



BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

Committee on Environmental Justice, Resiliency and Parks
Kendra Lara, Chair

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REPORT OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

September 21, 2022

Dear Councilors,

Docket #0934, message and order authorizing an appropriation order in the amount of Six Hundred Eighty-Six Thousand Eight Hundred Dollars (\$686,800.00) for the Cemetery Division of the Parks and Recreation Department and the Trust Office of the Treasury Department to be funded from the Cemetery Trust Fund established under Chapter 13 of the Acts of 1961: was sponsored by the Administration and referred to the Committee on August 10, 2022. The committee held a hearing on September 9, 2022.

Summary of Legislation:

This Docket appropriates \$686,800 out of the fund established under Chapter 13 of the Acts of 1961, known as the Cemetery Trust Fund for the Cemetery Division of the Parks and Recreation Department. The appropriation will go towards renovation projects at two of the three cemeteries in the city with remaining burial space. Of the sum, \$28,800 will go towards expanding and improving the infrastructure for the veteran and indigent sections of the Fairview Cemetery; \$258,000 will go towards rehabilitating the Mount Hope Cemetery facilities; and finally, \$400,000 will go towards rehabilitating the entrance and grounds of the Mount Hope Cemetery.

Information Gathered at the Hearing:

The following individuals participated at the hearing on behalf of the administration: Thomas Sullivan, Director of Cemeteries, Cemetery Division; and Margaret Dyson, Trust Manager, Treasury Department. During this hearing, the Administration respectfully requested the City Council release funds from the Cemetery Trust to support the maintenance, repair, improvement, and embellishment of the three cemeteries in Boston with open space for burials. Cemetery Trusts were established in 1961 and mandated that any cities and towns adopting the legislation maintain an independent account and Trust separate from the department. Traditionally, this type of appropriation has been done annually; however, the last appropriation to the Cemetery Division from the Trust was in October 2019 for \$175,000.

In breaking down the dollar amounts designated for the projects at both cemeteries, the panel elaborated upon the specific work needed at each site. For example, to expand the veteran and indigent burial area at the Fairview Cemetery, the \$28,800 will go towards laying new concrete foundations. To rehabilitate the Mount Hope Cemetery, \$258,000 will go towards the design, construction, and capital costs necessary to repair the disarray the facility is in due to failure to

maintain the exterior, which has led to storm damage and rodent/raccoon infestation. Finally, to rehabilitate the face of the Mount Hope Cemetery, the \$400,000 will go towards repairing the entrance fencing and surrounding landscape. The Administration explained that completing this work is necessary to serve and support the community-at-large, the bereaved, and the staff on site. The timing for interior repair at Mount Hope Cemetery is sensitive as the fall construction season approaches and as it concerns the health and safety of cemetery employees.

The maintenance and repair projects discussed during the hearing will be contracted out with the Parks Department advertising for landscape work and the Public Facilities Department advertising for facility construction work. The Administration confirmed that the departments responsible for choosing the contractors to do this work are aware of and in line with the City's procurement goals to contract with women and minority-owned businesses. The Chair requested more information on what the RFP process will look like when hiring contractors to complete the projects for which funds are being appropriated. The administration's response is as follows: "The Parks and Recreation Department will conduct the standard outreach plan for construction related bids. The Contract Unit will first consult the certified business directory to search for MWBE companies to contact. They then fill out the Equitable Procurement Compliance & Assistance form and send the scope of work to the Office of Economic Development and Inclusion for assistance with finding qualified bidders in related industries."

Recommended Action:

The Chair of the Committee on Environmental Justice, Resiliency and Parks, to which the following was referred:

Docket #0934, message and order authorizing an appropriation order in the amount of Six Hundred Eighty-Six Thousand Eight Hundred Dollars (\$686,800.00) for the Cemetery Division of the Parks and Recreation Department and the Trust Office of the Treasury Department to be funded from the Cemetery Trust Fund established under Chapter 13 of the Acts of 1961;

submits a report recommending that this docket ought to pass.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kendra Lara". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Kendra Lara, Chair
Committee on Environmental Justice, Resiliency and Parks.