Environmental Quality & Public Works (EQPW) Committee

March 3, 2026

Summary and Motions

Chair Dave Sevigny called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Committee Members James Brown, Tyler Morton, Tom Eblen, Emma Curtis, Liz Sheehan, Lisa Higgins-Hord, Joseph Hale, Amy Beasley, and Hil Boone were in attendance as voting members. Vice Mayor Dan Wu and Council Member Jennifer Reynolds were present as non-voting members.

I. APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 3, 2026 COMMITTEE SUMMARY

Motion by Morton to approve the February 3, 2026 Environmental Quality & Public Works Committee Summary. Seconded by Curtis. Motion passed unanimously.

II. SEWER ODOR CONTROL PROGRAM

Charlie Martin, Director of the Division of Water Quality, presented an update on Lexington's sewer odor control program and recent efforts to reduce odor impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. The program currently focuses on two primary strategies: infrastructure improvements to capture and treat odors before they are released into surrounding areas, and chemical treatment within the sewer collection system to prevent the formation of odor-causing compounds such as hydrogen sulfide.

At the Town Branch Wastewater Treatment Plant, the city installed a two-stage odor treatment system consisting of a bio-scrubber followed by activated carbon filtration. Similar approaches are being used at the West Hickman Wastewater Treatment Plant, including activated carbon scrubbers and upgrades to wet scrubber systems serving ash tanks. Additional operational improvements over the past year include smaller-scale odor mitigation projects and system adjustments throughout the wastewater collection network. Chemical treatment options are also being evaluated through pilot testing programs comparing current chemicals with alternative treatments.

Looking forward, the Division plans to continue advancing both infrastructure and chemical treatment strategies. Two treatment units have been completed, and additional projects are approaching construction readiness. The city is also soliciting bids for alternative chemical treatments and plans to conduct a season-long demonstration project to evaluate performance and cost effectiveness before broader deployment. No committee action was taken on this agenda item.

III. ENERGY INITIATIVES UPDATE

James Bush, Energy Initiatives Section Manager, provided an update on municipal energy initiatives, including recent utility cost trends, projects supported by the Energy Improvement Fund, and the fund's overall financial outlook. City utility costs have risen steadily in recent years. Total costs increased from approximately $20.5 million in FY2022 to about $22.3 million in FY2025, with the FY2025 increase largely driven by higher water costs, hydrant expenses, increased water usage in Parks facilities, and higher electricity demand charges.

Several energy-efficiency and renewable-energy projects are underway, including HVAC upgrades at the Tates Creek Ballroom, insulation improvements at the Town Branch facility, and preparations for solar installations at the Black & Williams Recreation Center, Raven Run, and Camp Kearney. The solar

installation at Fire Station #19 illustrates the city's approach to renewable energy investments. Estimated savings are about $2,100 per year, with roughly 94% of project costs recovered within 12 years and full payback expected around year 13 without subsidies.

As of February 2026, the primary Energy Improvement Fund account is expected to be largely committed by the end of the fiscal year. The program also lost approximately $329,000 in anticipated federal Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) funding after the federal government withdrew the allocation. A $150,000 request has been included in the FY2027 budget to support continued energy efficiency and solar investments. Staff also noted that the city currently lacks formal targets for building energy efficiency or solar deployment, which can complicate long-term planning and infrastructure coordination. No committee action was taken on this agenda item.

IV. ENGINEERING MANUALS UPDATE

Doug Burton, Director of Engineering, presented proposed updates to several of Lexington's Engineering Manuals. These updates include revisions to the Procedures Manual and the Stormwater Manual, and the creation of a new Maintenance Manual for Post-Construction Stormwater Controls. The goal of these revisions is to align Lexington's infrastructure design standards with current engineering practices and regulatory requirements while providing clearer guidance on maintenance responsibilities. The Procedures Manual governs how public infrastructure associated with development—such as roads, sanitary sewers, pump stations, and stormwater systems—is designed and constructed. It applies to infrastructure built by private developers that will eventually become publicly maintained by LFUCG.

These changes are intended to improve coordination between planning and engineering standards and to clarify that maintenance agreements for stormwater facilities transfer with property ownership. The updates also incorporate language required by House Bill 443, which requires strict ministerial review procedures when public health, safety, or welfare concerns are involved. The Stormwater Manual establishes Lexington's stormwater management standards for development projects and ensures compliance with the city's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit and federal flood insurance program requirements.

The new Maintenance Manual establishes formal maintenance standards for post-construction stormwater controls located on private property. It includes planting standards, seeding guidance, inspection procedures, and other operational requirements. The manual replaces the existing basin maintenance policy and will be incorporated into the Code by ordinance.

A motion was made by Sevigny and seconded by Morton to approve the proposed changes to engineering manuals as presented to the committee and as set forth in the committee packet. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Sevigny and seconded by Morton to suspend the rules and have a partial report-out of the Engineering Manuals Update at the Council Work Session today, March 3, 2026. The motion passed unanimously.

V. ITEMS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

No committee action was taken on this agenda item.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 pm.