

LWV



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF SOUTH COUNTY

VOTER

★★★ **GUIDE** ★★★

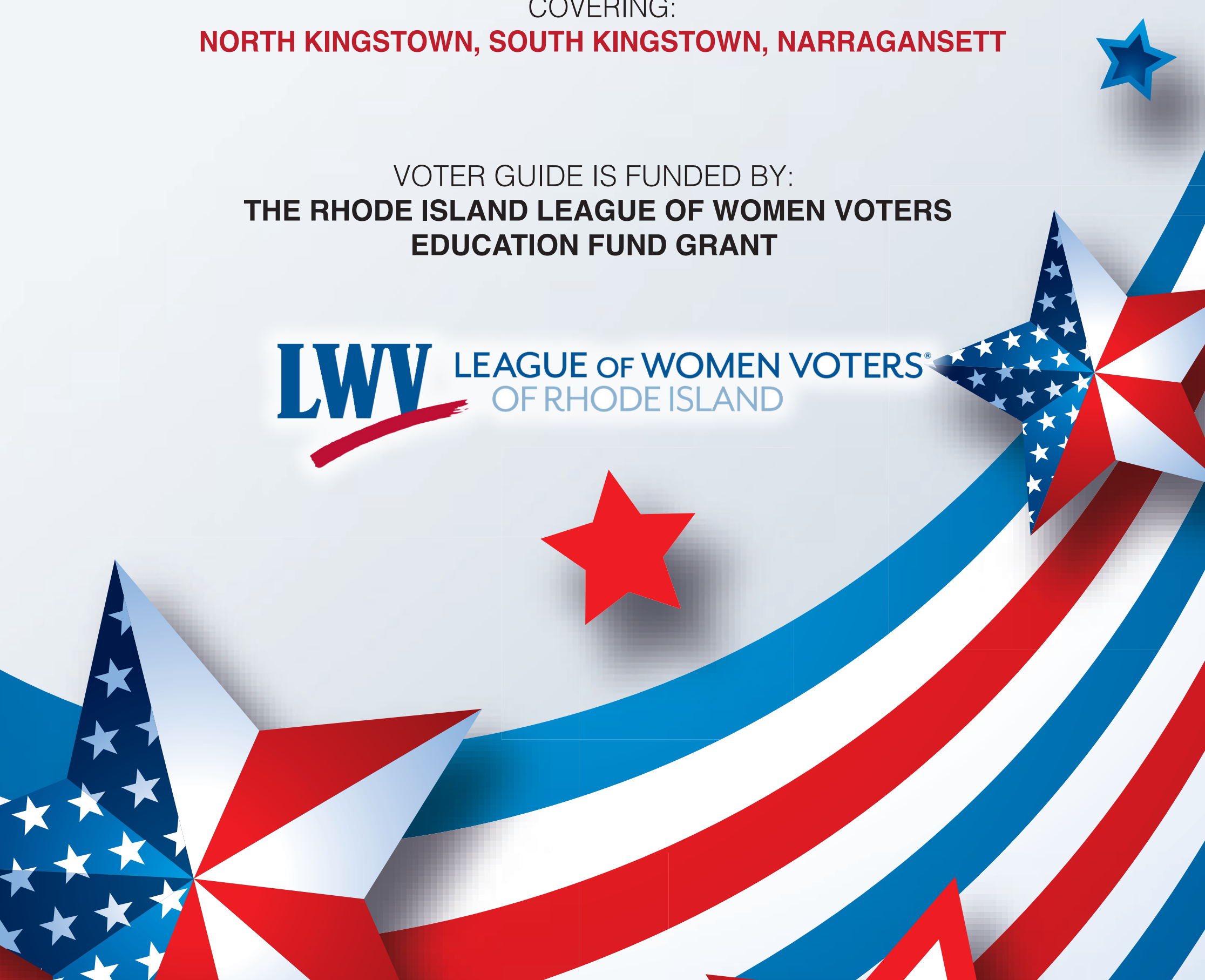
2022

COVERING:

NORTH KINGSTOWN, SOUTH KINGSTOWN, NARRAGANSETT

VOTER GUIDE IS FUNDED BY:
**THE RHODE ISLAND LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
EDUCATION FUND GRANT**

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF RHODE ISLAND





LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF SOUTH COUNTY

Dear Readers,

The League of Women Voters goal has always been to educate voters so that they may make informed choices when they enter the voting booth. By providing a Voter's Guide to your community, we hope that you learn more about the local candidates who are seeking offices and understand their positions more clearly. The League of Women Voters strongly believes that 'all politics is local' and begins with grassroots participation. This year's midterm elections will decide issues that will determine future vital functions in your town as well as in Rhode Island.

Be Informed Before You Vote! Participate in your government—check the Secretary of State's Office website to learn more about the changes made in voting regulations and update any changes in your voting status. Most importantly VOTE!

Christine Martone
President The League of Women Voters South County
lwvsc@gmail.com

Dear Voters,

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization encouraging informed and active participation in government. It influences public policy through education and advocacy. We never support or oppose a political party or candidate.

This is a very exciting time for our League as we continue to grow membership across South County RI and provide programs that educate and inform our community on current public policy and, in election years, state and municipal candidates and government. Since the 1920's the League of Women Voters has fought to improve government and encourage all citizens to become knowledgeable in the decisions that impact their lives.

Thank you to all the citizens who submitted questions, which, based on the frequency of mentioned topics, were used to generate the final questions for the candidates. Special thanks to all the candidates who responded in a timely manner with your answers.

This Voter Guide is paid for by a grant from the Rhode Island League of Women Voters Education Fund, a 501(c)3 entity, established by a generous donation from Susan B. Wilson, a past local LWVSC member.

Nina P. Rossomando
LWVSC Voter Service Committee

LIST OF CANDIDATES

Some district lines have changed. Please check your polling place by visiting:
<https://vote.sos.ri.gov>

STATE SENATORS - Two Year Term - Elect 1/District

District 35 - North Kingstown, South Kingstown, East Greenwich
DOREEN COSTA - R - no response
BRIDGET VALVERDE - D (Incumbent)

District 37 - South Kingstown
RAYMOND GARDNER - R - no response
ANITA NORTON JACOBSON - I
VIRGINIA S SOSNOWSKI - D (Incumbent)

District 36 - Narragansett, North Kingstown, New Shoreham
ALANA DIMARIO - D (Incumbent)
PATRICK MURRAY - R

District 38 - South Kingstown, Charlestown, Westerly
CASWELL COOKE - I - no response
ROBERT deVILLERS - I - no response
VICTORIA GU - D
WESTIN PLACE - R

STATE REPRESENTATIVES - Two Year Term - Elect 1/District

District 31 - North Kingstown, Exeter
JULIE CASIMIRO - D (Incumbent) - no response
LISA MARIE LEAVITT - R

District 34 - South Kingstown, Narragansett
CATHERINE CANAVAN - R
TERESA TANZI - D (Incumbent)

District 32 - North Kingstown
ROBERT CRAVEN, Sr. - D (Incumbent)
RYAN HANSEN - R - no response

District 35 - South Kingstown
KATHLEEN FOGARTY - D (Incumbent)
WILLIAM PANICCIA - R

District 33 - South Kingstown, Narragansett
JESSICA DREW-DAY - R
CAROL MCENTEE - D (Incumbent)

District 36 - South Kingstown, Charlestown, Westerly, New Shoreham
JOHN PACHECO - R
TINA SPEARS - D

TOWN OFFICES

NARRAGANSETT

Town Council
Two Year Term - Elect 5

SUSAN CICILLINE-BUONANNO (Incumbent)
EWA DZWIERZYNSKI (Incumbent)
STEVEN FERRANDI
WINTER HAMES
LAURIE KELLY
DEBORAH KOPECH (Incumbent)
JILL LAWLER
MATTHEW MANNIX
ROBERT PATTERSON
ALICIA VIGNALI HENRY

School Committee
Two Year Term - Elect 5

JENNIFER ARMSTRONG
TONY JONES
TAMMY MCNEIEGE (Incumbent)
ALEXANDER MENZIES (Incumbent)
DIANE NOBLES (Incumbent)
JUSTIN WOLF SKENYON (Incumbent)

NORTH KINGSTOWN

Town Council
Two Year Term - Elect 5

KATHERINE ANDERSON - D (Incumbent)
KALEN ARREOLA - R
MARY BRIMER - R (Incumbent) - no response
WILLIAM KING - R
GREGORY MANCINI - D (Incumbent)
LAWRENCE MANDEL - D
MATTHEW MCCOY - D
KIMBERLY PAGE - D (Incumbent)
RICKEY THOMPSON - I
RICHARD WELCH - I
RANDY WIETMAN - R
CHRISTOPHER ZANGARI - R

School Committee
Four Year Term - Elect 2

THOMAS BRIODY - D
ERIN EARLE - D
JAMES GALLO - R - no response
ROBERT JONES - R
KAREN KUMINSKY - I
KRISTLE SIMAS - I

SOUTH KINGSTOWN

Town Council
Two Year Term - Elect 5

PATRICIA ALLEY - D
NATHAN BARRINGTON - R
DEBORAH BERGNER - D (Incumbent)
DAVID COTE' - R
MICHAEL MARRAN - D
RORY MCENTEE - D (Incumbent)
SEAN O'DONNELL - R
ALEX PETRUCCI - R
JESSICA ROSE - D (Incumbent)
CHARLES (GREG) SWEET - R

School Committee
Four Year Term - Elect 3

MICHAEL DAY - R
KATHERINE MACINANTI - I (Incumbent)
LACEY MCGREEVY - R - no response
JAMES RESTIVO - D
CAROL VETTER - D (Incumbent)

Voice Your
CHOICE



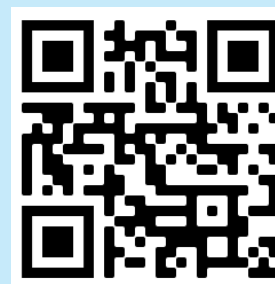
NOVEMBER 8, 2022

POLLS ARE OPEN

7AM - 8PM

Find your polling place at

<http://vote.sos.ri.gov/>

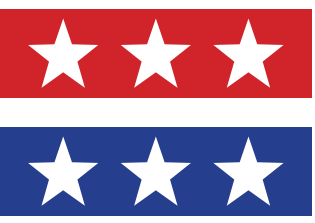


SCAN FOR VOTER SERVICES



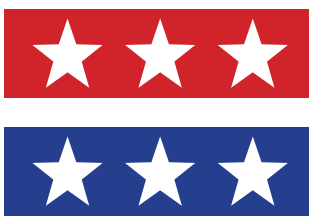
SCAN TO JOIN LWV





State of Rhode Island General Election Candidates

SENATE



Senate District 38
Victoria Gu
Democrat

1. Why do you want to serve as Senator in the General Assembly?*

I'm running for State Senate because our community deserves a senator who works hard, listens to the community, and is focused on bringing fresh, evidence-based solutions to the challenges we face.

We have unique challenges in our coastal towns. First, we're a coastal community in the time of climate change. I joined the local Climate Resiliency Commission and was honored to be named chair. As state senator, I will work hard to protect our groundwater and other critical infrastructure and make sure we're prepared before the next Hurricane Sandy hits. Second, we are seeing fewer families here and more out-of-towners who only come during the summer. The cost of everything: housing, gas, food, childcare, and healthcare, is stretching many families' budgets. Our community is special because it is tight-knit. I will work hard so that everyone who has roots here can afford to stay here.

I didn't grow up thinking that I would ever run for office, but our community and our state legislature would benefit from some fresh perspectives and approaches to problem-solving. As a professional software engineer and data analyst, I have worked on health technology ranging from training doctors to make better diagnoses to helping expectant mothers have a healthy pregnancy. In all this work, my team used a data-driven approach to decision-making. I want to bring this evidence-based approach to the Rhode Island state legislature.

2. How does climate change impact your district and what specific efforts will you support or oppose?*

Westerly, Charlestown, and South Kingstown are at the frontlines of climate change. Sea level rise, tidal flooding, and severe weather events are affecting our groundwater and infrastructure. Septic systems are in danger of failing more often. The current drought is causing some households' wells to go dry. Our coastal ponds are warming, and that is affecting the marine ecosystem.

We need to make a swift shift to 100% clean energy, build up our renewable energy sector, and reduce our reliance on foreign oil. We have so much potential for both solar and offshore wind. We should have credits and incentives for rooftop solar and solar on pre-existing community or industrial sites. We also need to pave the way for more offshore wind projects, modernize the energy grid to handle these new sources of energy, and invest in energy storage.

In order to fulfill the Act on Climate objectives, we also need to decarbonize transportation, homes, and industry:

- In transportation: we must build out an effective and accessible EV charging network across the state and invest in electric-powered public transportation that helps move at least some residents off of their reliance on cars
- In homes: we must provide credits and support for installing electric heat pumps and stoves, funding for energy efficiency improvements, and low-carbon building standards for

future developments

- In industry: we must fund research and incentives to decarbonize different industries as much as possible and as quickly as possible.

3. How will you support improving public education in Rhode Island?*

Two things that I would look at are school funding and leadership.

We need to revisit the school funding formula that has resulted in major cuts in state funding for the school districts in South County.

I would advocate for creating a pool of funding for schools to apply for in order to implement evidence-based curriculum changes (there is a national database for that) as well as pre-K, career/technical, and afterschool programs. I volunteered in an afterschool program for low-income kids for four years, and I am a big proponent of them because they provide a safe environment for kids after school. They help students whose parents work long hours and can't supervise them or help them with their homework. Finally, the transition back to in-person learning has been tough on both teachers and students, and that is why we need more support staff to help with behavioral and mental health issues (social workers, etc.).

Aside from funding, we also need strong leadership at the top. I spoke to someone at the Massachusetts department of education who emphasized continuity of superintendents. Many educators- superintendents, principals, and teachers- are getting burned out from the demands of the

past few years. We need to hire and retain highly qualified and motivated superintendents and principals at the top, and we need to reform salaries and pensions and address common causes of burnout so that we attract and retain high-quality teachers.

4. Where do you stand with regard to current gun laws in Rhode Island?*

I'm a strong supporter of common-sense gun reforms, and I've talked to many gun owners who agree: it's been 10 years since Sandy Hook, and we need to take targeted steps to reduce gun violence and stop preventable tragedies. These measures don't restrict people's ability to hunt or do self-defense. I went to the state house this year to support raising the age of buying a long gun from 18 to 21 and limiting magazine capacity to 10 rounds. I also support the following:

- A ban on the sale of assault weapons
- Robust background checks and red-flag laws
- Measures to curb gun trafficking
- Safe storage requirements

5. What is your position on women's reproductive rights and existing RI law?*

I'm running as a strong pro-choice Democrat because I believe that women should have the right to make choices about their future and their family without government interference. I'm also the only Democratic candidate in the primary to have the endorsement of organizations like

Planned Parenthood Votes RI, the RI Democratic Women's Caucus, and Emily's List because they know I've always been a strong supporter of a woman's right to choose.

6. Where do you stand on public shoreline access and existing RI law? *

I grew up fishing with my dad and golden retriever Kelly. We loved going exploring and getting sprayed by the waves. I want to make sure we protect and expand public access to the shoreline in RI because our whole community should enjoy it—whether you're swimming, fishing, or making a living or a home here. Here are a couple of initiatives I want to work on:

- Sponsor and pass H-8055 to ensure that the public always has passage along the shoreline (high tide + 6 feet)
- Work with the Attorney General on guidelines for legal and illegal signage (for example, we don't want "Private Property" signs right next to public rights of way)
- Ensure that CRMC has adequate funding to enforce signage rules and make sure that public rights of way are clearly marked and accessible.

7. How will you address the concerns about the Lighthouse Inn property in Galilee? Please explain.

Did not respond.

8. Do you support RI's current election laws?

Yes



Senate District 38
Westin J. Place
Republican

1. Why do you want to serve as Senator in the General Assembly?

I love Rhode Island and I want to represent all of the citizens. I am by no means well off. I'm a blue-collar Truck Driver who sacrifices a whole lot to afford living in RI with my family. I'm not part of country clubs or any exclusive groups. My goals are helping out regular people, because with inflation and electricity costs rising, I'm suffering along with all of you, and we are not represented in our state like we should be.

2. How does climate change impact your district and what specific efforts will you support or oppose?*

Putting a specific label on what climate change is affecting my specific district is tough. I know green energy will be needed in the future but making the cost of it unaffordable for regular Rhode Islanders does not help anyone. We need a transition that is not forced to an unrealistic time frame and we shouldn't be looking at purchasing technology from China and focus on US ingenuity instead.

3. How will you support improving public education in Rhode Island?*

Rhode Island has one of the highest costs in the country per student. Yet we are nowhere near the top when it comes to test scores. Our schools need to stop trying to politicize our

children and get back to basics. Reading, Writing, Arrhythmic, History (Both good and bad), Civics, Finance, Science, and Cursive. These should be the curriculum; any other classes should be decided on between the local parent communities and school boards. I also want an expansion in Trade schools like Chariho has done. Not everyone will be a doctor or lawyer. We can hope but some of us need to be Mechanics and Truck Drivers.

4. Where do you stand with regard to current gun laws in Rhode Island?*

Gun laws in Rhode Island have been working for us for years. We already had the strictest background checks and the longest "waiting period" of 7 days. Our problem

now is the lack of prosecution of criminals breaking the law. Laws are laws for a reason. If you don't follow them, you should be punished to the fullest extent of the law. Not making new laws just to punish the law-abiding citizens of Rhode Island.

5. What is your position on women's reproductive rights and existing RI law?*

I consider myself a Pro-Life Candidate. Personally I do not believe in abortion but I am also someone who knows it is still necessary in certain situations. With the advance of technology when it comes to birth control and early pregnancy detection, I must insist that abortion not be a form of birth control. It should be safe, legal, and extremely rare.

Rhode island current laws do that for the most part but we need to make adoption more affordable and a more viable option for expectant mothers.

6. Where do you stand on public shoreline access and existing RI law?*

Shoreline access is enshrined in the Rhode Island Constitution. We should look to article 1 section 17 "The people shall continue to enjoy and freely exercise all the rights of fishery, and the privileges of the shore, to which they have been heretofore entitled under the charter and usages of this state," This should be looked at as the law of the land before any shoreline access law is passed.

7. How will you address the concerns about the Lighthouse Inn property in Galilee? Please explain.

I grew up in Narragansett but now reside in Westerly. My district does not cover Galilee so I will keep this on the short side. Personally, between the Town Council, Galilee Advisory Lease Committee, and the Galilee Advisory Committee should have an equal say in its usage just as much as the owner of the property, the DEM in this case. Local issues are better dealt with by local people and groups.

8. Do you support RI's current election laws?*

Yes



MAIL-IN VOTING UPDATES

Voting by mail takes extra effort this year. The time between the passage of the Let RI Vote act and the Midterm Elections did not allow enough time to customize the application process online for the Midterms. It should be better in 2024.

Rhode Island voters who are unable, or prefer not going to the polls on Election Day can vote by mail, but you need to act now!

1. Go online immediately to <https://mailballot.sos.ri.gov/Home/MyRequest> to request an application, which will come by mail.
2. The paper application must be returned to your local Board of Elections by **October 18, 2022** in order to receive a mail-in ballot for November 8, 2022. Signature must match your voter registration signature.
3. When you receive your ballot, mark it and complete the Voter's Mail Ballot Certificate as directed. **The signature on your Mail Ballot Certificate envelope will be compared to the signature on your mail ballot application.**
4. Return sealed ballot to the Board of Elections by 8:00 PM on election day. Allow at least 7 days by mail, deliver ballot to a dropbox or to the RI Board of Elections, 2000 Plainfield Pike, Suite A, Cranston, RI 02921.

IF YOU THINK YOUR MAIL-IN BALLOT WILL NOT BE RECEIVED BY THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS IN TIME BY MAIL, YOU CAN DELIVER IT TO A LOCAL DROPBOX BY 8PM ON ELECTION DAY.



State of Rhode Island General Election Candidates

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



House District 31
Lisa Marie Leavitt
Republican

1. Why do you want to serve your district in the General Assembly and what expertise do you bring to this role?

My parents explained to me early on that I will someday see where I am needed and that my inner strength, my ability to say 'NO' will come in handy (one of their least favorite while I was growing up I am sure). They wanted better for me. They taught me to excel at everything I did in life and try my hardest no matter what. Today I am a wife, mom and stepmom, a grandmother, and a business owner. To this day it is my mantra and my teachings to my kids. I am tough, I have a lot of energy and

endurance to give to my role, and I am extremely organized in my work. I work long hours and I strongly believe in customer service. I will bring the same to my office. Now, after 30 years here in Rhode Island and seeing all we have gone through here in this tiny state with an oversized budget, I have realized I am called now to give back to my community with these skills. I am by no means claiming to be an expert, but I will support my fellow Rhode Islanders, and the constituents in my district will actually know me, and be invited to work as a team with me to solve the issues at hand.

2. How does climate change impact your district? What specific efforts would you support or oppose?

I love RI's beautiful landscape. I've practiced conservation since I was little. I've been taught how to care for animals and conserve our resources. I have watched our landscape change in the past years; not for the better. Places we used to fish are now off limits due to pollution. Shellfish/blue crabs-almost disappeared from the beaches. I believe in common sense solutions vs. radical ones. We need to do better. Fishermen need their livelihoods preserved and our citizens should not be burdened by costly green-energy misjudgements. Recently our current legislators voted against helping our neighbors. Republicans wanted to give \$7 million to LIHEAP for this winter to help struggling Rhode Islanders with newly inflated bills from RI Energy. But Casimiro voted no.

I can name several negative/positive points regarding what is being called "renewable energy". Here are a few...Approximately 50% of all

current solar installations require deforestation. Why can't we offer tax breaks to add solar panels to already existing commercial buildings? Those trees give us oxygen, and they take away carbon dioxide. Oxygen is more important than energy. This earth we live on is a beautiful gift and we need to be mindful of its delicate balance. Same applies to our fishermen and farmers. No food=no people. That will be a far faster death than global warming. Let's manage it. Let's learn more about science instead of forcing it on unprepared and financially destroyed (following Covid +after effects) people.

3. How will you support improving public education in Rhode Island?

Of course I will. Having been a teacher in the past I truly respect the profession. I have seen teachers work long hard days to help children in their classrooms with the constant excuse of funding issues, grants being cut and having to generalize for the masses of kids they are forced to manage. The paperwork alone is crushing. I feel that children all learn differently. I have seen this as well in my own children and step children. Teachers need our parental support and all students should be supported financially by towns in each district with a majority of this money spent on the kids in the classrooms, not on administrators. This pertains especially to special education. No child should be denied the special help that they need to learn because their issues are not extreme enough, and parents told that it's just not in the budget. I feel the curriculum should (be set as a countrywide standard and) should emphasize reading, writing, arithmetic, and history as well as

the arts and physical fitness. Teaching other ideals and beliefs should be left to parents or legal guardians. We need to take a hard look at school safety. In North Kingstown we are very lucky to have resource police in the high school but we need to do better here with providing equal protection with police or former officers' presence shown in all schools. Our children are the future and they are Rhode Island's most precious asset.

4. How do you stand in regards to the current gun laws in Rhode Island?

I am aware of the gun laws just recently signed by our Governor. I feel that these "rulings" by our current "leaders" are just that. I also don't believe that these 'rules' will be allowed to stand because they violate our Constitutional rights as Americans. Rhode Island is a stand your ground state. As a woman I am especially horrified that just because a mentally ill person shot someone with a non-permitted or stolen gun that I will be restricted in my right to protect myself and my family with a legally purchased firearm. Suddenly, with the stroke of a pen, law abiding citizens are now criminals. I would be deemed a criminal simply because they changed magazine capacity rules. Our "leaders" insist on their own protection with armed guards, but they are not protecting our kids in schools, or allowing us to protect them! I truly feel like the larger "elephant in the room" issue in this country is actually the unmentioned mental health issues, and our dehumanizing, desensitizing, and distancing as human beings. Many children have become benign to emotions due to video games, television, and movie violence that they are exposed

to almost on a daily repeated basis. Let's work together and protect our families wherever we are.

5. Where do you stand on public shoreline access and existing RI laws?

I am unsure of the particulars but I do know that there was a study commissioned and legislation put forward to grant shoreline access to all Rhode Islanders, but influential and wealthy people killed it. Rhode Island Law states every Rhode Islander has the right to enjoy our shores. I wholeheartedly support safe public access to the shoreline and would be supportive of the legislation that was proposed this year to protect this right. I do however, believe that current pollution and littering laws should be fully enforced and perhaps Coastal Resources should implement anti pollution methods they have set in these areas to preserve our coastline along public access. There is a current issue in my own neighborhood where we have been hindered by a resident because he has created a barrier and added obstacles. Many in the neighborhood pay elevated "water view" property taxes. These taxes state if you can stand in the middle of the road and see the ocean you must pay a higher tax rate. I am sure this will be coming back to light shortly and I am interested to learn more and help my own neighbors to win their right to visit the shore without any barrier or hindrance.

6. What is your position on women's reproductive rights and existing RI law?

As a woman I fully support women's reproductive health and I believe in medical privacy. I believe

lieve that everyone should have their right to medical privacy no matter the situation. I believe that only a doctor, a patient and perhaps family members should be involved in any medical decision. There is no "one size fits all" for this issue.

7. How will you address the concerns about the Lighthouse Inn property in Galilee? Please explain.

My family maintains leased tenants as well. We have never tolerated such acts of malice towards our own property so why should RI tolerate this and hand them a reward to boot? I was raised to respect other people's property, and live up to the promises that I make. In this instance I believe that the landlord (the State of Rhode Island) should hold the lessee, The Procciantti Group (aka TPG) accountable for not maintaining the property as promised in the lease. I do not feel that the taxpayers of The State of Rhode Island, nor the Town of Galilee for that matter, should be paying for the faults of a private business owners agreement with their landlord. TPG is a large conglomerate millionaire corporation maintaining hundreds if not thousands of properties all over the United States. As a side note, I am sure that this particular property is much smaller and easier to maintain than others that they own. There are absolutely no excuses for this. Why is the state of Rhode Island allowing a further/ deeper relationship with this company on the citizens dime?

8. Do you support RI's current election laws? (Only a response of yes or no will be published).

Yes



House District 32
Robert E. Craven
Democrat

1. Why do you want to serve your district in the General Assembly and what expertise do you bring to this role?

I have served as the State Representative for North Kingstown's District 32 for ten (10) years. For the last four (4) years, I have served as Chair of the powerful House Judiciary Committee. As the Chair, I have been able to lead the efforts to pass meaningful gun control legislation, such as raising the age to purchase guns to 21 years old, limiting high-capacity magazines, and prohibiting guns on school grounds. I also led the effort to codify Roe v. Wade in state law, protecting the right of women to control their reproductive decisions. If re-elected, I will continue serving the people of North Kingstown in my current leadership position.

2. How does climate change impact your district? What specific efforts would you support or oppose?

Climate change significantly impacts my district. Rising tides in Wickford are threatening the existence of the downtown shopping area. We need to do our part as a town and support green energy in appropriate areas of our community. I supported the 2021 passage of the climate change bill and the Governor's efforts to make Rhode Island a 100% green energy state by the year 2033.

3. How will you support improving public education in Rhode Island?

I will support improving public

education in Rhode Island by (1) continuing the State's efforts to help cities and towns build or repair schools, (2) capping the mayoral academies and charter schools at the current level, and (3) continuing to protect our schools from gun violence by supporting gun control and other safety measures.

4. How do you stand in regards to the current gun laws in Rhode Island?

Although I have personally led the fight to pass responsible gun control legislation, more needs to be done. We need to pass new laws related to mental health checks prior to permitting gun purchases and consider banning the sale of military-style weapons.

5. Where do you stand on public shoreline access and existing RI laws?

I was a sponsor of the shoreline access bill that passed the House of Representatives in 2022. I expect to again sponsor the bill and support its passage, if I am re-elected.

6. What is your position on women's reproductive rights and existing RI law?

I am proud to say that I sponsored the bill that codified Roe v. Wade in Rhode Island law in 2019. I anticipated the U.S. Supreme Court's shift to the right and I persuaded then-Speaker Mattiello to allow the bill to be voted on the floor of the House. I will continue to advocate for women's rights, including the right to freely

make reproductive decisions.

7. How will you address the concerns about the Lighthouse Inn property in Galilee? Please explain

The zoning issues are a local Narragansett decision but I am willing to do anything I can to prevent the sale of the property to the proposed developer.

8. Do you support RI's current election laws? (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes.



House District 33
Jessica Drew-Day
Republican

1. want to serve your district in the General Assembly and what expertise do you bring to this role?

I am a Rhode Islander who, over the years, has worn many hats including wife, mother, business owner, landlord, homeschooler, gardener and fisherman. I am a concerned citizen who is tired of staying on the sidelines. The last straw came when I started reading actual bills and was stunned how at every turn, they catered to special interests and infringed on the rights of Rhode Islanders. As homeowners struggle to pay bills, one bill would streamline property tax sales, making it easier for investors to seize people's homes. A tragically high number of children are below grade-level in reading and math. But instead of addressing our failing schools, lawmakers proposed mandating "pleasure based" sex education for children as young as 11. As business owners cope with supply chain and staffing issues, lawmakers focused on banning gas-powered lawn equipment and plastic straws. I have decided I can no longer stay silent. I can no longer do nothing. When elected, I will be a voice of reason in a political climate that is often unhinged.

2. How does climate change impact your district? What specific efforts would you support or oppose?

I am a fisherman and have been since I was little. I remember going to the shoreline and digging buckets of clams with my family for dinner. I

remember swimming in Greenwich Bay and scooping up handfuls of eels. There are no longer clams or eels in the bay due to use of chemicals at the shoreline. Our waterways are the lifeblood of this state and must be protected. Our commercial fishermen depend on the bay for their livelihood. We depend on the bay for recreation, as well as food. We can do better. I am a common-sense environmentalist. We need to protect our waterways and environment without putting unfair burden on already struggling Rhode Islanders. However, the climate act signed by Governor McKee is unrealistic. I am opposed to putting windmills in our oceans and mowing down hundreds of beautiful habitats for solar farms. For example: "Some estimates from various resources for RI indicate up to 20,000 acres of solar panels would be needed to reach our 2040 goals, and approximately 50% of all current solar installations require deforestation. That's a potential elimination of 10,000 acres of forest in RI and trees are the single largest eliminator of CO2 in the world." This is not environmentally friendly. When the Republicans wanted to give \$7 million to the LIHEAP program for this winter to help struggling Rhode Islanders, Kazarian said no, our elderly need to embrace green energy. I am completely opposed to hurting our most vulnerable Rhode Islanders.

3. How will you support improving public education in Rhode Island?

I support our teachers and provide

them with everything they need to teach every student, every day. Our parents are key to our children's success. I would write legislation that ensures parents are notified of behaviors of our children in school and provides them with the curriculum so that parents can help their child succeed. I homeschooled my two children. It was challenging because they were so different and each child learned differently. I understand what it takes. I am here to help parents and teachers succeed. Our teachers are not trained psychologists and need to have access to support when issues arise with their children. We have a Narragansett police officer (SRO) at the Narragansett High School. As a parent I was comforted that a trained professional was in the school in case of an emergency or needed if drugs were found or a fight broke out in the school. The kids respect and have a good relationship with officers at the high school. Recent events in South Kingstown schools have made its SRO much less visible. An engaged SRO should not just be a privilege to someone in the right zip code.

4. How do you stand in regard to the current gun laws in Rhode Island?

While this is not a focal point of my campaign, I am aware of the laws just passed at the State House level. I support our Constitutional rights to defend ourselves. In a knee-jerk reaction to a recent school shooting, our legislators and governor should law-abiding citizens criminals with

a stroke of the pen. I find it disingenuous that while signing the most recent gun laws, Gov. McKee was guarded by armed security. We as a state continue to fail to secure our schools with resource officers and other measures. We need to protect our children while working at the root cause of violence - which is mental health. I would have liked to see the state put in place a law that dealt with mental health and also made a commitment to securing our schools.

5. Where do you stand on public shoreline access and existing RI laws?

The Rhode Island Constitution, rightly, protects the public's shoreline access. I was against the closure of Beavertail, our state beaches and other state parks during COVID. Our state's beautiful shoreline should not be reserved for the rich and access to the general public needs to be preserved. It wasn't fair that Gov. Raimondo shut down the public beaches and public access during one of the hardest and most depressing times in our history. The shoreline access bill establishes shoreline access along the ocean. I would be in favor of this bill. The bill presented does not include waterways such as rivers, lakes or ponds.

6. What is your position on women's reproductive rights and existing RI law?

I believe women's reproductive health should be a matter between a woman and her physician.

7. How will you address the concerns about the Lighthouse Inn property in Galilee?

The Lighthouse Inn has been an eyesore for way too long. Instead of a vibrant seaside town, the tourists who flock to the Block Island ferry encounter this dilapidated, excrement-covered property. The state owns the land and is doing a terrible job holding the PRIX group (Procciantti and Paolino properties) responsible for cleaning up the Inn or maintaining it. As a landlord myself I would never allow a tenant to mistreat my property like this and let them get away with it. The taxpayers of Rhode Island should be outraged that again a billionaire is put before the hardworking Rhode Island tax payers. I would hold the Billionaire PRIX group responsible for the cleanup of the property and end the lease on the land. It should be put out to bid and the PRIX group should not be allowed to enter into another lease with the state of Rhode Island. I insist that all parties come together for a seat at the table to come to a good plan for both Narragansett and the state.

8. Do you support RI's current election laws? (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

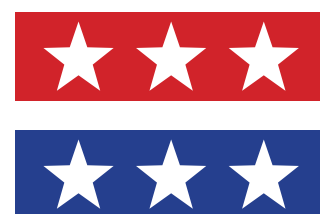
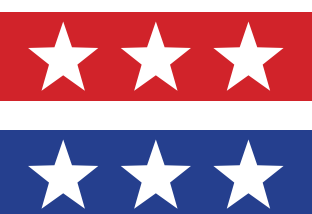
Yes

YOUR VOTE

Counts

VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE

OCTOBER 9, 2022



Narragansett General Election Candidates

NARRAGANSETT TOWN COUNCIL



Laurie Kelly

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the council?

I am running for Town Council to counter those previous councilors who did not respect democracy and the will of the people. I believe the townspeople should decide the direction of the town and councilors who disregard referendum votes by the people are dangerous to this town and the country. I'm currently the Chair of the Library Board, and as such have executed a plan to improve the town services by expanding the current library, as well as successfully pursuing and obtaining state funding,

private grants and donations for this project. My position on the library board has given me the experience to work collaboratively with a diverse group; I have the ability to dig in on a project- studying and getting expert input. As a library board member, I gathered expertise from architects, engineers and professional construction experts for the library project. I have attended council and various board meetings, and know this sort of experience is useful and directly applicable to a Town Council seat. Also, I have extensive business experience in the financial sector, and would be able to contribute to the analysis of town finances. My involvement on the future council would stress working together, and sharing a true vision for the Town, not the Lawler /Mannix vision of going back on the path of tearing down and destroying our institutions.

2. How will you balance the needs of the community with fiscal responsibility?

The town of Narragansett needs to look forward and plan for the future. This means setting priorities now, and realistically structuring the financing going forward. It is important to remember that major infrastructure continues to increase in price, and to not plan is akin to burying one's head in the sand. Just as the library project was brought in under the \$5.8 MM budget by focusing on State Aid and donations; councilors must be willing to examine the costs and commit to a reasonable plan to finance these infrastructure improvements. The for-

mer councilors who repeatedly talk of "cutting taxes", defunded the library and lost over \$400,000 in state aid - a fiscally irresponsible treachery to the Narragansett taxpayer.

3. What will you do to address the shortage of affordable housing in Narragansett?

Many years ago, I attended several meetings that had "think outside the box" ideas for affordable housing. It seems that these intriguing ideas were not put in place, and the town of Narragansett has made little headway on addressing these issues. I would say that the lack of affordable housing is coupled with rental issues, and it takes the skill to sit at the table and hammer out a plan to improve this situation. Local businesses have suffered because of the lack of affordable housing for employees, and a coherent plan is needed to insure the health of Narragansett's economy. This will not be an easy or simple fix, but I believe we can implement a multi pronged plan that can help us expand our affordable housing.

4. How will you address the town's water issues in terms of quality, supply and stormwater runoff?

The Town has struggled with water quality issues for years, and our summer supply is increasingly restricted regardless of actual rainfall. These two issues have garnered some money from the ARPA distribution, but both

issues will require more funding to solve. Both issues require substantial infrastructure, and I would like to examine addressing these issues as soon as possible. Since it certainly looks like we do not have the ability to expand our water resources, I think it is time to examine a desalination plant as a possible solution to address our future and continuing water shortages. Threatening to shut homeowners water off (as happened this summer in phone calls from our water company) is unacceptable to our residents, and we need to seriously address these issues with long range plans.

5. What is the town's role in addressing the issues around the Lighthouse Inn property in Galilee?

First, many thanks to a number of Narragansett advocates that closely examined the lease documents and raised many disturbing issues that perhaps would have gone forward unremarked upon. At this point though, the Town should sit at the table with the State and try to iron out differences in an adult fashion, so that we can go forward with a cohesive and inclusive plan to help our major industry, commercial fishing. While I would love to see Mystic Seaport and Mystic Aquarium in Galilee, there is no private or municipal funding for such a wide ranging plan. I also wish the advocates had put out a November referendum that spelled out what is envisioned specifically and the cost to the Town of Narragansett taxpayers. The only way to gauge public support is to ask the question with a

price plan and a clear vision - something that I felt was not presented forthrightly in our RFP (although I do think it mentions a \$54 million price tag to the Town.) The town voted twice to approve the library building project (70% approval), but until you have a vote, you can never be sure of a project's support. If the majority of voters support a \$54 million plan, I will support the will of the people; I believe that is a councilor's main job.

6. Describe the parking issues in town and how you will address them.

Parking is integral to the smooth operation of a town. Businesses and restaurants do not rely on patrons who live down the street, rather, our fantastic and diverse commercial community depends on visitors, and these same business ventures greatly help the town through alleviating some of the tax burden on the homeowners. We therefore need to plan for parking solutions particularly in the summer months. In years past, Trolleys ferried visitors thru town, utilizing school parking lots for the public. This should be revisited, as well as possible expansion of public lots in particular neighborhoods. But this should be done with the help of our commercial businesses; they have dealt with issues like this for years, and have a clear headed view of what will work in their environment. And let's not forget that parking is also integral to coastal access; the State of RI supports water access for all- not just the lucky few who own property at the water's edge. This issue should

also be worked on with a round table of stakeholders- reasonable people can always come to terms with a compromise.

7. Are you willing to re-examine the town's rental and zoning ordinances? Please explain.

I think that with so much of our community involved in rentals, this has to be an ongoing conversation between all the stakeholders. By some reports, one third of our housing stock is rental. This means we have to start where we are, and make incremental changes toward the Narragansett we would like to see. Jesse Pugh had many eye opening statistics on our rental community, and implemented the 3 unrelated. I would have preferred to start with 4 unrelated, and then revisit it in a year or two to see if more restrictions were needed. Part of this rental property issue that has not been addressed is the weekend or wedding event short term rental that morphs into a blowout party in a quiet residential neighborhood - this should also be examined immediately. Again, adult behavior on the town council leads to a balance between a citizens right to "quiet enjoyment" of their property, and the inherent right of the owner to rent his property, if he so desires.

8. Do you support the successful completion of the new library? Yes/ No (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes



Deborah Kopech

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the council?

I have been a town council member for the past two years. Initially, I ran because I felt my background in corporate management and municipal Human Resources could be of some value to the Town and I was particularly interested in environmental, coastal, housing and fiscal issues as well as ensuring that our library project could be completed.

While well under way, the library is not completed and certain climate mitigation initiatives are underway but incomplete and my intention is to move these issues to completion.

2. How will you balance the needs of the community with fiscal responsibility?

Narragansett is fortunate in that our tax base is one of the lowest in the state but is able to cover budgeted costs. We still struggle with infrastructure issues with regard to maintaining roads and our sewer and water infrastructure. Besides the \$4.5 million provided through the ARPA funding as a result of COVID, funds are available through grants supplied by the Federal Infrastructure bill and I intend to support the town's ability to obtain funding in that way. I am extremely conscious of the budget and ways to keep tax increases as low as possible. But we then have to be mindful of future issues and ensure that our planning accounts for potential future costs.

3. What will you do to address the shortage of affordable housing in Narragansett?

I am not a member of the Affordable Housing Board but I have attended meetings and support innovative ways of creating opportunities to help solve this very definite problem in Narragansett. Several solutions in-

clude housing density projects, using underutilized property to support public housing projects (for which state and federal funds may be identified), examining the possibility of mixed use land or revising zoning requirements in some cases to allow for mixed use (Commercial/Residential). My vote to limit student housing to no more than 3 students was in part to free up housing stock in the town for families and young and senior singles to purchase or rent homes that are currently used as commercial properties seasonally. I will continue to pursue those avenues.

4. How will you address the town's water issues in terms of quality, supply and storm water runoff?

As noted above, I have been working on climate change mitigation and infrastructure activity both of which include a component with regard to storm water runoff but which require infrastructure improvement to our drainage and sewer systems. We also need to ensure that individual septic systems are properly managed and meet town ordinance specifications. Regarding water, more than anything we need to educate our residents about water as a precious and scarce commodity. With limited options for sourcing additional water at an affordable rate, requiring conservation techniques in households as well as the town system also need to be

explained. I intend to work on those issues.

5. What is the town's role in addressing the issues around the Lighthouse Inn property in Galilee?

The town has a somewhat limited role in this as the state of RI owns the property. That being said, there are problems that have not been solved by DEM and their Lessee that may have resulted in local ordinance violations with regard to the parking lots in use. The town has sent a letter to the parties requiring that they obtain the proper permitting going through our planning and zoning board requirements within a certain time frame that has not yet expired. Our role is to ensure that no one violates our Ordinances or Comprehensive Plan and that is what is being done at this time. In addition, the Town council has approved providing funding for Galilee to pursue coursework to update a 2016 plan that was proposed for Galilee that incorporates climate change mitigation, port improvements for the fishing fleet and a more robust and interesting town to attract and educate visitors. I look forward to the results and hope to be part of the solution by determining next steps upon its completion.

6. Describe the parking issues in town and how you will address them.

There are two parking issues in Narragansett.

- The Pier area, (Ocean Road to the Beach and several blocks to the west) especially from mid-June until mid-September. The issues are how to manage the parking and the council and Planning Board have been working to identify solutions. Public hearings were held and suggestions are being considered. This is a problem complicated by several factors. Solutions include:
 - Charging for parking in certain areas and/or,
 - Placing time limits on parking and enforcing both;
 - Identifying a long term parking facility some distance from the Pier and providing public transportation (trolleys or buses) either for free or a small fee,
 - Reviewing other restricted parking spaces to ensure that they function as designed.
 - Making Boon St. one way, which would allow parking on both sides of the road.
- The Town Council should receive a potential plan from the Planning Board in the future but determining the ultimate plan will be the responsibility of the new council.
- The second issue is coastal access. Along with my colleagues on the Town Council, we modified parking regulations in an area with 3 Coastal Access points to allow parking on one side of the street with specific restrictions. I voted in favor of this plan as

Coastal Access Point with no local access largely inhibits the access.

7. Are you willing to re-examine the town's rental and zoning ordinances? Please explain.

This is a very broad question. With reference to student and short term rentals, I would be in favor of re-examining the results of the 3-student ordinance after a few years to allow time to determine its impact and whether or not housing stock has been freed up for families and affordable housing.

If this refers to short term seasonal rentals we are in the process of examining and working to solve the concerns of our residents regarding this issue and another reason I am seeking another term in office is to ensure an ordinance that will meet the needs of all stakeholders. Zoning is a complex issue. Concerns have been raised about some elements of the new Bulk Zoning ordinance and the Town Community Development Department has been working on modifications but in general I believe no major modifications are necessary.

8. Do you support the successful completion of the new library? Yes/ No (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes



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Narragansett General Election Candidates

NARRAGANSETT SCHOOL COMMITTEE



Jennifer Armstron

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the committee?

The reason I am running for Narragansett school committee is because I believe that educating children is the key to a strong community and society. Our world is constantly evolving and education should follow suit in order to prepare the children to become their best selves and citizens. This will help ensure the best future for all of us collectively. I want to help guarantee each child in Narragansett fulfill their potential throughout their schooling. My family and I feel a responsibility to serve our community to help it grow and prosper. I find great joy in watching students find their own gifts and talents and to thrive in education.

I am a certified RI teacher, have a dual masters degree in education and the arts, and have been teaching for more than a decade. I have offered many hours in local after school and community music and arts programs. I am a parent of two children who attend Narragansett Public Schools. I have the inside perspective of a teacher and a parent and have the passion to share my knowledge to take us into a new chapter in public education.

2. How will you ensure a diverse,

equitable and inclusive learning environment?

I would like to help orchestrate important conversations and make educated decisions about how children should learn during this time. Personalization and differentiation is key in providing the best education for each student. I would start with looking at NPS strategic plan and ensuring action steps are taken and data is collected on what is working and what might need to be revised. All learners should have the opportunity to discover what path suits them in being successful in public education. I would suggest we gather information from all parties who are a part of the students learning ie. teachers, families, community, and the students themselves to initiate learning plans for each student.

3. Who should determine the school curriculum including instructional and school library material? Please explain

A committee of teachers, administrators, school committee members and parents should be formed to help determine and revise curriculum. Public School curriculum has evolved over many decades. Throughout time there have been standard texts that

have been used to teach students about important pillars of educational knowledge and structure. I don't believe those should be taken away without a lot of thought and consideration by curriculum committee members, educational researchers, admission officers from institutions of higher education and students. However, our society is progressing and though we can't erase our past we can learn from it and move forward in positive ways.

4. How do we ensure the health and safety of children in school?

In my opinion this is on the top of the priority list. Children and families should not have to worry about safety in school. Sadly there are dangers associated with schools today. The school committee, superintendent, commissioner and local leaders should work together to come up with a strict plan for school safety. What is in place now is not enough. Laws might need to change in order to accomplish this. Again important conversations should be had and research should be done about what has worked well in other communities. Action steps should be taken in a short period of time. One possible action step could include unannounced safety checks in schools. As for health considerations, this should

be led in most part by the Department of Health. However, in Rhode Island law, many parties including school committees should help ensure safety and health matters among students and teachers. In situations like communicable diseases, every child and staff member should be considered. If individual plans need to be made and met then that should take priority.

5. How will you manage declining school enrollment?

Declining school enrollment is based upon many factors among Narragansett's low year round populated community. As a teacher and parent I see low enrollment in both a negative and positive light. I have witnessed first hand some of the benefits of low enrollment. One benefit is the smaller classroom size compared to our neighboring towns. This ensures more personalized instructional time per child. On the negative side, Narragansett doesn't offer as many programs for children as other districts. We don't receive as much funding. The school committee should work with the town in discussion about this issue and figure out reasonable incentives for more families to live here year round. Balance is key for our community and a plan should be made to address education growth

over the next five to ten years.

6. Will you support arts and music education in all grade levels? Please explain

Absolutely! Arts and Music are essential to not only students but to all members of our community. It is one aspect in today's fast and electronic world that connects us all in a positive light. Research shows that children who take art and music in school significantly outperform other students who don't take art and music classes academically. Today's culture puts pressure on students and families to perform at a very high academic level in order to get into the best colleges and universities. While this is a wonderful goal to have, it only factors in one aspect of the child's education, academic growth. We need to work harder at changing our culture to include creative arts and activities in order for our students to find a healthy balance and to discover hidden talents and skills.

7. Do you support a half credit civics course for high school graduation? Yes/no (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes



Tony Jones

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the committee?

I have a long track record of public policy work and civic involvement along with a traditional communications background and skill set, yet I am also well-versed in technology, web-based media, also with new and social media which makes me uniquely qualified to assist in advocating for better transparency and communication in the education sector. For example, in my past civic involvement, I served as a School Committee member, as well as on the North Kingstown Arts Council and the Charter Review Commission, so I have been involved with some form of civic/community involvement for most, if not all, of my adult life. I do this because I truly enjoy it and find it to be personally fulfilling, but I also do it because I feel that good people have a duty to get involved in their community (when they can) So, I see the important role of a school committee member as a natural continuation of my work as a civic-minded citizen. I also truly believe in the importance of providing a quality education that ensures that all students are prepared for their choice of post-secondary pursuits, while also being mindful of the costs.

2. How will you ensure a diverse, equitable and inclusive learning environment?

A diverse, equitable and inclusive learning environment involves collaboration from parents, schools, administrators, and our elected school committee members, as well as from the larger society which can help to ensure that all students feel part of their community and with the hopes of creating a sense of belonging for each student that will prepare them for a productive life in the community in the future. Given the benefits of an inclusive learning environment, our schools should continue to strive to build up these partnerships. When serving a diverse student population, it also becomes important to consider a wide range of learning modalities in order to support different learners and different learning styles. I also support opportunities for respectful public discussion and creating space for students to express their thoughts and feelings not only on subject matter in the classroom but also on worldwide issues which can promote a respectful space and a trusting relationship with both the educator and their peers.

3. Who should determine the school curriculum including instructional and school library material?

While the school committee does have a vote on the final curriculum, good curriculum is never a one-and-done initiative because there's no single best method for its evaluation in general as the effectiveness will depend on the desired learning outcomes, as well as the learners, the teachers, and support materials. In the past, I have been able to work with some very knowledgeable subject matter experts who are an invaluable resource for determining school curriculum and in regarding how curriculum is developed. It is an active process with some time-tested and traditional methods being used while also considering emerging delivery methods. It has also become increasingly important to consider good instructional design models for all curricula.

4. How do we ensure the health and safety of children in school?

Most importantly, I support innovative and technology-based solutions to school security. Also, I have a background with, and I

am experienced in facility/campus security and served on the facilities management and planning sub-committee at my former school committee role, so I would look to bring that knowledge to the table. I also feel that it is important to seek input from, and increase open channels of communication with, those who are working on the "front lines" of the school district. This would not only be regarding general health and safety, but also for information on the overall upkeep and hygiene of the facilities. I also support the option of the ability to file an anonymous ethics violation report through a solution such as EthicsPoint etc.

5. How will you manage declining school enrollment?

Firstly, I support and respect any family that decides that homeschooling, an alternative program, a charter school, a career and technical education program that is not offered in our district, etc. is ultimately a better 'fit' for their needs and for the needs of the student. However, in this time of increased choice, public school systems do often offer more program and curriculum opportunities than some of their charter and private school counterparts, yet they do not do a good job of promoting those

choices. This means that polishing and promoting a school district as a "brand" has now become a key factor for any district. The Narragansett School System currently does do a nice job with this (especially when it comes to cross promoting the career and technical education program options offered in Narragansett) but it is a mindset that should continue to be explored and developed in order to attract students from across Rhode Island.

6. Will you support arts and music education in all grade levels?

As a former musician myself, I will always support arts and music education in all grade levels (as I have in the past) My support also extends to extracurricular arts and music opportunities as well as to emerging extracurricular activities such as esports, robotics, blockchain clubs etc. which, much like arts and music, also tend to reach students who may otherwise be disengaged from the school community.

7. Do you support a half credit civics course for high school graduation? Yes/no (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes



Tammy McNeiece

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the committee?

The main reason I decided to run for re-election is to ensure that the district continues to grow and improve, maintains high standards for all students, and supports the academic and social-emotional needs of all students. I have been the Chair of the Narragansett School Committee for the past 14 years, and I am very proud of the work the district has accomplished with expanding our preschool programming, completing significant capital projects, and supporting budgets and programs to support the needs of all learners. I have spent the past 20 years working in the field of education as a teacher and a building principal in another school district, and I hold 3 degrees in education. I am well versed in the issues and challenges that schools face on a daily basis, and I bring this perspective and experience to the School Committee.

2. How will you ensure a diverse, equitable and inclusive learning environment?

One of the most important roles of the School Committee is to write and revise policies. These policies provide the framework to ensure that all students have equitable access to opportunities, and are able to learn in an inclusive learning environment. With

appropriate and supportive policies in place, expectations are clear for all students, families, and staff members, and school administrators are able to align their student handbooks with district policies. In addition, over the last term the district established an Equity and Diversity sub-committee. This sub-committee will continue to discuss ideas and make recommendations to the School Committee, to ensure that all students feel safe and supported. The School committee will continue to examine, revise or write new policies to afford all students with equitable opportunities in inclusive learning environments.

3. Who should determine the school curriculum including instructional and school library material? Please explain

All curriculum units of study for all content areas should be derived from standards. Instructional resources and materials that are purchased to support curriculum units of study are aligned with specific standards, whether it is Common Core state standards, or content specific standards. In Narragansett there is a long-term curriculum revision plan to ensure that curriculum for each content area will be revisited and revised by teachers and administrators, to ensure curriculum units of study remain aligned to state and national standards as they become updated. Teachers from each school meet periodically in vertical articulation

teams to ensure there is a coherent curriculum scope and sequence at each grade level.

4. How do we ensure the health and safety of children in school?

The physical safety and emotional well being of all students and staff are top priorities. The Narragansett School district worked exceptionally hard to keep all students and staff safe throughout the ongoing pandemic. The district diligently followed all recommendations from the RI Department of Health throughout the pandemic, and will continue to do so to ensure the health and safety of all students and staff. The district was able to keep students in school, and was able to successfully pivot to more restrictive or less restrictive protocols in response to COVID data.

Students need to feel safe and cared for to achieve at high levels. Narragansett schools have revised their safety protocols and plans in response to increased threats and incidents that have occurred across the country. The school department has responded with a multi-tiered approach, including security upgrades in the physical environment at each school, continuing our partnership with the town to support our School Resource officers, and increased mental health support.

The district will now shift its focus to continue to support the social and emotional needs of all students. All school districts across the country are

well aware of the significant mental health crisis students in all schools across the nation are experiencing, as a result of the pandemic. Narragansett will continue to personalize learning, and focus on building strong positive relationships and connections with students, to support the social and emotional needs of students.

5. How will you manage declining school enrollment?

Narragansett is not alone in facing enrollment challenges. The housing and rental crisis has made it extremely challenging for families with young children to find affordable housing in Narragansett. Narragansett has made a concerted plan to expand preschool classes and programs, based on the high demand and need for high-quality preschool. High-quality early childhood programs such as the preschool programs in Narragansett enable students to develop a strong academic and social-emotional foundation, to prepare them to be very successful in Kindergarten. The purposeful expansion of preschool programming based on need and demand, is one way the district is addressing enrollment challenges.

In addition, the district has worked very hard to expand and improve its CTE programs at Narragansett High School, which has resulted in significant increases in enrollment at the high school level, as more students tuition in to participate in the vibrant CTE programs. The district works

hard to retain students in the district, and to promote the varied opportunities for students to excel at every grade level.

6. Will you support arts and music education in all grade levels? Please explain

I enthusiastically support the arts and music education at all grade levels. Narragansett has outstanding opportunities for students at each school in music, theater and the arts. Our high school musicians have received several awards and accolades throughout the years at various performance festivals. The School Committee has financially supported and planned for a significant renovation of the high school auditorium, which includes exciting improvements to the stage, lighting and sound system. This renovation project will greatly enhance the environment for students performing in Band, Orchestra, Chorus concerts and Theater performances. We are very proud of our talented students, and are grateful to our experienced and skilled educators in the music and the arts. I will continue to support these programs at the School Committee level.

7. Do you support a half credit civics course for high school graduation? Yes/no (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes

YOUR VOTE Counts

VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE

OCTOBER 9, 2022



Narragansett General Election Candidates

NARRAGANSETT SCHOOL COMMITTEE



Alexander Menzies

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the committee?

The greatest honor of my life was when Narragansett residents elected me to my first term on the School Committee in 2020. I ran for the Narragansett School Committee under the premise that it is important for a student's voice to be heard at school committee meetings. Since then, I have been able to fulfill my promise to give back to the schools that gave me so much. I grew up in the Narragansett School System and attended kindergarten through twelfth grade. I believed that it was important for a former student who attended all three public schools to be able to provide a unique perspective and reflect on the years spent in Narragansett. I am grateful every day for the education that I received. I have had the privilege of serving on

the Health and Wellness, Diversity Team, District Technology, Special Education Advisory, and Knights of the Rockingham Arch subcommittees. I am thankful for all the community members, teachers, parents, and students for their valuable input, hard work, and dedication that made these subcommittees successful. I was also recognized by the Rhode Island Board of Education and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for successfully completing the Rhode Island Association of School Committee's Leadership Academy. I will continue to fight hard for Narragansett students and teachers. It is my hope that every student that graduates from Narragansett will hold the memories they have made in their hearts the way I continue to do so my own.

2. How will you ensure a diverse, equitable and inclusive learning environment?

I am proud of the leadership role that the Narragansett schools has taken over the last few years. We now have a Diversity/Equity Team that is composed of teachers, parents, students, administrators, principals, and school committee members. Our mission has been to ensure that all students in Narragansett receive an education that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive. It is important to encourage and support each other. We need to continue to make sure that every student and teacher has access to all resources that will ensure that every student continues to receive the best education. The school committee recently approved the new District Technology Plan for 2022-2025. As a member of the District Technology subcommittee, we have made it one of our goals to support digital equity. This goal states that we will "ensure all students have access to and ownership of the tools that best support

them as learners, help students develop the skills and competencies they require in order to best take advantage of these digital resources, and communicate the value of using these tools to engage with learning experiences that are targeted, authentic, relevant, socially connected, and growth-oriented." I want to personally thank all members of the District Technology Committee for their exceptional work at putting this thorough plan together. I will continue to support blended learning and making sure that all students have access to various forms of education.

3. Who should determine the school curriculum including instructional and school library material? Please explain.

There is a lot of time and research that goes into determining the school curriculum and deciding on which instructional materials to use. The school library is a fantastic place to find a variety of authors and secondary sources to do research. Focus groups of teachers, students, parents, and administrators will research different programs and will provide their feedback. It is important to hear from as many voices as possible and to make constructive decisions based on current research. Being a student doesn't stop inside the classroom. We are students for life. We will never stop learning and experiencing new things. Every day, people are learning new and improved ways to administer an education that will adhere to the learning style of every student. High quality math, science, reading, and writing programs should follow the current studies on these topics. We are thankful to have a Director of Curriculum in the Narragansett schools who takes on a great leadership role throughout this process. There are many training and professional

development opportunities that are offered to provide the best programs and methods in Narragansett. Once the focus groups have provided their feedback to the Director, the School Committee will be presented with the options and will vote on the new curriculum.

4. How do we ensure the health and safety of children in school?

The health and safety of all members in the Narragansett schools will always be the number one priority. We went into a pandemic with a lot of questions and unknowns. I am grateful for the tireless work of our teachers, administrators, nurses, maintenance crew, custodians, cafeteria workers, and bus drivers. It took a village to get us through the most challenging months in the history of Narragansett. Your efforts have successfully supported our students and have allowed Narragansett to bounce back stronger than ever. We will continue to abide by the guidelines from the Rhode Island Department of Health. Over the last two years, I have witnessed the countless updates from the school nurses and the superintendent regarding information on COVID and best health practices moving forward. Parents, teachers, and school committee members were regularly informed, and this communication allowed for complete transparency throughout this process. With many concerns in the world today, the Narragansett schools have stepped up their security in each building, revised procedures, utilized technology, and provided staff and students with training. We have also partnered with the Police Department to have School Resource Officers present in our buildings and have emphasized mental health awareness programs in our schools. Building mental health awareness and providing helpful sup-

port through resources to all students, teachers, and members in the school community will continue to be a top priority for the Health and Wellness subcommittee.

5. How will you manage declining school enrollment?

School enrollment has fluctuated over the past few years but continues to decline. It is important now, more than ever, for anyone who qualifies for free or reduced lunch to apply. It is an unfortunate truth that the cost of living in the town of Narragansett and many others has increased significantly. The housing market is at an all time high and interest rates are through the roof. Families are finding it very difficult to move into this town to raise their children. My parents moved to Narragansett before I was born because of the quality of education that the public schools would provide, the beautiful resources all around town, and the many small businesses. Narragansett is seen as a town of opportunity and a place to grow. Since being elected, I have seen how marketable the Narragansett schools and programs are. There are opportunities offered in Narragansett that many other districts can only dream of being able to provide. We have a fully redeveloped school webpage and a monthly newsletter that gets sent out during the school year. We have some of the best resources and the best educational opportunities in the state. The problem is getting families to be able to afford living here. Families want to come. We hear it all the time. We will continue to be mindful of how we budget each year and make the proper adjustments to ensure that every student continues to receive the best education.

6. Will you support arts and music education in all grade levels?

offerings, extracurricular activities, and athletic programs to remain one of the best school districts in the state.

Please explain.

We are so lucky to have incredible leadership in the Narragansett art and music education departments. I have seen the joy that the concerts, art shows, and theater productions continues to bring to all members in attendance. The School Committee just recently approved the renovation project of the high school auditorium. Input was gathered from the music and theater departments so that we could incorporate their wishes. I cannot wait to see the new productions at the college-level auditorium once it is complete. My family always looked forward to attending Narragansett school concerts for my brothers and me. One of my brother's played the saxophone and the other played the trumpet. I grew up singing in the chorus. In our junior year, we performed on stage during the variety show. My parents would attend the art shows at the town library or at the towers to show their support for the work we had done. It is important to support the multiple modalities of learning. Every student has a different preferred way of learning, and it is important to offer these opportunities to help all students to grow. Many will find their passion in music and the arts. This creative outlet is mentally stimulating and stress reducing. I encourage every student to pick up an instrument, pick up a paint brush or pencil, to find your creative outlet, and to try new things. I will absolutely continue to support the many arts and music education opportunities in Narragansett.

7. Do you support a half credit civics course for high school graduation? Yes/no (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes.



Diane Nobles

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the committee?

My motivation for running is to provide a quality education for our students at an affordable price to our taxpayers. And, to make sure that every student crossing the stage to receive a Narragansett High School Diploma has the knowledge and skills necessary to prepare them to be successful at their next step.

Having served on the Narragansett School Committee since 2004, with the exception of one term, my experience has a historical perspective, as well as, a broad-based working knowledge of the purpose and function of the NSC. During my time on the Committee, I have served, and continue to do so, as Vice Chair, Clerk, Policy Committee Co-Chair, Contract Negotiations School Committee Representative, and RI Association of School Committee (RIASC) District Representative. Educationally, I earned a Ph.D. from Texas A&M University in Educational Human Resource Development. As part of my doctoral studies, I was the main researcher and designer of the Texas Skill Standards System Model. Professionally, I retired after a 35+ year career in Community College Administration in Oklahoma, Texas, and Rhode Island.

2. How will you ensure a diverse, equitable and inclusive learning environment?

The district has established a DEI

Committee, a special DEI Committee for Technology, and is represented on the town's DEI Committee to address this effort and ensure that our learning environment is serving all of our students and providing them with equal opportunity.

3. Who should determine the school curriculum including instructional and school library material? Please explain

The School Committee approves the educational materials used in our classrooms when it is an agenda item(s) at our public School Committee monthly meetings. Our Director of Curriculum presents and explains the instructional materials and describes the work of the teacher committee in the selection process. In addition to this responsibility, each year the School Committee, again in a public monthly meeting, reviews and takes a vote on the Narragansett High School Program of Studies. The School Committee, as the elected representatives of the community, performs this oversight function and is answerable to the taxpayers, for the instructional materials and curriculum content.

4. How do we ensure the health and safety of children in school?

The health and safety of our children while in school, as well as, the health and safety of our professional and support staff, is a primary responsibility. During the recent Covid pandemic, our schools took extraordinary

measures to ensure the health and welfare of our students and staff by adjusting the daily routine protocols for students, establishing set groups of students in pods during the school day, and in all our schools installing high quality HEPA filters, ensuring fresh air was circulating in our buildings and keeping our schools as clean and germ free as possible.

During my time on the School Committee, we have taken many important steps to protect the safety of our students and staff, including implementing the Sandy Hook Promise protocols and trainings and having School Resource Officers in our buildings as a daily presence. From a physical point of view, we have 'hardened' our three schools by instituting new procedures for admittance to our buildings, installed door alarms and new locks on all classroom doors.

While all these many steps were necessary and are important, perhaps the most important aspect for ensuring our students well-being is promoting a caring school culture, where the physical, mental and social-emotional health and safety of our students matter. That our students are seen as the unique individuals that they are and our professional and support staff meet them where they are and encourage their growth, both intellectually and personally.

5. How will you manage declining school enrollment?

While Narragansett has seen a decline in enrollment over the years, it has somewhat leveled recently,

with the addition of our Career and Technical Education Programs. These popular programs, which prepare a student for college, apprenticeship, and/or employment, have attracted an influx of students, not only from our own school population, but from other area school districts. Presently, we offer Agricultural Science, which offers four pathways where students can earn certifications: Floriculture, OSHA/Equipment Safety, Pesticide Safety and Pet First Aid; Educator Preparation, which uses the nationally accredited Educator Rising curriculum and prepares students to take the Praxis Core Assessment; Information and Computer Technology, which offers curriculum in coding, cybersecurity, virtual reality animation, web design, programming and CISCO Networking Certification; and Mechanical Trades/Plumbing, which offers hands-on training with RI Local 51 in plumbing, construction management, pipe fitting and welding at their state of the art training facilities, which results in the student being certified to begin an apprenticeship with full membership in Local 51.

Our Pre-School has provided affordable educational opportunities for parents of three/four year olds and has been fully subscribed since being established. As a result of this early learning opportunity, more of our third graders are reading on or above grade level and require less support services.

Another equally important strategy for stemming declining enrollment, is to be continuously improving and strengthening our district's academic

6. Will you support arts and music education in all grade levels? Please explain.

Arts education and music education is appropriate and important in all grade levels. Both allow students to develop their creative skills, talents and open another avenue for expression and communication. According to Americans For the Arts, art and music education inspires kids to excel in and out of the classroom and can be a key motivation for a student to remain in school. According to their research, "A student involved in the arts is 4 times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement."

The Narragansett School District has very strong arts and music education programs at all grade levels. The students' instrumental and vocal performances, plays, musicals and art displays at all three schools are outstanding. And, the number of awards that our students earn in state, regional and national competitions is very impressive.

7. Do you support a half credit civics course for high school graduation? Yes/no (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes



Justin Wolf Skenyon

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the committee?

I have had the honor of serving for three terms on the Narragansett School Committee and wish to use my knowledge and experience to serve our students, parents and teachers. I recognize a high performing school system is critical to the success of our community and want to continue to contribute toward this goal. I have chosen a career as an Ocean Engineer, having earned my degree from the University of Rhode Island. I grew up in Narragansett, I am an Eagle Scout and a proud member of our local Lions Club. Participating in serving our community is important to me. I am proud of how our committee has worked together to smoothly address issues and situations that have arisen. I have served on the capital and budget subcommittees and I am proud of working to

maintain a reasonable budget while undertaking large projects to improve our schools.

2. How will you ensure a diverse, equitable and inclusive learning environment?

This is a very important issue. I encourage the celebration of diversity in our student population. We know that when students have access to an equitable and welcoming environment there is a positive impact on their education. I will work to provide an environment within our schools where all student voices are listened to and understood. We all bear the responsibility of being positive role models and as a school committee member I intend to support our teachers as they navigate the different learning styles within the classroom.

3. Who should determine the school curriculum including instructional and school library material? Please explain

Our school curriculum is determined by an open and collaborative process led by our dedicated staff of excellent teachers and administrators as well as input from parents and students which is critical to a robust curriculum. Since I have served on the school committee Narragansett has strengthened and expanded its Career and Technical Education programs. We have used our library to take advantage of the one to one laptop program to ensure each student their own individual device to expand their access to educational material.

4. How do we ensure the health and safety of children in school?

Students are best educated in a positive environment where they are physically and mentally healthy

and safe. During the spread of the coronavirus, we followed professional guidance while including additional measures to protect our students' health. In addition we are working on providing programs to address the stress a student may be experiencing. Over the last several years we have also made numerous efforts to upgrade our school security measures, further protecting the safety of our students. Improving students' wellbeing will continue to be my priority.

5. How will you manage declining school enrollment?

We have been able to take advantage of retirements, reorganizing teachers each year, and shrinking class sizes. I am proud we have been able to maintain the size and scope of our school curriculum available to students despite the decrease in enrollment. I will continue to advocate for our CTE which attracts students

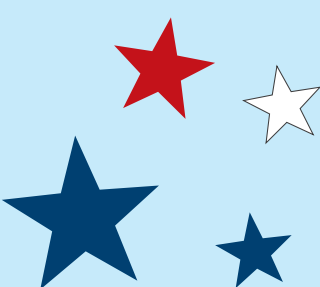
from out of district who wish to take advantage of our programs. If the declining trend continues we will take on those challenges.

6. Will you support arts and music education in all grade levels? Please explain

Yes absolutely, the arts and music are fundamental parts of ourselves and should be taught at every grade. The arts are communications of our minds on display for the world. Music, art and entertainment all provide color and beauty to our lives on a daily basis. It is essential we work to ensure students benefit from the introspection the arts can provide.

7. Do you support a half credit civics course for high school graduation?

Yes

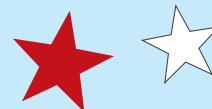


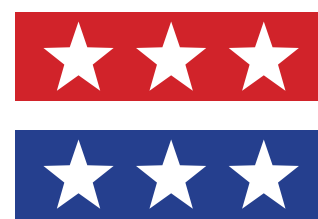
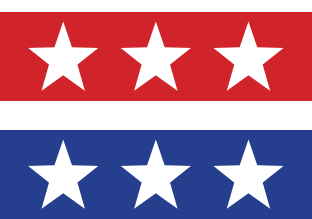
Voice Your

CHOICE



Be Sure to Vote on Tuesday, November 8, 2022.





North Kingstown General Election Candidates

NORTH KINGSTOWN TOWN COUNCIL



Katherine Anderson
Democrat

here, too. This affords me a unique perspective on our community.

I am a licensed clinical social worker currently practicing in community mental health, serving those with significant challenges to their health and well-being. I have a background in public policy, non-profit fundraising and development, and healthcare management. In sum, I have dedicated my career to helping individuals, families, and communities achieve a higher quality of life.

Since my first term began in 2020, we have made tremendous strides in preparing for and mitigating climate change, restoring and expanding school funding, improving town services and assets, and updating environmental and water protections. Despite global financial challenges, we maintained a strong fund balance. We passed a budget that was fair to taxpayers in these trying times, while still allowing our municipal and school services to function at a high level. However, we have more work to do.

Looking forward, the next council will allocate rescue plan funds to new, innovative projects to ensure improved quality of life for our residents. We must continue investing in education, supporting our residents and town workforce, and helping the town navigate through crises like

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the council?

I am running for re-election as the only Town Council candidate with a 360 degree view of our community: I am a working mom of two young kids, and my parents - both retirees - live

inflation and the protracted COVID pandemic.

2. How will you balance the needs of the community with fiscal responsibility?

Our municipality maintains a strong fund balance and an AA+ bond rating — evidence of our accountability to taxpayers and strict adherence to our fiscal responsibilities, even amidst uncertain economic times. We can incorporate innovative funding solutions, like the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, to ensure our ambitious future projects — to possibly include a recreation center and new public safety complex, among others — are prudent investments. Similarly, I proudly championed North Kingstown’s participation in the Municipal Resiliency Program, which saw almost \$675,000 in grant money come to our town for infrastructure projects related to climate and environmental hazards.

3. What will you do to address the shortage of affordable housing in North Kingstown?

There is no one answer for how a municipality can solve our unprecedented housing crisis. This is a crisis I see daily in my role as a social

worker. Everyone from working families, to young professionals, to seniors feel the shortage acutely. We must partner with community-based groups and adapt best practices from other municipalities. We must look to intentionally funnel any development through appropriately zoned, transit-friendly hubs to avoid sprawl and think sustainably to ensure we address our housing and climate crises jointly.

Earlier this year I asked the town’s Economic Development Advisory Board to consider hosting a forum on affordable housing. I look forward to seeing further conversation on how we might tackle this complex issue.

Last, the Council proudly passed a Homestead Exemption to help keep homeowners in their homes — an effort to not add to the housing crisis by driving people out of their residences.

4. Do you support a business-friendly environment? Please explain.

Yes. I supported the Chamber of Commerce’s budget requests in both budget cycles since I have been elected, and I voted in accordance with their endorsement of the town’s state of emergency declaration. The declaration granted businesses more flexibility to operate outdoors or in

other amended ways without the typical “red tape,” thus allowing them to survive the pandemic.

5. What is your stance on residential and business expansion along the Rte. 1 corridor?

The Post Road corridor is appropriately zoned for both residential and business expansion, and both must grow in tandem to be mutually supportive. Business will not grow or thrive without housing, and housing will not assure quality of life without the small businesses that allow a community to flourish. I look to findings from the Council’s first Post Rd workshop and the Economic Development Advisory Board’s forum on growth to support this. I would support the town continuing to draw upon lessons learned from these discussions from experts, stakeholders, town staff, and community members.

6. How will you address concerns with deteriorating roads and increased traffic?

Town Manager Mollis and the current Council have been in ongoing talks with the Department of Transportation on issues including traffic through Wickford, sidewalks along Post Rd and through Wickford, and

possible shuttle or bus service. The Council gave preliminary authorization for the Town Manager to explore using ARPA funds for the sidewalk project in particular. I voted in favor of the Public Works’ budget — which includes provisions for road repair — in each budget cycle since I was elected. I support any efforts to improve our infrastructure and traffic safety.

7. How will you address the town’s water issues in terms of quality, supply and stormwater runoff?

We must continue learning from issue experts including our municipal staff, RIDEM, URI, the US Geological Survey, our town committeees, and others. This last council passed a sweeping and comprehensive update to our groundwater ordinance. The ordinance is in line with current best practices and has the flexibility in its verbiage to address both current and future threats. We must protect open space and acquire new open space.

8. Will you commit to reviewing town beach access and fees? Yes/ no (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes



Kalen Arreola
Republican

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the council?

Born and raised in Rhode Island by teenage parents, I grew up watching them work incredibly hard to stay off welfare and build a janitorial services company. My mother’s dream was to make enough to buy a house “down near the beach.” She battled Lupus SLE and passed away months after our family moved to South Kingstown in our brand-new home, that she and my father worked so hard to purchase.

At age 14, I had to become a leader in my own small family, by taking care of laundry, sometimes my little sister, doing dishes, buying groceries, cooking, and cleaning house. I was hired at Shaw’s Supermarket in Wakefield at the age of 15 and by the time I turned 17 I was a shift manager.

After 9/11 I knew I wanted to serve our country, so I joined the Army Reserve and worked as a Public Affairs Officer for ten years. I earned a Bronze Star for Leadership during my



William King
Republican

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the council?

I was born in NK in 1939, educated in the public schools, and raised by depression-era parents who instilled in me a sense of service. I served as a professional soldier for 20 years, then worked in private industry another 25 years reaching executive positions and business ownership. I served on town and city boards wherever I was stationed. Since returning to NK in 1990 I have served on all the key town commissions.

- Serving my town is a request to someone who they trust. If elected I must demonstrate good, reasonable judgment and honor that trust.

- In my professional career I volunteered to evaluate the best factories in the world who competed for an international award of excellence. I will constantly ask every requested town action to demonstrate knowledge of what town, city anywhere in the world is the “Best-In-Class” for comparison.

- NK is driven by the Quonset Point industrial miracle within our

deployment to Iraq from 2007-2008.

I launched a marketing agency in 2010 and continue to serve clients nationwide. I have served on the boards of numerous nonprofits but have since focused all my spare time on raising my daughter.

I love North Kingstown and would be honored to serve the people here from all political sides. I believe that we can work together without divisive rhetoric, and I’d like to help champion that.

2. How will you balance the needs of the community with fiscal responsibility?

This is truly the most difficult thing that is asked of every public servant, but I think it can be simplified if political posturing is taken out of the equation.

In business, clients want to understand the ROI, or “return on investment” of any activity they’re paying for. I think we should be looking at financial decisions with the same lens.

Taxes come from hard working people who are spending more and more every year just to enjoy everyday life. Leaders should be able to ask where is the money going, why is it going there, and who is it benefitting? If the taxpayer doesn’t see an ROI of some kind, then we need to have a discussion.

3. What will you do to address the shortage of affordable housing in North Kingstown?

The state will need to enforce quotas by developers to build affordable housing. I saw how they failed to do that in San Diego and it caused massive housing shortages. By the time they acted, families had already been forced to leave and homelessness skyrocketed. We cannot allow that to happen here.

4. Do you support a business-friendly environment? Please explain.

Yes. I supported the Chamber of Commerce’s budget requests in both budget cycles since I have been elected, and I voted in accordance with their endorsement of the town’s state of emergency declaration. The declaration granted businesses more flexibility to operate outdoors or in

Absolutely. I was raised in a small business household, and I have had the most freedom as a single mother being a business owner. It has been incredibly difficult, but also extremely rewarding.

Whether elected or not, it is a goal of mine to spearhead local programs that help teach entrepreneurs of all ages how to start and grow a business.

The greatest thing about entrepreneurship is that the market doesn’t care if you are a woman, a man, young, old, or any label you’d like to insert. If you bring value to others through a product or service, and you can be paid for it, then you’ve got something to build from.

5. What is your stance on residential and business expansion along the Rte. 1 corridor?

If done well, Route 1 could be a thriving business corridor that supports our growing town.

6. How will you address concerns with deteriorating roads and increased traffic?

Our town is expanding, and these issues will continue, making it a necessity to keep the roads maintained, expand them in areas, and add adequate sidewalks. This will take leadership willing to engage with the State of Rhode Island.

7. How will you address the town’s water issues in terms of quality, supply, and stormwater runoff?

Our town has excellent water quality, and systems in place that are working well for both quality and supply. As far as stormwater runoff, this will take leadership willing to engage with the State of Rhode Island.

8. Will you commit to reviewing town beach access and fees? Yes/ no (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes.

performance.

7. How will you address the town’s water issues in terms of quality, supply and stormwater runoff?

- Quality: NK already has an excellent track record and internal process for water quality.

- Supply: NK already does an excellent job managing the several water sources, some shared with other communities.

- Run-Off: I live on the ocean with a clean, well-maintained and easily accessed Right-of-Way abutting our property. I am very aware of run-off/ environmental issues that are regulated by the state of RI, not the towns.

8. Will you commit to reviewing town beach access and fees? Yes/ no (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes



Gregory Mancini
Democrat

our town. These accomplishments include ensuring that our vacant town hall will be successfully renovated, resolving numerous lawsuits with little liability to the town, increasing town reserves by 80%, lowering the tax rate from \$18.06 in 2018 to \$14.06 this year, attaining a AA+ bond rating, establishing a homestead exemption, significantly improving our town water quality, improving town parks and beach facilities, and increasing funding to our underfunded school system. Accordingly, in the short time Katie Anderson, Kim Page and I have been on the council we have accomplished so much, but so much more needs to be done, and if re-elected we will get it done.

2. How will you balance the needs of the community with fiscal responsibility?

Balancing the needs of the community with fiscal responsibility is always challenging. I strive to do this by thoroughly going through the proposed budget department by department of town government and reviewing what is really needed versus what is wanted. I weigh that against what I hear from constituents as well as a review of our economic climate and then make a decision what to fund. It is not easy because I know that there are a lot of people struggling but I also

know that our town has needs that cannot be overlooked. This past year our council unanimously passed our budget that has an approximate 2% increase. In addition, for the first time ever we also included a limited homestead exemption.

3. What will you do to address the shortage of affordable housing in North Kingstown?

Municipalities have very limited legislative tools to assist in addressing the dire need for housing, particularly affordable housing. Having said that, I have tried to promote housing developments on major thoroughways and near mass transportation. In doing so, I have also focused on trying to maximize affordable housing units within these developments. All projects approved must have a reasonable percentage of units designated as affordable.

4. Do you support a business-friendly environment? Please explain.

I believe I have supported a business friendly environment in several respects: during my first term on the council I asked our town administration to conduct a community workshop focused how we as a community can support economic

development on Post Road (COVID hampered our ability to conduct a follow up workshop this term); worked with the town to have all NK businesses on the Boom Local Internet Directory (<https://www.boomlocalusa.com/north-kings-town?search&page=1>), a directory that people in our community can utilize to find any business in town; supported a grant to the North Kingstown Chamber of Commerce to allow them to promote businesses; and, initiated and supported a grant to the Wickford Village Merchants’ Ass’n to also assist them in promoting commerce in the village.

5. What is your stance on residential and business expansion along the Rte. 1 corridor?

As indicated in the prior question, the condition of Post Road caused me to ask our town administration to conduct a workshop to see how we can improve the business climate on Post Road in my first term. Our Economic Advisory Board along with many citizens made a significant contribution to this workshop.

The following suggestions in the workshop that our town has acted upon are: an ordinance that allows for easier access for an administrative review as opposed to going through the full planning process; an

ordinance that increases penalties for not properly maintaining properties; a commitment to re-shape our town economic development position; more aggressive town involvement in the state site readiness program; an updated database of residents and businesses on an email listserv.

However, this is only a start. More needs to be done. And if elected, we will hold yet a second workshop to assess what we have done to date and see what we need to do to support a vibrant economy on Post Road. Limited residential expansion along the Post Road corridor will also be part of any solution to making this thoroughway economically vibrant.

6. How will you address concerns with deteriorating roads and increased traffic?

At the town level, we allocate what is affordable to our public works department to fix and maintain town roads. At the state level, I have met with the director of transportation multiple times to advocate for investment in state roads that go through North Kingstown. This not only includes advocating for fixing and maintaining our roads, but also putting in sidewalks and bike lanes. In meetings with the DOT we have also advocated for them to reevaluate our roads for increasing traffic patterns.

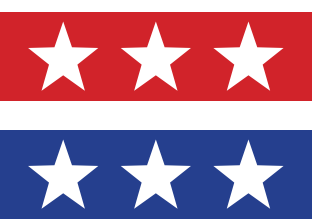
If elected, this is something that I will continue to do with the DOT.

7. How will you address the town’s water issues in terms of quality, supply and stormwater runoff?

Ensuring water quality is one of, if not the most important responsibilities our town council has. As a town councilor I rely on the opinions and analysis of multiple experts to ensure our water quality. These experts include our in-house water department, experts at the University of Rhode Island, and outside engineering firms. To date, all have unanimously determined that our town has the strictest water quality standards in the state. In fact, our town is looked at as a statewide leader on water quality standards and maintenance. This past year we tapped into these water quality experts to upgrade our water quality standards. Upgrades that our town council unanimously passed into law.

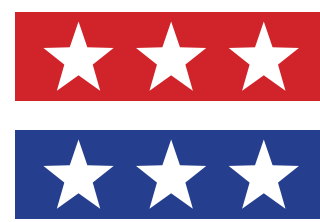
8. Will you commit to reviewing town beach access and fees? Yes/ no (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes



North Kingstown General Election Candidates

NORTH KINGSTOWN TOWN COUNCIL



Richard Welch
Independent

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the council?

I have served on the North Kingstown School Committee for one term as Chairman and three terms on the town council, one term as President. I have served on many town committees and boards since 1978 which has given me a lot of knowledge that comes with that firsthand experience. Many of the present and previous members of the town council have not had this experience and that lack of knowledge and background has proved costly to our town. It is hard to know how to plan for the future when you do not know where you have been and why you should not repeat the same mistakes.

2. How will you balance the needs of the community with fiscal responsibility?

When you understand that time in grade gives very valuable knowledge and experience, you have a feeling what is important to our citizens and what the priorities are. Having run

my own business for many years I understand the need to proceed with caution and understand the responsibility for making very careful decisions that may affect the community for years to come. This combination of work experience and many years of involvement in the town will help our community.

3. What will you do to address the shortage of affordable housing in North Kingstown?

The State of Rhode Island has mandated that every community have not less than 10% affordable housing. At present our community has over 8% affordable housing and has approved new development not yet built that would put us over 10%. The law cannot accomplish its goal since our young firefighters, policemen, teachers do not qualify according to the salary limits. Furthermore, owning an affordable housing unit will not allow the owner to build any equity in the home, it is like paying rent.

4. Do you support a business-friendly environment? Please explain.

I am not sure what you mean by support. I encourage the protection of our environment by any business doing business in Rhode Island or in our country. For too long we as a country have taken advantage of low-cost fuel and non-existent government controls on the environment and we are now paying the price.

5. What is your stance on residential and business expansion along the Rte. 1 corridor?

We need a plan to redevelop existing real estate along the route 1 corridor to make it more attractive to new investment for retail and housing. This housing is needed for the employees at the Quonset Industrial Park which is attracting new employers and building investment every year. Most of the empty buildings on Post Road were built when the Navy was in town and our population was over 30,000, a number that still has not been reached almost 45 years after the Navy closed the base. The zoning along the Post Road Corridor should

be changed back to the way it was before it was changed some years ago. Post Road will never be like Wickford or Main Street in East Greenwich.

6. How will you address concerns with deteriorating roads and increased traffic?

We have been spending millions of dollars upgrading our town roads recently making up for the lack of spending on our roads in previous years. Past town managers did not budget for road paving, this has changed in the last 6 years with an eye towards a 20-year cycle to repave our roads before they need to be replaced completely. Increased traffic comes with more employees and businesses at Quonset together with any new residential development in town which is eventual growth in south county.

7. How will you address the town's water issues in terms of quality, supply and stormwater runoff.

This issue came up when I was last on the town council. The Water Dept.

proposes to up-grade existing old pipes over the next ten years spending about \$20 million to accomplish the work. About \$9 million is already on hand and work should be in process at this time starting with the leaking pipes once they have identified where they are. The availability of new federal funds to pay for water utility improvement will be a plus to help pay for this construction. I am not aware of any storm water runoff issues that have not been addressed. I support returning to the former water department regulations that were recently changed by the town council, no explanation was given why we needed to have less restrictions on our water and who wanted this change. We also need to explore the need for new filters on our water to take out different minerals and PFAS which are everlasting chemicals that can cause cancer.

8. Will you commit to reviewing town beach access and fees? Yes/ no (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes.



Randy Wietman
Republican

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the council?

I grew up in a small northern Minnesota community into a very blue-collar family where a solid work ethic was thought to be at the core of all meaningful success. I still believe in, and honor, those values because I know they always apply. I joined the Navy soon after I graduated from college, because I felt that service to my country was an expectation. I retired a Navy Commander with significant leadership experience both at sea and ashore, and also have extensive

manufacturing experience in running several major OEM product lines for Texas Instruments. After retirement, I decided to continue my service on the local level, and I am gratified in knowing that I have, indeed, made a meaningful contribution in my community. I am the Chairman of the Zoning Board of Review and have been on this board for the past 11 years. I am also currently a board member for the NK Charter Review, NK Sewer Appeals, Historic Wickford (HistWick), Parades Committee and Wickford Yacht Club. I'm proud of my record with the US Navy, and with my community. If you want to know what a candidate will do if elected, look at what they have done, and continue to do. Look for a demonstrated commitment, through continuous and consistent involvement. I raised my two daughters in North Kingstown. As such, I've invested in NK and have a very real interest in seeing that we continue our proud legacy for the next generation.

2. How will you balance the needs of the community with fiscal responsibility?

As a board member of the Charter Review, I was involved in the development of the Town's Charter to include several questions that will appear as ballot questions this Nov 8th. Among those are questions concerning fiscal responsibility as it relates to the stewardship of town assets. We need to set aside funding that is specifically targeted for maintenance/repair of our town assets. The Old Library,

Town Hall, Old Meeting House, Wickford Elementary were in such derelict condition that all had to be shuttered. These were all lost opportunities for NK residents and taxpayers. The result is that some assets were sold off. Some required a bond to resolve. Ideally, and much more appropriately, our assets should be maintained via a much more effective asset management process that includes a funding source in the budget, so we don't have to go to bond for maintenance & repair. We also need to develop, and guide Alternative Energy in North Kingstown through a common sense, comprehensive plan for solar and wind. Alternative Energy is part of our future. We must make good decisions on this topic and that takes professional guidance, as well as citizen involvement. Lastly, we need to continue the development of Quonset Point. It is the preeminent economic engine for the entire state of RI. Although NK receives revenue through 3 sources (rents, property taxes, and PILOT programs), we need to continually reassess opportunities to maximize our return from this hugely successful state asset in our own community.

3. What will you do to address the shortage of affordable housing in North Kingstown?

The State of RI requires that each city and town provide affordable housing for its citizens. The goal for all communities is 10% of all year-round housing. North Kingstown is among the very highest in RI in reaching that

goal of 10%, but there is still room for improvement, so that public and service workers who desire to live in the community where they work, can afford to live here in NK. In following a deliberate and responsible plan to meet that goal, the town, as well as developers, have the opportunity to have control over where and how this requirement is accomplished within NK.

4. Do you support a business-friendly environment? Please explain.

Through my role as Chairman of the Zoning Board of Review, I had the opportunity to support numerous applications for the purposes of reasonable, responsible and appropriate development throughout North Kingstown, to include the Old Town Library project, Reynolds Farm, Wickford Woods, Wickford Elementary, Rolling Greens, New Town Hall expansion and repair, Auto Dealerships on Rt 2, the Olde Theatre, Wickford Junction, and the addition of town sewers, along Phillips, Brown and Main Streets.

5. What is your stance on residential and business expansion along the Rte. 1 corridor?

I would ensure that there is a comprehensive plan specific to the Post Road corridor. At the moment, we don't have that. Funding is important but without a thoughtful plan, we end up dumping money into an effort that still has the appearance where each

and every business is "on their own." It certainly has that appearance now. Post Road should not be a stretch of road that you must endure, so you can get to that place you want to be. It may be hard to envision now, but Post Road can be, and should be, a destination. At the moment, Rhode Island Energy has a 66ft easement on Post Road. Working around that is cumbersome, but with the removal, elimination, or relinquishment of that easement, we would have more, and better, choices for the development of Post Road. This is understandably a very difficult task for the next council, but also one of their most important issues. As Chairman of the Zoning Board of Review, as well as a board member for the NK Sewer Appeals, I've seen numerous applications for residential and business development along this stretch of road, and all have been reviewed/considered with rigorous attention to the overall NK Comprehensive Plan, NK Zoning Ordinance, and the Post Road Design Guidelines. I believe the key is appropriate, reasonable, and responsible development that meets the needs of North Kingstown residents and taxpayers, as well as the needs of the NK business community.

6. How will you address concerns with deteriorating roads and increased traffic?

With the development of Post Road, will come more congestion. It's hard to have one, without the other, but we can make it better than what it is. Although the road itself (Post Road) is largely a state issue,

I see no other solution other than additional lanes, possibly utilizing the utility easement on the east side of Post Road. We have the funding to adequately maintain the town owned roads, but must get better at the execution of a repair/maintenance schedule.

7. How will you address the town's water issues in terms of quality, supply and stormwater runoff?

This is a passionate issue for many, and it should be. Our water is critical to our ability to properly develop as a community, but more importantly, it is critical to our health. The facts here are important. We have excellent quality water here in NK, and it is plentiful, but as a community with a sole source aquifer, we are also quite vulnerable. Safeguarding our groundwater is critical and it means vigilance on behalf of the EPA, RI DEM but most critically, our own water department and planning department. The 11 pumping stations/wells, reservoirs, recharge areas and 177 miles of distribution piping, must all be continuously monitored. Despite a significant amount of housing development in NK, with the extensive oversight that marks this community's commitment to protection of our water source, we can expect plentiful, high-quality water into the future.

8. Will you commit to reviewing town beach access and fees? Yes/ no (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes.



Christopher Zangari
Republican

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the council?

As a Town Councilor I would to work to secure funding for a new Middle School, consolidating and closing Davisville Middle School and Wickford Middle School, support the Town Police Department, create and enterprise zoning along Post Road from the Police and Fire Station to the Town line, promote new housing stock, and continue to promote experienced growth minded residents to Town Boards and Commissions.

I served as Assistant Town Solicitor in varying positions since 1999 for the Towns of North Kingstown, Jamestown and Charlestown. Specifically, I have served as Assistant Solicitor for Police Prosecutions for North Kingstown from 1999 through 2000 and 2002 through 2006; Assistant Solicitor for the Zoning Board of Review for the Town of Jamestown in 2000 and 2001; Assistant Solicitor for the Zoning Board of Review for the Town of

Charlestown from 2003 through 2006 and Assistant Solicitor for the Zoning Board of Review for the Town of North Kingstown from 2002 through 2006. I am presently a member of the North Kingstown Zoning Board of Review.

2. How will you balance the needs of the community with fiscal responsibility?

I will follow the Town Charter. The needs of the residents will be considered and met within the bounds of the law, desires and non-essential expenditures will be vetted and likely sent to a referendum for voter approval. Fiscal responsibility is also a community need. Tax burdens should represent the least amount required to perform the functions of government required pursuant to the Town Charter.

3. What will you do to address the shortage of affordable housing in North Kingstown?

I would support density bonuses for housing development along Post Road as well as projects that include twenty-five percent or higher of affordable units as defined by HousingWorks RI. I would also support zoning amendments to allow for an increase in multifamily housing. These affordable housing units will help to revitalize the Post Road corridor with potential clients, customers, employees and new business owners.

4. Do you support a business-friendly environment? Please explain.

Yes, I do. A thriving economic base will support the tax base and reduce the burden to residential real estate taxpayers. I would support making the Post Road corridor an Enterprise Zone, a tangible tax exemption for the first \$40,000.00 for all small businesses defined as Micro businesses in Rhode Island General Laws §37-14.2-3 (4).

5. What is your stance on residential and business expansion along the Rte. 1 corridor?

I am in favor of both residential and business development of the Route 1 corridor as I have discussed in the previous responses.

6. How will you address concerns with deteriorating roads and increased traffic?

I will review the current Public Works capital expenditures budget for road maintenance in 2022/2023 and audit how we are spending the funds available as well as those funds provided by the State. I will support the Traffic Calming mechanism currently in use and promote and implement additional Traffic Calming devices along with educational technics to alert drivers to the posted speed limits and surrounding neighborhoods and environments to internalize and ingrain safer driving habits and

practices.

7. How will you address the town's water issues in terms of quality, supply and stormwater runoff?

I would continue to support the groundwater protections in place to protect the Town's aquifers as those regulations and protections have protected the water supply to date. I would balance the suggested actions in the University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension assessment with the prudent development of the Town while giving significant consideration to the analyses and conclusions of the Groundwater Committee.

8. Will you commit to reviewing town beach access and fees? Yes/ no (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes.



In the 20 days leading up to Election Day, you can vote in person at your city or town hall or at a designated location during regular business hours. This is a great option if you are unable to vote at your usual polling place on Election Day, or if you have run out of time to request a mail ballot.

Early voting runs Wednesday, October 19, 2022 – Monday, November 7, 2022 until 4:00 p.m.

Narragansett Town Hall - 25 Fifth Street, Narragansett, RI 02883
Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

North Kingstown Town Hall - 100 Fairway Drive, North Kingstown, RI 02852
Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

South Kingstown Town Hall - 180 High Street, Wakefield, RI 02879
Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

South Kingstown General Election Candidates

SOUTH KINGSTOWN TOWN COUNCIL



Jessica Rose
Democrat

1. Why are you running and what expertise do you bring to the council?

I am running for re-election because I have realized over the past two years what a rewarding experience it is to serve my community. I have been able to connect with the people of South Kingstown in a way that I had never dreamed of. I truly enjoy being able to serve as a voice for those who depend on me to advocate for them.

I am fully invested in the future of South Kingstown. My family has been here since the late 1940's. I moved to SK full time as a URI student in 2003 and I never left! My husband (a lifelong SK resident) and I have enjoyed raising our two children here. Our son attends Peacedale Elementary and our daughter recently graduated from SKHS and began her college education at Montana State University. My parents and younger sister also reside in South Kingstown.

I have been a lifelong Democrat and activist. I am a member of the SK Democratic Town Committee, a supporter of Climate Action RI, Planned Parenthood, and The Human Rights Campaign, to name a few. I strongly believe that affordable housing

should be available in all communities, and that there is a lack of such housing here in South Kingstown. I am also a strong proponent of sustainable living and practice it in my daily life. Sustainable communities are stronger and healthier. I will do everything that I can to insert sustainability practices into town policies.

2. How will you balance the needs of the community with fiscal responsibility?

One thing that I have noticed in my two years on the council is our over reliance on consultants. One example of this is the 3-2 vote where I voted against spending \$500K on a consultant to help us work out the spending of ARPA funds. The TC had already allocated money to certain projects. Most of those projects could be handled by our town employees, many of whom live here and have a vested interest in our town. We really need to start putting faith in our greatest asset- our outstanding and dedicated town employees, and rethink the need for so many consultants.

3. What will you do to address the shortage of affordable housing

in South Kingstown?

While I have always been aware of the affordable housing crisis in SK it wasn't until I joined the council that I realized the enormity of the situation. Affordable housing isn't an issue that can be solved in one two year term. I knew that we had to prioritize and set the stage for future councils to continue our work, whether or not I would still hold office. One of the first things that I did was demand that we finalize our town's comprehensive plan, which had expired long before I came to hold office. That was accomplished within my first six months. Today I continue to fight for affordable housing through open and frequent communication with our state leaders, the Affordable Housing Collaborative, the Planning Board, and other community partners. I have also been a strong advocate for a homestead tax exemption in SK.

4. How will you address the town's water issues in terms of quality, supply, and storm water run off?

It is time to put an end to the yearly water bans in SK. I will continue

to work with Veolia and hold them accountable for updating their infrastructure to meet the demands of our community. While we may not be able to "shop around" for different water vendors, we most certainly can demand better infrastructure on the part of Veolia, and we can advocate to the Public Utilities Commission when they fall short of their responsibilities. Our town must also fortify its existing water infrastructure in order to best utilize it in the event that Veolia continues to not meet our water supply demands. This may include looking into reopening old wells.

5. Do you support a business friendly environment? Please explain.

Absolutely! Small businesses are the heartbeat of a vibrant and connected community. When we invest in them, we invest in our community.

6. What real estate tax exemptions will you support?

A homestead tax exemption, or some version of one, is something that I have wanted to see through since my first day in office. I believe in a multi-tiered system of taxation,

where year round residents would benefit most. Our new town manager, who I was instrumental in hiring, has expertise in this area and I am confident that if given the opportunity to serve another term we can bring such a plan to fruition.

7. How will you address concerns about deteriorating roads and increased traffic?

This has been a priority of mine, particularly over the past several months as we have witnessed the deterioration of the new design on Old Tower Hill Rd. I have been in constant communication with our town manager, who in turn has been able to put pressure on RIDOT to provide more frequent maintenance to that stretch of road. I look forward to working with the town manager to identify federal funds and grants through the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act which can be used to upgrade our local transportation infrastructure and to add traffic calming measures where appropriate.

8. Do you support dredging of the Narrow River? (Yes/No)

Yes



Charles Greg Sweet
Republican

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the council?

I have run a local business in town for the last 20 years. We have gone through difficult times and have had to make tough choices to adjust for downturns in the economy. Running a business has forced me to listen and ask questions. What is the importance of these skills? I will use the school facilities project as an example. I spent many hours attending meetings and looking into the project. I listened and asked many questions during the meetings and would not get answers, so I had to look for the answers myself. I spent a lot of time and my own money to find answers and present them to our residents. I felt if residents were voting on the biggest bond in our town's history they need to know as much about the project as possible. The majority of the present town council voted to ask the voters to vote on a plan with many important questions unanswered. If this 85-million-dollar bond had passed, we would have needed to borrow tens of millions more to complete the work and put our town at risk of a lower bond rating. With the facilities plan still being submitted now more than ever we need someone to look out for everyone. I've proven I can do that.

2. How will you balance the needs of the community with fiscal responsibility?

One must first define the needs of the community. Town officials need to develop a list of projects that need to be addressed, then prioritize them and make them available for residents to review. There is no shortage of projects that we should pursue. The new town council needs to work with the new school committee to responsibly address their budget. Rhode Island has other school districts with the same demographics with budgets significantly less than South Kingstown's and provide better results. We need to figure out how they do that and apply their techniques in our district. We need to use our funds much more responsibly. As an example, our town received 9 million dollars in Covid money. The present town council majority approved \$500,000. for a consultant to help beautify villages in South Kingstown. That \$500,000. could be invested directly into projects that don't need a consultant like road and sidewalk work, addressing the water problems and other problems that need to be addressed. The town receives roughly 1 million dollars from the state each year from the added 1% meals and beverage

tax. Beautifying the villages should come from that which was its original intended use.

3. What will you do to address the shortage of affordable housing in South Kingstown?

I recognize the problem our town faces with affordable housing. Home prices have skyrocketed for several reasons. I would suggest we work with local lenders or agents and lean on their expertise. Also, our town needs to look at what could be done to loosen building restrictions. Many of the restrictions inflate the cost of building.

4. How will you address the town's water issues in terms of quality, supply and stormwater runoff?

The water supply problem has been with us for years. It seems to be discussed every 2 years then nothing is done. What I would do if elected is keep the water issue on the agenda for every meeting until the problem is resolved. South Kingstown has knowledgeable people in town that know the workings of our water system and its problems. We need to ask them to advise us on what our options are and address the problem. If we don't

keep the problem on the agenda, it becomes out of sight out of mind. We need to stop kicking the can down the road and finally address the problem.

5. Do you support a business-friendly environment? Please explain.

I do. The town needs to do a better job creating a business-friendly environment. A recent town ordinance says all business or business property owners in town are required to remove snow from in front of their businesses, within 24 hours, or risk being fined. This puts an added burden on businesses. The town owns equipment used for sidewalk snow removal. I've talked to several business owners that deal with the town on building projects. I was told that town officials will give direction then change it later. A set of guidelines should be developed so that the process is easier to navigate through.

6. What real estate tax exemptions will you support?

At a meeting in June the Town Manager said he and his staff are researching different options. I need to see what options are presented and listen to the pros and cons of the different plans before I can decide.

7. How will you address concerns about deteriorating roads and increased traffic?

I'm not sure if this was asked properly. I think it should be how will you address deteriorated roads and sidewalks. We first need an inventory of roads and sidewalks that need to be replaced within 10 years. Then a list that needs to be repaired. Then we need a list of roads that need to be maintained. All this needs to be addressed keeping the budget in mind. As near as I can tell our town has a reserve of around 20 million dollars. We need to question why we need such a high reserve, roughly 20%. If we don't, then we can use some of that money to do immediate work. Now to address the traffic problems. We need to have the police tell us what the problem areas are and give suggestions on how to alleviate them. Then we can decide what to do using their recommendations.

8. Do you support dredging of the Narrow River? Yes/No (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Candidate did not respond with a yes or no.

South Kingstown General Election Candidates

SOUTH KINGSTOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE



Michael Day
Republican

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the committee?

I am a father of two and love my children. I own a small video production business and manage property. I chose to run for School Committee after watching first hand some of the troubling experiences with my children. The 9th grade assignment "Bite of the Mango", covered troubling topics that a reviewer for Quill and Quire warned "its necessarily graphic nature makes it best suited for mature readers." The vivid pornographic description of a child being raped was extremely disturbing to my son. It affected his other classes and school work for weeks. In my daughter's 8th grade year, her social studies class featured a regular streaming of CNN alongside her teacher's one sided political views that went unchallenged by students for fear of reprisal. Most of us remember great teachers. It was incredibly rare for us to know their political leanings. In order to change our public schools, we need to bring back open debate and unbiased discussion with age appropriate content.

2. How will you ensure a diverse, equitable and inclusive learning environment?

The new trend that prioritizes equity over all other facets of schools has its pitfalls. Every student must be treated equally and fairly regardless of personal traits or characteristics. We should be meeting each child where they are, while recognizing that the schools are only a part of their development. One of the pitfalls introduced by the pursuit of equity at the expense of everything else is the culture that considers the child as a ward of the schools without need for parents. One particular policy (1236) in South Kingstown's schools authorizes the school to act without parental knowledge on the difficult topic of gender transitioning. While the initial intent of the language may have been protective, the explicit wording encouraging a student/staff relationship that circumvents the parent/child one. The public schools need to make sure every student, in partnership with their families, are getting what they need every day. Even if it is outside of the district.

3. Who should determine the school curriculum including instructional and school library material? Please explain.

Curriculum and material should be determined based on proven

methods of education. In many cases, the school committee may need to steer that, especially by watching the modern political trends that influence education systems enormously. And under no circumstances should parents be kept in the dark about any content being presented to their children. Curriculum transparency is critical to establishing the trust of the families served by the district.

4. How do we ensure the health and safety of children in school?

As a former Military Police officer I believe School Resource Officers (SOR) play an integral part in keeping our kids safe. The SRO should become a member of the community and be trusted by students and families. Only then can each student feel safe in their schools. Stricter measures for profanity, destruction of property and violence need to be implemented and enforced. Only then can each student feel safe in their schools. Ensuring health is a more complicated concern. Much of that starts in the home, but the last 2 years have shown what a public institution can do to harm the health of students. The obesity epidemic was made worse during the pandemic when gym classes, and recesses were abandoned. Physical activity, team

building, and confidence exercises cannot be ignored.

5. facilities meet the educational needs of all our students?

The buildings in our district need serious work. Everyone knows it, but the realities of the last several years is that politics have interrupted some pretty necessary projects. Operational spending has inflated unnaturally, while major facility maintenance efforts have been sidelined. You might draw the conclusion that political influences have prioritized labor contracts over building needs. This is further evidenced by the ever growing spending in the face of ever declining student enrollment. Like every other facet of our district, we need to get politics out of the system and begin putting kids first.

6. Will you support reinstating the dual-language immersion program?

I thought the dual language immersion program was an interesting program. As I have studied this issue once it made headlines last year, I realize its sunset may have been an unavoidable necessity. With elementary school enrollment in free fall, it placed notable pressure on the placement process for staff. In recent

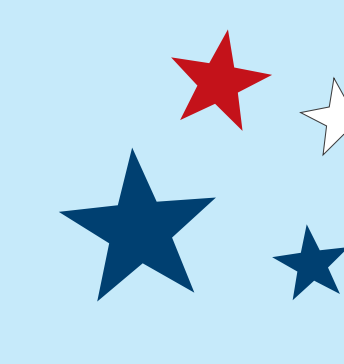
years, School Committee turnover introduced elected officials that were no longer champions of the program. The political pressure on the program became too great. While second languages open incredible opportunities for our students, until we get politics out of the schools, comprehensive programs like DLI present incredible challenges.

7. Will you support Arts and music?

Yes, Arts and music are important for developing minds and should be part of the curriculum. Too often, the threat of "cutting" these programs appears to be a budget tool to draw engaged families out to meetings. So many programs, like computer science, shop, or culinary classes fall prey to the same activities every year. As an artist myself, I am an advocate for the arts and music programs and will champion these programs in our schools. The curriculum would not be complete without including music and arts.

8. Do you support a half credit civics course for high school graduation?

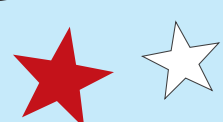
Yes

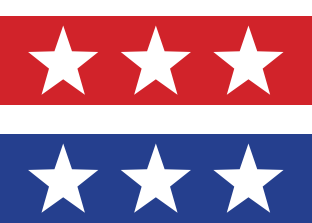


Voice Your

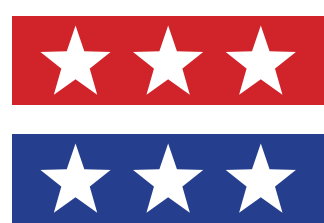
CHOICE

Be Sure to Vote on Tuesday, November 8, 2022.





South Kingstown General Election Candidates



SOUTH KINGSTOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE



Katherine Macinanti
Independent

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the committee?

My reasons for running for a 2nd term with the South Kingstown School Committee are two-fold. Firstly, my main focus has been and continues to be working to move our School System forward in its mission of educating ALL of our Students. Having been part of the various configurations of our School Committee over these past 5 years, there has been a lot of "1-step forward, 2-steps back" that was driven by a variety of reasons - the most prominent being so much change in leadership. Over the past 8-10 months, the current School Committee has made some significant moves in order to stabilize and point our District in a positive & progressive direction. This brings me to my second reason being that I feel compelled to follow through on the changes our Committee has brought about. I feel like we have just started to gain some traction in making progress towards reestablishing South Kingstown as a top-tier school district, and I feel the need to follow key decisions all the way through.

2. How will you ensure a diverse,

equitable and inclusive learning environment?

As a School Committee member, it is my role "to provide leadership and oversight of community supported goals, policies, and resources to make certain the South Kingstown public schools deliver a high quality education for ALL students". We have already made some very important leadership changes that have poised our District in becoming a learning environment that takes responsibility for our failures, maps out a plan to correct our missteps, and embraces a way forward to fill existing learning gaps that have grown exponentially over the past 2-3 years. The School Committee's role is governance and accountability. We have put strong Leaders in place, and now it is time to put the trust and respect into them, so they can do the job we hired them for.

3. Who should determine the school curriculum including instructional and school library material? Please explain

Our State and Local Educational Leaders, alongside our Teachers, are the ones qualified in determining the curriculum that is being taught in our

schools - inclusive of library materials. The District's Educational Leaders & Teachers, by law, should be working with various groups in our community as part of the School Improvement Teams to help guide and focus this work, based on community values. However, at the end of the day, our Education Professionals should be ultimately responsible for the choices in Curriculum.

4. How do we ensure the health and safety of children in school?

Partnerships between Educational Leaders, Faculty, Support Staff, Maintenance/Custodial Staff, Municipal Leaders, Local Law Enforcement, and most importantly, our Families, should all be working together to help create and maintain open, clean, and safe facilities for our children to learn in. This can look like School Improvement Teams, Parent-Teacher-Admin Groups, Task Forces between School, Local Law Enforcement, and Families, and the like. It is not 1 single entity's responsibility, but rather, a full community effort to ensure both the Physical and Mental safety of our children in and out of school.

5. How will you ensure that the

town school facilities meet the educational needs of all our students?

I currently sit on the School Building Committee and we are now kicking off the process to re-visit the Facilities Upgrade Program that will allow our Community to analyze and navigate towards updating/renovating/repairing our Facilities in a manner that will not just catch up to the current educational needs for our students, but will work to look forward into the future and envision the learning needs 10-20-30 years in the future. I hope that in this process, we will solidify relationships with local initiatives, business, neighborhood communities, and our State's colleges & universities so that South Kingstown's facilities and programs reflect what is needed in order to offer to our students exactly what they need to be successful, contributing members of our local and global society.

6. Will you support reinstating the dual-language immersion program? Please explain.

South Kingstown needs to create and cultivate a premier World Culture & Language Curriculum and Framework, Pre-K through 12. Our students

should be prepared to understand and contribute in local, national, and global communities. This should be accomplished by having a curriculum that allows our students to become proficient in multiple languages and demonstrate competency in multiple cultures in order to be aware of and responsive to the community & world around them.

7. Will you support arts and music education in all grade levels? Please explain

I always have been and always will be a staunch advocate for a full and robust Fine Arts and Music Program in South Kingstown, PK through 12. Our current group of Arts & Music educators are exceptional, and have created a nationally recognized program. My voice has been, and will continue to be, pivotal in keeping it that way, and in fact, as far as I am concerned we need to cultivate it and ensure that it only continues to grow!

8. Do you support a half credit civics course for high school graduation? Yes.

Yes.



James Restivo
Democrat

1. Why are you running and what expertise and experience do you bring to the committee?

I'm running because I am a concerned parent who wants to see our district move in a positive direction. The reasoning behind some recent decisions has not seemed transparent, leaving many parents, including myself, confused about where the district is going. We have many crucial decisions coming with looming budget cuts and a continued decline in enrollment. I want to ensure we have rational decision-makers on the committee that can clearly explain their reasoning behind their votes.

As far as what I bring to the committee, I have many years of experience in the business world. I have a varied background, from working in payroll to running operations for a software company. As a key contributor to a small software company with a limited budget, I have to make decisions daily about where to allocate resources efficiently and effectively. I have volunteered on the Executive Committee of the Rhode Island Sierra Club for the last 6 years and have gained valuable experience working with a varied group of individuals with varying viewpoints.

2. How will you ensure a diverse,

equitable and inclusive learning environment?

When we implement programs in our school system, they need to be designed such that every student in our system is eligible to participate. We need to identify any barriers to entry and either give supports where needed or remove barriers where needed. It's my goal that every student has every opportunity accessible to them.

Through our polices, we can ensure that our children encounter an inclusive learning environment.

3. Who should determine the school curriculum including instructional and school library material? Please explain

Available curricula are given to us through the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE). The administration of the district is responsible for choosing and implementing the chosen curriculum. The School Committee can help direct this by making sure we have the right leadership in place to run the district. Leadership should take community input into account when choosing the curriculum. Whichever curriculum is chosen should be available for all parents to see.

As far as library material, I don't think there should be any limits on age and educationally appropriate material in each library. The foundation of a functional democracy includes the exposure to different points of view and philosophies that not all in our community will agree with. That being said, parents need to play a role in helping their children navigate their reading choices.

4. How do we ensure the health and safety of children in school?

We need to identify any health hazards, including updating old and outdated facilities, to ensure a safe and healthy environment for our children. Entrance and egress points need to be secured to ensure only those with appropriate access be allowed to enter our schools.

We need to encourage a positive environment for all of our learners, with robust anti-bullying policies. We need to invest in our children's social and emotional health, as well. Sexual harassment cannot be tolerated in our school system, at any level.

5. How will you ensure that the town school facilities meet the educational needs of all our students?

First and foremost, I am committed

to a new or updated High School, whichever makes the most sense fiscally. Whether we can update in place or need to build new is yet to be seen. But we can't keep deferring maintenance.

As our elementary schools, and even Broad Rock, age, it's important that we prioritize maintenance to keep our buildings in peak condition. Our annual budget must include line items to address deferred maintenance so we can continue to update our buildings on a rolling basis.

If our enrollment declines, it's important to right-size our schools and our district. Conversely, if enrollment increases, we need to be prepared to address the needs of those students as well.

6. Will you support reinstating the dual-language immersion program? Please explain.

I will support a new and improved version of dual-language immersion for our schools. The previous model was not given the support it needed to survive. If we were to bring it back, we need to ensure that all stakeholders involved are committed to making it successful and making it a permanent feature of our system.

At this point, we'll have to start from scratch, and if we do, the problems with the previous implementa-

tion will need to be addressed. That being said, it is important for our children to be introduced to world languages. I will support initiatives that bring early language instruction to our elementary students, while encouraging our older learners to continue to pursue language-learning opportunities.

7. Will you support arts and music education in all grade levels? Please explain

Absolutely. Art and music are critical elements of education. Art and music can show us perspectives we never thought of and take us to places we never dreamed of. They can expand our minds while keeping us grounded in ourselves. We learn so much about each other and about ourselves through arts and music. We can learn what others have been through without having to go through it ourselves. They encourage empathy and compassion. They are an essential part of any well-rounded education.

8. Do you support a half credit civics course for high school graduation? Yes/no (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes



Carol Vetter
Democrat

building level and the district level. Some of these committees include a special education committee on language learning needs, the "late start" committee at the high school, the superintendent stakeholder's committee, and various school improvement teams.

My three sons attended our district schools from per-k through high school. I am very proud of their achievements and a large part of their success has been the wonderful education they received in South Kingstown.

I have an MBA in finance and accounting, giving me the ability to help prepare and analyze the district's budget, and I have served on the budget subcommittee for this past year. I am very involved in the SK community, serving on the board of directors for Peace Dale House and GEAR Productions. I have the skills and knowledge needed to move our district forward.

2. How will you ensure a diverse, equitable and inclusive learning environment?

I will make promoting diversity, equity and inclusion within our school district a priority. This begins with having robust policies that outline and define the district's expectations and responsibilities. It is also important that we provide equal access to every school program to all of our students, across school buildings and grade levels.

Another important aspect is providing professional development to teachers and staff. We need to make sure that we provide our educators

with the skills they need to promote diversity in the classroom and create an inclusive learning environment. We also need to partner with community members and families; they can provide a wealth of knowledge to our district and help expose our students to diverse people, experiences and identities that will help prepare them for life outside the classroom

3. Who should determine the school curriculum including instructional and school library material? Please explain.

Curriculum is crucial for maintaining high quality programs and improving educational outcomes for all students. It provides a framework for teaching and learning to ensure that students gain the knowledge they need to be successful. I believe the best method to developing school curriculum is to bring together a committee of highly trained teachers and administrators to evaluate curriculum choices that are approved by the Rhode Island Department of Education.

For school library materials, again I would recommend a committee of trained educators with a background in library science. Materials should be chosen with consideration for age, social and emotional development, reading level and interest level. Input from parents and the community is also important. We need to make our processes for choosing curriculum and library materials available and transparent. Once curriculum development has been completed, the district needs to make the curriculum for all grades available

on its website for easy accessibility to all stakeholders.

4. How do we ensure the health and safety of children in school?

Every student deserves a high quality education in a healthy and safe environment. We learned a considerable amount during the pandemic on the importance of ventilation, cleaning and staff training. We need to continue to invest resources in these areas.

The safety of our school buildings is also crucial. As we get the needs assessment done by the district's consultant, we need to build in increased safety measures to any planned upgrades. Clearly defined emergency procedures and preparedness also need to be in place.

Another pivotal piece to health and safety is the mental health and emotional wellness of our students. This is becoming an increasingly vital area of concern. We need to provide social-emotional learning opportunities for our students and continue to give our teachers and staff the needed resources and curriculum to teach these essential skills.

5. How will you ensure that the town school facilities meet the educational needs of all our students?

We are currently going through a needs assessment of all our school buildings. This will help the district identify areas of concern and opportunities for improvement. The most critical needs are at our high school, as the building is not conducive to

21st century learning. The environment you work in has a huge impact on how you feel and how productive you are. We owe it to our students to provide them a learning environment where they can be successful.

A crucial part of this process is the design stage, with attention to natural light, improved air quality, acoustic environment, classroom design and shared learning spaces. The town council and school committee have recently created a school building committee to begin the design process for our school facilities. As part of this process, open forums must be utilized to understand the needs and wants of our community. By having a comprehensive, open, and transparent process, we can assure that the educational needs of all our students will be met.

6. Will you support reinstating the dual-language immersion program? Please explain.

I was not in favor of abruptly ending the dual-language immersion program. I felt we had an obligation to the students, families and teachers in the program to continue the program for at least those already enrolled. I wanted an open conversation to discuss the challenges with the program, and there were several. The biggest challenge, as it is with the district as a whole, is declining enrollment, and was this program sustainable given this challenge.

I don't think that reinstating the dual-language immersion program is possible at this point. The talented teachers within the program have taken other employment opportunities

at other dual-language schools. In order to make this program successful, it would also require the full backing of the district administrators. I would like to see the district develop a world language program that could benefit all students. Developing this new program will be a priority for me.

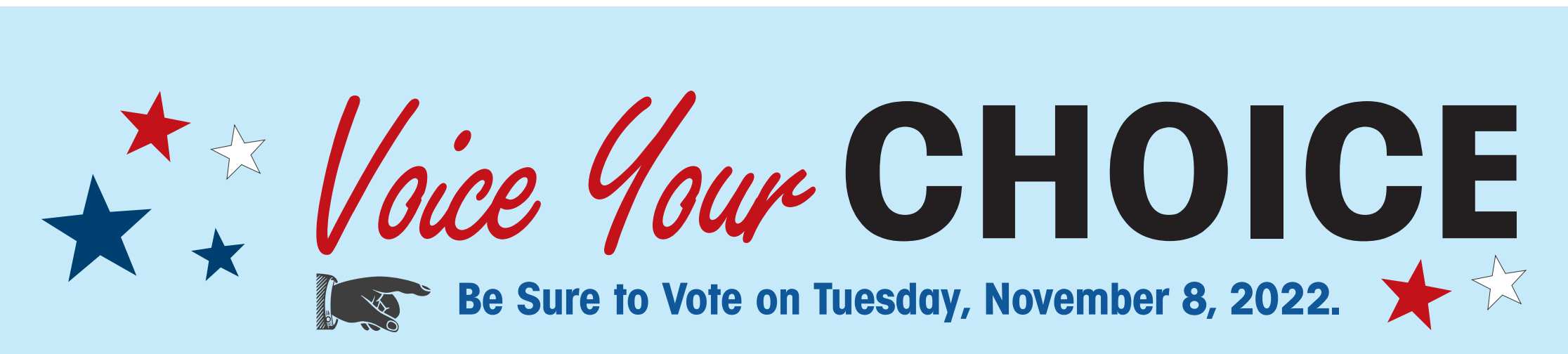
7. Will you support arts and music education in all grade levels? Please explain.

I have always been a champion for art and music education in our schools at all grade levels. Research has shown that studying art and music has a positive influence on math, reading, verbal skills, cognitive abilities, and critical thinking. This is especially true for students exposed to art and music at an early age. Art and music classes may also be the highlight of a student's day, giving them the motivation to come to school.

Strong art and music programs can also help our district as it works to close achievement gaps. Children of more affluent parents often get exposed to art, theater and music outside of school. Lower income children may not have these same opportunities. This is another reason why having school based programs are so important.

8. Do you support a half credit civics course for high school graduation? Yes/No.

Yes.





Charlestown
 Exeter
 Hopkinton
 Richmond
 Narragansett
 North Kingstown
 South Kingstown
 Westerly

Open to US Citizens, 16 yrs. and older.

Who Are We?

We are a nonpartisan political organization that works to build a better democracy through:

- active participation in government
- understanding of public policy issues
- the action of voting

We meet the 2nd Wednesday every month at 7:00 PM on Zoom.

Please join us to make a difference in your community.

League of Women Voters South County
P.O. Box 1636
Westerly, RI 02891-1636

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Name _____

Name(s) of additional member(s) in household _____

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Please enclose a check to: *League of Women Voters of South County* to the address above. We will contact you soon.

Please check membership category:

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- _____ \$50.00 one member.
- _____ \$75.00 two members, same household.
- _____ \$25 Student, 16 years and older

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REGISTRATION
DEADLINE**

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In person at your town hall

Online vote.Sos.Ri.Gov/



NOVEMBER 8, 2022

POLLS ARE OPEN 7AM - 8PM

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