Social Services and Public Safety Committee

January 13, 2026

Summary and Motions

Chair Jennifer Reynolds called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Committee Members Vice Mayor Dan Wu, Council Members Chuck Ellinger, Tyler Morton, Shayla Lynch, Lisa Higgins-Hord, Joseph Hale, Amy Beasley, Whitney Elliott Baxter, and Hilary Boone were present. Council Members Emma Curtis and Dave Sevigny were present as non-voting members.

I. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 14, 2025 COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

Motion by Ellinger for approval of the October 14, 2025 Committee Meeting Summary. Seconded by Higgins-Hord. Motion passed without dissent.

II. CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTION REQUIREMENTS

Chair Reynolds introduced the item and explained that this work stemmed from a fatal carbon monoxide poisoning incident in her district that resulted in one death and eleven hospitalizations, prompting a review of local regulations. She said a cross-departmental working group, including Fire, Public Safety, Code Enforcement, Housing, and Law, was convened to evaluate potential regulatory changes, and this presentation reflected the outcome of that work.

Battalion Chief and Fire Marshal Jeff Johnson noted that carbon monoxide (CO) is a long-recognized life-safety hazard, with more than 400 deaths and 100,000 emergency room visits nationwide in 2025. Locally, Lexington reported approximately 30 cases and one fatality last year. Chief Johnson explained that since 2011, building codes have required CO detection in new construction and major remodels, but existing structures built before 2011 are not covered, creating a regulatory gap. The proposed approach adopts International Fire Code (IFC) Section 1103.9, which requires CO detection in existing structures.

Two ordinances were presented:

- Section 9-2.1 establishes safety standards for CO detection, including the installation of CO detectors in existing commercial structures.
- Amendment to Section 12-1(C) establishes the required standards for CO detection, including the installation of CO detectors in existing single and two-family dwellings.

The purpose of these requirements is to reduce preventable injuries and deaths from CO poisoning by requiring CO detection in existing residential and commercial buildings where CO sources are present (fuel-burning fireplaces, space heaters, furnaces, stoves, water heaters, or attached garages). These ordinances close a safety gap for older buildings, align Lexington with International Fire Code standards, and address a documented, preventable public health risk with a low-cost, high-impact solution.

Enforcement would follow existing processes:

- The Fire Marshal's office would enforce Section 9-2.1, which includes receiving notice through an order to remedy and a fire marshal order. The section also outlines an appeal process.
- Code Enforcement will identify CO hazards during routine inspections when invited in by a resident. Failure to comply results in punitive citations

During the discussion, members clarified the applicability to specific occupancies, placement guidance, homeowner responsibility, and coordination with existing smoke and CO alarm assistance programs. Chief Johnson noted that the Fire Department can currently provide limited CO alarms upon request, subject to funding availability.

Motion by Morton to approve the draft language for Sections 9-2.1 and 12-1(C) [as presented to the Social Services & Public Safety Committee on January 13, 2026]. Seconded by Hale. Motion passed without dissent. [Note from Law Department: Language was cleaned up in Section 12-1(C) under PM-705.1, removing a reference to the International Residential Code, as the Kentucky Residential Code establishes building code requirements for single-family and two-family dwelling units in Kentucky – this is a non-material change]

III. STREET OUTREACH AND HOMELESS ENCAMPMENT RESPONSE

Jeff Herron, Homelessness Prevention Manager, delivered the presentation. Herron explained that street outreach provides mobile, community-based services for individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness, particularly those least likely to seek help on their own. Street outreach is a core component of effective homeless response systems, providing mobile, trauma-informed engagement to connect unsheltered individuals with shelter, housing, healthcare, treatment, basic needs, employment, education, and benefits—particularly for those least likely to seek help independently.

He outlined the evolution of Lexington's outreach program:

- 2016-2019 Hope Center Pilot: First-touch outreach model ($75,000 annually).
- 2019-2023 Community Action Council Assertive Outreach: Expanded case management and pandemic response ($280,000 annually),
- 2023-Present Hope Center Progressive Outreach: Expanded hours and clinical support (approximately $316,000 annually).

Since August 1, 2023, the Hope Center has made over 800 unique contacts, with nearly 30% resulting in positive housing outcomes. Approximately 32% of participants enrolled in intensive case management, and 63% of those exited to permanent housing. The addition of an Encampment Coordinator (hired in September) has improved coordination, efficiency, oversight, and case-specific responses.

Looking ahead, the downtown outreach team will include weekend coverage and enhanced clinical support. The Hope Center contract expires in July 2026, and an RFP will be issued in spring 2026 to rebid services, informed by the Encampment Coordinator and downtown expansion data. A Mayor's Task Force on homelessness is also developing recommendations for continued system improvements.

In response to questions, Herron stated that an ideal future model would include 24/7 outreach coverage, which would require approximately four additional full-time staff and increase annual costs from roughly $500,000 to $800,000. The initial downtown service area will cover the downtown entertainment district and surrounding blocks, with flexible boundaries extending roughly to Third Street, the north end of UK's campus, and toward the convention center. Council members acknowledged successful interdepartmental coordination, including the cleanup of the Russell Cave Road encampment. The Chair noted the item may be returned for future discussion. No action was taken on this item.

IV. AUDREY GREVIOUS CENTER UPDATE

Felicia Lindsay, Principal of Audrey Grevious Center (AGC), provided the update. Principal Lindsay explained that AGC is a public-school treatment and education program serving Fayette County youth

ages 12–18 (up to 21 for qualifying special education services). It is designed for young people involved in the juvenile justice system and with significant social/emotional needs, enabling them to remain in the community. AGC provides individualized and group counseling, clinical assessments, treatment planning, and collaborative treatment team meetings that include families, as well as academic instruction aligned with Board of Education guidelines. The treatment model emphasizes trauma-informed and cognitive/behavioral therapies, with students receiving daily group therapy and individual support. Grant funding supported the creation of a calming room, and a $10,000 grant was used to update the school library.

The presentation highlighted extensive community partnerships supporting employment, mentoring, literacy, and enrichment, as well as student and parent testimonials demonstrating improved attendance, behavior, academic progress, and successful transitions back to A1 district schools, with continued support from a transition specialist. Enrollment and outcome data showed that students with IEPs, 504 plans, English language learners, and gifted/talented students have recovered multiple credits toward graduation since August. Discipline data reflected a reduction in incidents through therapeutic interventions and alternatives to suspension, and academic data showed growth in reading and math.

Kacy Allen-Bryant, Commissioner of Social Services, provided historical context, noting the program's origins as a day treatment model and its evolution into the current partnership, in which FCPS provides education and therapeutic services while LFUCG provides infrastructure and operational support. Principal Lindsay emphasized that AGC is open to additional community partnerships and welcomes mentors and organizations interested in supporting students. No action was taken on this item.

V. ANNUAL REVIEW OF COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEMS

No items were removed from the committee.

The meeting adjourned at 2:14 p.m.