



## CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

### RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE FULL DISBURSEMENT OF UNSPENT APPROPRIATIONS FOR PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING FROM FISCAL YEARS 2023 TO 2025

- WHEREAS,* In December 2020, the City Council passed an initial order for an amendment to the Boston City Charter seeking to establish a binding participatory budgeting process funded by “no less than half of one percent (0.5%) of the proposed annual operating budget by Fiscal Year 2024, increasing to no less than 1% by Fiscal Year 2029,” but this provision was not included in the final order passed by the City Council in June 2021 following a review by the Municipal Law Unit of the Office of the Attorney General for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; *and*
- WHEREAS,* Although the charter amendment language that appeared on the November 2021 ballot did not include a mandated funding allocation, the identified percentages remained a stated goal discussed by Councilors and advocates; *and*
- WHEREAS,* Over 50 community, labor, and faith organizations endorsed the proposed charter amendment to empower the City Council with equal budgetary discretion as well as to establish a citywide, binding participatory budgeting process by fiscal year 2024 (FY24), and the Board of Election Commissioners certified the November 2021 municipal election results to report that the binding charter amendment of Ballot Question 1 received 82,342 votes in support (67.4 percent); *and*
- WHEREAS,* Since adoption of the charter amendment, hundreds of residents have called on the Boston City Council and the Mayor over the past two budget cycles to provide meaningful funding for a robust participatory budgeting process; *and*
- WHEREAS,* Increased participatory budgeting funds could enable further investments to be disbursed for up to fifteen projects submitted by Boston residents, to be voted on in early 2025, which target areas such as economic development, affordable housing, community health, transit safety and mobility, environmental initiatives, neighborhood quality of life, youth jobs, recreational activities; *and*
- WHEREAS,* The FY22 adopted budget included a \$1 million non-personnel appropriation for participatory budgeting; the FY23 adopted budget included an overall \$2 million for participatory budgeting which was transferred to the Special Revenue Fund; the FY24 adopted budget included a \$1.75 million special appropriation for participatory budgeting; and the FY25 adopted budget includes approximately \$1.4 million in special appropriations for participatory budgeting; *and*

*WHEREAS,* Chapter 2 of the Ordinances of 2023, passed in February 2023, established the Office of Participatory Budgeting and provided that “The Office can make payments to support multi-year projects in a special revenue fund and can accept and expend additional grant funds as they are awarded”; *and*

*WHEREAS,* The Mayor announced in May 2024 that the participatory budgeting process would have \$2 million disbursed to projects in 2024, despite the cumulative appropriations amounting to approximately \$5 million when accounting for the FY23 funds transferred to Special Revenue Fund and special appropriations of \$1.75 million in FY24 and \$1.4 million in FY25; *and*

*WHEREAS,* The first round of participatory budgeting projects will be voted on in early 2025;  
*NOW, THEREFORE BE IT*

*RESOLVED:* That the Boston City Council supports the full disbursement of unspent appropriations for participatory budgeting from fiscal years 2023, 2024, and 2025, to support projects funded in the upcoming round of participatory budgeting;  
*AND, BE IT FURTHER*

*RESOLVED:* That the Boston City Council supports the use of the full amount of available appropriations to be allocated for participatory budgeting each fiscal year.

Filed on: December 9, 2024