



City Council
Public Safety Meeting

36 Court Street
Springfield, MA 01103
<http://www.springfieldcityhall.com>
Gerry Martin (Chair)

~Final~

May 14, 2026

5:00 PM

City Hall - Room 200

Roll Call

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Brian Santaniello	City Councilor At Large	Absent	
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	Excused	
Kateri Walsh	City Councilor At Large	Excused	
Justin Hurst	City Councilor At Large	Virtual	
Victor Davila	City Councilor — Ward 6	Virtual	
Michael Fenton	City Councilor — Ward 2	Excused	
Jose Delgado	City Councilor At Large	Excused	
Lavar Click-Bruce	City Councilor — Ward 5	Virtual	
Melvin Edwards	City Councilor — Ward 3	Excused	
Tracye Whitfield	City Councilor At Large	Virtual	

In Person

Councilor Martin (Chair)

Dean Fay (Central City Boxing & Barbell)

Kyla Raimer (SPD)

Francis Olive III (Local Action research partner)

Anthony Falvo

Rachelle Hannough (Director of youth violence prevention & Court support program)

Eve McCray (violence prevention supervisor)

Chiarina Sarco (Coo, spfld boys & girls club)
Jason Carrasquillo (NNCC, director of recreation/enrichment)
Ed Cuisse (Director, Sheriff's Office)
Charles Stokes (community advocate)
Atu White (Dunbar Center)
Dexter Johnson (YMCA CEO)
Michael Grant (President/founder Give Music)
Rosa Valentine (School Committee member, ward (6/7))
Mark Dorsey (Spfld citizen)
Jarix Santiago (NNCC)
Elizabeth Dineen (YWCA of Western MA)
Rhonda Latney (Public Citizen)
Francena Brown (CEO of Families Against Violence)

Virtual

Councilor Click Bruce
Councilor Davila
Councilor Hurst
Council President Whitfield
Francis Olvie III
Donna
Jonathan Demars
Karon Forde
KT
Tova Marshall
Matt Benoit, Lieutenant SPD
Natalie
Sara

Call To Order

5:00 PM Meeting called to order on May 14, 2026, in Hybrid Room 200, 36 Court Street, Springfield, MA 01103.

Public Portion

1. Discussion on planned use of Shannon Grant funding to strengthen the Shannon Community Safety Initiative (CSI) and improve community safety outcomes.

Minutes:

On May 14, 2026, the Springfield City Council Public Safety Committee, chaired by Councilor

Gerry Martin, reviewed the Shannon Grant program and its role in addressing youth violence, gang activity, and public safety efforts for youth ages 10 through 24 in Springfield. Officials stated Springfield has approximately 65 gangs involving an estimated 1,000 to 1,200 youth and young adults, a poverty rate of 25.8 percent, and approximately 82 percent of public school students classified as low income. Risk assessment data identified 48 percent of referred youth as low risk, 28 percent as moderate risk, and 24 percent as high risk, including known gang members and individuals exposed to violence. During fiscal year 2025, programs reported 683 youth receiving outreach services, 1,217 participating in recreation programs, 1,588 participating in youth development programs, 263 participating in employment programming, 136 participating in education programs, and 210 community members attending events.

The Springfield Police Department stated its role focuses on suppression strategies, hotspot patrols, gang investigations, and coordination with community organizations. Officials reported 41 hotspot patrols and 131 gang-related arrests during the reporting period and stated recent changes to grant administration improved accountability and coordination among partners.

The YWCA Here Project stated it provides violence prevention education, healthy relationship training, human trafficking awareness, bystander intervention, counseling, shelter support, and trauma-informed services. Staff reported serving 620 youth in 2025 and approximately 350 to date in 2026.

The Salvation Army stated its court diversion program for youth ages 12 through 18 provides educational support, clinical services, family engagement, and behavioral intervention. Officials reported an 82 percent school retention rate with no participant reoffending, stated that the program receives approximately \$67,000 annually through Shannon funding and additional organizational support, and confirmed that it now operates the Massachusetts Youth Diversion Program.

The Boys and Girls Club of Springfield stated that it provides teen mentorship, recreation, summer camps, financial literacy, job-readiness training, and the Unity Basketball League. Representatives reported serving 167 teens in 2026 to date.

The YMCA Y-AIM program stated it offers after-school and summer programming focused on violence prevention, dropout prevention, leadership development, financial literacy, and college exposure opportunities for middle and high school students.

The Dunbar Community Center stated its programs support middle school girls through leadership development, arts, entrepreneurship, technology training, mentoring, podcasts, and summer basketball activities.

Give Music, Inc. stated it operates music and technology workforce development programs for youth involved with the Department of Youth Services through recording studios and concert technology training in secure facilities and community locations.

The New North Citizens Council stated that it provides after-school services, mentoring, advocacy, and community-building activities. Representatives reported reduced enrollment from

more than 100 youth annually to 41 youth due to budget limitations.

The Central City Boxing Program stated its volunteer-based organization serves more than 300 youth annually through boxing instruction, mentoring, academic support, discipline-building, fitness, and family engagement without paid staff.

The Criminal Justice Organization of Hampden County stated its basketball league program uses mentorship, teamwork, and character development to engage youth and families in targeted neighborhoods.

MLK Family Services stated the Nightspot program provides evening recreation, mentoring, noncompetitive sports, and discussions addressing violence, grief, trauma, depression, and substance abuse.

Families Against Violence stated it provides advocacy, funeral assistance, trauma support, mental health services, group sessions, community outreach, and the “Men Speak, Young Men Speak” storytelling initiative for families impacted by violence.

Councilors raised questions regarding transparency, measurable outcomes, accountability, and whether intervention programs are successfully reaching individuals most responsible for violent activity. Program representatives acknowledged challenges engaging the highest-risk individuals while emphasizing the importance of early intervention, outreach, mentorship, mental health support, family engagement, and sustained funding. Participants also discussed staffing pressures, budget constraints, and public criticism of community organizations, despite ongoing collaborative efforts among law enforcement, schools, nonprofits, families, and local agencies to reduce violence and support Springfield youth.

Councilor Martin made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

[MIN_SIGNATURES]