

**NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL
MINUTES
MARCH 1, 2023**

The Newberry County Council met on Wednesday, March 1, 2023, 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: Todd Johnson, Chair
Les Hipp, Vice-Chair
Mary Arrowood, Council Member
Karl Sease, Council Member
Robert N. Shealy, Council Member
Johnny Mack Scurry, Council Member
Travis Reeder, Council Member
Karen Brehmer, Acting County Administrator
Joanie Winters, Interim County Attorney
Debbie S. Cromer, Finance Director
Crystal Waldrop, Procurement Director
Susan C. Fellers, Clerk to Council

Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m., determined a quorum to be present and welcomed visitors to the meeting.

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

1. ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. Newberry County Council Special Called Meeting - February 2, 2023**
- b. Newberry County Council Meeting - February 15, 2023**
- c. Economic Development Committee Meeting - February 21, 2023**

Mr. Shealy moved to adopt all items on the Consent Agenda, as presented; seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. There being no discussion, Mr. Johnson called for the vote. Vote was unanimous.

2. ADDITIONS, DELETIONS AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

There being no additions or deletions to the Agenda, Mr. Shealy moved to adopt the Agenda, as presented; seconded by Mr. Hipp. There being no discussion, Mr. Johnson called for the vote. Vote was unanimous.

3. CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST TO PURCHASE BUNKER GEAR - CRYSTAL WALDROP, PROCUREMENT DIRECTOR

Mrs. Waldrop reported that 2 bids were received. Staff recommends accepting the second lowest bid due to the noncompliance in the specifications regarding the low-rise pants. The second lowest bid is from SC Fire Equipment in the amount of \$2,492.00 for each set. The total cost for 15 sets would be \$37,380.00. Funding is budgeted in the capital outlay for the fire department and this bid falls within the budget limitations.

Mr. Shealy moved to accept the bid of SC Fire Equipment; seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. There being no further discussion, Mr. Johnson called for the vote. Vote was unanimous.

4. CONSIDERATION OF A REQUEST TO REIMBURSE PROSPERITY FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR SELF-CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS - ROBERT DENNIS, CHIEF PROSPERITY FIRE DEPARTMENT AND BRANDON WICKER, EMERGENCY SERVICES COORDINATOR

Robert Dennis, Chief of Prosperity Fire Department, advised Prosperity Fire Department had purchased 4 paks, 8 cylinders and 8 masks to bring one truck up to standard. The cost for these purchases was \$37,963.00. Prosperity Fire Department is using fundraiser and donation monies to make this purchase. This still leaves Prosperity with two other trucks that would need to be brought up to standard.

Friendly, Fairview and Prosperity Fire Departments have applied for the FEMA Fire Assistance Grant and requested a total of 34 paks, 68 cylinders and 40 masks.

Since this is a county-wide situation, Mr. Johnson recommended deferring this issue to Tommy Long, Public Safety Director, to come up with a plan which should then be presented to the Public Safety Committee.

After discussion, Mr. Shealy moved to send this item to Tommy Long, Public Safety Director, to develop a county-wide plan, which plan will then be submitted to the Public Safety Committee for consideration; seconded by Mr. Hipp. There being no further discussion, Mr. Johnson called for the vote. Vote was unanimous.

5. COMMITTEE REPORT - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE, RICK FARMER, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Mr. Farmer reported that project activity was solid and there were six site submissions. Newberry County is missing opportunities because it currently has no empty buildings.

The new road expansion in Mid-Carolina Commerce Park is complete.

The Daeyoung Construction in Mid-Carolina Commerce Park II is complete. A new sign will be needed for this park at an estimated cost of \$122,000.00, and funding for the sign is being requested in his FY 23-24 budget request.

The Mawsons Way Extension project to add a new road in the Newberry Industrial Park is back on track, and Alliance Consulting, who was first hired in 2019 is back on the job. He has resubmitted a grant request letter to the SC Department of Commerce and was optimistic that the County would get these funds reallocated. However, it is not a sure thing.

The 2022 State Korea Mission was completed last October. This was his fourth Korean Mission, and he felt this was the best.

He has requested \$15,000 in his FY 23-24 budget request to overhaul the economic development website.

The average wage in Newberry County has increased by 32% in the last five years.

The Workforce Summit will be held on March 31, 2023.

Mr. Johnson asked if the traffic light to be installed at the I-26 and Highway 219 interchange would impact Mawsons Way. Mr. Farmer responded that it would have no impact on Mawsons Way.

6. APPOINTMENTS

No appointments.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments from the public.

8. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Code Section 30-4-70(a) of the Code of Laws of SC, as amended, 1976:

(1) Discussion of employment, appointment, compensation, promotion, demotion, discipline, or release of an employee, a student, or a person regulated by a public body or the appointment of a person to a public body; however, if an adversary hearing involving the employee or client is held, the employee or client has the right to demand that the hearing be conducted publicly. Nothing contained in this item shall prevent the public body, in its discretion, from deleting the names of the other employees or clients whose records are submitted for use at the hearing.

(2) Discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and proposed sale or purchase of property, the receipt

of legal advice where the legal advice relates to a pending, threatened or potential claim or other matters covered by the attorney-client privilege, settlement of legal claims, or the position of the public agency in other adversary situations involving the assertion against the agency of a claim.

(3) Discussion of matters relating to the proposed location, expansion, or the provision of services encouraging location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body.

Mr. Shealy moved to go into Executive Session for the reasons set forth above; seconded by Mr. Reeder. There being no discussion, Mr. Johnson called for the vote. Vote was unanimous.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION
6:46 P.M. – 7:50 P.M.**

Mrs. Arrowood moved to return to open session; seconded by Mr. Scurry. There being no discussion, Mr. Johnson called for the vote. Vote was unanimous.

Mr. Johnson reported that Council met in Executive Session for the above reasons, and no action was taken in Executive Session.

Mr. Hipp moved that County Council issue a document in support of Newberry Electric Cooperative's application for a grant to provide fiber service in unserved and under-served areas of Newberry County; seconded by Mr. Reeder.

There being no discussion, Mr. Johnson called for the vote. Mr. Shealy abstained from voting due to his affiliation with Newberry Electric Cooperative. All other Council Members voted for the motion unanimously. Motion passed unanimously with Mr. Shealy abstaining because of his work-related conflict.

9. COMMENTS/REQUESTS FROM ACTING COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Mrs. Brehmer stated this would be her last meeting as Acting County Administrator and looked forward to Jeff Shacker coming on board as the County Administrator on March 13.

10.COMMENTS/REQUESTS FROM COUNCIL

All Council Members thanked Mrs. Brehmer and Mrs. Cromer, as well as other staff, for all they have done to keep the County afloat.

Mr. Johnson announced that Katherine Cook was back with Newberry County as the Human Relations Director.

11.FUTURE MEETINGS:

- a. County Council meeting - March 15, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.**
- b. Finance Committee meeting - March 27, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.**
- c. County Council meeting - April 5, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.**
- d. Budget Work Session - April 12, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.**

Mr. Johnson reminded everyone of the FILOT meeting on March 28, 2023 and the Workforce Summit on March 31, 2023.

12.ADJOURNMENT

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

Mr. Johnson declared the meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL

Todd Johnson

Todd Johnson, Chair

Susan C. Fellers

Susan C. Fellers, Clerk to Council

Minutes Approved: 3-15-23