

City Hall, Monroe, Louisiana
January 9, 2024
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, & Mrs. Dawson

There was absent: Ms. Woods & Mr. Marshall

Chairman Ezernack announced that a quorum was present, and that the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance would be led by Mr. Harvey or his designee.

The Invocation was led by Assistant Pastor Rachel Washington, Greater Faith Church.

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Harvey had no announcements.

Mrs. Dawson said Happy New Year and thanked everyone for attending the City Council meeting.

Mrs. Ezernack welcomed everyone to the City Council's first meeting of 2024. She reminded everyone this is the year of kindness, caring, and peace and she said to remember that in our daily lives.

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson the minutes of the Legal and Regular Session of December 27, 2023, were unanimously approved. (There were no public comments.)

PROPOSED CONDEMNATIONS:

The following condemnations were considered:

1. 208 Egan Street (D4) (Owner – Carrie Mae Jones) Notice to show cause was served. Photographic evidence was presented. There was no one present. Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved, the building was condemned, and the property owner was given 30 days in which to bring the structure into compliance with the Code or demolish the Structure and clean the lot. (There were no public comments.)

Mr. Brandon Creekbaum, City Attorney, noted for the record all the proposed condemnations on the agenda are curator services.

Mr. Tommy James, Code Enforcement Officer, stated this is a burnt dilapidated structure and it burnt 2022. They are asking that the property be condemned, giving the owner 30 days.

2. 508 South 1st Street (D4) (Owner – Benny Ray Sims) Notice to show cause was served. Photographic evidence was presented. There was no one present. Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved, the building was condemned, and the property owner was given 30 days in which to bring the structure into compliance with the Code or demolish the Structure and clean the lot. (There were no public comments.)

Mr. James stated this is an open dilapidated unsafe structure and they are asking that the property be condemned, giving the owner 30 days.

The following condemnation was removed:

3. 104 Jason Drive (D5) (Owner – Huey Mathis and Lorthel Pratt) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to remove this item from the agenda. (There were no public comments.)

4. 207 Egan Street (D4) (Owner – Emma Fay Abraugh c/o Antony C. Johnson) Notice to show cause was served. Photographic evidence was presented. There was no one present. Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved, the building was condemned, and the property owner was given 30 days in which to bring the structure into

compliance with the Code or demolish the Structure and clean the lot. (There were no public comments.)

Mr. Tommy James, Code Enforcement Officer, stated this is a burnt dilapidated structure and they are asking that the property be condemned, giving the owner 30 days.

5. 505 South 25th Street (D3) (Owner – Gator Realty, LLC and Donald D. Lewis) Notice to show cause was served. Photographic evidence was presented. There was no one present. Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved, the building was condemned, and the property owner was given 30 days in which to bring the structure into compliance with the Code or demolish the Structure and clean the lot. (There were no public comments.)

Mr. James stated this is an open dilapidated structure and they are asking that the property be condemned, giving the owner 30 days.

There being no objection from the Council and before moving to the next item on the agenda Mayor Friday Ellis noted a lot of great announcements are happening in the City. He said the I-20 passenger rail announcement was to note that the City of Monroe have been selected for the Corridor Identification and Development Program. He said this is the first step of multiple steps to bring passenger rail service to the City. He said the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) website and Amtrak website have been updated and Interstate 20 is on the map now. He thanked the team and their creative grant writing that allow artists within the City of Monroe to start beautifying the City's recreation centers and basketball courts. He said the Black Creative Circle got together outside of Powell Recreation Center and did a mural. He noted the next mural is for Charles Johnson park, and they hope to continue this throughout the City. He said eventually all the City basketball courts will be painted and the artists that were a part of this also got paid, which is an opportunity for them to earn money as they do this as well. He further noted the annual bike give away is always fun and it's nice to run into kids every year that tell you, they received a bike from the City of Monroe. On another note, Mayor Ellis stated a lot of the work done in the City that residents can't see because all of it is underground such as the Texas Stanifer trunk line. He stated this was a 42 inch service main that was clogged about 9000 feet, and it has been that way for years. He said it is a massive undertaking and it keeps sewers from backing up in residents homes. Lastly, the Mayor announced the City of Monroe 45th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Salute Tuesday, January 16th at the Jack Howard and he said this year the City has a keynote speaker (Ms. Zebie Grayson). He said it's a wonderful program to be able to honor those in the community that are making a difference and leave a lasting impact on families and a lasting legacy within the City. He said if you can please be in attendance with the City to honor those who honor our residents every single day.

Mrs. Ezernack announced the City Council next meeting will be on January 22, 2024, on a Monday night at 6:00 pm. She noted the City Council will be traveling on the regular Council meeting day to Washington, D.C. to talk about rail and other projects that the City would like to have additional funding for and make people aware of. She further noted the change will be posted on the City's website as well.

RESOLUTIONS AND MINUTE ENTRIES:

Council:

Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8649 granting an Exception to the Open Container Ordinance to the Twin Cities Krewe of Janus (Mardi Gras Parade) pursuant to Monroe City Code Sec. 12-231 D. (Open Container Ordinance), and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

ADD-ON: Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to add item (b) to the agenda granting an Exception to the Open Container Ordinance to the Twin Cities Krewe of Janus (Mardi Gras Parade) pursuant to Monroe City Code Sec. 12-231 D. (Open Container Ordinance), and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8650 granting an Exception to the Open Container Ordinance to the Twin Cities Krewe of

Janus (Mardi Gras Parade) pursuant to Monroe City Code Sec. 12-231 D. (Open Container Ordinance), and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Engineering Services:

Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8651 authorizing a designated city representative to execute (Close Out) Change Order No. Five (5) for State Project No. H.013937.6 Kansas Lane Extension Clearing and Grubbing for a decrease in the contract amount of \$148,960.79 and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8652 authorizing a designated city representative to execute Change Order No. One (1) for the Monroe Tire Storage Building Project for a decrease in the contract amount of \$5,000 and to add 96 calendar days to the contract time and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8653 authorizing a designated city representative to enter into and execute a Master Services Agreement with Mancha Consulting Group, Inc. to provide engineering, surveying, and other related professional services and providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8654 authorizing a designated city representative to enter into and execute a Master Services Agreement with Architecture Associated, APC to provide architectural and other related professional services and further providing 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 Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved Ordinance No. 12,208 approving a Collective Bargaining Agreement by and between the City of Monroe and the International Union of Operating Engineers, AFL-CIO, Locak 407 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 Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Ordinance No. 12,209 authorizing the City of Monroe to acquire a certain 4.30 acre parcel of real property in the Monroe Air Industrial Park from Banks Construction Family Limited Partnership and further providing with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments.)

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION:

1. Ms. Keisha Sparks, 607 North 3rd Street, said Happy New Year to everyone and she said at the beginning of the new year if any citizen wanted to make a career change Acadian has an earn as you learn program still available. She stated the next Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) program will be February 5 and they are interviewing for that now. She further stated it is a paid two week course and you will receive an EMR state certification. She said it will encourage you to go as far as you want in the medical field.

Mrs. Dawson wanted to clarify that the start date is February 5th.

Ms. Sparks said yes, and she said you earn during orientation and during class. She said they provide books and all of the schooling.

Mrs. Dawson wanted to know where does one go to apply.

Ms. Sparks stated the Acadian Ambulance website.

2. Mr. Michael Caster, 3408 Garden Avenue, said this week he was accused of something that happen at a recreation center. He said people were making copies of papers and he noted he had nothing to do with that, but he was attacked for it. He said he feel like if he is going to be put in it, he in it and he said it is not fair for no one to be running for candidate and you can get free stuff

done inside the City. He said for years people in Monroe have done stuff wrong for so long in this City that they think it's right.

3. Ms. Johnnie Thomas, 414 South 8th, said she was late, and she had a reason to be late because for the first time in 77 years of her life the City now have crossing rails at that railroad track. She stated they were installed on Saturday, and she said she knows it was because of the accident but the community is glad to have them.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m., upon motion of Mr. Harvey and it was seconded by Mrs. Dawson.

Mrs. Gretchen Ezernack
Chairman

Ms. Carolus S. Riley
Council Clerk

Ms. Ileana Murray
Staff Secretary