



General Government & Social Services

April 10, 2018

Summary and Motions

Chair Lamb called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. Committee members Evans, Kay, Moloney, Stinnett, J. Brown, Smith, Farmer, F. Brown, and Henson were present. Council Members Plomin and Bledsoe were also in attendance as non-voting members.

I. Approval of March 6, 2018 Committee Summary

A motion was made by CM Farmer to approve the March 6, 2018 General Government & Social Services Committee Summary, seconded by CM Henson. The motion passed without dissent.

II. Fayette Mental Health Court

(A motion was made and passed to allow an additional five minutes for the presentation.) Director of Advocacy and Public Affairs for National Alliance on Mental Illness Lexington (NAMI) Kelly Gunning started the presentation pointing out that the need for a mental health court was identified by the Mayor's Commission on Homelessness in 2012. She explained the need for the program and the people it serves, particularly the difference from drug court and the impacts of mental illness. NAMI Executive Director Phill Gunning explained how the Fayette Mental Health Court (FMHC) was started in 2014, highlighting the difficulty with funding, their current needs and sustainability efforts, emphasizing their immediate need for funding for fiscal year 2019. NAMI FMCH Coordinator Jennifer VanOrt detailed how FMCH operates, the support they provide their clients and their strategy. She explained the "black robe effect" and their approach to wrap-around services. (A motion was made and passed to allow an additional five minutes for the presentation.) K. Gunning concluded the presentation with the success of FMHC participants and how that impacts the community.

Council members Moloney, Plomin, Kay, Henson, Smith, Evans and Bledsoe all commended NAMI and FMHC for their hard work and dedication, highlighting the economic impact of the program. Several council members specifically expressed support of the funding they have requested of the City of Lexington for fiscal year 2019.

CM F. Brown asked if NAMI is a non-profit organization, who is responsible for their financial reporting, what their total budget is for the program, about the clients they serve and how those clients graduate. K Gunning said NAMI is a non-profit, part of a national organization and that their financial reports falls under NAMI. She explained how FMHC focuses on people with serious persistent mental illness (SPMI) and how 80 percent of people who suffer from SPMI nationwide have been identified as having a co-occurring or dual-diagnoses of substance abuse disorder, stressing the need to treat mental illness and substance abuse at the same time. K. Gunning explained that their current budget is \$150,000 but that they increased their request to \$200,000 because they need to expand the program. She highlighted four stages a client must go through to complete the program, averaging three to four months to graduate with the understanding that the process is unique to each client. She said other cities are looking at their program as a model now and that they modeled their program from the mental health court in Broward County, Florida.

VM Kay and CM Henson both highlighted their experience visiting FMHC. VM Kay emphasized impact on the individuals' lives who participate in the program. CM Henson said the funding is important for the sustainability of the program.

CM Lamb asked Judge Kim Wilkie to speak a few words but first she explained her experience at FMHC the day before, the respect within the courtroom that she experienced and the opportunity for each individuals needs to be discussed. Judge Wilkie pointed out an article Beth Musgrave, with the Lexington Herald Leader, wrote a couple years ago that spread to other communities. He emphasized the wonderful team that makes FMHC possible and wrapped up his comments with, "one final word, hoorah!"

No further comment or action was taken on this item.

III. Gun Legislation Resolution and HB 463

CM Stinnett provided a brief background of the item in committee, explaining how he was originally thinking about initiating a resolution to send to state legislators and how their work became more complex. He pointed out that this item might spring board its way into the Planning and Public Safety Committee. CM Stinnett first reviewed HB463, which tried to reduce the number of people being incarcerated in our state. He highlighted SB200, which was similar to HB463 but focused on the juvenile justice system and pointed out that these bills were the driver behind the repeat offender workgroup. Lexington Police Department Assistant Chief Shawn Coleman explained the crime statistics that were included in the committee packet and the situations they are seeing with repeat offenders.

Fayette Commonwealth's Attorney Lou Anna Red Corn continued the presentation by explaining the number of defendants, indictments, and persistent felony offender charges they have dealt with in recent years, pointing out the spike in 2017 for each. She reviewed the types of cases they deal with, particularly the types that are often related to drugs. She finished by emphasizing the situation with repeat offenders. (A motion was made and passed to allow an additional 10 minutes for the presentation.) Fayette County Attorney Larry Roberts introduced Lee Turpin, first assistant county attorney. Turpin went into detail about juveniles, gun related offenses and the impacts SB200 and the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative. She explained the difficulty to detain juveniles prior to court and she emphasized the amount of crime some juveniles are committing before they are treated or serve time. She also pointed out the lack of funding associated with the two state bills. CM Stinnett completed the presentation by mentioning the US recidivism rate, and provided Germany as an example.

CM F. Brown asked how these bills were passed in the first place and whether or not any of the presenters had a say in the creation of the bills. CM Stinnett said there were task forces behind each of the bills and Red Corn said they did have one representative involved with the task force for HB463. CM F. Brown concluded that these bills have hindered Lexington, and pointed out his particular concern about repeat offenders. He asked what the council can do to make some changes. Roberts explained why he does not think the bills should be repealed but that there is a need for improvement and touched on the gang activity among juveniles.

CM Bledsoe explained the frustration of her constituency with repeat offenders and juveniles and the lack of accountability. She said parents have told her that their children are being recruited by gangs because gangs are aware juveniles will not go to jail and that parents want to know how they can help.

CM Henson asked if they are aware of social services programs to help the youth, pointing out that often times parents don't know what to do when they have a child that is out of control. Turpin explained that social services are not typically involved with the criminal justice system, and that the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services deals with the civil aspect of it. CM Henson explained some examples of situations that neighborhoods are facing, often with the same few offenders causing problems and how difficult it is to combat that when you're trying to clean up a neighborhood.

CM Moloney said the larger problem is lack of programming to serve the youth and that the youth need services the first time they are caught. Roberts highlighted the work that Gerald Gibson, also known as G.O., is doing and the need for five more people just like him. He mentioned that funding is not just a state problem and the city should consider what they can do to support necessary programming.

CM Evans said there is a larger societal question of whether we are going to be a community that penalizes offenders or a rehabilitation focused community, emphasizing the need for wrap-around services to have an impact but the cost associated with both the criminal side and services side. Roberts pointed out a court similar to FMHC that Judge Bell runs, the diversion program that their office provides, and how the city could simply provide additional social workers and parole officers to make a big difference.

CM Stinnett said he thinks this item should stay in this committee to focus on the social services needs and that it would be helpful to look at what programs are available.

CM Lamb mentioned the impact of adult peer support she witnessed at the FMHC and whether that could be done for juveniles. Turpin explained the challenges there would be when dealing with juveniles. CM Lamb thought it might be possible with families. Older programs that no longer exist involving youth were also mentioned.

No further comment or action was taken on this item.

IV. Items Referred to Committee

A motion was made by VM Kay to remove the removing elected officials item from committee, seconded by CM Farmer. The motion passed without dissent.

CM Moloney explained that he would like the Bluegrass Area Development District committee item to remain in committee as an annual update to take place in or around March of each year. He would also like the current item to remain in committee until their lawsuit with the state is settled.

A motion was made by VM Kay to adjourn, seconded by CM Stinnett. The motion passed without dissent.

The meeting adjourned at 2:46 p.m.