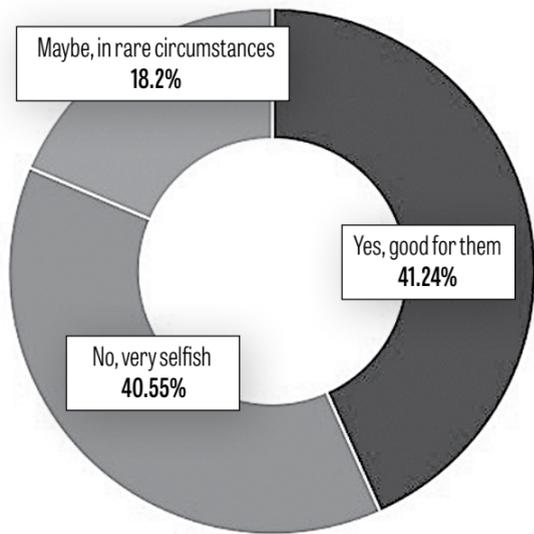


ONLINE POLL:
Should teachers call in sick in order to participate in political protests?



This poll reflects the opinions of 435 respondents. Visit www.state-journal.com to take part in today's poll.

EDITORIAL

Keep inclusion conversation going

Two recurring themes are making headlines in the capital city this week — compassion and inclusion.

The conversation, which drew about 100 locals to the Paul Sawyer Public Library on Sunday, centered around how to make Frankfort and Franklin County a more compassionate city. At Wednesday's On the Table event, also at the library, folks of all ages, backgrounds and ethnicities will brainstorm ways to foster a more cohesive sense of belonging in our city and county to make it more welcoming and inclusive.

Sponsored by the Franklin County InterFaith Council and the Frankfort Chapter of the United Nations Association, at Sunday's event participants specified the ways compassion is already being shown in the community (volunteers, organizations, random acts of kindness); their dreams for growing compassion (discussion on social media, student-led initiatives in schools, a communications network for volunteer opportunities); and next steps (attend meetings, welcome new residents, get out of comfort zone).

That discussion on how to grow, cultivate and spread compassion is the perfect appetizer for Wednesday's all-day On the Table conversation, which the public is invited to attend in 90-minute sessions from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the library.

According to organizers the Franklin County Community Fund and Friends of the Paul Sawyer Public Library, which are hoping to draw more than 1,000 residents, discussions will involve four major topics, which were identified at last year's event:

- ▶ How do we encourage more civic involvement in neighborhoods, schools, community boards and other organizations?
- ▶ How do we enhance and promote what makes our community special?
- ▶ How do we make Frankfort a college town?
- ▶ How do we make Frankfort/Franklin County a more child- and family-friendly community?

It's no coincidence that compassion and inclusion go hand-in-hand. We commend organizers of both events for seeking public input on two critical issues that will help define who we are. We also encourage residents to take time out of their day on Wednesday to make their voices heard.

For more information about On the Table, visit www.bgcf.org/onthetable.

Public part of 2nd Street project

In 2017, the City of Frankfort applied for and, in 2018, was awarded a U.S. Department of Transportation grant from the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program.

The TIGER grant application identified the Second Street corridor as the focus of anticipated improvements. Specifically, the limits of the project are on West Second Street from Taylor Avenue to Capital Avenue and then on Capital Avenue across the river to the East Main Street intersection.



Chuck Knowles
Guest columnist

So how did we get to this point in time where a consultant has recently started work to design the anticipated improvements and conduct an environmental assessment? You have to go back seven years to when a process started to identify and prioritize various improvements in the area between the commonwealth's Capitol and the core of downtown Frankfort. This process, from the very beginning, involved a wide variety of stakeholders and numerous opportunities for "public engagement." It was during this process that, prior to submitting an application for a TIGER grant, the conceptual plan for the West Second Street corridor was developed.

In 2012, the city received a technical assistance grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to identify improvements in the capital city that would meet several objectives. During 2012 and 2013, a multidisciplinary core team was created, focus groups for varied interests were conducted, and a public workshop was held. The results of this process were presented in a study report entitled "Greening America's Capitals — Second Street Corridor, Frankfort Kentucky." This report can be found on the City of Frankfort website. You are encouraged to review this report to learn more about the planned improvements for West Second Street and Capital Avenue.

Please keep in mind that these planned improvements are conceptual in nature and may be necessarily altered due to engineering, environmental and budgetary factors. In early 2014, there was another "public engagement" opportunity. A public meeting was held to prioritize the many improvements identified in the Greening America's Capitals report.

The results of this entire process, including the numerous opportunities for "public engagement," served as the basis for the City's TIGER grant applications in 2014, 2015 and 2016, which were unsuccessful. It was in 2017 that the city submitted its successful, \$7.99 million TIGER grant application.

So, where are we now? Last

month, the Frankfort City Commission approved two documents — the TIGER grant agreement between the city and the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, which allows the city to be reimbursed for eligible expenses up to the \$7.99 million, and the agreement between the city and Strand Associates of Lexington, which provides for project preliminary engineering and environmental assessment work. During this phase of the project as design details are developed, there will still be several "public engagement" opportunities, including three days of stakeholder meetings, a public meeting and a public presentation at a future city commission meeting.

As just presented above, the TIGER project is not in its formative stages. It is, in its current form, the result of many years of professional and public involvement. Our goal is to keep those who are interested in this project up-to-date on project status and opportunities. We have a growing stakeholder list that will be used to share periodic e-mail updates. If interested, please contact us at cknowles@frankfort.ky.gov and provide an e-mail address. You are also encouraged to visit the project website at www.frankfort.ky.gov/TIGER.

Chuck Knowles is the TIGER grant project manager for the city of Frankfort. He can be reached at cknowles@frankfort.ky.gov.



LETTER

HELP SCHOOLS FILL VOID LEFT BY FPB

Dear editor,
Our letter is in response to Franklin County Schools' request to the Frankfort Plant Board at its December board meeting to cover the cost of six water bottle filling stations for the two high schools as part of FPB's "Frankfort on Tap" initiative promoting health and environmentalism.

Who doesn't drink from a refillable water bottle today? A huge percentage of the population does. You don't have to be a hard-core environmentalist to know the rewards of using a refillable bottle. Maybe yours sports your favorite team logo or your initial or the date you got married. Or maybe you like

yours cold, so it's insulated. Whatever the reason, they are popular.

No wonder the four high school students who are on the Superintendent's Advisory Committee came up with the idea to install this type of refilling station in the high schools. How cool is that!

I am sure these students have the facts to back up the cost and savings associated with these six stations. The pollution produced by plastic — water/drink bottles in particular — is filling our landfills and our waterways. Let's hope that this next generation is taking serious the plight of Planet Earth and the role of PLASTICS!

And let's not forget about the health benefits of encouraging our youth to drink water rather than sugary soft drinks or sport

drinks. Kentucky's rank is third highest in the nation for obesity among high school students. Twenty percent of all high school students are considered obese. (Source: www.stateofobesity.org)

We have pledged our support to Mr. Kopp by making a donation toward the purchase of these stations. We want to encourage others in Franklin County to support the great ideas of our youth by pledging any amount toward the purchase of the six bottle filling stations. The FCS Administration Office can be reached at (502) 695-6700 or by mail at 190 Kings Daughter Drive, Bldg 300, Frankfort KY 40601.

Let's show our support.
Scott and Cindy Hawkins Hampton Frankfort

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