

City Hall, Monroe, Louisiana
June 28,2022, 6:00p.m.

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

The Honorable 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, and Mrs. Dawson

There was absent: None

Chairman Marshall announced that a quorum was present, and that the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance would be led by Chief Jimmie Bryant.

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Harvey welcomed and thanked everyone for joining the City Council meeting on this evening. He expressed his condolences to the family of George Snelling, a loving member in the community and asked for prayers for the family.

Mrs. Ezernack said good evening to everyone and wanted to wish everyone a safe 4th of July holiday. She said it is always a wonderful event to honor our nation but safety first. She mentioned reading about horrible things that happen with fireworks at this time of the year. She stated to have a good holiday with family and friends.

Ms. Woods welcomed everyone attending the City Council meeting and to those watching via social media. She said the City is about to end the inaugural Juneteenth month celebrations and it has been a phenomenal month. She wanted to thank and congratulate everyone that participated in the celebration. She said if you have time on June 30 the TaylorMade Band will be having an all-white affair which will be a live concert and recording at the W Center at 9pm.

Ms. Dawson thanked everyone for attending the City Council meeting. She stated on July 5, 2022, at 5pm until 6pm there will be a one-hour committee zoom meeting regarding the Cultural Arts District. She thanked Community Affairs and Public Affairs for all their hard work while being short staffed.

Chief Jimmie Bryant announced in Mayor Ellis's absence that this weekend, July 2 the Annual Downtown Block Party starting at 8am. He asked the community to pray for a City of Monroe employee who lost her son tragically last weekend.

Mr. Marshall wanted to thank the City for sponsoring the Jr. Olypimics this past weekend, it was an awesome turn out. He said the Organization Association loved everything Monroe had to offer, and they will be looking to have the regional meet next year in Monroe. He thanked everyone for coming out supporting the kids, Coach DeeDee Massey, Coach Tank, and Massey Miracle Run track group. He stated there were people that came from all around the area to compete and they felt welcomed. He further stated covid is still here advised everyone to continue to be safe with covid cases on the raise. He noted Senator Jackson has a summer mentorship program at varies churches and facilities. He further noted for more information contact her office for locations and information on how to sign kids up for the program.

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson the minutes of the Legal and Regular Session of May 24, 2022, and June 28,2022 were unanimously approved.

ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF BIDS:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8301 accepting the Base Bid of Gilling LLC, in the amount of \$198,238.88, for the Autonomous Wheelchair Securement System Project, and further authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into and execute a contract for said work. (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to consider a request from the Planning & Urban Development Department for authorization from the City Council for an authorized City representative to advertise for bids for the 416 South 23rd Home Rehabilitation project. The source of funds is HOME Investment Partnership Funds. (There were no public comments.)

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to consider a request from the Planning & Urban Development Department for authorization from the City Council for an authorized City representative to advertise for bids for the 4101 South Grand Home Rehabilitation Project. The source of funds is HOME Investment Partnership Funds. (There were no public comments.)

Mr. Marshall said the house belongs to a friend of his that is thankful for this project and program, he appreciates everything the City has done to enhance his quality of life. He said the homeowner has been hoping for this a long time and he is glad it has come about. Mr. Marshall said he is excited about the program and keep up the good work.

(d) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to consider a request from Monroe Airport Division for authorization from the City Council for an authorized City representative to advertise for bids for the purchase of a Sweeper truck. The estimated cost of the truck is \$300,000.00 The source of funds is FAA Funds. (There were no public comments.)

Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to add to the agenda an item (e) to consider a request for an authorized City representative to advertise for bids for the City Street Striping Phase V. Project. The estimated cost of the project is \$730,894.00. The DBE goal is 5.76% and the source of funds is Capital Infrastructure Funds. (There were no public comments.)

Mrs. Woods wanted to know why item (e) needed to be added on instead of waiting until next Council meeting.

Mr. Curt Kelly, Purchasing Department, said this was an oversight in purchasing on his part. He said the City is approaching cooler weather and when it gets colder you can't strike the street. He noted the City has a striking project every year but last year the City didn't have the project because they waited to late. He further noted it takes another sixty to ninety days to get the project kicked off. He stated if the City waits until next Council meeting to get it out for bid it will not be until late August or September to accept the bids.

(e) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved a request for an authorized City representative to advertise for bids for the City Street Striping Phase V. Project. The estimated cost of the project is \$730,894.00. The DBE goal is 5.76% and the source of funds is Capital Infrastructure Funds. (There were no public comments.)

RESOLUTIONS AND MINUTE ENTRIES:

Council:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8302 granting an exception to the Open Container Ordinance to the Southern Vine (Triangle Park Block Party) pursuant to Monroe City Code Sec. 12-231 D. (Open Container Ordinance), and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Mayor's Office:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8303 indicating the intention of the City of Monroe, State of Louisiana, to approve the two (2) year appointment of Mayor Friday Ellis as a Director to the Board of the Louisiana Local Government Environmental facilities and Community Development Authority (the "Authority") as provided by Chapter 10-D of Title 33 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, as amended. (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Woods wanted to know if this was new.

Mrs. Angie Sturdivant, City Attorney, said it has been around, and the previous Mayor was on this board and Mayor Ellis has been on this board two years. She said it is just renewal of the board he is already on.

Department of Public Works:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8304 approving the execution of a Maintenance Agreement by and between the City of Monroe and the State of Louisiana, Department of Transportation and Development, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, relative to mowing and litter pickup within the limits of the City of Monroe, and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Mr. Harvey noted he never received the agreement for this one.

Mrs. Sturdivant noted she isn't sure why the agreement wasn't submitted, and it is the same annual agreement that the City does with the State every year. She further noted she isn't sure if anyone from public works is here tonight to discuss it, but it expires every year on June 30th. She stated she believes \$90,000.00 is the annual fee that the State pays.

Mrs. Ezernack noted that the City receives the \$90,000.00 from the State.

Mrs. Sturdivant noted this item is similar to the full signal maintenance agreement under engineering.

Ms. Woods noted she has questions, but it is more of an observation. She said she definitely can see the City needs to assist here. She stated the City has many properties that we are taking resources from to do State highways instead of putting it into the community to stop some of these phone calls. She wanted to know if there was anyway the City can get temporary help on keeping up properties.

Mrs. Sturdivant said she is hopeful that the Mow to Own program that State Legislature recently passed will help.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if Mrs. Sturdivant is referring to the program that will offer incentives for people to keep their property taken care of.

Mrs. Sturdivant said yes.

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to clarify that there will be a number of times people will have to maintain their property.

Ms. Woods wanted clarification also that it has to be done for an extended period of time.

Mrs. Sturdivant said yes, it is a one-year contract.

Ms. Woods stated to show that the property was maintain over that time.

Mrs. Sturdivant said yes ma'am.

Ms. Woods wanted to know how the City can just give someone's property away just because they didn't mow it once the bill passes.

Mrs. Sturdivant stated there will be procedures, policies, and guidelines that the City is working on and then the program will be introduced.

Ms. Woods stated she believes it will be something really good and incentivizing for people to keep their neighborhoods up.

Department of Community Affairs:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8305 authorizing the Donation of 2 Miniature Horses to Christian Norred and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Engineering Services:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8306 authorizing Friday Ellis, Mayor, to execute a Full Signal Maintenance Agreement with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022, and ending June 30, 2023 and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8307 authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into an Agreement for Professional Services with Arcadis U.S. Inc, (Arcadis) to provide additional cleaning and inspection of 1,000 feet downstream of Hadley Street Pump Station Gravity Main for a free of \$161,000.00. (There were no public comments.)

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance 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 Works.)

Mr. Charles Theus, 503 Speed Avenue, said this needs to be ran by ethics

Ms. Woods stated we are on the first item for water.

Mr. Harvey informed Mr. Theus he was on the wrong agenda item.

Mr. Theus apologized.

Mr. Harvey noted this is another item that the Council doesn't have a contract on.

Mrs. Sturdivant said it was emailed this afternoon they were still working on it. She stated Greater Ouachita Water Company is one of the City's bulk water customers, but they are gearing up to go fully online where they don't depend on the City for their daily water. She further stated they all have run into material delays that it has been postponed. She said they plan to be online by November 1st but if not, the rate goes up 1.3 times the current rate of 448 per 1,000 gallons. She said if they are online by then they will pay 1.3 times the rate charging customers within the City limits only when they use the City's water and in case of an emergency. She said it is a benefit to the City if we sale water it is a good thing.

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to know will they also have to pay for meters.

Mrs. Sturdivant said yes ma'am, also there is a minimum monthly usage fees that will be established in the water Ordinance that they will also pay.

Ms. Woods said she was surprised to see them on the agenda because she thought they would go in a different direction.

Mrs. Sturdivant said they did plan to go in a different direction, but the City has faced some of the same delays that the Greater Ouachita Water Company have with pipes. She noted this is until they go online or until November 1st then the new rate will go into effect.

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and approved to Introduce an Ordinance 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 Law pursuant to La. R.S. 33:9020, et seq.; and for related purposes. (Admin.) (Mr. Marshall abstained)

Mr. Charles Theus, 503 Speed Avenue, said this needs to be ran by ethics to ensure that only things mentioned in the process is followed. He addressed Mr. Marshall to say ethics suggest that maybe when it comes up for a vote, the CEA comes before council, and now council is voting on it, but council should take the time to look at it. He said he is not against the agreement but suggest taking time to look at it. He wanted to know if they can get an opinion from the Attorney General's Office and if there is a dual office holder position that may be a problem with this. He believes the AG

Office and dual office holdings because of them being public. He stated he knows on I-20 people go to that, but the problem is I-20 is private. He further stated Mayor Ellis came from the administration the ethics state if you are a part of that organization, you cannot promote that organization. He suggested when all the Economic Development Districts bring something before the Council that everyone is treated fairly and equally. He said when you read the statute it says the projects that the board picks out, but the problem is with SEDD the Mayor wants to pick the projects. He said he is not complaining but he thinks there needs to be some continuity to where everyone is treated the same. He said it is visibly absent in the CEA that they must have a clause in the agreement that they will not seek any other funds or tax.

Mr. Marshall noted he understands Mr. Theus concerns and when he looked at the agreement, he was considering the same thing. He said in all fairness he doesn't feel it will be any different for SEDD as far as this agreement. He said if this project is something that works whose to say it couldn't be done in varies parts of the city. He noted all those things are already in motion and they are multimillion dollar contracts. He further noted this situation is a little bit different than SEDD.

Mr. Harvey noted he serves on the I-20 Board both use public funds, and he also votes on things inside that board that he also ends up voting on at City Council meetings. He explained they also have the Chairman that sits on OCOG and a lot of times the by laws are set up where members of Council and or designees serve on those boards. He said the part about weather or not the board can promote a project, but they promote things all over the City.

Ms. Woods said one thing Mr. Theus didn't bring out that the Council needs to look at is financing about levying of sales tax or use sale taxes. She wanted clarification because she thought with SEDD the Council talked about not wanting tax support but now the Council is saying it is okay for tax support.

Mrs. Angie Sturdivant explained the difference is SEDD and DEDD are large geographical areas and the City has been working on the CEA almost a year. She noted the City has also been waiting for SEDD for almost a year on a list of Economic Development projects. She further noted this Economic Development project is detailed on what they are going to do. She said the difference is this is a two-block area that can levy additional tax for a boutique, hotel, restaurant, and convention center. She stated she believes an investor is committing \$31 million for this project. She said the administration says large geographical areas don't support a tax and it is in the proposed SEDD and DEDD CEA that they can't levy any additional tax. She further stated in this CEA the project can levy tax because it is for one development project that investors are investing millions of dollars that will generate jobs and tax dollars. She noted that both attorneys for the District from Butler and Snow are present for any other questions.

Mr. Theus noted that SEDD has also used Butler and Snow in the past, and they are a very good firm that is the reason he is saying there maybe an issue. He wanted to know what is the size of the area that is allowed and the track that is not allowed. He stated both SEDD and DEDD have the ability to signal out and designate another Economic Development District.

Mr. Marshall said yes, he doesn't see why that's not possible.

Mr. Harvey addressed Mr. Theus in reference to the two-block spot versus a geographical area for SEDD which probably takes up 25% of the land mass of the City but those are not the same.

Mr. Theus wanted to know how is that relevant, when SEDD met with Mayor Ellis in Baton Rouge he said he was against a tax and now this item he is saying he is for a tax. He stated the Council can play musical chairs, but he is suggesting being fair to everyone. He further stated just because people are on a board doesn't give them the okay to vote on an issue. He said Mr. Echols has been gone long enough for him to ask for this because he is the priority beneficiary of these funds, and he was on the Council until 2020. He said we don't know if its dual office holder or if it violates any other ethics.

Mr. Marshall wanted to know what Mr. Theus means when he says treat everyone fair.

Ms. Woods stated they received a TIF within a TIF.

Mr. Sturdivant said the statute states that the district shall be comprised of the area of the City and the block of 108 to 128 Walnut Street an area approximately one city block. She noted the difference is Walnut Street tax can levy an additional tax for their development only. She further noted discussing repeatedly in meetings the administration had a problem with tax in the entire SEDD area because a loaf of bread would cost more on Winnsboro Road in that district than it would on North 18th. She said the tax is a larger geographical area that would be a higher tax on everything down there. She reiterated this is one block that people can chose to go to a boutique, hotel, restaurant, or utilize the convention center on this one city block.

Mr. Theus stated a hotel is paid by travelers and it's very few people in this city that pay for hotels.

Mr. Marshall said it is an incentive to develop that area, but he understands Mr. Theus concerns, and this is just the introductory phase as well.

Council Meeting was interrupted by Ms. Vee Wright that expressed her frustration with Mr. Marshall and Mr. Theus over talking each other.

Mr. Marshall addressed Ms. Wright to let her know he understands her frustration but to keep her voice down as well.

Mrs. Sturdivant informed Mr. Marshall that the City has been working on this for almost a year and have been waiting for a list of Economic Development projects from SEDD for almost a year. She said if the City had everything they needed from SEDD there is nothing to say that their CEA would not have beat this one on the agenda.

Mr. Marshall said he has had conversations about it as well there is no reason SEDD can't still have what they have along with another District inside of that.

Mr. Harvey said the only other hotel tax in the City SEDD already has.

Ms. Woods wanted to know how much is that tax?

Mr. Theus stated 2% which they fought for, and the previous administration did not support SEDD having a tax. He further stated this was a suggestion and just take it for whatever it is, but he does appreciate the Council's time.

Mr. Marshall noted the Walnut Street District Attorneys have some remarks as well.

Mrs. Ezernack said she had concerns pertaining to the language in the agreement for the developer's ability to assign without the Council's approval or approval of who ever it is assigned too. She wanted to clear that information up in the final agreement.

Mr. Michael J. Busada with Butler & Snow Law Firm, Public Finance and Economic Development Attorney, said they spoke with the City Attorney earlier and they will be getting that changed. He said it wouldn't allow them to assign this agreement without the approval of the City Council.

Mrs. Ezernack said she thinks Mr. Theus other point in the discussion is that it is one developer, it's the public citizen developer, it's not entity among entity like some of the others, or boards between boards. She noted as to the ethical part of it, if Mr. Echols thought he had an issue with it he probably should have checked it out. She further noted Mr. Marshall may want to abstain from the vote if he feels maybe that's an issue.

Mrs. Sturdivant, City Attorney, stated she doesn't believe it is an ethical issue, and she doesn't think Mr. Marshall will stand to gain any monetary from a vote in favor of this. She further stated if he wants to abstain, he certainly can but she doesn't see any reason for it.

Mrs. Ezernack said that was really the only concern she had in there.

Mrs. Stacy Rowell, Director of Administration, noted the CEA with DEDD that is in existence and the proposal for SEDD is the City actually giving up its own funds and this will be generating new tax dollars. She further noted the base there now is zero dollars the City is not collecting any sales tax and the 2% would be brand new tax dollars collected.

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to know if there is a seal or lock on it once it's a collection and no longer in effect.

Mrs. Rowell said that is correct.

Ms. Woods wanted to know what the Cap is on this one.

Mr. Busada said their firm is one of the largest Public Finance Law Firms in the country and this is something they put a big focus on. He noted when hired by the City their job is to protect the taxpayers every step of the way. He further noted when they first received this agreement, they made significant changes just to make sure that the worst thing that could possibly happen is contemplated and they put protections in place. He said going back 20 years the State law makes it very clear what barometers and metrics you have to meet in order to be able to use public money to reimburse private projects. He stated there has to be a legal demonstration that the amount of likely gain by the City will be equal to the amount that the City is contributing. He further stated it comes down to what they advise their clients to require which is a form of sources and uses showing where all the money is going, how that money will be spent, and showing the banks that there is financing in place to show that project is going to be successful because the whole purpose of Economic Development is to encourage private people to spend their money.

Mr. Marshall said he thinks that is the concern because people think this is a pool of money going to the developer. He wanted Mr. Busada to explain how that works.

Mr. Busada wanted to clarify that this District was created by the legislature in 2015 not created by the City. He said in this scenario the City really has very little authority to make decisions when it comes down to this District, and the City is required to work with the District, but the District has the full authority without the City's approval to levy additional taxes up to 4% for sales and 2% for hotels. He said the City has authority to take the entire increment which would be about 3.99% but they are only requesting 2.25%, therefore, the City will still keep 43% of that revenue in that area. He said to keep in mind the City gets a hundred percent but it's a hundred percent of zero. He said once this happens, the City will receive 43% of whatever is generated there until that 2.5 million is paid and then the City will get the full hundred percent. He noted back to Mr. Marshall's original question the way this works the 2% tax that they levy, basically the developers come to the District to ask for tax to be raised on their business and people that go there will have to pay that additional tax, but nobody else does. He further noted in exchange for raise in taxes on their businesses that money will be used to help provide Economic Development financing to make this project, which would otherwise not be economically viable become viable. He said when the firm was hired, they did everything they could to tighten this agreement up but its really up to the governor and the legislature, not the law firm. He stated without this money it's the belief of the District that this project would not be financially feasible. He further stated they represent many cities in these areas, and this is an issue that is always discussed. He said how do they make sure every part of the community has the ability and opportunity to take advantage of these Economic Development tools and that is something they do as a firm. He said when the firm was hired by administration, they wanted to make sure that the firm would help them put policies in place that allows everyone to have the opportunity in every part of the community.

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to know if SEDD had a developer that would commit and was approved for a project, could SEDD come back at some point and ask for some sort of overlay power in that District to do the same thing, depending on the project.

Mr. Busada said absolutely.

Mrs. Rowell wanted to clarify if Mrs. Ezernack was talking about getting it through the State.

Mr. Busada said as another State entity or District, yes.

Mrs. Ezernack noted it is for one specific project with an approved private developer.

Mr. Busada stated he has not looked at that Statute in a long time that creates SEDD, but the Statute allows these State Districts to create a subdistrict within their General Districts to confine the area. He reiterated what Mrs. Rowell said its easier to levy a new tax on one or two businesses when the business wants the tax. He further stated it's a different calculus when you're basically saying to a lot of businesses that they will put the tax on them and it's hard to get all those businesses to agree. He said that is why a lot of times it gives the District the ability to do a more confined space so the City can go to those businesses that want it.

Ms. Woods said when the City was looking to put a tax on SEDD that was one that would have to go to the voters, as opposed to the council. She said that would have been before the tax was implemented but says it is up to the council.

Mrs. Rowell stated not the council.

Ms. Woods corrected her comment to state the council doesn't have any control over this because Mr. Busada said it is the District. She said basically the Council is approving the Endeavor between us, them, and the developer.

Mrs. Rowell said the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement basically states the City will be the collector and the Cooperative Endeavor is the mechanisms.

Ms. Woods wanted to know why the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement didn't work for SEDD.

Mrs. Rowell said it is because SEDD is a city created District.

Ms. Woods questioned Mrs. Rowell's response about SEDD being a city created District.

Mrs. Rowell noted it's created by the legislature, but the funding source will be based on funding from the City.

Ms. Woods stated the funding was coming from the hotel tax and she doesn't believe SEDD is getting that money either.

Mrs. Rowell noted they are getting the hotel tax, but they have no projects to spend it on right now.

Ms. Woods wanted to clarify if there are no projects than the City is not disbursing that money.

Mrs. Rowell stated it goes into their fund, yes ma'am.

Mr. Busada reiterated he doesn't have the background on SEDD because he hasn't looked at it in a long time, but when it comes down to these statutorily created districts it can vary significantly. He said this one gives the powers of the state and local entities. He said typically these State created districts are unique and they have different requirements. He said one thing Mr. Theus brought up about a landowner in the district being on the board, but when he read the statute, it specifically states that if a landowner in the district request membership it must be granted. He noted the way the statute is written they are following the statute and they are comfortable they have protections in place to protect the City.

Mr. West Shafto with Boles and Shafto Law Firm noted this is a very specific project for a specific economic development where there's no residence in this district, it's a two-block area, and dilapidated buildings that is producing zero revenue will be renovated. He further noted the key is the developer had agreed to levy the tax on itself. He said it is going to create over sixty jobs and represent an approximate 30-million-dollar investment in a dilapidated area in downtown Monroe. He said the City gets the benefit of the residual tax and all the taxes after a certain amount. He said there is no telling how many people this project will bring to the City. He said under the Statute and the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement the money can only be use for Economic Development purposes.

Ms. Woods wanted to understand the demographics on this District.

Mrs. Sturdivant and Mr. Harvey said it is exhibit B inside the packet.

Ms. Woods noted she knows where the hardware store and pool shop area is.

Mrs. Ezernack said that is it.

Mr. Shafto said he believes it's the block behind the buildings.

Mrs. Sturdivant noted it is 108 to 128 Walnut Street to Art Alley.

Ms. Woods wanted to clarify the old chamber building is a part of it.

Mr. Harvey said no.

Mrs. Ezernack noted it is only the ones the developers own.

Mr. Shafto said except the pool shop, side shop, and the old southern hardware building its an empty lot in that area.

Mrs. Ezernack said she thinks they had something they could access from the other street back in the day.

Ms. Woods wanted to know with this development can the developer go back and expand on the boundaries.

Mr. Busada stated that was in the original documents but was removed. He said they wanted to make sure it is only this area, and it cannot be expanded, the project as well can't be changed. He said they made sure it was restricted in the agreement.

Ms. Woods wanted to know once the project is operational can they raise the tax on it. She stated she thinks its 2% but what is the maximum.

Mrs. Rowell noted 2% is as high as it goes.

Mr. Busada said it is 2% sales and uses and then an additional 2% hotel occupancy if they want.

Mr. Shafto said there is no intention to do the 2% occupancy tax right now.

Ms. Woods wanted to clarify they will not do the hotel occupancy right now.

Mr. Shafto said it is not covered by this agreement. He stated most of this agreement is a mechanism. He further stated the City have to collect the tax and provide it to the district because that is what the City sales tax is for. He said if they did anything they would have to come back and amend the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement requiring further approval from the Council.

Mr. Busada said the City's only leverage is to refuse to collect the money and disperse it which would also be a lawsuit.

Mrs. Rowell said at least the City gets sales tax collection fees for doing it.

Mr. Busada noted they are able to negotiate more than the state law requires otherwise the process to collect that money to go through the logistics can be long.

Mr. Shafto said the legal requirement of a Cooperative Endeavor are just developers and the districts are going to provide Economic Development, therefore, providing the City with the mechanisms to collect is a mutual beneficial agreement.

Mr. Marshall wanted to reiterate this is just introduction and concerns of Councilwoman Ezernack and Mr. Theus they definitely looked into those prior too.

Ms. Vee Wright, West Monroe, wanted to apologize to the City Council and everyone that is assembled for her outburst. She said she is not normally easily triggered but two people talking at the same time she thought her head would explode. She said it will not happen again but also wanted to ask that when council is speaking with each other or members of the public to speak one at a time.

Mr. Marshall said the Council tries to be respectful but sometimes in dialogue it happens sometimes. He said he doesn't think there is ever a point where they try to over talk each other.

Ms. Wright said it was going on too long for her ability to absorb it, hence, her unexpected outburst. She stated she believes Council knows she is not a person who just erupts out of her seat and there is definitely no need to have a hulking individual over her left shoulder.

Mr. Marshall said he is not a hulk but a gentle giant.

Ms. Woods said she will not abstain; however, she is not against this project because she believes the City needs to do something to help incentivize and grow the economy in the City. She said she does believe we all need to be treated equally. She stated SEDD has a valuable plan, and she doesn't believe the City is treating that as fair as they should. She further stated when SEDD came forward with the plan, there was so much back and forth, and she was very unhappy with the way that turned out. She said it is easy to take this one when everyone is on board and there are not a lot of questions, it concerns her that everything is not treated fairly. She said we are all taxpayers

in this city, and it disturbs her that we have so much a divide on things. She wanted to put on record she will vote to go ahead and introduce it.

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance declaring certain immovable property in Monroe, La, identified as Parcel 76532 by the Ouachita Parish Tax Assessor and identified by Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) of Louisiana, State Project No. H.007300 as Parcels 22-1, 22-1-C-1 and 22-3 as no longer being needed for public use and necessary for DOTD project No. H.007300, and authorizing the same to be sold to the DOTD pursuant to Louisiana Revised Statute 33:4712, and further providing with respect thereto. (Legal) (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 Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approve an Ordinance No. 12,124 accepting the donation of a parcel of real estate to the City of Monroe from Patricia Ann Fontana Corley, Pamela Ruth Fontana Hudson, and Frankie Joe Fontana, and further providing with respect thereto. (Eng. Dept.)

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

(b) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approve an Ordinance No. 12,125 adopting the authorized Millage Rate(s) and providing for the Levying of Special and General Taxes for the City of Monroe for the year 2022. (Admin.)

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to reiterate that these are Millage Rates that were in affect last year as well.

Mrs. Stacy Rowell, Director of Administration, said yes ma'am.

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

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approve an Ordinance No. 12,126 amending Chapter 25 Section 64 of the Monroe City Code Entitled Parks, Recreation, and Boating and further providing with respect thereto. (Harvey)

Ms. Woods wanted to make a statement before her vote for those that are attending council meeting and for those listening at home that this removes the fee for aquatic facilities. She stated in other words children can swim at public swimming pools for free.

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

(d) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approve to Passover an Ordinance authorizing Mayor Friday Ellis to enter into a Lease Agreement with Louisiana Purchase Zoological Society until next council meeting. (Comm. Affairs)

Ms. Woods wanted to know why this item was being passed over.

Mrs. Sturdivant noted the City is still working out a couple details with the Zoological Society.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION:

(1.) Ms. Kenya Roberson, Executive Director of the Monroe Regional Black Chamber, wanted to thank the City of Monroe, Police Department, and City's Marshals Office. She said with this being their first year in existence with the Juneteenth celebrations it took a lot of hard work, and they had some issues, but they made it. She wanted it to be known there were no injuries, no issues, and no crimes just a weekend of greatness. She expressed her wish to see the Mayor at something and they have had several events. She said she knows the Mayor is pulled many different ways

but out of everything that the Monroe Regional Black Chamber has had since October 28 she thinks one appearance would be in order.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m., upon motion of Mr. Harvey and it was seconded by Ms. Woods.

Carday Marshall, Sr.
Chairman

Carolus S. Riley
Council Clerk

Ileana Murray
Staff Secretary