

**NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL PUBLIC SAFETY AND COURTS COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

April 28, 2025

The Newberry County Council Public Safety and Courts Committee met on Monday, April 28, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at the Courthouse Annex, 1309 College Street, Newberry, SC, for a special called meeting.

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

PRESENT: Stuart Smith, Committee Chair
 Leon Fulmer, Committee Member
 Karl Sease, Committee Member
 Jeff Shacker, County Administrator
 Tommy Long, Emergency Services Director
 Laura Kneece, Coroner
 Eric Nieto, I.T. Director
 Andrew Wigger, Clerk to Council/PIO

1. Call to order – Mr. Smith, Chairman.
 - Mr. Smith called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.
2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance – Mr. Leon Fulmer, Committee Member.
 - Mr. Fulmer led the invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Additions, Deletions and Adoption of the Agenda.
 - The Committee accepted the agenda as presented.
4. Radox Toxicology Machine and IACME Accreditation Auditors' Report – Coroner Laura Kneece.

- Ms. Kneece said they will buy the Randox MultiSTAT machine through the Midlands Health Care Coalition Grant. This machine will test blood and urine of 29 different street drugs that her office has been seeing around the county. The county has had a 10% increase in overdose deaths, Ms. Kneece felt it was important to put in for this grant.
- This machine will provide presumptive tests, telling the Newberry County Coroner's Office if the drugs are there during the first part of a death investigation. This will also provide quantitative numbers of what is in their blood at the time of death. This will allow them to inform law enforcement faster. At this time, it takes about 12-16 weeks to get those toxicology reports back.
- Ms. Kneece said Newberry Pathology Group services 13 other counties in South Carolina, the machine will be housed at their autopsy facility, and they can reach out and be collaborative with other agencies.
- The Newberry County Coroner's Office has been granted \$62,000 for this machine and it will also come with the barcode scanner, installation and staff will be trained on how to operate it. Furthermore, this will also come with a manual and a one-year warranty. They will also receive a six-month supply of the testing kits (which have a six-month shelf life) so they will order six months at a time.
- The recurring cost after the first year will be \$8,000 annually, along with the kits. Ms. Kneece said since there is still opioid relief money at the state level, they plan on reaching out this June and ask for the state to cover that annual fee, and funding for the kits. She said they can also reach back out to the Coalition when it is time to redo a grant and ask for continuous funding for this machine.
- Mr. Fulmer asked if the \$63,000 was grant money to which Ms. Kneece answered in the affirmative and added that it was fully funded.
- Mr. Sease asked if it would be housed at one location and the bodies taken there to perform the toxicology test; Ms. Kneece said it will be at the morgue where they are transported for autopsies. She said

unless they see a reason to pull at the scene, where they have the ability and training to pull at a scene.

- Mr. Smith asked about how much time it will take them to run the test and get the results; Ms. Kneece said roughly 25 minutes and that is presumptive.
- Mr. Fulmer asked about the service life of this machine; Ms. Kneece said she did not know but will get the answer.
- Mr. Sease asked once they are trained would they need to get requalified; Ms. Kneece said no, but they can call for further training, if needed.
- Additionally, Ms. Kneece announced that on April 11, 2025, the Newberry County Coroner's Office underwent on-site reaccreditation through the Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners. The office completed 100% of the 260 required standards and 100% of the 25 non-required standards.
 - While on-site, the auditors met with EMS, City of Newberry Police and City of Newberry Fire Department and spoke with them about their working relationship.
 - The auditors had the following recommendations: where they store drugs (before they are given to the Newberry County Sheriff's Office for disposal) and property storage is reaching capacity; the morgue air handling system should be isolated from the main hospital; remodel or expansion of the morgue to remain IACME approved, to include increased refrigeration space; upgrade to a key card type access system both in the morgue and the Newberry County Coroner's Office, as well as video surveillance system; provide additional documentation to include on-site prescription count or photographic documentation to further control and document drug evidence.
- The Newberry County Coroner's Office was one of eight South Carolina counties and one of 44 offices across the United States to be accredited.
- Mr. Sease asked how often they have to go through the accreditation renewal process; Ms. Kneece said every five years, but the way they

have it now, they will need to go through certain standards every year or every other year.

5. Helene Update and Presentation from Emergency Services Director Tommy Long and Chris Wood of Berquist Consulting.

- Prior to Mr. Woods presenting to the Committee, a few questions were asked of Mr. Long.
- Mr. Smith said a concern during the Hurricane Helene was getting access to fuel and if that has been addressed. Mr. Long said they use a local vendor, but in the future what they are looking at doing is staging some tanks in certain parts of the county.
- Mr. Smith asked if the county could do an inventory of what is on rolling stock at each station with year, model, age and condition. Mr. Long said he already has a spreadsheet on that already with fire and rescue rolling stock. Mr. Long said he will share that with the committee.
- Mr. Smith asked Mr. Long to speak about a discussion he had with a vendor regarding ambulances. Mr. Long said the vendor building the county's two new ambulances came and took a look at the ambulances that will be replaced and came up with a price if the county trades them to the vendor or if they decide to remount one for the rescue squad. He said he is waiting on those figures.
- Mr. Sease asked if the county keeps supply list of what is in the trailers; Mr. Long said it is in his head, but he can do an inventory list. He said right now, they have enough to set up 80 cots, if needed.
- Mr. Sease asked if the county keeps a list of all volunteer firefighters and what their qualifications are; Mr. Long said Mr. Brandon Wicker is working on that now and is something they've been working on.
- Mr. Sease also asked about the status of Mr. Long's old truck that will be converted to a truck for hazmat. Mr. Long said he is still waiting on a couple of things for his new truck and when that is done, he'll be ready to give his old truck to hazmat.

- Mr. Smith asked when the new ambulances and fire engine will be delivered. Mr. Long said they should all be here in July.
- Mr. Long then introduced Mr. Wood to the committee with Berquist Consulting. Mr. Wood reviewed a Newberry County Hurricane Helene Recovery Update Report, which is attached with these minutes.
- Mr. Smith asked what the timeline is for receiving reimbursements; Mr. Wood said he estimates this summer.

6. Public Comments.

- No public comments.

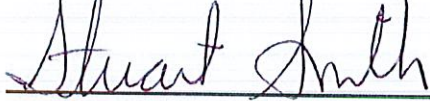
7. Comments from Committee Members.

- Mr. Sease thanked Mr. Long, Mr. Wood and Ms. Kneece for coming out and providing those reports.
- Mr. Fulmer congratulated Ms. Kneece on the accreditation and that is really good. He also thanked Mr. Long and Mr. Wood.
- Mr. Smith thanked Ms. Kneece for getting that grant and that will help speed up the process. He also thanked Mr. Wood and Mr. Long for their hard work.

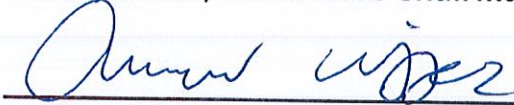
8. Adjournment.

- Mr. Sease made a motion to adjourn; Mr. Fulmer provided the second and the motion carried 3-0 at 5:51 p.m.

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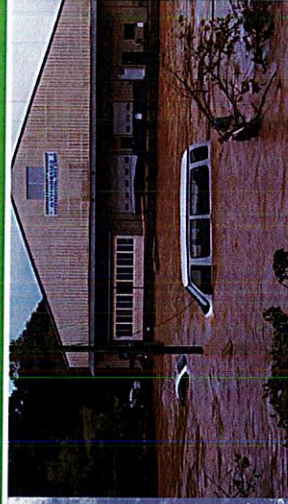
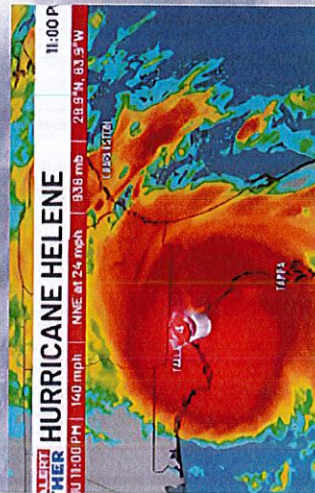


Stuart Smith, Committee Chairman

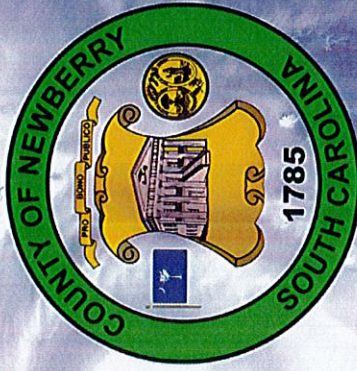


Andrew Wigger, Clerk to Council

Minutes Approved: May 21, 2025



NEWBERRY COUNTY



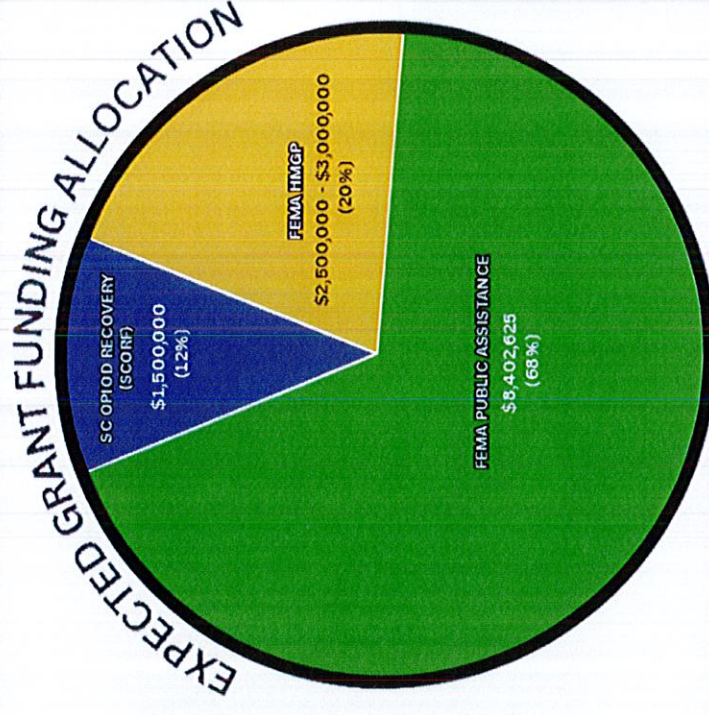
HURRICANE HELENE (DR-4829-SG) RECOVERY UPDATE REPORT

PRESENTED BY:
CHRIS WOOD
BERQUIST RECOVERY CONSULTING
APRIL 28, 2025



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

FUNDING SOURCE	ESTIMATED COST	EXTERNAL COST SHARE (FEMA/SCORF)	COUNTY MATCH
FEMA Public Assistance	\$8,402,625	\$6,301,969 (75% Federal Share)	\$2,100,656 (25%)
FEMA Hazard Mitigation (HIMGP)	\$2,000,000-\$3,000,000	\$1,500,000-\$2,250,000 (75% Federal Share)	\$500,000-\$750,000
SC Opioid Recovery Fund (Guaranteed)	~\$1,500,000	~\$1,500,000 (100% Cost Share)	\$0
SC Opioid Recovery Fund (Discretionary)	Varies (Competitive)	TBD 100% Cost Share	\$0



*Newberry County Recovery and Resilience Funding Report Executive Summary

FEMA PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROJECTS

21 FEMA PA Projects

Newberry County is managing 21 FEMA Public Assistance projects across various categories

Project Categories

The projects span categories A, B, C, E, G, and Z, totaling \$8.4 million in estimated costs

FEMA Reimbursement

The anticipated FEMA reimbursement is \$6.3 million, with the county providing a \$2.1 million match

Project Status

The projects are in various stages of development, with some awaiting initial FEMA reviews and others in progress

Key Projects

Significant projects include debris removal, bridge repairs, and facility/infrastructure repairs

FEMA HAZARD MITIGATION GRANT PROGRAM



Emergency Generator Program

Standby generators at seven critical facilities: Airport, Airport, Courthouse, Annex, Auditor-Treasurer Office, Office, Maintenance Shop, Magistrate Office, Public Public Works & Animal Control. FEMA reviewing for reviewing for eligibility and cost-effectiveness.



Lynches Woods Flood Mitigation

Two-phase hydrology/hydraulics study and infrastructure improvements (culverts, regrading, stabilization). Pending FEMA benefit-cost and environmental reviews.

Newberry County will be submitting multiple HMGP projects focused on improving community resilience through emergency generator installations and flood mitigation efforts at Lynches Woods Park. The County is actively working with FEMA to secure approval and funding for these critical resilience initiatives.

SOUTH CAROLINA OPIOID RECOVERY FUND (SCORF)



Guaranteed Subfund Allocation

Immediate access to \$25K planning funds; approximately \$250K at risk if not obligated by December 2025. Proposed initiatives: Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT), naloxone distribution, jail-based treatment, community education, drug courts, recovery housing.



Discretionary Subfund (Competitive Grants)

Potential additional resources for regional collaboration, youth prevention, Quick Response Teams, and jail diversion programs.

The South Carolina Opioid Recovery Fund (SCORF) provides critical resources to Newberry County to address the local opioid epidemic, including both guaranteed and discretionary funding streams. The County plans to leverage these funds for a range of initiatives, such as medication-assisted treatment, naloxone distribution, and community-based programs, which will play a key role in their comprehensive recovery and resilience efforts.

IMMEDIATE ACTION ITEMS & PRIORITIES



Finalize FEMA PA Documentation

Expedite project approvals within the next 60 days



Secure Matching Funds

Budget approximately \$2.5–\$2.8 million for PA and HMGP matches



HMGP Application Follow-Up

Regularly monitor status and provide supplemental information promptly



SCORF Funding Strategy

Immediately finalize and submit the \$25K planning funds request, complete and submit formal opioid abatement plan by June 2024, secure County Council resolution for SCORF-funded projects, and prepare discretionary funding applications

Newberry County's immediate action items and priorities focus on ensuring successful funding retention and implementation of their comprehensive recovery and resilience efforts. By finalizing FEMA PA documentation, securing matching funds, following up on HMGP applications, and developing a strategic approach to SCORF funding, the County is well-positioned to overcome any strategic risks and achieve their goals.