



# **The League of Women Voters of Wilmette**

presents a

## **VOTER GUIDE**

A guide to the candidates in the

**April 5, 2011**

### **Consolidated General Election**

Statements from candidates running for the:

**Wilmette Village Board of Trustees  
Wilmette Park District Board of Commissioners  
Wilmette District 39 Board of Education  
Wilmette Public Library Board of Trustees  
New Trier District 203 Board of Education  
Avoca District 37 Board of Education**

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**ABOUT THIS VOTERS GUIDE**

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization that neither endorses nor opposes candidates or political parties. Our purpose is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government. It is our purpose in producing this Voters Guide to provide information to the public about all the candidates seeking election to local government.

This Voters Guide contains information as submitted by candidates for the above-listed offices. All candidates were sent a copy of a questionnaire, with a request to submit written answers within a total word limit. The material submitted by the candidates was NOT edited by the Wilmette League of Women Voters prior to publication, although the format was made consistent throughout the publication. Candidates are listed alphabetically.

This Voters Guide also can be found on the Wilmette League of Women Voters website, [www.lwvwilmette.org](http://www.lwvwilmette.org).

This League of Women Voters of Wilmette wishes to thank the North Shore Community Bank & Trust Company of Wilmette for its funding of this Voter Guide.

**Michael G. Bailey**  
**VILLAGE OF WILMETTE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**In what ways are you particularly qualified to be a Wilmette Trustee?**

I have 30 years of experience working with local governments as an attorney specializing in public finance. My public service includes serving as the Chair of the IRS Advisory Committee on Tax Exempt and Government Entities, which advises the IRS on its dealings with state and local governments and nonprofit organizations. My experience is both practical (completing numerous transactions for local governments) and policy-oriented (for example, authoring reports of an important federal advisory committee). I am a partner in a major Chicago law firm.

The challenges facing the Village call for practical experience implementing projects as well as sound policy judgment. My skills and experience would help me to make significant contributions to our Village government.

My wife and I are longstanding Wilmette residents, and are the proud parents of two graduates of Wilmette public schools. I share a deep respect for the family-friendly values of our community.

**Describe your strategies for dealing with reduction of municipal revenue while providing the services that you believe are central to the needs and preferences of Wilmette's residents. What services (if any) would you suggest deleting or outsourcing, and what services that are not currently provided should be?**

I am generally supportive of the cost-cutting strategies that are set forth in the Village's 2011 Budget, including the new solid waste contract and joint contracts for services with other villages. The appropriate role of the Village Board is to continue to work with our capable Village Manager and staff to continue to explore similar cost-cutting opportunities.

I generally support consideration of outsourcing of Village services to achieve cost savings, and believe that the private sector in most instances can deliver services more efficiently than local government. Outsourcing of certain core administrative functions (for example, the recent outsourcing of the legal department), however, needs to be monitored on an ongoing basis with care. Outsourcing of such core functions may yield short-term savings, but entail hidden long-term costs because of lack of continuity.

The Village Board should continue to explore the financial viability of additional services with environmental benefits, such as voluntary programs to recycle Christmas trees and for composting.

**Regarding the Village Center Master Plan:**

**a. What are your priorities for implementation and what aspects of the Plan present problems for you?**

**b. Please discuss zoning regulations in the Village Center, focusing on density, height of buildings, and mixed-used opportunities.**

I support the Master Plan, and applaud the many members of our community who contributed to this important project. The most difficult part, however, lies ahead: implementation in a manner that respects the many interests of the community.

The first priority of the Village should be to take actions that are within its control, such as modernization of the zoning regulations for the Village Center. Implementation of actual development will almost certainly occur in phases; the timing of those phases may be largely dependent on the initiatives of private landowners and developers. In implementing the Master Plan it is particularly important to consider whether each phase can reasonably stand on its own.

Although I share the goal of fostering commercial development, the need to enhance existing community services within the Village Center also should be a core concern. In particular, the concerns voiced by the Library Board and its patrons need to continue be carefully considered in implementation. To the extent that the Village can determine

the actual staging of development, I believe that completion of the parking structure is most likely to be a useful catalyst for other development.

I do not believe that bigger is intrinsically better, particularly for our Village Center. Although I support the Master Plan, actual implementation of the larger scale projects (for example, 5-story structures) should be based on determinations at the time of approval that there is a reasonable expectation that at least certain of the substantial community benefits contemplated by the Master Plan will be actually achieved, such as stimulus of commercial activity, necessary enhancement of financial viability, environmental benefits and opportunities for housing appropriate to community needs.

I strongly believe that, if any taxpayer subsidies are proposed for implementation of elements of the Master Plan, those proposals need to be highlighted to the public for community discussion.

**As a Trustee, what role would you take to foster environmental initiatives in the Village?**

I strongly believe that the Village should endeavor to be a leader in environmental initiatives. The Village Board should focus on development of voluntary, not mandatory, environmental initiatives, and take full advantage of the resources and ideas offered by the Environmental and Energy Commission and community organizations such as Go Green Wilmette. I believe that most residents of our community are willing to voluntarily embrace environmental initiatives if they can be shown how to readily fit such initiatives into their daily lives.

The Village Board needs of course to be fiscally prudent, and to carefully evaluate the cost of any proposal, but should not automatically reject environmental proposals that entail only very modest additional possible costs.

**As a Trustee, please describe how you would encourage a vibrant residential and retail atmosphere in Wilmette.**

Wilmette neighborhoods now in general have a great residential atmosphere. The main role of the Village Board in this respect should be to avoid taking actions that detract from the character of our residential neighborhoods or that damage what already works.

The Village Board should continue to play an active role in encouraging more vibrant retail districts, in particular by modernizing zoning ordinances and working cooperatively with local business. The Village Board should not lose sight of the need to promote retail districts in addition to the Village Center.

**Please share your views about the possible consolidation of several of the existing commissions and committees that serve Wilmette.**

The Wilmette community has extraordinary talent to contribute to Village government. A major goal of the Village Board should be to continue to find ways to foster broad community participation, even if doing so may entail modest administrative cost.

As a member of a federal advisory committee, I can attest that formal committees and commissions can help to better focus citizen input and government's response to citizen input.

It is appropriate, however, for the Village Board to periodically evaluate the need for and contribution of each committee and commission. I believe that it is reasonable to consider adopting sunset dates for all Village commissions and committees, in the same manner the sunset dates now apply to only certain commissions. Such an approach would accommodate extensions of the charters of committees and commissions, but would require Board action for continuation after evaluation of need, contribution and public interest. Periodic consideration of consolidation is also appropriate.

It is generally appropriate for the Village Board to ask each commission to submit specific implementable projects or reports on at least an annual basis.

**Mike Basil**  
**VILLAGE OF WILMETTE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**In what ways are you particularly qualified to be a Wilmette Trustee? If you are an incumbent, what are your most significant Board achievements.**

I am well-qualified to help lead local government, with degrees in Economics, Political Science, Law and Finance. My experience and business practice involving real estate and construction provides me with unique insight and ability to represent the interest of Wilmette homeowners in protecting and enhancing the value of their most important investment: their home.

As a Village Board member for the last four years I successfully changed the process in Wilmette for obtaining minor variances, making it much easier and quicker for homeowners to invest in their homes and thereby improve not only their own homes, but the entire community as well. I have also been a leading force in setting a new vision for downtown Wilmette business development, bringing the ULI Technical Assistance Panel and the RTA downtown master plan redevelopment grant to the Village. As the youngest candidate and member of the Village Board, with children in the local schools and decades ahead of me as a Wilmette resident, my family and I have the most to gain from setting the best possible course for Wilmette's development and progress.

**Describe your strategies for dealing with reduction of municipal revenue while providing the services that you believe are central to the needs and preferences of Wilmette's residents. What services (if any) would you suggest deleting or outsourcing, and what services that are not currently provided should be?**

With approximately two-thirds of the Village's operating budget committed to salaries and benefits packages that are covered by collective bargaining agreements and otherwise dictated to us by the state legislature, there are surprisingly few areas where the Village Board is able to control, let alone reduce, spending. While we have been struggling financially to maintain the current level of core village services, we have been making good progress in the last two years with outsourcing certain functions in the community development department and cross-training our existing employees to cover multiple functions. There are undoubtedly more opportunities for significant savings using technology and outsourcing, as well as increased collaboration with our neighbors in providing public safety services to our residents.

**Regarding the Village Center Master Plan:**

**a. What are your priorities for implementation and what aspects of the Plan present problems for you?**

The key priority for implementation at this point should be to quickly amend the zoning code to reflect the height, density, parking and technical requirements called for in the Lakota Group preferred plan. This will increase the value of the key downtown parcels covered by the plan and will make these downtown blocks primed for redevelopment when the economy recovers.

The plan should not be regarded as a one-size-fits-all or take-it-or-leave-it proposition. It should be perfectly acceptable for the development community to come to the Village with its own ideas for using the land in the key Master Plan blocks, and as long as there is an effort to provide fairly comparable density, mix of uses and open space, we should not feel rigidly tethered to the particular forms, ideas and geometry set forth in the Plan.

**b. Please discuss zoning regulations in the Village Center, focusing on density, height of buildings, and mixed-used opportunities.**

The changes in height and density reflected in the Master Plan key blocks are appropriate. Beyond that, our zoning standards regarding parking are a prime culprit in deterring downtown development. Our current parking requirements are so restrictive that developers and prospective business owners are significantly discouraged from providing innovative uses of Wilmette's downtown shopping districts. Wilmette's parking ratios are too high compared to our neighboring communities, which is major factor in understanding why our neighboring towns' commercial districts have been more attractive to new businesses.

**As a Trustee, what role would you take to foster environmental initiatives in the Village?**

Wilmette's current involvement in environmental matters is appropriate, providing opportunities for individuals to recycle and making additional information available to those who seek further participation. We should be very careful about turning environmental initiatives into mandates that are imposed on all residents through the force of law. Too often in today's society we see well-intentioned environmental ideas failing to satisfy basic cost-benefit scrutiny, failing to have verifiable scientific support, or creating problematic unintended consequences. Local government should be respectful of individual liberty when dealing with these matters, and it should allow competing viewpoints on such matters to succeed or fail on their own merits.

**As a Trustee, please describe how you would encourage a vibrant residential and retail atmosphere in Wilmette.**

I will continue to work to make it easier for Wilmette residents to improve their own homes, free of unnecessary bureaucratic requirements on their projects. When a homeowner spends money improving their own home, that rising tide lifts all boats in Wilmette. As your neighbor's home value improves, so too does your own home value improve. All our policies regarding land use and regulation must be viewed with this basic principle in mind: village rules and requirements should have a primary focus and bias to protect and enhance the value of all residential real estate within our borders, and to permit and encourage our residents to improve their lot in life, literally and figuratively.

Commercially, Wilmette should be sending the message at every possible opportunity that we are "open" for business, and our policies and regulations should reflect this same sentiment. The Village Board's approval of a current moratorium on downtown business development is emphatically the wrong message to send. I have been a vocal opponent of the moratorium, and I hope every candidate will commit to lifting the moratorium.

**Please share your views about the possible consolidation of several of the existing commissions and committees that serve Wilmette.**

The board, commission and committee function in the Village has traditionally been an excellent avenue for residents to get involved in their community, making meaningful contributions to areas where they have particular skills or interests. The current effort to consolidate or merge these bodies is the result of the time and expense they impose on the paid staff of the Village. Preserving these volunteer opportunities while minimizing the cost to the Village is a challenge we should try to meet.

**Bob Bielinski**  
**VILLAGE OF WILMETTE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**In what ways are you particularly qualified to be a Wilmette Trustee? If you are an incumbent, what are your most significant Board achievements.**

Now more than ever, the Village Board would benefit from my financial expertise as Wilmette deals with the unprecedented challenges posed by these difficult economic times and our State's budget crisis. My 20+ years of business experience is both relevant to the issues facing the Village Board and complementary to the expertise of the current Trustees. In addition to regular Board meetings, I attended 14 meetings focused exclusively on the Village's budget or Master Plan over the past two years.

Most of my career has been spent in the financial services industry where I previously managed bond financings for state and local governments. My experience also includes serving as a financial executive for restaurant and retail companies. I currently work for a financial firm that focuses on small and middle market businesses.

I hold undergraduate engineering and management degrees from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University.

I was born and raised in the Chicago area, and as a graduate of Loyola Academy, my connection to Wilmette goes back more than 30 years. Learn more at [www.BobForWilmette.com](http://www.BobForWilmette.com).

**Describe your strategies for dealing with reduction of municipal revenue while providing the services that you believe are central to the needs and preferences of Wilmette's residents. What services (if any) would you suggest deleting or outsourcing , and what services that are not currently provided should be?**

The Village should always be looking for the most cost effective and efficient ways to carry out its primary mission of delivering municipal services to its residents, and it should continue to provide the level of service which its residents currently enjoy. I am not proposing any additional services.

With the exception of police and fire protection, I support outsourcing almost any Village function if more cost effective than delivering with internal resources. The Village already makes extensive use of outsourcing, and it regularly reviews its operations for additional opportunities.

I also support other methods used by the Village to save money including jointly bidding with other municipalities for goods and services (for example, tree trimming with Glenview), providing services to other municipalities (food inspections to Northbrook), and contracting for services from other municipalities (dead animal pickup by Evanston).

**Regarding the Village Center Master Plan:**

**a. What are your priorities for implementation and what aspects of the Plan present problems for you?**

**b. Please discuss zoning regulations in the Village Center, focusing on density, height of buildings, and mixed-used opportunities.**

I fully support the Village's efforts to encourage development in the downtown Village Center, and I agree with residents who would like to see more dining, retail and entertainment options in Wilmette. The Master Plan presents a collective vision of what our community would like to see downtown. By communicating this vision, the Village hopes to remove some uncertainty from the development process and encourage proposals.

Downtown development will not be implemented directly by the Village, but rather the aspirations of real estate developers and private property owners will determine its direction. As a result, if the Village truly wants to encourage development, it will be flexible and open to a variety of different approaches.

However, at times the Village Board will need to take action when opportunities arise which will facilitate future development, like acquiring

the property at 611 Green Bay Road.

Because the Master Plan is a vision and not a precise blueprint, I am comfortable with the plan as adopted. I share the concern that traffic patterns will have to be studied more closely in the context of specific proposals, and I also realize that most of the proposed projects are currently not economically feasible.

I am comfortable with modifying zoning regulations in the Village Center to accommodate the increased density, taller buildings and mixed uses suggested in the Master Plan which was conscientiously designed to be sensitive to the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

**As a Trustee, what role would you take to foster environmental initiatives in the Village?**

Environmental considerations are an important element of the decisions which face the Village Board. Clean air and clean water are essential to our existence. As a community fortunate enough to be situated along the lakefront, we have a particular responsibility to be good stewards of Lake Michigan, our community's source of drinking water and a national treasure.

The Village should facilitate environmentally responsible behavior by its residents and visitors. I will support initiatives that are consistent with the Village's current practices, such as its partnerships with organizations like SWANCC and Clean Air Counts.

I support the Village's current policy of incorporating environmental considerations, along with traditional considerations of product safety, price and performance into its purchasing decisions and the management of its operations, so long as incremental costs are reasonable. The Village should take a common sense approach to rules and regulations, including environmental regulations, and as it should with all of its operations, the Village should seek the most cost effective ways to achieve its environmental goals.

**As a Trustee, please describe how you would encourage a vibrant residential and retail atmosphere in Wilmette.**

The Village must constantly be mindful of the obstacles it places in the way of residents, real estate developers and small business owners. Simply put, it should be easy to operate a business in Wilmette, and I will support efforts to streamline and simplify the Village's demands on small business owners.

In addition, the Village should engage in an active dialogue with the business and real estate development communities to determine what steps it can take to make Wilmette more attractive to retail customers and businesses. My experience as an executive in the restaurant and retail industries should be helpful.

In the same vein, regulations on home builders who want to update the housing stock of the Village and homeowners who want to invest in their homes should not be overly burdensome. I will support initiatives that encourage investment in, but are also sensitive to the character of, our residential neighborhoods.

**Please share your views about the possible consolidation of several of the existing commissions and committees that serve Wilmette.**

I support the current efforts of the Administration Committee of the Village Board to streamline the functioning of the Village's commissions and committees.

The Village should make use of the significant talents of its residents by encouraging participation on commissions, and the work of the commissions is valuable to the community. However, a comprehensive review of the current configuration is appropriate since the subject matter of a number of the commissions overlap.

If after consolidating commissions, an issue arises that requires more specific expertise than available, then the Village Board should appoint an ad hoc committee, with a limited scope and term, to perform the needed advisory role.

**Dan Kaplan**  
**VILLAGE OF WILMETTE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**In what ways are you particularly qualified to be a Wilmette Trustee?**

Over the next four years, the Village faces important decisions on how best to manage its finances and invest in its future. Development in Wilmette must proceed in a fiscally responsible way that serves the needs of the community.

To these important tasks, I bring 30 years of experience working with local governments on fiscal issues in the roles of consultant, financial advisor, investment banker, credit analyst and auditor. I have closely observed and participated in the decision making processes of many local governments. With my knowledge of what has worked well in other communities, I will help the Village adopt sound, long-term financial, investment and development policies.

Throughout my career, I have collaborated with elected officials, staff and teams of professionals to understand what communities want to accomplish and to help them turn their ideas into reality. As a trustee, I want to continue doing this for the community where I have lived for 26 years and where my family and I will continue to live for many more.

**Describe your strategies for dealing with reduction of municipal revenue while providing the services that you believe are central to the needs and preferences of Wilmette's residents. What services (if any) would you suggest deleting or outsourcing, and what services that are not currently provided should be?**

As a trustee, I hope to avoid service reductions by developing long-term compensation policies that will make the Village less vulnerable to downturns in the economy and that will lead to reductions in our pension costs.

In 2009 and 2010, salary increases were well ahead of the rates of inflation. Our public safety pension liabilities and contributions are based on an actuarial assumption of future annual salary increases of 5.5% – also well above historic inflation levels.

Longer term, we need compensation systems that provide annual salary increases equal to the rate of inflation and additional increases only when employees reach specific performance standards.

These are not simple changes. But when governing boards allow wages to grow faster than their revenues, they force themselves into structural deficits where service cuts and tax increases must be considered. We need to do something different.

In the 2011 Budget, almost \$600,000 is budgeted electricity purchases. Prices in our current, three-year contract from 2009 are almost 50% higher than average daily energy prices in 2009 and 2010. This often happens with multi-year, fixed price contracts – there is always a premium to pay for a price guarantee. The Village should be able to save money next year by selecting a one-year or shorter term contract.

**Regarding the Village Center Master Plan**

**a. What are your priorities for implementation and what aspects of the Plan present problems for you?**

The Master Plan is a statement of what attractive development in the Village might one day look like. It is not a financial plan nor does it answer what financial commitments the Village should make to further development.

My priorities as Board member will be to oversee this financial plan. This begins with staff assessing the expected tax revenues and costs that can be reasonably expected so that the Village's future commitments to parking garage construction, Green Bay Road improvements and any future property acquisitions can be properly evaluated.

Investment in the Village Center must then be integrated within the overall capital improvement program. One of the Village's 2011 management objectives is to expand its long term capital plan from five to

10 years. The new capital plan should incorporate and prioritize Village Center improvements identified in the Master Plan.

Finally, financial commitments and developer proposals must be scrutinized closely, negotiated fairly and evaluated against the expected tax benefits that the public bodies in Wilmette will receive.

I have no doubts in our ability to create an attractive Village Center. The key objective is to be certain that what is created will improve the fiscal well-being of the community.

**b. Please discuss zoning regulations in the Village Center, focusing on density, height of buildings, and mixed-used opportunities.**

While I am comfortable with what has been presented in the Master Plan, I find it difficult to assess the aesthetics of the open public space. Will people find this space quiet and relaxing or feel hemmed in with buildings and traffic? I would like to see visualizations of the site from ground level before committing to a maximum height of 5-stories for the Green Bay Road block.

**As a Trustee, what role would you take to foster environmental initiatives in the Village?**

Wilmette is home to many environmentalists, including Village staff who earned a gold LEED certification for the new public works building and residents that develop renewable energy projects or participate in local green initiatives.

There is no shortage of ideas to consider. That is what makes a Trustee's job fun. I look forward to hearing from residents and Village staff and building a consensus on what to do next.

My own ideas? For our new power supply contract in 2012, the Village should evaluate purchasing a portion of its energy from one of Illinois' new wind farms or other clean energy source. We should also examine what portion of the Village vehicle fleet can be converted to natural gas or electricity.

**As a Trustee, please describe how you would encourage a vibrant residential and retail atmosphere in Wilmette.**

Anyone who has been to the Farmer's Market on a Saturday, Gilson Beach in the summer, waited at Borders to buy Harry Potter at midnight or been to Panera and Starbucks after school gets out knows how vibrant Wilmette can be.

**How do we bring more of what we enjoy to the Village? The first task is to attract new businesses to our current retail centers that have vacancies. In 2010, the total property tax rate in Wilmette was as much as 16% lower than Evanston and much of Skokie and Highland Park. We should market our tax advantage to prospective businesses.**

Longer term, the mixed-use developments envisioned in the Master Plan will bring both people and businesses to downtown Wilmette. But in what is still an uncertain economy, we need to proceed carefully. If development leads to higher taxes, new business recruitment will become more difficult.

**Please share your views about the possible consolidation of several of the existing commissions and committees that serve Wilmette.**

I attended three commission meetings in January and an Administration Committee meeting that is evaluating consolidation. My initial impression is that the functions performed by the five commissions are too diverse to be consolidated into a single Health & Human Relations Commission.

It is understandable that governing boards want accountability from the commissions that they create. We should be careful though in pursuing changes that may reduce civic involvement and opportunities for dialogue within Wilmette.

**Douglas Rathe**  
**VILLAGE OF WILMETTE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**In what ways are you particularly qualified to be a Wilmette Trustee? If you are an incumbent, what are your most significant Board achievements.**

For the past 12 years, the voters of Wilmette have elected me to serve as a Trustee on the Wilmette Library Board. Because the work of a Library Trustee is very similar to the work of a Village Trustee, I believe my Library experience will allow me to be a good Trustee for the residents of Wilmette. In my time on the Board, the Library has never run into financial difficulties. The Library Trustees have always believed that we are the "stewards" of the public monies spent on the library. I am most proud that I was part of the effort that led to the renovation of the Library's first floor.

I have been an attorney for the 35 years. For ten years, I was a Cook County Assistant State's Attorney and also worked as Illinois Assistance Attorney General for 15 years where I prosecuted polluters as the Chief of the Environmental Crimes Bureau. After leaving the Attorney General's Office, I set up a private legal practice in Wilmette. In my practice, I serve on the Panel of Attorneys for the Federal Defender Program where I represent the indigent who are charged with violations of the laws of the United States.

**Describe your strategies for dealing with reduction of municipal revenue while providing the services that you believe are central to the needs and preferences of Wilmette's residents. What services (if any) would you suggest deleting or outsourcing, and what services that are not currently provided should be?**

**Core Services**

The Village is the level of government that provides services that are essential to public safety and health. Core services that are critical to the well being of residents are police and fire protection, waste collection and street maintenance and improvements. It is my position that these core services cannot be eliminated.

**Outsourcing Services**

If elected as a Trustee, I certainly would consider whether there are any non-core services that could be eliminated or outsourced. The Village has already embarked on outsourcing some services, including plumbing inspections and engineering plan reviews. While the savings have been modest to date, I would work with the Board and Village Staff to help identify other areas that could be outsourced if the net effect is to save the Village money while ensuring that the work is up to the standards expected by the residents.

One idea that is gaining momentum is entering into contracts with nearby municipalities to share purchasing expenses. As an example, Wilmette and Glenview have signed an agreement for joint tree trimming that lets the two municipalities trim more often.

**Regarding the Village Center Master Plan:**

**a. What are your priorities for implementation and what aspects of the Plan present problems for you?**

At this moment, the Village Center Master Plan represents a policy statement by the Village Board as to the direction it would like to see the Village take. For the plan to move forward, there will have to be numerous meetings of the Zoning Board, working with Village Staff, to consider amendments to the zoning ordinance that will be necessary to implement the Master Plan. This will be a lengthy process. Further, the Master Plan depends on private developers who have to believe that the Wilmette residential, retail and commercial market can justify development on a larger scale. On February 8, 2011, the Board voted to purchase of the "Ford" property, which would be part of the Master Plan site, and end the lawsuit brought by the current owner of the property. It will take

awhile to sort out the implications of the Village becoming the owner of this property.

**b. Please discuss zoning regulations in the Village Center, focusing on density, height of buildings, and mixed-used opportunities.**

Wilmette has a long history of low-density, low height buildings. The Master Plan allows for the possibility of buildings that are four or more stories in height. Most residents prefer the current low-density approach to zoning. Before I would be comfortable with allowing buildings to rise to four or five stories, I would have to be certain that there is general support among the residents for such development and there is a market for such buildings.

**As a Trustee, what role would you take to foster environmental initiatives in the Village?**

The Village entered into an agreement with Veolia Environmental Services to collect trash and recycled waste. Veolia has now supplied 15,000 containers to village residents.

The Village should explore replacing all building interior lighting with compact fluorescent light bulbs. Further, the Village can explore whether street light bulbs can be purchased that are environmentally friendly.

When Village departments purchase new vehicles, consideration should be given to highly fuel-efficient cars and trucks. There is no reason that Wilmette cannot be a leader in the use of electric cars, so long as the benefits outweighs the costs.

**As a Trustee, please describe how you would encourage a vibrant residential and retail atmosphere in Wilmette.**

**Residential**

Wilmette has a well-deserved reputation of being a great place to live because of its excellent schools, an effective and service oriented Village government and the amenities that are provided by the Library, the parks and lakefront. These are the primary reasons people live in Wilmette. However, the residential market depends entirely on the economic well being of those who wish to buy a home. To a large extent, the Village Board has little power over the local housing market. While increases or decreases in the transfer tax may have some influence on sales, its impact is most likely small, since this tax only accounts for 3.4% of the Village revenues.

**Retail**

As to retail, the Board can improve the retail atmosphere. Wilmette merchants are competing against Edens Plaza, Old Orchard and other shopping malls in the area. If business owners believe that there are impediments to doing business in Wilmette, such as difficulty in obtaining permits, appearance changes and so forth, I would be an advocate to eliminate unnecessary regulations. It is clear to me that successful retail and commercial businesses are essential to the long-term financial health of the Village.

**Please share your views about the possible consolidation of several of the existing commissions and committees that serve Wilmette.**

The commissions and committees provide a wonderful opportunity for Wilmette residents to participate in Village government. An example of a vital commission is the Plan Commission. The members of that commission did a great job in reviewing the Village Center Master Plan.

If elected, I would work with the Board and Village Staff and determine what resources are allocated to the working of the commissions and committees. Based on the information I receive, if the consolidation or elimination of commissions or committees makes sense, then I would be in favor of moving in that direction.

**Julie Wolfe**  
**VILLAGE OF WILMETTE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**In what ways are you particularly qualified to be a Wilmette Trustee? If you are an incumbent, what are your most significant Board achievements?**

I have an extensive history of work with village government. I am currently a member of the Appearance Review and Lakefront Commissions, and was a past member of the Sheridan Road Beautification, Public Art, and Streetscape Commissions. During my work with these village commissions, I have proved myself to be a good listener and a consensus builder. I have taken a leadership role in making key decisions, and I have a track record of really digging in and working hard to resolve issues. This experience has given me an excellent overview of Village operations and of the issues and opportunities we as a village face going forward. My husband Martin and I have lived in Wilmette for 25 years, and raised our two children here in Wilmette. Professionally, I have worked in non-profit management for the past ten years. My prior work includes positions in corporate finance and marketing at large and small companies in the Chicago area. My educational background is also an excellent fit for the position of trustee; I have an MBA from Northwestern and a B.S. in Landscape Architecture from Iowa State University.

I think it is also important to have a woman's voice and perspective on the Village Board. With my educational background and experience working with village committees, I am uniquely qualified for the position of trustee.

**Describe your strategies for dealing with the reduction of municipal revenue while providing the services that you believe are central to the needs and preferences of Wilmette's residents. What services (if any) would you suggest deleting or outsourcing, and what services that are not currently provided should be?**

I am interested in preserving the unique character of Wilmette by making the village a hospitable place for business while maintaining fiscal balance. The two ways to maintain this balance are to spend less and increase revenue. There are major opportunities for retail development in the Village Center and the other commercial districts that would increase the revenue stream. The approval of the Master Plan is a big step toward encouraging this development. Neighborhood retail areas also have potential for increased retail development. New businesses opening recently at Fourth and Linden and Plaza del Lago are a positive step, but more needs to be done to market Wilmette and encourage new businesses.

Wilmette residents enjoy a high level of municipal services. The recent blizzard made this clearer than ever, with the efficient clearing of streets and sidewalks. While not all services are as critical to public safety, they do contribute to making Wilmette the wonderful place that it is, and I think it is important wherever possible not to reduce the service level. Studying cost savings opportunities such as the 2010 change in refuse collection is a good idea. Some staff positions within the village have been outsourced, resulting in savings. As positions become open due to attrition, further outsourcing should be evaluated. It is also worth studying potential savings by combining resources with other governmental groups such as the Park District, or even with other communities.

**Regarding the Village Center Master Plan:**

- a. What are your priorities for implementation and what aspects of the Plan present problems to you?**
- b. Please discuss zoning regulations in the Village Center, focusing on density, height of buildings, and mixed-use opportunities.**

The focus on transportation and the emphasis on the Green Bay corridor are key portions of the plan. The access to excellent transportation is a powerful advantage to development. It encourages higher-density residential and commercial development, which in turn will bring more people into the Village Center. I agree with the vision for making Green Bay Road function as a corridor that defines Wilmette as a unique

place. Higher-density development interspersed with green spaces for gathering and relaxing will make the village a more vibrant and interesting place. The Master Plan thoughtfully addresses multiple issues and provides a guide for development. Top priority is to communicate this clearly to potential developers.

The current open sites along Green Bay Road are well-suited to mixed-use development. Street-level businesses that generate foot traffic are needed (e.g., restaurants, gyms or spas, or retail establishments). Housing above would be ideal, along with other uses such as professional offices. A building height of five stories along Green Bay Road would increase the density and be in keeping with the overall feel of the village. Setbacks along Green Bay Road are critical in establishing it as a corridor. The recent agreement for the village to purchase the Ford Motor site is a positive step in preparing for development in this area.

**As a Trustee, what role would you take to foster environmental initiatives in the Village?**

The Village should lead by example in pursuing environmental initiatives that result in savings or resource preservation. For example, the switch to LED lights for the Village holiday tree resulted in cost savings of 97%. Wilmette businesses stock the LED lights, so residents deciding to purchase them have a local opportunity to do so. Sustainable technology can be researched and implemented where economically feasible. A good example of this is the use of renewable building materials and the high-efficiency vehicle washing system at the new Village Yards building. Water quality and preservation of the Great Lakes as a unique natural resource are important to all of us. Considering future initiatives to control storm runoff and reduce the potential for flooding is important for the Village and for Lake Michigan.

**As a Trustee, please describe how you would encourage a vibrant residential and retail atmosphere in Wilmette.**

New development in the Village Center would bring more people into the village, and would increase demand for goods and services. Having a greater number of housing options available would make it attractive for younger professionals and for older adults to remain in the community. The proposed new parking structure would provide ample parking for those traveling to the village to shop, dine, or commute.

With the spotlight on the master plan and development in the Village Center, it is easy to lose focus on the neighborhood retail areas. We need to encourage business development in these areas as well as the Village Center. An important part of the "small-town" character of Wilmette is the local businesses in the neighborhoods.

**Please share your views about the possible consolidation of several of the existing commissions and committees that serve Wilmette.**

The commissions and committees are a vital part of village services. The time and talents of those who serve on them add immeasurably to the village. At the same time, administration and oversight of the committees requires staff time. It would be good to work with staff to identify (a) commissions whose services are duplicated elsewhere and could be eliminated without reduction in overall service and (b) commissions that could be combined.

**Robin Baugher**  
**PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**What personal qualities, skills, and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a Wilmette Park Board Commissioner? If you are an incumbent, what board achievements would you point to that have made the greatest difference?**

I am an enthusiastic advocate for our parks and open lands, with a longstanding knowledge of our community and its priorities. As a former Park District Commissioner (elected 1987 and 1991), I have a unique perspective on the Wilmette Parks. I was on the Park Board when our children were growing up and using Park facilities. At that time our primary indoor recreation facility was Highcrest, a school building on temporary loan from District 39. Our most significant achievement during my years on the Board was developing the Wilmette Community Recreation Center by buying and recycling a former school-turned-commercial building into a premier recreational complex.

I am currently volunteering as a member of the Lakefront Commission, a group helping to formulate a Lakefront Master Plan for our lakefront parks, Gillson and Langdon.

Service on the Park Board is demanding. It takes fresh energy or time away from government to serve well. For that reason, I believe Park Board Commissioners should be limited to no more than two consecutive terms.

**One of the most significant issues facing the Park District is how to maintain and improve the parks, related facilities, and park district services in a declining economy. As a Commissioner, what would you recommend to best meet the needs of the community?**

Because user fees cover the cost of most Park District programming, and because of the District's excellent staff, we have been able to sustain a high level of service notwithstanding the recession. But there is a limit to the amount Wilmette residents should be asked to pay, whether through program fees or taxes. Commissioners elected in 2011 will be particularly challenged to balance desirable innovation and ambition with financial discipline and longer development timelines. The Board should continue its tight financial management, maintenance of fund reserves, and implementation of new technological efficiencies wherever possible. Capital improvements should be planned for and funded out of long-term capital reserves. The Park District should not take on new referendum debt or increase taxes.

**With respect to the lake front, how would you prioritize needed upgrades and why? Should users fees be increased and extended to include the South end of the beach to help offset costs?**

I have served on the Park District's Lakefront Commission since its formation this past fall. Our charge is to assess Wilmette Park District lakefront assets and plan for their future. Gillson Park, created in 1908-1910 by excavation of the North Shore channel, is one of the region's most prized resources. Its infrastructure is aging, and expensive decisions about roads, sewers, safe pedestrian access, parking, beach erosion, athletic activities, and landscaping lie ahead. However, Gillson Park is not in imminent peril. The Park Board has ample time to gather a wide range of input from various community sources and to develop ideas which will benefit our lakefront parks for years to come.

Because of Gillson's size and range of activities, the projected

costs for rebuilding roads and sewers, for new and improved beach facilities, and for adding pedestrian and bike paths are considerable. In the present economic environment, any such projects must be assessed critically, prioritized, and timed consistent with other community needs—and a resolve not to burden residents with new Park District borrowings or taxes.

A Lakefront Master Plan, conceived with deliberate care and consideration, will be an important guide to renovation of our lakefront parks over an extended time horizon. An effective plan will have building and paving limits and visual and environmental protections, as well as new development goals. Park District Commissioners must be willing to be patient with the planning process, taking the time and effort necessary to solicit, listen to and integrate the wishes of the community.

The south end of Gillson beach (aka the "free" beach) is a thin veneer of sand over rock rubble held in place by a rusting steel groin parallel to the shoreline. It would need to be regularly refurbished at substantial cost to become a safe beach; even then, this reengineered beach will largely disappear when Lake Michigan water levels return to more historic norms. Ongoing expenses would include additional staff and maintenance as well as new sanitary facilities.

Fencing off of the south end of Gillson Beach, while potentially useful for controlling crowds, would raise beach expenses and almost certainly negate any nominal increase in revenue. High iron-gray bar fences (similar to those enclosing the present Wilmette beach) if extended along the overlook bluffs would compromise the openness to the water, spectacular lake views, and the natural feeling that is one of the park's most unique and special attributes.

I advocate more creative ways to manage that portion of the park through landscaping, such as additional dune grass plantings, boardwalks through the dune grasses and strategically placed old-fashioned moveable wood slat "snow fences" during the three month summer beach season.

**What is a Park Commissioner's role, if any, in ensuring that Village environmental improvement policies are being met for the more than 300 acres of parks and open land and five facilities under Park District oversight?**

Wilmette is a mature, fully-built community in a dense urban area. Our parks therefore should offer a natural oasis—quiet, green spaces amidst buildings, roads, businesses, schools and an ambitious community's wealth of activities. Our tendency is always to build more and do more. Parkland provides a place to balance motion and noise with breath and thought. I would hope that we recognize nature as a priority within our parks: that we have parks where we nurture native species and wildlife, reduce water consumption, and avoid unnecessary paving, fencing, and non-biodegradable materials such as the noxious shredded tire material which has covered the ground in Gillson's historic council rings.

**How much oversight should the Board of Commissioners provide to ensure that all Park District facilities and administrators are providing excellent service?**

One of a Park Board Commissioner's major responsibilities is to oversee the District's staff and facilities. I have visited every park and facility within the district and have participated in many district programs. First-hand oversight is important, and because of the high quality of our staff and facilities, it is an aspect of the Commissioner's job I particularly look forward to.

**Gary K. Benz**  
**PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**What personal qualities, skills, and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a Wilmette Park Board Commissioner?**

My professional career has been either consulting for national corporations, managing local businesses, or running my own small business. These skills will enable me to manage the challenges of the Wilmette Park District.

Along with my wife, Maggie, my parenting career has included raising two sons who learned to play baseball, soccer, golf, basketball and football with the help of the Wilmette Park District programs. They learned to ice skate and play gymnastics as well as enjoy Summer Camp in Gillson Park. Both boys' first summer jobs were with the Park District. My perspectives as a Park user will help move the District forward.

I will come to the Park District Board with a new, fresh perspective. I do not have a pre-determined agenda or a list of must-dos. I offer the time and commitment to review and establish objectives and strategies for the Park District. Make the strategies actionable with input from the citizens of Wilmette and hold the paid staff accountable for their implementation.

**One of the most significant issues facing the Park District is how to maintain and improve the parks, related facilities, and park district services in a declining economy. As a Commissioner, what would you recommend to best meet the needs of the community?**

The Wilmette Park District along with District 39, the library, streets and sanitation, police and fire, water and village services all contribute to the wonderful environment of our Village. Our economy has forced us to see the importance of all Village services as interrelated rather than separate fiefdoms campaigning for the same funds. As a result, communication among our citizens is most important to help your elected officials to rank how our total local tax dollars should be spent. This communication should be structured, ongoing and easy to access. As a Commissioner, I plan to facilitate citizen communication to determine the wants and needs of the community.

**With respect to the lakefront, how would you prioritize needed upgrades and why? Should users fees be increased and extended to include the South end of the beach to help offset costs?**

New governmental requirements and laws will lead the list of upgrades for our lakefront. As a Commissioner, I will assist the staff in planning for these required improvements recognizing the scarcity of new funds. I do not endorse increasing resident user fees. I would like to consider an expansion of the overlook area between the swim beach and the dog beach—currently many non-residents use this area for free—into an improved fee-for-use beach area.

However, I cannot emphasize enough the need for citizen input regarding these changes and improvements. Users of our parks and programs could be called upon through the Park District website to provide evaluations of proposed projects and changes.

**What is a Park Commissioner's role, if any, in ensuring that Village environmental improvement policies are being met for the more than 300 acres of parks and open land and five facilities under Park District oversight?**

A Park District Commissioner should have a direct management oversight role with regard to implementing all Village policies, including environmental policies, assuring Wilmette citizens that their goals are being met.

**How much oversight should the Board of Commissioners provide to ensure that all Park District facilities and administrators are providing excellent service?**

I feel that our Park District Administrators have been providing excellent service to Wilmette citizens. To insure this level continues, easy and direct feedback is necessary from all users of our Park District facilities. This communication link to citizens should be reviewed by your Park District Board of Commissioners to correct problems and assure excellent service.

**James Crowley**  
**PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**What personal qualities, skills, and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a Wilmette Park Board Commissioner? If you are an incumbent, what board achievements would you point to that have made the greatest difference?**

Board members should be open minded, fair and genuinely care about the community they live in. They should take pride in the success of others and see the world as a glass half full rather than half empty. They should be encouraged by possibilities rather than distressed over what is missing. Occasional random acts of kindness should be a part of their makeup. These are things I believe and things I practice. These are the things that I believe qualify me to be a Park District Commissioner.

While a board member I was a participant in the purchase of the Alter Building (now the Community Recreation Center) which has been the corner stone of our parks and recreation programming for years and years. After almost three decades our community pool finally gave way to the relentless pounding of Mother Nature. As a board member, I was involved in the planning, public hearings, design selection and ultimate construction of our current beautiful pool. When fire ravaged our golf course facility in July of 2003, I was a board participant in the rebuilding of the club house. The rebuilding of the clubhouse was a once in a 100 year event that resulted in our golf course becoming the gem it is today. When Loyola University decided to sell Mallinckrodt in 2002 a large group of concerned residents approached the park district to preserve the building and adjacent land for open space and public use. I was part of that process as a sitting board member. More recently, I was involved in the transition of the park districts executive directors. A changing of the guard, of the leadership of the district, is a vitally important task. It is imperative that the director have all the qualities necessary to not only run a park district, (with at times over 1,000 employees), but to balance all the idiosyncrasies of a wide variety of business demands. These are some of the things I have done as a commissioner that I feel has made a difference.

**One of the most significant issues facing the Park District is how to maintain and improve the parks, related facilities, and park district services in a declining economy. As a Commissioner, what would you recommend to best meet the needs of the community?**

Investigate new and innovative streams of revenue that will positively effect a possible economic short fall by looking at each park facility in an outside the box view. For instance, utilize Groupon coupons for the driving range at the golf course. Initiate a Winter Festival as a village wide event with activities throughout the village, both at park district facilities as well as village facilities. Rent beach chairs and umbrellas at the beach. Rent Bicycles for use up and down the north shore bike path. Continue to reach out to the residents of Wilmette to hear what they have interests in. Prioritize those assets which require repair or improvement with careful financial restraint and a commitment to preserving the park assets for future generations.

**With respect to the lake front, how would you prioritize needed upgrades and why? Should user fees be increased and extended to include the South end of the beach to help offset costs?**

The most significant need at the lakefront is to upgrade, improve and preserve the infrastructure. Roads, sidewalks and buildings must be maintained for the safety of all park patrons. A current lakefront study is underway to best develop a plan that improves the layout of the lakefront, make it more user-friendly and protect our most vital natural asset. User fees don't necessarily need to go up. The extension of programming to the south beach will increase revenues from lakefront patrons who in the past have not used the swimming or sailing beach. Camp programs can be spread out, be safer and accommodate more revenue generating groups.

**What is a Park Commissioner's role, if any, in ensuring that Village environmental improvement policies are being met for the more than 300 acres of parks and open land and five facilities under Park District oversight?**

A park district commissioners first and last role as an elected official is to preserve the assets of the park district during the present and for the future. It means making sure we all observe and follow the laws of our municipality, our state, our country and respect our environment. It means do no harm to our parks, our programs and the facilities that house our patrons when they participate in those programs. It means leave the Park District in better shape than when you started. To do that a commissioner needs to visit the parks and building facilities on a regular basis to see first hand what condition these assets are in. It means asking questions and seeking relevant information. It means making informed decisions for the general good and not for the loudest voice or harshest critic.

**How much oversight should the Board of Commissioners provide to ensure that all Park District facilities and administrators are providing excellent service?**

Years ago prior boards set up sub-committees for Golf, Parks & Recreation, Centennial and Financial Planning to make sure policies were being adhered to by those who run the Park District. These committees are populated by elected commissioners. Each committee meets twelve times a year and with staff evaluates aspects of that particular program, budget and facility. This is where the oversight truly takes place. If you hire the right people the results will usually surpass your expectations. We have been fortunate to have had and continue to have some of the most talented and knowledgeable professionals in park management and programming in the country. It is more often than not that these professionals are providing the cutting edge lead on environmental issues and improvements in park district programming across the board. It is after all what they love and their profession. Oversight / not so much, more of collaboration.

**Dennis O'Malley**  
**PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**What personal qualities, skills, and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a Wilmette Park Board Commissioner? If you are an incumbent, what board achievements would you point to that have made the greatest difference?**

I have been privileged to serve the Village of Wilmette for over a dozen years in various capacities and my commitment to volunteerism is one of my core beliefs. I am thankful that the citizens of Wilmette have put their trust in me to lead the efforts of the Park District for the past eight years. We have had a busy eight years with many accomplishments and milestones. Those include creating 11 new acres of parkland at Mallinckrodt, the rebuilding of our fantastic new golf clubhouse, creating a long-anticipated and very popular skateboard park, and managing the transition from Terry Porter to Tom Grisamore to Steve Wilson as Executive Director. In addition we have had two bond rating increases over my tenure which shows that our finances are managed well and we run our business properly.

**One of the most significant issues facing the Park District is how to maintain and improve the parks, related facilities, and park district services in a declining economy. As a Commissioner, what would you recommend to best meet the needs of the community?**

I believe that one of the main reasons people choose to raise their families in Wilmette is because of the tremendous schools and parks. I am committed to improving the park system to ensure that people will always consider Wilmette a desirable place to live. We cannot compromise on that basic tenet. With the economy being challenged right now, we have to run a very tight ship, and we are. We are always on the lookout for new streams of revenue and are starting to pursue those more aggressively in 2011. An example of this would be advertising on the boards at the ice rink.

**With respect to the lake front, how would you prioritize needed upgrades and why? Should user's fees be increased and extended to include the South end of the beach to help offset costs?**

Gillson Park and the lakefront is clearly the crown jewel of Wilmette and needs to be taken care of as such. The park is in desperate need of upgrades to the infrastructure as it relates to roads, utilities, and sewers. We cannot continue to put off those needed improvements. In addition the beach house is rather dated and is need of an upgrade. All of these things cost money. To fix this I feel strongly that we need to capture more revenue from the users of the south end of the beach. I feel it is unfair to have our residents pay to use one stretch of sand and have others use another stretch of sand for free. On a warm summer weekend there are literally thousands of people using the south beach. Think of what it costs just to clean up after them each evening. To be fair, we have not made any decisions on the lakefront yet. We are excited to start the public input phase of the lakefront study this spring to hear what the residents have to say about what direction they would like our lakefront to go.

**What is a Park Commissioner's role, if any, in ensuring that Village environmental improvement policies are being met for the more than 300 acres of parks and open land and five facilities under Park District oversight?**

We are always on the forefront of environmental improvement in our parks and our facilities. A commissioner's role is to ensure that our staff is continually involved in efforts to implement green initiatives and to follow best practices from an environmental standpoint. An example of our commitment would be the new wildflower park that replaced the drainage holding area at Centennial. Rather than maintain the drainage area with fertilizer and mowing, we now have a self-sustaining park that will require little if no maintenance.

**How much oversight should the Board of Commissioners provide to ensure that all Park District facilities and administrators are providing excellent service?**

The public has elected the Board of Commissioners to make sure we provide the highest level of service to the community. As President the buck stops with me. That being said, our job is to put the best people in place to deliver those services and I believe we have done so. We have monthly meetings that cover every aspect of the park district so we are constantly in touch. If there are problems or we hear from the community we will address those issues on an as needed basis. But at the end of the day I feel strongly that you have to let your people do their jobs and put them in position to succeed. I think we have accomplished this over my tenure. The Wilmette Park District continues to be one of the leading Park Districts in the State of Illinois and with your support I will commit to keeping it that way.

**Shelley Shelly  
PARK DISTRICT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**What personal qualities, skills, and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a Wilmette Park Board Commissioner? If you are an incumbent, what board achievements would you point to that have made the greatest difference?**

My family is active year-round in the Wilmette Park District programs. Not a day goes by without one of my three children, husband or my using a Park program or facility. These year-round activities include classes, sports, summer camps, and performing arts programs offered through the Wilmette Park District. I believe that the Park Board can greatly benefit from the direct input of a parent who is closely involved with the activities and experiences of the Park programs, Centennial pool, tennis and ice rink, beaches, the Rec Center, neighborhood parks and golf course.

My work experience includes having spent many years in sales and marketing positions and managing multi-million dollar budgets for major corporations. I look forward to applying my business experiences in the role of Park Commissioner. Lastly, I believe Wilmette's parks and recreation offerings are the best on the North Shore. I look forward to having the opportunity to apply my experiences, passion and love for this Village while serving on the Park District Board.

**One of the most significant issues facing the Park District is how to maintain and improve the parks, related facilities, and park district services in a declining economy. As a Commissioner, what would you recommend to best meet the needs of the community?**

As a commissioner, I would take a very thorough look at the park district's revenues and expenditures. From an expenditure standpoint, perhaps an ongoing review to evaluate the classes and programs offered. This is one way to make sure that the Park District continues to offer topical classes and programs that best meet the needs and interests of our community. Additionally, the Park District should monitor to ensure that classes and programs meet minimum class sizes. This will help control unnecessary expenditures and better reflect the needs of the community.

In order to enhance revenue, the Board should consider the massive appeal of both Centennial pool and our beaches. These attractions are highly desirable to both residents and our neighbors in surrounding communities. Perhaps we explore a slight increase in non-resident fees. With beach access extending to the south end of Gilson, we have additional space and the opportunity for increased revenue in terms of users and a slightly higher non-resident fee.

In terms of expenditures, the Board must prioritize the needs of the lakefront and golf course. I think that by prudently spending money – on necessary improvements – we should be able to have great financial gains.

**With respect to the lake front, how would you prioritize needed upgrades and why? Should users fees be increased and extended to include the South end of the beach to help offset costs?**

Gilson Beach is the crown jewel of our lake front. Unfortunately, most of its infrastructure is original to the park. At this point, the infrastructure has exceeded its useful life. I am aware that the Board is carefully reviewing plans and imminent replacement costs.

I support the Lake Front Commission and know the residents have worked hard to come up with an organized plan. In addition, it is important that we listen to all the residents and their concerns. I do support increasing fees for non-residents and extending the park to include the south end of the beach.

**What is a Park Commissioner's role, if any, in ensuring that Village environmental improvement policies are being met for the more than 300 acres of parks and open land and five facilities under Park District oversight?**

I know in the past year the Park District upgraded the retention pond adjacent to the Centennial complex, with prairie grass. This was done to minimize storm water run-off going into the village storm sewer system. This is a great example of the Park District facilitating environment improvement to benefit the entire community. As a commissioner, I feel that every initiative concerning environmental improvement deserves a thorough review.

**How much oversight should the Board of Commissioners provide to ensure that all Park District facilities and administrators are providing excellent service?**

The Park District Board has one direct report – Steve Wilson. The Board of Commissioners supports Steve in managing the staff below him. With that being said, I believe that we have a great group of people working for the park district. With my family's close involvement in using the services, I have been very pleased with the level of service and positive attitudes that I interact with on a daily basis.

In today's economy jobs need to be valued and service should be at its highest level. I think we all - as citizens of Wilmette - should encourage and recognize the good and not tolerate mediocre or sub standard service.

**Karen Donnan**  
**DISTRICT 39 BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**What personal qualities, skills and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a Board member? (If you are an incumbent, what board achievements would you like to highlight?)**

I was elected in 2007 to the Wilmette District 39 Board of Education and I am running again for my second term. During my tenure on the board, I served two years as vice president and chair of the health insurance committee. To control health costs, the health insurance committee implemented a high deductible PPO plan, a move more in line with private business practices. As a member of the negotiation team, I helped to implement the current contract with the support staff that tied salary increases to CPI. As an active board member, I was involved in evaluation of all programs that reduced the operating budget by \$4.8 million, reducing almost 10% of the total budget while minimizing the impact on students.

I have also demonstrated leadership and dedication to my community, by serving in many positions in the PTO/A's including Wilmette Junior High PTO President and New Trier Parent's Association Co-president. In addition I have had a long history of community service involvement with the Woman's Club of Wilmette, The Rotary Club of Wilmette Harbor, and The Family Service Center and as member of the Wilmette Chamber of Commerce. My involvement with many community organizations gives me the opportunity to solicit feedback from the 80% of families in the community who do not have children in the schools.

**What do you see as the three or four key issues facing District 39? What are your priorities for addressing those issues?**

In this tough economic environment and uncertain future of the state budget, fiscal responsibility of the taxpayers' dollars has to be a top priority. The most important role of a board member is to review and ensure that the tax payer's dollars are spent wisely. D39 is highly efficient compared to 14 other nearby K-8 districts with similar high ISAT scores. We have a low operating cost per pupil ranking us 13<sup>th</sup> lowest out of 15 surrounding districts. I believe District 39 continues to deliver outstanding educational value for tax payer dollars.

A second priority is the continued excellence in education. Over 96% of our students meet or exceed ISAT test scores. While the state test scores are exceptional, we cannot rely on their metrics alone. D39 recently implemented Scantron testing of all of the students three times a year, allowing for continuous feedback to the teachers of their effectiveness in the classroom. This helps monitor every student to ensure that they demonstrate a year-over-year improvement in academic growth.

Third, it is imperative that our students enter New Trier with an equal education to the other feeder districts. The curriculum at D39 must also align with the New Trier programs. The current science program has not been updated since the 1980's and is not competitive to the other New Trier feeder schools. We must ensure that programs such as this are competitive.

Finally, we must also focus on the strategic educational plan that will prepare our students for their lives after New Trier. The strategic educational plan outlines the skills our students will need to be leaders in a global competitive environment. Constant review of the curriculum and teacher excellence is needed to ensure effectiveness in the classroom.

**Due to state tax caps, property tax increases are limited to the cost of living increase. The CPI has increased by .1% in 2008. What do you believe the role of the tax referendum should be to address the district's financial problems? Do you support the tax referendum and please give reason for or against.**

I voted yes to put the tax referendum on the ballot. Under the current tax cap, revenue to D39 increases at CPI or 5 % whatever is less. The operating revenue this year increased by only 0.1%. D39 has not gone to the community for a referendum since 1998, a period of 13 years. The other five New Trier districts have all voted to raise taxes at least once in that time.

District 39 current tax rate generates the lowest property tax revenue per pupil in the region. Over 90% of the schools revenue is from property taxes and fees, and unlike other local taxing bodies, schools require a community referendum for any increase beyond the tax cap. A referendum allows that community to evaluate their schools and the effectiveness of their tax dollars. D39 has clearly demonstrated that it has been conservative and fiscally responsible with the taxpayers' dollars. Passing the current referendum will allow D39 to maintain academic excellence with continued conservative fiscal management.

**District 39 has a history of reorganizing resources in a way to use tax dollars as efficiently as possible. One example is the recent withdrawal from the special education cooperative, NSSED. Do you see this move as successful and how effective is this type of strategy in managing costs?**

It is the responsibility of the board to continually evaluate all programs for both academic excellence and fiscal responsibility. District 39 is a larger district than many of the other districts who participate in NSSED. It was cost effective to bring the students home and provide the needed specialized teachers, such as vision specialist, physical and occupational therapists to name a few. Access to these services benefits all students in the district. For example students who are struggling with writing skills now have the assistance of an OT in the classroom.

Withdrawing from NSSED allowed students to be integrated in their home school community, and to participate in the park district after-school programs. We continue to monitor the academic and social progress of the each student who would have been served through NSSED to ensure the program remains successful.

**Our teachers are close to the lowest paid amongst the New Trier feeder schools. Our class sizes are the highest and we have the fewest administrators per student among the elementary districts in township. We also have the lowest commercial property tax base to support our operating revenues. What is your plan for the long-range fiscal and academic integrity of the District? What experience and knowledgebase do you have to enable you to be an effective leader in addressing this dilemma?**

District 39 is very proud of its outstanding academic record. Of the 19 schools in the New Trier feeder district, D39 has 3 of the 4 prestigious national blue ribbons awards. We have done this with a lower cost per student than the other comparable districts. As a school district we have been both effective and efficient.

D39 has clearly demonstrated that we can have outstanding test scores with larger class size and with the fewest administrators. We have a dedicated and involved parent community that work with us to achieve our goals. The District 39 Community Review Committee seeks community members with a passion for curriculum to work with teachers and administrators in researching curriculum issue facing our schools. The District 39 Educational Foundation raises the seed money to test and implement new and innovative programs. As a board member I understand that the school district is more than just the students, teachers and administrators, but the collective energy of the community.

**Keith Dronen**  
**DISTRICT 39 BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**What personal qualities, skills and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a Board member? (If you are an incumbent, what board achievements would you like to highlight?)**

I was elected in 2007 to the Wilmette District 39 Board of Education and am running for a second term. I currently serve as president, chair of the finance committee, member of the facilities committee, and member of the Wilmette Community Special Education Agreement committee.

I am extremely proud that Chicago Magazine recently named all six of our schools among the top twenty in the area! Additionally, among the 19 schools in the six New Trier sender districts, District 39 has produced three of the four recipients of the prestigious national Blue Ribbon Award over the last ten years: Romona in 2006, Central in 2009, and now WJHS in 2010. This recognition publicly highlights what we in the community have long known and is exemplified by 96% of our students meeting or exceeding standards on ISAT tests – District 39 is truly a high performing district.

**What do you see as the three or four key issues facing District 39? What are your priorities for addressing those issues?**

Clearly the top priority at this time is addressing the budget issues as detailed in my response to question #3.

Dealing with the fiscal problems of the State of Illinois is another important priority. While state support has always been a modest contributor, the financial problems of the State of Illinois will continue to impact District 39. During my tenure on the Board, I have taken the time to travel to Springfield to express concern to our representatives that general and categorical state aid not be reduced in our District. We must not let Springfield shift the State's obligations to fund general and categorical state aid to local property tax payers. I will continue to be a voice on this issue.

Another priority is maintaining and improving upon our academic excellence in a fiscally responsible manner. Our schools are an important part of our community and families move to Wilmette because of them. We must continue to look for efficiencies in how we deliver education without compromising the quality of education that our community expects.

**Due to state tax caps, property tax increases are limited to the cost of living increase. The CPI has increased by .1% in 2008. What do you believe the role of the tax referendum should be to address the district's financial problems? Do you support the Tax Referendum and please give reasons for or against.**

The Board of Education must manage the dual needs of academic excellence and fiscal responsibility. Property taxes have always been, and will continue to be, the main source of revenue to fund our excellent schools. The property tax cap in Illinois limits our growth in revenue to the rate of inflation as measured by the consumer price index, plus new construction. For school year 2010-11, our revenue growth is basically limited to 0.1%, the CPI in 2008, the lowest rate in over 50 years. District 39 has not put a tax rate referendum on the ballot since

1998. Since that time, the five other New Trier sender districts have passed seven tax referenda. We have carefully managed our resources and have been fiscally responsible. Our operating cost per pupil and average teacher salary is the 13<sup>th</sup> lowest among 15 comparable nearby school districts, and we are the lowest among the six New Trier sender districts. Over the past 12 years, we have seen our enrollment increase by 7%, as many new families move to Wilmette because of the quality of its schools.

Despite prudent fiscal management, the District faces a \$4.3 million educational fund deficit this year. The Administration has worked aggressively to reduce the deficit by \$2.5 million dollars over the past two school years and an additional \$1.8 million dollars this coming school year. However, cost cutting alone will not be enough to balance our budget without major reductions in staff and/or significant program cuts. Either option would negatively impact our students and significantly alter the way we deliver education.

At its regular meeting on January 18, 2011, the District 39 Board of Education voted unanimously to place a referendum on the April 5<sup>th</sup> ballot asking voters for a tax rate increase for operating funds. Under the property tax cap, the District is required to get voter approval for this increase. By this vote, the Board is asking the community to decide how we will move forward. The voters have the opportunity to determine whether to increase our revenue and invest in our schools or proceed with additional cuts in staff and programs to balance the budget. I urge our community to take the time to understand these issues.

**District 39 has a history of reorganizing resources in a way to use tax dollars as efficiently as possible. One example is the recent withdrawal from the special education cooperative, NSSED. Do you see this move as successful and how effective is this type of strategy in managing costs?**

District 39 has provided excellent special education programs locally at a reduced cost following its withdrawal from NSSED. Outside placements are still an option for children whose needs cannot be met in the district. Surveys of parents of children with special needs show that overall satisfaction with programming and services increased following the withdrawal. The withdrawal has been successful and children with special needs can now be included in their home schools.

**Our teachers are close to the lowest paid amongst the new trier sender schools. Our class sizes are the highest and we have the fewest administrators per student among the elementary districts in township. We also have the lowest commercial property tax base to support our operating revenues. What is your plan for the long-range fiscal and academic integrity of the District? What experience and knowledgebase do you have to enable you to be an effective leader in addressing this dilemma?**

These facts demonstrate that a quality education can be provided in a fiscally responsible way. We must continue to look at creative ways to deliver the quality education that our community expects while managing the cost of providing that education. The role of the Board is to manage the dual needs of academic excellence and fiscal responsibility to the community.

**Alice D. Schaff**  
**DISTRICT 39 BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**What personal qualities, skills and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a Board member?**

I have many years of experience serving on school and community related boards. I currently serve on the District 39 Educational Foundation as fundraising chairman and have assumed leadership roles on that board since joining in 2002. As board chairman for three years, I led a strategic planning process that reorganized the Foundation, improving its ability to raise funds that expand, enrich and complement educational opportunities for students and staff. I am proud that the Foundation has contributed so significantly to the District and has emerged as an alternative funding source for innovative projects that enhance our children's education.

Over the last 15 years, I have served in numerous volunteer capacities at Central, Highcrest and Wilmette Junior High Schools. Highlights include serving as co-chair for the Central School Benefit and on the executive boards at Highcrest and Central Schools. Outside of the school district, I have been involved with many volunteer organizations including The Volunteer Center (treasurer), The New Trier School Board Caucus, the North Shore Board of the Northwestern Settlement, The Nature Conservancy (events and fundraising), The American Cancer Society (fundraising), Trinity Church Staff Parish Committee and Family Matters (tutor).

I am an effective leader with a track record of pursuing innovative ideas and getting things done. I believe in the importance of listening to others and I tend to pursue a collaborative approach to problem solving. Honesty, hard work, cooperation, and organization are values that I embrace. I offer my talents, services and time to support the continued excellence of Wilmette schools.

**What do you see as the three or four key issues facing District 39? What are your priorities for addressing those issues?**

The top issues facing our District are the budget deficit; maintaining educational excellence given proposed programmatic cuts; and modernizing curriculum and facilities to educate children for New Trier, college and future careers. Always, my priority on the board will be to provide the best education possible within the means of the District. If the voters do not vote to increase operating revenues, then we will be making program reductions and cuts. If the referendum passes, we will be able to continue current offerings and implement planned new curriculum. We will also be able to look at more far-reaching changes to the District as outlined in the strategic plan and the recent CRC recommendations.

**Due to state tax caps, property tax increases are limited to the cost of living increase. The CPI has increased by .1% in 2008. What do you believe the role of the tax referendum should be to address the district's financial problems? Do you support the Tax Referendum and please give reasons for or against.**

The role of the proposed tax referendum is to balance the budget without cutting programs and to build reserves to acceptable levels. Ultimately, it is up to the voters of Wilmette to decide the referendum question. My role on the board will be

to help provide the best education for the revenues that we have available.

Personally, I support the Board of Education's decision to put a referendum question on the ballot. I believe the district has done everything it can to cut costs without compromising educational programs. But even after making \$4.3mm in cuts, we will continue to carry a deficit. With revenues basically flat, we need a tax referendum to re-balance the budget.

Our district offers excellent programs and services to our students. We will take a big step backwards if the referendum is not approved. To balance our budget we will need to cut \$6.4mm over two years. This means that class sizes will increase; 80 teachers will lose their jobs; all foreign language and instrumental music programs will be cut; and differentiation and reading assistance programs will be a thing of the past. Our children will suffer.

**District 39 has a history of reorganizing resources in a way to use tax dollars as efficiently as possible. One example is the recent withdrawal from the special education cooperative, NSSED. Do you see this move as successful and how effective is this type of strategy in managing costs?**

Withdrawing from NSSED was a good move for District 39. Our programs are now coordinated district-wide and are much more effective in meeting the needs of students. We have also saved significant money. Additionally, as our early childhood intervention program has grown the number of IEP's has been reduced. District 39 special education programs are well respected and parents report that they are very pleased with the level of service. With services provided in-house, we can respond quicker and with more flexibility to better address specific needs. We have even created a partnership with Avoca to share services. This is an effective strategy in managing costs and should be considered for other programs on a case by case basis.

**Our teachers are close to the lowest paid amongst the New Trier sender schools. Our class sizes are the highest and we have the fewest administrators per student among the elementary districts in township. We also have the lowest commercial property tax base to support our operating revenues. What is your plan for the long-range fiscal and academic integrity of the District? What experience and knowledgebase do you have to enable you to be an effective leader in addressing this dilemma?**

In the near term, the first order of business is to balance our budget by either cutting costs or, hopefully, raising revenues. After that, I believe that we need to think creatively as we evaluate programs and funding options. Perhaps other cooperative arrangements could help provide purchasing and/or staffing efficiencies for our budget.

Additionally, my experience with the District 39 Foundation may help in developing alternative funding sources for the district. The Foundation is all about alternative funding and maybe there is a role for it to become a bigger player providing funding for some of the District's newer and more innovative initiatives.

**Laurie Stogin  
DISTRICT 39 BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**What personal qualities, skills and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a Board member?**

I have an inquisitive mind, I ask questions. I believe leadership is not being all-knowing, but all-serving. I listen to others and keep an open mind when studying an issue. Sometimes the best research produces a surprise outcome. As a former educator, I understand the educational system. Having acquired a Masters in Curriculum and Instruction, I understand how students learn. I know how to review and approve curriculum and would make my decisions accordingly. I have volunteered on various boards over the 15 years we have been a part of our community. Each position enriched my education.

**What do you see as the three or four key issues facing District 39? What are your priorities for addressing those issues?**

Our district needs to become fiscally sound. If the referendum passes, we will have the funds to balance our budget, though fine tuning a budget will always be a priority of mine. If the referendum fails, I would explore ways to cut our budget without directly affecting classroom numbers. I would consider cutting back on support personnel at all levels. I would study the areas of the budget that incur expenses at or above one million dollars.

We also need to improve our writing curriculum. ISAT scores show that our students' writing needs work. I would like to explore other writing curricula and learn what works for other districts.

Dismissal of untenured teachers needs review. Currently, the only perspective offered when an untenured teacher is dismissed is that of administration. I think it is important to also consider the perspectives of other grade level teachers, parents of students in the classroom and where appropriate, the students themselves. This can be accomplished through anonymous surveys and a board policy change.

Finally, we need to maintain the high quality of education that we have in our district and continue to stay competitive with the New Trier feeder districts. Having lower property values, lower mean income and lower commercial tax base than other districts, we need to stay fiscally conservative, regardless of the referendum outcome.

**Due to state tax caps, property tax increases are limited to the cost of living increase. The CPI has increased by .1% in 2008. What do you believe the role of the tax referendum should be to address the district's financial problems? Do you support the Tax Referendum and please give reasons for or against.**

The tax referendum should balance District 39's budget. It should also give a small buffer to cover the costs that might be incurred as the state struggles with its ability to pay its own debt. I support the referendum. But if the community is unable to carry this tax burden in these financially challenging times, I believe we can find ways to cut expenses without directly affecting classroom size.

**District 39 has a history of reorganizing resources in a way to use tax dollars as efficiently as possible. One example is the recent withdrawal from the special education cooperative, NSSED. Do you see this move as successful and how effective is this type of strategy in managing costs?**

From 2007 to the present budget, our spending on Special Education has increased by almost two million dollars. At the same time we have cut our overall budget by roughly two million dollars. I feel this is an area that needs further exploration.

I will continually look for ways to streamline the budget. I will be open to listening to ideas from our community members, to ask questions and to hold administration accountable. Those are fundamental responsibilities of board members. If we act, the fiscal integrity of our schools will be sound.

**Our teachers are close to the lowest paid amongst the New Trier feeder schools. Our class sizes are the highest and we have the fewest administrators per student among the elementary districts in township. We also have the lowest commercial property tax base to support our operating revenues. What is your plan for the long-range fiscal and academic integrity of the District? What experience and knowledgebase do you have to enable you to be an effective leader in addressing this dilemma?**

Class size needs to be kept as small as possible. We must recognize and empower our teachers as the backbone of our education system and yet hold them accountable to live up to that standard. Curriculum requires constant review. It must teach our children to think, but also develop a firm knowledge base.

"Enrichment programs" can backfire. Too many of these can leave instruction time disjointed and ineffective. I would like to examine the policies that govern our enrichment programs and make sure the schedules our teachers must keep promote learning for our students. Input from teachers would be necessary when evaluating these programs.

I would like to see more collaboration with the Family Awareness Network and similar community groups, to provide more opportunities to empower the family to provide an atmosphere of supportive learning in the home. Academic integrity starts in the schools but the schools need the community to be great. I believe my experience as a classroom teacher and my educational background, both in college and in life, would enable me to be an effective leader.

**Jan G. Barshis  
LIBRARY BOARD**

**What personal qualities, skills, and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a Wilmette Public Library Trustee?**

My professional background is in education, and I hold a graduate degree as a certified reading specialist. I began my teaching career in Chicago elementary schools. Following that, I was a faculty member in the English Department at Harold Washington College, the downtown campus of the City Colleges of Chicago, for over thirty years. While at Harold Washington, I directed an award-winning program for developmental students to provide them with the communication and study skills necessary to become successful college students. As director, I was responsible for registering students, organizing curriculum, running planning meetings with faculty as well as library and tutoring staff. We did all this while working within the constraints of a limited budget. My experiences will definitely contribute to what I can offer the Library as a trustee.

I am also a board member of Go Green Wilmette. I have worked closely with library staff to choose books and films for the "Greener Choices Book and Film Series" at the Library. I have also lead several discussions in the series. I am an active supporter of Books Down Under and a member of Friends of the Library.

**How would you prioritize Library services and expenditures in a time of severe budget constraint?**

The principle behind my prioritizing of Library services is to keep the Library accessible and meeting community needs. This means keeping the technology and materials up-to-date and available to all age groups. In a time of budget constraint, this may require strengthening existing cooperative relationships with neighboring libraries and service agencies in order to have maximum access to resources. Fortunately, through the excellent work of the library staff and leadership, the Wilmette Library has remained a valuable community resource even in tough economic times. I would also work to continue the strong relationship between the Board and Friends of the Library whose support of programs like Books Down Under and the excellent online tutoring service enhance Library resources without extra burdens on its budget.

**As a trustee, what would be your response to a request to remove a book from the Library's collection or to limit access to certain internet sites?**

As a lifelong educator, I am generally opposed to censorship of educational resources, but as a member of the Board of Trustees, I would certainly listen carefully to such a request and insure that the Board discusses it fully. It is currently the policy of the library not to limit access to the library's book collection or to the use of its computers. However, it is also the library's policy to monitor children's use of the internet by having the computers in highly visible areas. I also strongly support working with local schools and parent organizations to insure that children's uses of library resources are for safe and educational purposes.

**What are your top three priorities for the Library Board of Trustees to address over the next four years?**

As a trustee, my guiding principle is to insure that the Library remain a community-friendly and up-to-date resource staffed with helpful professionals. My specific priorities follow directly from that, and I would work to ensure that we have:

1. Adequate, convenient parking for all the Library's patrons in order to provide easy access to all the Library has to offer,
2. Updated and available technology for all, such as the Kindles the Library has recently purchased for use,
3. Continuation and expansion of the Library's green initiatives, so that it becomes a central community resource for how "green living" not only benefits the environment, but also helps the community to live in a healthier and more sustainable way.

**Virginia T. George  
LIBRARY BOARD**

**What personal qualities, skills, and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a Wilmette Public Library Trustee?**

I have lived in Wilmette for 18 years. I have four children who have participated in many Library Youth Programs. I am an active volunteer at my children's school. I was motivated to run for the Library Board by a desire to perform public service and to give back to a great community and institution. Finally, as a lifelong reader, I appreciate the role of the library as a cultural resource for the community. My education includes a B.A. in French and a law degree.

**How would you prioritize Library services and expenditures in a time of severe budget constraints?**

The front line for the library is the staff and the resources the community requires. The priority should be placed on maintaining a strong staff and current resources for the public. In addition, the library should continue to use technology to streamline its operations.

**As a trustee, what would be your response to a request to remove a book from the Library's collection or to limit access to certain Internet sites?**

Library users should be allowed to choose their reading and viewing material.

**What are your top three priorities for the Library Board of Trustees to address over the next four years?**

- a. Research the potential impact of evolving technology on the Library's mission/method of delivering resources.
- b. Ensure that the library's needs are considered and met in the context of the Village's new master plan.
- c. Evaluate environmental footprint of Library to see if it can be reduced.

**Lisa Gaines McDonald  
WILMETTE LIBRARY BOARD**

**What personal qualities, skills, and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a Wilmette Public Library Trustee?**

- Lifetime reader and frequent user of library services since I moved to Wilmette in 1992.
- Appointed interim Wilmette Public Library Trustee for the last 1 ½ years. I understand both the opportunities and challenges facing the library.
- Successful market research consultant since 1994 thus I am able to grasp many issues and have excellent problem solving skills.
- Other expertise stemming from my volunteer and marketing background include: outstanding listening, strategic planning, marketing and facilitation skills.
- Desire to serve my community.

**How would you prioritize Library services and expenditures in a time of severe budget constraints?**

My priorities in a time of severe budget constraints even though the past trustees have been diligent planners and fiscally responsible in forecasting and maintaining adequate reserves would be:

- Sustaining the physical facilities and technological infrastructure.
- Increasing physical and virtual library service levels while continuing to support programs that educate and train patrons on new technologies and the libraries services
- Supporting the Director in providing adequate staff compensation and development so that patrons can maximize their use of library resources and the library can continue to retain and attract the best talent.

**As a trustee, what would be your response to a request to remove a book from the Library's collection or to limit access to certain internet sites?**

I concur with the policy of the IL Library Association that an individual has the freedom based on the First Amendment to the US Constitution to read whatever they choose to read and it is the library's responsibility to provide a range of diverse subjects and opinions.

**What are your top three priorities for the Library Board of Trustees to address over the next four years?**

- Develop a 5 year strategic plan since we are in the final year of the last long range plan which incorporates the attitudes and opinions of patrons, residents, staff and community leaders. I firmly believe that *"If you don't know where you are going, how can you expect to get there?"* - Basil S. Walsh
- Financial stewardship of community tax dollars through evaluation of major expenditures and insuring a competitive bidding process for approved large projects.
- Maintaining acceptable service levels and services in light of the collapse and consolidation of the North Suburban Library System which managed the transport of inter-library loans, staff benefits and other services.

**Kathleen O'Laughlin  
LIBRARY BOARD**

**What personal qualities, skills, and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a Wilmette Public Library Trustee?**

I have been a long time member of the library board and have served as Treasurer and as Secretary. I have also been active in the community in other ways as well. I have been on the Plan Commission, and the Community Relations Commission for the Village of Wilmette. I have also served on District 39 community advisory committee. I have been an active member of the League of Woman Voters. I have been a resident of the Wilmette for over 30 year, and have been an active library user for all of those years. I believe that I bring a breath of experience and community knowledge to the library. I am a lawyer and I have raised three children in Wilmette.

**How would you prioritize Library services and expenditures in a time of severe budget constraints?**

The library has a solid balance sheet and has continued to balance its budget. It has undergone a remodeling project with funds transferred from reserves. At the current time there are no plans to reduce library services, materials or hours. The board carefully evaluates the budget against the revenue that it anticipates receiving. However, State funds to libraries have been cut back, eliminated or paid late. This has resulted in the reevaluation of those services that state funding supported, such as interlibrary loan. The library continues to monitor this situation carefully, with the goal of continuing to provide the services that Wilmette patrons have come to expect.

**As a trustee, what would be your response to a request to remove a book from the Library's collection or to limit access to certain internet sites?**

Library collection development is a staff function that the board would not become involved in. The Library does not limit access to the internet.

**What are your top three priorities for the Library Board of Trustees to address over the next four years?**

To continue to provide the level of service that Wilmette patrons currently enjoy. To continue to work with the all stakeholders to address the parking shortage at the library. To work with fellow board members, staff and patrons of the library to develop a new long range plan to set priorities for the next five years of the library.

**Michael K. Levitan  
LIBRARY BOARD**

**What personal qualities, skills, and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a Wilmette Public Library Trustee?**

My experience serving on 3 different boards, including a term on the Wilmette Park Board, gives me the skills to deal with budgeting issues, planning, and program development. Having operated a business dealing with the public, I understand what is required to provide our users and taxpayers with outstanding customer service. As a graduate of New Trier High School and Northwestern University, my roots in the community run deep.

**How would you prioritize Library services and expenditures in a time of severe budget constraints?**

All services and products we offer must be consistent with the mission statement of the Library. I will work with staff and board members to determine what areas could be trimmed and made more efficient. Payroll and staffing must continue to be prudently managed. I will also evaluate the economic future of the rentals of DVDs and CDs in light of all the recent technological developments in disseminating these items.

**As a trustee, what would be your response to a request to remove a book from the library's collection or to limit access to certain internet sites?**

The prime function of a library is to provide information and the tools to gather information. We should not act as censors, and should continue to provide a wide range of materials on all topics, without bowing to the pressure of political correctness. In regards to the internet, adults over 18 should have unrestricted access to the web, without filters. Library staff should monitor the use of minors.

**What are your top three priorities for the Library Board of Trustees to address over the next four years?**

- 1) How we deal with the continued advancements in technology must be forefront. As the way information gets disseminated continues to evolve, the board must keep up on these issues to prevent obsolescence.
- 2) Working with the village on the effects of their master plan to redevelop the land surrounding the library. We need to insure that library patrons have adequate parking and access.
- 3) Maintaining an open and transparent board with increased utilization of the website. The board does an excellent job currently, but I would post committee agendas and committee minutes, and establish individual email accounts for each board member, a practice in place by other Wilmette governmental bodies.

**Peter D. Fischer**  
**NEW TRIER HIGH SCHOOL BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**What personal qualities, skills and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a member of the New Trier Board of Education?**

I think my strongest assets are good judgment, common sense and an ability to remain reasonable which are all important in a job where consensus building is important. I also work very quickly. I believe my years of training and experience as an attorney have developed my communications skills, both written and oral, which can be helpful in any board setting. A sense of humor is also important for easing tensions and keeping things in perspective and some people say I have that, others, including my wife and daughter, would not be so sure.

I am presently Chairman of two corporations and I have served for many years on corporate boards so that I am used to operating in a board setting. I have also been a member and Chairman of Northfield's Traffic and Transportation Committee. More specifically to the educational context, my experience as a board member and president of the Sunset Ridge District 29 Board of Education has prepared me for many of the types of issues, albeit on a smaller scale, that I would encounter at New Trier. During my time at Sunset Ridge we hired a new superintendent who replaced a beloved superintendent who had led the district for over 27 years. We hired a new director of student services, replacing another retiring district icon. We conducted a strategic planning process for the first time in many years. We commenced a long-range facilities planning study. We totally revamped our communications systems with parents. We instituted a student lap-top computer program. I negotiated a new collective bargaining agreement with the teachers and, finally, we had to respond to the Rev. Meeks' "enrollment" stunt.

**In an era of shrinking resources, what are your priorities for developing a budget for New Trier District 203? Where would you make reductions in spending?**

I firmly believe that a district must live within its means. I believe in keeping a healthy reserve and that reserves are for emergencies. The community decides the level of taxes it will accept for the school to meet its mission and the school must live with that level.

I'm all for "cutting out the fat" in any budget. Obviously, in such times the district must eschew things that would be "nice" to have and only authorize expenditures on things that the district *must* have to do its core job which is educating students.

**What, if any, steps should the Board take to address the facility deficiencies at the Winnetka campus?**

There are different types of deficiencies at the site which must be prioritized. Any deficiency that may threaten the life or safety of any child, employee or visitor must be addressed immediately. Closely related is the issue of accessibility. The next priority is to address those areas where annual maintenance costs are excessive and where investment in replacement systems or machinery makes sense. The next issue would be addressing areas where the state of the building is impeding the education process as it has evolved over the years.

**What do you see as the qualities of a successful high school? How would you evaluate the effectiveness of programs at New Trier?**

To me the question to be asked is: Are we giving every student the opportunities he or she needs to reach his or her full potential? It's not just about the top students or the elites doing well, it's about everybody. Thus, it's not just about test scores, although they are a component. In fact, one of the problems with this question is that we can't fully evaluate the success of the school based simply on what students do while at the school. Instead, success is measured ultimately by how the students do when they leave New Trier; by how they do in college, after college, in their careers and in life itself. The answers to these questions are much more difficult to gauge than mere test scores and who got into which college.

In the case of New Trier the motto says it all "To commit minds to inquiry, hearts to compassion and lives to the service of humanity." If we can live up to that motto, then we will have a successful high school.

**Given that contracts with teachers, support staff, and physical plant employees will expire in the next 18 months, what parameters and goals should guide the negotiations?**

Obviously, the main drivers in any negotiations during the next few years are the state of the economy and decreasing revenues for all school districts including ours. At present it appears that the effects of the recession will continue or that the economy will grow only slightly. It also appears that revenues will decrease, especially insofar as money coming from the State is concerned.

This reality should be clear to all parties and should be reflected in any contracts. All parties should also keep in mind the present low rate of inflation which should keep escalation in the contracts also low.

**What are some strengths of New Trier's current Strategic Plan? For continued long-range planning, what would be your top priorities and goals.**

The strength of the present plan is that it was comprehensive and well-thought out. The planning process involved all segments of the school community. To me it was important that the Strategic Plan recognized the anxiety and stress felt by many students in the high pressure competitive atmosphere that exists at New Trier and that it attempted to implement programs to reduce that anxiety and stress.

Going forward, the top priority for future planning is to recognize and deal with the changes in the economic landscape.

**In your view, what are the benefits of technology in aiding education at New Trier? What additional technological initiatives, if any, would you like to see implemented?**

The real key to education is twofold and has not changed over the years. First, parents must instill a love and respect for education in their children at an early age and continue to reinforce that over time. Second, you need great teachers. Technology is merely a *tool* to help teachers teach and students learn.

**Joel Goldhar**  
**NEW TRIER HIGH SCHOOL BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**What personal qualities, skills and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a member of the New Trier Board of Education.?**

I am a lifelong educator who understands the challenges of the classroom as well as the changing demands colleges are placing on high schools to make their graduates competitive for the best opportunities. I teach, do research and consult on the design of efficient and effective organizations, with emphasis on the role of technology. I have been trained to take a strategic, long range, and integrated view of any issue; and am committed to transparent and inclusive governance. I believe that the Board of Education must be the 'stewards' of the assets and the social mission of NTHS for the community as a whole, and for future generations. I am also experienced as an NTHS Parent with two sons who are recent graduates and who I believe represent the outstanding educational and development experience available at NTHS.

**In an era of shrinking resources, what are your priorities for developing a budget for New Trier District 203? Where would you make reductions in spending?**

The budget process must be inclusive and take into account the needs of the school and its students, balanced against the community's ability and willingness to provide financial support in a coming decade of reduced economic expectations. We need to find ways to maintain academic excellence and attractive salaries for both new and experienced Faculty, while organizing and managing our resources as efficiently as possible.

**What, if any, steps should the Board take to address the facility deficiencies at the Winnetka Campus?**

The Board needs to take account of all the facilities available at both campus locations and match them to the academic and programmatic needs of the school – and then decide on what new or remodeled facilities are needed, and where to put them.

**What do you see as the qualities of a successful high school? How would you evaluate the effectiveness of programs at New Trier.**

A 'successful' high school will be known by the performance of its graduates in post secondary education and in the lives they lead. This is difficult to measure in the short term, but the track record of New Trier alumni certainly suggests that the school's reputation as one of the U.S.'s elite high schools is well deserved. Most importantly, in my view and from my experiences as an NTHS Parent, a successful high school will offer both an outstanding education and a developmental experience that helps adolescents make a successful transition to adulthood.

**Given that contracts with teachers, support staff, and physical plant employees will expire in the next 18 months, what parameters and goals should guide the negotiations?**

The next contracts should seek to achieve a better balance between costs per student, the educational goals of the school, and the rate of inflation; so that property tax levels are sustainable and property values maintained. In general, I would seek a contract that represents fairness for all stakeholders.

**What are some of the strengths of new Trier's current Strategic Plan? For continued long-range planning, what would be your top priorities and goals?**

Strategic Planning is a very important function of the Board. It needs to be inclusive and transparent and related to the goals and social mission of NTHS and the New Trier Community overall. In this way it becomes a set of guidelines for the Annual Budget, which executes the Strategic Plan. The current Strategic Plan offers many wonderful ideas; many of which do not need any specific new resources to execute.

The Board, with the faculty, staff and administration; should do an Annual review of progress towards each of the 41 Initiatives. This review needs to include consideration of the continued relevance of each Initiative, and the potential need to add new initiatives or modify current ones; as changes occur in society, the economy, technology and law/regulation. If Initiatives are not making progress because they lack necessary resources, that should become part of the Budget Process.

**In your view what are the benefits of technology in aiding education at New Trier? What additional technological initiatives, if any, would you like to see implemented.**

I have worked at the leading edge of information technology since 1973 when I was a Program Director at the national Science Foundation Office of Science Information Services where we funded much of the basic research and early stage development that led eventually to computer graphics, robotics, faster computing speeds, remote and distributed computing, more user-friendly and economically viable technology and systems, email, search capability and the www. What I learned then, I believe is still true. Technology opens up new options for more efficient and effective human endeavors of all kinds including teaching and learning; but the specific choices of technology and systems investments must always be driven by strategy and goals and missions. In academia it is also important to prevent technology from getting in the way of students developing their critical thinking, research and writing, leadership, and communications skills.

**Lori A. Goldstein**  
**NEW TRIER HIGH SCHOOL BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**What personal qualities, skills and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a member of the New Trier Board of Education?**

I believe that I would be an asset to the Board based on my diverse roles, and the experiences within each demanding deep involvement in board-level issues. First, I have had extensive board and school experience in the New Trier community for more than 10 years, including New Trier Parents' Association, New Trier's Ethical Conduct and Global Citizenship (ECGC) Parent Committee, the Strategic Plan Evaluation committee, Wilmette Village-Wide PTO, Highcrest PTO, Romona PTA, Family Awareness Network, and Temple Jeremiah (Legal Counsel and Director.) In terms of leadership, I have held several officer and committee positions involving school administration and school boards, and I spent several years as a Wilmette District 39 School Board Observer. The organizational and school issues I've handled include budget, staffing, curriculum, strategic planning, school improvement planning, bylaws, policy, and student health and safety.

Second, I have more than 25 years of legal experience as an employment (management) attorney, dealing with contracts, negotiations, human relations, employer-employee relations, hiring, firing, group staff cuts, discipline, and policy. Related skills include problem solving, defending claims and accusations, investigating and presenting facts, advocating and writing positions, presenting to clients and decision-making.

Third, I have significant communications experience. I graduated college with a journalism degree and I have substantial legal writing and public speaking experience. In addition, I have been the New Trier Parents' Press editor since 2008. I feel strongly about the power of open and honest communications and being a good listener. I have dealt with public relations issues for clients as well as for New Trier by serving as a member of the Strategic Plan subcommittee dealing with sender schools' perceptions about New Trier. It is essential for School Board members to actively engage at the Board and committee meetings; I am well prepared to ask questions, voice opinions and actively participate.

Finally, my personal qualifications are important for a School Board member. As a parent of New Trier students and a New Trier community member for 20 years, I have the benefit of seeing the varied perspectives of parents, students and community members. I feel strongly about equity and fairness - I consider all perspectives on an issue and seek to make balanced decisions. I am fiscally conservative and in favor of managing the district efficiently, transparently and in the best interests of the community. I am a hard and committed worker, dedicated to maintaining New Trier's excellence. In sum, the breadth and depth of my involvement makes me well qualified for the Board.

**In an era of shrinking resources, what are your priorities for developing a budget for New Trier District 203? Where would you make reductions in spending?**

The Board must have a conservative approach, balancing the students' and taxpayers' needs. Continued streamlining and cost containment should be done with the least negative impact on students. With economics and taxpayers in mind, we should strive to competitively maintain and recruit excellent teachers and administrators while providing development opportunities for 21st century learning. Also key are the physical facilities and equipment needed to provide a safe environment that enables our students to thrive. As a Board member, I would review in detail all operations and related costs and determine spending reductions consistent with the above.

**What, if any, steps should the Board take to address the facility deficiencies at the Winnetka campus?**

In response to the community's voice on the referendum, the Board should gain further community input in order to continue to understand the evolving education goals, student/staff needs (including safety and accessibility) and economic challenges that voters face. Various forms of input should be balanced with educational opportunities or financial constraints presented by the current facilities based on a new assessment. Then, up-to-date facilities review can be conducted. If gaps exist

between these two areas, the Board must think creatively to solve the problem, by identifying new solutions while considering options that meet the voters' expressed desires. In the meantime, however, the Board must continue to repair/replace items on an as-needed and life-safety basis.

**What do you see as the qualities of a successful high school? How would you evaluate the effectiveness of programs at New Trier?**

Most important, a high school's success should be measured by its' students' achievements and how those achievements match with the community's expectations. Secondly, the school must meet those educational expectations while doing so in a financially prudent manner that is also consistent with the stated needs. Thus, other than the all-important financial benchmarks, an educational assessment might consider grade point averages, test scores, yearly progress reports and teacher evaluations as major criteria in the school's success. Also important is the school climate, including ethical conduct and global citizenship, diversity, communications, community, creativity and innovation, inquiry, compassion and service. Successes in these areas also depend upon a healthy and safe environment with a well-balanced lifestyle. Finally, the qualifications of the administrators, faculty and staff, as well as a good relationship among them and with the community, are additional measures of success at New Trier.

New Trier's strategic plan evaluation, school climate surveys, and youth, risk, behavior surveys, together with anecdotal evidence, provide excellent evaluation resources. Generally, NT programs are excellent, but improvements can always be made.

**Given that contracts with teachers, support staff, and physical plant employees will expire in the next 18 months, what parameters and goals should guide the negotiations?**

The Board must balance economic interests with the goal of maintaining and recruiting excellent faculty and staff competitively. Recent national trends towards performance-based compensation could be considered. Parameters must include contracts that ensure the financial soundness of the institution well into the future while enabling the school to deliver a high quality education experience. However, the tax cap and government funding issues cannot be ignored as these discussions take place.

**What are some strengths of New Trier's current Strategic Plan? For continued long-range planning, what would be your top priorities and goals?**

The 2005-10 Plan strengths are its focus: social and emotional issues important for healthy, balanced students; ethical conduct, global citizenship, social connections, creative learning and exploration, optimal time use. Future planning should continue and improve upon the plan's delivery and measurement while adding new goals including a balanced, conservative budget; facilities renovations/repairs; improved community connections/communications; and 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning needs.

**In your view, what are the benefits of technology in aiding education at New Trier? What additional technological initiatives, if any, would you like to see implemented?**

Our students and faculty are fortunate to have the current use of various technological aids for learning, both in and out of the classroom. Access to global information and opportunities to learn digital skills are only some of the benefits. In the interest of economics and streamlining, additional technology should not be a priority for the short term. Eventually, future initiatives should be based on research and recommended technology for 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning.

**Patrick O'Donoghue  
NEW TRIER BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**What personal qualities, skills and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a member of the New Trier Board of Education?**

Critical thinking and analysis is my strongest attribute. This will allow me to question analyze and problem-solve for New Trier's Board of Education.

**In an era of shrinking resources, what are your priorities for developing a budget for New Trier District 203? Where would you make reductions in spending?**

The priority will be to keep New Trier's premier educational status and success record while using our limited resources more carefully. The key to doing this successfully is to become more efficient where possible so that educational excellence will not suffer.

**What, if any, steps should the Board take to address the facility deficiencies at the Winnetka campus?**

Any deficiencies should first be addressed in priority of their relevance to safety and well-being. The next priority would be maintaining existing facilities and replacing them if it is more cost effective.

**What do you see as the qualities of a successful high school? How would you evaluate the effectiveness of programs at New Trier?**

A successful high school prepares the student for the next stage. New Trier's programs should be evaluated for effectiveness by measuring whether the New Trier Graduate is prepared for success in the next phase of his or her life after graduation.

**Given that contracts with teachers, support staff, and physical plant employees will expire in the next 18 months, what parameters and goals should guide the negotiations?**

The goals should be a professional balancing that includes analysis of employee merit, competitive pay and resources available to the district.

**What are some strengths of New Trier's current Strategic Plan? For continued long-range planning, what would be your top priorities and goals?**

The Strategic Plan is comprehensive and sets goals. The top priority for continued long range planning is to provide the best services most efficiently.

**In your view, what are the benefits of technology in aiding education at New Trier? What additional technological initiatives, if any, would you like to see implemented?**

Technology is beneficial in every area of education. Technology is naturally integrated with the subject matter. I would like to see students lead the effort to use technology by unleashing their creativity in every subject.

**Greg Robitaille  
NEW TRIER BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**What personal qualities, skills and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a member of the New Trier Board of Education?**

I work to understand and evaluate all sides of an issue. I believe decision processes should be data-driven, fact-based and incorporate all reasonable alternatives.

I have a deep background in financial analysis and business strategy and an MBA from Columbia University. I also have significant board-level experience in both corporate and not-for-profit settings. I presently serve as a trustee on my college's board of trustees where I lead its fundraising efforts. In this capacity, I must understand the spending priorities and financial workings of the college.

I understand the importance of governance and having outcomes-based goals that are measurable. My credentials lend themselves to developing an understanding and perspective on the financial management and priorities of the school to support and sustain the outstanding education at New Trier.

**In an era of shrinking resources, what are your priorities for developing a budget for New Trier District 203? Where would you make reductions in spending?**

Balancing the imperative to maintain academic excellence with the fiscal realities of stagnant incomes, higher unemployment and significant home value reductions in our community is the signature issue the board must confront in the next four years. My priority is to find ways to become more efficient without sacrificing excellence at New Trier so this community remains viable and accessible to younger families and, ultimately, our kids.

**What, if any, steps should the Board take to address the facility deficiencies at the Winnetka campus?**

Safety and compliance with local, state and federal laws must be addressed. Thereafter, decisions regarding capital investment must be subject to a needs test that asks questions about the outcomes the spending achieves. If the outcome of a capital spending initiative significantly contributes to the quality of a New Trier graduate's education at New Trier then it ought to be seriously considered. I believe we are in a financial environment where all capital projects must be critically reviewed.

**What do you see as the qualities of a successful high school? How would you evaluate the effectiveness of programs at New Trier?**

A properly educated person must be able to think critically and communicate orally and in writing. The qualities of a successful high school are best measured by outcomes. How do New Trier students do on standardized tests? Where do our kids go to college? How do they do at college? How do they do when they graduate from college? If they don't go to college, how ready are they to join the workforce?

**Given that contracts with teachers, support staff, and physical plant employees will expire in the next 18 months, what parameters and goals should guide the negotiations?**

Since 2004, salaries and benefits at New Trier have increased at a rate that is in excess of three times inflation. Private sector incomes, benefits and housing values have not enjoyed similar growth during this period. The ability to increase property taxes to fund such growth in NTHS salaries and benefits does not seem to be supported by the community nor is it sustainable. This dynamic must be front and center in any negotiation of the budget item -- salaries and benefits -- that comprises 80% of District 203's operating costs. We need excellent teachers to sustain our academic excellence but we need to balance this with the financial realities of our township's resources.

**What are some strengths of New Trier's current Strategic Plan? For continued long-range planning, what would be your top priorities and goals.**

I found New Trier's 2005-2010 Strategic Plan to be amorphous and not focused on desired outcomes. I would try to identify a small number of high-impact goals that can be measured and tracked. I would work closely with fellow board members, community members and the administration to identify key attributes of a New Trier graduate and then determine the goals that map to those outcomes.

**In your view, what are the benefits of technology in aiding education at New Trier? What additional technological initiatives, if any, would you like to see implemented?**

The benefit of technology should be the enhancement of the learning process. Making more information and knowledge more accessible to students is the promise of technology. A secondary benefit may be bringing efficiencies to the district. I would study how technology is currently used at New Trier, how it can be more effectively used and how it can be used to drive efficiencies.

**Timothy H. Scherman**  
**NEW TRIER HIGH SCHOOL BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**What personal qualities, skills and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a member of the New Trier Board of Education?**

The main attributes I have to offer as a candidate for the New Trier Board are knowledge and experience in the field of education on “both sides of the desk.” I have been a teacher and coach at the high school level, a professor and adviser at the college level, and a graduate professor of English for current high school teachers pursuing MA degrees. On the management side, I have been elected twice to the Board of Education in District 39, where I served on Insurance, Facilities and Negotiating committees, and I volunteer on the Executive Board of the District 39 Educational Foundation as Fine Arts Chair. Since 2003, my position as Northeastern Illinois University’s representative to the Faculty Advisory Council to the Illinois Board of Education has given me a broad perspective on the politics, funding, and administration of education at the state level, and I have drafted white papers for that group on raising standards for teacher preparation and the alignment of standards from pre-schools to graduate schools. Finally, my role as Chair of the University Planning and Budget Council at Northeastern has given me valuable experience in both the development and oversight of strategic plans and in achieving consensus among a diverse group of faculty, civil service personnel, administration and students.

In short, while for more than 25 years, education has been my vocation, my avocation and my passion, the diversity of my roles in the field has preserved me from any narrow “ivory tower” perspective, and I believe this variety of experiences will be especially useful to the New Trier Board.

**In an era of shrinking resources, what are your priorities for developing a budget for New Trier District 203? Where would you make reductions in spending?**

Clearly such conditions provide an impetus to search for any inefficiencies or redundancies in curriculum or programming that might be cut in order to direct the most dollars to existing programs and services that are most basic to student success. Flattening and even dipping enrollments predicted over the next decade would at least offer some relief in costs that might allow reallocations for the maintenance of current programs, services, and “soft” infrastructure—most of all technology. This would not be a time for program expansion—at best reallocation.

**What, if any, steps should the Board take to address the facility deficiencies at the Winnetka campus?**

Voters clearly rejected a proposal to take on the various deficiencies in the Winnetka campus’s facilities all in one fell swoop, but few will deny that school facilities, like any other property, require not only upkeep but periodic updating to stay valuable in the marketplace. Deficiencies where ongoing maintenance clearly exceeds the cost of replacement in the short term should be made our first priorities, but the case for other facilities improvements should be addressed in our next Strategic Plan, where the particular relationships between educational programs, the spaces they would occupy, and a plan for funding renovations or new spaces would have to be researched, communicated and approved.

**What do you see as the qualities of a successful high school? How would you evaluate the effectiveness of programs at New Trier?**

In an ideal world, the success of NTHS would be measured according to its ability to foster the intellectual, social and emotional growth of students as they progress through their high school years. In the real world, New Trier High School must be measured by two or three more mundane criteria: 1) its ability to offer curricular and extra-curricular programs on a par with the best high schools in the area that make our graduates competitive with students across the nation seeking entrance into the nation’s best colleges and universities, 2) its ability to continue to offer such excellence at a reasonable cost to local taxpayers, and 3) as a result of (1) and (2), its ability to maintain and even augment property values in the township.

**Given that contracts with teachers, support staff, and physical plant employees will expire in the next 18 months, what parameters and goals should guide the negotiations?**

Longer-term contracts afford districts financial stability and better opportunities for long-term planning, but the risk of such agreements became clear in the recent economic downturn. While our goal should always be to offer salaries and benefits that retain and attract the highest caliber personnel, our next contracts have to be adjusted to current economic conditions and the possibility that any significant recovery at the state and local level may be long in coming.

**What are some strengths of New Trier’s current Strategic Plan? For continued long-range planning, what would be your top priorities and goals?**

The current strategic plan was the product of countless hours of effort on the part of every constituency, and it responded in a timely way and with great energy to particular issues of the school environment. Future plans, in my view, might be more capacious, making sure to articulate goals for learning alongside or within the context of goals for operations and maintenance and continued fiscal strength. One parameter of the current plan is to balance “innovation” with “tradition.” We also need to balance innovation with available resources.

**In your view, what are the benefits of technology in aiding education at New Trier? What additional technological initiatives, if any, would you like to see implemented?**

Innovations in technology have changed the way the world works; it would be very strange if they did not change both the way teachers teach and what they teach. The task facing New Trier is to make sure our students are prepared to engage and take advantage of new modes of information gathering, sharing and analysis that new technologies have provided (or will have provided) by the time they leave high school. Still, technology doesn’t teach our kids—teachers do—so no initiative should be taken on without substantial opportunities for buy-in and training

Joel Raynes  
DISTRICT 37 BOARD OF EDUCATION

**What personal qualities, skills and experiences make you particularly qualified to be a member of Avoca School District 37's Board of Education? If you are an incumbent, which of your School Board achievements would you want to highlight?**

I have been active in the Avoca Parent and Teacher's Council for the last nine years. I have served as the Treasurer, Vice President of Fundraising, 4 years as President, and now as President Emeritus of the Avoca Parent's and Teacher's Council. I have served on the Strategic planning committee, Community Outreach Committee, Parent Involvement in the last Principal search, and served as Treasurer for the Keep Improving District 37 Schools (KIDS) Committee. This year was member of New Trier Caucus.

**What are your priorities for District 37? What do you see as the three or four key issues facing District 37 over the next five years? What do you see the key components of the District's next long-range plan to be?**

My priorities for District 37 are to provide a great education for all students. Issues facing District 37 over the next few years are: Keeping our Finances in check. We need to be proactive in looking at all our finances, We need to check and recheck to make sure we are getting the best pricing. Secondly, we need to replace Key Leadership roles in the District. Thirdly, we need to sustain the greatness model. We need to find ways to keep our teachers and staff hungry and motivated. Finally, we need to sustain and grow the technology initiative.

**At the time of the 2009 tax increase referendum, the District stated that it wanted its new resources to last at least five to seven years. What needs to be done during the upcoming years to achieve this goal of fiscal stability?**

As I stated in Question 2, we need to be proactive in looking at all our finances. We need to explore new possibilities for revenues sources, while keeping our expenditures in check. The Board has a Finance Committee, which I hope to be part of.

**Over the past five years, student achievement in District 37 has risen to levels that are near the top in the state. What can you do as a Board member to ensure that the District sustains that momentum and growth?**

A Board Member's role is to keep expectations high, while having an accountability system in place. The District has 7 Greatness Indicators: Student Academic Achievement; Recognition of Students, Staff, School, and District; High level of satisfaction; Leadership in Innovation; Student Connectedness; Success in High School and Beyond; and Fiscal Responsibility. The Superintendent reports on how well we are doing.

**District 37 is a very diverse community. What can you do as a Board member to see that the District provides, for all of its constituencies, both necessary information and opportunities to engage fully in the education of its students?**

The last strategic plan establish a District Diversity Committee that will research and initiate activities that celebrate, enhance and expand the benefits of diversity at Avoca, and promote an understanding and appreciation of a world community, including but not limited to: -Curriculum and instruction; Recruitment and hiring practices; Community Outreach;

The Board and the School District are implementing specific recommendations from last year's Diversity Committee; They are implementing Diversity Resource Center at both school libraries. They are also implementing a language interpreters services to help parents, staff, and student relatives for Non English speaking parents during conferences and other school related activities. The District has also enhanced our website. The Parent Teacher's Council started a Diversity Committee. I would like to see that we unite our technology prowess with our diversity initiative.

**Sherry Wallingford  
DISTRICT 37 BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Which school board achievements would you want to highlight as an incumbent?**

Since the school board acts as a whole I could not actually highlight any individual achievements. I could name several achievements of the district:

- The use of technology to transform the way we teach and learn
- Student achievement levels that have risen significantly over the past few years
- The master plans at elementary and middle schools, which promote a team approach to meeting student needs and potential
- Community support for a referendum to finance the current educational program

**What are your priorities for District 37? What do you see as the three or four key issues facing District 37 over the next five years? What do you see the key components of the District's next long-range plan to be?**

The priority of the district is to achieve its mission-to maximize the unique potential of each child we serve.

One of the main issues facing the district is to attain the mission while working within the financial constraints. The board and the administration regularly look at ways to provide educational services as cost effectively and efficiently as possible. Over the next 5 years, another challenge will be to plan for resources in alignment with enrollment trends. Another challenge will be to sustain the high level of achievement and satisfaction that is currently present in the Avoca district.

The key components of the next long range plan will always be defined by the mission. The actual components will be identified by the data that is collected via a survey of all stakeholders. In general, I would think that there will be components to address ways to sustain excellence, financial issues, technology, and, I think, a component related to community engagement and diversity.

**At the time of the 2009 tax increase referendum; the District stated that it wanted its new resources to last at least five to seven years. What needs to be done during the upcoming years to achieve this goal of fiscal stability?**

The board and the administration have a responsibility to consistently evaluate the educational program for outcomes, and to look for ways to provide the education cost effectively. The tax increase was requested to fund the current program. If changes need to be made to the current educational program I would anticipate that the changes would be budget neutral. The board will also look for ways to keep other costs down in order to make the resources last at least five to seven years.

**Over the past five years, student achievement in District 37 has risen to levels that are near the top in the state. What can you do as a Board member to ensure that the District sustains that momentum and growth?**

I am an advocate of continuous improvement and of facing brutal facts. In addition, I am data driven in my decision-making. That is actually the culture of the board and the district. By setting the standards of a willingness to look at the data and to address challenges, I believe that the district will continue to be high achieving.

**District 37 is a very diverse community. What can you do as a Board member to see that the District provides, for all of its constituencies, both necessary information and opportunities to engage fully in the education of its students?**

The district currently has goals in place to address this issue. The diversity in Avoca is a wonderful asset for our children. Over the past year, committees of board members, parents, teachers, community members, and administrators have grappled with this very issue. There will be some new initiatives forthcoming during this year. We have to make consistent efforts to communicate via multiple vehicles, and to be attuned to the variety of cultural differences that may affect communication and engagement.



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**Key Dates for the April 5, 2011 Election**

<b>3/8/2011</b>	<b>Last day to register to vote</b>
<b>3/14/2011</b>	<b>First day of Early Voting</b>
<b>3/31/2011</b>	<b>Last day of Early Voting</b>
<b>3/31/2011</b>	<b>Last day to request a mail-in absentee ballot, including military and overseas voters</b>
<b>4/1/2011</b>	<b>In-person absentee voting begins at the Clerk's downtown Chicago office and five suburban courthouse mini-centers</b>
<b>4/4/2011</b>	<b>Last day voted mail-in absentee ballots can be postmarked for acceptance by the Clerk's office</b>
<b>4/5/2011</b>	<b>Election Day</b>

**Cook County Clerk Website: [cookcountyclerk.com/elections](http://cookcountyclerk.com/elections)**