

COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON

HELD:

Tuesday, March 10th, 2020

LOCATION:

Council Chambers

Scranton City Hall

340 North Washington Avenue

Scranton, Pennsylvania

Maria McCool, RPR
Official Court Reporter

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

WILLIAM GAUGHAN, PRESIDENT

KYLE DONAHUE, VICE PRESIDENT

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. MARCIANO: Mr. McAndrew.

6 MR. MCANDREW: Present.

7 MS. MARCIANO: Dr. Rothchild.

8 DR. ROTHCHILD: Present.

9 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Donahue.

10 MR. DONAHUE: Here.

11 MS. MARCIANO: Mr. Gaughan.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Here. Mrs. Reed,
13 please dispense with the reading of the
14 minutes.

15 3-A. MINUTES OF THE SHADE TREE
16 COMMISSION QUARTERLY MEETING HELD
17 OCTOBER 31, 2019.

18 3-B. FUEL CARD ANALYSIS RECEIVED
19 FROM OFFICE OF THE CITY CONTROLLER
20 DATED MARCH 2, 2020.

21 3-C. CORRESPONDENCE SENT TO MAYOR
22 PAIGE G. COGNETTI DATED MARCH 3, 2020 REGARDING
23 ATTACHMENT E DISCLOSURES BY CURRENT
24 CONTRACTORS.

25 3.D. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM

1 TERRENCE J. MCDONALD, ESQUIRE, DATED FEBRUARY
2 26, 2020 REGARDING THE ELECTRIC CITY PARKING
3 GARAGE.

4 3-E. CORRESPONDENCE SENT TO BRIAN
5 FALLON, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PARKS &
6 RECREATION DATED MARCH 3, 2020 REGARDING
7 NOVEMBRINO SPLASH PARK PROJECT UPDATE.

8 3-F. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM
9 PARKS & RECREATION DIRECTOR REGARDING
10 NOVEMBRINO SPLASH PARK & RECREATION COMPLEX
11 PROGRESS UPDATE REPORT FEBRUARY 25, 2020.

12 3-G. ANTICIPATED BUDGET FOR CITY OF
13 SCRANTON APPEAL PREPARED BY STEVENS & LEE
14 RECEIVED MARCH 3, 2020.

15 3-H. AGENDA FOR THE ZONING HEARING
16 BOARD MEETING TO BE HELD MARCH 11, 2020.

17 3-I. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM
18 CITY COUNCIL SOLICITOR KEVIN HAYES, ESQUIRE,
19 DATED MARCH 3, 2020 REGARDING PROHIBITION OF
20 CERTAIN DOG BREEDS.

21 3-J. CORRESPONDENCE SENT TO MAYOR
22 PAIGE G. COGNETTI DATED MARCH 4, 2020 REGARDING
23 MOTION MADE BY SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL.

24 3-K. MINUTES OF THE SCRANTON
25 REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY MEETING HELD

1 FEBRUARY 5, 2020.

2 3-L. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM
3 COUNCILMAN PAT ROGAN DATED MARCH 6, 2020
4 REGARDING RESIGNATION FROM SCRANTON CITY
5 COUNCIL.

6 3-M. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM
7 THE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR DATED MARCH 6, 2020
8 REGARDING COVID19 UPDATE.

9 MR. GAUGHAN: Are there any comments
10 on any of the Third Order items? If not,
11 received and filed. Do any Council members
12 have any announcements at this time?

13 MR. MCANDREW: I have a quick one.
14 I received this e-mail yesterday. I'm sure all
15 of you did that the Bethel AME Church on
16 Saturday, April 4th from 12 to 4 will be having
17 a chicken wing dinner as a fund-raiser.

18 It's \$10. It's four whole wings,
19 french fries, green beans and a dinner roll.
20 So please try to get out and support this.
21 Thank you. That's all I have.

22 MR. DONAHUE: And I just have a
23 quick reminder that residents should start be
24 receiving census -- their census materials in
25 the next month. So make sure you fill out your

1 census forms and send them back in.

2 For each person that's not counted,
3 that equals about \$2,000 per person which could
4 add up pretty well over the next 10 years. So
5 when you get your census forms, please fill
6 them out and send them back in. Thank you.

7 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Anyone
8 else? I have quite a few actually. So last
9 week Council received notice that former
10 Councilman Pat Rogan had resigned his position.
11 First, I would just like to say that -- I would
12 like to thank Pat Rogan for his commitment to
13 public service over the last 10 years.

14 He was a Councilman for a little
15 over a decade, which is a big sacrifice to make
16 for anyone. I enjoyed working with him, and I
17 wish him and his growing family the best. In
18 terms of his Council seat, there has to be an
19 appointment.

20 So Council will accept letters of
21 interest and resumes of those residents
22 interested in seeking an appointment to fill
23 the vacant seat of Pat Rogan whose term extends
24 through the first Monday in January, 2022.

25 Residents must meet the

1 qualifications of the Home Rule Charter which
2 states that a Council person must be a United
3 States citizen, shall have been a resident of
4 the City for at least one year prior to
5 appointment and shall reside in the City of
6 Scranton throughout the term of service.

7 Letters of interest and resumes will
8 be accepted in the Office of the City Clerk and
9 must be received no later than Thursday, March
10 19th at 12 noon. Interviews will be conduct in
11 City Council Chambers at a date and time to be
12 determined. You will be contacted
13 individually. And you must be present for the
14 interview to be considered for the appointment.

15 And Council would welcome any and
16 all people to apply for this seat. And we will
17 hope, you know, to get interest in this seat
18 because it is for two years. And it is
19 extremely important.

20 The second announcement that I have
21 is this Saturday, March 14th the annual St.
22 Patrick's Parade will be held in our downtown.
23 Parade day mass at St. Peter's Cathedral begins
24 at 10 a.m.

25 The Brian P. Kelly memorial 2 mile

1 foot race starts at 11 a.m., then the parade
2 steps off at 11:45 a.m. The parade route
3 begins at Mulberry Street and Wyoming Avenue
4 moving towards Lackawanna Avenue taking a left
5 turn onto Lackawanna Avenue which then turns
6 into Jefferson and then left onto Spruce
7 Street.

8 After a right turn onto North
9 Washington, the parade passes the reviewing
10 booth near the corner of North Washington
11 Avenue and Linden Street. The parade ends at
12 the corner of North Washington Avenue and Vine
13 Street.

14 There will be several street
15 closures. Streets will be closed to traffic
16 from approximately 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., while
17 the parade is still occurring. Please be
18 mindful of participants, parade goers and road
19 closures if you need to travel throughout the
20 downtown on Saturday.

21 One important announcement is in
22 terms of the parade is Colts buses once again
23 will provide free transportation on parade day
24 and we would like everyone to join in the
25 festivities and have an enjoyable safe day.

1 Next announcement is Council's
2 regularly scheduled meeting for next week,
3 March 17th has been rescheduled to due to lack
4 of a quorum to Monday, March 16th at 6:30 p.m.
5 We will caucus at 5:45 p.m., prior to the
6 meeting on Monday evening as well.

7 And finally for all of those who
8 come to our meetings to address Council, I
9 would like you to keep the following in mind.
10 First, you should discuss agenda items or
11 business that relates to the City.

12 As President of this Council I will
13 not tolerate any speaker who attacks Council
14 members or anyone else personally. There is no
15 room for that kind of behavior in these
16 chambers.

17 I do believe that we are all
18 striving towards the same goal of making this
19 City a better place. And it makes absolutely
20 no sense to spend your five minutes attacking
21 someone because of their gender, their sexual
22 identity or anything else.

23 As public officials, we are
24 certainly not immune from criticism, nor should
25 we be. But that criticism should be based on

1 our actions as public officials and should not
2 involve any attacks of a personal nature.

3 I have the utmost respect for the
4 important role that the public plays in these
5 Council meetings. We honestly could not have a
6 meeting without you, the public and your input.
7 And I believe that every Council member up here
8 values that.

9 I'd ask that you please be
10 respectful of the rules so that we may engage
11 in meaningful public discourse. And I would
12 like to take a minute to just read from our
13 rules:

14 No person, including members of
15 Council shall use their time during Citizens
16 Participation to personally insult or attack
17 any individual, name calling, profanity,
18 racial or ethnic slurs, discriminatory remarks
19 based on race, color, religion, national
20 origin, ancestry or place of birth, sex, gender
21 identity, sexual orientation, disability,
22 marital status or age and any other behavior
23 that is insistent with the purpose and intent
24 of conducting official business shall not be
25 permitted.

1 appointed me the new Emergency Management
2 Coordinator, I took the plans out and started
3 to update them with things like, you know, name
4 changes, for instance, myself.

5 So we were going through all of
6 those things. And as fate would have it, the
7 Coronavirus started getting on the radar. So
8 we went specifically to annex and we started
9 digging -- drilling down into that one to see,
10 you know, what our plan actually is.

11 So the plan basically is we look at
12 how we're going to continue operations of our
13 government to make sure that we're going to
14 serve the citizens no matter what if this thing
15 got worse or if it goes away. Either way, but
16 we're hoping for the latter.

17 Every department already had a plan
18 in place. And I asked each department to again
19 look at theirs and see if there was -- any
20 changes were needed. Manpower has changed
21 since 2006. Maybe some departments are larger.
22 Some are smaller. So of these 40 percent
23 outlooks that we look at as an outage of --
24 sick outage from work should this virus affect
25 our workforce -- we're talking internally in

1 the City.

2 So we all took our plans and we
3 tweaked them, did some -- just basic
4 continuation of government and stuff. We
5 looked at supply chains. Are we still going to
6 get our supplies should our supply chains be
7 affected by illnesses in their fields and
8 avenues?

9 So we looked at all of that. And,
10 you know, we're prepared. We're ready to go.
11 We -- I don't know if there is more you need to
12 know specifically, Mayor?

13 MR. GAUGHAN: I think just the one
14 thing I would like to say -- first of all, I
15 appreciate you both coming because just being
16 out in the community, there are people that are
17 panicked by this whole thing.

18 And I think it's good for people at
19 least in the City to know that if there is an
20 outbreak or, you know, something does happen to
21 that affect that we do have things -- plans in
22 place. So I do appreciate you coming.

23 MR. LUCAS: And on that -- I lost my
24 place for a second. We did start a task force.
25 The Mayor directed me to reach out to the

1 schools, for instance.

2 So I reached out to the local
3 schools, parochial schools, Prep. And we had a
4 good meeting. We all got together here in City
5 Hall. We shared and exchanged our networking
6 information. And now we have a network chain
7 where everything that gets pushed out of the
8 CDC or DOH every day I'm pushing to them.

9 And they're letting me know what
10 their plans are. Should the CDC or DOH at some
11 point recommend a closure of a school, they'll
12 let us know that. And then we'll obviously be
13 able to communicate that to the public what's
14 going on.

15 So it's kind of a coordination of we
16 need to know what all of our partners are
17 doing as well as they need to know what we're
18 doing. So I shared our plans. They've shared
19 theirs. I met with hospitals. We were on a
20 conference call with Wilkes-Barre and our local
21 hospitals.

22 Where we're just a component of
23 their plan, we know what our part will be in
24 that should that day come. We're prepared for
25 that. And I could assure you that the

1 hospitals are prepared because DOH, you know,
2 really drives them and tells them each step of
3 the way what level of their plan they need to
4 be at. And they're ready now and they'll be
5 ready to move to the next level should this get
6 closer or expand any larger than it is.

7 MR. GAUGHAN: And do we know if we
8 have any confirmed cases in Lackawanna County?

9 MR. LUCAS: There are no confirmed
10 cases. There are 12 cases so far confirmed --
11 presumptive positive which just means they
12 tested positive locally but not to the CDC in
13 Atlanta. None of them are here.

14 Philadelphia County was the newest
15 one today. Wayne County and Montgomery County
16 I think -- Wayne County I believe is the
17 closest to us. But there is 12 cases right now
18 in Pennsylvania. None of them are considered
19 community spread, which just so we understand
20 that.

21 Community spread would mean that
22 we're getting it from each other. All of the
23 people that were presumptive positive tested
24 travelled somewhere where someone else was
25 infected. And they would have contracted it

1 from them.

2 So far, you know, in our state it is
3 not spreading through the communities. It was
4 contracted from someone else and brought back
5 here. And then they were isolated. And then
6 they do what they call contact tracing. And
7 they look at every person that was in contact
8 with those 12 people.

9 And they're now quarantining them
10 and isolating the actual patient. So the CDC
11 is on it and we're prepared.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Does
13 anyone else have questions for Chief Lucas?
14 Thank you, Chief. Appreciate it.

15 MAYOR COGNETTI: Thank you. So
16 Chief Lucas and I are going to Wilkes-Barre
17 tomorrow for a regional Covid meeting with some
18 members of the medical community in the entire
19 region. So that's just another continuation of
20 the work that we're doing to stay in touch at
21 all levels both down to the school level here
22 and then up on -- the Chief is always in touch
23 with the Department of Health like he said
24 communicating, getting information from the
25 CDC.

1 We're putting that out on our
2 website. And it's being pushed out on both the
3 Chief of Police and the Facebook page for the
4 Mayor, so Mayor of Scranton. A piece of it
5 the Chief talked about is don't panic. That is
6 part of the thing we want to reiterate here.

7 I was at Wegman's last night and all
8 the toilet paper was gone. At this time
9 there's no need to go out and buy out all of
10 the toilet paper. There's no need to panic.
11 This is a stay calm situation. Stay calm but
12 stay home if you don't feel well.

13 So part of this, listen to your
14 body. Use common sense. Realize you don't
15 want to get anybody sick anyway. This is
16 something we should be doing in our lives for
17 flu, virus just in general. So, you know, stay
18 healthy. Take precautions. Wash your hands
19 thoroughly and often. Keep surfaces that other
20 touch like door handles wiped down. If you
21 feel sick, stay home.

22 So looking forward to next
23 Saturday -- to this coming Saturday to the St.
24 Patrick's Day Parade. At this time there is no
25 need to alter the day's schedule.

1 However, we are asking that
2 residents, especially those who are older or
3 have chronic health conditions consider the
4 risks of attending a large gathering
5 considering, you know, everything that is going
6 on.

7 But like the Chief said, there are
8 no local cases here in Lackawanna County. We
9 have no reason to believe at this time that we
10 need to make alterations to the schedule.
11 However, what everyone needs to understand is
12 that our number one concern and highest
13 priority is the health, safety, and welfare of
14 our residents and others who work and/or visit
15 our City as well as our uniformed officers who
16 are out in force on a day like parade day to
17 maintain public order and safety.

18 So we will continue to be closely
19 monitoring the situation. We'll be conferring
20 with folks in the medical field and in other
21 cities and seek guidance. In the meantime,
22 like I said, stay calm. Stay home if needed.
23 And we'll continue to give updates. So
24 anything else on -- any other questions on that
25 piece?

1 MR. GAUGHAN: No. Thank you.

2 MAYOR COGNETTI: So I just wanted
3 two things -- three things. Gas cards, so I
4 know you guys have talked about that a lot.
5 We've been working with Controller Murray like
6 we talked about last week at caucus to get this
7 situation, get ourselves into a new system
8 where there is much more accountability.

9 There's much for more of a
10 controlled system. Controller Murray and Pat
11 Sheridan, the interim Business Administrator
12 are working on what that would look like. Like
13 everything, this is not as easy as an overnight
14 solution.

15 It may be, we don't know for sure.
16 It might require an RFP and a contract. We
17 will keep you all informed. As this goes on
18 we're trying to do this absolutely as quickly
19 as possible to make that happen like we talked
20 about.

21 The goal is to get it where the card
22 is attached to a vehicle and not a person. So
23 easier said than done like everything. But we
24 are working on it. And we'll keep you posted.

25 We have -- last night we had a

1 census ambassador training. We have another
2 one tomorrow. So like Councilman Donahue said,
3 the Census Bureau is sending out the
4 information to households, the actual
5 information for the census. I believe it goes
6 out on Thursday.

7 So we are having another training
8 tomorrow night at 5:30, Northern Lights if you
9 want to become a volunteer. I want to give a
10 shout-out to Norma Jeffries in the audience who
11 has been making so many phone calls to get
12 volunteers to get out there and get census
13 count. So thank you, Ms. Jeffries.

14 And finally, I was not here last
15 week. But I heard that it wasn't the most
16 pleasant meeting. And I just want to state for
17 Councilperson Rothchild, for everyone that is
18 here, everyone that is in our community that I
19 stand behind her, any initiatives that she
20 proposes to any of us to be a more tolerant and
21 educated community and city. So thank you.

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you very much,
23 Mayor. Thank you. Have a good night. Next
24 speaker is Les Spindler.

25 MR. SPINDLER: Good evening,

1 Council, Les Spindler, City resident and
2 homeowner. First of all, I'd like to wish Pat
3 Rogan best of luck in his next endeavor
4 whatever that may be. I've known Pat for a
5 number of years now.

6 For the most part, I supported him
7 on his stay on Council. And I got to wish him
8 good luck in whatever he's going to do from now
9 on. I guess he's moving out of the City so
10 obviously he can't be a councilperson anymore.
11 So good luck, Pat.

12 Last week I spoke about -- is it NDC
13 that runs the parking, Councilman Gaughan?

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

15 MR. SPINDLER: Okay, the free spots
16 that they've taken away from businesses in the
17 City and I think it's hurting businesses. And
18 I said, like, when I go to pay my bill at
19 Times-Tribune, they tell me disabled people
20 come instead of parking in front of the
21 building, sometimes they have to walk a block
22 or two. I think that's wrong.

23 They're hurting businesses downtown.
24 I think it would be a good idea for Council to
25 get NDC in here for a caucus and ask if there

1 is any way that these business can get their
2 free spots back. I think it will be good for
3 the downtown and good for people -- at least
4 the handicap spots.

5 You know, that's wrong for making
6 people walk all that distance. You know, we
7 want our City businesses to thrive, not chase
8 people away. These businesses should get their
9 free spots back. So I hope you could look into
10 that.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

12 MR. SPINDLER: Next thing is it
13 might be a little early. Is the street sweeper
14 schedule out yet?

15 MR. GAUGHAN: I don't believe so.
16 Mrs. Reed, has that been posted yet? No, as
17 far as we know it hasn't.

18 MR. SPINDLER: I did see one in
19 South Side but it might have been a PennDOT
20 sweeper.

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Yeah, when that is
22 published it will be -- I know it will be
23 placed on the City's website.

24 MR. SPINDLER: Yeah, I know it's a
25 little early. But I think winter is over. I

1 think we have to start sweeping. I saw geese
2 flying north three weeks ago.

3 MR. GAUGHAN: I think April is when
4 they --

5 MR. SPINDLER: That's early. The
6 geese know more than the meteorologists do.

7 MR. GAUGHAN: I think the month of
8 April is when they start.

9 MR. SPINDLER: Okay. Last week I
10 heard what you told me last week the dangerous
11 dog legislation will be in Third Order. What's
12 the next step with that if there is one?

13 MR. GAUGHAN: Yeah, the next step
14 now is we're, you know, still in the process of
15 reviewing the memo that Solicitor Hayes had
16 submitted to Council which you had requested
17 that we look into.

18 We're going to get together with the
19 administration and the Mayor to get their view
20 on it and then we'll move forward from there.

21 MR. SPINDLER: Okay. Thank you for
22 your time.

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you very much.
24 Have a good night. Next speaker is Joan
25 Hodowanitz.

1 MS. HODOWANITZ: John Hodowanitz,
2 City resident and still recovering property
3 taxpayer. First, I want to make some comments
4 about the first two months of the Cagnetti
5 administration and how impressed I am with the
6 change in leadership.

7 I'm 70 years old. And except for a
8 26 year absence, I've always lived in Scranton.
9 And I'm well aware of its long legacy
10 politically. And it's always, always had a
11 culture of let's call it corruption and
12 entitlement in many regards.

13 Although the vast majority of City
14 employees are great people. But that was a
15 leadership thing, the political chiefs of the
16 City.

17 And it's nice to see the Mayor and
18 also our new City Controller bringing in a new
19 ethic into the City which has been long needed.
20 So now we're seeing now an emphasis on service
21 and accountability, especially chief -- or City
22 Controller Murray had an opportunity to talk to
23 him about a few things.

24 And he's clearly well aware of the
25 need for good, strong internal controls within

1 the administration, especially financially.

2 This is great.

3 The City is like the titanic. It's
4 not going to stop on a dime. It's going to
5 take time. But we have turned into the right
6 direction. And this is great. When I talk
7 about this culture of corruption and
8 entitlement, I'll give you one example.

9 When I was on the Ethics Board last
10 year I asked a City employee about how I might
11 get access to the union contracts. And here's
12 what I was told. Quote, I don't work for you,
13 unquote. And, you know, I made -- you can't
14 get there from here with that kind of attitude.

15 Yes, that employee does work for me
16 because I'm a taxpayer or I was back then. But
17 I also want to thank Pat Rogan for his long
18 service. And believe me, I respect somebody
19 who would be a Councilman for 10 years and take
20 a lot of the criticism that he did.

21 And with regard to the coronavirus,
22 I too see that there is little edge of hysteria
23 about what might happen. But on the other hand
24 having come out of the military, I will tell
25 you that the Pentagon has a plan for

1 everything.

2 That includes the zombie apocalypse
3 and alien invasions. So I come from a culture
4 which whether even if there's a low probability
5 of an event occurring, we did plan for it.

6 And I've heard a lot of information
7 about the City planning for what they would do
8 and the county and Wilkes-Barre. And that's
9 great. But one element of our community that I
10 think is not often considered and is virtually
11 invisible is our homeless population.

12 And those are the ones I would worry
13 about. I don't know how many we have. I'm
14 sure we have quite a few. Let me ask you
15 something, where does a homeless person go to
16 wash their hands. When is the last time a
17 business in downtown Scranton let them in to
18 use the restroom?

19 You know, I mean, if anything like
20 the Coronavirus did hit us, they would be among
21 the first victims. And I would like for when
22 we dust off our plans that someone addresses
23 that entire issue how many do we have, where
24 are they, and how would we serve their medical
25 needs because if they get infected they are

1 going to spread it too.

2 So maybe we could learn -- have some
3 lessons learned for how the City handled the
4 1918 flu epidemic. I'm sure the Lackawanna
5 Historical Society and even the newspaper in
6 their old records could give us some lessons
7 learned. Thank you.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Have a
9 good night. Next speaker is Dave Dobrzyn.

10 MR. DOBRZYN: If you could pronounce
11 that in polish you win \$5. You lose. Okay.
12 All right. Dave Dobrzyn, resident of Scranton,
13 taxpayer. Last week we had a lot of
14 discussions on the gas card business.

15 And what I think is the right thing
16 to do is establish a set of rules and time move
17 on. Let's not get upset with -- it is a
18 considerable amount of money. But, you know,
19 there -- and again, a lot of voters I notice
20 don't ever want to pay the price for who they
21 vote for.

22 And that's all there is to it. I
23 used to call the independents back in the early
24 old -- Bush deniers. I voted for him but I
25 don't want you to know it because things are

1 starting to go a little wrong.

2 But I really think that we should
3 resolve it and just move on. Animal control
4 was mentioned also. And I did mention that
5 Griffin Pond needs your support. And I would
6 also support that even if it hurts us a little
7 bit. Pit bulls, they're loaded with pit bulls
8 up there. I just adopted an old dog.

9 Anybody over 60 years old can adopt
10 a dog for 40 bucks instead of the 150. And I
11 adopted an older dog because who knows, maybe I
12 won't be around for the little girl or guy. So
13 that's the way I went.

14 But banning certain breeds and
15 stuff, I mean, I made friends with a pit bull.
16 And he was in the yard and he nipped my finger
17 just being excited one day. And I stayed away
18 from him. And then I felt sorry for him. I
19 started giving him biscuits.

20 Well, this little talented guy
21 climbed through a chain link fence and got out.
22 And I thought, oh boy, you know. All he wanted
23 was for me to take him for a walk. Now, the
24 owner is a putz. But sometimes maybe that's
25 right. There aren't any bad dogs, there's just

1 bad owners.

2 And once again, our LST tax whatever
3 we have to do to fight for it, keep it going
4 because Plan B is probably massive property
5 taxes and that's unacceptable. Defend it at
6 all costs, at all costs. We can't keep going
7 on with 54 percent of the people in this town
8 paying property tax.

9 And whatever other entities exist go
10 by tax free and that's fine and dandy. But
11 grandma and grandpa -- I'm not a grandfather.
12 I was never a father. But I certainly fit into
13 the category where I'm comfortable but not, you
14 know, wealthy.

15 And, you know, it gets to the point
16 where it starts eating into everything you
17 could do during the summer or whatever, attend
18 a NASCAR race or going on a train excursion
19 ride or something. And, well, last week we had
20 somebody in here criticizing about support for
21 Planned Parenthood. Planned Parenthood is
22 pro-life.

23 They are drummed out of Scranton.
24 You want every low income person having
25 unintended pregnancies? Their kids have to be

1 schooled. They don't earn much money. They
2 don't pay many taxes. It's just ungodly. You
3 know, during my generation we had the
4 population time bomb. And there's certain
5 countries in this world like Egypt, India,
6 China, their populations have doubled and
7 tripled. So it's something to think about.

8 And the real trouble starts when
9 everybody wants to live like they live in the
10 west. So you got ten times the pollution and
11 global warming and everything else that comes
12 with it. Thank you and have a good night.

13 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Have a
14 nice night. Next speaker is Connor O'Brien.

15 MR. O'BRIEN: Good evening, Council.
16 Thank you. Connor O'Brien resident of
17 Scranton. I'm the cofounder and Executive
18 Director of the Scranton Fringe Festival.

19 Members of Council, I believe you
20 would have received an e-mail from Mrs. Reed
21 earlier today, correct? I'm sure you've had a
22 busy day though. For those on Council who are
23 unaware and possibly many of guests here in the
24 audience, Scranton Fringe Festival is a
25 nonprofit based organization in the City of

1 Scranton.

2 We are coming up on our sixth annual
3 year presenting a festival in the fall. It is
4 centered on the performing arts, the visual
5 arts, literary arts and uniting the community.
6 Last year during the festival, I believe we had
7 approximately 7 and a half to 8,000 in
8 attendance across the 10-day festival.

9 One of the documents Council would
10 have received is the confirmation of a survey
11 conducted by the business leader students of
12 the University of Scranton under their staff
13 director.

14 It has confirmed that in the last
15 three or so years, each year just during the
16 festival itself it generates over a quarter of
17 a million dollars in the regional economy
18 through hotel, restaurant -- and that does not
19 count the artist payouts that we provide or the
20 direct ticket sales.

21 For full transparency, it is worth
22 noting that that economic impact spans all of
23 Lackawanna County and possibly even parts of
24 Luzerne. But, of course, as it is the base of
25 the festival in downtown Scranton and seat of

1 the county, I would estimate that a large,
2 large percentage of that is based here.

3 The Fringe Festival is modelled
4 after the Edinburgh Fringe in Scotland which
5 has began in 1947 and is now the world's
6 largest arts festival. A common misconception
7 often created in the arts and culture
8 environment or even in any nonprofit based
9 platform is that it could be drain. It's
10 constantly feeding for sponsorship for grants.

11 And, of course, we welcome those at
12 any time. But ultimately we are very proud to
13 prove that the arts and culture, a stimulus and
14 are quite possibly the greatest economic
15 stimulus we have. I believe a recent study
16 confirmed in the last two years that arts and
17 cultures surpassed agriculture for the first
18 time in the national level economic impact.

19 I have no direct request.
20 Everything's fine which is nice to say for once
21 for the most part. We receive no City-based
22 funding. We do receive a small grant from the
23 state and the county level which we put to good
24 use. Our applications are currently open.

25 They are available at Scranton

1 Fringe dot org slash apply. There is no cost
2 to apply. We receive hundreds of applications
3 every year from across the country and even a
4 few international groups.

5 We've positioned our festival
6 timewise to match up with major events and
7 other festivals in New York City, Philadelphia
8 Rochester, New York, Baltimore to kind of
9 incite artists and performers and creative
10 entrepreneurs to kind of tour the east coast
11 circuit.

12 And Scranton is perfectly placed
13 there. We are growing to our largest festival
14 ever, 11 days, September 24th through October
15 4th. So although we are taking the Coronavirus
16 situation critically seriously and we've been
17 attending meetings and web conferences with
18 other festival and event planners around the
19 world, we are confident and thankful that at
20 least our major event is so far into the
21 distant future in the fall that it's likely not
22 going to become a major threat hopefully.

23 With Council's permission I'm simply
24 going to leave with you our programs from last
25 year. My objective tonight was to get a

1 dialogue with City Council. I greatly
2 appreciate your time. It was also to ensure
3 that going forward we could position this as a
4 time to put our city on display and shine it
5 brightly because it's been doing so for over
6 five years.

7 And we're incredibly, incredibly
8 proud. With 1 minute and 28 seconds remaining,
9 I would just like to thank Councilmember Bill
10 Gaughan for the remarks about some comments
11 that were made by an individual last week. I'm
12 sure I speak on behalf of many, many people in
13 this room and those who could not attend that
14 that's not the Scranton that we know or want to
15 be a part of.

16 Unfortunately it may be the Scranton
17 that many know and have known in the past. But
18 I'm deeply, deeply grateful that is no longer
19 the Scranton that we are creating going
20 forward. So with Council's permission, I will
21 leave this here and I will thank you for your
22 time.

23 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you very much.
24 There are no other speakers on the sign-in
25 sheet. Would anyone else like to come forward

1 and address Council?

2 MS. JEFFRIES: Good evening,
3 Council, Norma Jeffries, Scranton resident.
4 And I just have one other question, Bill. I
5 know that the NDC -- I always get their
6 initials mixed up are going to come in again
7 for another caucus.

8 And I don't know whether I should
9 send this question to you or if you could just
10 take it as question. And the park meters, of
11 course, still continue to be a pain. And
12 unless you leave the house prepared with your
13 quarters, it's going to be a problem.

14 So I was just thinking the last time
15 I used them I wondered why couldn't they have a
16 dollar slot to put the dollar in so we wouldn't
17 have to put the four quarters in to make the
18 dollar.

19 And it seems like it should be
20 something they should be able to do is to
21 put -- make available that we could put the
22 dollar in there to make it for the -- for those
23 minutes that we need and rather than scrounging
24 through our purses or remembering to take those
25 quarters before you leave your home. So if you

1 could just take that for something to talk with
2 them about?

3 MR. GAUGHAN: Yeah, just -- I
4 highly -- maybe I'm wrong. But I highly doubt
5 they would ever do that. I only say that
6 because they just invested so much money in
7 that equipment and I can't -- unless there's an
8 add-on that they -- I know that you could, you
9 know, pay with a credit or debit card.

10 But unless there was an easy way to
11 do that, I can't imagine that they would make
12 another investment. But I will definitely
13 bring it up.

14 MS. JEFFRIES: I don't feel
15 comfortable with using my debit card in an open
16 facility like that with the ability for someone
17 to put those scanners on there. There's no one
18 watching. It's bad enough at the gas stations
19 that you have to be mindful of that, never mind
20 a meter on the street.

21 So that's what I thought when I was,
22 you know, putting my quarters in. And I
23 thought why can't they just have a dollar slot
24 and put that in as well. So if you could just
25 check for me --

1 MR. GAUGHAN: Yeah, sure I will
2 bring it up to them.

3 MS. JEFFRIES: Okay. And I do thank
4 the presentation tonight and the update on the
5 virus situation and all, but what I did have
6 two questions on it. I didn't hear them say so
7 maybe I missed it. But I was thinking about
8 they said they were going to talk to the
9 schools and everything.

10 But what about the people my age,
11 the 60 and over, the senior citizen groups and
12 I didn't hear any kind of dialogue that they're
13 going to be having with the senior groups. So
14 if someone could follow up on that as well and,
15 you know, we don't want to all stay home
16 forever.

17 But we do like being out and about
18 in the public and if you could just check that
19 out for me.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Sure. Councilman
21 McAndrew is Chairperson of Public Safety. So
22 he'll certainly look into that.

23 MS. JEFFRIES: Okay. And the other
24 question I had was -- I didn't hear was, you
25 know, they gave these plans that they have for

1 the coronavirus and to be ready and the
2 different people they're meeting with.

3 But I didn't hear them say how many
4 kits -- testing kits are available for us if
5 they should need that and how quickly would
6 they be available. And I'm sure that is still
7 in the planning stages as to where would they
8 go, do they go to hospitals or what do they do?
9 But I didn't hear any kind of numbers about the
10 kits.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Yeah, we can find out.
12 I think that would be -- certainly we can pose
13 that question to Chief Lucas. I think that
14 would be a question for the hospitals and
15 probably would be something that comes down
16 from CDC and the federal government. But
17 Councilman McAndrew would look into that.

18 MS. JEFFRIES: I think it would
19 eliminate a lot of the fears and concerns
20 because I like you when I'm out there in the
21 public it's just like how can you go out there
22 now? You know, you wash your hands. We've
23 always washed our hands. But I think we're all
24 more conscious of washing our hands now to that
25 happy birthday riddle that we learned when we

1 were kids.

2 But it becomes more prominent now
3 when we go out we're more conscious of washing
4 and when we come in the house I know I wash my
5 hands as soon as I come in the house.

6 MR. GAUGHAN: Red raw, my hands are
7 red raw from washing them.

8 MS. JEFFRIES: Right. Your hands
9 get so tender. So that's my concerns tonight.
10 Thank you.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you very much.
12 Would anyone else like to address Council?

13 MR. MULLINS: Good evening. Thank
14 you very much, members of Council. I came here
15 really not to speak but I felt moved to stand
16 in support of my friend Dr. Rothchild.

17 I had hoped that my first time
18 before the new Council and this administration
19 would have been an introduction of myself and
20 what I plan to do for my seat on -- Kyle
21 Mullins, State Representative from 112
22 District.

23 And there will be an appropriate
24 meeting to do just that to describe the type of
25 things I want to do on behalf of the City

1 working with Council and with this
2 administration.

3 But I simply came here to tell Dr.
4 Rothchild that we've got her back that she
5 stands for what's great about the City and
6 what's possible about this City that regardless
7 of how long you or your family have lived here
8 or how new you are to the City that we accept
9 you here and we love having you here regardless
10 of who you love or the principles you stand
11 for.

12 And I can't -- I just have to say
13 how proud I am to be her State Representative
14 and that we people speaking from this podium
15 and across this country speaking from a place
16 of love and community and compassion, not from
17 a place of hate where very few find infamous
18 comfort.

19 So thank you very much for your
20 service -- to all of you for your service. You
21 are at the front lines of our democracy. And I
22 tip my hat to your service through public
23 service every single day. Thank you very much.

24 DR. ROTHCHILD: Thank you,
25 Representative Mullins.

1 MS. SMITH: Good evening, Council,
2 my name is (inaudible) Erica Smith. I am a
3 senior combat medic for the PA Army National
4 Guard. I'm also a volunteer firefighter, EMT
5 for the local community. And I'm also a master
6 student at Marywood University for clinical
7 (inaudible) counseling.

8 I'm also transgender. I'm a
9 transgender woman. And while Scranton has
10 become a place that's more and more accepting,
11 one of the things I've noticed is that we don't
12 really do a great job of communicating what
13 resources we have available and where we could
14 go and -- for example, some people, they don't
15 accept people like me.

16 And it took me about six hours to
17 cash a check the other day to go to two
18 different banks because I mostly just got
19 laughed at because I didn't look like my
20 driver's license.

21 DR. ROTHCHILD: I'm sorry, can you
22 talk closer to the microphone, please? Thank
23 you.

24 MS. SMITH: Additionally, medical
25 resources, most of us have to go down to

1 Allentown or Philadelphia as well as knowing
2 like what resources local areas have. We just
3 don't know what's out here. We don't know what
4 specialties we have here. We don't know what
5 providers are trained properly or who's willing
6 to accept and who's willing not to.

7 And then even like religious
8 spiritual matters, what churches are willing
9 to accept? What aren't? I'm christian. What
10 church do I go to that I need to be fearful of
11 being told of fire and brimstone and what
12 others are accepting.

13 And then businesses, what businesses
14 are okay with me and what are not because
15 everyone is allowed their own opinion. Whether
16 it's discrimination or not, discrimination is
17 institutionalized. It's not overt what we
18 think of from the TV and movies. It's the
19 silent, well, I'm not going to acknowledge
20 them. I'm not going to treat them properly.

21 So what I would like to ask is,
22 could we look into develop a repository of
23 resources, resources that are like that tell
24 us, okay, these are the medical resources that
25 we have available to people are LGBTQ with

1 their specific needs.

2 These are the people with the
3 specializations that are properly trained and
4 vetted to work with these populations so that
5 they're not going to get hurt, a repository of
6 local religious institutions that are willing
7 to take on people and, you know, repository of
8 businesses of businesses that are willing to
9 opt in and say, hey, you know, we're okay
10 whoever you want, like, we'll take anybody and
11 that knows like whether you're from here or
12 you're visiting and you're from this community,
13 you know you could just look up online on the
14 Scranton website and say, okay, I know exactly
15 where I need to go, who I could talk to, where
16 it's safe and where it's not because while we
17 want to work towards a future that is fully
18 accepting and loving and caring, we still need
19 to deal with the reality of now.

20 And the reality of now is it's not
21 safe. And so I would just like to ask the City
22 Council to looking into developing maybe
23 something like that that I don't think would be
24 too much of a resource (inaudible.) Thank you.

25 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Have a

1 good night. Anyone else?

2 MS. SCHUMACHER: Marie Schumacher.

3 MR. GAUGHAN: Good evening.

4 MS. SCHUMACHER: Tonight I would --
5 I've got a list of questions. And I did not
6 write them down. But if I don't get them
7 answered tonight I will try to submit them
8 before next week so you could hopefully -- I'd
9 like to start by saying I second the proposal
10 that Lee Morgan presented last week. I'm sorry
11 he's not here.

12 A Home Rule Charter review is very,
13 very definitely overdue. And you guys could
14 make it easy and vote it or you can leave it to
15 us and we can go out and get petitions and do
16 it that way. But I don't know what you would
17 be afraid of having a review for. So I hope
18 you do get to voting on that.

19 Next, I guess, Mr. Donahue, last
20 week you promised Lenny you would have an
21 answer for him this week. Did you have -- I
22 know he's not here tonight. But have you
23 transmitted that to him?

24 MR. DONAHUE: So we sent out a very
25 detailed e-mail last week looking -- exactly

1 what we're looking for from DPW -- the answers
2 we're looking for from DPW and also the City
3 Engineer.

4 So we're just waiting for a response
5 on that. And as soon as I get a response on
6 that I'm going to reach out to Lenny and then
7 other neighbors over there I've also been in
8 contact with.

9 MS. SCHUMACHER: You have been in
10 contact with them.

11 MR. DONAHUE: I was over there about
12 two and a half weeks --

13 MS. SCHUMACHER: No, I mean, since
14 you did that letter.

15 MR. DONAHUE: As soon as I get my --
16 as soon as I get a response I will be in
17 contact with them, yes.

18 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. Now, can you
19 tell me what percentage of the cable fees that
20 are provided to the City are transferred to
21 ECTV?

22 MR. GAUGHAN: No, I don't have that
23 in front of me.

24 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. What is the
25 next milestone in the -- I believe it's the HRG

1 contract on the stormwater situation in
2 general? Have we had an MS4 permit submitted
3 yet?

4 MR. GAUGHAN: As I stated, I think
5 two or three weeks ago, Council had requested a
6 caucus with that firm and the City Planner and
7 the administration. We have not received word
8 yet. But Mr. King did say when he was prepared
9 to come before Council with that company to
10 unveil the update or progress or plan that they
11 would do that. So I'm looking forward to that.

12 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay, well, maybe
13 we can get a little advance notice so if
14 there's something else --

15 MR. GAUGHAN: Right, well, when
16 there's a caucus I usually give a week's
17 notice.

18 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. And then I'm
19 somewhat confused because of the letter that
20 you all sent to DPW on Novembrino pool because
21 when I asked about why the demolition contract
22 didn't come here, you said that the City
23 Council wasn't involved. So could you --

24 MR. GAUGHAN: I don't understand
25 your question.

1 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, you're trying
2 to get something from DPW through the
3 Recreation Department.

4 MR. GAUGHAN: So we asked for an
5 update on the Novembrino project and that's
6 what we received. That's why I put it in Third
7 Order.

8 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. Another
9 thing -- a lot of things, actually. But I was
10 going through the -- last week you said, you
11 know, where are we going to get money from and
12 that it doesn't grow on trees and show us where
13 you could cut.

14 But there are a number of things in
15 the exit plan that stated where money could be
16 obtained and where possibly cuts in expenses
17 could be made. So there were a few. Number
18 one was medical -- retirees of the medical
19 cost.

20 And I guess Kyle picked that up from
21 Mary. And I hope Mary will be coming back and
22 joining the four of you and making female
23 bookends, but time will tell. But worker comp
24 ratio to payroll, has that improved since the
25 exit plan was --

1 MR. GAUGHAN: There have been
2 improvements in the workers' compensation
3 program. Numberswise, I don't have that in
4 front of me. But if you do submit that in
5 writing we can certainly relay that to the
6 administration and try to get an answer for
7 you.

8 MS. SCHUMACHER: I will do that.
9 Also, job descriptions of light duty positions,
10 did that ever happen and how many times has a
11 worker been placed in a light duty job?

12 MR. GAUGHAN: That would be a
13 request for the HR Department. So again, if
14 you want to put that in writing I could try to
15 get that for you.

16 MS. SCHUMACHER: So you want me to
17 do Right to Know on that one?

18 MR. GAUGHAN: Well, I mean, yeah, I
19 think you should -- probably the best bet would
20 be because you're giving us the question and
21 I'm like the middleman. So I'm just going to
22 go to HR Department. So with the new
23 administration, what I honestly I suggest is
24 that you just go right to the department and
25 see if they'll answer the question for you.

1 MS. SCHUMACHER: No, they don't
2 answer questions directly to people.

3 MR. GAUGHAN: Well, then you'd have
4 to --

5 MS. SCHUMACHER: That was the policy
6 I thought.

7 MR. GAUGHAN: Well, I don't know if
8 it's a new policy of this administration.

9 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. Has the
10 required --

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Your --
12 Mrs. Schumacher, I'm sorry, your time is up.

13 MS. SCHUMACHER: Oh, I'm sorry.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: No, that's okay.

15 MS. SCHUMACHER: Thank you.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Would anyone else like
17 to address Council?

18 MR. CASEY: My name is Steven Casey,
19 50-year resident of Hill section. I think I
20 would be remiss tonight if I did not step up to
21 speak in regards to a situation which I think,
22 Mr. Chair, you represented very well the stand
23 of the City.

24 However, I think maybe we should
25 hear from some of our citizens. I spent a long

1 time as a history student. So I'm looking over
2 things. And I recall the story this morning,
3 which I think is very interesting.

4 In the south, it's actually
5 Mississippi. They were all Democrats.
6 Everybody was at that point. A gentleman went
7 through northern Alabama declaring that his
8 opponent was a flagrant heterosexual and
9 everyone knew it.

10 Well, the point he said that, I
11 didn't know what a heterosexual was. And I
12 think most of the people then didn't either and
13 you didn't grab your cell phone then and call
14 it up and see what it was. He won his seat.

15 Afterwards they went out and they
16 asked people what was going on. Oh, don't you
17 know he is? I would like us to think carefully
18 about someone who came to this City to be a
19 citizen here, to be a student and a good one at
20 that, to decide to stay here, to run for an
21 office that she was eligible to sit for and
22 took the job when she got it. Thank you very
23 much, Jess.

24 We have learned something, the 50
25 years and more -- and this was and should be a

1 future, a welcoming City for people who want to
2 come here, whether they want education, whether
3 they want to settle down, whether they have a
4 spouse or whatever. They should be able to
5 come here and it should not be the topic of
6 discussion in a Council meeting. Thank you.

7 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. Anyone
8 else like to address Council? No? Last call.
9 Okay, Mrs. Reed.

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

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Councilman McAndrew,
13 any motions or comments?

14 MR. MCANDREW: Yes, I have a few.
15 So yesterday actually -- I'm sorry. I want to
16 first of all thank Mayor Cagnetti and acting
17 Chief Lucas because actually yesterday I
18 reached out and said could you please provide
19 me with some information so I could provide an
20 update as Chairman of Public Safety to all of
21 you this evening.

22 And it was -- the response was
23 immediate and it was great to hear that the
24 Mayor said, you know what, I'll come and do it
25 with the acting Chief because it's a rarity

1 that they responded and come and presented. So
2 I want to thank them for that.

3 But in addition to that, they did a
4 great presentation. But with regard to
5 Mrs. Hodowanitz's question, I'm sorry her
6 question and for seniors information can we,
7 you know, forward that and say what's the
8 plan -- maybe there is a plan that we don't
9 know about and Mrs. Hodowanitz's question or
10 concern about the homeless.

11 I know, you know, there are a couple
12 events cancelled this week, Friends of the Poor
13 being one of them next week and a majority of
14 them are homeless. So it's an issue maybe it
15 is addressed I'm not aware of, just relay that
16 to the Chief and, if not, they could address
17 that for us.

18 Testing kits, I don't know about
19 testing kits. But I've seen just in social
20 media and reading and the paper that most
21 insurance companies of this area say Highmark,
22 Geisinger are covering these types of testing
23 if they arise and if they are referred to by
24 your doctor. So I don't know if that answers
25 your question but there is a plan in place for

1 testing.

2 Also two weeks ago I brought
3 concerns of -- a taxpayer about Griffin Pond
4 and their concerns were that, you know, we give
5 them \$63,000 a year. They don't take cats
6 anymore or feral cats. They don't -- they're
7 selective with dogs. And, you know, all the
8 feral cats go to Nay Aug which is, you know,
9 raised by -- the money to operate that is
10 raised by grants and donations.

11 So I reached out to Chief Graziano.
12 He shares the same concerns as me, you know,
13 and the citizen that brought these issues to
14 us. And he said we need a long-term solution
15 because the situation is only going to get
16 worse.

17 So, you know, moving forward I think
18 what we need to do is get ahead of this because
19 it's like you said the situation is going to
20 get worse. We do provide money to Griffin
21 Pond. Maybe we explore doing it ourselves.
22 But my understanding -- and this is what Chief
23 Graziano said that, you know, this deal with
24 Griffin Pond was negotiated from the past
25 Business Administrator.

1 So for the most part it is what it
2 is for this year. They got their money. I
3 don't see them changing or adapting to our
4 needs. But I'd like to get ahead of this and
5 maybe we have some conversation moving forward
6 before next year before, you know, the
7 situation gets worse. Thank you. That's all I
8 have.

9 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Councilman
10 McAndrew. Dr. Rothchild, any motions or
11 comments?

12 DR. ROTHCHILD: Yes, I have several
13 comments. First, I'd just like to point out
14 I'm having a little bit of an issue with my
15 e-mail. So if there are residents who were
16 trying to get in touch with me through my
17 council e-mail and I haven't gotten back to you
18 I will.

19 For some reason I don't get the
20 e-mails unless I'm here in the building. So
21 that's a problem that I'm going to be working
22 on. But I will certainly get back to you if I
23 received your e-mail. And something else
24 regarding communication that I'd like to bring
25 up.

1 I just set up a Facebook page
2 separate from the campaign Facebook page that I
3 was using but one as a Council member that I
4 would like to use to communicate with the
5 public, let you know legislative updates or
6 just to provide you with City information and
7 also using as a way for people to contact me.

8 So you could take a look on Facebook
9 on there. It's under Council member Jessica
10 Rothchild. And, like I said, that's just in an
11 effort to increase communication and airwaves.
12 And also on that note, I have brought this up
13 before to Council. And I had come up with a
14 more formal proposal that I provided to my
15 other Council members regarding a town hall.

16 I would like to have ideally
17 biannual town halls throughout the City to
18 invite residents to come to that. Now, we have
19 a large crowd here tonight; but we don't
20 typically. And I want to give people another
21 avenue for being able to connect with us and
22 with other City-elected officials to discuss
23 their issues and have them addressed in a bit
24 of a different forum.

25 So that was my idea behind the town

1 hall. We would like to have the Mayor there.
2 And I know that we are going to work on some
3 dates and I'll be able to provide more updates
4 on that.

5 I'd also like to thank Connor,
6 Connor O'Brien for coming to talk about the
7 Fringe Festival. I really enjoy being a part
8 of the Fringe Festival in the past and being an
9 attendee. I think it's fantastic for the City
10 of Scranton. We should encourage more things
11 like that to help to celebrate, celebrate the
12 arts in Scranton.

13 And I just want to respond to one of
14 the individuals who spoke tonight, Erica. She
15 had asked about resources for specifically the
16 transgender community. And I think that's
17 something that we could possibly talk to the
18 human relations commission about that it might
19 be in their wheelhouse.

20 So that's something that I can
21 certainly look into for you because I think
22 that would be a great opportunity to provide
23 some more education to the public on what
24 resources we have in the City or in the region
25 that would be available to people.

1 And then I would also like to thank
2 all the people who have come out tonight. I
3 wish you were here every week. And I'd like to
4 say a special thanks to Mayor Cagnetti and to
5 Representative Kyle Mullins for both being here
6 tonight. Their words were very appreciated as
7 well as the others who spoke in support of me.

8 And with that I would like to
9 address what happened last week. I was hopeful
10 that I would not need to address it but it
11 appears that some comments were made last week
12 that in my opinion were disrespectful,
13 demeaning, and disappointing.

14 In my absence from the meeting I
15 didn't have the opportunity to respond and know
16 one else had addressed it at that point so I'd
17 like to take the time to do that now.

18 First, to avoid any confusion, in
19 the future when I'm being formally addressed it
20 is appropriate to call me Councilmember,
21 Councilwoman or Dr. Rothchild as my name plate
22 below here I believe indicates.

23 If anyone would like to know more
24 about my professional degree which is Doctor of
25 Physical Therapy or the scope of practice for

1 physical therapist, I would be more than happy
2 to discuss that with you personally. It is a
3 field that I love and a degree that I worked
4 very long and hard to earn, seven years to be
5 exact. And if you don't believe me, I have the
6 student loans to prove it.

7 And I firmly believe that if one of
8 my male colleagues had a doctoral degree that
9 they would be respectfully addressed as doctor
10 without any question.

11 Second, I would like to establish
12 for the record that I am, in fact, a woman.
13 And I ask that you use the pronouns of she, her
14 and hers when referring to me. Keep in mind
15 that it really isn't that difficult to be kind
16 and considerate to one another.

17 I hope you all understand that when
18 an individual is purposefully misgendered, it
19 could be very hurtful and offensive. I could
20 only imagine what's it like for someone to be
21 transgender or nonbinary and experience this on
22 a very frequent basis. I am a human being just
23 like everyone else and I'm deserving of your
24 respect and dignity.

25 In the future I wholly expect this

1 Council and those who choose to speak during
2 Fourth Order, Citizens Participation to uphold
3 the value of common decency and, of course,
4 decorum.

5 As noted many times before, this use
6 of citizens participation to attack others is
7 simply unacceptable. And I believe it clearly
8 violates our rules of Council. I'm asking that
9 the President of Council and/or our Solicitor
10 affirmatively step in if this type of behavior
11 were to occur in the future which I'm really
12 hopeful that it does not.

13 And it's frustrating to me that I
14 must take the time from our Council meeting to
15 address these comments. However, I refuse to
16 be mocked and bullied. I want to emphasize
17 that while I'm fully aware as an elected
18 official, I am open to public criticism on
19 matters related to City business or City
20 Council.

21 I do not expect that criticism to
22 extend into my private life. This must stop
23 and it must stop now. With my statement
24 tonight, I am confident that this issue is
25 resolved once and for all. I'm here as a

1 public servant. I've enjoyed my past two
2 months serving on Council here. And I
3 especially enjoyed working on issues that
4 matter to the people of Scranton who elected me
5 for a reason.

6 I'm looking forward to the remainder
7 of my four years here and I know what we can
8 accomplish together if given a fair chance.
9 Thank you.

10 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Dr.
11 Rothchild. Councilman Donahue, any motions or
12 comments?

13 MR. DONAHUE: Just to clear
14 everything up, the pronouns I identify with are
15 he, his, and him to stand in solidarity with my
16 colleague here. The remarks last week weren't
17 acceptable at all. And I apologize to my
18 colleague for not saying anything.

19 I actually had to go back to hear
20 actually what he said. Just to put it into
21 context, for the first three and a half minutes
22 the gentleman was up there he was defending a
23 Fire Chief who misused City resources.

24 So I admittedly just sort of zoned
25 out and I just didn't catch it. It's not an

1 excuse. There is no excuse. But just to put
2 that into context -- and I would like to give
3 my sincere apologies to my fellow colleague.

4 Moving on from that, Miss Schumacher
5 brought up healthcare. I did have a meeting
6 scheduled with Attorney Eskra this morning that
7 was -- due to unforeseen circumstances that
8 was postponed. And I'm going to be meeting
9 with her either towards the end of this week or
10 the beginning of next week.

11 Also, we did get one complaint about
12 a burned out vacant house, Mrs. Reed, if we
13 would be able to send that along to licensing
14 and inspections. The address is on Preston
15 Place in West Scranton. And I believe I'll be
16 able to pass that along to you.

17 DR. ROTHCHILD: I'm sorry, I believe
18 that's the same one that we've asked to be
19 addressed in the past.

20 MR. DONAHUE: Did we? Okay, would
21 we be able to send a follow up then because I
22 know I believe we got one at the end of last
23 week, an e-mail at the end of last week too.
24 And that's all I have for this evening. Thank
25 you.

1 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you, Councilman
2 Donahue. First thing I want to address is
3 obviously the comments from last week. I'm not
4 telling anybody here or anyone who may be
5 watching or in the City anything they don't
6 know.

7 But I think I could say with great
8 certainty that Bob Bolus in my opinion after
9 sitting up here six years is an ignorant fool.
10 And I say that not as a name calling because
11 we're not allowed to do that. But I do think
12 based on his statements that is actually you
13 could probably prove that as a fact.

14 He is a weak-minded bully. And Dr.
15 Rothchild as evident from all of you who are
16 here tonight to support her and the thousands
17 of people who supported her when she ran for
18 Council and was the top vote getter is a
19 personal friend of mine outside of politics and
20 a wonderful person who is obviously committed
21 to public service and who is committed to this
22 City.

23 Mr. Bolus's comments last week were
24 disgusting and disgraceful. They defy any sort
25 of logic that you would -- you could ever think

1 of. And the uneducated venom that he spews is
2 not going to be tolerated at these meetings,
3 period.

4 We are here as City Council members
5 to conduct the business of the City. There is
6 a lot of things going on. And as Dr. Rothchild
7 said to have to spend time addressing this each
8 and every week is not productive for anyone.

9 We have an administration, a Mayor
10 who comes to the Council meetings and addresses
11 Council and has a working relationship with
12 Council. I believe we're moving in the right
13 direction and to have someone who literally
14 does not represent this City at all come here
15 and hijack our meetings will not be allowed
16 anymore. So thank you.

17 And again, Dr. Rothchild comes to
18 Council with an unbelievable background. And
19 to question that I think is absolutely
20 ridiculous. So I look forward to actually
21 working with Dr. Rothchild on issues that
22 matter and not having to address this.

23 And, like I said, it will not be
24 tolerated at any point moving in the future.
25 And that's all I have. Mrs. Reed?

1 MR. MCANDREW: I have something real
2 quick. I'm sorry. I should have said this
3 also. Also in solidarity I would like to be
4 referred to as he, him or his.

5 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you.

6 MR. MCANDREW: Thanks.

7 MR. GAUGHAN: Mrs. Reed?

8 MS. REED: 5-B. No business at this
9 time.

10 SIXTH ORDER: 6-A. No business at
11 this time.

12 SEVENTH ORDER: 7-A. No business at
13 this time.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: Thank you. If there's
15 no further business, I'll entertain a motion to
16 adjourn.

17 MR. DONAHUE: Motion to adjourn.

18 MR. GAUGHAN: This meeting's
19 adjourned. Thank you.

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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 taken by me of the above-cause and that this copy is a correct transcript of the same to the best of my ability.

Maria McCool, RPR
Official Court Reporter

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