



City Council
General Government
Committee Meeting

36 Court Street
Springfield, MA 01103
<http://www.springfieldcityhall.com>

Councilor Justin Hurst (Chair)

~Final~

February 5, 2026

4:00 PM

City Hall - Room 200

Call To Order

4:00 PM Meeting called to order on February 5, 2026, in Hybrid Room 200, 36 Court Street, Springfield, MA 01103.

Roll Call

In Person

Justin Hurst
Gerry Martin
Victor Davila
Gladys Oyola (Elections Commissioner)
Chelsea Parmentier (Deputy Elections Commissioner)
Stephen Buoniconti (Solicitor)
Gumersindo Gomez (School Committee Member)

Virtual

John McCorskey
Sherri Meptune
Bernice Ezell
Grace
Jacqueline Brown-Hazard
Maria Periez
Michael Fenton
Tony Bass
Tracey Carpenter

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Brian Santaniello	City Councilor At Large	Excused	
Gerry Martin	City Councilor — Ward 7	Present	
Maria Perez	City Councilor — Ward 1	Present	

Malo Brown	City Councilor — Ward 4	Excused	
Zaida Govan	City Councilor — Ward 8	Excused	
Kateri Walsh	City Councilor At Large	Excused	
Justin Hurst	City Councilor At Large	Present	
Victor Davila	City Councilor — Ward 6	Present	
Michael Fenton	City Councilor — Ward 2	Virtual	
Jose Delgado	City Councilor At Large	Excused	
Lavar Click-Bruce	City Councilor — Ward 5	Excused	
Melvin Edwards	City Councilor — Ward 3	Excused	
Tracye Whitfield	City Councilor At Large	Virtual	

Public Portion

1. Confirmation of Appointment: John McCloskey to the Mobile Home Rent Control Board
2. Discussion on the 2025 Elections

Minutes:

Item 1: Appointment of John McCloskey – Mobile Home Rent Control Board

- City Councilor Chair Hurst introduced the proposed appointment of John McCloskey and invited him to speak.

John McCloskey

- City employee and Forest Park resident
- First-time applicant for a board or commission
- Described the Mobile Home Rent Control Board's role as resolving disputes between mobile home residents and lot owners related to rent increases
- Expressed interest in public service and a commitment to objective decision-making
- Noted concern for the impacts of rent increases on residents with fixed incomes

Councilor Chair Justin Hurst

- Highlighted Mr. McCloskey's educational background and public service experience
- Confirmed receipt of a letter of support from the Mayor
- Thanked Mr. McCloskey for volunteering to serve

Councilor Victor Davila

- Confirmed the appointment would fill a vacancy created by the retirement of Jesus Christi
- Asked Mr. McCloskey about his views on rent increases
- Thanked him for his service to the City

Council President Tracye Whitfield

- Asked how Mr. McCloskey learned of the appointment opportunity
- Raised concerns regarding fairness, transparency, and public access in the boards and commissions appointment process
- Expressed support for the appointment while requesting that the concerns be noted on the public record

Chair Response

- Chair Hurst acknowledged the concerns raised
- Indicated the appointment process could be reviewed at a future meeting

Motion and Vote

- Motion to recommend the appointment of John McCloskey to the Mobile Home Rent Control Board for a three-year term
- Moved by Councilor Davila
- Seconded by Councilor Martin
- Vote: Unanimous approval

Outcome

- The appointment of John McCloskey was advanced to the full City Council for

consideration

Item 2: Discussion on the 2025 Elections

Councilor Chair Hurst

- Opened the meeting and explained the format; noted additional meetings would follow.
- Asked about parking and voter access issues at Rebecca Johnson School and MLK Charter School, and how similar issues could be prevented.
- Reported voter confusion over the J.C. Williams to Brookings School polling location change.
- Raised the late opening at Highland House and inquired about prevention measures.
- Deferred questions about vote totals to a later meeting and adjourned.

Election Commissioner/Madam Clerk Gladys Oyola

- Explained Rebecca Johnson parking issues were due to unexpected school use and were corrected.
- Confirmed police presence and election oversight at all polling sites.
- Described coordination challenges with MLK Charter School; relocation is being considered.
- Outlined the legal process for polling location changes.
- Clarified school closures on Election Day are voluntary.
- Noted the Highland House late opening resulted from building access issues.

Deputy Election Commissioner Chelsea Parmentier

- Explained MLK Charter School is not part of Springfield Public Schools, limiting coordination.
- Reported that few postcards were returned undeliverable after polling location changes.

Councilor Davila

- Asked about actions taken to address Rebecca Johnson parking.
- Suggested clearer expectations with schools.
- Noted MLK was busy but voters were still able to vote and asked about charter school

accountability.

Tracey Carpenter

- Asked how many polling locations are schools and about police presence.
- Inquired about undeliverable postcards.

Council President Tracye Whitfield

- Asked about discrepancies in vote totals.

Councilor Maria Perez

- Asked whether schools are required or volunteer as polling locations.

Councilor Martin

- Expressed confidence in the Election Department and its staff.

Sherri Neptune (Public)

- Suggested schools close on Election Day to avoid conflicts.

Danielle (Public)

- Raised concerns about late poll openings and suggested improved backup plans and signage.

Councilor Michael Fenton

- Suggested inviting MLK and Highland House representatives to future meetings.

[MIN_SIGNATURES]