, the kid on the motor bike, I
18 happen to know who that was. I didn't
19 know him but I knew. This boy had
20 this big bike that goes 60-70 miles an
21 hour for three days. He had no
22 experience, and the father didn't
23 supervise him. This one just -- this
24 is what I've been telling you it's
25 going to happen. If you hit a child

1 or somebody instead of a car, he
2 doesn't have any insurance whatsoever.
3 These bikes are unlicensed. They're
4 running all over up and down the
5 streets and I don't know if people
6 know it, a four-wheeler can be
7 licensed but they have, you know, they
8 have titles that they're licensed and
9 inspected and insured. The ones that
10 you see running all over the place
11 can't be licensed. They don't have --
12 I don't care where they ride. Let the
13 people that sold it to them find them
14 a place to ride. But, you know, they
15 just don't belong in the street. They
16 ought to make an example of this
17 father, take his license away and
18 throw the book at him and let the
19 other kids out here with these bikes
20 know what's going on. Last Monday one
21 of them deliberately hit my dog with
22 his bike and kept going, and I'll find
23 him. I know who he is but I just
24 don't know where he lives. But he
25 rides all the time over by my house

1 and he runs up there by Deacon Street
2 or Depot, someplace down there. You
3 know, to hit my dog, it's like a kid.
4 I don't have any kids to speak of.

5 But in today's paper I was
6 reading somebody -- a young kid wrote
7 a letter of how fortunate we are to
8 have the University of Scranton here.
9 To me they're nothing but like a big
10 maggot, eating up our tax base and
11 here she's 19-years-old, I think, but
12 she's not even going to stay here.
13 She's going to Boston. She doesn't
14 live in town. You know, these people
15 are just -- they're just immature or
16 something. They write these letters
17 and they don't have any idea what it's
18 like for the people here that is
19 supporting these institutions that are
20 just sucking the life blood out of the
21 city. I was waiting for you to come
22 back.

23 MS. EVANS: I'm here.

24 MR. ELLMAN: Last week I
25 understood your defense of the United

1 Way. But to me they're funding and
2 arguing and these institutions like
3 that that are just block busting and
4 ruining neighborhoods in group homes.
5 They don't have a zone or they ought
6 to be some kind of requirements where
7 they can't go all over the place. And
8 I've had a home -- I've had six or
9 eight people ask me what they can do
10 to it, if it's possible to buy a KOZ
11 from the mayor. I don't know what the
12 deal is but I had several people
13 wanting to buy them. You know, people
14 that buy that 1500-block of Court can
15 have one, why can't the rest of us?
16 You find out anything?

17 MS. EVANS: Actually, no, I
18 haven't found out anything more than I
19 was able to tell you last week, and I
20 just wanted to add, though, I wasn't
21 given that information in defense of
22 any entity. It was just providing the
23 facts for you. That's all.

24 MR. ELLMAN: Well, to me when I
25 asked Stu Renda for some information,

1 it's like him being honest is like
2 being pregnant. You are or you're
3 not. And he's not being honest with
4 me. He refuses to give me an answer
5 so I think I can assume that there was
6 something shady going on with these
7 transactions if he won't tell you the
8 truth. And there's another one I can
9 add to my list. I got a list, there
10 must be 15 people on there. But
11 there's something not kosher when that
12 house was taken off the rolls and how
13 do we know there's not other houses
14 like that all over the city. You
15 don't know if my house had been take
16 off, I might have been able to buy one
17 of those KOZs from the mayor.

18 MS. EVANS: Well, I'll try my
19 best to find an answer for you but
20 like you say very often, I don't
21 receive answers either as you can see
22 when Mrs. Krake provides her clerk
23 notes every week, many, many, many
24 requests for information or requests
25 to help citizens go unanswered. So I

1 think we're starting a little bit of a
2 line here for certain department
3 heads, not all, but certain ones.

4 MR. ELLMAN: Well, to me this is
5 important because this is like theft
6 of money from the taxpayers making
7 that house a KOZ. There's no reason,
8 you know, and there is a reason when
9 nobody will tell me because it was
10 illegal.

11 MS. EVANS: Well, as I said, I'll
12 do my best to try to find exactly what
13 happened there and I'll let you know
14 when I do. So thank you very much.

15 MR. ELLMAN: There's some people
16 that -- some business people, you
17 know, really wondering what happened
18 because this doesn't -- it wasn't
19 right.

20 MS. EVANS: Well, thank you, Mr.
21 Ellman.

22 MR. ELLMAN: Thank you.

23 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else
24 who would like to address counsel?

25 MS. CHILIPKO: Good evening.

1 Mary Chiplicka, Scranton resident. I
2 came here with a few neighbor problems
3 but then I heard Mrs. Evans mention
4 Emily Donovan, the benefit for the
5 sick little girl and I remember that
6 the family is originally from
7 Pinebrook and her grandmother still
8 lives in Pinebrook so you put in
9 prospective, we need to help a very
10 little precious sick little girl.

11 Anyway, I want to let everyone
12 know that the Pinebrook Neighborhood
13 Association has reorganized and will
14 be meeting this Thursday, July 8th, at
15 7:30 p.m. at 829 Capouse Avenue and
16 our meetings will be held the second
17 Thursday of every month, of each
18 month.

19 My neighbor and I were just
20 discussing our neighborhood yesterday
21 and remarked that we need Munley back,
22 referring to the Scranton Police
23 Department Officer, John Munley
24 working as beat patrol in our
25 neighborhood. What he endeavored and

1 other officers did in a short time,
2 even a few hours spent in the
3 neighborhoods was amazing. Then I
4 read in today's paper in my opinion
5 the insane idea not to use money
6 immediately to fund beat patrol
7 officers, be it overtime or not. Then
8 I read the remarks by the chief --
9 what's his name?

10 MS. EVANS: Elliott.

11 MS. CHILIPKO: Elliott, okay.
12 Officers in the vacated positions
13 respond in motor vehicles, beat, motor
14 vehicles. I don't get it. But still
15 work as deterrents of interacting with
16 residents, no. With officers in
17 cars -- he also says officers in a
18 car, they can go anywhere as needed,
19 also from our experience in the
20 neighborhood except where an officer
21 on foot or bicycle can go. It's
22 pretty tough to squeeze these cars in
23 some of these little alleys and the
24 park, wooded areas of the city. This
25 while neighborhoods are deteriorating

1 everyday. They're talking about
2 testing and hiring and they should
3 have some beats back on the street by
4 next year according to their plan.
5 I'm going to drop a little article
6 that says -- I found on the internet
7 that matches the effectiveness of
8 bicycles and beat patrols along with
9 parole cars. So I'm asking with
10 council's help and we're going to
11 start a petition in the neighborhood
12 to try to get the beat cops returned
13 immediately to the neighborhoods.

14 And lastly I also read the
15 article about money earmarked once
16 again for South Side, and I think
17 that's actually how it said in the
18 paper once again. I think part of the
19 problem, I have a resident on the
20 400-block of New Street who was crying
21 when we saw this property. He owns
22 two beautiful properties. The other
23 three properties on his side of the
24 block are condemned. He has the only
25 properties on the block that are not

1 condemned. His family comes and it's
2 disgusting. I think what we need to
3 do are reign in some of the
4 inspections and make sure that the
5 proper procedure is followed before we
6 inspect and condemn or we condemn some
7 of these properties. I'm not sure
8 that they are in all cases before we
9 get to the rehab or the blighted and
10 abandoned properties. My brother -- I
11 say that -- my brother is coming in
12 from Maryland next week to visit and I
13 cringe every time he comes into the
14 city to see how much worse it gets
15 each time. I think this time I'm
16 going to tell him that all of those
17 orange -- bright orange and the faded
18 papers, the faded orange condemned
19 signs are actually awards for
20 excellence. Thank you.

21 MS. EVAN: Thank you, Mrs.
22 Chilipko. And next?

23 MR. JACKOWITZ: Bill Jackowitz,
24 South Side resident, member of the
25 Taxpayer Association.

1 As Andy said earlier we have our
2 first swim on the 30th of July. We
3 have 440 kids, total \$1,320, we paid
4 \$3 per kids. On the first year we ran
5 the free swim and I never wanted to
6 politicize the free swim but the city
7 administration has been doing that.
8 The first year we ran a free swim,
9 Mark Dougher gave us a \$1 discount
10 after 250 kids. The second year we
11 ran free swim Mark Dougher gave us a
12 50 cent discount after 250 kids. The
13 third year we ran a free swim Mark
14 Dougher gave us a 50 cent discount
15 after 250 kids. This year Mark
16 Dougher told me no discount. So we
17 paid three dollars for each kid which
18 totalled \$1,320. Now, all this time it
19 was money that was donated and
20 collected by city businesses and
21 taxpayers and private individuals from
22 the city. Mark Dougher informed me
23 that, you know, he's actually saving
24 the taxpayers' money. I don't know
25 how. I don't what his reasoning is.

1 Maybe city council can get that
2 reasoning for me. Again, I asked him
3 very specifically and I didn't argue
4 with him. Why do we get a discount
5 the first three years, why no discount
6 this year. His answer was because I'm
7 not giving you one. Simple as that.
8 And the Parks and Recreation
9 Authority, I guess must have voted on
10 it. I think it's wrong. I think
11 those kids that should be at that pool
12 from the age of six to 15 should be in
13 there for free. But it's not going to
14 stop us. We will pay three dollars.
15 We would rather pay \$2.50 but, hey,
16 you want us pay the three, we're going
17 to pay the three. Again, I'm not
18 criticizing this. The city is and the
19 administration is and they don't need
20 to do that. They're here to support
21 the citizens and the taxpayers of this
22 city. Mark Dougher's salary is paid
23 by tax money, Mayor Doherty's salary
24 is paid by tax money. Support the
25 taxpayers.

1 Okay. I'm quoting on the SAPA
2 thing. You know, everybody is saying,
3 I was listening to Lee, sometimes I
4 agree with him, sometimes I disagree
5 with Lee. He, the same with me. You
6 know, we've been getting on hunches
7 forever. You know, the railroad from
8 Hoboken to Scranton has been coming
9 here for 31 years. Has it gotten here
10 yet? No. You know, Wall street West
11 has been coming here for six years.
12 Has it gotten here? No. Five hundred
13 block of Lackawanna Avenue,
14 revitalization, completely empty,
15 five years, six-years-old. Has it
16 been completed? Yes. I asked a
17 couple months ago whether or not the
18 contractors have been paid since
19 Sardoni is suing. I still haven't
20 gotten an answer yet. Have those
21 contractors have been paid? I know
22 the vacant buildings are still vacant.
23 We've been waiting for the wage tax
24 reduction for the last eight years.
25 Has it come yet? No. I've been back

1 15 years. The city has been
2 distressed 18 years, going on
3 19 years. We've been waiting on that.
4 When are we going to become a non
5 distressed city? Again, do I put any
6 faith in SAPA bringing us any work
7 here? No. Why would anybody come
8 here and pay these kinds of taxes when
9 they can go to Old Forge, they can go
10 to Taylor, they can to Dunmore, they
11 can anywhere else. Now, if SAPA
12 guaranteed us -- guaranteed us ex
13 number of jobs -- paying -- good
14 paying jobs and ex number of
15 businesses move into the city, they
16 have a new figure, but if we're going
17 to have -- a prayer -- we've been like
18 31 years, we've been waiting for a
19 miracle to come or the train takes off
20 from Hoboken to Scranton, I say no.

21 Again, still no -- when is the
22 tenants coming to the 500 block of
23 Lackawanna Avenue? I missed the
24 caucus today so I don't know what Mr.
25 Joyce had to say. Is he going to

1 finish this project this time are we
2 going to have holes in the middle of
3 downtown like he has in the past?

4 MS. EVANS: This particular
5 project that they attended tonight's
6 meeting to discuss, they indicated
7 would be finished in the fall of 2010.

8 MR. JACKOWITZ: Yeah, but they
9 wouldn't say with all their projects.

10 MS. EVANS: Once -- Bill, I'm
11 just repeating what he said. Once all
12 the approvals have been provided, the
13 project, itself, is only a three-month
14 project.

15 MR. JACKOWITZ: Okay. As long as
16 he completes it, I'm in favor of it
17 but if he doesn't complete it, we're
18 stuck with someone's project -- you
19 know, when he did the one big thing, I
20 was mistaken two weeks ago. You know,
21 nothing happened. It seems like
22 everybody comes here but nothing ever
23 happens. So that's the reason why I
24 don't agree with the SAPA thing unless
25 they guarantee something in writing

1 then I say no.

2 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Is there
3 anyone else to address council?

4 MR. SLEDNESZSKI: The last one
5 again, always the last one again --
6 The kids are great up there, all of
7 them are. Thank you.

8 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Chris. Is
9 there anyone else who wishes to
10 address counsel?

11 (No response.)

12 MS. KRAKE: 5A, motions.

13 MS. EVANS: Mr. McGoff. Do you
14 have any comments or motions?

15 MR. MCGOFF: Please. Council's
16 response into some carryover items.

17 First on the rehabilitation and
18 demolition of homes, in many cases
19 it's the neighbors that are requesting
20 the demolition of the homes. With
21 blighted homes that are reducing
22 property values in their
23 neighborhoods, homes that are vacant
24 and are shelter for all kinds of
25 animals, also for people going in and

1 out of them without authority, and so
2 the neighbors are the ones that are
3 asking for these home to be demolished
4 in many cases. Also as far as
5 rebuilding on them, many at least -- I
6 shouldn't say many. Some of the lots
7 that where the homes are being
8 demolished are too small to rebuild.
9 I know there was one in the court
10 behind River Street where I live and
11 there was no way that you could build
12 another house on that lot. By today's
13 standards it just can't be done and so
14 that's the case in some situations
15 that's the case, that you simply can't
16 rebuild where these homes are being
17 taken down.

18 As far as the empty lots that
19 result sometimes from the demolition,
20 perhaps one of the things that we can
21 look at is somehow where there are
22 neighborhoods associations, give
23 control of the lots to the
24 neighborhood association for use and
25 maintenance. You know, somebody

1 mentioned that, you know, they can be
2 used for planting, they can be used
3 for recreational purposes, you know,
4 to put a swing set, do anything, but
5 basically, you know, let the
6 neighborhood associations, let the
7 neighborhood associations have some
8 control over the neighborhoods. I'm
9 not saying that they would, you know,
10 pay for everything but at least the
11 people that live there and are
12 concerned with the condition of these
13 places may have solutions rather than
14 putting them in the hands of the city
15 or someone else and just letting them
16 go unused. A possibility.

17 MS. EVANS: Mr. McGoff, actually
18 we discussed something similar to that
19 when we had our meeting with
20 Representative Smith and Murphy and
21 they are going to be writing a bill
22 that's going to most likely amend a
23 current piece of state legislation
24 that has not been entirely helpful to
25 the municipalities. So one of the

1 options that we had suggested is
2 somewhat similar to what you are
3 saying in that very often during my
4 seven years on council, neighbors who
5 reside next door to a vacant lot have
6 requested the purchase of that
7 property because they're maintaining
8 it anyway, they don't want something
9 unsightly next to their property and
10 so, as I said, for years they're
11 maintaining something that isn't there
12 and they very much want to purchase
13 it, however, when that attempt is
14 made, they run into one road block
15 after another and so we are hopeful
16 that perhaps a right of first refusal
17 might be offered in these events to
18 the adjacent neighbor so, as you said,
19 many of these lots are not large
20 enough for homes to be built on any
21 longer and if those neighborhoods
22 would like to make the purchase, maybe
23 we can get some legislation through
24 the state that would make that
25 purchase a lot easier for them.

1 MR. McGOFF: I wasn't here for
2 that meeting but I did read some of
3 the literature that is provided and it
4 seems like a good idea. Anything
5 where somebody is given control and
6 allowed to maintain and use the
7 property, I think would be a very good
8 idea rather than just letting them go
9 vacant.

10 There's been a number of things
11 mentioned and on SAPA, I was -- as you
12 know, I was disappointed with the vote
13 on the SAPA. I was also somewhat
14 disappointed with council's response
15 to a letter that we received from SAPA
16 requesting a meeting where they gave
17 us a number of dates and simply
18 refused to accommodate them in any
19 way. I still believe that we need to
20 gather more information concerning
21 this plan. This was a plan that was
22 five years in the making. Does it
23 have any guarantees? No. I don't
24 think any plan can guarantee things.
25 But it's a plan that has minimal costs

1 that has been mentioned. The cost
2 that would occur can be funded through
3 OECD. It's a plan. It's a
4 possibility. We don't know -- no,
5 we're not getting a guarantee, but we
6 don't know what will happen unless we
7 give it an opportunity to take place.
8 And yet we don't -- we're saying we
9 don't have any questions answered, but
10 yet we're not giving anybody an
11 opportunity to give us the answers. I
12 don't know if we're afraid of the
13 answers because they may be ones that
14 we don't want to hear. But I think
15 that we should set up some meeting
16 with these people and I still believe
17 we should do it through council. We
18 are constantly inviting people to come
19 here and speak and when they don't
20 want to, we're upset and yet we have a
21 group that wants to come and present
22 information about something that I
23 think would be very relevant, very
24 important to the city and yet we
25 refuse to listen to them and to hear

1 from them. We constantly complain
2 about the lack of economic
3 development, that week after week
4 after week I hear, you know, speakers
5 and people talk about, you know, what
6 is lacking. Yet here we have a
7 possibility of a plan that might work
8 at minimal costs and yet we refuse to
9 even get information about it. I
10 think that that is wrong. I think
11 that that's -- we're not doing our job
12 properly by not allowing these people
13 to present to us.

14 The last thing I -- last week I
15 asked about the Comcast contract, and
16 Mrs. Evans responded that we were
17 negotiating but I meant to ask you at
18 that time of exactly who that we're
19 negotiating with the contract.

20 MS. EVANS: The parties involved
21 are Attorney Dan Cohen, the mayor,
22 Attorney Boyd Hughes and myself.

23 MR. MCGOFF: And what is it that
24 is actually being negotiated within
25 the contract that's different than

1 what was presented to us or is that
2 not available for --

3 MS. EVANS: I believe I can defer
4 to Solicitor Hughes, but I believe
5 that during our -- one of our first
6 conversations Mr. Cohen indicated that
7 the discussions were confidential.

8 MR. HUGHES: That's correct.

9 MR. MCGOFF: Okay. Is this
10 something that you can't discuss with
11 other members of council? Because the
12 reason I'm asking, I was unaware that
13 we were negotiating, first of all, and
14 I still was unaware of what actually
15 is being negotiated within the
16 contract with Comcast.

17 MS. EVANS: Well, I can speak
18 with you or you can speak with the
19 mayor.

20 MR. MCGOFF: Okay. I would like
21 to speak with you about what is being
22 negotiated. Thank you. And that's
23 all I have. Thank you very much.

24 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Mr.
25 Rogan, any comments or motions?

1 MR. ROGAN: Yes. First, I would
2 like to comment on two of the things
3 Mr. McGoff talked about. And the
4 first one, I agree with him, and the
5 second one, I have to disagree.

6 I spoke to a resident last --
7 during the week who lived next to a
8 property that was torn down and was
9 put up for sale. And in the
10 conversation one of things he brought
11 up was that the two neighbors directly
12 on each side wished they were able to
13 buy a piece of property because they
14 had smaller lots and would like a
15 little bit more land instead from what
16 I gather through the conversations,
17 the developer wants to build
18 apartments there. When you have a
19 neighborhood where you have, you know,
20 single family homes and then all of a
21 sudden you're in the middle of a
22 standing apartment building may not be
23 what is the best for the neighborhood.
24 And I agree completely and, Mrs.
25 Krake, please send a letter to the

1 mayor asking if any properties can be
2 given to neighbors when either a
3 blighted property is sold are taxed
4 lien property or income property is
5 sold in a neighborhood.

6 Second one, we're still talking
7 about SAPA. As I said in the
8 newspaper, I'd be more than willing to
9 meet with the SAPA members if they
10 would like to get in touch with me,
11 that's fine. You know, as far as
12 council meeting as a whole, I know
13 that we have a very busy agenda moving
14 forward with PEL next week again and
15 again that is most important thing
16 right now is to revise the recovery
17 plan and, again, I do not see how
18 simply zoning is going to change
19 businesses that come here. The reason
20 why they're not coming, we all know,
21 is because of the tax rates. As I
22 showed you last week, the chart from
23 PEL when the rates were lower, there
24 were seven of eight years of growth
25 after the relief of the mercantile tax

1 and I think that's the way to move
2 forward with attracting businesses.

3 Moving on, I received the monthly
4 report from OECD. In the month of
5 June home buyers were -- three
6 applications were received, two were
7 approved, four was closed. Also in
8 the month of June for the house
9 rehabilitation program which was one
10 bid opening, 20 contacted for
11 verification, two were approved, there
12 are currently six total rehab projects
13 that are under construction. The home
14 program, 208 Pittston Avenue, during
15 the last month the contractor has
16 installed vinyl siding, stabilized the
17 front porch, installed new railings,
18 the heating system has been put in,
19 the electrical system has been updated
20 and new walls were constructed and
21 this one is 95 percent completed and
22 renovation should be done in the
23 immediate future.

24 The CED paving of \$300,000, the
25 paving is currently underway and

1 should be completed within the next
2 few months. Kirst Avenue Bridge, OECD
3 received plans and specifications from
4 the engineering firm on June 11th,
5 2010. The site work was prepared by
6 OECD on June 12, 2010. The
7 preconference will be held on the site
8 on July 7th, 2010 -- excuse me. The
9 bid opening will be on July 21st, 2010
10 in council chambers. That is very
11 good news. This is a project that was
12 desperately needed and it's very long
13 overdue. The Lackawanna Neighbors at
14 718 Cedar Avenue, during this
15 reporting period, the windows have
16 been installed, the electricity is
17 being completed, the cement board
18 siding is underway and a new roof was
19 installed after it was determined
20 there were numerous leaks. Third
21 property at 550 Hickory Street,
22 Lackawanna Neighbors purchased a third
23 proposed property at 550 Hickory
24 Street on June 16th, 2010. It is
25 being bided out on this project. Bid

1 notice was advertised on June 30th and
2 July 1st and prebid conference on
3 July 8th. The bid opening will be on
4 July 21st, 2010. And again, 213
5 Stevens Avenue, Lackawanna Neighbors
6 purchased a fourth foreclosed property
7 and the closing will be scheduled for
8 the week of July 12th.

9 Demolition and hazardous
10 structures, prebid conference was held
11 June 21st, 2010 and a bid opening was
12 held on July 28th, 2010. The
13 documents for the lowest bidder is
14 currently under review by Attorney
15 Carl Greco.

16 The Energy Commission State
17 Conservation Block Grant, the City of
18 Scranton entered into an agreement
19 with the Commonwealth Consulting
20 Services on June 9th, 2010, to perform
21 energy audits on the following city
22 owned building: City Hall, fire
23 headquarter, Department of Public
24 Works, police headquarters and the
25 Weston Field Recreation building. .

1 They will be preparing a detailed
2 energy audit report which will
3 specifically identify energy
4 improvements and operational changes
5 that will be recommended to the city.
6 The collection of background data on
7 all facilities has begun and walk
8 through site visits are in the process
9 of being scheduled. Once all visits
10 are complete Commonwealth Consulting
11 Services will be begin the process of
12 comparing energy audit reports. All
13 other reports are scheduled to be
14 completed in the fall of 2010.

15 The Connell Building, the Connell
16 Building is actively under
17 construction and their completion
18 should be done by the fall of 2010.

19 An finally I have a few citizen
20 requests for the week. The building
21 located at 411 North Decker Court is
22 in terrible shape. The windows are
23 smashed, animals and homeless people
24 are living inside. Can we please send
25 a letter to the blight Officer as well

1 as Mr. Seitzinger regarding this
2 issue.

3 I received a phone call or
4 actually a meeting from a firefighter
5 this week and we were talking about
6 the problems every year at Nay Aug
7 Gorge and again somebody fell in --
8 this was I think two weeks ago, and
9 could you please send a letter to Mr.
10 Dubas asking what is being done to
11 prevent people from swimming there as
12 well as people that may be walking by
13 and may slip and fall.

14 Now, a resident reports on the
15 corner of Madison Avenue and Vine
16 Street, there's no street sign. He
17 said multiple calls were made to DPW
18 and nothing has been done. Please
19 forward that to Mr. Brazil.

20 And I received another letter,
21 there's a property 403 South Ave and
22 the residents states that all the
23 properties on this block are in great
24 shape, they mow their lawns but the
25 lawn at 403 is a problem. The

1 backyard is a jungle, the properties
2 bordered it are concerned about having
3 their children out because there are
4 mice, rats and snakes in the high
5 grass. And the second concerns that
6 they have at 1000 River Street and the
7 intersection of Meadow Avenue, between
8 the high grass, litter and a host of
9 signs and other animals, it's an
10 eyesore. And the residents want to
11 know who owns the property, why
12 nothing has been done about the blight
13 there.

14 And my final request is I
15 received an e-mail from a resident who
16 is looking for information about a
17 group home that will opening up in the
18 middle of the Tripp Park Development
19 and they said the group home is owned
20 by ARC of Northeastern Pennsylvania,
21 and there's a list of questions here.
22 I'm not going to read them off but
23 I'll give these to you after the
24 meeting.

25 And finally I enjoyed the Fourth

1 of July with some of my colleagues up
2 at the evening at Nay Aug. It was a
3 great event and just wanted to say
4 glad to see everyone there. That's
5 all.

6 MS. EVANS: And thank you, Mr.
7 Rogan. Mr. Loscombe, any comments or
8 motions?

9 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes, thank you,
10 Mrs. Evans, just a couple quick
11 comments. I don't want to beat it to
12 death but SAPA, Mr. McGoff mentioned
13 they gave us a list of dates for
14 meeting, but those meetings were after
15 the fact, after we voted on it and
16 such. I'm confident -- I feel I'm
17 competent enough to read the plan and
18 understand it. I think my colleagues
19 are. It's a great plan and the right
20 dynamics but I just don't see Scranton
21 receiving a return on investment on
22 this plan not at this time, and I
23 agree wholeheartedly with Mr. Rogan
24 and his comments, you know, we're
25 going to do better once we reduce some

1 of regressive taxes here, then maybe
2 we would be competitive in a situation
3 like that along with our neighbors.
4 But right now everyday that comes down
5 is going to go to the size as
6 explained on my pie chart last week.
7 So I really don't think anything is
8 going to change my mind on my vote for
9 SAPA at this point. We have a lot of
10 other important issues we're working
11 on that would help us budget wise and
12 everything like that as you'll see
13 down the road. But that particular
14 item right now has been, I think, a
15 little bit overplayed at this point.

16 As far as blighted properties, I
17 did notice the bid in the paper when
18 we had paperwork on it and it appears
19 that it's targeting South Scranton
20 again. I believe the blurb in the
21 paper mentioned that they're going to
22 be looking at others. I know that we
23 have a lot of problem properties here
24 as we've mentioned just about every
25 meeting. And, Mrs. Krake, I was just

1 wondering, DPW had a crew that was in
2 the process of demolishing properties
3 and I wonder if that crew was still
4 active and if they will continue to
5 work with this program and help get us
6 a bigger bang for the buck on some of
7 these things and maybe if Mr. Brazil
8 can provide us with a list of
9 properties with the DPW themselves
10 demolish this year, I would appreciate
11 that, and what intentions are for the
12 remainder of the year.

13 And the last thing is it is
14 grilling season at this time of the
15 year and I know we already have fires
16 started by open grills. Today there's
17 a lot of homes built with vinyl siding
18 and vinyl railings and stuff like that
19 and people forget and they set their
20 grills against the house. I've
21 noticed that on many homes where
22 people realize that after the siding
23 started melting and buckling and it
24 was a little too close. All I want to
25 say is to be careful, enjoy your

1 grills, your decks, your backyards,
2 but there's ways to play it safe and
3 avoid any major disasters. Even if
4 it's taking a cement board, they sell
5 them at Lowe's and Home Depot and
6 placing it under the grill and behind
7 it. The days of the asbestos is gone.
8 They used to sell asbestos sheets.
9 But these are pretty much illegal now.
10 So the next best protection is that
11 cement board but still try to keep it
12 away from anything that's flammable.
13 Just come common sense. Keep a fire
14 extinguisher handy or a large box of
15 baking soda and that's all I have to
16 say. Have a safe summer. Thank you.

17 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr.
18 Loscombe.

19 Mr. Joyce, do you have any
20 comments or motions?

21 MR. JOYCE: Just a few brief
22 comments. I've received a couple of
23 calls that a lot adjacent to the Speed
24 Wash in South Side is built up with a
25 lot of garbage and grass hasn't been

1 cut in quite awhile. I think we sent
2 a request about this a couple weeks
3 ago. Could you please followup on
4 that.

5 Also over in Minooka on Birney
6 Avenue some residents are reporting
7 excessive speeding. I believe we sent
8 a request about that to Chief Elliott
9 to address. But they are also
10 reporting that some of the patrons
11 of -- a couple of the local bars are
12 throwing cans and bottles of beer into
13 their lawns so would you please notify
14 Chief Elliott about this issue. Maybe
15 he could send a patrol person up there
16 to monitor that one night possibly so
17 they could help solve this problem.

18 Also, a resident contacted me
19 regarding their sewer bill. I guess
20 this was one of the first sewer bills
21 that they received with the new rates
22 structure and asked if there's
23 anything that council could do about
24 it because their bill went up. One
25 thing I just wanted to clarify for the

1 public that the new building rate
2 structure is a result of a study that
3 was conducted by the Sewer Authority
4 and it is not under the jurisdiction
5 of city council. Originally there was
6 a plan proposed for a flat fee and
7 previously there was a system where
8 rates were charged based on
9 consumption. Now, it is a combined
10 system. So I just wanted to clarify
11 that for anyone out there that may be
12 wondering that are relevant to
13 interpreting their new bill or that
14 they have any question. And that's I
15 have, Mrs Evans.

16 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Joyce.
17 Good evening. Several days ago I read
18 an interesting newspaper article
19 regarding the new state budget
20 entitled local agencies predict
21 widespread fiscal pain. Among the
22 lengthy listed in the pack of
23 agencies, several items that served
24 municipalities under the State
25 Department of Community and Economic

1 Development or DCED faced cuts, one
2 which is SAPA. According to Rick
3 Jamison, a representative of SAPA,
4 "Without the state's help, projects
5 such as this one will increasingly
6 difficult to implement." Referring to
7 Scranton/Abington Planned Association
8 comprehensive plan. We mean
9 municipalities rely very heavily on
10 DCED. Unfortunately the state cannot
11 afford its previous level of financial
12 support as I often stated publicly and
13 the saying is equally true for the
14 City of Scranton. Neighboring
15 boroughs and cities were forced to
16 make painful budgetary cuts recently.
17 Dunmore could not fund its summer
18 youth program this year and Hazleton
19 has recently cut numerous city
20 employees. Likewise, Scranton faces
21 hard choices and budgetary cuts as
22 well. More importantly it would be
23 utterly and irresponsible to
24 participate in SAPA without a definite
25 annual and long term costs having been

1 provided to city council particularly
2 in light of the new state budget cuts
3 and the numerous financial burdens
4 that only the City of Scranton faces.

5 Next, council wishes to send a
6 letter to Mr. Renda requesting the
7 following information, please, Mrs.
8 Krake:

9 1) How does the city intend to
10 pay the salaries, health benefits and
11 pensions of the SIT positions that are
12 posted.

13 2) From what budget accounts and
14 line items will these monies to be
15 paid. Do you intend to open and amend
16 the budget to provide transfers for
17 these monies?

18 3) Will the City of Scranton
19 participate in the Lackawanna County
20 multi municipal cooperative purchasing
21 alliance. If so, a resolution will
22 need to be adopted by council by
23 July 27, 2010, for submission to
24 Lackawanna County no later than
25 July 30th, 2010.

1 Today's newspaper reported very
2 bad news for city residents as one of
3 our speakers tonight at council
4 reported. There are no beat patrol
5 officers in the City of Scranton.
6 However, Chief Elliott intends to use
7 \$490,000 in OECD monies from 2009 and
8 2010 to hire new ComD or beat patrol
9 officers. This appears to be good
10 news particularly since I've been
11 requesting for weeks that the police
12 tests be given in September in order
13 that new officers will be hired.
14 However, the newspaper fails to
15 mention that it takes approximately
16 six months from the time the test is
17 administered to the time that officers
18 hit the street since Act 120 training
19 and additional police training
20 requirements must first be met. In
21 addition, Miss Ably states that
22 \$190,000 in 2009 funding must be spent
23 before \$300,000 in 2010 funding can be
24 expended. Further, additional CBEG
25 funding can be allocated for 2011. It

1 would seem that 190,000 in 2009
2 funding should be used for overtime
3 for July and August to cover the
4 streets. An additional CBEG funding
5 may then be allocated for 2011 for the
6 new hires who won't be on the street
7 until 2011 due to training
8 requirements. As recently as 2008,
9 the administration can and at least
10 have agreements to use funding for
11 overtime. I question why funds have
12 accumulated for ComD officers in
13 2009-2010, why officers were not hired
14 in 2009 and 2010 using these funds.
15 And if the list of candidates had
16 dwindled, why wasn't the police test
17 administered. Also I asked for beat
18 officers in June at the request of
19 city residents, not at the request of
20 the police union. I then asked the
21 mayor and the president of the FOP if
22 they would consent to an agreement
23 modeled on past agreements to get
24 police back in the neighborhoods using
25 overtime. The union responded and

1 agreed promptly. The mayor has not
2 responded. Bottom line is as follows:
3 Administer the test and prepare
4 candidates to hit the neighborhood
5 streets in January and equally
6 important, use a portion of CBEG money
7 this summer to put current officers on
8 the streets. I don't know that any
9 city resident is pleased that Scranton
10 has no beat officers. People of
11 Scranton want police officers in their
12 neighborhoods now, not some day.
13 Public safety has hit an all time low
14 in 2010. And it should be addressed
15 immediately. And I do understand the
16 problems that Miss Chilipko enumerated
17 for us this evening in Pinebrook. I'm
18 sure that all of council remembers
19 that recently we received a report
20 from the Hill Neighborhood Association
21 asking for beat patrol officers,
22 wondering why there are no longer any
23 on the streets of East Scranton and
24 the cries are heard from West
25 Scranton, South Scranton, the Plot,

1 anywhere you travel throughout the
2 City of Scranton, the residents want
3 officer on the street. That means
4 walking officers and officers on
5 bicycles. The money is there, the
6 money should be used.

7 Also council wishes to send a
8 letter to the Miss Ably, the Scranton
9 Parking Authority and Mr. Gerald
10 Donahue requesting the following:

11 1) A complete status update
12 regarding the former Molly Braningans
13 including current litigation and
14 current or future plans for the
15 building space.

16 Also what financial agreement was
17 made with the business which operated
18 Molly Braningan's on the date of the
19 2010 St. Patrick's Day Parade.

20 2) A complete status update on
21 the progress and plans for the former
22 New Jersey Central Railroad building.

23 And finally I have a citizen's
24 request for the week. First, for over
25 52 years the 3200 block of Pollak

1 Court and Birney Avenue in Minooka
2 have severely flooded during rain
3 events. Homeowners gardens, lawns,
4 garages and basements are often
5 submerged into several feet of rapidly
6 flowing water. Neighborhood children
7 are unable to play in their yards
8 because of the sewage overflow. In
9 2009, for example, this area flooded
10 three times in one week and it floods
11 so significantly in 2010 the Scranton
12 Fire Department had to respond to the
13 many problems. Thank goodness for our
14 firefighters. But this is not the
15 proper solution. Please send letters
16 to Mr. Gene Barrett, the Executive
17 Director of the Scranton Sewer
18 Authority and Mr. Brian Swanson, city
19 engineer, determine the problems and
20 address solutions because no one
21 should have to wait 42 years for
22 relief from the constant hardship.

23 Next, Kearney Court and Warner
24 Street and Corey Street between
25 Pittston Avenue and Greenwood Avenue

1 need to be paved. Over the past seven
2 years I've requested paving for these
3 courts and streets and nothing has
4 ever been done. As a result, the
5 residence of this Minooka area feel
6 like second class citizens who pay
7 their taxes only to be ignored or
8 forgotten.

9 1016 Monroe Avenue, a tree
10 requires trimming in this location.
11 Dead branches continuously fall on
12 vehicles and on the street. Residents
13 contacted the DPW and were directed to
14 the Forestry Department. Please
15 contact Mr. Santoli to examine this
16 tree and provide a solution.

17 209 Colfax Avenue, another tree
18 requires trimming. Branches are
19 growing onto the house and dead
20 branches are falling onto neighbors'
21 properties and into the street.
22 Contact Mr. Santoli. Letters were
23 sent to DPW and to LIPS on April 15th,
24 2010, requesting the clean up of an
25 overgrown lot containing over a dozen

1 barrels at the corner of Wyoming
2 Avenue and Linden Street. Send a
3 second request for immediate cleanup.

4 For the last year three years
5 there's a combination pave cut and
6 pothole at the intersection of Hickory
7 Street and Arthur Court which is
8 behind the 500-block of Molke Avenue.
9 There are six homes and 16 neighbors
10 in this area who requested help from
11 Mr. Brazil and Mr. Hazzouri but
12 nothing has ever been done to fill the
13 pothole and correct the problem.
14 Please repair this as soon as
15 possible, and I hope I don't have to
16 continue to request this week after
17 week.

18 And, Mrs. Chilipko, you could
19 correct if this is wrong, this is the
20 400-block of New Street?

21 MS. CHILIPKO: Yes.

22 MS. EVANS: There are three
23 condemned properties. Council would
24 like to know when they would be
25 demolished or what their ranking is on

1 the demolition list and that's it.

2 MR. LOSCOMBE: Mrs. Evans?

3 MS. EVAN: Yes.

4 MR. LOSCOMBE: If I can just go
5 back to the beat officers. According
6 to the newspaper, they said they're
7 going to hire beat officers for the
8 summer?

9 MS. EVANS: No. They're hiring
10 them for next year.

11 MR. LOSCOMBE: Oh, for next year,
12 okay. I misunderstood. I was
13 wondering where they were going to get
14 them because they have an exhaustive
15 list right now.

16 MS. EVANS: They have none on the
17 street. Another police test needs to
18 be administered, and as I've
19 mentioned, it's a six-month process
20 before you're able to have the police
21 on the streets. So in the meantime
22 Chief Elliott does not want to put any
23 beat officers on the street by using
24 OECD monies for overtime for our
25 current police officers so we have no

1 officers on foot or on bicycles
2 anywhere in the City of Scranton and
3 this is something that at least during
4 my time on council I can't remember
5 happening. I mean, there have been
6 periods where the number were down
7 but, you know, at this point this is
8 unacceptable. And the citizens of
9 Scranton have, you know, have long
10 wanted this service. They're paying
11 their taxes for it and the money
12 should be used during the summer
13 months particularly when crime
14 escalates.

15 MR. LOSCOMBE: I agree with you.
16 That's the only option since there's
17 no list to appoint from. Now is time
18 that we need them. So I hope they're
19 listening to us.

20 MS. EVANS: And as I said, it's
21 not a new idea. It's been agreed upon
22 in years past. Why suddenly there's a
23 stalemate. I don't know. And I
24 frankly don't care. I just want
25 police on the street.

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Mrs. Krake?

MS. KRAKE: 5B, AUTHORIZING THE ZONING HEARING BOARD OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO EXTEND THE CONTRACT FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES WITH DANIEL L. PENETAR, JR., ESQUIRE TO ACT AS ITS SOLICITOR FOR A PERIOD OF TWO (2) YEARS FROM JULY 1, 2010 THROUGH JULY 1, 2012.

MR. ROGAN: I make a motion to amend the resolution to extend the contract for professional services of Daniel L. Penetar, Jr., Esquire, to act as solicitor by reducing the period of the contact from two years, from July 1st, 2010, to July 12, 2012, to a period of two months, from July 1st, 2010, to September 1st, 2010.

MS. EVANS: We have a motion on the floor. Is there a second?

MR. LOSCOMBE: Second.

MS. EVANS: On the question?

MR. MCGOFF: The purpose of the motion?

1 MR. ROGAN: We just appointed
2 three new zoning board members and we
3 feel they should have the option to
4 either choose Mr. Penetar or another
5 attorney.

6 MR. MCGOFF: Was Mr. Penetar --
7 was a vote taken of the zoning board
8 asking for Mr. Penetar to be --

9 MR. ROGAN: It was done at the
10 last minute by some of people who were
11 leaving.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Last minute?

13 MR. ROGAN: Yeah.

14 MS. EVANS: It was done in June
15 by the members of the zoning board at
16 that time but --

17 MR. MCGOFF: Are they legally
18 authorized to do that?

19 MS. EVANS: The zoning board does
20 select a solicitor, however, I think
21 it was an action in bad faith for
22 outgoing members who were at their
23 last meeting to select or to enter
24 into a new contract with the solicitor
25 thereby preventing three new members

1 from having any voice in the
2 decision-making process.

3 MR. MCGOFF: I guess I had -- had
4 Mr. Penetar done something that would
5 warrant that this would be in bad
6 faith?

7 MR. LOSCOMBE: Perhaps the new
8 board will elect Mr. Penetar. We're
9 just giving them the opportunity to
10 vote which they haven't had yet.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Once again, we're
12 entering into something where a board
13 has done it's, you know, legally
14 appointed duties and we want to change
15 what they've done simply because we
16 feel that somebody else should have
17 the vote.

18 MR. ROGAN: I feel that the
19 members who are going to be on that
20 for the future should have the vote,
21 not the members who are leaving.

22 MR. MCGOFF: There's always
23 members leaving and the new members
24 will have a voice when this contract
25 is --

1 MR. ROGAN: Mr. McGoff, this
2 would be like if we took over in the
3 majority, if you appointed our
4 solicitor at your last meeting.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Not quite the same.

6 MR. ROGAN: Yes, it is.

7 MR. MCGOFF: No.

8 MS. EVANS: Well, maybe we can
9 compare to the Library Authority and
10 the lame duck council passing
11 legislation to create a Library
12 Authority for the City of Scranton
13 which I believe was a grievous action
14 to take and when new council came in
15 and to have to live with the action of
16 the Library Authority and the possible
17 construction of the library in South
18 Side which the county will not fund
19 and the city cannot fund, that was
20 reversed. Now, I do believe that
21 these members should have a voice and
22 they should have a voice now, not two
23 years from now. I think it really was
24 in poor judgment and as a matter as I
25 said operating in the bad faith for

1 outgoing members as one of their final
2 actions to propose a contract for a
3 solicitor and give absolutely no
4 opportunity to new members and, you
5 know, at the time they were aware that
6 they were not made appointed.

7 Is there anyone else on the
8 question? All those in favor signify
9 by saying aye.

10 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

11 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

12 MS. EVANS: Aye.

13 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

14 MS. EVAN: No?

15 MR. MCGOFF: No.

16 MS. EVANS: The ayes have it and
17 so moved.

18 MR. HUGHES: Madame Chairman,
19 that's only amended to the motion.

20 MS. EVANS: Yes.

21 MR. HUGHES: Now, you have to
22 introduce the motion. Actually, I
23 think the motion was introduced.

24 MS. EVANS: By Mrs. Krake and now
25 we will return to --

1 MR. HUGHES: Return to the
2 motion, correct.

3 MS. EVANS: At this time I'll
4 entertain a motion that Item 5B as
5 amended be introduced into its proper
6 committee.

7 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

8 MR. LOSCOMBE: Second.

9 MS. EVANS: On the question? All
10 those in favor to introduction signify
11 by saying aye.

12 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

13 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

14 MS. EVANS: Aye.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

16 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

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

19 MS. KRAKE: Item C, APPOINTMENT
20 OF STEPHEN E. WHITTAKER, PH.D., 443
21 WHEELER AVENUE, SCRANTON,
22 PENNSYLVANIA, 18510, AS A MEMBER OF
23 THE ETHICS COMMISSION FOR A FIVE (5)
24 YEAR TERM. MR. WHITTAKER'S TERM
25 EXPIRED ON JULY 12, 2009. HIS NEW

1 TERM WILL EXPIRE ON JULY 12, 2014.

2 MS. EVANS: At this time I'll
3 entertain a motion that Item 5C be
4 introduced into its proper committee.

5 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

6 MR. LOSCOMBE: Second.

7 MS. EVANS: On the question?

8 MR. ROGAN: Yes. Once again,
9 this one, when we make appointments,
10 generally our policy has been that
11 people to be appointed will provide a
12 cover letter and a resume to council.
13 You know, I don't know this man if he
14 was sitting next to me. So I don't
15 feel comfortable voting yes without
16 knowing some information. I will vote
17 in the affirmative that week just
18 because we have a second reading but
19 if I don't have specific information
20 is provided to us, I will be voting
21 no.

22 MS. EVANS: I wanted to add that
23 Mr. Whittaker's previous term on the
24 Ethics Commission expired in July,
25 2009. According to the file of

1 council No. 24 of 2000, the mayor has
2 within 30 days to make an appointment
3 to an expired term. If he fails to
4 do, council then makes the
5 appointment. However, only in this
6 one case of the reappointment of Mr.
7 Whittaker, council may forego it's
8 power to appoint. As Mr. Rogan stated
9 council does request a letter of
10 interest and resume, and I would
11 request that from Mr. Whittaker prior
12 to next week's final vote on his
13 reappointment, and council asks for
14 these documents from all candidates
15 for appointments to board, authorities
16 and commissions, particularly since
17 council has no knowledge of the
18 majority of these individuals. If Mr.
19 Whittaker complies with council's
20 request, I would hope that council
21 would approve his reappointment.
22 However, if Mr. Whittaker chooses not
23 to submit this information on/or
24 before July 13, 2010, then I would
25 anticipate that council could not

1 grant approval. So, Mrs. Krake,
2 please have our office contact
3 Mr. Whittaker tomorrow to request this
4 information.

5 Anyone else on the question?

6 MR. LOSCOMBE: And just to
7 reiterate what Mrs. Evans said, this
8 is regards to all appointments, future
9 appointments that will be coming
10 before us. So everyone is no
11 notified. Thank you.

12 MS. EVANS: All those in favor of
13 introduction signify by saying aye.

14 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

15 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

16 MS. EVANS: Aye.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

18 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

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

21 MS. KRAKE: 6A, READING BY
22 TITLE - FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 26, 2010 -
23 AN ORDINANCE - RATIFYING THE MAYOR AND
24 OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS
25 EXECUTION OF THE DECLARATION OF

1 EASEMENT AND RIGHT-OF-WAY BETWEEN
2 HORSHAM INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL
3 DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND
4 GF/PENNSYLVANIA PROPERTIES, INC. NOW
5 BY CHANGE OF NAME PENNSYLVANIA
6 LTC, INC., ("GRANTORS") AND THE CITY
7 OF SCRANTON ("GRANTEE") FOR A STRIP OF
8 LAND TEN (10') FEET IN WIDTH AS SHOWN
9 AND DEPICTED ON THE "PROPOSED DRAINAGE
10 PIPE AND DITCH EASEMENT TO THE CITY OF
11 SCRANTON" AND AUTHORIZING THE FILING
12 OF THE DECLARATION OF EASEMENT AND
13 RIGHT-OF-WAY IN THE RECORDER OF DEEDS
14 OFFICE OF LACKAWANNA COUNTY.

15 MS. EVANS: You heard reading by
16 title Item 6A. What is your pleasure?

17 MR. ROGAN: I move that Item 6A
18 be passed reading by title.

19 MR. LOSCOMBE: Second.

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

22 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

23 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

24 MS. EVANS: Aye.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Aye.

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MR. JOYCE: Aye.

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

MS. KRAKE: 7A, no business at
this time.

MS. EVANS: I'll entertain a
motion for adjournment.

MR. JOYCE: Motion to adjourn.

MS. EVANS: Meeting adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes taken by me of the above-cause and that this copy is a correct transcript of the same to the best of my ability.

Amelia Nicol
Official Court Reporter