COUNCIL FOR THE BOROUGH OF DUNMORE

HELD:

Monday, March 9, 2015

TIME:

7:00 P.M.

LOCATION:

DUNMORE COMMUNITY CENTER
1414 Monroe Avenue
Dunmore, Pennsylvania

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

MICHAEL MCHALE, President
PAUL NARDOZZI, Vice President - absent
SAL VERRASTRO
TIMOTHY BURKE
CAROL SCRIMALLI
THOMAS HALLINAN
MICHAEL DEMPSEY
THOMAS P. CUMMINGS, Esquire, Solicitor - absent

MARIA McCOOL, RPR
OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER
(Pledge of Allegiance.)

MR. BURKE: Mike, I was wondering if we could have a moment of silence for Mr. Cummings and James Gruttadauria.

(Moment of Silence.)

MR. MCHALE: Thank you. You took it out of my mouth, Timmy. Mr. Cummings isn't here tonight. His father passed away suddenly yesterday. He had sent me a brief statement to read into the record if you'll allow me to do so:

Dear, Mr. McHale, as you know, my father passed away Sunday afternoon. While the loss is enormous I take this time to thank you at the public Council meeting and of record convey my thoughts and gratitude for the immediate professional and very kind service of the Dunmore Fire Department, the Dunmore Police Department, and the Pennsylvania Ambulance crew.

They provided a degree of service that we never want to need but thank God for
when the need arises. And they are well prepared and on scene in moments. My sincere appreciate, Thomas Cummings, Jr.

Obviously he's in all of our thoughts and prayers tonight. He's obviously not going to be with us. So we're on our own tonight. But I had the pleasure to know Mr. Cummings pretty well. And when I started my business several years ago, he wanted to take me to lunch to give me some words of wisdom that I could tell you sit with me every day.

And, you know, his passing -- he's a wealth of knowledge that he worked for the IRS for more years than he probably wanted anybody to know and just a great, great professional man. So, Tommy, is in our thoughts. So I'm going to move on with the roll call. Mrs. Scrimalli.

MS. SCRIMALLI: Present.  
MR. MCHALE: Mr. Burke.  
MR. BURKE: Present.  
MR. MCHALE: Mr. Verrastro.  
MR. VERRASTRO: Present.  
MR. MCHALE: Mr. Dempsey.
MR. DEMPSEY: Present.

MR. MCHALE: Mr. Hallinan.

MR. HALLINAN: Here.

MR. MCHALE: Mr. Nardozzi is absent tonight and Mr. McHale is here. Go onto number three, public comment on agenda items. Would anybody like to speak on agenda items tonight?

(No response.)

MR. MCHALE: Seeing none, number four, motion to approve the minutes.

MR. VERRASTRO: I'll make that motion.

MR. BURKE: Second.

MR. MCHALE: I have a motion and a second. On the question. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. MCHALE: Opposed?

(No response.)

MR. MCHALE: The ayes have it and so moved. Number five, motion to approve and pay open bills.

MS. SCRIMALLI: I'll make that
motion.

MR. HALLINAN: I'll second it.

MR. MCHALE: I have a motion and a second. On the question. All those in favor signify by saying aye.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. MCHALE: Opposed?

(No response.)

MR. MCHALE: The ayes have it and so moved.

Mr. Hetman from Lackawanna County is he here with us tonight? I don't think so. Mr. Duncan, please.

MR. DUNCAN: Gary Duncan, 117 Barton Street. I'll be really very brief tonight. Vito, I left a voicemail for Joe Lorince if you are talking to him tomorrow if you could ask him to give me a call back. I have two issues that came up during the week and I want to talk to him before I spoke to the people directly. And then if anybody could give me updates my understanding is for Mrs. Shane that the light is now working at 1339 Adams Ferguson and Buenzli Court, do we have any updates on those?
MR. RUGGIERO: As of Friday they were all fixed.

MR. DUNCAN: Okay. And then the other concern at the time was about the speeding down by the schools. And I continue to get messages down in the elementary and the, you know, Dunmore campus about people speeding on the property and those things.

So I just want to put it out there for us because I continue to get those messages. And then just that the next Dunmore Neighborhood Watch meeting is 3/16. It's March 16. It will be a week tonight, 7:00 in the community room. Certainly everybody is welcome. That's it.

MR. MCHALE: Thank you, Mr. Duncan.

MS. SCRIMALI: Thank you.

MR. MCHALE: Mr. Valvano.

MR. VALVANO: Good evening, Council, David Valvano from Representative Farina's Office. Just a couple items tonight. Let everybody know April 9th Representative Farina will be conducting a town hall meeting on the proposed natural gas plant being proposed in Jessup. That will be 6:00 p.m., on April 9th
at the Jessup Hose Company Number one, if anybody wants to come and get some information about that proposed plant.

April 17th, Representative Farina will be having a free shredding event here at the Dunmore Community Center from 10 until noon.

MR. MCHALE: I laugh because I scheduled one for April 11th. But we can schedule another time. I'll call your office. We'll talk about it.

MR. VALVANO: All right. And May 21st, I know it's going ahead, but Representative Farina will be having a senior fair here from 10 until 2. And also a reminder for the residents, the first and third Wednesday of every month we have a representative here from Medicare that could answer any questions that any seniors would have on Medicare.

The third Friday of every month we have a representative from the VA to discuss Veteran's benefits. And that's all I have. And our condolences to the Cummings family.

MR. MCHALE: Thank you. Move on to
number nine, public comment on any items.

Would anybody like to address Council tonight?

MR. HUNT: Council members, Greg

Hunt, 201 West Drinker Street in Dunmore. My

question is addressed to you guys individually,
as a whole, however you want to answer it.

What is your stance on the sale,

privatization, or lease of the Scranton Sewer

Authority?

MR. MCHALE: Well, I first of all,

we usually don't allow polling of Council. You
guys can answer at will obviously. But I just

for a matter of record because we've stopped

before. I do sit on the Board now as of two

months ago.

I stated publicly and I'm not going
to change my mind, my vote as a Board member of

the Scranton Sewer Authority will be based on

the majority of this Council whether or not I

agree with it or not. But I could tell you my

personal opinion on it.

I don't want to see anything happen

with that Sewer Authority that is going to

affect our taxpayers. What I mean by that is,

inevitably if we sell the Sewer Authority in my
opinion what will happen is obviously it will
go into private industry. They're going to
pass on the cost of buying it to the residents
of Dunmore. We got our financial house in
order.

So I just don't want another form of
taxation coming onto our taxpayers. That's my
number one goal. So to answer your question
directly I'm against the sale of the Scranton
Sewer Authority. Anybody else?

MR. HALLINAN: I have no problem
answering you either. I'm totally against the
sale. I could see a lease. I could see, you
know, obviously it's not going to stay status
quo. We're only one vote.

But I'm totally against the sale and
I'm on record of saying it. I have no problem
with that. I think somebody told me once or I
heard it somewhere that Allentown got into a
nice deal with the lease and that actually
saved their town. So if we could look into
something like that where there would be an
open bidding --

MR. HUNT: In that lease -- not to
cut you off but there was a project labor
agreement clause. I looked into that as well. Nobody lost their jobs. And I guess it's been working really good for them.

MR. HALLINAN: Yeah, and that's the last thing we want to do is see anybody lose their job, you know, so you guys do a heck of a job. I've seen, you know, the results of what you guys do. And, you know, I'm totally for the lease over the sale if something has to be done, you know, so that's where I stand.

MR. DEMPSEY: Same.

MR. MCHALE: Clarify mine, I'm not for either --

MR. HUNT: Okay.

MR. MCHALE: -- a lease or sale personally.

MR. HUNT: One more quick question on this --

MR. VERRASTRO: I don't want a lease. I don't want a sale. We tried a lease. That didn't work. I definitely don't want a sale. I think that's -- it's its own board, its own entity. And it should stay that way. And maybe someday we'll be able to draw from it as individuals the way it is.
MR. HALLINAN: And let me --

MR. VERRASTRO: So I'm 100 percent against --

MR. HALLINAN: I wouldn't want -- if we had that option of no sale at all I'm with you. If anything that they should have learned from is the one time sale of like the Muni or anything. It's a one time cash influx and then it's gone.

And that's what's going to happen. And I don't want to see that happen and lose jobs, you know, that are good jobs.

MR. HUNT: Plus, I mean, it will affect the rate payers as well.

MR. HALLINAN: Absolutely. And if anybody doesn't think it's going to is silly.

MR. MCHALE: And no doubt is and the City of Scranton is paying for the last mistake by taking out debt and so is the Borough of Dunmore. We're still paying off the last mistake that was made here because the money was obviously spent.

MR. BURKE: You know my answer on that. It was one of the reasons I ran for Council. I'm not here to bail out Scranton.
We seen what privatization did. All it did is increase our rates 48 percent right off the bat. And when majority was changed we got out of that contract right a way to protect the Dunmore rate payers. Scranton had to follow suit because it took three at privatization -- three votes.

It took Dunmore Council's vote as a whole, Scranton Sewer Authority Board as whole, and it took the Mayor's vote. Sale, I've asked Tommy when it first came up I haven't got an answer yet on --

MR. HUNT: Can I interrupt you for a second? What's the legality? Do you guys know? Can Dunmore stop a lease, a sale, or something like that? I thought they need -- you might know more about it.

MR. MCHALE: Actually forgive me, I'm there 60 days if that.

MR. HUNT: Yeah, okay. All right.

MR. MCHALE: But to my knowledge, it's the Board and Timmy speaks to we having a bigger voice than I thought so I will yield to him and obviously Tommy Cummings and the attorneys for the Sewer Authority.
I think you could see my personal
and most of the people who spoken so far where
our thoughts and our goals are seems somewhat
aligned with yours.

MR. HUNT: Yeah, I was just
wondering if we're all on the same page, do you
know what I mean, if there was a way for
Dunmore to roadblock this.

MR. MCHALE: If there is.

MR. HUNT: If there is. Right and
that would be Mr. Cummings that would be more
into that.

MR. MCHALE: And forgive me for
doing that but, you know, if I had the answer I
would tell you. But if there is a way to do
something for us to slow it or block it, you
know, we're not there to be roadblocks because
we are four to one down there.

MR. HUNT: Right.

MR. MCHALE: But we'll do everything
we can.

MR. VERRASTRO: Are you going to
address witness this with Scranton at all?

MR. HUNT: Pardon me?

MR. VERRASTRO: Are you going to
address witness this with Scranton at all?

MR. HUNT: Yeah, I'd like to, yes.

MR. BURKE: Like I said, I brought this up to Tommy before when this first was coming out in the paper. And I'm still waiting for the answer. I know what happens in privatization. We do get a vote. A sale I don't know. I'm still waiting for an answer from Tom. Well, Tom's obviously is not here for good reasons.

But I think that's the answer we have to get is what is -- how do we stand on a sale legally. Could we stop a sale? I know privatization Dunmore Council's vote could stop privatization. A sale, I don't know. I'm still waiting for a legal answer. I think the sooner we get it the better because it seems like they're moving fast.

MR. HUNT: Right.

MS. SCRIMALLI: Greg, I'm also against it. I'd like to let you know that's how I stand.

MR. HUNT: Great. Thank you guys very much.

MR. MCHALE: Thank you.
MR. HALLINAN: Thank you, Greg.

MR. MCHALE: Anybody else? Please.

MR. AMICO: Vince Amico, 17 of Adams. Just I'm going to ask a very easy question. Am I allowed to ask Mr. Valvano a question from the podium or if that -- if it's not okay I could do it later.

MR. MCHALE: You can. Go ahead, Vince.

MR. AMICO: Do you plan on -- does Representative Farina plan on having a meeting regarding the landfill like we're having one for the power plant?

MR. VALVANO: He's waiting to see because the public comment period has been extended.

MR. AMICO: Right.

MR. VALVANO: He's waiting to see if DEP is going to hold another public meeting or not. The reason Representative Farina is doing the town hall meeting is because Jessup Borough is under a time constraint for 60 days to approve a land development or not.

There is a lot of information, misinformation out with the residents of the
Mid Valley about that plant. So that's why he is doing the town hall meeting to bring a panel together, some independent experts to speak on, you know, the proposed natural gas plant and get some information out there to the residents.

And it was only because Jessup is under that 60 day time constraint to approve or deny the land development request. There's another thing, that they also stepped up and asked for a curative amendment that has to be voted on by April 15th I think it is. That's why we scheduled it for April 9th.

MR. AMICO: Thank you very much.

MR. MCHALE: Anybody else? Last chance.

(No response.)

MR. MCHALE: All right. Move onto number ten, public officials. Attorney Dempsey, do you want to start us off tonight?

MR. DEMPSEY: Yes, I just want to give my sincere condolences to Mr. Cummings. I had the pleasure of meeting him multiple times. He was a great guy and my condolences to the family. That's all I have tonight.
MR. MCHALE: Mr. Hal.

MR. HALLINAN: Again, my condolences to Tom Cummings and his family. Grew up with the Cummings. Tom Cummings I knew my whole life. And they were just -- he was a great man and my condolences to the family.

Potholes, if obviously we're patching potholes. With the rain I hope everybody understands as you patch a pothole and ran hits and traffic, it kicks back up. So when somebody says, you know, hey, I complained about a pothole and Didge says we patched it and then we come back in after a rain storm and it's gone.

Well, that's just part of the process. They are only temporary patches. And we will get the hot stuff when the -- hopefully the weather will break shortly. But as you could see, this ran is really going to kick the crap out of the roads now. And they are unthawing as we speak, you know, a lot of the roads are a mess.

Just bear with us on the potholes. And the guys I saw them out patching today. They are doing a great job. So thank you.
MR. MCHALE: Mr. Verrastro.

MR. VERRASTRO: Again, my condolences to the Cummings family. I met Mr. Cummings a few times. And he was always a gentleman. I'm sure the family is going through a lot. Something that we're not -- a lot of people aren't aware of, he was one of the people that -- he was very big in the Dunmore Volunteer Fire Department as far as one of the four branches of it.

He was very involved in it. And as you get older he couldn't participate as much but he was still an officer. Vito, maybe we should check to see do we -- with the fire department about putting something up for him in that aspect. Other than that, I'd like to thank everybody for being here tonight.

MR. MCHALE: Mr. Burke.

MR. BURKE: I'm just the same too. I spent many childhood days down at Mr. Cummings' house growing up with Tommy and many days at the bar Jimmy Gruts which I really enjoyed. I'm going to miss both of them, two really good men. And it's really sad. Thank you.
MR. MCHALE: Mrs. Scrimalli.

MS. SCRIMALLI: Yes, I would also like to extend my sympathies to the Cummings's family and to Jimmy Grut's family. Sadness for everyone there concerned. And that's all I have for tonight. Oh, and excuse me one more thing.

MR. MCHALE: Sure. Please.

MS. SCRIMALLI: Great job with the potholes, Didge. So thank you so much. Please tell the guys, okay.

MR. MCHALE: I apologize, Vito, do you have anything tonight?

MR. RUGGIERO: Just the website progress, five vendors and meeting with the interested parties now and Council will make their final decision. Also Dunmore Borough and the Dunmore Community Center is now on Twitter to try to get some information out that way as well.

Obviously you know that we're patching potholes. I'm glad it's being noticed. And Didge is going to keep doing that with some extra guys and some extra time obviously to get caught up. So he'll continue
to do that. And hopefully we have our last of our salts so hopefully we won't need that anymore.

We're at about 66 ton. And then we'll be at our cap for this year. So hopefully we won't need that anymore. That's it and the Cummings family as well. It's hard going last when you have to speak regarding something of that nature. But our thoughts and prayers are all with Mr. Cummings and his family.

MR. MCHALE: Mr. Kearney.

MR. KEARNEY: I grew up across from Mr. Cummings. I knew their family very well. I share my condolences with the rest of you. That's all.

MR. MCHALE: Didge.

MR. JUDGE: I have nothing to say except for Tommy Cummings. I grew up across the street from him too.

MR. HALLINAN: It's a busy block. We were all there.

MR. MCHALE: You want to go again?

MR. HALLINAN: I just want to -- I forgot to say one more thing. We sent out the
recycling calendar and it was sponsored by DePietro's Pharmacy. They paid for printing, mailing. And it's something that we want to look forward to maybe next year if more businesses want to get involved so that, you know, maybe we could have -- I think it's the Borough of Olyphant has a calendar and we could mimic that.

And it's not for profit for the Borough. It's just -- it will support our businesses. People will see it -- the taxpayers and think more of going to local businesses than going to somewhere else because let's support our local people.

And, you know, I think a calendar is a good advertisement. Everybody sees it every day and it's the recycling or however we work it out, but I thank Tommy DePietro for sponsoring that for us and doing what we could do. Thank you.

MR. MCHALE: Yeah, it should be noted that we didn't solicit Tommy to -- Tommy DePietro to do this. We didn't send out the calendar this year because our -- we didn't do a garbage fee of $150 so it didn't go out with
those.

MR. HALLINAN: How it happened was I went over to pick up a prescription and I put some calendars on his counter because I said we're not mailing them out this year and for the citizens to pick up as they come in and out.

And he said -- he just stepped up to the plate and he said, hey, why don't we work something out together? And I said, fine. You want to take the ball and run with it and we did that. And Vito was very instrumental in, you know, putting the calendar together.

And he approved it. And he's paying for everything which I think is a great thing. He's a very community minded guy. And I thank Tommy DePietro again for doing that. But that's how it happened.

MR. MCHALE: Absolutely. I have nothing else. I'll look for a motion to adjourn.

MR. BURKE: Mike, can I say one more thing?

MR. MCHALE: Mr. Burke, please.

MR. BURKE: Could we ask for help
from one of our solicitors either Tommy or Billy or is it Mark just on legal advice on the Sewer Authority? Can we have them try to find legal advice on what would happen on a sale if Dunmore Council has any say?

MR. MCHALE: Absolutely. As you said, I know you brought it up before so --

MR. BURKE: Thank you.

MR. MCHALE: Anybody else?

(No response.)

MR. MCHALE: Look for a motion to adjourn?

MR. DEMPSEY: Motion.

MR. VERRASTRO: Second.

MR. MCHALE: Second. All in favor.

ALL MEMBERS: Aye.

MR. MCHALE: We're adjourned.
C E R T I F I C A T E

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Maria McCool, RPR
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