



BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

Committee on Ways and Means
Brian Worrell, Chair

One City Hall Square 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02201 ◊ Phone: (617) 635-3040 ◊ city.council@boston.gov

REPORT OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

October 1, 2024

Dear Councilors,

The Committee on Ways and Means was referred the following docket for consideration:

Docket #1430, Message and order for your approval an Order authorizing the City of Boston to appropriate the amount of Two Million Two Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$2,225,000.00) for the purpose of paying the cost of a feasibility study and schematic design associated with a project for the Paul Agassiz Shaw-Charles H. Taylor Elementary School, Mattapan, MA 02126. This includes the payment of all costs incidental or related thereto, and for which the City of Boston may be eligible for a grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority ("MSBA"), said amount to be expended under the direction of the Public Facilities Department on behalf of the Boston Public Schools.

This matter was sponsored by Mayor Michelle Wu and referred to the Committee on September 25, 2024.

Summary of Legislation

Docket #1430 requests approval to appropriate the amount of Two Million Two Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$2,225,000.00) for the purpose of paying the cost of a feasibility study and schematic design for the Paul Agassiz Shaw-Charles H. Taylor Elementary School. This appropriation may be eligible for a grant from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). This school was submitted to the MSBA Core Program in April of 2023 to prevent potential severe overcrowding from anticipated increased enrollments, perform necessary work regarding the replacement, renovation, or modernization of school facility systems – such as roofs, windows, boilers, and heating and ventilation systems – to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in the facility, and perform necessary work that may include replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings.

The feasibility appropriation is the second step at which the council is involved in a process to engage in discussion with the MSBA (the State authority that oversees construction for public schools throughout the Commonwealth and is funded by a small portion of the State sales tax) for potential funding, which would reimburse the City for a percentage of the cost of certain repairs.

The feasibility appropriation under Docket #1430 is for the MSBA Core Program, which supports facility projects covering extensive repairs, renovations, addition/renovations, and new school construction. The Statement of Interest submitted to the Core Program (the first step in the aforementioned process) proposed construction of a new school facility that would merge the P.A. Shaw Elementary School and the Charles H. Taylor Elementary School, which officially combined in September of 2024.

Information Received at Hearing

The Committee held a hearing on Tuesday, October 1, 2024 to discuss Docket #1430. Brian McLaughlin, Senior Project Manager in the Public Facilities Department, Carleton Jones, Director of Public Facilities



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in the Public Facilities Department, and Del Stanislaus, Chief of Capital Planning at Boston Public Schools all testified on behalf of the administration.

Mr. McLaughlin gave an overview of the MSBA stating it is a state authority that oversees the funding of public school capital projects in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and has two main programs: the Core and the Accelerated Repair Program (ARP). To date, the City of Boston has collaborated with MSBA for 35 ARP projects and is currently under review for 8 projects. He stated that the Shaw-Taylor statement of interest (SOI) was submitted in April of 2023, and the school was invited into the Core Program in December of 2023. He stated after this admittance, the school went into a 270-day eligibility period (which started July 1, 2024) during which the MSBA gauges financial and community readiness by allowing the schools in question nine months to complete preliminary requirements such as initial compliance certification and the formation of a school building committee. He stated the school will be finished with its eligibility period tasks by March of 2025 when the period ends. He provided a brief overview of the rest of the the MSBA timeline for the school, including when the MSBA will invite the project into the Capital Pipeline (March and April 2025), when the consultant will be selected for the project (Spring and Summer 2025) and when the feasibility study will commence (Fall 2025).

Chief Stanislaus stated that the Shaw-Taylor school started the school year as a unified, two-campus school where grades PreK-1 are located in the Shaw building and grades 2-6 are located in the Taylor building. She stated there has been robust community engagement regarding the merger, including 10 community meetings since the Spring of 2022 and 7 merger planning team meetings since the Winter of 2023. She stated that over the summer the BPS facilities team performed light renovation work, including electrical work, painted at both campuses and acquired new furniture for classrooms, the upper campus library, and gym areas. She stated as a combined school, the Shaw-Taylor has become a community hub school and has received an additional full time employee to coordinate community resources that provide holistic wraparound support.

Committee Chair Recommended Action

As Chair of the Committee on Ways and Means I recommend moving the listed docket from the Committee to the full Council for discussion and formal action. At this time, my recommendation to the full Council will be that this matter **OUGHT TO BE READ FOR THE FIRST TIME AND ASSIGNED FOR FURTHER ACTION.**

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