

Social Services & Community Development Committee
November 20, 2012
Summary & Motions

Vice Chair Henson called the meeting to order at 11:02 AM. Committee members Ellinger, Kay, Ford, and Stinnett were present. Also present and recognized for a quorum was Blues. Absent from the meeting was Myers, Lane, Crosbie, Lawless and McChord.

Henson called on Jacob Wolbourn from the Law Department to provide legal opinion regarding meeting without a quorum.

Mr. Wolbourn stated that under Council Rules, as well as Kentucky Open Meeting regulations, the committee could meet without a quorum but they could not take any action without a quorum.

Henson stated that they just received a conflicting opinion from the Law Department that indicated that if they met without a quorum and ever took action they would need to re-hear the entire presentation. Henson recommended that they wait until there is a quorum.

9.18.12 Committee Summary

On a motion by Ellinger, seconded Blues the 10.16.12 Social Services & Community Development Committee summary was approved.

Workforce Investment & Development

Henson called on Ford, who referred the item, to introduce the topic.

Ford stated that he was interested in workforce development because it is a federal economic development program that invests in people. He stated his intent is for the Council to get a better understanding of the opportunities that may come available for Council to take bigger role. He stated that he asked Commissioner Beth Mills and Council staff Paul Schoninger to prepare a presentation on workforce activities in Fayette County.

Commissioner Mills discussed the Mayor's Training Center, which was closed in 2007. Prior to its closing in 2007 there was an inter-local agreement with Lexington Fayette Urban County Government (LFUCG) and the Bluegrass Workforce Investment Board. She stated that the inter local agreement in 1998 provided that LFUCG would receive 20% of the workforce investment area's adult allocation and 22% of the youth allocation for programs in Lexington-Fayette County. She also stated that the agreement stipulated that LFUCG was to assume all decision making authority and liability for all Workforce Investment Act monies it receives and programs it operates. Mills stated that when she was first appointed Commissioner she met with Kentucky Workforce officials and they informed her that such set asides were not permitted under current Workforce Investment Act regulations.

Mills discussed the type of programs the Mayor's Training Center offered including customized training for numerous area employers.

Paul Schoninger discussed both the 17 county Bluegrass Workforce Investment Board, and the Business & Education Network operated in conjunction with Commerce Lexington. He described the purpose, programs, budget and governance of both organizations.

Mills discussed two current Workforce Investment Act programs in Lexington-Fayette County. She described *Path to Success*, a GED, career and secondary education program for 40 high school dropouts and *LEEP* (Literacy, Education, Experience & Postsecondary Program) offered by the Community Action Council. LEEP provides employment and training for 40 youth in the Russell School and East End areas.

Mills also discussed two adult work programs that have been developed but lack funding, including a sewing cooperative for resettled refugees and a mattress/e-waste/text book recycling effort employing ex-offenders.

Mills also discussed the numerous community partners involved in the current and proposed workforce projects. She stated that it was critical for Fayette County to offer workforce development services for its job seekers and employers.

Ford addressed the unemployment rate and stated that in one census tract in the 1st District the unemployment rate was over 20%. He also discussed the closing of the Mayor's Training Center and stated that he agreed with Commissioner Mills that additional resources needed to be obtained for Fayette County as it is the economic, cultural and educational base for the central Kentucky region. He stated that he wanted to continue to discuss this item at the Committee's January meeting.

Kay addressed the need to focus emphasis on the unemployed and disadvantaged in Lexington-Fayette County. He stated that resources can and should be allocated to improve job skills and to improve the viability of area businesses.

Stinnett stated that he agreed that we need a liaison for workforce issues but that the Mayor's Training Center model was closed because our business partners did not believe it effectively and efficiently addressed their need for trained employees.

In response Mills stated that there are several models to address the need for a workforce coordinator/facilitator either within or outside LFUCG.

Stinnett asked about the percentage of training dollars that are serving residents from Fayette County. Commissioner Mills said that she met with the Workforce Investment Board and has those numbers. Stinnett said he would like to see those numbers.

Stinnett requested an inventory of workforce training partners in Fayette County along with a summary of their respective services and outcome measures of effectiveness prior to discussing the issue in January. In response Mills said that there are partners in the community that can do the job training but she thinks what has been lost is the customized job training, targeting the job training to fit the employer coming to town. Stinnett said that he thinks she is right and said it would be nice to see a position in the geared at fostering relationships with business and focused on training individuals. He requested that the committee hear a presentation on how to manage a workforce facilitator/coordinator. He also suggested that Mills request necessary resources in the FY 14 Mayor's Proposed Budget.

Henson discussed customized training needs for area employers and partnering with agencies such as OWL (Opportunity for Learning & Working) and Employment Solutions. She also agreed with Stinnett regarding using performance indicators to show effective utilization of funds.

Blues stated that current economic conditions require that we allocate federal, state and local resources to deal with the issue of high unemployment and slow economic growth. He agreed with Stinnett that he would like to see how the current providers are improving our region's economic conditions.

Mills stated that the committee might want to hear from the Bluegrass Workforce Investment Board and others offering training services at the January meeting. She reminded the Committee that at the December 4 meeting the Committee will hear an interim report from the UK students who are preparing the social services needs assessment project.

Ford stated that he would like this item left in committee and stated that at the January meeting the committee could hear from the Workforce Investment Board and others.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:35 PM.