

Somerville Resident’s Ordeal with City-Backed Home Renovation: A Tale of Unresolved Woes and Unfulfilled Promises



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The Big Somerville Water Meter Scandal: Mystery Solved, Time To Lawyer Up



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TWO MORE POSSIBLE BALLOT QUESTIONS FOR NOVEMBER 2026 ARE CERTIFIED



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NEWS TALK OUT LOUD/SPEAK UP



Somerville Police Real Life Somerville Police Stories Page



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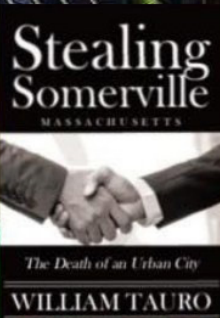
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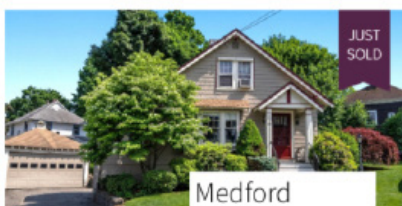
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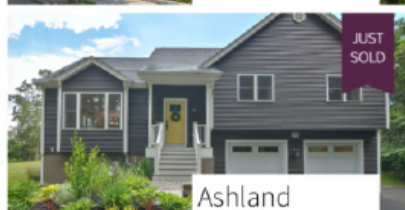
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Medford



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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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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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Artwork / Logos must be submitted to MHSVarsitySoftball22@gmail.com
Deadline for artwork / logos is March 7th for full season exposure, any late submission banners will be hung starting tournament weekend.

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2. Getbadged Route: Apply directly through GetBadged.com. Visit GetBadged.com, create an account, and select your preferred exam date. This is on-going.

For more details and the next steps in the new hiring process, please visit our website at medfordpolice.com/becomeapoliceofficer.

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Somerville/Medford Remembering Maryann Bova of Medford



Obituary
Maryann Bova of Medford, passed away on January 11, 2026. Loving daughter of the late Francis C. and Mary (Mainey) Maguire. Predeceased by her devoted husband, Lawrence S.

on November 6, 2025, who left this world first, so that he could hold the door open for her into the next one. She leaves her daughter, Marie Bova of Stoneham.

Predeceased by her brother Joseph Maguire in 2022, survived by her brother Francis (Leslie) Maguire. Always in her heart were her nieces, Diane, Suzanne and goddaughter Leanne Maguire. She is survived by her cherished sister Joannie (Maguire) Riley (Mike) and beloved nephews, Michael (Amy) and her great nieces, Reese and Maren of California, and Kenny Riley and his wife, Tasha of Texas. Just a phone call away from her nephews, Richie (his late wife, Barbara),

Charlie (Rochelle), Anthony, Robert, Glenn, Stephen and John Eckert, and her niece, Debbie Kasper (Johnny) of Florida.

She also leaves her extended family and many cousins.

After a short tenure at New England Telephone where she always fondly remembered her coworkers and 1960's office life, she married and became a wife, mother and homemaker.

An Irish girl, now a Bova, she mastered the fine craft of cooking meatballs, and her lasagna was second to none.

An original networking Mom, she

curated the best of childhood organizing many neighborhood activities and making lifelong friendships. A leader in the since evolved Camp Fire youth organization, she helped to create a still talked about scavenger hunt along the Mystic River. She enjoyed music and it always filled her home, and she looked forward to the traditional mother-daughter venture to see Rod Stewart whenever he came through town.

Maryann loved to watch baseball and followed the Boston Red Sox for many years.

In their later years, she and her husband enjoyed long walks, long talks and trips to the casino.

Maryann bravely and silently battled Type 1 diabetes for fifty plus years, qualifying her for the Bronze medal in the program started by Elliott P. Joslin, MD. Please consider donating on Maryann's behalf to the Joslin Research Center, the world leader in diabetes care at <http://www.joslin.org>

A graveside service will be held at Oak Grove Cemetery, 230 Playstead Road, in Medford at 10:00 am on Thursday, January 15. Please meet directly at the main gate.

"You know how the time flies | Only yesterday was the time of our lives | We were born and raised in a summer haze | Bound by the surprise of our glory days"

Somerville/Medford Remembering James E. Toner



Obituary
James E. Toner, of Arlington and formerly of Somerville, passed away suddenly at home on

January 6, 2026, he was 59. Born and raised in Somerville, Jim was the son of the late Ellen (Martell) and Hugh Toner.

Jim lived simply, but enjoyed time spent walking around the city, shopping and trips to the beach. In summer months he could often be found at Revere Beach or taking day trips to Hampton or when not at the beach, he kept busy at the gym working out.

He also enjoyed quite time at home watching his tv programs, movies or listening to music. Jim will be remembered by many for his jokes and great sense of humor.

Jim is survived by his siblings, Gloria Kennedy and her husband Patrick of Oklahoma, Patricia Toner of Somerville, Michael J. Toner and his partner Tanya Belen of Woburn, Edna Toner of George-

town and the late Thomas J. Toner, Ellen Ellis and Hugh Toner. He was the dear uncle of Suzanne Ellis, Kenny Boschen, Richard Kennedy, Catherine Edwards, Philip Mitza, Dan Ryan, Jr., Tammi Toner, Jennifer Montijo, Kerri Ayala, Patrick Toner and many great nieces and nephews.

Visiting Hours will be held in the George L. Doherty Funeral Home,

855 Broadway (Powder House Sq.) Somerville on Saturday morning, January 10th from 9:00AM – 11:00AM followed by a Funeral Procession to Fox Hill Cemetery, Billerica for a graveside service at 12:00PM. Relatives and friends invited to attend.

In lieu of flowers, donation in Jim's memory can be made to the Joslin Diabetes Center at <http://www.joslin.org>.

Somerville/Medford Remembering Christine A. (Cannata) Murphy



Christine A. (Cannata) Murphy — A longtime resident of Somerville, passed away peacefully with her children by her side on Friday, January 9, 2026. She was 91 years old.

Born in Charlestown, Christine was the beloved daughter of the late George W. and Marion J. (Palumbo) Cannata. She took her role as a mother very seriously and devoted her life to caring for and nurturing her children. When she became a grandmother, her love only grew stronger. Christine was an exceptional grandmother who had a special way of making each grandchild feel like the most important person in the room.

Christine also enjoyed a successful career as a hairdresser and later worked for many years at Stop & Shop. In every position she held,

she took great pride in her work and was known for her dedication and strong work ethic.

A woman of deep and abiding Catholic faith, Christine faithfully attended Sunday Mass for as long as she was able. When she could no longer attend in person, she continued her devotion by watching Mass from home.

Beloved wife of the late Harry G. Murphy. Devoted mother of Harry G. Murphy, Jr. and his wife Paula of Medford, Denise A. Murphy of San Diego, California, Linda Colella and her husband Carmine of Derry, NH and Robert Murphy and

his wife Christine of North Reading. Cherished grandmother of Kristen Clark and her husband Michael, Leslie McCarthy and her husband Timothy, Michael O'Hearn and his wife Nikki, Nicole Colella and her partner Mathew, Michelle Colella and her partner Michael, Jason Murphy, Julia Murphy and Noelle Murphy. Loving great grandmother of Keren, Kevin, Alivia, Simone, Alistar and Maxxine. Dear sister of the late George, Robert, Margaret, Anthony, Rita and Richard. Also lovingly survived by many loving, nieces, nephews and extended family members.

A funeral mass will be cel-

ebrated in St. Ann Church, 399 Medford St., Somerville on Saturday, January 17th at 11:00AM. Please meet directly at church.

Interment will be private.

Somerville/Medford Remembering Noel Mark Pefine



Noel Mark Pefine – Of Cambridge, passed away on January 8,2026. He was 57 years old.

Born in Malden, he

was the beloved son of the late Joseph F. and Lillian H. (Pedro) Pefine.

Services are to be scheduled.



The Big Somerville Water Meter Scandal: Mystery Solved, Time To Lawyer Up

By William Tauro

Of course, city officials told residents that the newly installed water meters were reading correctly, and they were. However, those same officials neglected to inform Somerville residents that the readings were, in fact, wrongfully and knowingly inaccurate.

All this time we were blaming the new water meters, but in reality it was the readings submitted that were the real crime!

The story begins when the City of Somerville switched to the new meters. Ironically, around the same time, the city also let go of a number of employees—possibly during an administration change or for other reasons.

Unfortunately for the city, those departing employees either lost or intentionally took with them all the paperwork containing the final readings from the original meters. As a result, the new city employees tasked with cataloging the last meter readings and linking them to the zeroed-out starting points on the new meters were unable to make the connection. To save face and avoid major embarrass-

ment, city officials guesstimated the initial readings—which apparently all came out extremely high.

So, while the new meters themselves are functioning correctly, the starting readings were absolutely wrong and based on estimates.

For those of you who had your water meters replaced, your next bill after the installation likely skyrocketed, and subsequent bills have continued to exceed the legitimate amounts owed.

Let's not forget that many of the same elected officials in office today were there when this all happened—and most of them knew about it but once again neglected the residents of Somerville.

I encourage all Somerville residents, property owners, and renters—who may have faced higher rents to offset the inflated water bills passed on by landlords—to retain an attorney and file a class action lawsuit against the City of Somerville for the intentional overcharging on our water bills.

I also recommend hiring legal counsel from outside Somerville, such as a firm

in Boston with no ties to the city, to avoid any potential conflicts of interest that could compromise your case.

Have those attorneys subpoena the city's records on water billing readings especially the last actual meter readings from the old meters, as well as the employees who worked in the water department and Department of Public Works (DPW) during that time period that possibly knew about it and/or we possibly afraid of retaliation from the city for whistleblowing.

Also included in the subpoena should be—including city councilors—the mayor's office and that mayor's administration that served during that entire time period including employees up to this present time period as well where residence are still being billed these fictitious water bill amounts.

It took some time but the truth finally came out!

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The Big Somerville Water Meter Scandal: Mystery Solved, Time To Lawyer Up



SOMERVILLE –Residents should please note that motor vehicle excise tax bills for 2026 are being sent one month earlier this year. Bills will issue

on January 26, 2026, and are due February 25, 2026.

Somerville residents who own a vehicle with a valid Massachusetts license plate are responsible for paying their excise tax bill each year. Payments can be made:

Online via the link on the city's website at somer villema.gov/payonline
In-person at the Collector's office at City Hall (93 Highland Ave.). Valid

ID required if you do not bring the bill with you when making payment in person.

Via mail using the provided envelope.
Or by check, which can be dropped off in the stainless-steel payments box outside the front entrance of City Hall.

Regularly check your mailbox to avoid missing payment deadlines. Payment is required

even if a physical bill is not received. To request a duplicate copy, please contact the treasury department to have a duplicate bill mailed, or "self-authenticate" online and pay via the city's website at somer villema.gov/pay-online.

For more information, contact the Tax Collector's office at Treasury@somervillema.gov or call (617) 625-6600 x-3500.

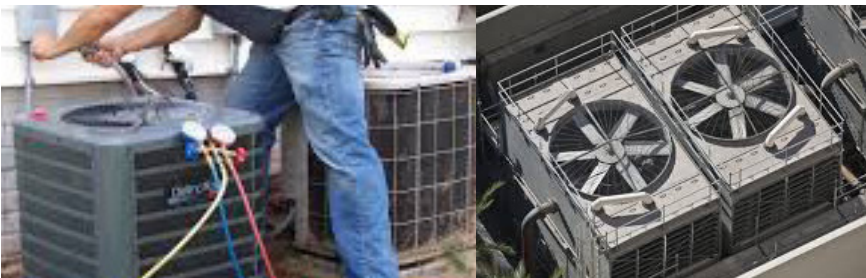
For general information on how to make a payment, contact 311 at 617-666-3311 or via chat/app/email/etc. at somer villema.gov/311.

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Funky New Medication Names



By William Tauro

Have you ever noticed all the new different funky names for medication's out there? They even have some named after animals! Check them out? And of course coming to you from on air with Billy Tauro!

Here's a curated list of medications currently on the market (as of early 2026) that stand out for their particularly weird or exotic-sounding names. I've focused on relatively recent approvals to keep it fresh, drawing from pharmaceutical sources. These are real drugs, often for specialized treatments like rare diseases, cancers, or chronic conditions:

- Aqneursa (for a genetic disorder)
- Miplyffa (for a neurological condition)

- Ebglyss (for skin conditions)
- Lazcluze (an oncology drug)
- Niktimvo (for immune disorders)
- Livdelzi (for liver issues)
- Nemludio (a biologic for inflammation)
- Yorvipath (for hormone-related conditions)
- Voranigo (for brain tumors)
- Leqselvi (for autoimmune diseases)
- Ohtuvayre (for respiratory issues)
- Piasky (a treatment for blood disorders)
- Sofdra (for excessive sweating)
- Iqirvo (for liver disease)
- Rytelo (for blood cancers)
- Imdelltra (an immunotherapy)
- Xolremdi (for metabolic disorders)
- Ojemda (a pediatric oncology drug)
- Anktiva (for bladder cancer)
- Zevtera (an antibiotic)

Here's a fresh selection of medications currently available on the market (as of early 2026) with notably funny or punny-sounding names. I've focused on ones that often elicit chuckles due to their phonetic similarities to everyday words, potential double entendres, or just plain silliness, based on common discussions and lists. These are real drugs for various conditions, and I've included a quick note on why each might strike people as humorous:

- Golytely (a laxative prep for colonoscopies) – Sounds like “go lightly,” which is ironically the opposite of its intense effects.
- Aciphex (for acid reflux) – Pronounced like “ass effects,” perfect for a drug treating digestive issues.
- Caverject (for erectile dysfunction) – Evokes “cavern” and “inject,” hinting at its injection method for... well, you know.
- Phexxi (a non-hormonal contraceptive gel) – Rhymes with “sexy,” which fits its use in intimate situations.
- FML (an eye drop for inflammation) – Stands for Fluorometholone, but matches the acronym for “f*** my life,” amusing for allergy sufferers.
- Urispas (for urinary tract issues) – Sounds like “your ass” or “you’re a spaz,” tying into bladder spasms.
- Pyridium (for UTI pain relief) – Makes urine orange, but the name sounds like “pyre” or something fiery, matching the burning sensation it treats.

- Slynd (a birth control pill) – Like “slimed” or “sly end,” but it’s a progestin-only option with a sneaky-cool vibe.
- Vigamox (an antibiotic eye drop) – Combines “vigor” and “mox,” reminiscent of “Viagra” but for eye infections.
- Comirnaty (the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine) – A mashup of “community,” “immunity,” and “mRNA,” but it just sounds comically made-up.
- Qsymia (for weight loss) – Pronounced “cue-sim-ee-uh,” like a quirky take on “kiss me,” for a diet drug.
- Sofdra (for excessive sweating) – Sounds soft and dramatic, like a soap opera name for a sweat-soaking issue.
- Imvexxy (a vaginal insert for menopause symptoms) – Like “I’m sexy,” which is cheeky for hormone therapy.
- Xtampza (an opioid pain reliever) – Evokes “extra tampon za” or something absurdly unrelated to pain meds.
- Qbrexza (for hyperhidrosis wipes) – Another “Q” name that sounds like a sci-fi gadget for sweat control.

Here's a curated list of medications (primarily for human use, as of early 2026) whose names are directly inspired by or reference animals, often due to their origins in animal-derived substances or venoms. These are real, approved drugs, and I've included a brief note on the animal connection for each. Note that such names are relatively rare in pharmaceuticals, as most drug names are coined from chemical

- structures or acronyms rather than direct animal references:
- Premarin (conjugated estrogens for hormone replacement): Derived from and named after “pregnant mare’s urine” (mare being a female horse).
 - Ursodiol (for gallstones and liver diseases): The “urso” prefix comes from “ursa,” Latin for bear, reflecting its original isolation from bear bile.
 - Batroxobin (a thrombin-like enzyme for blood clotting disorders): Named after the South American pit viper Bothrops atrox, from whose venom it’s extracted.
 - Reptilase (a reagent for coagulation testing and hemostasis): The name explicitly references “reptile,” as it’s derived from snake venom.
 - CroFab (antivenom for pit viper bites): An abbreviation of “Crotalidae Fab,” where Crotalidae is the scientific family name for pit vipers like rattlesnakes.

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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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Thank you for your continued support.



Somerville/Medford Remembering Patricia (Patty) K. (Carter) O’Riordan



Obituary
Patricia (Patty) K. (Carter) O’Riordan — Of Malden, formerly of Arlington, passed away suddenly at her home on Friday, January 9, 2026. She was 69 years old.

Patty was known for her friendly and caring demeanor. She had a natural gift for helping others and was always there for anyone in need. She took great pride in making people feel welcomed, comfortable, and cared for in her presence. When her daughter was growing up, Patty made sure that not only her own child, but also her daughter’s friends, were well fed and cared for, treating everyone like family.

An accomplished and passionate cook, Patty was well known for her talents in the kitchen and found great joy in preparing meals for those she loved. She enjoyed spending quality time with family and friends, as well as moments at home, relaxing on the couch while watching her favorite shows. Patty also loved her summer vacations in Maine, Lake Winnepesaukee, and Cape Cod with her late husband, John, and family and friends.

Above all else, she cherished being a mother and a wife, believing those to be her greatest accomplishments in life. Patty deeply missed John and always looked forward to the day she

would see him again.

Beloved wife of the late John F. O’Riordan of Arlington. Devoted mother of Molly Dupuis and her husband Chris. Loving Nana of Remi Dupuis. Daughter of the late Lowell H. Carter and the late Lucille Whittemore Carter. Cherished sister of Jimmy Carter and his wife Teresa of Greensboro, NC, Bill Carter and his wife Ramona of Pensacola, FLA, the late Mary Carter Berry and the late Joanne Carter Watts Moore both of NC. Also survived by many loving nieces, nephews, extended family members and friends.

Calling Hours will be held in the

George L. Doherty Funeral Home 855 Broadway (Powder House Sq.) on Friday, January 16th from 10:00AM to 12:00PM. Followed by a prayer service in the funeral home at 12:00PM.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend.

Services will conclude with burial at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery, Arlington.

Somerville/Medford Remembering Joseph P. Leo



Obituary
Joseph P. Leo – Of Medford, formerly of Attleboro

and Somerville passed away on Sunday, January 11, 2025. He was 71 years old.

Born in Boston, he was the son of the late Rocco A. and Antonette (Minda) Leo.

Joseph had a deep love for all things sports. If there was a game on, he could almost always be found

in front of the television cheering along. Music was another great passion in his life. He was a talented organ player and shared his love of music as a member of a band, finding joy both in performing and listening.

Beloved father of Justin Leo. Loving grandfather of Mason and Alex Leo. Cherished brother of

Anthony R. Leo of Somerville, Louis C. Leo of Burlington and Anne C. Alizio of Somerville. Dear longtime friend of Fran Boll of Medford and Mike Santangelo of Medford. He is also lovingly survived by his nephew Christopher Leo of Burlington.

Calling Hours will be held in the George L. Doherty Funeral Home 855 Broad-

way (Powder House Sq.) on Thursday, January 15th from 10:00AM to 12:00PM. Followed by a graveside service at Woodlawn Cemetery, Everett at 12:45PM.

Relatives and friends are invited to attend.

Services will conclude with interment at Woodlawn Cemetery, Everett.

PERSONNEL RECORDS (H 2112)

By Bob Katzen

The House gave initial approval to a bill that would expand a current law that prohibits an employer from penalizing, in any way, an employee as a result of any action on the part of the employee to seek his or her rights under the Massachusetts wage laws which are designed to ensure that

workers are fairly treated and paid for all the hours they work. The bill would provide the same protection to employees who ask their employers to provide the employee with any of his or her personnel records.

Under current law, an employer is required to notify an employee within 10 days of the employer

placing in the employee’s personnel record any information to the extent that the information is, has been used or may be used, to negatively affect the employee’s qualification for employment, promotion, transfer, additional compensation or the possibility that the employee will be subject to disciplinary action. Once notified, the em-

ployee can request a copy of his or her records. The bill would prohibit the employer from penalizing an employee who does so.

Supporters said the bill will guarantee that an employee is not penalized for making a simple and reasonable request to see his or her personnel records.

Rep. Kenneth Gordon (D-Bedford), the sponsor of the measure, did not respond to repeated requests by Beacon Hill Roll Call asking him to explain why he filed the bill and to comment on its passage.

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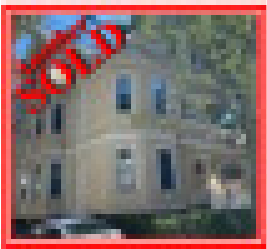
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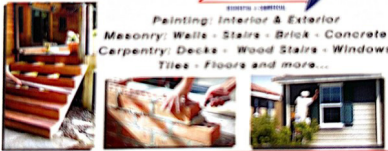
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FOREVER CHEMICALS (H 4870)

By Bob Katzen

The Public Health Committee gave a favorable report to and recommended passage by the full House and Senate of a bill to protect public health from toxic “forever chemicals” which are per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). The measure would phase out PFAS in many products; cut industrial discharges of PFAS;

and set up a fund to help communities test and treat PFAS in drinking water, soil and groundwater.

Supporters said that in Massachusetts, 172 public water systems in 96 cities and towns, and many private wells, have exceeded the state’s legal limit for PFAS which are toxic even at very low level exposure and do not break down easily, meaning they will

persist for thousands of years in the environment. They argued that PFAS can increase the risk of developing cancers, immunosuppression, liver disease and developmental and reproductive illnesses. They said that 28 states have passed laws to ban PFAS in at least one product, and most states in New England, except Massachusetts, have banned PFAS in food packaging,

firefighting foam, carpets, clothing, fabric sprays and personal care products.

“This is great news for Massachusetts residents,” said Deirdre Cummings, MASSPIRG Legislative Director.

“Other states have already enacted laws to restrict PFAS in some or all products,” said Laura Spark, Environmental Health


Program Director at Clean Water Action. “Now it’s time for Massachusetts to act. PFAS contamination in Massachusetts will continue to worsen until PFAS restrictions go into effect.”

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Medford VFW #1012 located at 114 Mystic Avenue in Medford is having karaoke on 7/24 and 8/21 , 8:00 PM till 12:00 PM!

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TWO MORE POSSIBLE BALLOT QUESTIONS FOR NOVEMBER 2026 ARE CERTIFIED

By Bob Katzen

Two additional proposals were certified by Secretary of State Bill Galvin's office indicating that they contain the required 74,754 certified signatures needed to advance another step toward going on the November 2026 ballot for voters to decide. That brings the final total of possible 2026 ballot questions to 11.


One would place sales tax revenue from sporting

goods like golf clubs, RVs and camping gear into a new "Nature for All Fund" that sponsors say could generate \$100 million annually for water and nature conservation and restoration efforts.

A second one is designed to make it easier for residents to purchase a home by updating zoning rules including allowing single-family homes to be built in a residentially zoned area as long as the land on which it is to be con-

structed is at least 5,000 square feet, has at least 50 feet of land bordering the street, road or public way that it faces and has access to public sewer and water services.

The 11 proposals were sent by Galvin to the Legislature and if not approved by the Legislature by May 6, 2026, proponents must gather another 12,429 signatures by July 1, 2026, in order for the question to appear on the November 2026 ballot.



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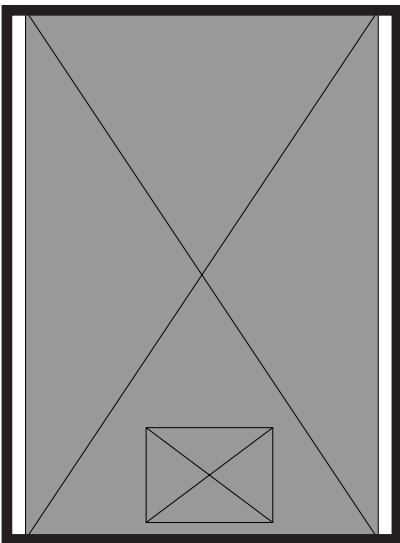
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Mayor Jake Wilson’s Inaugural Address Sets a Results-First Agenda



Mayor Jake Wilson giving his inaugural address on stage at Somerville High School

On January 3, the Somerville community gathered together for the 2026 inauguration ceremonies.

Mayor Jake Wilson was sworn into office along with newly-elected and returning members of the City Council and School Committee. The ceremony included greetings from Governor Maura Healey and Interim Secretary of

Transportation/MBTA General Manager Philip Eng in addition to spoken word and musical performances by Somerville youth, City staff, and School of Honk.

In his inaugural address, Mayor Jake Wilson pledged visible improvements and a transparent approach the public can follow.

Wilson’s second major theme was keeping Somerville livable from the environment to an inclusive local economy to a housing plan that’s a map, not a mantra. He previewed priority steps he will take, including adding homes near transit and growth corridors, enabling a wider mix of housing types, expanding nonprofit partnerships to deepen affordability, and strengthening tenant protections so workers and families can stay. Wilson linked affordability to small-business stability and the creative economy, promising to treat affordable commercial and artist space with the same urgency as housing. Read or watch and listen to the Mayor’s full speech.

City Council President Lance Davis and School Committee Chair Dr. Emily Ackman also emphasized a commitment to progress and collaboration.

Learn more about the 2026 inauguration ceremonies.

Photo by Devon Moos Photography

Somerville Resident’s Ordeal with City-Backed Home Renovation: A Tale of Unresolved Woes and Unfulfilled Promises



By William Tauro

In the heart of Somerville, Massachusetts, a well-intentioned city program aimed at revitalizing affordable housing has left one homeowner entangled in a web of contractor mishaps, unfinished work, and bureaucratic inaction. The Home Improvement Program (HIP), administered by the Mayor’s Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development (OSPCD) through the City Hall Annex, promises to assist low- and moderate-income residents in upgrading their properties. This initiative, funded in part by Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), pre-qualifies contractors to perform rehabilitation work, with the goal of creating safe, sustainable, and affordable housing options. However, for one local resident, what began as an opportunity to renovate rental units in her home has devolved into a prolonged nightmare, marked by shoddy workmanship, financial burdens, and a lack of support from the city.

The story centers on a Somerville homeowner who enrolled in the HIP to address improvements in her property’s upstairs flooring. The city facilitated the project by allocating \$100,000, which was added to the end of her home mortgage. This loan is structured as a deferred payment, meaning the city will automatically recoup the funds upon the sale of the home. In exchange, the program connected her with a pre-approved contractor: Miles Iyamu of Apex Construction & Environmental, Inc., based at 86 Brunswick Street in Dorchester, MA. The work commenced, but problems arose almost immediately.

According to the resident’s account, the upstairs floor was installed twice since December of the previous year, yet the issues persist unabated. The flooring is reportedly peeling away and separating, rendering it unusable and unsafe. Despite repeated attempts to alert the city, no officials have inspected the site, and efforts to resolve

the matter have yielded no results. The contractor, meanwhile, has gone out of business, leaving the homeowner without recourse for repairs or refunds.

When I reached for comment, Iyamu initially hung up on me during a phone inquiry but later responded via text: “Ask her for the spec for the Job. Have a contractor compare the upgrade to the work done. Am owed thousands of dollars for changes and the City claimed there is no money for extra work order. Also, we are out of business.” This statement suggests disputes over project specifications, change orders, and unpaid extras, pointing to potential miscommunications or funding shortfalls on the city’s end.

Public records and reviews of Apex Construction & Environmental reveal a mixed history, primarily focused on lead removal and environmental services. While some clients have praised the company for timely deleading work,

others note it is not accredited by the Better Business Bureau, and no widespread complaints specifically tied to Somerville projects were uncovered in available sources. However, the firm’s dissolution exacerbates the resident’s predicament, as she now faces the dual challenge of faulty renovations and a \$100,000 lien on her property—without the intended benefits.

The city’s role in this saga raises questions about oversight and accountability. As the program manager, OSPCD is responsible for vetting contractors and ensuring projects meet standards. Yet, despite ongoing correspondence from the homeowner—detailed in attached emails that chronicle back-and-forth exchanges pleading for intervention—the city has reportedly done little to mediate or rectify the situation. No inspections have been conducted, no alternative contractors assigned, and no steps taken to alleviate the financial strain. This lack of action contrasts with the program’s stated mission to support residents in maintaining affordable housing.

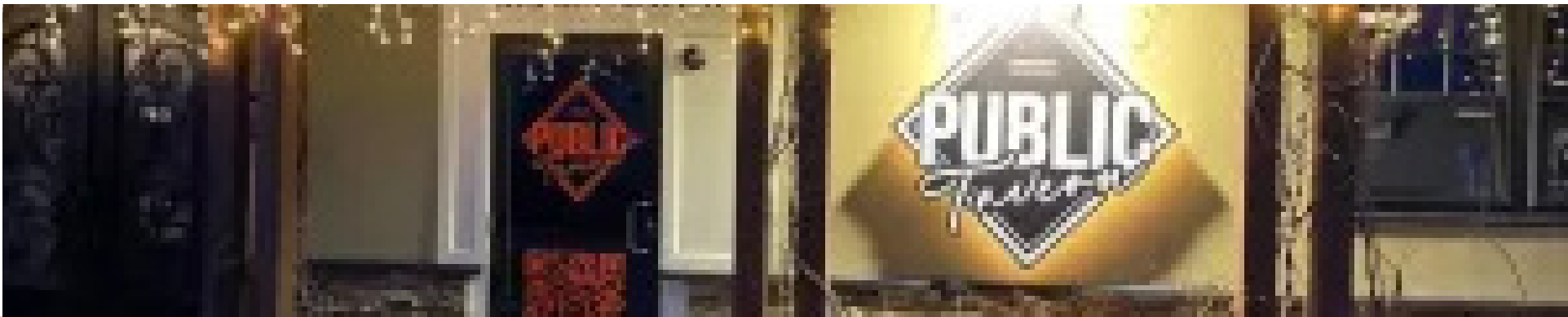
In judging this case based on the available details, it appears the City of Somerville fell short in its duty to protect participants in its own program. While contractor disputes can arise in any renovation, the HIP’s structure places the

city in a pivotal position to intervene, especially when funds are publicly sourced and tied to long-term homeowner obligations. By not addressing the resident’s complaints promptly or facilitating a resolution—such as reimbursing for subpar work or removing the lien until issues are fixed—the city risks undermining trust in its community development efforts. Homeowners deserve better safeguards, and this incident highlights the need for stronger monitoring, clearer communication on change orders, and dedicated support channels for when things go awry.

As Somerville continues to promote initiatives like HIP to foster equitable housing, stories like this serve as a cautionary reminder: good intentions must be backed by robust execution. The resident’s ordeal, now stretching over a year, underscores the human cost of systemic gaps. City officials, including Program Manager Russell Koty, could still step in to make things right—perhaps starting with that long-overdue inspection.

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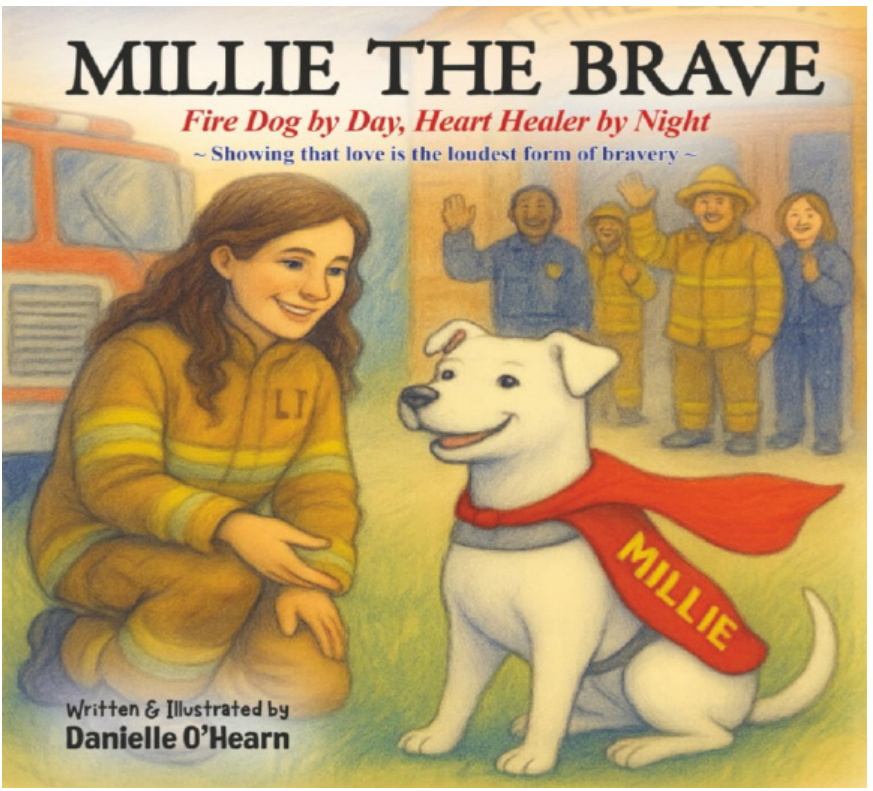
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Somerville 2026 Excise Tax Bills Arriving in January

	<p>Residents should please note that motor vehicle excise tax bills for 2026 are being sent one month earlier this year. Bills will issue on January 26, 2026, and are due February 25, 2026.</p> <p>Somerville residents who</p>	<p>own a vehicle with a valid Massachusetts license plate are responsible for paying their excise tax bill each year. Payments can be made:</p> <p>Online via the link on the city’s website at somervillema.gov/payonline</p>	<p>In-person at the Collector’s office at City Hall (93 Highland Ave.). Valid ID required if you do not bring the bill with you when making payment in person.</p> <p>Via mail using the provided envelope.</p> <p>Or by check, which can be</p>	<p>dropped off in the stainless-steel payments box outside the front entrance of City Hall</p>
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Somerville Names Ohemeng Kyeremateng as New Parks Director



Seasoned municipal recreation leader brings decade-plus of experience in equitable programming, operations, and fiscal stewardship

SOMERVILLE — Mayor Jake Wilson is welcoming Ohemeng

Kyeremateng as the City’s new Director of Parks & Recreation. Kyeremateng brings more than a decade of municipal parks and recreation leadership experience focused on expanding access, strengthening community programming, and improving the stewardship of public recreational spaces.

Prior to joining Somerville, he held senior leadership roles across multiple communities, including serving as Deputy Director of Recreation for the City of Hartford, CT, where he helped oversee parks, facilities, aquatics, and community programs and managed significant operating and capital budgets.

“I’m proud to welcome Ohemeng as our new Parks and Recreation Director. Recreation is quality-of-life infrastructure,” said Mayor Wilson. “It’s youth sports, after-school and summer programs, and the daily opportunities that help kids thrive and neighbors connect. Ohemeng brings the experience and drive to grow participation and strengthen the programs Somerville families and all our residents rely on.”

In Hartford, Kyeremateng directed division-wide strategy and operations, collaborated with schools and community partners to deliver neighborhood-based programming, and helped

manage budgets exceeding \$10 million.

Most recently, Kyeremateng has served as Director of Recreation for the Town of Palmer, MA, leading year-round programming, overseeing town recreational assets, and supporting long-term planning and facility improvements guided by community needs.

Kyeremateng is a scholarship award recipient of the American Parks and Recreation Foundation and a graduate of the National Recreation and Park Association’s Revenue Management School, with expertise in financial sustainability and revenue strategy.

He holds an MBA in Management and a bachelor’s degree in Sports and Leisure Management.

“I’m honored to lead Somerville’s Parks & Recreation Department,” said Kyeremateng. “Recreation programming can help community members of all ages discover new talents, meet new friends, and just have fun. I’m looking forward to working with our team to deliver great programs for everyone in Somerville.”

For more information on the City’s Parks & Recreation programming, please visit somer维尔.ema.gov/parksandrec.

ADOPT A SHELTER DOG MONTH (H 3288)



By Bob Katzen

The House gave initial approval to legislation that would designate the month of October as Adopt a Shelter Dog Month.

“Massachusetts shelters take in more than 20,000 animals each year, and despite our high save rate, they continue to struggle with staffing shortages, rising intakes and limited community resources,” said sponsor Rep. Bruce

Ayers (D-Quincy). “Establishing October as ‘Adopt a Shelter Dog Month’ will give us a statewide platform to promote adoption, support our shelters and ensure more dogs have a real chance at finding a permanent home.”

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Join the Somerville Fair Housing Commission Applications Now Being Accepted for One Open Position



SOMERVILLE — The Somerville Fair Housing Commission (FHC) is actively seeking a new member, and we invite all Somerville residents to consider applying.

What is the Somerville Fair Housing Commission?
The Fair Housing Commission works to ensure that all current and prospective Somerville residents have equal access to housing, free from discrimination and prejudice. The FHC plans annual educational events, reviews complaints submitted, does tabling at community events, and meets with City of Somerville legislative staff on fair housing issues.

Who can join?
Any Somerville community member who is over the age of 18 can apply.

What is the time commitment?
The commission typically meets on the fourth Thursday of each month for one hour. Members commit to serving three-year terms.

How do I apply?
To apply, send a message sharing why you are interested in joining the Fair Housing Commission to Shannon Lawler, staff liaison to the Fair Housing Commission, by Friday, January 30, 2026.

Email your application to slawler@somervillema.gov. Or mail your paper application to: Somerville Fair Housing Commission, 50 Evergreen Ave., Somerville, MA 02145 ATTN: Shannon Lawler

When is the application deadline?
Friday, January 30, 2026

Questions?

If you have questions or would like more information, contact Shannon Lawler via email at slawler@somervillema.gov or by phone at (617) 625-6600 ext. 2569.

Stay Connected!
Want to learn about roles open on other commissions or more ways to engage? Visit <http://www.somervillema.gov/BeSomerville>

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration, January 17

Community members are invited to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the City's annual celebration.

The event will take place on Saturday, January 17, from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Somerville High School

(81 Highland Ave). The celebration will include light food and refreshments, arts and crafts for all ages, youth performances including speeches, poetry, and music, and a keynote address delivered by Dr. James “Jimmy” McCarty focused on the

life and legacy of Dr. King. Light food and refreshments will also be served.

RSVP to attend at bit.ly/MLK_2026.



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LOBULAR BREAST CANCER AWARENESS DAY (H 4625)

By Bob Katzen

The House gave initial approval to legislation that would designate October 15 as Lobular Breast Cancer Awareness Day in Massachusetts — recognizing the day to promote public awareness of lobular breast cancer, encourage

age education and support related research efforts.

“While knocking doors during my campaign in Pinehills, I had a conversation at one home with Plymouth resident Laurie Hutcheson, Executive Director of the Lobular

Breast Cancer Alliance, that introduced me to lobular breast cancer—a disease I had never heard of, despite the fact that it accounts for 10 to 15 percent of all breast cancer cases and is the second most common form of the disease,” said sponsor Rep. Michelle Badger (D-Plym-

outh). “Through continued conversations, Laurie shared critical information about how lobular breast cancer is difficult to detect on mammograms because it does not form distinct lumps but instead appears as striations, often described as spider-web-like patterns, lacks its own

targeted treatment and frequently goes undiagnosed for years. I am proud to have filed this bill ... to raise awareness, promote earlier detection and help prevent further unnecessary loss of life.”



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Somerville Introduces Mattress Recycling Fee Program



Fees for state-required mattress and box spring recycling go into effect February 1, 2026

SOMERVILLE–The City of Somerville currently spends nearly \$300,000 each year to cover the cost of recycling mattresses and box springs discarded by residents. Since November 2022, state law has required that all discarded mattresses and box springs be recycled to reduce pressure on landfills, significantly increasing municipal recycling costs

statewide.

After reviewing mattress recycling programs in 28 nearby communities of similar size, the Department of Public Works (DPW) is introducing a Mattress and Box Spring Recycling Fee Program starting February 1, 2026. This program will help offset rising disposal costs while creating a more consistent, fair, and sustainable system for residents. It will also help deter residents of neighboring communities from disposing of their mattresses improperly in Somerville to avoid their own community’s fees.

The new policy establishes a clear, uniform approach to mattress recycling and is expected to reduce the total number of units collected each week, helping the City better manage operational costs. In Fiscal Year 2025, the average cost paid by the City of Somerville

to recycle a mattress or box spring was \$63.46 per unit, including hauling and recycling fees.

Under the new program, residents will be charged a \$55 disposal fee per unit, allowing the city to recover a portion of actual costs while continuing to provide responsible recycling services.

The new fee program will go into effect on February 1, 2026. Starting on that date, residents of eligible households wishing to dispose of a mattress or box spring will need to purchase a Disposal Sticker before scheduling a mattress pickup and placing these items on the curb. Mattresses will be collected curbside one day after regular trash collection. For residents with Friday trash pickup, mattresses will also be collected on Friday. Mattresses and box springs are counted as separate items.

How to Recycle a Mattress or Box Spring via City Services:

First, confirm that you are eligible: Only residential households in buildings with 6 or fewer units with city-managed trash collection are eligible to have the City recycle their mattress or box spring. Pickup is also limited to two bulk items per week. Residents of buildings with 7 or more units using private trash services are not eligible.

Purchase a Disposal Sticker one of three ways:

Online: Purchase through the online payment portal on the City website at somervillema.gov/payonline.

Department of Public Works (DPW): Purchase in person at the DPW Offices at One Franey Road. Check, credit cards, and money

orders are accepted. No cash.

City Hall: Purchase in person at the City Clerk’s Office in City Hall at 93 Highland Avenue. Cash, check, credit card, or money order are accepted.

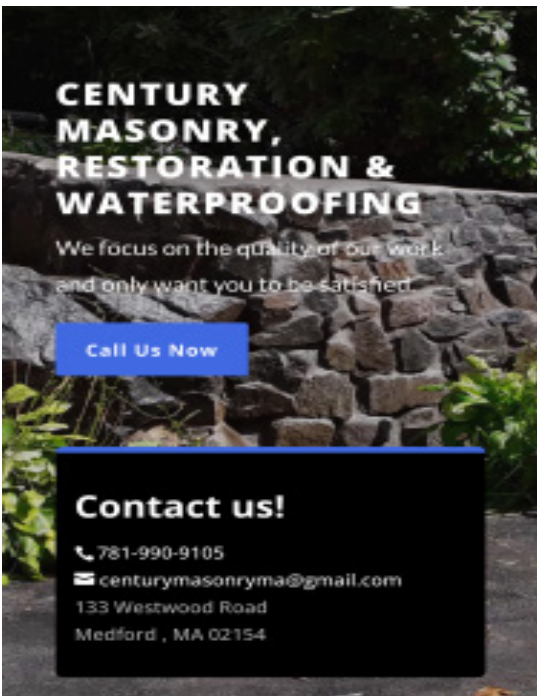
Schedule your mattress pickup: Residents must contact 311 Constituent Services in advance to schedule a mattress and/or box spring pickup. Call 311 at 617-666-3311 or visit somervillema.gov/311 for more ways to contact 311.

Please note: Infested or soiled mattresses must be scheduled for special pickup. Contact 311 before purchasing a sticker.

For more information on mattress recycling and disposal, please visit the City website at somervillema.gov/mattressrecycling.

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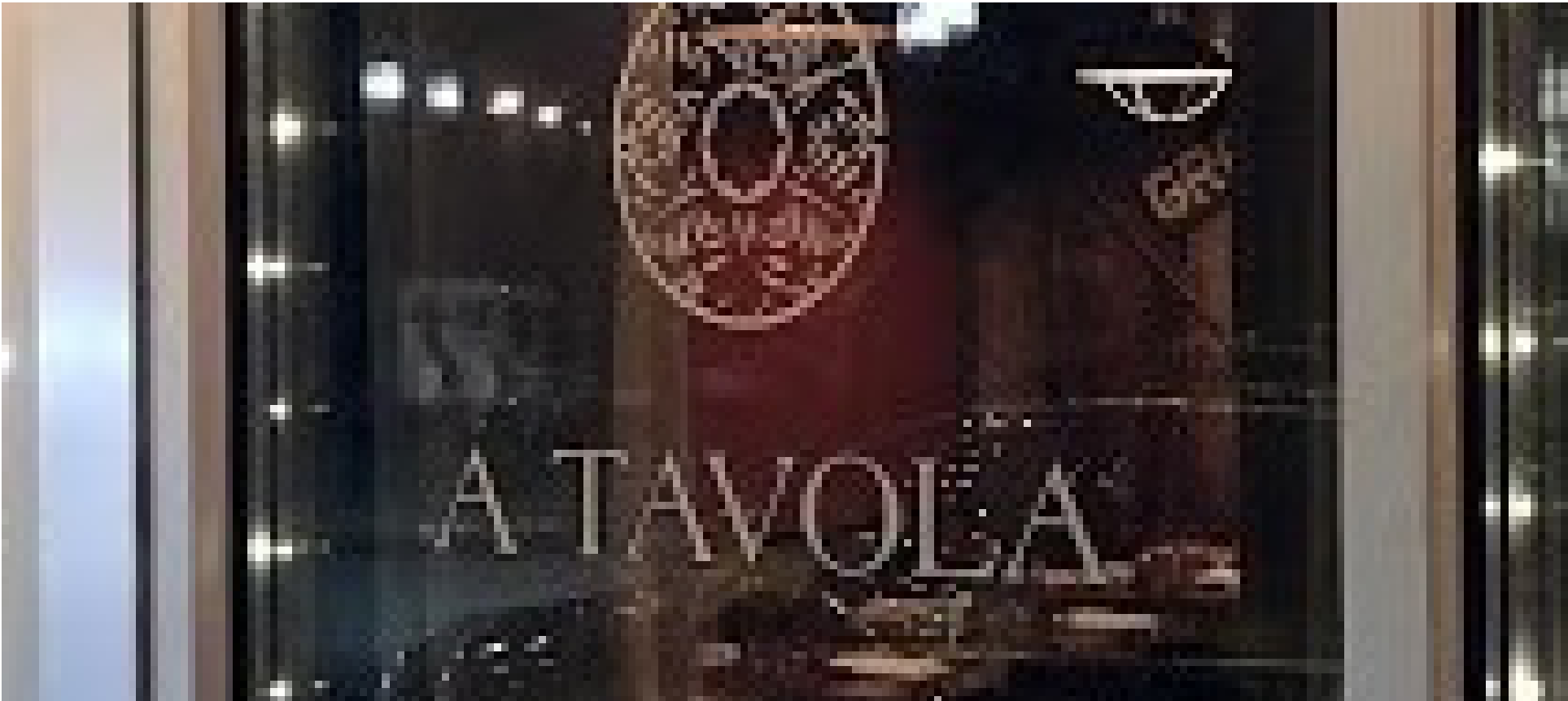
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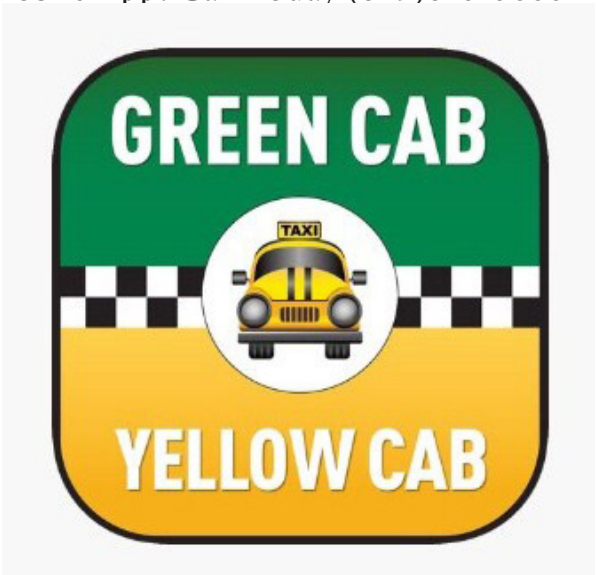


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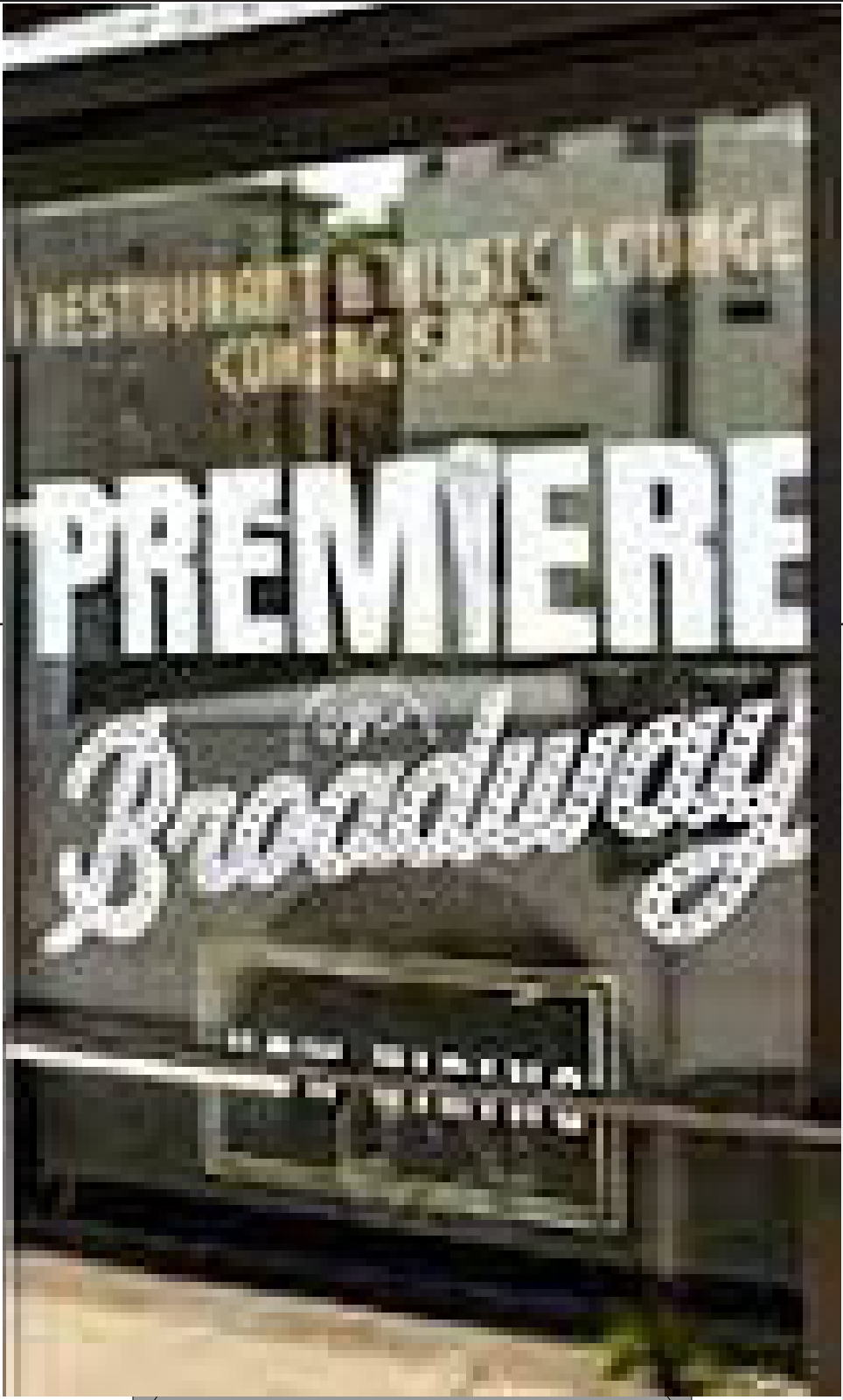
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