

Monroe City Council Legal and Regular Session
October 27, 2020
6:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers-City Hall
MINUTES

There was a legal and regular session of the City Council of the City of Monroe, Louisiana held this date, October 27, 2020 at the Council's regular meeting place, 400 Lea Joyner Memorial Expressway, City Council Chambers/City Hall Building, Monroe, Louisiana.

The Honorable Douglas Harvey, Chairman called the meeting to order.

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

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

Council member(s) absent: None

Chairman Harvey declared a quorum.

The Invocation was led by Mrs. Ezernack designee, Rev. Lenard Montgomery; Mrs. Ezernack led the Pledge of Allegiance.

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Mr. Harvey motioned to move Item 5 B confirming the appointment of the Police Chief to number 5 on the agenda and also due to the number of citizens present and relative to the Fire Marshal's capacity that public comments be limited to one and half minute. Motion was seconded by Mrs. Ezernack, and unanimously approved.

Mr. Harvey stated the capacity was at 75 and there are others outside the chambers, are social distancing and respect the requirements; there are those present for the appointment of the Police chief, there will be public comment, an orderly meeting as work through each agenda item.

2. Mrs. Ezernack, thanked Rev. Montgomery for prayer; she thanked everyone for their prayers, assistance, and care for the event that took place with the tree falling on their home during Hurricane Delta.

3. Ms. Woods welcomed and thanked everyone for being present out of concern for the City.

4. Mr. Marshall welcomed each one present and for their concern of the City. Mr. Marshall made a Distinguished Citizen's Achievement Award presentation to Mr. Foster Wilhite.

5. Mrs. Dawson welcomed each one present and those listening via social media; she acknowledged Breast Cancer and Domestic Violence Awareness survivors and offered them prayers of blessings. Councilwoman Dawson said in reference to the violence, that she is excited about the City getting a new Chief of Police and look forward to working close with the Chief. She thanked the volunteers for all of their work during the cleanup efforts and announced the next cleanup effort is scheduled in November; she announced the upcoming reopening of the Zoo on Saturday and the grand reopening hopefully in the Spring.

6. Mayor Ellis expressed his thankfulness for the community volunteers throughout the city during the storm, the zoo, or cleanup efforts. He thanked the Councilmembers for their being a part of the cleanup efforts. He spoke regarding the donation of school supplies which included 90 pair of shoes for the students at Barkdull Faulk. The donation was from an anonymous donor that the Mayor spoke with; Fleet feet scanned the students to get properly fitted shoes for the 90 students who received brand new New Balance tennis shoes. He thanked the concerned PTO members, citizens, and staff at Barkdull Faulk School for their concern; he thanked Mike at Fleet feet for giving back to the community. He thanked the City workers for their hard work and tell them thank you for their hard work they do for the citizens.

Upon a motion of Mr. Marshall and a second by Mrs. Dawson, the minutes of the Legal and Regular session of October 13, 2020 were approved; Voting YES: Marshall, Dawson, Woods, Harvey; Voting to Abstain; Ezernack. (There were no public comments).

Upon a motion by Mr. Marshal, second by Mrs. Ezernack, Voting YES: Harvey, Ezernack, Marshall, Dawson; Voting NO: Woods and approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7828, confirming the appointment of Victor A. Zordan as Chief of Police of the Monroe Police Department and further providing with respect thereto.

Chairman Harvey asked that Mr. Bryant come forward and explain the interview process; Mr. Jimmie Bryant, Monroe City Chief Operating Officer explained the interview process by the Civil Service board. Chief Bryant explained to Ms. Woods the number of days and she asked if there were deadlines to be made with the Chief being in position. Mr. Bryant explained the law was specific on the time frame of returned scores, approval by board, and the Mayor acts on selecting a Chief by state statute to make a decision. Ms. Woods wanted to know the number of days and Chief Bryant said he thought it was immediate; Attorney Creekbaum explained the process and how the timeline of selecting a chief began in July which is when the 60 days began. Mrs. Ezernack inquired about having information, resumes on each candidate. Ms. Woods asked if the candidates that initially took the test earlier, if they had taken it again. Chief Bryant said, no and all that wanted to be included in the interview process were included and interviewed. He explained that the 60 days have already passed, and it was incumbent upon the Mayor to make a decision on who he chose to lead the department. The Council is to determine that the person that the Mayor has selected meets the qualifications for Police Chief. Ms. Woods said she had the opportunity to speak with the Chief and he understands her concerns and she understands his plan; she asked if Council needed to make a decision by law at this time or did, they have additional time. Chief Bryant said the Council was to decide if the Chief is qualified. Mr. Harvey asked the qualifications of Chief; Mr. Creekbaum explained the qualifications are set by Civil Service rules and law, a job description voted on and set by the local board and the rules determine if the candidate is qualified to sit for the exam and have been vetted by the local Civil Service board. Under the Civil Service law there is a deadline to appoint someone and the Council is not reviewing qualifications, that's what the Civil Service board does. Ms. Woods asked if the appointment needed to be tonight, next week, two weeks from now, or thirty days from now. She asked if the Police Chief could still function in the role of Chief, even if not confirmed; Attorney Creekbaum said he would have to be confirmed for him to be able to assume the role of Police Chief and the State Civil Service law sets forth very specific deadlines; it states that once you have a list of certified eligible appointees, then you have sixty days to name an appointment from the list and are no longer eligible to have an interim Chief of Police; and with the Mayor's appointment there is no roller where you can appoint a new interim Chief to buy more time or appoint Mr. Zordan or anyone from the list as interim Chief and there are obligations to be met under Civil Service law and the Mayor has taken the first step by within the sixty day period making the appointment and the Home Rule charter requires an additional step to bring it before Council to confirm the Mayor's appointment. Ms. Woods asked what happens if he is not confirmed; Mr. Creekbaum stated he didn't like addressing hypotheticals without researching it, but that you run into issues under Civil Service law if you don't proceed with the process and go forward at this time picking someone. Mr. Marshall said the concerns may be accountability factor and asked for an explanation of the probationary period for the Chief; Mr. Creekbaum commented according to Civil Service law that every new hire to a position goes through a working test period, a probationary period.

Public Comments:

1. Gloria Walker, asked about confirmation process. Mr. Creekbaum explained it would be determined by the Council's vote.

2. Rev. Ambrose Douzart, commented about appointment of the Police Chief.

Mrs. Ezernack asked if a representative from the Police Department would come forward and speak on behalf of the officer present that were in support of the appointment.

3. Thomas Staten, 28 year Police veteran spoke in support of the appointment of Mr. Zordan.

4. Chris Fulmer, Police Dept, spoke in support of the appointment of Mr. Zordan.

5. Scotty Sadler, Police Dept. spoke in support of the appointment of Mr. Zordan.

6. Mennon Campbell, spoke in support of the appointment of Mr. Zordan.

7. Verbon Muhammad, asked that Council not confirm the appointment tonight, so that Mr. Zordan could get to know the community.

8. Adale Callen, spoke in support of the appointment of Mr. Zordan.
9. Tyrone Dickens, spoke to ask that the new chief have a relationship with the community.
10. Vandy Jenkins, spoke in reference to the appointment and the recruitment of new officers, and getting rid of the poison off the street.

Mr. Marshall stated there were questions that were sent in from the community and asked Mr. Zordan to answer them. Mr. Zordan commented that he has met with each Council member and answered questions they had from their constituents. He spoke about relationship building with the community. Mr. Marshall said Mr. Zordan had answered questions already and the questions being asked were intended for the live feed. His first question was how did Mr. Zordan feel about police brutality and his plans to wipe out future occurrences to which Mr. Zordan said there is no place for police brutality in law enforcement at all, it will be addressed quickly and police reform will be a part of their training. Mr. Marshall asked how he would increase arrests; Mr. Zordan said they would recruit to get more officers, and they do have a plan which won't discuss and have to get numbers up. Ms. Woods asked for the plans to recruit new officers and Mr. Zordan said they have a good recruitment officer who will work to recruit good officers, from military bases. Mrs. Dawson expressed concern about balancing the racial makeup of the officers, because of the national issues with white officers and black police brutality; Mr. Zordan gave a percentage of the current officers, and said he would work to make the police department to look like the citizens of Monroe, having diversity in all aspects, and hire the best prospects.

Mr. Harvey read two public comments into the records (these comments appear as written by them):

1. Marie Brown, commented, I'm asking for the police chief to serve as interim for 90 days. We are concerned about appointments that has not been vetted by the City Council. What is in this officers record the community needs to know, the citizens asked for Brown's records, I think it's fair we know what's in his record, because we don't know this officer, he has not been a part of this community so it is unfair to have him take this seat without us knowing what he stands for. The city council has to vote him in and when they vote in favor of this chief, only the Mayor can fire him. Let us see the video in his record. City council have you viewed the video. Make your vote count.

2. Roosevelt Wright, Jr., commented, The naming of a Chief of Police is arguably the most important of the mayor's appointments. There is a national movement to change policing that means different things to different communities. Drastic changes are being made as city governments announce their police departments are "evolving" to keep pace with the times. There is also an uneasiness among African-Americans concerning racial profiling, targeted sweeps, and abuses of force in our city and across the nation. The nominee for this position has been recommended as Monroe's Police Chief, but the public has no idea about some of his ideas. I am impressed with the chief's plan to recruit highly qualified officers, get tough on crime, increase sensitivity training, and adopt a zero-tolerance for protocol breaches. What worries me are the unknowns. Last week he said the police department must "evolve" without any explanation of what "evolve" means. He also served notice that there will be an increase in arrests in the coming weeks, but we have no assurance that these targeted arrests will be conducted without racial or demographic profiling. I am also concerned that his resume' lists about 15 years of law enforcement service that neither the public nor council members know anything about other than the agency's name that employed him. His service has been completely cloak and danger and hidden from public view, with no digital footprint. It's a black hole. I believe the council should delay confirming this nominee until council members know more about the nominee. There is no rush. The nominee will serve as interim chief for 90 days with the chief's office's full power and authority. In this time, he can meet with council members, community, and business leaders, as well as the mayor's transition team, and fully explain his ideas about "evolving" our police department and his plans to increase arrests without racial profiling. I am not in opposition to this nominee, but I do suggest that it would be irresponsible to confirm his nomination without having answers to all of the unknowns surrounding his plans and work history.

Mr. Marshall asked Mr. Zordan his comments regarding community policing; Mr. Zordan said this is one of the best avenues to have as far as making relationships and working with the federal government for years, there are grants for those types of programs; there were programs like this in the past when he was with the department and want to be able to do that and have someone in the neighborhoods that citizens feel comfortable with and they are able to talk with. He would go to the area schools and speak with the administration about programs.

Ms. Woods prior to the vote commented that she does believe Mr. Zordan would take the City in the direction it needs to go, from their conversations, she is very satisfied with what she has heard and thinks he will be a very valuable asset to the community, very confident he will get the confirmation because she has already heard 4 votes, but her concern is right now, that not that he won't do a good job, but concerned and having been on Council and in her second term, that have never received so many calls and texts, comments from her constituents and they are concerned about the rush of the appointment; would like to have more time to talk with him before going in; the community is in a crucial time and thinks this is the most important appointment that the Mayor is going to make and with the decisiveness in the community at this time and people are concerned about which direction and we do need cleanup in the crime, it's at the top of her list; Kingsway is in her district and get a call every other day about gun fire, and do know he will go in and take care of it; she said her vote is not a vote against him, it's a vote letting her constituents know that she does hear them and do understand and she is their voice and if she put their voice and concerns out there, then she is not doing what they elected her to do; she said she hopes this vote doesn't deter him from bringing his forces into the community that needs it the most; her constituents need to know that she hear them loud and clear and with that being said, no.

PRESENTATION: NONE.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE.

PROPOSED CONDEMNATIONS: Public Comment:

1. 1013 South 6th Street (D4) (Owner, Robert L. & Rhonda H. Golemon) Upon a motion by Mr. Marshall, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved for property owner to be given 90 days or January 28, 2021, in which to bring the structure into compliance with the code or demolish the structure and clean the lot. (There were no public comments).

Comments: Pictorial evidence of the current state of the property was shown by Chief Code Enforcement Officer, Catherine Robinson. Discussion on the property's condition was made by Mrs. Robinson and Councilman Marshall. This motion was made contingent upon the owner making the proper repairs within the 90 day repair plan.

2. 3001 Renwick Street (D3) (Owner, Melvin Tatum, Sr., et al) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved for property owner to be given 30 days or November 28, 2020, in which to bring the structure into compliance with the code or demolish the structure and clean the lot.

Comments: Pictorial evidence of the current state of the property was shown by Chief Code Enforcement Officer, Catherine Robinson. Discussion on the property's condition was made by Mrs. Robinson and Councilwoman Woods. Mr. Melvin Tatum, owner was present and commented his plans for the property.

3. 1610 South Grand Street (D4) (Owner, Rosalind J. Loyd) Upon a motion by Mr. Marshall, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved for property owner to be given 120 days or February 28, 2021, in which to bring the structure into compliance with the code or demolish the structure and clean the lot. (There were no public comments).

Comments: Pictorial evidence of the current state of the property was shown by Chief Code Enforcement Officer, Catherine Robinson. Discussion on the property's condition was made by Mrs. Robinson and Councilman Marshall. Mrs. Loyd, owner was present and commented her plans for the property. Mrs. Robinson stated that she would need a plan of action from the owner.

Rodney McFarland commented that Council should listen to their supporters prior to condemning the properties. Mr. Marshall said he has reached out to and have listened to his supporters.

ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF BIDS: Public Comment None.

RESOLUTIONS AND MINUTE ENTRIES:

Council: Public Comment: None

Department of Administration: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to Consider an Application by Roy J, Arthur dba Concession Stand, 428 Desiard Street, Monroe, LA 71201 for a New 2020 Class A Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been Cleared, CO-Cleared, Distance Report Cleared. (There were no public comments).

(b) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Consider twelve (12) Renewal Applications for a New 2021 Class A Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (There were no public comments).

(c) Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to Consider two (2) Renewal Applications for a New 2021 Class B Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved.

Comments: Mrs. Arnita Spencer, citizen, asked about the addresses of each business. Mr. Harvey explained the items explained the address locations were renewals of existing licenses with the exception of the first one was a restaurant that previously had an alcohol license.

(d) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Consider one (1) Renewal Applications for a New 2021 Class C Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (There were no public comments).

(e) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Consider one (1) Renewal Applications for a New 2021 Class D Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (There were no public comments).

(f) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Consider one (1) Renewal Applications for a New 2021 Class E Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (There were no public comments).

(g) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Consider two (2) Renewal Applications for a New 2021 Class G Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (There were no public comments).

Department of Planning & Urban Development: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mrs. Dawson, Voting YES: Ezernack, Marshall, Dawson, Woods; Voting NO: Harvey; approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7829, authorizing Friday Ellis, Mayor to enter into and execute a Memorandum of Understanding (contract) by and between the City of Monroe and Community-Based Development Organization (CBDO) ahayah community development corporation up to the amount of \$140,000.00 from the home investment partnership program (home) m-19-mc-22-0206, and up to the amount of \$25,000.00 from the community development block program (cdbg) b-19-mc-22-0206 and further providing with respect thereto.

Comments: Ms. Downs explained the housing project and not livable due to raw sewage, senior citizen handicap; Harvey inquired about the cost of the housing; they are partnering with the CBDO to demolish the property with CDBG funds and reconstruct with Home funds and make it ADA compliant and energy efficient; Mr. Harvey commented about the livable space of 1400 sq. ft house and the costs associated with the project. Ms. Downs explained. Ronald Calhoun came forward for comments explaining the project is a 3 bedroom home, 2 baths, handicapped accessible. Mr. Harvey asked for the management fee as a CBDO and Mr. Calhoun said it was 6 percent. Ms. Harvey asked if this item would come back to Council in regard to the funds spent; Ms. Downs said it would come back before Council. Ms. Hill said they wouldn't go beyond the \$140,000 and unless went beyond, then they wouldn't come back. It's a subrecipient agreement and they get the project to manage per HUD rules.

Legal Department: Public Comment: None.

Mayor's Office: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7830, approving and authorizing an agreement for local services by and between the City of Monroe and the Monroe Chamber of Commerce and further providing with respect thereto.

Comments: Mrs. Sue Nichols, Monroe Chamber, thanked the City for their support of the Monroe Chamber.

Department of Public Works: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7831, authorizing a designated city representative to execute Change Order Number 3 (MLU Runway 14/32 Extension – Phase 1 Construction) between the City of Monroe and Merrick, LLC., for a decrease of \$218,439.14 to the contract cost of said project and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

(b) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7832, accepting the base bid of Grindstone Construction LLC of Sterlington, La in the amount of \$118,750.00 for the Office of Motor Vehicles Storm Damage Repairs and further authorizing a designated city representative to enter into and execute a contract for said work. (There were no public comments).

Add-On: (c) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved to add to the agenda to Adopt a Resolution authorizing a designated City representative to execute change order number 1, (Office of Motor Vehicles storm damage repairs) between the City of Monroe and Grindstone Construction LLC for a decrease in the contract amount of \$20,000.00 and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Comments: Attorney Creekbaum explained why the change order was being made immediately after introducing the resolution for repair because it was a public bid law issue.

Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7833, authorizing a designated City representative to execute change order number 1, (Office of Motor Vehicles storm damage repairs) between the City of Monroe and Grindstone Construction LLC for a decrease in the contract amount of \$20,000.00 and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Department of Community Affairs: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7834, accepting the base bid plus alternate bid 1 of Grindstone Construction LLC for a total amount of \$602,000.00 for the Masur Museum of Art Storm Damage Repairs and further authorizing a designated city representative to enter into and execute a contract for said work. (There were no public comments).

(b) Upon a motion by Mr. Marshall, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7835, authorizing a management agreement between the City of Monroe and Donald Walters as Golf Director and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Add-On: (c) Upon a motion by Mr. Marshall, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to add to the agenda to Adopt a Resolution authorizing a designated city representative to execute Change Order Number 1 (Masur Museum of Art Storm Damage Repairs) between the City of Monroe and Grindstone Construction LLC for a decrease in the contract amount of \$157,000.00 and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7836, authorizing a designated city representative to execute Change Order Number 1 (Masur Museum of Art Storm Damage Repairs) between the City of Monroe and Grindstone Construction LLC for a decrease in the contract amount of \$157,000.00 and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Police Department: Public Comment: None.

Fire Department: Public Comment: None.

Engineering Services: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7837, accepting as substantially complete work done by and between the City of Monroe and W. L. Bass Construction, Inc., for the repairs to Warhawk Way & Inabnet Blvd. Causeway Project, and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

(b) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mrs. Dawson and unanimously approved to Adopt Resolution No. 7838, authorizing posting of weight limit recommendation for the bridge structure on Grammont St near the City Cemetery (Recall No. 400523), and further providing with respect thereto.

Comments:

Mrs. Arnita Spencer, citizen, inquired about the location of the bridge.

BREAK IF NEEDED:

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES:

Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Marshall, second by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance declaring a one-time Waiver of Class A License Fees for Bars and Nightclubs that were unable to open during the covid-19 pandemic and further providing with respect thereto. (Mayor)

Comments: Senator Stuart Cathey, commented his commendation for the Ordinance and spoke regarding a package of bills doing this at the State level and is hopeful it will be passed; there were businesses that were forced to close at no fault of their own; the house and senate on the state level agreed that it was more than fair to grant the businesses a waiver on next year's liquor licenses and in the future is hopeful that the City will take the same action they did.

Mrs. Ezernack asked for the numbers that would be waived; Mrs. Rowell said there are approximately 19 at \$500 for a total of \$9500.00 revenue stream.

(b) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to Introduce an Ordinance accepting the Donation of sewer improvements built on a public right of way from CBS Interest, LLC and further providing with respect thereto. (Eng.) (There were no public comments).

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

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairman Harvey opened the public hearing and seeing no one come forward, the hearing was closed.

(a) Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,020, authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to Marisa Wilson all rights, title and interest that the City may have acquired to the lot in Lots 23 & 24 Parlor City Industrial Sub of Sq 27 Terminal Heights, No Street Address On Thomas Ave., Ouachita Parish, District 5, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated June 24, 2015, and further with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments).

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairman Harvey opened the public hearing and seeing no one come forward, the hearing was closed.

(b) Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,021, authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of the property described below and sell to Marisa Wilson all rights, title and interest that the City may have acquired to the easterly 60 ft of Lots 23 & 24 Parlor City Industrial Sub of Sq 27 Terminal Heights, Ouachita Parish, 821 Thomas St., District

5, Monroe, La, by Adjudication at Tax Sale dated June 24, 2015, and further with respect thereto. (Legal) (There were no public comments).

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairman Harvey opened the public hearing and seeing no one come forward, the hearing was closed.

(c) Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,022, establishing a twelve (12) month Moratorium upon the receipt and processing of all applications for Certificates of Occupancy, Building Permits and any other land use development approvals associated with used tire stores; setting a public hearing date and further providing with respect thereto. (P&Z) (There were no public comments).

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairman Harvey opened the public hearing and seeing no one come forward, the hearing was closed.

Mrs. Ezernack stated that she didn't think they needed to set the public hearing; it would be struck from the Ordinance.

(d) Upon a motion by Mrs. Dawson, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,023, adopting and amending the Zoning Map for the City of Monroe, Louisiana to rezone a ±10-acre tract of land presently located in Ouachita Parish from B-3, General Business/Commercial District to B-4, Heavy Commercial District to allow the applicant to operate a drive-in theatre and other outdoor commercial, recreational activities, and is more particularly described as follows: 1101, 1201, 1203 and 1205 Louisville Avenue – APPLICANT: Stephen Carroll – (P&Z) (There were no public comments).

Open Public Hearing/Public Comment/Close Hearing: Chairman Harvey opened the public hearing:

1. Gloria Walker, citizen asked questions regarding the ad valorem tax and the purpose of all the committees. Mr. Harvey explained the advalorem tax was to fund downtown businesses and it would not raise taxes as he explained to Ms. Walker at a prior council meeting.

Mr. Marshall commented in reference to the previous adoption and information stating that it was I-20 back to Louisville, but in speaking with Mr. Bratton, it would be from Masur Museum on back.

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

(e) Upon a motion by Mrs. Ezernack, second by Mr. Marshall and unanimously approved to Finally adopt Ordinance No. 12,024, authorizing the execution of a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement by and among the City of Monroe, State of Louisiana and the Downtown Economic Development District of the City of Monroe, State of Louisiana, relating to the collection, use and expenditure of Ad Valorem Property Tax and Sales Tax Increments in said district, and providing for other matters in connection therewith. (Admin.)

Comments: Mrs. Ezernack thanked DEDD for the information they provided and the explanation concerning the agenda item and to vote, yes.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION:

Chairman Harvey read into record comments that were sent in from Mr. Coleman and Rev. Wright.

1. Mr. Damian Coleman's comments:

Comment #1:

I want to address the council about the school Mask mandate for Monroe City Schools. I have received numerous of complaints from our citizens about the issue of educators at shady grove elementary school and other city schools not enforcing the children to wear mask and practice social distancing during recreation. I myself have driven by shady grove and observe these children on several different occasions outside playing hand and hand, face to face, with no mask or social distancing. Due to the consistent rise of corona virus cases

in schools across the country, we are very concerned about the health and safety of these children. We are asking the Council to please look into this matter and please enforce the COVID-19 safety protocol that has been put in place.

Comment #2:

On behalf of The Life Changers of Northeast Louisiana and the Citizens of District #3. We would like to recognize and say thank you to councilwoman Juanita Woods on her efforts to answer the call of the citizens about the speeding in her District. Councilwoman Wood allowed the placement of small yard signs in her District to campaign the 18 wheelers and big truck's to slow down in certain part's of Booker T. Though we understand that this is small gesture to a much bigger solution. Councilwoman Woods has took the initiative to provide immediate comfort to the citizens of her District and The reassurance that thier voice's are being heard. Councilwoman Woods commitment to her District has been superb, and her leadership has been emaculant. Thank You again Councilwoman Wood for your many years of service and community outreach. We pray that you continue to help and serve the citizens in your District for many many more years to come.

2. Rev. Roosevelt Wright's comments:

Forty years ago the Monroe City Council passed an ordinance to close down the city dump because it was hazardous to the safety of the community. In the interim, four mayors have served the city and all have respected that ordinance even though the city has been inundated by a series of storms, tornados, and hurricanes over the years. The city could have saved money by using the site, but it was a matter of respect for health and safety concerns. I am extremely disappointed that the city has sought and received permission for the DEQ to use this site for two years even though there are residents who live in close proximity to the site and new homes are presently under construction.

The parish chose a site far away from residential or commercial operations to burn its storm vegetation. I am deeply disturbed that the city did not do the same.

I do not believe that the city would have chosen a site near residences in North Monroe. The fact that it does not seem to bother the administration to choose a site near residents of South Monroe speaks volumes.

Don't we deserve the same consideration that would be given to North Monroe residents?

Are South Monroe residents expendable?

I ask each council member to use your influence, and your voice to immediately stop this burn and to pass an ordinance affirming that the site will never be used for any dumping or burning purpose without a council approved declaration of emergency. To do less is inexcusable.

3. Verbon Muhammad, asked if the City would cease and desist the burning within the city limits.

4. Melonie Saulsberry, a member of Mayor's transition team, spoke regarding the respect of the citizens.

5. Gloria Walker, spoke regarding being in bondage and the leadership being terrible.

6. Lamar Spencer, spoke regarding the trash pickup schedule and crime, police response and speeders in the area.

7. Arnita Spencer, spoke regarding the traffic in her community and the speeding.

Mr. Janway commented the increase of trash tonnage and not knowing exactly when they would be back on schedule. Ms. Woods inquired about the use of the old dump and expressed her concern for the continued dumping of the trash and asked that it would stop. Mr. Janway said they did stop taking to the dump and have not hauled anything into the dump.

8. Rodney McFarland Sr., commented about giving out addresses due to uncertain times and to reconsider that; he spoke about speaking time being limited; spoke regarding the continued burning at the dump.

Ms. Woods said she witnessed trucks going into the dump site; it is good for the burning due to the citizens in the area.

9. A.B. Davis Johnson, Sr, spoke regarding the burning of the dump and who got permission from DEQ to open the landfill, was it a public notice. Mr. Harvey said all DEQ permits are public notice.

Mrs. Ezernack asked what Council could do to shut down the dump and with the concerns of the community, asked Attorney Creekbaum to look into the matter. He said he would look into the matter.

10. Sam Moore, III, spoke regarding the closing of the dump.

11. Willie Colvin spoke regarding the structure at 826 Bryant Street and it has been torn down.

12. Michael Thompson, Police Juror, spoke regarding the sharing of District with Ms. Woods; he spoke with the Mayor and he and DJ gave him the videos about the dumping grounds and understand and said the constituents didn't know how the debris was being burned and asked that it be closed. Ms. Woods commented that as Councilwoman for that District that she has not seen the video that was mentioned by Mr. Thompson.

13. Mr. Marshall said Ms. Sonya Jacobs had something that she wanted to share; Ms. Jacobs commented her concern for the decorum of the Council meeting.

14. Ms. Rosalind Loyd, commented concerning her property and the Code Enforcement department. Mr. Marshall said he would speak with Ms. Robinson for more discussion.

There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 8:59 p.m., upon a motion of Mrs. Ezernack and seconded by Ms. Woods. (There were no public comments).

Mr. Douglas Harvey
Council Chairman

Ms. Carolus S. Riley
Council Clerk

Ms. Jacqueline Benjamin
Council Secretary

***For extended details on the Council meeting please call the Council Clerk, Monday-Friday at 329-2252; also, a recording of the minutes can be sent via email to you.**