

City Hall, Monroe, Louisiana
July 26, 2022
4:30p.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 Carday Marshall, Sr., Chairman called the meeting to order. He then asked the clerk to call roll.

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

There was absent: None

Chairman Marshall announced that a quorum was present.

ELECT CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE COMING YEAR 2022/2023:

Mr. Marshall asked Mrs. Angie Sturdivant, City Attorney, to call for nominations.

Mrs. Angie Sturdivant, City Attorney, called for nominations for Chairman for the coming year 2022-2023.

Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall to nominate Mrs. Kema Dawson for Chairwoman; Voting in favor: Mr. Harvey, Mrs. Ezernack, Ms. Woods, Mr. Marshall, and Mrs. Dawson to elect Mrs. Kema Dawson for Chairwoman, 2022-2023. (There were no other nominations on the floor.)

Mrs. Angie Sturdivant, City Attorney, called for nominations for Vice-Chairman for the coming year 2022-2023.

Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Mr. Marshall to nominate Mrs. Ezernack for Vice Chairwoman; Voting in favor: Mr. Harvey, Mrs. Ezernack, Ms. Woods, Mrs. Dawson, and Mr. Marshall to elect Mrs. Ezernack for Vice-Chairwoman, 2022-2023. (There were no other nominations on the floor.)

Chairwoman Kema Dawson announced that the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance would be led by Councilman Harvey or his designee.

The Invocation was led by Mr. Williams Boles of Boles, Shafto Public Finance Attorneys.

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Harvey wanted to welcome everyone out to the double header on this evening.

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to thank everyone for coming out today. She wanted to thank Mr. Carday Marshall for being an outstanding Chairman this past year. She wanted to congratulate Mrs. Kema Dawson on her new appointment as Chairwoman and welcomed Mayor Mayo to the council meeting.

Ms. Woods said it's good to see so many people out for the double header and it will be interesting to see what the six o'clock meeting looks like.

Mr. Marshall thanked everyone for coming out and he knows it has been a long day for most but will continue to be a long day for the Council. He asked everyone to bare with the council members and keep them in their prayers. He wanted to send a special thanks to Jason Donovan who hosted a sports medicine and athletic training conference at Emily P. Robinson last weekend for the kids. He said the kids were inspired by everything he showed them, and they learned a lot in his opinion. He said there will be more programs at the community centers to engage with students and inspiring them to think out of the norm. He stated Mr. Donovan is the head trainer at Neville High School and the President of Louisiana Athletic Training Association. He further stated he wanted to thank Mr. Donovan for giving his free time for a free program he did in our community.

Mayor Friday Ellis wanted to thank everyone for coming out tonight. He acknowledged Mayor Mayo and thanked him for coming out tonight. He congratulated the new Council Chairwoman Mrs. Kema Dawson and Vice Chairwoman Mrs. Gretchen Ezernack and said he is looking forward to working with them. He stated Mr. Marshall did an excellent job as Chairman. Mayor Ellis presented a key to the City to Mr. Kevin Crosby, Engineer Consultant, he stated Mr. Crosby stepped up when the City was in need during the transition between city engineers. He further stated Mr. Crosby has taught him a lot about infrastructure within the City and he is very passionate about it. He said Mr. Crosby has done an amazing job and he is an amazing friend to the City of Monroe. On another note, he stated the men and women of Monroe Police Department go above and beyond to serve our community. Mayor Ellis presented a letter of accommodation to the Monroe Police Department for outstanding services provided to the citizens of Monroe, Louisiana as well as the guest that attended the Red, White, and Blue Airshow at Monroe Regional Airport June 17th and 18th 2022.

Mrs. Dawson announced that District 5 has partnered with Louisiana Catalyst to provide working space and technology resources to small businesses. She noted they are located at the heart of Benoit Recreation Center and all the services are free. She wanted to thank the City and Louisiana Catalyst for doing this for District 5 which will be a great thing. She further noted it is for everybody not just District 5. On another note, she wanted to give her condolences to the family of Ms. Willie Mae McCoy who is the mother of Pastor Harold McCoy and the grandmother of Mr. Eddie Clark.

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack the minutes of the Legal and Regular Session of June 28,2022 were unanimously approved. (There were no public comments.)

There following condemnation was considered:

1. 1000 ½ South McGuire Avenue (D3) (Owner – Charlon Y. Brown) Notice to show cause was served. Photographic evidence was presented. Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Marshall, and unanimously approved the building was condemned, and the property owner was given 60 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 an open dilapidated structure, and it was presented in court in February. He said he made contact with the owner and the owner plans to rehab the property. They are asking that the property be condemned, and owner given 60 days.

Mrs. Woods noted the property has been an eyesore in the community, but she is definitely in favor if the owner wants to rehab the property. She motioned to condemn the property and give the owner 60 days to bring it up to code.

Mrs. Dawson wanted to know if anyone was here to represent this property. There was no one present.

ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF BIDS:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey seconded by Mr. Marshall unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8308 accepting the base bid of Dixie Overland Construction, LLC in the amount of \$232,000.00, for the WTP High Service Control Vault Repairs Project, and further authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into and execute a contract for said work.

Ms. Marie Brown, 1002 South 5th Street, wanted to know what this money is for.

Mr. Sean Benton, Water Plant Superintendent, stated this project is for the water vault in front of the water treatment plant where the water comes out. He stated that project was put together in 1960 and the quality of those units has deteriorated, and they are looking to replace them in case of a major blowout in that area.

Ms. Brown wanted to know if the whole vault will be replaced.

Mr. Benton stated the piping and everything.

Ms. Brown wanted to know where this is located.

Mr. Benton said 2401 North 10th Street.

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey seconded by Mrs. Ezernack unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8309 accepting the base bid of Womack & Sons Construction Group, LLC, in the amount of \$77,250.00 for the Public Works Tire Storage Building Project, and further authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into and execute a contract for said work.

Ms. Marie Brown wanted to know if this will be located on the City property.

Mr. Sean Benton said yes, the location and structure will be on the City' property. He said currently they collect tires that residents bring and some off the side of the road. He said the amount of this contract is about \$77,000.00 and \$45,000.00 of that money is coming from grant from DEQ.

Ms. Woods wanted to know will this be a storage building for tires.

Mr. Benton said yes, until a contractor comes to pick them up, they have to have a certain location to store the tires. He said when they call the contractor to pick up tires, they will come to that one central location.

Ms. Woods wanted to clarify that the City will pick up tires.

Mr. Benton said once they are out doing clean up within the City and since people dump tires in certain areas, they pick up the tires. He stated they have a program with the City that a resident can bring a certain amount of tires for money and turn them into the City for disposal. He further stated only the tire not the tire and rim.

Ms. Woods wanted to know how to communicate this information to the residence because people don't know the City will collect the tires. She wanted to know if there was a limit on how many tires a resident can bring a month.

Mr. Benton said there is a limit overall, but he is not sure of the limit at this time, and he is just getting involved with this process. He said moving forward they will put out public service announcements about tire collection and the clean up within the City. He said hopefully they can work with each council member's district to put the information out for it to be a collective cleanup project.

Ms. Brown wanted to know where this company is located and if it is a local company.

Mr. Benton said the company is local and it was put out through a bid process with the Purchasing Department. He said they took the lowest bid once it came in.

(c) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack seconded by Mr. Harvey unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8310 accepting the base bid of Dixie Overland Construction, LLC, in the amount of \$247,000.00, for the Monroe Potable Water Storage Tank Modifications Project, and further authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into and execute a contract for said work.

Ms. Marie Brown wanted to know what the Potable Water Storage Tank Modifications is.

Mr. Sean Benton said this project encompasses the current water storage tanks in the City of Monroe. He said annually the Department of Health and Hospital comes to do a survey and the item that were bid out were deemed to have deficiencies. He said the tanks were built in the late sixties and the standards of law have changed since then. He stated the mandate pushed for them to correct these items. He further stated the project is to bring those tanks up to code and standard.

Ms. Brown wanted to know where the tanks are located.

Mr. Benton said two are located on the water treatment plant ground at 241 North 10th and he believes the other one is located on Selman Drive.

Ms. Brown wanted to know if this is a local company also.

Mr. Benton said yes, this project was done the exact same as the current projects that were put out for bid. He said there were several companies that bided on it, and they took the lowest bid.

Mr. Harvey said they are based out of Sibley.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if Womack is out of Harrisonburg.

Mr. Benton said yes, they are.

Ms. Brown wanted to know who is out of Harrisonburg.

Ms. Woods and Mr. Benton informed Ms. Brown Womack and Son is out of Harrisonburg.

Ms. Brown stated she thought he said they were out of Monroe.

Mr. Benton said ultimately from the area yes.

Ms. Brown informed Mr. Benton she didn't understand.

Mr. Benton said they are from the area, and they deal with contractors all over the US. He said when we talk about locally, he is referring to the state of Louisiana.

Ms. Brown said she is concerned about money going to businesses in Monroe.

Mrs. Angie Sturdivant, City Attorney, said the City had to take the lowest bid and they have no choice on these Public Works projects. She said the purchasing process require sealed bids and they have to take the lowest responsible bid.

Ms. Brown wanted to know once the bids come out are they posted for the public.

Mr. Harvey said yes, they are open in a public form, and they are in the council packet. He said the packet is available online with each bid.

Ms. Brown wanted to clarify that the bid information comes in the council packet but not for the public.

Mr. Harvey said it is publicly available online.

RESOLUTIONS AND MINUTE ENTRIES:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey seconded by Mrs. Ezernack unanimously approved an application by Tim Hitt dba The 906Group LLC-dba Fiesta on Eighteenth 1211 North 18th St., Monroe, LA 71201 for a New 2022 Class A Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (Distance Report Cleared, Cert. of Occupy Cleared) (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8311 authorizing a designated city representative to execute a Professional Services Agreement between the City of Monroe and Kinetix Technologies and further providing with respect thereto. (Ms. Woods voting no)

Ms. Marie Brown wanted to know how much this contract was because she doesn't see a price.

Mrs. Angie Sturdivant, City Attorney, said it varies depending on the request of the City, departments, and divisions. She said it is up to \$120,000.00.

Ms. Brown wanted to know if this company is located in Monroe.

Mrs. Sturdivant said they have a business in Monroe located at 1811 Auburn Ave Suite 201 and a representative from Kinetx Technologies is here that can verify. She said the City has used them since at least 2017 maybe even longer and the City chose to continue to utilize their service. She said this contract is just to memorializing what the City utilize them for in writing so the City will have a current agreement.

Ms. Marie Brown wanted to know if it was put out for bid.

Mrs. Sturdivant stated this is a Professional Services Agreement.

Mr. Harvey noted a Professional Service Agreement do not go out for bids.

Ms. Brown wanted to know does an African American with the same business compete with a Professional Service Agreement if it is not put out for everyone to get a chance. She said we have some African Americans that have the same business here.

Mrs. Sturdivant said it is the same response, that it is a Professional Services Agreement and they do not have to go out for bids. She said Mayor Mayo can attest, the City has used Kinetx since his administration, they have done an outstanding job and this is a continuation of services.

Ms. Brown stated that is an excuse to keep using the company and her question is how other people get a chance to participate.

Mayor Ellis said Jerod Strickland, videographer, would be another African American business owner who has a similar contract with the City to do professional work to do the same thing. He said there are other African Americans with a Professional Service contract with the City who are business owners.

Ms. Brown wanted to know if there is a list of them.

Mayor Ellis stated Ms. Brown would have to ask for the list and the City will give it to her.

Ms. Brown wanted to know who to ask for the list from.

Mayor Ellis said purchasing and procurement department can provide the list.

Ms. Sanya Jacobs, 700 University Avenue, said she received a call concerning this Professional Services Agreement from three locally owned businesses. She said she understands since 2017 this company has been contracted with the City and have done a wonderful job. She said she read the contract in its entirety and sent it to three other businesses to see if they had been apprised of this opportunity, and they said they have not. She stated we know inconclusion has been an issue, in her opinion, she doesn't think there is anyone who would object. She questioned the efforts of the City on apprising these enterprises of such opportunities. She stated all three businesses are able to perform these services. She asked the Council to let this go out again to let the locally own enterprises have an opportunity. She said she is not questioning anyone's credentials, capabilities, or their deliverables but she is saying the City needs to do a better job of including these underserved communities in our contracting practices. She said she is happy to entertain questions or other perspectives.

Mrs. Ezernack stated in her office structure, if someone wants to get their business, they contact someone to make a presentation, maybe it's not the time the contract is going up or the services are needed but they try to get their foot in the door. She said she doesn't know if any of the three people have done that, but she thinks the door will be open to find out those things.

Ms. Jacobs said one of the three businesses stated they made a pitch to the City in 2019 which was under Mayor Mayo administration at that time. She stated to answer Mrs. Ezernack question this proposal was presented in 2019 and it never transitioned from a presentation to a contract. She said she understands the business when working in corporate America there are a certain set of rules but when we are in government spending out of the people purse, we want it to include as many of those people as possible.

Ms. Woods wanted to know what the length of this contract is.

Mrs. Sturdivant stated three years but any time the City is dissatisfied with the services, in section 6A, it can be terminated at will by either party. She said she has been with the City almost thirteen years and they have been extremely satisfied with their services. She said they help with activities on the Monroe Police Department page, Civic Center, and the airport they have been outstanding for years. She noted she sat with Ms. Jacobs to talk about future plans and contracting with DBE on plans in the near future. She further noted Ms. Michelli Martin can speak to it in greater detail and Ms. Liz Powell from Kinetix can better explain what they have done.

Ms. Jacobs wanted to reiterate she is not questioning anyone's capabilities, credentials, or deliverables but she is saying to have that equity and if it is a situation where the City have to look at all credentials then that may be a possibility. She said at what point does something become a monopoly and this contract has a propensity to become a ten-year contract. She said she doesn't think we should shrug at the opportunity of having more and if Kinetix had the opportunity in 2017 that was their first opportunity. She said that means they were never apart of such an endeavor because someone gave them an opportunity. She stated simply asking for opportunities for your constituents.

Mr. Harvey said he thinks it's important to understand what a Professional Services Agreement gives the administration or any department in the city. He gave an example that it does go out for bid in a scenario. He said if he is doing video work and he doesn't want the cheapest person doing the video he wouldn't want the lowest bid in that scenario. He stated the Professional Services Agreement, within many departments, gives the administration the ability to select a contractor on more than price but ultimately on there working relationship. He further stated this is just outside his district and this is a constituent that lives inside the City therefore he has no issue with administration continuing this relationship.

Ms. Woods noted she can understand both sides on this issue, however, with it being a three-year contract if the City wanted to be fair it could go out for bids but let the contract expire after a year. She said the City will never know what the deliverables are from anyone else if the City doesn't give anyone else a chance to do it. She said if everybody is satisfied you will never know if you will be satisfied with someone else work.

Mayor Ellis wanted to know how long the Council is contracted with their videographer.

Ms. Woods said she doesn't know, which videographer?

Mrs. Dawson said Mr. Wright.

Mrs. Sturdivant said Proworks LLC Mr. Kita Wright.

Ms. Woods said he is renewable annually.

Mayor Ellis explained the City has a clause that if they don't deliver and the City is not satisfied with them the City can get out.

Ms. Jacobs said she feels as though the Council is diluting the conversation. She said when we are spending our money and work for businesses but its government contracting, we are spending the people's money we want to include the people fairly and equitably. She wanted to give Mr. Harvey an example, who is also a business owner, when did someone give him an opportunity. She said this is not to debate or dilute but if this is the path the City, the Council and administration chooses to take then it is on record.

Mrs. Dawson asked Ms. Liz Powell, Kinetix Technologies, if she had anything to say.

Ms. Liz Powell said if the Council would like for her to address any of the services over past five or six years that they have worked with the City even under Mayor Mayo. She said she is happy to answer any of those questions. She said the services have continued to evolve based on the demands and needs of the City of Monroe, the Police Department, the Civic Center, and the airport. She said they went out to solicit the business and came to Mayor Ellis to tell him about the services offered.

Ms. Kenya Roberson, Executive Director for the Monroe Regional Black Chamber of Commerce, said she is not questioning anyone qualifications, but her concerns are for the African American businesses who are not here that she knows do a great job. She said they must have the opportunity, and someone must open the door, it is not being done. She noted she is not saying who the City have chosen or utilized in the past was not good but give others a chance as well. She further noted she doesn't think it is fair for any business to be able to go continuously utilizing the same person for the same services forever. She said at some point you have to say it's time for someone else to be afforded the opportunity in her opinion.

Ms. Michelli Martin, Communications Director, said Kinetix is not only an established business, but they opened up a new location here in Monroe. She noted their creative team is 98 percent female which is a minority still. She wanted to highlight the relationship the City have with them and how it has worked for the City because of their wealth of knowledge when it comes to what is allowed on social media. She stated Kinetix is where she goes for that information to make sure they don't break laws which is important in a municipality. She further stated they also help other municipalities and there is a level of experience that goes with it. She noted the City is not against giving people an opportunity to get their foot in the door but if you are working with someone who has the necessary skill set to make sure you are successful, she doesn't understand what the issue is continuing with that. She said they have demonstrated in the past five years that they are more than capable of doing so. She wanted to congratulate them on their many accolades and highlight that the MRBCC is giving acknowledgement to these individuals who are just starting off from ULM and are excited to be starting. She said they represent a number of businesses that might be able to help those individuals as well as get their foot in the door.

Ms. Roberson stated she understands Ms. Martin doesn't get it and that is why they are here to assist the Council and our Mayor so that they understand. She said they are not being given the opportunities. She said if the City of Monroe and the City Council doesn't want it to seem as it appears then the right thing to do is have a meeting and present the list of Professional services. She noted all the businesses are not starters that was just two of them that Ms. Jacobs stated.

Mrs. Dawson noted we do need to move on from this item on the agenda.

Ms. Roberson said it can't be rushed because we are tired of hearing it. She stated its very important and definitely something that needs to be addressed. She further stated we have to continuously say what is going on is not working. She said because of the position she is in she will no longer sit and allow it to take place. She said if her council does nothing about it of course that is out of her control. She said she has to make sure she is doing right by the people she serves and answers too. She said she wanted to express to her council and Honorable Mayor that the entrepreneurs aren't happy. She noted the entrepreneurs are asking her why they aren't getting opportunities but if it is a Professional Service, it will never be posted. She said the only way to sit her down is to meet with her and provide the list of Professional Services and she doesn't think that is asking to much.

Ms. Woods wanted to make a motion to modify this Agreement.

Mr. Harvey said the Council doesn't get to modify the Agreement they can either vote it up or down.

Mrs. Sturdivant noted the administration presented it as a Professional Service Agreement the Council doesn't have the ability to negotiate the contract. She said there are licensing and time requirements with certain websites, but if it doesn't pass there may be issues with the City's website.

Mr. Marshall said he fully understands what Ms. Roberson and Ms. Jacobs were saying but he feels most of these should be job specific as far as timelines. He said he thinks there should be a closer look at the process to see how the City can include as many businesses as possible. He stated there have been discussions, but they have not gone deep into those conversations to develop a plan. He further stated this has been a working process for many years and one of those things we have to dummy down to make sure everyone is included. He said he agrees with Ms. Roberson about having a meeting to hear those concerns and see how we can move forward productively.

Ms. Woods said she does have one question for Mr. Marshall. She wanted him to clarify what he meant when he said we need to dummy down.

Mr. Marshall said no, as far as the process not calling anyone dumb.

Ms. Woods noted dummy down means to her that you will go in and make it simple because people don't have the capabilities to do it.

Ms. Dawson wanted Ms. Jacobs to reach out to those companies to schedule a meeting with administration, therefore, they can present proposals to the City going forward and the City will know what services they provide.

Ms. Jacobs wanted to clarify that the three businesses she mentioned are locally owned businesses, but she never said they were new. She said her point is we have local home-grown talent here and they are well established businesses. She said the statement was made when you work with a municipality, but she knows if not one, but all businesses have work with municipalities. She said it seems to be an assumption that is when we are talking about underserved businesses or minority owned businesses that they are lower credentialed businesses. She said she wanted us to abandon that mindset because she never stated they were new or inexperienced.

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to know if Ms. Jacobs or Ms. Roberson will request the list of the Professional Service Agreements.

Ms. Jacobs stated Ms. Roberson will request the information via email if that is acceptable.

Ms. Woods asked that the Council members be copied in the email as well.

During the vote, Ms. Woods said she didn't get to say what she wanted to say because she was told the council could only vote up or down. She reiterated not saying anything about the deliverables or the services Kinetix have provided because apparently, they have been amazing. She thinks it would be fair if this contract could be rewritten to say it's a one-year contract instead of three years. She said the renewal should be two years and with that being said she voted no.

Engineering Services

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey seconded by Mrs. Ezernack unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8312 authorizing an authorized city representative, to execute Change Order No. Five (5) for the Monroe Water Treatment Plant Renovation and Expansion Contract, between the City of Monroe and Max Foote Construction Company, LLC, for an increase in the contract amount of \$103,897.09 and further providing with respect thereto.

Ms. Woods asked Mr. Morgan McCallister to come talk about this one.

Mr. McCallister, City Engineer, said this is the latest change order number five it includes ten items that is in the Council packet in regard to some changes and upgrades. He said he can run through those if he needs to, but they are broken down on pages three or four of the packet he believes. He said he just printed the summary from Burns & McDonnell. He said it is a combination of things the plant needs in order to move forward on the project. He believes it was previously decided there will be a \$100,000.00 limit then they would come back with that total, rather than come back to the council with each change item.

Mrs. Dawson asked if there were any other questions from the Council.

Ms. Marie Brown stated she has a question.

Mrs. Dawson informed Ms. Brown we are passed that part.

Ms. Brown stated Mr. McCallister made a statement that wasn't mentioned earlier. She wanted to clarify if Mr. McCallister said there is an extra \$100,000.00 pot besides this where they won't have to come back to the Council for approval.

Mr. McCallister said any change order will come before council, however, in this situation instead of every single change coming before council they came up with a list not to exceed the \$100,000.00.

Ms. Brown wanted to know if that is including the other money.

Mr. McCallister said yes, its all broken down in the packet.

Ms. Brown wanted to know if she can have the information to keep.

Mrs. Sturdivant and Mrs. Dawson informed Ms. Brown the information is on the City's website.

Ms. Brown wanted to know if it is a \$700,000.00 project.

Mrs. Sturdivant stated it is a 46-million-dollar project.

Ms. Brown questioned it being a 46-million-dollar project in the beginning and the change orders that are being added to it. She said the project is up to five change orders now.

Mr. Harvey stated it will be more than that to be realistic because it is a 46-million-dollar project as the City tries to marry two sites together while adding expansion on the site. He said some of the line items are things that are a part of connecting the new plant. He said the City doesn't get into that until the construction phase and they find those types of problems.

Mrs. Stacy Rowell, Director of Administration, said she thinks the airport had about 18 to 20 million dollars.

Mr. Harvey reiterated what Mrs. Rowell said about the airport having about 18 to 20 million dollars when it's all over. He said big projects like this do have change orders and if they didn't, they would over bid to a degree.

Ms. Brown said the City is spending a lot of money and she thinks the extra \$100,000.00 won't come to the council to say what it is being spent on they will just have the check.

Mr. Harvey said he disagrees with Ms. Brown statement because it is listed line by line in the council packet.

Mrs. Dawson and Mr. Harvey stated again all the information is on the City's website.

Mr. Harvey stated everybody who wants to find this information can go to the City's website. He said it is published every Thursday when the agenda is released. He further stated this information has been out on the website since early July.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if the changes are being performed prior to bringing them to the Council or are they collected first. She wanted to know have any of the ten items in the packet already been done.

Mr. McCallister said he can't specifically state if any of them have been done because some were before he joined the City of Monroe six weeks ago. He said before anything moves forward that he is involved in no work will be done before it is presented and approved.

Ms. Woods said she thinks it might be a good idea because this would have been four already and this would have made us at fourteen if it was brought to the Council individually for change orders. She wanted to know if there is a certain dollar amount that has to get Council approval.

Mr. Harvey said once they get to \$100,000.00 then they will bring it to the Council instead of one change order every meeting.

Ms. Woods said her only concerns was if any of the work had already been done.

Mr. McCallister said Mr. Kevin Crosby and Mr. Sean Benton may can answer that but some of the items were prior to him coming to the City of Monroe. He said there are people in the room that can attest they have been highly critical of everything, and somethings just have to be done.

Ms. Woods said she was complementing Mr. McCallister for collecting them all as one change order verses it being fourteen.

Mr. Kevin Crosby said none of these items have been performed.

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey seconded by Mrs. Ezernack unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8313 authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into an agreement for Professional Services Agreement with Neel Schaffer to provide traffic safety studies at two (2) intersections and fourteen (14) roadway segments in the City of Monroe for a fee of \$70,000.00.

Ms. Johnnie Thomas, 414 South 8th Street, said she has lived at this corner all her life now she is 76 years old and there are accidents after accidents. She said spoke with Sgt. Fendall this morning and there have been 53 accidents since 2014. She stated she doesn't think the City needs somebody to see what we need. She further stated we need it and the previous administration said we could get it. She said the area needs a red light no if ands or buts about and she is begging the City to help out. She said if we work together, we can accomplish a lot.

Mr. Verbon Muhammad, 23 Marx Street, wanted to know if a list of the intersections are available.

Mr. Harvey said yes, it is in the packet online that the Council referenced earlier.

Mr. Muhammad wanted to know if any of the intersections that are being studied already have traffic lights.

Mr. Harvey stated he thinks two do but wanted engineering to confirm that for him.

Mayor Friday Ellis wanted to give a little background on this item. He stated they have been working with OCOG on a master safety transportation plan.

Mr. Harvey interrupted Mayor Ellis to inform everyone that OCOG is a combination of all the entities in Ouachita where we share roadways like state highways.

Mayor Ellis said the intersections that have been identified are all high crash and incidents areas. He said to be able to draw down federal dollars though the IJA infrastructure bill the City must have the traffic study done to put it in place. He said the study will determine if the red light helps or if we need some traffic calming measures along that route. He stated the suggestion is based on the activity and he agrees the intersection is pitiful. He further stated that section of the street the City is planning to take it in to make it a city street. He said once it becomes a city street, we have the autonomy to be able to put a light there. Mayor Ellis stated to Mr. Muhammad that he has his commitment that once the City takes possession of that street a traffic light will be put there.

Mr. Muhammad noted they have been fighting for arrows on 165 South for decades. He wanted to know if the public was included in determining which intersections and roadways to study.

Mayor Ellis informed Mr. Muhammad that it was determined by crash and incident reports.

Mr. Muhammad wanted to know where the two intersections are located.

Mr. Harvey said there are two different intersections across fourteen different intersections. He said there is actually sixteen different areas two just happen to be an intersection.

Mr. Muhammad wanted to know which are the two intersections.

Mr. Harvey read from the council packet all sixteen area for Mr. Muhammad.

Mr. Muhammad said none of those areas that Mr. Harvey listed are on 165.

Mayor Ellis noted 165 is DOTD.

Mr. Muhammad stated we have to work together.

Mayor Ellis said DOTD is coming up with a corridor enhancement to start public engagement. He said there was a meeting about a week ago with DOTD to show preliminary plans of 165. He said it will include pedestrian walkways and bike lanes.

Mr. Muhammad said when the roadways are identified for the City the public can only go so far and the City has to go to bat. He said it shouldn't be that major to add traffic arrows on 165.

Mayor Ellis noted he thought so too, with a turn signal or a red light, but they must have a traffic study to justify what to spend. He further noted they have been working with the local DOTD office to get things done.

Mr. Harvey said it is painful to get anything done on a state highway.

Mayor Ellis agreed with Mr. Harvey that it does just take a little extra work.

Ms. Marie Brown wanted to clarify that the streets Mr. Harvey named are streets that will be studied in the future after they are done with the first two. She said stated the list of streets are just suggestions.

Mr. Harvey said those suggestion form this contract.

Ms. Marie Brown said they will meet with the City for \$70,000.00 and give them the study. She said anything after that the City has to repay for it. She suggested that all citizens start reading the packet because what Mr. Harvey just said is not true.

Mr. Harvey said he disagrees with Ms. Brown.

Ms. Brown asked Mr. Harvey to read the top line.

Mr. Harvey said those are recommendations that form this contract and now the council is voting on a contract which involves the ones that are highlighted. He noted when the City says we are entering into a professional service agreement to provide traffic studies for named intersections and road segments, that's how we got here.

Ms. Brown stated once again, she is asking everybody to go back and read the packet. She further stated if she misunderstood what she read then she will come back to next council meeting and apologize. She said none of the streets that were named are in the black community.

Mr. Harvey stated he disagrees, he said it is for streets all over the city and that is what this traffic study informs.

Introduction of Resolutions & Ordinances:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack seconded by Mr. Harvey unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance authoring the City of Monroe to take Corporeal Possession of the property described below and sell to Bryant Newton all rights, title, and interest that the City may have acquired to the Lot 12, JS James Construction Co resub of part of Square 6 Terminal Heights Addition, Ouachita Parish, 2104 Georgia St., District 4, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated June 12, 2017, and further with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey seconded by Mrs. Ezernack unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance authoring the City of Monroe to take Corporeal Possession of property described below and sell to Bryant Newton all rights, title, and interest that the City may have acquired to the Lot 12, JS James Construction Co resub of part of Square 6 Terminal Heights Addition, Ouachita Parish, 2104 Georgia St., District 4, Monroe, La by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated June 12, 2017, and further with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey seconded by Mrs. Ezernack unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance adopting a Collective Bargaining Agreement for 2022-2025 by and between the City

of Monroe and the Amalgamated Transit Union Local No. 1160, AFL-CIO and further providing with respect thereto. (Transit) (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 declared closed.

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to remove item (a) from the agenda an Ordinance authorizing Mayor Friday Ellis to enter into a Lease Agreement with Louisiana Purchase Zoological Society and further providing with respect thereto. (This item was passed over at the last meeting.) (Comm. Affairs)

Mrs. Angie Sturdivant asked that item (a) be removed from the agenda because they are still working with the Zoological Society but will have a new agreement.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if there is a new date for the item to be back on the agenda.

Mrs. Sturdivant said she is meeting with the Zoological President in the near future but hopefully the next council meeting. She said surely by the second meeting in August it should be back.

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing:

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approve an Ordinance No. 12,127 authorizing Friday Ellis, Mayor, to enter into a Contract by and between the City of Monroe and Greater Ouachita Water Company and further providing with respect thereto. (Public Wks.)

Mrs. Lynnetta Whitehurst, resident of Ouachita Parish, said she is not a resident of the City of Monroe, but she spends her tax dollars here in Monroe. She said she started her undergrad career here but moved because the opportunities weren't here. She stated Monroe was not intentional about hiring African American students out of NLU at the time. She further stated, herself and her husband were both professionals in the IT and software industry. She said when her husband applied for Troy Nickels three times as a programmer, they hired someone out of Dallas. She said she is here to represent part of the executive board of the NAACP. She wanted to read the NAACP mission statement because that is her view on returning.

Mr. Harvey wanted to make sure Mrs. Whitehurst was speaking under the correct item on the agenda.

Mrs. Whitehurst apologized realizing she come up to the podium under the wrong agenda item.

Chairman Dawson stated seeing no one else come forward the hearing was closed.

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing:

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approve an Ordinance No. 12,128 authorizing a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement by and between the City of Monroe and the Walnut Street Special District authorizing the sharing of tax increments within the boundaries of the district in connection with the City's efforts to support and incentivize an Economic Development Project as defined in and provided for pursuant to the Cooperative Economic Development Law Pursuant to La. R.S. 33:9020, et seq.; and for related purposes. (Admin.) (Mr. Marshall and Ms. Woods voting no)

Mrs. Dawson asked if there will be any comments from the audience but wanted to address the line at the podium to see if everyone is together.

Mr. Ambrose Douzart said no they were not altogether.

Mr. Charles Theus said there are more people coming to speak as well.

Mrs. Whitehurst noted she will begin with the NAACP mission on a returning person in the last 5 years and being more involved in the last two years. She said it's not that she hasn't had a social calendar but decided to take a step back as she returned closer to home. She stated she did tours to find a home and she saw the growth in the City. She said North and South is compared, as usual, that there is less improvement of life and plan of our ability. She said the NAACP mission is to achieve equity, political rights, and social inclusion by advancing policies and practice that expand human and civil rights, eliminate discrimination, and accelerate the well-being, education and economic security of black people. She said to words jumped out to her when reading this mission voting and intentionality. She said she is speaking on this mission on how to make sure that small businesses in Monroe grow. She wanted to know how the City will reflect fairness and equitable decisions of making the plans that SEDD have proposed a reality. She said it is an ambitious plan but it's not impossible in her opinion. She further stated what she is seeing is an imbalance and a question of equity. She said voting on Mr. Theus's plan the next step shouldn't have been that difficult in financing this plan because there is a model on how to address financially developing districts. She said there was no problem in Downtown or Walnut and reading the Riverfront District, it seems there was no problem there either. She said when she looked at the Statue where SEDD was in 2001 and Riverfront was in 2008 according to the paper. She said the board is only asking to have equity.

Mrs. Dawson informed Mrs. Whitehurst that we must move to the next person in line at the podium.

Mrs. Whitehurst said didn't know that but had two words again intentionally and voting. She said when people vote it shows your intention.

Mrs. Dawson interrupted Mrs. Whitehurst last quote to reiterated we have to move to the next person.

Reverend Ambrose Douzart, President of Ouachita Monroe NAACP, said each time he comes with fairness in his heart because this is our town. He said he received the cooperative endeavor agreement which he stated was just put together July 12, 2022 which was a few days ago. He said he had several sleepless nights waiting for the council to get a quorum but in the agreement, he found several things he is voting against. He said on page 2 section 11 it states a public hearing would be called to advise the citizens of Monroe and Ouachita Parish of the geographic boundaries of this wonderful Walnut District. He said he was disappointed in the Mayor and all the rest that would allow a public investor to invest in property and the City will furnish all the work to do this project. He stated by chance the project fails the investor is not responsible the City will pick it up. He wanted to know who the Walnut District board members are and when do they meet. He said members of this Council or anybody else, better be careful because they might be in some ethnic violation. He said it has been 20 something years since the SEDD has gotten any help from the City.

Reverend Robert Bradford, Executive Board of the NAACP, wanted to know what process the Walnut District has to be accountable for the public funds.

Mr. Marshall stated the City collects the taxes.

Reverend Bradford said it also states there is a sharing of the tax increments.

Ms. Kenya Roberson said she is coming on behalf of these two ways for the Monroe Regional Black Chamber as well as Senator Katrina Jackson, Representative Pat Moore, and Representative Adrian Fisher. She stated they are writing in support of our constituents that have asked repeatedly for the SEDD TIF to be placed on council agenda for approval. She said they stand with the MRBCC on tonight and ask that the TIF that is on the agenda be halted on all votes. She further stated that this TIF be placed on the agenda with SEDD. She said they understand what is in front of the Council on tonight, but it has not been fair to SEDD. She said she doesn't think it is anything wrong with pulling Walnut District from the agenda and putting them on the agenda together. She reiterated to the council to please not vote on this item on tonight.

Mr. Charles Theus, 503 Speed Avenue, Executive Director for SEDD, asked the audience, just for his curiosity, how many people here would like to see this item pulled from the agenda and put on with SEDD (members of the audience raised their hands.) Mr. Theus said the public does not fear

its representatives or any person on the council and the public rules. He stated they are asking that the council join with the public and give them their request. He said the questions regarding the makeup of this agreement has been changed. He wanted to know how the Council can have a final reading on something that has been documented and it's the public first time seeing it. He said for the public, he is not fussing at Mrs. Dawson he is directing it to her because she is the chairman, but how can you have reading on something that is first heard. He stated he thinks Mr. Marshall made the right decision because there are ethic violations that he thinks is waiting inside this document. He said Mr. Harvey's wife works with Mr. Echols, how can a council member vote on something so close? He stated to Mr. Marshall that ethics state you have to be gone two years.

Mr. Harvey wanted to remind everybody that he completes a personal financial disclosure every year and that is where you can find his real estate and business holdings. He said his wife is an employee of the State Legislature which means it is completely separate from any of Mr. Echols's business ventures, but it is on ethics.la.gov.

Ms. Brown wanted to know if that bars Mr. Harvey from voting.

Mr. Harvey said no it does not bar him from voting.

Ms. Brown wanted to know how many buildings are in this district and who owns them.

Mrs. Ezernack stated it is two building and a parking lot.

Mrs. Sturdivant said the properties in the Walnut District are owned by Mr. Echols exclusively.

Ms. Brown wanted to know how many buildings are in the District.

Mrs. Sturdivant said she would have to defer to Mr. Echols, but he is the sole property owner.

Mr. Harvey said there are two building.

Ms. Brown wanted to know why the City is giving one person, Mr. Echols \$2.5 million but said do not give SEDD any money for their business. She said before council votes on this agreement they should think about section 402 contributions of annual local increments is a material change and it replace section 305 public utilities. She stated the City is removing a section of the agreement which is a material change and not clarification. She said section 507, Successor and Assigns are not clear, what are the clarification. She further stated that there are many holes in the CEA and it should not be voted on favorably. She said a lot of things that the City mentioned in the letter came out, and the council should go to the section, read it because it is not in there.

Mr. Muhammad said he has heard a lot about this, but when he read it, it says it came out May 22 meeting but where are the minutes.

Mrs. Sturdivant noted it is the minutes from the Walnut Street Board. She said they have the advertisements for the public and Mr. Shafto and Mr. Echols can provide all of that. She further noted it is not the minutes from the Monroe City Council meeting.

Mr. Muhammad wanted to know where the minutes are, but he stated he doesn't need them now.

Mrs. Sturdivant stated they have the minutes and the attorneys that were hired to work on this have all the information.

Mr. Muhammad wanted to know if they are public and what is going on.

Mrs. Sturdivant said they made sure all of that is accurate and the attorneys have reviewed the financials from the 30 plus Million-dollar investment.

Mrs. Sturdivant noted the attorneys are here with a presentation.

Mr. Muhammad said the council needs to back up and pump the brakes because as a citizen he was looking for the minutes to read. He said he wants to read about all the stuff that is going on, but he couldn't find them. He wanted to know have the Council members read the minutes.

Mr. Harvey said the minutes are available for request just like the City Council minutes.

Mr. Trey Harrison, Butler Snow, LLP, said they have a presentation but thinks it would be longer than 3 minutes. He wanted to know if they need to wait until the hearing is closed.

Mrs. Sturdivant said they are requesting the presentation on behalf of the City.

Mrs. Dawson let the attorneys know they can begin their presentation.

Mr. Jamie Mayo asked Chairman Dawson before council proceed if he could make a comment.

Mr. Jamie Mayo, 318 King Oaks Drive, said it is good to be here after also two years. He said he receives a lot of calls about different issues here. He said he has been consulting with a number of different cities both state and national. He said the economic development districts consist of four districts which are I-20, Armand District, SEDD, and downtown. He said two of those districts have a revenue stream and Senator Charles Jones created the SEDD as well as the Downtown Economic District without revenue streams. He noted present council approved the revenue stream for Downtown and SEDD. He said during his administration, they were able to go to Baton Rouge to get the Bond Commission to approve and go out for a vote that passed at 82%. He said SEDD bought the building at about \$250,000.00 as far as he knows that is the only money SEDD have received. He said all the districts now have a revenue stream but time and time again SEDD have come pleading for support. He further noted he keeps up with stats and we are losing with crime, economic empowerment as it relates to equality in the community.

Mrs. Dawson said she would have to cut off Mr. Mayo at this time.

Mr. Mayo wanted to know why he was being cut off.

Mrs. Dawson stated his time was up.

Mr. Mayo reminded Mrs. Dawson this is a public hearing.

Mrs. Dawson said we have to give time to everybody that's standing up.

Mr. Mayo said he didn't hear that with anyone else.

Mrs. Dawson stated the timer was on for everyone and we have another meeting coming up.

Mr. Mayo said he has one more point to make then he will return to his seat. He stated the City has never given a TIF district to one developer or one family. He said the reason he mentioned I-20 is because there are several businesses located in this district. He said the City is giving one family \$2.5 million that own the property, which is unconscionable in his opinion. He said at the least there should be an ethic requirement and the citizens are talking about putting them both at the same time but that's an issue. He said a lot of the questions the citizens have proposed to the council have not been answered. He further stated there are some ethics issues and material changes in this item, so how can the council vote on this anyway. He concluded by reiterating the City is giving one family \$2.5 million who is a state representative and if a family member works for the state representative the council is telling the public there aren't any issues as it relates to the connection with the developer.

Mrs. Dawson stated seeing no one else come forward the hearing was closed.

Ms. Woods said that Mr. Little was coming up before Mrs. Dawson closed the public comments.

Mr. Tony Little, 13154 Forsythe Ave, Chairman of SEDD, said he appreciates everyone who came out to voice their support. He said SEDD has a meeting with administration but there is a general perceived and realistic equality as it relates to the Southside and how it has been treated by this administration. He said with DEDD and the Walnut Street TIF, as Mayor Mayo said, basically is a one-man city. He said a political subdivision is a city and doesn't know of anywhere in the state of Louisiana in which one man owns one city. He said he thinks it would be incumbent upon the members of the council to take an internal look at the injustice that the community as a whole have

stated. He stated if it was not for the fact this meeting was held at 4 o'clock today and was scheduled he promise there would be 4 to 5 hundred people present. He said Mr. Marshall has been great at being the liaison with the going back and forth but we now face a moral issue if the City proceed. He further stated he took time to meet with one of the attorneys and the language clearly says \$2.5 million for 20 years which is one of the reasons the community is upset. He said that it has been cleared up in the document but not in people minds. He said if we are going to be one city with one future, in his opinion, we must also look at the psychological divide and address the inequities as it relates to how people are treated. He said he doesn't see the rush to wait one meeting and deal with the changes. He said if we just bury our head in the sand, and we have the votes but do it just because, we will never fulfill that dream of being one city with one future.

Mr. Trey Harrison, Butler Snow, LLP, gave a presentation to show some of the mechanics of TIFs not only in Louisiana but throughout the country in terms of how they work. He said the law firm was engaged by the City of Monroe in December 2021 and they began working with the City on this particular project. He said the outset began engaging Mr. Echols's counsel and the first draft is now in final reading. He stated he thinks they went through numerous iterations of that draft, but the initial diligence was February. He stated the questions he proposed to Mr. Echols and his council which was a detailed business plan, if the project will be completed in phases to provide detail explanation of the phases, the economic impact of the project, description of the infrastructure improvement, sources of uses and many more were discussed.

Mr. Michael J. Busada with Butler & Snow Law Firm said the City present statute that was passed in 2015 and basically told the attorneys the City doesn't have a lot of options. He said the City didn't want to violate state law and also make sure to protect the citizens of Monroe. He said they were hired to come in read this law, research the statute, and see what they can do. He said this is a legislative created district and it provide powers to districts that most districts do not have. He said it gives the authority provided to local government subdivision including but not limited to ad valorem tax increment financing and bonding. He said the agreement has no limit to the amount of money and the law doesn't require a limit. He stated the City collects 100% of the taxes generated in this district for a total amount of zero dollars.

Mr. Marshall wanted to know with this being a TIF district can this money be bonded against the \$2.5 million.

Mr. Busada said the district has the ability with or without the consent of the City to issue bonds because they are considered a political subdivision just like any other city or municipality. He said they made restrictions where the district must provide documentation for the month on the thing's money has already been spent on. He said it must show it was specifically spent on this project within this area. He said they have to provide the receipts or documentation then they would get a reimbursement. He said with the other money they have they can issue bonds, or like any other subdivision could do.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if this project is bankable without the TIF.

Mr. Busada said he would have to defer to the developer but under the law they get unlimited amount of money.

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to know if the City needs to have an negotiated agreement with some of the boundaries that the attorneys placed. She said if the Council didn't pass the TIF they can do what they want to because the State Legislature passed the TIF in 2015.

Mr. Busada noted that is correct and state law basically says the City is the collection agent that collects the money and gives it to the district.

Mrs. Ezernack said the whole agreement is for the City to collect the money and give it to the district as they provide the receipts.

Ms. Woods wanted to clarify if the Council doesn't pass this the district can still do whatever they want to do.

Mr. Busada said yes, they can do it themselves for limited amount of money and they would have to work with the tax commission to collect the money. He said the Council would have no say whatsoever.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if the City would still get the money.

Mr. Busada said your tax collector would.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if they would give the money over to the City.

Mr. Busada said no they would give it over to the district. He said without this agreement the district can force the tax commission to bypass the City and give the money directly to the district.

Mrs. Ezernack and Mrs. Dawson noted all of it.

Ms. Woods wanted Mr. Busada to explain who the district is. She wanted to verify the district is the Walnut TIF.

Mr. Busada said correct, and this is what was created which states the Walnut Street Special District is a political subdivision of the State of Louisiana. He said it outlines their boundaries and tells their purposes.

Ms. Woods wanted to know would this one person be their own one city.

Mr. Busada said it would be the board and the board makeup the Mayor of the City or designee, Monroe City chair or designee for the Monroe City Council, the president or CEO of West Monroe, the Monroe West Monroe Convention Visitors Bureau, and any person who is a property owner within the District that applies for a membership

Mr. Marshall said the Council introduced this item and made some changes, but the changes weren't put out for the public. He said he understands the Council didn't have a quorum but most of the time when Council introduces an item, they are brought back either the same or minor modifications. He said from what Mr. Busada is saying there have been a lot of changes.

Mrs. Sturdivant said the updated agreement that added the clarification has been in the packet and available to the public on the website since July 7th. She said the public had an extra two weeks of notice and opportunity to be heard. She said the only additional change was a section being removed.

Mr. Busada said Mr. Marshall is bringing up a good point and the changes that were made were months ago. He said it was done by numerous meetings with the developers by email. He said the changes that are in the agreement are changes because people had questions on clarifying. He said from a legal standpoint the law firm felt like there wasn't any need to make those changes.

Mr. Marshall said he tries to make sure everything is done in order. He said no disrespect to Mr. Echols, but he knows there have been questions about funds going to elected officials. He asked if Mr. Busada can speak to that issue as well. He said he knows its his project and he owns the building but as far as funds being given for development to an elected official.

Mrs. Dawson explained Mr. Marshall question stating the developer is an elected official.

Mrs. Sturdivant said she doesn't think there is any law that prohibits an elected official from investing and having investment properties.

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to know since the agreement has the stop gap measures about the accountability as far as getting the money and how its going to be spent in those specific items, correct?

Mr. Busada said yes, there is a requisition and he said if legislation was authored by Representative Echols or if it was something he voted for in the legislature there may be a question there. He noted this was before he was in the legislature, but they weren't hired to speak specifically to that issue.

Mr. Marshall said he is for economic development and no disrespect to anyone. He said he knows a lot of people have concerns and he sympathizes with South Monroe as far as development. He noted they are working on things and a lot of things are coming. He further noted working with SEDD on somethings, but it is taking some time. He said he has concerns and he is not fully settled as far as everything, with that being said he chose to abstain.

Mrs. Sturdivant wanted to remind the council of the previous discussions about rules of procedures that relates to abstinence. She said the rules state that every member present when a question is stated from the chair shall vote there on unless excused by the chairman or unless he asks to be excused because of a personal interest in which case he shall not vote. She recommended the council members vote up or down based on the rules of procedures.

Mr. Marshall said he would have to vote no right now because he is not 100%.

Mr. Harvey said it seems we have talked about one economic district more than the other tonight which actually have a funding source. He said it has been about \$433,000.00 since inception and people should probably look at that list of projects. He said if you're worried about benefiting one person in district one you should definitely look into that. He said he hopes the citizens hold the same level of accountability.

Ms. Woods stated she has enjoyed all the conversation that was had on this evening, and she thanked everyone for coming out. She said she believes there are so many issues right now with this the uncertainly, clarity, and the whole nine yards. She said if anyone knows her, she is definitely for development in downtown Monroe. She noted her challenge right now is SEDD is near and dear to her heart because her district is in the Southside Economic Development District. She said she does believe they have gotten the fair treatment as far as bringing things to the table and its nothing against the Walnut TIF. She said she would like to pull it from the agenda, bring it back as opposed to just rushing to do anything and just treat them both fairly.

Citizen's Participation:

(1) Mr. Michael Castor, 34A Garden Avenue, said he has a problem with the recreation centers. He said the council is saying we are equal, but we are not equal in his opinion. He said they can't get any help at the recreation centers, and he has been spending his money on the recreation, but nobody can tell him why. He said they can't get any participation from the staff, janitors, and if they don't do it, it won't get done. He said he worked for the City for a while and you have to hold City workers accountable. He stated we need the fire and police at every recreation center to participate not just on 165, we need them in the community. He further stated no one is helping them, so don't ask us to help you.

(2) Ms. Keisha Etheridge, Owner of Trucking Transportation Academy, wanted to state she supports everybody in Monroe, and she will go into impoverished areas, into prisons, and give us a different view of hope to bring the community together. She said she trains Logistics Freight brokering, dispatching, and how to start a business. She said her motto is teamwork makes the dream work and she hopes to continue to be welcomed to the City because she will do her very best here.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:02 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

