



## **Social Services and Public Safety Committee**

November 12, 2024

### **Summary and Motions**

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Chair Jennifer Reynolds called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

Committee Members James Brown, Chuck Ellinger II, Tayna Fogle, Denise Gray, Fred Brown, Whitney Elliott Baxter, Dave Sevigny, and Kathy Plomin were in attendance. Committee Member Brenda Monarrez was absent. Vice Mayor Dan Wu and Council Members Shayla Lynch and Hannah LeGris were present as non-voting members.

#### **I. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 8, 2024 COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY**

Motion by Fogle to approve the October 8, 2024 Committee Summary. Seconded by Ellinger. Motion passed without dissent.

#### **II. ANNUAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING UPDATE**

Rick McQuady, Affordable Housing Manager, explained the purpose of the Affordable Housing fund which is to leverage public and private investment to preserve and produce safe, quality, affordable housing for Fayette County residents whose incomes are at or below 80% of the area median income. He spoke about the application process and the evaluation criteria which include need/market, design of development, financial feasibility, capacity of development team, and readiness to proceed. Annual compliance objectives consist of review of financial condition and performance, property inspection, tenant eligibility, and adherence to requirements of the affordable housing program. He reviewed the allocations and funding and said there are 3,522 total units funded. There are 45 accessible units for seniors and 1,418 units for the special-needs population. Some of the challenges the program has experienced are rising interest rates, increased costs of property management, escalating construction costs, and acquiring viable and affordable land.

When asked about the percentage of additional homeowner units, McQuady said that is an extremely low number and it will require up to a \$150,000 subsidy. There is difficulty applying for and getting a mortgage approved. When asked how the advisory committee is selected, McQuady said people come to him expressing interest, but there is no application. McQuady said anyone can contact him or Polly Ruddick to be added to the board. When asked if there are other initiatives, McQuady said he speaks to Christie McCravy with the Louisville Metro Affordable Housing Trust Fund. They administer the programs in a similar way, and this is who he stays in the most contact with. Addressing the feasibility of Affordable Housing in Lexington when developers say it is expensive to build Affordable Housing here, McQuady said we must look at tax credits which are important to Affordable Housing. McQuady closed by saying the pro-housing grant is in and we should be hearing something in the spring. No action was taken on this committee item.

#### **III. ANNUAL JUVENILE TREATMENT COURT UPDATE**

Judge Lindsay Hughes Thurston introduced Kivvi Figgs, Program Coordinator of Juvenile Treatment Court (JTC). The mission of JTC is to protect public safety and reduce the recidivism rate of juvenile offenders by increasing their overall wellness. Using an integrated approach, the JTC seeks positive and long-lasting life changes. Thurston said they entered into an agreement with the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC)

in October 2021, they entered into an agreement with Fayette County Public Schools (FCPS) in November 2021, and presently they work with LFUCG for grant purposes. JTC accepts referrals from a court designated worker, family court, or juvenile court. JTC implements a 4-phased approach which includes random drug screening, mental health services, and family and educational support. Figgs reviewed the current census since the first court date on March 11, 2022: 39/70 referrals were accepted and there were 11 graduates. Currently there are 10 participants receiving mental health services and 1 high school graduate. Thurston spoke about partner involvement with mental health services, and she explained the importance of offering these services in the program. Figgs reviewed additional activities and engagement in the program. Thurston introduced a participant named Jaden who provided a testimony of his experience with JTC. When asked about language services, Thurston said they use court interpreters and FCPS to facilitate these services. No action was taken on this committee item.

#### **IV. THE HOPE CENTER EXPANSION PROJECT UPDATE**

Jeff Crook, CEO of The Hope Center, spoke about the Hope Center's Veterans Housing / Shelter. He said the project is approximately \$6.8 Million in terms of the new facility and \$500,000 in renovations on the emergency shelter which amounts to a \$7.3 Million expansion project. They received \$2 Million from ARPA funds for this project and \$1.5 Million from Veterans Capital funds. Fundraising is in progress for the remaining balance of the project; they currently need \$1.2 Million. The project is moving along and they are 80% complete with expected completion by February 2025. He displayed graphics to point out the existing shelter and where the new construction is taking place.

When asked what the updates to the facility include, Crook said this will provide 72 beds for transitional housing and 24 of those are designated for veterans. The remaining units will be for supportive transitional housing to help prepare clients for moving into permanent housing. The winter temporary shelter last year was a specific project for the unsheltered around town and this year there will be a different solution. Addressing whether the funding could be used to expand emergency housing, Crook explained the ARPA funds were specific to the terms of not being able to expand emergency shelter. The funds had to be used for transitional housing or another form of housing. When asked if this classification has a maximum stay, Crook said typical transitional housing has a two year maximum, but there are no time-based restrictions based on the funding for this. When asked if there is a facility for female veterans, Crook said when we originally received the grant, there were 5 spots for female veterans, but they have not had a qualified female veteran seek help at the Hope Center. When asked how we communicate with the target population, Crook said they have not been overly intentional, but they collaborate with partners in the community. Crook said he will work with the Commission on Veterans Affairs to provide a list of resources for their website. Lanter explained a rule in the federal regulation that stated ARPA money could not be used to expand shelter capacity and that was never the intention of this program. He confirmed the continuum of housing progresses from unhoused to shelter to transitional to permanent housing. No action was taken on this committee item.

#### **V. ITEMS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE**

Motion by Gray to remove the Juvenile Treatment Court Update from the list of committee referrals. Seconded by J. Brown. Motion passed without dissent.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.