



Boston City Council

Committee on Arts, Culture and Special Events

Councilor Gabriela Coletta, Chair

November 30, 2022

Dear Councilors:

The Boston City Council's Committee on Arts, Culture and Special Events to which was referred the following:

Docket #0799 – Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000.00) in the form of a grant, for the Boston Red Sox Arts Fund, awarded by the Boston Red Sox to be administered by the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture. The grant will fund programs supported by the Boston Cultural Council, with a portion directed specifically to Fenway-area groups or artists.

Docket #1246 – Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend a grant from the Boston Planning and Development Agency in an amount not to exceed Four Million Six Hundred One Thousand Five Hundred and Eighty Nine Dollars (\$4,601,589.00) which will be allocated to the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture for its work on public arts and culture efforts.

These matters are sponsored by the Mayor and were referred to the Committee on Arts, Culture and Special Events, Docket #0799 on June 29, 2022 and Docket #1246 on October 19, 2022.

The Committee on Arts, Culture and Special Events held a public hearing on November 15, 2022 in the Iannella Chamber, to take testimony and consider the same.

Councilors Present: Chair – Councilor Gabriela Coletta, Council President Ed Flynn, Councilor Kendra Lara, Councilor Kenzie Bok, Councilor Tania Fernandes Anderson and Councilor Erin Murphy

Kara Elliot Ortega - Chief of Arts and Culture, Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture, made a presentation on the particulars of these grants and responded to questions from the Councilors.

The presentation included: the specific use of these funds and the various other related components – the background, history, jurisdiction and processes of outreach, applications, selections, allocations and management by the Boston Cultural Council and the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture.

The Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture is actively engaged in continuous efforts to facilitate and promote the access, participation and inclusion of historically underserved neighborhoods and communities.

Docket #0799 -The Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000.00) for the Boston Red Sox Arts Fund, awarded by the Boston Red Sox will fund programs supported by the Boston Cultural Council, with a portion directed specifically to Fenway-area groups or artists.

These grants to groups or artists are typically for up to Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00), which is currently the Boston Cultural Council policy, and they go to organizations considered small, or very small to mid-size.

The Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture is open to a future review of the Boston Cultural Council's policy to consider an increase in the amount of the sub grants to groups or artists.

Docket #1246 – The Four Million Six Hundred One Thousand Five Hundred and Eighty Nine Dollars (\$4,601,589.00) from the Boston Planning and Development Agency allocated to the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture, for its work on public arts and culture efforts.

The Memorandum of Agreement by and between The Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture and The Boston Planning and Development Agency - for the administration of public impact contribution funds from the Government Center Garage Project (the "GCG Project") and the Hub on Causeway Project (the "HoC Project") *Copy of full text attached*

List of Project Funding Improvements by Source of Funds, Allocations and Use of Funds - **Total \$4,601,589.00**

Source of Funds - Hub on Causeway
Allocation - **\$2,000,000.00**

Use of Funds - High quality public art and place making (may include various forms of art, including but not limited to sculpture, mural, creative lighting; may include but not limited to fabrication, installation, place-based programming and endowment)

Source of Funds - Government Center Garage
Allocation - **\$601,589.00**

Use of Funds - High quality public art and place making (may include various forms of art, including but not limited to sculpture, mural, creative lighting; may include but not limited to fabrication, installation, place-based programming and endowment)

Source of Funds - Government Center Garage
Allocation - **\$2,000,000.00**

Use of Funds - Seed fund for City Hall Plaza programming

City Hall Plaza will be a much more functional venue; there will be places to plug and play, having different zones that can be used for different things.

As funds are not all budgeted and accounted for, we will be able to proactively contract for the programming that we want to see in the Plaza.

City Hall Plaza is our front door for civic cultural space, and needs to reflect the entire City and celebrate, promote and include the rich diversity and talents of all our neighborhoods and communities.

We know that we need to contract for that work, and that the artists and producers need to be supported. If we want to see this, we need to pay people to bring that programming here. We need to support the commissioning of temporary art and also fund artists and creative people, to have free community events, free public events and diverse cultural events.

This funding will help us do that into the future, augmenting the funds that we already have from the American Rescue Plan Act that are dedicated to Plaza programming.

There will be continuous efforts in community outreach to insure awareness, input and active participation from all interested stakeholders in all the processes of planning, implementation and evaluations.

The Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture will be collecting all pertinent data related to these funds; and there will be a City position to specifically work on the programming that will have hands on in the coordination and efforts, of the making of events, activities and programs that happen in the Plaza. Part of the job description of this City position includes issuing of an annual report evaluating all events, activities and programs, and sharing all the pertinent statistics and metrics with the community and the Boston City Council.

Based on the testimony and information presented at the hearing and having considered the same I respectfully recommend that these matters ought to Pass.



**Councilor Gabriela Coletta, Chair
Committee on Arts, Culture and Special Events**