

**NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL  
FINANCE COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
MARCH 28, 2022**

The Newberry County Council Finance Committee met on Monday, March 28, 2022, at 6:00 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:** Henry H. Livingston, III Council Committee Member  
Mary Arrowood, Council Committee Member  
Les Hipp, Council Committee Member  
Robert N. Shealy, Council Member  
Christopher Inglese, County Administrator  
Karen Brehmer, Deputy County Administrator  
Debbie S. Cromer, Finance Director  
Susan C. Fellers, Clerk to Council

Mr. Hipp called the meeting to order and determined a quorum to be present.

Mr. Hipp had the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

- 1. Election of Committee Chairman for 2022 - Christopher Inglese, County Administrator**

Mr. Inglese opened the floor for nominations for Chairman.

Mr. Hipp nominated Mrs. Arrowood; seconded by Mr. Livingston.

There being no other nominations, Mr. Inglese declared Mrs. Arrowood to be Chairman of the Finance Committee.

- 2. Approval of Minutes of April 5, 2021**

Mr. Livingston moved to adopt the Minutes of April 5, 2021, as presented; seconded by Mr. Hipp. Vote was unanimous.

### **3. Additions, Deletions and Adoption of the Agenda**

There being no additions or deletions to the Agenda, Mr. Livingston moved to adopt the Agenda, as presented; seconded by Mr. Hipp. Vote was unanimous.

### **4. Discussion of Solid Waste Fees and Ordinance**

#### **a. Transfer Station**

##### **i. Commercial User Fee**

##### **ii. Mega User Fee**

Mike Pisano, Public Works Director, presented a powerpoint presentation regarding the Newberry County Transfer Station.

The costs to Newberry County for FY20-21 at the landfill was \$2,204,481. The tipping fee revenue was \$1,171,438. There is a shortfall of \$1,033,043.

At the present time the City of Newberry pays no tipping fees for commercial trash.

Users who dump over 1,000 tons have been identified as mega users. The consultant has recommended a surcharge for mega users. Staff recommends a \$2 per ton surcharge for anything over 1,000 tons and an increase of the base fee from \$49 per ton to \$51 per ton

Projected revenue for FY23 including charging the City of Newberry for commercial trash, implementing a surcharge for mega users, and increasing the base fee will generate a total of \$1,779,333. The projected shortfall for FY23 would be \$425,149. This shortfall could be more due to fuel costs.

Mr. Inglese advised a draft ordinance would be brought to full Council at the April 20th meeting, which will set out all commercial users to be subject to the same fees as the City of Newberry. The fee will be consistent with all commercial waste. The budget includes a presumption that these fees will be included.

## 5. Discussion of FY 22-23 General Fund Budget

Mr. Inglese presented the proposed FY22-23 budget to the Committee.

Included in the proposed budget is a 3% cost of living adjustment for all county employees

The budget recommends a transfer of reserve funds in the amount of \$441,195 for operations and \$397,663 for capital purchase or improvements. We will work toward a three year capital purchase plan and a five year capital improvement plan, thereby enabling a strategic approach to major purchases and improvements.

Staff projects total revenue collections of \$28,724,880 for FY22.

Total revenue projections for FY23 are \$28,539,846.

The anticipated value of a mill for FY23 equals \$160,370, an increase of 6.5%. The recommended budget includes a 2.5 mill increase for operations and debt service millage decrease of 1 mill. The recommended net millage increase equals 1.5 mills. On a \$150,000 house this would equate to a \$6 increase.

Fifteen personnel requests were included in departmental budgets. The recommended budget includes 4 new positions: CPA/CFO, IT Director, Grants Writer and Park and Recreation Programs Manager.

As to the CPA/CFO, that person needs to be on board now to work with Debbie Cromer, who will be retiring at some time in the future. This job is a need and not a want. The CPA would provide oversight of work for audits. Other officials such as the Treasurer, Auditor and Sheriff could also consult with this person.

Mr. Hipp inquired as to the contract of the County with its outside auditors. He felt it would be good to seek bids when our current contract expires. Mr. Inglese will check on the contract the County has with the current outside auditing firm.

The IT Director is a need and not a want. Ervin West will be retiring soon, and with his retirement it is time to hire a skilled IT person. An on board IT person would save the County approximately \$40,000 from its contract with VC3. \$105,000 has been budgeted for an IT Director, and this amount would be offset by the \$40,000.

As to the facilities part of Mr. West's job, the County will need to find a property manager or either somebody in the department with maintenance experience. The salary range would be around \$70,000.

The grant writer would focus on Public Safety and Public Works. This could be a payoff for the County.

The Parks and Recreation Coordinator would allow the county to grow its own program. Right now the County pays money back to the municipalities toward recreational programs.

The proposed budget includes an extra increase in salary for Public Works and Detention Center employees.

Mrs. Arrowood said she needed to study all this information and then come back with questions.

Mr. Livingston was glad to see the increase for the employees. He asked about the Compensation Salary Study.

Mr. Inglese responded that they were finishing up the RP and hoped to have it posted by the end of the week. The County hopes to have this study completed by the end of the calendar year.

Mr. Livingston expressed concern over where the numbers were coming from for the new positions.

Mr. Inglese said these figures were not totally random. He budgeted on the high end in case we get the perfect person. In reality these figures could be 20% less.

Mr. Livingston said the County needs a grant writer but they need to pay their own way through the grants.

Mr. Hipp requested a list of job responsibilities of the grant writer, as well as a list of potential grant monies the County could get.

Mr. Livingston said Rescue Squads and Fire Departments have to write their own grants and should have someone to assist with that.

Mr. Inglese said there is currently no accounting of what grants they get. We will know if the grant writer is successful because of increased accounting responsibilities.

Mr. Livingston also requested information about bonds, such as date of maturity and interest rate.

#### **6. Discussion of potential fee agreement for architectural space need analysis - administration building**

Mr. Inglese would like to engage an architectural firm to talk about the county needs for Administration, Treasurer, Auditor, Zoning, etc. He would like to get all departments working in a single space. It would take approximately \$13,000 to do it. In order to get drawings and to cover the architectural fees, it would be an additional \$27,000, for a total of \$40,000.

One estimate has been received and the County is waiting on the other two. \$13,000 has been identified from Ervin West's budget.

#### **7. Public Comments**

Matt DeWitt, City of Newberry, said an increase in the transfer fee would affect 213 businesses in the City of Newberry. It would be an increase of 119.76% for the City to pass along. Currently the cost is \$86 per month and that would increase to \$179 per month. A lot of businesses are barely getting by after covid. He felt the County could look at ways to not impact businesses so much at one time. If the County pursues this cost increase, the City of Newberry will discontinue its garbage services.

As to recreation fees, there was an agreement entered into a few years ago where the County pays the City a small amount and that would eliminate fees for county residents. The City receives \$40,000 from the County every year and the City is happy with this arrangement. The City will have to look at county residents paying more for city recreation programs.

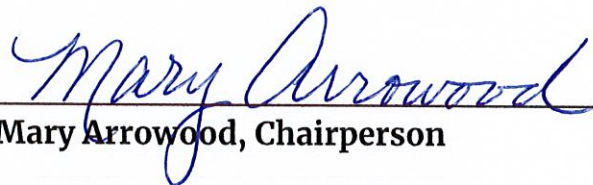
Joe Trainer felt the millage increase and trash fee increase could have a negative effect on downtown businesses. The City is happy with the services it is getting now, and this would negatively affect some people.

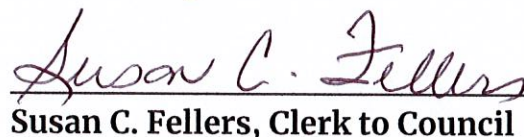
### 8. Adjournment

There being no further business, Mr. Hipp moved to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Livingston. Vote was unanimous.

Mrs. Arrowood declared the meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.

**NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL  
FINANCE COMMITTEE**

  
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Mary Arrowood, Chairperson

  
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Susan C. Fellers, Clerk to Council

Minutes Approved: 5-4-2022