



General Government & Social Services Committee

March 8, 2022

Summary and Motions

Committee chair, Council Member Susan Lamb, called the meeting to order at 1:44 p.m. Committee members Vice Mayor Steve Kay and Council Members Richard Moloney, James Brown, Hannah LeGris, Liz Sheehan, Fred Brown, Whitney Baxter, Jennifer Reynolds, Kathy Plomin, Chuck Ellinger, and David Kloiber attended the meeting.

I. Approval of March 8, 2022 Committee Summary

A motion by Hannah LeGris to Approve March 8, 2022 Committee Summary, seconded by Liz Sheehan, the motion passed without dissent.

II. Introduction of New Explorium Director

Mr. Colby Ernest introduced himself and his role as the new director of the Explorium. The Explorium has been in Lexington for over 30 years. The Explorium is currently working with the University of Kentucky on a five year strategic plan that will wrap up this summer. They will have a new website. Additionally, the Explorium has secured new funding to update their exhibits. They have been working with various community partners, including the Juliette Market and LexArts to provide programming in the community.

Ernest stated that the relationship between LFUCG and the Explorium is crucial. Support from the city will allow the Explorium to have a greater reach with the Lexington community. The Explorium is looking into hosting sensory friendly events for children who are on the spectrum.

The Explorium remains at its location in Victorian Square. F. Brown asked about the Explorium's marketing efforts. Ernest said that is an area that they are looking to improve. LeGris asked what Ernest would like people to think of when they look at the Explorium. He stated that he wants families to know that the Explorium is a place for them to go and connect with their children. He also said that it is important for families to learn and play together.

J. Brown suggested that the Explorium evaluate funding opportunities at the state level. He also asked about the potential concerns for the Explorium's current location. Ernest said that the priority is for the Explorium to remain downtown so it can continue to be near lower income areas and that the central location is useful. Moloney suggested that it may be useful to have partnerships with the schools.

III. Substance Use Intervention Update

Amy Baker, the Substance Use Intervention Program Coordinator, shared an update of the First Responders and Community Partners Overdose Prevention Project (FRCOPP). This project was awarded \$2 million in 2018, receiving approximately \$500,000 annually. The biggest partner with the program has been the Lexington-Fayette County Health Department, which has distributed \$1.1 million of naloxone over the life of the grant. The goal was to provide 3,600 naloxone kits.

Scott Luallen, the Overdose prevention Coordinator, shared that one of the main initiatives of the program has been community trainings on how to administer naloxone. Every week, there are trainings for inpatient individuals at the Ridge. They additionally host trainings in the hospitality industry, as well as

other community organizations like the Hope Center. There have been over 130 trainings and the goal is to increase that number.

Baker shared that they work closely with community paramedicine to help fill gaps in training locations. Anyone can get naloxone from the health department for free. The need for naloxone was exacerbated by the pandemic. Luallen works with New Life Day Center, Lighthouse Ministries, Rescue Mission, Alano Club, The Ridge, and the Syringe Service Program to conduct outreach. Baker stated that people who use needle exchange programs are five times more likely to get treatment. They also have been working on a campaign to encourage people who witness an overdose to call 911.

During 2020, Lexington had 209 overdose fatalities however in 2021, Lexington saw a slight decrease at 193. This program has worked to provide naloxone to first responders who did not have a regular source of funding like District 9 Probation and Parole Officers, Child Protection Services, Transylvania University Division of Public Safety, and the Fayette County Sheriff's Office. The next step is to apply for another grant as well as a two-month no-cost extension, with the grant ending in November 2022. They are also applying for various other grants.

Luallen introduced the Recovery Supportive Living Assistance Program. There is a significant barrier to getting people into recovery housing. The program began as a pilot in October 2020 with approximately \$17,000 for the remainder of FY21. This grant is a one-time benefit of \$400, applied for by the owner/operator of the recovery residence on behalf of the individual. During FY22, approximately 420 individuals have received assistance from the program.

Reynolds asked how the sober living and recovery homes work. Luallen explained that currently there are no restrictions on what people do with their property, the regulations of these homes are in the beginning stages. The vast majority are well run and it behooves those homes to be good neighbors. Baker shared that KY Department of Behavioral Health is working on a certification. The program in Lexington only works with houses that have published policies, procedures and rules and that they require drug and alcohol testing.

Sheehan asked about the impact of counterfeit pills on overdoses. Baker said that people can purchase pill presses to make counterfeit pills and those pills usually contain fentanyl. These pills look like prescription pills. A conversation ensued about kratom as an alternative to opioids. Moloney asked if it was dangerous and Baker said yes and that it isn't regulated.

Moloney asked how the opioid settlement will impact this program. Baker said that it was too early to determine what it will look like. Susan Speckert said that the state will get \$483 million, \$241.5 million will go into a state trust fund and \$251.4 million will be distributed among municipalities. The amount each municipality will receive will be determined based on a formula. Currently, Lexington will be expecting around \$15 million. The rate of receipt will be different depending on the defendant. Commissioner Allen-Bryant and Baker have been working on a formal process to figure out the best way to manage and use the funds.

IV. The Arboretum of Kentucky Update

Molly Davis, the Director of the Arboretum, shared the organization chart for the Arboretum. CM Susan Lamb and Ned Crankshaw are the co-chairs of the advisory board. The Arboretum was established as a partnership between LFUCG and the University of Kentucky. Davis shared various maps and images of the

Arboretum, which includes the access points, paths, the native plant collection, and other features. Arboretum has the Kentucky's Children's Garden, native horticultural gardens, the Flight 5191 Memorial, and more.

The agreement between LFUCG and UK states that the University reserves the property for public use through 2086. UK has provided the majority of the operational funding. Funding also comes from Arboretum generated income, philanthropy and grants, as well as LFUCG. Currently, the Arboretum is looking to expand the Dorothea Smith Oatts Visitor Center. The budget is \$3 million and they have raised over half of those funds since 2013. There is approximately \$1.4 million left to begin the project. The schematics of the expansion displays outdoor gathering spaces, expanded indoor areas for programming, and stain glass art from Laura Mentor.

LeGris asked what they can do to promote the Arboretum. Davis said that it would be helpful for people to know of the partnership between LFUCG and the University. The Arboretum does struggle financially, but they have gotten grants from other NGOs and the Student Sustainability Council. They are about seven staff members short on their grounds team. Lamb mentioned that she will be asking for support for the expanded visitor's center during the fund balance discussions.

V. Division and Program Review – 2022 Evaluations

Director Kendra Carter has agreed to have LexCall involved in the 2022 Division and Program Review.

VI. Items Referred to Committee

A motion by Richard Moloney to approve to remove #5 item - *Review of the LFUCG Charter*, seconded by Jennifer Reynolds, the motion passed without dissent.

A motion by Steve Kay to adjourn at 3:15, seconded by Whitney Baxter, the motion passed without dissent.

Meeting materials: <https://lexington.legistar.com/DepartmentDetail.aspx?ID=27924&GUID=C0436769-E09F-4EA3-B79F-2D67F931F874&R=ef6228db-601d-46b7-a0f5-665316ff6a49>

Recording of the meeting: https://lfucg.granicus.com/player/clip/5499?view_id=4&redirect=true