



## CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

### ORDER FOR A HEARING ON THE STATE OF BOSTON'S NON-GOVERNMENTAL, NONPROFIT SOCIAL SECTOR AND CHARTING A POST-PANDEMIC RECOVERY

- WHEREAS*, Social activity undertaken by non-governmental nonprofit organizations are often regarded as comprising the voluntary, civic, social sector, or the “third sector” in contrast to the public and private sectors; *and*
- WHEREAS*, Non-governmental, nonprofit organizations and government are natural partners, serving the same constituents and working to address shared challenges; *and*
- WHEREAS*, Local nonprofits, with deep knowledge of community needs, provision of direct services, high-impact reach, and established presence as trusted messengers, are positioned to maximize positive impacts toward an equitable recovery, particularly in low-income and underserved or hard-to-reach populations; *and*
- WHEREAS*, Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, thousands of Boston residents turned to charitable nonprofit organizations and mutual aid efforts for assistance, yet resources and stability drastically declined for many nonprofit organizations; *and*
- WHEREAS*, According to the Johns Hopkins University Center for Civil Society Studies, U.S. nonprofit institutions accounted for at least 12.5 million total jobs prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, but saw a loss of 1.64 million jobs (13.2 percent of the nonprofit workforce) in the first three months, and although 40.6 percent of lost jobs were recovered by summer 2020, there is still an estimated net loss of nearly 470,000 nonprofit jobs as of November 2021; *and*
- WHEREAS*, The Center for Effective Philanthropy conducted a survey of nonprofit leaders across the country and published their findings in a June 2021 report, *Persevering Through Crisis: The State of Nonprofits*, which indicated that the pandemic’s negative impacts on nonprofits were magnified for those providing direct services and serving historically disadvantaged communities, as well as arts and culture organizations; *and*
- WHEREAS*, Since late 2021, labor economists and media outlets have reported on the so-called “Great Resignation,” highlighting the ongoing economic trend of the country’s workforce voluntarily leaving their jobs at historic rates, attributing such causes to wage stagnation amid rising costs of living and inflation, and noting pronounced impacts on the nonprofit social sector’s workforce recruitment and retention; *and*
- WHEREAS*, The National Council of Nonprofits published an October 2021 report, *Strengthening State and Local Economies in Partnership with Nonprofits*, outlining recommendations to invest recovery funds for the greatest impact by leveraging resources, relationships, and strengths to better serve our communities; *and*

*WHEREAS,* There are many impactful examples of local government–nonprofit relief initiatives across the country, such as the City of Denver’s Nonprofit Emergency Relief Fund in Colorado and the Baltimore Nonprofit Relief Fund in Maryland; *and*

*WHEREAS,* The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) presents once-in-a-generation resources with the potential to address longstanding challenges and improve conditions within our communities, and for our communities and local economies to recover, governments must invest in the work of local nonprofits; *and*

*WHEREAS,* On January 3, 2022, the Treasury Department released the “Final Rule” for the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds program, which states that governments may allocate federal funds directly or through others, expressly determining that it is an eligible use to disburse funds to charitable nonprofit organizations as *recipients of assistance* as well as *providers of assistance* to others; *and*

*WHEREAS,* As the City of Boston considers allocation of the remaining \$349.2 million in federal relief funds to meet local needs, the City should consider guiding principles for identifying high-impact programs which complement and extend the City’s priorities in achieving equity, as well as look to successful models for lasting government-nonprofit partnerships from across the country; *and*

*WHEREAS,* The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated longstanding challenges in the nonprofit sector which existed well before the public health crisis, including gentrification and real estate market conditions threatening the stability of local, community-based nonprofit organizations; *and*

*WHEREAS,* The public and nonprofit sectors are stronger when we collectively invest in our communities through targeted collaboration, and the allocation of federal relief funds provides an unprecedented opportunity to strengthen natural partnerships and secure sustainability, relief, recovery, and greater impact for the public good; *NOW, THEREFORE BE IT*

*ORDERED:* That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to discuss the state of Boston’s non-governmental, nonprofit social sector and that representatives of the City administration, including from the Office of Economic Opportunity and Inclusion, Office of Health and Human Services, Office of Resilience and Racial Equity, and the Office of Strategic Partnerships, as well as industry professionals in the nonprofit and philanthropic sectors, and interested members of the public be invited to attend.