



July/Aug/Sept 2025

WELCOME TO OUR NEW COMMISSIONERS, GEOFF ENGLER AND AMANDA BERMAN

The Needham Housing Authority is pleased to welcome **Geoff Engler** and **Amanda Berman** as the newest members of our Board of Commissioners. Both bring a wealth of experience, insight, and dedication to the field of affordable housing, and we are excited to have them join our leadership team.

We are confident that Commissioners Engler and Berman will contribute meaningfully to the ongoing mission of the Needham Housing Authority to provide safe, affordable housing and support services that foster stability, independence, and dignity for all residents.

Please join us in giving them a warm welcome!

Sincerely, **Cheryl Gosmon**
Executive Director



21 Highland Circle, Suite 10 • Needham, MA 02494

THANK YOU TO COMMISSIONERS Penny Kirk and Ed Scheideler

Dear Residents,

I'm writing to inform you that two long-serving members of the Needham Housing Authority's Board of Commissioners, **Commissioner Ed Scheideler** and **Commissioner Penny Kirk**, have officially stepped down from their roles and will not be seeking new terms.

Both Commissioners have provided exceptional service and leadership to the Needham Housing Authority. Their commitment to our mission—and more importantly, to the well-being of our residents—has made a lasting and meaningful difference.

Commissioner **Ed Scheideler**, who served as Treasurer of the Board, brought a thoughtful, steady voice and a strong focus on accountability, always ensuring the agency operated with integrity and sound financial practices.

Commissioner **Penny Kirk** was a tireless advocate for resident needs and community development. Her

passion for improving the quality of life for our tenants was evident in all of her work and will leave a lasting legacy.

On behalf of the Needham Housing Authority and the entire resident community, we extend our **deepest thanks** to both Commissioners for their years of dedication, leadership, and service.

We wish them all the best in their future endeavors and hope they remain lifelong friends of the Needham Housing Authority.

Sincerely, **Cheryl Gosmon**,
Executive Director



OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
TUESDAY 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
WEDNESDAY 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
THURSDAY 7:30 AM - 4:00 PM
FRIDAY 7:30 AM - 1:00 PM
SATURDAY CLOSED
SUNDAY CLOSED

12:00pm - 12:45pm closed for lunch

OFFICE - 781-444-3011

CHERYL GOSMON EXT. 212
BLAIR FETZER EXT. 213
TRACEY HUNTER EXT.
SALIM PILLAI EXT. 215
LAURIE BLAKE EXT. 216
MARIE CELESTIN EXT. 210
ELENA CHOY EXT. 218

NEEDHAM HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

REGINALD FOSTER CHAIR
JIM FLANAGAN VICE-CHAIR
AMANDA BERMAN TREASURER
GEOFF ENGLER COMMISSIONER
JANICE BENNETT COMMISSIONER

Go Bananas!

Americans are all smiles when it comes to bananas. They are the most-consumed fruit in the country, with 96% of households buying bananas at least once a month. Enjoy this bunch of facts about the sunny yellow fruit:

- In the U.S., the average person eats nearly 27 pounds of bananas every year.
- Bananas don't actually grow on trees. They are massive herbs—the world's largest herbaceous plant—and can reach a full height of 30 feet.
- The fruits grow in large clusters called hands, and each single banana is a finger! One stalk containing multiple hands is called a bunch. The largest bunch on record weighed 287 pounds and had 473 individual bananas.
- Many parts of the world—including Africa, Southeast Asia and Central America—wrap food in banana leaves for cooking, making use of both their flavor and size. A single leaf can be a foot long or more.
- Of the 1,000-plus varieties, Cavendish is the most common banana sold in grocery stores.
- Known as a source of potassium, bananas are also high in fiber, vitamin B6 and vitamin C.
- Slipping on a banana peel is a traditional trope in comedies and cartoons. In 2014, a team of Japanese scientists earned an Ig Nobel Prize in Physics—awarded for “research that makes people laugh ... then think”—for their work measuring the friction of banana skin.
- Bring a banana on your next outdoor activity. The peel can relieve itching and swelling from bug bites!

welcome TO THE TEAM

We are pleased to welcome two new temporary team members to the Needham Housing Authority. Please join us in giving a warm welcome to **W. Michael Thorstad**, Executive Assistant, and **Maleika Brown**, Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) Coordinator.

Michael Thorstad joins us as Executive Assistant, bringing strong administrative and organizational skills to help support daily operations and executive functions. With a background in legal services and

administrative coordination, Michael has already begun making a positive impact by improving workflow, supporting policy development, and assisting with communications and reporting tasks.

Maleika Brown joins us as our new ROSS Service Coordinator, working closely with residents to help connect them with employment, education, financial literacy, and supportive services. Maleika brings valuable experience in community outreach and service coordination, and she is passionate about empowering individuals and families to reach their goals and achieve greater self-sufficiency.

We are excited to have Michael and Maleika as part of our team and are confident that their contributions will strengthen the mission and impact of the Needham Housing Authority.

Welcome aboard!

FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY (FSS) PROGRAM

HERE IS AN ANNOUNCEMENT
FROM ELENA CHOY, FSS
COORDINATOR

“FUEL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM”

Although the thought of heating is off in the distance right now, we'd like to take up a little room in the distant corner of your mind to apply for Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) when applications open in October. HEAP helps income-eligible households pay a portion of winter heating bills. Sometimes called “fuel assistance,” these funds are allocated annually to Massachusetts from the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services. The period covers from November 1st to April 30th each winter season.

The organization that manages this program for Needham is:
Self Help, Inc.

(Home Energy Assistance Program)
780 West Main St. Avon, MA 02322
Phone: (508) 588-5440
<https://www.toapply.org/MassLIHEAP>
You may apply directly online or contact Elena Choy, FSS.

E-BIKE VOUCHER PROGRAM

The Massachusetts E-Bike Voucher Program demonstrates the state's commitment toward expanding access to clean transportation. The Program assists low and moderate income residents across the state by providing a voucher that reduces the cost of an e-bike. Vouchers of \$800 to \$1200 (depending on eligibility) will be awarded via random selection. Please click the button below to register for the opportunity to receive a Voucher.

<https://ma-ebikes.masscec.com/>



Dear Residents,

I am writing to inform you about important regulatory changes that will affect all Federal Public Housing residents, as required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Beginning **July 1, 2025**, the **Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act (HOTMA)** will go into effect, implementing key changes under **Sections 102 and 104**. These changes are part of a federal effort to streamline housing program administration and ensure consistency across public housing programs.

What You Need to Know

Section 102: Changes requirements related to income calculation and reviews for the Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher (HCV), and Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) programs.
Section 104: Sets maximum asset limits for eligibility and continued assistance in the Public Housing, HCV, and Section 8 PBRA programs.

How This Affects You

We will begin implementing these changes with annual and interim recertifications scheduled **on or after July 1, 2025**. Our staff will provide updated forms, guidance, and notices as required.

In the coming weeks, the Needham Housing Authority will:

Provide detailed information during recertification appointments; offer printed materials and FAQs to help you understand the new rules; host an informational session to answer resident questions (date to be announced soon).

We understand that these changes may raise questions, and we are committed to helping you through the transition.

Sincerely, **Cheryl Gosmon,**
Executive Director

Resources at a Glance

Needham Public Service Numbers

Emergency	911
Fire Department	781-444-0142
Police Department	781-455-7570
Town Clerk	781-455-7510
Public Health Dept	781-455-7500
Park & Rec	781-455-7521
Community Council	781-444-2415
Animal Control	781-444-1212
YMCA	781-444-6400



ROSEMARY POOLS SUMMER 2025

May 26-June 18 ..	11am-4pm Open Swim
June 19	Pool Closed
June 20-29	10am-6pm Open Swim
June 30-Aug 8 ..	10am-6pm Open Swim
Aug 9-31	11am-4pm Open Swim



Thank you Needham Community Council for all you do for all residents in the Town of Needham.

<https://needhamcouncil.org/>



Cozy Container Gardens

Container gardens allow plant lovers to nurture their hobby all year long, no matter the size of their space or the changing of the seasons. When colder weather arrives, some plants must be moved indoors to survive, but there are lots of ways to care for containers in outdoor areas.

An easy first step is to move pots and planters as close to the building as possible. Surround more delicate plants with other containers to help protect them. Top plants off with soil and/or mulch to provide more insulation. You can also wrap pots in burlap to keep them extra cozy.

Keep in mind that terracotta, concrete and ceramic pots may crack or break when moisture in the pot freezes and expands, but pots made of metal, plastic, resin and wood should withstand winter temperatures. You may wish to move more fragile containers inside or take extra caution in insulating them.

Root rot is more common in colder weather, since soil can take longer to dry out between waterings. Therefore, ensure both the soil and the containers themselves have good drainage, and water less often. This goes for indoor houseplants, too.

Another option for winter gardening is to plant cold-friendly species, such as ornamental kale, pansies and coral bells. Dwarf varieties of evergreen shrubs and trees also provide an attractive pop of green during the colder months.



July 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

- 1 National Postage Stamp Day
- 2 National I Forgot Day
- 3 Grand Parade at 5:30 PM
Needham Fireworks Display 9:30 PM at Memorial Park
- 4 Independence Day
Children's Parade - Needham Memorial Park
- 6 National Fried Chicken Day
- 7 World Chocolate Day
- 10 Pick Blueberries Day
- 18 **NHA MONTHLY MEETING**
- 20 National Ice Cream Day
- 28 National Soccer Day

August 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

- 2 National Ice Cream Sandwich Day
- 6 Cycle to Work Day
- 8 National Pickleball Day
- 19 National Aviation Day
- 21 **NHA MONTHLY MEETING**
- 25 Kobe Bryant Day
- 27 National Banana Lovers Day
- 29 More Herbs, Less Salt Day
- 30 National Beach Day
- 31 National Zoo Awareness Day

September 2025

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

- 1 Labor Day
- 3 National Skyscraper Day
- 8 National Ampersand Day
- 10 National Swap Ideas Day
- 11 Patriot Day in the USA 2025
- 12 Stand Up to Cancer Day
- 17 Smithsonian Day
- 18 **NHA MONTHLY MEETING**
- 23 National Miniature Golf Day
- 30 National Punctuation Day

