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SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
PUBLIC HEARING

IN RE: FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 47, 2013 -  
AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS  
OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO TAKE ALL NECESSARY ACTIONS  
TO IMPLEMENT THE CONSOLIDATED SUBMISSION FOR COMMUNITY  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS TO BE FUNDED UNDER  
THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM,  
HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP (HOME) PROGRAM AND  
EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANTS (ESG) PROGRAM FOR THE PERIOD  
BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2014.

HELD:

Thursday, September 19, 2013

LOCATION:

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

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR  
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

1     CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

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3     JANET EVANS, PRESIDENT

4

5     PAT ROGAN, VICE-PRESIDENT

6

7     ROBERT MCGOFF

8

9     FRANK JOYCE

10

11    JOHN LOSCOMBE

12

13    NANCY KRAKE, CITY CLERK

14

15    JAMIE MARCIANO, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

16

17    BOYD HUGHES, SOLICITOR

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1 MS. EVANS: I'd like to call this  
2 public hearing to order. Roll call, please.

3 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. McGoff. Mr.  
4 Rogan.

5 MR. ROGAN: Here.

6 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Loscombe.

7 MR. LOSCOMBE: Here.

8 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Joyce. Mrs.  
9 Evans.

10 MS. EVANS: Here.

11 Notice is hereby given that Scranton  
12 City Council will hold a Public Hearing on  
13 Thursday, September 19, 2013 at 5:30 P.M.,  
14 in Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, Municipal  
15 Building, 340 No. Washington Avenue,  
16 Scranton, Pennsylvania. The purpose of said  
17 Public Hearing is to hear testimony  
18 and discuss the following:

19 FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 47, 2013 -  
20 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE  
21 OFFICIALS OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO TAKE  
22 ALL NECESSARY ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE  
23 CONSOLIDATED SUBMISSION FOR COMMUNITY  
24 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS TO BE  
25 FUNDED UNDER THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK

1 GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM, HOME INVESTMENT  
2 PARTNERSHIP (HOME) PROGRAM AND EMERGENCY  
3 SOLUTIONS GRANTS (ESG) PROGRAM FOR THE  
4 PERIOD BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2014.

5 And before we begin, I would like to  
6 acknowledge and thank Ms. Aebli, OECD  
7 director; Attorney Michael O'Brien,  
8 representing OECD; and Mr. Tom Preambo, also  
9 representing OECD, for their attendance at  
10 this public here hearing.

11 MS. AEBLI: Thank you.

12 MR. O'BRIEN: Thank you.

13 MS. EVANS: Our first speaker is Lee  
14 Morgan. No? Trisha Thomas.

15 MS. THOMAS: Good evening. My name  
16 is Trisha Thomas, I'm the director of the  
17 Boys and Girls Clubs of Northeastern  
18 Pennsylvania, and first of all, I would like  
19 to extend a thank you to city council, Mayor  
20 Chris Doherty, and the Office of Economic  
21 and Community Development for your past  
22 support of our programs, our building and  
23 your belief in our organization.

24 The Boys and Girls Clubs of  
25 Northeastern Pennsylvania has two CDBG

1 applications before you. One for our  
2 Park-It Program, and one for the renovation  
3 of the first floor interior of our building.

4 We respectfully request that city  
5 council fully fund both applications. The  
6 Park-It program. The cost of the Park-It  
7 program is \$63,000. We currently have a  
8 funding request pending for \$11,000. We  
9 need \$52,000 additional dollars to  
10 successfully run this program in the Summer  
11 of 2014. Park-It is a free, ten-week summer  
12 program, essentially the entire summer, that  
13 keeps you safe, supervised, fed and off the  
14 street when school is not in session.

15 In 2013, we served 254 children at  
16 three sites in the City of Scranton. Since  
17 2003, in the City of Scranton, the Park-It  
18 Program has helped to provide safe and  
19 suitable living environments, helped to  
20 improve areas that serve low to moderate  
21 income youth, and helped to improve low to  
22 moderate income neighborhoods. There is a  
23 great need for localized summer programs  
24 such as Park-It when school is not in  
25 session, especially in low to moderate

1 income neighborhoods.

2 Park-It helps to prevent summer  
3 learning loss, addresses the need of a lack  
4 of transportation to and from summer  
5 programming, addresses the lack of nutrition  
6 during the summer months, and addresses the  
7 need for affordable summer programming.

8 If we do not receive the entire  
9 funding, we will have to decrease the number  
10 of locations, conduct the appropriate fewer  
11 days, conduct the program for fewer hours  
12 per day, and/or serve less children.

13 A main goal of the Boys and Girls  
14 Clubs of Northeastern Pennsylvania is to  
15 never turn a child away. With your help, we  
16 will not have to. Thank you.

17 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Our next  
18 speaker is Joy Kalasinski.

19 MS. KALASINSKI: Hello. My name is  
20 Julianne Kalasinski, and I'm the development  
21 director of the Boys and Girls Clubs of  
22 Northeastern Pennsylvania. I am here today  
23 to speak0 in regards to the club's  
24 application to renovate our first floor  
25 interior. On behalf of our board of

1 directors, our staff, and the 1,000 children  
2 we serve yearly I am respectfully requesting  
3 to please fund this project in its entirety.  
4 The project will cost approximately  
5 \$180,000, all of which has been requested  
6 from OECD.

7 If you can imagine with about 200  
8 children in our building day after day, our  
9 first floor interior is in dire need of  
10 renovation. Our building was constructed in  
11 1973 and this portion of our building has  
12 never been renovated. We have cracked  
13 floors, we have old paint on the walls and  
14 we have some lights that don't even work.  
15 We do try to Band-Aid the building when we  
16 can, but now is the time for a complete  
17 renovation of the first floor interior of  
18 our building.

19 Our building is kept clean and safe,  
20 but we want our members to be proud of their  
21 facility. The project will take about three  
22 months to complete and it will not destruct  
23 any of our services currently being  
24 provided. Our programs are staff driven and  
25 building based. We need funding to keep our

1 building safe and up-to-date. Two of our  
2 biggest expenses are, first, is the  
3 maintenance of our building. Second is  
4 staff expenses. We need to pay our staff to  
5 implement these much needed programs.  
6 Therefore, we need both applications to be  
7 fully funded by OECD. So please keep in  
8 mind why the Park-It program and the first  
9 floor interior renovation are so essential,  
10 not only to our organization, but also the  
11 City of Scranton and the children we serve  
12 in this area. Thank you very much.

13 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

14 (Mr. McGoff joins the meeting.)

15 THE COURT: Michael McHale.

16 MR. MCHALE: Good evening. My name  
17 is Michael McHale, I'm the director of  
18 Project Hope at Camp St. Andrew. I am here  
19 on behalf of the United Neighborhood  
20 Centers. As the director of Project Hope, I  
21 have been involved with the organization for  
22 the past 25 years. We are requesting money  
23 to keep this continuing.

24 Project Hope serves underprivileged  
25 children from throughout Lackawanna County,



1 but primarily the City of Scranton.

2 Yesterday, it was published that 1/3  
3 of the children in Scranton are living in  
4 poverty, and these are the children we are  
5 serving. We are asking for you to fully  
6 fund our application for Project Hope. We  
7 served over 11,250 meals just in 2013 to  
8 children who attend Project Hope. We have a  
9 longstanding relationship with the Scranton  
10 School District. We have five teachers who  
11 come up to Project Hope on a daily basis.  
12 They provide extra instruction in science,  
13 math, reading, language arts, spelling. We  
14 have a nature program. We have a lake where  
15 the children swim each day. We also have a  
16 pool. We have speakers from throughout  
17 Lackawanna County that come up and provide  
18 drug and alcohol abuse education, all  
19 different kinds of programs that are  
20 important to the community.

21 Project Hope has been in existence  
22 the past 44 years and we hope that we can  
23 continue to provide the necessary  
24 educational and recreational activities for  
25 the children from throughout Scranton and

1 Lackawanna County. Thank you very much.

2 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Nancy Iezzi.

3 MS. IEZZI: Good evening. Thank you  
4 for this opportunity. My name is Mary Iezzi  
5 and I'm the executive director of Dress of  
6 Success of Lackawanna County, and I'd just  
7 like to thank you for your previous support  
8 of our agency. And if you are not familiar  
9 with what we do, we are an agency that helps  
10 women in transitioning back to the work  
11 force. We are best known for our suiting  
12 program by providing professional clothing  
13 for women who are transitioning out in the  
14 workforce.

15 We also now are providing career  
16 development services and workforce  
17 development services and the funding that we  
18 are asking for is to help fund those  
19 programs. Our workforce development  
20 programs we are finding now we have seen  
21 just recently that year up to this date we  
22 have an increased number of referrals and  
23 many of our referral partners are here  
24 tonight for services for women to be suited.

25 We have surpassed our projected

1 goals up in this point, but we are not only  
2 finding that suiting program has increased  
3 referrals, but also finding now that our  
4 career services are receiving increased  
5 referrals, so we are finding that women are  
6 coming to us not prepared for the workforce.

7 So what we are doing now is we are  
8 not only providing them with professional  
9 resumes, with professional cover letters,  
10 but we are also providing them with a skills  
11 and the tools necessary to not only just go  
12 out and find a job, but to land a career,  
13 and that's what our goal is with these women  
14 is to help them find a career to make them  
15 economically self-sufficient.

16 So, you know, those factors are  
17 really key to empowerment and building  
18 self-confidence and self-worth and  
19 self-sufficiency, and our mission at Dress  
20 for Success directly responds to those key  
21 factors. Those are priorities for us for  
22 teaching, educating and empowering women  
23 and, you know, your support will help us  
24 continue to provide those services so I  
25 would just thank you for your consideration

1 and on behalf of the women we serve we hope  
2 that you would consider giving us the full  
3 funding for our request. Thank you.

4 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Doug Miller.

5 MR. MILLER: Good evening, Council.  
6 Doug Miller, Scranton. Just real brief with  
7 this tonight, I do appreciate Ms. Aebli and  
8 the staff from OECD coming in here this  
9 evening. You know, just from taking a look  
10 at this briefly throughout the week, I do  
11 believe there are a lot of worthy, you know,  
12 institutions and, you know, programs out  
13 there that are worthy of the funding. You  
14 know, particularly the street paving and,  
15 you know, a lot of those different types of  
16 things. You know, blight removal, the West  
17 Lackawanna Avenue Bridge, I believe there  
18 was funding that was put in for it.

19 But one that stood out for me that I  
20 thought should be definitely one of our top  
21 priorities moving into next year, 2014, is  
22 the I believe \$183,000 that was applied for  
23 by Pinebrook Neighborhood Association and I  
24 do believe that, you know, that's definitely  
25 something that should be a priority. I know

1           that was one of the -- one of the  
2           applications that wasn't recommended by the  
3           Office of Economic and Community  
4           Development. However, I do believe that  
5           council should take a close look as that.  
6           Perhaps we can consider giving them a  
7           portion of that funding, maybe not  
8           necessarily all of it, if that's allowed for  
9           us to do. I'm assuming a study was done  
10          where they came up with that \$183,000  
11          figure.

12                         But, you know, I just know that each  
13           summer we consistently have come to this  
14           podium and we have certainly been  
15           disappointed in the fact that this is  
16           probably the fourth summer now that those  
17           kids have suffered over in that part of town  
18           and I do think we need to take some sort of  
19           action and if this is the appropriate way to  
20           do that then I think we need to do that as a  
21           council, and I'm sure that we can support  
22           them in some way.

23                         As I said, if it's not possible to  
24           give them all of that funding there has to  
25           be something we can do because I don't think

1 we can continue go on and allow that pool to  
2 continue each summer to be closed and I do  
3 think that's something we have to address.

4 But again, there a lot of worthy  
5 projects and that makes it difficult to  
6 determine where the funding should be  
7 allocated. We have a lot of priorities, a  
8 lot of things we have to take a look at, but  
9 the Pinebrook Neighborhood Association that  
10 swimming pool particularly jumped out for me  
11 just because we've had a lot of discussion  
12 about the swimming pools, and the upkeep and  
13 the funding that, unfortunately, isn't there  
14 each year to, you know, obviously to have a  
15 full complement of swimming pools, but if we  
16 can certainly take a look at this and see  
17 what we can do to help them out down there.  
18 They put a lot of hard work in and I do  
19 think that if we have the opportunity to  
20 give them some assistance here with funding  
21 I think we should definitely jump on that.

22 That's all I have on this issue you.  
23 Thank you.

24 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Our next  
25 speaker is Peg Ruddy.

1 MS. RUDDY: Good evening, and thank  
2 you. I, too, want to express my  
3 appreciation to Ms. Aebli and Mr. Preambo  
4 the OECD department as well as city council  
5 and the mayor. Last year we concluded an  
6 extremely successful project at the Women's  
7 Resource Center where we are able to get a  
8 new roof and a new paint job and now we are  
9 moving onto some other wish list items that  
10 are necessary to keep our building safe.

11 Again, my name is Peg Ruddy, and I'm  
12 the executive director of the Women's  
13 Resource Center. Earlier this week in the  
14 newspaper, according to acting Chief  
15 Graziano, unfortunately violent crime is on  
16 the rise in Scranton, and while domestic  
17 violence is not often separated out from  
18 those reports, we know at the Women's  
19 resource Center that that's one of the  
20 crimes that is on the rise.

21 The Women's Resource Center is the  
22 sole provider in Scranton and all of  
23 Lackawanna County for crime victims as it  
24 relates to domestic and sexual abuse. We  
25 are the sole provider of emergency housing,

1 and crisis intervention service and advocacy  
2 for those adults and children.

3 A lot of the funding sources out  
4 there now want new projects, special  
5 projects, we are here to talk about our need  
6 for money for our core service, which is  
7 housed in our safe housing program. So  
8 Women's Resource Center has two applications  
9 in for 2014. One is to continue our  
10 emergency housing for victims of domestic  
11 violence in Scranton and all of Lackawanna  
12 County, although, the majority of our  
13 clients are from Scranton. We are a  
14 requesting \$30,000 from the Emergency  
15 Solutions Grant so that we can provide  
16 prompt, 24 hour a day easy access to a safe  
17 place to go for moms and kids who have to  
18 leave their home because they are not safe  
19 there.

20 We are also asking for an additional  
21 \$4,500 for our free housing program. We  
22 know often times abusive partners may leave  
23 their family in a lurch with a house that  
24 they can't afford and they have to move  
25 quickly, so in order to keep them out of the



1           shelter or the safe housing program we will  
2           use those dollars so that they can get  
3           independent living in their own apartments.

4                   Our second application is to the  
5           Community Development Block Grant Program,  
6           we are asking for \$25,832 so that we can  
7           upgrade our security at our building. We  
8           also want to be able to replace some  
9           sidewalks.

10                   I believe that each and every one of  
11           us here would agree that we have a  
12           fundamental right to be safe in our homes.  
13           A fundamental right. That is not true of  
14           our fellow Scranton citizens and so we are  
15           the safety net for those individuals and so  
16           I would appreciate your consideration for  
17           our applications this year. Thank you.

18                   MS. EVANS: Thank you. Angela, and  
19           I can't make out her last name.

20                   MS. SEIBERT: Seibert.

21                   MS. EVANS: How is that spelled?

22                   MS. SEIBERT: S-E-I-B-E-R-T.

23                   MS. EVANS: Thank you.

24                   MS. SEIBERT: Thank you for the  
25           opportunity to speak tonight. I'm Angela

1           Seibert from the EOTC. I'm the program  
2           coordinator. I'm here to speak about two  
3           projects before you tonight. For those who  
4           of you who may not be familiar with EOTC, we  
5           are a Scranton based nonprofit agency with a  
6           25-year history of promoting economic  
7           stability to area residents to work force  
8           development, youth mentoring at human  
9           service programs.

10                         With the city's assistance, we  
11           recently renovated a property at 431 North  
12           Seven Avenue to create a multi-service  
13           family resource center. Currently  
14           approximately 3,000 children and adults come  
15           to the Seventh Avenue Center each month,  
16           most of whom are low to moderate income  
17           Scranton residents.

18                         We have a requested CDBG funds in  
19           the amount of \$82,460 in order to  
20           reconstruct sidewalks and install light  
21           polls in front of the Seventh Avenue  
22           properties. The affected properties would  
23           include our building 431 North Seventh  
24           Avenue, and also the adjacent 413 or 415  
25           property which we recently purchased for

1 future development. The existing walkways  
2 are cracked, uneven and pose a risk to  
3 pedestrians that come into our center,  
4 neighboring businesses and also to the  
5 neighboring Scranton High School. The lack  
6 of the lighting for this North Seventh  
7 Avenue walkway poses an additional hazard to  
8 children and parents who are coming into our  
9 center for evening and later afternoon  
10 programs.

11 Aside from the recent public safety  
12 and access to programs that serve low to  
13 moderate income residents, the lighted  
14 sidewalks will also improve the overall  
15 street scape along the 400 block of North  
16 Seventh Avenue.

17 The City's consolidated plan also  
18 specifically mentions the need to replace  
19 sidewalks, so we feel that's in keeping  
20 with, you know, some of your goals.

21 Our second request before you is to  
22 support new workplace literacy projects  
23 inside of the county prison. EOTC has a  
24 long history of providing employment and  
25 training programs for low to moderate income

1 residents, particularly disadvantaged women.  
2 With 2014 CDBG funding, EOTC will introduce  
3 a program that integrates life skills,  
4 employment readiness, basic financial  
5 literary and job search training for  
6 individuals with significant barriers to  
7 employment.

8 Recently at the County's Criminal  
9 Justice Strategic Planning Committee  
10 specifically asked you to see to develop a  
11 work place literacy course to increase the  
12 employability of individuals returning into  
13 this community from the Lackawanna County  
14 Prison. The goal is to reduce the  
15 likelihood of taxpayer dependency and  
16 homelessness among Scranton residents with  
17 criminal backgrounds.

18 Our program will serve low to  
19 moderate income residents while they are  
20 housed at Lackawanna County Prison and then  
21 link them to the EOTC's employment services  
22 and other community program upon their  
23 release.

24 We believe that both of these  
25 projects are tremendously important for the

1 benefit of the taxpayers and we urge your  
2 support, and we are also committed to  
3 working with city council and OECD to  
4 further our city. So, thank you.

5 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

6 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you.

7 MS. EVANS: Steve Wallace.

8 MR. WALLACE: Good evening, council.

9 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

10 MR. WALLACE: Steve Wallace of South  
11 Side Neighborhood Watch, South Side  
12 resident. I'm here tonight to suggest that  
13 you hold the OECD funds to the police  
14 department to 309, 404 and 10 because if you  
15 cut it we could be losing officers we need.  
16 We have currently three officers right now  
17 stretched throughout the city. We need  
18 five, and that's what this funding is  
19 allocated for. They are stretched to the  
20 point where when you see them at the end of  
21 the day they definitely want to go home.

22 Imagine riding a bike all the way  
23 from the top of Valley View to Moosic Avenue  
24 and doing it three or four times a day or  
25 from say center city up to the top of East

1 Mountain. They are doing this on a regular  
2 basis every day and we only have three of  
3 them to cover the entire city.

4 Now, in the paper they said they  
5 want to cut it 152 from the figure it was.  
6 I think it should stay at the figure it is  
7 so we can have an additional two officers.  
8 I mean, both West Side and our group have  
9 been using these officers since they came  
10 back in May and we have had success on drug  
11 arrests, on blighted homes, on vandalism by  
12 children and if we lose them or we don't get  
13 the extra officers it's just going to go  
14 back where it was, so thank you everybody  
15 and OECD for their funding. Thank you.

16 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Ms. Aebli?

17 MS. AEBLI: Yes.

18 MS. EVANS: Would you care to  
19 address that specific comment?

20 MS. AEBLI: Sure.

21 MS. EVAN: I know you had a provided  
22 council with information about the  
23 neighborhood police patrol.

24 MS. AEBLI: The neighborhood police  
25 patrol is a public service and we can use

1           only 15 percent of our total allocation of  
2           CDBG on public services, and if you look on  
3           page four of my sheet, we can base that \$2.4  
4           million we can only spend \$360,000 on public  
5           services. So if we did fund the  
6           neighborhood police patrol, the \$300,000,  
7           you would have to cut all of the other  
8           public services, so that's why currently I  
9           have \$150,000 from 2010 that we are  
10          currently using, 2013 we put in \$150,000 and  
11          that's how I came up with \$152,000 for 2014.  
12          Currently, we have three officers on the  
13          beat.

14                   MS. EVANS: So that the money that  
15                   your office has suggested in terms of the  
16                   allocations is to continue funding just  
17                   those three officers.

18                   MS. AEBLI: Correct, because if we  
19                   fund any more you are going to have to take  
20                   off all of the other public services. It  
21                   wasn't an easy decision to make. You want  
22                   to fund everyone, but we have tough  
23                   decisions to make and that's how we decided  
24                   to do it.

25                   MS. EVANS: And the funding that was

1 available as you mentioned from previous  
2 years, that's now been used?

3 MS. AEBLI: We are using I believe  
4 2010 and then we did not fund the  
5 neighborhood police patrol for 2011 and 2012  
6 and we started January 2013. So currently  
7 we have three beat cops on patrol right now.

8 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Our next  
9 speaker is Andrea Wharton.

10 MS. WHARTON: No, I was going to  
11 speak about the same thing.

12 MR. WALLACE: Can I have a question,  
13 please?

14 MS. EVANS: Well, Mr. Wallace, you  
15 could stay and speak with Ms. Aebli  
16 following the public hearing --

17 MR. WALLACE: I have a disagreement  
18 with what she said.

19 MS. EVANS: -- following the meeting.

20 MR. WALLACE: Oh, okay, because I  
21 have a dispute with what she said.

22 MS. EVANS: Marie Schumacher.

23 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening,  
24 Council. Marie Schumacher.

25 MR. LOSCOMBE: Good evening.



1 MS. SCHUMACHER: Before I get in  
2 what I had come here for, did I just say  
3 that Ms. Aebli say that it's three not the  
4 five that was published in the paper?

5 MS. AEBLI: Correct.

6 MS. EVANS: I believe what was  
7 published in the paper were the applicants.  
8 You know, the applications that were  
9 submitted by every agency and organization,  
10 but I believe that, you know, the actual  
11 allocations they have not been publicized  
12 because they have not yet been decided.

13 MS. SCHUMACHER: Oh. What was  
14 published in the paper is just whatever they  
15 ask for? This says only 309 for the hiring  
16 of CDBG.

17 MR. O'BRIEN: Ma'am, I can actually  
18 address your question very briefly. The  
19 authority that ultimately that has -- or the  
20 decision making body that ultimately has the  
21 authority over these allocations is city  
22 council.

23 MS. SCHUMACHER: I understand that.

24 MR. O'BRIEN: What the  
25 representatives of OECD do as the subject

1 matter experts and as the people who are  
2 most familiar with these projects and how  
3 they are implemented, they give the elected  
4 representatives of the people their opinions  
5 so what was posted in the newspaper, as  
6 Mrs. Evans said, were the applicants.

7 What OECD has recommended was not  
8 posted because that's not final. The final  
9 amount is going to be determined by the  
10 elected officials who have the last say on  
11 the taxpayers' money.

12 MS. SCHUMACHER: Thank you. I would  
13 like to know how many first time potential  
14 recipients are on this list? How many are  
15 new?

16 MS. AEBLI: We have one. It's a  
17 public service, and it is Northeast Suicide  
18 Prevention Initiative.

19 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay.

20 MS. AEBLI: And they have asked for  
21 \$11,000.

22 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. Yeah, I have  
23 a real concern that some of these agencies  
24 are getting overly dependent upon OECD  
25 funding and I would think their boards would

1 be out raising money, so I would like to see  
2 what percent each of these agency's budget  
3 is being -- would be funded by the OECD  
4 grants, if that would be possible. I think  
5 that would be very helpful to know. I do  
6 think it's incumbent on some of these people  
7 to do and I'll get down to the United  
8 Neighborhood Center again in a minute.

9 I would like to know if there is a  
10 list of the properties to be demolished that  
11 backs up the half a million dollar item  
12 requested in the newspaper article? And I  
13 would like to know approximately how many  
14 are on that list.

15 MS. EVANS: Mrs. Schumacher, we do  
16 not have a list right now. We get the list  
17 from Licensing and Permits, the house is  
18 demolished and when they are ready -- I  
19 mean, I'm sorry, when they're condemned and  
20 when they are legally ready to be demolished  
21 those addresses are provided to OECD.

22 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, if we don't  
23 have any statistics on the number then how  
24 can we know whether or not a half a million  
25 dollars is a reasonable amount? How can

1 council do that and how can we let them know  
2 how we feel about that if we don't have any  
3 idea what the size of the population is?

4 MS. AEBLI: That answer would have  
5 to come from Licensing and Permits.

6 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay, Mr. Rogan,  
7 since this is your --

8 MR. ROGAN: I would just add,  
9 obviously anyone who walks through any  
10 street in Scranton there are no shortage of  
11 homes in the city that are in need of either  
12 rehab or demolition through these programs.

13 MS. SCHUMACHER: This is demolition  
14 only.

15 MR. ROGAN: Demolition as well and  
16 there is certainly -- there is not a lack of  
17 properties that need to be demolished. The  
18 funds are the issue. If we had -- we could  
19 probably spend \$20 million on it in the  
20 city, but I will ask the proper department  
21 for that list.

22 MS. SCHUMACHER: Thank you. Of the  
23 previous years demolition what percentage of  
24 the properties have been disposed of by sale  
25 or transfer to a new owner?

1                   MR. O'BRIEN: I would answer that  
2                   question by saying that, you know, the  
3                   allocation of funds that OECD recommends to  
4                   council and that council ultimately has the  
5                   authority over, that's where that stops.  
6                   The allocation of the funds to demolish.  
7                   That's the purpose of this request and  
8                   that's the purpose of the allocation. It's  
9                   the demolition and disposal of blighted  
10                  properties throughout the City of Scranton.

11                  What then happens to the properties  
12                  afterward, obviously all of us have an  
13                  interest in this, but it's not something  
14                  that we would do.

15                  MS. SCHUMACHER: So then it's not  
16                  for demolition and disposal, it's for  
17                  demolition only. You are not disposing of  
18                  the property. I would, again, ask Mr. Rogan  
19                  to answer that question for me or get me the  
20                  answer again of the properties that were  
21                  demolished last year.

22                  MR. ROGAN: Sure.

23                  MS. SCHUMACHER: Thank you. And  
24                  then there is an axiom about you get what  
25                  you pay for and on the CDBG grants, we are

1           paying for a lot of the things that I don't  
2           think while they are necessary are  
3           addressing our basic problem, which is lack  
4           of employment, that would apply if we had  
5           some job creation parents in a lot of these  
6           instances would be able to provide for their  
7           own children and I think only \$200,000 for  
8           economic development activities is sparse  
9           compared as a percentage of the total CDBG  
10          block grant money, so for what it's worth.

11                         And then on the UNC, last year's  
12          year end loan portfolio showed 47 payments  
13          on the \$300,000 loan were late with a  
14          notation of a five-year moratorium on the  
15          payments. There was nothing stating when  
16          that moratorium took place or if it's ended,  
17          but, you know, giving money to people who  
18          are not showing the -- paying for when they  
19          do have a loan, I think should be a factor  
20          in the decision process. Thank you.

21                         MS. EVANS: Thank you. Is there  
22          anyone else who cares to address council?

23                         MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.  
24          I really don't know how I got on the top of  
25          that list this time, but it must have been a

1 miracle.

2 You know, sitting here listening I  
3 agree with a lot of things that Marie  
4 Schumacher presented here tonight in regards  
5 to demolition. I think that the \$500,000  
6 that the city wants to have diverted out of  
7 these community development funds for  
8 demolition should be frozen. There is just  
9 too many questions as to what's going on  
10 with those demolitions and the city finds  
11 itself in Court for tearing down properties  
12 that were owned by different individuals.

13 And to be honest with you, we are  
14 tearing houses down and we can't even  
15 maintain the lots that they used to stand on  
16 and to switch off now, you know, I'd like to  
17 see the Boys and Girls Clubs receive total  
18 funding for what they have asked for and the  
19 reason for that is as a child I played at  
20 the Scranton Housing Authority, which was an  
21 old church that the Boys Club had, and it  
22 was a real asset for us in the community on  
23 the Hill and, you know, we used to have two  
24 Boys Clubs in this city, we have one now.

25 And I just think that they, in my

1 opinion, are probably very seriously  
2 overwhelmed with the amount of children they  
3 are trying to serve and I just think if this  
4 is community development money, I do  
5 understand that there is a lot of places  
6 that we would like to spend that money, but  
7 I think that the city and the residents of  
8 this city need to have a genuine concern for  
9 the children in our community, and I would  
10 have to say that if anybody would possibly  
11 meet low to moderate income in my opinion as  
12 a child I would have to say that the Boys  
13 and Girls Clubs definitely met that at every  
14 instance, and it was really a great place to  
15 be as child.

16 And there weren't a lot of other  
17 people tonight that have come, Dress for  
18 Success and, you know, and the literacy  
19 program for the prison, these are all very  
20 important to this community long range. In  
21 other words, to turn this city around and to  
22 give you us something to work with in the  
23 future, so I just hope this council would  
24 pay a lot of attention, would take the  
25 \$500,000 and set it on the side, and take a



1 good look at that because maybe that money  
2 can be better spent somewhere else. We have  
3 done a lot of demolition, what we need is a  
4 lot more development.

5 And I agree with Marie, maybe  
6 \$300,000 of that should go to help create  
7 jobs and to help spur some kind of economic  
8 development in this city, you know, I just  
9 hope you would consider some of the things I  
10 said, but I just think that the Boys and  
11 Girls Club is a very worthy project.

12 I'd also like to say that I would  
13 like to see Novembrino pool and the Capouse  
14 Avenue pool, I would like see some funding  
15 somehow to get to them to open those city  
16 pools because not only is that a safety  
17 issue, but there are a lot of children in  
18 those neighborhoods and if this community  
19 development money then let's development the  
20 community with it and let's fix our fixed  
21 assets, which are the city pools, which  
22 benefit low to moderate income children in  
23 this city from all of the neighborhoods  
24 because they will come from everywhere to  
25 use those pools and maybe it's time to

1 really consider that. I appreciate your  
2 time.

3 MS. EVANS: Thank you. Is there  
4 anyone else? I'd like to thank all of you  
5 who came before us this evening to present  
6 your cases for funding. We are well aware  
7 that the federal government has decreased  
8 funding to all of these social service  
9 agencies. I hope, on the other hand, that  
10 you, too, are aware of the fact that the  
11 federal government has been decreasing  
12 funding to municipalities, specifically,  
13 CDBG, ESG, HOME.

14 So our mission or our goal perhaps  
15 is better term is to fund as many worthy  
16 projects as we possibly can with annually  
17 dwindling funds.

18 So please know that all council  
19 members will take into consideration what  
20 has been said this evening by each and every  
21 one of you and we do have a 30-day waiting  
22 period, I believe, in which citizens may  
23 submit written comments to the Office of  
24 OECD, and when that time period has passed,  
25 then the legislation will return to

1 council's desk and in Seventh Order for  
2 final approval and it will be at that time  
3 that the announcements will be made public  
4 concerning the final allocations to each of  
5 the agencies and organizations.

6 And once again, I thank everyone for  
7 your participation. This public hearing is  
8 adjourned.

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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.

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CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR  
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER