

Lexington- Fayette Urban County Government Council Meeting

Lexington, Kentucky July 3, 2025

The Council of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government, Kentucky convened in regular session on July 3, 2025 at 5:03 p.m. Present were Mayor Gorton in the chair presiding, and the following members of the Council: Curtis, Ellinger, Elliott Baxter, Gray, Hale, LeGris, Morton, Reynolds, Sevigny, Sheehan, Wu, Beasley, Boone, and Brown. Absent was Council Member Lynch.

The reading of the Minutes of the previous meeting was waived.

Ordinances No. 049-2025 through 051-2025, inclusive, and Resolutions No. 305-2025 through 362-2025, inclusive, were reported as having been signed and published and ordered to record.

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The Invocation was given by Mr. Sevigny.

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Upon motion by Vice Mayor Wu, seconded by Ms. Reynolds, and approved by unanimous vote, a presentation from CivicLex regarding a Charter Review was placed on the docket after the conclusion of resolutions.

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The following people spoke in opposition to the Memorandum of Understanding between UK ROTC and Lexington- Fayette Urban County Government, which was on the docket for second reading: Dave Cooper, Dist. 1; Deana Mullins, Dist. 6; Chuck Eddy, Dist. 4; and Anita Courtney, Dist. 3.

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The following ordinances received second reading. Upon motion by Mr. Ellinger, and seconded by Ms. Curtis, the ordinances were approved by the following vote:

Aye: Curtis, Ellinger, Elliott Baxter, Gray, Hale, -----14
LeGris, Morton, Reynolds, Sevigny,
Sheehan, Wu, Beasley, Boone, Brown

Nay: -----0

An Ordinance amending certain of the Budgets of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government to provide funds for purchase orders and pre-paid expenses rolling

from FY 2025 into FY 2026, and appropriating and re-appropriating funds, Schedule No. 2.

An Ordinance amending certain of the Budgets of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government to reflect current requirements for municipal expenditures, and appropriating and re-appropriating funds, FY 2026 Schedule No. 1.

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A Resolution authorizing and directing the Mayor, on behalf of the Urban County Government, to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Ky. Army ROTC, for the use of Hisle Farm Park for ROTC Training, at no cost to the government was on the docket for second reading.

Vice Mayor Wu asked for an update regarding the discussions to find an alternative training location and asked what the intentions were of the University of Kentucky's ROTC. Commissioner Chris Ford, Dept. of General Services, responded.

Mr. Sevigny shared his concerns with holding the training exercises in the public park.

Ms. Sheehan stated she would recuse.

Ms. Curtis concurred with Mr. Sevigny.

Vice Mayor Wu asked about the length of time in the agreement and about the possibility of future agreements. Comm. Ford responded, remarking that the City has had the agreement in place for nearly a decade and noted that the ROTC would likely need the entire academic year to solidify a new training option through negotiations. Vice Mayor Wu commented that it was his belief that tradition does not dictate the future.

Vice Mayor Wu motioned to amend the resolution to shorten the length of the agreement from one year to 6 months. The motion was seconded by Mr. Morton.

Mr. Ellinger asked if the new length of time would be enough to allow the group to find an alternative option. Comm. Ford responded that he was not optimistic that it would.

Ms. Beasley asked when the previous MOU expired. Comm. Ford Responded.

Mr. Morton stated he concurred with those who spoke in opposition to the agreement but also shared concerns with the ROTC's ability to find alternative plans in the diminished timeframe. He asked Vice Mayor Wu about the deadline of the proposed amendment. Vice Mayor Wu responded that the amended timeframe would allow park

usage for 6 months, which he felt was ample time to secure alternative plans. Mr. Morton asked about the timeline should the item fail to pass. Comm. Ford responded.

Ms. Curtis asked a procedural question and then about the existing relationship between the Div. of Parks and Recreation and the ROTC. Comm. Ford responded.

Mr. Hale asked when the academic school year ends and asked if that date would be amenable. Comm. Ford responded.

Vice Mayor Wu stated he appreciated the effort behind the agreement but believed the agreement concerned whether military training should be in public parks. He stated he was offering the amendment as an alternative to disapproving the resolution in its entirety due to the nearing start of the school semester.

The motion to amend passed by majority vote (Ms. Sheehan recused).

A Resolution authorizing and directing the Mayor, on behalf of the Urban County Government, to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Ky. Army ROTC, for the use of Hisle Farm Park for ROTC Training, at no cost to the government, as amended, received a new first reading.

Upon motion by Vice Mayor Wu, seconded by Ms. Elliott Baxter, and approved by majority vote (Ms. Gray and Ms. Curtis voted no, Ms. Sheehan recused), the rules were suspended and the resolution received second reading.

Upon motion by Ms. LeGris, and seconded by Vice Mayor Wu, the resolution failed by the following vote:

Aye: Ellinger, Elliott Baxter, LeGris, -----7
Reynolds, Wu, Boone, Brown

Nay: Curtis, Gray, Hale, Morton, Sevigny, -----6
Beasley

Recuse: Sheehan

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A motion was made by Mr. Morton to reconsider a Resolution authorizing and directing the Mayor, on behalf of the Urban County Government, to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Ky. Army ROTC, for the use of Hisle Farm Park for ROTC Training, at no cost to the government, as amended. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brown.

Mr. Brown urged his colleagues to reconsider the item.

Ms. Reynolds stated she did not see the need to reconsider the item.

Ms. Gray stated she would not support the motion.

Ms. Curtis stated she would not support the motion.

Mr. Morton asked about the next steps for the ROTC. Comm. Ford responded.

Mr. Hale stated his reasoning behind his previous vote but expressed support for the ROTC to find an alternative.

Vice Mayor Wu clarified that the item now being reconsidered is the amended resolution. Mayor Gorton agreed.

Mr. Hale asked if he was able to amend the item at this point. Comm. Dave Barberie, Dept. of Law, responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Sevigny asked for the reason to reconsider, stating he believed the motion needed reason grounded in the parliamentary process. Comm. Barberie responded.

The motion to reconsider a Resolution authorizing and directing the Mayor, on behalf of the Urban County Government, to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Ky. Army ROTC, for the use of Hisle Farm Park for ROTC Training, at no cost to the government, as amended passed by majority vote (Ms. Curtis, Ms. Gray, Mr. Sevigny, Vice Mayor Wu, and Ms. Beasley voted no).

Mr. Morton motioned to postpone the item until August 14, 2025. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sevigny.

Vice Mayor Wu stated he would not support the motion.

Ms. LeGris stated she too would not support the motion.

Mr. Morton shared his reason to postpone.

The motion to postpone the item until August 14, 2025 failed by the following vote:

Aye: Ellinger, Morton, Sevigny -----3

Nay: Curtis, Elliott Baxter, Gray, Hale, -----10
LeGris, Reynolds, Wu, Beasley,
Boone, Brown

Recuse: Sheehan

A motion was made by Vice Mayor Wu to suspend the rules and give the resolution a second reading. The motion was seconded by Mr. Ellinger and approved by majority vote (Ms. Sheehan recused). Comm. Barberie stated there was no need to make the

motion or to have a second reading done given the item has already been read multiple times.

Upon motion by Vice Mayor Wu, and seconded by Ms. Elliott Baxter, the resolution was approved as amended by the following vote:

Aye: Ellinger, Elliott Baxter, Hale, LeGris, -----8
Reynolds, Wu, Boone, Brown

Nay: Curtis, Gray, Morton, Sevigny, Beasley -----5

Recuse: Sheehan

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Upon motion by Ms. Elliott Baxter, and seconded by Ms. Curtis and approved by unanimous vote, a Resolution authorizing and directing the Mayor, on behalf of the Urban County Government, to execute an Agreement related to Council Capital Project Expenditure Funds with the Friends of the Parks in Fayette County, Inc. (\$7,500), for the Office of the Urban County Council, at a cost not to exceed the sum stated received first reading.

Upon motion by Ms. Elliott Baxter, seconded by Ms. Curtis, and approved by unanimous vote, the rules were suspended and the resolution received second reading.

Upon motion by Ms. LeGris, and seconded by Vice Mayor Wu, the resolution was approved by the following vote:

Aye: Curtis, Ellinger, Elliott Baxter, Gray, -----14
Hale, LeGris, Morton, Reynolds,
Sevigny, Sheehan, Wu, Beasley,
Boone, Brown

Nay: -----0

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At 6:16 p.m. Mayor Gorton departed the meeting, and Vice Mayor Wu assumed the chair.

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A presentation regarding the review of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government Charter was given by CivicLex Dir. Richard Young. He outlined the process, noting it sought to acquire three topics of focus, proposed compensation for participants, and gave a timeline for the project. He shared outside fundings sources and asked for Council support.

Mr. Morton remarked on the innovative approach encouraging participation and asked what other models, if any, CivicLex had analyzed. CivicLex Deputy Dir. Kit Anderson responded. Mr. Morton asked why the project limited the topics to three items, opposed to a comprehensive review of the Charter. Mr. Young responded. Mr. Morton inquired about the need for future reviews of the Charter. Mr. Young responded. Mr. Morton then asked about the educational component of the project, and who would be responsible for that. Ms. Anderson responded.

Ms. LeGris thanked them for their efforts and remarked that she hoped there would be ample public engagement and enrichment. She then asked about their funding source. Mr. Young responded.

Ms. Sheehan complimented CivicLex on their work and expressed her enthusiasm for the undertaking and her belief that the Council remain neutral throughout the process. She stated she was in support of regular reviews of the Charter.

Ms. Elliott Baxter thanked them for their work and shared that she and her colleagues had their own concerns regarding the Charter prior to being approached by CivicLex. She stressed the need for Council to be prepared for unforeseen outcomes of the review and conveyed her enthusiasm for the project.

Vice Mayor Wu stated his support for the experiment, his desire for the Council to remain neutral, and his hope that the endeavor is a success.

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Mr. Brown placed an item in the Budget, Finance, and Economic Development Committee regarding the impact of federal policies.

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Ms. Gray thanked Mr. Ellinger for hosting the Summer Senior Intern Program this year, noting her mother was in attendance. She also wished her mother a Happy Birthday and thanked Dir. Kristy Stambaugh, Div. of Aging and Disability Services, for her assistance with the program.

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Mr. Morton announced the Social Services and Public Safety Committee would be holding a special meeting on Tuesday, August 26, 2025, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. to gain public input on an upcoming ordinance which seeks to regulate organizations that

aid in recovery from addiction. He thanked Ms. Reynolds for her efforts to schedule the meeting.

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Ms. Sheehan announced that she and Mr. Sevigny would be forming a work group to discuss the future of solar power in Lexington. She noted Mr. Boone and Mr. Morton volunteered to join the group, and they would be seeking others to join. She also invited the community to participate in feedback sessions hosted by A Caring Place to discuss the village model of care and noted the next session would be held on July 14, 2025 at the Senior Center on Life Lane. She also shared that CivicLex would be hosting a public field day Saturday, July 5, 2025, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at Castlewood Park. Lastly, she reminded everyone that the applications were still open for the Veteran Banner Program.

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Ms. Curtis spoke about the Fourth of July and the anxiety surrounding the Holiday due to the recent changes in the Federal government. She spoke in opposition to the Federal Budget, the “Big Beautiful Bill,” and expressed concern for the negative impact the bill would have on communities.

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Seeing no objection, Vice Mayor Wu declared the meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

Clerk of the Urban County Council