

CITY OF WORCESTER

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, September 8, 2026
Esther Howland (South) Chamber
Convened: 5:04 P.M.
Adjourned: 6:20 P.M.

MAYOR

Joseph M. Petty

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chairperson Kathleen M Toomey
Vice Chairperson Morris A Bergman
Councilor Tony Economou



CLERK OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Nikolin Vangjeli

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City Hall - 455 Main Street Worcester, Massachusetts

Present Were:

Chairperson Councilor Kathleen M. Toomey
Councilor Morris A. Bergman, who arrived at 5:17 p.m.
Councilor Tony Economou

Also:

Commissioner of Inspectional Services Nicholas J. Antanavica
Police Chief Paul B. Saucier
Deputy City Clerk Stephen A.J. Pottle, clerk

1. Virtual Attendee Call-In Information

- a. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 and in order to ensure active, public engagement, the City of Worcester currently allows for both in-person and remote participation at all City Council and Standing Committee meetings. To partake in the meeting, you may attend the meeting in-person within the meeting location, follow the below link to join via Zoom or dial the direct line as indicated. If you join a Zoom meeting by dialing in with a phone number, you can raise your hand by dialing *9.

Public Safety Committee Zoom Link: <https://worcesterma.zoomgov.com/j/1615547889>

Public Safety Committee Zoom Phone Number: +1 646 828 7666

Public Safety Committee Zoom Access Code: 161 554 7889

Chairperson Councilor Toomey read the item and recognized the following Speakers:

1. **Bruce Hoffner, NH resident, spoke in favor of item #3a**
2. **Joseph Carcia, Worcester resident, spoke in favor of item #3a**
3. **Gordon Davis, Worcester resident, spoke neither in favor of nor opposed to item #3a**

2. Approval of the Minutes

- a. Order - That the City Council Standing Committee of Public Safety hereby approves the minutes of the Public Safety Committee meeting on June 23, 2026.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey read the item and moved to adopt the item. Order adopted

3. Miscellaneous Item

- a. Order of Councilor Tony Economou, Councilor Jose A. Rivera, Councilor Kathleen M. Toomey, Councilor Gary Rosen and Councilor Robert A. Bilotta - Request Standing Committee on Public Safety hold a discussion to review the city's ordinance relative to excessive and unreasonable noise. Further, request said discussion include the feasibility of amending the noise ordinance to allow for the creation of a special noise variance application for churches, festivals, or organizations holding certain events (see attached for Worcester noise ordinance, as well as other municipalities' processes).

13b CC July 21, 2026

Chairperson Councilor Toomey read the item and recognized the Commissioner of Inspectional Services, who provided an overview of the city's noise ordinance, which included enforcement roles between the Worcester Police Department (WPD) and the Inspectional Services Department (ISD), as well as best methods used to approach noise complaints at establishments.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey discussed problem properties and the feasibility of establishing a chronic ambient noise policy with the Commissioner of Inspectional Services.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey recognized Councilor Economou, who discussed the process used by the License Commission to grant one-day and yearly entertainment licenses to establishments, permissible event operation hours relative to religious buildings, permitted operations under a one-day event license, the request within the one-day event license application for additional amplification permitting, and the process relative to enforcing one-day event license violations with the Commissioner of Inspectional Services.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey discussed ISD investigating reported noise complaints within standard business hours with the Commissioner of Inspectional Services.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey recognized Councilor Economou, who discussed rules within event licenses that exempt certain noise ordinance guidelines, late night reports of excessive noise being triaged by WPD, the process relative to inform the License Commission of repeated event violations at an establishment, and issues relative to event parking with the Commissioner of Inspectional Services and Police Chief.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey brought forth the following Chairman's Order: "Request City Manager request City Solicitor provide City Council with a draft ordinance amending the city's noise ordinance by increasing fines associated with violations of excessive noise."

Chairperson Councilor Toomey recognized Councilor Economou, who discussed the feasibility of requiring WPD officers to be present at permitted events with the Commissioner of Inspectional Services.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey recognized Councilor Bergman, who discussed the process relative to notify abutters of locations with approved one-day event licenses and an increase in one-day event applications with the Commissioner of Inspectional Services.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey brought forth the following two (2) Chairman's Orders: "1) Request City Manager review the feasibility of requiring that public hearings take place before the License Commission for all one-day event license applications, with public notices being sent to all abutters in the vicinity of the proposed location; and 2) Request City Manager request Commissioner of Inspectional Services ensure data is provided at all one-day event license hearings before the License Commission that identifies whether the property has received complaints and/or citations relative to excessive noise and event permits for the purpose of increasing noise ordinance enforcement."

Chairperson Councilor Toomey discussed event capacity limits with the Commissioner of Inspectional Services.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey recognized Councilor Economou, who discussed the process related for ISD to inform WPD of weekly events occurring in the city with the Commissioner of

Inspectional Services.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey discussed required training to measure and analyze noise and the feasibility of staffing ISD personnel at permitted events to measure excessive noise in lieu of a WPD officer with the Commissioner of Inspectional Services.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey recognized Councilor Bergman, who highlighted the importance of neighborhood testimony relative to issuing event licenses and issues relating to the early meeting times of the License Commission with the Commissioner of Inspectional Services.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey then discussed issues relative to unlicensed events occurring in the city and the process relative to revoking an establishment's Certificate of Occupancy due to hosting unlicensed events with the Commissioner of Inspectional Services.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey recognized Councilor Economou, who discussed referring to the building code to enforce repeated event violations with higher monetary penalties with the Commissioner of Inspectional Services.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey brought forth the following Chairman's Order: "Request City Manager request Commissioner of Inspectional Services provide City Council with a report detailing the step-by-step process used by the License Commission to approve event license applications. Said report should also include the requirement for public hearings, the process used to notify event location abutters, a list of identified problem properties, and best practices used in other communities relative to event permitting and permit violation enforcement."

Chairperson Councilor Toomey moved to recommend the item be placed on file.

Recommend File

Chairman's Orders

Request City Manager request City Solicitor provide City Council with a draft ordinance amending the city's noise ordinance by increasing fines associated with violations of excessive noise.

Request City Manager review the feasibility of requiring that public hearings take place before the License Commission for all one-day event license applications, with public notices being sent to all abutters in the vicinity of the proposed location.

Request City Manager request Commissioner of Inspectional Services ensure data is provided at all one-day event license hearings before the License Commission that identifies whether the property has received complaints and/or citations relative to excessive noise and event permits for the purpose of increasing noise ordinance enforcement.

Request City Manager request Commissioner of Inspectional Services provide City Council with a report detailing the step-by-step process used by the License Commission to approve event license applications. Said report should also include the requirement for public hearings, the process used to notify event location abutters, a list of identified problem properties, and best practices used in other communities relative to event permitting and permit violation enforcement.

4. Communication of the City Manager - Police Department

- a. Transmitting informational communication relative to the Hospital Guard of the Worcester Police Department.

7a CC June 2, 2026

Chairperson Councilor Toomey read the item and recognized the Police Chief, who provided an overview related to the role of Hospital Guard of the Worcester Police Department (WPD) and discussed challenges relative to staffing capacity within the department.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey discussed the feasibility of establishing a secured unit within the hospitals to reduce the need of individual Hospital Guards per detainee and contract negotiations to mitigate staffing challenges with the Police Chief.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey recognized Councilor Economou, who discussed the process relative to staffing hospital transportation for detainees and the effect said arrangements have on patrol/route officer staffing with the Police Chief.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey recognized Councilor Bergman, who discussed the need for additional police officers within the department and the feasibility of staffing two (2) officer patrol cars with the Police Chief.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey recognized Councilor Economou, who discussed short-term methods to institute a two (2) officer patrol car practice with the Police Chief.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey brought forth the following Chairman's Order: "Request City Manager provide City Council with a report detailing the feasibility of increasing the Worcester Police Department (WPD) personnel to ensure the staffing of two (2) officers per route/patrol car. Said request report should also include an estimated cost analysis to institute such a practice."

Chairperson Councilor Toomey recognized Councilor Bergman, who discussed the feasibility of establishing precinct police stations to mitigate officer travel times with the Police Chief.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey brought forth the following Chairman's Order: "Request City Manager provide City Council with an update concerning a previously adopted order from July 21, 2026, which read, 'Request City Manager request Police Chief provide City Council with a report detailing incentives and efforts provided by other cities and towns relative to recruiting lateral police transfers.'"

Chairperson Councilor Toomey recognized Councilor Economou, who discussed the feasibility of working with the Worcester County Sheriff's Office as a method of mitigating temporary staffing challenges with the Police Chief.

Chairperson Councilor Toomey moved to recommend the item be placed on file.

Recommend File

Chairman's Orders

Request City Manager provide City Council with a report detailing the feasibility of increasing the Worcester Police Department (WPD) personnel to ensure the staffing of two (2) officers per route/patrol car. Said request report should also include an estimated cost analysis to institute such a practice.

Request City Manager provide City Council with an update concerning a previously adopted order from July 21, 2026, which read, 'Request City Manager request Police Chief provide City Council with a report detailing incentives and efforts provided by other cities and towns relative to recruiting lateral police transfers.'