



2021 Voters' Guide

Compiled each year as a public service by the League of Women Voters of Darien.

Vote Tuesday, November 2 -- Democracy is not a spectator sport!

The League of Women Voters (LWV) is a nonpartisan, non-profit organization that encourages the informed and active participation of all citizens in the process of government. The LWV of Darien is a local group of both men and women who strive to improve the quality of democracy by increasing voters' knowledge of candidates and issues. Visit lwvdarien.org to learn more.

The Voters' Guide is designed to provide information about the candidates to the public in a nonpartisan and balanced way to assist them in casting an informed vote on Election Day.

Questionnaires were submitted to candidates for local offices, asking one or more office related questions. Responses were limited to a specific word count and are printed exactly as submitted by the candidates. For every ballot position, a voter may write in the name of someone who is not listed as a candidate on a separate line at the bottom of the ballot for "Write-In Votes." In the State of Connecticut for those votes to be counted, the individual whose name is being written in, must have registered with the Secretary of State. Write-in candidates for the RTM must register with the Town Clerk no later than the last business day preceding the election.

(*) Signifies that the candidate is an incumbent.

Note: All offices appear in the order in which they appear on the ballot.

Candidates for First Selectman

Vote for One
11/08/2021 - 11/13/2023

Questions:

1. What qualities and qualifications make you best suited for First Selectman?

2. What is at the top of your agenda and why?

250 words in total

Tara Ochman Democratic Party 476 Mansfield Avenue

1. Darien is a premier town, yet we have unmet challenges. It is the First Selectman's responsibility to solve problems, prioritize projects and get the job done for the community. As the former Chair of the Board of Education, financial manager, and community volunteer, including six years as a Trustee of the Darien Library, I bring the necessary skills to the job: the ability to deliver results; build consensus; and bring critical projects forward, get them funded and underway, as I did with the new Ox Ridge school and the air conditioning of our schools, and to complete them, as I did with Fitch Academy. I have developed responsible budgets and effective 5-year capital plans. I will foster an environment where all residents are heard.

2. Darien is at a pivotal moment. We need new leadership and energy to advance critical projects to meet the challenges facing us right now. This means improving our infrastructure by developing an updated comprehensive plan to mitigate flooding, roadway improvements, and making our community more pedestrian and biker safe. Our town-owned properties, like Pear Tree Beach and Highland Farms, need reliable capital plans for maintenance and improvement. These plans must be developed with community input and be fiscally smart. Our local businesses are steadfast community partners and we do better by supporting, planning, and working with each other. The answer is not more taxes, but better fiscal stewardship, engaging community talent and advocating for and securing more state and federal funds.

Monica M. McNally Republican Party 71 Arrowhead Way

1. I have a deep love for this town, its people, the volunteer spirit, and the way we address issues collaboratively and openly. I have worked with Town government for eight years on the RTM including as Vice Moderator, Chair of Public Works, and Vice Chair of Rules. I am currently a member of the Board of Selectmen. I will use this experience, and my relationships with others in government, to address today's issues, and tomorrow's. My professional background helps me in understanding the town's finances, our financial decisions and alternatives ahead. I will strive to continue Darien's fiscal discipline as pending federal tax increases affect every member of our community. I will help navigate Darien through the 2022 State legislature session, as Hartford begins "Regional Decision Making and Tax Sharing" workshops.

2. Keeping our residents safe. Protecting Darien's autonomy and local control.

Flooding and drainage are major threats to personal safety and property. Our storm infrastructure was not designed to withstand the extreme weather events we experienced this summer, and which are likely to occur more frequently in the future. Flood mitigation calls for a multi-faceted approach which requires coordination between landowners, town services and the State government. I am committed to leaving no stone unturned in assessing solutions to improve stormwater management.

We must also manage the growth in population, traffic and demands on our infrastructure that come with new development. Darien is 98% developed and further reduction in green space and permeable surfaces also negatively impact flooding/erosion.

Christian Noe Petitioning Candidate 242 Old Kings Highway South

With corruption and incompetence at an all-time high among Darien employees there has never been a better time to vote for an Independent candidate to get things done. The union's tail wagging the dog brought the 4-day work week won't go unanswered.

The state is almost 70 billion in debt with 3.5 million residents = \$20,000 each. They say, "Make the rich pay their fair share." The combined wealth of CT's billionaires couldn't pay CT's debt. 7% income tax is pushing wealthy people out, who's left to pay for these blunders. Don't forget the "Mansion Tax" and "Darien needs more affordable housing."

This is my 7th time running, you know who I am. I have warned of impending disasters and they all came true. If you want the disasters to stop, if you want corruption gone you need to vote for Chris Noe. I will not tolerate incompetence or corruption.

Get involved, ask questions.

Google: "Soundkeeper Save the Sound" then scroll to the bottom. Click "Press Releases" then scroll down to October 8th 2020. "Darien Sewage Pollution Deal." Read this and start asking questions like, 'Can I trust anyone in Darien's executive branch. How many millions of dollars were promised? What has been done to date?'

In 2004 a million-gallon sewage spill was documented to occur every time it rained by Malcolm Pirnie engineers. They advised install a larger pipe, the elected chose to ignore repairs, now we'll pay 10 times the cost.

Candidates for Selectman

Vote for up to Two
11/08/2021 – 11/13/2023

Questions:

1. What qualities and qualifications make you best suited for Selectman?

2. What is at the top of your agenda and why?

250 words in total

Michael J. Burke Democratic Party 15 Lake Drive

1. For any board to be high functioning, the members must be critical thinkers, collaborative, informed, communicative, accountable and motivated to get things done. These are qualities I possess, and have exhibited throughout my professional, and volunteer life.

My community service in Darien started when we moved here in 2008. I immediately started helping coach our twin son's youth sports teams. In 2009, I was elected to the RTM and served there until being elected to the Board of Education in 2014. In those elected roles, I examined and vetted town and school district budgets during public hearings. As a member of the BOE, I negotiated teacher contracts, chaired our policy committee and worked collaboratively with other members, administrators and parents to navigate the COVID pandemic and kept our children and staff safe. I also helped lead the effort to get important capital projects completed, including field reconstruction, cafeteria expansion and the long-stalled lights installation at the high school.

2. At the top of my agenda is enacting effective and responsible flood mitigation. As an RTM member, I approved the creation of studies that called for action. It is well past time for elements of those plans to be updated and adopted. I am ready to act. Attention is also long overdue concerning our public lands usage and we need to vastly improve community engagement.

I have a demonstrated record of effective community service. I am fully ready to serve on the Board of Selectmen.

***Sarah Neumann Democratic Party** 94 Gardiner Street

1. I have served Darien on the Board of Selectmen for the past two years, with prior experience on the RTM and a variety of volunteer roles in Darien over the past 17 years. While on the Board of Selectmen, I have consistently collaborated across many Boards and Commissions in town to deal with a variety of issues. My vast volunteer experience has shown that I learn quickly to identify issues, and work effectively to arrive at solutions. My focus is on listening to and giving voice to all Darien residents to make the most informed decisions for our town.

Keeping our residents safe and well-informed will always be at the top of my agenda. I am currently working on the Town's pedestrian safety campaign and will be serving on the building committee for the Hindley, Royle, and Holmes schools projects that are about to begin.

2. One of my main priorities on the Board of Selectmen will be to work to find solutions for our flood and erosion issues around our town. I have been heartbroken to see the damage, both physical and emotional, that this has inflicted on so many of our residents and businesses. The town has conducted multiple studies in the past 60 years, and yet flooding is worse than ever. It is time for solutions.

I remain focused on finding solutions to consistently improve Darien and look forward to serving Darien on the Board of Selectmen for another term.

Marcy A. Minnick Republican Party 417 Hoyt Street

1. As CEO of a 60-year-old manufacturing company, I understand how to look at an organization strategically and make improvements and decisions for success over the long haul.

Workforce is highly valued and sought after in my industry. Because of this, I need to stay competitive in employee retention, innovative in planning for our company's future and accountable for the profit and loss of the company.

These skills will allow me to make a unique contribution as a Selectman here in Darien. I am a natural problem solver and I am thoughtful when crafting solutions to complex issues. I'm a listener and I am trustworthy. Your voice will be heard, valued and respected with me as your Selectman.

2. The safety and security of Darien children and families is at the top of my agenda. This includes public safety, walkability, anti-bullying and diversity and inclusion. I want all families to feel comfortable and confident as they move through town and raise their children here. I also want our police force and emergency responders to feel valued and supported in our community. Darien residents are highly engaged, and over the past ten years I have taken the opportunity to immerse myself in this community. As both a parent and volunteer, I have heard many of your concerns. I am ready now to use my professional skills to make sure those concerns are addressed and investments are made in a thoughtful, inclusive and productive manner.

Jon E. Zagrodzky Republican Party 30 Crimmins Road

1. I have been a Darien elected official for thirteen years, serving on the Board of Finance since 2008 and as Chairman since 2015. In that time, I have gained a thorough understanding of Town government, built enduring relationships among elected officials and town staff, and developed a public reputation for clarity, integrity and competence.

I am a collaborative leader who works hard to ensure open dialogue, transparent debate and good humor with everyone. I strive for consensus and inclusivity, but I will ask irritating questions until I get the answers I need. I welcome hard work and dedicated service from our talented volunteers. I will always put the interests of Darien first.

2. For me, infrastructure is a top priority. We have sufficient financial resources, and debt markets are favorable, so we have the capacity to support new initiatives. Flood mitigation and remediation are top of mind, and a lot is being done already, but this is an enormously complicated problem that does not lend itself to easy, quick or inexpensive solutions.

Also on the agenda is public safety. I applaud all that our Police do to keep us all safe, and we can do more as a Town to support them, develop new solutions, and continue building public awareness and responsibility.

Finally, local decision-making is critical. Democrats in Hartford want to increase their control over our schools, beaches, homes and businesses. But government works best when it is local, and our team will strive to keep it that way.

Candidate for Town Clerk

Vote for One
01/03/2022 – 01/02/2024

Question:

What are your qualifications, and have you identified any initiatives for the Town Clerk's office in the upcoming term?

100 word limit

***Christa Sheehan McNamara Republican Party 69 St. Nicholas Road**

I am honored to have the chance to continue serving the residents of Darien as their Town Clerk in the upcoming election. I have been serving as the interim Town Clerk since June 1st following the unanimous vote by the Board of Selectmen in support of my appointment. Together with my team, I am committed to continuing the high level of customer service that our residents have known throughout the years, though now with an increased focus on exploring opportunities with software programs so that residents have a chose to interact with the office on-line, as well as in person.

Candidate for Town Treasurer

Vote for One
11/08/2021 – 11/13/2023

Question:

What factors do you consider when making investment decisions for the Town?

100 word limit

***Joan D. Hendrickson Republican Party** 97 Hoyt Street

As Treasurer, my number one concern in making an investment decision is the safety of the investment. All of our investments by statute must have reserves held against the investment by the institution with which we invest. The investments must meet the standards described in CT statute 7-400. Investments must be short-term which Town Counsel has defined as under 2 years. Yield is the third aspect, but is behind safety and liquidity in priority. Town Counsel opines on the suitability of all classes of investment.

Candidate for Town Tax Collector

Vote for One
11/08/2021 – 11/13/2023

Questions:

Are you considering any new initiatives for the upcoming term?

75 word limit

***Kathleen M. Larkins Republican Party** 57 Echo Drive North

As a matter of policy, any new initiative that streamlines and/or enhances the tax collection process is always a top priority. In addition to realizing collection rates of 99.65% and 99.74%, the following initiatives have been implemented during my current term:

- expansion of online payments to include sewer service and sewer assessment billings;
- successful negotiation of lower convenience fees with the online payment provider
- addition of American Express to list of accepted bank cards

Candidates for Board of Finance

Vote for up to Three
11/08/2021 – 11/10/2025

Questions:

1. What information do you consider when evaluating capital requests?

2. Given today's low interest rates environment, should we consider bonding for items other than capital requests? If so, provide examples.

250 words in total

David R. Martin Democratic Party 15 Libby Lane

1.
 - Description of the capital item/project requested
 - Purpose for the request/need fulfilled/goal of project
 - Anticipated life of the capital project
 - Total capital cost, amount requested in the current year and any subsequent year
 - Description of how cost estimate was developed
 - Expected start and completion dates
 - Review of alternative methods/options to solve the need
 - Benefit of the project
 - Does it fulfill compliance with State statutes or other legal requirements
 - What impact will the project have on the operating budget? Maintenance cost, reduced cost due to benefits etc.

Ideally each the BOS and BOE will provide a five year forward look at potential capital needs with each of the projects ranked on a 1-3 priority basis. The BOS and BOE should use the same methodology for these forecasts. This would allow the BOF to consolidate the forward estimates by year and priority status which would allow the BOF to anticipate large capital request years for the consolidated town.

2. Bonding is only appropriate for long lived projects or purchases. Capital markets theory holds that the duration of the funding should closely match the useful life of that being funded. Bonds are typically issued for periods of 15 years or longer so only projects or purchases with long useful lives should be considered.

***Robert Cardone Republican Party 17 Park Lane**

1. Many different criteria can be used to evaluate a capital request. Among those are: What is the timeline for the future need of the capital item? Is the request short term or long term? Are there large operating costs associated with the capital request that will need to be budgeted for in future years? Is there any way to share the costs with other towns or private companies? Can the capital project be bonded so that costs are spread over a long-term timeline? I view capital requests as having gone through an approval process that touches all levels of town government and then ultimately approved / disapproved by the Representative Town Meeting (RTM). So, in practice, everyone approves the capital request, not just the BOF.

2. Most rating agencies do not take kindly to using bonding to finance a town's operating costs. Taxes collected by the town should be enough to cover the operating costs of the town. Bonding is usually used for long term capital projects.

John O. Wolcott Republican Party 1 Nolen Lane

Thanks to LWV for their thoughtful queries. A first-time candidate for the Board of Finance would not unreasonably have many, many more questions than answers. As a result, the following is substantially based on a career in corporate finance.

1. Information to consider when evaluating capital improvements might include: how an acquisition would impact the Town’s long-term capital plan; is the asset truly necessary or “nice to have”; does the expenditure extend useful life and/or substantively add value; could the expenditure be deferred; what competing needs for capital exist; is there another underutilized asset available that could satisfy the need; could the acquisition be combined with or divided into component parts; have cost/benefit analyses, including social, environmental, educational, safety and opportunity costs been thought through; are charges to deliver, install, operate, maintain and dispose of the asset taken into account; are warranty terms favorable; were comparable competitive bids sought; are bids fixed price or cost plus; are incentives/penalties negotiated; does the final draft of the purchase contract (and the asset itself) conform in its entirety to agreed terms; if not to be in service for its entire useful life, could the asset be leased; in that cost of capital is part-and-parcel of an acquisition, how will the necessary funds be sourced; will the vendor finance advantageously; and so on.

2. Finally, with respect to bonding, one might not have thought that either the Town would choose, or its underwriters support, entering the business of financial engineering.

***Paul B. Hendrickson Republican Party 97 Hoyt Street**

1. There are many criteria to use when evaluating capital requests: health and safety, how many townspeople does it affect, what is the immediacy, length of project, potential for State and/or Federal assistance, adequacy and number of potential vendors (references), value of project / capital purchase to the entire Town. Capital requests typically originated either with the Board of Selectmen or the Board of Education and they provide substantiating information for their request(s). The request is reviewed by the Board of Finance and ultimately approved / disapproved by the Representative Town Meeting (RTM).

2. Bonding is typically associated with long-term capital projects or assets and the rating agencies frown upon using borrowing (bonding) to meet operating expenses.

Candidates for Board of Education

**Vote for up to Two
11/02/2021 – 11/05/2024**

Questions:

1. What motivated you to be a candidate for the Board of Education and what special skills do you bring to this position?

2. How can the district make up for lost instructional time and ensure equitable opportunities for all students now and in the period after the pandemic?

250 words in total

Julie Best Democratic Party 38 Red Rose Circle

1. We have great schools in Darien but they can be better. I have been volunteering in school-related positions for ten years. I know where we are succeeding and where we are not. As a PTO and Council of Darien School Parents chair, I have worked closely with parents, district Administration and members of the BoE to untangle problems and find ways through them together. Most recently, I helped the town's PTOs navigate the pandemic by bringing community and connection to families during these challenging times. These challenges are not yet over. By listening actively and advocating effectively I can continue to bring people together to work in the best interests of our children and our schools. I have a proven track record of collaboration and I look forward to having a greater impact at the Board table.

2. The pandemic moved the goalposts. Yes, Darien's students lost instructional time, but globally students lost instructional time. Thankfully, Darien had more in-person school last year than much of the nation. Yet there are sure to be deficits, and I understand staff are currently conducting assessments to determine curriculum adjustments.

Most importantly, I believe the district should focus on social emotional needs and the most foundational losses, such as reading, writing and socialization for our younger students. As a BoE member, I would help ensure resources are being directed effectively to meet these needs, and I would advocate for ongoing communication between school and home on the solutions for now and the future.

Stacey J. Tie Democratic Party 10 Clocks Lane

1. The moral responsibility of the Board of Education is to give Administration and staff the tools to create knowledgeable, inquisitive and empathetic students so that they are properly prepared to join a fast and ever-changing future. I've been watching Board of Education meetings for seven years, and lately they seem to have veered from this mission. Political motivation and personal agendas have overtaken moral imperative. Instead, the board should be focusing on early intervention, innovation, inclusion, differentiation, various student success outcomes, whole child development, and academic excellence in a way that is fiscally responsible. Through my work as a child advocate and on the RTM Finance and Budget committee, I have the experience needed to accomplish just that.

2. I would focus on social-emotional learning and social skill development as both impact mental health which affects a child's ability to learn; smaller class sizes so students get more attention day in and day out; and smaller caseloads for specialists - particularly speech and language pathologists who are instrumental in the building blocks of literacy and social skills. The district is already working to remediate lost instructional time by assessing students and adjusting curriculum, adding a psychologist at DHS and adding a literacy specialist at the elementary schools. As a board member, it would be my responsibility to both support the district in the actions they have already taken, as well as bring new solutions to the table.

***David Brown Republican Party 15 Revere Road**

1. I am motivated to serve again because I know how important this team will be in setting the direction our schools will take in the coming years, and I want to have a voice at the table.

Due to COVID, our students are faced with an academic and emotional recovery effort that will require a great deal of support and focus by teachers and staff. I will ensure our administration prioritizes that effort and is held accountable to parents.

Recent discussions about curriculum and oversight have also illuminated how important the Board's role is in ensuring transparency and setting educational priorities for our children. I am committed to delivering an academically robust, agenda-free education in Darien, and ask for your support on November 2.

2. Students will need a focused, individualized approach to their academic and emotional recovery. Each child experienced COVID differently, and will therefore need assistance in different ways.

I am committed to ensuring the district has the resources it needs to support all students in that effort, and to guiding the administration in prioritizing that personal recovery over other agendas that are competing today for attention and time spent in the classroom.

Tara A. Wurm Republican Party 17 Mystic Lane

1. I was inspired to run to help navigate the challenges that have arisen due to COVID and the social unrest we've experienced in the last eighteen months.

As a former financial professional, I look forward to participating in the budget process with an eye toward fiscal discipline, transparency, and accountability as well as investing intelligently in our students. As a candidate for a Masters degree in Clinical Mental Health counseling, I am also highly focused on ensuring our students have the emotional support they need to succeed.

As a parent and longtime student advocate in the school system, I look forward to lending my voice at the board table in support of critical thinking skills, diversity of thought and retention of local decision-making. Political ideology has no place in the classroom, and I am passionate about providing our children with a robust, agenda-free education.

2. Every child has been affected differently by the pandemic, there has never been a more important time to individualize education. Balancing systemic data collection with an individualized approach to remediation will be key.

I believe channels of communication between parents, teachers and administration must be open. Parents and teachers should be communicating what they are seeing at home and in school and teachers need support from administration in garnering the resources they need.

Working together with an open dialogue between all stakeholders with singular focus on

advancement of the student, I believe every child can reach their potential and recover from this difficult time.

Candidate for Assessment Appeals

Vote for One
11/08/2021 – 11/10/2025

Question:

For Voter education purposes, please explain the responsibilities of your office.
75 word limit

***Glenn S. Ritch Democratic Party 57 Hale Lane**

No response.

***Christopher S. Peters Republican Party 218 Old Kings Highway North**

The three members of the Board of Assessment Appeals meet with property owners who don't feel the Town Assessor has accurately valued their property. Our responsibility is to consider both the applicant's value and the Town's value and decide if either is correct or it's somewhere between and then adjust the value accordingly. We look at both land and improvements and consider the unique factors that impact the value of each.

Candidates for Planning & Zoning Commission Full Term

Vote for up to Two
11/08/2021 – 11/10/2025

Questions:

1. To what extent should climate change be factored into Planning and Zoning decisions?

2. Should Darien do more to encourage affordable housing?

250 Words in total

Adam Balgach Democratic Party 55 Cedar Gate Road

1. As witnessed by the recent 200 and 500 year storms this past summer which caused significant flood damage to both private and public property, climate change should be one of many factors in the decision making process. After the storms almost ten years ago Darien incorporated several stronger measures to our regulations to address drainage and flooding. As the climate changes, the forecasted climate in the Northeast is expected to get wetter, with storms bringing more intense rain like those of this past summer. With this knowledge Planning and Zoning

should seek to build on the current foundation to ensure that any development incorporates a changing climate.

2. Darien should use its zoning regulations to encourage more housing options for everyone, which includes affordable housing. As a very desirable place to live we should shape our regulations to encourage growth in the number of housing units available so that we can be a more inclusive town for every family that wants to move here.

***Stephen P. Olvany Republican Party 49 Echo Dr. North**

1. Our recent inundation with flooding has all of us concerned. P&Z had the forethought in 2009 to pass the flood mitigations Regulations. We know more needs to be done on this including the update of FEMA to our town flood maps. I live in this town and have experienced these hardships too, and will work with our neighbors to find even more solutions to these complicated problems.

2. We are the most forward-thinking town in the State on affordable housing. We are being emulated by our peer towns as an example of Best in Class. Between 2000-2020, the total number of approved and constructed multi-family units within Darien is 860 with over 31%, or 272, designated as affordable multi-family housing. We value diversity in housing stock and affordable housing. We are already on a great pathway. Hearing the voice of our local residents, and ensuring their voice matters, helps us all to continue this important work.

***James H. Rand Republican Party 31 Ox Ridge Lane**

No response.

Candidates for Planning & Zoning Commission Fill Vacancy for Two Years

**Vote for One
11/02/2021 – 11/13/2023**

Questions:

1. To what extent should climate change be factored into Planning and Zoning decisions?

2. Should Darien do more to encourage affordable housing?

250 Words in total

***Geoffrey W. Ball Republican Party 6 Bates Farm Lane**

No response.

Candidates for Constables
Vote for up to Two
11/08/2021 – 11/13/2023

Question:

For Voter education purposes, please explain the responsibilities of your office.
75 word limit

***Louis James Calastro Republican Party** 15 Hollow Tree Ridge Road

No response.

***Alan T. Hyatt Republican Party** 114 West Avenue

No response.

Representative Town Meeting

The Representative Town Meeting is determined annually by elector apportionment and cannot exceed 100 members. Legislative powers for the town are vested in this body. Members serve two-year terms, do not get compensated and are not elected based on party affiliation. Its responsibilities include passing laws and ordinances, appropriating money and approving collective bargaining contracts involving town employees.

Ballots will vary depending on the voting district. There may be write-in candidates in some of the districts, but you must ask at your polling location. Write-in candidates must receive a minimum of 25 votes to serve on the RTM.

Attendance records for RTM members are provided for your information at the end of the RTM question response section. RTM incumbents are noted with a *.

Please note the polling location of your District.

Question:

What are the three most important issues facing our town?
150 word limit

District 1
Poll Location: 35 Leroy Avenue
Vote for up to ten

***Luisa Brakman 17 Sylvan Road**

We are a community that offers excellent schools and many opportunities; that cares about its citizens and has a beautiful natural environment. We need to work to empower our residents,

listening to and learning from to address issues. I am concerned about the state interfering in our affairs (our schools); about struggling residents and our elderly that cannot afford Darien and development that impacts the natural beauty of our town. Having a philosophy of “know your neighbor” matters, staying connected, listening and sharing, then acting with their interests on the top of your mind.

***Patti Finn Bumgardner 64 Hanson Road**

I have served on the RTM for 13+ years, presently as Vice Chair of the Parks and Recreation Committee and on the Rules Committee, and previously on the Public Works and the Town Government and Structure Committees. I believe flood mitigation should be a top priority for our town. We must be proactive versus reactive and update our infrastructure, so families and businesses are not severely impacted. Another important issue is the improvement and maintenance of our parks and beaches to the highest standards of care for our town. Playgrounds, the new basketball and pickleball courts, walking paths and our beaches are being used at an increased level as our community is relishing outdoor space. A third concern is balancing our capital and infrastructure needs with managing the mill rate. Making prudent investments in the town infrastructure will help maintain and improve our property values.

***Patrick Keane 10 Pembroke Road**

No response.

***Colin J. Kelly 16 Sherry Lane**

No response.

***Derek M. Lublin 24 Maplewood Drive**

No response.

***Karen McNicoll 43 Salisbury Road**

Education: Darien has a highly regarded education systems, with the High School number one in the State. It is important to maintain a fiscally sound education budget while ensuring continued high educational standards, innovation, and broad program offerings for all students. Productive and informative communication between the schools, the Board of Education and the people of Darien should be maintained.

Infrastructure issues: drainage in Darien. Drainage in some areas in Darien has long been an issue, and work has been done to correct this. However, the changing climate will result in even heavier rainfall in our area. We need to make provision for this now, to protect the town and people’s livelihoods

Affordable housing: ensuring and supporting the provision of affordable housing in the town that is a benefit for the whole town. It will help Darien become an even more vibrant community with an equitable, sustainable, and prosperous future.

***Lois J. Schneider 31 Maywood Road**

The three key issues that I currently see facing Darien include: local control, managing growth and implications of recent flooding.

The state introduced several measures which were not passed but opened up discussions about allowing other towns and/or state groups to affect what is happening here. We need to be concerned about this and stay involved not only at the local level, but also the state level.

There are several major new home/business communities that are currently under development working cooperatively with town boards. This needs to be continued as we carefully redevelop areas of town. We need to be sure that the town infrastructure and schools can support the current development in town (i.e. flooding issues) and any reasonable new development.

Please vote for me so I can continue supporting District 1 and our town as we all work thru these important issues.

***Jenny Schwartz 8 Saddle Ridge Road**

The three most important issues facing our town are (i) the pandemic's impact on our schools, (ii) near term capital needs, and (iii) increasing taxes. The impact on our students and teachers from remote learning, social distancing, and mask-wearing have yet to be fully assessed and understood. Ensuring that our teachers and staff have the financial, technical and community support they need to deliver a high caliber Darien public school education is the most important issue at hand. Secondly, our near-term capital needs include three school renovations/construction projects, potential flood mitigation projects, and the need to improve our parks and beaches, all of which will likely require new bond issuance, which impacts the mil rate. Lastly, the mil rate has grown 27% over the past 10 years. Darien needs a vision for the future. How that vision gets executed requires innovation, fiscal prudence, and transparent community engagement from leadership.

***Bert von Stuelpnagel 61 St. Nicholas Road**

Our town continues to thrive based on its outstanding education system, vibrant community and favorable fiscal discipline. These are accomplishments that we all cherish, but also want to be vigilant about. We need to protect what we have, and to develop services further where we can without giving up fiscal discipline. The Darien RTM has an important role to play in answering these challenges, and I am looking forward to adding another two years to my seven years of service in town government. As to fiscal discipline, RTM Finance and Budget has a strong role in analyzing and recommending school and town budgets that are sound and effective; I hope to continue to serve on that committee. One warning: Darien residents and their representatives need to be alert to efforts by the State Legislature to infringe on our school district and local authority for planning and zoning.

District 2
Poll Location: Town Hall
Vote for up to eight

Vincent Arguibau 69 Salem Straits

Two storms this summer showed the soon to be formed Flood Committee will have to consider major infrastructure projects to increase the capacity of piping under I95 to solve previous flooding at Noroton Heights and now downtown Darien. Secondly Darien should look to develop and finance solutions locally and avoid as much as possible Hartford's strings that bind, particularly with programs to build up our resilience that require immediate attention. Thirdly I ask my Delafield Island and Tokeneke District 2 constituents to allow piped sewer lines in their neighborhoods such as we have in Salem Straits and Long Neck Point and let the marshes and channels in Scott Cove to come back to what they were when I was a child.

***William Cusack 219 Old Kings Highway South**

No response.

***Mia Handler 9 Sunswyck Road**

1-Pedestrian Safety. Darien should be a place where everyone is able to move around and feel safe. Continuing to focus on safe measures such as increased cross walks, sidewalks and patrolling for speeding cars will keep Darien as a coveted location to live.
2-The Changing Environment. Many of town residents and small businesses have faced damage relating to recent storms. These environmental changes are not going away, and we need to learn how to adapt to protect individuals and businesses and ideally lead the area with 'greener' ways of living.
3- Maintaining a financially conservative budget. We have learned in the last 2 years that there is no way to predict what the future holds.

***Susanne Handler 11 Homewood Lane**

Some of the most important issues facing Darien today, would be
—Address the water/ drainage before the next storm comes.
—Try to facilitate and allow the new down town development to progress as quickly and efficiently as possible.
—Allow for a more organized pedestrian / bicycle infrastructure throughout Darien.

Jeffrey Hudson 10 Five Mile River Road

No response.

***Jacqueline L. Miller 84 Fitch Ave**

I'm Jacquie Miller, and I'm thrilled for the opportunity to continue to represent the residents of District 2. I believe that the three biggest issues facing Darien today are infrastructure, in particular the need to respond to recent flooding events, but also to ensure that sidewalks and traffic patterns serve the needs of pedestrians, bikers, and drivers in town; education, making sure that Darien continues to offer first-rate learning experiences to all students; and diversity and inclusion, ensuring that our community is a welcoming and non-discriminatory environment for all residents and visitors.

***Iris B. Mix 4 Wild Rose Lane**

I believe the current top issues are as follows:

- 1) Health and Social Services should be reviewed, improved, and streamlined. The town did well to pivot during the pandemic, however we need to reconsider how we provide services and integrate with charitable organizations. Examples needing improvement are an additional social worker to support our elderly, improved town technology and additional monetary support for our volunteer EMS, Post 53.
- 2) The town needs a plan for flood mitigation and response. This will require cooperation between town planning and zoning, public works, local businesses, developers, and property owners. It will require a review and update of environmental focused building codes. Improvements on town owned parks, beaches and other land should undergo environmental assessment.
- 3) The town needs to continue to improve and expand sidewalks, bike lanes, and dog parks to support outdoor access to town resources.

District 3

Poll Location: Noroton Heights Fire Department

Vote for up to eleven

Kari Cardone 17 Park Lane

To me, the three most important issues facing our town are: 1) Keeping local control of our schools and planning and zoning. We don't want Hartford regionalizing our high-quality school district or tell us what we should build in our quaint New England town. 2) Keeping our town fiscally responsible while making certain that our schools stay exemplary and our parks, beaches and surrounding areas stay the beautiful town where we chose to live. 3) I'd like to see our RTM encourage the BOE to follow an inclusive review process so that curriculum materials accurately reflect community values. I would also like to encourage the BOE to use financial appropriations where appropriate because they have proven to be a very effective tool.

***Adele M. Conniff 8 Wheat Lane**

Having served on the RTM Parks & Recreation Committee for the past fourteen years, my focus remains on our parks. The pandemic brought increased appreciation of our parks with usage

substantially increasing, highlighting the need for further investment. Elsa and Ida brought dramatic flooding and damage which particularly affected Pear Tree Beach. We need to fix the boat ramp and invest in the “back” beach, raising the parking lot, or we may soon lose the beach completely.

Darien’s beaches are among our great assets.
I hope to continue serving District 3.

***Holly Giordano 17 Leeuwarden Lane**

No response.

***Eric Golus 4 Chester Road**

Hello Mother Nature!!!! This summer we’ve seen hurricanes and flooding and tree removal, oh my. Just look on social media or read letters to local papers and you see how as a town the issues of proper drainage and the removal of trees are taking center state. Mother Nature has taken a toll on local businesses through flooding and has driven some Darien residents to take issue with what they view as the unnecessary removal of trees in preparation for future storms. These are challenges that must be resolved in the near term as time isn’t necessary on our side. I’m encouraged by the amount of discussion going on concerning these issues and look forward to a day when you can pick up the paper and the only discussion of the weather is in the weather section.

***Elizabeth Lane 16 Hillcrest Ave**

I believe preserving the excellent quality of our school district is the single most important issue in town every year. This year, the evident impact of climate change in increased flooding is also a vital problem that we need to address. Finally, I believe we need to do both of those things in a fiscally prudent manner, utilizing our resources in as efficient a manner as possible.

***M. Carolina McGoey 28 Kensett Lane**

1. Diversity and inclusion: making Darien a more inclusive & diverse town is a very important issue that we are facing and making sure our schools are educating our children for the world we are currently living in which is more diverse and inclusive should be a priority.
2. Flooding: definitely one of the issues of most concern for me and our town. We need solutions and we need them now.
3. Taxation: our residents should not be over taxed for the purpose of having a very healthy rainy day fund and the funds that are a surplus to this fund should be properly deployed to make sure we are prioritizing and fixing the problems we currently have.

***Sue-Ellen Mitchell 50 Kensett Lane**

No response.

***Thomas Moore 26 Georgian Lane**

No response.

***Seth Morton 20 Denhurst Place**

The three most important issues facing our town relate to the impact of the pandemic. They are: Delivering quality education to our students; Supporting local businesses and following medical guidelines to minimize the spread of the various iterations of the Covid virus.

District 4
Poll Location: Precinct 4 – 1 Hindley School
Vote for up to eleven

***Martha Banks 17 Harbor Road**

Schools

To assure the continued quality of our schools, provide support for:

- All COVID safety protocols
- Learning/social/emotional needs that have arisen due to pandemic
- Redesign/construction process to remove portables, redesign libraries, determine appropriate classroom size/count for Hindley, Holmes, Royle
- Challenging state regionalization efforts that provide no clear benefits

Environment/Safety

- Support efforts directed at climate sustainability
- Maintain town infrastructure
- Review/update flood mitigation plans –take action when benefits justify cost
- Promote personal responsibility for maintaining areas adjacent to waterways
- Aggressively seek grants to help fund sustainability projects
- Maintain parks and pursue further development thoughtfully and with public input
- Enforce traffic laws to support pedestrian/car safety
- Continue campaign to lock cars overnight

Capital Projects

Ensure that all proposed capital projects are thoroughly planned/rigorously reviewed to ensure beneficial, timely and fiscally sound outcomes

You can contact me at: mbanks@darienct.gov

***Jim Cameron 55 Dubois Street**

Among the many issues confronting Darien:

Open, Transparent & Participative Government: To increase civic engagement we must expand public access to all aspects of town government. That's why I have dedicated the last 15 years to my work on TV79, to bring our leaders and their decision-making into our homes. We need to engage more citizens to join boards and commissions and to volunteer for civic groups.

Flooding: We need to evaluate what can be done to our infrastructure to cope with the inevitable consequences of global warming, both its impact on the shoreline and inland waterways.

Maintain Home Rule: We need to preserve our independence from increasing state attempts to regulate the way we run our town, its zoning and access to mass transit. We know what's best for our town, not Hartford.

I have served on the RTM since 2003 and welcome the opportunity to continue my service.

***Christine Castles 15 Dubois Street**

No response.

Dan Guller 10 Walmsley Road

1. Pandemic Response

20 months into the pandemic and there's still a lot of confusion about how to keep our community safe. I believe we need to listen to science and scientists and base our recommendations accordingly;

2. Climate Change

Storms are getting worse, just as climate scientists have been telling us they would. Our town infrastructure needs to be able to handle larger volumes of water and higher winds than they used to. We can't keep mother nature at bay, but we can be better prepared for the next weather event;

3. Diversity

Darien is a vibrant, thriving community. But we have a reputation of inhospitality. We need to turn away from the mistakes we made in the past. Let's make affordable housing and equitable zoning a priority. Plus, it's time we had a local non-discrimination act that clearly states all are welcome to live and work here.

***Eric Kanigan 23 Walmsley Road**

No response.

***Frank Kemp 20 Seagate Road**

The three most important issues:

- balancing P&Z decisions that preserve the character of our town's New England tradition with requirements of contemporary growth
 - supporting the goals of the school district in terms of enhanced curriculum, secure and safe facilities, and the efficient conclusion of the current renovation projects
 - continuation of the collaboration, inclusion and civility in the budgeting process so as to keep taxes low, consistent with the needs of a developing and prosperous community.
- Underlying each of these themes is the importance of citizen participation in the decision making process.

I have served as Chair of the RTM's Town Government Structure and Administration (TGS&A) Committee, coordinating updates to the Town Charter – clarifying responsibilities of staff departments, regulations relating to plastic and paper bags and the blight ordinance. Re-elected and re-assigned to TGS&A, I look forward to continuing modernization of the Town Charter.

***Joseph Miceli 22 Nickerson Lane**

The most important issue facing Darien in the future is maintaining its high reputation as one of the most desirable places in the country to raise a family. I am a second generation Darien parent who has raised my family (a third generation) in Darien. Darien requires hands on participation by all of its residents. We can never leave our guard down allowing the town's future to be left on automatic pilot. A strong and steady course with vision must be followed. We must always be on the look out for opportunities to improve the quality of life for all residents. An example of this vision is finding a way to secure the Ziegler property to enhance Darien's open space, reduce the need of another elementary school and supplement our waterfront activities.

***Andrew Millar 18 LaForge Road**

- 1-Preserve Pear Tree Beach from town plans to develop it
- 2-Flooding: Comprehensive plan to control flooding. It's been a problem since at least 2006
- 3-Local control of zoning, property taxes, housing, education and curriculum

***Sandra Savage 22 Pleasant Street**

No response.

District 5
Poll Location: Town Hall
Vote for up to eleven

***Kenneth Fiveson 27 Edgerton Street**

No response.

***Christopher Noonan 5 High School Lane**

- 1 – The quality of our schools and education system
- 2 – The health and safety of our town residents – walking/pedestrian safety, traffic and speed concerns, Covid and other public health matters
- 3 – Promoting diversity and inclusion throughout all aspects of the town

***Erin Noonan 5 High School Lane**

There are quite a few very important issues facing our town; the issues I am most passionate about are:

- maintaining the quality of our schools,
- ensuring the safety of our residents (from pedestrian safety to Covid safety and everything in between), and
- promoting inclusivity – in all its forms – in our community.

***James Patrick 22 Edgerton Street**

There are certainly many issues facing the town of Darien. As the current RTM Chair of District 5 and Chair of the RTM Public Health & Safety Committee, I feel Pedestrian Safety, Construction Congestion, and Vehicle Speeding are three of the most important in town affecting all citizens. While these concerns do get addressed by town officials, more work is needed to be done. Noroton Heights, Middlesex Middle School, and the High School, all in District 5, are impacted by these concerns. Addressing these three topics will continue to be a priority for the RTM and me.

***Laura Pesce-Gray 131 Holmes Ave**

No response.

***Waddill Platt 28 Holly Lane**

No response.

***Ann Reed 15 Libby Lane**

Three most important issues facing the town

1. Infrastructure

Flooding over the summer has shown us we have much work to do to keep our town and its homeowners and business owners safe in the future. We need to work towards understanding how we prevent catastrophic flooding in areas of town that have been hard hit and what that will cost.

2. Repairing and modernizing 3 elementary schools

These projects are essential for these schools to continue to operate safely and comfortably for all students and staff

3. Management and growth of town owned land

As the town grows so does the demand on parks and Town land

***H. William Smith 2 Tyler Drive**

I believe the three most important issues facing Darien are identifying, prioritizing and funding (i) essential infrastructure projects such as repairs to Town-owned roads and bridges, (ii) flood mitigation projects and (iii) priority capital projects at the Town's schools and municipal

facilities. As RTM members we need to act as good stewards of the Town's resources and be prepared to exercise our oversight function to ensure that tax dollars are used wisely.

District 6
Poll Location: 35 Leroy Avenue
Vote for up to eleven

***Barry Baldwin 10 Rock Spring Lane**

The most important issue facing our town continues to be ensuring that our schools provide the highest quality education experience. The public school budget accounts for 2/3 of the entire town, tax supported, expenditures. Furthermore, a quality public school education is the major reason young families choose to purchase homes in Darien. As a parent of three kindergarten thru 12th grade DHS grads, I will continue to support our excellent schools.

Other issues that we need to focus on are maintaining a safe environment in town and ensuring that we have local management of planning and zoning. With several major development projects underway there are going to be significant changes in coming years and we will need to keep a careful eye on how these changes will effect our schools and public safety. In closing, be sure to lock your cars and.....please get vaccinated.

***Mary Nevin Gauthier 17 Harriett Lane**

Darien is a wonderful multifaceted community, and the RTM provides an opportunity to thoughtfully participate in our local government. Personally, I believe the three most important issues facing our town are:

- Approaching the growing environmental and sustainability concerns at the local level with cooperative solutions.
- Continuing to proactively navigate the effects from the pandemic. This includes everything from addressing the economic impacts and providing support to our education and public health systems to thoughtfully approaching growth and development as our town dynamics evolve.
- Preservation of and support for green space within our town.

***Janet Grogan 719 Post Road, Apt. 317**

I have been a member of the RTM since 1987, and served as a chairman of District 6 for several years.

1. The MOST important issue facing Darien is working to reduce the amount of flooding happening in so many places in town. The big solutions sought and required are available, but very difficult to achieve. The Flood Mitigation Strategy Advisory Committee needs to be revived, and access to appropriate agencies sought.
2. Certainly maintaining the excellent reputation of our schools goes without saying. Recent disagreement on curriculum is not helpful to this pursuit, and should not reach the non-partisan RTM.

3. Minimum basic improvements for Pear Tree Point Beach are all that are necessary. This is the case especially now as we face frequent unpredicted weather events, and Darien will be devoting resources to flooding remediation.

***Liza Lucas 208 Old Kings Highway North**

1. Pandemic recovery and response
2. Storm remediation and preparedness
3. Improvements to education infrastructure

***Martha Luz 23 Fairview Avenue**

No response.

***Sarah Madson 10 Musket Lane**

I have lived in Darien for over 12 years, and my husband and I have raised our two children in this wonderful town. While there are many important issues facing our town the three most important issues I see are: 1. An aging inventory of school and town buildings. 2. An uncertain source of state funding and a potential for new state charges. 3. Preserving and enhancing our parks, beaches, library and all the programs in town that are such an important part of this incredible place we chose to live. I ask for your vote to serve our community by providing the leadership necessary to accomplish these goals.

***Peter Orphanos 67 Raymond Street**

I have been honored to have served Darien as an RTM member since 2017. The RTM's unique non-partisan structure is special to me and I want to continue to Darien's town government.

***Shannon Silsby 42 Mansfield Avenue**

Building resilience in Darien requires tackling the following three issues:

- 1) Progressing and funding an educational system that supports all learners
- 2) Investing in public health and safety including:
 - assessing the impact of climate change today on our community while proactively working to make changes to mitigate potential future impacts
 - sidewalks and traffic safety improvements
 - best practices in policing
 - proactive public health programming
- 3) Supporting and fueling a thriving town business community that is rooted in businesses that improve the lives of town residents. A fantastic example of this is the newly proposed Montessori childcare educational center.

***William Van Loan Jr. 60 Raymond Street**

No response.

***Theresa Vogt 22 Circle Road**

Darien must continue to move forward in our fast changing, global society. As such I believe our elected officials must focus on creating a community where we can all actively listen to each other to find common ground be it with regard to our schools or the pressing needs of our citizens and business owners. We must also accept that climate change is real and any further development must consider how they will impact our environment long term.

ATTENDANCE RECORDS

The following are the attendance records for the Representative Town Meeting members for the past year. There were ten meetings in the 2020-2021 RTM calendar, excluding an organizational meeting, but some members joined after the year's session began. The attendance record notes both how many meetings were attended as well as how many meetings for which they were eligible. *Continuing candidates on this year's ballots are noted by **

DISTRICT 1

Sarah M. Baldwin	10/10
Amy Barsanti	9/10
*Luis Brakman	10/10
*Patti Finn Baumgardner	10/10
Curtis A. Butler	9/10
Diane G. Conologue	10/10
*Patrick Keane	9/10
*Colin J. Kelly	9/10
*Derek M. Lublin	9/10
*Karen McNicoll	10/10
Cassie Ann Mecser	9/10
Holly S. Mitchell	10/10
*Lois J. Schneider	10/10
*Jenny Schwartz	9/10
*Bert von Stuelpnagel	10/10
Priscilla Wong	9/10

DISTRICT 2

Elizabeth C. Bacon	7/10
Michael A. P. Casolo	10/10
*William Cusack	10/10
*Mia Handler	9/10
*Susanne Handler	10/10
James Henry Howe	9/10
Robert K. Lyons	10/10
*Jacqueline Miller	1/1
*Iris B. Mix	8/10
Cheryl Russell	10/10
Clara C. Sartori	10/10

Barbara L. Thorne	9/10
Stacey Tie	10/10
Michael C. Wheeler	10/10
Penelope Wilson	10/10

DISTRICT 3

*Adele M. Conniff	10/10
Jack H. Davis	9/10
*Holly Giordano	10/10
*Eric Golus	9/10
*Elizabeth Lane	9/10
Petr Marousek	10/10
*M. Carolina McGoey	9/10
Marcy A. Minnick	9/10
*Sue-Ellen Mitchell	10/10
*Thomas Moore	9/10
*Seth Morton	10/10
Edward A. Washecka	10/10
Jennifer Woodbury	8/10
Lisa Yarnell	10/10
Scott Zimmerman	10/10

DISTRICT 4

*Martha Banks	10/10
Meghana Bhat	9/10
Nicholas N. Branca	9/10
*Jim Cameron	10/10
*Christine Castles	10/10
Werner Domittner	10/10
*Eric Kanigan	9/9
*Frank Kemp	10/10
*Joseph Miceli	8/10
*Andrew Millar	8/10
Rolf C. Obin	9/10
Brian J. Rayhill	10/10
Jan S. Raymond	7/10
*Sandra Savage	10/10

DISTRICT 5

Mark R. Adiletta	8/10
David F. Bayne	10/10
*Kenneth Fiveson	7/10
Lindsay Kelly	8/10
Megan Kilcourse	10/10
Harry McLaughlin	10/10
Jennifer M. Moller	6/10

*Christopher Noonan	1/1
*Erin Noonan	1/1
*James Patrick	10/10
*Laura Pesce-Gray	8/9
*Waddill Platt	9/9
*Ann Reed	10/10
Shiela B. Sherwood	9/10
*H. William Smith	10/10
Michael Sean Wheeler	4/9

DISTRICT 6

Frank H. Adelman	9/10
*Barry Baldwin	10/10
Amy R. Chickles	9/10
*Mary Nevin Gauthier	1/1
*Janet Grogan	9/9
Susan R. Lauritzen	10/10
*Liza Lucas	10/10
*Martha Luz	10/10
*Sarah Madson	9/9
*Peter Orphanos	10/10
Richard Poli	9/10
*Shannon Silsby	10/10
Christopher H. Taylor	9/10
*William Van Loan Jr	9/10
*Theresa Vogt	10/10
Robert A. Werner	10/10
Tara A. Wurm	9/10

POLLING LOCATIONS

District 1	35 Leroy Avenue
District 2	Town Hall
District 3	Noroton Heights Fire Department
District 4	Hindley School
District 5	Town Hall
District 6	35 Leroy Avenue

Voting hours are 6 a.m. to 8 p.m.