

Candidates for Town-Wide Office, 2017 Amherst, MA

Position	Your name as it appears on the ballot	Incumbent?	Years Residency	What interests and concerns motivated you to run for this town office? Please touch on at least one major issue facing Amherst today
Town Meeting Moderator, 1 year term. Vote for one.				
	James Pistrang	X	29	New England Town Meeting is grass-roots democracy at its best, encouraging the participation and engagement of a large number of citizens. Town Meeting must adhere to rules, standards and traditions in order to operate effectively. I hope to continue using my skills and expertise to guide Town Meeting in a clear, nonpartisan, and effective manner.
Select Board, 3 year term. Vote for not more than two.				
	Robert Greeney		23	Roads and sidewalks, police and fire – taxes - leadership, vision, voices – Master Plan, Appropriate diverse development, family friendly historic neighborhoods, large research university, Major capital projects - Select Board-Town Meeting co-ordination communication co-operation. This is Amherst – what’s not to love – let’s unite – left and right – black and white. Work together, make it better – add voice and vision to our collective wisdom.
	Constance Kruger	X	28	I am a planning professional with a focus on affordable housing. I am running for my second three-year term and I bring municipal and state government experience to the position. I have shown leadership and integrity as a local official, and I would bring stability to the town in the event that the form of government changes as a result of the the charter commission process. I care deeply about social equity issues and am committed to continue to make Amherst a safe and welcoming community for all.
	Andrew J. Steinberg	X	36	Amherst needs continuity in government. The death of John Musante created an unexpected challenge. The Select Board worked as one to assure continuity. As the Board considers the many matters that we confront, I listen and consider all perspectives, use my experience and knowledge, provide leadership, and proceed responsibly. My commitment has always been to well-managed government, enlarging our tax base with appropriate development in order to continue essential services, and having transparent and collaborative process. Those values assure the quality of life that brought all of us to Amherst. www.andyforamherst.org
School Committee, 3 year term. Vote for one.				
	Peter M. Demling		9	True public service requires hard work, an open mind, and actively rising above one's own personal preferences, in order to make long-term decisions that benefit all. As a parent in the Amherst schools for the past nine years, I'm running because I'm grateful for what my children have received, and will work to ensure all children have this same access. I'm an experienced, proven advocate for special education, parent voice and teacher voice at all school levels, able to bring people together around a shared vision. https://demlingforsc.org/
	Jennifer Shiao Page		9	I'm running for School Committee to do my part to ensure that Amherst schools are a welcoming, inclusive, and challenging place for every student, according to their needs and abilities - academic, social, and cultural. I am adept at bringing people with diverse opinions together, which is more important now than ever. Whatever the outcome of the referendum vote, we will need to come together to move forward. As your voice on the school committee, I will work hard to achieve our common goal - high quality public education. http://jenniferpageamherst.com
School Committee, 2 year term. Vote for one.				
	Robert Greeney		23	The proposal to building two co-located, elementary schools at the current Wildwood site has been controversial and divisive. If the town wide referendum on March 28 fails to pass the School Committee will need to build a plan for meeting the needs of both the Fort River and the Wildwood elementary schools. Parents, educators, administrators, and professionals together must find short run and long run options for improving condition for students and teachers. Leadership, listening, creativity, open-mindedness, and inclusion will be needed. I am willing and able to help.

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	Eric T. Nakajima		34	Amherst has excellent schools with talented, committed staff, parents and students. Unfortunately, the school committee has not provided an environment of stability, leadership and community engagement that matches that excellence. I am working collaboratively with the interim Superintendent and my colleagues on the school committee to improve how we do our work. This coming year, that should include selecting a new superintendent and a community-based strategic planning process for the district that builds trust, engagement and a shared vision. I will also advocate for full state funding of education. http://www.ericnakajima.com/
Jones Library Trustee, 3 year term. Vote for not more than two.				
	Cathy Axelson-Berry		11	I'm appalled by the trustees' plan to gut almost half of the iconic Jones, demolish its 1990s addition, replace it with a huge, expensive, generic-modern, coldly-corporate edifice to wasted space. For 46 years, I've loved the cozy Jones, and as Trustee will fight for meaningful public participation; for green, sustainable, place-based architecture; improved access to computers, information and community; and allocating tax-dollars wisely. Although it's legal to increase property taxes (and rents) every few years, is it wise? Protect, upgrade our libraries, and support an affordable Amherst. http://saveourlibrary.net/
	Chris Hoffmann	X	27	I have been a strong supporter of the library and its staff during my terms as trustee. It's amazing to see all the services it provides to our community. But there are problems with its physical condition. I am committed to seeking a renovation that addresses the needs and desires of its patrons at a cost that our taxpayers can afford.
	Terry S. Johnson		33	Serving as a teacher from preschool through high school, I have seen how libraries can improve the lives of children and families. Yet I cannot support the expensive Jones Building Project. It demolishes the 1993 addition and guts most of the 1928 historic structure. Our entire community needs to develop a creative yet fiscally responsible plan for the three library system that considers all existing town services and buildings. We must work on ADA compliance and provide outreach programs. Constructing a large expensive edifice is not what the town needs. https://www.facebook.com/terry.s.johnson.587
	Alexandra J. Lefebvre	X	16	I will continue working collaboratively with the public, Trustees, and library staff to ensure our libraries serve the entire community's needs. I believe community and democracy are strengthened when all citizens feel welcome, have access to resources and services, and are able to engage in civil discourse. Now more than ever we must invest in libraries and I will work to ensure that the proposed renovation/expansion guarantees services for today and the future, is undertaken in a fiscally responsible manner, and maintains the historic 'homey feel' of the building.
Jones Library Trustee, 2 year term. Vote for one.				
	Lee Edwards	X	23	A Library is a community's cultural heart. The Jones Library should be a welcoming, accessible resource for everyone, whatever their age, economic position, or mobility status. A contemporary library must offer a range of services appropriate to its surroundings: circulating books and visual materials, of course, but also nurturing young people, offering ESL and computer instruction, providing community meeting spaces. The proposed Library renovation and expansion project will fulfill these needs and be a source of pride and intellectual sustenance as the 21st century advances.
	Edwin W. Wilfert		16	The Jones Library, unlike most free public libraries, was created as the Amherst version of a home library, and a place for all to share the town's cultural riches. With all its services, it still provides ambiance for young and old, alternative to the modern on-screen placelessness that increasingly commands and consumes us. My aim is to protect the heart of our cultural center, balancing our heritage of a democracy of books in a home-like setting with the library's twenty-first century needs.

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Housing Authority, 5 year term. Vote for one.				
	Michael A. Burkart		26	I support Amherst's commitment to public housing. Not everyone is financially able to own a home or pay market-rate rents, especially in an affluent community. Our community is facing increased needs for public housing at a time when funding for current and future needs is in doubt. I have consulted to public housing authorities in the past, and I want to support the AHA staff and tenants. I think the Commissioners can take leadership in planning how to meet the challenges facing public housing.
Redevelopment Authority, 5 year term. Vote for one.				
	L. Paige Wilder		18	I believe the best ideas for new development come from collaboration with community members and achieve broad-based community support. Redevelopment projects should be community centers and provide benefits to the community including: permanently affordable housing; affordable commercial rents; increased net tax revenues; and green space. Projects should be environmentally sustainable and preserve historic structures, as well as the character of Amherst. I am a founding member of the Coalition of Amherst Neighborhoods and the Amherst Community Land Trust and will work in support of healthy, affordable, sustainable neighborhoods.
Elector, Oliver Smith Will, 1 year term. Vote for one.				
	John Coull	X	43	I believe that the Smith Charities mission of promoting trade school and nursing education is valuable and appropriate. By being the Elector from Amherst, I can see that our town's young people have this help available to them.