



Social Services and Public Safety Committee

October 8, 2024

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. Vice Mayor Wu and Council Members Lynch, LeGris, and Sheehan were present as non-voting members.

I. Approval of September 17, 2024 Committee Meeting Summary

Motion by Sevigny to approve the September 17, 2024 Committee Summary. Seconded by Gray. Motion passed without dissent.

II. Villages Model Initiatives for Lexington

Roxanne Cheney, Chair of *A Caring Place*, presented the Villages Model for Lexington. She reviewed the mission statement which recognizes that loneliness is an epidemic with adverse effects on physical and mental health. The vision statement is to imagine a world where everyone feels loved. She reviewed programs they currently offer and said they serve seniors over 60 which includes people with disabilities and caregivers. She described *A Caring Place* as being like a village with community-based, nonprofit, grassroots organizations formed through a network of caring people who want to change the standard of aging. She reviewed the accomplishments and described how *A Caring Place* measures its results. She showed testimonials from 5 participants to describe the impact *A Caring Place* has had on people's lives. She said there are 250 locations of villages in the United States and Kentucky has 3 of those, with one located in Lexington. The most common structure of a village is a hub and spoke with the hub being a nonprofit and a spoke being a neighborhood group and there is potential to expand this program throughout Lexington. \$150,000 is requested for a feasibility study to help minimize the risks, optimize resources, and increase the likelihood of success.

Cheney clarified the areas included in the Bluegrass Region which is comprised of 17 counties in total. Cheney confirmed there are 40 college students who volunteer their time to this program. When asked how caregivers are supported, Cheney said we support them by engaging with them. When asked if these places are set up with hubs and spokes, Cheney said they have an executive committee they would use as a model. Speaking about the feasibility study, there was a concern that \$150,000 seems low. Kristy Stambaugh, Director of Aging and Disability Services explained villages are service-driven. As an example, Stonewall and Idle Hour (neighborhoods) would be spokes and *A Caring Place* would be a hub. There was a suggestion to put money toward resources rather than a feasibility study. Stambaugh said villages perform an assessment to find out what the needs are to be successful. The village model is unique and built by the neighborhood. The village is supposed to run itself and ask the hub for help when needed. Councilmember Lynch closed by saying *A Caring Place* is asking for help to do this. She will make a fund balance request to support the request for a feasibility study. No action was taken on this item.

III. Gun Violence Task Force Workgroup Report Out

Kendra Thompson, Council Research Analyst, presented the report out from the workgroup that was formed under the Gun Violence Task Force. She reviewed the members of the Gun Violence Task Force and the

workgroup that began meeting earlier in the year. She began the review of recommendations with the list that came out of the Community Pillars group: define gun violence as a public health crisis; recommend a month-long gun violence awareness campaign in June; and inform community partners of opportunities available to utilize and provide programs in community and neighborhood centers. The City Leaders Recommendations include: ONE Lexington when responding to gun violence incident in a councilmember's district, provide the appropriate notification of incident debrief and follow up with opportunities on how Council can get involved if appropriate; provide continued support for co-response teams and mobile crisis teams to allow for rapid response to acute behavioral health emergencies in the city and continue support for additional behavioral health specialists; expand the scope to address gun violence for all ages, not just ages 13-29; and communicate more fully with the community about the work surrounding gun violence. The final recommendation was for the creation of a new position in Social Services for a Gun Violence Program Coordinator who would work for all divisions on gun violence. \$75,000 would be requested from the FY2026 budget for the position and \$75,000 would be requested from fund balance for the implementation of the recommendations [note: \$100,000 was approved and allocated from fund balance to fund the implementation of the recommendations].

During the committee discussion, it was suggested that the coordinator and the budget requests be implemented earlier than FY2026. \$75,000 or possibly more for (gun violence) initiatives are appropriate for the Fund Balance discussion. Fund Balance would not be the appropriate place for discussing the position since that would include recurring costs. There was a suggestion that the position be in Public Safety. Social Services Commissioner, Kacy Allen-Bryant explained one category for ESR is community wellness and mental health and there have been applications related to Gun Violence under that category. There was agreement among committee members that elevating Gun Violence to a public health crisis is important, but this needs to be backed up with action and funding. There was support for the recommendations and recognition of this as a problem in the city and as such there was agreement to remove this item from the committee and implement the recommendations. Reynolds confirmed she is planning to move the entire list of recommendations to the full Council.

Motion by Fogle to approve the Gun Violence Task Force Report-Out recommendations as presented to committee and included in the committee packet. Seconded by Gray. Motion passed without dissent.

IV. Items Referred to Committee

No action was taken on this item.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:49 p.m.