BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

Committee on Ways and Means
Brian J. Worrell, Chair

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REPORT OF COMMITTEE CHAIR

June 4, 2025

Dear Councilors:

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

Docket #0831, Message and order authorizing a limit for the Boston Public Schools revolving fund for Fiscal Year 2026 to support maintenance and repair for BPS facilities, including custodial and utility costs for extended building tie, floor refinishing, landscaping and building repairs, with expenditures not to exceed Two Million Dollars ($2,000,000.00).

Docket #0832, Message and order authorizing a limit for the Boston Public Schools revolving fund for Fiscal Year 2026 for Boston Public Schools Transportation costs, including bus and public transportation costs, with expenditures not to exceed One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars ($150,000.00).

Docket #0833, Message and order authorizing a limit for the Boston Public Schools revolving fund for Fiscal Year 2026 to repair and purchase Boston Public Schools computer technology, including computers, mobile devices, and instructional software, with expenditures not to exceed Two Million Dollars ($2,000,000.00).

Docket #0834, Message and order authorizing a limit for the Mayor's Office of Tourism revolving fund for Fiscal Year 2026 to purchase goods and services to support events and programming on and around City Hall Plaza to advance tourism and promote participation in public celebrations, civic, and cultural events, with expenditures not to exceed One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars ($150,000.00).

Docket #0835, Message and order authorizing a limit for the Environment Conservation Commission revolving fund for the Fiscal Year 2026 for the purpose of securing outside consultants including engineers, wetlands scientists, wildlife biologists, or other experts in order to aid in the review of proposed projects to the Commission, per the City's ordinance protecting local wetland and promoting climate change adaptation, with expenditures not to exceed Fifty Thousand Dollars ($50,000.00).

Docket #0836, Message and order authorizing a limit for the Distributed Energy Resource Revolving Fund for Fiscal Year 2026 to facilitate the purchase of offsets of greenhouse gas

emissions which shall be associated with a portion of the electricity consumed by the City annually, and to operate, maintain, monitor, and expand the City's existing solar arrays and Boston Public Schools' combined heat and power facilities, with expenditures not to exceed One Hundred-Fifty Thousand Dollars ($150,000.00).

Docket #0837, Message and order authorizing a limit for the Boston Centers for Youth and Families revolving fund for Fiscal Year 2026 to pay salaries and benefits of employees and to purchase supplies and equipment necessary to operate the City Hall Child Care, with expenditures not to exceed Nine Hundred Thousand Dollars ($900,000.00).

Docket #0838, Message and order authorizing the Law Department revolving fund for Fiscal Year 2026 to purchase goods and services for repairs to city property, with expenditures not to exceed Three Hundred Thousand Dollars ($300,000.00).

Docket #0839, Message and order authorizing a limit for the Boston Police Department revolving fund for Fiscal Year 2026 to pay salaries and benefits of employees and to purchase supplies and equipment necessary to operate the Police Department Fitness Center, with expenditures not to exceed One Hundred Twenty Five Thousand Dollars ($125,000.00).

Docket #0840, Message and order authorizing a limit for the Boston Police Department revolving fund for Fiscal Year 2026 to support the Canine Unit's training program for officers and police dogs from non-City of Boston law enforcement agencies, with expenditures not to exceed One Hundred Twenty Five Thousand Dollars ($125,000.00).

Docket #0841, Message and order authorizing a limit for the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture revolving fund for Fiscal Year 2026 to purchase goods and services to support public art to enhance the public realm throughout the City of Boston, with expenditures not to exceed Eight Hundred Thousand Dollars ($800,000.00).

Docket #0842, Message and order authorizing a limit for the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture revolving fund for Fiscal Year 2026 to purchase goods and services to support the operation of the Strand Theatre, with expenditures not to exceed Three Hundred Thousand Dollars ($300,000.00).

Docket #0843, Message and order authorizing a limit for the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture revolving fund for Fiscal Year 2025 to purchase goods and services to support the operation of the Strand Theatre, with expenditures not to exceed Three Hundred Thousand Dollars ($300,000.00).

Docket #0844, Message and order authorizing an appropriation of Three Million Six Hundred Thousand Dollars ($3,600,000.00) from the 21st Century Fund, also known as the Public, Educational, or Governmental (PEG) Access and Cable Related Fund, pursuant to Section 53F ¾ of Chapter 44 of the General Laws for cable related purposes including supporting PEG access services, monitoring compliance with the cable franchise agreement, and preparation of renewal of the franchise license.

Docket #0845, Message and order authorizing an appropriation of One Million Three Hundred Thousand Dollars ($1,300,000.00) from the George Francis Parkman Fund for the maintenance and improvement of Boston Common and parks in existence since January 12, 1887.

These matters were sponsored by Mayor Michelle Wu and were referred to the Committee on April 9, 2025. Some dockets were heard as part of public hearings on topics including Boston Public Schools, Office of Tourism, Sports, and Entertainment, Department of Innovation and Technology, Environment Department, Boston Centers for Youth and Families, Boston Police Department, and Office of Arts and Culture, on April 15, 2025, April 29, 2025, May 1, 2025, May 6, 2025, May 15, 2025, and May 20, 2025.

Summary of Legislation

Dockets #0831-0843 are authorizations of revolving fund limits for FY26. Annual authorization of the dollar-limit for each of these revolving funds is required by their enabling legislation, Section 53E½, Chapter 44, Massachusetts General Laws. Revolving funds are an important budgetary tool for departments, as they allow for better financial flexibility in the management of unpredictable and self-sustaining activities. The Committee on Ways and Means has formalized and standardized the review process for these funds by running reviews concurrent with the annual budget review process and departmental budget hearings, with the intent to maintain transparency and accountability in the annual review and authorization of these funds.

Dockets #0844-0845 are authorizations of annual appropriations for other special funds.

The 21st Century PEG Access Fund was established by Boston's acceptance of a local option, pursuant to Section 53F¾ of Chapter 44 of the General Laws, in 2016. The fund revenue is made up of cable franchise fees, paid by subscribers, from Comcast, RCN, and Verizon. The appropriation is used to support public educational or governmental access cable television services. The City uses the Fund to support Boston Neighborhood Network (BNN) Media, which provides community, government, and educational access television and radio programming, training, and production services; and Tech Goes Home (TGH), a digital equity initiative that provides low-income and underserved residents in the City with the opportunity, tools, education, and access required for 21st century skills development. The Fund also supports the City's dark fiber infrastructure, and other cable-related advocacy, auditing, and regulatory service.

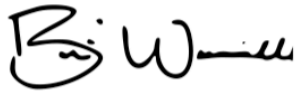
The Parkman Fund is a trust fund designated for maintenance and upkeep of certain City parks, including the Boston Common, Public Garden, Olmstead Park, Highland Park, Horatio Harris Park, and Malcolm X Park. The fund was established in 1908 from a bequest from George Francis Parkman, and the annual appropriation is used to fund operations, general care and maintenance, specialized maintenance of horticulture and infrastructure, and equipment, infrastructure improvements, and repairs as needed.

Information Received at Hearings

These funds are sources of additional funding for departments, as such the Committee heard dockets together with the relevant departments' budgets. For revolving funds, standardized reporting information consisting of a summary of each revolving fund and the fund's previous year's revenue and expenditures was shared with the Committee for review.

Committee Chair Recommended Action

As Chair of the Committee on Ways and Means, I recommend moving the listed dockets from the Committee to the full Council for discussion and formal action. At that time, my recommendation to the full Council will be that these matters **OUGHT TO PASS.**



Brian J. Worrell, Chair
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