

LWV



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®]
OF SOUTH COUNTY

VOTER

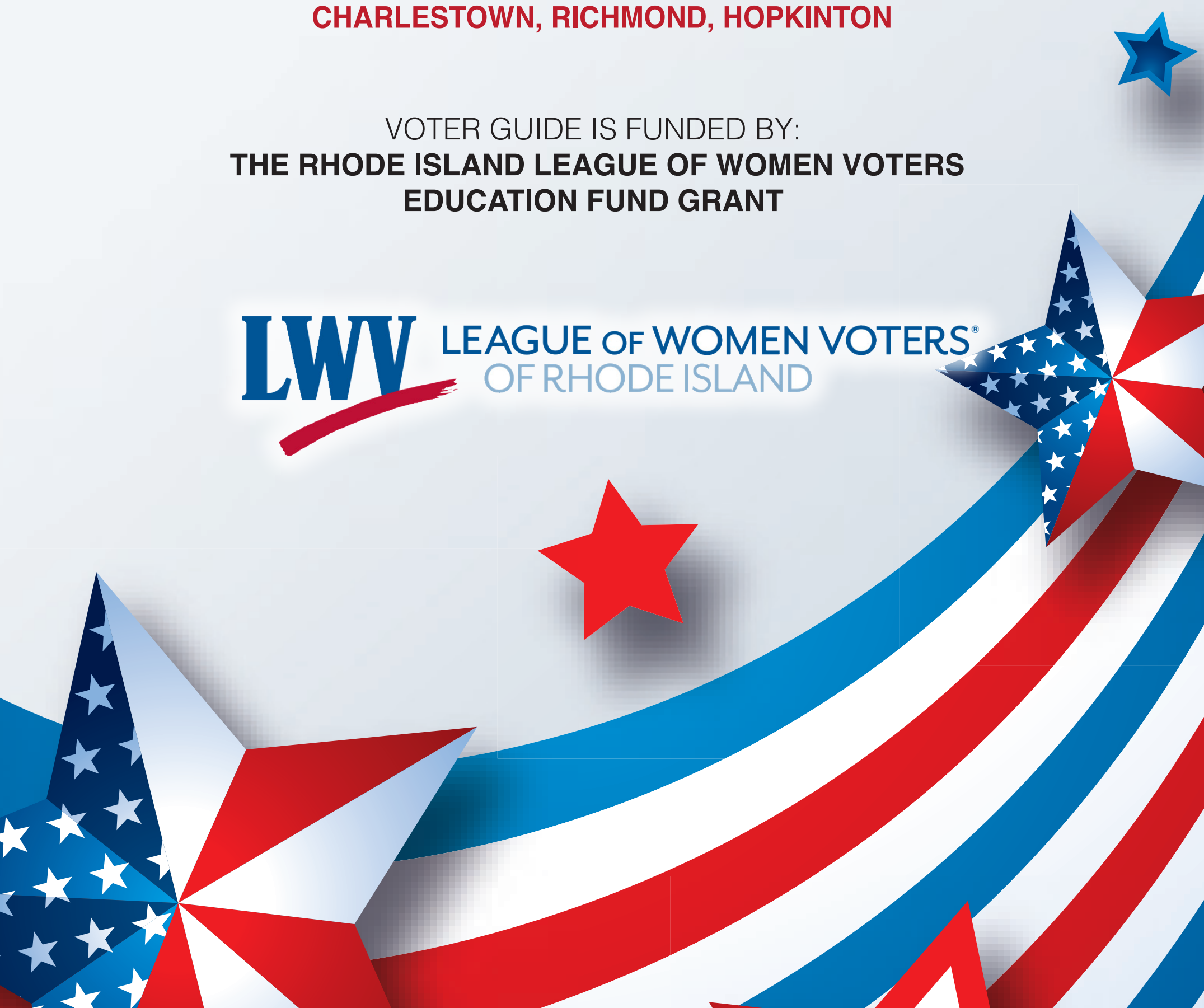
★★★ **GUIDE** ★★★


2022

COVERING:
CHARIHO AREA
CHARLESTOWN, RICHMOND, HOPKINTON

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

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®]
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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 believe 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
lwvscri@gmail.com

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Dear Chariho Voters.

Thank you to those who submitted questions, which, based on the frequency of mentioned topics, were used to generate the final questions for the candidates. A special thanks to all the candidates who responded in a timely manner with your answers, making this Voter Guide possible.

Etta Zasloff
LWVSC Voter Services Chariho
lwvscvoterserviceschariho@gmail.com

LIST OF CANDIDATES

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

STATE SENATORS - Elect 1/District - 2 year terms

District 34 - Exeter, Richmond, Hopkinton, Charlestown, West Greenwich Jennifer Douglas - D Elaine Morgan -R (Incumbent, no response)	District 38 - Westerly, Charlestown, South Kingstown Caswell Cooke, Jr - I (No response) Robert J. deVillers - I (No response) Victoria Gu -D Westin J. Place -R
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STATE REPRESENTATIVES - Elect 1/District - 2 year terms

District 36 - New Shoreham, Charlestown, South Kingstown John F Pacheco III - R Tina Spears - D	District 39 - Hopkinton, Richmond, Exeter Sean Comella - I (No response) Megan Cotter - D Justin Price - R (Incumbent)
District 38 - Westerly, Charlestown, Hopkinton Brian Patrick Kennedy - D (Incumbent) Donald H. Kohlman - R	

TOWN COUNCIL - Elect 5/Town - 2 year terms

CHARLESTOWN	HOPKINTON	RICHMOND
Charles W. Beck - I (Incumbent, no response) Deborah A. Carney - D (Incumbent) Susan J. Cooper - I (Incumbent) Peter N. Gardner- I Grace F. Klinger - R (Incumbent) James M. Mageau -I (No response) Anne Owen - I Lorna Persson - I Richard Rippy Serra - R Steven J. Stokes - R (Incumbent) Joshua D. Vallee - I David M. Wilkinson - I	Robert W. Burns - R (No response) Sharon Davis - D (Incumbent) Michael Geary - R (Incumbent) Robert Thomas Green - R Scott Bill Hirst - R (Incumbent) Edwin W. James - R Robert J Marvel - I (Incumbent) Stephen Moffitt, Jr. - I (Incumbent)	Lauren Cacciola - D (Incumbent) Michael A Colasante - R (No response) Daniel E Madnick - I Rich Nassaney - R (Incumbent) Ronald Newman - D (Incumbent) (No response) James Palmisciano - I (Incumbent) Mark Taylor Reynolds - I Helen F Sheehan - R Mark H Trimmer - R Samantha Wilcox - D Jeffrey M Vaillancourt - R (No response)

CHARIHO SCHOOL COMMITTEE

CHARLESTOWN	HOPKINTON	RICHMOND
<i>Elect 3 - 4 year terms</i> Donna Chambers - I (Incumbent) Kim Coulter - R (No response) Craig Louzon - I (Incumbent) Linda Lyall - I (Incumbent) Phyllis Penhallow - R (No response) James E. Sullivan - R	<i>Elect 3 - 4 year terms</i> Tyler M. Champlin - R Polly Hopkins - R Larry Clark Phelps - R (No response) endawnis Spears - D (Incumbent)	<i>Elect 2 - 4 year terms</i> Ryan Callahan - I (Incumbent) Katherine E. Colasante - R William Day -I (Incumbent) Patricia A Pouliot - R (No response) Jessica Purcell - D

Voice Your
CHOICE



NOVEMBER 8, 2022

POLLS ARE OPEN

7AM - 8PM

Find your polling place at

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

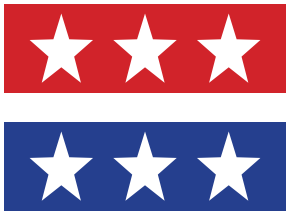


SCAN FOR VOTER SERVICES



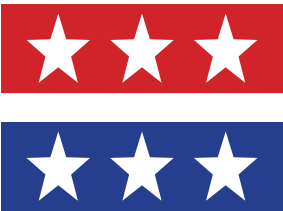
SCAN TO JOIN LWW





State of Rhode Island General Election Candidates

SENATE



Senate D34
Jennifer Douglas
Democrat

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

I'm running for office because when I look around my district I see that our lives have not improved in any measurable capacity for many years. In my community we've become overburdened by taxes that continue to rise without benefiting us. I want to work to bring businesses into our area that will retain our rural character but also lower the tax burden on property owners. I want to preserve our environment by putting a moratorium on clear cutting mature forests for solar farms until we can find a way to properly site alternative energy sources such as brownfields, parking lots, and municipal buildings. And I want to work to bring affordable housing to my district so our children and elders can continue to live where they grew up if they choose, instead of being priced out of their community. I'm here to help and I want to see

this entire state thrive. I'm not afraid to take bold action to do it, and refuse to settle for the status quo.

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

Climate change threatens our homes, our lives, and our economy. We need a just transition to 100% renewable energy by 2030 that prioritizes working people, along with a commitment to preserving our forests, farms, and shoreline. As a legislator I plan to take on the fossil fuel industry to ensure clean air, clean water, and clean energy for all, and shut down corporate polluters in frontline communities with a just transition for workers. It is imperative that we preserve our natural resources, eliminate clearcutting, expand regenerative agriculture, and guarantee public access to our shoreline. We should endeavor to expand public transporta-

tion, bring increased bus service to our area, electrify all buses, and make the bus free. I would also like to coordinate with our towns to incentivize building green, affordable homes for working families, and create good paying union jobs in the process.

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

I would look to tax the wealthy to fund our schools, create smaller class sizes, and improve our school buildings. I also believe in increasing the amount of social workers in our schools to help the children who need it. Our educators are also under constant attack from right wing dark money organizations, looking to defund our school systems under the guise of "choice" and affecting our children's ability to learn by banning educational materials. I will be a firm champion for our teachers and support professionals, endeavoring to make our

schools a place where students can engage in a robust exchange of ideas.

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

While I believe in a person's second amendment rights to own firearms, I do think that regulation is necessary. I am not opposed to our current gun laws, and I would like to see legislation targeting safe storage to keep firearms out of the hands of children and others who should not have access

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

I believe in a woman's right to abortion and contraception, and I believe it is a private medical decision that is between a woman and her doctor. While I'm extremely pleased we have

codified Roe into RI law, I would like to go further and see passage of the Equality in Abortion Coverage Act, which would provide abortion coverage to women who are state workers and medicaid recipients.

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

Shoreline access is a constitutional right for all Rhode Islanders and I support it fully. I also believe that shoreline access is an indigenous rights issue. Our indigenous neighbors have used the shoreline for ceremony, hunting, fishing, and worship well before colonization, and denying them the right to access their own land is a grave disservice that needs to be remedied.

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

No



Senate D38
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 off-shore 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 D38
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

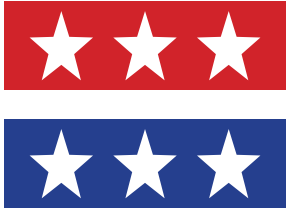
the charter and usages of this state," This should be looked at as the law of the land before any shoreline access law is passed.

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.

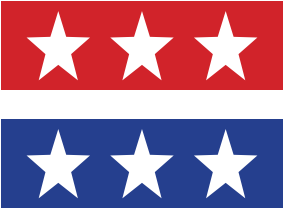
8. Do you support RI's current election laws?

Yes



State of Rhode Island General Election Candidates

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



House D36
John Pacheco, III
Republican

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

As a lifelong RI resident, I understand we face multiple issues as a diverse and storied community and I love to help. My experience as President of the Burrillville Town Council shows my proven record for defending the environment, improving school safety, demanding responsible spending, fighting the opioid crisis, increasing affordable housing responsibly and most of all, advocating for the people I served.

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

Being a district with a lot of oceanfront property, climate change can have a significant impact. I would support all efforts to preserve, nurture and keep clean, our beaches, salt ponds and freshwater resources.

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

I believe having a safe, secure, well cared for school building is an essential first step. I have a

successful record of collaborating with school departments, police departments, and my peers to identify the needs and find the resources.

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

I am an avid fisherman, hunter, and supporter of the second amendment. I believe the laws passed in the last legislative session are unnecessary and unconstitutional.

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

I believe the bipartisan legislation that Representative Blake Filippi sponsored was an excellent compromise and the fact it passed unanimously in the house proved it. The fact that it passed unanimously should have made it a priority in the senate, it was very disappointing the senate president felt otherwise.

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

I am pro-life but would never promote or try to change existing RI abortion laws.

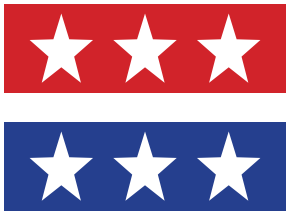
7. How will you address the concerns about the Lighthouse

Inn property in Galilee? Please explain

I would wait for the RIDEM to finish its research into how contaminated the site may or may not be, and what may be supported there before anything else. Then having experienced what it's like to have a lack of local control, I would make sure the community was heard and on board with whatever the proposals may be.

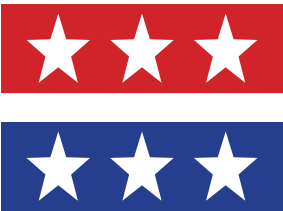
8. Do you support RI's current election laws? (Only a response of yes or no will be published)

Yes



State of Rhode Island General Election Candidates

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



House D36
Tina Spears
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 spent the last decade fighting for families and people with disabilities at the RI State House and now it is time for me to use my experience, drive and network for everyone in Dist 36 and the State of RI

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

Climate change is impacting our coastal communities, fisher-

ies, businesses, and way of life. We must take action to protect our fragile coastal ecosystem and ground water in the Ocean State, and to create green jobs while we do.

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

I attended our public schools, and my kids do too. Committed teachers made all the difference in my life, so I know that schools build opportunity for people and communities. Our students, teachers need their fair share of resources from the state for social / emotional support, excellent

teaching and a learning environment that offers everyone the chance to succeed.

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

I stand with the majority of people – including gun owners and our police – who want greater gun safety. We need sensible policy that insists on safe gun ownership like the basic safety measures the state legislature passed this year.

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

Efforts to preserve the public's right to shoreline access stalled in the Senate this year. I will continue the fight to preserve access to the shore for future generations.

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

I support a woman's right to make her own healthcare choices, including reproductive choices. Rhode Island's codification of Roe v. Wade into state law protected these rights in our state, but there is more to do to ensure women of all income levels have access to healthcare.

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

The Lighthouse Inn is not in my district, I need to learn more from community groups and my colleagues who represent the area to provide a more informed answer.

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

Yes



House D38
Brian Patrick Kennedy
(Incumbent) Democrat

1. Why do you want to serve your district in the General Assembly?

I have been honored to serve the voters and have a positive impact on District 38 by eliminating the car tax, providing working families with children a tax credit, reducing the state income tax on social security benefits while eliminating income tax on military pensions, supporting \$250

million towards affordable housing, and securing nearly \$600,000 additional dollars more than the Governor's original budget for the Chariho District in regional categorical transportation funding.

I provide a proactive voice for my constituents. I listen and respond to their concerns, needs and legislative ideas. I am always a call or email away and do my best to address their issues.

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

I supported the Act on Climate legislation because I recognize the impact climate change will have on wetlands, water supplies, and nearby beach communities with rising tides.

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

I have been a consistent supporter of improving public education in RI including increases in state education funding to lessen the impact on local taxpayers.

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

Rhode Island has some of the most restrictive gun laws in the country. Rather than adding new laws, RI should enforce existing gun laws.



House D38
Donald H. Kohlman
Republican

1. Why do you want to serve your district in the General Assembly?

Our district has been forgotten about and taken advantage of for far too long. While my opponent has been in office for 34 years, he is just another "Yes" vote for the establishment. Maybe at one point in time he cared about the welfare of our Community, but I think those days are long gone and now it's just business as usual. I want to make sure that Our community has a voice in this state because we are different from Providence, Pawtucket and Barrington. So therefore, we have different needs and wants and for a long time our needs have been neglected. So I am running to

make sure that my children can afford to live in RI and not have to leave this beautiful state like they may have in the past, because they couldn't afford to stay.

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

Need more information

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

I will improve public education in RI by supporting the parents of children in my district so they can decide how they want to raise

and educate their children. I will make sure the school system and the government doesn't overstep and try to take away their parental rights while they are trying to raise their children. Being a parent is hard enough without worrying about what soft porn book my 3rd or 4th grader is going to be checking out of the library today. The school systems in this state should be teaching reading, writing and arithmetic as well as any other skills to help students get jobs and become productive members of society in the future. Children shouldn't have to worry about if they forgot what Johnny's pronoun is that he wants used today or being asked if they feel like a boy or girl today. They will figure it out eventually and that's NOT what teachers are paid to do.

It's actually psychological abuse.

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

I am Pro-guns to law abiding citizens and ANY effort to take away the gun rights of law abiding citizens I am Against, period. The new Standard capacity magazine ban is Ridiculous and overreaching. It is also probably illegal since any standard capacity magazines that are out there weren't grandfathered in and people won't be getting compensated for throwing away their magazines. Besides, a 13 round vs. a 10 round magazine isn't going to make a difference unless you are trying to defend yourself in your own home from

predators or criminals. It's only a good way to make law abiding citizens felons overnight.

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

I am Pro-life with exceptions.

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

Every Rhode Islander should have some form of water access to the shoreline.

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

No



House D39
Megan Cotter
Democrat

1. Why do you want to serve your district in the General Assembly?*

I am running for office because we deserve a state government that champions the needs of working families and our seniors, not big corporations. People across Rhode Island are struggling to keep up with inflation, rising taxes/housing costs, and wages that don't keep up with the cost of living. I will work tirelessly to put money back in the pockets of working people and our seniors. Corporate greed and political corruption weaken the people's faith in the system, and I will be there to fight against it by making wise investments of state dollars to ensure Rhode Islanders get the most value out of their government. Rhode Islanders deserve better, and as your State Representative, I will fight for the needs of our community. Now more than ever, we need to give our much forgotten community a voice, and I am committed to promoting compassion and unity over hatred and division.

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

Climate change impacts everyone in every district across Rhode Island. As we see greater effects of climate change, residents will

continue to feel the impact of intense storms that result in fallen trees and power outages. In our part of the state where it feels as though we lose power every time the wind blows, this can be highly disruptive to our daily lives. In order to address this, we need to build resiliency in our infrastructure.

To be successful in the fight against climate change, RI must achieve two broad objectives simultaneously. First, RI must eliminate carbon emissions ASAP, and second, absorb and store the massive amounts of carbon that have already been released into the atmosphere. Renewable energy addresses the first objective but, unlike forests, can't absorb or store carbon. Rhode Island's total current greenhouse gas emissions can be eliminated by solar sited on developed and disturbed sites, including rooftop, landfill, gravel pits, brownfield, commercial/industrial, and carport solar.

According to DEM, 69% of all forest loss in RI is from solar development, and I will work to support a State program that incentivizes cities and towns to transition responsibly to renewable energy instead of lining the pockets of big corporations to clear-cut for solar. Taxpayers should see the benefits of reducing the town's electric bill, and we should prioritize solar on every municipal building, school, and transfer station.

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

I support the hard work of our educators, and we must ensure they have every resource available to succeed in the classroom. The last few years have been challenging, and our teachers need to be celebrated for their commitment to serving our students.

As a state, we need to do better. The current public school funding formula is eighteen years old and broken. We need action at the state level to repair and improve access to quality public education that all children deserve. School funds should be equitably distributed from the state to school districts across Rhode Island. We cannot continue to raise property taxes on working families and seniors to fund our schools. This forces taxpayers to choose between quality education and savings. I believe that local investment must be accompanied by stronger and more robust support from the state. We need to work to find a long-term solution that will close the funding deficit and remove disparities among different communities that persist in our school systems.

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

I support common sense gun laws like background checks, red flag laws (Extreme Risk Protection Order), and disarming domestic abusers to keep our families and communities safe in Rhode Island. With more than 100 people killed daily by gun violence, we are facing a public health crisis. While mass shootings in schools and public spaces often get the news headlines, the daily toll of gun violence also impacts our communities. In Rhode Island, 71% of gun deaths are suicides, and the state government must do more to pass gun safety laws, invest resources in mental health, and ensure that firearms are removed from those who may inflict harm on themselves or others. As a State Representative, I will support common sense gun laws that protect our families and communities.

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

We must protect a woman's right to choose. We cannot forecast every scenario a woman may find herself in nor can we impose a blanket law that would incorporate every situation. Roe vs. Wade was codified into law here in RI. I will work to make sure a woman has a right to make her own health decisions without government involvement, now and in the future.

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

Rhode Island is called the Ocean State because it has over 400 miles of beautiful coastline. Everyone should have access to the shoreline. There are tremendous roadblocks to shore access and this would ease some of those inequalities.

I support House bill H8055 which passed in the House but not the Senate. This bill proposed a constitutional change in favor of a "recognizable high tide line" instead of the current "Mean High Water MHW" line. This bill would be a huge step in the right direction, allowing Rhode Islanders access to its most precious resource.

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

This issue is not in District 39, but I believe that we need to enforce local land use ordinances and hold the State accountable. The State cannot supersede local ordinances.

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

Yes



House D39
Justin K. Price
(Incumbent) Republican

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

Serving as representative for the last four terms has been intrinsically rewarding. I enjoy helping my constituents access their government and solving problems. I add a conservative viewpoint and much needed perspective to the legislative debate. I truly enjoy making a difference through public service.

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

I recognize the importance of a healthy planet. Hunting, fishing, and outdoor recreation are an important way of life in the district. I am protective of the environment but also support economic viability and activity. There must be a balance.

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

I believe local control of schools is important and I support parents' rights in creating children's educational and health curriculums. Additionally, I worked, and will continue to work, for a fair funding formula for the Chariho school district.

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

Rhode Island's gun laws are among the most restrictive in the United States. Yet, every year, progressive legislators in Rhode Island seek to add to an already oppressive set of restrictions, making a mockery of both the 2nd amendment of the United States constitution and Section 22 of the Rhode Island constitution, which unambiguously states "The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." Criminals, by definition, do not abide by the law. Therefore, Rhode Island's restrictive gun

laws serve only to unnecessarily restrict law-abiding civilians, making it difficult, if not impossible, for them to effectively exercise their right to self-defense.

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

I am pro-life, I signed on to the heartbeat bill. I feel the current RI law is too extreme.

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

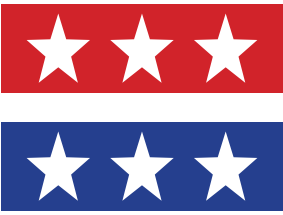
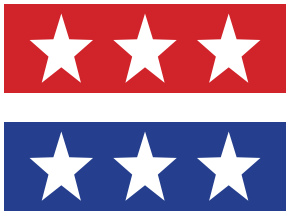
The Rhode Island constitution guarantees that the people shall continue to enjoy and freely

exercise all rights and privileges of the shore. I believe that R.I. law should define the shoreline in an equitable and sensible way that gives access to the shore, including during high tide, and respects private property.

Regarding question 7: I support election integrity. I believe that voter ID supports this. However, the massive expansion of mail-in ballots has essentially bypassed voter ID, reducing overall election integrity. (Be sure to put this paragraph in question #6 for fairness to all.)

7. Do you support Rhode Island's current election laws?

Did not respond Yes or No.



Charlestown General Election Candidates

CHARLESTOWN TOWN COUNCIL



Deborah Ann Carney
(Incumbent) Democrat

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

I am running for re-election in order to continue to ensure all voices are heard and for the following reasons:
*To maintain our low tax rate through responsible spending.
*To ensure Charlestown remains a rural community that grows in a balanced and responsible manner with a commitment to keep the character of the town intact.
*To support small and local businesses and affordable housing so those that work in Charlestown can also afford to live here.
I bring over two decades of experience to the town council.
I have served eight years on the Town Council, six years as President, 2020-present, and from 2002-2006, and two years as Vice-President, 2018-2020. I currently serve as the liaison to the Coastal Ponds Management Commission, Zoning Board of Review, and the Economic Improvement Commission and have served on the Chariho Audit Subcommittee since 2006.
I was elected to the Chariho School Committee from 2008-2012, served as Chair of the Chariho Entrance, Expansion and Exit Committee in 2002 and served as Chair of the Charlestown Charter Revision Committee from 2007-2008.
I run a small family business,

so I am extremely cognizant of responsible budgeting. I am as careful with taxpayers' money as I am with my own. I am a commercial rated pilot and certified flight instructor. My political, professional, and personal experience give me the insight and expertise necessary to continue to serve Charlestown as an elected official and I respectfully ask for your vote.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Charlestown residents?

The Town Council has already acted. While serving on the town council, I supported the formation of Charlestown's Climate Resiliency Commission. This commission is charged with studying and analyzing issues and impacts of climate change and global warming and developing strategies, policies, and plans for mitigation of and adaptation to impacts from climate change. To the best of my knowledge, Charlestown is the only town to take this proactive and focused approach. The Council appointed residents with specific areas of expertise, and they held their first meeting in March of 2022. The commission is utilizing a scientific, reasoned and pragmatic approach. Once the Council receives the information, I will carefully evaluate the commission's recommendations for

implementation.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Charlestown and what might the Town Council do about it?

Charlestown is only at 3.92% of the required 10%. I served as president of the Town Council in 2006 when the Council proposed, and voters approved, a \$1,000,000 bond for affordable housing. Charlestown was the first town in the state to proactively address the affordable housing need with a bond initiative. There is less than \$80,000 remaining from this bond. Charlestown needs affordable housing for our seniors, our workforce, and our children if they wish to continue to live in Charlestown once they enter the workforce. One of the problems facing Charlestown is that there are a limited number of non-profit agencies in Washington County with which Charlestown can partner. The town needs to work with R.I. Housing to re-establish county-based organizations to assist. If re-elected I will ensure the Town Council advocates for and supports the creation of community-based non-profit organizations to create affordable housing. Additionally, the Town Council can support zoning amendments that convert existing housing units to affordable housing.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, businesses and preserved land?

I support balanced growth in Charlestown. I support ordinances that consider the landowner's rights but also resource protection. One cannot be done at the expense of the other. Over the years, Charlestown has developed a reputation for being "anti-business." The Council needs to begin an open dialogue with the business owners and discuss ways to reverse that perception and remove the stigma.
Community Center- With regards to the question of a Community Center. Charlestown has a community/ senior center located in Ninigret Park. In 2019 the majority on the Council attempted to take \$3,100,000 from the town's unassigned surplus funds and use it for a "community center." The problem was that there was no plan at all for this community center. The voters were asked to approve \$3,100,000 with no information at all. A town should not operate in such a fiscally irresponsible manner. Prior to the voters being asked to approve a community center, there needs to be an actual plan with facts and figures. Any expenditure for a community center needs to be presented to the voters as a separate warrant item and not

included as a transfer within the budget.

5. What is your position on defining shoreline access?

I wholeheartedly support people's right to access the shore. I support legislation that clearly defines the area in which the public can exercise their rights and privileges of the shoreline. While serving on the town council in 2019, I proposed a resolution requesting the General Assembly enact legislation to clearly delineate public access to the shoreline that would guarantee the public's rights as provided in the RI Constitution. Earlier this year, I testified in support of House Bill 8055 which included language that defined a "recognizable high tide line," which is crucial to alleviating future potential conflicts along the shore. The bill was passed by the House but did not garner support from the Senate. If re-elected, I will continue to advocate for and lend my support to legislation that clearly identifies the area between those attempting to exercise their rights and privileges of the shoreline and the rights of property owners along the shore.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Did not answer.



Susan J. Cooper
(Incumbent) Independent

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

My reason for seeking a second term on the Charlestown Town Council is quite simple-I love Charlestown. I want to preserve and, where needed, improve upon the many wonderful aspects of life in our town. In addition to having served a term on the Town Council, I bring experience gleaned from thirty years in the practice of law and community volunteer work.
In serving on the Town Council, I've had a wonderful opportunity to learn a great deal about Charlestown. For example, as liaison to the Charlestown Budget Commission, I've observed the Town's budget process through two annual cycles. I've learned much about the Town's firm financial footing and the measures required to maintain our low tax rate - one of the lowest in the State. Maintaining our low tax rate is a top priority for my second term on the Council.
During the current Town Council term I supported and worked diligently for the passage of the Town's Comprehensive Plan, the culmination of years of hard work by our Planning Commission and our highly professional Town staff. With passage and State approval of the Comprehensive Plan, Charlestown may now begin the important process of updating and refining its land use ordinances. In this area, I am proud to have initiated and won passage of a moratorium on the building of new commercial storage facilities pending zoning review. In addition, I successfully supported the passage of the Conservation Development Ordinance, a refinement of the subdivision planning process.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Charlestown residents?

I believe that addressing the effects of climate change is essential for a thriving Charlestown. And I am not alone. According to the 2021 Town Survey, 94% of residents surveyed ranked the protection of our environment as the Town's top priority. No other concern ranked higher.
For this reason, I proposed and obtained Council approval for the establishment of the Charlestown Climate Resiliency Commission. The Commission is composed of Town residents with strong backgrounds in environmental science. Specifically, in the six months since its creation, the Commission has begun a risk assessment and grant funding process supported by the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank. The Commission is also advising the Town Council as it considers proposed road improvements and has begun work on a wild fire prevention effort.
Apart from overseeing the work of the Climate Resiliency Commission, I believe the Town Council must maintain its strong budgetary and operational support for the numerous ongoing efforts to minimize the effects of climate change carried out by Town staff in the GIS, Wastewater Management, Building and Zoning, Planning and Public Works departments.
I plan to work closely with the Climate Resiliency Commission and Town staff to address the risks identified in the current assessment process. I will prioritize efforts to protect our groundwater and minimize shoreline erosion. I also hope to initiate a process for

the gradual conversion of Town vehicle fleets from gas to electric and to improve Town stewardship of our preserved open spaces to reduce wildfire risk.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Charlestown and what might the Town Council do about it?

I strongly support efforts to increase the availability of affordable housing in Charlestown.
The Rhode Island Low and Moderate Income (LMI) Housing Act, (RIGL Ch. 45-53-2), provides that 10% of the housing in each Rhode Island municipality should meet the criteria for "affordable housing" as defined in the law. The designation essentially requires that LMI housing be deed restricted, government subsidized and fall within a specified price and income range.
In Charlestown, approximately 4% of our housing qualifies as LMI housing and thus, like many municipalities in the State, we have yet to achieve the 10% goal. The Charlestown Comprehensive Plan calls for achieving this goal, but in order to do so, the Town needs to add 239 LMI qualified units by the year 2039.
In the past, Charlestown approved an affordable housing bond issue and in the last ten years has added at least three affordable housing developments. But clearly we need to do more. Currently our Affordable Housing Commission is working to develop proposals, such as an affordable housing trust to address the need for LMI housing. As liaison to the Affordable Housing Commission I believe we will need to consider partnering with nonprofit organizations to build additional LMI developments and

converting existing housing units to LMI through the use of designated federal and state funding.
We are also experiencing a severe shortage of affordable rental units and housing within the reach of middle income buyers. This problem deserves the attention of the Council going forward.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, businesses and preserved land?

I support controlled residential development in Charlestown, if it allows for the preservation of open space and protects one of our most precious resources, the groundwater.
I strongly believe in supporting our existing local businesses and new commercial development that is responsive to the needs of the community and consistent with Charlestown's rural character.
I fully support private property rights as established by our laws and Rhode Island and United States' constitutions. However, I also believe that properly enacted zoning and planning regulations consistent with landowners' rights under the law are not only valid, but also crucial to the vitality of our Town. Landowners' rights are not compromised by the acquisition of open space. Instead such acquisitions provide landowners with options for the disposition of their property and involve only willing sellers.
I support the preservation of open space in Charlestown. Reserving open space preserves our rural character, provides recreational opportunities, and protects wildlife and native plant species. But most impor-

tantly, the preservation of open space protects our groundwater. Excessively dense development is the single biggest threat to our groundwater and our continued survival as a town reliant on private wells.

I do not believe that open space preservation compromises either our low tax rate or opportunities for growth. I prefer planned, rational development over swift, excessively dense development. It frequently creates an increase in costs for Town services that exceeds the contribution of the new units to the tax base.

5. What is your position on defining shoreline access?

Shoreline access is the right to fish from the sea, gather seaweed, leave the shore to swim in the sea, and to pass along the shore. This right is guaranteed to every state citizen under the Rhode Island Constitution. Defining such access is a matter of state law. I support House Bill 8055, sponsored by Representative Blake Filippi and others. The Bill clarifies the scope of the right to shoreline access by defining the term "recognizable high tide line" and allowing for public access as far as six feet landward from that line. I believe this definition strikes a fair balance between the public and private concerns related to shoreline access. HR 8055 was passed by the Rhode Island House earlier this year and I strongly urge its passage by the State Senate and enactment into law. I believe it sets forth a fair and clear definition of the scope of this important right.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes



Peter N. Gardner
Independent

1. Why are you running and what expertise/experience do you bring to the office? *

I represent the third generation of my family to work the Gardner farm in Charlestown, and my family's history in New England goes back over 400 years. I grew up in Charlestown, but college and then work allowed me to travel to 49 states and 65 countries on all seven continents. When the pandemic and remote work provided an opportunity to live anywhere, I decided to return to our family farm in northwest Charlestown. Despite all the change in Charlestown since my childhood, it is still an amazingly beautiful place and I am willing to work to keep it that way. I decided I needed to get involved in local government in order to protect Charlestown's character and natural resources. I have degrees in Communications and Marketing, and now over 15 years experience in large business management, logistics, quality assurance, and compliance. As a Compliance Specialist, I must ensure that organizations comply with relevant laws and regulations and maintain the highest stan-

dards of ethical conduct, integrity and professionalism. I will bring that same integrity and professionalism to the Town Council along with a love of Charlestown's natural environment.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Charlestown residents?

Among the impacts of climate change in Charlestown will be sea level rise, coastal erosion, and extreme weather events. These are serious issues, but without easy solutions. Last year Charlestown created a Climate Resiliency Commission that is charged with advising on these issues, and there is scientific expertise available from local universities, non-profit organizations, town staff, and state agencies. We should make decisions based on the advice of our Climate Resiliency Commission and all of these experts. We should continue to protect our forests and wetlands as they mitigate climate impacts by cooling the air and sequestering CO2; avoid building in floodplains as hurricanes are predicted to be more intense

resulting in more frequent and destructive flooding; and keep our residents informed about the risks associated with extreme weather, including the effect of drought on their drinking water wells.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Charlestown and what might the Town Council do about it? *

The Rhode Island Low and Moderate Income Housing Act requires that 10% of housing in Rhode Island towns be deed restricted for 30 to 99 years, rented or sold to a buyer who meets the income requirements defined by the law, and it must be built with a government subsidy. Charlestown has almost 4% of its housing in these deed restricted LMI units. We should encourage the conversion of existing housing to LMI units to meet the need for affordable housing. All of the candidates for Governor are promising money for affordable housing. We should work to get some of that money directed to Charlestown.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, businesses and preserved land? *

Charlestown's beautiful natural setting is at the root of our community identity and I believe we need to continue to protect our farms and open space to provide refuges for native plants and animals and provide places for people to continue to enjoy the natural world. Buying land or development rights from a willing seller does not violate anyone's property rights, and in fact expands the landowner's options. It will be important to work collaboratively with groups such as The Nature Conservancy to secure funding. For land that is destined for development, we should make sure that the buildings are sited on the areas of land best suited for development, and that we protect wetlands, forests, and important wildlife areas as much as possible. The 2021 town-wide survey found that protecting the environment and natural resources was the highest rated goal at 94%, while maintaining a small-town identity and rural

character were important to 84% of the residents, and limiting "big box stores" and "national chains" was important to a similar 80%, while 74% favored supporting and encouraging small local businesses. Our town government efforts, and business and land development regulations should support these same goals.

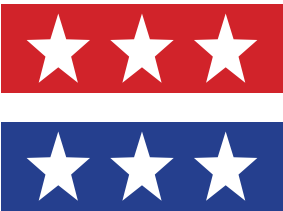
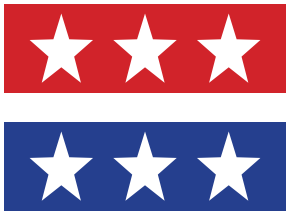
5. What is your position on defining shoreline access?

In 2022 bills were introduced in the RI House and Senate to define and ensure our right to lateral access along the Rhode Island shoreline. In 2022 the House bill passed, but the Senate bill did not. The Charlestown Town Council should continue to work with our local representatives to provide resolutions and testimony to urge the passage of this legislation. We should continue to educate the public, law enforcement, and other officials about the public's constitutional right to lateral access along the shore.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes





Charlestown General Election Candidates

CHARLESTOWN TOWN COUNCIL



Grace F. Klinger
(Incumbent) Republican

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

I am currently serving as a Charlestown Town Councilor and seeking reelection. As in the past term I had been aware of an imbalance of taxpayer representation on the Council and I hope to continue to improve that. I am the past Chairman and 13 year member of the Conservation Commission, a 20- year resident and a small business owner. Through the many Community Leadership roles I have served in, I have learned to listen and make

sound decisions based on fact.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Charlestown residents?

The Town Council has just recently established a “Climate Change Resiliency Commission”. As they have just started meeting, we look forward to their recommendations for our Town.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement

for Charlestown and what might the Town Council do about it?

Each City/Town in Rhode Island are required to fill a certain quota of affordable housing units. In Charlestown we have been assessed 10%, at this time we are at almost 4%. We need to create an additional 389 units. At this time we are in need of more Housing Subdivisions with affordable housing units included.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular

mention of owners’ rights, businesses and preserved land?

For future land development, the building choices that suit the topography and natural resources of the property should be considered to include neighbors, surrounding businesses and preserved land. Land owners/ Developers need choices. RE: Community CENTER We have a Community/Senior Center in Charlestown. Should the Taxpayers in the future request a discussion for another facility with a plan, which should include a location, cost estimates. and uses,

it should be put on a Ballot for the Voters to decide as a separate Warrant item.

5. What is your position on defining shoreline access?

I support Shoreline Access Legislation. Our Rhode Island Constitution guarantee’s our right to access, while not infringing on property owners rights.OM

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

No



Ann Owen
Independent

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

I am running for town council to help preserve the rural character, protect the abundant natural resources, and continue fiscally responsible, civil and professional management of Charlestown for the next generation. My career in finance taught me how to understand a business and assess its value based on facts. Listening carefully to my clients and understanding what they needed to achieve taught me to align investment decisions with client goals. After a long career of successfully using dispassionate analysis blended with a deep understanding of client needs, I believe this skill set directly translates to understanding the issues facing Charlestown and helping to create solutions meeting the needs of constituents.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Charlestown residents?

Charlestown is vulnerable to sea level rise. A recent study predicts a sea level rise of a minimum of 1 foot by 2050 with many buildings, septic systems, and roads in Charlestown at risk. Current CCA incumbent town councilor Susan Cooper instituted a climate change panel

of environmental experts during her first term on town council. This is a great step, based on facts, to identify issues, consider responses, and propose solutions to town council. Once the issues are known, we can then prioritize solutions, balancing the level of vulnerability and the desires of the town residents. The recently completed survey of Charlestown residents identified the majority are concerned about climate change and want the associated issues addressed. I support the solid work of the climate change panel. The town has replaced its street lights and outdoor lighting at the police station and community center with energy efficient LEDS. I think it would be valuable to assess the Charlestown fleet of police and other town vehicles at time of replacement and consider electric options. I would be supportive of the town working to improve the network of charging stations, both for their own future fleet, as well as supporting visitors to the area driving electric vehicles. I would be supportive of the town reaching out to the RI Public Utility Commission to insist that town power is provided by green sources.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Charlestown and what might the Town Council do about it?

RI state law mandates that the state’s 39 towns must reach 10% low to moderate income housing (LMIH) stock. Charlestown, which depends entirely on wells and septic systems, has reached approximately 4% of deed-restricted LMIH through partnering with a non-profit agency. Charlestown has further addressed ways to increase LMIH in its recently adopted Comprehensive Plan and has put an affordable housing panel in place tasked with presenting solutions to the town council to help improve the availability of LMIH in our community. I would be supportive of a partnership of a highly qualified non-profit housing specialist (such as Habitat for Humanity, for example) with the Town to help meet the state’s goal in a thoughtful and sustainable manner.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners’ rights, businesses and preserved land.

In 2015, Charlestown voters approved a \$2MM bond issue to finance the acquisition and preservation of open space. To date, approximately \$1MM has been spent in partnership with the Nature Conservancy and RI DEM to preserve approximately 150 acres, including the Sprague Preserve,

Tucker Preserve, and part of the Pasquisset Preserve. Additional bond funds are available to put toward purchase of another 100 acre parcel. However, an opposition group has blocked this purchase. I am in favor of supporting the will of the Charlestown voters and moving forward with the purchase of this parcel for preservation. During this same period, developers have subdivided nearly 500 acres of farmland and forest into approximately 140 new residential lots and an additional 75 new residential subdivision lots are under review, clearly demonstrating owners are able to develop their land. However, increasing density puts a strain on our natural resources. A majority of Charlestown voters surveyed want the rural character of our town preserved, including protection of open spaces, protection of well water, and mitigation of pollution from septic systems. Our elected Planning Commission has been delicately balancing owners’ and businesses’ rights as well as land preservation and the will of the electorate for the past 15 years using evidence-based sustainable development practices. More development than preservation has occurred. The will of the voters to preserve land should not be blocked. I support the conservation of land, sustainable development, and honoring the wisdom of Charlestown’s citizens

5. What is your position on

defining shoreline access?

According to the Rhode Island Constitution and the the RI Supreme Court, the public has the right to lateral access to the beach. The court ruling designates access seaward of the mean high-water mark. Because the average citizen cannot know where the “high water mark” is, legislation is needed to define where our constitutional right to lateral access is located. The Charlestown town council, in 2019 and 2021, asked the state legislature to clearly delineate public access to the shoreline. There was a special legislative study commission created by the RI House to examine the issue of lateral shoreline access; the commission made recommendations, and the legislation passed in the House. However, full legislative passage remains stalled. Charlestown police have attended a seminar, hosted by the CRMC, to educate the officers on our constitutional right to shoreline access. It is Charlestown’s policy that no one is charged with trespassing in Charlestown for swimming, sitting or walking on the beach. I urge the state legislature to act and support Charlestown’s excellent local solution.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes



Lorna M. Persson
Independent

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

I believe a healthy democracy begins at the local level and all citizens should participate in whatever way they are able to do so. I also believe everyone’s voices should be heard and considered. I am running for Charlestown Town Council because I believe I can help bring a balance to that area. I have been a resident of Charlestown for over 30 years. I have been employed at The Nordic- a successful Charlestown business for 40 years. I have been an active member at St. Andrew Lutheran Church. I currently serve on the Charles-

town Economic Improvement Commission and am a long serving Trustee at the Meadowbrook Waldorf School. My professional and personal experiences and my commitment to having Charlestown continue to be a town that is desirable to reside in during all stages in one’s life, makes me a great choice for Town Council.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Charlestown residents?

Continue to support the newly formed Charlestown Climate Resiliency group that will work toward developing mitigation strategies for our cherished natu-

ral resources and residences.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Charlestown and what might the Town Council do about it?

Charlestown has some work to do in this area. Charlestown needs to have more affordable housing for seniors, it’s workforce and young families. There are some very bright and committed citizens who serve on the Town’s Affordable Housing Commission. The Council should be considering ideas they put forward. Habitat for Humanity has a strong presence in our community and

I believe our Council could work with them and support them in their efforts.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners’ rights, businesses and preserved land

There needs to be a balance of land conservation, thoughtful business development and respect for the rights of landowners. When adopting policies and ordinances ALL voices need to be not only heard but heeded. We all want Charlestown to maintain its rural character and be good stewards of its natural resources. I want Charlestown to also be a

town where entrepreneurs are encouraged and young families can work, live and enjoy all the resources the Town offers. I am in favor of land owners and businesses having choices when it comes to developing or not developing their own properties.

5. What is your position on defining shoreline access?

The RI Constitution grants people the right to access the shoreline. Those rights should be recognized and preserved.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Did not answer.



Richard Rippy Serra
Republican

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

I am running for the Town Council to make our town government more user friendly to WE THE PEOPLE. I have been operating a small business for 40 years that is consumer and employee friendly. I am married with 4 grown children so have a lot of life experience, I have volunteered locally and support several local Charities and groups.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Charlestown residents?

The town of Charlestown has a Climate Resiliency Commission and I will listen to their advice.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Charlestown and what might

the Town Council do about it? *

Charlestown affordable housing stock is less than the 10% required by State Law, the town should be partnering with Habitat for Humanity to come up with a long-term solution for affordable housing in town.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners’ rights, busi-

nesses and preserved land.*

The Town of Charlestown should not be taking a landowner’s land without compensation for open space when they apply for a permit. We need to encourage abandoned or underutilized properties to be renovated or redeveloped to enhance the look of the town. All preserved land in town needs to have a management plan in place so people can enjoy the land and for public safety.

5. What is your position on defining shoreline access?

Our RI Constitution states that the beach face belongs to the WE THE PEOPLE, we need the enforcement of this right and look for opportunities to buy coastal land for open space and beach going activities.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

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!

- Go online immediately to **<https://mailballot.sos.ri.gov/Home/MyRequest>** to request an application, which will come by mail.
- 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.
- 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.**
- 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 REQUEST A MAIL-IN BALLOT AND YOU THINK IT WILL NOT BE RECEIVED IN TIME BY MAIL, YOU CAN DELIVER IT TO A LOCAL DROPBOX BY 8 PM ON ELECTION DAY - AN IMPORTANT WAY THAT ELECTION INTEGRITY IS MAINTAINED. ASSURES ONLY ONE BALLOT PER VOTER.



Charlestown General Election Candidates

CHARLESTOWN TOWN COUNCIL



Steven J. Stokes
(Incumbent) Republican

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

I'm running for Town Council to represent all the people of Charlestown by promising a fair, transparent and responsible government. Charlestown is the community that I grew up in and I want to ensure that it remains a premier place to live for my family and for yours. Through my many years of government experience in public safety and as a member of both the Charlestown Economic Improvement Committee and Charlestown Zoning Board, I have experienced the effects of good leadership and I want to ensure that the Charlestown Town Council provides the same to its people. I will never silence debate on an issue, no matter my belief on that issue and I will advocate to maintain responsible development while addressing the affordability of housing for new or young families. I will always remember my fiduciary responsibility to the tax-payer as well as keeping the rural character of our town. I support our small local business community and will work to gain more public access to our ponds and shoreline. These are just some of the reasons I am running for Charlestown Town Council. Please reach out to me or visit my website at stokes22.com, I would be happy to speak with you and it would be my honor to earn your vote in November.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Charlestown residents?

cil specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Charlestown residents?

One of the responsibilities of the Council is to evaluate policies and enact regulations to protect our community from the effects of climate change. Beyond that vast scope, the Council plays a much more specific role in the area of preparation and mitigation from the effects that a changing climate may bring. As a community with a significant shoreline, we are particularly vulnerable to changes in sea level and the ever-erratic nature of coastal storms. If elected I would continue the established Charlestown Climate Resilience Committee and listen to the guidance they provide as it relates to the impact of climate change on the residents, visitors and properties of Charlestown, including our precious shoreline. I also believe the town should make available additional information on the potential impacts that climate change may have on our community and provide the resources to residents through outreach programs and education.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Charlestown and what might the Town Council do about it? *

Currently Charlestown's status is less than half the State requirement at just below 4%. Frankly, we need to do better. As it stands now, Charlestown has experi-

enced a 35% increase in median home price to \$462,950 in 2020 up from the \$344,162 in 2015, which has the effect of pricing out even more young families and first-time home buyers. Now, it should be noted that Charlestown is by no means the only town below the threshold, in fact only 6 of RI's communities meet the 10% number but that doesn't mean Charlestown can't improve. If elected I would ensure that the Town Council works with the local, state, and federal agencies as well as the housing focused organizations in RI to address the ever-growing issue of affordable housing. We should identify areas where we can site additional housing similar to current units like the Churchwoods rental properties. By implementing design standards and architectural practices consistent with our towns character we can increase our supply of affordable housing while still keeping our community standards. Additionally, I would continue the established Affordable Housing Commission and empower them to continue to forward ideas and solutions to address the town's shortfall in its available affordable housing stock.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, businesses and preserved land. *

Growth and development are entwined in the overall vitality of

any town however, it is important to manage that growth and make certain to maintain development consistent with our community. I support the rights of property owners while also taking into consideration our natural resources but I do not support forcing easements on private lands or requiring land owners to provide large portions of their land as open space. Flexibility in design and open space are important but the needs of the land owner are equally important. Far too often in Charlestown we are seeing the slow but deliberate reduction in the rights of property owners. Now, this is not to say I don't support open space but Charlestown currently has over 10,000 acres of open space between, private groups, town and state-owned property and federal lands. We need to ensure that we are maintaining our current properties before we continue to acquire more. Additionally, we need to ensure growth that is cost effective to taxpayers while also prioritizing that Charlestown remains a beautiful and rural community. While there are always ways we can improve, keeping the character of the town is of vital importance. Lastly, we need to engage and support current local business owners to ensure their needs are met while also encouraging new small businesses to invest in our town.

5. What is your position on defining shoreline access? *

I very much support efforts to define shoreline access and firmly believe the shoreline is for

everyone to enjoy. In my opinion the RI Supreme Court erred when they reduced the access to the shoreline enshrined in the RI Constitution by creating the mean high tide line standard. In some cases, this mark is actually in the water. Additionally, with the potential rise in sea levels this standard will only limit more access. The shore is a natural resource that all Rhode Islanders should be allowed to use. I would continue to encourage the state legislature to pass language clearly protecting the public's access to the shore and make sure the town continues to protect the public's rights of access. I also would continue efforts to increase access for our residents to our salt ponds and other inland shoreline. While beaches are often the focus of shoreline access groups, our access to our salt ponds and inland resources for the Charlestown community should not be forgotten.

Regarding Question 7: Community Center- Charlestown currently has a community center that is active. If there becomes a need that our center can't fulfill, I would be open to listening to proposals for additions to the current facility or creation of new community focused spaces/buildings as long as they are consistent with the needs of the tax-payers of Charlestown.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Did not answer.



Joshua D. Vallee
Independent

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

Charlestown has been my home for 15 years and my wife and I fell in love with the town before we even purchased our home. The rural character, the sense of community and the amazing open spaces are all things we need to protect. The town has weathered the onslaught of over development reasonably well and this is due primarily to forward thinking policies and ordinances. Continuing to protect this important town is what drew me into supporting my community by running for town council. I have years of experience in leadership, building and outdoors activities. I believe I represent what the citizens of Charlestown wish to continue to protect while considering new ideas for the future of the town we hope to grow into.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Charlestown residents?

Land conservation: healthy ecosystems have great biodi-

versity. The best way to improve biodiversity is to promote a range of habitats for native species to thrive. Conservation is not preservation. Conservation is normally defined as the proper use of nature. While preservation is the protection of nature from use. Land can still be conserved while being utilized for the benefits of our citizens. Climate change is not something that Charlestown alone can fix, but we have been in a leadership role for the last two decades, even before climate change was a mainstream topic.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Charlestown and what might the Town Council do about it? *

Rhode Island law requires that each town have 10% of its housing deed restricted for qualified low and moderate income owners or renters. In 2019, after building Church Woods, Shannock Village Cottages, and other affordable housing projects, Charlestown was on the correct path. But because Charlestown continues to grow with more market rate units, the percentage of affordable units has declined. That number will continue to decline without

a requirement that developers in Charlestown build a percentage of their new units as affordable. Many Rhode Island towns have requirements for deed restricted, affordable units in each new development and Charlestown should explore that idea. Many of Charlestown's homes are currently owned by Low to Moderate Income (LMI) qualified families and senior citizens, but this housing does not count towards the required 10%. The town council should look for funding sources to make these homes permanently affordable, help seniors stay in their homes, and help our local families in need.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, businesses and preserved land. *

The pressure of land development in Charlestown has long been weighing on the rural aspect of the town versus the growing year-round population. This has been moved to the forefront by the Covid-19 pandemic which immediately changed where people feel safe. With the ability of remote work making the safety of our rural community more at-

tainable for year-round residency. Many of the seasonal homes that were vacated during the cooler months became permanent residences when the safety of the cities came into question. This along with the increase in people enjoying outdoor activities really emphasized why 25 years of conservation and good planning are so important. Charlestown has always been a premier seasonal location, but now the town has become one of the premier year-round locations in the region. I would support policies that promote conserving our valuable resources, promote small, locally owned business while continuing to give the landowners the flexibility to develop in a sustainable manner.

5. What is your position on defining shoreline access? *

Shoreline access has been an interesting debate in Rhode Island for some time. Article I, Section 17 of the Rhode Island Constitution grants access to the shoreline but its application is ambiguous at best. The section states:

The people shall continue to enjoy and freely exercise all the rights of fishery, and the privi-

leges of the shore, to which they have been heretofore entitled under the charter and usages of this state, including but not limited to fishing from the shore, the gathering of seaweed, leaving the shore to swim in the sea and passage along the shore; and they shall be secure in their rights to the use and enjoyment of the natural resources of the state with due regard for the preservation of their values.

This states precisely that the people shall continue to enjoy access to the shoreline, the only debate is where does this access start and the rights of the landowner begin. Legislation to demarcate the new boundary between public and private beaches as the recognizable high tide line (the seaweed line) plus 6 feet passed the Rhode Island House in 2022 in a 65-0 vote. That legislation, H8055, needs a companion bill in the RI Senate and I will urge the Town Council to work with our new House and Senate representatives to see this bill through to passage.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Did not answer.



David M. Wilkinson
Independent

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

I am a founding member of a national supply chain management corporation, Cardinal Logistics Management, in 1998, with current budgeted revenue of 1 billion dollars. I am the company's Senior Vice President with responsibility for field operations in the Eastern half of the United States. I have more than 29 years of business experience in logistics and transportation, project management, financial planning and analysis, budget development, and operations management with exposure to other communities in the United States and abroad. During my previous time on the Council, I was dedicated to a well-managed, responsive, civil, and open government and considered all points of view while representing the best interests of all residents of our town. I was also instrumental in the structuring of the town's recently completed Town-Wide Survey. I would like to continue the work of carefully developing our community, recognizing that Charlestown's economy depends

on the quality of our natural and scenic resources for tourism and for the health, safety, welfare, and high quality of life of Charlestown's residents. I am here to SERVE ALL residents, and bring a balanced point of view in my decision making process.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Charlestown residents?

CCA endorsed Susan Cooper initiated a Climate Resiliency Commission that is charged with this very important issue and there is scientific expertise from the faculty, staff and graduate students at the URI Graduate School of Oceanography and at the Kingston Campus who are willing to advise. We should work with all of these experts. We also need to look at water conservation initiatives. We are all dealing with extreme drought, and our water is our most valuable resource. This is a difficult matter, as everyone has private wells, but these wells share common ground water. We need to develop responsible water conservation initiatives.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Charlestown and what might the Town Council do about it? *

In 2004, the State Legislature enacted the Rhode Island Low and Moderate Income Housing (LMIH) Act requiring that 10% of all housing in each municipality must meet its criteria for affordable housing; that is, the housing must be deed restricted for 30-99 years, during which time it can only be sold to a buyer who meets the income requirements of the RI Housing Authority, and it must be built with a government subsidy. Charlestown's has 3.69% of these deed restricted LMI units according to Housing Works RI. This could mean in order to meet 10%, we need more than 250 new LMI homes built. Charlestown has a fairly high percentage of home owners whose income levels and home values qualify them for affordable housing, but who are not counted towards the 10%. Seeking grant funding towards these homes to add insulation, replace roofs, and other upgrades and at the same time voluntarily

enroll the homes with deed restrictions to keep them permanently affordable seems the best way to help our most vulnerable residents and improve neighborhoods without having to approve very high density developments that might not be environmentally sustainable without public water and sewer.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, businesses and preserved land. *

We should follow Charlestown's Comprehensive Plan with its emphasis on natural resource protection and continue to work with our funding partners like the Nature Conservancy and RI Department of Environmental Management to purchase land from willing sellers that protects groundwater and wildlife habitat, and provides access to trails, the Pawcatuck River, and other recreation opportunities. Commercial and residential developers should follow Charlestown's Comprehensive Plan, our Zoning and Subdivision regulations, and state rules that protect wetlands.

5. What is your position on defining shoreline access?

At this time, we need to follow the laws of the State and work with land owners and people who want to enjoy our amazing beaches. This is all about lateral access. Once you access the beach from a public access point, the constitution gives you the right to pass along the shore and stop to fish and swim, etc. for as far as you can walk along the shore. Where exactly those rights exist landward is where the debate is. I will continue to work with our exceptional police department in conjunction with the CRMC on public access issues. Our retiring State Rep. Blake Filippi co-authored legislation to define where our constitutional rights to the shore are. This passed the House, but did not get out of committee in the Senate. It is good legislation, I certainly support it and will work to support its passage in the Senate.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

No



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.

Charlestown Town Hall – 4540 South County Trl., Council Chambers,
Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Hopkinton Town Hall – 1 Town House Rd, Middle entrance, ramp door.
Monday - Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Closed weekends and holidays

Richmond Town Hall – 5 Richmond Townhouse Rd., Wyoming, Main Entrance,
Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. – 3:45 p.m.



Charlestown General Election Candidates

CHARLESTOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE



Donna Chambers
(Incumbent) Independent

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

As one of four Charlestown representatives, I would like to continue working alongside other Chariho School Committee members from Hopkinton and Richmond to assure Chariho maintains its high quality of educational opportunities for all students. Aside from representing Charlestown for the last eight years as a member of the school committee, I am retired from a fifty-year career in education. This career spans from the elementary classroom on a local level to expertise in Performance Assessment Professional Development and Program Administration Implementation on a state and national level. I have a lifelong commitment to continuous improvement and equity in our educational system which are paramount in all my decision-making processes for Chariho. We have a wealth of resources within and around our three beautiful towns and I fully encourage and support active community engagement to benefit all.

2. What concerns, if any, do you have about the status of the public school curriculum at Chariho? Please explain.

Since the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) dictates the content standards which go into curriculum development, schools do not have significant flexibility in curriculum. That said, curriculum ought to be responsive to an individual student's needs and interests as well as be transparent to students and parents. Professionals do have latitude and ability to determine how material is taught. Relevant and diverse resources, materials, and methods should be chosen that engage each student in active learning at all levels. In my opinion, good teaching practices often encourage direct dialogue among students, rather than teachers lecturing or dictating their own views while following the guidance of an authorized curriculum. This allows students the opportunity to develop skills around critical thinking by examining two sides of an issue. Rote learning should be applied in curriculum only when necessary. Likewise, teachers are challenged to adopt a variety of assessments to determine proficiency across benchmarks to assure student learning and behavior are grasped and understood. Encouraging critical thinking should be embedded throughout all instruction within the curriculum.

3. What is the most important health and/or safety issue facing Chariho and suggest how the School Committee could address it?

In my opinion, mental health is the most recent and prevalent health and safety issue now facing Chariho students. Some contributing causes are academic and social pressures, cultural differences, sexuality identity acceptance, and many others. Being different from others earmarks a student for ostracizing, bullying, and ridicule. Hostile environments erupt and some students and parents do not find school to be a safe place when it should be for all students. For this reason, schools need to work to ensure inclusion versus exclusion and tolerance as opposed to intolerance. It is up to the school committee to work with the administration to establish resources and partnerships with state and community organizations. This will allow Chariho to take advantage of existing programs aimed at helping deal with mental health issues confronting the students in our schools today.

4. Where do you stand on the school budget with specific regard to class size/staffing, transportation, sports, the arts

and technology?

Since I have been a member of the school committee, budget decisions were always centered around maintaining staffing and programs for the purposes of continuous improvement. Some things in the budget are required, giving schools no choice. A classic example of this is the need to include spending for children requiring special services that the district cannot provide. This can vary each year and we have to be prepared to pay for it no matter what the cost. State legislation demands it. With school operating costs, transportation, salaries and benefits on a rise from the previous year, an increase, even a slight one, was inevitable. The upcoming budget was voted on twice and citizens rejected it each time and so the message was clear. We have to tighten our belts and plan ways to absorb the increases. Particularly important to me are things in the budget that I do not want to see impacted. These are; class size, staffing and technology. Economizing is never easy, but with this current budget we were able to prioritize and make cuts to have a minimum impact. We will get by with level funding. It worked this year, but my hope is that in the upcoming years the residents of our three towns will appreciate

a fair and sustainable budget in order to maintain the high quality education that we have come to expect from the Chariho District.

5. What other areas of concern do you have about the Chariho Regional School District that voters need to know?

Maintaining high morale among the staff of a school district can be challenging today. Chariho has the best and they deserve the best. For the past eight years, I have been proud to support Chariho's award-winning, superior, and dedicated staff of administrators, teachers, counselors, support staff, coaches, and custodians. They all contribute to the enviable qualifications of the Chariho District. I ask that the residents of Charlestown provide me with a vote of confidence to continue this work, moving forward to limitless experiences and improvement.

6. Do you support keeping and renovating all four elementary schools funded within the existing capital improvement budget over building one consolidated one, that would be funded, at least partially, by the state School Building Authority?

No



Craig F. Louzon
(Incumbent) Independent

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

I am running for a seat on the Chariho School Committee to continue to work to build upon the successes that our amazing schools have achieved. I've been privileged to serve our communities for 11 years, 2 years as chair and 4 years as vice chair, and I am in constant awe of all that our students, staff and families possess and want to continue to be apart of a high performing district that supports such potentials in education. I want to keep this committee moving in the right direction and working with a focus on "all students, all the time".

2. What concerns, if any, do you have about the status of the public school curriculum at Chariho? Please explain.

I wouldn't say that I have any concerns about the status of the public school curriculum at Chariho. I've learned so much about curriculum development and implementation throughout my time on the committee already and have observed how it constantly evolves to support all different learners and their growth. I am confident and excited to see how the curriculum at Chariho continues to shift and prioritize the goals of all learning modalities and is representative of all of our diverse students. I will continue to strive for accessible funding and regulations from the state level that our students deserve, that our schools are eligible for and that we are owed as a district.

3. What is the most important health and/or safety issue facing Chariho and suggest how the School Committee could

address it?

I think that the most important health and safety issue that Chariho faces is mental health related concerns. Our young students, regardless of their personal struggles, are all living through a mental health crisis and it is our responsibility as a committee and community to recognize this and ensure that any and all students are able to get the support that they need. We cannot expect for our students to learn and live successfully if we do not address issues such as these and learn new ways to connect with them.

4. Where do you stand on the school budget with specific regard to class size/staffing, transportation, sports, the arts and technology?

If we can afford to support

smaller class sizes that enhance student learning and valuable interpersonal relationships, a wide range of opportunities within sports and arts programs that only better the experiences of our students and technology that sets our students up for successful futures, we are doing our job. The school budget is reflective of the needs of our students, staff and schools. While investing in their futures, we need to keep our voters involved in the process and be transparent so that the entire community can come to a decision.

5. What other areas of concern do you have about the Chariho Regional School District that voters need to know?

Some growing concerns of mine within Chariho are that the myths that are being spread and circulating within our community

are going to drown out the facts that reflect upon the endless positive attributes and achievements of our staff and students. We need to refocus and move forward with more positive communication and allow room for progress to continue, only pushing our schools further ahead and maintaining our district's status of "high achieving". We need to work as a committee alongside staff, families, students and community members and stand up for Chariho.

6. Do you support keeping and renovating all four elementary schools funded within the existing capital improvement budget over building one consolidated one, that would be funded, at least partially, by the state School Building Authority?

Yes



Linda Lyall
(Incumbent) Independent

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

I have always had a life-long advocacy for public education and a strong commitment to see that every child has access to a quality educational experience in a safe school environment. Also, my 30 years in the field of education, including administration and teaching at a college level, has allowed me to participate in a meaningful way as a member of the Chariho School Committee. Lastly, I believe in public service and giving back to the community by serving on boards and mentoring young people.

2. What concerns, if any, do you have about the status of the public school curriculum at Chariho? Please explain.*

Rhode Island schools implement a curriculum that is established and standardized by the RI Department of Education. The Chariho administration and staff work tirelessly to create a curriculum that follows these standards so students can achieve at their highest level. If anyone

wishes to review the Chariho curriculum, it is readily available on line through the Chariho website. More importantly, a primary responsibility of the School Committee is to support, through the budget process, the high quality and rigorous education that has been the hallmark of the Chariho Regional Schools. This is evidenced by the large number of students who take AP courses at Chariho High School and concurrently participate in the arts and sports at a high level. Additionally, many of our schools have achieved high accolades and awards at both the state and national levels. Our parents continue to communicate that they support and expect this high-level of instruction for their children. I do not view this as a concern, but more of a crucial responsibility of the School Committee to maintain this rigor.

3. What is the most important health and/or safety issue facing Chariho and suggest how the School Committee could address it?*

At this time, given all that has happened in the world, I believe the School Committee needs to

focus on the mental health of both our students and faculty. It is imperative that the School Committee supports the administration, staff, children and their families by ensuring the funds are appropriated so that resources, programs and interventions are accessible to all who require the services. This is such an important topic, I will make a request to my colleagues on the School Committee to make this a priority and place as an agenda item to be discussed one meeting a month to monitor the progress.

4. Where do you stand on the school budget with specific regard to class size/staffing, transportation, sports, the arts and technology?

Due to the FY 22-23 budget not being passed, I do have concerns that we are operating with limited funds with little for unexpected emergencies. Nonetheless, this school year the School Committee was able to keep the class sizes low for our quality teaching staff, provide the transportation to get the kids to and from school, maintain safe buildings, and provide a well-rounded educational experience to our students

through academics, sports, the arts and technology. However, if future budgets continue to be voted down, I do have concerns that the robust educational experience will become more difficult to provide to our students and families.

5. What other areas of concern do you have about the Chariho Regional School District that voters need to know?*

The COVID-19 pandemic, over the last two years, had a large impact on families' accessibility to our schools. I wholeheartedly support Superintendent Picard's goal that moving forward opportunities need to be created so parents can be partners in decision-making and share in their children's education. Additionally, I would like to also engage and inform community members who do not have children in the schools. The School Committee needs to find avenues of communication so all our community members can become partners in decision making. It is imperative to inform, educate and seek feedback from the community to help dispel the misinformation that can be swirling about and

creating mistrust.

* Note on Question #6 regarding Capital Improvements. At this time, I do not support either of those choices. The answer is a bit more complicated than a yes or no response. I do have concerns that continuing to spend money on older buildings may not be the best idea fiscally. Our constituents were loud and clear that they did not support one consolidated school. However, I would support researching other possible ideas to address our aging structures taking advantage of the monies available from the State. A lesson learned from the first try is to first seek input from all community members on what their visions would be for their elementary schools.

6. Do you support keeping and renovating all four elementary schools funded within the existing capital improvement budget over building one consolidated one, that would be funded, at least partially, by the state School Building Authority?

Yes



James E. Sullivan
Republican

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

To keep CRT(critical race theory) and any forms of teaching racism out of our school system. I have been a teacher, administrator, testing supervisor for NAEP (National assessment of educational progress), school administrator and a member of the Chariho school committee(2010-2012).

2. What concerns, if any, do

you have about the status of the public school curriculum at Chariho? Please explain.1 response

To foster a positive and productive collaboration between school teachers and parents concerning the curriculum taught to their children.

3. What is the most important health and/or safety issue facing Chariho and suggest how the School Committee could

address it?

To insure the safety and health of children it is necessary to work closely with law enforcement to have adequate police protection for all our schools.

4. Where do you stand on the school budget with specific regard to class size/staffing, transportation, sports, the arts and technology?

This is one of the most difficult problems in budget allocations

for the school system. All factors mentioned should present a reasonable request for funding. I would review each budget line item of all categories mentioned and make sure the funding is necessary to meet the needs of their objectives. All department heads and vendors should defend their proposals.

5. What other areas of concern do you have about the Chariho Regional School District that voters need to know?

The voters need to be proactive in regard to their children's education by starting a positive dialog with teachers and administrators about their concerns.

6. Do you support keeping and renovating all four elementary schools funded within the existing capital improvement budget over building one consolidated one, that would be funded, at least partially, by the state School Building Authority?

No





Hopkinton General Election Candidates

HOPKINTON TOWN COUNCIL



Sharon A. Davis
(Incumbent) Democrat

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

I am running for re-election to the Hopkinton Town Council for a third term because I love Hopkinton. I want to continue to bring my financial expertise, new ideas, and the voices of the residents of Hopkinton to bear on all issues important to us. During the past two years I have listened to the residents by:

- Creating a new solar ordinance that ended solar speculation in residential areas,
- Using my financial expertise to recommend reductions to the CHARIHO school district budget and the Hopkinton town budget, that could be effective in counter-ing residential tax increases while preserving services and the quality of our children's education,
- Honoring the Polish WWII veterans by improving Polish Park,
- Working with the Hopkinton Potter Hill Dam Information Committee and the Westerly Town Council to obtain a resolution that would not cause our residents' wells to go dry,
- Holding a Hopkinton Town

Council Ambulance Services Funding Workshop to find a solution to their revenue problems,

- Working with State Representative Brian Patrick Kennedy to persuade National Grid to improve its equipment maintenance and reduce power outages in our area, and
- Working to increase resident interest in, and volunteer participation on, town boards and committees to better reflect the needs and desires of our residents.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS:

- University of Connecticut-Director, Administrative Services
- Carson Products-Vice President, Operations

EDUCATION:

- MBA Finance-Cornell University
- BA Economics-Cornell University

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

- Hopkinton Affordable Housing Partnership- Member
- Hopkinton Democratic Town Committee - Secretary

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on

Hopkinton residents?*

The Town Council should work with the Planning Department and the RI Department of Environmental Management to ensure the Town's Stubtown Road Solar Project comes to fruition, including closing the Phase II Landfill. The Town Council can also work with the Town Manager to make sure the Department of Public Works' new equipment purchases are as energy efficient as possible. The Town Hall expansion project could also include several electrical vehicle charging stations and perhaps solar panels on the roof. These measures are only a beginning, but go a long way to minimize the effects of climate change on Hopkinton residents.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Hopkinton and what should the Town Council do about it? *

The State had zoom calls with several RI towns, including Hopkinton, in June and July 2022 to discuss affordable housing concepts. I believe that our Town Council should work with the

State to persuade them to expand the definition of "affordable housing" because there is a lot of housing in Hopkinton that could qualify as affordable under a new definition. Prior to being elected to the Hopkinton Town Council, I was a member of the Hopkinton Affordable Housing Partnership. I believe Hopkinton should follow up on the Community Development Block Grant program grants that were available to towns for landlords to improve their property in exchange for accepting a 30-year lien on their property and guaranteeing that they would rent to affordable housing renters.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, new businesses and preserved land.*

Hopkinton already has a land development process that requires potential land development projects to submit their plans to the Building and Zoning Department or the Planning Board for approval, depending on the requirements of the project. I agree with this process. Owners

have the right to develop their land and start new businesses in permitted land use zones. In general, I also agree that most Hopkinton residents want to "keep Hopkinton country" and preserve the rural character of our town. The Town Council and the Planning Board should continue to work together with the residents to accomplish both.

5. What policies do you favor for Hopkinton to alleviate the tax burden on property owners?

Although the State recently eliminated the potential property tax revenue from the land under solar panels, I have not given up the fight. I now favor our Town Council working with the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns to draft new compromise tax legislation, for the next State Legislature session, that will allow reasonable property taxes and tangible taxes on solar projects and the land they occupy.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes



Michael James Geary
(Incumbent) Republican

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

My reason for running for Town Council is to move the town forward. I am a current sitting member of the Town Council. Prior to being elected to Town Council, I chaired a seat on Hopkinton Zoning board of review for three years. I am also active within the community and community groups.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Hopkinton residents?

Follow State guidelines .

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Hopkinton and what should the Town Council do about it?

Understand it well. The biggest issue is locating the property to do so. There are many moving parts to this.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, new businesses and preserved land.

Hopkinton can have both business and keep its country setting within current zoning laws and respect to property owners.

5. What policies do you favor for Hopkinton to alleviate the tax burden on property owners?

Possibly be open to new businesses.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes



Robert T. Greene
Republican

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

I have lived in Hopkinton for forty-seven (47) years. I know the history of this town and I know a lot of the residents of Hopkinton. I have served on the Hopkinton Juvenile Hearing Board, Hopkinton Highway Commission, Hopkinton Animal Control Commission, Volunteer Member of the Hopkinton Emergency Management Response Team, and presently serve on the Ashaway Fire District Board of Fire Commissioners.

2. What can the Town Council

cil specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Hopkinton residents?

I believe that any change must come from the Federal and State level. So I would encourage the people to put pressure on our elected officials. Make them work for us. We also need to encourage people not to burn which affects the quality of the air.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Hopkinton and what should the Town Council do about it?

My understanding is that when a developer applies to build a number of homes, he or she has an obligation to include 10% of these homes as affordable or low income. I am very interested in housing for the elderly.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, new businesses and preserved land.

If you own land in Hopkinton, you can do with it as you please as long as you apply for a permit and do not violate the town planning and zoning ordinance. Hopkinton has to figure out how to bring in more business which will contribute to town finance while at the same time we do not over develop.

5. What policies do you favor for Hopkinton to alleviate the tax burden on property owners?

First of all, we must attract business. Second we must work with Richmond and Charlestown to lower the CHARIHO School budget. The school takes 85% of tax revenue. Lastly we must try to control the demand for money by the Hope Valley and Ashaway ambulance corp.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes



Scott Bill Hirst
(Incumbent) Republican

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

I have a commitment to the office of town council. The most experienced town council candidate in the election, I am serving my eighth term non consecutive. My expertise is the following: grew up in Hopkinton; educated in political science; was formerly the president of the local historical association; officer of the Ashaway Fire District being elected twice to the board of fire commissioners and once as moderator; Hopkinton Conservation Commission; Hopkinton Town Moderator; on the former Hopkinton Finance Board; and a town charter revision/review commission. I am currently chairing the Hopkinton Republican Town Committee and am a Rhode Island Notary Public. I have attended a number of political conferences and conventions through the years. One of my assets beyond the credentials mentioned is I am not a single issue candidate. I am also a Char-ihograduate. I am a life member of the Westerly Elks Lodge #678; Seventh Degree Granger;

and Freemason. Member of Richmond and Westerly Senior Centers; and would like to see the Hopkinton Committee on Aging reactivated as well as other town related committees.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Hopkinton residents?

An issue I need to educate myself more on this topic but policy should be based on facts and not emotion. This issue will undoubtedly greatly be influenced by federal and state policy which we have little control on. This is a really a new issue even though built overtime. I am interested in requirements from the federal and state in regards to this and cost to the town, local businesses, and individuals. On this and any issue I ask voters contact me directly at scottbillhirst@gmail.com; (401)-302-5972, Text and Call; or Tweet:@ScottBillHirst.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Hopkinton and what should

the Town Council do about it?

I went to talk in person unscheduled to our Hopkinton Town Planner on Wednesday, August 24, 2002 in regards to this issue. Not an easy answer even for a long-time town council member like myself. We are apparently at or around at 7% point. The housing stock on property outside the main residence can qualify, but this is an issue that needs to be followed. State law comes into play into this and it is not an easy topic. The town council needs to work with town staff and boards/commissions on this topic.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, new businesses and preserved land.

I think it best for town council members to get advice and counsel from boards and commissions and town staff. Important are state and federal laws. Any policies the town adopts must not be in conflict. A lesson needs to be learned from the solar issue: financial benefits assumed and

promised might not occur. The town needs to be sensitive to encroaching on property rights and balancing the need for new development and tax revenue. We need to consider preserved land which doesn't get the tax revenue and how it is maintained. Any policies should make Hopkinton an affordable place to live and have a business. We should appreciate and recognize our agricultural interests and realize how it enhances our community without the stress on taxes others do. Since we do have infrastructure issues, especially water and sewer, we need businesses that can deal with those limitations at the moment.

5. What policies do you favor for Hopkinton to alleviate the tax burden on property owners?

We should look at the exemptions or reductions for classes of residents like senior citizens and veterans and other categories, encourage economic development for the tax base, but remember the real benefits from that need to be appreciated can be limited, and controlling

spending. Hopkinton, and the other municipalities and school districts in our state collectively need to pressure our state government more than in the past, if you will to find more money for education. Both our Chariho School Committee and the three town councils should collectively work on this. The state constitution requires the Rhode Island General Assembly to promote education. Remember over three-fourths of Hopkinton property taxes goes to education. We should have an outside management study of school district operations by a credentialed and outside source knowledgeable on public schools but only the school district can do this, and implement the results from it. Those that fear this should remember that we have a "maintenance of effort" rule in Rhode Island dealing with education. We need to be vigilant with developers' promises and whether they can be kept on tax benefits or legislation that can change them.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes



Edwin W. James
Republican

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

Hopkinton is where I grew up and feel that new ideas need to be brought to the table.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Hopkinton residents?

Policies to address climate change are handled at the state and federal levels.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Hopkinton and what should the Town Council do about it?

The state requires that 10% of each municipality's housing should be affordable. The 10% could be increased at the local level.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, new businesses and preserved land.

Promote beneficial economic growth, development and use existing facilities more fruitfully thus preserving land that doesn't need to be clear cut.

5. What policies do you favor for Hopkinton to alleviate the tax burden on property owners?

Bringing business to Hopkinton, options need to be available to offset taxes.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes



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

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Hopkinton General Election Candidates

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HOPKINTON TOWN COUNCIL



Robert J. Marvel
(Incumbent) Independent

Why are you running and what expertise/experience do you bring to the office?

I am running for a second term on the Town Council. I originally ran for that office two years ago after spending a couple of years watching the previous council and Planning Board work through an onslaught of solar development. I felt at the time that the town leadership was not making thoughtful and intelligent decisions, and not giving residents enough consideration. I don't claim to have political experience, but I care about the town I choose to live in and want to continue to help make the right decisions for Hopkinton.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Hopkinton residents?

Honestly, that's a difficult question. Many people will insist that the large-scale solar development that was going on in town was helping to minimize climate change, but I disagree. I think it was just fueling an

ever-increasing demand for energy and destroying vital forests in the process. We must, at every level of government, work to reduce demand for power and reduce carbon emissions. That means encouraging less electricity consumption, less driving, and less waste. How do we do that as a Town Council? We need to find ways to continue to preserve our forest land and protect our water sources. We can also continue to help residents and local businesses make use of solar energy as a direct benefit to them. Beyond that we all need to push for more state and federal efforts to fight the climate crisis, such as better public transportation particularly to rural areas to help reduce auto emissions, and more common-sense renewable energy efforts that are not driven by profit.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Hopkinton and what should the Town Council do about it?

The current Affordable Housing Progress Report (<https://ohcd.ri.gov/online-resources/affordable-housing-progress-report>) lists Hopkinton as being close to achieving the 10% goal and is in a better place than many other towns. However, it is an ongoing challenge for us because of a couple of different factors. First off, we are one of the more rural towns in the state, with very few multi-family dwellings, limited local businesses for family needs (i.e., groceries), and few options for public transportation. In my opinion this makes Hopkinton a less attractive choice for low-income families. Second, our town budget is heavily burdened by the Chariho school budget, and there is heavy push-back from current residents to add to our school enrollment. I believe that in order to reach the 10% goal we need to address these other issues by working toward lowering the school budget burden, reducing property tax burdens (perhaps in part by encouraging more local businesses) and making Hopkinton a more locally livable community for all residents.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular

mention of owners' rights, new businesses and preserved land.

I strongly believe that we need to pay close attention to our Comprehensive Plan with regard to zoning, and to make proactive decisions regarding housing, business, and open land. First and foremost, we need to preserve as much of the current forest land as we possibly can, and not allow it to be clearcut and developed. Previous decisions on the industrial scale solar projects for example, were very reactive and opportunistic with little regard for proper siting or zoning. These types of decisions are detrimental to the town and its residents and will impact us far into the future. I favor policies that look realistically at future impacts to the town and determine the best development options for Hopkinton. I also believe that landowners have rights, but also responsibilities. We all have a responsibility to be stewards of our land and the environment surrounding us.

5. What policies do you favor for Hopkinton to alleviate the tax burden on property owners?

Currently, Hopkinton's municipal budget is very small, and our tax burden is heavy. Approximately 75% of our tax dollars go directly to the Chariho school system, which leaves very little for other needs in town. Looking at the bigger picture however, our property tax rates are somewhere in the middle compared to the other towns in RI, so we are certainly not the highest. Realistically, when you choose to live in a rural town with minimal industry and big business, you have to expect to pay higher taxes than a town or city with a large business and industrial base. What does all of that mean for Hopkinton? It means we have to continually balance trying to encourage small businesses to come to town (in the right locations) with keeping the town safe from over-expansion of business and industry. We also have to continue to work with the school committee to try to keep the school budget as low as possible.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes



Stephen Moffitt, Jr.
(Incumbent) Independent

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

I am running for reelection to continue the work that has been done by the council in the last 2 years. During the last 2 years as the council president, I have learned the nuts and bolts of what it takes to run the town and how it operates. It is not an easy job and takes a lot of time and effort.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Hopkinton residents?*

There is not too much that the

Town Council can do to minimize the effects of climate change on the residents of Hopkinton. The lack of revenue and minimal resources make any attempt to minimize the effects of climate change a tall order.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Hopkinton and what should the Town Council do about it? *

My understanding is that the state has a mandate that each town strive to reach a goal of having 10 percent of housing inventory to be considered affordable. According to HousingWorks RI

the town of Hopkinton is at 7.1% of housing inventory considered affordable. Charlestown is at 5.1% and Richmond is at 1.2%. I believe that Hopkinton is on pace to increase upon its 7.1% with potential developments in the future.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, new businesses and preserved land.*

Policies that I would favor would be ones that protected the rural character of Hopkinton. People move here and stay

here for that very reason and I would prefer that it stay that way. Hopkinton does not have the infrastructure and resources that other towns and cities are equipped with and makes it difficult to attract new business or manufacturing that would require such resources.

5. What policies do you favor for Hopkinton to alleviate the tax burden on property owners?

The tax burden will never be alleviated in Hopkinton. With 77% of the towns budget going to the Chariho School District it will always be a tall order for Hopkin-

ton to keep up with its contractual obligations and departmental needs to operate the town. The state tax percentage increase cap on towns is 4% of the towns budget and with Chariho Regional School District budget eating up the 4% in most years leaves Hopkinton neglecting its needs which compounds the financial burden that Hopkinton faces to meet the needs of its residents. This has been an issue for a very long time.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes

YOUR VOTE

Counts

VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE

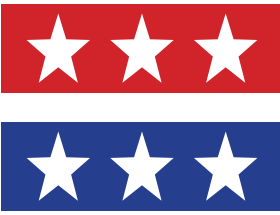
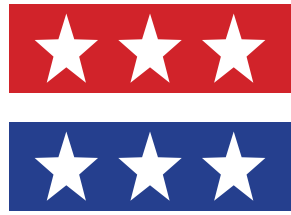
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Hopkinton General Election Candidates

HOPKINTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE



Tyler M. Champlin
Republican

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

As a resident and parent of the Chariho district, I see a lack of accountability throughout the district. The children need to be held accountable by their teachers, the teachers by the administration, the administration to the school committee and the school committee to their constituents who have elected them. The school committee has a job to do to help steward the district by working to foster and help provide a high-quality education while also being sympathetic to the taxpayers who are having to grapple with an ever-increasing school budget that defies enrollment in the district. We need to work to bring fiscal responsibility back to our district. As a Certified Public Accountant, I believe I can be an asset to both the administration and the taxpayers of the Chariho district working to provide responsible ways to trim costs while maintaining the high quality education that residents and voters expect from the Chariho district.

2. What concerns, if any, do you have about the Chariho public school curriculum at Chariho? Please explain.

The curriculum at Chariho needs to be returned to the core tenants of education, reading, writing, mathematics, civics, and science. The overall issue with the curriculum at Chariho is that it is no longer driven by the teachers and the administrators of the district. The Rhode Island Department of Education is now directing the specific standards that are incorporated into our district curriculum. Chariho in the recent past, has had very strong curricula, which has needed to be reworked to fit the new standards directed by the state. I believe that a district should set its own curriculum, driven by its teachers and student needs with oversight from the administration.

3. What is the most important health and/or safety issue facing Chariho and suggest how the School Committee could address it?

Overall school safety is important for me. Making sure our schools are secured from entry by any person or persons with malicious intent should be priority number one. The district does a decent job in making sure the buildings are secure, but I believe there are spaces that should

be looked at such as possibly establishing gated entry points on school and campus property. There are times when children are passing between buildings or are outside for physical education and could be in vulnerable positions as the entrances and exits to the properties are not secured. I would also like to see more of a police/security presence on all school properties. This all requires funding, which I believe can be done in a fiscally responsible manner. That is the job of the school committee, to work with the administration to trim costs in some areas and use that capital to further protect our children.

4. Where do you stand on the school budget with specific regard to class size/staffing, transportation, sports, the arts and technology?

Fiscal responsibility is one of the most important issues for me in this election cycle. Costs across the board are increasing for everyone. Those cost increases to be held in check by taking a long, hard look at what we are budgeting for working to minimize the impacts across the district and its residents. I believe the absolute last thing to cut should be educator positions and student

programs. I believe, after spending much time analyzing the last Chariho budget, there are areas that funding can be better allocated. Class size should be kept as small as possible understanding that the NEA contract with the educators dictates how large class sizes can be. I also believe that we should not be locking the district into any long-term contracts as is the case with the teacher's union. This past year, the budget was level funded, with an understanding that additional funds might possibly allocated to the district when the state budget was passed. These funds, for transportation, were indeed appropriated to the district but the school committee and the administration refused to revisit the two elementary world language positions that were cut from the budget when it was adopted. This is inherently wrong and does not sit well with me.

5. What other areas of concern do you have about the Chariho Regional School District that voters need to know?

The school committee needs to engage and interact with the parents and voters of the district. Policies have been updated to specifically exclude voters who have no children enrolled in the district.

If, as a taxpayer, you have an issue with anything that is going on within the district in which you live and pay property taxes, you deserve to have your voice heard. You also deserve to have your elected officials listen and interact with you in a kind and respectful manner. Far too many times in the last year and half to two years I have sat and observed disdainful looks and eye rolls from members of the school committee when they are asked a question or are hearing from someone who may have a different view on a matter than them. That is unacceptable behavior. The job of the school committee is to be stewards for the education the children of the district receive without forgetting who elected them to do that job. It is time to have an elected school committee who is willing to listen, engage and understand everyone, regardless of one's personally held beliefs.

6. Do you support keeping and renovating all four elementary schools funded within the existing capital improvement budget over building one consolidated one, that would be funded, at least partially, by the state School Building Authority?

Yes



Polly Hopkins
Republican

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

I've always been a Hands-on Mom, involved in my children's education and extracurricular activities. Through volunteering during their years at Ashaway Elementary, to their Middle School years and into High School you can find me helping wherever I can. I served as a volunteer, then Chair, of the Special Education Advisory committee.

The past couple of years have exposed changes in our state School systems that I believe aren't always for the better. I want to get Chariho back to being a leader in Education, expand our Technical school and restore the trust between Parents and Educators. As a graduate of '91, I remember how Chariho grew from the double-sessions model, became an accredited school and achieved every goal they set out to meet. But there are new and higher goals we must meet, new challenges we face.

Being an outspoken advocate to return to the methods that we know historically work best, has not been an easy position in the face of modern theories. That's

why I'm running.

I stand with Parents, Teachers, Support Staff and the Community when I say; It's past time to get involved.

2. What concerns, if any, do you have about the Chariho public school curriculum at Chariho? Please explain.

Chariho's school curriculum WAS a beautiful, historically relevant and community based curriculum, until it was replaced with a State approved Curriculum. For years, our teachers have honed their topics, delivered the best and most comprehensive education to our children, and used Best Practices to achieve results that have catapulted many students to careers and livelihoods they didn't think possible. Now, we are asked to put our trust, as Parents and Teachers, into a curriculum that hasn't been tried, honed or tested. Our children should not be the test case for an initiative that has no proof of achievement. I will endeavor to bring our customized curriculum back home, where it belongs.

3. What is the most important health and/or safety issue

facing Chariho and suggest how the School Committee could address it?

It is a fact of life, especially as a teen, that you will encounter every single obstacle out in the "real world". Drugs, social engagements, weight, popularity, parents, learning...how about we work to improve morale? Teach kids empowerment and where to draw their energy from. How to set a goal and surpass it. Bring in speakers that empower the kids to be their own advocates. In a world gone crazy, this is where you start.

4. Where do you stand on the school budget with specific regard to class size/staffing, transportation, sports, the arts and technology?*

The Budget is what runs the school, from the ground up. With me you are going to quickly see I abhor waste and frivolous expenditures.

I know many people stayed in this area after graduating because it's idyllic and "home". We also remember when Chariho didn't have football, ran on double-ses-

sions and cut every corner to give us the best education. It was not everything we wanted, but everything we needed. A time may be coming to sort these 2 differences out and we need School Committee members that can make quality choices, while being mindful of where their funds come from, your pocket.

I believe we should be expanding the Tech school as they simply need more room. Period.

So, ask yourself, what is it the students NEED? Over what they want? What can we do to enhance educational standards, get the reading/writing/math scores up? And an unpopular opinion with the school administrators, are all of these administrator roles necessary?

5. What other areas of concern do you have about the Chariho Regional School District that voters need to know?*

I have a multitude of concerns for our budding students. As an advocate for traditional school practices, based on empirically vetted material, I see newly introduced "theories" as a divisive method to communicate socially. They may "feel" like a solution

to students that struggle with fitting in, but hold no proven track record for actually fixing a community or a social issue. In fact, these theories (i.e., Gender, Critical, Social-Emotional) are dividing students, Parents and teachers. This, over all, is affecting our community the most. If the theories had merit, then they would have been used for the past 50 years since they were studied, but they have not because they hold no foundational elements, only feelings that rely upon beliefs.

If you're reading this, know 1 thing: everyone is gloriously different, everyone struggles, and everyone is exceptional in their own way...let's find that in our kids and celebrate it. That's what our kids need. It is what our community needs.

6. Do you support keeping and renovating all four elementary schools funded within the existing capital improvement budget over building one consolidated one, that would be funded, at least partially, by the state School Building Authority?

Yes



endawnis Spears
(Incumbent) Democrat

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

I am a proud mom of a Hope Valley Elementary School fourth grader, second grader, and kindergartner, next year our youngest will start Pre-K. Our extended family is made up of Chariho grads and are part of the backbone of this community: farmers, stone masons, teachers, environmentalists, and Narragansett tribal culture bearers. I am an enrolled citizen of the Navajo Nation, my grandparents were boarding school survivors and my grandfather was a Navajo Code Talker who served as a Marine in WWII. I am forever motivated by their sacrifice and love.

My academic and professional background is in anthropology. I co-founded the Akomawt Educational Initiative, a consulting partnership, and work for Brown University as the Tribal Community Member in Residence. I have served on the Chariho Anti Racism Task Force, on the Hope Valley School Improvement Team, I was a Chariho CHILL mentor and most recently I was appointed to the School Committee to finish the term of a vacated seat.

I am running for School Committee because of these experiences: a combination of my lived, irreplaceable knowledge of being a working mom with children in the Chariho School District, a small business owner, and my professional experience working in schools and places of education. I value equipping the next generation with the tools needed to be engaged global citizens and to imagine futures that are accessible to everyone. I believe in the power of public education: the resources we invest in education repay our towns in dividends.

2. What concerns, if any, do you have about the Chariho public school curriculum at

Chariho? Please explain.

Over the past decade, Chariho High School has consistently ranked in the US News & World Report list of Top Ten schools in Rhode Island, an accomplishment that does not happen without a focus on curriculum. While this list is unable to quantify some of the most important elements of learning environments including the ethos and culture of schools, it can help us gain an understanding of where we are in terms of college readiness and curriculum implementation. Currently, the School District utilizes a process of cross disciplinary and grade level expertise via the District Curriculum Planning Council to evaluate and plan curriculum implementation. The ability of the Planning Council to align with, and surpass RIDE standards has been effective, thoughtful, and well informed and I will continue to support their vital work. This model provides an opportunity for community engagement and cross-scholarly and administrative communication.

One of the ways the curriculum can be improved is by making supporting resources available to teachers that incorporate culturally responsive learning, teach accurate histories, and heighten competency in United States civics. These improvements can help with the immeasurables that lists like the World Report do not evaluate. Understanding and engaging in respectful and informed discourse requires classrooms that honor intellectual humility- the concept that learning new information is a not a threat, but can be good. In addition, continuing to support the Right to Read Act and the learning approaches it outlines are also key to improving curriculum standards and performance at Chariho.

3. What is the most important health and/or safety issue

facing Chariho and suggest how the School Committee could address it?

In the wake of Covid-19 we can use the lessons learned in a pandemic going forward. One lesson learned is that the importance of mental health for students, teachers, staff, and administrators is foundational to the overall health and safety of the School District. Ignoring the mental health needs of our students and staff will have short and long term repercussions that extend beyond our schools. I will continue to stand in solidarity with the students in our District who are advocating for mental health, and I am committed to better understanding ways we can meet the needs of an overextended educational workforce by supporting their health and safety.

Every weekday morning, in the midst of packing backpacks, setting out breakfast, doing hair, and searching for a perpetual missing shoe - I say a prayer of protection over my children, a practice I am sure is familiar to many parents. But prayer is not enough. Continuing to refine school safety measures as they pertain to gun violence in partnership with Hopkinton, Richmond, and Charlestown law enforcement is critical. During my time on School Committee I gained a nuanced understanding of the challenges that exist and how we can implement the recommendations put forth by the School Safety Teams. This is an ongoing and never ending process. Technology and practices are re-evaluated throughout the year. I am committed to allocating the resources, time, and knowledge to ensure the safety of our children and those who come to work in our schools everyday.

4. Where do you stand on the school budget with specific

regard to class size/staffing, transportation, sports, the arts and technology?

I am pro public education, pro small class size, pro safe transportation and pro integration of STEAM into all aspects of the Chariho ecosystem. The budget process is a politicized cross section of competing narratives. There are opportunities for the public to engage in discussion over how the budget can accommodate the needs of taxpayers while providing the best possible education for our future leaders. Let's increase these spaces for communication and dialogue because misinformation and lack of understanding as to how public education functions have flourished, to the detriment of our children and educators. Our students deserve an educational environment that honors their humanity- giving them the skills needed to work AND learn via the arts, world languages, physical education and electives that spark the passion to be life long learners.

I understand just as much as anyone the financial stresses of working to make ends meet. My husband and I work everyday to put food on the table, gas in the car, and make a mortgage payment while raising four children. We are motivated by the Indigenous value of investing beyond our lifetimes and preparing a better world for generations we will not live to meet. In our cultures we have an obligation to do things that do not directly benefit us, but are good for all. This value also informs my approach to the budgetary process: I believe in devoting the resources necessary for a future Chariho that is even more vibrant, knowledgeable, peaceful, joyous and equitable.

5. What other areas of concern do you have about the Chariho Regional School District

that voters need to know?

There are always ways to do better for our children. I have had multiple conversations with parents who are concerned about the lack of communication over disciplinary and bullying policies particularly at the Middle and High School. While there may be measures in place to report bullying, they may not be readily communicated or easily accessible. We want to find ways to ensure all families are able to be in conversation with teachers and administrators regarding the physical and mental safety of their children. I am dedicated to ensuring that the School Committee continues to better protect all students and ensure that their school environment is a safe place to learn and make community. I know that this is an issue that all on the current School Committee and any incoming Committee members can agree on and we must find constructive ways to approach refining or re-crafting policies and practices for bullying and discipline.

I want voters to know I am willing to have a conversation about this or any other concerns Chariho families may have. Please feel free to email me at endawnis.spears@chariho.k12.ri.us or please introduce yourself and say hi when you see me at a baseball game, a school event, or in the grocery store. I am always ready to learn more and find ways we can co-constructively engage for the betterment of our community.

6. Do you support keeping and renovating all four elementary schools funded within the existing capital improvement budget over building one consolidated one, that would be funded, at least partially, by the state School Building Authority?

Yes





Richmond General Election Candidates

RICHMOND TOWN COUNCIL



Lauren E. Cacciola-Parmer
(Incumbent) Democrat

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

I am running for re-election for Richmond Town Council. I have supported and actively searched for grant opportunities for recreation. Working towards improving local business dealing with the town.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Richmond residents?

Conservation and reuse things to improve the town.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Richmond and what should the Town Council do about it?

I have been a big supporter of affordable housing. I know personally how hard it is to have an above minimum wage job and full time job but still you can't afford a house on your own.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, new businesses and preserved land.

I think it's a give and take situation. Next question I see here is taxes. One of the biggest problems in Richmond is vacant buildings. One we need to fill those buildings with business, offices or other services. Second we need land on our tax roll to lower taxes.

5. What policies do you favor to alleviate the tax burden on Richmond property owners?

More smart business and keeping business. We have local businesses that have been struggling since COVID-19 and have had issues with the town in minor growth. We need to support these businesses and help bring businesses like them into our town.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes



Daniel E. Madnick
Independent

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

I am running for Town Council because I would like to help serve the community in a positive manner and keep Richmond a great place to live for all generations. My time serving as a volunteer on the Planning Board has changed my perspective immensely. I now realize that the important work performed by the local government such as the Planning Board and Town Council affect people's lives far more than state and national politics do. Local government works most effectively when participants have integrity and accountability. I am confident that I can provide that, along with the ability to effectively communicate and thoughtfully consider all stakeholders. I have demonstrated this with my time spent serving on the Planning Board.

I graduated from the University of New Hampshire with a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering. I joined Electric Boat as a structural engineer where I have worked my entire career. While working full time, I obtained a Master of Engineering from UCONN. Now I am a supervisor at Electric Boat managing the same advanced structural analysis group that I have worked in since 2010. If elected, I will use my problem-solving skills to determine the root cause of an issue and make an informed decision based on facts and logic. However, the most important aspect of the position is to listen to the concerns of the residents and encourage public input, which is something I have been doing and will continue to do if elected.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Richmond residents?

As a member of the Town Council, it is imperative to

effectively communicate the risks that climate change poses to Richmond residents. The Town Council, along with the town boards and commissions, state and federal agencies, and residents must work cohesively together to consider the effects of climate change and be proactive in planning for any situations that may arise and impact residents. The town can leverage two documents that have been developed to guide decisions pertaining to disasters: the Comprehensive Community Plan and Hazard Mitigation Plan. Both documents include short- and long-term goals and actions to help reduce the actual or potential loss of life or property from a hazardous event. The Hazard Mitigation Plan identifies specific areas that are vulnerable to natural hazards, while the Comprehensive Community Plan informs the town on how to best manage land use. The combination of these documents provides the information necessary to make educated decisions that attempt to limit the negative effects of climate change. The Emergency Management section of the Comprehensive Community Plan notes that flooding and wind damage are the potential hazards of greatest concern. Additionally, in recent years drought has impacted many residents who rely on private wells for water. This is especially important since Richmond depends on groundwater from a sole-source aquifer for all water needs. Now that both documents have been revised, the Town Council should act on the identified actions and goals in both plans to improve resiliency and response when disasters happen.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Richmond and what should the Town Council do about it?

The Housing section of the Comprehensive Community Plan

defines what "Affordable Housing" means and provides data on Richmond's current housing stock and needs. Currently, the town of Richmond has 108 of the 325 low-to-moderate income dwelling units necessary to meet the 10% affordable housing goal. Currently, there are two primary methods that Richmond uses to increase affordable housing: the Comprehensive Permit application and Inclusionary Zoning ordinance. Most of the recent affordable homes constructed in Richmond have been approved through the Comprehensive Permit application. In addition to the two methods to create affordable housing, the town relies on the Affordable Housing Committee to recommend changes and updates to the Comprehensive Community Plan and zoning ordinances to promote affordable housing. Beyond those methods, the Town Council should work with the Planning Board, Economic Development Commission, and Affordable Housing Committee to encourage and facilitate new development in the town's growth centers that can increase the amount of affordable housing within the town. These areas include the Richmond Commons property and revitalizing the Wyoming area. To do this, the town must engage landowners, developers, and subject-matter experts to determine how to meaningfully develop those areas. For Wyoming, this may include studying the effect of widening route 138 and creating a special mixed-use zone with carefully crafted incentives for developers. This has been one of my primary goals as a member of the Planning Board, which I hope to continue in a different capacity as a member of the Town Council.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, new businesses and preserved land.

The number one concern

Land Use decisions is one of the major concerns amongst residents in Richmond and has been one of the top issues during my time on the Planning Board. Richmond is ~25,000 acres, of which ~13,250 acres is developed. Currently, the town is zoned primarily for 2- and 3-acre residential development (90%). A limited variety of commercially zoned areas (~1000 acres) in Alton, Shannock, and primarily Wyoming surrounding route 95 are available for development or redevelopment, of which only Shannock and Wyoming are considered growth centers. Any future development in Richmond needs to consider water availability and wastewater treatment. Currently, the Planning Board and Town Council are drafting an updated ordinance to the Aquifer Protection Overlay District (APOD) to clarify the types of development and regulations for areas within the APOD. Once this ordinance is completed, it will aid in facilitation of development in areas within the APOD, which includes Wyoming. Richmond has numerous properties devoted to conservation and open space (~8300 acres), which should be maintained and advertised as an amazing town amenity. However, thoughtfully planned development can be promoted while balancing the need to "Keep Richmond Rural". This can be accomplished by encouraging development in the growth areas and reviewing the current zoning in areas designated as residential that may be suitable for non-residential development. During my time spent serving on the Planning Board I have demonstrated that I can balance the needs of the town and developers and will continue to do so on the Town Council.

5. What policies do you favor to alleviate the tax burden on Richmond property owners?

The number one concern

from residents is the property tax burden of which ~75% of the property tax revenue is allocated to Chariho. Accordingly, the municipal budget is small in comparison and requires the town to work efficiently to offer the limited services available. To reduce the tax burden on residents, non-residential tax revenue can be increased, or spending can be decreased, however, it is not a simple or quick prospect. The Town Council should work together with the Planning Board and Economic Development Commission to market Richmond, implement the Comprehensive Community Plan, and determine ways to facilitate commercial and industrial development, without undermining the rural character of the town. An increase in non-residential development will reduce the tax burden on residents and potentially require less town services, thereby reducing the need for an increased municipal budget. Additionally, the Town Council should work with our state representative and senator to increase already available state funding to Chariho, which will also reduce the burden on Richmond residents. To reduce spending and not lose vital municipal services, a continuous improvement initiative can be implemented in which town staff are requested to determine areas to increase efficiency to decrease costs. A similar request could be made to the school committee to encourage increasing efficiency in the school budget, while maintaining the high level of education of our children. Finally, as a member of the Town Council I will forego my stipend as a good faith effort to reduce the budget.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes



Richard Nassaney
(Incumbent) Republican

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

I am running again, so that the residents of Richmond will have someone on the council that is true to them, and only them. I have been on the council for 6 years and bring a level of truth that most people never see in politics. I am a small business owner, and share all the same concerns. Rising taxes, affordability of living here in Richmond.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Richmond residents?*

Climate change is a global issue, it is like voting. If we make incredible changes and have zero emissions, but the town next door burns coal and rubbish for

energy, then nothing changes. The biggest problem with climate change is China, India, which are building coal burning plants by the dozens. Richmond is not. Do the best you can recycle, and be mindful of the planet, leave it better than you found it, if you can.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Richmond and what should the Town Council do about it?

We have been working on it, but if people think that we are going to Build 350-500 new homes for affordable housing, you are going to be disappointed. The schools would not be able to handle it, and the taxes would be out of this world. We pay approximately \$18,000 per student in the Chariho Schools as of today. If that (buildup) happens

it would be a completely different landscape here in Richmond. The taxes brought in from a residential home is on the average of 4-5 thousand on some and 7-10 thousand on others. Those do not add up to cover the cost of one child.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, new businesses and preserved land.

A house built on 2 acres should be just that. No more developments with R2 or R3, with the house sitting on 1 acre, and the other land being used as common land. Or any kind of commercial solar, or farming on that common area. Businesses should only add to the community, not remove resources from Richmond. And they need to be in commercial or industrial zones only. The rest of

Richmond should stay rural. And we need to preserve the land we have for natural wildlife, rivers. And historical grounds.

5. What policies do you favor to alleviate the tax burden on Richmond property owners?

We need Businesses that bring a valuable need to our area, an urgent care, would be one. I'm open to anyone that can bring an idea, one that benefits our town, not just one person or interest group.

Your next question is a loaded question. Yes I would like a community center, but we have no future financial means to support it, if it was to be built on its own. That is why I wanted to team up with the YMCA to make it happen. But the two sides could not meet in the middle. Maybe this is something we can work on in the future, but the current

council is not able to even work together on a simple task like a food truck event. How do you expect a building or partnership to like this work, if we are not going to be able to be civil, and have open conversations, with ideas being placed on the table with meaningful discussion? So I will leave you with this thought. The next council, needs to be filled with people that have NO personal agenda. No interest in putting policies in place that will better themselves and friends, and have people that are able to be truthful, not only to themselves but to the people. Most importantly people that are not looking to become the president just for a title. Or the power of it.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes



James Palmisciano
(Incumbent) Independent

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

For the last two years I have served in my first term as the vice president of the Richmond Town Council. Many would agree that these two years have been one of the most challenging periods in history for not only Richmond, but our country as well. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to continue serving the community on council as we put the pandemic behind us and return to normalcy as a vibrant and growing community. I have built a strong relationship with the town administration, staff, community leaders, our boards and commissions, business leaders, non-profit organizations, and the community. These relationships are built on trust, transparency, and a promise to put in the extra effort to best represent the town as a council person. Additionally, I bring over 20 years of experience working for a Fortune 500 global corporation, with a proven record in leadership, cooperation, ethics, and a track record for getting the job done. On council I have demonstrated repeatedly my ability to work across the political spectrum, recognizing the merit of ideas and action over partisan division. I am identified by current Republican, Democrat, and Independent council candidates as a person they could all

work with if elected. This type of partnership and mutual respect is what we need to lead Richmond forward.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Richmond residents?

I divide the responses at the municipal level to climate change into two categories: proactive and reactive. For proactive measures, the town can work with State agencies and businesses to craft guidelines encouraging the deployment of more electric vehicle charging stations across our community. A hesitations people have in choosing an electric vehicle is the limited access to charge the vehicle outside their home. Removing this barrier could encourage people to invest in more hybrid and full-electric vehicles, therefore reducing their reliance on fossil fuels. Additionally, using smart opportunities for solar could be supported. For example, instead of clear-cutting forest for solar arrays we should be looking at expanding the use of solar as an auxiliary usage. For example, creating parking canopies which have a solar micro grid on top. Less obtrusive to the community and power could be shed back to the grid. Additionally, support the deployment of solar arrays on existing structures. Let's use the square footage atop

some of our larger industrial and retail spaces - not clearing trees - to meet state solar quotas. For reactive measures, we should be looking at how we can best limit the impact of a changing climate on our community. This would mean a more intensive long-term plan for floodplain mitigation, as well as potentially working with our congressional delegation to investigate Federal buyback programs to recapture locations for which mitigation is not the answer and that will be more prone to flooding in the future.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Richmond and what should the Town Council do about it?

Richmond's plan for achieving 10% of affordable housing is built into our comprehensive plan document. Recent State requirements have changed allowing a broader definition of a dwelling that would be considered as affordable housing, bringing Richmond closer to its target. That said, there is still an opportunity to ensure that young people who were born and raised in Richmond have an opportunity to purchase their first dwelling in the community they call home. I have worked with current town council members and our town planner on the current version of the comprehensive

plan. Providing the opportunity for higher density housing in our identify development zones could be part of the solution. This would ensure that we could provide affordable housing for our future residents while not overextending residential development into our rural interior. Whenever housing construction or expansion is discussed the question of the cost impact on our school system is raised. Roughly \$0.78 of every \$1.00 of tax money goes to support our top-rated schools. That's why I believe we should also be looking at affordable housing to meet the needs of our seniors. Age-restricted housing communities built in accordance with affordable housing guidelines would help the town achieve it's 10% target while providing much needed living space to our elder population - without adding any additional burden on our school system.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, new businesses and preserved land.

I would be in favor of development in accordance with what we have worked hard to define in our town comprehensive plan. We have identified development zones, specific zoning to drive business and recreation, and

worked hard to protect and retain our rural character through preserved lands. Smart development will allow us to have both town and country. I would support policies that allow us to have a revitalization in our town centers, bringing in businesses to fill empty storefronts and clean up blight, while still maintaining the rural character of our community.

5. What policies do you favor to alleviate the tax burden on Richmond property owners?*

Richmond needs a broader tax base. A more vibrant business community will help in offsetting the tax burden. I believe that we could be working more cohesively as a town to actively market and recruit businesses to come to Richmond. Our Flex Tech (FT) zone is an example of the type of zoning specifically created to attract business. I believe partnering with town administration, planning & zoning, EDC and council we could do more to make sure the world knows we are here and ready to welcome business. More tax revenue from business will be a step in the right direction to off-set costs and reduce the burden to the taxpayer.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes



Richmond General Election Candidates

RICHMOND TOWN COUNCIL



Mark Taylor Reynolds
Independent

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

My wife and I have lived in Richmond for more than 20 years. I am an attorney running a small law firm in Providence. I have three children – two Chariho graduates (2015 & 2016), and one entering Chariho Middle School this year.

I have served in leadership positions at several community organizations. I was Chariho Youth Soccer Association President for 4yrs. I was a leader in Troop 1 Richmond BSA and served as the Troop Committee Chair. I have been a board member of the Arcadia YMCA for more than 10 yrs, and I currently serve on the board of the Ocean Community YMCA as the Chair/Chief Volunteer Officer.

For the Town of Richmond, I am the Chair of the Board of Tax Assessment Review. During the past year I also served on the Charter Review Commission and was the Moderator at the 2022 Financial Town Meeting.

The Town Council needs people who are independent and willing to listen to others to find solutions that move our town forward. I have a wide variety of experiences and I have been part of boards and groups that needed to make decisions and solve problems in a constructive collaborative way. I will bring that same approach to the Town Council. I will listen to different points of view on issues and make decisions based upon what is best for the town. As an independent my loyalty is to the Town of Richmond, not any person, party or group.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Richmond residents?

Climate change's most immediate impact on Richmond is from the increasing severity of weather events. Richmond is surrounded and divided by rivers and streams. According to the recent update to Richmond's Hazard Mitigation Plan, the Town has approximately 3,000 acres of flood hazard areas representing 11% of total acres town-wide. The increased frequency of severe storms will mean these areas will experience flooding more often. One area of particular concern is the Valley Lodge neighborhood off KG Ranch Road. I would ensure that the Town follows through with completing the high priority projects outlined in the Hazard Mitigation Plan. One of these in an ongoing Federally funded study of the factors contributing to run-off that collects in the area. Once those factors are identified the Town will need to undertake the work needed to address those conditions that are leading to flooding, and identify funding sources for the work. This will require collaboration with state and federal agencies. The plan also outlines some roadway improvements that would reduce the chance of flooding blocking access on roads leading to important town services like DPW/EMA and Chariho Campus (the Town's emergency shelter).

Town residents also experience frequent power outages in severe weather. This is mainly due to trees falling on lines. I would continue the efforts, started a few years ago, to remove from Town roads dead or diseased trees that are a hazard to power lines or could block the roadway.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Richmond and what should the Town Council do about it?

My understanding is the Town is a long way from meeting the state established requirement to have 10% of our housing considered affordable. The state recently passed a law that will make it easier meet the requirement. Once on the Town Council I look forward to learning about these changes and how they impact the Town's efforts to increase the amount of affordable housing. Having more affordable housing will benefit the Town's existing residents and will help keep people living in Richmond. Affordable housing benefits seniors, the disabled, and the economically disadvantaged. If developments are permitted to be built in Richmond, then the developer must do their part to incorporate affordable housing units into their plan. Accepting payments in lieu of building housing units does not help our residents find a place where they can afford to live. We need more units so residents don't have to move out of town to find housing they can afford. Hopefully the new state law will allow the Town to increase its current percentage of affordable housing and make it easier to add more housing for Richmond residents.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, new businesses and preserved land.

The greatest challenge with land use decisions is balancing a property owner's desire to maximize the economic potential

of their property with the Town's interests in maintaining its rural character. For this reason, it is important that the Town Council remain faithful to the Town's comprehensive plan and zoning ordinances. The comprehensive plan is the blueprint the Town has adopted to govern future development that expands the property tax base while protecting the Town's rural characteristics. Consistent with the plan, development needs to be managed in a way that sustains the rural character of the Town, achieves a thoughtful balance of green space and development through well planned community design with limited infrastructure; and conserves natural resources, protects habitats, and identifies areas appropriate for development.

I would favor commercial development for new businesses in the areas currently zoned for those uses. This is primarily the area surrounding Route 138 (Main Street) in Wyoming where there is plenty of space for new business development. Also mixed commercial/residential village type development would be appropriate in the Wyoming area. Residential development using smaller units or multi-unit buildings take up less land. Single family developments must be planned in a way so that includes open space. Any development residential or commercial must recognize existing aquifer protection and preferred agricultural areas. Therefore, it is crucial that the Town Council make sure their decisions support the goals of the comprehensive plan.

5. What policies do you favor to alleviate the tax burden on Richmond property owners?

The best way to alleviate the tax burden on residential property

owners is to expand commercial development and support existing businesses. I would work with the Economic Development Commission on this issue. Tourism related business is a potential area for expansion. One of Richmond's greatest assets is its proximity to beautiful nature areas from the many walking/hiking trails to the rivers and streams that crisscross the Town. We also have historic areas of interest. Businesses supporting tourists wishing to enjoy these outdoor experiences (i.e. lodging, camping, restaurants) could be an area for growth. Another benefit to these types of businesses is that a portion of the meals and lodging taxes collected come directly to the Town.

The Town also needs to support its existing business. Our regulations should not be so burdensome that they restrict a business's ability to thrive. I would support a survey or roundtable with businesses to get their feedback on what the Town can do to support them. We should make sure that Town ordinances encourage home based businesses that are appropriate for a residential area. The dual use of one property will help to preserve more land in town while allowing the homeowner to have a business and avoid the expense of a separate location. We also need to promote our agricultural businesses to those outside of Town to expand their customer base to keep them successful. New and expanding businesses will add to the Town's tax rolls and reduce the burden on residential taxpayers.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes



Helen Sheehan
Republican

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

I am running for Town Council because I have noticed that the town does not have a clear vision of it's goals. There is a comprehensive plan, but no specific goals for achieving them. This contributes to raises in taxes. Having clear priorities and clear goals saves money and leads to more satisfaction among people. I want to be a responsible and effective steward of the taxpayers' money while at the same time helping the town to provide more of what the citizens want. I ran a very successful psychotherapy practice until 2020 when I sold it. I know about budget forecasting, management, staffing, anticipating problems and finding solutions. As a psychotherapist, I am very skilled at listening, helping people and groups to develop consensus. Also, I am trained in the Debt Free and Prosperous Living Approach to Money Management, which empowers people to identify their priorities and adjust spending to

favor the priorities while eliminating or reducing spending on things they find are really not that important to them.

I believe the citizens of Richmond deserve to be more informed about things happening in town, and to have greater transparency in town government. Citizens should have more voice in decisions, something that does not seem to be happening. I support residents in empowering them to speak, to have a voice and to be heard.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Richmond residents?

One third of the town is forested. We must maintain the forested areas of town as trees lower temperature by 20 degrees or more where they are planted.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Richmond and what should the Town Council do about it?*

Richmond is not far off the 10% affordable housing requirement and there is a new development scheduled for construction in the near future. If that does not bring us to the 10% mark, then the Council will need to work with the zoning, planning and Economic Development Center to identify locations for additional affordable housing, and invite investors to construct new affordable housing.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, new businesses and preserved land.

I believe that owners have rights to their own property. The town has areas zoned as industrial and business, and these need to be developed by industries and businesses. Our taxes are too high, partly because we do not have enough businesses in the town to carry some of the load. We could afford more of things people want without raising taxes if we had more businesses and

industry in town. There is considerable preserved land in the town. I think the town should level off on new purchases of preserved land to allow space for other uses.

5. What policies do you favor to alleviate the tax burden on Richmond property owners?*

One of the most important policies would be to encourage business and industry development in the areas of town designated for these. Of course, the planning department and Economic Development Commission would be essential in bringing the right types of businesses to town. The other policy would be to have a clear list of priorities, so that we do not waste taxpayer money. There are many things that it would be nice to donate to, but people should do that with their own money, not the taxpayers' money. The town has recently allocated \$75,000 for a wellness person in town. I think this is a big waste of money. Only 1% of residents do not have health insurance. People can have a visiting nurse visit. There are

multiple service agencies in our area that can provide help to people. The town just gave RICAN \$87,500, so they can help. (By the way, they had a \$500,000 surplus last year.) The St. Vincent De Paul Society has 2 groups in our area and they will help people in need find the help they need. I understand that the Wellness director will be doing wellness checks that the police used to do. I would like to find out how many of those checks would be safe for a non-policeman to make. I would not be willing to respond to a situation where there was a potential domestic violence situation, or a situation where a person was under the influence of a substance. We need to remember that we are a town of 8,000 people, not 32,000 like South Kingstown or 35,000 like Coventry. We need to spend in keeping with our size, so as to not force people to leave town due to the taxes.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes



Mark H. Trimmer
Republican

1. Why are you running and what expertise/experience do you bring to the office? *

Previous Town Councilor - I am an engineer with Financial acumen. I offer unique solutions and have a desire to serve others

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Richmond residents?*

Use renewable sources for public buildings

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Richmond and what should the Town Council do about it?*

Require ALL developers to include an affordable housing component to their projects.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, new businesses and preserved land.*

Rural zoning with opportunity zones. Any large developments must have preservation of open space

5. What policies do you favor to alleviate the tax burden on Richmond property owners?*

I championed the Elderly Tax Abatement on a sliding income scale. I encourage commercial development within specific opportunity zones.

6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

No



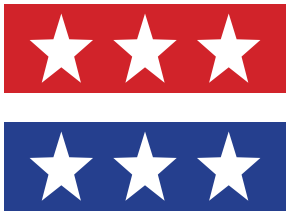
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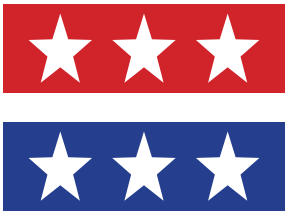
Rhode Island Secretary of State
<https://vote.sos.ri.gov/>

LWV
of South County, Rhode Island



Richmond General Election Candidates

RICHMOND TOWN COUNCIL



Samantha Wilcox
Democrat

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

I am a lifelong RI resident. In 2018, I bought a home in Richmond with my husband and two children. I became involved with Town activities shortly after because this is not just our first home, this is our forever home. I am committed to the future of Richmond because we will live here for a long time. I want the town to not only meet the needs of today but the needs of the future.

I work as a Paralegal with a focus on admiralty, maritime law and land use - typically involving the coast. My favorite part of this career is listening to people and solving problems. My work has a wide variety of situations and sets of facts which prepares me to think outside the box and use a variety of resources to accomplish various goals. I lead with common sense and critical thinking, and understand that teamwork is needed to serve on the Town Council.

In my experience professionally and as a member of town commissions, open discussions and transparency support our democracy and help us move forward together. If elected to council, I will ensure all residents are not only informed but empowered to voice their opinions and concerns, so everyone is a part of the decision-making process.

2. What can the Town Council specifically do to minimize the effects of climate change on Richmond residents?

As a Conservation Commis-

sioner, I am proud to be a part of a team working to help conserve our natural resources and promote outdoor recreation. A major attraction to our town is the variety of outdoor recreation within its forests and rivers including walking trails, kayaking, fishing, and canoeing. As visitors and residents explore and admire the scenic area, Richmond has the potential to set the example as a green, environmentally sustainable town that preserves its open space.

Preservation of open space will help minimize the effects of climate change. It protects the earth's soils and keeps important ecosystems intact. While cities and suburbs are trying to plant more trees, we need to protect ours. Installation of solar must be done without clear cutting forests and trees. Town Council can help by creating, strengthening and enforcing ordinances that support green initiatives.

Dumping and litter is a major concern in rural areas. We have all seen bulky items such as couches and tires left in the woods. We can reduce the frequency of such litter by offering opportunities for residents to access the transfer station with more flexibility. I hope that accessible hours and pricing would decrease these instances.

3. What is your understanding of the status of the 10% affordable housing requirement for Richmond and what should the Town Council do about it?

I understand the need for affordable housing first-hand. When I was a single mother of two, I rented in Exeter. After

getting re-married, we were not ready to buy and didn't want the children to change schools multiple times. Low inventory caused a competitive process, finding another rental was difficult. I am grateful that we found housing; however, availability of affordable homes is an ongoing concern.

The State suggests the town reserve at least 10% of its residential property for affordable housing. Richmond is far from meeting this goal. Affordable Housing includes housing for elderly, group homes and everyone in between. All of whom contribute to our economy and pay taxes. Affordable Housing supports our local businesses, we have restaurants, stores, and gas stations that are reducing their hours due to lack of staffing. These jobs often pay less than \$18/hr. The lower income someone is making, the less likely they will be willing to commute, especially in a small state like ours.

The percentage of properties that qualify as affordable housing fluctuates as homes no longer meet the criteria. Town Council can help facilitate long-term affordability on homes by making the process more desirable to builders. Quality builds that meet the town's standards should be permitted and prioritized. With teamwork from the Affordable Housing Committee, Planning Board and Town Council, we can get closer to meeting this goal while maintaining our rural character.

4. What policies would you favor regarding future land development with particular mention of owners' rights, new businesses and preserved land.

I favor policies related to land development that will help Richmond maintain its rural character, meet its affordable housing goals and support new businesses. As mentioned, preservation of land is an important piece of fighting climate change. Land development needs to keep this in mind and follow all zoning and other regulations. Homeowners, landowners and developers have the responsibility to ensure their plans contribute positively to the community.

In order to help maintain our rural character, I support Conservation Developments in appropriate locations. These developments create open space around the lot that maintain site features. Additionally, this type of development offers flexibility to the builder while protecting historical features and our environment.

I also support new and diverse businesses hoping to open in Richmond. The ideal location would be in the vicinity of Routes 138/3 and Interstate 95, not only for the aesthetics of the town but for the long term success of the business.

When working with landowners and new business on plans and potential projects we need to work together to find solutions so that one person or property owner does not adversely affect the town.

5. What policies do you favor to alleviate the tax burden on Richmond property owners?

Richmond currently provides tax exemptions for seniors and farmers. I will support both pro-

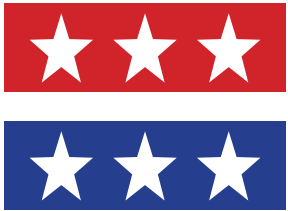
grams and help eligible residents be aware of this opportunity. Additionally, I support policies regarding our taxes that will not alter the quality-of-life Richmond provides. I moved to Richmond for its rural character, outdoor recreation and great schools. The town is safe and has an outstanding community. With this comes a higher tax rate, I knew this when I moved here, but there is certainly room for improvement.

Affordable housing, business growth and increasing revenue, including grant opportunities for projects, will help alleviate the taxes on residents. I will work with our state level representatives for funding from the state as well as ensure their decisions support Richmond. We have opportunities in the vicinity of Route 138 and Interstate 95 for new mixed developments that offer commercial and residential buildings and renovation of buildings in such disrepair they cannot support occupancy. The Town Council and the Planning Board can work together to create, strengthen and enforce ordinances that support land developers and help rejuvenate these areas, which will help alleviate our tax burden.

Business growth and other development needs to be made in moderation and will take time. We can support builders and business owners by prioritizing projects that fit the town's standards and working together to find a balance between meeting investors' needs and the needs of the community.

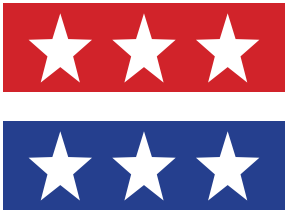
6. Do you favor a new Community Center?

Yes



Richmond General Election Candidates

RICHMOND SCHOOL COMMITTEE



Ryan Callahan
(Incumbent) Independent

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

I'm running because I believe serving on the school committee is important volunteer work. Providing a well run school, both fiscally and structurally, to our community is critical for the long term health of our society. I've served on the school committee for six years and bring substantial experience as well as a practical and balanced point of view to the committee. I am always available for a phone call or email and willing to engage with parents and community members when concerns arise.

2. What concerns, if any, do you have about the status of the public school curriculum at Chariho? Please explain.

The school curriculum is vetted extensively by parents, teachers, administrators and finally the School Committee itself in a

public forum. It is available on line and anyone in the district can access it and review it. My concerns are not over the political hot topics we see on the news today, but rather whether or not the curriculum is providing the foundation our kids need post high school to succeed in their careers (whatever those may be). A good example is financial knowledge as well as statistics; we have been improving these areas within our curriculum because they are essential to all children; concomitantly we have not dropped or reduced availability of more selective topics (like calculus). Enhancing and improving our curriculum is key to remaining relevant as an educational institution.

3. What is the most important health and/or safety issue facing Chariho and suggest how the School Committee could address it?

The safety of our children is

the number one concern for the school committee and community. I've been on the emergency operation team for years and there is a constant need for upgrades to our aging infrastructure. Ensuring that we stay focused on safety, not just when tragedy strikes, but as part of our school culture is critical. We need to continue to fund the capital projects that enhance safety while maintaining a warm and welcoming atmosphere for our children and parents.

4. Where do you stand on the school budget with specific regard to class size/staffing, transportation, sports, the arts and technology?

Class size discussions need a more nuanced approach. We have too small of classes in some cases (AP courses) and too large of class sizes in others (elementary school). We need to be flexible enough to respond to the needs of the school as they emerge. A

cookie cutter approach does not always work. Transportation is a mandatory requirement for the district; minimizing bus times for kids while keeping the routes to a minimum is difficult. I've been on the transportation sub-committee for years and we focus on ensuring the right balance is kept. Sports and Arts provide our kids outlets for energy (physical and creative). They are key components to their development but oftentimes are the first budgetary cut because the value is hard to quantify. I am and will remain a strong supporter of both. Investing in technology and related infrastructure enabled Chariho to rapidly deploy a remote program during the pandemic. Continuing to invest in these programs will ensure our children understand technological developments and that the district is able to support our community needs as they become known.

5. What other areas of concern do you have about the Chariho Regional School District

that voters need to know?

There are a lot of aspects of the school district that need improvement and or constant revision. This questionnaire touched on some of them (infrastructure, busing, curriculum, class size, etc), this is normal and part of maintaining a healthy community. A school committee should seek to provide services that our community needs and be wise enough to adjust them properly when the voters decide the bill is too high. I have faith in my community's commitment to Chariho and I am happy to serve if the voters want me to.

6. Do you support keeping and renovating all four elementary schools funded within the existing capital improvement budget over building one consolidated one, that would be funded, at least partially, by the state School Building Authority?

No



Katherine E. Colasante
Republican

1. Why are you running and what expertise/experience do you bring to the Committee?*

I am running to keep solid academics the main focus, critically examine curricula and teaching methods to that end, protect students' safety- physically and emotionally, respect students' and parents' rights, support teachers with effective policies that help them maintain order. My experiences include educational research, informing the community and the legislature on educational issues, teaching in the homeschool, church and as a private tutor. I have been effective in changing policy in a private school, church and public school to reflect community standards. This was done quietly, respectfully and effectively.

2. What concerns, if any, do you have about the status of the public school curriculum at Chariho? Please explain.*

With good intentions, but with lack of critical analysis we have in the past embraced failed teaching methods. It was whole language replacing phonics that originally caused me to homeschool many years ago. I wanted to ensure all my children could read and write well. I had heard from many teachers and parents that this method was failing children, but nevertheless it was all the rage at the time. This was the start of my educational research. I understand education has become very political. Teachers, professors, administrators have told me things privately they could not say publicly. I am no longer naive. My experience has taught me to look

more critically at things. There are issues with math curriculum where things are being complicated. Also, varying abilities and needs of children need to be factored into the structure of classrooms and the requirements we place on them.

3. What is the most important health and/or safety issue facing Chariho and suggest how the School Committee could address it?*

With the horrible history of school shootings across our country, we must be proactive in every way possible to eliminate any possibility in our own community. Many times people have a concern but they are afraid to share it. We could have a hotline for school committee members where concerns can be left anon-

ymously. I am aware of a college where staff repeatedly prop open doors putting everyone at risk, because they frequently take mini smoking breaks and if they were to use their electronic card, their frequent breaks would be recorded. This was told me privately and if there was a hotline this employee would report it. For fear of losing her job, once her superior dismissed it, she did also.

4. Where do you stand on the school budget with specific regard to class size/staffing, transportation, sports, the arts and technology?*

Class size is important to a degree, and this cannot be ignored. But it is also important to have policies that support order. I have taught large classes as effectively as smaller classes because the

students were well behaved.

5. What other areas of concern do you have about the Chariho Regional School District that voters need to know?*

I am concerned about division in our country and in our community. We need to respect pluralism. Each family has a right to their own values. [Regarding number six- I maintain it as long as it is economically feasible.

6. Do you support keeping and renovating all four elementary schools funded within the existing capital improvement budget over building one consolidated one, that would be funded, at least partially, by the state School Building Authority?

Yes



William G. Day
(Incumbent) Independent

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

I am running for reelection as an independent candidate for the school committee. I have confidence that the Chariho Schools will maintain as one of the high performing school districts in the state. I have served the taxpayers of Chariho on three school building committees and teacher and support staff contract negotiations. I am the school representative on the district safety team. I have reviewed and signed off on all building emergency operation plans and attended all types of emergency drills at all the

schools. I supported the Maddie Potts Field house and the Chariho Rotary High School courtyard project and will continue to support any community projects that will enhance our schools or community.

2. What concerns, if any, do you have about the status of the public school curriculum at Chariho? Please explain.

As it stands at this time the state of R.I. controls the curriculum in the school districts with little or no input from high performing districts like Chariho. This will continue as long as state aid controls how we educate our children.

3. What is the most important health and/or safety issue facing Chariho and suggest how the School Committee could address it?

The mental health of our students and staff because of the pandemic is a top priority. I will advocate for much needed resources that will improve teaching and learning. I will continue to spend a lot of my time on the district safety team reviewing EOPs, school drills, and surprise building inspections.

4. Where do you stand on the school budget with specific

regard to class size/staffing, transportation, sports, the arts and technology?

Much of the district budget is locked into contracts with staff, transportation, and outside vendors. If the state rewarded high performing school districts like Chariho with fair budget dollars this would help to maintain a taxpayer friendly budget. I believe technology, the arts, and sports are important parts of school life and child development.

5. What other areas of concern do you have about the Chariho Regional School District that voters need to know?

My concern is all the misinformation on Facebook, Twitter and all other social media places that have much information that is not always correct. If you have questions or concerns, call the school. My phone number is 539-7197 if you think I can help.

6. Do you support keeping and renovating all four elementary schools funded within the existing capital improvement budget over building one consolidated one, that would be funded, at least partially, by the state School Building Authority?

Yes



★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★

Richmond General Election Candidates

RICHMOND SCHOOL COMMITTEE

★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★



Jessica Purcell
Democrat

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

As a parent of two children currently enrolled in the district, I have lived through the challenges that a global pandemic has forced upon our education system. In rising to meet these challenges, I have become more aware that I am a partner in my children's education. The whole community prospers when we share strong educational values and work as partners to address the real challenges that students face.

As a former public school student, and the daughter of a mother who was a custodian in my high school, I am a product of public education. I have experienced how public schools provide education to their students but they also provide employment to local and nearby community members. I am thankful for the vocational-technical education I received, which is a personal reason why I take interest in the success of the Chariho Tech program.

As a self-employed Graphic Designer with a flexible work schedule, I have been able to volunteer for RES initiatives such as the Food Ambassador program, the Green Team, and the School Improvement Team. I've enjoyed being a BOKS coach, leading students in twice-weekly early morning fitness classes. My professional training and experience has advanced my skills of active listening, curiosity and learning, and cooperation.

On the School Committee, I would represent families like mine, and act as a productive partner to all other stakeholders with a focus on the needs of students.

2. What concerns, if any, do you have about the status of the public school curriculum at Chariho? Please explain.

As an active parent and a frequent attendee of Chariho School Committee meetings, it is clear to me that all curricula at Chariho are developed through a detailed process and undertaken by a team of education professionals and community members. All curricula are on a five-year rolling review schedule and are continually evolving through a curriculum improvement process in order to stay current with research-based data and to meet standards set by RIDE. The Chariho website provides an exhaustive list of links to the full curricula of all programs from K-12.

The School Committee is delegated the task of adopting the curriculum as it is presented to them based on the rolling review schedule. At this time, all members of the School Committee and members of the community are able to be part of the conversation and learning process. I believe this transparent system is a valuable asset for those interested in the details of what is being taught and the practices guiding the education process. Personally, I find it quite interesting and am impressed at the hard work that each Curriculum Task Force contributes to their task.

3. What is the most important health and/or safety issue facing Chariho and suggest how the School Committee could address it?

I have learned from attending School Committee meetings that some students at Chariho need assistance with bullying and behavior management, especially at the middle school level. These issues reflect a rising national

trend of youth mental health distress and challenges.

As someone who was teased in middle school, I know how isolating this experience can feel. We need to let students know that bullying is not acceptable and teach them productive ways to manage their emotions and behaviors. I strive to understand that the child inflicting the harm is likely experiencing their own emotional pain and insecurities. All parties involved would benefit from the care and attention of counselors and professionals. The adolescent period has always been challenging but teens of today are navigating new concerns related to social media and devices that can have a negative impact on their mental health and behavior.

These challenges affect the whole community. When one child is bullied or suffers from a decrease in mental wellness, there is a ripple effect through their family, friends, and school that reveals the interconnected nature of our relationships. My hope is that we can partner together as a community to address the youth mental health crisis. We can provide awareness and assistance at home, in schools, in extracurricular clubs or sports, and in local healthcare locations. I hope we can utilize community partnerships, strengthen communication between families and schools, ensure adequate support staff, and work to secure funding through grants in order to achieve these goals.

4. Where do you stand on the school budget with specific regard to class size/staffing, transportation, sports, the arts and technology?

The Chariho Regional School District is a social and public good in service of our collective

future, especially the future of our children. I am proud to invest in this school system, which is a benefit to our community.

In regards to the school budget, my first consideration is to recognize the span of the Chariho Regional School District. The budget provides the financial foundation to operate four elementary schools, one regional middle school, one regional high school, one career-tech center, and one alternative learning academy. That is an extensive operation with many moving pieces that I refer to as an ecosystem. Small class sizes, adequate staffing, sports, arts, and technology are part of an environment that provides quality education and experiences to a diverse set of learners.

I acknowledge and respect personal fiscal concerns in regards to the school budget, and I believe that we can practice fiscal responsibility in regards to allocating resources based on mandates, data, and needs-based assessment. We must be aware of federal and state laws and regulations that affect the operating of schools and how these factor into the budget.

In specific regard to transportation, I appreciate the bus drivers and monitors who transport students. We should continue to partner with state legislators to receive full funding for Regional Transportation Aid. I hope we can also increase federal funding to public education as I believe that education should be a joint investment at the town, state, and national level.

5. What other areas of concern do you have about the Chariho Regional School District that voters need to know?

• I have been and will continue to be an advocate for the creation of a student representative position to be present at School

Committee meetings. I support student-led initiatives and believe that students deserve a seat at the table where decisions involving their education are being made. We can build a better world if we work with those that will inherit the future.

• The Newer and Fewer Initiative brought me to attend my first School Committee meeting in March of 2021. This was a proposal to utilize available state funding to regionalize the four elementary schools into one building on the current Chariho campus. The last I heard, this option was not under further consideration at the moment. If it does come back into the conversation, it will be important once again, to involve the community in making a decision. I acknowledge that there are challenges that come with the maintenance of four aging elementary school buildings, two of which exist within the town of Hopkinton.

• As a member of the School Improvement Team at RES, I helped move forward a plan to improve student and staff safety at pickup. I hope we can continue this discussion in partnership with the Richmond Town Council and Police Department to enhance school safety and security, possibly using ARPA funds or other grant sources.

• I believe it is important to foster an inclusive school ecosystem within our community that strives to support a diversity of students, teachers, and staff.

6. Do you support keeping and renovating all four elementary schools funded within the existing capital improvement budget over building one consolidated one, that would be funded, at least partially, by the state School Building Authority?

Yes



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