

COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON

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HELD:

Tuesday, January 28th, 2020

LOCATION:

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

Maria McCool, RPR
Official Court Reporter

1 C O U N C I L M E M B E R S :

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WILLIAM GAUGHAN, PRESIDENT
KYLE DONAHUE, VICE PRESIDENT
PATRICK ROGAN - absent
MARK MCANDREW
JESSICA ROTHCHILD

LORI REED, CITY CLERK
KATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK
KEVIN HAYES, COUNCIL SOLICITOR

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

3
4 MR. GAUGHAN: Roll call, please.

5 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan. Mr.
6 McAndrew.

7 MR. MCANDREW: Present.

8 MS. CARRERA: Dr. Rothchild.

9 DR. ROTHCHILD: Present.

10 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

11 MR. DONAHUE: Here.

12 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

13 MR. GAUGHAN: Here. And please let
14 the record reflect that Mr. Rogan did contact
15 Mrs. Reed and explained that he would not be
16 here tonight for the meeting.

17 MR. DONAHUE: I'd like to make a
18 motion to table Item 7-C.

19 MR. MCANDREW: Second.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: On the question? On
21 the question, Stevens and Lee has submitted
22 their budget as requested. And it's in the
23 process of being reviewed. Council has not
24 received it yet. Therefore, we are tabling the
25 fee agreement with Stevens and Lee until next

1 week.

2 So that is the reason we're making
3 this motion at the top of the meeting. All
4 those in favor signify by saying aye.

5 MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

6 DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

7 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

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

10 MR. DONAHUE: I'd also like to make
11 a motion to appoint Councilman McAndrew as
12 temporary Chair for the Committee on Finance.

13 DR. ROTHCHILD: Second.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: On the question? All
15 those in favor signify by saying aye.

16 MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

17 DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

18 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

19 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye. Opposed? The
20 ayes have it and so moved. Mrs. Reed, if you
21 would please dispense with the reading of the
22 minutes.

23 MS. REED: THIRD ORDER. 3-A.

24 MINUTES OF THE SCRANTON LACKAWANNA HEALTH &
25 WELFARE AUTHORITY MEETING HELD NOVEMBER 21,

1 2019.

2 3-B. ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT FOR
3 THE CITY OF SCRANTON YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31,
4 2018 PREPARED BY THE OFFICE OF THE CITY
5 CONTROLLER.

6 3-C. CORRESPONDENCE SENT TO AUDITOR
7 GENERAL EUGENE DEPASQUALE DATED JANUARY 21,
8 2020 IN REFERENCE TO THE SALE OF THE SCRANTON
9 SEWER AUTHORITY.

10 3-D. MINUTES OF THE SCRANTON SEWER
11 AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS HELD
12 NOVEMBER 21 AND DECEMBER 19, 2019.

13 3-E. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM
14 MAYOR PAIGE G. COGNETTI DATED JANUARY 21, 2020
15 REGARDING U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS WINTER
16 MEETING.

17 3-F. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM
18 THE SCRANTON FIRE DEPARTMENT DATED
19 JANUARY 24, 2020 IN RESPONSE TO EMERGENCY
20 MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR DUTIES AND ACTIONS.

21 3-G. FUEL CARD ANALYSIS RECEIVED
22 FROM OFFICE OF THE CITY CONTROLLER DATED
23 JANUARY 23, 2020.

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Are there any comments
25 on any of the Third Order items? If not,

1 received and filed.

2 MR. GAUGHAN: Do any Council members
3 have announcements at this time?

4 MR. MCANDREW: I do. I'm very proud
5 to announce that next Tuesday, my daughter
6 Moriah and the Leadership Lackawanna Core
7 Program class of 2020 will be hosting a
8 fund-raising event to benefit their group's
9 project for the Valley Community Library
10 Children's Outdoor Garden Maze and
11 Constructions.

12 The event is called Tacos, Trivia
13 and More. And it will be held, like I said,
14 next Tuesday at Montage Mountain.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Anyone
16 else? I have two. We received -- City Council
17 received a copy of a reminder from the City's
18 Forrester and Chairman of the Shade Tree
19 Commission, Mr. Tony Santoli who asked that the
20 following could be announced:

21 It is unlawful for any person, firm,
22 or corporation to engage in the business of
23 tree removal, tree pruning, stump removal and
24 tree planting without registering with the
25 Office of Attorney General, Bureau of Consumer

1 Protection as required by the Home Improvement
2 Consumer Protection Act.

3 The requirement is applied on work
4 being performed either on private property or
5 publically owned property. Insurance for the
6 vendors of tree service is required. And in
7 addition, worker's compensation insurance is
8 also required.

9 Vendors of such services should call
10 the Bureau of Consumer Protection for
11 information and ways to register at
12 1-717-772-9707.

13 Also, Kohanski and Company will
14 conduct an audit exit conference regarding the
15 2018 independent auditor's report next Tuesday,
16 February 4th at 5:45 p.m., in Council Chambers.
17 Mrs. Reed.

18 MS. REED: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS
19 PARTICIPATION.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Just a note, I would
21 please ask speakers to state your name for the
22 record.

23
24 (The following speakers offered
25 public comment on agenda items or matters of

1 general concern:

2 Joan Hodowanitz

3 Norma Jeffries

4 Dave Dobrzyn

5 Tom Coyne

6 Marie Schumacher.)

7

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

9 MOTIONS.

10 MR. GAUGHAN: Mr. McAndrew, any

11 motions or comments?

12 MR. MCANDREW: Yes, I do. As

13 Chairman of Public Safety Committee, I would

14 like to thank School Resource Officer Jill

15 Foley and Juvenile Officer Kevin Uher for their

16 swift actions and arrest of a juvenile in last

17 week's multiple threats on West Scranton High

18 School.

19 I would also like to recognize last

20 week one of our very own Scranton firefighters,

21 Chuck Bartlebaugh. While off duty and during a

22 basketball game at Valley View, rushed to the

23 aid of a collapsed referee in cardiac arrest

24 and provided CPR. Great job. That's all I

25 have.

1 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Mr. Andrew.
2 Dr. Rothchild, any motions or comments?

3 DR. ROTHCHILD: Yes, I do have one
4 comment. Last week at the meeting I had
5 mentioned that I planned on having a meeting
6 with OECD this past Friday as Chair of the
7 Committee For Community Development.

8 And I did have that meeting with
9 Mary-Pat Ward the Director of OECD. And I will
10 be having several other meetings individually
11 with the program specialists through OECD. So
12 I was able to get a great comprehensive
13 overview from Mary-Pat of their programs and
14 the work that they've been doing. And I look
15 forward to serving as a liaison with that
16 department and Council. Thank you.

17 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Dr.
18 Rothchild. Councilman Donahue, any motions or
19 comments?

20 MR. DONAHUE: Yes, just briefly.
21 One is I was -- reviewed the contract we had
22 with Rainey and Rainey. And when I pulled the
23 legislation, the original bid went out for
24 Rainey and Rainey to do audits for budget years
25 '15 through '18. But then that was just

1 amended to just be '15 and '16.

2 And that's the only copy of a
3 contract that I have. So, Miss Reed, would we
4 be able to contact the Business Administrator's
5 office and also the Controller's office to see
6 if there's a current contract they're working
7 on that we just don't have in our office?

8 And also just to follow up on a
9 request that both myself and Councilman Gaughan
10 made back in September regarding Parrot Avenue.
11 The neighbors are -- it's becoming a raceway.
12 So would you be able to send correspondence to
13 Chief Graziano to see if he ever looked into
14 that? And that's all I have for tonight.

15 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Councilman
16 Donahue. Just a few comments. Number one,
17 Miss Schumacher had asked -- and I think
18 Council in the past had asked that the executed
19 contracts be placed on the City's website. So
20 we did send that request to the Mayor's Office.
21 They did get back pretty quickly.

22 And they said that that request is
23 part of future updates to the City's website.
24 So I think some time in the future we will be
25 seeing that, maybe not as quickly as you would

1 like. But I'm sure that's on the docket.

2 The second thing, we did send a
3 letter out. This was something that was asked
4 back in 2019 in terms of the Ethics Code
5 acknowledgement by City employees. So we
6 really asked two questions, has a deadline for
7 employees to submit the acknowledgment of
8 receipt of the Ethics Code been established?

9 Also, what action, if any, will the
10 City take to enforce the signing of the
11 document and what action or discipline, if any,
12 would the City take against employees who may
13 refuse to sign this document?

14 I realize that the Ethics Code is
15 kind of in limbo. I have a meeting with
16 members of the Ethics Board tomorrow. You
17 know, Miss Hodowanitz mentioned that it was
18 signed into law a year ago. You have to
19 remember that there was several -- when this
20 was first on the docket for Council, that's
21 when the previous Mayor was -- his house was
22 getting raided and that whole thing was going
23 on with the FBI.

24 So there was several roadblocks that
25 were put up. So it didn't get off to the best

1 start, number one. Number two, prior to myself
2 bringing that up and other members of Council,
3 nothing was done with the Ethics Board. So
4 while we haven't made the greatest amount of
5 progress, we have made some progress. And we
6 will get there. But it will take time.

7 Again, one thing I learned in six
8 years being on Council is things don't move in
9 government as quickly as you want them to move.
10 And it is frustrating at times. But, you know,
11 progress will be made on that I'm very
12 confident.

13 And I do appreciate Mrs. Sheridan
14 who is the new Chairwoman of the board who I
15 think is committed to that and who is doing a
16 pretty good job. I did mention at the
17 beginning of the meeting that we are having the
18 exit conference with the auditors next week,
19 Tuesday, February 4th at 5:45 p.m. So if
20 anyone's interested in that.

21 I did receive a citizen's complaint
22 about Locust Street in West Side. And if, Mrs.
23 Reed, if you could send that to the DPW and the
24 administration and ask if they would consider
25 putting that on the paving list. One of the

1 things this gentleman mentioned was that with
2 all the work that Pennsylvania American Water
3 Company is doing, they are doing work on, like,
4 both sides of that street. But they are not
5 hitting, obviously Locust Street and that is in
6 really rough condition.

7 In terms of truck traffic and the
8 issues on Third Avenue, I know our office has
9 been inundated with complaints. And they are
10 legitimate complaints. I was out there. I did
11 actually in the last few days see the truck
12 traffic going up and down Third Avenue.

13 I just want everyone to know that
14 our office did send a detailed letter to the
15 DPW and to the City Engineer asking for their
16 response and their review of that situation.
17 And, Mrs. Reed, I would ask this week if you
18 would just get in contact with Mr. Pocius and
19 ask him if there is any progress on that.
20 Again, I know these things take time.

21 There are several people on that
22 block who are not ill and not feeling well.
23 And it's really taking a toll on them of the
24 situation. So I would hope that we can move as
25 quickly as possible on that. And that's all I

1 have this week. Thank you.

2 MS. REED: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION -
3 AN ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL
4 NO. 2, 1983 AN ORDINANCE, AMENDING FILE OF THE
5 COUNCIL NO. 39, 1977, ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE
6 ESTABLISHING RATES OF DISCOUNT AND PENALTIES ON
7 TAXES DUE ON REAL ESTATE TO THE CITY OF
8 SCRANTON," BY AMENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS
9 RELATING TO DISCOUNTS, THE DISCOUNT PERIOD,
10 INSTALLMENT PAYMENTS AND PENALTIES ON TAXES
11 DUE ON REAL ESTATE TO THE CITY OF SCRANTON.

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

15 MR. DONAHUE: So moved.

16 MR. MCANDREW: Second.

17 MR. GAUGHAN: On the question? On
18 the question, I just want to take a second to
19 explain this. So this is a request from our
20 Tax Collector Bill Fox. And this legislation
21 came down from the administration. He was
22 proposing making all payment schedules the
23 same.

24 Currently the City and school
25 district have a step-up penalty period that is

1 5 percent to 7 and a half percent and then 10
2 percent. His proposal was copying the county
3 schedule that goes directly to 10 percent,
4 which would put all governing bodies on the
5 same schedule. Thank you. Anyone else on the
6 question?

7 MR. DONAHUE: And I would just like
8 to add that the school district already did
9 approve this. They are just waiting on us to
10 do that.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. All those
12 in favor of introduction signify by saying aye.

13 MR. MCANDREW: Aye.

14 DR. ROTHCHILD: Aye.

15 MR. DONAHUE: Aye.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye. Opposed? The
17 eyes have it and so moved.

18 MS. REED: SIXTH ORDER. 6-A. No
19 business at this time.

20 SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A. FOR
21 CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC
22 WORKS - FOR ADOPTION - FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.
23 1, 2020 - CLOSING AND VACATING A PORTION OF
24 BLUCHER AVENUE BETWEEN BEECH STREET AND
25 BIRCH STREET.

1 MR. GAUGHAN: What is the
2 recommendation of the Chairperson for the
3 Committee on Public Works?

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

7 DR. ROTHCHILD: Second.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: On the question? Roll
9 call, please.

10 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McAndrew.

11 MR. MCANDREW: Yes.

12 MS. CARRERA: Dr. Rothchild.

13 DR. ROTHCHILD: Yes.

14 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

15 MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

16 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

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

19 MS. REED: 7-B. FOR CONSIDERATION
20 BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE - FOR ADOPTION -
21 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 2, 2020 - AMENDING FILE
22 OF THE COUNCIL NO. 43, 2018, AN ORDINANCE
23 AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 100, 1976,
24 ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE (AS AMENDED) LEVYING
25 GENERAL AND SPECIAL TAXES FOR THE FISCAL YEAR

1 1977", BY SETTING THE MILLAGE FOR THE YEAR 2020
2 AND THE SAME SHALL REMAIN IN FULL FORCE AND
3 EFFECT ANNUALLY THEREAFTER" BY AMENDING SECTION
4 1 REVERTING BACK TO THE MILLAGE RATES FROM 2016
5 WHICH ARE .232521 MILLS LEVY ON LAND AND
6 .050564 MILLS LEVY ON ALL BUILDINGS AND
7 BY ELIMINATING THE DEDICATED MILLAGE FOR DEBT
8 SERVICE CONTAINED IN SECTION 2 AND REPLACING
9 THE DEDICATED MILLAGE FOR DEBT SERVICE WITH A
10 DEDICATED DEBT PERCENTAGE OF 33% OF REAL ESTATE
11 TAX REVENUES COLLECTED ON A CURRENT YEAR BASIS.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: What is the
13 recommendation of the Chairperson for the
14 Committee on Finance?

15 MR. MCANDREW: As temporary
16 Chairperson for the Committee on Finance, I
17 recommend final passage of Item 7-B.

18 MR. GAUGHAN: Is there a second?

19 MR. DONAHUE: Second.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: On the question? Roll
21 call, please.

22 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McAndrew.

23 MR. MCANDREW: Yes.

24 MS. CARRERA: Dr. Rothchild.

25 DR. ROTHCHILD: Yes.

1 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Donahue.

2 MR. DONAHUE: Yes.

3 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

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

6 MS. REED: 7-C. Previously tabled.

7 MR. GAUGHAN: And just before we
8 adjourn the meeting, I failed to mention Miss
9 Schumacher had asked a question about the
10 police overtime. And it is budgeted. And this
11 year it's \$700,000.

12 Mrs. Reed, if we can ask Chief
13 Graziano, I know we asked in the past and I
14 honestly can't remember if he provided it or
15 not. And he usually gets back to us fairly
16 quickly. A large -- I don't know if a large
17 percentage but a percentage of that amount is
18 reimbursable to the City.

19 So it is \$700,000. But I think what
20 we were looking for last year is what amount
21 was reimbursed. So that \$700,000 figure is
22 not, you know, the actual amount that the City
23 has to pay. But we will, we'll get that figure
24 for you, okay?

25 MR. DONAHUE: I know we've -- just

1 to add onto that too. I know previously we've
2 asked for analysis on that. And we just never
3 received that. So I think we're going to have
4 to have a conversation with the new
5 administration about doing an analysis of the
6 previous contract especially going into
7 contract negotiations next year.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Okay. If there is no
9 further business, I'll entertain a motion to
10 adjourn.

11 MR. DONAHUE: Motion to adjourn.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: This meeting's
13 adjourned. Thank you.
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C E R T I F I C A T E

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2
3 I hereby certify that the proceedings and
4 evidence are contained fully and accurately in the
5 notes taken by me of the above-cause and that this copy
6 is a correct transcript of the same to the best of my
7 ability.

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10 _____
11 Maria McCool, RPR
12 Official Court Reporter
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22 apply to any reproduction of the same by any means
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