

City Hall, Monroe, Louisiana  
August 23, 2022  
6:00p.m.

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

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

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

There was absent: None

Chairwoman Kema Dawson announced that a quorum was present, and that the Invocation would be led by Councilman Marshall.

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Harvey wanted to welcome everyone on this evening including the Monroe World Series Champs sitting front row. He said the City has plenty of rain left and he thinks meteorologist Mr. Jarod Floyd said we've had a little over seven inches since Sunday. He said if the residents would work on their drains, it could probably solve fifty percent of the drainage problem. He said if there is anyone needing help they can reach out to the council or Public Works. He noted for the residents that live on the Bayou the level will be high for the next couple of days and he encourages the residents to remove items that can be damaged by raising levels. He further noted Thursday District 1 will be having their community meeting at St. Albans by River Oaks Park.

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to welcome everyone to the council meeting this evening. She said it's nice to see everyone out even with the threat of rain and everyone's presence is appreciated. She wanted to thank everyone that was involved with District 2 Downtown meeting that was held on last Tuesday. She stated it was a nice turnout with a lot of activities and discussions. She said it was enlightening and she is hopeful all the Districts meetings will be the same or even better. She further stated there were a lot of good ideas and a lot of exchange of conversations. She said she thinks the District is making progress.

Ms. Woods said it is good to see everyone this evening and congratulated the Monroe World Series Champs. She expressed her condolences to Mr. Jesse Barnett, an award-winning coach at Carrol High School, he recently passed away and the funeral services were held this past Saturday. She asked everyone to mark their calendars for the 41<sup>st</sup> Sickle Cell Anemia Annual Banquet on Thursday, September 8, 2022. She noted District 3 community engagement meeting will be on Tuesday, August 30, 2022, at 6pm at the Powell Street Recreation Center. She said there will be discussions about downtown as well as talk about some of the things that are going on in District 3. On another note, she said if people have time and want to see a good show on Saturday August 27, 2022, the Bayou Black Rodeo starts at 7pm at the Monroe Civic Center. Ms. Woods yielded the remainder of her time for Mr. Robert Clark from the Twin City Golf Association for an opportunity to address the Council.

Mr. Robert Clark, Twin City Golf Association, said the Twin City Golf Association was incorporated around March 1996. He stated the association have some serious concerns about Chennault Park making a lot of money for the City and the money should be spent with the golf association. He further stated it is his understanding that 62% of the revenue from the sales tax comes to the City which should be spent with the association. He said there are pump problem at the park and the key to any golf course is water. He said there are three pumps at the park but only one in operational. He said a lot of sprinkler heads are not working and a pump shield that protects the pumps have been down since 2020. He noted even with all these problems Chennault is making money according to the budget. He said Chennault is probably the most public golf course that averages about 15,000 to 16,000 rounds of golf which is unheard of in a City the size of Monroe. He further noted it is outperforming the national average and he would like to see it do better. He said the Twin City Golf Association brought the first Tea Program to Monroe probably six or seven years ago resources have dried up and the personnel couldn't afford to

keep it. He said they have been doing tournaments for the last 26 years and average about \$122,000 that has been given to the City. He said the tournament has dropped from 120 golfers to 45 or 50 golfers. He reiterated he is here because the Chennault Golf Course needs the City Councils help.

Ms. Woods said Chennault Park is one of her projects and the council will work with the City to see what they can do. She said she will continue to have conversations with Chief Jimmie Bryant, Chief Operating Officer, until Chennault Park can get to a point where their needs are met.

Mr. Marshall wanted to thank everyone for coming out on this rainy day. He wanted to thank the Louisiana Housing Corporation for coming out last week sharing information about there program. He said they put out a lot of information and provided resources. He said the Louisiana Housing Corporation are doing a lot of great things in the state of Louisiana and have put a lot of money in the community. He encouraged everyone to visit their website to look at the opportunities and resources they provide. On another note, he wanted to thank Acadian and St. Francis for putting on a stop to Bleed CPR and chest pain recognition training on Friday at Emily P. Robertson Recreation Center. He stated one of his goals is to make sure that many programs and resources are available at the recreation center. He said on September 3<sup>rd</sup> at Forsythe Park the family of A'mir Lewis will be having a childhood cancer awareness event. He further stated on September 17<sup>TH</sup> the Mary Perkins Cancer Center will be having free cancer screenings at the Monroe Civic Center. He wanted to thank everyone that attended the District 5 Downtown Engagement meeting as well and a lot of information was shared. He said everyone's voice was heard, and their concerns will be addressed.

Mayor Friday Ellis wanted to echo Councilman Harvey's remarks and he gave kudos to the City employees for their all hands on deck approach. He said the City workers have put in a lot of hard work over the last couple of days and he wanted to say thank you. He said five City of Monroe employees were nominated for top 20 under 40 and 3 employees did receive awards. He stated he has been getting a lot of good information from the District meetings and he has enjoyed the engagement because it is direct feedback from the City of Monroe residents of what is needed. He further stated Mr. Clark picked the perfect meeting to attend because on the agenda is a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to get feedback from residents. He said it is an opportunity to listen to golfers, baseball families, MCAL, and residents to see how the City can better serve and create funding sources. On another note, Mayor Ellis wanted to recognize the Monroe 9U All-star Team on winning the Dixie Youth World Series. He said he is very proud of the team and thanked them for representing Monroe very well. He said he wants to recognize them for their efforts but also recognize the coaches and parents. He presented each of the Monroe 9U All-Star Team members with a Letter of Proclamation for being a baseball team of extraordinary athletes with great abilities that have worked hard all summer to make it to the Dixie Youth World Series. Mayor Ellis said he wanted to recognize one outstanding athlete to receive the 2022 9U All-Star team Dixie Youth World Series sportsmanship award. He stated the recipient of this award was recommended by the coaches and the player has demonstrated great attitude and effort while also being an outstanding teammate. He presented the 2022 9U Monroe All-Star baseball team Dixie Youth World Series sportsmanship player award to Number 11 Michael Zambie.

Mrs. Kema Dawson wanted to thank everyone for attending the council meeting and everyone that attended the District 5 Community engagement meeting last night. She stated they had an awesome time, and a lot of history was given out about the downtown area. She further stated she would like for everyone listening and tuning in to be prayerful for the council, the Administration, and our Mayor. She said there are a lot of things going on in the City right now such as wickedness and bitter people doing evil things in this world. She asked everyone that is a believer to keep the City and the leaders in their prayers to avoid these attacks by the enemy.

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack the minutes of the Legal and Regular Session of August 09, 2022, 6:00PM meeting were approved. Ms. Woods abstained she was not present at the last meeting. (There were no public comments.)

**ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF BIDS:**

ADD-ON: Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved to add to the agenda item (a) to consider a request from the Purchasing Division for City Council authorization that all bids received on August 10,2022, for the 416 South 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Rehabilitation project be rejected. The bids were nonresponsive. (There were no public comments.)

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved a request from the Purchasing Division for City Council authorization that all bids received on August 10,2022, for the 416 South 23<sup>rd</sup> Street Rehabilitation project be rejected. The bids were nonresponsive. (There were no public comments.)

ADD-ON: Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to add to the agenda item (b) to consider a request from the Purchasing Division for City Council authorization that all bids received on August 10,2022, for the 4101 South Street Rehabilitation project be rejected. The bids were nonresponsive. (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved a request from the Purchasing Division for City Council authorization that all bids received on August 10,2022, for the 4101 South Street Rehabilitation project be rejected. The bids were nonresponsive. (There were no public comments.)

**RESOLUTIONS AND MINUTE ENTRIES:**

Council:

ADD-ON: Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to add to the agenda item (a) Resolution granting an exception to the open container Ordinance to the Department of Community Affairs pursuant to Monroe City Code Sec. 12-231 D (Open Container Ordinance), and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comment.)

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8342 granting an exception to the open container Ordinance to the Department of Community Affairs pursuant to Monroe City Code Sec. 12-231 D (Open Container Ordinance), and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comment.)

ADD-ON: Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved to add to the agenda a Resolution authorizing a designated City representative to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the City of Monroe, The Academy Fitness and Sports LLC D/B/A Monroe City Academy League (MCAL) and Free Me Association related to helmets for the football program and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comment.)

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8343 authorizing a designated City representative to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the City of Monroe, The Academy Fitness and Sports LLC D/B/A Monroe City Academy League (MCAL) and Free Me Association related to helmets for the football program and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comment.)

Ms. Woods stated she wasn't aware this would be on the agenda and the City would be giving funds to MCAL. She further stated she did notice that two council members donated \$2,400.00 each and she would like to add \$2,400.00 coming from her and District 3.

Mrs. Angie Sturdivant, City Attorney, noted the only issue with the invoice attached in the council packet the cost was only \$4,800.00.

Ms. Woods said she will make a contribution to MCAL somewhere down the line.

Mr. Marshall stated it was an immediate need for helmets for the overwhelming number of kids in the MCAL program and it was a quick decision to make things happen.

Legal Department:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8344 stating the City of Monroe's endorsement of Ludeling Properties, LLC and their Project #20210591-RTA to participate in the benefits of the Louisiana Restoration Tax Abatement Program. (There were no public comments.)

Mayor's Office:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8345 authorizing a designated city representative to apply for and participate in the Louisiana Development Ready Communities Program and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8346 authorizing a designated city representative to enter into a Professional Services Agreement by and between the City of Monroe and Carbo Landscape Architecture for a Park Master Plan and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Woods stated for the purpose of those watching from home, she wanted clarification on what is the Park Master Plan.

Mr. Shannon Blakeman, Managing Partner with Carbo Landscape Architecture, said the Master Plan is to look at the three largest parks within the City which include Chennault Park, Forsythe Park, and Johnson Park. He said they will engage with the community to determine what they would like to see in the parks and to create a long-term Master Plan. He said they will evaluate the parks base on the input they receive from the community. He said he thinks part of the Master Plan will also be looking at other green spaces and small parks around the City to examine the parks to see what can be done.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if the Chennault Park Golf Course will also be apart of the study.

Mr. Blakeman said yes, he will talk with Mr. Clark and anybody else that is interested.

Ms. Woods stated a portion of the Chennault Park Golf Team is present and this is really good information for all of us. She further stated there are a lot of dollars generated at Chennault Park and she thinks the park can generate even more if the City does major enhancements to the golf course.

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8347 authorizing a city representative to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with Manning, APC for a facility assessment related to the city's seven community centers and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Woods wanted to know for the purpose of everyone present and listening to explain what the City is doing on this item.

Ms. Patience Talley, Director of Community Centers & Programs, stated they are looking at a facility assessment and vision document for all of the City community centers. She further stated for many decades the City community centers have been slightly overlooked but they need some upgrade associated with the centers. She said in January 2021 during the winter weather storm the community center simulator temporarily housed hundreds of displaced community residents and in September of 2021 hurricane Ida brought a thousand displaced residents from Terrebonne and Lafourche Parish. She stated the community centers have dealt with AC Units out in just about all of the community centers this summer. She further stated the project can't be completed without a realistic approach as to how it should be planned, details, and the cost associated with looking at the community centers.

ADD-ON: Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved to add to the agenda item (d) a Resolution authorizing a designated City Representative to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the City of Monroe, The Academy Fitness and Sports LLC D/B/A Monroe City Academy League (MCAL) and Free Me Association related to after school and dance/cheer programs and further providing with respect thereto.

Mrs. Hollins, Representative of MCAL, said when the partnership was first oriented the Academy Fitness and Sports was a part, but the Academy Fitness and Sports is not to be apart of this CEA. She said it's only for the Free Me Association doing business as the Monroe City Academy League, and she wanted to make sure it doesn't get documented incorrectly.

Mrs. Sturdivant said the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement can be edited.

(d) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, with edit as stated above, seconded by Ms. Woods, and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8348 authorizing a designated City Representative to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the City of Monroe, The Academy Fitness and Sports LLC D/B/A Monroe City Academy League (MCAL) and Free Me Association related to after school and dance/cheer programs and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Woods wanted to know more information on the project since the item was being added.

Mrs. Sturdivant stated the City have been working with MCAL for several weeks and there are a lot of groups that want to do after school programs and early childhood initiatives in the centers. She said they will determine with the help of Patience Talley where to put everyone that will participate in these programs.

#### Department of Public Works:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8349 authorizing a city representative to execute Change Order Number 3, MLU Runway 14/32 Extension Phase 2 Construction Project) between the City of Monroe and Merrick, LLC., for an increase of \$157,593.55 to the contract cost of said project and 38 additional days to the contract time and further providing respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8350 authorizing a designated city representative to enter into and execute Amendment No. 1 Work Authorization between the City of Monroe and Garver, LLC., related to the professional services for the Runway 14-32 Extension Phase 2 Project at the Monroe Regional Airport and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

#### Engineering Services:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to remove item (a) from the agenda authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into an agreement for professional services with Neel Schaffer, to provide a Traffic Study at US 80 (DeSiard Street) at Chatham Street. (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Woods wanted to know why item (a) was being removed.

Mr. Morgan McCallister, City Engineer, said the item is requested to be remove because it is below \$30,000.00.

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8351 accepting the base bid of Highway Graphics, LLC, for the city Striping – Phase 5 Project in the amount of \$752,895.20, and further authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into and execute a contract for said work. (There were no public comments.)

ADD-ON: Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved to add to the agenda item (c) authorizing an authorized City Representative, to execute change order No. three (3) to make modifications to the Texas/Standifer trunk line screen, between the City of Monroe and Dixie Overland Construction, for an increase in the contract amount by \$44,900.00 and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8352 authorizing an authorized City Representative, to execute change order No. three (3) to make modifications to the Texas/Standifer trunk line screen, between the City of Monroe and Dixie Overland Construction, for an increase in the contract amount by \$44,900.00 and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

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

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

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved an Ordinance No. 12,138 to amend the Zoning Map for the City of Monroe, Louisiana to rezone a ±0.193-acre tract of land, from being B-1 (Neighborhood Mixed-Use) District to the B-3 (General Business/Commercial) District, for the applicant to operate a used car dealership, at 916 Arkansas Avenue- **Lot in Square 99, D.A. Breard Sr's Addition- APPLICANT: Ahmand Kelly (P&Z)** (There were no public comments.)

**Citizen's Participation:**

(1.) Mr. Michael Castor, 3408 Garden Avenue, wanted to thank Mr. Marshall and Mrs. Dawson for their participation in putting out 636 back packs. He said when Mr. Marshall started his prayer, he was right on because the City have a lot of demons. He said the Council wants the community to work together but the Council isn't working together. He said there are a lot of demons in the council and people are doing vicious things. He said it is alright to agree or disagree but when the public comes to ask council members what is going on, but they lie to you, it's a slap in the face. On another note, Mr. Castor stated the Booker T. Bridge looks pretty but the community still can't use it and Ms. Marie Brown exposed it. He said the community elected the council members, but they are not doing their jobs. He said the council wants the community's help but if the council members can't do their jobs they should resign.

(2.) Ms. Kenya Roberson, Executive Director Monroe Black Regional Chamber of Commerce, wanted to thank the City workers that help with the backpack give away with the B Law Firm, Omegas, and the Black Chamber. She stated they serviced 389 backpacks, and 420 adults were feed as well as suppling the children. She said she is very appreciative and thanked everyone for putting the information out. She further stated they are looking forward to the collaboration for next year.

(3.) Ms. J.T. Stevenson, 1915 Adams Street, wanted to thank Ms. Marie Brown and former council member Kenneth Wilson along with Greater Faith Church and Greater Free Gift Church they feed 125 people in her community. She said they brought health supplies and cleaning supplies that were much needed in the community. On another note, she said she has been blessed on many occasions to use the services of OMCAP and she said she recently called to speak with Mrs. Dawson but was informed she wasn't there anymore. She said she questioned why with the knowledge of Mrs. Dawson being out of town but wanted to know if OMCAP comes under the council.

Mrs. Dawson said no ma'am.

On another note, Ms. Stevenson said the City needs a lot of gun control and she has spoken with the Mayor about the gun problems in her neighborhood. She said everyone in her neighborhood owns a gun, but they need gun safety and control.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned at 6:57 p.m., upon motion of Mr. Harvey and it was seconded by Mr. Marshall.

Mrs. Kema Dawson  
Chairman

Carolus S. Riley  
Council Clerk

Ileana Murray  
Staff Secretary