



OFFERED BY COUNCILOR ED FLYNN

CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS PUBLIC SAFETY AND QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES IN THE BOSTON COMMON AND DOWNTOWN

- WHEREAS:** In recent months, public safety and quality of life issues in Downtown and the Boston Common have deteriorated. City officials have received a significant increase in outreach from concerned Downtown residents, families, schools and businesses regarding the issues of crime, violence, open drug-dealing and use that has impacted their sense of safety and quality of life; *and*
- WHEREAS:** In August, a Downtown Public Safety walkthrough was conducted with residents, the Downtown BID and businesses, Boston Police, and other stakeholders, many of whom expressed unease and concerns of personal and public safety due to instances of drug-dealing and consumption in public and the increase in violent in the area; *and*
- WHEREAS:** In September, the Boston Police Department held a Compstat meeting with the Downtown Boston Neighborhood Association, and reported that crime statistics in the area have increased. Residents who live and work in and around the vicinity of Downtown, such as those from the Leather District and Beacon Hill neighborhoods, and those who commute into South Station to work in Downtown, have also highlighted their decreasing sense of personal and public safety when seeing the flagrant drug consumption, crime and other illicit activities in public view; *and*
- WHEREAS:** More recently, meetings have taken place with nearby school administrators, parents, Boston Police, and city officials regarding serious concerns on the safety of children, caretakers, and staff as the population of those with substance use disorders have started migrating from the Brewer Fountain closer to Park Street. Parents of young children, many of whom are Downtown residents and walk their kids to preschool every morning, have expressed frustration for the safety of their children and the unhealthy environment that they walk by in the Common to pick up and drop off at the school every day; *and*
- WHEREAS:** In September, NBC Boston reported recent incidents of violence at Boston Common have led to some tour operators to either re-route or skip Boston Common altogether. Boston Historic Company reported that visitors got slapped in the face and another employee got punched in the face while on break in the area. Moreover, there was a stabbing at Downtown Crossing in August, and another in October near the Brewer Fountain in the Boston Common, with many parents reportedly witnessing the aftermath while taking children to school; *and*
- WHEREAS:** Downtown and Boston Common remain both critical economic engines, as well as home to some of the most important historic sites in our country. There is an urgent need to reevaluate the current strategies in addressing the public safety and quality of life issues in the heart of our City. We need to identify ways to improve the City's response to the opioid crisis, drug dealing activities, violence and homelessness; *and*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:

That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to address this public safety and critical need to enhance city response and services related to this area. Representatives from the Mayor's Office, Police Department, the Coordinated Response Team, elected officials, community leaders, and any other interested parties shall be invited to attend.

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