



# Boston Fire Department Committee on Ways and Means Budget Hearing

*Boston City Council*  
*May 13, 2025*



# Attendance

---

**Paul F. Burke,**

**Commissioner & Chief of the Boston Fire Department**

- **Rodney Marshall, Chief of Operations Support Services**
- **Patrick Ellis, Chief of Operations Field Services**
- **Kevin Coyne, Deputy Commissioner of A&F Budget**
- **Michael Gaskins, Diversity Recruitment Officer**



# Opening Remarks

---



**Paul F. Burke Commissioner & Chief of the Boston Fire Department**

# Boston Fire Department

---

We are an organization of dedicated professionals who are committed to serving the community by protecting life, property, and the environment through prevention, education, emergency medical, civil defense and fire service.

We protect all Boston residents and the hundreds of thousands of people who work, shop and visit the City of Boston.



*“The first in the nation”*

# Agenda

---

- **Budget Submission Review**
- **Budget Status as of March 31, 2025**
- **FY 25 - 26 Largest Increases and Decreases**
- **Staffing, Vacancies and 5 Year FTE Review**
- **Grant Review - Federal & State**
- **Lease Purchase**
- **BFD Accomplishments - Cadets - Marine Unit - Training Academy**
- **Capital Projects Completed & Planning**
- **Questions**

# Review 2026 Budget Submission

---

FY2025 Adopted	FY2026 Reccomended	Increase/Decrease
\$ 306,569,810.00	\$310,600,767.00	\$4,030,957.00 

The recommended budget represents a 1.31% overall increase salaries directly related to existing CBA's and the shift of 85 Firefighters funded by SAFER onto the Operating Budget.



- Budget Status as of March 31, 2025

Account	Budgeted	Expend	Avail
Overtime	\$ 30,237,989.00	\$ 29,833,890.56	\$ 404,098.44
Unemployment Compensa	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 40,012.89	\$ 19,987.11
Workers Compensation	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 9,240.27	\$ 140,759.73
Telecommunications	\$ 923,568.00	\$ 663,334.60	\$ 258,357.85
Utilities	\$ 2,072,122.00	\$ 1,179,139.93	\$ 892,982.07
Snow Removal	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 34,448.17	\$ 5,359.25
Waste Removal	\$ 467,846.00	\$ 137,763.89	\$ 262,284.00
Repairs/Maintenance	\$ 1,670,786.00	\$ 1,177,133.92	\$ 44,464.24
Repair/Service Equip	\$ 1,784,028.00	\$ 1,052,642.82	\$ 343,259.45
Transportation/Travel	\$ 50,314.00	\$ 21,207.34	\$ 25,906.66
Contracted Services	\$ 4,466,299.00	\$ 3,036,991.33	\$ 267,527.68
Motor Vehicle Energy	\$ 1,355,045.00	\$ 652,911.07	\$ 456,210.87
Food	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 2,009.87	\$ 2,990.13
Custodial Supplies	\$ 64,000.00	\$ 54,990.73	\$ 328.02
Medical/Dental Suppli	\$ 147,919.00	\$ 121,967.60	\$ 22,202.12
Office Supplies	\$ 90,800.00	\$ 74,299.48	\$ 12,974.07
Clothing Allowance	\$ 866,200.00	\$ 844,700.00	\$ 21,500.00
Educational Supplies/	\$ 36,000.00	\$ -	\$ 36,000.00
Misc Supplies/Materia	\$ 3,493,745.00	\$ 1,811,201.23	\$ 851,710.35
Workers Comp Medical	\$ 41,500.00	\$ 5,137.51	\$ 36,362.49
Legal Liability Premi	\$ 170,000.00	\$ -	\$ 170,000.00
Indemnification	\$ 3,500,000.00	\$ 2,164,126.44	\$ 1,335,873.56
Current Charges	\$ 1,727,504.00	\$ 1,281,696.75	\$ 231,473.17
Lease Purchase Debt S	\$ 4,318,015.00	\$ 2,017,985.02	\$ 2,300,029.98
Furniture	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 9,996.55	\$ 913.45

- FY 25 - 26 Largest Increases and Decreases**

Account	FY25 Approp	FY26 Recom	Reduction FY25 - FY26	% Increase /Decrease	Narrative
Misc Supplies & Materials	\$4,323,345	\$3,703,845	-\$619,500	-14.33%	Administrative Reductions
Contracted Services	\$3,865,299	\$3,671,799	-\$193,500	-5.01%	Transferred to BFDs Current Charges account to fund 155 Rivermoor Lease Expansion
Transportation of Persons	\$75,736	\$30,900	-\$44,836	-59.20%	Centralization of MBTA Passes
Lease Purchase	\$4,318,015	\$4,549,671	\$231,656	5.36%	Increase to existing debt service
Current Charges	\$1,431,504	\$1,818,992	\$387,488	27.07%	155 Rivermoor Lease Expansion. The monies to fund this expense came from other BFD accounts so this transfer is budget neutral.
Total Permanent Employees	\$248,304,466	\$252,303,307	\$3,998,841	1.61%	General wage increases



- Projected impact of reductions - Largest Increases and Decreases

The FY2026 recommended budget reflects a reduction to the following cost centers

Account	FY25 Approp	FY26 Recom	Reduction FY25 - FY26	% Increase /Decrease
Misc Supplies & Materials	\$4,323,345	\$3,703,845	-\$619,500	-14.33%
Contracted Services	\$3,865,299	\$3,671,799	-\$193,500	-5.01%
		Total	\$813,000	-19.34%

The FY2026 recommended budget reflects a Increase to the following cost centers

Account	FY25 Approp	FY26 Recom	Reduction FY25 - FY26	% Increase /Decrease
Lease Purchase	\$4,318,015	\$4,549,671	\$231,656	5.36%
Current Charges	\$1,431,504	\$1,818,992	\$387,488	27.07%
Total Permanent Employees	\$248,304,466	\$252,303,307	\$3,998,841	1.61%

# Vacancies

Position Title	Hrs/Wk	Status Update
WkgFrprsMech	40	The plan is to post this position, but creating a JD with Facilities
Admin Asst	35	This is the job that Cheyenne is going to fill
Data Proc Equip Tech	35	Filled - person starting on 5/12/25
Head Clerk	35	This position is in SOC, but I have heard of no plans
Hvy Mtr Equip Repairperson BFD (2)	40	Position will be eliminated to create (1) new FTE - Marine Engineer - Approved in FY2026 Budget
Hvy Mtr Equip Repairperson BFD	40	Posted - waiting for qualified applicants
Maint Mech - HVAC Technician	40	Just received approval from Knack - moving towards PRC submission
Prin Storekeeper	35	Pending Administrative Review & Possible Reconfiguration
Sr Admin Asst (Fire)	35	Position is currently posted
Sr Data Proc Sys Anl	35	Need to repost - no qualified applicants from last posting

# 5 Years of FTE's

---

Calendar Years				
1/1/21	1/1/22	1/1/23	1/1/24	1/1/25
FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE	FTE
1,616	1,604	1,625	1,672	1,620



# BFD Grants

The Department currently has 8 active federal grants funded by FEMA, BJA, and CPSC totaling \$3,072,062.12 in federal shares.

## Active Federal Awards

Title - Short	ORIGINAL PERIOD OF PERFORM...	PROJECTS / SCOPE OF WORK -Short	Total Approved B...	Federal / State Share	COB SHARE
FY22 AFG	09/22/2023 - 09/21/2025	Fire Ground Survival Training & Health and Cancer Screenings	\$1,493,910.00	\$1,358,100.00	\$135,810.00
FY22 FP&S	09/01/2023 - 08/31/2025	Evidence Management System, related equipment, software support	\$50,285.00	\$47,890.47	\$2,394.53
FY22 PSGP	09/01/2022 - 08/31/2025	Progressive Shipboard Firefighting Program	\$24,000.00	\$24,000.00	\$0.00
FY23 AFG	09/26/2024 - 09/25/2026	Peer Support Training, H&L Programming, Clinical Director/IPS & Chief Officer Training	\$1,322,817.00	\$1,202,560.90	\$120,256.10
FY23 FP&S	09/04/2024 - 09/03/2026	Hot Work Training, Training for Inspectors and Engineers, and Arson Investigation Training	\$111,300.00	\$106,000.00	\$5,300.00
FY23 Coverdell ...	10/01/2023 - 09/30/2025	BFD Forensic Lab Accreditation	\$11,330.00	\$11,330.00	\$0.00
FY23 COPPGP	06/28/2024 - 06/27/2026	Purchase and Installation of Carbon Monoxide Detectors. Education and Outreach.	\$346,709.00	\$260,031.75	\$86,677.25
FY24 PSGP	09/01/2024 - 08/31/2027	Marine Firefighting for Land-based Firefighters Command and Control training course	\$82,866.00	\$62,149.00	\$20,717.00





# BFD Grants

The Department currently has 5 active state grants funded by DFS and EOPSS totaling \$1,539,370.33, all of which must be exhausted by 6/30/25.

## Active State Awards

Title - Short	ORIGINAL PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE	PROJECTS / SCOPE OF WORK -Short	Total Approved B...	Federal / State Share	COB SHARE
FY25 FF Saf. Equip	04/17/2025-06/30/2025	Handheld Thermal Imagers	\$23,860.00	\$23,860.00	\$0.00
FY25 Hazmat Earmark	07/01/2024-06/30/2025	Legislative Authorization to Fund the Hazardous Materials Response Teams	\$593,750.00	\$593,750.00	\$0.00
FY25 Training Earmark	07/01/2024-6/30/2025	Legislative Authorization to Fund the Boston Fire Department Training Academy	\$500,000.00	\$500,000.00	\$0.00
FY25 PSAP	07/10/2024-06/30/2025	Personnel, CAD, FSAS, and Other Equipment to Support Fire Alarm Dispatch	\$339,682.49	\$339,682.49	\$0.00
FY25 State 911 Trng.	07/09/2024-06/30/2025	Fire Alarm Dispatch Continuing Education Training Registration Fees and Personnel Costs	\$82,077.84	\$82,077.84	\$0.00





# FY 2026 Lease Purchase Submission

---

As part of the FY 2026 Budget Submission - BFD has requested to purchase (2) new pieces of specialized apparatus.

Description	Total	
H-2 Lighting Unit	\$	450,000.00
Hazmat 1	\$	1,300,000.00

H2 - Originally Purchased in 2014  
Hazmat 1 Originally Purchased in 2003



# Cadets

---

The Fire Cadet Program provides opportunities for young people from every neighborhood in Boston to learn the skills, values, and work ethic needed to succeed and become full-fledged firefighters.

In FY 2025, we will graduate members of our very first Boston Fire Cadet class. This class is made up of members from ten of the City's neighborhoods, a testament to this administration's commitment to growing a workforce that represents the diversity of every neighborhood of our great city.

**One highlight relating to cadets is the largest number of female recruits in one class - 8! All women represented are from our Cadet positions.**

22 of the 23 Cadets in the class were appointed to the Academy class and add value, diversity, and representation from many of Boston's neighborhoods.



# New Dive Boat - Captain John Kenney

---

The Boston Fire Dive Rescue Team has officially taken delivery of its new dive vessel—a state-of-the-art 46' custom-built to BFD's exact specifications. Delivered on schedule, the cutting-edge boat represents a major leap forward from the team's previous 30' open dive boat. Now in the water, the team is actively conducting familiarization training, with the vessel expected to be fully operational within two weeks.



*The vessel will be named to honor Captain John Kenney. Captain Kenney was the Captain of Engine 24 and a member and advocate of the Boston Fire Dive Team. Captain Kenney died as a result of occupational cancer in 2007 at the age of 48.*





# New Small Fire Boat

---

The Boston Fire Department's newest small fire boat is nearing completion, where final fit-out is underway. This 38-foot, custom-designed vessel has been built to meet the Department's specific operational needs, with features tailored for the unique geography of the Boston coastline.





## New Big Fire Boat

---

Construction is progressing steadily on the Boston Fire Department's newest and largest fireboat—a 69-foot custom FireStorm vessel currently being built. Engine installation began this week, and the hull and pilothouse are scheduled to be joined in the coming weeks, with final fit-out to follow. The project remains on schedule and under budget, with completion expected in August 2025 and delivery by the end of September.





# Training Academy Highlights

---



The Training Division held a Regional Academy with recruits graduating 11/22/24. In addition to this, we completed the following:

- Forcible Entry Training to the FBI, Regional Task Force, and Boston Police;
- “Handling Elevator Emergencies”;
- Held Department of Fire Services (State) exams at the Academy for ourselves and other neighboring Cities/Towns;
- Researched and Tested new hose, nozzles, bunker gear, boots, thermal imagers, foam, tips, etc.;
- Purchased a new document management system for Fire Engineering Training;
- Were provided with an MBTA training prop (Green Line Train) at the Academy. This will be used for all field training.

# Capital Projects FY25-30

---

## Recently Completed:

- Engine 17
  - New fire station in Meetinghouse Hill
- Purchase of new Fire Apparatus
  - Engines, Ladders
  - Marine units including Fire and Dive Boats

## Highlighted Capital Projects Advancing:

- Design of Engine 3
- Radio System Upgrades
- Study and design of structural repairs at Engine 9 and Engine 21
- Study of Engine 8 building
- Fire Detection and Energy Management improvements at multiple stations



# Questions

---

