

Social Services & Community Development Committee
October 16, 2012
Summary & Motions

Chair Myers called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM. All members were present except CM McChord.

9.18.12 Committee Summary

On a motion by CM Kay, second CM Stinnett the 9.18.12 Social Services & Community Development Committee was approved.

Summer Youth Employment Follow Up

Commissioner Mills introduced the summer youth employment presentation. She introduced Mattie Morton the program coordinator of the summer youth employment program.

Ms. Morton discussed the parameters of the program. She stated that 150 youth were placed and employed by the program this past summer. She stated that the participants come from every Council District in the County but over half (53%) reside in 3 districts; the 1st, 2nd and 8th districts.

Ms. Morton stated that the participants were between 15-18 years old and the majority were 14-15 years old. She stated that the participants come from 18 of the 20 public middle and high schools in the County. Ms. Morton stated that most come from Bryan Station, Lafayette and Henry Clay. She stated that the youth are paid \$ 7.25 per hour.

She stated that 30% of the participants previously participated in the summer youth employment program. The participants were assigned to over 65 work sites. Most of the work sites have been involved in the program for multiple years.

Ms. Morton stated that there were ten (10) types of jobs available including landscaping, animal care, retail sales, warehousing, child care, reception/office, computer technology, maintenance, auto tech and food service. She stated that 76% of the participants were assigned to the office/receptionist and child care categories.

Ms. Morton reviewed the skills that the youth were exposed to and learned at their worksites. She also reviewed program performance measures used to evaluate the participants and the worksites.

Lane discussed income eligibility for the program.

Lawless stated that the program was very well run and it was a good investment for Lexington. She also discussed trans-generational poverty in Lexington.

Ford stated that the community had an opportunity to invest more resources in the program. He stated that the FY 13 budget increased funding to have an additional 75 youth participant in the program this coming summer. He stated that he would like the program to grow to at least 300 youth each summer.

Myers asked about the job types. He asked if school counselors were involved in the program to match the youth with career paths. In response Ms. Morton stated that they were not.

Myers asked whether the sites were ever required or encouraged to pay part of the participants' wages. He discussed varying the job types to make them more appropriate career paths. He also asked about financial literacy workshops.

Kay asked about the recruitment process. He stated that the worksites spend a great deal of time with the youth and acclimate the participants into a work environment. He stated that the summer employment program instills job skills in the participants.

Ford made a motion to increase participation to 300 youth in FY 14. The motion was seconded by Kay.

Crosbie asked about the intent of the motion. In response Mills stated that an increase from 150 to 225 in FY 13 and to 300 participants in FY 14 would mean increased administrative resources would need to be allocated to adequately support the program.

Myers stated that he supported the program but would like to see more employment opportunities for the participants rather than receptionist and child care positions. He stated that employers need a well trained work force to compete in the global economy.

Kay stated that a positive vote would send a message to the Administration to develop methods to increase participation. He stated that the program benefits young people and our community as a whole.

Lane discussed the Junior Achievement program and youth training. Myers followed by comments from Lane and stated that the program should expand opportunities for our youth and include jobs in emerging industries and fields.

Debbie Sharon and Jane Peck spoke on half of work sites in favor of the program. They stated that the youth were motivated to work and had improved job skills during the duration of the program. They both stated that the participants contributed to the work sites.

Ford clarified the motion regarding establishing a baseline of 300 participants for FY 14.

Myers asked if the motion could include a statement that the employers should pay a portion of the youth salaries. In response Ford stated that he wanted the administration to have flexibility in managing the program. He stated that the worksites invest their time

and training in the participants. He stated that it can be challenging to bring teenagers into their work environment.

On a motion by Ford, second Kay the committee approved establishing a baseline of 300 summer youth employment slots by FY 14.

Committee Referrals

On a motion by Lawless second Lane the Senior Citizen Center issue was moved to Work Session. Motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:25PM