



# Boston City Council

## Committee on Ways & Means

*Mark Ciommo, Chair*

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June 1, 2009

Dear Councilors:

The Committee on Ways & Means held a hearing on June 1, 2009 in order to discuss:

**Docket # 0650-** Message and order approving an appropriation of \$1,000,000.00 from the income of the George Francis Parkman Fund for the maintenance and improvement of the Boston Common and Parks

Having considered the information presented and the testimonies heard, the Chair respectfully recommends that this matter **ought to pass.**

For the Chair:

Mark Ciommo  
Committee on Ways & Means

# *The George Francis Parkman Trust Fund*

Mr. George Francis Parkman (1823-1908), a noted 19<sup>th</sup> century banker and real estate owner, directed in his will of 1887 and subsequent codicil that the residue of his estate (approximately \$5.0 million) be bequeathed to the City of Boston to create a permanent fund, the income from which is to be perpetually utilized for “*the maintenance and improvement of the (Boston) Common and Parks now existing*”. He further directed that any income from this fund that is not expended within one year must be returned to the fund for reinvestment.

Acting on these instructions, the City of Boston officially established the George Francis Parkman Fund on March 9, 1909 and further refined its operational protocol in 1922 upon the recommendations contained in the report submitted by the Special Parkman Fund Committee of the City of Boston whose membership included the pre-eminent landscape architects Frederick Law Olmsted and Arthur Shurtleff.

Distributions from the fund are made by the fund’s trustee and custodian, the City of Boston’s Collector-Treasurer, upon the recommendation of the City of Boston Parks Commissioner subject to the rules governing appropriations.

The following parks, in existence in 1887 and currently under the care and custody of the City of Boston, which by their area cover over one acre and by their topography and character are “*parks*” in the sense of the word as used in Mr. Parkman’s Will and defined by the Parkman Fund Committee:

1. The Boston Common
2. The Public Garden
3. The Fens
4. The Riverway
5. Olmsted Park (Leverett and Ward’s Pond)
6. Jamaica Pond
7. Franklin Park
8. Highland Park
9. Horatio Harris Park
10. Malcolm X Park



CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
THOMAS M. MENINO

May 4, 2009

**TO THE CITY COUNCIL**

Dear Councilors:

I transmit herewith for your approval an Order appropriating one million dollars (\$1,000,000.00) from the income of the George Francis Parkman Fund. The funds are to be expended under the direction of the Commissioner of Parks and Recreation for the maintenance and improvement of Boston Common and Parks in existence of January 12, 1887.

I urge your Honorable Body to pass this Order as expeditiously as possible so that the funds can be spent in accordance with Mr. Parkman's Bequest.

Respectfully,

Thomas M. Menino  
Mayor of Boston

BOSTON  
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CITY CLERK  
RECEIVED

**CITY OF BOSTON**  
**IN CITY COUNCIL**

**AN ORDER AUTHORIZING THE BOSTON PARKS  
AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT  
TO UTILIZE FUNDS FROM THE GEORGE FRANCIS PARKMAN FUND**

**ORDERED:** That the sum of ONE MILLION DOLLARS (\$1,000,000.00) be, and the same hereby is, appropriated from the income of the George Francis Parkman Fund to be expended at the direction of the Commissioner of Parks and Recreation as follows:

For the general care and maintenance of the Boston  
Common and Parks in existence as of January 12, 1887..... \$800,000.00

For the specialized maintenance of the horticulture and  
infrastructure of the Boston Common and Parks in  
existence as of January 12, 1887..... \$177,000.00

For equipment, infrastructure improvements and repairs  
in the Boston Common and Parks in existence as of  
January 12, 1887..... \$23,000.00

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT  
THE FOREGOING, IF PASSED IN  
THE ABOVE FORM, WILL BE IN  
ACCORDANCE WITH LAW.

  


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**WILLIAM F. SINNOTT**  
CORPORATION COUNSEL