

Dear Steven Flythe and the City of Somerville,

I am excited to apply for a position on the City of Somerville's Commission for Women. I support the Commission's focus on "advocacy, education, and outreach in regards and on behalf of women." I appreciate that there is research about pregnancy, mental health, and cancer. I would like to see more focus in the following areas:

- **Education and leadership.** What is Somerville doing to make sure women have a voice? On City Council in early 2025, 27% of councilors identified themselves as women. What needs to change for that to be 50%? We should ask that question to all women, especially youth. What are the percentages of women representation on the other commissions? What are the percentages of city staff and their roles?
- **Sexual abuse and harrassment, including consent.** What is it? How can it be reported? Women walk around in defensive mode all day. We need constant education about sexual abuse in order to build better protections.
- **Health.**
 - Sexual health: Women are more likely to get STIs.
 - Endometriosis awareness.
 - Medical education is only now starting to be aware of a condition that affects more than 10% of women.
 - Black women and girls face longer delays in diagnosis and pain management.
 - This fall, Mount Auburn Hospital cancelled a lot of endometriosis surgery dates (often the waitlist is years long) because they were understaffed on the support team side. These cancellations should have made the news. I was able to convince one Cambridge councilor (I sent a message to all Cambridge and Somerville councilors) to make an inquiry, but I never heard back from her.
 - Period education. All human beings should be aware of how to provide for someone who is menstruating.

As my term as Community Co-chair of the City of Somerville's Anti-Displacement Task Force - Creative Displacement Committee comes to a close, I am in awe of the task force's impactful work. In this role, I:

- Proposed innovative programs and policies aimed at reducing the displacement of the city's cultural communities.
- Collaborated with city staff and community members to produce a comprehensive report outlining key findings and actionable recommendations.

- Conducted in-depth research on both current and former cultural spaces, documenting square footage, location, and the status of displacement or relocation.

This work has provided a profound sense of fulfillment. And it has reinforced my belief that collaboration between city staff and community members is essential for any city to thrive and evolve.

As detailed in my attached resume, I bring over two decades of experience in communications, organizing, and advocacy. I'm now seeking a meaningful opportunity to further invest my time and skills in a way that will benefit the community. The Commission for Women represents a natural and exciting next step, offering both a fulfilling challenge and the chance to make a real difference.

Many thanks for your consideration,

Jenn Harrington
Ward 3