

SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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HELD:

Thursday, November 5, 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  
(Not present)

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 moment of reflection  
2 observed.)

3 MR. ROGAN: 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. ROGAN: Dispense with the reading  
14 of the minutes.

15 MS. REED: THIRD ORDER. 3-A. TAX  
16 ASSESSOR'S RESULTS REPORTS FOR HEARING DATES  
17 HELD OCTOBER 9 AND OCTOBER 13, 2015.

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

20 MS. REED: 3-B. MINUTES OF THE  
21 COMPOSITE PENSION BOARD MEETING HELD  
22 SEPTEMBER 23, 2015.

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

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

1 SCRANTON POLICE PENSION COMMISSION MEETING  
2 HELD SEPTEMBER 23, 2015.

3 MR. ROGAN: Are there any comments?  
4 If not, received and filed.

5 MS. REED: 3-D. AGENDA FOR THE  
6 NON-UNIFORM MUNICIPAL PENSION BOARD MEETING  
7 HELD OCTOBER 28, 2015.

8 MR. ROGAN: Are there any comments?  
9 If not, received and filed.

10 MS. REED: 3-E. MINUTES OF THE  
11 NON-UNIFORM MUNICIPAL PENSION BOARD MEETING  
12 HELD SEPTEMBER 23, 2015.

13 MR. ROGAN: Are there any comments?  
14 If not, received and filed.

15 MS. REED: 3-F. MINUTES OF THE  
16 SCRANTON FIREFIGHTERS PENSION COMMISSION  
17 MEETING HELD SEPTEMBER 23, 2015.

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

20 MS. REED: 3-G. SINGLE TAX OFFICE  
21 CITY FUNDS DISTRIBUTED COMPARISON REPORT  
22 2015-2014 YEAR TO DATE OCTOBER 31, 2015.

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

25 Do any council members have

1                   announcements at this time?

2                   MR. WECHSLER: Yes, Mr. Rogan, I have  
3                   one. Mary Mother of God parish of Scranton  
4                   will hold it's roast beef dinner on Sunday,  
5                   November 8, at Stirna's Restaurant from 12  
6                   to 4. Tickets are \$10 in advance and \$12 at  
7                   the door. From personal experience this is  
8                   well worth the \$10.

9                   MR. GAUGHAN: And I have one or two,  
10                  also. Just a reminder that Veteran's Day is  
11                  next Wednesday, November 11, and we should  
12                  remember to honor the sacrifices made by our  
13                  veterans in the name of freedom and  
14                  democracy for our country.

15                  The Steamtown National Historic site  
16                  is helping celebrate Veteran's Day by  
17                  waiving the daily entrance fee at the  
18                  downtown Scranton park. Free admission  
19                  includes the visitor's Center, history  
20                  museum, round house, technology museum,  
21                  theatre and interpretative tours.

22                  Also, downtown retailers are staying  
23                  open until 7:00 p.m. every Thursday through  
24                  Christmas starting tonight, so we encourage  
25                  everyone to shop downtown this holiday.

1                   That's all I have. Thank you.

2                   MR. ROGAN: As Councilmen Gaughan  
3 mentioned, Wednesday is Veteran's Day and  
4 City Hall be closed on that day in honor of  
5 our veterans. DPW will also be off on  
6 Wednesday so refuse collection and plastic  
7 recycling will be delayed by one day next  
8 week.

9                   An executive session was held this  
10 evening prior to the meeting to discuss a  
11 matter of litigation.

12                  And one other announcement, this is  
13 from State Representative Marty Flynn's  
14 Office. It says, "It's that time of year  
15 again to help others by dropping off used or  
16 gently worn coats and blankets at his  
17 district office for the annual winter coat  
18 drive to benefit children and adults. The  
19 community has come through in a tremendous  
20 way the last two years and I'm sure it will  
21 continue from the generosity of neighbors  
22 helping neighbors. A warm coat or blanket  
23 can make those less fortunate survive the  
24 cold winter months.

25                  Drop off locations are at State

1 Representative Marty Flynn's Office on Main  
2 Avenue in West Scranton, and they can also  
3 be dropped off at What the Fork, at the  
4 restaurant and with the mobile food truck as  
5 well.

6 MS. REED: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS'  
7 PARTICIPATION.

8 MR. ROGAN: Our first speaker tonight  
9 is Lee Morgan.

10 MR. MORGAN: Good evening, Council.  
11 Well, the first thing I have I'd like to  
12 start with, Mr. Rogan, if I could. At the  
13 last meeting you said that the city didn't  
14 file bankruptcy because the governor  
15 wouldn't support it, but my question is the  
16 city could have still done filing in Court  
17 and why didn't that take place?

18 MR. RGOAN: You can file anything  
19 you want with the Court --

20 MR. MORGAN: Absolutely.

21 MR. ROGAN: It doesn't mean it's  
22 going to be approved. Governor Corbett made  
23 it very clear that he would not sign off on  
24 any municipal bankruptcies, so by filing,  
25 which we could do, you are right, we would

1           have the negative stigma of being bankrupt  
2           without the protection that bankruptcy would  
3           afford having the governor sign off on it.

4                     MR. MORGAN: Do you think we are  
5           bankrupt at this time?

6                     MR. ROGAN: I think we are in very  
7           tough shape financially, but we are not  
8           bankrupt.

9                     MR. MORGAN: How much money does this  
10          council actually believe that you can tax  
11          the residents of this city beyond the point  
12          where they are at now because, you know,  
13          Mr. Evans, I'm glad you won and I'm waiting  
14          for Mr. Perry to come on board but, you  
15          know, I had the opportunity to call WILK and  
16          ask Mr. Corbett if he will allow this  
17          council to come forward on their channel and  
18          discuss the monetization of the Scranton  
19          Sewer Authority, I had asked you last week  
20          can you tell the residents of this city how  
21          the city managed to pay its way out of the  
22          deal with the American Anglican at this  
23          time?

24                     MR. EVANS: Well, I'm in the process  
25          of going back and researching all of that, I



1           actually have a meeting set up with  
2           Mr. Barrett of the Sewer Authority, so we  
3           are going to go over all of those details  
4           and more so I'll be very much informed when  
5           the time comes for any discussions. On  
6           monetization, by the way, I really don't  
7           know anything that's been going on. We vent  
8           been informed of what the process is or how  
9           far along it is or if there is any bidders  
10          on the --

11                       MR. MORGAN: Did this council  
12           honestly believe that leveraging the Sewer  
13           Authority is going to really answer any of  
14           the problems that faces this city other than  
15           financial incompetence over an extended  
16           period of time?

17                       MR. EVANS: Well, at this point it's  
18           conceptual, that's the problem, until we see  
19           something that's concrete it's hard to  
20           answer your question.

21                       MR. MORGAN: But the bondholders pay  
22           for that Sewer Authority and through the  
23           incompetence of city administrations and  
24           councils you are leveraging something that  
25           you yourself acknowledge at the last council

1 meeting that a for-profit corporation is  
2 going to have make money, and my question to  
3 this council is how much did the  
4 incompetence of the prior council that  
5 agreed to this deal and then the way they  
6 paid it, how much has that effected the  
7 sewer bills that the resident of this city  
8 are paying?

9 How many fees should the residents  
10 of this city tolerate through the  
11 incompetence of its government, and maybe  
12 it's time for the council to send a budget  
13 down to the mayor cutting the budget by 30  
14 percent. Maybe it's time to do something  
15 that this council and other councils have  
16 refused to do. I mean, you know, it's great  
17 to sell off assets, but how could you  
18 explain to the residents of this city that  
19 their revenue from everything is going to  
20 people with very deep pockets that bought  
21 everything that these residents own because  
22 it's elected government was incompetent?  
23 Does anybody want to say anything on that?  
24 Nothing?

25 I mean, it's just, you know he, I

1           talked to somebody the other day there was a  
2           house in the city that was listed for --  
3           you're a realtor so, there was a house that  
4           was listed in this city or \$191,000, a very  
5           beautiful house, it went for 85. Houses are  
6           constantly being reduced to sell. People  
7           are just moving away, they are just walking  
8           out the front door and I'd like to ask this  
9           council, you know, your solutions to the  
10          problems we have, do you ever think they  
11          might be the problem and that maybe it's  
12          time to really, you know, I mean, I watched  
13          what you said about monetization of the  
14          Sewer Authority assets and the parking  
15          garages and the same thing with Mr. Perry,  
16          and the council here, you know, I firmly  
17          believe you are wrong. I believe just  
18          looking at the way some of this community  
19          development money has been spent over the  
20          years proves how twisted and upside down  
21          this city is. I mean, how can a city sell  
22          South Side Sports Complex in federal losses  
23          it's illegal to sell, just go ahead and sell  
24          it. Is that good government?

25                   I mean, where is good government

1 here? I mean, you know, it's nice to talk  
2 about spaghetti dinners and little functions  
3 and, you know, let's shop downtown, but look  
4 around. There is not much left of this  
5 city, and it's not too late to cut the  
6 budget by 30 percent and stop playing  
7 political games or either file for  
8 bankruptcy or receivership. Thank you.

9 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. Joan  
10 Hodowanitz.

11 MS. HODOWANITZ: Joan Hodowanitz,  
12 Scranton resident and taxpayer. Does anyone  
13 have the status of the 2014 audit?

14 MR. EVANS: My understanding is that  
15 the audit will be completed by the end of  
16 the year.

17 MS. HODOWANITZ: By that you mean  
18 that it will be published, signed and ready  
19 for view by the public?

20 MR. EVANS: Well, we hope so, but it  
21 be -- a draft of it will be completed.

22 MS. HODWOWANITZ: Okay, this is a  
23 backward way of doing budgeting.

24 MR. EVANS: Certainty.

25 MS. HODOWANITZ: The audit should be

1 available as one goes into the budget cycle.  
2 Be that as it may, I would hate for the city  
3 to break with tradition at this late date,  
4 but I will be waiting for it breathlessly  
5 and remind you it was due on March 31.

6 I sat in the caucus tonight and I  
7 got the impression that while you do not  
8 have the proposed 2016 operating budget you  
9 have seen drafts; is that correct?

10 MR. EVANS: Well, it's more of a  
11 working document, you know, a working  
12 document not actually a draft.

13 MS. HODOWANITZ: Okay. My comment  
14 is that even as you look at a working  
15 document in a budget there is always  
16 assumptions built in unless you are going  
17 with zero based budgeting, and I don't think  
18 we are, but there are assumptions built in  
19 and some of them you have to look at, you  
20 know, is the mayor and the administration  
21 assuming that the parking garages are going  
22 to leased next year or going to monetize the  
23 Sewer Authority?

24 You say that you really don't have  
25 any feed back from the administration on the

1 status of some of these issues, yet you need  
2 some feedback from the administration or  
3 otherwise your numbers in the budget are  
4 going to have virtually no credibility. We  
5 have been down this road where there have  
6 been big ticket items in the budget that  
7 never came to pass because assumptions were  
8 made that never came through. So as we  
9 approach the actual proposed budget and the  
10 hearing he would expect you to have some  
11 very pointed questions that you asked the  
12 administration and Mr. Bulzoni, who should  
13 be the chief architect.

14 Speaking of Mr. Bulzoni, has he  
15 found a place yet to live in Scranton? He's  
16 had 10 1/2 months to look.

17 MR. EVANS: Not that I'm aware of.

18 MS. HODOWANITZ: Is it safe to  
19 assume that Mr. Bulzoni will not be with us  
20 this next year?

21 MR. EVANS: He had a one-year waiver,  
22 that's what I will tell you, and the waiver  
23 expires at 12-31 of this year.

24 MS. HODOWANITZ: And is there any  
25 rumors as to who his replacement might be?

1 MR. EVANS: None.

2 MS. HODOWANITZ: I hope he has got  
3 somebody in training. Have you heard  
4 anything from the mayor and the  
5 administration on your letter with regard to  
6 the number of accidents that pedestrians  
7 have been having downtown? Anything said,  
8 any kind of response that they'll even look  
9 it as a priority?

10 MR. EVANS: I talked to a  
11 representative of PennDOT, I know there was  
12 an attempt to have a meeting scheduled this  
13 week, but with the police department, and I  
14 know Councilmen Wechsler, I think you wanted  
15 to be there as well, but it was postponed  
16 for various reasons, not getting all of  
17 parties together, but I think that attempt  
18 is ongoing to meet with PennDOT downtown to  
19 talk about that.

20 MR. WECHSLER: It definitely remains  
21 a priority. It definitely remains a  
22 priority.

23 MS. HODOWWANITZ: With regard to Item  
24 3-G, the Single Tax Office funds  
25 distribution comparison report, the 2015

1 operating budget had \$4, 287,500 allotted  
2 for the LST and as of the end of October we  
3 have collected \$2,754,451.43. How are we  
4 going to collect the remaining \$1.5 plus  
5 million? Is that going to be though the end  
6 of the year or through the end of the first  
7 quarter of next year? What's going on with  
8 the LST?

9 MR. ROGAN: That would probably best  
10 for the tax collector to answer where it  
11 currently stands for the budget next year  
12 that certainly does matter.

13 MS. HODOWANITZ: Well, that's another  
14 question to be asking during the public  
15 hearing. That's another big assumption in  
16 the the budget that we've caught ourselves a  
17 hole for this year.

18 Just for everybody's information, I  
19 understand that the Pension Board meetings,  
20 I know the Composite Pension Board will meet  
21 on November 18 because of Thanksgiving this  
22 year so anybody who was wanting to come down  
23 and see that dog and pony show it will be  
24 on Wednesday, November 18, not the fourth  
25 Wednesday of the month. Thank you.



1 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. Ron Ellman.

2 MR. ELLMAN: Hello. I didn't vote  
3 for anyone in this election that supported  
4 reassessment plans, which didn't seem to  
5 hurt anyone anyway. You claim a third would  
6 stay the same, a third would go up, a third  
7 would go down, it there won't be any  
8 significant change why are you so intent in  
9 getting ahold of this eight or ten million  
10 dollars that county has? Why don't you give  
11 everybody in the city \$100 off, it wouldn't  
12 even take half of that. People really  
13 appreciate \$100 off their taxes after  
14 Amoroso and Bulzoni get ahold of everything.

15 You people you sit there and you  
16 listen, but you don't hear these people out  
17 here. I think it was three weeks ago I  
18 stood here and I said if you reassess there  
19 will be a run on the Tax Borough, now to  
20 explain what I'm mean a little better, let  
21 me hand you -- that's from last Fridays  
22 Philadelphia Daily News and it's exactly  
23 what I was talking about. They had a run --  
24 a huge amount of people, I think it says a  
25 little -- about 30,000 oppose their

1 assessment. Almost everybody was found the  
2 same it went up except for a couple of  
3 hundred, I talked to a reporter at the  
4 paper, out of 30,000 the same thing will  
5 happen here proportionally, it's going to go  
6 up on everybody and not go down and you know  
7 it. There wouldn't be no sense in wanting  
8 to spend \$8 million if that wasn't true.  
9 You know, it didn't take you people 2 1/2  
10 months, there is 2,200 foreclosures in this  
11 paper in August. You have forgotten about  
12 them already.

13 I don't know about you guys. I was  
14 with Mr. Gaughan's father-in-law the other  
15 night, and I told him that I was very  
16 disappointed in you. You sort of joined the  
17 flow instead of being a fighter like when  
18 you first got there, you know.

19 MR. GAUGHAN: Well, I would disagree  
20 with you on that.

21 MR. ELLMAN: That's just my opinion.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: I understand.

23 MR. ELLMAN: What's you people -- the  
24 low income and the city and the retired  
25 people, the veterans and the plain poor, the

1 residents up in these high rises you act  
2 like you just want to get rid of everybody  
3 like they did in Germany 80 years ago, that  
4 they are just a pain in the neck because  
5 they can't contribute anything anymore and  
6 that's not right. What are you going to do  
7 give everything to Lackawanna College and  
8 Keystone Enterprises? These things I say  
9 are I think people discuss them during the  
10 week. You read that about the run. What I  
11 said every lousy penny that is opposed  
12 nobody gets it until the case is settled, do  
13 you know that? It's right there in the  
14 paper.

15 MR. EVANS: Well, we are experiencing  
16 a run here as well.

17 MR. ELLMAN: It says 2,500 people  
18 opposed it, that money doesn't go to the  
19 city, the county, the school board, nothing.  
20 It sits there until their case is settled.  
21 That's been going on for two years with some  
22 of these people and the same thing will  
23 happen here and then you have a bunch of  
24 fools that will appeal the appeals so they  
25 don't have to pay taxes.

1 MR. EVANS: Well, they will have to  
2 pay them eventually, but we are seeing that  
3 right now. We had more cases last year than  
4 the year before because the taxes and the  
5 assessments are wrong.

6 MR. ELLMAN: Well, reassessment is  
7 just plain stupidity.

8 MR. EVANS: I tend to disagree with  
9 that.

10 MR. ELLMAN: That's because you are  
11 not holding onto to your property by your  
12 fingertips like probably a quarter or a  
13 third of the city. You don't know what it's  
14 like -- if you ever went down Jackson Street  
15 and some of these streets where the people  
16 are -- the houses look like hell because  
17 they don't have money to work on them.

18 MR. EVANS: Well, they are the people  
19 that the reassessment will help.

20 MR. ELLMAN: I got one right on  
21 Throop Street, it hadn't been painted since  
22 I lived there and talked to the lady every  
23 once in awhile, they used to have two cars  
24 and now they have one that must be 10 years  
25 old already. They don't have the money to

1           paint their house or work on it. The garage  
2           is falling in and this is a nice  
3           neighborhood around their house. Their  
4           house looks like hell. It's all over the  
5           city like this.

6                   MR. EVANS: We are going to agree to  
7           disagree on reassessment.

8                   MR. ELLMAN: No, you people have --  
9           you have just turned your back on a quarter  
10          of the city. These veterans and these poor  
11          and these low income, you have forgotten  
12          about them. You have forgotten about these  
13          2,200 people that have lost their homes.

14                   MR. ROGAN: Thank you, Mr. Ellman.

15                   MR. ELLMAN: The most cherished  
16          possession they had. Thank you.

17                   MR. ROGAN: Before the next speaker  
18          comes up, I do want to echo what Councilman  
19          Evans mentioned regarding the run of the tax  
20          assessor, we get every week a report from  
21          the Tax Assessors Office there is hundreds  
22          of people and properties that are appealing  
23          their taxes, and I'm just looking at this  
24          week out of six full pages like this not one  
25          of them went up, they all went down, and

1           what's happening is many large businesses  
2           and people that own large parcels are  
3           appealing, they're hiring attorneys and they  
4           are appealing and they are seeing their  
5           taxes go down. While, as Councilman Evans  
6           mentioned, people in the areas that at one  
7           time may have been low off areas in the city  
8           are assessed at a higher amount than they  
9           should be. A reassessment would make that  
10          fair. The taxes in Lackawanna County are  
11          not fair by any stretch of the imagination  
12          and, as I mentioned before, I urge you to go  
13          on to the County's website and compare your  
14          assessment to your neighbors and you will  
15          see the disparities for yourself.

16                   MR. EVANS: There is entire  
17          neighborhoods that are totally overassessed  
18          based on a 1970 valuation and that has to  
19          stop. You know, the City of Scranton is  
20          more impacted by a lack of reassessment than  
21          any community in the county and it's  
22          inherently unfair, and many of the people  
23          you are talking about that are the poorer of  
24          our population that own their homes are more  
25          impacted than people that are paying --

1 richer, better hopes, more expensive homes,  
2 etcetera. They are the people that we are  
3 trying to help because we have people that  
4 are paying \$6,000 in taxes living in  
5 \$350,000 homes, and we have people that are  
6 paying \$5,000 in taxes living in a \$60,000  
7 home and that is not right and that's what  
8 reassessment will do, it will change the  
9 balance and bring equality to the assessment  
10 process. So that's why we are for it so we  
11 are going to have agree to disagree on that  
12 issue but I will never back off my viewpoint  
13 that reassessment is a a positive, positive  
14 thing for the City of Scranton and all of  
15 its residents so --

16 MR. ELLMAN: Can I just say one thing  
17 real quick?

18 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Ellman, your time is  
19 it up.

20 MR. ELLMAN: How will you cover four  
21 or five thousand people that aren't paying  
22 their taxes for a year? That's what will  
23 happen if they oppose what the taxes are?  
24 It's right there in black and white. That's  
25 the state law.

1 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Dobrzyn.

2 MR. EVANS: I'll talk about that in  
3 motions.

4 MR. DOBRZYN: Hold that clock. Dave  
5 Dobrzyn, resident. Taxes paid and fees  
6 paid. Last week I mentioned about the  
7 pensions, and one of the things that's  
8 troubling our pensions, the way I understand  
9 stand it is it from some of the people that  
10 work with within the public safety was there  
11 was a \$26 million loss factoring in the Wall  
12 Street debacle, and I think it's time that  
13 we at least investigate before we go into  
14 anything else or hand anybody a big suitcase  
15 full of cash to investigate this and find  
16 out who was in charge, if they are still in  
17 charge and if had they are still in charge,  
18 and if they're still in charge it time that  
19 the charge be taken off of them and, I mean,  
20 \$26 million is probably more than we will  
21 ever get for monetizing the sewer plant or  
22 any such thing and here we are.

23 Now, my wife had a 401-K that lost  
24 about six or eight thousand dollars and it  
25 wound of replaced, but from what I'm seeing



1 here, and I talked to a teacher yesterday at  
2 the polls, and their pension money hasn't  
3 been replaced, so it's like public pensions  
4 have been a big piggy bank for Wall Street  
5 and it's ashame.

6 And, once again, I mean, you know,  
7 we used to have a sleez factor with  
8 politicians, well, with Obama and his  
9 Department of Justice it's basically a wimp  
10 factor because nobody was ever investigated  
11 for this and the people that did happen to  
12 do it like Elliott Spitzer fell down with  
13 their bad morals and it all got forgotten  
14 about in the wash.

15 So, I mean, and also if there are  
16 local people responsible and they are still  
17 on the Pension Board then it's time to  
18 resign. That's all there is to it. If you  
19 insisted on going to a less than reputable  
20 -- whoever is responsible, a less than  
21 reputable investment means then it's time to  
22 move on, you know. Carli Firoino hasn't had  
23 a job in 10 years because she tanked both of  
24 the companies that she was in charge, you  
25 know, and justifiably so. She is rich

1           enough, she got \$50 million off of them.

2                   And I'd also like to point out that  
3           when we were given those double pensions,  
4           which I don't approve of trying to collect  
5           the back money, that's water over the dam.  
6           They tell you what you are going to get,  
7           you don't tell them what you are expecting,  
8           Jack Loscombe was denied a pension while  
9           others were given double.

10                   And I'd also like to talk about  
11           objective thinking and, for instance, we had  
12           a person in here, and they were a nice  
13           person and they had youngster or two and  
14           they mentioned that they were paying \$5,000  
15           in property taxes and \$5,000 in wage taxes,  
16           and my compliments on their household income  
17           because that's about three or four times the  
18           household income average in Scranton, but,  
19           however, that's still doesn't add up to just  
20           one child in school, so it may -- maybe you  
21           don't want to get these poor old guys too  
22           aggravated, their tickers are going to give  
23           out or something and, you know, they won't  
24           be paying their taxes. My point is is it  
25           takes several households to pay just for one

1 child to go to school and then, you know,  
2 the city maintenance and the city services.

3 And couple of weeks ago there was a  
4 guy here about a dog license, and I have to  
5 say \$35 is a little too high for a dog  
6 license. That's high. It's gone up like  
7 triple and quadruple, it used to be nearly  
8 ten bucks or something like that, eight if  
9 they were neutered and we just jacked it up  
10 so high that it's going to discourage people  
11 from licensing their dog or they are going  
12 to try and get in under the fence or if they  
13 have a small house dog they just won't  
14 consider it more like a cat. So thank you  
15 and have a good night. I'll be back, but  
16 don't forget think objectively. I mean, you  
17 don't want to give a tax cut to somebody  
18 that's going to cost five times more than  
19 what they are ever going to pay.

20 MR. ROGAN: Thank you.

21 MS. SCHUMACHER: Goodd evening,  
22 Council. Marie Schumacher, city resident,  
23 taxpayer. I think I'll be brief tonight, I  
24 do have a couple of housekeeping kinds of  
25 things like do we have a DEP report yet on

1           what was actually measured for in the  
2           Sandone tire fire?

3                   MR. WECHSLER: No, we do not, but we  
4           have confirmed that they were readings that  
5           were taken so we are making an effort to get  
6           it. The readings were taken, no report was  
7           issued.

8                   MS. SCHUMACHER: That's what I'm  
9           saying, they obviously measured something,  
10          they should be able to tell us.

11                   MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

12                   MS. SCHUMACHER: We deserve to know  
13          that.

14                   MR. WECHSLER: I agree with you, but  
15          they did not issue a report. We are trying  
16          to get that.

17                   MS. SCHUMACHER: Second, I sent  
18          e-mails to PennDOT on this personally, but  
19          every time I go up 307 or go South on 307 I  
20          just think we need more than an an e-mail  
21          from me. Anybody who has gone up there,  
22          there are areas where there is no white  
23          shoulder paint because there is no shoulder.  
24          It's a drop of like four feet, maybe even  
25          five. I was going to actually go down there

1 and measure some of them today, there is  
2 many of them that are -- where the road is  
3 actually crumbling into this abyss and I  
4 value my life more than measuring those to  
5 be precise, but we need to send a letter to  
6 them on those. With winter coming up one  
7 slide and somebody is going to rip the  
8 bottom of their car.

9 And then on the nonprofit, we were  
10 supposed to be validating the eligibility of  
11 all of our nonprofits, another thing we  
12 haven't done yet, and I would like to extend  
13 that one step further, I cannot by any  
14 stretch of my imagination come up with how  
15 the operator or the person who is going to  
16 lease the Parking Authority garages and our  
17 meters would qualify as a nonprofit, so I  
18 hope they are the first one tested.

19 MR. EVANS: Well, there is a test  
20 for all of that.

21 MS. SCHUMACHER: I understand there  
22 is.

23 MR. EVANS: And --

24 MS. SCHUMACHER: I'm saying it should  
25 be applicable to this company. That's all

1 I'm saying.

2 Now, you know, you have taken good  
3 care of a percentage of the taxpayers, you  
4 gave the the police and firemen contracts  
5 through 2021, extended it out way past  
6 anybody on this dias' tenure, beyond the  
7 mayor's elected tenure, I think it's time  
8 that you do something for the taxpayers and  
9 that is before you approve next year's 2016  
10 budget this taxpayer, and I think a lot of  
11 others, would like to see a five-year budget  
12 beyond the budget you are actively working  
13 on. Howe are you going to prove to us in  
14 black and white what's going to happen with  
15 the money that you are going to gain from  
16 the Parking Authority sale, the parking  
17 asset sale, how that's going to play out  
18 over the next many years, how long is it  
19 going to be applied only to the pension, is  
20 it going to help our operating budget or  
21 not. The same with the Sewer Authority, you  
22 know.

23 And the pension, you probably all  
24 read the editorial today, we think the  
25 pension is bad this year at 9.3, it only

1 goes up 2 million in 2016, but in doubles  
2 this year by the next year.

3 The LST tax is only going to be good  
4 for two more years, there are so many things  
5 that make me believe that there is no way  
6 you or the mayor or Mr. Amoroso can pull  
7 this off, and I would like proof in black  
8 and white that we can track -- that we  
9 taxpayers can track to or that you can prove  
10 to yourselves that you are honestly voting  
11 in favor of a budget that's fair to the  
12 taxpayers.

13 I think the time has come to ask how  
14 much is enough. I think that has -- we have  
15 reached that point and, I agree, I have  
16 watched properties go for -- in Scranton go  
17 for pitiful amounts and I know my property  
18 value is down, I would say probably  
19 everybody's is in this city. And, yes, we  
20 need a reassessment but, again, I do not  
21 believe we need an \$8 million reassessment.  
22 What we need is for you people to go to our  
23 legislators and tell them a different method  
24 of doing it so that it's market value, pure  
25 market value, and it is updated annually and

1                   that would help a whole lot. Thank you.

2                   MR. ROGAN: Thank you. Is there  
3 anyone else who would like to address  
4 council?

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

6                   MR. ROGAN: Mr. Wecshler, do you have  
7 any motions or comments?

8                   MR. WECHSLER: Yes. Thank you, Mr.  
9 Rogan. First, I'd like to congratulate  
10 everyone that was involved in the election  
11 process on Tuesday. When we take a look at  
12 this process we look at the candidates that  
13 come through and look at them as winners and  
14 losers, and definitely there is no more  
15 final count for an election candidate than 8  
16 p.m. on Tuesday evening in November, but  
17 everyone that participates should be  
18 congratulated. The candidates that won and  
19 the candidates that loss because this is  
20 what makes the system work.

21                   Also, the people who take time out  
22 of their day to work the polls and volunteer  
23 for their candidates, it makes the process  
24 work, and I would especially like to  
25 congratulate Mr. Evans and I would also like



1 to congratulate Mr. Perry, who will be  
2 joining us in January. I feel very  
3 comfortable in both of their abilities to  
4 continue the work that I think this council  
5 is doing.

6 We heard a lot of discussion tonight  
7 about the budget and about reassessment and  
8 every year I make this same comment about  
9 both things, the fact that city council is  
10 televised and the fact that we have -- we  
11 are the easiest people to access in terms of  
12 the budget we get a lot of the comment about  
13 how poor the budgets are and how expensive  
14 they are, but I hope everybody just  
15 appreciates the fact that the school  
16 district also has a major impact on your  
17 taxes and, fortunately, this year the county  
18 is not going to raise taxes, and we do take  
19 our fair share of risks, and rightfully so.

20 In terms of some of the comments  
21 about a five-year budget, I would love to do  
22 a five-year budget, unfortunately, we don't  
23 know where we are going to be in 2017, 2016  
24 is a mystery that we are trying to work on.

25 Also, the budget is prepared by the

1           mayor, we have influence as well, we can  
2           make changes to it, and we will try to do  
3           our best, but the criticism about our budget  
4           is unfounded and the mayor makes the budget  
5           and we'll work with him and we will try to  
6           make a good budget, but the responsibility  
7           for the budget is the mayor's.

8                         We have been talking with the county  
9           in terms of their participation and their  
10          response to the tire at Sandone. We did  
11          receive a letter from the Lackawanna County  
12          Emergency Management and I just want to read  
13          a little bit of it because it provided a lot  
14          of information that I did not have.

15                        The letter goes to say that,  
16          "Lackawanna County EMA staff responded to  
17          the scene of the fire upon notification of  
18          the incident. Shortly after the initial  
19          fire dispatch, the initial response  
20          including three EMA staff members as well as  
21          two vehicles. In our initial on-site  
22          meeting, our staff asked what support EMA  
23          could provide in the firefighting effort  
24          including the possibility of using the  
25          County's mobile command vehicle, and the

1 acquisition of firefighting foam. While it  
2 was not possible to begin using foam at the  
3 time due to the conditions and location of  
4 the fire within the structure, EMA staff had  
5 in place on standby and partnering agencies  
6 would could provide foam and the county foam  
7 trailer which was dispatched to the scene."

8 They also provided the use, if  
9 necessary, of a structural engineer. They  
10 also coordinated with the American Red Cross  
11 at the scene, and Lackawanna County EMA had  
12 for the record requests to the Pennsylvania  
13 Emergency Management Association for  
14 assistance, also.

15 As the letter goes on, some of the  
16 things this we had spoken about since the  
17 fire happened and one thing that they  
18 mentioned is something that we also had  
19 expressed concern about, and I'll just read  
20 what they say about that. "The concerns  
21 addressed in your comments or letter would  
22 have been addressed by is city EMC if the  
23 city did not have adquate resources. The  
24 city EMC could request assistance for the  
25 county. Unfortunately, the situation at

1 Midtown apartments or any other unmet needs,  
2 if they existed, were not brought to the  
3 attention of the county EMA. We have  
4 included a copy of Title 35 for your review  
5 and are willing to discuss the topic further  
6 to prevent such situations from occurring  
7 again in the event of a large scale incident  
8 with the hope of filling the gap created by  
9 the lack of an emergency management  
10 coordinator for the City of Scranton."

11 So far we have not made any progress  
12 in filling that gap. It's something that I  
13 do want to work on going into next year  
14 finally creating a position of either  
15 someone who is already here or someone new  
16 that could become this emergency management  
17 coordinator.

18 In my opinion, we got very lucky at  
19 that fire. The situation could have been  
20 much worse. Our firefighters and police  
21 department, the county came in and  
22 neighboring firefighters participated and  
23 created or avoided disaster so I think going  
24 forward we have to concentrate on that.

25 And a few things that I do have

1           comments on that Mr. Gaughan will address,  
2           Mr. Gaughan and I have been working on a  
3           couple of different issues, one of them  
4           being in terms of the leaf collection for  
5           the city, Mr. Gaughan has the information on  
6           that, and that's all I have for this  
7           evening.

8                       MR. ROGAN: Thank you. Mr. Evans,  
9                       any motions or comments?

10                      MR. EVANS: Yes, thank you,  
11                      Mr. Rogan. I'm going to step back a little  
12                      bit on the reassessment again. I do  
13                      appreciate what Mr. Ellman said that he is  
14                      looking out for the interest of the senior  
15                      citizens that own properties, some of them  
16                      are poor families that own property, but the  
17                      reality is that those are the people that  
18                      reassessment will actually protect.

19                      There hasn't been a reassessment in  
20                      45 years. Generally the people that we are  
21                      speaking about are the people that never  
22                      file for an appeal. They are good citizens  
23                      that pay their taxes every year and think  
24                      that that's their responsibility and that's  
25                      their role and that's what they do. So they

1 are probably paying the tax based on  
2 assessment and never asked for a reduction.

3 But what a reassessment does, as I  
4 mentioned before, one third goes up, one  
5 third stays the same, and one third goes  
6 down. It's neutral. It's tax revenue  
7 neutral which means in the first year taxes  
8 can't go up. It's based on that premise so  
9 what will happen is people that aren't  
10 paying their fair share will pay their fair  
11 share and the people that are being  
12 overcharged with the high assessment will go  
13 down, and that's what we are trying to do.  
14 We are trying to create equality for all of  
15 our citizens, plus the fact that we will  
16 create opportunities on the economic side of  
17 the stratosphere because we are not seeing  
18 any new construction in city and a lot of  
19 that has to do with the fact that we haven't  
20 had a reassessment in so long because if you  
21 build a new house in the city your taxes are  
22 through the roof. If you build new  
23 construction, a commercial building, your  
24 taxes will go through the roof because the  
25 assessment will be based on 1970 valuations.

1                   So I am a proponent for  
2                   reassessment, I will always be a proponent  
3                   for reassessment, I'll be glad to talk about  
4                   this issues with anybody at any time, I'm  
5                   sure I can't convince everybody, but I am  
6                   positive in my mind that this is something  
7                   that the city has to do and has to force the  
8                   county to do.

9                   Now, their \$8 million figure that  
10                  they are touting as being too much I don't  
11                  even know where that number comes from  
12                  because there hasn't been an RFP, nobody has  
13                  asked anybody what the cost actually will  
14                  be. We spent \$2.9 million already on  
15                  getting the leg work done and all of the  
16                  properties in Scranton have already been  
17                  measured, reviewed, all of that information  
18                  is already there. Now, will some of it have  
19                  to be updated, probably. However, a lot of  
20                  that work is done so I would like to see  
21                  what a reassessment would actually cost and  
22                  I would ask the commissioners to put an RFP  
23                  out there and find out what the cost really  
24                  is. Just don't tell us it's \$8 million  
25                  let's find out what the real number is and

1           then we can have a conversation on how to  
2           get this thing done.

3                         Secondly, is as you may know the  
4           police Pension Board once again has elected  
5           to authorize increases to retirees. While  
6           this could be viewed as a nice gesture on  
7           their part for retirees, it is actually a  
8           continuation of the denial of the grave  
9           condition of the pensions and the systemic  
10          problems with the Pension Boards and the  
11          rules and ordinances that guide them. We  
12          have called for changes for those rules over  
13          a year, and I personally called for a  
14          revamping of who sits on the Pension Boards  
15          allowing for Pension Boards that are more  
16          experienced in financial matters sa well as  
17          any members that will bring a new look of  
18          independence than those who are going to  
19          receive pensions in the future.

20                        I repeatedly stated that there can  
21          be no super funding of the pensions without  
22          the changes needed at the Pension Board  
23          level and the rules that guide them or the  
24          transferring of that role to the  
25          Pennsylvania Municipal Pension Board, so any



1 discussion completing the monetization of  
2 the Sewer Authority to super fund the  
3 pensions to me is premature at best without  
4 those changes in place before it happens.  
5 And that's all I have tonight. Thank you.

6 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. Mr. Gaughan,  
7 do you have any motions or comments?

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, thank you.  
9 Mr. Wechsler mentioned the leaf pick up, we  
10 did speak to the Department of Public Works  
11 director, Mr. Gallagher, and he is going to  
12 notify city council and the public when leaf  
13 pick up begins. He did say to notify  
14 residents that it would be extremely helpful  
15 to bag the leaves in paper bags instead of  
16 plastic. The recycling center will not take  
17 the plastic bags and he does not want leaves  
18 swept to the curb so please bag your leaves  
19 and we will notify the public when the leaf  
20 pick up is taking place.

21 There is a program that I would like  
22 to talk about for a second that our  
23 recycling consultant, Joyce Hatala, is  
24 reviewing along with members of the  
25 administration that I think could possibly

1 be beneficial for the taxpayers as well as  
2 our environment and it is called the PAYT  
3 program, "Pay as you Throw" in Pennsylvania.

4 To reduces waste, as well as promote  
5 recycling, many communities in Pennsylvania  
6 have implemented an incentive based program  
7 known as "Pay as you Throw" or PAYT. With  
8 this program, a household's payment is based  
9 upon the amount the trash that they you  
10 produce, conflicting to avoid hire fees many  
11 households practice sustainable behavior  
12 such as composting, recycling and buying  
13 products that generate less waste. The  
14 money that is collected pays for trash  
15 collection as well as the community's  
16 recycling program. The fee that is charged  
17 varies from community to community. Some  
18 communities collect the money up front  
19 through the purchase of garbage bags and  
20 others based the amount on the volume or  
21 weight of the garbage. This flexibility  
22 allows each community to choose the method  
23 that is best suited for them. The fee can  
24 be paid in a number of different ways such  
25 as direct payment or subscription.

1                   Currently the PAYT program has been  
2                   implemented in over 211 different  
3                   communities in Pennsylvania. Across these  
4                   municipalities, wide ranges of results have  
5                   been found. The reduction in landfill waste  
6                   is between 6 and 50 percent depending on the  
7                   community. There has also been a 30 to 64  
8                   percent increase in recycling. Moreover,  
9                   there has been a four-fold increase in yard  
10                  waste collection. Due to the success of  
11                  this program, the Department of  
12                  Environmental Protection is hoping to expand  
13                  to include all parts of the Pennsylvania.

14                  It would be my recommendation that  
15                  the administration consider at some point an  
16                  assembling a panel of experts to evaluate  
17                  the feasibility of pursuing pay as you throw  
18                  options for the City of Scranton. We need  
19                  to find waste, protect our environment and  
20                  also our taxpayers from the very high  
21                  garbage fee that they currently pay.

22                  We also received an assessment that  
23                  I found very interesting completed by Harris  
24                  Engineering of our downtown area street  
25                  lighting system. The concerns I have heard

1 along I'm surer with my colleagues over and  
2 over and again from business owners,  
3 developers and residents is that the  
4 lighting downtown and really throughout the  
5 whole city is not adequate and makes people  
6 feel unsafe at night. Harris Engineering  
7 identified three major areas of concern with  
8 respect to taking corrective action to  
9 better enhance lighting downtown. The three  
10 areas were:

11 Number one, aesthetics,  
12 deteriorating polls, inconsistent  
13 illumination levels, inconsistent styles of  
14 lighting fixtures and inconsistent lighting  
15 technology.

16 The second area was safety. Low  
17 lighted areas, inconsistent spacing of  
18 lighting fixtures, burnt out lamps, and  
19 deteriorating polls.

20 And the third, and one of the most  
21 important is cost. There is inconsistent  
22 document of pole ownership, inconsistent  
23 documentation of land lottage, and no  
24 long-term plan for the reduction of system  
25 lighting costs.

1                   The engineering company recommended  
2                   installing effective, energy efficient  
3                   streetlight. Some of the benefits of energy  
4                   efficient lighting such as LED are reduced  
5                   costs to the city, increased safety,  
6                   improved appearance and reduced light  
7                   pollution and light trespass.

8                   And on the point of increased  
9                   safety, the reports said that the  
10                  effectiveness of improved lighting and  
11                  reducing crime is second only to increased  
12                  police presence so I thought that was very  
13                  important.

14                 Following these recommendations will  
15                 provide an increase in lighting levels on  
16                 city streets that will improve visibility  
17                 for drivers and pedestrians and provide a  
18                 clean, safer and more inviting landscape for  
19                 Scranton's residents and visitors, and I'm  
20                 hopeful that this administration will make  
21                 an effort to follow through with these  
22                 recommendations. And that is all I have to  
23                 this week. Thank you.

24                 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. A couple of  
25                 comments. I'd like to start of by

1           congratulating Councilmen Evans on his  
2           election as well as Mr. Perry, and  
3           especially monumental for Mr. Evans is as a  
4           Republican winning in the City of Scranton  
5           he accomplished something that hasn't been  
6           done since Brian Reap, and by most accounts  
7           Brian Reap was one of the best councilmen  
8           the City of Scranton has ever had, so  
9           congratulations to both you as well as to  
10          our city controller, Roseann Novembrino, who  
11          was reelected as well.

12                    Some comments on items that were  
13           brought up by speakers and by other council  
14           members, the idea that Councilmen Gaughan  
15           just pitched is a great idea. I have been  
16           an advocate of a per bag garbage fee for  
17           many years. In the City of Scranton, it is  
18           completely unfair that a widow pays \$300 for  
19           a garbage fee when the family of 12 also  
20           pays \$300 for a garbage fee. There is no  
21           equity in the rates between, you know, the  
22           amount of garbage they are putting out and  
23           the fee, so anything to make that fee more  
24           fair, whether it's a higher of usage and a  
25           flat rate the way that the sewer bills are

1           calculated or whether it's a completely  
2           based on usage fee that would be great. It  
3           would promote increased recycling and it  
4           would be more fair.

5                         Sticking to the recycling fee, I  
6           would like to thank the newspaper, which is  
7           something I don't do often, for their  
8           excellent article regarding the questions  
9           that were brought up by other members of the  
10          media regarding political signs on city  
11          property. They did a great job explaining  
12          that, especially with the pictures and  
13          everything that was placed in there, and on  
14          the theme of recycling it's another smart  
15          idea. It only saves a few hundred dollars a  
16          year, is what the article says, but every  
17          little bit counts.

18                        Next, the item that was talked about  
19          the most today by Councilmen Evans and a  
20          couple of the speakers is reassessment. We  
21          did receive a reply from outgoing  
22          commissioner Jim Wansack regarding  
23          reassessment from our letter that was sent,  
24          and I want to stress this is only from  
25          Commissioner Wansack, it's not sent from the

1 majority commissioners. As you know,  
2 Commissioner O'Malley, will be continuing to  
3 to serve for another four years, so in  
4 summary the letter says, "Dear Council, I  
5 have received your correspondence dated  
6 October 21, 2015, and I thank you for  
7 contacting me regarding the idea of a  
8 countywide property reassessment in  
9 Lackawanna County. While I agree that  
10 reassessment is needed in Lackawanna County  
11 and across our Commonwealth, I do not  
12 believe that funding such a reassessment by  
13 spending the vast majority of our county  
14 surplus is in the best interest of county  
15 taxpayers. Due to the overwhelming costs  
16 and arcane rules that go with reassessment  
17 in Pennsylvania, our administration holds  
18 the position that reassessment is not  
19 feasible without significant reform at the  
20 state level, particularly in how  
21 reassessments are funded and later updated  
22 without significant reform."

23 It goes and to talk about some of  
24 the items that they have done since 2012 in  
25 their administration not related to



1 reassessment. There is no question that the  
2 way reassessment is done in the State of  
3 Pennsylvania needs to updated, but we cannot  
4 continue to sit idly by while the  
5 politicians in Harrisburg do not do their  
6 job. As we see, there hasn't been a state  
7 budget in many, many months which is having  
8 an impact on many local schools districts  
9 and nonprofits. If they can't even pass a  
10 budget how are they going to pass reforms to  
11 how properties are reassessed.

12 As it was mentioned, and as I  
13 mentioned earlier, every week we get a stack  
14 of papers from people who challenge their  
15 reassessments their property, and I would  
16 say the majority of them are people that are  
17 able to hire an attorney to represent them.  
18 The average citizen in the City of Scranton  
19 cannot afford to higher an attorney to  
20 challenge their tax assessment. A  
21 reassessment, as Councilmen Evans mentioned,  
22 a third of people would see the tax  
23 reduction, a third will see the same and a  
24 third will go up, but it would be fair.  
25 There are many properties within the city

1           that are uneven in taxes. I know of a  
2           duplex in South Scranton that their total  
3           tax bill is less than \$1,000. That's  
4           between city, county and the school  
5           district. I know of a house right down the  
6           block from that one in similar condition,  
7           similar lot size that's paying more than  
8           double that. How is that fair? The  
9           reassessment would take care of the fairness  
10          issue, and as Councilmen Evans also  
11          mentioned it would promote development of  
12          new houses. Without having to do KOZ's and  
13          without having to do tax abatements to get  
14          redevelopment within the city.

15                 As I mentioned, when we initially  
16          sent the letter to the county there was --  
17          we discussed whether we would send it to the  
18          current commissioners or the new  
19          commissioners, and as we know Tuesday two  
20          new commissioners were elected, and one of  
21          them, Jerry Notarianni, has made  
22          reassessment a key part of his platform and  
23          he was the top vote getter in the election  
24          so I'm helpful that with Commissioner  
25          Notarianni coming in he could convince one

1 of his other colleagues to make this a  
2 priority and make it happen for Lackawanna  
3 County and the City of Scranton.

4 Two other items I would like to  
5 bring up, I received another letter from  
6 Isaac Tripp Elementary regarding the  
7 numerous traffic problems on Dorothy and  
8 Farr Street. Now, those streets are  
9 currently in the process of being paved,  
10 which is good long-term, it's making the  
11 problem even worse in the short-term. I  
12 know we did send a letter to Chief Graziano,  
13 we would be able to send follow-up on this?  
14 I will call him tomorrow as well to see what  
15 is going on with this study because this  
16 traffic issue needs to be straightened out  
17 in the Tripp Park section by the school.

18 And, finally, and probably most  
19 importantly of everything I will mention  
20 today, Wednesday, this upcoming Wednesday is  
21 Veteran's Day so I'd like give a big thank  
22 you to all our veterans in the City of  
23 Scranton and our community who fought to  
24 keep us safe and give us the freedoms that  
25 many of us expressed on election day this

1 week and the freedoms we have every day.

2 And that is it all. Thank you.

3 MS. REED: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION - A  
4 RESOLUTION - APPOINTMENT OF ANTHONY SANTOLI,  
5 1041 PRESCOTT AVENUE, SCRANTON,  
6 PENNSYLVANIA, 18510 AS A MEMBER OF THE SHADE  
7 TREE COMMISSION, EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 29, 2015.  
8 MR. SANTOLI IS BEING APPOINTED TO A FIVE (5)  
9 YEAR TERM WHICH WILL EXPIRE ON OCTOBER 29,  
10 2020.

11 MR. ROGAN: At this time I'll  
12 entertain a motion that Item 5-B be  
13 introduced into its proper committee.

14 MR. WECHSLER: So moved.

15 MR. EVANS: Second.

16 MR. ROGAN: On the question?

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question, I  
18 would just like to say that I'm very happy  
19 to see the Shade Tree Commission back up and  
20 running. It had been non-operational for a  
21 long period of time. This is upon the  
22 recommendation of our city forester, Tony  
23 Santoli, and I believe that he is really one  
24 of the gifts to the City of Scranton. He  
25 offers his expertise for free. He doesn't

1 ask for any money, and he is very passionate  
2 about what he does and I thank him for his  
3 service.

4 One of the reasons that the Shade  
5 Tree Commission is being brought up again  
6 and they are appointing members, is in order  
7 for the city to be considered for Tree City  
8 USA we must have a Shade Tree Commission in  
9 place. And I'll just read for a moment what  
10 the Tree City USA program is. It provides  
11 direction, assistance, and national  
12 recognition for communities. It's the  
13 framework for a healthy, sustainable urban  
14 forestry program in municipalities across  
15 the United States and the benefits are  
16 substantial. Three of the most important  
17 benefits are, number one, reduced costs for  
18 energy, storm water management, and erosion  
19 control. Trees yield three to five times  
20 their cost in overall benefits to the city.  
21 In cuts energy consumption by 25 percent.  
22 Studies indicate that as few as three  
23 additional trees planted around each  
24 building in the United States could save \$2  
25 billion annually in energy costs, and it

1           also boosts property values across  
2           communities in the United States. Properly  
3           placed trees can increase property values  
4           from 7 to 20 percent. So, again, I'd like  
5           to thank Mr. Santoli for his recommendation  
6           and his service to the city and, again, I'm  
7           glad to see this commission up and running.  
8           Thank you.

9                       MR. EVANS: On the question, I'd like  
10           to echo what Councilmen Gaughan said, Tony  
11           Santoli is the ultimate public servant. I  
12           worked with Tony for decades on tree  
13           planting projects in South Side throughout  
14           the city and he is always there for you. If  
15           you call him today he will be there in an  
16           hour to look at a problem with a tree or  
17           whatever the case may be. And looking on  
18           the list, I will be honest with you, this is  
19           the whose who of talented citizen volunteers  
20           that are going on this Shade Tree Commission  
21           so I wish them all the best of luck and  
22           thank them for their service because there  
23           is some very, very good people and I applaud  
24           the mayor and his appointments because they  
25           are excellent. That's all I have on this.

1 MR. ROGAN: All those in favor of  
2 introduction signify by saying aye.

3 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

4 MR. EVANS: Aye.

5 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

6 MR. ROGAN: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
7 have it and so moved.

8 MS. REED: 5-C. FOR INTRODUCTION - A  
9 RESOLUTION - APPOINTMENT OF THOMAS J.  
10 MCLANE, 601 STAFFORD AVENUE, SCRANTON,  
11 PENNSYLVANIA, 18505 AS A MEMBER OF THE SHADE  
12 TREE COMMISSION, EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 29, 2015.  
13 MR. MCLANE IS BEING APPOINTED TO A FOUR (4)  
14 YEAR TERM WHICH WILL EXPIRE ON OCTOBER 29,  
15 2019.

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

19 MR. WECHSLER: So moved.

20 MR. EVANS: Second.

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

24 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

25 MR. EVANS: Aye.

1 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

2 MR. ROGAN: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
3 have it and so moved.

4 MS. REED: 5-D. FOR INTRODUCTION - A  
5 RESOLUTION - APPOINTMENT OF DAVID J. WENZEL,  
6 7 PHILLIPS DRIVE, SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA,  
7 18505 AS A MEMBER OF THE SHADE TREE  
8 COMMISSION, EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 29, 2015. MR.  
9 WENZEL IS BEING APPOINTED TO A THREE (3)  
10 YEAR TERM WHICH WILL EXPIRE ON OCTOBER 29,  
11 2018.

12 MR. ROGAN: At this time I'll  
13 entertain a motion that Item 5-D be  
14 introduced into its proper committee.

15 MR. WECHSLER: So moved.

16 MR. EVANS: Second.

17 MR. ROGAN: On the question?

18 MR. WECHSLER: Yes, Mr. Rogan, on the  
19 question, as Councilman Evans said these  
20 people are very committed to this project.  
21 In fact, Mayor Wenzel is leading the chair  
22 of planting 150 trees in the city  
23 commemorating the contributions that past  
24 mayors have contributed to the city so  
25 Mr. Wenzel is along in planting these trees



1 and he is walking the walk and talking the  
2 talk.

3 MR. ROGAN: All those in favor of  
4 introduction signify by saying aye.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

6 MR. EVANS: Aye.

7 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

8 MR. ROGAN: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
9 have it and so moved.

10 MS. REED: 5-E. FOR INTRODUCTION - A  
11 RESOLUTION - APPOINTMENT OF ANNE MCNALLY,  
12 1132 SAINT ANN STREET, SCRANTON,  
13 PENNSYLVANIA. 18504 AS A MEMBER OF THE SHADE  
14 TREE COMMISSION, EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 29, 2015.  
15 MS. MCNALLY IS BEING APPOINTED TO A TWO (2)  
16 YEAR TERM WHICH WILL EXPIRE ON OCTOBER 29,  
17 2017.

18 MR. ROGAN: At this time I'll  
19 entertain a motion that Item 5-E be  
20 introduced into its proper committee.

21 MR. WECHSLER: So moved.

22 MR. EVANS: Second.

23 MR. ROGAN: On the question? All  
24 those in favor of introduction signify by  
25 saying aye.

1 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

2 MR. EVANS: Aye.

3 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

4 MR. ROGAN: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
5 have it and so moved.

6 MS. REED: 5-F. FOR INTRODUCTION - A  
7 RESOLUTION - APPOINTMENT OF JOSEPH A.  
8 RICCARDO, JR., 944 MONROE AVENUE, APARTMENT  
9 #1, SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA, 18509 AS A  
10 MEMBER OF THE SHADE TREE COMMISSION,  
11 EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 29, 2015. MR. RICCARDO IS  
12 BEING APPOINTED TO A ONE (1) YEAR TERM WHICH  
13 WILL EXPIRE ON OCTOBER 29, 2016.

14 MR. ROGAN: At this time I'll  
15 entertain a motion that Item 5-F be  
16 introduced into its proper committee.

17 MR. WECHSLER: So moved.

18 MR. EVANS: Second.

19 MR. ROGAN: On the question? All  
20 those in favor of introduction signify by  
21 saying aye.

22 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

23 MR. EVANS: Aye.

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

25 MR. ROGAN: Aye. Opposed? The ayes

1 have it and so moved.

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

4 SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A. FOR  
5 CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC  
6 WORKS - FOR ADOPTION- RESOLUTION NO. 212,  
7 2015 - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER  
8 APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE AND  
9 ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH PETROLEUM TRADERS  
10 CORPORATION TO PROVIDE 80,000 GALLONS (MORE  
11 OR LESS) LOW SULFUR DIESEL FUEL TO THE CITY  
12 OF SCRANTON DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS FOR  
13 THE PERIOD JANUARY 1, 2016 THROUGH DECEMBER  
14 31, 2016.

15 MR. ROGAN: What is the  
16 recommendation of the Chair for the  
17 Committee on Public Works?

18 MR. GAUGHAN: As Chairperson for the  
19 Committee on Public Works, I recommend final  
20 passage of Item 7-A.

21 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

22 MR. ROGAN: On the question? Roll  
23 call, please?

24 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Wechsler.

25 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

1 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Evans.

2 MR. EVANS: Yes.

3 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Gaughan.

4 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

5 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Rogan.

6 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare

7 Item 7-A legally and lawfully adopted.

8 MS. REED: 7-B. FOR CONSIDERATION BY  
9 THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS - FOR ADOPTION  
10 - RESOLUTION NO. 213, 2015 - AUTHORIZING THE  
11 DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
12 OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO SIGN AND SUBMIT  
13 THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF  
14 TRANSPORTATION ("PENNDOT") APPLICATION FOR  
15 TRAFFIC SIGNAL APPROVAL FOR TRAFFIC SIGNAL  
16 PERMIT NOS. 40032, 10166 & 40123 FOR THE  
17 MODIFICATION OF THE EXISTING TRAFFIC SIGNALS  
18 AT PITTSTON AVENUE AND ELM STREET, MAIN  
19 AVENUE AND SCHIFF'S DRIVEWAY/JOHNSON  
20 TECHNICAL INSTITUTE DRIVEWAY, AND MERIDIAN  
21 AVENUE AND LUZERNE STREET.

22 MR. ROGAN: What is the  
23 recommendation of the Chair for the  
24 Committee on Public Works?

25 MR. GAUGHAN: As Chairperson for the

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

3 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

4 MR. ROGAN: On the question? Roll  
5 call, please?

6 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Wechsler.

7 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

8 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Evans.

9 MR. EVANS: Yes.

10 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Gaughan.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

12 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Rogan.

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

15 If there is not further business,  
16 I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

17 MR. WECHSLER: Motion to adjourn.

18 MR. ROGAN: This meeting is  
19 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

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