

**NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL  
MINUTES  
MAY 6, 2020**

Newberry County Council met on Wednesday, May 6, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at the Courthouse Annex, 1309 College Street, Newberry, S.C., for a regular scheduled meeting.

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

**PRESENT:** Henry H. Livingston, III, Chairman  
Kirksey Koon, Vice Chairman  
Steve Stockman, Council Member  
Scott Cain, Council Member  
Travis Reeder, Council Member  
Dr. Harriett Rucker, Council Member  
Johnny Mack Scurry, Council Member  
Wayne Adams, County Administrator  
A.J. Tothacer, III, County Attorney  
Debbie S. Cromer, Finance Director  
Karen Brehmer, Deputy County Administrator  
Taylor Davenport, Assistant to County Administrator  
Susan C. Fellers, Clerk to Council

**MEDIA:** Andrew Wigger, Newberry Observer

Mr. Livingston called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Dr. Rucker had the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**1. Adoption of Consent Agenda.**

Motion by Dr. Rucker to adopt the Consent Agenda consisting of minutes of the Council meetings of February 5th and 19th, 2020, March 4, 2020 and April 1, 2020, as presented; second by Mr. Cain.

Vote was unanimous.

**2. Additions, Deletions and Adoption of Agenda.**

**A. Instructions for Amending Second Reading of the Budget:**

Amendments to second reading of either budget ordinance may be offered once there is a motion and a second to adopt second reading and the Chairman has opened the floor for discussion. The final vote on second reading will not occur until all amendments have been voted on.

Each amendment is considered as if it were a separate vote. Each has its own motion, second, discussion period and vote.

After all amendments have been considered as described above, Council votes on second reading *as amended*. There is no need for a motion and second - they have already been offered. The Chairman simply calls for the question on second reading *as amended*. Approval then incorporates all amendments that have been approved.

Motion by Mr. Reeder to approve agenda, as presented; second by Mr. Scurry.

There being no discussion, Mr. Livingston called for the vote.

Vote was unanimous.

**3. Ordinance #04-14-20: An Ordinance to provide appropriations for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2021, for the Newberry County Budget for County Ordinary purposes and for the other County purposes for which the County may levy a tax and receive revenues; to provide for the levy of taxes on all taxable personal and real property in Newberry County for all County purposes, including sufficient tax to pay the principal and interest on outstanding indebtedness of Newberry County payable during said fiscal year; to provide for matters relating to Newberry County; and to provide for the expenditure of said taxes and other revenues received by the County during said fiscal year, and to provide for borrowing in anticipation of tax collections by the issuance to one or more tax anticipation notes, if necessary.**

## **A. Second Reading**

Motion by Mr. Scurry to adopt second reading; second by Mr. Reeder.

Under discussion, the following amendments were proposed and voted on:

**3.1 Motion: Strike funding for employee salary increases in the amount of \$175,191 (line item #010-005-02200-01000). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 1.20.**

Dr. Rucker so moved; second by Mr. Reeder.

Vote was unanimous.

**3.2 Motion: Reduce Council contingency funding by \$101,634, from \$287,397 to \$185,763 (line item #010-005-15000-02011). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.70.**

Dr. Rucker so moved; second by Mr. Reeder.

Vote was unanimous.

**3.3 Motion: Strike one-time equipment purchase for school resource officers in the amount of \$33,400 (line item 010-005-06112-0410). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.23**

Dr. Rucker so moved; second by Mr. Stockman.

Mr. Koon advised that the Sheriff has agreed to this reduction but this is part of the Sheriff's Office budget, and there are several more motions affecting reduction of the Sheriff's Office budget.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Livingston called for the vote.

Vote was unanimous.

**3.4 Motion: Reduce facilities capital repairs - detention center by \$20,000, from \$190,000 to \$170,000 (line item 010-005-08130-04150). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.14.**

Dr. Rucker so moved; second by Mr. Stockman.

Vote was unanimous.

**3.5 Motion: Reduce Sheriff's fuel by \$17,000, from \$167,500 to \$150,500 (line item #010-005-06100-03130). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.12.**

Dr. Rucker so moved; second by Mr. Reeder.

Mr. Koon said again this is a reduction from the Sheriff's Office but the Sheriff has agreed to try and get by with this reduction.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Livingston called for the vote.

Vote was unanimous.

**3.6 Motion: Reduce fleet maintenance contracted services by \$8,000, from \$472,464 to \$464,464 (line item #010-005-08120-02021). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.06.**

Dr. Rucker so moved; second by Mr. Scurry.

Vote was unanimous.

**3.7 Motion: Strike funding for Helena Center repairs in the amount of \$8,000 (line item #010-005-08180-02312). Reduce current year property tax revenue by corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.06.**

Dr. Rucker so moved; second by Mr. Reeder.

Vote was unanimous.

**3.8 Motion: Reduce GIS contracted maintenance by \$5,000, from \$56,604 to \$51,604 (line item #010-005-03700-02050). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.03.**

Dr. Rucker so moved; second by Mr. Scurry.

Vote was unanimous.

**3.9 Motion: Reduce funding for Chamber of Commerce in the amount of \$5,000 (video), from \$15,000 to \$10,000 (line item #010-005-13800-02020). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.03 mills.**

Dr. Rucker so moved; second by Mr. Koon.

Mr. Cain said the Chamber provides services for all businesses. This is a fundamental part of economic development.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Livingston called for the vote.

Voting for the motion: Council Members Livingston, Koon, Stockman, Reeder, Rucker and Scurry.

Voting against the motion: Council Member Cain.

Motion passed by majority vote.

**3.10 Motion: Strike funding for Community Hall site repairs in the amount of \$4,000 (line item #010-005-08140-02312). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.03.**

Dr. Rucker so moved; second by Mr. Reeder.

Vote was unanimous.

**3.11 Motion: Remove two vehicles for school resource officers from the debt service levy budget (lease purchase) in the amount of \$17,250 (line item**

**#020-005-06100-04070). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.12.**

Dr. Rucker so moved; second by Mr. Stockman.

Mr. Koon again pointed out this was affecting the Sheriff's Office.

Dr. Rucker advised the Sheriff didn't feel he could actually employ 4 school resource officers at this time.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Livingston called for the vote.

Vote was unanimous.

**3.12 Motion: Strike funding for the Newberry Museum by \$70,000 (line item #010-005-13820-02020). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.48.**

Mr. Koon so moved; second by Mr. Livingston for discussion purposes.

Mr. Cain advised that Newberry County, City of Newberry and Newberry College each put in \$70,000 for the Newberry Museum and he felt the County should not cut this from the budget.

Dr. Rucker also felt we should honor our responsibility.

Mr. Koon said this was a non-essential item and not a governmental entity. We are not giving our own employees a cost of living raise. The Sheriff's Office has taken a cut. He was not against any of these entities but did have a problem with it being funded with taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Reeder agreed it was not essential but it did bring people in, which in turn brings money into Newberry County.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Livingston called for the vote.

Voting for the Motion: Council Members Koon and Stockman.

Voting against the Motion: Council Members Livingston, Cain, Reeder, Rucker and Scurry.

Motion failed.

**3.13 Motion: Strike funding for Newberry Opera House by \$25,000 (line item #010-005-13900-02020). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.17.**

Mr. Koon so moved; second by Mr. Livingston for discussion purposes.

Mr. Cain said the Newberry Opera House brings in hundreds of people.

Mr. Stockman said the Newberry Opera House has been open for quite a while now. The County made a commitment to help support them but like any other business, the Newberry Opera House needs to support itself. He was not sure the taxpayer dollars should be going to the Newberry Opera House.

Mr. Reeder felt these funds allowed Newberry Opera House to lower ticket prices.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Livingston called for the vote.

Voting for the Motion: Council Members Koon and Stockman.

Voting against the Motion: Council Members Livingston, Cain, Reeder, Rucker and Scurry.

Motion failed.

**3.14 Motion: Strike funding for Newberry County Literacy by \$6,000 (line item #010-005-13800-02020). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.04.**

Mr. Koon so moved; second by Mr. Livingston for discussion purposes.

Mr. Koon stated this was not a government agency.

Mr. Reeder felt funding should be continued. Newberry County has a high rate of illiteracy, and they pay taxes to the County, too.

Mr. Cain agreed with Mr. Reeder.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Livingston called for the vote.

Voting for the motion: Council Member Koon.

Voting against the motion: Council Members Livingston, Stockman, Cain, Reeder, Rucker and Scurry.

Motion failed.

**3.15 Motion: Strike funding for Small Business Development Center by \$5,000 (line item #010-005-09400-02021). Reduce current year property tax by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.03.**

Mr. Koon so moved; second by Mr. Stockman.

Mr. Cain felt this should be funded because it focuses on industries and businesses.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Livingston called for the vote.

Voting for the motion: Council Member Koon.

Voting against the motion: Council Members Livingston, Stockman, Cain, Reeder, Rucker and Scurry.

Motion failed.

**3.16 Motion: Strike funding for Free Medical Clinic by \$5,000 (line item #010-005-12500-02020). Reduce current property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.03.**

Mr. Koon so moved. No second offered.



Motion died.

**3.17 Motion: Strike funding for Sexual Trauma Services in the amount of \$4,250 (line item #010-005-13600-02020). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.03.**

Mr. Koon so moved. No second offered.

Motion died.

**3.18 Motion: Strike funding for Comet in the amount of \$2,500 (line item #010-005-15000-04203). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.02.**

Mr. Koon so moved; second by Mr. Stockman.

Mr. Cain said Comet is a bus service between Columbia and Newberry every day and brings people in and out of Newberry County for work. This is an extension service for the County.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Livingston called for the vote.

Voting for the motion: Council Members Koon and Stockman.

Voting against the motion: Council Members Livingston, Cain, Reeder, Rucker and Scurry.

Motion failed.

**3.19 Motion: Strike funding for Sistercare, Inc. in the amount of \$2,295 (line item #010-005-13700-02020) Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.02.**

Mr. Koon so moved; no second.

Motion died.

**3.20 Motion: Strike funding for Village Cemetery in the amount of \$2,000 (line item #010-005-15000-04200. Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.01.**

Mr. Koon so moved; second by Mr. Stockman.

Voting for the motion: Council Members Koon, Stockman and Livingston.

Voting against the motion: Council Members Cain, Reeder, Rucker and Surry.

Motion failed.

**3.21 Motion: Strike funding for the Christmas Lights in the amount of \$1,500 (line item #010-005-15000-04202). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.01.**

Mr. Koon so moved; no second.

Motion died.

**3.22 Motion: Strike funding for the Newberry Downtown Development in the amount of \$1,000 (line item #010-005-15000-04201). Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.01.**

Mr. Koon so moved; no second.

Motion died.

Mr. Stockman understands Mr. Koon's feelings on these items but we don't know when we are going to get back to a new normal.

There being no other amendments offered, Mr. Livingston called for the vote for second reading.

Voting for second reading: Council Members Livingston, Stockman, Cain, Reeder, Rucker and Scurry.

Voting against second reading: Council Member Koon.

Motion passed by majority vote.

Mr. Adams advised 2.71 mills were cut from the budget tonight, leaving a 136 mill levy (the same as the prior year).

**4. Ordinance #04-15-20: An Ordinance to provide appropriations for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2021, for Newberry County Library, Piedmont Technical College and Newberry Agency for Disabilities and Special Needs; to provide for the levy of taxes on all taxable personal and real properties in Newberry County for said purposes; to provide for the expenditure of said taxes and other revenues received by the County during said fiscal year for said purposes.**

**A. Second Reading**

Motion for second reading by Mr. Reeder; second by Mr. Cain.

The following amendment was offered:

**4.1 Motion: Reduce proposed funding for the community services levy by \$28,106, from \$1,003,584 to \$975,478. Reduce current year property tax revenue by a corresponding amount. Millage equivalent = 0.19.**

Dr. Rucker moved to leave the \$28,106 funding in the budget; second by Mr. Reeder.

Dr. Rucker said this does not increase the millage and Piedmont Technical College does so much for the County.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Livingston called for the vote.

Voting for the motion to leave in the funding: Council Members Livingston, Koon, Cain, Reeder, Rucker and Scurry.

Voting against: Council Member Stockman.

Motion passed by majority vote.

There being no further amendments offered, Mr. Livingston called for the vote for second reading.

Voting for second reading: Council Members Livingston, Koon, Cain, Reeder, Rucker and Scurry.

Voting against second reading: Council Member Stockman.

Motion for second reading passed by majority vote.

**5. Resolution #02-20: A Resolution committing to negotiate a Fee-in-Lieu of *Ad Valorem* taxes agreement between Newberry County and Project Ursa including the provision of special source revenue credits; and other matters related thereto.**

Motion by Mr. Cain to approve Resolution; second by Dr. Rucker.

Vote was unanimous.

**6. Consideration of Annual Indexing of Elected Officials' Salaries.**

Newberry County Ordinance No. 01-01-17 provides that “absent a successful vote to the contrary by Newberry County Council at its first meeting in May, the county-funded salary portions for all countywide elected officials shall be increased at a rate equal to the consumer price index for all urban consumers (CPI-U), as determined for the most recently reported 12-month period.”

Sheriff Foster stated he would not accept a pay increase if other county employees did not get one.

Dr. Rucker moved to not increase the elected officials' salaries since all other county employees were not getting salary increases; second by Mr. Reeder.

Vote was unanimous.

**7. Executive Session (if needed)**

No Executive Session needed.

**8. Public Comments.**

No comments from the public.

**9. Comments/Requests from County Administrator.**

No comments.

**10. Comments/Requests from Council Members.**

Mr. Scurry requested that Council go forward with the budget with no additional cuts.

Dr. Rucker felt the meeting went well tonight and expressed appreciation to everybody working together on the budget issues.

Mr. Reeder urged everyone to take precautions since the County and State have opened up. We are far from the end of this pandemic.

Mr. Cain asked that everyone be cautious since we are coming out from under the stay at home order.

Mr. Stockman thanked Wayne and his staff for the excellent job on the budget. We don't want to make cuts but it is necessary.

Mr. Koon said working on the budget requires tough and hard decisions. He requested that we all remember Kelly Nobles and her family in the loss of her husband.

Mr. Livingston thanked the County Administrator and his team for all they have done on the budget during these difficult times. The public hearing on the budget ordinances is scheduled for May 20. We are still unable to have open session but welcome your comments relating to the budget.

**11. Future Meetings:**

- A. Personnel & Intergovernmental Relations, 5/18/2020 at 6:00 p.m.
- B. County Council, 5/20/2020 at 7:00 p.m.
- C. County Council, 6/3/2020 at 7:00 p.m.

**12. Adjournment.**

There being no further business to come before Council, Dr. Rucker moved to adjourn.

Mr. Livingston declared the meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

**NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL**

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**Henry H. Livingston, III, Chairman**

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**Susan C. Fellers, Clerk to Council**

**MINUTES APPROVED:** \_\_\_\_\_