

Monroe City Council Legal and Regular Session
August 25, 2020
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, August 25, 2020 at the Council's regular meeting place, 400 Lea Joyner Memorial Expressway, City Council Chambers/City Hall Building, Monroe, Louisiana.

The Honorable Juanita G. Woods, Chairwoman, called the meeting to order.

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

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

Council member(s) absent: None.

Chairwoman Woods declared a quorum. She acknowledged newly elected Councilman District 4, Mr. Carday Marshall and acknowledged Judge Marcus Clark for administering the oath of office less than thirty minutes ago in the Council's conference room. She thanked Ms. Riley for putting the paperwork together and Ms. Sturdivant for offering her assistance. She thanked the Mayor for what he is doing, and she reminded everyone of the impending storm and asked that everyone would do their part to remove debris from yards and ditches and if they need assistance to call.

The Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were led by designee, Rev. Tegitra Thomas, First Missionary Baptist Church Pastor, and Councilwoman Woods.

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Mr. Harvey welcomed each one present; thanked Pastor Thomas for the invocation, and welcomed newly elected Councilman Carday Marshall, District 4. He encouraged the citizens to volunteer in the upcoming cleanup organized by a Neville student on September 12th from 9am-11am. He reminded the citizens of the impending storm and if assistance is needed, he can be reached on his cell number at 318-243-3499.
2. Mrs. Ezernack, welcomed each one present and welcomed newly elected Councilman Carday Marshall, District 4.; she reminded everyone of the impending storm in our area and the Lake Charles area, and to pray for the State.
3. Mr. Marshall thanked everyone for their calls of encouragement and look forward to working with the Mayor, the Administration, and the Council. He reminded everyone of the storm and to look out for the elderly in the community; there will be a cleanup soon and there will be ULM students out filling sandbags at Emily P Robinson.
4. Mrs. Dawson welcomed newly elected Councilman Carday Marshall, District 4 and thanked him for representing them even before he was sworn in and it's a good thing to see that he is already working. She invited everyone out, weather permitting to come to the community volunteer workday Saturday at the La. Purchase Gardens and Zoo, beginning at 10am, it is being sponsored by her, the Zoological Society, and JPS; there are new people coming on board to assist, including Mr. Kevo Meredith with 2 Dudes, who has worked really hard behind the scenes. She thanked Public Works for their work in District 5; she asked that Monroe citizens clear the debris from the drainage, streets to help with the upcoming weather related conditions such as flooding. Ms. Dawson offered prayers for the safety of all citizens during the storm.
6. Mayor Ellis congratulated Councilman Marshall on running a great race; he said seeing him in the community, his enthusiasm and how he care about the community makes him proud of the team; the community voted each council member to be leaders of their community and look forward to working with each and the coordination of the council who are servant leaders. He asked Mr. Kevo Meredith to stand and recognized him as a servant leader, because he has a sense of community pride, as he had close to 100 volunteers working in downtown to pickup trash; he thanked him for his efforts of volunteerism. He thanked Public works employees for working hard and cleaning ditches, debris as they are cleaning up from a former storm and now getting prepared for another storm. He commented in reference to the storm, there are sandbag locations including Emily P. Robinson, Saul Adler, and Marbles Recreation Center; the City has already been in contact with Homeland Security, Goseph, and Parish partners with the sister city West Monroe to ensure that all are on one page to communicate clearly to the citizens about resources; he asked that citizens would call 211 for any information, as they are the immediate point of contact and as the storm progresses, the immediate evacuation center is in Alexandria, LA and from there they are directing them to their current hotels because of Covid and as they fill up, they will then be moved to Baton Rouge,

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and Shreveport; this City have been proactive about it and the leadership is working really hard to serve the citizens and other residents as they come to Monroe and welcoming them into our neighborhoods which is our strength.

Ms. Woods echoed the sentiments of all comments made; she acknowledged the passing of Mrs. Elaine Clay, a community advocate, and asked for prayers for her family and friends of Mrs. Clay, which included Councilman Wilson who was like a sister to him. Her viewing is Friday, Smith Funeral, 10am-2pm and a private service on Saturday, 11am, Free Gift Baptist Church.

Upon a motion of Mr. Harvey and a second by Mrs. Dawson, the minutes of the Legal and Regular session of August 11, 2020 were unanimously approved. (There were no public comments).

PRESENTATION: NONE.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE

PROPOSED CONDEMNATIONS: Public Comment: NONE.

ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF BIDS: Public Comment NONE.

RESOLUTIONS AND MINUTE ENTRIES:

Council: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7783, confirming the appointment of William Sparks to the Interstate 20 Economic Development Corporation and further providing with respect thereto. (Dawson) (There were no public comments).

Department of Administration: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7784, accepting and approving the System Survey and Compliance Questionnaire for the City of Monroe for the fiscal year ending April 30, 2020. (There were no public comments).

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

Legal Department: Public Comment: None.

Mayor's Office: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7785, confirming the appointment of Douglas Seegers as Director of Community Affairs for the City of Monroe and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Comments: Ms. Woods asked Mr. Seegers to stand and excited to have him on board.

(b) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7786, authorizing Mayor Friday Ellis to enter into and execute a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the City of Monroe and Northeast Louisiana Arts Council and further providing with respect thereto.

Comments: Mr. Barry Stevens, NELA Arts Council introduced himself and thanked the City for their continued support.

Department of Public Works: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Consider request from the Sewer Division of the Public Works Department for Council approval to purchase two (2) Service Body Trucks off the Louisiana State Contract. These trucks will be used to replace existing Lift Station Service Body Trucks which are worn out. The total cost of both these trucks will be \$65,970.38 plus \$300 or \$400 delivery.

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The purchase of these trucks is in the current budget and funding will come from the Sewer Division's Capital Account, which has a balance of \$485,000.00. (There were no public comments).

(b) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7787, authorizing the purchase of Cityworks Software off of Louisiana State Contract and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Comments: Mr. Harvey thanked Mr. Benton for the information; Mr. Benton explained the request for the software company and the software would assist with the mobile work orders. Ms. Dawson asked if the system would enable agencies to log in and pledge money to help citizens pay bills; he said it would not, as it is an internal city system, but there would be a community platform to request city services such as a water leak request; Ms. Woods asked if a citizen would be able to monitor their request and he said the first phase would only consist of the city being able to monitor a citizens request and the second phase would enable a citizen to request service and to monitor when the crew members are enroute, completion, and feedback from citizen. Mr. Marshall asked if this would be on the city's website and he said yes. There would be community awareness of the availability of the software when it becomes available.

Department of Community Affairs: Public Comment: None.

Police Department: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to remove from the agenda to Consider request from the Monroe Police Department for Council approval to purchase police units. The department wants to purchase twelve (12) vehicles (including equipment) for a total of \$335,358.52. The purchase would be made from the Capital Account, attached is a breakdown of the cost. (There were no public comments).

Fire Department: Public Comment: None.

Engineering Services: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7788, accepting the Base Bid of Smith Machine Works, in the amount of \$278,800.00, Alternate No. 1 in the amount of \$4,500.00, Alternate No. 2 in the amount of \$5,400.00 and Alternate No. 3 in the amount of \$6,480.00 for the Hawes Pumping Station Diesel Drive Replacement Project, and further authorizing Friday Ellis, Mayor, to enter into and execute a contract for said work. (There were no public comments).

(b) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7789, authorizing Friday Ellis, Mayor, to enter into and execute Supplemental Agreement No. 3 to a contract with Arcadis U.S., Inc, to provide Professional Engineering Services to determine sanitary sewer inflow & infiltration relative to operation of the WPCC Digester Cover Improvements Project and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Comments: Mr. Marshall asked for information on the project, as the south side of Monroe citizens experience a lot of sewer issues; Mr. Curt Kelley said this project would continue the study of the project that was done in North Monroe and it will continue to South Monroe and will be implemented into the plan to be submitted to DEQ by September 15. Mr. Marshall asked if he could be informed of the process and Mr. Kelley said Council would be informed. Mr. Harvey explained the procedure of what the project would do, pressurizing the lines to see where the leaks are to correct the issues such as storm water penetrating the sewer and to keep stormwater out of the sewer.

BREAK IF NEEDED:

IX: INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to Lavell Warren all rights, title and interest that the City may have acquired to lot in Lot 1, Sq 7, Unit 3 Booker T. Washington Addition, Ouachita Parish, no municipal address, District 3, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated July 10, 2015, and further with respect thereto. (Legal)

Comments: Ms. Vevlyn Wright commented regarding the property not having a listed municipal address on the agenda item. Mr. Harvey said it could possibly be a plot of land between to houses and listed as a parcel. Ms. Woods said it is a parcel. Ms. Wright stated there was another agenda item property that had a street name, but no number. Harvey suggested that one would look at the parcel number and then use the Ouachita Parish Assessor's site, active count data search function to research by inputting the parcel number and it would show the address.

(b) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to Belle Jones all rights, title and interest that the City may have acquired to lot in Lots 28, 29 & 30, Sq 1, Meadowbrook Addition, Ouachita Parish, 2901 Maddox, District 3, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated July 9, 2009, and further with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments).

Comments: Ms. Woods commented there is an adjudicated listing of properties on the city's website. Ms. Sturdivant said for those who don't have internet access, they can pick up a paper copy of the listing from the Marshal's desk at City hall or can call the Legal Department for more information.

(c) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to Malcom M. Bosworth all rights, title and interest that the City may have acquired to Lot 17, Sq 19, Booker T. Washington Addition, Ouachita Parish, Columbia Ave., District 3, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated June 24, 2015, and further with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments).

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

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairwoman Woods declared the public hearing open;

1. Mr. Ben Marshall, developer for the Miller Roy building project explained that the zoning being approved for project was for a multi-family housing project.

2. Ms. Vevlyn Wright commented regarding the use of space; Mr. Marshall said it would serve low to moderate income residents including 66 units for living space at one hundred percent of the space, offices, supportive services for residents.

Mayor Ellis encouraged the citizens to learn the history of the Miller Roy building, such a rich history, it was an endangered building in the state. The services that will be provided speak to the history of the building. Ms. Woods thanked the developer for his project plans. She encouraged others to develop areas that have been run down.

3. Mr. Damian Coleman asked if the unit was one total unit; Mr. Marshall explained there would be two buildings, first floor retail/offices, and upper two floor would be apartments.

4. Mrs. Vickie Krutzer commented that she was excited about the project; as she is serving on the quality of life transition team, asked if the building would have any green space for the residents and if there would be covered parking; Mr. Marshall said there would not be covered parking, but they have bought extra parking across the street for employees to park and there would be green space available for activities.

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

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,010, adopting and amending the Zoning Map for the City of Monroe, Louisiana to zone a ±1.83-acre tract of land presently located in Ouachita Parish from B-3, General Business/Commercial District to B-2, Neighborhood Business District to construct a multi-family residential structure with retail and offices, and is more particularly described as follows: **1001 DeSiard Street, 430 Adams Street and Lots 1-5, the west 10' of Lot 7, Lots 8 – 9 and the east 10' of Lot 10, Square 38, Filhiols 1 Addition – APPLICANT - Tenth Street Properties, LLC (P&Z)** (There were no public comments).

Comments: Mrs. Ezernack asked the timeline for the project; Mr. Marshall said they plan to close in November and begin construction in the early spring.

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairwoman Woods declared the public hearing open; seeing no one come forward, the hearing was closed.

(b) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved to finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,011, authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to Sonya L. Muhammad all rights, title and interest that the City may have acquired to Lot 4, Sq 10, Booker T. Washington Addition, Ouachita Parish, 1006 Powell Ave., District 3, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated July 6, 2012, and further with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments).

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairwoman Woods declared the public hearing open; seeing no one come forward, the hearing was closed.

(c) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,012, authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to Sonya L. Muhammad all rights, title and interest that the City may have acquired to Lot 2, Sq 10, Booker T. Washington Addition, Ouachita Parish, 1002 Powell Ave., District 3, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated July 1, 2011, and further with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments).

Citizens Participation:

1. Shannon Gremillion, spoke to introduce himself for the upcoming La. Supreme Court election.
2. Damian Coleman, spoke regarding concerns for the citizens and said he has come before Council for two years with propositions and no one responds; he said the Parkview area is getting worse which escalates to violence and murder. Ms. Woods said she saw some of his proposals and asked what are the things that the people want and he said the people feel the city doesn't engage them enough, provide enough resources in their communities and he gave Parkview as an example of no activities for the children. He said to provide an emergency relief center in the Parkview area that would give the residents available access. Ms. Woods said the responsibility rests with the company that owns Parkview, which is Standard Enterprises and maybe the city can work with them. Ms. Dawson commented that a lot of things that are not able to happen in Parkview is due to the management not allowing it to happen; she stated that she has gone to each door in Parkview to seek the needs and they tell them that they can't get through to management and there is nothing else they can do; the agency that she works for has gone out to Parkview to assist with electric and gas help, mental health assistance. Mr. Coleman said he has spoken with management on several times. Ms. Dawson said she would be personally involved because it is in her district. Mr. Harvey commented about the issues and getting assistance through agencies. Ms. Dawson commented to Mr. Coleman that it was important to provide the services they say that they offer. Mr. Coleman said they are now in a position to provide better services. Ms. Woods asked him if they completed the CBDG block grant and he said they got the notification late and did go to a seminar and are pursuing other avenues.

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There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m., upon a motion of Mr. Harvey and seconded by Mr. Marshall. (There were no public comments).

Ms. Juanita G. Woods
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.**