

2009 Voters Guide



The League of Women Voters of Greater Hartford

www.lwvgh.org



Denise Berard Hall	Republican
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Biographical Information:

Hall is a SVP and manager in Webster Bank's Treasury Department. A Conard High School graduate, she received her BA from UCONN and an MBA from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. She serves on the Town of West Hartford's Risk Management Advisory Board, formerly serving on the Investment Advisory Committee. She was the treasurer of the West Hartford Veterans Memorial Committee, former President of the Board of Trustees of Mercy Housing & Shelter, current member of its finance committee and associate member of the Government Finance Officer's Association.

Response to Questions

1. Which West Hartford services can be reduced and still be viable (assume no increase in state aid)?

In times of economic slowdown, businesses don't stop providing customers with their products and services; they find ways to deliver the services in a more cost effective manner. West Hartford should not reduce its services, it should analyze and implement cost saving solutions to mitigate rising costs. Through my involvement with the Risk Management Advisory Board, I have seen how the Town saved \$165,000 in insurance premiums through reduction in the number of town vehicles, compliance with property loss control recommendations and commitment to safety compliance. I would advocate for an environment of continuous improvement and efficiency town wide to reduce and control costs without impacting services.

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2. West Hartford and Bloomfield partner to operate the Health Department. What additional regional cooperative efforts could ease our economic situation?

West Hartford is the envy of many communities for our physical and human resources, level of professionalism in town administration, and overall economic strength. Unfortunately, this makes any regional cooperative efforts difficult as there is little that a neighboring town can offer us in reciprocity. Continued cooperative efforts with federal, state and local law enforcement could, however, help the town fight crime, which in turn promotes a better business environment and improved economic results.

3. What are the biggest challenges and opportunities of our changing demographics?

A town's changing demographic makeup is something that can't be controlled, but must be forecast, implications assessed, and possible outcomes projected. Comprehensive plans to react when there are shifts that cause a greater demand for services from any segment, such as senior citizens or returning veterans, or create a change in school populations, will ensure that the Town is prepared to react accordingly, without disrupting services or school systems.

4. If elected, what initiative would be your top priority?

My top priority as a town councilor would be to control costs and spending so that each of the four generations of my family currently living in town can afford to remain here. I want West Hartford to maintain the attributes that my family valued when we decided to live here: the best neighborhood schools, an emphasis on public safety, fiscally responsible with services and opportunities for every age group and business to thrive.

Issues at a Glance Grid Questions

1. Should West Hartford provide more incentives to assist and encourage small businesses? **YES**
2. Would you support reducing activities at senior centers to save money? **NO**
3. Should the town provide additional safe bike lanes? **YES**
4. Would you support an ordinance requiring developers to replant a tree for every tree removed in West Hartford? **NO**
5. Do you support prioritizing energy efficiency upgrades in the capital improvement budget? **YES**