

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR MICHELLE WU



## CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

### ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING ARTS AND CULTURE FUNDING IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

- WHEREAS:* The City of Boston has a rich history of supporting arts and culture, including the founding of the oldest municipal arts commission in the United States in 1890 and establishing the first state-recognized cultural area in the Fenway Cultural District; and
- WHEREAS:* From its neighborhood arts centers and theaters to its world class museums and music institutions, Boston's arts and cultural sector helps build a vibrant community and brings together the different parts of the city; and
- WHEREAS:* The City of Boston today offers financial support for the arts and culture through the Boston Cultural Council, which under the umbrella of the Mayor's Office of Arts, Tourism and Special Events, annually distributes funds allocated by the Massachusetts Cultural Council to support innovative arts, humanities and interpretive sciences programming that enhances the quality of life in our City; and
- WHEREAS:* The Boston Cultural Council currently awards two types of grants: 1) to fund programming of arts and cultural organizations based in and serving Boston, and 2) to reimburse the cost of school field trips to attend performances at Boston-based, designated performing arts organizations; and
- WHEREAS:* The Mayor's Office has demonstrated a strong commitment to supporting the arts and culture community and Boston's creative economy through soliciting arts and culture community input, the creation of a Cabinet-level Arts Commissioner position, plans to designate a line-item for arts funding in the City budget, and other actions; and
- WHEREAS:* The impact of any additional dedicated city funding for the arts and culture will depend on the mechanisms for funding distribution, the division of funding between City-administered programming and external grants or assistance, the criteria for awarding external grants and target recipients, and effective communication of funding opportunities to the arts and culture community; and
- WHEREAS:* Other municipalities such as Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, Portland, Chicago, Nashville, Austin, and Seattle offer creative examples of funding and communication mechanisms to maximize the impact of municipal arts funding, including grants for individual artists, multi-year grant opportunities for arts, funding for arts community networking programs and workshops, city programs to commission public art through a public process, artist mailing lists for notification about art opportunities;

*NOW*

*THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED,*

That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to examine how best to utilize and distribute arts funding from the City of Boston to maximize impact for the arts and culture community, and to gather recommendations for funding distribution and communications mechanisms to ensure impact and access to information about funding; and

*BE IT FURTHER ORDERED,*

That representatives from the Boston Cultural Council, the Mayor's Office of Arts, Tourism, and Special Events, MASSCreative, and other interested parties shall be invited to testify.

Filed on: February 26, 2014