



Social Services and Public Safety Committee

January 23, 2024

Summary and Motions

Chair Reynolds called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. Committee Members Ellinger, J. Brown, Fogle, Monarrez, Gray, F. Brown, Baxter, Sevigny, and Plomin were in attendance. Council Member Lynch was also present as a non-voting member.

I. Approval of November 14, 2023 Committee Meeting Summary

Motion by Ellinger to approve the November 14, 2023 Committee Summary. Seconded by Plomin. Motion passed without dissent.

I. Approval of November 14, 2023 Special Committee Meeting Summary

Motion by Ellinger to approve the November 14, 2023 Special Committee Meeting Summary. Seconded by Gray. Motion passed without dissent.

II. Source of Income Discrimination

Dave Sevigny, 10th District Council Member, began his presentation with a timeline from introduction of the *Source of Income Discrimination* item in 2022 until present. This item was first introduced to Council Members in 2022 and the Kentucky Tenants group met with almost every council member. The item died in committee that year for lack of action from previous sponsor. Council Member Sevigny took ownership of the item by placing it in this committee on April 18, 2023. Council Member Shayla Lynch became a co-sponsor of the item and the two met with Commissioner Charlie Lanter, tenants, landlords, and wrap around providers. The item was presented to the Social Services and Public Safety committee on October 10, 2023. The committee held a special meeting on November 14, 2023 for the purpose of hearing public input. Council Members Sevigny and Lynch received several letters of support which were circulated in the January 23, 2024 committee packet. During this meeting, Sevigny spoke about updates to the draft ordinance which now stands alone in the code of ordinances. He reviewed the addition of whereas clauses and what each of those meant. He pointed out the addition of a paragraph that states this shall not be construed or interpreted to supersede any federal or state law or regulation.

Motion by Sevigny to approve as amended an ordinance creating section 2-31.2 of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government code of ordinances, to prohibit discrimination in housing on the basis of lawful source of income or payment, all effective March 1, 2024; and report the item out of committee at the January 30th Work Session. Seconded by Gray. Motion passed 7-3 (Yes- J. Brown, Fogle, Monarrez, Gray, Sevigny, Reynolds, and Plomin; No – Ellinger, Baxter, and F. Brown).

Motion by Baxter to amend the ordinance referenced above (section 2-31.2 of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government code of ordinances); removing language pertaining to paying mortgages and the sale/buying of property. Seconded by Gray. Motion passed 7-3 (Yes – J. Brown, Ellinger, Monarrez, Gray, F. Brown, Baxter, and Plomin; No – Fogle, Sevigny, and Reynolds).

Motion by Ellinger to table discussion of the *Source of Income Discrimination* committee item until March 5, 2024. Seconded by F. Brown. Motion failed 5-5 (Yes – Ellinger, Monarrez, F. Brown, Baxter, and Plomin; No – J. Brown, Fogle, Gray, Sevigny, and Reynolds).

III. Assistance Programs Update

Shayla Lynch, 2nd District Council Member, introduced this item. Charlie Lanter, Commissioner of Housing Advocacy and Community Development reviewed the past, present and future of rent/utility assistance programs. Prior to 2020, there was no program to provide significant rental assistance. Most programs assisted in small amounts of \$45-800 and were frequently out of funding in the first week of each month. Community Action Council's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) provided annual subsidies for heating bills each fall and crisis cutoff assistance in winter. LFUCG Community & Resident Services (CRS) offered a suite of programs including Emergency Financial Assistance to help with rent, mortgage, or utilities. He reviewed the budget for CRS for Emergency Financial Assistance for 2018-2024 including ARPA assistance. At present, CRS tracks calls monthly and the Housing Stabilization Program exhausted rent funds at the end of November 2023 and he noted \$54 million has been spent in total. Lanter reviewed eviction cases filed in the years 2018 through 2023 and he spoke about the overall impact. He mentioned additional funding from the fund balance that will allow them to serve 200-300 households. He reviewed what we can do that works such as continued investments in affordable housing, smaller targeted programs, and household level case management. Lanter mentioned eviction diversion and legal aid and he reviewed the differences between the two. There was some discussion about federal funding and what happens when funds run out. When asked about getting more vouchers, Lanter said Simms has pursued every option, so the likelihood is minimal. No action was taken on this item.

IV. Items Referred to Committee

Motion by Sevigny to remove *Source of Income Discrimination* from the list of committee referrals. Seconded by Gray. Motion passed without dissent.

Motion by Reynolds to remove *Community Risk Assessment Standards* from the list of committee referrals. Seconded by Baxter. Motion passed without dissent.

Motion by Reynolds to remove *Community and Resident Services: Evaluation of assistance programs...* from the list of committee referrals. Seconded by Gray. Motion passed without dissent.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:38 p.m.