

★ MAYOR ★
MARTIN J. WALSH

BOSTON2014
TRANSITION COMMITTEE



Reports from Issues Working Groups for Mayor Martin J. Walsh's Transition Team

April 16, 2014

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On November 5th, 2013, the people of Boston elected Martin J. Walsh to be their mayor, marking the first change of administration in twenty years.



Photo: Mike Ritter

Mayor-elect Martin J. Walsh at the Open Town Meeting, December 14, 2013

Within days, Mayor-elect Walsh launched his transition effort to lay a foundation for the effective implementation of his plans and vision, and to ensure the continued smooth operation of the day-to-day functions of government. Just as importantly, Mayor-elect Walsh saw the two months between his election and assumption of office as a unique opportunity to reach out and listen, to convene a structured and specific discussion about municipal government and

how it can best serve our city.

The report that follows is one outcome of that civic dialog.

To this end, Mayor-elect Walsh assembled a team of more than 250 practitioners, experts, community leaders, and end-users organized into twelve issue-specific “Working Groups.”

Overseen by two group leaders and, in most cases, one or two transition co-chairs, each Working Group drew from a wide range of backgrounds and

experiences. Overall the Working Groups’ membership included half individuals of color and half women, with all members deeply connected to Boston by virtue of residing and/or working in the city.

Each Working Group was tasked with examining one of Mayor-elect Walsh’s key thematic concerns and developing a menu of ideas and proposals representing possible ways to advance that goal. The concerns

posed to each group were kept broad by design so that all members could contribute. Discussions and this report followed a framework of “Keep, Implement, Dream.”

“Keep:” A policy or program that the City of Boston is already doing which should be maintained.

“Implement:” A policy, program or idea that the city is not currently doing which could be realized without requiring major new funding or legislative changes.

“Dream:” A policy, program or idea that could be transformative but which would likely require a longer time horizon to achieve.

The twelve Working Groups and their areas of focus were: Arts and Culture; Basic City Services; Economic Development; Education; Energy, Environment and Open Space; Housing; Human Services; Intergovernmental Relations; Public Health; Public Safety; Transportation and Infrastructure; and Youth. Groups had between 18 to 35 members each, with every group meeting at least three times during December 2013 and, in some cases early January 2014, and all (except for Intergovernmental Relations) hosting at least one issue-specific public hearing.

To ensure even greater public participation, Mayor-elect Walsh hosted a city-wide Town Hall meeting, drawing over 1,000 people to Roxbury Community College on a snowy Saturday, December 14, 2013. Eleven Working Groups conducted two sessions each, at which any interested Boston resident or stakeholder was given an opportunity to speak. At the end of the day, the group leaders presented a consensus report to Mayor-elect Walsh, and the audience participated in a robust Q & A.

By late January, each Working Group had produced a report setting out ideas and recommendations arising from its discussions and public sessions. It was not expected or required that full consensus exist on every item or that reports be rigidly prescriptive. (And as with any collective effort, it would be incorrect to ascribe every mention or recommendation contained

here as necessarily being the viewpoint of every member of a Working Group, or the transition effort as a whole, or Mayor Walsh.) Nonetheless, these reports speak to ideas and policies that found significant group support or seemed especially innovative. (Note: Some members of the Basic City Services group decided to produce two additional papers, focusing in detail on the city’s Inspectional Services Department and the issue of Animal Care, and these individuals’ efforts are included here as well.)

The transition’s Working Groups process culminated in February 2014, with a series of twelve face-to-face meetings at City Hall. In sessions of between 90 minutes and two hours each, members and leaders of all 12 groups met with Mayor Walsh, his relevant cabinet and departmental leadership, and his mayoral policy team to present the results of their discussions, public hearings, and recommendations. At these meetings, Mayor Walsh made clear his hope and expectation that discussions undertaken in the Working Groups, and collegial relationships formed there between members and City Hall, ought to continue. Indeed, since that time, several of the people in working groups have been tapped for city boards, commissions, and advisory councils.

In presenting this report to the residents of Boston we would like to thank once again all those who participated in the transition process, whether as Co-Chairs, Working Group members and leaders, public meeting attendees, staff, or volunteers.



Joyce Linehan
Co-chair



David Stone
Executive Director

April 16, 2014

Mayor Martin J. Walsh's Transition Team Co-chairs

- Felix Arroyo, Chief of Health and Human Services, City of Boston
- John Barros, Chief of Economic Development, City of Boston
- Katherine Craven, Chief Administrative Officer for Babson College
- Joyce Linehan, Chief of Policy, City of Boston
- Dr. James Mandell, Attending Physician, Boston Children's Hospital
- Charlotte Golar Richie, Former State Representative
- Sam Tyler, President, Boston Municipal Research Bureau
- Paul Watanabe, Director, Institute for Asian American Studies; Associate Professor of Political Science, College of Liberal Arts, UMass Boston
- Beth Williams, President and CEO, Roxbury Technology, LLC

Organizational titles and affiliations are provided for identification purposes only.

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