



City Council

Finance Sub Committee Meeting

~Final~

36 Court Street
Springfield, MA 01103

<http://www.springfieldcityhall.com>

Zaida Govan (Chair)
Lavar Click-Bruce
Victor Davila

March 18, 2026

4:00 PM

City Hall - Room 200

Roll Call

In Person

Victor Davila
Zaida Govan
Tracye Whitfield
Gerry Martin
Maria Perez

Virtual

Justin Hurst

Constituent

Stephen Howard

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	Present	
Kateri Walsh	City Councilor At Large	Excused	
Justin Hurst	City Councilor At Large	Virtual	
Victor Davila	City Councilor — Ward 6	Present	
Michael Fenton	City Councilor — Ward 2	Excused	
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	Present	

Call To Order

4:00 PM Meeting called to order on March 18, 2026, in Hybrid Room 200, 36 Court Street, Springfield, MA 01103.

Public Portion

- 1. Order Authorizing a Contract Term Over 3 Years for Food Service Management Company for The Springfield Public Schools**

Minutes:

Springfield City Council Finance Committee Meeting – March 18, 2026 – School Food Services Contract

The Finance Committee, chaired by Councilor Zaida Govan with Councilors Victor Davila, Maria Perez, Justin Hurst, Tracye Whitfield, and Gerry Martin, met with Tim Gray from Springfield Public Schools Food Service to review the school food services contract with Sodexo (Homegrown), focusing on contract terms, food quality, audits, and finances.

The current Sodexo contract has been in place for 20 years, with a one-year base term and four renewals. A five-year RFP is underway, with proposals due April 21 and a potential start July 1. Five companies attended the pre-bid conference, and the RFP incorporates prior audit recommendations.

Parents and students have reported cold meals and skipped lunches. Meals are prepared centrally and shipped to schools, managed by Sodexo. Reintroducing onsite preparation was suggested. Food quality is to be addressed separately, possibly with the Health and Human Services Committee or in a joint meeting with the school committee.

Audits identified \$1.9 million in administrative costs, raising concerns about overlap with the \$0.25-per-meal management fee. The school department stated that administrative roles are required and included in the RFP. Surplus funds are reinvested in equipment, food quality, and refrigeration, funded by USDA federal sources. Background checks are returned to Sodexo and coordinated with school safety staff. The committee requested a detailed financial breakdown and clarification of audit findings.

The committee expressed caution about approving a five-year contract without reviewing the

final draft. If not approved, a three-year contract would be negotiated. Joint sessions with the school committee and auditors are planned to review contract terms, audit findings, and food quality.

Approximately 22,000–30,000 meals are served daily. Sodexo’s long-term service faces persistent quality complaints, and questions remain about financial transparency, management fees, salaries, and surpluses.

Next steps include a joint review of contracts, audits, and food quality; site visits to the Culinary and Nutrition Center and selected schools; obtaining a comprehensive financial report; consideration of Health and Human Services oversight; and formalizing background check procedures. Outstanding issues include justification of administrative costs, contract details, effectiveness of background checks, financial clarity, contingency planning, and the final determination of the service provider.

The committee emphasized accountability, transparency, and collaborative oversight to ensure quality service and responsible use of public funds.

[MIN_SIGNATURES]