

City Hall, Monroe, Louisiana
October 25, 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 Mrs. Ezernack or her designee.

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

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Harvey welcomed everyone to the Council meeting.

Mrs. Ezernack welcomed everyone, and she thanked Reverend Montgomery for his inspirational message.

Ms. Woods congratulated Carroll High School on a 7-0 winning spree, and she wanted to put on record, and confirm the integrity and sportsmen like conduct displayed by the players on the field Thursday night. She congratulated OIC of Ouachita, Inc for being rewarded a grant for mentorship and training of males ages 15-18. She wished Ms. Eva Whitty a Happy Birthday, a matriarch in District 3, her family will be giving her a birthday party Saturday that resembles an old fashion wiener roast. On another note, she wanted to remind everyone early voting started today, and she said everyone's vote matter.

Mr. Marshall welcomed everyone, and he announced on Saturday the Newtown Community will be having their Annual Fall Festival from 11am until 5pm at the Newtown Playground. He said there will be bounce houses, food, and music for everyone to come out to have a good time. He said "Ease on Down to Healthcare" at Lida-Benton Park November 5th from 12pm until 4pm.

Mrs. Dawson thanked Mr. Michael Castor, the staff at the Emily P. Community Center, and the residents for the community cleanup this past weekend. She announced "Boo at the Zoo" will be October 29th from 10am until 2pm.

Mayor Friday Ellis said this week the City had the Candy Company Mural Reveal, and he said local artists worked together to teach other muralists how the process is done. He said eventually the murals will be displayed in recreation centers and parks to be a movable or a permanent fixture of public art in our community. The Mayor announced the I-20 South Frontage Road is open and it connects the old State Farm Building to Lowe's which will open up opportunities for development along that access point. He said today the City met with LADOTD Secretary Sean Wilson, Local State Delegation, and Representatives from the Federal Delegation about the Amtrack Passenger Rail in North Louisiana. He said the project will help the City with economic development and adding new intermodal transportation options. On another note, the Mayor announced the City has kicked off the Parks and Recreation Masters Plan with Carbo Landscaping and Manning Architecture. He said they have been touring the facilities, taking inventory of what the City needs, and they have started engagement about things the community would like to see. He said he attended the VCOM white coat ceremony welcoming 160 new students into our community from all around the country. He stated Movie in the Park at Charles Johnson Park was great and he said he thinks the families appreciated the City being out there having family friendly events in the park. Mayor Ellis noted the City of Monroe is in the middle of 12 Capital Outlay projects that total \$240,000,000.00 in capital investments. He said every single project address flooding, economic development, and all the needs of our locals and with the help of our State Delegation the City will go after those projects. He said the City had a great discussion with our

State Delegation and he noted the City is putting in the work to get our city ready to support new business and industry. The Mayor welcomed Ms. Aundi Brown for a special presentation, and he thanked her for all the work she does in the community.

Ms. Aundi Brown, Ouachita Green, said every month Ouachita Green chooses a Volunteer of the Month and this is somebody that serves the community, maybe a public servant, may work in the private or public sector but someone who goes above and beyond to make sure the community is clean. She said the October Volunteer of the Month is Mrs. Kema Dawson Robinson and she said Mrs. Dawson has hosted over a half dozen litter cleanups in her district and other districts. She said Ouachita Green has six high school interns from Mrs. Dawson's district this year participating in their "Love Where You Live" program.

Ms. Alyssa Guidry, Curator of Education and Public Programs at the Masur Museum of Arts, said there is an exciting project that has come to completion at City Hall. She said back on September 17th of this past year they held their Masurkids Street Art Fall Festival, and it was an opportunity for kids to make art that they might not get to make in class. She said the Masur Museum is always free admission and for this event they had guest artist Mr. Jason Nelson to host the event. She said he made stencils for the kids to use, and they are on display from Halloween until Thanksgiving upstairs at City Hall. She noted the museum is located at 1400 South Grand the hours of operation are 9am until 5pm Tuesday through Friday and from noon to 5pm on Saturday's. She further noted the museum is a nonprofit organization, but the City pays their salary, and the art is funded through donations, sponsorships, and grants. She said if anyone would like to get involved, they can sign up with a Masur Museum Art Education Outreach Sponsor packet.

Mayor Ellis said if anyone would like to see the talent of young men and women in our community just step upstairs at City Hall to take a look. He said the artwork has definitely brightened the hallway up and puts a smile on everyone's face. He said if you are not following the Masur Museum on social media please do, they host events for adults and children.

Ms. Kelsea McCrary, Chief Cultural & Economic Development Officer, introduced Mr. Brian Davis for a special presentation.

Mr. Brian Davis, Executive Director with the Louisiana Trust Historic Preservation, congratulated Councilwoman Dawson for her efforts and working with the staff to get the Divine Nine Cultural District done. On another note, he said as part of the Louisiana Preservation awards, he has the honor of presenting the 2022 Leadership Award to Mayor Friday Ellis with the City of Monroe. He said this award recognizes an individual that made a significant contribution to advocacy and/or promotion of the Historic Preservation for his cultural discipline in the community, region, or State.

Mayor Ellis said he appreciates the recognition, but he wanted Mr. Davis to talk to the community about the Save America's Treasures grant program.

Mr. Davis said the Council supported the request to apply for the grant and they will be announcing on next Tuesday the funding to restore the Cooley House. He said the City of Monroe was the only one to receive this grant in the State of Louisiana.

Mayor Ellis invited the community to South Grand project ceremony on October 28, 2022, at 9:30am pending weather conditions. He said pay attention to social media and they will put out a community invite for everyone to be able to participate.

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall the minutes of the Legal and Regular Session of October 11,2022, were approved. Mrs. Ezernack abstain she was not present at last meeting. (There were no public comments.)

PROPOSED CONDEMNATIONS:

The following condemnation was removed from the agenda:

1. 615 South 16th (D5) (Owner – Julia Mae Tyson Est c/o Shonda Tyson Bracy) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to remove this item. The property owner has done sufficient work on the property to bring into compliance with Code Enforcement. (There were no public comments.)

The following condemnations were considered:

1. 1307 State Street (D3) (Owner – Cora Lee Calloway Est) Notice to show cause was served. Photographic evidence was presented. There was no one present. Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved, the building was condemned, and the property owner given 30 days in which to bring the structure into compliance with the Code or demolish the Structure and clean the lot. (There were no public comments.)

Mr. Tommy James, Code Enforcement Officer, stated this is an open dilapidated structure, and it was presented in Environmental Court June 28,2022. They are asking that the property be condemned, and owner given 30 days.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if anyone was present to represent the property. There was no one present. She motions to condemn the property giving the owner 30 days in which to bring the structure into compliance with the code or demolish the structure and clean the lot.

2. 3409 Dick Taylor Street (D4) (Owner- Johnny Lee White) Notice to show cause was served. Photographic evidence was presented. There was no one present. Upon motion of Mr. Marshall, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved, the building was condemned, and the property owner 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 this is a burnt structure, and it was presented in Environmental Court in February 2022. He further stated the property burned in 2018 and it is considered an unsafe structure. They are asking that the property be condemned, and owner given 30 days.

Mr. Marshall motion to condemn the property giving the owner 30 days in which to bring the structure into compliance with the code or demolish the structure and clean the lot.

On another note, Mr. James announced on November 5th Ouachita Green presents “America Recycles Day”, and he said everyone with large items such as tires, mattress, and sofas can them to the Monroe Civic Center free of charge for recycling.

Department of Administration

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8384 authorizing the City of Monroe to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Louisiana Department of the Treasury and the State of Louisiana for the state funds appropriated for the City of Monroe’s Drainage Division, the BMX Facility, and the Community Soup Kitchen and further providing with respect thereto.

Ms. Kenya Roberson, 116 Glenwood, said she saw in the Resolution it’s for \$332,000.00 but when she looked at the break down of the funding, she had questions. She said on attachment A plan item number 2 it says \$200,000.00 for BMX and \$20,000.00 to the Community Soup Kitchen which leaves a difference of \$112,000.00. She wanted to know who the rest of the funding will go to.

Ms. Stacey Rowell, Director of Administration, said the \$112,000.00 goes to the vac truck for the Monroe Drainage Division and the dollar amount wasn’t put in the packet.

Ms. Roberson said in Article 4 subsection 4.3 it states the payments by the State under this agreement will be allowed only for expenditures occurring between July 1,2022 and June 23,202. She wanted to know if there have been any disbursements prior to today’s date.

Ms. Rowell said no.

Ms. Roberson wanted to know why is the City waiting until October if the agreement started July 1, 2022.

Ms. Rowell said the whole Cooperative Endeavor Agreement has to be prepared by the State and they have to send information to the State to get it approved. She said the State lays out the format and it just takes that long to get it from the State.

Ms. Vee Wright, 415 Gulpha, West Monroe, wanted to know how the funds will be used that the Twin City BMX and Community Soup Kitchen will receive. She wanted to know how the Twin City BMX will get \$200,000.00 and the Community Soup Kitchen will get \$20,000.

Mayor Ellis said the State Legislator appropriates the dollars and the City disburse the dollars. He said the community pays State sale taxes, but this is from the State's budget.

Ms. Wright wanted to know where the request originates or does it just pop up.

Ms. Rowell said no ma'am, but she thinks that some organizations get the ear of their Legislator to get the funding.

Ms. Wright wanted to know if the State requires the City to do any investigations.

Ms. Rowell said no the funds are through the States budget its through Act 120 and for this agreement it's Act 199.

Ms. Wright said she has gotten into the habit of looking up everyone the City does business with, and these two nonprofit organizations are not in good standing with the Secretary of State Office. She said it might be useful to let them know they should make their annual filing. She said she is assuming that the State would want the organizations to have their paperwork in order, but the paperwork is not in order. She said the Council might see fit to table this to give them an opportunity to get their paperwork in order before the vote.

Mr. Harvey said that is not a condition of this Grant for the organization to have an LLC filed.

Ms. Wright said the Grant doesn't say one way or the other if they must have an LLC, but they are two nonprofit organizations that are on the agenda without their paperwork in order.

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8385 authorizing the City of Monroe to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Louisiana Department of the Treasury and the State of Louisiana for the Biomedical Research Innovation Park and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Mayor's Office:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8386 approving and authorizing a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement between the City of Monroe and Northeast Louisiana Arts Council and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8387 authorizing Mayor Friday Ellis to accept a grant offer from the United States Department of Commerce/Economic Development Administration (EDA) for a Biomedical Research and Innovation Park Project and further providing with respect thereto.

Reverend Ambrose Douzart, President of NAACP, said there are situations where the community tries to expand to bring more business to our city. He said the NAACP wanted to address the Biomedical research center which is the same one that was in China that cause America thousands of deaths, now they want to bring it to the City of Monroe. He said 45 was right and Donald Trump was right, the virus that happen came from China and the City wants to bring the same facility here. He said he is not saying to not invest but know what the City is investing in for the betterment of the people.

Ms. Woods said she thinks someone should talk to the constituents about what is going on with the Biomedical Research Center.

Mr. Virendra Chhikara, President, said the BRIP, Biomedical Research and Innovation Park, is a 501(c)(3) nonfit organization built in 2019 led by board members. He said the mission is to

promote the biotechnology cluster in the region and they want to capture the powerful research going on at the University of Louisiana at Monroe campus. He said they are trying to build an ecosystem, health science companies, and biomedical startup companies to collaborate with researchers beyond the University limitations. He said the size of the building will be 60,000 square feet and they have generated around 25 million in grant funds. He said the research center will respectfully generate about 175 new jobs.

Ms. Woods wanted to know where the Biomedical Research and Innovation Park will be located.

Mr. Chhikara said it will be adjacent from the ULM's College of Pharmacy depending on funding.

Mayor Ellis wanted Mr. Chhikara to talk about the relationship to ULM's Pharmacy and why it is important for it to be next to the Pharmacy school.

Mr. Chhikara said the College of Pharmacy is doing a lot of research in cancer and skin transfusion of injectables. He said giving the students a platform where they can collaborate and do more research keeping them in the area instead of them leaving to join another research park. He said there will not only be jobs but internship opportunities when companies come to the City. He said it makes perfect sense just to be next to the pharmacy school and researchers can easily maneuver in between the buildings.

Ms. Woods wanted to know if there are any additional research centers in Louisiana and how many.

Mr. Chhikara said he can't give a definite number, but he knows about three.

Mayor Ellis mentioned a product that launched from the ULM Pharmacy School called Olio an Olive oil extract that help with Alzheimer patients and some cases cancer recovery. He said the City didn't have a place locally for the product to incubate and it left our community leaving the area for treatment producing jobs in another community. He said these are careers in science and technology that puts our community in the forefront of cutting-edge technology that supports the research that our University is producing. He said this is a quality investment and he appreciates everyone's tenacity to get this here.

Department of Public Works:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Marshall, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8388 authorizing Monroe Transit to submit an application for the special call for projects regarding Federal Transit Administration (FTA) 5339 Urban & Small Urban Funds and further providing with respect thereto.

Mr. Eugene Payne, 803 South 7th Street, wanted to know what are the projects being submitted for the application.

Mr. Marc Keenan, Transit General Manager, said the funds will be used to purchase a bus, if they receive the funds.

Mr. Payne wanted clarification that the funds will be used to replace one bus.

Mr. Keenan said that is correct.

Engineering Services:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8389 authorizing an authorized city representative, to execute Change Order No. Two (2) for the Forsythe Pool Demolition, between the City of Monroe and Lathan Construction, LLC for an increase in the contract amount by \$54,000.00 and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved a Resolution No. 8390 authorizing an authorized city representative, to execute Change Order No. Two (2) for the Forsythe Pool Demolition Contract, between the City of Monroe and Lathan

Construction, LLC for an additional one hundred sixty-four (164) calendar days added to the contract time and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Ms. Woods wanted to know why is there an increase in money and time.

Mr. Morgan McCallister, City Engineer, said the increase in money is for additional material for the pool demolition site. There is a shortage of that material, and it is estimated at 60,000 cubic feet to finish the project. He said the increase in days is to allow the contractor time to complete the project. There was an issue with equipment and there was an extension the council previously passed, now there is a total of 284 days left to complete the project.

IX: INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance authorizing Stacey Rowell, Director of Administration, to enter into and execute a lease by and between the City of Monroe and Berry Plastics Corporation, and further providing with respect thereto. (Admin) (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded 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 B & R Pest Control Professionals LLC all rights, title, and interest that the City may have acquired to the Lot 6, Sq. 62, Layton's 3rd Addition, Ouachita Parish, 612 S. 2nd St., District 4, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated May 18, 2016, and further with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments.)

(c) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance authorizing the City of Monroe to acquire a certain parcel of real property from I-20 Corridor Properties, LLC, situated in Ouachita Parish, Monroe, Louisiana, said property is located near the corner of Tower Drive and Bienville Drive containing 8.45 acres ± in Monroe, La, and further providing with respect thereto. (Admin)

Ms. Kenya Roberson, 116 Glenwood Drive, wanted to know if the Tower Armand District is governed by a board.

Mrs. Ezernack said it is the City Council.

Ms. Roberson wanted to know how much the property was appraised.

Mrs. Angie Sturdivant, City Attorney, said 5.1 million.

Ms. Roberson wanted to know the owner of this property

Mr. Harvey said I-20 Corridor Properties LLC.

Ms. Roberson wanted to know if that is the name of the business or the person who owns the property.

Mr. Harvey said it is the entity that owns it and LLC have members. He said the list is available on the Secretary of State website.

Ms. Roberson wanted to know who is Michael Graham on page 3 of the Council Packet.

Mrs. Ezernack stated that is a different property.

Ms. Vee Wright, 415 Gulpha Drive, West Monroe, noted for the record the agent of I-20 properties is Mr. Joseph Hakeem. She said she is excited about the Biomedical Research Center, and she thinks it can be a wonderful project for the area. She is particularly excited about the jobs that it promises. She said she wants to encourage as much economic development in the area as possible. She said she hopes a large percentage of the 175 jobs will be given to people who live in the area since the University is here. She stated this is an opportunity for the City to partner with the schools to make sure we are producing students that can have this type of job. She said to the extent of the BRIP there will be opportunities for businesses, and she said she hope they will reach out to disadvantaged businesses for a diversity of businesses. She further stated there are people present at the Council meeting that can help and be a facilitator. On a different note, Ms. Wright stated she just recently learned about the TIF and hopes that the Mayor and SEDD can reach a reasonable agreement for that TIF to move forward. She said where there is economic

development it can benefit the whole city. She said with economic development people are gainfully employed, less crime, and the City can attract better industry. She said she applauds these types of projects particularly when they intersect with equity and an inclusion but asked the City to keep that in mind as they move forward with the BRIP.

Ms. Maria Brown, 1002 South 5th Street, said she wanted clarification that the Tower Armand District is ran by City Council and not the Mayor.

Mrs. Sturdivant said the City Council votes.

Mr. Harvey said all their appropriations go through the City Council.

Ms. Brown wanted to know if the Mayor decides where the money will be used.

Mr. Harvey said it has to be voted on just like any other expense.

Ms. Brown stated when the Mayor brings something to the Council just like everything else on the agenda the City Council votes on it.

Mr. Harvey said yes.

Ms. Brown wanted to reiterate if the Tower Armand District is run by the Mayor.

Mrs. Sturdivant noted the State sets up the TIF.

Ms. Brown said she read an article in the ULM magazine that the Mayor wanted to invest in disinvested areas and that was the reason for buying this property. She said if the City has TIF money that can be used anywhere if it is not being used in the Tower Armand area.

Mr. Harvey wanted to clarify it is in the Tower Armand area and that is where the funds have to be spent.

Ms. Brown noted when she called the Administration, she was told it wasn't in the Tower Armand District but for that she will apologize. She said the word disinvested did bother her because there is a lot of invest areas over there. She further noted Districts 3, 4, and 5 is the worst area for disinvestment.

Mayor Ellis informed Ms. Brown that the City is working on the Capital Outlay projects. He said there are 12 Capital Outlay projects totaling over 240 million dollars and he said 11 of them are in Districts 3, 4, and 5. He said the one Capital Outlay project they are asking for funds is in District 1 and it's for the water treatment pump station. He said the City is currently spending 30 million dollars on a sewer trunk line in District 4 and what the community can't see is the work underground to help set up for proper investments. He said the City can't recruit companies and quality housing in Districts 3,4, and 5 if the City can't give them well served letters for sewer. He said every business that comes to Districts 3, 4, 5 the City has to calculate the capacity on that sewer trunk line.

Ms. Brown said infrastructure is very important because the City is falling in but there are still a lot of buildings going up that she can see. She said spending infrastructure money on a City that is falling down because whatever is not fixed on the South Side will back up on the North side. She said it makes sense to do the infrastructure first, but the City had two years to work on infrastructure, that should have been first priority.

Ms. Sonya Jacobs, 700 University Avenue, President of the Monroe Regional Black Chamber, said she is asking for the Council's commitment to partner with them to help in the equitable distribution of the 30 million dollars. She said some businesses will get a check that will total 30 million plus, and she is asking for a partnership with the organization to make sure there is a fair and equitable distribution of those resources.

Mr. Marshall said they had this conversation before, but it is a continuous effort to work with the Administration. He said he is in favor of working with the organization to move this partnership forward. He noted they met with SEDD, and it was a productive meeting; therefore, they would need to do the same with the Monroe Regional Black Chamber to move forward.

Ms. Woods noted there was a meeting with SEDD, but she wasn't invited.

Mr. Marshall said he understands that, but they have been working on this for a year and a half as well. He said that is a conversation for another time. He noted there have been conversations at Council meeting, but they are not coming to the table to have the hardcore meetings to lay out a plan to move forward.

Mrs. Dawson asked to stay on the topic matter item (c).

Ms. Jacobs asked to respond to Mr. Marshall's comment and reiterate her question about the infrastructure projects. She stated as the Chair, as the President of the organization equity is very important. She said the organization wants to see a fair equitable distribution of opportunities. She noted the organization has a simple ask on the table. She said that is a simple commitment of the Mayor and the Administration to partner with the Monroe Black Chamber to ensure that this deficit is non-existent on these types of projects.

Mrs. Dawson wanted to know if Ms. Jacobs would like to schedule a meeting to further discuss her concerns because she doesn't think this is the platform for this type of discussion.

Ms. Roberson said she respectfully understands where the Chair is coming from, but the Regional Black Chamber of Commerce has been in existence for one year. She said they have been coming to every council meeting and have been crying out for their members. She said this is a public meeting and the only time the organization can get all the Council members together without it being an issue. She said she sees the post on social media about Economic Development meetings, but not once has she been invited and it's kind of a slap in the face. She said she is concerned about her members and if we are OneRoe that includes all, but the Black Chamber is not being included. She stated the members of the Black Chamber would like the opportunity as well and she is asking the Council to make sure a representative is at every single meeting that the Mayor has pertaining to Economic Development and that she is called or emailed.

(d) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack to Introduce an Ordinance declaring certain immovable property in Monroe located at 1400 and 1401 Stubbs Avenue as no longer being needed for public use and authorizing the same to be sold to Cole Sullivan pursuant to Louisiana Revised Statute 33:4712 died for a lack of a second. (There were no public comments.)

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to know if there is a timeline or process once an Ordinance is Introduced.

Mrs. Angie Sturdivant, City Attorney, said under Revised Statute 33:4712 any opposition to the proposed Ordinance shall be made in writing filed with the Clerk within 15 days after posting of the above notice or its first publication. She said once its Introduce notice of proposed Ordinance is published three times in 15 days one week apart. She noted after it is published any objection can be made in writing to the City Clerk within 15 days.

Mrs. Ezernack stated she knows a lot of people in the audience are probably here concerned about this item, but she clarified this is basically to Introduce the Ordinance. She said this is not saying it is passing but to get the affirmations or objections in writing during this time period. She said in regard to that she will motion to Introduce this Ordinance knowing this is an Introduction only.

(Motion died for a lack of a second)

Citizen's Participation:

(1.) Darien Belton, 3512 Bonaire, wanted to invite everyone out to the Ester Gallow Community Garden Volunteer/Meet & Greet on Wednesday October 26, 2022, at 5:30pm. He said there will be free food, fun, and fellowship. He stated people can find out how to become a part of community gardening. He further stated not only does community gardening help feed the citizens, but it also helps improve city beautification. He said it can also help fight food deserts and foster intergenerational relationships.

(2.) Mr. Michael Castor, 3408 Garden Avenue, thanked the Council for the community cleanup and he said there were a lot of young people that came out to help.

(3.) Mr. Marty Campbell, 2411 Grammont, said on last week SEDD met with the Mayor Ellis, Mrs. Dawson, and Mr. Marshall concerning the SEDD TIF and he said in his opinion it was a great meeting. He said they were able to come up with ideas on how to work together to finalize the SEDD TIF and he thanked Ms. Woods for keeping the Resolution in order for SEDD to have the conversation with the Mayor. He stated publicly there has been a lie told that SEDD was not authorized to have the meeting with the Mayor. He said Mr. Marshall and Mrs. Dawson have been a part of the TIF meeting since day one, since SEDD didn't go to the Bond Commission on last

year they have been in every meeting. He further stated the information that people have read in the newspaper is a lie. He said he is Mrs. Dawson's Representative for District 5 and Mrs. Dawson has been in support of SEDD, but she wanted to make sure the economic development work gets done in SEDD.

(4.) Mr. Derrick Wilkerson, 3009 Gordon Avenue, wanted to request a stop sign be put on Thomas and Garden Ave if possible. He said the traffic is being diverted from South Grand and it would be nice for the safety of the kids.

Mr. Marshall said he has talked with Mr. Arthur Holland, Engineering Project Manager, about traffic on Thomas, Lee Avenue, and Gordon.

Mr. Wilkerson said they did construction work on the west end of Gordon Avenue, but they left a hump in the road. He said he saw a couple of the kids fall while riding their bikes.

The Mayor asked Mr. Morgan McCallister to follow up with Mr. Wilkerson's concerns.

(5.) Ms. Vee Wright, 415 Gulpha, West Monroe, said Mr. Belton was so excited that he forgot to say his gardening event is located at 1401 Sherrouse Street. On another note, she encouraged the City Council and the Mayor to meet with the Monroe Regional Black Chamber of Commerce. She wanted to remind the council that they are elected by the people and that we live in a Democratic Republic. She said we don't threaten each other, but we respect each other and follow the rule of law.

(6.) Ms. Kenya Roberson, 116 Glenwood Drive, said the Monroe Regional Black Chamber has proclaimed the month of November as Buy Black Month and she asked the Mayor and the City Council to stand with the Black Chamber. She said she is asking that it be publicized on the City's website, and she will supply them with the information.

(7.) Ms. Wendy Petrus, 1605 Stubbs Avenue, wanted to talk about the property at 1400 and 1401 Stubbs.

Mrs. Dawson noted the Ordinance died for a lack of a second.

Ms. Petrus wanted to know will there be a discussion about the property.

Mrs. Angie Sturdivant, City Attorney, said it was introduced but there wasn't a second.

Ms. Petrus wanted to know if the property would be sold and change to a residential facility.

Mrs. Dawson said not at this time.

(8.) Mr. Cole Sullivan said they were in a meeting waiting for their item to come up on the agenda, but the Ordinance died.

Mrs. Sturdivant said Mr. Sullivan can comment on the matter.

Mr. Sullivan said he just needs to understand if the sale of the building was passed.

Mrs. Sturdivant said it was not.

Mr. Sullivan stated they submitted their offer for the building in March 2022 and they have been in constant communication with the City. He further stated they were given positive feedback, and everything was looking good until the September 13th Council meeting. He noted some of the community had an issue with the class of people they would be serving. He said he was called to come up to speak but isn't sure why.

Mrs. Dawson stated Mr. Sullivan signed his name on the Citizen's Participation sheet.

Mr. Sullivan apologized he assumed everyone signs in.

(9.) Mr. Christopher Orange, 3901 Old Sterlington Road, said he wanted to cover a few things, but a few people already covered it. He congratulated the Mayor and thanked him for the email to clarify what would be talked about in the SEDD meeting. He gave a shoutout to Mr. Curt Kelly, Purchasing Director and LaKeysha Bullock, Contract DBE/Contract Services Administrator, they did a great job at the DBE meeting on October 13th. He said he emailed Mrs. Dawson about her outstanding job getting the Divine Nine Cultural District and he said the name had to be approved

by the Pan-Hellenic Council. He said knowing that the Divine Nine will encompass all historically black Greek organizations will be the first in Monroe, La is incredible. He noted to be nice to people and not make threats but support the council.

(10.) Mr. Hunt said Mr. McDuffie yielded his time for him, but he is a little confused on item (D) under Introduction of Resolutions and Ordinances. He asked for the Council to explain what happen.

Mrs. Dawson informed Mr. Hunt she will speak with him after the meeting because Mr. McDuffie can't yield his time during Citizen's Participation.

There being no further business to come before the council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:39 p.m., upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack and it was seconded by Mr. Marshall.

Mrs. Kema Dawson
Chairman

Carolus S. Riley
Council Clerk

Ileana Murray
Staff Secretary