

## **Precinct 2 Town Meeting Candidates**

**Eight to be elected for 3 years, ten candidates on the ballot**

**One to be elected for 1 year, two candidates on the ballot** (M. Blumsack and J. Dong)

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

(\* indicates incumbent)

**Jian Liu\***

**Kristine Kamikawa\***

[kristine@kamikawa.us](mailto:kristine@kamikawa.us)

### **Community Activities**

School - Room Parent, Box Tops Coordinator, Spirit Wear Coordinator, School Directory Coordinator, Classroom Activities Volunteer, 5th Grade Memory Book Committee

Leader, Library Volunteer, Girl Scout Leader

Church - Religious Education Committee Leader (2yrs), Youth Advisory Committee, Fundraising Committee (7yrs)

Town Government: Town Meeting Member (3yrs)

### **Candidate Statement**

**What Winchester issues do you think are most important?**

- Swanton St/Washington St. Property Development Plan
- Pedestrian safety
- Welcoming/ease of new businesses coming to town

**Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?**

The Swanton St/Washington St. Property Development Plan is what I feel most passionate about now because of our time limitations. I would love to see this project move forward with 40B housing and a space for small businesses/retail. However, in order to stay in "safe harbor" and have control over the project, we need to make this a priority.

**What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?** I think Winchester does a great job maintaining our roads in winter. The plowing and salting are great! However, the DPW can't do everything. I think the townspeople need to take on more accountability in making sure sidewalks are clear and safe for our kids to get to school and all other pedestrians and four legged friends, young and old, to get safely to their destinations.

**Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?** I do. I think it is very important to preserve the historical buildings in town and restoring the Carriage House to give it new purpose is a great idea.

**Colin White\***

[colin.a.white@gmail.com](mailto:colin.a.white@gmail.com)

**Community Activities**

- Town Meeting member since 2018.
- WPS Parent since 2009.
- Winchester Youth Baseball volunteer.
- Volunteer and donor to many other community organizations and activities.

**Candidate Statement**

**What Winchester issues do you think are most important?**

- Providing a safe, effective public school system for our children and educators.
- Ensuring that seniors do not have to move out of Winchester due to rising property taxes and other costs.
- Ensuring that housing options are available for our children and young families.
- Finding ways to encourage commercial development and build the commercial tax base while retaining Winchester's small-town feel.

**Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?**

Winchester residents have historically come from a variety of ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds, but that balance has shifted over time. I am committed to keeping Winchester a desirable, inclusive community that attracts diverse group of residents.

**What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?**

Winchester attracts a diverse population of people who hold many different points of view. Unfortunately, some groups have taken it upon themselves to spread misinformation about town initiatives and activities to sway people to their point of view. In response, the town has taken steps to improve communication about the operation of town government and I support and applaud that effort.

**Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?**

At the current time I am not convinced that the financial impact of this project is warranted given the other more pressing WPS-related expenditures that are coming down the pike, like the rebuilding of the Lynch and Muraco schools.

**Catherine EA Curtis\***

[ccurtis@verizon.net](mailto:ccurtis@verizon.net)

**Community Activities:**

Town Meeting Member 2012-present  
Swim Winchester Board member 2014-present

**Candidate Statement**

**What Winchester issues do you think are most important?**

Fiscal prudence, affordable housing, school quality, safety, inclusiveness.

**Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?**

I think the quality of our schools is the most important. Winchester should continue to support education and wellness for our youth.

**What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?**

Winchester is a fantastic community! It has a wonderful sense of community, support for its schools, a beautiful downtown, and lots of community volunteer groups. I would love to see a more vibrant downtown, more pedestrian/biking infrastructure, and more variety in housing stock so that our young people could afford to buy and seniors can stay in town when they are ready to down-size.

**Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?**

I have concerns about the cost of this renovation. Since there is a historical preservation goal, maybe Winchester could pursue grants to reduce cost? I hope that alternatives will be adequately considered (such as renovating Parkhurst, administrative space at the new Lynch school, or sharing the costs of the Carriage house restoration with another group).

**Stephanie Zaremba\***

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**Community Activities:**

- Current Town Meeting Member
- Residents for Waterfield Facts, Campaign Chair
- Member of the Waterfield Lot Task Force
- Muraco Elementary Room Parent
- League of Women Voters Member
- Athena health Women's Leadership Forum, Co-Chair

**Candidate Statement**

**What Winchester issues do you think are most important?**

- DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) and social justice so that Winchester is welcoming to all, and so that our government represents all
- Supporting and continually improving our top-notch public education system
- Meeting our affordable housing obligations

**Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is our position on that issue?**

I am most passionate about DEI and social justice, especially in our schools. I will always vote in favor of policies that promote accessibility, create more diversity in Town government, and support our children in their understanding and pursuit of a more just community.

**What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?**

Winchester is an incredible town. Our government and institutions foster a close-knit community. Our schools are of the highest quality. Everyone at Town Hall is responsive and cares deeply for our residents. Our public works and services are reliable and high-quality. Our government, whether volunteer or employed, works very well in maintaining these benefits. We have two areas where we could improve:

1. Communication and engagement. Town Meeting created a communication study committee in 2021 in recognition of this issue. As residents, our lives are ever-busy, but mechanisms for engagement and discussion are (surprisingly!) harder to come by in the digital age. I look forward to working on ways to improve how residents stay up to date and engage with town government.
2. Financing continued improvement. Winchester lacks the commercial tax base that other towns enjoy, and there are limited opportunities to change that. The costs to maintain the things we love about and need in this town are going to often outstrip our annual revenue. We need to do a better job being honest about that, weighing hard trade-offs, and letting voters decide when tax overrides are necessary and desired.

**Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?**

I voted in favor of Article 28 in 2021 Fall Town Meeting to appropriate money for architectural and engineering design services for the Carriage House renovation associated with the school's Central Office Relocation Study. My vote was based on the understanding that even if we do not locate the Central Office there, the Town cannot avoid the expense to rehabilitate the Carriage House at some point. And with that being the case, if the Carriage House space is available, I think it would be a good location for the Central Office.

**Jeffrey J. Dean\***

**Edward R. Levesque\***

[ed@runfish.com](mailto:ed@runfish.com)

**Community Activities**

Current Town Meeting Member

Former member: Muraco School Mentor Committee

**Candidate Statement**

**What Winchester issues do you think are most important?** (In no particular order)

- School renovations (Lynch and Muraco)
- Fiscal responsibility
- Mental health for our students

**Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?**

(In no particular order)

School renovations: The town has been fortunate with the staggered nature of the debt exclusion overrides and maintaining our bond rating while the EFPBC juggles band aids and significant capital renovations for our schools. The Lynch and Muraco schools are running out of band aid fixes, and our community deserves the same caliber of infrastructure all over town. I look forward to well-researched, logical proposals for both and will support these projects.

Mental health: Many studies and articles exist that are sounding alarms about the mental health crisis in school aged children, which has been increasing in recent years and exacerbated by the pandemic. I will support further town sponsored actions to evaluate the need for and administer various approaches to address this complex issue, including more support for our students and the town overall.

Fiscal responsibility: We have a finance committee that works very hard to project outcomes as best as they can with the information they are offered. We need to avoid an attitude of “we must have [this item] at all/any cost now” or fall into the ‘sunken cost fallacy’ (exacerbated when volunteers are trying to meet deadlines), regardless of the committee’s recommendation- this is not sustainable, and devalues the committee’s work.

**What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?**

What we do well: Winchester’s main ‘business’ in a sense is its education: and we do very well with a low commercial tax base in terms of the quality of our education.

What might be improved: when it comes to fiscal responsibility, we need to pass legislation with as much reasonable data as we can and be ready to push back and consider wants vs needs, or ask for more options, data or time if needed. There may be other, greater needs, not fully researched and/or offered as a plan yet.

We also should be ready to simply say “not today”. If short term consulting or other measures can bridge a perceived gap until we have more facts on return on investment, I support the short term higher cost to determine our long term needs and consider other priorities.

**Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?**

We will need swing space for the Lynch project. Let’s assume that will total about 2 years’ need.

- If we leave the Central Office at Parkhurst and bring in 8 modular classrooms (plus site improvements to support them), it will cost ~\$3MM. We get 2 years use from rented modulares that are not for post swing space use (and not desirable as sublet if we bought them). We get no upgrade or other use at the Carriage House or Parkhurst.
- The Carriage House, if renovated, can serve as permanent home for Central Office with no expected major capital costs for 20 years. It would cost ~\$6MM. We’d have Parkhurst vacant and rentable space. EFPBC feels conservatively they can make back the cost of renovations in 11-13 years. And it would still be available for rental beyond that.
- Therefore, I’d support the Carriage House renovation option, assuming the EFPBC can present favorable data, as it provides multiple uses beyond swing space, would help defray

costs and pay for itself and offer more use, and be more structurally sound beyond a probable modular class lifespan of 20 years.

## **Martha S. Hoyt**

[msh0001@mac.com](mailto:msh0001@mac.com)

### **Community Activities**

Parent of Lincoln Elementary School student (3rd grade);

### **Candidate Statement**

#### **What Winchester issues do you think are most important?**

Winchester, as many small towns in Massachusetts has critical challenges with affordable housing, equal access to educational opportunities, increasing racial and ethnic diversity and long-term energy sustainability.

**Of those important issues, which one do you feel most passionate about, and what is your position on that issue?** I am the most passionate about energy sustainability and participating in Winchester's future energy management. I feel strongly that we need to be planning for a future where our town can live efficiently, inexpensively and potentially independently from our failing state energy grid by encouraging and supporting residents with education and programs. My own home isn't well suited for solar due to its roof lines, but I'm keenly aware of other energy options such as hydro-electric and geo-thermal leveraging other tools including heat exchangers, etc. that could help my household as well as my neighborhood. I also feel that the town could do a better job with reuse and recycling, especially when it comes to the waste that comes from the frequent renovations and demolition I see around town. So much of that material is added to our landfills.

#### **What does Winchester do well and what might be improved?**

Winchester has a fantastic small town feel to it and it seems that many citizens want to keep it that way. We take pride in the town spaces and green areas and it's a beautiful and accessible place to live. My family's experience has been pretty good with the elementary and middle school education; however, we chose another path for high school education due to what we saw was a gap in opportunities. The gap is minimal support for students that were not in the honors and AP programs and also not requiring the formal support of IEP-type program, a middle-of-the-road, group that was left behind. With the high property-taxes and increasing property-tax revenues of the real estate boom, I believe we need to broaden the scope and definition of educational support, drive more active career mentoring, internships and choices for all high school groups and abilities.

#### **Do you support the proposal to build a stand-alone administrative building for the Winchester Public Schools, to be developed by restoring the Carriage House adjacent to the Sanborn House?**

I would like to know more about the other competing funding requests around town. I know that the school administration was done at Lynch, so I need to have a deeper understanding of the Lynch plans before answering.

**Robert Pace**

**Daniel Nakamoto**

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**Precinct 2 Town Meeting Candidates**

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**Michelle Blumsack**

**Jinghui Dong**