



Social Services and Public Safety Committee

August 22, 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, LeGris, Sheehan, and Vice Mayor Wu were also present as non-voting members.

I. Approval of June 13, 2023 Committee Summary

Motion by Sevigny to Approve the June 13, 2023 Committee Summary. Seconded by Gray. Motion passed without dissent.

II. Lexington Noise Ordinance

Hannah Eiden, Legislative Aide to the 3rd District Council Member presented the history of Lexington's Noise Ordinance. She reviewed the current guidelines and enforcement laid out in the ordinance. She provided data on the number of noise disturbance calls and explained what areas those calls are coming from in the community. She spoke about a case study analysis that was done in other communities and the results from that study. Finally, she reviewed the next steps which include finding a funding mechanism, staffing for enforcement, and challenges with the citation process. Looking forward, some items to consider include an internal working group to investigate this further, revisit proposals from the 2011 Ordinance Task Force, explore the use of decibel readers, review the fine structure, and explore a joint enforcement between Code Enforcement and Lexington Police Department.

When asked about history and why this has failed before, Barberie explained reasons why it failed including certain neighborhoods where there was industrial noise and Council could not agree on a penalty structure. Regarding enforcement, Brian Maynard, Assistant Chief in the Lexington Police Department spoke to the investigation of cars driving down the street. He said this could be a stationary vehicle or a moving vehicle. When asked about citations being under 1% of those investigated, Maynard said he would need to look at these figures further. Speaking about red light running and the state not allowing cameras for moving violations, Maynard feels that having cameras with decibel readers to catch loud vehicles would fall under state statute. Referencing previous discussions and the issue of barking dogs, Maynard explained this goes through the Fayette County Attorney now. For the investigation, the witness would provide recorded video and work with the County Attorney. Angela Evans, Fayette County Attorney, explained her process for nuisance and quality of life concerns. When asked about enhancing the policing of noise complaints, Maynard explained the dispatch calls and the priority list. Maynard confirmed that loud noises (such as garbage trucks or HVAC units) present a quality-of-life issue and people who are bothered by these would want enforcement with teeth. Speaking about case studies, Eiden confirmed that many of the noise ordinances they researched pertained to vehicles. A recommendation from this conversation was to create a working group or subcommittee to explore decibel readers and a penalty structure. No action was taken on this item.

III. Office of Homelessness Prevention and Intervention Annual Update

Jeff Herron, Director of Office of Homelessness Prevention, and Intervention (OHPI) provided background information and said this office was established in 2014 and was designated as a Continuum of Care lead in 2015. He explained that OHPI is a coordination and planning office but does not provide direct services. Since OHPI was established, LFUCG invested \$47M in the Innovative and Sustainable Solutions Fund. He reviewed the progress for ending homelessness with the Lex Count program. He provided an update on SOPs for how LFUCG controls the homeless camps. He reviewed the 5-year strategic plan for 2021 to 2025 and said 19 out of 55 recommendations have been completed. Moving forward OHPI will work toward completion of recommended strategies. He closed his presentation by reviewing the goals of the 5-year strategic plan. Those goals include community outreach & engagement, preventing homelessness, policy and advocacy, funding sources, and expanding permanent supportive housing.

Speaking about locations of homeless encampments, Herron pointed out they are all over the city and in a variety of locations. Herron spoke about opportunities for continuum of care, and he encouraged outreach. When asked about those who choose to live this way and don't want assistance, Herron said there are 3 teams, and "no" might be heard a lot so we need to address what we can do for people who are making decisions against their best interest. Explaining an encampment, Herron said this is an attempt to establish a residence with belongings and a structure for shelter. When asked about the Lex Count chart and how much of *Community Action Council* is included in this, Herron said that is a separate count. He said a requirement for continuum of care is to do a shelter and un-shelter count. When asked about repeats, Herron said there are surveys that help us understand this better. The data is looked at from an aggregate level and they don't have the staff to do this level of analysis. Speaking about trends, Herron explained the decrease from 2017 to 2018 and said there were transitional housing programs that were not included. Addressing whether this trend is nationwide, Herron mentioned that other cities are seeing an increase. To explain the breakdowns of the count, Herron said household would include families with children. When asked about the number in each district and what the count looks like not using HUD, Herron said the chart indicates these numbers include one night during the year when the count took place. When asked if the count differentiates citizen versus non-citizen, Herron said they don't track this. Most shelters, street outreach, or housing programs accept anyone. No action was taken on this item.

IV. Items Referred to Committee

Motion by Ellinger to remove *Improve Enforcement of Traffic Laws* from the list of items referred to committee. Seconded by Baxter. Motion passed without dissent.

Motion by Gray to combine *Code Enforcement items (items 12-19)* on the list of items referred to committee. Seconded by Sevigny. Motion passed without dissent.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:04 p.m.