Ouachita Council of Governments
Meeting Minutes
September 29, 2026

Members Present:	Mayor Staci Mitchell City of West Monroe	Ben Westerburg City of West Monroe
	Mayor Friday Ellis City of Monroe	Gretchen Ezernack City of Monroe
	Shane Smiley Ouachita Parish Police Jury	Larry Bratton Ouachita Parish Police Jury
Staff Present:	Doug Mitchell Executive Director	Shelby Rybicki Planner II
	Jeff Maxwell CPA	Jeffrey Tyler Planner II
	Ryan Emerick GIS/Planner	

A public hearing was held on September 28, 2026, at the Council Chambers of the Monroe Government Plaza at 11:30 a.m. to hear comments from the public regarding the ***MTS Financial Budget TIP Amendment for FY 2026*** and the Draft ***TIP FY 2027-2030*** introduced at the August 24, 2026, OCOG meeting. There were no comments.

The Ouachita Council of Governments meeting was called to order by Staci Mitchell. The meeting was held in the Council Chambers of the Monroe Government Plaza.

A roll call certified a quorum was present.

A motion was made by Ben Westerburg and seconded by Larry Bratton to approve August 24, 2026, meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Ben Westerburg and seconded by Gretchen Ezernack to recess OCOG and enter into the Transportation Policy Committee. Motion carried unanimously.

Transportation Policy Committee
A motion was made by Ben Westerburg and seconded by Larry Bratton to approve the ***MTS Financial Budget TIP Amendment for FY 2026*** for adoption. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Ben Westerburg and seconded by Friday Ellis to approve the ***TIP FY 2027-2030*** for adoption. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Gretchen Ezernack and seconded by Friday Ellis to adjourn the Transportation Policy Committee and reconvene OCOG. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Gretchen Ezernack and seconded by Friday Ellis to ratify the actions of the Transportation Policy Committee. Motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Larry Bratton and seconded by Ben Westerburg to accept the Budget to Actual Report as presented by Jeff Maxwell. Motion carried unanimously.

Ambulance Service Advisory Board

Elmer Noah presented the Ambulance Service Advisory Board Report. The attorney for Acadian Ambulance requested minor changes be made to the ambulance service contract before they signed. Those changes will be made, and a final contract will be presented at the next OCOG meeting.

There being no other business, a motion was made by Friday Ellis and seconded by Larry Bratton to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously.

Doug Mitchell
Executive Director, OCOG

10/29/2026
Date

OUACHITA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Monroe West Monroe Ouachita Parish

3000 KILPATRICK BLVD●MONROE, LOUISIANA 71201

OUACHITA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
MONROE GOVERNMENT PLAZA
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
SEPTEMBER 29, 2026
NOON

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES
Action Item

RECESS OCOG
Action Item

TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE

A. TIP AMENDMENT – ADOPT
Action Item
1. MTS Financial Budget Amendment for FY 2026

B. TIP 2027-2030 – ADOPT
Action Item

RECONVENE OCOG & RATIFY ACTIONS OF TRANSPORTATION POLICY COMMITTEE
Action Item

BUDGET TO ACTUAL REPORT
Action Item

AMBULANCE SERVICE ADVISORY BOARD

ADJOURNMENT

HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS REPORT

Budget to Actual
September 29, 2026

Budget Summary

Revenues	Budget	Y-T-D	
Federal Sources	645,056	125,144	19.40%
Local Sources	146,155	17,289	11.83%
Other Revenues	55,500	-	0.00%
Total Revenues	846,711	142,433	16.82%
Expenditures	846,711	159,374	18.82%
Net	-	(16,941)	

Contract Budgets

	Contract Budget	Y-T-D Budget		August 2026	Y-T-D		July 2026	Prior Year
Local	$ 35,613	$ 5,936	16.67%	$ -	$ -	0.00%	$ -	$ 35,613
FTA	75,210	12,535	16.67%	6,663	13,864	18.43%	7,201	86,822
Human Svcs	15,000	2,500	16.67%	2,138	2,712	18.08%	574	15,071
FHWA	373,849	62,308	16.67%	36,162	72,580	19.41%	36,418	389,344
Safety	1,373,022	732,278	53.33%	30,061	53,277	44.66%	23,216	228,529
TOTAL	$ 1,872,694	$ 815,557	57.12%	$ 75,024	$ 142,433	7.61%	$ 67,409	$ 755,379

Safety is a 5 year contract.
The new safety contract started February 1, 2024.

					Safety	
					Total Contract Spent	Contract End Date
1	Budgeted amounts remaining on contract per month:					
	Local	35,613	10	3,561.30		
	Safety	759,868	28	27,138.14	613,154	1/3/2029
	FTA	61,346	10	6,134.60		
	Human Svcs	12,288	10	1,228.80		
	FHWA	301,269	10	30,126.90		
		1,170,384		68,189.74		

MONROE TRANSIT FINANCIAL BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR FY 2026

Project Description	Implementing Agency	Federal FY	Funding Statue	Federal Amount	Non-Federal Amount	Obligation Year
Capital - Facility Renovations	151- City of Monroe	2026	5307	250,000	62,500	2026
Capital - Bus Technology Upgrades	151- City of Monroe	2026	5307	750,000	187500	2026

DATE: **September 29, 2026**

ROLL CALL

MEMBERS	PHONE #	EMAIL	PRESENT	ABSENT
Mayor Staci Mitchell	318-396-2600	smitchell@westmonroe.la.gov	✓	
Mayor Friday Ellis	318-329-2227	friday.ellis@ci.monroe.la.us	✓	
Mr. Shane Smiley	318-267-8659	ssmiley@oppj.org		X
Mr. Ben Westerburg	318-366-4488	bwesterburg@westmonroe.la.gov	✓	
Ms. Gretchen Ezernack	318-366-1675	gretchen.ezernack@ci.monroe.la.us	✓	
Mr. Larry Bratton	318-614-3370	larrybratton2019@gmail.com	✓	

OUACHITA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS MEETING
MONROE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
September 29, 2026
12 NOON

PLEASE SIGN IN:
(Print Please)

NAME	AGENCY REPRESENTING
Rodger McConnell	OHSEP
Elmer Noah	Ambulance Board
Jamie Hanks	OPPJ

OUACHITA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS PUBLIC HEARING
MONROE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
SEPTEMBER 28, 2026
11:30 A.M.

PLEASE SIGN IN:
(Print Please)

NAME	AGENCY REPRESENTING

USA TODAY CO.

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PO Box 631825 Cincinnati, OH 45263-1825

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

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STATE OF WISCONSIN, COUNTY OF BROWN

The News Star, a daily newspaper published in the city of Monroe, in the Parish of Ouachita, State of Louisiana, and personal knowledge of the facts herein state and that the notice hereto annexed was Published in said newspapers in the issue:

MON Monroe News Star 09/17/2026
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Sworn to and subscribed before on 09/17/2026

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8-21-30

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OCOG Special Meeting & Public Hearing Notice

A special meeting of the Ouachita Council of Governments is scheduled for Tuesday, September 29, 2026, at 12:00 p.m. in the Monroe Government Plaza Council Chambers. A public hearing will be held on Monday, September 28, 2026, at 11:30 a.m. to hear comments from the public regarding the Draft TIP FY 2027-2030 and Draft MTS Financial Budget Amendment for FY 2026.

September 17 2026
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AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

Shelby Rybicki
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STATE OF WISCONSIN, COUNTY OF BROWN

The News Star, a daily newspaper published in the city of Monroe, in the Parish of Ouachita, State of Louisiana, and personal knowledge of the facts herein state and that the notice hereto annexed was Published in said newspapers in the issue:

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and that the fees charged are legal.
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8-21-30

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OCOG Items for Review

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held Monday, September 28, 2026, at 11:30 a.m. in the Monroe Government Plaza Council Chambers to hear comments on MTS Financial Budget Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) Amendment and the Draft TIP 2027-2030. The amendment and Draft TIP will be available for review for fourteen days at 3000 Kilpatrick Blvd., Monroe, LA 71201, and at www.northdelta.org.

August 28 2026

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