

Precinct 3 Town Meeting Candidates

Eight to be elected, thirteen on the ballot

If no candidate profile is shown, the candidate did not submit a profile.

(* indicates incumbent)

Thomas R. Howley*

tom@howleybread.com

Community Activities

Chair Winchester Council on Aging (2019 – present)

Town Meeting Member: (1995 – present)

Former member of: Climate Action Plan Committee (2019-2020); Select Board (2001-2013); Planning Board (1997-2001); Co-Chair Committee for new high school (2013-2014); and former member of Wright Locke Farm Land Trust

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

Strengthening Winchester as a caring and connected community that leaves no one behind; slowing the rate of increase in tax burden that is making Winchester unaffordable for many while maintaining the quality of schools and town services; building the community consensus and providing the tools necessary to achieve substantial progress toward net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 (especially in our buildings and modes of travel); providing more affordable housing options and senior housing (including more housing density in the Town Center that architecturally is a 21st century complement in scale and style to the historic architecture we value); making Winchester the most age friendly community in the Commonwealth.

What does Winchester do well?

Drawing upon its rich tradition of talented community volunteers

What could be improved?

Assessing whether in all instances, our volunteer committees are capable of effectively handling the current complexity of the issues they are presented (for example, Town Center development proposal review and permitting)

What is your opinion on the Winchester Spring Ballot Question, the proposed override for the Muraco Culvert and Muraco School Life Extension?

The Town's flood mitigation project began over 20 years ago in response to damaging neighborhood and Town Center flooding. The Muraco Culvert is the last remaining major element and should be completed as part of our overall preparation for more frequent intense rainfall brought by climate change. If the Muraco School's substantial rebuilding or replacement is to be delayed for a number of years as part of multi-year budgeting and tax burden plan then I would be favor of the life extension, but I need to know more before I vote.

Amy Poftak

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Community Activities

United for Literacy – Winchester
WinPAC

Candidate Profile:

I am running for Town Meeting Member because I am committed to Winchester and care about the success of the community.

I grew up in Winchester and left town after high school to attend Stanford. I lived and worked in California for many years, and later, Washington, D.C. – but Winchester always stayed with me. I was happy to have the opportunity to move back to town with my family in 2017.

For most of my career I have worked in higher education and publishing. I am currently Director of Communications at Harvard Business Review, and previously worked in communications roles at Georgetown University and Stanford Law School.

I am passionate about education and am part of a parent group, United for Literacy – Winchester, that has been advocating for changes to the district's approach to dyslexia identification and early literacy so that all students have the opportunity to thrive.

Underlying my work with United for Literacy is a belief that investing in prevention will improve long-term outcomes and ultimately save money. It is for this reason that I support the proposed override for the Muraco Culvert and Muraco School Life Extension. Finishing the culvert project will complete the flood mitigation program that started in Precinct 3 and will benefit the entire community. The Muraco repairs are essential to extending the life of the building until it is replaced. Keeping town buildings in Precinct 3, including Lincoln and McCall, in top shape is also critical and I would support capital requests to make necessary repairs to them.

We are fortunate to have downtown Winchester in Precinct 3. I believe in supporting the businesses that make our precinct so vibrant, and especially now during the pandemic. I support smart growth while also balancing our precinct's needs in our downtown district, including the need to address parking, walkability, and safe streets.

On a more personal note, my mother Helen Babcock was a Winchester Town Meeting Member for 10 years and set an example of civic engagement that has always inspired me. I would be thrilled to carry on her tradition of service to the town. More importantly, I would be honored to represent the interests of Precinct 3 residents and hear from them about their issues and concerns.

John H. Stevens (Mr. Stevens is also a candidate for Select Board)

john_h_stevens@hotmail.com

Community Activities

1. Winchester ABC
2. Democratic Town Committee
3. Council on Aging
4. ENKA Fair
5. Winchester Senior Association
6. Winchester Farmers' Market
7. Planning Board discussions regarding a) the Fells Hardware project, and b) zoning.

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

Real estate development generally, with particular emphasis on increasing low- and moderate-income housing.

What does Winchester do well?

In general Winchester does everything well: Town offices, fire, police, the transfer station, public schools, parks, construction and maintenance of public works, and support for social issue, e.g. the change in "mascot" to "the Red and Black" and recognition of the residency of indigenous peoples.

What could be improved?

1. Decisions regarding real estate development.
2. Traffic generally - vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian. The Town needs: 1) bicycle lanes on its "major" streets; 2) for pedestrians - crosswalks which are more clearly marked with better lighting; and 3) reduced speed limits and traffic calming – both of which will help with bicycle and pedestrian safety.
3. Public parking, especially downtown.

What is the financial forecast for Winchester with the building or renovation of the remaining two schools, and municipal projects in Winchester?

I expect that these projects, collectively, will require an increase in the tax rate. I do not like the idea of paying more in taxes, but however much we dislike them, taxes are a necessary element of life in a civil society. The real issue is whether the money collected through taxation is spent wisely.

What is your opinion on the Winchester Spring Ballot Question, the proposed override for the Muraco Culvert and Muraco School Life Extension?

I support the override. There is no viable alternative.

Maureen I. Meister*

Community Activities

Winchester Planning Board (2000-2021)

Winchester Historical Society

Boston University Tanglewood Institute (Governing Council)

Society of Architectural Historians

Candidate Statement

I have a deep knowledge of Winchester—the residents, the neighborhoods, the schools, and the local businesses. My husband and I moved to town in the early 1980s. Within a year, I was appointed to the Historical Commission, and after that I served on the Design Review Committee. For the past twenty-one years, I have served as an elected member of the Planning Board and as a representative in the Town Meeting. It's Town Meeting that enacts the bylaws that determine how the town will grow. Winchester is being challenged by enormous development pressures. It's important to steer this development, both in the neighborhoods and in the commercial districts, to achieve a wide range of objectives and retain the attractive qualities of the town.

Kathleen M. Bodie*

Community Activities

Town Meeting Member 1995-present

School Committee 1994-2009

Winchester ABC Program

- Board member, host family 1980-2000
Tutor
- President 1987-1992

Candidate Statement

My husband and I have lived in Winchester since 1979. We have raised our three children in Winchester, who have all graduated from the Winchester Public Schools. Currently, I serve as the Superintendent of the Arlington Public Schools. My career in education began as high school mathematics teacher and has included over the years teaching college mathematics, mentoring aspiring teachers and being a public-school administrator. It has been a privilege to serve my community in various capacities for forty years. I hope to continue my service to the community by serving another term in Town Meeting.

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

- Funding of our public schools to maintain an excellent school system that attracts, supports and retains highly qualified teachers
- Address space issues in schools to accommodate a growing student enrollment
- Partnership with the MBTA to rebuild the downtown train station
- Update a strategic plan to improve the downtown and to attract and support new businesses

- Develop a five-year financial plan that shows when overrides may be needed to maintain town services and school funding at a reasonable rate of growth to ensure the quality of education for all students.
- Continue to address affordable housing needs in town.

What does Winchester do well?

- Community – Winchester is a wonderful community to both live in and raise a family.
- Opportunities to participate in the life of the community – there is a wide array of volunteer groups, town committees, non-profit organizations, elected boards, including Town Meeting, that people can be involved in that both enriches the life of the volunteer, as well as the community
- Quality of public schools
- Wright-Locke Farm
- Town recreation areas, youth sports and parks
- Library
- Multi-cultural network programs and community conversations
- Partnerships with the Massachusetts School Building Authority on the rebuild or renovation of school buildings
- Effective representative government

What could be improved?

- Downtown become more business diverse, vibrant and supported
- More affordable housing

What is your opinion on the Winchester Spring Ballot Question, the proposed override for the Muraco Culvert and Muraco School Life Extension?

I support both override initiatives. The repairs to the Muraco School have been needed for many years. The culvert project is part of a multi-phase flood mitigation program. The project will protect homes near the Muraco School and the school itself from floods during a major storm.

Theodore Michalski, Jr.

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Community Activities

I am currently the Traffic Director at the Muraco School. I also run The Book and Board located at 626 Main Street. As a former police officer, I try to use the store as a place our youth can go to play games and to enjoy reading.

Candidate Statement

• **What Winchester issues do you think are most important?** Getting the Schools up and running during the pandemic. The mental health and well-being of the residents. Letting all voices be heard. Getting a new train station at Winchester Center.

- **What does Winchester do well?** We have a top-notch Police and Fire Department.
- **What could be improved?** Having more open discussions. Let all people be heard and not just the few. If there is an issue that is controversial, it should be a town wide vote, not voted on by a few people.
- **What is your opinion on the Winchester Spring Ballot Question, the proposed override for the Muraco Culvert and Muraco School Life Extension?** Before we raise taxes, we should see if we could divert monies from other areas and/or try to get some federal grants. In the 30 years I have lived here, I have seen our taxes go up exponentially and if you keep going to the well it is going to dry up.

Caren M. Connelly*

Jason M. Lewis*

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Community Activities

Town Meeting Member (since 2009)

State Senator (since 2014)

Former State Representative

Former member of the Winchester Finance Committee

Former Board member of the Winchester Foundation for Educational Excellence

Candidate Statement

The most urgent issue facing Winchester is our continued COVID-19 pandemic response and recovery plan. Our schools, small businesses, and many families have been hard hit by the pandemic, and it will take years to fully recover. We will need a continued collaborative effort between the community, town government, and state and federal governments to meet this enormous challenge.

Other challenges and opportunities facing Winchester in the years ahead include: the renovation of the downtown commuter rail station and related impacts on the town center and transit-oriented development; the need for more affordable housing options for lower-income families and seniors; the completion of the town's decades-long flood mitigation efforts; required investments in infrastructure, including new Lynch and Muraco elementary schools; and a sustained focus on efforts to enhance sustainability and resilience.

I support the spring ballot question to fund the Muraco culvert project and Muraco school life extension. The town has been working diligently on flood mitigation projects since the late 1990s, and has already spent millions of local and state dollars to make improvements that have significantly reduced flooding concerns for residents and businesses. The Muraco culvert project is the last remaining project that needs to be completed.

Ryan Mackay

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Community Activities

I was a member of the Town of Winchester Finance Committee for three years (2018-2020). My time on the committee included significant work on the most recent override that helped fund the McCall school expansion among other projects. I was also a member of the Public Safety and OPEB subcommittees during my tenure. I have two boys at the elementary school grade level and have been an active participant in coaching their youth sports teams: including soccer, basketball, and baseball. Supporting my wife, who is a member of the board, my family is involved with the Woburn Council of Social Concern.

Candidate Statement

What Winchester issues do you think are most important?

Education is a particularly important issue to me and this community. Our children's education should be our top civic priority and it is one of the major reasons most families decide to locate here. I believe it is critical to get our children back to in-person learning as soon as possible. Our school's infrastructure is also in need of upgrade and modernization, particularly the Muraco and Lynch schools. Maintaining a high-quality education system will also continue to keep Winchester a desired destination for homebuyers, which will maintain resident's home values. I believe diversifying the Town's tax base is also a critical objective.

What does Winchester do well?

Winchester is a town with a focus on community. Town events are well attended, and volunteer participation is very high. Whether it be parents volunteering their time at their child's school, coaching a town league team, participating in the Glen Doherty road race, volunteering at the ENKA fair, or coming together to pass an override bill to finance required services and town improvements, Winchester citizens are highly involved.

Karen Caputo

KCaputo8@hotmail.com

Community Activities

- Co-chair LSPA Mentor Program at Lincoln Elementary School. (4 years)
- Elected and served on the McCall School Council as a parent representative. (2017-2019)
- Volunteer board member and co-president of Parent to Parent. (Since 2017)
<https://www.parenttoparentwinchester.org>

Candidate Statement

My family and I have lived in Winchester for 12 years and our two kids have attended the public schools and are now in WHS. I would like to be a member of town meeting because I have seen the active collaboration of our town agencies, schools, non-profit organizations, elected

officials and residents. I'm always impressed by the amount of time and dedication Winchester Residents are willing give toward making our town a better place to live by volunteering for various organizations, running for office and supporting town agencies and employees. I would like to be a more active part of this collaboration and focus on the community.

Specifically, I am impressed by the development of the Master Plan for our town that emphasizes balanced economic development, preservation and sustainability. I would be like to help bring this plan to fruition and represent my precinct in the various phases of the plan.

Some of the things I find important are...

- Supporting our public schools to allow for growth and equity.
- Increasing awareness of important public information and town business by making information available to all residents through multiple channels.
- Supporting the success of existing and new local businesses in Winchester.
- Improvement in walkability to public schools in specific areas within precinct 3 by adding and/or widening sidewalks and traffic calming measures.

I support the ballot question regarding the flood mitigation project, which will remove many homes from the floodplain and enable the Muraco school to be rebuilt when the town is able to embark on that necessary plan. The Muraco School Immediate Repairs are important since these improvements will enable the students and staff to be in safe space with heat and updated electric until the school can be rebuilt.

Robin Vos*

I have greatly enjoyed representing Precinct 3 for the last three years at Town Meeting. The past year has shown us what a difference a supportive and caring community makes, and I hope you will allow me to continue serving as your voice in local town government.

My children attend Lincoln Elementary and McCall Middle Schools. Like many parents, we have struggled during the pandemic. I am committed to supporting our schools, and our town, as we rebuild in a post-COVID era. Over the years, I have learned invaluable lessons through volunteering in classrooms and with the Lincoln School Parents' Association, including as Grants chair and a fifth grade committee co-chair. I have also coached youth soccer, am a volunteer at the Jenks Center, and currently sit on the Board of Trustees at the Winchester Community Music School.

I believe the critical thinking skills provided to me by my scientific background as well as the connections I have made within our community will serve me well in representing Precinct 3 on issues such as

- Maintaining strong schools, including supporting the needed repairs/replacement of both Lynch and Muraco schools
- Thoughtful development while maintaining historic character
- Supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion

I hope that you will consider voting for me on March 30. Thank you!

Charles Kelley

Susan McPhee*

sgmcphee@me.com

Community Activities

- Wright-Locke Farm, volunteer and board member
- Unitarian Church, active member and volunteer
- Energy Conservation Coordinator for Winchester
- Parent Lincoln School, McCall Middle School and Winchester High School graduates

Candidate Statement

Having moved to Winchester for the community, schools, neighborhoods and trees seventeen years ago, I still place a high value on all these qualities. People move to Winchester for the same reasons today. I participate in Town Meeting in an effort to protect and enhance these qualities. Other priorities for me are Wright-Locke Farm and sustainability. The addition of Wright-Locke Farm as a hub of activity in Winchester has been a terrific evolution and a credit to the town. Increasing focus on issues of sustainability, environment and climate change is also a priority for me. Addressing town issues, both near term and long term, while balancing fiscal responsibility and minimizing the burden for tax payers are the lenses through which I examine the issues put before town meeting.