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Somerville and Chelsea file lawsuit to protect sanctuary cities



The cities of Somerville and Chelsea have filed lawsuits challenging recent federal immigration policies.

Two sanctuary cities in Massachusetts – Chelsea and Somerville – filed a federal lawsuit on Monday of this week challenging the Trump Administration's efforts to coerce them into participating in mass deportation efforts. Represented by Lawyers for Civil Rights, the cities assert that the Administration's heavy-handed tactics – threatening to strip sanctuary cities of federal funding and prosecute them for failing to bend to the President's will – violate their Constitutional rights.

Somerville and Chelsea have identified as sanctuary/welcoming cities since 1987 and 2007, respectively, recognizing that victims and witnesses are less likely to report crimes if they know that local police are working in concert with federal immigration authorities. By avoiding that entanglement, sanctuary cities improve public safety and

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SomeSights maps the odd and obscure, for free

By Jeffrey Shwom

Google Maps is used by over a billion users globally. In Somerville, one of those users, a work-from-home 3D graphics programmer, spends his time outside walking around documenting and sharing all of the "odd" things that make Somerville interesting and historic.

The Times caught up with Eric Haines, a Magoun Square-adjacent resident, who has created "The SomeSights map [1]." If you have Google Maps on your phone or computer, The SomeSights map points will show up as a filter overlaying Somerville. It functions similar to how the Porchfest map works during the annual outdoor music festival (coming back May 2025), with symbols like a painting palette, a guitar (to indicate the band

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Deano's Fresh Pasta Mural.

— Photos courtesy of The SomeSights Map



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The views and opinions expressed in Newstalk do not necessarily reflect those of The Somerville Times, its publisher or staff. The column has many contributors.

Preserving Black History: Somerville Museum Panel. RSJ and the Somerville Museum invite you to a thought-provoking panel discussion on the impact of Black history on arts and culture and the importance of preserving Black narratives in our community. Hear from community organizers, activists, and city library staff as they share insights and experiences. Light refreshments will be served. How to Join: bit.ly/BHM_2025 or email rsj@somerville-ma.gov for more details.

Interested in learning more about **upcoming bridge repairs** and safety improvements on Maffa Way and Mystic Avenue? MassDOT is hosting a public information meeting to review the planned improvements and provide a look ahead to upcoming construction. **February 26, 6 p.m. Somerville Central Library, 79 Highland Ave.**

Happy birthday this week to the following: Happy birthday to **City Councilor Kristen Strezo**. We wish her the happiest year to come. She will be holding a **Birthday Party Campaign Kickoff** this **Sunday, March 2**, from 2 to 4 p.m. at **Daddy Jones Bar** (525 Medford Street, Magoun Square). Happy birthday to **Eddie Nuzzo**. We hope he has a great one. Happy birthday to **Nancy Trane**, we hope she has a great day. Happy birthday to **Nick Kondilis**. We hope he has a great birthday. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **David Mangan, Lu Alves, Bill Roy,** *Continued on page 7*

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of February 26 – March 4 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
Wednesday <i>February 26</i>	Sunny	50°/35°	9%	6%	WNW 10 mph
Thursday <i>February 27</i>	Rain	52°/41°	42%	34%	SW 13 mph
Friday <i>February 28</i>	Partly Cloudy	43°/32°	15%	11%	NW 13 mph
Saturday <i>March 1</i>	Cloudy	47°/30°	22%	9%	SW 14 mph
Sunday <i>March 2</i>	Partly Cloudy	35°/16°	13%	7%	NW 15 mph
Monday <i>March 3</i>	Sunny	34°/20°	6%	3%	WNW 13 mph
Tuesday <i>March 4</i>	Partly Cloudy	44°/35°	2%	1%	W 12 mph

NOTE: Conditions subject to change. Always check a daily forecast prior to activities that can be affected by the weather.

TheSomervilleTimes.com Comments of the Week

Response to: **Federal immigration policies impact East Somerville**

TheoNa says:

How much consideration has been given to how the attack on parking has impacted restaurants in Somerville? I live in Somerville and now don't even consider dining in Somerville due to parking challenges. Meanwhile, outside of Somerville and Cambridge it can be challenging finding a table in those communities where parking is available.

Also, how much consideration has been given to rising dining costs and the weather? We're now experiencing the coldest winter in 10 years which impacts decision making when deciding to eat in or go out.

david stag says:

the article is well written.

i do feel bad for the business owners.

(i am a 40 year business owner who grew up in somerville)

the lack of patrons is very telling. it suggests that the patrons are scared.

we all generally speaking have good intentions.when opening up a business you have to count all the costs of doing business ahead of time.

if potential customers and their stability and ability to support your business were not factored in then you did not do your home work.

all business owners everywhere in the food and drink sector are feeling the pinch. the east somerville group has an additional layer issues.

ive noticed the parking issues too.thats another layer that does not help.

i wish the restaurants and take out establishments the best in these difficult time.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

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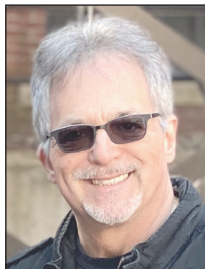
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Life in the  by Jimmy Del Ponte

The views and opinions expressed in the commentaries and letters to the Editor of The Somerville Times do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of The Somerville Times, its publishers or staff.

Somerville is on eBay!



This article was originally published in the March 15, 2008, edition of *The Times*.

For some strange reason, I started replacing some of my

favorite childhood toys - I turned to eBay to accomplish this odd task. I just figured it was another weird part of getting older. So far, I have re-purchased a Secret Sam Spy Rifle with the hidden camera in the attaché case, a Girder and Panel Building Set, one of those 20 Mule Team Borax models and a Kenner "Give A Show Projector." Remember those? It was a small plastic slide projector that showed color slides of Popeye, The Flintstones, Superman, Yogi Bear, and other cartoons - it worked with batteries and a light bulb, and you would project the image on a wall or a sheet. I got one for 30 bucks on eBay.

Recently, I was surfing the big "e," and just for the heck of it, I searched the words "Somerville, Mass" - what I found was very interesting. First, there were the old postcards - one was of Somerville English High School, dated 1907. The photo was just the High School's main building when there was nothing else surrounding it. Another postcard was of Robinson's Round House on Spring Hill, and several others were of the Old Powder House. I found

these artifacts very interesting.

Other items I found were very old bottles and containers with the First National Stores markings on them. The most intriguing item I found was an old wine bottle - the label says "Elba Brand, bottled by The Goduti Wineries, Somerville, Mass." Those must have really been the good old days when there was a winery in Somerville - I wonder if there was ever a brewery in the 'Ville of old. If there was maybe they would have brewed a Winter Hill Lager or a Ball Square Ale - how about Magoun Malt, or maybe a brisk Powder House Pilsner. That gives me an idea - anyone want to start a Somerville Brewery? I'll be more than happy to be a taste tester.

I also found some great photos of old Somerville Fire engines from 1933, two factory photos of a booster hose car, and a pumper manufactured for the Somerville Fire Department by the Seagrave Fire Truck Factory - all up for bids. I found even more old postcards of the Central Library, Highlands Railroad Station that used to be behind the High School I think, and a very interesting postcard of City Hall when they were still using the Highland Ave entrance. There is also a great postcard of St. Ann's Church from 1907. Sadly, not all internet websites are as entertaining as eBay.

When I entered "Somerville Mass" on Wikipedia, I was not amused at the



derogatory things written about our city and its not-so-distant history. Try it, and you will see what I mean. But if you want to have a little fun while you're surfing the 'net, go to eBay and see the treasures that are out there from the old days of Somerville.

The strange part is that the people that are selling these items are from all over the country. By the time this reaches print, I will know if I won the auction for that great old Somerville wine bottle.

As for my own project to "replace objects from my past," I'm still looking for one of those little grey plastic baking soda-powered submarines that used to come inside

boxes of Kellogg's Frosted Flakes. I've purchased some Beatles collector cards (remember those?), a Beatles *Rubber Soul* album - and believe it or not, some vintage marbles to hopefully replace the ones I've lost over the years.

Finding vintage Somerville items online is an enjoyable way to kill some time. I actually had accumulated a few Somerville artifacts without even trying. Down in my cellar, I found my Western Jr. High School class picture from 1968, my very last report card, and my beanie from class day in 1971. I'm afraid that someday when I do a search for "Old Somerville Artifacts" my picture will pop up.

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Somerville Police Dept Crime Log February 11 – 17

Assault

25008776: On 2/16/25 at approximately 6:10 a.m., Somerville Police responded to 376 Mystic Ave. for an assault. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the victim who stated he got into an altercation with a male party while shoveling snow in the parking lot. During the altercation, the suspect punched and kicked the victim then grabbed what was believed to be a firearm from his vehicle and made a racking motion.

Commercial Breaking and Entering

25008518: On 2/12/25 at approximately 1:00 a.m., Somerville Police responded to a business on Broadway for a report of a past breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the owner who stated a male party broke in and took money from the cash register.

Commercial Breaking and Entering

25008433: On 2/14/25 at approximately 10:53 a.m., Somerville Police responded to a business on Linwood St. for a report of a past breaking and entering. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the manager who stated two male parties broke into the building overnight and proceeded to vandalize the interior. The males then took a set of keys and stole a vehicle that they later returned.

Arrest

25008564: On 2/14/25 at approximately 11:12 p.m., Somerville Police responded to Fellsway West for a fight. Upon arrival, officers spoke with several victims who stated they were involved in an altercation with a male known to them. During the altercation, the male suspect grabbed a metal rod and a shovel handle then began to threaten the victims. The male suspect was placed under arrest.

Other Crimes: 2 MV vandalisms • 4 Vandalisms • 1 MV theft • 1 Car break • 2 Package thefts

— Somerville Police Department



Crime Tip Hotline: 617-776-7210

Help Keep Somerville Safe!

Somerville and Chelsea file lawsuit to protect sanctuary cities

CONT. FROM PG 1

quality of life not just for immigrant residents, but for all residents and community members.

But since his inauguration, Trump has issued Executive Orders (here [1] and here [2]) threatening to cut off federal funds to sanctuary cities unwilling to use municipal resources to carry out federal responsibilities; the Department of Justice (DOJ) has warned [3] of criminal and civil prosecutions against them while freezing all DOJ funding; and the Department of Transportation (DOT) has said it will de-prioritize [4] transportation funding to sanctuary cities.

“The President cannot use federal funding as a weapon to force local governments to undermine public safety and their values and participate in his mass deportation efforts,” said Oren Sellstrom, Litigation Director of Lawyers for Civil Rights, one of the Cities’ attorneys. “Today’s lawsuit seeks to protect sanctuary and welcoming cities, so they can continue to make public safety decisions that are in the best interests of their residents.”

“Public safety is the top priority for the City of Chelsea – we cannot afford to have our residents fear reporting crimes or engaging with local law enforcement, as this undermines the safety of everyone in our

community,” said Chelsea City Manager Fidel Maltez. “The City of Chelsea has been firmly committed to being a Sanctuary City since 2007. We are stronger because of our immigrant population, and we will not let fear or misinformation divide us. Chelsea is a city for all, and that will never change.”

“Bullying sanctuary cities is not just an assault on immigrants or cities – it’s an assault on all of us, on state and local rights, on the economy, and the Constitution. So, Somerville is standing up for what is both lawful and right,” said Somerville Mayor Katjana Ballantyne. “Our residents know that our community is safer when police focus on preventing crime and leave federal immigration enforcement to the Feds. We know that stripping localities of their right to lawful local policies erodes everyone’s rights. And we know politicized withholding of federal funding threatens the health and safety of all residents, be it your neighbor who relies on Meals on Wheels for dinner or your kids who need road investments for a safer walk to school. We urge the Administration to honor our Constitution and let us serve our communities as we know is best. This isn’t something you should have to fight for in court – but that is what we are stepping up to do.”

“Somerville has proudly upheld our identity as a sanctuary city for nearly four decades, reaffirming our commitment in 2016 and 2019, and again just this year. The federal government’s attempts to coerce us into betraying our immigrant neighbors are unconstitutional, morally unacceptable, and a danger to our full community,” said Judy Pineda Neufeld, Somerville City Council President. “Our city’s values are clear: We will protect the dignity, safety, and rights of all of our residents, regardless of immigration status.”

“In Chelsea, it’s critical we build and maintain trust between our community and law enforcement,” said Norieliz DeJesus, Chelsea City Council President. “Our residents should not have to fear that reaching out for help from local police will put their families at risk of immigration enforcement. This lawsuit aims to protect our right to focus on keeping our community safe.”

Chelsea received approximately \$14.5M in federal funding for fiscal year 2024, including for education and a downtown reconstruction project. During that same fiscal year, Somerville received approximately \$19.4M in federal funds to support a variety of community and public safety services, including roadway safety initia-

tives, homeless prevention services, and efforts to address and reduce youth tobacco usage and alcohol consumption.

The lawsuit asks a federal court to hold that the Executive Orders, as well as the DOJ and DOT directives, are unconstitutional and to enjoin them from being enforced.

A copy of the complaint can be downloaded at: http://www.thesomerville-times.com/downloads/Somerville_Chelsea_Lawsuit.pdf.

Links:

[1] <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclefindmkaj/https://public-inspection.federalregister.gov/2025-02006.pdf>

[2] <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/02/ending-taxpayer-subsidization-of-open-borders/>

[3] <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclefindmkaj/https://www.justice.gov/ag/media/1388531/dl?inline>

[4] chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcgclefindmkaj/https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2025-01/Signed%20DOT%20Order%20re_Ensuring%20Reliance%20Upon%20Sound%20Economic%20Analysis%20in%20Department%20of%20Transportation%20Policies%20and%20Programs%20and%20Activities.pdf

Two Davis Square business owners expanding reach outside the square

By Jeffrey Shwom

While discussions of new housing, possible business displacement, and the changing face of Davis Square continue, two Davis Square owner groups are broadening their brands into adjacent neighborhoods. The Burren's owners soon will open their third restaurant and music venue, McCarthy's and Toad, while Dragon Pizza owners are creating The Hollows in Teele Square.

"From the proud owners of The Burren in Somerville and The Bebop in Back Bay, we bring you McCarthy's and Toad [1] – your new Irish pub in Porter Square, Cambridge," proclaims Tommy McCarthy and Louise Costello on their new website. "With perfect pints, live music, and the greatest craic in town, we can't wait to welcome you in February 2025!" The opening date has moved back a few times, with other news outlets [2] reporting January 24, 2025, as the opening date and another [3] suggesting a February opening. McCarthy and Costello, both musicians as well, purchased the former Christopher's Restaurant and Bar in Porter Square in June 2024 and have been doing renovations. Views of the restaurant renovation from Mass. Avenue shows a total gut inside and movement of the position of the central staircase up to the second floor.

Separately, Dragon Pizza owner Charlie Redd is part of a group opening The Hollows that is taking over the space of former long-time Teele Square restaurant, Rudy's Cafe. In January, the applicants (Redd, Douglas Shipman, and Bridget Zerner) received a transfer of the 7-Day Restaurant License-Private, Common Victualer License, Entertainment by Devices License, and Sunday Hours License. Charlie told us, "It is a revisiting of craft cooking and hospitality. We are just excited to create a new space in Teele Square. We got a lot of great ideas. We are hoping to open late spring/summer of this year."

We asked if the Hollows is truly an expansion of Charlie's years in the industry

or safety because of uncertainty in Davis Square? Charlie was clear and direct. "Totally the first. My partners and I felt the Rudy's space would fit our project goals. Growth (into Rudy's) is a totally separate project."

At the January 2025 Licensing meeting [4], notes state that "they will continue to manage" Dragon Pizza, with no discussion about plans to close Dragon Pizza and the adjacent Dragon's Lair, a bar and games room with shuffleboard. In speaking with Charlie over the phone, he reiterated that Dragon Pizza will stay open "until the wrecking ball swings." He said the "first kind gesture" from Andrew Flynn of Copper Mill, the developer who owns the 233-247 Elm Street block, was those actual words concerning the wrecking ball. Charlie explained that some development is "done with smoke and mirrors" but Mr. Flynn has been "honest and straightforward." Charlie has been in constant contact with the landlord and developer since 2019. He did comment, "Where it goes, I don't know" while expressing hope that Dragon Pizza could return after construction.

Copper Mill is actively discussing development above and including The Burren, Dragon Pizza, and Dragon's Lair spaces, as well as McKinnon's and Kung Fu Tea. Recent community discussions have included an up to 25-story tall building focused on residential housing as opposed to previously planned lab space. In 2023, there were a few business changes along the 233-247 Elm Street block in focus. When Pigs Fly Breads, the bread shop with daily baked breads from Maine, moved to 259 Elm Street in July 2023, shifting to a different building managed Riverside Properties, Inc [5] (Wellesley, MA). Long-time Irish pub Sligo's closed its doors on June 4, 2023, after 75 years of pouring beers and memories. Links:

- [1] <https://www.mccarthystoad.com/>
- [2] <https://www.wgbh.org/news/local/2025-01-03/toad-bar-to-reopen-in-porter-square-this-month>
- [3] <https://www.bostonmagazine.com/restaurants/2025/01/31/mccarthys-toad-cambridge/>
- [4] chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://s3.amazonaws.com/somervillema-live/s3fs-public/2025-01/licensing-commission-minutes-20250121_0.pdf
- [5] <https://www.riversideprop.com/blank-sm56p>



Operators of both The Burren and Dragon Pizza will be opening new establishments in the near future. — Photo by Bobbie Toner



ANNOUNCEMENT
315 Broadway, in conjunction with Micozzi Management are pleased to announce an **Affordable Rental Open Waitlist Opportunity**

The application period for a one-bedroom (1BR) Affordable Rental Waitlist will begin on 2/14/2025 at 2pm and end on 3/14/2025 at 2pm.

315 Broadway, Somerville, MA 02145
Located in the Winter Hill neighborhood of Somerville, the units offer open-concept floor plans and modern features. Parking is available based on availability and for an additional fee.

Maximum Annual Income

80% AMI	1 Person	2 Persons
Income	\$91,200	\$104,200

Eligibility Requirements

- The rental unit must be used as the renters' primary residence.
- Income and residency restrictions will apply throughout tenancy. Income eligibility will be reviewed annually.
- Head of households claiming full-time student status are not eligible.
- Total Household Liquid Assets cannot exceed \$75,000

Applications will be available beginning on 2/14/2025 at 2pm. To obtain an application, please contact **Micozzi Management** and reference "315 Broadway 80%"

Telephone: 617-254-5576 ex 112 or email: eburkart@micozzimanagement.com

Completed applications must be submitted to Micozzi Management at eburkart@micozzimanagement.com or mailed to **159 Cambridge Street, Suite 2, Allston, MA 02134** by **3/14/2025 at 2pm.**

Applications received after the deadline will not be added to the waitlist. All qualified applications will be ranked by date and time received. All mailed applications will receive a 7-day grace period.



Beacon Hill Roll Call



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Beacon Hill Roll Call can also be viewed on our website at www.thesomervilletimes.com

THE HOUSE AND SENATE: *Beacon Hill Roll Call* records local senator's votes on roll calls from recent sessions in which the Senate debated the rules by which it will operate in the 2025-2026 legislative session.

ADOPT SENATE RULES (S 14)

Senate 39-0, adopted a set of Senate rules for the 2025-2026 session.

Rules include requiring that the votes senators take in joint committees be published online; requiring in-person or written testimony received by Senate members of a joint committee be published online; requiring Senate committees to make bill summaries available online for legislation reported favorably out of the committee; and requiring every senator and Senate employee to undergo cybersecurity training every two years.

"These changes would provide more opportunity to residents to participate in the Legislature's work, encourage greater insight into bills being considered by the Legislature and provide more transparency on legislators' positions on issues that impact Massachusetts residents," said Senate President Karen Spilka (D-Ashland).

"This comprehensive rule proposal was a collaborative effort that makes the work we do here in the Senate more transparent, more efficient and respectful to the needs of members and residents," said Sen. Joan Lovely (D-Salem), Chair of the Senate Committee on Rules. "We are proud of the Senate's work, and we want people to know what is going on in The People's House. These measures take meaningful steps towards a more transparent Legislature and allow for more access to information by members of the public about our work, including easier participation."

(A Yes" vote is for the rules package.)

Sen. Patricia Jehlen Yes

TIGHTEN RULES FOR REMOTE VOTING (S 14)

Senate 5-32, rejected an amendment that would change the current rule that allows a senator, who is not physically at the session in the Senate chamber, to vote remotely from any location and without giving a reason for his or her absence from the Senate chamber.

The amendment would have allowed senators who are not in the chamber to vote remotely only in cases of disability, illness, providing care for an immediate family member, pregnancy or childbirth for a senator, a senator's spouse, partner or domestic partner. The amendment does not require the senator to provide proof or documentation of

the reason for not being in the chamber.

"Legislators work best when they have the kinds of discussions and collaborations only possible through in-person interaction," said amendment sponsor Sen. John Keenan (D-Quincy). "Nearly every other state legislature, including the Massachusetts House of Representatives, meets in person. The Senate should do the same."

Sen. Lovely said the current rule works well and does not need to be changed. She noted if there are empty chairs in the Senate chamber, it's not necessarily because those senators aren't in the building. They may be up in their offices or at another meeting in the building. She also noted that sometimes senators are needed in their districts on a day the Senate meets and argued that remote voting offers a rare opportunity to be with our constituents in our districts and still be recorded on a Senate vote at the same time. She noted it is rare that someone needs to operate from home for illness or disability.

(A "Yes" vote is for the amendment. A "No" vote is against it.)

Sen. Patricia Jehlen No

BAN SESSIONS AFTER MIDNIGHT (S 14)

Senate 6-31, rejected an amendment that would prohibit the Senate from meeting beyond midnight. The amendment would replace the current rule that allows the Senate to meet after midnight if two-thirds of the Senate votes to do so.

"We have moved up the initial committee reporting deadline for legislation and will allow conference committee reporter to be considered for an extra five months," said amendment sponsor Sen. John Keenan (D-Quincy). "These changes should make it unnecessary for a session to extend through the night into the next day. Few good discussions are made by sleep-deprived, overworked minds."

Sen. Joan Lovely (D-Salem) said that during the last few budget debates, no session went past 8 p.m. She noted that it is rare that the Senate meets past midnight.

(A "Yes" vote is for the amendment prohibiting the Senate from meeting after midnight. A "No" vote is against the amendment.)

Sen. Patricia Jehlen No

REQUIRE THE SENATE RECORD TO REVEAL WHEN A SENATOR HAS VOTED REMOTELY (S 14)

Senate 6-31, rejected an amendment that would require that all Senate roll call votes, publicly published by the state, include "Virtual Vote" (VV) alongside any member's name if the senator was not in the chamber and voted remotely from his or home, office or other location.

"I sponsored [this amendment] because senators are elected to represent their constituents on Beacon Hill, not in a Zoom room," said amendment sponsor Sen. Ryan Fatman (R-Sutton). "We're a full-time Legislature and our bosses are the constituents in our districts. They deserve to know when we are showing up to work. We shouldn't get an unlimited pass to work from home without anybody who elected us knowing."

Other amendment supporters said that the only way a constituent can know if a senator was present for a vote or voted remotely, is by watching the session online, which takes a lot of time and which most people don't have time to do.

Sen. Lovely said that the votes that are cast remotely are of the same weight and impact and do not have to be singled out when a roll call is published. She noted that all Senate sessions are broadcast live online and are archived online on video. She said that anyone who watches a session will know whether his or her senator was in the chamber or voting remotely because it is announced at the session.

(A "Yes" vote is for the amendment requiring the notation "virtual voting." A "No" vote is against the amendment.)

Sen. Patricia Jehlen No

ALSO UP ON BEACON HILL

BAY STATE COALITION OPPOSES ELIMINATION OF PROTECTED STATUS FOR 500,000 HAITIAN IMMIGRANTS – The Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy (MIRA) Coalition responded to the Trump Administration's plan to end Temporary Protected Status (TPS) in August for up to 500,000 Haitian immigrants – thousands of whom reside in Massachusetts.

"Ending TPS for the half a million Haitians that have fled unimaginable violence and instability is deeply immoral and unjust," said Elizabeth Sweet, Executive Director of MIRA. "Terminating TPS for Haitians is just the latest step the Trump administration has taken to strike fear in our nation's hardworking, caring immigrants – especially those seeking refuge here. Eliminating the opportunity for Haitians to live and work in states like Massachusetts, which continue to grapple with a severe

Continued on page 15

COMMENTARY

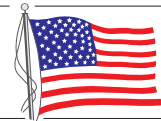
SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Get ready for Somerville Parks and Recreation's new season of fun for all!

Our View Of The Times



If there is one invaluable resource that all city residents can appreciate and be proud of, it is the Somerville Parks and Recreation Department.

They operate year-round programs throughout the city's public facilities, playgrounds, schoolyards, and various other locations to promote positive and healthy activities for all members of the Somerville Community, in particular our kids.

A veritable plethora of programs and activities are made available throughout the year, but the spring and summer months are especially active as the weather brings us all out for exercise and play.

Whether it's the classes and activities, sports clinics, special events, group memberships, preschool programs, youth sports, adult league sports, or adult classes and activities, and a myriad of other excit-

ing and educational activities, the department is there to offer the community the best it can offer in recreational activities.

And don't forget the great job they do in helping to maintain and manage the city's many wonderful parks and playgrounds.

Upcoming events like the Shamrock and Roll Family Dance are also regularly featured highlights that provide fun and friendly opportunities to bring members

of the community together

The department brings the public invaluable opportunities for enhancing the well-being of all residents who are interested in maintaining their health and learning new skills.

Stay up-to-date with all the department's events and programs by checking out their website at <https://somervillema.myrec.com/info/default.aspx>.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

Lauren Chirichiello, Sarah Colestock Berson, Matt Smith, Barbara Ni Neac, Susan Mangherini Griffin and Laurie a very happy birthday. To all those who are also celebrating this week, we wish a happy birthday.

Join the **Growing Center** for the **Maple Boil Down** and experience the process of boiling sap into maple syrup. Learn the process from the tapping of maple trees at **Tufts University** to the making of maple syrup. Connect with other folks in the community. Get into the spirit and order your t-shirt ahead of time at bit.ly/fgc-store. This event is free and open to

all. **Saturday, March 1**, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m., Somerville Community Growing Center, 22 Vinal Ave, Somerville. Rain Date Saturday, March 8.

The Somerville Police Department (SPD) has produced a list of **unclaimed bicycles** that are currently being stored at SPD headquarters located at 220 Washington St. Any owner of an unclaimed bicycle who seeks to reclaim it is encouraged to contact Somerville Police at 617-625-1600 as soon as possible. Bicycles remaining in the possession of SPD will be treated as municipal property and will be disposed of in any manner consistent

with city surplus property and MGL c. 30B § 15, including but not limited to disposition at less than fair market value to a charitable organization.

Name Change Clinic, March 2. Join **Somerville Health & Human Services (HHS)**, the **Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition**, **City of Cambridge LGBTQ+ Commission**, and the **Cambridge Public Library** to learn about the legal name change process. This event will be held on Sunday, March 2, at **Central Library** (79 Highland Ave.) from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Liam Mannion, proprietor of **Sally O'Brien's**, and former **City Councilor Bob McWatters** invite the public to celebrate Irish Heritage and hoist a pint of Guinness on **St. Patrick's Day, March 17**, at Sally O'Brien's, 335 Somerville Ave. Sally's will have plenty of corned beef and cabbage, Irish music and pints of Guinness flowing all day. Stop in and hoist a Guinness with Liam and Bob in honoring the patron Saint of Ireland. All are welcome to join the festivities.

The Somerville Homeless Coalition's Amazon Wish Lists are updated monthly with the most *Continued on page 21*

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#963

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. When is National Peanut Butter Lover's Day? | hit <i>Vogue</i> ? |
| 2. When is World Wildlife Day? | 8. What's the name of the famous music festival held annually in Indio, California? |
| 3. What historic act was signed on March 1, 1872? | 9. In what year did Elvis Presley die? |
| 4. What flower symbolizes March? | 10. What is the base ingredient of gummy bears? |
| 5. Which team won the first NCAA basketball championship in 1939? | 11. Arachibutyrophobia is the fear of what food sticking to the roof of your mouth? |
| 6. The game of baseball originated from which country? | 12. Which country drinks the most coffee in pounds per year? |
| 7. Who sang the 1990 | |

Answers on page 14

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. Nutmeg is extremely poisonous if injected intravenously.
2. Montpelier, VT, is the only U.S. capital without a McDonald's.

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

DANCE MOVES

ACROSS

1. Mrs. in Germany
5. Nae Nae's partner
8. m in F = ma
12. Deadly sin
13. Hindu serpent deity
14. Blood line
15. State location of Miami University
16. Last word on radio
17. Best friend quality
18. Sideways dance step
20. Buzzing pest
21. "That is" in Latin
22. Corvine bird's sound
23. Omicron or Delta, e.g.
26. Verb derived from "wreath"
30. Although, for short
31. Demijohn
34. Kings of ____ band
35. Act against
37. Bruin legend Bobby ____
38. Southern cuisine pods
39. Cold war initials
40. Transmitted radio signal
42. French vineyard
43. Strong suits
45. Overnight flight
47. Like a dancer in The Royal Ballet company
48. Polynesian island country
50. Dracula's bane
52. Dancer's gardening tool simulation
56. Cass Elliot and Michelle Phillips
57. Eon, alt. sp.
58. Reminiscent of certain hardwood, to sommelier
59. In a tilted position
60. Flower holder
61. Cartoon lightbulb
62. Police informer
63. Before, poetically
64. Koppel and Turner, e.g.

DOWN

1. Use cat o'nine tails
2. German industrial valley
3. "Heat of the Moment" band
4. Sir Thomas More's famous book

CROSSWORD													
1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11	
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Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:

T	E	N	T	H		V	A	T		Z	O	L	A	
A	D	I	E	U		E	G	O		V	I	N	I	C
M	E	S	A	S		I	O	N		E	N	T	E	R
	N	I	C	K	E	L		G	A	S	C	O	N	
		H	E	R		C	A	M	P					
F	A	B		D	I	D	O		T	E	A	S	E	D
O	G	R	E		C	O	L	A		R	U	N	N	Y
A	L	O	T		A	N	O	R	A		L	E	A	L
M	E	D	A	L		A	S	C	I		D	A	T	A
S	T	Y	L	E	S		S	H	O	D		K	E	N
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	O	B	R	I	E	N		W	I	C	K	E	D	
C	U	R	I	O		O	R	E		O	R	E	A	D
A	S	E	A	N		L	A	V		D	O	L	B	Y
M	E	W	L			L	Y	E		E	N	S	U	E

- | | |
|---|--|
| 5. Actress Viola ____ | 32. Sturgeon output, pl. |
| 6. ____ provocateur | 33. Lingerie staple |
| 7. Like some necessities | 36. Serena Williams' Super Bowl LIX move |
| 8. Michael Jackson's backward move | 38. Theater, to Socrates |
| 9. Maisie Williams on "Game of Thrones" | 40. Sis' sibling |
| 10. Immediately, to a doctor | 41. King's mantle fur |
| 11. Salt, in Mexico | 44. Painter Max or Director Lubitsch |
| 13. Nine-day Christian devotion | 46. Armed gang member in India |
| 14. Aquatic scum | 48. Asparagus unit |
| 19. Authoritative proclamation | 49. What phoenix did |
| 22. "____ Me a River" | 50. Numbers |
| 23. Pull strings | 51. Gulf V.I.P. |
| 24. Not those | 52. "Keep this information" button |
| 25. Comedy Central's public humiliation | 53. Place a load on |
| 26. a.k.a. caterpillar, with The | 54. Augmented |
| 27. 9 a.m. prayer | 55. Swedish shag rugs |
| 28. Ancient | 56. Running ____ |
| 29. Follow as a consequence | |

Soultion in the next edition of The Somerville Times.

Jason Mackey announces candidacy for Mayor of Somerville

Jason Mackey has officially launched his campaign for Mayor of Somerville, pledging to bring decisive leadership, innovative solutions, and a results-driven approach to city government.

“Somerville deserves leadership that delivers – not just talks,” said Mackey. “For too long, critical issues like housing affordability, transportation, and public safety have been met with half-measures and delays. I’m running to change that. This city needs a mayor who will tackle problems head-on and get things done.”

A Vision for a Stronger Somerville

Mackey’s campaign is built on pragmatic, people-first solutions, including:

- ✦ Ending Homelessness for Good – Implementing a housing-first approach modeled after successful programs in Helsinki and Houston, prioritizing permanent supportive housing and reducing bureaucratic barriers.
- ✦ Protecting Somerville’s Sanctuary City Status – Ensuring all residents are treated with dignity and standing firm against unconstitutional federal overreach.
- ✦ Addressing Housing Affordability – Expanding affordable and middle-income housing through zoning reforms, responsible development, and strengthened tenant protections.
- ✦ Empowering Small Businesses – Cutting red tape, expanding micro-loans, and launching a city-wide business accelerator to support local entrepreneurs.
- ✦ Fixing City Hall – Streamlining permitting, modernizing city services, and eliminating inefficiencies to make government more responsive.
- ✦ Enhancing Public Safety – Fully staffing police and mental health services, strengthening community policing, and taking a proactive approach to crime prevention.
- ✦ Championing Diversity & Equity – Ensuring every resident has a voice in government and fostering inclusive policies that promote fairness and representation.

A Track Record of Problem-Solving

Mackey, a longtime advocate for equity and inclusion, understands the importance of leadership that reflects the diversity of its people. As a Black gay man, he has worked to break down barriers and create opportunities – values he’ll bring to the Mayor’s Office to ensure Somerville remains a city where everyone has the chance to thrive.

“The City Council isn’t a training ground for mayor,” Mackey stated. “Somerville can’t afford on-the-job learning. We need leadership that knows how to cut through red tape and make real progress.”

On transportation, Mackey pledged practical, balanced solutions that prioritize year-round infrastructure repairs, safer roads and sidewalks, and rational parking policies that work for residents, businesses, and commuters.

With a growing coalition of supporters, Mackey is inviting Somerville residents to join the movement. “This isn’t just my campaign, it’s our campaign,” said Mackey. “If you’re ready for real leadership and real solutions, let’s make it happen together.”

Join the Movement

For more information, to volunteer, or to schedule an interview, please visit www.jasonmackey.org or email elect@jasonmackey.org.

Issued by: Mackey Committee, PO Box 114, Somerville, MA



The Somerville Times Historical Fact of the Week



Eagle feathers #323

This article first appeared in the May 15, 2013, edition of The Somerville Times.

Queen of the Air – Heart of the Ocean By Bob (Monty) Doherty

From above, it looks like an island in the middle of a body of water, not unlike a footprint of a modern castle surrounded by a moat. From the shore, it looks like an airport with its conning tower protruding high into the air where operators have a great 360° vista.



It was completed in 1966 and was built in Somerville at the intersection of the Mystic and Malden Rivers. Its construction improved navigation and recreation along the waterfront, but its main purpose was to protect against flooding ... flooding that could do damage to any of the 22 communities in the mystic river watershed under the right circumstances. Upstream, you will find freshwater rivers, lakes, brooks, and streams. Downriver, it flows into the Atlantic Ocean. The flavor of the ocean and air are highly fitting in the design of this complex because it is Amelia Earhart Mystic River Dam and basin.



So who was Amelia Earhart and what did she do? What didn’t she do in the aviation world would be the more appropriate question. She personified the word aviatrix.

Born in Atkinson, Kansas, she received her education in numerous locations because of her *Continued on page 11*

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BID ADVERTISEMENT

The Somerville Housing Authority, the Awarding Authority, invites e-bids from DCAMM Certified General Contractors in General Building Construction and DCAMM Certified Filed Sub-Bidders in Painting for the Window Replacement Project at Weston Manor Apartments, Weston Avenue Somerville, MA 02144, in accordance with the documents prepared by SOCOTEC AE Consulting Inc. of Boston, MA.

The project scope includes but is not limited to replacement of the existing windows on the west elevation of the Weston Manor Apartments at Weston Avenue Somerville, MA 02144. Additionally, the work includes abatement of the window caulking and preparation and painting of the existing railings.

The work is estimated to cost **\$ 658,037**.

General bidders must be certified by DCAMM pursuant to M.G.L.c. 149 Section 44D. The General Bidder must be certified eligible in the DCAMM Prime/General category of General Building Construction.

Filed sub-bidders must be certified by DCAMM pursuant to M.G.L.c. 149 Section 44D. The Filed sub-Bidder must be certified eligible in the DCAMM Filed Sub-Bid category of **Painting**.

Bid Forms and Contract Documents are available online after **2:00PM, Wednesday, February 26, 2025** at www.Projectdog.com. Enter Project Code 867147 in the project locator box and select "Acquire Documents" to download documents. All plan holders must have an active online account on www.Projectdog.com to acquire documents and to receive project notifications.

Addenda, if issued, will be posted to the Projectdog website and shall be accompanied by e-mail notification to every individual or firm on record as having received the Contract Documents.

This project is being Electronically Bid (E-Bid). All bids shall be submitted online at www.Projectdog.com. Hard copy bids will not be accepted by the Awarding Authority. Tutorials and Instructions are available online at www.Projectdog.com. For assistance, contact Projectdog Inc. at 978.499.9014.

Filed Sub-Bids for this project will be accepted from eligible bidders until **2:00PM, Friday, March 7, 2025** and will be publicly opened, forthwith online.

General Bids for this project will be accepted from eligible bidders until **2:00PM, Friday, March 14, 2025** and will be publicly opened, forthwith online.

General bids and Filed sub-bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit that is not less than five (5%) of the greatest possible bid amount (considering all alternates) and made payable to the **Somerville Housing Authority**.

The successful bidder will be required to furnish a Performance Bond and a Labor and Material (Payment) Bond each in the amount of one hundred percent (100%) of the contract sum. Bonds shall be obtained from a surety licensed to do business in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the form shall be satisfactory to the Somerville Housing Authority. The cost of such bonds shall be included in the bid price.

Attention is directed to the Davis-Bacon Act Wage Determinations, a copy of which is included in the Contract Documents, and will be made a part of the Contract.

The Awarding Authority is exempt from sales and federal excise tax to the extent permitted under law. Bidders should not include such taxes in figuring or in references to any bid.

Bidding procedures and award of the Contract and Subcontracts shall be in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 149, Sections 44A through 44J inclusive, of the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, including all current amendments; and the guidelines established by the Deputy Commissioner of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Capital Assets Management (DCAMM), dated June 30, 1981.

The Awarding Authority reserves the right to waive any irregularities in or to reject any and all bids, if it be in the public interest to do so, and to act upon the bids and make its award in any lawful manner.

PRE-BID CONFERENCE / SITE VISIT:

Date and Time: **Monday, March 3, 2025, at 11:00 A.M.**

Address: **Weston Manor Apartments, 15 Weston Avenue Somerville, MA 02144.** Meet at the main entrance of the building.

Attendance at this pre-bid conference is strongly recommended for parties submitting a bid.

Brian Langton
Somerville Housing Authority

2/26/25 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING
& COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
KATJANA BALLANTYNE
MAYOR**

THOMAS F. GALLIGANI, JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LEGAL NOTICE - HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC)

The Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) will hold a public meeting and public hearings on **Tuesday, March 18, 2025** at 6:45pm on the following applications, in accordance with the Historic Districts Act, Chapter 40C of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, and/or the City of Somerville Code of Ordinances, Pt. II, Chap. 7, Sections 7-16 – 7-28.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission will be conducted via remote participation. An audio recording of these proceedings will be available upon request to historic@somervillema.gov.

TO USE A COMPUTER

Registration URL:
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_0ELACz7RRfObLm6gjnHfW
Webinar ID: 850 5165 3956

TO CALL IN

An attendee must register for the meeting online in order for a call-in number to be emailed to them by Zoom.

ALL OF THE CASES ADVERTISED BELOW HAVE A PUBLIC HEARING COMPONENT

DETERMINATIONS OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE (STEP 1 IN THE DEMOLITION REVIEW PROCESS)

HP24-000125 - 8 Bolton Street

Applicant: Mazel Tov LLC – Julian Lewis
Owner: Stephen Ober

The Applicant seeks to demolish a building that is at least 75 years of age.

HP24-000122 - 128 Central Street

Applicant: Pro Touch Home Improvements Inc. – Nilton Dornelas
Owner: Nilton Dornelas

The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

HP24-000120 - 199 Elm St

Applicant: Picker Construction- Pablo Picker
Owner: Wisdom Publications

The Applicant seeks to demolish a building constructed a minimum of 75 years ago.

Case documents reviewed by the HPC are available on the City website at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/historic-preservation/hpc-cases>. Cases may be continued to a later date; please check the agenda (posted 48 hours in advance of the meeting) on the City website or email historic@somervillema.gov to inquire if specific cases will be heard. Continued cases will not be re-advertised. **Note: Written comments due to historic@somervillema.gov NO LATER THAN NOON one week prior to the meeting date. Email historic@somervillema.gov with inquiries.**

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Notice of Self Storage Sale

Please take notice Prime Storage - Somerville located at 39R Medford St., Somerville, MA 02143 intends to hold an auction to sell the goods stored by the following tenants at the storage facility. The sale will occur as an online auction via www.storagetreasures.com on **3/11/2025 at 12:00PM**. Unless stated otherwise the description of the contents are household goods, furnishings and garage essentials. Bijou Mengulwa unit #1432; Mikhael Twyman unit #1953; Susan Robinson unit #279B; Niangelinette Torres Jordan unit #4342. All property is being stored at the above self-storage facility. This sale may be withdrawn at any time without notice. Certain terms and conditions apply. See manager for details.

2/19/25, 2/26/25 The Somerville Times



The Somerville Housing Authority (the Awarding Authority) invites sealed bids for Fire Alarm Sprinklers and associated Equipment Testing, Inspections, Certifications, Emergency Repairs, Reporting, & Maintenance bid number P-P-FAS-032025-2028 for multiple locations located in Somerville, Massachusetts, in accordance with documents prepared by the Somerville Housing Authority Purchasing Department.

This is a 1-Year with 2 1-year options at the sole discretion of the SHA.

Estimated at **\$295,000.00**

The work under this contract consists of performing annual testing & inspections, firepump maintenance, emergency repairs and routine preventative maintenance on fire protection sprinkler systems, connecting pipes, and associated wet/dry systems, to comply with latest NFPA 25 standards, CMR standards, and the requirements of the local authority having jurisdictions.

Bidders must be certified by the DCAM in the category of Fire Alarm Sprinklers.

Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.149 secs.44A-H and to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §26 to 27H inclusive.

General Bids will be received until **2:00 p.m., March 12, 2025**, and publicly opened forthwith, at Somerville Housing Authority, Administration Building, located at 30 Memorial Road, Somerville, MA 02145

General Bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit or bid bond that is not less than 5% of the greatest possible bid amount considering any alternates and made payable to the Somerville Housing Authority in the form of a bid bond; cash; or a check certified by, or a treasurer's or cashier's check issued by, a responsible bank or trust company, payable to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Any bid bond shall be (a) in a form satisfactory to the Awarding Authority (b) with a surety company qualified to do business in the Commonwealth and (c) conditioned upon the faithful performance by the principal of the agreements contained in the Bid.

Bid and Contract Documents will be available for download on Somerville Housing Authority web site www.sha-web.org, under Bids\RFP's Tab by **2:00 p.m. February 26, 2025**, there will be no charge for these documents. If bidding, you must contact Anthony Crespo by email at Tonyc@sha-web.org and leave contact information including telephone number, Company name, Contact name, and email, if received you will receive a reply to your email. Bidders/Contractors are responsible for ensuring that their email and bids are received.

A site visit is scheduled for **March 3, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.** You are not required to attend. Please notify Anthony Crespo by email at Tonyc@sha-web.org or at 617-625-1152 extension 336 if you are attending. All interested parties will meet at of Somerville Housing Authority, Administrative Building, 30R Memorial Road, Somerville, MA 02145.

2/26/25 The Somerville Times

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SHA Job No. 2501: (AMP-1)

The **Somerville Housing Authority**, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed bids from contractors for the SHA Job No. 2501: (AMP-1) Mystic View Apartments Asphalt Shingle Roof Replacement Phase 4, for the Somerville Housing Authority in Somerville MA, in accordance with the documents prepared by EHA Design, Inc.

The Project consists of, but is not limited to: Furnish all labor, materials, equipment, and supervision necessary for the complete replacement of the shingle roofing at (AMP-1) Mystic View Apartments Asphalt Shingle Roof Replacement Phase 4, located on 5-15-25 River Road and 10-20-30 River Road, Somerville, MA 02145.

The work is estimated to cost: **\$430,000.00**.

All bidding "Requests For Information" (RFI's) shall be forwarded to Peterd@ehadesign.com by Friday, February 28, 2025 for general bids.

Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.149. & to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §26 to 27H inclusive and federal wage rates established by the Davis Bacon Wage Act and the Secretary of Labor, under the Provisions of the Code of Federal Regulations, as amended. The higher of the two rates shall be paid. The project is subject to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968.

THIS PROJECT IS BEING ELECTRONICALLY BID AND HARD COPY BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Please review the instructions in the bid documents on how to register as an online bidder. All bids shall be submitted online at www.biddocsonline.com, by the date and time specified.

General Bidders must be certified by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) for the category of Roofing, and general bids must be accompanied by a DCAMM Certificate of Eligibility, and Update Statement.

General Bids will be received electronically at www.biddocsonline.com until **2:00 p.m., on Thursday, March 6, 2025**, and publicly opened online, forthwith.

General bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit that is not less than five percent (5%) of the greatest possible bid amount (including all alternates) and made payable to the **Somerville Housing Authority**. A one hundred percent (100%) Payment Bond will also be required.

Bid Forms and Contract Documents will be available for review at www.biddocsonline.com (may be viewed and downloaded electronically at no cost) or at Nashoba Blue, Inc. at 433 Main Street, Hudson, MA 01749 (978-568-1167).

A pre-bid conference / site visit will be held at the rear Modernization Office of the **SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY, 30 Memorial Road, Somerville, Massachusetts 02145, on Wednesday, February 26, 2025, at 1:00pm**. It is strongly recommended that prospective bidders attend.

2/19/25, 2/26/25 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
Annual Action Plan and Public Services RFP**

The **City of Somerville Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development** is preparing the draft of the 2025-2026 Annual Action Plan, a requirement of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The City seeks input on the content of the plan. The City will also answer questions on the Public Services request for proposals (RFP) which will be live on **March 12th, 2025**.

- The City will hold a public hearing on **March 11th at 6pm** to receive comments pertaining to the content of the 2025-2026 plan and the Public Services RFP. Members of the public may attend this hearing at Connexion at 149 Broadway.
- Individuals with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication, written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures, in order to access the programs and activities of the City of Somerville should contact Adrienne Pomeroy, at APomeroy@somervillema.gov.
- The City of Somerville can provide you with an interpreter in your language for free. To request an interpreter, please contact SomerVIVA at somerviva@somervillema.gov or call 311 (617-666-3311) at least 7 days in advance of this event.
- Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments Annual Action Plan to Miranda Rubin (mrubin@somervillema.gov) at the City's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (City Hall, 3rd Floor). All comments received by **March 31st, 2025**, will be incorporated in the final application. All questions about the RFP should be directed to Julia Melgar (jmelgar@somervillema.gov).

2/26/25 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP 25-43**

The City of Somerville, through the Procurement and Contracting Services Department, invites sealed proposals for:

Fully Automated Healthcare Kiosks

A RFP package may be obtained online at <https://www.bidexpress.com/businesses/33100/home>, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or from the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **Wednesday, February 26th, 2025**.

Sealed proposals will be received at the above office or via BidExpress until: **2:30 pm, Wednesday, March 12th, 2025**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to reject any or all proposals if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

Please email Thupten Chukhatsang at procurement@somervillema.gov for more information.

**Thupten Chukhatsang
Senior Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3400**

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www.TheSomervilleTimes.com

Information meeting for Maffa Way and Mystic Ave. Project

Interested in learning more about upcoming bridge repairs and safety improvements on Maffa Way and Mystic Avenue? MassDOT is hosting a public information meeting to review the planned improvements and provide a look ahead to upcoming construction. February 26, 6 p.m. Somerville Central Library, 79 Highland Ave.



Historical Fact

CONT. FROM PG 9



California, where she learned to fly. Then, it was on to the East Coast, where she lived in Medford with her mother and sister and was employed as a Boston social worker.

After establishing the women's altitude record, she was presented with an invitation to become the first female to fly across the Atlantic Ocean, as a passenger. The successful flight was made on Bunker Hill Day, June 17, 1928. Somerville and Medford celebrated with a parade that went from Magoun Square to Medford Square. To put this feat into perspective, it took her 20 hours and 40 minutes to cover the same distance that it took John Winthrop and the Puritans 76 days to do in 1630.

The first male to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean was Charles Lindbergh on May 20, 1927. Earhart became the first woman to accomplish this exactly five years



later on May 20, 1932, and on January 11, 1935, she became the first person in history to fly solo across the Pacific Ocean, flying from Hawaii to Oakland, California.

She was the first woman to receive the National Geographic Society's special medal and the only civilian to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross from Congress. She accumulated speed, distance

and altitude records too numerous to list, and her status in female aviation was unrivaled. She died just shy of completion, during her endeavor to circle the globe at the equator.

The biggest memorial in Somerville, The Mystic River Dam, links the Mystic River to the oceans. It honors Amelia Earhart, the first to fly over the oceans.

father's occupation as a railroad lawyer. As a young nurse's aide in a Toronto hospital, she tended to injured pilots, sparking her interest in aviation. The family moved to

COMMENTARY

The views and opinions expressed in the commentaries and letters to the Editor of The Somerville Times do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of The Somerville Times, its publishers or staff.

The Power We Have Right Now

By State Representative
Christine P. Barber

Right now, we are facing tremendous threats – to our communities, economy, and our democracy. Like many of you, I have been struggling since the federal election to address these challenges. The last few weeks have escalated our fears of deportations of immigrants who have not committed crimes, of threats against transgender youth, and of a loss of federal funding for critical programs. I am angry about the dangerous decisions being made in Washington, many of which will have very real impacts on our communities. This is a scary moment for so many, but it is also a time to harness our local strengths and channel them into action.

As a state official, I am focused on what I can do at the State House to support the safety and rights of residents in Somerville, Medford, and around Massachusetts. This means I am filing and supporting bills that ensure the rights of immigrants, LGBT people, and reproductive health. I am also working with local partners to share resources about basic rights to get clear information out.

In Massachusetts, we have already taken many steps to meet this moment. A number of years ago, we passed the Roe Act to codify care for abortion and reproductive health in state law, and we have expanded access to gender-affirming health care and shielded medical providers from attacks. We have passed strong laws protecting LGBT people from discrimination in housing, health, and public accommodations. These measures and others will con-

tinue to provide needed safeguards against federal overreach into our communities and against our basic rights.

While I am proud of the foundation that we have built in Massachusetts, there is more we can do. This session, I filed HD.3596 *The Dignity not Deportations Act* [1] to minimize the abuse of power by federal ICE agents and ensure that our Commonwealth remains true to its values. Federal ICE immigration authorities rely on state resources to detain and deport residents who have not committed crimes. This bill would prohibit agreements that allow ICE to deputize local law enforcement to act as federal immigration agents and would prohibit state contracts with ICE – without limiting state employees from taking action on criminal matters. This ensures that our state resources are not being used for Trump's mass deportation agenda and is a step Massachusetts can take to protect members of our immigrant communities.

I am also continuing to fight for reproductive freedoms in the face of federal threats. While Massachusetts has significantly increased support for reproductive care since the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, challenges remain in ensuring health care is a decision between the patient and their doctor. A bill I filed this session, HD.2651 *An Act Prioritizing Patient Access to Care* [2], clarifies that decision-making regarding abortion care, including later in pregnancy, is in the hands of patients and doctors based on the physician's professional judgment.

Addressing climate change is another issue I am prioritizing, particularly for people in environmental justice areas who face the greatest threats. I filed HD.1924 *An*

Act to Ensure Cleaner Air for Communities Overburdened by Air Pollution [3], which will create air quality monitoring in certain hotspots and set concrete targets to improve air quality. Poor air quality, due to pollution like highway traffic, has been shown to cause cardiovascular diseases and higher incidences of asthma. Mitigating the effects of climate change is something we need to keep working on at the state and local levels.

I have serious concerns about potential federal actions that are beyond our control, particularly cuts to federal funding. Our state receives significant funds for health care, education, and transportation projects through federal programs. We must continue to reach out to our elected officials at the federal level to remind them how important these programs are so we do not lose access to basic services that residents depend upon.

Many people are already taking action – showing up at rallies, making calls, and sharing information about our rights and needed services. These are all critical activities right now. I suggest two other actions:

1) **Share information and meet with people with similar concerns.** There is a lot of misinformation swirling around, but organizations like MIRA Coalition have Know Your Rights trainings and information to support immigrants. You can find out more at <https://miracoalition.org/news/know-your-rights/>.

2) **Find local organizations – online and on social media – that work to protect access to federal programs and issues you care about.** Right now, many organizations are looking for volunteers



to take action, and this is a helpful way to channel anger and fear into something positive for our communities.

This moment asks us to work together and reminds us of the importance of state and local government in standing up for the needs of our communities. Massachusetts can lead the way and continue to stand up against the many challenges we face. There is power in partnership and working together to protect our neighbors.

Links:

[1] <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/194/HD3596>

[2] <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/194/HD2651>

[3] <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/194/HD1924>

Christine P. Barber is State Representative for the 34th Middlesex District, which includes neighborhoods in Medford & Somerville. She is Vice Chair of the Massachusetts Caucus of Women Legislators.

Tufts University Department of Music Presents 'Ballaké Sissoko, Kora Tales' film screening

The Tufts University Department of Music presents Ballaké Sissoko, Kora Tales film screening in the Distler Performance Hall at the Granoff Music Center on Thursday, March 27, 2025 at 7:30 pm. The Tufts University Department of Music presents the story of the kora, one of Africa's most iconic instruments, featuring kora player Ballaké Sissoko. Co-written and co-directed by Lucy Durán and Laurent Benhamou, this screening is part of the International Symposium on the Musical Arts of Africa (ISMAA), taking place at the Granoff Music Center March 28-29, 2025. More info at: <https://humanities.tufts.edu/international-symposium-musical-arts-africa-co-it-phelps-lecture-2025>.

The Granoff Music Center is located at 20 Talbot Avenue on Tufts' Medford/Somerville campus. For more information, please visit go.tufts.edu/musicevents or call the Granoff Music Center Box Office at 617-627-3679.

COMMENTARY

The views and opinions expressed in the commentaries and letters to the Editor of The Somerville Times do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of The Somerville Times, its publishers or staff.

Somerville's Path Forward in a Shifting National Landscape



By Mayor Katjana Ballantyne

I know many in Somerville have been watching the national news with a mix of disgust and distress. Prices continue to rise, and economic stability and critical systems and alliances appear threatened. Our federal government is actively reintroducing systemic bigotry of minority and marginalized groups. The new administration also seems fine with making life harder for people already living at the frayed end of the wage scale – or, really, all of us in the 99%. I wish I could tell you they're going to stop, but there's no indication they will. This is why where you live matters more than ever.

In Somerville, we categorically reject the efforts to drag this country a century backwards. We know full well that good government improves most aspects of our lives be that quality schools, traffic safety, or social and health

services. We still put diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice at the forefront of everything we do.

We continue to help the people in our community who need the most help and to deliver core services to all who live, work, and do business here. And we still treat our neighbors – everyone – with respect and dignity. None of that is going to change. But these ideas, values, and established traditions, as well as the laws and system of government that support them are under assault.

Make no mistake, the rule of law is on our side. The Constitution remains on our side. And we will not stand by and be bullied out of our rights. This week, we filed a joint lawsuit with Chelsea [1] to defend the constitutional rights of cities – in this case, to direct local police to focus on the job they are hired and trained for, local police work, rather than accepting an unfunded and illegal man-date from Washington to take part in mass deportations.

In January, we submitted an amicus brief supporting a lawsuit to block the federal effort to end birthright citizenship, which is a right spelled out clearly in our Constitution. So far, the courts have upheld that right. We shouldn't have to fight for state

and local rights, our sovereignty, or individual rights in court, but that is what we are stepping up to do. Our nation's rule of law was built up over centuries, and we will do our part to uphold the progress and safety woven into it.

We will do everything in our power to protect the rights of all our residents – including our immigrant and LGBTQIA+ residents, residents targeted with DEI dog whistles, and any others who are targeted now or in the days to come. To be clear, attacks on some hurt us all. This isn't about putting one group ahead of others. It's about our community as a whole.

It's true, we are in uncharted territory. We don't have all the answers, and we don't yet know all the questions. Many of the chaotic federal actions underway seem sure to either disrupt our economy or curtail our rights and representation. So, day to day, as the City keeps picking up the trash/recycling, making sure you all have clean water, and advancing all our plans, programs, and services, we will also remain focused on this shifting landscape.

We are in ready contact with our federal and state delegations, regional and national city organizations, and economic and legal

experts. We are always in touch with our neighboring cities and towns. With them, we will continually monitor and navigate what comes.

And don't forget your own ability to make an impact. Somerville is a compassionate and caring community. We saw this during the peak of the pandemic. We see it every snowstorm. Let's keep that community-mindedness going.

Check on your neighbors. Inject kindness where you can. Volunteer if you are able, for example, to support climate action, food access, or more. Shop and eat local: businesses across the city are hurting as people who are afraid stay home. Donate local: some of our local nonprofits too are facing threats to their federal funding.

If these are going to be hard and uncertain times, know that you are not in them alone and we are not powerless. Together, we can work to make sure that Somerville remains a place of security, sanity, and decency amidst what comes.

City programs and services:

Right now, if you are already feeling the impacts, remember as well that we have a range of city programs and services that we offer or outside services we can

refer you to.

You can fill out our social services form at [somervillema.gov/somevillehub](https://www.somervillema.gov/somevillehub). Visit our [somevillehub.org](https://www.somervillema.gov/onesomerville) site for dozens of programs that can give you some needed assistance and savings. Contact our LGBTQ+ Coordinator to check in on services and supports. Get in touch with the Council on Aging about their senior and caregiver programs. Visit our City and Schools One Somerville page at [somervillema.gov/onesomerville](https://www.somervillema.gov/onesomerville) to learn about immigrant rights and resources. Learn about utility discounts from our Sustainability and Housing staff. Contact the Office of Housing Stability for help addressing housing needs.

You can do this with **"One Call to City Hall"** to our 311 Constituent Services. Our 311 Customer Service Reps are wonderful people ready and waiting to connect you to the staff who can help. You can contact them by phone (311 or 617-666-3311), email, chat, via the 311 app, or online at [somervillema.gov/311](https://www.somervillema.gov/311).

[1] <https://www.somervillema.gov/news/massachusetts-sanctuary-cities-sue-stop-trump-entangling-them-federal-immigration-enforcement>

Somerville seeks community input on CPA priorities

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne is inviting residents to help shape the future of Community Preservation Act (CPA) investments by participating in the CPA Annual Review process. The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) has launched a survey to gather public input on community needs and priorities for CPA funding. The survey is open through March 31, 2025, and can be accessed at [this link](https://www.somervillema.gov/cpa). Additionally, the CPC will host its Annual Public Hearing on Wednesday, March 26, via Zoom to hear directly from residents. Community members can register for the meeting [here](https://www.somervillema.gov/cpa). The feedback collected during the review period will help guide the allocation of CPA funds for Fiscal Year 2026.

This year's review is particularly important as the City prepares to strategically leverage additional CPA revenue. In November 2024, Somerville voters approved a ballot measure increasing the local CPA property tax surcharge from 1.5% to 3%. With this increase set to take effect, the CPC is looking for fresh community perspectives on how best to invest these additional funds alongside other economic considerations. Since Somerville adopted the CPA in 2012, the program has funded nearly 100 projects across affordable housing, historic preservation, and open space and recreation. Community input has always been a vital part of the CPA process, ensuring that funding aligns with residents' evolving needs and priorities. Residents are encouraged to complete the CPA Annual Review survey by March 31 and attend the public hearing on March 26 to share their thoughts. For more information, visit [somervillema.gov/cpa](https://www.somervillema.gov/cpa).

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Ms. Cam's

Olio

Answers

From page 8

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. March 1 | 6. England |
| 2. March 3 | 7. Madonna |
| 3. The Yellowstone National Park Protection Act, making it the first national park in the U.S. | 8. Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival |
| 4. The daffodil | 9. 1977 |
| 5. The University of Oregon | 10. Gelatin |
| | 11. Peanut butter |
| | 12. Finland |

Join open house sharing Somerville Elm-Beacon Connector project design plans

If you want to see how people move around Somerville, visiting Elm Street by the Kennedy School on any weekday morning would be a good place to start.

Standing on the corner of Elm Street and Hancock Street, you'd see younger children arriving at school with their caregivers and older students making the trip on their own. Mixed with the students are harried commuters rushing to the Red Line or commuter rail, or waiting for the 87 to take them to Union Square, and people out running morning errands at the Porter Square shopping center. You'd also see people biking toward Beacon Street—to work in Kendall Square and beyond.

Unfortunately, Elm Street along with nearby Somerville Avenue and Beacon Street are high-crash streets for people walking and riding bikes. Fortunately, the city's upcoming Elm-Beacon Connector project aims to improve safety for everyone.

As a next step, Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, Ward 6 Councilor Lance Davis, Ward 5 Councilor Naima Sait, Ward 3 Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen, Ward 2 Councilor J.T. Scott, and city staff are excited to invite all community members to come to an open house to learn more about the effort, see community feedback and data gathered, review the preliminary design and share their input at a project open house.

When? Monday, March 10, between 6:30 and 8:30 p.m.

Where? John F. Kennedy School at 5 Cherry Street

"Our Vision Zero approach reminds us that crashes such as those we have experienced in our city are not acceptable or inevitable. As a city, we're working daily to pre-

vent them by prioritizing safe street design and aggressively investing in traffic calming. This project is another opportunity to take a significant step forward in an area that serves as a critical connection for our community," said Mayor Katjana Ballantyne.

After hearing community feedback about transportation safety concerns and priorities through community meetings, street outreach pop-ups, and feedback surveys, the project team has developed preliminary plans for the project.

At the open house, community members can explore different stations describing aspects of the design and talk directly to the project team about their questions and comments. If community members cannot attend, there will be multiple other ways to share feedback such as through an online feedback survey, virtual office hours, street outreach pop-ups and more. Visit somer villema.gov/elmbeacon for more details.

More About the Project

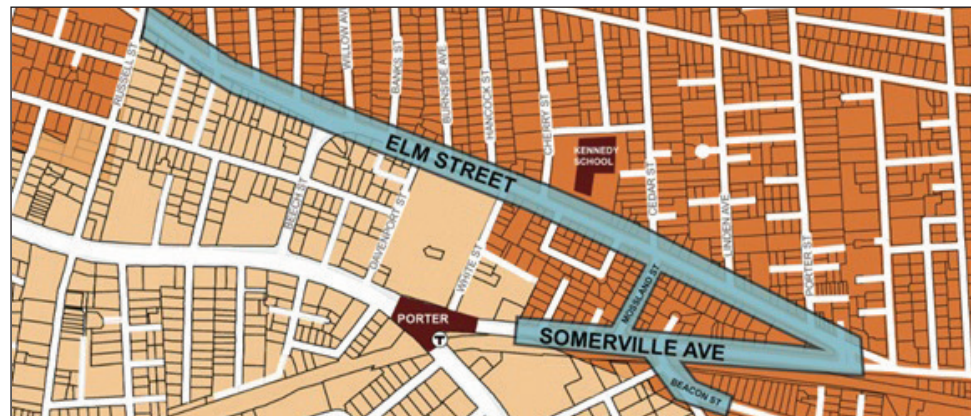
The Elm-Beacon Connector will bring a range of safety improvements to Elm Street (between Russell Street and Somerville Avenue), Somerville Avenue (between Acadia Park and Elm Street) Beacon Street (between Somerville Avenue and Oxford Street) and Mossland Street including but not limited to:

Protected bike lanes

This project fulfills a critical connection in the city's Somerville Bicycle Network Plan, which aims to build a connected 88-mile network of bicycle facilities to key destinations so that people of all ages and abilities can bike across the city.

Crosswalk improvements

The new design will add "clear corners" markings at intersections to restrict parking within 20 feet of the crossing,



The project aims to improve safety on streets that serve as key connections to civic life.

improving safety for people crossing the street by making them more visible to people driving. The new design will also incorporate strategic flexible posts along centerlines at some unsignalized crossings to slow motor vehicle turning and increase visibility of crosswalks. Changes to traffic signal operations will also prioritize safety and accessibility.

Neighborway on Mossland Street

By designating Mossland Street as a "Neighborway" the proposed design aims to reduce traffic on the street and make it quiet enough that people of all ages and abilities can safely bike in the street.

Parking regulations

There are trade-offs between safe, sustainable transportation options and parking given the limited space on our city's streets and this project will require a reduction in the number of on street parking spaces. At the same time, many residents currently rely on (and will continue to rely on) access to parking.

With this in mind, the city is dedicated to employing creative approaches to regulating curb use and working with local businesses and neighbors to develop strategies that make the best use of

limited parking resources. As part of the preliminary design, staff have developed a proposal for revised parking regulations based on feedback from residents and local businesses.

More about Somerville's commitment to Vision Zero

In 2017, Somerville formally adopted Vision Zero as part of the city's strategy and planning process. Vision Zero is a worldwide advocacy campaign focused on reducing and eliminating transportation injuries and fatalities.

The city's Vision Zero Action Plan outlines a strategy for eliminating deaths and serious injuries from our transportation system and details the actions the city will take. It was developed by a team of City staff and dedicated resident volunteers on the Vision Zero Task Force, including representatives from advisory and advocacy committees from Somerville and the Greater Boston region. The objectives, strategies, and actions set forth are intended to be ambitious, specific, actionable, and measurable.

To learn more about Vision Zero in Somerville visit somer villema.gov/visionzero.

Beacon Hill Roll Call

CONT. FROM PG 6

workforce shortage and increasingly depend on dedicated immigrant workers, will cause even more long-term harm."

HOW LONG WAS LAST WEEK'S SESSION?

Beacon Hill Roll Call tracks the length of time that the House and Senate were in session each week. Many legislators say that legislative sessions are only one aspect of the Legislature's job and that a lot of important work is done outside of the House and Senate chambers. They note that their jobs also involve committee work, research, constituent work and other matters that are important to their districts. Critics say that the Legislature

does not meet regularly or long enough to debate and vote in public view on the thousands of pieces of legislation that have been filed. They note that the infrequency and brief length of sessions are misguided and lead to irresponsible late-night sessions and a mad rush to act on dozens of bills in the days immediately preceding the end of an annual session.

During the week of Feb. 17-21, the House met for a total of six minutes while the Senate met for a total of five minutes.

Mon. Feb. 17

No House session
No Senate session

Tues. Feb. 18

House 11:00 a.m. to 11:03 a.m.
Senate 11:12 a.m. to 11:13 a.m.

Wed. Feb. 19

No House session
No Senate session

Thurs. Feb. 20

House 11:01 a.m. to 11:04 a.m.
Senate 10:06 a.m. to 11:10 a.m.

Fri. Feb. 21

No House session
No Senate session

Bob Katzen welcomes feedback at bob@beaconhillrollcall.com

Decennial Accreditation visit to be conducted by the Commission on Public Schools

In the next step toward Accreditation, eight outside educators will conduct an on-site Decennial Accreditation visit at Somerville High School beginning on April 13 through April 16. The purpose of the Accreditation visit is to assess the school's alignment with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges' (NEASC) Standards for Accreditation.

The visiting team of educators will meet with school stakeholders, visit classrooms, examine student work and review Somerville High School's Self-Reflection. As part of the comprehensive Self-Reflection, faculty members have identified the school's strengths and areas where improvements can be made.

The visiting team, made up of teachers and administrators from a variety of schools in the Massachusetts area, will be chaired by Carl Johnson, Associate Director for Accreditation and School Improvement at NEASC, who brings extensive experience in the Association's Accreditation process. "Our purpose in visiting Somer-

ville High School is to assist the faculty in its pursuit of quality education for its students," said Chair Johnson.

Principal Kersten said she looks forward to the insights and observations from the visiting committee. She also said that collaboration is one of the key features of the New England Association and believes their visit will serve to stimulate a continuing drive for improvement in the school.

Somerville High School and the Somerville Public Schools district seek formal accreditation by the NEASC. Public schools have the option of seeking accreditation once every ten years. According to the NEASC, accreditation is an ongoing, voluntary cycle of both internal and external assessments, planning, and reporting that allows schools to meet their unique goals while maintaining alignment with research-based standards that define characteristics of high quality, effective learning communities. The full accreditation process occurs over three years, with a final decision by NEASC expected in late 2025.



The NEASC is a voluntary membership organization of more than 2,000 public schools, colleges and universities, independent schools, and vocational, technical, and career institutions. Of these, over 725 schools have been accredited through the Association's Commission on Public Schools. The Commission works with

individual public schools to improve the quality of education through a continuous process of Accreditation and evaluation.

Somerville High School lives in a newly renovated and state-of-the-art facility, serving a diverse student body of over 1,400 students. Somerville High School prides itself on meeting the needs of all its students.

Developmental screenings offered for all Somerville children ages 3 to 5 years

The Somerville Public Schools (SPS) is offering free Preschool Screenings for 3- to 5-year-old children residing in Somerville. Screenings are scheduled on February 26, and April 30, from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Capuano Early Childhood Center, 150 Glen Street, Somerville, MA.

All Somerville parents, guardians, and caregivers are invited to bring their children to participate in these screening events. Screenings are by appointment only and advanced registration is required. Participation in the screening program is free and optional.

Somerville Public Schools offers screenings yearly as a way to assess children's developmental progress and identify children who may need further evaluation for special education services. Screenings provide an opportunity for families to ensure their children receive the support they need for a successful early learning experience.

"We are really excited to offer Preschool Screenings this year," said Kathleen Bailor, Director of Early Education and Care.

"Through this program, we are able to provide supports early in life that put Somerville children on a solid path toward success at the start of their educational journeys."

Parents, guardians, and caregivers with concerns about their child's development are encouraged to register for an appointment. The screenings are available to all Somerville residents and are conducted by trained professionals in a supportive, child-friendly environment.

Ways to set up an appointment for a Preschool Screening:

Online Screening Intake Form. Link: <https://forms.gle/wBDGVxzIMH5ZQdua9>. Filling out the form should take 2-5 minutes to complete. A staff member will follow up to confirm an appointment.

Phone call. Call Courtney O'Connell at (617) 629-5670 ext. 3657.

Preschool Screening in Somerville is a collaborative effort between the Somerville Public Schools Department of Early Edu-



cation and Care and the Somerville Public Schools Special Education Department.

The Department of Early Education and Care oversees various programs for families, including free public preschool programs, Head Start classrooms, and private childcare providers across the city, con-

necting Somerville children to high-quality early education and care. The Special Education Department is responsible for ensuring all students who require special education services are identified and their individualized learning needs are met in the least restrictive environment possible.

Be sure to visit us online at www.TheSomervilleTimes.com

Somerville's Rodent Committee finalizing rodenticide concerns

By Lexi O'Neil

Last Wednesday, February 19, the Somerville City Council Rodent Committee reconvened to discuss the concerns surrounding SGARs and what can be done to continue their efforts in eradicating a long-standing rodent problem that affects the residents of Somerville. Though great success has been made in the last few years, efforts are still being made to eliminate harmful rodenticides while also encouraging Somerville residents to continue calling in with their rodent concerns.

The following was discussed with the Committee members:

Rodent report trends

621 reports in 2024, lower than previous years. Hot spots on Winter Hill, showing a new concentration compared to the previous year. This area had a low concentration and has now seen an exceeding amount. However, exceedingly fewer rodents reported since 2016.

Factors influencing populations

Changes in climate, such as milder winters, ensure rodents will be out more often, thus increasing the number of reports and is always considered when reviewing population sightings. The newest council members have helped to reduce these populations due to new implementations for eradication with encouragement for residents to call in so they can immediately target issues. This has taken a positive de-

cline since 2019.

Violations and ordinances

Most violation tickets (3,545, up 918 counts since 2023) were for generalized trash complaints and there were 181 rodent/pest control violations. Most of this has to do with Somerville residents failing to comply with not putting overflowing/messy amounts of trash onto the curb every week, and also for harboring and lack of care on properties, which allow rodents to burrow undisturbed. They are finalizing ordinances on vacant property concerns that should be ready by early summer.

Council's strategies

The council has been devising new plans for how to continue the work on maintaining the city's rodent population, including but not limited to: seasonal mailers that remind folks every Spring and Fall about how to manage trash and reports during peak seasons, communication leads on concerns via the council's social media pages, and workshopping with SOIA, specifically on how to manage food/shelter resources to diminish homelessness encampments and thus, eradicating extra rodent infestations.

New innovative measures

The cities of Cambridge and Somerville have rolled out a new field test study where non-toxic hormonal fertility control products, called Evolve, are being implemented to assist in new and safer efforts for diminishing rodents. Somerville High School,



they're maintaining the trash frequently and have been the test site to use the most amount of Evolve. They have also recently announced that they are still looking for volunteers to help with having bait placed on their property and helping with re-baiting existing traps.

SGARs ban and wildlife protection

Concerns about the owls ingesting SGARs have been extremely harmful, and the banning of SGARs on public properties in multiple cities has helped to protect other wildlife in the meantime. Residents have been extremely supportive of banning SGARs and councils are working to ban them on private property, but this is not finalized just yet. The council is struggling

to find where the poisonous prey is being ingested by the local birds of prey. Traps have even been altered to ensure less damage to aid in tracking. All SGARs should be replaced with snap traps by this point. By using Vitamin D-based rodenticides, rats will die from more natural means, as their bodies can only handle a specific amount of Vitamin D, instead of the use of harmful poisons in the environment.

Ongoing efforts

The City of Somerville is still working endlessly to focus on current legislation that is posing to ban SGARs completely across the state, along with other forms of rodenticides that impact both wildlife and eradication.

Help test a new, non-toxic approach to rat control in Somerville

The City of Somerville is looking for community members to help test an innovative, non-toxic approach to reducing the local rat population.

In partnership with the Cambridge Public Health Department and Cambridge Inspectional Services, Somerville is participating in a Rodent Fertility Control Study using Evolve, a hormonal fertility control product designed to humanely curb rat reproduction. This study aims to determine whether Evolve is an effective long-term solution in dense urban areas like Somerville while reducing reliance on traditional rat poisons, which can harm other wildlife such as birds, cats, and foxes.

The city is seeking residents and property owners in the Lincoln Park area to participate in the study by allowing bait stations containing the fertility control product to be placed on their property at no cost or volunteering to join the field team.

How You Can Help

There are two ways for residents to get involved:

- ✦ **Enroll Your Property:** If you live in the Lincoln Park area, you can participate by allowing bait stations to be placed on your property. There is no cost to enroll.
- ✦ **Volunteer for the Field Team:** Field volunteers help City staff deploy bait stations, collect rat activity data, and help with outreach to neighbors in our study area.

This study builds on existing rodent control strategies in Somerville, which include active surveillance, improved waste containment, and habitat reduction. By testing this non-toxic method, the City hopes to develop a safer, more effective approach to managing urban rat populations.

Sign Up or Learn More

To enroll your property, volunteer for the field team, or learn more about the study, please contact aprivett@somervillema.gov.



Committee meeting addresses yard waste collection and sustainability

By Carlie Lombardi

On February 20, the Open Space, Environment, and Energy Committee discussed key environmental policies in Somerville, focusing on yard waste collection, energy efficiency, and sustainability.

Yard waste collection debate

A proposal to extend yard waste collection beyond just December faced logistical challenges, as the Department of Public Works (DPW) Commissioner emphasized winter preparation and financial issues. Residents have raised concerns about yard waste collection timing due to changing seasonal patterns, noting that leaves are falling later in the season. Council members mentioned changing climate conditions and suggested shifting the start of weekly collection later in the fall rather than extending it. The commissioner agreed to consult with waste contractors. Some council members also raised

concerns about accessibility for residents without their own private transportation, bringing up different pickup options for yard waste.

Expanding energy efficiency with Mass Save

Somerville aims to boost participation in the Mass Save program, which offers rewards for energy efficient home upgrades. Shannon Taylor, a newly appointed Energy Adviser, will assist residents with the program. Engagement efforts include targeted messaging, QR code posters, and community engagement to help renters and landlords use the program. The council also discussed ways to improve data sharing with Mass Save to better track participation rates and identify areas needing additional efforts.

Sustainability and public health

Discussions also covered balancing pollinator-friendly landscaping with rodent control concerns. Some members brought



up the environmental benefits of leaving leaves on the ground, while others worried about increased rodent activity. The city is now integrating composting with other sustainability initiatives, making sure they

align with the Mass Save incentives and waste reduction strategies. Additionally, officials are trying to figure out the best ways to improve communication about sustainable yard care practices.

SomeSights maps the odd and obscure, for free CONT. FROM PG 1

Guster's Somerville home, for example), squirrels, municipal buildings and more indicating notable sites and points of interest. Sometimes obscure, definitely Somerville. Per Google Maps, the SomeSights map has almost 272,000 views to date.

The SomeSights map has eight categories including Atlas Obscura [2] (local choices from the organization that documents and promotes the world's hidden wonders, unusual destinations, and incredible histories), Handsome Houses (Eric's "totally arbitrary" choices), Newer Switchboxes (painted lighting boxes), and Paw prints in concrete. Paw Prints started as a request by a Facebook user whose kids wanted to find paw prints around town.

Eric told us, "Part of my map was to point out the other maps. (For example), there is a map of all the borderline markers [3] from 150 years ago. Little carved pillars." There is another map that shows historic catch basins and sewer covers [4], starting from the late 1800's.

The SomeSights map was started in the late 2010s. Like many folks experience, his doctor had advised him to be more active. Before the pandemic, he would go to the gym but when the pandemic hit, Eric had to switch things up. "Let's walk outside. Let's do outside stuff. At that time, a person, Kami Ford,

was moving out of the area. She had all the Free Little Libraries on a map (now called the Free Book Box and Micro-Pantry Map) [5]. That became my summer project in 2020 and 2021, visiting them all and covering them all." During that time, he added community fridges and micropantry boxes that offered free food in Arlington, Medford, Somerville, and Cambridge. And he found other maps created by folks online. "There are a lot of little crazy maps. People trying to keep track of these oddities."

The whole thing started to "snowball" by then, with Eric asking himself, "What else could I do? He added the Somerville Arts Council's Art Map [6], referenced by another user Emily Bhargava, and still has been "visiting and verifying the locations and photographing" as he goes around. "I gathered up all the artist stuff in public spaces. About half of the sites or a third had disappeared, as is natural. I started saying, 'Oh I will go visit all of those.' It became a quest to obsessively record all of these different things." One of the most obsessive things he has documented is rabbit tracks in concrete. "Once you start looking for stuff, you just find more and more. I keep the paw prints that tell a story."

We asked what he has learned in his wanderings. "Somerville is a very walkable

city. It is just great that you can walk the whole thing. It has four dimensions, the fourth dimension of time ... I am looking at something ... what is that? What does that mean? Then, you find out that is where the old factory was."

As for him personally, "I have not reached the level of zen in life where I can just take a walk. I feel like I want to do more than take a walk (and) have a reason to go visit a place." He said he has turned to "going around with a grabber and a trash bag and picking up trash. I will do that, and I think half of the people think I am a crazy person. Sometimes, people will say thanks, and I say you're welcome. By doing this while I am picking up junk, I can make it a little bit nicer for everybody." Amen to that, neighbor.

Visit <http://bit.ly/somesights> and explore.

Links:

[1] <https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?ll=42.39322701635064%2C-71.11037847042235&z=15&mid=1P3czMoomQ72II-p0gVcrf16ScHT-dkKU>

[2] <https://www.atlasobscura.com/>

[3] https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?msa=0&mid=1R_6y0Aqa-VkO8cj_KGRcZxd7eMOQ&ll=42.40363807757688%2C-71.1166525&z=14



The Leaning Tower of Borders, Medford-Somerville historic boundary marker.

[4] https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1eKPgYN6xPSGsoBX5bv0nBqEqK0GhS-3g&fbclid=IwY2xjawGkrrhleHRuA2F1bQIxMAABHbDjm-4F6ZXstHvBpDnAELhYyiN2RVth-Jrw45SB6SxQpKBEV9e8v7Rja2wQ_aem_yIINq8rbjE7JIMzzKKjXOA&ll=42.374022324708285%2C-71.07184029990003&z=13

[5] <https://erich.realtimerendering.com/llfmap.html>

[6] <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/artmap>

Tax Tips of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

Q: Can I claim a dependent on my taxes if they're not my child and don't live with me?

A: Surprisingly, yes! Many people don't realize that the IRS allows you to claim certain dependents even if they're not your child – or even if they don't live with you. But there are some key rules to follow.

To qualify as your dependent, the person must:

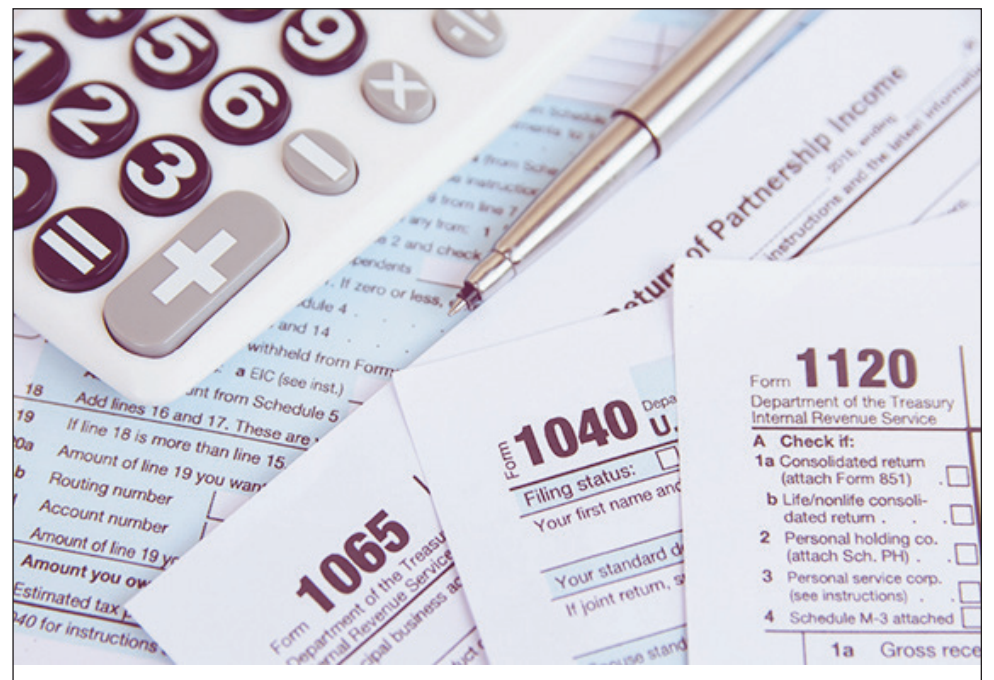
1. Be a relative (such as a parent, sibling, step-relative or grandparent) OR have lived with you all year.
2. Earn less than \$4,700 in gross income for the year (2024 limit).
3. Rely on you for more than half their financial support.
4. Be a U.S. citizen, U.S. resident, or a resident of Canada or Mexico.
5. Not be claimed as a dependent by anyone else.

If they meet these conditions, you may even qualify for the Credit for Other Dependents, worth up to \$500.

Q: What if multiple people help support the same dependent? Can they all claim the tax benefit?

A: No, only one person can claim a dependent, even if multiple people provide financial support. However, if no one individual provides more than half family members who contribute together can agree on who gets to claim the dependent under a Multiple Support Agreement. In this case, one person (who contributes at least 10%) can claim the dependent if the others sign a waiver (IRS Form 2120).

Have questions about your taxes? I'd be happy to help! I'm Vincent Hicks, a CPA based here in Somerville with over 20 years of experience. Feel free to email



or call me at vhicksconnect@gmail.com (859-553-0788).

Disclaimer: This column provides general tax

information and should not be considered tax or legal advice. Tax laws change frequently, and individual circumstances vary. For personalized guidance, consult a tax professional.

Calls to Artists for Somerville Arts Council's ArtBeat 2025

Time to get FROZEN! The Somerville Arts Council's ArtBeat 2025 Calls for Talent are now available.

In addition to approximately 100 craft, community, and food vendors on the street, we'll have two stages of music and a dance showcase at the Somerville Theater.

The Somerville Arts Council invites musicians, street performers, circus artists, installation artists, buskers, craft vendors, and more to participate at ArtBeat 2025. Festival date and new time: Saturday, July 19, 1-9 p.m. (Rain date: Sunday, July 20) Davis Square, Somerville. The main festival will be 1 – 7, but music and food will continue in Seven Hills Park from 7 to 9 p.m.

Apply here for the following ArtBeat Calls:

- ♦ **Craft Vendors** – <https://beta.somervilleartscouncil.org/artbeat/calls/artbeat-craft-application/> – **APPLICATION DEADLINE: Monday, March 31**
- ♦ **Bands/Musicians** – <https://beta.somervilleartscouncil.org/artbeat/calls/artbeat-music-call/> – **APPLICATION DEADLINE: Monday, March 31**
- ♦ **Dancers/Choreographers** – <https://beta.somervilleartscouncil.org/artbeat/calls/dance/> – **APPLICATION DEADLINE: Monday, March 31**
- ♦ **General Talent** – <https://beta.somervilleartscouncil.org/artbeat/calls/artbeat-general-talent-application/> – **APPLICATION DEADLINE: Monday, March 31**

ArtBeat 2025 Theme: FREEZE

At this year's festival, we will explore the word "freeze" in the many ways this word can be interpreted. Literally, "freeze" applies to the temperature – and we love the idea of convincing ourselves it is frigid on what is usually the hottest day of the year. Think igloos, snowflakes, sleet, and parkas. Yet beyond icy cold weather, freeze also connotes freezing time, freezing motion, and a freeze frame. Also, in this rushed world, what happens when we freeze, pause, and slow down? What happens when we get glacial? We look forward to your creative interpretations of this chilled-out theme.

About the Festival

ArtBeat is Somerville's annual multi-media street party. The festival showcases the city's diverse and vibrant arts communities and attracts thousands of visitors to Davis Square. Presented by the Somerville Arts Council and Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, ArtBeat is now in its 39th year and features an eclectic mix of music, dance, theater, food, performance, and interactive activities. We choose a new theme each year to keep things fresh.





Somerville Fair Housing Commission
Question of the week



Q: I want to increase the rent on a unit. What do I need to do?

A: If your tenant has a lease and you do not have an escalator clause in it, you must wait until the end of the lease and then may raise the rent by giving 30 days notice or signing a new lease. If your tenant is a tenant-at-will, you must give them at least 30 days notice before raising the rent.

The Somerville Fair Housing Commission generally meets on the fourth Thursday of each month at 3 p.m. online. Call 617-625-6600 ext. 2578 for the login information.



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BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



Bacon and eggs walk into a restaurant. The host says, "Sorry, we don't serve breakfast here."

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**Somerville through
the eyes of Denise**



Tree shadow...

— Photo by Denise Provost

On This Day in History

February 26

- 1154 – William the Bad succeeds his father, Roger the II, in Sicily.
- 1790 – As a result of the Revolution, France is divided into 83 departments.
- 1815 – Napoleon and 1,200 of his men leave Elba to start the re-conquest of France.
- 1848 – Karl Marx and Frederick Engels publish The Communist Manifesto in London.
- 1924 – U.S. steel industry claims an eight-hour day increases efficiency.
- 1933 – Ground is broken for the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco.
- 1936 – Japanese military troops march into Tokyo to conduct a coup and assassinate political leaders.
- 1951 – The 22nd Amendment is added to the Constitution limiting the Presidency to two terms.
- 1964 – Lyndon B. Johnson signs a tax bill with \$11.5 billion in cuts.
- 1968 – Thirty-two African nations agree to boycott the Olympics because of the presence of South Africa.
- 1993 – A bomb rocks the World Trade Center in New York City.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

requested items from their food pantry to meet the needs of their clients experiencing food insecurity. If you would like to learn more and donate through our wish lists, please see the link here: <https://bit.ly/SHCLinks>.

Starting to think about **summer plans for your child**? Join **Somerville's Summer Camp and Activities Fair** on **Thursday, March 6**, at **East Somerville Community School** (50 Cross St.) from 5 to 7 p.m. Get information on Somerville's summer camps, recreational activities, and learning opportunities. Pizza and fun activities will be provided. <https://somer-villehub.org/>.

Join Somerville author **Cara Giaimo**, and learn about her latest exploration of the magical world that we all share together on **Tuesday, March 4**, from 6 to 7 p.m. in the **Central Library Auditorium**. From the bestselling authors of *Atlas Obscura* and *Gastro Obscura* comes a nature book like no other – a dazzling, over-the-top collection of the world's most extraordinary wild species that takes you to all seven continents and beyond. It's more than a field guide—it's an adventure. Contact Tim at tdevin@somervillema.gov.

The **City of Somerville** in collaboration with **SomerViva (Somerville Office of Immigrant Affairs)**, and the **Somerville Public Library** will be hosting a **Know Your Rights Training**. Learn about your and your neighbors' immigration rights. **Monday, March 3**, 6 -7:30 p.m., **West Branch Library**, 40 College Ave. These trainings will be conducted in English, with interpretation into Spanish, Haitian Creole, and Portuguese. To request this training in Cantonese, Mandarin, or Nepali, please contact us at somerviva@somervillema.gov or call 311 (617-666-3311) at least 2 days in advance. Persons with disabilities who need auxiliary aids or reasonable modifications should please contact **Adrienne Pomeroy** in advance at 617-625-6600 x 2059 or ADA@somervillema.gov.

The annual **Read by the River K-5 Literacy Carnival** run by **Tufts University Hillel** is coming up on **Sunday, March 9**, 1:00-4:00 p.m., at the **Joyce Cummings Center** at Tufts University, 177 College Ave. Children in grades K-5 and their caregivers are invited to enjoy student-led literacy activities and meet a

surprise guest.

The city is holding **COVID-19 and Flu Vaccine Clinics: Thursday, February 27**, at the **SomerViva Office of Immigrant Affairs** (42 Cross St.) from 4:30 to 6 p.m., **Tuesday, March 4**, at **West Branch Library** (40 College Ave.) from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. Learn more and register here <https://www.somervillema.gov/vaccinations>.

The **Somerville Commission for Women (SCW)** seeks five members, and Somerville residents are encouraged to apply. The SCW serves as a centralizing force in the **City of Somerville** and the community which will deal with all women's issues providing information, referral, guidance, and more to public agencies and organizations engaged in activities and programs intended to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against women because of their status as women or minority women. All applications are due **Friday, March 21**. Interested candidates should submit a statement of interest by email to sflythe@somervillema.gov or by mail to **Steven Flythe, Deputy Director, Department of Racial and Social Justice, City of Somerville**, 167 Holland Street, Suite 208, Somerville, MA 02144. Please contact **Steven Flythe** at 781-808-7502 or sflythe@somervillema.gov with questions.

The **Rás na hÉireann USA 5K**, takes place, **Sunday, March 16**, 11 a.m. **Rás na hÉireann** is the most genuine Irish race this side of the Atlantic. Everyone is invited to Somerville, all runners and walkers, to celebrate life, the coming of spring, and to enjoy a memorable race and St. Patrick's Day celebration. The **Ras na hÉireann U.S.A. 5Km** is open to all, from beginners to international stars. To register visit: <https://www.theraceofireland.com/>.

On **Thursday, February 27**, at 6:30 p.m., join in for **A Polyamory Discussion** in the **ROOTED Armory Café** presented by **Polyam Collaborative Community** and facilitated by **Carol Ann**. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., Discussion from 7 to 9:30 p.m. More info on their website: <https://artsatthearmory.org/>.

On **Friday, February 28**, at 9:30 pm, **Lizardsandgizmos Comedy** presents **The Duo Show** at the **Arts at the Armory**,

191 Highland Ave. More info and tickets available <https://artsatthearmory.org/>.

State health officials are informing the public that **Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza**, which rarely infects humans, is suspected to be affecting wild and domestic birds in several Massachusetts municipalities. Here are precautionary steps you can take: Avoid handling birds and other wildlife and keep dogs and pets leashed and away from wildlife. Learn more and stay up to date on state guidance. <https://www.mass.gov/news/state-officials-provide-updated-guidance-on-suspected-avian-flu-cases-reported-across-massachusetts>.

Join **Somerville SEPAC - Special Education Parent Advisory Council** on **February 27** at 7 p.m. on Zoom to talk all things reading with **Dr. Nadine Gaab** of **@Gaab Lab** at **HGSE**. Translation available. Please register in advance and a Zoom link will be emailed to you: <https://tinyurl.com/SSEPAC-NadineGaab>.

The **Somerville Family Learning Collaborative (SFLC)** and **Families First** are partnering to offer the **Power of Parenting**, a free 12-week program connecting parents and caregivers of children ages 3 to 8. Learn about your child's developmental stages and behaviors, strengthen your caregiving skills, and discover self-care techniques. Programs begin **March 4**. Learn more and apply now. <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLS-fgFd1kL1E91KxC8QLMQYt01fW-wQZEOJy6Irm185zecYVWmHw/viewform>.

The **Somerville Warming Center** is looking for donations for their clients. To see what is needed visit their Facebook page or their Amazon wish list under **Somerville Warming Center**.

Winter can stretch budgets to the breaking point. With increased costs for food, heating, housing, and transportation, many Massachusetts families are facing tough choices. If you or your family need **help accessing food**, don't wait – call **Project Bread's** toll-free **FoodSource Hotline** today at 1-800-645-8333.

All Somerville residents should be on the lookout for the **2025 annual City of Somerville census** in their mailbox. The

2025 census form also includes an application to vote by mail in Somerville's preliminary and city elections this year. High census participation provides an accurate population count, which helps the city plan municipal services, apply for grants, and adapt as the population changes. The **Elections Department** also uses the census to help keep voting rolls up to date. It's easy to take part in the census. Just fill out the short form, be sure to sign and date the form, and then return it one of three ways: mail it back in the provided postage-paid return envelope, scan the form and email it to census@somervillema.gov, or drop it off in person at **City Hall** (93 Highland Ave.). Contact 311 (617-666-3311) with any questions.

Made In Massachusetts, a 3+ hour chronological journey through over 100 years of filmmaking in Massachusetts will screen on **Sunday, March 9**, at 1:00 p.m. at the **Somerville Theatre** in Davis Square, Somerville. **MIM** features clips from over 200 movies and television shows shot in the state starting with films from the silent era and going all the way through 2024. Highlighting cities and towns from Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville to Concord, Martha's Vineyard, Great Barrington, and everywhere in between. Featuring stars from James Cagney, Elizabeth Taylor, Steve McQueen, and Paul Newman to Harrison Ford, Sandra Bullock, Ryan Reynolds, Kerry Washington, and all the Afflecks and Wahlbergs you can handle. Admission is free, with donations gladly accepted to support the **Independent Film Festival Boston (IFFBoston)**. Q&A with filmmakers **Adam Roffman** and **Vatche Arabian** to follow.

Important tips for **staying safe and warm** in the current cold weather: Dress in layers and cover as much exposed skin as possible when outdoors. Minimize time outside, including for pets. Check in on family and neighbors. Follow all safety precautions if using space heaters. Do not use a stove or oven as a heat source. Check your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and make sure they are working and have fresh batteries. Learn more about carbon monoxide safety: mass.gov/info-details/carbon-monoxide-co-safety. Prevent frozen water pipes: somer-villema.gov/frozenpipes. For more, visit: somer-villema.gov/coldweather.

OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

sidebody: a band of friends who experiment



Lyrical

SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Our poet writes: The chair of Endicott College's English Department hired me in 1987 because of this poem about my paper route. He had one too. I have been teaching creative writing at Endicott ever since. I was the youngest member of the faculty, now I am the oldest. This spring I will be done. Who says poetry doesn't do anything?



March Winds

I was a paperboy for the Long Island Press, twelve years old, wanting to be alone. Home from school, the stack of newspapers on the stoop. I'd cut the string, split the stack in two, put them in the baskets over the back fender of the red Robin Hood three-speed English racer. With crew-cut, I pushed through March winds, folding newspapers and placing them in mailboxes and screen doors of little development houses, patchy lawns in Blue Point, New York, 1965. Each house had its own warm sour smell. Wind swept across the Great South Bay where I stopped to have a Milky Way, to see oystermen on the beach, and ice sailors glide across the ice. I can still feel my fingers freezing, wind whizzing over my ears. I would drop a newspaper on the bar of the Republican Club on Atlantic Avenue where pasty men in tight suits sat with blank expressions. I grabbed a handful of peanuts, hopped on my bike and raced up the gray pebbly driveway, lined with tall pine trees, to tiny houses where old men

I recently hooked up with Somerville artists Cara Gaimo, Lena Warnke, Martha Schnee, Hava Horowitz, a band of friends who experiment with music, performance, and zine publishing.

They call themselves "sidebody." They are part of the fabric of Somerville, MA, the "Paris of New England."

Doug Holder: As musicians and artists how has it been for you guys living in Somerville, the "Paris of New England?"

Cara: We all feel grateful to live in Somerville. We have a practice space in the basement of Central Street Studios that allows us to keep this project going, and to meet other artists. I love going to shows and getting to know people from overlapping scenes and generations. It's inspiring and also motivating — we need to make the city more affordable so that artists can live and work here.

Lena: I feel there is a very interesting direct comparison between Paris and Somerville, which is that their prime time is in the past, and they are now slowly falling into a capitalist decay. And there are certain holdovers, specifically older generations, who embody that spirit. I personally feel like I'm learning from those elders to try to keep it alive.

DH: People have described your music as experimental, punk minimalist, do it yourself, etc. How do you define yourselves?

Martha: Sidebody is an amalgamation of sound, friendship, silliness, physical space, performance, and making nothing into something.

Lena: Friendship-based vibes. Rocky, snappy tunes that come up with new and crazy theories about the world. Organic, intuitive and fun, and surprisingly complex when you're not expecting it.

Cara: Experimental is right but it's more like a kid experimenting with a chemistry set — mixing up all



our influences and personalities in different shaped beakers and seeing what freezes or blows up.

DH: Tell us about the performance aspect of your group. Is it traditional theatre or something else?

Hava: We do work with all of the fundamental elements of what theater is — the body, the voice, the set, the audience, and the emotional realm of characters. We're really focused as a collective on having some sort of storyline or thematic focus for our performance, which I think is different than a lot of band. The more we can break down barriers of what a typical music performance looks like, where there's really clearly defined roles of who plays what instrument and who's watching and who's listening, the more fun it is, for us and also the audience.

Martha: It's somewhere between a DIY rock-and-roll basement show performance, and performance art in the tradition of the Dadaists or the surrealists or 60s-style Happenings, where process comes before product.

DH: I am a small press publisher, so I was interested in your zine publications. Years ago, I interviewed noted Somerville writer Pagan Kennedy. She started her career by publishing zines when *Continued on page 23*

cooked supper at four in the afternoon.
The March winds stung my face.
I waved to some friends, Emily Miller,
Eric Leifson, Kathy McKenna.
As the sun went down, lights shone brightly
in every room at home. Bicycle in the garage,
I could smell beef stew and apple pie.
I splashed hot water on my face
at the kitchen sink. My dog, Happy,
jumped all over me and we wrestled
on the kitchen floor.
I wish we never stopped wrestling.

— Daniel Sklar

P.S. In 1838, nineteen-year-old Walt Whitman wrote his newspaper, the Long Islander, and then distributed it on his white horse, Nina.



Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 21

LEGO® Brick's 67th Birthday and LEGO Discovery Center Boston is celebrating by launching a brand-new event called LEGO Creativity Academy through March 3. Event URL and tickets: <https://www.legodiscoverycenter.com/boston/whats-inside/events/creativity-academy/>.

Are you looking for a way to get involved? The City of Somerville needs board and commission members. Learn more and apply for current openings by visiting somer villema.gov/besomerville.

The Somerville Homeless Coalition invites you to join them for a special celebration on Thursday, March 27, at 6 p.m., Crystal Ballroom, 55 Davis Sq, as they commemorate 40 years of service to the Somerville and Greater Boston community. Enjoy specialty cocktails, delicious delights from local favorites Redbones and Dave's Fresh Pasta, and vibrant live music to sway to by West of Willows and The Loomers. <https://somer villehomelesscoalition.org/events/>.

SCES is teaming up with City Fresh Foods to offer a five-pack of frozen home-delivered meals. This new meal delivery option is ideal for consumers who want the convenience of home-delivered meals but are not able to be at home each weekday to receive deliveries. Meal recipients can choose which weekday they would like to receive the frozen meals,

with up to five meals in each bulk delivery. Each meal comes with bread, milk, and a dessert. Current SCES clients who are interested in receiving meals should call their office at 617-628-2601 or contact their case manager for more information.

Low-income households may be eligible to receive help with winter heating costs through the Fuel Assistance Program. This program is part of the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) and serves residents of Somerville and Cambridge. Participants receive assistance with their heating costs between November 1 and April 30. Learn more about the program, check if you qualify, and apply for assistance today at somer ville-ma.gov/heatingassistance.

Somerville High School students are invited to bring their SHS ID to the Somerville YMCA on Fridays from 7 to 9 p.m. and Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m. for free. There are free movie nights. On Sundays, students will have access to the basketball and exercise areas (including the weight room). Visit their website to learn more. <https://somer villeymca.org/news/somer ville-teens-after-hours/>. Somerville YMCA asks that students go to their website to register before visiting and this program is for ages 14 to 17 years.

City Alerts are a great way for those who live, work, or own a business in Somerville to receive important city information that

affects your neighborhood. City Alerts provide information about emergencies (including snow emergencies), construction and road closures, water service interruptions, community news, and more. To sign up, visit somer villema.gov/alerts and click on the button for your preferred language. Step-by-step sign-up instructions are available at: somer villema.gov/alerts. Having trouble signing up? You can call 3-1-1 (617-666-3311) for assistance.

With the days growing shorter and temperatures dipping colder, the Somerville Homeless Coalition is in critical need of new or lightly used jackets for their clients currently living outside. If you have any adult-sized coats hanging in your closet that you don't wear, please consider dropping them off at the Somerville Homeless Coalition admin office located at 255 Elm Street, Suite 204, during the hours listed below. Drop Off Hours: Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., 2 – 5 p.m. Each coat donated provides warmth, dignity, and safety for our neighbors having to face the harsh New England winter conditions.

If you want to adopt-a-drain in Somerville, perform light maintenance as needed, and give it a creative name. Sign up for the Adopt-a-Drain program today by visiting somer ville.mysticdrains.org.

The Somerville Winter Farmers Market is back at the Arts at the Armory, 191 Highland Ave. on Saturdays, 9:30

a.m. – 1:30 p.m. from November 2 to April 12. The Center for the Arts at the Armory is proud to offer a weekly winter market with 71+ local food vendors with the best locally grown and regionally produced foods, including fresh produce, cheese, eggs, meats, fish, breads, tamales, pastries, chocolate, skincare products, and more. The market accepts SNAP/EBT and HIP benefits. They also offer a \$15 SNAP match to customers each week. More info is available on their website: <https://www.somwintermarket.org/>.

Through the generosity of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), and from the direction of Mayor Ballantyne, the Council on Aging can provide Durable Medical Equipment at no cost to Somerville residents. Residents with a documented need for medical equipment must be over the age of 60, or have a permanent disability, and must be otherwise unable to afford or access needed medical equipment. We currently have available: Commodes, Bath Benches, Rollator Walkers, Incontinence Supplies, and Transport Wheelchairs. For additional information, or for an application, please contact Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321.

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Off The Shelf CONT. FROM PG 22

she lived in Allston. How does this fit in with your artistic mission? Is there a political aspect to them?

Lena: We are a community focused band, and we make music in a communal way. Our zines also embody that. *ELFLAND: a zine*, for example, brought together neighbors to archive an ephemeral, communal art space that was displaced because of development. We're trying to hold onto a certain time, a certain spirit. Another political aspect is deconstructing individualism. This also relates to the way we write songs, which really is something that we do as a group. Our band and our zines decenter or complicate the idea of the individual maker.

DH: It is hard to make a living as an artist. How do you guys make your daily nut?

Hava: We all have jobs that are not sidebody. We piece different and overlapping professional and artistic endeavors together in order to make a living. Cara is a journalist who writes articles and books, Hava is a storytelling and presence coach, Martha is an educator and printmaker, and Lena is a researcher, educator, and photographer. We

do find that all this work informs sidebody and vice versa. We called our last album "full time job" as a joke, because while the band feels like a full-time job, and sometimes we wish it was, it's very difficult to imagine making the numbers work.

We all also come from privileged backgrounds and are very aware of how lucky we are to be able to do this at all. Not everyone is in a position to give so much time and energy to art in a society where it's not valued the way other work is!

DH: Why should we view and or listen to your work?

Lena: Our work deals with the simple joys and tragedies and small-time aspects of life – like breakups, or like doing nothing. But then we go big as well, so we're kind of stretching across the scales of life. And I think that's really relatable. I think our work is also a celebration of friendship, and I think people want to hear that more.

Hava: I think that we are sharing the possibility that you don't have to be technically excellent in order to make something really interesting. That is something I find su-

per refreshing when I view art. Especially now with AI that can make technically perfect pop songs, or technically perfect digital paintings. I think messiness and the raw material of making is only going to become more interesting and important and vital to art. We're constantly learning new things as a group, whether that's learning to play instruments that we're not familiar with, or sing in styles that we're not familiar with, or use our voices in new ways, or engage in new kinds of audience interaction or bits. We're constantly experimenting. And I think it's just fun to watch a band experiment live. That's an exciting space to be a spectator in, versus going to a show where you know it's gonna be perfect.

Cara: No matter what's happening in the world, or in your day or your week or your year, making music and art basically always feels good. The professional aspects of being in a band are fun to experience and play around with, but the core of sidebody is about bringing these spontaneous, creative, silly aspects of life to the forefront, and reminding other people that they can do that too.

Martha: You should do whatever you want!

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