



General Government & Social Services

February 2nd, 2016
Summary and Motions

Chair Lamb called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. All committee members were in attendance. Council Members Kay, Farmer, Stinnett were also in attendance.

I. Approval of Committee Summary

A motion was made by CM Scutchfield to approve the Committee Summary, seconded by CM Akers. The motion passed without dissent.

II. Aquatics Program Design

CM Scutchfield introduced the item and Monica Conrad, Director of Parks and Recreation, introduced Pat Hoagland with Brandstetter Carroll. Hoagland presented an overview of the City's aquatic service areas and identified growth areas of the community underserved by current aquatics facilities. He presented recommendations for improvements to the City's aquatics system, including upgrades to existing centers and the development of new centers and facilities. Hoagland also reviewed safety and regulatory improvement requirements, and costs associated with repairs and improvements.

A motion was made by CM Scutchfield to extend speaker's time to 25 minutes, seconded by CM Akers. The motion passed without dissent.

CM Gibbs inquired if there have been changes in swimming pool participation trends and if demographic info was collected for pool users. Hoagland stated that National Sporting Goods Association surveys show that swimming has consistently been the second most popular sporting activity in communities.

CM Akers asked for an itemized list of the recommended improvements and Hoagland stated that this will be provided. CM Akers inquired if the consultant recommended closing any pools. Hoagland replied that Picadome could be recommended for closure, noting that Shilito would be able to accommodate the senior population currently utilizing the Picadome pool. CM Akers inquired why there are recommendations to build an aquatics facility rather than a splash pad that would be free for the community in a low income area. Hoagland stated that splash pads are less expensive to build, but there is also a desire to maintain the ability for people to swim at the facility. Hoagland stated that the area needs more aquatics programming to improve the image of the pool and increase the participation rate.

CM Evans inquired about the proposed scenarios, and Hoagland stated there is some flexibility to change options and costs. CM Evans further stated she would like to see total revenue generated by the pools to help in their decision making.

CM F. Brown inquired if the aquatics plan is part of the Parks Master Plan being developed. Commissioner Geoff Reed stated that the aquatics plan is intended to function as a standalone plan which would be incorporated into the master plan. He further stated that there will be recommendations for the budget that would include first year projects. CM F. Brown inquired about pool attendance and Hoagland stated attendance varies tremendously based on weather and noted the previous year's decline. Hoagland stated that obsolete facilities and lack of shade are deterrents to attendance. There was discussion about the YMCA pools, and Hoagland stated that there is a strong demand for pools from local swim teams.

CM Stinnett inquired about the cost difference between splash pads and pools. Hoagland replied that pools are about 10 times the annual operating cost of splash pads. CM Stinnett inquired if they looked at ways to cut costs in existing pools and Hoagland replied that there is not a way to significantly cut costs, although improvements may generate income. CM Stinnett inquired if they still recommend a pool near the new YMCA pool opening in Hamburg. Hoagland stated that indoor pools do not meet the high demand for outdoor swimming during the summer. CM Stinnett inquired if there is a standard for how many pools are needed in a city. Hoagland stated there are currently no established standards. CM Stinnett stated there have been previous studies that recommend closing pools and past attempts at lowering fees have not been successful. He stated that there is a need for town hall meetings to discuss pools as one component of the community's recreation needs.

CM Henson stated her support for making improvements to the City's aquatics facilities, but voiced concern for building new facilities where attendance has been low. CM Henson stated that she feels it is important for all kids to learn how to swim, and thinks the city should look at incentives for lessons. She would like to see attendance tracked at city pools.

In response to a request from CM Scutchfield, Hoagland informed Council of the methods they used to collect their data from the community. CM Scutchfield noted that the existing aquatics infrastructure is aging, and that better facilities in neighboring counties likely account for low attendance at Lexington's pools.

CM Bledsoe stated her appreciation for a tiered planning approach and stated that Council needs to decide what their goals will be for citywide aquatics facilities.

Vice Mayor Kay inquired about the large costs of spray pads, and Hoagland provided more information regarding maintenance requirements. Vice Mayor Kay stated that Council needs to decide what services are necessary, and encouraged Council to consider a short-term investment in splash pads in underserved areas while they consider what larger investments to make.

CM J. Brown stated that splash pads in areas where pools have been removed the city provide a valuable service to those areas and expressed the potential benefit to low income communities. J. Brown stated he feels the City loses income to other counties who have updated facilities.

CM Stinnett inquired why the consultant did not consider updating Castlewood, noting there are not any pools in the area. Hoagland stated that there are more opportunities and capacity for expansion at Shilito. CM Stinnett inquired if they had data showing the cost-benefit relationship of adding amenities, and how those amenities increase utilization and revenue. Hoagland stated they did not have that information, but experience shows that adding more family-friendly features increases usage tremendously.

CM Moloney stated he was concerned about the cost of proposed improvements. He further stated that investing in pools can be an asset to the citizens of Lexington during economic downturns and is important for that reason.

In response to a question from CM Lamb, Hoagland stated that all pools are required to have an access lift. CM Lamb inquired if the consultant is proposing placing new pools on existing city owned property, or if land must be purchased for the facilities. Hoagland stated that, if the city does not want to purchase land, Masterson Station and Jacobson Park are two options where land is available for expansion of facilities.

III. Boards, Agencies & Commissions

CM Scutchfield introduced the item and discussed proposed improvements to the reporting process. CM Lamb stated she would like to see a draft of the suggested improvements.

CM Bledsoe noted that Louisville uses Board Match, an automated system which is user friendly to both the public and internal users. She stated that improvements should be considered for recruitment for Boards, noting that an online system could encourage younger participants as well.

Commissioner Reed reported that electronic and software solutions for Board and Committee membership are being explored. CM Lamb asked that an update on this item be presented to the Committee in April 2016.

CM Evans stated that the focus of the reporting should be on vacancies. CM Scutchfield stated that the reporting also provides for transparency, and stated that the reporting needs to be comprehensive until a software solution is implemented.

IV. Review of Ethics Ordinance

CM Evans reported that the Ethics Commission has provided a memo with recommendations and comments on proposed amendments to the Ordinance, and that the subcommittee will be meeting in February to review these recommendations.

V. EMS Service Fees

Commissioner Ford provided an update on this item, and stated that the program has been implemented as part of the Emergency Financial Assistance program.

VI. CNG Fueling Station

CM Moloney stated that the proposed RFP language is currently being reviewed by the State. CAO Hamilton confirmed this, and stated that the RFP will be issued next week.

VII. Items in Committee

In regard to the EMS service fees item, CM Henson asked Commissioner Ford if there is a way of tracking late bills for EMS, and noted that information about this program could be included with the notice. Ford stated that he would research this with Revenue and report back to CM Henson.

A motion was made by CM Henson to adjourn, seconded by CM Gibbs. The motion passed without dissent.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

D.S. 2.3.2016