



Environmental Quality & Public Works Committee

February 20, 2018

Summary and Motions

Chair Farmer called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. Committee Members Stinnett, Moloney, Gibbs, Evans, F. Brown, Worley, Mossotti, Bledsoe, and Plomin were present. Council Members Smith, Lamb, and Henson were also in attendance as non-voting members.

I. Approval of Committee Summary – January 23, 2018

A motion was made by CM Mossotti to amend the January 23, 2018 Environmental Quality & Public Works Committee Summary to add that public notification of consumer price index changes under the Chapter 16 Code of Ordinances will be posted on the city's website, seconded by CM F. Brown. The motion passed without dissent.

A motion was made by CM Plomin to approve the January 23, 2018 Environmental Quality & Public Works Committee Summary (as amended), seconded by CM Mossotti. The motion passed without dissent.

II. Keep Lexington Beautiful

CM Henson introduced the item, providing a brief background. Amy Sohner presented the item. She highlighted the mission, makeup, and priorities of the Keep Lexington Beautiful Commission. She said Keep Lexington Beautiful is an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful and one of the requirements for the program is the Community Appearance Index that takes place in March every year. She explained how they use a litter reporting heat map. She discussed how the Great American Cleanup is a way to get people in the community involved with cleaning up the neighborhoods and how successful the program has been. She said this is not something Keep Lexington Beautiful does; it is a community-led initiative. She explained the cigarette litter prevention program they have implemented, which is a grant program allowing them to purchase 32 ash urns. She said Parks and Recreation installed them in various places like parks and downtown. She discussed the community tree planting project on Polo Club Boulevard where 35 native tree varieties were planted and 32 sumac shrubs were planted as well for added variety and texture. She reviewed the various ways they do outreach and offer support in the community and she explained how most of their funding is through grants. Finally, she displayed their annual budget and outlined their 2018 goals.

CM Plomin commented on the litter-bug program and asked how litter complaints are made and if those calls can go through 311. Sohner said you can call 311 or Bluegrass Greensource, but complaints cannot be reported on the LFUCG website. Plomin asked if someone would be sending a letter out and Sohner said they are not sending letters anymore.

CM Mossotti expressed appreciation for the work done with this program, she commented on previous support from Glad for the Great American Cleanup, and she asked if we still have a corporate partner we work with. Sohner said Keep America Beautiful provides bags and the city provides Bluegrass Greensource with bags, gloves, rakes, and litter pickers. She added that Lowe's provided Keep Lexington Beautiful with a leaf blower and a weed trimmer which are housed at Bluegrass Greensource. She said participants in the Great American Cleanup can go to the Bluegrass Greensource office and check those items out. Susan Plueger, Director of Environmental Policy, said there is money in their operating budget for supplies they would need and she explained a couple of other ways the city offers support. She said from working with the Corridors Commission and the Breeders' Cup Beautification Project, there is an opportunity to reach out to corporations in Lexington who want a group to partner with, but they do not know where to go.

CM F. Brown asked about coordinating with the homeless population since we pick them up and give them jobs and he asked if any of this is coordinated with the city's litter pick-up efforts. Plueger explained how the litter efforts are coordinated with fundraising. She said the panhandling program now is completely focused on litter pick-ups. CM F. Brown asked about intersections with turn lanes where there are cigarette butts and he asked if a

vacuum is needed for those areas. Plueger explained that the city has handheld vacuums and one that goes on the back of a pick-up truck which would require traffic control. She said the quickest way to pick them up is by sweeping them into a shovel. She said if a buildup of cigarette butts is seen to call 311 or Bluegrass Greensource and report it so they can have it cleaned up. F. Brown asked if there are portable ash urns that could be moved around. Sohner said the ones that have been purchased so far are stationary. She said they receive pocket ash trays and auto ash trays from Keep America Beautiful and said those are passed out at special events.

CM Henson asked about the litter index and if that information is shared with the council members. She said there is the map that shows where there are large amounts of litter. She said it would be good if we could share this with council members in case they have volunteer groups who want to help. She said the need is higher in some areas than others. Sohner said it is the city's GIS division who create the maps and those can be sent to all of the council members.

CM Gibbs asked when the program for sending letters to litter bugs was discontinued. Sohner said it has been 3 or 4 years since the letters have been sent. She said the person who sent the letters worked for the police department and since that person retired, they have been unable to continue it. She said they had an agreement with the Sheriff's office to send the letters, but a few years ago the Sheriff said she no longer had the resources to continue. Sohner said at one time the city agreed to fund this service through the litter money, but she is unsure if that offer is still on the table. She said along with CM Henson, she has met with members of Public Safety regarding this, but they were unable to find a way to continue this effort.

CM Moloney said the majority of the problem is the people who are actually littering. He said we need to find a way to enforce this and penalize people who litter. He said it would be great if money taken in from fining litter bugs could be used to help this program. He called on the administration to look into this. Glenn Brown, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, said he believes in order to enforce this, police officers have to witness an individual in the act of littering. Brown said his office will meet and discuss this with the new chief of police and Plueger. CM Moloney said there should be a way around an officer having to witness this each time it happens, suggesting a phone camera as an option. Sohner pointed out what the KRS states regarding the funds that come from litter citations. She said a portion goes to the division that cites individuals and a portion goes to the city which is currently given to Keep Lexington Beautiful. CM Henson said they lobbied for legislation and tried to make this a civil issue. She said the intent was that if a fine was not paid, the person had to go to court. She said there isn't a lot of leverage the way it is written.

CM Farmer requested that when they have useful information available to send it to Council so it can be included in newsletters as a way to get the word out to constituents. Sohner said to be looking for something from the Great American Cleanup.

No further comment or action on this item

III. Lexington's Official Tree

CM Gibbs provided a brief background on the item and explained that this committee looked at this same resolution last month and vetted it pretty well. He said the resolution was sent back to the Tree Board for a final review and they made 2 additions to the resolution.

A motion was made by CM Gibbs to approve Lexington's Official Tree Resolution, seconded by CM Plomin. The motion passed without dissent.

CM Bledsoe commented during the motion and suggested that we do an educational piece with the Bur Oak as a way for others to discover the history. Angela Poe, Program Manager with Environmental Quality and Public Works, said there is a project in the works where students of the Citizens' Environmental Academy are creating a tree crutch for the Bur Oak in McConnell Springs. She said there will be a kick-off party for that. She said the crutch

is a way to support it as it gets older and hollowed out which will help it last for many years to come.

IV. Traffic Signal Cabinet Artistic Wrap Program

CM Bledsoe introduced the item and explained how this would be a good idea for areas around town where you could create a theme in a neighborhood or along a street using utility box art. She said we have worked with groups to see what the process would be for a private entity to create an artistic wrap. Angela Poe, Program Manager with Environmental Quality and Public Works, presented the item. She explained how this is an opportunity to add more art throughout the community because these boxes are at every intersection where there is a street light and there are approximately 400 in Lexington. She said the media has run several stories about these and it has been really well received and generated interest. She outlined the process they are proposing for individuals who are interested in installing an artistic wrap. She discussed the Urban County Arts Review Board (UCARB) and their approval process, as well as a few additional steps that involve the division of Traffic Engineering and Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. She discussed installation requirements and reviewed the cost estimates.

CM F. Brown said he likes the project idea and discussed how he remembers hearing about this a few years ago while on a Chamber trip. He asked if Traffic Engineering has a say in this procedure and the content that is put on these wraps. Poe explained the difference in responsibilities for Traffic Engineering and UCARB throughout the approval process. F. Brown said his concern was with content and that people might have differing views about what might be considered art. Chad Edwards, Attorney with the Law Department, explained the purpose of UCARB and said they have a review process they go through in determining which artwork to put in public places. CM F. Brown said he is concerned about whether Council would have a say in this because he would like to know what art will be going up in his district. CM Bledsoe explained that early on in the process, citizens would be encouraged to get input and approval from council members, neighborhood associations, and adjacent property owners who might be impacted by the art. CM F. Brown asked if council members would know when art is coming to their districts and Poe said if a concept is brought to her, she will make sure the council member in the appropriate district is made aware.

CM Gibbs asked for clarification on the removal of the wraps and if they will last seven years. Poe said according to the vendor we are currently using, they will stay in place up to seven years. She said they feel like the \$50 will cover the costs for taking them down as it will be a simple process. CM Gibbs asked for different scenarios on how the artwork would be generated; whether it would be a competition for artists or a database of art. Poe said they have not talked about setting up a database, but it is something we could explore. She said generally it would be generated by the neighborhood because they want it to be a reflection of the neighborhood. CM Gibbs asked how much artists would be paid. Poe said she does not know, but she noticed one city has a program that required the artist be paid, but there was no minimum requirement.

CM Evans commented about the cost and how that could be difficult for some neighborhoods to afford. She said she thinks this seems unfair for neighborhoods who can't afford it. She asked what other cities are doing to pay for this. CM Bledsoe said that some cities sponsored these projects, but we wanted to start with a zero-cost to the city option to see if they would be well received and see how much interest there was. She said there is an option to do an NDF for neighborhoods and there are other options, but we wanted to start with a no-cost option before exploring those. CM Evans said she thinks this will be well received, but she feels like there would be an equity issue. Poe said this is another reason to inform the council member because they may have ways to acquire additional funding. She said she will work with interested parties to look for additional funding if it is not readily available.

CM Mossotti said she likes the idea but she is concerned about the content. She asked, for example, if a church wants to have a religious piece or a business wants to advertise their company, how that would be determined. Poe confirmed that UCARB would make these decisions.

CM Worley commented on funding options and asked if they looked into grant funding. He also asked if there has been any communication with the District 7 office regarding state roads. David Filiatreau with Traffic Engineering said they spoke with District 7 on a previous project and they gave a list of what was not allowed such as reflective material, and wording faced away from oncoming traffic. CM Worley asked if they explained their approval process including timelines. Filiatreau said they did not, but their process would be through issuing a permit.

CM F. Brown asked about advertising content. Poe said she does not believe UCARB would allow that.

CM Bledsoe said this could be a corridors project using art as a way of cleaning up and beautifying areas. She said we might also want to consider working with VisitLex if we wanted to use a blue horse like we used at the bus stop at Harrodsburg Road and Corporate Center Drive as it may be less expensive. She said these wraps are expensive, but there may be opportunities we can find that would drive the cost down.

CM Farmer commented during the motion about a traffic signal box in his district that was painted "Granville Green" to blend in with the surroundings rather than stand out. He asked how that would be contemplated in this process. Poe said theoretically you could design a wrap that is meant for the box to blend in rather than stand out. CM Farmer said the wraps cost \$2,000 and the only cost associated with painting a box is the paint that will be needed. He asked if there were other options to consider other than a wrap. Poe said she would look into this and follow up.

A motion was made by CM Bledsoe to accept the process for the traffic signal cabinet artistic wrap program to move forward, seconded by CM Gibbs, the motion passed without dissent.

V. Items Referred to Committee

A motion was made by CM Gibbs to remove the Lexington's Official Tree item from committee, seconded by CM F. Brown. The motion passed without dissent.

A motion was made by CM F. Brown to adjourn, seconded by CM Plomin. The motion passed without dissent.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:22 p.m.

KT 2.28.18