

**REGULAR MEETING OF NEWBERRY CITY COUNCIL
HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL, NEWBERRY, SC
December 10, 2019 – 7:00 P.M.**

Members Present: Mayor Foster Senn, Councilman Zebbie Goudelock, Councilman David T. Force, Councilman R. LeMont Glasgow, Councilman David E. DuBose, Councilman Edwin E. Wicker and Councilman Thomas Louis Boyd

Also Present: City Manager Matt DeWitt, Municipal Clerk Jennie O'Shields, Utility Director Tim Baker, Division Director Tamra Tootle, PRT Director Scott Sawyer, Planning and Development Director Ward Braswell and Fire Chief Keith Minick.

Others Present: David Eldridge, James Hill, Charlene Granville, Kevin Goodman, David Phillips, Jess Folk and Family, Jason and Haley Stuhr and family, Justin Weaver, Mary Helen Stuhr, Krystal Bates, Deborah Hawkins, Collin Shealy, Liz Rivera, Boris Alvarado, Yolanda Williams and Family, Daniel and Katie Werts and others.

Media Present: Elyssa Haven

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Senn called the meeting to order and led in the Pledge of Allegiance. Councilman Glasgow gave the invocation.

MINUTES:

Councilman Goudelock made a motion, seconded by Councilman Boyd to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of Newberry City Council held on November 12, 2019, and a special meeting held on November 19, 2019, as presented. Mayor Senn declared the motion carried following a unanimous vote of City Council members present.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Mayor Senn advised that members of City Council had received a copy of the Financial Report and Financial Summary for the period ending November 30, 2019 and noted that the report would be attached to the minutes. City Manager DeWitt gave a brief summary of the financial report highlighting the steady decrease in water receipts due to the reduction of Saluda usage and an increase in expenditures in the General Fund to secure the purchase of a new fire truck.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:

Yolanda Williams, 5 yrs.

Mayor Foster Senn, City Manager Matt DeWitt and Police Chief Roy McClurkin recognized Yolanda Williams for her five (5) years of service with the Police Department. Williams began working with the City on November 17, 2014 and holds the position of Police Corporal.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:

Jason Stuhr, 20 yrs.

Mayor Foster Senn, City Manager Matt DeWitt and Police Chief Roy McClurkin recognized Jason Stuhr for his twenty (20) years of service with the Police Department. Stuhr began working with the department on November 29, 1999 and holds the position of Police Sergeant.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:

Jesse Folk, 15 yrs.

Mayor Foster Senn, City Manager Matt DeWitt and Utility Director Tim Baker recognized Jesse Folk for his fifteen (15) years of service with the Utility Department. Folk began working with the City on November 22, 2004 and holds the position of Electric Lineman A.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION:

Deborah Hawkins, Retirement

Mayor Foster Senn, City Manager Matt DeWitt and Finance Director Shannon Smith recognized Deborah Hawkins for her retirement from the Finance Department. Deborah began working with the department on March 30, 2004 and held the position of Financial Services Specialist.

The employees received a certificate and gift selection package commensurate with their years of service.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Certificate of Financial for Excellence Reporting

Mayor Senn and City Manager DeWitt announced that for twenty-sixth year in a row, the City of Newberry has received a ***“Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.”*** This award is presented annually by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States to those governments that have achieved the highest standards of perfection in their accounting procedures. He stated that there are very few municipalities in the entire United States which achieve this level of competency.

Mayor Senn and City Manager DeWitt presented the award to the Finance Director Shannon Smith.

UPDATE:

Fiber Deployment Update

Assistant Utility Director David Eldridge gave Council and the public an update on the Fiber Network build out highlighting that Zone 2 is now complete and that the crew will begin work on Zone 3 the following week which includes the West End area. Eldridge reiterated that installation remained two weeks behind schedule but completion for the whole project is still projected for late April.

UPDATE:

City of Newberry receives CDBG Grant

Mayor Senn announced that the Planning and Development Services Department has applied for and received a grant in the amount of \$475,000 from the SC Department of Commerce Community Development Block Grant program. The money will be used to demolish vacant structures within the City. The homes that were identified for the project are located in the West End area and the department hopes to complete the project within 2 years. City Manager DeWitt commented that this would make a large impact in the city with 50-60 homes slated for removal and available for redevelopment and if the project is deemed successful the hope will be to reapply for future grants to aid in other areas of the city.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

**Proclamation recognizing the Newberry Academy
Competition Cheer Team**

Mayor Senn announced that the Newberry Academy Competition Cheer Team recently competed in and won the state cheer competition. Due to an event conflict, Mayor Senn will honor them with a proclamation in March of 2020.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Charlene Granville

Charlene Granville, a member of the Wise Street community, addressed Council and asked for permission to raise money for renovations and beautification of Wise Street Park. All funds raised by the Friends of Wise Street Park would be allocated to the enhancement of the Wise Street Park and remitted directly to the City.

ORDINANCE: **Ordinance #2019-1014 to amend sections 12-7, 12-8, 12-9 & 12-10 of the code of laws of the City of Newberry as they apply to the Firehouse Conference Center – Second and Final Reading**

Mayor Senn said that the Newberry Firehouse Conference Center has provided an historic venue at a fair price that is fully staffed for every group that rents the facility. The cost to operate has increased due to the need for increased staffing, audio/visual upgrades and increased operational costs and fees have not been adjusted since 2017.

The most significant change would be the reapportioning of rooms, updating AV equipment and a \$25 increase to weekday facility usage. These proposed increases continue to offer groups first class facilities and services at a fair price and at rates that remain competitive or lower than other area rental venues.

Councilmember Glasgow made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Boyd to adopt the second and final reading of Ordinance #2019-1014 to increase the rates for bookings at the Firehouse Conference Center. The motion was carried by a unanimous vote of City Council members present and voting.

FINANCE: **FY2018-2019 Audit**

Mayor Senn introduced David Phillips, CPA with Greene Finney, LLC, presented an overview of the FY2018-2019 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report to members of Council. He explained that the audit report format continues to reflect GASB Accounting Standards and that his firm would be issuing an unmodified or clean opinion. Phillips highlighted to members of Council several key pages within the audit and summarized the various funds while stating that the Certificate of Achievement shows a level of excellence in recording and the City is in a favorable net position.

Mr. Phillips informed Council of upcoming changes in 2020 and 2021 to the auditing process including leases now treated as debt with the ability to depreciate usage and in the case that auditors prepare financial statements for municipalities, an outside party would to review these statements.

Mr. Phillips recommended that the City seriously consider replacing laborious and outdated accounting software and also develop Fraud Risk Management and Disaster Recovery Policies.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilmember Goudelock made a motion to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a contractual matter related to utility billing and a contractual matter related to PMPA as outlined in the agenda. Councilmember Boyd seconded the motion which was carried by a unanimous vote of the City Council members.

Councilmember DuBose made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Goudelock to return to open session. Mayor Senn declared the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the City Council members.

11A- Discussion of a contractual matter pertaining to utility billing

Information was received and no action was taken.

11B – Discussion of a contractual matter pertaining to PMPA

After Executive Session, City Manager DeWitt informed the public and Council that he would execute a letter terminating the supplemental power contract with PMPA by Wednesday, December 11, 2019.


ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before City Council, Councilman Glasgow made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:14 P.M. Councilmember Wicker seconded the motion which was carried by a unanimous vote of City Council members.




Foster Senn
MAYOR

ATTEST:



Elyssa Haven, Acting City Clerk
Newberry, South Carolina

WITNESS:



Matt DeWitt, Manager
Newberry, South Carolina

