

**NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL  
MINUTES  
JANUARY 4, 2023**

The Newberry County Council met on Wednesday, January 4, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at the Courthouse Annex, 1309 College Street, Newberry, SC, for a regular meeting.

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

**PRESENT:** Todd Johnson, Chair (District 1)  
Les Hipp, Vice-Chair (District 5)  
Mary Arrowood, Council Member (District 2)  
Karl Sease, Council Member (District 3)  
Robert N. Shealy, Council Member (District 4)  
Johnny Mack Scurry, Council Member (District 6)  
Travis Reeder, Council Member (District 7)  
Karen Brehmer, Acting County Administrator  
Debbie S. Cromer, Finance Director  
Crystal Waldrop, Procurement Director  
Susan C. Fellers, Clerk to Council  
Joanie Winters, Interim County Attorney (via ZOOM)

**MEDIA:** Andrew Wigger, Newberry Observer

Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and determined a quorum to be present. He welcomed all visitors. Mr. Johnson also recognized former Council Member, Scott Cain, and his wife.

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

**1. Public Appearances:**

**a. Representative Joe White**

Representative White addressed Council regarding his concerns with crime, law enforcement and the judicial system. In summary, Representative White requested Council to consider taking the following actions:

- i. Assist Senator Ronnie Cromer with replacing Magistrate Gordon Johnson upon his retirement in June by giving names of persons who will be a good Magistrate to the Governor for consideration.
- ii. Work with the Governor by sending a letter of support as to bail bond reform.

- iii. Make every bail bondsmen in Newberry County abide by every law, rule and regulation.
- iv. Challenge Magistrates and Judges when you feel they made a bad decision.
- v. Work with the Solicitor by providing additional funding to his office for extra personnel and specifically for a full time investigator for Newberry County.

## **2. Adoption of Consent Agenda:**

- a. Newberry County Council Special Called Meeting – December 7, 2022**
- b. Newberry County Council Meeting – December 7, 2022**

Without objection, Mr. Johnson requested that these two items be considered in one motion.

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

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

Mr. Scurry moved to adopt the agenda, as presented; seconded by Mr. Sease. There being no discussion, Mr. Johnson called for the vote. Vote was unanimous.

## **4. Resolution #01-23: A Resolution to endorse USC Supportive Housing Services' application to provide Housing Opportunities for People With Aids (HOPWA) services to residents of Newberry County.**

Mr. Reeder moved to adopt the Resolution; seconded by Mr. Scurry. There being no discussion, Mr. Johnson called for the vote. Vote was unanimous.

## **5. Consideration of creating a Capital Fund and an Economic Development Fund using FILOT Revenues – Rick Farmer**

Mr. Farmer requested that Council consider creating an Economic Development Fund and a Capital Projects Fund using FILOT monies. This would require an amendment to the Master Agreement Governing the Greenwood-Newberry Industrial Park.

The original agreement provides that Newberry County can designate 30% of FILOT funds to a Capital Projects Fund and 15% of FILOT funds to an Economic Development Fund.

Mr. Johnson felt that public safety and infrastructure issues should be addressed before any final decision.

It was the consensus of Council that in addition to studying the proposed amendment to the Master Agreement, additional information would be necessary from the committee.

Mrs. Arrowood inquired if this proposed funding would start with new industries. Mr. Farmer replied that it would start with all industries in Mid-Carolina Commerce Park since 2016.

**6. Update on ambulance remounts and consideration of additional funding – Tommy Long and Crystal Waldrop**

Additional funds are needed for (1) the EMS ambulance remount in the amount of \$21,320.03 and (2) the Rescue ambulance remount in the amount of \$48,900.90. Accordingly, Mr. Long requested additional funding of \$70,220.93.

After considerable discussion regarding purchase orders and the increase in prices after the issuance of a purchase order, Council asked for Mrs. Winters's opinion. Mrs. Winters's opinion was that a purchase order is a binding contract and to renege on it is a breach. She requested copies of the purchase orders for review.

The additional funding can be taken from the ARPA funds.

Mr. Shealy moved to take the additional \$70,220.93 from ARPA funds; seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. There being no further discussion, Mr. Johnson called for the vote. Vote was unanimous.

**7. Consideration of funding a local cash match for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to construct a sidewalk along Subertown Road and Gary Street in the Town of Whitmire**

Resolution #10-22 passed by County Council on October 5, 2022, committed Newberry County to provide a local cash match for a Community Development Block Grant from the South Carolina Department of Commerce to construct a sidewalk along Subertown Road and Gary Street in the Town of Whitmire. The approved expenditure for this project was \$47,500, which funds will be taken from County Council Contingency code number 010-005-15000-02011.

Mr. Shealy moved to approve the expenditure of \$47,500 from Council Contingency as the local cash match for this project; seconded by Mr. Reeder. There being no discussion, Mr. Johnson called for the vote. Vote was unanimous.

**8. Appointments**

No appointments.

**9. Public Comments**

No public comments.

## 10. Executive Session:

**Code Section 30-4-70(a)(2) of the Code of Laws of SC, as amended, 1976:**

- (1) 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.**

Mr. Shealy moved to go into Executive Session for the above-stated reasons; seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. There being no discussion, Mr. Johnson called for the vote. Vote was unanimous.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION (6:45 P.M. – 8:15 P.M.)**

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

Mrs. Arrowood moved to give the County Administrator the authority to disperse grant funds for the ATT economic development; seconded by Mr. Sease. There being no discussion, Mr. Johnson called for the vote. Vote was unanimous.

## 11. Comments/Requests from Acting County Administrator

Mrs. Brehmer reported as follows:

- a. The Compensation and Classification Plan market survey is completed. Overall the County is lagging behind in the market, and adjustments are anticipated. Questionnaires were completed by 108 employees for 99 positions. They are now aging the marketing data to be integrated with employment cost index for public administration, consumer price index and social security costs. Some information is still being requested (excel spreadsheet on all employees). Their staff will review and have a full scope with projected costs to the County by the end of January. We hope to have this ready for Council at the second meeting in February.
- b. ARPA funds available, including funds that came from the tribal funds, are \$5,379,172.00. These are funds that have not been committed. Funds have been committed for fire engines, brush trucks, ambulance remounts and EMS life pack. \$70,000 has been committed to the Public Defender.
- c. The Newberry County Comprehensive Plan is in various stages of element review, such as population, cultural, and housing. The transportation element is under staff review. Drafts are in progress for economic development and land use. A work session will be scheduled with County Council later.

- d. There is an issue with a dump truck for Public Works that we can't get our hands on. This money was in lease/purchase but we can't get the truck.

## **12. Comments/Requests from Council**

Mr. Shealy – no comments

Mr. Sease looks forward to working with everyone.

Mrs. Arrowood said it's a new year and this is our first meeting of the new year. We have a lot of work ahead for this year.

Mr. Scurry reminded Council that all purchases will be going up. We need to prepare to go forward in a good way.

Mr. Reeder felt Newberry County would soon be faced with homeless issues and felt Council needs to start planning for this. The Covid numbers are up, and Newberry County is one of the highest in the State. We need to be careful and possibly think about going back to masks.

Martin Luther King day celebrations are as follows: Parade on January 15<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m. and the march and program on January 16<sup>th</sup> starting at 9:30. The march will go from Miller Chapel to Bethlehem with the program at Bethlehem at 10:00.

He started on line law school today and missed his first class.

Mr. Hipp said we have a lot of challenges this year. We are already challenged with how much money we are going to have to come up with.

Mr. Johnson stated it would be a difficult budget process.

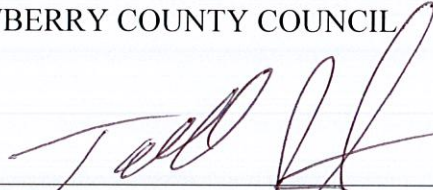
## **13. Future Meetings:**

- a. **Newberry County Council Work Session – January 18, 2023 @ 5:00 p.m.**
- b. **Newberry County Council – January 18, 2023 @ 6:00 p.m.**
- c. **Public Safety Committee – January 30, 2023 @ 6:00 p.m.**

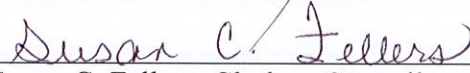
## **14. Adjournment**

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

NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL



Todd Johnson, Chair



Susan C. Fellers, Clerk to Council

Minutes Approved: 1-18-2023