

City Hall, Monroe, Louisiana
January 22, 2024
6:00 p.m.

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

The Honorable Chairman Ezernack, called the meeting to order. She then asked the clerk to call roll.

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

There was absent: None.

Chairman Ezernack announced that a quorum was present, and that the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance would be led by Mrs. Ezernack or her designee.

The Invocation was led by Mr. Curt Kelly, Director of Purchasing.

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Harvey had no announcements.

Ms. Woods said that it was good to be back and thanked everyone for all the prayers, phone calls, and texts she and her family were going through. She mentioned while she was watching television this morning, they mentioned Mr. John Terry that works at Walmart as a door greeter, and she wanted to say publicly that he is an amazing man. She said that whether it was rain, sunshine, sleet, or snow that he was going to be there and do his job and a video of him saying that had gone viral and she wanted to say congratulations to Mr. John and all that he does. She also said to her constituents in District 3, she wanted to thank them for their vote of confidence in her leadership abilities that she brings to this Council, by allowing her to come back unopposed and for that she is eternally grateful. She said they have her word; she will keep her promise and do whatever she needs to do to make District 3 the best community it can be.

Mr. Marshall thanked everyone for coming out and watching via social media. He announced that Saturday, January 27th at 5pm, the Krewe de Riviere Mardi Gras Parade will be rolling downtown. He said that there will be an all-day festivity at the River Market. The children and pet parades will be around 2pm, there will be tons of games and vendors there at the River Market so if you are not busy, he encourages everyone to come out and enjoy. He mentioned they will have the World Fame Grambling State University Band and other local and surrounding area bands. He said the Black Creative Circle is starting their kid's club on February 12th at 5pm at The Sugar Gallery on 131 Art Alley. This was a program they started last year, and they had 20 kids that attended where they did some introductory arts and crafts and it was completely successful, so they decided to do it again this year. He also mentions that at Emily P. Robinson Recreation Center they are offering pottery, sewing, and computer classes, please be on the lookout for some dates and times concerning those classes. Mr. Floyd is excited and ready to teach the kids a few things about pottery, especially with the new room they have set up for the classes. He said that the dates and times will be posted on social media.

Mrs. Dawson thanked everyone for attending and watching. She thanked Ouachita Green and the City of Monroe; this past Friday we celebrated Arbor Day. Arbor Day means you plant trees. On Friday they planted a couple of sweet bay magnolia trees at the Benoit Recreation Center at the Sister Margaret Sanders-Jackson Playground, which was something big and they are getting ready to work on getting some trees planted at Emily P. Robinson Recreation Center as well. She announced to mark your calendars for this event, she has decided to publicize it early, the Alzheimer's Association Walk will be on Saturday, September 28th, 2024. She already has a team assembled and if you are interested in joining the team or giving a donation, it will be posted on Councilwoman Kema Dawson and the Monroe City Council's page on Facebook or go to the Alzheimer's Association page and find Councilwoman Kema Dawson's name and join her team. Last year's walk was a success and there was an awesome time had, so this year she would like to make it better than it was last year. She also announced that on Sunday, February 4th at 5pm, Donterrio Anderson presenting a Musical titled Celebrating Who We Are for Black History

Month, at The Glory Church on Highway 15, the attire for this event is formal, so if you are not doing anything please come out and celebrate Who We Are.

Chief Jimmie Bryant, Chief Operating Officer, sitting in for Mayor Friday Ellis stated the Mayor wanted to express his thanks to all the citizens for being patient during the inclement weather the City had last week, and he wanted to thank all the employees for all their hard work. He said there were a lot of busted pipes that resulted in low water pressure and other issues that they had to deal with, and he wanted to acknowledge their hard work and the citizens patience.

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to remind everyone of her theme for this year 2024, Kindness, Caring, and Peace and that we need to remember that it starts with us and to please spread that word to others. She believes that if we took on any of those attributes, we all would be a lot better. She announced that Mr. John Ross that used to be with Community Affairs, passed away a couple of weeks ago. She said that he was a fine man that was here when she first came on the Council and he was eager to help her with any problem that she had, he will be deeply missed and to keep his family in prayer. She also mentioned that Mr. Janway's son Trey also passed away as well, so please keep him and his wife in prayer. She also wanted to thank the Water Distribution and those essential workers that were out in the field during last week's freeze, sleet, ice, and snow that kept us at home several days and what they did for us by keeping the water pressure what it was, because we could have gone to a boil order and it could have been worse, so again she thanks them for their many hours spent working to keep us all safe.

Upon a motion of Mrs. Dawson and seconded by Mr. Harvey, the minutes of the Legal and Regular session of January 9, 2024, were approved. (Ms. Woods abstained. She was not present at the last City Council meeting.) (There were no public comments).

Proposed Condemnations:

The following condemnations were removed:

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved the removal of items 1 – 4 from the agenda. (There were no public comments.)

- (1) 1012 Louise Anne Avenue (D4) (Owners – Finley Group, LLC)
- (2) 505 Moore Avenue (D4) (Owners – Sunshine Properties)
- (3) 4112 Ponder Street (D3) (Owners – 1st Lady Properties, LLC)
- (4) 1408 South 9th Street (D4) (Owner – Shakeitha Williams)

Ms. Woods asked why we are removing these items from the agenda.

Mr. Brandon Creekbaum, City Attorney, said they were notified back in December for the Council meeting on January 23rd and after those notices were sent, the Council meeting was moved to today January 22nd. He stated those notices were invalid once the date was changed.

ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF BIDS:

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8655 accepting the base bid of and awarding the contract to Dixie Overland Construction, LLC, for the replacement of Bayou Bartholomew Pump No. 2 Project and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

RESOLUTIONS AND MINUTE ENTRIES:

Council:

Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8656 granting an exception to the Open Container Ordinance to the Twin City Art Foundation for hosting a Public Reception for an Exhibition Opening at the Masur Museum of Art pursuant to Monroe City Code Sec. 12-231 D. (Open Container Ordinance), and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Department of Administration:

Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8657 providing for Canvassing the Returns and declaring the results of the Special Election

held in the City of Monroe, State of Louisiana, on Saturday, November 18, 2023, and to promulgate the results thereof.

Ms. Woods wanted to have clarification for the sake of those who were watching and in attendance at the meeting about what this is about.

Mr. Bill Boles, 1880 Avenue of America, Monroe, LA, said that it is a stepping process of the election had in the City last November for recreation, drainage, and for safety purposes. He said these were not new taxes, but they were renewal same tax that was out before. He said that this is just the step where the City Council has to reclaim that they accept these results as just a routine step in the election process. He noted once this part is completed, they will take it to Baton Rouge and then it will be filed.

Ms. Woods said that she appreciated him explaining and giving her clarity about it. She said that if she didn't understand completely, the citizens probably didn't either, she thanked him again.

Mr. Marshall wanted to know on the proclamation page, where it says that everything is dually passed it says proposition one on all three of them, is there a typo error.

Mr. Boles said yes, that is a typo, and they will correct it.

Upon motion of Mr. Marshall, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to consider a request from the Purchasing Division for authorization for an authorized city representative to advertise for bids for a 2023 Aerial Manlift Bucket Truck. Funding for this item will come from the Capital Fund. (There were no public comments.)

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to consider (6) Renewal Applications for a New 2024 Class A Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (There were no public comments.)

Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to consider five (5) Renewal Applications for a New 2024 Class B Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (There were no public comments.)

ADD-ON: Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to add item (e) to consider request from The City of Monroe Purchasing Division is requesting authorization for an authorized City representative to advertise for bids for the Stubbs Avenue Office Limited Renovation Project. The DBE goal is 12.55%. (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Woods wanted to know what is the urgency to add this item to the agenda.

Mr. Brandon Creekbaum, City Attorney, said that the plans and specs came in earlier last week or just a little before and this item would have been on the council agenda. He said at the threshold the City determined it needed to be a bid and requested it be added on therefore the City could at least get the advertising part of it started. He said there is still a public bid law in place that will come before the City Council, but this is just to get the process started.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if the specs and bids came in after the agenda was printed.

Mr. Creekbaum stated he thinks it was after the deadline because of the storm.

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to consider request for authorization for an authorized City representative to advertise for bids for the Stubbs Avenue Office Limited Renovation Project. The DBE goal is 12.55%. (There were no public comments.)

Mayor's Office:

Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8658 approving the re-appointment of Chief Terry Williams to the Ambulance Service Advisory Board. (There were no public comments.)

Police Department:

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8659 authorizing a designated city representative to accept and execute an agreement with the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement for \$17,816.00 in funding for the Dare Program and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned at 6:20 pm., upon motion of Mr. Harvey and it was seconded by Ms. Woods.

Mrs. Gretchen Ezernack
Chairman

Ms. Carolus S. Riley
Council Clerk

Mrs. Rachel N. Washington
Council Research Coordinator