

EPILOGUE

# Mayor Curtatone's Culture of Curiosity

Building Data Capabilities at Somerville City Hall

# TIMELINE: 2020

0033SD

*A year that TIME magazine referred to as “THE WORST YEAR EVER”*

Jan.

- Mayor Curtatone’s 9<sup>th</sup> inauguration (case ends)
- 
- Based on predictive models, Curtatone is convinced COVID-19 will come to Somerville

Feb.

- Cambridge-based Biogen hosts a “super-spreader” event in Boston
- Somerville begins coordinating an emergency response team

# TIMELINE: 2020 (cont'd)

0033SD

## March

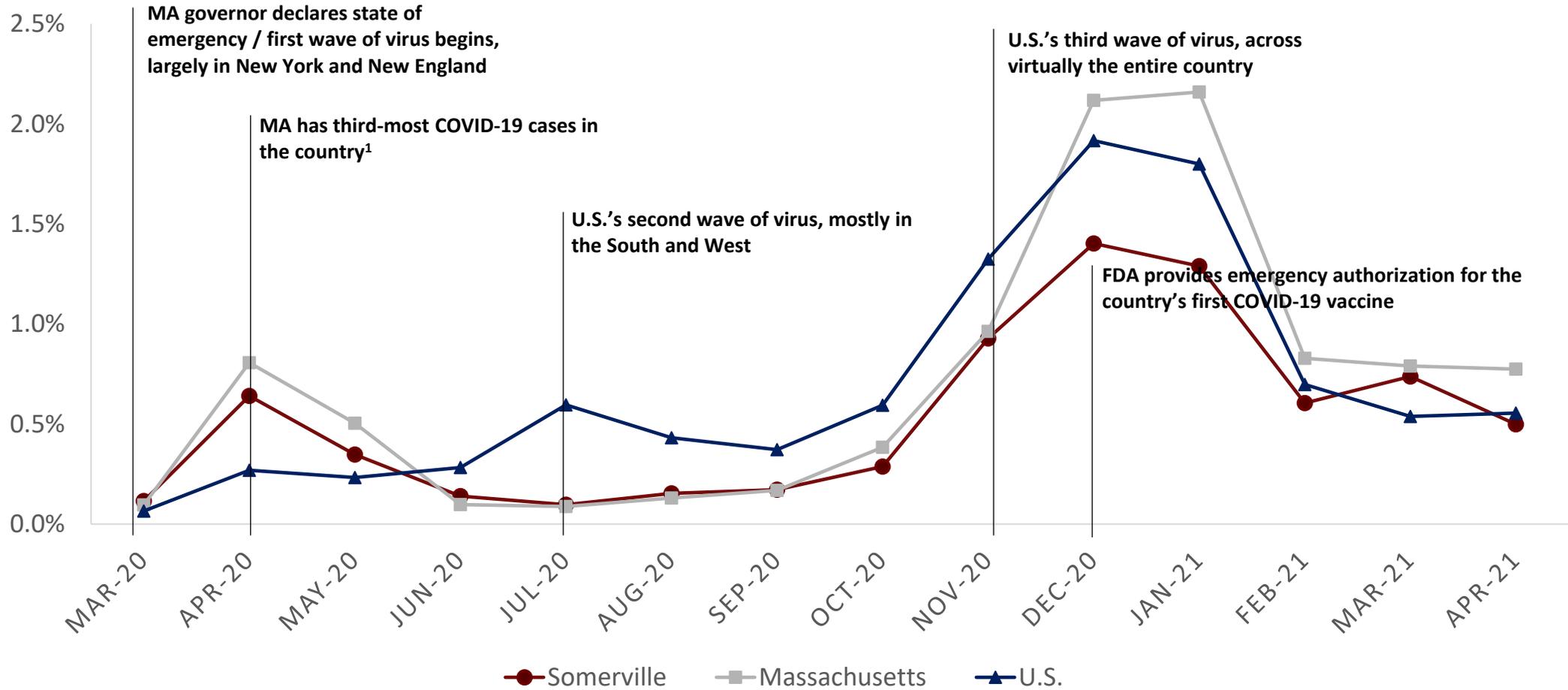
- Mayor convenes thirty city leaders from the state to present models that experts on epidemiology had shared with Somerville's public health team
- City leaders send letter to Mass. governor to close schools
- Governor closes schools, bans eating in restaurants, gatherings, etc.
- Omar Boukili named incident commander of Somerville's COVID-19 incident command system
- First Massachusetts resident dies of COVID-19
- Poll says "Just 46% of Americans ... say the federal government is doing enough"<sup>1</sup>

## Spring & beyond

- Somerville mounts a rigorous, customized response to the pandemic, which Boukili and Kristen Stelljes (Boukili's successor as incident commander) credit to commitment to public service ("working 12 to 16 hour days"); porting over certain SomerStat processes to the ICS; and "a certain versatility" of staff who had a level of comfort with processing data and managing projects, even if it wasn't in their job description.

<sup>1</sup> Domenico Montanaro, "Poll: Americans Don't Trust What They're Hearing From Trump On Coronavirus," March 17, 2020, <https://www.npr.org/2020/03/17/816680033/poll-americans-dont-trust-what-they-re-hearing-from-trump-on-coronavirus>, accessed May 2021.

# COVID-19 CASES PER CAPITA: Somerville v. Massachusetts v. U.S.



Sources: Figures from City of Somerville and CDC, accessed June 2021.

# Mayor Curtatone announcement March 1, 2021

Mayor Curtatone decides not to run for reelection in 2022 after nine terms in office. He tells the *Boston Globe*, “I’m tired of COVID — I’m not tired of the job. My passion for public service is there. . . . I feel good about [leaving], but I’m not excited. And that’s good. I can do it another 20 years, but I don’t think I should.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Matt Stout, “Curtatone, Somerville’s longest-serving mayor, says he will not seek reelection,” March 1, 2021, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2021/03/01/metro/curtatone-somervilles-longest-serving-mayor-says-he-will-not-seek-reelection/>, accessed May 2021.

# NON-COVID UPDATES



- Mayor delivers final budget presentation for FY2022 and highlights several developments to continue to modernize the city's government. For example:
  - A city charter review process
  - The launch of a Racial and Social Justice Office and a community-led effort to reimagine policing in Somerville
  - The addition of a digital innovation officer to the SomerStat team
  - The relaunch of Somerville Academy for Innovative Leadership (SAIL)

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