

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR BRIAN WORRELL, GABRIELA COLETTA ZAPATA,
RUTHZEE LOUIJEUNE, DURKAN, FITZGERALD, FLYNN, MEJIA, MURPHY,
PEPÉN AND SANTANA



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS AND OUTLINING BEST PRACTICES FOR CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS

WHEREAS, The Mayor, Council, and City rely heavily on the organizing strength of Boston’s network of civic associations to engage residents, build community, and provide feedback on neighborhood developments and public policies; *and*

WHEREAS, Civic associations provide critical platforms for community engagement, amplifying resident voices, especially those who are traditionally underrepresented; *and*

WHEREAS, Many civic associations operate with volunteer support and minimal resources, relying on out-of-pocket costs for essential operations such as printing, website creation, virtual meeting technology, and outreach; *and*

WHEREAS, Unequal access to resources, including technology and language services, creates disparities among civic associations, particularly in historically disinvested neighborhoods; *and*

WHEREAS, Providing technical assistance, targeted financial support, and capacity-building opportunities will help civic associations operate effectively, increase engagement, and foster equitable community representation; **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to explore providing technical assistance and targeted funding for civic associations, including resources for website development, social media management, hybrid meeting technology, translation services, and outreach efforts; **AND, BE IT FURTHER**

ORDERED: That the hearing examines best practices to improve operations, diversify meeting topics to include schools, climate justice, and community-building activities, and increase representation from renters, younger residents, and underrepresented voices. Additionally, the City will consider creating a centralized digital platform to share information on civic associations, facilitate hybrid meetings, improve communication, and support collaboration. The discussion will address barriers to equity, explore phased pilot programs to measure outcomes, and assess third-party funding management models to avoid conflicts of interest while ensuring

equitable resource distribution. Representatives from the Office of Neighborhood Services, Civic Organizing, the Department of Language and Communication Access, and other relevant City departments, along with civic association leaders and stakeholders, will be invited to testify and provide recommendations.

Filed on: Jan. 3, 2025