

City Hall, Monroe, Louisiana
December 12, 2023
6:00 p.m.

There was a legal and regular session of the City Council of the City of Monroe, Louisiana held on this date at the Council's regular meeting place, the Council Chamber, City Hall Building, Monroe, Louisiana.

The Honorable Chairman Ezernack, called the meeting to order. She then asked the clerk to call roll.

There were present: Mr. Harvey, Mrs. Ezernack, Mr. Marshall, & Mrs. Dawson

There was absent: Ms. Woods

Chairman Ezernack announced that a quorum was present, and that the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance would be led by Mrs. Dawson or her designee.

The Invocation was led by Mr. Curt Kelly, Director – Purchasing.

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Marshall congratulated Ms. Sidney McKinley for opening the Wellness Stop located at 1911 Jackson Street and he said if anyone is in need of medical services she would be delighted to have you. He said Happy Holidays to everyone, and he prays everyone has a blessed and safe holiday season. He noted to love on your family and friends and remember the reason for the season. He said he encourages everyone to shop locally this holiday season, if possible. He noted the City have a lot of small businesses that are selling some great items. He expressed his condolences to the family of Mr. Frederick Coleman, Supervisor Henrietta Johnson Recreation Center, as well.

Mrs. Dawson said good evening to everyone, and she said to have a safe and happy holiday season.

(Mr. Harvey arrived at the City Council meeting at 6:06 p.m.)

Mayor Friday Ellis said good evening to everyone, and he expressed his condolences to the family of Mr. Ron Phillips, former airport director, in his passing. He wished everybody a Merry Christmas and he thanked everyone for all that they do in the community. He said he agrees with Councilman Marshall for everyone to shop local and he said a lot of these small business vendors have a lot on the line. He said he hates the word small business because their business aren't small to them. He said a lot of owners have everything they have to their name wrapped up in their business. On another note, he said the CPKC holiday train (Canadian Pacific, Kansas City Southern) came to the City of Monroe and what a wonderful time; his family and the community had a good time. He gave a shout out to the staff and the City employees, and he said their compassion and love for children with different needs made a family's night special. He said the City had the Louisiana Division of the Arts Brunch and Learn which was an opportunity to speak to residents, business owners, and different people within those cultural districts to understand the benefits of being within a cultural district. He noted today was the groundbreaking at Forsythe Park tennis courts and he thanked the City Council for allowing these type of projects to come forward. He further noted City Hall had a very special visit today from the Cypress Point Elementary students. He said it was a wonderful experience and they put a smile on everybody's face. He thanked Judge Angie Sturdivant for opening up City Court and he said the kids were able to see it all today. Lastly, the Mayor stated Friday, December 15, 2023, at noon there will be another announcement for the next step in the long distance passenger rail service here in the City of Monroe. He further stated before the year closes out he wished a Merry Christmas to the City Council, and he thanked them for their service.

Mrs. Ezernack wished everyone a Merry Christmas and many blessings this Christmas with family, friends, and those near a dear. She noted another reminder, the next City Council meeting, which is normally the fourth Tuesday of the month has been changed to Wednesday December 27th at 6 p.m. because the City will be closed on Monday and Tuesday.

Mr. Harvey had no announcements.

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall the minutes of the Legal and Regular Session of November 28,2023, were unanimously approved. (There were no public comments.)

ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF BIDS:

Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8639 accepting the base bid of Amethyst Construction, Inc., in the amount of \$1,383, 422. 73, for the Parkview Drive Improvements Project and authorizing a city representative to enter into and execute a contract for said work. (There were no public comments.)

Department of Administration:

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to consider request from the Purchasing Division for authorization for an authorized City representative to advertise for bids for the Chiller Replacement at Various Locations. The engineer's estimate is \$1,100,000.00. The DBE goal is 1.01% and the source of funds is the Capital Infrastructure. (There were no public comments.)

Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to consider an Application by KST, LLC dba Miro's Sports Bar and Grill, 201 Walnut St., Monroe LA 71201 for a New 2023 Class A Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (Distance Report Cleared, Cert. of Occupy Cleared) (There were no public comments.)

Upon motion of Mr. Marshall, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to consider seven (7) Renewal Applications for a New 2024 Class A Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (There were no public comments.)

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to consider six (6) Renewal Applications for a New 2024 Class B Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (There were no public comments.)

Department of Planning & Urban Development:

Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8640 authorizing a designated city representative to enter into and execute an agreement by and between the City of Monroe and Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) AHAYAH Community Development Corporation Inc. for the reconstruction of 3004 Gordon Avenue and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Mrs. Ezernack noted the Council received additional information about the property in question and if there are any questions there is probably someone here to answer them. She said she thinks this is a great project and she thanked the Department of Planning & Urban Development (PUD) for providing the Council with the information. She said this is a wonderful help to people that will be able to enjoy a nice safe home in the future.

Mr. Marshall stated he passed by the property today and he thanked PUD for considering this property.

Mayor's Office:

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8641 approving and authorizing a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with Northeast Louisiana Arts Council, Inc. and further providing with respect thereto.

Mr. Berry Stevens, Monroe, LA, said he is the President of the Northeast Louisiana Arts Council, and he thanked the City Council and the Mayor for their continuing support of the Arts Council. He said these dollars provide many organizations in Monroe with the support that they need to do their work in the arts. He said it was mentioned earlier about shopping locally and he said buy art, tickets, and attend events because those organizations really appreciate it.

Mr. Harvey stated he was asked by a young teen about how they could be plugged into the local art community.

Mr. Stevens said of course there are opportunities in some schools, but he said to have them contact the office and they can help direct them in different ways.

Mr. Harvey wanted to know what is the best way to contact the Northeast Arts Council by phone or email.

Mr. Stevens said it can be by phone or email and their contact information is on the website.

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8642 approving and authorizing a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with Red White and Blue Airshow Inc. and further providing with respect thereto.

Ms. Hollie Boudreaux, Director of the Red, White, and Blue Airshow, 114 Quail Creek Drive, thanked the City and the many City departments for the continuing support as well as the City Council. She said their first year in 2022 they made a 1.7 million dollars in economic impact and in 2023 they were right under 2 million dollars economic impact. She said tickets went on sale December 1st and they are already seeing more than 30% of those tickets are out of area purchases. She said it will be three full days of an amazing airshow and they appreciate the City's support.

Mayor Ellis thanked Ms. Boudreaux for bringing this back to the City of Monroe and he said bringing it back has caused a lot of excitement. He stated they do a wonderful job putting on the airshow and he understands it is a huge undertaking.

Mrs. Ezernack said the City certainly appreciates it and it puts the City on the map during that particular period of time. She said it brings more people to our community each year.

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8643 appointing Randall Pittman to the Monroe Fire and Police Civil Service Board and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Engineering Services:

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8644 authorizing a designated city representative to execute Change Order No. One (1) for State Project No. H.014348 Lee Avenue: Jackson Street – Standifer Avenue for an decrease in the contract amount of \$18,558.13 and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Mrs. Ezernack stated this is for a decrease in the contract amount, which is always nice.

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8645 authorizing a designated city representative to execute Change Order No. One (1) for the WPCC – Flow Equalization Basin Dredging Project for an increase in the contract amount of \$86,914.00 and to add 10 calendar days to the contract time and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance authorizing the City of Monroe to take Corporeal Possession of the property described below and sell to Robert K. Jones all rights, title, and interest that the City may have acquired to the Lot 8, Block 17, Unit 4, Booker T. Washington Addition, Ouachita Parish, 3602 Pippin St., District 3, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated July 1, 2010, and further with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING AND FINAL ADOPTION AND SUBJECT TO PUBLIC HEARING:

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing and seeing no one come forward the Hearing was closed.

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8646 endorsing Layton Properties, LLC's Application for participation in the benefits of the Louisiana Restoration Tax Abatement Program for Project #20230350-RTA and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing and seeing no one come forward the Hearing was closed.

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8647 endorsing Georgia Tucker, LLC's Renewal Application for participation in the benefits

of the Louisiana Restoration Tax Abatement Program for Project #20170018-RTA and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Citizen's Participation:

(1.) Mr. Darian Belton, 1500 North 19th Street, invited everyone to the Ester Gallow Community Garden Winter Breakdown, Thursday December 14, 2023, 1404 Sherrouse Street from 4:00 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. He noted there is not much growing in the winter but there is much to plan for and much to do in preparation for spring. He further noted they want to get the information out on how to plan for your spring garden and get some beds prepared for the spring. He said they will even have free seeds for your spring garden in exchange for your volunteerism. He said it is his intention to have a community garden in each district and if everyone does a little no one has to do a lot. He said there are so many benefits of community gardening. He said this past Thanksgiving they picked greens from the garden to pass out to members of the community and they were happy to have fresh organic greens. He said let's get growing and involved because they are changing the world one garden at a time.

Mrs. Ezernack thanked Mr. Belton for what he does and his enthusiasm for it as well.

(2.) Ms. Johnnie Thomas, 414 South 8th, thanked Mayor Ellis and Mr. Morgan McCallister, City Engineer, for cleaning up the corner of South 8th and Orange Street. She said she is so happy and as well as other people in the neighborhood. She said the Christmas tree ceremony was awesome and beautiful. She said the City is proud of the Public Works Department and they have that corner looking like it should be but on the other hand the work on Millhaven Road that pavement has already sunk in and it's really bad.

Mayor Ellis stated that is a Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) job, but the City will keep pushing on them. He said his wife travels that way to work every day and she reminds him every other day about that road.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned at 6:29 p.m., upon motion of Mr. Marshall and it was seconded by Mr. Harvey.

Mrs. Gretchen Ezernack
Chairman

Ms. Carolus S. Riley
Council Clerk

Ms. Ileana Murray
Staff Secretary

For extended details on the council meeting please call the Council Clerk Monday-Friday at 318-329-2252 to schedule an appointment to listen to the minute recording.