



**NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL  
BUDGET WORK SESSION  
MINUTES  
APRIL 20, 2015**

Newberry County Council met on Monday, April 20, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. in the Courthouse Annex Conference Room, 1309 College Street, Newberry, SC, for a budget work session.

**PRESENT:** Buddy Livingston, Chairman  
Kirksey Koon, Vice Chairman  
Bill Waldrop, Councilman  
Les Hipp, Councilman  
Steve Stockman, Councilman  
Scott Cain, Councilman  
Travis Reeder, Councilman

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Ervin West, Wayne Adams, Laurie Renwick, Debbie Cromer, Karen Brehmer, Jay Tothacer, Sheriff Foster, Ben Chapman, Mike Pisano, Jeff Smith, Sandra Oliver, Sam Ziady, Gordon Johnson

**MEDIA:** No media present

The meeting was duly advertised as required by law.

**1. Call to order**

Chairman Livingston called the meeting to order.

**2. Personal Appearances**

- a. Jeff Smith, Newberry County Library Board Chairman
- b. Sandra Oliver, Friends of the Library President

Jeff Smith, Chairman of the Newberry County Library Board and Sandra Oliver, President of the Friends of the Library, both spoke in support of additional funding for the library. It was noted that the current funding per capita is \$9.14 which makes us 7<sup>th</sup> from the bottom in the state.

Mr. Waldrop asked what new programs the libraries wanted to fund.

Sam Ziady, Library Director, commented that we are only funding a slice of programs to meet the needs of the total community in Newberry. The programs we have in place are good but we would like to increase our capacity and serve more of the general public.

Mr. Hipp thanked Mr. Smith, Ms. Oliver, and Mr. Ziady for their service and the excellent job they are doing. He said Council will take this request along with others and prioritize because we have a fixed pot of money. He noted that there was an additional line item in this year's budget for the Whitmire Library.

Mr. West responded that the additional funding is for basement work at the Whitmire Library.

Mr. Hipp clarified that this was in addition to the standard operating money set aside for the libraries.

#### c. Sheriff Lee Foster, Body Cameras

Sheriff Foster briefed Council on state level discussions concerning body worn cameras and that a number of bills have been filed making it mandatory for every officer to wear one. Other factors involved are the cost, how to store and retrieve information, and the video's subjectability to FOIA. The legislature initially remarked that they would find the money to fund the cameras but he did not feel 21 million would cover the cost for the cameras and storage of data. He felt the state would eventually mandate this requirement for counties and municipalities to fund. Sheriff Foster stated that law enforcement around the state is not opposed to this but we want to make sure it is done right and does not impact local government.

### **3. Proposed FY15-16 Operating Budget**

Debbie Cromer and Wayne Adams summarized the proposed \$23,116,011.00 operating budget for FY15-16 (Attached and part of the official minutes). Mrs. Cromer noted that this budget is an increase of \$1,243,230.00 over last years; however, staff does not foresee an increase in millage levies due to an increase in revenue sources. Mr. Adams touched on fund balance projections and the need to keep a reserve of 5-6 months operating; there is a projected surplus that will need to be spent to keep our reserves at a comfortable level but not excessive. He said staff does not have any reservations about

the spending level in this year's budget but it might be good to think about future budgets and priorities for those budgets.

Mrs. Cromer and Mr. Adams briefed Council on the top ten taxpayers, the tax levy/mill value, and the major funding changes by department.

Mr. Adams asked Council if they knew of any facility repairs that the county needed to address.

Mr. Cain responded that the Whitmire Fire Department was in need of some heater units and he was getting a list together to get them up to code.

Mr. Hipp commented that even though we are preparing for the extension of the CPST; it is not a guarantee. He said Mr. West was preparing a 5-10 year maintenance and repair plan on our facilities but if some of these cannot be funded through the CPST as in the past, we could find ourselves in a challenging position. He said Council needed a projection of maintenance and repairs for future budgets.

Mr. Adams reported that there is \$367,000.00 of contingency money in the budget to address any emergency repairs.

Mr. West noted that there are fifteen HVAC units on top of the Annex Building that are approaching 20 years in age that will eventually need replaced. We have started replacing them as they go out; we bought two last year and one this year.

Mr. Hipp mentioned that the Courthouse areaway has been budgeted but there is not anything budgeted for the office space and that could be a pretty expensive proposition; a significant cost down the road.

#### **4. Proposed FY15-16 Capital Budgets**

Mr. Adams briefed Council on the impact of all bonded indebtedness showing an increase of 1.4 mills which includes the Spec Building, the regular GO Bonds, and the Lease Purchase for rolling stock.

Mr. Adams presented the list of capital projects included in the budget (Attached and part of the official minutes).

Mr. Adams noted that a \$12,802.33.00 amendment will be added to the budget at second reading to cover two employees working five hours each at the Transfer Station on Saturday.

Mr. Adams and Mr. West reported on the status of the remaining CPST Projects (Attached and part of the official minutes).

Mr. Adams asked if there was anything Council wished to modify.

Mr. Hipp shared his thoughts on thinning and grading a portion of the property in the Mid-Carolina Commerce Park for prospective tenants. He also asked if we had considered looking at the old District School Administrative Building and what it would cost to renovate it similar to what we have done at the Annex Building and at Piedmont Tech.

Mr. Adams shared that Mr. Bennett and Mr. Suber approached him and asked for the use of a portion of the strip mall at Piedmont Tech for adult education.

Chairman Livingston noted that an assessment would need to be made of the parking area at the old district office.

## **5. Proposed FY15-16 Community Services Budget**

Mr. Adams briefed Council on the proposed budget for Community Services which includes Newberry Disabilities and Special Needs, Newberry Library, and Piedmont Technical College (Attached and part of the official minutes).

After much discussion among Council and staff, the decision was made to increase the Library's budget by \$20,000.00 and the Disabilities and Special Needs by \$10,000.00.

Mrs. Cromer noted that the county's contribution for the medically indigent will increase by \$9,786.00 and will need to be added.

## **6. Questions/Comments from Council Members**

No comments.

## **7. Public Comments**

No comments.

## **8. Adjournment**

Chairman Livingston adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

**NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL**

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**Henry H. Livingston, Chairman**

**APPROVED:**

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**Laurie N. Renwick, Clerk to Council**