Newberry County Transportation Committee
Minutes
October 20, 2026

Present: Mr. Tim Carroll, Mr. Glenn Hamm, Mr. Harry Werts, Mr. Randy Cannon, and Mr. Arnold Hiller

Absent: Mr. Travis Grimsley

Others in Attendance: Mr. Herb Cooper, Ms. Rebecca Owen, Mr. Joe Kitchen, Dr. Lovelace, and Ms. Teresa Ball

Call to Order-Invocation

Mr. Carroll called the meeting to order, and Mr. Hamm led the invitation.

1. **Additions, Deletions, and Adoption of the Agenda**
   A motion to adopt the agenda as written. Motion made, seconded, and carried.

   Approval of Minutes from Prior Meeting
   A motion made for approval of the minutes for September 15, 2026, meeting with a change made from Wilson Road project to bridge project. Motion made, seconded, and carried.

   Financial Report from Treasurer

   Mr. Cannon reported that the cash balance for September 30, 2026, was $6,952,850.57. Funds received were $199,403.89. Total withdrawals were $0. The total cash balance is $7,152,254.46. Total funds committed are $3,057,827.55 and the uncommitted balance is $1,094,426.91.

   Mr. Cannon reported that the cash balance for proviso (118.20) was $318.000. Total funds committed are $318,000.

   Mr. Cannon reported that the cash balance for proviso (118.22) was $3,050,222.00. Total funds committed are $3,050,222.00.

   Motion made to accept as information only. Motion second and all were in favor.

2. **Old Business/New Business**
   Old Business

Ms. Owen said this was on Central Avenue in Whitmire between Nessie 66 and Washington Street. And they just paved the road and there was a sinkhole that was formed. And, coincidentally, there was a water line in that area. So, initially, we just thought the water line was leaking. When the town went excavating a little bit, they realized there's a box drain of some sort underneath the road. And the top collapsed. The sides appear solid. It's just the issue that is with the top failure. If you look at a picture going towards the mill, you'll see the roads there, but no top. So, despite not really being supported, the top didn't collapse. Nobody fell in or anything. It was just a sinkhole, which is what we thought it was. We realized there was a more significant issue. We didn't even know what was really under there.

We have no plans for it. Well, we talked with Palmetto Construction. They do a lot of our hedge base and sidewalk repairs.

And the sides look solid. We've had district engineers look at it as well. The sides appear solid.

So, our current plan forward is to excavate, preserve the sides, clean off the top of them, and fabricate some new 8-inch-thick tops in 5-by-10 sections. So, they're a little bit wider. The box is about eight feet wide. And then we'll put some sealant, put some global grout on it, make it nice and safe, and then we'll repatch it so that the road can be opened again. The quote that came to do this is just under $50,000, which I think is good deal because if we had to actually replace that entire system, we're going to double that at least.

I was hoping that that was something you all would consider funding for us, so $55,000, a little bit of contingency in case we find more as we open it up.

Mr. Hamm said he would like to make a motion to expend up to $55,000 to support the DOT with repairs.

Mr. Carroll asked for a motion. Motion was made, motion second and all in favor.

Mr. Carroll said that Mr. Rowe was asking for $100,000 for gravel. We couldn't bring it up last time, because we didn't have it on the agenda.

Mr. Carroll asked for a motion to give the county, in his absence, $100,000 to buy gravel to fix some of these roads. I got a motion, motion second and all in favor.

New Business

Mr. Carroll said you know, every year we try to do some sidewalk repairs throughout the county.

Ms. Rebecca has a few, but if you all would, Joe, you check with Newberry City. Check to see if you have any more than what you have. I know you got that picture or whatever. But see if you have any more that needs repaired. And then, Glenn, if you check with Prosperity. I know we

did a lot of work in Prosperity and Little Mountain last time. And then I'm going to check with Whitmire and see what they got.

Mr. Carroll said that for Prosperity, do you still have a little bit of note on S11? That's Elm Street and 244? That's Church Street. Elmwood Church.

Mr. Hamm said I believe that's Church Street. I'll check with Karen at the meeting.

Mr. Carroll said he would call Little Mountain.

Mr. Carroll said we can get something together; we can get a price estimate and go ahead and get it funded at the next meeting. So, you can go ahead and get them to do it.

3. Public Works Report

A. Josh Rowe - Newberry County Public Works Director

B. Rebecca Owen – SC Department of Transportation

C. Joe Kitchen – City of Newberry Public Works Director

Mr. Kitchen said that the Wilson Road project did not get that incentive. So, that's off the table for right now. I do think that they plan to apply for it again next year. I think they're working with somebody to see how they can tweak their grant application for that. But we did not get it. The only other thing I have is the sidewalks around Dr. Lovelace's office on Hunt and Harbor.

We'd like to get those redone. I was thinking about asking for $30,000. That should redo the sidewalk on Hunt Street and the part on Harbor, too, because it's just a little section on Harbor and then a section right there on Hunt Street.

Mr. Carroll asked with all the sidewalk barriers, they just need sections.

Mr. Kitchen said, "I think on Hunt, it was sections. And I had a sidewalk guy look at it. He gave me a price to replace it. It was one hundred feet and somewhere around $16,000 to $17,000. Now, he could have been low because he's trying to get work. But what I'd like to do, if you give us the money, is hand the project over to Rebecca.

Mr. Carroll said let's just put it in that project. We'll vote on it next month. I'd rather just put it in there because they've got a standing contract with these people. And that's what I brought up.

I was going to let Dr. Loveless tell you a little bit about what the business was going to be.

4. Public Comments

Dr. Lovelace said he appreciates the ability to speak with you all today. Thank you for your service out here. We're actually starting something exciting. It's a teaching clinic. You are all aware that hospitals are consolidating. And with consolidation, big hospitals buy little hospitals. That has caused a restriction on services. You may not be aware of this, but if you pulled into the ER bay at a large county hospital today and you're bleeding, you can't be taken care of. They don't take care of pregnant women in large county hospitals. You know, joining Fairfield County Hospital doesn't take care of pregnant ladies. And Union County Hospital doesn't. They don't take care of pregnant ladies. So, this is what we call a maternity desert. And that has not only affected the delivery of services, medical services, essential medical services, it's affecting the education of young doctors. Because what's happening is these bigger hospitals are actually training doctors now, you know, in their system, often practice in their suburbs, while they're buying the rural hospitals and training people just to practice in Blythewood and that sort of thing. What I mean by that is they're not really training doctors to be rural doctors. I've been in Newberry for 38 years. And we're having a tough time finding doctors that do what we do, to take care of people in the hospital, the nursing home, and the office. And those kinds of doctors are now being trained in what are called rural residency training tracks. So, the South Carolina Medical Association seen this problem. And a group of individuals, of which I'm part of, called Integral Leaders in Health, joined together, and said, we need to do something about this problem. Less services are available in rural America, and particularly South Carolina. And training doctors to do what rural doctors need to do. So, they chose to start a rural training program here in Newberry. They asked me if I would assist. It may come as a surprise to you, but Newberry County Hospital is the number one rural hospital in South Carolina right now. We're thriving because we've got a strong, basic core of services, obstetrics, surgery, medicine, and terribly busy orthopedics. We just recruited a urologist that's working there now. We've got oncology outpatient services going on. We're blessed in Newberry. But we cannot rely on things as they are without embracing this situation we have, which is training young doctors to do what rural doctors need to do. So, this clinic is going to be, this teaching clinic is going to be started in Ralph Baker's old surgery clinic. When I say that, it is actually, we're starting out in the old Lominick's drug store.

It's pretty amazing, but R.B. Baker built that building for his son Ralph when he was coming back from World War II in 1949. And what he built was a surgery clinic for his son Ralph and a pharmacy for Lominick's drugs. Well, the clinic is in memory of his son, Henry Parr Baker, who delivered his payload to the Pacific and is never seen again. And I want to embrace that history, make people aware of the sacrifice that people in Newberry made to build the hospital. You know that hospital crossed the street and was built in 1925, and it was built with no debt. We're going to start the teaching clinic there.

But the way these programs work is the first year these young doctors will be trained in a busy urban environment. Lexington County Hospital has agreed to be our first-year training site. The reason it's called a rural residency training track is because they spend the last two years in the rural community, working in a community where they won't practice.

So, we'll be training the residents for the last two years. I can tell you a lot of details about it but let me just say that we submitted a grant to HERSA, a federal agency, and we got $475,000.

We submitted a grant to Blue Cross and Blue Shield. We received $300,000. We received $250,000 from Medicaid. Newberry County Hospital board has voted unanimously in favor of going forward with this project.

My role is that start a private teaching practice because we want these people to go to communities like Whitmire and set up shops and know how to make a business run. My practice in Prosperity is private practice. We want to try and train doctors that can be successful in small towns.

The sidewalk in front of the old surgery clinic is in bad shape and needs to be repaired. I appreciate the committee's consideration.

5. **Executive Session**

6. **Consideration of Actions on Matters Discussed in Executive Session**

7. **Adjournment**

Motion made to adjourn. Motion second and all were in favor.

Teresa Ball Minutes Prepared By:
Teresa Ball, Newberry County Public Works Approved