

City Hall, Monroe, Louisiana  
July 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 the Council's regular meeting place, the Council Chamber, City Hall Building, Monroe, Louisiana.

The Honorable Mrs. Kema Dawson, Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:08pm after a late start going into this second meeting. She then asked the clerk to call roll.

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

There was absent: None

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

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

### **COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Mr. Harvey had no announcements at this time.

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to thank Reverend Montgomery for his moving invocation, and she thinks we all could take a lot away from his words.

Ms. Woods wanted to give her condolences to Suletta McClinton and her family she recently lost her sister. She said the services will be Saturday at 11 o'clock at the Mount Zion Baptist Church. She wanted to give her condolences to one of the matriarchs in District 3, Ms. Willie Mae McCoy, the mother of all the McCoy clan including Reverend Harold McCoy and Alicia Calvin. She said her heart is happy for a number of reasons, one in particular for the Community Garden with Darian Belton. On another note, Ms. Woods said she is happy glad about the Renwick bridge it has been a long time coming and it is beautiful, in her opinion. She said the yellow ribbons are being placed around the light poles in dark places in Monroe. She thanked Mr. Darian Belton for Esther Gallow Community Garden and their efforts.

Mr. Darian Belton, TayNyley Plantery, stated he is on a mission to inspire more people to grow their own quality produce. He said he sponsors the JS Clark School Garden, Neville Jr. High, a couple of local churches, and the newest project he is a part of the Esther Gallo Community Garden. He noted the sponsorships provide beds directly to the seniors of Booker T. community and help feed them. He said beds have been allocated to local elementary schools such as Roy Neal Shelling Elementary and beds are going to the residents in the Booker T. community. He said they donate produce to the food kitchens and homeless shelters. He said the Community Gardens has a lot going on and he believes if everyone comes together and contribute, we can feed everyone. He further noted the next volunteer day is August 10, 2022, at 6pm. He said there will be free food, free drinks, and they will be getting a couple of beds ready for Roy Neal Shelling Elementary. He said if there are any questions feel free to reach out and they want to get as many people as possible to start growing their own produce.

Ms. Woods noted Mr. Belton will be around if there are any questions and 30 boxes have already been adopted, but they are checking to see what the need looks like. She wanted to thank ULM, Delta Community College, Ochsner Monroe, and of course the City of Monroe because it was conservative efforts between all of these entities. She also wanted to thank Home Depot for donating the tools needed for the gardens.

Mr. Marshall wanted to welcome everyone back to the second council meeting on tonight. He wanted to thank the City of Monroe for donating and sponsoring the Massey Miracle Run track meet that was at ULM. He said it was an amazing weekend and everything went great. They are looking to do the regional meet here next year.

Mayor Friday Ellis acknowledged Mr. Belton by stating whenever people do good work and good deeds, don't think it goes unnoticed. He said it is very interesting that a councilwoman is just as

proud of Mr. Belton as we are. He said he received a text from the first lady and Mr. Belton's mother bragging on him. Mayor Ellis presented Mr. Darian Belton with a letter of accommodation for his outstanding service provided to the citizens of Monroe, Louisiana.

Mrs. Dawson said she doesn't have any special announcements or communications at this time.

There following condemnations were considered:

1. 809 South 27<sup>th</sup> Street (D3) (Owners – Gator Realty (Non-curator), Marcus Stevens) 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 comment.)

Mr. Tommy James, Code Enforcement Officer, stated this is an open dilapidated structure and the last contact with the property owner was a year ago. He stated the owner said she would be moving out. They are asking that the property be condemned, and owner given 30 days.

Ms. Woods said she has seen the property and they are working to eliminate some of the blight in the community. She motions to condemn the property giving the owner 30 days to either tear it down, remove all noxious growth, and debris from this facility.

2. 431 North 26<sup>th</sup> Street (D2) (Owner- Florence Bowman) Notice to show cause was served. Photographic evidence was presented. There was no one present. Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, 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, Code Enforcement Officer, stated this is an open dilapidated structure, and it has been that way since December 2017. They are asking for 30days to bring structure up to Code.

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to know if anyone was present to represent the owner interest. She noted seeing no one come forward she move to condemn the property giving the owner 30 days to demolish the structure.

3. 806 South 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (D4) (Owner – LaSandra Madden) Notice to show cause was served. Photographic evidence was presented. There was no one present. Upon motion of Mr. Marshall, seconded by Mr. Harvey, 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 was presented in court in February. They are asking that the property be condemned, and owner given 30 days.

Mr. Marshall wanted to know if there was contact with the property owner.

Mr. James said there was no contact with the property owner.

4. 4210 Spurgeon Drive (D3) (Owner – Bernice Lagale Reynolds) Notice to show cause was served. Photographic evidence was presented. Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Harvey, 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 the last contact with the owner was March 2022. He stated the property owner said she was moving out and he was present in court in November. They are asking that the property be condemned, and owner given 30 days.

Ms. Woods stated she talked with Ms. Reynolds who is here this evening. She further stated the property owner wishes to demolish the property. Ms. Woods motion to condemn the property and give the owner 30 days to rid it of all growth and debris.

ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF BIDS:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approve a Resolution No. 8314 accepting the bid of Norit Americas, Inc., for Water Treatment Chemical-Powdered Activated Carbon and, further authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into and execute a contract for said items. (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approve a Resolution No. 8315 accepting the bid of Lott Oil Company, for Petroleum Products Supply and, further authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into and execute a contract for said items. (There were no public comments.)

ADD-ON: Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to add to the agenda an item (c) accepting the base bid of Diamond B. Construction L.L.C in the amount of \$3,924,819.60 for state project No. H.014347 South Grand Street: Orange St. – Standifer Ave Project, and further authorizing an authorized city representative to enter into and execute a contract for said work. (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Woods stated for a project of this magnitude, to just to add it on the agenda, she wanted someone to talk about what is going on here and why.

Mr. Kevin Crosby, Engineer Consultant, said this is an urban systems project that Metropolitan Planning Organization just approved on yesterday. He stated they have been waiting to have a council meeting to approve this and its two projects, but they are at the end of the time awarding the project to the contractor. He said DOTD has called repeatedly wanting to know if the city council is in an agreement to award this project.

Ms. Woods wanted to clarify that the project was approved on yesterday.

Mr. Crosby stated the Metropolitan Planning Organization approved it, but it went over budget as well as outside the City's funding allocated to the MPO.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if the project is faced with time constraints if it doesn't get approved tonight. She wanted to know what the ramifications are if the council doesn't add it on tonight but put it on the agenda for the next meeting.

Mr. Marshall stated it was already out for bid and the bids came back 45% higher.

Mr. Crosby noted one was 45% and one 58%.

Mr. Marshall said in the OCOG meeting on yesterday, Mayor Mitchell allowed one of her projects to be push back for this project to go forward. He stated it has been in the works for a while and they are trying to finalize everything. He further stated the bids were already out and they allowed the funding.

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8316 accepting the base bid of Diamond B. Construction L.L.C in the amount of \$3,924,819.60 for state project No. H.014347 South Grand Street: Orange St. – Standifer Ave Project, and further authorizing an authorized city representative to enter into and execute a contract for said work. (There were no public comments.)

ADD-ON: Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to add to the agenda an item (d) accepting the base bid of Diamond B. Construction, L.L.C., in the amount of \$3,745,338.30, for state project No. H.014348 Lee Ave: Jackson St.- Standifer Ave Project, and further authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into and execute a contract for said work. (There were no public comments.)

(d) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8317 accepting the base bid of Diamond B. Construction, L.L.C., in the amount of \$3,745,338.30, for state project No. H.014348 Lee Ave: Jackson St.- Standifer Ave Project, and

further authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into and execute a contract for said work. (There were no public comments.)

Mr. Marshall wanted to thank the administration for moving these projects forward because South Grand is a main corridor for Ochsner, downtown, and residential homes. He stated there are millions of dollars coming to South Monroe and it's not always what we want to see.

ADD-ON: Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved to add to the agenda an item (e) accepting the base bid of Covington Sales & Service, INC., in the amount of \$291,580.00, for the Airfield Power Sweeper for fod removal project, and further authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into and execute a contract for said work. (There were no public comments.)

(e) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8318 accepting the base bid of Covington Sales & Service, INC., in the amount of \$291,580.00, for the Airfield Power Sweeper for fod removal project, and further authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into and execute a contract for said work. (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Woods wanted to know what the obligation for the City and how is it being funded.

Mr. Curt Kelly, Purchasing Department, said this is hundred percent funded by FAA and the City has no funds in this project.

#### **RESOLUTIONS AND MINUTE ENTRIES:**

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8319 granting an exception to the Open Container Ordinance to the Twin City Art Foundation for a Public Reception for the William Dunlap Exhibition 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 comments.)

#### **Department of Administration**

(a) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to consider an application by Christy Duchette dba Burger Brats LLC- JO-EL'S, 903 N 4th St., Monroe LA 71201 for a New 2022 Class A Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (Distance Report Cleared, Cert. of Occupy Cleared) (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Woods wanted to know if the new owner of this business was present. She wanted to thank the owner for doing business with the City of Monroe.

#### **Department of Planning & Urban Development:**

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8320 authorizing Mayor Friday Ellis to execute an Amended Agreement with PPM Consultants Inc. to provide professional services for the program management and technical assistance for the Monroe Coalition Brownfield Assessment Grant Program and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.) (Ms. Dawson abstain she is on the Brownfield advisory board.)

Ms. Woods stated she just need an explanation.

Ms. Ellen Hill, Director of Planning & Urban Development, said the original agreement was capped a little over \$390,000.00, however, since the project has started, they have discovered more properties to do more assessments. She said initially they had a staff person doing the work, but more money was shifted to the consultants to do more assessments, therefore, they had to come back before council because it increases the amount. She stated this project is Brownfields assessment grant that was approved by the EPA, and they approved this change.

Ms. Woods questioned the amount of the increase.

Ms. Hill said the total grant was \$479,000.00 and she believes the original agreement was \$398,000.00. She noted the amount went up about fifty thousand dollars.

(b) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8321 authorizing the City of Monroe to apply for additional grant funding through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) "Lead Hazard and Control and Healthy Homes" Grant Program and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Woods wanted to know if training will be provided to get people who can perform this task.

Ms. Hill said yes, LEAD has a grant that allows testing in homes, to replace windows, to replace doors, mitigate possible exposure to lead, and most importantly build capacity. She said they will be working with a local contractor to get them certified in Lead Testing, free of charge to them. She noted hopefully expanding into Healthy Homes arena allowing them to do testing on all household hazards. She further noted this grant will be a supplement to what is being done in housing rehab and it comes out every year, but more funding is available.

Ms. Woods said this is good especially when there is free training for contractors to make money.

Ms. Hill said yes, and it has a great workforce development component.

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8322 authorizing Mayor Friday Ellis, to approve and submit the City of Monroe's FY 2022 Annual Action Plan to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) Project No. B-22-MC-22-0005 and the HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) Program Project No. M-22-MC-22-0206 and further providing with respect thereto.

Ms. Kenya Roberson, Executive Director of the Monroe Regional Black Chamber of Commerce, wanted to know what this agreement consists of and the amount.

Ms. Jawaun Downs, Director of Community Development, said they are requesting approval to submit the Annual Action Plan for fiscal year 2022. She said they were awarded nearly \$741,887.00 for Community Development Block Grant funds of which 15% will be allocated to public services. She explained in her presentation their commitment and budgeted CDBG projects such as housing rehabilitation for single family homes, neighborhood revitalization strategy areas, and 20% of CDBG funds are budgeted for administrative activities. She noted the recommended projects for funding such as Team Up Sports, MCAL, Goodwill Industries, Ouachita Council on Aging, AmeriCorps Vista, Building Blocks Blight Software, and The Big Haul. She further noted some of the recommended public facilities projects such as Benoit or Powell playground equipment and fire equipment. She said the Benoit and Powell playground equipment is being discussed because that fund amount will be determined through the bidding process.

Ms. Woods wanted to know how the Planning and Urban Development determine which agencies they want to fund.

Ms. Downs stated there was a pre-proposal conference in May and people had to attend the conference in order to submit an application for funding. She said at the conference they discussed all the regulations, rules, and what was required to submit an application.

Ms. Woods stated to Ms. Downs the department does well is marketing and getting the word out. She wanted to know did the department do their usual marketing method.

Ms. Downs said the department is required through HUD to advertise through the News Star, the Dispatch, and the Free Press.

Ms. Jessica Hollins, Program Director for MCAL, said MCAL is one of the proposed programs to receive funding from this grant opportunity and she is grateful. She said this gives them the opportunity to extend their after-school program to offer academic enrichment. She noted the proposed budget for the program is about \$50,000.00 but being that MCAL is new to Planning and Urban Development, MCAL is only being requested for \$10,000.00 which is wonderful. She

further noted MCAL is excited and about 85% of the athletes come in at low grades, low participation in after school activities, and low attendance in school, therefore, this would be an amazing thing to have for their athletes.

Mrs. Dawson stated she is excited about the projects that were selected especially Benoit Recreation because they are definitely in need of something.

Ms. Downs said the public service for Team Up Sports provides sport uniform and equipment for 60 youths enrolled in their football program. She said Ouachita Council on Aging will seek \$20,000.00 for their senior citizens meals on wheels program and provide 70 seniors with meals. She said Goodwill industries will receive \$10,000.00 for job training and placement. She said they will be working with Public Works for the Big Haul around October.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if the \$10,000.00 is independent of the \$10,000.00 that is on the agenda.

Mr. Brandon Creekbaum, Assistant City Attorney, stated that is correct.

Ms. Woods noted while Planning and Urban Development is trying to make a decision on whether it will be Benoit or Powell, let her know if there needs to be any lobbying.

Mrs. Dawson suggested splitting it down the middle.

Ms. Woods stated she can do that.

Ms. Down noted Planning and Urban Development received funding for the HOME in the amount of \$369,611.00 as well. She said 10 percent of that is for administration and a set aside which is approximately \$60,000.00. She stated the department has budgeted for the first-time homebuyer's program where they offer down payment, closing costs, and buydowns at approximately \$60,000.00. She further stated that the housing rehabilitation is budgeted at over \$200,000.00.

Ms. Dawson wanted to know how people apply for the housing rehabilitation and reconstruction program.

Ms. Downs said people can go to the City's website to put in a request and application which is done twice a year in the fall and spring.

Mayor's Office:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8323 authorizing a city representative to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with Sound Diplomacy for a Music Strategy and Venue Audit for the Jack Howard Theater and Monroe Civic Center and further providing with respect thereto.

Ms. Brown wanted to know what this is and the amount of money that is attached.

Mrs. Kelsea McCrary, Chief Economic & Cultural Development, said there is a two-part proposal with Sound Diplomacy which the first part of the project is a venue audit and strategy for the Jack Howard Theater and the Civic Center complex. She said the second part of the strategy is full city-wide music strategy focusing on the nighttime economy, utilizing creative placemaking principles. She noted the venue audit is \$55,000.00 and the music strategy is \$125,000.00.

Ms. Brown wanted to know if the company was local.

Mrs. McCrary noted it is a Louisiana based company and they have an office in Lafayette.

Ms. Woods wanted Ms. McCrary to talk more about what each service entails in the venue audit and the music strategy.

Mrs. McCrary asked Clay Casey to join her at the mic to help explain the project. She said the venue audit essentially shows a swat analysis of the full Civic Center complex which was built in the sixties. She stated we are all aware it is the centerpiece in our community for events unfortunately the disrepair that it has fallen into is significant. She said this will show the City how

to leverage funding and Chief Jimmie Bryant has been very instrumental in contacting GOSIP, Government Open System Interconnection Profile, to come to Monroe for a meeting with the administration. She further stated from that meeting the administration hopes to be able to determine where those funds could be used and what they can be used for. On another note, she said the music strategy, Sound Diplomacy has conducted this all over the world. She explained the music strategy as a food pyramid, where the nighttime economy is comprised of many layers, bottom most layers would be local musicians and top layer is people who perform at the Civic Center. She noted they will dive into community engagement, creative pace making, survey the cultural landscape of our city and provide economic development strategies to reinforce the nighttime economy for musicians and artists so they can thrive.

Mr. Clay Casey, Civic Center, stated for 25 years he has worked with bands helping with live shows and he is from Monroe, Louisiana. He said helping local artists with a roadmap and strategy can take them from performing at the Jack Howard theater to other places also.

Mayor Ellis noted this is the same group that worked with the state of Texas and Governor Abbott to put together their statewide music strategy. He further noted the City have a one-time opportunity with one-time funding to be able to go after federal dollars strategically and aggressively. He said the City can't go after it with just an idea there must be sound policy, strategy, and sound plans with projects with money allocated behind it. He stated hopefully the strategy will tell the City how to build for the market and how not to over bill for our market.

Mrs. McCrary noted this is part of our economy that has been overlooked for a very long time. She said the lack of structure means we export all of that talent, and we don't understand the economic impact of artist in her opinion. She said when people are in town for an event there are numbers wrapped around that attendance and it is not just the ticket price. She said tourism builds cities for people who don't live here.

Mayor Ellis stated the City has put together a facilities team that's been taking inventory of all the recreation centers. He noted it is to help understand where the City needs to steer that funding and there is a funding stream and revenue source that is attached to funding facilities maintenance. He further noted it is called a Millage for our Parks and Recreations within the two years of that Millage the City can't bond out. He said the focus is the Parks and Recreation Master Plan focusing on three parks and three to four recreation centers. He said when our girls dance on the Civic Center stage, we want them to dance on a nice stage. He said we have to understand we have revenue stream for it, community engagement behind it and the City will need the citizens help to be community champions.

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8324 authorizing a designated city representative to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the City of Monroe, The Academy Fitness and Sports LLC d/b/a Monroe City Academy League (MCAL) and Free Me Association and further providing with respect thereto.

Ms. Brown wanted to know what is in the Endeavor Agreement.

Mr. Brandon Creekbaum, Assistant City Attorney, said the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement is almost identical to last year that provides MCAL with the use of several of the community center fields for practices and potentially games. He said the City will additionally provide funds to MCAL for purchase of uniforms and allow MCAL to continue the football program that they successfully started last year.

Ms. Brown wanted to know if MCAL was being charged for the use of the facilities.

Mr. Creekbaum stated under the agreement that is currently written from his understanding, they are not.

Mr. Harvey noted the City pays a sum of \$10,000.00 for football uniforms and youth football programs. He further noted the main deliverables are the use of facilities, the practice fields, and the uniforms.

Ms. Woods asked about the Saturday games that were held at Carroll High School.

Mr. Creekbaum stated that was an agreement MCAL reached with the Monroe City School board. He said he is unsure if MCAL has continued to reach out or had any discussions with the school board about the cost or use of those fields. He further stated the City Attorney Mrs. Sturdivant has reached out to her contact at the school board to encourage engaging in some of those discussions with MCAL regarding that same issue. He said he thinks in the agreement as it is written, there is some ability to use the field at Benoit for possible games but obviously the City doesn't have the existing football facilities that the Monroe City School system have which is a separate agreement with the school.

Mayor Friday Ellis wanted to encourage each council member to reach out to members of the school board to suggest they meet with MCAL to help.

Mrs. Dawson stated they have already started working on that.

Mayor Ellis noted helping the Monroe City School board to understand that these are the children of the Monroe City Schools as well.

Ms. Brown said it is kind of hard trying to pay money back and it is kind of defeating the purpose.

Mrs. Jessica Hollins, Representative of MCAL, said MCAL is growing and will be estimating about 900 football athletes this year. She said they want to give the City a overview on where MCAL wants to go. She said the City has already donated so much and they do want to have a family learning center in the coming years.

Mr. Hunter Stonewall, Representative of MCAL, said in the past year MCAL has doubled in registration. He said MCAL has over 19 independent teams which are compiled of both local and outside surrounding parishes that will come to Monroe to play. He said statistically speaking, youth sports leagues all over the country are catalysts for not only for entertainment attractions but overall community development. He stated sports has a huge impact on economic stimulation, more jobs, more positive events to spend and make money as well as marketing ideas that come with local businesses. He said in the five years at a glance MCAL goal is to build on the league with a learning center as well as five fields to be able to have a great turn out. He said this not only bring the potential for MCAL to grow but to bring national attention to Monroe. He further stated MCAL fundraising efforts over the next year will happen in two phases first the next eight weeks will be geared towards this football season then MCAL will continue fun raising efforts until June to match the collaboration with the City of Monroe. He noted they have sponsorship packets on hand and any information that the City may need to reach out to MCAL.

Mayor Ellis asked that MCAL email him and the Council members the sponsorship packet that can be sent out to people that want to help the program.

Mr. Tyree Hollins, Representative of MCAL, stated MCAL motto is it takes a village he gets sentimental because all the success stories, it took somebody to believe to help them reach new heights. He said he is a firm believer that at our best we still don't know it all, and at our best there is room to be better. He stated the reality is we have to save our kids and part of saving our kids is investing in our kids. He further stated MCAL's objective is to build a culture that will better our youth and parents as well. He said there are a lot of community activists that deal with youth that need the attention and investment to help us grow as a community. He said the sponsorship packets states in detail the total budget as well as benefits of the program and were MCAL is headed within the program.

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Marshall, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8325 authorizing a city representative to enter into a Professional Services Agreement with Cornerstone Government Affairs, Inc. and the Monroe Chamber of Commerce and further providing with respect thereto.

Ms. Kenya Roberson wanted the Endeavor explained and the amount.

Mrs. Kelsea McCrary stated the previous lobbying agreement expired June 30<sup>th</sup> and this is entering into a new lobbying agreement with Cornerstone Government Affairs. She further stated the full

amount is \$100,000.00 with the Monroe Chamber of Commerce providing their contribution of \$10,000.

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to know if this is just for federal.

Mrs. McCrary said yes, this is just for federal.

Ms. Roberson wanted to know if this is done every year.

Ms. McCrary said the previous agreement had the option to extend year over year and the City allowed that to expire in order to enter into a different agreement with a different group.

(d) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8326 reappointing Hardeman Cordell IV to the Monroe Fire and Police Civil Service Board and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(e) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8327 appointing Shane Wooten to the Monroe Fire and Police Civil Service Board and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Mrs. Ezernack mentioned the language of the resolution should be appointing Mr. Shane Wooten.

Mayor Ellis and Mrs. Dawson thanked Mr. Wooten for his services.

#### Department of Community Affairs:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8328 authorizing Mayor Friday Ellis to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the City of Monroe and the Ouachita Parish Police Jury for the improvement and enhancement of the City's Louisiana Purchase Gardens and Zoo "Louisiana Purchase Exhibit" Project and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Meghan Risinger, Grant Writer for the City of Monroe, wanted to give a special thank you to Councilwoman Mrs. Dawson for meeting with the police jurors at the zoo to talk about this project. She wanted to also thank Michael Thompson and Larry Hudson with the Ouachita Parish Police Jury for working with the City on this project.

Ms. Dawson wanted to thank them personally and stated it was Police Juror Michael Thompson first time coming inside of the zoo.

Ms. Woods said this is a grant, but she sees where the Police Jury is donating \$300,000.00.

Ms. Risinger said originally it was a \$400,000.00 grant but the City hired an architect that only works with zoos the price skyrocket. She said they saw the price jump therefore they had to go to the police juror to ask for the remaining funds.

Ms. Woods wanted to know the total cost for this project.

Ms. Risinger said \$1.1 million.

Ms. Woods wanted to clarify that the Police Jury is giving \$300,000.00 and the difference is coming from the grant.

Ms. Risinger said \$400,000.00 is coming from the CVV and \$400,000.00 from the City. She said hopefully they will have some rendering and stuff to show as they get closer.

Ms. Woods stated she saw some that was quite interesting.

Ms. Risinger stated it is going to be great and it is the Louisiana Purchase section of the zoo where they really wanted to pay homage to our native wildlife and species.

Engineering Services:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8329 authorizing Mayor Friday Ellis to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the City of Monroe and the State of Louisiana Office of Facility Planning and Control, Division of Administration for the River Pump Station Water Treatment Plant Planning and Construction (Project No. 50-MJ6-21-02) and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approve a Resolution No. 8330 accepting the base bid of Womack and Sons Construction Group, LLC for the Young's Bayou Retention Project in the amount of \$1,129,750.34 and further authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into and execute a contract for said work. (There were no public comments.)

Introduction of Resolutions & Ordinances:

(a) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance amending Section 22-33 of Chapter 22 of the Monroe City Code Entitled Monroe Air-industrial Park Development Ordinance and further providing with respect thereto. (Airport) (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance 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 – Love's Travel Stop (PUD/P&Z Div.) (There were no public comments.)

(c) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance adopting and amending the Zoning Map for the City of Monroe, Louisiana and authorizing the Clerk to public notice of a Public Hearing to zone a ±12-acre tract of land, from being located in Ouachita Parish to the I-1, (Industrial Business Park) District, in order for the applicant to have a commercial truck stop, retail sales and restaurant facilities, at 355 HWY 594. (23.867-acres more or less)– Applicant – Love's Travel Stop (PUD/P&Z Div.) (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Woods said the reason she is moving quickly on these items is because they are all in her district. She said she is excited and when she is excited, she moves quickly.

**Resolutions and Ordinances for Second Reading and Final Adoption and Subject to Public Hearing:**

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

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Marshall seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approve a Resolution No. 8331 authorizing Friday Ellis to sign and accept the 2022 Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

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

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack to Passover item (b) Ordinance declaring certain immovable property in Monroe, La, identified as Parcel 76532 by the Ouachita Parish Tax Assessor and identified by Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) of Louisiana, State Project No. H007300 as Parcels 22-1, 22-1-C-1 and 22-3 as no longer being needed for public use and necessary for DOTD project No. H007300, and authorizing the same to be sold to the DOTD pursuant to Louisiana Revised Statute 33:4712, and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Mr. Brandon Creekbaum noted the administration has requested that council Passover Item (b) until next council meeting August 9, 2022.

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, second by Ms. Woods to adopt an emergency Ordinance No, 12,129 declaring the condition of Primary Clarifier No. 3 at the Water Pollution Control Center an Emergency necessitating immediate repair and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

**Citizens Participation:**

(1) Barbara Joyce Williams, 502 Carlton Avenue, wanted to thank Mayor Ellis, Council Marshall, code enforcement Tommy James, and all those who came out to resolves her neighbors water issue. She wanted to thank Mr. Marshall for his listening ear and patience who came out on a Sunday to engage and the Mayor as well who came out personally. She also wanted to thank the Monroe City workers for coming out to the area resolving issues under overwhelming circumstances.

Mr. Marshall wanted to thank Mrs. Williams for everything she does for her community and her concerns for her residents.

(2) Ms. Brown wanted to address something in the agreement that the council just passed. She stated under the definition of the item reimbursement undertaking it supposedly explain in section 309, however, it stops at section 306. She said there is no definition of reimbursement undertaking anywhere in the agreement indicting section 307,308, and 309 may have been omitted. She said the agreement my need to be reviewed to ensure that it is complete and accurate. She further stated the agreement allows the scope of the project to be expanded later without the need of additional approval of the council. She said section 306 executive exhibit (b) may be later amended and supplemented after execution of this agreement. She said this is an ambiguous statement that implies improve first and get the details later. She noted a cooperative agreement with a private business or corporation is not unusual or illegal however recently the city council approved 25-year plan with SEDD with the provision that no public money would be used to loan or help underwrite private businesses. She further noted this agreement seem to be in conflict with council decision by giving a substantial assistant to a private business with public funds. She said Mr. Echols will be the recipient of taxpayer's funds not subsequent to any vote or district but a deal between the City and Mr. Echols with the Walnut Street District thrown in to give legal coverage.

(3) Ms. Johnnie Thomas, 414 South 8<sup>th</sup> Street, said some may not agree with her but our city is filthy. She said she firmly believe the quality of work should be done in all areas. She said she doesn't know how much the City worker are making but someone needs to be held accountable.

(4) Ms. Kenya Roberson, Executive Director of Regional Black Chamber of Commerce, said she is on the Renaissance Movement Board and on this Saturday, they will be giving away baby formula for free. She said to text their name and the type of formula they need to 318-235-4840 to be picked up this Saturday. She announced the Monroe Regional Black Chamber of Commerce and several businesses have partnered to have a back-to-school Bonanza on August 13,2022 targeting 300 children. She said they were fortunate to collaborate with the Omegas and the B Law firm, the children will be feed and receive community resources will help them though out the school year, everything is free. Finally, she wanted to bring to the council attention September 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> will be a college tour unfortunately it is not free to students, but they are taking donations. She stated she would love to see the City Council and the Mayor sponsor one child or a donation.

Mrs. Dawson wanted to know what the sponsorship amount for one child is.

Ms. Roberson said it's \$350 which covers the hotel, food, two t-shirts, and their charter bus seat. She said there are currently 50 spots available.

(5) Ms. Serita Stiles, 6508 Pilgrim St. Metairie, La, stated she will be in Northern Louisiana for the next three days to meet with people in the community because she is running for the US Senate. She stated most times when people run for office, they often leave out the areas that aren't the five big cities and she expressed it is important to her as she travels to include the parishes and cities that are often left out of the conversation. She further stated she was amazed by the council meeting and impressed by the projects the City have along with the participation by the community. She said she is an executive director of a non-profit organization that focus on informing incarcerated women to help them transition into society. She further noted she was a college student at the age of 19 got into some trouble and served time in prison. She said she was also in the military and her

mom was a judge when she went to prison. She explained a lot of time people think because you come from a particular social economic background that's what lands you in prison, but most times it is trauma. She said since her release 13 years ago she has been working on giving back to the community. She noted she has been working on advocacy and legislation over the past few years. She further noted working on the former President Trump Administration and on former President Trump's last day in office she received a Presidential Pardon for the work she had done.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:33 p.m., upon motion of Mr. Marshall and it was seconded by Mr. Harvey.

Mrs. Kema Dawson  
Chairman

Carolus S. Riley  
Council Clerk

Ileana Murray  
Staff Secretary