



## **Milford Town Election Candidates Forum, March 25, 2014**

### **Sponsored by Citizens for Milford**

Dear Citizens of Milford:

Citizens for Milford recognizes the importance of all town positions and would like every voter to have the information needed to make informed choices at the ballot box. With that goal in mind, we have invited all the candidates running in a contested race to participate in our Candidates Forum. The Forum provides an opportunity for each candidate to speak and to answer questions from Milford residents.

The Forum is being video recorded and will be available for all to watch on Milford TV (Comcast Channel 8 and Verizon FIOS Channel 40) on March 26 at 9:00 p.m., March 27 at 6:00 p.m., and March 30 at 10:00 p.m. The Forum video will also be available to watch on the Citizens for Milford website ([CitizensforMilford.com](http://CitizensforMilford.com)) and Facebook page ([Facebook.com/CitizensforMilford](https://www.facebook.com/CitizensforMilford)) within 48 hours after the Forum is concluded.

In addition, Citizens for Milford recently distributed a list of questions posed by Milford citizens to each of the candidates who are participating in the Forum. The questions and the candidates' answers are printed on the following pages. Please feel free to share this questionnaire with your friends and neighbors. A printable copy of the questionnaire is also available on our website, [CitizensforMilford.com](http://CitizensforMilford.com).

**Milford's town election will be held Tuesday, April 1. Please mark your calendar and plan to vote!**

John Seaver and Steve Trettel  
Co-Chairmen, Citizens for Milford

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#### **About Citizens for Milford**

Citizens for Milford is a volunteer, nonpartisan, grassroots organization based in Milford, Massachusetts. We are a diverse group of citizens who care about our community. Our initial membership comes from the ranks of Casino-Free Milford, a group of Milford's citizens who have reorganized as Citizens for Milford with a renewed, two-fold mission:

- To review, research, and provide objective information to the Milford public and its town officials regarding current issues of concern.
- To encourage active citizen participation by coordinating projects and events that address current issues and that seek to improve the quality of life in our community.

Citizens for Milford welcomes new members who likewise wish to maintain Milford as a great community in which to live and work. Participation in our projects and events is open to everyone in Milford.

Learn more and sign up for email at [CitizensforMilford.com](http://CitizensforMilford.com)  
Get regular updates on [Facebook.com/CitizensforMilford](https://www.facebook.com/CitizensforMilford)  
Send email inquiries to [CitizensforMilford@gmail.com](mailto:CitizensforMilford@gmail.com)



# Candidates Directory

## Board of Library Trustees

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### **George Clemens (Incumbent)**

Phone: 508.473.7655  
Email: georgeclemens33@verizon.net

### **Scott Vecchiolla**

Phone: 508.377.2144  
Email: scottvecchiolla@gmail.com

### **Kathryn Mastroianni (Incumbent)**

Phone: 617.630.5924  
Email: k8mast@gmail.com  
Facebook: Vote for Kate 2014

## Tax Collector

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### **Melissa V. Alves-Tomas**

Phone: 508.381.0322  
Email: melissa.alvestomas@gmail.com  
Web: ElectAlvesTomas.com  
Facebook: Elect Melissa Alves Tomas

### **Theresa Diomedes Dias**

Phone: 774.573.8462  
Email: terrydee80@yahoo.com  
Facebook: Dias For Tax Collector

## Highway Surveyor

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### **Scott Crisafulli (Incumbent)**

Phone: 508.478.2697  
Email: scott368@gmail.com  
Web: ElectCrisafulli.com  
Facebook:  
Scott J. Crisafulli Candidate for Highway Surveyor

### **Shelly Leclaire**

Phone: 508.473.5910  
Email: leclaireshelly@yahoo.com  
Web: ElectShellyLeclaire.com

## School Committee

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### **Joseph Callery**

Phone: 508.202.3495  
Email: joecalleryschoolcommittee@gmail.com  
Facebook: Vote for Joe

### **David Levine**

Phone: 508-561-7138  
Email: david0308@verizon.net  
Facebook: David Levine For School Committee

### **John Erickson**

Phone: 508.381.1553  
Email: john@ericksonelectric.net  
Facebook: John Erickson for School Committee

### **Jennifer Parson**

Phone: 508.473.3438  
Email: jenkyle11@verizon.net  
Facebook:  
Jennifer Parson for Milford School Committee

# Job Descriptions

Below are brief summaries listing the basic responsibilities of the Library Trustee, Tax Collector, Highway Surveyor, and School Committee positions. If you would like to read the complete job descriptions, please send an email request to [CitizensforMilford@gmail.com](mailto:CitizensforMilford@gmail.com).

## Board of Library Trustees

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The By-Laws of the Board of Library Trustees require three primary responsibilities of the Trustees:

- The Board shall be responsible for all monies appropriated by the Town for the Library and all money or property received by the Town by gift or bequest for the Library.
- The Board shall appoint a qualified Library Director who shall be the Executive and Administrative officer of the library on behalf of the Board and under its review and direction.
- The Board shall establish written policies governing library activities and services.

All decisions of the Board are made by the Board as a collective body. No individual Member may make decisions or, with the exception of the Chairperson, act or speak for the Board unless specifically authorized to do so by a vote of the membership of the Board.

## Tax Collector

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The Town's official job description specifies that the Tax Collector plans, directs, and controls the functions of the Tax Collector's Office in accordance with State Statutes and Town By-Laws. Responsibilities include planning overall department activities and ensuring the accurate and timely processing of monies received; establishing, implementing, and controlling tax collection policies and procedures; supervising the collection of all taxes and user fees, including the issuance of bills, initiation of collection activities, and handling of severe complaints from taxpayers.

The duties require knowledge equivalent to a bachelor's degree in Business Administration and two to three years of progressively responsible experience in a municipal collector's office, including supervisory experience and knowledge of computers.

## Highway Surveyor

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The Town's official job description specifies that the Highway Surveyor is responsible for planning, organizing, and directing the construction, maintenance, and repair of Town streets, sidewalks, storm drains, and related structures and for overseeing fence and street sign maintenance, school grounds maintenance, and snow removal and treatment operations.

The duties require knowledge equivalent to a bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering and at least seven years of general and road construction experience.

## School Committee

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According to the Milford Public Schools “School Committee Policy Manual,” the primary responsibility of the School Committee is to establish the purposes, programs, and procedures that will best produce the educational achievement needed by our students. The committee is charged with accomplishing this while also being responsible for wise management of resources available to the school system. The committee must fulfil these responsibilities by functioning primarily as a legislative body to formulate and adopt policy, by selecting an executive officer to implement policy, and by evaluating the results. It must carry out its functions openly, while seeking the comments of public, students, and staff in its decision-making processes.

The duties and obligations of the individual committee members are:

- To become familiar with the General Laws of the Commonwealth relating to education and School Committee operations, regulations of the MA Board of Education, and policies and procedures of this School Committee and school department.
- To keep abreast of new laws and the latest trends in education.
- To have a general knowledge of the goals, objectives, and programs of the town’s public schools.
- To work effectively with other committee members without trying either to dominate the committee or neglect his or her share of the work.
- To respect the privileged communication that exists in executive sessions by maintaining strict confidentiality on matters discussed in these sessions, except that which becomes part of the public record, once it has been approved for release.
- To vote and act in committee impartially for the good of the students.
- To accept the will of the majority vote in all cases, and to remember that he or she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all committee decisions once they are made.
- To represent the committee and the schools to the public in a way that promotes interest and support.
- To refer questions and complaints to the proper school authorities.
- To comply with the accepted code of ethics for School Committee members.

To serve on the School Committee, an individual must be a registered voter and take an oath of office.



## Candidates for Library Board of Trustees (Two Seats)

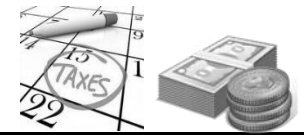


	Question	Kathryn Mastroianni (Incumbent)	Scott Vecchiolla
1	<i>What personal, educational, and/or work experiences do you have that would help you fulfill your responsibilities as a Trustee?</i>	My Liberal Arts degree reflects a variety of interests, and my work history illustrates that variety. I've worked in retail, software; startup, and manufacturing environments. They've all fed my sense of curiosity, and my continued desire to learn and to share what I've learned. Whether through customer service roles or by training. My experience reflects my general willingness to help and a desire to serve. I see the role of Trustee as serving this community by supporting the Director in her decision making processes to improve and expand the Library's services.	I am a high school graduate, Town Meeting member, and Vernon Grove Cemetery Trustee, all of which gives me the experience to do the job as Library Trustee.
2	<i>The Milford Town Library provides a broad range of services and programming for patrons of all ages. Do you believe the library is adequately serving all community members? If not, what opportunities do you see for improvement?</i>	The Library has a dedicated and proficient staff who provide a variety of services across the generations from children to seniors. They have arranged quiet study space on Saturday for students and IT support for job hunters. The facility offers computer access with their newly updated terminals and wifi access for others. Any community group, large or small, can take advantage of their meeting rooms. In conjunction with the Friends of the Milford Library, they offer a wide range of speakers and exhibitions. A relatively recent resource innovation was the library's expansion into ebooks that can be uploaded to a variety of platforms. The staff have years of experience supporting regulars and newcomers and they're a strong resource for identifying how and when community needs evolve.	I recommend adding more reading materials, more discounts to places like Sturbridge Village (venues that are cultural and historic locations), and more computers for the Milford residents because many people do not have access to computers. The library is a resource to the residents.
3	<i>One responsibility of the Board of Trustees is to establish written policies governing library activities and services. (The policies are provided on the library's website.) At this time, would you recommend changing or adding to the existing policies? If so, please elaborate.</i>	Interestingly, we have been working on updating the policies for the past year. A committee comprised of the Director and two trustees have been reviewing the basic policies. The staff will conduct an initial review of the library's institutional policies.	No changes or additions at this time.

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Kathryn Mastroianni (Incumbent)</b>	<b>Scott Vecchiolla</b>
<b>4</b>	<i>Describe how you see yourself working with the Library Director. How involved will you be in decisions made by the Library Director?</i>	As trustees we're available as the Director needs, it can be as simple as brainstorming a policy revision or supporting a more complicated process like building repairs.	I will be very involved in the day to day operations with the Library Director to make sure the Milford residents get the best service.
<b>5</b>	<i>The Board of Trustees is responsible for all money appropriated to the library by the town. Describe how you will work to ensure Milford tax payers are represented during the budget planning process.</i>	We review the budget as proposed by the Director to ensure the funds are appropriated correctly so that all Milford's residents can enjoy the full benefit of the library.	I will make sure the taxpayers' money is spent wisely for the library needs and future generations of Milford residents.



## Candidates for Tax Collector



	Question	Melissa V. Alves-Tomas	Theresa Diomedes Dias
1	<p><i>Explain your experience that qualifies you for the position and distinguishes you from your opponent.</i></p>	<p>This is a management position. Business management knowledge and skills such as leadership, planning, organizing and controlling are needed. Nine years ago I graduated with a Bachelor's in Business Management degree with honors. That gave me the knowledge. The 9 years since have given me the experience applying it. I also have years of financial and accounting experience to complement management skills.</p>	<p>I am the only qualified candidate for Tax Collector. I am currently Acting Tax Collector and I was appointed by the Board of Selectmen to this position in September of 2013. Having worked in the Tax Collector's office for six years, I have the knowledge, experience and dedication it takes to run this office. My prior five years working as Assistant to the Assessor Administrator enabled me to have in-depth knowledge of the assessing function as well as management experience. This is critical for the Tax Collector function where 90% of our tax information is generated from the Assessing Office.</p> <p>Prior to working for the Town of Milford, I worked for twenty-two years in banking which gives me the finance experience needed as well as thirty-three years in customer service which enables me to handle the high volume of customer service which is required of the Tax Collector's Office on a daily basis. I possess the knowledge and ability to collect the 56 million dollars in real estate and personal property taxes for fiscal year 2014. We currently maintain a 99% collection rate. I also have the knowledge of the three systems needed to efficiently run this office.</p> <p>I am educated in many areas pertaining to Tax Collection. At UMASS Amherst Annual School, I have taken and completed the Massachusetts Collector/Treasurer course. (Cash control, property tax collection, motor vehicle excise, tax takings and interest calculation.) Also, I have taken and completed the Department of Revenue Assessment Administration course as well as the Massachusetts Assessors course. I have attended numerous workshops related to Tax Collection and Assessing. I have taken every opportunity the Town of Milford has offered me to educate myself on Tax Collection and Assessing by completing the above courses and workshops.</p> <p><i>continued</i></p>

	Question	Melissa V. Alves-Tomas	Theresa Diomedes Dias
			All of the above experience and education in Tax Collection greatly distinguishes me from my opponent. Without all of the above knowledge, a person would never be able to carry out the oath of this office and perform the duties and responsibilities required of a Tax Collector.
2	<i>What are your short and long-term goals for the department?</i>	<p>At the start:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closely examine and evaluate existing ways of doing things,</li> <li>• Assess the staff’s level of hard skills, training, and interpersonal skills</li> <li>• Develop a plan that addresses any areas that need to be strengthened immediately, and implement it.</li> </ul> <p>Long Term Goals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping up to date with technology and options/features that benefit residents.</li> <li>• Work closer and have greater communication between departments such as the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee.</li> </ul> <p>The goal is to become even more efficient, saving money in the process. It also includes giving Milford residents the very best customer service. I’m bilingual, so this level of customer service can be extended to even more town residents.</p>	My short-term goal has already been accomplished which was implementing an online payment system. This system, since it has been up and running, has received great response from the taxpayers. In working in the Tax Collector’s office for six years, I am well aware of the updated technology the office needs. My long-term goal is to continue to update technology to make the taxpaying process convenient, and as easy as possible.
3	<i>What major weaknesses do you see in the department that you would like to correct?</i>	<p>Looking at it from the outside, it would appear there is a need to get up to-date. In recent weeks it was announced that online payment is now available. While a good thing, it should have happened long ago. The Internet has been a common payment method for over 10 years. I’ll bring my information technology skills to the office, so residents get sooner rather than later.</p> <p>Customer Service is a concern for residents. I have received many complaints about the manner in which the residents are treated. As a town employee, I work for you- the resident – Exceptional service must be given at all times.</p>	The major weakness in the department is the desperate need for new computers. This is the top priority for the office at this time.



	<b>Question</b>	<b>Melissa V. Alves-Tomas</b>	<b>Theresa Diomedes Dias</b>
<b>4</b>	<i>Do you think the current staffing and budget levels are adequate? Do you anticipate asking for an increase or decrease in the department budget?</i>	<p>Yes, the current full time staff is adequate. The office has been a 3 person office for many years, and I do not believe that additional staffing is needed. The majority of the budget is for salary/wages, and the department salaries are governed by union contracts. The department's total budget is approximately \$181K, and \$167K is salary/wages. In moving forward, I would explore every opportunity of new technology to cut costs. Other than personnel budget/contract requirements, I foresee no other budget increases.</p>	<p>Yes, the current staffing levels are adequate to perform the day to day operations of the department. I have submitted a budget with an increase. I am requesting additional money for education. I believe attending meetings and workshops and keeping current on Massachusetts General Laws and new legislation, along with the Department of Revenue expectations and general issues affecting all Tax Collectors is a must to perform my duties to the best of my ability. I have also requested money to fund new computers for the office. This discussion will continue with the Town Administrator, the Finance Committee and the I.T. Committee.</p>
<b>5</b>	<i>How would you manage tax delinquents?</i>	<p>The ultimate goal is to not have any tax delinquents. Being highly organized and having impeccable record-keeping are essentials in dealing with taxpaying delinquency. Follow-up includes working very closely with the tax payers, staying in timely contact and monitoring each situation very closely.</p> <p>Working closely with the Board of Selectmen in a timely manner will also help improve tax delinquents. The Board is able to assist in the collection process by addressing the business owners sooner, not just at license renewal time.</p>	<p>I will continue to work with delinquent taxpayers as I have done in the past. I believe that compassion and the willingness to work with the taxpayer to try to come up with a payment plan which enables them to pay off their past due taxes. Communication is a must between the Tax Collector and the taxpayer and I keep in constant contact either by phone, email, or letter. Working in the department for six years, I know the reasons why people cannot pay their taxes. This generally comes from loss of a job, illness, or death of a spouse. I do not wish to advertise or embarrass people who have fallen on hard times and will not do so until I am required to by law through administering a tax taking.</p>



# Candidates for Highway Surveyor



	<b>Question</b>	<b>Scott Crisafulli (Incumbent)</b>	<b>Shelly LeClaire</b>
<b>1</b>	<i>What are the specific reasons Milford voters should vote for you?</i>	On the merit of what I've done. I have 28 years of construction experience. My 20+ years as a Highway Department employee performing every job has given me the best experience to perform the job. My overall knowledge of equipment leads to what's needed to perform the services that residents expect on a daily basis. Constantly finding and utilized grants to save taxpayers millions of dollars on road repair, culvert repairs and equipment purchases. Making continued education a priority for new road technology and equipment technology that changes at a rapid pace. Safety of residents utilizing town roads and sidewalks along with safety of the employees that work for the department are always my number one priority.	The voters of Milford have a unique opportunity in this election to compare and evaluate my record as Highway Surveyor and that of my successor. During my tenure as Highway Surveyor, my accomplishments left a lasting impression on Milford residents. For example: the implementation of the Town-wide leaf removal program, the construction of a \$1million equipment garage, 94 roads resurfaced and the installation of 119 handicap compliant ramps. Voters should also consider our values; I value public safety as a first priority, service to the community, availability and responsiveness, open and honest communication, fiscal responsibility, and meticulous attention to detail.
<b>2</b>	<i>What Highway Department resources (such as equipment or technology) do you believe are at the most critical need to be updated?</i>	Pavement technology is always changing. The cost of liquid asphalt has sky rocketed in the past six years causing us to find alternatives to rebuilding roads. The idea is to make a road last longer at a lesser cost. There are many new alternatives that we have used such as surface treatments, recycling and base treatments that can add up to another 15 years of new life to a road. GIS is another great tool that has multiple uses for the Highway Department and our storm water mandate that can save time and money. I believe in purchasing multi use equipment where ever possible. Since 2006 I have specified and purchased most of our equipment as multi use not only for this department but useful to other departments.	Working with the Capital Improvement Committee and Finance Committee, I implemented a five year capital improvement plan for the replacement and or acquisition of capital equipment. If adhered to, there should be no critical need to update equipment.

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Scott Crisafulli (Incumbent)</b>	<b>Shelly Leclaire</b>
<b>3</b>	<i>What is your strategy for maximizing resources beyond the tax base?</i>	A snow removal example. We now utilize other department's personnel and equipment to help in our snow removal process. This saves money by reducing the need for as many outside contractors. The implementation of the GPS units for contractors has also been a proven cost savings for the town. A concern going forward is salt use. The effect on the environment, the escalating cost and availability are becoming issues. One way to combat this is altering sander calibration to spread even more efficiently, controlling waste, limiting environmental damage and saving money.	I will aggressively seek Federal and State funds available to offset expenses required to maintain roads and sidewalks. I will submit road repair requests for reimbursement in a timely manner. The current administration has been late in submitting reimbursement requests. By eliminating these delays the Town will avoid adding interest costs to taxes, allowing funds to be available for other projects.  To further maximize resources I have proposed utilization of rail delivery for more efficient acquisition of road salt, which would save the Town thousands of dollars in transportation costs. I will evaluate a possible regional arrangement with neighboring Towns whereby increased volume would result in lower salt costs.  I propose purchasing an asphalt hot box so that the Town can be prepared to fix pot holes year round. An abundance of potholes is presenting a hazard to drivers, there is no reason why so many potholes have gone unfixed. My plan will allow department employees to fill holes year round.
<b>4</b>	<i>How do you determine when a street needs to be resurfaced or reconstructed? Do you favor having the work completed by town employees, by outsourced contractors, or some combination?</i>	We have a list of all town roads in need of repair. Every year we determine which roads have had constant maintenance and are in the worst condition. A list of roads is sent to all utilities companies to find out if there are any repairs needed and what their schedule is for the repairs. We then determine what process will be used to repair the road. We try to fit as many in each year as we can according to our Chapter 90 allotment and the town road repair budget. We are a maintenance department and are not set up to perform major street repairs. However, our employees do some of the smaller jobs involved in the street repair.	The Highway Surveyor constantly inspects and evaluates the condition of 120 miles of roads and sidewalks to determine and prioritize which roads need attention and the most cost effective method of repair. Some roads are so far deteriorated they require full depth reclamation, while others may only need to be coldplaned. Road work must be accomplished utilizing outside contractors because the Town does not have the specialized equipment or manpower to perform the necessary work. The highway department works in conjunction with outside contractors performing various aspects of the work, such as, insuring driveway aprons are to grade and loaming/reseeding upon completion of the road.

	<b>Question</b>	<b>Scott Crisafulli (Incumbent)</b>	<b>Shelly Leclaire</b>
<b>5</b>	<i>Please explain how you would handle a resident's complaint involving street maintenance (such as holes in the street, ice, or damaged lawn from town equipment).</i>	All complaints whether email, phone calls or in person are put on work orders. Each work order gets evaluated and commented on by me or one of our foremen. All potholes, ice or any other dangerous situation is a priority and repaired as soon as possible. Potholes are repaired on a daily basis throughout the year. We meet with residents when necessary to solve the complaint or problems they are experiencing. When completed, work orders are entered in our data base for future use and tracking of road condition.	It is important to restore key services to the residents of Milford, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During business hours the telephone will be answered by a person who will promptly assist the caller.</li> <li>• Re-implement a work order system for prioritization of complaints which ensures direct communication with the residents informing them of remediation.</li> <li>• Implement a training program to outside contractors to familiarize them with their assigned plow route to minimize or eliminate property damage.</li> </ul>
<b>6</b>	<i>What would you consider to be your biggest challenge if you were elected/re-elected?</i>	To do more with less is a continuing challenge but the biggest challenge this department and the town faces is the new MS4 storm water permit. The new permit requirements are very intense and expensive. The Town of Milford alone with storm water retro fits and BMP's will have to spend as much as \$65,000,000 in the next ten years. At this time there are no grants or special funding to pay for this. A Storm Water utility will have to be set up to run and maintain the program for the future.	The condition of the roads in Milford is not acceptable. During the past five years, many of the roads have fallen into disrepair. There are a large number of potholes and cracks that have gone unfixed for far too long. This lack of preventative maintenance has led to a shortened life for the roads more recently repaired. Sidewalks near our schools are cracked and the installation of handicap compliant ramps has declined. Each and every one of these areas presents a safety hazard to the residents of Milford.  If elected I will regularly survey all of the roads in Milford to assess and prioritize the road repair needs and put a plan in place to remediate these problem areas. When I was Highway Surveyor it was well known that I would regularly be out on the roads personally so I could identify the biggest issues in need of my attention. I plan to take the same approach once again, as I do believe that current process is broken and needs to be fixed.



# Candidates for School Committee (Two Open Seats)



## 1 What qualifications do you have that would help you fulfil your responsibilities as a school committee member?

<b>Joseph Callery</b>	<b>John Erickson</b>	<b>David Levine</b>	<b>Jennifer Parson</b>
<p>I am a supervisor at Milton Caterpillar where I oversee government contracts for the US Military. I am responsible for maintaining budgets and juggling the needs of many on a daily basis. I have been employed with CAT since 2006. I am persuasive, motivated and extremely thorough. I am able to work well with anyone.</p> <p>I am father and will have children in the school system for the next 15 years. I have no plans to leave Milford and hope my children will choose to stay and raise a family here as well. As a fourth generation Milfordian I have a personal investment and responsibility to ensure the success of the town.</p>	<p>As a lifelong Milford resident, a graduate of Milford High School Class of 1986, WPI graduate, local contractor for many years and current Municipal Employee, I have been immersed in this community in many ways my entire life. I have heard concerns from diverse groups and understand them well. As a proven decision maker without an agenda, my plan is to focus on the true role of a School Committee member. I will support our Administrators and Educators, and insist on accountability for programs and decisions that work, as well as those which do not implement as well as anticipated. Educational goals remain unchanged, we all want the best education possible for our students. Programs, methods, and enrollment dynamics do change, and the System must adapt accordingly. The Budget is always a concern, and as a complete and unbiased candidate, I will be able to objectively and responsibly approve the spending of over \$42,000,000 of taxpayer dollars. My commitment to this community and the Town of Milford is ultimately my biggest asset.</p>	<p>I believe my educational background, Bachelors in Economics (University of Massachusetts), Masters in Business Administration and Masters in Accounting (Suffolk University), my work experience as an Accounting and Finance Manager for Real Estate Investment/Development Companies and my town government involvement as a Capital Improvement Committee Member, School Building Committee Member (Stacey, Brookside) and Town Meeting Member proves that I'm a driven individual that cares for not only the importance of an education but for the community's well-being as a whole.</p>	<p>I have spent the past 20 years working in public education as an elementary school teacher, assistant principal, and currently as principal of the Lincoln Street School in Northborough, which houses grades K-5. I have a Master's Degree in Curriculum from Lesley University, and a CAGS (Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies) Degree in Educational Leadership from Bridgewater State College. In my position, I participate in our school's work with implementing the Common Core and the new MA Educator Evaluation System. I am experienced at budget preparation, at prioritizing when working with limited resources, and at approaching situations flexibly. Equally as important, I am the parent of two children who attend the Milford Public Schools. I believe that my professional and personal experiences will allow me to successfully fulfill the responsibilities of a school committee member.</p>

**2 At the February 2014 Town Meeting, the new Woodland School project was approved. What role will you play to ensure the project stays on budget and meets the educational goals established by the previous School Committee?**

<b>Joseph Callery</b>	<b>John Erickson</b>	<b>David Levine</b>	<b>Jennifer Parson</b>
<p>First off, I have been behind the new Woodland School project from the beginning. The state is paying for a large portion of the cost because the school cannot support the number of children we have in town. We have to turn away potential revenue via school choice students because of the lack of space at Woodland. The finance committee has done a great job preparing the town for this project over the last decade. The budget for the school is conservative and the educational goals are realistic. I am a fourth generation Milfordian and I promise to you, as I did to the rest of my family, that I will do my part to ensure this project does not cause any financial stress on any of our taxpayers.</p>	<p>Building a new Woodland School project was long overdue. Having observed the present physical aspect of the learning environment, it is amazing what a great job the teachers at Woodland are able to accomplish. To return to a true elementary school environment with grades 3 – 5 in a traditional classroom setting will allow the Teachers to focus more on curriculum than ever. The project is already in good hands with HMFH Architects doing the design, Joselin Lesser as Associate Project Manager, and Shawmut Construction as the management team at risk. I have been involved in the construction industry for all of my working life. For the past 10 years I have served first as a Building Inspector and currently as a Building Commissioner/ Certified Building Official. Every day I am reviewing construction plans for compliance. I am also performing inspections daily. I have seen the common pitfalls and cost overruns, and will use this experience to prevent unnecessary delays and change orders. With proper planning, design, and construction management, there should be no surprises.</p>	<p>As the school’s project is under the direction of the School Building Committee I would request to be one of the School Committee’s representatives as my work experience would be invaluable to the project. Having worked with project managers I understand the risks and economic exposures to construction costs. I would monitor the budget and change orders to ensure we are not spending for spending sake which will result in the alleviation of any unnecessary “bells and whistles”. As for the educational goals, I would re-evaluate the existing goals and recommend that a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis be performed so to ensure that there is an understanding from every stakeholder how the objectives can be met or exceeded but at the same time understand what limitations there are.</p>	<p>In my current position, I am working with the Mass. School Building Authority (MSBA) on a proposed renovation project for my school. The MSBA's process for building projects is carefully regulated and the Woodland Building Committee has already encountered great scrutiny by the MSBA and the citizens of Milford. As a school committee member, I would expect regular updates by the Building Committee, including communication from the architects and project managers. I would expect to remain engaged in the planning both for the new Woodland and for the transition to a new grade level configuration in Milford; plans for transitioning our fifth grade to Woodland and our eighth grade to Stacy will need to be completed in a thoughtful, realistic manner. As with any endeavor, I believe that communication among all constituencies will be the key to a successful project.</p>

**3** *Do you believe Milford’s Public Schools have the required security measures in place to ensure the safety of our students? Provide examples of some measures that you feel have been implemented or not implemented that support your position.*

<b>Joseph Callery</b>	<b>John Erickson</b>	<b>David Levine</b>	<b>Jennifer Parson</b>
<p>Our schools are leading the way for others with their safety procedures. My son was completing lockdown drills with his teachers before the last elementary school tragedy occurred. The schools all have locked doors, you are required to ring a buzzer and let the office know who you are and what business you need to conduct before entering. The schools have visitor check in booths that require you to present ID.</p> <p>Safety is always something that can be improved as time goes on. As we get better at protecting our children, people that want to hurt them figure out new ways to beat the security measures. We need to continue to strive to stay one step ahead when it comes to our children’s’ safety.</p>	<p>The Milford Public School System has worked well with the Milford Police Department, the two full time officers assigned to the schools, and internally to secure the Schools. A number of measures are in place which are designed to ensure the safety of our students. However I believe that the system as a whole would benefit by reinstating the position of the Director of Safety and Security. Those in charge of the safety of the Schools are charged with numerous other duties. While the safety of the schools is always a group effort, there needs to be one director in place who can continue to develop the proper safety protocol, and instruct and direct all school employees in this effort. Where the Director of School Safety used to perform in District Court on matters such as truancy, it is now the responsibility of the individual school Principals. Where the Director of School Safety would respond to off hour alarms, a Custodian now responds. A great deal has been lost since this position cut.</p>	<p>Yes, I believe there are measures in place such as Real Life Disaster Mock Training, No visitors without an appointment, dedicated police officer, school ring in system and security cameras. However, at the high school too many unlocked unattended doors in the morning. As the campus is so large, I would like to see either one way access into the school or have the doors monitored by administrators. I would also like to see the police officer more visible by being outside of the car and walking campus.</p>	<p>Ensuring the safety of our students and staff is critical. Our District has implemented a number of safety measures, including: locking all schools, communicating with families regarding expectations for entering the schools during the school day, practicing safety drills and reviewing safety protocols with students, and conducting more advanced training with our faculty members. It is also clear that our schools have a positive working relationship with the Milford Police Department.</p> <p>Moving forward, staff and students will require more in-depth training in crisis management. All staff members need to understand the choices they have for preserving safety and order in an emergency, and much research is available on ways to empower staff members to make decisions that match the needs of a particular situation. Also, while our schools have common needs, every school has its own unique challenges based on the site and the population of students that it serves. Our budget needs to be developed with safety in mind in order to address the safety needs at each one of our schools.</p>

**4** *Do you believe it is the state and federal government's job to decide what and how we teach our children, or do you believe this decision should be made locally?*

<b>Joseph Callery</b>	<b>John Erickson</b>	<b>David Levine</b>	<b>Jennifer Parson</b>
<p>I believe that the teachers we trust with our children, who see them on a regular basis, along with the leaders in each school would be the most qualified to make recommendations on curriculum.</p> <p>I think we could have a better balance in place to ensure quality education across the country while leaving enough room for our teachers to teach at a personal and local level.</p> <p>Ensuring that we have a challenging and engaging curriculum in place for our schools is the highest in priority. We should always push for that flexibility for our teachers to ensure we have the best learning environment for our students.</p>	<p>Fundamentally I am opposed to the federal government deciding what and how we teach our children.</p>	<p>Given that we live in a global economy competing for college seats and jobs from people all over the world, I do believe we need a state if not national standard of learning. However, I do feel that how we teach these standards to our children should be left to our local government which will allow teachers and administrators the flexibility for creativity as not every child has the ability to learn the same way.</p>	<p>No matter where children reside, there are core understandings that they should master at each grade level. Students should never be at a disadvantage based on their zip code, or because of the whim of elected or hired officials. Teachers need to have the training, confidence, and flexibility to make instructional decisions based on the students who sit before them each day. For any local school district, this means that teachers need to familiarize themselves with the big ideas and "enduring understandings" that students should take away from any unit of study. Milford educators are now working on an organized means of mapping their curriculum to ensure that students have access to what educational experts call a "guaranteed and viable curriculum." This is where our educators, who are our local experts, greatly impact our students' learning.</p>



**5** *What do you think about the Common Core State Standards?*

<b>Joseph Callery</b>	<b>John Erickson</b>	<b>David Levine</b>	<b>Jennifer Parson</b>
<p>There are some things to consider when we discuss the Common Core Standards. On one hand we need to keep in mind students moving from other towns and even other states. When we establish standards that reach across the board we can ensure that every student is getting a quality education and if they do need to move to another school they will be able to jump right in where they left off. On the other hand I believe that there should always be flexibility for our teacher to engage each child as they see most effective for that student during the school day. We can achieve and even exceed the standards required by the state as the end result and still allow our teachers to partner with school leaders and officials to create a classroom setting that is engaging for each student.</p>	<p>The new Common Core State Standard has been adopted by 45 States. The concept of teaching virtually the same content at the same levels throughout the country gives me the inclination that the top students may not have the opportunities that they do at this time. For example there is a notion that with a curriculum set to Common Core standards, a student may not advance quickly enough to take a subject like AP Calculus in high school. However the concept has been developed over many years and I do think it is too soon to pass judgment.</p>	<p>Too early to tell because it has been written that there are many issues in implementing the system such as infrastructure (technology, books) and training costs, lack of funding to support full implementation and more importantly the standards are cultivating an environment that inhibits both teaching and learning beginning at the kindergarten level. But I do believe that designing an educational standard to ensure that all students no matter where they live will graduate with the same global skills is an encouraging endeavor that will create accountability in our school system.</p>	<p>The Common Core Standards were designed to address societal changes, such as the significant advances we see in technology, our global society, and increasing expectations in the workplace. The Common Core standards are broad and far-reaching, and learning activities may appear different from the instruction that many of us received in our own schooling. However, what we see in the Common Core is relevant to countless aspects of our students' lives and future career paths. Thinking, analyzing, communicating, effectively using technology, and being able to quickly change course are skills that will serve our children well in all settings, including: academics, athletics, performing arts, in their part-time jobs, and ultimately in their chosen professions. Aligning Milford's taught curriculum to the Common Core Standards is currently a very important work in progress.</p>

**6** *The community is concerned about Milford’s current ranking regarding its MCAS and SAT test scores. What is your opinion of Milford’s current scores? Do you have any ideas for improvement?*

<b>Joseph Callery</b>	<b>John Erickson</b>	<b>David Levine</b>	<b>Jennifer Parson</b>
<p>We have many extremely intelligent students, our high school ranked 37th in Massachusetts but our test scores are far from 37th. We live in a very diverse town. These standardized tests are not written for English as second language students. The scores may be on the lower side for some because of the language barrier in turn bringing down the overall average.</p> <p>I am looking forward to the implementation of the Partnership for Readiness of College and Careers test that will be replacing the MCAS. As we phase in new technology, this test will help our teachers address concerns sooner as the results are readily available when the test is taken on a computer. This test will also help when it comes to the assessment and the readiness of the students who are more likely to go into the workforce after high school.</p>	<p>MCAS and SAT scores are not necessarily the best indication of a Student’s ability or of a School System’s success. That is true of standardized tests in general, and it has been recognized. MCAS will soon be replaced with PARCC testing. PARCC testing is designed to measure deeper learning and critical thinking. The testing format is much different than what is in place currently, and should be a better reflection of a student’s progress. The best way to improve any standardized test score is to align the instruction to what the standard is. But again, I don’t feel that any standardized test is the best measure of a student’s ability. Something I look at in my assessment of a school system is which colleges the graduates apply to and get accepted to. The MHS graduates of 2013 were accepted to numerous top level institutions such as Boston College, Boston University, Clark University, Bryant University, Bentley College, Holy Cross, and Dartmouth, to name a few. Milford has a great school system and was recently recognized by the US News and World Report as the 37th best school system in Massachusetts.</p>	<p>In one word my opinion of the scores is Diversity. To alleviate the concerns I welcome everyone to go on the mass.edu website to see which sectors are driving the scores downward. Although it may not drives scores upward my ideas for improvement would be towards decreasing the drop-out rate by building upon vocational programs such as the Hospitality Program or consider a cost/benefit analysis of placing students whose interests are geared more towards a trade to a vocational school such as Tri-County or Keefe Tech.</p>	<p>When reflecting on scores from the MCAS, SATs, AP exams, or any other type of group-administered test, we should see a direct connection between what is tested and our curriculum. While teachers should have the flexibility to deliver instruction in a manner that matches their unique style, the essential content must be consistent and aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. We need to ensure that teachers are proficient at reviewing data and making instructional decisions based on data. Data teams have been created in each of Milford's schools, and this is a great step forward.</p> <p>It is also important to remember that there are virtually no exemptions where the MCAS is concerned. Students of all ability levels and levels of language proficiency take this complex assessment. The reality is that this does impact our scores. More importantly, however, we need to devote resources to our students who are struggling learners, as well as to those students who are capable of more than they are producing, and to those who require accelerated learning opportunities. With significant changes to curriculum and with countless initiatives facing all schools in the Commonwealth, this work will not be accomplished overnight, yet it should remain at the top of Milford's priority list.</p>