

2018 Amherst Election Guides

Election Guides for the State and Town Elections, November 6, 2018



Absentee and early voting:

Early voting continues from 8 am to 4:30 pm through Friday, November 2, at the Town Clerk's office. Absentee ballot requests must be received by the Town Clerk by noon on November 5. For more information, call the Town Clerk's office at 259-3035.

LWVMA Election Guide for the Massachusetts General Election, November 6, 2018:

informedvoterma.org

Information compiled by the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts.

Election Day: Polls open 7 am to 8 pm:

Precinct	District	Polling Location
1	1	North Zion Korean Church 1193 North Pleasant Street
2	2	North Fire Station, 603 East Pleasant Street
3	1	Immanuel Lutheran Church 867 North Pleasant Street
4	3	Bangs Community Center, 70 Boltwood Walk
5	4	Bangs Community Center, 70 Boltwood Walk
6	2	Fort River School, 70 South East Street
7	5	Crocker Farm School, 280 West Street
8	5	Munson Memorial Library, 1046 South East Street
9	4	Wildwood School, 71 Strong Street
10	3	Bangs Community Center, 70 Boltwood Walk

LWVA Election Guide for the Amherst Town Council Election, November 6, 2018

CANDIDATES FOR DISTRICT 1	What should Town Council do to develop a diverse and representative pool of qualified candidates for the Planning Committee, the Zoning Board of Appeals, and other committees that it will appoint?	How would you prioritize and fund Amherst's capital project needs? In particular, would you support an override?	Specify one or more initiatives that you will support to increase affordable housing in Amherst.	How would you address the effects of declining school-age populations and charter schools on the Amherst school systems?	How can Amherst become a municipal leader for local efforts to mitigate climate change?
Sharon Povinelli 493 Montague Rd Owner/Manager sharonfornorthamherst.org	I believe it's critical that our government encourage viable, meaningful participation from our residents. The new Town Charter supports this by the creation of a Participatory Budgeting Commission and, via the Town Manager, a Resident's Advisory Committee.	Resolving the Elementary School infrastructure needs of our community is my top priority for our capital projects. A debt exclusion override and a municipal bond are supportable options to begin to address this and the other needed projects.	I support the East Street School project. Development of a 40R district creates a Smart Growth Overlay District (SGOD) providing additional housing for an underserved population, revitalizing a dormant/underused building and triggers non earmarked state funding and school funding.	Amherst will be more attractive to young families by increasing our starter home stock, slowing the increase of residential property taxes and providing the best facilities we can for the education of our students.	I strongly support Community Choice Energy (Plus). This, combined with the Net Zero Building bylaw will promote Amherst as a forward acting community significantly engaged in climate mitigation.
Cathy Schoen 519 Montague Rd Retired/Economist cathyschoen.org	The Council should publicize openings in advance and invite people with diverse experiences or willingness-to-learn to apply for Boards/Committees. For Planning/Zoning, experience includes: architectural designs that enhance a town's character, economic development, net-zero energy, farming, affordable housing, and innovative cluster/co-housing.	Amherst's major projects' backlog totals over \$100 million, without roads/sidewalks. I would prioritize by urgency (SCHOOLS FIRST) and minimize tax impacts by requiring cost-effective designs, phasing and long-term bond financing. BEFORE override discussions, I would inform residents about choices/timing.	Develop affordable housing on the East Street School site; identify sites for cluster/denser affordable, energy-efficient housing; strengthen zoning by-laws to require affordable units in new multi-unit developments; and UMass public-private-partnership expansion of on-campus housing to reduce in-town rent pressure.	I support replacing/rebuilding aging elementary schools pursuant to an educationally/fiscally sound assessment of classroom-space across preK-12; encouraging curriculum competitive with Charter schools, particularly language offerings; marketing Amherst schools' strengths; and securing full-funding of State Charter-offsets and fixing the Charter formula.	Amherst can lead by: implementing our net-zero energy policy for new municipal buildings; expanding net-zero-energy design to major library and private developments; authorizing exploration of a 3-town (Amherst-Northampton-Pelham) initiative to pool community electrical purchases and redirect supply to renewable sources.
Sarah Swartz 11 Meadow St Farmer sarahswartzdistrict1.org	We need to contact leaders of various communities to recruit candidates. The Council must provide with child care and transportation costs, offer varying meeting times and adopt policies to shorten meeting times. Candidates for important boards must be interviewed.	All projects must be prioritized by the Council. I cannot commit to support every capital project without studying first. I'm generally opposed to passing an override. However, I will enter each new project with an open mind.	I support the initiatives put forward by the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. I also support strategies to fund these initiatives by broadening the tax base: increasing industry, non-academic business related jobs, and businesses that meet people's essential needs.	It is important for the schools to offer a variety of new programs and curriculums that meet the needs of a majority of students. Increasing housing for lower and moderate income families would help the two maintain student enrollment.	The Council needs to work to become a Community Choice Energy (CCE) town. This includes collaborating with public and private groups to begin treehouse gas reducing features. I support the Zero Energy Bylaw and guidelines in the Paris Accords.
Nicola Usher 37 Harris St Academic Advisor votenicola.org	Council members must be committed to hearing and representing viewpoints that differ from their own. One potential strategy for boards and committees: anonymous applications that allow councilors to review potential appointees free of personal association/connection to known perspectives.	Our elementary school buildings are the top priority. I would support an override, as Amherst voters did, twice. There are several other important capital projects, which we're not going to be able to fund without revenue from commercial development.	I would like to see the council explore development of a 40R (Smart Growth Overlay) district. I recognize that finding a suitable location and garnering community support may be challenging.	Work with the SC on effective information collection from families that leave the district. The council needs to lead Amherst in a difficult, data-driven conversation about whether we can afford to maintain 5 school buildings without compromising educational excellence.	The net-zero energy bylaw is a step in the right direction. Although it's in early stages, I hope community choice energy comes to be. I would like to see more aggressive efforts toward reducing reliance on motor vehicles.
CANDIDATES FOR DISTRICT 2					
Patricia DeAngelis 21 Ward St Retired teacher/educational consultant patforamherst.org	Open the definition of "qualified"; step out of the usual recruitment channels; include citizens with direct interest in/or impact from decisions; clarify tasks and time requirements; be open to changing meeting times and locations to accommodate members; provide childcare. Listen.	Reevaluate each capital project in a context of citizenizing needs and available funding; consider renovation before new construction where possible. I support an override when/if other options will not work and the request is in context of all current projects.	I support expansion of Amherst Community Land Trust; zoning changes that increase affordable housing requirements; inclusionary development where market rate and affordable housing options occur together in the same "neighborhood" and the continued development of 40R Districts.	Investigate the "decline" to determine if this is a trend or a point in a cycle; establish a dual language program in Spanish; investigate magnet school possibilities; and create options that make housing affordable for young families.	Our net-zero bylaw, actively pursuing Western Mass Community Choice Energy, and supporting Valley Bike Share are good starts. We need to support expansion of PVRTA routes and review building/zoning regulations to assure development is based on green and sustainable practices.
Lynn Griesemer 83 Flat Hills Rd Executive Director UMass Donahue Institute (retired) lynnfordistrict2.org	By reaching out to communities not always in the town government loop. My experience with the Amherst Survival Center has helped me learn about ways to reach diverse communities, and connect stakeholders with opportunities to make their voices heard.	As chair of the fire station/DPW committee I've supported a balanced capital plan that also includes the schools and library. Using existing reserves and maximizing state funding we can limit an override, but some additional tax dollars will be needed.	One of our best options is continued emphasis on mixed-income projects in both the Master Plan and the Zoning Bylaw. The Town Council will have to act on both, and I will bring this priority to the Council.	Nearly all communities face declining school-aged populations. There are good models for sharing certain school facilities while still maintaining a small-school atmosphere, and Amherst should continue to learn from other communities and apply those lessons here.	I was part of the group that revised our successful Zero Energy bylaw, and I believe it combines ambitious goals with practical solutions. I'd like to see both our cooperative process and our sustainable solution be models for other communities.
Victor A. Nunez Ortiz 5 Blackberry Lane Veteran advocate vote4vic.org	The most important thing our Town Council need to establish a diverse pool is to outreach to profit, non-profit and town departments in order to attract and identify qualified individuals to serve on respective committees.	The school project and the south Amherst fire Station should be at the top of our capital spending priorities. I believe both projects deserve equal attention, as education and public safety are key elements for a vibrant, welcoming, safe communities.	An initiative I will support is an inclusionary housing policy that would require developers and current landlords to provide units that are affordable to low and moderate income residents and hold them accountable.	Establishing a collaborative relationship with the school committee will be essential in advocating the needs of our public education systems. I will commit to being and advocate to our elected officials to address and voice our concerns.	One of the ways we can make an instant impact is to continue to educate our residents of the progress made to reach 100% renewable energy through the collaboration of Northampton and Pelham with Community Choice Energy initiative.
Peter Vickery 71 Cherry Ln Attorney votevickery.org	(1) Ensure that meeting schedules accommodate people with young children, people with jobs, and people who use public transport; and (2) treat committee members with respect, value their work, and actively welcome diversity across a variety of dimensions.	Top priority: building a new elementary school, per the clear wishes of the voters, possibly with a grant from Massachusetts School Building Authority. No, absent new and compelling evidence that an override is absolutely necessary, I would not support one.	I will support: (1) the East Street School project; and (2) the creation of a chapter 40R district in Amherst that would allow for denser development than is currently allowed under the Zoning Bylaw.	I support revising and expanding Inter-district School Choice and the METCO program so as to attract students from other communities, in particular Springfield and Holyoke. I also support revising the charter-school law to end the cutting the sending district's funding.	Amherst can serve as a model of climate resilience via permeable paving surfaces, rain gardens, green roofs, and reducing zoning/permitting impediments to solar and photovoltaic energy production. We also need to take a lead in encouraging micro-hydro electricity production.

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