

2009 Voters Guide



The League of Women Voters of Greater Hartford

www.lwvgh.org

Responses by Question:

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

Steve Adler

There are many cost savings opportunities in this area. Connecticut has 169 government entities which means there are a number of administrative services that are duplicated throughout the state. This gives West Hartford a huge opportunity to partner with neighboring towns using municipal shared agreements with such back office functions as animal control, building code enforcement, tax assessors and human resources. For the record I am strongly against sharing such services as police and fire departments and education. Currently many Connecticut municipalities have implemented successful regional cooperative relationships with their neighboring towns and are now enjoying the cost saving benefits from these smart decisions.

Denise Berard Hall

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.

Tim Brennan

We should continue to explore a regional energy manager to further reduce energy costs and to implement the action items in the Comprehensive Energy Plan. An energy manager, like an IT department for computers, is necessary given our nation's sweeping changes in energy. If accomplished at a regional level, we will save on our tremendous energy costs, share expenses and benefit from experiences of other towns.

Shari Cantor

Regional participation also includes MDC and CRRA. We purchase energy and health insurance in consortiums to reduce costs. Service to residents and cost are always our primary concern. We look at opportunities with other municipalities and when appropriate we do a cost benefit of regional efforts. If it will benefit our residents, we will pursue regionalization to provide services at reduced costs.

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Judy Casperson

I will work towards any type of government partnership that will help us save money for our taxpayers without reducing the quality of our services. Based on my business background, I believe that some efficiencies can be achieved by reducing administrative overhead and combining bidding and procurement functions with neighboring towns and regional organizations.

Justin Clark

Regional cooperation has its benefits, but as we have learned with regional entities like the MDC, it also has its drawbacks. On the council, I will fight any effort to regionalize or otherwise dismantle our neighborhood school system. This crown jewel of West Hartford needs to remain under local control, which is under threat from the state legislature and its racial imbalance law. This law improperly attempts to assign children to schools based solely on their race and I will fight it.

Leon Davidoff

Regional partnerships can assist municipalities by eliminating duplication of programs and services. When specific cooperative opportunities present themselves, I will continue to evaluate whether there will be a significant cost savings by forming a mutually beneficial arrangement with regional partners without jeopardizing local control.

Rob Durbin

State and federal funding exists for regional services such as job training and housing initiatives. We should pursue such initiatives provided they are cost-effective and do not create an unnecessary, additional layer of government. Further, West Hartford must remain as autonomous as possible and avoid entangling itself in complicated, long-term commitments.

Scott Slifka

West Hartford has long been a leader in regional/cooperative efforts that reduce costs to our taxpayers. In addition to the Health District, our membership in CRCOG enables us to save money through regional bidding for products and services. Any additional such efforts that reduce costs to our taxpayers without sacrificing quality of service or local control should be considered. Public works, employee management and investment functions present specific regional savings opportunities that we're presently pursuing.

Rob Sisk

As MDC clearly demonstrates, not all regional cooperative efforts work in favor of West Hartford. Each must be judged on its individual merits and on any future limitations it might impose on our ability to independently address the serious challenges we face.

Joe Verrengia

As a Commissioner of the Metropolitan District Commission I believe there are cooperative opportunities within the MDC particularly in the area of public works. I will continue to explore other cooperative opportunities especially now that we are in this very difficult economic climate.

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Joe Visconti

Regionalizing a Vacuum/Bag-it collection program utilizing a smaller group of independent leaf collection vendors along with Public Works vehicles can lower costs to participating communities. Armed with GPS tracking devices on all participating vehicles coordinated with the public online and employing energy efficient equipment, the opportunity is ripe to increase efficiencies in environmental recycling and increase public safety while providing support for labor intensive services to the public.