

SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL

SPECIAL MEETING

IN RE: Applicant Interviews for Open Seat on
City Council

HELD:

SATURDAY, JULY 19, 2014

TIME:

10 A.M.

LOCATION:

Council Chambers

Scranton City Hall

340 North Washington Avenue

Scranton, Pennsylvania

AMELIA NICOL, RPR

COURT REPORTER

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

ROBERT MCGOFF, PRESIDENT

PATRICK ROGAN, VICE-PRESIDENT

WILLIAM GAUGHAN

JOSEPH WECHSLER

AMIL MINORA, SOLICITOR

LORI REED, CITY CLERK

JAMIE MARCIANO, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

	APPLICANTS:	PAGE NO.
1		
2		
3	ROBERT WEBER	5
4	JOSEPH F. RICKARD	16
5	MICHAEL BOUSELLI	25
6	TIM PERRY	34
7	BLANCA FERNANDEZ	49
8	BOB PALMITESSA	61
9	LAWRENCE PUGLIESE	74
10	ALAN O'NEILL	90
11	LEE MORGAN	103
12	THOMAS SCHUSTER	116
13	JOSEPH MATYJEVICH	126
14	WAYNE EVANS	140
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

1 MR. MCGOFF: Please stand for the
2 Pledge of Allegiance.

3 (Pledge of Allegiance.)

4 MR. MCGOFF: Please stay standing
5 for a moment of silence reflection for
6 servicemen and women throughout the
7 world and also for all those who have
8 passed during the past week.

9 (Moment of Reflection.)

10 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Roll
11 call, please.

12 MS. REED: Mr. Wechsler.

13 MR. WECHSLER: Here.

14 MS. REED: Mr. Rogan.

15 MR. ROGAN: Here.

16 MS. REED: Mr. Gaughan.

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Here.

18 MS. REED: Mr. McGoff.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Here. Dispense with
20 the reading of minutes.

21 MS. REED: THIRD ORDER, PROCEED
22 WITH INTERVIEWS.

23 MR. MCGOFF: This morning the
24 purpose of this special meeting is to
25 interview candidates for the vacant

1 position on City Council. This
2 position will fill the unexpired term
3 of Councilman Jack Loscombe which will
4 be through the 2015 year. I
5 respectfully request that all audience
6 members turn off cell phones and
7 refrain from speaking during the
8 interviews. Each interview will last
9 approximately 15 minutes. We have
10 been informed that the first interview
11 which was scheduled for 10 o'clock,
12 the person has contacted us and will
13 not be available and so we will -- the
14 next interview will be held at 10:15.

15 Perhaps while we're sitting here
16 doing nothing I will just explain the
17 process that will be used for the
18 interviews. Each person will be asked
19 to make an opening statement followed
20 by two questions that will be asked of
21 every candidate. The first question,
22 why are you interested in the City
23 Council vacancy? And the second, why
24 do you feel you're the best candidate
25 for the position? These questions

1 have already been made public or have
2 been shown to the candidates, a sheet
3 that they were given. That will be
4 followed by questions from council
5 members and if time allows a brief
6 closing statement by the candidate
7 prior to the next interview.

8 Good morning, Mr. Weber. Thank
9 you. A little early to start.

10 MR. WEBER: I'll jump right into
11 it.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Let me just --
13 please just state your name for the
14 record and then a brief opening
15 statement.

16 MR. WEBER: Robert Weber,
17 W-E-B-E-R. Council, thanks for the
18 opportunity to present myself to you
19 guys for the open position. I was
20 born and raised in Scranton. I raised
21 my family, lived here for 60 years. I
22 have four children and married for 38
23 years. I have a Bachelor's -- or I'm
24 sorry, an Associate's Degree in
25 business from Keystone Junior College

1 and a Bachelor of Science Degree in
2 health and physical education of Lock
3 Haven University. Upon graduation I
4 started working for the International
5 Brotherhood of Teamsters. Spent 33
6 years there in many capacities.
7 Worked my way up from the Health and
8 Welfare Fund Manager to the principal
9 officer of the local, was elected to
10 three terms as an official there, the
11 longest holding official at that level
12 in the last four years with the local,
13 was responsible for 1.2 million
14 dollars to 1.5 million dollars a year
15 budget, negotiated many contracts with
16 national organizations and local
17 businesses, never had a strike in all
18 the years that I've negotiated the
19 contracts, sat on pension boards in
20 the state for the Brotherhood of
21 Teamsters, sat on health and welfare
22 funds and I also sat at local credit
23 unions. Also coached high school and
24 college women's basketball for 20
25 years, spent many years traveling as a

1 traveling coach for AEU Basketball. I
2 also owned my own business for over
3 ten years very successfully, was a
4 trophy, plaque and award business.
5 When I took over as head of the
6 Teamster's Union, we were losing money
7 on a regular basis, on a quarterly
8 basis. I made some aggressive and
9 creative moves to help the budget and
10 within one year we were doing well and
11 changed a lot of things without
12 hurting service for the local members
13 and also without hurting the employees
14 and our executive board.

15 MR. MCGOFF. I should have told
16 you that there would be a bell at the
17 end of two minutes for you. I'm
18 sorry. You were given the two
19 questions that would be asked first
20 and the first question is why are you
21 interested in City Council vacancy.

22 MR. WEBER: Well, obviously I
23 like the city, I've stayed here my
24 whole life, raised my family here and
25 was always interested in obtaining

1 office on City Council but throughout
2 my career the demanding pressures of,
3 you know, being the head of the local
4 union and coaching and raising four
5 children and running a business, I
6 wasn't able to devote the time and
7 energy that's required to properly
8 service the city residents. So within
9 the last two years since I've been
10 retired I had opportunities where I
11 ran for Lackawanna County Study
12 Commission, was voted six out of 38
13 people to elect to serve on that
14 commission. We served one full year,
15 was presented with many, you know,
16 decisions that we had to make, some of
17 them were very difficult, some of the
18 were easy and so I'm very familiar
19 with the workings of a board and a
20 council and was able to, you know,
21 make the tough decisions and I've done
22 it all my life within the union and
23 everything, making decisions for
24 contracts and the employees.

25 MR. MCGOFF: And why do you feel

1 you're the best candidate for this
2 position?

3 MR. WEBER: Well, already
4 pursuing an elected office within the
5 county and being elected and serving
6 on the commission for over a year, I
7 was very familiar with Robert's Rule
8 of Order which are, you know, the
9 setting up of motions, meetings and
10 listening to arguments and things like
11 that and the fact that I sat with many
12 companies, negotiated many contracts,
13 understand both sides, the union side
14 and the company side and in this case
15 the authority or city side, we sat on
16 many grievances, I sat on
17 arbitrations, I've written briefs for
18 arbitrations and served what I thought
19 was very, very diligently for the
20 union for many years and had the
21 opportunity to retire which I did. I
22 could have kept running for office but
23 I decided not to, and besides that,
24 I've owned my own business, understand
25 what it takes, understand the taxes

1 involved that businessowners have to
2 pay and ran it successfully and
3 retired from that also in the last
4 couple of years.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Council members may
6 now have questions for you.

7 MR. WEBER: Sure.

8 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Rogan?

9 MR. ROGAN: Yes. And first,
10 thank you for your service in the
11 Government Study Commission. We all
12 appreciate that and running for office
13 is not something that is easy and
14 congratulations on your appointment
15 and for your service.

16 Looking through you resume and
17 your opening statements, one of the
18 things that stuck out to me was that
19 you're involved with some local labor
20 and obviously labor unrest in the city
21 has been a major problem for the last
22 ten years or so. How would you
23 believe your experience with labor
24 would help you as a City Council
25 person?

1 MR. WEBER: Well, certainly for
2 so many years with the Teamsters'
3 Union we've sat and addressed a lot of
4 issues pertaining very similar to the
5 issues that the city is involving,
6 obviously expenditures and taxes and
7 things like that. I mean, we didn't
8 get involved in taxes but indirectly
9 when you're dealing with these major
10 companies and you're sitting and
11 negotiating these contracts, you have
12 to make some very drastic decisions,
13 sometimes quickly, sometimes you have
14 to sit diligently go over things and
15 come up with some hard core decisions
16 and I think because of that experience
17 in being able to sit with major
18 companies coming in from out of town
19 and dealing with these people that I
20 would be able to sit down and
21 breakdown, obviously not having the
22 labor contracts in front of me, I
23 don't know the guts of them and it
24 would be hard to break them down and
25 say offer some suggestions on that but

1 just looking at them, I think I could
2 come up with some ideas that would
3 sit -- and I think that by being able
4 to maybe sit with the unions and with
5 my knowledge and my background behind
6 it being able to discuss logically
7 some of the things that are going on
8 which I'm sure some of you guys have
9 done and the mayor has done and, you
10 know, being able to make some
11 suggestions regarding that and help
12 solve the issues which is the basis of
13 the problems that we have in the City
14 of Scranton.

15 MR. ROGAN: Thank you very much.

16 MR. WEBER: You're welcome.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Wechsler?

18 MR. WECHSLER: One of the things
19 that I'm concerned with the council
20 person to be, does your schedule, your
21 work schedule which you mentioned
22 you're retired so I guess you don't
23 have a work schedule which is --

24 MR. WEBER: Is that a compliment?

25 MR. WECHSLER: Looking for that

1 day myself. But do you see any
2 conflicts with your work or family
3 schedule that would prevent you from
4 being a full-time council person?

5 MR. WEBER: No, no, I don't and
6 that's why I'm presenting myself here
7 the opportunity is available to me at
8 this at this point where I can
9 dedicate the time and the energy
10 involved and I know it's going to
11 require a lot of time and energy and
12 obviously keeping up with politics
13 over the last two years, more so than
14 I did throughout my life, I'm aware of
15 some of the issues that you guys are
16 dealing with and there's some
17 difficult decisions that have to be
18 made.

19 MR. WECHSLER: Okay. Thank you.

20 MR. WEBER: You're welcome.

21 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Gaughan.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes. Thank you,
23 Mr. Weber, for coming in. What are
24 your top three priorities that you
25 believe are the most pressing concerns

1 to the City of Scranton moving into
2 2015?

3 MR. WEBER: Obviously the pension
4 issue I think should be something that
5 should be taken care of, some very
6 deep and deep discussions with the
7 labor unions have to be straightened
8 out. Obviously the increase in taxes,
9 the tax base is depleting and taxes
10 are going up. We have issues with our
11 roads, we have issues with real estate
12 being sold in the area, people moving
13 out, obviously we have issues with
14 employment. A lot of our young kids,
15 my three children and my fourth one
16 are basically out of town working
17 because there's no opportunities here,
18 and I think I would be able to help
19 and make some suggestions and try to
20 attract business here so employment
21 could increase and we can keep some of
22 the younger people here.

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

24 MR. WEBER: You're welcome.

25 MR. MCGOFF: If you were to be

1 appointed to this position, would you
2 seek to be elected for the following
3 year to the position?

4 MR. WEBER: I have no disregards
5 with doing that. My intentions right
6 now would be to do that. Obviously
7 things could change between now and
8 January or February but my intentions
9 would be to run for that office, yes.
10 I have no problems doing that.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Is there
12 anything else you would like to say to
13 council or --

14 MR. WEBER: Just that I think
15 that, you know, you guys have been
16 doing a great job. It seems like
17 council is working together. I think
18 I can fit in with you guys and help
19 solve and move this City forward.
20 That's all.

21 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr.
22 Weber, for your time.

23 MR. WEBER: I appreciate the
24 opportunity.

25 MR. RICKARD: Joe Rickard.

1 MR. MCGOFF: Okay. Mr. Rickard,
2 the process as you see, we will allow
3 you to make an opening statement. We
4 ask that on the questions that you
5 limit your answers to a minute or two
6 in answering the questions and then
7 you will be allowed to make any
8 closing statement that you wish.

9 MR. RICKARD: Okay.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Please just state
11 your name for the record.

12 MR. RICKARD: Joe Rickard.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Please, an opening
14 statement.

15 MR. RICKARD: I'm just here
16 because I'm interested in the
17 position. I've been a lifelong
18 resident of Scranton. I wasn't able
19 to do anything in the past because I
20 spent 20 years with my wife taking
21 care of my ailing parents at home
22 keeping them out of the nursing home
23 so sorry to say my parents have passed
24 away but now the time is my own so I
25 have more time to get involved in the

1 City that I've made a living in, lived
2 my entire life.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Why are
4 you interested in the City Council
5 vacancy?

6 MR. RICKARD: Like I said, I have
7 a lot invested in the city, my whole
8 life is in the city, I invested
9 substantially in property here. I
10 like living here. My children are out
11 of town. I'd like to have them be
12 able to come back some day. I just
13 really like the city. I've never --
14 in my entire life I never lived more
15 than a mile from where I was born. I
16 was born on Hyde Park Avenue, moved
17 over to St. Ann's Street, now I live
18 in Tripp Park. It's been my home, a
19 good home for 57 years.

20 MR. MCGOFF: And why do you feel
21 you're the best candidate for this
22 position?

23 MR. RICKARD: Well, I think I
24 have a good background. I mean, I'm a
25 product of the Scranton School

1 District, I got a Bachelor's of
2 Science Degree in political science
3 from the University of Scranton, have
4 my Master's degree in public
5 administration from Marywood College.
6 I have 30 plus years as a successful
7 business in operation and sales. When
8 I came in, you were talking about
9 union. I've dealt with the Teamster's
10 Union for 20 years, different union
11 but still organized labor. I was
12 involved in contract ratification and
13 contract construction, discipline from
14 Baltimore, Maryland, all the way to,
15 you know, Providence, Rhode Island, so
16 I have a good union background dealing
17 with the union. I currently work for
18 a nonunion family owned company. I'm
19 in sales so I have flexibility. I
20 work from my home. My time is my own
21 so I do have the flexibility and the
22 time to do what is needed.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Rogan?

24 MR. ROGAN: Yes. There's no
25 secret by reading the newspaper or

1 watching TV that the City of Scranton
2 has a lot of financial problems.

3 MR. RICKARD: Right.

4 MR. ROGAN: How will your
5 experience and your ideas be used to
6 help solve some of those issues?

7 MR. RICKARD: Well, looking at my
8 resume you can see that I've taken
9 companies that were struggling and
10 regions that were struggling and
11 turning them around profitable. I
12 mean, the city is a business just like
13 anything else if want to get down to
14 brass tacks with it. I think the
15 biggest impression right now is well,
16 the base is eroding. But the awards
17 to the unions there, I know that's
18 going to be hard. I think there's
19 several ways you can deal with that
20 without really borrowing money. One
21 of the things I thought about that is
22 all, you know, the policeman, the
23 fireman's union, you know, maybe look
24 at, you know, taking -- you know, not
25 having to pay any property tax or

1 reduce the wage tax as a line item on
2 their paychecks. That way you're
3 actually getting an interest free loan
4 from the unions to however long it
5 takes to pay them off but I know you
6 would to have open it up and try to
7 get a reduction in settlement because
8 it's kind of a big nut to turn there
9 that's for sure. But just of the idea
10 I thought like that, and negotiate
11 with them, try to get a better price,
12 go through, like I said, minimize
13 their wage tax, their property tax
14 until they're paid what, you know, the
15 negotiation brings down the settlement
16 to.

17 MR. ROGAN: Thank you very much.

18 MR. RICKARD: Okay.

19 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Rickard, since
20 you are into politics how would you
21 deal with the public scrutiny and
22 exposure that you have as a City
23 Council person?

24 MR. RICKARD: Well, I mean, I was
25 a manager in the trucking business for

1 years and as you know when you're a
2 manager, the drivers don't like you,
3 the dock man don't like you, the sales
4 people don't like you, upper
5 management because you are the one
6 that makes the tough decisions but as
7 I came onboard with each company I
8 told them, I'm not here to make
9 friends. I'm here to make money.
10 This is a business. If it doesn't
11 make money, we'll be out of business
12 so that's the way I look at it.

13 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you. And
14 like I said we're going to ask this of
15 all the candidates. Your work
16 schedule does not prohibit you from
17 being available for weekly meetings
18 and other events?

19 MR. RICKARD: No. I work from my
20 house. I have a sales territory. You
21 know, I set my own schedule and as
22 long as, you know, honestly the
23 company, as long as I'm making money
24 for them and doing good, I don't hear
25 from them, so.

1 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Gaughan.

2 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes. Thank you for
3 coming in, Mr. Rickard. Two
4 questions. The first, please discuss
5 your public service experience, what
6 volunteer roles or positions have you
7 held with civic, community or
8 governmental organizations?

9 MR. RICKARD: Okay. Well, I
10 started -- I did my internship when I
11 got my master's in public
12 administration at Marywood with the
13 Scranton School District. I worked
14 with Dr. Peter Flynn who was the
15 superintendent at the time. I've
16 coached my both children's baseball
17 and softball all the time, I belong to
18 several attractions of Northeast
19 Pennsylvania. Basically that's it.
20 Like I said, my last 20 years were
21 wrapped up with the care of my elderly
22 parents. We actually when we built
23 our home, we made a handicapped
24 accessible addition on the house so
25 that would keep my mother and father

1 out of a nursing home so, you know, my
2 time was kind of tied up then. It's
3 open now.

4 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. Thank you.
5 And the second question. What are
6 your top three priorities that you
7 believe are the most pressing concerns
8 to the City of Scranton moving into
9 2015?

10 MR. RICKARD: What's of pressing
11 concern, an eroding tax base obviously
12 is the one. I see -- I know the
13 commuter tax is a hot button item
14 right now. But when you look at it
15 is, all the successful people and my
16 counterparts that I grew up with and
17 went to school with, as soon as they
18 got successful, they moved out of the
19 city and income, the tax base went
20 with them, it's hard to deal with
21 that. My own son is the Director of
22 Finance for Johnson and Johnson. He's
23 in charge of it in Puerto Rico where
24 he lives and the Dominican Republic
25 and I feel bad he's down there because

1 I don't get to see my grandchildren as
2 much that I'd to and I'd like to be
3 able to see him come home some day
4 and, you know, live in the city. I'm
5 at the crossroads with my daughter
6 right now. My daughter is a speech
7 therapist. She wants to build a house
8 and she's looking at, you know, the
9 3.4 percent wage tax and the property
10 taxes but she really likes the City of
11 Scranton and she's like the
12 convenience of living here so you've
13 got to come to a common ground there.
14 And like I said before, you know, the
15 unions, obviously the contracts have
16 to be reopened and looked at, be
17 renegotiated. I've already given you
18 my ideas for trying to pay off that
19 settlement. I think that would -- I
20 don't know how the union would react
21 to that, but you know what, nothing
22 ventured, nothing gained so, you know,
23 it would be an interest free loan and
24 they get their money. Like I talk to
25 a lot of them now, they don't when

1 they're getting their money or if
2 they're get their money. So I think
3 that would be an opening, you know, a
4 stumbling block, maybe get things
5 going.

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

7 MR. MCGOFF: If you were to be
8 chosen for this position, would you
9 consider running for election to the
10 position in 2015?

11 MR. RICKARD: Yes, yes, I would.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. And, Mr.
13 Rickard, council will make its
14 decision and you will be informed as
15 to the nature of that decision.

16 MR. RICKARD: Okay. All right.
17 Hey, thanks for your time. I
18 appreciate it. Bye, bye.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Michael Bouselli.

20 MR. BOUSELLI: Michael Bouselli,
21 yes.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Bouselli, the
23 process will be, you will be allowed
24 to make your opening statement, you
25 will hear a bell at two minutes and

1 then you will be asked two questions
2 that were on the sheet that you were
3 given. Please limit your answers to a
4 minute or so for those questions and
5 then there will be questions from
6 council, council members and then
7 you'll be allowed to make a closing
8 statement. And if you would just
9 please state your name for the record
10 and then you would make your opening
11 statement.

12 MR. BOUSELLI: Good morning. My
13 name is Michael Bouselli. I'm a
14 lifelong resident of Scranton and a
15 graduate of West Scranton High School.
16 I currently attend Penn State
17 University, University Park. I'm
18 majoring in political science and I
19 have a minor in communications, arts
20 and sciences. I'll be graduating next
21 year and currently I'm the manager of
22 Bouselli Properties and we are a
23 residential real estate. And some of
24 my responsibilities as manager of
25 Bouselli's Properties, I'm responsible

1 for collecting rent, servicing and
2 maintaining 17 investment properties
3 and I also own my other small business
4 which is Bouselli Lawn Care and Car
5 Detailing. I've owned my own
6 successful small business in the City
7 of Scranton for several years. I've
8 grown my small business from a handful
9 of clients to as many as 50. One of
10 the things I do at State College is
11 I'm the President of UNICO National
12 which is an Italian American service
13 organization. I've resurrected the
14 Happy Valley Chapter of UNICO National
15 and I've grown the chapter from as
16 little of three members to 30 members.
17 I'm responsible for delegating and
18 instructing 30 members and we've
19 organized fundraisers to benefit local
20 charities and scholarships. As I've
21 been here at Penn State Worthington, I
22 was the 2013 recipient of Eric A. &
23 Josephine S. Walker Award and award
24 was -- I was honored for student
25 leadership, scholarship, citizenship

1 and character and I was recognized as
2 the student who most improves the
3 university's reputation through its
4 extracurricular activities. In 2013 I
5 was also the UNICO National Youth
6 Award recipient and I was honored for
7 youth leadership, enthusiastic support
8 and a pride of Italian American
9 heritage. I feel -- Can I begin?

10 MR. MCGOFF: You'll have an
11 opportunity to finish it.

12 MR. BOUSELLI: Okay.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Why are you
14 interested in City Council vacancy?

15 MR. BOUSELLI: I feel that I
16 would have better alternatives for the
17 city. I feel like I should bring in
18 some fresh new ideas for the council.
19 I've always been interested in
20 politics. I've chosen it as my major
21 to receive a Bachelor's Degree from
22 Penn State. I feel like I could bring
23 maybe some new ideas to the commuter
24 tax.

25 MR. MCGOFF: And why do you feel

1 you're the best candidate for this
2 position?

3 MR. BOUSELLI: I feel like in my
4 past five years I've had a some
5 experience in politics and budget
6 planning. I did a whole semester on
7 budget planning. I organized a lot of
8 events, charitable events, and I feel
9 like that's the kind of thing we need
10 for Scranton City Council, is someone
11 who values community.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Mr.
13 Rogan.

14 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. How will
15 your experience managing properties in
16 our neighborhoods influence your
17 decisions? For instance, you know,
18 you're in the neighborhood and you see
19 a lot of the problems that we have in
20 different parts of the city, West
21 Scranton as compared to South Scranton
22 and so on and so forth. So how will
23 that experience with property
24 management help you as a City Council
25 member?

1 MR. BOUSELLI: One thing I would
2 like to do is I would like to not
3 reassess taxes once a construction
4 permit is pulled for the City of
5 Scranton. I feel like this would
6 entice more people to maybe invest in
7 their properties, blighted properties
8 and I will feel like it would clean up
9 the City of Scranton a lot more and a
10 lot of people won't pull a permit or
11 do construction on their house because
12 they're afraid of their taxes doubling
13 or their house being reassessed. I
14 feel like it's a deterrent.

15 MR. ROGAN: Thank you very much.

16 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Wechsler?

17 MR. WECHSLER: Yes. Are you
18 still going to be at State College in
19 the fall?

20 MR. BOUSELLI: Yes.

21 MR. WECHSLER: How would you be
22 able to schedule both being a council
23 person and being out at State College?

24 MR. BOUSELLI: I would commute.

25 MR. WECHSLER: I was going to ask

1 this of a previous candidate. Being
2 new to politics, how would you handle
3 the public scrutiny that we are
4 exposed to as council people?

5 MR. BOUSELLI: I normally don't
6 take scrutiny. It usually rolls off,
7 you know, my back. I mean, I really
8 don't -- I mean, everyone is really
9 entitled to their own opinion and I
10 value that. It's pretty much -- did I
11 answer your question?

12 MR. WECHSLER: Yes. Thank you.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Gaughan?

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes. Mr. Bouselli,
15 thank you for coming in today. What
16 are your three priorities that you
17 believe are the most pressing concerns
18 to the City of Scranton moving into
19 2015?

20 MR. BOUSELLI: I feel like the
21 commuter tax would definitely be my
22 top concern. I actually have a -- I
23 think the commuter tax would bring
24 money into the City of Scranton but I
25 think there is maybe better

1 alternatives. I do actually -- I was
2 putting together an alternative,
3 something such as a copay for non city
4 residents and this copay would be for
5 non city residents like say if you
6 lived in Old Forge or Taylor and you
7 wanted to use the courthouse, you
8 would have to a pay a small copay to
9 the City of Scranton. I also feel
10 property tax is going to be another
11 major issue and property concern in
12 the City of Scranton is always a major
13 issue especially with a lot of people
14 are selling their houses now in the
15 City of Scranton. I feel like it
16 might look like to turn to people from
17 outside of area looking to invest in
18 the City of Scranton.

19 Another concern I think I would
20 have would be the -- maybe the
21 parking. I think maybe there could be
22 better alternatives to our current
23 parking system. Does that answer --

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes. Thank you.

25 MR. MCGOFF: And if chosen to the

1 this seat, would you seek election to
2 this seat in 2015?

3 MR. BOUSELLI: I currently don't
4 have an answer to that.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Okay. And is there
6 anything else you would like to say to
7 council?

8 MR. BOUSELLI: I would like to
9 ask the whole council, what are you
10 looking for in a candidate?

11 MR. MCGOFF: What we are looking
12 for is someone that we feel can work
13 with the other members of council for
14 solving some of the problems. We're
15 looking for people who may have
16 experience in dealing with some of the
17 problems that do exist in the City of
18 Scranton. Those would be our primary
19 concerns.

20 MR. BOUSELLI: Okay.

21 MR. MCGOFF: Anything else?

22 MR. BOUSELLI: That's all I have.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr.
24 Bouselli.

25 MR. BOUSELLI: Thank you.

1 MR. MCGOFF: And you'll be
2 notified as to council's decision.
3 Thank you.

4 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

5 MR. MCGOFF: We are running ahead
6 of schedule. The next candidate is
7 not scheduled until 11 o'clock but we
8 will conduct the interviews as soon as
9 they're available.

10 Mr. Perry, just for your
11 information you'll be allowed to make
12 an opening statement. A bell will
13 ring at approximately two minutes to
14 indicate that that time period is over
15 and then there will be a series of
16 questions from council.

17 MR. PERRY: Okay.

18 MR. MCGOFF: The first two will
19 be the questions that were on the
20 sheet that you were given when you
21 handed in your resume. So just please
22 state your name for the record and
23 make your opening statement.

24 MR. PERRY: Timothy Perry, 2325
25 Birney Avenue. Well, first, I want to

1 thank you guys for having me here,
2 Councilman Wechsler, Councilmen Rogan,
3 McGoff, Councilman Gaughan. I mean,
4 it's really an honor to be standing
5 here. I was never at a council
6 meeting. I pay attention to city
7 business constantly. I was born and
8 raised in the City of Scranton. Born
9 in CMC, graduated from Scranton
10 Central, went to Lackawanna College.
11 I live here. I'm going to be buried
12 here and it would mean a lot to me to
13 get involved with the city at the City
14 Council level. It's something that
15 it's -- it's my niche. I believe it's
16 something that my skill set in
17 business translates well to the City
18 Council position. You guys have a lot
19 of oversights that you see. It's a
20 good checks and balance with the mayor
21 and I have 20 years experience in
22 dealing with different factions of
23 business, whether it's HR, marketing,
24 people management, overall operations
25 and what the city needs right now is

1 cost control. But, you know, at this
2 time I would like to answer any
3 questions that you gentlemen have for
4 me.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Why are you
6 interested in the City Council
7 vacancy?

8 MR. PERRY: Councilman McGoff,
9 that's a good question. I kind of --
10 you know, I guess you probably do the
11 same thing. We kind of answered that
12 in the beginning. It's Scranton is my
13 blood. When I graduated from Scranton
14 Central which, by the way, I still
15 call it Scranton Central even though
16 the school board closed it on me my
17 final year and I got moved over to
18 Scranton Technical Institute for one
19 year. I'm still a Scranton Central
20 graduate. That's -- you know, you're
21 never going to rip that away from me.
22 My career me took me to Patchogue,
23 Long Island, to fix a broken
24 restaurant. My career took me to
25 Culpeper, Virginia; Charlottesville,

1 Virginia; I worked at Pottsville; West
2 Virginia, all parts of Northeast PA.
3 Scranton's always been home. And when
4 it was time for my wife and I to buy a
5 home, even though your friends would
6 tell you, What are you doing buying a
7 home in the City of Scranton? It was
8 never even a question we were going to
9 live in the City of Scranton. And if
10 I believe, you know, to paraphrase a
11 Founding Father, if you have the
12 ability to take charge, then you have
13 the obligation to take charge and if
14 I'm looking to live here, I'm going to
15 be a part of what is happening in the
16 City of Scranton and that's what led
17 me to here and that's why I want to be
18 part of City Council.

19 MR. MCGOFF: And the second
20 question was why do you feel you're
21 the best candidate for the position?

22 MR. PERRY: Why do feel like I'm
23 the best candidate for the position?
24 Other than the non tangibles, you
25 know, the enthusiasm, love, the

1 ability to stay up till three in the
2 morning working on city business when
3 your wife is telling you to go to bed
4 which I'm sure you guys have all been
5 there before. I have 20 years
6 experience in dealing with multiple
7 departments at multiple times and, you
8 know, I threw my hat in the ring last
9 time for City Council. I ran against
10 Councilman Wechsler and Councilman
11 Rogan and Councilman Gaughan and it
12 was one of the best experience I've
13 had in my life. And, you know,
14 something to keep in mind, guys, is
15 anybody can put in an application and
16 say they want to do it but as you guys
17 know, walk every street in South Side,
18 walk every street in West Side, East
19 Mountain, Minooka, you know, that will
20 set the person apart who really
21 deserves to be there.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Rogan.

23 MR. ROGAN: Thank you, Mr. Perry,
24 and we had a great campaign with all
25 of us and the two other candidates.

1 MR. PERRY: We did.

2 MR. ROGAN: It was a very good,
3 clean campaign, you know, something
4 that the city needed, no mud slinging
5 so we're glad to see you here today.
6 Just a question regarding I see you
7 have extensive business experience
8 within the restaurant industry and
9 managing employees. How do you
10 believe that business experience will
11 translate as an asset as a City
12 Council person?

13 MR. PERRY: Well, I think the
14 first and foremost asset I bring to
15 the table from the restaurant industry
16 and business industry overall to City
17 Council is dealing with budgets and
18 line items. I've had at one point
19 seven restaurants under my management
20 with multi, multi million dollar
21 budgets that not only do we have to
22 maintain but we have to generate. We
23 have to create those budgets and to
24 maintain those budgets and budget
25 aren't numbers that you put on a wall

1 just so somebody can see them and make
2 yourself look good for a couple weeks.
3 Budgets are something that at the end
4 of the day when the bell rings, you're
5 accountable for it, whether you
6 created it as the mayor does or
7 whether you made amendments like City
8 Council does, you're accountable for
9 it and the council member and the
10 mayor are accountable to the Scranton
11 taxpayers in the City of Scranton.
12 And that's a big job. And I know what
13 it's like to have the burden of a
14 couple hundred employees running under
15 a decision I'm about to make. I've
16 had the privilege of opening new
17 restaurants and creating jobs and I've
18 had the unfortunate thing when a
19 restaurant wasn't economically viable
20 anymore to close that down. It's not
21 an easy decision but sometimes you
22 have to make that tough decision on a
23 few people for the masses and the
24 greater good and that's something that
25 I've never had a problem doing.

1 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. And just
2 a follow-up on something you mentioned
3 in the opening statement. How do you
4 believe that actually running for
5 council prepares you for being a
6 council member?

7 MR. PERRY: It was like the best
8 experience that I've had in my life.
9 It was very eye opening. It got me
10 out to different parts of the city
11 that normally don't go to. I know I
12 spent extensive amount of time in East
13 Mountain in Wechsler country and, you
14 know, other than visiting a couple
15 friends up there, I've never really
16 had the opportunity to meet everybody
17 up there. Going door to door I found
18 out that per capita there's more dog
19 owners in East Mountain than anywhere
20 else in the city. I mean, I did not
21 knock on one door where, you know,
22 there's a dog that didn't greet me
23 first. And just getting involved with
24 city business. I mean, I've been
25 up-to-date on city business now

1 probably a year before we started
2 running because you guys know when
3 you're going to run for campaign, you
4 just don't wake up one day and say,
5 I'm going to -- there's a build up to
6 it and there's a certain comfort
7 ability level that you have to create
8 before you can run and that's really,
9 I think, how running for a campaign
10 gets you ready for the seat because
11 you're already aware of the issues,
12 you've already made that decision in
13 your mind, can I or can't I make those
14 tough decisions when I'm called upon.
15 That's what a campaign will do for you
16 as you guys all know.

17 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Wechsler.

19 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Perry, does
20 your work schedule prevent you from
21 attending meetings on evenings and
22 weekends?

23 MR. PERRY: No, no, it does not.
24 The restaurant business schedule is
25 very flexible. When most people are

1 off, you know, that's when I'm
2 working. And you have a certain
3 amount of control over your schedule.
4 Unfortunately if I am lucky enough to
5 get this appointment, I'm going to be
6 on a first name basis with my florist
7 because between my employer and the
8 City of Scranton, you know, my wife is
9 going to be the only person that, you
10 guys would know this, sees you the
11 least than anybody. So, oh, you're
12 home today, thank you, you know. So
13 there's going to be a lot of flowers
14 being bought on my credit card.

15 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, Mr. Perry,
17 thanks for coming in. Two questions.
18 First, please discuss your public
19 service experience. What volunteer
20 roles or positions that you've held
21 with civic, community or governmental
22 organizations?

23 MR. PERRY: That's a good
24 question, Mr. Gaughan.

25 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

1 MR. PERRY: I've had -- I
2 volunteer every year at St. Joe's
3 Church in Minooka which is now the
4 Divine Mercy Church. I try to stay
5 active there. Their annual picnic is
6 their biggest fundraiser so that
7 weekend you will always see me there
8 whether it's at the beer tent or with
9 my uncle, Phil Merred, who worked the
10 bazaar, the rummage sale. I also am
11 an active member in the Minooka Lion's
12 Club where we've raised -- well,
13 actually I will be at the golf
14 tournament today at Pine Hills at 1
15 o'clock right after this which I will
16 be volunteering at. I'm also a newly
17 member. We haven't done -- I haven't
18 done much in this organization yet,
19 the Ancient Order of Hibernians,
20 J.F. Kennedy Division of Scranton, I
21 got involved with them after attending
22 one of their events and it was just
23 unbelievable and they raise money
24 strictly for wounded veterans who come
25 back home and I thought it was a good

1 niche to be in and haven't really
2 heard anybody doing that so I got
3 involved in that. And that's the one
4 thing that running for office gets
5 you. You start to get more aware of
6 the situations out in the city and the
7 opens your eyes and it gets you out in
8 the community even more. So if that
9 answers your question, council.

10 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Second
11 question. What are your top three
12 priorities that you believe are the
13 most pressing concerns to the City of
14 Scranton moving into 2015?

15 MR. PERRY: The top three, let's
16 fix our budget. Let's balance the
17 budget. And I believe you brought up
18 this point on Thursday, councilman.
19 What is the overall plan for the
20 mayor? I know we have Act 205 coming
21 up but that to me is just one piece of
22 the puzzle and it would be hard to
23 kind of go on that without knowing the
24 other pieces that are coming into
25 place which apparently there are other

1 pieces but, you know, I would like to
2 see that. I think you used the word,
3 piecemeal. That was a good point. I
4 would think that we are owed a bigger
5 picture. It's a big situation. I
6 think we're owed a bigger picture to
7 make any kind of intelligent decision
8 which I guess will be coming up soon
9 on that. The budget is No. 1. No. 2
10 is we need to increase home ownership.
11 It needs to be easier to buy a home in
12 the City of Scranton. It needs to be
13 more cost effective. We have too many
14 homes that are going into rentals and
15 that leads me to my third is
16 rebuilding some of the communities.
17 We have pockets of really tight
18 communities. But if you talk to
19 somebody who was around 20 years ago,
20 it's less than that. If you talk to
21 somebody who was around 50 years ago,
22 it was less than that which our tight
23 communities are shrinking and the only
24 way to solve that is to reverse that
25 and start getting more homeownership

1 in the City of Scranton. If you own
2 your home, you care. You take care of
3 your property, you take care of your
4 neighbor's property, people look out
5 for each other. I think we're
6 trending that the wrong way where
7 we're starting to see rentals and we
8 need to rebuild our communities, we
9 need to get home ownership and we need
10 our budget taken care of. Those would
11 be my three.

12 MR. MCGOFF: And last question I
13 had. If you were appointed to this
14 position, would you seek election to
15 the seat in 2015?

16 MR. PERRY: Without question,
17 without question.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Anything
19 else that you would like to say to
20 council?

21 MR. MCGOFF: No, no. Just thank
22 you for the opportunity and, you know,
23 you guys have a rough couple weeks,
24 and I know it must have been tough
25 and, you know, just thank you for the

1 opportunity and good luck.

2 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr.
3 Perry.

4 MR. PERRY: Thank you.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Again, we're running
6 ahead. We're going to take a 10
7 minute recess until the next candidate
8 is here.

9 (Recess taken.)

10 MR. MCGOFF: We are going to
11 resume our interviews at this time.
12 Just to brief you on the process.
13 We're going to ask that you make a
14 brief opening statement. A bell will
15 ring at two minutes. That will
16 indicate that that opening statement
17 is complete or the time is completed
18 and then the two questions you have
19 been given on the sheet when you
20 handed in your resume. And please
21 keep your answers to a minute or two
22 on each of those. And then questions
23 of council, other council members and
24 then you'll have an opportunity for a
25 closing statement if you wish. Okay?

1 So please just state your name for the
2 record and then your opening
3 statement.

4 MS. FERNANDEZ: My name is Blanca
5 Fernandez. I'm a resident, taxpayer,
6 homeowner of the City of Scranton.
7 I've been here since 2005 advocating
8 in our community. Some people call me
9 a leader in the Latino community. I
10 prefer the word advocate, an advocate
11 for families that are assimilating in
12 our communities. I build bridges
13 between the Police Department and the
14 community. I've gotten five awards
15 minimum during my stay here in
16 Scranton and -- I'm sorry, I'm really
17 nervous. I'm not used to microphones
18 or cameras. I didn't expect that. I
19 tend to be a little more modest in
20 what I do but in that essence I serve
21 the community any which way I can.
22 This is my community, and I'd like to
23 see the City of Scranton turn itself
24 around. When I moved here, it was a
25 much more happening place, the mall

1 was much more occupied, and I think
2 that, in essence, I can bring new
3 ideas to council in how to turn the
4 city around. I invest in the city.
5 I'm not going anywhere. I'll still
6 stick around in spite of the tough
7 times that we're facing. I'm not a
8 quitter. I know I went before the
9 bell but I tried to squeeze everything
10 in as much as possible.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Miss Fernandez, why
12 are you interested in the City Council
13 vacancy?

14 MS. FERNANDEZ: I believe I can
15 offer some fresh ideas, not that you
16 guys aren't trying your best and I
17 commend you all for being under public
18 scrutiny. It's a very difficult spot
19 to be in and I understand that
20 everybody has a solution and we're not
21 all going to be singing Kumbaya all
22 the time but we all have the same goal
23 in mind which is to turn the city
24 around. In essence I believe that I
25 can make a difference up there. My

1 motto is make a difference, not
2 excuses. So I believe that fresh
3 ideas -- I'm not from here, I don't
4 have any affiliation with anybody but
5 I invested in the city and I'm not
6 going anywhere like I said.

7 MR. MCGOFF: And you kind of
8 partially answered the second question
9 that is there. Why do you feel you're
10 the best candidate for this position?

11 MS. FERNANDEZ: Because I can
12 reach out to populations that maybe
13 haven't been tapped into. I can
14 network with just anybody. I feel
15 that I can add to it.

16 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

17 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. One of
18 biggest problems facing the city is
19 anyone in the area knows our economic
20 condition and the finances of the
21 city. What solutions or proposals
22 would you have to help the city, the
23 city's budget and our economic state
24 overall?

25 MS. FERNANDEZ: One thing for

1 sure that I know as an AOPC Registered
2 Interpreter -- AOPC is the
3 Administrative Office of Pennsylvania
4 Courts. The City of Scranton hires
5 interpreters at \$50 an hour even they
6 go for an ARD and that takes five
7 minutes, five minutes. I think the
8 city is wasting money on interpreters
9 per diem than they would if they hired
10 a liaison that would basically occupy
11 that position. My understanding is
12 that there's already a gentleman in
13 place that applied for a liaison and
14 the city doesn't have funding.
15 However, if the court administrator
16 did his math and he took a tally as to
17 how much they occupy this gentleman
18 for interpreting costs, they would
19 realize it would be cheaper to hire
20 him as a liaison or as an interpreter
21 to fit all those needs.

22 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

23 MR. WECHSLER: One of the
24 questions we've been asking everyone
25 is does your work schedule prevent you

1 from attending meetings on weekends
2 and evenings?

3 MS. FERNANDEZ: Absolutely. I
4 work nine to five Monday to Friday.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Because a lot of
6 the work that we do is in the evening.
7 So that's not a problem, correct?

8 MS. FERNANDEZ: That's not a
9 problem for me, no.

10 MR. WECHSLER: Another thing that
11 we've been asking is how would you
12 feel dealing with the public? How is
13 your reaction being out dealing with
14 the public because council goes
15 through a lot of scrutiny, we're
16 always taking comments wherever we
17 are.

18 MS. FERNANDEZ: I have no problem
19 dealing with the public, I don't. As
20 a matter of fact, I'm the organizer of
21 the Latin Festival, founder of the
22 festival. That entails basically
23 reaching out to possible sponsors,
24 vendors, absolutely no problem
25 whatsoever.

1 MR. WECHSLER: And could you just
2 expand a little bit on the work that
3 you have done with our Police
4 Department?

5 MS. FERNANDEZ: Initially before
6 Duffy there was a chief that wasn't so
7 receptive to basically building the
8 bridges. We have Latino
9 businessowners, homeowners here that
10 do pay taxes into the city and they
11 were being ignored. With the Chief
12 Duffy, former Chief Duffy, he went out
13 to the community, he needed somebody
14 to interpret and introduce him and he
15 met all of the businessowners on South
16 Side. Now, the new chief, Graziano,
17 he's very receptive as well. He's not
18 as personable as Duffy but it doesn't
19 make him less likeable. So with that
20 being said and I've also invited the
21 Canine Unit to participate in our
22 event. They were actually recipients
23 of a donation from the festival since
24 I took it back over in 2012. I
25 interpret for the Police Department.

1 I'm on-call. They'll call me in the
2 event that they stop a Latino person
3 that doesn't speak English so that a
4 simple traffic spot doesn't become
5 anything more than that. Most people
6 don't understand the officer's
7 instructions and the officers don't
8 know Spanish so they need somebody to
9 help them facilitate communications
10 and command and order so I'm available
11 for that.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Gaughan.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, Mrs.

15 Fernandez, thank you for coming in.
16 Two questions. The first, please
17 discuss your public service
18 experience. What volunteer roles or
19 positions have you held with civic,
20 community or governmental
21 organizations?

22 MS. FERNANDEZ: Again with the
23 festival, that was the first one.
24 Secondly, I was the Chairperson of
25 Complete Count Committee of Lackawanna

1 County for the 2010 Census. I
2 advocate in our community again with
3 the Police Department and the Latino
4 community. What else haven't I done?
5 I'm out there. I'm out there for
6 anybody. It's not just the Latino
7 community. I'm out there for
8 everybody. I serve as a referral
9 source. When people are in trouble or
10 they need some help, they will call
11 me. As a matter of fact, my e-mail is
12 Bianca Fernandez 911 for that reason.

13 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. And my
14 second question. What are your top
15 three priorities that you believe are
16 the most pressing concerns to the City
17 of Scranton moving into 2015?

18 MS. FERNANDEZ: Well, taxes being
19 one. I don't feel that you should
20 penalize the people that are staying
21 put in the City of Scranton. If
22 they're willing to invest in the city
23 and they're not moving, then you can't
24 penalize the ones that stay.

25 Second one being, I guess, would

1 be, you know what, the common one and
2 it sounds really stupid but the
3 potholes are really annoying. You
4 look suspect of being a DUI person
5 when you're really just dodging
6 potholes. Potholes are a menace,
7 they're a nuisance and they cause
8 damage.

9 And thirdly I would say to bring
10 business into Scranton. We need a
11 solicitor to go out and market like
12 the Forbes 500, Fortune 500 magazine
13 people, those companies and try to get
14 them to come here. We need new
15 business. Maybe that will help keep
16 the taxes lower for the residents.

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Really just a
19 follow-up to something Mr. Gaughan
20 asked you. On your resume you list
21 founder of the Justice Crusaders?

22 MS. FERNANDEZ: Yes.

23 MR. MCGOFF: What is that?

24 MR. FERNANDEZ: I used to live in
25 the Poconos where I was one of three

1 Latino families and there was a lot of
2 discrimination. Obviously the realtor
3 wasn't going to say that to us. But
4 they pushed us into this community and
5 didn't tell us that there were people
6 that were racist where they wrote
7 White America, KKK on the school road
8 and that escalated to the point where
9 they actually had a bomb threat and
10 the ploy was to get the students to
11 come out of the school and there were
12 snipers supposedly in the stand ready
13 to kill our kids. So five of us and
14 it was two Latino and the rest were
15 Afro American, we contacted Harrisburg
16 and got 15 of the top heavy hitters of
17 every department, and they came down
18 on Western Wayne School District with
19 a vengeance. They wouldn't close down
20 the school for Martin Luther King Day
21 but they would close it down for
22 hunting season, the first day of
23 hunting season. That school got
24 closed down for an entire day where
25 everybody from the janitor to the

1 superintendent, anybody had any
2 contact with a minority child had to
3 go through a diversity training. So
4 that was our success and based on that
5 we did feel like we had justice. So
6 the Justice Crusaders was formed from
7 that.

8 MR. MCGOFF: I remember the
9 events at Western Wayne.

10 MS. FERNANDEZ: Oh, do you? Oh,
11 they were terrible to live there, I
12 tell you that.

13 MR. MCGOFF: I taught in the
14 Poconos for 20 years so I'm a little
15 bit familiar with some of the
16 situations that you described.

17 The last question I have for you,
18 Miss Fernandez. If chosen to this
19 position, would you seek election to
20 this seat in 2015?

21 MS. FERNANDEZ: That's hard to
22 say because I haven't sat in your seat
23 so I don't know what is going to
24 happen from now to then. I used to
25 come to council. I've seen all the

1 criticism, and like I said, you know,
2 everybody has different ideas and
3 we're not all going to sing Kumbaya.
4 We not all going to be agreeable on
5 the same subject matter as to how to
6 get there. We all have the same goal,
7 however, which is the city, get over
8 this hump and get on the right path.

9 MR. MCGOFF: And finally, is
10 there anything else that you would
11 like to say to council?

12 MS. FERNANDEZ: No. I applaud
13 your efforts. I see and I know it's a
14 very hard job. I've seen the critics
15 and for you to be under the bus, so to
16 speak, and willingly do so is
17 commendable. So I applaud you guys.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you very much.

19 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

20 MR. MCGOFF: And we will inform
21 you as to council's decision.

22 MS. FERNANDEZ: Thank you.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Miss
24 Fernandez.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Good afternoon or

1 good morning, Mr. Palmitessa. Just to
2 briefly explain to you the process for
3 the interviews. You will be given
4 approximately two minutes to make an
5 opening statement followed by the two
6 questions that you were given when you
7 handed in your resume.

8 MR. PALMITESSA: Right.

9 MR. MCGOFF: Please we just ask
10 that you have a minute or two to
11 answer each question and then there
12 will be questions from other council
13 members and then an opportunity for a
14 closing statement.

15 MR. PALMITESSA: Okay.

16 MR. MCGOFF: So if you would
17 please just state your name for the
18 record and you may make your opening
19 remarks.

20 MR. PALMITESSA: My name is Bob
21 Palmitessa. I'm a resident of the
22 City of Scranton for most of my life.
23 I was born here, raised here, educated
24 here, got married here, have three
25 children that also were born here,

1 raised here, educated here. And
2 what -- I was involved in every aspect
3 of their life, whether it was Little
4 League Baseball, Little League, little
5 kid football, cheerleading, dance,
6 piano, every single thing we were
7 both, my wife and myself were behind
8 our children, pushed our children to
9 strive to do better. Okay. I work as
10 a union electrician here now.

11 Unfortunately I had to go out of town
12 a few times to seek employment in
13 different states due to the lack of
14 work in this area. I'm back in this
15 area now working with a company. I've
16 been with them for three, three and a
17 half years and basically that's it.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Why are you
19 interested in the City Council
20 vacancy?

21 MR. PALMITESSA: The reason why
22 I'm interested is that, No. 1, I don't
23 think the blue color people are
24 getting the proper representation.
25 There's a lot of hardworking

1 individuals out there, not to take
2 anything from you four gentlemen.
3 It's just that I believe that, No. 1,
4 that the elderly need a voice, the
5 blue color people need a voice,
6 people -- we can't just continue to,
7 No. 1, go on keep increasing taxes and
8 not worrying about the rest of these
9 people. Like I said, I've been very
10 active in our community along with
11 other communities. I did a lot of
12 volunteer work, Nay Aug, Lackawanna
13 Little League, Scranton -- the Ozzie
14 Complex. There's a lot of good people
15 here and I believe that the people
16 need a strong voice.

17 MR. MCGOFF: And why do you feel
18 you're the best candidate for this
19 position?

20 MR. PALMITESSA: Well, No. 1, I
21 work for -- we work for several
22 different companies. Now, we come in,
23 we do a job and then we move on. If
24 we don't come in and do a good job in
25 a proper amount of time, come in on

1 time with the money aspect of it, the
2 hour aspect of it, we're no longer
3 called by these people. So this way
4 here -- she kind of threw my train of
5 thought, I apologize. Like I said, we
6 do work all over the State of
7 Pennsylvania. We do work for schools,
8 hospitals, a ton of other facilities.
9 If we don't perform like we need to
10 perform, then we're just simply not
11 asked back to do additional work and
12 stuff like that. I believe that in
13 that aspect that that will help me to
14 join up with you four gentlemen to
15 more or less not completely eliminate
16 these problems but at least get a
17 control on them so that we can see
18 light at the end of the tunnel.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

20 MR. ROGAN: You mentioned and
21 also in your resume you mentioned that
22 City Council is missing a blue color
23 worker which is obviously true by
24 looking at the background of the four
25 of us. Can you explain a little bit

1 more that would be an asset to council
2 and the experiences that you've had
3 would be an asset.

4 MR. PALMITESSA: Well, I know the
5 struggle. I mean, we work and then we
6 don't work. When we're laid off,
7 we're to collect Unemployment. When
8 we're laid off, no money goes into our
9 health and welfare, therefore, there's
10 a great risk that I lose my medical
11 benefits, okay. That's one thing.

12 No. 2, just like I said, the blue
13 color workers, they're everyday
14 people. Neighbors up and down my
15 street. I see them every morning
16 getting up 4:30, 5 o'clock, going,
17 coming home 4:30, 5 o'clock as myself.
18 Like I said, I don't believe that
19 they're getting the correct
20 representation. And, again, I'm not
21 taking anything from anyone. It's
22 just I know everyday struggles. I
23 know -- you know what, it seems to me
24 that my utility bill comes every three
25 weeks, not once a month, and it's when

1 we meet together, we get together with
2 our neighbors and stuff, it's the same
3 thing. It's, No. 1, there's very
4 little left at the end of every
5 paycheck and it seems like it's
6 getting less and less and less. Let
7 alone, I'm fortunate enough that my
8 children are already educated so I
9 don't have that. But there's people
10 with small children and all you can do
11 is look at my neighbor thinking this
12 guy has no idea what he's in for in
13 the next ten years.

14 MR. ROGAN: Thank you very much.

15 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Palmitessa,
16 we've been asking all the candidates.
17 Does your work schedule prevent you
18 from being active as a council person
19 on weekends and evenings?

20 MR. PALMITESSA: Absolutely not.
21 I get up and I go and if I have a
22 responsibility, I will meet that
23 obligation. Okay? Like I said, I
24 work all over the place. There's
25 times where I have to work long hours,

1 I'm fortunate enough that I can work
2 additional on one day to get a
3 reprieve for the next day. My company
4 is very flexible with me in that
5 respect.

6 MR. WECHSLER: Okay. The other
7 thing we've been asking and I know
8 you've been out there for a long time
9 being involved. But we're kind of
10 trying to get a field for how you
11 would deal with the public and the
12 scrutiny that we go through as a
13 council person.

14 MR. PALMITESSA: I have pretty
15 thick skin. I've been around. I've
16 been at tons of fundraisers with
17 everyone of you's and I would always
18 think to myself, Man, I don't know how
19 these guys go through this. I mean,
20 it don't have to be true yet it's in
21 the paper. Like I said, I've been at
22 fundraisers with everyone of you's and
23 I said to myself, you know, this is
24 where I need to get. I'm going to get
25 in. I can take the heat. There's no

1 doubt about it. Like I said, I would
2 like to have an opportunity to show
3 you what I'm capable of. There's like
4 I said, long hours is nothing that I'm
5 not used to. I've worked long hours
6 all of my life. Like I said,
7 things -- some things went good, some
8 things went bad. Disappointment is
9 not the end of the world for me.
10 Okay. That's just a minor setback.
11 Then I know I have to plan and go
12 another route.

13 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, Mr.

15 Palmitessa, thank you for coming in.
16 Two questions. No. 1, please discuss
17 your public service experience. What
18 volunteer roles or positions have you
19 held with civic, community or
20 governmental organizations?

21 MR. PALMITESSA: Okay. I was on
22 the -- No. 1, I was on the Board of
23 Directors for Lackawanna County Little
24 League, spring, summer, fall, no
25 matter when it was, whether we were

1 putting our Little League together.
2 We put a park at Lackawanna Little
3 League. I went down there, tons of my
4 own free time when I was off. And,
5 again, I didn't build the Little
6 League. It wasn't all me. It was a
7 group of volunteers that we got
8 together and we stayed together. I
9 was on the Board of Directors for
10 Lackawanna Little League, I was also
11 with the West Side Falcons for a good
12 number of years, the entire -- I
13 stayed down that after my son
14 graduated from the Little League and
15 it got to the point where I didn't
16 know three-quarters of the people that
17 were coming into the Little League
18 because of the age difference between
19 my children and these new kids that
20 were coming onboard. Did a lot of
21 volunteer work for cleanups for the
22 City of Scranton, did Capouse Avenue a
23 few times, volunteered, did some work
24 for the Nay Aug projects. Again, I'm
25 not afraid to jump in. I have many

1 skills and I have no problem offering
2 them skills to people.

3 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Second
4 question. What are your top three
5 priorities that you believe are the
6 most pressing concerns to the City of
7 Scranton moving into 2015?

8 MR. PALMITESSA: My top three
9 concerns, No. 1, my top concern is
10 probably the tax increases. Okay? I
11 believe that we need tax increases. I
12 know everything continues to go up. I
13 understand that but I believe that we
14 can go up other avenues as far as
15 instead of having maybe a 20 or 30
16 percent increase, maybe we can get
17 away with a four or five percent
18 increase. I think there's a lot of
19 things that we need to explore as a
20 team that maybe we could hold like the
21 individuals that are here. We were
22 already told that the police unit, the
23 police and fireman's union are willing
24 to come and renegotiate. That tells
25 me right there that they want help.

1 Okay? We have the University of
2 Scranton. It's nobody is going to
3 write the city checks without any type
4 of regard. Nobody is going to do
5 that. There has to be a way that
6 everybody has to get onboard to move
7 the whole city forward all at one
8 time, whether it's through the state
9 representatives or senators, us as
10 individuals. I mean, like I said,
11 everyone knows that there has to be
12 tax increases but the problem is that
13 they're so drastic, it's getting to a
14 point where we are now taxing the
15 elderly out of their homes. So that
16 would probably be one of my biggest
17 concerns. Like I said, there's room
18 for improvements whether it be with
19 the clerical workers, whether it be
20 with the DPW, the school board, the
21 school district, there's definitely
22 room for improvement, I can see it.
23 Like I said, I'm out there every
24 single day. I see what goes on. And
25 that not that none of you's are --

1 I'm not saying that you's are not
2 paying attention. What I'm saying is
3 what I'm observing.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Final
5 question, Mr. Palmitessa. The term of
6 office, the unexpired term of Mr.
7 Loscombe is a year and a half. If
8 chosen to this position, would you
9 seek election to this seat in 2015?

10 MR. PALMITESSA: Absolutely.
11 There's no doubt about it. This is
12 something that is not going to happen
13 overnight, No. 1. No. 2, like I said,
14 it would be based on the feedback that
15 I get from the people that I'm
16 representing. If they say, hey,
17 listen, you're no good and you're not
18 good for our community, well, then,
19 point well taken and I will go on my
20 way. But I do not believe that I
21 would get that type of response. I
22 believe that I can get the people
23 excited, get the people motivated to
24 move forward. Like I said, nobody is
25 against not paying some type of tax

1 one way or another. It's just it has
2 to be done moderately and it has to be
3 done when everyone else is making
4 sacrifices all at the same time. We
5 can move forward. We can get out of
6 this. There's not a doubt in my mind
7 about it. It's just -- it seems to me
8 that we're not all on the same page
9 and don't mean by you four gentlemen.
10 I mean, once again, the Police
11 Department, the DPW, the school
12 district. There's a lot of people.
13 It makes a lot of things up. And like
14 I said if everybody give a little, now
15 the burden doesn't solely lie on the
16 taxpayers.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Is there
18 anything else that you would like to
19 say to council?

20 MR. PALMITESSA: Thank you, No.
21 1, for the opportunity to come and
22 speak in front of you's. And whether
23 you pick me or not, I wish whoever you
24 do decide to go ahead with, I wish
25 them nothing but well. I would also

1 like, No. 1, to be part of moving this
2 city forward. That's it.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr.
4 Palmitessa.

5 MR. PALMITESSA: Thank you.
6 Appreciate it.

7 MR. PUGLIESE: Good afternoon,
8 gentlemen.

9 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Pugliese?

10 MR. PUGLIESE: Pugliese.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Just to give you an
12 idea of what we're doing here. You'll
13 be allowed approximately two minutes
14 to make your opening statement
15 followed by the two questions that
16 were on the sheet that you were given.
17 We please ask that you keep your
18 response to a minute, two minutes for
19 each question. That will be followed
20 by questions from the other members of
21 council and finally you will be
22 allowed to make any closing comments
23 that you wish.

24 MR. PUGLIESE: Okay.

25 MR. MCGOFF: So please state your

1 name for the record and your opening
2 remarks.

3 MR. PUGLIESE: Thank you. My
4 name is Lawrence Pugliese. I'm a
5 citizen of Scranton, 1106 Richmond
6 Street and my opening statement.
7 Basically, I guess the first and
8 foremost role I play is father of five
9 ranging in ages from five to 17 and
10 then a distant second, nonetheless a
11 pretty important role I play in the
12 community is professor at Lackawanna
13 College and I teach mathematics,
14 environmental law and policy,
15 environmental studies and I've also
16 taught social issues, multi
17 culturalism, critical thinking and
18 communication as well. I worked as an
19 adjunct teaching multi culturalism at
20 the University of Scranton. And the
21 reason I bring that up is because I
22 believe that's one of the main reasons
23 I am well suited for a position on the
24 council as I mentioned in my cover
25 letter to maybe assist you folks in

1 facing the challenges this city, our
2 city has confronted. I have an
3 undergraduate degree in engineering
4 and a master's degree in law and I've
5 been involved with many community
6 organizations over the years,
7 including Scranton Tomorrow, the
8 Scranton Jazz Festival, Electric City
9 Television, Mark, my good side, the
10 Diversity Coalition as well as United
11 Cultures Leadership Academy. I am
12 president formerly right now -- not
13 formerly. I was formerly the vice
14 president. Presently I am the
15 President of the Lackawanna College
16 Education Association which is the
17 faculty at Lackawanna College. And I
18 believe the reason I'm here is I
19 believe Scranton in general is a great
20 city. I think we all agree to that.
21 It's a wonderful place. And we have
22 wonderful people living here. Some
23 have been here for decades, others are
24 new arrivals. Nonetheless, we have
25 significant challenges as we all know.

1 I feel like I'm preaching to the choir
2 here but for the citizens that are
3 watching, mainly a dwindling tax base,
4 also blight, absentee landlords, a
5 high poverty rate -- is that the end
6 or do I have 30 seconds or so --

7 MR. MCGOFF: Go ahead. You can
8 finish.

9 MR. PUGLIESE: I can finish?
10 Thank you. Severely resolve the
11 pension system. I can now make --
12 speaking our jobs, unemployment is
13 terrible. It's not our fault to the
14 city but we have to deal with these
15 problems. And again the experience
16 that I have as an educator, someone
17 formally trained in analytical
18 thinking and also my work with the
19 community, I think, gives me the
20 insight and the skill set to help with
21 those challenges. Thank you.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Well, in your
23 opening statement you're answering
24 some of the questions that we're
25 asking. The first question was why

1 are interested in the City Council
2 vacancy?

3 MR. PUGLIESE: I'm sorry. Mark
4 was giving me a signal about the mike.
5 I missed it. I didn't have the mike
6 close enough to me.

7 MR. MCGOFF: Why are you
8 interested in the City Council
9 vacancy?

10 MR. PUGLIESE: Well, I am a
11 citizen of the city and I care for the
12 city. I'm a true believer in
13 government being a means to provide a
14 better situation, a better set of
15 opportunities for its citizens. And
16 I'm 47-years-old. I think at this
17 point in my phase -- in this phase of
18 my life I have somewhat of a
19 responsibility given the experience
20 that I've accrued to give a little bit
21 to my city and I am interested in this
22 kind of work. I love to sit down with
23 people and talk with them about
24 complicated scenarios and I love to
25 use my analytical skills to try to

1 figure out all the factors and the
2 possible solutions. I'm open minded.
3 I hear when people talk and I'm not
4 too egotistical. I'm sure we all have
5 an ego to even want to be and I
6 suppose a government position, you
7 must have somewhat of a ego, big
8 enough to at least come in front
9 instead of me but I don't try -- you
10 know, I don't let the ego to get in
11 front of what's most important, the
12 best decision being made. So I think
13 this opportunity presenting itself
14 allows me to exercise a lot of what I
15 think is important and also to use a
16 very beneficial end of the skills that
17 I've developed.

18 MR. MCGOFF: And, again, why do
19 you feel you're the best candidate for
20 the position?

21 MR. PUGLIESE: Yeah, you're
22 right. I'm being redundant. I kind
23 of answered them all.

24 MR. MCGOFF: I'm sorry. If you
25 would care to expand on it.

1 MR. PUGLIESE: Sure, I could. I
2 mean, I also see besides some of those
3 negatives I mentioned about the city,
4 there's so many positives here that
5 with the right guidance via government
6 and community leaders can really be
7 nurtured and help us grow out of the
8 somewhat, I guess, negative state of
9 affairs we're dealing with. We have a
10 diverse, diverse citizenry which, I
11 think, is a major asset. We have
12 great educational systems here,
13 primary, second, post secondary and
14 the arts and the culture that exists
15 here is wonderful and we could
16 together as a council, I suppose, work
17 closely with the mayor and community
18 leaders to hear what ideas are out
19 there, the best ideas, look to cities
20 that have done great things in this
21 nation and maybe learn from what
22 they've done and try to fit those
23 types of programs into what we need
24 here in our city. It's a very
25 exciting opportunity to be able to

1 have access as you guys do to major
2 decisions and, you know, I think
3 that's what entices me.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Mr.
5 Rogan.

6 MR. ROGAN: Yes. It's no secret
7 that Scranton faces many financial
8 difficulties. What would be some of
9 your ideas to get the city budget back
10 in line and also economic development
11 in the city in general?

12 MR. PUGLIESE: Well, that's a
13 really good question. I think right
14 now for years we've been talking about
15 the mercantile tax which I don't know
16 how we get around reducing that though
17 I think it keeps businesses out of the
18 city. The commuter tax perhaps will
19 as well. We're talking about a
20 municipal services tax that might go
21 up. It's dependent on a Harrisburg
22 decision. All those taxes dissuade
23 businesses and residents from moving
24 in which keeps our tax base low. I
25 don't know right off the top of my

1 head how to solve those problems.
2 They're very complicated and I think
3 many councils have tried to figure it
4 out. I would do my best to look at
5 all of the research and all of the
6 opportunities and possibilities and
7 programs out there to try to figure
8 out the best way with you folks. But
9 the arts and culture and education,
10 those are things we already have going
11 for us. We should have more festivals
12 to bring in more people, to allow for
13 those people to go to downtown
14 businesses and the neighborhood
15 businesses and spend money. That
16 could help. I think we have a number
17 of them now. I'm involved with the
18 Scranton Jazz Festival and we have
19 many great festivals. We should focus
20 on that even more so. The nonprofits,
21 though they're not obligated, we
22 definitely need to talk with them
23 about helping us out with the
24 financial challenges we face. I think
25 the unions, though, I'm the union

1 president at Lackawanna College and I
2 believe the unions, we also need to
3 talk to our union brothers and sisters
4 in the city about maybe helping us
5 with changing their expectations as to
6 what they're going to gain in the
7 future so that we're not an insolvent
8 city. So those are some of the areas
9 in general I would look at. You know,
10 we need to make the place attractive
11 for businesses, for residents and we
12 have everything in place. We just
13 need to coordinate and be reasonable
14 with one another.

15 MR. ROGAN: Thank you very much.

16 MR. WECHSLER: Does your work
17 schedule prevent you from attending
18 meeting on evenings and weekends?

19 MR. PUGLIESE: No, it does not.

20 MR. WECHSLER: Okay. The other
21 thing that we've been asking is how
22 would you handle public scrutiny as a
23 council person?

24 MR. PUGLIESE: Well, I've already
25 kind of dipped my big toe in that

1 given an article in the Scranton Times
2 today so let me give it a go. I'll
3 address that situation. First of all,
4 I think the public has a right to look
5 closely at anybody who represents
6 them. I also think they should
7 certainly have all the information
8 before they lambaste somebody, not
9 that I've been lambasted but I have
10 seen in the past people have been
11 lambasted without due process really.
12 But public scrutiny is part of the
13 job. You know, I have an uncle who's
14 been involved in politics in Dunmore
15 and he always told me, If you're going
16 to be politics, Larry, you have to
17 have thick skin. And that's for sure.
18 I didn't pay my garbage fee last year,
19 half of it. I just found out today,
20 \$89 I paid in June and then the second
21 89 I just forgot. You know, a
22 personal matter. I went through a
23 divorce. It kind of threw me off. I
24 had to deal with all kinds of
25 financial issues. And that accrued a

1 couple of percent of interest which is
2 \$116. I never got a notification, I
3 didn't know. I got the new bill and I
4 think this is a problem which is for
5 \$300. Really it should have carried
6 over the 89 that I owed so I would
7 have known that 89, that was in
8 arrears that much. But anyhow it's my
9 responsibility, I paid it this morning
10 on-line as soon as I was made aware of
11 fact that I was behind on that, so.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

13 MR. PUGLIESE: You're welcome.

14 Thank you for the opportunity to
15 explain myself.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you for
17 coming in.

18 MR. PUGLIESE: Yes.

19 MR. GAUGHAN: Two questions I
20 have. No. 1, please discuss your
21 public service experience. What
22 volunteer roles or positions have you
23 held with civic, community or
24 governmental organizations?

25 MR. PUGLIESE: Okay. I was

1 cofounder of United Cultures Community
2 Council which is part of Scranton
3 Tomorrow with the late Reverend McLane
4 and the late Nancy Kay Holmes and
5 those two folks, and I was a youngster
6 and I learned a lot from those two
7 folks in regards to the importance of
8 community and diversity and openness.
9 We did a lot of good work. We had a
10 program and we brought people together
11 to talk about issues such as racism
12 and poverty and sexism, all the isms
13 basically on the public access
14 channel. The whole purpose given that
15 I'm an educator so people could more
16 indepthly understand the wonders of a
17 diverse society and the challenges
18 that also come with different
19 cultures, different opinions,
20 different backgrounds. I'm also -- I
21 was also the president of the
22 Diversity Coalition which was a group
23 that brought together many sorts of
24 people, all walks of life so to speak.
25 And again we had festivals and brought

1 people together. The whole objective
2 was to share culture and see that we
3 do have a very vibrant set of
4 individuals and background
5 representative in the city and we're
6 stronger if we work together and we
7 have a lot of fun when we get
8 together. I've been involved with the
9 Leadership Academy that was in
10 existence for four years where we
11 brought eighth graders through senior
12 year in to teach them how to be
13 critical thinkers, teach them about
14 the theories that are the economic
15 growth and challenges are steeped
16 in, to teach them about multi
17 culturalism. The whole objective is
18 so when they grow up, they will be
19 well suited to live in society and be
20 active participates. I've been
21 involved with a lot of the Scranton
22 Jazz Festival as well. I'm one of the
23 organizers and the MC, working with
24 Marco and Lori and Bob. The Little
25 League, you know, Board of Directors

1 in Green Ridge. I was involved with
2 that for a number of years. Off the
3 top of my head those are several.

4 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you very
5 much. Second question. What are your
6 top three priorities that you believe
7 are the most pressing concerns to the
8 City of Scranton moving into 2015?

9 MR. PUGLIESE: Well, taxes,
10 insolvency of the pension fund,
11 unemployment, blight. All of those
12 are problems that I see us facing as a
13 city. Also, we're a small city. And
14 I think it would be easier for us than
15 many others to work together. I think
16 we should really put a lot of time and
17 energy into building bridges, working
18 with neighborhood associations and
19 community groups so that we have open
20 dialogue and communication. I value
21 that. I value vigorous debate and
22 intellectual discourse that all can
23 participate with and if we do those
24 things, together we're going to hear
25 all kinds of perspectives and ideas

1 and probably come to better
2 conclusions as to how to face our
3 challenges and also just become a more
4 tightly knit community. Now, life is
5 short. We should enjoy each other and
6 not be looking at each other as
7 adversaries or, you know, be caught up
8 in the political theatre of what does
9 goes on in this room and throughout
10 the city. You know, we're all
11 citizens of same city. I think we
12 should work together a bit more and
13 that's a priority I think we overlook
14 oftentimes.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you very
16 much.

17 MR. MCGOFF: Final question. If
18 chosen to this seat, would you seek
19 election to the seat in 2015?

20 MR. PUGLIESE: Right at this
21 moment I would say yes. Yes, I would.
22 You know, see how much public scrutiny
23 I can take in a year if I were given
24 the opportunity.

25 MR. MCGOFF: And lastly, any

1 closing remarks or any questions you
2 have for council?

3 MR. PUGLIESE: I guess I thank
4 you for the opportunity to stand in
5 front you and share with you my ideas
6 and my intentions and either way I
7 support you folks. I know you have a
8 hard job and I think you're doing a
9 good job. Hopefully I can be one of
10 your colleagues.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you very much.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

13 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

14 MR. MCGOFF: That concludes the
15 morning round of interviews. We will
16 resume the interview process at 12:30.

17 (Recess taken.)

18 MR. MCGOFF: I'd like to call
19 this meeting back to order and
20 continue with the interviews of
21 candidates for the unexpired term of
22 Councilman John Loscombe.

23 MR. O'NEILL: Hello.

24 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. O'Neill, I'd
25 just like to explain the process that

1 we're using for the interviews. You
2 will be given two minutes for opening
3 remarks. If you hear a bell at some
4 point in time, that's the two minute
5 bell. And then the two questions will
6 be asked that you were given prior to
7 this meeting and then there will be
8 additional questions from council. We
9 just ask that you limit your responses
10 to a minute or two.

11 MR. O'NEILL: No problem.

12 MR. MCGOFF: And then finally you
13 will have an opportunity for any
14 closing remarks. So if you would just
15 state your name for the record.

16 MR. O'NEILL: Alan O'Neill.

17 MR. MCGOFF: And your opening
18 remarks.

19 MR. O'NEILL: Hello. My name is
20 Alan O'Neill. I'm from Scranton,
21 Pennsylvania. I lived most of my life
22 in Scranton, Pennsylvania, till I was
23 about 25 and I thought it would be
24 best if I left the city for a bigger
25 and better things. I moved to Tampa,

1 Florida, for approximately five years
2 where I was pretty successful in
3 sales. I did all different type of
4 sales through the United States. I
5 was a regional sales manager,
6 consultant, public speaker. Then
7 after a few years I decided, you know,
8 I really started missing Scranton and
9 I was concerned about it. So I made
10 some arrangements to come back home
11 and I just wanted to see the city
12 start doing some more improvements,
13 things like that. I bought a couple
14 properties, started to rehab some
15 homes and things like that. On
16 Mulberry Street I had an internet
17 gaming store that was one of the first
18 around and then I had one in Olyphant,
19 it got some good reviews and then it
20 started to decline after that. So
21 then I thought to myself I'd start to
22 be interested in politics a little
23 bit. I'm a member of the zoning board
24 right now. I'm a father which is one
25 of the most important things, I think,

1 out of anything because I'm concerned
2 about my daughter with the city and I
3 said I've always had a soft spot in my
4 heart for Scranton even when I was
5 making, you know, great money and
6 spectacular weather and stuff. In
7 Tampa I always had, you know, Scranton
8 in my mind and I'd always pay
9 attention to things, who's running and
10 things like that, how the city is
11 doing. And over the last few years
12 I've seen like a decline in the area
13 where I live, and I would like to make
14 a difference for the whole entire
15 city, not just for myself or my family
16 but for everybody so Scranton could be
17 a place where, you know, we all can be
18 proud of.

19 MR. MCGOFF: And you started to
20 answer the first question that will be
21 asked of you. Why are you interested
22 in the vacancy on City Council?

23 MR. O'NEILL: Because as I said,
24 I think I can make a difference. I
25 have a good background in public

1 speaking, things like that, and I've
2 said I've always been someone that's
3 very concerned about Scranton. I said
4 ever since, you know, I was a young
5 kid I always thought it could be a
6 bigger and better city like we always
7 heard the rumor of the train coming in
8 and this and that and I was always
9 like waiting for that next step for it
10 to take that next leap. I've traveled
11 all around the world. I've been to
12 about 30 countries and I see little
13 things, little nuances in these other
14 countries and stuff that I think, you
15 know, that Scranton can use and from
16 this wi-fi through the entire downtown
17 and outlying areas to like light rail
18 to things like that where maybe it's
19 not feasible but maybe some new ideas
20 and stuff can help out the city.

21 MR. MCGOFF: And what makes you
22 the best candidate?

23 MR. O'NEILL: As I said, I think
24 my background. I have a background in
25 construction, I have a background in

1 public speaking and I have a
2 background in sales and you're not
3 going to get too many people with that
4 combination. I'm a confident person.
5 I watch your meetings. I know there's
6 a burden on every single person with
7 everything. From the zoning board
8 there's a burden, you know, if you
9 shoot down someone's idea you feel
10 horribly because you know they put
11 their time, effort and money into the
12 city. And, I mean, I'd like to see
13 everybody successful, not just the
14 five of us or whoever is here, I want
15 to see the whole entire city do well.
16 I think if you have someone like
17 myself that really truly cares and I
18 said the reason why you can look at me
19 and think that I truly care about the
20 city is as I said I moved back from a
21 2.3 million person city back here
22 because I was concerned and I'd like
23 to make a difference and I'd like to
24 help everyone out.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

1 MR. ROGAN: You touched a little
2 bit on the question I wanted to ask
3 and I appreciate the good work you've
4 been doing on the zoning board. How
5 does the work you've been doing on the
6 zoning board prepare you to be a
7 member of City Council?

8 MR. O'NEILL: Well, it puts you
9 in the limelight a little bit, and as
10 I said, I think is the biggest thing
11 is the burden on your back. You know,
12 when I first took the position, I
13 didn't realize how much it would tug
14 at your heartstrings, you know what I
15 mean? Like when you see someone and
16 you're voting, it's a two to three
17 vote, maybe you're the deciding one or
18 you're the contributing factor to
19 someone not having enough money to do
20 this and the building, you know, they
21 need to do a whole new parking scheme
22 and this and that, it's tough. You
23 know what I mean? And I realize the
24 stuff that you guys go through, it's
25 similar stuff. Everything is weighted

1 on your back and your shoulders. You
2 know what I mean? You really want to
3 make that right decision, what's best
4 for the city and I truly understand
5 that from just being on that for a
6 short period of time.

7 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. And as a
8 businessowner and somebody is involved
9 in real estate in the area, what are
10 some ideas that you have regarding
11 economic development in the city and
12 the budgetary problems that we've had?

13 MR. O'NEILL: Economic
14 development, I think you almost need
15 outside just a salesman for the city
16 where they can have an influx of
17 people, an influx of business and you
18 approach other cities and you start to
19 try having people drum up business to
20 bring it into Scranton instead of
21 going out of Scranton. I think that's
22 truly one of the most important things
23 is having that amount of people and
24 businesses, you know, from the Chamber
25 of Commerce to, you know, maybe it

1 would be on beyond someone's
2 shoulders, just that, how many
3 businesses do you contact today, how
4 many people did you contact if they're
5 interested in coming, if they're
6 interested in moving in. You find out
7 if, you know, a company wants to leave
8 Pittsburgh, you contact them, hey,
9 what about Scranton. Here's what we
10 have to offer. And basically that.

11 MR. ROGAN: Thank you very much.

12 MR. O'NEILL: You're welcome.

13 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. O'Neill, does
14 your work schedule prevent you from
15 attending meetings on evenings and
16 weekends?

17 MR. O'NEILL: No.

18 MR. WECHSLER: The other thing
19 that we've been asking candidates is
20 how would you handle the scrutiny from
21 the public as a City Council person?

22 MR. O'NEILL: Well, like I said,
23 I have pretty broad shoulders and I
24 said I realize the stuff that you go
25 through, it's similar to what I go

1 through. I realize, you know, some of
2 the people are incredibly tough but
3 that doesn't bother me. You know, I
4 said I've done motivational speaking
5 and things like that for a consulting
6 company and, you know, negatively, it
7 doesn't breed negativity with me.

8 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

9 MR. O'NEILL: You're welcome.

10 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, Mr. O'Neill,
11 thank you for coming in. Two
12 questions. No. 1, please discuss your
13 public service experience. What
14 voluntary roles or positions have you
15 held with civic, community or
16 governmental organizations?

17 MR. O'NEILL: Just helping out
18 neighbors and stuff like that with
19 different projects, nothing like on
20 the books or things like that. But
21 just helping the community from
22 helping friends out for, you know,
23 fixing things around their house and
24 things like that. Like I said, I have
25 a very small construction company and,

1 you know, any of the neighbors or
2 anything need a hand, I'm always there
3 for them. Or, you know, if I'm on a
4 job, I'd always try to improve. If
5 it's a small little thing, I can help
6 somebody out with, I have no problems
7 with that.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. No. 2,
9 what will be your top three priorities
10 as a councilman that you believe are
11 the most pressing concerns to the City
12 of Scranton moving into 2015?

13 MR. O'NEILL: One I briefly
14 touched with before. I think you need
15 an influx of people and businesses in
16 this city. I don't know how people in the
17 past have maybe overlooked it because
18 I believe if you ask -- it's when
19 you're teaching sales, if you have a
20 certain percentages of noes, you get a
21 certain percentages of yeses. So if
22 you ask enough people, if you ask
23 enough businesses, you will eventually
24 have those yeses coming in and with
25 enough yeses you start building up the

1 tax base, you can start building up
2 the populations that are declining and
3 inclining with the businesses so I
4 think that's a large thing. And what
5 was the other question?

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Just what are your
7 top three priorities that you believe
8 are the most pressing concerns of the
9 city moving towards 2015.

10 MR. O'NEILL: The next thing
11 would be addressing the tax base.
12 That's all you hear from basically
13 every single person in Scranton from
14 the increase of tax on homes, from the
15 talking about the commuter tax now.
16 It has to be more friendly taxes to
17 the city. I don't know if the
18 commuter tax is the best idea because
19 maybe you would influence people from
20 coming in. I don't have an opinion on
21 that yet. I'd like to see a little
22 bit more information on it. And the
23 last thing, I think if a
24 beautification project in the city if
25 there's some money allocated for that,

1 just like I said sprucing up a couple
2 area, things like that, the blighted
3 houses. You know, that's a huge
4 thing. When people come in, they see
5 the stuff, you don't want to live
6 there. You know what I mean? That's
7 something that should be addressed.
8 If you go after businesses people to
9 come into the city, you know, you want
10 to the city to look respectful, neat,
11 clean, and there's definitely great
12 sections of Scranton but then there's
13 other section that are on the decline
14 that need to be addressed.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

16 MR. MCGOFF: One final question.
17 The seat vacated by Mr. Loscombe has a
18 year -- approximately a year and a
19 half of an expired term. If chosen
20 for this position, would you seek to
21 be elected to that seat in 2015?

22 MR. O'NEILL: I imagine so. I
23 would like to continue with City
24 Council. I mean, things do and will
25 come up but as of right now I have

1 every, you know, idea of running again
2 in 2015.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Anything
4 else that you would like to say to
5 council or any questions that you may
6 have for us?

7 MR. O'NEILL: No. I just
8 basically appreciate the time and the
9 interview, and I would look forward to
10 working with all of you in the future.

11 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you very much,
12 Mr. O'Neill.

13 MR. O'NEILL: Thank you.

14 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

15 MR. MORGAN: Hello.

16 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Morgan, I'd just
17 like to explain to you the process
18 that we will be using here for this
19 interview. You have two minutes to
20 make an opening statement followed by
21 the two questions that were on the
22 sheet that you were given when you
23 presented your resume. Please we ask
24 that you keep your answers to a minute
25 or two for each of the questions. And

1 that will be followed by questions
2 from other members of council and you
3 may hear a bell at like a ten mark.
4 That just is an indication that we're
5 getting close to the interview period
6 and you'll be given an opportunity to
7 make any closing remarks.

8 MR. MORGAN: Okay.

9 MR. MCGOFF: If you would just
10 please state your name for the record
11 and you may begin with your opening
12 remarks.

13 MR. MORGAN: Yes. My name is Lee
14 Morgan. And my opening statement is
15 that I really appreciate the
16 opportunity to come here today and
17 participate in this forum in the hope
18 to be appointed to that council seat
19 and that's my opening statement.

20 Now, the reason that -- can I
21 move to question one?

22 MR. MCGOFF: You may.

23 MR. MORGAN: Okay. The question
24 one is why are you interested in this
25 City Council seat? And the reason I'm

1 interested in the council seat is
2 because I think it would be make me a
3 better citizen. I think I could learn
4 a lot here, and I look forward to
5 working together in crafting
6 legislation for the benefit of the
7 residents of the city. Okay. Could I
8 go to two?

9 MR. MCGOFF: You're taking up my
10 time.

11 MR. MORGAN: All right. Why do
12 you feel you are the best candidate
13 for this position? The reason I feel
14 that I'm the best candidate for this
15 position even though I've run before
16 and I've never run is that I've spent
17 over 20 years through a multitude of
18 administrations and witnessed a lot of
19 the work that has taken place here.
20 Some I agreed with, some I didn't
21 agree with, and I think in all that
22 time I really have a very broad
23 knowledge of the things that are
24 taking place here and I think at this
25 time where the city finds itself, I

1 think it would be important to have
2 someone on council that has that
3 knowledge to take that council seat.
4 And I'm ready for the next one.

5 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. It's no
6 secret that the city's finances have
7 been one of the main problems facing
8 City Council and the mayor over the
9 last few decades. What are some
10 proposals that you would support to
11 try to get our finances back on track?

12 MR. MORGAN: Well, as far as
13 finances are concerned, I think that
14 for a very long time the city has gone
15 absolutely in the wrong direction. I
16 think we've gone in the direction that
17 the status point that it's in because
18 they don't want to answer the problems
19 that they have in regards to pensions
20 and a lot of other issues and they'll
21 just trying to push it off on the
22 city. I think one of the greatest we
23 can do is try to build a partnership
24 with the Scranton Chamber of Commerce.
25 I think that the Scranton/Abington

1 Planning Association is the first step
2 for the city. I think our financial
3 problems are based on the fact that
4 our population decline has really hurt
5 us and matched with the elderly
6 population base that we have in the
7 city, it really hurts us, and we've
8 looked to blame other people for the
9 things that have gone on like the
10 nonprofits. They do have something to
11 do with what's occurred here but I
12 think that we have to build a strong
13 partnership with the outlying
14 communities and ask them to about
15 interact with us as we interact with
16 our state representatives and our
17 state senators to have Scranton as a
18 Class A-2 city, bond that with SAPA
19 and begin, I guess, a manufacturing
20 light industrial redevelopment in the
21 city to create jobs which will then
22 create wages which will create an
23 expanding wage base which will create
24 an expanding tax base which will lead
25 to redevelopment of the neighborhoods

1 and that's the way we should be going.
2 I think that Mr. Amoroso's plan, no
3 disrespect to the council, I think is
4 going to hurt us so much that it's
5 very hard to explain to the individual
6 council members but that's not the
7 plan we should take. We need to take
8 the hard plan and we need to start
9 getting state government to respond to
10 our problems instead of ignoring them
11 and giving us the ability to mistreat
12 the people in the outlying communities
13 by reaching to them for money.

14 MR. ROGAN: Outside of the SAPA
15 plan and working with the chamber, do
16 you have any specific proposals that
17 would help the city?

18 MR. MORGAN: I think that they
19 are very specific plans and I think
20 the greatest plan that we can have in
21 this city to be quite honest is a
22 united council that doesn't fight
23 among itself and has the ability to
24 have the mayor as a very strong
25 partner and legislation needs to be

1 crafted by the mayor and the council
2 with a very strong understanding of
3 state law and the ability of the
4 residents to comply to that
5 legislation in regards to taxation or
6 redevelopment.

7 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

8 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Morgan, we've
9 been asking this question of all the
10 candidates today and the first one I
11 have is, does your work schedule
12 prevent you from working evenings or
13 weekends as in terms of a council
14 person?

15 MR. MORGAN: I believe that I can
16 meet those requirements.

17 MR. WECHSLER: The other question
18 that I've been asking is how would you
19 handle the public scrutiny that's
20 rendered as a council person?

21 MR. MORGAN: How would I handle
22 the public scrutiny of --

23 MR. WECHSLER: As being a council
24 person? How would handle being under
25 the public eye all the time?

1 MR. MORGAN: Well, I'm pretty
2 much there all the time now anyhow and
3 I just think it's good to be
4 scrutinized and put under a microscope
5 because it keeps you alert in a way
6 and I think you are responsible for
7 everything you do and you should never
8 make a vote or enter and make a
9 statement that you can't defend and
10 that you don't feel is right and just.

11 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Mr. Morgan, thank
13 you for coming in. Two questions.
14 The first one, please discuss your
15 public service experience. What
16 voluntary roles or positions have you
17 held with civic, community or
18 governmental organizations?

19 MR. MORGAN: As far as voluntary
20 things, I'm part of the tax group. At
21 one time I helped in cleanups
22 throughout the city. What was the
23 rest of that question?

24 MR. GAUGHAN: What volunteer
25 roles which you had just mentioned or

1 positions have you held with civic,
2 community or governmental
3 organizations?

4 MR. MORGAN: I've never held a
5 civic or government position, never.

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. Thank you.
7 And question No. 2, what will be your
8 top three priorities of councilman
9 that you believe are the most pressing
10 concerns to the City of Scranton
11 moving into 2015?

12 MR. MORGAN: Stabilizing the tax
13 base, finding financial solutions to
14 our problems and getting the people to
15 participate in government as we try to
16 move forward and salvage our city.

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

18 MR. MCGOFF: And one final
19 question, Mr. Morgan. As you know,
20 Mr. Loscombe's unexpired term is
21 approximately a year and a half. If
22 chosen to this position, would you
23 then seek election to the seat during
24 the 2015 year?

25 MR. MORGAN: I have to be real

1 honest with you and tell you that I'm
2 almost positive that I would not seek
3 election to that seat. I would just
4 like to -- well, 99 percent sure and I
5 I'd like to say a 100 because I would
6 just like to sit there and see if the
7 council could accept some of my ideas
8 and see if we could work together to
9 try to turn the city around. I've sat
10 here for over 20 years with a lot of
11 ideas and a lot of opinions and I've
12 expressed them publicly and I've never
13 been afraid to put my name on the
14 ballot and I just really think that if
15 I were to run for an elected office,
16 it wouldn't be a council seat because
17 I think I would rather be a state
18 representative or something other than
19 a councilman but I would like to help
20 if I could.

21 MR. MCGOFF: And are there any
22 closing comments or anything that you
23 would ask council?

24 MR. MORGAN: This is where I get
25 a chance to make my closing statement,

1 okay. My closing statement is very
2 simple. I really have listened to a
3 lot of people try to surmise who might
4 get the seat or how it might happened
5 or, you know, a lot of other scenarios
6 but I really think at this time in our
7 city's -- well, the problems we really
8 face here, I really do believe that I
9 am the best candidate because I've
10 spent so much time here and I have
11 such an understanding of what's taken
12 place here and I'm very opinionated on
13 how we can go about changing this
14 city. I think it's very important to
15 have the ability to listen to the
16 public and understand those problems.
17 I think I have that ability. I'm not
18 afraid to take credit for the things
19 that I do and I never hide. You never
20 have to look for me. I'm right there.
21 I think that most people in this city
22 that I've run into know who I am and
23 to be honest with you more people have
24 my cell phone number in this city than
25 I could imagine. I receive phone

1 calls all the time. I think the
2 people in this city are very
3 comfortable with me and they
4 understand me and they accept me. You
5 know, when I've run for office and
6 people have come out to vote, I don't
7 use signs and I don't advertise but
8 people tell me they've come out just
9 to vote for me and in the last
10 election I did only receive 20 percent
11 of the vote and there's no doubt about
12 that but I didn't campaign hardly at
13 all because I didn't have the time.
14 And I just think that I have a great
15 respect for people, and I think that
16 the people in this city have a respect
17 for me, and I think it's a two-way
18 street and I would never take lightly
19 the respect that this council or the
20 people in this city would give me if
21 they put me in that seat and that's
22 one of reasons why, you know, I would
23 like to be appointed and I'm willing
24 to make the tough decisions, I'm
25 willing to express why I am going to

1 vote a certain way, and I never think
2 I'm right all the time, and I think
3 that I always want to know what other
4 people think and other people's
5 opinion so I would never go out and be
6 a role person without respect for
7 somebody else's viewpoint and I'm not
8 a person who does things personally to
9 people. And that's all I have.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr.
11 Morgan, very much.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Good afternoon. I'd
14 like to explain to you the process
15 that we are going to use for the
16 interview. You will be given
17 approximately two minutes to make any
18 opening remarks that you may have.
19 That would be followed by the two
20 questions that are on the sheet that
21 you were given when you handed in your
22 resume. We would just ask that you
23 keep your responses to those questions
24 to two minutes in time. That will be
25 followed by questions from the other

1 members of council and finally an
2 opportunity to make closing remarks.

3 MR. SCHUSTER: All right.

4 MR. MCGOFF: So if you would
5 please just your name for the record
6 and you may begin with your opening
7 statement.

8 MR. SCHUSTER: Tom Schuster. Can
9 you hear me on the mike?

10 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

11 MR. SCHUSTER: Like I said, my
12 name is Tom Schuster. I have a
13 Bachelor of Science Degree in
14 psychology and business from Penn
15 State University and for the last few
16 years I've been a candidate for
17 Scranton School Board. I've explored
18 many issues which face the district
19 and I've kept abreast of issues that
20 face council because they're both
21 interrelated. The reason I'm
22 interested in public office is that I
23 have vested interest in the city, I'm
24 a homeowner and a taxpayer. Like all
25 of us here, I want to see a strong

1 Scranton. I want to see us out of
2 financial troubles, I want to see us
3 regain our credit worthiness and I
4 want us to fortify the city for the
5 future. I want to explore the ways to
6 attract business to the city, keep our
7 educated citizens in the city and
8 promote home ownership and in turn
9 increase the tax base. In my line of
10 work which I work in behavioral health
11 there are qualities that are needed.
12 One is good interpersonal relationship
13 skills, being able to coordinate and
14 collaborate with the team in dealing
15 with many individuals and agencies and
16 coming together on one plan. I feel
17 it's one of my best qualities which
18 would help me on City Council and I
19 think if you all asked yourselves, can
20 I work with Tom, I think you can all
21 answer yes. I bring to the table
22 common sense, I'm a constant
23 researcher and I look at all the
24 angles of an issue. I can definitely
25 work with a team but I also see issues

1 as an individual and I'm not afraid to
2 express my own opinion. I've read Mr.
3 Amoroso's report in full and I've seen
4 the suggestions and Scranton does need
5 a plan of action. In order to get us
6 back on track I see two major hurdles.
7 The biggest hurdles are the union
8 arbitration and the funding of city
9 pension. Most recently I saw an
10 article in the Scranton Times that
11 read that the unions were willing to
12 negotiate or give some concessions and
13 I think our first step would be to
14 discuss what these concessions are.
15 Keep in mind that if we're taking any
16 loans, we should be taken by the end
17 of the year because the federal policy
18 is going to raise interest rates.
19 With 34 percent of the city's pension
20 funded and us making minimum payments,
21 I think this issue has to be dealt with
22 immediately and although the governor
23 didn't address or he failed to pass
24 the state pension reform, Scranton
25 needs to get ahead of the curve and

1 get onto this. I think we should
2 explore other ideas, rather they be
3 highbred, pooled or group pension
4 funds. And since this is a nationwide
5 issue, I think we can look at other
6 cities around the country, see which
7 ones have had success and apply them
8 to our city.

9 MR. MCGOFF: You started to
10 answer or basically answer the first
11 question I was going to ask which is
12 why are interested in the City Council
13 vacancy and I'll piggyback with the
14 second question. Why do you feel
15 you're the best candidate for this
16 position?

17 MR. SCHUSTER: Again, like I
18 said, I live in the city, I'm a
19 homeowner, me and wife are here, we
20 plan on having a family here. We'd
21 like to stay here. And like I said
22 with working with a team, I do work --
23 I am on one the other boards in the
24 city and, again, with my job it's all
25 about collaboration, teamwork and --

1 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Schuster, it is
2 difficult to hear you. If you would
3 just speak up a little bit.

4 MR. SCHUSTER: All right.

5 MR. MCGOFF: And the
6 stenographer, I know, would appreciate
7 it.

8 MR. SCHUSTER: All right, all
9 right. I think my team working skills
10 and skills with interpersonal
11 relationships, I think I can jump
12 right on and work well with each of
13 you.

14 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

15 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Schuster, you
16 started to get onto this. But one of
17 the questions I've been asking a lot
18 of the candidates is how their work
19 experience would translate into an
20 asset as a City Council member. Can
21 you talk a little bit of how your
22 experiences would make you a good City
23 Council member.

24 MR. SCHUSTER: Again like I said,
25 I'm a psychology major, again I'm a

1 therapist, I'm a rehabilitation
2 counselor and this is what I work in
3 day in and day out. It's, again,
4 collaborating with the team to address
5 the issues of in my situation children
6 in schools and in the community.

7 MR. ROGAN: And what are some of
8 the -- obviously if anyone follows the
9 city understands that the finances
10 have one of the most difficult parts
11 of being a member of council or a
12 mayor at this point in time. What are
13 some ideas that you have to support
14 our -- to help with the budget or with
15 community development and economic
16 development in general?

17 MR. SCHUSTER: All right. I
18 would like to -- I'd like to explore
19 the pilot or somewhat. And you guys
20 have had more experience than with me.
21 But I also saw recently in Mr.
22 Amoroso's report that the health care
23 concerns were an issue with the city
24 and maybe we can explore approaching
25 our health care providers and

1 hospitals for maybe free health care
2 services for city employees possibly
3 would be one.

4 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Schuster, does
6 your work schedule prevent you from
7 working evenings and weekends in terms
8 of City Council business?

9 MR. SCHUSTER: No. Actually
10 evenings and weekends are when I'm
11 free.

12 MR. WECHSLER: The other thing
13 that we've been asking the candidates
14 is, how would you deal with the public
15 scrutiny that you're going to receive
16 as a City Council person?

17 MR. SCHUSTER: I'm actually not
18 sure yet. I think I can handle it. I
19 think I can handle it.

20 MR. WECHSLER: Okay. Thank you.

21 MR. SCHUSTER: Thank you.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Mr. Schuster, thank
23 you for coming in today. Two
24 questions. No. 2, please discuss your
25 public service experience. What

1 volunteer roles or positions have you
2 held with civic, community or
3 governmental organizations?

4 MR. SCHUSTER: All right. I'd
5 say some of the volunteering
6 experience I've had is working with
7 St. Patrick's in West Side. I've
8 helped out at the church picnic and
9 volunteered for certain events there.
10 I helped out last weekend. I attend
11 the North Scranton Weston Field Bulls
12 Head Neighborhood Association meetings
13 as well as some of Tripp Park. Again,
14 I'm on the Scranton Planning
15 Commission which is a city board.
16 Right now we're looking at the
17 Scranton/Abington Planning Association
18 proposal which will be coming down
19 probably in the next month I would
20 say.

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Second
22 question. What will be your top three
23 priorities as a councilman that you
24 believe are the most pressing concerns
25 to the City of Scranton moving into

1 2015?

2 MR. SCHUSTER: Like I have stated
3 two of them here and one is finding
4 our way out of this arbitration. We
5 have to settle this so we can move on.
6 And the next one is pensions and I
7 think we can get into some pension
8 reform here for new hires the sooner
9 the better. And then I'd like to say,
10 I mean, we have to get out of this
11 situation first before we can get try
12 to attract people to the city but, I
13 mean, the ultimate goal would be to
14 attract people to the city, to expand
15 our tax base rather than taxing the
16 dwindling population.

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

18 MR. SCHUSTER: Thank you.

19 MR. MCGOFF: The last question --
20 well, actually I was going to ask that
21 I see on the resume that you were the
22 line cook at Kelly's. Were you
23 responsible for the wing sauce? If
24 so, I --

25 MR. SCHUSTER: I was not

1 responsible for the wing sauce.

2 Cooking of the wings, yes.

3 MR. MCGOFF: But the last
4 question that I have. Mr. Loscombe's
5 term, the unexpired term is for a year
6 and a half. If you were chosen to
7 this seat, would you then seek in 2015
8 to be elected to that seat for 2016?

9 MR. SCHUSTER: It is possible.
10 Like I said, the last two elections I
11 ran for Scranton School Board and
12 given this opportunity, well, I
13 probably will run for something in the
14 next election.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. And are
16 there any closing remarks or any
17 comments that you have for council?

18 MR. SCHUSTER: No. I'm all
19 right.

20 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you very much,
21 Mr. Schuster.

22 MR. SCHUSTER: All right. Thank
23 you.

24 MR. MCGOFF: Good afternoon. I'd
25 like to just explain the process that

1 we're going to use for the interviews.
2 First, you will be given approximately
3 two minutes for any remarks or
4 statements that you may have followed
5 by the two questions that you were
6 given when you handed in your resume.
7 That would be followed by questions
8 from the other members of council. We
9 just ask that you please keep your
10 responses to a minute or two for each
11 of the questions, if possible, and
12 then you will be given an opportunity
13 to for any closing remarks.

14 MR. MATYJEVICH: Thank you.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Okay. So if you
16 would please just state your name for
17 the record and you may begin.

18 MR. MATYJEVICH: Joseph
19 Matyjevich, M-A-T-Y-J-E-V-I-C-H. Mr.
20 McGoff, Mr. Wechsler, Mr. Rogan, Mr.
21 Gaughan, thank you for this
22 opportunity to address you today as an
23 interested party for that open seat.
24 My name is Joe Matyjevich. I'm the
25 son of the late Joseph and Margaret

1 McLain Matyjevich. I'm happily
2 married to the former Laura Realstone,
3 22 years. Yesterday was our
4 anniversary. I have daughter,
5 20-years-old, third year at Mansfield
6 University. I'm a graduate of West
7 Scranton High School, honor's graduate
8 in 1983, I'm a graduate of the
9 University of Scranton, 1988. I've
10 been working for the last 26 and a
11 half years for Sanofi Pasteur
12 Vaxserve, one of the largest vaccine
13 manufactures in the world. I started
14 in operations. I have worked my way
15 up to the position of a project leader
16 ultimately responsible for the large
17 departments there working with our
18 distributor down here in Scranton,
19 Vaxserve, on their retail business.
20 Myself personally I have a passion for
21 our city. I have a passion for the
22 people of this city, a passion for the
23 employees of this city. I'm
24 interested in this position to
25 continue my service to the city

1 following the footsteps of my father
2 who instilled strong work ethic in us.
3 My father served 26 and a half years
4 in the Bureau of Fire so there's a
5 hard work ethic in our family that, in
6 turn, I want to continue to give back
7 to the City of Scranton and it's
8 people and I feel that with my strong
9 work ethic, my education, my
10 background and my dedication I will be
11 the best candidate for this position.

12 MR. MCGOFF: And you've started
13 to answer the question. The first
14 question I had, why are you interested
15 in the City Council vacancy and the
16 second one is why are you the best
17 candidate for that position so you
18 would wish to expand on that.

19 MR. MATYJEVICH: Basically as a
20 lifelong resident of the city, you
21 know, born and raised in the Hyde Park
22 section, living in Tripp Park,
23 48-years-old, I see the city has a
24 bright future. One man cannot do it
25 alone. Basically I am a team player.

1 I will work with the administration,
2 the employees, the residents and you
3 four members of City Council to ensure
4 that we do the best things for our
5 residents, that we look out for them
6 and we make sure that we make the
7 right decisions. Decisions are hard.
8 There's major issues facing our city.
9 I don't see items as issues. At work
10 we say, Joe we have an issue. I see
11 issues as opportunities because
12 opportunities are things that you can
13 look forward, you know, to solving.
14 Issues reminds you of a problem. So
15 you have to turn it around. You have
16 to look at the glass half full versus,
17 you know, half empty. And, you know,
18 start that course, work forward, you
19 know, to solve the problems. And I
20 believe that I have that strong work
21 ethic and education, the professional
22 background to actually do that and to
23 fill that open seat next to Mr.
24 Gaughan there on City Council and work
25 with you four.

1 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

2 MR. ROGAN: Yes. One of the
3 biggest issues that's been facing the
4 city is our finances. What ideas do
5 you have to help get the finances of
6 the city straightened or economic
7 government in the city in general?

8 MR. MATYJEVICH: Mr. Rogan,
9 that's a great question. I do have
10 some ideas that I believe can probably
11 raise between eight and ten million
12 dollars per year for the City of
13 Scranton. It would start at either
14 working with the administration or
15 working with the legislative bodies
16 here to draft some legislation. We
17 would, in turn, would take that
18 legislation, to -- it will be
19 Representative Flynn or Ellis in the
20 fall or Representative Farina and
21 Senator Blake down to Harrisburg,
22 working then with Senator Toomey and
23 Senator Casey in the federal
24 government to not impact our customers
25 but possibly generate somewhere around

1 \$560,000 a year and if you all know it
2 or not it's something that we're all
3 doing today and money is being
4 generated for Lackawanna County in all
5 of the 67 counties, you know, in
6 Pennsylvania with not that large of an
7 impact, you know, for the city. So I
8 do have something that I would
9 evidently like to bring forward, you
10 know, as a member of council working
11 with the administration and hopefully
12 we can look at instituting that in the
13 2015, you know, budget.

14 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. And how
15 does your work experiences and your
16 experiences make you a good fit for
17 Scranton City Council?

18 MR. MATYJEVICH: Good fit for me.
19 I started work in 1988 as a computer
20 operator. I've been promoted through
21 the organization of Sanofi Pasteur up
22 to a project leader. I am responsible
23 for large projects, small projects,
24 working with outside business
25 partners, inside business partners. I

1 actually, you know, manage people, I
2 manage budgets. I believe that I have
3 not had anything at work that would
4 actually make me feel like I have not
5 done the right thing. If the time is
6 needed, if the effort is needed, I'm
7 the type of guy that will roll up my
8 sleeves and get the job done, and I
9 believe that I can start the job, you
10 know, at 2 o'clock this afternoon if
11 you decide to, you know, make that
12 vote today and offer me that seat and,
13 you know, do what I need to do to, you
14 know, move the city forward working
15 for you.

16 MR. ROGAN: Thank you very much.

17 MR. MATYJEVICH: Thank you.

18 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Matyjevich,
19 how would your work schedule affect
20 your ability to attend meeting on
21 evenings and weekends?

22 MR. MATYJEVICH: Mr. Wechsler, my
23 work schedule is open. I work for
24 eight to five. Sometimes I'm there
25 till seven, sometimes I start at six,

1 I work weekends. But I'm the type of
2 guy that I give it my all. I give
3 24/7. You know, I'm very active in
4 the community, in my neighborhood, in
5 Tripp Park, in the Weston Field Bulls
6 Head neighborhood, a lot of civic
7 organizations and other areas within
8 the Democratic party as a committee
9 man, a member of the county committee
10 and the city committee and work will
11 not be an issue. I'll do what it
12 takes to get the job done and I'm
13 actually doing that now, you know,
14 working, helping my volunteer
15 organizations as the treasurer for the
16 Black Sheep of West Scranton which
17 allows us to actually serve, you know,
18 kids in need, and I've been doing that
19 for 19 years so I feel that I can
20 handle the job and I can make the time
21 and I will make the time.

22 MR. WECHSLER: How would you deal
23 with the public scrutiny that you
24 receive as a council person?

25 MR. MATYJEVICH: Public scrutiny

1 as a council person, you know, I can
2 handle that. I've actually -- I dealt
3 with that in the past, you know, just,
4 you know, recently. I believe there
5 was a number of other people here who
6 had ran for office and I did run for
7 this office in 2013 and I participated
8 in the debates, I had interviews, you
9 know, with the newspaper, and I'm a
10 man of my word and basically I can
11 handle anything that comes to me and I
12 can actually -- I will stick up for
13 myself, my family and the city. I
14 will make sure that I put my best foot
15 forward when it comes to that.

16 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Mr. Matyjevich,
18 thank you for coming in today. Two
19 questions. No. 1, please discuss your
20 public service experience. What
21 volunteer roles or positions have you
22 held with civic, community or
23 governmental organizations?

24 MR. MATYJEVICH: Basically from a
25 civic organization and volunteers,

1 I've been a member of the Tripp Park
2 Neighborhood Association, I'm on the
3 board of directors for the past few
4 years. I've been members of the PTA.
5 My daughter is 20. It started when
6 she was four-years-old at the John
7 Marshall School. I was on the Board
8 of Directors for the West Side Falcons
9 since she was a cheerleader.
10 Basically worked in the Tripp Park
11 Missy League, I'm the treasurer of the
12 Black Sheep of West Scranton, an
13 organization that helps sick children.
14 I'm an active member of the Bulls Head
15 Weston Field Neighborhood Association,
16 I'm a committeeman of the Democratic
17 party in 213 which is Tripp Park, I'm
18 a member of the Lackawanna Executive
19 Committee, the Scranton City
20 Democratic Committee, I'm the chairman
21 of 113 Legislative District and I'm a
22 member of the inactive Scranton
23 Parking Authority and I put my best
24 foot forward in all of these to ensure
25 that we do the right things, you know,

1 for the people and basically I have no
2 problem, you know, adding the Scranton
3 City Councilman as the list of things
4 that, you know, will be there to add
5 to tell people about in what I can do.

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. And my
7 second questions is, what will be your
8 top three priorities as a councilman
9 that you believe are the most pressing
10 concerns to the City of Scranton
11 moving into 2015?

12 MR. MATYJEVICH: The top three
13 things are finances, our
14 infrastructure and the health,
15 education, welfare and safety, you
16 know, of our city and the citizens.
17 You know, it's all starts in
18 neighborhoods. I've been involved in
19 Tripp Park, Bulls Head in Weston Field
20 and basically it's a building block
21 system so basically we need to make
22 sure the neighbors are stable, we need
23 to make sure that the neighbors get
24 the services they provide, we need to
25 make sure that the infrastructure that

1 is given us for our city is the best
2 infrastructure that we can attract
3 people and we need to ensure that
4 actually, you know, the safety of our
5 citizens is there. And basically, you
6 know, being a citizen of Scranton, a
7 member of those organizations, they
8 would be my priorities. I will treat
9 them priorities and opportunities that
10 we can take and move forward with
11 them.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Final question, Mr.
14 Matyjevich. The unexpired term of
15 Councilman Loscombe is for a year and
16 a half through the 2015 year. If you
17 were chosen for this seat, would you
18 then seek reelection or election to
19 that seat for 2016?

20 MR. MATYJEVICH: Well, certainly
21 I would. Basically as I said before,
22 I'm active in my community, I'm active
23 in my city and I see many
24 opportunities for our city and my job
25 here on earth, you know, isn't done.

1 I need to just keep going and moving
2 forward to ensure that, you know, I do
3 my best for my time here to make sure
4 that I take care of issues at hand,
5 friends family, my faith and my city.
6 And I will definitely, you know, seek
7 election to that term in 2015.

8 MR. MCGOFF: And thank you, Mr.
9 Matyjevich. Is there anything, any
10 closing remarks or any questions or
11 comments that you may have?

12 MR. MATYJEVICH: You know, first
13 of all again let me thank you for the
14 opportunity. It's unfortunate that
15 you have to, you know, go through this
16 as you were, you know, six, seven
17 months into the year, of a rush year,
18 of a hectic year but, you know, I
19 again let me just reiterate that, you
20 know, born in the city, my educational
21 background, my strong work ethic, my
22 community involvement, I feel that if,
23 you know, given the opportunity to
24 serve, you know, I will do my best and
25 I will give 110 percent, you know, to

1 the city to ensure that we do what we
2 can, you know, for our citizens to
3 keep them here and to keep our
4 neighborhoods as vibrant as they are
5 because basically we can't lose this
6 city. We don't want houses being just
7 bulldozed down and green space like
8 you've seen in Detroit or basically we
9 don't want to cities like they've gone
10 in Stockton, California, you know,
11 actually gone bankrupt and so forth.
12 We need to, you know, do everything
13 that we can, turn over every stone to
14 ensure that we find the opportunities
15 to move this city forward. And
16 basically I hope that you carefully,
17 you know, take what I said and my
18 resume and actually give me some good
19 consideration, you know, in this when
20 you make your decision.

21 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you very much,
22 Mr. Matyjevich, and we will do that.

23 MR. MATYJEVICH: Thank you very
24 much. Have a good day.

25 MR. GAUGHAN: Thanks.

1 MR. EVANS: Good afternoon,
2 council.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Good afternoon. I'd
4 like to first explain to you the
5 process that we have been using for
6 the interviews. You will be given
7 approximately two minutes to make any
8 openings statements or remarks that
9 you may have followed by the two
10 questions that were on the sheet that
11 you were given when you handed in your
12 resume.

13 MR. EVANS: Okay.

14 MR. MCGOFF: That will be
15 followed by questions from the other
16 members of council. We just ask that
17 your responses be limited to a minute
18 or two for each question, if possible.
19 And then finally you will be given an
20 opportunity to make any closing
21 remarks. And if you would please
22 state your name for the record and you
23 may make your opening comments.

24 MR. EVANS: Well, first of all,
25 it's good to see you today. Good to

1 see you today by the way. Oh, the
2 mike is right here, okay. Good
3 afternoon again. My name is Wayne
4 Evans and as you saw by my resume I
5 have a lifetime full of community
6 service and government experience.
7 Like all of you, Scranton is my home.
8 I'm a third generation Scrantonian, my
9 children, of course, are fourth
10 generation and now my grandchildren
11 are fifth generation so, yes, we all
12 have a stake in Scranton and I have a
13 larger stake than ever. But honestly
14 this is the last place I thought I was
15 going to on a Saturday in July. I've
16 never really had designs on being on
17 City Council but I know how tough a
18 job it is. But a couple things did
19 bring me here today. No. 1, the fact
20 that it is only an 18 month term
21 theoretically was important.
22 Secondly, I've noticed a new era of
23 civility between council and the
24 administration and I felt that was
25 also very, very important to me as an

1 individual to be part of a group that
2 is going to be like that. See, you
3 and I and all of us as Scrantonians,
4 we all have a lot of work to do. If I
5 am fortunate enough to join you as
6 councilman, I firmly believe that I
7 can bring a wealth of experience to
8 this council. The City of Scranton is
9 at a crossroads again. It is my
10 opinion that the next 18 months will
11 be critical and will set the stage for
12 the next generation. But rest assured
13 I have no designs on being at City
14 Council beyond those 18 months.
15 That's a promise. I feel that we can
16 get the job done together. This is
17 the most critical time in the history
18 of the City of Scranton. I believe I
19 will bring a level of talent,
20 experience and understanding of city
21 government, our neighborhoods, civic
22 involvement, planning, real estate,
23 assessments and small business to this
24 chamber. Quite frankly with that
25 background I can hit the ground

1 running. We simply cannot afford to
2 put the training wheels on. And I
3 feel this is another opportunity to
4 continue my lifelong passion for
5 community service at the highest level
6 as a city councilman, I think I can
7 help and I humbly ask for your support
8 today.

9 MR. MCGOFF: The two questions
10 that I was going to ask you, you sort
11 of started to answer as many others
12 did. Why are you interested in the
13 City Council vacancy and I guess the
14 piggyback to that is why you feel
15 you're the best candidate for the
16 position?

17 MR. EVANS: Well, I really do
18 feel I can help. I think I can make a
19 difference. And it may sound like
20 simplistic answer but that's really
21 the truth. That's the bottom line.
22 If you don't think you can be a
23 positive participant in this
24 government, you shouldn't be at this
25 podium and you shouldn't be behind

1 those seats. So that's the main
2 reason I want to come. You know, I
3 stepped up all my life in community
4 service as a civic volunteer, as a
5 citizen volunteer and this is just
6 another opportunity to carry on that
7 tradition. As far as, you know, why
8 I'm the best suited candidate, I just
9 feel I have the wealth of experience
10 and the background in government, in
11 the private sector and, of course, in
12 the community.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

14 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Evans, thank you
15 for coming in. And could you talk a
16 little bit about how your experience
17 as a realtor in the City of Scranton
18 would make you a good fit for Scranton
19 City Council?

20 MR. EVANS: Well, as some of you
21 know as the President of the Greater
22 Scranton Board of Realtors, we
23 developed what is called the Scranton
24 Initiative this year. We had video
25 contest that promoted Scranton and

1 asked people to say on camera why they
2 think Scranton is a great place to
3 live and it was highly successful. We
4 have another project we're working on
5 called Lighter Quicker Cheaper where
6 we're going to do actually a project
7 within the city that we're going to
8 show up a 1 o'clock in the afternoon,
9 by 4 o'clock it's going to be done and
10 we're going to unwrap some sort of
11 gateway project and we'll work with
12 the administration on and people are
13 going to drive by and say, Wow, where
14 did that happen. We're trying to
15 create an environment that is positive
16 within the city. But more than that,
17 homeownership matters. The best
18 blocks, the best neighborhoods in our
19 are those that have a high percentage
20 of homeownership. Clearly we all know
21 that and the worst blocks and the
22 worst neighborhoods are those that
23 don't. That is -- it sounds
24 simplistic as well but that is the way
25 to turn our city around. It's a way

1 to turn blight around, it's a way to
2 turn crime around. We have to do
3 everything we can to foster
4 homeownership in our city.

5 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. And you
6 started to answer some of my second
7 question which was with the budget
8 being what it is in Scranton, what are
9 some ideas to shore up the budget and
10 to create community and economic
11 development?

12 MR. EVANS: That's a heck of a
13 question. Well, before you now you
14 have the Amoroso plan and you're going
15 to have to decide on that. The truth
16 of the matter in recent past recovery
17 plans did not work it was because they
18 were cherry picked. The
19 administrations in the past tended to
20 cherry pick what they liked and what
21 they didn't like and the whole plan
22 fell apart. So the Amoroso plan if
23 you decide to go forward with that,
24 you have to go forward with the whole
25 plan. You can't try to reshape it

1 because I think that would be a
2 mistake. The number one issue right
3 now that is having a little
4 controversy is the commuter tax. I've
5 never been a believer in the commuter
6 tax. However, this commuter tax is so
7 focused particularly because it can
8 solve the pension problem or at least
9 try to solve the pension problem, I've
10 come to terms with that. However, I
11 also think that allowing that to go
12 forward without creating a system or a
13 situation where you have pension
14 reform would be a disservice to
15 nonresident taxpayers.

16 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

17 MR. EVANS: You're welcome.

18 MR. WECHSLER: Mr. Evans, we've
19 been asking all the candidates a
20 couple questions on does your work
21 schedule prevent you from attending
22 meetings on evenings and weekends as a
23 council person.

24 MR. EVANS: Yes.

25 MR. WECHSLER: It does --

1 MR. EVANS: It does permit me to
2 attend meetings. I'm sorry?

3 MR. WECHSLER: It does not
4 prevent you from --

5 MR. EVANS: Oh, no, it does not
6 prevent me.

7 MR. WECHSLER: And the other
8 thing that I've been asking is how
9 would you handle the public scrutiny
10 as a council person?

11 MR. EVANS: Well, Councilman
12 Wechsler, you know as well as I do,
13 you were involved with the
14 neighborhood movement, I was involved
15 with the neighborhood movement for
16 decades. We've been in a few
17 controversial issues over the years
18 and we've taken some heat and we're
19 used to that. I was on the Planning
20 Commission for a decade. During that
21 timeframe we wrote the zoning code, we
22 wrote the subdivision code, we wrote
23 the city master plan. We've had
24 public hearings. So I'm used to that
25 participation. I was on the Home Rule

1 Charter Study Commission for two
2 years, sat at this table for two long
3 years putting together a plan for the
4 city, with citizen input, on TV, so
5 I'm pretty much used to the public
6 scrutiny so been there.

7 MR. WECHSLER: Thank you.

8 MR. EVANS: You're welcome.

9 MR. GAUGHAN: Mr. Evans, thank
10 you for coming in today. I have two
11 questions. The first is please
12 discuss your public service
13 experience. What volunteer roles or
14 positions have you held with civic,
15 community or governmental
16 organizations?

17 MR. EVANS: Okay. Well, I'm not
18 being a bragger. I don't like to
19 really do that too much but you have
20 my resume in front of you. I've been
21 involved with -- currently I'm
22 involved with the Architectural
23 Heritage Association as the president
24 of the preservation group. I'm the
25 chairman of the Elm Street Program in

1 South Scranton. I'm the President of
2 the Greater Scranton Board of
3 Realtors, of course. I'm also past
4 history -- also on the HARB, by the
5 way, Historical Arbitration Review
6 Board with the city. Formerly I was
7 on the Ethics Commission with the
8 city, the Golf Commission, the City
9 Planning Commission. I served on
10 Metro Action which is part of the
11 Chamber of Commerce, Scranton
12 Tomorrow. So I have a vast long
13 history of being involved in our
14 community and I've stayed active
15 throughout my entire life.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. And my
17 second question. What will be your
18 top three priorities as a councilman
19 that you believe are the most pressing
20 concerns to the City of Scranton
21 moving into 2015?

22 MR. EVANS: Wow. Well, taxes and
23 finance obviously are No. 1. I'm sure
24 you've heard that before. The problem
25 with taxes right now is we've long

1 reached the point of diminishing
2 returns. Every time you raise a tax,
3 in year one we gain revenue because
4 naturally people can't react to it.
5 Year two, it's flat. Year three, we
6 actually lose money. So we really
7 have to think long and hard every time
8 we attempt or think about a new tax or
9 raising a tax, it simply doesn't work.
10 We're well beyond that situation. On
11 the financial side we have to take a
12 good hard look at the Amoroso plan and
13 see if it works for us. If it does
14 work, then we have to go all in. The
15 other two issues, probably blight is
16 always a concern. As a neighborhood
17 leader, I was on the front lines of
18 fighting blight my entire adult life
19 and crime. I'm a big proponent of
20 what's called the Broken Windows
21 Theory of crime fighting. And we hear
22 people talk about it all the time but
23 it lacks real implementation.
24 Basically what that is is going after
25 the small crimes, you know, the

1 vandalism, you know, things like that.
2 You have to go after the small things
3 to take care of the larger things.
4 And I've heard the chief of police
5 talk about that and I know he's
6 implemented some of those ideas but I
7 think we really need to go all in with
8 that as well because I think that's a
9 way to, again, eliminate blight. It
10 works hand in hand and, of course,
11 home ownership works hand in hand with
12 blight as well.

13 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

14 MR. EVANS: You're welcome.

15 MR. MCGOFF: The final question
16 that I had you did answer in your
17 opening remarks. I just wish if you
18 would reiterate. I was asking if
19 chosen for this seat would you run for
20 reelection to the seat in 2015. Would
21 you just expand on why you feel that
22 not running would be plus?

23 MR. EVANS: Well, basically I
24 review this as almost an 18 month
25 assignment, you know, like a project

1 because the next 18 months again are
2 the most critical. I don't want to
3 spend or waste one second worrying
4 about a campaign. I don't want to
5 have one vote influenced by a
6 campaign. That's not why I'm looking
7 to be -- I'm here to help. I'm not
8 here to foster a future political
9 campaign. I understand you will have
10 to do that, all of you will have to do
11 that because you are already city
12 councilman and I applaud you for doing
13 it. That's not something I'm
14 interested in. I'm interested in
15 being part of this group and moving
16 the city forward. And at the end of
17 that 18 months I feel that I can
18 contribute enough, that it be a
19 positive benefit to the city.

20 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you.

21 MR. EVANS: You're welcome.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Are there any other
23 comments or statements that you would
24 like to make to council?

25 MR. EVANS: Just to reinforce the

1 fact that I think I have the
2 government experience through being on
3 the Planning Commission and the Ethics
4 Commission and now the HARB and I have
5 zoning experience by being part of the
6 planning experience. I have private
7 sector experience. I'm a private --
8 I'm a small businessman, plus I worked
9 for a Fortune 500 company for 30 years
10 and also obviously I had the civic
11 experience. I have that, you know,
12 across the board, across the city,
13 from the Chamber to Scranton Tomorrow
14 to my neighborhood. So, again, I feel
15 like I can join this council on day
16 one and be productive and be honest
17 and serve the city well.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you very much,
19 Mr. Evans.

20 MR. EVANS: Thank you.

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

22 MR. MCGOFF: That concludes the
23 interviews for the vacant council
24 position. It is council's intent to
25 deliberate on the candidates and to

1 make a choice by early next week and
2 to actually it would be our intention
3 at this point in time to have that
4 person sworn in prior to next
5 Thursday's council meeting. So we
6 will be meeting to discuss each of the
7 candidates and the interviews, and we
8 will be announcing our choice early
9 next week. And this meeting is
10 adjourned.

11 (Proceedings concluded at
12 1:32 p.m.)

13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

C E R T I F I C A T E

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

Amelia Nicol, RPR
Court Reporter