

COS-Ward Meetings
10/3/2022 6:30 PM

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8648 - COS-Ward Meetings
(City of Somerville Communications Department - RSJ Department)
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8648-COS-WARD MEETINGS
(CITY OF SOMERVILLE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT-RSJ DEPARTMENT)
OCTOBER 3, 2022

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[Recording in progress]

>> Hi, everyone. We'll get started in just a minute. If you can take a seat. Welcome, everyone. And thank you for joining us tonight. I'm Victoria, coordinator for city hall meetings. Before we begin, I would like you to know that live transcription is available tonight. If you would like to see live caption for this meeting, please select live captions on the screen.

>> Good evening. It is so great to see everybody, and I'm meeting staff in person, instead of through school. I'm here to hear your input and I thank the Mayor for the opportunity to listen and input, and this is so important, so many smart, very involved citizens in this community, trying to make it better. I pass on the baton to a great Mayor here.

>> Sorry. A few additional housekeeping items before we begin.

Bathrooms are located if you see outside on your left once you walk out of the cafetorium. And refreshments on the back corner there. I want to note tonight is our first ever community meeting in a hybrid format. Some of you are meeting in person and residents are also tuned in online.

Our agenda is quite packed tonight. Presentations will not be taking too deep a dive for any subject. Mainly updates.

We have established a process for questions. Once each speaker finished their presentation, they will take up to two questions from the live audience. For those in person, please raise your hand and you will be brought a wireless microphone. And then we'll take two questions from those online.

And anyone on Zoom, please write your questions on the Q&A area on your screen, and questions will be read aloud by myself or staff member to provide to the presenter.

Please turn your microphones up as we're getting some background noise.

We'll all do our best to announce, speak slowly clearly.

If we don't get to your question initially, please hold on to it. And after all of the presentations, we'll open up to Q&A and starting with questions online and going to those in person.

Around 8:00 o'clock, the meeting will come to a close and if you have questions, we ask that you e-mail them to CM@SomervilleMA.gov and we'll respond to the questions in the coming days.

Tonight's meeting is being recorded and available the next day or so.

Thank you for taking the time as we experience and go through this hybrid meeting the first time. I would like to welcome Mary Ballantyne.

>> KATJANA BALLANTYNE: Good evening. I normally walk around a little bit, but I want to be sure our viewers can see and hear us.

I want to ask a couple of questions upfront so we can figure out who's in the room and you can also get to know your neighbors.

I am wondering, would you raise your hand if this is your first meeting? Oh, wonderful. Thank you.

Would you raise your hand if you -- oh. Excuse me, I wanted to introduce the counselor at large, Christen Strezzo is here.

Would you raise your hand if you have lived in Somerville a year or less? Welcome. Would you raise your hand if you have lived in Somerville two years or less? How about three years? How about -- I'm going to skip the 4. Between 5 and so years, would you raise your hand? 10 and 15? 15 and 20? If you have lived here more than 20 years, would you raise your hand if you have lived here your entire life?

[Applause]

>> KATJANA BALLANTYNE: Wonderful. I would also like to acknowledge former congressman, Mike Pablano is in the room.

[Applause]

>> KATJANA BALLANTYNE: Would you raise your hand if you have a dog? Would you raise your hand if you walk primarily in Somerville to get around. If you use public transit? You use your bike. You use your car. Does anybody want to throw a question out there that they would like to know? Okay. How many people have cats, raise your hand. Oh. Yes. So how many people have children? How many people have children who are in the public school system, attend Somerville public schools? Okay. Great.

Okay. Wow, thank you. And I guess if you can turn to your neighbor who's on your right and say hello and introduce yourself if I don't know them.

Well, thank you. I would also like to acknowledge that the counselor [Indiscernible] is here this evening.

[Applause]

>> KATJANA BALLANTYNE: The goal of the ward city hall community meeting is to provide information, access and to develop community. My progress for all

agenda is a commitment to an open and inclusive government. My pronouns are she/her. I'm excited to be here with you this evening.

I have attended these meetings in the past as a resident, City Council lore, City Council ill president and honored to be your Mary.

[Applause]

>> KATJANA BALLANTYNE: Thank you. So you may remember these meetings as Resostat meetings. We're going to call it city mal community meetings so people can understand what they are.

So for some, this might be as we said, your first meeting tonight here for ward 7 and some of you your first time ever. And for clarity, I want to show you how city hall is, and I also empower you to get involved in city hall process. Did you want to say something? Ward 5. Thank you.

The goal of the ward city hall meeting is to provide the information. It is an understanding that Somerville and how we use city resources is equally important for residents and staff. In order to enact certain issues, we must understand Somerville today.

I want to share Somerville at a glance. We're a community that's 76 percent white. And some of our public school students represent the reversion, majority -- identify as low-income.

Every three years, there's a certain percentage of people who move out of Somerville. Does someone want to throw out some numbers there? 3 million, that's a good number.

We have a population of 81,000. Bardon. 60% of our population turnover every three years. And our city is 4 square miles and as percentage of our neighbors -- between 2010 and 2020, our population rose 7%, so we're a little over 81,000. Our jobs during that time have increased by about 880. We can use data about vehicles on the road in Ward 7.

From Broadway to winter hill, 12,000 cars and Broadway to powder house about 12,000. Warner to Harvard, I 93 and [Indiscernible] circle and [Indiscernible] square about 10,000 per day. Cedar street about 7,000, low street about 5,000, Somerville Street about 5,000.

In the last decade, 2013, our annual budget was almost 185 million. And this here year for the FY23 budget, we're a little over 30 9 million.

And these statistics secure significant change where we've been as a city. It is up to us to act what we know. These community meetings are a step in the right direction. Allowing city departments and department heads to tell their story for you and our residents and keep you informed.

Weigh also want to make sure you have access to the same people I have access to. And it is multifaceted. We must make every opportunity from my field that you do have to have access.

Our community is changing on establishing systems giving residents access to changes around them. From developers, employees, job seekers, workforce development pipelines youth, and more.

And rooted in affordability, both housing and jobs. It is the ability to live, work, and do business in Somerville. We're working to connect people.

This past spring, I hosted a forum with the developers and unions, so you can all see the construction happening around us, or that is being planned because you have been in the community meetings, so what I am trying to do and what our staff is helping us do is to make sure that you also have the access to and that you know who's coming in. Union workers wanted to make sure they knew the developments coming out.

So we invited the developers and they met with the union labor force, so they knew the pipeline of projects coming in.

That was the first of its kind, and I am going to continue doing those. One in the spring, and one in the fall. Our next one in the fall is going to be with nonprofits, and art space know the projects that are coming in and that there are workforce development opportunities. And I will continue to host these, so it is really important for me to make sure that groups are connected, and they can develop relationships and opportunities. Residents to City Staff, residents to local workforce.

Many of the city's major projects include public process to get community feedback. City hall community meetings is another vehicle for residents to meet, come together and talk about things patient to them.

Most of you play a key role to our SomerVision, it is a strategic plan, based on visions, captures community goals, values and directly identifies ongoing challenges. Goals, job substantiation, climate change, suggestion ability. And including equity. Everyone said they wanted it to be equitable and didn't want equity to be a buzz word.

The SomerVision 2040, my administration's plan for progress for all agenda. It is an open and inclusive government and we asked how do we create government for all? The answer is intentional efforts always viewed through an equity lens. And priority voices who often feel unheard. Progress always starts with listening and understanding concerns.

Here's how I have been engaging the community. And I have held 10 Covid listening sessions and understanding ideas and needs.

I have met over 15 times with seniors. I have door knocked domestic housing neighborhood twice and held two community meetings over there.

We also have a first time \$1 million for the city budget for participatory budget working groups.

Voices of Somerville survey from the fall and wanting to hear from residents what their issues are. I have met probably ten times with various youth groups, whether through job working and hear what they want, to community team center and more issues that affect them.

So I have been hearing that affordability, housing, living costs, jobs are at the top of everyone's mind. Covid impacts. People trying to figure out how to financially recover.

Health, safety, food access. Social justice. Environment, Global Warming, sustainability, transportation. How do we get around safely in Somerville?

And city infrastructure. School buildings, yes. We have some old infrastructure. Whether it is update what's underground or whether it is trying to update the buildings that are above ground, and streets. I hear a lot about streets.

Quality of life issues, we also hear a lot about those. That's one of our themes tonight. It there's Colin, we'll be talking about it, and public safety.

My administration and staff have taken concrete steps to address multiple areas of concern. Covid recovery, access, security. There's a Somerville food coalition, Somerville global markets. We have two weeks left for the global farmer's market. And EDT match programs at the Somerville farmers. We have a tab to the health program, providing free rides to grocery stores, food pantries, farmer's markets and hospital appointments.

And awarding grants to small businesses. We have free rapid tests and masks available at all libraries. We have flex funds for rental assistance.

In terms of the social progress, we almost completely staffed our racial and social Justice Department, which is wonderful. And so many V Office of Language affairs, six observations. Spanish, port geese, nap alley, Chinese mandarin and Japanese.

We have 8.4 million dollars, 10% of the Somerville school budget. And that equated also to everybody's identified youth as needing extra support of services and that's equivalent to 10 additional mental health staff at all levels, behavioral therapists, social workers and more.

In affordable housing, we added 8.5 million to the affordable housing trust fund for land acquisition, land and filled public housing, has a financing model which allows us to build nearly 300 units of affordable housing.

We have added more affordable housing on to through inclusionary zoning and Somerville land trust, about 84 units.

Here's where progress for all is headed. We're reimagining police and public safety survey as launched. We need help in hiring staff to help build out the supports that you all want in our community. We have some open positions that we're looking for, a youth services director, health despite coordinator and Chief Administrative Officer, LGBTQ coordinator, crossing guards, and I am sure staff will tell us more.

If you have concerns not mentioned tonight, we're here tonight and beyond to talk with you, know that we're hard at work in numerous areas and we are actively assessing all city activities.

As I stated in my inaugural address, my pledge to you as Mayor is I will always have an open and honest conversation with you and plans to address them. City hall

meetings are the vehicle to get that done. I thank you for your participation as we continue to build progress for all in Somerville.

[Applause]

We're going to take a couple of questions now. Please, know. You can ask questions at the end, too. We'll have a Q&A at the end. Yes?

>> Audience member: [Away from microphone].

>> KATJANA BALLANTYNE: They are going to look for the microphone to get it to you. Thank you. [Away from microphone].

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: [Away from microphone]

>> KATJANA BALLANTYNE: Canada we make sure the gentleman's name and contact information and pass it to Victoria. Thank you. We'll have it addressed and get an answer back to you.

There a couple of questions online? Yes.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: [Away from microphone].

>> KATJANA BALLANTYNE: I will leave that to Paul. I would say the metric that we -- that I was looking at the growth. So I guess, [Indiscernible] closed down.

>> The question s we added 8800 jobs did we lose some? We definitely did in the last 10 years. There have been a number of companies that moved and closed down and laid off employees. On the net, we added 36 percent more jobs than we had in the 10 years.

We see them in the retail center, growth in the square, office segment, software companies and startups and labs, we have also seen a number of biotech jobs, science jobs in [Indiscernible] and soon to come throughout the city. It is a tremendous increase of jobs. Oh. Thank you, Mayor. I am Tom Delega. For the last six years I have been the Director of that [Indiscernible].

>> KATJANA BALLANTYNE: Next, I would like to introduce Aaron Noel, our Community Engagement Specialist for the Office of Sustainability and Environment.

>> Erin: [Away from microphone]. Updates from our office. Talking about our mission. As I mentioned our office is to develop, implement policies and programs that minimize environmental impacts and greenhouse gas emissions and build resiliency and increase equity and enabling a healthy and enjoyable environment for all of the people of Somerville.

Community choice of electricity. A great way to get competitive pricing and varies throughout cycles. [Away from microphone]. Also to note within our region, greenhouse -- Greenish energy sector and also pretty full because possesses like you can opt in without permission. [Indiscernible].

So we have some new rates for November 2022 to December 2024. We're going to double the amount of renewable energy brought in. We're going to stay with

the supplier of direct energy. We'll continue to receive one bill from ever source and don't have to worry about it and have one bill.

You will not worry about an employee knock at your door. [Away from microphone]. We also get to choose from three products. You can literally do nothing and you will be in 20% premium. You can choose the basic product, the lowest rate and save about 36 percent.

And you can opt in for 100% regional, zero carbon energy.

And CCE.SomervilleMA.

The next thing we have is become a climate ambassador, a program we have been piloting for the past couple years with our office and basically you are a resident and come in for about 6 weeks with different topics. The duration of the program, looking to address a lot of equity questions we have when it comes to environmental issues and have people's help with climate action update, and [Indiscernible] so we talked about doing a program about how we can better implement hazardous waste programs within the city.

I guess the best program you can be part of and anyone can be a part. Young are people, older people, moms, and he we do have Skype ends. If you are a mom who wants to join, but worried about babysitting, we can help out because we want everyone involved in the program.

The next Somerville climate forward update. Our city's climb action plan and prioritizing equity, mitigation, adaptation and resiliency.

And we're identifying priority actions for the city to address, and we want to tap into the community hear what your concerns are. Are we doing great, on track, can we do more? What would you like to see, not want to see? And you can sign up tonight and give your e-mail, phone number and you can give comments now if you want that.

Also, coming out on the last slide. You scan the QR code, and put your contact information and also for a climate update and we have the hyperlinks. [Indiscernible].

That's about it. So we can -- next slide. Contact us from our website or e-mail, the general e-mail for the office, or me personally, and you can sign up for the newsletter and scan the QR code and you will have all of that. Any questions you have?

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: [Away from microphone].

>> No. There's no [Indiscernible]. If you want to join. With your parent's permission, you can come. [Laughing].

Back there?

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: [Away from microphone].

>> Personally, I don't know. I think I would go to -- there's an office that deal was [Indiscernible]. That's a question for her.

>> Sure. I don't know who asked the question?

>> Someone asked, what do we need to do to get a dedicated urban tree trimmer. I'm Louis Alvera and we have two ash rifts working in the department and APW, and we have tree trimmers. If there's something that needs to be trimmed, you can put in 311 and both to trim newly planted trees grown structural or when there's a dead tree or if you see a tree that needs to be trim, it is done through DPW. We have a tree trimmer. Done.

>> The next question is Tom. [Indiscernible] strategic planning and community development.

>> Tom Galligani, Acting Director of the Office of Strategic elements, otherwise known as OSP CD. It is the city's planning development agency. We have team of 70 individuals, and responsibility of focusing on the city's future, committed to developing projects, policies and programs and help create a future that includes the lives of our constituents.

We're organized into 7 organizational divisions. Ing on economic development, how's stability, nobility, planning preservation and zoning, public space and policy.

I wanted to point out in the audience, raise your hand. Rod Rosten, William black mirror and [Indiscernible]. Both economic planning developers and you just met Ellen Sheltner, Shara Luis, Director of Planning, Luis Roud --

You're going to hear from Brad and Ellen, and I will talk about economic development projects. And our economic development division focuses on three different program areas. Workforce development, funding training programs for residents to get better jobs and we try and connect people with industries growing in Somerville, particularly life sciences and also construction trades is the focus right now.

We do business development, small mom and pop businesses focus, and sector based businesses in the life science industry and green tech labs.

Finally real estate development, everything from large developers navigate their projects through and we can see the transformations we have seen, and we also do the work of buying, selling, and leasing property on behalf of the city.

And one of the big projects that in your neighborhood, we bout Armory, and we did that back in 2021, and now doing a master plan, and Advisory Committee and participating and shaped on the future of the armory. We bought it as a role in the community arts center and figuring out what form that will take. We have probably about six months more of planning to figure out what we're going to do with the armory.

If you want to comment, get an idea, or any thoughts about attending the meeting regarding the armory. That is the place to check out.

We'll talk about a planning, preservation, and zoning, we do planning and long-range planning. A lot of areas, assembly square have a neighbor plan underway, also the Davis square commercial area plan. Brick bottom, we're doing the plan right now and more to come.

And we're constantly doing plans and thinking about the future of the neighbor roads. Also rules related to demolition. Defense, you may have participated in the flag raising on the first day in January.

A lot of VINs through our preservation team. Zoning, permitting projects seeking relief, we work with folks small and large to make sure the projects are done in accordance with all of the laws.

And Broadway corridor, we're going to do municipal zoning card nation. ? All square. All of the projects are half in Somerville and half in Medford, bringing challenges because both cities' rules are different.

We have a grant and applying that money to our close friends in medical Ford thinking about the future in that area. The train station will be important and helping with the development what you want to consider. So more to come.

I will stop and take a few questions about economic development and planning and then turn it over to my colleague, Ellen. Question over here?

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: [Away from microphone]. In the public schools here. With all of this talk about the future of our neighborhoods, I am wondering what are your plans? What are you going to build and why? And [Indiscernible].

>> You want to take a stab at that?

>> KATJANA BALLANTYNE: Sure. So schools are managed under our Office of Infrastructure and asset management and we'll give a process in the rules. Not just that department, but [Indiscernible].

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: [Away from microphone].

>> KATJANA BALLANTYNE: No. That's okay. So this department is not in charge of building anything. It is putting the recipe in for the zoning. Sort of what can that land be used for? And they also manage community meetings around that zoning, and the Ward counselor manages the -- any projects that are private property. So there's a process on that. So I'm not punting. I will give it at a high level of the as I said earlier, we have a lot of assets, both underground and above ground. My team has been working on understanding what all of the assets are, understanding what condition they are in. In terms of schools, if we want to rebuild a school, for example, there's a process we go through because the we get funding through the state. For example, an enrollment study. What are the projections of enrollment five or ten years down road and once we know what the projection are, we can plan how we're going to work within the assets. Why do we do the enrollment study? It is a requirement by the state when building a new school.

First in the process is the enrollment study. We funded that for the budget. They are doing an enrollment study. And that's on the school side.

On the city side, we're looking at our assets and where things are now. And trying to figure out where we can get money to improve our assets. There's a

department that manages the assets, and we know that schools are one of the assets that needs to be invested in.

>> Right down the middle? Oh. Counselor.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: [Away from microphone]. [Away from microphone].

>> The question generally relates to keeping rents affordable, and despite all of the growth and economic development, we're definitely concerned about that. Also facing a challenge in the region, not building enough housing that demand has. It is a problem not just here, but in the state. And City of Somerville is doing much to these. Developments, and large corporations pay into the housing development projects and we can use money from the developers and create permanent housing, all shapes, sizes, rentals and home ownership as well.

And you have housing stability and we'll dive into different programs they offer to keep people in their homes and to support them so they can stay here in Somerville. Mayor, do you have something to add?

>> KATJANA BALLANTYNE: We have to use every tool possible that there's. As a municipality, we have to use every ordinance or every law we can do. We have worked on that and done that right now.

We also need to give pressure up to the state, to allow them to allow us to do laws, whether it is on rent stabilization real estate transfer see ifs, and the other pronged approach is, how do you innocent advise people who are creating housing to build more housing? Do they get a [Indiscernible] bonus, and do we put that in housing overlay. We have use every tool possible.

Over the last dozen years, foster and Cambridge have had over 2000 thousand jobs and not built the housing to sustain that.

The pressure goes outlet and people look to Somerville, and people look at it as the box to Boston and Cambridge practice the council identified there are 132 thousand units of housing shortage in Boston and came ridge. Some of them have 3 3,000 housing units in four square miles.

As I mentioned, Boston has 90 square miles and Cambridge 45 square miles. There has to be pressure to the surrounding community to build density. Using every tool possible on policy, and we are. In addition to using our voice to pressure up at the state level with our regional partners.

>> I want to answer your question about the retail jobs of a assembly. When we were tacking those jobs and we did all of the way up to the pandemic. All of those assembly jobs loaded [Indiscernible] to 21 percent, and people coming and going. We haven't tracked that since the pandemic started, but I would say it is probably about the same. One fifth to a quarter of the jobs are held by somebody else.

I will turn it over next -- oh. One online question.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: [Away from microphone].

>> The question is, is there a high level plan for how the development will occur across the city? And our guidance document, SomerVision 2040, went to the process two years ago, updating SomerVision 2030, and this is the basic building blocks and thinking about the growth in our community.

Three different areas, transportation areas, assembly row or [Indiscernible] yards, and you have types of things going into something new. Like junk yards to homely more potential uses like housing and life sciences in particular.

And from there, we breakdown and do detailed plans of each of our neighborhoods, you look at the Somerville square and Union Square about five years ago to dive in deep and figure out what are the specific kinds of uses and how do we combine those uses and a vital place providing jobs and community for each other and create open space, we desperately need for the city. I hope that was the question.

There's another question if you want to take it. Should I take it or wait until the end?

>> [Away from microphone].

>> We have time to take it.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: [Away from microphone].

>> KATJANA BALLANTYNE: So you said what kind of advocacy?

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: [Away from microphone].

>> KATJANA BALLANTYNE: Yeah. So yes, the City of Somerville has. We actually filed a lawsuit about seven years ago and lost the lawsuit. As you can imagine, they put in a new runway, 33 [Indiscernible]. And it is to take off in the Northwest. Airplanes are supposed to take off flying into the window. This is a State and Federal thing, not so much a municipality. They are supposed to take off into the window. The runway owned by mass port and airways by the Feds. It is the congressional organization that can help and spear back.

Briefly, if you take off into the window and it is coming out of the Northwest. And they are given this sort of latitude on runway in the sky. Depending on how the winds are, they might veer off of that and might come identifier into Somerville. It is the winds conditions that control it.

Again, the City of Somerville did collect information so you can call 311 and think share 245 back, the advocacy side has been primarily on the fed side and state reps. It would be [Indiscernible] and senator Daly.

>> Thank you. We'll be around all evening. Feel free to harass us. We're friendly people and can't wait to meet you.

We're going to welcome the Director of Office of Stability.

>> Thank you so much. I wanted to thank the person in the back for their last question about rent, and a perfect segue to hear about the housing stability.

I want to say, it is confusing sometimes we have an office of housing and Office of Housing stability. Typically concentrating on the unit of affordable housing and housing stability, we're the people side. And we're the people to come to if you are a tenant, landlord and have issues with housing stability and hopefully we add up with a more stable Somerville.

I wanted to thank the people of Somerville, all of you. Consistently, every opportunity we had for community input. When the Mayor says to people, what's important to Somerville? You are all telling us that housing affordability and stability is one of the key elements in this city. I find that whether or not housing stability is impacting on each one of ooh. But rather, Somerville cares about their neighbors and community and equity. I really wanted to recognize that, and to thank the Mayor from the city, being so supportive of every idea we tried. We don't have all of the answers for housing stability and a lot of the reason is because it is controlled by state law.

We're always trying to think, what are we going to do here in Somerville and how can we build on it?

I want to tell you our mission statement in housing stability. We work to prevent, one, in volunteer displacement of Somerville residents. Two. Help residents who need help finding now housing and hopefully they are affordable to them. Three, we develop policies and programs that combat displacement and enhance housing availability in Somerville.

What do we do? Services and policy and programs. And first slide talking about our services. I encourage everybody, we are a busy office and I think we had 120 0 coming for services and each one of those represents a household, not just one person. We're busy, but we love to help.

One, we help people access to financial resources, both for tenants and fallen behind in their rent or maybe they lost their job and struggling to pay their rent, or maybe a 70% increase. Homeowners struggling to pay mortgages or taxes. I can't promise you that everybody is eligible for every program, but I will tell you we'll do our best to get you eligible, to get you the help you need.

For example, since Covid, we hired five temporary banking assistance advocates because getting rental assistance were so complicated. We have now brought in over 4.5 million dollars for rental assistance since Covid began. We're really proud of that. On the program side, what can we do? We have taken the Federal money from Covid and put it into something called our flex account. An account that helps us to be able to pay when people are struggling. Again, what are the programs we can put in place? What are the financial research available to help people concretely immediately? Rental assistance is a big one.

We provide case management and help stabilize tenancies and assist with housing. People know you have to wait sometimes ten years. Federal Government pays most of your rent and you pay 30% of your income.

Many people have to wait. You get the voucher and it is hard to come up with a place in Somerville. We have something called the Somerville program, incentives to landlords to take new tenants into the program.

We're trying to think of what we're trying to do and it is harder and harder in Somerville to keep our low-income folks with housing.

Lots of housing research, people with housing, affordable housing and rate housing.

We do referrals for placement. We have contacts with two legal service providers and home with ARPA funding and legal services and folks that work with us and representing many of the tenants that are vulnerable and legal actions.

I say that because studies have shown in Somerville, 90 percent of tenants were represented by counsel and 10 percent low-income without representation.

And we have this tenant not paying any rent and have mental health issues and need help. We're trying to not online look at the perspective of the tenant, but why are they trying to evict and making it possible for that tenant to stay in the place and try to find win-win solutions.

Also doing foreclosure, and if you know someone struggling and potentially facing foreclosure or taxes. And we'll try and get you into one of our contracts.

We do a lot of outreach and education and [Indiscernible] tradition and some people the housing stability notification act, the first of its coined in the state and required that tenants being evicted get specific notices in hir own language. And I see [Indiscernible] is expanding this. And I will get back to him. Where can they get help, what are their tenant flights and we enacted that one. And had a law was expanded so every new tenant in the City of Somerville should be getting a comprehensive document about tenant's rights and resources when they start a tenancy.

If it is not happening, call 311, make a complaint, and as I said, the first ticket is only a warning. And we're not advising them, and we're trying to make sure it happens.

In terms of direct services, we also get advice, information, workshops for tenant and landlords, and tenant advocates. If you are interested in having a training on tenant law or know your rights, we would be happy to do so.

I also wanted to talk about the really challenging piece of the policy question, and ask, what do we do about the mass?

The city and state, as you know back in 1994 and 1996, I was a lawyer at Cambridge and actually there were about four different cities in the commonwealth during that time. There was say state-wide ballot referendum and it passed. There can't be any rent control in Massachusetts.

One of the things we looked at people saying, okay. What can we do that could be unstabilizing and work for this community today and this time, not 1994. Boston took the initiative and putting together a proposal for a policy they have to send to the

state house. Same here. We either have to go to the state house for permission for this legislation or for just Somerville.

We want to make sure what will be fair for Somerville and the Mayor, I think your second day in office, maybe, came and testified at the state house on safety and look at what's fair. We come to all of you, landlords, tenants, and what do you want from Somerville? We need permission from the state to do that.

I told you about the housing notification act. And the state, we're very proud. The law changed a few years ago. And expenses \$350 or one month's rent. Nick trying to raise ten thousand dollars between moving expenses, first, last and not mentioning [Indiscernible]. And we updated all of that in our law and gave protections to seniors, people with disabilities and under our conga law. We're trying hard because every time they get taking out of the rental projects and they convert. If anyone is using units from the market the tenants are treated fairly.

What else? A real estate transfer fee. We can't do that, without funding or affordable housing, that's one piece we have to do.

Let reality transfer fee, from high end transactions and go to affordable housing. We have provided leadership in the state on this issue because it could be \$6 to \$10 million a year, and for the most part real estate has gone up so dramatically, one percent or if I have percent of sale is minuscule.

Somerville we were not going to apply to individual homes. If you are living in the home you are buying? Doesn't apply. Just for institutional people who are buying and selling properties. We have all of your support on this, but we need more avenue news for local funding for affordable housing.

Right to counsel, and not only funding for legal services here in Somerville, but both low and moderate income participates and but small unit landlords have every opportunity for counsel.

We have come close to passing this year, and there has been movement and we're going to try and work on to again next year. Trying to pass state laws is a long term proposition and doesn't happen frequently.

We're working on the steering committee for something called the homes act. You have probably heard in the criminal justice world of "Everybody deserves a second chance." People with felonies, we get a chance. At some point you followed the law and done nothing wrong, you get to start over. The same thing for convictions.

Right now, it can haunt you for the rest of your life. Even if the tenant won their case, if it was dismissed or it was no fault.

There's tracking from landlord companies looking to see and as soon as they see you have an vising on the database and you have had a conviction. Not this they are bad people, but hey, I will have someone without a conviction and it is really important that vulnerable people get a chance.

And lastly, the opportunity for purpose. We find education and outreach, and there are buildings that tenants are at risk. And somewhere at tree month, [Indiscernible]. They are five families long, and 25 years and they just got notices to quit.

We need to know we're doing everything for the folks and we do the best we can within a system allowing for corporatization. There's a huge increase of ownership in so many sop and [Indiscernible]. The last time we looked in the nine months before Covid started, 69 percent of Owl all housing sales in Somerville were one hundred percent cash transactions. Think about what that says for who is purchasing property.

It used to be Somerville and Bedford, now it is national, international, different structures and can't even tell who are the others.

And we have another opportunity to purchase and if passed at the state house saying any tenant or housing organization pay market prices for a building and then buy the building even at the nonprofit before going to market.

There are so many buildings saying oh, if we had that ahead of time, we could have reserved that for tenancies and that's a piece of the puzzle and Somerville making sure when buildings are up for sale, hey, can we come as a community and get the resources and.

And that's basically some of the propositions and we're always wanting to hear your ideas and constantly coming up with different ways to be anal to do that.

That's it for now, unless anybody has any questions? .

[Applause]

>> I will leave that to you. Thank you. Question?

>> Commentary.

>> Hi, everybody. City Council lore at large. [Indiscernible] in the house? Somewhere. Definitely somewhere.

Yeah, I wanted to say that Ellen is amazing and if you want it basically read everything that Ellen just talked about, the wonderful exhibit at the armory called statistics. And going over at lot of the statistics over \$2 billion of properties in Somerville owned by LLCs outside of our community and state. And one of the major issues with our housing markets, have you people from California, New England all across the world, buying up our communities. And Sassoon, buying at this moment, multi-billionaire, for hair. It is very weird.

We need to know that housing is one of these issues that connects everyone in Somerville, whether you are a low-income person, whether you own your home, or you can barrel keep up with your mortgage. We need to come together and fight for it. It is really the states, and really corporate capital getting in our way right now. And we need to do this for the future survival of our city and I am very thankful for the work Ellen's office does because they are on the front line with cash and original

organizations and keeping housing in Somerville and no one has to feel the prediction of housing in Somerville. Thank you very much.

>> Good evening, everybody. [Indiscernible] okay? Thanks for hanging out. I'm Brad Rawson, serving as the Director of Mobility. Brian, do you want to introduce yourself?

>> BRIAN POSTLEWAITE: Heim Brian Postlewaite, Director of Engineering and we're learning how to not stand in the way of the projector.

>> Brad: I hope folks get a sense especially in the pros of how holistic it is in Somerville. We are both residents and proud parents of our public school system and the fact that you are all involved in civics is one of the many things making this community so great.

We're going to go over the schedule for collaborative work. You got a senses from Tom and Ellen. We're going to talk about moment and infrastructure and look at the slides and think about the fact that our goal is not just moving people, but moving people safe. We're talking about moving people to doctor appointments, job fairs, grocery shopping and making things available for residents.

We're not coming up with the ideas, you are.

First thing we're going to hit on quickly, I don't know if anybody has heard, our community has worked for three or four decades for our green line extension. It is happening because none of us or you gave up when the chips were down. In 2016, the state was going to counsel this project. Crazy. We dared them to did it and they backed down and we saved this thing.

Our community for 15 years and I remember a different admission r-administration had the audacity they were going to cancel it. No way, our community will never put up with it. We have lived through impacts disrupting our lives and sleep, about you we strongly believe it is worth it. We strongly believe because you strongly believe that it is important to get our residents a way around and small business neighborhoods. Joe, how long have you been advocating to are the business community the merchants from green square need the green line. Think about all of the things the green line unlocks for business growth and access to parks and different places.

We have a couple of months. In November, we have the most recent date it is been published and a little bad because of the weather.

A lot of interdependence work and Brian and Steve work on these issues. Brian, anything you want to add to green line? Keep the faith and make sure people are riding the trains to our districts who don't just want to be the bedroom communities, but bring people to our retailers, especially the mom and pops.

Community path. Good news, it is happening. And this is not a foregone conclusion. The state could have canceled this thing and taken the path away from the green line extension, and because our residents have the incredible ability to rally, show up and advocate for our community, the community path is going to be built.

People realize getting to the library, City Hall and high school. And having your kids more free range. If you are an educator having the choice to ride the subway or your bike. And more places to walk your dog and not have to dodge traffic.

It will be open maybe a month, month and a half after the green line does, and unfortunately, it will be like January 1st, and next year, we'll have more opportunities.

This will lead all of the way downtown. And for the family wanting to go to the museum and it is super exciting.

And also using this cycle to help people understand there will be a learning curve and the community path will be different than what you see around the square today. Part of the reason the green line is so expensive is because you are building next to a railroad corridor and commuter trainings going 60 miles per hour and you all go out 20 feet each direction and you go to Maxwell street and cedar street, looks a little bit more like this.

Put yourself in our shoes, DPW, responsible for plowing the snow and some of the green's teams responsible for public safety.

Out of respect for you all, we're using this opportunity to educate folks. It will be a little different and there will be growth pains and let's get through the learning together. And the first big snow storm, the only way to get across is cross country skis.

Last, but not least. This can be an entire hour discussion, but wanting to be the [Indiscernible] version civics and we don't want to spend an hour on street construction.

Job number 1, don't let anybody in our community get run over by a speeding vehicle. Everything else is details.

[Applause]

>> We approached this from a position of humility and we inherited a transportation system rooted in 1950s public policy, build higher, speed through communities and urban communities.

We had all sorts of problems. Our residents are demanding better and safer streets. Our job is to alleviate traffic problems and we're always respectful of our residents, it may take an extra 20 minutes to get through the neighborhood -- we think the tradeoff is worth it because nobody should be run over in our streets.

Speed bumps certain types of traffic signaling, established best practices and we're learning from the best and all of the way around the country as well as Boston and Cambridge. Brian, how big is your team?

>>

>> BRIAN POSTLEWAITE: About a dozen team members and just hired more teams to challenge the efficiency.

These are all really great new infrastructure tools we're using in the city, but manufacture our contractors have 2409 done this before, and many of the communities don't do pedestrian safety island or speed bumps to control traffic.

There's a chalcogenide everything to work with contractors how to build them right. If they don't build them right, we go out and re construct them.

These are important learning curves that we build things that that are new, novel and go throughout the country and the city, and many of these tools are new here and we're learning how to inspect them and install them in our climate and culture.

>> Our learning curve is designing streets for people and I want to give a shout it out DPW, and fire department who responds to 20, 30 calls per day, a big apparatus around our streets. And worked with focuses and forecast, how does this turn feel, working around land, and speed bumps and islands. It is a commitment to safety and responsive governments and we're really pleased to what you all are telling us to do. And issues from day-to-day. We're here, the and here to speak to you and fine tuning it.

Last thing I want to say before brine talks about sub utilities. People pushing strollers, and seniors working with devices. Adrienne, you have been such a game changer adding capacity and making sure we lead to accessibility. And any folks have specific questions, Adrienne will be hereinafter the next presentation. We'll stick around until the last question is answered. Thanks, everybody.

>> BRIAN POSTLEWAITE: Brad, you said something about forecasting, weather is changing and right now, we're finishing up a two year stormwater master plan, and one of the things that came out of our compliment r- climate study before the master plan. Our rain storms have been more intense every year. We had a relatively dry 2022 standpoint. That's not typical. 2021 is a lot wetter and why you should expect it to continue.

We did a stormwater master plan coming out in November and that will be highlighting many of the projects we have studied over the past year, and pulled these in a priority so we can start chipping away at the flooding that happens in Somerville, creating a safer Somerville all year-round throughout all of the weather, as best we can, with 150 year old infrastructure.

Second, this stormwater master plan is going to roll immediately into our combined sewer overflow study, which we are working hand in hand with Cambridge and the NWURA. This is a study, not only now -- we're finishing looking at reducing flooding and now we have to look at reduces flooding request it it comes into our river bodies, meaning the mystic and Charles river, and Alewife brook. And we're trying to create a framework and minimize the amount of sewage over flows that connect.

We should go into questions. We talked about infrastructure and mobility.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: [Away from microphone].

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: [Away from microphone].

>> Brad: Thank you for question. We're also concerned with safety in schools. In [Indiscernible]. I would say it wasn't enough. At sick more and Helena, if you look at crosswalk across sick more, it is narrow with big curb extensions and reduce the amount of time for pedestrians to cross traffic. We're doing it at the line at medical Ford, and in the future, those are the things we would like it work on.

And another thing, planning on speed humps, at sick more and including schools. We have 350 degree strategies.

We look at narrow and traffic signal planning and [Indiscernible], right now, staff, and from Brian and mine, working on the [Indiscernible] and central and counselor, asked me and we're working on those things and have a new timing plan hopefully using the red light running.

I am also hoax about this, every day there are risks and although we are able to deliver ten times the number of safety projects than we did a number of years ago. We have such a massive backlog, and we depend on what you are doing, Sam. Coming to the meetings and holding us accountable for Somerville neighborhoods. I hope that's a good enough answer.

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: [Away from microphone]

>> BRIAN POSTLEWAITE: First off, yes. We were surprised, too. Second of all, yes, we'll be reconstructing the tower. They are smaller than what we specified, and trying not to make them as tall as the ones on [Indiscernible]. And a route for fire engines.

We work with the [Indiscernible] and fire department and making sure they are the right height and the ones on sick more were higher and shallower than we have expected.

>> Brad: It is getting late and Karen with the UHHS director and next on the agenda.

>> Karen: Hi, I'm Karen Carol, new HHS director, Health and Human Services and I feel like it is speed dating and you can ask questions after, and I will run through some quick updates from you are department.

Myself, I started in June, thrilled to be here, and in charge of expanding our services, including health equity in the City of Somerville so many with you are partners and I am also looking at growth in the department and we have questioning including disputed director and ISD and environmental science and all sorts of things there. Shared services regional coordinator, doing more regional work and advocate for that kind of work and we can often leverage resources from our surrounding communities.

I will not read through all of those, the youth and Veteran's department, and working out a lot of initiatives within the city and work with schools and partners to better coordinate those services.

Lots of work going on there, and a few positions, half of these have been hired or are in the process. Looking forward to the update there.

The next slide, of course, Covid. And unfortunately, Covid is here, and as you probably have heard lately, the numbers are increasing again. We're seeing our basic water numbers coming up, an indicator foreseeing lots of people getting sick from it.

And we'll watch these trends, still, daily, weekly, talking about the state.

The good news is, we're not where we were two years ago, where we have no tools to fight this virus. We understand the importance of masking as the numbers go up. We have now boosters that are improving over time to match the variants that we have in our community. A number of you are getting your booster and the city will be offering those as well. And a great way to protect yourself and family and also projecting services and we realized those types of things go up as the weather gets colder.

Practice prevention and as the numbers go up, we encourage people to wear masks and over along that table, have I brought along masks as well as antigen test kits, a way of assessing your contagiousness and whether you have Covid or not. You should stay home.

I encourage people to take tests and we have more and lots of them. Getting them at our safe buildings and libraries.

Our website will tell you where these kits are, and any updates on testing and boosters. We have pretty good rates here in Somerville, but we'll continue to focus on populations that may have -- that we haven't reached quit as effectively as other groups in the state, and we want to be sure our health data is good as it can be, and we understand who is still struggling to gain access to these important tools.

Finally, I want to mention the supervised consumption sites, in the City of Somerville, there had been has been a lot of strategies for people who use drugs. It is an effective site offering people a safe place to use drugs and it saves lives. There are a lot of benefits and this is a [Indiscernible] in and of 2self and we'll have more chance to talk about it.

It is an unfamiliar concept and a little scary to some.

The data is there, and not only reduces 911 calls, and it reduces needles and other instances of violence and crime.

You also know people are more likely to get help if they are provided an opportunity it live, and also essential health services they might not ordinarily access.

The supervised consumption sites, one part of what we do. There's a nurse on-site, providing essential care that's costly for folks, and link them to other services and we know this is also an avenue for people to get help.

There will be lots more information. I wanted to give you a timeline of what happened already. Much of it to the credit of others here in the room. I was not here for it. There was and needs assessment in 2021 and feasibility study 2022, and on the website and you can't find it we'll help you.

How this might be feasible, how will it get funded? How much does it cost? Staffing? All of those things.

There is several community meetings as well as advisory.

At this point, we have several departments in this room tonight, who are diving into the needs feasibility studies and all of the things that need to be understood well before the project can be received.

Thank you to my colleagues who are putting in a lot of time and getting to the details of specific sites mentioned in the plan.

And that's where we're at, and hopefully to get to more definitive, where can this thing be and how can we move forward?

I think that's my last slide. Do I have another one? It is a pleasure to be here tonight. Thank you for having me. We're down at the annex, or you can reach me through the city phone or e-mail and wherever you want to talk about these things. Thanks again.

I will introduce Denise Molina Capers.

>> DENISE MOLINA CAPERS: Good evening. I am freezing in here. Please, bear with me. I would like it welcome to the podium as well, Adrienne Pomeroy.

Our State Department, although we post divisions, we work as a team, and so I would like Adrienne to be here with me and begin our presentation. I will try to keep it quick even though it is a little bit complex what our department does. I'm sure everyone has questions. Myself and Adrienne will be available afterwards for answering any questions that you have.

If we are not able to answer your questions at this point in time, please leave your information and we'll get back to you. The Department of racial and social justice leads the city's equity efforts and collaborates with shareholder to eliminate constitutional and structural systems and create racial inequities, social disparities, and injustices.

Huge job. Right now, we're prioritizing specific initiatives. As far as our RSJ department being developed. Our RSJ coordinator, and community engagement specialist and public information officer, Haaxon brooks.

We'll also be announcing, presenting the data that was collected by the RSJ youth league in partnership with several graduates of Harvard graduate school and we had youth create a research project to consider a design that will be housed in the RSJ department that will give you in the city an opportunity to participate in a meaningful and inclusive way in the democratic process.

And that means we'll get real time, what are the issues concerning them and what do they want to talk about, put action behind.

This information will be shared by you who conducted the study, sometime in November.

Recently, we held on this September 20 and September 22nd, the Department of Public Affairs and Department of Health and Human Services and had trainings so City Staff, front line workers and community leaders and what I mean by community leaders, people who are known as the go to person in the community. And not someone with the title of community leader.

We're talking about home grown people. Neighbor down the block that you can trust and you want to talk to and you they can provide resources and trust.

And provided by Zoom and lifeline locations and Riverside community care. 100 community individuals preregistered for the training and over 90 participants participated over two days. We were super excited and for this reason, we're offering three additional training dates and participants will be able to practice techniques and collaborate with other local partners and we want to be sure because RSJ department is community-driven, we want to be sure an entire community is equipped to be able to help each other out and requirements from a trusted individual.

And for hate and bias incidents, established a system for reporting. I am excited to say we're in the process of implementing a case management system known as file [Indiscernible]. And this system, we were able to select so it keeps the information confidential. A system often used by attorneys and legal professionals and with this tool, we were able to track hate and bias incident complaints, [Indiscernible] and 311 and other parts of the city are receiving complaints by constituents.

And compact in and all information relevant to these cases and if we need to provide a report of specific incidents if requested at any point in time.

This allows us to keep real time connections with those persons who are filing the complaints giving them specific updates on their particular case.

For reimagining releasing and public safety, the analysis has completed the phase or facts finding and focus groups and staff and community members and that analysis is also being done. The next and final phrases. Recommendation development and finding and report development and presenting the findings to the community.

Let community focus groups is a critical way for us to receive community feedback and drive our initiative about policing and public safety in a way informed by all community members, including our City Council members, including those in our gullible population, who are often not felt heard or often intimidated and can be bold and edge powered to let you know what is concerning them, what do they need and want?

And police stationing public service perception survey is published and available in six languages and also available in hard copy if requested.

At the end, I will give you multiple ways to contact us if you want a hard copy survey.

The RSJ community ambassadors playing a critical role of power and engagement in the community of Somerville and especially the most vulnerable and will be announced in November as well.

We have an evaluation committee made up of unit and [Indiscernible]. The Art Department will not be doing that arts and community because we want to be remain a neutral party in this and make it fair for all who have applied.

I am happy to say, we're soon going to public micropages and giving specific instructions on all of your elections and that will happen in November.

RSJ fund, the purpose of racial and social justice system and addressing racial inequality, and used to support community partners in the efforts in these structures.

So we are conducting through the month of October and November focus groups, city departments and community members residents, workers, in order to get more information around impact areas and the community funds to be used for specifically.

And civilian oversight, and RSJ is tasked for creating what that will look like in Somerville.

We'll be announcing the official task force members in November as well. And the task force will be trained, informed and knowledgeable about what this is and how it functions across models and align the awareness with the needs of the city and voiced by constituents.

We're using this task force to increase transparency and public trust in the process. We want to be sure be bring this task force together with representations of the Somerville community and experts on the subject matter to have informed decision and oversight.

Last, but not least, all of the Commission housed and supported by the State Department, the people for disabilities and women's Commission and there are four seats open for each and we'll keep it open until we fill all four seats.

Please get into touch with us at RSJ@Somerville.gov and I will leave an e-mail for number you can text if that's easier for you. Thank you.

>> Good evening. Thank you for those who gathered here and we appreciate you meeting with us. I'm Adrienne Pomeroy, the ADA or otherwise known as the American with disability act coordinator for the City of Somerville and also a resident of so many sop and I live here, too. And which I first moved here, I [Indiscernible]. I have a very big soft spot in my heart for this area. .

With that said, it is true that Somerville Commission forepersons with disability and I have the honor being the staff liaison. And specifically we're looking for four individuals and three of these individuals are persons who identify with the disability and one spot is for a family member of the person with disability.

And they currently meet the second Tuesday evening of the month from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. on Zoom and you may e-mail AVA@SomervilleMA.gov for more information.

Going forward in spring of this year, I was able to survey my colleagues about the knowledge of the ADA within their department, and I am very encouraged that so many of my colleagues in relationship roles actually have a great working knowledge of

the ADA, and I really encourage as this will help me implement trainings for my colleagues and staff. And what better way to start with our first responders. I'm thrilled to bring in ADA training at the end of October to our fearless firefighters and EM T's and I'm very excited about that. And we'll be working with the police department as well for training and then going from there.

Finally, by the beginning of November, it will be your turn to be able to tell me and my colleagues what your accessibility and ADA concerns are within the city, through the ADA community survey, so be on the lock for that at the beginning of November.

As I said, I'm Adrienne Pomeroy, and I can be reach add the ADA@SomervilleMA.gov.

The number you can text is (781) 80 8-8 344. And [Indiscernible].

Now, I would like to introduce.

>> Good evening. I'm Charlie [Indiscernible]. Police chief. I have a little history here, spent 32 years at the police department, and retired in 2015 and called by in 2020. I work very closely about [Indiscernible]. And racial and social justice and I have a meeting weekly for the last year, and I'm excited in the sense that what's happening here, which I came back after six years of being away, it is different.

Obviously, the demographics changed considerably, and those who have been here for 20, 30 years, a whole different Somerville and those who have moved here recently don't know that you are forming a new Somerville and something you would want as you move forward into the future. And as ani-throw [Indiscernible]. Moving the whole reimagining the policing process along into the future. And the analysis study and staffing operations and analysis, I request that be done in and put it in the budget.

I think it is an important subject. The last study done back in 2001, and many of the recommendations put in place are no longer valid and some of them never put into place. For the most part, the staffing analysis going to be coming out will have a whole new dimension to the police department.

Before I highlight, usually what happens in these types of meetings and meetings in the past, and super friends in particular, and before I do that, I wanted to give you more recent process and discussions and post community policing. Some of us have back in the mid-80s. And award both on the day shift and afternoon shift and based on staffing. Previously, most recently, rather, 7 officers assigned to this unit and I believe we're down to four now.

As of now, for update purposes, that option has been somewhat expanded and reassigned to [Indiscernible].

We have been recognized for the policing program in the past, and I'm hoping as we move forward with the staffing analysis and move forward for recommendations from the staffing analysis will be able to bring back the policing unit in some way, shape, or form.

Another talk, resource officers at school. And currently school resource officers, two assigned to the high school and one at the grade level schools. And that right now, by way of voting of school committee was temporarily paused and those three police officers reassigned to staffing and steps program, similar to school resource program and in geographical resource officer and assigned a particular award and presentations at the grade level school and follow that grade up to the point of high school so the kids get to know those particular officers.

Accreditation is often the topic of discussion. For those who don't know, Somerville police department. The accreditation process entails an assessment process Massachusetts police association and really started back in the 90s as a state entity, and now a private entity. And about 30 or so the department has to meet and 2002, we had reassessed department standards and the most recent audit, including about 27 or so, new standards coming up from the police reform bill.

I am sure many of you are familiar with the police reform bill and the govern signed into legislation. It was meant to increase transparency and accountability and it has done that with the Commission, called the post Commission police officer's standards and training. Nine people who were appointed by the govern and Attorney General. And that Commission is tasked with the certification, first time in Massachusetts that we actually -- certification, every police officer in Massachusetts has to be certified. And this certified process includes a review of that officer's disciplinary record, past history and that certification is good for three years.

Every three years, an officer has to get decertified. And the task of decertified police officers.

And based on their circumstances who have been decertified and all of this information, databases created and training, increased training on bias and things, and the databases they have analysis for certification includes centralized beta base so that all of the information is being stored and tracked by this Commission.

And departments and police departments not only hire better candidates.

And if I were decertified in Massachusetts and I tried to show up from a state, and it is a tool, and civilian and six out of the nine civilians and I think there are three law enforcement on the task force.

Next slide, please.

Crime stats. Citywide index increased [Indiscernible] percent over the last year and 11 percent over the last two years. In Ward 5, 14 percent increase in one year and 5 percent over two years.

This is not certifies crime in the sense of crime and basically motor vehicle theft and bike theft, car breaks, motor vehicle parts and motor vehicle theft.

Inward 5, particularly, there's a number of car break ins of late, and I would ask, what do we do about that? Normally speaking, you as residents have our part to do and we as a police have our part to do. Lock your cars and I know that sounds repetitive and you hear it all of the time. You would be very surprised people leaving

their cars open and the other company and whether the values have changed. Don't leave your car running and now, you will have automatic stats and somehow the car is open and the crime of opportunities and if you want to try and lock your cars, don't leave them running.

If you see something suspicious, saying this. Especially in the night. I know people are out to all hours of the morning, if you see something going on, call and have a car come by and see if they can identify somebody breaking into a car. Our part we try and take our crime analysis unit and cars and certain times and crime establishes and we'll deploy those officers and respect Wards during that time period.

We have a detective out of the regional task force for catalytic converter thefts, and not just so many sop and down the East Coast, and that particular theft -- basically, our resources are investigated based on violent crime, severity of the crime and factors involved in the crime.

>> As I stated, holidays are starting to come, so with that, people are going on vacation, leaving their homes and again, you see this information all of the time, but I think people become desensitize the in the sense they just did don't do it.

I am hoping that if you are going on vacation and leave clock your house, make sure your car is liked and most importantly, lighting is best. Having light on year-round, utilities and lamps and things like that, put it on a timer when you leave. I do that even if leaving for the weekend. I have lights on the first level just to show someone might be home.

I would think today's day and age, home surveillance, you can buy something at Home Depot or on the ring services, .

These are resources and again, I will put that up for you. And pay attention to the core unit listed at the top and the core unit is located within the police department. Probably five or six people there now. And respond to referrals as part of an incident and someone needing additional services. With that being said, if you have incidents and if not, I will be hereinafter to any questions you may have. Thank you.

>> Any questions? You can't talk loud and I can't hear. [Laughing].

>> AUDIENCE MEMBER: I would like to know what [Indiscernible]. [Away from microphone].

>> I will have the Mayor -- that's one of the reasons we are having the staff and operations' study and hoping we can work with the recommendations they make, and we look forward to getting some of this worked out. Mayor?

>> KATJANA BALLANTYNE: Thank you for the question. I was trying to give the same answer. I funded a staffing and operational analysis study of the police departments and they are in the process of finishing that up, the consultants that are working with us and analyzing the trends that have happened in Somerville and try to suggest for us with a they think the best staffing should be and the operations.

>> Are there any other questions? [Indiscernible].

>> Charlie: Good evening. Thank you for hanging in of the I will be brief. The fire department, we'll be adding a sixth link next year, and the counselor's [Indiscernible] neck of the woods, we're thrilled about that and have to touch into that neighborhood.

At the heart of Ward 5, engine 7 and 265 Highland Avenue, the basically the dead center of the ward. At the top of the ward, headquarters at walnut and [Indiscernible] street.

And lower portion of the ward near the fire station and somewhere around [Indiscernible] street and near tower 1.

Right now, as of this week, the average response time for the fire department for the city is 3 minutes 29 seconds, a very impressive response. It is such a congested city.

Next slide, please.

I had a short video here, and unfortunately, it is not working tonight. I want to touch on a problem we have in the city. We have far too many porch fires than -- porch fires are extremely dangerous at Somerville because of the density of the city. When we have a fire at the building it spreads rapidly when a fire spreads outside, it is without the detection of smoke detectors or sprinklers and often spreads multiple floors before it is even noticed and enters the building quickly spreads quickly to the building next door.

The video was going to show, we have a big problem people putting out cigarettes in potted plants, recycle bins or flicking them off the porch below or in the mulch.

The big push, if you smoke, use a metal can full of sand and make sure the cigarette butt it put out. That's my presentation tonight. Thank you very much. Any questions? Thank you all.

[Applause]

>> Hi, good even, I'm Ashley Speliotis, Executive Director of Somerville.

And mission here comprehensive services through access and connectivity, providing multi-disciplinary services, health, wellness, fitness opportunities as well as social services, mental health counseling and crisis interventions, doing this all through our comprehensive team and professionals, we have different fitness programs and a few pictures that your director turns to. On the other side.

Our first slide shows our COA program, just in April, we received our funding our senior transportation program and free rides for some of those seniors to the grocery store, food pantries and provided over 1500 rides, just from the end of April through August and that's in addition to over 7000 rides throughout the pandemic.

Next is our social programming, arts and crafts done by local artists and just the cost of material.

We have intergenerational families at the center as well. Making connections with the local food group and learning center and we have intergenerational activities

and our last one is performance, part of our cultural programming that was strumming through the ages and video equipment which brought seniors on location throughout the world.

And these are in addition to fitness programs over 30 participants currently force exercise, strength and balance, yoga, Tai Chi, and also social worker, providing more management services helping with Medicare, counseling and making sure you are on the right track with your Medicare insurance. Over to the next slide.

It shows -- I will stick with the pictures. Showing activities and two senior centers currently active and open during regular did Is hours and open programming to the cent as well. We have brought themes, lunches and two offsite locations. -- response to Covid. And sometimes we're seeing the only meal seniors are receiving is a nutritious meal is coming from our sector or program.

We expanded our brown bag prom, stable shelf program providing 20 pound boxes of food.

The last point, a little bit more of social programming, but we're always open it new ideas, programs and we would love to hear from you. Any questions or again, other staff will answer your questions

[End 5:48 p.m. PST]