

NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
MINUTES
April 2, 2025

Newberry County Council met on Wednesday, April 2, 2025, at 5:02 p.m. in Council Chambers at the Courthouse Annex, 1309 College Street, Newberry, SC, for a Work Session.

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

PRESENT: Robert Shealy, Chairman
Karl Sease, Vice-Chairman
Leon Fulmer, Council Member
Todd Johnson, Council Member
Travis Reeder, Council Member
Johnny Mack Scurry, Council Member
Stuart Smith, Council Member
Jeff Shacker, County Administrator
Captain Ben Chapman, NCSO
Debbie Cromer, Finance Director
Sheriff Lee Foster, NCSO
Eric Nieto, I.T. Director
Andrew Wigger, Clerk to Council/PIO

Mr. Shealy called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

1. Discussion of proposed Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Budget.

- Mr. Shacker reviewed a summary of changes to the General Fund, following the previous Budget Work Sessions. These changes specifically addressed an additional pay increase for law enforcement and Public Works.
- Mr. Shacker presented the proposed 3% pay increase across the board for county employees and then an additional 2% for law enforcement and public works. To help fund that additional increase,

staff made changes that also helped reduce the use of fund balance by roughly \$27,000.

- Under non-personnel, staff proposed an increase of \$153,149 for the cost of the aforementioned 2% increase.
- Under the public safety division, staff propose changes to two departments, a decrease in emergency services by \$40,500 which involves cutting funding for a public safety study (Mr. Shacker said that could be funded out of council contingency) and an increase in the AVL, the automated system the county uses for locating vehicles, increased by \$9,000, but the cut from the study showed an overall decrease in the department. Then under communications, there was a project fully budgeted for next year, related to Cisco for IT infrastructure, switch gear, and voiceover IP telephones that can be accomplished, a portion, this year, so staff was able to drop a portion of that funding for the proposed budget by \$50,000, as suggested by the Newberry County Sheriff's Office.
- Under Facilities Management, there were two employees, one that left and one that is about to retire, staff budgeted those two positions at the maximum salary and that is not necessary to hire their successors, and staff was able to drop funding level for the positions in line with the new employees. This was a decrease of \$34,117.
- Also under Facilities Management, there was another decrease of \$45,000, this comes from contracted cleaning services for DSS and DHHS where staff feels there is another option available, in terms of upgraded janitorial. Mr. Shacker said this will not be a downgrade and they are looking to upgrade the services out at that location but can do so without the \$45,000.
- Under Building and Zoning, an employee is retiring and the person who will fill that role will come in at a lower salary, this decreased the proposed budget by \$11,279.
- Mr. Shacker said the plan is to contribute to fund balance, not use fund balance, but in the interest of being conservative with the revenue projections and expenditures a use of fund balance as a balancing strategy for the budget. The proposed budget shows fund balance decrease by \$27,747. That takes fund balance down 1.15%.

2. Comments/Requests from Council.

- Mr. Sease had a few questions, the first was how much of the county's money is insured; Mr. Shacker said all of their money is insured, with the bulk being invested in the Local Government Investment Pool, managed by the state treasurer, all of which is insured. Other monies in business accounts are FDIC insured.
- Mr. Sease asked what the county is doing to ensure the CPST projects are staying on track as they seem to be kind of behind. Mr. Shacker then recapped updates for the projects. Mr. Shacker added that in terms of the CPST period, the collection of the current CPST began last May 1, so they are 10 months in the period covered by the new tax.
- Mr. Smith asked Mr. Shacker to speak on the funds coming in from the one cent sales tax; Mr. Shacker said it is well beyond what the projections were, he said as are the costs (which they've addressed) but on the other side, inflation has increased the revenue.
- Mr. Johnson said he abstains when it comes to WTH and law track when it comes to the budget. He further stated that the AVL, that Mr. Shacker mentioned, is provided by the company for which he is the general manager for South Carolina, so he will abstain from that. He further added that the county had a relationship with them before he took office.
- Mr. Fulmer asked what their planned use of fund balance was last year and what it looked like, to date; Mr. Shacker showed that, as of right now, they are looking at a possible contribution to fund balance in the amount of about \$959,000.
- Mr. Johnson said, regarding the public safety study, that he thinks that is long overdue and they should try and find a way to do that to figure out where they have equipment and best ways to utilize it.
- Mr. Sease said since their funds are available July 1, does council need to vote on the large items before July 1 so if something becomes

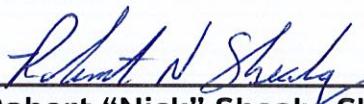
available they can move forward sooner; Mr. Shacker said that is possible, but he will speak to Mr. Tommy Long about that.


- Mr. Fulmer asked, regarding the public safety study, would that include an equipment analysis; Mr. Shacker said the study would look at the positions of the stations, future staffing, etc. Council also requested that include law enforcement as well. Mr. Sease asked if the Coroner's Office fall into that, Mr. Shacker said potentially, and they can look into that.
- Mr. Shealy said he appreciates the work staff put into this. He added he doesn't have a problem with the extra two percent this time, for law enforcement and public works, but he does not want to discourage other county employees either, and absolutely law enforcement and public works are worthy of it, and he thanked everyone working together to do that increase.
 - Mr. Johnson said he could not agree more, and it was never meant to discourage employees.
- Mr. Sease said thank you for a great presentation and putting the packets together.

3. Adjournment.

- Mr. Smith made a motion to adjourn; Mr. Fulmer provided the second and the motion carried 7-0 at 5:39 p.m.

NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL


Robert "Nick" Shealy, Chairman


Andrew Wigger, Clerk to Council

Minutes Approved: 5-7-2025

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