

# 2021

# Bedford Voter's Guide For Town Elections



**This pamphlet was compiled by the Bedford Public Library's Reference Department in conjunction with Town Clerk Sally Kellar.**

All information contained in this packet was provided voluntarily by the candidates.

# **2021 Candidates for Town and School Offices**

## **Town of Bedford**

### **TOWN COUNCIL**

**(3 SEATS) (3 YEARS)**

Sue Thomas

Kelleigh Murphy

Bill Duschatko

Phil Greazzo

### **TRUSTEE OF THE TRUST FUNDS**

**(1 SEAT) (3 YEARS)**

Kenneth Peterson

### **LIBRARY TRUSTEE**

**(1 SEAT) (3 YEARS)**

Walter Gallo

### **LIBRARY TRUSTEE**

**(1 SEAT) (2 YEARS)**

Jerry Hanauer

Hank Vanderbeek

Doreen Schneller

### **SUPERVISOR OF THE CHECKLIST**

**(1 SEAT) (5 YEARS)**

Becki Kuhns

# 2021 Candidates for Town and School Offices

## Bedford School District

### SCHOOL BOARD

(2 SEATS) (3 YEARS)

Melinda Bator

Melissa Stevens

Autumn Haskell

Michael McCormick

*We did not receive responses from the following candidates: Walter Gallo, Doreen Schneller, and Becki Kuhns.*

# CANDIDATE FOR TOWN COUNCIL

## Sue Thomas

**Contact:** 603-533-4416/sue\_thomas@comcast.net

**Education:** BS-Hotel Management, Niagara

MBA-Finance, University of Detroit

**Profession:** CFO/Treasurer - Rx Monitoring Services, Inc, Bedford

**Organizations/Affiliations:** I was involved in many Bedford organizations, including the School Board, PTG, Little League, Parks and Rec, girls HS basketball coach and more. This year, I was part of the Bedford Sewing Battalion, making masks that were donated state-wide. We are members of St. Elizabeth Seton Church.

**Political Experience:** Bedford School Board, 2000-2008

**Incumbent?** No

## Why are you running for elected office in Bedford?

My husband and I moved to Bedford in 1989 and raised our family here. We both come from out of state and realized very quickly what a great place Bedford was. We have both been involved in many town and school organizations. From 2000-2008, I was a member of the Bedford School Board, which was during the time of planning, voting on and ultimately building the high school. At the end of my third term, I was ready to do something else in town. For 11 years, I was part of the BHS girls basketball coaching staff, eight of those years as the head coach. During the last two years, I have had to deal with some family issues, including the health of my parents but I am now able to get back to contributing to the town. I have always thought that Bedford was well run, due to the people who are employed in town and the many

community members who step up and give their time. I know that with my experience as a longtime member of the community, a small business owner in town and my background in Finance and budgeting, I can contribute to help keep Bedford the desirable community that people want to live in.

### **Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community?**

In these unchartered times, I hope to help the town work to balance the issues concerning the budget and tax rate with the need to improve town facilities. While some of our facilities are aging and need to be brought up to date with technology, the taxpayers, who are paying the bill, must be given enough information to make informed decisions. We need to find a way to get more information out to the community.

### **How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for?**

I have been involved in many town/school activities since moving to Bedford in 1989. I know how the town functions, how the two forms of government (town and school) work, how their budgets are developed and what the needs of the town are. Besides being a Bedford resident, I have also owned a Bedford based business with my husband and partners for 25 years. We have 10 employees and own our building. My background is in Finance and I am the CFO of our small company. For the past 25 years, I have developed and managed our company's budgets to grow it into a prosperous small company. Both at work and at home, I have had to navigate the waters of lean financial years while achieving the highest possible outcomes, whether it be putting our three children through college or making the next payroll. I can use my experience volunteering in Bedford, along with building a business and raising a family, to help the town meet its needs now and into the future.

# CANDIDATE FOR TOWN COUNCIL

## Kelleigh Murphy

**Contact:** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/kelleighmurphy/> or [www.murphylegalnh.com](http://www.murphylegalnh.com)

**Education:** B.A., Political Science with concentrations in music and linguistics, Boston College; J.D., Vermont Law School

**Profession:** Complex Asset Divorce and Civil Litigation Attorney. Founding Principal, Murphy Legal



**Organizations/Affiliations:** Vice Chairwoman, Bedford Planning Board; Board Member and Grant Committee Chairwoman, Educational Farm at Joppa Hill; Board Member, Bedford Little League; Has coached for Bedford Little League; Bedford Girls Softball League; Bedford Basketball; Bedford Bulldogs Flag Football

**Political Experience:** Served as a School Board Member and Alderwoman in Manchester, NH. Bedford Town Council, 2012-2018 (Chairwoman 2015-2017).

**Incumbent?** No

## Why are you running for elected office in Bedford?

Bedford is such a great community with big-town amenities and a small-town feel. I want to work to preserve the character of this town for future generations to enjoy, which ensuring that taxes are reasonable and the town's needs are met, particularly when it comes to investment in Police, Fire and our roads and infrastructure. I enjoy public service, and feel as though my background as an attorney serves as an asset on the Council.

## **Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community?**

I would like to focus on forward-thinking for the community. By that, I mean that I would like to focus on preserving Bedford's unique character while planning for the future. Specifically, public safety issues, including a more secure and safe Police Station, additional ambulance services, and appropriate personnel levels must be considered. Infrastructure is another area that needs attention - the road bond allowed us to reconstruct many of the roads in town, but they must be continually maintained so that they do not fall into disrepair in the future.

I would look to find efficiencies in operations, particularly post-COVID. Perhaps some town employees can continue to perform remotely, freeing up space in existing town offices without the need to construct additional buildings for non-safety-related personnel.

I would also seek to work with the Planning and Zoning Boards to address and promote responsible growth and to ensure a sustainable tax base into the future.

## **How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for?**

I am an attorney with extensive experience with oral advocacy, reading, writing and contract review and drafting. In my past work on the council, these skills have served me well, and I anticipate they will continue to do so in the future. I also have a history of working collaboratively with existing town council members, no matter what our individual views are on an issue. Finally, I believe that the best governance is that which listens to the people - I would listen to the concerns of residents and taxpayers if I was fortunate enough to be elected to the council.

# CANDIDATE FOR TOWN COUNCIL

## **William ("Bill") Duschatko**

**Contact:** 602-472-5393/ wldgroup.com/candidate

**Education:** Dartmouth College A.B.

Amos Tuck School of Business Administration M.B.A.

**Profession:** Retired

**Organizations/Affiliations:** Director and Treasurer The Friends of the Bedford Cemeteries

**Political Experience:** I have had the privilege of serving the residents of Bedford since 2015 as a Town Councilor and as Chairman of the Council in 2018 and 2019. I have served on all of the Town's Boards and Commissions at some point during my time on the Council.

**Incumbent?** Yes

## **Why are you running for elected office in Bedford?**

I wish to continue my service to Bedford by using my experience in and knowledge of municipal affairs. I have had great interactions with our Town Manager and Department Heads and would like to apply my experience to ensuring that Bedford develops operational policies that will continue to provide the highest level of services to our residents at a fair cost to all. In addition I would like to use my experience and knowledge to help marshal an effective facilities program and provision of a total fiber optic connectivity to all areas of Bedford.



## **Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community?**

The most critical item facing Bedford in the next ten years, is the necessity of maintaining a fair tax assessment for property owners. At the town level approximately 75% of our annual expenditures are related to employee compensation and benefits. Another 22% is related to debt service on obligations that have been issued to ensure that our roads and facilities are maintained at an acceptable level and that we have the necessary equipment to allow our public safety personnel to function at their highest levels. Because our employment pool is growing older we have to continue to attract their replacements with fair, but not excessive compensation.

At the same time, as a community, we are faced with the continued failure of the State Legislature to responsibly cover its stated obligations to sharing revenues with all communities. This requires a constant effort to work with not only representatives of our district, but also to reach out to other communities to engage them in support of efforts to have the State of NH follow the laws that have been previously put in place.

Operationally we need to continue to improve efficiency in providing services to our residents. We have made investments in software and improved data processing and now we need to ensure that it is a requirement that these systems are used to improve communication with our residents and fulfill basic constituent services as completely as possible.

As a Councilor one can not be directly involved in daily operations, but Council members, on a collective basis, must create a level of understanding that the only acceptable performance level is one of excellence.

## **How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for?**

I have been fortunate to have been involved in many aspects of both business and government during my career. As the Founding Executive Director of the New Hampshire Housing Finance Agency, I have been active in improving housing opportunities in NH since 1976. I have extensive experience in real estate development issues and financing, in addition I actively use new technologies to create new opportunities for better and more timely information that assists decision making. However, I do not blindly accept the latest fads or hot topics. I require a in depth analysis of the situation and the proposed solution and attempt to fairly assess the balance between expected costs and benefits. If this is not readily available, I search out answers.

I am familiar with telecommunications alternatives and am active in exploring with the help of others, potential solutions to provide high speed internet services to Bedford and fair and consistent prices.

We are fortunate in that we have a community to does not have any significant problems with the exception of certain facilities that no longer are adequate to provide desirable and efficient work areas. We all have to work together to pool our experience and insights to create a program to replace and renovate existing facilities.

# CANDIDATE FOR TOWN COUNCIL

## **Phil Greazzo**

**Contact:** 603-669-0494

**Education:** High School  
Advanced Individual / Leadership Training,  
Tactical Satellite Communications, College  
Correspondence

**Profession:** Small Business Owner, Property  
Maintenance & Construction



### **Political Experience:**

Town Council, State Representative, City Alderman

**Incumbent?** Yes

### **Why are you running for elected office in Bedford?**

Help maintain responsible spending on necessities as well as finding ways to reduce the tax burden.

**Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community?**

We already have an incredible community and must work to preserve it. I will work for lower taxes and less spending with a focus on responsible growth.

**How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for?**

As a small business owner who has served in other elected positions, I am well aware of how government "works" and know that it must constantly be held in check. Spending should always be on needs versus wants in order to keep costs down and prevent unnecessary increases in taxes.

# CANDIDATE FOR TRUSTEE OF THE TRUST FUNDS

## Kenneth S. Peterson

### Education:

Engineering Degree from Penn State  
Masters in Air Defense from USAF

**Profession:** Retired: 30 years Military Officer (Brig. Gen.); 10 years Captain major airline



### Political Experience:

Elected and served on the Bedford Town Council

Elected and served in the NH House of Representatives

**Incumbent?** Yes

### Why are you running for elected office in Bedford?

When I started with the Trustees I was given a paper bag with some check stubs in it...that was the total record of the Trustees at the time, and they did not have regular meetings or take minutes. Since then I have initiated quarterly meetings; minutes of meetings published online; created a website with Trustee information for the public; invested the funds we are tasked with (they were not invested when I took over...they were in a non-interest bearing checking account...in the area of \$6M); interviewed and hired an investment advisor; created an annual “to do” list; created a published list of member responsibilities.

It is my desire to continue with this “improving” of the Trustees and their mission.

# CANDIDATE FOR LIBRARY TRUSTEE

## Jerry Hanauer

**Contact:** (603) 472-5587    gshanauer@yahoo.com

**Education:** Bachelor of Science, University of Wisconsin; Master of Urban Affairs, Boston University

**Profession:** Chief Underwriter for No. New England, Federal Housing Administration(Retired)



## **Organizations/Affiliations:**

Library Trustee Alternate: Sept. 2019 to present (appointed by Bedford Town Council)

Bedford Public Library Foundation: Board Member since 2007, Chair, 2015 - 2019, Currently Treasurer

Rotary Club of Bedford: Board member since 2002, Past President and Treasurer

## **Political Experience:**

I was an elected Assessor in the Town Bedford, Massachusetts -and was Chair of the Bedford, MA Board of Assessors until 1984- when I moved to Bedford, New Hampshire.

**Incumbent?** No

## **Why are you running for elected office in Bedford?**

Since retiring from 30 years of civil service in 2001, public service in Bedford has been a major occupation for me. Through my long-time service to our fine library through the Bedford Library Foundation -and more recently as an acting Library Trustee- I have gotten to know and very much appreciate our fine Library Director and her extraordinary staff and group of volunteers.

In 2019, the 3 member Board of Library Trustees asked if I would serve as the appointed Alternate Trustee. Of course I accepted. I have been acting as a full Library Trustee since one of the 3 elected Trustees resigned this past spring. I would like to continue this service as an elected Library Trustee.

**Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community?**

A current initiative of the Library Trustees is to implement the findings of an energy audit of our Library. Seeing this through will save the Town many thousands of dollars every year. Involved is the replacement of virtually all fluorescent fixtures in the building and conversion to much more efficient LED lighting.

With the pending retirement of long-time Library Director Mary Ann Senatro, the Library Trustees have recently completed the hiring of a new Director. We look forward to continued talented administration of our Library. Along with a highly qualified Library staff, the ongoing budgetary support of the Bedford Town Council also maintains our Library's status. I would work to maintain these strong ties.

On every Board I have served over the years, I have been an active, working member. For myself, I consider any Board or Trustee position to be a contribution of my time and effort, and not merely a place-holder position.

**How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for?**

Perhaps many who will vote in our March 9 town elections are unfamiliar with the function of the Library Trustees. A quick explanation:

In its annual budget cycle, each department head -including our Library Director- submits their proposed budget to the Town Council for

approval. However, -unlike the other Town facilities- by statute, income and expenditures of the Library's budget are overseen by the elected Library Trustees, independent of the Town Council.

At its heart, then, the Library Trustee's function is an oversight and fiduciary responsibility. I have lived in town for over 35 years. Through my community involvement, Bedford citizens have come to know me for my service and my integrity. I ask that they recognize the value of these qualities and my long affiliation with our Library by voting for Jerry Hanauer for Library Trustee in the Town Elections on March 9.



# CANDIDATE FOR LIBRARY TRUSTEE

## Hank Vanderbeek

**Contact:** hankbeek@aol.com, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/hankvanderbeek/>

**Education:** BS, Industrial Management,  
BS Social Sciences, Clarkson University

Masters of Public Administration, Northeastern University

Doctor of Strategic Leadership student, Liberty University

**Profession:** Business and property condition consultant, Freelance writer, Antiques dealer

**Organizations/Affiliations:** National Association of Certified Home Inspectors, New England Regional Counsel/National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NERC/NAHRO), Homeland Heroes Foundation

**Political Experience:** None

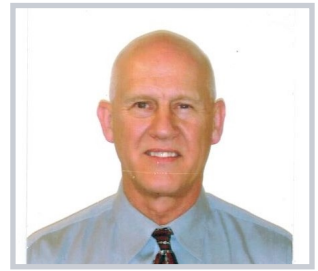
**Incumbent?** No

## Why are you running for elected office in Bedford?

I am running for the Bedford Public Library Trustee position to assist the Library in serving the needs of the community. The Library provides an important service to Bedford, and libraries, like any institution, are challenged to stay abreast of ever changing values and ideals that come with learning, socializing, and functioning in an ever evolving and challenged society.

Bedford is a vibrant and changing community. It is important the library continues to meet the needs of its residents. Sound leadership's core qualifications and experience motivate through imparting an understanding of why an organization does what it does. It's not so important that 10 books were loaned and read as much as how many of those books made a difference in someone's life.

For these reasons, a library will flourish and grow best through



continuing realignment of its mission, vision, and goals with that of the community it serves. Otherwise, the library will cease to keep its customers, supporters and leaders engaged and enthusiastic. The Wadleigh Library (Milford) has a detailed mission and vision statement on its website. It includes markers to know when it is successfully meeting its mission.

Libraries, like any organization, should have a central, guiding mission statement that defines the library's purpose and describes who the library serves, and why. I hope to work with the library leaders, staff, and friends to ensure its mission communicate why its exists.

The BPL is much more than a place to borrow books and read periodicals. It is the source for discovering thoughtful, entertaining, enlightening information. It is also Bedford's community center. It is a place for users to come together, to share ideas and forge friendships and meet their neighbors.

Assuring that the mission of the BPL is well defined and aligned with the ever changing demographics and ideals of the user community is critical for growth, continued enlightenment, and community cohesiveness. In a word, the why of the BPL. What is the purpose, cause, belief of the library. Its what makes the difference in being exceptional or just okay.

I bring leadership skills to assist the BPL in being exceptional.

### **Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community?**

One GMILCS library's mission statement on its website says, "shall strive to provide quality services and materials to meet the cultural, educational and informational needs of our diverse and changing community." The PBL website does not include a mission. It is my intention to ensure the BPL has a mission that fits the community's needs, is accepted, and that it motivates a desire to really want to help users in their library needs. A library will flourish and grow best through continuing acceptance of its purpose and reason for existence. Otherwise, the library may not keep its customers, supporters and leaders engaged

and enthusiastic in a way that truly benefits.

Bedford's Emergency Management team is evaluating COVID information, keeping in touch with community and State partners and providing updates, as necessary. The last update was June 2020. The pandemic is rapidly changing. It is my intention that BPL be fully functional as soon as practicable. Bedford's community wants to use the beautiful library. It has not been fully functional for about a year now. The tables are off-line. There is one chair open in the periodical section. If taken one has to stand to read. As a community gathering center, library users want to again sit quietly and read, study, and converse with friends and neighbors. BPL should have a phased reopening plan that is posted on the website. The plan would assist schools, and other users with their planning needs.

The BPL offers a small selection of books for sale and periodical borrowing. Many books and periodicals are fast becoming too expensive for the average household. Allowing for a better organized and expanded short-term periodical borrowings like magazines and more books for sale helps users whose needs transcend borrowing.

It is vitally important to preserve the physical plant so that maintenance costs are minimized and the structure remains safe, decent, sanitary, and in good repair. Too often building maintenance is neglected allowing disrepair to advance to a point that requires avoidable repair costs had the issues been anticipated and addressed timely. An adequate building maintenance plan and cost accrual account is an important maintenance budgeting tool.

The BPL has had and continues to have engaged and dedicated employees and volunteers. It is important that the BPL continues to seek ways to retain its dedicated, competent, and enthusiastic staff and support. The BPL library staff are people that love what they do, and truly care about the community and the role the library plays in the community.

Fundraising is a critical component of the BPL's ability to meet its goals. It is essential to identify and pursue many tried and true avenues to fund raise and assure that ongoing fundraising efforts are part and parcel of the BPL's activities. Library is fortunate to have Walter Gallo as a trustee with his expertise in fund-raising who I will help where ever I can.

Hours of operation are an important part of BPL's service. Users' needs should be met as should those of the library staff. Hours should be posted accurately and timely on the BPL website and elsewhere in the community, like community centers, schools, restaurants, et cetera, Bedford Journal, and other widely read local publications. Consistent and convenient hours of operation to all users is a vital part of being a library.

Feedback is sought on other GMILCS' websites. Continuous feedback from users and stakeholders lets service providers know how they are doing; where and how improvements are beneficial which leads to improved operations and services. The feedback can be used to assure BPL's goals and the communities needs are aligned.

### **How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for?**

Library Trustee duties include, but are not limited to, the following:

1) Establish a mission and vision for the future of the library:

Through a lifetime of continuing education and experience at all levels of government, as a business consultant and business owner, and as a former army officer, I have learned that giving people a sense of purpose, i.e. the why of what they do work best to establishing and accomplishing a mission and a vision. Successful leaders need a combination of diverse skills. Those skills are not acquired over night, but over many years of trial and error and in many different environments and setting. A profound understanding of differing needs, motivations, and an organizations mission and vision have to merge to be successful.

2) Select, hire, and evaluate the Library Director and arbitrate internal personnel issues:

My background includes serving on a healthcare auditor board, as an army officer, and as a federal healthcare forensic auditor. This experience included evaluating healthcare leaders, military personnel, and business managers' fitness for various positions over a 48 year period. Hiring the right person for a job requires a good understanding of people.

3) Observe and evaluate the effectiveness of the library:

My skills/background includes authoring several books on healthcare compliance and Federal housing policies and procedures, and over 48 years of working with healthcare industry leaders in determining the effectiveness, and compliance with policies and procedures to ensure stakeholders, and customers are well served. For example, as an Office of Inspector General auditor in the Veterans Administration, I oversaw hundreds of evaluations of every aspect of dozens Veteran's Administration Medical Centers' operations, including financial, medical quality of care, wait times, regulatory compliance, et cetera.

4) Determine, with the Director, service priorities for annual budgets and long range goals and objectives, and obtain sufficient funding from the town for operation of the library:

My skills/background includes many years as Federal auditor, business owner and consultant. I have over many years of experience with evaluating and auditing budgets, and other financial statements. For example, not too long ago, I worked pro bono to help turnaround a local area charitable Veterans non-profit. The organization was about to close its doors but with help setting up a five year plan, identifying revenue sources and creating an implementation plan, the non-profit was able to not only stay open but to flourish well beyond expectations.

5) Serve as a connecting link between library and community, and be an advocate for the library:

My skills/background includes marketing my commercial inspection business and that of a small software development company. As a business owner I have had to oversee all aspects of marketing including the Internet, print media, and mailings. Having had to advocate and promote the development and improvement on mine and other businesses has given me the skills and background needed to advocate for and promote the development and improvement of library services, and serve as link between the library and the community.

# CANDIDATE FOR SCHOOL BOARD

## Melinda Bator

**Education:** Bachelors in Accounting/Finance with a minor in Economics

**Profession:** Banker with the US Small Business Administration/  
Business Owner

**Political Experience:** N/A

**Incumbent?** No

### **Why are you running for elected office in Bedford?**

I am running for School Board to represent the students, teachers and support staff and tax payers of the Bedford, NH community.

As a mother of five children, all either currently in or recently graduated from the district, I have an in depth understanding of all levels of our education system. As a family, we have been fortunate to attend five out of the six schools over our years in Bedford. I have gotten to know many aspects of the schools including our special needs providers and services. I would be honored to continue to learn about and provide a well rounded voice of and for the community as a School Board member.

### **Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community?**

I would like to address issues as they arise. I believe that the social, emotional, education and mental health of our students will be key topics and areas of need over the next few years, heightened by the pandemic. I feel that utilizing the areas of strength in this district, such as guidance and teachers, in combination with outside services, will be key to addressing these issues. I believe with kindness, cooperation,

and respect, we can work together as a community towards our most common goal—a healthy and safe education for our children.

I would also place areas of focus in the forefront and support the development of focus groups such as the Diversity Committee, to assist with topics of needs that arise.

The investment in the students' success is not only a personal family investment but an overall district investment. I believe it is a school board member's responsibility to treat each and every student's personal investment with respect and understanding. No two equal, no one over the other.

### **How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for?**

I have been involved in the Bedford School District since my oldest was in Kindergarten, over 11 years ago. I have since had four other children, in addition to my oldest, involved in the schools within the district. Over the years, I have served in numerous roles within and in support of the students and schools. Those roles include, but are not limited to, room parent, It's A GAS instructor, DIG instructor, Stand By Me committee member, MCK Move-A-Thon, and Book Fair. Outside, but in support of our schools and students, I have been a part of the Bedford PTG acting in such roles as School Book Fair Chair/Coordinator, Hospitality Chair, VP of Fundraising, and most recently, PTG Treasurer. I have had the opportunity to serve with each and every principal/administration in the district in one manner or another.

As a small business owner, with a career and background in banking, I understand the challenges of balancing a budget while keeping the goals and needs of the district in mind. Developing a comprehensive budget that meets the needs of our students and staff, while keeping in mind the community ability to fund it, is of great importance.

I would be honored to be elected to the Bedford School Board to continue and further my work with and for the community.

# CANDIDATE FOR SCHOOL BOARD

## Melissa Stevens

**Contact:** Melissastevensnh@gmail.com

**Education:** BA in Political Science and Communication

**Profession:** Stay-at-home mom

**Organizations/Affiliations:** Bedford Youth Football Association — President; Miss Bedford Scholarship Program — Board Member, past President

**Political Experience:** I have spent most of my career in politics and government affairs. I have worked at federal, state and local levels as both a volunteer and advisor.

**Incumbent?** No

## Why are you running for elected office in Bedford?

Serving this community is truly a labor of love. There are many reasons I hope to serve as a School Board member. First and foremost, I am a mom of three. My two oldest children attend Riddle Brook. My son just turned two. Ensuring our community provides a top quality education is very important to my family. Second, I hope to bring a holistic approach to policy and the budget process by working closely with those on the Town Council and in state government. And finally, having family and friends who work in education will be helpful in ensuring fair, thoughtful and effective leadership during these difficult times.



**Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community?**

Our schools are perhaps our community's greatest asset. I will work to ensure we provide the education and support all our students need and deserve. Our children and staff will have faced unprecedented challenges. The pandemic has resulted in students stagnation and even failing, both educationally and mentally. Bridging the educational and emotional gap will be a priority for years to come.

**How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for?**

I have served two terms as Town Councilor. I am familiar with working on budgets and how federal and state laws and regulations direct local policy. And perhaps more importantly, I am a mom of two children currently in the school system and friends with children as young as kindergarten and as old as seniors. I understand each student and family is unique and hope to provide a voice for them.

# CANDIDATE FOR SCHOOL BOARD

## **Autumn Haskell**

**Contact:** AutumnBSBNH@gmail.com / Instagram @AutumnBSBNH / Facebook @AutumnBSBNH

**Education:** MBA Norwich University,  
BA University of Illinois

**Profession:** Logistics Manager, Army Chief  
Warrant Officer Blackhawk Pilot



**Organizations/Affiliations:** United States Army Reserve

**Political Experience:** None

**Incumbent?** No

## **Why are you running for elected office in Bedford?**

I am running for School Board as a part of my commitment to serve. For nearly 20 years, I have served our country as part of the United States Army. It is now time to get involved in serving the Bedford Community - my Family, Bedford Students and Bedford Taxpayers. Our community needs strong leaders. My background and experience have prepared me for this leadership opportunity. I will be accountable for my actions and will hold those around me accountable as well. I will research information I am not familiar with and look to subject matter experts to guide me in making sound decisions. As a School Board member, I will always put the needs of the Students First. I will work to keep our school district at the top of the ranks in New Hampshire and across the nation. I am also running out of duty to the Bedford Taxpayers. Taxpayers have a vested interest in our School District. The School Board must remain financially responsible and be accountable.

## **Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community?**

First, I will work to get students back in school full time, while also ensuring the remote option remains. Part of this is ensuring Students and faculty have the resources and tools required to address the challenges we will face as a result of the pandemic. Social and emotional needs will be handled at the same time educators will be working to get Students back on track. Time lost as a result of this pandemic cannot simply be overlooked. Our Students will need support, our educators will need our support and our community should be ready to stand beside them as it will be a difficult transition for everyone.

I will then work to address concerns our community had before the pandemic. There were Students leaving Bedford School District and we need to understand the why in order to best address. Students in Bedford should want to graduate from Bedford High School and should be proud, and more importantly, be prepared for their future.

I will continue to work to better the Bedford School District during my time.

## **How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for?**

The core values I have lived and will continue to live: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage. All of these values are important to the Students of Bedford and the Bedford Community. I am committed to working through the difficult times and not losing sight of what matters most - our Students.

I will review details of community concerns and make sound recommendations as part of a team that is the School Board. I will not back down from what I believe is right and will not be afraid to change my thoughts when new information is available.

# CANDIDATE FOR SCHOOL BOARD

## Michael McCormick

**Contact:** <http://michaelrmccormick.org>

**Education:** B.S. Political Science, Classics  
University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH

**Profession:** Operations & Analytics, Anthem, Inc:  
Diversified Business Group



**Organizations/Affiliations:** Board Member, At Larger  
New Horizons | Families In Transition, Manchester, NH

**Political Experience:** NH State Senate Intern, supporting Lou D'Allessandro (2008)

**Incumbent?** No

## Why are you running for elected office in Bedford?

The decision to run for school board was simple after considering the benefits. First, this will give me an opportunity to learn more about a subject that is of the utmost importance for my family and, of course, the development of my children. This is a chance to support something that is integral to making sure Bedford remains a family-friendly town with appealing benefits for its taxpayers.

I've seen the way that members of the school community have rallied and responded to the pandemic. I'm excited at the prospect of becoming a bigger part of that group and, hopefully, forming long-lasting relationship with other like-minded Leaders.

I'm determined to do everything I can to apply a fair and balanced approach using common sense and effective communication with other board members and the Bedford community.

## **Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community?**

I plan to be laser focused on the budget. There has been great work done to create and manage budgets during these trying times. I want to make sure that Bedford Schools continue to be an example in the State for avoiding unnecessary tax increases and committing to smart investments, both long- and short-term.

The communication strategy has been critical to ensure that the community feels connected to what's happening in schools. Things are very confusing for our families that it's incumbent on school administrators and faculty to communicate freely and often. I've seen so many great things as a result of the pandemic. There have been YouTube videos, emails, and surveys. This is commendable but I want to know 1) is this working and 2) what else can we do to make you feel more involved and connected. We need to preserve the trust in relationship with Bedford families.

The final area of focus will be local representation and awareness in State matters. Take House Bill 20 or the "Education Freedom Account Act", for example. This will shift some public education funds to parents to spend it on anything from private, religious, or online schools. There is a lot of traction at the state level and it raises concerns around accountability for measuring a student's educational progress. This is just one example of a piece of legislation that we, as a community, should be well-versed to fully understand the repercussions.

## **How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for?**

I've been fortunate enough to hold several positions throughout my professional career that helped me build and refine a broad skillset. My record of accomplishments in the analytics space, illustrates my commitment to applying a thoughtful approach to solving problems. In

the past, I have managed teams and budgets ranging in size from \$6M to \$175M. I understand the requisite process and nuances a team must consider as they work towards a final budget proposal. My leadership style and team culture are grounded on three core fundamentals: balance, transparency and accountability.

The current administration and school board members have done an excellent job coping with the complexities of COVID. Restoring normalcy in a safe, appropriate way will be equally as important. I'm a board member at my Fortunate 100 company that's focused on reopening our facilities and offices throughout the country. I've learned techniques and strategies to guarantee that relevant parties are included, key questions get answered and we're making the best decisions for our constituents...

...the most important factor for ANY elected positions.



**If you would like to learn more,**

you may watch interviews with the candidates on BCTV on their program "Candidates Corner", as well as the Bedford Men's Club sponsored forums with the Town Council and School Board Candidates. Visit BCTV's website, [www.bedfordtv.com](http://www.bedfordtv.com) to find the program schedule of candidate interviews and the debate or to view them on demand.

**Don't forget to vote!**

Election Day

Tuesday, March 9, 2020

7:00 AM to 7:00 PM

Bedford Middle/High School

47 Nashua Road

Budgetary Town Meeting

Wednesday, March 10 at 7:00 PM

Bedford/Middle High School

47 Nashua Road

The Town Meeting Handout is available at:

<https://www.bedfordnh.org/DocumentCenter/View/4980/2021-Town-Meeting-Handout>