

2013 Bloomfield VOTERS GUIDE
presented by League of Women Voters of Greater Hartford®

Town Council Candidates

Patrick A. DeLorenzo, Republican



Patrick is Treasurer for the Bloomfield Republican Town Committee. He was appointed by Town Council to serve on the Board of Assessment Appeals (BAA) 2009-2012. Prior to BAA, he was a member of the Ethics Committee. He was appointed to an open position on Town Council in June 2012. He sits on the Committee on Committees, Finance, and Administration and Education Committees. He continues to give back to the community by volunteering for the United Way Day of Caring.

He served on the Board of Directors for The Common at Sinnott Farm from 2007-2011. He received a Masters of Human Organization Science degree from

Villanova University and is employed by Cigna. Patrick is married to Ellen Moran.

1. If elected what would be your top three priorities?

- Lowering taxes on residents
- Economic development of Town Center and Cottage Grove Road to stimulate jobs for residents
- Dedicated Grant writer/Administrator position

2. Bloomfield has an extraordinary range of recreational assets which could attract people to Bloomfield and enhance its economic development. In addition to several large parks, including one with frontage on the Farmington River, Bloomfield will soon have the LaSalette Trail which will connect Bloomfield with the Metacomet Trail in Penwood Park (part of the National Trail System) and a section of the New England Greenway running from Tariffville to the Town Center. Would you promote these opportunities so that people both in town and out of town begin to use and appreciate them and, if so, in what way?

Answer: These are assets that make Bloomfield one of the most desirable locations to both live in and visit. Preserving and expanding the trails, Greenway and other recreational areas is paramount to our growth. As a minority Town Council member, I support promoting these assets. One way is through partnerships with Wintonbury Land Trust, TPZ Commission, and Conservation, Energy, Environment Commission. Their recommendations will be considered by Town Council in order to continue the successful acquisition and preservation of these areas for future generations. The minority party supported capital improvement projects for both the Greenway and Filley Park projects.

3. Bloomfield, like all other municipalities, is vulnerable to cuts from federal and state governments. How would you prioritize current programs and services. Would you favor tax increases over eliminating services?

Answer: Bloomfield has an impressive range of programs and services for our residents. I am very proud of our town Departments and staff and the work they do. During the budget hearings all services are reviewed. Eliminating services is never popular but neither are tax increases. The minority party fought for a zero tax increase in the proposed 2013/2014 budget without eliminating services but we were defeated. Residents have seen a mill rate increase for the last 4 years. We are carrying a large debt service that must be paid. One way to reduce the burden on

residents is to aggressively seek and apply for Federal and State Grants. We need to do a better job going after these funds to reduce the tax burden on residents.

4. *Wintonbury Mall has attracted several new businesses but there are still many empty retail spaces. What can the council do to help fill up empty storefronts and second floors?*

Answer: We need to do a better job attracting businesses. We must listen to the needs of business owners and then try to help. Development of the Town Center and Filley Park will help to attract new business and create jobs.

Joan A. Gamble, Democrat



Joan A. Gamble, I have lived my whole life in Bloomfield. I attended Bloomfield Public Schools and the University of Hartford, Hartford Art School, and the Hartt College of Music. I have a Bachelors degree in Art Education and a Masters in Art Education. I taught middle school art from 1969 till 2004 in East Hartford, retiring in 2004. I am a member of the Bloomfield Town Council and Sub-Committees; Land Use and Economic Development, Education and Administration, and Committee on Committees. I am also on the Board of Directors of the Greater Hartford Transit District, and a past B.E.S.T. evaluator for

the St. of Ct. I have donated my work as an artist to the Sacred Heart Church in Bloomfield for the past 17 years.

1. *If elected what would be your top three priorities?*

- To develop a prioritized list of Capitol improvements that the town's infrastructure must address.
- Address those needs by making the budget accomodate those needs without burdening the tax payers.
- Bring much needed attention to the Town Center by encouraging it as a destination.

2. *Bloomfield has an extraordinary range of recreational assets which could attract people to Bloomfield and enhance its economic development. In addition to several large parks, including one with frontage on the Farmington River, Bloomfield will soon have the LaSalette Trail which will connect Bloomfield with the Metacomet Trail in Penwood Park (part of the National Trail System) and a section of the New England Greenway running from Tariffville to the Town Center. Would you promote these opportunities so that people both in town and out of town begin to use and appreciate them and, if so, in what way? By connecting with the New England Greenway , Bloomfield is likely to enjoy the benefits of increased Economic growth from an increase in people from all areas using these recreational assets. We should address this opening of our doors by looking to the opportunities created and provide services that include a hotel, trasportation, tourist trade, events, and destinations to attract visitors.*

3. *Bloomfield, like all other municipalities, is vulnerable to cuts from federal and state governments. How would you prioritize current programs and services. Would you favor tax increases over eliminating services?* To address the tightening of State and Federal budgets, we will need to look to regional opportunities to save as well as alternative sources of revenue through grants and other avenues. To say that no increase in taxes is my priority is naive. The cost of doing the business of town government has increased with increasing population and costs that all homeowners have experienced. For example the cost of fuel oil for my home was five cents a gallon in 1940 when my parents build the home I live in

now. One of the reasons for town government is to provide services to its citizens, it is a matter of quality of life. Can we guarantee that we will not eliminate services? I do not see use doing that, but, changes might become necessary and I pledge to do my best to accomodate town needs.

4. *Wintonbury Mall has attracted several new businesses but there are still many empty retail spaces. What can the council do to help fill up empty storefronts and second floors?*

Wintonbury Mall is a problem that is not easily solved because it is privately owned by an out of state owner. What we as citizens can do is pledge to do business first with Bloomfield Center. Retailers look to the bottom line, if there is major traffic and money being spent they see a reason to open new stores. We have a first run movie theater that is the most reasonable ticket price in the Hartford area and the parking is free. Our restaurants, bakery, and other businesses have patrons from all over the state, we need to help them by getting the word out. As a council we can advocate bringing more cultural events to the town center so that regional attention and visitors come to Bloomfield.

Wayne Hypolite, Democrat

- Deputy Mayor 2011 – Present;
- Chairman Finance sub-committee;
- Town Council member 1999 – 2007;
- Former Chairman and Board of Education Member 1992 – 1997;
- Member West Indian Social Club;
- Executive Assistant, Office of the State Treasurer;
- Twenty-seven year resident currently residing 55 Prospect Street with wife of 33 years, and two daughters



1. *If elected what would be your top three priorities?*

- Property Tax relief by offering a no tax increase budget
- Raise Town Bond rating from present AA2 to AA1.
- Expand our Tax Base by retaining and attracting new business and residential housing.

2. *Bloomfield has an extraordinary range of recreational assets which could attract people to Bloomfield and enhance its economic development. In addition to several large parks, including one with frontage on the Farmington River, Bloomfield will soon have the LaSalette Trail which will connect Bloomfield with the Metacomet Trail in Penwood Park (part of the National Trail System) and a section of the New England Greenway running from Tariffville to the Town Center. Would you promote these opportunities so that people both in town and out of town begin to use and appreciate them and, if so, in what way?*

- Make a clear commitment by setting aside dedicated funding.
- Partner with the Wintonbury Land Trust, CEEC, beautification committee and other likeminded groups, and volunteers to expose more people to these incredible assets.
- Support our state elected representatives to secure additional grants.
- Encourage Town sponsored and partnered events.
- Include Lisa Lane, Hawk Hill, the Trails behind Seabury, Sam Reed Park, the Stout properties and a host of other areas to be included in the Town's Master Park Planning Study currently underway to comprehensively evaluate the best use of our parks and recreational areas.

3. Bloomfield, like all other municipalities, is vulnerable to cuts from federal and state governments. How would you prioritize current programs and services. Would you favor tax increases over eliminating services?

Tax increases vs. eliminating town services is a false choice. Contrary to perception, Bloomfield received a net increase of State and Federal grants. In FY13 we obtained in excess of \$2M, the bulk of which arriving from FEMA reimbursements as a result of storm Alfred, and for the past couple of years the total state & federal funding has remained relatively constant notwithstanding the \$1.4M loss of the Manufactures equipment PIOLT grant. That lost represents 1.6% of our budget and was absorbed by our grand list growth of 2.55%. While we cannot predict future state and federal funding levels, there will be no need to reduce services; in fact we should fully Fund Education and maintain Town services at its present levels if not increase them in the areas of public works and social services.

4. Wintonbury Mall has attracted several new businesses but there are still many empty retail spaces. What can the council do to help fill up empty storefronts and second floors?

- Streamline permit approvals
- Implement the Town center design plan which has as at its core recommendation to build on what we already have, brand it and augment our organizational capacity to follow thru on the plan to promote a more vibrant center
- Beautify Town center, with more plantings and street lighting
- Actively engage business owners and landlords to determine their needs and wants.
- Expand Parking
- Get out of their way

Quentin Johnson, Republican



Quentin Johnson graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Philosophy from Central Connecticut State University. Quentin has been an employee of The Hartford for 12+ years and he continues to develop and grow within the company. His current position is an Assistant Director of Enterprise Operations. Quentin will be celebrating his two year wedding anniversary to his wife Elizabeth. In addition he is very excited to celebrate the first birthday of their first child Abigail Elizabeth on September 16th. Quentin is an active member of the community and helped organize the TEDxBushnellPark event in Hartford this summer.

1. If elected what would be your top three priorities?

My top priorities if elected are to promote economic development, create jobs and reduce taxes. By fostering an effective environment for economic development it will attract businesses to Bloomfield. The new businesses will create jobs. The taxes from the new businesses will provide revenue for the town and it will allow for lower taxes for citizens.

2. Bloomfield has an extraordinary range of recreational assets which could attract people to Bloomfield and enhance its economic development. In addition to several large parks, including one with frontage on the Farmington River, Bloomfield will soon have the LaSalette Trail which will connect Bloomfield with the Metacomet Trail in Penwood Park (part of the National Trail System) and a section of the New England Greenway running from Tariffville to the Town Center. Would you promote these opportunities so that people both in town and out of town begin to use and appreciate them and, if so, in what way?

I learned about the New England Greenway at the TEDxBushnellPark event when Steven Mitchell spoke about it. He inspired me to be more active; burn more calories and less carbon. I have promoted the

recreational assets of Bloomfield to family, friends and colleagues and would love the opportunity to share my enthusiasm with residents and nonresidents.

3. Bloomfield, like all other municipalities, is vulnerable to cuts from federal and state governments. How would you prioritize current programs and services. Would you favor tax increases over eliminating service?

I would prioritize current programs and services by assessing what is important to the citizens. Going out into the community and listening to the people. Increases in economic development will provide revenue and will provide funding to programs and services.

4. Wintonbury Mall has attracted several new businesses but there are still many empty retail spaces. What can the council do to help fill up empty storefronts and second floors?

To attract businesses to Wintonbury Mall the council can provide new businesses with a first year tax credit, it will allow the business to get started and hire employees. It will also attract people to Bloomfield and increase revenue for the town. It will make Bloomfield more attractive to nonresidents. If the parks and recreational areas can bring people in, the great businesses will keep them in town.

James McGovern, Republican

- Lifelong Bloomfield resident.
- Attended Bloomfield Schools from Kindergarten to Twelve Grade.
- Married sixteen years and have two children: James and Sylvester.
- Employed as Chief Architect, Insurance for HP.
- Honorably Discharged: United States Coast Guard.
- Advisor to Internet Startups.
- Industry thought leader on Privacy, Security and Open Source.
- Member of OathKeepers and the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF).
- Committed to community, dedicated to progress.



1. If elected what would be your top three priorities?

- Spend Wisely and Govern Well
- Providing a Great Education for Every Child
- Preserving our Environment

2. Bloomfield has an extraordinary range of recreational assets which could attract people to Bloomfield and enhance its economic development. In addition to several large parks, including one with frontage on the Farmington River, Bloomfield will soon have the LaSalette Trail which will connect Bloomfield with the Metacomet Trail in Penwood Park (part of the National Trail System) and a section of the New England Greenway running from Tariffville to the Town Center. Would you promote these opportunities so that people both in town and out of town begin to use and appreciate them and, if so, in what way?

Promoting the image of Bloomfield as a vibrant, fun and year-round community that is an ideal place to work, live and play is key. The economic, social and physical environments that surround us can have great impact on our health and well-being. Marketing Bloomfield holistically and not as several different parts is a core requirement to successful and sustainable economic development.

3. Bloomfield, like all other municipalities, is vulnerable to cuts from federal and state governments. How would you prioritize current programs and services. Would you favor tax increases over eliminating services?

Government services should be prioritized according to a hierarchy of needs. Historically, governments have helped ensure that the people have enough food, developed infrastructure to ensure that we have clean water and public health systems to protect us against diseases. We have a framework of criminal and civil law, policed and implemented by professionals to provide the safety that we need. These needs are universal and therefore mandatory for the government to provide to anyone who cannot meet those needs themselves. These services should be maintained even if it requires tax increases.

Residents should have opportunity to participate directly in any decision to reduce services via town hall meetings, referendums or other means. In government, there are many non-value added activities (waste) in administrative, transactional and office processes. Promoting best-practices by adopting corporate America approaches such as Lean, Six Sigma and Agile to expand the capacity to provide more services within existing tax revenue should be embraced.

4. *Wintonbury Mall has attracted several new businesses but there are still many empty retail spaces. What can the council do to help fill up empty storefronts and second floors?*

Increased focus on economic development is of utmost importance. Some radical ideas worth exploring include:

- Partnering with a community-oriented bank to create a Microloan program that provides loans for small businesses for startup costs. Initial working capital and inventory typically are impediments for entrepreneurs who could create businesses to occupy empty retail space.
- Working with our state legislators to secure block grants to make targeted investments in improving our community in the retail, housing and technology areas.
- Working to bolster the internal economy by combatting buying patterns where residents purchase goods and services outside the community such as in urban malls or through the Internet.

Joseph Merritt, Republican



Bloomfield native, Bloomfield schools, Kingswood School; Dartmouth College, AB Government; MIT, MS Management; School of Finance, Sloan Fellow; United States Naval Officer, VP Hartford Special; 20 yr. owner manufacturing companies. Now Retired, H&R Block Master Tax Advisor; 24 yrs. Town Council, Minority Leader; 10 yrs. Seabury Director, Chair WH-Blmfld Health District. Wife Bev, 3 children, 7 grandchildren; Church choir, tennis, bicycling; A founder, Bloomfield Volunteer Ambulance; A founder, director Wintonbury Hills Golf Course

1. *If elected what would be your top three priorities?*

- a. Reduce Taxes. We have been raising taxes beyond reason. This year the majority party bulldozed a tax increase through over our objections and even admitted the increase wasn't necessary. Town staff has not pursued Bloomfield's share of federal and state grants. Instead it has been too easy to raise taxes on Bloomfield taxpayers.
- b. Jobs are a huge interest of our minority demographic and the Minority party is listening. The majority party killed economic development in South Cottage Grove depriving our citizens of hundreds of jobs and appointed a retired art teacher who wanted to kill that development as Economic Development Chair. As a result Economic Development has stopped in Bloomfield. Town Hall seems to hire few Bloomfield applicants.
- c. Restore democracy to Bloomfield. We have had one party government in Bloomfield for over 40 years. Absolute power corrupts absolutely. We need a balance. It is time for a change. Majority party incumbents don't need to do anything at all to get elected and that is why we have

do-nothing government. Voters need to make them earn their vote, not vote for them because of a party label.

2. Bloomfield has an extraordinary range of recreational assets which could attract people to Bloomfield and enhance its economic development. In addition to several large parks, including one with frontage on the Farmington River, Bloomfield will soon have the LaSalette Trail which will connect Bloomfield with the Metacomet Trail in Penwood Park (part of the National Trail System) and a section of the New England Greenway running from Tariffville to the Town Center. Would you promote these opportunities so that people both in town and out of town begin to use and appreciate them and, if so, in what way?
I have been obsessed with getting the Greenway through Bloomfield and actively promote all of these recreational opportunities.

3. Bloomfield, like all other municipalities, is vulnerable to cuts from federal and state governments. How would you prioritize current programs and services. Would you favor tax increases over eliminating services?

Bloomfield gets little revenue from the state and federal government so we are less vulnerable than most towns to such cuts. Our one-party dominance reduces the effort to get more aid to education and other grants. We are not getting our share.

4. Wintonbury Mall has attracted several new businesses but there are still many empty retail spaces. What can the council do to help fill up empty storefronts and second floors?

Our Economic Development Committee Chair is run by an art teacher who hates development. She first ran to oppose development on Cottage Grove, our prime commercial corridor and killed the center of town project 4 years ago. Our town manager-run Economic Development Commission and the town center project. Ideas include connecting parking lots, promoting our restaurants and making the center pedestrian friendly. We need sidewalks up Mountain and Tunxis Avenues for example.

E. Leon Rivers, Democrat

Councilman E. Leon Rivers has been a resident of Bloomfield for the past 34 years. He currently resides at 24 Stuart Drive in Bloomfield, CT. As an incumbent Town Council member, Councilman Rivers strives to provide the best leadership in ensuring that services are top notch for the citizens of Bloomfield.



Councilman Rivers serves as a Chairman of the Administration & Education Subcommittee as well as the Golf Subcommittee for the past two years. In his professional role, he is employed by CREC-Metropolitan Learning Center as a Student Manager. Among his interests within town, he has served as a past Supervisor with the Department of Leisure Services for 17 years and remains active on various boards and commissions such as: the Youth Adult Council, Commission on Aging, member of the Democratic Town Committee and Co-Chair of Voting District 1. He has been married to Mrs. Jeannette Rivers for the past 48 years whom they have two children and two grandchildren.

1. If elected what would be your top three priorities?

I would continue to work at providing the best services to our citizens without an increase in taxes, maintain a stable tax base, no decrease in town services and continuing to work with the building department to rid the town of blight.

2. Bloomfield has an extraordinary range of recreational assets which could attract people to Bloomfield and enhance its economic development. In addition to several large parks, including one with frontage on the Farmington River, Bloomfield will soon have the LaSalette Trail which will connect Bloomfield with the Metacomet Trail in Penwood Park (part of the National Trail System) and a section of the New England Greenway running from Tariffville to the Town Center. Would you promote these opportunities so that people both in town and out of town begin to use and appreciate them and, if so, in what way?

The Council should continue to support the necessary funds that will provide for proper media coverage. These assets have to be known for people to take advantage of them. I would work with the Department of Leisure Services to hire the necessary staff for expansion.

I would support visible improvements at Filley Park and the development of walking trails.

4. Wintonbury Mall has attracted several new businesses but there are still many empty retail spaces. What can the council do to help fill up empty storefronts and second floors?

The Council should continue to get the business property owner's to come to Bloomfield to discuss the possibilities for enhancing the Wintonbury Mall. If there is ever an opportunity to purchase the Wintonbury Mall it should be a consideration. The tax base must be improved to take some of the burden from the residents.

Sydney Schulman, Democrat



Mayor-2003-2013; Deputy Mayor-1993-1997 & 1999-2003.
Past Chair Council Economic Development Committee.
Past Chair Bloomfield Ethics Commission.
Past Bloomfield Commissioner Greater Hartford Transit District.
Past President Beth Hillel Synagogue.
Past State Chairman MD23 Lions Council.
Past President Connecticut Lions Research Foundation.

Attorney - Schulman & Associates Law Firm.

Married 35 years to Elba Cruz Schulman, 7 children & 12 grandchildren.

1. *If elected what would be your top three priorities?*
 - a. Economic Development.
 - b. Quality of Life.
 - c. Fiscal responsibility and tax structure.

2. *Bloomfield has an extraordinary range of recreational assets which could attract people to Bloomfield and enhance its economic development. In addition to several large parks, including one with frontage on the Farmington River, Bloomfield will soon have the LaSalette Trail which will connect Bloomfield with the Metacomet Trail in Penwood Park (part of the National Trail System) and a section of the New England Greenway running from Tariffville to the Town Center. Would you promote these opportunities so that people both in town and out of town begin to use and appreciate them and, if so, in what way?*

Our plan for the center of Town and our purchase of the Hawk Hill property will link us to the National Trail System and the New England Greenway. We will have to rebrand Bloomfield so our residents and those of surrounding towns know of the opportunities. This can be done through media presentations, photo contests, flora and fauna identification projects and other "active" uses promoted.

3. *Bloomfield, like all other municipalities, is vulnerable to cuts from federal and state governments. How would you prioritize current programs and services. Would you favor tax increases over eliminating services?*

We must insulate ourselves from such cuts by increasing our Grand List of taxable property through major economic development by bringing in industries compatible with our quality of life, such as the current tax producing additions - Home Goods Warehouse, Pepperidge Farm, Metlife Insurance Company and in the future others, such as a Hotel, a medical instruments manufacturing plant and an electronics industry. Priorities of current programs include Senior Services, Youth programs and recreational facilities, including one major town entertainment event, such as the forthcoming first annual Folk Festival. If we still are faced with a choice of taxes vs. services, I would be in favor of a combination of small scale back, not elimination, of services with small tax increases.

4. *Wintonbury Mall has attracted several new businesses but there are still many empty retail spaces. What can the council do to help fill up empty storefronts and second floors?*

In past years, I have worked with the owners and/or managers of the Mall to recommend and seek out compatible stores to populate the Mall. I have taped Mayor's Report shows with Pasticceria Italia Bakery, Thai Palace and Ginza Restaurants to encourage patronage. I also encouraged the use of outside seating for the restaurants and use of the interior space between front and back, perhaps with kiosks in outside hallways between front and back. Before the recession hit, I was involved in trying to link the ownership with a developer to build up a floor or two to the Mall to have condominiums. The Mall has now been in foreclosure. Future plans are indefinite. The Council can encourage more through the forthcoming economic development specialist we have put in the budget to assist Wintonbury Mall and other property owners in such efforts.

Derrick Seldon, Democrat



Derrick Seldon and his wife Andrea have been residents of Bloomfield since 1999. They have raised three children and are the grand-parents to a five year-old grandson. Derrick is employed as a Community Liaison Officer with the Housing Authority of the City of Hartford.

Derrick began his service to the Bloomfield community immediately upon arrival fourteen years ago. He served as a coach with the Bloomfield Baseball Little League for four years and coached fifth and sixth graders in the Bloomfield Youth Basketball League for six years.

Derrick served as Treasurer and President respectively of the J.P. Vincent Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization (P.T.O.). During Derrick's tenure as president, he was instrumental in the P.T.O. obtaining a 501-C-3 designation which allowed it to become one of the only P.T.O.'s in the state to be incorporated as a tax exempt organization.

Derrick has served as a member of the Bloomfield Board of Education for the past eight years. He has served as the Vice-Chair for the past four years and secretary for two years. Derrick serves as Chair of the Board of Education Finance Committee and is serving on the Carmen Arace Building Committee. He has served on the Bloomfield Town Committee for eight years.

Derrick is a proud member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc., and Bethel A.M.E. Church of Bloomfield where he serves as a Steward and Treasurer of the church.

1. *If elected what would be your top three priorities?*

My top three priorities if elected will be to ensure that we continue to maintain strong schools that will attract new young families to Bloomfield; maintaining high quality public and social services to all town residents and develop plans to reduce the number of vacant properties both commercial and residential.

2. *Bloomfield has an extraordinary range of recreational assets which could attract people to Bloomfield and enhance its economic development. In addition to several large parks, including one with frontage on the Farmington River, Bloomfield will soon have the LaSalette Trail which will connect Bloomfield with the Metacomet Trail in Penwood Park (part of the National Trail System) and a section of the New England Greenway running from Tariffville to the Town Center. Would you promote these opportunities so that people both in town and out of town begin to use and appreciate them and, if so, in what way?*

These are attractive outdoor recreational assets and I agree one of the benefits of living in Bloomfield is its open space. However, I think these opportunities should be considered along with other options for attracting people to Bloomfield and enhancing economic development.

3. *Bloomfield, like all other municipalities, is vulnerable to cuts from federal and state governments. How would you prioritize current programs and services. Would you favor tax increases over eliminating services?*

I think we can and should do a better job in securing grant funds to assist with reduced funding due to federal and state cuts. I believe everyone wants excellent programs and services at the most efficient tax rate.

4. *Wintonbury Mall has attracted several new businesses but there are still many empty retail spaces. What can the council do to help fill up empty storefronts and second floors?*

The retail area in the center of town including the mall is in need of major renovations. It should be remodeled to meet today's retail's needs which will increase pedestrian traffic.

Joseph Washington, Democrat



Member, Bloomfield Town Council
Chairman of the Council Subcommittee Public Safety;
Co-Chair of the Council Subcommittee on Committees;
Member of the Council Subcommittee on Finance;
Co-Chair of 2nd District Democratic Town Committee;
Attended University of Hartford; Attended Central State University;
Greater Hartford Community College Political Science Degree; United States Post Office: Managerial Administrative Service Career Training (1983/84);

United States Post Office: Executive Administrative Service (1984-2004)

United States Air Force: 4 years of service; United States Army Reserves: 3 years of service

1. *If elected what would be your top three priorities?*

Economic Development: grow new and expand existing businesses; Public Safety: making our Town a safe place to live; and Capitol Improvements: keeping our infrastructure in good repair.

2. *Bloomfield has an extraordinary range of recreational assets which could attract people to Bloomfield and enhance its economic development. In addition to several large parks, including one with frontage on the Farmington River, Bloomfield will soon have the LaSalette Trail which*

will connect Bloomfield with the Metacomet Trail in Penwood Park (part of the National Trail System) and a section of the New England Greenway running from Tariffville to the Town Center. Would you promote these opportunities so that people both in town and out of town begin to use and appreciate them and, if so, in what way?

I support open space acquisition and promotion of existing parks. Council has been supportive of efforts to acquire the Hawk Hill property and the recent acquisition of 13 acres at Stout Farm. We need to improve Filley Pond Park and let residents know about the beautiful parks and open space we enjoy. The Council should assist in obtaining state, federal and private grants to preserve open space and maintain our parks.

- 3. Bloomfield, like all other municipalities, is vulnerable to cuts from federal and state governments. How would you prioritize current programs and services. Would you favor tax increases over eliminating services?*

In addition to our budget, we can raise revenue by selling excess town properties that we no longer use (i.e. Vincent School). We should maximize federal, state and private grants, and utilize excess town reserves to repair our buildings and roads. By prioritizing and creative budgeting, together with aggressive economic development, we can maintain services and prevent tax increases.

- 4. Wintonbury Mall has attracted several new businesses but there are still many empty retail spaces. What can the council do to help fill up empty storefronts and second floors?*

Council needs to focus on revitalization of our Town Center. We need to interface with property owners and see how we can provide assistance. Strategies should include the hiring of an Economic Development Director, and a targeted tax abatement program for development that meets town objectives. We should assist in identifying grants like the Business Express Loans and Facade Replacement Funds. Our new Town Manager needs to identify policies and strategies for Council consideration that will enhance our Town Center.

Note: Joel Neuwirth did not respond to the invitation to participate in the Voters Guide.

2013 Bloomfield VOTERS GUIDE
Candidates for Bloomfield Board of Education

HOWARD STEVEN FRYDMAN, Democrat



General Manager and Executive Director of Bloomfield Access Television for the past 27 years. Howard has worked in the field of television, radio and print media for over 30 years and has coordinated many local and statewide public events. Mr. Frydman has also served politically in various elected positions including: Bloomfield Library Board of Director, Selectmen, Registrar of Voters and Justice of the Peace. Howard additionally serves on the Board of Directors for Bloomfield's Continuing Education and Bloomfield Federation Homes. Howard was a founding member of the Bloomfield Winterfest/Light Up The

Town Holiday Event.

His movie, theater and food reviews have been syndicated in several newspapers in Connecticut including: "The Airport News" the official newspaper for Connecticut's Bradley International Airport, *The North Central News*, *CT Business Journal* and *BATV*. He is the recipient of the Connecticut "Hometown Hero" Award, Connecticut Jaycee Outstanding Citizen Award and the National Army Citizen Service Award. A Graduate of Central Connecticut State University and Bloomfield resident for over 54 years.

1. How can we maintain a high level education system while still keeping taxes under control?

In the last few years under the leadership of Superintendent of Schools Thompson, Bloomfield has achieved real and lasting improvement in students' scores especially in math and reading. To maintain these and future improvements takes a united effort from administration, parents, students, community partners and effective use of resources.

Change by itself doesn't guarantee improvement - but in Bloomfield our changes have resulted in significant improvement. Through creative strategies including teacher training, financial organization, involvement of parents and students we can keep taxes under control while maintaining a high level of education for our children.

2. What is the right balance between school security and a welcoming environment?

In light of recent events in Sandy Hook and Columbine, many feel that schools are no longer the safe havens for children they once were. Our students cannot learn in an unsafe environment. Some local schools have recently employed retired armed police officers- but I do not think this is the way for Bloomfield. We need to have an ongoing comprehensive plan that involves the entire community. I will urge the Superintendent to conduct an evaluation for us to discuss. A welcoming environment is particularly important for those students who are struggling in school and need extra support. It is important to create a school climate that does not tolerate bullying, cyberbullying and intimidation. A safe learning environment is focused on academic achievement, maintaining high standards, fostering positive relationships between staff and students, and encouraging parental and community involvement.

3. *In the past five years Bloomfield has made a major investment in its school facilities. What do you believe are the most important things that the town can do now to ensure that its children have access to, and take advantage of, excellent educational resources?*

One of the most important aspects of choosing Bloomfield as your residence, is the town's educational system. Residents want their children's schools to have a goal of high academic achievement - knowing their child will be effectively taught. Bloomfield offers a rejuvenated public education including GEMS-Global Experience Magnet School; Wintonbury Early Childhood Magnet School, Learning Academy of Bloomfield, Extension Programs, Family Resource Center Programs, Adult Education and two town libraries. These outstanding educational resources are available to all Bloomfield residents. To help fund these educational services, we must continue to seek out federal, state and private grants.

4. *What is the high school graduation rate and how would you reduce the drop-out rate?*

Connecticut ranks low among New England states for high school graduation and the rate for economically disadvantaged students is among the lowest in the country, according to the U.S. Department of Education.

Bloomfield, like many of our state's towns has a low graduation rate. The Strategic School Profile for 2010-11 shows a Bloomfield graduation rate of 76.7% - our state average is 81.8%. However, Bloomfield's Big Picture High School had a graduation rate of 100%- a wonderful success story. Yes we have work to do – but things are looking better! To improve Bloomfield's graduation rate I suggest the following: First, all students must be treated fairly with the respect they deserve. Second, our community must invest in dropout prevention and recovery strategies to help make learning more engaging and relevant for students. Third, our schools need to identify and respond to students at risk of failure. Research has demonstrated that by making learning environments safe and relevant, plus having parents engaged with their child's education help students get back on-track academically and lower dropout rates.

Donald Harris, Democrat



Professional Employment

- Bloomfield Parks & Recreation
- Physical Education Teacher – Bloomfield High
- Director of Athletics – Bloomfield Schools
- Vice Principal – Carmen Arace Middle School
- Principal – Bloomfield High School
- Real Estate Sales Agent – William Raveis Realty-Simsbury Office

Community Affiliations: CREC – Elected Secretary/Treasurer July 2013; CREC Executive Board 2013 – 2016; CT African American Affairs Commissioner-Legislative Appointment 2012; Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) Board of Directors 2012; CREC – Advisory Board of Directors; Bloomfield Board of Education Chairman – 2011 – present; Deputy Mayor Town of Bloomfield 2007 – 2011; Literacy Volunteers Board of Directors- 2007; Graylodge Shelter for Women Board of Directors 2003 – 2006; Amistad Center for Art & Culture Board of Directors 2002 – 2006; Bloomfield Democratic Town Committee 2006; Seabury Board of Directors 2008 – 2012; Seabury At Home Care Board and

Seabury Memory Center Board; Rotary International -Bloomfield Chapter 2006 ,President 2008 – 10; Deacon Union Baptist Church, Deacon Board Chairman – 2004 – present

1. *How can we maintain a high level education system while still keeping taxes under control?*

Keep on doing what we are doing. It began with bringing in Dr. Thompson and his team along with a lot of professional development and utilizing data as a mechanism to staff with instructional strategies. This has led to a significant assault on the Achievement Gap with a zero (0%) percent increase of budget for 4 years.

2. *What is the right balance between school security and a welcoming environment?*

The 1st priority is providing a safe and nurturing school environment for all of our children. This is done by paying attention to building security to include locks on doors, controlled access into the building for those other than staff, cameras and necessary staff members in strategic areas around the buildings.

3. *In the past five years Bloomfield has made a major investment in its school facilities. What do you believe are the most important things that the town can do now to ensure that its children have access to, and take advantage of, excellent educational resources?*

The Town has invested in the area of 90 million that includes State funding to completely renovate all of our schools. We have been doing a wonderful job in monitoring school attendance to insure that Bloomfield Schools are being utilized by residents of the Town.

4. *What is the high school graduation rate and how would you reduce the drop-out rate?*

I do not have the exact figure because the school profile has just been completed, October 1, and we have not seen the results yet. I will tell you that historically, the high school graduation rate has been in the area of 94% and the drop-out rate has been well under 8%.

MICHAEL C. WILLIAMS, Democrat



A graduate of Northeast Louisiana University of Monroe, Louisiana; a graduate of University of Connecticut School of Social Work; a graduate of Trinity College of Vermont; and, a graduate of the University of Connecticut's School of Business' Executive Program in Managed Care. He is an ordained clergy.

The Regional Administrator of the Department of Children and Families region 4 which includes the Hartford and Manchester area offices.

An appointed member to the State of Connecticut's Commission on Health Equity, Beta Sigma Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Inc., a member of the Beta Tau Boule and participates in many other community activities in the greater Hartford area.

Michael is married to Lynda Hunter-Williams and has three children, Oscar, Romarius and Tiffany and three grandchildren, Marshal, Journee Renee and Sahrye.

1. How can we maintain a high level education system while still keeping taxes under control?

The current Superintendent and his administration have developed an ideal approach to assuring a high academic performance within the fiscal parameters set by the board of education and town council. This represents the third year of a zero increase budget while continued increase in student achievement. The keys to the success are data driven decision making, high quality teachers, parental and community engagement, a results focused administration and a governing body that focus on setting good policy. These are the ingredients of a high level education system, instead of reckless spending on programs that have no evidence of success.

2. What is the right balance between school security and a welcoming environment?

A welcoming school environment includes one that students, parents, teachers and administrator feel safe attending. They must go hand in hand and not compete with each other. Securing schools is the responsibility of the entire Bloomfield community, not just the school district. The balance occurs by creating good safe school policy that affords the administration discretion to apply consequences for violators, establishing curriculum that includes aspects of citizenship and pride in community for students, having security presence that integrates within the school environment, and having a mechanism to constantly assess school climate.

3. In the past five years Bloomfield has made a major investment in its school facilities. What do you believe are the most important things that the town can do now to ensure that its children have access to, and take advantage of, excellent educational resources?

The town must now shift its focus from bricks and mortar to investments in technology for students. Our students will compete with a global community and in order to be successful, we must expose them to the technological advances that are rapidly changing our world.

4. What is the high school graduation rate and how would you reduce the drop-out rate?

All children have the ability to learn but some learn differently than others. Many of our children who drop out are struggling with a variety of life challenges that impact their ability to focus on education in a traditional classroom setting, Monday through Friday. It is our responsibility to assess the learning styles and needs of those children and design an educational plan to meet their needs.

Note: Candidate Susan True did not respond to the invitation to participate in the Voters Guide.