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# **2019 Westport Voter's Guide**

Prepared as a nonpartisan public service Vote Tuesday, November 5, 2019. Polls open 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Dear Westport Voters,

The Voter's Guide, prepared as a community service by the League of Women Voters of Westport, is a tool to help you educate yourself on the upcoming local election. The League is a nonpartisan purely volunteer membership organization that neither supports nor opposes any political party or candidate.

For Westporters, this year is a local election with no State or special elections. Local elections decide issues that affect our daily lives. Read through the guide to find out about the candidates for each office and where they stand on important issues to town residents, along with pertinent information for election day. You can take the Voter's Guide into your voting booth on Tuesday, November 5, 2019.

For additional printable copies or further information on voting, please visit the Vote section on our website lwvwestport.org. Thank you,

Esther Korovillas

President, League of Women Voters of Westport

Candidates are listed in the order in which they appear on the ballot. Candidates' replies are published as submitted unless shortened to conform to the word limits specified by LWV of Westport.

#### **Candidates for Board of Finance**

Vote for up to 4

LWV Question: What will your priorities be in addressing competing demands to increase expenditures for education, pensions and municipal services?

Nancie Dupier (D)

Westport is a town of extraordinary assets, resources, and community engagement – a town of which we can all be proud. We must take better care of and make better use of these assets. In considering any funding request, we must evaluate alternative approaches to addressing the issue – not just approve incremental spending. My key priorities will be to 1) improve Westport's infrastructure and schools

(safety, quality, function), 2) keep Westport affordable, and 3) keep Westporters safe. I will always ask before voting: Do we have – and understand – all facts? Do we understand the risk of NOT approving this? Does this enhance and protect the value of Westport? Can we afford it? How will it impact our mill rate. Having served on the Board of Finance since 2018, I am fullyversed in the current issues facing our community and will do the work required to ensure the soundness and sustainability of Westport's financial future. Senior global executive.

James Foster (R)



My priorities, if elected to the BoF, will be to bring to Westport the fiscal responsibility necessary to maintain the high standards of educational excellence in our schools' and the integrity of the town amenities we all treasure, while ensuring a competitive Mill Rate and minimizing our longterm debt. The recent increase to our longterm debt, flat to declining property values,

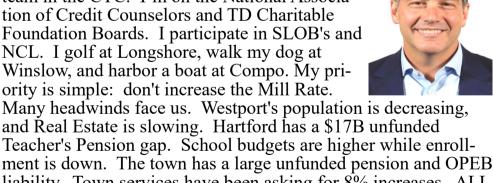
and the threat of increased taxes and pension liabilities from Hartford represent headwinds we haven't had to deal with in the recent past and will put pressure on the town's balance sheet. We need financial leaders who have experience managing such challenges. My experience leading public and private companies in driving growth while managing their operating costs will be imperative. I promise to communicate and collaborate more closely with the BoE and the First Selectman's Office to ensure Westport remains the town we've all come to cherish.

Sheri Gordon (D

Bio: 12-year Westport resident with husband (Paul) and three children (Tess, Max and Chloe). Current member of BOF, and past member ZBA. Attorney (NYU '96 J.D.; Cornell '93 B.A.). TI Trustee, Bridgeport literacy volunteer, soccer manager, PinkAid committee member.

Answer: My priority is to ensure generous funding for our prize-winning schools and maintenance of an excellent level of municipal services and facilities while minimizing any tax increases. During my first term, the Democratic BOF restructured pensions and benefits for 95% of town employees; this restructuring reduced Westport's future cost of pensions/OPEB, allowed us to keep taxes flat for all four years, and provided the town with increased capacity to invest in our buildings, parks, and beaches. My promise to voters is that I will continue to prioritize investing in town assets while exercising fiscal responsibility on behalf of all taxpayers.

I've lived in Westport for 13 years. Grad-Jav DesMarteau (R) uated from Purdue and Duke. Lead Commercial teams at TD Bank. I've coached sports teams for my kids. Organized the 4th largest team in the CTC. I'm on the National Association of Credit Counselors and TD Charitable Foundation Boards. I participate in SLOB's and NCL. I golf at Longshore, walk my dog at Winslow, and harbor a boat at Compo. My pri-



Teacher's Pension gap. School budgets are higher while enrollment is down. The town has a large unfunded pension and OPEB liability. Town services have been asking for 8% increases. ALL put pressure on the Mill Rate. I stand for zero increases and a flat budget.

## The League of Women Voters of Westport

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement. The LWV neither supports nor opposes any political party or candidate. Join LWV and be directly involved in shaping the important issues in our community. Membership in the League is open to men and women of all ages. Our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary will be celebrated at the Westport Women's Club on Feb. 9, 2020. Join us and be part of one of America's most trusted grassroots organizations.

> For more information, contact us at: lwvwestportct@yahoo.com

#### REMEMBER TO BRING IDENTIFICATION TO THE POLLS

You are required to provide one of the following: A Social Security card or a preprinted form of identification which shows name and address, or name and signature, or name and photo.

Acceptable forms include:

- driver's license,
- library card,
- bill addressed to you at your home,
- personal check with name and address on it

If you do not have any of the listed documents, in most cases you may sign an affidavit in lieu of presenting ID. See the poll moderator.

LWV Question: The 2018-19 school year saw the closure of Coleytown Middle School, a protracted debate about the best approach to middle school education and the sudden departures of the Superintendent and the Principal of Staples High School. What, in your view, should the Board of Education do to improve its oversight of both the physical plant and the administration of the schools?

#### Youn Su Chao (D)



Last year's key lesson is that oversight or accountability is critical to move our District forward in a positive and productive way. When the Board makes a policy, budget, or personnel decision it must set and communicate to stakeholders its goals, assessment criteria, or key performance indicators. Without fair and transparent criteria, it will be hard to hold administration to ac-

count. Establishing a regular review process ensures our District's shared goals will be accomplished. The same rigor also applies to monitoring our physical plant's health and utilization. I used this approach during my teaching career and will apply it when I am on the Board. Youn Su Chao taught English as a Second Language at UPenn, Drexel, and Yale University. Most recently, she served as PTA Co-President at Coleytown Elementary advocating for students, allocating resources, and connecting with educators and parents throughout Westport.

Liz Heyer (R)



Having grown up in Westport, I value being involved in this educational community. Our highest priority is to hire and retain top teachers and administrators. We must recruit a world-class superintendent that understands the needs of our district, and can lead and partner with our community of educators. Our students also deserve schools that are in good physical

condition. We must develop a long-term infrastructure plan to prioritize investments that preserve our schools, while demonstrating fiscal responsibility. Working with town bodies, we need an annual and long-range education budget that supports current priorities and a long-term vision for our schools. 10-year career at American Express; Former Member PTA Executive Board; Member Westport Public Schools Workshop Committee; Board Member, Team Manager, WestportSchool (MBA); Married, Mother of three children attending Westport Public Schools.

Lee Goldstein (D)



Lee Goldstein, new leadership for Westport BoE, mother of two Staples students, past middle school PTA Co-President, former high school English teacher with experience on the Board of Education in Bedford NY. Married to Charlie Dockter. I have become increasingly concerned about the Board's oversight of our administration and physical plant. I am not alone. We must trust the BoE

to make informed decisions that weigh facts and input from stakeholders and to effectively set and enforce policies. The Board must determine our priorities with the town and school administration to maintain our properties. The Board must hold the administration accountable for the allocation of school resources due to changes in student population. Facts and options must be communicated at the right time with substance and preparation so that stakeholders believe that the Board is leading and governing at the highest standards to provide stellar education to every student.

**Vik Muktavaram (R)** With regard to oversight of buildings, I be-



lieve that ongoing maintenance of Infrastructure must be a collaboration with the Town. The primary mandate of the BoE is Education. While, no doubt, Infrastructure is critical to Education, School Districts, typically do not have the requisite Buildings' expertise. Collaborating with the Town, allows us to leverage expertise and also reduce overall costs.

In general, I believe that Westport Public Schools provide outstanding administration of schools. I think that BoE must provide an

opportunity for staff to voice serious concerns, through 360-type reviews. BoE must be diligent in selecting the most highly qualified Superintendent to lead the school administration, and going forward demonstrate stronger, more decisive leadership that is clear in its mission to deliver world-class educational services to every student.

Bio: Serving on the Board of Education since 2016. Married with two girls in Westport Public Schools. Management Consultant, by profession.

# **Candidates for Board of Assessment Appeals**

Vote for 1

LWV Question: What are the most important factors in deciding/granting residential assessment appeals?



Garson F. Heller Jr. (R) The Board of Assessment Appeals ("BAA") is a 3-member board. We adjudicate appeals by comparing the building appraisal to similar buildings, and neighboring property appraisals for the land value. We also use the information presented in the BAA hearing to try and understand the appellant's value recommendation. The first concern is if the property is described accurately. If the property in question has not been recently inspected by the Assessor or revaluation company, we ask the Assessor to inspect the property. Usually, about 50% of appeals result in a reduction; the most frequent reasons are differences in land valuations due to shape, topography, wetlands and other negative conditions.

Bio: College: Yale University BE Chemical Engineering, Westport resident 55 years, 14 years on RTM, 37 years on BAA, retired from career in engineering and computer systems. Wife Velma Heller, moderator of RTM, 3 adult children, 6 grandchildren and 1 great-grandson.

## **Candidates for Planning & Zoning Commission**

Vote for up to 4

LWV Question: Westport, like many towns, has a lot of vacant retail space. What actions would you recommend that P&Z take to help solve this problem?

**Paul Lebowitz (D)** To revitalize Westport's downtown area,



we must streamline the P&Z application process. This will help attract new and more varied retailers.

The answer to the vacancy rate is to create a sense of urgency on new applications and improvements to existing tenant's space, while protecting the integrity of the Village District.

We can do this within our existing regulations by bringing greater efficiency to the application process. The easier it is to navigate our process the sooner stores will fill up.

Elected to the P&Z in 2015, and Chairman for two of the last four years, my accomplishments include creating a responsive and fair atmosphere, bringing renewed respect to the P&Z through strong non-partisanship, and careful listening to applicants and citizens alike.

As a 23 year resident, I am especially proud of Westport's small town charm. As the owner of Westport Mortgage, I know firsthand what attracts homeowners to Westport.

Jon Olefson (R) (SWN) The decline of retail business-



es is a national phenomena based on immense social and technological changes over the past 20 years. The best counter to these forces are businesses that offer unique experiences that can't be found online or in big box retailers. The P&Z should encourage intelligent growth and redevelopment that leverages our strengths, such as our historic retail districts and local arts scene, to create expe-

riences that draw people into Westport. Goods and services are fungible, but experiences are memorable and create repeat guests. Examples might include cafes, boutiques, restaurants with outdoor seating, mixed-use developments, and pop ups. This also means maintaining the character of our town (and avoid even more traffic) by focusing development in our existing commercial zones, and discouraging the Walmarts and similar massive retailers. Westport is an fantastic place to live, work and experience – let's keep it this way for generations to come.

#### Al Gratrix, Jr. (R) (SWN)

My goal as a Planning & Zoning Commissioner over the last 9 years has been to ensure, with my vote, that construction projects follow the rules and guidelines that have been set by the P&Z Commission, town administrators and town engineers. Too many times we see builders or developers break the rules which is not fair to any-



one who does follow them. Height maximums, especially in the beach area, safety and congestion caused by new large housing projects, landscaping and tree planting designs which can cause problems for neighboring properties, additional traffic flow and water quality and erosion issues are my issues. As the only homeowner builder on the Commission, I am often relied upon by the other Commissioners for help with blueprints and understanding regulations and excavation and fill issues. I strongly believe in maintaining open, natural space for the physical and mental health of our residents.

Chip Stevens (R) (SWN)

In 8 years on P&Z I have worked hard towards maintaining Westport's character as the key to our future livability and property values. Balance must exist between development and preservation with every decision considered by the commission. There must be consideration of our traffic arteries, parking and density as we are limited by traffic flow into, out of and through. We need to consider



the effect of all our decisions as they effect follow up issues and our limited open space. If not strategically planning the impact of more congestion and density, we jeopardize our property values and the prized uniqueness of Westport.

By encouraging sane development and working with all in respecting town's resources and limitations we can preserve the Westport we all came here for. Finally, I believe in enforcement of our regs and ordinances.

Chair of Village District regulation, Sandy Recovery regulation and other committees.

#### Catherine Walsh (R) (SWN)

Most Westport commercial space is owned by hedge funds who in recent years have invested upwards of \$200 million in downtown. We've worked with developers and owners in approving projects with appropriate height and historical character. Our town is nearing the end of this transformation



and most buildings on Main Street are leased (but under construction). We've enabled almost 100000 sq. ft. of new retail and in town multifamily housing to be developed. Our existing regulations allow theaters and I'm totally supportive of the Remarkable Theater. I support sidewalk expansion and redesign of Parker Harding Plaza and the Riverwalk. We will continue to work to keep our town vibrant by encouraging community events, outdoor dining and musical entertainment. It's a great town! I ask for your vote on Republican or Save Westport Line. P&Z Commissioner 10 years-4 as Chair. BA Economics Penn State, Steel Industry 40+ years, daughters Annie and Michelle.

#### Joe Strickland (CFW)

As an architect and consultant with 40 years of experience and service on numerous Westport Boards and Commissions, I feel well-qualified to address the changes needed to sustain Westport in the 21st century. To solve the retail vacancy problem, for example, while the P&Z needs cooperation from all stakeholders - landlords, tenants and the



public – the Commission should be assisting by revising the Zoning Regulations: to encourage interactive uses such as a theater, to increase foot traffic and support conventional retail which is under pressure from on-line shopping and the new Norwalk Mall; to invite a mix of downtown housing options to revitalize the area and provide an opportunity for uses other than retail to serve the residents; to create travel options, reduce congestion at intersections and bridges, assure safe pedestrian and bicycle options; and improve public transportation; to improve traffic circulation and parking and to better utilize the riverfront.

# **Candidates for Zoning Board of Appeals**

Vote for up to 3

LWV Question: Since variances are granted according to state statute, how much leeway would you give to petitioners seeking a variance? What in your opinion constitutes an acceptable hardship?

Liz Wong (R)

The Zoning Board of Appeals is a state mandated, quasi-judicial board that functions as a "safety valve" for The Planning and Zoning Commission. The ZBA



can only "vary" the zoning regulations if a hardship is determined to exist. To approve a "hardship" the ZBA considers both state statutes and the local zoning regulations. We also consider The Town Plan of Conservation and Development, a requirement by the State of Connecticut that all towns and cities prepare every ten years to layout and identify the important needs of the community. Likewise, fairness is an important consideration, as are comments and concerns from neighbors and interested parties. I have been chairman of the ZBA for the past 22 years and the board works hard to provide fair, impartial and educated decisions. I look forward to continuing to work with the members of the board on behalf of Westport.

James Ezzes (D) Variances can only be granted when a property owner can document that their subject parcel of property has unique characteristics or conditions that create a legitimate hardship as defined by the CT State Statutes.

Other considerations inother considerations include: the immediate and future implications of a variance to ensure that it is consistent with the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development; its harmonious with its neighborhood; it will not adversely impact contiguous properties; and it will protect and preserve the health, safety and welfare of the population at large. Member of the Zoning Board of Appeals 22 years, Vice Chairman since 1999. NY State Homes and Community Renewal, Maslan Associates, P.C. M.S. Urban Planning, Columbia University, American Bar Association Paralegal Certificate. American Planning Association, American Academy of Ophthalmic Executives. Westport Sunrise Rotary, clude: the immediate and future implica-Executives. Westport Sunrise Rotary, League of Women Voters, husband, James Wong, M.D. one daughter, Westport resident 39 years.

35+ years ex-perience in building design, soft-ware engineering, ad-vanced product devel-opment, marketing and opment, marketing and consulting. Ten years serving on the Westport Flood & Erosion Control Board and its chair for the last 2 of those years. Continu-



MBA. I returned to school to get a Master of Architecture and worked as an architect.

The Westport League of Women Voters would like to thank Town Clerk Patricia Strauss and Registrars Marla Cowden and Richard Ruggiano for their help in the production of the guide.

The publication of this Voter's Guide is funded by the League of Women Voters of Westport together with financial support from members. A special thank you to the following members in appreciation for their generous support:

Jo Ann Davidson & Alan Beasley **Esther Korovillas** Ellie & Richard Lowenstein

**Celeste & Norman LaCroix Becky Ruthven Barbra Utting** 

Sheila Ward & James Berner

## Vote for up to 4



**Kristin Mott Purcell** RTM member since 2017 – Education, Parks & Recreation and Long-Term Planning committees. Founder and Managing Partner of Westport-based business. Treasurer Compo Beach Improvement Association. Treasurer/Board Member, National Charity League Westport. Longtime Parks & Recreation basketball commissioner. Married mother of two Westport Public School students. I have a particular interest in preserving and

enhancing the unique qualities that make Westport the place we chose to raise our family. These include our excellent schools, the fantastic parks, beaches, and programs overseen by Parks & Recreation, our library and the community of caring, passionate citizens. Collectively, Westport has addressed significant issues over the last two years. While not always easy, I believe that coming together at all levels of local government has allowed us to best serve our community



**Richard Jaffe** As your incumbent, I believe I have earned your vote. I study the issues, listen, discuss, then act based on what I believe is good for our District 1 residents and the Town of Westport. My only agenda is to maximize the quality of life, cost effectively, for all of us. RTM Finance Committee; RTM Long Range Planning Committee; others. MBA, Finance and Accounting. Former Chief Technology Officer. Former Chief Compliance Of-

ficer. We will continue Westport's proactive approach to providing affordable housing. The poorly written state law 8-30(g), against which we will defend ourselves by earning an exemption, allows loopholes to impose affordable housing inappropriate to our planning. We must tighten control of our budget. Our larger homes have lost value. If we spend the same money next year, but property values are down, we all will suffer from an increased tax rate while our wealth has decreased.

**Matthew Mandell** 



As an RTM member for the past 14 years, it's clear there is "one" defining issue - how do we preserve the character and maintain the infrastructure of our wonderful town while keeping taxes reasonable, overdevelopment in

check and our schools top notch. I have worked diligently to protect our neighborhoods, like Old Saugatuck, advocated for preservation of the Cribari bridge, saved historic houses and open space, and have been a voice of restraint of our budget, yet ensured compo beach, our roads, our police and fire departments, senior center and schools were all improved.

As Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce I originated community events like the Slice of Saugatuck and Dog Festival, and continue to work to create a better business environment, aiding our tax base, thus making Westport a more desirable place to live.It's a tough balancing act, but I am confident in our future.

**Chris Tait** 



Born and raised in District 1 where he is running for re-election on Westport's RTM. Chris Tait's goal is to keep Westport an attractive place to move to, raise a family, and retire. We must invest in Westport's schools

and buildings in order to deliver a worldclass education. In addition, support initiatives that provide high quality services for our Seniors and the ability for them to stay in Westport. As Chairman of the RTM Parks and Recreation Committee, he has been supportive of the improvements and ongoing maintenance of our beaches, parks and recreational services for All to enjoy and improve our real estate values. It is important to keep Westport an attractive locale for businesses to keep property tax rates as low as possible. Chris Tait is married with two daughters in the Westport Public Schools.



My name is TJ Elgin. I have lived in Westport for over 22 years, I went through Kings highway through Staples.I ran last cycle for 1st Selectman to try and help the towns current and upcoming issues. My Wife and I are strong leaders in helping the towns different

organizations such as fundraisers for years now for the Library, Historical society, both Rotarians organizations, the Westport Weston chamber of Commerce, Free Masons lodge, homes with hope, the Gillespie center, Clasp, Senior center. We also have been involved with many things outside of Westport as well Google (Ti Elgin Connecticut) my focus now is on saving Saugatuck and keeping Westport sustainable through the coming years of fiscal issues. Education, infrastructure, and sustainability are my tasks at hand, email me at Elginforwestport@gmail.com if you have any questions or concerns I'm here for the people.

#### **Candidates for RTM District 2**

#### Vote for up to 4



Mother of four, Harvard undergrad, UVA law, litigator, and current financial industry arbitrator, Only Connecticut Certified Municipal Official in Westport, 15 years' experience in the financial sector, Founder of Westport non-profit related to resident health/safety, Volunteer coach.

How will we properly maintain and improve our town and schools while keeping taxes flat, which is

especially important now that residents lost the full SALT deduction? Solving this problem would be difficult under the best circumstances. It's a herculean task now due to (a) the state's continued shift of costs to towns, (b) expenses related to Coleytown Middle School, and (c) a potential near-term economic slowdown. Given these headwinds, Westport needs RTM members with the skills necessary to critically evaluate and prioritize expenditures and balance near-term requests with long-term strategic goals. I hope to continue representing you and using my expertise to help navigate the town through these challenges.



Born and raised in New York, I then learned to drive a car and moved to Westport with my wife and two children. My eclectic background has seen me in various roles including, Assistant Director for the Governor of New York, Chief Technology Officer of a marketing/events com-

pany, Director of IT at the Whitney Museum of American Art, and even a Pipe Organ Builder. I am a Board Member of Coney Island USA, on planning committees for Westport Library, where we produced the annual town events: Saugatuck StoryFest and Maker Faire Westport. I am also on the BMS PTA for Security, as well as many years serving as the KHS Security parent.

**Louis Mall** Candidate did not respond.

Jay Keenan

Candidate did not respond.

# **Candidates for RTM District 3**

# Vote for up to 4

Arline P. Gertzoff



Arline P Gertzoff is a retired educator and a 63 year resident of Westport. I attended Westport schools and hold a B.S and EdM in history and education from Boston University. My teaching experience includes the New Canaan public schools and the International Baccalaureate at the Antwerp International School in Belgium

> I take an active role locally in the DTC DWW and UNSWCT. Additionally I am an

active participant in the Claflin Society at BU.

The key local issues are an equitable solution to the inevitable redistricting to achieve a better balance between CMS and BMS so the current pod method of instruction can be maintained and funded. The decision should be made by the incoming Board of Ed after a more accurate analysis of enrollment for 2020.

The second issue is to put constraints on overbuilding large apartment complexes that are not in keeping with local neighborhoods and the character of the town.

Ross Burkhardt



Westport needs a dynamic vision of the future that recognizes the compelling need to face 21<sup>st</sup> century realities. As an elected member of the RTM, I will:

Seek solutions to traffic problems such as utilizing CT's Safe Streets programs and work with the Department of Public Works and the State in implementing traffic calming measures; Assist

"Sustainable Westport" and other groups in developing policies and obtaining resources to reduce our carbon footprint to "Net-Zero"; Advocate for the preparation of resiliency plans for coastal areas and infrastructure vulnerable to sea-level rise and flooding. The bridges crossing the Saugatuck are particularly vulnerable. Westport Resident for 41 years; served on the P&Z and the Housing Authority; Master's degree in Community Planning; Thirty years of not-for-profit leadership in community development including Executive Director, Broad Park development Corp. (Hartford) and President and CEO of New Neighborhoods, Inc (Stamford).

Jimmy Izzo



I am a lifelong resident of Westport, running for my 4<sup>th</sup> RTM term, District 3. Current Chair of the RTM Public Protection Committee. The two most important issues the RTM must address now is the state of Connecticut Teachers pension, where the state is looking for towns

like Westport to pick up part of the shortfall. The second issue is the state mandated 8-30g housing law which supersedes our local zoning laws. We must continue to be fiscally responsible on both our Board of Education and town budgets to find reserves to tackle these pension issues as they arrive. As for 8-30g, we have no choice but to work with developers in creating projects that work within our local zoning laws to make our affordable housing numbers required by the state. Fiscal responsibility keeps our taxes low, seniors in town, and fully funded schools.



Amy Kaplan

A 20 year Westport resident, I've raised a family, produced pop-up community events, been active in the PTA, Artists Collective, and the WDMA. An artist, I have the ability to see things from a different perspective, and my goal is always to bring our community together around common interests. As Westport moves into the future, thoughtful development, both residential and commercial is key to maintaining our vitality. The impact of high density development needs to be carefully managed so Westport does not lose its small town New England charm. Equally important is maintaining our physical assets. The situation at CMS was allowed to develop into the crisis that resulted despite many warning signs. We need to have an accurate understanding of the needs in this area, and plan for investing in repair, renovations, or new builds. This includes our area, and plan for investing in repair, renovations, or new builds. This includes our police station, fire stations, Town Hall, as well as our schools.

#### (Continued)

Mark Friedman Attorney, educator, and investment adviser, RTM incumbent Mark Friedman loves Westport's creative culture and recreational opportunities. Father of two boys and active in both PTA and youth sports, Mark chaired Westport's Minds in Motion four times.

Two most important issues for RTM: The town's crown jewel, Westport's schools provide a lifelong benefit to our students and anchor the town's status—and property values—in the top tier. As a current member of the RTM Education Committee, I view investing in the schools as critical: doing so enriches both our children's lives and our own pocketbooks.

#### **Candidates for RTM District 4**

### Vote for up to 4

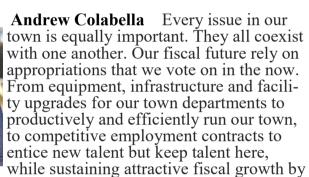


Chris Pulichino I believe in maintaining Westport's vibrancy and in preserving Westport's identity for future generations.

The 2 most pressing issues facing Westport today are: SCHOOLS: This is a critical pillar for all of us. Our children deserve it and this is a key reason most people move here. Not only good for kids, also good for real es-

INFRASTRUCTURE: Westport is under stress from the development occurring at a breathtaking pace. Preventing future incidents such as the recent sewage spills into the Saugatuck River and Sound is para-

My wife, Lori, and I chose Westport to raise our 2 children 10 years ago because of the amazing balance of art and culture, schools and sports, proximity to the city and living surrounded by trees...and it really has given us so much. Now is my time to give back. Please vote Pulichino for RTM District 4.



bringing in business but also families, is essential. Westport has been a leader in sustainability of economic growth and environmental improvements nationwide. I, along with my colleagues, passed the most comprehensive Single Use Plastics Ban in the country. Its purpose is to Reduce, Reuse, Refuse. This will save costs for businesses, our carbon footprint, and protect human life from exposure to chemicals in our air, water and soil. Overall, protecting our people, town and employees is imperative for future growth and sustainability one vote thoughtfully at a time.



9-year Valley Road resident. Mar-Noah Hammond ried to Weatherly; they are proud parents of Saugatuck students Nate (10), Luke (8), and Caroline (6). Noah has 15 years financial software development experience and is a volunteer coach for Westport Little League and Basketball

Protecting our "Town Jewels" for the next generation. Our schools, teachers, policemen, firemen, beaches, parks, businesses and arts. The RTM must ensure budgets, ordinances and expenditures are the result of adequate due

diligence into issues surrounding CMS, specifically value our educators and first responders, increase accessibility to all our town amenities, and focus on retaining and attracting businesses. Keeping constituents informed. The state of our schools, endless traffic, Cribari Bridge, senior housing, Saugatuck TOD, 8-30g- it is the RTMs responsibility to inform residents on topics that can impact daily life. We need transparency, open communication and stronger engagement on all issues under the RTMs pur-

Jeffrey N. Wieser Elected RTM 2007. Current Deputy



Moderator and Chair, Finance Committee. A 30+ year international banker, he is President of Homes with Hope, Westport's homeless shelter and supportive housing operator. Wieser and wife Pat moved to Westport in 1985, and their three children attended Westport Schools. Current Trustee, YMCA and Positive Directions and Past President

Westport Rotary. As Chair of the RTM Finance Committee, I believe Westport's tax base must be a main issue of the RTM. However, while it is important to maintain our modest mill rate, as we have done over the past many years, we must also balance the education, recreational and infrastructure needs of the Town. I am a proponent of affordable housing and think we need a plan to add housing stock in Town, as we must plan for even greater traffic in the coming years.

Candidate did not

Kristan Hamlin

respond.

**Greg Kraut** 

#### **Candidates for RTM District 5**

#### Vote for up to 4





Getting around Westport is increasingly difficult. In my position on the RTM Transit, Long-Range Planning and Public Works Committees I'll work with Town departments to explore possible solutions, including sidewalks, bike lanes, and commuter shuttles, and to develop, fund and implement plans to help alleviate the problem. I'll also monitor state roadway projects to help insure they enhance Westport (e.g., saving the trees by Stop & Shop). Zoning without planning

can lead to unintended, sometimes unfortunate, results. The RTM can review and overturn zoning text amendments adopted by the Planning and Zoning Commission. I'll monitor proposals before the Commission and bring any text amendments adversely affecting Westport's character and overburdening its infrastructure to the RTM for review. 38 year resident. Two children. Four-term RTM member; Transit (Chair), Public Works, Long-Range Planning, Ordinance Committees. governmental benefits consulting. Former Board member, YMCA, Children's Community Daycare. Volunteer, Library, Playhouse, Sound Cyclists.

**Dick Lowenstein** A key complaint of



Greens Farms residents is traffic volume, speeding, and noise. It is a tough problem. Although I was able to get an electric speed-warning sign installed on Greens Farms Road, my priority is to make all local roads safer. Westport's empty

stores and unoccupied offices concern me. Economic development must become a towndirected function to attract new businesses and keep the existing ones. In 1983, my wife, Ellie, and I moved to Westport with our three children. For 16 years, I represented Greens Farms on the RTM, where I chaired the Transit and Public Protection Committees. I co-founded the Westport Library book sales and am its cochair. I am also a member of the Greens Farms Association board. What I liked most about serving on the RTM was helping residents find solutions to their problems. That's why I want <sup>5</sup> to represent Greens Farms again.



The biggest problem facing Westport is we are reactive rather than proactive in maintaining and improving town infrastructure. A grand example was the debacle at Coleytown Middle School. Our goal now is to fix it and have it open by August 2020. Another huge issue

is how to keep Westport the lovely town it's always been. We have to ensure there is proper development to allow for change yet maintain our small town character. We need to be creative to offset what won't be coming from the State to keep our taxes low, yet our schools and town strong. My husband and I have resided in Westport for 31+ years. My children have been educated here and both my husband and I work here with me selling estate in town since 1997. We are fully vested and deeply committed to our town. Please re-elect me so I may continue helping.

Managing Partner of a real estate investment firm, Greg oversees strategic development and asset management. He serves on the B'nai B'rith Real Estate Board. Married, his two sons attend GFS. The two most important issues the RTM is obligated to address are its two key functions.

We are tasked with adopting the annual Town and Education budgets and approving all Town appropriations over \$20,000. As the final arbitrators of approving the funding levels for both the schools and Town, we play an important role in ensuring that our schools maintain their funding and excellence. In tandem, it is also important that we maintain the quality of our community to ensure that Greens Farms continues to remain a highly sought after and desirable place for all of us to call home.

Nicole Klein



Mother of a Greens Farms School third grader, has been an RTM member since 2017 and serves on the Education, Public Protection and Environment committees. The two most important issues she intends to focus on in her next term are ensuring the continued quality of our

public schools and protecting our children from the dangers of vaping. In service of our schools, she will support robust educa-tion budgets and she will keep a keen eye on redistricting efforts to ensure that all five elementary schools remain viable, while making sure that the friendships our children have built at GFS remain intact. In service of the public health, in particular that of our high school and middle school students, she will seek to support burgeoning efforts at the state level to ban vaping products by calling for a town ordinance to do the same in our local stores.

#### Vote for up to 4

#### **Candace Dohn Banks**



11+ year resident of Westport in District 6. Three children currently attending BMS in 6th, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Past President of Long Lots PTA & PTA Council. Honored to serve as a Board Member of ABC Westport & Staples Tuition Grants. Alumna of Wellesley College and University of Chicago Law School. Contituents depend on their RTM representatives to

alert them to significant proposals impacting their neighborhoods & schools. Providing accurate & timely information enables Westporters to show up and advocate for their interests when it **counts.** Impending projects for District 6 include the BOE's proposals to redistrict or rezone many D6 students in order to rebalance the two middle schools, and the water tank construction on North Avenue. I pledge to proactively communicate with D6 neighbors to ensure they are aware of what's happening and amplify their feedback on the issues that affect their daily quality of life.

#### Jessica Bram



I am deeply concerned about the rapid pace of Westport's development and density, which potentially overburden our public schools, roads, traffic, and human services. The RTM should propose ordinances to restrain development while insuring our economy thrives. Westport's public schools are our primary asset, and why most families choose our Town. While educa-

tional policy occurs at the Board of Education, rather than RTM level, the RTM should approve appropriations that insure the quality of Westport Public Schools, while keeping a cost-conscious eye on efficient spending.

21 Year Resident; Two-term RTM member, serving on Parks & Rec, Transit, and Health and Human Services Committees; Master of City Planning, Cornell University; Master of Fine Arts, Sarah Lawrence College; founder and executive director, Westport Writers' Workshop (2003-13); creative writing teacher, Westport Rotary Club Board (2000-2013), Staff, NYC Office of the Mayor and Board of Education (1976-1982); proud mother of three Staples HS graduates.



Cathy Talmadge Fiscal responsibility and sustaining the quality of life and the character of our town. The RTM must work with the schools and the town to find creative solutions to fund the unexpected expense of Coleytown while continuing to maintain the excellence of our schools, while improving infrastructure and our other town assets and open spac-

es. The reality is it's a balancing act and prioritization is crucial. Town bodies need to develop additional tactics to impact state policies and services. The current DOT proposal for Post Rd East includes removing significant trees as well as other questionable design and environmental issues. The Town must get involved and insure that the DOT considers aesthetics and other forms of mobility in addition to automobiles.

Bio:6 terms on RTM. Former executive with extensive financial and operational expertise. Active volunteer on numerous boards and instrumental in the founding of the Wakeman Town Farm.

**Seth Braunstein** Westport must maintain the high quality of



our schools. Our high educational standards and philosophy must also be met with high quality educational infrastructure. This is what draws so many people to raise their families here and what helps to distinguish our town from the many great places to live in Fairfield County. We must also balance smart approach-

es to planning and zoning with the desire to hold on to what makes Westport unique and desirable. Development is going to occur but we need to make sure it is consistent with the scale and feel of our small, but cosmopolitan town. My family and I have enjoyed all Westport has to offer for the last 14 years. Wife Sara and I have one son that is completing his senior year at Staples. I am employed by a CT based financial boutique. BA from University of Chicago, MBA from NYU Stern.

## **Chas Durkin** Candidate did not respond.

#### **Candidates for RTM District 7**

#### Vote for up to 4

**Ellen Lautenberg Hendel** Two issues I believe are most important: Ongoing expenditures for Coleytown renovation and usage.



**Solution**: Work closely with Board of Ed and listen carefully to constituent concerns regarding plans for use of the building to determine best use of money related to this. Review of ordinance proposing creation of Board of Police Commissioners to oversee certain departmental decisions Solution: This will be a diffi-

cult decision. We need to listen to all sides and weigh the pros and cons carefully, particularly considering the constituents we represent Brief Bio: RTM Member since November 2015, Prior PTA Involvement: Executive Boards Long Lots, Bedford, Staples; PTA Council Health and Wellness Co-Chair, Prior Boards: Temple Israel, Hadassah and Federation for Jewish Philanthropy of Fairfield County, B.A. Clark University; JD - Cardozo School of Law, Lehman Brothers - V.P. Taxable Fixed Income, Moved to Westport in 1995, 2 children attended Westport public schools K-12

#### Lauren Karpf

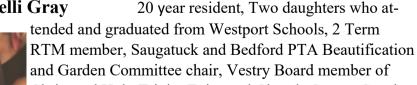


Property values and state funding are decreasing. Now more than ever, the RTM must protect Westport's quality of life, mill rate, and excellent schools by making difficult fiscal decisions and allocating tax dollars responsibly. As Chair of the Education Committee, I will continue to advocate for school funding and for creatively reducing costs without impacting the classrooms. I believe we will attract new families and retain residents by maintaining and

improving our facilities, the senior center, town services and amenities, and downtown, but must prioritize innovative cost efficiencies, better allocation of funds, and revenue opportunities. I also believe in preserving the character of our neighborhoods and community.

RTM member 5 years. Chair of RTM Education Committee; member of Parks/Recreation & Ordinance Committees. Attorney. Former strategic planning executive. Mentor and coach. Board President of nonprofit school. Married with three children in Westport schools, and parents living in Westport. Facebook.com/laurenkarpfrtm.

# Lisa Parrelli Gray



Christ and Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, Soccer Coach, Softball Coach and Commissioner, Westport Boating Advisory Committee member, CLASP Homes Secretary and Board member, Westport Y Water Rats Secretary, West-

port New Neighbors Annual Clambake and Gourmet Club Chair, Past Executive Director of the Westport – Weston Chamber of Commerce. I believe one of our greatest challenges facing Westport is preserving the integrity of our community while accommodating the necessary growth our town is attracting. As the Chair of the RTM Long Range Planning Committee, I will support and collaborate with my fellow RTM members and other elected board officials to further preserve and improve our services and amenities that are supported by our town government and community members.

#### Jack Klinge



As 22 year member RTM Education Committee and 45 year resident District Seven, I intend to be closely involved with all decisions of BOE regarding equitable rebalancing of enrollment at BMS and CMS. I have urged rebalancing for ten years, but not at the expense of families from District Seven who purchased homes expecting their children would be attending LLS and BMS. A MAJOR issue. RTM must continue to approve Town budgets and policies which protect low property taxes while prudently maintaining critical infrastructure and progressively

improving services provided to all residents. I am especially sensitive to seniors' concerns as Chair of RTM Health/Human Services Committee and Board President of "Friends of Westport Senior Center". \* 53 year resident, 22 years RTM, 20 years sub teacher SHS, BMS, CMS (AKA Coach K), Town Building Maintenance Committee, Westport Service to Seniors Award (twice), Cornell – Masters Engineering, Harvard MBA, LT US Navy Active Duty

**Brandi Briggs** 



Most important issues for the RTM: 1) Supporting our schools and providing the necessary resources to ensure excellent quality schools for all students, and 2) Focusing on the long-term financial health of Westport so we can continue to deliver first-rate services and amenities to all residents. This is crucial to sustaining property values, tax rates, and our quality of life. We must continue to invest in our schools infrastructure. However,

the cost of these projects, along with challenges we face due to the state's ongoing fiscal crisis, demand that we make difficult, disciplined decisions in spending and prioritizing taxpayer funds.

Bio:Married, Three children attending Westport schools; Attorney-Trusts/Estates, Elder Law; RTM-3 terms, Chairwoman-Ordinance Committee; Past-President-Westport Young Woman's League; VP Membership-National Charity League Westport; LLS PTA (past VP of Fundraising); JD-University of Colorado School of Law, BS-Boston College

#### REGISTRATION DEADLINES OCTOBER 29

Online voter registration deadline (11:59 PM) Mail postmark voter registration deadline In person registration at Westport Registrar of Voters' office in Town Hall

#### November 5

Election day registration starting at 6:00 A.M. at Westport Town Hall

#### Vote for up to 4

#### Carla L. Rea



Incumbent RTM member (elected 4 terms) Stephen Shackelford from D#8, presently serving on the Environment and Planing & Zoning committees. Westport resident 42 years, Former elected Chairman Westport P&Z, member of ZBA, Real estate agent, businesswoman, Justice of the Peace and Language teacher. Mother of three (Michael, Alex and Deborah), all went through Westport school systems. Pledge to continue to support an excellent Westport school system and ensure that Coleytown Middle

School is re-open as a first-class middle school. Town facilities and school need to be better maintained. Policies and procedures that support this effort need to be implemented now. Will continue to take necessary actions to protect our environment and the residential character of our town and District. As your RTM representative, I will continue to scrutinize all town expenditure to ensure dollars are well spent and that we minimize any future increases in our taxes.

Wendy G. Batteau



Enhancing all Westporters' quality of life and reinforcing our community character considering the consequences of necessary school rebuilding are essentials. These require re-evaluating town fiscal plans and their real-life consequences in open timely ways. We can help increase residents' confidence in participating in decisionmaking and being heard. Town bodies must share information earlier, work cooperatively and transparently, and create more opportunities for public conversation (eg. around redistricting). Specific

budgetary priorities include supporting our excellent educational system, recreational and cultural amenities; improving infrastructure; increasing senior options; mitigating traffic; preserving neighborhood characters; safeguarding our kids' wellbeing and environmental and public health; attracting new families and businesses; to raise home values while keeping tax rates low. RTM 6 terms, longtime Chair Environment Committee. Publishing and electronic media editor, executive. Child graduated CES/CMS/Staples. Certified substitute teacher. Assisted-living facility volunteer. Work with local and national nonprofits. 27-year Westporter



I am excited to be running to represent District 8 on the RTM. When I'm not hanging out with my family on the soccer fields or at home, I practice law at a commercial litigation firm in New York. As the father of four children in the Westport Public Schools (ages 14, 14, 11 and 7), I've seen up close the effects of closing CMS and the debates

and discussions that followed. The two most important issues I see facing the town today are schools and transparency. I will work hard to ensure that Westport's public school system remains the best in the state, and that my constituents understand both what is going on in our town government and why. Only then can you have confidence that your elected officials are handling the tough issues of today and anticipating the potential challenges of tomorrow.

#### Lisa Newman



5-year Westport resident with husband, Josh, and our three children in preschool, 1<sup>st</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades, current RTM member, former: CMS PTA Exec Board, CT public school teacher, Sacred Heart University program director

1: It is critical to evaluate the condition of each of our school facilities, especially in conjunction with redistricting discussions. We need proactive conversation in partnership with the BOE and BOF about next steps

to ensure all district facilities: (1) have the proper amount of space; (2) make needed upgrades to maintain an optimal educational experience; (3) are monitored to ensure environmental health safety for students. 2: We must keep Westport a place people love to live. While our schools need attention, we also need to properly but responsibly invest in all that our town has to offer. Most specifically, we must continue to grow our downtown into a vibrant place to work, shop and dine.

#### **Candidates for RTM District 9**

# Vote for up to 4



**Lauren Soloff** Owner and President of Newtown based manufacturing company. First term RTM member sitting on the Finance, Environment, P&Z, Employee Compensation, and Rules Committees. Twenty-five year resident of Westport, serving on school boards and the TCS synagogue board. Serving my tenth year as a Homes With Hope board member, formerly Vice-Chair. Mother of three Staples High

School graduates. The RTM will continue to be faced with the task of evaluating our investment in Westport's school system and the town's infrastructure. Although we must ensure that we spend responsibly, it is imperative that we commit to supporting a state of the art educational experience for Westport students, while simultaneously preserving and improving our town's resources. This is a balancing act that is not always easy. However, as an RTM member, I will strive to promote a collaborative, respectful, and community driven conversation that brings us closer to consensus on these complex issues.



Velma E. Heller While supporting our educational system is always a priority, recent experience demonstrates that maintaining and upgrading Westport's considerable assets: school buildings, public facilities/properties is imperative. Planned, systematic monitoring of town infrastructure will enable us to tackle problems before they're overwhelming, and provide evidence to better inform RTM fund-

ing decisions. Challenging economic issues at the state and federal level may impact our town resources as we strive for quality in education, public protection, health and human services and address environmental, safety, transit, historic and infrastructure concerns, Creative, collaborative problem solving among town, state government and private entities becomes more important than ever. 55 year Westport Resident; 18 years, RTM - District 9 Representative; RTM Moderator, Deputy Moderator, Education Committee Chair, many RTM Committees; Retired Westport Principal:, Vice Principal, K-12 Director, Teacher; Children, grandchildren graduated Westport schools; Ed.D. - Retired Professor, Sacred Heart University; League of Women Voters, past Westport Rotary, PTA's.

#### Kristin Schneeman



If re-elected to the RTM, I'll continue to work hard and work smart to:

Maintain and enhance the distinctive qualities that make Westport unique and attract people to live and work here. Continue to invest in our schools, parks and recreation, arts and culture, and support our seniors. We can do this even in tighter fiscal times if we make smart choices. Focus on quality of life. Improving traffic, in-

frastructure, environmental stewardship, and walkability/ livability in our neighborhoods is paramount. I think we can do a better job prioritizing projects and developing creative solutions to getting them done.

25+ years' experience in public policy, politics, academia and media. Locally involved with PTA, Project Return and Suzuki Music School. Main Street resident with my husband and two schoolage daughters.

Sal Liccione

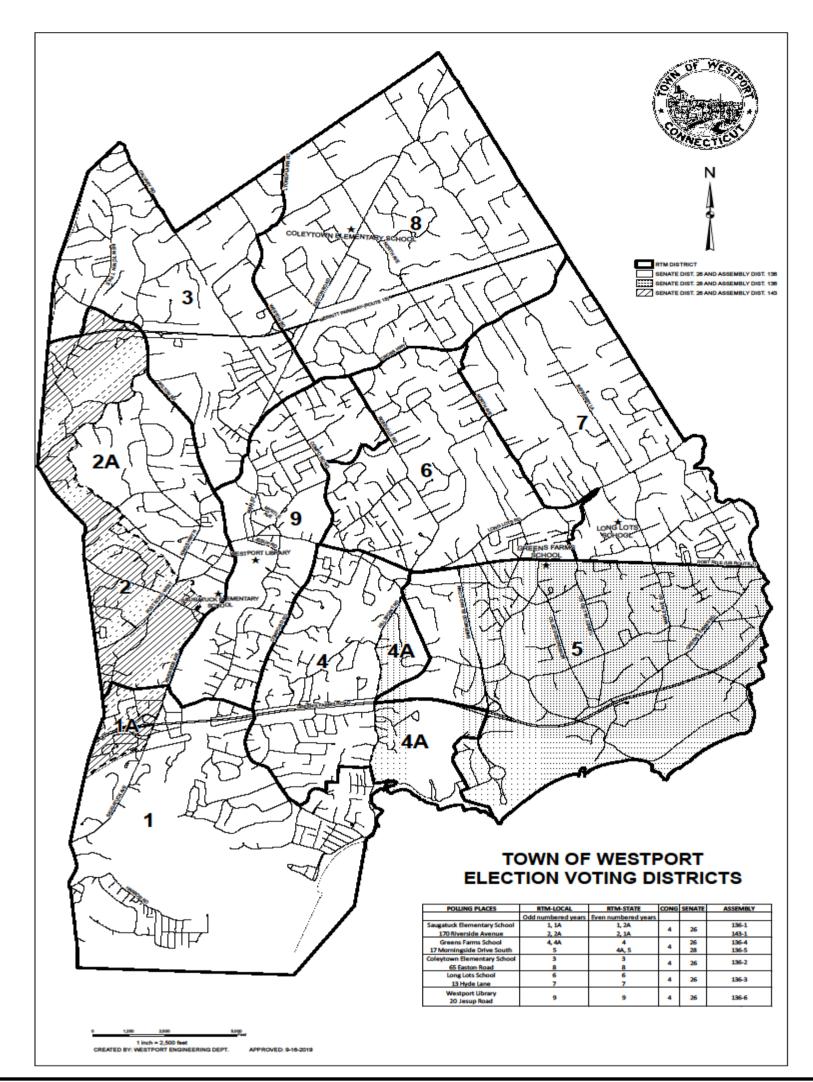


As a third generation Westporter who has lived in District 9 for the past 19 years, I am uniquely qualified to represent you. Two of the most important issues that the RTM must address are the easing traffic congestion and ensuring the continued quality of our schools. To help mitigate traffic backups we should retime traffic lights at our worst intersections and con-

serve the Cribari Bridge, which prevents 18 wheelers from using our local roads. To ensure the quality of our schools, I have strongly supported the bond funding to rehab Coleytown Middle School which will eliminate the overcrowding at BMS, and I stand fully prepared to support strict fiscal discipline in future town budgets to pay for it without increasing property taxes. It is both an honor and privilege to serve on the RTM, working to preserve the quality of life Westport offers young families and senior residents alike.

Albert T. Strazza Candidate did not respond.

For additional printable Voter's Guide copies or further information on voting, be sure to visit the Vote section on our website at www.lwvwestport.org.



# Westport has Nine different ballots, one for each RTM District Candidates for Boards and Commissions are the same on all ballots

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## IMPORTANT VOTER REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

You can register to vote in Westport if you meet the following criteria: You are a U.S. citizen and Westport resident who will be 18 by Election Day. You meet the criteria above and have completed confinement and parole if previously convicted of a felony.

To register to vote you must provide one of the following: Learner's Permit, your Connecticut Driver's License Number, Social Security Card, or your Connecticut non-driver ID number. Alternatively, provide a copy of one of the following with your registration application: current and valid photo ID, Government Issued Document that shows your current name and address, automobile documentation (insurance or registration), utility bill, government check, bank statement, or paycheck that shows your current name and address.

RTM District	Westport Poll Locations						
1, 1A, 2, 2A	Saugatuck Elementary School Gymnasium, 170 Riverside Ave.						
4, 4A, 5	Greens Farms Elementary School Gymnasium, 17 Morningside Dr. S.						
3, 8	Coleytown Elementary School Gymnasium, 65 Easton Rd.						
6, 7	Long Lots Elementary School Gymnasium, 13 Hyde Lane						
9	Westport Library, 2 Jesup Road						
All	All Polling Places will be open from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.						

8