The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Somerville Housing Authority (SHA) duly called and held on October 22, 2026.

The Regular Meeting of the Somerville Housing Authority was held in-person at the Mystic Activity Center at 530 Mystic Avenue, Somerville on Thursday, October 22, 2026, at 5:00 PM.

The Executive Director Diane L. Cohen called the roll at 5:00 p.m. Upon roll call Commissioners present and absent were as follows:

PRESENT	ABSENT
Joseph Capuano	
Eleanor Rances	
Adeleine Mannion (Arrived at 5 :03)	
James Zamer	
Dennis Lemard (Arrived at 5 :08)	

Others in Attendance: Adam Garvey, Deputy Director; Arnaldo Velazquez, Director of Finance & Administration; Ansen Cassady, Accounting Manager; Shannon Bennett, Director of Resident Services; Matt Lincoln, Director of Leased Housing; Brian Langton, Director of Modernization; Andrew Rocha, Director of Operations; Lisa Taylor, Director of Admissions, Occupancy and Compliance; Casandra Burgos, Housing Manager; Deb Cenci, Housing Management Assistant, Rey Santana, Mystic Tenant Association; Fatima DeChavez, Brady Towers Resident; Emily Eschmann, Executive Secretary.

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1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(a) Regular Board Meeting – September 17, 2026

Commissioner Zamer made a motion to approve the minutes of Regular Board Meeting held on September 17, 2026. Commissioner Rances seconded the motion.

All in favor: 3-0

2. COMMUNITY INPUT/RESIDENT COUNCILS

Mystic Tenant Association (MTA) President Rey Santana raised a concern regarding winter preparations, particularly snow removal and accessibility. It was noted that significant snowfall during the previous winter made sidewalks difficult to navigate, creating challenges for individuals with disabilities, children, and residents using wheelchair ramps. Rey emphasized the importance of maintaining accessible sidewalks and ramps throughout the winter season.

3. COMMUNICATIONS

(a) July 27, 2026, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) Designation Letter and Score Report.
(b) Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) Public Housing Notice 2026-12: Cybersecurity Alert: Protecting LHA Funds and Financial Accounts.
(c) Lab 9 Modular, LLC vs. Department of Labor Standards and Another: Memorandum of Decision and Order on Cross Motions for Judgement on the Pleadings.

D. Cohen discussed the SEMAP assessment, which evaluates multiple aspects of the Section 8 program. SHA was identified as a high performer, subject to confirmation through the applicable review and audit process. The designation was noted as an important accomplishment.

The Board was advised of EOHLC's Notice 2026-12 emphasizing the importance of cybersecurity training and precautions to protect agency funds and financial accounts. Staff are advised to remain alert to phishing attempts, suspicious activity, and unsafe use of agency devices.

D. Cohen discussed the Clarendon Hill Redevelopment prevailing-wage case involving the Department of Labor Standards and indicated that the decision was favorable for SHA regarding potential retroactive liability.

D. Cohen reported receiving a late invitation to attend a White House event associated with the First Lady's Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) voucher program. SHA has received substantial funding for the FYI voucher program. D. Cohen plans to attend a meeting on October 30 to explore expansion opportunities. She emphasized that expanding the program could provide valuable opportunities for youth while other programs face financial shortfalls.

Director of Leased Housing Matt Lincoln and Director of Resident Services Shannon Bennett provided an overview of the FYI program's growth and successes. M. Lincoln reported that the FYI program has operated for approximately two years and currently serves approximately 45 voucher holders, all of whom were referred by the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Success stories include participants completing biotechnology training, securing laboratory positions and full-time employment, and pursuing higher education. The agency hopes to secure additional resources to expand the program and increase opportunities for participating youth.

4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

5. DEVELOPMENT UPDATE (IF NECESSARY)

D. Cohen reported that SHA is conducting due diligence regarding the VNA property adjacent to Capen Court, including a capital needs assessment.

She informed the Board that SHA is pursuing refinancing opportunities for Capen Court and Bryant Manor. Although the process requires extensive documentation and due diligence, it presents a significant financial opportunity for the agency. SHA is also working with Lighthouse to obtain a bond rating from Standard & Poor's to issue multi-family bonds for acquisition financing.

D. Cohen further reported that she will meet with City of Somerville Director of Economic Development Tom Galigani in the coming weeks to review surplus properties and older buildings for potential redevelopment. Possible uses include senior centers, recreational facilities, and affordable housing.

6. PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATE (IF NECESSARY)

D. Cohen reported that the home rule petition related to public safety is progressing. A hearing is anticipated after the election. If approved, the agency hopes to expand its public safety staffing by approximately two to three additional officers, including full-time and part-time positions.

7. NEW BUSINESS

(a) Permanent status of Andrew Rocha, Director of Operations.

Deputy Director Adam Garvey spoke in support of the appointment, noting that Andrew began serving in the role in September 2025 to assist across departments. Adam praised Andrew's commitment to public service, his involvement in inspections and maintenance, and his contributions to the agency and its staff.

Commissioner Mannion made a motion to approve the permanent status of Andrew Rocha, Director of Operations. Commissioner Lemard seconded the motion.
All in Favor: 5-0

(b) Proposed Revisions to SHA Section 8 Payment Standards to be effective January 1, 2027.

M. Lincoln discussed the annual Fair Market Rent (FMR) survey and its role in establishing payment standards. HUD guidance generally permits payment standards within 90% to 110% of FMR, subject to applicable requirements.

The proposed revisions were developed with consideration of the agency's financial shortfall. The agency intends to adjust payment standards strategically, increasing

them in specific areas to support housing opportunities and reducing them in areas where market conditions and limited demand warrant adjustments.

Commissioner Zamer made a motion to approve the proposed revisions to SHA Section 8 Payment Standards effective January 1, 2027. Commissioner Mannion seconded the motion.
All in Favor: 5-0

(c) Proposed SHA Federal Public Housing Flat Rents to be effective January 1, 2027.

Director of Admissions, Occupancy and Compliance Lisa Tayor advised the Board that the flat rents had been adjusted based on Fair Market Rent figures.

Commissioner Mannion made a motion to approve proposed SHA Federal Public Housing Flat Rents effective January 1, 2027. Commissioner Rances seconded the motion.
All in Favor: 5-0

(d) Bryant Manor Panelboard/Transformer Replacement Project Phase 2 Certificate of Substantial Completion.

Director of Modernization Brian Langton explained that the project replaced obsolete electrical panelboards and outdated equipment. The work had been completed.

Commissioner Rances made a motion to approve the Bryant Manor Panelboard/Transformer Replacement Project Phase 2 Certificate of Substantial Completion. Commissioner Lemard seconded the motion.
All in Favor: 5-0

(e) Bryant Manor Panelboard/Transformer Replacement Phase 2 Certificate of Final Completion.

B. Langton reported that the project is 100% complete.

Commissioner Lemard made a motion to approve the Bryant Manor Panelboard/Transformer Replacement Phase 2 Certificate of Final Completion and Payment for the Bryant Manor Panelboard/Transformers Replacement Phase 2 to Jupiter Electric, Inc for the sum of $14,479.95. Commissioner Zamer seconded the motion.
All in Favor: 5-0

(f) Weston Manor HVAC Controls Replacement Construction Contract.

Brian explained that the existing thermostats and HVAC controls were outdated, replacement parts were no longer readily available, and the software management system was obsolete. The replacement system will allow staff to adjust heating settings remotely. The project was bid twice. No bids were received during the first solicitation, and only one bid was received during the second solicitation.

Commissioner Lemard made a motion to enter a design contract with Davison Company Inc for the Weston Manor HVAC Controls Replacement project for the sum of $292,000.00. Commissioner Zamer seconded the motion.
All in Favor: 5-0

(g) Approval of the State Program Budgets for FY 2027 as presented with the following programs:
Conventional 400-C Program (Mystic, Clarendon Hill, Jacques Street, Fountain & Sycamore)
Conventional 667-7 Program (Clarendon Towers)
Conventional 689-C Program (Broadway)
State Leased Housing Program (MRVP/AHVP)

Director of Finance & Administration Arnaldo Velazquez explained that the budgets initially presented in March required revision because updated Department of Labor Standards rates and budget reductions were not yet known. The budgets were subsequently reviewed with the agency's fee accountant, and updated summaries covering 15 programs were provided to the Board.

The discussion focused on reductions in operating subsidies, declining net income, and the need to allocate resources carefully. The agency is facing significant financial pressure, including an estimated $1.1 million loss in federal funding, with additional uncertainty affecting voucher programs.

The Board reviewed the financial outlook for individual properties and programs. Bryant Manor and Hagan Manor were reported to have positive financial projections, while Clarendon Hill Towers is expected to break even. Mystic and Jaques Street were projected to experience a combined shortfall of approximately $250,000. The State has advised the agency to use reserves while also maintaining appropriate reserve levels.

A. Garvey emphasized the difficult conditions facing the housing industry, including declining subsidies and rental income, and the need to improve efficiency without making cuts that would negatively affect residents. He stated that SHA will continue pursuing savings and new initiatives. Positive developments included investment efforts led by Joe Macaluso and D. Cohen and opportunities to expand the agency's footprint through mixed-use housing and other projects.

Commissioner Lemard made a motion to approve the State Program Budgets for FY 2027 as presented with the following programs: Conventional 400-C Program (Mystic, Clarendon Hill, Jacques Street, Fountain & Sycamore); Conventional 667-7 Program (Clarendon Towers); Conventional 689-C Program (Broadway); State Leased Housing Program (MRVP/AHVP). Commissioner Zamer seconded the motion.

All in Favor: 5-0

(h) Approval of the Federal Program Budgets for FY 2027 as presented with the following programs:
Conventional AMP 1 Program (Mystic)
Conventional AMP 2 Programs (Brady, Weston, Highland, Ciampa & Properzi)
Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program and two Section 8 SRO Programs 1 and 3
Two Ross Service Programs
Conventional (Bryant Manor)
Conventional (Hagan Manor)
Central Office Cost Center
Public Safety Program

Commissioner Zamer made a motion to approve the Federal Program Budgets for FY 2027 as presented with the following programs: Conventional AMP 1 Program (Mystic) Conventional AMP 2 Programs (Brady, Weston, Highland, Ciampa & Properzi) Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program and two Section 8 SRO Programs 1 and 3 Two Ross Service Programs; Conventional (Bryant Manor); Conventional (Hagan Manor); Central Office Cost Center; Public Safety Program. Commissioner Lemard seconded the motion.
All in Favor: 5-0

8. OPEN SESSION for topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

The Board welcomed Ansen Cassady, Accounting Manager, Casandra Burgos, Housing Manager and Deb Cenci, Housing Management Assistant to SHA.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Zamer made a motion to adjourn at 5:31 p.m. Commissioner Lemard seconded the motion.
All in favor: 5-0

Diane L. Cohen

Diane L. Cohen
Executive Director

ATTEST
A True Copy

Documents presented during the Somerville Housing Authority Board Meeting on 10/22/2026.

- Agenda
- 1(a) Copy of minutes from the Regular Board Meeting – September 17, 2026
- 3(a) Communication: July 27, 2026, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) Designation Letter and Score Report.
- 3(b)Communication: Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) Public Housing Notice 2026-12: Cybersecurity Alert: Protecting LHA Funds and Financial Accounts.
- 3(c) Communication: Lab 9 Modular, LLC vs. Department of Labor Standards and Another: Memorandum of Decision and Order on Cross Motions for Judgement on the Pleadings.
- Executive Director's Report
    - Report: Tenant Selection Report – September 2026
    - Report: Vacancy Report September 2026
    - Report: Leased Housing
    - Report: Resident Services
    - Report: Public Safety
    - Report: Work Orders Issued: September 2026
    - Report: SHA Modernization Contract Log – Active Jobs October 2026
- New Business 7(a): Memo: Andrew Rocha – Permanent Status Recommendation
- New Business 7(b): Memo: Proposed Revisions to SHA S8 Payment Standards to be Effective January 1, 2027
- New Business 7(c): Memo: Proposed Flat Rents
- New Business 7(d): Memo: Certificate of Substantial Completion - Bryant Manor Panelboard/Transformer Replacement Project Phase 2 - SHA Job #2526
- New Business 7(d): Certificate of Substantial Completion
- New Business 7(e): Memo: Bryant Manor Panelboard/Transformer Replacement Phase 2 - Certificate of Final Completion SHA #2526
- New Business 7(f): Weston Manor HVAC Controls Replacement Construction Contract SHA Job #2530
- New Business 7(f): Letter of Recommendation: Somerville Housing Authority Thermostat Replacement and Building Management System Modifications Somerville HA Project # 2530 - Weston Manor (31-7)
- New Business 7(g) & 7(h): SHA Budget Summary – March 31, 2027