

Monroe City Council Legal and Regular Session
September 28, 2021
6:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers-City Hall
MINUTES

There was a legal and regular session of the City Council of the City of Monroe, Louisiana held this date, September 28, 2021, at the Council's regular meeting place, 400 Lea Joyner Memorial Expressway, City Council Chambers/City Hall Building, Monroe, Louisiana.

The Honorable Carday Marshall, Sr., Chairman, called the meeting to order.

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

Council members present for roll call: Mrs. Gretchen Ezernack, Ms. Juanita Woods, Mr. Carday Marshall, Sr., Mrs. Kema Dawson.

Council member (s) absent: Mr. Douglas Harvey

Chairman Marshall declared a quorum.

The Invocation was done by Mr. Tom Janway, Public Works Director, and the Pledge of Allegiance by Mayor Ellis.

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Mrs. Ezernack thanked Mr. Janway for all of his assistance, as he has been an asset to the City; she wished him the best in his retirement. On October 7, 2021, Mrs. Ezernack will hold her District 2 Community Townhall meeting at Saul Adler, 6:00 p.m. and all citizens of that district and anyone else who wants to attend are welcome. Mayor Ellis, and department heads will be present to speak on city projects and also to answer any questions or concerns.

2. Ms. Woods thanked everyone for attending; she wished Mr. Janway the best on his retirement and that all would miss him, and she thanked him for his service. She extended prayers and condolences to Mrs. Ezernack on the loss of her Mother in law and asked that all would pray for her.

3. Mr. Marshall offered condolences to Mrs. Ezernack's family; he thanked Mr. Janway for his service and well wishes on his retirement; he acknowledged the Creative Black Circle exhibit at Masur Museum that will continue through November 6, 2021, from 9am-5pm, Monday-Saturday. He thanked Mr. Tommy James for his work as Chief Code Enforcement officer, and said a difference can be seen from his work since taking office.

4. Mrs. Dawson welcomed everyone in attendance; she thanked everyone, including Ouachita Green, Keep Monroe Beautiful and the City for being involved in the District 5 clean up on last Saturday; she extended condolences to Mrs. Ezernack and her family; she acknowledged the loss of Mr. Perry Thomas, a community activist and Ms. Kelly, a local singer. She yielded time to Mrs. Myra Gatling Akers who spoke regarding the Prevention on the Go program for free cancer screenings and the upcoming date is December 3, 2021, for cancer screenings and it's sponsored in part by Mr. Brady James and for more information to call 318-414-9758 for appointments. Mrs. Dawson asked for prayers for all citizens, as there are cases of corona virus and to continue to be safe.

6. Mayor Ellis commented regarding the event at the Masur Museum's event, the Black Creative Circle of NELA, it was a great exhibit featuring local artists; the Ouachita River sweep, along with Ouachita Green, Monroe/West Monroe and local groups was a good event with over 200 volunteers and lot of trash was picked up. He visited ULM and met with students, spoke about the Monroe Charter, and a deeper understanding of what the city does and responsibilities; he judged a pitch competition for small business and entrepreneurs. He congratulated ULM's Dr. Berry's investiture and the 90th Birthday celebration of ULM. He presented proclamations to several departments including MPD, Fire, Community Affairs; also presented a letter of commendation to Mr. Tom Janway on his retirement after 17 years from the City's Public Works Department.

Upon a motion of Mrs. Dawson and a second by Mrs. Ezernack, the minutes of the Legal and Regular session of September 14, 2021, were unanimously approved. (There were no public comments).

PRESENTATION: NONE.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE.

PROPOSED CONDEMNATIONS: Public Comment:

1. 1300 South 4th Street (Curator - Julia Am Smith, Corey Chambers, Corey Chambers, et al) (Non curator - James Howlet & OPPJ). Upon a motion by Mr. Marshall, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved for the property owner to be given 30 days or October 29, 2021, in which to bring the structure into compliance with the code or demolish the structure and clean the lot. (There were no public comments).

Comments: Mr. Tommy James, Chief Code Enforcement Officer, presented information to Council regarding the listed property, along with photographic evidence; he asked that the property be condemned.

ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF BIDS: Public Comment None.

RESOLUTIONS AND MINUTE ENTRIES:

Council: Public Comment: None.

Department of Administration: Public Comment: None.

Department of Planning & Urban Development: Public Comment: None.

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to add to the agenda to adopt a resolution appointing Michael Douglas, II to the Board of Adjustments of the City of Monroe, and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 8075, appointing Michael Douglas, II to the Board of Adjustments of the City of Monroe, and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments)

Comments: Mrs. Dawson and Mr. Marshall acknowledged Pastor Douglas and thanked him for his desire to serve the public in this capacity.

Legal Department: Public Comment: None.

Mayor's Office:

Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 8076, authorizing a designated city representative to execute a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Ouachita African American Historical Society/Northeast Louisiana Delta African American Heritage Museum and further providing with respect thereto.

Comments: Ms. Joyce Powell, President of the museum, along with Board member, Mr. Leonard Clark thanked the City for Monroe for their continued support of the museum; she invited the Mayor and Council members to come out to some of their events and to volunteer their services. Mr. Marshall thanked her for her service.

(b) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 8077, approving and authorizing a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the City of Monroe and the Friends of Chennault Aviation and Military Museum as per the attached agreement and further providing with respect thereto.

Comment: Ms. Woods acknowledged that both museums were in District 3 and thanked them for their service to the community; a museum representative thanked the city for supporting them for the last six years, as they support the veterans and have been for the last 21 years.

Department of Public Works: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 8078, authorizing a designated city representative to enter into and execute Task Order #3 between the City of Monroe and Kutchins and Groh L.L.C., at the Monroe Regional Airport, and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments)

(b) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 8079, authorizing a designated city representative to enter into and execute Task Order #4 between the City of Monroe and Kutchins and Groh L.L.C., at the Monroe Regional Airport, and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments)

(c) Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 8080, authorizing the City of Monroe to advertise for bids to rehabilitate Runway 4-22 at the Monroe Regional Airport, and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments)

Comments: Ms. Woods asked about the DBE goal; Mrs. Sturdivant said it was 1.63 per cent., an email was sent, it is a state funded LADOTD project, and the state does not require a goal and based upon the type of specialized work and the relative availability of DBE's the goal was recommended and approved by the committee. Mrs. Sturdivant explained the process that the consultant used during the DBE meeting. Ms. Woods commented that she wanted to ensure that the city was doing more of an adequate job advertising the projects. Mrs. Rowell said they do advertise. Mrs. Dawson commented that this item is only for advertisement and once received they can go back and discuss the DBE goal once the DBE's decide to bid for the project and Mrs. Sturdivant said they could. Mr. Marshall asked if they were advertising other ways and Mrs. Rowell said yes, they have to do online bidding where it goes out through the online bidding service. Mr. Janway commented it was a seal coat project and that there are not a lot of seal coat contractors. Ms. Woods commented that she would like to have more discussion about it offline. Mrs. Sturdivant explained there is a code, NAICS and you can go to the DOTD website and it can tell you how many DBE's there are for that type of work and the number is zero and there is no one in the state of Louisiana who does this type of work.

(d) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 8081, authorizing Mayor Friday Ellis to enter into and execute Amendment No. 1 Work Authorization MLU-015 between the City of Monroe and KSA Engineers Inc. for services related to the rehabilitation of Runway 4-22 at the Monroe Regional Airport, and further providing with respect thereto.

Comments: Ms. Vee Wright said it was a good idea to advertise in Black media. Ms. Kenya Roberson commented that seminars or communication need to go out to Black owned businesses. Mrs. Sturdivant explained that the city has done and is doing that, and they have brought DBE experts in and have explained it in step by step workshops and there are plans for an upcoming one.

(e) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 8082, accepting the bid of Womack & Sons Construction Group LLC, in the amount of \$6,889,375.01 (base bid) and \$505,680.52 (additive alternate #1) and \$19,280.00 (additive alternate #2) to improve airport drainage/erosion control and further providing with respect thereto.

Comments: Ms. Pepper, a citizen asked if the resolution could be explained; Mrs. Sturdivant explained the total cost of the project and it's fully funded by FAA, DBE goal of 5.15%, the contractor exceeded it and the DBE participation was 7.33%.; the advertisements are for each project and when a project is advertised it is in great detail including specs and plans, pre bid meetings; they must be qualified to do the work and they must be certified by the State if it is a State or Federally funded project. Mayor Ellis added there is a bonding capacity that has to be met by the contractor and it is set by the State whether it is a state or federal project.

(f) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 8083, authorizing the Director of Administration to enter into and execute Work Authorization #13 between the City of Monroe and Garver, L.L.C., related to the Airport Drainage Improvement Project Phase 2 at the Monroe Regional Airport and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments)

(g) Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 8084, authorizing the Director of Administration to enter into an Agreement with Traveler's insurance for the Monroe Transit System's Insurance and further providing with respect thereto.

Comments: Peyton Farr of Thomas and Farr explained the renewal option with Traveler's, as they have provided insurance to them for the last six years. A citizen, Ms. Peppers asked why the company name and the amount wasn't a part of the resolution; Mrs. Sturdivant said they were still waiting on quotes.

Department of Community Affairs: Public Comment: None.

Police Department: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 8085, authorizing Mayor Friday Ellis to sign and accept the 2020 Byrne Justice Assistance Grant (BJAG) Discretionary Coronavirus Emergency Supplemental Funding (CESF) and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Fire Department: Public Comment: None.

Engineering Services:

Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 8086, authorizing an authorized city representative to advertise for bids on the Riverbarge Street Improvements Project. The estimated cost of this project is \$110,467.50. The DBE Goal is 5% and source of funds Capital Infrastructure Sales Tax Revenue Funds. (There were no public comments)

Comments: Ms. Woods asked for explanation of the project; Mr. Holland commented that the project consist of them making changes on the street, a lot of heavy equipment crosses the railroad track, and the trailers are dragging the top of the track and they are now going to elevate the street on each side; he commented that the handout he gave them explains the items and DBE's and what they are qualified to bid on.

(b) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 8087, authorizing an authorized city representative, to execute Change Order No. one (1) to the Forsythe Boat Ramp Parking Lot Improvements Contract, between the City of Monroe and Amethyst Construction, Inc., for an increase in the contract amount of \$43,213.85 and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments)

Comments: Ms. Woods asked for an explanation of the increase; Mr. Holland explained when laying the new storm drain, they discovered an old abandoned saltwater pool and there were changes made to the bedding of the pipe to put in additional drains to collect the water to run through the drainage system; and also, the tearing up of an old concrete system and replacing it and combined both change orders together.

(c) Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 8088, authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into and execute Supplemental Agreement No. 1 to a contract with MESA, Inc, to provide professional engineering services to the Alligator Experience Exhibit for the Louisiana Purchase Exhibit Improvements Project and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments)

Comments: Mr. Holland explained the project was for Community Affairs, La. Purchase Gardens and Zoo; Mr. Seegers explained the rendering on the projector screen, and it is an improvement to the alligator exhibit, replacing the original exhibit which only holds a couple alligators and this new one would have an interactive portion to allow the feeding of the alligators and another revenue stream towards the zoo; the funding is from the CVB, and design is being done by Mesa, Inc.

BREAK IF NEEDED:

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES: Public Comment: None.

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

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairman Marshall opened the Public Hearing:

1. Ms. Vee Wright, asked if there was a number known for the total of affordable housing in this project; Mr. Marshall said he didn't have information and they are in the re-zoning phase. Ms. Wright encouraged some of the duplexes be made designated for affordable housing.

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

(a) Upon on a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,080, adopting and amending the Zoning Map for the City of Monroe, Louisiana to rezone a ± 5.2 acre tract of land located in Ouachita Parish from RMH (Manufactured Home District) to (High Density Multi-Family District) in order for the applicant to be able to develop the area with thirty-two (32) duplexes - Applicant: Braud & Blaze, LLC - (P&Z) (There were no public comments)

(b) ADD-ON: Upon on a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to add to the agenda to adopt an Emergency Ordinance declaring the repair of influent pump #4 at the Water Pollution Control Center (WPCC) an emergency and necessitating immediate repair and/or replacement and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments)

(b) Upon on a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Adopt Emergency Ordinance No. 12,081, declaring the repair of influent pump #4 at the Water Pollution Control Center (WPCC) an emergency and necessitating immediate repair and/or replacement and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION:

1. Ms. Vee Wright, citizen, offered her condolences to Mrs. Ezernack and other families; she thanked Mr. Janway on his service to the City. Ms. Wright commented regarding an email from her to Council members and issues on a previous agenda.

2. Mr. Pat Hezekiah, citizen, spoke regarding the noise ordinance and concerns that he has had with loud music from his two neighbors.

3. Mr. Stanley Smalls, spoke regarding the city Transit workers and First Transit.

4. Mr. George DeCuir, spoke regarding the City Transit workers.

5. Ms. Shameka Washington, former Transit operator, spoke regarding the conditions of having to work under First Transit.

6. Ms. Jackie Kidd, former Transit employee, a current member of the Transit Union, spoke regarding the work conditions of the transit employees.

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There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:29 p.m., upon a motion of Ms. Woods and seconded by Mrs. Ezernack. (There were no public comments)

Mr. Carday Marshall, Sr.
Council Chairman

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.**