





WaylandeNews Q&A with the Board of Selectmen Candidates

Question 1: Why did you decide to run for this seat on Board of Selectmen?

 <p>Chris Brown</p>	<p>I am running because I believe that Wayland is a great town, with great people, great schools, great natural resources, and great services ... and I want to keep it this way. Serving as a member and current Chair of the Board of Public Works has given me invaluable experience within Wayland town government; experience that will allow me to be an effective voice for Wayland residents on the Board of Selectmen. There are wonderful things going on in Wayland right now. The newly-opened High School will serve our children and our community well for many decades. I applaud and congratulate the High School Building Committee for their outstanding work on the project. Town Center will soon become a reality giving residents more shopping and recreational opportunities.</p> <p>At the same time, we need to find ways to ease the tax burden on citizens, particularly seniors and those on fixed incomes. Town Center will expand our commercial tax base, and our Economic Development Committee is looking into other ways to bring revenue into the Town. Meanwhile, we need to continue our efforts to look for greater efficiencies, seek joint purchasing opportunities, and pursue consolidation and regionalization efforts as ways to unburden Wayland taxpayers. I am confident that Wayland's citizens can work together and continue to achieve that proper balance between revenue and services.</p>
 <p>Ed Collins</p>	<p>Over the last few years I was asked several times by many who expressed a certain unhappiness about the way the town was being run whether I would consider becoming a candidate for the Board of Selectmen. In a recent moment of weakness, I agreed to run. My real motive is to do what I can to make the town an even better place.</p>
 <p>Doug Leard</p>	<p>I have already served as a member of the Board of Selectmen from 2003-2009. In 2009 I needed to refocus my efforts due to the failing health of my parents, who have since passed on. I have decided to throw my hat back into the ring for a couple of reasons: FIRST, I have been a resident of Wayland for 28 years, my wife (Cynthia Bryant) was born and raised in Wayland and is a longtime business owner in Wayland and our son is the 3rd generation to go through the Wayland school system. With all that being said we are vested in this community and I am concerned for what Wayland WAS - IS - AND WILL BE!! Secondly, I am running because of our rising tax rate. If elected I will push for greater efficiencies in town government while continuing to maintain quality services. Thirdly, it is a belief of many that if a town board or committee repeatedly discusses a particular subject matter at their meetings then Wayland residents should be well informed..... AND THEY ARE NOT. Because these meeting are public meetings this assumption should not be allowed to continue. It will be my effort to push for greater efficiencies, inclusion, accountability and better communication within town government, beyond the town building walls. Lastly, and by no means less important, I plan to push for a long-term plan to find a better balance between Wayland's income, expenses and free cash (as evidenced by our last Special Town Meeting). I hear too many residents complaining that the town is stockpiling their money. Residents are saying, if you need money for a specific project then please ask for it with an override vote.</p>
 <p>Sue Pope</p>	<p>I am running for re-election to the Board of Selectmen because there are many projects that we have not yet brought to fruition and I look forward to completing them for the benefit of the town.</p> <p>I bring a balance to the board, I am a good listener, and am pro-active rather than reactive. I thoroughly enjoy the position and as an incumbent, I am committed to the community.</p>

Question 2. Why should a voter choose you over your opponents?



Chris Brown

There are excellent candidates running for office, and I applaud them all for their desire to get involved and contribute their time and energy to the Town. My desire is to keep Wayland a great town in which to live, whether you already live here or for those who are seeking to move here. Wayland has been known for decades as a highly-desirable town due in large part to its excellent school system and its semi-rural way of life. Few towns in Massachusetts offer the fantastic open space we enjoy, the great recreational opportunities, and the outstanding quality of life – so close to Boston.

I want to maintain these qualities of the town, while moving forward in a responsible fashion. Town Center, in addition to bringing in additional tax revenues, will be a wonderful community gathering place. Imagine enjoying summer concerts on the green with old friends while enjoying an ice cream from a local shop, and then in the winter, ice skating on that town green while sipping on some hot chocolate from the nearby cafe. This will soon be an exciting reality for the entire community.



Ed Collins

Two of my opponents appear to be pretty much status quo candidates. This is intended to be descriptive, not pejorative. By contrast, I'm an advocate for change (see below for some detail).

I would bring the benefits of the excellent educational opportunities I have had, including graduation from the Boston Latin School, an undergraduate degree from Boston College, an A.M and Ph.D. from Harvard University, and a law degree from the Boston College Law School (with Special Student status at Harvard Law School). I would also bring my career experiences as a college professor, a legislative lobbyist, and a practicing trial lawyer.

I also have such knowledge and experience as I have gained from living in Wayland since the early 1970s, from having four children attend the Wayland schools and graduate from Wayland High School, and also from serving as a member and Chairman of the Wayland Planning Board.



Doug Leard

I have already served on the Board of Selectmen for six years and I already have the knowledge, experience and understanding of the Board of Selectmen and town government to start work right away. As I stated above, I have a vested interest in this great community and my family is not moving out of town. We are here to stay. My interests are for ALL Wayland residents for now and for the years to come. My education and experience outlined in my web site www.dougleard.net will show you my continued commitment to my community.







Sue Pope





My experience as a member of the Board of Selectmen and as a former State Representative distinguishes me as a candidate; I bring the essential qualities of commitment and dedication to the position. As a former State Representative I have cultivated a network of contacts across the state and can use their combined expertise to benefit Wayland's town offices.

I am a voice for all residents of Wayland: I don't have one single agenda or just one issue that consumes my attention.

Question 3. If you are elected, is there anything specific you would like to encourage the Board to do that is currently not on their agenda?

 <p>Chris Brown</p>	<p>One of the great things about living in a relatively small town is the ability to truly listen to resident's concerns and ideas. An example of this was the recent proposal to put a playground on the green at the new town center – what a great idea! This was something that had not been contemplated by town officials, yet upon hearing the idea the response was almost unanimous – brilliant!</p> <p>I use this example because the five members of the Board of Selectmen are just that – five individuals. They don't have all the answers. Only by listening to residents and by carefully weighing ideas and proposals can we come to the best decisions. I will work to listen to all sides of issues, because only then can one truly make an informed decision.</p>
 <p>Ed Collins</p>	<p>I am unaware of what, if anything, is currently on the Board's agenda beyond the positions it has taken as detailed in the Warrant for the upcoming Town Meeting. However, I would like to encourage the following for the future:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More openness by the Board of Selectmen to a diversity of views, whether they come from members of other elected or appointed boards or committees or from concerned citizens who take the time and energy to inform themselves of the merits of issues and who may want to bring the fruits of their endeavors brought to the attention of the Board. • Protection of drinking water by implementation of the Wellhead Protection Plan (June 2011) prepared by the unfortunately now dissolved Wellhead Protection Committee (Sherre Greenbaum, Jennifer Riley, Tom Sciacca, Linda Segal and Kurt Tramosch) and praised by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection is of vital importance to every resident of Wayland. See: www.waylandwells.com and the June 26, 2012 presentation to the League of Women Voters by Tom Sciacca at http://waycamtv.pegcentral.com/player.php?video=293f966dc441ae3cfb181ff7c80df9bc • Tighter control over our financial affairs. For example, the town has generated very large surpluses from excessive real estate tax collections and water charges. This has created pressures to spend the money (apart from appropriate reserves) for certain pet projects simply because the money has become available as Free Cash from over-taxing real estate and as "retained earnings" from over-charging water fees. The challenge is for Wayland to develop a more rational and coherent way of avoiding over-collection and managing surpluses when and where they may exist while providing reasonably expected services at a reasonable tax rate. • Serious respect for the Open Meeting Law and Public Records Act to help promote genuine transparency and accountability in town government.
 <p>Doug Leard</p>	<p>As I mentioned above, I will advocate for better accountability to Wayland residents, greater emphasis on budgetary efficiencies in all departments, better communication in town government and an emphasis on TRUST! I sincerely believe that a town wide adoption of this basic philosophy by town government and the Wayland community will renew the trust and confidence we all need from one another. I can sincerely appreciate all the time and effort and dedication displayed by all town boards and committee members. At times their positions are challenging but we must remember we all work for all Wayland residents and our actions speak so much louder than our campaign words.</p>
 <p>Sue Pope</p>	<p>The Board of Selectmen has had success listening to the concerns of the town through monthly office hours; we could increase accessibility with quarterly meetings across Wayland at different locations such as Mainstone, Cochituate Apartments, and Bent Park.</p> <p>The Board has made itself accessible through email and contact is encouraged and promoted through the town's website.</p>

Question 4: Should cutting taxes or limiting tax increases be given priority over the preservation of services?

 <p>Chris Brown</p>	<p>In a word: no. Wayland's excellent schools and services are one of the keystones of what we are known for. When people from other towns ask me where I live and I respond "Wayland," the immediate response is "great town – great schools." Cutting our services is not the right thing for our town to do, both on a fiscal and philosophical level. Let me explain my reasoning:</p> <p>On a fiscal level, some have argued that Wayland's taxes have hurt our home values. The studies I have seen have shown that the biggest negatives against Wayland in recent years have been the quality of the High School (now fixed), and the lack of a town center / commercial development. However, I believe that cutting services would depress home values much more so than a high tax rate. Our homes are worth what they're worth because they are located in a town with excellent schools. Look at comparable towns with school systems that are not as renowned – home values in those communities are much lower than Wayland.</p> <p>On a philosophical level, I feel we have an obligation to educate the next generation – to the best of our ability. Education is what drives the future. As a society we owe it to our children to educate them better than we were educated. Wayland is accomplishing this now, and we need to continue to do so particularly given the global trends and demands.</p>
 <p>Ed Collins</p>	<p>This is decidedly the wrong question to ask. We can (and should) apply the huge excesses in free cash after the deduction of a proper amount for a reserve to the reduction of real estate taxes. We can (and should) apply the huge excesses from the over-charging of water fees to the reduction of water rates. All of this can be done without affecting services by a single penny. As a matter of law, the Board of Selectmen has no authority over the school budget (if this is what is meant by "services"), except perhaps the power of persuasion, such as it is. There is also the question of what is meant in the question by "services." Is the proposed expenditure of \$700,000.00 for a wireless water meter system an expenditure for "services?" In any event, on the financial issues that affect the tax rate and the level of services, the Selectmen only recommend; the Finance Committee advises; Town Meeting decides.</p>
 <p>Doug Leard</p>	<p>Our priority should always be to offer quality services to all Wayland residents. It is a decision that "informed" Wayland residents should make. With an increased emphasis on budgetary efficiencies and greater accountability, I think we can certainly come close to having both our cake and eating it too.</p>
 <p>Sue Pope</p>	<p>Wayland taxes are high. However, the Board of Selectmen does not set the tax rate; while we operate within the guidelines of Massachusetts Department of Revenue, it is at Town Meeting where residents vote on the budget and decide whether or not to decrease services. Most residents support the current level of service we maintain for Wayland.</p> <p>With the completion of the Town Center Project, Wayland's commercial tax base will grow through increased business revenue. This commercial revenue should allow individual property taxes to decrease. This is one of the ways that Wayland can maintain its excellent services that makes it an outstanding community. For example, we are one of a few towns that support qualified seniors by doubling the state's allowed assistance.</p> <p>Just like any responsible household, which should have 3-6 months expenses stashed away in case of unforeseen events, so too, it is prudent for the town to be prepared in case of emergency.</p>

Question 5: Are there any warrant articles from the upcoming Town Meeting that you think are especially important, and if so, describe your position(s).



Chris Brown

The warrant article that could most dramatically change Wayland is the article to limit the Community Preservation Act (CPA). The CPA, which has been in place since 2001, has raised more than \$9.5 million to put towards acquiring open space, addressing housing concerns and preserving historic resources. One of the great features of the CPA is the matching state funds Wayland receives. Over the past ten years Wayland has received more than \$3.5 million from the state in matching funds. Much like a 401(k) match you may get at work, this is “free money.” Accepting this article will cause us to lose these funds in future years.

However, why I say that this article passing would dramatically change Wayland is Mainstone Farm. This 200 acre working farm off of Rice Rd. and OCP is one of the identifying gems of Wayland. By limiting the CPA, and losing out on matching state funds, we are severely hindering our ability to preserve this land.

Some argue that putting a 150 house sub-division on this land would help Wayland’s tax issues, and it could. But I ask, “at what cost?” Do we really want to see 150 single family homes on that hillside as we drive down Old Connecticut Path? Or would we prefer to keep looking at the “oreo cows” and the pumpkin patch for generations to come? That farm is part of what makes Wayland ... Wayland. I will do whatever I can to try and preserve that space.



Ed Collins

The budget (Article 8), of course, is very important. Curiously, in the current Warrant, contrary to custom, the budget article has been placed after Articles 4-7 [4 (Elect Finance Committee), 5 (Audit Review Committee), 6 (Community Preservation Act), and 7 [as written] (Water Enterprise Fund)] and before Article 29 (Hear Reports).

I support the election of members of the Finance Committee. At present, the seven members of the Finance Committee are appointed by five selectmen. They obviously are required to spend large amounts of time on the town’s financial issues, and historically have done so. Nevertheless, I support the proposal that they be elected by all the voters. The Finance Committee reports to Town Meeting. They have to be chosen in some fashion: election by all the voters appears to be the most democratic way to make that choice, a better way to respect the diversity among residents, and also more in keeping with the function of the Finance Committee members as advisers to Town Meeting. It is interesting to note that in most towns of the Commonwealth the Finance Committee is appointed by the Town Meeting Moderator (for example, Weston, Wellesley, Sudbury, Concord, Lincoln, Dover), not by the Selectmen. This is in keeping with their function as advisers to Town Meeting, which is presided over by the Town Meeting Moderator. The arguments ostensibly in support of appointment by the Selectmen – special financial expertise, long learning curve, philosopher-kings - apply with equal force to election by the voters.



Doug Leard

Personally, I believe all 31 Town Meeting Articles are "especially important" and I encourage all Wayland voters to attend Town Meeting, starting on April 9, 2012. I assume the sponsor of every town meeting article has a reason and purpose for their Article and I welcome their participation in town government and I look forward to their presentation, discussion and vote.



Sue Pope

All warrant articles are important. Several of the proposed articles would change how Wayland is governed and the town’s makeup. Specifically, Article 4, the election of Finance Committee Members, would detrimentally alter the composition of the board. The FinCom’s appointment process ensures that qualified, civic-minded individuals are responsible for overseeing the town’s budget. Nominees are selected on the basis of expertise in finances and familiarity with the scale of budgeting that our community requires. Candidates are interviewed and the most qualified individuals are offered the position. The process is both transparent and highly functional. The three-year term is appropriate for the learning curve of the office (I can say this as a former Finance Committee member). Electing board members one year at a time increases the possibility of promoting short-term interests at the expense of long-term planning: a one-year term offers less incentive plan beyond the same 12-month period and greater potential for conflicts of interest.

Article 21: Appropriate CPA and other funds for due diligence efforts for the pre-permitting and potential sale of town-owned land on Boston Post Road benefits Wayland.

The Economic Development Committee, one of Wayland’s stellar committees, has thought outside the box by proposing the development of affordable and market-rate rental housing. This would allow many residents who wish to downsize but still live in town greater opportunities to do so. I am in favor of Article 21: it would transform idle town property into additional source of revenue for Wayland.

Question 6: Is there any elected official or other prominent person inside or outside of Wayland with qualities that you would like to bring to your role on the Board?



Chris Brown

I greatly admire Mike Lowery, a member of our Board of Public Works (BoPW). Last year when the BoPW was setting water rates, Mike, at the time not a member of the BoPW, took great interest in the process. He spoke at public comment at many of our meetings advocating for more equity in the rates. His argument was that the low-end water users were disproportionately paying too much because of the flat capital fee as well as the minimum usage charge that was in place at the time.

I admire Mike because he made his arguments in a thoughtful and persuasive fashion. He educated us to the issue, advocated for a way to solve the problem, and at the end of the process the BoPW voted unanimously for his proposal.

I also admire Mike because when a spot opened up on the BoPW, he volunteered to join us. He became part of the process. His skills and knowledge on various issues have proved to be invaluable to the BoPW during his tenure. I thank Mike for his service to the BoPW and to the town. I look forward to his service in the future.



Ed Collins

I have no particular answer to this question at this time.



Doug Leard

I bring my past six years experience as a selectmen to the Board but I can honestly say what I cherish the most and what I will bring and convey to the Board and the Town of Wayland is listening to the public speak of the great things that Wayland has to offer, about the services they wish they had in town and about the issues that bother them the most and would like to see corrected. As elected public officials, we are elected to serve ALL Wayland residents. That is the duty of anyone who holds a public office and we all must take that responsibility SERIOUSLY!



Sue Pope

Wayland has a great asset and a role model for all public office holders in Lea Anderson, former Chair of the Wayland High School Building Committee. Her calm demeanor, intelligence, and ability to relate to the public the step-by-step building progress of the High School in simple terms were paragons of public service. She continually demonstrated how town officials can operate with intelligence, eloquence, and class.

Question 7: Please take this opportunity to state anything about yourself that you would like voters to know.



Chris Brown

I grew up in a small town in Central Maine; a town where most of the residents worked in the local paper mill where they made Scott paper towels. My parents were teachers and taught me the value of education. When I was a sophomore in high school, our town suffered a great flood where more than a dozen homes were literally lifted off their foundations and swept down the river. Others were damaged beyond repair. My fellow students and I donated countless hours of our time to help those in need. It is that community spirit that has made a great impression in my life.

Two years later when I graduated high school, just 18% of my senior class went on to some type of post-secondary education, primarily technical, vocational, or community college. I feel lucky to have been admitted to Middlebury College, and could attend only because of a great financial-aid package they were able to offer. I made it through Middlebury because I took on significant work-study jobs.

I share this background because I want my neighbors to know where I get my beliefs that education and community service are critical components to society. Education is the great equalizer. I understand what it is like to need to "pinch pennies," and I believe Wayland needs to do so as well. That's why I believe we need to proceed in a thoughtful and prudent fashion and retain Wayland's fantastic schools, services, and community spirit.



Ed Collins

I'm "cute" ☺. See attached photo.



Doug Leard

I would kindly refer all Wayland voters to my web site: www.dougleard.net for any additional information about me and to please call me at 508-655-9925 or email me at dougleard@realtour4u.com and I would be most happy to speak with you personally.

In closing I would like to thank you all for taking the time for getting involved and having an interest in Wayland and I ask for your vote for DOUGLAS J. LEARD FOR SELECTMAN. Thank you very much.



Sue Pope

I have over 25 years of service to the town that spans multiple town offices. I have been and continue to be dedicated and committed to Wayland and to making Wayland a great place to live. One of our town's great strengths is the sense of civic duty that our town volunteers demonstrate and promote within the community. Continuing this tradition leaves the town in good hands for the future. We work not for one group, but for the good of the whole town.