

City Hall, Monroe, Louisiana  
May 12, 2026  
6:00PM

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 present: Mrs. Ezernack, Ms. Woods, Mr. Muhammad, and Mr. McFarland

There absent: Mr. Harvey.

Chairman McFarland announced that the quorum was present, and that the Invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance would be led by Rev. Joshua L. Wilhite, Sr.

Chairman McFarland stated on the record that Mr. Harvey arrived at 6:05p.m., and that the full council was present.

Rules of the Day: Chairman McFarland 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. Chairman McFarland 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. Chairman McFarland also advised department heads they could address agenda items pertaining to their departments without time limitations.

Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, second by Chairman McFarland, the minutes of the Legal and Regular Session of April 14, 2026, were approved. (Mrs. Ezernack and Ms. Woods abstained) (No comments from the public)

#### Council

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved Resolution No. 9118 authorizing the City of Monroe to enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement with the Northeast Louisiana Sickle Cell Anemia Foundation and further providing with respect thereto. (No comment from the public)

(b) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, second by Mr. Muhammad and approved Resolution No. 9119 authorizing the retention of JDS Consulting & International Partners, LLC for procurement analysis and review consulting services. (Mrs. Ezernack and Mr. Havery nay)

Ms. Mondrian Douglas, 5513 Long Drive, explained that she was against the resolution. The channels that she believed should have come out with the respect of the council working with the administration and not override it as if the proposal had come from the council itself. Ms. Douglas stated that consultants are normally recommended by the mayor after being asked to by the department or the division requesting the approval of such partnerships for said consult or at the mayor's request. Also stating that council uses its powers for positions made rarely to them, which consist of a council staff, and these position flows interchangeably already with the administration. Once the material needed is pulled, the city council could opt-in for the use of AI to complete such information if it chooses. Douglas advised she didn't see a CEA in place for this item. The argument against this business itself is a former relationship with the Southside Economic Development District and the work it presented to perform and underperform to tackle all things that this was going to do. The company didn't deliver on a proposal that was over \$100,000.00, that was for twenty-four months with potential for another year. Nothing has been produced for district 5. The proposal is for the city and is said to be completed in 9 months, believing that it's not in the council's best interest to entertain the proposal. Ms. Douglas asked Mr. Muhammad to vote against it, encouraging all council to vote against it as well.

Mrs. Sonya Jacobs, 700 University Avenue, head of JDS Consulting and International Partners, stated that the matter had been discussed for several years and highlighted the company's experience and recognized accomplishments in successfully working with municipalities and other government agencies. Mrs. Jacobs also noted the company's experience supporting economic and small business development initiatives and stated there had been no deficiency reports involving the agencies they have served. She described the partnership as a long-awaited opportunity and emphasized that the company would serve as a resource to the city rather than an adversary. Mrs. Jacobs further stated that JDS Consulting consists of experts with a proven track record of working with reputable municipalities and expressed enthusiasm about being a valuable resource to the city.

(c) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and approved Resolution No. 9120 affirming the validity of the economic development framework established by ordinance No. 9553, ratifying the actions of the Interstate 20 Economic Development Corporation within that framework, formally notifying Mayor Ellis that the

continued withholding of payment on a lawfully executed contract may expose the city to compounding statutory liability under LA. R.S. 38:2191, and calling upon the Mayor to fulfill his obligations under charter section 3-09(A)(1) and Louisiana Law. (Mrs. Ezernack and Mr. Harvey nay)

Mr. Mike Gibson, 600 Burrow Street, spoke regarding Ordinance No. 9553 and stated that he didn't understand why the ordinance had been voted against. He attended the Interstate 20 board meeting when the matter was previously considered and believed it should have been passed. Mr. Gibson expressed concerns that the issue was racially motivated and described the business as a legitimate organization that approached the city with a proposal. Mr. Gibson further stated that a similar situation did not occur with Remington. He noted that he had spoken with several council members about the ongoing matter and urged the council to do what he believed was right.

(d) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Mr. Harvey and unanimously approved Resolution No. 9121 granting an exception to Open Container Ordinance to Tyrone Dickins (K9 Outreach Stop the Violence Car, Truck & Bike Show: "Coming Together" Chennault Park) (pursuant to Monroe City Code Sec. 12-231 D (open Container Ordinance) and further providing with respect thereto. (No comment from the public)

(e) Upon motion of Mr. Harvey, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved Resolution No. 9122 granting an exception to the Open Container Ordinance to the Fleet Fleet of Monroe for (The Big Run) at the Forsythe Park pursuant to Monroe city Code Sec. 12-231 D. (Open Container Ordinance) and further providing with respect thereto. (No comment from the public)

## 2. Planning and Urban Development

Ms. Ellen Hill, Planning & Urban Dev. Director, approached the podium to address the upcoming Housing Fair and Expo scheduled for June 6<sup>th</sup> and encouraged community members to attend. She explained that the purpose of the expo is to help residents improve their financial stability and prepare for a stronger financial future. Ms. Hill stated that while managing finances may seem easier during stable times, challenging economic periods make it even more important to learn effective financial strategies. She noted that this marks the fifth year of hosting this expo and recognized the event sponsors. She also highlighted the various programs and educational classes that will be offered to citizens during the event. Additionally, she advised that all agenda items are centered around housing and reinvestment efforts, including partnerships with nonprofit organizations to support housing development and community services.

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved Resolution No. 9123 authorizing a Home American Rescue Plan Program between the City of Monroe and AHAYAH Community Development Corporation, Inc. (CHDO) for the rehabilitation of a residential property located at 3805 Spurgeon Street. (No comment from the public)

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved Resolution No. 9124 authorizing a Home Investment Partnerships Program the City of Monroe and Quest 4 Success (CHDO) for the rehabilitation of a residential property located at 1807 Ruth Street. (No comment from the public)

Mr. Harvey excused himself at 6:23p.m.

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved Resolution No. 9125 authorizing a professional Services Agreement with Mid City Redevelopment Alliance, Inc. for housing counseling, financial coaching, and homeownership support service for the HOME in Monroe Program and related initiatives. (No comment from the public)

(d) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved Resolution No. 9126 authorizing a Professional Services Agreement with United Way of Northeast Louisiana for financial education and financial empowerment services. (No comment from the public)

## 4. Department of Administration:

(a) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved Application by Lamario Looney dba Roxie Southern Bistro, 436 DeSiard Street, Monroe La 71201 for a New 2026 Class A Alcoholic Beverage Permit. The Monroe Police Department has no disqualifying records and Sales Tax has been approved. (Distance Report Cleared, Cert. of Occupy Cleared) (No comment from the public)

Ms. Woods congratulated Pastor Looney on the opening of the business and thanked him for investing in the community. She stated she had heard positive remarks regarding the restaurant.

Ms. Chantel, assistant manager, as well as Ms. Renee, bar manager, of Roxie Southern Bistro, thanked the council for their support and invited the community to patronize the restaurant.

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved a request from the Purchasing Division for authorization for an authorized City representative to advertise for bid WTP Control Room

HVAC Modifications Project. The estimate for the WTP Control Room HVAC Modifications Project is \$200,00.00. (No comment from the public)

Chairman McFarland clarified that the resolution was presented through the Purchasing Division on behalf of the Department of Administration and confirmed for the record that the motion passed.

Public Work Department:

Chairman McFarland opened the floor for any remarks, Mr. Tolliver declined.

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved Resolution No. 9127 accepting a five-year contract for the purchase of diesel and electric transit buses and providing for related matters. (No comment from the public)

Police Department:

Chief Zordan, Monroe Police Department, explained that there is the need to lease an additional ten Ford Explorers due to the increasing numbers of officers and the need for properly equipped police vehicles. Chairman McFarland inquired about wrecked vehicles located behind the Civic center. Chief Zordan advised that vehicles involved in litigation cannot be disposed of until legal matters are resolved.

(a) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved Resolution No. 9128 authorizing the purchase of equipment for ten leased Ford Explorer police vehicles from DANA Safety Supply, Inc. under Louisiana State Contract No. 44000027721. (No comment from the public)

(b) Upon motion of Mrs. Ezernack, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved Resolution No. 9129 authorizing the purchase of twenty-four Swat Vests and related equipment from Caplan's under Louisiana State Contract No. 4400034186/NASPO 198469. (No comment from the public)

4. Engineering Department:

Mr. Morgan McCallister, City Eng / COO, stated that the Powell Avenue Parking Improvement project will begin in the spring and it's a part of the overall master planning for the community centers throughout the city of Monroe. Mr. McCallister advised that the project would double the available parking space and include bus parking, lighting improvements, and land scaping. Second, work is completed by Phantom Construction at the wastewater treatment plant. Last item, the work authorization for Garver, LLC. They have an MSA with the airport and they have done great over the years. So, they would like to use them for the MALSR relocation, associated with the Kansas Lane and Interstate 20 Improvement Project.

(a) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack and unanimously approved Resolution No. 9130 accepting the bid of Amethyst construction, Inc LLC for the Powell Avenue Community Center – Parking Lot Improvements Project and providing for related matters. (No comment from the public)

Ms. Woods, on behalf of District 3 and the Booker T area community, expressed appreciation for the completion of the project.

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved Resolution No. 9131 accepting the work done by Phantom Construction, LLC for the WPCC Headworks Screen Improvements Project as substantially complete and providing for related matters. (No comment from the public)

(c) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved Resolution No. 9132 approving Work Authorization No. 8 with Garver, LLC for resident project representative services for the Runway 04 MALSR Modifications Project, a component of the Kansas Lane – Garrett Road Connector and I-20 Improvements Project. (No comment from the public)

VI: INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTION & ORDINANCES:

(a) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and approved to introduce an Ordinance establishing zero tolerance for racial discrimination, racist remarks and hostile work environment conduct by city employees; providing for investigation, disciplinary action, mandatory training, and reporting requirements; and otherwise providing with respect thereto. (Mrs. Ezernack nay) (No comment from the public)

Mr. Muhammad explained that the proposed ordinance would establish reporting and accountability measures regarding complaints of racial discrimination and hostile workplace conduct.

Mrs. Ezernack, unclear of the statement. She advised she understands what Mr. Muhammad is stating, but that's not what the three-to-four-page document is saying. Regarding the existing city policies, reporting procedures, and the council's role in personnel matters.

Mr. Muhammad advised that this is something we needed to know that this administration is looking into it.

Mrs. Ezernack stated that's a human resource issue and doesn't believe as a council they should be involved.

Mr. Muhammad stated he's not looking for names, just want to know the type of complaints that are coming to the city. Understanding their privacy, they need to know about these complaints because they are obviously not being investigated.

(b) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to introduce an Ordinance approving the Annexation of ±26 acres, extending and enlarging the boundaries of the City of Monroe, Louisiana; providing for recordation of the revised boundary; establishing an effective date; and otherwise providing for related matters.

Ms. Ella Blaine addressed the council regarding approval of the annexation of the Buckhorn Bend property into the City of Monroe. She stated concerns regarding community safety, infrastructure, and property development. Ms. Blaine explained that the developer has invested in Monroe through property improvements and expressed support for responsible, planned development that would contribute to housing and economic growth.

Mrs. Ezernack requested additional information regarding the cost to the city for utility extension and infrastructure development for the proposed annexation. She expressed concern about the fiscal impact of developing approximately 26 acres and requested a development plan or cost estimated prior to final consideration.

Ms. Wood expressed support for exploring the annexation and noted the need for additional housing and economic development in the area. She stated that growth and job creation may increase housing demand and encourage further review of the proposal.

Mr. Muhammad expressed support for expansion of the City of Monroe and the proposed annexation, noting potential economic benefits and future growth opportunities. He requested that additional financial information be provided as the process moves forward.

Chairman McFarland stated that while cost consideration is important, future tax revenue and development potential should also be considered. He expressed support for continued evaluation of the annexation and development of the area.

During the vote, Mrs. Ezernack stated she was voting in favor but requested additional information regarding the City's overall financial commitment. Chairman McFarland reminded Councilmembers that discussion should conclude prior to voting, and that further comments would be allowed after the vote if recognized.

Chairman McFarland took a moment to explain the rules and regulations during voting.

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Chairman McFarland and unanimously approved to introduce an Ordinance amending and re-enacting Chapter 5 (Ambulance Services) of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Monroe to establish a uniform ambulance service system and to provide for the licensing and regulation of a sole provider of ambulance services. (No comment from the public)

(d) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Mrs. Ezernack, the introduction of an Ordinance amending and supplementing the City of Monroe Operating Budget for the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 and further providing with respect thereto was passed over until the next meeting May 26, 2026, for further review and explanation.

Ms. Woods expressed concern regarding discrepancies in the proposed budget figures and requested clarification on fund balance calculations and prior-year financial data.

Mr. Moore stated the ordinance pertains to the prior fiscal year and not the current fiscal year. He requested additional review of the figures and clarification regarding fund balance sources.

Ms. Woods advised that she was aware of the fiscal year on the agenda, ending in 2026. There was \$12,012,154 estimated for 2026, and the propose for 2027 was \$18,398,022.00.

Mr. Moore asked Ms. Woods to meet with him the following day to get a clear understanding of her question. He stated that he didn't have everything in front of him and needed to gather the information.

Chairman McFarland stated that Mr. Moore should be prepared when presenting or discussing agenda items and emphasized the importance of prior review of supporting documentation. He noted that the council had provided sufficient time for preparation.

Mr. Moore stated he believed the supplemental funds were derived from increased sales tax revenue and requested confirmation. He further stated he would need additional time to review the budget details.

Chairman McFarland stated the council would proceed with the items as presented, noting that sufficient time had been provided for review.

Mr. Moore stated that he will not be able to answer the question tonight, but he believed that the inquiries into the supplement came from an increase in the sales tax collected.

Mr. Moore advised he didn't bring his budget book and stated what he brought was strictly focused on the budget amendment items.

Chairman McFarland advised that Mr. Moore was looking for the amending and supplementing ordinance to fail tonight because he didn't come prepared, as advised in the previous meeting. Chairman McFarland stated that the council has given the appropriate amount of time.

Mr. Muhammad stated that several of his questions regarding OCC had been addressed but expressed concern that everyone should have all necessary information before proceeding. He stated that if the item were approved, clarification would still be required for future consideration.

Ms. Woods said she's also not fully prepared to proceed, noting concerns regarding the financial figures presented. She stated she understood the sales tax estimate to be approximately \$1.90 million and requested clarification.

Mr. Creekbaum asked Ms. Woods to restate her question again, and she did.

Mr. Muhammad called for point of order. Advised that the fiscal year 2026-2027 started on May 1st, and asked if Ms. Woods was inquiring about fiscal year 2025-2026?

Mr. Creekbaum explained that the 2026-2027 budget had been previously adopted without the current amendment and that the proposed amendment would impact the beginning and ending fund balance. He stated that the adjustment would result in a reconciliation of prior-year accounting figures for the current fiscal year.

Chairman McFarland advised that since Mr. Moore was not prepared to present full supporting documentation, this item would be postponed allowing for proper review and clarification.

Mr. Creekbaum stated he had answered the questions presented and would offer additional clarification if needed.

Chairman McFarland also added, when you know we have questions coming up to the meeting, you should be ready.

Mrs. Ezernack has motioned to pass over the items to the next meeting to allow for additional clarification. The motion was seconded.

Chairman McFarland advised that a motion is on the floor and reminded council that discussion should conclude prior to voting.

Ms. Wood asked Mr. Creekbaum to put it in writing for her.

Mrs. Ezernack left the meeting, advised Chairman McFarland of her departure at 7:11 p.m.

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

Chairman McFarland opened the Public Hearing and seeing no one come forward the Hearing closed.

(a) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Chairman McFarland, an Ordinance adopting a Reapportionment Plan for Monroe City Council Districts and providing for related matters, unanimously failed.

Chairman McFarland stated that future redistricting efforts would be revisited in accordance with state requirements.

Chairman McFarland opened the Public Hearing and seeing no one come forward the Hearing closed.

(b) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved Ordinance No. 12,296 authorizing a Memorandum of Agreement with the Federal Aviation Administration for the use of certain real property at Monroe Regional Airport and otherwise providing with respect thereto.

Chairman McFarland opened the Public Hearing and seeing no one come forward the Hearing closed.

(c) Upon motion of Mr. Muhammad, seconded by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved Ordinance No. 12,297 authorizing the grant of utility servitude and right-of-way across certain property owned by the City of Monroe in favor of Entergy Louisiana, LLC and further providing with respect thereto.

Chairman McFarland opened the Public Hearing and seeing no one come forward the Hearing closed.

(d) Upon motion of Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Muhammad and unanimously approved Ordinance No. 12,298 revoking a portion of Reese Street (53' wide by 215' long) between Booth Street and Rogers Street.

### XIII: CITIZENS PARTICIPATION:

Ms. Anita Snyder, 1708 Millhaven Road, the Secretary for Transit, was present on behalf of the Union to address the council regarding renewal of the Union contract for Transit employees. She stated that negotiations had been ongoing since May 2025 and requested further discussion regarding employee pay increases and scheduling concerns.

Chairman McFarland expressed concern that the union and administration had not met, stating that the lack of communication was troubling. He noted that allowing a council member to participate in discussions with the union during negotiations could help move the process forward. Chairman McFarland acknowledged that both the mayor and council have responsibilities in the matter, and ultimately any contracts would still require council approval. He further stated that the union had been requesting meetings with the administration since May 2025, yet no meeting has been scheduled as of May 2026, which he considered to be a significant issue.

Mr. Creekbaum stated that he had been communicating directly with Mr. Garland, the International Vice President, regarding negotiation matters and scheduling discussions. He explained that, in previous instances, dates had been coordinated through Mr. Garland and that negotiations had continued accordingly. Mr. Creekbaum further noted that when Mr. Garland recently requested meeting dates, he responded by asking that Ms. Anita provide available dates to assist with scheduling. He added that it would be more efficient for the union to submit proposed dates first, due to the administration coordinating with multiple individuals. He advised that efforts are being made to resolve the issues involving the union; however, he stated that Mr. Garland had not complied with providing the requested information.

Chairman McFarland asked what's the timeline for the matter to be resolved.

Mr. Creekbaum explained it's unclear because it's a product of negotiation.

Chairman McFarland stated the matter needs to be rectified and implemented within 60 days.

Ms. Dixie Smith, 3800 Lee Ave, expressed concerns regarding speeding vehicles on Lee Street and requested consideration of a traffic control device at the intersection of Standifer and Lee Street.

Ms. Johnnie Thomas, 414 South 8<sup>th</sup> Street, expressed concerns regarding illegal dumping of debris and requested increased enforcement, public education, and potential fines to address the issues.

Chairman McFarland explained from his understanding, Code Enforcement were able to ticket the offenders.

Mr. McCallister had a conversation with Mrs. Hill, Chief Zordon, and Mr. Tommy James, about the ongoing situation. Mr. McCallister stated that a meeting is scheduled where they are going to sit down to discuss starting a unit in police. After speaking with Mrs. Hill, they understand they don't want to create a unit in PUD that are operating as Police Officers. He explained they are thinking about expanding the unit in the police department, and they will go out to issue the tickets. After conversations with Mrs. Hill, that's the route they are considering. Mr. McCallister emphasized that Ms. Thomas is corrected on the matter, and that fines will be implemented.

Ms. Thomas explained that Chairman McFarland accompanied her through the neighborhood, stating that the people who owns the businesses and homes on the southside are not from the area.

Chairman McFarland stated that laws were passed to regulate the fines, and it should be upheld.

Mrs. Hill added that conversations were had with Chairman McFarland regarding the proactive rental inspection, that will help educate the landlords and holding them responsible. Mrs. Hill stated a final draft will be sent by the next council meeting. Ms. Hill explained that when people get evicted, the landlord move unwanted trash from one location to the next, also the same with sub-contractors. Mrs. Hill stated educating the community about illegal dumping, what's acceptable and not, and fines. Mrs. Hill addressed her concerns about over policing the communities, adding if they were to turn Code Enforcement into police officers then that's another level of policing. Mrs. Hill explains that Code Enforcement officers are community officers, who work with the community to enforce codes. The police have the power to write the tickets. Mrs. Hill stated they are looking at the officers who work in the downtown area to collaborate with Code Enforcement, as they are working towards a solution for writing fines and tickets.

Chairman McFarland explained that relief is needed on the south side.

Mr. Muhammad addressed his concerns, about the numerous calls, and inquired about the surveillance cameras.

Mr. Tommy James, Code Enforcement Officer, stated there are cameras that are being used, and that Wildlife and Fisheries have made multiple arrests related to the matter. He informed Mr. Muhammad that due to his absence, this was on a halt, but the equipment is being set up, and that public works as well as others will be teaming up to assistance in the surveillance.

Mr. Muhammad stated he saw Wildlife and Fisheries digging in the trash trying to identify the offender to be cited, and he stated that since the debris has been down for so long, people are illegally dumping on top of the piles.

Mr. James explained that once public works collect the trash, people from other areas are dumping it in the same areas.

Ms. Woods explained that in district 3, there is still a lot of debris. Entergy comes out to trim trees and leave behind the debris. Ms. Woods stated that Entergy should be responsible for their debris from the storm.

Chairman McFarland stated that it's a huge problem on the south side, and they need help.

IX: COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIALS ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Ms. Woods- expressed concern regarding the current social climate, noting increased tension with the community. She emphasized the importance of unity and respectful communication among residents and officials. Ms. Woods expressed her deepest sympathy to Mr. Tommy James on the passing of his mother. And asked everyone to keep him in their prayers.

Mr. Muhammad- **Vice Chairman** announced that "Love the Boot" cleanup campaign was a big success. Partnering with the Monroe Chamber of Commerce, and even Miss. Ouachita came out in support of the campaign. Clean up was from Orange Street bridge up to eighth street. The groundbreaking that took place at Georgia and Thomas Street, Mr. McCallister and Chairman McFarland were in attendance as well as others. Ms. Brown, who lives at that intersection, was also affected due to the closure. Mr. Kenny Wilson, in attendance at the meeting, who had served on the council, had also dealt with the same issue. Mr. Muhammad stated that hopefully we can get Thomas and Georgia back open and get the bus routes back for that part of town. Also, the council were in Baton Rouge for Northern Exposure, this past week, where the Chamber of Commerce invited all Northern Louisiana delegates, and it was very informative. Also Mr. Muhammad thanked Ms. Ellen Hill for inviting him to Southern Cities Economic Initiative in Atlanta, Georgia. Mr. Muhammad stated he it was very informative and he was there with Kim Lowery from United Way. They got a chance to go into the communities to see what they were doing with housing. Mr. Muhammad also had a chance to network with some mayors. The mayor of Natchitoches, LA., Jackson, MS., Center Point, AL., and Greenville, MS., and Senior Program Officer Denise Bleson. And lastly, First Sunday Blue's Concert at the Louisiana Purchase Gardens and Zoo. The weather was nice. Everyone had a great time. Even Ms. Eden Cooking was in attendance and sold out. He thanked everyone for their participation and support.

Mr. McFarland- **Chairman** stated that the council values input from constituents, including phone calls, visits, and community engagement. He emphasized ongoing efforts to improve and clean up the City of Monroe and encourage residents to remain patient as recovery and development efforts continue following recent storm impacts. He noted that progress is ongoing despite delays. He further encourages citizens to participate in upcoming elections and emphasized the importance of voter turnout. He also addressed the upcoming tax renewal for Monroe City Schools, stating that misinformation had circulated regarding the measures. He clarified that the tax is not new and referenced its long-standing history of support for the school system. He encouraged citizens to vote in favor of the renewal, stating that failure of the measure could negatively impact school operations.

There being no further business to come before the council, Chairman McFarland adjourned the meeting at 7:53 p.m.

Rodney McFarland, I  
Chairman

Carolus S. Riley  
Council Clerk

Erica L. Moore  
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.

