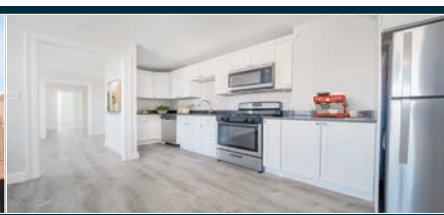
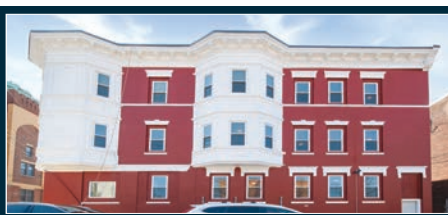


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# East Boston

## TIMES - FREE PRESS

Wednesday, April 21, 2021

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### Edwards named Vice Chair of the Council's new Committee on COVID-19 Recovery

By John Lynds

Last week, City Council President Pro Tempore Matt O'Malley appointed At Large City Councilor Michael Flaherty and District 1 City Councilor Lydia Edwards as chair and vice chair of the Council's new Committee on COVID-19 Recovery.

Last Wednesday, the Council unanimously voted in favor of O'Malley's motion to amend the City Council rules to add the committee. The goals of the Committee are to exercise general oversight and make recommendations on the City of Boston's distribution of state and federal COVID-19 relief funding and programs.

With the city poised to receive hundreds of millions of dollars in federal support, Edwards said the new committee makes perfect sense for oversight and transparency.

"This new committee will really help concentrate all of the conversations about COVID recovery, and the hundreds of millions of dollars that's going to come to the City of Boston," said Edwards. "Normally as federal grants come in we have them go to the assigned relevant committees and then we have a hearing about it and a vote. But

See EDWARDS Page 4



Katie Warren (left), a Northeastern University student was the first person to use a gift card as part of the Eastie Strong Gift Card program. She purchased pizza and salad at Dirty Water Dough on Maverick. Jacqueline Babin (right) is an employee at Dirty Water.

### Eastie Strong program distributes gift cards

By John Lynds

The new pandemic relief program started by East Boston Main Streets (EBMS), a coalition of real estate developers and local business owners began distributing merchandise gift cards to residents to be used at participating Eastie restaurants.

According to EBMS Director Gladys Oliveros the new "Eastie Strong" initiative has two components. While the first is the Adopt a Patio program the other is the Gift Card Program.

Earlier this year Eastie Strong distributed two rounds of grant money through the Adopt a Patio program. The program provided capital to fund reopening costs related to complying with COVID-19 restrictions. The funds were used by

more than a dozen Eastie restaurants to purchase items such as outdoor furniture, umbrellas, and space heaters for the winter.

Last week local real estate developers and sponsors began distributing gift cards directly to their tenants for use only at participating local restaurants.

This first round included 310 gift cards totaling \$31,000, pumping funds directly into the community.

"What makes this gift card unique is that unlike other restaurant gift cards, these are for use only in local owned East Boston restaurants," said Oliveros. "This will help tremendously to bring life back to an industry that has been so severely impacted by the COVID-19 crisis."

Participating restaurants

include Jak's Pizzeria, Dirty Water Dough Pizzeria, Mexicali Sushi Bar, La Casa del Pan Debono, Tawakal Halal Café, Pazzo on Porter, Rincon Limeno, Perros Paisas and La Gran Manzana.

Most of these restaurants received relief during Eastie Strong's Adopt a Patio program.

"We are so pleased to partner with East Boston Main Streets, to help our Eastie neighbors who were among the hardest-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic," said Nick Black, Managing Director of The Trustees Boston Waterfront Initiative, who are sponsors of the program. "We're grateful to TD Bank for their support of this program through the TD Ready Commitment, and look forward to

See EASTIE STRONG Page 2

### City budget includes \$19 million for public housing project

By John Lynds

Last week, acting Boston Mayor Kim Janey proposed her administration's recommended \$3.75 billion Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) operating budget and \$3.2 billion Fiscal Year 2022-2026 (FY22-FY26) Capital Plan. Janey said the budget focuses on providing the resources for the city's continued robust public health response to COVID-19, making strategic investments in Boston's neighborhoods and residents, and setting the stage for Boston's equitable reopening, recovery and long-term renewal.

One of those investments highlighted in the budget is \$19 million for the final phase of the Boston Housing Authority's Orient Heights Public Housing Development project.

Janey said she recognizes the importance of

making sure that residents of all incomes are able to access quality, affordable and safe housing options that meet their needs, and this budget helps support additional affordable housing opportunities.

"Orient Heights has been a staple of the East Boston community for seven decades, and this investment will help to finish its redevelopment," said Janey Tuesday. "This investment preserves a vital housing resource and will secure a better quality of life for hundreds of East Boston families for decades to come."

Four years after kicking off the three-phase redevelopment of the Orient Heights Public Housing Development Trinity Financial began construction on Phase III of the project in January.

Like Phase I and Phase

See BUDGET Page 2

### Eastie resident Nick Raccuia starts brownie company for ketogenic lifestyles

By Cary Shuman

East Boston resident Nick Raccuia is on a mission to develop high quality and great tasting snacks for Ketogenic and low-carb diets.

And he is well on his way to reaching that goal, having founded Keto-Brownie, a Boston-based nutrition company.

A former certified public accountant who grew up in Saugus, Raccuia came up with the idea to introduce Ketobrownies as a new dessert treat in 2016 after doing extensive research on the benefits of ketogenic diets.

Raccuia, 30, is a 2008 graduate of Pope John XXIII High School in Everett. He attended Suffolk University and received a graduate degree in Accounting. He became a CPA and worked at a large public accounting firm and later at Fidelity.

"Then I quit accounting after four and a half years and started a brownie



East Boston resident Nick Raccuia, owner of Keto-Brownie, a nutrition company, is pictured above.

business — so it was quite a change," said Raccuia.

He started making recipes inside his Orient Heights apartment in December, 2016. He put his first food product live on his KetoBrownie website six months later.

Raccuia became a customer himself and found his brownies to not only be a delicious treat, but an

See RACCUIA Page 2

### East Boston Savings Bank thanks honest customer

By John Lynds

Anyone in East Boston who knows Phyllis DeLvechhio knows she's as honest as they come. The longtime Eastie resident is a familiar face in the community and has a reputation of always being warm, kindhearted and sincere.

So it was no surprise that when an East Boston Savings Bank (EBSB) teller accidentally added an extra \$100 bill to her withdrawal, and DeLvechhio didn't think twice about returning the money.

"Last week I went to the East Boston Savings Bank drive-thru," said DeLvechhio. "After I left and counted my money, the teller gave me an extra \$100. I went back to the drive-thru and gave her the extra \$100 and she couldn't thank me enough."

A few days later DeLvechhio went to make a deposit and another EBSB teller gave her something a little extra with her receipt.

"The teller wrote a nice little note and a (Dunkin Donuts) gift card to show their appreciation for be-

ing honest," she said. "I really didn't expect anything. I was brought up to be honest and to always do the right thing. Although, it was nice to be appreciated for honesty in today's crazy world."

DeLvechhio's story caught the attention of EBSB President and CEO Richard Gavegnano who said her honesty made his day.

"It's stories like this about the relationship between our customers and our employees that I love," said Gavegnano. "I feel very strongly that there are so many

good people out there and something like this should get recognized. The customer had compassion for the person working at the bank and she was honest enough to go back and give the money back. And our employees were so appreciative that they got her a gift card for her honesty. I think it's a terrific story and it really made my day. It just goes to show you what kind of a bank EBSB is. We create relationships and the community is part of our family."

While DeLvechhio

See EBSB Page 2



971 Saratoga St., Orient Heights  
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**eastietimes.com**





A photo of the completed Phase II portion of the overall Orient Heights Public Housing Development project. Acting Mayor Kim Janey earmarked \$19 million for Phase III of the project, which began in January.

## Budget // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

II, Phase III will tear down the old post World War II-era brick housing on Vallar Road and portions of Faywood Avenue and be replaced with 81 units of new public housing.

Eva Erlich, vice president of development for Trinity Financial said an additional 42 units would be modernized as part of Phase III.

Phase III will also include the construction of a centrally located park for residents, the demolition of the existing community center and the expansion of open space.

The \$51.6 million Phase II portion of the project wrapped up last summer on Vallar Road. There, crews demolished 87 old units in four buildings and constructed 88 replacement state-funded public housing units in two townhouse buildings and one mid-rise build-

ing. Phase II also included improvements to the existing infrastructure and open spaces. Phase II leveraged \$10 million in proceeds from the sale of the Winthrop Square Garage, as well as \$1.83 million in Inclusionary Development Policy Funds, secured from the Davis Companies' 99 Sumner Street development in East Boston.

Phase III is part of the larger effort to transform the 331-unit of BHA owned public housing development that was originally built in 1951. Trinity completed Phase I of the project in 2018 where 90 units of public housing were replaced with 120 units of public housing both in townhouse and apartment-style buildings.

"Orient Heights has come a long way in the four years since we first broke ground for phase

one. Hundreds of BHA families have seen their quality of life improve as they've settled into newer, more modern homes," said BHA Administrator Kate Bennett Tuesday. "I want to thank Mayor Janey for her commitment to helping us finish what we've started and complete this critical work for our residents and for the neighborhood at large."

In January 2015, the BHA selected the development team of Trinity Financial and East Boston Community Development Corp. to work with BHA and Department of Housing and Community Development (DCHD) and finalize a redevelopment strategy for the site. This development team secured financing to implement the redevelopment, and will own and manage the buildings post-redevelopment.

## Eastie Strong // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

continuing to work with the community through the long recovery process we all face together."

Other sponsors of the program include The Grossman Companies, The Davis Companies, Roseland Residential, Trinity Financial, Cranshaw Construction, Lend-Lease, East Boston Savings Bank and Norfolk Kitchen and Bath. The

program is being managed on a pro bono basis by local consult, the Novus Group.

The program has currently distributed over \$25,000 dollars in direct aid to local restaurants.

Stephen Davis of The Davis Companies said his company wanted to find a way to help our tenants as well as contribute to the local restaurant economy

which has suffered greatly during the pandemic.

David Grossman of the Grossman Companies, who is spearheading the fundraising component of the program with The Davis Companies, said the program is a win for both local businesses and tenants because it helps tenants afford a night out while providing a financial lifeline to restaurants.

## Councilor Edwards submits statement of candidacy

Boston City Councilor Lydia Edwards has submitted her Statement of Candidacy to the City's Elections Department. Edwards had previously announced she will be seeking re-election in the fall to the District One seat.

Edwards must now collect signatures from 200 registered voters in the

district between April 27 and May 18 in order to appear on the ballot.

"I'm so excited to kick off the campaign and get out into the district collecting signatures," said Edwards. "Representing this district for the last three years has been the honor of a lifetime. I'm excited for the opportunity to continue serving

in this role. I can't wait to get out there and safely collect signatures."

Volunteers interested in helping Edwards collect signatures (while observing strict COVID safety protocols), phone bank, or hosting a virtual meet and greet can sign up at <http://bit.ly/EdwardsVolunteer2021>.

## Raccuia // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

effective supplement to his ketogenic diet.

He dropped 30 pounds from his 5-foot-9-inch frame and now weighs 155 pounds. He also immediately noticed improvements in his mental clarity, an increase in energy levels, and a positive impact in his overall mood.

### KetoBrownie is building a loyal customer base

Using social media such as Instagram to build an advertising platform, Raccuia's new company generated \$2,000 in sales in the first month.

"I've just kept at it the last four years and now we've reached \$1.5 million in online sales," said Raccuia proudly. "I got investors six months ago so they infused a lot more capital into the business and hopefully I'll be scaling it up pretty heavily over the next few years."

Raccuia company now produces multiple products. The most popular product is the ketobar which comes in three fla-

vors, chocolate almond, cookie dough, and peanut butter chocolate chip. Customers are also trending toward the company's brownie mixes.

Raccuia has set out to build upon the company's success and he is constantly looking to improve the recipes.

"Since our launch of the original product, we've done four major reformulations and iterations," said Raccuia.

KetoBrownie now has more than 20,000 customers. Raccuia said the ketogenic diet gained wider exposure when NBA superstar LeBron James began talking about its effectiveness as a weight-loss measure in his diet.

"I'll have to send LeBron a KetoBrownie T-shirt," he said.

Raccuia, who works out regularly at a Sal Bartolo's boxing gym in Winthrop, continues to be his company's best promoter as a physically fit young man who says he feels great.


"I've never felt better than doing keto," said Raccuia. "Mentally, I have a lot more energy. I don't feel sluggish. When I ate a lot of carbs, I felt sluggish, run-down, and tired. I often say it's a lot like buying premium gas for your car - you're just putting the highest possible fuel into your body. The main thing my customers tell me is that they generally feel really good."

Customers can purchase KetoBrownie products on the company website ([ketobrownie.com](http://ketobrownie.com)) and on Amazon.com.



Pictured above is the company logo for KetoBrownie, which is owned by East Boston resident Nick Raccuia.

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# Virtual Public Meeting

## East Boston Resilient Waterfront

**Tuesday, May 4**  
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

**Zoom Link:** [bit.ly/3x2H2h8](https://bit.ly/3x2H2h8)  
**Toll Free:** (833) 568 - 8864  
**Meeting ID:** 160 282 5290


**Project Description:**

The Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA) and the City of Boston are building off of the climate vulnerability analysis and resilient strategies developed through Climate Ready Boston (2016) and Coastal Resilient Solutions for East Boston (2017) to analyze site conditions and develop implementable design options to protect the East Boston waterfront and community from future sea level rise and coastal storm events.

mail to: **Joe Christo**  
Boston Planning & Development Agency  
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor  
Boston, MA 02201

phone: 617-918-4447

email: [joe.christo@boston.gov](mailto:joe.christo@boston.gov)

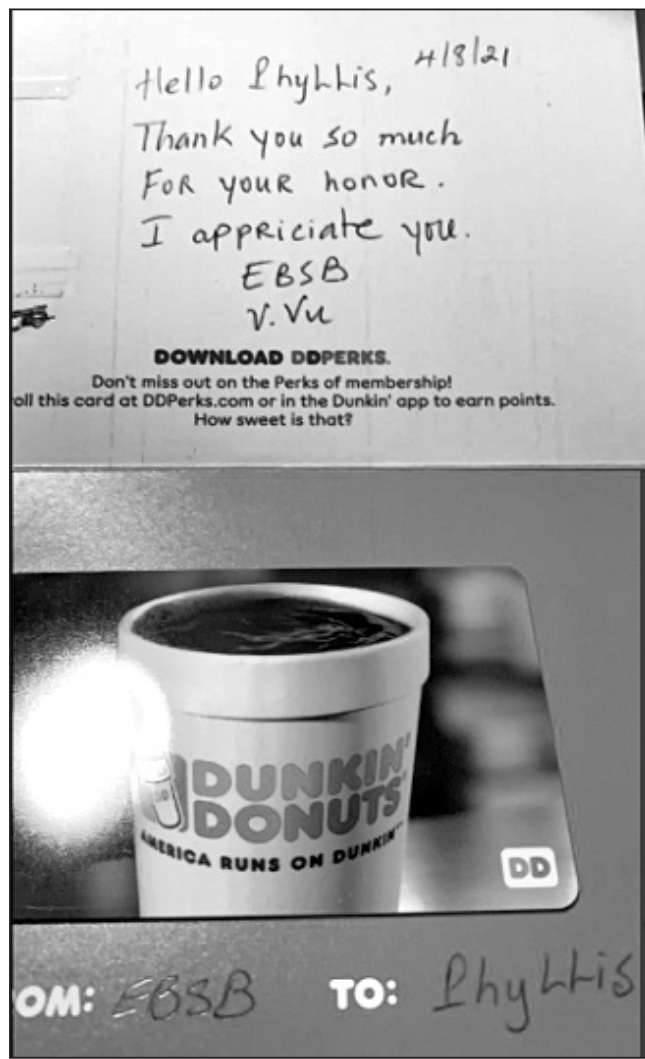
[BostonPlans.org](http://BostonPlans.org) |  [@BostonPlans](https://twitter.com/BostonPlans)

Teresa Polhemus, Executive Director/Secretary

## EBSB // CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

wasn't expecting anything in return for her honesty, Gavegnano said he will be sending her a \$100 American Express Gift Card.

"We love our customers and truly believe they are all like Phyllis and would have the same level of honesty if put in the same situation," said Gavegnano. "That level of honesty should be rewarded and on behalf of EBSB we thank Mrs. Delvecchio."



The note and gift card EBSB tellers gave to Eastie's Phyllis DelVechhio for returning an extra \$100 that was accidentally added to her withdrawal. The bank's President and CEO Richard Gavegnano plans to send her a \$100 gift card.

**THE EAST BOSTON FOUNDATION**



**The East Boston Foundation**  
**Phone: 617-561-6336**

**DEADLINE ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Grant Application Deadline will be May. 3, 2021**

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News in Brief

GEORGE WRIGHT GC JUNIOR GOLF LESSONS REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

The Boston Parks and Recreation Department is offering free golf clinics at the George Wright Golf Course in Hyde Park for ages 7 to 14 years old.

The first-rate Junior Golf Lessons program provides basic instruction in the fundamentals of golf taught by professionals. Equipment is provided, if needed, but you may bring your own clubs. Pre-registration is required.

Founded in 1938, the 18-hole par 70 Donald Ross-designed George Wright Golf Course is a hidden gem located at 420 West Street in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Boston.

The lessons take place Tuesdays through Thursdays with classes at 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. The series repeats weekly starting from July 6, 2021, until August 12, 2021.

Clinicians are highly qualified golf instructors. To register, go to the “Parks Online Activity Search” link at [www.boston.gov/calendar/junior-golf-daily-lessons](http://www.boston.gov/calendar/junior-golf-daily-lessons).

For more info, please contact Jennifer Widener at (617) 961-3047 or [jennifer.widener@boston.gov](mailto:jennifer.widener@boston.gov).

PARKS DEPT. ANNOUNCES EAST BOSTON VIRTUAL TREE REMOVAL HEARING

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 87, the Boston Parks and Recreation Department will hold a virtual public hearing on Thursday, May 6, at 10:00 a.m. on a request to remove one public shade tree in East Boston.

The request is for the removal of one Norway maple tree measuring 14 inches dbh (diameter at breast height) due to a building construction project at 69 Lubec Street in East Boston.

The hearing will be held by the City of Boston’s Tree Warden (or designee). Please note that due to the current pandemic the hearing will be a virtual meeting via ZOOM. Written comments or questions may be submitted to [parks@boston.gov](mailto:parks@boston.gov) prior to the hearing. The information for the ZOOM hearing is as follows:

To participate by computer: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82708873991#success>

To participate by phone: 1-312-626-6799  
Webinar ID: 827 0887 3991

Public testimony will be taken or may be provided prior to the hearing in writing to the Tree Warden, Boston Parks and Recreation Department, 1010 Massachusetts Avenue, 3rd floor, Roxbury, MA 02118 or by emailing [parks@boston.gov](mailto:parks@boston.gov) with “East Boston Tree Hearing” in the subject line.

A final decision regarding the request will be made within two weeks of

the hearing. For further information, please contact the Tree Warden at (617) 635-7275.

TSA SEEKS INPUT ON MOBILE DRIVER’S LICENSES TO INFORM REAL ID RULEMAKING

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Strategy, Policy, and Plans and Transportation Security Administration (TSA) published a request for information in the Federal Register seeking information about security standards and technologies concerning mobile driver’s licenses. Responses to the request for information will support future DHS/ TSA rulemaking to update the REAL ID Act implementing regulation to accommodate mobile driver’s licenses.

Mobile driver’s licenses are digital representations of physical driver’s licenses, and are typically accessed via an app installed on a smartphone. Conceptually, mobile driver’s licenses are similar to digital representations of physical credit cards that are accessed via apps installed on smartphones. DHS and TSA are interested in mobile driver’s licenses because, compared to physical driver’s licenses, mobile driver’s licenses could provide greater security to TSA and all federal agencies verifying an individual’s identity, stronger privacy protections to individuals, and health and safety benefits to all users by enabling touchless identity verification.

“The TSA workforce comprises teams of security-focused innovators who look for opportunities to improve security and the traveler experience across the nation’s transportation network,” said Darby LaJoye, Senior Official Performing the Duties of the TSA Administrator. “The mobile driver’s license is one emerging technology example, and TSA is interested in exploring its incorporation into our identity verification processes.”

The Request for Information, solicits comments and input regarding technical approaches, applicable industry standards and best practices to ensure that mobile driver’s licenses can be issued and authenticated with features that ensure security, privacy and identity fraud detection. Comments may be submitted until June 18, 2021.

The REAL ID Act applies to mobile and digital driver’s licenses and identification cards. To enable federal agency acceptance of mobile driver’s licenses for “official purposes,” which the REAL ID Act defines as including access to federal facilities, nuclear power plants, and boarding federally regulated commercial aircraft, the REAL ID Act implementing regulation requires an update to accommodate mobile driver’s licenses. This request for information will inform potential updates to the regulation.

For more information on REAL ID, please visit

[TSA.gov](http://TSA.gov).

GSCA VIRTUAL MEETING AGENDA

The Gove Street Citizens Association (GSCA) monthly meeting agenda for Monday, April 26 is as follows:

GSCA monthly meeting will be held ONLINE (and on phone) via ZOOM. The meeting will be start at 6:30 p.m. Registration is required. If you have not received an invitation to register or have difficulty registering or attending, please go to <https://govestreet.org/zoom>, send an email to [secretary@govestreet.org](mailto:secretary@govestreet.org) or contact (781) 951-4111.

Though the agenda is subject to change, we plan to discuss the following items:

Attendance Roll Call  
Welcome & Announcements

Boston Police Updates  
Office of Neighborhood Services Updates – Lina Tramelli

Neighborhood Updates – Nat Taylor

2021 Love Your Block Spring Clean Up

Project Presentations:  
77 Lubec Street - 2nd Presentation & VOTE

Aaron Daigneault - Vote to approve that the 77 Lubec Street is zoned for nine units. Mr. Daigneault has conflicting documentation from the City of Boston. We will vote to oppose or support 77 Lubec Street as a nine-unit building.

14B Geneva Street – Encore Presentation & VOTE

Marc Savatsky and Phil Sima - Construct 4 family building on vacant lot with 4 parking spaces in enclosed garage. Attorney Jeff Drago presenter- 4 Unit condo (3 stories, 34 ft high – 35 ft allowed) with 4 parking spots

229 Maverick Street – Informational Presentation  
Meggan Ayres - Roof Deck Addition

Legislative Update – Senator Joseph Boncore and Representative Adrian Madaro

Next Meeting – Monday, May 24.

JPNA P&Z MEETING AGENDA

Jeffries Point Neighborhood Association Planning & Zoning (P&Z) Agenda will be held on Wednesday April 21 starting at 7:00 p.m. and is as follows:

The JPNA P&Z Meeting will be held ONLINE via ZOOM. The registration link is provided in the meeting notice below. If you have any difficulty registering or attending, please contact us at [board@jeffriespoint.org](mailto:board@jeffriespoint.org).

If you are an abutter within the 300’ radius to a development project and wish to be considered to speak aloud (not via chat), you must register at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting. This is so we may verify your abutter status.

The JPNA will be recording these meetings and may post the recordings online.

Zoom Video Conference Registration Required! Please Visit The Website To Register For This Meeting.

AGENDA (subject to change)

304 Sumner Street - First Presentation - Erect addition and change occupancy from 3 to 4 units

Developer: 304 Sumner St, LLC- Represented by: Richard C. Lynds

64 Haynes Street - Second Presentation - Erect a four (4) story three (3) unit residential dwelling with parking for two (2) vehicles.

Developer: Francesco Chieriegatti Spoldi Represented by: Richard C. Lynds

1 Everett Street - Second Presentation - Erect a five (5) story mixed-use residential building

Developer: Richard Garraffo Represented by: Joseph P. Hanley and Thomas P. Miller

FRIENDS OF THE MARY ELLEN WELCH GREENWAY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Friends of the Mary Ellen Welch Greenway Council Meeting minutes for the meeting held on March 25 are as follows:

Police Report  
• Reduce in vandalism  
• Some arrests  
• Confiscated around 10 guns in the past months. 5 in one arrest.

• Still seeing scams  
• 647-xxx number (not sure how they got it, but that isn’t the Police Department)

• Just hang up on them and call the police to report

• When there is something concerning, they would email all the community contacts they have

• No issues around Wood Island to Constitution Beach

PLAN East Boston Update

• Usually, Kristina Rico would give the update (role in East Boston). Today Nick Schmidt talked to us

• East Boston Neighborhood plan is still happening. It was started 2.5 years ago.

• There will be community process involving several topics

• Commence from Imagine Boston 2030 and encompass and distill this

plan and the transportation overall vision

• More information about Plan East Boston is in English and Spanish on the BPDA website

• BPDA Will be presenting recommendations for the future

• Excited to get out of the 1-year slumber we have been in (we blame covid)

• East Boston has a lot to consider because of the pandemic

• BPDA has been in communication with other agencies to keep everybody in the loop and updated with the process.

• However, we are in the starting process, so we don’t meet week to week

• Wouldn’t like to see marine jobs badly affected due to redevelopment (Karen)

MEWG Garden Update

• The Executive Committee, Luli and Michelle have been talking with Parks about the Mary Ellen Welch Memorial Garden.

• The project has been scaled back a bit to remove the pavement, but keep plants. Luli is working on updating the design with the changes to work on getting approval from Parks.

• Hopefully we can still plant the garden this spring and have volunteers help with the planing.

• Karen mentioned that we won’t accept anything that is not up to Mary Ellen, but that we are willing to compromise Spring Clean-Up + Painting Stencils

• There will be a clean-up on the Greenway for trash pick up, weeding, and maybe painting stencils.

• Saturday, 04/17 from 10-12.

Spring program

• There will be a COVID and Family Friendly event on Saturday 04/03 in front of the East Boston Library to make flowers and write poems.

• Michelle has reached out to the library and parent groups to help promote the event.

Piers Park Update

• The community organizer position is still open

Chelsea Creek

• Magdalena did a short presentation of vision

Chelsea Creek

• Collaborative planning (public-private partnership)  
• Abandoned area

• Started from scratch wondering what can we do here? While making it inclusive and equitable. Create resiliency and accessibility

• Tried to really understand what it’s happening planning wise

• Looked at the regulatory overlay

• Doesn’t look at the Car go Venture area

• Magdalena is doing and will keep doing site visits. Just call her to coordinate a small group visit.

• Intend to balance the community and industrial needs

• Had several workshops, some members of the council and greenway consultants participated

• Almost everyone agreed that this site should be accessible to the public and include ecological restoration

• Include civic use  
• Have a greenway loop in East Boston

• Intend to soften route 1A

• Include traffic calming and green infrastructure

• EB medium-low income is lower than the state and country average, so we need to consider this in our process

• We want to assure that works that come from this project go to the local community workers

• Would be restoring some wetlands

Other

• Jane O’Reilly commented on how the greenway is mentioned in all community meetings of the area. And she doesn’t want to exploit it.

The next Greenway Council meeting will be on Thursday, April 22nd at 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Zoom Link

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom-link>

2021 Planning & Zoning Meeting dates are available at [jeffriespoint.org](http://jeffriespoint.org)

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with East Boston Savings Bank

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SEND US YOUR NEWS

The Times encourages residents to submit engagement, wedding and birth announcements, news releases, business and education briefs, sports stories and photos for publication. Items should be forwarded to our offices at 385 Broadway, Revere, MA 02151. Items can also be faxed to 781-485-1403. We also encourage readers to e-mail news releases and photos to [deb@reverejournal.com](mailto:deb@reverejournal.com)

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# East Boston

Times-Free Press

**PRESIDENT:** Stephen Quigley

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**EDITOR::** Cary Shuman

**PUBLISHER EMERITUS:** John A. Torrone

## AT LAST, SPRING HAS SPRUNG

Spring officially may have arrived on March 21, but the past month has been anything but spring-like.

For those of us who live along the Massachusetts coastline, this is nothing new of course. The prevailing, on-shore sea breezes at this time of year transport air from the ocean that still is in the low 40s. So on days when the temperature may be in the 60s in central Mass., we're at least 10 degrees cooler, with a wind-chill factor that makes it feel 10 degrees cooler than that.

In other words, the 60s elsewhere feel like the 40s for us.

But this week finally brought a measure of spring, not only because of the warmth, but because of the daffodils, forsythia, and flowering trees that signal the end of winter and the promise of nicer days ahead.

With the coronavirus pandemic hopefully coming to an end, the arrival of spring is coming none too soon.

## MASS SHOOTINGS ARE OUR NEW EPIDEMIC

Mass shootings with high-powered weapons are nothing new in America. The recent tragedies in Atlanta and Indianapolis are just two more of a long string of the slaughter of innocent Americans who simply were going about their everyday lives at work, in school, or at a shopping mall.

But as horrific as these well-publicized incidents have been, they are just the proverbial tip of the iceberg when it comes to mass shootings all across the country, which have been occurring at ever-increasing rates.

In the past 30 days since the Atlanta massacre, there have been 45 mass shootings -- defined as incidents where four or more people have been shot -- across the U.S.

The vast majority of these shootings never make it into the national headlines to the extent of the Atlanta and Indianapolis incidents, but they are real. For example, on April 8 in Bryan, Texas, a gunman (who apparently was a disgruntled former employee) shot six persons at a cabinet-making company. One was killed and five were wounded, four critically.

We could go on and on, but the bottom line is that America is the only place in the world where mass shootings are a daily part of life. And the reason is very simple: America is the only country where there are more guns than people and a large percentage of those weapons are high-capacity, semi-automatic firearms.

Ardent supporters of gun ownership make the time-worn argument that if there are restrictions on gun ownership, then only criminals will have guns.

But the reality is that the perpetrators of mass shooting incidents are not criminals -- they're typically the guy next door who has some sort of mental health or anger issue, but who has been able to buy a high-capacity weapon on a whim and go on a shooting rampage a short time later.

The shooter in Atlanta, for example, had purchased his gun just a day before he went on his murderous spree.

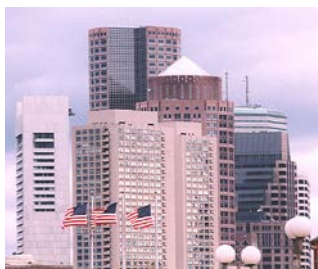
Other nations -- principally narco-terrorist states such as Mexico and Honduras -- may have higher homicide rates, but mass shootings by, and of, ordinary civilians are a uniquely American phenomenon.

Countries with broad gun-ownership, such as Australia and New Zealand, have instituted common-sense laws that have eliminated mass-shootings. Australia did so after a school massacre in 1996 -- and there have been no similar incidents since then.

What will it take for America to reach the tipping point that will persuade Congress to implement common-sense gun legislation?

We're obviously not there yet. Our guess is it will occur only when Americans will be fearful of gathering such that it will affect travel and business. After all, who wants to travel to a state where people are allowed to openly carry high-capacity weaponry?

But in the meantime, America tragically will remain among the most randomly-violent places on the planet.



# Forum

## Sheriff Tompkins continues vaccination education campaign

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins and the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department have worked diligently and effectively within the two facilities - the Suffolk County House of Correction and the Suffolk County Jail - to ensure the health and safety of both staff and the people in Department care and custody.

While successfully maintaining these efforts to isolate and prevent the spread of the virus inside his facilities, Sheriff Tompkins has since widened his scope of protection to include the residents of Suffolk County, and those well beyond, in an effort to keep them safe and healthy.

With an initiative that kicked off in early March, Sheriff Tompkins and the Department created a series of video public service announcements (PSA) designed to encourage COVID-19 vaccinations among residents in Boston, Chelsea, Revere, Winthrop and across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to help lower the spiking infection rate in the state and hasten the end of the pandemic.

Beginning with his first PSA titled, "It's Up To Us," and producing five subsequent videos, Sheriff Tompkins has assembled

an impressive roster of local elected officials of color, community activists, clergy, and medical professionals to target the communities that have been among the hardest hit by the virus with the highest concentration of essential, public-facing employees and the least amount of access to quality medical care.

PSAs have included outreach to women, seniors, and members of the Haitian, Cape Verdean and Latinx communities and feature, among others, a distinguished list of participants that includes: Acting Mayor Kim Janey; Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins; State Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz; State Representatives Russell Holmes, Nika Elugardo, Jon Santiago, Elizabeth Miranda and Brandy Fluker Oakley; Boston City Councilors Michelle Wu, Andrea Campbell, Annissa Essaibi George, Lydia Edwards, Ricardo Arroyo, and Julia Mejia; Register of Probate Felix Arroyo, Sr., former Senator Linda Dorcea Forry; former State Representatives Marie St. Fleur and Evandro Carvalho; East Boston Neighborhood Health Center CEO Manny Lopes; City of Boston Chief of Economic Development John Barros; Vanessa Calderón-Rosado,



Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins is shown receiving his COVID-19 vaccination.

Chief Executive Officer of Inquilinos Boricuas en Acción; Father Miracle; Pastor Keke; President and CEO of El Mundo Boston, Alberto Vassallo III; Chief Diversity Officer for State Street Corp. Paul Francisco; General Counsel at Compass Working Capital Betty Francisco; Co-Founder of Haitian Americans United Gertrude Delsoin; Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Assistant Deputy Superintendent Abiezer Ayuso and, of course, Sheriff Tompkins himself.

"For those people with the platform and ability to step up and help to promote the safety and well-being of our communities,

I feel that it is absolutely incumbent upon us to do so," said Sheriff Tompkins. "We need to do everything in our power to encourage our brothers and sisters to get vaccinated because they are vital to our efforts in overcoming this pandemic. We've already lost far, far too many people to COVID-19 and we need to do what we can to prevent any further losses of our family members friends and citizens."

Residents are encouraged to consult with their medical practitioner or visit: [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov) for information about where and when they can receive their vaccination.

## 2022 Sumner Tunnel restoration project meeting scheduled

By John Lynds

East Boston residents are still recovering from the traffic nightmares caused by the ill conceived reconfiguration of the Sumner Tunnel toll plaza when MassDOT switched to All Electronic Tolling (AET).

Now, MassDOT is planning an ambitious restoration project for the decaying Sumner Tunnel.

According to MassDOT, beginning in 2022 the tunnel that leads from Eastie to the North End will undergo a full restoration.

It's no secret the tunnel has seen its better days. Crumbling concrete, missing wall and ceiling panels, broken lights and pot holes make for an interesting trip into Downtown to say the

least.

However, MassDOT will host two community meetings next week to discuss the upcoming project. The meetings will be held on Tuesday, April 27 at 6 p.m. and Thursday, April 29 at 6 p.m. Both meetings will be held on Zoom. The first meeting's Zoom ID will be 889 2113 5782 and the passcode will be 860159. The second meeting's Zoom ID will be 862 2389 6416 and the passcode will be 765313.

"The purpose of these upcoming meetings is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the project," said MassDOT in a statement. "All views and comments made at the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the max-

imum extent possible."

MassDOT has already warned that the "Sumner Tunnel Centennial Project" will create significant impacts to the community and commuters during construction.

"During the meetings, MassDOT will review the construction activities and schedule, tunnel closures, traffic detours, and community impacts," continued the statement. "Attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions and offer comments."

Eastie's traffic nightmare began nearly five years ago after the Sumner Tunnel tolls were taken down and replaced with AET.

Apparently MassDOT, when designing the new entrance into the mouth

of the tunnel used outdated traffic projections that predicted traffic going into the tunnel would grow by half a percent each year. Going on those projections traffic into the Sumner should have only grown by 2.5 percent from 2013 to 2018. However, MassDOT said that traffic has exploded and there was a whopping 47 percent increase in tunnel traffic since 2013. That was nearly 45 percent more than MassDOT predicted over the same time period.

Residents are eager to see if the latest MassDOT project to improve the Sumner Tunnel will have the same dire effects on traffic in the neighborhood as the last project.

## Edwards// CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

here comes hundreds of millions of dollars and the question is how do we make sure we're concentrated on COVID recovery and this funding doesn't just get washed away on other things."

Edwards said the committee will work to strategically direct federal dollars so they can be used appropriately.

"I don't want this funding to be used to fill the normal gaps that have to be filled," said Edwards. "That's not how this is going to work. We want to make sure we're talking about real structural changes that need to happen--specifically, aid to individuals and to our businesses because they were hurt in a unique way for a long time by this pandemic. It's hard enough for people to track where taxpayers' dollars are going so the idea is if we have one committee where all of the COVID related dollars

are going then it's easier for us to be held accountable and be more transparent to the public. What we want to make sure we are not filling in budget gaps with these funds but really doing something new. If we're not dedicating a majority of our efforts to bringing people who lost everything back, bringing jobs back, bringing homeowners and tenants back and just dedicating our efforts to business as usual we will fail the city and its citizens."

With her home neighborhood of Eastie hit harder than nearly every other neighborhood in Boston by the pandemic, Edwards is in a unique position to bring some insight to the committee on how funds should be targeted.

"I have never been more proud of my neighborhood and district than during this pandemic and I know that we're going to swing back stronger than ever,"

said Edwards. "I really think I'm uniquely positioned because my district has been hurt the most by this pandemic. So I want to help navigate a lot of these conversations towards how the funding can help the most and have the biggest impact on the lives of residents."

These federal funds will support a national vaccination program, small businesses, provide emergency relief and resources for schools' safe reopening.

"The purpose of the Committee is to elevate incoming federal and state funds, while ensuring there are community voices throughout the entire process ensuring that these funds are distributed equitably, fairly, and effectively," said O'Malley. "As the city recovers from COVID-19's devastating inequitable impacts on public health, housing, and the economy, we will work toward building a more

resilient future for every Bostonian."

While Flaherty said, "A critical benefit of having a stand alone committee focused on reviewing this funding is that the Council can now provide a singular public forum for residents to provide input on how the funding is spent. I am looking forward to engaging residents and stakeholders from every neighborhood in our City to make sure that this funding will have the greatest impact on the programs, services and communities that need it most."

Aside from Edwards and Flaherty, committee members include Councilor Ricardo Arroyo, Chair of Public Health Committee, Councilor Kenzie Bok, Chair of Ways and Means Committee, and Councilor Ed Flynn, Chair of City and Neighborhood Services Committee.

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EAST BOSTON SENIOR JETS



EBHS football is off to a great start with a 5-1 season so far. Contributing to the teams success are the seniors. Front row, Anirichna Sophorlrath, Henry Antunez, Christian Feudo, Darwin Castellon, Kevin Garcia, and Aamir Johnson. Back row, John Festa, Dary Pimental, Coach John Parziale, Michael Zelaya, and Ty Birkner.

Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority holds Zoom session for college financial aid

Staff Report

The pandemic created financial and social hardships for Massachusetts families, including lost employment and isolation from loved ones. For high school seniors, the disrupted academic year left many unable to focus on life after graduation.

As vaccination rates increase, in-person classes resume, and hope emerges, a statewide effort is underway to reach undecided high school students and parents with an encouraging message: there are still many choices for college in the fall and opportunities to receive federal and state financial aid. A coalition of state and non-profit organizations across the Commonwealth is promoting that message in a campaign called “Worth It,” urging high school seniors and parents to apply for college financial aid as an important step in realizing their college dreams. The campaign also includes ways students and parents can seek free, expert help in pursuing higher education.

For example, Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA), will host a free, online workshop to help students and parents complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA is the key to unlocking college financial aid from federal, state, and institutional sources.


Filling out the FAFSA helps keep college an option for the fall but does not commit a student to enrolling. Yet, fewer high school seniors have filled out the FAFSA this year than in the previous two years. This has financial aid experts concerned that a generation of low-income and minority students will miss out on a college education.

MEFA’s FAFSA Festival is open for Massachusetts residents to drop in on Saturday, April 24, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Visit [mefa.org/events/fafsa-festival](https://mefa.org/events/fafsa-festival) for information. In advance of the event, MEFA recommends students begin filling out the FAFSA and to then bring their questions to the FAFSA Festival. Families can start the FAFSA at [fafsa.gov](https://fafsa.gov) and find other helpful resources at [mass.gov/financialaid](https://mass.gov/financialaid).

“The pandemic has created many challenges for families, and we just want them to know that they don’t have to defer their dream of a college education. We have a team of experts volunteering to help high school seniors achieve their goals by accessing financial aid opportunities,” said Thomas Graf, Executive Director of MEFA.

In addition to the FAFSA Festival, MEFA will host Opportunities for After High School, a virtual panel discussion with four higher education leaders from the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education, Dean College, and Worcester State University, detailing colleges and programs offering enrollment for Fall 2021, the available federal and state financial aid to help pay for a two-year and four-year college or university, and resources to help students complete the FAFSA. The panel discussion will be Thursday, April 29th, at 6:30 p.m. To attend, visit [mefa.org/events/opportunities-for-after-high-school](https://mefa.org/events/opportunities-for-after-high-school).

MEFA is a not-for-profit state authority, not reliant on state or federal appropriations, established under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 15C. MEFA’s mission, since its founding in 1982, has been to help Massachusetts students and families access and afford higher education and reach financial goals through education programs, tax-advantaged savings plans, low-cost loans, and expert guidance. All of MEFA’s work aligns with the ever-present goal to support the independence, growth, and success of Massachusetts students and families. Visit [mefa.org](https://mefa.org) to learn more or follow MEFA on Twitter @mefatweets and on Facebook at mefaMA




Boston Water and Sewer Commission  
(BWSC)

980 Harrison Avenue  
Boston, MA 02119

WATER MAIN FLUSHING NOTICE

Boston Water and Sewer Commission will commence Water Main Flushing (Sector 2) in parts of the East Boston area starting:  
  
April 25, 2021 through May 12, 2021

The boundaries for the areas being flushed: Chelsea Creek to the north, Boston Harbor to the south, I-90 to the east and Boston Harbor to the west.



The purpose of the Water Main Flushing Program is to improve drinking water quality for residents and businesses.

Water Main flushing will take place between the hours of  
10:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M.

The flushing process may cause discolored water and a reduction in pressure. The discoloration of the water will be temporary and is not harmful. If the condition persists, please contact BWSC's 24 Hour Service at (617) 989-7000.

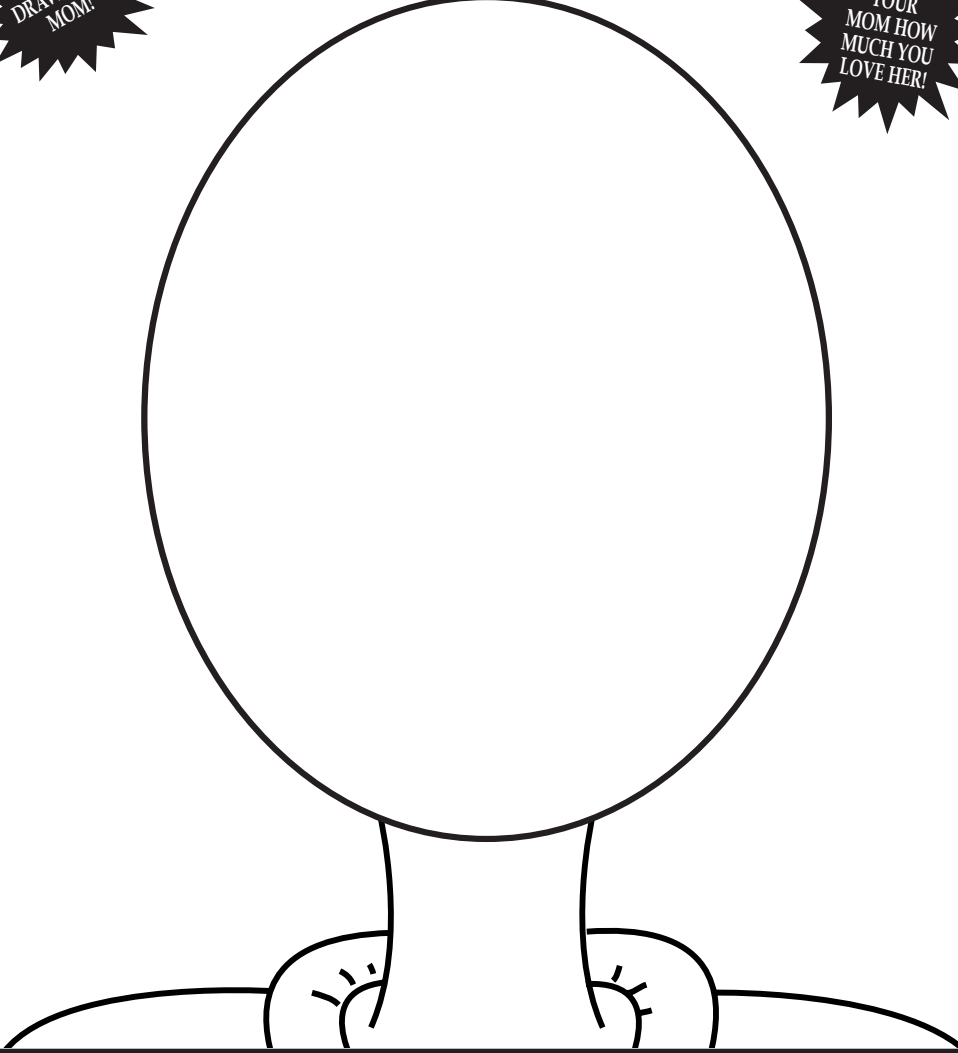
BWSC appreciates your patience as we work to improve the quality of drinking water we will provide to the residents and businesses of Boston.

If you have any questions, contact BWSC's Night Operations Manager at (617) 989-7000 or visit our website @ [www.bwsc.org](https://www.bwsc.org).

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Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

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Draw Your Mom

• Complete the picture by creating a picture of your mother

• Pens, pencils, markers or crayons, use colors

Email or Text Your photo to [promo@reverejournal.com](mailto:promo@reverejournal.com)  
Please include the publication in the email or text

Or mail to: The Independent Newspaper Group, 385 Broadway, Ste 105, Revere

Deadline for entries will be Friday, April 30th.

Entries will be published in the May 5th, & 6th issues of the Revere Journal, Chelsea Record, Everett Independent, East Boston Times, Winthrop Sun Transcript, The Lynn Journal & The Charlestown Patriot Bridge



EAST BOSTON JETS VARSITY VOLLEYBALL LOSE TO LATIN ACADEMY 3-0

The East Boston High School Varsity Volleyball Team dropped a home game last week to Latin Academy, bringing their season record to 8-1.



Luisa Sanchez sets for a pass to a teammate.



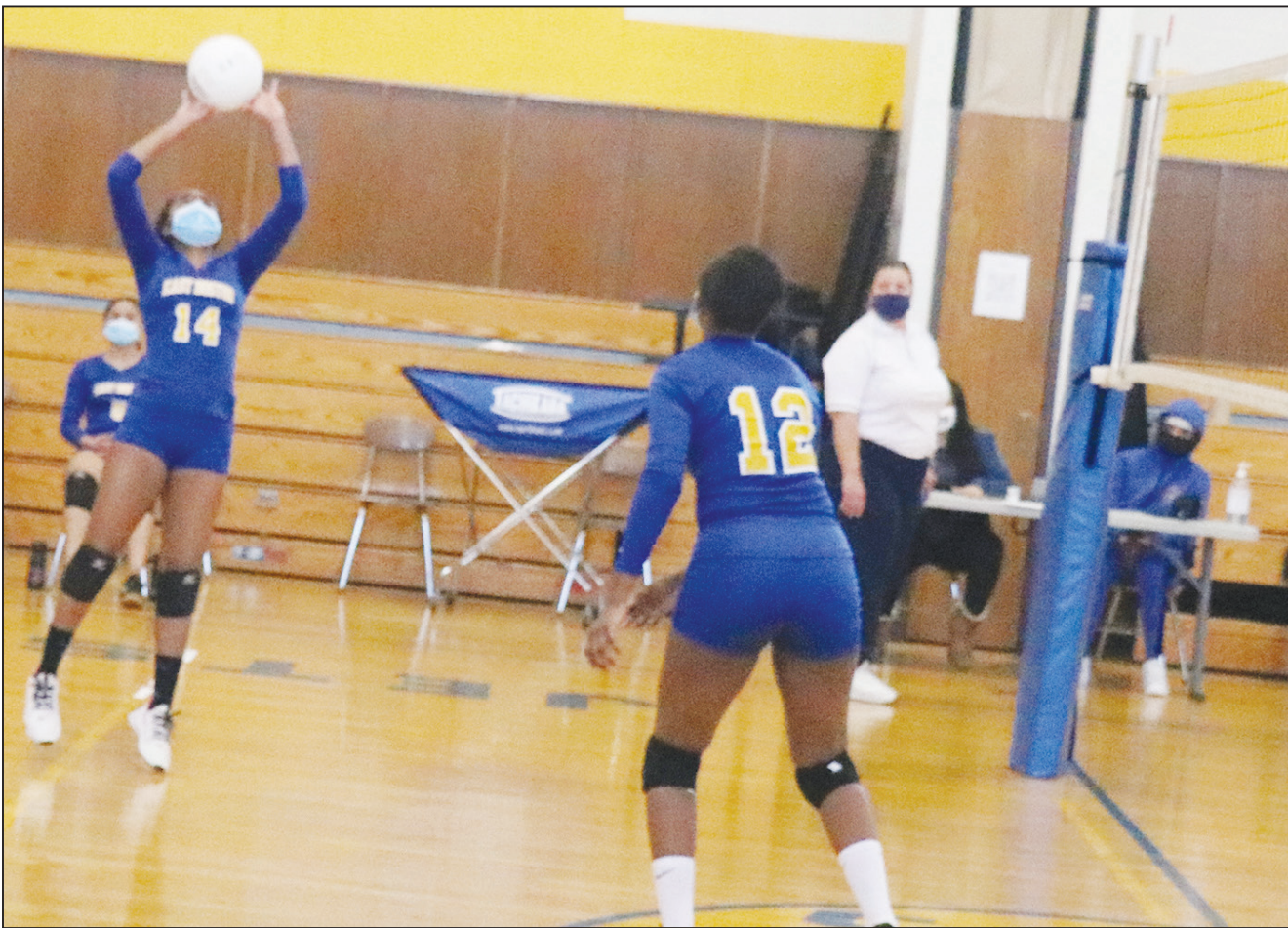
Brittany Elliott serves for the Jets.



Captain Jennifer Delgado returns a volley for the Jets.



Kennetta Roebuck with a close play at the net.



Capt. Whitney Ruberto keeps the ball in play.



Head Coach Clarita Prudencio with East Boston Jet Captains, Jennifer Delgado (left) and Whitney Ruberto (right).



Head Coach Clarita Prudencio with the East Boston Jets Varsity Volley Team: Front row: Jaden Pacitta, Brittany Elliott, Jennifer Delgado, Whitney Ruberto, Kennetta Roebuck, Luisa Sanchez, and Salome Arango. Back row: Liliana Vargas, Esperanza Cruz, Cindy Alfaro, Alexmayri Peguero, and Emely Cruz.

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Idahoan Mashed Potato Pouches..... 10/ \$10.00

Hunts Snack Packs..... 10/ \$10.00

Dannon Light & Fit Yogurt ..... 10/ \$10.00

Best Yet Potato Chips..... 2/ \$4.00

Best Yet Cranberry Juice 64 oz ..... 4/ \$5.00

Gatorade 6 pk lemon or lime only..... 2/ \$4.00

General Mills Honey Nut Cheerios..... 2/ \$5.00

Best Yet Peanut Butter..... 2/ \$3.00

Best Yet Apple Juice 64 oz ..... 2/ \$3.00

Guildens Mustard 12 oz ..... 4/ \$5.00

Hunts Ketchup 20 oz ..... 4/ \$5.00

Dynamo Laundry Detergent..... 2/ \$5.00

Best Yet Frozen Bagels ..... 2/ \$3.00

Vans Waffles..... 2/ \$5.00

P.F. Chang Meals ..... \$6.99

Best Yet Sour Cream 16 oz..... 2/ \$3.00

Simply Smart Milk 64 oz..... 2/ \$7.00

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Chicken Leg Quarters..... 79¢/lb

Boneless Chicken Thighs..... \$1.79/lb

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Sirloin Spoon Roast ..... \$4.89/lb

Jones All Natural Sausage links or patties 2/ \$7.00

Best Yet Bacon 16 oz..... 2/ \$10.00

Bob Evans Chicken Entrees 20 oz ..... 2/ \$8.00

Weekend Specials

Friday, April 23rd to Sunday April 25th

"while supplies last"

BAKERY

Mini Cupcakes..... \$3.69

DELI

Russer Wunderbar German Bologna ..... \$2.59/lb

Best Yet Roast Beef ..... \$7.99/lb

Hans Kisse Cheese Tortellini Salad..... \$5.99/lb

PRODUCE

Fresh Sweet Red Seedless Grapes..... \$1.79/lb

USA Grown Fresh Pint Blueberries..... \$3.99

California Celery Hearts ..... 2/ \$5.00

MEAT

Fresh Pork Tenderloin ..... \$3.99/lb

Bone in Blade Lamb Chops..... \$4.99/lb

Best Yet Cooked Shrimp 26-30ct ..... \$7.99

GROCERY

Best Yet K-Cups ..... \$3.99 limit 3

Best Yet Ice Cream..... 2/ \$4.00 limit 4

Best Yet Butters Quarters ..... 2/ \$5.00 limit 4

Bakery

Apple or Raspberry Turnovers 2 pk ..... \$2.49

Our Own Oatmeal Raisin Cookies 10 ct..... \$2.99

Blueberry Pies ..... \$4.99

Deli

Margherita Genoa Salami..... \$6.99/lb

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Sara Lee Honey Ham..... \$6.99/lb

Best Yet Corned Beef ..... \$6.99/lb

Best Yet Salads-Potato-Macaroni-Cole Slaw ..... \$2.99

1 lb pkg

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Tropical Sweet Golden Pineapples ..... 2/ \$5.00

California Lemons..... 2/ \$1.00

Tangy Limes..... 59¢

California Sweet Seedless Navel Oranges..... 99¢/lb

Hot Slicing Tomatoes..... \$1.49/lb

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# Weekly COVID positive test rate keeps rising in Eastie

By John Lynds

Despite a successful vaccine rollout so far in the neighborhood, East Boston’s weekly COVID-19 positive test rate continues to climb and increased another 12 percent last week. The weekly positive test rate has increased 16 percent, 20 percent, 10 percent and now 12 percent week over week since the end of March.

According to the latest data released by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), last week, 2,012 Eastie residents were tested for the

virus last week and 7.4 percent were positive--a 12 percent increase from the 6.6 percent reported by the BPHC two weeks ago.

Of the 38,657 Eastie residents tested for COVID since the pandemic began, 19.1 percent overall were found to be positive for the virus. This was an increase of half a point from the 19 percent reported by the BPHC two weeks ago.

However, positive test rates citywide decreased but fell below the five percent threshold.

According to the BPHC,

26,430 residents were tested and 4.9 percent were COVID positive--this was a two percent decrease from the 5 percent positive test rate reported by the BPHC two weeks ago. The five percent threshold has been used to plan Boston’s phased reopening strategies.

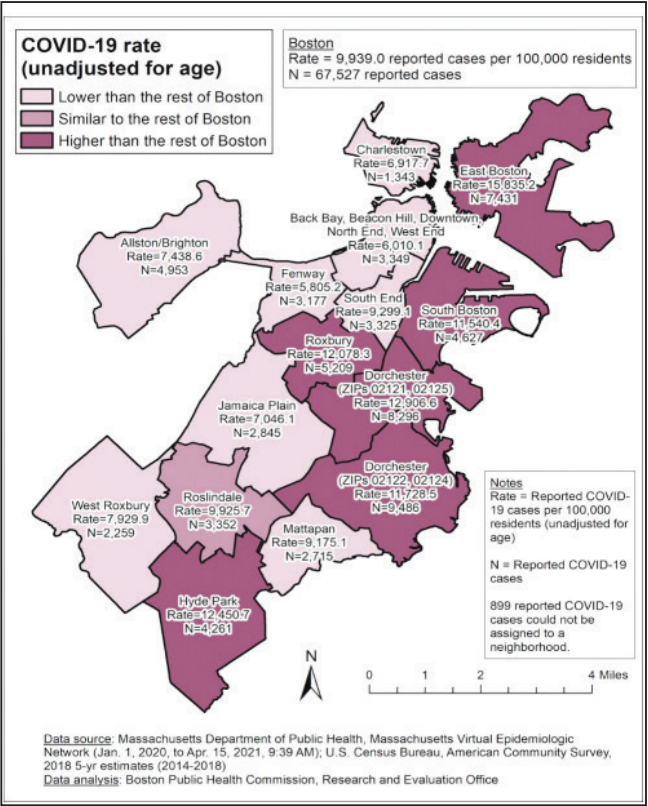
Eastie’s COVID infection rate increased by 1.9 percent last week and went from 1,553.2 cases per 10,000 residents to 1583.5 cases per 10,000 residents.

An additional 142 Eastie residents contracted the virus and there are now

7,431 confirmed cases, up from the 7,289 reported two weeks ago.

The statistics released by the BPHC as part of its weekly COVID19 report breaks down the number of cases and infection rates in each neighborhood. It also breaks down the number of cases by age, gender and race.

Citywide positive cases of coronavirus increased 3.4 percent percent last week and went from 65,474 cases to 67,685 confirmed cases in a week. Three additional Boston residents died from the virus last week and there are now 1,361 total deaths in the city from COVID.



On Friday the BPHC released its weekly COVID-19 statistics by neighborhood that tracks infection rates and COVID testing results in Boston neighborhoods.

## Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts offers free Bluebikes rides to COVID-19 vaccination appointments

To boost access to COVID-19 vaccines and support transportation needs as more Massachusetts residents become eligible, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (“Blue Cross”) continues to sponsor free Bluebikes rides to and from vaccination sites located within the Bluebikes system. Providing equitable access to vaccines is a critical priority for Blue Cross, which recently made a \$1 million commitment toward transportation to and from vaccination sites in underserved communities across the state, in partnership with Lyft and the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers. Residents are eligible for two complimentary Bluebikes Adventure Pass rides, available across the system’s 10 municipalities: Arlington, Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, Newton, Revere, Somerville and Watertown. Blue Cross is the title sponsor of Bluebikes, which is owned by the municipalities and operated by Lyft.

“Bluebikes is an important part of our public transportation system in Boston, particularly during the pandemic,” said Boston Mayor Kim Janey. “We’re grateful for Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts’ support in encouraging every Bostonian to get vaccinated.”

Riders can take advantage of this offer by downloading and opening the Bluebikes app

on a mobile device and using the vaccination codes “BLUEVAX1” and “BLUEVAX2,” providing residents who require two vaccine doses with complimentary Bluebikes trips for both appointments. Each code will unlock one free Adventure Pass beginning April 19, and includes free unlimited two-hour rides for a 24-hour period, giving riders the flexibility to travel to and from a vaccination site (for information and to find a vaccination location, please visit [mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine](https://mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine)). In addition, complimentary bike valets will be available at Bluebikes stations nearest two mass vaccination sites, the Hynes Convention Center (Newbury St. and Hereford St.) and the Reggie Lewis Center (Roxbury Crossing), beginning April 26, courtesy of Blue Cross and Lyft. Bluebikes associates will offer expanded docking and bike availability to make coming and going easier.

“We’re committed to supporting our communities and removing barriers to this critical vaccine, especially in underserved areas,” said Kathy Klingler, chief consumer experience and marketing officer at Blue Cross. “As appointments become available to the majority of Massachusetts residents beginning Monday, we encourage residents to get vaccinated and to take advantage of safe and free transportation options.”

Blue Cross is in the fourth year of a six-year Bluebikes title sponsorship, which launched in May 2018. Through its partnership with the municipal owners of Bluebikes, Blue Cross continues to support system growth and accessibility, including station expansions, upgrades and additional bikes.

About Bluebikes

Bluebikes is public transportation by bike. Owned and jointly governed by the municipalities of Boston, Brookline, Cambridge, Chelsea, Everett, and Somerville and now serving Arlington, Newton, Revere and Wattertown, Bluebikes is a fast, fun, and affordable transportation option. Since launching in 2011, more than 12 million trips have been taken on Bluebikes, including more than 2 million trips in 2020.

About Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts ([bluecrossma.org](https://bluecrossma.org)) is a community-focused, tax-paying, not-for-profit health plan headquartered in Boston. We are committed to the relentless pursuit of quality, affordable health care with an unparalleled consumer experience. Consistent with our promise to always put our members first, we are rated among the nation’s best health plans for member satisfaction and quality. Connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

## New AARP analysis shows Massachusetts COVID cases and deaths declining in nursing homes

The latest release of AARP’s Nursing Home COVID-19 Dashboard shows that both cases and deaths in nursing homes declined in the four weeks ending March 21. Although these rates are improving, chronic problems in nursing homes—revealed during the COVID-19 pandemic—continue. In Massachusetts, during the four weeks ending March 21, 2021, .49 percent of nursing homes reported a shortage of nurses or aides, down from 2.4 percent from the previous reporting period.

Deaths of nursing home residents in Massachusetts have significantly decreased from the previous period, dropping from a rate of .79 to .10 per 100 residents. New infections among residents and staff also declined to less than half of previous levels. Resident cases fell from 2.4 to .34 per 100 residents, and new staff cases declined from 2.4 to .49 per 100 residents.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to light the chronic, ongoing problems that have plagued the nursing home industry for decades, including staffing shortages, poor infection control, transparency, and accountability,” said Mike Festa, AARP Massachusetts State Director.

“Following the COVID-related deaths of more than 9,000 nursing home residents and staff in Massachusetts, now is the time to eradicate these failings that jeopardize the health and safety of nursing home residents.”

AARP continues to urge elected officials to act immediately, focusing this year on:

- \* Enacting or making permanent the components of AARP’s five-point plan
- \* Prioritizing regular and ongoing testing and adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) for residents and staff—as well as inspectors and any visitors.
- \* Improving transparency focused on daily, public reporting of cases and deaths in facilities; communication with families about discharges and transfers; and accountability for state and federal funding that goes to facilities.
- \* Ensuring access to in-person visitation following federal and state guidelines for safety, and require continued access to virtual visitation for all residents.
- \* Ensuring quality care for residents through adequate staffing, oversight, and access to in-person formal advocates, called long-term care Ombudsmen.

\* Rejecting immunity for long-term care facilities related to COVID-19.

\* Establishing minimum nursing staffing standards

\* Ensuring progress is made so that in-person visitation can safely occur and facilitating virtual visitation

\* Creating a pathway for single occupancy rooms in nursing homes

The AARP Nursing Home COVID-19 Dashboard analyzes federally reported data in four-week periods going back to June 1, 2020. Using this data, the AARP Public Policy Institute, in collaboration with the Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University in Ohio, created the dashboard to provide snapshots of the virus’ infiltration into nursing homes and impact on nursing home residents and staff, to identify specific areas of concern at the national and state levels in a timely manner.

The complete Nursing Home COVID-19 Dashboard is available at [www.aarp.org/nursinghomedashboard](https://www.aarp.org/nursinghomedashboard). For more information on how COVID is impacting nursing homes and AARP’s advocacy on this issue, visit [www.aarp.org/nursinghomes](https://www.aarp.org/nursinghomes).

# SWINGING FOR THE FENCES



## EAST BOSTON YMCA T-BALL LEAGUE

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**GAMES BEGIN TUESDAY, APRIL 27! REGISTER TODAY!**

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## Real Estate Transfers

BUYER 1	SELLER 1	ADDRESS	PRICE
Patel, Aditi	119 Barnes Avenue LLC	119 Barnes Ave #3	\$638,000
133 Boardman Street LLC	Vecchio-Cowan, Priscilla	133 Boardman St	\$630,000
Prakash, Varshini L	Matos, Priscilla E	193-195 Chelsea St #2	\$439,000
Boland, Julia	Coppersmith Way LLC	1 Coppersmith Way #3	\$840,000
Omalley, Ryan	Tays Realty LLC	115 Falcon St #2	\$725,000
Martinez, Brian S	Cramer, Bruce J	48 Frankfort St #8	\$400,000
Lim FT	Slip 45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #102	\$575,000
Beyna, Mercedes	Slip 45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #106	\$700,000
Xu, Aisheng	Slip 45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #114	\$990,000
Chase, William P	Slip 45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #205	\$625,000
Meng, Fanyu	Slip 45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #209	\$1,550,000
Mehra, Nivedita	Slip 45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #210	\$1,634,000
Qian, Susan	Slip 45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #213	\$1,110,000
Gormley, Brian J	Slip 45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #214	\$1,060,000
45 Lewis Street 511 RT	Slip 45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #511	\$1,215,000
Gardiner, Gregg A	Slip 45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #512	\$1,196,000
Li, Xiang	Slip 45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #PH19	\$936,100
Mei, Lina	Slip 45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #PH5	\$685,000
Ellard, Brian D	Slip 45 Owner LLC	45 Lewis St #PH8	\$637,500
Sanchez, Rochio D	Baglio, James J	260 Lexington St	\$780,000
Kibbler, Emily S	Girard, Eric	269 Lexington St #1	\$374,000
Butterfield, Michael J	Falcucci Properties LLC	39 Lexington St #2	\$590,000
Deblas-Waldo, Jose D	Zawaski, Richard L	109 Leyden St	\$810,000
109 Liverpool Street LLC	Liverpool Ctrl May 109	109 Liverpool St	\$1,080,000
Maverick Sq Prop LLC	Velez, Martin	87-89 Liverpool St	\$2,300,000
Maverick Sq Prop LLC	Velez, Martin	91-93 Liverpool St	\$2,300,000



37 MAVERICK SQUARE ■ EAST BOSTON ■ 617/561-4495



# Baker administration files last legislation for ride-sharing bill

Staff Report

The Baker-Polito Administration last filed legislation to build on the Commonwealth's comprehensive oversight of Transportation Network Companies (TNC) by improving public safety requirements and obtaining additional ride data to assist with transportation planning, congestion management, and vehicle emissions tracking.

Additionally, An Act Relative to Transportation Network Companies would provide needed flexibility for the ban on surge pricing during a State of Emergency, and expand the types of companies subject to state TNC laws and regulations.

"The safety of Massachusetts residents and visitors is our top priority and this legislation will institute additional public safety measures for passengers and law enforcement, provide important information to transportation planners and reduce administrative burdens for cities and towns," said Gov. Charlie Baker.

"The Commonwealth was a national leader in providing background checks and a regulatory framework for the rideshare industry, and as the industry evolves into an important element of our transportation system, we are pleased to file this bill ensuring that the Commonwealth's transportation network can continue to grow in a safe and responsible manner."

The Administration previously filed An Act Relative to Public Safety and Transparency by Transportation Network Companies in 2019, but today's legislation includes a newly filed provision that gives the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) exclusive authority to regulate large livery companies operating throughout the state on a digital network. This provision will ensure that livery companies operating on a digital network with over 100 drivers will be subject to the statewide TNC laws and regulations. Smaller livery companies will remain regulated at the municipal level, regardless of whether they operate on a digital network.

The proposal would build on Massachusetts's TNC safety and enforcement laws, some of the most stringent and comprehensive in the country, by:

- Increasing fines and penalties, up to two and half years in a House of Correction, for the practice of "account renting," or allowing another individual to utilize a TNC driver's account or identity, to provide TNC services.
- Making it a criminal offense for a driver to exploit the personal information of a rider to stalk, harass or defraud a rider.

Implementing tougher penalties for drivers who:

- \*Fail to maintain a driver certificate or a background check clearance certificate
- \*Fail to display TNC vehicle decals
- \*Fail to maintain adequate insurance, or carry proof of a TNC vehicle inspection

This legislation also

allows for new transportation data to be collected from TNCs and eases the administrative burden on small towns. Specifically, the bill will:

- Authorize the DPU to obtain more detailed trip data from TNCs on a monthly basis that can then be shared in an anonymous and confidential manner with state agencies, municipalities and local organizations for planning purposes.

\*The more detailed data called for in this legislation includes total miles and minutes when drivers are en route to pick up riders and when they are providing rides; whether riders were successfully matched for shared rides; and additional data on accidents and reasonable accommodations.

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## OBITUARIES

### Claire Helfer

A woman who thoroughly enjoyed the closeness of family and the fun of sharing time with them

Family and friends are invited to attend visiting hours on Thursday, April 22 from 4 to 7 p.m., in the Vertuccio & Smith, Home for Funerals, 773 Broadway (Rte. 107) Revere for Claire N. (Mathison) Helfer who passed peacefully on Saturday, April 17 in the Lighthouse Nursing Care Center of Revere following a long illness. Following the visitation, a Funeral Service will be conducted in the Funeral Home at 7:15 p.m. Interment is private. Face masks must be worn at all times and social distancing must be maintained in the funeral home. All attendees are required to provide their name and phone number for contact tracing and temperatures will be checked prior to entering the funeral home. Only 25 people are allowed in the Funeral Home at one time. Guests are asked to visit briefly and to exit the funeral home to allow others to enter.

Born and raised in East Boston, she was a graduate of Girls' Trade School, Boston, Class of 1959. Claire and her family left East Boston in 1998, moving to Revere, where they remained. Early in her working career, she worked for the former Boston Acoustics of East Boston and the Ames Department Store.

Claire was a woman who thoroughly enjoyed the closeness of family



and the fun of sharing time with them.

She was the very proud grandmother to Brendon T. and Jamie M. Helfer, who made their home with her; the beloved wife of 52 years to Robert L. Helfer, the cherished mother to Robert M. Helfer and his wife, Teresa and the proud grandmother to Brendon T. and Jamie M. Helfer, all of Revere; the dear sister of Gary Mathison and his wife, Audrey of East Boston and the late Joyce White and Donald L. Mathison, Sr. and his late wife, Gloria. She is also the loving sister-in-law to Charles White of Peabody. Several nieces and nephews also survive her.

In lieu of flowers, remembrances may be made to MSPCA (Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 350 South Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02130-9923. To send online condolences or for more information, please visit [www.vertuccioand-smith.com](http://www.vertuccioand-smith.com).

### Edward Bushee

Musician who loved the arts and listening to jazz music

Edward J. Bushee of Chelmsford, formerly of Revere, died on April 14 at the age of 80.

Edward proudly served his country in the United States Army

and was a member of the National Guard 26 YD Yankee Division Band. He played several instruments. Edward loved the arts and listening to jazz music.

The beloved husband of the late Rosemary (Hayes), he is survived by his daughters, Heidi Ricker and her husband, Jonathan of Tewksbury and Suzanne Silvestri and her husband, Nicholas of Danvers; dear brother of the late Frederick Bushee Jr. and Mary Murphy and cherished grandfather of Haley and Delilah Ricker and Nico and Luca Silvestri. He is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

A Visitation will be held at the Paul Buonfiglio & Sons-Bruno Fu-



neral Home 128 Revere St, Revere on Friday April 23, 2021 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 pm followed by a private prayer service. Due to capacity limits, we ask that you keep you visit brief to allow others to enter. Relatives and friends are kindly invited. Masks and social distancing are required at the funeral home.

Interment will be in Puritan Lawn Memorial Park. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to the American Cancer society 3 Speen St, Framingham, MA 01701. For guestbook, please visit [www.buonfiglio.com](http://www.buonfiglio.com).

## BWSC offers property owners credit to replace lead pipes

Boston Water and Sewer Commission (BWSC) announced that it is doubling to \$4,000 the credit for replacing lead pipes through its Lead Replacement Incentive Program. A recent review conducted by the Commission estimates that as many as 4,800 property owners may be eligible for the program. For most customers, this credit will cover the total cost of the lead pipe replacement.

Lead water pipes can significantly increase a person's exposure to lead, a toxic metal that can be harmful to human health. The water provided by BWSC and Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) is lead-free when it leaves the reservoirs because distribution pipes are made mostly of iron and steel. However, lead can leach into tap water through home service lines and internal plumbing, especially if water sits for long periods of time before use. People in homes and businesses built before 1950 should run their drinking water for two to three minutes if it has been stagnant for several hours, before drinking or cooking, to flush out any lead that might have leached into the system.

Under the Lead Replacement Incentive Program, properties owners who may have lead pipes will receive a letter outlining the program and urging them to reach out to the Commission to schedule an evaluation and estimate. Owners are re-

sponsible for all pipes on their property. The Commission is giving property owners 60 months interest-free to pay for replacement costs beyond the amount of the incentive. To be eligible for the program, property owners must be current in their payments and agree to have the work performed by the Commission. Lead pipe replacement is subject to availability and is offered on a first-come, first-served basis.

For additional information regarding the program and other lead resources, property owners are encouraged to visit the Commission's website at: [www.bwsc.org](http://www.bwsc.org), or call the LEAD HOTLINE at (617) 989-7888.

About the Boston Water and Sewer Commission: The BWSC manages the largest and oldest system of its kind in New England, providing drinking water and sewer services to more than one million people daily. The BWSC's goal is to provide residents and businesses in the city of Boston with the best water quality and sewer services available in a way that is both protective of the environment and financially prudent. BWSC was created by the Massachusetts Legislature in 1977, replacing separate water and sewer divisions of the city's Public Works Department. BWSC is overseen by a three-member Board of Commissioners that is appointed by the Mayor with the approval of the City Council.

## OBITUARIES

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~ 22nd Anniversary ~

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So he put His arms  
around you  
And whispered  
"Come to Me"  
With tearful eyes we  
watched you  
And saw you pass away  
Although we loved you  
clearly  
We could not make  
you stay  
A golden heart stopped  
beating  
Hard working hands at rest  
God broke our hearts to  
prove to us  
He only takes the best  
Love Always  
Wife & Son







Region

// CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

PATRICK STEPPING DOWN AS COACH

LYNN - Lynn Tech boys basketball coach Stevie Patrick, who led the Tigers' program for the past five seasons, has stepped down from his position.

Patrick, who played basketball at Tech for two seasons before enrolling at Tabor Academy and later served as an assistant coach at Tech, informed Tech Director of Athletics Adolph Graciale of his decision on March 13. Tech did not have a boys basketball season this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Stevie told me he wants to spend more time with his family and his son," Graciale told the Lynn Journal. "He definitely loves coaching here at Tech. He just wanted to put quality time in with his family and I understood that totally. It takes a lot of work being a head coach of any team. I thank Stevie for his excellent leadership as our coach."

Patrick, a former college basketball player at Quinnipiac and UMass Dartmouth, took over the Tech program in 2016, succeeding David Leary, who is now the Revere High boys basketball coach.

Patrick helped his teams achieve great success during his basketball-playing career. In his sophomore year at Tech, Patrick starred on a 16-5 team. At Tabor, Patrick excelled for two New England Prep School championship teams. During his freshman year at Division 1 Quinnipiac, the Bobcats had a 21-8 record. At UMass Dartmouth, Patrick helped lead the Corsairs to an ECAC title.

At the head coach, Patrick was building a successful program in the Commonwealth Athletic Conference, trying to return the Tigers to the heights they had reached under former Coach Marvin Avery, who is now coaching at Lynn Classical.

Patrick is highly regarded as an outstanding teacher of the game and his

players benefited greatly from the knowledge and experience he brought to the Tech bench.

Graciale has posted the position and a large number of candidates have expressed their interest in the Tech job.

"We have received a ton of applications," said Graciale. "It seemed like it was an NBA job by the number of candidates that have inquired or applied for the position."

The significant interest in a Lynn basketball coaching position is understandable. The city has been the center of the basketball universe for decades, notably when the great Pancho Bingham and Stu Primus played for an undefeated state championship Classical team. Tom Grassa led the Rams to back-to-back state championships (1993-94). The incomparable Marvin Avery guided the Tech Tigers to a state title in 2002. More recently, Antonio Anderson (English) led his team to back-to-back state titles and an undefeated season this year while David Brown (St. Mary's) brought a state championship home to Lynn after winning a title in Winthrop.

The Lynn girls basketball scene is also home to extraordinary coaches. At St. Mary's, Jeff Newhall has three state championship on his resume and this year's team was poised to bring home another title after winning 20 games in the regular season (The State Tournament was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic). At Classical, Tom Sawyer has built a winning program that has consistently qualifies for the State Tournament and sends players on to compete at the next level. Mackenzie Charles led English to an undefeated regular season in the GBL and he has restored the program to Freddie Hogan-era basketball prominence.

So Adolph Graciale and the selection committee will have interviews with several well-qualified candidates before making its recommendation to Tech Principal Carissa Kara-kados.

Graciale will lead the selection committee that includes Tech Assistant Athletic Director Joe Conlon, Vice Principal Fred Gallo, Tech girls basketball head coach Kaitlyn Wechsler, Tech department administrator Claire Price, and Tech media coordinator Noubertson Rateau.

"We'll begin setting up our interviews for the last week in April and the first week in May," said Graciale.

RPS POISED FOR GREAT YEAR

REVERE -At the Revere Public School (RPS) Committee Ways and Means meeting last week Superintendent Dr. Dianne Kelly reported that RPS has kicked off its lengthy budget process and funding for next year looks better than it has in decades.

"This coming school year we will actually have \$132 million that we could spend just in this next school year on our school department," said Kelly at the meet-

ing. "That's almost a \$30 million, increase over last year, which is absolutely astronomical. It's the kind of funding that we should have had phased in over the last two decades."

Over the next several weeks Kelly in the school committee will begin the process of how to best spend the increase in funding for the next school year that will most likely focus on getting students back to where they need to be post-pandemic.

"What's unique about this year is that our funding is different than it's been in decades," said Kelly. "We have been thinking a lot about how we can improve the district and ways to leverage this additional funding to really influence the outcomes for our students. What really impacted some of the decisions are the vast amount of input that we got from our community meetings just over a year ago, when we thought we were going to have some funding for Fiscal Year 2021. However, this funding was not realized because the pandem-

ic caused the state to pull back the funding we anticipated from the Student Opportunity Act (SOA). So what we are hoping to do is to set an overarching vision for this funding."

Kelly said the additional funding that RPS has on top of SOA funding are other grants like the American Recovery Act that are forthcoming.

"These are sizable amounts (of funding) as well," said Kelly.

After expenses last year, the School Committee agreed to reserve about \$878,000 in the fall left over from the 2019/2020 school year.

"We agreed that we should leave that funding unspent because we were not sure at the time what our fiscal status would be for next school year," said Kelly. "So when all of that was said and done we had \$99 million to operate the school department. Then we received some additional funding because of COVID."

Throughout the pandemic Kelly said RPS received one grant for \$2.2

million and an additional \$320,000 in Remote Learning Technology grants, which RPS used to buy the Chromebooks that went to students.

"We also had at one point almost \$1.7 million in Coronavirus Relief funding," said Kelly. "Most of that was targeted for the purchase of PPE and other things that we needed to ensure that our schools were safe. So our grand total we had to spend for the school year was \$103 million."

Kelly said now with SOA funding hopefully coming through finally to the tune of \$11 million for RPS the schools will be in real good shape fiscally.

"This year we had \$108.7 million to spend on the school district," said Kelly. "Again that's a sizable jump over last year's budget of \$103 million and we anticipate with grants and SOA funding that we'll have \$132 million to spend on our schools--an increase of nearly \$30 million."

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# Boston Mayoral candidate and former EBHS teacher Annissa Essaibi George releases education plan

By John Lynds

On Tuesday At-Large City Councilor, former East Boston High School teacher and current Boston Mayoral Candidate Annissa Essaibi George released her education plan.

Before entering the political arena, Essaibi George taught Economics, Business Management and Health and Human Services to juniors and seniors at East Boston High School and served as the school's assistant softball coach for 14 years before being elected to the Coun-

cil in 2015.

"As a former Boston Public Schools teacher, a mother of four BPS students, and Chair of the Boston City Council's Education Committee, I know that we have to make changes to our public schools in order to provide every one of our students the quality education they deserve," said Essaibi George. "Today, I released my Education and Child Care plan that focuses on providing high quality schools for every student in each of our neighborhoods. The in-

consistency in the quality of our schools is directly linked to declining enrollment, a widening opportunity and achievement gap, and a lack of trust in BPS to provide our kids with a great education."

Throughout her tenure on the Council Essaibi George has emerged as a champion for students, educators, and families.

Informed by her time in the classrooms at EBHS and by the ideas and lived experiences of advocates, experts, families, educators, students and Boston residents Essaibi George

said the plan includes short- and long-term solutions to rebuild an equitable school system, increase trust within our school communities, and prioritize and invest in child care infrastructure.

"As a former Boston Public Schools teacher, a BPS graduate, a mother to four BPS students, and the current Chair of Boston City Council's Committee on Education, I've held a front row seat to the challenges facing Boston families—both in and out of our public school system," said Essaibi George. "I've seen firsthand the school to prison pipeline. I've seen the heartbreaking repercussions of not having food access or housing, a stable income and affordable health and mental health care. These are all issues that I can and will take on as Mayor of Boston."

Essaibi George said the greatest challenge facing BPS is that not every student is receiving a high quality education.

"The variations in the quality of schools are directly linked to declining enrollment, a widening opportunity and achieve-

ment gap, and a lack of trust in BPS to provide our kids with the education they deserve," she said. "The inequities among our schools and across learning opportunities, facilities, and student support services, continue to exacerbate existing racial and economic disparities for students. That needs to end."

She said her education priorities if elected mayor would be to close the opportunity and achievement gap.

"In order to accomplish this we must begin with establishing equitable baseline standards and resources in every school," said Essaibi George. "We also need to implement consistent, district-wide curriculum standards to reduce disparities between schools and ensure that every BPS school is providing high quality academics. This also starts by establishing a structured literacy program for every child from pre K-3. And then also, I've said this before, we need to be investing in vocational and technical education here in Boston to ensure our students are prepared



At-Large City Councilor, former East Boston High School teacher and current Boston Mayoral Candidate Annissa Essaibi George released her education plan Tuesday.

to take advantage of the opportunities in our labor market. I will prioritize improvements to Madison Park Technical Vocational High School and vocational programs in BPS to provide our students with a strong foundation for lifelong success and career readiness after graduation."

You can read the full plan at <https://www.annissaforboston.com/education-child-care/>.

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## 'Basquiat and the Hip-Hop Generation' exhibit extended

Due to popular demand, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA), has extended the exhibition "Writing the Future: Basquiat and the Hip-Hop Generation" through July 25.

Timed-entry exhibition tickets, which include general Museum admission, remain required in advance for all visitors—members and nonmembers alike—due to limited capacity. May tickets for the exhibition, originally scheduled to close on May 16, are now on sale for members and April 21 for nonmembers.

"Writing the Future" brings together more than 120 works by Jean-Michel Basquiat and 11 of his peers—A-One, ERO, Fab 5 Freddy, Futura, Keith Haring, Koolhaas, LA2, Lady Pink, Lee Quinones, Rammell-

zee and Toxic—all artists whose techniques share a conceptual approach rooted in early hip-hop practices. Their subversive abstractions generated a new style all their own, giving rise to the insurgent "post-graffiti" movement in American art and catalyzing the rise of hip-hop and street art as globally dominant phenomena. The exhibition illuminates this unprecedented fusion of creative energies and its defiance of longstanding class and racial divisions in 1980s New York City as these artists demanded—and commanded—the attention not only of the art establishment, but of the world at large.

During this year's April Vacation Week (April 21–24), the MFA is partnering with Boston Public Schools (BPS) to offer 160 free tickets for students, parents and educators from over 15 high schools to see "Writing the Future."

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Museum is

also hosting a Sound Bites: Nancy Lee Clark Concert Series that explores how different generations expand on and redefine early hip-hop, carving out a space for unique contributions to this global cultural movement. The concerts—filmed inside the exhibition and available for rent on the Museum's recently launched on-demand video platform, MFA Selects—continue with Edo G and Brady Watt, premiering on April 29, and Slick Vick with Cake Swagg and Bernadine, premiering on June 3.

"Writing the Future: Basquiat and the Hip-Hop Generation" is sponsored by Bank of America. Additional support is provided by the Robert and Jane Burke Fund for Exhibitions, the Darwin Cordoba Fund, the Amy and Jonathan Poorvu Fund for the Exhibition of Contemporary Art and Sculpture, and the Museum Council Special Exhibition Fund.

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