



Social Services and Public Safety Committee

November 14, 2023

Summary and Motions

Chair Reynolds called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. Committee Members Ellinger, J. Brown, Fogle, Monarrez, Gray, F. Brown, Baxter, Sevigny, and Plomin were in attendance. Council Members Lynch and Vice Mayor Wu were also present as non-voting members.

I. Approval of October 10, 2023 Committee Summary

Motion by Ellinger to approve the October 10, 2023 Committee Summary. Seconded by Fogle. Motion passed without dissent.

II. Annual NAMI - Fayette Mental Health Court Update

Connie Milligan, Clinical Director for Fayette County Mental Health Court, stated the Fayette Mental Health Court program has been in operation for 14 years and she discussed some success stories. She spoke about the intersection of mental illness and substance abuse and said 90% of incoming participants struggle with co-occurring disorders. She spoke about the need for continuing care which is helped through PALS (Participation, Alliance, Legacy, and Service). She spoke about the alumni impact which shows lowered recidivism rates, 80% retention of participants, and support from peers and staff. She reviewed the monetary savings for Lexington from July 2021-June 2023 with 15 graduates. This saved the city 21,709 days of incarceration which amounted to cost savings of almost \$2.5 million. Judge Tackett spoke about the court process and mentioned the Supreme Court is taking initiative to help those with mental illness. He spoke about jail not being the best option for people suffering because no therapy is provided. Speaking about the importance of saving money and helping people, Milligan said there was a 51% increase in one year and funding would allow for more staff. When asked about stable housing and if there is a difference this year, Milligan said stable housing is a crisis. There is a need for different types of housing so people can get off the street. Milligan confirmed the success rate is holding and she said peer support and community partners are what makes this work. When asked how long the waiting list is, Milligan said there are about 7 or 8 on the list now so it could be about 8 weeks. Milligan spoke about community partners and extensive relationships with providers of substance abuse treatment. When asked where referrals come from, Tackett mentioned Melissa Moore Murphy and Lindsey Thurston who have the Juvenile Treatment Court and he said they handle juveniles. Speaking about opioid abatement, Gunning said they will be applying for an Opioid Abatement grant. We need funding for trauma because it is the basis for all the issues (mental health, substance use, etc...). No action was taken on this item.

III. Annual LFUCG Affordable Housing Fund, Initiatives and Projects Update

Rick McQuady, Affordable Housing Manager, spoke about the purpose of the Affordable Housing Fund and he highlighted the median income thresholds. He reviewed the housing costs per month and noted it is affordable when you only spend 30% of income on housing expenses. He pointed out the rent must be affordable for people to live there. He spoke about the evaluation criteria for this program, and he reviewed the annual compliance objectives. He explained the fund activity which includes an allocation of \$28,622,233 which allows for \$9,579 allocated to each of 2,988 units. He spoke about the total number of affordable housing units funded and the maximum allowable incomes. He spoke about the special

needs population accounting for 1,117 funded units. When asked about more permanent affordable housing, McQuady spoke about those who would be providing supportive services. Speaking about the special needs population, McQuady said the profile has not changed much since its inception. The need for accessible housing is critical. When asked about criteria and the location of proposed 35 units, McQuady said it is in the 9th district. Speaking about students not allowed to rent these, McQuady clarified that traditional college students would not be able to rent these units but single parents taking classes would. No action was taken on this item.

IV. Alcohol Sales on Sundays

Dave Sevigny, 10th District Council Member, provided a presentation on alcohol sales on Sundays. He spoke about the history of blue laws which came to America with the first colonists and restricted almost every activity on Sunday. He reviewed the law in Kentucky pertaining to the sale of alcohol on Sundays. He went over the timeline of this issue from 1982 when state law allowed for Sunday sales of distilled spirits and wine through 2017 when Council allowed for the expanded hours of retail package distilled spirits and wine sales when Christmas Eve and New Years Eve fall on Sunday. He explained the proposed change came about from Economic Development and he said this will increase business revenues. He spoke about the fairness this would provide to night shift employees. The solution is to treat all days and hours the same and allow sales to start at 6 am every day. When asked what this will change, Sevigny said the hours would change to 6 am every day, including hours for package liquor store sales. Committee members expressed support for this change, but there was some concern about the change in hours at package liquor stores.

Motion by Sevigny to approve the ordinance as presented today, amending the hours for the sale of alcohol on Sunday (as amended). Seconded by Gray. Motion passed 9-1 (Yes – J. Brown, Ellinger, Fogle, Baxter, Plomin, Monarrez, Gray, Sevigny, Reynolds; No – F. Brown).

A motion by Whitney Elliott Baxter to amend the ordinance to only allow this change for the sale of alcohol at restaurants, not package liquor stores. Seconded by Tayna Fogle. Motion passed 6 – 4 (Yes – J. Brown, Ellinger, Fogle, F. Brown, Baxter, Plomin; No – Monarrez, Gray, Sevigny, Reynolds).

A motion by Sevigny to report this out at work session today, November 14, 2023. Seconded by Gray. Motion passed 9 – 1 (Yes – J. Brown, Ellinger, Fogle, Baxter, Plomin, Monarrez, Gray, Sevigny, Reynolds; No – F. Brown).

V. Items Referred to Committee

No action was taken on this item.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:58 p.m.