

**NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL
MINUTES
MAY 4, 2022**

The Newberry County Council met on Wednesday, May 4, 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
Les Hipp, Vice-Chairman
Mary Arrowood, Council Member
Henry H. Livingston, III, Council Member
Robert N. Shealy, Council Member
Johnny Mack Scurry, Council Member
Travis Reeder, Council Member - via ZOOM
Christopher Inglese, County Administrator
A.J. Tothacer, Jr., County Attorney
Karen Brehmer, Deputy County Administrator
Debbie S. Cromer, Finance Director
Crystal Waldrop, Procurement Director
Susan C. Fellers, Clerk to Council

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. Shealy had the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Additions, Deletions and Adoption of the Agenda

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

2. Public Appearances:

a. Lee Tant, Public Affairs Manager, Cooperative Health

In the absence of Mr. Tant, Jennifer Glover Hawkins and Miranda Hartzog appeared before Council.

Ms. Hartzog updated Council on some of the things Cooperative Health has done for Newberry County during their 14 years of serving teens and adolescents in Newberry County. Some of their work includes podiatry services, radiology services, and pharmacy services. They provide a sliding fee scale in order to make health care affordable. They assist with signing up for the Affordable Health Care Act. They provide transportation when needed for health care. They provide language services and have a teen and adolescent program for ages 12 to 25.

b. John Favors, Newberry County Museum

In 2019 County Council passed a Resolution recognizing 7 law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty in Newberry County. After researching this, Mr. Favor found that the first law enforcement officer killed in the line of duty in Newberry County was a city police officer named Henry Bluford on October 19, 1874. The City of Newberry passed a Resolution honoring him and set up a fund to take care of his family.

On May 9 there will be a special ceremony to recognize all 8 officers who lost their lives in the line of duty. He requested Council's consideration of a Resolution updating the names of the law enforcement officers, including Mr. Bluford. (Resolution is on tonight's agenda for consideration by Council).

3. Proclamation Recognizing Newberry County Correctional Officers Appreciation Week May 1-7, 2022

Mr. Hipp moved to adopt the Proclamation, seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. Vote was unanimous.

Mr. Johnson read the Proclamation into the record, as follows:

"Whereas, Correctional Officers in Newberry County form an integral element of the public safety team of our community; and

Whereas, our Correctional Officers provide security, supervision, treatment services, and re-entry efforts for hundreds of individual cases in the course of a calendar year; and

Whereas, in Newberry County, Correctional Officers serve a co-equal role with law enforcement, engaging in dangerous and potentially life-threatening situations every day of the week; and

Whereas, residents of Newberry County need to more fully recognize and understand the complex, dangerous, and challenging responsibilities carried out by every single staff member in the Newberry County Jail; and

Whereas, every member of the Newberry County Sheriff's Office Corrections Staff accept enormous personal and professional responsibility;

Now, Therefore, I, Todd Johnson, Chairman of the Newberry County Council, do hereby proclaim the week of May 1-7, 2022, as National Correctional Officers' Week and congratulate our Correctional Officers for their service to Newberry County."

Mr. Johnson then presented the Proclamation to Sheriff Foster and the Corrections Staff.

4. Proclamation Recognizing Newberry County Public Works Employees Appreciation Week May 15-21, 2022

Mr. Shealy moved to adopt the Proclamation, seconded by Mr. Livingston. Vote was unanimous.

Mr. Johnson read the Proclamation into the record, as follows:

"Whereas, Public Works employees focus on infrastructure and services that are of vital importance to sustainable and resilient communities and the public health, quality of life, and well-being of the people of Newberry County; and

Whereas, this infrastructure and services could not be provided without the dedicated efforts of Public Works managers and employees at all levels of government who are responsible for rebuilding, improving, and protecting our County's roadways and other structures and facilities essential for our citizens; and

Whereas, it is in the public interest for our citizens and the civic leaders in Newberry County to gain knowledge and maintain ongoing interest and understand and appreciate the importance of Public Works employees and Public Works programs in their respective communities; and

Whereas, the year 2022 marks the 62nd annual National Public Works Week sponsored by the American Public Works Association;

Be It Now Resolved that I, Todd Johnson, Chairman of Newberry County Council do hereby designate the week of May 15-21, 2022, as National Public Works Week; I urge all citizens to join with representatives of the American Public Works Association and government agencies in activities, events and ceremonies designed to pay tribute to our Public Works managers, and employees and to recognize the substantial contributions they make to protecting our health, safety, and quality of life."

Mr. Johnson then presented the Proclamation to Mike Pisano, Public Works Director, and his employees.

5. Resolution #03-22: A Resolution Honoring Law Enforcement Officers in Newberry County who died in the line of duty.

Mr. Hipp moved to adopt the Resolution, seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. Vote was unanimous.

6. Consideration of Annual Indexing of Elected Officials' Salaries:

Newberry County Ordinance #01-01-17 provides that "absent a successful vote to the contrary by Newberry County Council at its first meeting in May, the county-funded salary portions for all county-wide elected officials shall be increased at a rate equal to the Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers (CPI-U), as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (unadjusted) for the most recently reported 12 month period.

Mrs Arrowood moved that the elected officials receive the same increase as their employees; seconded by Mr. Livingston. Vote was unanimous.

7. Ordinance #04-09-2022: An Ordinance establishing minimum rules and regulations to regulate the disposal of garbage, refuse and other trash in Newberry County and providing penalties for violation of this Ordinance.

a. Second Reading

Mr. Hipp moved to approve second reading; seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. Vote was unanimous.

- 8. Ordinance #04-07-2022: An Ordinance to provide appropriations for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022, and ending June 30, 2023, for the Newberry County Budget for County Ordinary purpose and for other county purposes for which the County may levy a tax on all taxable personal and real property in Newberry County for all county purposes, including sufficient tax to pay the principal and interest on outstanding indebtedness of Newberry County payable during said fiscal year; to provide for matters relating to Newberry County; and provide for the expenditure of said taxes and other revenues received by the County during said fiscal year; and to provide for borrowing in anticipation of tax collections by the issuance of one or more tax anticipation notes, if necessary.**

a. Second Reading

Mr. Hipp moved to approve second reading; seconded by Mrs. Arrowood.

The following proposed amendments were considered:

- Mr. Hipp moved to eliminate the Special Fund established for Parks and Recreation and put it back into the General Fund, seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. Vote was unanimous.
- Mr. Hipp moved to reduce the Information Technology budget for contracted services by \$39,000 in consideration of approval of an I.T. Director position thereby reducing the proposed millage revenue by a corresponding amount (-.25 mills); seconded by Mr Livingston. Vote was unanimous.
- Mr. Hipp moved to reduce County Council's budget by \$55,000 by eliminating the proposed parks Master Plan study thereby reducing the proposed millage revenue by a corresponding amount (-.3 mills); seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. Vote was unanimous.
- Mr Shealy moved to reduce Public Works contracted services budget by \$16,031 by removing the yard debris container at Seibert Road thereby reducing the proposed millage revenue by a corresponding amount (-0.1 of a mill); seconded by Mr. Hipp. Vote was unanimous.
- Mr. Livingston moved to eliminate the \$15,000 line item for interns in the Economic Development Department's budget and return \$44,436 to the personnel line item to maintain the current personnel positions (=+.25 mills); seconded by Mr. Shealy. Voting for this Motion: Council Members Scurry, Reeder, Johnson, Arrowood, Livingston and Shealy. Mr. Hipp abstained. Motion passed by majority vote.

- Mr. Hipp moved to reduce the Administrator's budget by \$74,804 to provide for one-half of a year's salary (and not a full year) for a Chief Financial Officer (-.47 mills); seconded by Mr. Shealy. Vote was unanimous.
- Mr. Livingston moved to utilize \$140,000 from available ARP funds in the Fiscal Year 2023 budget with a **ONE-TIME** \$70,000 expenditure to the Solicitor's Office and a **ONE-TIME** \$70,000 expenditure to the Public Defender to assist with moving a backlog of court cases due to the closure of courts during the Covid-19 pandemic (+\$140,000 expenditure of ARP funds); seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. Vote was unanimous.
- Mrs. Arrowood moved to increase the funding to the Council on Aging from \$50,000 to \$60,000; seconded by Mr. Livingston. Vote was unanimous.

With the above amendments, the proposed net 1.5 mill increase would be reduced to a .63 mill increase.

Mr. Johnson called for the vote on second reading as amended. Vote was unanimous.

Mr. Johnson stated for the record that he supported and voted for the budget as amended, but would abstain as to any budgetary issue concerning WTH Technology and Nicholson Business.

Lynn Stockman with the Council on Aging thanked Council for the \$10,000 increase.

- 9. Ordinance #04-08-2022: An Ordinance to provide appropriations for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022, and ending June 30, 2023, for Newberry County Library, Piedmont Technical College and the Newberry Agency for Disabilities and Special Needs; to provide for the levy of taxes on all taxable personal and real estate properties in Newberry County for said purposes; to provide for the expenditure of said taxes and other revenues received by the County during said fiscal year for said purposes.**

a. Second Reading

Mr. Livingston moved to approve second reading; seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. Vote was unanimous.

- 10. Ordinance #05-10-2022: An Ordinance to adopt a false fire alarm ordinance for the County of Newberry. This Ordinance is to encourage businesses and homeowners to maintain alarm systems properly and to provide penalties for violation of this Ordinance.**

a. First Reading

Mr. Shealy moved to approve first reading; seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. Vote was unanimous.

11. Ordinance #05-12-2022: An Ordinance amending Ordinances #10-07-19 and #05-16-20 of Newberry County to amend the use of a portion of the proceeds of the General Obligation Bond of Newberry County authorized thereby.

a. First Reading

Mr. Shealy moved to approve first reading; seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. Vote was unanimous.

12. Ordinance #05-11-2022: An Ordinance to amend the Budget Ordinance for the fiscal year 2021-2022, Ordinance #04-12-21, to provide for revised revenue and expenditure appropriations related to operating and capital purposes to provide for unanticipated cost of the purchase of a fire truck previously approved by Council.

a. First Reading

Mr. Shealy moved to approve first reading; seconded by Mr. Livingston. Vote was unanimous.

13. Council to consider the purchase of a remount ambulance

Crystal Waldrop, Procurement Director, stated only one response from Emergency Transportation Associates was received. The base bid was \$150,647.37 with the add ons for the power load Stryker stretcher and the power cot totaling \$43,189.60 The budgeted amount was \$200,000, and the base bid and the add ons are within the budgeted amount. Staff recommends approval of the bid received from Emergency Transportation Associates.

Mr. Hipp moved to accept the bid, as recommended by staff, from Emergency Transportation Associates; seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. Vote was unanimous.

14. Executive Session

Code Section 30-4-70(a) 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 Mr. Livingston. Vote was unanimous.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION
6:40 P.M. - 7:12 P.M.**

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

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

15. Adoption of Consent Agenda:

- a. Finance Committee Minutes of March 28, 2022**
- b. County Council Special Called Meeting Minutes of April 6, 2022**
- c. County Council Minutes of April 6, 2022**

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

16. Appointments

Mr. Hipp moved to appoint Dan Rhoad to the Newberry County Memorial Hospital Board; seconded by Mr. Shealy. Vote was unanimous.

17. Public Comments

No comments from the public.

18. Comments/Requests from County Administrator

Twelve applications have been received regarding the Economic Task Force. At the May 18 meeting, Mr. Inglese would like for Council to make its appointments. Appointments made by any Council Member do not have to reside in that particular member's district. He will interview two of the top scored consultants next week.

Jimmy Coggins has requested that the County start back with regular interviews with the Administrator, County Council Members, staff and anyone else. These will be held on the third Thursday of each month, beginning in June.

May 5 is the deadline for bids relating to the compensation study.

A banner will be placed on the County's website to seek responses as to what should be included on the website when updated. Input will be received through the month of May. Those responses will then be reviewed by the Administrator, Liz McDonald, Jessie Long and Rick Farmer.

Newberry County is tied with Lexington County for the lowest unemployment rate in South Carolina.

Mr. Johnson inquired as to when the new Clerk to Council would be on board. Mr. Inglese said she would report for work on May 16.

19. Comments/Requests from Council Members

Mr. Reeder appreciated everything going on and for the work on the budget, and he would be glad when he could return in person.

Mr. Scurry asked that everyone be kept in prayer.

Mr. Shealy thanked everyone for the hard work.

Mr. Livingston inquired as to the issue with a fire truck at the Little Mountain Fire Department and was advised that issue had been handled. He thanked everyone and specifically thanked Debbie Cromer and Karen Brehmer for their work on the budget preparation.

Mrs. Arrowood thanked everyone for their work on the budget.

Mr. Hipp thanked staff and County Council for coming together on the budget and hoped it was close enough to move forward.

Mr. Johnson attended a conference last week at which Newberry County's Auditor, Assessor and Treasurer were also present. He thanked them for the work they do for Newberry County.

20. Future Meetings (all meetings begin at 6:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted):

- a. Budget Work Session on May 10, 2022**
- b. County Council on May 18, 2022**
- c. Economic Development Committee on May 23, 2022**

21. Adjournment

There being no other matters to come before Council, Mr. Hipp moved to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Shealy. Vote was unanimous.

Mr. Johnson declared the meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL



Todd Johnson, Chairman



Susan C. Fellers, Clerk to Council

Minutes Approved: 5-18-22