



Environmental Quality & Public Works Committee

March 12, 2019

Summary and Motions

Chair Bill Farmer, Jr. called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. Committee Members Steve Kay, Richard Moloney, Josh McCurn, Jake Gibbs, Angela Evans, Preston Worley, Fred Brown, Jennifer Mossotti, and Amanda Bledsoe were present. Council Members Susan Lamb and Kathy Plomin were also in attendance as non-voting members.

I. Approval of February 19, 2019 Committee Summary

A motion was made by CM Worley to approve the February 19, 2019 Environmental Quality & Public Works Committee Summary, seconded by VM Kay. The motion passed without dissent.

II. Review of Recycling Practices

Angela Poe, Program Manager with Environmental Services, presented the item. She began by reviewing the current practices, explaining what can be recycled and what cannot. She reviewed what to do with unwanted items that cannot be recycled such as campaign signs or holiday lights. Charlie Martin, Acting Commissioner of Environmental Quality & Public Works, described how we compare to other cities as far as acceptable items. Poe continued by explaining the public outreach practices taking place at schools, apartment complexes, and a limited number of businesses. She described the different outreach materials and media outlets available to provide notification of recycling practices.

CM Moloney stated that we are one of the best at recycling and he thinks there is a potential to improve our recycling process and we should look into how we can profit from recycling cardboard. He commented on glass recycling as well, mentioning options for glass to be turned to sand or other usable elements. He commented on the trash going to the landfill being turned into electricity for Toyota and said there is potential to build partnerships for specific types and uses of recycling (glass, cardboard, etc.). He asked if paper recycling was still profitable and Martin said office paper is practically given away, but cardboard is where we are most profitable.

CM F. Brown asked if the material in the packet is our advertising campaign. Poe said the material we are using most often is the flier that shows the items we accept. F. Brown said the flier is confusing and added that he suspects most people use the the recycling logo to determine what can be recycled. He asked how we get the correct message out to people. Poe commented that we are doing more mass marketing. F. Brown asked if cart labels would be sent to everyone with a cart and Poe stated that they are in the homeowner packets for newly purchased homes and Waste Management staff is placing these on new carts being delivered.

CM Mossotti asked what outreach is in place for private waste collection. Poe stated that the materials are available free to affiliates and we have offered to allow them to change the logo from Lexington to their own. Mossotti asked if we have contacted producers of plastic bags, mentioning the Kroger initiative to eliminate plastic bags. Poe stated that they had not reached out to vendors but are making an effort to educate individuals on reducing these materials. Mossotti asked what the percentage is for private versus public garbage. Martin said he would find the answer and report back.

CM Bledsoe said 90% of environmental impact comes from paper, cardboard, and metal. She commented on a more streamlined process and asked if we would have more intentionality, higher profit and environmental impact than doing what we are doing now and what the impact/benefit would be. Martin commented that there is no market right now for paper. He said he does not see a correlation between the environmental benefit and economic benefit. Bledsoe asked if we can do this in a way that makes the most fiscal sense as well as the most environmental sense and find a way to maximize both things. She also suggested using the university or high school students to devise a plan for recycling glass or paper.

CM Gibbs asked why we don't take all number 2 plastic. Poe stated that she thinks part of it is how the plastic is formed and the other is how our equipment functions because certain items can damage the machine. Gibbs asked if we were still paying less to haul glass away versus putting it in the landfill and Martin confirmed. Gibbs stated that the council may want to really study this issue and look at the long-term effects before making any major changes to how or what we recycle.

CM Worley commented on the issue and said he wants this to be a continuing discussion. He said this item first became a concern when he distributed a survey to constituents. The feedback he received was that people did not know what or how to recycle. He said originally this was an issue with outreach, but the bigger issue is whether we are doing it correctly. He said if we cannot be profitable, we should be cost-efficient.

CM Evans asked for information on how other cities are recycling different materials most efficiently and cost-effectively. She expressed concern about the plastic bags and said she and others want to find ways to recycle these. She would like to know how to explain why we are not recycling plastic bags or glass. Poe something that might be helpful in explaining what we can and cannot recycle is to survey the public because how we weigh the cost-benefits of recycling certain materials depends on the views of the community.

VM Kay asked how much of what we cannot recycle is plastics that fall outside of what is allowed. Martin said he really isn't sure it has ever been broken down that way; it all goes into the category of trash. Kay said that based on his household, most of the material they have is the plastic that is not recyclable. He added that the campaign should emphasize that the numbers on the bottom of the container don't matter because that is not how our recycling program works. Poe said they will get to that message but now they are concentrating on the recycling symbol and how not everything with that symbol on it is recyclable.

CM Bledsoe said she likes the idea of a survey because what people want to do is different with each community and having that engagement here would be great. Poe added that doing something people are supportive of makes the education piece easier.

CM Moloney asked if they can make gas out of plastic bags that are put into the landfill. Martin commented that he was unsure but intends to research the rate of composition of various materials. He said a carbon is needed in order to make methane used for electricity which is why glass would not work.

No further comment or action was taken on this item.

III. Fiber Optic Technology (MetroNet)

Darrick Zucco, President of MetroNet provided an update on the Fiber Optic Technology installation taking place around Lexington. He reviewed community highlights and provided a construction update which includes an interactive map. Tana Williamson, Marketing Assistant for MetroNet, reviewed pre-construction communication efforts and the timeline for those communications. She explained the construction feedback system which allows customers to submit a ticket for any construction matter.

CM McCurn commented on the construction update and said his office was told construction on the west end would begin this spring, but it is not scheduled before this summer. Zucco said that is quadrant 4 and it is on the agenda for late summer. McCurn asked if this was because of a delay and Zucco confirmed there was a weather delay and is also due to contract availability. McCurn asked if they would work with HOAs on the yard signs for neighborhoods who have restrictions. Zucco said they will work with HOAs, but have not had any issues so far.

CM Lamb said she appreciates the updates and she asked if the cables were being encased where squirrels are abundant. Zucco said they use armored cable which prevents squirrels from chewing through it. Lamb commented on maintenance associations and neighborhood organizations and she suggested using the city's web site to locate and contact the various neighborhood groups.

CM Worley commented on the opportunity that MetroNet provides the community, but he is happy to see MetroNet is scheduled to be leaving the 7th District because the homes have been deeply impacted by the construction. He asked for continued respect of constituents' homes and to understand that a construction mistake to MetroNet is something different to a constituent.

Chair Farmer commented on a gate that was left open in his district, releasing a dog, which was an incident that did not have a favorable ending. He said the impending installations should be a positive thing and said he understands the challenges that come with building new infrastructure in an old city. He concurred with Worley's comments about the comfort and quality of life of constituents and said it can make a permanent difference when something happens. Zucco said he agrees and they have added resources to address that.

No further comment or action was taken on this item.

IV. Empower Lexington

VM Kay provided a brief background to explain how the item came to committee and the history behind it. Judith Humble, Blaine Early, and Henry Jackson with the Empower Lexington Working Group, were the presenters for this item. Humble began the presentation by providing a background of the program. Early reviewed some statistics and spoke about the goals and implementation of the program. Jackson concluded the presentation reviewing the Empower Lexington plan and the proposed resolution.

CM Mossotti expressed appreciation and said she is happy to see the work that has been done on this. She asked what is needed from committee today and Jackson said the resolution to apply for grants needs to be approved.

A motion was made by CM Mossotti to consider a potential resolution authorizing the Mayor, on behalf of the Urban County Government, to execute and submit one or more grant applications and to provide

any additional information requested in connection with the grant applications, which grant funds are in an amount not to exceed \$500,000 for support of the Empower Lexington Program, seconded by VM Kay. The motion passed by a vote of 9-1 (Voting yes: Kay, Moloney, McCurn, Gibbs, Farmer, Evans, Worley, Mossotti, Bledsoe; Voting no: F. Brown).

CM Evans commented on the request for new positions and expressed concern that we are in budget discussions at this time. She asked for clarification that this is a motion to allow someone to apply for grants. Mossotti said this is showing our support for Empower Lexington to request grant funds.

CM Bledsoe asked if they have done research to determine if there are grants available to fund a specific position like the one described. Jackson said there are some grants that have come up in a search which are not available at this time, but they will continue to monitor. He said this approach is for us to state what we are looking for to see if there is any interest. Bledsoe said in her experience, it is difficult to find a grant that will fund a position.

VM Kay expressed appreciation for the work being done on this and the work to come.

CM Worley expressed support and asked for clarification that this resolution is requesting the Mayor to seek available grants and not creating a position. VM Kay confirmed and said this is the typical process for Council. He said this will allow the group to work with the understanding that they have the support of the Mayor.

(With no further discussion, at this time the motion was voted on and approved)

V. Items Referred to Committee

Due to time constraints, the referral list was not reviewed.

A motion was made by CM Bledsoe to adjourn, seconded by CM Mossotti. The motion passed without dissent.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:01 p.m.
KT 3.13.2019