



City Council

Civil Rights Sub-Committee Meeting

~Final~

36 Court Street
Springfield, MA 01103

<http://www.springfieldcityhall.com>

Councilor Tracye Whitfield
(Chair)

October 9, 2025

12:00 PM

City Hall - Room 200

Roll Call

Present: Tracye Whitfield, Kateri Walsh, Brian Santaniello, Timothy Allen, Zaida Govan, Steve Loneran, Cathy Bueno, Laura Walsh, Peter Krupczack, Kevin Garvey, Channel 22, Tom Ashe.

Virtual: Victor Davial, Maria Perez

Call To Order

12:00 PM Meeting call to order on October 9, 2025, in Hybrid Room 200 36 Court Street, Springfield, MA 01103

Public Portion

1. Discussion on missed grant opportunities.

Minutes

Summary of Key Discussions:

1. Missed Park Grants

- The meeting focused on missed park grant opportunities, notably the PARC grant for FY25, which was not pursued due to fiscal constraints and uncertainty regarding matching funds.
- Finance department defended the decision as a necessary measure to protect existing services during challenging financial times.
- Parks director expressed concern that some grants could have been better leveraged for visible community projects.

2. Grants Status & Decision-Making

- Discussion included Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and ORLP grant statuses.
- FY26 PARC grant not applied for due to uncertainty in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) matching funds amid potential federal cuts.
- Councilors requested historical data on past grants received, applied for, or missed, including matching fund sources.

3. Parks Department Budget & Projects

- Parks Department is currently managing \$18M in active projects and \$1.6M in design work.
- Councilors emphasized prioritizing resident benefits (e.g., tax rate reductions) when allocating free cash.
- Issues regarding maintenance, especially in metro parks and terraces, were highlighted.

4. Financial Context

- City noted to be in strongest financial position in 16 years with \$74M in reserves and improved bond rating.
- Concerns raised about balancing fiscal prudence with community improvement initiatives.

5. Community Engagement & Collaboration

- The importance of collaboration between residents, city officials, and police for neighborhood maintenance and safety is emphasized.
- Positive outcomes highlighted, such as the Indian Orchard Citizens Council reducing crime through community reporting.

Next Steps / Action Items:

1. **Kathy Buono, CAFO**, to provide data on grants received this year, including matched funds.
2. **Kathy Buono** to compile a comprehensive list of grants historically received but not applied for this year, noting match requirements.
3. **Kathy Buono & Councilor Allen** to include grant decision-making processes in the next Finance Committee meeting agenda.
4. **Tom Ashe, Director of Parks & Rec**, to address parks needing attention upon specific reporting of locations.

[MIN_SIGNATURES]