



## **City Council**

### **Finance Committee Meeting**

**~Final~**

**36 Court Street  
Springfield, MA 01103**

**<http://www.springfieldcityhall.com>**

**Councilor Timothy Allen (Chair)**

---

**November 18,  
2025**

**3:00 PM**

**City Hall - Room 200**

---

### **Special Finance/Real Estate Tax Classification/Real Estate Tax Ratio Committee**

#### **Call To Order**

3:00 PM Meeting called to order on November 18, 2025, in Hybrid Room 200, 36 Court Street, Springfield, MA 01103.

#### **Roll Call**

In Person: Timothy Allen (Chair), Sacoy Malone (Assessors), Melony Nacewycz (Assessors), Courtney Brodie, Janet Deforge (The Republican), Matt Fontaine (Assessors), Frank Bryan, Wilfredo Lopez, Cathy Buono (CAFO), Ruth Stutts (Resident), Steve Lonergan (Treasurers), Steve Buonoconti, Pat Burns, John Moynihan (Resident).

Zoom: Ken Shea, Maria Perez, John Collins, Tracye Whitfield, Scott Wellington, Richard Allen, Kateri Walsh, Patrick Greenhalgh, Diana Szynal, Mark Howard, Jessica Guerra (Assessors), Lindsey Hackett (Finance), Victor Davila.

#### **Public Portion**

1. FY26 Tax Rate Information with Approved Values

#### **Minutes**

#### **Springfield Tax Rate Setting Committee — Meeting Minutes (Summary)**

## Quick Recap

The annual Tax Committee convened to review the FY26 budget, evaluate revenue challenges, and determine potential tax rate adjustments for the City of Springfield. Key issues included declining state aid, the use of free cash, the distribution of residential vs. CIP tax burdens, and strategies for taxpayer relief. The meeting concluded with votes supporting enhanced delinquent tax collection efforts and approval of a new Recreational Entertainment Development (RED) initiative.

## Meeting Summary

### Budget Overview

- Jessica Guerra (Board of Assessors) presented the FY26 budget, noting a **6.1% increase**, including **\$42M for schools** and **\$14M for city operations**.
- **\$51M** of the increase is non-discretionary (school transportation, pensions, fixed obligations).
- State aid constitutes **63% of revenue** and continues to decline.

### Tax Rate Framework

- Jessica Guerra (Board of Assessors) reviewed the assessment process, DOR requirements, and proposed a **single tax rate of \$19.84** for residential and CIP properties.
- Discussions centered on Springfield's historical **split tax rate** and the optional **residential-to-CIP shift** (maximum 1.75).

### Assessment & New Growth

- Property values are certified using market-based assessments from the previous calendar year.
- New growth stems from utilities, underground infrastructure, and new construction.
- Jessica Guerra (Board of Assessors) committed to providing a detailed **CIP vs. residential new growth breakdown**.

### Tax Relief Measures

- The mayor has committed **\$4M** to tax relief, lowering the average FY25 single-family increase from **\$348 to \$288**.
- Additional relief options are being explored, including reallocation of free cash and targeted relief programs.
- Exemptions, Circuit Breaker credits, and tax relief insert materials will be expanded and distributed (including Spanish translation).

### Free Cash, Reserves & Financial Strategy

- Current free cash stands at **\$18M** (down from \$21M last year).
- Discussion included funding for OPEB/pension reserves, T-bill investment capacity (~\$45M), and long-term fiscal stability.
- Some members recommended allocating additional free cash toward immediate homeowner relief.

### Industry-Specific Tax Data

- Questions were raised regarding food truck personal property taxes and broader industry contributions.
- Jessica Guerra (Board of Assessors) will follow up with detailed data.

### Comparative Community Analysis

- Members requested inclusion of **per capita income, average property values**, and comparisons with neighboring communities' tax structures.

### Shift Factor & Voting

- A proposal to maintain the **maximum shift** was discussed, along with a recommendation to request an additional **\$2M** in relief from the mayor.
- The committee prepared recommendations for the upcoming City Council tax rate vote.

### Tax Collection & Development Initiatives

- John Moynihan (Resident) highlighted the city's aggressive delinquent tax enforcement approach (liens, payment plans, occasional foreclosures).
- WeVAMP presented the **RED (Recreational Entertainment Development)** initiative to transform municipal properties into community hubs.
- The committee unanimously supported the RED proposal.

### Next Steps / Action Items

#### Jessica Guerra (Board of Assessors)

- Email presentation slides to participants.
- Provide detailed **CIP vs. residential utilities/new growth** breakdown before the next classification hearing.
- Research food truck personal property accounts and provide data to Councilor Davila.
- Add **average income and property values by community** to comparative tax

bill slides.

- Create and distribute a **tax exemption information insert** for this year's bills.
- Coordinate **city councilor tours** for exemptions/tax relief program outreach.
- Ensure exemption insert is available **in Spanish** for Councilor Perez.
- Research other communities' **maximum shift usage** before next meeting.

### **Councilor Tim Allen & Cathy Buono (CAFO)**

- Meet with the mayor to discuss **additional funding** beyond the \$4M already committed.

### **Councilor Tim Allen**

- Obtain contact information for **John Moynihan (Resident) and Courtney Brodie (Resident)** to share with Councilor Whitfield and Diana Szynal.

### **Cathy Buono (CAFO)**

- Submit a request to City Council to allocate **10% of free cash** to OPEB and pension reserves.

### **City Council**

- Vote on the **tax rate recommendation** at the Monday, 5 PM meeting.

[MIN\_SIGNATURES]