

City Hall, Monroe, Louisiana
July 22, 2025
6:00 p.m.

There was a legal and regular session of the City Council of the City of Monroe, Louisiana held on this date at the Council's regular meeting place, the Council Chamber, City Hall Building, Monroe, Louisiana.

The Honorable Chairman Rodney McFarland I, called the meeting to order. He 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 McFarland 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 Ms. Janiya Banner.

ITEMS FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION – An Ordinance authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of and sell to Alvin McClain and Natasha McClain, all rights, title, and interest that the city may have acquired to Lot 21, Sq. 52, Ouachita Cotton Mills 2nd Addition, Ouachita Parish, 1301 Florida St. Monroe, La, by adjudication at tax sale dated July 31, 2003. (Passover until the next City Council meeting August 12, 2025) and A Resolution accepting the bid of and awarding the contract to TK Airport Solutions Inc. for the Monroe Regional Airport Passenger Boarding Bridges Project (Public Works item added to the agenda). Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved. (There were no public comments.)

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

(1.) Mayor Friday Ellis welcomed everyone and announced they had a wonderful State of the City attended by the public. He thanked all who were involved for putting it on, the City Council, and the City employees who showed up to talk about what has happened over the past year. He said he had the privilege of attending the NAACP Freedom banquet which was a wonderful event. Lastly, he said he had the privilege Sunday to make a road trip to Texas and many of the City first responders are there in the recovery efforts in Texas. He said they are working in some very dangerous conditions, but they are highly trained and skilled. He said it was good for them to meet with FEMA and their first responders to learn from them. He said continue to pray for the first responders in Texas and to be very proud of the first responders.

(2.) Mr. Harvey had no announcements.

(3.) Mrs. Ezernack thanked Ms. Banner for the wonderful invocation, and she wished her good luck in her senior year at Neville High School. She thanked everyone who was involved with the State of the City and the production. She said it was a wonderful event with a lot of great information. She noted she also had the opportunity to go to one of the ribbon cuttings for the senior center at Benoit. She said it was a wonderful effort by Assistant Chief of Police Mary Tellis and her team for making sure it happen for the seniors.

(4.) Ms. Woods welcomed everyone, and congratulated Chairman McFarland and Vice-Chairman Muhammad and she said she is looking forward to working with them this next term. She thanked Chief Mary Tellis and Sergeant Stephanie Williams for all the effort they put forth to open a beautiful senior room at Powell. She said they really didn't get the publicity that Benoit got but she wanted all her constituents to know that the Powell's senior room is open. She said it is a beautiful facility, and they are super excited to have it in the community.

(5.) Mr. Muhammad said good evening to everyone, and he echoed the Council stating the State of the City he really enjoyed. He said it was put together well by the administration. He said there were two events at Benoit the groundbreaking of the fiber with AT&T and the senior room grand opening both well-attended. On another note, he said the fence at Carver Elementary they have gotten some movement on that and there will be a new fence around Carver which they are in the second Phase. He said hopefully the students will have a pathway to walk for those who live in Oak Manor to walk to Carver. Also, he noted, he did attend the NAACP Freedom Fund Banquet,

which was also well attended, and they heard from Grambling State University President Martin Lemelle Jr., and everyone was in good spirit. Lastly, he announce 63 days with no homicides in the City of Monroe, and he engaged the community to keep it going.

(6.) Mr. McFarland stated he doesn't want to be redundant about what his colleagues have already spoken on. He said the only thing that he didn't hear them talk about was the Greater Louisiana State Convention that was held here in Monroe this week. He said some of them had the opportunity to share with them on Sunday and also today with their community service project. He thanked those who have supported and noted that they brought quite a few people from around the state to Monroe. And they informed the Council today they have already decided to come back next year. He said they definitely want to show them some great hospitality when they come back next year. On another note, he said before going into the voted agenda items he wants to make sure to set the ground rules. He stated for public comments, once you leave the podium you cannot return. He said during Council deliberation, no one from the public can interrupt or come back and make other remarks. For citizens' participation, they will have 3 minutes only, and when the bell rings, please take your seat. He asked the Council to not ask any questions while the citizens are at the podium so as to not give them additional time

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey and seconded by Ms. Woods and the minutes of the Legal and Regular session of July 8, 2025, were approved. (There were no public comments.)

RESOLUTIONS AND MINUTE ENTRIES:

(a) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8952 authorizing a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with Issac King d/b/a Justa Cowboy Association and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8953 granting an exception to the Open Container Ordinance to Advancion Sciences for the annual United Way Golf Tournament 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 Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8954 granting an exception to the Open Container Ordinance to Darryl Dayson (Dayson Diamond Youth Foundation) for a Multi-Cultural Seafood Festival at the RiverMarket pursuant to Monroe City Code Sec. 12-231 D. (Open Container Ordinance) and further providing with respect thereto.

Pastor Earl Davis, 900 Marx Street, spoke to the Council about hosting Monroe's 1st Annual Seafood Festival. The event aims to raise awareness and support for local farmers who are currently struggling. The festival will offer free general admission, with a VIP section featuring a complimentary crab and lobster boil and drinks. He mentioned they've received strong community support but currently lack a location to receive the food being sent by the Lieutenant Governor's Office, due to restrictions on using the Civic Center's kitchen facilities for business though he emphasized this is a nonprofit effort. The festival's goal is also to raise funds to help local youth after graduation and to create job opportunities. Pastor Davis requested the City's support, including police presence and other resources, for the three-day event scheduled for August 15–17. He invited everyone to attend this family-friendly event, which will include vendors, and noted that VIP registration is available at Iloveseafoodfest.com.

Mr. McFarland emphasized the need to keep Council meetings on track. He said that during "any other item" on the agenda, those representing the item should speak during public comments. He said when the Council begins deliberations, only the Mayor's staff or department heads should address the Council. Additionally, he recommended that Pastor Davis submit his requests in writing to the Council and the Mayor for their consideration.

Department of Administration:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to Consider request from the Purchasing Division for authorization for an authorized City representative to advertise for bids for the Water system Improvements – Thomas Avenue/Georgia Street

Intersection Project. The engineer's estimate is \$677,220.00. The DBE goal is 11.65% and the source of funds is Water Distribution Funds. (There were no public comments.)

Mr. McFarland thanked the City Engineer for pulling the Council in and having a great conversation about this project. He thanked the him for giving the Council the information in more than a timely manner.

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8955 authorizing a contract with Anding Construction Services, LLC, for the Chauvin Lane Drainage Repair Project and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Muhamamad, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to consider an Application by Kristina Crook dba K&K's Giving Tree, 1623 North 18th Street, Monroe, LA 71201 for a Renewal 2025 Class B Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (Distance Report Cleared, Cert. of Occupy Cleared) (Mrs. Ezernack abstained) (There were no public comments.)

Department of Planning & Urban Development:

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8956 authorizing the City of Monroe to apply for and accept fy 25-26 HUD/Emergency Solutions Grants Program Funding. (There were no public comments.)

Mrs. Ezernack thanked Planning and Urban Development for bringing this to the Council and for their hard work. She said it is very important to the community that this resolution to pass.

Legal Department:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8957 authorizing the expropriation of Parcel 9-1 for the Kansas Lane – Garret Road Connector Project and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Mayor's Office

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8958 authoring a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Miss Monroe Scholarship Pageant Organization, Inc. and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Department of Public Works:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8959 approving amendment no. 1 to the work authorization (102400) between the City of Monroe and KSA Engineers, Inc. for the Monroe Regional Airport Passenger Boarding Bridge Replacement Project. (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8960 approving the contract with Ouachita Electrical Contractors, LLC, for the Water Treatment Plant High Service Pump No. 4 Repair Project and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

ITEM CONSIDERED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING AND ADDON AS ITEM (c).

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8961 accepting the bid of and awarding the contract to TK Airport Solutions, INC. for the Monroe Regional Airport Passenger Boarding Bridges Project and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Engineering Services:

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved Resolution No. 8962 approving amendment no. 1 to the Wastewater Treatment, Collections, & Transmission Operations Management Agreement between the City of Monroe and Waggoner Engineering, Inc. (There were no public comments.)

(b) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution to consider request from Jack & Deep LLC (Sip-n-chill) for a Major Conditional Use Permit authorizing the use of this location (1314 Sterlington Road) to allow the sale of alcohol for consumption off-premises in the B-3(General Business/Commercial) District. The Comprehensive Business/Commercial) District. Major Conditional Uses are uses that require a second level of approval; therefore, this request comes before the City Council for their approval in addition to that of the Planning Commission. (There were no public comments.)

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

ITEM CONSIDERED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MEETING TO PASSOVER:

Upon consensus of the Council item (a) was passed over: An Ordinance authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of and sell to Alvin McClain and Natasha McClain, all rights, title, and interest that the city may have acquired to Lot 21, Sq. 52, Ouachita Cotton Mills 2nd Addition, Ouachita Parish, 1301 Florida St. Monroe, La, by adjudication at tax sale dated July 31, 2003.

The Chairman Open Public Hearing and Seeing no one coming forward the Hearing was closed.

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Ordinance No. 12,267 authorizing the City of Monroe to take corporeal possession of and sell to Kimareanna L. Ross, all rights, title, and interest that the city may have acquired to the lot in Lot 11 Stubbs Bayou Addition, beg 211.11 ft no of Grammont St. & frtg 40 ft on east side alley, depth 107.48ft, Ouachita Parish, (no situs) S. 21st St., Monroe, La, by adjudication at tax sale dated June 18, 2010, and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments.)

Citizen's Participation:

(1.) Ms. Detrick Massey, 1900 Hickey Street, addressed the Council about her previous request for funding to help local kids participate in the Olympics. She said she hasn't received any response by email or phone and doesn't know if the request was denied. She shared that in 2018 she organized a track meet at Carroll High School that drew over 3,000 people to Monroe. Currently, some local kids are competing in Georgia to represent Monroe, though some parents struggled to cover travel costs. She also mentioned plans to bid for another track meet next June, which she expects will bring even more people to the city.

Mr. McFarland noted that the Internal Auditor, Mr. Muhammad, and Mr. Creekbaum met and seemed to reach a resolution regarding Ms. Massey's request. He asked whether the letter with their response would be sent to Ms. Massey or if she would receive it tonight.

Mrs. Yolanda Washington, Internal Auditor, stated she can give her the letter tonight.

(2.) Ms. Jerrilyn Profit, 1900 Hickey Street, noted she is here in support of Massey Miracle Run which she is a parent, and she also help her with administration. She said as a parent she knows how expensive it can be. She said they have planted in the community and would want the community to plant back in them. She said if the beloved City of Monroe could just assist them they would be totally and gratefully thankful.

(3.) Ms. Marlo Moore, 1510 Georgia Street, thanked Mr. Muhammad, Mr. McFarland, and Mr. McCallister for taking time out for her grievances. She said she feels the City of Monroe Firefighters are the best in the State of Louisiana. Ms. Moore recounted that on April 5, 2025, her car got stuck under the Plum Street underpass because barricades weren't put in place. She lost her car that night and paid \$700 to retrieve it the next business day. She tried contacting the City Attorney's office but was directed to the City's adjuster, Mr. Mike Shore, whom she described as condescending and unsympathetic. She said Mr. Shore accused her of intentionally driving her car into water that she couldn't see and he told her it was her fault and the City wouldn't help. Ms. Moore questioned why barricades weren't set up that night and said she is still without a car because of the City's failure to act.

Mr. McFarland noted he has been very calm tonight, and he doesn't like those type of comments coming from the insurance adjuster and he knows that it is not the first time which is problematic. He said he need some conversations held with him about how he talks and deals with the Council's

constituents. He said he pray and hope this is the last time he hears about these comments coming from those who should be helping.

(4.) Ms. Alicia Washington, 3000 Evangeline Street, said she is here because she rented a park through Monroe Parks and Recreation. She said when she went back July 11th to retrieve her refund she said the lady was rude to her. She said she told her she wasn't processing a refund today and she would call her when it is ready which she did not. She noted she ended up calling Chief Jimmie Bryant and he called her supervisor Mr. Ray Wright. She said when she picked up the check it was paid to her in a money order and not a city check. She said she also asked for a copy of the permit which she then found out her name was forged on the permit. She said Mr. Wright stated he gave the City employee permission to sign her name on the document.

Mayor Ellis stated he would follow up with Ms. Washington after the meeting.

Mr. Muhammad noted to forged someone name is not policy and that should be looked into.

Mr. McFarland said the red flag is where someone receiving a money order and not a checkback to the city. He wanted to clarify if the City rent parks.

Mr. Creekbaum stated there are rental fees for various areas of the parks and it depends on the park or what's going on.

Mr. McFarland stated he needs Mr. Creekbaum to look into this matter and wasn't aware that the City rent parks.

(5.) Ms. Arleace Green, 301 Egan Street, noted she has lived on Egan Street for 33 years and they have issues with trees needing to be cut, ditches need to be cut, grass grown over the ditches, vacant houses, squatters, and the landlords with tenants who are not keeping up their yard. She said the drug situation is terrible and people all of sorts are living in vacant homes. She said for the record in hurricane season if the rains come the ditches are covered in grass they will have a flooding situation. She said FEMA has been cut and for the record she is here today to ask for consistently and to please get them some help down there because they have been neglected for too long. She said only time they see something going on is during election and she hope the Council consider what she has stated.

Mr. McFarland noted he would have some more conversation on this matter with Ms. Green.

Mr. Muhammad stated there was a rain event Saturday flooding near Dollar General on Jackson Street and he talked to Mr. McCallister and Public Works, and they mentioned behind Egan Street which he asked Mr. McCallister to speak to.

Mr. Morgan McCallister, City Engineer, noted at the Dollar General it is private matter, and he has reached out a couple times, but they have identified an area that is east of Dollar General down Egan Street. He said they sent the information over to Mr. Louis Tolliver in Public Works but anything beyond Public Works capability they will get Atakapa involved so it will be a collaborative effort. He said there is an outfall issue at that point, and they did receive permission to do some cleaning and evaluation of that system from the State because Jackson Street is a DOTD owned roadway. He said there is a major issue along Jackson Street from Standifer all the way down to Vernon.

(6.) Mr. Brain Drayton, 405 Filhiol Avenue, stated he is the Union President here at the City of Monroe #2388 and he said they are having problems with Council 17 who are over them. He said members of management when they have problems they are calling Council 17 instead of calling him about the problems. He said Chief Jimmie Bryant is intervening with Union business because he called his supervisor Mr. Ray Wright and told him he is no longer the Union President and to not let him do any type of Union business. He further stated he has not received anything from Council 17 saying he is not the Union President anymore.

Mr. Muhammad said he doesn't want to get involved in administration business, but he has never heard of an administrator tell a Union President that they can't be the President, and the Council need to find out if that is true.

Mr. McFarland said that it is going a little bit too far if that's going on, and he thinks the Mayor needs to look into his second in command.

Ms. Woods said it is coming back more often, and it really needs to be looked into.

(7.) Mr. Robert Johnson, 2108 Coolidge Street, noted the Mayor has people in charge that are not giving him the whole truth. He said he filed a grievance on the young man that stole a weed eater, and they only gave him two weeks. He said he was given 45 days, and he had permission. He said there are people going at employees because they have the power to do it. He said they painted to the Mayor that he was a bad person, and that was their way of getting back at him because they want him to retire. He said when God tells him it's time, that is when he will retire, but until then his values are still for the citizens of Monroe.

(8.) Mr. Tyrone Dickins, 3004 Dick Taylor, said he contributes a lot to Monroe, both through events and bringing in revenue. He emphasized that he avoids drama and trouble. Although there was some confusion with paperwork previously, he said it has now been resolved. He requested that the City place his item on the agenda, as he now has everything in order.

Mr. McFarland wanted everyone to understand there is a cutoff time for items to be submitted for the agenda. He said if you don't meet that cutoff time then your item goes to the next agenda. He said no one is stopping anything of Mr. Dickins from being on the agenda and he doesn't know who gave him them bad information. He said the Council saw the flyer, but they didn't have his paperwork.

There being no further business to come before the council, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7:22 p.m.

Mr. Rodney McFarland I
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.