

City Hall, Monroe, Louisiana
April 26, 2022
6:00p.m.

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, the Council Chamber, City Hall Building, Monroe, Louisiana.

The Honorable Carday Marshall, Sr., Chairman, called the meeting to order. He then asked the clerk to call roll.

There were present: Council members Ms. Woods, Mr. Marshall, and Mrs. Dawson

There was absent: Mr. Harvey & Mrs. Ezernack

Chairman Marshall announced that a quorum was present, and that the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance would be led by Councilwoman Mrs. Ezernack who is absent but sent her designee.

The Invocation was led by Pastor Montgomery of New Faith Missionary Baptist Church.

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUCEMENTS:

Ms. Woods wanted to thank everyone for coming out to Council meeting on tonight. Ms. Woods announced District (3) will be rolling out "No Dark Spaces" to identify light poles that are out in the City. She noted tying a yellow ribbon around the light poles will indicate the light needs servicing and ribbons will be provided at the community centers. She also noted if anyone would like to donate as well, they can. She said District (3) is asking all Carroll High School alumni attend the meeting at Marbles Recreation Center Thursday May 12, 2022, at 6:00 to talk about possible improvements of Carroll High School. She noted her constituents have been requesting information on summer jobs in the community. She further noted her not having knowledge of this issue is not good representation for her constituents and if anyone has any information please share.

Mrs. Dawson thanked everyone for being in attendance on tonight. Mrs. Dawson wanted to thank the panel that came to discuss the crime and violence in the City. She noted the panel discussion is posted on her Facebook live and she may be able to post on the City Council page for the public to view the information from the panel. She further noted Thursday April 27, 2022, at 12:30 pm at the Monroe Civic Center they will gather for prayer for Harry Brown, former OPSO duty, he will be having a kidney transplant.

Mr. Jimmie Bryant, Chief Operating Officer, setting in for Mayor Ellis stated he had no comments from the Mayor tonight.

Mr. Marshall thanked everyone for coming out again. Mr. Marshall announced Omega Psi Phi will be having a mother-son dance on May 7, 2022, at 7:00 pm at the ULM Sub Ball Room. He also announced the Stop the Violence bike ride by Rated E LLC on May 21, 2022, will begin at the corner of Jackson Street and Texas Avenue. He noted there have been a few meetings to address the violence in the community and he wanted to thank everyone for coming out to the meeting on last Thursday. He further noted looking to engage more with the community to discuss their concerns. He mentions Saturday April 30, 2022 the Krewe of Rivere will be having the Claws for Cause at the Holsum Building from 10 am until 2 pm with crawfish, facing painting, and live band.

Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mrs. Dawson the minutes of the Legal and Regular Session of April 12, 2022 were unanimously approved. (There were no public comments.)

There following condemnations was considered:

1. 3211 Dick Taylor Street (D4) (Owner-Willie Gooden) Notice to show cause was served. Photographic evidence was presented. There was no one present. Upon motion of Chairman Marshall, seconded by Mrs. Dawson, and unanimously approved the building was condemned,

and the property owner was given 30 days in which to bring the structure into compliance with the Code or demolish the Structure and clean the lot. (There were no public comments.)

Mr. Tommy James, Code Enforcement Officer, stated this is an open dilapidated structure, and it has been that way since October 2021, and that his office made contact with the property owner then but had no further contact with the property owner.

2. 211 Grammont Street (D3) (Owners Robert Burgess, Taylor Bates, Jr. Est c/o John Bradley, Taylor Bates, Jr. Est & Robert Burgess. Notice to show cause was served. Photographic evidence was presented. There was no one present. Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved the building was condemned, and the property owner was given 30 days in which to bring the structure into compliance with the Code or demolish the Structure and clean the lot. (There were no public comments.)

Mr. Tommy James said this is an open dilapidated structure, and it has been that way since September 2021, and there was no contact with the property owner.

Ms. Woods noted she passes by the structure every day and she was willing to give 10 days' if possible because the structure is truly an eyesore.

3. 420 Marx Street (D5) (Owners- Kendra Coneal Scott Fegan, Kemper Cameron Scott, Lakenya Natasha Scott Whitaker, Kendra Coneal Scott Fegans, Kemper Cameron Scott, Lakenya Scott Whitaker et al c/o Elaine Scott (non-curator) Notice to show cause was served. Photographic evidence was presented. There was no one present. Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved the building was condemned, and the property owner was given 30 days in which to bring the structure into compliance with the Code or demolish the Structure and clean the lot. (There were no public comments.)

Mr. Tommy James, Code Enforcement Officer, stated this is an open dilapidated structure, and it has been that way since August 2021 and there was no contact with the property owner.

RESOLUTIONS AND MINUTE ENTRIES:

Council:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8248 granting an exception to the Open Container Ordinance to the Northeast Louisiana Arts Council (The Blend) pursuant to Monroe City Code Sec. 12-231 D. (Open Container Ordinance), and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8249 authorizing the City of Monroe to enter into Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Northeast Louisiana Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation and further providing with respect thereto. (Dawson/Woods) (There were no public comments.)

(c) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8250 authorizing the City of Monroe to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with Goodwill Industries of North Louisiana Inc. and further providing with respect thereto. (Harvey)

Ms. Kenya Roberson, Regional Black Chamber of Commerce, wanted to know why some of the Council Resolution entries have Council member's names in parenthesis in reference to items (b) and (c) on the agenda.

Mr. Brandon Creekbaum, Assistant City Attorney, noted to his knowledge when a Councilmember specifically request a Resolution be brought to the council the council member's name is included in parenthesis and the other matters are general Resolutions that are brought before council as an ordinary course of business.

Ms. Woods wanted to clarify which item on the agenda the Council was voting on.

NOTE: City Council was interrupted at 6:24 PM during the vote of item (c) and with there being no objections Chairman Marshall let Ms. Donna Thaxton speak on the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement that is item (b) on the agenda.

Ms. Donna Thaxton, Executive Director of Northeast Louisiana Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation, apologized to Council but wanted to speak about the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Northeast Louisiana Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation that is item (b) on the agenda. Ms. Thaxton wanted to thank Council members Ms. Woods and Mrs. Dawson for helping the foundation stay open. Ms. Thaxton noted the Northeast Louisiana Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation have been serving the community for 40 plus years and a proven track record for a black nonprofit organization to be open.

Mr. Marshall noted he didn't get the memo until later that week, but he will be supporting the Northeast Louisiana Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation with additional funds.

Ms. Woods wanted to thank Ms. Thaxton for the work she is doing in the community, and she also serve twelve parishes of individuals who suffer from Sickle Cell Anemia. She noted speaking with the City to see what other resources are available to keep this organization open.

Mr. Marshall wanted to thank Ms. Thaxton for her work in the community as well. He noted the conversation he had with Mr. Jimmie Bryant looking to see how the City can further assist the foundation.

Mr. Marshall asked Ms. Carolus Riley, Council Clerk, to continue the vote for item (c).

(d) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8251 granting an exception to the Open Container Ordinance to the Chennault Golf Course (Mayor's Cup- Charity Golf Tournament) pursuant to Monroe City Code Sec. 12-231 D (Open Container Ordinance), and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

ADD ON: Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to add to the agenda a Resolution granting an exception to the Open Container Ordinance to El Paso Mexican Grill (Cinco De Mayo) pursuant to Monroe City Code Sec. 12-231 D. (Open Container Ordinance), and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(e) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8252 granting an exception to the Open Container Ordinance to El Paso Mexican Grill (Cinco De Mayo) pursuant to Monroe City Code Sec. 12-231 D. (Open Container Ordinance), and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Mayor's Office:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8253 authorizing a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the City of Monroe and Ouachita Green and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8254 authorizing the City of Monroe to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Northeast Louisiana Children's Coalition and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Police Department:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8255 authorizing the City of Monroe to advertise for bids for ten Chevrolet Tahoes equipped with police equipment for Monroe Police Department. The source of funds will be Police Capital Funds and further providing with respect thereto.

Ms. Woods said it appears the police department are getting new vehicles regularly and she

wanted to know who this is for.

Mr. Curt Kelly, Purchasing Director, noted the last order of ten vehicles in February 2022 were purchased with capital funding and they just want to be ahead on the purchasing of the vehicles. Mr. Kelly noted that they have an older fleet that needs to be replaced and they have received federal funds for the vehicles while they are available.

Ms. Woods wanted to know would the old Crown Vic be replaced with the new Tahoes.

Mr. Curt Kelly said yes it will.

Ms. Woods wanted to know after the 10 Tahoes are purchased will more be purchased as well.

Mr. Curt Kelly said yes when the vehicles become available in the future.

Ms. Woods wanted to know how many Crown Vic vehicles are in the fleet as of now.

Mr. Thomas Staten, Monroe Police Department, said he was unsure of the exact number, but they are old vehicles, some have over 100,000 miles and maintenance is expensive. He noted the police department purchase the vehicles in a certain time frame for the vehicles to arrive on time.

Ms. Woods stated once the police department purchase these vehicles, they must be suited to identify being a police vehicle.

Mr. Staten noted that is correct, but the new vehicles will be outfitted prior to purchase. He further noted they must stay ahead of purchasing to equip new officers with vehicles; therefore, officers won't be sharing cars which can result into another problem.

Ms. Woods wanted to know where the capital funds for the Police Department come from.

Ms. Stacy Rowell, Director of Administration, stated the funds are ad valorem property tax. She said the sooner they get the vehicles the more they will save on fuel and maintenance.

Ms. Woods noted in her opinion this is good information for the public to understand where funds are coming from.

Mrs. Kenya Roberson wanted to know has the City ever considered getting the Marshall's Office new vehicles.

Ms. Rowell noted the Marshal's Office typically have their own financing mechanisms and they finance their own operations for things such as vehicles.

Mrs. Roberson wanted to understand if the Marshal's Office wanted new vehicles would they have to finance their own.

Ms. Rowell noted the City donates to the Marshal's Office and they have their own pots of money if they chose to purchase new vehicles they can. She further noted the City provides a certain level of support to the Court and Marshall's office.

Mr. Brandon Creekbaum noted state law governs how the Marshal's Office is funded and generally governs what their municipalities obligations are. He noted he believes a portion of the criminal court fees go back to Marshal's operations to be used for purchase of equipment but further noted he is not an expert in Marshal's law.

Ms. Woods said it would be nice for the City to assist more with the Marshal's Office operations when they do task for the City, but this is not a conversation to debate on this evening.

Mrs. Dawson wanted to know if the Marshal's Office can bring issues to the Council the same way the police department does.

Mr. Creekbaum said the Marshal's Office are an independent entity and they can purchase equipment without coming through the Council.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if the Marshal's Office have the funding.

Mr. Creekbaum and Mrs. Rowell stated the City doesn't maintain the Marshall's office finance information.

Mrs. Rowell said their reports are published on the legislative auditor's website as well.

Mr. Marshall wanted to know if the Marshal's Office is eligible for any state or federal funding?

Mr. Creekbaum stated he doesn't look into the law that is applicable to them.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if the City has spare money they can donate.

Mrs. Rowell stated there isn't any spare money to donate.

Ms. Woods expressed again this is not a conversation to debate on this evening and we can talk about it later.

Engineering Services:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved Resolution No.8256 authorizing an authorized city representative to advertise for bids on Young's Bayou Retention Area Project. The estimated cost of this project is \$ 1,548,781.30 and funding sources will include the Department of Transportation and Development and City of Monroe. (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Woods wanted to know what was going on with this one and if there was a DBE goal.

Mr. Arthur Holland, Project Manager, said yes, the DBE goal is 11.77 %. He said the City will be digging a retention pond in the area.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if the project was in District (3) if so, she is excited for the project.

Mr. Holland said yes, they are trying to get it out for bids during the dry season hopefully in July and get permission to advertise it.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance approving a Collective Bargaining Agreement between the City of Monroe and the Monroe Fire Fighters Association, International Association of Fire Fighters, Local Union No. 629, AFL-CIO and further providing with respect thereto. (Fire Dept.) +

Ms. Woods wanted to thank the Fire Department for everything they do. She said the Fire Department are an amazing group of men and women that service the community well.

(b) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance authorizing the lease - purchase of (125) Verkade Cloud-Based Surveillance Cameras and related (10) year licensing and equipment, for the Department of Community Affairs / Monroe Civic Center off state contract and further providing with respect thereto. (Comm. Affairs) (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Woods wanted to know more about the surveillance cameras being put in the Monroe Civic Center.

Mr. Doug Seegars, Community Affairs Director, said they are replacing the existing cameras that have been up for years.

Ms. Woods wanted to know the cost.

Mr. Chris Kidd, Technical Director, said just under 290,000 dollars covers the cost of the entire complex.

Mr. Seegars said it's a 10-year program with no additional cost.

Mr. Kidd said if a camera goes out the company sends another at no cost to the City.

Ms. Woods wanted to know will the City be installing the cameras.

Mr. Seegars and Mr. Kidd replied yes.

Ms. Woods wanted to clarify that its 125 cameras under \$200,000.00.

Mr. Seegars said the cost is right under \$300,000.00.

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

The Chairman opened the Public Hearing:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Woods and unanimously approved Ordinance No.12,114 extending and enlarging the boundaries of the City of Monroe, Louisiana, providing for the recordation of the entire boundary as amended: establishing the effective date thereof, and providing further with respect thereto. **APPLICANT: Gipson J. Properties, LLC (P&Z)**

Ms. Iva Tanguis, 127 Loop Road, wanted to know the area this will cover.

Mrs. Dawson stated it covers 200-206 Martinez Street and 601-605 Chatham Drive.

Ms. Tanguis wanted to know if the distance was a block or mile?

Mr. Creekbaum stated the area is lot size and only covering a corner.

Seeing no one else come forward the Hearing was declared closed.

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

(b) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved an Ordinance No. 12,115 adopting and amending the Zoning Map for the City of Monroe, Louisiana to zone a ±0.75-acre tract of land, from being located in Ouachita Parish to the R-4 (High Density Multi-Family Residence) District, in order for the applicant to construct duplexes. **200-206 Martinez Street and 601-605 Chatham Drive APPLICANT: Gipson J. Properties, LLC (P&Z)** (There were no public comments.)

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

(c) Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved an Ordinance No. 12,116 authorizing a Lease Agreement between the City of Monroe and DRP Masonry LLC, for the lease of a portion of a city owned parking lot and further providing with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments.)

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

(d) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved an Ordinance No.12,117 authorizing the City of Monroe to repeal and replace the Monroe Regional Airport's Minimum Standards for Commercial Aeronautical Activities and further providing with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments.)

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

(e) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved an Ordinance No. 12,118 amending Chapter 7 of the Monroe City Code Entitled "Aviation" and further providing with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments.)

(f) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved an Ordinance No. 12,119 extending a prior Emergency Declaration, declaring as an Emergency the condition of the Texas to Standifer Sewer Trunk Line between Lee Avenue/Nichols Street and Dick Taylor Street/Mouton Street necessitating demolition, bypass and repair or replacement and other repairs, and authorizing additional work and further providing with respect thereto. (Public Wks.)

Mr. Marshall wanted to know if there was an estimated time frame for the project to be completed.

Mr. Kevin Crosby, Interim Engineer, said the contractor has located the pipe but they are waiting on the decision of the council to move forward with the project.

Ms. Woods wanted to know with the additional distance where the pipe needs repairs will the project take longer.

Mr. Crosby said yes, it allows the sewer pipe to be repaired and moved out of the roads. He noted the City have an Urban Systems Project that is at DOTD for final review and wanted to get repairs done thus they wouldn't have to go back in at a later date.

Ms. Woods wanted to know how the citizen's homes will be impacted that sits on top of the pipe.

Mr. Crosby noted when the sewer line gets realigned up the road it will cross the City's property at the next intersection and the existing pipe will be filled with concrete leaving no risk to the citizen's property.

Ms. Woods asked would the homes of the people living on top of the pipe have any kind of sewer problems.

Mr. Crosby explained it will connect out to the sewer that is in the road and no residential connection are on this main sewer line.

Mr. Marshall wanted to know will it affect the Lida-Benton Park.

Mr. Crosby said no sir.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

Ms. Marie Brown, 1002 South 5th Street, wanted to announce the Juneteenth weekend celebrations coming up. She said on June 17, 2022, there will be a Father's Day celebration at Greater Flower Mount Church at 6:00 PM. She noted they will also be having a parade on Juneteenth weekend beginning at Wossman High School. Ms. Brown stated in her opinion the importance of Juneteenth is knowing our history and being proud of where we came from.

Ms. Kenya Roberson wanted to echo everything Ms. Brown said and applaud everything she has done for Juneteenth celebrations over the years. Ms. Roberson noted with this being the first year Juneteenth is a federal holiday the Regional Black Chamber of Commerce will have an all-white event Friday at the W Events Center at 8PM. She further noted there will be a parade Saturday June 18, 2022 at 9am. Ms. Roberson also noted all nonprofits organizations can participate at the River Market for free. She explained members of the Regional Black Chamber of Commerce can be vendors at the River Market at no cost. She said non-members fee vary such as nonfood fees are \$50, table of food fees are \$60 and food truck fees are \$100. On Sunday the Regional Black Chamber of Commerce will end the Juneteenth weekend with a musical at Greater New Antioch at 3PM with Rev. John L. Russell and other various churches combined.

Ms. Iva Tanguis, 427 Loop Road, wanted to discuss an article she read in The Ouachita Citizen about a robbery that recently took place on Hwy 165 and wanted to better understand why the City mostly handles misdemeanors but not felonies.

Mr. Brandon Creekbaum stated the City Court have limited jurisdiction where they can only handle violations of municipal ordinances.

Ms. Tanguis questioned if the City has any control over violence.

Mr. Creekbaum was explaining how district court prosecutes violent felonies but was interrupted by Ms. Tanguis with additional questions.

Ms. Tanguis asked if the City has control over who is in the District Court system.

Mr. Creekbaum said district court judges are elected officials in the state of Louisiana.

Ms. Tanguis said she had some concerns because some people don't learn quickly enough with probation in her opinion and what is the City doing to help the police control the crime activity on South Grand.

Mr. Marshall noted he lives on St. John therefore he is in the middle of the activity, and he knows it's a lot going on in that area.

Ms. Tanguis wanted to know what is going on in the South Grand area.

Mr. Marshall noted there is a lot of work to be done and the City is working to get things done.

Ms. Tanguis noted if there were any more conversations about this issue within the Council she would like to participate.

Mr. Marshall noted he will get Ms. Tanguis information when the meeting is adjourned.

Mr. Stanley Smalls, Transit Union representative, said he would like to make a personal donation to the Northeast Louisiana Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation. Mr. Smalls came forward to read a letter on behalf of IVP Garland who couldn't come to Council meeting on tonight. He noted the letter states the City continues to disregard Article 21 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) in his opinion. He said the transit system is requesting the City Council to intercede in the matter that continues to plague and disrupt the transit priority to provide reasonable transit in the City of Monroe. He stated the Union continues to seek a resolution to address this issue with the Mayor and his attorney without success. The Union employees believes Marc Keenan, Transit Director, purposely creates job openings for 3rd party temp employees at Monroe transit which disregards Article 21. He noted the board approved the CBA negotiated by the parties, and the Union transit is requesting the board insist Mr. Marc Keenan and the City of Monroe honor the bargaining agreement contract. He further noted part-time employees are not able to get full-time positions and the employee salaries are below the CBA standards.

Mr. Marshall wanted to know Mr. Garland's first name for clarification.

Mr. Smalls said it's Anthony and he will be sending Mr. Garland's proposal to the City Council.

Ms. Woods wanted to know what the CBA post says the transit salary should be.

Mr. Smalls stated the post says per the CBA an operator should be making \$14.90 but after a year it goes up to \$17.12. He stated temp employees don't receive benefits and they are working below the CBA salary.

Mr. Marshall stated with there being nothing else for citizen participation at this time, he entertains a motion to adjourn.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m., upon motion of Ms. Woods and it was seconded by Mrs. Dawson.

Carday Marshall, Sr.
Chairman

Carolus S. Riley
Council

Ileana Murray
Staff Secretary

For extended details on the council meeting please call the Council Clerk Monday-Friday at 318-329-2252 to schedule an appointment to listen to the minute recording.