



Special General Government & Social Services Committee Meeting

March 10, 2015

Summary and Motions

Chair Ford called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m. All committee members were present: CMs Akers, Bledsoe, Brown, Evans, Ford, Gibbs, Henson, Lamb, Moloney, and Scutchfield. Vice Mayor Kay and CM Stinnett were also in attendance.

I. Approval of February 3, 2015 Committee Summary

A motion was made by CM Scutchfield to Approve the February 3, 2015 Committee summary, seconded by CM Gibbs. Motion passed without dissent.

II. Workforce Investment & Training

Kevin Atkins, Chief Development Officer, presented an update regarding ongoing Workforce Development and job training efforts. Atkins reviewed the timeline of Workforce efforts to date, and discussed the redesignation process for Workforce districts. Billy Peavler with Commerce Lexington provided further information on the redesignation process, and presented potential options for redesignation area boundaries.

A motion was made by CM Brown to extend the time for the presentation by 5 minutes, seconded by CM Akers. Motion passed without dissent.

Peavler provided next steps in the process and an action plan.

CM Henson stated there needs to be a better understanding of the responsibilities of the Workforce Investment Board, including available opportunities. CM Henson expressed her desire to reach as many unemployed individuals as possible and requested a presentation on the responsibilities of the Workforce Investment Board.

Atkins informed the state is mandating certain functions of the Workforce Investment Board as part of an interlocal agreement, and he gave an overview of those functions. Peavler stated, in addition, the Board will review eligibility and accessibility of services. Peavler also acknowledged the areas of technology based jobs (and training) and the high unemployment in the urban core, stating the need to research why pockets of high unemployment exist.

At the request of CM Ford, Atkins provided a brief history of the LFUCG's actions related to Workforce Development. Atkins informed they are currently in the position of presenting what is best for the region and state economically.

CM Ford stated Council is preparing to embrace the new federal law which takes place in July, as well as the determination from the Governor's office that will define the new service area boundaries; Council needs to prepare to react and work towards a strategy that will benefit Lexington. CM Ford further highlighted the need for the program's success stating there are economic development and social service impacts to the City. CM Ford stated that pockets of high unemployment in an area as resourceful and affluent as Lexington is unconscionable.

CM Lamb asked if there was a time when the program was working well and if the problems discussed began with the breakup of the Mayor's Training Center in 2007. Atkins replied that significant issues have existed since January 2011; there is no proposal to bring the Mayor's Training Center back, but there is a need for a program that realizes what Fayette and the eight counties mean to this region.

CM Moloney stated he believes this issue has become politicized, especially since the abolition of the Mayor's Training Center. CM Moloney inquired if the Governor does not make a decision if the City will be able to appeal. Atkins said the Governor has stated recently the important factor is not about who controls the funding, but about getting people the training they need. Atkins further stated he does not think the Governor will delay a decision, which is due by July 1st; Administration and Council will have the option of an appeals process, and if that is still not the right decision for the community there is an appeal process to the Secretary of Labor. CM Moloney stated Lexington provides many services to other counties in the region and feels this justifies a return of those dollars to Fayette County.

CM Akers stated the need for more study of the areas with high unemployment rates to determine what barriers exist to gainful employment, and hopes to see this continue regardless of the Governor's determination.

Vice Mayor Kay inquired if there had been some consideration of the counties that would be left out of the possible service area designation. Peavler stated there is discussion at the state level about those counties and she provided an overview by county of those considerations.

CM Ford stated that Bowling Green and other communities in Kentucky are addressing these same issues. CM Ford stated the timeline is slightly delayed because there is not a consensus, but that there is potential for change.

III. Proposed Department Reorganization – Division of Grants & Special Programs

Commissioner Derek Paulson presented the proposed department reorganization. He clarified that the function of Grants & Special Programs (GSP) will not change, but coordination efforts will be enhanced as a result of the reorganization.

CM Moloney stated his concerns about the proposed reorganization, saying he felt it was more balanced to leave the department under the CAO's office. Paulson stated the intent is not to change or improve the work of GSP but to achieve better coordination for overlapping tasks.

CM Lamb expressed similar concerns, stating that this reorganization would result in eight areas of oversight under Planning, and noted that GSP has functioned well under the CAO's office.

CM Akers stated her desire to hear the CAO's thoughts and inquired about changes that would result from the reorganization. Paulson stated the move would not change the mission or even the location of GSP, and would not change their work, other than being able to coordinate more directly. Sally Hamilton, CAO, stated that she understands both sides of the issue, and that GSP runs well due to the hard work of Irene Gooding which will not change with a move. CM Akers followed up that she could understand the move in light of coordinating efforts and gave the Vacant Properties Commission, CDGB and Home Funds as an example.

CM Brown inquired what initiated the move, as GSP is running well. Hamilton stated it came up during the creation of the Office of Affordable Housing last year, and stated that during the conversation they discussed the option of pairing both Grants and Special Programs and the Office of Homelessness with the Office of Affordable Housing.

CM Henson stated she does not support the move, stating that the office works with many different divisions within government and it makes sense to be in a central location. CM Henson stated she could understand assigning staff from GSP to coordinate with the Office of Affordable Housing, but not to move the entire department under Planning.

Evans stated Council should consider the appearance the reorganization could present to other divisions, and avoid future conflicts.

CM Ford gave a history of the most recent changes to the CAO structure. CM Ford stated that the GSP works as the clearing house for all state and federal grants in government. Irene Gooding provided an overview of the current roles and the responsibilities of the department.

CM Lamb praised the good work of the government in successfully working across departments. CM Moloney echoed CM Lamb's sentiments.

CM Ford asked the committee if there was any additional discussion or motions on this item.

A motion was made by CM Brown to remove the reorganization of Grants & Special Programs from Committee, seconded by CM Moloney. Motion passed without dissent.

IV. Inclusion of Veterans as Disadvantaged Business Enterprises

CM Akers introduced the item and stated she recently received a constituent request to add Veterans to the LFUCG's definition of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises. She presented a summary of information included in the packet, including draft language regarding this item.

CM Gibbs voiced his concern that adding Veterans would create difficulties in the Purchasing process for disadvantaged businesses, and asked if we were currently fulfilling the 10% goal, stating

he would not want to add Veterans if it put them in competition with the current populations being served. Todd Slatin, Director of Purchasing, replied that the city currently achieves 8-10%.

CM Akers asked for an explanation of the process, and how preference is given to minority and disadvantaged businesses, and Slatin gave an overview of the purchasing process.

CM Evans stated adding another category to the 10% goal would naturally place them into competition with the current groups. Slatin replied that it would dilute the goal due to a larger applicant pool, and they had discussed the possibility of creating a second goal or raising the goal amount. CM Evans stated she would like to see the goal be consistently met for a number of years before including additional groups. She inquired about the real impact of the proposal and how Veterans were considered, adding her concern that a new category of individuals would skew the reporting for the current groups and make tracking them less efficient.

CM Ford stated the current Resolution dates back to 1991, and thought it could be updated.

CM Lamb stated although the legislation was passed in 1991, there was not a staff person or a budget implementing this process until more recently. Slatin agreed, stating the implementation is only about 5 years old.

A motion was made by CM Akers to approve the draft resolution supporting the inclusion of Veterans to Disadvantaged Business Enterprises. The motion failed for lack of a second.

A motion was made by CM Henson to change the verbiage in Resolution 167-91 from "handicapped" to "disabled individual". The motion was withdrawn.

V. Items in Committee

A motion was made by CM Akers to adjourn, seconded by CM Scutchfield. Motion passed without dissent.

The meeting adjourned at 12:58 p.m.

DS 3.11.2015