

**NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL
MINUTES
February 07, 2024**

Newberry County Council met on Wednesday, February 07, 2024, at 6:08 p.m. in Council Chambers at the Courthouse Annex, 1309 College Street, Newberry, SC, for a regular scheduled meeting.

Notice of the meeting was duly advertised, as required by law.

PRESENT: Todd Johnson, Chairman
Robert N. Shealy, Vice-Chairman
Leon Fulmer Jr., Council Member
Les Hipp, Council Member
Travis Reeder, Council Member
Johnny Mack Scurry, Council Member
Karl Sease, Council Member
Jeff Shacker, County Administrator
Joanie Winters, County Attorney
Karen Brehmer, Deputy County Administrator
Debbie Cromer, Finance Director
Major Robert Dennis, NCSO
Rick Farmer, Director at Newberry County Economic Development
Liz McDonald, Assessor
Eric Nieto, I.T. Director
Karen Lindler Smith, Treasurer
Crystal Waldrop, Purchasing Director
Andrew Wigger, Clerk to Council/PIO

Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

Mr. Sease led the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Adoption of Consent Agenda:

- a. Newberry County Council Work Session Minutes – January 17, 2024.
- b. Newberry County Council Meeting Minutes – January 17, 2024.
 - Mr. Shealy made a motion to adopt the minutes as presented; Mr. Fulmer provided the second and the motion was approved 7-0.

2. Additions, Deletions & Adoption of the Agenda.

- Mr. Scurry made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented; Mr. Sease provided the second and the motion was approved 7-0.

3. Public Appearance:

- a. Newberry Soil and Water Conservation District – Mark Kiser, Secretary.
 - Crista Lukoski, District Coordinator for the Newberry Soil and Water Conservation District, spoke in place of Mr. Kiser.
 - On January 13, 2024, the NSWCD held their ninth annual Grinding of the Greens, a program repurposing live Christmas trees turning them into mulch. This year they partnered with Newberry Electric Cooperative and Cromley's Ford. Roughly 80 trees were collected, and the mulch was distributed for free. She added that a lot of trees were taken from the pile to make fish habitats.
 - This year, the NSWCD received a \$7,100 grant from Palmetto Pride to help fund clean-up supplies to distribute throughout the county.
 - A Great American Clean-Up kick-off is scheduled for March 30, 2024, with the City of Newberry. This will be in conjunction with seven other counties to see who can clean-up the most,

last year they cleaned up 10,000 pounds of trash from roadways.

- NSWCD will host a Tools of the Trade Winter Field Day for land management on February 27, 2024. They will be partnering with Clemson Extension, DNR Quail Forever, Forestry Service and Indian Creek Restoration Service. They will teach field equipment, tractor safety, etc.
- This year NSWCD and Keep Newberry County Beautiful will offer four scholarships. Thanks to a fundraiser last year, they were able to increase the scholarships from \$500 to \$1,000 for students from Newberry County or attending schools in Newberry County.
- This past year they did a grant through Keep America Beautiful (\$7,500) to start a cigarette litter provision program. They have partnered with businesses across the county to collect cigarette butts which can be recycled. Once 500 pounds have been collected (takes 14,000 to make a pound), they will receive a park bench made from the recycled products.
- Ms. Lukoski recently went to Gallman Elementary to teach recycling and 50 students took a litter pledge.
- She also started a contest for kindergarten to fifth grade students in Newberry County to write an essay about why they like fishing. The winner will receive a new fishing pole and gear in May.
- The Natural Resource Conservation Services, a partner within the NSWCD's office, they work with them to do their contracts, currently they have 22 active contracts in Newberry County worth \$2.2 million that will fund farmers, foresters, ranchers and landowners. In 2024, they have a big increase in applications, 66 at present.
- The State filed a bill, to amend the Code of Laws, to add a provision to make a crime of illegal dumping of tires.
- Mr. Hipp thanked Ms. Lukoski for reporting to council and that NSWCD made a commitment in the budgeting process, in order for them to get their funding to keep them well informed and

they have kept their end of the bargain, and he hopes council has as well.

- Mr. Johnson added that they have been true to their word and that is a blessing in today's world.

b. Newberry County Family YMCA – Scott Sandor, Executive Director.

- Mr. Sandor came before Newberry County Council to discuss a child development center, during which he utilized a PowerPoint which is attached within the minutes.
- Mr. Sandor said this would be a partnership between Newberry County, The YMCA and the State of South Carolina. He said this was a concept in the making for about two years.
- Mr. Sandor went to Senator Ronnie Cromer to share his vision of improving opportunities for childcare for preschool aged children in our community. Senator Cromer went through the state budgeting process and got the YMCA \$1 million for a child development center.
- Mr. Sandor said they have this money to build the facility and as more time goes by, the smaller the center may need to be due to the cost of construction going up.
- Mr. Sandor has been working at his local YMCA since he was 16, taking care of children. He knows what they need to do, he knows the processes, he knows how to do it well and that is the YMCA's part, he knows what they need in staff and to be their childcare director.
- What the Newberry County Family YMCA needs from the county is help for a place to put a child development center.
- Mr. Sandor then presented his presentation which included the need for the child development center; the vision to address the need; what they were asking of the county; and long-term goals.
- Mr. Sandor said ultimately, the YMCA would like the council to consider a parcel of land at Mid-Carolina Commerce Park as an injection of resources the county has available to go with this

project. The parcel in question is located at the M CCP, on Hwy 773, near the Daeyung facility.

- Mr. Sandor said when the widening project is completed on I-26, the county will see a “boom.” He said that will bring more housing and they need to be prepared for that growth.
- In the proposed facility, Mr. Sandor said they would be able to accommodate approximately 60 children.
- Mr. Sandor said this will be a program where they work with a teacher so when they hit the doors of the schools, they are ready.
- Mr. Sandor said they want to continue to serve the community at a high level and address this problem. He said they brought this issue up with his board and put it on their radar and they were amazed at how much this issue has been covered and trying to figure out how to address the problem.
- Mr. Sease asked if this would be available for all Newberry County residents that have a pre-school age child. Mr. Sandor answered in the affirmative and up to their capacity. Mr. Sease said he wanted to make sure it was not just for the industries.
- Mr. Sease said he was once a shift worker in Newberry County, and he left Newberry County because of not being able to get childcare. He asked if the second shift period would just be available for pre-school age children or older children as well because he may need more spaces for second shift. Mr. Sandor said it will be based on need, the facility will be licensed for about 60 children, they can do it after school as well, but they could provide that service for second shift was well.
- Mr. Shealy asked if he was open to other parcels. Mr. Sandor said yes, and they were open to almost anywhere. He added that the thought process to that area involved the new companies but also across the street is a new subdivision.
- Mr. Johnson asked if this would be a fee-based system. Mr. Sandor answered in the affirmative.

- Mr. Johnson said he is concerned about setting up a childcare facility in an industrial park; adding that he thinks that is a recipe for disaster for traffic, noise and everything else.
- Mr. Johnson's other concern was that they have several residents in Newberry County that have established childcare businesses that didn't get any money from Newberry County and in fact, pay taxes to do that. He said he is concerned if Newberry County was to basically set this up, it hurts other businesses in the community. He said he is not for or against it, but those are valid concerns that need to be addressed.
- Mr. Sandor said he understood those concerns. He added that this is a different model that is typically used to do this. He said the Newberry County Family YMCA doesn't have the space to do something like this where they are located like the YMCA in Laurens is doing.

4. Consideration and approval of proposals for Financial Software System for General Ledger (RFP# 2023-17).

- Mr. Johnson said they had lengthy discussion about the software during the 5 p.m. Newberry County Council Work Session. He then asked if there was anything Mr. Shacker would like to add.
- Mr. Shacker said council charged staff with doing additional research and negotiation and engaging with Ms. Smith to make sure her needs are met at the Treasurer's Office
- Mr. Shacker gave background on the request, staff issued a request for proposal and five software companies made proposals for the specific product, with some having more than one product, they identified a specific product to propose to Newberry County. What was asked for was enterprise resource planning, software with many components, one of which being general ledger, and they are all integrated to minimize error and efficiency. Six members of staff participated in that evaluation and what they were looking at, in terms of

evaluations and demonstrations, was a product that was functional, intuitive, something not only finance staff can use but the entire management team.

- Mr. Shacker said they looked at the strength of the company, the functionality of the software, how it was designed and what level of support the companies offer.
- County Administration recommended Tyler and their product Munis, Mr. Shacker said what played into this decision was when the companies offered the demonstrations and Tyler's product met what they were looking for in terms of being intuitive and staff felt was designed in a way that would not scare employees. He added that not only have they been in business for 50 years but have been cloud-based for about 20 years.
- Mr. Nieto spearheaded additional research, looking at specifications comparing all five software proposals, but also reached out to multiple counties in South Carolina. He said feedback was generally positive, with some negative feedback regarding implementation. Mr. Shacker said that is something that they may have to deal with no matter the company chosen.
- Mr. Shacker said they wanted to make sure the software chosen had no inherent disadvantage from a tax standpoint. Mr. Nieto was able to confirm that of the five solutions, none of them had an inherent advantage regarding tax. There will not be an integration with the tax software, but with some programming with the tax software, it will have the capability to export the revenue data that is necessary to be imported into the general ledger software and that is uniformed over all five vendors.
- Mr. Shacker said they did some research into the modules, to make sure the county was not over buying. They confirmed the core product they are recommending for purchase would be just that, core components, but it is expansive as far as the product offerings they can purchase in the future, if the county so desires. There was one module that was identified that was

not needed immediately, statement builder. This pulls data out of the general ledger and produces financial statements to be used by the auditor. Mr. Shacker said this could benefit the county in the future.

- Mr. Shacker said they were very satisfied with the research and testimonials.
- Mr. Hipp said it was told to him by several people, including an independent citizen that met with the treasurer and staff, what a wonderful job Mr. Nieto was doing and what he did in this process. He added that the presentation at 5 p.m. was very professional and Mr. Nieto's effort is appreciated.
- Mr. Shacker asked if council, in the motion, could acknowledge the fact that entering into a contract would be dependent on negotiating favorable terms.
- Mr. Hipp made a motion with the caveat that pricing for the future modules established in the contract be good for three years. The motion was to authorize the county administrator to enter into negotiations with Tyler Technology with the stipulation that one year after implementation if it does not meet the Treasurer's standard, the council would revisit the issue.
- Mr. Shealy provided the second.
- Mr. Johnson said he thinks this is a long time overdue and they are going to achieve benefits of it and prays that Ms. Smith will be glad they did and the ability to see financial software throughout this county will be a blessing. He added he agrees with Mr. Hipp about Mr. Nieto and that Ms. Smith said she trusts him and that speaks volumes.
- The motion was approved 7-0.

5. Ordinance No. 01-01-2024. An Ordinance to provide for the determination of salaries for county appointed officials other than those appointed by County Council or the County Administrator, and to provide for the regular evaluation of salaries for such officials.

a. Public Hearing

- Mr. Johnson declared the public hearing open. With no one signing up or standing up to speak, Mr. Johnson declared the public hearing closed.

b. Second Reading

- Mr. Sease made a motion to approve second reading; Mr. Reeder provided the second and the motion was approved 7-0.

6. Ordinance No. 02-01-2024. An Ordinance to adopt the Newberry County 2023-2033 Comprehensive Plan as mandated by the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994, as amended; and to provide for the repeal of all prior Comprehensive Plans and Ordinances.

a. First Reading

- The Comprehensive Plan Enabling Act requires local governments to adopt a comprehensive plan in order to enforce zoning and land development regulations. The plan must be revised every 10 years, council has reviewed all 10 elements and consented to all 10.
- Mr. Shealy made a motion to approve first reading; Mr. Fulmer provided the second and the motion was approved 7-0.

7. Consideration of a motion to authorize the County Administrator to execute an agreement with the City of Newberry providing for the disbursement of capital project sales tax proceeds to reimburse the City of Newberry for incurred eligible project expenditures and/or for direct payment of eligible project costs upon the availability of bond proceeds and/or sales tax proceeds.

- Mr. Shacker said the City of Newberry has requested the county execute this agreement with them, which will enable them to move forward with their projects and begin incurring expenses.
- The City of Newberry had three projects they are involved in, the additional improvements to the City of Newberry Recreation Complex and two they partnered with Newberry County, the Old Gallman School renovations and the Downtown Newberry Amphitheater.
- Mr. Shacker said this will allow the city to move forward with the design of the recreation complex and implementing that project. This will also allow them to conduct utility relocation, the city was able to get a grant with support of Newberry County. This is a 50/50 grant from the Department of Commerce.
- Mr. Hipp made a motion to authorize the county administrator to execute the agreement with the City of Newberry; Mr. Reeder provided the second and the motion was approved 7-0.

8. Consideration of a motion to authorize the County Administrator to execute a Memorandum of Agreement with Newberry Electric Cooperative, Inc. granting access to property for the purposes of inspection and due diligence.

- Mr. Johnson said this is just an investigational approval, they are not approving any other action other than to go on the property to do their due diligence.
- Mr. Shacker said there is a need for electric distribution in the area that will support economic development and electrical needs in that area of Newberry County. This will allow them to access the property and make assessments and do their due diligence of the property.

- Mr. Shealy and Mr. Fulmer announced they would abstain from the vote to eliminate the appearance of a potential conflict of interest.
- Mr. Sease made a motion to execute the Memorandum Agreement; Mr. Reeder provided the second. The motion was approved 5-0, with Mr. Hipp, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Reeder, Mr. Scurry and Mr. Sease voting in favor and Mr. Fulmer and Mr. Shealy abstaining.

9. Appointments.

a. Newberry County Board of Rural Fire Control – Chief Michael Parker, Silverstreet.

- Mr. Scurry made a motion to appoint Mr. Parker to the Newberry County Board of Rural Fire Control; Mr. Shealy provided the second and the motion was approved 7-0.

10. Public Comments.

- There were no public comments.

11. Comments/Requests from County Administrator.

- Mr. Shacker said he has been impressed with what Facilities Management has been working on since he came to Newberry County Government. He said the county owns 77 buildings and they all have roofs, and most have heating and air and there are a lot of needs. He said they were able to get the new 100-ton chiller

unit in at the Court House and that is up and running. This will provide energy savings to the county.

- Mr. Shacker said he thought this was a neat event Newberry County Recreation and Jessie Long, a Jigsaw Puzzle Contest and was an inclusive event for anyone who likes to do puzzles. He said there were really creative team names, and everyone had a good time in Prosperity and the event was successful.

12. Comments/Requests from Council.

- Mr. Fulmer said he appreciates them indulging him in his infancy coming on to council and he has enjoyed the last few months and looks forward to quite a while yet. He added it is a pleasure to serve the citizens of Newberry County.
 - Mr. Johnson added to that that Mr. Fulmer does not act as though he is in his infancy in their discussions and carries himself well and represents his district well.
- Mr. Hipp said he thinks the process of selecting their general ledger software began very well and this body did the right thing, because they needed additional information not to rush to make a decision. They obtained additional information with the two bodies involved working together to work out some differences. They even had input from a private citizen at no cost to the county that had good experience, and expertise in this area that facilitated discussions with staff and the treasurer and tonight they chose the best solution. That entire process went the way local government should go. Starting with staff, ending with council.

- Mr. Reeder thanked everything administration and staff have been doing and it has been handled excellently. He thanked the Farm Bureau for having them out there on Monday, had a great meal and great social activities. He also reminded everyone of Valentine's Day.
- Mr. Sease thanked staff for putting those proposals together and Mr. Nieto for providing all the information they needed and answering the questions well.
- Mr. Shealy echoed all previous comments. He added that he doesn't want them to forget their other employees and the survey they did for a salary study, and they need to put that back on the priority list.
- Mr. Johnson said he appreciates the efforts and appreciates Ms. Smith's spirit of cooperation during all of this and commended the whole team for bringing this together. He said he thinks it is a stellar day for Newberry County when all the citizens can see the finance issues going on, adding that he doesn't think some people understand how far behind the county was on those issues and how much this is going to make Newberry County operate.

13. Future meetings:

- a. Economic Development Committee – February 12 at 6 p.m.
- b. Presidents' Day Holiday – Offices Closed – February 19.
- c. Newberry County Council Work Session – February 21 at 5 p.m.
- d. Newberry County Council – February 21 at 6 p.m.
- e. Executive Committee – February 26 at 6 p.m.

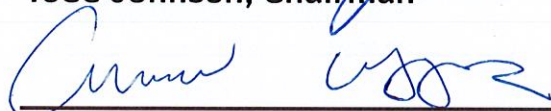
14. Adjournment.

- Mr. Shealy made a motion to adjourn; Mr. Fulmer provided the second and the motion was approved 7-0.

NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL



Todd Johnson, Chairman



Andrew Wigger, Clerk to Council

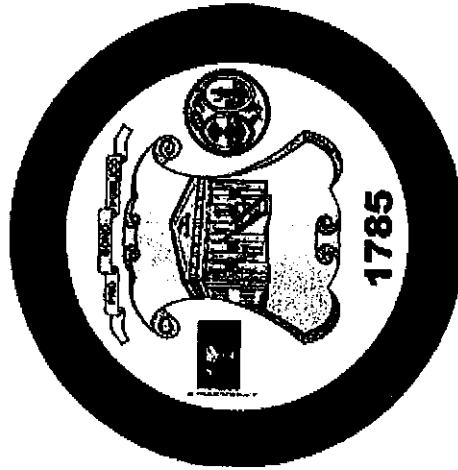
Minutes Approved: 2 - 21 - 2024



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Newberry County
Economic Development



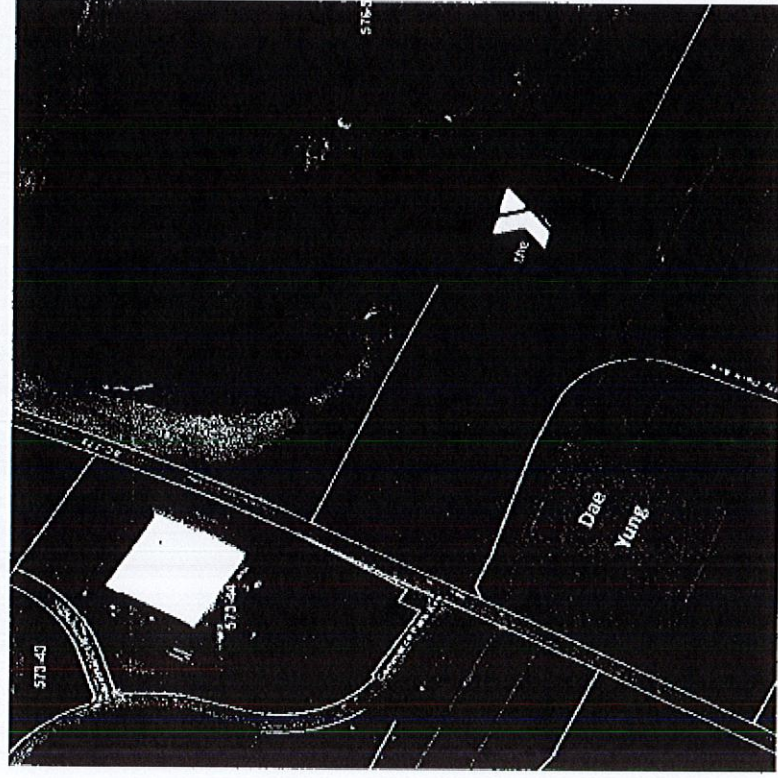
What is the need?

- Quality childcare is a critical need for communities to attract and sustain a successful workforce.
- Currently, the shortage of providers places families in a position of making decisions regarding employment or housing to care for their children. 42% of young children live in childcare deserts resulting in there being three children for each childcare slot.
- Employers consistently lose or struggle to attract personnel due to the lack of childcare options. 15% of young children live in a home where someone quit, changed, or refused a job due to lack of childcare.

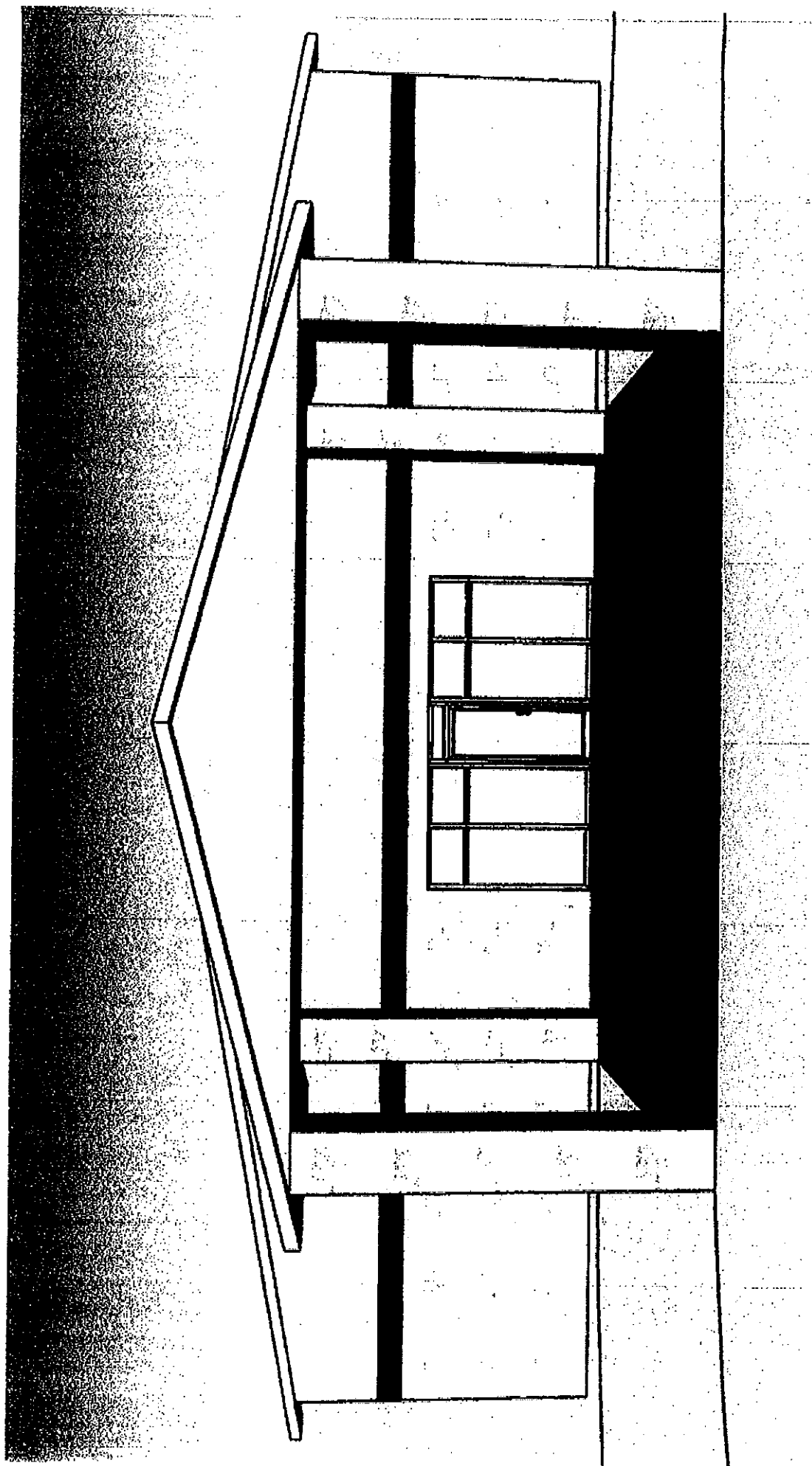
Vision to address the need

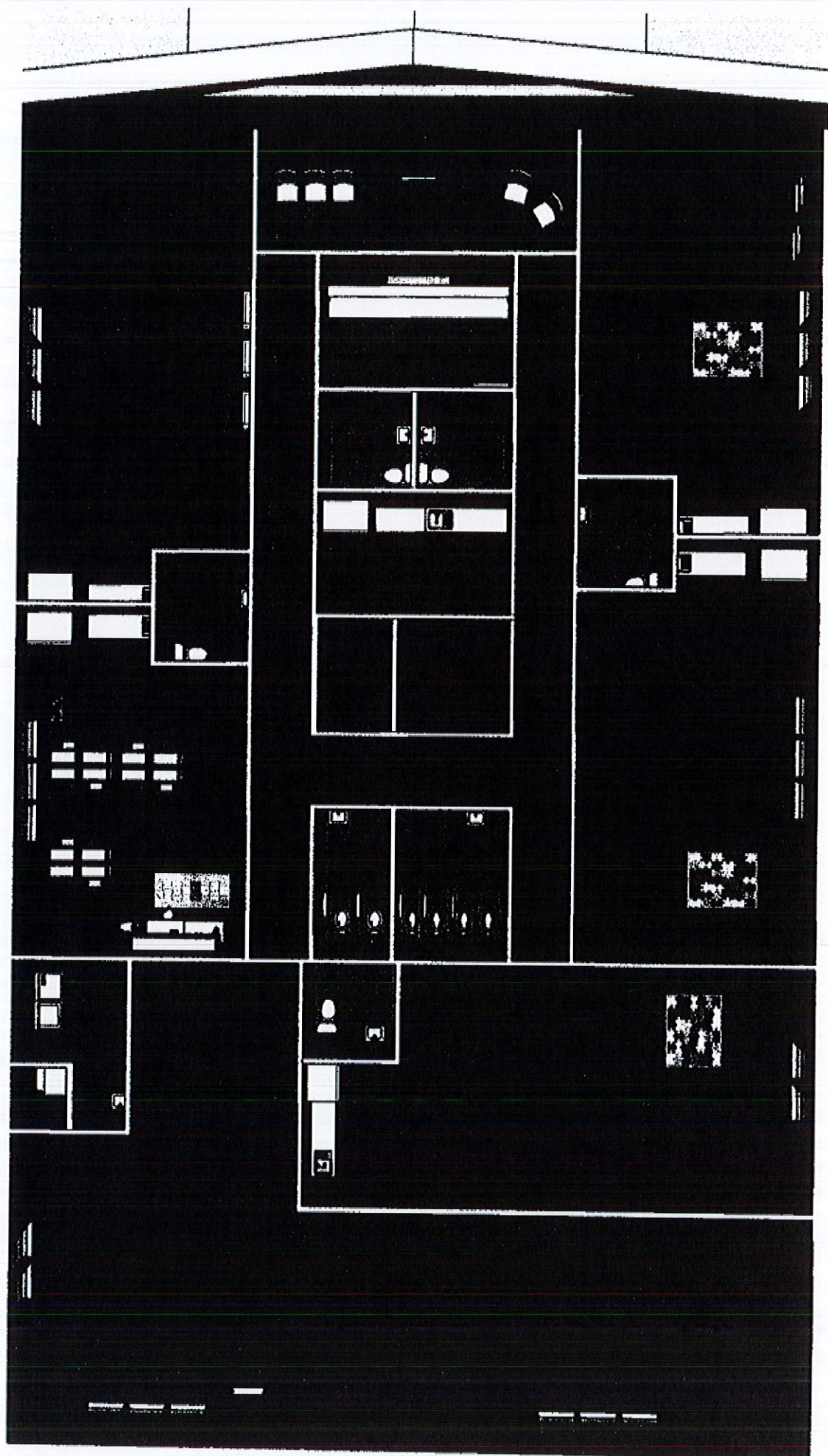
- Partnership between the State of South Carolina, Newberry County, and the Newberry County Family YMCA.
- Senator Ronnie Cromer initiated the proposal in the 2023-2024 State Budget to commit One-Million dollars to help us address this critical need in Newberry County.
- The YMCA has the local staff experience and the support of the largest childcare providing organization in the country to deliver quality efficient operation of the facility.
- Requesting that Newberry County will commit a parcel of land at the Mid Carolina Commerce park to the project.

What are we asking of Newberry County?



- **5.9 Acre Site**
- **Access to Hwy 773 and I-26**
- **Seven minutes from site to Samsung plant**
- **With completion of the interstate widening project this area will grow commercially and residentially.**
- **Partnering with us on this project will send the message that county council recognizes a need and wants to help address the need.**





Long term goals

- Support local industry by including them in decision making processes regarding operational hours and other needs.
- Provide families with quality programming that enhances their overall quality of life.
- Create a replicable model for the future.
- Partner with Newberry College and Piedmont Technical College to facilitate experiential learning options for early childhood educators.
- Be a hub for continuing education related to childcare for the community.

Questions?