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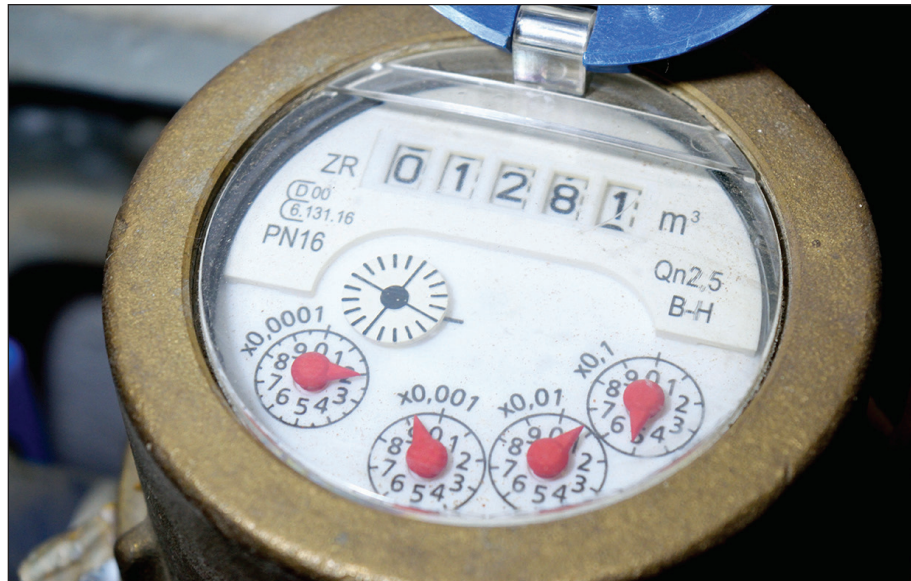


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City Council approves 15% rate hike for water and sewer



Increases in water and sewer rates were recently approved by the City Council.

By The Times Staff

The Somerville City Council approved a 15 percent rate increase for water and sewer for FY 2027 during the June 11 meeting.

The increase in water and sewer volumetric usage charges is determined on actual consumption. The base charges are calculated by the meter size and will remain the same.

Expense projections are increasing for water and sewer field operations, and all the business is executed on a daily basis to keep the operation running 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, explained Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management Richard Raiche.

The primary driver for rate increases is the capital investment plan and the debt *Continued on page 4*

Good Food for All: Raising awareness and funds for USFM's SNAP match program

For the 9th year, Union Square Main Streets (USMS) and local businesses proudly present Good Food for All (unionsquaremain.org/good-food-for-all), a week-long community campaign to raise awareness and funds for the Union Square Farmers Market (USFM)'s local SNAP match, June 20 – 27.

SNAP recipients often find fresh, local food at farmers' markets inaccessible, yet these foods are vital for strong and healthy immune systems.

To increase accessibility to these local food sources, the Union Square Farmers Market offers a SNAP Match Program (unionsquaremain.org/food-access): USFM matches SNAP funds that shoppers use with market vendors, dollar-for-dollar up to \$15 each market day. This means that a shopper gets \$30 to shop SNAP-eligible goods while only spending \$15 of their benefits, doubling *Continued on page 4*



The week-long Good Food for All campaign takes place from June 20 to 27.

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

Mayor Jake Wilson, Ward 1 Councilor Matthew McLaughlin, and city staff invite you to a virtual community meeting on **Wednesday, June 17**, from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. to discuss the quick-build safety improvements project on Washington Street between Tufts Street and the city line. Hear an overview of the project, learn more about the opportunities in quick-build projects, and share your questions and feedback. Following the community meeting, they will launch an online survey to gather community input and host pop-ups along Washington Street. Please find more information about the event and other opportunities for engagement at voice.somervillema.gov/eastwashington.

All city offices are closed. **Trash and recycling** are delayed by one day for the **Juneteenth holiday, Friday, June 19**.

The **World Cup** is here. Celebrate with fellow fans in Somerville. Visit somervillema.gov/worldcup throughout the tournament to find upcoming matches and where to watch locally.

Celebrating their birthdays this week: Happy birthday to a good guy, **Jonathan Buck**, who celebrates this week. We wish all of our Facebook friends, such as **Martin Janet, Steven Mirabella, Pindi Singh, Donna M. Gilberti, Gail Chambers, Chris Marshall, Marie Kearns, and Terra Yan**, a happy birthday. We hope everyone has a great day. To all the others we may have *Continued on page 7*

Somerville Weather Forecast

for the week of June 17 – June 23 as provided by the National Weather Service

DAY	CONDITIONS	HIGH/LOW	PRECIPITATION	HUMIDITY	WIND
Wednesday June 17	Partly Cloudy	79°/60°	4%	1%	S 10 mph
Thursday June 18	Rain	78°/65°	66%	43%	S 16 mph
Friday June 19	Partly Cloudy	80°/64°	10%	5%	W 14 mph
Saturday June 20	Partly Cloudy	77°/61°	20%	12%	W 18 mph
Sunday June 21	Partly Cloudy	80°/62°	22%	10%	WNW 12 mph
Monday June 22	Rain	78°/60°	70%	57%	SSW 10 mph
Tuesday June 23	Cloudy	77°/60°	23%	14%	NNW 9 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: **Obituary: Jeanne Bonaventura Aiello**

anthony m manzelli says:

Sorry for your loss . Lots of prayers . A truly awesome and great woman who I had the privilege to know.She put the Care in Caregiver a true friend to all!

Kathleen A Houghton says:

I knew Jeanne from our neighborhood, worked with her on Youth Committees while she served in State Police. Later had the pleasure of working with her for years at the Kennedy School 3rd grade Swim Lessons. She was a great friend, tireless mother & grandmother, and an amazing cook! She participated in so many events or programs in Somerville, and will be greatly missed.

Log onto TheSomervilleTimes.com to leave your own comments

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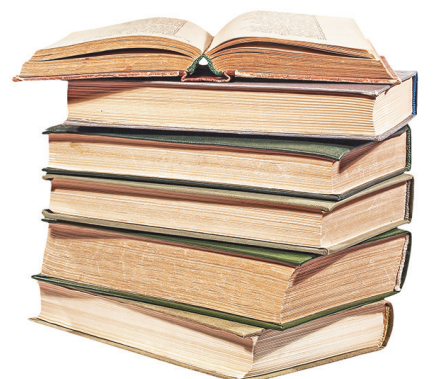
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Find great books on the Somerville Public Schools Summer Reading List

Looking for a fun book for your child on an indoor day or on a visit to the library this summer? Find a list of grade-appropriate books, curated by the SPS library and curriculum staff, on their website: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://somerville.k12.ma.us/files/Summer_Reading_List_2026.pdf

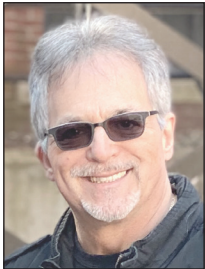
Somerville Public Libraries will make these books available on a display, so it's easy to pick up a good read. Enjoy!



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.

Father's Day



My dad has been gone since 1994. I was 41 when he died. So I had 41 years to get to know Fred Del Ponte. To say he was quite a character is an understatement.

My father built our first buggy. He used a broomstick to push me, my brother, and my sister around the block from Pearson Ave., and down Prichard. We took turns steering.

In 1968, the nuns at St. Clement's offered a piano to anyone who was willing to move it. Dad got it home, and that was the piano my brother and I learned on.

Dad became a scoutmaster when my brother and I joined Troop 71. He came on weeklong camping trips with us. He enjoyed the bossy role of scout leader while my brother and I dealt with the other campers, making fun of him. His real name was Ferdinando, and a few of the older scouts had a blast teasing him. They

called him "Ferd," and my brother and I were called "little Ferds!" He straightened them out by giving them garbage detail and other silly jobs. They had nicknames for him, and he had nicknames for the two biggest wise guys. He called one "bulb nose" and the other "frying pan head." Lol.

Dad worked as a welder at the Charlestown Navy Yard before he got married. One of his favorite stories was when he was stopped the night of the Brinks robbery, and the cops searched his car.

During World War II, when Dad was stationed in Italy, he was in charge of Frank Sinatra's USO airplane. I guess Old Blue Eyes was being rude to some of the servicemen, so my father bumped him off the plane and made him wait an extra five hours. Dad did it "his way."

When we were really small, probably around 1962, my father called Fort Devens and told them he was a Somerville politician, and they drove us around in an official staff car and gave us the royal

treatment all day.

When I started taking guitar lessons, my father bought himself a guitar and took lessons with me. I remember sitting on the picnic table in the backyard, trying to show him how to play "G-L-O-R -I-A GLORIA!"

Dad had a watch repair office in our house. I still have a cigar box filled with broken watches with tags on them that he never got to. The names on the tags are aunts, uncles, neighbors, and even a couple of nuns from St. Clement's grammar school.

Dad became an usher at St. Clement's Church for a few years. He'd be at one or two masses on Sunday, passing the collection box. He used to tap us with the basket for a joke when he came to our bench. He thought that was the funniest thing ever. He made it well known that the only reason he was an usher was because of the hearty breakfast served in the Rectory.

For a while, Dad drove a limo and flower car at Cataldo's funeral home. I still cringe when I drive by the former site. My whole



family ended up there.

A great memory was marching in the Memorial Day parade with the Italian American War Vets, Post 20 ITAMS. I was about 10 years old. We wore huge helmets and baggy leggings, and thought we were so cool. My cousin Eddie Pellagrini and I looked forward to marching with our dads every year. The party afterwards was fun too, with cold cuts and Joe Antonelli entertaining everyone on the piano.

Dad's friends were the best. There was Lenny Scott, Mary Forni, Eddie Pellagrini Sr., Marie Howe, Artie *Continued on page 17*

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Money Map Tip of the Week

By Vincent Hicks, CPA

Q: I'm short on cash until payday. Should I use a paycheck advance service?

A: Ideally, we would all have emergency savings available for situations like this. However, unexpected expenses happen, and some options are considerably better than others.

Here's how I generally view these services:

♦ **Earned Wage Access (EWA) services – usually the least risky option.**

These services allow you to access wages you've already earned before payday. Because you're accessing earned income rather than taking out a traditional loan, costs are often lower than other alternatives. The main downside is that your next pay-

check will be smaller.

♦ **Cash advance apps — use with caution.**

These apps typically provide small advances that are repaid from your next paycheck. While the costs may appear modest, frequent use can create a cycle where each paycheck starts with less money available than expected.

♦ **Payday loans – generally the riskiest option.**

Payday loans often carry very high fees and effective interest rates. What begins as a short-term solution can quickly become an expensive cycle of borrowing.

♦ **Pay attention to patterns.**

Needing occasional help is understandable. However, if you find yourself repeat-

edly relying on advances between paychecks, it may be a sign that a longer-term cash-flow solution is needed.

Bottom Line:

Unexpected cash shortages happen from time to time. If you need short-term help, be sure you understand both the costs and tradeoffs before borrowing. As a general rule, Earned Wage Access services are often the least problematic of these options, cash advance apps fall in the middle, and payday loans are typically the most expensive and highest-risk choice.

Any questions? I'm Vincent Hicks, a CPA based in the Cambridge–Somerville area. Reach out at 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.

City Council approves 15% rate hike for water and sewer

CONT. FROM PG 1

service that results from it, he said in a presentation.

To address aging infrastructure and fulfill regulatory requirements, the city will be upgrading the sewer system, which is referred to as the combined sewer overflow (CSO) control plan.

The estimated cost is \$1.29 billion and is shared with Cambridge and the MWRA to upgrade infrastructure and eliminate CSO discharges. This includes sewer separation, new storage tanks, and upgraded conveyance systems.

Sewer expenses over the next 10 years will increase as a result of the updates.

Operating expenses will grow modestly at roughly 4 percent per year. The debt service will increase 14.4 percent per year, a 336 percent increase over the next decade. The MWRA assessment will increase 63 percent over the 10-year span, according to the city's projections.

The average annual total water and wastewater bill, including base and volumetric charges for an average condo unit in FY 2027, will be \$1,711. The average bill for a two-family home will be \$3,692, according to the presentation data.

Following the presentation, City Councilor-at-Large Kristen Strezio said that rate

Total Change in Annual Costs for Various Billing Units (including base & volumetric charges, amended)				
Total Units per Bill (in CCF)	FY 2026	FY 2027	\$ Change	
	Annual Total	Annual Total	(FY 2027 - FY 2026)	% Change
15 (average condo unit)	\$1,487	\$1,711	\$223	15%
18 (average single-family home)	\$1,785	\$2,052	\$413	15%
30 (average two-family home)	\$3,211	\$3,692	\$818	15%
42 (average three-family home)	\$4,637	\$5,332	\$1,222	15%
110 (average 8-unit apartment building)	\$12,988	\$14,934	\$3,568	15%

increases are “a burden on our community” and expressed concerns for renters.

“This is a death by paper cuts blow to them and one more reason they can't stay

in the city,” said Strezio.

Both Strezio and City Councilor-at-Large Wilfred Mbah voted against the water and sewer rate increase.

Good food for All: Raising awareness and funds for USFM's SNAP match program

CONT. FROM PG 1

their purchasing power. Throughout the 2025 season as a whole, USMS issued \$21,173 in SNAP Match funds through this program.

Since 2005, USMS has raised more than \$120,000 to match SNAP dollars, making it possible for more neighbors to participate in and enjoy the bounty of its farmers market. Good Food For All ensures that this vital food access program continues.

Participating businesses show their dedication to the Union Square community by donating to support the SNAP Match – funds that will be spent at the Union Square Farmers Market, not at their own brick-and-mortar stores. Prioritizing access and community health are values important to many independently owned businesses in the

Square, and Good Food For All is excited to highlight them throughout the fundraiser. You can too by dining, shopping, and playing with them.

Throughout the 2019 Union Square Farmers Market season, USMS issued an average of \$145 in SNAP Match funds per market day. In the 2025 season, USMS issued an average of \$882 in SNAP Match funds per market day – an astounding 508% increase. While this increase shows that fresh food continues to be a priority for all, it also means Good Food For All is even more important than ever.

Friends and neighbors, please come to the table and to help USMS sustain a farmers market for all.

Make your donation here TODAY: <https://union-square-main-streets-inc.networkforgood.com/>.



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COMMENTARY

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How Transparency Led to Real Protections for Immigrants



By State Representative
Erika Uyterhoeven

It has been the honor of my life to serve three terms as your State Representative here in Somerville. I am now running to be your next State Senator because I believe the fights I have led on transparency, accountability, and immigrant rights need to be front and center in Beacon Hill. Some constituents have asked me: how did you come to run for State Representative in the first place? It's true that I was formerly an antitrust economist, not a career politician. The answer begins with a failure: During Donald Trump's first term in office, the Massachusetts legislature passed zero bills to protect immigrants.

I found this outrageous because hundreds of people testified in favor of the Safe Communities Act, representing countless more who supported it but couldn't take a whole day off to wait hours in a packed hearing room. Courageous immigrants, including parents, children, workers, as well as faith leaders, community organizers, and even some in law enforcement, came to the State House and told their stories.

They asked for basic protections: that local police not be turned into an extension of ICE, that courthouses and schools remain safe, that families not be ripped apart.

The response from Beacon Hill was silence. The Safe Communities Act died in committee with no vote.

How was that possible? How could hundreds of people give testimony, only for a bill to disappear without a single recorded vote?

The answer was simple: legislators on Beacon Hill kept most votes they took hidden from the public. Committee votes were secret and there was no way to know which legislators killed the bill and which ones fought for it. The system protected legislators from accountability, and it did not protect immigrants from deportation.

That is why I co-founded Act on Mass [1], the only organization in Massachusetts dedicated to fighting for legislative transparency. We ran ballot questions across dozens of districts asking voters whether committee votes should be public, and we won with an average of 87% support. There are no shortcuts, we organized, we advocated, and we built power. That work is what led me to run for State Representative: because I saw that the lack of transparency was the reason our immigrant neighbors were left unprotected. Their silence was a choice, and secrecy made that choice possible.

After years of advocating inside and outside the State House as your State Representative, we won a historic change: all committee votes are now publicly available and all written testimony is posted after hearings. These reforms did not happen because Beacon Hill decided on its own to be more open. They happened because people across the Commonwealth demanded it.

When Trump returned to office, the same voices that had been silent during his first term tried to claim that there was nothing the state could do to protect immigrants [2]. That was the federal government's responsibility, they said. We made our demands clear, and we proved them wrong.

This year, the Massachusetts legislature is passing two major bills that will protect immigrant families right here in the Commonwealth.

The PROTECT Act establishes statewide standards for interactions between state and local law enforcement and federal civil immigration enforcement. Both the House and Senate versions prohibit police from inquiring about a person's immigration status, restrict the use of state and local resources for civil immigration enforcement, and require a judicial warrant for ICE arrests at courthouses. The Senate version goes further by creating statutory protections for sensitive locations including schools, houses of worship, and health care facilities. Both versions restrict new 287(g)

agreements, the formal contracts that turn state agencies into arms of the deportation machine. Massachusetts is currently the only blue state in America with an active 287(g) agreement, through the Department of Correction, which has transferred more than 2,000 people to ICE. Neither version terminates that existing agreement, a gap I will continue to fight to close.

The Consumer Data Privacy Act bans the sale of the geolocation data ICE has been using to target our immigrant neighbors. Right now, apps on your phone collect your geolocation data: where you sleep, where you work, which stores you shop at, your movement patterns. That data is packaged by companies you have never heard of and sold to the highest bidder. ICE has spent millions of dollars purchasing commercial location data from data brokers to track down and target immigrants. This bill bans the sale of precise geolocation data and classifies immigration status as sensitive personal data that cannot be sold or shared without explicit consent. It cuts off the flow of data that ICE has been buying to locate people.

These are massive steps forward and they happened because we made votes and testimony public, thereby making it impossible for legislators to quietly kill bills that the vast majority of their constituents supported. With transparency, people across the state demanded that the State

House take action to protect immigrant families. That is how change works: by shining light on the problem so we can organize, advocate, and win.

However, the work continues. Both bills are now in conference committee, where legislators are working out the final details. The House and Senate must reconcile their versions of both bills and we need to ensure that the strongest language from each makes it to the final version.

If you want to stay informed about what you can do to make these bills stronger, including a breakdown of each bill, please sign up for my newsletter at electerika.com [3] or follow me on social media [4] for updates. This fight is not over but we have come a long way from the days when hundreds of people like you could be met with silence on Beacon Hill.

Links:

- [1] <https://actonmass.org/>
- [2] <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2025/12/29/metro/massachusetts-legislature-trump-response-immigration-funding-cuts/>
- [3] <https://electerika.com/>
- [4] <https://www.instagram.com/electerika/>

Erika Uyterhoeven represents the 27th Middlesex District (Somerville) in the Massachusetts House of Representatives and is a candidate for the 2nd Middlesex State Senate seat, which includes Somerville, Medford, parts of Cambridge and Winchester.

Father's Day gift idea!

Looking for something unique for Dad? Stop by the Somerville Museum, one Westwood Rd and pick up a Spark of the Revolution beer mug and a bottle-opener skeleton key. They have lots of museum gifts your dad would enjoy.

Perfect for history lovers, Somerville fans, and anyone who appreciates a gift with a story.

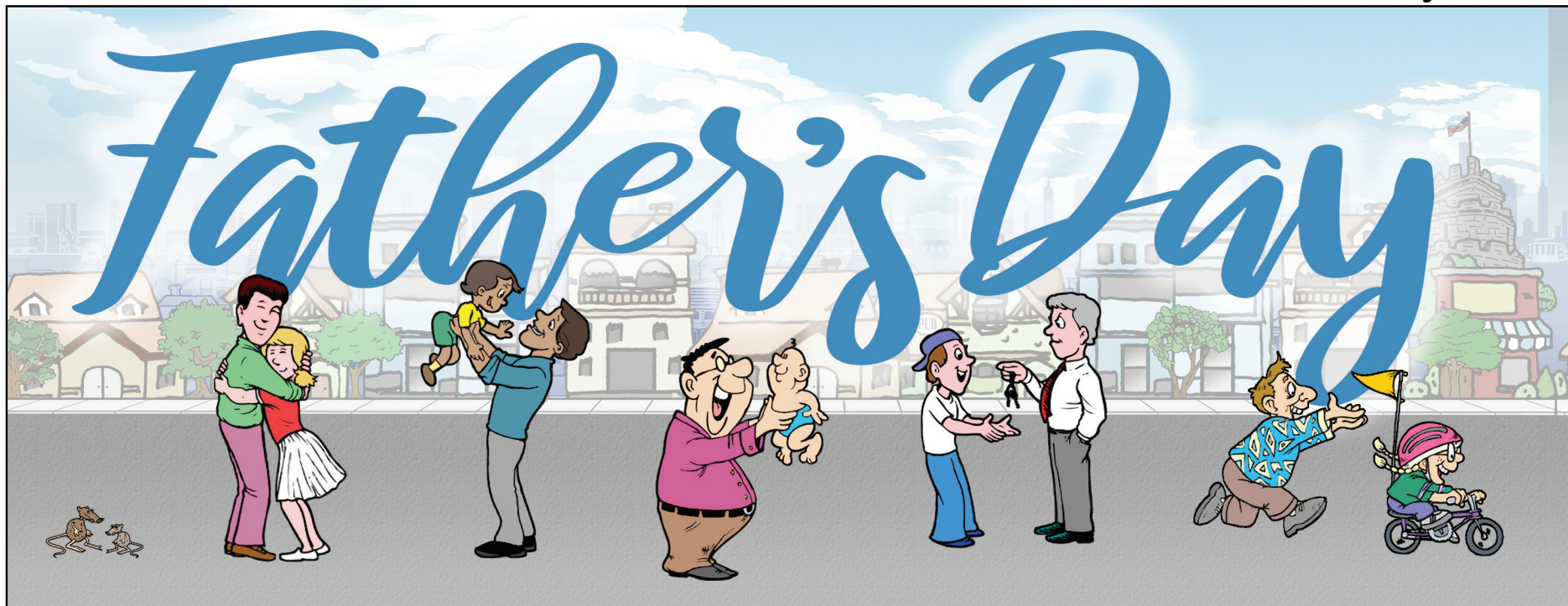
Stop by and find something special for Father's Day! <https://www.somervillemuseum.org/>



COMMENTARY

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Illustrated by Jim Clark



Have a happy Father's Day, Somerville!

Our View Of The Times



For those of us who are fortunate enough to have had a strong, loving father figure in our lives, we have indeed been truly blessed.

They have served as our providers – along with mom, of course – our enablers, our staunch supporters, our coaches, our towers of strength.

Most of us love our dads year-round unconditionally, but we are immediately re-

mindful of just how much they mean to us whenever Father's Day rolls around in the month of June.

It suddenly becomes a high priority to pick out that perfect gift, to prepare a nice meal, or to just spend some meaningful quality time together.

And as stoic and unconcerned as they may want to appear, you can be sure that these gestures are deeply appreciated. Ev-

eryone likes to feel appreciated, whether a giver or receiver.

Some of us may be so separated from our fathers geographically that an in-person get together might not be possible this time around. We can still pick up the phone or buzz them on Zoom for a special talk that would surely lift dad's spirits.

Think of all the times he was there for you, for that important sports event at

school, for the wonderful summer vacations and holiday season sledding in the park. For graduations, weddings, births, and so many of life's most memorable events. He made sure to make time for you, no matter how busy his life was.

So, however it is we manage to celebrate our fathers this year, let's make sure they know how important and precious they are to us. They'll surely appreciate it.

Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 2

missed, we sincerely wish them the very best of birthdays.

Somerville is hosting the SomerCup 2026 community soccer tournament for kids and adults, and all are invited to participate. Games will take place in July at Dilboy Stadium (110 Alewife Brook Parkway). Sign up for yourself or build a team of neighbors, colleagues, and friends. Schedule is as follows: Sunday, July 12, 12 to 5 p.m.: Kindergarten to Grade 4. Monday, July 13, 5 to 10 p.m.: Adults (ages 18 and up). Friday, July 17, 1:30 to 5 p.m.: Grades 5 to 8 and 9 to 12. Players of all skill levels are welcome

to participate. Register individually or as a team (8 to 10 players) now through Friday, June 26, at somervillema.gov/worldcup.

Save the date for the 21st Annual What the Fluff? Festival, Saturday, September 19, 1 – 5 p.m. in Union Square. Are you interested in being a vendor at this year's Festival? Go here to find out more: union-square-main.org/fluffvendors.

Join Somerville Emergency Management for the upcoming workshop, "Prepare Kids for a Safe Summer." The workshop will be held at Somerville

Public Library's West Branch (40 College Ave.) on Thursday, June 25, from 4 to 5 p.m. and will cover how to prepare kids for extreme heat, severe weather, and more. This workshop is child-friendly! All are welcome. This event is part of the Preparedness and Resiliency through Neighborhood Engagement and Readiness (PARTNER) Program. Sessions will be held throughout the year, covering different topics to help you build skills and confidence to prepare for emergencies. Learn more at somervillema.gov/em.

The Somerville Museum will host Patterns from the Collection, a mini bowl

painting workshop. June 18, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. 1 Westwood Rd. Inspired by patterns found in the Somerville Museum's collection, participants will paint their own miniature ceramic bowl to hold tiny treasures, keepsakes, or everyday small objects. You'll look closely at historic designs, decorative borders, floral motifs, and color combinations, then use them as inspiration to create something personal and new. No painting experience is needed. This workshop is a relaxed, hands-on way to explore museum objects, pattern-making, and the joy of creating a small, beautiful object to take home. For more information, visit Continued on page 21

FUN & GAMES

Ms. Cam's

Olio

Olio - (noun) A miscellaneous mixture, hodgepodge

#1027

- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1. Which country won the first FIFA World Cup in 1930? | 2. Who is the all-time highest goal scorer in FIFA World Cup history? | 3. What is the nickname of the trophy awarded to the FIFA World Cup winner? | 4. Who is the oldest goal scorer in a FIFA World Cup tournament? | 5. Which player scored the infamous "Hand of God" goal in the 1986 FIFA World Cup? | 6. In which country was the first-ever women's FIFA World Cup tournament held? | 7. Which soccer club is known as "The Red Devils"? | 8. In which country did the "tiki-taka" style of play originate? | 9. What soccer star opened up a museum in Portugal to display his trophies and other gear? | 10. The art of folding of paper to shape objects is called what? | 11. What is an oenophile an expert in? | 12. Which animal kills the most humans annually? |
|--|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

Answers on page 14

The Somerville Times Useless Facts of the Week

- The time displayed on a watch in most ads is 10:10.
- An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.

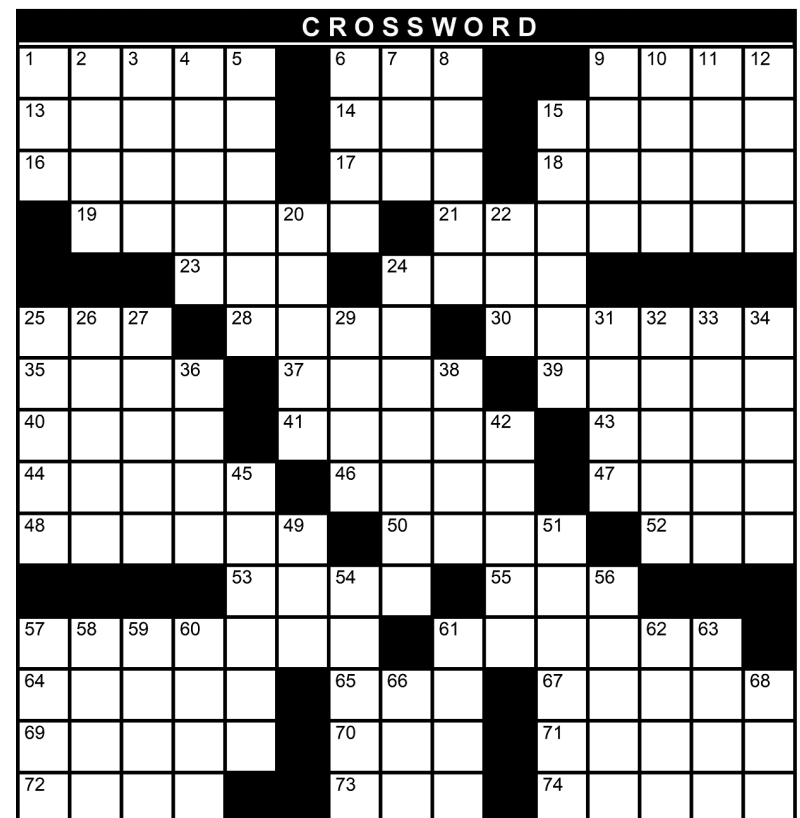
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- What beanstalk did
- Pack animal
- Charged particle
- Lacking guile
- Lumen per square meter, pl.
- Crime scene evidence, acr.
- Roast host
- Unalienable ones in the Declaration of Independence
- Colony that originally abstained from voting on independence
- Baba of "One Thousand and One Nights"
- Parsley or basil, e.g.
- Mountain peak
- Four Declaration signers were alums of this CT Ivy Leaguer
- Most mature, as in fruit
- It must go on?
- Small brook
- "...to assume among the powers of the ____"
- Cap and gown accessory
- Where there's trouble
- Rani's dress
- Useful quality
- Volcano off Sicily coast
- State on Old Glory
- Dionysus' follower
- Dems' opponents
- Not divisible by two
- Like certain people's glasses
- Australia's flightless bird
- First Declaration of Independence signer
- Self-evident ones
- Not a minor
- "____ it or lose it!"
- Songs for two
- Formally surrenders land
- Last name of the only brothers to both sign the Declaration
- Last Supper cup
- "If you only ____!"
- Boy
- Item in diary

DOWN

- ____ men are created equal
- Talk like a drunk



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Soultion to last week's crossword puzzle:



- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 3. Fare ride | 33. Nickname for a certain violin |
| 4. Opposite of alpha | 34. Certain George, with The |
| 5. In a foolhardy manner | 36. "____ in the course of human events..." |
| 6. Jar covers | 38. Like TV's famous ranger |
| 7. Long, long time | 42. Candle shape |
| 8. Stupid or silly | 45. Fortune teller's deck, pl. |
| 9. Risque | 49. Who is Bugs Bunny talking to? |
| 10. Puerto ____ | 51. Blemish |
| 11. ____ and anon | 54. Cranial bones + facial bones |
| 12. 168 hours | 56. Driver's 180 |
| 15. Rookie | 57. Bypass firewall, illegally |
| 20. Beauty pageant winner's headgear | 58. Yemeni port |
| 22. Make a blunder | 59. Classic art subject |
| 24. Serfdom, archaically speaking | 60. Ball of yarn |
| 25. Indian black tea | 61. Started during the Ryder Cup, e.g. |
| 26. Capital of Tibet | 62. Miami basketballer |
| 27. One's entourage | 63. Cookbook direction |
| 29. Liberty's partner | 66. Shining one in "America the Beautiful" |
| 31. Permission to leave | 68. Sylvester Stallone's nickname |
| 32. Muse of love poetry | <i>Solution in the next edition of The Somerville Times.</i> |

Teen Empowerment funding in question

By Harry Kane

Ward One City Councilor Matthew McLaughlin recognized The Center for Teen Empowerment for providing over 20 years of service in Somerville, but said that funding is decreasing for the organization.

He's asking for an update from the Director of Health and Human Services on recent grant system changes, which will likely reduce funding.

"Teen Empowerment's existence in this city closely mirrors my own activism in the community," said McLaughlin.

At the City Council meeting on June 11, McLaughlin said the city had changed the way TE is funded, and instead of one grant for \$400,000, the city now has multiple grants.

"Several of them are grants that Teen Empowerment's programming may not qualify for," said McLaughlin. "We're looking at a reduction of three-quarters, \$300,000 loss for teen empowerment. Not because we don't have the money, not because it's not there, not because of budget cuts, but just a bureaucratic change in the way that we're addressing our requests for proposals."

McLaughlin says he thinks there is a solution and doesn't want the youth organization punished by the process.

At the state level, Gov. Maura Healey's administration has proposed a 40 percent funding cut to the YouthWorks summer jobs program in FY 2027, according to The Bay State Banner.

McLaughlin said seeing young people go down the wrong path and witnessing friends pass away from substance abuse is one of the reasons TE is so important in the community.

The Curtatone administration introduced TE to Somerville in the Fall of 2004 to address substance abuse, adolescent suicide, and gang-related concerns. Since then, the organization has been helping change the lives of young people in the community.

"I've seen these people in the community that I know...are still alive today because of this program"

"I've seen these people in the community that I know...are still alive today because of this program," said McLaughlin. "They're thriving because of this program. They have jobs. They've become adults. They have families. And I truly believe that many of them may not be here were it not for Teen Empowerment."

The Somerville location at 165 Broad-



Center for Teen Empowerment advocate Councilor Matthew McLaughlin is appealing to the city to ensure that adequate funding is provided for the organization.

way "employs youth ages 14-19 to work in year-round youth leadership jobs," addresses "pressing community issues such as mental health," and brings "youth voices into city and school policies," according to their website.

McLaughlin says he sees teens still dealing with the same problems that they were two decades ago, and that Teen Empowerment is the answer to galvanizing local efforts to tackle youth unemployment. "They're the group that comes forward and addresses their problems. It empowers them," he said.

At the City Council meeting, McLaughlin sponsored three speakers to testify on behalf of Teen Empowerment's impact in the community. Abigail (Abra) Forrester, CEO of Teen Empowerment,

said, "Over the last 21 years, we've supported Somerville and young people in their transformation."

Forrester explained that the organization is at a "crossroad" and questioned who would replace their organization in a "progressive way" to deal with the issues that young people are facing in the community. He added that society is at a "critical point" and that there needs to be "a space where young people can develop and grow."

Forrester added that a recent survey conducted by the Ballantyne administration found that the community wants more youth development. "Young people want to bring their voice to social issues so they can create change. And that's what we do at Teen Empowerment," he said.

Dorothy's Corner BY DOROTHY DIMARZO



Vegetable Slaw

With the Fourth of July just around the corner, I thought I would share this recipe for those of you who love a good coleslaw. This is not a traditional coleslaw, but delicious all the same.

Not everyone has a food processor to shred your own cabbage or vegetables,

so it is quite acceptable to use your favorite pre shredded product. I do!

This is a simple recipe that can be made in about five minutes, a huge time saver.

- 12 oz broccoli slaw
- 3/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1/8 cup seasoned rice vinegar

- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/4 tsp salt and 1/2 tsp pepper
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup walnut pieces

In a medium bowl, add the mayonnaise, vinegar, sugar, salt and pepper and mix well. Add the remaining ingredients and gently toss until

well incorporated. Place in the refrigerator for about 1/2 hour prior to serving.

**Please note, this recipe was adapted from the Trader Joe's Broccoli Slaw package*

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

Visit us online at www.TheSomervilleTimes.com
On Facebook at www.facebook.com/somerville.times.1

LEGAL NOTICES

Legal Notices can also be viewed on our website at www.thesomervilletimes.com



Notice of names of persons appearing to be owners of funds held by City of Somerville and deemed abandoned.

To claim funds, please go to www.somervillema.gov/treasury and complete the Abandoned and Unclaimed Property Form and send completed form together with required documentation to the City of Somerville Treasury Department by **August 9, 2026**. Mail to **City of Somerville Treasury, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA 02143** or email treasury@somervillema.gov. If you would like a printed copy of the Abandoned and Unclaimed Property Form mailed to you, please email treasury or call 617-625-6600 ext. 3500. Funds not claimed by **August 9, 2026** will be deemed abandoned.

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LEGAL NOTICE

City of Somerville
Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD)
WFD-27.1
The City of Somerville, Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD)
invites sealed proposals for **FabVille Lab Manager**
Funds for the FabVille Lab Manager are provided by the Economic Development Division of the City of Somerville Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development.
Bid Number WFD-27.1
Request for Proposal (RFP) package will be posted and available for download on the City of Somerville website beginning at **10:00AM, Wednesday June 17, 2026** at www.somervillema.gov/wfd.
Print copies available upon request to WFD@somervillema.gov.
An electronic PDF file should be emailed to WFD@somervillema.gov and proposal packages must be submitted no later than **12:00 PM, Friday July 17, 2026** for responses to WFD-27.1 to the above email address.
Please contact the City of Somerville's Workforce Development staff, by email at WFD@somervillema.gov, for information and proposal packages.
Thomas F. Galligani Jr.,
Executive Director
617- 625-6600, x 2500

6/17/26 The Somerville Times

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court**

MIDDLESEX Division Docket No. MI26P2988EA

INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE

Estate of: Concetta Silveri
First Name Middle Name Last Name

Also Known As: _____

Date of Death: April 19, 2026

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of

Petitioner Anthony Silveri of Somerville MA
First Name M.I. Last Name (City/Town) (State)

a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

Anthony Silveri of Somerville MA
First Name M.I. Last Name (City/Town) (State)

has been informally appointed as the Personal Representative of the estate to serve [] with without surety on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.

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Legal Notices can be downloaded from our website: www.TheSomervilleTimes.com



**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
IFB #26-19**

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

Argenziano School Boiler Replacement

An Invitation for Bid may be obtained online at www.bidexpress.com, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **06/17/2026**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves right to reject any or all bids if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

Filed Sub-Bids are due by **07/1/2026 at 3:00pm:**

Sealed General Bids are due by **07/8/2026 at 3:00pm.**

A Pre-bid Site Visit is scheduled for 6/22/2026 at 10:00 AM at 290 Washington Street, Somerville, MA

5% Bid Deposit required. Prevailing wages apply. DCAMM Certifications required.

Please email тчukhatsang@somervillema.gov for more information.

Thupten Chukhatsang
Senior Procurement Manager
617-625-6600 x3400

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**CITY OF SOMERVILLE
PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
Rebid IFB #26-66**

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

Cross Connection Control Program

An Invitation for Bid may be obtained online at www.bidexpress.com, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **06/17/2026**. Sealed bids will be received at above office until: **07/2/2026 2:00PM 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 for more information.

Logan Carroll
Procurement Manager
Lcarroll@somervillema.gov

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Back to School Fair: Save the Date!

Tuesday, August 25 at Somerville High School.

Save the date for this popular annual event for the entire family.

Students and families from across the district are invited to join the fun. Learn more about SPS, meet staff from your school, the City of Somerville, and local community partners.

Expect a message from them this summer with all the details. They hope to see you there!

Learn more at: <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/back-school-fair>



LEGAL NOTICES

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NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT and NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS

Date of Publication:

City of Somerville
 Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development
 93 Highland Ave
 Somerville MA, 02143
 617-625-6600

Request for Release of Funds

On or after July 3rd, 2026, the City of Somerville will submit a request to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the release of the following funds: Community Project Funding, and Section 108 Loan funds to undertake a project to be known as Clarendon Hill Phase II located at 34 North St. in Somerville, MA. The project is to be undertaken on a site that contained a 216-unit public housing complex, built in the 1950s, and is being demolished and rebuilt in three phases. The new development will be a 591 unit mixed-income development, with 216 units still being public housing, 75 rental units restricted to households at or below 80% AMI, 5 rental units restricted to households at or below 110% AMI, and 295 unrestricted market rate units. The project design includes physical traffic calming treatments, improvement of residents' access to the surrounding community (including safe access to the large, green, open space across the street), and the creation of an equitable neighborhood out of an isolated housing development. The development is currently owned by the Somerville Housing Authority and each phase will be transferred through a 99-year ground lease. An award of \$2,400,000 in CPF funding has been allocated, and an application has been submitted for \$9,750,000 as a Section 108 Loan. The project is a collaboration between the Somerville Community Corporation, the Preservation for Affordable Housing, and the Somerville Housing Authority. The total estimated cost of this phase of the project is \$98,000,000.

Finding of No Significant Impact

The City of Somerville has determined that the project will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) and is available upon request. Any individual, group, or agency may submit written questions on the ERR to Miranda Rubin, City of Somerville, OSPCD, 167 Holland St., Suite 211, Somerville MA 02144. ERR may be examined or copied during normal business hours' Mon, Tues, and Wed, 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, Thurs 8:30 AM-7:30 PM, Fri 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM.

Public Comments

Any individual, group, or agency disagreeing with this determination or wishing to comment on this activity may submit written comments to the Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development at the address indicated above or to mrubin@somervillema.gov. All comments received by July 3rd, 2026 will be considered by the City of Somerville prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds. Comments should specify which notice and proposed project they are addressing.

Environmental Certification

The City of Somerville certifies to HUD that Jake Wilson, the Certifying Officer, in his capacity as Mayor of Somerville consents to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. HUD's approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under NEPA and related laws and authorities and allows the City of Somerville to use HUD program funds.

Objections to Release of Funds

HUD will accept objections to its release of fund and the City of Somerville's certification for a period of fifteen days following the anticipated submission date or its actual receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if they are on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer of the City of Somerville; (b) the City has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by HUD regulations at 24 CFR part 58; (c) the grant recipient or other participants in the development process have committed funds, incurred costs or undertaken activities not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of a release of funds by HUD; or (d) another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures (24 CFR Part 58, Sec. 58.76) and shall be addressed to the HUD Office of Community Planning and Development at Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. Federal Building 10 Causeway Street, 5th Floor Boston, MA 02222-1092, (617) 994-8350 or via email: CPDRROFBOS@hud.gov. Potential objectors should contact HUD to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

Jake Wilson, Mayor of Somerville, Certifying Officer

6/17/26 The Somerville Times



Section 00 11 13
ADVERTISEMENT TO BID
 MGL c.149 §50K to §150K

The **SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**, the Awarding Authority, invites sealed bids from Contractors for the Thermostat Replacement and Building Management System Modifications - Weston Manor at Weston Manor (31-7) in Somerville, Massachusetts, in accordance with the documents prepared by **C.A. CROWLEY ENGINEERING, INC.**

The Project consists of but not limited to:
 Replace existing thermostats with new thermostats in the building with new - total 163 thermostats. Backup existing BMS system points, schedules, and sequences and upgrade existing BMS to meet current standards as noted in the contract documents. Replacement of existing electric baseboard radiation with new in select locations (four).

The work is estimated to cost **\$110,000.00**.

All Bidding Requests for Information (RFIs) shall be submitted online by 07/06/2026 at 2:00PM EDT for general bids.

Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.149 §44A-J & to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §526 to 27H inclusive.

THIS PROJECT IS BEING ELECTRONICALLY BID AND HARD COPY BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Please review the instructions in the bid documents on how to register as an electronic bidder. All Bids shall be submitted online at www.biddocs.com and received no later than the date and time specified.

General Bids will be received until **09 July 2026 at 2:00PM EDT** and publicly opened online, forthwith.

General bids and sub-bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit that is not less than five (5%) of the greatest possible bid amount (including all alternates), and made payable to the **SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY**. Note: A bid deposit is not required for Projects advertised under \$50,000.

Bid Forms and Contract Documents will be available for review at www.biddocs.com (may be viewed and downloaded electronically at no cost).

PRE-BID CONFERENCE / SITE VISIT: Scheduled
 Date and Time: 06/23/2026 at 11:00AM EDT
 Address: 15 Weston Ave., Somerville, MA 02144
 Instructions: Meet out in front of the building. Will tour the one of the units, the basement and review the existing BMS system.

The hard copy Contract Documents may be seen at:

Nashoba Blue Inc.
 433 Main Street
 Hudson, MA 01749
 978-568-1167

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Legal Notices can be downloaded from our website:
www.TheSomervilleTimes.com



CITY OF SOMERVILLE PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTING SERVICES DEPARTMENT INVITATION FOR BIDS IFB #26-82

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

Elm-Beacon Connector Traffic Signal Equipment Installation

An Invitation for Bid (IFB) may be obtained online at www.bidexpress.com, <https://www.somervillema.gov/procurement>, or from the PCS Department, Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave., Somerville, MA, 02143 on or after **Wednesday, June 17, 2026**. Sealed bids will be received at above office until: **3:00PM Wednesday, July 1, 2026**. The Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to reject any or all bids if, in her sole judgment, the best interest of the City of Somerville would be served by so doing.

Please email Felisa Garate at fgarate@somervillema.gov for more information.

5% Bid Deposit required. Massachusetts Prevailing Wages apply.

Felisa Gárate
 Senior Procurement Manager
 617-625-6600 x3406

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IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF COBB COUNTY STATE OF GEORGIA

BLUE SKY ADVANCE LLC,
 Plaintiff,
 v.

UNLOCK STAYS LLC and SHANTE DAVIS,
 Defendants.
 Civil Case No.: 26CV00923

To Unlock Stays LLC and Shante Davis, 1 College Avenue, Somerville, MA 02144, 3343 Peachtree Rd. NE. Ste. 145-1482, Atlanta, GA 30326, and 110 Stanley Oaks Place, Fayetteville, GA 30214, You are hereby notified that the above-styled action, A Complaint for Breach of Contract, Unjust Enrichment, and Attorney's Fees, seeking judgement in the amount of \$16,114.25 and \$17,200.72 was filed in the Superior Court of Cobb County, State of Georgia, on February 4, 2026, by the Plaintiff, Blue Sky Advance LLC, Service of the Summons, Complaint, and Affidavit of Damages upon you has been authorized by Order of the Court dated June 4, 2026, pursuant to O.C.G.A §9-11-4(f)(1)(A) due to Plaintiff's demonstrated inability to serve you personally after diligent efforts, You are required to file with the Clerk of the Superior Court of Cobb County, 70 Hayes Street, Marietta, Georgia 30090 and to Serve upon Plaintiff's Counsel, Melissa Barrett, Esq., M Barrett Law, 225 N. Jeff Davis Drive, Fayetteville, Georgia 30214, an Answer in writing within sixty (60) days of the date of the first publication of this notice. Failure to respond will result in a judgement by default being entered against you for the relief demanded in the Complaint.

6/17/26 The Somerville Times

**TO PLACE LEGAL ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE SOMERVILLE TIMES,
 CONTACT US BY 12 PM MONDAY
 PHONE: 857-488-5138**

Look for the second edition of SPS In Print!

Somerville Public Schools has published its second edition of SPS: In Print with exciting exclusives about SPS students and events.

Read about the district's adult learning program (SCALE), plans for a new playground at Kennedy School, a CTE project in collaboration with the Library Foundation, and an SHS senior who lights up the lacrosse field.

The paper is free and available at local Somerville cafes and our city libraries.



6/17/26 The Somerville Times

SomerStreets: Carnaval 2026

SomerStreets: Carnaval took place on Sunday, June 14, from 2 to 6 p.m. and transformed Broadway into a vibrant, walkable celebration of community and culture. The festival stretched along Broadway, from McGrath Highway to Pennsylvania Avenue, creating a welcoming space for everyone to enjoy. Somerville's Mayor Wilson was the first mayor to participate in the Dunk Tank at Carnaval. He went in expecting to stay dry — but things definitely didn't turn out that way.





Photos by Bobbie Toner



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MISCELLANEOUS

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Ms. Cam's

From page 8

Olio

Answers

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Uruguay | 7. Manchester United |
| 2. Miroslav Klose | 8. Spain |
| 3. The Jules Rimet Trophy | 9. Cristiano Ronaldo |
| 4. Roger Milla | 10. Oragami |
| 5. Diego Maradona | 11. Wine |
| 6. China | 12. mosquitoes |

COMMENTARY

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

Somerville boycott ordinance introduction

On Thursday, June 11, 2026, members of Somerville City Council introduced an ordinance to boycott and divest from companies complicit in Israel's genocide, apartheid, and illegal occupation of Palestine. The proposed ordinance follows years of campaigning by Palestinian community leaders and local organizers to stop the flow of municipal tax dollars to companies that provide material support to Israel and enable Israel's long history of crimes against Palestinians.

The ordinance was written by Councilors Ben Ewen-Campen and Ben Wheeler. Councilors Will Mbah and Jon Link also indicated they would be co-sponsors of the proposed legislation. In his opening remarks, Councilor Ewen-Campen stated, "This generation has watched, day after day, for years, as truly unimaginable acts of violence and destruction have been done to Gaza, to Palestine. A campaign that is directly targeting the civilian population, has reduced Gaza to rubble, that has been recognized as a genocide by many human rights groups and scholars. And as they have watched this unfold, they have also seen very clearly that Israel's actions have the complete and total support of our country and our government. They see that this could not be happening without our country providing weapons, sending aid, publicly supporting these unconceivable actions that we can all see on our phones every day, read about on the news — and for many people in Somerville, it's not just something they see on their phones. For our Palestinian constituents, every single one of them has been directly affected by this in unimaginable ways."

Councilor Will Mbah sponsored two speakers, Palestinian organizer Amina Awad and Jewish community leader and filmmaker Erin Axelman. Awad highlighted the importance of this moment for Palestinians: "Today, we are enacting the will of the people and heeding the call of the 11,599 Somervillians who voted yes to divest in November. But the reality remains that there is an ongoing genocide of Palestinians being livestreamed as we sit in the

comfort of this room. As I speak, Palestinians continue to endure unimaginable state sanctioned violence, murder, and destruction funded by our tax dollars," still directly affecting relatives of Palestinians living in Somerville.

Axelman, in their remarks to the Council, commented on the need to support Palestine through the proposed ordinance, amidst a new political landscape shaped by increased public scrutiny of Israel's treatment of Palestinians: "Somerville is one of the most progressive cities in the country. 100% of our city council members are Democrats. As our ballot initiative's success showed, and as polling over and over again shows, the era of Pro-Israel Democrats is over, and our [Democrat] party is not going back." They continued, "We need our city councilors to follow the will of the voters, both in Somerville and nationally," by "becoming one of the first cities in the U.S. to divest from companies complicit in Israeli genocide and apartheid."

During the introduction of the ordinance to the City Council, City Councilor Naima Sait shared, "This genocide is the most horrifying thing in our lifetime. If we can't take action on Israel's genocide in Palestine, then I don't know how we can still talk about human rights or community values. I genuinely cannot go around in the community saying that I care about children or women, women's rights, human rights, if I cannot support an ethical procurement ordinance. That's the least we can do."

The ordinance states that the city may not procure goods or services from an entity whose contracts, services, or operations, in any of the three most recent fiscal years, provide material support to, or derive revenue from material support provided to entities engaged in conduct recognized under international law to constitute apartheid, genocide, unlawful military occupation, or conduct recognized to constitute systematic violation of international humanitarian law, including without limitation in Israel and Palestine. It further restricts the city from purchasing financial equities



Somerville resident and Palestinian leader of S4P speaks to the importance of this moment for Palestinians. — Photo courtesy of City of Somerville Public Recording

or bonds that constitute investment in the same entities so long as alternatives with equivalent or better financial prospects are available. The Mayor is directed to promulgate an Ethical Procurement and Investment Policy to implement the restrictions, and consider the findings of several international legal bodies, including the International Court of Justice and the United Nations Human Rights Council, in creating such a policy.

Organizers with Somerville for Palestine have expressed concern that the ordinance, as written, may be interpreted in such a way as not to affect a boycott of any company doing business with Israel. International legal bodies have largely failed to term Israel's conduct in Palestine a genocide or apartheid state, and rulings often take years to come out. As such, community members are pushing city councilors to include the American Friends Service Committee's database "Companies Profiting from the Gaza Genocide" in the list that the Mayor must consider in creating a policy to, as Awad highlighted in her remarks, "provide clarity around who to boycott upon enforcement."

The Cambridge for Palestine orga-

nizer addressed the crowd outside City Hall: "We are here to bear witness today. This isn't everything we want for the liberation of Palestine, but this is not the end of our struggle."

The ordinance will now be considered by the Legislative Affairs Committee, which will review and revise the language and present a final version to the rest of the council for voting.

This ordinance follows the passage of Question 3 in November 2025, which called on elected leaders to end city business with companies that sustain Israel's apartheid, genocide, and illegal occupation of Palestine. The question passed with broad support in Somerville, securing the win in 27 of 28 precincts in the city. At the urging of local activists, the City Council passed a measure in December 2025 resolving to implement Question 3 within a year.

Somerville for Palestine is an inclusive local, community-led group that formed in response to Israel's U.S.-funded genocide against the Palestinian people, and we are united in our steadfast advocacy for Palestinian liberation.

— Somerville for Palestine

Join Somerville Fireworks at Trum Field on June 30

Fireworks return to Somerville's skies on Tuesday, June 30, at the city's annual summer celebration featuring live music, food, family-friendly activities, and of course, a fireworks finale.

The festivities will begin at 6 p.m. with live music from Pluto's Return, a Somerville High School alumni band. DJ Live will follow with a lively mix of pop, soul, funk, and classic hits, and at 7:45 p.m., local funk band Search Party takes the stage.

At approximately 9 p.m., Mayor Jake Wilson will deliver brief remarks, followed by the National Anthem and the official countdown to the fireworks show. Food vendors will be available throughout the evening, including local Somerville favorites, plus classic treats like fried dough and lemonade.

Community programming

Community members are also invited to additional programming beginning at 5:30 p.m. at Premiere on Broadway (519 Broadway), hosted by the Somerville Museum and the Department of Racial and Social Justice.

The program will include a reading of Frederick Douglass' famous address and Black Out poetry led by Christian Walkes. Artist Sophie Tachibana Miller will also lead an interactive public art activity on Broadway near Trum Field.

Plan ahead

Due to the large crowds and loud noise associated with Somerville Fireworks, the city recommends that attendees leave pets at home and avoid bringing unnecessary bags or backpacks. All bags and backpacks are subject to inspection.

To support public safety and pedestrian access, traffic and parking restrictions and road closures will be in place in the area around Trum Field. Attendees are encouraged to plan ahead and allow extra travel time.

MBTA buses 80 and 89 will be rerouted from 5 p.m. to midnight. Riders should visit mbta.com for full detour information. See below for all planned parking restrictions and road closures.



No parking:

8 a.m. to midnight

- Broadway eastbound from Charles E. Ryan Road to Cedar Street
- Cedar Street, both sides, from Broadway to Murdock Street
- Charles E. Ryan Road, both sides, from Broadway to the end of the street

3 a.m. to midnight

- Franey Road, both sides, from Cedar Street to Charles E. Ryan Road
- Cedar Street, both sides, from Murdock Street to Morrison Avenue

4 p.m. to midnight

- Broadway, both sides, from Boston Avenue to Medford Street

Road closures

3 p.m. to midnight

- Franey Road will be closed to vehicular, cyclist, and pedestrian traffic. Authorized personnel only.

4 to 6 p.m.

- Charles E. Ryan Road will be closed from Broadway to the end of the street, except for residents.
- Cedar Street from Morrison Avenue to Broadway will be closed, except for residents.

5 p.m. to midnight

- Broadway will be closed to all vehicular traffic from Boston Avenue to Medford Street.
- Hinckley Street will be closed from Fiske Avenue to Broadway.

6 p.m. to midnight

- Cedar Street from Morrison Avenue to Broadway will be closed to all vehicular traffic, including resident traffic.
- Charles E. Ryan Road from Broadway to the end of the street will be closed to all vehicular traffic, including resident traffic.

The following restrictions will also be in place in Medford near the Somerville border:

5 p.m. to midnight

- Williams Street at Winter Hill Road: no access to Broadway
- Williams Street at Albion Street: no access to Winter Hill Road

Book review: 'Fortune Favors the Dead' by Stephen Spotswood

By Dennis Fischman

The time is 1942, in the midst of the Second World War. The place: the Big Apple. A former circus hand with knife-throwing skills saves the life of a private detective. The two promptly become a team. The detective is gradually weakening from MS and needs a scrappy helper to go out and spend time and shoe leather investigating scenes and interviewing people. The former circus hand needs a job.

This is a delightfully twisty-turny historical noir, with homages to Rex Stout [1] and his Nero Wolfe/Archie Goodwin pairing. It also makes deft use of gender reversal: the gumshoe who falls in love with a femme fatale, and her

intellectual boss, are all women.

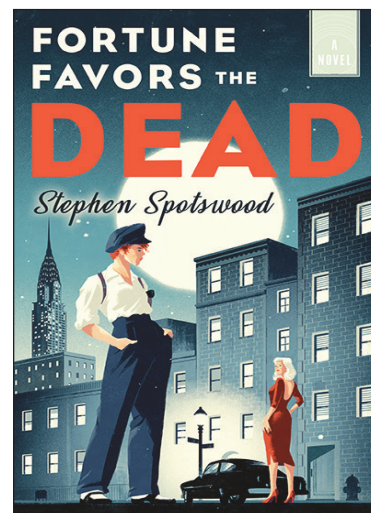
Willowjean ("Will") Parker gets hired by wealthy Lillian Pentecost, and in between cases, she runs self-defense classes for women, often women facing abuse and domestic violence. Lillian heads the agency. Because she doesn't need the money, she can take on cases for free when the client needs their services but cannot pay. That creates a network of people who are grateful to them and can give them information when they need it.

In this first book of the series, Pentecost & Parker take on what seems to be a classic locked room mystery. The wife of a steel magnate (and war profiteer), Abigail Collins, is found dead at her annual Halloween party. Her husband,

Alistair, had committed suicide in the same room, a year earlier. Is his spirit walking on the eve of the Day of the Dead, and is her death a supernatural occurrence?

Or is it all too human, and which of the suspects committed the crime: their children, Randolph and Becca (who sets Will's pulses racing), or their godfather, Harry Wallace ... or even the mysterious fortune teller, Ariel Belestrade (who has a history with Lillian Pentecost that's yet to be entirely revealed)?

Delightfully, many of the characters (conveniently listed and blurred in the front of the book, Lindsey Davis-style [2], are not who they seem to be, and their relationships with other characters are not what they appear to be



Fortune Favors the Dead by Stephen Spotswood, Doubleday, 2020.



Dennis Fischman is a member of the Somerville Public Library's Mystery Book Club and an inveterate reader.

either. I look forward to reading more of this series [3].

Links:

[1] https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/41112.Rex_Stout

Rex_Stout

[2] https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/24844.Lindsey_Davis

[3] <https://www.goodreads.com/series/300368-pentecost-and-parker>

American Rendezvous (ARDV) returns

Parkour Generations Americas is proud to announce the return of American Rendezvous (ARDV), one of North America's premier annual parkour gatherings, taking place June 26–28, 2026, across Somerville, Cambridge, and Boston.

ARDV is hosted by Parkour Generations Boston (PKGB), based in Somerville, and brings together more than 200 participants and 30 coaches, who are internationally renowned instructors from across the United States, Europe, and Asia, for a 3-day weekend of workshops, training, and community engagement. Registration is open to participants of all experience levels aged 14 and up, plus dedicated programming for younger children.

ARDV celebrates movement, physical

fitness, personal development, and connection through the discipline of parkour. Parkour is founded on the principles of overcoming challenges and reimagining the built environment. It has experienced significant growth over the last 14 years throughout Greater Boston thanks to PKGB's extensive community programming, which now includes more than 60 weekly classes, youth development initiatives, and active partnerships with schools and municipalities.

This is the 13th year that Somerville has proudly hosted the ARDV event, due to strong support from the City of Somerville and partnerships with many local businesses and non-profit organizations. The event showcases the region as a hub



Annual parkour event, American Rendezvous (ARDV), is set to return to the area from June 26 to 28.

for innovation, healthy lifestyles, and public-space recreation. for the international movement community.

Register for the limited number of spaces remaining via <https://www.american-rendezvous.com/>

Father's Day

CONT. FROM PG 3

Ardolino, and Sabby Capuano to name a few. Some of Dad's best buddies were Somerville icon Gene Brune, Dr. David W. Jones, an educator extraordinaire. My dad's best pal was my uncle Sal. In later days, when dad was active in The Masons, he and mom hung around with Donald and Pat Norton, and uncle Sal and aunt Olga. Dad loved his friends.

Dad always had a few jobs. He also helped at my uncle Joe Del Ponte's glass business. But the job he loved was head engineer running the engine room of Dewey and Almy Chemical, later to become WR Grace. He ran those boilers for 38 years. That was him

blowing the 9:30 curfew whistle at night. I remember seeing an iridescent glowing liquid at Dad's work. Probably toxic goo.

My father lost his wife, my mom, in 1986. It was a very sad time for us. But nothing prepared him for losing his 39-year-old daughter six years later. He was left to fight for custody of his 9-year-old granddaughter against her abusive father. Dad and his granddaughter were the best of friends. Dad was triumphant, but those grueling court sessions and losing two loved ones weighed very heavily on him.

The news of my brother's terminal illness was enough to push him to the brink.

I believe Dad willed himself to die so he didn't have to bury a third loved one. He basically turned the family over to me. He often referred to me as his "right-hand man." I loved that.

Dad never met my two boys, but I tell them stories about him all the time. I say things dad used to say. They just pop out, and I have to smile and say, "Wow, my dad used to say that!"

My dad, Fred, hung around the Supreme Deli in Davis Square right up until he died on Thanksgiving Day, 1994. He proudly wore his Kiss 108 jacket with his name on it and a Yankees hat. He handled

the ribbing well. You can still hear Dad's voice occasionally on Kiss 108, saying funny things like "You guys are all cuckoo up there," and "Right you are, Mr. Siegel."

Fred was quite a colorful guy. I'm a lot like him in many ways. I'm loud, I yell at cars to slow down on my street, and I love my family like crazy. One of my father's favorite things to say was, "You tell them your Daddy said so!"

Hopefully, Dad is reunited with his loved ones and friends in heaven.

And in closing, I'll leave you with one of dad's favorite sayings: "Yeah, that's it ... what the hell more do you want?"

Somerville seeks resident input on Community Choice Electricity plan

The City of Somerville is inviting residents to review and comment on proposed updates to its electricity aggregation plan for Somerville Community Choice Electricity (CCE). The 30-day public review period is open through July 3, 2026.

Somerville's Community Choice Electricity program

Somerville CCE is the city's official electricity supply program. It helps provide more stable electricity supply prices for Somerville residents and businesses and supports the city's transition to cleaner energy. The program's current electricity supply contract runs through January 2028.

Most electricity customers in Somerville are automatically enrolled in CCE, including renters and homeowners. Customers can check their enrollment status, opt in, opt out, or switch between CCE electricity products at any time with no fees or penalties at cce.somervillema.gov.

What's an aggregation plan?

The aggregation plan explains how Somerville's electricity program is structured and operated. The City's original aggregation plan was approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU) in April 2017.

In July 2024, the DPU issued new rules for municipal electricity aggregation plans, giving municipalities more local authority and requiring more public transparency about how their programs operate.

The proposed updates to Somerville's aggregation plan would bring the city's plan in line with the new DPU guidelines.

The revised plan would also:

- Give the City more flexibility to offer new electricity supply options in the future
- Change the default product for eligible low-income residents to "Somerville Basic," the lowest-cost CCE option
- Strengthen annual performance reporting
- Allow the City to make future plan



updates without a lengthy DPU approval process

The change for eligible low-income residents is intended to support both of the city's goals for the program: expanding renewable energy and keeping electricity as affordable as possible.

Residents can review the revised plan and submit comments at cce.somervillema.gov. Comments may also be emailed to support_ma@goodenergy.com with the subject line "Somerville Plan Comments."

The public review period closes July 3, 2026.

Neurodiversity-focused Design Workshop for New School Building at 115 Sycamore, June 26

As part of the design process for the new school building at 115 Sycamore Street, all community members are invited to join a collaborative virtual workshop focused on ensuring the new building provides a welcome and supportive environment for all students, with a focus in this session on the needs of our neurodiverse student population.

Project architects, Perkins Eastman, along with City staff, will share information about the project and how Universal Design principles will be applied throughout the building. Community members will then have the opportunity to ask questions, discuss, and provide feedback. The feedback gathered will be used by the city's project team and architects to help inform design efforts and work moving forward.

Please join us virtually via Zoom on Friday, June 26, from 10 to 11 a.m. Visit somervillema.gov/newschool to attend.

The goal of this session is to better understand the community's vision for how the building can best meet the needs of its neurodiverse student population. Dis-

cussions will focus on the application of Universal Design principles to provide supportive learning environments, facilitate movement, aid sensory regulation, and more.

The timing for this session was scheduled in consultation with families at Somerville Public Schools, including members of the Somerville Special Education Parent Advisory Council. If you cannot make the live session, feedback can be submitted via email at any time to new-school@somervillema.gov.

More About the Project

Somerville is building a new school at 115 Sycamore Street and working with the Massachusetts School Building Authority to access state funding to help cover the cost. This new school building will meet a range of Somerville School District needs. Various design options for how to configure quality learning environments within a larger structure are being explored. Community input will be invited throughout the development of the building's design. Sign up for the project newsletter for up-



dates on future opportunities.

Newsletter, Website, and Contact for the New School at 115 Sycamore

Learn more, sign up for a monthly proj-

ect newsletter, and stay up to date on the project at somervillema.gov/newschool. Email new-school@somervillema.gov or contact 311 with any questions.

Councilor Will Mbah's remarks at Juneteenth flag-raising ceremony

The City of Somerville invited all community members to the City's annual Juneteenth flag-raising ceremony on Tuesday, June 16, on the City Hall Concourse. The following remarks were delivered by Councilor At-Large Will Mbah:

Good afternoon, everyone,

It is an honor to join you with my family as we commemorate Juneteenth, a day that marks both a celebration and a warning.

On June 19, 1865, more than two years after President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, enslaved African Americans in Galveston, Texas, finally learned they were free. Juneteenth reminds us that freedom declared is not always freedom delivered. Rights written on paper do not automatically become rights realized in people's lives.

As an immigrant from Cameroon, standing before you today, I feel a deep connection to this history.

I came to America because I believed in the promise of this nation, a promise that people are not defined by where they were born, the color of their skin, or the circumstances of their birth. Like millions before me, I was drawn to the idea that America is constantly striving to become a more perfect union.

But Juneteenth teaches us that progress is never automatic. It is won through struggle, sacrifice, and courage.

The history of Black America is often told as a simple story of oppressors and oppressed. Yet history is more complicated than that. Consider Anthony Johnson, a Black man who arrived in colonial Virginia as an indentured servant, gained his freedom, accumulated land, and later owned white and black slaves himself. Consider Robert Smalls, born into slavery, who courageously commandeered a Confederate ship to freedom, became a Civil War hero, and later served in Congress.

These two men represent very different paths. One adapted himself to an unjust system. The other dedicated his life to transforming it.

Their stories remind us that the struggle for justice is not about race alone. It is about power, morality, and choices. History asks each generation a question: Will we simply accept the world as it is, or will we work to make it more just?

That question is before us again today.

Across our nation, we are witnessing growing political polarization. We see efforts to divide Americans into opposing camps. We hear rhetoric that treats immigrants as threats rather than neighbors. We see anti-Blackness persist in new forms, from disparities in housing, education, health care, and criminal justice to attacks on honest discussions of our history.

Too often, fear is being used as a political weapon.

But Juneteenth teaches us that fear cannot be the foundation of a democracy.

The enslaved people who waited for freedom in Texas did not know when liberation would arrive. Yet they maintained hope. The civil rights activists who marched across bridges and sat at lunch counters faced violence and intimidation, yet they persisted. The immigrants who crossed oceans and borders seeking opportunity believed that tomorrow could be better than today.

Hope has always been America's most powerful resource.

And hope requires action.

We honor Juneteenth not merely by remembering history but by continuing the work that history demands.

That means defending voting rights.

It means standing against racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, and every form of hatred.

It means ensuring that every child, regardless of race, zip code, or immigration status has access to quality education and opportunity.

It means building communities where people can afford to live, work, and thrive.

It means rejecting the politics of division and embracing the politics of human dignity.

As an immigrant, I know that America's story is not finished. As a Black man, I know that the journey toward equality remains incomplete. And as a public servant, I know that our future will be shaped by what we choose to do right now.

The generation that celebrated the first Juneteenth passed the torch to us.

The question is: What will we do with it?

Will we leave behind a society that is more divided, more fearful, and more unequal?

Or will we build a future worthy of those who fought for freedom before us?

I believe we can choose the latter.

I believe we can build bridges where others build walls.

I believe we can replace fear with understanding.

I believe we can create a City, a Common-wealth, and a country where every person belongs, and every person matters.

And so today, let us leave here with a commitment not merely to celebrate freedom, but to expand it.

Not merely to remember history, but to make history.

Not merely to honor those who came before us, but to become worthy ancestors for those who will come after us.

That is the promise of Juneteenth.

That is the work of our generation.

And together, that is the future we will build.

Thank you, God bless you, and Happy Juneteenth.





Somerville Fair Housing Commission
Question of the week



Q: I live in an apartment building, and the landlord doesn't want to rent to people below the age of 25. Can he do that?

A: No. It is illegal to discriminate against someone based on his or her age. Age is a protected category under the Massachusetts fair housing laws. However, there are some exceptions. Minors are not protected and the protections do not extend to residency in state or federally-aided housing for the elderly, or to housing intended for use as housing for persons 55 years of age and over, or to housing for individuals age 62 or over..

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.

FIFA World Cup watch party



On Saturday night, Mayor Wilson, Councilor At-Large Will Mbah, and Councilor Matt McLaughlin visited the Highland Creole Cuisine to support Haiti as they played against Scotland. That night, Scotland won their first World Cup match since 1990.

Somerville through the eyes of Denise



An explosion of wisteria... — Photo by Denise Provost

BOBBY'S DAD JOKES CORNER

By Bobbygeorge Potaris



Why are soccer players excellent at math?
They know how to use their heads.

On This Day in History

June 17

- 362 – Emperor Julian issues an edict banning Christians from teaching in Syria.
- 1579 – Sir Francis Drake claims San Francisco Bay for England.
- 1775 – The British take Bunker Hill outside of Boston, after a costly battle.
- 1799 – Napoleon Bonaparte incorporates Italy into his empire.
- 1856 – The Republican Party opens its first national convention in Philadelphia.
- 1940 – The Soviet Union occupies Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.
- 1950 – Surgeon Richard Lawler performs the first kidney transplant operation.
- 1963 – The U.S. Supreme Court bans the required reading of the Lord's prayer and Bible in public schools.
- 1972 – Five men are arrested for burglarizing Democratic Party headquarters at the Watergate complex in Washington, D.C.
- 1994 – Millions of Americans watch former football player O.J. Simpson—facing murder charges—drive his Ford Bronco through Los Angeles, followed by police.

The "Original"
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Newstalk CONT. FROM PG 7

<http://somerwillemuseum.org>.

 June's **Somerville Arts Council Artist of the Month: Ethan Dussault**. Ethan is a recording engineer, producer, musician, and co-owner of **New Alliance Studios** in Somerville. Inspired by the music and records that shaped his youth, Ethan built a career that blends technical expertise with creative collaboration. Find out more in his interview, here <https://somerwillemuseum.org/aotm/ethan-dussault/>

Ward 2 Slice of the City will take place on **Wednesday, June 24, 5 – 7 p.m., Lincoln Park, 290 Washington St.** Slice of the city is an early evening, drop-in style meetup at green spaces in each of Somerville's wards. **The mayor, City Council, and city staff** will be present to mingle with residents. Join in to celebrate Somerville's open spaces, engage with the city outside of formal meetings, and of course – enjoy some pizza. For more information and rain locations, visit: <https://www.somerwillemuseum.org/slice>

 Celebrate the start of summer at the city's **20th Annual Family Fun Day** on **Saturday, June 27, from 1 to 4 p.m. at Trum Field (541 Broadway)**. This free event, hosted by the **Parks and Recreation Department**, invites families, neighbors, and community members of all ages to enjoy an afternoon of kid-friendly activities, entertainment, and summer fun. This year's activities include bounce houses, magic shows, face painting, live music, arts and crafts, outdoor games, and more. To learn more, please email ParksRec@somervillema.gov or call 617-625-6600 ext. 2980.

The **Somerville Community Baptist Church**, 31 College Avenue near Davis Square, will present a free **Vacation Bible School from Monday, August 10, through Friday, August 14, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.** All children, from age 4 up to 5th grade, are welcome to attend. This rain-forest-themed program includes Bible stories, music, creative activities, games, and free snacks each day. For more information or to register your child, see www.ILoveSCBC.org/events.

 The **Big Gay Dance Party** takes place on **June 27**. Dance the night away in celebration of LGBTQ+ Pride. The theme: **Gender Euphoria**. Enjoy live music, drag performances, and more. All LGBTQ+ individuals and allies are welcome. This event will be held on **Sunday, June 27, from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m.** (rain date: June 28), at **Union Square Plaza (90 Union Square)**. <https://somerwillemuseum.org/>

Connexion needs your support for a new projector. If you've been to an event at Connexion recently, you've probably noticed the projectors aren't doing well. They're dim, spotty, and there's a broken chip leaving a permanent blemish right in the middle of every image. After 12 years of faithful service, it's time for an upgrade. Connexion has received a **\$7,500 Together For Tomorrow grant**, and they need your help to match it. Every dollar you give is doubled. Whether you've celebrated a birthday there, grabbed a meal at **Come to the Table**, or attended a community meeting – help them make Connexion shine for everyone who walks through the doors. <https://app.easytithes.com/app/giving/connexion>.

[com/app/giving/connexion](https://app/giving/connexion).

 Join **Union Square Main Streets** and 60+ of your favorite local food producers for the **22nd Annual Union Square Farmers Market**. Shop local **Saturdays through 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.

Friendly Caller Program. The **Somerville Council on Aging** has many wonderful volunteers who are waiting to give you a call. Whether you are looking to make a new friend or would just like a friendly chat to look forward to every week, this program has you covered. Call **Natasha Naim** at 617-625-6600, ext. 2317, to learn more about the program and to sign up.

Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services Meal Program. All are welcome. Registration is required. You will need to register on a weekly basis. Each week, on **Monday or Tuesday**, call the **COA Reservation line** at 617-625-6600 ext. 2323 to reserve your spot for the following week.

 The **Davis Square Market** has opened for the 2026 Season. The market will run **every Wednesday** from 12 noon to 6 p.m., **through November 25, at 44 Day St., Somerville**. This long-running market features over two dozen Massachusetts farmers and food producers offering a vibrant selection of delicious produce,

protein, baked goods, ready-to-eat meals, alongside a host of other locally made products. The market accepts cash, credit/debit cards, WIC/Senior coupons, and EBT cards and offers a weekly \$15 SNAP Match. Visit <https://www.massfarmersmarkets.org/davis>.

 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.

 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 Bobbieton@aol.com. We offer great discounts to help our advertisers be able to advertise. Thank you all so much for your support!

 Don't forget, if you would like to subscribe to receive a **digital edition** of our paper, go directly online to our website, over to the right side, and fill out your email address to receive a free, full PDF copy of the paper.

It's Yart Sale time again

Yart Sale will take place Saturday, August 8, 12 – 6 p.m.

Yart Sale is Somerville's citywide celebration of creativity, community, and secondhand treasures. Think of it as a yard sale but with an artistic twist!

Spend the day exploring neighborhoods across Somerville and discovering original artwork, handmade goods, vintage finds, art supplies, records, plants, clothing, tools, home décor, and other unique treasures from local artists, makers, and neighbors. Whether you're hunting for one-of-a-kind artwork, looking for creative supplies, or simply enjoying a day of exploration, Yart Sale offers something for everyone.

Interested in Participating?

Artists, makers, collectors, and neighbors are invited to host their own Yart Sale from a porch, yard, driveway, studio, business, or other approved location.

Please visit the website for details on how to participate. Apply here: somerwillemuseum.org/yart-sale



Mass Legislature passes bill to remove outdated and offensive terms

The Massachusetts Legislature passed a bill that removes outdated and offensive language in the General Laws to describe persons with disabilities last week.

The bill, S.2563, removes all variations of outdated terms such as “handicapped,” “disabled,” and the “r-word.” The bill replaces these terms with current terminology, such as “person with a disability.” “Language is constantly changing.

And it's changing because of the activism of people who were ignored and demeaned for too long,” said Senator Pat Jehlen (D-Somerville), the Senate’s primary sponsor of the legislation.

“When people tell us they feel insulted and offended by the use of outdated words, we worked to change the legal language. It took a long time because we kept finding more examples of offensive language. Lan-

guage and activism will continue to evolve, and there’ll always be more work to do, but this is a gigantic step forward in respect. Thanks to the many, many people who made this possible.”

Last year, the Massachusetts Legislature renamed the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) as MassAbility, a change that defines the agency’s role in supporting residents with disabilities to live independently. The name change reflects the intention to empower individuals living with disabilities and move away from outdated terminology as the office undergoes broad changes towards a more expansive model for disability employment services and independent living.

The Massachusetts Legislature approved the bill last week, and it was signed by the Governor.



Senator Pat Jehlen (center) with advocates from the Arc of Massachusetts.

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OFF THE SHELF

by Doug Holder

The Depths of 'Great Pond' by Ed Meek

Great Pond by Ed Meek

Review by Off the Shelf Correspondent Laura Cherry

As in the eponymous *Great Pond*, there is much more going on beneath the surface of Ed Meek's most recent poetry collection than first meets the eye. What begins as a series of lyrical meditations on nature evolves into a commentary on relationships, longing, grief, missed chances, art, and the fraught political landscape.

Deft nature poems invite readers into the book, introducing us to the poet's landscape: pond, bay, harbor, and woods.

the sun splits the trees and lifts me with its light
as surely as wings lift a bird.

"June"

The flora and fauna of New England are on brilliant display here, particularly our variety of native birds, from the quotidian (robins, jays) to the breathtaking (herons, goldfinches, ospreys). Meek captures the childlike awe we can feel from a close encounter with, say, a starfish: "Those tiny stems / beneath the arms / are legs!" ("Asteroidea")

Meek's poems emit a muted longing: for the past, for beauty, for a better world than the one we've made.

Now those few wild horses who are left alone
Seem unaware of what we've done.

Yet I can't help but smile watching them run.

"Mustangs"

From a placid beginning, the collection moves into sometimes-troubled stories of family, youthful hijinks, and terrible losses. One of the collection's most powerful pieces is the brief *The Death of a Child*, breathtaking in its stark simplicity.

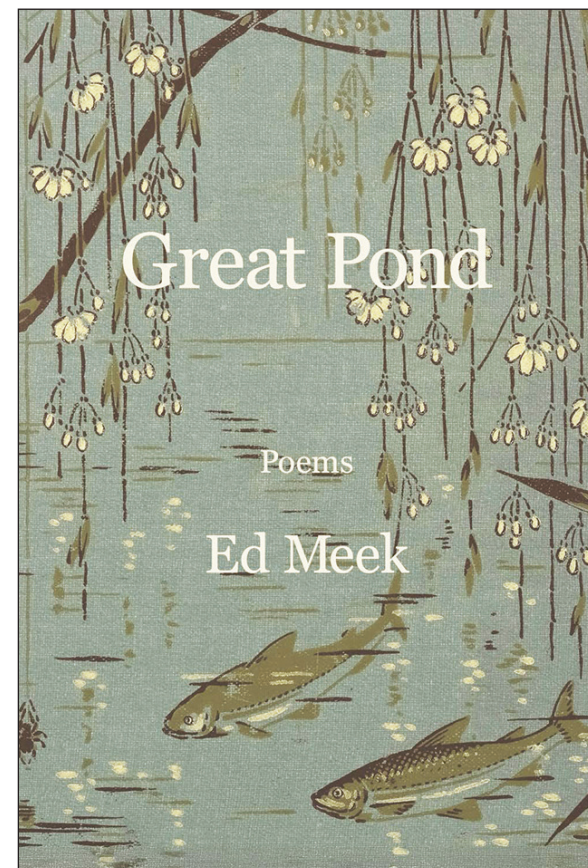
Great Pond is enlivened by wry descriptions of time-honored New England pastimes: walking the dog on a sleety afternoon, being forced off the road by a sudden squall, searching a loved one's skin for Lyme-carrying ticks, sneezing through pollen season, and, my favorite, trying to cross Mass Ave:

6700 died last year, a my wife says
pushing the useless button
at the crosswalk.

"Pedestrian"

In the book's later poems, Covid lockdown memories piercingly recreate those insular, foggy times, with the virus "[going] room to room / through nursing homes / separating

souls from bodies" ["In the Provinces"]. Several pieces on painters and poets (Warhol, Haring, Ginsberg) comment on the way outsider art reflects aspects of our society that we may not want to see – "faces are masks / the authorities use to identify / enemies of the state" ("Basquiat"). Meditations on our broken political system and embattled neighborhoods express sympathy with those who have been harmed and a deep



fear for what we are, collectively, facing.

Several pieces on painters and poets (Warhol, Haring, Ginsberg) comment on the way outsider art reflects aspects of our society that we may not want to see – "faces are masks / the authorities use to identify / enemies of the state" ("Basquiat"). Meditations on our broken political system and embattled neighborhoods express sympathy with those who have been harmed and a deep fear for what we are, collectively, facing.

It's a great weight
to carry the future
on our backs
like mules.

"The Burden"

Freedom and the Dignity it Contains ends the collection by calling on Abraham Lincoln's example as one we need to heal our divided country: "He stood firm to all assaults / as if already carved in rock." At a time when "agents must learn to ignore / the crying and screams" of detainees (*Asylum*), and "We always assume / the suspects armed and dangerous" (*Wanted: A Few Good Men*), Meek looks to Lincoln for the "seeds of hope" we need to find our own courage, conviction, and moral center.

Like a true New Englander, Meek's *Great Pond* is quiet, with hidden depths, and well worth spending time with.

Great Pond, by Ed Meek. Kelsay Books, 2026
<https://www.amazon.com/Great-Pond-Ed-Meek/dp/B0GKVG6TSL>

Lyrical SOMERVILLE

edited by Doug Holder

Mike Burgess is a Cambridge-based hobbyist writer. After growing up in New Hampshire, he moved to Cambridge for college and has stayed in the area since. All the while, he writes in his free-time as motivated by fortunes and troubles in his personal life alike.



Can You Trust A Timid Lover?

Vows are spoken words
Convictions are disputed in silence

You whisper the things you wish
Scream the things you feel
And withhold which you believe

The night is a hushed flutter
Of beautiful candor that dances and sparks
Within the mind of one's own

The day it dulls and flows and
Spurs monotony into the mouths of all souls

We seek the daybreak
We discuss at dusk
Sit with me
Sit with me and watch the nighttime speak

— Mike Burgess

To have your work considered for the Lyrical send it to:

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