

City of Monticello  
**Planning Commission**  
**Meeting of Tuesday, February 14, 2023**  
**Minutes**

The regular monthly meeting of the Monticello Planning Commission was called to order by Commission Chair Dan Boice at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers. Lou Lambert opened the meeting and the new year with a prayer.

Members present were Dan Boice, Nick Akers, Cathy Campbell, Daniel Courtney, Jay Jones, Lou Lambert, Evan Patrick, and Ray Ryburn. Kathy Campbell, Bubba Groves, and Esbeida Higginbotham were absent. Boice declared a quorum.

**New Members:** The Commission welcomed Daniel and Evan. The Commission briefly reviewed its duties as laid out in the State Code.

**November Minutes:** Ray MOVED to approve the January 2023 minutes as distributed, which motion was seconded and CARRIED.

**Public Forum:** There were no comments.

**CURRENT BUSINESS:**

**Election of Officers:** Nick agreed to serve as Treasurer, and was duly elected by acclamation. He will begin his duties at the March meeting.

**Report of the Fire Marshal:** Dale reported that January permit activity had been a little slow, but that Murphy would soon begin tearing down and rebuilding their station by Walmart.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Armory Update:** Dan noted that Mayor Akers had suggested conferring with local realtors for their ideas of both uses for and marketing of the facility. There has been some discussion about using the facility for municipal storage. Lou wondered about earlier suggestions of using the building for conferences or meetings. Dan will confer with the A&P Commission to get their input as to whether this is on their radar. They had earlier considered hiring a consultant to judge whether the building would serve that purpose.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Projects:**

While the Commission continues to fill out the long-term plans with such goals as infrastructure repair and a Master Street Plan, we can look to smaller projects to help begin some progress toward meeting goals in the Plan.

To that end, Commissioners offered some ideas for projects which, under the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, included:

1. Infrastructure
  - a. Drainage: Mayor Akers noted that city crews are cleaning out ditches as one step in improving drainage.
2. Quality of Life / Recreation
  - a. Providing safety equipment and devices at the swimming beach at Lake Monticello. We could look at other examples, and see about private funding. This will probably not be needed until 2024.
  - b. Making more accessible, possibly via tours, our growing list of historic sites including the Hollywood Plantation, the Pindall Law Office in Arkansas City, and the Japanese-American Internment sites in Jerome and Rohrer.
  - c. Inviting state or other professional groups to meet in Monticello.
  - d. Continuing to support the development of leisure activities at Lake Monticello. Commissioners noted that more effective signage and lighting (see 3.a. and 5.a) will be part of enhancing the usefulness of this wonderful resource.
  - e. A museum or other resource celebrating Monticello's Black history.
3. Transportation
  - a. Enhanced street lighting, especially at intersections and at stop signs.
  - b. Improving traffic flow on 425 South, especially at Old Warren during school opening and dismissals.
  - c. Posting Share The Road signs and painting sharrows on streets serving as bicycle routes in order to enhance safety.
  - d. Looking into decreasing road speeds in order to increase safety for all travelers.
4. Affordable Housing
  - a. Mayor Akers noted that the Scogin Drive extension will ameliorate traffic congestion on 425 (see 3.b) as well as encourage the development of new housing to the west of the city.
5. Community Identity & Image
  - a. Sign Ordinance: we need to present a better face to guests.
  - b. A facelift for the Chamber of Commerce building.
  - c. Cleaning up the area between Gaines and McCloy east of Gabbert.
  - d. Planting trees on the Town Square as the current ones are getting old.

Mayor Akers noted that it will be good to coordinate our concerns with other groups, especially the A&P Commission and Ryan Copico.

**Next Meeting:** The Commission's next regularly scheduled meeting will be March 14<sup>th</sup>. We will study the proposed projects and prioritize them.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

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Dan Boice  
Secretary *pro tem*