

Monroe City Council Legal and Regular Session
January 22, 2018
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 at the Council's regular meeting place, 400 Lea Joyner Memorial Expressway, Council Chambers, City Hall Building, Monroe, Louisiana.

The Honorable Gretchen Ezernack, Chairwoman, called the meeting to order. She asked the clerk to call the roll.

There were present, Council members: Mr. Wilson, Mr. Clark, Mr. Echols, and Ms. Woods, Mrs. Ezernack.

There was absent: None.

Chairwoman Ezernack announced that a quorum was present; the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance would be led by Mr. Wilson's designee, Pastor John Thomas, Wing of Faith Full Gospel Church.

Chairwoman Ezernack thanked Pastor Thomas for the invocation, she noted the housekeeping rules, reminded everyone present to put their cell phones and or communication devices on silent, and if they needed to make a phone call to please step away from the area; and to keep any side conversations to a minimum, due to the acoustics allowing them to hear conversations as far as to the back of the Chamber; she thanked everyone for their cooperation.

Chairwoman Ezernack proceeded by acknowledging the time for special announcements and/or communications.

Mr. Echols wished everyone a good evening.

Ms. Woods wished everyone a good evening, and thanked everyone for coming.

Mr. Wilson welcomed each one present, and the citizens of District 4; he thanked Ms. Marie Brown for her outstanding work with the Unity in the Community Project; he thanked the volunteers that work with Ms. Brown and their work in the community by bringing unity in the community.

Mr. Clark wished everyone a good evening and welcomed them to the meeting; he congratulated Coach Doug Peterson, who is from Monroe on his bid to the Super Bowl with the Philadelphia Eagles, as well as a good friend of his, the Eagles' left tackle, Mr. Jason Peters, who have also stepped up and made donations in the community; congratulations and a job well done to them both.

Mayor Mayo had no communications.

Mrs. Ezernack thanked each one for being present; she thanked Public Works, Police and Fire during the recent winter weather; in her neighborhood the sanitation department was on the streets Sunday morning picking up trash and she appreciated the extra effort, as it is usually a time off, but thanked them for doing what they did.

Upon a motion of Mr. Wilson and seconded by Mr. Clark, the minutes of the Legal and Regular session of January 09, 2018 were approved, Voting YES: Clark, Wilson, Woods, Echols; Voting to ABSTAIN: Ezernack (she was not present at the meeting). (There were no public comments.)

PRESENTATIONS: NONE.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE.

PROPOSED CONDEMNATIONS: Public Comment:

(1) 2603 South Grand Street (D4) (Owner-Glenda Black O'Deay) Upon a motion by Mr. Wilson, second by Mr. Clark and unanimously approved for property owner to be given 30 days or February 22, 2018, in which to bring the structure into compliance with the code or demolish the structures and clean the lot. (There were no comments from the public).

Comments:

Ms. Robinson stated there was service on the property; there has not been contact with the owner, but the son did call the office and upon mailing of the notice, a property owner compliance form was given to them to let them know exactly what was wrong with the premises and what they needed to do to bring the premises up to compliance and said Council should have that notice before them attached to the photograph; she said the son, Mr. Black called and wanted an extension to make the repairs, but as of this date nothing has been done to the structure and have not heard anything from him or Ms. O'Deay.

Mr. Wilson asked if anyone was present representing the property and said he went by to look at the property; he said he received a call on last week but was expecting another call on Friday, but didn't receive one.

Mr. Echols asked if the Blight Ordinance allowed for a foreclosure on the property to put a blight lien on it and turn it back over to the public, so that someone could potentially save the buildings, put people back in them versus just tearing them down; Ms. Robinson said the property does still belong to Ms. O'Deay, but at the end of the day, yes; Mr. Echols said instead of having a lien on a blank lot. For example if you had a lien on the property and sold it to somebody that wanted to actually restore the property and put neighborhood and people back in it; he said he thought that was the purpose of having the blight lien and being aggressive with it; Mrs. Summersgill said it was one of the purposes of it, but there is a way that someone can come in and buy the property; she said we need to go in and amend the Ordinance and have something at the next Council meeting to make the liens comply with some features that didn't previously do, but there is a way that if somebody wanted to come in now and purchase the property, there is a procedure they can go through; it depends if the property has been adjudicated or whether or not it is with the original owner and if it is adjudicated someone can come in and buy it as it sits there right now; someone would have to call the Legal department to find out what the process is; Mr. Wilson asked Ms. Robinson, if the City was willing to work with the property owners, if even if the City condemns it, as long as they will come in and try to remodel the home or do some work to the home and time will be given to them to do this; Ms. Robinson said they could come in as soon as possible, yes, before the thirty days is up; Ms. Robinson said there is a procedure they must go by; Mr. Echols asked, if after the thirty days and they have not met their obligations, could they bring it back before Council and maybe by that time a revision to the Ordinance will have been done, then we can talk about bringing the structures to another process; he said (1) they wouldn't have the expense of tearing them all down, which is five to eight thousand dollars per house and (2) go through the lien process and then put them back into an investor homeowners; Mrs. Summersgill said yes, she understands, and next week, she will have an Ordinance, but also before next week, she will send each Council member a copy of what exactly can be done under the present Ordinance.; Ms. Robinson asked if Council would declare the property as blighted, that it would help; Mr. Wilson made a motion to amend it and Mr. Echols said he would second it to amend it for blight; Mrs. Ezernack asked the Clerk, if they needed to vote on the amendment first or the motion as amended; Mrs. Riley said a vote hasn't been called on either one; Mrs. Ezernack asked if they should do the amendment first; Mrs. Riley said the original; Mrs. Ezernack stated they would vote on the original first, then they would vote on the amendment and votes were taken for the original, then the amended was voted on.

A second vote for the amended motion declaring the property at 2603 South Grand Street as a blighted property was taken.

Upon a motion by Mr. Wilson, second by Mr. Echols and unanimously approved to amend the motion to consider the property blighted at 2603 South Grand Street (D4)(Owner-Glenda Black O'Deay) (There were no comments from the public). (There were no public comments.)

(2) 3612 Polk Street (D4) (Owners - Frank Sinatra Harbor & Sharon Dione Davis Harbor) Upon a motion by Mr. Clark, second by Mr. Echols and unanimously approved to remove from the agenda. (There were no comments from the public).

(3) 109 Texas Street (D4) (Owner - Joseph A. Lapietra) Upon a motion by Mr. Clark, second by Mr. Echols and unanimously approved to remove from the agenda. (There were no comments from the public).

ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF BIDS: (Public Comment)

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Wilson, second by Ms. Woods, and unanimously approved to Accept the bids of Guy Paper Co. of West Monroe, LA, Parker Wholesale of Bastrop, LA, Fuqua Paper, Ruston, LA for a one (1) year

supply contract of Janitorial Paper Products Ref#2018-00000030 as recommended by the Director of Administration for complying with the specifications of this bid. The Vendors comply with the specifications of this bid and has cleared the Tax and Revenue Division. Funds will be derived from the Inventory Account. (There were no public comments.)

RESOLUTIONS AND MINUTE ENTRIES:

Council: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Echols, second by Mr. Clark and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7117, of support for the 528 Engineer Battalion of the Louisiana National Guard and further providing with respect thereto. (Echols) (There were no public comments.)

Comments:

Mr. Echols said this was an opportunity to recognize an organization that has been serving their Country, City, State for over 125 years; he spoke with the Administrative officer, Mr. Joshua Culp and after having their discussion and noting their longevity in our community and the services they provide to protecting us and helping us in times of despair, it seemed to be an appropriate act for the Council to recognize the 528th Engineering Battalion for their time in the City of Monroe, and for what they do to protect the City of Monroe, and for all the good things they do for our Country; he said these are the reasons that he brought this before the Council tonight and do appreciate the Council's consideration; Mrs. Ezernack added her support for the group, because they do a lot for our area, and is also on call at any point in time to do for Louisiana, our Country or for somewhere overseas and do appreciate the sacrifices that they make.

Department of Administration: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Clark, second by Mr. Echols and unanimously approved to Consider an Application by AADAJR, LLC dba Smokers Paradise and Daiquiris, DeSiard St., Monroe, LA 71203 for a New 2018 Class B 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.)

(b) Upon a motion by Mr. Echols, second by Mrs. Ezernack and approved to pass over until next meeting; Voting YES: Ezernack, Echols, Clark; Voting NO: Woods and Wilson to Consider an Application by Naseem Corporation dba Quick & Easy#2, Winnsboro Rd., Monroe, LA 71203 for a New 2018 Class B Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been Cleared, CO-Cleared, Distance Report Cleared.

Comments:

1. Pastor Thomas, citizen, spoke regarding concerns for the Southside; he commented the liquor store is not adding to the Southside and do understand the need for the taxes; the Southside need something better and as a Pastor he understands the effects of liquor and he wants things to make the Southside better like a truck driving school to help citizens get their cdl license; he was concerned about not being able to go into stores and come out safely due to people hanging out at the businesses; he commented there would be more crime due to the consuming of liquor, and said he would stand for the Southside and can't let everything come into the community just because of taxes and all money is not good money; he commented the Mayor hired a consultant to try and solve the crime, but to allow the liquor stores back into the neighborhoods you are bringing crime back into the City.

2. One of the owners of the business came forward to speak; he stated it wasn't a liquor store, that it was one, but they changed it to a convenience store, there will be liquor, but not all liquor; he said there would be a deli, food and a lot of money was spent; he said his lease would end this year and they are just moving from Winnsboro Gas Grocery to across the street; he said he just wants everyone to be fair.

Mrs. Ezernack asked if he was just trying to move across street and he answered yes; she said he was leasing the property across the street and he will move his operation completely and will close it down; he said no, somebody else owns the building; she asked him if he was going to operate in the building and he said as soon as they get the license, they will move across the street, the lease will end this year, but they can leave before, as

soon as they get the license; Mrs. Ezernack asked them what types of things do they sell across the street and he said the same things; she asked if 75% would be other sales; he said the same things but the store would have some food and bought a little shelf for the liquor; they do cashing checks, bill pay and other things for the community and people like their convenience of location.

Mr. Clark congratulated the owners for wanting to do something in the community; as there are those of us who live in the area have failed to do it; he said this license wasn't a renewal, it is a new Class B alcoholic license and this is the issue that he has; he said if they were just renewing their license across the street and purchasing the property then for him, it wouldn't be a problem.

One of the owners of the business said they just want to move their location and they have been there for twenty years at WGG, and moved across the street and built it from ground up; he said they spent all of their money; he asked what is he supposed to do, file bankruptcy; Mr. Clark asked him if they were across the street and he said they are going to the store they built because the lease is finished this year; Mr. Clark asked them if they were across the street with a lease or not across the street with a lease; they said they are still there, one owner said the lease was finished, it will end this year, December 31 and it is not finished; Mr. Clark asked them if they were operating under a liquor license where they were currently located; he said yes; Mr. Clark stated to Mrs. Summersgill if they were just renewing the license where they are, and their license followed them across the street, that's one thing considering that they are now asking for a new Class B license and this is the issue; he said if they were just renewing their license and that license was following them across the street, no problem, but now they have the license across the street, which they are telling Council that it will end, but everybody knows that they can probably renew the lease or whatever and then are asking for a new one; Mr. Clark said he has strip clubs in his district, liquor club, liquor stores on every corner and going to school on the buses, walking to school through the neighborhoods and all the kids are seeing bingo halls, check cashing places, liquor stores and strip clubs; he agreed with Pastor Thomas that more is needed for South Monroe; one of the owners said liquor is legal, and the focus need to be on guns; Mr. Clark said unfortunately guns are not on the agenda tonight and said if they were just renewing their license and the license was following them across the street, and because they already have the license, and he would have no issue with the renewal, but because they are asking for a new license; one of the owners said it was a brand new store and when they applied, there were those who were thinking since they remodeled that it was a new building, they are just going to move from one location to another location and they have a liquor license; Mr. Clark said this is why he asked the Attorney to clarify and make the distinction publicly, that this is not a renewal, it is a new license on top of every other liquor store that we have in this vicinity; he said he has to vote and listen to his constituents as they are saying, just like Pastor Thomas, we are tired of the liquor stores, tired of the bingo halls, check cashing, and our kids need something else to look at and there is another way to make a dollar; he said he understands and congratulated them on what they are doing, but didn't want to sit and digress, but wanted them to know where he was coming from; he said at the time that they need to renew their license is one thing, but as for him, he would say nay to another new alcoholic license being in this vicinity with all of the other stores corner to corner, block to block, strip clubs, bingo halls and liquor stores.

Mr. Echols asked Mrs. Summersgill, if they changed their physical address, wouldn't it be a new application; she said yes, and the way that you can transfer a liquor license is what Mr. Echols is getting to; he said if they change the name of their operation, then you have to do a new application; she said yes, but they could transfer if they wanted to stay in business with their same liquor license where they are now for six months and then transfer their liquor license across the street, then they could do that, but they can only have liquor at one location; the owner said what they were told by Baton Rouge, that if they were just moving from location to location, they needed just one application; Mr. Echols asked if this was an issue with and if they could get clarity from Louisiana, ATC or whomever the permitting agency was to determine if it is a transferability issue with the license versus Council approving a new one; this is something that can be looked into; the owner said they asked them if they needed to move from one location to the other and they said that it was no problem; Mrs. Summersgill said what she is hearing is, if we have the same person that have two locations and they are saying they are going to close down this location, then perhaps, we wouldn't have a problem with them opening up a new location across the street, but to give them a new liquor license, we then have in place liquor licenses for both establishments at the same time; Mrs. Summersgill said what she is hearing from Councilman Clark is that this is something that he is questioning and in his mind he doesn't want to do; she said it may be good if it was passed over one more time and see about the transferral of the license; Mr. Echols said his only hesitation is whether you are a restaurant operator, or convenience store owner and because of the flaws in some of the state government and how they approve the licenses, some of the businesses may lose twenty to fifty percent of their revenue while waiting thirty to sixty to ninety days for all of their inspections and do understand why they

may want to have two in place at the thirty day overlap so they don't get their businesses hurt from a revenue standpoint; he said if there was further clarity they could get where one business wasn't jeopardizing two; the business might not be the most desirable for the neighborhood and maybe we could pass over it and do one more set of research.

Mr. Clark asked to go on the record saying he doesn't think there is any other place in the City other than South Monroe that you are going to find this many liquor stores, and know there isn't another strip club that he's aware of besides the Onyx; no one will find in a close vicinity proximity of what is going on in the area of Winnsboro Road, this many liquor stores, with a strip club, video bingo and this is the problem that we are having; it's not located on 165, but it is in close corridors in the community and he has gotten calls on it and have met with people on it who are his constituents and this is the issue they are having; he said they are asking where is the vision inside the neighborhoods, where is the vision for re-invigorating and re-energizing the area and a tax was just passed with SEDD and are trying to do some things and that is the problem; he said he is not trying to hurt anyone economically, but what the Southside have is money being sucked out of the community with nothing coming back in; he said we have to look at this for what it is worth and we have to listen to the constituents and balance the needs of the community; he said they have a right to make money, but it's not like we have one or two liquor stores on Winnsboro Road, but there are five or six and this is the issue; he said the Council is not turning the business down, but if they transfer it from the business across the street, so be it, no harm, no foul, but you are asking for a new one, an additional liquor store to go in the community and this is the issue that he has with it and wanted it to be clear.

Mr. Wilson stated in speaking with the citizens of District 4, and also with Pastor Lewis, there was concern that the liquor store business does not enhance south Monroe; he said he understands the owners have several stores on South 2nd, WGG, and there was a lot of crime in the area; the businesses don't bring anything to south Monroe, neither to District's 3,4, or 5; he said when they came to an earlier Council meeting, it was agreed that Council would not be approving the liquor license, but the grocery store and the convenient store would be okay; he said they approved, but he voted against it, because he knew they would be coming back and now you are here again with the liquor license; he said he stands now as he stood the last time, and that is voting nay; the people don't want it and it doesn't enhance the area, it doesn't bring anything to the area and this is his stand; he said WGG's need to have work done there, there is obnoxious growth around the building, trash is around the building and he took pictures of it; there are people loitering at WGG's, people hanging out and do understand money is being made; Monroe Housing Authority is coming in and trying to do development in the area and we don't want another liquor store to cause harm to our people in South Monroe; Mr. Wilson called for the vote.

Mrs. Ezernack asked Mr. Echols if he was going to withdraw his motion or does he want to go ahead and vote or to pass it over; Mr. Echols said he wants to give Mrs. Summersgill another two weeks; Mrs. Ezernack said Mr. Clark brought up a point and said that Mr. Echols withdrew his motion and Mrs. Ezernack withdrew her second; she said passing it over tonight would allow Mrs. Summersgill to see if there is a way for the transfer to happen, if not then Council will have to come to a vote; a motion was taken to pass over to allow Legal to take a look at whatever options there may be available to the owners.

Mrs. Ezernack said the item will come back in a couple of weeks and the owners need to get with Legal and find out if there is a way that the existing license can be transferred across the street and that way the owners won't have two active licenses at one time. Mrs. Ezernack told the owners that Council was trying to help them, otherwise it was going to fail this evening and to let it go and see what can be found and if Council can help they will and if not, they cannot; she said to try this rather than vote it down this evening.

Department of Planning & Urban Development: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Echols, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to Consider request from Children's Coalition, 300 Winnsboro Rd., for a Major Conditional Use Permit authorizing the use of the existing structure (300 Winnsboro Road) for a day care center (large). The Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance allows a day care center (large) as a Major Conditional Use in the R-4, High Density Multi-Family Residential District. Major Conditional Uses are those uses that require another level of approval; therefore, this request comes before the City Council for their approval in addition to that of the Planning Commission. (There were no public comments.)

Legal Department: Public Comment: None.

Mayor's Office: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Wilson, second by Mr. Clark and approved Voting YES: Wilson, Clark, Ezernack, Woods; Voting to ABSTAIN: Echols; to Adopt Resolution No. 7118, stating the City of Monroe's endorsement of Vantage Health Plan, Inc. FBA Monroe Development, LLC and their Project #20170016 to participate in the benefits of the Louisiana Restoration Tax Abatement Program. (There were no public comments.)

Comments:

Mrs. Ezernack stated this was looked at once before, and asked if it was any type of clarification. Mrs. Summersgill said they asked for it too early, and they didn't rescind the other Resolution.

Department of Public Works: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Echols, second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved to Consider request from the Water Distribution Division of the Public Works Department for Council approval for the Purchasing Division to advertise for a one (1) year supply contract of various water distribution parts with the option of two renewals. Funds for these purchases will be derived from the Inventory Account. (There were no public comments.)

Department of Community Affairs: Public Comment: None.

Police Department: Public Comment: None.

Fire Department: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7119, authorizing James E. Mayo, Mayor, to apply for and accept an Assistance to Firefighters Grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency on behalf of the Monroe Fire Department for funding to pay for Emergency Medical Technician Training and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Engineering Services: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Echols, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7120, authorizing James E. Mayo, Mayor, to execute Change Order No. Eight (8) to the north area sewer system improvements Basin MR-27(A)30/31 Rehabilitation Contract, between the City of Monroe and Jabar Corporation, for an increase in the contract amount of \$28,821.82 and an increase in the contract time of 15 days and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Comments:

Mr. Wilson said he noticed the change order was number eight, and asked for the total amount spent on change orders; Mr. Holland said he didn't have the number in front of him, nor the contract; he said six of the change orders that involved money usually involves additional time and in this case they are paying for a creek crossing and the other is a sewer line that ran through a catch basin on Forsythe for an additional \$23,500 of work; the only time change orders are done on the jobs are because they are finding so many unknown items and why they are out, they are trying to take care of them; Mr. Wilson asked if he felt comfortable saying this would be the last change order going forward; Mr. Holland said no; Mr. Wilson asked if more were coming; Mr. Holland said he had a meeting already scheduled and is reviewing change orders now and when a contractor brings something to them, they don't always agree and a lot of the time, they argue about the price, trying to negotiate a better price and no, it is not the final change order for this project; they are at over the amount of \$3.7 million now of the total contract.

(b) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Echols and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7121, amending Resolution No. 7072 authorizing an additional payment to an engineer to review the plans for the improvements to Basin MR-27(A)/30/31 Rehabilitation Project, and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Comments:

Mrs. Ezernack asked Mr. Holland to explain the item; Mr. Holland said he was in the process of putting in a new 14" force main, which is close to two miles long and am having a problem with getting the line in place in the existing right of way; the existing right of way is cluttered with existing utilities and are having to shift the new line in the railroad right of way, and it near Horseshoe Lake Road to Technology Drive; he said you don't put anything in the railroad right of way without their approval and you pay whatever expenses that they charge you; Mrs. Ezernack said this is the one where they quoted the City a price; Mr. Holland said they gave them one price for fees and then they came back and doubled it and then they came back after that and requested

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES: Public Comment:

(a) Introduce an Ordinance amending and restating Ordinance 11,363 and further providing with respect thereto. (City Code Sewer Rate) (Admin.) (There were no public comments.)

Comments:

Mrs. Ezernack made the motion, there was no second made; Mrs. Ezernack asked if anyone wanted to speak to it and why it should at least have it up for discussion if we are not going to be giving a second this evening and the importance of it; Mrs. Ezernack asked Mr. Thompson if he would like to come to the podium; Mr. Clark said to the extent that it may or may not be appropriate and don't know if it would be appropriate for anyone to speak on it, because there is no second, and the matter dies for a lack of second; Mrs. Ezernack stated Council would move on to Item B.

(b) Introduce an Ordinance amending Section 36-23(a) (1) and Section 36-33 (a) (2), relative to Water Rates, of Chapter 36 of the City of Monroe Code, and further providing with respect thereto. (Water Rate) (Admin.) (There were no public comments.)

Comments:

Mrs. Ezernack made the motion and there was no second; Mrs. Ezernack stated it looks like we aren't going to get a second and will move to Item 10.

Mayor Mayo said, I just can't sit here and let this fly without making comments about this and I think the Council members should at least explain why they are not wanting to address the very important issue as it relates to water rates and also sewer as it relates to the Consumer Price Index; he said this has gone on for months, probably years and the previous Council which a couple of you Council members were on that Council where you rescinded the CPI rate that would help in a major way; he said we talk about the fact that we are almost at full capacity and all cities around us are going on boil advisories and we have not gone on boil advisories; we have had the professionals to come in to meet with the Council members and talk with you about this, to answer whatever questions you had and they assured me that they had met with you and this is not anything that is new; he said I think it needs to be said on the record why this very important issue is not being addressed and you just can't be quiet on this and the time that something happens then the blame goes; and the question is asked why didn't they do something about it; he said our water treatment plant now has professionals that are doing an outstanding job and trying to make do with what the City has, a plant that has been around for years; he said you talk about economic development and moving forward but you sit there and don't do anything about it and this is one of the major economic development drivers that the City will ever have and not one word is said about it and this is not acceptable; he said this Council is acting irresponsible for not saying a word about it and why.

Mr. Will Davis, City of Monroe, Superintendent of Sewer Department, thanked the Mayor for bringing it to a point; he said the sewer rates were needed because there are a lot of deteriorating main lines in the South Monroe area including Texas to the Standifer trunk line, Hadley gravity main line, the alleys on South 6th through South 8th and all the streets in the area that have the old concrete sewer main lines that have deteriorated so bad that most can't be washed, and the bell joint is left in some areas from deterioration; he said there will be a serious issue if something is not done from the Texas pump station junction box to the Standifer major pump station; he said they are doing what they can, but when you have to take a main line and try to put it together at a bell joint, the customer is complaining and you can't wash them and unstop them as you need to, because there is nothing there and something has to be done;

Mr. Echols asked Mr. Davis if he had a plan for which infrastructure he was suggesting, which he stated there were challenges on the Southside; Mr. Echols said there are challenges all over the City and outside of artificially increasing rates, asked if there was a long range sewer and drainage plan that Council could be privy to so that Council could consider future rate increases that he or Mr. Westrom had; Mr. Westrom said he did and there has been a plan in effect since 2002 where different basins were rated in order of priority; since then they have gone past that point and have been examining the failures, as there are citizens in Monroe who can't flush their toilets when it rains and places where they can't repair the lines when they break down; he said there are accumulated locations where it is occurring, and they are not just going by the old plan from 2002, but they are using the data that they have acquired to put priority on the projects and right now the City don't have the money to repair them; Mr. Echols asked Mr. Westrom if he could share the plans with Council for the sewer and the water; he asked what the City is planning to do with the rate increases that are being proposed; Mr. Westrom said he could provide Council with the problem areas of the town and the description of what work that needs to be done and when it needs to be done; he said, some are simple projects that include North 165 from the bayou to Apple Dental and where the old Levin canal crosses, the line is blowing apart and there is no way to fix it; Mr. Echols said he understands in District 1, there are several lines that are completely mangled and are having dramatic problems; he said Council has the fiduciary responsibilities to see what the total project costs are for all of the different things and then Council will be more than happy to go back to their constituents and say that this is more than just raising your rates, these are the problem areas and this is what it's going to cost to get it fixed, if we agree to some of these changes and that plan is critical for confidence; Mr. Westrom said truthfully, this is a two stage project, and stage one is to do the Consumer Price Index and that is a five year average; Mr. Westrom said the Consumer Price Index is not adjusted year by year and this is a whole list in a normal operating mode of where they are today, which means they can continue repairing things at the rate they are now; Mr. Echols said if they have miles and millions dollar's worth and nothing has been taken care of that is falling apart for the last 25 years and if there is huge infrastructure issues, then Council need to see a plan and when they see the plan, then he is sure that they can go to their voters and say there is a bigger challenge here that need to be addressed, not just raising your rates today, but we have a plan and this is our future, this is where we are going and we will get behind you, we don't see that right now, and there is no vision on the infrastructure saying this is where we have to go.

Mayor Mayo said, I just can't accept that and how long have we been talking about this and how often have we presented the plan and talked to you individually; he stated to Mr. Echols saying, right after you were elected and in our four hour meeting, you indicated to me, it was one of the things that I mentioned to you about the rescission of the CPI, and you indicated that we need to get that taken care of; we have had gentleman that have met with you all and they were able to meet with the four of the five of you and they said they couldn't catch up with Mr. Clark or that he didn't return the call and don't know what the case was, but this is what they told him; he stated, there is no question that this has been going on for years and you guys need to quit playing politics and do the right thing; there is a plan, and we have been talking about it, it has been all over; he said tomorrow I am going to Washington and the major projects are water projects and I will tell you something, I'm not going, and why would I go up there to lobby our federal officials for funds and you won't do the prudent thing here locally and it doesn't make sense; he said, I'm not going to go and ask Congress to give us money and we have an opportunity to help ourselves to expand our water treatment plant which is much needed in addition to address the issues as it relates to sewer, we were able to negotiate the find years ago, concerning the consent decree that we are presently on now and about to come off; he said and the reason we are not off right now is because Council members voted against the CPI index which relates to sewer which is what's on the agenda tonight and that is the reason we are not off the consent decree, that is the one hundred percent reason; good luck with your meeting with the congressional delegation, because I'm not going to a meeting or any meeting where we won't do the proper due diligence and talk about a plan that we have been talking about and don't know how many years, putting off things that need to be done now, because the Administration is presenting it.

Mrs. Ezernack asked Mr. Clark if he had a comment; Mr. Clark said no, where there is no wood the fire goes out; Mr. Janway said he would give him a little wood; Mayor Mayo asked Mr. Clark if he understood that; Mr. Clark said he didn't hear him; Mr. Janway, said should this Council ever approve a CPI index, you're are not even standing still in the same place that you are; a lot of this sewer equipment has to be replaced on a ten to fifteen year cycle and we have got some serious critical issues in the sewer and will leave it at that; we put together a list of what we felt were critical projects to the Mayor three years ago, about \$40 million and we could add to that list and as Mr. Westrom stated, there was a capital infrastructure plan that was developed for sewer when they first started and they followed that plan until all the resources were depleted and less than 30 per cent of the basin areas were completed and less than 10 per cent of the sewer lift stations were done with the

\$100 plus million that was spent on sewer and that's enough on sewer and moving to water because we do have some wood there to burn; he said, we have a brand new capital improvement plan that was prepared by Burns and McDonald within the last year and the rate structure that you are looking at tonight to support that plan and from what I understand the majority of you were discussed that plan this fall and we definitely have a plan for water and the majority of you have been presented with that plan.

Mr. Echols said, my request and it has been at least four to six months since we met with the consultants and believe there was some follow up information that was to come from those meetings and I do have my notes at home and was going to bring them tonight and this was added to the agenda when we received it on Thursday or Friday due to the snow day; he said, this is more of a communication issue on not understanding what all is in this package and what the rates are and how they rate and all these things; we need more information and I would like the package in the proposal again and whatever they pitched three to six months ago, a lot has changed since then and I'm sure Mr. Westrom has found additional sewer and water infrastructure issues that need to be addressed and I think if we have that information, we could make a better decision and until I get that I can't support anything; Mr. Janway said, the water treatment plant has not changed one red penny, there has not been one thing done, but we will be more than happy; Mr. Echols asked if he had a copy tonight that he could see; Mr. Janway said he didn't know if they had a copy of the study here tonight; Mr. Echols said nobody has the information; Mr. Janway said, we will be more than happy to provide all of the Council with another copy of that plan, there has been no update; Mr. Echols asked if they had anything on the sewer and has it changed; Mr. Janway said the sewer plan was not done and as stated by Mr. Westrom the sewer was done in 2002, it was identified then what was required, the funds weren't available to complete the plan; Mr. Echols said, my fear is going to the voters on some of these major challenges and say we are going to raise rates or add additional bond indebtedness out there and we don't fix the problems, and I know on Pointe Drive, we have significant problems, and in Downtown Monroe, we have massive problems and in some cases if we were to get a three to five inch rain right now, you would have twenty buildings that flood; we have major challenges in this space, but a plan on our table and then we can go out and sell it to our constituents and this would make a heck of a difference; I agree, I did get the plan three to six months ago and I met with Mr. Thompson and his team, so I would appreciate the sewer plan and any other information you can get us and I would be more than happy to entertain some of the proposals from the Administration as the Mayor suggested that we met for four hours several years ago; I am open to being progressive in finding ways to solve our infrastructure challenges, but I need all the information at our fingertips.

Ms. Woods said, I apologize because I was probably not as attentive as I should have been on this; I do know that we do need infrastructure, and I do know that we are at capacity or nearing capacity and I do know that we are annexing and are providing services for a lot of businesses that are coming into our area and that's a good thing; she said, if you could just tell me one more time and let me see it one more time, I can definitely support it; my concern is what will these rates and how will the rates impact people that are on fixed incomes, and water rates are expensive right now and I need to understand and put my arms around how much more is it going to be, because when someone bill is running sixty dollars a month already and then we are going to go up, then I just need to better understand what we are talking about and how people in my district are going to be more impacted with the increased rates.

Mayor Mayo said, let me answer that, we have professionals here one of whom have flown in from Kansas City to start the dialogue in an Introduction and all of you know that an Introduction is just that, it has to go for the Final adoption; the fact there had already been conversation, however long it's been and it hadn't been several years ago, maybe one and a half years ago, Mr. Echols, when we had that conversation; we all know that the Introduction is not the Final adoption, you would have at least two weeks to ask any question or whatever plan that you have forgotten or don't have and you will have that opportunity; it's far too long and too much where people come to me and question me about things that we are trying to act responsibly as an Administration and they asked me about things that they need when they have sewer issues or when the water pressure is low, those types of things; they don't remember which way anybody voted, they are just going to call the Mayor's office and say why is this happening this way; I have the same constituency that you have and have some of the same concerns that you have, but we still have to do the responsible thing and when we have to go on the boil advisory, we have busted pipes, and utilizing more water than we normally have because of busted pipes and so forth and I know there are problems and you will probably get calls, but not as many calls as we get; they want to know what are you going to do about it, and what you're going to do is refer those calls to the Administration and that's all I'm asking you to do.

Mrs. Ezernack said, this is just an Introduction and we have the luxury this time of having three weeks before the next meeting and this should be enough time to get to Mr. Westrom, Mr. Janway and to get the answers needed and to get with the consultants and ask again to revisit it; she said without it being approved for introduction tonight, it will be three weeks before it can be introduced, which means it will be two more weeks after that; if we do our due diligence in a matter in which we should do our due diligence three weeks should be plenty enough time to get the answers needed to make a responsible decision; we are going tomorrow and the expense of the water plan is on the agenda to be talked about as well as the sewer and what is needed; water is \$35 million and that is to help us, we are almost at capacity and are running at about fifteen million gallons a day and the capacity is only nineteen million and sometimes it may be more and other things are needed; if the plant goes off line what happens to the City of Monroe and how long can it stay offline and we have water that we can use, there is a lot of moving parts to this; I was on the Council when we voted the original Ordinance and it did have the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in it, and that was not anything anybody wanted to do, but we were at least able to do some things to improve both of those systems and do some projects; I have had calls about water and the sewer and we all have and it is very hard to tell someone there's not much I can do for you and that's not what anybody wants to hear; most people want to know how much more per month will it cost me, as Ms. Woods stated and this is the real bottom line and what will we do with the extra funds, that's the other part of it and when those things can be answered in our three week turn around; I don't know what the process is to bring it back up tonight to re-introduce the Ordinance, if that's parliamentary correct if we can get a second to have the consultants come up and talk about it, they are sitting and waiting and we brought them in and they should have that opportunity for us then to make a vote; Mr. Echols, said in the proposal from the Administration they don't have it commencing until April 30, 2018 and whether it's this week or three weeks from now, we have ample time as a Council to get it back on the agenda and to pass it or some form of it once we have the data that we suggested; he said he is not opposed to giving the gentleman as much time as he needs in the public format to fulfill any of the informational needs that Council have, but from a procedural standpoint, we have passed the two issues due to no second and you are the Chair, but I still think that we have time to do this and to do it in a responsible way; Mrs. Ezernack said, I would like to argue that point and thinks that we have kicked the can down the road many, many times and this is too important not to do it; if we at least get it introduced and we don't want it to come back at the next meeting, that's one thing but we need more time to get information; she said irresponsibility, and you talk about your fiduciary responsibility and yes you do have that, but you got to make a motion and you've got to then enact your fiduciary responsibility to get all the information you possibly can once that is and if you are not ready at the next meeting to vote, then we can push it down for the next one, but at some point somebody has got to step up to the plate and do something to get this off center; it has gone on way too long and we need to have it done.

Mayor Mayo said, it was not voted down, it was not seconded, so I would submit to what is in Roberts Rules of Order; Mrs. Summersgill said, I don't know what Roberts Rules of Order says about it but, we have re-urged motions here before, so if one of the Council wanted to or if Councilwoman Ezernack wanted to re-urge her motion, she could do that and I can't tell you what Roberts Rules of Order says about it but we have done it before; Mrs. Ezernack said, so basically since the motion was on the floor and got no second, a re-urging of the motion or do I have to repeat the motion again; Mrs. Summersgill said, re-urge the motion that you have; Mrs. Ezernack asked, if she was to do it herself; Mr. Clark said, I note my objection Madam Chair, it died for a lack of a second and I think it can be reconsidered probably at the next Council meeting, but doesn't think for the sake of Roberts Rules of Order which I have in front of me, Roberts Rules of Order for dummies; he said, I was just reading it while you all were talking and doesn't think we can just come right back in the same meeting and reconsider something that fail for lack of a second, while you all were talking I can go to the specific rule if you want me to; Mayor Mayo said please do; Mrs. Ezernack said she had the book with her and Mr. Clark said whatever you want to do; Mrs. Summersgill asked if they wanted to go off the record for a minute; Mrs. Ezernack said, a break would be taken for about ten minutes.

Chairwoman Ezernack called for a meeting break at 7:14 p.m. and the meeting was called back into session at 7:32 p.m.; Mrs. Ezernack thanked everyone for their patience and said they did break for a little longer than planned, but because of the delay in the meeting, stated that she would move to renew the motion for Item (a) Introduce an Ordinance amending and restating Ordinance 11,363 and further providing with respect thereto. (City Code Sewer Rate) (Admin.)

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack and a second by Ms. Woods and approved; Voting YES: Ezernack, Wilson, Woods, Echols; (Mr. Clark was absent for the vote, as he left the meeting earlier) to renew the motion to Introduce an Ordinance amending and restating Ordinance 11,363 and further providing with respect thereto. (City Code Sewer Rate) (Admin.)

Comments:

Mrs. Ezernack asked Mr. Thompson and the member of his team to come and do a presentation and to be available to answer any questions Council may have; also during the period she asked them if they would be available for personal meetings with Council to go over questions they may have; Mr. Thompson said, yes.

Mr. Nambdy Thompson, Government Consultants, introduced himself and Mr. Ted Kelly, Burns McConnell as the engineer and the rate consultant on the deal.

Mr. Ted Kelly, Senior Project Manager, Burns McDonnell, stated he has been doing consultant work for over 38 years; stated, in August, met with four of the Council members to go over the financial plan that has been laid out to meet the needs of the water system to cover major capital projects and the renewal and replacements that have been laid out; he said the CPI over the last sixteen years have been going up at about a percent and a half a year as an average and for water and sewer systems across the country, operation management expenses have been going up at an average of about five and a half percent a year; almost all systems are falling behind, if they are not making some type of adjustments, but if you put with that the fact that the systems have aging infrastructure and have seen that in places like Jackson Mississippi with the cold weather and over one hundred main breaks on an aging system, when the systems begin to freeze and thaw; the issue is if it isn't addressed through how the system is operated and maintained, you have to have the money to do that; the system here has had reduced growth and at one time there was pretty steady growth, and the growth has been slowed, the consumption is not going up as much, which means its leading to lower revenues on average; the utilities mostly are fixed, it doesn't vary with how much water a customer uses; regulations have increased and adjustments need to be made to water rates, typical bills were looked at and in comparison to cities that were compared, it is relatively low for a customer using about 5,000 gallons a month and they pay a little over \$12 per month and the proposed increase would raise it to \$15.86, the cost of a happy meal; the second increase of a year from now would be another \$4.76 and the accumulative increase for a 5,000 gallon a month customer would be \$8.42; the production plant is currently treating 12 million gallons a day on average, but the capacity can go over and are treating 15-20 million and are exceeding the rate capacity on a regular basis and it gets to be an issue and putting it under strain and could be major problems; the renovation that need to occur to increase the capacity by 4 million gallons a day, the expansion would add 8 million gallons a day, and there would be 24 million capacity once everything is taken care of; it allows to serve the current customers and for economic development; the current cost to produce water on a 1,000 gallon basis is \$2.50, for operations, maintenance and debt service; the revenue is currently averaging \$2.52 per 1,000 gallons and you are basically covering costs and nothing extra and how will you take care of capital improvements and the renewals and replacements that have to occur, you have to raise rates, it is not a fun thing to do; rates have been held low for a long time and in comparison to other cities across the state, the City is very low on water rates and with the proposed increases, the City would still not be the highest by quite a bit and would fall in the middle, this is if the other systems don't have additional increases; he asked if Council had any questions and said they talked to some members and will be back to meet individually in the next couple of weeks.

Mr. Clark thanked them for coming, and said he talked with Mr. Thompson about some of his concerns and shared with him that an Ordinance that the City had in 2010 was under the Producer Price Index and the proposed ordinance changes it to the Consumer Price Index with an increase annually; Mr. Clark asked why was there a switch from the Producer Price Index to the Consumer Price Index; Mr. Thompson said the Producer Price Index that was in the 2010 Ordinance versus the Consumer Price Index mirrors the price of goods and inside a water treatment system, you may have some fixed costs that are not going to move, and often you will have the costs of chemicals for treatment and the CPI more mirrors the variable costs; Mr. Clark said he understands the Producer Price Index is a lower index than the Consumer Price Index even though it is a federal index; Mr. Thompson said he wouldn't say that, depending on the year, one may be a little higher than the other and the choice for using the Consumer Price Index is given the cost of the various materials that comes along with water systems; Mr. Clark said, he shared with Mr. Thompson some other concerns being that the above rates shall be adjusted upward on an annual basis for each fiscal year in the same proportion as the increase of the CPI or Consumer Price Index and a few lines under that it states, these rate adjustments shall be automatic and shall be calculated and determined administratively, the rate shall be reviewed by the Council every

five years; Mr. Clark said if you take the fact that we are going from the Producer Price Index to the Consumer Price Index and we agree on that, is it also correct that it is still negotiable that the rates can be reviewed by the Council every year; Mr. Thompson said it is written that Council can review it every five years and Mr. Clark said I understand as it is written, but it could be every six months or every three days, Mr. Thompson said yes, if it was amended by the Council; Mr. Clark said as he is looking at it, there are several things that can be amended or agreed upon by the Council even if Council agrees on the language or the rate increase or the Consumer Price Index; Mr. Thompson said that is correct, and one reason that the review is made every five years is because if you review every year, then you don't necessarily have the need for the Consumer Price Index and the CPI is going to show up after the first two rate increases that Mr. Kelly just mentioned and then once you get the rate in fiscal year of 2019, then you start looking at the CPI and the CPI indicates summer goods have gone up a half percent and the rates are going to move up a half percent to cover the costs of various materials, and the operation of the water system; Mr. Thompson said, you can review it every year, but if you are reviewing it every year, then review it every year and move it up or down depending on what you need to do and to eventually take this out of Council's hand and allow the water system to run as a true Enterprise system; Mr. Clark said he understands and this is the part that he has to convey to not just those present tonight, but to those at home and tell them this is what's being proposed and it is negotiable as well; He mentioned to Mr. Kelly referencing the cumulative effect of for instance in 2019, an \$8 increase, but realistically, it is more than an \$8 increase, it's \$8 per month and that's \$96 per year and asked him if this information was correct; Mr. Kelly said, yes it is monthly bills; Mr. Clark said he understands and wants it to be put out there for people to know what they are talking about; Mr. Clark, said if a person is using 3,000 gallons with a 5 A meter that in 2019 there rates would have increased by almost \$7 and that would be an \$84 yearly and Mr. Kelly said that was correct; Mr. Clark said he is trying to understand what is being said, so that he can convey this information intelligently to his constituents so that when his term is up, he can go home to his kids; Mr. Kelly said, he would try to clarify two things, the CPI is a typical index that is used to adjust utility rates, not the PPI and the reason for having the five year review is the chance to do a rate study and take a look at costs going up more or less and if there is a need for an adjustment up or down, sometimes rates do go down, not frequently, but sometimes they do; Mr. Clark said, whenever they talk he will want to talk about the cost of production, delivery, depreciation, capital expenditures per thousand gallons of potable water and will take this back to his constituents and explain it very simply to them; Mr. Thompson said, in explaining to them the third slide presentation that the Council has in front of them and as Mr. Kelly stated earlier, the operation and maintenance of the water system plus the debt already associated with the water system, it is almost \$9 million and if look at the amount of gallons sold in 2016, it is about three and a half, and the cost of the water was \$2.52, and it was sold for about the \$2.52; the water is being sold for about the same that it is being made for and there is no extra room to pay for capital expenditures that may come up, if a water main breaks or anything like that; Mr. Clark said he appreciates this and when they get together he wants to talk about the different water lines in South Monroe, Districts Three, Four, and Five do overlap and on South 9th, 10th, and Dawnview, the lines are collapsing under people's homes right now; he said before voting on an increase to do it, he wants to know as Councilman Echols brought up what specific projects will be on the horizon, where I'm not just selling them a hope and a dream.

Mr. Wilson asked Mrs. Summersgill when Council introduces a bill, if it can come back before the Council and then they can vote it up or down; Mrs. Summersgill said it is up for introduction and it takes two to three weeks and when it comes back you can pass over it until you get all the information that you need; Mr. Wilson said he would have a community meeting with his constituents before he do anything and wants to change some of the language up in the ordinance, because he doesn't want to put a heavy rate increase on the elderly and a community that is already struggling and knows that it has been kicked down the road ten, fifteen, twenty years and do see why the community is in a crisis; Mr. Kelly said one of the things in the rate structure is a lifeline rate that's available and customers can apply for it; Mr. Wilson said, these are some of the things that will be talked about in the community meeting; Mr. Thompson said there is a lifeline in the current rates and will have to defer to the public works department, but doesn't think anyone has applied for it and it has been around for a long time; Ms. Woods said, she thinks this is something that is open to communicating and asked if they knew what the average household usage was; Mr. Thompson said it was between four to five thousand gallons for a family of a four member household; Mr. Clark asked for the amount of the anticipated revenue; Mr. Kelly said he didn't have the table with him and will look at it while fielding other questions; Mr. Thompson said, in answering Mayor Mayo's question, in order to raise the money to fix the water treatment plant and in talking with the market to say that Monroe wants to issue 30 million, the cost of the water treatment plant, to fix, renovate and expand; have to show the market the city of Monroe has the ability to repay and the only way to show is the amount collected on water usage, produced and sold, there have to be some type of coverage factor, for every dollar of debt that you produce, that it be a certain amount over it; usually inside of water and sewer

bonds need to have a 1.25 or 1.33 coverage, which means you have an extra quarter above the dollar in debt that you have; he said the rates they are doing are at the minimum and in speaking with Council, there was a need to keep them as low as possible, and would like to have a 1.33 and it makes the rate come down a little lower and this rate was adjusted based on trying to generate enough funds to have 1.2 to 1.3 coverage; Mr. Kelly said the existing rates were generating a little over \$9 million annually, the increase for a full year would produce a little of \$2.5 million additional revenue, and when adding the second increase there is about a \$6.3 million total additional revenues and it puts it over \$15 million while the total requirements are going up significantly; he said one of the things that are not being done currently is having an adequate ending balance and the market is favorable if you can have 120 days of reserves and you don't have that right now and it's built into it as well.

Mr. Echols said, so that I can convey to my constituents what the increases that are proposed today stated to Mr. Kelly, you indicated after the two year period that there would be an additional \$6.3 million revenue generated from your proposal or the Administration's proposal and the current generate revenue of \$9 million and it nets up to about 71.6 percent increase and asked if his math was correct; Mr. Kelly said the total increase if rates are kept where they are would be a little over \$9.1 million and it is just under 70 percent cumulative revenue increase; Mr. Echols said this comes from the constituents and 35 percent a year just averaging things out; Mr. Kelly said it was 30; Mr. Echols said 30, 35, whatever, it still seems like a pretty dramatic increase from an increase standpoint and I have had several calls today, there were folks that saw the agenda and were worried about a 60-75 percent increase; Mr. Echols said, I am just getting the proposed increase that you are suggesting today; Mr. Echols stated to Mr. Thompson, in our earlier meeting, we met on August 3rd or the 6th and in the meeting, you provided a couple of these slides, but there were seven or eight other pages that you provided and thinks it was eight pages; Mr. Thompson said that is what Mr. Kelly was speaking from a little earlier, and after their meeting there were more questions and this was produced to answer the questions that he asked at the meeting; Mr. Echols said, didn't I correspond with one more email from that; Mr. Thompson said I believe you did and I sent back some more information; Mr. Echols said that what I can't find is that information; Mr. Thompson said he would have to go back and search his emails; Mr. Echols said that is the reason that he is absent of that communication, because he doesn't recall receiving that correspondence; Mr. Echols asked Mr. Thompson, how far are you in correspondence with the USDA on some of the water grants and or loan funds and are we working down those lines or somewhere else; Mr. Thompson, said you want to look into the market for this type of transaction; Mr. Echols said okay, and asked him why; Mr. Thompson said, the USDA has some interesting covenants that would not make what you would want to try to accomplish inside of this proposal, this project and whenever you are dealing with federal government financing, there are a lot of things that come with it, plus we also understand the severity of the potential problems at the water treatment plant; he said from the number of water and sewer deals that he has done over his career, those are not quick processes, they are a couple of years and if we want to provide the funds and fix the water treatment plant, where it is rated at 12 but are doing 15, and it's causing wear and tear on the plant, then the USDA is not the way to go and having done plenty of them, it is not the way to go on this type of project; Mr. Echols asked Mr. Thompson, in his and Mr. Kelly's professional opinions, how far behind or we in the infrastructure improvements, five, ten, twenty years behind and when should the work have begun on the improvements; Mr. Thompson said he's not an engineer and can't say how many years behind they are, but will say the majority of the cities across America are behind, they need to always be doing something on their infrastructure, whether it be water, sewer, drainage, roads; Mr. Thompson, said as a bond consultant, the water, sewer, and each individual one is an enterprise and by nature they should take care of their own bills and he has some clients where they subsidize their water, sewer by putting sales taxes inside and by putting property taxes inside, as a core belief those entities should take care of themselves and this is designed so that the water system can take care of itself; Mr. Echols asked how much of the water that is produced is sold outside of the City of Monroe; Mr. Janway said it was 20-25 percent sold; Mr. Echols said of the \$9 million, about 25 percent or a couple of million dollars is sold to outside sources; he asked when does it become financially not viable for Sterlington, Greater Ouachita Water, if we increase our rates by 70 percent and they go out and build additional capacity on their own with 150 percent rate indicator that is present here; he said his concern is we are selling water to others and then we turn around and raise rates so dramatically, that they don't need it and then we have 25 percent too much capacity and then we don't have the revenue to support the bonds that you are suggesting we go out to package this product; Mr. Thompson said the percentages are high because the rates are so low, and when he says 30 or 70 percent it sounds high, but right now the city is charging \$2.44 per thousand gallons and the ordinance says to go to \$3.17 and this is a 73 cents increase, not per cent and we are talking cents on the dollar and if we talk about what \$3.17 can get you, it won't get you a gallon of water at the convenience store but \$3.17 here will get you a thousand gallons and Mr. Kelly showed in previous meetings where Monroe is compared to local municipalities and Monroe is on the low end and in doing this gets us to the middle of the pack; he said in dealing with cities across the state, everyone is talking about having to true up the rates to what is produced and sold and each individual entity, and the outside

client, Sterlington and others will be an individual case and they will have to decide what makes sense for them and there are certain costs to building a water treatment plant and in this case to renovate and expand, we are talking about \$30 million dollars and if they build, then they will need to do that too, and at \$30 million that is being talked about, it's over the City of Monroe and the existing clients and you would have to put the whole 30 million on Sterlington and imagine what their rates would be, it wouldn't be feasible for them to do; Mr. Echols said, I wouldn't estimate that they would be borrowing \$30 million to build a plant because they are only trying to produce as you suggested 25 percent of the total production capacity, you do the math on what those are; he said, I'm just trying to get to the fact that in your professional opinion, do we have the potential to lose some of our larger commercial customers if we raise the rates this dramatically and they go out and build their own facilities and we would have more than enough capacity; Mr. Kelly said there is always the potential to lose customers, but it is also the potential to gain customers, because they can't get water anywhere else; Mr. Echols said he liked the idea of growing business and do get it; he asked, in their professional opinion if that is not a likely hood in this scenario that they would leave; Mr. Kelly said, no; Mr. Echols said he would hate for the Mayor to miss the Washington trip and would support the Ordinance tonight on the read in, because he wants to make sure that he is there with him and all the meetings with his Congressman and has been going to the meeting for the last couple of years and talking about the water project and many other projects that we have and any additional help at the table would love it; he said he has a bunch of other questions especially as it rallies around the points of water and sewer, and the bonding process and many other things, but at the end of the day, he wants to spend some time with the Mayor in Washington DC; Mr. Kelly said, in emphasizing a point that is not only in Monroe is they have been in the country and blessed with the fact that we have had really low priced water and those days are getting shorter and shorter, because water supply is very valuable and here is a situation where it has been adequate water, and am dealing with a lot of states where they have less than adequate water and there are a lot of restrictions and it's driving the cost of water up and it will happen for a lot of people and it doesn't make it easy to have to raise the rates on people, but it's something at some time you have to face reality and have to do certain things that are hard decisions; Mr. Echols said, he does agree that over time rates have to be adjusted and have to repair the failing infrastructure and water systems, because they are critical to the livability of this community and if we lost the Ouachita river, you lose your water source, sewer source and so many other things, but more importantly, if your plant breaks again, it is critical to the future; he said he is looking at the broad picture, the financials and wants to make sure that we don't run off customers and it only hurts us in our ability to repay any debt that is incurred and then we have to do things that are responsible for our citizens by way of we can't break the bank; he asked Mr. Thompson if he would forward the last three emails from their previous conversations and will try to generate questions from his initial response as well as to send him the first power point slide that was presented on last August along with all the data; he said the conversation tonight would have started much differently if they had the conversation two weeks ago or some phone call or something whether it was from him or someone else and would have been more inclined to have the conversation then coming up here and having to peel through all the data again, seven months later, not even knowing we would have the conversations up until Friday afternoon; Mr. Kelly said they look forward to coming in and addressing the questions.

Mrs. Ezernack thanked Councilmembers for allowing this to come back so that the gentlemen could speak; she thanked them for the great information this evening and it was very informative and sure there is much more information and questions we will have; she asked them to send Council a couple of dates that they would be able to come to the community and meet with them and she will circulate it around and will have to meet on the same dates or maybe one evening and the next morning or something of this nature to give examples of when they can do it and then Council can pick and they will come back and answer the questions; Mr. Thompson said they have already sent the email with a couple of dates and hopefully will be forwarding them and set their schedules; Ms. Woods asked if they were looking to do this in the next three weeks and he said yes.

Mayor Mayo said if that means an affirmative vote, then praise the Lord.

Ms. Marie Brown, citizen, spoke that she wasn't for structure being done for the water, because there is a problem; she said nobody in Monroe pays \$15 for water and that water starts at \$60 a month, that is for those who have a low bill; she said there are people right now who call her and say their water is so high that they can't pay it and told them to give their water bills and to have a town meeting with the Council and they are getting their water bills together now; she said if the consultants are going to start off with numbers saying we are paying low water bills, something is wrong with their numbers; she said they should start off the bills where they are and some people are paying over \$100-200 for water and when you call and try to get some relief, the water company gives a lot of run around and you can't get the assistance only for once a year; the seniors aren't benefitting from the programs that the City has in place; regardless to how high your bills are, the City has one

answer and that is that your toilet is running and it's not; something is wrong with billing and this need to be taken into consideration, and if you would start off with the right numbers, no one would object, but if you are allowing the consultants to come with a figure that everyone is paying \$12 – 15 per month, and it needs to go up and the bills start out at \$60 per month, then the arithmetic isn't right.

Chairwoman Ezernack called for the vote for Item (a) and the vote was taken to renew the motion for Introduction; With discussion by the Council Clerk, the Chairwoman and Mr. Echols, the Clerk stated the motion was just made to renew the motion only and that they needed to now vote on the Introduction of the Ordinance; it was decided by legal that the motion to renew the motion for Introduction was the only motion needed and not an additional motion to Introduce the Ordinance.

Chairwoman asked for a motion to renew the motion to Introduce Item (b); a motion was made.

(b) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, a second by Ms. Woods and approved, Voting YES: Ezernack, Wilson, Woods, Echols; (Mr. Clark was absent for the vote, as he left the meeting earlier) to renew the motion to Introduce an Ordinance amending Section 36-23(a) (1) and Section 36-33 (a) (2), relative to Water Rates, of Chapter 36 of the City of Monroe Code, and further providing with respect thereto. (Water Rate) (Admin.) (There were no public comments.)

Comments:

Mr. Wilson stated, he would be having a community meeting and that Mr. Tom Janway would be invited and do know that some citizens in his District have high water bills and thinks there are problems with the meters and there are that many bathrooms running water, causing the bills to be; there is one citizen that lives on South 9th Street whose water bill is \$6,000 and this is a problem and there will be a community meeting and hope that Mr. Janway can attend to explain to the citizens what the problems are and what can be done to correct the problems.

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

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Wilson, a second by Ms. Woods and approved; Voting YES: Ezernack, Wilson, Woods, Echols; (Mr. Clark was absent for the vote, as he left the meeting earlier) to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 11,820, authorizing James E. Mayo, Mayor, to enter into a Utility Easement Agreement with Timothy Todd and further providing with respect thereto. (Legal)

Chairwoman Ezernack opened the public hearing and coming forward:

Ms. Eva Wilson asked what was a utility easement; Mr. Holland said there are utility easements in all neighborhoods and there is a servitude and sometimes they look at the street, it's not just a back and curb to curb, it's beyond that and to your property line, it can vary from 30 to 60 feet and some property lines in the rear have utility easements for underground power that are 15-20 feet wide, it varies, but it is for utilities for that particular neighborhood; Ms. Wilson asked if it was for a particular person; Mrs. Ezernack said he is the one giving; Mr. Holland said he may be buying property for a utility easement from a particular person.

With no one else coming forward, the public hearing was declared closed.

(b) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, a second by Mr. Wilson and approved; Voting YES: Ezernack, Wilson, Woods, Echols; (Mr. Clark was absent for the vote, as he left the meeting earlier) to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 11,821, authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to James N. Detiege, all rights, title and interest that the City may have acquired to Lot 4, Block 5, Roosevelt Heights Addition, Ouachita Parish, District 5, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale Dated July 6, 2012, and further with respect thereto. (Legal)

Chairwoman Ezernack opened the public hearing and coming forward:

Ms. Eva Wilson stated that most of the like items had street addresses and have noticed that a number of the Resolutions over the years and she asked for the address of the property and why wasn't it included in the

description of the property; Mrs. Summersgill said whatever comes from the tax assessor's office, whoever is named for the property and whatever property description they have on the tax assessors notice is what is used; Ms. Wilson asked if you can mail something to lot 4, block 5; Mrs. Summersgill said no, they get the property description from the tax assessor and it's not necessary that they are mailing anything, it's just for legal description; Ms. Wilson asked if the people get notified some type of way; Mrs. Summersgill said yes, they get notified generally on the adjudicated properties through the newspaper; Mrs. Ezernack said, this particular one it was at a tax sale in 2012; Ms. Wilson said that was okay, and they do have addresses; Mrs. Summersgill said there are addresses, and what Ms. Wilson is saying to them, is if the law requires them to do this, and when the property description comes to them from the tax assessor's office, that she wants them to go do a property search for the address; Ms. Wilson said she is not making that request, just asking why they don't have addresses; Mrs. Summersgill said because it comes from the tax assessor's office like that, the property was adjudicated by the tax assessor as that lot 4, block 5 of Roosevelt Heights addition.

With no one else coming forward, the public hearing was declared closed.

(c) Upon a motion by Mr. Wilson, a second by Mr. Echols and approved; Voting YES: Ezernack, Wilson, Woods, Echols; (Mr. Clark was absent for the vote, as he left the meeting earlier) to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 11,822, authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to Leon Smith, Jr. all rights, title and interest that the City may have acquired to Lot 22, Sq. 41, Booker T. Washington Addition, Ouachita Parish, District 3, Monroe, la, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated July 7, 2000, and further with respect thereto. (Legal)

Chairwoman Ezernack opened the public hearing and seeing no one come forward, the hearing was declared closed.

Comments:

Mr. Wilson asked Mrs. Summersgill if there was a problem to get the addresses on the properties; Mrs. Summersgill said it is not done because when you go to a tax sale, they are not saying lot 22, sq. 41 located at 222 Forsythe or whatever, that's not how they do it at a tax adjudication sale, they sell it like this and how they sell it is how it comes back to them; they would have to do that work and then they would have to be scared that they may not have the correct address and this is done at the courthouse on the public record and this is why it is done the way they have it.

(d) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, a second by Mr. Echols and approved; Voting YES: Ezernack, Wilson, Woods, Echols; (Mr. Clark was absent for the vote, as he left the meeting earlier) to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 11,823, authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to Tried Stone Baptist Church, all rights, title and interest that the City may have acquired to Lot 5, Block 5, Booker T. Washington Addition, Ouachita Parish, District 3, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated July 31, 2003, and further with respect thereto. (Legal)

Chairwoman Ezernack opened the public hearing and seeing no one come forward, the hearing was declared closed.

(e) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, a second by Mr. Echols and approved; Voting YES: Ezernack, Wilson, Woods, Echols; (Mr. Clark was absent for the vote, as he left the meeting earlier) to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 11,824, authorizing the City of Monroe to acquire full ownership interest of the property described as Lot 21, Sq. 32-A Union Development Co. resub Ouachita Cotton Mills 2nd Addition, 1103 S 3rd St, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated July 6, 2012, and further with respect thereto. (Legal)

Chairwoman Ezernack opened the public hearing and seeing no one come forward, the hearing was declared closed.

(f) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, a second by Ms. Woods and approved; Voting YES: Ezernack, Wilson, Woods, Echols; (Mr. Clark was absent for the vote, as he left the meeting earlier) to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 11,825, authorizing the City of Monroe to acquire full ownership interest of the property described as Lot 12, Union Development Co. resub Ouachita Cotton Mills 2nd Addition, 1205 S 3rd St, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated July 1, 2013, and further with respect thereto. (Legal)

Chairwoman Ezernack opened the public hearing and seeing no one come forward, the hearing was declared closed.

(g) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, a second by Mr. Wilson and approved; Voting YES: Ezernack, Wilson, Woods, Echols; (Mr. Clark was absent for the vote, as he left the meeting earlier) to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 11,826, authorizing the City of Monroe to acquire full ownership interest of the property described as Lot 6, Union Development Co. resub, Sq. 49 Ouachita Cotton Mills 2nd Addition, 1300 S 4th St, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated July 1, 2013, and further with respect thereto. (Legal)

Chairwoman Ezernack opened the public hearing and seeing no one come forward, the hearing was declared closed.

(h) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, a second by Ms. Woods and approved; Voting YES: Ezernack, Wilson, Woods, Echols; (Mr. Clark was absent for the vote, as he left the meeting earlier) to Finally adopt Emergency Ordinance No. 11,827, declaring the condition of the influent pump at the WPCC an emergency and further providing with respect thereto. (Public Works)

Chairwoman Ezernack opened the public hearing and seeing no one come forward, the hearing was declared closed.

Citizens Participation

1. Ms. Kenya Roberson, citizen, announced an event, the 1st African American Business Gala and Expo to be held on February 3, 2018, consisting of any and all African American Businesses locally in the Arklamiss and the best in the Arklamiss would be crowned in 50 categories; the expo is from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the Monroe Civic Center, BD Robinson Hall and the Gala is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. until, it is a catered event and the tickets are \$30 for the Gala and the expo ticket prices are \$5 for adults and \$3 for children.

2. Ms. Marie Brown, citizen, thanked Mr. Wilson for allowing her organization the use of his lot for the Martin Luther King Birthday, and to Preferred Care Community Health Clinic for sponsoring it; she commented her work on the vote for SEDD and in attending a meeting recently and during citizen participation time, she asked a question and felt attacked asking her questions; the board is out of order, there are people on the board that has been on it for 16 years, this is out of order; there are people that don't live in the District, out of order; they are giving one of the Board members money for their youth group, out of order; she will continue going to the meetings, so they can continue acting crazy and think they are going to talk to her crazy so that she won't show up; she said Charles Theus is out of order, the Attorney General said he can't serve in that capacity, it's on the internet and Davis, said he couldn't be a consultant in that capacity because he was on some executive board, he is out of order; she asked the Council people to look to who they are putting on the boards and they need to put people on the boards that know what they are doing and they have a television there that is bigger than the building and who authorized it, another television in the other room; they are out of order; there is no secretary, Charles is the secretary and the executive director; she said she would be at the next meeting and the citizens voted for the SEDD to become a tax base and will not sit by and allow them to do whatever they want to do and think no one will question them, the board is out of order; people need to be placed on the board who know what they are doing; it is a three year board, not sixteen; she said she is not a suicidal person, and have already written a note in case something happens to her.

Monroe City Council Legal and Regular Session
January 22, 2018
6:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers-City Hall
MINUTES

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m., upon a motion of Mr. Echols and seconded by Mr. Wilson.

Mrs. Gretchen Ezernack
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.**