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VOL.1 NO.329-265

SOMERVILLE/MEDFORD MASS.

Tuesday June 3rd, 2025

Democratic Policies and Police Restrictions: A Hidden Form of Defunding?



NEWS TALK OUT
LOUD/SPEAK UP



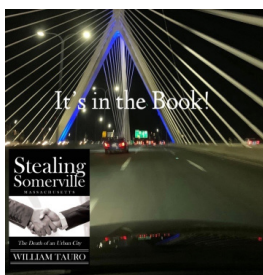
Continued to page 15



Somerville Police
Real Life Somerville
Police Stories Page

Somerville Avenue Quick Build Safety Improvements Project Kickoff Meeting, Monday, June 9

Mystic River Bicycle Pedestrian Bridge Public Meeting – Somerville



Continued to page 11



Continued to page 16

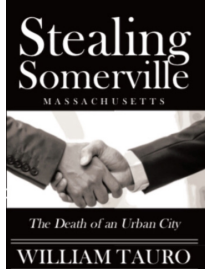


MOUNT VERNON RESTAURANT

We are open for indoor dining along with take out. Our business hours are Sunday through Wednesday 11:30am to 8:30pm and Thursday through Saturday 11:30am to 9:30pm. Our full menu along with our daily specials and catering menu is available.
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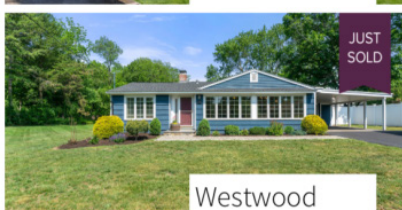
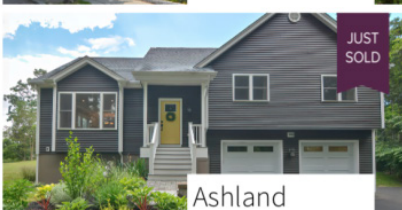
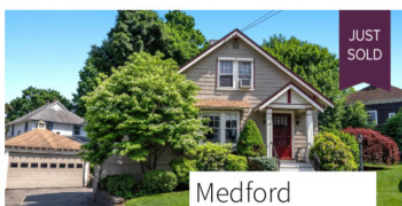
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MARKET ACTIVITY

WE HAVE BEEN BUSY...

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We have been busy, but never too busy for you! These four properties were sold in one month! If you see something you would like to know more about, have any questions or are thinking about buying or selling a property, please don't hesitate to send us an email or give us call!

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Patricia Ng Broker Associate
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Please send both forms and payment to:

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If you have any questions email us at MHSVarsitySoftball22@gmail.com
 MHS Varsity Softball is a non-profit organization in affiliation with Medford High School, our tax ID is listed below for your records.
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Somerville/Medford Remembering Roberta J. (Perry) O'Brien



Obituary
Roberta J. (Perry) O'Brien
- Of Woburn, passed away

peacefully after a lengthy and courageous battle with Alzheimer's disease.

Born in Somerville, Roberta was the cherished daughter of the late Robert and Lillian (Clark) Perry. A woman of quiet strength and simple pleasures, Roberta found joy in the written word, often finishing two or three

books in a single week. When not immersed in a novel, she enjoyed challenging herself with games of solitaire or testing her luck at Texas Hold 'Em.

Above all, Roberta treasured the time spent in the home she lovingly built and shared with her beloved husband. It was there, surrounded by

memories and warmth, that she found her greatest comfort and happiness.

Beloved wife of 40 years to Simon Peter Mosgo-fian. Devoted mother of Paul D. O'Brien, Brenda O'Brien-Goode and the late Robert O'Brien. Cherished and loving grandmother of Michael Talluto. Also survived by

many loving friends and extended family members.

Calling Hours will be held in the George L. Doherty Funeral Home 855 Broadway (Powder House SQ.) on Sunday, June 8th from 1:00PM to 4:00PM.

Interment will be held privately at Glenwood Cemetery, Everett.

Somerville/Medford Remembering William P. McNamara



William P. McNamara, of Lunenburg, passed

away on May 28, 2025, he was 83. Born in Boston and raised in Somerville, he was the son of the late Mary (Buckley) and Thomas McNamara. He served honorably in the Army Reserves and then began his career with the Harvard University Police Department. He retired as a Sergeant following 43 years of service.

William was the husband of the late Anne (Mitchell) McNamara and father of Kelly DiNapoli of Tewksbury, William P. McNamara, Jr. and his wife Karen of Billerica and Kristen Hyslop and her husband John of Tewksbury. Grandfather of Michael and Kaitlyn DiNapoli, Addison, Sydney and Cassidy Hyslop. Bill is further survived by

his significant other Diane Sheerer of Lunenburg and her daughters Irene Butler of Leominster and Lisa Sheerer of Dracut.

Funeral Procession from the George L. Doherty Funeral Home, 855 Broadway (Powder House Sq.) Somerville on Friday morning, June 6th at 10AM followed by a Funeral Mass celebrated in

St. Joseph Church, Union Sq. Somerville at 11AM. Relatives and friends invited to attend.

Calling Hours will be held Thursday, June 5th from 4:00PM to 7:00PM.

Services will conclude with burial at Puritan Lawn Cemetery, Peabody.

Somerville/Medford Remembering Retired Sargent Wayne J. Scirocco



Obituary

Vietnam War Veteran Retired Sargent Wayne J. Scirocco Of Somerville, Massachusetts. On May 27th, 2025 Wayne J. Scirocco age 77 passed away from a long-term illness acquired during his combat days overseas.

Born, December 7, 1947 in Charlestown.

He was raised in Somerville. He volunteered into the selective service United States Army back in the 1970s. Acquiring his education, in Somerville, He quickly moved up in rank to Sargent during the Vietnam

War. His nickname, "Sargent Rock", was given to him by fellow Soldiers and friends, of which during his military service, He received numerous medals for His actions and valor.

Once officially discharged, from active duty overseas, He remained active rotating into the Army Reserves. He, also, worked post war at the VA Hospital for over 13 years during which time, He obtained a Level 5, Life Guard Certificate, and taught paraplegic Veterans how to swim and remain active in society. After which, He worked in South Boston for Local 82 Teamsters (now absorbed into Local 25

Teamsters in Charlestown) as, a Professional Mover and Showman, where He finally retired. He was good humored, and a firm believer in old school practices. A true Somerville tough guy, that always stood firm by his friends and family.

Wayne is survived by his daughter Kim of Bridgewater, Brothers David Of Hyanis, Kenneth of Somerville, and Richard J. Scirocco. His Sister in law Laurie Cunha. Also survived are His many nephew's and nieces, Eric R., Jenn, Richard N., Michael L., Carla, Nikolas A., Rachel, Rebecca, Theresa and Riane J. Scirocco. His grand nephew's and nieces, Emilia,

Angela Marie, Ashton, Kayleigh, Athena, Bentley, and Ryan J. Scirocco. Further survived are many cousins, nephew's and nieces which stretch over the United States, Canada, Ireland, and Italy. Too many to list.

His life was full and he died with respect, dignity, and honor. He was well loved and will be greatly missed by the entire family.

Services for Wayne will be held privately as requested by the Family. In Honor of Wayne, please feel free to make a donation to the local Veterans Organization of Somerville, Massachusetts.

FINANCIAL AID FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS



By Bob Katzen

The Healey Administration is urging all students and families, particularly low-income families, to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for the 2025-2026 college academic year. The federal form is required for students to be eligible for certain federal and state financial aid, including free community college and opportunities to at-

tend the state's public four-year universities without paying tuition and fees.

"Earlier this year, we visited high schools across Massachusetts for our Higher Education Financial Aid Road Show," said Education Secretary Dr. Patrick Tutwiler. "The students we spoke with expressed overwhelming interest in going to college, but many said they were unaware of the historic

levels of available state financial aid. Massachusetts has nearly \$400 million in financial aid and we want students and families to know the first step to accessing this money is to complete the FAFSA."

"Too many students leave money on the table by not completing the FAFSA, and the implications of that are significant," said Commissioner of Higher Education Noe Ortega.

"Accessing financial aid has an impact on whether a student attends the institution of their choice or attends college at all. College access, and the upward mobility that comes from a college degree, all start with applying for financial aid."

Students and families can learn more about FAFSA by visiting [Mass.Gov/FinancialAid](https://www.mass.gov/financialaid) which has links to free FAFSA.



I.C.E. Activity In Somerville

By William Tauro

A letter sent to parents from the City of Somerville

ICE activity & our commitment to all
From email@finalsiteconnect.com (SOMERVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT)

To xxxxxxxxxxxx@yahoo.com
May 29 at 3:36 PM

A message from SOMERVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

Dear SPS Families,

As you may be aware, immigration enforcement activity has been reported in Somerville today, and we know that it is deeply affecting some of our students and families. Please know that federal law enforcement

agencies have not come on to any SPS school property. While they may have been seen nearby, we have not had an incident of ICE activity on school grounds.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to our staff, who are responding with incredible compassion and care.

I also want to reassure you that we are committed to keeping our schools safe, welcoming, and supportive for every member of our community. As I've shared previously, our policies remain the same: We do not coordinate with federal agencies such as Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

We do not allow ICE agents into SPS facilities without a criminal judicial warrant signed by a judge.

We do not ask about the immigration status of students or families.

We do not share student records with ICE without parent/guardian consent or a court order issued by a judge.

We know this can be an incredibly stressful time. If your child is feeling anxious or overwhelmed, please reach out to our school-based counselors who are ready to support them. We've also compiled a list of resources and training materials, which you can find here.

Please know that you are not alone. We stand with you, and we will continue to do everything we can to uphold a safe and inclusive environment for all.

It is an honor to serve as Superintendent of this resilient, diverse, and caring school community.

In partnership,

ICE activity & our commitment to all

From email@finalsiteconnect.com (SOMERVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT)
To [redacted]@yahoo.com
May 29 at 3:36 PM

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- We do not ask about the immigration status of students or families.
- We do not share student records with ICE

PTSD AND POLICE, FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY PERSONNEL (S 1821)

By Bob Katzen

Another bill before the Public Service Committee would require that the disability or death of police, fire or various other public safety personnel resulting from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is presumed to have been suffered in the line of duty.

"This legislation is needed to safeguard the health and well-being of our

public safety personnel who are on the front lines daily to protect their community members," said Sen. Sal DiDomenico (D-Everett). "Thanking these public servants is not enough. We need to put action behind our words and make real improvements by passing bills ... which would support those dealing with PTSD and reduce stigma around mental health."



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Somerville/Medford/Cambridge Remembering Nancy Williams Galluccio



Official Obituary of

Nancy Williams Galluccio

February 13, 1936 – May 27, 2025
89 Years Old

Nancy Galluccio Obituary

Nancy Williams Galluccio passed away peacefully at 6:49 p.m. on May 27, 2025, at Mt. Auburn Hospital after a long and courageous battle with kidney disease. She was 89.

Born in North Plainfield, New Jersey, Nancy was a graduate of

Beaver College (now Arcadia University) in Glenside, Pennsylvania. She moved to Cambridge, Massachusetts, 64 years ago and made it her lifelong home.

In 1960, Nancy met Anthony (Tony) Galluccio, and the two were married in 1961. They spent their honeymoon attending the inauguration of President John F. Kennedy, an event they cherished throughout their lives. The couple settled in Tony's hometown of Cambridge, where they raised three children — Lo (Laurie), Anthony D., and Lissa — in their home at the corner of Buckingham and Concord Avenue. Tony passed away in 1980 after a long battle with cancer, and Nancy devoted the next 45 years to raising her family with unwavering love and resilience.

Nancy returned to work

in 1975, first at Harvard Law School and later at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, where she served for more than 35 years, eventually becoming Head of the Business Office. She also served as treasurer of a variety of charities, including Galluccio Associates, Inc. (1993 to 2024) and supporting children with Cancer. She was also campaign treasurer for her son's political endeavors, including Cambridge City Councillor and Massachusetts State Senator. Tireless and dedicated, Nancy also managed properties at 2 Clinton Street and 56 Concord Avenue/86 Buckingham Street for many years.

Nancy lived at 86 Buckingham Street for 56 years before moving to The Cambridge Homes in June 2023. For the first time in her life, she embraced a slower pace, surrounded by

warmth, comfort, and newfound friendship. Her family is profoundly grateful to the staff of The Cambridge Homes for their compassion, care, and the deep sense of community they offered Nancy. She found joy in making new friends at the age of 87 — a testament to her spirit and openness.

Nancy was predeceased by her parents, Maude and Lloyd Williams of Slatington, Pennsylvania. She is survived by her brother and sister-in-law, Lloyd Williams, Jr. and Paula Williams of Elkhart, Indiana; her cousin Cathleen Dwyer of Arlington, Massachusetts; her three beloved children; and her two cherished grandsons, Louis and Nathan Pardo, of whom she was deeply proud.

Nancy will be remembered for her quiet strength, no-nonsense determination, deep kindness,

and unshakable optimism. Her family extends heartfelt thanks to the nurses of Needham 3 at Mount Auburn Hospital for their attentive and compassionate care in her final days.

Visiting hours will be held in the Brown & Hickey Funeral Home, 36 Trapelo Rd., Belmont, on Sunday, June 1st, from 3:00 – 7:00 p.m. A Funeral Service will follow in Christ Church, Zero Garden St., Cambridge on Monday at 10:00 AM (Parking will be available along Garden St). Relatives and friends are kindly invited. "In lieu of flowers please donate to Mount Auburn Hospital – <https://mountauburnhospital.org/giving>

This Week's QUOTABLE QUOTES On Beacon Hill – LET THE 2026 RACE FOR GOVERNOR BEGIN

By Bob Katzen

"Massachusetts means business. We need to support our entrepreneurs and companies, cut their costs and make it easier to do business in our state. That's what we are doing by cutting red tape, simplifying regulations and saving thousands of businesses and business owners

significant time and money so they can focus on what matters most – growing jobs and contributing to our economy." —Gov. Maura Healey announcing that she is eliminating a series of regulations for the purpose of saving businesses and business owners time and money.

"Gov. Maura Healey has spent her days in the Corner Office devastating Massachusetts' business environment and making life unaffordable for working people through her support for increased regulations, fees and taxes. As a result, Massachusetts is bleeding businesses, private sector jobs and workers, and is now dead last in

the country in job growth." —Brian Shortsleeve, candidate for the Republican nomination for governor.

"Gov. Healey's so-called regulatory reform is nothing more than political theater. Any small business owner can see right through this. These symbolic tweaks won't even begin to fix

the hostile business climate, sky-high taxes, and runaway spending that are making Massachusetts unaffordable and unattractive to employers."

—Mike Kennealy, candidate for Republican nomination for governor.

MEDFORD VFW POST 1012 HAS A NEW COMMANDER

Congratulations to The Medford VFW on its new Installation of Commander Steve McLaughlin as he takes charge.

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If there is anything in particular you would like to see from us or if you need help preparing food at home for your families please reach out and we will do

our best to help. Whether it be recipe ideas with random things you might have purchased or if you run out of something that you need that we can help with please don't hesitate to ask.

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The Somerville/Medford News Weekly

Here's your weekly News Talk Shout Out dosage continued from page 2



Heres Your Weekly Dosage of Somerville News Weeklys Newstalk Shoutout/Speakup Loud

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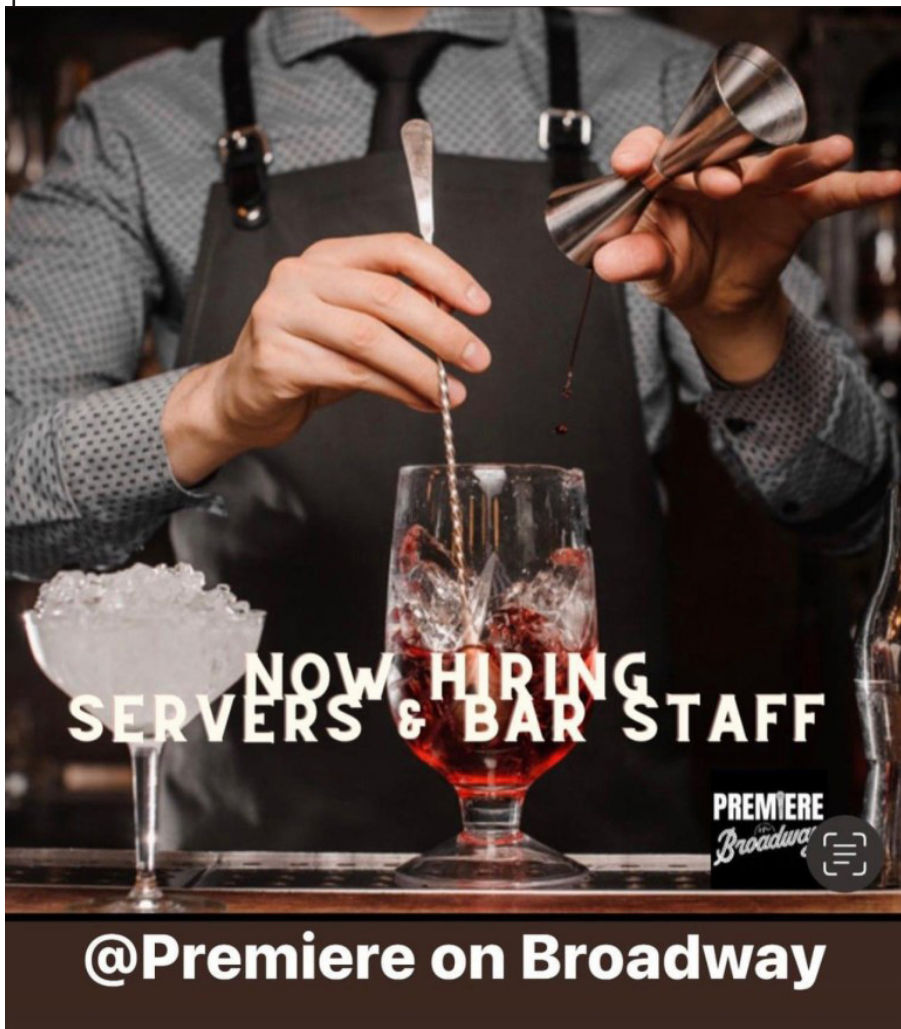
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Somerville/Medford News Weekly Speakup Line:

Mayor and City councilors are ignoring elderly people about library elevator issues

Dear Billy T and Somerville/Medford News Weekly Speakup Line,

Billy,
It's going on 5-6 months since the Somerville Main Library's

elevator located at 79 Highland Avenue hasn't work. The lame excuse that they've been using is that the part has been on backorder with no definite date to be installed. Elderly, handicap (wheelchairs people can't access

the top floors. This is so bad. When I'm at the library with my grandchildren I see people struggling every day and we've even contacted the mayor's office and our city councilors just about all of them

with no replies I am going to start hanging signs all over the place letting residents know that our elected officials don't give a crap about anyone and to vote them out
Jane Simpson



Somerville's Nicotine-Free Generation Policy Begins as New Sales Regulations In Effect



SOMERVILLE - This spring, Somerville's Board of Health (BOH) voted for the City to join a growing

national movement to create a Nicotine-Free generation by adopting new public health regulations limiting the sale of nicotine products, which went into effect May 1.

The updated rules, adopted unanimously by the Somerville Board of Health on March 25, mark the start of a major local effort to prevent nicotine addiction, especially among youth.

Under the new regulations:

Somerville will begin implement-

ing a Nicotine-Free Generation policy. Anyone born on or after January 1, 2005, will be permanently ineligible to purchase tobacco or nicotine products in the city, even once they turn 21.

Nicotine pouches can now only be sold in adult-only retail stores. Retailers who do not meet this standard must remove pouches from their shelves immediately.

"The Nicotine-Free Generation policy isn't about taking away

rights, it's about giving young people the freedom to grow up without the grip of nicotine," said Bhavika Kalia, a member of Somerville Positive Forces. "It's about bold action today to protect the well-being of those who will lead our communities tomorrow."

The Somerville Board of Health encourages retailers and community members to familiarize themselves with the new rules. These changes reflect the City's continued commitment to a healthier, addiction-

free future for its residents. These regulations follow years of local and statewide efforts to reduce access to harmful products, including Massachusetts' 2024 ban on menthol-mimicking tobacco products.

For more information, contact Six City Tobacco Control Director Bonny Carroll at bcarroll@somervillema.gov, or visit somervillema.gov/prevention.



Somerville Avenue Quick Build Safety Improvements Project Kickoff Meeting, Monday, June 9



Project aims to improve safety on one of the City's most traveled streets

SOMERVILLE – Everyone should feel comfortable when using our streets. This is one of the principles guiding the City's ongoing work to create safer, more accessible streets across Somerville. With this principle in mind, the City has started planning and exploring options for improving safety along Somerville Avenue between Elm Street and Bow Street.

As a first step, Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, Ward 5 Councilor Naima Sait, Ward 3 Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen, Ward 2

Councilor J.T. Scott, and City Staff invite you to participate in a virtual project kick off meeting.

When? Monday, June 9, from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Where? The meeting will be held virtually on Zoom. Visit somervillema.gov/somervilleavenue to attend.

At this meeting, City staff will introduce the project and provide residents with the opportunity to ask questions and share their experiences. Public feedback opportunities on both the initial planning and then the design of the project will continue over the coming year.

Project Overview and Timeline
The Somerville Avenue Quick-Build Safety Improvements project is intended to improve safety through a range of treatments including installing protected bike lanes, increasing visibility and safety at crosswalks, and evaluating bus rider experience and existing parking regulations.

The City plans to engage community members and develop the new design between summer 2025 and Spring 2026. Installation of the new safety and mobility features is anticipated to take place in spring 2027.

The Somerville Avenue Safety Improvements projects is a "quick-build project," which means that all of the work can be done without digging or making major structural changes to the street (such as moving sidewalk curbs or changing the height of the road). Instead, the city will use materials that are quicker to install like vertical plastic posts and paint markings on the street. This approach allows us to deliver safety improvements faster and more affordably than full street reconstruction.

How to Get Involved
The city will offer a mix of in-person and virtual engagement opportunities throughout the design process, including:

- Online and in-person surveys
- Street outreach with neighborhood pop-ups and tabling at community events
- Direct outreach to local businesses
- "Office hours" drop-in events

The first event is a virtual community meeting on Monday, June 9, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Attend the meeting and learn more about the project by visiting somervillema.gov/somervilleavenue.

Policy Background
The City's efforts to increase safety on our streets are guided by our goals to both keep community members physically safe as well as to achieve our climate action goal to shift more trips to sustainable modes of travel like public transit, walking, biking, and rolling. You can learn more about this work in the plans below.

Somerville's Vision Zero Action Plan to eliminate traffic fatalities and reduce severe injuries within our transporta-

tion system.
The Somerville Bicycle Network Plan which aims to create bike facilities for people of all ages and abilities to safely get around the city.
The City's Climate Forward Plan to reduce carbon emissions and increase active and sustainable transportation options.
Somerville's recently passed Safe Streets Ordinance reaffirms the city's commitment to accelerating work toward these goals through the implementation of forward-looking design and safety practices.

Questions and comments can be submitted at any point by emailing transportation@somervillema.gov and by calling 311 (617-666-3311). Visit somervillema.gov/somervilleavenue to learn more about the project and stay up to date.

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Preservation Committee

Applicants for open space, recreation, and historic preservation should note the following steps and deadlines:

CPA Screening Form recommended for all applicants, may be submitted any time.

Eligibility Determination Form required for all applicants, due July 15, 2025.

Full Applications required for all applicants, due September 15 2025.

For further information about how to apply for CPA funds for historic preservation or open space and recreation, please see the FY26 Application Instructions (bit.ly/4mHGN4Q).

Find all CPA program information and required forms at somervillema.gov/CPA. For any questions, contact Roberta Cameron, Community Preservation Act Manager, at rcameron@somervillema.gov.

FY25 CPA Grant Recipients

In FY25, the Community Preservation Commission (CPC) awarded \$4,000,000 to projects that will create affordable housing, improve City buildings and parks, and rehabilitate and preserve valuable community assets. Recipients include:

Somerville Community Land Trust: \$365,000

Both a historic preservation and affordable housing project, this grant will help SCLT to restore and convert the historic Elijah Walker House into 6 affordable housing units. CPA funds will be used for repairs of the building's exterior and structural elements to ensure preservation of the building's historic integrity.

Elizabeth Peabody House: \$172,000

Funds to be used to continue exterior renovation to the landmark Broadway building from which the organization operates its programs to benefit children and low-income families.

Somerville Museum: \$114,259

This grant will enable the Somerville Museum to undertake three projects to preserve artifacts in its collection and restore exterior elements to its building.

City of Somerville Department of Veterans' Services: \$18,500

This grant will initiate the restoration of the Veterans Memorial Cemetery and veteran monuments located throughout the city by preparing a condition assessment and treatment plan.

City of Somerville Art Farm: \$542,756

Funds to initiate the installation of a park atop the 2.1 acre site which was formerly a waste transfer station, where the Poplar Street Pump Station is currently under construction.

Quincy Street Park Renovations: \$500,000

This project will update a passive park located near Union Square providing accessibility and safety improvements and implementing the recent Pollinator Action Plan.

Nunziato Field Water Fountains: \$200,000

Two new water fountains will be installed at Nunziato Park, including one in the dog park area and one adjacent to the field.

Dilboy Auxiliary Field: \$100,000

This grant closes a funding gap to complete renovations of the natural grass athletic fields located next to Alewife Brook.

City of Somerville Kennedy Schoolyard Construction Project: \$200,000

Additional funds were combined with previous CPA awards to complete design for renovation of the Kennedy Schoolyard. The additional funds will allow for a larger area to be included in the design, and to include construction management in the design contract.

Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund: \$1,468,693

The FY25 Housing allocation was transferred to the Somerville Affordable Housing Trust Fund. SAHT administers grants for nonprofit organizations to create new affordable housing units as well as housing stabilization programs.



Mayor Ballantyne Submits FY26 Somerville Budget to City Council

Budget prioritizes schools, stability, and progress amid economic uncertainty

SOMERVILLE — Mayor Katjana Ballantyne has submitted a \$380.1 million Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) operating budget that delivers stability and progress, even as federal uncertainty, rising costs, and slowing development challenge local governments across the state. The proposal includes a \$7.85 million increase to Somerville Public Schools spending, new goals for Climate action, emergency response, and supportive housing, and a continued focus on equity, collaboration, and core service delivery.

“This budget proves we can be fiscally disciplined and forward-looking at the same time,” said Mayor Ballantyne. “Even in an unpredictable economy, we are choosing progress. We are protecting vital services, growing school investments, and improving government efficiency through management best practices and collaboration.”

The budget was formally presented to the City Council at a public meeting on Thursday, May 29.

Prioritizing Schools and Core Services

At the heart of the FY26 budget is a 7.4% increase in school funding, continuing a three-year pattern of growth that totals a 34% rise in school funding since Mayor Ballantyne took office. That includes a 5.2% increase in regular budget funds, as well as an additional \$1.5 million in union contract contingency funds that the Ballantyne administration will add to the school budget after negotiations, and \$750,000 to be added from various school reserves, for a combined total of 7.4%.

The \$1.5 million in school salary contingency funding aims to help bring SPS compensation in line with the City’s wage equity goals. These investments allow Somerville to defy regional trends of school cuts and layoffs and build comprehensive supports for students from cradle to career or college.

Across all departments, core City services—like snow removal, trash pickup, youth programs, and infrastructure maintenance—remain funded although with small reductions in some cases, despite sharp cost increases in areas such as healthcare, energy, and goods

and services.

Advancing Equity and Scaling for Efficiency

The FY26 budget continues to scale internal capacity by breaking down silos and connecting cross-departmental work. In addition to fulfilling all current union agreements, the City is reserving funds to address future collective bargaining and remains committed to continue closing long-standing wage gaps.

Initiatives and efforts supported by this budget include:

- Continued facilitation of the 976 affordable housing units in the City’s affordable housing pipeline
- A Homelessness Contract Coordinator and relaunch of the Warming Center
- A Public Safety for All (PSEA) Program Manager to advance recommendations of the PSFA, Anti-Violence, and Civilian Oversight task forces
- Major upgrades to fire station dispatch systems and traffic signal preemption for faster arrival of emergency vehicles
- A composting pilot for ~1,000 households
- Advancing networked geothermal and decarbonization projects to help address Climate Change

An all ages recreation hub at Founders Rink

A permanent shift away from rodenticides in schools and public buildings

Renovations and upgrades to parks, water infrastructure, and roadways

Cross-training for DPW staff

Website ADA upgrades

Forward-looking programming from seniors, youth, and Veterans to arts, food security, and immigrant services

The City is also launching a Permanent Supportive Housing Task Force to improve housing outcomes for chronically unhoused residents, and advancing small business-friendly permitting.

Stable Foundations for the Future

While other municipalities turn to layoffs, major cuts, or overrides amid economic headwinds, Somerville’s strong fiscal foundation and some strategic measures avoided this for the Somerville community. Somerville’s projected new growth tax revenue for FY26 (\$8 million) is slowing compared to recent years, but remains a vital source of additional City funding. Thanks to proactive planning, reserve funds, and three consecutive AAA bond ratings, debt service

costs are kept lower. Careful use of reserves, a 6-month hiring freeze for unposted positions, and surgical reductions to nearly every city department helped close a \$4 million budget gap without layoffs or cuts to services. Reductions were designed to minimize impacts to services.

“Other cities are scaling back. In Somerville, we did have to take some extraordinary measures but we are staying the course,” said Mayor Ballantyne. “We are using creative work-arounds and efficiencies to maintain services. You will still find your librarian at the desk, your street plowed, and your recreation program on the calendar. And we will still be making progress toward shared priorities like affordable housing, road improvements, fostering a thriving arts community, serving vulnerable residents, and more.”

Learn More
Residents are encouraged to participate in the budget process:

City Council Budget Public Hearing: Tuesday, June 4, 6 p.m.

Somerville’s Anti-Displacement Task Force to Host

Film Screening & Panel Discussion
Thursday, June 12

Event to feature the ADTF-commissioned short film “Displacement Stories” and panel discussion with task force members

SOMERVILLE—As the next step after releasing three anti-displacement

reports in January, the City of Somerville’s Anti-Displacement Task Force (ADTF) invites community members to a special event to highlight its work and continue the vital conversation around displacement in Somerville. All are welcome to join Task Force members, Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, City Councilors, and fellow community members for this opportunity on Thursday, June 12, to celebrate the

work of the Task Force and mark our community’s commitment to creating stability for residents, businesses, nonprofits, and the cultural arts.

Film Screening & Panel Discussion:

Date: Thursday, June 12, 2025

Location: East Somerville Community School (50 Cross St.)

Time: 6 p.m.

The evening will begin with a complimentary dinner and a recorded presentation of key findings from the three ADTF committees published earlier this year on residential, business/nonprofits, and cultural arts displacement. A screening of Displacement Stories, a short film commissioned as part of the ADTF’s work will follow. The film features

personal stories of Somerville residents impacted by displacement. Afterward, a panel discussion with members of the ADTF task force will feature their reflections on their work.

“Displacement is a word that doesn’t tell the whole story. Every time a resident, business, nonprofit, or artist is displaced from Somerville it means the costs of staying here were just too high, so we lose one more thread from the fabric of our community. My administration is committed to fighting displacement, and I want to thank the Task Force for this vital work to support our mission to drive down displacement pressures and to keep our community whole,” said Mayor Ballantyne.

The ADTF was called into action in

2023 by Mayor Ballantyne in response to not only the housing crisis but also rental pressures on local businesses, nonprofits, and artists and cultural organizations. Three ADTF committees were formed to develop recommendations aimed at reducing the rate of displacement across all of these areas. Committee members were drawn from the community as part of the administration’s commitment to inclusive leadership. The committee reports were released in January. Work is now underway to review for the most actionable recommendations, prioritize next steps, and determine what resources are needed to move forward on recommendations.

“This concluding event of the Anti-Displacement Task Force is an important celebration of the community

members involved in this project and the unique approach we took to get here,” said Luis Quizhpe, Strategic Planning & Equity Manager in Somerville’s Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development. “The task force was an exercise in co-design, where our neighbors, together with City staff, set to preserving the tapestry that is our collective identity as a community. Each thread of this tapestry represents our collective contribution to what makes this city a great place to live, work and create in, and what makes each thread worth preserving.”

To learn more and review the ADTF reports, visit:
voice.somervillema.gov/adtf

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES AND POLICE, FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY PERSONNEL (H 2961)

By Bob Katzen

The Public Service Committee held a hearing on a bill that would provide that police, fire and EMT personnel making claims for death, disability or medical services from contagious diseases – who did not evidence any such condition at the time of entry into service – will be presumed to have acquired these

contagious conditions in the line of duty. If it can be shown that non-service-connected risk factors accidents, or hazards caused such incapacity, the presumption can be rebutted.

The list of diseases includes COVID-19, Hepatitis A, B or C, TB, HIV and other conditions found by the Commissioner of Public Health

to have a statistically significant correlation with police, fire or emergency medical service.

The bill would expand current law which establishes that disability or death of public safety personnel resulting from certain conditions of cancer, as well as disease of the lungs/respiratory tract, is presumed to be caused in the line of duty.

Co-sponsor Rep. Greg Schwartz (D-Newton) said that as a physician he understands the increased risk these public service workers face of contracting infectious diseases. “We ask our first responders to engage with the public in situations that often carry increased risk of personal harm to the responder,” said Schwartz. “They perform

invaluable, often lifesaving, service to strangers in the line of duty. It is the least we can do to acknowledge the risk to themselves that they take on to serve others in times of need, and we should support them when that service likely is the cause of disease, disability or death.”

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INSURANCE COMPANIES MUST NOTIFY DRIVERS (H 1200)

By Bob Katzen

The Financial Services Committee held a hearing on legislation that would require insurance companies to provide a written notification to customers when the company charges a fee to process an electronic payment transaction

for an automobile insurance policy.

"I filed this bill after hearing from a constituent who was being charged by their insurance company for making online payments and had never been notified that they would be subject to these fees," said

sponsor GOP Minority Leader Rep. Brad Jones (R-North Reading). "This is a pro-consumer bill that will help to ensure that insurance companies provide full disclosure to their policyholders on any additional fees they may assess for conducting these types of transactions."



EXPIRED INSPECTION STICKERS (H 1195)

By Bob Katzen

Another measure before the Financial Services Committee would remove an expired inspection sticker violation from being a moving viola-

tion, which add points to your driver's record and sometimes surcharges, and instead make it a non-moving violation, with no points or surcharge.

"I filed this consumer-oriented

bill to correct, what I feel, is an unfair insurance surcharge assessed to Massachusetts drivers," said sponsor Rep. Steve Howitt (R-Seekonk).



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Democratic Policies and Police Restrictions: A Hidden Form of Defunding?

By William Tauro

In recent years, Massachusetts has seen significant tension between state policies, local law enforcement, and federal agencies like Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Democratic politicians, often at the forefront of these policies, have been accused of tying the hands of police departments and oversight bodies like the Massachusetts Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission, particularly in their interactions with federal authorities. This dynamic has fueled frustration among law enforcement, with some arguing it represents a subtle form of defunding the police. Last year alone, and abruptly amount of police chiefs in Massachusetts retired, not due to age, but because they were fed up with a system they see as increasingly untenable.

The Roots of the Conflict

Massachusetts, a state led predominantly by Democratic lawmakers, has implemented policies aimed at protecting immigrant communities, which some argue have inadvertently hamstrung local law enforcement. A key example is the state PLEASE PROVIDE A VALID URL, EMAIL, OR PHONE NUMBER state's sanctuary policies and restrictions on cooperation with ICE. State law, reinforced by Democratic

leadership, prohibits local police and courts from assisting ICE in detaining individuals based solely on immigration status. Governor Maura Healey has publicly stated her administration's reluctance to cooperate with ICE, emphasizing local control over immigration enforcement.

While these policies are framed as protecting vulnerable communities, they have created significant operational challenges for police departments. Local police chiefs, like Albuquerque's Harold Medina, have expressed concerns that the inability to work with ICE erodes public trust, as immigrant communities may conflate local police with federal immigration agents. This fear can deter crime reporting, making it harder for police to maintain public safety.

The POST Commission and Accountability

The Massachusetts Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission, established under the 2020 police reform legislation signed by then-Governor Charlie Baker, was designed to increase accountability and transparency in law enforcement.

However, the commission's strict certification processes and oversight have been criticized by some as overly restrictive, adding bureaucratic hurdles that frustrate officers and depart-

ments. Unlike New Hampshire, which maintains a public list of officers with credibility issues, Massachusetts has resisted creating a similar statewide list, citing due process concerns raised by police unions and leaders like Mark Leahy of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association.

Critics argue that the POST Commission, while well-intentioned, limits police autonomy and creates an environment where officers feel micromanaged. Combined with restrictions on federal cooperation, this has led to a perception among some law enforcement officials that their ability to operate effectively is being systematically undermined.

A Wave of Retirements: A Symptom of Frustration

The frustration is palpable. In 2024, and abruptly amount of police chiefs in Massachusetts retired, a staggering number that many attribute not to age but to exasperation with the system. The Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association has voiced concerns about the increasing pressures on law enforcement, including legislative efforts perceived as reactive and overly punitive. In 2020, the association denounced some reform bills as a "knee-jerk reaction" to national events, arguing that they placed law enforcement "under attack by liberal elements."

The combination of restricted cooperation with federal agencies, heightened oversight from the POST Commission, and public criticism has led to plummeting morale. Police chiefs, many with decades of experience, are choosing to leave rather than navigate a system they view as hostile to their profession. This mass exodus is not just a loss of leadership but a signal of deeper systemic issues.

Is This Defunding by Another Name?

The term "defunding the police" typically refers to budget cuts, but critics argue that Massachusetts' policies represent a more insidious form of defunding. By limiting police authority, imposing stringent regulations, and restricting cooperation with federal agencies, Democratic-led policies are seen by some as eroding the ability of police to function effectively.

This, they argue, achieves the same outcome as defunding— weakened law enforcement— without directly slashing budgets. Nationally, similar trends have been observed in Democratic-run cities. For example, cities like Minneapolis, Oakland, and New York have seen significant budget cuts alongside high rates of police resignations and retirements, driven by low morale and public backlash. In Massachusetts, while direct budget cuts are less preva-

lent, the operational constraints and oversight measures have a comparable effect, according to critics.

The Other Side: Balancing Reform and Safety

Democratic lawmakers and advocates argue that these policies are necessary to rebuild public trust and address systemic issues in policing. The 2020 police reform legislation, endorsed by the Black and Latino Caucus, aimed to create a mandatory certification process, ban chokeholds, and limit the use of force, positioning Massachusetts as a national leader in police accountability. Supporters, including Senate President Karen Spilka, view these measures as critical steps toward justice and equity.

Additionally, sanctuary policies are designed to protect immigrant communities from federal overreach, ensuring that local police focus on community safety rather than immigration enforcement. Governor Baker's amendments to the 2020 reform bill, which strengthened due process protections and facial recognition provisions, reflect a bipartisan effort to balance reform with fairness to officers. However, the unintended consequences of these policies cannot be ignored.

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\$189.6 MILLION FOR CHILDCARE (S 2521)



By Bob Katzen

Senate 39-0, approved, House approved on a voice vote without a roll call, and Gov. Maura Healey signed into law a \$189.6 fiscal 2025 supplemental budget that provides \$95.6 million for the Department of Children and Families and Department of Transitional Assistance-related childcare, and another \$94 million for income-eligible childcare.

Supporters said the additional funding is necessary because of the difficulty of advance funding, with precision, these childcare accounts that are “caseload driven.”

“For our early education and care providers, without the authorization of such spending, our providers will not receive their scheduled June childcare financial assistance that’s due

them,” said Senate Ways and Means Chair Sen Mike Rodrigues (D-Westport).

“Passing this supplemental budget ensures families across Massachusetts continue to receive the affordable, high-quality childcare they depend on,” said Sen. Dylan Fernandes (D-Falmouth). “Investing in early education and care isn’t just about helping children thrive — it’s about supporting

working parents and building a stronger economy.”

The Senate approved the bill as Rodrigues was showing visiting New Bedford fourth graders around the Senate chamber. “Just like that, we spent \$189 million,” Rodrigues told them.

(A “Yes” vote is for the \$189.6 million for childcare.)

Sen. Patricia Jehlen Yes

Mystic River Bicycle Pedestrian Bridge Public Meeting – Somerville

Mystic River Bicycle Pedestrian Bridge Public Meeting - Somerville

What is happening?

The purpose of this meeting is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed project. All views and comments made at the meeting will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

How will this affect you?

The proposed project consists of a new bicycle and pedestrian bridge crossing the Mystic River and connecting the path networks on the Somerville and Everett sides of the river. The bridge will connect the DCR Draw Seven Park to the Gateway Park trail and public boardwalk at the Encore Resort. The Mystic River Bicycle and Pedestrian Bridge will provide a vital missing link between the communities of Everett and Somerville, linking mixed use paths with local amenities including Draw Seven Park, Assembly Row and the Lower Broadway District. The bridge will provide a reliable and safe crossing alternative for bicycle users and pedestrians who wish to utilize the trail networks, access public transportation, and these communities.

When & Where:

Tuesday, June 24, 2025
6:30PM – 8:00PM

Somerville High School
Highlander Forum
81 Highland Ave
Somerville, MA 02143

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4-DAY WORK WEEK PILOT PROGRAM (S 1330)

By Bob Katzen

The Labor and Workforce Development Committee held a hearing on legislation that would create a voluntary 4-day work week pilot program in the Bay State. Participating employees would transition employees to a 4-day work week without any reduction in pay, status or

benefits. Private employers that complete at least one year in the pilot program and meet reporting requirements, may qualify for state tax credits. Public employers can participate but are not eligible for tax credits.

“Americans are overstressed and overworked,” said Sen. Dylan Fernandes (D-Falmouth). “The

data shows that a 4-day work week creates a happier workforce, fuels company productivity and helps businesses attract top talent. This pilot program studies its efficacy in Massachusetts to determine whether the 4-day work week could benefit commonwealth employees and businesses.”



PAID PRENATAL LEAVE (S 1361)

By Bob Katzen

Another proposal heard by the Labor and Workforce Development Committee would require employers to provide up to

24 hours of paid prenatal leave per year for pregnant individuals, and up to ten hours for their partners, to support attendance at medical appointments and related care. The proposal

is modeled after a similar policy adopted in New York and aims to provide more flexibility for working families to access critical prenatal care.

“I sponsored this bill because expanding prenatal leave helps ensure healthier pregnancies and better birth outcomes,” said sponsor Sen. Jake Oliveira (D-Ludlow).

“When we give families the time they need for early care, we strengthen not just individual health but also public health and workplace stability.”

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homeless and less fortunate.
A “Somerville Blessing Boxes” Facebook page has been established keep everyone updated on donations and the Blessing Boxes inventory status. Please feel free to join the page and follow all the good that is being done everyday by the good people of Somerville.
One blessing box is located at Statue Park in Davis Square and the other is located at Union Square, Plaza in Union Square.
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Frank Santangelo

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<input type="checkbox"/> Smart wool socks	<input type="checkbox"/> Chapstick
<input type="checkbox"/> Gloves	<input type="checkbox"/> Facial wipes
<input type="checkbox"/> Scarf	<input type="checkbox"/> Moisturizer
FOOD & DRINK	<input type="checkbox"/> Comb
<input type="checkbox"/> Quality instant coffee	<input type="checkbox"/> Toothbrush & tooth paste
<input type="checkbox"/> Tea	<input type="checkbox"/> Grooming kit
<input type="checkbox"/> Energy drink	SURVIVAL
<input type="checkbox"/> Beef jerky	<input type="checkbox"/> First aid kit
<input type="checkbox"/> Dried fruit	<input type="checkbox"/> Water bottle with built in filter
<input type="checkbox"/> Fruit leathers	<input type="checkbox"/> Heat-pack
<input type="checkbox"/> Trail mix	<input type="checkbox"/> Multi-purpose tool
<input type="checkbox"/> Nuts	TREATS:
<input type="checkbox"/> Granola bars	<input type="checkbox"/> Chocolates
<input type="checkbox"/> Protein powder packets	<input type="checkbox"/> Fruit snacks
<input type="checkbox"/> Restaurant gift cards	<input type="checkbox"/> Cookie snack packs
HELP THEM CONNECT	<input type="checkbox"/> Candy (individually wrapped)
<input type="checkbox"/> Journal & pen	<input type="checkbox"/> Mints
<input type="checkbox"/> Stationary	<input type="checkbox"/> Chewing gum
<input type="checkbox"/> Stamps	SPLURGE:
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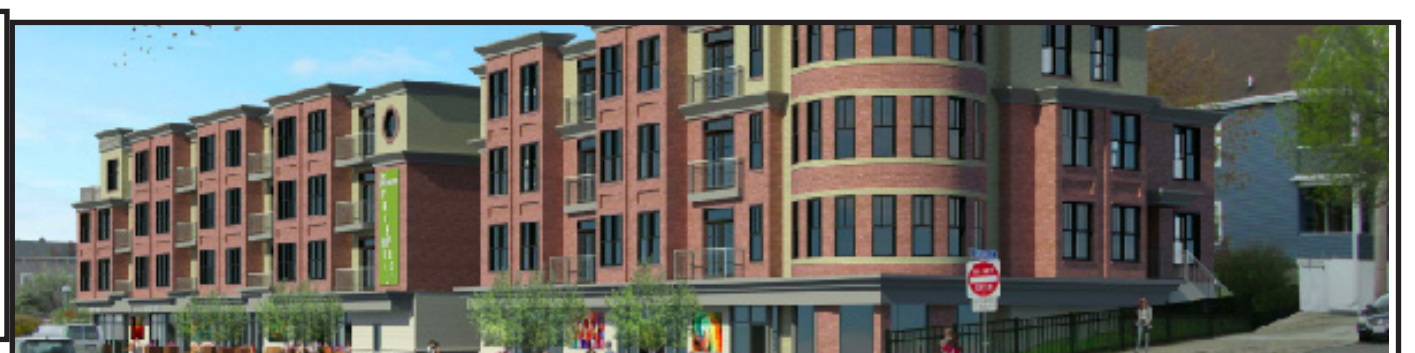
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Somerville/Medford News Weekly Speakup Line: Favorite Facebook Comment Regarding Karen Read Trial

Dear Billy T and Somerville/Medford News Weekly Speakup Line,

Here's the thing... I feel like the one person in the world you should be able to trust is a cop with the facts of the case. For me, any evidence that has to do with Michael Proctor – interviews, evidence he cataloged, etc. is all invalidated by him sending those text messages. I think those messages, combined with the fact that absolutely nothing else was even considered shows his absolute bias.

And his bias is absolutely reasonable doubt. I didn't watch the first trial, I don't know what case the defense will present... but

I know if I was a juror, I'd have to wonder if "she's going down for this" is because he'd make it that way because he thinks she's a "whack job see you next Tuesday". Not to mention the absolute mockery these officers made of the *actual* evidence by not following protocol. It's almost like they did it on purpose, because what officer was not trained to collect evidence properly? I'm not saying she did or she didn't. I'm simply saying my personal opinion is that the prosecutions case has issues that would be a huge problem for me if I was a juror.

Leslie Nicole's Facebook Comment

Somerville/Medford News Weekly Boston News Group Favorite Comments

Regarding The Karen Read Trial



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PRESCRIPTION DRUGS (S 3)

By Bob Katzen

Senate 34-5, approved an amendment that would allow Health Policy Commission regulators to place a maximum price limit on some medications, capping what patients, providers, pharmacies and others in Massachusetts would pay.

"I was supportive of this

amendment because of the impact high prescription drug prices have had on the most vulnerable in my community" said Sen. Pavel Payano (D-Lawrence). "Nobody should have to make a choice between paying their bills and paying for their prescriptions."

"While I agree with the intention behind this amendment, I

believe that the subject matter needs to be addressed. I voted no ... because I believe, given its magnitude, that it should go through the regular committee-review process," said Sen. John Keenan (D-Quincy). "While versions of the legislation that this amendment reflect have been filed in previous sessions, this amendment includes new language that deserves a com-

mittee hearing and additional committee review."

"If this doesn't belong in a budget, I'm not sure where else it belongs," said amendment sponsor Sen. Cindy Friedman (D-Arlington). "This is having a profound effect on how we use our resources in the commonwealth, and if we don't address this issue sooner rather than

later, we will be in major trouble. Our hospitals are in major trouble because of this, our insurers are in major trouble, our state is in major trouble, so this, in my mind, is absolutely the right place for this."

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

Sen. Patricia Jehlen Yes

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Prospect Hill Academy Charter School Named as a Recipient of the Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries Grant

On May 8th, Prospect Hill Academy Charter School (PHA) was named one of 220 schools from 38 states across the country to receive a \$5,000 grant through the Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries. This year, the Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries awarded over \$1 million in library grants.

PHA will use the funds to update the school's library collections by adding more dual language titles and books that showcase a wide range of stories and perspectives.

"Books have the power to spark curiosity and inspire lifelong learning. We are thrilled to provide these grants so that librarians can refresh their shelves — opening the door for students to discover new interests and endless adventures," Mrs. Laura Bush said.

At the annual Laura Bush Book Club event, which is part of the Engage at the Bush Center series presented by NexPoint, Mrs. Bush's 2025 summer reading list was revealed. This annual collection includes recommendations for young

readers through middle schoolers.

"Reading helps children connect with the world around them," Mrs. Bush said. "This year's summer reading list celebrates America, everyday adventures, and friendships that stand the test of time. I hope families will take time to enjoy the slower pace of summer, and enjoy reading these stories together."

The list features 16 books including *I Loved You First*, written by Jenna Bush Hager and Barbara Pierce Bush.

It also features *First Ladies Make History* authored by mother/daughter duo Anita McBride, Mrs. Bush's former Chief of Staff when she was First Lady, and Giovanna McBride. Inspired by the Laura Bush Foundation, Anita McBride and daughter Giovanna McBride will donate a copy of *First Ladies Make History* to every elementary school that has received a Laura Bush Foundation grant since 2002.

The Laura Bush Foundation for America's Libraries supports school libraries with the greatest needs with

the goal of encouraging all students to develop a love of reading and learning. Since its inception in 2002, it has awarded \$23 million to over 4,000 schools across the country. To learn more, visit bushcenter.org/laurabush-foundation.

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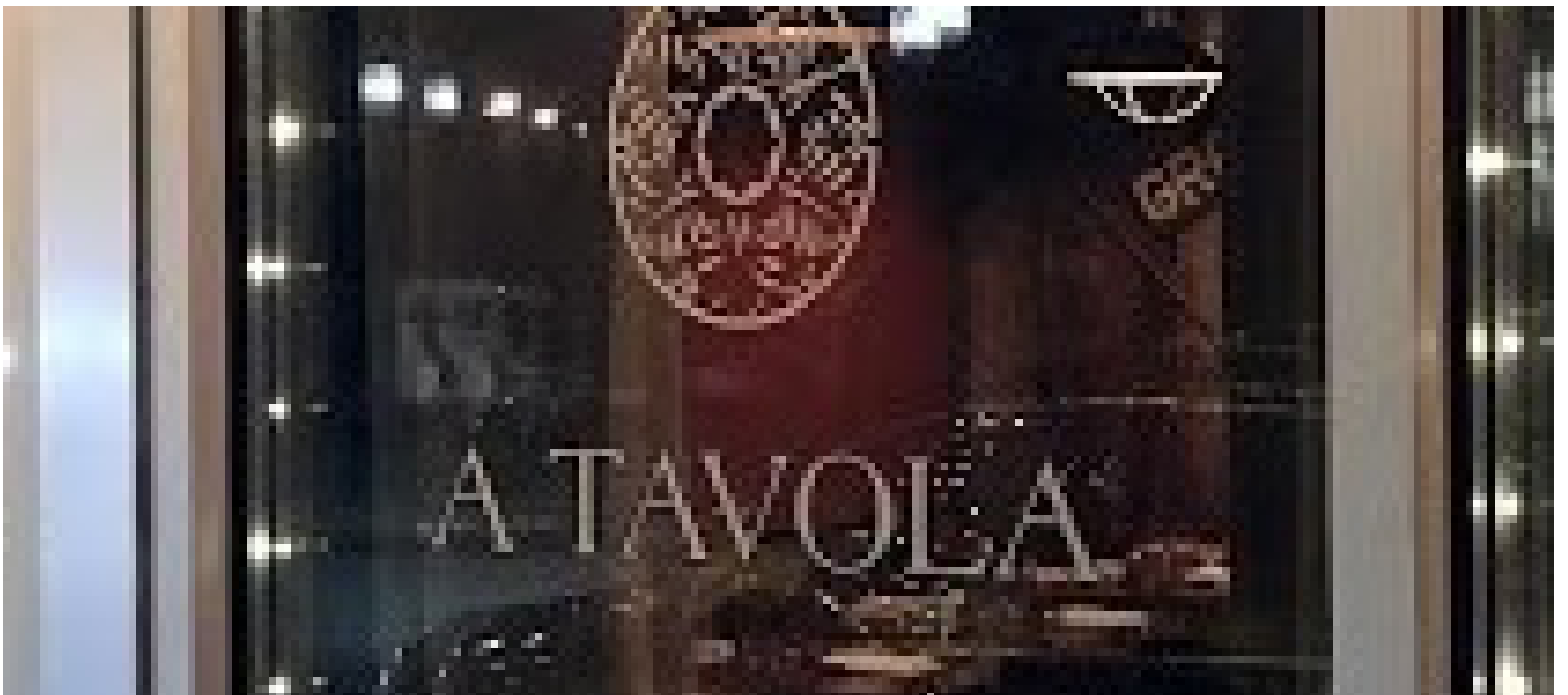
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