

The Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Somerville Housing Authority (SHA) duly called and held on September 18, 2025.

The Regular Meeting of the Somerville Housing Authority was held in-person at the Mystic Activity Center at 530 Mystic Avenue, Somerville on Thursday, September 18, 2025, at 4:30 PM.

The Executive Director Diane L. Cohen called the roll at 4:34 PM. Upon roll call Commissioners present and absent were as follows:

PRESENT

ABSENT

Chairman Capuano

Comm. Mannion

Comm. Lemard

Comm. Rances

Vice-Chairman Zamer

Others in Attendance: Adam Garvey, Deputy Director; Arnaldo Velazquez, Director of Finance & Administration; Brian Langton, Director of Modernization; Shannon Bennett, Director of Resident Services; Janine Lotti, Family Self-Sufficiency Coordinator; Yi-Lan Tseo, Resident Opportunity Self-Sufficiency Coordinator; Billy Rymill, Public Safety Officer; Charlie O'Leary, Maintenance Supervisor; Emily Eschmann, Executive Secretary; Rey Santana, Mystic Tenant Association (MTA) Vice-President.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(a) Regular Board Meeting – August 21, 2025

Commissioner Lemard made a motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on August 21, 2025. Commissioner Mannion seconded the motion.

All in favor: 5-0

2. COMMUNITY INPUT/RESIDENT COUNCILS

MTA Vice-President Rey Santana thanked SHA for starting to tow cars that are illegally parked at the Mystic Development. She asked if towing could begin earlier than 1 a.m. Additionally, she questioned why cones are placed in some spots. Maintenance Supervisor Charlie O'Leary explained the cones are to reserve spots for Maintenance vehicles to be parked.

R. Santana asked for clarification on the 48-hour parking rule. Public Safety Officer Billy Rymill stated that it is a City of Somerville mandate. Chairman Capuano stated that all parking tickets can be appealed through Somerville's Traffic & Parking Department.

Deputy Director Adam Garvey stated that since ticketing and towing has increased, it's apparent there is a need for repainting the roadways to make parking spots and fire lanes clearer.

A. Garvey updated the Board on the procurement of vending machines for Bryant Manor, Capen Court, Brady Towers and the Mystic Development. He stated that two proposals were received and that a contract will go before the Board at the next meeting.

3. COMMUNICATIONS

(a) Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) Performance Management Review (PMR) Results.

D. Cohen stated SHA scored well on the Performance Management Review. She stated some minor corrections are needed, but overall, the results were very positive.

4. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

D. Cohen offered to respond to any of the Board's questions regarding the monthly department reports. No questions were asked.

D. Cohen stated the financial reporting has been reformatted, making the reports much easier to understand. Director of Finance and Administration Arnaldo Velazquez detailed the updated reports to the Board, breaking down each development's status. Additionally, A. Velazquez informed the Board of the upcoming payroll company change and advised that they would receive an email to log in to the system. He stated the new system will save SHA \$13,000/year and is much better suited for a housing authority.

D. Cohen introduced the new Director of Operations, Andrew Rocha.

5. DEVELOPMENT UPDATE (IF NECESSARY)

D. Cohen stated that air quality tests are ongoing at the Waterworks II Development. She stated the engineers have eliminated the possibility of many contaminants and are hopeful of finding the source of the issue soon.

D. Cohen stated that 80-100 families will begin moving into the new Clarendon Hill Redevelopment starting September 29, 2025. She stated inspections of the new units are ongoing and that residents are being screened for the public housing and project-based voucher units.

D. Cohen discussed the recent tour of SHA properties given to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) New England Regional Administrator Michael Banks.

6. PUBLIC SAFETY UPDATE (IF NECESSARY)

D. Cohen stated that the monthly Public Safety report has changed. She stated it will be finetuned but for the time being it will contain a lot more data than previously reported.

7. NEW BUSINESS

(a) Permanent status of Evens Bouloute, Maintenance Mechanic.

A. Garvey stated that Evens began as a Mechanic Aide but was quickly promoted to Maintenance Mechanic due to his skillset. He is very professional and reliable.

Commissioner Mannion made a motion to approve the permanent status of Evens Bouloute, Maintenance Mechanic. Commissioner Rances seconded the motion.

All in favor: 5-0

(b) Permanent status of George Lally, Maintenance Mechanic Aide.

A. Garvey stated George is very dependable and has been a valuable mentor for younger staff members.

Commissioner Zamer made a motion to approve the permanent status of George Lally, Maintenance Mechanic Aide. Commissioner Lemard seconded the motion.

All in favor: 5-0

(c) Permanent status of Yi-Lan Tseo, Resident Opportunity of Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) Program Coordinator.

Director of Resident Services Shannon Bennett stated Yi-Lan has been a valuable member of the Resident Services team, meeting with residents, helping with the Public Safety survey, and creating a resident news letter.

Commissioner Mannion made a motion to approve the permanent status of Yi-Lan Tseo, Resident Opportunity of Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) Program Coordinator.

Commissioner Zamer seconded the motion.

All in favor: 5-0

(d) Amendment to the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Action Plan.

S. Bennett stated the amendment is to add a new provision that outlines how forfeited escrow funds may be used to support current FSS participants.

Commissioner Lemard made a motion to approve the amendment to the Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Action Plan. Commissioner Zamer seconded the motion.

All in favor: 5-0

- (e) Proposed revisions to SHA Section 8 Payment Standards to be effective January 1, 2026.

D. Cohen stated that due to the recent funding shortfall, payment standards for the Section 8 program will remain the same except for areas where they are under 90% of the Fair Market Rents (FMRs). She stated many housing authorities have reduced their payment standards.

Commissioner Rances made a motion to approve the proposed revisions to SHA Section 8 Payment Standards effective January 1, 2026. 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.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Zamer made a motion to adjourn at 5:02 p.m. Commissioner Mannion 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 September 18, 2025.

- Agenda
- Copy of minutes from the Regular Board Meeting – August 21, 2025
- Communications 3(a): EOHLC PMR Results
- Executive Director’s Report
 - Report: SOMERVILLE HOUSING AUTHORITY MONTHLY REPORTING PACKAGE for the month ended July 31, 2025
 - Report: Tenant Selection Report – August 2025: Public Housing and Leased Housing Waitlists
 - Report: Vacancy Report August 2025
 - Report: Section 8 Voucher Utilization & Spending Projection Reports as of September 2025
 - Report: Resident Services August 2025
 - Report: Public Safety – August 2025
 - Report: Work Orders Issued: August 2025
 - Report: SHA Modernization Contract Log – Active Jobs September 2025
- New Business 7(a): Memo: Permanent Hire Recommendation – Evens Bouloute, Mechanic
- New Business 7(b): Memo: George Lally, Permanent Mechanic Aide recommendation
- New Business 7(c) Memo: Recommendation for Permanent Status – Yi-Lan Tseo, HUD ROSS Service Coordinator
- New Business 7(d): Memo: Board Approval – Addition to FSS Action Plan: Use of Forfeited Escrow Funds
- New Business 7(d): FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY (FSS) ACTION PLAN Somerville Housing Authority
- New Business 7(e): Proposed Revisions to SHA S8 Payment Standards to be Effective January 1, 2026