

**NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL
MINUTES
JANUARY 19, 2022**

Newberry County Council met on Wednesday, January 19, 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: Todd Johnson, Chairman (District 1)
Mary Arrowood, Council Member (District 2)
Henry H. Livingston, III, Council Member (District 3)
Robert N. Shealy, Council Member (District 4)
Johnny Mack Scurry, Council Member (District 6)
Travis Reeder, Council Member (District 7)
Christopher Inglese, County Administrator
A.J. Tothacer, Jr., County Attorney
Karen Brehmer, Deputy County Administrator
Debbie S. Cromer, Finance Director
Susan C. Fellers, Clerk to Council

PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Les Hipp, Vice Chairman (District 5)

MEDIA: Andrew Wigger, Newberry Observer

Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and determined a quorum to be present.

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

1. ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Shealy moved to adopt the Consent Agenda, as presented; seconded by Mr. Reeder. Vote was unanimous.

2. ADDITIONS, DELETIONS AND ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mr. Reeder moved to adopt the Agenda, as presented; seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. Vote was unanimous.

3. ORDINANCE #12-29-21: AN ORDINANCE FOR REDISTRICTING OF NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL BASED ON THE 2020 CENSUS.

a. Public Hearing

Mr. Johnson declared the public hearing open. There being no comments from the public, Mr. Johnson declared the public hearing closed.

b. Third Reading

Mr. Tothacer advised that the final map was on the County website.

Mrs. Arrowood stated her district had the most change, and she had no problems with the district lines. Accordingly, she moved to adopt third reading; seconded by Mr. Scurry. There being no discussion, Mr. Johnson called for the vote. Vote was unanimous.

4. ORDINANCE #01-01-22: AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE GRANT OF AN EASEMENT TO NEWBERRY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE FOR THE PURPOSE OF LOCATING AN ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION LINE IN THE MID-CAROLINA COMMERCE PARK II LOCATED ON SC HIGHWAY 773.

a. Second Reading

Mr. Shealy recused himself from any discussions regarding this agenda item based on his employment with Newberry Electric Coop creating a conflict of interest and left the room during all discussions.

Rick Farmer, Economic Development Director, met with representatives from Daeyoung, who advised they had found a better way to enter the property. Both Daeyoung and Newberry Electric thanked County Council for

consideration of this but requested that this item be removed from the agenda as it is no longer needed.

Under discussion, Mr. Tothacer recommended that in order for this item to be removed from the agenda, Council would need to vote against second reading. The record will then show it was defeated at second reading, and it is over and done.

Mr. Reeder moved to adopt second reading; seconded by Mrs. Arrowood.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Johnson called for the vote. There were no votes for second reading. Voting against second reading were all Council Members except Mr. Shealy, who had recused himself. Second reading was defeated.

Mr. Shealy was then called back into Council Chambers.

5. UPDATE ON CAPITAL PROJECT SALES TAX

Mr. Inglese met with the engineers, and they are up and running and understand the timeline. There are two projects that need individual meetings set up and discussions as to what the County's role will be in those two particular projects.

6. PROPOSED COUNCIL COMMITTEE RESTRUCTURING

Mr. Inglese and staff recommends reduction of the Council Committees from five committees to four committees. The current committees are Public Safety and Courts, Public Works and Planning, Personnel and Intergovernmental Relations, Economic Development and Finance. The proposed committees would be Finance, Public Safety, Economic Development and Executive Committee. Another option would be to reduce from five committees to two committees: Finance Committee and Executive Committee.

The two committee meetings scheduled for later in January have both been postponed until this issue is resolved.

Mr. Shealy asked Mr. Inglese to explain the changes.

Mr. Inglese -

Public Safety and Courts - there are not a lot of court issues, and there doesn't seem to be a need for that portion of this committee.

Public Works and Planning - eliminate the planning portion, and Finance can absorb that. If there are issues, then the full Council can handle those. Some of the planning actually falls to Economic Development.

Personnel and Intergovernmental Relations - the intergovernmental relations is not something that is utilized. Personnel is mainly policy changes which would come before the Executive Committee.

Economic Development and Finance - there is a lot of activity in both of these committees so they should be kept in place.

If Council adopts the proposal, the Chairman can make appointments to the committees, and staff will begin working on a calendar of meetings.

Mr. Hipp felt this was an excellent opportunity to support our new Administrator and his recommendations and to utilize his knowledge and experience. Mr. Hipp advised he would vote in favor of this.

Mr. Shealy moved to accept the proposed Council Committee restructuring; seconded by Mr. Scurry. Vote was unanimous.

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

(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.

To discuss opioid litigation and Cavanaugh Tract

Mrs. Arrowood moved to go into Executive Session to discuss the matters as set forth above; seconded by Mr. Livingston. Vote was unanimous.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

6:20 P.M. - 6:55 P.M.

Mr. Livingston moved to return to open session; seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. Vote was unanimous.

Mr. Johnson advised Council went into Executive Session for the above-stated reasons, and no action was taken.

Mrs. Arrowood moved to authorize the County Administrator to take the necessary and proper steps to end the opioid litigation; seconded by Mr. Reeder. Vote was unanimous.

8. APPOINTMENTS

No appointments.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No comments from the public.

10. COMMENTS/REQUESTS FROM COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. Inglese recommended Council consider a budget planning session on either February 4-5 or February 11-12. He requested they let him know which dates and times would be suitable.

He complimented Debbie Cromer and Karen Brehmer on a successful Department of Revenue audit of the CPST.

There will be a budget amendment at the first meeting in February. There are retention issues in Public Works because of salaries.

He has been in contact with DHEC, and covid cases in Newberry County have grown considerably. For the period of December 5-18, 2021, Newberry County reported 123 covid cases. As of January 17, Newberry County had 1,441 cases. He does not feel comfortable opening up county facilities for rental to the public at this time. If Council directs otherwise, he will do it. There is staff out with covid. Newberry County has the third highest case count in the state. As of this morning, the count was 1,991. Currently it is over 2,010 just through the end of today, and numbers are increasing hour by hour.

Newberry County is currently under a winter weather watch. Public Works has not reported any significant problem with the roadways at this time.

11. COMMENTS/REQUESTS FROM COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mr. Shealy had no comments.

Mr. Livingston thanked all responders who went out in the weather this past weekend, whether first responders or linemen with the Coop. He requested prayers for the Danny Gilliam family. He also congratulated Debbie Cromer and Karen Brehmer on the CPST audit.

Mrs. Arrowood said her comments would be the same as Mr. Livingston.

Mr. Scurry thanked the County Administrator for working with Council and expressed appreciation for his open door policy. He also requested prayers for the Danny Gilliam family.

Mr. Reeder thanked the County Administrator for all his work. Due to the weather, the MLK parade was canceled; however, he thanked Mr. Inglese and Mr. Johnson for walking with everyone on Monday. He hopes to get everyone's participation in the years to come.

Mr. Hipp gave a shout out to all utility workers, who had to work overtime and had to come out on a holiday to work.

Mr. Johnson echoed thanks and appreciation to the public utilities, as well as the citizens who were without power for 36 hours or so. He commended Mr. Reeder on a successful MLK program and appreciated Mr. Inglese being there and supporting the County. He also expressed appreciation to Debbie Cromer and Karen Brehmer for the outstanding CPST audit. He will be speaking at Danny Gilliam's funeral on Saturday. Danny treated people right, did the right thing and was a good man all around.

12. FUTURE MEETINGS (All meetings are at 6:00 p.m., unless indicated otherwise):

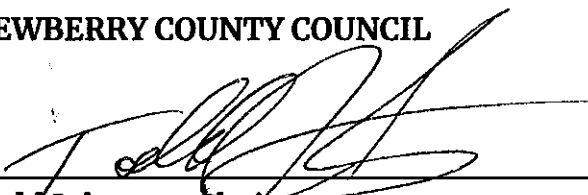
- a. Public Safety and Courts - 1/24/22 (POSTPONED)
- b. Public Works and Planning - 1/31/22 (POSTPONED)
- c. County Council - 2/2/22
- d. County Council - 2/16/22

13. ADJOURNMENT


Mr. Shealy moved to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Livingston. Vote was unanimous.

Mr. Johnson declared the meeting adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL



Todd Johnson, Chairman



Susan C. Fellers, Clerk to Council

Minutes Approved 2-2-2022

=====