



OFFERED BY COUNCILOR ED FLYNN

## CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

### ORDER FOR A HEARING ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMITTEE ON CIVILITY IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

- WHEREAS:** Intense partisan identity has been on the rise with people shifting to further ends of the political spectrum. We have been left in a place where there is a larger volume of issues for people to disagree with. According to polling in 2024, a record 80% of U.S. adults said that Americans were greatly divided on the most important values; *and*
- WHEREAS:** With escalating polarization and tensions, it is important that our government leaders and elected officials practice civility. National, state, and local government bodies should serve as role models for civil discourse, refraining from disrespect, personal offenses and remain professional, all while leaving room for disagreements in the spirit of democracy; *and*
- WHEREAS:** Municipalities across the country have taken action to foster a welcoming environment for government and residents alike to engage in healthy dialogue. The Montana League of Cities and Towns, a nonpartisan association of municipalities in Montana, painted a blueprint for how local leaders can encourage civility. In short, leaders should provide leadership, welcome disagreements, and connect, respect, and listen; *and*
- WHEREAS:** In terms of past examples of official committees and commissions focusing on civility, the City of Nashville has an Ad Hoc Civility Committee, which held a hearing to discuss a proposed Council Civility Code. Additionally, The Illinois Supreme Court has a dedicated Commission on Professionalism, which maintains its focus on promoting civility. The Commission, governed by Illinois Supreme Court Rule 799, may help outline a potential body for the City of Boston; *and*
- WHEREAS:** The National League of Cities (NLC), an organization comprised of city and town leaders stated in a 2024 article that city governments should, “be mediators in the community by working strategically with community groups to facilitate difficult conversations.” Recently, elected and municipal officials participated in a NLC forum to discuss how city leaders can improve civility in city government; *and*
- WHEREAS:** This hearing will be an opportunity to learn from legal experts, nonprofits, and residents on how this committee will serve as an example of strong leadership and fellowship. It would be beneficial to look into how the City of Boston can resist its own issues of incivility so we can serve as better role models for public discourse and lessen the effects of political tensions both locally and nationally; *and*
- NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:** That the appropriate Committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to discuss the establishment of a Committee on Civility in the City of Boston. Representatives from the City of Boston, Department of Intergovernmental Relations, and any other relevant party are invited to attend.

Filed on: February 25, 2026