



BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

Committee on Public Safety and Criminal Justice
Michael Flaherty, Chair

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REPORT OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

January 25, 2023

Dear Councilors:

The Committee held a hearing on January 24, 2023 regarding *Docket #0108, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of Thirteen Million Five Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$13,520,000.00) in the form of a grant for continued support of planning, exercises, trainings and operational needs that will assist in building enhanced and sustainable security capacities to help prevent, respond to and recover from threats to acts of terrorism, including Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive incidents, awarded by the United States Department of Homeland Security, passed through the MA Executive Office of Public Safety & Security, to be administered by the Department of Emergency Management. The grant will fund the Federal FY2022 Urban Areas Security Initiative, referred to the Committee on November 30, 2022; and, Docket #0109, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of One Million One Hundred Sixty Nine Thousand Six Hundred Twenty Three Dollars (\$1,169,623.00) in the form of a grant for the Boston-Providence Regional Catastrophic Preparedness project, through which we work to close known capability gaps, encourage innovative regional solutions to issues related to catastrophic incidents and build in existing regional preparedness efforts, awarded by the United States Department of Homeland Security, passed through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to be administered by the Department of Homeland Security. The grant will fund the Federal FY22 Regional Catastrophic Preparedness, referred to the Committee on November 30, 2022; and, Docket #0110, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of Five Hundred Sixty Seven Thousand Dollars (\$567,000.00) in the form of a grant for the FY23 State Information System Improvements, awarded by the United States Department of Transportation, passed through the MA Executive Office of Public Safety & Security, to be administered by the Police Department. The grant will fund specialized equipment for 564 marked and unmarked cruisers to implement the Motor Vehicle Automated Citation and Crash System in Boston. The eCitation technology issues electronic traffic citations which can be printed out in the police cruisers, referred to the Committee on December 14, 2022. Mayor Wu sponsored these dockets.*

Summary of Legislation as Filed:

Docket #0108 provides \$13,520,000.00 awarded by the United States Department of Homeland Security to continue support of planning, exercises, training, and operational needs to assist in building enhanced and sustainable security capacities to help prevent, respond to and recover from threats to acts of terrorism. This grant is administered by the Department of Emergency Management from the MA Executive Office of Public Safety & Security. The grant will fund the Federal FY2022 Urban Areas Security Initiative (“UASI”).

Docket #0109 provides \$1,169,623.00 awarded by the United States Department of Homeland Security passed through the Federal Emergency Management Agency. This grant will fund the Federal FY22 Regional Catastrophic Preparedness. This grant supports the Boston-Providence Regional Catastrophic Preparedness project in order to close known capability gaps, encourage innovative regional solutions to issues related to catastrophic incidents and build on existing regional preparedness efforts.

Docket #0110 provides \$567,000.000 in grant money awarded by the United States Department of Transportation passed through the MA Executive Office of Public Safety & Security. This grant is administered by the Boston Police Department and will fund 564 marked and unmarked cruisers in order to implement the Motor Vehicle Automated Citation and Crash System in Boston.

Information Gathered at the Hearing:

The Chair reviewed the dockets and summarized the use of the grant money. Chief Shumeane L. Benford, Office of Emergency Management and Deputy Superintendent Christopher Walsh, Boston Police Department attended the hearing and offered testimony in support of the grant money.

Chief Benford provided an overview of the process, resources, and equipment that the grants awarded by the United States Department of Homeland Security support. Chief Benford emphasized the necessity of these grants in order to ensure the safety of Boston and the surrounding region against terrorist attacks and other catastrophic events. Chief Benford explained that these grants provide the capacity to respond to mass shootings, acts of terrorism, and both man made and non-man made acts. Chief Benford reviewed the six national priorities that the Urban Areas Security Initiative (“UASI”) addresses. The six national priorities are as follows: soft targets and crowded spaces; information sharing and intelligence; domestic terrorism and extremism; community preparedness and resiliency; cyber security; and, election security. In describing the process, Chief Benford explained that Boston is the core city. Chief Benford explained that the Office of Emergency Management does not make financial decisions and that those decisions are made by subcommittees consisting of subject matter experts. Chief Benford explained that the subcommittees identified nine goal areas including safety and security, critical infrastructure, planning, and community preparedness. Chief Benford explained that UASI conducts monthly meetings that are open to the public.

Chief Benford gave examples of how the resources made possible by these grants have enabled Boston and surrounding areas to be responsive in hosting events and responding to incidents. Chief Benford cited the following examples: the US Open; the State of the City; equipment to locate drowning victims; PPE support for neighborhoods, schools, health centers; equipment and training for Boston Fire Department in responding to building collapses; and, migrant responses.

Deputy Superintendent Walsh provided an overview of Docket #0110 which will fund the FFY 2023 eCitation Transition Project. Deputy Superintendent Walsh explained that the grant funds will be used to install computer equipment including mobile printers for 564 police vehicles. This is a one time grant that will allow the Boston Police Department to participate in the Department of Criminal Justice Information Services (DCJIS) Motor Vehicle Automated Citation and Crash System (MACCS). Deputy Superintendent Walsh explained the benefits of this program which include improving officer safety, streamlining data collection, improving data quality, eliminating redundant data entry processes, and improving timeliness of reporting.

The Committee discussed the grants and inquired about the process, use of funds, and their impact on Boston and the safety of the public. With regard to the eCitation program, the Committee discussed the current process for the issuance of citations and how this new system made possible by the grant funds will be more efficient by eliminating duplication of services as well as providing information in a more timely and accurate way. The Committee also acknowledged the improvement in safety in using this system by increasing situational awareness. The Committee also discussed traffic safety concerns.

The Committee discussed Dockets #0108 and #0109, that would provide funding to support Boston and regional responses to catastrophic events. The Committee inquired about the technology, readiness, resources, and planning for incidents. The Committee recognized that Boston and surrounding areas are the host for many events. The Committee discussed the importance of having a collaborative approach and balance with public safety and public health and bringing the community into the process of community preparedness.

Rationale and Recommended Action:

Docket #0108 provides funding for planning, exercises, training and operational needs that help prevent, respond to and recover from threats or acts of terrorism. Docket #0109 provides funding to support the Boston-Providence Regional Catastrophic Preparedness project in order to close known capability gaps, encourage innovative regional solutions to issues related to catastrophic incidents and build in existing regional preparedness efforts. Docket #0110 will fund 564 marked and unmarked cruisers in order to implement the Motor Vehicle Automated Citation and Crash System in Boston. Passage of Dockets #0108 and #0109 will ensure that Boston has the ability to prevent and respond to catastrophic events. Passage of Docket #0110 will allow the Boston Police Department to purchase the equipment for the eCitation project which will allow for greater efficiency and accuracy as well as improve safety.

By the Chair of the Committee on Government Operations, to which the following was referred:

Docket #0108, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of Thirteen Million Five Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$13,520,000.00) in the form of a grant for continued support of planning, exercises, trainings and operational needs that will assist in building enhanced and sustainable security capacities to help prevent, respond to and recover from threats to acts of terrorism, including Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive incidents, awarded by the United States Department of Homeland Security, passed through the MA Executive Office of Public Safety & Security, to be administered by the Department of Emergency Management. The grant will fund the Federal FY2022 Urban Areas Security Initiative.

Docket #0109, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of One Million One Hundred Sixty Nine Thousand Six Hundred Twenty Three Dollars (\$1,169,623.00) in the form of a grant for the Boston-Providence Regional Catastrophic Preparedness project, through which we work to close known capability gaps, encourage innovative regional solutions to issues related to catastrophic incidents and build in existing regional preparedness efforts, awarded by the United States Department of Homeland Security, passed through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to be administered by the Department of Homeland Security. The grant will fund the Federal FY22 Regional Catastrophic Preparedness.

Docket #0110, Message and order authorizing the City of Boston to accept and expend the amount of Five Hundred Sixty Seven Thousand Dollars (\$567,000.00) in the form of a grant for the FY23 State Information System Improvements, awarded by the United States Department of Transportation, passed through the MA Executive Office of Public Safety & Security, to be administered by the Police Department. The grant will fund specialized equipment for 564 marked and unmarked cruisers to implement the Motor Vehicle Automated Citation and Crash System in Boston. The eCitation technology issues electronic traffic citations which can be printed out in the police cruisers.

submits a report recommending that these dockets ought to pass.

For the Chair:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Flaherty".

Michael Flaherty, Chair
Committee on Public Safety and Criminal Justice