

There was a legal and regular session of the City Council of the City of Monroe, Louisiana held this date, July 28, 2020 at the Council's regular meeting place, 400 Lea Joyner Memorial Expressway, City Council Chambers/City Hall Building, Monroe, Louisiana.

The Honorable Juanita G. Woods, Chairwoman, called the meeting to order.

The roll call was done by the Council Clerk, Ms. Carolus Riley.

Council members present for roll call: Mrs. Gretchen Ezernack, Ms. Juanita Woods, Mr. Douglas Harvey, Mr. Kenneth Wilson, Mrs. Kema Dawson.

Council member(s) absent: None.

Chairwoman Woods declared a quorum.

The Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were led Rev. Tommy Lester and Councilman Doug Harvey.

Ms. Woods welcomed Mayor Friday Ellis and Councilwoman Kema Dawson. She thanked Rev. Lester for the amazing prayer.

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Councilman Harvey thanked Rev. Lester for his wonderful prayer; he welcomed Mayor Ellis and Councilwoman Dawson and thanked Mr. Wilson for his service.

2. Councilwoman Ezernack thanked everyone present and welcomed Mayor Ellis, Ms. Dawson and look forward to working with them on city projects.; She thanked a Neville student and his friends for volunteering their time cleaning up the Forsythe boat dock; they will be having a cleanup this Saturday from 9:00 am - 11:30 am.

3. Councilwoman Woods thanked everyone for coming and stated she would yield her time to Mr. Edward Chips Taylor, Regional coordinator for the Census. Ms. Woods asked prayers for Mayor Ellis' daughter as she undergoes surgery. Ms. Woods thanked Mr. Wilson for his service and continued work. Mr. Chips Taylor spoke regarding the Census and his work along with Ms. Ellen Hill who has worked hard to make sure the citizens count, and that Monroe will get its fair share.

4. Councilman Wilson welcomed each one present and acknowledged Mr. Sharkey; he congratulated Mr. Carday Marshall for being in the runoff. He welcomed Mayor Ellis and Mrs. Kema Dawson; he thanked Mrs. Angie Sturdivant for her work, Ms. Roshonda Gospel and Mr. Michael McGrue for getting the containers installed and also for getting them emptied. Citizens are interested in volunteering their time, as well as looking forward to getting cameras installed and getting the Georgia pump station completed

5. Councilwoman Dawson thanked all for coming and also District 5 for entrusting her to represent the district and look forward to working with Mayor Ellis and all others. She is looking forward to the work ahead and one of her first meetings was at the zoo and the work to be done there; she thanked public works for their assistance on the

addresses being sent to them; she asked that a community effort be made so that our communities are kept clean. She looks forward to working with all Council members to get things done in the community.

6. Mayor Ellis thanked the citizens for the opportunity to serve; he said he understands the importance of a three month transition period, although Covid has left him with 5 days to get acquainted and am very proud of the community who stepped up and it proves that we have tremendous citizens in the City who wants to make this a better place; it is a transformation team that helps us in the next 90 days to help create a master plan for what future growth would be in Monroe; he looks forward to his relationship with the Council who are elected by the people for the people to be a voice for their communities; he said he feels like they all will do some big things and do look forward to it and doesn't feel there is nothing that they can't do together and look forward to serving each and every one; he said there are no words to express how he feels being here and representing the people each and every day. He thanked all of the department and division heads for taking the time this week to meet and is still

Monroe City Council Legal and Regular Session

July 28, 2020

6:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers-City Hall

MINUTES

getting used to the Honorable Mayor, having always been Friday and it is good and they all have been hospitable in showing him their departments and talking about things and ways for growth and opportunities; there is a lot of work to do and believe all are ready and do look forward to working with each and every one.

Upon a motion of Mr. Harvey and a second by Mr. Wilson, the minutes of the Legal and Regular session of July 14, 2020 were unanimously approved. (There were no public comments).

PRESENTATION: NONE.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: 6pm

(1.) A Public Hearing to hear and consider all comments, protest and objects to the 2020 Justice Assistance grant (JAG) for the Monroe Police Department. Chairwoman called the public hearing opened; seeing no one come forward and no comments, the public hearing was closed.

(1.a) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7766, authorizing Friday Ellis to sign and accept the 2020 Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Comments: Mr. Harvey commented that he thought the city already had this digital ticketing devise system and asked if this grant was to be used for the ongoing cost of the system or is it for additional equipment. Ms. Baldwin said this is an annual grant for the digiTicket system.

PROPOSED CONDEMNATIONS: Public Comment: NONE.

Ms. Woods stated there is a lot of blighted property in the city, but due to Covid pandemic, would not like to do any condemnations so that it can allow citizens to come and be able to defend their properties and this is why there are no condemnations listed; once the state opens back up then the proposed condemnations will be brought back. Mr. Harvey asked what phase would they be brought back to the agenda; Ms. Woods commented they will not be introduced again until we move into phase 3 or beyond, because they have to get it to the point to allow the citizens to come in and defend their properties or not.

ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF BIDS: (Public Comment)

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved to Accept the bid of ShotSpotter for Gun Shot Locator & Gun Fire Detection Software #2021-00000007 as recommended by the Director of Administration for meeting the specifications of this bid. The Vendor responses meet the specifications of this bid. Funds will be derived from the MPD Police Capital Account. The Tax & Revenue Division has confirmed that this bidder is tax compliant. (There were no public comments).

Comments: Mr. Wilson thanked interim chief Brown and the citizens are excited about it. Ms. Woods said she was excited about it being brought to Monroe, as there are gunshots happening evenings and before day in the mornings in certain areas and this will alert the police to what is going on. Mrs. Ezernack said she saw a demonstration of the model and is excited for it to be brought to the city.

RESOLUTIONS AND MINUTE ENTRIES:

Council: Public Comment: None.

Department of Administration: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved to Consider an Application by Allen Sandoval Soto dba La Catrina Mexican Street Food, Inc., 512 Louisville Ave., Monroe, LA 71201 for a New 2020 Class A Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been Cleared, CO-Cleared, Distance Report Cleared. (There were no public comments).

Department of Planning & Urban Development: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7767, Adopt a Resolution appointing Tegitra Thomas to the Planning Commission of the City of Monroe and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Comments: Ms. Woods asked Rev. Thomas to stand and thanked him for willingness to serve.

Legal Department: Public Comment: None

Mayor's Office: Public Comment: None.

Department of Public Works: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7768, authorizing an invitation for bid for a Mobile Ticketing Solution System and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Comment: Mr. Harvey asked if this method would prevent riders from paying in cash. Mr. Keenan said no it wouldn't and they would continue to purchase passes with cash, this is just in addition to get electronic passes on their mobile devices. Ms. Dawson asked for an explanation on how they can add money to their card; Mr. Keenan said with the mobile solution you can do it from a website similar to purchasing an airline ticket with the barcode and the bus will have a validator for the ticket purchased.

(b) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Ms. Dawson and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7769, authorizing an invitation for bid for an Autonomous (Self-Securement) Wheelchair System and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Comments: Mr. Keenan explained the system would enable the wheelchair passenger to secure the chair in place.

(c) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved to Consider request from the WPCC Division of Public Works to accept the bid of Benchmark Construction Group of LA, LLC for the expansion of the WPCC Administration Building. Funding will come from the surplus funds left over from last year's sewer budget. Any amount over the \$135,400 previously approved by the City Council will come from the WPCC's current year Capital Account, which has a balance of \$46,000. (There were no public comments).

Comments: Mr. Westrom explained the expansion to be inclusive of the waste water plant operators due to their current area possibly being asbestos contaminated and was wide opened to the old sewer wet well underneath it and they have to be moved out and into the Admin building and they are also adding a conference room.

Department of Community Affairs: Public Comment: None.

Police Department: Public Comment: None.

Fire Department: Public Comment: None.

Engineering Services: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7770, accepting the base bid of W. L. Bass Construction, Inc., in the amount of \$124,470.00 for the repairs to Warhawk Way and Inabnet Blvd. Causeway Project, and further authorizing Friday Ellis, Mayor, to enter into and execute a contract for said work. (There were no public comments).

(b) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7771, accepting the base bid of Dixie Overland Construction, LLC, in the amount of \$377,145.00 for the Texas Avenue Lift Station Bar Screen Replacement Project, and further authorizing Friday Ellis, Mayor, to enter into and execute a contract for said work. (There were no public comments).

(c) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7772, accepting the base bid of Womack & Sons Construction Group, Inc., in the amount of \$217,120.00 for the repairs to Bayou Bartholomew pump and motor no. 1 Project, and further authorizing Friday Ellis, Mayor, to enter into and execute a contract for said work. (There were no public comments).

(d) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7773, authorizing the Purchasing Manager to advertise for bids on the tower at Bienville Drive Intersection Improvements Project. The estimated cost of this project is \$132,862.63. The DBE Goal is 4.21% and source of funds Tower Drive Economic Development Revenue Funds. (There were no public comments).

(e) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7774, authorizing the Purchasing Manager to advertise for bids on the tower at Fulton Drive Water & Sewer Improvements Project. The estimated cost of this project is \$137,912.50. The DBE Goal is 8.33% and source of funds Tower Drive Economic Development Revenue Funds.

Comments: Ms. Marie Brown, citizen, asked due diligence was being done to ensure the DBE requirements were being met and it has gone through the process by the DBE committee and they confirmed the process. Ms. Brown asked if the due diligence was being made for minorities and if the percentage would be stated for all of the bids. Ms. Golden, city engineer said they are adhering to the requirements of the ordinances and approved purchases and the purchasing processes as far as giving the information and for those responsible for getting the information to the minorities, this is given to them ahead of time and in the format requested and monthly check to ensure the DBE's are paid and receive cancelled checks to make sure it is being accomplished and are adhering to the requirements that the council and administration setup.

(f) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7775, authorizing Friday Ellis, Mayor, to execute Change Order No. One (1) to the MTS Facility Bus Wash Replacement Contract, between the City of Monroe and Traxler Construction Company, for an increase in the contract amount of \$21,164.13 and further providing with respect thereto.

Comments: Ms. Marie Brown, citizen, asked for an explanation of the increase; Ms. Golden, city engineer, explained the increase to be items requested by transit. Mr. Harvey said his concern was in the wording of the resolution that read, for an increase in the contract amount for various changes to the work with no net change in cost. Ms. Golden said it was an error; Mr. Harvey said when it first came up it was 80% federally funded and 20% city funded and asked if the additional \$21,000 increase be exclusively funded by the city. Mr. Harvey commented that since it is an 80/20 split, then the actual cost to the city would be \$4,000. Mrs. Vickie Krutzer, citizen, commented that with this being a change order, asked what was initially done when the first evaluation of the contract was done to determine all of the improvements that were needed. She asked if these were new additions; Mr. Harvey said it was something separate and explained they were all additions, not part of the original project scope and as changes were made to the facility, these were changes they identified as it was explained to him. Mrs. Krutzer asked if there was a full assessment before the bids were put out; Ms. Golden said there was a full assessment done and explained the original scope; she said as they got into the project, they realized there were other things that if a little more money was spent it would enhance the resilience and dependability of the overall system and the bid came in under their budget.

BREAK IF NEEDED:

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance accepting the Donation of real property into the City of Monroe from Peters Family Urban Properties, LLC and Osprey Properties, LLC, and further providing with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments).

(b) Upon a motion by Mr. Wilson, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance accepting the Donation of real property into the City of Monroe from the Monroe City School Board, and further providing with respect thereto. (Eng.) (There were no public comments).

(c) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance authorizing the City of Monroe to take Corporeal Possession of the property described below and sell to Frankie Cloman-Edwards all rights, title and interest that the City may have acquired to Lot 39, Square 5, Blanks Addition,

Ouachita Parish, 802 Camp St. District 5, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax sale dated July 17, 2001, and further with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments).

Comments: Mrs. Ezernack asked if this was the same rate; Mrs. Rowell said it was the same rate.

(d) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance adopting the Authorized Millage Rate(s) and providing for the Levying of Special and General Taxes for the City of Monroe for the year 2020. (Admin.) (There were no public comments).

Comments: Mr. Harvey asked for an explanation and Mrs. Rowell explained they were property taxes and annually received by the tax assessor who sets the millage rate based on the assessments and they give the city the arrange of how the city wants to set the millage based on what type of revenue the city need to generate. She said with this one, they left the millages alone because didn't know what effect the covid19 would have on the sales tax revenue; the assessment was higher this year and would generate an additional \$40,000 by leaving them alone and there is no adverse effect on the citizenry.

Ms. Woods stated the introductory ordinances would be brought back in two weeks for a final reading and approval.

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

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairwoman Woods declared the public hearing open; seeing no one come forward, the hearing was closed.

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,000, authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to Roshonda Johnson all rights, title and interest that the City may have acquired to Lot B, Sq. 37, Layton's 2nd Addition, Ouachita Parish, 1104 Louise Anne Ave., District 4, Monroe, La, by adjudication at Tax Sale dated July 1, 2010, and further with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments).

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairwoman Woods declared the public hearing open; seeing no one come forward, the hearing was closed.

(b) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved to finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,001, authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to Chandra Isby-Melancon all rights, title and interest that the City may have acquired to Lot 13, Block 38, Unit 4, Sherrouse Park Addition, Ouachita Parish, 509 Darbonne St., District 3, Monroe, La, by adjudication at Tax Sale dated July 5, 2012, and further with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments).

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairwoman Woods declared the public hearing open; seeing no one come forward, the hearing was closed.

(c) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved to finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,002, authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to Stephen Collins all rights, title and interest that the City may have acquired to Lot 8, Block 1, J. Arthur Smith's Subdivision of Lots 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 of Block 5 of Terminal Heights Addition, Ouachita Parish, 104 Wilson St., District 4, Monroe, La, by adjudication at Tax Sale dated June 22, 2011, and further with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments).

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairwoman Woods declared the public hearing open; seeing no one come forward, the hearing was closed.

(d) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,003, authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to Stephen Collins all rights, title and interest that the City may have acquired to Lot 6, Block 2, J. Arthur Smith's Subdivision of Lots 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 of Block 5 of Terminal Heights Addition, Ouachita Parish, 206 Kenewah St., District 5, Monroe, La, by adjudication at Tax Sale dated June 22, 2011, and further with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments).

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairwoman Woods declared the public hearing open:

1. Allison Jarrell, citizen, spoke on behalf of the proposed ordinance change

2. Clint Hixon, spoke to clarify the types of homes they are proposing to place on the Hixon lot. Mr. Harvey questioned regarding the type of inventoried homes and Mr. Hixon explained there was a mistake that was spoken about the information previously given regarding the types of inventory to be placed on the lot. Mr. Harvey asked who would manage the lot; Mr. Hixon said it would be what the city wanted them to provide to the tenant and it would be up to the tenant to produce the product. Mr. Harvey explained his concerns from constituents regarding traffic and Mr. Hixon said moving in would be the greater influx of traffic. Mr. Harvey commented regarding the payroll benefits and the makeup of employees; it was explained to be a manager, sales, and maintenance staff included an inhouse contractor. Mrs. Dawson commented she has seen pictures of the homes, but not how they would actually be situated on the lot; Mr. Hixon said he didn't have that information, didn't spend the money on giving that info; she asked if he had information of how it would look from the owner and he said he didn't know of one and it would be placed on concrete and have the opportunity to have a tax collection around one million dollars. Mr. Hixon apologized to Mr. Harvey for misleading information and am hopeful he is making things clearer. Ms. Jarrell commented they are dealing with a perspective tenant and can't deliver a business plan due to not having proper zoning. Ms. Woods commented from the previous conversation is that the potential client had a facility in Winnsboro and asked if the pictures were from Winnsboro; Ms. Jarrell said it was, but don't have proper zoning and wanted the zoning to go out and get a tenant that fit the city's restrictions. Mrs. Ezernack asked commented that she thought there was a potential tenant, a hard tenant and previously they saw someone that was interested in the property that they were doing the rezoning on, had signed a lease subject to the zoning being changed rather than changing the zoning, then going out to someone else; she said they are getting a lot of pushback from the community and did get the pictures which look like more in line of a trailer, that's the esthetic look unless the model homes are done which has all of the landscaping. Mr. Hixon said he want's Council to tell him what they want; Mrs. Ezernack said the tenant should be present answering the questions and Mr. Hixon said the tenant got cold feet. Ms. Woods said not trying to turn away sales but may need to take off the agenda so that Mr. Hixon could go back and have more conversation; Mrs. Sturdivant said to pass over until the next meeting and for the perspective tenant to come and answer questions.

Seeing no one else come forward, Chairwoman Woods declared the public hearing closed.

(e) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved to pass over until the next meeting to finally adopt an Ordinance adopting and amending the Zoning Map for the City of Monroe, Louisiana to zone a ±3.3-acre tract of land presently located in Ouachita Parish from B-3 General Business/Commercial District to B-4, Heavy Commercial District to operate a manufactured home sales lot, located at **1101 Louisville Avenue – APPLICANT- Hixson Automotive Sales - (P&Z)** (There were no public comments).

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairwoman Woods declared the public hearing open; seeing no one come forward, the hearing was closed.

(f) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,004, amendment to Chapter 32, Subdivision Regulation, of the Code of the City of Monroe, Article II, Definitions, Section 32-21 Definitions and Article III Administrative Procedures, Section 32-39 Replat of Approved Plats (a) Procedures. (P&Z) (There were no public comments).

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing:

(g) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved to pass over to Finally adopt an Ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a Lease Agreement with Edge Holdings, LLC for the lease of property at the Monroe Regional Airport and further providing with respect thereto. (Airport) (There were no public comments).

Citizens Participation:

1. Mr. Patrick Sharkey, citizen, represented his company and offered an idea of entertainment for the city.
2. Ms. Vee Wright, citizen, offered her encouragement for the betterment of her hometown, Monroe.
3. Pastor Taylor, commented regarding the 2020 Census and the benefits of filling out the census.
4. Ms. Marie Brown, commented on the districts needing to be taken care of and look forward to good things and the need for transparency. She thanked Mr. Wilson for his service and his future work; she thanked Mr. Harvey for his work and Ms. Dawson for having a listening ear from constituents.

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m., upon a motion of Mr. Wilson and seconded by Mr. Harvey. (There were no public comments).

Ms. Juanita G. Woods
Council Chairwoman

Ms. Carolus S. Riley
Council Clerk

Ms. Jacqueline Benjamin
Council Secretary

***For extended details on the Council meeting please call the Council Clerk, Monday-Friday at 329-2252; also, a recording of the minutes can be sent via email to you.**