

**NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL
CAPITAL PROJECT SALES TAX WORK SESSION
FEBRUARY 23, 2010**

Newberry County Council met on Tuesday, February 23, 2010, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at the Courthouse Annex, 1309 College Street, Newberry, SC, for a special called work session.

PRESENT: Henry H. Livingston, III, Chairman
William D. Waldrop, Vice Chairman
Kirksey Koon, Councilman
John E. Caldwell, Councilman
Edgar Baker, Councilman
Leslie (Les) Hipp, Councilman
Steven C. Stockman, Councilman
Wayne Adams, County Administrator
Laurie Renwick, Clerk to Council

PRESS: Cindy Pitts, Newberry Observer

The meeting was duly advertised as required by law.

Chairman Livingston called the meeting to order and determined a quorum present.

Mr. Caldwell led the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Additions, Deletions and Adoption of Agenda

Chairman Livingston stated that the Little Mountain Library had withdrawn from County sponsorship; therefore, agenda item 2b will be deleted from the agenda.

Mr. Hipp motioned to approve the agenda as amended; seconded by Mr. Baker. The vote was unanimous.

2. Discussion of Project Prioritization

Chairman Livingston said the presentations may vary but will be made at approximate intervals of 15-25 minutes. He said Council reserves the right to modify the order of appearance if a subsequent presenter is available.

a. Mid-Carolina Commerce Park CPST Presentation

Teresa Powers, Economic Development Director, made the presentation on behalf of the Mid-Carolina Commerce Park. She stated that the County owns 463 acres off of the interchange at Exit 82 close to the Mid-Carolina Golf Course. They are currently wrapping up the Phase I infrastructure that includes the main entrance road into the park

and a turn off down to a cul-de-sac which opens up 77 acres, with 30 of those acres currently committed to Nasmyth Precision Products for their new building. The Mid-Carolina Commerce Park project is being submitted by the Economic Development Office and is proposing to extend the existing infrastructure into the park; identified as Phase IIA and Phase III improvements. We are looking to extend the roadway across the non-interstate side of the property, put in water lines along that roadway, and install waste water work in conjunction with that. This would complete about 3,515 linear feet of roadway, 3,420 linear feet of water lines and about 1,456 linear feet of waste water work. The survey, geo technical engineering, and design work for this has already been completed. It is permitted and ready for construction. At this point, it is a funding issue to move forward with the total cost of about 2.5 million dollars. The County will be the owner of the roads and the Newberry County Water and Sewer Authority will take over the water and sewer lines once they are complete. The NCWSA Board approved this project through a joint sponsorship with the County at their meeting in January and this will benefit them because once the companies come in; they will receive the water and sewer revenue. Extending the roadway will open up about 200 more acres of property which will increase its marketability and help in locating companies. A piece of property on the side of a road does not count anymore as an industrial site; you have to have roads, water and sewer, and be ready. This will benefit all citizens of the County in terms of when the companies come, residents of the County will be employed, the companies will be paying property taxes that will benefit the school system and subsidize property taxes for the residents.

Mr. Waldrop asked where Nasmyth will be located in the park.

Ms. Powers stated that Nasmyth had secured Parcel 13 that includes 15.5 acres right by the interstate near the circular cul-de-sac, and they have an option on Parcel 14 as well.

Mr. Waldrop asked if the first phase was ready.

Ms. Powers said it was finished except for finishing up with the pump station for the sewer system and the cu-de-sac has not been paved yet due to the rain.

Mr. Waldrop asked how many acres of the total property were in the wetlands area.

Mr. Frost said he thought it was around 50 acres, but asked not to be quoted on that. He said they have really good site visibility and that all of this acreage is not considered wetlands, but steep grade changes that do not make it conducive for development so it has been left as open space.

Mr. Baker asked about the stock pile where the Phase II roadway would start.

Mr. Frost said the stock pile of dirt will be used to fill in low areas.

Mr. Caldwell said it is very advantageous for the County to have that ready when industry comes and should help us with negotiations.

Mr. Hipp asked if it would be possible or reasonable to do part of this and not expend the entire amount you are requesting. Considering that we only have one industry that is obligated at the present time, we could open up Parcel 2 and 3 which would provide additional access for growth. We can still make some more land available looking at this somewhere in between, and not looking at it as an all or nothing.

Mr. Frost stated they could look at that but they would suggest not phasing it at this stage because of the economic scare, the construction prices that are coming in, and the amount of property that it opens up. If this is a funding issue, it most definitely can be changed with the largest portion of the cost getting you across the creek.

Ms. Powers said they are mainly trying to complete the basic/primary roadway in the park, with extension roads not being built until someone comes to a specific site.

Mr. Hipp said he understood it is not preferable to reduce the size but could be a possibility if the decision needed to made.

Mr. Caldwell stated he thinks this is remarkable and something that is going to sell. He doesn't see any negatives against it. This is long over due and we need to move on it.

Mr. Baker commended Depal Eliatamby and his team for coming up with this concept.

Mr. Eliatamby thanked Council for the opportunity and said this was planned with some flexibility. This is a great parcel of land and will be very beneficial to the County.

Chairman Livingston commented that if we have the money, he would like to see us do the full project because of the possibilities it will open up. This will leave people with more palatable choices and allow them to possibly choose a larger parcel over a smaller one to get a better price. He said if we do this, he would like to see us do it all but he knew we needed to stay within budget.

b. Little Mountain Library CPST Presentation

The Town of Little Mountain withdrew the Little Mountain Library from County sponsorship. (See agenda item 1)

c. Piedmont Tech CPST Presentation

Dr. Ray Brooks thanked Council and introduced George Piersol, Piedmont Tech Commission member, Pat McGee, Dean Emeritus of the Newberry Center and Dr. Jennifer Wilbanks, new Dean of the Newberry Center. He said they have a wonderful center in Newberry but have outgrown it. We are excited about the potential here in Newberry County and appreciate the opportunity to talk about a project they would like

Council's favorable consideration on. Dr. Brooks turned the presentation over to Dr. Jim Klauber.

Dr. Klauber stated that the Newberry Center opened in 1994 with an enrollment of 120 students. In the spring term of this year, they have 574 students registered at Piedmont Tech's Newberry Center. We have maxed out the availability and use of the armory that the County has graciously leased to the college for these many years. The vacated Wal-Mart building will meet their needs for a lot of different reasons. First is for programmatic reasons and their partnership with Newberry College. They envision the Wal-Mart facility as a place where they can put an industrial training lab that will enable them to offer SC ready job training on site in a flexible lab. This facility will also give them the space they need to grow their classroom programs, meet the industrial recruitment demands in the future, and meet their mission for the people of Newberry County. He said this is the most viable option that will meet both the needs of Piedmont and the needs of the County. It removes an eye sore on Wilson Road and transforms it into a facility that the citizens of Newberry County can be very proud of and they can use in many different ways. They are seeking a total of \$5,783,100.00 from the Capital Project Sales Tax to purchase this property and do all the renovations and it will also provide the County with some additional office space if they see fit to use it.

Mr. Baker asked if they thought there would be enough parking spaces if this campus is done.

Mr. Jones responded that there was plenty of parking available.

Mr. Waldrop asked if the old Winn Dixie building would be demolished.

Mr. Klauber said they would like to demolish the old Winn Dixie building and create a green space there for the citizens to use.

Mr. Hipp said this is a great idea and it exercises smart growth because we are in fact filling an empty box building. He said this was an excellent choice of an existing facility, cost effective, and needed. He asked about item 1b on the check list and who would own the project upon completion. He said he understood their desire to have full ownership of the facility; however, since the citizens of Newberry County have invested 6 million dollars in this projects, if and when Piedmont chooses to sell this property, there should be something in the deed transfer on an option of refusal so they can get some return from that money should this occur.

Mr. Klauber stated they would be glad to put a reversionary clause that states should Piedmont Tech cease to use the building for an educational facility it will automatically revert back to the County.

Mr. Adams commented that he did not think that was necessary because the County will have to own the property. The County will lease it to Piedmont Tech for use as a college.

Mr. Hipp said that staff will have change the language in the proposal.

Mr. Klauber stated that they will work with the County to do whatever is needed in that area. He informed Council that Piedmont received notification today from the Budget and Control Board to move forward with the engineering and design of this project. They are very excited about accomplishing all the hurdles needed to get to this point.

Chairman Livingston commented that he thought Piedmont Tech could be one of the best stimuli for Newberry County from the standpoint of our youth by giving them a cheaper avenue to pursue their education and eliminating the travel to and from Greenwood. This will be a cost saver to the citizens of Newberry County, and the more we can offer right here for our students; the better it is for them. He said the marriage between Piedmont Tech and the Mid-Carolina Commerce Park project, with its ability to facilitate industrial recruitment and development, is a phenomenal combination.

d. Old Library

Mrs. Connie Rinehart, member of the Newberry County Historical and Museum Society, made the presentation on behalf of the Old Library. She stated the Society contacted various citizens and groups within the community of Newberry County and the consensus among everyone was to transform the Old Library into a Commerce, Tourism and Historical Center which would house the Newberry County Historical and Museum Society, the Newberry County Chamber of Commerce, local historical archives, local business promotion mall and storage for museum-quality historical artifacts. The building would be a one-stop, clearinghouse for assistance to residents of the County; potential businesses and residents coming into Newberry County, and to those seeking employment information and genealogical and historical data. She said with the recent announcement of the Boeing Plant in Charleston and the speculated restoration of the Old Newberry Hotel, this project could not be timelier as it represents Newberry's preparedness to tap into commerce and development. The economic development generated by this project will more than pay for any tax dollars ever spent in its initiation. This building will represent an embassy for both commercial and residential growth that will increase the County's tax base eliminating the current burden on property owners within the Count of Newberry. Mrs. Rinehart thanked Council and stated she would be willing to answer any questions they might have.

Mr. Hipp said Council unanimously voted a year ago to allow a voluntary group to go out and research the best use of this building. It was at no expense to the County and people have spent a lot of time and effort researching the building and its potential uses and they have talked with numerous people in the community. They have come back to us and said this is a compilation of the input of the best use of the building. He said it makes sense to use this building as a tourism and welcome center; a front door to Newberry County, if you will. This project has a great potential return. He commented on the identity the County has with the Opera House and the tremendous economic impact it has had but it cannot do it all on its own. This project will be an excellent addition to some of the other things that are being offered in economic development. We do need jobs and

we need to improve the economy in this County. There should be some significant considerations made when we go forward with prioritizing this. He thanked Mrs. Rinehart for her work and the work of the committee. Regardless of the outcome, there has been a lot of uncompensated and devoted work put forward on this.

Chairman Livingston commented that there are a lot of grants out there for historical buildings and inquired about the possibility of acquiring some matching funds with grants.

Mrs. Rinehart said there is always a possibility of grant funds. She said once this is underway there are several people, including herself, that are grant writers and this will be looked into.

Mr. Caldwell said this should be an automatic sell because of the location and the historical significance of the building. He said he thought this was a win, win, situation and was glad to see that this is not a building that is going to be demolished and torn down.

Mr. Baker asked Mr. West about the roof on the library.

Mr. West said the County has already repaired the clay tile roof. The roof is dry and in good shape; however, the interior roof drain on the side of the building is still a problem and needs to be corrected.

Mr. Waldrop asked if this project is approved would there be any overhead or recurring cost to the taxpayers.

Mrs. Rinehart said she would hope not. She said the Historical and Museum Society will have a cadre of volunteers to help with being ambassadors and the new staff at the Chamber of Commerce would be incorporated too.

Mr. Andy Morris with the Chamber of Commerce shared that they have two full-time and one part-time staff members. They are hoping to move the part-time member to full-time sometime this year. The Visitor Center has been open on Saturdays since the first of the year and they are looking for volunteers for this also. This building will be available and open for visitors and for industrial prospects coming to Newberry. He said the three projects heard tonight really compliment each other; having space in the Industrial Park, a vibrant Piedmont Tech to educate the employees, and this facility being there to show the people the benefits of Newberry County.

e Fire Department Substations

Mr. Tommy Long, Emergency Services Coordinator, gave the presentation on behalf of the Fire Department Substations. He said their goal was to build four (4) new substations and since the last meeting, he has acquired three of the four land owner agreements; however, he was unable to acquire one of them. He asked Council for a little time to try

to find another landowner and if not, he would like to move forward with three of the proposed substations. Mr. Long said there are 1,539 addresses outside of the five mile drive of any fire station in the County and if they were to add these substations, they could cover an additional 938 of those addresses. The overall goal of this project is to lower the ISO rating for these residents. They currently have a Class 10 ISO rating and their goal is to lower that to at least a Class 7. Mr. Long said he had obtained some comparisons from an insurance company and on a \$100,000.00 brick home, with an ISO rating of 10, the average insurance premium is around \$821.00 a year. By lowering the ISO rating one notch to a 9, would lower their insurance to \$682.00. This would be a savings of \$139.00 per home owner. If they were able to bring the rating down to a 7, that would bring their insurance premiums down to \$446.00 per year on average realizing a \$375.00 savings. This would be a significant savings to these residents in which they could in turn reinvest their savings back into the community and the economy. If we look at constructing 4 substations, we are looking at a cost of \$1,582,349.00, but if we remove the one station the cost will drop to \$1,043,524.00.

Mr. Waldrop asked if they were negotiating with a different person to obtain the property for the Belfast site.

Mr. Long stated they moved the location to the Brehmer/Belfast site because they were able to pick up an additional 120 residents compared to the Sandy Run/Brehmer Rd. location.

Mr. Baker asked why the cost for the substation at Hwy. 176/121 was higher than the rest of them.

Mr. Long stated there are two different size stations proposed. The larger station proposed for this location was to plan for future development in that area and would give us a four bay building instead of a two bay building. Eventually, we would like to add a rescue truck in that area because of its isolated location between Newberry and Whitmire.

Mr. Waldrop asked Mr. West if these types of buildings that just house fire trucks have to be earthquake proof and 200 mph wind proof.

Mr. West said these are insulated pole buildings with metal siding and are not totally pre-engineered but they will still have to withstand the minimum zone and wind load established by the state.

Mr. Waldrop commented that he just couldn't believe that it would cost this much for this type of building. He asked Mr. West if this was the real cost or could it be less than this.

Mr. West said this was the budgeted number. In today's bid market, it will be less than this. He said you can do just a bare bones building, but these are air tight buildings with insulation and propane gas heaters.

Mr. Waldrop said he thought this was a good project and we need to get insurance rates down on people's homes. He asked if this would guarantee that the ISO rating would go down.

Mr. Long stated he could not guarantee exactly what the rating will be changed to until they come in and re-evaluate the area once these stations are established, but it would definitely help out in getting their insurance lowered.

Chairman Livingston asked George Piersol if he would like to comment on this matter.

Mr. Piersol said in the Chappells area a class 10 would cost over \$1,000.00 per year. When the ISO rating was lowered in Chappells after the fire station was built, people hugged his neck because it lowered their insurance \$400.00-500.00.

Chairman Livingston asked how many total residents would be served by this project.

Mr. Long said there are currently 1539 residents outside of the 5 mile radius in the County. If we are able to place these four stations, 938 of the 1539 would be picked up.

Chairman Livingston asked about recurring cost (i.e. propane, telephone, utilities).

Mr. West said you would not have telephones but you would have propane and electricity cost.

Mr. Long said they estimated a recurring cost of \$10, 300.00 on all four of these stations.

Chairman Livingston asked about the equipment to go in these buildings.

Mr. Long said there is enough equipment in the County where we can transfer one engine to start these stations off with. Down the road, we would like to have at least one engine and one tanker at each station.

f Whitmire Rescue/EMS

Mr. David Andrews thanked Council for their consideration of this project. He said the Whitmire Rescue Squad has been around for just about 50 years and served the community of Whitmire, the surrounding area, and the rest of Newberry County. They have outgrown their current facility and the bays will not hold the equipment that they need. The facility is landlocked and there is no room to expand at the current location. The EMS is housed in a garage with limited space and no bay to park their ambulance. We are proposing to relocate the Whitmire Rescue and EMS station to the Young Chevrolet property on 176. This location will give them access to main roads for responding to calls, increase their visibility to the public, and give them the room they need to operate. He said this location will allow them to house all of their equipment inside. Both rescue and EMS will be at one location and ready for response. By renovating this building, they will be getting a lot more square footage for the same cost.

The meeting space in the new location will be available for use by other community organizations and can also be used to shelter families during emergency situations.

Mr. Grisby stated his support of this project and said they currently staff 2 people, 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, at the current EMS location which is a garage. There is no place for the ambulance and the medicines are outside, so when it is cold or hot they just do what they can. The proposed project of EMS and rescue sharing a building is the way we need to go throughout the County and stated EMS supports this project 100%.

Mr. Baker asked if the truck bay enclosed on the front will be for EMS.

Mr. Grisby stated that the front would be for EMS. There will actually be two bays and they will keep one ambulance at this location at all times.

Mr. Hipp said that \$200,000.00 has been set aside for the land acquisition with an option of \$2,000.00 that needed to be paid by March 4th. He said we will not have an answer by then and asked how they plan to address that.

Mr. Long said those funds will come out of rescue's current budget or they will come before Council to ask for additional funding to meet the deadline.

Mr. Waldrop said he had been to see the building several months ago and it seemed like a pretty good building, structure wise.

Mr. West commented that it is a full pre-engineered building but it has been neglected. The roof and insulation will have to be replaced. The front portion of the building is proposed to house EMS. This is a great location with a lot of land and room for future expansion.

Mr. Baker asked Mr. Andrews if the existing bays will be enough to hold all of their equipment.

Mr. Andrews said this location will allow them to put everything under cover because it is a clear span building.

Mr. Waldrop asked about the \$300,000.00 budgeted for site work.

Mr. Jamie Frost with Alliance said the majority of it is for the demolition of the existing pavement that is not in good shape. The cost also includes storm drainage and a helicopter pad with lighting.

Mr. Christian Jones with Alliance said the heavy duty concrete and asphalt will be the majority of the costs.

Mr. Hipp commented on the continuing cost to the current rescue squad building, especially to the roof, and the County's need to keep that up.

Mr. Baker said that the Town of Whitmire maintains that building.

Chairman Livingston said Mr. Andrews had mentioned the census population as being 3,620 and asked how many people will be served by this project.

Mr. Andrews stated that 3,620 is the number of full-time residents the best he can tell.

Chairman Livingston said it was a great project and location but asked if this was the best expenditure for our dollars or would we be better off going completely new.

Mr. West said you have a sq. ft. construction cost of \$96.00 for the building and the site. We are building normal fire stations now at \$116.00 per sq. ft. and that is with the County owning the property. If you add the land, it will bring the sq. ft. cost up to around \$125.00. Mr. West said he did not know if we could find another piece of property with that location and visibility, but if you did you would spend more per sq. ft.

Mr. Waldrop felt this project might help Whitmire with getting some prospective people looking at the Renfro by having a nice building with fire protection and rescue right there close by.

Chairman Livingston reminded Council that on or before March 4, 2010 we have to have \$2,000.00 cost of option to purchase this property and we probably need to take action as Council tonight to decide where that money will come from.

Mr. Baker said he thought Mr. Long volunteered to take it out of rescue funds.

Mr. Long said if Council recommends it, he can take it out of rescue's budget.

Mr. Baker motioned for the funds to come out of rescue's budget; seconded by Mr. Waldrop. The vote was unanimous.

g. Lake Murray Public Safety

Mr. Rodney Bedenbaugh thanked Council for the opportunity to present their project. They are currently requesting an addition to their current facility. He said they have run out of space, believe it or not, with four services that operate out of this building and every bay is full with emergency equipment. Storage has become an issue with equipment that you need but do not always carry on the truck. We are trying to encourage fire department, rescue, EMS, and law enforcement personnel to use their exercise equipment which brings members into the station and they are there ready for call should the need arise. By adding the additional square footage, they can move the exercise equipment into that building and it can also house additional office space and would help provide a good environment for our volunteers that utilize the facility. Last year they had approximately 150 meetings and training sessions in the facility which stays busy.

Mr. Tommy Brown said the total cost of the addition will be \$294,302.00. He briefed Council on the building specifics and drainage and said everything has been approved by DHEC as far as adding a small septic tank for the toilets and the drainage. This addition will allow them to store a ladder truck that the Prosperity Fire Department is hoping to acquire that will not fit in their facility due to the height of their doorways.

Mr. Baker asked what they were going to put in the truck bay.

Mr. Brown said a fire truck.

Mr. Baker stated that the City and County co-own a ladder truck that is housed at the Newberry Fire Department and considering the cost of that truck, he did not think we would be getting another one in this County anytime soon.

Mr. Bedenbaugh said they may be required to get one because they have three story houses down at Plantation Point that they would not be able to get to. We are just trying to plan for the future and be pro-active. He said Newberry County might have to follow a lot of other counties with paid firefighters because their volunteers are not increasing.

Chairman Livingston asked how many people this project would serve.

Mr. Bedenbaugh said there are 2500 in the area.

Chairman Livingston said he did not see where Alliance Engineering did anything on this project. The last time Fairview's project was put up to County Council, the budgeted cost was significantly lower than what it ended up costing the County. The County provided a free service for this to be done and asked why it was not utilized.

Mr. Brown stated that Mr. Baker and Mr. Billy West gave them a price of \$695,000.00 to do the original building. They had \$50,000.00 from the fire board and they asked for \$645,000.00 in CPST funding. Being the first building built under the one cent tax, they found out that anything over 5,000 sq. ft required architects and engineers which shot it up tremendously high. They had to do a lot of value engineering and go back and adjust so they could afford to get what they got.

Chairman Livingston asked why the engineering services were not utilized on the addition they were proposing tonight.

Mr. Bedenbaugh said that most of the engineering had already been done with the previous building. The addition was on the specs of the original plan.

3. Public Comments (by those who signed up at meeting)

No. Comments

4. Comments from County Administrator

Mr. Adams said that from the completeness of these proposals, it is obvious that this process is doing what Council intended for it to do.

5. Comments/Request from Council Members

Mr. Hipp asked when the rankings were to be completed and returned back to Administration.

Mr. Adams said there is a scheduled work session for the purpose of ranking the projects on March 2, 2010 but if Council does not need that, you can decide at the County Council meeting on March 3, 2010.

Mr. Hipp motioned to have the ranking sheets returned for discussion on March 3, 2010; seconded by Mr. Baker.

Chairman Livingston asked if there was any discussion.

Mr. Caldwell said he did not feel we were following parliamentary procedure and this item should have been added earlier on the agenda, not after we are in the process of closing.

Chairman Livingston said if we are proposing to go with this on March 3rd, would it be more like a work session to discuss the projects.

Mr. Hipp said we discussed that we would each formulate our own priority list and numerically rank them. These figures would be rolled into a summary and we would present our individual rankings along with the summary to the Commission. He said he thought we would want to have some discussion unless we are totally going to do this individually without any other group discussion. If we are going to do this, then it does not matter; we will just turn in our ranking and that will be it. He said he would like to have some additional discussion on this after they are individually ranked.

Mr. Caldwell said he does not have a problem with discussing anything if it is put in the proper procedural order, but his concern is here we are in the process of closing and then we come up and add another agenda item to vote on.

Mr. Hipp said based on Mr. Caldwell's concern that this is kind of out of order, he removed his motion and said he was in favor of the work session on Tuesday night to discuss this, with Council meeting on Wednesday night.

Chairman Livingston said the total request for County sponsored projects is \$20,646,845.00 with estimated one cent revenues less than 20 million. He said we have our work cut out for us because this is just ours and does not include the municipalities

and other entities that can offer proposals for consideration. In summary, all of these are great projects but don't get offended if you don't get funded because there is no way we can fund all of these projects unless they have really over estimated the cost of them. He thanked everyone who had proposed and those who put together the numbers to make this realistic.

6. Vote to Adjourn

Mr. Baker motioned to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Stockman. The vote was unanimous.

7. Adjournment

Chairman Livingston declared the meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL

Henry H. Livingston, III, Chairman

APPROVED:

Laurie N. Renwick, Clerk to Council