

SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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HELD:

Thursday, June 11, 2015

LOCATION:

Council Chambers

Scranton City Hall

340 North Washington Avenue

Scranton, Pennsylvania

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR - OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

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CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

ROBERT MCGOFF, PRESIDENT

PATRICK ROGAN, VICE-PRESIDENT

WAYNE EVANS

JOSEPH WECHSLER

WILLIAM GAUGHAN

LORI REED, CITY CLERK

JAMIE MARCIANO, 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. MARCIANO: Mr. Wechsler.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Here.

6 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Rogan.

7 MR. ROGAN: Here.

8 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Evans.

9 MR. EVANS: Here.

10 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Gaughan.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Here.

12 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. McGoff.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Here. Dispense with  
14 the reading of the minutes.

15 MS. REED: THIRD ORDER. 3-A. TAX  
16 ASSESSOR'S REPORT FOR HEARING DATE TO BE  
17 HELD JUNE 17, 2015.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Are there any comments?  
19 If not, received and filed.

20 MS. REED: 3-B. TAX ASSESSOR'S  
21 RESULTS REPORTS FOR HEARING DATES HELD MAY  
22 20, 2015 AND MAY 27, 2015.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Are there any comments?  
24 If not, received and filed.

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

1                   REGULAR MEETING OF THE MEMBERS OF SCRANTON  
2                   HOUSING AUTHORITY HELD MAY 4, 2015.

3                   MR. MCGOFF: Are there any comments?  
4                   If not, received and filed. Are there any  
5                   Clerk's notes?

6                   MS. REED: Yes, Mr. McGoff, thank  
7                   you. There is a matter of housekeeping,  
8                   there is a typographical error with regard  
9                   to Item 7-C on the agenda this evening, the  
10                  contract with Latona Trucking for the grass  
11                  cutting services. The contract expiration  
12                  date has been corrected from November 31 to  
13                  November 30. Thank you.

14                  MR. MCGOFF: Would we read it as the  
15                  correct one?

16                  MS. REED: Yes. It was a  
17                  typographical error, yes.

18                  MR. MCGOFF: Anything from council?

19                  MR. ROGAN: I have one announcement.  
20                  Street Cats and Dogs is holding a comedy  
21                  benefit on Friday, June 26, 2015, at Laugh  
22                  Out Comedy Club, the second floor of Tequila  
23                  Mexican Bar and Grill at 320 Penn Avenue in  
24                  Scranton. Show time is at 8:00 p.m. with  
25                  seating starting at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are

1           \$18 and that includes the first drink. The  
2           proceeds will benefit Street Cats and Dogs.  
3           Street Cats and Dogs is a 501-C-3 nonprofit  
4           all volunteer group originally started to  
5           reduce cat overpopulation by trapping and  
6           transporting feral cats working with the  
7           community to spay and neuter and return  
8           these cats.

9                         Again, you can purchase tickets  
10           online at [CatsDogscomedy.eventbright.com](http://CatsDogscomedy.eventbright.com).  
11           Thank you.

12                        MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else?

13                        MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, I have one.  
14           There is a program called turning strangers  
15           into neighbors, trained observation and  
16           reporting presented by Scranton Police Chief  
17           Carl Graziano. It's a special neighborhood  
18           watch summit Series and all City of Scranton  
19           residents are welcome. It will be held  
20           Wednesday, June 24, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in  
21           the West precinct, 1304 Jackson Street, and  
22           the driveway entrance is just passed 116  
23           North Sumner Avenue. Thank you.

24                        MR. MCGOFF: Anyone else? That's  
25           it.

1 MS. REED: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS'  
2 PARTICIPATION.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Doug Miller.

4 MR. MILLER: Good evening, Council,  
5 Doug Miller, Scranton. Just a few issues  
6 tonight. First, just in regards to what was  
7 in the paper this morning, in regard to the  
8 parking garages, and just yet again just  
9 more baffling and just outright in my  
10 opinion just lack of any common sense in our  
11 city government. Here we are discussing  
12 whether or not we want to tear down assets  
13 in this community, where is the leadership?  
14 Where is the common sense in this thought  
15 process? We have a moneymaking opportunity  
16 throughout the downtown in these parking  
17 garages, millions of dollars we've invested  
18 in these parking garages and we are going to  
19 tear them down? I don't know why we deem  
20 shaking our heads, I think to anybody it  
21 would be common sense if it doesn't make any  
22 sense whatsoever.

23 MR. MCGOFF: Because, Mr. Miller, it  
24 was because that was the report from Desmond  
25 and gave three different scenarios for the

1 garages. It did not say anything about the  
2 city considering tearing them down.

3 MR. MILLER: Well, that's what the  
4 proposal is to look at a report and consider  
5 the possibility, that's what a study would  
6 be done for. Obviously -- you're obviously  
7 going to review that and consider that;  
8 correct?

9 MR. MCGOFF: Actually, it was  
10 prepared for the bidders on the parking  
11 garages.

12 MR. MILLER: Well, evidently a  
13 report was done, of course, it had some sort  
14 of endorsement through this administration  
15 for any report to be done and my point is we  
16 have gone through and brought all of these  
17 consultants in and we've done all of these  
18 reports for years and years and years and  
19 where has it lead us? I mean, the fact that  
20 we would even consider that possibility is  
21 just stupidity.

22 We already gave away the golf  
23 course, I mean, the South Side complex, and  
24 now we are going to give away our parking  
25 garages or evidently tear some of them down

1 possibly. Never stated that that was  
2 something the city was going to definitely  
3 do, but obviously it's under consideration  
4 if the report was done.

5 And then, you know, the other end of  
6 this aspect here, you know, earlier this  
7 week we hear that, you know, we have no  
8 problem with giving money away and  
9 guaranteeing money, yet on the other end we  
10 acknowledge that we can't maintain parking  
11 garages so really, I mean, are we that just  
12 -- you think the residents of this city are  
13 really that foolish that we don't see it for  
14 what it is? I mean, there is absolutely no  
15 leadership in this city, this  
16 administration, on this council, I mean, we  
17 do have a few individuals who have taken the  
18 bull by the horn on many occasions, but for  
19 the most part this council majority is just  
20 a do nothing council and that's sad and  
21 pathetic and it's just a total insult to the  
22 residents of this city to see what takes  
23 place on a daily basis in this community.

24 The other thing I have -- the other  
25 issue I have tonight is something that we



1 failed to address and that's in regards to  
2 professional services. It's my  
3 understanding that we far exceeded that  
4 budget months ago and yet that issue hasn't  
5 been addressed, and I'd like to see somebody  
6 on this council look into that because we  
7 have raised a lot of issues in the past with  
8 previous administration regarding  
9 professional services and millions of  
10 dollars given to lawyers and consultants and  
11 a lot of people came to this podium, a lot  
12 of people that no longer come here, but a  
13 lot of people came to this podium, and we  
14 had people seated on previous councils, some  
15 of them are actually sitting here right now  
16 who ravaged the previous administration for  
17 doing that, but now because we have a  
18 different administration in place I guess  
19 it's okay now but it's not, and I'd like to  
20 see maybe Mr. Evans or Mr. Gaughan possibly  
21 look into this because I would like to know  
22 what we spent to this date because I'm of  
23 the understanding that it's a lot and we  
24 need to know exactly what it is because here  
25 is the city crying poverty and we don't have

1 anything left but yet we have no problem  
2 giving out money to consultants and lawyers  
3 as has been the common practice in this city  
4 for a long time from administration after  
5 administration nothing has really changed.

6 This city is not back on track. We  
7 have a long way to go before we see any  
8 tracks in this community. There is blight  
9 everywhere, we blame all of the wrong  
10 people. We don't take responsibility for  
11 anything in this city. We would like to  
12 play the blame game, but we don't get down  
13 to the root cause of the problem and it's  
14 just really sad to see where we are, and a  
15 lot of this is just due to residents not  
16 voting based on fact and putting people in  
17 these seats who are just totally clueless,  
18 who have never participated in government,  
19 don't know the first thing about it and they  
20 are the ones making the decisions and it's  
21 scary, and there is very few people we have  
22 right now that are actually looking out for  
23 us and they are the people that we need to  
24 keep here because we have just let too many  
25 political parasites dictate the decision

1 making in this town and it's just killing it  
2 off.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Miller.  
4 Mr. Bolus.

5 MR. BOLUS: Good evening, Council,  
6 Bob Bolus, Scranton. Just briefly, last  
7 week I brought up about the mercantile tax a  
8 on those that write the tickets for the  
9 parking, are they exempt or do we have money  
10 coming from them? It was a question I  
11 asked, Mr. McGoff.

12 MR. MCGOFF: Yes.

13 MR. BOLUS: I don't know if you had  
14 the time --

15 MR. MCGOFF: I'm sorry, I did not  
16 get an answer to that, I'm sorry.

17 MR. BOLUS: Okay, if you could, you  
18 know, it's I think it's important. You  
19 know, we've got to look at every corner of  
20 the city right now to find out where we  
21 could kick up some dust and put some money  
22 in our coffers.

23 One of the issues that I think it's  
24 important, I brought up almost a year ago I  
25 submitted a letter to council, some of the

1 legislators and people about filing or  
2 asking the legislators to consider drafting  
3 a new license for the City of Scranton for a  
4 casino at the mall and everybody just backed  
5 off it. Well, let the other casinos do  
6 something, this and that, it's not about the  
7 other casinos. We don't get a dime out of  
8 their profits or the money they share with  
9 anybody else. This is about Scranton. The  
10 proposal I gave, remember, we are putting  
11 \$50 million dollars on the table, it's not  
12 chicken feed, but we are revitalizing a dead  
13 goose, and that's what the mall is right  
14 now, I don't care what Al Boscov has to say  
15 or wants to borrow, \$10 million, \$20  
16 million, when the mall was full blown they  
17 should have did the maintenance on the  
18 parking garage there. When the mall was  
19 full blown and they were making all of this  
20 money Al Boscov should have dug in his  
21 pocket instead of taking the profits  
22 elsewhere then returning them to the  
23 building that's there. This is a debit and  
24 credit, this is a business decision profit  
25 and loss. There is no other way that we can

1 look at it and for the mayor to sit here,  
2 and I'm not -- I've never gone against Billy  
3 in any way, I have a lot of respect for him,  
4 but that was the most asinine comments I  
5 heard that we are going to support Al Boscov  
6 and a mall that we know is dead. It's dead.  
7 It's not coming back. There is no way on  
8 God's earth that that mall as a mall with  
9 Boscov is going to come back to life. It's  
10 gone. It's dead. It went down like the  
11 Titanic. It's finished. We have to put a  
12 new life, a new blood here. We proposed a  
13 casino. You have the intermodal. You have  
14 the ball parks. You have everything here to  
15 make this work and guess who benefits? The  
16 lienholders on the mall, the people in the  
17 City of Scranton, Lackawanna County, because  
18 the money shared here it doesn't go to Mt.  
19 Pocono, it doesn't go to Wilkes-Barre, it's  
20 right here so why are we sitting when you  
21 have the golden goose right here in your  
22 hands if you want to blow the opportunity.

23 It's going to up for scale. The  
24 mall is going to go up for sale and we'll  
25 see who is going to own it. The party isn't

1 over yet. Our proposal is to make the  
2 lienholders a 100 percent whole, not screw  
3 them out of a dime as what's going on or  
4 take a penny out of the taxpayers, and if  
5 the garage needed repairs we were going to  
6 repair it. I've had engineers look at it  
7 already, we know what it needs, we know  
8 where we are going so don't come in here and  
9 say, "Oh, mea culpa, we should have did this  
10 or did that," you should have did it.

11 You are a businessman, this is  
12 Scranton and you helped kill it. It's dead,  
13 you got to bring it to life and all you guys  
14 sitting here, the mayor and everybody else  
15 who wants to play political favoritism and  
16 play the game and put the screws to the  
17 people in this city. When they have the  
18 opportunity to make something happen.

19 Now, over a year since I brought  
20 this here and it's frustrating. This is my  
21 city just as much as it is to you guys. I'm  
22 born and raised here, I have developed here,  
23 we have all lived here, don't you think it's  
24 time we got off our butts and did something  
25 for the people in the City of Scranton

1           instead of the politicians and the political  
2           parties and those that are on the free ride,  
3           the professional services who want to tear  
4           garages, who want to tear this down and more  
5           vacant lots.

6                        I bought a church for 35 grand to  
7           save our culture, not that I needed a  
8           church, I preserved the hall for the kids to  
9           stay playing basketball and I played there  
10          when I was a child because they were going  
11          to tear everything down there for a couple  
12          of dollars. There was a magistrate who had  
13          the deed already cut to own the mall.  
14          That's how deceptive we are around this town  
15          and it involved the diocese. Come on, let's  
16          get together here, let's worry about what we  
17          do with the people in this city. They  
18          assessed me at \$500,000 on that church and  
19          the hall over here because I tried to save  
20          something and I have been to the corrupt  
21          arguments that they wanted to make against  
22          me and hold we hostage, I turned two other  
23          churches because of their attitude.

24                       So we have the mall, we have the  
25          opportunity, and take a pen in your hand and

1 write a letter, just like the mayor wrote a  
2 letter, put it in you are hand. It's the  
3 most power thing we have this community,  
4 it's a stupid little ballpoint, and as our  
5 writer sitting over there knows the power of  
6 the press, the power of the print, the power  
7 of the pen, because the pen is mightier than  
8 the sword and let's not all forget it.  
9 Let's do something to bring Scranton back  
10 where we can hold other heads instead of  
11 burying them in the sand.

12 And the last thing, I'd like to see  
13 everybody at the next meeting regarding that  
14 landfill, at the Mid-Valley, not just send a  
15 letter, but let's hear a voice out there  
16 that involves all of us and the future  
17 generations. Thank you.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Bolus.  
19 Carl Kupchunis.

20 MR. KUPCHUNIS: Good evening My name  
21 is Carl Kupchunis, I'm a life-long resident  
22 of lower Greenridge. One of the reasons I'm  
23 here this evening is to invite everyone here  
24 and everyone watching to our annual block  
25 party, the Mary Mother of God parish at Holy



1 Rosary Church in North Scranton. We'll be  
2 holding our annual block party next weekend,  
3 June 18, 19 and 20 at our parish center,  
4 which is on West Market Street by Cole  
5 Muffler. The block party is between 6 & 11  
6 p.m. on Thursday and Friday and between 5 &  
7 11 p.m. on Saturday. The block party will  
8 include the following life entertainment:  
9 On Thursday, Damian the Magician will start  
10 the evening between 6 and 8 p.m., followed  
11 by the Chatter who will play until 11 p.m.  
12 on Friday, the Act Out Theatre group will  
13 start the evening between 6 and 7 followed  
14 by one of the best bands in our area,  
15 Picture Perfect, who will play until 11 p.m.  
16 On Saturday, Jim Cerminaro will be feature  
17 between 5 and 6:30, Lane Lancaster will on  
18 stage between 7 and 11.

19 This is event should be enjoyable  
20 for everyone. We have a variety of games  
21 for adults and children, adults will enjoy  
22 the raffle, Big Six wheel and several other  
23 games. For the children we have plush  
24 animals, lollipop tree, kids corner, which  
25 will feature face painting, sand art, and

1 many other games. We can't forget about our  
2 annual diaper derby which will be run,  
3 Friday, June 19, at 7 p.m. All children up  
4 to three years of age are warmly invited to  
5 run for the roses. Ribbons and prizes will  
6 be awarded at the metal stand.

7 Other features for our block party  
8 are the silent auction, dining around,  
9 baskets galore, book nook, an ice cream  
10 truck, bingo and many, many more. Also, we  
11 have some of the best food around in  
12 addition to usually burgers, hot dogs and  
13 fries, pizza, potato pancakes and usual  
14 block party food, a stand from our friends  
15 and neighbors at Shilo Baptist Church will  
16 feature the best ribs that you've had.

17 If you miss our block party you will  
18 miss some of the best food and entertainment  
19 of the entire summer season. We hope to see  
20 you in the next weekend, rain or shine, and  
21 sincerely thank everyone to comes. And if  
22 you would like to voluntary at the block  
23 party please call the parish office at  
24 570-342-4881.

25 In other matters, I still have

1 safety concerns about the Scranton Crossfit  
2 who has their gym in the 1500 block of  
3 Albright Avenue. It is the practice of this  
4 gym that several times a week, usually  
5 during the early evening hours between 4 and  
6 6:30 p.m. they have members of their gym run  
7 down the middle of the 1500 and 1400 block  
8 of the Albright Avenue, some times two and  
9 three abreast, there have been times when  
10 traffic has been backed up in both  
11 directions. I can't understand why they do  
12 not have their members run in and exercise  
13 on the former Gelbin Company property, which  
14 is right next to their gym. Having them run  
15 down the middle of the street is very  
16 dangerous for both the motorists and members  
17 of the gym. There are three other gyms  
18 within a one block radius and they are great  
19 neighbors. I hope Crossfit Scranton  
20 realizes the safety concerns they are  
21 causing and nuisance from the members  
22 running down the middle of the street.

23 Finally, I have concerns about some  
24 blighted properties in our neighborhood. A  
25 few years ago our neighbors had a meeting

1 with Jody Cordaro who had planned  
2 renovations to take place in the Scranton  
3 Lace Corporation building, which would have  
4 made that building, which is now abandoned,  
5 into an asset to the community. As of now,  
6 nothing has happened. There are more  
7 windows being broke out every week by  
8 teenagers throwing rocks at the building.  
9 Please let me know during motions if you  
10 know the status of the Lake Works building  
11 renovation.

12 Also, in the 1400 block of Mylert  
13 Avenue, the former land site steel  
14 fabricators building, is in equally bad  
15 shape. It has no roof, there is partial  
16 walls, please let me know if you are  
17 planning to demolish or repair this building  
18 before somebody gets hurt either by walking  
19 or driving by it and this building is ready  
20 to fall apart. Thank you for your time this  
21 evening and I hope everyone has a great  
22 summer. If you could let me know about  
23 those buildings, I would appreciate it.  
24 Thank you.

25 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you,

1 Mr. Kupchunis. Ron Ellman.

2 MR. ELLMAN: Hello, Council. I'd  
3 like to first off thank Mr. Sweeney and  
4 Mr. Liptai and the Licensing Borough for  
5 removing that truck. I couldn't believe  
6 there was such an immediate response, but it  
7 was an eyesore and it was just everything  
8 adverse for the neighborhood and I thank  
9 these gentleman.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Ellman would you  
11 just for the stenographer state your name,  
12 that's all.

13 MR. ELLMAN: I didn't hear you.

14 MR. MCGOFF: Would you please just  
15 state your name for the stenographer.

16 MR. ELLMAN: Oh, Ronnie Ellman, but  
17 you can call me Ron.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you, Mr. Ellman.

19 MR. ELLMAN: I don't know if you  
20 people know it or not, I'm not going to bad  
21 mouth anybody in this city like you before,  
22 in 1946 to 1956 this city had a Scranton  
23 plan. Here's a book about it. All of the  
24 facts that I'm going to mention briefly are  
25 in here, the names and everything. You

1 can't imagine the thought process that went  
2 into this plan, not like somebody saying  
3 we'll raise taxes and sell everything, these  
4 people in ten years, let me just read  
5 briefly.

6 In ten years they brought 58 new  
7 plants here, 85 plants here expanded. They  
8 added over 30,000 new jobs in ten years and  
9 you can imagine the payroll then. They used  
10 four different plans. They sold first  
11 mortgages. Not one penny in government  
12 money went into any of this. This was all  
13 raised by the banks and these plans and so  
14 forth and they have raised \$3,800,000  
15 without any government help. They had a  
16 revolving perpetual fund so they didn't have  
17 to have a lapse of money. I'm going to  
18 leave this with you people to glance at.  
19 You can't imagine we had 60 trucking  
20 companies here, I think there was four  
21 airways came into town, there was six  
22 railroads, we were a hub. We still are, but  
23 there is no one takes advantage of it  
24 anymore. We were a marketing hub and all of  
25 this is gone now because of lack of

1 leadership. I know jobs went overseas, but  
2 what happened in everything?

3 Look at, I saw the paper in few days  
4 ago there was a plan to bring all of these  
5 little towns around here into one, I don't  
6 know if somebody -- if you all read that 50  
7 and 100 years ago, I think it was 75 years  
8 ago, that would have saved the area but, you  
9 know, there is no plan. Here's is the  
10 Amoroso so plan right here, this is the  
11 Amoroso plan, 639 foreclosures last week in  
12 the paper. Somebody ought to tell the mayor  
13 because he certainly thinks things are good  
14 wanting to give \$15 million away to Boscov  
15 who continually -- he is a deadbeat. He  
16 doesn't pay his bills that he owes the city.  
17 What was it years we finally got \$700,000  
18 out of him? He borrowed \$3 million I  
19 believe. You can't -- this a business.  
20 This city is a business for crying out loud.  
21 It needs to be run like a business. You  
22 know, I think a bunch of high school kids  
23 can do a better job running this city than  
24 what's going on here. It's just senseless.

25 You know, like I always say you

1 people are just out of touch with the people  
2 that put you in those seats. You might run  
3 into somebody here and there, I'm talking  
4 eight, ten, 12 people a week, sometimes more  
5 and sometimes less, and I thank them for  
6 giving me their time. I thank you for  
7 giving me some time to let the know.

8 I'd like leave this book with you on  
9 to let you see it because it's worth -- I  
10 it's only a few pages, but it has facts and  
11 figures that are worth reading about. Thank  
12 you.

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

15 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening, Council.  
16 Dave Dobrzyn, resident and taxpayer. Once  
17 again I'm back to my public service  
18 announcement. Call Congress at 1-202-224 --  
19 3121 and mention who you wish to address and  
20 which representative or senator and tell  
21 them to can it on the Transpacific pack.  
22 White House is 1-202-456-1111. If they have  
23 already voted, which is possible with the  
24 Senate, try and find out how they voted and  
25 if they voted for it, and even if you don't



1           like the other guy from the other party,  
2           tell them that you plan to vote against them  
3           in the primary maybe, that they are out of  
4           touch. If you are tired of poor job  
5           opportunities, higher property taxes every  
6           year, threats to your retirement, constant  
7           complaints that social security is going  
8           broke, environmental threats, by the way  
9           they have a right to inflict their  
10          environmental damage upon our country and  
11          take us to Court if we don't go along with  
12          it, it's just ridiculous, and if you are a  
13          public sector employee, well, this thing  
14          about how much trouble you have every time  
15          you get or ask for a raise. If people are  
16          paying taxes, it's easier to pay your  
17          salaries.

18                         Now, a week or two ago there was an  
19          article in the paper about responsible  
20          monetization of the sewer plant. Well, in  
21          my opinion there isn't any responsible way  
22          to monetize the sewer plant because several  
23          years ago I seen a report that hedge funds  
24          were investing in water resources and it's  
25          pretty much the same all around the country

1 so in Detroit if you owe 150 bucks to the  
2 Detroit Water Authority you get your water  
3 cut. Well, that big global golf course owes  
4 \$500,000 in that neighborhood and they  
5 didn't have their water cut off, and so did  
6 the sports stadium they owed close to  
7 \$80,000 or 80,000 and they didn't have their  
8 water cut off but some poor shmuck with \$150  
9 bill comes home and finds he has no water  
10 with very little warning and, please, start  
11 to collect back fees such as the trash fee.  
12 Don't raise taxes and fees on the people who  
13 pay every year. It's ridiculous. If we  
14 have a collected those fees over the years  
15 we would probably be paying about \$220 a  
16 year for trash which would be totally  
17 reasonable, but when you are paying somebody  
18 else's bill with far more money in their  
19 pocket than you will ever have it becomes  
20 egregious.

21 And on the opinions of people hired  
22 by the Chamber of Commerce, it's time for  
23 second opinions so you don't have to go too  
24 far for them, but it's always good to have a  
25 second opinion because some people hire

1 study groups to come up with the results  
2 that they wish to find, the findings that  
3 they wish to hear.

4 And, once again, I think it would be  
5 wise to consider filing suit against PA to  
6 compensate for 35 percent tax exempts in  
7 this city. I would venture to say that it  
8 was Scott Township or Dickson City they  
9 might have 5 or 10 percent, so how about  
10 compensating us for the other 25 percent.  
11 We can't go on like this. We can't keep  
12 paying everybody else's bills. I appreciate  
13 the hospitals, I wouldn't be here if it  
14 wasn't for the hospital. The colleges, I  
15 don't have anything against them, but the  
16 point being that if you attend that college  
17 you are also getting an education paid for  
18 partially by the taxpayers and it's time  
19 that they start to -- the state starts to --  
20 there is no reason why they should be paying  
21 taxes. They are tax nonprofits that's  
22 understandable, but, once again, the state  
23 tells us that this is the way it has to be,  
24 how about sending some money. Thank you and  
25 have a good night.

1 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. Anyone  
2 else?

3 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening.  
4 Marie Schumacher. I'd like to start tonight  
5 by thanking the DPW for coming out and  
6 fixing the seam between Stafford Avenue and  
7 Hemlock Street, which was a real tire buster  
8 at the seam and the East Elm Street where  
9 the -- not the last one, but the prior big  
10 storm washed out the open gutters and took a  
11 good portion of the road with them with it  
12 and they were up there today fixing it and I  
13 want to thank them for that.

14 And I also would like to know,  
15 Mr. Gaughan is not here, but maybe somebody  
16 else knows what are the rules with pave  
17 cuts? I go down the streets and I try to  
18 count them, how many pave cuts before  
19 utilities have to repave that block and how  
20 many, I mean, is it all utilities or is it  
21 only one utility? Where are the rules so  
22 that I could look them up?

23 MR. MCGOFF: That would be something  
24 that DPW would need to answer.

25 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. I will do

1           that. And then, Mr. Rogan, have you been  
2           able to get the loan information yet on the  
3           loans going back to 2002 and how many have  
4           defaulted and what the amounts are?

5                   MR. ROGAN: Which ones, the ones  
6           that were referenced from the CAPER or these  
7           additional ones?

8                   MS. SCHUMACHER: No, all of the  
9           loans that were made from 2002. If you need  
10          a list, I guess I could probably do that for  
11          you, but -- okay. But one in particular --  
12          or two items from OECD -- through OECD, the  
13          SRA loaned the Marquee theatre \$500,000 --  
14          or \$700,000 and as we know the status of the  
15          Marquee theatres I'm wondering if that was  
16          ever paid, could you find out whether that  
17          was paid and if so if it's not fully paid  
18          what the balance is?

19                   And then, also, we did within the  
20          last probably certainly 10 years, but less  
21          than probably the facade of the Linden  
22          parking garage was redone and I remember  
23          there was pretty some internal work was done  
24          and was the amount of the investment in that  
25          Linden parking garage that OECD made?

1 MR. ROGAN: Regarding the Marquee  
2 theatre there was a \$700,000 loan, it looks  
3 like it was not paid. The total balance,  
4 there is three that are listed on the saved  
5 line item here, they come to a total of \$3.5  
6 million, which is the total balance owed by  
7 Steamtown Mall Partners so it doesn't look  
8 like it was paid.

9 MS. SCHUMACHER: And what are we --  
10 are we pursuing that legally?

11 MR. ROGAN: Well, Steamtown Mall  
12 partners in bankruptcy, so that's --

13 MS. SCHUMACHER: Steamtown Mall was  
14 the Marquee theatre?

15 MR. ROGAN: Yeah, Steamtown Mall  
16 Partners.

17 MS. SCHUMACHER: That wasn't  
18 separate?

19 MR. ROGAN: No, it has SMP on it.

20 MS. SCHUMACHER: Must be nice.  
21 Okay, and on 7-C tonight did anybody  
22 provide -- get the information that I  
23 requested on square footage between the  
24 levies and the Taylor landfill?

25 MR. MCGOFF: Apparently not.

1 MS. SCHUMACHER: So there is really  
2 no way to compare what we are paying for on  
3 the levies, which are steep and --or what  
4 those three people are now doing that were  
5 hired to do the levies?

6 MR. GAUGHAN: I had asked, we had  
7 sent correspondence to the DPW director last  
8 week, I think, I believe Friday after the  
9 meeting, but we have not heard anything.

10 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. Well, maybe  
11 next week then I would like that and then as  
12 I stated or I requested that some of the  
13 metrics from the two MOU's that were  
14 extended like almost forever, earlier this  
15 year, some of those metrics could be  
16 reported on regularly and since that wasn't  
17 done I volunteered to take the overtime and  
18 it's a little distressing because the  
19 numbers for March, April and May for the  
20 fire department is \$35,503 over what it was  
21 last year, and the police are \$5,222 over in  
22 overtime over last year, so I would like to  
23 know if there is any rational if there was  
24 something special that lead to that or not  
25 and then.

1 MR. MCGOFF: We do not have the  
2 ability to answer those questions. Those  
3 are something that would need to be answered  
4 by the departments.

5 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. I thought  
6 you all were the coordinators on those and  
7 you all had specific departments that you  
8 coordinated with.

9 MR. MCGOFF: We do, but the  
10 questions you ask, Mrs. Schumacher, these  
11 are things that would need to be answered,  
12 most of them, by the specific departments.  
13 We, as council, do not have answers to most  
14 of those.

15 MS. SCHUMACHER: I thought it would  
16 be --

17 MR. MCGOFF: And our staff, if we  
18 were to pursue all of the questions that you  
19 ask our staff would be unable to do the work  
20 that it's supposed to do.

21 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, I'm just  
22 really disappointed then that you are not --  
23 I mean, these are all things -- the things I  
24 have asked were things that were pulled out  
25 of the budget that you agreed to that were



1 going to be done. I would think you all  
2 would be interested.

3 MR. WECHSLER: Mrs. Schumacher, may  
4 I just make a comment, because I have been  
5 in contact with Becky McMullen, the  
6 personnel director, about these same  
7 questions that you had and I am meeting with  
8 her next week to go over the numbers.

9 MS. SCHUMACHER: Thank you.

10 MR. WECHSLER: And just a quick  
11 comment, I have spoken to both chiefs about  
12 it --

13 MS. SCHUMACHER: To -- I'm sorry?

14 MR. WECHSLER: I have spoken to both  
15 Police Chief Graziano and to Fire Chief  
16 DeSarno to get an understanding of where the  
17 overtime is generated and is it necessary,  
18 isn't it necessary, so just like in  
19 reference to the -- especially the fire  
20 department, a few weeks ago we had several  
21 major fires so there was a lot of overtime  
22 then, but I am going to meet with her and  
23 the chiefs next week to get an understanding  
24 of those numbers.

25 MS. SCHUMACHER: Thank you.

1 MR. MCGOFF: Is there anyone else  
2 who wishes to address council?

3 MS. REED: FIFTH ORDER. 5-A.  
4 MOTIONS.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Wechsler.

6 MR. WECHSLER: That came kind of  
7 fast, I wasn't ready so after last week's  
8 meeting the response to some comments that  
9 we made about advertising job openings on  
10 the city's website were in the newspaper. I  
11 have been investigating the logistics for  
12 making that happen. From speaking to too many  
13 people of the public last week, they  
14 understand that there is an authority that  
15 the mayor has to do hiring, but I think a  
16 lot of people would feel more comfortable if  
17 those jobs were posted and we are pursuing  
18 that.

19 In regards to the comments and the  
20 story in the paper this week about Boscov's,  
21 I'm not really going to speak generally  
22 about that, I was disappointed that we were  
23 not as a council involved with knowing about  
24 that prior to that, but I am looking at this  
25 and I'm trying to always find a positive in



1                   This week I was approached by a  
2                   constituent who had a rather novel idea and  
3                   I am going to pursue it further, this person  
4                   mentioned to me that the DPW workers,  
5                   especially the garbage collectors, are on  
6                   every street in the city at least once a  
7                   week and this person thought it would be a  
8                   good idea if they would be the people who  
9                   kind of generated the ideas about what  
10                  vacant properties or problems or which  
11                  streets in the city have severe potholes, so  
12                  I am going to pursue that a little more to  
13                  see what we could do with reporting from the  
14                  DPW and also from the police department to  
15                  generate ideas on what problems needs to be  
16                  fixed in the city, and that's all I have  
17                  right now, Mr. McGoff.

18                  MR. ROGAN: Thank you. A couple of  
19                  brief items and then something I'm going to  
20                  talk at length for a little longer. Two  
21                  quick items, first, I'd like to congratulate  
22                  Dave Gervasi. Today he retired after 29  
23                  years as a Scranton firefighter. I have  
24                  known Dave very well, he has been a regular  
25                  speaker at city council meetings throughout

1 the years and I know without him, I know  
2 much of what I know about the Scranton Fire  
3 Department I learned through talking with  
4 Dave and current union president John Judge  
5 so I wish him a happy retirement and I hope  
6 he enjoys his time off.

7 Secondly, I was contacted by a  
8 resident on East Mountain that was concerned  
9 about gypsy moths. I know this is something  
10 that was on the news in Luzerne County and  
11 the Hanover Township area has been inundated  
12 with these moths. They eat trees, they kill  
13 trees, if people get them on them they could  
14 cause very bad rashes. One of my coworkers  
15 actually was at his son's baseball game and  
16 got a terrible rash from these moths.

17 I know the process only because of  
18 talking with officials in Luzerne County  
19 about it is the county needs to request the  
20 state to do spraying if that area has a  
21 problem. So if it's agreeable with my  
22 colleagues if we could send a letter to the  
23 county asking if they have taken any action  
24 regarding this problem. Obviously, it's  
25 much worse in Luzerne County than it is here

1           currently and we don't want that to happen  
2           in Scranton or anywhere within Lackawanna  
3           County because it's not only a problem to  
4           individuals but from what I understand it  
5           will kill the trees, so it will eat all of  
6           the leaves off the trees and will kill the  
7           trees so if we could do that just to make  
8           sure the county is aware of it so we can  
9           stay ahead of it unlike Luzerne County who  
10          fell behind and then was never able to get  
11          caught up to the problem.

12                        Next, regarding the article that was  
13           in the paper regarding the mall and  
14           Mr. Boscov, I have spoken quite a bit about  
15           this issue through the years, I'm going to  
16           speak a little bit more about it tonight.  
17           Today we received a letter from the mayor,  
18           it was actually we were copied on a letter  
19           from the mayor to Al Boscov, and I'm not  
20           going to read the whole letter because it is  
21           over three pages long, but there were some  
22           things in there that I was happy to see.  
23           The one I mentioned that Mr. Boscov's  
24           company currently owes \$18 million to the  
25           City of Scranton and that nothing further

1 would come from the City of Scranton until  
2 that is satisfied. That's something I  
3 completely agree with. That amount is  
4 staggering, that \$18 million of economic  
5 development money through various loans have  
6 gone to, I don't want to say Mr. Boscov, to  
7 Steamtown Mall Associates who the principal  
8 investor was Mr. Boscov.

9 Moving on with the letter, it says,  
10 "I want to be perfectly clear to ensure  
11 there are no misunderstandings between you  
12 and the city. We will not move forward on  
13 the grant loan application for new financing  
14 for the mall until we have sufficient  
15 assurances that all outstanding issues you  
16 have with the City of Scranton are resolved  
17 in the city's. Rest assured, if you do not  
18 resolve these issues, my administration will  
19 not support any additional funding for you  
20 on your project. I would strongly suggest  
21 you come up with a plan to address all of  
22 these issue in advance of any request for  
23 funding."

24 And it mentions that this was  
25 discussed some months ago at a meeting that

1 the mayor had with Mr. Boscov. Like I said,  
2 I'm not going to read the whole letter. I  
3 don't have a problem with the -- even though  
4 I disagree with the initial letter that was  
5 sent to DCED, I understand how letters of  
6 support work, generally governmental  
7 officials bodies are asked to send them out  
8 and they send them out for any economic  
9 development projects within their city.

10 I know we just recently did one for  
11 a grant as well. So I don't have issues  
12 with the letter being sent out, but I do  
13 have an issue with Mr. Boscov and how he  
14 does business. I did a little research,  
15 actually a lot of research this week. Last  
16 week I mentioned when I was referring to the  
17 article that was in the Times-Tribune  
18 regarding "Donor's Brother Gets Job," why  
19 the Scranton Times, and not Mr. Lockwood in  
20 particular, because he was not the reporter  
21 during this time, didn't investigate other  
22 campaign contributors that received jobs or  
23 different perks from the city.

24 So I started looking into that and I  
25 actually wound up going in a completely



1 different direction than where I planned on  
2 because of this mall issue. I discovered a  
3 website and for those of you out there that  
4 want to check it out it's [www.AlBoscov.com](http://www.AlBoscov.com).  
5 Sounds pretty simple. I figured it might  
6 have been Mr. Boscov's website, but it's  
7 certainly not. What this website says  
8 across the header, "Al Boscov. Exposing the  
9 Pennsylvania's Number One Tax Pimp." And it  
10 goes onto state all of his political  
11 donations to political candidates throughout  
12 the state, and they are numerous.

13 Mayor Doherty, former Mayor Doherty,  
14 received a total of \$17,500 from Mr. Boscov.  
15 Now, that isn't surprising considering  
16 Mr. Boscov has donated over the course --  
17 since he was bailed out by the State of  
18 Pennsylvania in total Mr. Boscov has donated  
19 to political candidates \$549,893.15. That's  
20 over half a million dollars that Mr. Boscov  
21 donated to various political candidates  
22 throughout the State of Pennsylvania  
23 including, as I mentioned, \$17,500 to Mayor  
24 Doherty, \$31,000 to State Senator Blake,  
25 another \$2,000 to former State Rep Kevin

1 Haggerty. They were the only ones I noticed  
2 in our region. Former Governor Corbett,  
3 hundreds of thousands of dollars, and former  
4 Governor Ed Rendell, hundreds of thousands  
5 of dollars, and you have to question what is  
6 Mr. Boscov receiving because of these  
7 donations?

8 So I did a little more digging, and  
9 not to mention the fact that the State of  
10 Pennsylvania has bailed him out, Mr. Boscov,  
11 under Ed Rendell, to multi-millions of  
12 dollars, and all of these political  
13 donations were after the state bailout. So  
14 going back to 2009, now, I was not on city  
15 council at this time, "Boscov to city,  
16 Guaranteed Loan to Keep Store Open. Retail  
17 Chain Owner Seeks City Approval for \$3  
18 Million and \$47 Million HUD Loan."

19 The first line of the article from  
20 the Times Leader, "I promise we will pay you  
21 back." The first line in the article. \$3  
22 million. We have not been paid back. It  
23 goes on and on about it, but, again, this is  
24 Mr. Boscov using his political influence to  
25 receive favors.

1                   In July of 2011 I was on city  
2                   council at that time, another article,  
3                   "Council Extends Mall Loan Repayment  
4                   Schedule. With a 4 to 1 vote, Council  
5                   amended the 2003 Section 108 loan agreement  
6                   before the City and Steamtown Mall Partners,  
7                   LLP for the refinancing of the Lackawanna  
8                   Avenue mall project by extending the  
9                   agreement until 2013."

10                   I was the loan dissenting vote. It  
11                   goes on after, some back and forth between  
12                   myself and some of the previous members of  
13                   council, I referred to the loan as a bailout  
14                   and my colleague said, "More of a  
15                   forbearance."

16                   And I replied, "I shouldn't use the  
17                   term bailout, I should have used the term  
18                   state of execution."

19                   And it turns out in 2011 to now I  
20                   was correct. I wish I wasn't, but we are  
21                   still on the hook for \$18 million, the  
22                   taxpayers of Scranton. That money could  
23                   have been used for so many other economic  
24                   development projects within the city that  
25                   could be seeing results from instead of a

1 mall that is desolate and barren and it  
2 makes me wonder, why Mr. Boscov is able to  
3 donate over half a million dollars to  
4 political candidates throughout the state,  
5 including some in our area, but he can't pay  
6 back the \$18 million he owes to Scranton  
7 taxpayers. For one, I will not vote to  
8 give Mr. Boscov a cent, whether it's city  
9 backed dollars or even if it's state grant  
10 dollars. I would like to see state money  
11 come into Scranton to help that property but  
12 not under the current management of  
13 Steamtown Mall Partners or under the  
14 management of Mr. Boscov. That property  
15 needs a new business plan and it needs to be  
16 completely revamped. And that is all for  
17 tonight. Thank you.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Mr. Evans?

19 MS. EVANS: Thank you. I guess I'll  
20 continue on with comments about Mr. Boscov  
21 and the mall. Mr. Boscov has effectively  
22 cleared the deck for bidding in a few weeks  
23 for the purchase of the Steamtown Mall.  
24 Unless there is a surprise bidder out there  
25 he will gain sole ownership of the mall at a

1 dramatically reduced price. It really is a  
2 bizarre scenario where a partner in the  
3 company that owned the mall and that  
4 defaulted on the mortgage allowed to go into  
5 foreclosure would now have the opportunity  
6 and the inside track to become the new  
7 owner. To say that Mr. Boscov is a shrewd  
8 businessman would be an understatement, but  
9 with that said without a commitment from him  
10 after he is the new owner to totally  
11 reinvent the mall and to pay the millions of  
12 dollars still owed to the taxpayers it would  
13 not even be close to be a sound investment  
14 by the City of Scranton to spend one  
15 taxpayer dime on the Boscov-owned Steamtown  
16 Mall.

17 As I mentioned earlier, because  
18 Mr. Boscov will most likely own the mall at  
19 a severely discounted price there is no need  
20 to commit anymore tax dollars to the mall.  
21 It is time for this project to finally stand  
22 on its own and stop being propped up by  
23 other people's money, particularly when that  
24 money is for the taxpayers.

25 On another topic, HP-316 it is no

1           secret that I have been discussing the need  
2           for pension reform for almost a year, so I  
3           was extremely happy to learn this week that  
4           HP-316 passed in the state government  
5           committee and may be headed to a full vote  
6           on the floor of the house soon.

7                         This pension reform bill would among  
8           other things place future public safety  
9           employees into a cash balance plan which is  
10          a hybrid pension plan with similarities to  
11          the 401-K. There is also an optional 457  
12          plan available to new hires. What also will  
13          make the current practice of spiking which  
14          occurs when an employee has worked extensive  
15          overtime in their final years raising  
16          salaries to use to set pension payments.

17                        Also, those employees would not be  
18          eligible for post-retirement health care and  
19          the retirement age would be raised to age 55  
20          and you must also have 25 years of service,  
21          still lower than the private sector.

22                        In April of this year, the ten  
23          Democratic mayor's from Pittsburgh, Erie,  
24          Harrisburg, York, Allentown, Easton,  
25          Lancaster, Kutztown, Bethlehem and West

1 Chester took a Democratic council seminary  
2 to task for failing to overhaul the states  
3 municipal pension system and for not working  
4 with Republican lawmakers who are advancing  
5 pension reform. Those mayors are simply  
6 asking for bipartisan efforts on reform.

7 This city council sent letters dated  
8 April 15, 2015, to State Representatives  
9 Flynn and Farina asking for their support as  
10 well. If he hasn't done so already, I would  
11 ask Mayor Courtright to publically state his  
12 support for this bill and to personally  
13 lobby our state representatives to support  
14 this important legislation. I would also  
15 like to mention that Carbondale Mayor Justin  
16 Taylor who showed his support for the bill  
17 by personally visiting the capital on the  
18 date of the committee vote. This message  
19 from these mayors -- or those mayors and the  
20 city council should be loud and clear.

21 Municipal pension reform should never be a  
22 partisan issues and for cities like Scranton  
23 mired in pension obligations, it may simply  
24 be a matter of survival. That is all I have  
25 at this time. Thank you.

1 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. I would  
2 just agree with Councilman Evans, I do think  
3 that we should send correspondence to Mayor  
4 Courtright to have him publically support  
5 this bill, I think it's important, as we  
6 know, as we've talked about for the past  
7 year and a half pension reform is critical  
8 to the city's success moving forward  
9 financially.

10 I had the pleasure of attending a  
11 book launch event at the Lackawanna  
12 Historical Society today at 5:30 just before  
13 our caucus. The book is called "Scranton's  
14 Hill Section." It is a textural and  
15 pictorial celebration of the history of  
16 Scranton's Hill Section neighborhood. The  
17 book was written by Jack Sheen, a native and  
18 resident of the Hill Section. I had the  
19 pleasure of having Jack as a student when I  
20 did my student teaching at Holy Cross High  
21 School. Jack wrote the book during his  
22 senior year of high school and will be  
23 attending Penn State in the fall. He is an  
24 unbelievable student and a great person. I  
25 would encourage everyone to purchase this



1 book and you can buy it online at  
2 [www.arcadiapublishing.com](http://www.arcadiapublishing.com) for \$21.99 and  
3 this is the book that I have right here. So  
4 I would encourage everyone to buy that and  
5 support Mr. Sheen.

6 The street sweeper is scheduled to  
7 be in the East Scranton area from June 15 to  
8 June 19 from Arthur Avenue to Taylor Avenue.  
9 A resident had a question and contacted me  
10 this week about curb cuts throughout the  
11 city and I thought it would be informative  
12 for anyone else who was curious. Curb cuts  
13 or curb ramps are required on any  
14 construction project where federal funds are  
15 being used, including paving project.

16 A gentleman called our office about  
17 speeding on Sloan Street. Residents would  
18 like the speed limit placed in the area and  
19 extra patrols so we will be contacting chief  
20 Graziano about that. There was an issue two  
21 weekends ago that I was made aware of about  
22 adults throwing quarter sticks of dynamite  
23 into the Lackawanna river killing nearly a  
24 dozen fish, just below Sweeney Beach, and I  
25 guess this is not just an occurrence not

1           just with sticks of dynamite or M-80's.  
2           Firecrackers and other things, but this is  
3           reprehensible and cannot be tolerated. The  
4           police were called, but we will be having a  
5           conversation with Chief Graziano to see if  
6           this sort of thing -- patrols could be  
7           ramped up near the river.

8                         Also, I had a conversation with  
9           Charlie Charlesworth, who was in and spoke  
10          about the Sweeney Beach legislation about  
11          two weeks ago. He would like to talk to  
12          city council about enacting an ordinance  
13          making the area from the Poplar Street to  
14          the Olive Street bridge catch and release,  
15          artificial lures, single hook only, no  
16          triple hooks or double hooks, which are  
17          harmful to fish, and he would like it to  
18          cover the whole green way from Poplar Street  
19          to the city limits below Elm Street. So we  
20          will be having that conversation with the  
21          next few weeks and encourage continued  
22          development long our river, which is a great  
23          economic asset, to the city.

24                         Also, in caucus we spoke about, and  
25          I mentioned a conversation I had with Ron

1 Koldets, who is the Tax Claim Bureau  
2 director of Lackawanna County, to discuss  
3 the county's offer to collect the delinquent  
4 taxes for the city, distribute proceeds on a  
5 monthly basis and conduct sales for the city  
6 just as they do for the school district.

7 So we did discuss that as a council  
8 in our caucus tonight and we are planning on  
9 having Mr. Koladjeski in for our caucus to  
10 give us more information about that. I  
11 think it's very interesting.

12 In regards to the newspaper article,  
13 many of colleagues have touched on about  
14 Boscov's applying for a RACP grant in the  
15 amount of \$10 million and a \$50 million  
16 loan, as my colleagues have already said,  
17 council was never approached or consulted by  
18 Mayor Courtright regarding a letter he  
19 submitted pledging unanimous support for  
20 this project. Council was referenced in the  
21 letter yet known us knew anything about it.  
22 I spoke to Mayor Courtright Wednesday  
23 morning by phone to get an explanation and  
24 he did apologize, but this is just another  
25 example in my opinion of a total lack of

1 communication and transparency for Mayor  
2 Courtright. At best, this is another sloppy  
3 display by the mayor and, quite frankly, bad  
4 government.

5 And as it pertains to Mr. Boscov, I  
6 think on a personal level when you talk to  
7 your average person on the street what they  
8 understand is how can somebody get a loan or  
9 a grant or any type of money when they still  
10 have outstanding debt. So I think I would  
11 agree with my colleagues that the debt has  
12 to be paid before that could even be  
13 considered. And that is all I have. Thank  
14 you.

15 MR. MCGOFF: Just a couple of  
16 responses to people that spoke at the  
17 podium. First of all, in regard to the  
18 parking garages report that was in the paper  
19 this morning, that was an engineering report  
20 provided by Desmond. It was part of the  
21 monetization process and it's required as  
22 part of the monetization process from the  
23 bidders. The report was prepared for the  
24 bidders specifically, not necessarily for  
25 the City of Scranton. The City of Scranton

1 did not go out to Desmond and say, "We want  
2 to demolish the garages, how much is it  
3 going to cost?"

4 Desmond simply gave or provided a  
5 report that included a number of the  
6 different scenarios so that the bidders  
7 would then properly evaluate the bid that  
8 they might provide to the city in this  
9 monetization process. The city at no time  
10 was necessarily considering the demolition  
11 of the garage. It was simply something that  
12 was a part of or required report for the  
13 bidders in this monetization process.

14 As far as the mall and the idea of a  
15 casino for a mall, this has come up  
16 repeatedly from Mr. Bolus. First of all, we  
17 do not own the mall. Right now the mall is  
18 in receivership and likely to be owned by  
19 Mr. Boscov since he was the only bidder. We  
20 cannot force Mr. Boscov to put a casino in  
21 the mall.

22 Secondly, a casino needs an  
23 applicant, the city cannot apply for a  
24 license for a casino. If Mr. Bolus wants to  
25 apply and then look for support from the

1 city so be it, but there is no applicant for  
2 the casino license. Mr. Bolus is simply  
3 asking the city to do things that it cannot  
4 do.

5 Last, the Scranton plan was brought  
6 up, the Scranton Plan was a great idea and  
7 it worked until all the jobs started to move  
8 south and then to Asia. I would like, you  
9 know, Mr. Ellman gave a number of the  
10 businesses that came in under the Scranton  
11 Plan, I would like to know how many of those  
12 businesses still exist.

13 Yes, the Scranton Plan was a great  
14 idea and maybe we need something like that,  
15 but what types of businesses can we attract  
16 to the city, to the area at this time and  
17 how many can we keep in the area.

18 Lastly, as I think it's almost  
19 unanimous in our disfavor with the letter  
20 that was sent in support of a loan to  
21 Mr. Boscov. I had two problems with that  
22 and I spoke to the mayor on Wednesday,  
23 morning, Mr. Gaughan was part of a  
24 conference call at the time. I said that  
25 there were two things that I thought were

1 wrong about that letter. First, we had no  
2 knowledge of the letter. We had been trying  
3 to build a rapport between council and the  
4 administration. We had been, you know,  
5 doing our best to use that rapport with  
6 people in the banking community, you know,  
7 business community, and things like this  
8 simply aren't good as we move forward. How  
9 do we tell people that there is a  
10 communication between the administration and  
11 the council and a working relationship when  
12 this type of thing appears in the paper?  
13 It's simply was not a good practice.

14 Mayor Courtright had said, "Yes, it  
15 was a mistake on my part, I should have  
16 notified council," and we all agree with  
17 that, but still the image is out there and  
18 we are going to have to work to repair that.

19 My second problem was with the  
20 parking garages. The letter, which nobody  
21 has mentioned, said that we would give \$10  
22 million to Mr. Boscov to repair the garage  
23 when we are trying to sell the garages that  
24 we own. To me, that's just giving your  
25 competitor money is not a good business

1 practice. In the letter that Mr. Rogan  
2 referenced, there is a mention that the city  
3 did ask or said to Mr. Boscov that they  
4 would agree or part of the agreement was  
5 that he would not provide long-term parking  
6 in the garage, that it would be for patrons  
7 only, that is a concession that is okay, but  
8 again, giving \$10 million to your competitor  
9 I just don't think that that is a good idea,  
10 and as everybody has mentioned, I think it's  
11 about time that Mr. Boscov starts spending a  
12 little bit of his own money and not everyone  
13 else's. And that is all.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Can I just have --

15 MR. MCGOFF: Sure.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: -- a point of  
17 clarification, too, and this was brought up  
18 in the caucus because this was a point of  
19 confusion I think in the article and many  
20 people are under the assumption that  
21 Mr. Boscov is asking the city for a \$15  
22 million Section 108 loan, and I think,  
23 Mr. Rogan, could you just clarify exactly  
24 what -- since you are OECD, because when I  
25 read it I was under the assumption and then



1 I did -- we did ask Ms. Aebli what our  
2 lending capacity was because I thought there  
3 is no way we would be able to lend out \$15  
4 million.

5 MR. ROGAN: The 108 loans are what  
6 Mr. Boscov has used in the past, well,  
7 actually Steamtown Mall Associates, which  
8 Mr. Boscov is the principal of, to obtain  
9 financing. The letter of support that was  
10 referenced in the Scranton Times' article  
11 was to the state for RACP grant I think of  
12 \$10 million. Any funds that come through  
13 those programs generally are voted on before  
14 council before they will given to the  
15 applicant. Any funds from a Section 108  
16 loan or any sort of loan that would come  
17 from OECD would also come before city  
18 council for consideration and I don't see  
19 either one having the votes to pass city  
20 council at the current time.

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Right. But, I mean,  
22 is he -- is this a Section 108 from the  
23 state or --

24 MR. ROGAN: Section 108 if it were  
25 to be pursued would be through the city's

1 OECD office.

2 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay.

3 MR. ROGAN: That's maybe one of  
4 Mr. Boscov's long-term goals, but at this  
5 time that's not something that's going to  
6 be --

7 MS. EVANS: Basically a loan, it's a  
8 loan that we guarantee.

9 MR. ROGAN: It's a loan guaranteed  
10 -- a loan from federal dollars guaranteed by  
11 the city and in an instance of a default it  
12 comes out of our programming money, which we  
13 saw last year when we had to amend the CDBG  
14 allocations. Luckily those funds were paid  
15 back at that time, but moving forward, you  
16 know, how much debt is Mr. Boscov going to  
17 take on? He already owes us \$18 million, so  
18 let's get that \$18 million back before  
19 considering anything further.

20 MR. MCGOFF: And I would also add to  
21 that that I spoke to Mrs. Aebli on Wednesday  
22 morning about the \$15 million and she was  
23 unaware of anything that was in the  
24 application. It was a 400-page application,  
25 by the way, so in some cases you can't see

1 the forest for the trees, but the trees for  
2 the forest or whatever it is.

3 MR. ROGAN: I guess --

4 MR. MCGOFF: Go ahead.

5 MR. ROGAN: To give a little bit  
6 more background on grant applications, which  
7 is something I'm a little familiar with my  
8 work, many times when an applicant will  
9 apply for a grant they will put their best  
10 case scenario in for why they should get the  
11 money because they have other sources lined  
12 up. I think that's probably why it was put  
13 in, you know, they weren't sure that you --  
14 it's not a state giving \$10 million that he  
15 has private funds, he has other public funds  
16 that there is an entire plan in place, not  
17 that the state is going to give \$10 million  
18 just to fix the garage that there is more  
19 too it, so that's how, you know, these grant  
20 applications are typically structured. This  
21 one is particularly long. I didn't have a  
22 chance to -- I glanced through it, I mean, I  
23 didn't read through the whole thing because  
24 it is so lengthy, but that and letters of  
25 support that's every day practice in

1           probably every governmental agency in the  
2           state, but the actions that council will be  
3           taking, will not be taking, or what we need  
4           to concern ourselves with and let the state  
5           decide what they decide and then it will  
6           come to city council.

7                     MR. MCGOFF: Let's just say that  
8           there was a lot of confusion involved in  
9           this application process and there are  
10          probably still some things that need to be  
11          sorted out. And that's all. Thank you.

12                    MS. REED: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION - A  
13          RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER  
14          APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE AND  
15          ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH REILLY ASSOCIATES  
16          CONSULTING ENGINEERS FOR  
17          ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING (A/E) SERVICES FOR  
18          TRAFFIC SIGNAL DESIGN AT THE INTERSECTION OF  
19          NORTH MAIN AVENUE AND PARKER STREET.

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

23                    MR. ROGAN: So moved.

24                    MR. WECHSLER: Second.

25                    MR. MCGOFF: On the question? All

1 those in favor of introduction signify by  
2 saying aye.

3 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

4 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

5 MR. EVANS: Aye.

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

7 MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed? The  
8 ayes have it and so moved.

9 MS. REED: 5-C. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
10 A RESOLUTION - ACCEPTING A DONATION OF FIVE  
11 THOUSAND (\$5,000.00) DOLLARS FROM ALLIED  
12 SERVICES PRESENTED TO THE CITY OF SCRANTON  
13 TO DEFRAY THE COST OF SWIMMING FEES FOR  
14 TEENS AGES 13 TO 17 AT THE NAY AUG PARK SWIM  
15 COMPLEX.

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

19 MR. ROGAN: So moved.

20 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

21 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? All  
22 those in favor of introduction signify by  
23 saying aye.

24 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

25 MR. ROGAN: Aye.

1 MR. EVANS: Aye.

2 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

3 MR. MCGOFF: Aye. Opposed? The  
4 ayes have it and so moved.

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

7 SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A. FOR  
8 CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC  
9 WORKS- FOR ADOPTION - RESOLUTION NO. 150,  
10 2015 - RATIFYING AND APPROVING THE  
11 SUBMISSION OF THE GRANT APPLICATION BY THE  
12 GRANT MANAGER AND OTHER CITY OFFICIALS OF  
13 THE CITY OF SCRANTON, LACKAWANNA COUNTY, FOR  
14 A PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
15 GREEN LIGHT GO PROGRAM GRANT IN THE AMOUNT  
16 OF \$11,760.00 TO BE USED TOWARD REPLACEMENT  
17 OF INCANDESCENT LIGHT BULBS WITH LED BULBS  
18 IN TRAFFIC SIGNALS LOCATED AT DESIGNATED  
19 CORRIDORS THROUGHOUT THE CITY OF SCRANTON  
20 AND IF THE GRANT APPLICATION IS SUCCESSFUL,  
21 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE  
22 CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL  
23 DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO ACCEPT AND DISBURSE  
24 THE GRANT FUNDS.

25 MR. MCGOFF: What is the

1 recommendation of the Chair for the  
2 Committee on Public Works?

3 MR. GAUGHAN: As Chairperson for the  
4 Committee on Public Works, I recommend final  
5 passage of Item 7-A.

6 MR. ROGAN: Second.

7 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? Roll  
8 call, please?

9 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Wechsler.

10 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

11 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Rogan.

12 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

13 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Evans.

14 MR. EVANS: Yes.

15 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Gaughan.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

17 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. McGoff.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby declare  
19 Item 7-A legally and lawfully adopted.

20 MS. REED: 7-B. FOR CONSIDERATION BY  
21 THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS - FOR ADOPTION  
22 -RESOLUTION NO. 151, 2015 - RATIFYING AND  
23 APPROVING THE SUBMISSION OF THE GRANT  
24 APPLICATION BY THE GRANT MANAGER AND OTHER  
25 CITY OFFICIALS OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON,

1 LACKAWANNA COUNTY, FOR A PENNSYLVANIA  
2 DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION GREEN LIGHT GO  
3 PROGRAM GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$99,000.00 TO  
4 BE USED TOWARD THE RECONSTRUCTION AND  
5 REPLACEMENT OF THE FAULTY TRAFFIC SIGNAL AT  
6 THE INTERSECTION OF GREEN RIDGE STREET AND  
7 SANDERSON AVENUE AND IF THE GRANT  
8 APPLICATION IS SUCCESSFUL, AUTHORIZING THE  
9 MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS  
10 TO EXECUTE ANY AND ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY  
11 TO ACCEPT AND DISBURSE THE GRANT FUNDS.

12 MR. MCGOFF: What is the  
13 recommendation of the Chair for the  
14 Committee on Public Works?

15 MR. GAUGHAN: As Chairperson for the  
16 Committee on Public Works, I recommend final  
17 passage of Item 7-B.

18 MR. ROGAN: Second.

19 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? Roll  
20 call, please?

21 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Wechsler.

22 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

23 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Rogan.

24 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

25 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Evans.



1 MR. EVANS: Yes.

2 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Gaughan.

3 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

4 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. McGoff.

5 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby declare  
6 Item 7-B legally and lawfully adopted.

7 MS. REED: 7-C. FOR CONSIDERATION  
8 BY THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS - FOR  
9 ADOPTION -RESOLUTION NO. 152, 2015 -  
10 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE  
11 CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO A  
12 CONTRACT WITH LATONA TRUCKING, INC. FOR  
13 GRASS CUTTING AT THE TAYLOR LANDFILL FOR  
14 CALENDAR YEAR 2015. CONTRACT TO EXPIRE  
15 NOVEMBER 30, 2015 FOR A LUMP SUM BID OF  
16 \$12,800.00.

17 MR. MCGOFF: What is the  
18 recommendation of the Chair for the  
19 Committee on Public Works?

20 MR. GAUGHAN: As Chairperson for the  
21 Committee on Public Works, I recommend final  
22 passage of Item 7-C.

23 MR. ROGAN: Second.

24 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? Roll  
25 call, please?

1 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Wechsler.

2 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

3 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Rogan.

4 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

5 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Evans.

6 MR. EVANS: Yes.

7 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Gaughan.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

9 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. McGoff.

10 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby declare  
11 Item 7-C legally and lawfully adopted.

12 MS. REED: 7-D. FOR CONSIDERATION  
13 BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES- FOR ADOPTION  
14 -RESOLUTION NO. 153, 2015 - APPOINTMENT OF  
15 MARTIN KENEHAN, 546 LEGGETT STREET,  
16 SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA 18508, AS A MEMBER OF  
17 THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION EFFECTIVE MAY  
18 29, 2015. MR. KENEHAN WILL BE REPLACING EV  
19 JONES WHO RESIGNED EFFECTIVE MAY 27, 2015.  
20 MR. KENEHAN WILL FULFILL THE UNEXPIRED TERM  
21 OF MR. JONES WHOSE TERM IS SCHEDULED TO  
22 EXPIRE ON DECEMBER 31, 2015.

23 MR. MCGOFF: As Chairperson for the  
24 Committee on Rules, I recommend final  
25 passage of Item 7-D.

1 MR. ROGAN: Second.

2 MR. MCGOFF: On the question? Roll  
3 call, please?

4 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Wechsler.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

6 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Rogan.

7 MR. ROGAN: Yes.

8 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Evans.

9 MR. EVANS: Yes.

10 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Gaughan.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

12 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. McGoff.

13 MR. MCGOFF: Yes. I hereby declare  
14 Item 7-D legally and lawfully adopted.

15 MR. ROGAN: Before adjournment, I  
16 just checked the limit for a Section 108  
17 loan is \$6 million.

18 MR. MCGOFF: Thank you. If there is  
19 no further business, I'll entertain a motion  
20 to adjourn.

21 MR. ROGAN: Motion to adjourn.

22 MR. MCGOFF: Meeting adjourned.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

I hereby certify that the proceedings and evidence are contained fully and accurately in the notes of testimony taken by me at the hearing of the above-captioned matter and that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the same to the best of my ability.

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CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR  
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER