

2009 Voters Guide



The League of Women Voters of Greater Hartford

www.lwvgh.org

Responses by Question:

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

Steve Adler

To make West Hartford affordable for everyone! With Connecticut unemployment at 9% and investment and income levels eroding, the town needs to become more focused to managing our taxpayer's dollars. We can do this through managing our operating costs with stronger discipline, negotiating more equitable employment contracts, implementing municipal cost sharing agreements and institute a pay of performance program with all town employees. In addition I want to propose the creation of a West Hartford Economic Development Commission to identify new industrial and technology business ventures to grow our tax grand list to reduce the tax burden on residents.

Denise Berard Hall

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.

Tim Brennan

While I hope to continue my work for the Public Safety Committee and West Hartford's newly formed Veteran's Commission, you have my promise to push to improve and reduce our energy usage. I am proud that the Town Council unanimously adopted Connecticut's first Comprehensive Energy Plan. Every dollar we save on energy helps to relieve a burden to taxpayers and supports our police and fire departments, our schools and all the other town services that we cherish. We have saved over \$1 Million on energy costs and I know through more effort, we can double that next year.

Shari Cantor

In today's economic environment we have real financial concerns and challenges. There will be little or no revenue growth in the next year. Therefore, maintaining West Hartford's quality of life is a growing challenge. Our residents increasingly turn to town services in these financially stressed times. Our focus over the last couple of years has been to streamline town operations and reduce costs while maintaining most town services and a top quality education system. My top priority has and will

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continue to be to maintain the enviable quality of life in West Hartford while being as cost efficient as possible.

Judy Casperson

I want to work to ensure that West Hartford remains affordable for our senior citizens and attractive to young families. I have said that after our years of travel, my family was blessed to find West Hartford. My husband and I plan to retire here and we hope that our children will return here to raise their families. That will mean maintaining our strong schools and managing our taxes for seniors and those on fixed incomes.

Justin Clark

My top priority would be to fight to keep West Hartford a great place to live. I have lived in West Hartford for most of my life and my family has lived here for three generations. Throughout my childhood in West Hartford, I took advantage of all of the opportunities that this town has to offer. I was also blessed to live in a town with my grandparents and lots of close relatives. I want to serve you on town council to ensure that my kids and your kids grow up in that same type of environment.

Leon Davidoff

Keeping West Hartford an affordable, safe and terrific place to live, work and raise a family. To accomplish this, I would:

- Examine diligently how we spend your tax dollars, and make fiscally conservative decisions.
- Provide strong support for all public safety departments by providing the best resources to respond to all public safety situations.
- Support educational excellence in neighborhood schools.
- Encourage economic development that will grow our tax base, provide employment opportunities, and add to the vibrancy of our community.
- Continue to be a “Voice of Reason” at the Council table.

Rob Durbin

Providing more and higher quality services to our residents without raising taxes by continuing to find (1) additional sources of state and federal funding and (2) safe, reasonable ways to lower the cost of services. West Hartford must continue to attract young professionals and families. At the same time, we must control spending and taxes to ensure that West Hartford remains affordable for all residents.

Scott Slifka

Affordability, through property tax reform and mandate relief. The property tax structure places a disproportionate burden on seniors and those with fixed or limited incomes. Furthermore, it limits the Town’s ability to administer our own affairs. We must work with the State on the long-term solutions to this dilemma - obtaining our full share of State funding and relief from unfunded mandates. This year I led efforts on behalf of Connecticut mayors to eliminate or suspend mandates – requirements imposed by the State for which it provides no financial assistance. These cost West Hartford alone \$20-30 million annually.

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Rob Sisk

The next two years will be critical as we again face revaluation, the next round of collective-bargaining negotiations and the threat of mandated “gerrymandering” of our schools. Regaining control of the budget is clearly the highest priority. If we are to disarm the impending benefits time-bomb, we must replace the programs we offer to future employees with ones that are sustainable. Meanwhile, every employee and department should be objectively evaluated for performance, cost-competitiveness and accountability and we must fight to protect the integrity of both the property tax system and our schools from the divisive meddling of state bureaucrats.

Joe Verrengia

Without question my top priority will be to balance a budget that protects the integrity of our town and services at a price that our residents can afford. The downward spiral in our economy has made balancing a budget very difficult this year and I expect the next budget to be even more challenging. With your vote and continued support for the past five years I pledge to rise to the challenges that lie ahead and to represent you in a manner that you’ve come to expect.

Joe Visconti

My Major initiative would be to accelerate funding for many of our Capital Improvement Projects such as pool repairs, energy efficient upgrades, street resurfacing and curb installations. Working with the MDC and their Clean Water Campaign as well as the State of Connecticut and the Federal Government with their available grants, West Hartford can take advantage of historically low Municipal interest rates with its AAA Bond Rating and retain its charm and property values. To keep taxes affordable by increasing funding for Capital Improvements, streamlining employee pay, pension and benefit compensation must be our top priority.