

NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL

MINUTES

October 5, 2022

The Newberry County Council met on Wednesday, October 5, 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: Les Hipp, Vice-Chair (District 5)
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)
Karen Brehmer, Deputy County Administrator
Debbie S. Cromer, Finance Director
Crystal Waldrop, Purchasing Director
Jacquelyn R. Lawrence, Clerk to Council
Joanie Winters, Interim County Attorney

MEDIA: Andrew Wigger, Newberry Observer

BY ZOOM: Todd Johnson, Chair (District 1)
Christopher Inglese, County Administrator

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

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

1. Public Appearances

a. Leslie Jenkins, Operations Manager for Animal Control

Bonnie Shealy, Volunteer at the Humane Society

Mrs. Jenkins gave an update on the Humane Society. In 2011 the low cost spay and neuter program was started. In 2010 854 cats and dogs were euthanized. In 2021 only 56 cats and dogs were euthanized. The numbers have decreased significantly. She thanked Council for continuing to support that program.

Oktoberfest will be on October 15, 2022. Adoption will be done on a donation basis. That can be in monetary or supply form.

Lever Farms Fall Day will be October 21, 2022.

Whitmire's Trunk or Treat Festival will be October 29, 2022.

The Christmas Party for the animals will be in December. Adoptions will be free that day. Also, the animals will be participating in the Christmas Parade when it is scheduled.

Bonnie Shealy spoke regarding the work that is done for all unwanted, neglected, or lost animals. She introduced many of the current residents of the Humane Society. She also stated that there is no way that the shelter could make it without the volunteers. There is walking to be done more than once each day, the kennels must be cleaned, and these animals need love. Additionally, since the shelter is at capacity, foster homes are needed. Volunteers help with transportation, sponsor adoption events, bathe dogs, poop patrol, donate supplies, etc. Volunteers sponsored the cost for staff and volunteers to attend the Heartworm Project. Volunteers have created "dating cards" for the animals as a way of advertisement to help get them adopted. They also post on Facebook, NextDoor, monthly flyers, and The Newberry Observer. Facebook has recorded 91,000 reads of the shelter page. The page is called The Shelter Volunteer Network for Newberry County. All shelters across the State have declared a state of emergency due to the rising numbers of surrenders. The rise in number of surrenders is requiring the number of euthanized to rise. The volunteers are asking that when the shelters are full that the county impose a moratorium to say no surrenders for a specific amount of time to allow the shelter time to free up kennel space. The staff at the shelter are stretched too thin, they are dealing with dangerous situations and having to euthanize the animals is hard on everyone. Thank you for your time and for listening to the needs of the shelter.

Mr. Hipp thanked the staff and the volunteers for their hard work and stated that the County is currently reviewing classification and compensation for all departments of the County.

Mr. Livingston, Mrs. Arrowood, Mr. Reeder, and Mr. Shealy thanked everyone involved for their hard work and dedication.

b. Parents Overseeding Planted Seeds

Minister Mark Hill spoke regarding their request to have the County help support the cost of a full day of activities, entertainment, food, and general camaraderie during the Proclamation of Peace. The program is geared to help stop violence in the area. The event would be in connection with the city as well if permission is granted. The group is also asking for permission to use a local park located in the Wise Street Community.

Staff and Council agreed that this request needs to be reviewed by legal counsel and the requestors need to contact the city to see if they are willing to support as the Wise Street Community is in the city limits.

Mr. Hipp stated that he appreciated Mr. and Mrs. Hill coming to the meeting and their program sounded great.

2. Adoption of the Consent Agenda

Item number 2 was removed from the agenda.

3. Additions, Deletions and Adoption of the Agenda

Mr. Shealy moved to adopt the agenda as written; seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. With no further discussion, Mr. Hipp called for the vote. The vote was unanimous.

4. Ordinance No. 09-22-2022 An Ordinance to amend the budget ordinance for the fiscal year 22-23. Ordinance number 4-7-22, to provide for an amendment to the copying fees at the Courthouse.

a. Second Reading

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

5. Ordinance No. 09-23-2022 An Ordinance to amend the budget ordinance for the fiscal year 22-23, Ordinance number 04-07-22, to revise the fees collected by the building department.

a. Second Reading

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

Mr. Livingston asked that language be added to address dilapidated mobile homes and overgrown areas be addressed at the time one comes to obtain a permit.

With no further discussion, Mr. Hipp called for the vote. The vote was unanimous.

- 6. *Resolution No. 10-22 Match Resolution committing 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.***

Mr. Greg Sprouse, Director, Researcher, Planning and Development with Central Midlands Council of Government, spoke regarding what the "CMCOG" is. The CMCOG is a regional planning agency. There are 9 other agencies in the state. They handle a wide range of programs that benefit the 4-county region. Such as Workforce Development to Aging Services under the Elders Americans Act to transportation planning. Mr. Sprouse's main areas are Economic Development, Community Development, and Planning and Local Government Services.

This Resolution provides a local cash match of \$47,500 towards the minimum ten-percent local match required by South Carolina Department of Commerce (SCDOC), to support the County's application to SCDOC for a \$475,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to construct a sidewalk along Subertown Road and Gary Street in the Town of Whitmire. The CDBG is a Federal Program from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, administered through the SC Department of Commerce. It aids communities with focus on low- and moderate-income populations.

There are two primary program areas.

Community infrastructure program that cycles in the spring. It allows for water, sewer, and drainage improvements and has a minimum \$50,000 and a maximum \$750,000.

Community enrichment program that cycles in the fall. It allows for sidewalks, demolition/clearance, brownfield remediation, and library improvements with a minimum \$50,000 and maximum \$500,000. This program also allows for a maximum \$750,000 for streetscape projects.

The CDBG project would provide pedestrian connectivity between the apartment complexes along Subertown Road the Whitmire central business district. The project would take approximately 25 months.

Mr. Scurry asked why a sidewalk needed to be placed there when each of the complexes has their own sidewalk that connect to one another?

It was stated that it is unsafe for residents to walk the road to get from point A to point B. Mr. Johnson stated that he is very familiar with the area, and it is very dangerous.

Mr. Shealy moved to adopt the Resolution, seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. With no further discussion, Mr. Hipp called for the vote. Voting for the Resolution were Mr. Hipp, Mr. Reeder, Mr. Johnson, Mrs. Arrowood, Mr. Livingston, and Mr. Shealy. Voting against the Resolution was Mr. Scurry.

7. Appointments

No appointments.

8. Consideration/Approval of Christmas bonuses.

Mr. Inglese reported that there is a line item in the budget to cover a \$50 net bonus to an employee. This requires an approval by Council.

Mr. Johnson moved to approve the Christmas bonuses, seconded by Mr. Shealy.

Mrs. Arrowood asked with each person having a different tax rate, how would that be handled.

Mr. Brehmer stated that when you "gross up" to net you are required to deduct FICA, SS/Medicare, and retirement. It would be the same 7.65% for each person, plus depending on if the employee is in the SERS, it would be 9% and if they are in the PORS it would be 9.75%. The gross would vary only for the different retirement system an employee may be in. This is the same process as any other stipend that is given. Mrs. Brehmer also asked if Council wanted this to be a separate check?

Council agreed to a separate check.

Mrs. Brehmer asked when Council would like the checks delivered.

Council agreed to the earliest of December.

Mr. Livingston pointed out that we would be paying more for this route as compared to the gift cards.

With no further discussion, Mr. Hipp called for the vote. The vote was unanimous.

9. Consideration/Approval of Christmas Holiday Schedule.

Mr. Inglese stated requested approval of the Holiday dates for this year as the actual Holidays fall on weekends. The proposed dates would be December 23, 26, 27, 2022, and January 2, 2023.

Mr. Shealy moved to approve the stated Holiday dates, seconded by Mrs. Arrowood.

With no further discussion, Mr. Hipp called for the vote. The vote was unanimous.

10. Public Comments

No public comments.

11. Executive Session

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

- (1) *Discussion of matters relating to the proposed location, expansion, or the provision of services encouraging location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body.*

Mrs. Arrowood moved to go into Executive Session to discuss the matters as set forth above; seconded by Mr. Shealy. There being no further discussion, Mr. Hipp called for the vote. The vote was unanimous.

EXECUTIVE SESSION
7:06 P.M. – 7:51 P.M.

Mr. Reeder moved to return to open session; seconded by Mr. Scurry. Mr. Hipp called for the vote. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Hipp reported that no action was taken during Executive Session.

12. Comments/Request from County Administrator

Mr. Inglese thanked Council for allowing him to appear virtually and that he is learning a lot in Lake City at his conference.

13. Comments/Request from Council Members

Mr. Livingston stated that he was very disappointed that after information given at a previous meeting it has come to light that the information given by the County Administrator and the County Attorney was incorrect.

Mr. Hipp reminded everyone about Oktoberfest and that he was glad the animal shelter will be involved.

No other comments from other Council members.

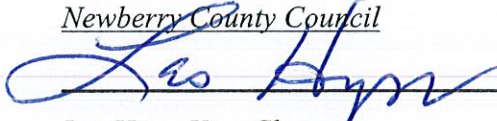
14. Future Meetings

- a. Executive Committee - October 11, 2022, at 6 p.m.
- b. Work Session w/ Joint Planning and Zoning - October 12, 2022, at 5 p.m.
- c. Work Session County Council - October 12, 2022, at 6 p.m.
- d. County Council - October 19, 2022, at 6 p.m.
- e. Public Safety Committee - October 24, 2022, at 6 p.m.

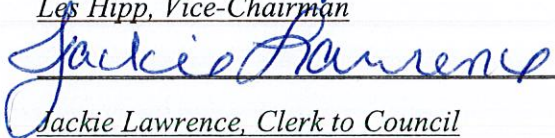
15. Adjournment

Mr. Reeder moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mrs. Arrowood. Mr. Hipp called for the vote. Vote was unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Newberry County Council



Les Hipp, Vice-Chairman



Jackie Lawrence, Clerk to Council

Minutes approved: October 19, 2022