

**CITY OF MONROE COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 14, 2025 – 6:00 P.M.
MINUTES DRAFT**

The Mayor and Council met for their regular meeting.

Those Present:	John Howard	Mayor
	Charles Boyce	Council Member
	Julie Sams	Council Member
	Adriane Brown	Council Member
	Greg Thompson	Council Member
	David Dickinson	Council Member
	Myoshia Crawford	Council Member
	Logan Propes	City Administrator
	Laura Wilson	City Clerk
	Paul Rosenthal	City Attorney
	Russell Preston	City Attorney

Absent: Lee Malcom Vice-Mayor

Staff Present: Danny Smith, Jeremiah Still, R.V. Watts, Andrew Dykes, Mike McGuire, Rodney Middlebrooks, Brad Callender, Beth Thompson, Chris Bailey, Les Russell, Brian Wilson, Kaitlin Stubbs, Sandy Daniels

Visitors: Billy Storms, Laura Powell, Lyriq Riden, Tracey Young

I. CALL TO ORDER – JOHN HOWARD 6:02pm

- 1. Invocation** - Billy Storm from Harmony Baptist Church gave the invocation
- 2. Roll Call** – Mayor Howard noted that all Council Members were present except for Lee Malcom. There was a quorum.
- 3. Approval of Agenda**—Need to amend the agenda to add Qualifying fees to New Business under section 1.b

Motion by Sams, Seconded by Brown
Passed unanimously

4. Approval of Consent Agenda

- a. December 10, 2024 Council Minutes
- b. December 10, 2024 Executive Session Minutes
- c. October 22, 2024 Historic Preservation Commission Minutes
- d. November 14, 2024 Downtown Development Authority Minutes
- e. November 14, 2024 Conventions and Visitors Bureau Minutes

Motion to approve by Thompson, Seconded by Crawford
Passed unanimously

II. PUBLIC FORUM

1. Public Presentation

- a. Rebecca Vassy and Christy Bass—recognition for extraordinary efforts to help those impacted by Hurricane Helene in East Georgia and North Carolina

2. Public Comments—none

III. BUSINESS ITEMS

1. City Administrator Update—Logan Propes HB 581 Overview—A reaction to the high home values that started in 2020-2022; the bill places limits on the assessed value of homestead parcels, values can only be raised by a maximum of 3%, provides for a Floating Local Option Sales Tax known as FLOST (to recoup funding), the bill is all or none so if one organization opts out--everyone is out; because Walton County has an existing exemption that is stronger it does not count for them to opt out; The city will have to have three public hearings; has no effect on existing school tax exemptions; FLOST - a potential revenue replacement which would require a separate referendum, would require an intergovernmental agreement with county organizations; opting in would create future tax loss in 5-10 years; tax loss burdens would shift from residential properties to commercial and rental properties; opting in may adversely affect future bond rating which would increase interest rates on borrowing money; opting in is a permanent decision; opting out allows for a better control of the budget on a yearly basis- discussion about alternatives - a Monroe specific homestead exemption which would give a better prediction of revenues for budgetary stability; need to create a public information plan for the public meetings
2. Assistant City Administrator Update—Chris Bailey—Monroe sign monument will be installed in the next couple of weeks-be on the lookout for dates; T-Hanger projects are nearing completion; TAP grant on the agenda tonight for approval and one for Lumpkin/Broad will go out soon; Hotel RFP is live; 20th annual car show is March 15th; Crepe Myrtle festival and Farm to Table events are back
3. Department Reports
 - a. Monthly Central Services Report—no report given, covered in Assistant City Administrator update
 - b. Monthly Code Report—Brad Callender—no Planning Commission meeting last month but will meet in January for De-annexation request off of Hwy 78; Vines of Monroe is about 2/3 complete to submit phase 1 final plat; the Jax out on 78 will be complete in the next couple of months;

Hambrick Station on Alcovy St started development this past month; River Pointe will be submitting for Phase 1 final plat soon as well; Rivers Edge is eligible for building permits but they have not submitted yet; Brookland Commons is now owned by D.R. Horton

- c. Monthly Economic Development Report—Brian Wilson—Approximately about 4 people have expressed interest with one packet submitted, open until April 3rd; RFQ ad placed in the Walton Tribune; great increase in social media in the past month; on the year 103 new licenses with minus 100 businesses closed
- d. Monthly Finance Report—Beth Thompson—November financial report; annual audit season is up us; starting February 10th the auditors will be onsite for two weeks; new time system started this week; AP automation will be put on hold until mid-year
- e. Monthly Fire Report—Chief Dykes—High call volume in November, received aid from Walton County 9 times and only provided aid twice; this past weekend went well with the winter weather and working with the other departments; transitioning into a new record management system
- f. Monthly Police Report—Chief Watts—Year end highlights - 27,000 calls for services with 135k checks; overall crime is down compared to last year and higher close case ratio; recently made roads into a 2016 cold case to charge a suspect
- g. Monthly Solid Waste Report—Danny Smith—Collected 119 mattresses at curbside and was able to bill out 82; running a modified holiday schedule for MLK Day; thank you to staff who worked during the Christmas and New Year's holidays--collected 1.3 million pounds of trash in two weeks not including yard waste; if there is overflow trash the customer should call Customer Service
- h. Monthly Streets & Transportation Report—Jeremiah Still—The leaf truck is running 40-60 hours per week from now until the end of February; working on cold weather projects; good collaboration with other city departments during last week's winter storm
- i. Monthly Telecom Report—Mike McGuire—Due to holidays and infrastructure damage most of the month was spent fixing existing equipment vs installing new; in 2024 did over 8000 work orders which is about 32 work orders per day of which 75% was handled by city staff of which 60% was trouble tickets but less than a third were for issues that were the city's fault; goal for 2025 is to reduce the number of trouble tickets especially for issues not related to the city; bond project this year;

complete all fiber installs; upgrade to core services; eliminate the final cable holdouts; there is an existing bundle rates for phone and fiber service

- j. Monthly Water, Sewer, Gas & Electric Report—Rodney Middlebrooks—
Finished gas line to the new jail, all utilities are onsite and up to date;
finish camera work for 2025 sewer grant for King St, GW Carver-could be
two year project; no power out more than 30 minutes year last week's
storm

4. Department Requests

- a. Central Services: T-Mobile Agreement Amendment
Chris Bailey recommends approval of the 5th Amendment to the 2005 Site Agreement between City of Monroe and T-Mobile USA for the purpose of leasing a portion of the property located at Wayne Street and West Washington Street to provide enhanced cellular and telecommunication services; The 5th Amendment is for a 10 year lease with annual rent of \$40,000; the current fee is 5000

Motion to approve by Sams, Seconded by Crawford
Passed unanimously

- b. Code: Schedule of Fees – Code Enforcement
Brad Callender recommends approval of adding four fees for procedures in the Zoning Ordinance. The new fees include requests for Annexations and De-Annexations in the amount of \$250, amendments to the Zoning Ordinance and Development Regulations in the amount of \$500, and requests for Administrative Special Exception Variances in the amount of \$100.

Motion to approve by Gregory, Seconded by Brown
Passed unanimously

- c. Public Works: Approval – 2025 LMIG Allocation
Jeremiah Still recommends approval of 2025 LMIG funds for improving approximately 1.9 miles of street along Sorrells Street and East Marable Street; work includes patching, milling, over lay and/or striping; The 2025 LMIG funds total \$2268, 726.42 of which 30% is the required local match (\$62,013.79) The remainder of \$206,712.63 is reimbursable from GDOT; the funding will come from SPLOST funds

Motion to approve by Boyce, Seconded by Crawford
Passed unanimously

- d. Public Works: Tap Grant Fee Proposal – PI 0019856
Chris Bailey recommends approval of request for fee proposal for the Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) Grant (PI 0019856) project of \$320,238.60 for concept development, database preparation, and

environmental documents for Davis Street, South Madison Avenue, and Mears Street streetscape project.

Motion to approve by Dickinson, Seconded by Gregory
Passed unanimously

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. New Business

- a. Election of Vice-Mayor –
Mayor Howard: Current Vice-Mayor Lee Malcom would be happy to service another term in 2025; Motion to approve Lee Malcom to serve as Vice-Mayor for 2025

Motion to approve by Dickinson, Seconded by Brown
Passed unanimously

- b. 2025 Qualifying Fees
Logan Propes: 2025 Qualifying fees need to be set by February 1st in the Walton Tribune, fees are based on currently salaries Dickinson, Gregory

Motion to approve by Dickinson, Seconded by Gregory
Passed unanimously

V. DISTRICT ITEMS

1. District Items

- a. Brown - Happy New Year and glad to be back; thank you for the work solving the cold case; thank you to Chief Glass for keeping me the loop all these years
b. Gregory - thank you for all the hard work keeping the lights on during the storm
c. Thompson - thank you for all the workers we had during the storm
d. Dickinson-thank you!

2. Mayoral Update

Leadership Walton thank you for being here

VI. ADJOURN—7:10pm

Motion by Thompson, Seconded by Crawford
Passed unanimously