



BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

Committee on Government Operations
Gabriela Coletta Zapata, Chair

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REPORT OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

October 2, 2024

Dear Councilors,

The Committee on Government Operations was referred the following docket for consideration:

Docket #1162, Message and order for your approval an Order amending City of Boston Code, Ordinances, Chapter XV, Section 15-11.1, regarding Black Male Advancement for Equity and Welfare. Since its establishment in 2021, the Black Men and Boys Commission has sought to study the social conditions of the city's Black men and boys, develop strategies to remedy or assist in remedying serious adversities, and recommend courses of action to create equal opportunity for generations of Black men and boys in the City of Boston.

This matter was sponsored by Mayor Michelle Wu and referred to the Committee on August 7, 2024.

Summary of Legislation

Docket #1162, amends **Chapter 15, Section 11** of the City of Boston Code, Ordinances (the Code) by revising current language relevant to the Commission on Black Men and Boys (the Commission) and adding language to codify the Office of Black Male Advancement (the Office).

The Commission consists of twenty-one members appointed by the Mayor, with youth members included in the membership. The members serve staggered terms to ensure continuity and expertise on issues related to Black men and boys. The Commission is tasked with advising the Mayor on matters concerning Black Men and Boys, monitoring and advising City agencies and departments, designing projects and programs to promote equity, and collaborating with other agencies on issues of concern to Black men and boys. The Office, while not yet codified, works in collaboration with various city departments to enhance representation and access to services for Black men and boys at all levels of government.

The proposed Ordinance amends the Commission's duties (**Chapter 15, Section 11.3**), with respect to collaboration, matters of the Commission's concern, and monthly meetings. The proposed Ordinance, includes language to ensure that the Commission will work in collaboration with other City departments and agencies; revises matters of the Commission's concern to include equity and racial justice, economic opportunity and worker empowerment, education and youth advancement, affordable housing and pathways to homeownership, public health and wellness, fatherhood and families, community safety and returning citizens, financial empowerment and more and includes provisions to require the Commission hold regular meetings following the first year of its existence.

The proposed Ordinance adds a new section (**Chapter 15 Section 11.4**), establishing the Office of Black Male Advancement and describing the Offices' Purpose, Powers and Duties and Reporting requirements. The Office, under the charge of the Executive Director, will have the powers and duties necessary to fulfill the mission of the Commission. The Office will conduct research, collect data, and report on the progress of initiatives aimed at addressing the challenges faced by Black males in the city.

Matters Discussed at the Working Session



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The following representatives of the Commission on Black Men and Boys and the Office of Black Male Advancement attended the working session: Frank Farrow, Executive Director of the Office of Black Male Advancement; Tito Jackson, Chair of the Black Men and Boys Commission; Maddrey Goode, Chief of Staff of the Office of Black Male Advancement; and Brandon Miles, Policy and Research Manager of the Office of Black Male Advancement.

During the working session, the Chair reviewed the legislative progression of **Chapter 15, Section 11** of and the language of **Docket #1162**, as filed. Councilors expressed their support for passing this Ordinance and officially codifying the Office. Councilors and the invited representatives of the Office discussed the annual report requirements, clarifying that the following passage of this Ordinance, the annual report the Council receives from the Commission will encompass a report from the Office as described in the proposed Ordinance. Councilors discussed the importance of considering compensation for the labor and time commission members give to the Commission work. With regard to the proposed Ordinance, Councilors discussed the potential for striking the current compensation provision and including one that would compensate Commission members. Councilors expressed support for reviewing compensation language relevant to the Reparations Task Force and the Human Rights Commission to potentially use as a model for compensation language to be included in the proposed Ordinance.

Summary of Amendments

The original Ordinance as filed, was amended to include the following provision in a new draft under **15-11.2 ‘Organization’** clause ‘e.’ The following provision provides potential compensation for Commission members in the form of a stipend to be determined by the Mayor, by striking the current language and inserting the following:

“The members of the Commission will receive stipends as determined by the Mayor commensurate with their duties and/or expenses.”

Committee Chair Recommended Action

As Chair of the Committee on Government Operations I recommend moving the listed docket from the Committee to the full Council for discussion and formal action. At this time, my recommendation to the full Council will be that this matter **OUGHT TO PASS IN A NEW DRAFT**.

Gabriela Coletta Zapata, Chair
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