



City Council
Public Safety Meeting

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

~Final~

Gerry Martin (Chair)

April 7, 2026

4:45 PM

City Hall - Room 200

Roll Call

In Person:

Councilor Martin
Councilor Walsh
Councilor Whitfield
Officer J Martucci
Officer D Martin
Tom Ashe, Director of Parks & Rec
Stephen Howard (Constituent)

Zoom:

Councilor Hurst
Charles Stokes (Constituent)
Jeannette DeForge (Press)
Councilor Govan
Councilor Davila
Councilor Santaniello

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Brian Santaniello	City Councilor At-Large	Virtual (L)	
Gerry Martin	City Councilor — Ward 7	Present	
Maria Perez	City Councilor — Ward 1	Excused	
Malo Brown	City Councilor — Ward 4	Absent	
Zaida Govan	City Councilor — Ward 8	Virtual (L)	
Kateri Walsh	City Councilor At Large	Present	
Justin Hurst	City Councilor At Large	Virtual (L)	
Victor Davila	City Councilor — Ward 6	Virtual (L)	

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 (L)	

Call To Order

4:45 PM Meeting called to order on April 7, 2026, in Hybrid Room 200, 36 Court Street, Springfield, MA 01103.

Public Portion

1. New Public Safety Strategy after the Sheriff's Department Cut backs.

Minutes

The Public Safety Subcommittee meeting, chaired by Council Member Jerry Martin, convened on April 7, 2026, to address public safety impacts following approximately \$26 million in Hammond County Sheriff's Department budget reductions resulting in layoffs and reduced patrol coverage.

Discussion centered on operational impacts at Union Station and Forest Park. Two sheriff officers assigned to Union Station will be lost, with Deputy Chief David Martin and Captain Jeff Marti outlining mitigation through metro units, C3 Community Crime Control units, traffic units, and walking posts to maintain coverage. At Forest Park, reduced sheriff patrols will be offset by bike patrols, walking posts, directed patrol reports, and continued C3 unit activity. Director Tom Ash supported bike patrols to enhance community engagement, and Superintendent Akers affirmed Forest Park's safety as a top priority. Sheriff Cocchi was acknowledged for prior cooperation.

Deployment strategies were described as seasonal and data-driven, including early-April dirt bike enforcement, spring-to-fall anti-drag-racing patrols, and traffic-safety grant enforcement from April 1 through mid-September. They expanded foot and bike patrols in areas such as Mason Square and the North End. Overtime will be used selectively. Additional coverage includes canine units and metro unit support; mounted sheriff units are being phased out. Needle

cleanup operations continue under separate funding and are unaffected.

Coordination with state police is underway through the metro unit led by Lieutenant Elliott, with joint deployment planning pending. Parks facilities continue to provide space for police coordination. Marine rescue operations remain unchanged.

Council members, including Kateri Walsh, raised concerns regarding transparency, staffing impacts, and crime trends in areas such as Mason Square and McKnight. Requests were made for future discussion on police lobby protocols and C3 restructuring in the North End. Members emphasized ongoing public engagement.

Key dates include the deployment of traffic safety grants beginning April 1, 2026, the April 7 meeting, and an April 12 court proceeding related to sheriff layoffs. Seasonal enforcement continues through mid-September. The committee concluded that interagency coordination and targeted deployments will be used to maintain public safety under reduced staffing conditions.

[MIN_SIGNATURES]