



VOTER GUIDE

April 2, 2019
Municipal Election

Statements of Candidates in Contested Races

Village of Wilmette Board of Trustees
Wilmette Park District Board of Commissioners
Avoca School District 37 Board of Education

Statements of Candidates in Uncontested Races

Wilmette Public School District 39 Board of Education
Wilmette Public Library District Board of Trustees
New Trier Township High School District 203 Board of Education

Printing of this Voters Guide is underwritten by



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A project of the Voter Services Committee of the League of Women Voters of Wilmette

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Statements of Candidates in Contested Races

Village of Wilmette Board of Trustees

Candidate Biographies

Jeff Axelrod

Jeff is a former software engineer turned household renaissance man and activist who is the dad to Zoe, 17, Evan, 8, and husband to local OB-GYN Cheryl. His passions include pinball, bike advocacy, craft beer, affordable housing, gourmet food preparation and fair wages.



Peter Barrow

I'm a Wilmette resident of over 35 years, with three children all graduates of the Wilmette schools and New Trier. Three of our grandchildren live in Wilmette and one daughter teaches at Ramona. I served on our Plan Commission for eight years and am in my second year on our Transportation Commission. Of Counsel to a downtown law firm, I'm an avid cyclist and walker of our third Golden Retriever, Leo.



Joel Feinstein

Joel I. Feinstein has lived in Wilmette since 1999 with his wife and three children. He is a practicing civil engineer specializing in drainage, utilities, and permitting. He works for a transportation group at a consulting engineering firm. Joel is interested in representing **all** of Wilmette as a Village trustee. Visit him at jif.jfein.net



Gina Kennedy

Gina has been a resident of Wilmette since 1987. She is a former partner with the law firm of Sidley Austin, LLP, with over 20 years' experience with state and municipal bond finance, affordable housing tax credit financings, project and capital asset financing, and tax exempt organizations, as well as other tax-intensive transactions. She has been an active volunteer in the community, primarily with the District 39 schools and New Trier Township High School, which all three of her now-grown children attended.



Ryrie Pellaton

Wilmette resident since 2006

Johns Hopkins University, BA Political Science and French Literature

Commissioner Wilmette Park District (4yrs)

Chairman, Lakefront Committee (3yrs)

Financial Policy and Planning Committee (4yrs)

Chairman, Facilities Committee (1yr)

Golf Committee (1yr)

PTA/PTO participation over the last 8 years;

Community Review Committee (1yr)

Chairman Village Wide PTO Civics & Safety Committee (2yrs)

Central School Carnival Chairman (2yrs)

Central School and Highcrest PTA/PTO Civics & Safety

Representative (4yrs)

Kara's husband and father of Rhys (14), & Tommy (11)

Previous positions:

Director of Operations at the Francis W. Parker School, Chicago (10yrs)

General contractor single family residential construction (16yrs)

Business Manager Countryside School

Director of Auxiliary Programs Evergreen School



Senta Plunkett

My family and I have lived in Wilmette for the past 15 years. I grew up in Chicago and attended Northwestern University and law school at the University of Illinois. I worked as Assistant Corporation Counsel for the City of Chicago for many years. I have been serving the Village of Wilmette in various capacities for the past 10 years: currently as a Village Board member and previously as a member of the Police and Fire Commission and as Chair of the Historic Preservation Commission. I have also been an active volunteer in Wilmette schools where our three children have and still are attending.

**Daniel Sullivan**

My name is Dan Sullivan and I am excited for the opportunity to continue serving as a trustee for the Village of Wilmette. My family and I have a long history living and working in the Village. My wife Catherine and I moved here in 2003, restored a 90 year old home and started raising our family of two boys and a few dogs. I have worked in the banking industry for over 25 years, currently with CIBC in our wealth management group. We are active in the community taking advantage of all the Village offers from wonderful park district programs, retail and dining options and the ability to volunteer from zoning to trustee positions. I look forward to continuing that service.



Village of Wilmette Board of Trustees Responses to Voter Guide Questions

Candidates for 4-Year Term

1. What do you hope to accomplish if you are elected as a Village Trustee? Please explain why these goals are priorities for you.

Joel Feinstein

I want to represent the people of Wilmette with progressive stances that I believe are reflective of the values and wishes of the majority of residents. Currently the most pressing and expensive issue on the Village's agenda is to make sure the west side stormwater plan proceeds diligently. As a water resources engineer, I believe that I am well positioned to make this happen. Unfortunately rainfall has increased over the decades and will likely continue to increase. For more information about me and my views, please visit my website at www.jif.jfein.net. You can be directed there from my Facebook page, Feinstein For Trustee, or my LinkedIn page, Joel I Feinstein.

Gina Kennedy

My priorities are (a) exploring avenues for improving Village revenues, including enhancement of the Village's business districts; (b) tackling badly needed infrastructure projects, including street repairs and flood control measures; (c) fostering constructive, civil and respectful dialogue among Village residents, the Board and the business community; and (d) making the Village more accessible, livable and pleasant for all residents, including through expansion of affordable housing, greenscaping, and bike and pedestrian safety. These goals are important to me because, I believe, they are priorities for most Village residents.

These goals won't be easy to meet. I don't believe anyone, myself included, has a ready, fool-proof plan. Problem solving must be nuanced, with the recognition that even the most initially appealing idea may have unexpected adverse consequences. What I bring to the process is a deep understanding of municipal finance and business, dedication to listening respectfully to all members of our community, willingness to work hard, a flexible, pragmatic approach to problem-solving, and commitment to co-operation.

Ryrie Pellaton

My goal is to maintain the high level of Village services that our community currently enjoys and to simultaneously maintain the Village's current excellent financial status. Residents understandably want any property tax increases to be minimal and justified. They also want the services that the Village provides to continue undiminished.

If, in the next few years, expected financial challenges result in an overall reduction of tax and fee revenue, the Trustees will need to make prudent and creative financial decisions. I feel that my four years on the Wilmette Park Board Financial Planning & Policy Committee and three years as Chair of the Lakefront Committee demonstrate that I am qualified to do so. In 2015 Village residents voted down the proposed Gillson Beach referendum. Since then, after gathering additional public input and working with my fellow Commissioners, the Park District has been able to design and begin construction on a much improved plan for the beach house and parking lot and to fund it without asking tax payers for additional taxes via a new referendum. The \$9,000,000 building and parking lot are scheduled to open this summer. That is the kind of leadership, creative and collaborative problem solving, and fiduciary acumen, that I will bring to the Village Board.

Senta Plunkett

It's been a busy four years since I was elected to the Board, and we have accomplished a lot. In 2016, we instituted a substantial increase to our annual Road Program with the goal of significantly improving our roads over time without large increases to the tax levy. In 2018, after much study and public outreach, we approved a stormwater plan. This plan promises to protect 98% of homes from flooding. Also in 2018, we approved Wilmette's first all-affordable non-senior housing project.

I'm particularly excited about some of my objectives that were accomplished. I sponsored the ordinance to raise the age to purchase tobacco (including vaping products!) from 18 to 21 in Wilmette. On the sustainability front, I helped bring the Greenest Regions Compact to Wilmette and was a catalyst for Rain Ready Wilmette.

Moving forward, I hope to continue the momentum on the green initiatives that we started. I look forward to the implementation of Rain Ready Wilmette, and to collaborating on a Sustainability Plan. This spring the Board will review the consultant's report regarding a stormwater utility. We will also be presented with an Active Transportation and Master Bike Plan that can be used as a roadmap for future budgets.

This next Board will also be able to collaborate on the Central Street Reconstruction Project. This project will make our downtown even more vibrant and help bolster our existing businesses and attract new ones as well.

Dan Sullivan

I have been fortunate to be able to volunteer my time and experience over the last 14 years as a Zoning and Village board member and through that effort I have come to further appreciate all that there is to offer in Wilmette. Continuing that service was an easy decision as I want to ensure we further improve the quality of life I have come to enjoy for myself, family, friends, neighbors and business owners. My main focus will be continued financial responsibility and prudence which has allowed us to have the highest quality of public services, water and safety that makes Wilmette special. We have a number of large capital projects to undertake in the next few years that include stormwater improvement and a new police station. Starting both of

these in the next few years is important but also financing them in an affordable fashion is critical. We must be responsible with the debt we incur while maintaining our reserve levels so that we can continue to deliver the level of service our residents and business have come to expect and deserve.

2. What financial challenges do you see for our Village and how would you address them?

Joel Feinstein

Though property taxes represent the lion's share of income to the Village, a significant amount of income comes in through retail taxes. Loss of revenues at Eden's Plaza and challenges at Fourth and Linden threaten income. The plan to implement the west side stormwater plan will likely be funded through municipal bonds, where Moody's currently rates us at AAA. The Board must continue its commitment to fiscal sustainability through good governance, and attracting new businesses to come and flourish.

Gina Kennedy

From decades of experience with public financings, I have a solid understanding of Village finances. The community's expectations regarding public services, infrastructure improvements, beautification of our business districts, improved safety, sustainability, etc., will be difficult, if not impossible, to achieve unless the Village has a strong financial footing.

The Village currently faces challenges for which there aren't easy, painless solutions.

Recurring non-property tax revenues have declined in recent years, while property tax revenue has increased only modestly. Consequently, the Village's total operating revenue declined 12% between 2017 and 2018 alone. Due to the loss of businesses that contributed significant sales tax revenue to the Village, it will likely decline further. Additionally, Wilmette's share of the state's income tax receipts may be in jeopardy as the state legislature looks for money to address its own fiscal issues.

Meanwhile, expenses are increasing. The pension plan for many Village employees is fully funded. However, the plan for police and firefighters is not and, by 2020, contributions to it will need to increase by \$425,000. Village staffing is at its lowest level in decades. The police department currently has five vacancies. Further staffing cuts would likely erode vital services. Our obsolete police station needs replacing, many roads in the Village are in poor condition and there are other infrastructure projects, such as storm sewer improvements, that require funding.

No one welcomes an increase in fees or taxes. Currently, only 12% of a resident's property taxes goes to Village government, but total property taxes are high and, because of recent federal tax law changes, the burden of these taxes is greater than ever. Even a modest increase will likely be unpopular with some residents. I believe, however, that we cannot rule out this option. Additionally, increases in fees, particularly sewer and water fees which have

been flat for many years, may be prudent. If possible, however, the Village should endeavor to address revenue needs in a way least burdensome to our less affluent residents.

Ryrie Pellaton

Despite the Village being in the best financial position in decades, there are several areas of potential future and current concern.

Local:

Loss of sales tax revenue from five retailers (Carson Pirie Scott, Carson's Furniture, Skokie Valley Materials, Treasure Island and Imperial Motors) which collectively generated over \$500,000 in annual sales tax revenue.

Pension payments:

Village's share of Fire and Police pension payments total over \$5,000,000 annually. Total employer annual pension contributions for all Village employees exceed \$6,000,000 annually. The average rate of increase over the last 22 years has been 8.88%. That represents an increasing share of the Village's total budget each year and is a significant cause of pressure on property tax rates as pensions alone represent 18% of the \$33,400,000 total Village budget.

State funding:

The Local Government Distributive Fund is a designated portion of state income tax revenues distributed by the State to Cities and Counties. Distributions occur on a per capita basis. In FY 2018 a "one time" 10% reduction followed by another "one time" 5% reduction resulted in a \$130,000 loss of revenue to the Village. Many observers believe that State may discontinue this program entirely forcing the Village to make up the shortfall.

Illinois imposed a 1.5% administrative fee on the Home Rule share of retail sales taxes totaling an additional \$30,000 reduction in Village revenue.

Continued discussion of a potentially disastrous freeze by the state on local property taxes which would result in an approximate \$1.8 million reduction in Village revenues and would also likely raise the cost of borrowing for future infrastructure investments such as the Storm water project. No one wants to give Springfield more power at the expense of local government.

National:

The \$10,000 Federal cap on State and Local Tax deductions will affect most Wilmette residents as their SALT tax burden exceeds \$10,000. Property taxes are the largest part of that. The result of the cap is that our current property tax burden will effectively increase and any future tax increases will be that much more onerous as residents won't be able to offset them with Federal income tax deductions.

Predicted recession within the next two years:

Former Fed Chairman, Ben Bernanke, likened the U.S. economy to an episode of Looney Tunes, explaining it could soon face what's been called a "[Wile E. Coyote moment](#)" as benefits

from the Trump Administration's various forms of fiscal stimulus – like the 2017 tax cuts – start to fade. "In 2020, Wile E. Coyote is going to go off the cliff," Bernanke said. Bernanke's opinion is far from an outlier; Moody's and JP Morgan also predict increasing (70%+) odds of a 2020 recession.

Increased costs:

Approved "Neighborhood Storage Option" storm water improvements totaling \$68,200,000 including the recent Optimization and Future Proofing additions.

\$25,000,000 Police station replacement delayed for 17 years now scheduled for 2025.

These financial issues, and others, will be a significant concern for many residents when casting their votes for Trustee.

Senta Plunkett

The financial position of the Village is its strongest in decades. Our AAA bond rating was affirmed and our General Fund Reserves have continued to increase as the result of a conservative budget approach. Our 2019 Budget includes the lowest percentage increase in the property tax levy in 22 years!

That being said, financial challenges lie ahead. In losing Carsons, Treasure Island, and Imperial Motors, the Village lost valuable sales tax revenue. We are currently setting new zoning regulations to ensure the retail character of those districts. While we will need to identify strategies to offset this revenue loss, we are hopeful there will be larger sales tax generators in the future in those locations.

Pensions are another important topic that we on the Finance Committee are tackling right now. Not only do we need to meet the State of Illinois mandate, we know that a healthy pension system is very important to the financial stability of the Village and directly affects the Village's bond rating. We are working on long-term strategies to increase funding to the pension system that will not cause marked increases to the tax levy.

As discussed, we are embarking on a significant stormwater project. While this plan is the most cost-conscious of those we studied, it will still result in an increase to residents' fees. I am mindful that we need to have a measured approach, taking into account all of the taxes and fees residents pay as a whole as we go through the budget process.

Dan Sullivan

The Village of Wilmette is financially stable and well-positioned today given the steps we have taken over the last ten years to be more efficient, well-funded and financially responsible. As a result, Wilmette is affordable yet able to continue providing the services we all expect from public works, police and fire. Maintaining that approach and diligence is important as we have capital projects and pension obligations to meet, while balancing reduced sales tax revenue and a potential slowdown in the economy.

To address these, I will continue to lead our “open for business & development” mindset to welcome in new businesses, residents and commercial and residential development projects. Over the years we have been successful at inviting new stores and restaurants that have complimented Wilmette’s charm and brought terrific options to all of us. We have improved our community development process to allow both residents (new and existing) a way they can make improvements to their homes so they can continue living in this community, while also pursuing developers of multi-family affordable living to consider a project in Wilmette.

3. The Village has recently signed onto the Greenest Region Compact 2 (GRC2), which is an environmental sustainability blueprint for Chicago-region communities. As Village Trustee, what environmental priorities from the GRC2 strike you as most important, and why?

Joel Feinstein

I am proud that the Village of Wilmette has signed on to the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus’ Greenest Region Compact, along with our neighbors Evanston, Winnetka, and Northfield. The consensus lays out 49 goals, broken into ten categories: leadership; mobility; municipal operations, sustainable communities, waste & recycling, and water. Many of the goals are interconnected and tend to support others, however some stand out.

Support safe and effective active transportation is an important goal. It encourages us to be more active and healthy and is important to allow children to get to school or park district camps safely on foot or bicycle. Looking into the future, with the onset of more cars for hire and autonomous driving vehicles, the number of personally owned cars may significantly decrease, along with the need for parking. This would present an opportunity to potentially increase the number of cycling lanes.

Ensure local policies and codes support sustainability encourages residences and businesses to follow best practices. We can influence how things get implemented. For example, if a stormwater utility were to be implemented, charges could be based on a formula that gives credits for effective green infrastructure and discourages contiguous impervious areas, which cause higher runoff.

Lead by demonstrating sustainable values and practices is a good goal because the Village can take the lead while educating people on sustainable development and best management practices.

And of course as a lakefront community, enacting policies to protect water resources is of the utmost importance. Lake Michigan and the other great lakes, hold about 20% of the world’s fresh surface water. We often take for granted the beauty of Lake Michigan and the awesome responsibility of its stewardship. As a water resources engineer, issues of water are of particular interest to me.

Gina Kennedy

No priority is more important than reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change is real and we are perilously close to reaching a point after which we may be unable to prevent catastrophe. Major reductions in greenhouse gases require policies and practices at the national and international level.

Nevertheless, the Village can do more than take symbolic action. There are pragmatic, achievable initiatives that will have a positive impact. I favor amending our building code to incentivize the use of greenscaping, solar panels, recycled and environmentally-friendly building materials, and energy-efficient building components, while discouraging construction that increases impervious surfaces. The Village should maintain a conservation ethic in our community, promote public transportation, and improve bike and pedestrian safety. As the Village replaces its municipal fleet it should do so with energy-efficient vehicles and as it renovates or replaces out-of-date municipally-owned buildings it should do so with sustainable, energy-efficient structures.

Ryrie Pellaton

The Village Environmental and Energy Commission is tasked with the enormous job of overseeing pursuit of the GCR2 goals. I believe that the Village should pursue all of the areas in the GRC2 framework rather than focusing on one or two most important areas and take opportunities as they arise during Village projects to incorporate GRC2 best practices.

The Village currently has projects under consideration or construction that fall into the Land Use, Water and Waste Water, Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy categories. For example:

- a) The Storm water storage plan is a good opportunity to add some green infrastructure to aid in flood control in addition to the underground storage tanks.
- b) The current \$5.2 million construction project at the Wilmette water treatment plant (which supplies 105,000 area residents) is designed to reduce electrical requirements and to make the water treatment process more energy efficient.
- c) I support installation of solar and/or geothermal systems at the new Police Station (2025) similar to the system the Wilmette Public Library installed. In fact the new Police Station will be a good candidate for a LEED project.

There are limitations to the incorporation of renewable energy which must be considered, e.g., earlier this year, we received a quote to add solar panels to our home but the inadequate suitable roof area means that installing them would actually increase our electrical costs.

Senta Plunkett

In December 2017, Trustee Julie Wolf and I attended the North American Climate Summit and returned to the Village with a renewed excitement for the environmental initiatives presented.

We shared our experiences with the Board, and last August the Board signed onto the GRC2, tasking the Village's Environmental and Energy Commission (EEC) with implementation. Through collaboration with the EEC, Village staff, the Board and environmental groups, the Village will create its own Sustainability Plan within the framework of the GRC2.

The GRC2 is a menu of environmental initiatives, many of which the Village has already implemented. We also have several new projects coming soon, including curb-side composting and Rain Ready Wilmette. During our last budget review, the Board made a policy decision directing staff to review green alternatives whenever we replace a vehicle. On the solar front, the Village is actively pursuing designation from the national SolSmart program which recognizes municipalities for taking steps to encourage solar energy. We anticipate obtaining this SolSmart designation this Spring.

I think that a future Sustainability Plan for Wilmette should be woven into all operations of the Village. When the Village updates its Comprehensive Plan in 2020, I hope that our Sustainability Plan will become an integral part.

Dan Sullivan

The board's unanimous support for the GRC2 allows Wilmette to expand our own Sustainability Plan. We have accomplished much as it relates to this over the years from solid waste and composting, free electronics recycling, pursuing SolSmart certification, creating a RainReady program and the replacement of LEDs throughout the Village. GRC2 initiatives help us further focus on other initiatives including Water & Wastewater, Economic Development and Municipal operations, all very important to the continued success of our community. Focusing on our Water, including our plant and the delivery of this to our residents is very important as we must maintain the quality and safety for our residents.

4. Should the Village play a role in expanding affordable housing and/or housing assistance programs in Wilmette and, if so, what role should the Village Board take?

Joel Feinstein

Expanding affordable housing would be easier if we could develop denser housing, which could mean more or taller high rises. However, changing the character of the Village by becoming more urban, is not something most residents want, particularly those living in the central business district. However developers that do not provide sufficient affordable housing should be encouraged to donate to the emergency assistance fund, which helps low income residents in the Village. The Board should encourage the Village to publicize these resources.

Gina Kennedy

The Village has an obligation to support development of affordable housing. Fulfilling that obligation will benefit the community at-large. There are significant challenges to doing so, however. The vast majority of land suitable for residential development is already developed, the high value of land within the Village makes construction of single-family affordable housing

financially infeasible, and sites appropriate for multi-family affordable housing are scarce. In 2004, the Village developed an affordable housing plan that, despite such challenges, encouraged development of affordable housing. Later a Housing Commission was established. Unfortunately, the plan hasn't been fully implemented and the Housing Commission hasn't met since September 2014. I endorse the 2004 plan. I would like to see it implemented fully and the Housing Commission revived, and I would like to encourage openness to fresh approaches.

Additionally, there are alternatives to sole reliance on private developers to build affordable housing. Based on many years' professional experience with tax-credit affordable housing, I believe the Village should explore partnering with not-for-profit organizations. Community Partners for Affordable Housing (CPAH), a seasoned organization dedicated to increasing affordable housing in other North Shore communities, is an outstanding example of such organizations.

Ryrie Pellaton

There are a number of fixed income Village residents that are living on the margin. Any increase in their cost of living may force them to move out of the Village or make other difficult financial choices.

For about 30 years, the Village provided some financial housing assistance to allow qualified residents to remain in their homes. The 2008 recession made it increasingly difficult for the Village to continue funding the program and in 2013, the Village's affordable housing program was transferred to a separate non-profit organization, Housing Our Own. Housing Our Own does an admirable job of administering financial assistance to 27 residents for whom \$1,800 in property tax loans or up to \$2,400 a year in rent subsidies often makes the difference in their ability to continue to live in Wilmette. Since it is not a Village program they have also been able to raise over \$100,000 in donations to support the program.

The Village has a goal of 15% affordable housing for all new multifamily developments, and, with the completion of the HODC project on Wilmette Ave, will be meeting that goal (the last four multifamily developments are Mallinkrodt, Greenleaf Ave, 611 Greenbay Rd and HODC) The Village also accepted \$80,000 payment in lieu of additional affordable units at 611 Greenbay. While that is not a large amount, the payment went to Housing Our Own and was adequate to fund their grant and subsidy operations for two years.

The Village benefits from having housing options for seniors on fixed income or younger persons on social security disability. The goal of 15% is in line with the state requirements and the Village should work towards continuing to meet that goal.

Senta Plunkett

The Village has recently made significant strides in affordable housing and I'm proud to have taken part. In 2004, with the help of past president John Jacoby, the Village drafted its Affordable Housing Plan. That plan established a goal that 15% of new multi-family units would be affordable. Because of that Plan, Village staff reached out to the Housing Development

Corporation (HODC) when the American Legion site became available. In 2018 the Village Board unanimously approved the application of the HODC for affordable housing at that site. When completed, we will have slightly exceeded our 15% goal. I believe that in the near future other multi-family building proposals will be reviewed, and the Board should look to our Plan to try to meet that goal.

The Village's Housing Assistance Program, Housing our Own, is at its greatest level since the program began. While the funds come from private donations, the Village manages the program and the Board has been successful in securing donations from developers. As a result of these recent efforts, more residents than ever are benefiting from the direct assistance the program offers and are able to remain in our community. I foresee that the Housing Our Own program will continue to grow to benefit even more residents and the Board can definitely help guide it in that direction.

Dan Sullivan

The Village board and staff should continue to play a pro-active role in expanding affordable housing and I am fully supportive of expanding this important initiative. Wilmette has been supportive of Affordable Housing over the years, ever since we self-elected to adopt our own plan in 2004. It is this plan that allows Wilmette to exceed our goals of having at least 15% of new multi-family housing units constructed (to-be) as affordable, including the most recent support for HODC's development of the Legion Property. In addition to our commitment to affordable housing in new multi-family development, the Village in 2015 established Housing Our Own-Wilmette, a not-for-profit corporation, to provide financial housing assistance to low income Wilmette senior citizens and persons with disabilities. To help fund this program, the Village secured a one-time payment of \$80,000 as well as a recurring annual payment of \$10,000 through its Planned Unit Development process on the behalf of Housing Our Own-Wilmette. Through the Village's funding efforts and generous support from Wilmette residents, Housing Our Own-Wilmette increased its monthly financial assistance by 12.5% effective January 1, 2019. This organization is a successful example of a public and private partnership working to better Wilmette.

5. What issues remain in the Village's plans to improve stormwater management and how would you address them?

Joel Feinstein

Stormwater management will continue to be an issue for Wilmette in the coming decades. Our first priority is to keep on track with our solution for the west side. Our engineering consultant, supported by the Board, is making improvements to the neighborhood storage plan to serve previously underserved residents. An intergovernmental agreement with the Wilmette Park District must be negotiated to obtain permission for park use. It is expected that the Village will pay for improvements on park property where the underground stormwater detention basins are to be located.

Stormwater on the east side of the Village is also an issue during large rainfall events. We have brick streets that allow water to infiltrate the porous sandy soils, which cleans the water and lessens the load on the sewer system. A few years ago Kenilworth implemented a porous asphalt and permeable parkways project and is now proceeding with Phase II design. The continued success and challenges of their projects could indicate a workable strategy in east Wilmette.

I would like to explore the idea of starting to separate the storm and sanitary systems on the east side of Wilmette. This may be too expensive, but it would be a good idea to look towards a cleaner, more efficient future. I also would also like to eventually create a Village stormwater ordinance that fully incorporates the MWRD ordinance and adds a few items. One thing we can consider is more groundwater recharge of stormwater into pervious soils where the water table is sufficiently low. Another stormwater challenge that needs to be addressed is how to pay for our sewer systems. As policy setters, the Board should be looking at a stormwater utility or other methods to fund our system while encouraging sustainable development and best management practices.

Gina Kennedy

The plan, adopted last year, for stormwater management in parts of central and western Wilmette is a welcome first step towards solving a problem that, because of climate change, will only worsen in coming years. As regards the existing plan most of the issues are engineering and technical in nature -- the solutions to which should be left up to experts -- and questions regarding appropriate sites for infrastructure are currently being discussed by the Village and the Park District.

The fact remains, however, that a significant portion of the Village has flooding issues that will not be resolved by the current plan. This problem will require further consideration. Solving it will benefit not just the affected neighborhoods -- which have as strong a claim to Village resources as other Wilmette neighborhoods -- but our entire community. As long as Wilmette's flood-prone reputation stands, homebuyers may shy away from the village, diminishing everyone's home values.

Ryrie Pellaton

The Village decided on the Neighborhood Storage option in April 2018. They presented drawings of the project to the Park District Board for the first time in November and the proposed project has since increased in scope to cover more affected residences.

I support the Park Board's plan to gather community input to ensure that the Parks are preserved or enhanced by the Stormwater project. The answer is to take the time to determine what the effects of the tank installation will be on the Parks and then to figure out as a community how to augment the project to provide benefits to the Park District to offset the negative consequences. Additional smaller local storm water options should also be pursued separately to reduce the amount of water entering on the sewer lines.

Residents whose homes flood want action taken as quickly as possible. The Village studied the project for 5 years. The Park Board will need to work with the residents and subsequently the Village to reach a mutually acceptable agreement which ideally will result in improved Parks while meeting the Village's stormwater storage goals.

Senta Plunkett

As most residents know, following much study and resident involvement, the Board chose the Neighborhood Storage Plan. After preliminary engineering studies were completed, the Board recently learned that the Plan could be optimized to protect 98% of the homes west of Ridge Road. We will be moving forward with a stormwater plan that is significantly less costly than the other proposals but promises to protect even more homes.

There is still much to do on stormwater management. I was a strong supporter of green infrastructure, and we will be looking at options as part of the stormwater plan. The Village just introduced Rain Ready Wilmette, a cost-sharing program for sustainable landscaping slated to begin this spring.

Also this spring, the Board will be presented with a consultant's report regarding a stormwater utility as a means to fund the stormwater project. I look forward to reviewing the report and discussing our options.

Dan Sullivan

Stormwater management will be an ongoing issue for Wilmette well into the future. Our challenges will not end with the completion of one project but rather will require constant long term focus to continue providing options and solutions that will improve the lives within the community.

The initial step that the majority of the board took to approve spending over \$50 million is to develop retention and enhance our sewer system is an important first phase. The Village staff, our consultants, the boards and residents have spent years better understanding what are our challenges and how can we address those to provide relief to our community. Stormwater management goes well beyond just a sewer system underground, as just as important is the education of what we can do to reduce water in the system, such as environmental improvements through rain gardens. We are experiencing greater storms on a more regular basis so it is important that stormwater education remains an important part of our communication with the Village.

Candidates for 2-Year Term

1. What do you hope to accomplish if you are elected as a Village Trustee? Please explain why these goals are priorities for you.

Jeff Axelrod

Our village board's values need to more closely align with those of our community, and I hope to help. For instance, almost 80% of Wilmette consistently supported abiding by our county's minimum wage and earned sick time benefits, however our existing board followed their own agenda and circumvented the laws. We need representation from progressive leaders who will better support each of our families, including the underserved. We need more leaders dedicated to environmental stewardship, and who are committed to reinvestment in our roads, services, and other infrastructure to keep Wilmette the same great place we chose to take root.

I hope to introduce ethics reform and better transparency in our village government. I support stronger disclosure from elected officials, detailing local business relationships that might raise concerns about conflicts of interest. I aim to stop former elected officials appearing to benefit from their past service by conducting village-related business that might appear conflictual.

For example, there's the appearance of a revolving door with a former official who appointed commission members, then later represented clients requesting special accommodations from those very commissioners. He also then publicly endorsed favorite future village board candidates. We need independence.

I have a solid record of not being afraid to do and say what's right to represent the will of the residents of Wilmette. I'm not afraid to hold officials accountable when necessary, standing up to the chamber lobby who pushed the board to go not only against the will of almost all of our residents, but also the majority of business owners.

I will continue to work with the chamber and other groups to invest in and promote sustainable business health. To help further strengthen Wilmette's economy, I would like to reinstate our cancelled membership in the North Shore Convention and Visitors Bureau; we're the only North Shore non-member community.

I'd also like to re-establish Wilmette health and human services that have been eliminated or weakened, including our restaurant health inspector who protects us and our visitors from foodborne illness, the village housing assistance program for Wilmette residents, our human relations and housing commissions. Our transportation commission is responsible for our children's crossing guards, ensuring our community is safely walkable, and that we can get around town smoothly. I want this commission to fulfil its legal requirements meeting six times per year instead of meeting twice annually, despite there being much to discuss.

This all underlines how important it is that our village government reflect the welcoming, safe, and generous community that we are. Local government matters now more than ever. We need your help; it really does take a village. Please join us at axelrodforwilmette.com.

Peter Barrow

There's much to like in Wilmette today. Our downtown is prospering, with abundant retail choices and a thriving restaurant scene. Our finances are strong, including a Aaa bond rating and significant reserves in this year's budget, and the recent sale of Edens Plaza suggests that redevelopment will bring new life to that shopping area. My goals, as a Village Trustee, are to build upon these successes, to address the commercial areas of the Village that have struggled, and to maintain the quality of essential municipal services provided by the Village. The vibrancy of our economic community is essential to attracting and retaining families and is essential in mitigating the need for tax and fee increases. Sustained economic development, especially during challenging times for retail and a possible recession, is critical to our Village. As residents, we correctly expect a high level of municipal service, delivered in a cost-effective way. The Village has been, and must remain, prudent in its budgeting and spending. Finally, my priorities will be to represent our residents independently and respectfully, serving the Village as a whole, committed to common-sense, practical solutions.

2. What financial challenges do you see for our Village and how would you address them?

Jeff Axelrod

Sales tax revenues are somewhat reduced because of Carson's, Treasure Island, and other struggling retailers. However, as online sales are increasing, Wilmette shares in this tax revenue to offset local losses. Our community development department and chamber of commerce are strong, and I expect new retailers to fill in the voids. If necessary, I support creative solutions such as an additional food and beverage tax as other neighboring suburbs have done, or even vacancy taxes to discourage less motivated landlords from letting valuable retail space remain empty and creating retail blight, like we've seen in the Linden business district.

Our village has been lowering its tax levy increase consecutively for the past decade, sparked by the 2007 housing crisis. I'm concerned that we've been cutting staff and service levels while our economy is at its strongest, leaving us little buffer to propel us through future hardships.

Peter Barrow

Our financial challenges have several sources, the most obvious of which is the loss in recent years of major sales tax generators and pension related costs. This year's Village budget assumes a decrease in sales tax revenue of approximately \$400,000 and while some of that may be made up with other revenue sources and cost savings, neither is sure and may not reoccur. Continued economic development, downtown and in all commercial areas, must be a priority. Let's be sensible in how we address regulation to make our business areas attractive for investment. The outlying commercial areas have not prospered as the downtown has and renewed attention must be given there. Let's understand better what's needed and expand our

outreach to potential businesses to locate there. We must be user friendly as well for residents and businesses alike. Pension costs for the Village's three defined benefit plans will continue to challenge our budget. While we have control over some aspects, the benefit levels are set by the State and are unfunded by Springfield. The Village adopted a two-tier benefit plan for employees hired after 2011, but it will take some years for its full benefit. In the near term, careful management of all Village expenses may be the real answer over which we actually have control. Finally, while the Village has established substantial reserves in its current budget, major capital improvements may be on the horizon, including equipment replacement and a new police station. The adequacy of those reserves, if there's a recession, may be tested and will require careful planning.

3. The Village has recently signed onto the Greenest Region Compact 2 (GRC2), which is an environmental sustainability blueprint for Chicago-region communities. As Village Trustee, what environmental priorities from the GRC2 strike you as most important, and why?

Jeff Axelrod

I organized residents to encourage President Bielinski sign onto voluntary climate agreements back when Trump withdrew from the Paris Accord. While our national leadership seeks to move us backward, local governments need to step up combat climate change. I was thrilled last August when our village signed on and joined Climate Mayors. The compact is wide ranging and holistic, and I feel remiss answering a question narrowing priorities. However, areas of special interest to me are enhancing and preserving our parks, trees, and natural ecosystems as well as the mobility goals. I am already helping Wilmette improve in this area; for instance, I secured a National Parks Service grant on behalf of Canal Shores to bolster their ecological master plan and help the park develop a multi-use trail. I was at the forefront advocating against Cullerton's plans to pave the Canal Shores tenth hole. I support making Wilmette even more walkable and promoting other healthy activities that get us moving safely.

Peter Barrow

An affluent community like Wilmette should be a leader in adopting many of the Greenest Region Compact 2 (GRC2) goals. Some of those, like waste recycling, public transportation, biking initiatives, and land preservation, have long been in practice. Water conservation is an important goal and will be addressed as part of the coming storm water project. All of the GRC2 goals are desirable; the challenge is to adopt and effect goals that provide the greatest benefit, but also are affordable to our community. How to do this? Let's start by tapping into the expertise within our very town. We have knowledgeable, committed residents and Village Staff that can help prioritize here. Let's explore the costs and benefits of a Sustainability Coordinator for the Village. There may be grants and programs to defray the costs and such a person would provide full time engagement and coordination of Village initiatives. Of the stated GRC2 goals, effecting more renewable energy, including inducements for solar, should be a priority. Vehicle charging stations, well located, may be useful for residents and visitors alike, and would make a public statement that Wilmette cares. Local merchants, especially the banks, might sign on and

would appreciate the positive publicity and defray some of the cost. Much is possible here, but a practical approach is essential.

4. Should the Village play a role in expanding affordable housing and/or housing assistance programs in Wilmette and, if so, what role should the Village Board take?

Jeff Axelrod

It's important that we provide and maintain safety nets for our residents, whether seniors or disabled residents struggling to afford rising property taxes or to help support someone going through a life transition like divorce, or a surprise medical condition. This can happen to any of us or our loved ones, and it's delusional to think otherwise. It's also important that we make available affordable housing for our police officers, school teachers, and other important members of our community. Within the past few years, Wilmette defunded and privatized our housing assistance program. I also support our village president fulfilling his duties and making the required appointments to fill the long-vacant housing commission seats.

Peter Barrow

Our Village and its residents support the goal of providing housing choices to persons of moderate incomes; all benefit from a community with economic diversity. Implementation of this goal must reflect the economic realities of our Village and the wishes of its residents. I believe that the 2004 Affordable Housing Plan reflects a thoughtful, flexible, and balanced approach, encouraging communication and cooperation, while preserving our single family home character and open land. I believe the Board should continue this approach. Our Plan wisely rejects absolute mandates, special fees and taxes, and taxpayer-funded subsidies. However good our intentions, nothing gets sold or built unless the expected returns are possible and we can't simply will this to happen. The approval of the 1925 Wilmette Avenue development (the VFW Hall) is a bright light as it adds 16 affordable units. Given Wilmette's demographics, this will always be a challenge, but let's be thoughtful and use common sense in spending our dollars here and encouraging this development.

5. What issues remain in the Village's plans to improve stormwater management and how would you address them?

Jeff Axelrod

I'm pleased by the very recent unanimous support for a plan that better protects virtually every family's home. One issue that remains is that in comparison to the conveyance option, which would have cost us about \$50 more annually, the proposed system will become overwhelmed causing flooding. During sustained rainfall, storage tanks will reach capacity and stop providing relief. Despite these limitations, I fully support the current plans being implemented as quickly as possible serve the residents who will be helped by storage tanks. I'm now optimistic about working out an intergovernmental agreement with the park district, but felt discussions could

have been more public. I will work to foster better intergovernmental cooperation to address the issues that came up during this process.

Peter Barrow

With the Board approval in February of the Community Playfield as the initial site, the stormwater project is well on its way. Analysis, engineering and design for what is likely the largest Wilmette project for a generation are on going and much needs to be done before we lift a shovel. The challenges here will be many, two of which are project fatigue and communication. The project encompasses many neighborhoods and three public parks. It will take years to complete and will require the attention and cooperation of several Village and Park District Boards. If successful, the rewards of the project will be substantial and will benefit us all. It's critical that we and our Boards not lose our resolve to complete this. Dedicated, regular communication from the Village and the contractors to the affected residents and the Village generally will do much to alleviate the stress and aggravation of major construction. The best surprise will be no surprise.

Wilmette Park District Board of Commissioners Candidate Biographies

Chad Chastain

(Voter Guide material not available)

Cecilia Clarke

As a Wilmette resident since 1992, Cecilia has a long history of community volunteer involvement. She has managed several District 39 school PTA/PTO programs including Grocery Dollar fundraising, Membership Directory and the After School Club programs for Central School, Highcrest and Wilmette Junior High. She is also on the Board of the Friends of the Wilmette Library and is an Assistant Adviser for Wilmette Venturing Crew 5. After receiving her J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center, Cecilia practiced law for 13 years, primarily excess insurance coverage litigation with the Chicago law firms Peterson & Ross and Fedota Childers & May. Cecilia has raised four children since moving to Wilmette and she and her family have been active users of the Park District's facilities.



Julia Goebel

Julia Goebel is a Wilmette resident, wife and mother of two children in District 39 schools. Professionally, she is employed with a technology company as Chief Marketing Officer and specializes in building high-performing teams. As a candidate for Commissioner of Wilmette Park District, her goals are to focus on

- input and communication between residents and the Park District on key issues such as the Stormwater project
- the Lakefront's facilities and changing environment
- programming for residents of all ages, and
- sound financial management to ensure the improvement and maintenance of our beautiful parks.

Originally born in New York, she is proud to call Wilmette her home and never misses a chance to do something active.



Michael Murdock

Michael Murdock has been a Wilmette resident since 1998; my wife Eileen and I have raised four children here. Professionally, I am a real estate investor and developer but my passion has been supporting and growing local institutions—I oversaw the reconstruction of Ronald Knox Montessori School which both created a dramatically better learning environment while also solving long-standing neighborhood traffic issues. I have helped over 50 Wilmette residents remain in their homes through my work with Rebuilding Together (formerly Christmas in April) and I oversaw the renovations of the Michigan Shores Club which restored its vitality while also partnering with local institutions such as the Wilmette Park District and Go Green Wilmette on their programs. I have also served on a number of other local boards and non-profit institutions, including the WPD Board of Commissioners from 2009 to 2013.

**Todd Shissler**

Todd Shissler, a resident of Wilmette, is a candidate to be a member of the Board of Park Commissioners of Wilmette. Todd has lived in Wilmette since August 2015 with his wife and two daughters who both attend Central Elementary School. Todd is frequently a parent volunteer at Central, and has served as enrichment coordinator for the PTA at Central Elementary for the last two years and is the assistant Girl Scout troop leader for his older daughter's troop. Todd has also been active in raising money for the Special Olympics and the New Trier Food Pantry. Todd and his family have truly enjoyed building relationships and being a part of the community through their involvement with New Trier Aquatics, the local swim club where both of his daughters swim. Todd and his family are also active in a local church, Grace Presbyterian Church of the North Shore.



Wilmette Park District Board of Commissioners Responses to Voter Guide Questions

**1. What do you hope to accomplish if you are elected as a Park Board Commissioner?
Please explain why these goals are priorities for you.**

Cecilia Clarke

Since my family moved to Wilmette in 1992, we have been active users of our parks and other Park District facilities. The Park District has maintained a high level of excellence in the operations of our parks and in providing recreational opportunities. My goal is to continue this excellence, first and foremost by ensuring that the Park District's financial position remains strong and secondly by encouraging the continued development of and access to program offerings for all Wilmette residents.

Julia Goebel

Broadly speaking, my priorities are to contribute to maintaining our beautiful parks, to partner with the Village on key projects such as the stormwater program, and ensure the Park District continues to provide healthy indoor and outdoor recreation options.

Commissioners represent the community in governing Park District matters - and if elected, I plan to focus my practice specifically on community input and communication.

Input - so that the Board decisions made about future programming and facility investment reflect the needs and wants of the community today, as well as its changing needs.

Next, communication - so that the public understands the roles, responsibilities and decisions made by the Park Board. As a marketing communication professional, I believe we need to meet the community "where they are" in their busy lives - and increase engagement via communication in the community's channel of choice - whether print, email, social media, or other methods.

Michael Murdock

First and foremost, I hope to offer experience and perspective as a Commissioner. While we should always seek new vitality/new energy brought by new participants, we should also value those who have already served. When I was elected in 2009, the average tenure on the WPD board was 15+ years. That is too long. But in 2021, the average tenure could be one year. That is too short. None of the current/future Commissioners has served during a recession or has addressed recession-related issues. I believe my experience and historical perspective will be invaluable wrt this and other issues.

Todd Shissler

The Wilmette Park District has amazing facilities and very robust programming. Its offerings and facilities are the envy of many of the North Shore communities. From the camps and kid-programming to the sports offerings, we have an amazing Park District. I want to keep it that way. Having young children that take advantage of a number of the District's programs, this goal is very important to me. The robust programming directly impacts our families, our neighbors, and ultimately, our community. Overall, I have been very pleased with the quality and extensiveness of the District's offerings and it is my hope that I can work to make the facilities and programs even more accessible to more people. I hope to make it easier for members of our community to know about the District's offerings and register for them. I believe that this goal can be furthered by streamlining the District's website and making it more user-friendly and less "clunky."

I would also seek to make the District's golf course self-sufficient. Presently, as it has been the case for some time, the golf course is subsidized by several of the other District's programs. The golf course is a beautiful facility, although I do not believe that Wilmette residents are aware that this is the case. I would like the restaurant at the golf course to draw more people to the facility.

2. The Village's stormwater improvement project calls for neighborhood storage tanks in three different Wilmette parks, which will have long term implications for the use of these facilities. What is the role of the Park Board as this project moves forward?

Cecilia Clarke

The remediation of household flooding during heavy storms is of great importance to Wilmette residents. At its February 4 Board meeting, Village Trustees confirmed the Community Playfields, Thornwood Park and Hibbard Park as the locations for underground stormwater storage tanks that will be key to reducing flooding. Each of these three parks provide significant recreational options for their neighbors as well as the greater Wilmette community. As trustees of Wilmette's public park land, the Park District needs to partner with the Village of Wilmette to ensure that the installation of the stormwater infrastructure and its long term maintenance will not be detrimental to the neighborhoods surrounding these parks or to the use and character of the parks involved.

Julia Goebel

The Park Board will play a key influencer role in the Village's stormwater improvement project since the locations of the proposed neighborhood storage solution and hybrid solution are in Park District parks. In the case of Community Playfields, the proposed storage unit will be in a low-lying area which floods and is sometimes unusable, near Highcrest Middle School.

All three project scenarios are expected to include funds earmarked for reconstruction and landscaping of the parks. With modest investment of Park District resources in landscape architecture and planning, this becomes an opportunity for the Park Board to improve upon the

impacted parks using the stormwater program funds, at no additional cost to the Village or the taxpayers - to improve the parks beyond their original state - like the low-lying area of Community Playfields.

Ultimately, an intergovernmental agreement is expected between the Village and the Park District, reflecting the priorities of both governing bodies, and the input from upcoming community listening sessions.

Michael Murdock

Effective stormwater management is critical for our village and can positively impact our community. I applaud village leadership for their efforts to create the greatest impact at the lowest cost. I do, however, have some concerns about the project including (1) how/when the village engaged the WPD (2) how the plan will impact residents near the parks and (3) how the plan will impact WPD programming/facilities long term.

(1) I believe the village should have involved the WPD sooner, and the initial plan had some obvious flaws. But I am pleased by recent changes, including the vault relocation from Centennial to Community Playfields. This may create new issues for residents near the Playfields, but it may also create opportunities for new/better WPD uses if drainage improves significantly.

(2) I am concerned that residents surrounding the parks will bear the brunt of the construction and feel the impact on property values and safety. I remember when many Thornwood Park residents objected to ice rink lighting. In that case, I listened to those residents and their objections. In the end, I supported that plan because I believed that a private landowner would have been permitted to install the lights under the same set of facts. But I also worked with our facilities team to make improvements to the plan, including additional drainage which fixed longtime outfield issues in the two baseball diamonds.

This situation is different because of the larger impact to surrounding residents and whether that impact is reasonable in the context of the overall community benefit. One specific concern is resident safety as trucks enter and leave the site, especially if those trucks are travelling on residential streets. While I believe the community benefits probably justify the project, I want to hear resident input on this complicated issue, and, as I did with every controversial issue we addressed in my previous term, I will listen to the experts and to the residents before making a decision.

(3) The WPD needs a strong intergovernmental agreement to address ST/LT impact of the construction project if it proceeds. The WPD should not bear any cost of the project, including costs related to the storage facilities at the end of their useful life. And an environmental impact study should be done. While the WPD and village serve the same constituents, I hope any plan would include improvements to WPD facilities. Improved drainage in the Community Playfields would be one obvious benefit.

Todd Shissler

If these storage tanks are in fact put into our parks, I would hope to work with the Village to insure that they are installed in a manner that does not detract from the community's enjoyment and use of such parks. I believe that it is absolutely necessary to consider the families who live in the neighborhoods where the parks are located and to balance their needs with those of the community as a whole. This project will in fact have long term-implications for the Village and underscores the importance of making sure that it is done properly and thoughtfully while keeping in mind the needs of the community. I look forward to working with the Village so that the stormwater issue can be resolved in a way that benefits all those involved in the matter.

3. How would you approach the next budget and tax levy cycles given the current financial picture of the Park District and its short-term and long-term needs?**Cecilia Clarke**

Thanks to the tradition of strong financial leadership by previous Park Boards, the Park District is in an excellent financial position. More than two-thirds of the Park District's annual operating budget is provided by user fees with less than a third of its annual budget coming from property taxes. The debt that was incurred by the Centennial Pool construction and the Mallinkcrodt purchase will be substantially paid off in the next two years and subsequently Wilmette residents will see the Park District portion of their property tax bill drop from the current 5.4 % to just about 4%. While it is to be expected that there will be necessary capital expenditures over the next several years, it is anticipated that those expenditures would be covered by surplus revenue from the District's operational fees.

Julia Goebel

In next budget cycle, I would first consider safety and non-compliance issues, for risk management and minimization of liabilities. Next, I would look at opportunities for improvement and advancement of programs, followed by facilities maintenance and upgrades.

As for tax levy cycles, the existing budget and the tax amount should be considered relative to the priorities set. Fiscal responsibility is key - so levies should be only to the level required to meet the goals - not more.

Michael Murdock

The WPD is strong financially. While FY18 revenues were down, the operating surplus and net surplus were both up significantly (some capital spending was deferred before the large FY19 lakefront expenditures). This demonstrates the impact of strong WPD management. Management will be tested over the next few years as major capital projects (Gillson infrastructure) need to be addressed. And the golf course continues to negatively impact WPD financials, as it did when I previously served. At that time, we developed a plan to improve drainage to decrease lost rounds and we shared those costs between users and taxpayers.

Previously, I voted against increasing the levy three times. The fourth year, I voted for an increase because it was clearly justified. The situation will be more challenging in the future because of the way the current board chose to fund Lakefront construction. But, as I did in the past, I will review reserves, anticipated operating surpluses and short-term capital needs and then vote for the appropriate levy.

Todd Shissler

I think that one advantage that the Park District has in the coming years is that its financial obligations will diminish as it pays off the financial obligations related to the Centennial facility and Mallinckrodt Center. Nevertheless, even after paying off the obligations in connection with these facilities, there are other financial issues to consider. For example, with the recent passage of the state minimum wage, the District needs to make sure that it is still able to attract top talent and pay their wages, which may require the Park District to be creative in the way that it recruits its employees.

With respect to the District's level of compensation for its employees, I am satisfied that the District has begun a compensation and benefits study to insure that the district's employees are being compensated appropriately, and hope that the study will lead to thoughtful decisions regarding employee compensation by the District.

I am also satisfied that a majority of the funds for the Park District are derived from fees from its programs and not property taxes. Keeping this in mind, I think that it is important to make sure that the programs that the District offers meet the needs of the community and have high levels of participation. To that end, I would like to see that Wilmette's golf course has a higher level of utilization and does not have to be subsidized by other Park District programs.

4. What if any changes in Park District programming would you strongly support?

Cecilia Clarke

The Park District does an excellent job of providing programming and facilities that provide recreational options for nearly everyone in our community. Over the 26 years my family has lived in Wilmette, we have taken advantage of Park District events at every stage of our life, from being a family with toddlers, then young children and teens and now almost empty nesters. One of the ways the Park District can continue its positive impact on our community is through increased programming for younger teens. Once children start high school, there are fewer programming options for them, especially during the summer months. Another change that I would support is additional programming that would promote social gathering options. This might include facilitating ways for residents who have an interest in group running, walking or biking to meet up, open gym time or even an open mike night at the CRC.

Julia Goebel

Additional programming for early morning and after-school recreation, and more kindergarten enrichment options until full-day kindergarten is available in District 39.

Increase in pre-teen and teen programming and camps to keep kids engaged in healthy activity beyond elementary years and into adulthood.

Further capacity planning, so that the Park District can opportunistically respond to growing and emerging sports programs for all ages - such as paddle and pickleball.

Michael Murdock

When I ran in 2009, we were active users of WPD programming including sports, classes and camps- I coached over 20 different WPD teams. My family is no longer involved to that degree, but during my tenure, I hope to strengthen and expand WPD offerings, finding ways to reach all of our residents in each stage of their lives.

Our sports/camp offerings are sought out by non-residents who pay a premium to participate, thereby reducing costs for our residents. But usage patterns ebb and flow (soccer), so we need to continually offer new opportunities to keep our residents engaged.

Our senior programming has greatly improved since Mallinckrodt Center opened; this programming serves our residents on the south/west sides of town, but we could do more to reach our seniors in east Wilmette.

Our passive parks, including Mallinckrodt, (parts of) Gillson and the Keay Nature Park are wonderful community resources but the lake at Keay is leaking and this park needs further attention.

Longer term, I hope we can add more indoor facilities. We currently have one indoor court and rely almost entirely on D39 for our winter sports programming. Community-wide there is a shortage of indoor court/field spaces. Given the demand, there may be significant revenue opportunities for these types of facilities and, although I do not see any short-term path to fund major projects such as this, I would like to investigate these possibilities for the future.

Todd Shissler

In general, the Park District offers very robust programming in a wide range of areas. Instead of changing the programming, I want to focus on making the public more aware of the programming that is available and making it more accessible. To that end, I would like to make the Park District website more user-friendly and easier to navigate. One of the complaints that I have heard from many residents is that it is difficult to register for programming and I would like to change that feeling for the user.

5. Describe the top environmental priorities for the Park District as you see them.

Cecilia Clarke

The Park District is facing the same environmental challenges as Wilmette residents. Moreover, as trustee of Wilmette's public land, the Park District is tasked with preserving that land for future generations of Wilmette residents. This puts the Park District in the unique position of

adopting a forward thinking leadership role in addressing environmental issues. The stormwater issue facing Wilmette is certainly one of the top priorities for the Park District and an area where the Park District can play a role in educating the community on ways to reduce water run-off by utilizing rain barrels and native plants in rain gardens. In addition, the Park District can be a leader in promoting waste reducing policies at its facilities.

Julia Goebel

Near term, I see the top environmental priorities for the Park District include assessing and responding to the changing beachfront conditions at Langdon Park, as well as determining a course of action for Keay Nature Center.

Michael Murdock

The WPD has improved wildlife sanctuaries in east (Gillson) and west (Keay) Wilmette, but we can make similar improvements elsewhere. New lakefront parking uses permeable pavers-- we should employ similar systems in other lots as we replace them to reduce the volume of water entering the stormsewer system. The Gillson road/sewer project should focus more on sidewalks and bike paths and less on parking spaces to encourage residents to visit the park on foot or bike. When the RecCenter roof is replaced, we should consider adding solar panels. We should always strive to be environmentally sensitive, even if the payoff will take years to realize. But these decisions still need to be made in the context of the cost considerations.

Todd Shissler

The environmental priorities for the Park District are almost too numerous to discuss them all. Almost everything that the Park District does has some sort of environmental impact. From building new facilities to the kind of sprinkler systems that are installed. It is important to make the District's environmental impact a priority when making decisions. An issue that has recently become important to our community is the proposal to pave over the 10th hole at Canal Shores. I am opposed to this proposal and would work to see that the 10th hole will remain as it is today. I also think that from an environmental perspective, I would like to get the website working effectively so that perhaps the District would not have to print the catalogs that go to all residents that outline the different offerings of the Park District.

Avoca School District 37 Board of Education Candidate Biographies

Louise Dechovitz

I am currently serving my first term on the Avoca D37 School Board, and have been the Vice President for the last two years. Prior to this I was very active on the Parent Teacher Council for over 4 years and served on its Executive Board for two years. I am an international tax consultant by training and worked for Ernst & Young and Deloitte & Touche for 17 years. I am a Wilmette resident and have two children in 5th and 7th grades.



Sumit Dhar

Sumitrajit (Sumit) Dhar is a Professor and Department Chair at Northwestern University. Sumit and his wife Julia have lived in the Avoca district since 2012 with their two children (currently in 3rd and 7th grades). Sumit would bring his professional and administrative experience in higher education as well as his experience serving on several not-for-profit boards to the District 37 Board of Education.



Gretchen Witte Glader

My name is Gretchen Witte Glader. I have lived in the Avoca School District for 9 years. I have one son who is 30. I am a psychotherapist and a retired school social worker. In my career I have been interested and active in education, I've taught at the pre-school level and at the university level, tutored for elementary and middle school gifted kids, and have worked as a social worker in schools at levels from pre-primary through high school. I am running for the school board because I feel it's a responsibility of community members to be useful to that community in the best way they can, using the skill sets they have.

**Dr. Robyn L. Schiffman**

Dr. Robyn L. Schiffman has over 20 years of experience in Higher Education, as a Literature professor, Associate Director of a Religious Studies Program, and as an Academic Dean at three institutions (public, private, and now at a community college). Her Ph.D. is from the University of Chicago. While her academic background is in the Humanities, she oversees the Early Childhood and Elementary Education programs at her current school. She has 3 children at Avoca and has lived in the district for 6 years.



Avoca School District 37 Board of Education Responses to Voter Guide Questions

1. What do you hope to accomplish if you are elected to the Board of Education? Please explain why these goals are priorities for you.

Louise Dechovitz

If I am re-elected to a second term on the D37 Board of Education, I will continue the good work of the School Board in helping the District balance competing financial priorities while maintaining focus on all activities that directly impact the education of our children. In addition, I will work with fellow Board members to help our District build upon its commitment to maximizing the unique potential of every child in core academics, in the arts, in our high achieving and special needs students, and in our community values. Another priority is to ensure we maintain our position as a highly attractive place to work and build a career in education so that we continue to attract and retain the best faculty for our District.

Sumitrajit (Sumit) Dhar

If elected, the beginning of my term would coincide with the initiation of new leadership at the district. I would put forth every effort to help the new superintendent get acquainted with the needs and aspirations of our school district. Essentially the new members of the board and the superintendent and Director of Pupil Services, key leaders in the school district, will together start their Avoca journeys in governance and management, respectively. The opportunity to be a part of this renewal is exciting to me and I look forward to participating in that process. Continued fiscal prudence and strategic deficit reduction as well as investment is going to remain important. I look forward to understanding our budget in even more detail and assisting the board in the continued drive to achieve our educational goals without jeopardizing fiscal stability. I am committed to making broad opportunities in STEM, humanities, and language arts available to our students. I will collaborate with the board in ensuring continued emphasis on evidence-based, age appropriate use of technology in the classroom. Finally, I would like to assist the board and the school district in forming meaningful connections with the community of scholarship related to education and development around us. The goal there would be to seek every advantage to ensure that our school district is a national leader in implementing best practice.

Gretchen Witte Glader

I believe a school board member should possess these three qualities: An open and curious mind, a willingness to be an active part of the discussion at hand, and an ability to be a true representative of the community

Robyn Schiffman

I hope to increase community engagement. Board of Trustee meetings should be packed with community members. Our Parent Teacher Council should not have to scramble for leadership. I

hope to effectively communicate what the Board of Trustees does and create dialogues so that constituents can learn more. Since our district is so spread out, this has been a great challenge. Do we have a dedicated news section in the Beacon or Lantern or other local papers? District 39 makes news most of the time. We should have literature (Board Briefs, Agendas, Minutes) in kiosks at the local libraries, grocery stores, coffee shops, and recreations centers with contact information. People need to be informed at every level, especially those residents without students in our schools.

2. How would you approach the next budget and tax levy cycles given the current financial picture of the district and its short-term and long-term needs?

Louise Dechovitz

I have served on the Finance Committee for the last two years, and our priority has always been to consistently monitor our principles and the framework through which we consider financial priorities for the District. While we may not know the specifics of any future changes in Springfield, we do know as a community what is important to us, which elements of education are non-negotiable, and where there might be opportunities to be creative in areas outside of classroom spending. Our priority continues to be to shield our children from any negative effects of potential funding changes and ensure the absolute best educational experience for them. Our District is currently operating at a deficit, and we have been looking thoughtfully and creatively at ways in which we can better balance revenues and expenditures to plan our way out of the deficit position.

Sumitrajit (Sumit) Dhar

Through deliberation with district leadership and other stakeholders, the board of education will have to continue the journey of deficit reduction without sacrificing educational opportunities. The board will have to understand the aspirations of the leaders of the school district as well as the teachers. It will then be the board's responsibility to create a collaborative environment where the highest priorities and the most impactful programs are supported. This may well require creative and new approaches to diversifying revenue streams. My priority will be to ensure that opportunities are available to Avoca students as we balance budgetary stressors against educational and developmental goals. Strategic investments will have to be made keeping the interests of the entire community including those who do not have students in the schools.

Gretchen Witte Glader

If I'm elected to the school board my approach will be to be actively engaged in the decision making process and form my opinions with a measured thoughtful stance, making every effort to fully understand the needs of the communities that form District #37.

Robyn Schiffman

We have to look at personnel. Who is retiring? What positions are essential to fill? What do enrollment projections look like and how does this impact staffing levels? I am most familiar with Zero-based budgeting, where all expenses must be justified. Is that the process currently in place? It has been 10 years since a referendum was on the ballot and this is usually a last

resort. When teacher contracts are being negotiated, can Collective Bargaining be used effectively to curb or defray costs? Are there certain contractuals that can be paid yearly when paying 3 years upfront does not provide such a great cost savings? These are some of the questions that would guide my thinking about short- and long-term district needs.

3. What if any changes would like to see in the way District 37 handles school security, either in security procedures or in communications to the community?

Louise Dechovitz

A school district's number one priority is the safety and well-being of its children. The Avoca School District continues to work collaboratively with local law enforcement on regularly reviewing and updating security procedures, consistent with the values of our community, as new strategies evolve to better protect our children and personnel. In addition, the District engages security consultants and based on their input, security updates are made to our buildings. Every year, our Administration carefully reviews and communicates with our families school policy regarding admittance to our buildings. Security is our priority.

Sumitrajit (Sumit) Dhar

While I have a lot more to learn about the intricacies of school security, my experiences so far have been satisfactory and reassuring. The entry procedures, screening, routing of guests have clearly been thought through by experts in this domain. Thus, I would like to pursue a path of continued vigilance with unfettered optimism about the common sense and practical sensibility of our community.

Gretchen Witte Glader

If I'm elected to the school board my approach will be to be actively engaged in the decision making process and form my opinions with a measured thoughtful stance, making every effort to fully understand the needs of the communities that form District #37.

Robyn Schiffman

There should be a community wide committee that seeks opinions about school security. Surveys are a good measure to take the temperature and get timely feedback. The Raptor system in place with scanned IDs seems to work well. I worry and wonder about using public schools as polling places where security has the potential to be compromised while school is in session (at least with after school activities there are fewer people in the buildings). Lock down drills have become the norm at public institutions across the country. Those drills, tornado warning systems in conjunction with the Village, and fire drills, must continue to be practiced with lessons being taught and explained to the younger grades.

4. What is your view on the current plan for the Avoca Center? Consider the extent to which it appropriately balances the financial needs of the district with the expressed wishes of the community.

Louise Dechovitz

In the last couple of years, we have consulted with the community in relation to the strategy for the Avoca Center property. Our objective has been two-fold: to ensure the land remains available to the Avoca community in the years to come, and to agree a solution that is financially viable for the District. The current plan is to lease the land to another educational institution, thereby retaining ownership of the property for the long-term in the most cost-effective manner. We are creating an income stream for the future while making the newly created playing fields available for use by students and community.

Sumitrajit (Sumit) Dhar

I believe the current plan for the Avoca Center exhibits a wonderful balancing of the variety of opinions and desires expressed by the community. The land will remain public. If the agreement in the works comes to fruition, the cost of demolishing the building and landscaping to create athletic or activity fields will be available. The current plan is a solution that allows the district and the community to continue to think creatively about the Avoca Center property.

Gretchen Witte Glader

I believe that the district's decision making process regarding the Avoca center was sound.

Robyn Schiffman

Since the cost for repairs or demolition is exorbitant, the new agreement to make the property able to be rented is a good compromise, which allows for revenue and less expenditure. It seemed the community was part of many discussions over a long period of time and input was sought. There needs to be data gathered and monitoring to ensure that both North Shore Country Day School and District 37 will benefit from any agreement. This should remain on everyone's radar, in other words, because the central problem of what to do with the property has been temporarily solved but still remains.

5. What other challenges or issues do you think are affecting the schools at this time, and how would you recommend that the Board of Education address them?

Louise Dechovitz

The biggest challenge affecting schools is to ensure that they operate within the financial means of their community while providing the best education for their children. It is incumbent upon a School Board for all of its members to work collaboratively, responsibly and respectfully to carry out the mission of its District.

Sumitrajit (Sumit) Dhar

Overall, the Avoca schools are exemplary, as endorsed by the community as well as organizations evaluating school standards. However, past success should not allow complacency in the present. The board of education, the community, district leadership,

teachers, and staff have to continually maintain a growth mindset. Having spent my entire career in higher education, I am keenly aware of the rapid pace of innovation in the domain. The challenge then is in keeping abreast of these changes and being able to identify practices worth implementing. This will require actively learning about new developments in the educational space and implementing practices that are most supported by evidence. We should consider setting our sights on meaningful outcome metrics that span the immediate-, medium-, and long-term success of our students. My experience of having served on several not-for-profit boards I have come to understand that organizations function in a rapidly changing communication landscape today. Views become news and words spread faster than light. Leaders of our school district try their best to keep up with this speed of information dissemination. However, this can distract our leaders from their primary purpose and responsibilities. As a district we need to find regular avenues of information and opinion exchange between district leadership, the board of education, and the community at large. This is pivotal to ensure that a relationship of trust and confidence is maintained. I will put in every effort to build and sustain a collaborative environment with transparent and dependable communication channels between all stakeholders. Having lived through the Avoca experience between the community preschool and the seventh grade with our two children, I truly appreciate and cherish the asset that our schools are to our community. If elected, I will put in every effort to serve the board and represent the community to the best of my ability.

Gretchen Witte Glader

If I were to list the three most important issues facing our district they would be:

1. Finances
2. Community engagement
3. A smooth transition for the new superintendent

Robyn Schiffman

Enrollment, state funding, teacher/substitute shortages, diversity (of learners and racial/ethnic categories), technology, and pedagogic best practices are a few. There should be monthly updates with best practices shared, subcommittees formed, outreach to peer institutions, and community input sought. I will focus on technology, for example. When my children were in Kindergarten, I had to join Twitter and Facebook to see what was going on in their class. I have now an additional 3 other apps on my phone to check what they eat, view class videos and projects, and message directory parents. Is that too many? Are we looking carefully at the relationship between technology and pedagogy for students? While they love screen time, is it too much at school? I, like many other parents, aim to achieve a healthy balance for our children. I aim to understand the district's decisions and participate in discussions about technology in a more active way.

Wilmette District #39 Board of Education Candidate Biographies

Frank Panzica

I, Frank D. Panzica, have been a member of the District 39 School Board since April 2015 and I am currently the Vice-President. I moved to Wilmette over 10 years ago with my wife and my son, who graduated from District 39 last year. I am also active in Boy Scouts and my church. After working 39 years in a variety of business ownership, strategic and management positions at AT&T and Motorola I retired at the end of 2018.



Amy Poehling

I have long defined myself as an educator at heart. I grew up outside of Boston, MA, where my parents still live. I got my B.S from the University of New Hampshire in Child Studies and Psychology and my M.Ed. from Lesley College. I was lucky enough to teach 1st grade and then become an elementary school principal in the Bay Area CA; Cambridge, MA and most recently at Francis W. Parker School in Chicago.

After my two daughters were born (currently ages 9 and 7), I left my job as a principal at Parker to stay home with my children while dedicating time to my community. Currently, I supervise student teachers in pursuit of their M.Ed at Northwestern. I have also been involved with Wilmette schools since we moved here in 2014. I advocated for Full Day Kindergarten and have served as a room parent, on the Newcomer's Committee at Central and on the Community Review Committee for the district.



Erin Stone

I have a B.A. in history from Northeast Missouri State University (now Truman State University) with minors in English and Russian and a J.D. from the University of Illinois College of Law. I currently work as a special education associate at Crow Island Elementary School in Winnetka and am also pursuing an M.A.T. at Northeastern Illinois University in order to get certified to teach middle school math, language arts, and social studies. While raising my freshman daughter and 7th grade son, I have enjoyed volunteering in many capacities in D39 schools and the surrounding community, including as a youth Sunday school teacher, a member and president of the Community Review Committee (CRC), Communications Chair of the Village-wide PTO, Co-Chair of the Highcrest Outdoor Classroom, and Secretary of New Trier Caucus.



Wilmette Public School District 39 Board of Education Responses to Voter Guide Questions

1. What do you hope to accomplish if you are elected to the Board of Education? Please explain why these goals are priorities for you.

Frank Panzica

I based every decision during my first term on two principles: (1) Does this help better prepare our students to be successful at New Trier? (2) Does it spend all taxpayers' money efficiently/effectively? The most impactful item for the next year or two is to help the new superintendent, Dr. Cremascoli, learn about our district and develop a plan. With change comes the opportunity to reflect on the many things that are done well in our district, and to work with the new superintendent to look at opportunities through a new lens.

Amy Poehling

I am a proud product and supporter of public education, with professional experience in a variety of school settings. I will draw on my background in school leadership to help ensure a smooth and successful transition for our new superintendent. Dr. Lechner has led our district well and is leaving us poised to capitalize on this opportunity of change in leadership to bring our schools to the next level of excellence.

Sydney Harris tell us, "The whole purpose of education is to turn mirrors into windows." We ask this growth mindset of our students, and we must demand it of ourselves as district leadership, as well. I believe our district can become a leader in providing research-based, forward thinking programming that provides our students with the tools they will need as they move into high school and beyond – and into the careers of the future.

As a member of the Board, I pledge to be accessible to the community at large and to do my best to represent the interests and ideas of all constituents. I will bring the voice of a parent of younger children to the diverse perspectives of the board. I do not have an agenda of set initiatives. I promise to listen, to learn, to work hard and to advocate for our children, for our schools, and for our community as a whole.

Erin Stone

A number of years ago, someone asked me the question, "what's your passion?" While that inquiry caught me off-guard, and I didn't have an immediate answer that was satisfactory to me at the time, what it did do was to cause me to do some soul searching to examine and determine exactly what my priorities are. After much thought and reflection, I realized that the thing that I am most passionate about in my life is working with and on behalf of children. This is why I embarked on a career change from law to education after years of being a stay-at-home mom. This is why, four years ago, I took a job that I love as a special education associate in a nearby elementary school. This is why I recently went back to school to become a middle school math, language arts, and social studies teacher. This is why I volunteer in our schools and teach

Sunday school to teenagers at my church. And this is why, after years of watching and attending D39 board of education meetings, I decided to run for the school board. People who know me would say that I am an earnest, calm, level-headed, hard-working, diligent person who welcomes diversity of thought, values kindness and empathy, and is committed to serving and building others up in a positive way. When I was the president of the D39 Community Review Committee (CRC), fellow members praised my leadership skills, and one of them also remarked that I embodied the characteristics found in that rare breed of individuals who could aptly be described as an “honest broker.” I believe that schools should be a safe place where exemplary teaching fosters the growth of the whole child. As a member of the D39 Board of Education, I hope to accomplish the realization of this belief through dedicated service that consistently brings to the table the personal attributes mentioned above.

2. How would you approach the next budget and tax levy cycles given the current financial picture of the district and its short-term and long-term needs?

Frank Panzica

We should always strive for a balanced budget. If there is a short-term need (such as capital for building school rooms for extended kindergarten) then the budget should maintain reserves within the upper and lower guidelines during the five-year budget projection. This excludes items not under our control that may be generated in Springfield. New laws that could impact anticipated state revenue or increase costs (such as unfunded mandates) are the biggest items that might impact our future finances. We monitor these Springfield discussions and analyze potential impacts and remediations.

The levy process is based on the law that was implemented to prevent unchecked raising of property tax rates and establishes the ability to increase revenue at the rate of inflation. This is structural and reflects the fact that over 70% of our costs are for teacher/staff salaries that tend to go up with inflation. Last fall we established a board practice that if the levy generates more money than needed for that year, as reflected in rising reserve levels, that we will specifically discuss if excess reserves could be rebated to taxpayers or are needed for priority projects such as maintenance and repair.

Amy Poehling

I have always been grateful for the board’s careful stewardship of our tax dollars and planning for our facilities. Our district continues to earn the highest “Financial Recognition” for financial stability. The recent definition of a minimum fund balance at 40% as a safety net, as well as a defined 65% upper limit leaves us on solid financial footing.

There will always be more items on our wish list than we are able to fund. But defining a compelling strategic plan can help us prioritize these needs and allow us to stay agile while maintaining fiscal discipline. In all financial decisions, I will continue to balance the absolute best use of taxpayers’ money with ensuring that our students receive the very best education we can offer.

Erin Stone

I think that making balanced financial decisions is one of the most difficult things that a school board does. My approach would be one of prudent focus on funding the district's highest priorities while also maintaining an unshakeable resolve to always be a mindful and wise steward of the taxpayers' money. My priorities for the district include continuing the current high-level quality of programming, providing staff with competitive compensation in order to attract and hold on to the brightest and best in the field, and maintaining our aging facilities by supporting necessary capital projects. In light of possible future decreases in funding which could result from a tax freeze or rollback referendum, coupled with the increasing amount of D39 students who have an IEP which may require the allocation of additional resources and the possibility of pension cost shifts, I support the district's recent commitment to increase the minimum fund balance from 30% to 40% of its operating fund budget.

3. Are there any changes you would like to see in the way District 39 handles school security, either in security procedures or in communications to the community?**Frank Panzica**

I am proud of how District 39 quickly addressed security issues as conditions changed over the last year or two. The administration quickly developed a list of high priority and important issues. The board immediately approved this list (and pulled in some timelines) and the administration quickly implemented them. We all need to remain aware that conditions change and we need to continue communication efforts, and we must monitor and fund any new identified beneficial/required items.

Amy Poehling

When we send our children off to school each morning, we need to know that their safety is our schools' top priority. I am grateful for the recent changes D39 has implemented. Entrance and exit points have been streamlined. We have enhanced security at school offices, including cameras, double door entries and sign in procedures for guests. Also, as part of the strategic plan, the board is committed to continuing training with the Wilmette Fire and Police Departments.

Most importantly, however, I appreciate the relationships our school personnel develop with students. They are committed to knowing and appreciating each child in their care. Our teachers, administrators and specialists have mechanisms in place to assess who might be at risk and to intervene with students who may feel isolated.

As a concerned parent, I feel assured that our children's safety is well planned for. As a board member, I will ensure that we continue to monitor the processes we have in place and keep this as a top priority.

Erin Stone

Nothing is more paramount than keeping children and staff safe in our schools. I appreciate how D39 has established an ongoing collaboration with the Wilmette Police Department in order to ensure that its security measures evolve accordingly over time to reflect current best practices. The balance D39 has struck between communicating relevant information to the public while still maintaining a prudent level of privacy has been appropriate.

4. How effective is the strategic planning process in your view? Are there any changes you would like to see?**Frank Panzica**

Early in my current term I was an advocate for a more robust strategy process. We added a Strategy Committee and have had board retreats on strategic items. However, this is an evolving area and we need to continue to collect input from all sources (the community, administrators, teachers, the board, etc.) I think we have an opportunity with a new superintendent to have a new set of eyes on our process and implementation. Based on interviews and initial conversations I believe that Dr. Cremascoli has some good ideas and experience in this area.

We do a good job of developing 2-5 year plans, but one area I would like to focus on more is discussions around bigger, longer term issues. Where do we want to be 10 years from now? As a baseline, 10 years ago there were no iPads and YouTube was a novelty. Now kids grow up with these and other tools. What do we need to do to be flexible enough to absorb the next new things? Do we need to minimize the impact and/or embrace the new opportunities? Collecting ideas from experts and the community and developing and documenting a strategic plan for the future should be a priority.

Amy Poehling

I encourage all voters to read the strategic plan for District 39. Our administrators and the board have tackled essential topics for improvement head on, with a robust plan for implementation and reflection. Their plan is thorough and transparent. I would like to see us refine this process through additional community input from all stakeholders and to plan further into the future beyond the current five-year model. My goal is for us to plan beyond a tactical level. We find ourselves, at times, following trends at the tail end rather than tackling problems head on, and being the leaders I know we can be.

Erin Stone

I support the district's relatively recent creation of a Board of Education Strategy Committee and its current practice of providing updates at board meetings on how ongoing strategic initiatives are progressing. I've long believed that one of the great strengths of D39 is that it doesn't just "coast along" or "rest on its laurels" but instead takes the deliberately proactive approach of reflecting and planning in a way that constantly and consistently improves the educational experience for its students.

However, when I consider how strategic planning is done in other districts (and I've actually had friends who work in education email me their districts' "strat plans" because they have correctly gleaned that I am indeed interested in such things), I am both impressed and inspired by not only the longer range outlook that they have, but also what I would call a "big picture"/"big ideas" approach to strategic planning that is usually arrived at after consultation with all stakeholders. When I see specific initiatives in a district's strategic plan that are tied to broader concepts like its "mission," "vision," and "beliefs," I think the whole process becomes a great deal more impactful. I would welcome such an approach in D39.

5. What environmental and sustainability issues would you like District 39 to address?

Frank Panzica

The current board takes these issues very seriously and has worked on a number of items such as outdoor gardens, waste minimization, and energy efficiency. I will continue to support sustainability audits and include energy efficiency as part of all new construction. How we obtain and use electricity is an area we are actively monitoring. There are many important and interesting projects that can be considered, but they have to be balanced against costs.

Amy Poehling

"You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference and you have to decide what kind of a difference you want to make."-Jane Goodall

It is imperative that we lead our students to be wise stewards of our natural environment. I strongly support Dr. Lechner's recommendation that the CRC study the issue of sustainability next year, and that we create bold policies based on the study's findings. We need to ensure that our schools serve as models of environmental sustainability.

In juxtaposition with the time our children spend indoors and online, we must teach them where our food comes from and to connect them with the outside world. Let's optimize our student programming so that our children learn how to be effective and empowered stewards of our environment. I will also stay vigilant in ensuring that our buildings are constructed and maintained with as green a footprint as possible. I strongly support exploring the feasibility of solar panels and transitioning our buildings to more renewable sources of energy.

Erin Stone

I am most grateful to the numerous parents, community members, and staff who created, developed, maintained, and expanded the gardens/outdoor classrooms at our schools. Their incredible foresight and tireless work have resulted in tremendous opportunities for growth and learning for D39 students which I believe are more important now than ever before. On a personal level, I truly treasure the memories I have of my time volunteering in the McKenzie garden and serving as a co-chair of the Highcrest Outdoor Classroom.

Included among the materials and presentations at the regular January meeting of the D39 Board of Education was a specific list of strategic plan updates regarding recent and near-future plans for sustainability efforts that the district has and is currently in the process of undertaking in its construction projects. These are all measures which I fully support. In addition, at its January meeting of the Committee of the Whole, the board suggested that the 2019-2020 Community Review Committee (CRC) study the topic of sustainability. If the CRC chooses to undertake this deeper dive into possible sustainability practices that the district might adopt, I look forward to learning what its conclusions are and giving high consideration to its recommendations.

Wilmette Public Library District Board of Trustees Candidate Biographies

Jan Barshis

I am completing my second 4-year term as a Wilmette Public Library Board Trustee. I currently serve as Secretary of the Board and am a member of the Landscape Committee where I have worked actively to help develop the popular Butterfly Garden and promote the use of native plants in the WPL's public spaces. I also serve as a liaison between the Board and the Illinois Library Association (ILA), the Board and the Friends of the Library/Books Down Under, and the Board and Go Green Wilmette (where I am also an Executive Board Member). I am a retired college professor, having taught Reading and English in the City Colleges of Chicago for more than 30 years. My husband and I have lived in Wilmette for more than 40 years.



Joan Fishman

I have had the pleasure to live in Wilmette for more than 20 years, married to Tom Gutman and have two grown sons. My professional career has been in Nutrition and Marketing. Currently, I'm president of Friends of the Library and have been involved for the past five years with this group of community members who love the library. I've worked for the Wilmette/Kenilworth Chamber of Commerce and am a member of the League of Women Voters, The Women's Club of Wilmette, and Go Green Wilmette. I'm also an American Field Service (AFS) liaison for the international exchange program for students attending New Trier and Glenbrook North.



Lisa Gaines McDonald

Age: 65

Residence: Wilmette

Occupation: Market Research Consultant with Research Explorers, Inc

Past local government and business experience includes:

- Trustee and Vice President Wilmette Public Library (2009-2019)
- Election Judge and Voter Registrar in Cook County
- 20+ years of market research, facilitation and marketing consulting experience
- 15 years of Planning and Marketing Experience – General Mills, Inc; Avery Label; University of Minnesota Hospital and Clinics

Lisa has an MBA from The University of North Carolina, Kenan-Flagler School of Business where she also received her BA. Professional affiliations include: Qualitative Research Consultants Association, Chicago Minority Business Development Council and the American Library Association. She is an active member of Unity of the North Shore, the North Shore Illinois Links, Inc., Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority and Diasporal Rhythms.



Fina Riddle

Former Bank Regulator and Analyst with 18 years of work experience. Possess in depth knowledge of banking laws, regulatory compliance, accounting and finance. Develop strong, ongoing collaborative relationships to serve as a reliable liaison and two-way communicator.

Mother of three, long time Wilmette resident and New Trier graduate with active interest in local initiatives, active member of St. Francis Xavier Parish. Enjoy free time reading "chick lit" and blogs on parenting and interior design, running to Gilson Beach and traveling.



Wilmette Public Library Board of Trustees Responses to Voter Guide Questions

1. What do you hope to accomplish if you are elected as a Library Trustee? Please explain why these goals are priorities for you.

Jan Barshis

If I am re-elected to be a Library Trustee, I will continue to work toward my three main goals of 1) enhancing the role of the WPL as a vital community resource sensitive to the educational, cultural, social, and technological needs of Wilmette's citizens; 2) ensuring that the tax dollars that finance WPL operations are used efficiently and effectively so that the community gets the best return on its tax dollar; and 3) promoting responsible environmental practices by the WPL so that the Library can serve as a "green" role model for the community and other public agencies. These goals reflect my belief that public board members should serve as change agents working for the best interests of the community that elects them to represent those interests.

Joan Fishman

As President of Friends of the Library for the past four years, I became involved because I love the Library. Taking the next step and running for Library Trustee, I want to share my passion and encourage other community members who perhaps haven't experienced the magic of the Library to use one of our most valuable community resources. The Library, along with our parks and schools, is what brings and maintains the vitality and unique value to Wilmette and Kenilworth. This is important for attracting new and keeping long - time residents. My goals are to be a good listener, someone who is dedicated to community concerns. I'll take responsibility for transparency with financial budgeting and being a good steward of the community's tax support, promote relevant programming for patrons of all ages and interests, and secure continuous feedback on our strategic plans.

Lisa McDonald

The three basic functions of a trustee are policy-making, finance and community relations. Given those objectives my desired objectives are:

- Facilitate long range and facilities planning incorporating current library trends, demographics, needs and interests to continue to exceed the level of services expected by the residents (WPL received a three-star rating based on 2016 statistics for the first time from the Library Journal's Index of Public Library Service)
- Continue to be a good financial steward of WPL's resources. Please refer to budget response below for additional information.

- Work with the Director to ensure a smooth transition and that WPL continues to reflect the patrons, staff and board's desires that are reflected in the Strategic Plan since there have been two directors in the last three years.
- Insure the safety and security of staff and patrons (ice melt system, emergency preparedness, etc.). This also includes a respectful environment to voice different opinions.
- Increase community input by having open houses, town hall meetings and surveys prior to commencing major projects.
- Encourage ongoing evaluation of programs to insure the relevancy and effectiveness of programs for patrons.
- Extend outreach efforts to reach non-users with targeted programs.
- Continue to work cooperatively with our community partners (League of Women Voters Wilmette & Kenilworth; Go Green Wilmette, SCORE, Friends of WPL, School Districts 37 and 39, Wilmette Park District Village of Wilmette and Mallinckrodt Community Center to expand our reach and tap experts.

Fina Riddle

I want to gain a strong understanding in two areas, the operating budget and public feedback, through my participation during committee and board meetings. I would like to better record discussions within detailed minutes for public access. Further, I would look into changing the public meetings location, capabilities of teleconference or video conference, or recording meetings to be posted to WPL's webpage alongside already posted meeting minutes.

To understand the budgetary operating needs of WPL: It is important to obtain further input regarding what the financial or tax implications would be given any change to the operating budget.

To make more prominent the avenue of public suggestions to services or making complaints: It is important to obtain a demonstrated need or request from the public to justify programming and the demand for services and space. It's important to allow for complaints to be made and be addressed in a timely manner. To show patrons this transparency builds goodwill.

Lastly, I aim to be a liaison between family households and WPL to increase participation and feedback. I feel fortunate to have solid roots in Wilmette and I aim to further grow friendships in the community. I could leverage my relationships to solicit feedback on public matters, including those related to WPL services.

2. How do you define the value of the library to the community beyond books and other media?

Jan Barshis

Libraries are more than repositories for books and media. They are educational institutions and community centers for the young and old alike with a broad array of programs, cultural activities,

social opportunities, and community service resources that include everything from meeting rooms for community events to open internet access for patrons.

Joan Fishman

In our often frenetic and online-oriented society, the library remains a setting that is calming, open, accessible and free. It's a safe place where community members of all ages, learning preferences, and passions can interact, intersect and share the vitality of our community and beyond. Our Library offers social companionship and a gathering place for older adults, young children and their caregivers, teens, and community members who all share the same space and enjoy the benefits from the resources and programs available.

The Maker Programs and the Library of Things are examples of innovation at the Library beyond books. These exciting programs are bringing new users to the Library and opening doors beyond the mortar and bricks of the building.

Lisa McDonald

The mission of WPL is to "serve the community's informational, intellectual, cultural, social and leisure needs" which it does with a host of programs for all generations and ability levels. In 2017-2018 there were 577 programs that served 21,000 adults and children. The programs are diverse whether it is 'One Book Wilmette', Digital University, interest or support groups, books groups, Maker Events or Friday night concerts. We had 54,558 E-Resource logins that allow patron to read or listen to books or data bases and resources that assist patrons with learning a new language, finding a job or managing your life or business. WPL has about 1,000 visits a day with an extremely qualified staff that is a safe place to dream, learn, play, create and dialogue. There were 700,000 items checked out last year. If you don't use WPL it is because you are unaware of the wealth of resources offered. Check out our Library Services Value calculator to see what value you get from WPL! <https://www.wilmettelibrary.info/about/about-us/library-use-value-calculator>

Fina Riddle

WPL is a meeting center for all ages, attracts learning, and builds memories. The value of the library, for me personally, is defined by providing a safe, clean, public center to partner with peers, library professionals, teachers, and especially families. WPL provides a quiet and safe environment for research and study, free access to technology/ WiFi, and is often a retreat for moms and young children. In my experience growing up in Wilmette, I learned to read at WPL in a mother/child reading group. My dad, actually a former WPL trustee, and I would regularly attend readings sitting beside the 1st floor fireplace and then later in the renovated basement auditorium space where we attended movie showings. WPL's photocopier took all my change for school reports, when computers and printers were not in every household. Later in high school, I met with the library staff to discuss college applications and ACT/SAT study guides. The WPL was my meeting spot for countless study sessions. And now as a mom with young children, we regularly participate in youth programming and events (e.g. with LEGOS, bubbles, jugglers.) A recent memory for my kids was the day of the solar eclipse at the WPL with one pair of special viewing glasses which we couldn't get our hands on elsewhere.

3. How would you approach the next budget and tax levy cycles given the current financial picture of the Library and its short-term and long-term needs?

Jan Barshis

While I believe that the Library has been a good steward of the public's money in recent years and has tried diligently to exercise restraint in determining its share of the tax levy, I nonetheless favor a more open and transparent detailing and explanation of the annual budget, especially the purpose, legal requirements for, and anticipated uses of the reserve fund. Budget challenges are significant. The Library faces the constant battle of keeping up with technology, maintaining an attractive and functional physical plant, and expanding its community outreach. It also must continue to attract and retain top-tier staff that will maintain the level of quality service our patrons expect, so salaries and benefits must be competitive with neighboring libraries on the North Shore.

Joan Fishman

I feel that it is important that we have detailed a "Line Item" budget for the library's income & expenses for past year's, 2017, 2018, and the 2019 budget at a level appropriate so that we can better understand and identify expenditures and growth trends. In addition, I would want a "line item" capital expenditure plan for the next 5-6 years that lists all major capital expenditures along with repairs and maintenance upgrades. Although the library does have a large reserve, it would not be financially prudent to say our request for tax funding is inappropriate or excessive without reviewing all the above details. Given the available funds in the special reserve/capital improvement budget, I would champion Section C: Improve and or Maintain Building & Parking, given the dearth of parking at the Library, which seriously impacts patrons and staff. I'm also concerned about reviewing long-terms plans for the lower level, bathroom access and security to make the most of the Library's footprint and meet the community's needs.

Lisa McDonald

Continue to be fiscally conservative and budget for actual costs in the next 3 years since current reserves are adequate to fund future capital projects.

There has been a reduction in the Tax Levy for the last two consecutive years 2018—2019 \$5,428,252 (-5.55%) and 2017-2018 \$5,747,103 (-2.5%) and it was stable at \$5,894,465.

If you look at your recent 2018 First Installment Property Tax bill you will see that WPL owes no money and we have paid 94.36% of our pension liability. In the past reserves have funded the WPL Renovation and HVAC Upgrade. Current plans include the Outdoor Landscape Renovation which has evolved based on community input. Plans are based on the long-range facilities plan as well as maintaining WPL's infrastructure to maintain a user friendly, safe and flexible environment. Plans include redoing the basement and refreshing the main floor.

Fina Riddle

I would approach the next cycles with measured questions and discussion. I aim to gain familiarity with the WPL's financial needs and operation. In particular, the amount of WPL's reserve is certainly a budget line worth attention. I have extensive professional experience with financial reporting as a banking and regulatory professional and I would add to needed further discussion of WPL's short-term and long-term needs. I would partner with the already secured Audit firm to provide advice. Lastly, I would look into consultation with investment advisors on alternative uses of funds within the reserve.

4. As you consider the library's future, what aspects of the Wilmette Public Library's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan particularly appeal to you or concern you? Is there anything in the plan you would want to change or strengthen?

Jan Barshis

The 2018-2021 Strategic Plan emphatically addresses one of my personal goals as a Trustee: enhancing WPL as a community resource by focusing on growing community connections through efforts to bring Library materials out into the community, an example being the new Library Book Bike ; expanding Library resources available to the community through innovative programs like the new Library of Things; increasing WPL's commitment to diversity in programs and hiring practices; and enhancing the Library's attractiveness with new landscaping and interior furnishings. While I wish the Strategic Plan mentioned efforts to improve public information about the budgeting process, I'm confident the new Director will address any budget transparency issues in his public communication. The budget should be a document any lay person can understand, and I will work toward making that happen. Finally, I am committed to seeing that WPL is a model for responsible environmental practices as a public agency. Though I wish the Strategic Plan had included more specific statements supporting "green" practices, I hope to use my liaison role with Go Green Wilmette to provide the WPL Board, administration, and staff with helpful information and community resources that can further the Library's commitment to a healthy environment in its programs and practices.

Joan Fishman

As President of Friends of the Wilmette Public Library, I was fortunate to participate in the two-day Strategic Planning sessions and community group discussions. I was impressed by the passion, creativity, and wide-range of thinking that emerged from the staff, community members, and board trustees (Library as well as Park) to shape the next three years of the Library. I think that the Growing Community goal is especially important as defined as "Focus library services to promote strong connections in our community." This initiative speaks to the importance of working collaboratively with the Village, Park, and School District. This brings a collective mindset both for programs and budgeting – and is a win for all. Additionally, the Library strives to be a welcoming destination for all points of view, abilities and interests. This open-door policy should continue to be encouraged and promoted.

I would also piggyback on the Marketing and Communication goal to increase awareness and encourage ongoing active listening sessions within the community for promoting resources and

programs at the Wilmette Farmer's market, Community Recreation Center, Kenilworth train station and Mallinckrodt Community Center to gather feedback from current patrons as well as untapped users.

Lisa McDonald

WPL Strategic Plan reflects the shared vision of the community, staff and board. I agree with all the objectives and support them since many of them compliment by desired objectives as a trustee stated above. The trustee's role is to assess the overall progress of the goals and work with the Director to ensure that they are on track.

Fina Riddle

As I mentioned above, WPL is a central community attraction. WPL should maintain and work on its local partnerships. I think it's valuable to obtain strong participation of patrons and Wilmette residents through surveys, forums, focus groups, and suggestion/complaint drop boxes. Further, continuing partnership with Friends of the Library, the Wilmette Beacon, Wilmette Schools and Wilmette garden clubs is worthwhile to demonstrate a need for programming and services. Lastly, partnering with the Village of Wilmette is imperative to maintain safe access to WPL's building via parking and public transport and ensure both are sufficient for the level of public use.

New Trier District 203 Board of Education Candidate Biographies

Cathy Albrecht

I am currently finishing my first 4-year term on the New Trier BOE, serving as Vice President. I am a principal and co-founder of a business with my husband which we formed in 2005. Before that I was a partner and associate in a Chicago law firm in mergers & acquisitions and international transactions. I graduated from Northwestern in law and undergrad in journalism. We've lived in Wilmette for 21 years and have 2 children who graduated from New Trier.



Jean Hahn

Education Experience

- Glencoe District 35 Board of Education
Communication, Safety and Security and Facilities Committee (2011-present)
- Multiple PTO volunteer positions, Glencoe Public Schools and New Trier High School, (2003 - Present)
- Community and Professional Organizations
- Village of Glencoe Sustainability Working Group, (2011 - 2013)
- Village of Glencoe Sustainability Task Force, (2016-present)
- Member, League of Women Voters
Glenview/Glencoe, (2017 - Present)
- Family Service of Glencoe, Board Member (2007 - 2010)
- Highland Park/Highwood Legal Aid Clinic (2016 - present)

Education

- Harvard Law School, Juris Doctor (J.D.)
- University of California at Santa Barbara, B.A.
Political Science

Personal

- Husband – Rick (NTHS 1989)
- Children - Jacob (NTHS 2021), Charlie (NTHS 2023)
- Glencoe Resident (2005-present)



Brad McLane

Brad McLane graduated from Yale University, where he majored in architecture; and earned his MBA from the University of Chicago. He and his wife Dede have lived in Winnetka for over 20 years. Their oldest, Emily, is teaching in France after a Teach for America stint in New York City (NTHS '10). Their next, Connor, is at MIT Sloan pursuing an MBA following three years at Bain Consulting (NTHS '11). Their youngest, Elizabeth, is a freshman and goalie on the NTHS girls varsity hockey team and for the Wilmette U19 team (NTHS '22).

Brad has been involved in several community organizations since 1996

- Over the past 18 months he has served on the NTHS Facilities Steering Committee (and contributed to the 2030 strategic plan).
- He is a past president of the Winnetka Park District Board of Commissioners
- Past chair of the Winnetka Congregational Church Board
- He also has served on the Winnetka Plan Commission
- He was a past chair of the Winnetka Caucus Council



New Trier Township High School District 203 Board of Education Responses to Voter Guide Questions

1. What do you hope to accomplish if you are elected to the Board of Education? Please explain why these goals are priorities for you.

Cathy Albrecht

I will use the experience I have gained in my first term on the BOE to further support New Trier into its next phase of 21st century educational excellence while exercising prudent financial management. New Trier is a lighthouse district recognized nationally for its development of the whole student, focused on challenging each student at the appropriate rigorous level and preparing each graduate to succeed in an increasingly complex world. That preparation involves student intellectual growth, refinement of critical thinking skills, and social and emotional well-being. Excellence in education also requires exceptional quality in teachers and administrators, a healthy, safe and innovative physical learning environment, and careful management of taxpayer dollars. On an annual basis New Trier will be setting specific goals in each of these categories in accordance with the newly adopted Strategic Plan New Trier 2030 (further described below in #2). The Strategic Plan was a community-wide effort to identify core values for the District for the next 10+ years. A priority of the Board over the next four-year term will be to ensure that annual and longer term goal-setting within those core values reflects the needs of the New Trier community for that period and that the goals are accomplished.

Jean Hahn

If elected to the Board of Education I hope to advance the mission of New Trier High School: “to commit minds to inquiry, hearts to compassion, and lives to the service of humanity.” Specifically, I will work to ensure that New Trier has the financial and human resources necessary to continue to provide our students the rigorous, high-quality academic experience that will prepare them for success in the 21st century. Additionally, I will advocate for the continued investment in the social and emotional well being of our students. By recognizing that we have a responsibility to educate the whole-child and by explicitly teaching our children the skills of self-awareness, empathy and resilience, New Trier can better prepare our students to lead purposeful and fulfilling lives. Lastly, by promoting strong connections between New Trier and the community we can expose our students to meaningful academic and extra-curricular experiences that will provide them opportunities to explore how they would like to contribute to the global society they will soon inherit.

Brad McLane

I would like to look back and see that--

- The NTHS graduates are even more well-prepared and well-educated than they are today.
- The campuses are in great shape.
- Leadership is vibrant and robust.
- D203 is fiscally sound.

2. What are your thoughts on NT2030, and what goals and objectives would you like to see prioritized in the annual district and superintendent goal-setting process during your term in office?

Cathy Albrecht

The Strategic Plan New Trier 2030 is guided by New Trier's motto of Committing Minds to Inquiry, Hearts to Compassion, and Lives to the Service of Humanity. With input from parents, students, staff, alumni and community members, teams identified six categories or frameworks to lead New Trier to year 2030 and agreed to core values within each framework. The six frameworks are: (1) Intellectual Engagement, Growth, and Readiness, (2) Student Personal Growth, Engagement, and Well-being, (3) Culture, Climate and Equity, (4) Leadership Throughout the School, (5) Community Engagement, Partnerships, and Governance, (6) Finance, Facilities, and Human Resources. Annually going forward, New Trier will establish specific and measureable strategies to meet identified goals within each framework which will be based on student and community needs at that time. The Superintendent's annual evaluation in large part will be categorized around each of those frameworks and will measure progress on and completion of annual goals and strategies.

As a Board, our responsibility is to review and approve goals and strategies, and measure success. The annual goal-setting flexibility in this model allows the administration and the Board to address current issues as they arise and reprioritize at that time, rather than trying to predict now what those priorities will be years out. For example, I participated in the Community Engagement, Partnerships, and Governance framework committee and we set a general goal to provide more opportunities for younger students in the community to become more familiar with New Trier. In listening to the New Trier students on our committee we then prioritized a specific goal of reducing the stress some 8th graders feel about leaving the familiarity of elementary school and advancing into the new experience of New Trier. To apply a strategy to this specific goal, New Trier just piloted face-to-face registration conferences at two elementary schools with parents and students to provide a more personal experience for incoming freshmen, and next we will be evaluating the success and feasibility of that strategy.

Jean Hahn

I applaud the Board's recent adoption of New Trier 2030 as it represents an ambitious yet realistic approach to strategic planning. I particularly appreciate the extent to which New Trier

included the community in the planning process. From the survey, to the Community Engagement Focus Group to the Framework Committees, the engagement of a wide array of stakeholders provides a broad foundation upon which the school can build for its future. Specifically, the district priorities about which I am most enthusiastic are the identification and cultivation of the intellectual and social and emotional characteristics, qualities and competencies for a New Trier graduate. These goals are at the heart of New Trier's mission. Additionally, I was fortunate to serve on the Community Engagement, Partnerships and Governance Framework Committee so my somewhat biased preference is for the district to prioritize providing engagement opportunities and information about New Trier to younger students in the Township and their families. By exposing students and families to New Trier long before they actually enroll in the school, we can alleviate much of the anxiety often associated with the transition to high school.

Brad McLane

The 2030 plan is anchored by NTHS' compelling credo "To commit minds to inquiry, hearts to compassion, and lives to the service of humanity."

The plan embraces this and sets a direction for the future. It was very thoughtfully and thoroughly developed. The seven frameworks allowed for focus and digestible components. It is a living and actionable plan. Not a shelf-filler. Next steps will focus on prioritizing annual goals and the change management needed to achieve them. Many of the goals overlap with the different framework groups (Intellectual Engagement, Student Growth, Culture/Climate, Leadership, Community Engagement, Finance/Facilities/HR). We will need to harness the energy that came out of the planning process. The Board, Dr. Sally, and staff will need to set the priorities and affect change that encompasses --

- Access to rigorous and rich curricula
- Ensure staff has a deep understanding of social-emotional skills (this can also tie-in to security planning).
- Appreciate individual identities, and broaden students' definitions of success
- Characteristics to lead meaningful and impactful lives,
- Reach into the feeder schools and more broadly to develop partnership opportunities.
- Financial stewardship and facilities master planning.

Dr. Sally and the staff will need to own the strategies and execution. And they will also need to allow for "bottom-up" push back and challenges to the guardrails and direction provided by the 2030 plan. It is important to have a vision and clear direction, it is critical to be able to adapt to unanticipated events. It may be even more important that the Board not do the Administration's job.

3. How would you approach the next budget and tax levy cycles given the current financial picture of the district and its short-term and long-term needs?

Cathy Albrecht

New Trier conservatively manages its finances, budgets and plans accordingly and has adequate reserves. I would expect the next budget cycle and levy would be similar to recent cycles of levying to capture the CPI increase and new property additions for the period. The Board and administration understand the faith the taxpayers put in them in approving the capital project referendum for the Winnetka campus new west wing and there are no current plans to pursue a referendum for operating revenue in the foreseeable future. That assumption, however, is based on no material reductions in revenue or increases in expenses in the near future outside the control or expectations of New Trier, such as could be caused by a prolonged property tax freeze, a sudden pension cost shift of the state's liability onto the District, or other similar extraordinary events. If any of those types of events happen, New Trier would engage the community in conversation to determine how New Trier should proceed.

Jean Hahn

One of the fundamental responsibilities of the Board of Education is to ensure that the district has the financial resources necessary to provide our students with the highest quality education. At the same time, the Board needs to allocate the public's money in a manner that reflects the values and priorities of the Township. Currently New Trier finds itself in a healthy financial position, due in large measure to the prudent governance of past boards, strategic planning of the administration and a supportive community that values public education. I am optimistic that New Trier 2030 will play an important role in maintaining that healthy balance. Specifically, by engaging the community in the process of establishing ambitious yet realistic goals for the district, the Board will be well-situated to enact responsible budgets that not only meet the needs of our students but that earn the support of our community.

Brad McLane

We should not be afraid to invest in the future. Reinvesting reserves, understanding debt capacity, and true capital investment in facilities should be thoughtfully considered.

4. How do you think New Trier should address the security challenges at the two very different campuses?

Cathy Albrecht

Our students and staff must feel safe in their physical learning environment for us to deliver a superior intellectual and personal growth educational experience. New Trier recently has instituted a number of new security measures at both campuses – some which are public and visible, and some which are not. Both campuses have upgraded their background check and visitor registration procedures. Public entry points have been limited, doors are locked and

students are instructed to not let in visitors at other doors. Shatterproof coatings have been added to glass at both campuses and other technology-related upgrades have been made for greater security and timely alerts and response. There are Resource Officers at each campus provided by the local police departments. Double entry vestibules were constructed last summer at Winnetka so that visitors must be buzzed in and guards have more time to view who is entering the building. Our plans for Northfield, with its separate buildings and outside hallways, are to provide the same level of physical safety, security, and limited visitor access as Winnetka and we recognize it is more complicated with the open campus model. More details will be announced soon. We have been working with local police and security consultants and reviewing, revising and finalizing plans for Northfield over the past months.

Equally important is the emotional well-being of our students and supporting those at risk. The adviser system helps in creating long-term bonds and increased awareness of student personal troubles or changes in personality. Social workers are onsite to counsel or refer those needing additional supports. New Trier's goal is that every student can identify at least one teacher, adviser or other staff person whom they would seek out for personal advice or comfort, with confidence that that person truly cares.

Jean Hahn

Another significant responsibility of the Board of Education is to provide a safe and secure learning environment for our students and staff. While both of our buildings have unique physical characteristics that pose challenges to our ability to protect students and staff (e.g., Northfield's open campus, Winnetka's extensive glass features), the Board's approach to security for both buildings should be similar. First, we must take measures to physically secure our buildings in a manner that is appropriate for our campuses and community. Often referred to as "hardening the target", examples of physical improvements that are appropriate for our schools include treating or replacing our exterior windows with bullet-proof glazing and/or shatter resistant glass; installing cameras, motion detectors, double and or triple buzzer entry systems, and classroom emergency alarms. Second, we must work with public safety to establish, implement and train our staff and students to execute daily as well as emergency procedures. Daily procedures that enhance safety include providing color-coded lanyards to various campus personnel, students and visitors; instructing classroom teachers to keep their doors locked; reducing points of entry to our buildings; etc. Emergency procedures encompass a variety of techniques from "stop-the-bleed" training to lockdown drills to reunification plans. Last, one of the most effective tools for enhancing school security is to create an environment wherein everybody feels that he or she is connected to the school community. Whether through behavior intervention training that teaches school personnel and students to recognize the warning signs of someone in crisis or through the advisory system that seeks to ensure that every student has a trusted adult to whom they can turn, these methods have proven to be an effective means of preventing school violence before it even starts.

Brad McLane

I am impressed with the way the staff, board, and outside consultants have strategically assessed, addressed, and acted on the two very differently configured campuses. I would encourage the completion of the current plans that have considered external threats. The next step is to further develop internal threat plans.

5. What environmental and sustainability issues would you like District 203 to address?**Cathy Albrecht**

New Trier has so much to be proud of in its sustainability efforts that there is a full page of accomplishments on the New Trier website. Find it under the Parents/Community tab and scroll down to "Sustainability". When building the new west wing at Winnetka we could build a sustainable part of the campus from the ground up, which isn't the same situation with the older structures on both campuses. The Board voted to build the new west wing to achieve LEED certification status meant to recognize environmentally friendly and energy efficient new construction. While we are still waiting for proof of our final level of certification, we met or exceeded Silver status and may have achieved Gold status. In the older buildings when we renovate or replace systems we do so with high energy efficient systems such as high energy efficient heating and hot water boilers and refrigeration compressors. Lighting in new and old parts of New Trier is fitted with sensors to save energy and turn off lights when areas are not in use. With other technology advances in lighting, New Trier also has been able to add LED lights in the older parts of the buildings without replacing the fixtures. New Trier's Environmental Committee, which includes students, staff and community members, has inspired multiple green initiatives on both campuses, including initiating composting efforts and refining advanced recycling efforts in the cafeterias and across the campuses. Administration also continues to explore the feasibility of solar power and where and when it could be used most effectively. As a Board member I support New Trier's dedication to sustainability and the many environmentally-friendly projects it has completed and plans for the future.

Jean Hahn

Environmental sustainability is an issue that is of particular interest to me. I have had the privilege of serving as the District 35 Board of Education's representative on the Village of Glencoe's Sustainability Working Group (2011-2013) and Sustainability Task Force (2016-present). Over the course of my service on these bodies, I have developed a deep appreciation for the importance of the partnership between a community and the schools when tackling the issue of environmental sustainability. One of the most significant challenges to creating a more environmentally sustainable community is a lack of public awareness. While most Township residents support the concept of environmental sustainability, not everyone knows how he or she can contribute. As a source of information for students, families, alumni and staff, schools have a unique ability to reach a significant portion of the population. By working closely with local governments, non-governmental organizations, and businesses to promote and implement sustainability initiatives, New Trier can play a significant role in raising public awareness both

within the school and wider community. In addition to modeling responsible global citizenship for our students, these partnerships can create meaningful opportunities outside the classroom for students to engage with their community to tackle this challenge.

Brad McLane

The Winnetka campus reinvestment provides a good example of completely integrating environmental and sustainability guidelines. This needs to continue and be embraced as the 2030 facilities master plan unfolds.

Thank you candidates!

ELECTION DAY is Tuesday, April 2, 2019

Polls on Election Day are open from 6 am to 7 pm

Early Voting

Monday March 18 through Monday, April 1th

Voting locations and hours at www.cookcountyclerk.com

Visit us at www.lwwilmette.org

ABOUT THIS VOTER GUIDE

The Voter Guide contains information as submitted by candidates in response to questions posed by LWV Wilmette 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.

See www.lwwilmette.org for this content organized as the 2019 Candidate Information Guide (includes Video Statements), or to download a PDF of this document.

It will also be appear in LWV's Illinois Voter Guide (see below)

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 Voter Guide to provide information to the public about all the candidates seeking election to local government.

For funding this Voter Guide, LWV Wilmette wishes to thank
North Shore Community Bank & Trust Company of Wilmette

