



Boston City Council Committee on Ways and Means

Dockets #0524-0531 FY21 Budget

Boston Public Health Commission

Working Session: Friday, May 14 2021, 10:00 a.m.

Hearing: Thursday, May 27, 2021, 2:00 p.m.

The following is a collection of questions that were asked by the Committee regarding the FY22 budget for the Boston Public Health Commission at the Working Session on Friday, May 14, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

Recording here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CNkRo2Yo8kc>

The Administration is requested to respond to all questions in one of three ways:

1. Verbally at the hearing on Thursday, May 27th, at 2PM.
2. For factual questions, through written responses supplied prior to May 27th, including budget book page numbers or other references where appropriate.
3. By deferring to a specific scheduled departmental budget hearing.

Please annotate and return this information request before May 27th, indicating how each question will be answered.

BPHC Budget Questions

Councilor Kenzie Bok, Chair asked:

- Please describe the reason for the overall decrease in the Homeless Services Bureau. What impact will this have?
- What is BPHC's plan for how it would put additional federal dollars received as part of the American Rescue Plan to use?
- Please elaborate on the Consortium for Professional Development line item.
- What trends are we seeing in opioid addiction and overdosing, and what specific impacts has the pandemic had?
- Please explain the functions and programs carried out at each BPHC property.
- What is the success rate of the DHCD Rapid Rehousing program? What are the barriers to getting folks rehoused within 90 days, if there are any?
 - How many individuals did the program rehouse this year?
 - What have the outcomes been for the Youth Rapid Rehousing Program?
- Please detail spending on Environmental Hazards. Are these Hazards that others have created (possibly companies/industry) that we are cleaning up or mitigating?
- What can we do to support those who have had serious cases of COVID and are experiencing long term effects?



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- What is the success with getting folks in Long Term Stayers Housing to more permanent housing? What is the average time spent in the program?
- How does BPHC think about serving and paying attention to the local native and indigenous population, especially given that they are often too few to be included in statistical reports. Does BPHC have a partnership been with the North American Indian Center of Boston? I would love for us to be more intentional about this aspect of public health outreach.
- Are there plans to get the folks that were temporarily housed during the height of the COVID pandemic into permanent housing? How much of this has happened so far? If so, do we have an idea of what proportion of these folks were able to be housed? What pieces of this work belong to DND vs. BPHC?
- It looks like there are significant hiring challenges. Obviously we still have an Interim ED, but also for many positions below that. Is there a strategy or plan in place to overcome these challenges?
- It was hard on the department not to have an Infectious Disease Bureau Director when COVID first hit. What is BPHC doing to enhance our infectious disease infrastructure and implement other preventative measures, to prepare for future pandemics?

Councilor Ed Flynn asked:

- Are there any programs within BPHC to address gambling addiction in the AAPI community?
- How is BPHC preparing to make COVID-19 vaccine booster shots available to the community in the near future?
- Can you provide an update on the renovations of the Woods-Mullen shelter?
- What programs and partnerships are available to address the spread of HIV among intravenous drug users? What resources are currently available to those living with HIV/AIDS?

Councilor Matt O'Malley asked:

- What is the plan for the COVID-19 vaccine booster shoots?

Councilor Liz Breadon asked:

- Can BPHC help support youth workers for families living in Faneuil Gardens in Allston-Brighton?



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Councilor Julia Mejia asked:

- Last year, then-Councilor Janey wrote a letter to the Mayor alongside Councilors of color urging financial investment in order to eradicate negative health impacts that racism has in our city. How does the BPHC budget actually reflect this?
- The letter written by Mayor Janey also urged that all violence prevention funding be moved from the BPD be moved from the BPD to the BPHC. Is this reflected in this year's budget? I'm also thinking about any future grant funding, such as the Shannon Grant.

Councilor Ricardo Arroyo asked:

- What is the status on appointing a permanent Executive Director for the BPHC? Why has the BPHC only had an Interim Director for over a year now?
- Can the Commission talk a bit about the annual \$100,000 for "State of Emergency for Communities of Color" line item within the Infectious Diseases Bureau? What does this investment fund?
- Why is the "Racial Equity and Health Improvement" line item within the Public Health Service Centers set to decrease by \$527,206? What will be the impact of this decrease?
- BPHC's breakdown of top ten department salaries shows 80% white, 10% Latino/Hispanic, and 10% Asian, despite 37% of all BPHC employees being Black: Can BPHC explain this discrepancy and efforts that are being made to ensure that Black employees are not locked out of these opportunities?
- Does any part of BPHC's budget go toward partnerships with community health services? If so, how much and what specifically will this fund in FY22?
- The Recovery Services Bureau and the Homeless Services Bureau have two of the highest proportions of externally funded FTEs compared to internally funded FTEs within the BPHC: Why are such a large portion of positions externally funded and does the Commission plan to change any of these positions to internally funded?