

NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

JULY 11, 2022

The Newberry County Council Executive Committee met on Monday, July 11, 2022, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chamber 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: Les Hipp, Chairman  
Henry H. Livingston, III, Council Committee Member  
Travis Reeder, Council Committee Member  
Christopher Inglese, County Administrator  
Karen Brehmer, Deputy County Administrator  
Jacquelyn R. Lawrence, Clerk to Council  
Debbie S. Cromer, Finance Director

Mr. Hipp called the meeting to order and determined a quorum to be present.

**Additions, Deletions & Adoption of the Agenda**

Mr. Reeder moved to adopt the agenda, seconded by Mr. Livingston. With no further discussion Mr. Hipp called for the vote. The vote was unanimous.

**Update from Human Resources Director, Debbie Peake**

Mrs. Peake will reschedule for another time due to illness.

**Request approval to redirect funds for FTE Grant Writer to a Grant Writer Consultant Service through an RFP process – Christopher Inglese, County Administrator**

Mr. Inglese requested that the funds in the budget for a Full-Time Grant Writer be sent to full council for approval of an RFP so that those funds can be converted to pay for a Grant Writer Consultant Service.

Committee would like more information as to what the proposals would be from the Consultants offering their services.

Mr. Livingston moved to send the request to full council for RFP purposes only, seconded by Mr. Reeder. With no further discussion Mr. Hipp called for the vote. The vote was unanimous.

**Recommendation to establish an Emergency Services fee on all taxes on vehicles and boats – Tommy Long, Emergency Services Director**

Mr. Long requested to establish a \$3 - \$5 Emergency Services fee on all vehicles and boats that are taxed. This would hopefully generate additional funding to provide for salaries, equipment, and other needs within the Emergency Services. At the \$3 tax the potential additional funds would be \$130,000 and at the \$5 tax it could be \$218,000. These numbers are based off the 2020/2021 data. Legislation has recently passed a bill to allow this tax to be added. One of the additional positions needed is a Fire Marshall for the county.

The bill that has passed also reduced revenues from the agricultural buildings. The loss to the County will be around \$180,000. This is supposed to be a revenue loss from agricultural producers only. The County will need to find a way to help make up for that loss in revenue.

Donna Lominack, County Auditor, spoke of the effects that this tax will have on her office. Adding something like this to a tax bill is very time consuming. It will raise the amount of phone calls, paperwork, computer time for inputting the information. If there is a need for a refund it will be very complicated. Mrs. Lominack wants to be sure that if this fee is passed that it will be a fee across the board. Also, it would be much easier on her office if it were a flat fee and not a percentage. These fees would not be able to be implemented until January 1<sup>st</sup> of the next year.

Karen Lindler Smith, County Treasurer, stated that her office is already overworked. Adding an additional fee that will have to be separated out will be additionally time consuming. All of the line items that are on a tax bill are taken in must be balanced and apportioned out to the appropriate departments.

What this potential revenue could be used for is up to Council. However, when a tax fee is specific to a department, it must go to that department.

Mr. Livingston moved to present to full council for discussion in August or September, seconded by Mr. Reeder. With no further discussion Mr. Hipp called for the vote. The vote was unanimous.

**Discussion of facilities maintenance – Christopher Inglese, County Administrator**

Mr. Inglese updated the committee regarding the retirement of Ervin West. At this time Mike Pisano has been asked to step in on a temporary basis to full the requirements of the Facilities Manager. This position will be revisited in three months and see where the county stands with trying to move the Facilities Manger back under the Public Works division.

Mr. Pisano stated that the only additional department he is taking on is Building Maintenance. There is a need to hire a Building Maintenance Operations Manager and two additional driver/operators. He is offering potential new hires the ability to take classes online for the required CDL.

Mr. Inglese gave a report as to there being several buildings that are going to need a large amount of work. An architect has been contacted for a space needs analysis. Ervin West is currently on retainer to help with this building project. There is a small grant that is being

applied for to help fund some of the work that needs to be done. There approximately 80 buildings in the county's inventory. The analysis should show a cost comparison of what it will take to maintain the current buildings verse building a new one.

**Request to amend Ordinance No. 03-08-21 An Ordinance permitting the Newberry County Joint Planning Commission and the Newberry County Board of Zoning Appeals to conduct virtual/electronic meetings permanently and establishing certain attendance requirements – Katie Werts, Zoning Administrator**

Katie Werts, Zoning Administrator, is requesting that the ordinance be amended due to many members of the BZA and JPC are still appearing by Zoom but not really attending. Staff would like to be given the ability to have stricter requirements to be allowed to attend virtually. Each member receives \$60.00 per meeting to attend. To receive that stipend the members will be required to complete orientation, continuing education and attend meetings in person and limiting virtual to no more than 2 per year. Understanding that there will be cases where more than 2 virtual meetings will be necessary but depending upon the circumstances the staff will say whether that is allowed or not. The request includes holding the stipend checks until the required hours of orientation, continuing education, and attending the meetings has been completed. Mr. Livingston stated that if the members are not completing what is required then they should be replaced. Replacing those members can be through Councilman for that district or by a Councilman from another district. Mr. Hipp responded that the members not getting their required education and making discussion at these meetings is a problem for everyone.

Mr. Livingston moved to take an amended ordinance before full council, seconded by Mr. Reeder. Mr. Hipp called for the vote. The vote was unanimous.

**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. Livingston moved to go into Executive Session to discuss the matters as set forth above; seconded by Mr. Reeder. Mr. Hipp called for the vote. The vote was unanimous.

**Executive Session**

**7:24 P.M. - 8:44 P.M.**

Mr. Reeder moved to return from Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Livingston. Mr. Hipp called for the vote. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Hipp asked for the report of Executive Session. Mr. Reeder stated no action was taken.

**Public Comments**

No Public Comments were made.

**Comments from Committee Members**

Mr. Livingston asked to follow up regarding employee bonuses. This matter needs to be addressed.

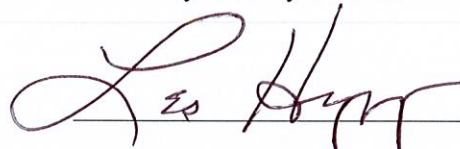

Mr. Reeder stated that the meeting went well.

Mr. Hipp had no comments.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Livingston moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Reeder. Mr. Hipp called for the vote. The vote was unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Newberry County Council

  
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Les Hipp, Chairman  
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Jackie Lawrence, Clerk to Council

Minutes approved: October 11, 2022