

Monroe City Council Legal and Regular Session  
January 24, 2022  
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, January 24, 2022, at the Council's regular meeting place, 400 Lea Joyner Memorial Expressway, City Council Chambers/City Hall Building, Monroe, Louisiana.

The Honorable Carday Marshall, Sr., Chairman, called the meeting to order.

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

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

Council member (s) absent: None.

Chairman Marshall declared a quorum.

The Invocation was done by Rev. Lenard Montgomery, and the Pledge of Allegiance by Mrs. Gretchen Ezernack.

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Mr. Harvey welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting.
2. Mrs. Ezernack welcomed each one present; she thanked Rev. Montgomery for the invocation.
3. Ms. Woods welcomed each one present and wished everyone a Happy New Year due to her not being present at the last Council meeting. She thanked Rev. Montgomery for the invocation.
4. Mr. Marshall thanked everyone for being present and supporting the City.
5. Mrs. Dawson welcomed and thanked each one for being present.
6. Mr. Jimmie Bryant, Monroe City Chief Operating Officer (COO), present on behalf of Mayor Ellis, had no communications.

Upon a motion of Mr. Harvey and a second by Mrs. Dawson, the minutes of the Legal and Regular session of January 11, 2022, were approved, Voting YES: Harvey, Marshall, Dawson, Ezernack; Voting to ABSTAIN: Woods. (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. Dawson, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 8162, authorizing a designated city representative to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the City of Monroe and Free Me Association d/b/a Monroe City Academy League (MCAL) and further providing with respect thereto. (Dawson/Woods/Marshall) (There were no public comments.)

Department of Administration: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Consider Application by Schulte Catering Pecanland, LLC dba Courtyard Monroe Airport, 4915 Pecanland Mall Dr., Monroe, LA 71203 for a Renewal 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.)

**ADDON:** (b) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to add to the agenda to Consider Application by El Paso Monroe, LLC, 3211 Sterlington Road, Monroe, LA 71203 for a Renewal 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.)

Comments: Assistant City Attorney Brandon Creekbaum explained why the item was being added to the agenda. He commented that the application was received timely and forwarded to the police department; the process took a little longer than normal and because it was timely submitted, the request was made for it to be added to the agenda. There was no disqualifying information.

(b) Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Consider Application by El Paso Monroe, LLC, 3211 Sterlington Road, Monroe, LA 71203 for a Renewal 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.)

Department of Planning & Urban Development:    Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 8163, authorizing Friday Ellis, Mayor, permission to submit Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) plans to Housing & Urban Development (HUD) that targets four (4) neighborhoods: Booker T. Washington, Renwick, New Town & Ouachita Cotton Mills and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Comments: Mrs. Ellen Hill presented a PowerPoint on the NRSA plan and information on presenting the plan to HUD; once funded the plan is good for five years; any funding will come before Council on a yearly basis. Mrs. Ezernack thanked the staff for all of their work on the plan; Mr. Marshall thanked PUD for presenting the information and the work on the plan. Ms. Woods commented that she is excited about the plan.

(b) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 8164, approving the appointment of Lisa Govan as an alternate member to the Board of Adjustment and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(c) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 8165, approving the appointment of Al Peterson as an alternate member to the Board of Adjustment and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

**ADDON:** (d) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to add to the agenda to Adopt a Resolution appointing Robert L. Smith III to the Board of Adjustments of the City of Monroe and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Comments: Ms. Woods asked who Mr. Smith was replacing; Mrs. Hill explained there was a vacancy for a while and when Mr. Phelps' term ended, he decided after his term of service that he would step down and this was the reason for the clear vacancy. The Board can have alternates and the alternate slots would allow them to have others come, and due to Covid they struggle to have quorums, and this ensures they will have a quorum.

(d) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 8166, appointing Robert L. Smith III to the Board of Adjustments of the City of Monroe and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Legal Department:    Public Comment:    None.

Mayor's Office:    Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to remove from the agenda to Adopt a Resolution authorizing Mayor Friday Ellis to apply for a \$1,500,000 Grant from the Economic Development Administration. (There were no public comments.)

Department of Public Works:      Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 8167, authorizing the City of Monroe to advertise for bids to rehabilitate airfield lighting at the Monroe Regional Airport, and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 8168, authorizing the City of Monroe to advertise for bids to rehabilitate Runway 4-22 at the Monroe Regional Airport, and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(c) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 8169, authorizing Mayor Friday Ellis to accept any grant offers from the FAA through December 31, 2022, for the Monroe Regional Airport that do not require matching funds, and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(d) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to remove from the agenda to Consider request for authorization from the Public Works Department for authorization to advertise for bids for purchase and installation of a metal building for tire storage. The estimated cost of this project is \$40,000.00 and the source of funds is a LDEQ grant totaling \$42,019.54. (There were no public comments.)

Department of Community Affairs:      Public Comment:      None.

Police Department:      Public Comment:      NONE.

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. 8170, accepting as substantially complete work done by and between the City of Monroe and Louisiana Bridge, Inc. for the CenturyLink Drive Bridge over Bayou DeSiard, and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 8171, authorizing an authorized city representative to advertise for bids on the Deborah Drive Cross Drain Replacement. The estimated cost of this project is \$650,000.00. The DBE Goal is 7.01%. (There were no public comments.)

Comments: Mr. Holland explained that the project was replacing two existing drainpipes that have deteriorated; the pipes are at least twenty years old, and the road is caving in. Mr. Harvey commented that he also saw the hole.

(c) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 8172, authorizing an authorized city representative to execute Supplemental Agreement No. 1 to Break Out Phase No. 2 Plans for the Kansas Lane Extension Project and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

BREAK IF NEEDED:      NONE.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Harvey, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance declaring certain immovable property in Monroe located on Washington St. between North 11<sup>th</sup> St. and Pendleton Street as no longer being needed for public use and authorizing the same to be sold to Michael Echols Enterprises, LLC pursuant to Louisiana Revised Statute 33:4712, and further providing 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: Chairman Marshall opened the Public Hearing:

1. Mrs. Eselener McCoy, citizen, spoke regarding her disappointment of how the matter was handled and her neighborhood didn't receive the formal information of what was going on when it started; her concerns that it would affect her street and the neighborhood. She asked that it not be approved.
2. Ms. Detrick Massey, citizen, spoke regarding the agenda item and the incidents that occurred from the playground at Oak Manor; this is directly across from their homes where the playground is being used by grownups playing cards, dominoes, gambling, and there is a daycare near the playground. She asked that Council consider their concerns.
3. Ms. Natalie Powell, citizen, commented that the complex would be directly in front of her home. She said "no" to the apartments being built there because of the possibility of the renters not taking care of the area, like they take care of their homes in the area. She has a daycare in the area and her concern and desire is to protect all the kids. She asked that the citizens on her street would be notified prior to anything being done on their street, as they all knew nothing about the project.
4. Mrs. Glenda Cowart, citizen, commented that the complex would be right in front of her home. After moving into her home in 2007 and several years after that her son was in the living room and someone from Oak Manor Apartment complex shot a gun; the gun bullet landed on her front porch in the flowerpot, and it could have been her child shot by bullet. She asked that Council not approve the project.
5. Mr. Randy Cowart, citizen, commented that they didn't know anything about the project, it just came up; they have enough problems with Oak Manor. He has had continuous problems with folks running through his yard and has had windows broken out, he has called the police department. The neighbors on his street take care of their street. He commented that his belief is that the apartment complex project would be a problem and they don't want it. They have had three bicycles stolen; both of their kids have gotten robbed standing in their driveway by a masked man and after he robbed them, he ran to Oak Manor, they never found out anything. He asked Council that they not permit the project to happen.
6. Mr. Jessie McCoy, citizen, commented that Standard Enterprises should have put a fence around the area after it was remodeled; he stated that his home has been shot into 8 times and he put a laser on it and it came from Oak Manor, the first apartment upstairs, the laser light pointed to a window during the time that they started remodeling. The bullets came through the couch, the living room floor and their only protection from the apartments have been due to the woods. He asked that Council keep the area residential, single family homes.

There were signatures presented from residents in the community who disagree with the apartments being built, and more want to add their signatures.

Upon seeing no one else come forward, the hearing was closed.

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to DENY to Finally Adopt an Ordinance adopting and amending the Zoning Map for the City of Monroe, Louisiana to rezone a ±0.33-acre tract of land, from the R-1 (Single Family Residence) District to R-4, (High Density Multi-Family Residence) District, in order for the applicant to be able to develop a 4-plex housing unit, at 1809 Hickory Street – 1809 Hickory Street (Lot 4 of the Resub. of Lot 2, Square F, Southside Commercial Subdivision Unit #2 (0.33-more or less)) – Applicant: Jerin Rountree (PUD/P&Z) (There were no public comments.)

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairman Marshall opened the Public Hearing and seeing no one come forward the Public Hearing was closed.

(b) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,098, declaring certain immovable property in the Monroe Air Industrial Park as not being needed for public use and authorizing the same to be sold at private sale to the Chennault Aviation & Military Museum pursuant to revised statute 33:4712, and further providing with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments.)

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairman Marshall opened the Public Hearing and seeing no one come forward the Public Hearing was closed.

(c) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,099, authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to Whitfield and Company LLC all rights, title, and interest that the City may have acquired to the Lots 2 & 3, Square 19, Unit 4, Booker T. Washington Addition, Ouachita Parish, 3610 Gayton St., Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated July 30, 2000, and further with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments.)

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairman Marshall opened the Public Hearing and seeing no one come forward the Public Hearing was closed.

(d) Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,100, authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to Joseph and Milleny Walters all rights, title, and interest that the City may have acquired to the Lot 16, Square 2, Blanks Addition, Ouachita Parish, 207 Morton St., Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated June 13, 2016, and further with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments.)

(e) Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Finally adopt Emergency Ordinance No. 12,101, declaring the condition of two (2) electric motors at the Texas Avenue Pump Station an Emergency necessitating immediate repair and further providing with respect thereto. (Public Wks.) (There were no public comments.)

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION:

1. Mr. David Wooley, citizen, commented that they had a home buyers expo that PUD put on this past Saturday, where they had all the people that qualified through their homebuyer program at the Civic Center; his company Choosing Independence is one of the developers present that were allowed to talk to the future homebuyers. He commented that homeownership is really what's needed on that side of the city and not apartments, rental facilities, or rental properties, but homes available for ownership. He commented that his company is building 40 homes on Plum Street, and they are only for ownership, not one will be leased or rented.

2. Ms. Elaine Matthews, citizen, commented that she is in the same district where Hickory Street is located. She expressed her concern and commented "no" to the development.

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m., upon a motion of Ms. Woods and seconded by Mrs. Dawson. (There were no public comments)

Mr. Carday Marshall, Sr.  
Council Chairman

Ms. Carolus S. Riley  
Council Clerk

Ms. Jacqueline Benjamin  
Council Secretary