

City Hall, Monroe, Louisiana
September 27, 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 Chairman Kema Dawson, called the meeting to order. 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 the Pledge of Allegiance would be led by Mayor Ellis or his designee.

The Invocation was led by President & CEO Mr. Roy Heatherly of the Monroe Chamber of Commerce.

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Harvey wanted to take the time to echo the sentiments he has received from the community over the last week, and he wanted to thank the Monroe Police Department for their response to the incident at Neville High School.

Mrs. Ezernack thanked everyone for being at the City Council meeting on tonight. She wanted to echo the sentiments of Mr. Harvey's constituents and she stated her office is down the street from Neville Jr. High. She said the Monroe Police Department checked the area quietly and quickly. She further stated she appreciates the response and training of the Monroe Police Department which is why the council is always interested in extra training and equipment for the City of Monroe's Police Force and Fire Department.

Ms. Woods said good evening and she wanted to ditto the comments that have already been stated by Mr. Harvey and Mrs. Ezernack. She wanted to thank the City of Monroe's Public Works Department and the residents of the Morning Side area for showing up for the District 3 cleanup on last week. She wanted to take the time to congratulate Ms. Denim Greeley the Carroll High School Homecoming Queen for 2022 and Ms. LaKayla Jones the 2022 Carroll High School Football Sweetheart. She announced to anyone who is interested to come out to celebrate with Carroll High School and she stated the Homecoming Parade will be on Thursday evening from 6pm until 8pm starting at Shelling Elementary. She further stated after the parade the block party will continue until about 11pm. She wanted to announce she will be sponsoring a movie evening at the Cinemark in West Monroe for "The Woman King" along with the Hester Law Firm out of Baton Rouge, La. She said they will sponsor the first fifty people that come in on Sunday October 16th at the 3:20pm matinee. On another note, she wanted to address an email sent to the council that stated, when she comes to the council meeting, she needs to come prepared. Ms. Woods stated she comes prepared, and she ask the questions because she is prepared for her constituents in District 3 to be informed.

Mr. Marshall wanted to give a shoutout to the Carroll High School Bulldogs on their homecoming this week and he said everyone is praying for a safe, fun, and pleasant week of activities. He wanted to thank everyone that came out to the District 5 Family Day and Movie Night last Sunday. He said the event was successful and District 5 will have another event on November 12th. On another note, Mr. Marshall presented Mr. Rudyard West Jr. with a proclamation on behalf of the Mayor, the Monroe City Council, and the citizens of the City of Monroe for his many accomplishments at the age of eleven. He said Mr. West is doing wonderful things in our community and nationally.

Mrs. Dawson wanted to announce on Saturday October 1, 2022, Districts 4 and 5 will have a community cleanup. She said they will meet at the King Oaks Hall at 10am and they are asking everyone that would like to help with the cleanup to please come. She stated if anyone needs trash

bags ahead of time to call the City Council's Office and she will try her best to get them out before Saturday.

Mayor Friday Ellis stated on last week he had the opportunity to speak with the JAG inductees at Delta Community College and it is always good to speak with youth to see the opportunities and pathways they are taking towards their future. He said they had a real estate meet up with the citizens in town to talk about ways to sell our community to perspective residents. He noted the month of September is Sickle Cell Awareness Month and the City partnered with Life Share to host a blood drive at City Hall and they surpassed their goal. On another note, the Mayor wanted to echo the councilmembers comments regarding Monroe Police Department, and he stated MPD was on the scene less than a minute and they had the building cleared in less than three minutes. He said to go above and beyond they cleared other schools, and he said he appreciates those who ran towards the threat of danger. He wanted to announce on November 3rd Monroe, La will be the hosting site for the I-20 Economic Development Corridor for Transportation for America Amtrak. He stated he is proud of the work put in by Ms. Nirali Patel and he wanted her to share the information with everyone.

Ms. Nirali Patel, Main Street Director, noted on September 17th the City unveiled the new Downtown and Monroe Main Street logos and she said it was one of the first things she started working on when she became a City of Monroe employee. She noted it is important for the City to tell its story and showcase the different agriculture and history of the City. She said everything that is in the logos speaks to different parts of Monroe and she is excited to see what will happen next. She further noted in mid-September 2023, Monroe and West Monroe will be hosting Destination Downtown for Louisiana, Mississippi, and Arkansas. She said it was announced the City received the bid when they went to Little Rock, Arkansas.

Mayor Ellis noted the work Ms. Patel has put in to get this National Program back into compliance has been extraordinary. On another note, he wanted to announce this Thursday 6pm until 8pm at Forsythe Park is the "Picnic in The Park" which is part of the Healthy Funroe series. He said it is another quality event that brings our community together.

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall the minutes of the Legal and Regular Session of September 13, 2022, were unanimously approved. (There were no public comments.)

The following condemnations were considered:

1. (3014 Dick Taylor Street (D4) (Owner – Arthur John & Diane P. Jones) Notice to show cause was served. There was no one present. Photographic evidence was presented. Upon motion of Mr. Marshall, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved, the building was condemned, and the property owner 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 and burnt dilapidated structure, and it was presented in Environmental court in July. They are asking that the property be condemned, and owner given 30 days.

Mrs. Dawson wanted to know if anyone was present to represent the property. There was no one present.

2. 803 Reed Street (D5) (Owner – Lisa Henderson Williams, et al) Notice to show cause was served. Photographic evidence was presented. There was no one present. Upon motion of Mrs. Dawson, 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. James stated he spoke with the property owner, and she started to demolish the property, but she stopped. He further stated he believes she wants to continue demolishing the property and they are asking to give the owner 30 days.

Mrs. Dawson stated she has spoken with Ms. Williams, and she is asking for a couple months, if possible.

Mr. James stated they have been working with the property owner for a while and he would like to stay within 30 days.

Mrs. Dawson wanted to know if Ms. Williams doesn't bring the structure into compliance with the Code or demolish the property the City will take care of it.

Mr. James said that is correct.

Mr. Harvey wanted to know if anyone was present to represent the property. There was no one present.

3. 705 Morris Ave (Marked as 512 S. 5th Street (D4) (Owner – Patricia Blackson Robertson) Notice to show cause was served. Photographic evidence was presented. Upon motion of Mr. Marshall, seconded by Ms. Woods, and unanimously approved the building was condemned, and the property owner was given 90 days in which to bring the structure into compliance with the Code or demolish the Structure and clean the lot.

Mr. James stated this is an open and burnt dilapidated structure, and it was presented in Environmental Court in July. He further stated there has been contact with the property owner that stated they are having issues with insurance. They are asking that the property be condemned, and owner given 60 days.

Mr. Marshall wanted to know when was the insurance contacted.

Mr. James noted the last conversation he had with the property owner was in March regarding the insurance.

Mr. Marshall asked if anyone was present to represent the property.

Ms. Lena Blackson Williams, sister of Ms. Patricia Blackson Robertson, stated she had two sisters to pass in the last 6 months. She said Ms. Robertson's property is a total loss and she has spoken to Mr. James about the insurance issue. She stated she just had a sister that passed last month, and she is trying her best but by the end of this year she will have the house torn down.

Mr. Marshall wanted to verify that Ms. Williams wants to demolish the property.

Ms. Williams said sure, it's a total loss.

Mr. Harvey suggested giving the property owner 90 days.

Mr. Marshall wanted to know if Ms. Williams is the sole owner of the property.

Ms. Williams said yes.

Ms. Kenya Roberson stated Ms. Patricia Robertson's son is her brother, Mr. Reginald Robertson, therefore he is the heir of the property. She further stated she was unaware it was on the agenda tonight and she is unsure if her brother is aware that the property was on the condemnation list. She said she doesn't know if service was made to him or if he was notified.

Mr. Marshall wanted to know if Mr. Reginald Robertson was on any of Mr. James documentation.

Mr. James stated service was made to the person on the tax docket if it hasn't been transitioned to him. He further stated he is fine with the 90 days that council suggested.

Ms. Williams stated Mr. Robertson has been notified of the court dates.

Ms. Woods wanted to verify if Ms. Patricia Robertson is still listed as the owner.

Mrs. Angie Sturdivant, City Attorney, stated for the record the property owner is still listed as Patricia Blackson Robertson on the assessor tax role.

Mr. Marshall said they probably have not had a secession if it just occurred.

Ms. Williams said no they have not.

Ms. Roberson stated she will speak to her brother to get clarification and Mr. Robertson is Ms. Patricia Robertson's only child.

Ms. Woods wanted to know what is going on with the insurance.

Mr. Marshall stated the insurance is up in the air and he is unsure who is in charge of the insurance.

Ms. Williams stated Mr. Reginald Robertson is the heir to the property.

Mr. Harvey wanted to know how does a secession affect what the council is dealing with on this condemnation.

Mrs. Sturdivant noted Ms. Robertson is still listed as the property owner and they have complied with the law regarding condemnation. She said they must notify the last registered owner and the last listed property owner on the tax assessor site. She further noted dealing with insurance would be a civil matter.

Ms. Woods stated if the property owner is deceased, you can't notify them.

Mrs. Sturdivant reiterated the law requires service be sent to the address at the tax assessors.

Mr. Harvey said the City deals with a lot of cases where people aren't receiving mail and the City is condemning properties while people aren't here to represent them. He wanted to know how Ms. Roberson felt about the 90 days to bring the property up to code.

Ms. Roberson said she understands the legal process and she doesn't know if her brother is aware of this proceeding otherwise, he would have let her know. She said if all possible could this matter be put back on the agenda for the next council meeting.

Mrs. Sturdivant said it can't be on the next meeting because they would not have enough time to comply with the notice requirements for all the documents. She said if the property owner is given 60 or 90 days that gives them time to communicate with Code Enforcement. She noted the condemnation can be passed over or removed.

Mrs. Ezernack noted the communication between Code Enforcement and the property owner is important.

Mr. Marshall said he would give 90 days to allow the brother to be notified.

4. 1709 South 5th Street (D4) (Owner – Robert Harris) Notice to show cause was served. Photographic evidence was presented. Upon motion of Mr. Marshall, seconded by Ms. Woods, and unanimously approved the building was condemned, and the property owner was given 60 days in which to bring the structure into compliance with the Code or demolish the Structure and clean the lot.

Mr. James stated this is a burnt dilapidated structure and it was presented in Environmental Court in July, the property owner was given 15 days to remove growth. He said the property owner started tearing it down but stopped. They are asking that the property be condemned, and owner given 30 days.

Mr. Marshall stated he is familiar with this property, and he motion to condemn the property giving owner 30 days.

Mr. Robert Harris, 1709 South 5th Street, noted he is waiting on the insurance.

Mr. Marshall wanted to know if Mr. Harris has been in touch with Mr. James.

Mr. Harris said no.

Mr. Marshall wanted to know where he is in this process.

Mr. Harris said he needs probably another month.

Mr. Marshall said he will give Mr. Harris 60 days since he has to deal with the insurance company.

Resolutions and Minute Entries:

Council:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8368 authorizing the City of Monroe to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Northeast Louisiana Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Department of Administration:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Ms. Woods, and unanimously approved to Passover item (a) to consider an application by Family Dollar Stores of LA, LLC dba Family Dollar#20834, 1421 Winnsboro Rd., Monroe LA 71202 for a New 2022 Class D Alcoholic Beverage Permit until October 11, 2022, Council Meeting. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (Distance Report Cleared, Cert of Occupy Cleared)

Ms. KShana Hall, Resident of District 4, wanted the City Council to consider the amount of alcohol retailers that are already in that area which is probably about eight. She said that area doesn't need another alcohol retailer.

Ms. Vee Wright, West Monroe, said she agrees with Ms. Hall.

Ms. Hall said the City Council should also consider the alcohol related crashes and fatalities in that area on the Southside of Monroe.

Mr. Harvey asked Mrs. Sturdivant if the State Statue gives any guidance on the matter.

Mrs. Angie Sturdivant, City Attorney, said no there's not a CAP on the number of stores that can sale alcohol.

Mr. Harvey noted if by the City Ordinance you meet these conditions such as the certificate of occupancy is cleared, sales tax is cleared, and it is not within certain distance of churches you can sale alcohol in the City of Monroe.

Mrs. Sturdivant stated that is correct.

Mr. Harvey stated he hears their concerns, but does the City become punitive to the other alcohol retailers in that area. He noted giving preference to the alcohol retailers in that area puts the City in a position of liability

Mrs. Ezernack asked if Mrs. Sturdivant could describe the Class D requirements and what it allows.

Mrs. Sturdivant said she would have to look it up to see if it's just beer and wine because she doesn't have the Statute with her.

Ms. Marie Brown, 1002 South 5th Street, stated Mrs. Woods and Mrs. Ezernack was on the council when the City did a CAP on not putting anymore liquor stores South of Monroe. She said the only businesses coming to South Monroe are liquor stores. She noted the community asked for a CAP on liquor stores and tire companies which was passed by the City Council.

Ms. Vee Wright said unfortunately she did not get a chance to read the council packet prior to the meeting but she noticed the Mayor may get \$34,000.00 from the Justice Department and the police are trying to get tasers and other equipment that brings to mind crime. She said we all have seen enough studies to know that when you have a concentration of places that sell alcoholic beverages anywhere in the country it also increases crime. She said at the very least the Council should not move forward on the matter and if there is a proliferation of liquor stores and tire companies on the South Side of Monroe it might be difficult to attract better industries in the area. She said liquor stores are actual community killers and that would be the opposite of what the community wants.

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to know if Mrs. Sturdivant was able to find the Class D definition.

Mrs. Sturdivant stated Mrs. Stacey Rowell, Director of Administration, is reaching out to Mr. Tim Lewis the Tax & Revenue Director.

Mr. Harvey clarified that the Class D is listed as a beer retail dealer, and it is consumed off premises only.

Ms. Woods said she would be interested in knowing about the moratorium because she said she does remember the CAP on not putting any more tire shops on the Southside of Monroe. She stated another liquor store was put down there which was not increasing the number of stores that sell liquor, but it was moving it from one location to another.

Mrs. Sturdivant stated the moratoriums are typically between 6 months and a year. She said since she has been the City Attorney, they have never done a moratorium that exceeds a year.

Mr. Harvey wanted to know if the application can be passed over until the next council meeting and researched.

The motion and second to consider application was withdrawn and Mr. Harvey motion to Passover this item.

Ms. Woods seconded Mr. Harvey's motion.

Mr. Harvey stated for clarification the vote is to Passover until next council meeting to gather information.

Legal Department:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8369 of the Monroe City Council approving Mid-South Extrusion inc. for participation in the Industrial Tax Exemption Program (Project Line 11) at 2015 Jackson Street, Monroe, La 71202. (There were no public comments.)

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to thank Mid-South for expanding in that vicinity and adding more jobs.

Mayor's Office:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8370 authorizing an agreement with the Picard Group in association with the Monroe Chamber of Commerce for State Governmental Affairs and Lobbying Services and further providing with respect thereto.

Ms. Vee Wright wanted to know what are the Lobbying Services.

Mayor Friday Ellis asked Mr. Alexander to inform Ms. Wright of the services they will provide to the City of Monroe.

Mr. Rodney Alexander, Picard Group, stated the Picard Group will provide services that the City of Monroe doesn't have time to do.

Ms. Wright put Mr. Alexander's words in plainer English that the Picard Group networks with elected officials and others to help bring businesses to the City of Monroe.

Mayor Ellis said they are a State Lobbying group located in Baton Rouge and while the City employees are here in Monroe, the lobbying group take the priorities of the City and puts them in front of the people in Baton Rouge. They make the decisions on where to move state funding.

Ms. Wright stated she understands what lobbying is but there may be people listening that may not understand.

Police Department:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8371 authorizing Mayor Friday Ellis to sign and accept an agreement with the Department of Justice to accept funding in the amount of \$34,000.00 for the 2021 Project Safe Neighborhood Program (PSN) and further providing with respect thereto.

Ms. Vee Wright wanted to know what the funds will be used for.

Mr. Harvey said the funds are for the renewal of the Shot Spotter Service.

Ms. Wright wanted Mr. Harvey to explain what that is briefly.

Mr. Harvey said the City can detect the accuracy of a gunshot within a yard.

Ms. Wright wanted to clarify if this is a piece of equipment.

Mr. Harvey said yes.

Ms. KShane Hall wanted to know where the Shot Spotter are located.

Council informed Ms. Hall that they are not allowed to disclose their locations.

Ms. Hall wanted to know if they are all in one area.

Mr. Harvey said it wouldn't be beneficial for the equipment to be in one area, they would overlap.

Mr. Christopher Orange Sr. wanted to know if the \$34,000.00 is the total amount for the tasers or just for the Police Spotters.

Mr. Harvey said it is for the Shot Spotters and the tasers are a separate line item on the agenda.

Mr. Orange said okay because he thought the amount was low.

Mr. Harvey stated the City gets help with funding which may not be 100% but like any other municipality the City will take all the help they can get.

Mr. Orange stated the City needs all the resources for the Police Department to do their jobs and sometimes there is more money available if we ask.

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8372 authorizing the Monroe Police Department to piggyback off of the Calcasieu Parish Sheriff's Office for the purchase of Tasers and accessories by and between the City of Monroe and Axon Enterprise, Inc., and further providing with respect thereto.

Ms. Maria Brown wanted to know why the City is piggybacking off of other Sheriff Departments.

Mr. Harvey said other parishes negotiate a good price that other entities in the State may use.

Mrs. Stacey Rowell, Director of Administration, said it must be a recent contract and Ouachita Parish may have a contract that could be beneficial, but it may have expired.

Mr. Harvey said it has to be timely and the City can piggyback off the price.

Mrs. Ezernack stated she thinks people have piggybacked off the City of Monroe as well.

Mrs. Rowell said they would have to give the City of Monroe a letter to benefit from something they have negotiated on, yes.

Ms. Woods wanted to know when the City needs this equipment are they actively going out to seek contractual agreements.

Mrs. Rowell stated they search the best price, or a vendor may contact them to look at their contract.

Mrs. Woods wanted to know if it was something the City needs to buy.

Mr. Victor Zordan, Chief of Police, stated they are replacing the first generation tasers with the second generation tasers because they are more accurate.

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8373 authorizing the Monroe Police Department to piggyback off of the Ascension Parish Sheriff's Office for the purchase of communications equipment, parts, and service by and between the City of Monroe and Motorola Solutions, Inc., and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Engineering Services:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8374 authorizing an authorized city representative, to execute Change Order No. Seven (7) for the Water Treatment Plant Renovation and Expansion between the City of Monroe

and Max Foote Construction Company for an increase in the contract amount by \$61,099.32 and further providing with respect thereto.

Ms. Marie Brown wanted to know if the City has an engineer why do they hire more engineers.

Mr. Harvey informed Ms. Brown the line item she is referring to is not the one the council is on yet.

Ms. Brown apologized and stated in the last three or four months there have been a lot of change orders at the water company. She noted there was \$47 million already allocated for this project but the City is still doing change orders.

Mr. Harvey stated the City will continue to do change orders and as they open things up issues are discovered. He further stated if anyone bids in a way that doesn't require a change order they are overcharging.

Ms. Brown want to know will the public get an explanation on what they are finding.

Mr. Harvey said yes, every change order is in the council packet that is available online.

Ms. Brown said the public would still like an explanation because the council reads the first two lines in the council packet isn't giving the public an explanation on what the City is doing.

Mr. Harvey stated this is a change order for \$61,000.00 for additional repairs found while doing the water treatment plant project. He further stated the funds encompass the CCTV services for the existing water line and the rerouting of the 6-inch water line.

Ms. Brown wanted to know if the \$47 million has already been spent.

Mr. Harvey said no, it is spending in progress meaning they are paid along the way.

Ms. Brown wanted to clarify that the \$47 million is not used but there is a change order to add more funds.

Morgan McCallister, City Engineer, stated this is a major project and every change order proposal is scrutinized before being presented to the City Council. He said this is another massive project when piecing things together some things just must be repaired.

Ms. Vee Wright wanted Mr. Harvey to explain to the public how to retrieve the council packet online.

Mr. Harvey reiterated he has a video online explaining how to retrieve the council packet and the public is welcome to ask questions at every meeting.

Ms. Sanya Jacobs, 700 University Avenue, said the City has had dialogue extensively about the \$47 million and she has been patient with administration. She noted not once have they mentioned the disadvantage business enterprise goal that was assigned at the very outset of this project. She further noted to keep the dbe goal in proportion to the change order increase. She said the City has multiplied millions in change orders but the public has not heard anything about the increase in the dbe goal.

Mr. Harvey wanted to make a correction that there are not millions in change orders, and the change orders as of today is \$791,000.00.

Ms. Jacobs reiterated that she has not heard anything about the dbe goal being kept in proportion to the \$791,000.00.

Mr. Harvey stated Mr. McCallister can speak to how that process works.

Mr. McCallister stated he can't offer a definite answer right now but the dbe goal set by the committee and presented by Max Foote, he believes was a little over 16 percent.

Ms. Jacobs stated if her memory serves her correctly the dbe goal was 16.82 percent but with that goal how many of our locals are included.

Mrs. Sturdivant stated the City has a list of locals that were asked to submit proposals to the City but they did not submit.

Ms. Jacobs noted she was one of those locals and wanted someone to talk to her from that perspective.

Mrs. Dawson stated that can be done at another time.

Mr. Harvey noted this is a public bid project.

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8375 authorizing an authorized city representative, to enter into and execute a Professional Master Services Agreement with Volkert, Inc, to provide engineering and other professional services and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

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

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

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved an Ordinance No. 12,139 granting authority for the City of Monroe, State of Louisiana, to proceed with conduit financing through the Louisiana Local Government Environmental Facilities and Community Development Authority (the "Authority") for City of Monroe Downtown Development Projects, requesting the authority to make application to the Louisiana State Bond Commission for approval; providing for the employment of bond counsel and other professionals; and providing for other matters in connection therewith. (Admin.)

Ms. Vee Wright wanted to know if the City is borrowing money for this project and how much.

Mr. Harvey stated this allows the City to issue up to \$12 million in bonds.

Mr. West Shafto, Boles & Shafto Law Firm, stated the Louisiana Community Development Authority is a state created entity which allows conduit financing for this type of project. He said the city doesn't have to pledge any specific tax for these projects, but a lot of it will be tax increments. He said yes, the City will be the borrower but it is not to exceed \$12 million or 6 percent of interest. He further stated they go to the state bond commission to get approval within these parameters, and they are publicly issued bonds. He noted they will have to go out into the market and hopefully get a 4 % interest rate because the environment is constantly changing.

Ms. Wright wanted to know if this will increase the City tax.

Mr. Shafto said no, when no specific tax is pledged the LCDA has no authority to increase taxes.

Ms. Wood wanted to know if there is a tax increase is it citywide.

Mr. Harvey stated it is Downtown Economic Development District TIF payments.

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

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Marshall, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved an Ordinance No. 12,140 to amend the Zoning Map for the City of Monroe, Louisiana to rezone a 6.149-acre tract of land, from being b-3 (General Business/Commercial) District to the I-1 6'foot high chain fence, for security purposes at 430 Ouachita Avenue and providing further with respect thereto- APPLICANT: Brennan Castello (P&Z) (Mrs. Ezernack abstain) (There were no public comments.)

Citizen's Participation:

Mr. Christopher Orange Sr., Resident of District 2, wanted to commend Mayor Ellis on the Amtrak project. He said he is excited about it, and he is glad to see the City of Monroe moving forward. On another note, he stated to Mrs. Dawson that he is a thousand percent behind her, and she is doing an outstanding job. He wanted to also commend the City Council members for the great job they are doing in the City of Monroe.

Ms. Vee Wright, West Monroe, said her main purpose of being at the council meeting is to follow up on an email she sent to the councilmembers on yesterday. She said she wanted to reiterate her request to postpone the "Picnic in the Park" because it conflicts with the Carroll High School Homecoming event. She stated she is a Carroll graduate but now she has to choose between the

“Picnic in the Park”, or the Carroll Homecoming events. She further stated the “Picnic in the Park” is being advertised as a community wide event bringing the city together, but it seems the conflict of the two events will cut off a significant portion of the citizens attending.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:23p.m., upon motion of Mr. Harvey and it was seconded by Mr. Marshall.

Mrs. Kema Dawson
Chairman

Carolus S. Riley
Council Clerk

Ileana Murray
Staff Secretary