

SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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

HELD:

Thursday, January 8, 2014

LOCATION:

Council Chambers

Scranton City Hall

340 North Washington Avenue

Scranton, Pennsylvania

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR - OFFICIAL 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

WAYNE EVANS
(Not present)

JOSEPH WECHSLER

WILLIAM GAUGHAN

LORI REED, CITY CLERK

KATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

AMIL MINORA, SOLICITOR

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

3 MR. MCGOFF: Roll call, please.

4 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Here.

6 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

7 MR. ROGAN: Here.

8 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans. Mr.
9 Gaughan.

10 MR. GAUGHAN: Here.

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Here. Let the record
13 show that Mr. Evans has informed council
14 that he will be unable to attend this
15 evening due to a prior commitment. Dispense
16 with the reading of minutes.

17 MS. REED: THIRD ORDER. 3-A. TAX
18 ASSESSOR'S RESULTS REPORT FOR HEARING DATE
19 HELD DECEMBER 10, 2014.

20 MR. MCGOFF: Are there any comments?
21 If not, received and filed.

22 MS. REED: 3-B. AUDIT STATUS REPORT
23 FROM ROBERT ROSSI & COMPANY RECEIVED
24 DECEMBER 18, 2014.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Are there any comments?

1 If not, received and filed.

2 MS. REED: 3-C. THE COMPLETED AUDIT
3 OF THE SINGLE TAX OFFICE FOR THE YEAR ENDING
4 2012.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Are there any comments?
6 If not, received and filed.

7 MS. REED: 3-D. TAX ASSESSOR'S
8 REPORT FOR HEARING DATE HELD JANUARY 7,
9 2015.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Are there any comments?
11 If not, received and filed.

12 MS. REED: 3-E. DRAFT GENERAL FUND
13 BALANCE SHEET FROM ROBERT ROSSI & COMPANY
14 RECEIVED JANUARY 5, 2015.

15 MR. MCGOFF: I'd just like to note
16 that the fact that the general fund balance
17 from Rossi & Rossi was issued prior to the
18 issuance of the TAN and was accepted
19 Amalgamated Bank as sort of part of their
20 checklist for the issuance of the TAN. Are
21 there any other comments? If not, received
22 and filed.

23 MS. REED: 3-F. AGENDA FOR THE BOARD
24 OF ZONING APPEALS MEETING TO BE HELD JANUARY
25 14, 2015.

1 MR. MCGOFF: Are there any commence?
2 If not, received and filed.

3 Any announcements from council?

4 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, I have one. I'd
5 just like -- I received a letter about an
6 event that's coming up February 7, and I'd
7 like to take a moment to read it. It's an
8 event that honors Shannon McDonough,
9 formerly of South Scranton. In 2009, at the
10 age of 23, Shannon McDonough passed away
11 from colon cancer. She was an inspiration
12 to many and a friend to all. The non-profit
13 organization "Friends of Shannon McDonough"
14 supports young courageous individuals
15 battling cancer in Northeastern
16 Pennsylvania. And I'd like to take a second
17 here to read the letter that I received on
18 behalf of this group.

19 It says, "Hello. I'm honored to
20 write to you on behalf of the "Friends of
21 Shannon McDonough." We are a Local 501-C
22 nonprofit organization which provides
23 emotional and financial support to young
24 individuals battling cancer in Northeastern
25 Pennsylvania. Over the past three years,

1 "Friends of
2 Shannon of McDonough" work with local
3 oncologists in order to financially support
4 five young individuals during their
5 courageous battles with cancer. As a small
6 nonprofit organization, we conduct
7 fundraising activities that not only support
8 our cause financially, but also provide our
9 community with pride, socialization and fun.

10 In 2012, the "Friends of Shannon
11 McDonough" fashioned Shannon's Shimmering
12 Shamrocks, an annual Scranton St. Patrick's
13 Day parade t-shirt sale. Last year "Friends
14 of Shannon McDonough" held our inaugural
15 polar plunge splashing with compassion. We
16 are thrilled to be holding the second annual
17 polar plunge on Saturday, February 7, 2015,
18 at Montage Mountain in Scranton, PA.

19 We are asking for your support by
20 helping us connect with deserving and
21 financially distressed individuals. We have
22 seen firsthand the struggles that cancer has
23 caused emotionally, physically and
24 financially to our late friend, Shannon
25 McDonough. If you have treated or know

1 anyone between the ages of 16 and 25 living
2 in Northeastern Pennsylvania who could use
3 our help, please help us to connect with
4 them so that we can donate portions of our
5 proceeds to them. If interested in learning
6 more about the "Friends of Shannon
7 McDonough", please visit our website at
8 WWW.FRIENDSOFSHANNONMCDONOUGH.COM or if you
9 have any questions please feel free to call
10 570-903-9079, and the event that was
11 mentioned in the letter is the splash with
12 compassion polar bear plunge February 7,
13 2015. You can register for the event from 9
14 a.m. to 11 a.m. at Montage Mountain. The
15 plunge takes place from 11 to 3 p.m. It
16 doesn't cost anything to attend. It's \$35
17 per person if you desire to plunge. There
18 is a prizes, entertainment, raffles and a
19 kids table, so I encourage everyone to try
20 to get out to this event in a month,
21 February 7. Thank you.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else? I guess
23 this the proper time, I have a Proclamation
24 for an individual in the City of Scranton
25 that is going to be presented at a later

1 date at a private function and I'd like to
2 make this proclamation part of the permanent
3 minutes of tonight's meeting.

4 Do I need to do that as a motion, to
5 put it in the minutes?

6 MR. MINORA: The proclamation? Yes,
7 you need a motion.

8 MR. MCGOFF: I make a motion to make
9 this proclamation a part of the permanent
10 minutes of tonight's meeting?

11 MR. ROGAN: Second.

12 MR. MCGOFF: All in favor?

13 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

14 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

16 MS. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed? Thank
17 you. And a copy will be given to the
18 stenographer for placement in the minutes.
19 Thank you.

20 WHEREAS, the Council of the CITY OF
21 SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA, celebrates "LAMEO &
22 ASSOCIATES, INC." Plumbing and Heating on
23 the 25th anniversary of their business in
24 the City of Scranton; and

25 WHEREAS, PAUL LAMEO, founder and

1 owner of "LAMEO & ASSOCIATES, INC." is a
2 long time resident of the City of Scranton
3 where he has devoted his time to his family
4 and business and had dedicated countless
5 hours to the performance of community
6 service; and

7 WHEREAS, "LAMEO & ASSOCIATES, INC."
8 is a small business that has contributed
9 positively to the local community by
10 creating jobs, boosting our local economy
11 and preserving our neighborhoods; and

12 WHEREAS, the City of Scranton
13 strongly supports the efforts of "LAMEO &
14 ASSOCIATES, INC." for their commitment to
15 live and work in their community.

16 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that
17 on Saturday, January 10, 2015, Scranton City
18 Council proclaims that day as "LAMEO &
19 ASSOCIATES, INC. SATURDAY" in Scranton.

20 Scranton City Council wishes to
21 congratulate Paul Lameo, his Family,
22 Co-Workers and Friends for the outstanding
23 achievements and extend our best wishes for
24 success in all future endeavors.

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this

1 Proclamation be made a permanent part of the
2 minutes of this Council as lasting tribute
3 to "LAMEO & ASSOCIATES, INC."

4 There are a couple of the other
5 announcements that I would like to make.
6 First, two executive sessions were held, one
7 on December 18, that was to discuss
8 potential litigation involving the City of
9 Scranton, and another on January 5 to
10 discuss contract negotiations. And that's
11 are being announced to fulfill our
12 obligation under the Sunshine Act.

13 Also, we received a notice from
14 Mr. Langan from Goodwill Industries, he says
15 and the note was that the management company
16 for Goodwill at North Scranton Junior High
17 School will advertise in the newspaper this
18 July, July 2015, to start building a list of
19 those interested in an apartment at Goodwill
20 at North Scranton. Estimated move in date
21 is December of 2015, January of 2016. And
22 it further says, "All our encouraged to
23 respond immediately to the notice in the
24 paper, details will be provided in the
25 notice."

1 And lastly, something that we
2 received from Lackawanna County Commissions,
3 a Code Blue Frigid Weather Alert and in the
4 alert it says that homeless individuals can
5 access an emergency shelter at the following
6 locations: KRMH Shelter at Bethel AME
7 Church, 716 North Washington Avenue. St.
8 Anthony's Haven, 409 Olive Street in
9 Scranton. And the Community Intervention
10 Center, 445 North Sixth Avenue in Scranton.
11 If you know of any individuals who would be
12 in need of shelter, please pass this
13 information onto them, and if you need
14 anything please contact the Clerk's Office
15 and these addresses will again be provided.

16 Also, something to go along with
17 this, we encourage everyone to please if you
18 have pets please take them indoors during
19 this time of year. As was said, pets get
20 cold, too, and these types of conditions can
21 be fatal to your loved pets, so please bring
22 pets indoors. Thank you. That's all.

23 MS. REED: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS'
24 PARTICIPATION.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Joan Hodowanitz.

1 MS. HODOWANITZ: Joan Hodowanitz,
2 city resident. I'm a little peeved why
3 isn't the approved 2015 operating budget on
4 the City's website? It's been approved
5 since December 4. If Mr. Bulzoni or Mayor
6 Courtright needs a contribution, I will
7 write a check to the city, but let's put it
8 on the website. This is unconscionable.
9 It's unconscionable, you know, a city as
10 much financial distress as we are that we
11 don't have access to that document or we
12 have to go to the City Clerk's Office and
13 stand there or make copies at 25 cents a
14 page. I'll have a baby before that thing
15 gets on the website.

16 With regard to the 2013 audit, I was
17 pleased to see in the background papers for
18 tonight's meeting that there was at least
19 the draft of the general fund budget, but
20 that's a long way from the actual audit, and
21 I saw that we had Mr. Rossi's update as of
22 December 18 which listed 18 outstanding
23 items, we are making progress. One of those
24 outstanding items appears to be the audited
25 finances statements for the Scranton Parking

1 Authority. Remember, we give them \$4
2 million backed up by our parking revenues?
3 I don't understand why Mr. Washo hasn't
4 produced those audited financial statements
5 that were due on April 15 of last year, but
6 hopefully we will make progress there before
7 we start bidding out the 2014 audit. And I
8 will also offer to pay for putting the 2013
9 audit, should it ever be completed, on the
10 city website.

11 With regard to Mr. Bulzoni, the BA,
12 I spent some time during the holiday period
13 reading the City's Charter and
14 Administrative Code, and it came to my
15 attention that employees who reside out of
16 the city should submit a waiver if they are
17 not going to move back in the city after six
18 months employment. These are new employees,
19 which would be Mr. Bulzoni. Mr. Bulzoni, if
20 memory serves, lives in Clarks Summit. Has
21 Mr. Bulzoni submitted a waiver to live in
22 Clarks Summit?

23 MR. MCGOFF: That is not submitted
24 to us so I would not know.

25 MS. HODOWANITZ: My understanding

1 it's supposed to go to the controller and
2 the last time I spoke with the controller it
3 was not seen. Just an interesting piece of
4 information.

5 With regard to PFM, which was hired
6 to provide financial services back in April
7 and they were providing services as of March
8 9, 2014, do we know what their billable
9 hours and their costs was for 2014 since it
10 was never budgeted for last year?

11 MR. MCGOFF: I don't know that. I
12 do know that they received I forget what the
13 total amount was, but as part of the
14 proceeds of the TAN.

15 MS. HODOWANITZ: Okay. It would be
16 interesting to see what we paid them and
17 what they billed us for. Also, what they
18 produced, that would be very interesting.

19 With regard to the December 31 MMO
20 you mentioned during the caucus that it was
21 paid after two days, how much interest did
22 we incur for paying that late?

23 MR. MCGOFF: Whatever the amount
24 was, I don't know the exact amount, it
25 was -- I know was reported in the paper. It

1 was two to three-hundred thousand dollars,
2 somewhere in there.

3 MS. HODOWANITZ: I'd be interested
4 in seeing that figure, too. It should have
5 been zero, unfortunately, I'm hoping this is
6 not going to be a trend. That's two years
7 in a row now we have paid interest.

8 MR. MCGOFF: It should be noted that
9 that's not -- that that payment goes
10 directly -- even the penalty goes directly
11 to the pension fund. It does not go to a
12 general fund.

13 MS. HODOWANITZ: No, I understand
14 that.

15 MR. MCGOFF: I'm just clarifying.

16 MS. HODOWANITZ: I would hope it
17 does not become a trend and we do that a
18 third year. That would be unconscionable.

19 And finally, the concessions that
20 were advertised in the paper for the last
21 two days, I applaud the police union for the
22 concessions that they did make, however, I
23 fear that those concessions are hardly going
24 to make the police pension fund solvent. I
25 don't think we are going to know what impact

1 they have had until the Summer of 2016 when
2 we get the next comprehensive compliance
3 audit that comes out every two years but
4 we'll see what happens and what the other
5 unions do. Thank you.

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

7 MR. MCGOFF: Lee Morgan.

8 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.
9 You know, Mr. McGoff, at the last meeting I
10 guess before the Christmas break you made a
11 comment, it was a compliment about your
12 attire here and, you know, you are probably
13 right because it's really very difficult to
14 compliment this council on any of the
15 actions they have taken at this point, so I
16 take that as a very positive development
17 that you guys have nice suits on, but as far
18 as the ability to think and do something
19 positive for the city I just really don't
20 see it and I don't think any of the other
21 residents do either.

22 And maybe it's just that the
23 Democratic and the Republican parties are so
24 out of touch with reality that they can't
25 legislate anymore but they have us trapped

1 in a dead two-party system, which really has
2 nothing to offer the ordinary person. I
3 mean, you look at SSI and SSD they are
4 bankrupt and they want to wait until after
5 the 2016 elections to start discussing that
6 issue.

7 But, you know, I thought I could
8 come up in here today and maybe start with
9 you, Mr. Wechsler, sir. You know, your
10 contribution to the city, I guess, you may
11 believe it was really a great thing which
12 was the North Scranton project, but that's
13 just another funding for a nonprofit that's
14 struggling in the city and I'd like to ask
15 how much of their own developer's money
16 actually ever went into any of that project.

17 And, you know, as we move this way,
18 you know, Mr. Rogan, I really have nothing
19 to say to you because I'm not sure you have
20 ever really contributed anything to the
21 city.

22 And, you know, Mr. McGoff, with all
23 of the intellect you have and all of the
24 ability you have and the ability of being a
25 retired senior citizen who didn't owe

1 anybody any favors and who really could have
2 started to steer this city in a different
3 way, it just hasn't happened. It's just --
4 it's really tragic with all of the ability
5 you have and the ability to speak your mind
6 that you couldn't offer the down and out
7 residents of this city some solutions and
8 stand strong, because I know mentally you
9 are capable of a lot more than you give here
10 and I just hope that maybe you would have
11 contributed something to the city.

12 And, Mr. Gaughan, you know, I
13 appreciate the stands you take from time to
14 time here, but I have to say that when we
15 are going to try to take a city that's over
16 100 years old and determine how we are going
17 to plow snow, you know, I hope you change
18 your focus and I hope the residents of this
19 city realize that it's time to start putting
20 the city's tax revenue in escrow and starve
21 the city out.

22 I have completed the paperwork to
23 file this group, and I intend to do it next
24 week, and I know that Myron Walkoff had
25 standing in Court to stop the American

1 Anglian deal with the Scranton Sewer
2 Authority and I think it's time for the city
3 residents to understand that the only way to
4 stop the city, the county or the school
5 district is to starve them. And, you know,
6 when you take a look at what the legislators
7 have offered us in Harrisburg, which had a
8 50 or 60 billion dollar pension debt and the
9 roads and bridges or everything about
10 Scranton, Pennsylvania, we are 50th in job
11 creation. We just have the most lackluster
12 legislature on every level, and we are great
13 at playing politics.

14 And, you know, the most troubling
15 thing, even though Mr. Evans isn't here
16 today, we are talking about the Hill
17 Neighborhood Associations taking over city
18 lots in the hill and making them mini parks,
19 we are doing a park in Greenridge, too, but
20 my problem with that whole thing is can the
21 Hill Neighborhood Association guarantee that
22 even for 20 years they can maintain those
23 lots?

24 So if we transfer a problem that the
25 city can't handle and the city created, we

1 are going to hand it off to a neighborhood
2 group. Why? We can't even -- if the Hill
3 Neighborhood Association can guarantee that
4 they can maintain those lots in the future
5 that might be a plan, but do we really need
6 mini parks in the city or do we need
7 population?

8 And as we even look in the downtown
9 mall, I do understand that some of the mall
10 is because the leases have ended and Mr.
11 Boscov would like to buy the mall as cheap
12 as he possibly could, but, you know, the
13 major problem here is that the residents of
14 this city have no disposal income because
15 the city government has been broken for over
16 20 years with no answers and we have chased
17 pipe dreams and illusions for all of these
18 years instead of sitting down and taking the
19 budget apart. Even the police contract, but
20 I'm going to wait until that is deciphered
21 in the newspaper to find out exactly what's
22 what before you talk about something you
23 aren't in command of.

24 But, I mean, really to be honest
25 with you I think the greatest thing that

1 could happen to this city is for the council
2 in total to resign and reorganize this city,
3 because you know what, pretty suits don't do
4 very much but the people walking up and down
5 the street, pretty soon they won't be able
6 to afford clothes, and the general condition
7 of the city is worse than I ever remember it
8 and we keep funding nonprofits. Lackawanna
9 College owes the plaza across the street.
10 We keep talking silliness and not doing the
11 things we should be doing, and remember one
12 thing talk is cheap but actions speak louder
13 than words and I just haven't seen any here.
14 Thank you.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Doug Miller.

16 MR. MILLER: Good evening. Doug
17 Miller, Scranton. Before I get into my main
18 issues tonight, I'm not going to really get
19 into the alleged police concessions, I
20 haven't had a chance to really digest it, it
21 wouldn't be appropriate to discuss it, I
22 have to take some time to review it, but my
23 main issue tonight is, you know, some
24 statements were made before the holiday
25 break, specifically some comments made by

1 Mr. Wechsler talking about the need for
2 speakers to come forward to the podium and
3 to be more positive while speaking heading
4 into the new year. And I do have to say, I
5 agree with Mr. Wechsler, we should be
6 positive coming forward and tonight I'd like
7 to be the first one to express some bit of
8 positivity with within the city here, and
9 I'd like to do that in making a suggestion
10 to the council tonight.

11 Of course it's not a secret to
12 anyone that the city is in dire need of
13 cash, we are in a desperate situation. We
14 have many obligations that very to fulfill
15 and we have an inability to generate the
16 revenue to sustain those debts, but I really
17 believe that this council and the mayor
18 heading into a new year, a fresh start, need
19 to explore our alternative sources of
20 revenue, real sources of revenue. Not pie
21 in the sky numbers, not fairytale plans, but
22 real sources of revenue that we can rely on
23 without having to resort to the same old tax
24 increases and punishing people who suffered
25 for decades.

1 Now, the unfortunate thing is in the
2 past year we had a new mayor come in, we had
3 a new council majority who came in and
4 talked an awful lot about ideas and the
5 vision that they had to move this city
6 forward. And unfortunately, we have, in
7 opinion wasted 12 months as not too many
8 productive things came about in the last
9 year, we took a few steps back, but I really
10 believe that it's time for this council and
11 the mayor to explore the idea of pursuing
12 revenue from all the recyclables that the
13 city collects. When you think about the
14 recyclables that we take to the Lackawanna
15 County Recycling Center what are we really
16 getting in return for that? And I think
17 when you take the time and think about the
18 amount of paper, glass, cardboard, aluminum
19 delivered to this center, I mean, that has
20 significant value.

21 And, you know, I think that if we
22 take a step back and we review a letter to
23 the editor from a few weeks ago by Attorney
24 Jim Mulligan that's where the suggestion was
25 initiated from and I happened to read that

1 letter and I think it made a lot of sense
2 because it actually showed someone in the
3 city who wasn't afraid to actually put forth
4 some creativity, something that we lack in
5 this government I have been saying that a
6 long time. I sound quite repetitive, but
7 that's the truth. But unfortunately right
8 now we don't receive a dime for our
9 recyclables and yet we deliver them, we use
10 our manpower, our fuel, our equipment, what
11 do we get? Nothing. You know, there is
12 scrap dealers all over the nation that buy
13 and sell recyclables and we give them away.
14 You know, we hear Mr. McGoff talk about
15 common sense, well, is this common sense? I
16 don't think it is. I truly believe, and I
17 took the time to do my homework and I
18 explored some other cities in the nation who
19 have instituted similar programs and they
20 generate millions of dollars annually, so I
21 know it can be done. In fact, just a few
22 miles down the road in the Borough of Old
23 Forge they have instituted a similar program
24 and this is a town of approximately 6,000
25 people and they generate nearly \$25,000 a

1 year by getting something in return for
2 their recyclables. And I spoke directly to
3 the Borough manager, I did my homework. We
4 are a city of about 70,000 so when you think
5 about that and you put the numbers together
6 we have the opportunity to really bring in
7 some significant revenue, and we also had
8 the idea to possibly reduce the tipping fee
9 and perhaps even eliminate the garbage fee
10 altogether.

11 But the problem we have in this city
12 is we lack creativity. We lack any effort
13 by our government. We have an inability to
14 want to roll our sleeves up and get down to
15 business, and that's a really problem,
16 that's why we are in the situation we are in
17 today and so I really believe that council
18 and the mayor a fresh start, a clean slate,
19 should reach out to the recycling center and
20 try to negotiate an agreement that gives us
21 a fair rate for our commodities that we
22 distribute to the center, and if the
23 recycling center doesn't want to negotiate a
24 fair deal, well, then we have the ability to
25 seek outside sources so that we do get our

1 fair rate and our fair share.

2 You know, as I said, creativity and
3 taking chances is what can turn this city
4 around and, you know, it's nice to talk
5 about being positive, but we really haven't
6 had a lot to be positive about when you take
7 a look at what's gone on in the city. And,
8 as I said, it's a new year, it's a fresh
9 start, it's a chance to bring something
10 positive to the table and I'm interested to
11 see if council and the mayor would take
12 advantage of this opportunity. It's a
13 unique opportunity and do we want to move
14 forward or do we want to continue to be a
15 council that has a reputation of a do
16 nothing council? So the ball is in your
17 court and let's see if we can really be
18 positive. Thank you.

19 MR. MCGOFF: Bob Bolus.

20 MR. BOLUS: Good evening, Council.
21 Bob Bolus. First of all, I think somebody
22 dropped a ring outside, it was outside
23 council the door here. If I may, I'll just
24 leave it here if someone comes and looks for
25 it.

1 First off, I'd like to thank
2 everyone who attended our dinner, it was a
3 great success and we served over 3,000 meals
4 and delivered -- and had over 3,000 takeouts
5 go out the door. So I want to thank all of
6 the volunteers and everybody else that
7 contributed to the success of this and just
8 shows what Scranton is all about and this
9 whole community, especially those that
10 showed up, they made it happen.

11 I'd like to talk a little about Mr.
12 Flynn and Mr. Farina on the landfill. I
13 don't appreciate their comments that they
14 are taking sides with the landfill. You
15 know, they are sitting here and running off,
16 well, it should be this, it should be that.
17 I supplied council with lab reports that
18 were given to DEP, the Dunmore Council,
19 Throop Council, and the news media, but yet
20 everyone has failed to address it or contact
21 the lab to find out really what's going on
22 and get an understanding and education.

23 Well, DEP has questioned the samples
24 we took over because when we dropped them
25 off they weren't on ice, but they went from

1 my office in Throop to Dickson City, which
2 is about five minutes, they were in the
3 container. There was nothing wrong with the
4 samples, but that's their requirement.

5 So my suggestion tonight is that all
6 of the councils, including Flynn and Farina,
7 that we presume will represent us, contact
8 DEP and request DEP take current samples of
9 vehicles entering the landfill from the
10 Marcellus shale and take accurate samples
11 and tell the people the real truth about the
12 contaminants going in there, and I would
13 suggest this council pan a letter to DEP
14 requesting that they do so.

15 This is about the health and safety.
16 It's not about the power giants in the area,
17 it's about us, as Kathleen Kane, the
18 Attorney General labeled us, the regular
19 people. Those that don't have the
20 wherewithal to be able to stand up to the
21 big boys because we don't have the funds and
22 the financial backing she and others have.
23 That's why we have councils and legislators
24 to do that for us because they have that
25 power to legislate and take us on that same

1 plateau. So, gentlemen, that's why I'm
2 asking that be done. Let's take us from
3 being the regular people to an equal level,
4 to our legislators and people that should be
5 done their jobs.

6 Another thing that I find very
7 troubling, we saw the mall now, it's almost
8 a ghost town and, you know, I'm going to
9 bring up something that Mr. Miller touched
10 on it a bit, but I took personal offense to
11 it and, Joe, don't take it the wrong way, I
12 have come in here, I am probably the most
13 positive person and progressive person in
14 this community toward this city. I
15 championed the fight against the golf
16 course. When it was sold, I championed and
17 paid for the litigation to have the money
18 put in escrow for parks and recreation. It
19 was this council and the past
20 administration, I say this council,
21 Mr. McGoff was part of it, you gentlemen
22 weren't, that squandered 3 1/2 million
23 dollars that was earmarked for parks and
24 recreation. We wouldn't have sweltered in
25 the heat and no pools and everything if you

1 had done your job and supported the real
2 people, okay? And that's a positive
3 attitude. You want to know why we are
4 negative? Because you took what didn't
5 belong to the city anymore and you gave it
6 away. That's the negativity. This council
7 had people in the past, and I'm tired of
8 listening to stuff around here and everybody
9 telling their muscles and telling us how
10 great you are, you had the golf course.

11 I bought the church here in
12 Scranton, the Holy Cross Church and the
13 hall. Those kids have been playing free in
14 this hall at my expense, yet this city, this
15 county, because I wouldn't sell it to a
16 district magistrate, the hall, assessed me
17 at \$500,000 on a church that was being sold
18 for \$3 and a hall combined. I paid \$35,000
19 to preserve history, keep what it was, and
20 create something out of that development
21 until they assessed me at a half a million
22 dollars then the taxes are 46,000 right now.
23 You want to be positive? That's the
24 negativity that's going on in this
25 community.

1 I brought the first train from New
2 Hope, Pennsylvania, on tractor trailers free
3 to this city. I moved everything from
4 Bellow Falls that could be moved on tractor
5 trailers, I donated free to the Steamtown
6 Ariel. That's negative? That's being
7 negative? If everybody on this council and
8 every damn legislature in this community was
9 as positive as I was, Scranton would be
10 where -- would not be where it is today.

11 I brought you the casino. Whether
12 Mr. McGoff likes the idea or not I really
13 don't care anymore. It was a Herculean
14 task. Well, go ahead what are you going to
15 do with the mall now, Mr. McGoff? Show me
16 what your Herculean task did not do as why
17 we got a ghost town in this city. You taxed
18 us to death, you let the city run rampant
19 into death, yet a positive idea has come
20 forward to convert it in something you would
21 rather go to Mt. Airy Lodge or Wilkes-Barre
22 than support what's in this city. You
23 supported not bringing legislation to pass a
24 fee on everybody in this community to allow
25 the people that are nonprofits to pay their

1 fair shares. You played cronyism in here.
2 You allowed these people to beat the regular
3 people in the ground, and you can beep the
4 number again, that's fine. The truth is --

5 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Bolus --

6 MR. BOLUS: The truth is,
7 Mr. McGoff.

8 MR. MCGOFF: Why don't you abide by
9 the Rules of Council.

10 MR. BOLUS: I follow the rules, and
11 I ask that --

12 MR. MCGOFF: No, I don't.

13 MR. BOLUS: -- you to follow the
14 rules while you took this seat. Pen a
15 letter, support us in legislation. Flynn
16 and the others that sit back and say, "You
17 can't put a casino here" because they are to
18 darn lazy to do their job. Do the job and
19 I'll put a casino in Scranton and I'll bring
20 Scranton back where it belongs and that,
21 Mr. Wechsler, is being positive. Thank you.

22 MR. ELLMAN: Hello, Council. That's
23 a hard act to follow. I'm not going to
24 waste no time and be blunt and get to the
25 point, I wrote it down so I don't get it all

1 double it next year and double it the year
2 after next, you are not going to make a dent
3 in what we owe anymore. You are going to
4 make a ghost town out of this place and you
5 are going to take people out of their houses
6 and businesses are closing left and right.

7 I know it's hard for you all and
8 there is not a person in this city, your
9 grandchildren, your -- nobody that wants you
10 to be more successful than I do, and
11 Mr. Courtright, but you are not that's what
12 it's comes down to, that's the bottom line
13 you are not being successful for the people.
14 You know, it takes a lot more knowledgeable
15 person than Mr. Amoroso to do this job. I
16 hear this two, three times a week from some
17 professional people let me say.

18 You know, when I talk to the people
19 out here they complain it wasn't just a wage
20 tax, it's a lack of progress. It's people
21 can't pay the upcoming taxes and you people
22 are spending more than we take in. You're
23 spending it before it comes in. This isn't
24 anyway to run the city, you know? You can't
25 talk about wanting that bike to come in and

1 it doesn't. You can't account for what has
2 come in half the time. There is just --
3 there is just no grand plan for recovery of
4 this city. The Amoroso plan is not for
5 recovery of this city, go and talk to
6 someone from Newark and see what he did down
7 there, the same thing he is doing here sell
8 the authorities, sell this, sell that.

9 Mr. Rogan, and I'm not being
10 argumentative, the paper said you wanted to
11 take the burden off the people, if you could
12 sell the Sewer Authority a private
13 individual is going to buy it and the rates
14 would double or triple. You know that.
15 They are in it to make money and the same --
16 you sell the Parking Authority what for 20
17 million or something? We still owe 30 or 40
18 million. What sense is there in that? Not
19 having nothing anymore?

20 I saw that big picture of
21 Mr. Courtright in the paper that he looked
22 so arrogant. That wasn't a good picture.
23 It doesn't give people a good attitude of
24 him. Mr. McGoff, I tell you what I'll do,
25 Mr. Evans has great faith that next year

1 won't be a double digit, well, I think it
2 will be just outrageously high. I'll pay
3 this year's taxes that are coming and I'll
4 pay next year's taxes with it if you give me
5 the same rate. You think about it and let
6 me know. I don't know the legality of that,
7 but I'll give you two years taxes
8 immediately when I get my paper for the same
9 rate because I think it would be outrageous
10 next year. Of course, I might lose, you
11 know, but I'm a gambler.

12 Before I get everyone mad at me, the
13 bottom line is that we just bankrupt for
14 crying out loud. You just can't keep
15 milking the people dry like we are doing.
16 This is going to end up a ghost town. It's
17 just going down hill so fast and you just
18 don't want to acknowledge what's going on it
19 seems. Don't get mad at me, but you people
20 need to do something on your own and not act
21 like five stooges for the Amoroso plan, and
22 the same for our mayor. There is nobody
23 wants to see him accomplish more and help
24 the city than me, but he is not. That's the
25 bottom line.

1 And before I go I'd like to thank
2 Mr. Bolus for a wonderful dinner and so many
3 people appreciated that don't say nothing to
4 him that I talked to. One lady told me to
5 give him a big hug and kiss for her, and I
6 won't go that far, but I would like to thank
7 him publically because this is a wonderful
8 event for us. Thank you.

9 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Ellman.
10 Anyone else who wishes to address council?

11 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,
12 citizen of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians,
13 how much interest are we paying on that TAN?
14 All of you said was it's lower than the last
15 time. I believe you said the last TAN was
16 9.1 percent from the same people, are we
17 paying 8 percent now?

18 MR. ROGAN: Most of the savings was
19 actually on the fees more so than the
20 interest rate, I think the interest rate
21 last was about 4 1/2 percent, this year it
22 was 4, but when you have to look at it all
23 in costs. It's more on the fees than on the
24 interest rates and that's where most of the
25 savings was this year. I think it was, and

1 don't quote me, I think it was around 300 --
2 it was a few hundred thousand dollars in
3 savings.

4 MR. SBARAGLIA: That's isn't the
5 question I asked. I asked what rate are we
6 paying? Are we paying 8 percent on the TAN?

7 MR. ROGAN: The rate is --

8 MR. SBARAGLIA: And not 4 1/2
9 percent because you've got a lot of costs in
10 there. The percent was up to 9.1 percent
11 the last time.

12 MR. ROGAN: The rate and the costs
13 are separate though, you can't combine them.

14 MR. SBARAGLIA: Well, tell me, who
15 has to pay the total costs?

16 MR. ROGAN: The taxpayers.

17 MR. SBARAGLIA: Okay, then there is
18 a percentage that it averages out to be,
19 either 8 percent, 7 percent, don't say it's
20 less. You need to give a number and if you
21 are not willing to give a number then you
22 are covering it up.

23 MR. ROGAN: I don't have it in front
24 of me this week, but I did give a number at
25 the last meeting.

1 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Sbaraglia, the
2 number, the amount, is 3.95 percent
3 interest.

4 MR. SBARAGLIA: Really? That's
5 okay.

6 MR. MCGOFF: Yes, it is.

7 MR. SBARAGLIA: But what's the other
8 costs that's added on, that is in there that
9 we have to pay back? I mean, this is the
10 reason -- you have to look at total cost of
11 everything. Don't give me that, the last
12 time I asked this guy right here, "What is
13 the interest rate?"

14 He said, "The interest rate was 3
15 point --" I think 3 point -- no, 4.2 or 3
16 percent and then with all of the other costs
17 was added on he claimed it was 9.1 percent.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Correct.

19 MR. SBARAGLIA: So don't give this,
20 give the true percentage rate that it's
21 going to cost the people of Scranton.

22 MR. MCGOFF: The question you asked
23 was what was the interest rate.

24 MR. SBARAGLIA: I don't want a cover
25 up, I want an answer. You people cover too

1 much up. That's not an answer.

2 MR. MCGOFF: Yes, it was. It was an
3 answer to your question.

4 MR. SBARAGLIA: It's the total cost
5 of the loan to the people of Scranton.

6 MR. MCGOFF: Okay. I answered your
7 initial question, now you want to know what
8 the total costs, what the fees were, is that
9 correct?

10 MR. SBARAGLIA: The total cost of
11 the loan. In other words, if we borrow what
12 was it \$13 million and we have to pay back
13 \$15 million I want to know that cost.

14 MR. ROGAN: I read these off the
15 last meeting of the year, but I will read
16 it, I just found it in my notes, I do have
17 it here. In 2014, the total all in costs
18 between interest and fees was \$787,149. In
19 2015, the total all in costs will be
20 \$471,685.

21 MR. SBARAGLIA: About half.

22 MR. ROGAN: I'll give you the report
23 if you want.

24 MR. SBARAGLIA: About half; right?
25 And the fees?

1 MR. MCGOFF: \$300,000 savings.

2 MR. ROGAN: \$300,000 savings.

3 MR. SBARAGLIA: Then how come we got
4 a -- he said it was 9.1 percent that TAN?
5 9.1 percent. Now, with the reduction he
6 said there that still leaves us about 8
7 percent? I mean, if we are paying 8 percent
8 on the loan just say so. What it totals out
9 the cost.

10 MR. MCGOFF: That's not what you
11 asked.

12 MR. SBARAGLIA: Yes, that's the way
13 you interpreted it. That's not what I
14 interpreted it.

15 MR. MCGOFF: No, you asked what the
16 interest was and I told you.

17 MR. SBARAGLIA: I said total
18 interest. Total. In other words, what all
19 of the fees and everything else would it
20 cost and that's what you got to give.

21 MR. MCGOFF: You got your answer.

22 MR. ROGAN: That's why I just read.

23 MR. SBARAGLIA: And that's what you
24 should have gave earlier. You should have
25 said instead of 9.1 percent it averages out

1 to be 8 percent. That people understand,
2 but when you keep on quoting little things
3 to get away from the total costs that's
4 different. People want to know exactly what
5 it costs with all of the fees and everything
6 else entitled to. The person that sold the
7 TAN to us, how much they received and so
8 forth and so on. Okay, let's get onto
9 something different, there is no sense
10 haggling over it, I figure it's about 8
11 percent.

12 Now, we got this thing here, UCC
13 enforcement, third party enforcement, has
14 this got anything to do with the quality of
15 life?

16 MR. ROGAN: Which third party
17 enforcement is that through Licensing and
18 Inspections Office?

19 MR. SBARAGLIA: Here it is here if
20 you want to look at it.

21 MR. ROGAN: A lot of the inspections
22 for construction of certain trades are done
23 through I believe it's Marino Brothers that
24 has the contract currently, but the quality
25 of life would be administered through

1 housing inspectors through police officers.

2 MR. SBARAGLIA: But it just says UCC
3 enforcement, third party. I assume you are
4 hiring people out to enforce city codes, is
5 this what it is or not?

6 MR. ROGAN: In past practice it's
7 been for building trades.

8 MR. SBARAGLIA: Yeah, past practice,
9 but that doesn't mean it -- you didn't get
10 the legislation yet I take? All you got was
11 that they approved it up at a city hall.
12 It's going to come down to you I guess,
13 because it's a contract.

14 MR. ROGAN: At this point that's a
15 question we can ask.

16 MR. SBARAGLIA: And at that point we
17 will have more information on this. Thank
18 you.

19 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

20 MR. MCGOFF: The total interest, Mr.
21 Sbaraglia, comes to 7.58 percent.

22 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening,
23 Council, Marie Schumacher. First, I'd like
24 to thank you for taking a position on the
25 landfill. I hope you will be more proactive

1 and urge the mayor to be more proactive and
2 actually engage the city engineer into
3 what's really going on up at that landfill.

4 I don't have much to say tonight
5 because I did take -- I figured if you guys
6 take a vacation so could I and I took a
7 vacation to both try to stop thinking about
8 this city and the horrible position we are
9 in, and recover from the sinus infection
10 from H-E double hockey sticks, so maybe by
11 not week I will have more, but I do have
12 questions.

13 First of all, what was the unfunded
14 fees that are carried forward from 2013 to
15 2014 -- or 2014 to 2015? Our unpaid bills
16 that are being carried forward, what is that
17 amount?

18 MR. MCGOFF: I'm not sure. I don't
19 have that number with me.

20 MS. SCHUMACHER: In the past couple
21 of weeks you have talked about the fact that
22 we don't have the five years to go into
23 receivership -- or get our act together or
24 go into receivership under the new Act 47
25 legislation, you said it was three years,

1 when is that -- what budget would that
2 equate to for the city, 2015 year one or --

3 MR. MCGOFF: I believe it's the --
4 it starts with the adoption of the revised
5 recovery plan, and that would be 2015
6 starts, I believe it's a three-year since we
7 -- isn't it?

8 MR. ROGAN: There is also an
9 optional I believe it's either a two or
10 three-year extension on that.

11 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, three years,
12 that's --

13 MR. ROGAN: Right.

14 MS. SCHUMACHER: I mean, without the
15 extension, okay. It's not because we had
16 already had a recovery plan in progress that
17 we haven't paid much attention to from a
18 couple of summers ago if that's not the --
19 is the upcoming recovery plan?

20 MR. MCGOFF: That's my
21 understanding, but I'm not sure.

22 MS. SCHUMACHER: How do we get a
23 ruling on that, would one of our state
24 legislators know that.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Well --

1 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, I'm
2 interested --

3 MR. MCGOFF: Mrs. Schumacher, the
4 revised recovery plan, the period of time
5 was a five-year period, I believe, from the
6 beginning of the last revision of the
7 recovery plan. With this new revision,
8 which is required by the Act 47 revisions,
9 we have a three-year period to implement
10 that or to, you know, to receive -- to get
11 to a point of recovery, but there is also,
12 as Mr. Rogan said, an appeal for an
13 extension.

14 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. And again, I
15 would like to know when the budget is going
16 to be -- the 2015 budget is going to be put
17 online? This is certainly the longest that
18 it's taken.

19 MR. GAUGHAN: Yeah, I made a request
20 I think three weeks ago, but I'll make
21 another one tonight that we ask the
22 administration to put that on as soon as
23 possible.

24 MS. SCHUMACHER: When will the full
25 audit be available?

1 MR. MCGOFF: I have no idea.

2 MS. SCHUMACHER: Does Mr. Evans,
3 when he returns, as the Finance Chair does
4 he know?

5 MR. MCGOFF: I can ask. Like I
6 said, I have not -- I don't know.

7 MS. SCHUMACHER: Now, I have been
8 told, and I'd like to know whether or not
9 this is true, that anything -- all contracts
10 have to be honored 100 percent when you go
11 into a receivership under the state plan, is
12 that true?

13 MR. MCGOFF: I'm not familiar with
14 any of the, what should I say, facets of a
15 receivership.

16 MS. SCHUMACHER: And when will this
17 proposed new contract with the police union
18 be available for the public to review?

19 MR. MCGOFF: I believe when it's
20 posted, which would be hopefully next week.

21 MS. SCHUMACHER: Because I am
22 certainly against any contract being
23 extended beyond 2021 by this council. I'll
24 at you why next week. Thank you.

25 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening, Council.

1 Dave Dobrzyn.

2 MR. GAUGHAN: Good evening.

3 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening. I'd
4 like to bring up an issue from last council,
5 new and old laws. First of all, appreciate
6 that the fines were lowered. Secondly, they
7 have gone from outrageous to heavy handed at
8 best.

9 I have another concern, where is our
10 local IT Department? Now, I have been
11 trying to look through the city website and
12 I can't find anything on any ordinances
13 whatsoever, zoning, etcetera, etcetera, that
14 goes on and on and on and where is our IT
15 Department? Now, ignorance of the law does
16 not vacate your legal responsibility to
17 comply, so if you don't know what the law
18 says or you have to jump through hoops to
19 find out what the law says in it's entirety,
20 you know, you are open for problems fully
21 knowing the extent of the law.

22 Now, I guess you can go down the
23 library and pay 25 cents a page, but you
24 people get a portion every month of what I
25 pay to Comcast, I think it's 7 percent

1 something like that, so what I pay to
2 Comcast that would probably be another \$120
3 a year or \$150 a year in local taxes that
4 I'm paying by having Comcast Xfinity and I
5 can't get the local ordinances. Sometimes
6 they are good and sometimes they're bad.

7 I have something here that everybody
8 should receive and stop by on your way out.
9 "Suit: Law discriminatory. Lawyers says
10 Blakely ordinance targets victims."

11 Apparently a lady had to call the
12 police to talk to her daughter one time and
13 inform her that running away wasn't the
14 smartest thing to do and then her husband
15 came up and made trouble twice at her
16 apartment and she got a letter from Blakely,
17 she didn't her landlord did, telling them
18 that they had to be evicted, so I'm going to
19 give these to Rose. That's an example, oh,
20 by the way, Morristown had a similar law and
21 they lost a lawsuit for half a million
22 dollars, so something to be concerned about.

23 If we are going to try and collect
24 new revenue by fines and fees, what about
25 the 7 /12 million back trash fees that many

1 people might not have money to pay or may
2 not have had money to pay or then there is
3 some people that just don't feel like paying
4 for it. For instance, when I read what Ma
5 Schumacher had on the ordinances now, I was
6 a mechanic all my life, I serviced my cars
7 all my life, I went for a state inspection
8 the day after Thanksgiving and riding home I
9 noticed a scratchy sound in my wheel. So I
10 pull it into my driveway and I remove a
11 brake drum and here they knocked a spring
12 off of my brakes when they put it back,
13 brake drum back on so I had to fix it. So
14 I'm reading that it's illegal to have a car
15 on blocks. I hope jack stands are
16 sufficient because otherwise I'll see you in
17 court. I have my own driveway, I don't do
18 any environmentally risky things like oil
19 changes and I will fix my own car in my own
20 driveway.

21 And I also let me neighbors park in
22 my carport, I have three spaces, one car, so
23 anybody that wants to park there keep out of
24 the way, the garbage truck or they got
25 relatives in for Christmas, well, if I'm out

1 if still looks like somebody is there so I'm
2 getting something out of it, too.

3 And another thing on cars was I
4 heard a story, and I don't know both sides
5 of the story, but two cars were removed from
6 a person's property, they weren't licensed,
7 they weren't insured, they weren't
8 inspected, but they were resold for \$5,000.
9 Now, if it's to pay back a bank note, and
10 I'll try and find out that, but if that were
11 sold for \$5,000 without that coverage of
12 that ordinance that would have been theft,
13 so it's something to think about. If that
14 car has some kind of value, something should
15 be done about it. Yeah, you can't have two
16 or three cars in every yard, but it's like,
17 I said the last time, oppression starts in
18 your hometown and if you want a
19 constitutional reprieve go to the Supreme
20 Court. Fine if you have \$5 million. Thank
21 you and have a great night.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else who wishes
24 to address council?

25 MS. REED: FIFTH ORDER. 5-A.

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

MOTIONS.

MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Wechsler.

MR. WECHSLER: Thank you, Mr. McGoff. I would like to congratulate the administration and the FOP for all of the hard work and effort put forth in developing and ratifying the new contract. We just got this so after my initial review I am pleased with the salary and overtime savings, the scheduling flexibility and the increased employee contributions to the pension plan.

The agreed upon wage increases are well below market averages. The proscribed rate will allow the city to have fixed numbers for the budgeting for the police salaries for the next few years. The additional manpower flexibility will allow more police presence during peak times without increasing costs or adding overtime.

While we were already are one of the safest large city in Pennsylvania, the greater police presence will permit Scranton to become even a safer city. The increased contributions to the pension plan indicate

1 that the membership is confident that the
2 parties can come to an agreement to make the
3 pension solvent.

4 Additional work to achieve pension
5 reform is required both at the city and
6 state level. As we move through this year,
7 I know that's a consideration that we all
8 will be working towards as the year goes on.

9 I also look at this contract as a
10 starting point for the other city bargaining
11 units. When we take a look at these salary
12 increases I wish that they would be able to get
13 something that they would be put out by a
14 review basis and not automatic. I think
15 there should be some performance-type
16 reviews involved with that, but it is a
17 starting point. You have to remember that
18 the police and fire and all of the other
19 unions are still under contract, so they did
20 not have to give us anything at this time.

21 And again, I commend the FOP for
22 showing their commitment to move Scranton
23 forward and work together in solving our
24 financial problems. Thank you.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Rogan.

1 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. I think
2 Councilman Wechsler stole my notes for
3 tonight because I had the same sentiments
4 that Councilman Wechsler does regarding the
5 union concessions, and much of this has
6 already been talked about, but I think
7 especially regarding the pension, during the
8 time that we were debating a 205 tax and
9 talked about the pension problem, many
10 people have said, well, why aren't the
11 members of the unions who will benefit from
12 the pension contributing more? And it was
13 definitely a valid argument to made and, you
14 know, I commend the members of the FOP for
15 making that concession.

16 Although, it will be more money in
17 the fund, it will not fix the fund, without
18 question. I think everyone agrees that it
19 will take much more than increased
20 contributions from the union members to make
21 the funds solvent, but it is a step and even
22 more so than the actual funding going in,
23 residents of the city for the last four
24 years or so have had tax increases every
25 year, increases in fees and while the

1 employees have not given anything. In this
2 case, we see that, that the employees who
3 also live in the city are willing to give
4 back.

5 Regarding the salary increases,
6 historically the increases in these union
7 contracts are approximately 3 percent per
8 year. That's generally what it's been
9 awarded three to four percent. This is much
10 below that which is a good thing, and the
11 last thing that we would have wanted to do
12 is to have a situation like occurred in the
13 past where an arbitrator or a judge is
14 making this decision.

15 Because in the past negotiations did
16 not happen, and you can blame whoever you
17 want for that, that's why we have a \$20
18 million plus bill to pay. It was actually
19 \$40 million, which is something that people
20 don't mention often that the unions did give
21 half of that award to the city already.
22 Obviously, we would look more of it to be
23 given up, but \$20 million already was
24 concede of that award.

25 And there are many cost savings, but

1 more importantly than that it allows the
2 chief flexibility to implement the police
3 patrols in the way that he sees fit to keep
4 the city safe. Under the Court award, the
5 city had to have a minimum number on each
6 shift, whether it was a very busy shift,
7 like midnights on Friday or whether it was a
8 very slow shift, Monday mornings. You have
9 a different element in the city that the
10 police are dealing with on a Friday night
11 than you are on a Monday morning, and this
12 gives the chief flexibility to reduce the
13 manning at the times when crime is low, and
14 increase it when crime is high without
15 costing tons of money and overtime.

16 Overtime has been, the last few
17 years, has been around a million dollars.
18 That's a lot of money in overtime. By being
19 able to implement different strategies the
20 chief believes that he will be able to save
21 on overtime significantly without hurting
22 the protection at the times when people need
23 it most.

24 I do have some questions on how some
25 things will work out, which I will be

1 following up with the chief with, but I
2 would also like to commend the mayor for his
3 great work with this, the chief for
4 enlightening us at the caucus about how he
5 plans to strategize, and I know he has a
6 sheet with the number of calls on each
7 shift, what time the calls are, where the
8 calls are, to implement a full strategy on
9 policing our city.

10 And I have said this probably a
11 hundred times since I have been on this
12 board, but government's job is to keep
13 people safe. That's it. I like this deal
14 because it does not cut men on the street
15 and the hours they are needed and it also
16 saves the taxpayer money, so it's something
17 that I will be supporting and look forward
18 to continue to work with our chief on this.
19 Thank you.

20 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Gaughan?

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Just an
22 update on the Rockwell Avenue bridge
23 project. As of today, per PennDOT, after
24 the pedestrian bridge was installed and
25 available for use as of January 2 the

1 demolition process of the existing bridge
2 part was started on Monday, January 5. The
3 demolition work continued around the clock
4 for two days to expedite the demolition
5 phase and is now complete. With weather
6 permitting, the contractor will proceed with
7 stream containment and stabilizing the
8 stream banks for additional work to start in
9 March of 2015. Everything so far is
10 proceeding on track.

11 Neighbors have requested a stop sign
12 at the intersection of North Sumner Avenue
13 and Los Robley Street. It is a three-way
14 stop and the neighbors have concerns that
15 there is speeding so they think a stop sign
16 might help there. Our office is sending
17 correspondence to Police Chief Graziano to
18 request that a study be conducted on the
19 feasibility of installing the stop sign at
20 this location.

21 I also received a complaint over the
22 break about an abandoned vehicle in the 3000
23 Colliery Avenue in Minooka. I forwarded the
24 complaint to Chief Graziano and the issue
25 was resolved and the residents are very

1 pleased.

2 I would ask that we send another
3 request to the administration about putting
4 the city's budget on the website, if
5 possible.

6 And as my colleagues have done, I
7 just want to briefly comment on the contract
8 agreement between the city and the police
9 union. The fact that the police union
10 reopened their contract is a very positive
11 first step for the City of Scranton. I
12 appreciate their willingness to come to the
13 table and discuss opportunities for cost
14 savings. I just received this agreement
15 late yesterday and will take this weekend
16 and next week before it's placed in our
17 agenda to do my due diligence and thoroughly
18 review it.

19 At first glance, I do have some
20 questions. Earlier today I sent a request
21 to our Business Administrator to provide a
22 cost savings analysis for each article that
23 was changed in the agreement and any
24 additional expenses to be projected through
25 2021, which would be the life of this

1 agreement. I think it's very important to
2 examine how the newly ratified contract will
3 impact the city's budget over the life of
4 the agreement. I also have asked for the
5 eligible number of police officers that
6 could take their retirement incentives
7 included in the agreement and what the
8 potential impact would be on the pension
9 fund, which we know is severely distressed.
10 And another question that I had was had an
11 actuary studio on the impact of the
12 retirement incentive been completed.

13 I would also ask, and I did mention
14 this in caucus tonight and my colleagues
15 agreed, that we contact PEL, the city's
16 recovery coordinator, and request that they
17 attend a caucus, if possible, next week when
18 this legislation will be placed on our
19 agenda to discuss their thoughts and opinion
20 on the soundness of the contract and how it
21 fits into the overall financial picture for
22 the city moving forward. We do have a new
23 recovery plan, as Mr. McGoff mentioned, that
24 is scheduled to be unveiled sometime this
25 month and I think it's extremely important

1 that we have a full briefing with PEL to
2 discuss the impact of the labor agreement on
3 the recovery plan and the city's financial
4 health over the next six years.

5 I want to make sure that I have as
6 much information as possible before I vote
7 or give this contract my endorsement. It's
8 imperative that we make sure that this is a
9 good deal for the city taxpayers and is
10 sustainable over the next six years. And
11 that is all I have for tonight. Thank you.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Gaughan.

13 Just a few brief responses to some
14 of the things that were mentioned during
15 citizens' participation. I would like to
16 thank Mr. Morgan for the constructive
17 criticism that he provided, although, I'm
18 not sure that wearing a coat and tie is a
19 negative thing, but thank you for your
20 input.

21 As far as the recycling that was
22 mentioned by Mr. Miller, the city does get a
23 reimbursement from the Commonwealth based on
24 tonnage. That's the reason why the city
25 collects recyclables from commercial sites

1 as well as residential sites. It increases
2 our reimbursement. Mr. Miller was correct
3 in the fact that we do not receive any money
4 from the actual recycling center, but the
5 city does get a state reimbursement.

6 And I would also like to
7 congratulate Mr. Bolus again on the dinner
8 that's provided every year, that's a great
9 community benefit, but I do disagree with
10 some of the things that he mentioned as he
11 was speaking. Number one, the \$3 1/2
12 million that he spoke of for the golf course
13 was never designated for recreation
14 purposes. We went through the legislation,
15 we went through the minutes of those
16 meetings, and while they discussed the
17 possibility that it should be used for
18 recreation that was never contained in the
19 legislation, so it was not ever -- while the
20 intent may have been to do that, it was
21 never in the legislation and, therefore,
22 that money was not designated specifically
23 for parks and recreation.

24 As far as Holy Cross Hall that he
25 mentioned, my father's first cousin, Jack

1 O'Connor, was the man who opened that hall.
2 I was one of the first people to -- first
3 kids to play there somewhere around
4 1960-'61. Kids have all played there I'll
5 say for free. Bidy basketball there may be
6 a small fee involved, but that has always
7 been part of Holy Cross Hall, and had he not
8 purchased Holy Cross Church and the hall,
9 the plan was that that hall would still
10 stand and would still be available for
11 recreation purposes. So his statement that,
12 you know, he is doing something that was not
13 done in the past is somewhat, somewhat
14 erroneous.

15 And last the thing, as far as the
16 casino idea, yes, I'm opposed. I'm
17 personally opposed to an urban casino. I
18 think there a precedent set in any number of
19 places that that is not necessarily an
20 answer or a panacea for distressed cities.

21 Also, he mentioned that I said it
22 was a Herculean task to get a permit or
23 whatever, a license for the casino, and it
24 is. There are restrictions by the state
25 that would prevent at this point in time

1 Mr. Bolus from opening a casino in Scranton.
2 It's that simple.

3 And as far as the contract is
4 concerned with the police, as Mr. Gaughan
5 and everyone has mentioned, we are, you
6 know, early in the process of reviewing
7 that, there are a lot of questions, but the
8 contract is something that we would -- we
9 have been asking for. It's something that
10 people have questioned, you know, why this
11 wasn't being done. We are able to have one
12 of the unions willing to negotiate with the
13 city to provide benefits, mutual benefits
14 for each. I think there are some short-term
15 savings in this proposal, but I'm more
16 concerned -- I think that there are some
17 long-term benefits that we will see as far
18 as the pension and the overall costs of the
19 police department. And again, early in the
20 process of reviewing it, next week as it
21 hopefully appears on our agenda I'm sure we
22 will have more to say, and that's it.

23 MS. REED: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION -
24 A RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND
25 OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE

1 AND ENTER IN A GOVERNMENT OBLIGATION
2 CONTRACT THROUGH THE PENNSYLVANIA
3 INFRASTRUCTURE BANK BETWEEN THE COMMONWEALTH
4 OF PENNSYLVANIA, DEPARTMENT OF
5 TRANSPORTATION (OBLIGEE) AND THE CITY OF
6 SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA, FOR A ROADWAY
7 RESURFACING PROGRAM IN THE CITY OF SCRANTON.

8 MR. MCGOFF: At this time I'll
9 entertain a motion that Item 5-B be
10 introduced into its proper committee.

11 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

13 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? All
14 those in favor of introduction signify by
15 saying aye.

16 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

17 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

18 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

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

21 MS. REED: 5-C. FOR INTRODUCTION - A
22 RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER
23 APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO ENTER INTO A
24 MUNICIPAL LEASE AND OPTION AGREEMENT WITH
25 FIRST BANKERS CORPORATION FOR THE LEASE

1 PURCHASE OF A PIECE OF FIRE APPARATUS, A KME
2 PUMPER TRUCK, FOR USE BY THE CITY OF
3 SCRANTON FIRE DEPARTMENT.

4 MR. MCGOFF: At this time I'll
5 entertain a motion that Item 5-C be
6 introduced into its proper committee.

7 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

8 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

9 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? All
10 those in favor of introduction signify by
11 saying aye.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

13 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

15 MS. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed? The
16 ayes have it and so moved.

17 MS. REED: SIXTH ORDER. 6-A. NO
18 BUSINESS AT THIS TIME.

19 SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A. NO BUSINESS AT
20 THIS TIME.

21 MR. MCGOFF: Prior to adjournment, I
22 would like to say that next week we expect
23 the FOP contract to be on the agenda plus a
24 number of the taxing ordinances that need to
25 be done each year, so next week's agenda

1 will probably be a very busy one. If there
2 is no further business, I'll entertain a
3 motion to adjourn.

4 MR. ROGAN: Motion to adjourn.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Meeting adjourned.

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

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 of testimony taken by me at the hearing of the above-captioned matter and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the same to the best of my ability.

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER