

**NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
MINUTES
May 6, 2024**

Newberry County Council Economic Development Committee met on Wednesday, May 6, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at the Courthouse Annex, 1309 College Street, Newberry, SC, for a Work Session.

Notice of the meeting was duly advertised, as required by law.

PRESENT: Les Hipp, Committee Chair
Travis Reeder, Committee Member
Robert N. Shealy, Committee Member
Jeff Shacker, County Administrator
Rick Farmer, Economic Development Director
Eric Nieto, I.T. Director
Andrew Wigger, Clerk to Council/PIO

1. Call to Order – Les Hipp, Committee Chair

- Mr. Hipp called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Additions, Deletion, & Adoption of the Agenda

- Mr. Reeder made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented; Mr. Shealy provided the second and the motion was approved 3-0.

3. Staff Report

a. Project Activity

- Mr. Farmer said activity in the last quarter has been slow. They have two new projects; however, he said they saw more than two projects, but have two they submitted for and are contenders for.

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- Mr. Farmer said they have discussed, in the past, two planned expansions that should occur this year, one of which is in a state of delay.
- Mr. Farmer said the reasons for slow down includes the fact that it is an election year, factory orders have been up and down, and signs of a softening economy. He added that the county's unemployment rate has gone from about 2.5% to 3.5% over the last couple of months.

b. Product Development

i. Mawsons Way Extension

- Mr. Farmer said this project is still moving forward and they are waiting on the attorneys to get access to the property the county needs and after that, they will go to the bid state.
- Mr. Farmer added that he is hoping they will get this started this summer and be completed by the end of the year.
- Mr. Hipp asked if the attorneys have given the county some dates, adding that Mawsons Way is an important project and has been going on for a while.
 - Mr. Farmer said the attorney has been on this for about six weeks or so and they communicated via email a few weeks ago to see if there was anything else the county could be doing, and there is not.
 - Mr. Shealy asked if the county was working with a couple of different people on the project. Mr. Farmer said yes, there are three different property owners.
- Mr. Hipp said maybe as a recommendation or consideration, is for them to have systematic contact with the attorney to let them know the county's sense of urgency so we don't let it occur on their schedule.
 - Mr. Shealy added that sometimes attorney's schedules are a little bit different than our urgency.

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- Mr. Farmer said they will follow up with them and check back in routinely.
- Mr. Shacker added that he knows there was a conflict on two of the measurements on a revised drawing the lawyer was working on and there was also the title searches, which is what they are working through now.

ii. Signage and repairs for parks

- Mr. Farmer said the signage at Mid-Carolina Commerce Park II is going to be completely funded by the Newberry Electric Cooperative Utility Tax Credits. He anticipates the cost will be about \$120,000; Mr. Farmer said that quote is from 2022 and hopefully, that price would have come down.
- Mr. Farmer said they expect the new sign to mimic the sign at Mid-Carolina Commerce Park I.
- Any remaining funds will go to some repairs to the sprinkler system and repairs to the sign at MCCC I.

c. Prospect Development

i. Central SC Alliance lead-generation program

- Mr. Farmer said he is excited about what the new Central S.C. Alliance president is doing. He said one of the important things the organization can do is come up with qualified leads.
- Mr. Farmer said Central S.C. Alliance got rid of the old lead generating firm and hired a new one. They will then pre-qualify the leads before the county meets with them. He added that all that information will be shared with all members, previously that was not the case.
- He said Central S.C. Alliance has hired a specialty lead firm in South Korea, as well, and there are plans for an

independent Korean marketing mission this fall. Mr. Farmer said this is not part of the state's mission, but the Central S.C. Alliance. Mr. Farmer has not committed to going on that mission, but he probably will go.

- Mr. Hipp said that is good to hear that they have a lead generating firm in South Korea and Newberry has a lot of South Korean presence in our county.

d. Other

i. SC Economic Developers Assn.

- The S.C. Economic Developers Association Annual Conference began on May 8, Mr. Farmer was voted president during the conference. He said he was looking forward to it and that he has the faith of his peers to help lead this important association.
 - Mr. Shealy said great accomplishment.
 - Mr. Hipp congratulated Mr. Farmer and asked how that was going to affect his time. Mr. Farmer said they do not have anything to worry about, he said he is already on the board and he's looking at a few hours per week. He said usually they handle things with virtual calls and will occasionally have to travel to events but will not be a significant amount of time.

4. Public Comments

- There were no public comments.

5. Comments by and discussion items from the Committee Members

- Mr. Reeder said that was a great report and he looks forward to everything building back up again.

- Mr. Shealy said he agrees with what Mr. Reeder said and that it is commendable to be elected president and it shows we have a good economic developer.

6. Executive Session

§30-4-70 (a)(2) and (a)(5): Discussion of matters incident to proposed contractual arrangements, and related to the proposed location, expansion, or the provision of services encouraging location or expansion of industries or other business in the area served by the public body, including Projects Artemis, Cardinal, Omega, Night Train, Yellow Condor, Sunny, Phoenix and other unnamed projects.

- Mr. Shealy made a motion to go into Executive Session; Mr. Reeder provided the second and the motion was approved 3-0.
- The committee went into Executive Session at 6:13 p.m.
- Mr. Shealy made a motion to come out of Executive Session; Mr. Reeder provided the second and the motion was approved 3-0.
- The committee came out of Executive Session at 7:14 p.m. and Mr. Hipp said no action was taken.

7. Adjourn

- Mr. Shealy made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Reeder provided the second and the motion was approved 3-0 at 7:14 p.m.

NEWBERRY COUNTY COUNCIL



Leslie Hipp, Chairman



Andrew Wigger, Clerk to Council

Minutes Approved: May 15, 2024

**Newberry County Council
Economic Development Committee**

**Monday, May 6, 2024
Council Chambers, Courthouse Annex, 6 PM**

6:00 PM

1. Call to Order – Les Hipp, Committee Chair
2. Additions, Deletion, & Adoption of the Agenda
3. Staff Report
 - a. Project Activity
 - b. Product Development
 - i. Mawsons Way Extension
 - ii. Signage and repairs for parks
 - c. Prospect Development
 - i. Central SC Alliance lead-generation program
 - d. Other
 - i. SC Economic Developers Assn.

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6. Executive Session - Sheary, Deeder ✓
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6:13

7. Adjourn - Sheary, Deeder ✓

Hipp -
No
action

Sheary, Deeder
7:14