

1 SCRANTON CITY COUNCIL MEETING
2 PUBLIC HEARING

3
4 IN RE: FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 56, 2012, AUTHORIZING
5 THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS OF THE CITY
6 OF SCRANTON TO TAKE ALL NECESSARY ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT
7 THE CONSOLIDATED SUBMISSION FOR COMMUNITY PLANNING AND
8 DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS TO BE FUNDED UNDER THE COMMUNITY
9 DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT CDBG PROGRAM, HOME INVESTMENT
10 PARTNERSHIP (HOME) PROGRAM, AND EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS
11 GRANT (ESG) PROGRAM FOR THE PERIOD BEGINNING JANUARY 1,
12 2013.

13
14 HELD:

15 Thursday, February 5, 2011

16
17 LOCATION:

18 Council Chambers
19 Scranton City Hall
20 340 North Washington Avenue
21 Scranton, Pennsylvania

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24 CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR
25 OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

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CITY OF SCRANTON COUNCIL:

JANET EVANS, PRESIDENT

PAT ROGAN, VICE-PRESIDENT

ROBERT MCGOFF

FRANK JOYCE

JOHN LOSCOMBE

NANCY KRAKE, CITY CLERK

CATHY CARRERA, ASSISTANT CITY CLERK

BOYD HUGHES, SOLICITOR

1 MS. EVANS: I'd like to call this
2 public hearing to order. Roll call, please.

3 MS. CARRERA: Mr. McGoff.

4 MR. MCGOFF: Here.

5 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Rogan.

6 MR. ROGAN: Here.

7 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Loscombe.

8 MR. LOSCOMBE: Here.

9 MS. CARRERA: Mr. Joyce. Mrs.
10 Evans.

11 MS. EVANS: Here. Notice is hereby
12 given that Scranton City Council will hold a
13 public hearing on Thursday, September 20,
14 2012, at 6:15 p.m. in council chambers,
15 second floor municipal building, 340 North
16 Washington Avenue, Scranton, Pennsylvania.
17 The purpose of said public hearing is to
18 hear testimony and discuss the following:

19 FILE OF COUNCIL NO. 56, 2012,
20 AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND OTHER APPROPRIATE
21 OFFICIALS OF THE CITY OF SCRANTON TO TAKE
22 ALL NECESSARY ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE
23 CONSOLIDATED SUBMISSION FOR COMMUNITY
24 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS TO BE
25 FUNDED UNDER THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK

1 GRANT (CDBG) PROGRAM, HOME INVESTMENT
2 PARTNERSHIP, (HOME) PROGRAM, AND EMERGENCY
3 SOLUTIONS GRANT (ESG) PROGRAM FOR THE PERIOD
4 BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2013.

5 Our first speaker is Ozzie Quinn.

6 MR. QUINN: Good evening.

7 MS. EVANS: Good evening.

8 MR. QUINN: Ozzie Quinn, Scranton
9 Taxpayers' Association. I want to pick up
10 where I left off last week and the first
11 reading of the CDBG before the council in
12 regard to the housing rehabilitation in the
13 City of Scranton. After that I spoke to
14 Linda and she sent me a -- Linda Aebli, the
15 executive director, and I said, "Hi, Linda.
16 I wish you would address the citywide
17 housing rehab using CDBG funds only at next
18 week's public hearing. When was the last
19 time CDBG funds were sent aside for programs
20 formerly operated in city hall, not HOME or
21 ESG for emergency repairs, CDBG."

22 She said, "I looked back in our HUD
23 financial system, and the 2000 allocation
24 was for a single family CDBG," this is for
25 Habitat for Humanity."

1 Well, that was Mayor Connors and I
2 was the executive director of Habitat then,
3 but that wasn't for rehab, it was for new
4 housing and it was funded for single family
5 homes. She says, "It is very misleading to
6 indicate to the public that the City of
7 Scranton does not have a housing rehab
8 program. The city has a very active single
9 family rehab program citywide along with a
10 lead program. The only difference is --"
11 now, get this, get this, Mr. McGoff -- "we
12 use HOME funding."

13 This program has not changed except
14 for funds being utilized to the HOME program
15 and HOME funding can only be used for it,
16 okay. Also, lead paint. "I hope this
17 answers your question."

18 She says, "OECD did appropriate
19 \$300,000 in 2013 for Lackawanna County
20 Neighbors for citywide," and she said they
21 appropriated in 2012 \$225,000 for Lackawanna
22 Neighbors. Now, you don't have to be a
23 rocket scientist to know why they are
24 demolishing all these buildings because
25 people can't afford it. They have problems,

1 their porches are falling off, they need
2 roofing, they need heating repairs, all of
3 these things and there is no money available
4 and every city, as I said before, is an
5 entitlement city throughout the United
6 States and I would say up to 20 percent
7 under CDBG grant each year is given towards
8 housing rehabilitation. When I housing
9 rehabilitation I mean contiguous, block by
10 block by block. Not a buckshot approach,
11 one up here and two in South Side. Do you
12 understand what I mean?

13 And it's really ashamed when you say,
14 I say \$50 million, I would say that they--
15 since Mayor Doherty took office he had used
16 the CDBG only, okay, and none for only with
17 the one point. I mean, the 1 percent. Last
18 week I said to Mr. McGoff 10 percent. I
19 correct myself, 1 percent. 1 percent. Yet
20 10 percent or 20 percent or \$10 million was
21 given for administration, salaries,
22 benefits, supplies, office space down at the
23 Scranton Life Building, okay?

24 Now, what I'm asking for here
25 tonight is we cannot continually see our

1 housing be demolished, okay? 61 percent,
2 according to the census, was built prior to
3 1939 or earlier, okay? Now, there is
4 \$34,641 units, okay? 30,0699 occupied.
5 17,190 family, okay, so that means that 61
6 percent, okay?

7 What I'm asking for, Mrs. Evans and
8 members of city council and Mr. Rogan you
9 are with the OECD, is to put \$5,000, \$5,000
10 set aside for next year for a housing
11 rehabilitation, outside housing
12 rehabilitation consultant to command and
13 show city hall OECD how they can organize a
14 housing rehabilitation program that is a
15 comprehensive throughout the city before we
16 can completely demolish all of our homes
17 built before 1939. Thank you very much.

18 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

19 MR. LOSCOMBE: Thank you.

20 MS. EVANS: Marie Schumacher.

21 MS. SCHUMACHER: Marie Schumacher,
22 city resident and taxpayer. I will be brief
23 because I only have two things tonight on
24 this particular budget request, but the
25 first one is I know until fairly recently I

1 always thought all of these nonprofits went
2 out and raised money and did all kinds of
3 good things and they helped people, but it
4 turns out very many of them get all of the
5 funding from the government or not -- over
6 90 percent, so I would have a request that
7 maybe Mr. Rogan can get with Ms. Aebli and
8 ask her or otherwise let me know if she
9 would prefer I do it because I can certainly
10 look up the 990's and see, but I think that
11 all of these people should be out raising
12 some money on their own, otherwise, they are
13 just quasi-government departments, so I
14 would really like that information before
15 the vote comes up on I believe you said it
16 was the 25th of October, Mrs. Evans, on what
17 the percentage of each are.

18 But the real thing I'd like to do is
19 ask that a portion of the half a million
20 dollars that's set aside for economic
21 development be used to help seniors 65 and
22 over and disabled vets with the tax
23 increases that are going to be levied.
24 There are 25 -- at least as of last year
25 about this time, there were 25,813 taxable

1 properties, so 70 percent, I read in the
2 paper, this I have not verified, but I'm
3 taking it that the paper knows what they are
4 talking about, that 70 percent pay less than
5 \$500 and, therefore, the 12 percent for 2013
6 would only be \$180,420 according to my
7 calculation to give seniors 65 and over who
8 live in their own home and make under a
9 certain amount or maybe even all of them
10 keep their taxes stable at last year's rate
11 and use some of this economic development to
12 suck up the raise because I think it's a
13 true economic development issue if a lot of
14 seniors are forced out of their homes, then
15 again, what Mr. Quinn talked about you are
16 going to have a lot more blight. We know
17 properties are not selling in Scranton and a
18 lot are going on the market and the more
19 that go up the more blight you create and
20 the more houses of crime and drugs that tax
21 our public services, so I think it would be
22 an excellent use and for economic
23 development purposes to help the seniors
24 that need help. Thank you.

25 MS. EVANS: Thank you.

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(While Ms. Schumacher was speaking
Mr. Joyce joins the caucus.)

MR. QUINN: Can I hand these to
Jamie?

THE COURT: Is there anyone else who
would like to address council? This public
hearing is adjourned.

C E R T I F I C A T E

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3 I hereby certify that the proceedings and
4 evidence are contained fully and accurately in the
5 notes of testimony taken by me at the hearing of the
6 above-captioned matter and that the foregoing is a true
7 and correct transcript of the same to the best of my
8 ability.
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12 _____
13 CATHENE S. NARDOZZI, RPR
14 OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER
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