

City Hall, Monroe, Louisiana
October 22, 2024
6:00p.m.

The Honorable Chairman Juanita G. Woods, called the meeting to order. She then asked the clerk to call roll.

There were present: Mr. Harvey, Mrs. Ezernack, Ms. Woods, Mr. McFarland, & Mr. Muhammad

There was absent: None

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

The Invocation was led by City Engineer Morgan McCallister.

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

(1) Mr. Harvey had no announcements.

(2) Mrs. Ezernack welcomed everyone, and she thanked Mr. McCallister for the Invocation.

(3) Mr. McFarland thanked all that met with DOTD at the Civic Center concerning the Texas Avenue bridge and he is asking them to please move the project up. He said they have a target date of July 2026 before the plans are released and December 2026 before they start any repairs on the deck of the bridge. With that being said, he is asking the Council members and those who that will come meet with DOTD on Monday, October 28th, 5:30 at the Wossman High School. He said there is an issue with some of his constituents concerning the closure of Winnsboro Road and this is the last hearing on this matter. On another note, he solicited prayers for his father-in-law who had surgery on yesterday and emergency surgery today.

(4) Mr. Muhammad stated the unveiling of the book boxes at Carver Elementary were successful. He thanked the staff and the students, and he said they want to do their part in helping to improve literacy in the community. On another note, he said Ms. Comanche lives on Jackson Street and her yard is always decorated and it brings joy to everybody. He said in the spirit of the Holiday season and on behalf of the Monroe City Council Ms. Bernita Faye Comanche was presented with a plaque for her attractive and creative beautification of her yard.

(5) Mayor Friday Ellis stated Picnic in the Park at Charles Johnson Park on October 17 was successful. He thanked the families that came out to participate and the small business vendors. Next, he said Rolling on the Riverfront was another great time and he thanked all the vendors and businesses that participated. On another note, he had the privilege to attend the Louisiana Energy Security Summit hosted by Senator Bill Cassidy that talked about the industry. He said it is the tip of the spear when it comes to Energy security and production.. He said it would help Monroe provide opportunities for families here and consider them for future expansion. He said another fun event is the Historic Haunts on November 2nd at the Layton Castle Master Museum and Cooley House. He said it is a haunted tour of all the things in Monroe from 6pm until 9pm. He said another big event put on by the Zoological Society is BOO at the ZOO, October 26th 10am to 2pm at the Louisiana Purchase Gardens and Zoo. He said the Downtown Pep Rally to support ULM Warhawks on November 7th in Downtown Monroe for the ULM vs Texas State beginning a 5pm with a welcome at 6pm. Lastly, he gave an update for the progress of Atakapa cleaning out all the underground pipes and catch basins. He said the extra capacity helps in times of flash flooding for crews to mobilize. He said they have cleaned 24 miles of pipes, and some sewer pipes have been cleaned and inspected as well. He said over a thousand catch basins and 47 truckloads of debris were moved out. He said these are things a lot of time the community can't see that causes a lot of heartache when it comes time for flash flooding and flooding incidents.

(6) Ms. Woods stated the Council is happy to have everyone here. She said the rules for tonight as the Council have comments you will only be able to talk one time on an issue on the agenda. She noted at citizen's participation the Council is reinforcing the 3 minute rule. She thanked everyone for coming and she said she is certain there were many other things they could be doing but they chose to come and listen to the business of the City.

Upon motion of Mr. McFarland and seconded by Mr. Harvey, and the minutes of the Legal and Regular session of October 8, 2024, were unanimously approved. (There were no public comments.)

RESOLUTIONS AND MINUTE ENTRIES:

Council:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8825 confirming the appointment of Thelma J. Stevenson to the Board of Commissioners for the Southside Economic Development District and further providing with respect thereto. (Mr. McFarland recused)

Ms. Thelma Stevenson thanked the Mayor for his vote of confidence, and she said she serves at the pleasure of the Mayor. She said Senator Jones and Otis Jones, former Presidents of SEDD, their vision was to empower small businesses on the South side, and she prays to be an asset to the board. She said she prays they can agree to disagree to move forward expeditiously about the product and services of the City.

Mr. McFarland said the advice of the City Attorney Brandon Creekbaum was to recuse himself because she is a member of his church, and she works under his leadership. He said she works for the McFarland Funeral Company as a funeral attendant and an outstanding employee.

Ms. Woods thanked Ms. Stevenson for her commitment to serve on the committee. She thanked Ms. Steveson for her perseverance as the Council went through some difficult changes and for her dedication though she had not been confirmed on the board.

Mr. Muhammad wanted to know if SEDD board is complete.

Mr. Brandon Creekbaum, City Attorney, said he believes SEDD have achieved all members.

(b) Upon motion of Mr. McFarland , seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8826 granting an exception to the Open Container Ordinance to the Twin City Art Foundation for an Exhibition Reception and Talk for Peter Jones: Contemporary Realist Retrospective 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 public comments.)

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Mr. McFarland and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8827 granting an exception to the Open Container Ordinance to the Twin City Art Foundation for (the Masur Museum Holiday Party) 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 public comments.)

(d) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. McFarland and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8828 granting an exception to the Open Container Ordinance to the City of Monroe & Friends of Monroe Main Street for a community event (Historic Haunts) pursuant to Monroe City Code Sec. 12-231 D. (Open Container Ordinance), and further providing with respect thereto.

(e) Upon motion of Mr. McFarland, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8829 granting an exception to the Open Container Ordinance to the Downtown Monroe Arts Alliance for a (Downtown Art Gallery Crawl) pursuant to Monroe City Code Sec. 12-231 D. (Open Container Ordinance), and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(f) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8830 confirming the appointment of Louis Tolliver as Public Works Director and further providing with respect thereto. (Mr. McFarland recused)

Mr. McFarland stated at the last meeting he recused himself on this matter due to the relationship that Mr. Tolliver and he have in different capacities. He said someone was saying he could un-recuse himself but that is not ethical, and he stands on the same to recuse himself from this matter.

Mr. Louis Tolliver, newly appointed Public Works Director, thanked the Mayor for having confidence in him to appoint him to this position. He thanked the City Council for their support, and he said it is time to hit the ground running.

Mayor Ellis stated Mr. Tolliver is a United States Marine Corps veteran and he has the upmost confidence in his leadership. He said he is a good man of integrity, and he can't wait to see what he is going to do to grow the department.

Ms. Woods thanked Mr. Tolliver, and she said get ready because she would be calling.

Department of Administration:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to consider an Application by DG Louisiana, LLC dba Popshelf Store#30251, 4219 Pecanland Mall Dr., Monroe LA 71203 for a New 2024 Class B Alcoholic Beverage Permi. 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.)

Mr. Harvey wanted to know if this was the one the Council approved a few weeks ago.

Mr. Brandon Creekbaum, City Attorney, said this came before the Council as a conditional use last time and now they are applying for the license.

Department of Planning & Urban Development:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. McFarland, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8831 accepting the RFQ Response of ELOS Environmental LLC to provide lead-based paint inspections, soil sampling risk assessment, and dust clearance samples and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Ellen Hill, Director of Planning and Urban Development, stated they were awarded a lead hazard control grant from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to address lead paint and healthy home hazards. She said a part of that grant requires lead paint inspections and risk assessments. She further stated while they have the staff, and one project manager certified to do the risk assessment they are planning to do many homes. She said there is funding to work with an outside firm for help as needed. She noted the plan is to do the risk assessments and then work with them to get clearance before anyone can move back into their home or before the job could be finalized they have to have a certified risk assessor to ensure that they have done the job properly. She said they met the qualifications, they have the experience, and they have worked in the community before.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if they would be starting sooner than later.

Ms. Hill noted the team have done at least 15 or 16 assessments already. She said they haven't started with the actual work because they are awaiting HUD's approval for their environmental review.

Mr. Muhammad wanted to know how are the houses determined.

Ms. Hill said for the lead based paint they have to be low to moderate income, there must be a child 6 or younger residing in the home or visiting for 60 hours or more over the course of a year, or an expecting mother. She said it could be a homeowner, or a renter and the landlord has to agree to put his or her property in the program. She said after they get that information then they do risk assessments. She said if there is lead based paint inside or outside then they come up with a plan how to address those hazards.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if there was a meeting that people needed to attend if they were interested or trying to see if they qualified for the first cycle of money.

Ms. Hill said they had their information session and about 64 people attended and so far they have had about 15 to complete the initial assessment. She said now they are going through the full application, but they also have about 50 other homes that came in when they had the grant from Louisiana Housing, and they are working that list. She said those people have qualified and about 12 of those houses have been assessed. She noted they are waiting on the release of funds from HUD to come up with a scope of work and how they would address the lead.

Before moving to the next agenda item with no objection from the Council, Mayor Ellis stated Mr. Sean Benton has been the interim Public Works director for some time now. He thanked Mr. Benton for the work he has put in and his leadership. He said what he has been able to accomplish there is

nothing short of amazing. He thanked him for going above and beyond and for teaching him a lot of things.

Ms. Woods said she still knows Mr. Benton's number and she will continue to call him along with Mr. Tolliver. She wanted Mr. Benton to know how much they truly appreciated all he has done in this interim period making sure that the City hasn't missed a beat.

(b) Upon motion of Mr. McFarland, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8832 approving Change Order No. One (1) for the 3004 Gordon Avenue Project and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Legal Department:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8833 authorizing the City of Monroe to retain Hudson, Potts & Bernstein, LLP for legal services and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Mayor's Office:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. McFarland, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8834 approving and authorizing a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Ouachita African American Historical Society (Northeast Louisiana Delta African American Heritage Museum) and further providing with respect thereto.

Ms. Avius Carroll, 11 Brair Hollow Drive, Chairman NELA African American Heritage Museum, said they have enjoyed an incredible working relationship with the City of Monroe, and she thanked the City for their ongoing support. She said the museum is deeply rooted in District 3 which is represented by Councilwoman Woods who has been a fearless advocate for the African American Museum. She stated the African American Heritage Museum showcases the contributions and impact of African Americans in our City, it explores the essence of being American, and illustrates how values such as resilience, optimism, and spirituality is reflected in African American culture and history. She further stated over the past two years they have hosted numerous events, exhibits, and activities to generate support for the museum. She said this cooperative endeavor agreement with the City allows them to continue to offering valuable experiences to the community. She noted the museum is a public institution open to everyone where all are welcome to participate, collaborate, and learn more about the African American history and culture. She thanked the City for their support, and she said they look forward to their continued sponsorship.

Ms. Woods thanked Ms. Carroll for her tenure as President and she noted she has done some amazing things.

(b) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8835 approving and authorizing a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with Red, White, and Blue Airshow Inc., and further providing with respect thereto.

Ms. Nell Calloway, CEO President of the Chennault Aviation and Military Museum, said they are having the Chennault fest this weekend and it is looking to be outstanding, and the weather is beautiful. She said they have 20 food trucks coming and hot air ballons Friday and Saturday night. She thanked the Council for passing resolution previously for the air show and she thanked them for all their pass support for the museum.

Ms. Woods thanked Ms. Calloway for all the hard work that she does.

(c) Upon motion of Mr. McFarland, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8836 approving and authorizing a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with Friends of Chennault Aviation and Military Museum and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(d) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8837 approving and authorizing a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the University of Louisiana Monroe and further providing with respect thereto.

Dr. Ann Hanks stated they are asking for the City's support to place weather stations in parks and schools all across Monroe to create a micro net. She said they have the only atmospheric science

program in the State of Louisiana, and they collect a lot of data. She said they received a grant to put a weather station in 50 parishes across the State of Louisiana. She said they would like to place weather stations all across Monroe to create a climatological library and then create maps for extreme temperature and heat. She said the data would be used for anyone in the City. She said it will cost the City nothing and they are very small and would give you 24 hours continuous data for temperature, dew point temperature, relative humidity, pressure, wind speed, wind direction, and measure solar radiation. She said they don't have any funding yet and they are applying for a grant and looking for the City's support.

Mr. Muhammad wanted to know if they will be working with the local weather stations.

Dr. Hank said yes, they would collect the data, and they have a big repository that they share with GOP and the National Weather Service in Jackson and Shreveport. She said they would have access to this data, and they would also share this with the City of Monroe if they need it for planning or grant writing purposes to ask for mitigation money for extreme heat or cold events.

Mayor Ellis stated having this data helps the university and municipalities vice versa in partnership draw down resources from the federal government. He said to help better protect the City to mitigate some future extreme weather incidents. He said without this data it's really hard to pull down this money and university has an outstanding program.

Department of Public Works:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. McFarland, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8838 authorizing the City of Monroe to apply for fy 2025 Section 5339 Funds for buses and bus facilities and further providing with respect thereto.

Mr. James Tatum, 600 Highway 139, Union 1160 Vice President, wanted to know what is the 5339.

Mr. Marc Keenan, General Manager, stated 5339 is a Federal grant section specifically for facilities or buses.

Mr. Tatum wanted to know if it is two grants combined one for buses and one for facilities.

Mr. Keenan said no sir, it's either or and it's up to the agency what they apply for.

Mr. Tatum said he knows in the past the City was talking about building another facility.

Ms. Woods said for the record she asked Mr. Keenan to tell everyone what the City have going on here.

Mr. Keenan stated Mr. Tatum is correct, the City has spoken about constructing a new terminal and that is what this project is for. He said the Terminal is being moved from Catalpa Street to DeSiard Street. He further stated the cost of the project eleven million dollars, and the City has to come up with 2.2 million dollars.

Mr. Tatum wanted to know the reason the terminal is being moved, which is an inconvenience for passengers downtown. He said he has worked for Transit 21 years, and he has seen a lot of disabled people come far and near. He said for the passengers downtown it is more convenient where the terminal is now.

Mr. Muhammad stated the previous Council approved the terminal be moved.

Ms. Woods said she understands Mr. Tatum but she doesn't know if this is the meeting they should be having this conversation. She said as Mr. Muhammad stated this has been approved and there is no going back to do anything other than to move forward.

Mr. Tatum wanted to know why they can't get a raise.

Ms. Woods said she can't answer, and she doesn't know if this is the proper venue to have that conversation.

Mr. Keenan said this grant is for Capital items and it is totally separate from a grant they would use for administration purposes.

Mr. Tatum said the operational grant they could definitely get a raise from that, and he doesn't understand why they can't because they haven't had a raise since 2013.

Ms. Woods reiterated she doesn't think this is the venue to have that conversation and she referred for Mr. Tatum and Mr. Keenan to get together to talk about it.

Mr. McFarland stated he is doing his best to stay within the rules to allow the public to speak first before the Council have their final deliberation on matters. He said he heard Mr. Keenan say that this grant could be for buses or facilities. He said evidently he misinterpreted the resolution because the only reason he is supporting this it clearly states an application submitted up to a million dollars towards the construction of a new terminal, that's not buses. He said he doesn't know if he misspoke or if it's some other gray areas that he can't see.

Mr. Brandon Creekbaum, City Attorney, noted 5339 is a grant program that allows people to submit applications in response to calls for projects. He said the Transit team indicated that they would be submitting an application for facility or bus grant, and they get to decide what they're going to apply for.

Mr. McFarland said he doesn't want the City to get crossed up and he doesn't want the public to leave thinking Transit could do anything with these funds. He noted the resolution says terminal and he is not going to support it if it's loosey goosey. He wanted to know if the property has been purchased.

Mr. Keenan said yes sir.

Mr. McFarland said the City is already down the road with the project because the last Council put the wheels in motion and the train has left the station and they can't bring it back. He said he thinks individuals could appreciate it more if the City would be very transparent and just tell it like it is. He said the land has been purchased and the previous Council has put it in motion and there's nothing that this Council can do about it. He said all they are trying to do is support the matching funds and this is just half of the matching funds.

Mr. Keenan said the federal government pays for 80% of the project and 20% will come from local funds.

Mr. McFarland noted it seems to him the City will be good and again he thinks everybody would feel better if the City just be transparent it's too late to reverse things. He said it put a lot of pressure on him as a Councilman because people will leave here thinking the Council have the power to reverse that issue and that's not true.

Mr. Muhammad wanted to know how confident is the administration that they will receive this grant.

Mr. Keenan stated historically they get roughly a million, however, other transit agencies in the State are allowed to apply for this grant funding also.

Mayor Ellis noted these programs are all competitive.

Mr. Keenan said they may not get anything but historically they have received a million.

Mr. Muhammad wanted to know if not getting this grant would affect the construction of the terminal.

Mr. Keenan said the construction of the terminal would continue and they would seek additional funds. He said they have some grants on hand that they are speaking to the federal government about.

Mayor Ellis stated each year there is a notice of funding but there are multiple opportunities throughout the year for other funding. He said if this one closes it's not the last opportunity for FTA. He said any grant the City applies for is not guaranteed.

Mr. Muhammad wanted to know if the terminal wasn't moving would they apply the grant to buses.

Mr. Keenan said no the terminal is 40 years old and it has reached it's useful life and they have to replace it.

Mr. Muhammad wanted to know if there is a target date for the new terminal.

Mayor Ellis said he thinks it would be a good idea to sit down with the Council as soon as possible to show them the plans.

Mr. Keenan said he really doesn't know, and they should probably talk to the engineer about that, however, he was told once they begin construction it's 18 months or so.

Mayor Ellis said he thinks as far as competitiveness for this grant the City is fairly strong because the other federal and State funding tied into this. He said anytime there are matching funds tied into this you are more competitive in these applications, but it's never guaranteed.

Mr. Muhammad stated other cities are trying to attract Amtrak and he wanted to know where would the new Amtrak terminal be.

Mayor Ellis said it would be downtown North 4th and DeSiard.

Engineering Services:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Mr. McFarland and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8839 approving Change Order No. One (1) for the La 15 (Winnsboro Road) Streetscaping Project and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Mr. Muhammad wanted the City Engineer to explain why there is a change order before the project has kicked off.

Mr. Morgan McCallister, City Engineer, said it is an extension of the assembly period from 30 days to 60 days as a result of electrical equipment with a lead time of 18 weeks.

Ms. Woods thanked Mr. McCallister for the text she received this evening. She said for those listening. For the record, she said work is being done at Renwick and Highway 165 and they had people on site this afternoon. She said she will be driving through tonight to see what that improvement looks like and she very hopeful that they will have lights.

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved to remove a Resolution approving Change No. One (1) for the North 6th Street Improvements (Louisville Ave. to Stubbs Ave.) Project and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. McFarland, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and approved to Introduce an Ordinance repealing Ordinance No. 12,192 re-approving an Administrative Reorganization, and further providing with respect thereto. (Mr. Harvey Nay) (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance amending Sections 36-20 (Tap Fees) of the City of Monroe Code and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Woods said for the purpose of those that might be visiting for the very first time when the Council talk about introduction of ordinances and resolutions they read it into minutes the first meeting and the Council have two weeks to think about it, consider it, and get more information. She said it is brought back to the next meeting, and it would be voted on for final adoption.

(c) Upon motion of Mr. McFarland, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance amending Sections 24-7 (Penalties) and 24-8 (Costs) of the City of Monroe Code and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Mr. Brandon Creekbaum, City Attorney, stated for the tap fees item (b) is the tap water that allows you to connect to the City water and those fees have not been updated since 2006. He said the cost of materials, labor supplies, and all that stuff have gone up exponentially since 2006. He said the proposed increases are contained in the ordinance and he said he believes the residential tap fees for the 3.25 inch is going up about a hundred dollars. He said the residential utility water tap fees for one inch taps is going to go up about the same price. He said the other one is the environmental court fees item (c) and fines. He said the City operate an environmental court where they hear cases about condemnations that come before the Council, and it first started in 2012, and Council did some amendments to those ordinance. He said the Council prescribed a set of fines and fees at that time and they had them broken down into first offenses, second offenses, and possibility of

daily fines. He said some of those fines didn't have a deterred effect in some instances and code enforcement has been asking to increase some of these fees to put some real teeth behind this ordinance to deterred the blight and noxious. For record, he said on the water tap fees the 3.25 inch went from 575 to 690 and the residential utility water tap fees for one inch tap went from 650 to 780.

Ms. Woods wanted to know what size tap are in homes.

Mr. Benton said 3.25 inch tap.

(Mayor Ellis leaves the City Council meeting at 7:15pm)

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

(a) Upon motion Mr. McFarland, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved Ordinance No. 12,248 authorizing the City of Monroe take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to Dontarius Thomas, all rights, title, and interest that the City may have acquired to Lot 2, Sq. 1, J.W. Johnston's 2nd Addition, Ouachita Parish, 3102 Polk St., District 4, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale Dated July 16, 2002, and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Citizen's Participation:

(1) Mr. Steve Cheek, 601 K Street, said the cones on 6th Street are still there and he received a call from the City Engineer's office which was an interesting conversation. He said apparently the plan is to leave the cones up until the administration has the authority to close one lane of 6th Street permanently to vehicular traffic. He said a lot of them don't want that and 6th and 5th Street are used for a lot of people to get across town. He said they plan to close one lane on 5th Street next and it is an inconvenience. He said the City Engineer could not answer a lot of his questions about the traffic study they did which made him wonder whether they really have a valid study. He said they have to come to the City Council to approve funds to restripe the street before they can close it and he asking the Council to please vote against it. He said there is a small group that seem to want it closed and they don't care who they inconvenience in the rest of the City.

(2) Ms. Kenya Roberson, Northeast Black Chamber of Commerce, thanked the Council who will be panelist for the Local Government Luncheon on October 31st. She said this is the first time they are doing it, and they had great participation. She noted they are almost sold out and it is a great opportunity to allow the community to hear from them and to see some things they have on their agenda for 2025.

Before the next citizen participation, Ms. Woods stated she sees Mr. Tatum is very passionate and she understands totally. She said they are really pushing for him getting together with Mr. Creekbaum and Mr. Keenan to work on getting this worked out.

(3) Mr. James Tatum, Vice-President Union 1160, stated his only concern are the seniors. He said he see them every day and sees how they struggle to get from point A to point B. He said they ask the simplest questions why they don't have cover, a place to sit, and why the signs are so far from where they live. He said he doesn't understand why the facility was moved and he wanted to know the City has to put such a burden on seniors.

Ms. Woods said she doesn't know why the bus stop and things were moved but she said she will ask the Council to reevaluate. She said she doesn't know he purpose, and she is concerned about that as well.

Mr. Tatum wanted to know why the last Council didn't get on the buses and see for themselves. He wanted to know why not the new Council come out and see as well.

Ms. Woods thanked him for the invite, and she will definitely do that. She said she thinks this is a good place for Mr. Tolliver to start.

Mr. McFarland said he wanted to make sure there no false solution in this matter and there were two of the present Council who won't a part that movement. He said he was trying to make sure it was stated that the horse is out the stable on this matter with the previous Council. He noted they have purchased the property, and they got everything in motion. He said he was trying to make sure they told Mr. Tatum that it is passed the point of reversal. He said there are some things he

definitely would change that the former Council put in motion, but he can't get the fourth vote to override the veto.

Mr. Tatum said when you do it in an agenda they should think the people first. He said it doesn't make any sense for people to sit behind a desk and come up with a plan and don't think about the people they are affecting. He said he is retiring soon, and it hurts him to leave a job and think he didn't do his best to help the seniors.

Ms. Woods said she doesn't think the Council have any control over the new home of transit but some of the movement of where the buses are stopping she think they can go back and revisit. She said putting out covers and benches for people to be in a little better comfort as they are waiting on buses they can work on that.

Mr. Tatum said that is all he is asking especially when there is bad weather.

Mr. Harvey stated he was here when the contract was terminated with the group that had the benches and covering. He said the argument was they were in disrepair and the City would take it over themselves. He said they have not put enough up, and he said the specific action they need is to get a list for Mr. Keenan to work from because he has been responsive about the request he has put into him.

Ms. Woods said Ms. Hill has been helping with that with some of the CDBG money and helping get better bus stops in places to make it a little more comfortable.

Mr. Muhammad wanted to know why the people are not being dropped off under the platform.

Mr. Tatum said he doesn't understand why that move was made and didn't make any sense to him.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:34 p.m., upon motion of Mr. Muhammad and it was seconded by Mr. Harvey.

Ms. Juanita G. Woods
Chairman

Ms. Carolus S. Riley
Council Clerk

Ms. Ileana Murray
Staff Secretary

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