



BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

Committee on Public Safety and Criminal Justice

Michael Flaherty, *Chair*

REPORT OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

February 17, 2022

Dear Councilors:

The Committee on Public Safety and Criminal Justice was referred the following dockets for consideration:

Docket #0159, message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of Twenty-Four Million One Hundred Fifty Four Thousand Five Hundred Eighteen Dollars and Eighty Five Cents (\$24,154,518.85) in the form of a grant, for the Federal FY 2020 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant, awarded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to be administered by the Fire Department. The grant will fund training for a class of 85 recruits at the BFD Training Academy and reimbursement for their salaries for 36 months.

Docket #0161, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of Two Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$2,500,000.00) in the form of a grant for the FY2021 National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative, awarded by the United States Department of Justice to be administered by the Police Department.

Docket #0162, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of Five Hundred Twenty Seven Thousand Five Hundred Eighty Six Dollars (527,586.00) in the form of grant, for the FY21 Connected and Protect, awarded by the United States Department of Justice to be administered by the Boston Police Department. The grant will fund clinicians-directed project coordinator, community partnerships for translation and outreach and staff cost for Section 12 activities carried out by the Boston Emergency Services Team in partnership with the BPD Street Outreach Unit.

Docket #0163, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of Four Hundred Ninety One Thousand Three Hundred Sixteen Dollar (491,316.00) in the form of a grant, for First Responders-Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act Cooperative Agreement, awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to be administered by the Fire Department. The grant will fund a collaborative effort between the Boston Fire Department First Responders, the Mayor's Office of Recovery Services, the Boston Public Health Commission and community-based organizations to improve the City's response to opioid overdoses. Year 4 of 4 year grant.

Docket #0164, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of Two Hundred Seventy Two Thousand Thirteen Dollars (\$272,013.00) in the form of a grant for FY2021 DNA Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction Program, awarded by the United States Department of Justice to be administered by the Police Department. The grant will fund two Criminalist positions, overtime, lab supplies and continuing education expenses.

Docket #0166, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of One Hundred Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000.00) in the form of a grant for the Federal FY21 Violence Against Women Act Stop grant, awarded by the United States Department of Justice, passed through the MA Executive Office of Public Safety & Security, to be administered by the Police Department. The grant will fund a Civilian Violence Advocate who provides services for victims in Jamaica Plain, East Boston, Charlestown and overtime for all Domestic Violence Advocates.

These matters were sponsored by Mayor Michelle Wu, and were referred to the Committee on January 26, 2022. A public hearing was held on Thursday, February 17, 2022. Testimony was taken from Commissioner John Dempsey, Boston Fire Department (BFD) on Dockets #0159 and 0163. Representatives from the Boston Police Department (BPD) included Kevin Kosiorek, Director, Crime Lab who provided testimony on Docket #0164. Captain Therese Komiski, Commander Family Justice Division, Lt. Richard Driscoll, Commander Sexual Assault Unit, provided testimony on Docket #0161. Jenna Savage, Deputy Director, Research and Development provided testimony on Dockets #0162 and 0166.

Summary of Legislation

Commissioner Dempsey testified on Docket #0159, a SAFER grant in the amount of \$24,154,518.85. This grant will be used to fund training for a class of 85 recruits at the Boston Fire Department. The Commissioner reported that this grant is the largest in the country and will save the City over \$24M over the next three years in salaries for the new recruits. The Commissioner reported that the Fire Department is currently down 130 firefighters due to retirement and attrition and plans for another class of 40 recruits to be put on. These funds will allow the Boston Fire Department to maintain staffing levels.

The Commissioner provided testimony on Docket #0163, which is in year 4 of a 4 year grant in the amount of \$491,316.00. This fund will be used in a collaborative effort between the Boston Fire Department First Responders, the Mayor's Office of Recovery Services, the Boston Public Health Commission, and the Boston Police Department. The Commissioner stated that they are trying to have the MBTA police involved as well. The Commissioner reported that this program is very effective and that the multi-coordinated efforts between these agencies help to improve the City's response time to the overwhelming opioid overdoses calls particularly in the Mass and Cass area.

BPD Captain Therese Kozmiski testified on Docket #0161, a grant in the amount of \$2,500,000.00 for FY 2021 to be administered by the BPD for the National Sexual Assault Kit Initiative. This grant will be used to cover the costs for overtime, travel and sub-awards and training for the Coordinator, Criminologist, and Victim Advocate positions. She described the types of services provided by the Department that include services for individuals and families affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence or exploitation. She indicated that the BPD works in partnership with several agencies including the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office, several civilian organizations, and other partners including the Boston Area Rape Crisis (BARC). Lt. Richard Driscoll previewed the use of the grant, explaining that this is a 3 year grant to be used in coordinated efforts between the criminal justice system partners that will help to improve BPD's capacity to respond to violent crimes, through

the investigation and prosecution of cases resulting from sexual assault evidence and collection of lawfully owned DNA. These efforts will assist in the review, inventory and follow-up investigations of up to 100 unsolved sexual assault cases that pose the most significant threat to public safety.

Jenna Savage testified on Docket #0162, a grant of \$527,586.00 for the Boston Police Department's FY21 Connected and Protect program. This grant will fund a clinician-directed project coordinator, community partnerships for translation and outreach and staff cost for Section 12 activities carried out by the Boston Emergency Services Team (BEST) in partnership with the BPD Outreach Unit. The grant is designated to support law enforcement-behavioral health cross system collaboration and to improve public safety responses and outcomes for individuals with mental illness and substance abuse who come into contact with the criminal justice system. Ms. Savage described the data tracking system as being highly effective in the Section 12 call logs to help with the mental health response and to reduce escalations with the BPD and highlighted that they are also maximizing their relationship with the Boston Emergency Services Team.

Captain Kevin Kosiorek offered testimony on Docket #0164, a grant funding of \$274,013.00 for the Boston Police Departments' FY21 DNA Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction Program. This grant will be used to continue to fund salaries for two Criminologist positions in the Lab as well as overtime, supplies, and continuing training education expenses for DNA analyst which is required for the accreditation program. These funds will assist the crime laboratories to increase capacity to process more DNA samples and reduce the number of forensic DNA and DNA database samples awaiting analysis and/or prevent a backlog of forensic and DNA samples.

Jenna Savage discussed Docket #0166, grant funding of \$125,000.00 for the Boston Police Department's FY21 Violence Against Women Act Stop grant. This grant will fund Civilian Violence Advocates who provide services to victims in Jamaica Plain, East Boston, Charlestown and overtime for all Domestic Violence Advocates. It was reported that BPD has 5 Civilian advocates and this grant will help to fund overtime expenses so that the advocates can cover other parts of the City which is a much needed resource. These Civilian Advocates working in partnership with the BPD will help ensure that victims of violent crimes are provided with protection and services that they need.

Committee Chair Recommended Action

As Chair of the Committee on Public Safety and Criminal Justice, I recommend moving the listed dockets from the Committee to the full Council for discussion and formal action. At that time, my recommendation to the full Council will be as follows: **Dockets #0159, 0161, 0162, 0163, 0164, 0166 OUGHT TO PASS** for the reason stated above.



Michael Flaherty, Chair
Committee on Public Safety & Criminal Justice and