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## Where the music never stops

How Tommy McCarthy and Louise Costello built a Boston institution



The Burren pub has been offering the best in food, drink, and entertainment since 1996.

— Photos by Sydney Johnson

By Sydney Johnson

On Elm Street in Somerville, Massachusetts, the pull of a lively crowd and the bright scrape of a fiddle tuning up drift onto the sidewalk, beckoning people inside. Just beyond the door, The Burren hums with animated conversations and music. It's warm, low-lit rooms, echoing with a variety of genres, including Jazz, Blues, and Traditional Irish music. The pub, founded by Irish musicians Tommy McCarthy and Louise Costello, has welcomed patrons for three decades, building a community around shared tables and shared tunes.

Tommy McCarthy grew up hoping to come to America.

Raised on American television and music, and on the stories of his father, a musician, who was invited on a cultural tour of the

Continued on page 4

## Somerville's PorchFest returns on Saturday, May 9

Hear great tunes right in your neighborhood. Community members are invited to Somerville's PorchFest on Saturday, May 9, an annual event that transforms porches and stoops across the city into mini-stages for a day of free, live musical performances.

Hundreds of bands at more than 500 locations will be performing music ranging from indie, punk, and hip hop to Latin, jazz, country, and world music. Travel across the city or stay in your area to connect with neighbors (it is the Year of the Neighbor in Somerville after all).

This event will take place rain or shine. Ahead of PorchFest, the city is sharing important information and reminders so you can make the most of this music-filled day.

Performance Schedule:

Continued on page 15



This year's PorchFest takes place on Saturday, May 9, throughout the city.



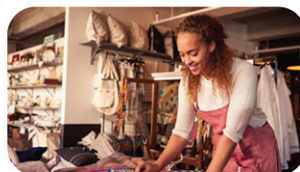
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**Broadway Magoun Open House.** The City of Somerville is planning to reconstruct sidewalks, repave, and redesign the segment of Broadway that passes through Magoun Square (Winchester Street to Central Street) to improve safety, accessibility, comfort, and sustainability. **The Mobility Division** is hosting an **open house** to share preliminary design concepts that seek to address these concerns and provide a safer, more comfortable experience for everyone using the street. **Wednesday, May 6**, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., **Arthur D. Healey School Cafeteria**, 5 Meacham Street.

\*\*\*\*\*








Join the city and **Mystic River Watershed Association** for a virtual community meeting on **Thursday, May 7**, from 6 to 7 p.m. to learn about construction plans. More info at: [www.voice.somervillema.gov/shore-drive-greenway](http://www.voice.somervillema.gov/shore-drive-greenway). **The Shore Drive Greenway project** will create a 12-foot-wide shared-use path through Blessing of the Bay Park along the Mystic River, improving waterfront access and connections to transit, jobs, and community resources. The project features multiple ecological enhancements to advance climate resiliency: 85 new shade trees, 1,520 sq ft of native plantings, and underground green stormwater infrastructure.

\*\*\*\*\*

To those celebrating their birthdays this week: Happy birthday to **Melissa Hurley**, who is celebrating this week. We hope she has a great birthday. Happy birthday to local attorney **Neil Berman**. We hope Neil has a great celebration. We wish *Continued on page 7*

## Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of May 6 – May 12 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
 <b>Wednesday</b> May 6	Rain	68°/51°	82%	67%	SSW 19 mph
 <b>Thursday</b> May 7	Partly Cloudy	63°/47°	17%	9%	WNW 10 mph
 <b>Friday</b> May 8	Sunny	61°/47°	5%	3%	NW 13 mph
 <b>Saturday</b> May 9	Rain	62°/48°	36%	22%	SSW 13 mph
 <b>Sunday</b> May 10	Partly Cloudy	71°/53°	15%	8%	SW 12 mph
 <b>Monday</b> May 11	Rain	59°/49°	48%	32%	SW 10 mph
 <b>Tuesday</b> May 12	Rain	61°/48°	39%	23%	NW 10 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: 'Special Operation' by Mark Pawlak

Julian W. James says:

Thank you Doug Holder for a good and well-written review, and your comments about politics, poetry, and the confluence of the two. In War, and especially modern warfare, it always seems like the Poets, the Artists, the Musicians, and perhaps the philosophers, are always the first to go, to the front lines, as fodder for the 'War Pigs'— the Politicians, Generals, and Hawks who plan, manifest, and revel in mass destruction and human suffering. Is it because the poetic and artistic ones are also the most dangerous to the culture of barbarity, depravity, and the torture of the human Spirit, both collectively and individually? And of course now there are no front lines, per se, for the entire planet has become the battlefield, and all places are the battlefields, and all civilians—and children—are the enemy! "Collateral damage" is now the centerpiece of every 'Special Operation', the venting of anger/hatred/rage at every place, person, and People. The war-torn mind of modern Kings, pawns, and victims alike is put in perspective by the words, thoughts, and actions of those who refuse to accept it, and thus strive in their own way to rise above it. That all of these words and feelings are brought to light by the poetry of Mark Pawlak is indicative of the power of poetry, to invoke feelings of shame and simultaneously sincere and certain Hope and Belief in, and appreciation of, the Triumph of the 'Human Spirit'. Yes, would like to thank Mark Pawlak, for his feelings and expressions. I can't wait to read 'Special Operation', sure that I will then thank him again, in a more knowing and meaningful way.

Doug Holder says:

Mark the review is by Dennis Daly

Log onto [TheSomervilleTimes.com](http://TheSomervilleTimes.com) to leave your own comments

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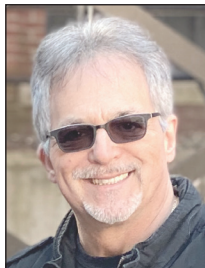
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Life in the **VILLE** by Jimmy Del Ponte

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.

# I was a teenage paperboy



If you grew up in the '60s and '70s in West Somerville and delivered newspapers, you probably worked for Mr. Abe Learner. Abe was the boss. "Better get going" was one of Abe's favorite sayings as he tried to get us out to start delivering our papers.

All my friends had paper routes down at Abe's, including a few girls (his wife's name was Stella). The office of The Davis Square News Agency was in the building near Cutter Avenue. Charlie was known as "Bay State," because that was the name of his route. I was "Francesca." He would say, "Hey, Francesca, fold those papers and get going!" I delivered *The Globe*, *The Record American*, and the afternoon *Herald Traveler*.

We would head over to the office, get our papers, and start folding them and putting elastics around them. We would then pack them into a large white canvas bag and sling it over our shoulders. You

would leave your bike parked outside. If you had a large basket, as I did, you would pack the papers into that.

I remember wiping out a few times on my bike because the basket was so heavy and hard to balance and steer. I think a lot of my friends my age have shoulder issues from lugging those paper sacks. Lots of kids stood outside businesses or on traffic islands hawking their papers. Some kids would regularly go into the barrooms to sell papers.

"My friend and I would get up at 4 a.m. and wrap papers with this big box of elastics. All I remember is that smell ... and the ink all over my hands." The odor was a mixture of the rubber from the elastics, cigarette smoke, and newspaper ink that filled the newspaper office. But delivering the paper was only half the battle.

Collecting the money from the customers was a bigger pain. We relied on tips, and not everyone was that generous. It was very important to deliver a clean, dry, and well-folded paper to your customers because that's when the tips came. Christmas



was a great tip-receiving time, too. If people blew you off or didn't answer the door, you would have to cover it yourself – and

that wasn't good.

My pal Danny had the worst possible house to deliver to. *Continued on page 19*

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# Money Map Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

**Q: Have you ever watched PBS's personal finance series "Two Cents"?**

**A:** If not, it may be one of the most useful free financial resources you're overlooking. "Two Cents" is PBS Digital Studios' personal finance video series, featuring short, engaging episodes — often just a few minutes long — designed to make money topics easier to understand. Since launching in 2018, the series has produced hundreds of episodes covering a wide range of personal finance subjects.

Here's why it's worth exploring:

♦ **It covers highly practical financial topics.** Episodes address budgeting, credit scores, debt, investing, retirement planning, in-

flation, emergency funds, and other financial issues that are especially relevant in today's economy.

♦ **It makes complex topics approachable.**

The series excels at breaking down intimidating financial concepts into clear, actionable lessons.

♦ **It offers trusted, high-quality financial education.**

As part of PBS Digital Studios, "Two Cents" combines strong educational value with engaging delivery.

♦ **It's easy to access and continually relevant.**

With hundreds of episodes available online, it can serve as an ongoing resource as your financial questions and goals evolve.

**Bottom Line:**

Managing money well requires lifelong learning. Just as physical health benefits from regular exercise, financial health improves when you continually sharpen your knowledge — and "Two Cents" can be an excellent place to start.

**Any questions?** I'm Vincent Hicks, a CPA based in the Cambridge–Somerville area. Reach out at [vincent@hickscpasolutions.com](mailto:vincent@hickscpasolutions.com) or (859) 553-0788.

*Disclaimer: This column provides general financial information and should not be considered legal, investment, or tax advice. Individual situations vary. Always consult a qualified professional for personalized guidance.*



## Where the music never stops CONT. FROM PG 1

United States in 1972. McCarthy imagined a country of possibility.

"When he came back from the tour after four weeks, he was telling me these great things, like how people used to fly to work, and there was no such thing as a water hose," McCarthy said.

That fascination became reality in March 1986, when a friend called to ask if he wanted to visit New York. McCarthy said yes.

A stop at a pub introduced him to a circle of Irish Americans, and musician Joanie Madden connected him with a band in need of a fiddle player. Instead of booking a return ticket, he stayed.

By September, he was in Philadelphia, uncertain about what would come next.

"I rang home, and I said to my dad, 'I'd like to stay till at least Christmas, and I'm not too sure where to go.' He said, 'Why don't you go to Boston?'" McCarthy said.

He arrived in Boston in November 1986. At the time, there was only one traditional Irish session, held at the Village Coach in Brookline Village.

"I kind of got a nice feel for Boston, really," McCarthy said. "I went downtown the next day to the Black Rose, and there was Irish music there. Everywhere you went around the city, people would be a part of the old country."

Boston's Irish music scene was tight-knit, sustained by immigrants who gathered nightly in neighborhood pubs. At The Kinvara in Allston, a hub for young Irish newcomers, McCarthy met Louise Costello, who was playing the banjo. Eventually, they started playing together.

Four decades later, they still are.

The idea that would eventually become The Burren took shape years later. After returning to Ireland and marrying in 1993, McCarthy and Costello were presented with the opportunity to tour across America in 1994. Following their final show at the Somerville Theatre, they stepped onto a dark, nearly empty Elm Street with friends and wandered into the Rosebud, a local townie pub where they spent the night talking and listening to music.

An opportunity to remain in Boston and continue performing followed. But the life of constant gigs and travel began to take its toll.

"I was probably about 27 at the time, and I was thinking, well, I'm married now, and we can't keep this gallivanting around the place playing music if we're going to get into this next serious part of life and start a family," McCarthy said. "Then I thought, why don't we open a pub? And that way, we could be playing our music, and we could be home every night. And if we have kids, we'll be there in the morning, in the evening for them."

Louise Costello had a similar experience traveling to Boston. She came over to visit a friend she worked with, who traveled to Boston and never looked back. After doing a session at the Kinvara, where she met McCarthy, she too ended up never looking back.

When McCarthy first pitched the idea of the Burren, Costello had her doubts. "It sounded like a mad idea at the time, but we had been playing around pubs for a couple of years, so it kind of made sense to have our own place," she said.

Two years later, in 1996, the Burren



opened its doors.

Costello said her one requirement was to have no televisions. "...Because that's what it's like in most of the traditional pubs in Ireland."

No flat-screen televisions. No distractions humming in the background. Just live music and conversation. A family place, as McCarthy described it. Somewhere where strangers could become regulars and even friends.

However, starting the Burren was not a seamless process.

"We were told to get a lawyer...I just about knew my telephone number, never mind getting a lawyer. But we made a few phone calls, we got a team together, and got to know the global councilors. My father was also a carpenter. So he came out from Ireland for a few months and helped us build the front bar of the Burren."

Success led to expansion. McCarthy and

Costello opened The Bebop in 2017. Located on Boylston St, near Berklee College of Music, The Bebop offered a space geared more towards college-aged musicians.

"There was a jazz musician performing in the back room of The Burren one evening, and he'd never been there. We got talking at the bar his during his break, and he said, 'You know, a place like this could do really well down in Berkeley College of Music Area.'"

McCarthy said they had a vision for musicians to be able to come in from the college and play music, form bands, and gain experience playing in front of an audience.

"There's one thing going to college, learning how to play music, inside the closet with your headphones and reading music, but you really need to get out there, get on stage."

They expanded again in 2023. Opening McCarthy's and Toad. *Continued on page 12*

# Cities of Cambridge, Somerville, and MWRA submit draft updated combined sewer overflow control plan

The cities of Cambridge and Somerville, together with the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA), have submitted a joint Draft Updated Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Control Plan to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) to protect local waterways from pollution, the first in the nation to go beyond EPA guidance and prepare for climate change.

The Draft Updated Plan is the first to take bold, progressive next steps to eliminate CSOs in a typical 2050 year, and the first to plan for heavier rainfalls due to climate change. It is the result of more than four years of detailed analysis, engineering evaluation, and broad public engagement. The draft recommends a set of projects – including new storage tanks, sewer separation, and upgraded conveyance systems – that together are projected to eliminate CSO discharges during a typical 2050 year in the Alewife Brook, Charles River, and the Mystic River. A Combined Sewer Overflow is an overflow of stormwater and sewage into nearby rivers and streams that happens during heavy rain.

This plan prepares for increased and heavier rainfall expected in a typical 2050 year due to climate change, while also balancing water quality, construction impacts, public open space, project timelines, and costs.

Climate change is expected to overwhelm sewer and drainage systems in area communities. This would result in local flooding, health risks, and water pollution equal to or worse than CSOs. To reduce these risks, it is critical that the MWRA, Cambridge, Somerville, and other Massachusetts communities continue resiliency planning and investing in major infrastructure projects that manage stormwater and help protect homes, rivers, and public health.

After reviewing 39 potential approaches, the following recommendations were made for each body of water.

**Alewife Brook:** Two storage tanks (three million gallons total), eight acres of sewer separation, a 0.75-mile conveyance pipe, and a one-mile micro tunnel. The estimated design and construction cost is approximately \$340 million, and the estimated completion timeframe is 13-18 years.

**Mystic River:** One storage tank (7.4 million gallons) and 95 acres of sewer separation. The estimated design and construction cost is approximately \$260 million, and the estimated completion time-

frame is 5-7 years.

**Charles River:** Two storage tanks (12.6 million gallons), 446 acres of sewer separation, and two new storage conduits. The estimated design and construction cost is approximately \$690 million, and the estimated completion timeframe is 28-33 years.

The recommended projects offer major advantages over other alternatives, including:

- Reduce pollution faster due to shorter construction timelines
- Less disruption to neighborhoods, including reduced truck traffic
- Protect parks and open spaces by limiting how much land is needed

The Draft Updated Plan incorporated extensive engagement by residents, advocates, and technical experts. Over the past four years, Cambridge, Somerville, and the MWRA hosted six large public meetings (with an average of 247 participants), held nearly 30 community events, conducted seven online surveys, and held nearly 20 meetings with the EPA and MassDEP.

This input helped shape a plan that balances environmental responsibility with affordability, community goals, and long-term resilience. It also builds on decades of investments by Cambridge, Somerville, and MWRA to modernize sewer and stormwater systems and protect local waterways.

“This Draft Plan is the most technically sophisticated and boldest CSO control plan in the country,” said Cambridge City Manager Yi-An Huang. “It proposes a level of control that goes beyond regulatory requirements and EPA guidance. It would eliminate CSOs in a typical 2050 year and factor in future rainfall projections that account for the impacts of climate change. Overall, this represents an important next step toward a cleaner, more climate-resilient future and builds upon years of investment and collaboration to improve our sewage and stormwater infrastructure. We are grateful for the ongoing support and partnership of Somerville and the MWRA during this critical process.”

“This new draft recommends bold action on Combined Sewer Overflows and highlights the scale of the challenge for communities across the state who are looking to responsibly manage stormwater in the era of climate change,” said Somerville Mayor Jake Wilson. “I am grateful to our partners at the City of Cambridge and the MWRA, and the many resident voices that helped shape the recommendations. My hope is that this plan will be a valuable contribution to our regional discussions of



— Photos by Lita Vongsavanh

how we can best prepare our communities for a resilient climate future and rally together as a region to equitably share the financial costs of progress.”

“The Draft Updated CSO Control Plan is a significant and responsible investment of rate payer dollars that balances real environmental benefits and actual water quality improvements,” said MWRA Interim Executive Director Stephen Estes-Smargiassi. “The Draft Plan is just the first step in

a thorough public process. Today, we begin a five-month public comment period to solicit feedback from stakeholders and members of the public. The best public policy decisions are made when all perspectives are heard, and we hope to hear from all interested parties during this review.”

**Next Steps: A Five-Month Public Feedback Period**

Between May 1 and September 30, 2026, community

*Continued on page 23*

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# Beacon Hill Roll Call



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**THE HOUSE AND SENATE:** *Beacon Hill Roll Call* records local representatives' votes on roll calls from the week of April 27-May 1. All roll calls in the House were on matters relating to House passage of a \$63.41 billion fiscal 2027 state budget. There were no roll calls in the Senate last week.

Most votes were strictly along party lines with most Republicans supporting the various tax cuts and other amendments, and most Democrats opposing them.

## A LOOK BEHIND THE SCENES OF THE "MAKING OF THE BUDGET"

Most of the decisions on which representatives' amendments are included or not included in the budget are made behind closed doors. Of the more than 1,700 budget amendments proposed last week, most of them were bundled into consolidated "mega" amendments. This year there were seven mega amendments and all were easily approved on roll call votes.

The system works as follows: Individual representatives file amendments on various topics. All members then pitch their amendments to Democratic leaders who draft consolidated amendments that include some of the individual representatives' amendments while excluding others.

The categories of consolidated amendments include many subjects including programs relating to public safety, judiciary, energy, environmental affairs, housing, labor and economic development.

Supporters of the system say that any representative who sponsored an excluded amendment can bring it to the floor and ask for an up or down vote on the amendment itself. They say this system has worked well for many years.

Opponents say that too much is decided behind closed doors without debate and noted that most individual amendments that are brought to the floor are defeated.

## HOUSE APPROVES \$63.41 BILLION FISCAL 2027 STATE BUDGET (H 5500)

House 149-9, approved and sent to the Senate a \$63.41 billion fiscal 2027 state budget after three days of debate. The House version now goes to the Senate which will approve its own version. A House-Senate conference committee will eventually craft a compromise plan that will be presented to the House and Senate for consideration and then sent to Gov. Maura Healey.

"As a result of the Trump Administration's sweeping

federal funding cuts and reckless trade war, as well as two proposed ballot questions that seek to cut the commonwealth's revenues by more than \$5 billion annually, this budget has come during a period of significant economic uncertainty," said House Speaker Ron Mariano. "That's why I'm incredibly proud of the investments that this budget makes despite those challenges, from funding for free school meals and for the final year of the Student Opportunity Act, to robust support for the MBTA, to nearly \$10 billion for cities and towns across the commonwealth."

"This budget builds off the successes of the last few years by prioritizing our constituents," said Rep. Aaron Michlewitz (D-Boston), chair of the House Committee on Ways and Means. "Whether it is greater investments into programs like housing stability, public transportation or early education, these initiatives are a reflection of our shared values. By reinvesting in the people of the commonwealth, we will continue to make our economy more competitive and equitable for years to come."

"[This is] a strong, responsive budget that both serves the needs of our constituents and continues to address the commonwealth's initiatives for competitiveness and statewide excellence," said Rep. Kip Diggs (D-Barnstable), assistant vice chair of the House Committee on Ways and Means.

"The budget is all wrong," said Rep. John Gaskey (R-Carver). "Communities should be the first thing funded behind roads and other infrastructure. School funding needs to be reimaged. We need to work on cutting taxes and energy costs and returning that money back to citizens and communities. Democrats rejected multiple amendments that would move a little back to communities and eventually a little adds up to a lot and before we know it, everyone is fully funded, bills are lower and people have more money in their pockets, spending more and the state revenues climb, all by asking for less.

"The Massachusetts House budget is the largest in state history," said Paul Craney, executive director of the Mass Fiscal Alliance. "It includes no reforms to the state's welfare system, which is spending \$1 out of every \$4 state dollars on welfare benefits, nor does it include any tax cuts, which were offered as budget amendments. In fact, it doesn't even address the concern that local aid in Massachusetts is now below the national average levels. State spending has become incredibly reckless and irresponsible, hurting local towns and cities with below national average local aid, and saddling taxpayers with obligations we cannot afford. The House leaders who pushed this state budget are not concerned with the taxpayers, just like they are not concerned with following the audit law that was

passed by the voters."

(A "Yes" vote is for the \$63.41 billion budget. A "No" vote is against it.)

Rep. Christine Barber	Yes
Rep. Mike Connolly	Yes
Rep. Erika Uyterhoeven	Yes

## LOWER SALES TAX FROM 6.25 PERCENT TO 5 PERCENT (H 5500)

House 25-131, rejected an amendment that would reduce the state's current 6.25 percent sales tax to 5 percent.

Amendment supporters said that this reduction will save consumers millions of dollars. They argued this is a reasonable way to provide relief to taxpayers who are suffering during these tough economic times, including the excessive cost of gas, groceries and so many other things.

Amendment opponents said that the reduction will cost the state up to \$2 billion in revenue and result in reduced local aid and/or cuts in programs that help millions of Bay Staters.

(A "Yes" vote is for the amendment reducing the sales tax to 5 percent. A "No" vote is against reducing it.)

Rep. Christine Barber	No
Rep. Mike Connolly	No
Rep. Erika Uyterhoeven	No

## EXEMPT OVERTIME WAGES FROM INCOME TAX (H 5500)

House 25-132, rejected an amendment that would exempt a worker's hourly overtime wages from the state's income tax. The exemption would not apply to salaried employees.

Amendment sponsor Rep. Marc Lombardo (R-Billerica) said if workers are willing to put in the extra time, take those additional shifts and work harder to support their families, they should reap the benefits and not be punished with taxes. He noted that overtime, often the difference between getting by and getting ahead, creates a real incentive for workers to step up and for businesses to meet their demands without adding a new bureaucracy or mandates.

Rep. Adrian Madaro opposed the amendment and said this exemption is untested, unsupported and would be unwise to implement. He noted that an identical bill received no support testimony at a public hearing.

Continued on page 19

COMMENTARY

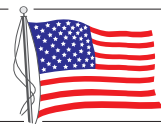
SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Have a happy Mother's Day, Somerville!

Our View Of The Times



Even in troubled times, even the worst of times, there is one particular beacon of goodness and light that pierces through the gloom to warm our hearts and lift our spirits – Mother's Day.

While life as we know it has been far from normal in recent years, mainly due to political divisions and the like, this is one occasion that can restore a bit of normalcy and order for us as we pause to honor the

beloved matriarchs of our families.

Of course, some may have to celebrate in less than ordinary ways, due to the miles that may separate family members that by necessity are keeping many of us from gathering together. Whether by phone, internet, or snail mail, a lot of folks will have to make do with making contact in whatever alternative ways they can manage.

And then there are those who are fortunate enough to be able to give their moms a warm hug in person, and either enjoy some of their incomparable home cooking, or cook a fabulous meal for them for a change.

However, we manage to do it, let's make sure that they know we are thinking of them and express our gratitude for all they have done for us throughout our lives.

Depending on their individual circumstance, they themselves may be going through some feelings of loneliness. Especially among the elderly. Let us make an effort to reassure and comfort them, and quell these feelings.

Let them know that you are doing well, and that you will do everything you can to see after them. Just as they would do for you.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

all of our Facebook friends, such as Jack Costello, Karen Mancini, Millie L McCarthy, Eileen Schofield, Jason Mackey, Cynthia Saltman, Jill Marie, Jim Breath, Karen Dupont, Lisa Dervishian, Janet McLaughlin, and Paul Curley, a very happy birthday. We hope everyone has a great day. To all the others we may have missed, we sincerely wish them the very best of birthdays.

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Don't miss the SHS Dance Concert, a joyful celebration of creativity and community that brings together dance classes and afterschool arts programs on stage in the Somerville High School auditorium.

Friday, May 8, at 7 p.m. and Saturday, May 9, at 7 p.m. Tickets are Pay-What-You-Can and can be purchased at the door.

\*\*\*\*\*

Somerville's RSJ Fund is making up to \$100,000 total in community programming grants available for residents, advocates, and local service providers working to advance racial and social justice work. Individual applicants may request between \$250 and \$9,999. Applications are open now until 11:59 p.m. on Friday, May 29. <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/department-racial-and-social-justice/rsj-fund>.

\*\*\*\*\*

Join Somerville Media Center in honoring former Mayor Joe Curtatone with their Public Service Award on Thursday, June 4, from 7 to 9 p.m. at Arts at the Armory, 119 Highland Ave, in Somerville. The celebratory evening will feature cheeses and specialty bites provided by Formaggio Kitchen and more, tasty drinks from Arts at the Armory, live music by Revolutionary Snake Ensemble, raffles, and a special presentation honoring Joe Curtatone's longstanding advocacy for community media and Somerville Media Center. Proceeds from the event will directly support SMC programs. Tickets are available online: [https://ti-](https://ti-nyurl.com/joecurtatone)

[nyurl.com/joecurtatone](https://ti-nyurl.com/joecurtatone)

\*\*\*\*\*

Community members are invited to a hands-on design workshop to help shape how a new school building at 115 Sycamore Street could serve the community beyond the school day. Join the city's project team on Monday, May 11, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Tufts Administration Building (167 Holland St.) to share ideas on potential uses for indoor and outdoor spaces, including after-school programs, recreation, community events, and more. Feedback will help inform the design efforts as the project moves forward.

Continued on page 21

# FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

# Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#1021

1. What specific area in Mexico celebrates Cinco de Mayo primarily?
2. What was the battle called that happened on Cinco de Mayo?
3. Which horse won the Kentucky Derby with the longest odds in history?
4. What is the nickname of Churchill Downs' iconic grandstand?
5. Who was the first female jockey to ride in the Kentucky Derby?
6. How long does the Kentucky Derby race last?
7. When is Star Wars Day?
8. Where did Porch-Fest originate?
9. What does Volkswagen mean in English?
10. What are pink-ing shears used for?
11. Where would you find a gnomon?
12. Which author penned the apocalyptic novel *The Stand*?

Answers on page 14

## The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

1. The largest bill in the United States was a \$10,000 note.
2. You spray 2.5 drops of saliva per word.

### STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

GRADUATION

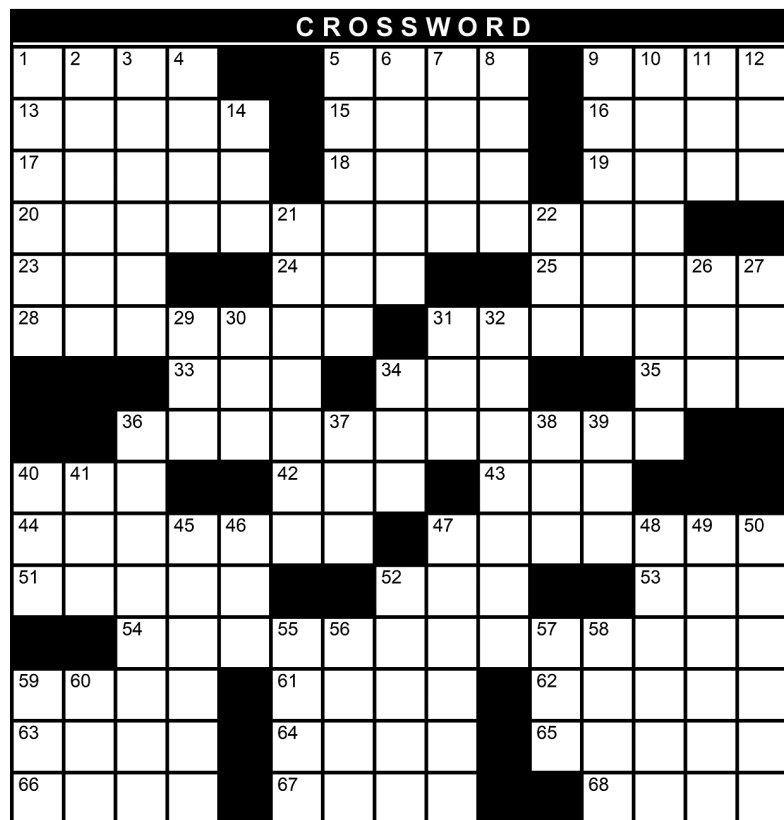
#### ACROSS

1. "\_\_\_ Louise"
5. Unsolicited email
9. Parentheses, e.g.
13. Not mainstream, as in art
15. Heap
16. Chesterfield, e.g.
17. Not sharp
18. Katy Perry's hit
19. Grammy of sports
20. Bachelor of Arts, e.g.
23. Autumn mo.
24. Opposite of outs
25. Muslim ruler, respectfully
28. Retirement safety net (2 words)
31. Completely isolate (2 words)
33. "That feels good!" exclamation
34. Programmer's bane
35. Mozart's "L\_\_\_ del Cairo"
36. Same as #11 Down
40. #me\_\_\_
42. Paleozoic or Victorian, e.g.
43. Yoda: "Do or do not. There is no \_\_\_"
44. River port in Belgium
47. Not figurative
51. Wavelike patterned silk
52. "For \_\_\_ a jolly..."
53. Bass product
54. \*Student speaker at graduation, usually
59. Regrettably, exclamation
61. Immanuel \_\_\_, German philosopher
62. Fortune teller's props
63. Welcome \_\_\_, pl.
64. "Cogito \_\_\_ sum"
65. Subdivision of an act
66. Olden day "you"
67. Whitetail, e.g.
68. Late actor Kristofferson

#### DOWN

1. Type of ape
2. Twist together
3. Not products, in chemistry
4. Dietary mineral
5. Spring, \_\_\_, sprung
6. Devoutly religious
7. Winglike
8. F te des M res honoree
9. Industrial plastic
10. Luxury furniture wood
11. Part of graduation regalia
12. Slovenly abode
14. Pilot's estimate, acr.
21. Fire starter
22. Santa \_\_\_ winds
26. Half of NFL
27. BA alternative
29. Same as Dao
30. "Friends, Romans..., lend me your \_\_\_," sing.
31. Stand-in teacher
32. Self-centered one
34. Undergarment
36. \*What guest graduation speaker is supposed to do
37. Dadaist Jean \_\_\_
38. A in #27 Down
39. Marbled toast
40. \*#36 Across for PhD recipient
41. Lennon's widow
45. Fish family
46. Sushi restaurant staple
47. Professor, technically
48. Faultfinder and scoffer
49. Former students
50. Part of eyeglasses, pl.
52. Door holder
55. Barely got by
56. Foolhardy challenge
57. Roman goddess of fertility
58. Nordstorm's outlet
59. Invoice qty.
60. Note that follows soh

Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.





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### Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:



# Surveillance technology discussed at Somerville Legislative Matters meeting

By Regina Arana

The Somerville City Council's Legislative Matters Committee met on Tuesday, April 28, to go over the city's annual report on surveillance technology. The meeting touched on transparency efforts but also raised some real questions about oversight and costs.

Ward 2 Councilor J.T. Scott chaired the meeting, which centered on the city's 2025 Surveillance Technology Annual Report. The city is required to publish this document every year, which breaks down which surveillance tools are being used, how they're being used, and any new data-sharing agreements that were entered into over the past year.

Scott made it clear from the start that the council's job is to determine whether the benefits of these tools are worth the financial and operational costs.

## Transparency was a big theme

City officials wanted people to know the report is meant to be accessible, not just a bureaucratic document buried somewhere. Councilor Ewen-Campen

was especially positive about it, pointing out that it includes real data on tools like ShotSpotter, including how often it's used, what evidence it's helped recover, and any complaints filed.

He essentially said if you're curious or worried about what the city is using, this report is a good place to start. Yasmin Radasi, from the Mayor's Office, backed that up, saying the administration plans to keep putting it out every year and is open to working through any concerns with the council.

## Digging into the details

Things got a bit more specific when councilors started asking about GrayKey, a digital forensics tool. Scott wanted to know whether the report captured the full picture of costs — specifically, whether training officers on the technology required overtime or additional staffing.

Police officials said two officers are trained on it and that most of the training happened online during regular hours, so no backfill was needed. But Scott wasn't totally satisfied — he asked the department to hand over training materials and



The city's Legislative Matters Committee recently reviewed the annual report on surveillance technology.

more details, saying it's information the council should have access to.

## What comes next

The committee has until May 31 to complete its review, after which the council will issue its own report on whether these surveillance tools should contin-

ue to be used. If something raises a red flag, they can push for changes — or even move to ban specific technologies through legislation.

The conversation is expected to continue as more items on the agenda get reviewed and public feedback comes in.

## Dorothy's Corner

BY DOROTHY DIMARZO



### New England Lobster Rolls

Memorial Day will be celebrated on the last Monday in May to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in the military. For detailed information on how this holiday came about, you can visit [http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memorial\\_Day](http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memorial_Day).

It's also the kickoff to the summer and traditions of cookouts and the gathering of friends and family. Every year at our gathering, we have steamed lobsters, corn on the cob, potato salad, mixed green salad, grilled chicken, burgers, and hot dogs. As always, we pick up a couple of extra lobsters for lunch the next day to make lobster rolls.

Lobster meat from 2 - 2lb Maine lobsters

4 - hot dog rolls

- Butter
- 3 Tbl mayonnaise
- 1 Tbl capers, rinsed and finely minced
- 2 Tbl lemon juice fresh
- 1/2 tsp Old Bay Seasoning(R)
- 1/8 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- Pinch of kosher or sea salt

Roughly chop the lobster meat into about one-inch pieces, set aside. In a medium bowl, add the mayonnaise, lemon juice, Old Bay Seasoning(R), capers, salt, and pepper, and mix all ingredients until well blended. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed. Add the lobster meat and gently toss until all the meat is coated with the mixture, and set aside. Preheat a skillet over medium heat. Butter the hot dog rolls and place them in the skillet. Adjust the heat as needed. Turn over once they are browned and do the same to the other side. Evenly divide the salad between the 4 rolls and



serve immediately. Serve with potato salad or, better yet, your favorite potato chips.

Visit Dorothy's website at <http://ddimarzo2002.wix.com/thymethief>.

# LEGAL NOTICES

Legal Notices can also be viewed on our website at [www.thesomervilletimes.com](http://www.thesomervilletimes.com)



**INVITATION TO BID**  
**SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
**INVITES PROPOSALS FOR**  
**DOOR REPLACEMENT AT HIGHLAND GARDEN AND BRADY TOWER**  
**SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**

The Somerville Housing Authority (Awarding Authority) invites bids for the **Door Replacement Project at the Highland Garden and Brady Tower developments**, consisting of selective demolition, repairs, and installation of new exterior balcony doors at Highland Garden, and new storm doors at both Highland Gardens and Brady Tower, both of which are occupied residential developments. The estimated construction cost of this Project is \$211,059 (Base Bid only).

*The Project Consists of:*

*Base Bid: Highland Garden ONLY - Removal and disposal of existing exterior balcony doors and associated storm doors, limited concrete repairs, installation of new fiberglass exterior balcony doors and aluminum storm doors, and joint sealants for a weather-tight installation.*

*Alternate No. 1: Highland Garden ONLY - Preparation and painting of railings, steel supports and ceiling of balconies, and painting of walls and trim around balcony windows and doors.*

*Alternate No. 2: Brady Tower ONLY - Removal and disposal of existing balcony storm doors, limited concrete repairs, installation of new aluminum storm doors.*

*Alternate No. 3: Brady Tower ONLY - Preparation and painting of railings, steel supports and ceiling of balconies and the main entrance, and painting of walls and trim around balcony windows and doors.*

**General Bidders shall be DCAMM certified in "DOORS AND WINDOWS" and the Filed Sub-Bidder shall be certified eligible in the DCAMM Filed Sub-Bid category of 'PAINTING' for work included in Add Alternates, as described in the Contract Documents.**

Bid Forms and Contract Documents are available online after **Wednesday, April 29, 2026, at 2:00 PM** at [www.Projectdog.com](http://www.Projectdog.com). Enter Project Code **874338** 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](http://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](http://www.Projectdog.com). Hard copy bids will not be accepted by the Awarding Authority. Tutorials and Instructions are available online at [www.Projectdog.com](http://www.Projectdog.com). For assistance, contact Projectdog Inc. at 978.499.9014.

All General Bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit in the form of a certified, cashier's or treasurer's check issued by a responsible bank or trust company made payable to the Somerville Housing Authority or a bid bond, in an amount not less than five percent (5%) of the value of the bid.

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.

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.

General bidders must be certified by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) in the following category of work – Doors & Windows and must submit a current DCAMM Certificate of Eligibility and signed DCAMM Prime Update Statement (Form CQ 3).

Filed sub-bidders must be certified by the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) in the following category of work – Painting, and must submit a current DCAMM Certificate of Eligibility and signed DCAMM Prime Update Statement (Form CQ 3).

**A pre-bid conference** will be held at **11:00 AM**, local legal time, on **Tuesday, May 5, 2026 at Highland Garden, 114 Highland Ave, Somerville, MA**. All bidders are invited to attend.

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.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts General Laws Section 149, Sections 44A through 44L and Chapter 30, Sections 39F through 39P, are incorporated herein by reference. Any inconsistency between the Invitation to Bid, Instruction to Bidders, Bid Forms, Conditions of the Contract, and any other Contract Documents and these statutes, or any other applicable statutes, bylaws, or regulations existing on the date on which the bids are to be received, shall not be grounds for invalidating the bidding procedures, but, where required by law, such statute, bylaw, or regulation shall be deemed to govern.

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.

**ANTICIPATED PROJECT MILESTONE SCHEDULE**

Project out to bid .....	Wednesday, April 29, 2026
On-site Pre-Bid Meeting .....	Tuesday, May 5, 2026 at 11:00 a.m.
Filed sub-bid Questions Due .....	Friday, May 8, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.
Filed sub-bid Bids Due .....	Wednesday, May 13, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.
General Bid Questions Due .....	Friday, May 15, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.
General Bids Due .....	Wednesday, May 20, 2026 at 2:00 p.m.

All questions and requests for interpretations must be submitted in writing via e-mail to [parul.belsare@socotec.us](mailto:parul.belsare@socotec.us)

A contract is expected to be promptly awarded to the lowest responsible and eligible bidder. The construction phase is expected to commence upon the completion of the shop drawing phase, with the substantial work to be completed within 120 calendar days from Notice to Proceed. The work hours shall be as follows: Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm., Saturdays with prior permission.

All bids shall remain in effect for 30 days, Saturdays, Sundays, and legal holidays excluded after opening of General Bids. Successful bidders shall agree to commence work and complete the Work in accordance with the dates set forth in the Bidding Documents. The Somerville Housing Authority reserves the right to award or not award the project.

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4/29/26, 5/6/26 The Somerville Times



**City of Somerville**  
**PLANNING BOARD**

City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The **Somerville Planning Board (PB)** will hold a virtual public hearing on **Thursday, May 21, 2026**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting of the Planning Board will be conducted via remote participation. A recording of these proceedings can be found online here: [Agendas, Minutes, & More](#).

**TO USE A COMPUTER**

Link: [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_OT2klfbjRVKpYxABJLAZBw](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_OT2klfbjRVKpYxABJLAZBw)

**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.

The Planning Board will consider the following pursuant to M.G.L. 40A and the Somerville Zoning Ordinance:

- 32 Webster Avenue** 32 Webster Holdings LLC/Kinvarra Capital proposes to develop an Apartment Building in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) zoning district, which requires Site Plan Approval.
- 32 Webster Avenue** 32 Webster Holdings LLC/Kinvarra Capital proposes to establish residential housing in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) zoning district, which requires a Special Permit.
- 32 Webster Avenue** 32 Webster Holdings LLC/Kinvarra Capital seeks to construct a mechanical penthouse that exceeds the maximum height in the Mid-Rise 4 (MR4) zoning district, which requires a Special Permit.
- 120 Middlesex Ave** DWCH Assembly Row, LLC, LLC proposes to develop a 19-story lab building in the Assembly Square Mixed-Use District (ASMD), which requires Site Plan Approval.

Development review application submittal materials and other documentation may be viewed online at <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/ospcd/planning-and-zoning/reports-and-decisions>. Interested persons may provide comments to the Planning Board at the hearing or by submitting written comments by email to [PlanningBoard@somervillema.gov](mailto:PlanningBoard@somervillema.gov).

Persons with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication (i.e., CART, ASL), written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures in order to access the programs, activities, and meetings of the City of Somerville should contact the ADA Coordinator in advance at 617-625-6600 x 2059 or [ADA@somervillema.gov](mailto:ADA@somervillema.gov).

5/6/26 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE**  
**PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT**  
**IFB #26-48**

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

**DPW Building Roof Repairs**

An Invitation for Bid may be obtained online at [www.bidexpress.com](http://www.bidexpress.com), <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **05/06/2026**. Sealed bids will be received at above office until: **05/28/2026 2:00 PM EST**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves 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 contact PCS at [Lcarroll@somervillema.gov](mailto:Lcarroll@somervillema.gov) for more information.

**Logan Carroll**  
**Procurement Manager**  
**Lcarroll@somervillema.gov**

5/6/26 The Somerville Times

# LEGAL NOTICES

Legal Notices can also be viewed on our website at [www.thesomervilletimes.com](http://www.thesomervilletimes.com)

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
Somerville  
OFFICE OF THE COLLECTOR OF TAXES  
NOTICE OF TAX TAKING**

TO THE OWNERS OF THE HEREINAFTER DESCRIBED LAND AND TO ALL OTHERS CONCERNED

YOU ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT on **Friday, the 22nd day of May, 2026, at 10:00 o'clock A.M.**, at **Treasury, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA 02143**, pursuant to the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 60, Section 53, and by virtue of the authority vested in me as Collector of Taxes, IT IS MY INTENTION TO TAKE for the City of **Somerville** the following parcels of land for non-payment of the taxes due thereon, with interest and all incidental expenses and costs to the date of taking, unless the same shall have been paid before that date.

*Linda Dubuque, Treasurer/Collector of Taxes.*

**LIST OF PARCELS TO BE TAKEN**

**Property Address:** 109 College Ave  
**Assessed Owner(s):** 109 College Ave LLC  
**Tax Year:** 2023  
**Parcel ID:** 020-F.00003-000000  
**Alternative Parcel ID:** 12384075  
**Square Footage:** 6,984 (more or less)  
**Title Reference:** Middlesex South Registry of Deeds Book: 64167, Page: 376

Fiscal Year 2023 Taxes Remaining Unpaid: \$ 25,653.97  
Interest to Date of Taking: \$ 12,298.17  
Incidental Expenses and Costs to Date of Taking: \$ 263.00  
Total for which Land will be Taken: \$ 38,215.14

5/6/26 The Somerville Times

**Property Address:** 59 Bow Street  
**Assessed Owner(s):** 59-61 Bow Street LLC  
**Tax Year:** 2023  
**Parcel ID:** 063-C.00029-000000  
**Alternative Parcel ID:** 13445140  
**Square Footage:** 3,000 (more or less)  
**Title Reference:** Middlesex South Registry of Deeds Book: 77404, Page: 408

Fiscal Year 2023 Taxes Remaining Unpaid: \$ 11,038.98  
Interest to Date of Taking: \$ 5,295.87  
Incidental Expenses and Costs to Date of Taking: \$ 263.00  
Total for which Land will be Taken: \$ 16,597.85

5/6/26 The Somerville Times

**Property Address:** 357 Somerville Avenue  
**Assessed Owner(s):** Manhar Rana and Priti Rana, Trustees, Rana Family Revocable Trust  
**Tax Year:** 2023  
**Parcel ID:** 074-C.00027-000000  
**Alternative Parcel ID:** 18563041  
**Square Footage:** 4,386 (more or less)  
**Title Reference:** Middlesex South Registry of Deeds Book: 66814, Page: 442

Fiscal Year 2023 Taxes Remaining Unpaid: \$ 4,409.27  
Interest to Date of Taking: \$ 1,872.19  
Incidental Expenses and Costs to Date of Taking: \$ 263.00  
Total for which Land will be Taken: \$ 6,544.46

5/6/26 The Somerville Times

**Property Address:** 28 Cross Street  
**Assessed Owner(s):** 28 Cross Street LLC  
**Tax Year:** 2023  
**Parcel ID:** 090-D.00028-000000  
**Alternative Parcel ID:** 09200081  
**Square Footage:** 2,737 (more or less)  
**Title Reference:** Middlesex South Registry of Deeds Book: 71770, Page: 451

Fiscal Year 2023 Taxes Remaining Unpaid: \$ 11,984.45  
Interest to Date of Taking: \$ 5,720.93  
Incidental Expenses and Costs to Date of Taking: \$ 263.00  
Total for which Land will be Taken: \$ 17,968.38

5/6/26 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
LICENSING COMMISSION**

There will be a Public Hearing before the **Licensing Commission** on **Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 6:00 PM**, on the following Application(s):

Application of Change of Officer/Directors and Change of Ownership Interest for LLH LLC d/b/a Trader Joe's at 145 Middlesex Avenue.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting may be conducted via remote participation, online in a webinar hosted on the Zoom platform.

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143.
2. Virtually through the Zoom platform. Enter this link exactly as it appears into your internet browser anytime before the meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9JmMLNltQyKunDD-ljh7A>

You can also find this link on the city website's calendar. You will then be asked to register, and after registering, you will receive an email with instructions to join the webinar.

3. If you are unable to attend but wish to be heard, you may send written comments by US mail to the Executive Secretary at 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA 02143, or by email to [licensing@somervillema.gov](mailto:licensing@somervillema.gov). Your comments must arrive no later than 12 Noon on the day of the Hearing, in order to be sure they are conveyed to the Commission.

**THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND AND BE HEARD.**

**ANDREA R. TORRES, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**  
[LICENSING@SOMERVILLEMA.GOV](mailto:licensing@somervillema.gov)

5/6/26 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
LICENSING COMMISSION**

There will be a Public Hearing before the **Licensing Commission** on **Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 6:00 PM**, on the following Application(s):

Application of Farmer Winery License and Alteration of Premises for TBD Brewing LLC d/b/a Aeronaut Brewing at 14 Tyler Street.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting may be conducted via remote participation, online in a webinar hosted on the Zoom platform.

You have three ways to be heard at this meeting:

1. In person in the City Council Chamber, 2nd Floor City Hall, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143.
2. Virtually through the Zoom platform. Enter this link exactly as it appears into your internet browser anytime before the meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/WayMLNltQyKunDD-ljh7A>

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**ANDREA R. TORRES, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**  
[LICENSING@SOMERVILLEMA.GOV](mailto:licensing@somervillema.gov)

5/6/26 The Somerville Times



**City of Somerville  
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS**

City Hall 3rd Floor, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville MA 02143

**PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The **Somerville Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)** will hold a virtual public hearing on **Wednesday, May 20, 2026**, at 6:00pm through Zoom.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting of the Zoning Board of Appeals will be conducted via remote participation. A recording of these proceedings can be found online here: [Agendas, Minutes, & More.](#)

**TO USE A COMPUTER**

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9JmMLNltQyKunDD-ljh7A>

**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.

The Zoning Board will consider the following pursuant to M.G.L. 40A and the Somerville Zoning Ordinance:

**24 Berkeley Street** Thomas Higdon seeks an Administrative Appeal of the Building Official's issuance of Building Permits B25-001643 and B25-001644.

**29a Windsor Road** Claire Grace & Sasha Krushnic seek relief from SZO 2.4.3.d.v in order to install a heat pump that is less than 2 ft from a side property line.

Development review application submittal materials and other documentation may be viewed online at

<https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/ospcd/planning-and-zoning/reports-and-decisions>. Interested persons may provide comments to the Zoning Board of Appeals at the hearing or by submitting written comments by email to [ZoningBoard@somervillema.gov](mailto:ZoningBoard@somervillema.gov).

Persons with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for effective communication (i.e., CART, ASL), written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures in order to access the programs, activities, and meetings of the City of Somerville should contact the ADA Coordinator in advance at 617-625-6600 x 2059 or [ADA@somervillema.gov](mailto:ADA@somervillema.gov).

5/6/26 The Somerville Times



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE  
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
IFB #26-75**

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

**Elevator Maintenance & Repairs**

An Invitation for Bid may be obtained online at [www.bidexpress.com](http://www.bidexpress.com), <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **05/06/2026**. Sealed bids will be received at above office until: **05/21/2026 3:00 PM EST**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves 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 contact PCS at [Lcarroll@somervillema.gov](mailto:Lcarroll@somervillema.gov) for more information.

**Logan Carroll**  
Procurement Manager  
[Lcarroll@somervillema.gov](mailto:Lcarroll@somervillema.gov)

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# Get your greens at the Union Square Farmers Market

Since 2005, shoppers from all over Greater Boston have found a new flavor in Union Square with culturally-relevant eats and treats, by chatting with community groups, and filling their reusable bags with high-quality, fresh fruits and vegetables at the Union Square Farmers Market. This annual neighborhood tradition continues to serve as an important catalyst for vibrancy, economic opportunity, and community connection in the densest city in New England.

"Markets are memorable when shoppers encounter a hearty spectrum of options, choices, and moments of discovery," said Jessica Eshleman, executive director of Union Square Main Streets, the nonprofit that produces the market. "The bounty available each Saturday offers something delicious for everyone, thanks to the 60+ local farms and food producers who engage thousands of weekly shoppers with outstanding goods, cooking tips, recipe suggestions, and their small business entrepreneurial journeys. Creating a culinary community where all are welcome is a shared value among all who join us to present in the market. You can feel it in the air."

SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) shoppers are valued members of the Union Square Farmers Market community. The market is proud to continue to serve a critical role in Somerville's food security system by offering a dollar-for-dollar SNAP match program thanks to a partnership with the City of Somerville and the Somerville Farmers Market Coalition (in collaboration with Mass Farmers Markets, Somerville Winter Farmers Market, and Somerville Mobile Farmers Market) and customers investing in their neighborhood through the annual Good Food For All campaign that has sustained this important community resource year after year.

To better serve all and thanks to our partners, we're proud to also provide SNAP Match interpretation services in Cantonese, English, Mandarin, Portuguese, and Spanish. Providing SNAP customers with a match has been a priority for the market since it opened in 2005, and with a marked increase in participation in this program, uplifting this resource is more important than ever.

Union Square Farmers Market proudly boasts that businesses as local as Somerville itself round out the vendor roster.



— Photo by Lizzie McCarty

With businesses such as Somerville Arts Council's Nibble Kitchen, Chappy's Pickles, Del's Coffee Roasters, Michi Sourdough, and Bangla Adda, customers can eat easily knowing their dollars will directly benefit Somerville's local economy.

While at the market, customers will be right at the doorsteps of some of the most

diverse, popular, and beloved businesses in Somerville and the Greater Boston Area. Customers are encouraged to grab a friend, family member, or pet to make each Saturday a "Shop the Square Saturday," and visit local businesses before or after they visit the market.

## Saint Theresa's School: A hidden gem in Somerville

Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus School was founded in 1926 by Father James O'Brien of St. Catherine of St. Catherine's Parish. In 1953, the school was renamed Saint Catherine of Genoa School to strengthen its connection to the Parish.

When St. Joseph's, St. Ann's, and St. Catherine Churches united in 2019 to form the Saint Louis and Zelig Martin Parish, the School returned to its original name, honoring both its founding and in alignment with the new Parish.

Our mission at St. Theresa's Elementary School is to build a strong foundation of academic



excellence while embracing the Catholic Faith, respecting diversity, and fostering Community. We aim to develop our students intellectually, spiritually, socially, and physically. Details on our Early Childhood Program curriculum and our elementary school curriculum are available on our website. Also, any questions can be directed to our Principal, Dr. Tiphaine Guillabert, at 617-666-9116.

Registration for the 2026-2027 School Year is now ongoing for the pre-school through 8th Grade.

Finally, St. Theresa's Community is in the process of planning the 100 Year Anniversary, celebrating the academic excellence and perseverance of St. Theresa's School.

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Ms. Cam's

Olio

Answers

From page 8

- |                                     |                                       |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Puebla                           | 7. May 4th                            |
| 2. The Battle of Puebla             | 8. Ithaca, New York, in 2007          |
| 3. Donerail, at 91-1 in 1913        | 9. People's car                       |
| 4. The Twin Spires                  | 10. To cut fabric in a zigzag pattern |
| 5. Diane Crump, 1970                | 11. On a sundial                      |
| 6. Two minutes from start to finish | 12. Stephen King                      |

# How to give oral testimony, part 1 of 2

By David Dahlbacka

An important part of public participation in policy-making is giving oral testimony at public hearings. For your testimony to be effective, your audience must remember what you say, and what they remember is determined in large part by how you structure your testimony.

The structure of oral testimony is determined by the nature of the meeting. The officials in charge of public hearings usually limit oral testimony by ordinary citizens to 2-3 minutes. (Political figures, powerful economic interests, policy-makers, and other "important" people often receive two or three times that.) If you run over your time limit, they will cut you off, so limit yourself to crucial points. If you have technical details to contribute, you must provide written testimony. Often, the comment period for written testimony is longer than that for oral testimony, but you should not depend on that.

When you give testimony in a public hearing, you are addressing three audiences at once:

- Those who called the meeting, such as the Metropolitan Planning Organization,

Environmental Protection Agency, City Council, and the Federal Communications Commission.

- Those who attend the meeting, such as policy wonks, informed or uninformed citizens, and supportive or hostile citizens.

- Those paying attention to the meeting from outside, such as the courts, political figures, opinion-makers, the news media, and citizens watching on TV or podcasts.

While the formal audience consists of those who called the meeting, those who attended the meeting are equally important, because your testimony may motivate passively supportive citizens to speak out for themselves.

The ideal structure of oral testimony is based on the psychology of human memory and decision-making. Politicians, advertising people, con artists, and other professional persuaders know these principles, whether instinctively or by training. If you do not, you limit your ability to counter the effect of professional persuaders on others and yourself.

- Most people have severe limits to their retention of spoken information.

- Most people require an emotional hook to make the material worth remembering.



- Most people require repetition to reinforce the initial impression.

Therefore, you should summarize each point by a key phrase of 5-7 words, ideally with an emotional hook; and repeat that key phrase at least three times. If you paraphrase to avoid repetition, your audience may not remember the key phrase at all.

The number of points you can make is determined by the amount of time you have. With three minutes, you have time for at most two points, so you must present your strongest points orally and present your complete testimony in writing.

This, therefore, is the suggested structure:

- Introduction

- o Opening sentence.

- o What you want to accomplish by your testimony.

- Point #1

- o Key phrase #1

- o Evidence supporting point #1

- o Key phrase #1

- Point #2

- o Key phrase #2

- o Evidence supporting point #2

- o Key phrase #2

- Wrap-up

- o Key phrase #1

- o Key phrase #2

In Part 2, I will provide an example of testimony that uses this structure.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

The views and opinions expressed in the commentaries and letters to the Editor of *The Somerville Times* do not reflect the views and opinions of *The Somerville Times*, its publishers or staff. Readers are invited to send letters to the editor to *The Somerville Times*. Please email your letters to [News@TheSomervilleTimes.com](mailto:News@TheSomervilleTimes.com) or mail them to 699 Broadway, Somerville, MA 02144. *The Somerville Times* Reserves the right to edit letters for style, grammar and length. All letters must include a name and contact information. Contact information will not be shared with the public. We look forward to hearing from you.

### Letter to the Editor – Drinking Water Safety

To the Editor:

Kudos to Somerville representative and House Environment and Natural Resources Committee Chair Christine P. Barber for advancing legislation (H.900) that would establish long-overdue testing

and standards for private well water in Massachusetts (H.900).

For more than half a million residents who rely on private wells, safe drinking water is not a certainty. Unlike public water systems, private wells are not subject to consistent statewide standards. A study found that nearly one-third of private wells in the state contain contaminants above acceptable levels, yet testing remains

inconsistent. Individual homeowners and renters have to fend for themselves in deciding when and whether to test. This bill would provide guidance on when they should test their water to protect the health of their families and prospective purchasers.

By moving this bill forward, the committee has honored private well users' right to know that their drinking water is safe.

I am grateful to Chair Barber for her leadership on this issue and urge Senate President Karen Spilka and House Speaker Ron Mariano to secure final passage of the bill in the current legislative session.

Bradley M. Campbell  
President & CEO  
Conservation Law Foundation  
62 Summer Street, Boston, MA 02110

## Somerville's PorchFest Returns Sat., May 9

CONT. FROM PG 1

Porchfest performances are staggered by location so you can explore music in each area of the city from west to east. The schedule is as follows:

- West Zone (West of Willow Avenue): 12 to 2 p.m.

- Central Zone (between Willow and Central Streets): 2 to 4 p.m.

- East Zone (East of Central Street): 4 to 6 p.m.

As you plan your day, our interactive

map featuring all bands and bios, block parties, and performance locations can help. Just visit [somervilleartscouncil.org/porchfest/porchfestmap](http://somervilleartscouncil.org/porchfest/porchfestmap).

**Stay Informed, Sign Up for Event Alerts**  
Need directions to a performance or help locating a porta potty? PorchFest Ambassadors will be walking around and ready to assist (look for light blue t-shirts labeled 'Ambassador').

The Somerville Arts Council will also

staff an information table on the Community Path between Willow Ave. and Cedar St. from 1 to 4 p.m.

To sign up for day-of emergency text alerts, text **SOMPORCHES26** to 888777. This is easy to do and a good idea. So please sign up.

### Be a Good Neighbor

Help keep PorchFest clean, safe, and fun for everyone:

- To ease congestion on streets and side-

walks, attendees are encouraged to use Somerville's Community Path to travel between zones.

- If nature calls, there will be additional porta-a-johns available in the community and on the Community Path.

- Please be considerate of neighboring properties and place all trash into trash cans or take it with you.

For all event information, visit [somervilleartscouncil.org/porchfest](http://somervilleartscouncil.org/porchfest).

# Somerville Open Studios 2026

The 27th Annual Somerville Open Studios took place this past. More than 430 visual artists opened their doors and exhibited their work at more than 120 studio buildings and homes all over Somerville.



Susan Hagner – Painting, collage, iconography, jewelry – Vernon Street Studios, 20 Vernon Street #57 — Photo by Bobbie Toner



Anne Beinecke – Paintings – annebeinecke.com — Photos by Bobbie Toner



Heather Balchunas – Drawing, Graphic Design, and Painting – hbillustrations.com — Photos by Bobbie Toner



— Photo by Denise Provost





Hilary Scott – <https://hilaryscottart.com> — Photos by Bobbie Toner



"Fog on the Mystic" by Jane Sherrill - Fine Art - <https://www.janesherrill.com> — Photos by Bobbie Toner



— Photo by Denise Provost



— Photo by Denise Provost



— Photo by Denise Provost

## SENIOR CENTER HAPPENINGS:

### EVENTS:

**Men's Group** – Tuesday, May 12 at 10:30 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. A confidential space where men are free to speak openly and honestly about their lives, and to support each other. New and returning members are welcome. RSVP to Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600 ext. 2321 or email Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

**LCR Game Day** – Friday, May 15, starting at 10:30 p.m. at our Holland Street Center. LCR-Left Center Right is a fun, fast-paced dice game that you won't be able to put down! Players roll the dice to determine where they pass their chips. The last player with chips is the winner and wins the center pot. Grab-n-go lunch available upon request. RSVP to Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600 ext. 2321.

**Coffee & Conversation Groups** – Every Monday in May except for the 25th from 10 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at our Ralph & Jenny Center located at 9 New Washington Street. Grab-n-Go lunch is available upon request. And every Thursday in May except for the 21st at the Holland Street Center from 10:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. Free! Join us for this staff-led discussion group, which covers a range of topics thought up by participants. This is a friendly group, where all topics are discussed respectfully. RSVP to Maureen Bastardi at 617-625-6600, ext. 2335, or email Maureen at mbastardi@somervillema.gov.

**Book Club** – Friday, May 15, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. Join the book club this month. You can attend in person at 167

Holland Street or via Zoom. Free of Charge. Please RSVP to Natasha Naim at 617-625-6600, ext. 2317, or email Natasha at nnaim@somervillema.gov  
**Veterans Group** – Tuesday, May 26, starting at 10:30 a.m. at our Holland Street Center. This group allows veterans to connect with their peers, discuss personal challenges, and provide support. All Veterans are welcome. Coffee & refreshments will be served. Free of Charge. Please RSVP to Debby Higgins by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2321, or emailing Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

**Brown Bag Supplemental Food Program PICK UP** – Thursday, May 28, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at our Ralph & Jenny Center located at 9 New Washington Street. For an application, contact Natasha Naim at 617-625-6600, ext. 2317, or email Natasha at nnaim@somervillema.gov.

**Project Outlook** – Thursday, May 28, at our Holland Street Center from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Project Outlook is a group for low vision and blind seniors to gather, socialize, and enjoy a meal together. This month, Isabel Rosario, Outreach Specialist at The Carroll Center for the Blind, will be speaking about services and resources that the Center has to offer. Please contact Molly Pagliuca at 617-625-6600, ext. 2318, or at mpagliuca@somervillema.gov for more information or to register.

**LGBTQIA+ & Allies Social** – Thursday, May 28 (the 4th Thursday of every month) from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at our Holland Street Center. Join us for a couple of slices of pizza & conversation with your peers. Free of charge! All are welcome! Please

RSVP to Maureen Bastardi by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2335, or emailing Maureen at mbastardi@somervillema.gov by Tuesday, May 26.

**Bowling** – Every Wednesday in May at the Flatbread Company/Sacco Bowl Haven in Davis Square at 45 Day Street from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. Free of Charge - RSVP to Debby Higgins by calling 617-625-6600, ext. 2321, or emailing Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Stay connected via our Facebook page - Informative, entertaining, lots of photos and updates. Visit our page at <https://www.facebook.com/SomervilleCOA/>.

Follow the Somerville Council on Aging on Instagram! You can find us under the Instagram handle: somervillecouncilonaging If you have any questions or need help following us, contact Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600 ext. 2321 or email her at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

### JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

If you would like to receive a virtual copy of our monthly newsletter, please contact Maureen Bastardi at 617-625-6600, ext. 2335 or email Maureen Bastardi at mbastardi@somervillema.gov.

If you would like to become part of our Google Group, please contact Debby Higgins at 617-625-6600, ext. 2321 or email Debby at dhiggins@somervillema.gov.

## Idle Hands Collective and Partridge Haus Present HAUS PARTY 003

Idle Hands Collective is partnering with Partridge Haus, a queer art, design, and culture collaborative known for transforming traditional spaces into nightclub-museum hybrids, to present HAUS PARTY 003 on Friday, May 15, from 6 to 10 p.m. at the Somerville Museum.

Coinciding with the museum's reopening, HAUS PARTY 003 invites guests to experience a reimagined museum environment through an evening of visual art, live performances, and music- described by organizers as their own "Night(club) at the (Somerville) Museum." This edition's theme is "Systems," encouraging attendees to explore the often-unseen structures that shape everyday life, movement, relationships, and access.

"Boston is loudly calling for third spaces to exist," said David Raposo, founder of Idle Hands Theater Collective. "In a city where space is sacred, you have to get creative. So why not party in a museum, surrounded by art, performance, and music?"

Food will be available for purchase throughout the evening from Wild Fox

Pierogi, with drinks also available on site. This is a 21+ event. Tickets are offered on a sliding scale from \$15-\$35, with Pay-What-You-Can admission available at the door the night of the event. For tickets and more information, visit: [hausparty003.eventbrite.com/?aff=press](https://hausparty003.eventbrite.com/?aff=press)

### ABOUT Idle Hands Theater Collective:

Founded in response to a growing lack of accessible performance space in Massachusetts and Rhode Island and the rigid siloing of artistic disciplines, Idle Hands is a decentralized performance collective. We create spaces for interdisciplinary artists to share risk, process, and performance, showing what becomes possible when artistic boundaries are removed. Idle Fest is fiscally sponsored by the Brookline Community Center for the Arts and produced in partnership with JSF Productions.



# Beacon Hill Roll Call

CONT. FROM PG 6

(A “Yes” vote is for the amendment exempting a worker’s hourly overtime wages from the state’s income tax. A “No” vote is against exempting it.)

Rep. Christine Barber No  
Rep. Mike Connolly No  
Rep. Erika Uytterhoeven No

## EXEMPT TIPS FROM INCOME TAX (H 5500)

House 25-132, rejected an amendment that would exempt up to \$25,000 of a worker’s tips from the state’s income tax.

Amendment sponsor Rep. Nick Boldyga (R-Southwick) said the amendment would provide meaningful tax relief to service industry workers at a time when costs are rising. He noted that these workers who serve our restaurants, our hotels, our hospitality businesses and deliver groceries often rely heavily on tips to support themselves and their families.

Rep. Adrian Madaro opposed the amendment and said it irresponsibly proposes hefty deductions for tips, mirroring a part of President Trump’s One “Big Beautiful Bill” and puts Massachusetts in lockstep with a shortsighted and fiscally irresponsible federal administration. He noted a separate similar bill pending in the Legislature has not received any support.

(A “Yes” vote is for the amendment exempting up to \$25,000 of a worker’s tips from the state’s income tax. A “No” vote is against exempting them.)

Rep. Christine Barber No  
Rep. Mike Connolly No  
Rep. Erika Uytterhoeven No

## EXEMPT RETIREMENT INCOME FROM INCOME TAX (H 5500)

House 25-132, rejected an amendment that would exempt retirement income of seniors aged 69.5 and older from the current 5 percent tax on it.

Amendment sponsor Rep. Nick Boldyga (R-Southwick) said the cost of living is soaring and that the amendment

would strengthen retirement income security for senior citizens. He noted that these seniors have worked for decades and saved as much as they can.

Rep. Adrian Madaro opposed the amendment and said it unfairly attempts to bypass the legislative process by proposing massive tax code changes as a budget amendment without public hearings and rigorous stakeholder engagement and review. He noted that the state’s current flat 5 percent tax on retirement income is modest in comparison to other states.

(A “Yes” vote is for the amendment exempting retirement income from the current 5 percent tax. A “No” vote is against exempting it.)

Rep. Christine Barber No  
Rep. Mike Connolly No  
Rep. Erika Uytterhoeven No

## TAX AMNESTY (H 5500)

House 27-129, rejected an amendment that would authorize cities and towns to conduct a municipal tax amnesty program over a two-month period, as determined by the local legislative body, any time prior to June 30, 2029. It specifically authorizes communities to waive any or all penalties, fees, charges and accrued interest if the original overdue tax assessment is paid in full.

“Many cities and towns are struggling to balance their budgets and still maintain essential services,” said amendment sponsor Rep. Brad Jones (R-North Reading). “Previous statewide tax amnesties offered by the Department of Revenue have proven to be highly successful, and that allowing municipalities to utilize their own amnesty program will give them a proven collection tool to recover back taxes that can help pay for critical local services.”

Rep. Madaro opposed the amendment and said that we all want to offer tax relief, but we need to do so without unintended consequences. He noted legislators need more time to consider the proposal which should be vetted through the legislative process including public hearings.

(A “Yes” vote is for the amendment authorizing cities and

towns to conduct a municipal tax amnesty program. A “No” vote is against allowing it.)

Rep. Christine Barber No  
Rep. Mike Connolly No  
Rep. Erika Uytterhoeven No

## 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 April 27-May 1, the House met for a total of 27 hours and 19 minutes and the Senate met for a total of four hours and 49 minutes.

Mon. April 27	House 11:00 a.m. to 8:22 p.m. Senate 11:16 a.m. to 12:07 p.m.
Tues. April 28	House 11:00 a.m. to 8:33 p.m. No Senate session
Wed. April 29	House 11:01 a.m. to 7:10 p.m. No Senate session
Thurs. April 30	House 11:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. Senate 11:15 a.m. to 3:13 p.m.
Fri. May 1	No House session No Senate session

*Bob Katzen welcomes feedback at bob@beaconhillrollcall.com*

# I was a teenage paperboy

CONT. FROM PG 3

It was that huge house on Morrison Avenue once owned by Burt Faulkner. He had to walk up “a zillion steps,” but he tipped “very well!”

We had to go into Abe’s office to turn in our collection money. The worst thing you could possibly hear was a s... “YOU’RE SHORT!” NO! That meant I’d have to use my tips to cover. It didn’t happen often, thank God. My paper routes paid for my first guitar amplifier as well as a lot of school clothes at the “Truc” and “The Lodge” in Harvard Square. There were

other news agencies in Somerville back then, such as Burkes and Broadway News.

Delivering the Sunday paper was a whole different story. It cost an outrageous 25 cents. You had to get up very early (and sometimes insert all the ads and “colors”) and put the gigantic papers in a huge, rickety wooden cart. Snow and rain made it more of a nightmare. You would have to wheel it around the streets until all of your 35 or 40 papers were delivered.

Once, I skipped a whole street by accident and thought I had extra papers. Instead of

wheeling the cart all the way back to Abe’s, I dumped them down the railroad tracks. Unfortunately, another paperboy saw me and ratted me out to Abe. He went berserk, and of course, I had to pay for the papers.

One of Abe’s right-hand men was Dixie Dumas. I wonder if he’s still around. And who could forget the colorful and outspoken character, Mary S., who lived next door. She actually ran for mayor of Somerville! She kept us entertained.

Once I had to pay for denting a guy’s aluminum screen door with a paper. Ex-

cept for that incident, I became pretty good at flinging papers from my bike. It also helped to develop my arm strength.

Today, it would be dangerous for kids to deliver papers because it would be hard to balance the bike, toss the papers, listen to an iPod, and text all at the same time! I can still hear Abe’s gruff voice telling us to hit the streets with our papers. All my friends would imitate him and impersonate his voice, but I am grateful to him for giving me some of the best memories of my boyhood.



**Somerville Fair Housing Commission**  
*Question of the week*



**Q:** How much notice do I have to give before moving out?

**A:** If you are a tenant-at-will, you must give at least 30 days notice. If you have a lease, you are bound to stay for the length of the lease unless you and your landlord can come to a mutual agreement.

*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.*

A **GoFundMe** has been launched by our own **Doug Holder** to help keep **The Somerville Times** free and thriving. Every dollar helps us stay independent and serve our community.

To donate visit:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-the-somerville-times>

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By Bobbygeorge Potaris



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Front yard cottage... — Photo by Denise Provost

*On This Day in History*

**May 6**

- 1527 – German troops begin sacking Rome.
- 1682 – King Louis XIV moves his court to Versailles, France.
- 1861 – Arkansas becomes the ninth state to secede from the Union.
- 1877 – Chief Crazy Horse surrenders to U.S. troops in Nebraska.
- 1937 – The dirigible Hindenburg explodes in flames at Lakehurst, New Jersey.
- 1941 – Bob Hope gives his first USO show at California's March Field.
- 1942 – General Jonathan Wainwright surrenders Corregidor to the Japanese.
- 1944 – The Red Army besieges and captures Sevastopol in the Crimea.
- 1945 – Axis Sally makes her final propaganda broadcast to Allied troops.
- 1954 – British runner Roger Bannister breaks the four minute mile.
- 1960 – President Dwight D. Eisenhower signs the Civil Rights Act of 1960.
- 1962 – The first nuclear warhead is fired from a Polaris submarine.
- 1994 – The Channel Tunnel linking England to France is officially opened.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

Celebrate Somerville's Haitian community and honor Haitian Flag Day by joining a Haitian Flag raising ceremony on Monday, May 18. Hosted by the City of Somerville's Office of Immigrant Affairs (SOIA), in partnership with the Haitian Service Providers Coalition (HSPC), all are invited to attend. The event celebrates Somerville's Haitian community and honors the history and enduring spirit of Haiti. Attendees will hear from Mayor Jake Wilson and SOIA and HSPC staff. Where: City Hall concourse (93 Highland Ave.) When: 3 p.m., Monday, May 18. For more information, please contact 311 (617) 666-3311.

The public is invited to attend an informal art reception with SOS artists, Arts Council staff, and the mayor to celebrate the SOS show and the launch of Community Collections. The reception will be held at Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., 2nd Floor, on Monday, May 18, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. All are welcome.

SustainaVille Week takes place May 2 - 8. Participate in Somerville's annual week-long series of free events and workshops showcasing the city's climate progress, creativity, and goals, and sharing useful tips and information. Visit the Kennedy School to see recent energy efficiency upgrades at work: tour highlights include new chillers, pumps, and controls. Energy Efficiency Tour of the Kennedy School, Thursday, May 7, 4-6 p.m., The Kennedy School, 5 Cherry Street. Arbor Day Picnic in the Park, Friday, May 8, 3 - 6 p.m., Lincoln Park, 290 Washington Street. For more information, visit www.somervillema.gov/sustainavilleweek

Somerville Music Mixer. Meet, mingle, and connect with others in the Somerville Music Ecosystem. Join the Somerville Arts Council on Sunday, May 17, 4 - 6 p.m. at Portico Brewing, 101 South Street, in Union Square. Bring flyers and cards. Hosted by Somerville Arts Council, Music Ambassador Ajda Snyder and #ARTSTAYSHERE. RSVP

is appreciated, https://maymusicmixer.eventbrite.com/.

Pints for a Purpose: Gilman Square Arts & Music Festival. Treat yourself and support the Gilman Square Arts & Music Festival with a special edition ice cream collaboration with Gracie's Ice Cream. For a \$15 donation, you can reserve one custom pint of ice cream created just for our community. If you would like to contribute more, additional donations are always welcome and directly support the festival. If you would like to donate and not reserve a pint of ice cream, please use our 2026 Festival Donation form: https://givebutter.com/GSNCg26.

Somerville High School is currently accepting prom donations on behalf of our senior class. We welcome attire to help make this special night accessible for all students. Monetary gifts are appreciated; however, we ask that cash donations not be given. Thank you for being so supportive in making prom a memorable experience for our seniors. All donations can be dropped off at the Somerville Police Station.

Vendors are wanted for a Flea Market to be held at the Somerville Community Baptist Church, 31 College Avenue, near Davis Square, on Saturday, May 9, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Seeking vendors of items, either useful or fun, such as vintage finds, household items, toys, knick-knacks, handmade crafts, etc. It costs \$20 to rent a table. For more information or to reserve your table, contact Heather Roderick, hroderick32@gmail.com.

Help Save Buddy's Diner! Buddy's has received Historic Preservation Committee approval for a \$75,000 grant from Somerville's Community Preservation Act funds. This is mood-shifting news for us at Buddy's, but it's not enough to open our doors. They help close the gap of \$100,000. This is all they need to dish out everyone's favorite diner fare once again. https://www.gofundme.com/f/help-save-buddys-diner.

Garden workshops on the library

lawn. Join staff and patrons at the Central Library in the demonstration garden beds as we group delicious food and herbs throughout the seasons. Farmers from Green City Growers will lead hands-on workshops designed to teach you when and what to plant, and how to maintain, fertilize, and harvest successful crops. Learn more at somervillepubliclibrary.org.

Somerville community members are invited to the "Slice of the City" spring meet-up series. This new series of family-friendly pizza parties in the park offers attendees a new way to connect and engage with city leaders and staff, local elected officials, as well as neighbors, all while enjoying Somerville's parks. Events in each of the city's seven wards will occur throughout the month of May from 5 to 7 p.m. For more information and to find all event locations, visit www.somervillema.gov/slice.

Join Union Square Main Streets and 60+ of your favorite local food producers for the 22nd Annual Union Square Farmers Market. Shop local Saturdays from May 9 to October 31, except July 4 and September 19, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the Union Square Plaza. They continue to offer our SNAP matches. Check the market webpage for the latest info and to see which vendors accept SNAP. To get the latest updates about the Union Square Farmers Market, visit www.unionsquaremain.org/2026-season.

Want to sell your goods? Applications for 2026 are now open for the Somerville Flea. Join them in Davis Square from August to October. Apply now and be a part of the action. https://www.the-somervilleflea.com/sell.

A reminder that yard waste pickup began the week of April 13. Yard waste should be put out with your trash and recycling on your normal pickup day and be in either a paper bag or a trash barrel with a "Yard Waste Only" sticker. Get stickers free of charge at the DPW building (1 Franey Rd.), at the entrance desk at City Hall (93 Highland Ave.), or by emailing

311requests@somervillema.gov. Hazardous Waste Drop-Off, Saturday, May 9: Next monthly Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Day at DPW (1 Franey Rd., 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.)

Regular street sweeping schedules resumed on Wednesday, April 1, and will continue through December 31. Community members should check street signs to know when parking is prohibited due to sweeping. On designated street sweeping days, vehicles must be moved from the side of the street being swept, as noted on signs posted on each street. Vehicles that do not move may be ticketed and towed. For more information on street sweeping, visit somervillema.gov/sweeping or call 311 (617-666-3311).

Sign up for the city's Planning, Preservation, and Zoning (PPZ) Newsletter. Stay informed on the updates shaping your neighborhood and city. Curated by PPZ staff, get quick updates on planning initiatives, efforts, and zoning updates. Sign up now and explore other cities and department newsletters at www.somervillema.gov/subscribe.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our Arts Editor, Doug Holder, for setting up a GoFundMe campaign for The Somerville Times. With the cost of printing going up and a lack of businesses having the resources to advertise, free papers feel the effect. We sincerely thank all who have already contributed and thank any future contributors. If you are interested in helping, please visit https://www.gofundme.com/f/support-the-somerville-times. Or if anyone is interested in advertising, please contact Bobbietoner@aol.com. We offer great discounts to help our advertisers be able to advertise. Thank you all so much for your support!

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## OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

## A Tribute to Jack from his friend Sidewalk Sam

At the memorial service for Jack Powers, the founder of Stone Soup Poetry of Boston, Mass., the famed street artist and Power's close friend Sidewalk Sam, made an eloquent tribute speech about Jack. A few years back I worked with Sam to organize Jack's 70th birthday, along with Margaret Narin and the Rev. Louise Anderson. Sam graciously sent me the text of the speech.

*A Tribute to Jack from his friend Sidewalk Sam*  
10/24/2010

Jack Powers spent every waking moment of his existence devoted to noble intentions and noble pursuits. He lived a noble life by practicing hundreds of little acts of nobility on a daily basis. He was a humanist. He was concerned with the condition of human-kind.

I was in awe of him for his devotion to the noble idea of poetry and for his absolute belief in the noble idea of Mankind. I worked with Jack constantly over the years on poetry and other artistic projects.

Let me tell you a story ... Jack was the main person I relied upon when my wife, Tina, and I undertook a vast project to ennoble a loathsome passageway from Haymarket into the North End. Remember it? It was the Freedom Trail, a pedestrian footpath that meandered under the elevated expressway and was the principal entrance into the North End from Boston, before the Rose Kennedy Greenway was built. Rusty, decayed, filthy and forlorn, it became a dungeon-like flophouse for homeless people who panhandled tourists passing through.

Jack, Tina and I decided to turn the block long space from a dungeon into a noble medieval Italian cathedral that would provide an appropriate welcome to tourists into the North End. Jack helped us clean up three dump truck loads of trash that we containerized for the City to haul away. We installed trash barrels and Jack swept the block and cleaned up the area many times a day. Nancy Jameson built seven flower boxes, which Tina and Jack painted with Tuscan motifs and planted with



flowers and then maintained daily. We got a lift from Modern Continental Construction Company for the entire summer. Jack donned breathing gear every day, raised himself up to the underside of the overhead highway two stories above us and cleaned and scraped away decades of filth, rust and debris.

Hardly any metal held that highway up when Jack finished. He removed tons of rust! Once cleaned, we painted the beams and supports that held up the highway to resemble ornate marble church pillars. The entire block long underside of the highway was painted like a royal-blue cathedral ceiling - a painted "heaven." Jack placed hundreds of gold stars in it. We painted dozens of cherubs flying

*Continued on page 23*

As she forced open her flower  
The petals began to fall  
One by one, until there were none  
Immature buds  
Not ready to be plucked

But a sea of flowers won't accept the pistil  
Reduced to just the ovaries

No style to distinguish her  
Just the stigma of being late  
Too late.

What good is a flower  
If it doesn't have its petals?

— Kye DeAngelis

# Lyrical

## SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Kye DeAngelis is a first-year Studio Art major with a minor in Creative Writing and Expressive Arts Therapies at Endicott College. She is from Mansfield, Massachusetts, and has been writing since she was young, with one short story winning an honorable mention in the Scholastic Writing competition in 2024.



### "Late Bloomer"

#### "Late bloomer"

Her mother always threw around that word  
She thought it was pretty  
The blooming of a flower  
With all its serene petals  
She didn't realize what it meant to be one

Opening her phone  
She saw her friends pictures  
Skinner, popular, better  
As her chubby fingers hovered over the like button  
Her friends skinny ones held up a peace sign  
Where were her petals?

She grabbed her own flower  
Opened it  
Forced the petals to bloom early  
Not ready  
Not developed  
Not ready to bloom

Skipped meals  
New wardrobe  
Plastic personality  
She contorted herself to fit their mold  
To be like them  
Skinnier, popular, better

# Cities of Cambridge, Somerville, and MWRA submit draft updated combined sewer overflow control plan

CONT. FROM PG 5

members, advocacy groups, and organizations are invited to review the Draft Updated CSO Control Plan and share feedback with the cities of Cambridge and Somerville, along with the MWRA.

• A virtual public meeting on June 2, 2026, will provide an overview of the Draft Plan.

• Two public hearings will be held in September, where residents can provide formal verbal comments.

• Local office hours will be hosted by project staff and technical teams.

• A dedicated website at [voice.somervillema.gov/joint-cso-planning](http://voice.somervillema.gov/joint-cso-planning) will be available throughout the project, and members

of the public can submit comments on the plan through September 30.

In addition, Cambridge will launch a new CSO and Stormwater Management Advisory Committee this summer to support continued community involvement. The volunteer committee will consist of members appointed by the City Manag-

er. It represents residents, technical experts, and representatives from several stakeholder groups, who will advise on the planning and implementation of programs, infrastructure projects, and other initiatives related to stormwater quantity, stormwater quality, sewer separation, wastewater, and more.

## Off The Shelf

CONT. FROM PG 22

among gold laced clouds in the blue, star-studded sky. We read poetry daily. We had violinists perform and singers sang arias along the walkway.

Jack was thrilled to the whole enterprise and devoted himself entirely to it. It consumed five years of our lives. It was a celebration of the streets! It took one of the worst examples of public spiritlessness and turned it into an exalted expression of high art.

It was what Jack was about. He was a poet ... but he was so much more. He believed in people. He acted like a high priest of people in daily life. He believed in Boston. To him Boston was his temple. He tried to make daily life in Boston a holy experience. He was high-minded. He believed in the power of the little guy, you and me, to exalt

ourselves and make daily life a paradise.

Jack thought immense thoughts and lived an immense life and was completely undaunted by poverty and class disadvantages. He went about the City as a humble street servant, doing common day labor – like a serf, like a peasant, like a ditch digger, like a grape picker. He was proud to be identified with them. And as he grew more and more into that role, I thought more and more that he was like St Francis of Assisi and I was in awe of the hundreds of tiny corporal act of mercy that he would bestow on Boston streets daily. As he went about his appointed rounds, Jack was a holy man. He lived his last years as a misunderstood saint, a downtrodden seer, sweeping our streets. His broom was like Demosthenese 's lantern – instead of

looking for an honest man, Jack cleaned the pathways of Boston for us, because we were all honest men.

He saw our beauty and our worth. He saw beauty in the mundane. He was a Johnny Appleseed of the streets. In his character Jacques DeBris, he collected trash trophies and set them on little stages like sculptures. They were beautiful! They were wiser and kinder than anything Marcel Duchamp ever did.

Wisdom, vision, insight, hard work, deep down goodness, great humor, unending love... Jack was so beautiful.

Jack had no faults, or none worth mentioning. Certainly, none to be mentioned on the glorious level on which he lived. His spirit... ah, that is his story! And we all have a story about Jack ...

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