

SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

HELD:

Thursday, September 24, 2015

LOCATION:

Council Chambers

Scranton City Hall

340 North Washington Avenue

Scranton, Pennsylvania

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR - OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

ROBERT MCGOFF, PRESIDENT  
(Not present)

PATRICK ROGAN, VICE-PRESIDENT

WAYNE EVANS

JOSEPH WECHSLER

WILLIAM GAUGHAN

LORI REED, CITY CLERK

KATHY CARRERA, 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. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Here.

6 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

7 MR. ROGAN: Here.

8 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

9 MR. EVANS: Here.

10 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Here.

12 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

13 MR. GAUGHAN: I make a motion to  
14 appoint Councilman Rogan as temporary  
15 Chairperson for the Committee on Rules.

16 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

17 MR. ROGAN: On the question? All  
18 those in favor signify by saying aye.

19 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

20 MR. EVANS: Aye.

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

22 MR. ROGAN: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
23 have it and so moved.

24 MR. GAUGHAN: I would like to make a  
25 motion to take from the table File of the

1 Council No. 111-2015.

2 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

3 MR. ROGAN: On the question? This  
4 is the Comcast contract and it's being taken  
5 from the table and placed in to Seventh  
6 Order for a final vote. Anyone who wishes  
7 to speak on this particular piece of  
8 legislation may do so during fourth order,  
9 citizens' participation. All those in favor  
10 signify by saying aye.

11 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

12 MR. EVANS: Aye.

13 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

14 MR. ROGAN: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
15 have it and so moved.

16 Please dispense with the reading of  
17 the minutes.

18 MS. REED: THIRD ORDER. 3-A. TAX  
19 ASSESSOR'S REPORTS FOR HEARING DATES TO BE  
20 HELD OCTOBER 2, OCTOBER 9, OCTOBER 14, AND  
21 OCTOBER 16, 2015.

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

24 MS. REED: 3-B. CONTROLLER'S REPORT  
25 FOR THE MONTH ENDING AUGUST 31, 2015.

1 MR. ROGAN: Are there any comments?  
2 If not, received and filed.

3 MS. REED: 3-C. TAX ASSESSOR'S  
4 RESULTS REPORTS FOR HEARING DATE HELD  
5 SEPTEMBER 2, 2015.

6 MR. ROGAN: Are there any comments?  
7 If not, received and filed. Do any council  
8 members have announcements to make?

9 MR. WECHSLER: Yes, Mr. Rogan, I  
10 have a few. On Sunday, the Lebanese  
11 Heritage festival will be held at St. Ann's  
12 Maronite Church, Sumner and Price Street.  
13 The times will be from 12 to 7.

14 Also, on Sunday, the Department of  
15 NEPA will be have its annual fall festival  
16 Sunday at Welner's Park from 3 p.m to 8 p.m.  
17 It is going to feature from great  
18 entertainment, the East Coast Trio and  
19 Wannabees will be there, also.

20 An upcoming event that's going to be  
21 for October, the North Scranton Neighborhood  
22 Watch is going to have there Octoberfest.  
23 That will be held on October 3, the time  
24 will be from 6 to 10 at Holy Rosary school  
25 auditorium and tickets are \$15 which

1 includes food, drink and entertainment.  
2 There will also be raffles.

3 And one other announcement. On  
4 Saturday there was a huge amount of  
5 volunteers in the City. Scranton Tomorrow  
6 and the Penn State Extension master  
7 gardeners planted nearly 500 mums in more  
8 than 100 planters in the downtown business  
9 district. Many thanks to our partners and  
10 the 125 volunteers from the Scranton School  
11 District, Lackawanna College, University of  
12 Scranton, Marywood University, the Laurel  
13 Garden Club, Lackawanna County, Scranton  
14 Area Foundation, and many more. We ask that  
15 building and business owners with a planter  
16 nearby if you we help keep it alive and  
17 beautiful by watering them daily and  
18 removing any debris. Beautification of the  
19 planters has proven to eliminate blight and  
20 enhance the curb appeal. Since 2012 we have  
21 planted over 2,500 annuals, 1,500 mums,  
22 utilizing over 2,100 volunteers. This  
23 endeavor is costly. If you would like to  
24 make a contribution to Scranton Tomorrow's  
25 Adopt a Planter Program or volunteer please

1 call Leslie Compton at 570-963-1575. That's  
2 all I have this evening.

3 MR. GAUGHAN: And I would just like  
4 to ask everyone to keep the families of  
5 James Calpin and Lori Lesh, who passed away  
6 this week, in your prayers. Thank you.

7 MR. EVANS: I'd like to also remind  
8 everyone that Saturday will be the annual  
9 Race for the Cure in downtown Scranton.  
10 This is will be my approximately my 25th  
11 time in attending this event either walking  
12 or running and I do so in Honor and memory  
13 of my mom, who was a 33-year breast cancer  
14 survivor so thank you.

15 MR. ROGAN: Busy week in the city, I  
16 have two as well this week and one next  
17 week. Saturday, from 12 to 3 p.m., at the  
18 Keyser Valley Community Center, there will  
19 be a fundraiser in memory of Monica, a sweet  
20 little girl who actually just lost her  
21 battle with cancer this week. The  
22 fundraiser will go on for her family.  
23 Please wear your favorite pink attire.  
24 There will basket raffles, 50/50, and food.  
25 A financial donation of your choice will be

1           accepted at the door and all proceeds will  
2           be collected for Monica's family and for  
3           their expenses during this very difficult  
4           time.

5                        Secondly, this Sunday, from 1 to 9  
6           p.m. at the Adventure Zone at Electric City  
7           Plaza, formerly known as the Ice Box, there  
8           will be very large fundraiser for Officer  
9           Wilding. The EB Jermyrn Lodge Fraternal  
10          Order of Police and the Scranton Police  
11          Department have done a wonderful bringing  
12          this together. Tickets are \$20 and they can  
13          be purchased at the door at the Ice Box.

14                      And, finally, you are invited to  
15          Representative Marty Flynn's Third Annual  
16          Senior Fair, which would be held Friday,  
17          September 25, from 10 to 1 p.m. at this is  
18          at St. Joseph's Hall on Davis Street. There  
19          will be free health screenings, flu shots  
20          with a valid insurance company, property tax  
21          and rental rebate applications, information  
22          on programs and services benefiting senior  
23          citizens and door prizes and light  
24          refreshments. And that is all.

25                      MS. REED: FOURTH ORDER. CITIZENS'



1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

PARTICIPATION.

MR. ROGAN: Our first speaker is  
Cara Seitzinger.

THE COURT: Good evening. Cara  
Seitzinger, city resident and employee of  
the City of Scranton. I'll be brief, I have  
to go I kids back to school night. I did  
not think I would be back here tonight,  
however, something arose last evening that  
compelled me to come back tonight. I  
honestly feel compelled on behalf of my  
family, fellow city employees and the  
countless citizens of Northeast PA who are  
insured and will continue to be insured  
through Highmark in the coming weeks,  
months, and next year. I spoke briefly to  
this body on Thursday, September 3, on  
behalf of my husband, Mark Seitzinger, a  
cancer patient relative to the 13,000 Delta  
Medix patients and anyone who may be  
affected by the questionable practices of  
Highmark insurance.

Briefly, my husband, an  
eight-plus-year cancer patient of Dr. Donald  
Preate, was afforded a continuation of care

1 for his six-month checkup, a questionable  
2 mass was discovered on his bladder after  
3 five-years remission and he underwent  
4 surgery on September 1. Mere hours, as I  
5 said before, before the termination of the  
6 coverage between Delta Medix, and doctors  
7 and Highmark.

8 Last evening I arrived home at 9:00  
9 p.m. after work, my daughter's hair  
10 appointment and a confirmation meeting at  
11 St. Paul's Church for my twins. I opened an  
12 explanation of benefit form and a check, the  
13 check was made out to me. I'm sorry. I am  
14 the policyholder. The check was in the  
15 amount of \$350.72. That amount was  
16 explained as the allotted amount for Mark's  
17 surgery. Ironically, I have yet to receive  
18 an explanation of benefit for the cystoscopy  
19 that was performed on August 24 in Dr.  
20 Preate's office which found the mass on  
21 Mark's bladder.

22 Both services were approved by  
23 Highmark under the continuation of care via  
24 paperwork received from Highmark, Blue  
25 Cross-Blue Shield, at our home as well as

1 multiple telephone calls with Highmark  
2 between ourselves and Delta Medix, and I was  
3 present for one of those phone calls at  
4 Delta Medix, I'm sorry.

5 I'm an employee of the City of  
6 Scranton, my husband Mark was also an  
7 employee from October 2004 until January 7  
8 of 2013. I am the insured policy holder of  
9 the plan issued to my employer, and my  
10 husband and children are named insured on  
11 the policy. I am at a loss as to how the  
12 Pennsylvania Insurance Commission, Attorney  
13 General and Governor have allowed Highmark  
14 to systematically defy and violate written  
15 Blue Cross-Blue Shield, First Priority  
16 contracts that they assumed via merger as  
17 indicated in paperwork that I have received  
18 from them, thereby, by placing the health  
19 and welfare of thousands of their paying  
20 policyholders. They have gone beyond  
21 upholding their fiduciary responsibilities  
22 as well.

23 As such, I'm requesting that city  
24 council request that Highmark at the very  
25 least explain the prior and current contract

1 in writing enumerating each and every change  
2 and the rational regarding same. If they  
3 the refuse, you have a duty as lawmakers to  
4 demand a point-by-point explanation from  
5 them as well as to report to them to the  
6 above-mentioned officials within the  
7 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

8 I do have additional requests, I am  
9 going to pass them along for time purposes.  
10 Just so you are aware, I did place a call to  
11 Highmark this afternoon and I got mixed  
12 signals, not mixed signals, it's recorded,  
13 I'm sure, on their line, I was told that you  
14 don't see EOB's if nothing is paid. I  
15 explained to them the continuation of care  
16 was for both his cystoscope and his surgery  
17 one week later. I have always received the  
18 EOB's, always. I mean, I have been, you  
19 know -- I've had Blue Cross before I came to  
20 the city, after I came to the city, I was a  
21 patient account manager for five years and a  
22 paralegal since 1997, so I felt badly for  
23 this employee because he wanted to know what  
24 I wanted, and then I went off and told him  
25 what I wanted in my Irish way. So I have

1 here the check payable to me, I'm sorry, can  
2 I have one second?

3 MR. ROGAN: Sure.

4 MS. SEITZINGER: The check payable  
5 to me, the explanation of benefits saying  
6 that they are not a preferred provider,  
7 which is a discrepancy with what we know  
8 from his 8-24 surgery, they didn't have an  
9 EOB, but if they wanted me to create one  
10 they would for August 24 so I honest to  
11 goodness cannot believe I'm here, I'm sick  
12 to my stomach. I am just, you know, Mark is  
13 okay, thank God, but there are so many  
14 people and he was going to come and he said,  
15 "I can't be there, I can't do it. I don't  
16 work there, this is your policy."

17 Mark is so private and so I came, he  
18 is waiting for me outside St. Paul's and  
19 that's where I'm going to go, but I would  
20 really, really implore you. We have calls  
21 into Governor -- or Senator Casey, John  
22 Blake. I have done my homework, gentlemen,  
23 and I am not going to stop not on behalf of  
24 my children, my husband, countless employees  
25 of the City of Scranton, countless residents

1 of Northeastern Pennsylvania. So if you  
2 want an information session I've got a lot  
3 but thank you very, very much and I  
4 appreciate that Joan let me go first. Thank  
5 you.

6 MR. ROGAN: Joan Hodowanitz.

7 MS. HODOWANITZ: Joan Hodowanitz,  
8 resident and taxpayer. I was pleased to see  
9 Mr. Bulzoni at your informal caucus at 6  
10 p.m., but I was biting my tongue because  
11 obviously as a member of the public I can't  
12 ask him any questions. I was pleased,  
13 Mr. Gaughan, that you did ask him about the  
14 Triben Insurance contract and was there, in  
15 fact, a lapse in coverage and he gave an  
16 explanation that no, there was not, there  
17 was apparently a series of extensions, but  
18 I'm still terribly confused. There was no  
19 clear explanation of extensions or even a  
20 mention of extensions in the background  
21 paperwork.

22 There was his memo stating, I quote,  
23 "The contracts with the existing insurers  
24 Voya for life and disability and Delta  
25 Dental have expired."



1 Serrenti Memorial Reserve Center. Before  
2 you accept a contract for what is obviously  
3 a very good purpose you need to be asking  
4 those long-term maintenance questions. Can  
5 we even afford to repair city hall and  
6 infrastructure we already have? I think you  
7 are need to see that study before you accept  
8 a contract for that facility. I'm sure the  
9 chief has great intentions for what he wants  
10 to use it for, but we don't have any money  
11 to throw around.

12 You probably saw the August  
13 controller's report, and you have seen the  
14 article saying that we are not collecting as  
15 much LST tax as we had hoped. That being  
16 said, are you of the opinion that we are  
17 probably going to make or miss the pension  
18 MMO on December 31 understanding that if we  
19 miss that for the third year in a row we are  
20 going to get whacked with another high  
21 interest payment. We have already paid  
22 almost half a million dollars for the first  
23 two years just in interest for having missed  
24 it so you need to be looking for that 2016  
25 operating budget and being looking at the



1 numbers closely. If we miss our revenue  
2 target for this year we are going to be in  
3 deep kimchi.

4 Any status on how the 2004 audit is  
5 going from SP & Company who promised status  
6 updates? Almost halfway through September.  
7 We already paid them 20 grand. Nothing?

8 MR. GAUGHAN: We haven't received  
9 anything.

10 MS. HODOWANITZ: Okay, and have the  
11 police and firefighters decided to move the  
12 pension plans under the state run municipal  
13 retirement system or not?

14 MR. GAUGHAN: I asked for an update  
15 on that, I haven't received it yet, but I  
16 don't think that they have made any effort  
17 yet to do that.

18 MS. HODOWANITZ: Well, I hope they  
19 at least make a decision and make it  
20 publically known so we can see where we  
21 stand.

22 How about the administration's plan  
23 to pay off the court award, have we made any  
24 process there?

25 MR. ROGAN: I do know there were a

1 number of meetings. I believe it was  
2 publicized in the paper regarding trying to  
3 obtain financing for the Court award.

4 MS. HODOWANITZ: Okay, but nothing  
5 has been firmed up yet?

6 MR. ROGAN: No, when it is it will  
7 come before council.

8 MS. HODOWANITZ: Okay. Thank you.

9 MR. ROGAN: Bob Bolus.

10 MR. BOLUS: Good evening, Bob Bolus,  
11 Scranton. I'd just like to look at the  
12 agenda a second here on 6-D, what is going  
13 to be done with a Novembrino Pool? Is it  
14 going to be left as a pool or is there a  
15 plan to change it into something else?

16 MR. ROGAN: There was plans  
17 presented to us to change it from a pool to  
18 more of a splash pad, I don' know if you've  
19 ever seen them but it's basically water  
20 falling from trees and for younger kids to  
21 play, but at this point what happened was  
22 the funding that was put in for the  
23 Novembrino Pool rehabilitation out of last  
24 year's allotment it needs to be spent in a  
25 certain amount of time so that money is

1           being put into paving and then we are  
2           refunding it this year.

3                       MR. BOLUS: Okay, I would like to  
4           see it stay as a pool. Waterparks may be  
5           good for kids but what about the other  
6           people in the City of Scranton. I can't  
7           picture of any of us in this room doing a  
8           belly flop, I'm know the type of operation  
9           you are talking about, so I would consider  
10          that you reconsider and make this a pool,  
11          put it back what it was, give swimming  
12          lessons, how many kids are going to learn to  
13          swim in this city without going say to  
14          Weston field or one of the Y's or something  
15          that may one day save your life and they are  
16          not going to learn it at a splash park, so  
17          use some common sense of where we are going  
18          here to think about the kid and the future  
19          and the next generation and some of us old  
20          people that may just like to soak in a pool.  
21          It's our right in the city and I don't think  
22          a splash park is there. You can put it  
23          almost anywhere else, take it up Nay Aug and  
24          put it somewhere else like that, but I think  
25          the pool belongs being a pool and we should

1 look for the funding to get the lifeguards  
2 to do what we need to do in the city.

3 The other thing I have is, as you  
4 know, I was interested in the mall. I had  
5 come before this council and said just one  
6 of you write a letter to a legislator  
7 requesting that they consider the  
8 possibility of creating a gaming license for  
9 that mall. You know what disturbed me and  
10 why I didn't buy the mall, and I didn't need  
11 to go to the bank to borrow to do it, is  
12 because not one official in this county  
13 would pick up that pen or use their computer  
14 and send an e-mail requesting that, and I  
15 walked away from it. I'm not interested in  
16 retail space, I was interested in the  
17 salvation of this city and bringing in tax  
18 revenue, right in here if you are getting  
19 money from Monroe County from a gaming fund  
20 that they got up there to help the city out  
21 to put in for a grant. Just think what we  
22 would be creating in this city if everyone  
23 in this city got together and made the  
24 legislation to do our bidding instead of  
25 their bidding.

1                   Take the role Donald Trump does, pay  
2 attention to it, you can get something done  
3 if you want to do it, but you didn't do it  
4 and that's why I walked away from it because  
5 it isn't worth the investment and time and  
6 energy to play creating a mall or bring in  
7 people, they couldn't make it when they had  
8 two major stores going, and it was full and  
9 it couldn't pay it's bills. You know, the  
10 individual that got it got a hell of a deal,  
11 you can't go wrong on it.

12                   However, we are being shortchanged.  
13 He is assessed \$3 million by Lackawanna  
14 County on that purchase. That's the  
15 assessment. I'm assessed \$500,000 for a  
16 church that was worth \$2. At Holy Cross I  
17 let the kids sit there and play free in Holy  
18 Cross hall that I own, and they play  
19 basketball there because I won't tear it  
20 down and I won't keep them from doing that  
21 but it's a half a million dollars and they  
22 were going to tear it down. This is a mall  
23 worth 25 to 30 million dollars and you are  
24 going to let this guy get away. Nothing  
25 personal, but he owes it to this city to pay

1 the fair tax. That's on 20 to 25 million  
2 dollars. He knew what he was getting, he  
3 could throw money all over of the place, buy  
4 this house for eight, nine thousand, build  
5 this building, do this and do that, put in a  
6 million dollars in lights, he has a  
7 bottomless pit of money pay your fair tax  
8 and you gentlemen should not allow anything  
9 but that to happen in this county because if  
10 you do, you shortchanged it on it by not  
11 sending a letter. At least make that  
12 attempt, at least do what's right and get  
13 the fair offer for the people and increase  
14 the tax base by properly taxing these  
15 institutions and this community putting a  
16 fee on the University and others bring it in  
17 and raise the tax base and that's what you  
18 are going to create here, but if you turn  
19 around and keep turning our head the wrong  
20 way.

21 And the other part of this horror  
22 story I heard tonight was on Mark Seitzinger  
23 with his wife coming here and pleading for  
24 something to do something for her, a former  
25 servant of the people. It's a hell of a way

1 to be treated that, again, you can't take  
2 this pen and contact the insurance  
3 commission and get something done. They  
4 need the power of the city. Please, I'm  
5 getting a headache, okay, I heard it.

6 MR. ROGAN: Thank you, Mr. Bolus.

7 MR. BOLUS: I understand that, but  
8 you have to --

9 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Bolus, your time is  
10 up.

11 MR. BOLUS: Yeah, I understand that.  
12 Mr. Evans, you had made a commitment not to  
13 run for city council, you have gone back on  
14 that commitment that you made. I'm willing  
15 now to put up a \$5,000 loan to any  
16 individual that's credible that will run  
17 against you in this election on an  
18 independent ticket --

19 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Bolus.

20 MR. BOLUS: I understand --

21 MR. ROGAN: This is politics and  
22 your time is up, Mr. Bolus.

23 MR. BOLUS: Listen, I have right to  
24 speak here.

25 MR. ROGAN: You do, and your time is

1 up.

2 MR. BOLUS: I understand that, Mr.  
3 Rogan, and I have listened to other people  
4 go on. Let's not get into a debate over  
5 arguing tonight --

6 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Bolus, you were  
7 talking about the election.

8 MR. BOLUS: The issue is I'm talking  
9 about a councilman here that made a  
10 commitment to the people, gave his word that  
11 he would not run no matter what. You broke  
12 that commitment and you broke your word  
13 which means your word, even if you elected  
14 will be no good, and I will support any  
15 candidate that will run against you. Thank  
16 you.

17 MR. EVANS: I'm not going to comment  
18 on anything politically here, I'll gladly  
19 debate with you any time, anywhere, but I  
20 will not talk about politics in this  
21 chamber.

22 MR. BOLUS: You don't have to  
23 comment, it's self-explanatory. You have  
24 your word publically --

25 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Bolus.



1 MR. BOLUS: And you broke it.

2 MR. EVANS: That was asked and  
3 answered so I'm going to go there, but I  
4 will say that we did already put pen to  
5 paper and we did send a letter to the real  
6 estate commission to city council on Cara  
7 Seitzinger's plan.

8 MR. BOLUS: You broke your word.

9 MR. EVANS: I'm not talking about  
10 that. I'm talking about --

11 MR. BOLUS: Your word not to run was  
12 your word and you broke it. Period. There  
13 is no other explanation.

14 MR. EVANS: Okay. Thank you very  
15 much.

16 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Miller.

17 MR. MILLER: Good evening, Council.  
18 Doug Miller, Scranton. Just to discuss 6-B  
19 for a moment in regards to the OECD  
20 community block grant money and the  
21 Novembrino pool and just the pools in  
22 general, for a very long time that has kind  
23 of been a pet peeve of mine in regards to  
24 the City's inability to maintain the  
25 swimming pools in this community. I was

1 never a proponent of the idea of a splash  
2 park, I think it's totally ridiculous. I  
3 know there is a splash park in South  
4 Abington if that gives anyone an idea of  
5 what -- pretty much what it is, but these  
6 pools were meant for the residents of this  
7 community to use. They were built 20, 30,  
8 40 years ago and, you know, it just seems to  
9 become a time where each year where we  
10 discuss that it's not feasible for the city.

11 I have had many discussions with the  
12 gentleman who actually personally maintained  
13 those swimming pools going back 20, 25 years  
14 ago, Mr. Greg Herbster. He was the head of  
15 Parks and Recreation and he single-handedly  
16 would maintain those pools, and I have had  
17 discussions with him on several occasions in  
18 regard to Novembrino pool in particular, and  
19 I think we should really maybe use his  
20 expertise because the idea that these pools  
21 are just going to cost an abundance amount  
22 of money to repair it I think the city is  
23 out of touch with reality. I just think the  
24 idea of a splash park is ridiculous.

25 You know, when is the last time we

1           actually used the pools in this community to  
2           teach children how to swim. Is a splash  
3           park going to do that?

4                         But most of all, shouldn't we really  
5           just feel embarrassed and ashamed of  
6           ourselves that we have gone summer after  
7           summer by depriving those children the  
8           opportunity to use these pools. You know,  
9           in the past we were ignorantly told that it  
10          was a luxury to have the swimming pools.  
11          Now, the residents in this city who  
12          continually get screwed over every year and  
13          overtaxed to death, no, they deserve a pool  
14          because they paid their fair share, but the  
15          problem is we elect incompetent people,  
16          clueless people in this city, who just are  
17          out of touch with reality.

18                         You know, Mr. Morgan brings up a  
19          good point a lot of times about coming in  
20          here dressed up, looking professional, I  
21          don't have a problem with that, we are here  
22          to be professional, but he does have a point  
23          this isn't about suits, this isn't a costume  
24          party, if we want to dress up that's why we  
25          have Halloween, but we need people proximate

1 brains, people that have the ability to come  
2 up with realistic creative solutions to turn  
3 this city around. We are losing people on a  
4 daily basis. Go up and down the streets to  
5 the neighborhoods, the "For Sale" signs pop  
6 up daily. I mean, Mr. Evans can explain  
7 that, he sees it. Mr. Rogan can see it.  
8 Nobody wants to come here. They are doing  
9 the complete opposite. They are doing  
10 everything they can to get out of here  
11 because there is no opportunity. What are  
12 we doing about the future generations in  
13 this city? We have a University where we  
14 have thousands of student come here every  
15 fall. What kind of message are we sending  
16 to them. We are glad to have them here for  
17 the time they here, but what are we doing to  
18 keep them here? They shouldn't have to  
19 leave. There should be opportunity for them  
20 to graduate and stay here and invest in our  
21 community and start families here and that's  
22 how you grow a city, but when you elect  
23 people who are just for themselves and how  
24 they can enhance their political career, you  
25 don't turn a city around you just kill them

1 of and that's where we are, selling assets,  
2 now we want to lease the parking garages,  
3 selling the Sewer Authority, I mean, just  
4 look where we are. We've sold anything that  
5 isn't nailed down at this point. Those  
6 aren't solutions, that's how you just put a  
7 city to sleep once and for all.

8 And it comes down to transparency,  
9 which we don't have right now, there is no  
10 accountability, we still have caucuses in  
11 the back room. I mean, when are we going to  
12 start looking out for the residents of this  
13 city and protecting the interest in the  
14 little guy? I haven't heard one creative  
15 solution yet from this council. Granted  
16 from time to time there are some members of  
17 this council who have brought some valid  
18 points to our attention, but we need more  
19 than that. We need everyone to be on the  
20 same page. We need to put politics aside,  
21 special interest aside. Forget worrying  
22 about representing the special interest that  
23 put you in these seats, they are not the  
24 people that you represent. You represent  
25 the 70,000 hardworking residents in this

1 community who are fed up and just frustrated  
2 because they are tired of being lied to year  
3 after year after year and, you know, as we  
4 head into budget season there is really not  
5 many optimisms from the residents of this  
6 city. The morale in this town is very, very  
7 low. I mean, you just feel it everywhere  
8 you go. There is no sense of optimism  
9 because we just been lied to over and over  
10 again because we just elect political  
11 puppets who are mouthpieces for special  
12 interests and certain groups in this  
13 community and that's all we look out for  
14 while we just kick the ordinary working guy  
15 to the curb.

16 And, you know, I have a suggestion  
17 as far as, you know, we have been discussing  
18 the repairs, much needed repairs that need  
19 to be made to this building, as a historic  
20 building in the city. Why don't we reach  
21 out to the University and some of the other  
22 nonprofits, you know, their concern is  
23 always that they feel that the money just  
24 might be put into a black whole, well, maybe  
25 if we give them a sense of assurance that

1           it's going to be put to a worthy cause they  
2           may want to invest in a historic structure  
3           such as this. I mean, they put a lot of  
4           money into the Hill Section with this  
5           history that was there --

6                     MR. ROGAN: Thank you, Mr. Miller.

7                     MR. MILLER: -- and perhaps they  
8           would want to do the same thing and assist  
9           with this building that, you know, has a lot  
10          of history because we don't want to see this  
11          building fall apart and this is, you know,  
12          the face of city and this is where we make  
13          tough decisions and, you know, perhaps we  
14          should consider that, it's a creative start.  
15          Thank you.

16                    MR. ROGAN: Thank you. Lee Morgan.

17                    MR. MORGAN: Good evening,  
18          gentlemen. Lee Morgan. Well, I guess the  
19          first thing I have here is that last week it  
20          was thought that Mr. McGoff should resign  
21          his position because, well, I guess he is  
22          ill and I don't really agree with that. As  
23          long as he can do his job where he is and  
24          can logically look at the facts he has set  
25          out before him I think he should stay on

1 council. Just because you get ill doesn't  
2 mean you throw somebody over the side. It's  
3 just not the way it goes in my opinion and,  
4 like I say many times before, I respect  
5 everybody on the council, anybody who is  
6 ever elected, I just don't agree with the  
7 way you conduct your business and whose best  
8 interest you are looking at way too often.

9 But the other thing is, you know,  
10 awhile back I spoke about creating an I  
11 guess it is a political organization and if  
12 people want to look on Facebook for Lee  
13 Morgan they will find that I have launched a  
14 group called Lee Morgan, the alliance. It's  
15 my intention to replace neighborhood leaders  
16 who don't understand that they have a  
17 function in their neighborhoods, and the  
18 group is going to be much more expansive  
19 than that. I mean, it's -- you know, I  
20 don't want to blow my own horn, I just want  
21 to say that it's a much wider group than  
22 that but I think we need to start here  
23 because that's where I live and that's where  
24 I intend to make some changes here and I'm  
25 hoping that enough people agree with me and



1 me can start changing who is controlling  
2 elections here, and have firemen fighting  
3 fires and have policemen fighting crime and  
4 have city DPW workers collecting the trash  
5 and recyclables, and have the clerical union  
6 do their clerical work and give the people a  
7 real voice instead of special interests, and  
8 they aren't the only one with an interest  
9 that control the elections here, there is  
10 many other people and they have made a lot  
11 of serious errors in their judgment over  
12 a considerable period of time, which is  
13 helped along with the help of the super  
14 voters that put the city in the toilet.

15 This city really needs to come up  
16 with a plan of either calling an undertaker  
17 and burying itself, or find a very swift  
18 treatment plan to turn it around, and to be  
19 honest with you, nothing personal, but I  
20 really don't have any faith in my city  
21 government and I have come here for well  
22 over 20 years, I don't want to hash out one  
23 or another.

24 And, you know, I do agree that the  
25 suits look pretty, but I call into question

1 judgment and intellect here and the ability  
2 to be able to wrap your mind around the  
3 legislation you present and be able to  
4 explain it to anybody who comes and asks you  
5 because if you can't do that you don't know  
6 what you are voting on and that means you  
7 are uninformed and you are extremely  
8 dangerous because you have taken this city  
9 in a position right now where it's painted  
10 into a corner, and I think that 6-D just  
11 about illustrates the point quite well.  
12 Novembrino Pool is going to have it's money  
13 striped from it and then have it transferred  
14 somewhere else and the Capouse Avenue pool.  
15 Why? You mean to tell me that this council  
16 couldn't up with a plan to match money or  
17 come with the money to put those pools back  
18 online over all of these years. It is  
19 absolutely ludicrous to elect public  
20 officials who don't understand that they  
21 have an obligation to public safety in this  
22 city, and to hide behind all of the other  
23 things that our elected officials hide  
24 behind is disgraceful and to get dressed up  
25 and play to the cameras for decades and not

1 answer the long-term fiscal problems this  
2 city faces. Look it, Mellon Bank ran the  
3 City's pension plan and then, of course, the  
4 city had a better plan and they give it over  
5 to someone else and we took a blood bath.  
6 People can't sell their homes here and can't  
7 get off here fast enough, and every council  
8 member knows it and the mayor knows it, and  
9 it's not a personal attack it's a fact,  
10 okay? We are looking to the federal  
11 government to fund the city. Unacceptable.  
12 The city has to be able to fund itself. The  
13 tax base has to be able to maintain the city  
14 and to look for the federal and the state  
15 government to come in here and wet nurse our  
16 elected officials is ridiculous, and some  
17 people may find it humorous, but the really  
18 honest humorous thing the people that are  
19 sitting in the seats who can't understand  
20 that they very pushed the average resident  
21 in this city beyond the ability to pay their  
22 taxes and now they are begging the federal  
23 and the state government to come save them  
24 because they have milked the residents who  
25 live here and the vast majority of them left

1 and that exodus has been going on since  
2 about 1950 and there has never been one  
3 answer found because it was all politics,  
4 politics, politics, politics, politics and  
5 politics and the neighborhood groups they  
6 have become an extension of that politics.  
7 Watch it, see it and know it.

8 MR. ROGAN: Thank you, Mr. Morgan.

9 MR. MORGAN: Thank you.

10 MR. ROGAN: Gerard Hetman.

11 MR. HETMAN: Good evening, Council.  
12 Gerard Hetman for the Lackawanna County  
13 Community Relations Department. Again, lots  
14 going on in the city and the county this  
15 week. Two items that come up every fall,  
16 two of our signature events, the first being  
17 our fourth annual Lackawanna County Senior  
18 Health Fair. It takes place this Friday  
19 morning, September 18, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at  
20 PNC field in Moosic. We will have over 50  
21 exhibitors present that deal with senior  
22 health and wellness. They'll provide a  
23 variety of refreshments, giveaways,  
24 information on senior health, and various  
25 health checks and services, again, relating

1 to health for senior citizens. We should  
2 note that the event is open to all ages.  
3 Again, the topics are geared towards  
4 seniors, but the services are available to  
5 folks of all ages. We certainly don't check  
6 ID's at the door and bar anyone who is under  
7 a certain age. We get questions along that  
8 line every year and we reiterate it's upon  
9 to folks of all ages to come out. We will  
10 have refreshments and flu shots will also be  
11 available at the health fair.

12 Second, coming up this Saturday our  
13 favorite Hero's Day public safety fair. It  
14 takes place Saturday, September 19, from 11  
15 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the County's 911 Center on  
16 Valley View Drive in Jessup. It will  
17 feature guided of the 911 center, giveaways  
18 and information relating to public safety,  
19 hands on static displays of fire, police,  
20 EMS and public safety vehicles and  
21 equipment. I believe the sheriff's office  
22 mounted unit should be on-hand to give rides  
23 to some of the younger attendees. Both of  
24 the events start after the conclusion of the  
25 Race for the Cure in the morning. Due to

1 the facilities availability at the 911  
2 Center and some other factors this was the  
3 only date that we could get it in the fall  
4 in September when we look to do the event  
5 that would match up with a number of factors  
6 we needed. We have done this for the third  
7 year in a row the day of the Race for the  
8 Cure just a little bit later in the morning.  
9 We have never seen a conflict with the race,  
10 we pay attention to avoid that. Many people  
11 that participate as exhibitors who are  
12 organizers for our event participate in the  
13 race in some form of another in the morning  
14 so we've never tried to conflict with that.  
15 It's worked well for us for two years and  
16 look forward to the same thing this coming  
17 Saturday, and again, a great crowd for the  
18 race and for Hero's Day.

19 Third, our countywide tire recycling  
20 event is underway this week. There are  
21 public drop-off hours available Friday from  
22 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., and then Saturday from 8  
23 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Lackawanna County  
24 Recycling Center, 3400 Boulevard Avenue IN  
25 Scranton. There are a variety of other drop

1 off sites available around the county as  
2 well at different municipal buildings Friday  
3 and Saturday. The full schedule is  
4 available online at [www.Lackawanna](http://www.Lackawanna)  
5 [County.org](http://County.org) and we'll also provide a schedule  
6 to council's office for your reference.

7 Fourth, the Lackawanna County Parks  
8 and Recreation Fall Fishing Derby takes  
9 place Saturday, October 3, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
10 at Merli-Sarnoski park. Again, this is the  
11 fall one, the spring is at McDade, so this  
12 is the one in the fall at Merli-Sarnoski  
13 every year. It's \$5 per child for children  
14 ages zero through 12. For more information  
15 call the Parks and Rec Department at  
16 570-963-6764.

17 Fifth, our seventh annual Link up  
18 with the Arts project takes place on Friday,  
19 September 25. Registration starts at 8:30  
20 at PNC Field and it is a free event and it  
21 goes from about 11 a.m. The featured  
22 speakers are artists and author Eric Booth  
23 speaking on the topic of under the radar,  
24 the future of arts education and culture.  
25 Again, free admission and parking. They

1 just ask that you register in advance by  
2 calling 570-963-6590, extension 106.

3 And lastly when I come in October we  
4 will be into the County's budget season that  
5 point so I will provide an update and a  
6 brief summary of the County's budget  
7 position as it relates to the tentative  
8 budget at the October meeting when I speak.  
9 That's all I have, thank you.

10 MR. ROGAN: Thank you very much.  
11 Ron Ellman.

12 MR. ELLMAN: Ronnie Ellman. Hello,  
13 gentlemen. I want to get away from things  
14 for just one minute, this morning when I  
15 turned my TV on I had TMZ or something on  
16 from last night and there was some old movie  
17 with Walter Selzak, most of you don't know  
18 who he is, he's a big actor in the 40's and  
19 50's. When I was cleaning swimming pools  
20 with this boy we stopped for a beer at this  
21 little neighborhood bar and Mr. Selzak was  
22 in there and the boy I was with knew him for  
23 years and years, they had this big reunion  
24 and so forth and, you know, we left. A  
25 couple of years later, two or three years



1 later, I was standing in front of the Bing  
2 Crosby Theatre, which used to be across from  
3 Capital Records, I doubt it's there anymore,  
4 and someone tapped me on shoulder and it was  
5 this Mr. Selzak and he remembered my first  
6 and last name just seeing my one time. I  
7 just thought that was phenomenal, especially  
8 when you think this man must have met a  
9 thousand people in two or three years.  
10 Anyway, I just thought that that was -- that  
11 is something though when somebody can  
12 remember your name meeting you one time. I  
13 wish I had a memory like that.

14 Mr. Evans, I got a question, I saw  
15 those pictures of you at the Woolworth  
16 estate, I thought Mansour was given a grant  
17 like 20 years ago to work on all of that.  
18 It sure didn't look like anything had been  
19 done in there.

20 MR. EVANS: No, he has never  
21 received a grant for that.

22 MR. ELLMAN: He never had a grant?

23 MR. EVANS: No, no, no. He used to  
24 give a lot of grants out and he used to  
25 plant a lot of trees throughout the Hill

1 Section, but, no, he has never been given a  
2 grant.

3 MR. ELLMAN: I know where it is, I  
4 never paid any attention to it but I have  
5 gone by it and glanced at it.

6 MR. EVANS: It's a pretty unique  
7 building. You want to make you offer get it  
8 in there.

9 MR. ELLMAN: And another thing, I  
10 don't know I like to read that 100, 75 years  
11 ago in the paper, a few days ago it said 75  
12 years ago some wise gentlemen advocated  
13 getting rid of a lot of the stoplights and  
14 making four-way stops around Scranton. If  
15 they would do that right now at Parker and  
16 Main traffic would move a thousand times  
17 faster than it does. There is cars lined  
18 up, I'm in the 2,600 block and that's two  
19 blocks from Parker and I have seen them two  
20 or three blocks past my house in heavy  
21 traffic when one car wants to make a left  
22 turn onto Parker. I don't know why there is  
23 not a four-way stop. You'd stop and go, I'm  
24 just saying that anyway.

25 About two weeks ago when I was

1 looking at the houses sold and all, I  
2 noticed there was 18 properties sold in the  
3 county, only two of them in Scranton, you  
4 know why? I think you know why. That's  
5 terrible, two houses out of 18. People  
6 avoid us like the plague, for God's sake.  
7 All you seem to be able to promise like last  
8 week's conversation is higher taxes and  
9 nobody has any solutions it's just -- when  
10 Hesser closed up downtown I said somebody  
11 could talk to this man and keep that  
12 business here, even if moved to another  
13 location. I have known him for years. This  
14 happens all over town and there is just  
15 nobody -- nobody working the right way with  
16 businesses. Downtown is just gone. And I  
17 don't -- I don't wish it, I keep telling you  
18 I don't wish it, but I was last week when I  
19 went to this tax bureau there couldn't have  
20 been 20 people in the mall and I think that  
21 fellow that thinks he is going to have  
22 retail in there is nuts, and I got that from  
23 somebody that's very successful.

24 You people just are not making the  
25 town any better. That's what you're

1           supposed to be doing up there. It's not  
2           getting any better for nobody. You sit  
3           there last week talking about taxes are  
4           going to go up another couple of hundred  
5           dollars. You complained you don't have no  
6           power, why? You are supposed to have some  
7           power for God's sake. I never heard of  
8           council not having any power. When we  
9           talked last week --

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

11                   MR. ELLMAN: --we have no power.

12                   Thank you.

13                   MR. ROGAN: Mary Gaughan.

14                   MS. GAUGHAN: Good evening,  
15           gentlemen. My name is Mary Gaughan, I'm a  
16           current city resident. My heart is broken  
17           listening to Ms. Seitzinger. I hope we will  
18           all pray for her and her husband that this  
19           insurance situation gets resolved.

20                   Now, I went to the Italian festival  
21           and I was appalled because a Scranton  
22           policeman didn't seem to know the difference  
23           between a domesticated animal, such as a  
24           dog, and an exotic animal such as a snake.  
25           Now, when I talked with him about the fact

1           that I am scared out of my wits about the  
2           snake, he laughed in my face and he said I  
3           could get bit by a dog.

4                         Now, the other day I was watching  
5           Good Morning America and George  
6           Stephanopoulos was interviewing Ray Kelly,  
7           former police Commissioner of New York City.  
8           The topic of the conversation was that the  
9           public confidence in police is at a 23-year  
10          low. We, in Scranton, are very fortunate.  
11          Every business, everyone will support the  
12          Scranton Police Department. Well,  
13          gentlemen, I want support and respect from a  
14          policeman. I do not want someone to laugh  
15          at me, and if there isn't an ordinance  
16          regarding dangerous reptiles in this city  
17          around somebody's neck inches away from my  
18          neck their damn well should be.

19                        And I look around this city and what  
20          I see on a daily basis, if there are not  
21          ordinances, which Solicitor Minora may  
22          inform me, I do think there are ordinances  
23          regarding skateboarding, regarding bicycles,  
24          regarding I know that in 2007 the  
25          Pennsylvania Senate passed an Act regarding

1 smoking in public places and on a daily  
2 basis I see people smoking in my face and  
3 everybody else's in violation of the law. I  
4 see people getting on buses and turning  
5 around and throwing the cigarette butts on  
6 the ground, and I see policemen careening  
7 by, and I know I'm not going to say anything  
8 wrong about the police, but I see police  
9 walking through this city like horses with  
10 blinders. They see nothing. If I was that  
11 officer my book would be filled and so would  
12 the city coffers with money. I think it's  
13 ashamed that if these ordinances exist that  
14 they are not being -- the police are not  
15 paying attention. I tried to cross the  
16 street on Lackawanna Avenue across from the  
17 Renaissance 500, there are signs on both  
18 sides that that is an area where citizens  
19 should be able to cross the street and cars  
20 fly by at 50 miles an hour. Sometimes I  
21 think I'm at a Nascar track, and I think  
22 that is definitely appalling.

23 And, also, Mr. Evans, I commend you,  
24 because I think this is America and I think  
25 whether or not you chose to run is your

1 business, and I don't think any citizen has  
2 the right to come in here and speak in an  
3 abusive manner to you. You are a gentleman  
4 and you have a right to do what you want.  
5 Thank you.

6 MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mary.

7 MR. ROGAN: Is there anyone who  
8 would like to address council?

9 MR. SBARAGLIA: Andy Sbaraglia,  
10 citizen of Scranton. Fellow Scrantonians,  
11 you all know what section of the city has a  
12 great population, or don't you? The  
13 greatest population in Scranton is in West  
14 Side why are you not -- every second in the  
15 city except for down there on Pineview, I  
16 think, has a pool. Why are you denying the  
17 citizens of West Scranton a pool? I don't  
18 understand your logic.

19 MR. ROGAN: Nobody wants to see a  
20 pool in West Side more than me. I grew up  
21 swimming in that pool. What I would --  
22 obviously, all of the plans are tentative  
23 plans, what I would like to see is there  
24 were always two pools at the Novembrino  
25 complex, what I would like to see happen is

1           one remain a pool and the other become a  
2           splash for younger kids, but right now this  
3           is only a portion of the funding and the  
4           rest of the funding the city has to find and  
5           that's why we are making the transfer here  
6           to keep that project alive, but we still do  
7           have a funding gap, but you are right, West  
8           Scranton is the biggest section of the town  
9           and there should be a pool.

10                   MR. SBARAGLIA: There is no question  
11           about it. West Side always had a pool, not  
12           Novembrino, but they have one right across  
13           from the high school. They had one adjacent  
14           there.

15                   Okay, let's go on a different  
16           subject, the parking garages, are they  
17           taxable or nontaxable being they are under  
18           receivership?

19                   MR. ROGAN: They are non-taxable?

20                   MR. SBARAGLIA: Why?

21                   MR. ROGAN: They are technically  
22           owned by the Scranton Parking Authority.

23                   MR. SBARAGLIA: I thought when they  
24           went under receivership the receiver took  
25           possession of the parking garages?



1 MR. ROGAN: The receiver runs the  
2 parking garages.

3 MR. SBARAGLIA: You mean we are  
4 still paying -- we are still on -- how did I  
5 put it, we are still paying insurance on it,  
6 is that what you are saying, and everything  
7 that goes associated with them garages?

8 MR. ROGAN: And we are paying over  
9 \$1 million in debt service every year.

10 MR. SBARAGLIA: Well, I realize  
11 that, but I don't care about that, if you go  
12 through with that sort of whatever I read in  
13 the paper, we stand to lose \$2 million a day  
14 year with parking and fines. I don't see  
15 how you could equate that, and never mind  
16 you want to lease it to another non-profit  
17 and then what obligations does the city  
18 have, all of the repairs because we are the  
19 landlord, no, none of the repairs. Why was  
20 there a stipulation in the paper saying they  
21 would have only a voice.

22 MR. ROGAN: Well, the paper only  
23 prints what they want to print, but we will  
24 be having a caucus prior to a vote on  
25 anything regarding the leases. We'll have

1 members of the administration and from the  
2 legal team that's been doing this work to  
3 answer questions.

4 MR. SBARAGLIA: Which once of you  
5 is on the committee, the liaisons with that  
6 deal? Is anybody on that, part of your  
7 council, have liaison with the mayor on what  
8 he is doing there?

9 MR. ROGAN: It would fall under the  
10 Finance Committee, and Councilmen McGoff has  
11 taking the lead on this issue from the start  
12 many, many months ago. In his absence I  
13 have been filling in on those meetings and  
14 conference calls until Councilman McGoff is  
15 back.

16 MR. SBARAGLIA: You should be well  
17 informed. You are a councilman, Mr. McGoff  
18 when that was forced into receivership so  
19 you should understand everything about that  
20 deal and what kind of deals was made, but  
21 even now you are going a little off board.  
22 I mean, if we stand to lose \$2 million a  
23 year no matter what we do, and pay a million  
24 dollars and lose another million that's not  
25 right.

1 MR. ROGAN: We're currently losing a  
2 few million dollars a year and we are also  
3 on the hook for repairs and there is a  
4 number of -- we can probably talk for an  
5 hour about the issues with the parking, and  
6 you are right it's been a huge issue for the  
7 last at least five years I have been here.  
8 That's why all of us on council thought  
9 before we do any vote regarding the parking  
10 monetization that we have a public caucus to  
11 answer all of these questions and that's  
12 what we are going to do.

13 MR. SBARAGLIA: Public caucus don't  
14 really do it, you should make extra copies  
15 of that legislation and have it available at  
16 a nominal cost so everybody in the city that  
17 wants to read it can read it. To listen to  
18 five minutes don't mean a darn thing. You  
19 couldn't even explain one iota in five  
20 minutes.

21 MR. ROGAN: There has also been --  
22 the caucus will likely be an hour, but there  
23 is also a website that was set up, I believe  
24 that was referenced in the newspaper article  
25 as well to help inform the public on this

1 transaction.

2 MR. SBARAGLIA: Right, it may inform  
3 them, but you got to read the contract and  
4 the contract should be made available at a  
5 nominal fee so everybody in the city that  
6 wants it can buy it rather than 25 cents a  
7 copy for cheap.

8 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. Is there  
9 anyone else who would like to address  
10 council?

11 MS. FOSTER: Good evening. Karen  
12 Foster, West Scranton resident, president of  
13 West Scranton Hyde Park Neighborhood Watch.  
14 I am sorry I was not able to attend the  
15 caucus earlier this evening, I did catch  
16 some of it on television, however, most of  
17 the comments were not on -- they didn't have  
18 their speaker on so we couldn't hear what  
19 the response was, so at the end, Mr. Evans,  
20 you had asked about what can be done  
21 regarding the census and could you just  
22 reiterate the response?

23 MR. EVANS: Well, basically Attorney  
24 Hickey expressed that the regulations are  
25 very onerous and time consuming and he was

1 going to -- still going through them to find  
2 out exactly what has to be done and how  
3 difficult it is. We, of course, you know, I  
4 offered any help that we can give in this  
5 process, if it means even an RFP for  
6 somebody from the outside, so we expect some  
7 sort of answer soon on what exactly has to  
8 take place. I do understand how it is a  
9 very difficult government entity to deal  
10 with, however, this is too important not to  
11 do so, so hopefully we will get the proper  
12 answer and get this thing moving.

13 MS. FOSTER: Okay, you may not be  
14 aware, but I have been in contact with the  
15 Lackawanna County Housing Coalition and we  
16 have agreed to put a subcommittee together  
17 to look at the situation and between the  
18 committee we are able to compare both maps  
19 and show what was current, what has been  
20 done from 2010 and what has remained the  
21 same. I did bring a copy of a marked up map  
22 if nobody has had an opportunity to look at  
23 it. There is a process that we can do and  
24 generally the body that takes care of the  
25 census numbers is and it's through Penn

1 State, they do have a department, and hold  
2 on one second, I will pull it up. It's the  
3 Penn State Federal Statistic Research Data  
4 Center and the current director's name is  
5 Mark Roberts.

6 And there is a process and,  
7 unfortunately, time has passed for an  
8 official redo of the map and those expired  
9 in July and in August. However, they do  
10 have a clause that they can look at specific  
11 parts of the census block to be able to look  
12 at them and see if there has been any errors  
13 on a case-by-case basis. This is little bit  
14 more challenging because we didn't go  
15 through the proper channels, but there is a  
16 solution to this, and as far as the  
17 Lackawanna County Real Estate Coalition,  
18 they are on board to do whatever it takes  
19 because this is a problem that could be 14,  
20 16 years. In 2000 it took until 2008 to get  
21 the low to mod number. It took until 2014  
22 to get the 2010 numbers, and we don't know  
23 what it's going to be like in the next 10  
24 years. So this is a moment where we need to  
25 be proactive rather than reactive and we are

1 going to be missing out not just our little  
2 West Scranton, but the city as a whole is  
3 going to be missing out on many  
4 opportunities and also identifying areas  
5 that have been traditionally low mod that  
6 are on the cusp of beyond blight and they  
7 are not going to be any good condition come  
8 the next census map if they even stand until  
9 this day.

10 So my concern is primarily policing  
11 efforts in these particular areas as well as  
12 giving opportunities to these blocks that  
13 could be renovated and have all of the  
14 wonderful thing that can happen through the  
15 Elm Street designation that we been looking  
16 to do for the lasts five years.

17 MR. EVANS: Can you -- now, the  
18 individual that you are referring to a Penn  
19 State did they work for who?

20 MS. FOSTER: They are entity that  
21 collects the data from the census for  
22 Pennsylvania and then distributes it to the  
23 federal government.

24 MR. EVANS: Okay.

25 MS. FOSTER: And that's really where

1 the data came from for the maps.

2 MR. EVANS: Okay. Now, he is  
3 telling you that there is a way around this  
4 to get it corrected but does the city have  
5 to be involved in this or can this be done  
6 --

7 MS. FOSTER: The only way this can  
8 happen is that chief executive officer or  
9 officers of the city borough or county would  
10 have to put in the order for this to happen.

11 MR. EVANS: So request. If you can  
12 get us a documentation on what exactly has  
13 to be done if there is something that we can  
14 do then by all means I think we should take  
15 a look at it.

16 MS. FOSTER: Also, the Lackawanna  
17 County Coalition has also offered to come in  
18 on caucus or in a special meeting to see  
19 what it is we can do as a collaborative to  
20 make this resolution to the best interest of  
21 the city.

22 MR. EVANS: Great.

23 MS. FOSTER: And then on another  
24 note --

25 MR. ROGAN: Go ahead, you can



1 finish.

2 MS. FOSTER: On another note, I  
3 understand this current situation going  
4 forward with the Novembrino pool and as our  
5 community has been selected for the pocket  
6 parks collaborative we have learned a lot of  
7 different things that will be make it easier  
8 in the future for the city to be able to  
9 maintain the parks without having a  
10 financial drain, and one of the reasons they  
11 picked this splash park concept is because  
12 it was so much less expensive.

13 Now, there was two different ideas,  
14 one was keeping the wading pool and then the  
15 Olympic size pool would be the splash park  
16 and the another one that we would eliminate  
17 one of the pools and put in an amphitheater.  
18 The children absolutely need this resource.

19 And just on another note, we take a  
20 big part of the solution very seriously and  
21 we have collaborated with the city and the  
22 other entities so that if we can be another  
23 catalyst to make the changes and the  
24 improvements so it's not a burden on the  
25 city then we are willing to do so.

1 MR. ROGAN: Thank you very much.

2 MS. FOSTER: Thank you.

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

5 MS. SCHUMACHER: Good evening,  
6 Council. Marie Schumacher. The first thing  
7 on my list for tonight was 7-D on the  
8 insurance and I now have changed it from did  
9 it lapse to are we paying twice so I really  
10 think that we need to table that for tonight  
11 until we find out. I can't believe there is  
12 any insurance company in existence that  
13 would allow for an extension without a  
14 financial compensation for that. So, again,  
15 as Joan, I will go on, but we need to know  
16 that I think before you vote on it.

17 And, also, I would like to know why  
18 it's going in halfway through the next  
19 administration. We have taken so much away  
20 from whoever wants to be mayor for next --  
21 during the next term that I don't think it's  
22 really fair.

23 I would like to know, I guess that  
24 would be you, Mr. Evans, on the rental  
25 registration is that just dead.

1 MR. EVANS: No, it's --

2 MS. SCHUMACHER: It's been since  
3 June.

4 MR. EVANS: It's a lawsuit, and the  
5 city was sued because of the rate structure.

6 MS. SCHUMACHER: I was in Court.  
7 They agreed that they are going to get  
8 together and do something.

9 MR. EVANS: I know. I agree. I'm  
10 absolutely surprised and I'm shocked that  
11 it's not taken care of. Councilman Rogan  
12 and myself had a conversation about the  
13 other day, we could have solved this last  
14 March and it could have done already and in  
15 place, and I have no idea what's taking so  
16 long other than there have been some  
17 complications with the lawsuit, I really  
18 don't know because we haven't been privy to  
19 that, but there is an opportunity to, you  
20 know -- -

21 MS. SCHUMACHER: Well, maybe  
22 somebody needs to take to Mr. Shrive and see  
23 what's happening.

24 MR. EVANS: Yeah, I would say we  
25 need to send a letter to Attorney Shrive to

1 get a status update. Absolutely.

2 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay, thank you.

3 And the parking -- the article that was in  
4 the paper last week, I think it came out a  
5 week ago, about what the mayor's planning to  
6 do, I know when I read it I had more  
7 questions than I found answers, but the one  
8 thing I would like to know since you people  
9 are involved is it the parking garages only  
10 or are the meters included in what the  
11 mayor's planning?

12 MR. ROGAN: It's the garages and the  
13 meters.

14 MS. SCHUMACHER: Garages and the  
15 meters, okay. Thank you. Now, on the trash  
16 fees, the last payment was due by the first  
17 of September, are you able to tell me  
18 whether the -- what percentage paid this  
19 time? Did we beat the 25 percent of past or  
20 did we not? And if we did not which  
21 direction and what was it?

22 MR. WECHSLER: I think actually  
23 there is a grace period until the 30th of  
24 September, the final payment, and that, of  
25 course, there is a -- it was due on the 1st,

1 but there's a 30 --

2 MS. SCHUMACHER: Did you people  
3 approve a grace period?

4 MR. WECHSLER: It's -- yeah, we did.  
5 It's due on the --

6 MS. SCHUMACHER: When was that voted  
7 on?

8 MR. WECHSLER: Well, the bill I  
9 voted on said September 1, and then fees  
10 would be assessed after the 30th.

11 MS. SCHUMACHER: But how many had  
12 been paid by the September 1?

13 MR. WECHSLER: Just to give you some  
14 background, the last time we tried to  
15 determine that number the number itself was  
16 dependent on how many vacant properties that  
17 there were there and that calculation isn't  
18 completed until almost the end of October,  
19 end of November. So the amount of bills  
20 that were made out aren't finalized until  
21 the vacancies are determined.

22 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay, I thought  
23 vacancy was an ongoing process, but how many  
24 vacant properties are there in the city as  
25 of the last time?

1 MR. WECHSLER: It's not the vacant  
2 properties it's if you have rented -- if you  
3 had vacancies.

4 MS. SCHUMACHER: Oh, my bad. Okay.

5 MR. WECHSLER: That determines if  
6 the fee was due or not.

7 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay, thank you.  
8 Mr. Rogan, have you received an answer yet  
9 regarding whether or not we can subpoena the  
10 principals in the double pension issue and  
11 get this put behind us?

12 MR. ROGAN: I just spoke to Attorney  
13 Minora just before the meeting about that,  
14 hopefully by next week we will know whether  
15 the state police would -- we can subpoena  
16 them, we have the right.

17 MS. SCHUMACHER: I understand that.

18 MR. ROGAN: But whether the state  
19 police would I guess frown upon on it or  
20 would hinder their investigation.

21 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay, so that's  
22 next week, okay. And I don't know who owns  
23 the Linden Street bridge that connects  
24 Mifflin Avenue with I think Seventh, but  
25 there is a lot of rebar that's sticking out

1 down there and I wondering if the city can  
2 get it done, fixed before the winter sets  
3 in, and if it's a county or a state road if  
4 you could write a letter to somebody to  
5 suggest that they might want to do that.  
6 There are portions of it that are I believe  
7 dangerous to the pedestrians certainly.

8 And awhile back you had a group in  
9 that wanted to collect delinquent taxes, and  
10 if I may finish this, they mentioned that  
11 they had a representative as every taxing  
12 authority is allowed to have on the  
13 Assessment Appeals Board, does the city  
14 currently have somebody attending those  
15 meetings?

16 MR. EVANS: Well, they are notified  
17 for every reassessment because we get them  
18 here, of course, every week, and that's up  
19 to the administration, and usually it's  
20 somebody from the law department that  
21 attends those, but I don't know if they are  
22 regularly attending them or not. They  
23 should be. I know when I was at the  
24 Assessment Office only one or two boroughs  
25 actually sent representatives, nobody else

1 did, unless there was something large that  
2 was coming in like a large commercial  
3 building.

4 MS. SCHUMACHER: Okay. I've got a  
5 lot of questions on the revised recovery  
6 plan that I'll bring back next week. Thank  
7 you.

8 MR. DOBRZYN: Good evening. Dave  
9 Dobrzyn, resident and taxes paid. Garbage  
10 bill paid, dog license. Gas company, please  
11 stand your ground once again. Don't let  
12 their battle of the lawyers batter us. They  
13 have been ruining our streets long enough  
14 and apparently it's a test case so the water  
15 company and everybody else that is concerned  
16 we do have underground phone lines. For  
17 instance, in my court there is rut that has  
18 been put in on switching box, ran power to  
19 the lines, it's a rut and it's been there  
20 for years.

21 Speaking of ruts, thank you for  
22 getting the 600 block of Brick Court. I  
23 seen in last night, it's patched adequately  
24 so we can scratch that off our list, Mr.  
25 Gaughan.



1                   Now, a subject once again KOZ's and  
2                   the Chamber and all of this, you know, a lot  
3                   of this has been reverse engineering our  
4                   entire society, we were years back in a  
5                   so-called energy crisis and trying to  
6                   scramble of ways to get the jobs to the  
7                   people. Now it's in reverse, we are  
8                   supposed to get the people to the jobs and  
9                   once again I'd like to remind the Chamber of  
10                  Commerce that they are not doing anyone any  
11                  favours when they move a company and a place  
12                  of employment 20 miles from the town up in  
13                  the sudden swamp in Scott Township, and,  
14                  furthermore, that was a wetland at one time,  
15                  I used to have snapper turtles crawling in  
16                  the door, Herb Jones, what have you, and a  
17                  lot of people just decided to retire and  
18                  some people decided that they would rather  
19                  find a job somewhere else.

20                  And on this EMT tax, I have a  
21                  question with this, is some of this -- I  
22                  heard the word volunteer a couple of weeks  
23                  ago, are people just willing to turn over  
24                  the money and it's fabulous and if you don't  
25                  there is no teeth in the law to collect it?

1           It's a very big concern because it was  
2           supposed to be the answer to our rather  
3           bankrupt pension system.

4                         And I thought I had it this week,  
5           but here is a bill from Comcast and I  
6           must -- it must have been on another bill,  
7           but I now have the right to dial to India  
8           and Japan and China and a couple other  
9           countries. I was wondering what the value  
10          of that is because I don't know anyone there  
11          and don't speak the language, well, I had a  
12          thought on it, well, you know, they are  
13          pushing this business class on the  
14          television every day, and how wonderful it  
15          is, well, you know, we are probably  
16          subsidizing the business class for \$5 a  
17          month or something like that, why do these  
18          company insist on offering me something that  
19          I don't really need and I didn't ask for and  
20          I didn't want? I mean, it's silly.

21                         And, furthermore, on this  
22          outsourcing, a mention was made a few weeks  
23          ago of schooling and, once again, at 50 or  
24          55 years old you should be planning to  
25          prepare for your retirement not launching a

1 new career. I mean, some people are experts  
2 and are good at reinventing themselves, but  
3 you are not going to go from a factory  
4 worker to medical worker or something like  
5 that in that amount of time and have it  
6 count, you are probably going to start at  
7 some ridiculous wage so as far as I'm  
8 concerned going to school at a later age is  
9 kind of just a way of an outsourcing, the  
10 chief giving themselves absolution. We are  
11 all going to sit around with our computers  
12 and play computer games and the check will  
13 be in the mail. Don't worry about it, the  
14 check will be in the mail and more often  
15 than not it will cost you 200 bucks a month  
16 for a lot of the things you don't ask for.  
17 Thank you and have a good night.

18 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. Is there  
19 anyone else who would like to address  
20 council?

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

23 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Wechsler, do you  
24 have any motions or comments?

25 MR. WECHSLER: Yes, thank you,

1 Mr. Rogan. In regards to the recent  
2 editorial that was in the paper about the  
3 SAFER grant I would like to just make some  
4 corrections to some of the information that  
5 was included there. The editorial stated  
6 that retention. The SAFER grant recently  
7 approved for Scranton does not include a  
8 retention requirement. The retention  
9 requirement has been not enforced since  
10 2010.

11 In regards to the pension, because  
12 of the new firefighter contract these new  
13 employees will be paying into the system not  
14 taking money out so in current time we will  
15 actually be helping the pension fund levels,  
16 and the comment that we should not hire any  
17 firemen until we evaluate the cost of the  
18 pension is unrealistic because we are going  
19 to have to hire firemen, policemen, DPW  
20 workers and other city employees, so we are  
21 going to have to keep hiring people, we are  
22 going to have to get our costs under  
23 control, but not to hire people because of  
24 the pension requirements I don't think it  
25 would ever work.

1                   In terms of the benefits, the SAFER  
2                   grant covers the benefits for the new -- all  
3                   of the new benefits. And in terms of entry  
4                   costs, it's true that the city must pay for  
5                   training for the new firefighters at about  
6                   \$102,000. This training will create a pool  
7                   of firefighters that are trained not only in  
8                   fire prevention, but also EMT training and  
9                   certification. If there is a layoff, these  
10                  officers would be available for recall as  
11                  needed and would not have to go through  
12                  retraining.

13                  And in terms of if there is a  
14                  layoff, if all of the new officers were laid  
15                  off after the grant expired the cost to the  
16                  city would be approximately \$208,000 in  
17                  unemployment benefit. So if we combine that  
18                  with training costs we are getting these  
19                  firefighters for two years at the exposure  
20                  rate of \$320,000 to the city. If we take  
21                  into consideration the increased protection  
22                  to the city and the expected reduction in  
23                  overtime for these new officers, it's my  
24                  opinion that the benefits far outweigh any  
25                  negatives that may occur.

1                   This evening we had a hearing in  
2                   regards to the community block grant funds  
3                   and I spoke to Ms. Aebli earlier in the week  
4                   and we are going to follow up with some  
5                   information next week, but I'd like to go  
6                   back to when Mr. Boscov was here in June,  
7                   last year Mr. Boscov gave a contribution of  
8                   \$750,000 to make good on the loan that the  
9                   city had been involved with for the Mall at  
10                  Steamtown, and when that money was given to  
11                  the city the question was asked of  
12                  Mr. Boscov if he intended to pay anything  
13                  further and his answer at that time was,  
14                  "Hopefully as we go forward we will be able  
15                  to take care of that other loan," he said.  
16                  "We are going to try to make sure that  
17                  Boscov's is doing well and we continue to  
18                  pay off whatever the city has due every year  
19                  over the next 10 years."

20                  When Mr. Boscov was here requesting  
21                  the application for the RAP-P grant I  
22                  specifically asked him if he was going to  
23                  make a payment this year and he said yes,  
24                  and I asked him if he could make it earlier  
25                  this year and he also said yes. So I would

1 just like to follow up on that to see if  
2 there is a plan for Mr. Boscov to make any  
3 other donations to the city this year to  
4 help us pay some of the costs of the loans  
5 that he is involved with.

6 This week Councilman Gaughan and  
7 Councilman Evans and myself we took a tour  
8 of the Midtown apartments. The Midtown  
9 apartments were severely affected by the  
10 recent Sandone Fire and through no fault of  
11 anyone there was kind of a lack of  
12 communications in terms of services that  
13 needed to be rendered during that time of  
14 that emergency in regards to lack of water,  
15 smoke, and different things like that so and  
16 I figure my colleagues will talk a little  
17 more about it, but I think part of the  
18 problem of this is we no longer have a  
19 director of public safety who would be more  
20 or less responsible for the general safety  
21 of the entire area.

22 One thing that I did when we sat and  
23 we talked about this I also thought that  
24 Lackawanna County Emergency Planning should  
25 have been a little more involved in this.

1 I know Lackawanna County sometimes likes to  
2 think of Scranton as on it's own, but I  
3 think in a situation where it's a mass  
4 problem I think Lackawanna emergency  
5 services could have been involved in that a  
6 little bit more.

7 Every time I hear a speaker talk  
8 about the neighborhood associations it kind  
9 of gets my dander up a little bit. Tonight  
10 we had a speaker say that the neighborhood  
11 associations are becoming extensions of  
12 political arms. Well, I have maintained my  
13 attendance in the neighborhood meeting, I  
14 have maintained my commitments to these  
15 neighborhood groups and I can tell you right  
16 now that there interest is not political.

17 I go to these groups, I was at North  
18 Scranton on Monday night, they were  
19 discussing plans for a fundraiser, with the  
20 Octoberfest they were also planning a  
21 ceremony of celebration of someone up there  
22 who does a lot of volunteer work. I know  
23 Mrs. Foster's group does a lot of work,  
24 South Scranton does a lot of work, and I  
25 shouldn't go on because I'll probably forget





1 ideas out of there that we'll be probably  
2 putting out in the not too distance future.

3 Councilman Rogan and myself met with  
4 realtors to discuss real estate in the city,  
5 another great meeting, although, very  
6 difficult because of challenges selling real  
7 estate right now in the city is very, very  
8 difficult, and we all know that. So we did  
9 come with some ideas, we are going to try to  
10 work through them and see what sticks I  
11 guess and move on, but we are collecting  
12 ideas and people are willing to give them  
13 and we are willing to receive them so as we  
14 move forward we'll try to disclose more and  
15 more as we get closer to unveiling what some  
16 of these ideas were, but so far the sessions  
17 have been very good and I'm very thankful  
18 for the people who have been able to  
19 participate and be involved in the process.  
20 Thank you.

21 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. Councilman  
22 Gaughan, do you have any motions or  
23 comments?

24 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, thank you. I  
25 received a complaint about the 500 block of

1 Bayo Court in West Scranton. It needs to be  
2 patched, it's in terrible disrepair and the  
3 residents in that area are having an awful  
4 time getting in and out of cars and  
5 traveling up and down that court so we did  
6 send that request to the DPW and hopefully  
7 that Court will be patched soon.

8 I am glad to report that Dunmore,  
9 Dalton, Clarks Green, and Clarks Summit have  
10 approve the SAPA implementation agreement  
11 through an ordinance so SAPA is moving along  
12 nicely and we should get some more updates  
13 on that in the near future.

14 I did receive a complaint about the  
15 400 block of Willow Street, junk cars, grass  
16 that is very high and hasn't been cut in a  
17 few months so we will send that request  
18 along to the DPW and the Department of  
19 Licensing and Inspections.

20 I did send a letter this week to the  
21 administration asking how the website, I  
22 think Mr. Rogan mentioned it before,  
23 Scranton Forward. It's a website that's  
24 supposed to explain the parking monetization  
25 deal and some other things and I am curious

1 as to how that is funded and what the costs  
2 are associated with maintaining the website  
3 so hopefully I'll hear back on that.

4 I am still awaiting a response from  
5 the mayor and administration on the status  
6 of the proposed \$1 million in savings from  
7 the police and fire contracts, and as I  
8 mentioned earlier to Ms. Hodowanitz, the  
9 status of transferring the pension  
10 management to the Municipal Retirement  
11 System. And that is all I have for this  
12 week. Thank you.

13 MR. ROGAN: Thank you. A number of  
14 issues tonight. First I'll start with some  
15 of the things that were mentioned. I  
16 wholeheartedly agree with Councilman  
17 Wechsler that, I guess I'm not used to  
18 speaking at this end, I'm used to going  
19 second, but he hit the nail on the head and  
20 one of the first items I wanted to talk  
21 about was Mr. Boscov and the loans.  
22 Obviously, the action plan that we had a  
23 hearing on tonight and will be tabling for a  
24 30-day comment period, one of the items that  
25 is costing us valuable money that we could

1 use for community programs is the fact that  
2 Steamtown Mall Associates, Mr. Boscov,  
3 defaulted on their loan and the city is  
4 paying, so I agree wholeheartedly with what  
5 Mr. Wechsler, and if my colleagues would  
6 agree I think that we should send a formal  
7 correspondence to Mr. Boscov asking if that  
8 payment is going to be made and, if so, when  
9 we should expect it, if my colleagues agree  
10 to that. Thank you.

11 Sticking with the theme of the  
12 community development block grant money,  
13 there are a number of great programs in  
14 here, some that are funded and some that  
15 aren't and, obviously, we wish we had the \$6  
16 million to fund all of these programs coming  
17 in from the federal government, but at the  
18 end of the day these are tax dollars, also.  
19 This is the free money that the city  
20 receives, so it's very important for us to  
21 make sure that those tax dollars are being  
22 spent on projects that are worthy and that  
23 are going to get the most bang for the buck  
24 to help the citizens of Scranton.

25 So one item that is funded in the

1 current plan that I have problems with in  
2 the past, and I did some investigating into  
3 this week, is the United Neighborhood Center  
4 of NEPA, the SCOLA Learning Center Program.  
5 It's funded currently for \$10,000 in the  
6 current proposal, and the explanation that  
7 was given is to provide adult literacy in  
8 English as a second language classes to  
9 residents of the City of Scranton. While  
10 I'm all for English as a second language in  
11 classes for people who are here in the  
12 United States legally my concern is that by  
13 funding this program for \$10,000 what we are  
14 in essence doing is using federal taxpayer  
15 dollars to teach illegal immigrants skills  
16 where they will go into the work force to  
17 compete against Americans for jobs and  
18 that's not right.

19 So what I did is it I looked back  
20 into the records when this issue came up and  
21 when I brought it up a number of the years  
22 ago, and Mr. Hanley was here touting the  
23 United Neighborhood Centers and the good  
24 programs that they do, and they do great  
25 work with many programs, and the other ones

1 that are funded, Developing Youth and the  
2 Project Hope summer camp are great programs  
3 and Mr. Hanley and that organization do an  
4 excellent job. This program in particular  
5 my concern was that as it is a program for  
6 immigrants was that the money is going to  
7 immigrants who are here in the United States  
8 legally, so I asked Mr. Hanley that  
9 question, it was at this podium a number of  
10 years ago, and first when I asked the  
11 question he first said, "Well, we don't,"  
12 and then he stammered, and it's in the  
13 minutes, and then he said, "We work with  
14 people who are working towards citizenship."

15 And it was just odd that he started  
16 with one train of thought and then  
17 completely switched to another and I think  
18 knowing my position on illegal immigration  
19 and knowing where I was coming from, so I  
20 did a little investigation into this today  
21 and I call was placed to the United  
22 Neighborhood Centers to the SCOLA learning  
23 center and a question was asked was that if  
24 an individual was in the United States  
25 illegally, came to sign up for this program

1           whether they would be allowed and the answer  
2           was absolutely yes that this program would  
3           accept somebody who was here in the United  
4           States illegally to teach them English. And  
5           as I mentioned before, I have no problem  
6           with that type of program, I actually think  
7           it's great that there is something out there  
8           to teach people English, my problem is that  
9           \$10,000 of taxpayer money is being used for  
10          a program that is primarily benefiting  
11          illegal immigrants over American citizens.

12                        So that being said, I would like to  
13          make a motion to amend Item 6-B as per the  
14          following changes: Change funding for Dress  
15          Success for Lackawanna County, which is an  
16          excellent women's organization from zero  
17          dollars to \$10,000, interchange funding from  
18          United Neighborhood Centers from the SCOLA  
19          program, from \$10,000 to zero dollars.

20                        Motion is made, is there a second?  
21          Motion for lack of a second. I have to say  
22          I'm very disappointed that not one of my  
23          colleagues would agree with me on this  
24          issue. I will try in the future weeks after  
25          the comment period to once again make a



1 similar amendment to defund this program  
2 that uses your taxpayer dollars to help  
3 illegal immigrants.

4 MR. GAUGHAN: Do we know that for  
5 sure? I mean, do we know that positively?  
6 Do you have facts that show that that is  
7 supporting illegal immigration or are you  
8 just assuming?

9 MR. ROGAN: I made a -- a phone call  
10 was made today and the question was asked  
11 would they provide this service to an  
12 illegal immigrant and the answer was yes.

13 MR. GAUGHAN: But are they?

14 MR. ROGAN: They would have to turn  
15 their records over to us.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: I just --

17 MR. ROGAN: Even the possibility  
18 that they would serve -- use our taxpayer  
19 dollars for an illegal immigrant over an  
20 organization like Dress for Success or any  
21 one of the other organizations -- -

22 MR. GAUGHAN: I think we are going  
23 down a slippery slope here and I think we've  
24 been watching too much Donald Trump on TV  
25 and I'll leave it at that.

1 MR. ROGAN: Well, Donald Trump is  
2 certainly rising in the polls because of  
3 this issue, but to stay away from the  
4 politics of it, it is a big issue and I  
5 think everyone on this board and everyone in  
6 the public knows where I stand on that  
7 issue.

8 MS. GAUGHAN: Let's get the homeless  
9 off the street.

10 MR. ROGAN: Excuse me, you are out  
11 of order.

12 MS. GAUGHAN: I'm sorry.

13 MR. ROGAN: But I agree --

14 MS. GAUGHAN: But what you're saying  
15 I agree.

16 MR. ROGAN: And I agree with you,  
17 but this money can't be used to help the  
18 homeless, which there is programs in here  
19 for.

20 MS. GAUGHAN: Well, why aren't  
21 they--

22 MR. ROGAN: I'm sorry, I thank you  
23 for agreeing with me, but it's not your  
24 time. I would be happy to.

25 MS. GAUGHAN: -- even if I disagree

1 with you.

2 MR. ROGAN: Again, this money should  
3 be diverted to help Americans and that's why  
4 I made the motion and I will continue in the  
5 coming weeks to see that this money is  
6 funded to an other program. If it's not,  
7 even though this package 95 percent of it is  
8 great, with this money going to this program  
9 I cannot vote on final passage for this  
10 program.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Can I just make one on  
12 that?

13 MR. ROGAN: Sure.

14 MR. GAUGHAN: I think it's  
15 disgraceful that Mr. Rogan is using his  
16 comment period to further his agenda on  
17 illegal immigration as if we have some kind  
18 of control over that, and I think to defund  
19 this program that helps people acquire basic  
20 reading, writing and life skills necessary  
21 to function effectively in society and to  
22 put us in that position to get into the  
23 middle of an illegal immigration debate is  
24 disgraceful.

25 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Gaughan, I did

1 provide all of my colleagues, you included,  
2 with this earlier in the week and I did  
3 sign -- -

4 MR. GAUGHAN: And I thought it was  
5 disgrace then.

6 MR. ROGAN: Well, you didn't mention  
7 it then, only when the cameras were on you  
8 mentioned that, and I'm not debating about  
9 the national issue, I'm debating on what we  
10 are voting on here, this funding proposal  
11 specific.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: And you are making an  
13 assumption, you don't know that for a fact.  
14 It may be true, it may be true with any of  
15 the other programs. There is a lot of  
16 illegal immigrants. I'm not saying that  
17 illegal immigration is right or wrong, all  
18 I'm saying is anybody could use any of these  
19 programs. This is ridiculous and that's --  
20 I'll leave it at that.

21 MR. ROGAN: Why you say illegal  
22 immigration is wrong, and I did investigate  
23 it, a call was made to the organization and  
24 they said they would.

25 MR. GAUGHAN: A call is not an

1 investigation. That's not an investigation.

2 MR. ROGAN: Mr. Hanley, who runs the  
3 organization, when he was here and I asked  
4 him about it personally and the initial  
5 answer was basically we don't make this  
6 determination. They will help anyone who is  
7 in need of the service. If you agree with  
8 that, that's fine, I do not agree with that.

9 MR. EVANS: My comment would be that  
10 Dress for Success is a fantastic program and  
11 at some point we should look into the  
12 funding that we have and possibly maybe we  
13 can shift some money over to them because I  
14 think it's a well worthy -- a very worthy  
15 cause.

16 On this issue my concern is that we  
17 don't know what level they may or may not  
18 have illegal immigrants, we don't know that  
19 for sure, but there are a lot of good people  
20 that are getting the service and need it  
21 that are trying to assimilate into our  
22 community and I think it's very, very  
23 important. I just don't know what the level  
24 is of the illegal immigration so that's why  
25 I'm going to vote "yes" tonight.

1 MR. GAUGHAN: And just to comment,  
2 this is not for the cameras, I did state in  
3 an e-mail that I thought we are going down a  
4 slippery slope. I did make that comment and  
5 I do feel strongly about it, so it's not  
6 just for the cameras.

7 MR. ROGAN: And I also mentioned  
8 that we could discuss this based on the  
9 organization without even speaking about  
10 immigration.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: And you're the one  
12 that brought it up. You sent that e-mail  
13 and you brought it up so -- I mean, come on.

14 MR. ROGAN: Because everyone else  
15 surprisingly objected.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: You knew we would  
17 object because nobody was for it.

18 MR. ROGAN: I thought it would be a  
19 4-0 vote to fund --

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Pat, please you are  
21 wrong on this one. You knew that we were  
22 not going to second, no one had a second.  
23 Joe it clear in the e-mail and you still  
24 brought it up so you want to make this about  
25 illegal immigration which makes absolutely,

1 positively in these chambers no sense in my  
2 opinion. No sense.

3 MR. ROGAN: In regards to this  
4 specific program it's absolutely relevant  
5 because it is a program for immigrants. If  
6 this program was for legal immigrants only I  
7 would want to fund it.

8 MR. GAUGHAN: It is for both native  
9 and foreign born people. It's right in the  
10 definition of what SCOLA is. It's for all  
11 people, not just immigrants, illegal  
12 immigrants, it's for everybody. If someone  
13 out there doesn't know how to read, use that  
14 service. It's not just for immigrants.

15 MR. ROGAN: Correct.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: It's for native born  
17 people, also, so let's not make that  
18 characterization that this is a program for  
19 just foreign people. It's for everybody.

20 MR. ROGAN: If you go on the website  
21 for the program it is primarily used -- the  
22 program started off as a literacy program in  
23 America. It has transitioned to an English  
24 as a second language program, which is  
25 mentioned in here. Obviously, I'm not going

1 to win this debate with my colleagues, but  
2 it is something I feel very strongly about  
3 and I will be hoping that we can make an  
4 amendment to this before final passage. As  
5 we mentioned before, there will be a 30-day  
6 comment period, this will be tabled tonight.  
7 I will support moving it on, but then at  
8 that point if that funding isn't there I  
9 can't support this on the final passage.

10 Moving onto to a couple of other  
11 items, the SAFER grant was brought up by  
12 Councilmen Wechsler, and the editorial in  
13 the paper was very unfair to the program.  
14 That editorial talked about SAFER as if it  
15 had the same regulations as the cops grant  
16 from the 90's, and it does not, as  
17 Councilmen Wechsler mentioned. This does  
18 not have a component where if the firemen  
19 are hired that they have to stay on with the  
20 city for however many years following that.

21 I did speak to the mayor regarding  
22 this and he did say that if these positions  
23 weren't filled through attrition as the  
24 firemen retire anyone hired under the SAFER  
25 grant would be laid off at that period of



1 time.

2 Two other -- three other items. The  
3 foreclosure registration, if you recall,  
4 about six months ago I had an individual  
5 from a firm come up and give a presentation  
6 to council regarding foreclosure  
7 registration, and I was at the BA's Office  
8 and Dave Bulzoni did give us an update on it  
9 today that that is -- the RFP should be  
10 going out shortly and I'm glad to see that  
11 there is movement on that issue.

12 The last two items, and this one was  
13 from Councilmen McGoff who texted this to me  
14 prior to the meeting, the planters  
15 throughout the downtown, there will be a lot  
16 of action downtown, the Race for the Cure  
17 and people all throughout the city, please  
18 do in the use the planters throughout the  
19 town as garbage recyclables because they are  
20 not.

21 And, finally, this is something I  
22 neglected for a number of weeks, during the  
23 recess I had an individual contact me  
24 because there were mattresses thrown out,  
25 basically in middle of the sidewalk in West

1           Scranton and, you know, it was sitting out  
2           there, it wasn't ripped up, it wasn't  
3           garbage day, and it's not the DPW'S job to  
4           pick up mattresses that are just thrown out.  
5           It was a Friday around 1:00 when I got the  
6           call and knowing that if it wasn't resolved  
7           within the next few hours it would carry on  
8           over the weekend, and Larry Winn from the  
9           DPW had that taken of for me within an hour,  
10          and so I just wanted to thank him and that's  
11          something that I meant to do a number of  
12          weeks ago. So that is all I have for  
13          tonight.

14                   MS. REED: 5-B. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
15                   A RESOLUTION - AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND  
16                   OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE  
17                   AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH ARRIS  
18                   ENGINEERING GROUP LTD. FOR THE CITY OF  
19                   SCRANTON ARCHITECT/ENGINEER (A/E) FOR STREET  
20                   LIGHTING PROJECT PHASE II.

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

24                   MR. WECHSLER: So moved.

25                   MR. EVANS: Second.

1 MR. ROGAN: On the question?

2 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question.

3 I just want to say that I think this is  
4 going to be a great project, and I think  
5 that -- I have to commend the mayor and the  
6 administration, I think they were working  
7 towards an economical and cost effective  
8 approach through revitalizing the city's  
9 lighting systems that will create a safer  
10 environment in our neighborhoods and  
11 downtown and create a significant hopefully  
12 cost savings as we move towards LED  
13 lighting.

14 MR. EVANS: I agree.

15 MR. ROGAN: Anyone else? All those  
16 in favor of introduction signify by saying  
17 aye.

18 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

19 MR. EVANS: Aye.

20 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

21 MR. ROGAN: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
22 have it and so moved.

23 MS. REED: 5-C. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
24 A RESOLUTION - RATIFYING AND APPROVING OF  
25 THE EXECUTION AND SUBMISSION OF THE GRANT

1 APPLICATION BY THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO THE  
2 PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND  
3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (DCED) FOR THE 2016  
4 LOCAL SHARE ACCOUNT GRANT (GAMING FUNDS)  
5 MONROE COUNTY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$401,568.00  
6 TO CONVERT THE SERRENTI MEMORIAL ARMY  
7 RESERVE CENTER, LOCATED AT 1801 PINE STREET,  
8 INTO AN EMERGENCY SERVICES CENTER AND  
9 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE  
10 CITY OFFICIALS TO ACCEPT THE GRANT, IF  
11 SUCCESSFUL, COORDINATING AND DISBURSING THE  
12 GRANT FUNDS FOR THE CONVERSION OF THE  
13 SERRENTI MEMORIAL ARMY RESERVE CENTER INTO  
14 AN EMERGENCY SERVICES CENTER.

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

18 MR. WECHSLER: So moved.

19 MR. EVANS: Second.

20 MR. ROGAN: On the question?

21 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question.

22 I don't believe that we should introduce  
23 this legislation until Mayor Courtright  
24 provides council with an analysis of how  
25 much it will cost the city to maintain this

1 building for the next five to ten years. We  
2 did hear in the caucus tonight from our  
3 business administrator that we may have an  
4 analysis of how much the building will cost,  
5 but to maintain it in the future we won't  
6 have that until October. What will the  
7 impact of the acquiring and maintaining this  
8 building, which is very large, as most of  
9 you know, have on future budgets? We should  
10 also find out, as was suggested in the paper  
11 recently, about an environment analysis on  
12 the site to make sure that there is no  
13 ground contamination, which once we acquire  
14 the building we would be responsible for.

15 I understand the police department's  
16 desire to use this facility as an emergency  
17 center as it would be a great location and I  
18 think the intent is very honorable, however,  
19 I'm concerned about the city's ability to  
20 maintain a building of this size as we move  
21 into the future. I do not believe that it  
22 is a wise choice for a city who is in  
23 serious financial trouble to acquire major  
24 pieces of real estate which we may not be  
25 able to maintain properly and which there is

1 not at this time an urgent need for. The  
2 city has proven time and time again that it  
3 cannot maintain the assets that it currently  
4 has. Thank you.

5 MR. EVANS: I have a comment on  
6 that. I have a little bit different take on  
7 this. I have no problem with passing this  
8 and approving it and sending it down,  
9 however, we talked and talked as well about  
10 possibly amending the ordinance to remove  
11 the word "accept" so council has an  
12 opportunity that after the grant is received  
13 we can say "yes" or "no", but only after the  
14 facility study could be done we will have  
15 that information at that time, we'll also  
16 have more information on what the plans are,  
17 and the administration will have to give us  
18 more information on what the plans for  
19 long-term maintenance are, so I think all of  
20 these things can happen while we are waiting  
21 for the grant to come in. Again, if the  
22 grant comes in, we find out that the city  
23 study tells us this is not a good idea or  
24 the administration does not give us a backup  
25 to support a long-term plan for this

1 facility we simply say no to the grant and  
2 move on. That would be my perspective on  
3 this.

4 MR. WECHSLER: Yes, I agree with my  
5 colleagues on this. We are getting to a  
6 point now we are putting these applications  
7 in and we are getting to get to a point  
8 where we are going to be in competition with  
9 ourselves. We are going to have to  
10 establish some priorities in terms of what  
11 we are applying for.

12 I think recently we just applied for  
13 an LSA for a large fire truck, and if I my  
14 choice between the fire truck and this  
15 facility I would choose the fire truck,  
16 which would immediately be able to serve  
17 people, so the question is and concern is  
18 raised. I agree I will be voting to move  
19 this along because there is an application  
20 period that these grants have to be put  
21 into, so if it's decided that the facility  
22 is a good deal for us and will assist the  
23 city I wouldn't want the grant to be held up  
24 while we wait for the study to be done, so I  
25 do agree with Mr. Evans and Mr. Gaughan on

1           this issue. Thank you.

2                   MR. ROGAN: And I agree, also, with  
3           much of what has been said, but before  
4           moving forward with this acquisition we do  
5           need to take a look at cost and the  
6           benefits. I did have a long conversation  
7           with Chief Graziano about it, and it seems  
8           to be a very well thought out idea that  
9           could help increase the public safety for  
10          the residents of Scranton.

11                   Mr. Bulzoni mentioned tonight to us  
12          that there will be an analysis completed,  
13          and again, we are just voting tonight to  
14          authorize the application of the grant and I  
15          think what we discussed and what's likely to  
16          happen is that we will make an amendment or  
17          put a rider into this legislation that if  
18          the grant is approved it would have to come  
19          to city council again for final approval, so  
20          in the mean time if that analysis came up  
21          that it was too costly to do this project  
22          that we would have the final say once again  
23          to approve or reject this grant. Anyone  
24          else? All those in favor of introduction  
25          signify by saying aye.



1 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

2 MR. EVANS: Aye.

3 MR. ROGAN: Aye. Opposed?

4 MR. GAUGHAN: No.

5 MR. ROGAN: The ayes have it and so  
6 moved.

7 MS. REED: 5-D. FOR INTRODUCTION -  
8 A RESOLUTION - APPOINTMENT OF JESSICA L.  
9 BOYLES, ESQUIRE, OF SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA,  
10 AS A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF THE SCRANTON  
11 SEWER AUTHORITY EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 10,  
12 2015. ATTORNEY BOYLES WILL BE REPLACING  
13 DOMINIC GEORGETTI WHO RESIGNED SEPTEMBER 10,  
14 2015. ATTORNEY BOYLES WILL FILL THE  
15 UNEXPIRED TERM OF DOMINIC GEORGETTI, WHOSE  
16 TERM IS SCHEDULED TO EXPIRE ON DECEMBER 31,  
17 2016.

18 MR. ROGAN: At this time I'll  
19 entertain a motion that Item 5-D 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 MR. WECHSLER: So moved.

7 MS. REED: SIXTH ORDER. 6-A.

8 READING BY TITLE - FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.  
9 117, 2015 - AN ORDINANCE - AMENDING FILE OF  
10 THE COUNCIL NO. 58, 2014, AN ORDINANCE  
11 ENTITLED "GENERAL CITY OPERATING BUDGET  
12 2015" BY TRANSFERRING \$63,477.00 FROM  
13 ACCOUNT NO. 01.401.13090.4299  
14 (NON-DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURES-CONTINGENCY)  
15 TO THE ACCOUNTS LISTED BELOW TO PROVIDE  
16 SUFFICIENT FUNDS FOR CADETS TRAINING AT HACC  
17 AND EMT TRAINING REIMBURSEMENT AND 10%  
18 MATCHING FUNDS FOR THE 2014 AFG GRANT FOR  
19 SCBA PURCHASE.

20 MR. ROGAN: You've heard reading by  
21 title of Item 6-A, what is your pleasure.

22 MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, I move  
23 that Item 6-A pass reading by title.

24 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

25 MS. ROGAN: On the question? All

1 those in favor signify by saying aye.

2 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

3 MR. EVANS: Aye.

4 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

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

7 MS. REED: 6-B. READING BY TITLE  
8 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 118, 2015 - AN  
9 ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER  
10 APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS OF THE CITY OF  
11 SCRANTON TO TAKE ALL NECESSARY ACTIONS TO  
12 IMPLEMENT THE CONSOLIDATED SUBMISSION FOR  
13 COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS  
14 TO BE FUNDED UNDER THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
15 BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM, HOME INVESTMENT  
16 PARTNERSHIP (HOME) PROGRAM AND EMERGENCY  
17 SOLUTIONS GRANTS (ESG) PROGRAM FOR THE  
18 PERIOD BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2016.

19 MR. EVANS: I make a motion to amend  
20 a the legislation to amend a typographical  
21 error to the Emergency Solutions Grants  
22 Program at the request of OECD per the  
23 following:

24 Delete "Catherine McAuley Center  
25 Emergency Shelter Rapid Rehousing, \$10,000"

1 add "Catherine McAuley Center Shelter  
2 \$30,000" add "Catherine McAuley Center Rapid  
3 Rehousing for \$11,500", and revise  
4 contingency for \$44,342 to \$12, 732.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

6 MR. ROGAN: On the question? All  
7 those in favor of the motion to amend 6-B  
8 signify by saying aye.

9 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

10 MR. EVANS: Aye.

11 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

12 MR. ROGAN: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
13 have it and so moved. You've heard reading  
14 by title of Item 6-B, a amended, what is  
15 your pleasure?

16 MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, I move  
17 that Item 6-B, as amended, pass reading by  
18 title.

19 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

20 MS. ROGAN: On the question? All  
21 those in favor signify by 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 MR. EVANS: I would like to make a  
3 motion to table Item 6-B, as amended, until  
4 October 22 to allow for the required 30-day  
5 public comment period.

6 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

7 MR. ROGAN: There's a motion and a  
8 second on the floor to table Item 6-B, as  
9 amended. On the question? All those in  
10 favor signify by saying aye.

11 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

12 MR. EVANS: Aye.

13 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

14 MR. ROGAN: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
15 have it and so moved.

16 MS. REED: 6-C. READING BY TITLE -  
17 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 119, 2015 - AN  
18 ORDINANCE - AUTHORIZING THE INSTALLATION OF  
19 A STOP SIGN (R1-1) WITH EXCEPT RIGHT TURN  
20 (R1-10P) BELOW IT, BE INSTALLED AT THE  
21 NORTHWESTERLY INTERSECTION OF RIDGE AVENUE  
22 AND ASH STREET AND THAT THE EXISTING ONE-WAY  
23 SIGNS BE REMOVED AT THE INTERSECTION OF  
24 RIDGE AVENUE AND MYRTLE STREET AND NEW  
25 ONE-WAY (R6-1L) SIGNS BE INSTALLED ON A

1 CHANNEL THERE AND ALSO AN ADDITIONAL ONE-WAY  
2 (R6-1L) BE INSTALLED NEAR 927 RIDGE AVENUE.

3 MR. ROGAN: You've heard reading by  
4 title of Item 6-C, what is your pleasure?

5 MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, I move  
6 that Item 6-C pass reading by title.

7 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

8 MR. ROGAN: On the question? All  
9 those in favor signify by saying aye.

10 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

11 MR. EVANS: Aye.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

13 MR. ROGAN: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
14 have it and so moved.

15 MS. REED: 6-D. READING BY TITLE  
16 FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 120, 2015 - AN  
17 ORDINANCE AMENDING FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.  
18 47, 2013 AND FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 44,  
19 2014, ENTITLED "AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE  
20 MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS OF THE  
21 CITY OF SCRANTON TO TAKE ALL NECESSARY  
22 ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE CONSOLIDATED  
23 SUBMISSION FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING AND  
24 DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS TO BE FUNDED UNDER THE  
25 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG)

1 PROGRAM, HOME INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP (HOME)  
2 PROGRAM AND EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANTS (ESG)  
3 PROGRAM BY AMENDING BOTH THE 2014 AND 2015  
4 ACTION PLAN TO ACCEPT, RECEIVE AND DISBURSE  
5 GRANT FUNDS FOR BOTH THE "NOVEMBRINO POOL"  
6 ACTIVITY IN THE AMOUNT OF \$220,000.00 AND  
7 THE "PINE RIDGE SWIMMING COMPLEX" IN THE  
8 AMOUNT OF \$45,000.00 THAT TOTALS \$265,000.00  
9 UNDER THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT  
10 PROGRAM (CDBG) ADMINISTERED BY THE U.S.  
11 DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT  
12 AND TRANSFERRING THESE FUNDS TO THE 2015  
13 ACTIVITY ENTITLED "RECONSTRUCTION OF CITY  
14 STREETS TO INCLUDE HANDICAPPED CURB CUTS".

15 MR. ROGAN: You've heard reading by  
16 title of Item 6-D, what is your pleasure?

17 MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, I move  
18 that Item 6-D pass reading by title.

19 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

20 MR. ROGAN: On the question? All  
21 those in favor signify by 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 MR. GAUGHAN: I would like to make a  
3 motion to table Item 6-D to allow for the  
4 required 30-day public comment period.

5 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

6 MR. ROGAN: There is a motion and a  
7 second on the floor to table Item 6-D, on  
8 the question? All those in favor signify by  
9 saying aye.

10 MR. WECHSLER: Aye.

11 MR. EVANS: Aye.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Aye.

13 MR. ROGAN: Aye. Opposed? The ayes  
14 have it and so moved.

15 MS. REED: SEVENTH ORDER. 7-A. FOR  
16 CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE-  
17 FOR ADOPTION - FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO. 115,  
18 2015 - SALE OF TAX DELINQUENT PROPERTY MORE  
19 COMMONLY KNOWN AS 1427 CAPOUSE AVENUE,  
20 SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA, TO FMP REALTY, LLC,  
21 1110 SAGINAW STREET, SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA,  
22 18505, FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF \$4,001.00.

23 MR. ROGAN: What is the  
24 recommendation of the Chair for the  
25 Committee on Finance?



1 MR. EVANS: As Chairperson for the  
2 Committee on Finance, I recommend final  
3 passage of Item 7-A.

4 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

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

7 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

8 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

10 MR. EVANS: Yes.

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

12 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

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

16 MS. REED: 7-B. FOR CONSIDERATION BY  
17 THE COMMITTEE ON RULES - FOR ADOPTION -  
18 RESOLUTION NO. 179, 2015 - APPOINTMENT OF  
19 HAL DONAHUE, 1518 VINE STREET, SCRANTON,  
20 PENNSYLVANIA, AS A MEMBER OF THE HUMAN  
21 RELATIONS COMMISSION, EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 4,  
22 2015. MR. DONAHUE IS BEING APPOINTED TO A  
23 THREE (3) YEAR TERM THAT WILL EXPIRE ON  
24 SEPTEMBER 4, 2018.

25 MR. ROGAN: As temporary Chairperson

1 for the Committee on Rules, I recommend  
2 final passage of Item 7-B.

3 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

4 MR. ROGAN: On the question? I  
5 would just like to mention although I  
6 strongly agree with Mr. Hanley regarding one  
7 program, the vast majority of the work that  
8 his organization has done is excellent and  
9 I'm sure he will be a fine member on this  
10 committee. Roll call, please.

11 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

12 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

13 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

14 MR. EVANS: Yes.

15 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

16 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

17 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

18 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare  
19 Item 7-B legally and lawfully adopted. And  
20 I apologize, I was ahead of myself, that was  
21 for the appointment of Mr. Donahue. The  
22 next resolution is for the appointment of  
23 Mr. Hanley, so again, I apologize for that.

24 MS. REED: 7-C. FOR CONSIDERATION  
25 BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES- FOR ADOPTION

1 RESOLUTION NO. 180, 2015 - APPOINTMENT OF  
2 MICHAEL HANLEY, 800 WOODLAWN STREET,  
3 SCRANTON, PENNSYLVANIA, AS A MEMBER OF THE  
4 HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION, EFFECTIVE  
5 SEPTEMBER 4, 2015. MR. HANLEY IS BEING  
6 APPOINTED TO A THREE (3) YEAR TERM THAT WILL  
7 EXPIRE ON SEPTEMBER 4, 2018.

8 MR. ROGAN: As temporary Chairperson  
9 for the Committee on Rules, I recommend  
10 final passage of Item 7-C.

11 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

12 MR. ROGAN: On the question? Roll  
13 call, please?

14 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

15 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

16 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

17 MR. EVANS: Yes.

18 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

19 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

20 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

21 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare  
22 Item 7-C legally and lawfully adopted.

23 MS. REED: 7-D. FOR CONSIDERATION  
24 BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES- FOR ADOPTION -  
25 RESOLUTION NO. 181, 2015 - AUTHORIZING THE

1 MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS  
2 TO EXECUTE AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH  
3 TRIBEN INSURANCE SOLUTIONS, INC. TO PROVIDE  
4 INSURANCE SERVICES FOR THE CITY OF SCRANTON  
5 LIFE, DISABILITY AND DENTAL INSURANCE FOR A  
6 FOUR (4) YEAR PERIOD FROM MARCH 1, 2015  
7 THROUGH FEBRUARY 28, 2019.

8 MR. ROGAN: As temporary Chairperson  
9 for the Committee on Rules, I recommend  
10 final passage of Item 7-D.

11 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

12 MR. ROGAN: On the question?

13 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question.  
14 I still have not received an answer on why  
15 it has taken so long for this piece of  
16 legislation to make it on our agenda. I do  
17 agree with the legislation. I think, as we  
18 heard in the caucus, we will be saving close  
19 to \$300,000 a year, however, I think we are  
20 going to miss out on some savings because we  
21 waited so long to get this on the agenda and  
22 passing it.

23 MR. ROGAN: Anyone else? Roll call,  
24 please?

25 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

1 MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

2 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

3 MR. EVANS: Yes.

4 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

5 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes.

6 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

7 MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare  
8 Item 7-D legally and lawfully adopted.

9 MS. REED: 7-E - PREVIOUSLY TABLED -  
10 FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES  
11 - FOR ADOPTION FILE OF THE COUNCIL NO.  
12 111-2015 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER  
13 APPROPRIATE CITY OFFICIALS TO EXECUTE AND  
14 ENTER A CABLE FRANCHISE AGREEMENT BETWEEN  
15 THE CITY AND COMCAST OF COLORADO,  
16 PENNSYLVANIA, VIRGINIA, LLC.

17 MR. ROGAN: As temporary Chairperson  
18 for the Committee on Rules, I recommend  
19 final passage of Item 7-E.

20 MR. WECHSLER: Second.

21 MR. ROGAN: On the question?

22 MR. GAUGHAN: Yes, on the question.  
23 I will be voting against this contract  
24 tonight. While there are many positives in  
25 this contract for the City of Scranton, I

1 will not vote to give a billion dollar  
2 company a 12-year deal when they have  
3 relocated their service center from Scranton  
4 to Dickson City. I feel that it's a slap in  
5 the face to the people of this city for  
6 Comcast to pack up and leave Scranton when  
7 we are their largest customer. In the  
8 contract it states that the service center  
9 must be conveniently located. I have talked  
10 to a number of senior citizens who do not  
11 feel the sometimes treacherous Commerce  
12 Boulevard in Dickson City is a convenient  
13 location for them to pay their bill and  
14 return their equipment.

15 I am also disgusted in the way Mayor  
16 Courtright has handled this contract.  
17 Council was handed it at the 11th hour  
18 without any input or updates from the mayor  
19 throughout the contract negotiations. This,  
20 unfortunately, is yet another example of a  
21 lack of leadership and transparency on the  
22 part of Mayor Courtright and his  
23 administration. Thank you.

24 MR. WECHSLER: On the question,  
25 Mr. Rogan, I am also disappointed that city

1 council did not have an opportunity to be  
2 involved in this discussion prior to it  
3 being issued to us. I found that talking to  
4 Attorney Cohen, although he may not have  
5 received the things that we were after, we  
6 may have been able to get something in  
7 return. So I had discussions with Attorney  
8 Coleman and a modest, a modest acquiescence  
9 that Comcast has given us is that there are  
10 internet programs and cable channel programs  
11 that are available for discounts for people  
12 who have low incomes. They have agreed to  
13 publicize those more to make them more  
14 well-known so that people who do want to  
15 apply for them they will have a chance.

16 They informed us that they do have a  
17 cable package with a variety of open  
18 broadcast and popular cable channels that  
19 range from \$22 to \$40 per month. They also  
20 have an economy internet program, which is a  
21 stand alone service, for \$40 or \$30 when  
22 combined with another product. Like I said,  
23 I know that is not what we were after, but  
24 perhaps if people were unaware of that  
25 program Comcast will try to make them more

1 well-known.

2 Comcast is also working on a small  
3 PILOT program designed to increase internet  
4 adoption rates for low income citizens. We  
5 will be working with them and try to make  
6 that well-known.

7 In terms of the service center, I  
8 have been talking about keeping the service  
9 center at the Steamtown Mall prior to this  
10 contract being sent to us. I had expressed  
11 my concerns several times yet that  
12 information never got to Comcast and from  
13 talking to them they actually had considered  
14 closing this store in the Steamtown Mall two  
15 years ago. They were of the opinion that  
16 the Steamtown Mall was going to fail so they  
17 had decided two years ago to move out of the  
18 city.

19 In speaking to them, again, to make  
20 something of a bad situation Comcast now  
21 established a partnership with Western Union  
22 which has offices downtown and also in Weiss  
23 Market and Giant Foods that people will be  
24 able to make the payments at. Customers  
25 also may return their equipment to all UPS



1 stores. Equipment can be returned as is  
2 without wrapping or any box and UPS will  
3 send the packages directly.

4 Like I said, I'm very disappointed  
5 that we did not have an opportunity to  
6 become involved in this contract. However,  
7 there are savings that are going to be --  
8 the city is going to see some financial gain  
9 and we also going to see maintain funding of  
10 ECTV, so this is one of these hold your nose  
11 and vote for me.

12 MR. EVANS: On the question, first  
13 of all, I would like to read a memo from  
14 President Bob McGoff. "There terms of the  
15 Comcast contract have never been the primary  
16 issue. In my opinion, as we have seen,  
17 Comcast is unwilling to discuss any issues  
18 brought to it that pertain to the proposed  
19 agreement.

20 Lack of transparency and cooperation  
21 by the administration has precipitated this  
22 situation. City council is being asked to  
23 enter a multi-year agreement without being  
24 provided an opportunity to offer input any  
25 meaningful manner. Again, this is returning

1 us to a process of legislation that will  
2 lead to acrimony and contention. That was  
3 not a working relationship that produced the  
4 recovery and reform that we so desperately  
5 need.

6 Refusing to vote on the Comcast  
7 contract accomplishes little, while it seems  
8 to bring into question a tactic that the  
9 administration is using to alienate council  
10 it is. This is something that needs to be  
11 resolved with the mayor and city solicitor.  
12 We need to move forward with this contract  
13 either positively or negatively and  
14 establish a more amenable process for this  
15 type of contract negotiation."

16 Again, President Bob McGoff.

17 And I couldn't agree more. I want  
18 to vote no. I'd love to vote no, but I  
19 can't because there is \$300,000 or \$200,000  
20 in there for ECTV that is so desperately  
21 needs the money. There is no competition.  
22 We have no choice. We weren't involved in  
23 this process. We have simply a yes or no.  
24 Comcast does not have to negotiate with us  
25 because they are the only show in town.

1                   To that end, I contacted Verizon, I  
2                   tried to reach out to Blue Ridge, and we  
3                   have no takers for a competitive cable  
4                   company at this moment in time so we really  
5                   have no choice. Is it a great deal? No.  
6                   Is a good deal? Probably. However, this is  
7                   the deal we have in front of us, and by  
8                   voting no all the good in it will be washed  
9                   away and we would be back to Ground Zero and  
10                  I don't think quite honestly we would be  
11                  probably sitting here five years now working  
12                  under the same existing contract we have now  
13                  and we need to do something to guarantee  
14                  that ECTV will survive beyond today and  
15                  tomorrow and next month, so that's why I'm  
16                  voting yes, and I will hold the feet to the  
17                  fire of the administration to get an MOU, a  
18                  memorandum of understanding, soon with ECTV  
19                  as their primary Peg provider and if they  
20                  don't do that they will be hearing from me  
21                  loud and clear. That's all I have on the  
22                  matter.

23                  MR. ROGAN: I would agree with what  
24                  Councilmen Evans just said, I also would  
25                  like to vote no. I'm not happy with the fact

1 that they are leaving the Steamtown Mall,  
2 I'm also not happy with the fact that a  
3 discount has not been implemented for senior  
4 citizens or low income, it is across the  
5 board. But as Councilmen Wechsler mentioned  
6 and I'm only mentioning it again for those  
7 out there, if your bill is high, which all  
8 of our Comcast bills are, call them and ask  
9 for a reduced rate, they will negotiate with  
10 you, and I know just personally when my  
11 contract expired with them I got a bill and  
12 it went up significantly and I was able to  
13 negotiate it down so definitely call  
14 Comcast.

15 Back to the issue, as much as we are  
16 upset about those two items, we do need to  
17 fund ECTV, as my colleagues mentioned, the  
18 folks at home wouldn't be watching us and  
19 seeing our meetings live every week if it  
20 weren't for ECTV. Also, there a few other  
21 good things in the contract in which they  
22 are providing for internet service for our  
23 fire houses, and I spoke to members of the  
24 Fire Department about this and there is  
25 certain training that they do online that

1           now they can do right in the fire house  
2           instead of having to move around from place  
3           to place so that would definitely be a  
4           convenience for the Fire Department with  
5           their training.

6                        So there are a number of benefits in  
7           going under this new contract versus staying  
8           under the old contract, and in regard to the  
9           service center whether this passes or not  
10          Comcast, unfortunately, is closing their  
11          store at the Steamtown Mall so I also, like  
12          my colleagues, will reluctantly be voting  
13          yes for this legislation because the good  
14          does outweigh the cost of not acting on this  
15          one.

16                       Anything else on the question? Roll  
17          call, please.

18                       MS. CARRERA: Mr. Wechsler.

19                       MR. WECHSLER: Yes.

20                       MS. CARRERA: Mr. Evans.

21                       MR. EVANS: Yes.

22                       MS. CARRERA: Mr. Gaughan.

23                       MR. GAUGHAN: No.

24                       MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

25                       MR. ROGAN: Yes. I hereby declare

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

Item 7-E legally and lawfully adopted.

If there is no further business,  
I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

MR. WECHSLER: Motion to adjourn.

MR. ROGAN: Meeting adjourned.

C E R T I F I C A T E

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

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

---

CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR  
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER