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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

HELD:

Thursday, April 5, 2012

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

FRANK JOYCE, VICE-PRESIDENT

ROBERT MCGOFF
(Not present)

PAT ROGAN

JOHN LOSCOMBE

NANCY KRAKE, CITY CLERK

KATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK
(Not present)

BOYD HUGHES, SOLICITOR

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

3 MS. EVANS: Roll call, please.

4 MS. KRAKE: Mr. McGoff. Mr. Rogan.

5 MR. ROGAN: Here.

6 MS. KRAKE: Mr. Loscombe.

7 MR. LOSCOMBE: Here.

8 MS. KRAKE: Mr. Joyce.

9 MR. JOYCE: Here.

10 MS. KRAKE: Mrs. Evans.

11 MS. EVANS: Here. If I could ask
12 the audience to please remain quiet.

13 Mrs. Krake, dispense with the reading of the
14 minutes, please.

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

16 MINUTES OF THE NON-UNIFORM MUNICIPAL PENSION
17 BOARD MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 22, 2012.

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

20 MS. KRAKE: 3-B. AGENDA FOR THE
21 NON-UNIFORM MUNICIPAL PENSION BOARD MEETING
22 HELD MARCH 28, 2012.

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

25 MS. KRAKE: 3-C. MINUTES OF THE

1 FIREMEN'S PENSION COMMISSION MEETING HELD
2 FEBRUARY 22, 2012.

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

5 MS. KRAKE: 3-D. AGENDA FOR THE
6 ZONING HEARING BOARD TO BE HELD APRIL 11,
7 2012.

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

10 MS. KRAKE: 3-E. MINUTES OF THE
11 SCRANTON POLICE PENSION COMMISSION MEETING
12 HELD FEBRUARY 22, 2012.

13 MS. EVANS: Are there any comments?
14 If not, received and filed. Are there any
15 clerk's notes tonight, Mrs. Krake?

16 MS. KRAKE: No, Mrs. Evans.

17 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Do any
18 council members have announcements at this
19 time?

20 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes. I have an
21 announcement. "Mur, The Final Hurrah."
22 Please join us for a fun night out at the
23 Divine Mercy Parish Center, 312 Davis Street
24 on Friday, April 13 from 6 to 11 p.m. The
25 price is \$20. There will be food,

1 libations, entertainment, money tree,
2 baskets, and 50/50. Proceeds will benefit
3 the family of Timothy Murray, the
4 firefighter who lost his battle with
5 malignant melanoma.

6 For tickets, sponsorship or to make
7 an in-kind donation please call Al Lucas at
8 347-8553 or Joe O'Hora at 212-0961. Checks
9 can be made payable to "Mur, the Final
10 Hurrah," that's M-U-R. Sponsors please
11 contact any committee member or drop off
12 donations at Stonewalls 2901 Pittston Avenue
13 or Loretta's, 106 Wattress Drive, and that's
14 all I have. Thank you.

15 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Is there
16 anyone else?

17 MR. JOYCE: Yes. PLCTA, Parents
18 Loving Children Through Autism, annual
19 awareness walk will be held on Saturday,
20 April 21st, at Nay Aug Park in Scranton's
21 Hill Section. The walk begins at 11 a.m.
22 and if you would like more information about
23 the walk please contact PLCTA at 341-3388.

24 The Tour De Scranton, a
25 noncompetitive bicycle race, which supports

1 the Erin Jessica Morgan Drug and Alcohol
2 Treatment Fund, will be held April 29. This
3 race raises money to assist young
4 individuals who are trying to overcome drug
5 and alcohol addictions. There is a 9 a.m.
6 registration at Scranton High School and
7 there are five bike routes to accommodate
8 every skill level being four, 15, 32, 46 and
9 65 miles. For more information on the race
10 please visit TourDeScranton.com.

11 On April 22 from 1:30 to 4:30 the
12 West Scranton Senior Center will hold a big
13 bingo fundraiser. The cost will \$5 for two
14 cards and there will be food for purchase
15 and cash prizes. If you would like more
16 information call 961-1592, extension 101,
17 and that is all.

18 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

19 MR. ROGAN: I had the same one as
20 Mr. Joyce.

21 MS. EVANS: Councilman McGoff is
22 unable to attend tonight's meeting due to a
23 health issue. Also, Solicitor Hughes is
24 absent because he is out of town.

25 A pasta dinner fundraiser for a

1 Leadership Lackawanna class project will be
2 held on Sunday April 15, 2012, at Barrett's
3 Pub, 474 North Main Street in Archbald from
4 1 to 3 p.m. Tickets are \$8.00 for adults, \$6
5 for children under age 12, and senior
6 citizens overage 65 and are available at the
7 door or by calling Lisa at 808-5912.
8 Takeouts will also be available. Proceeds
9 benefit "Restore the Slope," a Leadership
10 Lackawanna 2012 class project.

11 The Friends of the Scranton Knights
12 will conduct their annual "Night at the
13 Races" on Saturday, April 28, 2012, from 7
14 to 11:00 at St. Anthony's center, 1013 Wood
15 Street in Scranton. Tickets are \$10, are
16 available at the door, and include light
17 fare, beers, soda, water, music and fun.
18 All proceeds benefit the Scranton Knights'
19 football team, and you must be 21 years of
20 age to attend.

21 Finally, on behalf of Scranton City
22 Council, I wish you all a very blessed and
23 Happy Easter and Passover. That's it.

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

1 MS. EVANS: Our first speaker is
2 Andy Sbaraglia.

3 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,
4 citizen of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians,
5 they had a very good article in the Times on
6 the financial problems in the City of
7 Scranton. I thought they were very
8 conclusive on it. Anybody should if they
9 get a chance if they really wonder what's
10 happening financially in the city to read
11 the article. It's only about maybe 20 or 30
12 lines, but it covers everything.

13 But I had a question on Landmark
14 Bank, is that the bank who lent money to the
15 Parking Authority?

16 MS. EVANS: Yes.

17 MR. JOYCE: Yes, it is.

18 MR. SBARAGLIA: That's the bank?

19 MS. EVANS: Yes.

20 MR. SBARAGLIA: They are saying they
21 won't give us that second TAN unless we take
22 on the burden of that loan?

23 MS. EVANS: Actually --

24 MR. SBARAGLIA: Is that correct?

25 MS. EVANS: Well, that was correct,

1 however, in the meantime Landmark Bank has
2 rescinded it's offer to provide the TAN and
3 I feel overall that is very beneficial
4 because the city now no longer is asked to
5 guarantee the debt of the unsecured loan for
6 the Scranton Parking Authority, and the
7 citizens have also saved money in terms of
8 the interest that would have been charged by
9 the Landmark on that TAN.

10 MR. SBARAGLIA: I realize there is a
11 lot of banks in Scranton I just wonder why
12 they were sticking with Landmark. Surely
13 they should have went to another bank if
14 they were given conditions, because actually
15 we are due for millions and millions of
16 dollars next month from our wage tax. There
17 is no question about that, so we would be
18 able to do it. The only thing is we are
19 sort of in a bind now, and everybody knows
20 we are in a bind now, but surely they
21 should be -- even if they had to go to
22 Wilkes-Barre or out of the area or even
23 out-of-state to get the loan because it's
24 only a short loan and they would probably be
25 able to pay it right back. I had a lot of

1 questions on that. Why they even went to
2 Landmark. That was the main quirks. Why
3 would we go to Landmark and why sort of that
4 conditions?

5 You know the mayor has been trying
6 to push all of this stuff on us for quite
7 awhile. You didn't get your, what was it,
8 StreetSmart project because you didn't give
9 the Parking Authority the meters, and that
10 was the reason you dragged his foot on it.
11 I mean, you got to have your head in the
12 sand if you didn't realize the reason for
13 it. He didn't care less that we were going
14 to be in this financial bind, and I don't
15 think he cares now that we are in this
16 financial bind.

17 If it was up to me, I would have
18 shook him up and say, "Hey, I think we are
19 going to file Chapter 11," and just put a
20 little fear in his bones because actually we
21 might have to file Chapter 11 anyway.

22 MS. EVANS: That still could happen.

23 MR. SBARAGLIA: Chapter 11 more
24 reasonable because we do want to pay our
25 debts. Scrantonians has always wanted to

1 pay their debts. Most of the people in
2 Scranton are like me, your debts come first,
3 luxuries come second, and it's always been
4 that way.

5 So I really, really, really you
6 would shake the mayor up if you say we are
7 sort of looking at that as an option.
8 Bankruptcy is not an option. It really
9 isn't. Chapter 11 reorganization probably
10 would be a better way of doing it. Get
11 everything together and we get our -- them
12 authorities is just too bad we can't control
13 them. That is the worst thing they ever did
14 down -- well, other than this law they just
15 passed that put us in the bind now.
16 Authorities are not a solution to any kind
17 of a problem, they are appointees and they
18 sort of -- they are supposed to be
19 independent. They are about as independent
20 as like they say about the blind trust of
21 the people in Washington. Yeah, the only
22 person that is blind in that trust is the
23 citizens of the United States and that's how
24 it is with these authorities.

25 I didn't see one of them that did

1 anything decent for the citizens of
2 Scranton. To me I would have -- I can't
3 wait until he is out of office and ask them
4 all to resign. That's the best thing we can
5 do is get them all out of office and move
6 forward, because we will never move forward
7 with them in office.

8 And the Sewer Authority, we all know
9 it, it has become a dumping ground for any
10 politician they got left over from somewhere
11 else and that's not what the Sewer Authority
12 is for. We would have been better off under
13 the Germans if they had kept it instead of
14 that -- you know, that's really started our
15 problem, the money we had to pay to Anglican
16 Water, that created all of this debts that
17 we get today with that \$5 million that we
18 can't seem to get out of. We had to borrow
19 that for them and that really put us in a
20 bind.

21 Well, as long as we are not under
22 the gun anymore with Landmark. I thank you.

23 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Ozzie Quinn.

24 MR. QUINN: Ozzie Quinn, Taxpayers'
25 Association. Good evening.

1 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

2 MR. QUINN: Happy Easter.

3 MS. EVANS: To you, also.

4 MR. QUINN: Thank you. You know,
5 this here has got to be the greatest quote
6 of the year in the Sunday Times by
7 Mr. Doherty, "I'm the guy who proposed the
8 29 percent tax increase that was whittled to
9 5 percent by the council, Mr. Doherty said."

10 He is bragging about that? Come on.
11 You know what, I've been coming up here for
12 years and the debt, you know, and it just
13 don't go anywhere, you know, and I'm going
14 to put it where I think it really is. I
15 mean, I put a lot of thought to it, you
16 know, and it's just not Mr. Doherty,
17 everybody knows he is incompetent as a
18 financial administrator, there is no doubt
19 about it, you know, but you got the Scranton
20 Times, okay, Times-Tribune, and you got
21 "Doherty Confident," articles like that.
22 For ten years we have been hearing the same
23 old stuff, the spin, you know, and helping
24 this guy along when they should have been
25 backing up the taxpayers and it comes to

1 roost now, you know?

2 I mean, every week for ten years or
3 every night for no matter what was said it
4 was spun around in his favor, you know, and
5 then you saw these cartoons, you were well
6 aware of that Mrs. Evans and the whole super
7 majority. I mean, they are unethical as
8 hell, you know what I mean? That's the only
9 thing I can say, you know? But it got to a
10 point now where it just got that -- you
11 know, as long as we have this newspaper
12 doing this and supporting Mr. Doherty,
13 afraid of him for some reason, okay, or
14 because he is one of the elitist, I don't
15 know, whatever it is, okay? It bothers the
16 hell out of me, you know. We are not go to
17 go anywhere, you know, and back to PEL plan
18 and back to PEL, they want to fight the
19 unions, they want to fight the firefighters,
20 you know. There is something that's going
21 on right now if it wasn't involved somebody
22 as the mayor, you know, it's news. It's a
23 news thing, it would selling stories. That
24 would be out there every day, but because
25 it's Doherty related it's not out there.

1 People know that. You know, I go around the
2 stores and people say, you know, and they
3 always bring it up, the Scranton Times, the
4 Scranton Times.

5 I'm just wondering are they going to
6 get paid on Friday, the staff here
7 throughout city hall? Will they will be
8 able to have payday on Friday?

9 MS. EVANS: Next week?

10 MR. QUINN: Yeah, when do they get
11 paid?

12 MS. EVANS: There is no pay period
13 this week.

14 MR. QUINN: Will they get paid next
15 week?

16 MS. EVANS: I believe so.

17 MR. QUINN: Okay, that's starting to
18 bother me, okay? But anyway, you know, it's
19 Easter and we all know that, you know, I
20 guess you can miss the old church. You
21 know, I went to a parochial school, Catholic
22 from first until I graduated college so I
23 have a lot of theology and I always knew
24 that the guy was omnipotent, all powerful,
25 omni present, always present, and I miss it,

1 but I never knew a Times editor that was
2 omniscient, couldn't make a mistake. I
3 never met a man that could write editorials
4 after editorials that has so much knowledge.
5 Where did they get that? I know, if anybody
6 knows is there a pill out there that you can
7 take or what, you know? Please, let me
8 know, you know?

9 It's got to a point that it's got
10 unbelievably -- and unbelievable the spin
11 they have been putting on and, you know, if
12 they cared they wouldn't be charging so much
13 for advertisement for businesses, they
14 wouldn't have moved their plant to Waverly,
15 come on, you know? You know, when I was
16 growing up if you were a Democrat that was
17 the Bible, okay? If you were an Irish
18 Democrat, that was really the Bible. If you
19 are Catholic Irish Democrat, woah, that was
20 really the Bible, okay?

21 Now, we have the same -- you know, I
22 think people are starting to get aware of
23 the fact that where are we going, you know?
24 When you people are battling so hard up
25 there, so hard, and you don't know the next

1 day when you pick up the paper if there is
2 going to be something in the cartoon making
3 you look like a bunch of boobs in front of
4 the whole entire county or whole circulation
5 area. It's unethical, there is no doubt
6 about it.

7 I spoke to a priest in Georgetown
8 University who two years ago gave an ethics
9 seminar here at the University of the
10 Scranton I think it was on ESPN or the
11 public station and I called him and I
12 happened to see Mr. Lynett there, and I
13 said, "Gee, here's the situation as the
14 taxpayers," and I told him, and you know
15 what he told me? "Keep up the good work,"
16 he said. And I was really surprised, you
17 know, because, you know, the fact is that I
18 think the people are starting to get more
19 knowledgeable, starting to be a little more
20 independent, you know, and the fact is that
21 we keep on going down, down, down and there
22 is somebody dragging us down, and it's not
23 the Legion of Doom, that's for sure. It's
24 got to be somebody else, you know.

25 And all due respect to the Times'

1 reporter, I mean, he is probably a good
2 reporter, but probably he goes back and they
3 say, "Do it this way."

4 You know? There is no doubt about
5 it. Now, I called up there was a fire and I
6 picked up the paper, there is a fire in
7 Providence headline on Langstaff Street, and
8 I said, "Where the hell is Langstaff Street
9 in Providence?"

10 Wait a minute, Langstaff Street,
11 that's Park Place, so I called up the
12 Scranton Times and I told them, I said,
13 "That fire is not in Providence, it's in
14 Langstaff Street on Park Place."

15 If I told that reporter that it was
16 in Sandy Banks and I'll meet him there he
17 wouldn't know where the hell it was. I
18 mean, that's when we are dealing with here.
19 You know, we are dealing with a lot of
20 garbage being thrown at us day after day and
21 the people have got to start realizing that
22 as long as they keep on -- the Scranton
23 Times, GO Lackawanna and, oh, yeah, the
24 electronic media with their investigative
25 reporter where they go down to courthouse

1 street and read a press release saying, "I'm
2 John Doe, investigative reporter," and that
3 burns me. I get so much stuff over to the
4 news media that could have put this guy in a
5 position to pay to play and whatnot and they
6 just buried it and buried it and buried it.
7 Thank you.

8 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Les
9 Spindler.

10 MR. SPINDLER: Good evening,
11 Council. Les Spindler, city resident and
12 homeowner and taxpayer.

13 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

14 MR. SPINDLER: I wasn't able to
15 attend last week but I put the TV on at 6:30
16 and saw there was a caucus and the caucus
17 ended at 7:20 from 6:00. I said, you know,
18 I'm sitting home thinking that's not really
19 fair for the people that come here and talk
20 to sit here that long and wait for a caucus
21 to end. If I was here I wouldn't have been
22 able to speak, I would have had to leave and
23 go pick my daughter up and I really would
24 have been upset.

25 I mean, we come here and speak on

1 our own time, council gets paid to come here
2 and I don't think that's right that a caucus
3 meeting lasted that long. If you got a lot
4 of questions to ask maybe you can possibly
5 schedule it on a different night, but that's
6 just my opinion.

7 A week or so ago in the paper was a
8 story about the Parking Authority and hiring
9 Wayne Evans Realty to find garages in the
10 city. It's no secret that Wayne Evans is a
11 Doherty supporter since day one. I think
12 this is just another example of cronyism
13 with this administration. It should have
14 been put out to bid. I think he said he is
15 getting like 6 percent. If it was put out
16 to bid maybe we could have gotten someone
17 for 3 percent or 4 percent. That's just how
18 the politics have gone for 10 or 11 years in
19 this city though and it's not right.

20 And while I'm talking about the
21 Parking Authority, I, too, want to talk
22 about what Ozzie said, the one thing he
23 read, there is a sentence above it, Chris
24 Doherty said, "This was council's budget."

25 Well, he is absolutely correct. If

1 he would have followed council's last two
2 budgets maybe we wouldn't have been in the
3 bind we are now. Yeah, he just ignored
4 everything council put in the budget for the
5 last two years, a lot of revenue sources for
6 the StreetSmart program and, like I said,
7 maybe if he followed council's budget we
8 wouldn't be this bad off.

9 And I'm glad to see the Landmark
10 Bank pulled out of that deal because it's
11 the last thing we need is to have the debt
12 of another authority like the one of the
13 Redevelopment Authority. These authorities
14 are killing this city, so let them drown in
15 their own debt.

16 Once again, I want to talk about
17 dangerous dog legislation, I did a few weeks
18 ago. I brought this up years ago when my
19 dog was attacked and I think it was
20 Solicitor Minora said we can't be breed
21 specific and I don't know why we can't be
22 breed specific because it just seems like
23 pit bulls are doing all of these attacks on
24 people. Just last week a woman in West
25 Wyoming was attacked, maybe some people saw

1 it on the news, both her arms were bandaged,
2 she was bitten on both arms, and people will
3 argue with me that pit bulls are just
4 dangerous dogs. You don't hear of
5 dachshunds attacking people or Chihuahuas
6 attacking people, it's pit bulls for the
7 most part, and there are things we can do.
8 I have brought up a few things last, like,
9 four or five years when my dog was attacked
10 I did some researching and I think it's
11 Pittsburgh that requires people to have a
12 certain height fence if they have dangerous
13 dog, have insurance, and make them
14 responsible if these dogs escape like they
15 are doing. You know, I think something
16 should be done.

17 Again, last time I was here to talk
18 about the Ole' Good Things, what an eyesore
19 that's becoming and their manager, warehouse
20 manager, said that everything is within the
21 fence, and I said, "Well, that's not true,"
22 and I went by last week and took a really
23 good look. There is more material outside
24 of fence than there is inside the fence and
25 I know council was supposed to have sent a

1 letter, so --

2 MS. EVANS: Yes that was sent.

3 MR. SPINDLER: So I'm hoping to get
4 some reaction on that if something is done
5 because it is definitely an eyesore and I
6 think is also a fire hazard because there is
7 lots of old dry wood stored in there, also.

8 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Spindler, I'd also
9 add that underneath the railroad tracks is
10 sometimes where vagrants will, you know,
11 will hang out and, you know, when they see
12 the debris over there, you know, it's pretty
13 inviting for them to use it as, you know, to
14 steal stuff from Ole' Good Things and burn
15 it. You know, I went over myself, I drive
16 by all the time, but I stopped and took a
17 close look and you are right, it's -- the
18 majority of the material is out of the
19 fence. It's not -- a lot of it is concrete,
20 but still it's not up to code.

21 MR. SPINDLER: Right. It's not
22 pleasing to the eye.

23 MR. ROGAN: Not at all. Not at all.
24 An old building would have been a lot
25 better.

1 MR. SPINDLER: Lastly, I have one
2 question about the rental registration, I
3 know somebody owns a house that they rent
4 out they wanted to ask would they have to
5 pay that or are they exempt from that?

6 MR. LOSCOMBE: Do they occupy the
7 dwelling?

8 MR. SPINDLER: No. It's a small
9 house, they are renting it out to someone
10 else.

11 MR. LOSCOMBE: I believe that falls
12 under the rental registration, yes.

13 MR. SPINDLER: It does?

14 MR. ROGAN: A single unit?

15 MR. LOSCOMBE: As long as it's a
16 rental property and then it's not occupied
17 by the owner.

18 MR. SPINDLER: Can you find out for
19 sure for me?

20 MR. LOSCOMBE: I'll definitely check
21 that.

22 MR. SPINDLER: I know Mr. McGoff may
23 know.

24 MR. LOSCOMBE: I'm pretty sure that
25 if it's just a stand alone rental property

1 it comes under the rental registration. If
2 it's a double home or a triple, up to four
3 family and the owner occupies that
4 structure, but I'll double check on it. I'm
5 pretty sure that's where it was.

6 MR. SPINDLER: All right, thank you.
7 That's all I have.

8 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Gerard
9 Hetman.

10 MR. HETMAN: Good evening, Council.
11 Gerard Hetman from the Lackawanna County
12 Department of Community Relations.

13 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

14 MR. JOYCE: Good evening.

15 MR. HETMAN: Thank you. Our first
16 announcement just a general note from the
17 Lackawanna County Commissioners is that the
18 commissioners are exploring the possibility
19 of holding a countywide municipal equipment
20 auction where all municipalities would be
21 invited to auction off items of the
22 equipment that would otherwise have to be
23 auctioned by the individual municipalities.
24 It's a possible cost saving avenue for all
25 municipalities in Lackawanna County. Again,

1 Twitter, YouTube and other social media
2 avenues to further grow their business, grow
3 their audience. It's free, but registration
4 is required. You can call 570-963-6590,
5 extension 106 and speak to Chris Calpin to
6 register.

7 And, also, the Lackawanna Heritage
8 Valley Authority will be conducting the
9 Heritage Explorer Bike Tour on Saturday,
10 June 16, 2012, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
11 starting at Mellow Park in Peckville, and
12 participants can get more information by are
13 visiting Heritageexplorer.org, www.heritage
14 explorer.org or by calling 570-963-6730,
15 extension 8200. Again, that's 570-963-6730,
16 extension 8200.

17 And last, Mrs. Evans, thanks for
18 mentioning the pasta dinner because that's
19 my leadership Lackawanna project, and
20 everyone is invited, so everyone is invited
21 to come up and support the project. That's
22 all we have. Is there anything for the
23 county at or this time or anything you would
24 like to address?

25 MS. EVANS: No.

1 MR. HETMAN: Thank you, ladies and
2 gentlemen, and I'll be here after the
3 meeting if any of you want to talk to me
4 individually or anyone in the gallery wants
5 to talk to us about anything and thanks
6 again. Happy Easter.

7 MS. EVANS: Thank you. And Happy
8 Easter to you.

9 MR. JOYCE: Thank you very much.

10 MR. HETMAN: Thank you. Gregory
11 Evans.

12 MR. EVANS: Good evening, council.

13 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

14 MR. JOYCE: Good evening.

15 MR. EVANS: Gregory Evans, native
16 Scrantonian, product of Scranton school
17 district and city property owner in
18 Scranton, of course, resident of Scranton.
19 Members of council and fellow Scrantonians,
20 I'm here today as a representative of
21 Redwood Recovery Centers. As you may be
22 aware, we have a brand new facility, women
23 with children and recovery facility, in
24 plans for 614 Wyoming Avenue. Redwood
25 Recovery Centers specializes in step up

1 facilities. We vehemently oppose the term
2 halfway house as it delivers a negative
3 connotation and an awful stigma.

4 We operate transitional living
5 facilities licensed by the Pennsylvania
6 Department of Health. Our mission is
7 simple, to save lives. Our step up
8 facilities are the second three steps of the
9 continuum of care required by Pennsylvania
10 for substance abusers to overcome their
11 dependency.

12 Redwood Recovery is presently
13 developing three facilities, a step out
14 facility in Wyoming County, a step up
15 facility in Luzerne County, and a step up
16 facility right here in Scranton and
17 Lackawanna County. We are truly excited to
18 bring a Women with Children facility to
19 Scranton as it's only the third of it's kind
20 in Pennsylvania. Clients will receive
21 counseling, parenting, life skills training
22 to help them move forward as good mothers,
23 daughters, sisters, wives and members of the
24 communities. These women want and are doing
25 something for themselves. We are not just

1 another social service agency throwing money
2 at these woman and we are not here just to
3 collect a paycheck either.

4 As excited as we are to help the
5 underserved women with children segment, we
6 are very much aware of the stereotypes and
7 concerns that Scranton residents and
8 businesses may have. We also believe it's
9 in the best interest of everyone that we are
10 open and honest with our intentions. We are
11 reaching out to the city and county
12 community, we are not backdooring this.

13 With that being said, I want to
14 address three key points that Redwood
15 Recovery believe most concerns the
16 community. First, facility development;
17 second, health and safety; and third,
18 economic impact.

19 First, the facility development.
20 Using green initiatives and energy smart
21 materials the property will be restored to
22 its historical beauty while being developed
23 into a state of the art facility,
24 esthetically pleasing, historically minded
25 green and advanced with the finest

1 construction efforts. Preliminary estimates
2 indicate approximately \$2.5 million in
3 development of the building alone.

4 The second concern would be health
5 and safety. I believe after understanding
6 who our population is the community will
7 better embrace the facility and refute the
8 comment of not in my backyard.

9 Subpoint A, zoning, to specifically
10 address the not in my backyard comment, the
11 present zoning is general commercial, not
12 neighborhood. As far as the client
13 population, these are pregnant females,
14 females with child or children. Our clients
15 are medically stable and not dependent on
16 drugs or alcohol anymore. They have
17 nonviolent criminal backgrounds and this
18 facility is not a replacement for community
19 corrections.

20 And as far as security, we are
21 licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of
22 Health. Unlike the stereotypical halfway
23 house or sober houses that might be in
24 people's minds, we have to abide by strict
25 guidelines per state regulations, such as

1 the 24/7, 365-day a year monitoring facility
2 fully staffed. When leaving the facility,
3 clients must provide a timeline and
4 locations that can be confirmed, and you
5 will not see our clients congregating or
6 loitering amongst area business.

7 The last point I would like to make
8 is the economic impact. Firstly, we expect
9 to take in 50 to 85 clients and part of the
10 program is they must be gainfully employed
11 prior to being discharged. Now, once
12 employed they will be spending their money,
13 their family's money, and recovery support
14 money at local businesses nearby. We will
15 also be creating 30 to 50 jobs, both white
16 and blue collar, anywhere from community
17 technicians, professional counselors,
18 kitchen maintenance, housekeeping staff,
19 even medical staff.

20 Lastly, the hot topic right now in
21 Scranton are taxes. There are tax
22 advantages for Redwood Recovery coming here
23 as we are a for profit company. By year
24 three, we project \$1.2 million in taxable
25 earnings and unlike many businesses that

1 come to Scranton, we are not seeking local,
2 state or federal funds. We are not seeking
3 K0Z or tax exemptions, the real estate is
4 taxed, the business is taxed.

5 A question often asked of recent
6 Scranton projects, "If it's such a great
7 idea then why don't they use their own money
8 instead of public funds?"

9 Let it be clear, we are using
10 private funds not the taxpayers' money. We
11 are hoping to gain support of both the
12 Scranton community and the government. Our
13 executive team will gladly meet with anyone
14 to discuss our facility any further. Thank
15 you for your time this evening.

16 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

17 MR. JOYCE: Thank you.

18 MS. EVANS: Doug Miller.

19 MR. MILLER: Good evening, Council.
20 Doug Miller, Scranton.

21 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

22 MR. MILLER: I will be somewhat
23 brief tonight, I just want to begin this
24 evening by addressing the issues involving
25 Attorney Hughes and his work that he has

1 conducted on behalf of Scranton City
2 Council. In recent days Attorney Hughes, I
3 feel, has been unfairly criticized by the
4 select few of the officials in the city
5 regarding a bill in the amount of
6 approximately \$4,800 and work that he
7 conducted on behalf of council. Tonight, as
8 a Scrantonian, I just want to take this time
9 to publically defend Attorney Hughes and
10 personally commend him for all of the work
11 he has done. The position he is in at this
12 time certainly isn't easy, and obviously we
13 are in a very unique situation financially
14 and it's certainly adding more to his
15 workload.

16 And, unfortunately, I believe it's
17 unfair because I do believe a lot of this
18 work that he has had to do on his own should
19 be done by our city solicitor, Paul Kelly,
20 who we know as has a history of failing to
21 adhere to certain requirements and all of
22 this has been thrown on Attorney Hughes'
23 lap. He has had to deal with issues of the
24 TANS and dealing with banks and legislation
25 that's sent down to council. A lot of this

1 that Attorney Kelly should be handling,
2 that's what he is paid to do. I don't know
3 if he is overwhelmed, if he has an over
4 workload. As we know, he not only
5 represents the city but the Parking
6 Authority and the Recreation Authority,
7 which I do believe is a complete conflict of
8 interest and I do think we need to look and
9 take a close look at that, it's been
10 addressed before and I think we need to once
11 again address it.

12 As I said, I do believe Attorney
13 Hughes is entitled to the \$4,800. I also
14 feel that certain individuals want to make
15 this political. This is a political town
16 and that's what I think individuals are
17 trying to do is make this into a political
18 issue. Well, it's not. This a case of
19 someone going above and beyond and working
20 not only on behalf of council but most of
21 all the residents of this city.

22 Now, Attorney Hughes may not be an
23 elected official, but everything that he is
24 working on diligently certainly effects the
25 residents of this city and not only myself

1 but every other resident in this city should
2 come up here and offer a sign of
3 appreciation for what he is doing and I
4 don't think he should be criticized by
5 whether it's the city controller or any
6 other official in the city. We should be
7 commending him for this.

8 You know, it's really frustrating
9 that we do have a city solicitor in Paul
10 Kelly who has just failed to follow through
11 on everything that he is required to do and
12 yet now we want to criticize someone who
13 actually is doing the job and is doing the
14 work even though they probably shouldn't be
15 doing it. So again, once again, I commend
16 his efforts and think we can all agree he is
17 an asset to this city.

18 And with that said, I would just
19 like to wish everyone a happy Easter and
20 happy Passover. Thank you.

21 MS. EVANS: And to you also. Thank
22 you. Dave Dobrzyn.

23 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening. Dave
24 Dobrzyn, resident of Scranton.

25 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

1 MR. DOBRZYN: Taxes paid for a
2 change. Okay. I have been seeing on the
3 television some ads, this is the last time
4 I'm going to talk about fire insurance for
5 renters, but I think I saw \$4 a month with
6 comprehensive auto coverage, so even if it's
7 \$4 a week it's still cheap to get, so it's
8 something that somebody really wants to
9 consider. After that all you have to do is
10 have your fire alarms with batteries and
11 run.

12 Okay, I have a few questions with
13 street work, is there any post-inspection
14 after the utility comes in with street work?

15 Recycling, are there tipping fees
16 with recycling that are paid just like there
17 is tipping fees with trash removal?

18 And a thought occurred to me, I
19 watched the caucus last week and I'd like to
20 bring to your attention that employers are
21 not obligated to turn over money for three
22 months and that to me is an egregious,
23 egregious misconduct by the state and then
24 they have another 30 days on top of that and
25 then finally Berkheimer has another 30 days

1 which is causing big problems, as you people
2 have said, but figure if an employer maybe
3 collected \$10,000 like a fairly large
4 employer and held onto that money, I mean,
5 he would average \$5,000 in the account for
6 120 days and that's considerable amount of
7 money that is being paid out in interest and
8 it's being paid out to private employers.
9 So I'm very disturbed about that and I think
10 it demands a law change and I would write
11 Harrisburg.

12 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Dobrzyn, you're
13 exactly right. The current system the way
14 it's set up the taxpayer has to pay weekly,
15 biweekly --

16 MR. DOBRZYN: Yeah.

17 MR. ROGAN: -- just like they always
18 have, but instead of the money being turned
19 over to our tax collector and then turned
20 over to the city it's being held --

21 MR. DOBRZYN: Right.

22 MR. ROGAN: -- by the employer. They
23 are making interest then it's being held by
24 Berkheimer and they are making interest, and
25 then finally the city gets the money.

1 MR. DOBRZYN: Yeah. Yeah. And it's
2 averaging a lot of money after awhile and
3 say they collect \$10,000, well, after four
4 months they would have an average of \$5,000
5 in the account.

6 MR. ROGAN: Even they the amounts
7 are small if you are going to give money and
8 let me hold it for you for six months and
9 make the interest who is not going to take
10 that deal.

11 MR. DOBRZYN: Certainly. I agree
12 with you entirely, and I think we should can
13 get in touch with the state representative
14 and get them to modify the law or start
15 lobbying with them to modify the law,
16 because I could see one month and then 15
17 days for Berkheimer, but that's it. That's
18 as far as it should go. You shouldn't
19 have -- and then on top of it if the
20 employer welches on the deal and doesn't
21 turn that money over then the taxpayer is
22 responsible, the guy that already paid the
23 dues.

24 So it's really shameful the kind of
25 pathetic laws they're coming up with in

1 Harrisburg. They need it shaken up. I know
2 I'm going to be at the polls. I'm always at
3 the polls, but I'll be there this time, too.

4 Okay. A few weeks ago a few union
5 member made disparaging comments about
6 council, and I would like to remind them
7 that council has been on their side and they
8 had no guarantee to keep anybody, and the
9 administration refused to agree to do that
10 and I have heard disparaging comments on
11 Obama care and so forth, but we are trying
12 to sort out what insurance should cost and
13 lower the cost of insurance and in the end
14 they are asking somebody that may be
15 unemployed or whatever or have a low paying
16 job to pay taxes and pay taxes for a top
17 notch policy and everything, they have to
18 start to take the citizens into
19 consideration and that's what the
20 administration was about originally and it
21 sounded good in the beginning, but, of
22 course, I don't support beating up on the
23 unions, but, please, stop the disparaging
24 remarks about people that were on your side.
25 It's not right.

1 them where it's worth the freedom in our
2 country. Thank you and have a good night.
3 Bawk, bawk.

4 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else who
5 cares to address council?

6 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.

7 MR. LOSCOMBE: Good evening.

8 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

9 MR. MORGAN: I asked two weeks or
10 three weeks ago about Nay Aug Park and the
11 bars off the cages, does anybody know
12 anything about that?

13 MR. LOSCOMBE: I actually had taken
14 some photos and we did send the letter out
15 requesting information, I don't believe we
16 received anything back yet.

17 MR. MORGAN: Are you aware that
18 there is cameras on that facility 24 hours a
19 day at the department of Recreation? Now, I
20 saw those cameras before and there was a
21 different director there at the time, but, I
22 mean, it should be very simple to find out
23 what happened to that property because
24 nothing should have happened to that
25 property. It's just completely wrong in my

1 opinion.

2 MR. LOSCOMBE: I agree with you
3 totally.

4 MR. MORGAN: Now, I'd like to say
5 about Mr. Hughes because I think that -- I
6 think that Mr. Hughes is a very honorable
7 man and I think he is a good solicitor for
8 council, but I'm of the opinion that the
9 banks should have paid him and not the city
10 because this is the man that the banks made.
11 I think that it's just as wrong to pay him
12 as I believe it was wrong to pay Carl Greco
13 all the money he made. Mr. Hughes is a
14 solicitor for this council. He gets a
15 salary, the city is financially strapped and
16 has no money, I think it's time that
17 everybody realizes that fact and, like I
18 said, Mr. Hughes is a very nice man, very
19 professional, very intelligent, I have not
20 one bad word to say about that gentleman.

21 You know, but there are some things
22 that I would like to go back to. You know,
23 I don't think this council has a magic wand
24 by any means, and I don't think that this
25 council can make miracles happen, but I do

1 have to say that I'm under the impression
2 and the Scranton Times is and the mayor is
3 that council created the last budget. Well,
4 I just for all honesty, Mr. Loscombe, and I
5 respect you as former fireman, I mean, you
6 definitely knew in my opinion that this city
7 couldn't function with the kind of fire
8 department we have and I think that every
9 council member knows that and I think it's
10 time for the people in this city who go on
11 vote to realize that we have got to solve
12 that problem and I personally think that
13 bringing back the few firemen we are going
14 to bring back is not a solution to our
15 problem, and I'm not blaming council, but
16 I'm looking for council to come up with a
17 solution.

18 I personally think, to be honest
19 with you, this is only my only personal
20 opinion, I believe we need to go back to at
21 least 150 firemen at a bare minimum because
22 this city is a very large city and a very
23 old city, and I think the function of the
24 city is to protect its residents and it cost
25 money and if we have to make cuts somewhere

1 else and open the budget and do it maybe
2 it's time to do that.

3 The same thing with public safety
4 for policemen. You know, I disagree with
5 privatization of DPW because I think that
6 the DPW has been taken to the point now
7 where they are glorified garbage men. We
8 have lost so many different abilities and
9 functions that DPW can do for a bankrupt
10 city. We can't pay people to do everything
11 for us anymore. Maybe it's time for
12 Scranton to consider a partnership in some
13 ways with Dunmore over a very broad array of
14 different things, whether it's fire and
15 police, Department of Public Works, many
16 different things.

17 I just think that when you look at a
18 city, I still don't think we have a grant
19 writer and we lost that position a long time
20 ago, and it's my understanding that the
21 firemen helped to put the grants together,
22 and you know something, I think that we have
23 a lot of very qualified and committed public
24 servants here, but we have lost them and we
25 are losing more to pay debt, and that's not

1 a criticism of this council because we are
2 where we are, but you know something, we
3 have to come up with a solution. Even it's
4 a fee like a garbage fee, because when you
5 go to bed at night you want to know if you
6 have a problem the firemen is coming, the
7 policeman is coming, that your garbage is
8 getting picked up, that something is doing
9 something about stray animals in the city,
10 that we have some kind of infrastructure
11 program going on where we are trying to at
12 least attempt to renew an old city?

13 Because in my opinion, look it, I'm
14 just an ordinary person but I am firmly of
15 the belief that this is a really great place
16 to live and we are going to have to struggle
17 for a long time. We are going to have to
18 get control of the authorities. We are
19 going to have get control of our debt, and
20 the bankers aren't are friends and it's
21 easy, they kept loaning us money because
22 they know the bonds have to be paid.

23 Some communities are filing
24 bankruptcy and moving away. I think
25 Harrisburg did a very prudent thing by

1 filing bankruptcy. I know that the
2 government doesn't appreciate it because
3 politics is politics, you know, and I think
4 that's the downfall of the country.

5 But I hope that the council would
6 find a way to reinstate those positions and
7 not just some of them, but all of them.
8 Thank you.

9 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you.

10 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else?

11 MR. JACKOWITZ: Good evening,
12 Scranton City Council, Bill Jackowitz, South
13 Scranton resident.

14 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

15 MR. JACKOWITZ: Taxpayers'
16 Association. You know, one of these days
17 I'm going to come in here and I'm going to
18 see the mayor and some of his administrators
19 sifting at this table, but I'll bet my last
20 buck it's not Mayor Doherty, it's going to
21 be our next mayor and he is going to be
22 here, whoever he or she may be. I feel that
23 in my heart.

24 There is lot of things going on
25 within the City of Scranton, not only -- and

1 when I say the City of Scranton I include
2 everybody, all the government branches.
3 Lackawanna County, Scranton School Board,
4 Scranton City Council, the mayor, the
5 administration, I mean, because basically we
6 are all at the mercy of our elected
7 officials, the state representatives Murphy
8 and Smith, and I just don't feel that
9 everybody is working together. As a matter
10 of fact, I'm not even sure if you all
11 communicate with each other or talk to each
12 other or sit down and come up with plans.

13 What I would like to see is I would
14 like to see a scheduled public meeting with
15 city council, State Representatives Smith
16 and Murphy, Scranton School Board, President
17 Lesh and whoever other members want to meet,
18 county commissioners, Commissioner Wansack
19 or all three commissioners, have a public
20 meeting and allow the citizens of Scranton
21 to attend the public meeting and ask
22 questions and all governing bodies or
23 elected bodies get together because we are
24 getting killed.

25 When I say "we" I'm talking about

1 taxpayers, especially Scranton taxpayers.
2 We are getting hammered every time we turn
3 around and every time we look somebody is
4 increasing our taxes, reducing our services,
5 but the most important thing is the
6 nepotism. The hiring of relatives. I'm
7 firmly against that. That does not work and
8 in my opinion that's one of the biggest
9 problems we have in Scranton or in
10 Lackawanna County, maybe even in the state
11 is the nepotism policy because everybody
12 hires their family and friends and friends
13 of friends and so on and so forth.

14 I mean, our county commissioner,
15 Commissioner Wansack, came right out
16 publically and said it, I got to give him
17 credit for it. I mean, Commissioner
18 O'Malley said he didn't hire him because he
19 contributed to his campaign, he hired him
20 because he is my friend. What just happened
21 at the Scranton School Board, I was at that
22 meeting, and more people need to attend
23 Scranton School Board meetings. It's wrong.
24 To have an ethics policy in the Scranton
25 School Board and they don't even follow it.

1 You know, I have been researching
2 Scranton School Board for two weeks and the
3 results are horrifying. If I was someone
4 moving into this area, whether it's a
5 business or a citizen and I want on the
6 Internet and researched the Scranton School
7 Board and the Scranton School District there
8 is no way in heck I would come here because
9 the education is not there, but yet the
10 school board is worrying about hiring their
11 spouses, hiring their friends, and so on and
12 so forth, and we have the same problem with
13 within the City of Scranton with
14 appointments and the hiring.

15 And I would like to see all the
16 elected officials get together, have a
17 general meeting, a public meeting, and allow
18 the citizens of Scranton to sit down and ask
19 them questions and find out why. Why we had
20 to get a 38 percent tax increase from the
21 county. Why we had to get a 26 percent tax
22 increase from the city a couple of years ago
23 and then another 4 percent tax increase.
24 You know, why the school board has to raise
25 the taxes every year when we are not getting

1 results from the schools. I personally
2 would like to know that and I hope that
3 other citizens within the City of Scranton
4 would like to know the same thing. So
5 really, I one day that someone -- this will
6 happen. I really do.

7 Now, going back to the Recovery
8 Plan, I brought my little flyer with me
9 again, okay, I just want to remind people
10 what happened back in 2001. It didn't work.
11 It did not work, so I hope people really --
12 and I hope city council and the
13 administration and everybody else who was
14 involved in coming up with the new Recovery
15 Plan sit down, use good judgment, common
16 sense, and put the taxpayers first and put
17 the residents first, put public safety
18 first, because that's what it's all about.
19 It's not about hiring your spouse or hiring
20 your next door neighbor or your friend or
21 your supporter or who gave you the most
22 money. It's not about that. It's about the
23 residents of the City of Scranton and the
24 county of Lackawanna because we are in bad
25 shape.

1 We can sit and we can deny, we can
2 blame everybody else, but the bottom line is
3 we are in a bad city and the taxpayers are
4 the one who have to pay for it over and over
5 and over again. And I hope everybody has a
6 good Easter and I hope you come back in a
7 good frame of mind and I really hope that
8 someone, we have a representative from the
9 county here and I hope he goes back and
10 talks to the county commissioners and get
11 together and sit down and have a meeting
12 where everybody is there, all our elected
13 officials, and the citizens and residents of
14 the county and the City of Scranton have an
15 opportunity to ask them questions. Thank
16 you.

17 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Is there
18 anyone else?

19 MR. MARTIN: My name is Bob Martin,
20 resident of 420 Adams Avenue and there was a
21 couple of things I want to talk about. You
22 know, you mentioned about pit bulls and
23 stuff like that about picking on certain
24 breeds, I don't think -- I don't think you
25 can really pick on certain breeds, okay? I

1 have noticed something about pit bulls, I
2 don't know, maybe I'm wrong, it seems like
3 females are being attacked by pit bulls,
4 most of the people are females. I don't
5 know if there is a reason for that, I don't
6 know, but picking on a certain breed is
7 going to be tough.

8 Also, I'd like to talk about I'm
9 glad that Pittston Avenue is being paved and
10 it seems like it's been pretty bad, but I'm
11 glad they are doing something about that.

12 Another thing that's alarming me is
13 I drive the Colts buses a lot, I know you
14 are not allowed to pass a school bus, okay,
15 you are not allowed to pass a school bus,
16 but they should have something -- I know
17 most of the County of Lackawanna transit
18 system buses pull over to the curbs, but
19 sometimes they can't. It seems like cars
20 like to get in front of the bus, Colt's bus.
21 I'd rather be behind this bus because if you
22 get hit with one of those Colt's buses you
23 are going to know about it, but I think, you
24 know, I have -- I appreciate the bus. It's
25 like a truck. I treat it just like a truck,

1 because, you know, the alarms I know they
2 are there and as soon as they get the alarm
3 they sent it out from COM Center that they
4 would send somebody. It just seemed like
5 there is was a delay, and I'll tell you if
6 somebody had thrown something hot in the
7 garbage and it just started burning pretty
8 good, you know, the smoke was all the way
9 up. Immediately, I'm up on the seventh
10 floor and I immediately trying to make sure
11 that we could get down, you know what I
12 mean? Because there are certain residents
13 that you need to get out, and I don't know
14 sometimes if it's better to just stay in
15 your room or get out, you know?

16 But I respect the firefighters,
17 okay? We don't have enough firefighters in
18 this town. We need to have more and, like I
19 said, you were a firefighter, you know, but
20 I have talked to them and they do the best
21 thing they could do and it's just that I
22 respect the firefighters because you never
23 know when they go out on a fire whether it's
24 going to be their last. You know, it's
25 just -- I think the fire company, and I'm

1 not picking on the policemen, I mean, when
2 they go on a call, especially a house that
3 would have problems in the family or
4 whatever, that could be a big problem, too.
5 But can never have enough policemen and
6 never enough firefighters, I think.

7 But what I want to say I want to --
8 this is probably going to hurt some people
9 and the mayor, but I just believe he is
10 against the firefighters. I just feel like
11 he wished there was no paid firefighters
12 maybe. Maybe I'm wrong and he feels like
13 maybe he needs -- it rather be volunteers,
14 you know what I mean, but maybe I'm wrong in
15 saying that, I shouldn't say that, but I
16 just respect the firefighters and I
17 appreciate being able to talk and I wish
18 everybody a happy resurrection Sunday.
19 Okay.

20 MS. EVANS: Thank you. And you,
21 too.

22 MR. LOSCOMBE: And I will check on
23 the timelines on that for you.

24 MR. MARTIN: Okay, thank you.

25 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Jackie.

1 MR. LOSCOMBE: Chrissy.

2 MR. JOYCE: Hi, Chrissy.

3 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Hello, Janet.

4 Jack, yesterday afternoon and yesterday
5 morning there was an accident in front of my
6 house on the top of the hill there. Jack,
7 you know who responded, Rescue 1 and Engine
8 7. You guys, good job. Keep it up there,
9 I'm proud of every one of them, Jack.

10 MR. LOSCOMBE: Good job, Chris.

11 MR. SLEDENZSKI: Good job, Jack.

12 MR. ELLMAN: What's up, Council?

13 You didn't think you are were going to have
14 a meeting without me, did you?

15 MR. LOSCOMBE: I was getting
16 worried.

17 MR. ELLMAN: Jack, my friend, I got
18 something to tell you real quick. You know,
19 a house burnt down and we are really hyper
20 about fire and smoke, Tuesday night Rose
21 jumped and said, "I smell smoke."

22 I was in another room reading and I
23 ran in there and smelled it, I mean, it was
24 really powerful. I ran down in the basement
25 and nothing and I went upstairs and I went

1 in the attic and I went back in the basement
2 and didn't turn the light on and then I went
3 outside and I was getting all excited and I
4 ran back in the house, and she is walking
5 around and she said, "The smoke is right
6 there. The dog has a -- Slugo the Bassett
7 hound has a bed in front of the TV so he
8 won't jump on the furniture."

9 You know, I know he doesn't smoke
10 and I picked it up and it stunk from smoke.
11 I want you to open this up, it's from the
12 dollar store and you tell me if you wouldn't
13 think your house is on fire when you smell
14 that.

15 To change the subject, I know most
16 of you never --

17 MR. LOSCOMBE: It does have a weird
18 smell.

19 MR. ELLMAN: Very few people know
20 who Ann Sullivan is, which I find her one of
21 the greatest educators and one of the finest
22 Americans this country ever produced, she is
23 the one who taught Helen Keller how to
24 communicate, so I noticed in the paper today
25 that on this day in 1887 they communicated

1 with the first word, which if you can just
2 imagine what a task it must have been to
3 teach a deaf, blind and dumb person that was
4 young still. Mr. Joyce and Mr. Rogan should
5 appreciate the first word, it was water.
6 W-A-T-E-R.

7 And I have been complaining year
8 after year how declining my neighborhood is
9 getting. I have a house at the 2700 block
10 owned by I think his name is Paul Juice.
11 There is a half dozen guys live there, they
12 got Ohio and North Carolina license plates
13 so they don't contribute nothing, they don't
14 have any garbage cans, the stuff is piled up
15 so last week they threw out something and it
16 broke. It's a huge piece of glass, not a
17 cup, I mean, a big piece of glass all broken
18 all over the place, so the other night they
19 were outside about midnight and I said, "Why
20 you can't pick up all the glass before one
21 of these kids --" because it's across from
22 the bus stop -- "gets cut."

23 One of them said, "Yeah, you are
24 right. I know it's bad."

25 And the other one said, "It's not

1 mine, you know, you can pick it up if you
2 don't like it," all that kind of smart talk
3 and he said, "I'll phone the city. "

4 And I said, "It is yours. I saw you
5 throw the garbage out."

6 See, this house has been a problem
7 house for years. Years ago there is two
8 misfits in there that shot a little kid with
9 a bow and arrow, then we had some drug
10 dealers living there that were so open they
11 just had to get rid of them, now we got
12 these people and they just don't care about
13 nothing. This is what ruins every single
14 neighborhood in this city is landlords like
15 him that don't care who they rent to. Maybe
16 I ought to tell them I'm a member of the
17 taxpayers so they can't sue me.

18 And I'd like to say that I certainly
19 think Ms. Janet is right about Mr. Hughes
20 with all of the tens of thousands of dollars
21 the mayor has wasted on lawyers that lost
22 everything they encountered I think
23 Mr. Hughes is well worth every penny that
24 the city, I mean, has been involved with.

25 And one other thing, I saw that last

1 week somebody wants to rent that building on
2 600 Wyoming. You know, the building, that
3 big three story or four story used to be a
4 car building or something, that neighborhood
5 is just a crappy neighborhood anyway. We
6 had our business across the street for 20
7 years and I think it would be an asset to
8 rent it whether there is men or women going
9 there, but according to the paper they want
10 to put 50 to 85 people in that one building.
11 Look at ARC, they got ten buildings for 85
12 people, \$200,000 houses off the tax rolls
13 all over town when this place could have
14 them all at one place. It's just -- I just
15 don't see why this can't be worked out
16 somehow, and I hope you all have a nice
17 Easter and have a nice holiday.

18 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you.

19 MS. EVANS: Is there anyone else who
20 cares to address council? Mrs. Krake?

21 MS. KRAKE: FIFTH ORDER. 5-A.

22 MOTIONS.

23 MS. EVANS: Councilman Rogan, do you
24 have any comments or motions?

25 MR. ROGAN: Yes, thank you. I'll be

1 pretty brief tonight. There has been much
2 talk in recent weeks about payless paydays
3 for city employees, obviously, everyone
4 hopes this doesn't happen, but in the event
5 that there are payless paydays with
6 council's agreement I would like to send a
7 letter to the administration asking that the
8 administrative employees and city council
9 are the last to be paid if there is a way to
10 pay unionized employees first. I firmly
11 believe that the lawmakers should be paid
12 last if there is no money in the pot, with
13 everyone's agreement if we can send that
14 letter?

15 MS. EVANS: Yes, and I'm in
16 agreement with that. I would add though
17 that I spoke this afternoon with the mayor
18 who indicated that there will be pay for
19 everybody.

20 MR. ROGAN: That's the best case
21 scenario, but in the event that, you know,
22 they are \$100,000 short by not paying city
23 council, paying the mayor's salary, the
24 mayor's secretary, if that could make
25 payroll for everyone else --

1 MS. EVANS: Yes.

2 MR. ROGAN: -- we could certainly go
3 a few weeks without the pay instead having
4 the city employees do so.

5 MR. JOYCE: I agree.

6 MR. ROGAN: Next, I see in the
7 e-mail from Ryan McGowan concerns about Blue
8 Cross, the payments that haven't been paid.
9 Can we also send a letter to Mr. McGowan
10 asking exactly how much is owed, if anyone
11 knows, and if we are in any danger of losing
12 our coverage. I think as bad as a payless
13 payday would be for a city employees what
14 may be even worse is Blue Cross dropping the
15 coverage and then you have city employees
16 without health insurance coverage.

17 You know, if you are an accident or
18 something happens and you need medical care
19 you are getting the medical care whether you
20 have insurance or not. Now, whether the
21 burden in that scenario would have fallen on
22 the employees to pay it or if it would come
23 back to the city, either way it's not a good
24 situation. So, Mrs. Krake, could we please
25 send that and I'll have these in writing and

1 I'll send them tomorrow when the office
2 reopens.

3 MR. JOYCE: If you don't mind, if I
4 could add on that a little bit, because I
5 did speak to our business administrator Ryan
6 McGowan recently, and our Blue Cross claims
7 are currently being paid. If we are late on
8 the payment they are charging us a 5 percent
9 penalty.

10 MR. ROGAN: Okay, because in the
11 e-mail he wrote that, you know, he was
12 concerned about the outstanding obligation,
13 you know, stressing about a lapse in
14 coverage and that's I think what everybody
15 was worried about.

16 MR. JOYCE: That's what he told me
17 the last time I spoke to him, but I don't
18 know if anything has changed since then.

19 MR. ROGAN: I hope that's correct
20 and if that's the case then, you know,
21 everyone would be covered.

22 Finally, one more announcement I
23 forgot to make, it was actually just sent to
24 me in the middle of the meeting and Mr.
25 Piccolino was here last week to announce it.

1 At Buona Pizza this Easter Sunday from 5 to
2 8 p.m. anyone who doesn't have a place to go
3 for Easter dinner can stop by. He is
4 providing a dinner from 5 to 8 at Buona
5 Pizza, and if you can't make it, if you
6 can't drive or you are unable to make it,
7 Giovanni said he would be willing to deliver
8 and he could be contacted at 342--4032.

9 Two last notes, Mrs. Krake, can we
10 please a send a follow-up letter to Chief
11 Duffy asking if the Washburn Street Cemetery
12 will be included in the blight cleanup. I
13 know we sent this letter I think two weeks
14 ago, we haven't received a response as of
15 yet and the Washburn Street Cemetery has
16 been an issue since long before I have been
17 on council and hopefully one day it will
18 eventually be cleaned up.

19 Two final notes, not council
20 related, last weekend I had the privilege of
21 attending the West Scranton High School's
22 presentation of Grease, and I would like to
23 congratulate everyone involved, the
24 students, the staff, the parents, it was a
25 great production, the props were amazing

1 and, you know, I said when I left I forgot I
2 was on Luzerne Street, I thought on was on
3 Broadway because they did such a great job
4 and they certainly deserve credit for
5 everything they did.

6 And finally, I would like to wish
7 everyone and their families a very happy
8 Easter. Thank you.

9 MS. EVANS: Thank you, Councilman
10 Rogan. Councilman Loscombe, do you have any
11 comments or motions?

12 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes, thank you.
13 First of all, I think it was a week or two
14 ago GO Lackawanna newspaper highlighted a
15 situation at Keyser Valley on the storm
16 sewer problem. As of this date, the sewers
17 back there are still pretty full. Perhaps
18 we could send a letter to public works and
19 the Sewer Authority before we get some heavy
20 rains. Specifically, the two that were in
21 there that -- in the newspaper are still
22 pretty full and those are the problem areas,
23 so I'll provide you with the information,
24 but if we could send them a letter and make
25 sure they get there before we start getting

1 some heavy rains, otherwise, it's going to
2 cause more problems again.

3 Mr. Evans was here and spoke about a
4 project that he were looking at, I had the
5 opportunity to see the project or see the
6 building where the project is intended. I
7 was called by Mary Chalipko, president of
8 the Pinebrook Neighborhood Association and I
9 had met with her and three of the officials
10 who are looking to develop that property, as
11 Mr. Evans said, they want to be open right
12 up front and explain everything and show the
13 public, you know, what kind of project it
14 is.

15 There were a couple of things I
16 liked about it, the fact that it is not a
17 nonprofit, it will be paying taxes. The
18 fact it will be employing people in this
19 town. It's a vacant building that's been
20 sitting vacant and I believe the taxes were
21 left go for quite a long time, but it's a
22 good strong building. There were different
23 thoughts, different people were looking at
24 it to put more rental units in, apartments
25 and that, but, you know, with what's going

1 on downtown now we have quite a few of those
2 projects going on. The fact that this is in
3 an area right now that's not a neighborhood
4 area and, you know, there is lot of social
5 services in that vicinity, you know, to me
6 it appears to be probably a good idea for
7 what they plan on doing. But, you know,
8 that's my opinion and after going through it
9 and seeing their vision and their plans the
10 fact that they investing their own money,
11 not looking for anything from a taxpayers
12 and it will be taxable, and it will be
13 fixing up a property that it's an eyesore
14 and it's just deteriorating from vacancy
15 and, you know, my background in construction
16 and stuff I'll tell you what it's got a
17 great skeleton and good bones. It's got a
18 good base to work from, so anybody that does
19 anything with that building it's going to be
20 an asset to that whole area.

21 And I believe, you know, we had a
22 lot of questions for them previously at the
23 meeting, myself and Mrs. Chalipko, and they
24 answered everything that we had asked them
25 and I believe, you know, what they had

1 showed us. So, you know, hopefully that you
2 know the neighborhood and zoning would
3 consider that situation. I, for one,
4 personally feel it's a good idea for there
5 because it's been sitting so long and nobody
6 has been able to develop anything there,
7 but, you know, I wish them a lot of luck and
8 hopefully it will work out.

9 And I have been going around the
10 city, as my colleagues, and we go around
11 quite a bit, and now that the weather is
12 warmer it's a little easier to get outside
13 more often and check a lot of situations.
14 We get calls every day and there is a couple
15 of things that I want to tie in here, but
16 with our rental registration we have got
17 problems in the neighborhood, we all know
18 that, blight and different things like that
19 and our rental registration, as I stated
20 before, it's not meant to be a government
21 control of your property. We don't want to
22 come in and, you know, tear it apart on you.
23 Basically we are looking for light safety
24 issues and to clean up the neighborhood and
25 to help progress your own neighborhood with

1 a little help like that it will improve your
2 property values, because you have seen
3 what's happening in the neighborhoods.

4 But again, my philosophy is to be
5 firm but fair. Everyone has to be treated
6 the same. Everyone has to be treated
7 fairly. What I have run into as I am going
8 out there and a lot of issues are
9 construction related, you know, remodeling
10 related, different things that have to do
11 with LIPS and with the zoning officer. You
12 know, I see buildings that should be
13 condemned, buildings that should be forced
14 to do certain things, properties that they
15 should be forced to do certain things
16 because of the way they have been left go
17 just standing there. At the same time, I
18 have spoken to builders, developers,
19 individuals that are trying to improve their
20 properties in the city which is going to be
21 a benefit to you and your neighborhood with
22 their own money, their own investments and
23 are running into road blocks continuously.
24 Road blocks through the inspection's office
25 and our zoning office.

1 This shouldn't happen. Everybody
2 has to be treated firm but fair. Fair being
3 the correct word, and I don't think that's
4 happening here. There is certain
5 individuals that are getting away with
6 things, and there is other individuals who
7 have invested so much and have done
8 everything that they have been asked for
9 sometimes after they are asked to do
10 something then another thing is asked. This
11 isn't right. This is why we are so far
12 behind here. This is why our neighborhoods
13 are deteriorating. A lot of people have
14 given up.

15 And I am going to research a lot of
16 these stuff now because I have had a number
17 of people come to me about these issues and
18 we have to straighten this out. If we want
19 people to live in this town and pay the
20 taxes they have to be given the benefit of
21 the doubt and they have to be given a fair
22 shake when they are investing their money in
23 their own property. Naturally there is
24 codes to go by, but there is extremes that
25 people are being put through and I know it.

1 I personally experienced it myself for
2 someone else.

3 And again, I have gone around, I
4 have checked a lot of these and this is
5 going to be my focus. I have to focus on
6 this right now because if we are going to
7 build up this city, get rid of the blight,
8 we have to welcome these people that are
9 going to invest in their own properties,
10 improve their own properties without having
11 to get everybody out there that's tied in
12 with somebody to do different things to it.
13 They should be allowed to do what they have
14 to do, get it up to code or do what they
15 have to do within reason without dragging
16 the process out for month after month. You
17 know, that discourages many of the people
18 that are investing here.

19 I know for a fact there is builders
20 who won't even build in Scranton, let alone
21 individuals who want to invest in a property
22 in a rough blighted area, take over
23 properties, clean them up and do them right
24 and are having nothing but hassles over it.
25 There has got to be a middle of the road

1 especially when you see things being done
2 for other individuals without getting
3 permits and without having to go through all
4 of this process. That's one of the reasons
5 why we are in the position we are in.

6 But as I have said many times
7 before, every time we take two steps forward
8 there is step backwards. We have jumped
9 over a lot of hurdles in the last two years,
10 but, you know, we have to clean it up. You
11 know, the bureaucracy here and, you know,
12 many of the speakers have mentioned and it's
13 all around here, but treat the taxpayers in
14 this city fairly, remember we all work for
15 the taxpayers, they are making -- those that
16 are trying to make an investment, an honest
17 investment in our city, work with them not
18 against them, and I will follow up and keep
19 you up-to-date on any process on this. And
20 I think that's all I have. Thank you.

21 MS. EVANS: Thank you. And,
22 Councilman Joyce, do you have any comments
23 or motions?

24 MR. JOYCE: Yes, I do. As one may
25 or may not know, Northeast Revenue Service,

1 LLC, NRS, is collecting delinquent real
2 estate taxes for the city for all years with
3 the exception of 2011, which is being
4 collected by the Single Tax Office. For the
5 years of 2004 to 2006, all delinquent taxes
6 are remitted by check to Pennstar Bank do to
7 the Scranton Redevelopment Authority's
8 default on a prior loan relating to the sale
9 of the delinquent taxes for those years.

10 To report, for the period of March 1
11 to March 31, NRS collected and distributed
12 \$26,336.24 to Pennstar Bank for delinquent
13 taxes collected for the years 2004 to 2006.

14 For the period of March 1 to March
15 31, NRS collected and distributed
16 \$290,737.41 to the City of Scranton. This
17 constitutes delinquent taxes collected for
18 all other years besides 2004 to 2006 and, of
19 course, 2011 which is currently being
20 collected by the Single Tax Office, as I
21 stated previously. And just to note that
22 the Single Tax Office is doing a very good
23 job in collecting delinquent taxes for the
24 that year.

25 I read over their report of

1 collections and, you know, in the report I
2 have here they made collections backdated to
3 1945. With this in mind, you know, it's my
4 opinion that NRS is doing a good job at
5 collecting delinquent taxes and,
6 furthermore, they are doing a much better
7 job than NCC did when they were here, and
8 that's one thing I think that NRS is
9 definitely a cut above NCC as far as their
10 delinquent tax collection procedures.

11 Second of all, I have been --
12 council has been notified that \$2,782,256.52
13 has been deposited into the 2012 TAN debt
14 reserve escrow account. As everyone knows,
15 I probably mention this every time there is
16 a deposit, this year there is a special
17 agreement with real estate taxes due to the
18 conditions of the tax anticipation note that
19 was awarded to the city by Fidelity Bank as
20 well as banks that they partnered with. All
21 real estate taxes are required to be
22 deposited directly into this account until
23 the tax anticipation note is paid or June
24 30th of 2012.

25 Just to give you a quick update of

1 where we are, I just saw this in our mail,
2 but right now I would estimate that we are
3 probably between 2.2 to 2.6 or seven million
4 dollars, I don't know have the latest
5 figure, but that's about where we are as far
6 as what we owe on the TAN at this point as
7 of today, April 5, if you were to deduct all
8 of the money that's been deposited into the
9 escrow account.

10 And I do have two citizens'
11 requests. Residents of the Keyser Valley
12 section of West Scranton report that the
13 traffic lights located on the 2400 block of
14 Jackson Street has profane language spray
15 painted on it and it has been this way for
16 quite sometime. Residents feel as if this
17 is degrading to their neighborhood.

18 Mrs. Krake, with this in mind, can
19 you please inform Director Dougher of the
20 situation and ask him to handle this
21 accordingly.

22 Also, residents of the Keyser Valley
23 section have informed me that the condition
24 of the 100 and 200 block of North Dewey
25 Avenue are subpar have and cracks and

1 subsidences and growth that's making travel
2 conditions quite difficult.

3 And, Mrs. Krake, if you could add
4 this to the list of items to inform Director
5 Dougher to handle that would be greatly
6 appreciated.

7 And finally tonight with the holiday
8 season upon us, I would just like to wish
9 everyone a very joyous Easter and very
10 blessed Easter and Passover for our Jewish
11 friends that celebrate Passover as well, and
12 that's all.

13 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Good
14 evening. First, I'd like to provide an
15 update of recent activities. A second
16 meeting with Mayor Doherty and BA Ryan
17 McGowan was held to continue developing
18 joint initiatives and recommendations for
19 the Revised Recovery Plan. I would ask
20 Councilman Loscombe, McGoff and Rogan to
21 submit any and all suggestions for new
22 revenue generators to Councilman Joyce or to
23 me on or before April 12, the date of our
24 next city council meeting in order that we
25 may possibly be able to present a draft of

1 joint initiatives by the end of the month to
2 city council, the public and the
3 Pennsylvania Economy League.

4 Also, Solicitor Boyd Hughes, city
5 clerk Nancy Krake, Councilman Joyce, Mayor
6 Doherty, and I met with all county
7 commissioners, Superintendent William King,
8 School Director Jason Shrive, Ron Koladjeski
9 and John Foley to discuss both city and
10 countywide tax exempt entities. Mr. Foley
11 provided everyone with a list of all tax
12 exempt properties within the City of
13 Scranton in which he included taxes on land
14 improvements and a combined total, which I
15 will share with you.

16 The total tax loss from tax exempt
17 properties is \$196,293,893. Attorney Hughes
18 presented examples of the tax returns
19 documenting the profitable income and
20 discussed legal cases in which success with
21 tax exempts was achieved. Thereafter, the
22 city, county and school district agreed to
23 assign select employees to work jointly to
24 compile additional necessary information to
25 submit to the committee.

1 Following next month's meeting, the
2 three taxing bodies hope to announce the
3 first joint steps that will be taken to
4 generate revenue from tax exempt properties.

5 Also, intergovernmental cooperation
6 for ongoing and new projects was discussed,
7 including the annual summer concert series
8 conducted on the grounds of the courthouse,
9 the need to diversify entertainment to
10 better appeal to families with young
11 children and development of events to be
12 conducted beyond the downtown area.

13 It was the first joint meeting among
14 the three local taxing bodies of which I am
15 aware throughout my term as a city council
16 woman, and though the primary purpose of
17 these meetings is to address tax exempt
18 properties, secondary concerns and issues
19 may be raised and solved.

20 Next, the issue of the payment to
21 Solicitor Hughes for services rendered has
22 been raised by the city controller.
23 Clearly, Attorney Hughes is employed by
24 Scranton City Council and his duties and
25 responsibilities are strictly to this

1 council and it's office. However, the city
2 has found itself in dire financial straights
3 after a decade of unbridled, historic
4 borrowing and spending, which was enabled by
5 every sitting council from 2002 up to and
6 including 2009 to 2009 that approved annual
7 legislation to borrow funds for city and
8 Scranton Parking Authority projects, by the
9 Pennsylvania Economy League who allowed
10 current year TANS to pay for TANS from the
11 previous year in violation of the city TAN
12 ordinances and the Unit Debt Act, and by the
13 Department of Economic and Community
14 Development, which encouraged the
15 administration to fight it's own Scranton
16 police and fire in the courts and appeal
17 each decision until ultimately the case was
18 decided by the State Supreme Court for tens
19 of millions of dollars.

20 During the years in which I sat on
21 city council as a minority member, I warned
22 the public, voted against excessive
23 borrowing and spending and fought for the
24 people while I was frequently labeled a
25 prophet of doom, a naysayer and an

1 obstructionist. Those warnings and
2 predictions have been validated since
3 December 2011 when the city's financial
4 house of cards came tumbling down and the
5 local banks and the Pennsylvania Economy
6 League drew city council into the terms of
7 the 2012 series TAN-A and the borrowing of
8 \$5 million from the Workers' Comp Trust
9 Fund, both of which were unprecedented
10 actions.

11 Despite our numerous policy
12 disagreements, I agreed to work with the
13 mayor to keep this city alive at a time,
14 quite frankly, when it's on life support.
15 At any given moment city council or the
16 mayor can pull the plug and our city will
17 fall into bankruptcy or we can continue to
18 work cooperatively to meet this weighty
19 challenge. It was in that spirit of
20 cooperation and to provide for accurate and
21 timely development of financial documents,
22 TANS and legislation that council directed
23 Solicitor Hughes to come to the table to
24 perform duties that are well above and
25 beyond those required as a council

1 solicitor.

2 The need and urgency to act were
3 clear and present, and our council solicitor
4 agreed to work with banks, bond counsels,
5 the city solicitor and the mayor. We
6 directed Attorney Hughes to become involved
7 because he has a wealth of experience and
8 knowledge in municipal finance, law, and
9 government and has won Court victories
10 against the City of Scranton when it has
11 wrongfully acted.

12 On the other hand, he has also
13 successfully represented the city in
14 litigation among his lengthy portfolio of
15 clients. He has the proven expertise to
16 work with bond counsels and banks, develop
17 formulas for anticipated Court mandated tax
18 increases, and negotiate contracts, among
19 numerous other skill sets. Undoubtedly,
20 City Solicitor Kelly possesses his own set
21 of specialties, but is spread thin among his
22 duties and responsibilities to the
23 administration and the Parking Authority.

24 Therefore, what Solicitor Kelly
25 cannot perform Solicitor Hughes performs and

1 vice versa in every event that has a crucial
2 timeline. Hence, the services of Solicitor
3 Hughes are a much needed significant asset
4 while this city remains on life support. He
5 doesn't have to assume this tremendous
6 workload and, quite frankly, both of the
7 Doherty administration and this council are
8 very fortunate to have him. More
9 importantly, the people of Scranton benefit
10 from an experienced attorney who is
11 tirelessly working to protect them and save
12 money by insuring that every contract, every
13 bond issue, every piece of the related
14 legislation and every written agreement is
15 drafted accurately and lawfully.

16 He deserves just compensation for
17 his services, just as Attorney Greco,
18 Attorney Goldberg, Attorney Hickey and
19 numerous other attorneys selected by the
20 Doherty administration for various services
21 beyond the ability of its city solicitor and
22 his assistants were compensated.

23 Equally notable, Scranton City
24 Council acted within it's legal scope of
25 authority by amending the 2012 operating

1 budget to increase it's professional
2 services account and line item in order to
3 provide funds for legal services above and
4 beyond those required for a council
5 solicitor when needed. Without Attorney
6 Hughes' specialized services and expertise,
7 crucial timelines will not be met.

8 City council hopes that
9 Mrs. Novembrino know will decide to allow
10 financial progress and cooperation to
11 continue among the administration, city
12 council and it's solicitor during these most
13 crucial times, particularly, because it is
14 in the best interest of the people of
15 Scranton whom we are all elected to serve.
16 Only by working together can we try to
17 prevent bankruptcy and provide a Revised
18 Recovery Plan.

19 Next, I would like the residents of
20 the Webster Towers to know that city council
21 received your request for increased
22 financial support of the arts and will be
23 mindful of it when allocating annually,
24 decreasing federal funds among the numerous
25 applicants throughout our Scranton

1 community. We'll do our best to stretch the
2 money as far as possible.

3 Finally, I have two citizens'
4 requests for the week. Please report the
5 following streetlight outage, Pole ID No.
6 100W56828N45187. The pole is on Musin Court
7 at the rear of 428 Breck Street and 429
8 Ripple Street. It has already been
9 identified as city owned. Please repair
10 ASAP.

11 And a second request to post a "Do
12 Not Enter" sign on North Garfield Avenue, a
13 one-way street heading south. Countless
14 vehicles are driving north and homeowners
15 have valid safety concerns, and that's it.

16 MS. KRAKE: 5-B. NO BUSINESS AT
17 THIS TIME.

18 SIXTH ORDER. 6-A. READING BY TITLE
19 - FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 28, 2012 -
20 AN ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF COUNCIL NO.
21 40, 2010, ENTITLED, "AN ORDINANCE
22 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE
23 OFFICIALS OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO TAKE
24 ALL NECESSARY ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE
25 CONSOLIDATED SUBMISSION FOR COMMUNITY

1 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS TO BE
2 FUNDED UNDER THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK
3 GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM, HOME INVESTMENT
4 PARTNERSHIP (HOME) PROGRAM AND EMERGENCY
5 SHELTER GRANT (ESG) PROGRAM, BY AMENDING
6 THE CONSOLIDATED PLAN AND THE 2011 ACTION
7 PLAN TO ACCEPT, RECEIVE AND DISBURSE
8 \$84,412.00 ADDITIONAL FUNDING UNDER A NEW
9 PROGRAM UNDER THE HOMELESS EMERGENCY
10 ASSISTANCE AND RAPID TRANSITION TO HOUSING
11 ACT OF 2009 (HEARTH ACT), ENACTED INTO LAW
12 ON MAY 20, 2009, CONSOLIDATING THREE OF THE
13 SEPARATE HOMELESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
14 ADMINISTERED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
15 HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (HUD) UNDER
16 THE MC KINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT
17 INTO A SINGLE GRANT PROGRAM AND REVISES THE
18 EMERGENCY SHELTER GRANT PROGRAM AND RENAME
19 IT THE EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANTS (ESG)
20 PROGRAM.

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

23 MR. ROGAN: I move that Item 6-A
24 pass reading by title.

25 MR. JOYCE: Second.

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

3 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

4 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

5 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

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

8 MS. KRAKE: 6-B. READING BY TITLE -
9 FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 29, 2012 - AN ORDINANCE
10 - ESTABLISHING A NO PARKING ZONE IN THE 700
11 BLOCK OF CEDAR AVENUE (S.R. 3023) ON THE
12 WESTERN MOST SIDE OF SAID STREET PURSUANT TO
13 THE HIGHWAY OCCUPANCY PERMIT APPLICATION OF
14 CITIZENS SAVINGS BANK FROM SR 3023 SEGMENT
15 0050 OFFSET 0397 TO SR 3023 SEGMENT 0050
16 OFFSET 0532 FOR A DISTANCE OF ONE HUNDRED
17 THIRTY FIVE (135) FEET.

18 MS. EVANS: You've heard reading by
19 title of Item 6-B, what is your pleasure?

20 MR. ROGAN: I move that Item 6-B
21 pass reading by title.

22 MR. JOYCE: Second.

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

25 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

1 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

2 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

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

5 MS. KRAKE: SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A.
6 FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON
7 COMMUNITY
8 DEVELOPMENT FOR ADOPTION-RESOLUTION NO. 17,
9 2012 - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER
10 APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS FOR THE CITY OF
11 SCRANTON TO ENTER INTO A LOAN AGREEMENT AND
12 MAKE A LOAN FROM THE COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL
13 REVOLVING LOAN PROGRAM, PROJECT NO. 150.33
14 IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$150,000.00 TO
15 520 MADISON AVENUE ASSOCIATES, LLC TO ASSIST
16 AN ELIGIBLE PROJECT.

17 MS. EVANS: What is the
18 recommendation of the Chair for the
19 Committee on Community Development?

20 MR. ROGAN: As Chairperson for the
21 Committee on Community Development, I
22 recommend final passage of Item 7-A.

23 MR. JOYCE: Second.

24 MS. EVANS: On the question?

25 MR. LOSCOMBE: Just on the question,

1 I believe I had requested some information
2 on the guarantees, did we receive anything
3 on that or --

4 MS. KRAKE: Yes, we did. The
5 guarantee is actually attached to the
6 legislation.

7 MR. LOSCOMBE: The legislation that
8 we have?

9 MS. KRAKE: Um-hum.

10 MR. LOSCOMBE: The only thing I saw
11 was -- it left it pretty broad. I was just
12 wondering if there was something more
13 specific.

14 MS. KRAKE: If you wanted to ask a
15 more specific questions I'm sure that could
16 be done, but their answer was they answered
17 your question, but if you need more
18 specifics I'm sure we could, you know,
19 follow-up on it.

20 MR. LOSCOMBE: I believe when I read
21 it just said that whatever the city requires
22 or something at that point.

23 MS. KRAKE: To the back of the
24 legislation there is attachments and the
25 guarantee was part of that. There is the

1 agreement and then the guarantee was also
2 there.

3 MR. LOSCOMBE: I don't know if I had
4 it in my backup. I didn't see that.

5 MS. EVANS: I know that during the
6 evening of the public caucus I had requested
7 from Mr. Nasser that he forward to city
8 council's office a copy of the paid tax
9 receipts for the property and an
10 approximation of the permit charges that
11 would have been paid to the city over the
12 ten years during which he says that he has
13 been actively renovating the property.

14 Mrs. Krake, I could be wrong, but I
15 know we are trying to look into some of the
16 permits, when was the last year in which a
17 permit was taken out?

18 MS. KRAKE: I don't have them in
19 front of me, I apologize, I believe it was
20 2006. The total was somewhere around
21 \$50,000.

22 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Is there
23 anyone else on the question?

24 MR. ROGAN: I would just add I do
25 support this loan for many reasons, the main

1 one being the developer of this property
2 already put in I believe he said in excess
3 of \$1 million of his own money. It's not
4 just the loan for an upstart, it's even
5 identified in the legislation that the money
6 is to be used for furniture, fixtures and
7 equipment, inventory and working capital
8 needs.

9 The rehabilitation of the property
10 is already completed. That was paid for
11 with all of the developer's own money not
12 the tax money, and if he already paid around
13 \$50,000 in fees to the city, so that's a
14 third of the loan that he already paid to
15 the city just to renovate the property. So
16 he is obviously pretty committed to
17 renovating the property and having a nice
18 bed and breakfast in Scranton. Whether it
19 works or not, who knows. That's not by
20 business. I'm not in the bed and breakfast
21 business, but it does sound like a nice idea
22 and from Mr. Nasser said the rates would be
23 competitive to a hotel because in the bed
24 and breakfast you get one room, which is you
25 have multiple people, in the hotel you have

1 multiple rooms, so I do support this
2 legislation and I thank Mr. Nasser for
3 coming in and making himself available to
4 council.

5 MR. LOSCOMBE: I'm sorry.

6 MS. EVANS: No, go ahead.

7 MR. LOSCOMBE: No, since we are
8 discussing it, he said about the permits and
9 that, there was no permits pulled since
10 2006. You know, I'm a firm believer of
11 investment in this city and I just, you
12 know, explained my feelings on that. It's
13 not a grant, it's not handed to the
14 individual, as long as we have a guarantee,
15 you know, I'd love to see any development or
16 any progress on this here at this point.

17 I just hope that any pro-grant
18 permits that would have to be taken at this
19 point will be done, but, you know, I would
20 have to say at this point I'm in favor of
21 this project.

22 MS. EVANS: I just want to add that
23 because the information that I had requested
24 and that Mr. Nasser assured us would be
25 forthcoming was not given to the city

1 council's office I will be voting "no".
2 Anyone else on the question? Roll call,
3 please.

4 MS. KRAKE: Mr. McGoff. Mr. Rogan.

5 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

6 MS. KRAKE: Mr. Loscombe.

7 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes.

8 MS. KRAKE: Mr. Joyce.

9 MR. JOYCE: No.

10 MS. KRAKE: Mrs. Evans.

11 MS. EVANS: No. I hereby declare
12 Item 7-A is not legally and lawfully
13 adopted.

14 MR. LOSCOMBE: I'd like it make a
15 motion to take File of Council No. 24, 2004,
16 from the table.

17 MS. EVANS: Do we have a second?

18 MR. JOYCE: Second.

19 MS. EVANS: On the question?

20 MR. ROGAN: Yes. Why are we taking
21 this off the table when we didn't receive
22 the information yet?

23 MS. EVANS: Councilman Loscombe, do
24 you want to repeat what you said about the
25 conversation with Chief Duffy?

1 MR. LOSCOMBE: What this legislation
2 was, it had nothing to do with the original
3 28 vehicles. This is for future -- for the
4 ability for the police department to have
5 basically any vehicles that are sold by the
6 police department or through a police
7 department go into their own account for
8 their own vehicles.

9 As far as the policy, I don't have
10 it in front of me here, my discussion with
11 Chief Duffy was that whatever opportunity
12 given to them at that time to generate the
13 best -- the biggest amount of revenue, the
14 biggest bang for the buck to put towards a
15 vehicle, would be utilized. I know he is --
16 you know, he is anxious to get some new
17 vehicles and he is looking to generate as
18 much revenue as he can and he feels that
19 this going into that bucket of money would
20 go towards new vehicles rather than just
21 being thrown in with a file like inspector
22 vehicles and stuff like that.

23 MR. ROGAN: From the conversation we
24 had last week after the meeting, if the
25 legislation specifically said the money from

1 police vehicles that are scraped will go to
2 the police department, I don't think anyone
3 would have a problem, but it sets up the
4 procedure of scraping instead of, you know,
5 an auction. And I'll talk more when we get
6 on the question, I assume it's going to be
7 put back on the table.

8 MS. EVANS: Anyone else? All those
9 in favor signify by saying aye.

10 MR. LOSCOMBE: Aye.

11 MR. JOYCE: Aye.

12 MS. EVANS: Aye. Opposed?

13 MR. ROGAN: No.

14 MS. EVANS: The ayes have it and so
15 moved.

16 MS. KRAKE: 7-B. FOR CONSIDERATION
17 BY THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY FOR
18 ADOPTION-FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 24, 2012
19 (PREVIOUSLY TABLED)- AUTHORIZING AND
20 ESTABLISHING A PROCEDURE FOR THE DISPOSAL OF
21 CITY-OWNED POLICE VEHICLES.

22 MS. EVANS: What is the
23 recommendation of the Chair for the
24 Committee on Public Safety?

25 MR. LOSCOMBE: As the Chair for the

1 Committee on Public Safety, I recommend
2 final passage of Item 7-B.

3 MR. JOYCE: Second.

4 MS. EVANS: On the question?

5 MR. ROGAN: Yes, on the question. I
6 opposed this legislation from the beginning
7 for various reasons, and a new one that just
8 arose tonight as we had a representative
9 from the county here mentioning that the
10 commissioners are floating the idea of
11 having a multi-municipality auction. I have
12 been saying since before he was here to say
13 that I believe an auction is the best way to
14 dispose of these vehicles for two reasons:

15 Number one, if they are put up for
16 auction, especially the Lackawanna County
17 multi-municipal auction, when the police --
18 the parts of the police vehicles or the
19 vehicles is sold it's sold to another local
20 municipality, which still will help fight
21 crime in our area instead of sending it to a
22 scrap yard and melted for scrap.

23 The second point is I firmly believe
24 that an auction will bring in far more
25 revenue than bringing the cars to a scrap

1 yard. We all see what they do at a scrap
2 yard they sell every part they could, they
3 make their money, but in order for a
4 business to make money they have to give you
5 less than what it's worth. By selling
6 directly to another municipality, we
7 eliminate the middleman and the city will
8 get more money.

9 Mr. Loscombe mentioned before about
10 the specific account for the police vehicles
11 being put in, I don't oppose that. If the
12 legislation just stated, "The proceeds from
13 the sale of the scraped police vehicles goes
14 to the police department," I would vote
15 enthusiastically "yes". But with there
16 being an auction component, I think the
17 taxpayer is losing out and even the police
18 department is losing out on more revenue
19 that they could bring in through an auction.

20 And on top of that, I know you spoke
21 to Chief Duffy, but letters were sent to him
22 and he didn't reply to us, so I will be
23 voting "no".

24 MS. EVANS: Well, I would agree that
25 to my knowledge the police chief didn't

1 reply in writing, but then he was visited by
2 Councilman Loscombe so that we could receive
3 the answers.

4 MR. ROGAN: These requests were sent
5 I think three times to the chief and on the
6 last piece of legislation two council
7 members voted "no" because we didn't receive
8 a response from a businessman who is very
9 busy, when we have a city employee who
10 should answer the council and the mayor who
11 doesn't reply and it's just going to get
12 rammed through.

13 MS. EVANS: Well, actually he did
14 reply to Councilman Loscombe --

15 MR. LOSCOMBE: He did explain to me
16 in the meeting --

17 MR. ROGAN: He replied to one
18 council member, not all of council.

19 MR. LOSCOMBE: He did respond that
20 he wasn't able to respond to every letter he
21 has gotten so far because he is still doing
22 a lot of stuff there.

23 MR. ROGAN: If Chief Duffy believes
24 in this so much that this is the right way
25 to go wouldn't he have responded to council?

1 Additionally, in the chief's initial
2 reasoning for this he cited that scrap metal
3 has been going up, which is completely not
4 true. Over the last year the price of
5 aluminum has went from \$1.20 per pound to
6 less than a dollar a pound, nearly a 25
7 percent decrease. All metal commodities are
8 down 19.17 percent. Iron ore is down 24.99
9 percent, and tin is down 23.17 percent. The
10 cost of the metal is what you are going to
11 send to the scrap yard, that's what they are
12 paying you for, is going down.

13 By auctioning the parts it's going
14 to a municipality that is going to use the
15 part in their police vehicle. It could help
16 them and it could help us.

17 MS. EVANS: I would think though we
18 are looking at the car parts that if any are
19 usable our garages should be keeping them to
20 be used in other vehicles that are part of
21 the police force, but I do know, you know,
22 if are you trying to auction a vehicle
23 itself the vehicle has to at least start up
24 and the engine is running so that bidders
25 are able to open the hood and look into the

1 engine, etcetera, but on most of the
2 vehicles I think that we saw --

3 MR. LOSCOMBE: Were striped.

4 MS. EVANS: -- had either been
5 totaled in an accident or they had been
6 sitting dead for over a year.

7 MR. ROGAN: Well, as any scrap
8 dealer will tell you or anyone that ever
9 went to a junk yard to buy a part for their
10 own car, just because a car doesn't run
11 doesn't mean that many of the other parts in
12 the care are in working condition where they
13 could help another municipality and they are
14 going to be paying more to us than a scrap
15 yard would be.

16 MS. EVANS: Well, we are getting --
17 I think out of the first lot that was sold
18 we are getting about \$4,000 per vehicle.

19 MR. ROGAN: In the first lot that
20 was sold the procedure wasn't even approved
21 by council, they just went and did it like
22 the administration always does. They send
23 the legislation down, do what they want to
24 do before the legislation passes and then we
25 are still going to approve this anyway.

1 MS. EVANS: Precisely. I agree with
2 that, but that's why I would like to get the
3 procedure in place. Is there anyone else on
4 the question? Roll call, please.

5 MS. KRAKE: Mr. McGoff. Mr. Rogan.

6 MR. ROGAN: No.

7 MS. KRAKE: Mr. Loscombe.

8 MR. LOSCOMBE: Yes.

9 MS. KRAKE: Mr. Joyce.

10 MR. JOYCE: Yes.

11 MS. KRAKE: Mrs. Evans.

12 MS. EVANS: Yes. I hereby declare
13 Item 7-B legally and lawfully adopted. If
14 there is no further business, I'll entertain
15 a motion to adjourn.

16 MR. JOYCE: Motion to adjourn.

17 MS. EVANS: This meeting is
18 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