

What's Happening This Week...

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Community Meetings & Events



Charles C. Yancey Book Fair

William E. Reed Auditorium
 24 Washington Street
 Dorchester, MA
 March 4, 2006
 12:00PM - 3:00PM
 Free Books For Children!

Boston Public Schools FY 2007 Budget Hearings

School Department
 Headquarters
 Edward J. winter Chambers
 26 Court Street, 1st Floor
 Boston, MA
 March 8, 2006
 5:00PM - 6:00PM
 (prior to School Committee Meeting)

Boston's Community Summit on Youth and Handgun Violence

Northeastern University
 Curry Student Center
 Roxbury, MA
 March 10, 2006
 8:30AM - 4:00PM

Boston Center for

Weekly Update From Sam Yoon

From the Office of City Councilor At-Large Sam Yoon

Week Ending March 4th, 2006



Dear Reader,

The purpose of this e-mail update is to keep you informed of legislative issues at the City Council, current events, and community news.

In this issue I am excited about kicking off my four-part series "Inside City Council." Ever wonder what happens every Wednesday at our City Council meetings? You are not alone. I created this series so that as I learn the different facets of my role as a legislator, I can share what I learn with you. Enjoy!

Sam Yoon

**Exploring Home Rule Petitions
 Inside City Council: Part 1 of 4**

This is the first of a four part series reviewing several legislative functions of a City Councilor.

What is a Home Rule Petition (HRP)?

A Home Rule Petition is an action through which a city or town seeks permission from the state legislature to exercise power or authority that it has not been given by the state. All HRPs are sent to the City Council Government Operations Committee. The City Council must pass the petition and the Mayor must sign off, before the petition is submitted to the State House.

Why are Home Rule Petitions important?

HRPs are important because in Massachusetts, state law dictates so much of what cities and towns have the power to do. In fact, many people do not realize that in Massachusetts, cities and towns themselves are created by state law. HRPs, therefore, are a city or town's way of saying to the state, "Let us do things our way!" -- thus

**Community and Justice
Leadership Roundtable**

Self Respect 101
BCCJ Office:
38 Chauncy Street, Suite 812
Boston, MA
March 16, 2006
5:30PM - 7:00PM
RSVPL Payal Sharma
PSharma@BostonCCJ.org
Phone: 617-451-5010, ext. 20

[More Information Click
Here!](#)

**Grow Your Business
Workshop**

Vietnamese American
Community Center
42 Charles Street, Fields
Corner
Dorchester, MA
March 15, 2006
6:00PM - 8:00PM
Workshops are Free!
To register or for more info call
617.482.1145 (English),
617.988.0610 (Espanol),
617.822.3717 ext 13 (Tieng
Viet)

**Environmental Justice in
the Hood 2006**

USES Harriet Tubman House
566 Columbus Avenue
South End, MA
March 25, 2006
9:00AM - 4:00PM
Free Event!
Childcare, translation and food
will be provided

[More Information Click
Here!](#)

the term "home rule."

How do Home Rule Petitions become laws?

In Boston, HRP's are sent to a committee of the City Council called "Government Operations." If this committee recommends the petition to the City Council, the Council must approve it by a majority vote, and the Mayor must sign off. Then the petition is sent to the State House.

In order for the petition to become law both sides of the Massachusetts legislature (both the Senate and the House) must pass it, and then the Governor must sign it. Needless to say, it is a lengthy process. Since 2004, 39 HRP's have been filed with the City Clerk's office. Of these 39 HRP's, 17 have been passed by the City Council, signed by the Mayor, and sent to the State House.

Our office is currently researching whether any of these 17 HRP's were passed into law, or what stage of the legislative process they are in.

What HRP's have the City Council submitted recently?

Here are two examples of Home Rule Petitions introduced so far this year. They demonstrate the range of issues targeted by HRP's.

1. Offered by Councilors Tobin, Flaherty, Murphy and Arroyo: "Order approving a petition for a special law regarding an act relative to the appointment of John R. Mulligan to the Boston Fire Department."

This required an HRP because state law governs the way retirement benefits are owed to fire fighters. Mr. Mulligan's case was unique and called for intervention, which these councilors took up.

2. Offered by Councilors Arroyo, Turner, Yancey, Yoon: "Order approving a petition for a special law re: a Planning Department for the City."

This is a proposal to replace the BRA with a planning department with a new governance structure. This required an HRP because the BRA was created by state law.

** For specific information on current and pending HRP's please contact our office. **

NEXT TIME: What is a "resolution"?

[For More Info. Regarding Boston City Council Click Here](#)

City Council Declares March 1st Big Brother, Big Sister Day

In the effort to recognize one of the most influential youth mentoring programs in the country, the Boston City Council declared March 1st Big Brother, Big Sister Day. The resolution was offered by Councilor Yoon, Councilor Scapicchio and Councilor Tobin and announced at Wednesday's (3/1) Council meeting.

A small reception was held in the Curley Room at City Hall prior to the Council meeting to welcome Big Brothers and Big Sisters representatives and volunteers. Members of the City Council and staff were on hand to hear CEO & President of Big Brothers of Massachusetts Bay, John Pearson, give an overview of the long-standing agency.

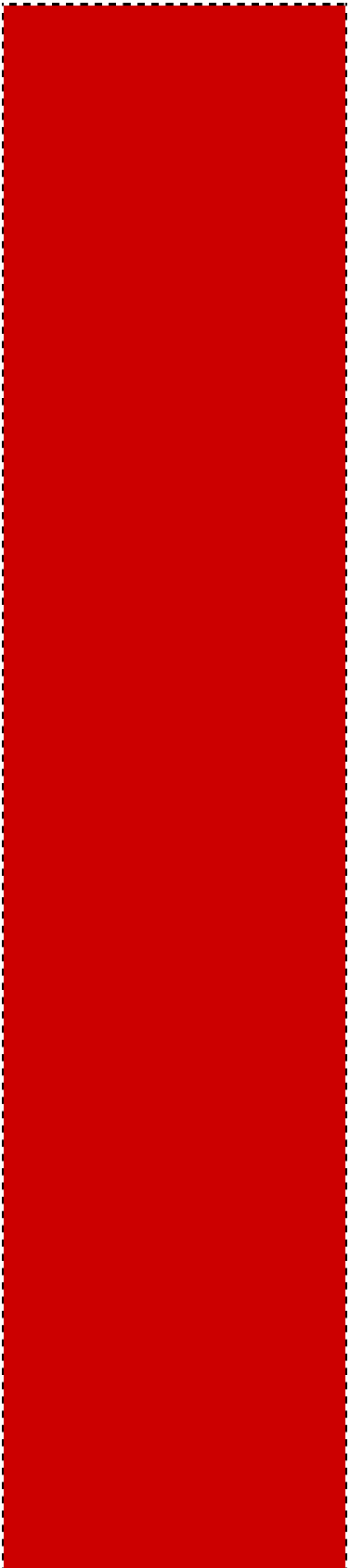
Committee on Youth Violence Crime Prevention Hearing Held

[Youth Speak Out, Urge More Programs and Less Lock-up](#)

More than 100 youth attended a public hearing on Wednesday, February 22nd to voice their concerns and suggestions regarding the recent spike of violence in the city. Committee Chairman Michael Ross, along with sponsors Councilor Felix Arroyo and Councilor Chuck Turner, listened to testimony from dozens of passionate community leaders and young people about this issue.

I joined the hearing as well. I was truly impressed by the maturity and leadership demonstrated by so many of our young people, as well as their mentors. In my remarks I told them how much I appreciated having a dialogue with them, noting that as elected officials "we spend a lot of time talking about you, but not a lot of time talking to you."

Many of the comments called for more funding for youth jobs, teen programs and bettering relationships with law enforcement. The Boston City Council's Special Committee on Youth Violent Crime prevention convened the hearing at the request of youth leaders with the United Youth and Youth Workers Alliance of Boston.



NEWS YOU CAN USE: Free Tax Preparation For Bostonians

The Boston EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit) Campaign has commenced its 5th season. Free tax preparation is available at 22 neighborhood sites across the city of Boston. Mayor Menino along with numerous partners sponsor the campaign, including ABCD, Codman Square Health Center and the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. Volunteers are certified by the EITC coalition and the IRS to provide quality free tax prep for low to moderate income households. Banking services, credit repair and benefits screening are also available at the sites.

Site information is available on the website at www.bostontaxhelp.org. Sites are both walk-in as well as by appointment. The campaign is committed to providing all Bostonians access to wealth building services. Flyers are available in seven languages and there are seven Ambassadors, outreach workers who are available to do translation and tax preparation in the following languages: Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Cape Verdian Creole and Somali. If you have questions regarding eligibility, feel free to call the hotline at 617.918.5275. For questions about the campaign, call Mimi Turchinetz, Campaign Director at 617.918.5259.

[Free Tax Preparation Information](#)

NEWS YOU CAN USE: Housing Information [Homeowner and Homebuyer Programs](#)

As Chairperson of the City Council Housing Committee, Councilor Yoon would like to inform you of city and state programs available to homeowners and homebuyers.

Each week, different programs will be highlighted for your convenience. Please contact our office if you would like more information on any of the programs below. All books and brochures offered free of charge.

1. Lead Safe Boston- Low or no interest loans are available to eliminate lead from your home. Also available are informational guides on the dangers of lead in drinking water. [www.ci.boston.ma.us/dnd/b_lead_safe_information.as p](http://www.ci.boston.ma.us/dnd/b_lead_safe_information.as.p).
2. Guide to City Owned Property- Brochures available OR visit www.cityofboston.gov/dnd/1_Real_Estate.asp.
3. Senior Homeowner Services- Low-income seniors in the City

may be eligible for loans, grants, and assistance for safety and structural improvements to their home. www.cityofboston.gov
Keyword: Boston HomeWorks.

4. Good Neighbors Handbook- A must-have for landlords AND tenants. The handbook outlines: security deposits, rental agreements, tenant rights, and much more. Visit on the web: www.cityofboston.gov/rentalhousing.

Help Make Our Newsletter Better

This newsletter is intended as a resource for information for all of our city's communities. With Councilor Yoon, together we share the belief in a better Boston. In the future there will be an opportunity to subscribe to the Weekly Update From Sam Yoon. Watch for announcements!

If you would like to share information about an event or meeting in your community, please contact Harry Harding in our office via email or phone using the contact information below.

Follow up Links

- [City Of Boston](#)
- [Community Event Search](#)
- [Boston Housing Authority](#)
- [My Neighborhood/My District](#)

email: harry.harding@cityofboston.gov

phone: 617-635-4217

web: <http://www.cityofboston.gov/citycouncil>