

Monroe City Council Legal and Regular Session
January 8, 2019
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, January 8, 2019, at the Council's regular meeting place, 400 Lea Joyner Memorial Expressway, City Council Chambers/City Hall Building, Monroe, Louisiana.

The Honorable Gretchen Ezernack, Chairwoman, called the meeting to order and asked the Council Clerk, Ms. Riley to call the roll.

Council members present for roll call: Mr. Echols, Mrs. Ezernack, Ms. Woods, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Clark

Council members absent: None.

The Invocation was done by Councilwoman Woods' designee, Rev. A.B. Johnson, Rose of Sharon Baptist Church, Monroe, LA and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ms. Woods.

Mrs. Ezernack welcomed each one present to the council meeting tonight.

COMMUNICATIONS & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Mr. Echols welcomed each one present and wished everyone a Happy New Year; he announced the Monroe Chamber of Commerce event on tomorrow night which begins at 5:30pm and the main event at 6:30pm, and tickets can be purchased today; he said the city had torrential rains on last week and thanked Mr. Janway and Mr. Westrom and those who work in public works that were out trying to address some of the flood concerns and the response to the situation that occurred at the Phillips bayou with the pumps there and the other fail pump stations that they are putting in temporary supports to get them up and in safe conditions. Mr. Echols thanked Mrs. Rowell and Ms. Baldwin for working with Council on the water ordinance to try to reduce some of the red tape to do business in the city, it's a big deal and not only for him, but for his fellow Council members, and Mrs. Ezernack serves on the financial committee and they have been talking about this for some time and am looking forward to getting a final approved ordinance and maybe streamlining some things so that businesses can get opened faster and residents can get water turned on faster; he said he knows that it has been a year's worth of work and Zach and several others have been a part of the committee to get it done.

2. Ms. Woods welcomed each one and a Happy New Year; she thanked Rev. A.B. Johnson, Pastor, Rose of Sharon Baptist Church for the inspiring prayer to start the new year off; she thanked the residents of District 3 for the very good meeting on last week; she thanked Ms. Carolus Riley, because she is always on the time there for anything and everything that she needs, she pulls the meetings together for her and pulls them off and thanked everyone for coming to that meeting, it was a very informative meeting; a lot of great things are getting ready to happen in District 3 and am very excited about this; she said there is a lot more to come and won't tell any of it and will keep it until they make it happen. She thanked Mr. Janway and said Ms. Roshonda Gospel, is a true trooper, in the midst of all the things that are going on, the flooding, the abundance of trash that is clogging up the ditches, she manages to get her people routed to get to the places that they need to be; she thanked them for that on last week when all of the flooding was going on and was continuously on the phone with her asking her to get someone out in the Booker T area, and to get someone to start working on the ditches because it's about to start building up and she was wonderful and was right on it and do appreciate it; she thanked Ms. Ellen Hill and her group, as she calls them often and they continuously and code enforcement is always on it, the huge piles of trash that they send people out to take care of it; it has been a wonderful 2018 and in the last meeting of this month, do plan to have you a detailed listing of some of the things that have been accomplished in District 3.

3. Mr. Wilson welcomed each one present including the citizens of District 4; he asked prayers for Ms. Berna Dean Jones and tried to get down to see her, but his time didn't allow him to do that and in speaking with Ms. Eva Wilson, that Ms. Jones is very ill and to keep her and her family in prayer. He thanked the citizens of District 4 for working in the district, in their yards before and during the flooding, calling and asking for bags; he thanked Mr. Janway for providing him with a couple of rolls of bags to last him for a while and the citizens are using the bags in District 4; Mr. Wilson stated that he wanted the public to know and for it to go on record that he spoke with the manager of Club Nuuvo and it is dear to his heart in what happened a few weeks ago during Christmas eve and don't want a life to be lost; he talked with the management and spoke with Ms. Baldwin, and also the management of Club Nuuvo is supposed to be putting a letter together and it's his understanding that it won't be a club anymore, they are trying to do something towards a day care center and the letter will be coming and this letter will be placed on record; he said he talked with him today and do want the citizens to know that it is important to him and to the

entire City Council, the Mayor and also the citizens; he thanked Chief Ellis and the officers that work that area and it does take a lot of time for safety which is the first priority for him and that is the safety of the little ones and the young people; he thanked the Chief, the owner and the manager of Club Nuuvo and is hopeful that the letter will be coming and it will be placed on record at the next council meeting, stating what they want to do; he talked with Ms. Joanne Poret, Planning and Zoning and Ms. Baldwin and it will fit in with what they are trying to do. Mr. Wilson thanked Mr. Janway, Mr. Westrom and the employees for the generators that are ready to go in case there is rain and it floods, that the generators are ready to go.

4. Mr. Clark welcomed each one present and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

5. Mayor Mayo wished the Council and everyone a Happy New Year; he stated in regards to his press briefing on yesterday, they rolled out the 2019 benevolent acts which will be similar to the ones they had in 2018, with a couple of changes; there were fourteen different projects that were led by the department heads and they did an awesome job on last year and this year the difference will be in addition to the department heads, division heads and employees that will take the initiative with the different projects, is they will be reaching out to the community too; the first one will be the Comfort Kits for homeless that is similar to what was done on last year and public works will be leading this effort; he said they would be reaching out to the community and asking them to support that project, clubs, organizations, business community and everybody and not necessarily coming through the City of Monroe, but to have direct contact with for instance, the Salvation Army, the DeSiard Street Shelter or whomever you would like, because we do have homeless as we all know; he mentioned on Thursday from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm, will have the salute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the 40th annual salute and everyone is invited to come out, it is usually a pretty nice program and will be acknowledging folks that have contributed in the area of education, just different areas that are done each year; the Trail Blazer Award will be given to Coach Broderick Fobbs, Grambling State University Football, head coach for the work he has done in education, and mentoring young men; he said they talked about it and it was reported on one of the media outlets that the conversation on race, the two that they had on race during last year were very important and very successful and will continue it this year; he said one of the reporters asked him, what came out of it; Mayor Mayo said there were a number of different dialogues that came out of it, people learning each other, there were agreements and there were disagreements, nobody got disagreeable and thought it was strong, and one significant thing that did come out of it and it may not be significant to some people, but for the first time in the history of the Dr. Martin Luther King salute, will have a non-African American speaker that will speak, and this came out of the conversation on race and these are the types of things that are very important in building relationships and getting different peoples thoughts, positions about different things and just understanding one another; Mayor Mayo mentioned that the City of Monroe would be given a National Award in January, as he travels to the U.S. Congress of Mayors convention in Washington D.C. and will be getting the award and will announce this later; he commended his Administrative Assistant, Mrs. Barbara Roethlisberger because she saw it and acknowledged it as a grant and it was pursued and also Mrs. Ellen Hill, PUD director, and Mr. Robert Johnson who will also be attending; he said there are positive things going on in the City of Monroe and we are Monroe Proud because of it.

6. Mrs. Ezernack wished everyone a Happy New Year and 2019 will be a wonderful year for the City of Monroe; she said in hearing some of the things that Mayor Mayo has outlined; Ms. Woods will be outlining and other Council members will be having things that will be happening in their districts in 2019 and do look for more information on that as the year develops; she thanked the public for their participation in the Council meeting tonight.

Upon a motion of Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Wilson, the minutes of the Legal and Regular session of December 26, 2018 were approved unanimously. (There were no public comments)

PRESENTATION: NONE.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: NONE.

PROPOSED CONDEMNATIONS: Public Comment: NONE.

ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION OF BIDS: Public Comment: NONE.

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Council: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Echols, second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 7349, appointing Yolanda Washington as Interim Internal Auditor of the City of Monroe and further providing with respect thereto. (Council) (There were no public comments).

Comments: Mrs. Ezernack asked Mrs. Washington to stand and that they look forward to working with her.

Department of Administration: Public Comment: NONE.

Department of Planning & Urban Development: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Echols, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 7350, authorizing Mayor James E. Mayo to join the City of West Monroe and the Ouachita Parish Police Jury to apply for a Brownfields Assessment Grant and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Legal Department: Public Comment: NONE.

Mayor's Office: Public Comment: NONE.

Department of Public Works: Public Comment: NONE.

Department of Community Affairs: Public Comment:

ADD-ON:

1. Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mr. Echols and unanimously approved to add to the agenda to adopt a Resolution authorizing Mayor James E. Mayo or Robert Johnson, Director of Community Affairs, to apply for a grant to effectuate the purpose of the Rivermarket and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Upon a motion by Ms. Woods, second by Mr. Echols and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 7351, authorizing Mayor James E. Mayo or Robert Johnson, Director of Community Affairs, to apply for a grant to effectuate the purpose of the Rivermarket and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Police Department: Public Comment:

ADD-ON:

1. Upon a motion by Mr. Echols, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to add to the agenda to adopt a Resolution authorizing Mayor James E. Mayo to accept and execute an agreement with the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement in the amount of \$22,905.00 for the DARE Program and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Upon a motion by Mr. Echols, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 7352, authorizing Mayor James E. Mayo to accept and execute an agreement with the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement in the amount of \$22,905.00 for the DARE Program and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Fire Department: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Clark, second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 7353, authorizing James E. Mayo, Mayor, to apply for and accept a Fire Prevention and Safety Grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for the purchase of two thousand and five hundred (2,500) Smoke Alarms and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Engineering Services: Public Comment:

(a) Upon a motion by Mr. Echols, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 7354, authorizing James E. Mayo, Mayor, to execute Change Order No. Three (3) to the WTP Sedimentation Basin Sludge Removal System Improvements Contract, between the City of Monroe and Dixie Overland Construction, Inc., for an increase in the contract amount of \$6,486.73 and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

ADD-ON:

(b) Upon a motion by Mr. Echols, second by Ms. Woods and unanimously approved to add to the agenda to adopt a Resolution requesting to reject all bids received on December 6, 2018 for the Bayou Bartholomew pump station bar screen project and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Upon a motion by Mr. Clark, second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved to adopt Resolution No. 7355, requesting to reject all bids received on December 6, 2018 for the Bayou Bartholomew pump station bar screen project and further providing with respect thereto. (There were no public comments).

Comments: Ms. Woods asked the reason for rejecting the bids; Ms. Golden stated, this was the bar screen located at the Bartholomew pump station and it pumps water into the bayou, then it is transported to the water treatment plant to be treated and turned into potable water; she said in the early part of the summer when the corps of engineers were pulling the river down, the city thought it was a good idea at that time to repair the bar screen and it took a little bit longer to engineer it than what they hoped and it was a little bit late getting to this point; the river is now up and it looks like it will stay that way a while, plus they are now looking at a broader project to rehab the pump station more fully and it would be more appropriate to take care of the bar screen in that context; under the bid law, that is grounds to reject all bids and this is the reason it is being recommended to go about it this way.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS & ORDINANCES: Public Comment: NONE.

RESOLUTIONS AND ORDINANCES FOR SECOND READING AND FINAL ADOPTION AND SUBJECT TO PUBLIC HEARING: Public Comment: NONE.

CITIZENS PARTICIPATION:

1. Marie Brown, citizen, thanked those who worked on closing Club Nuuvo for New Year and four events were shut down so far; she said she is hopeful something is being worked on for youth, if they are allowed to congregate and reopened, it has to be something in place and you can't just shut a business down without following rules and regulations; she said there need to be something special in place that a certain amount of security guards are in place when event centers try to open up for 14-17 year old's and hope there is focus on this; she asked that crime would be addressed in Monroe, and it need to be realized that crime is a big problem in Monroe and there need to be conversation about crime and can't keep ignoring it; she said she saw a man today, driving down the street with an open gun and she asked herself if she should call the police, say nothing or what should she do in this situation; she said she did call the police and reported the matter and don't know if the police found him and it looked like he was looking for someone; crime is a big problem in this city and it need to be addressed.

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There being no further business to come before the Council, the meeting was adjourned at 6:27 p.m., upon a motion of Mr. Echols and seconded by Mr. Clark. (There were no public comments)

Mrs. Gretchen Ezernack
Council Chairwoman

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.**