

City Hall, Monroe, Louisiana
November 25, 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 Rodney McFarland I, Chairman called the meeting to order. He then asked the clerk to call roll.

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

There was absent: Ms. Woods

Chairman McFarland announced that a quorum was present, and that the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance would lead by his designee Rev. Angela Thomas, Associate Minister, Greater Free Gift Baptist Church.

Rules of the Day: The Chairman welcomed everyone to the City Council meeting and outlined the rules: speakers on action items must use the podium to the right, have three minutes, and cannot return once finished. Citizens on the participation list may speak on any topic respectfully and orderly. Comments on agenda items must be germane to that item. The Chairman asked that order is kept in this chamber if not he will be asking the Marshal to escort you out. He will keep order in this Chamber, he asked that you follow the rules when someone is up speaking, do not interrupt and respect those as they come up to give their remarks.

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack, the minutes of the Legal and Regular Session of November 10, 2025, were unanimously approved. (No comments from the public.)

RESOLUTIONS AND MINUTE ENTRIES:

1. Council:

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved to adopt a Resolution #9047 appointing Karen Jefferson to the Board of Commissioners for the Downtown Economic Development District. (Woods)

Ms. Karen Jefferson, 418 Reed Street, was present and came forward to thank the Council and Mayor for entrusting her with this opportunity of being appointed to the Downtown Economic Development District. She is excited about this and wants to contribute in sustaining Monroe's economic grow in the historic downtown. She hopes with her help to attract more businesses and job opportunities.

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to adopt a Resolution#9048 appointing Cory Bahr to the Board of Commissioners for the Downtown Economic Development District. (Harvey) (There were no questions or comments.)

Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to adopt a Resolution #9049 appointing Troy Greer to the Monroe Planning Commission. (There were no questions or comments.)

Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to adopt a Resolution #9050 renaming the Benny J. Ausberry/James "Coach" Hughey Community Center to the Ausberry-Hughey Community Center. (Woods) (There were no questions or comments.)

2. Department of Administration:

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to consider twenty-six (26) Renewal Applications for a New 2026 Class A Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (There were no questions or comments.)

Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Mr. Harvey unanimously approved to consider thirteen (13) Renewal Applications for a New 2026 Class B Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (There were no questions or comments.)

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to consider one (1) Renewal Applications for a New 2026 Class C Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (There were no questions or comments.)

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved to consider two (2) Renewal Applications for a New 2026 Class E Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (There were no questions or comments.)

3. Mayor's Office:

Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution #9051 authorizing a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Miss Louisiana Organization for the 2026 Miss Louisiana Pageant.

Miss Gabrelle McLeod, Miss Louisiana 2025, came forward and thanked the Council and the City of Monroe for their continued support.

Mrs. Ezernack wanted to say thank you to Ms. Dawana Little, Executive Director as well as Miss Louisiana, for making their home here for the last number of years and for their support of the pageant and its continued operation here in Monroe. She noted that the city appreciates her as well.

Mr. Harvey thanked Miss Louisiana for serving and congratulations and he is sure it has been a fun year. He thanked Miss Little and he noted he couldn't think of the pageant without thinking of her.

Mr. Muhammad noted that he found out a little history that the Miss Louisiana Pageant started in Lake Providence, so everybody had to travel to Lake Providence at one point. Thank you for continuing to keep the pageant here in Monroe.

Mr. McFarland wanted to say thank you for not taking this pageant outside of Monroe and they want to give it all their support.

(The Council took pictures with Miss Louisiana after the vote.)

4. Department of Public Works:

Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved to adopt a Resolution #9052 authorizing the City of Monroe to apply for fy 2026 Section 5339 Funds for buses and bus facilities.

Mrs. Ezernack asked Mr. Marc Keenan to come forward and explain the process of what they are doing, applying for the funds and how they are generally going to be used when they are awarded.

Marc Keenan, Transit Director, came forward and explained that they do anticipate being awarded the funds once they apply. They have applied in the past and every year they get something. They usually purchase buses; some years they use toward the transit center they are looking at building. In this case their parking lot and the shop have some areas where the concrete has sunken, and this is a safety issue. The State has some lasting funds that they can apply for so they are seeking to apply for \$400,000 that will take care of that project.

Mrs. Ezernack asked if this is for the terminal.

Mr. Keenan said no this is for the current facility that they have for when they perform maintenance on the buses.

5. Police Department:

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved to adopt a Resolution #9053 authorizing the City of Monroe to enter into a Contract with Motorola Solutions for the implementation of the drone as First Responder (DFR) Program.

Chief Zordan, MPD, came forward to tell everyone a little about Drone First Responder(DFR). They have been working to get this for some time. It's going to be a benefit to the citizens of Monroe; it will take about 4 months to get it set up. The Drone will auto deploy from a 911 signal, and it has a hook where you can attach different things. For instance, we have drownings in the river it can literally signal from where they have it fixed auto deploy to it and drop a life vest that auto inflates when it hits the water. It can have a nork in it if we have someone overdoes, you can put an AED on it. It gets eyes on the scene very quickly and it feeds that information back before the police gets there. For instance, if someone calls in about a person with a gun it feed that information back before we get there and in the event that it's not a gun that information is transmitted back to the police officer and they can de-escalate. It has a heat sensor thermal on it, if there is a Silver Alert with our citizen who might have Alzheimer and they walk off, it can help to search. It is a good thing for the citizens.

Mr. McFarland noted that they saw some of these things at the meeting in Salt Lake City and he is excited about this, he is glad that he brought this to Monroe, Louisiana and he is in full support of it.

6. Engineering Services:

Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved to consider request from Daily Press, LLC, 2899 Sterlington Road, for a Major Conditional Use Permit to allow the sale of alcohol for consumption off-premises, within the B-3(General Business/Commercial) District. The Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance allows this as a Major conditional Use in the B-3(General Business/Commercial) District. Major Conditional Uses are uses that require a second level of approval; therefore, this request comes before City council for their approval in addition to that of Planning Commission. (There were no questions or comments.)

A representative of the Daily Press was present.

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Mr. Harvey wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.
2. Mrs. Ezernack wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.
3. Ms. Woods – absent.
4. Mr. Muhammad wanted to say Happy Thanksgiving as well and Go Jaguars. Mr. Muhammad asked two special individuals to come forward he got a chance to see what they do every two weeks. They feed and do food distribution on Texas Avenue; he asked Ms. Dupree and Ms. Mason to come forward and be recognized and to tell everyone about Rays of Sunshine and what they do for our community.

Ms. Veronica Mason came forward; she is a volunteer with Rays of Sunshine; every two weeks they bag 600 to 674 bags that they distribute to the community. They service 634 families every two weeks, according to the number in their household and it is based on their income level. They are trying to make sure that the community is being feed at all times. They get phones calls during the week because somebody is in an emergency and needs something extra and can't make it through, so they try to make sure they are taken care of. They also service SCORE (Senior Citizen Outreach Entity) that does a lot with the elderly so they make sure they are being utilized also, they come in and pick up from them, and they make sure they are loaded and carried back to distribute to some of the elderly facilities where they can get their food brought to them if they can't get out.

Mr. Muhammad noted that Ms. Dupree asked him to come by and see what they do.

Ms. Dupree thanked everyone for allowing them to come and express the things that they do in the neighborhood. She has enjoyed the years she has been there and she loves what she does, it is a passion, and she invites others to come out and see what they do. She asks that the council come by sometime

and mingle with them and hear their conversation, because it is so sad to hear what some of them are going through, it could be one of us.

5. Mr. McFarland wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving and a blessed season. He noted that Mrs. Ezernack, Ms. Woods and himself had the experience of their lives trying to get back to Monroe Louisiana trying to leave Salt Lake City on Sunday and had delays after delays and mechanical issues with airplanes. They made it to Dallas, and they missed their flight and got up the next morning that flight was cancelled. Mr. McFarland rented a car and the ladies agreed to get in the car with him, it was storming all the way from Dallas Texas, they talked and prayed that it was only by his grace, but they made it. It was truly by his grace because he hit a water pocket and the car went sideways, but he was able to get the car back in the road without going over.

Mrs. Ezernack said she could see that big silver fence.

Mr. McFarland said by the grace of God, it was God who took that stirring wheel and got them back in that road and there were so many accidents along the way home. They kept saying it could have been them. It was bad and only God allowed us to make it back to Monroe safely. Mr. McFarland thanked his colleges for their prayers while he drove them, and they kept him alert. They had a very good opportunity to bond, and it is an experience he will never forget that the 3 of them had on their way back to Monroe Louisiana.

Mr. McFarland announced that at the Greater Free Gift Church where he pastors for the last 36 years, will be serving on Thanksgiving Day at least 300 meals. They will have worship at 9am after that they will have hot Thanksgiving meals to give out. Volunteers are welcome to come around 9am on Thursday.

Mr. McFarland announced concerning what's going to happen on Saturday in Baton Rouge, he wants everybody to know that Jaguars is Tiger food. This year will be the year of the Tigers.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION:

Ms. Johnnie Thomas came forward to say that something happened in her neighborhood and MPD was on point, and she thanked the city for what they do.

Mr. Herman Jones came forward to speak on his MLK I have a Dream Theatre Play (a Musical Broadway Entertainment Experience) to encourage the city to partner with him for future endeavors. He also recognized a young lady in workforce development who is passionate about the theatre.

ADJOURN.

There being no further business to come before the council, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Mr. Rodney McFarland I
Chairman

Ms. Carolus S. Riley
Council Clerk

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.