



## General Government & Social Services Committee

January 14, 2020

### Summary and Motions

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Committee chair, Susan Lamb, called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. Committee members Steve Kay, Richard Moloney, Chuck Ellinger, James Brown, Bill Farmer, Angela Evans, Fred Brown, Jennifer Reynolds, and Kathy Plomin were present.

#### **I. Approval of October 15, 2019 Committee Summary**

A motion was made by CM Farmer to approve the October 15, 2019, General Government & Social Services Committee summary; seconded by VM Kay. The motion passed without dissent.

#### **II. Diversity Officer's Involvement in Appointments of Boards & Commissions**

Melissa McCartt-Smyth, Mayor's Office, reviewed eight recommendations the workgroup established to improve diversity for Lexington's boards and commissions, which the committee supported in February 2019. She outlined the process to complete each recommendation, first by focusing on the internal review of materials such as the application. She continued, explaining their communication efforts to existing members and the creation of a distribution list to announce vacancies, which is open to the public. She talked about two projects in 2019; a recruitment fair and a demographic survey. The recruitment fair, held on April 13, 2019, at the Senior Center, had 45 people attend with about half of the boards represented by a person, other boards had paper information available. The fair tied into *On The Table* and generated a lot of good conversation. McCartt-Smyth said she received several applications as a result.

Craig Cammack, Mayor's Office, explained the purpose of the survey was to understand the demographic makeup of our current boards. He said the survey was sent to 624 contacts and we had a 56 percent response rate. He pointed out the survey results represent the respondents of the survey and highlighted the questions included, such as race and ethnicity, homeownership, gender, and many other factors. He said the average number of years members have lived in Lexington is 29 and that most council districts were represented by between eight and 10 percent of respondents while making note of the high and low outlier districts. Cammack reviewed the survey results on homeownership, gender, disability status, age, race and ethnicity, military service, household income, employment, and level of education. He said the race and ethnicity survey results are similar to the city's breakdown and that Latino representation could improve by a couple of percentage points. Cammack concluded his report by stating the survey shows we are doing a good job.

McCartt-Smyth wrapped up the presentation by outlining initiatives they will continue into the future, including communication of vacancies and to further develop the distribution list. She said they will continue to conduct the demographic survey biennially.

CM F. Brown asked about people who are interested in boards and the application process. McCartt-Smyth explained the online application as the best option but that she can mail a hard copy to interested people or people can apply in person. They established that applications are active for one year. McCartt-Smyth explained the approval process is different for each board, some require more engagement from the board and others don't. F. Brown talked about identifying who really makes the appointments since most are done by the mayor. McCartt-Smyth said she is working on updating each

individual board's landing webpage by outlining the requirements for that board. F. Brown suggesting tiering the boards into levels.

CM Reynolds asked what the strategies to increase diversity are and pointed out the lack of diversity in socioeconomic status, age, and Latino representation. McCartt-Smyth talked about being limited by the applications they receive and therefore they are trying to increase applicants. She said one of the most common reasons applicants apply is because they were invited by someone so our focus is to invite people to apply. She added that the survey data can help target people and areas where more outreach is needed. Reynolds asked what happens to applications that are not selected. McCartt-Smyth said she notifies applicants when all vacancies have been filled. The length of time to fill vacancies is typically a month but some can take longer.

CM Plomin talked about the *Get On Board* program that started at the United Way in order to bring underrepresented populations to the table because those boards make decisions that impact people that are not on those boards. She said the program has been revamped for 2020, with one class starting in February and one in the fall. She talked about what the class covers and the effort at the end of the class to marry participants to boards. She said CM Evans and Arthur Lucas will both teach a class in the program and that board financial education is included. She talked about getting this board training linked to the city's website for people who may be intimidated to apply.

CM J. Brown talked about the progress made through the recruitment fair and stated the survey provided useful data. He said the survey results seem low in some categories but the representation is generally reflective of our community's population. He said we need to remain focused on this initiative. He talked about a recruitment fair taking place in the 1st Council District since it is one of the districts that is lacking in representation on our boards. He referenced the Division of Fire's outreach to recruit folks that represent our community, which contributes to the message that the city takes diversity seriously in our workforce and our boards and commissions.

Evans said this is a good start but it's only a start. She provided the example of 5 percent of survey respondents identifying with a disability, saying that this is not diversity if all of those people are on one board that focuses on disabilities. She would like the data taken to the next level and that the diversity of each board should be looked at, to be reflective of everyone. She asked about retaining applications for potentially two years. McCartt-Smyth explained that applications get archived after one year and that she has the ability to reactivate the application; she said this could be looked at.

Lamb spoke about the effort to increase diversity on all boards, with the workgroup that has worked on this for a year and a half, and that some board's diversity has improved. She encouraged communication of vacancies through council office newsletters while mentioning potential outreach opportunities through social media. She talked about the benefit of having the data from the upcoming 2020 Census and how that can help this effort. She also commented on the growth of the distribution list since it was first started.

No further comment or action was taken on this item.

### **III. Fairness Ordinance**

Kay said this item relates to a recent Kentucky Supreme Court ruling on a case that involved Hands On Originals and whether the owners discriminated unlawfully. He said the Kentucky Supreme Court did not rule on the merits of the case, instead, they ruled that the people filing the complaint did not have

standing. Grounds for the ruling were based on Lexington's code of ordinances and the use of the word "individual" when referencing the rights of people, versus the governing state statutes use of the word "person". He proposed changing the word "individual" in our code of ordinances so it's consistent with the wording in the state statute, which would allow organizations and a range of people besides an individual person to bring suit or file a complaint of discrimination.

Lamb said this is a very good correction as it relates to the definitions under KRS Chapter 344. She said this is the right way to move forward to make sure our ordinances comply with state statute.

A motion by Kay to report to the full council an amendment to Sections 2-32 and 2-33 of the Code of Ordinances changing the word 'individual' to 'person'; seconded by Farmer. The motion passed without dissent.

#### **IV. Items Referred to Committee**

A motion by Kay to remove the *Fairness Ordinance* item from the committee; seconded by CM Ellinger. The motion passed without dissent.

A motion by Farmer to remove the *Diversity Officer's Involvement in Appointments of Boards and Commissions* item from the committee; seconded by Kay. The motion passed without dissent.

Evans provided background on the business travel policy, which was a topic of discussion in several link committees for FY2020. She explained how she communicated the concerns that council members heard in links to the administration. The CAO Policy 4R was revised in the fall. Evans said the revised policy was included in the packet for informational purposes and does now require action.

A motion by Evans to remove the *Business Travel Policy* item from the committee; seconded by F. Brown. The motion passed without dissent.

A motion was made by Farmer to adjourn at 1:47 p.m.; seconded by Ellinger. The motion passed without dissent.