

# WATERTOWN TOWN COUNCIL CANDIDATES RESPONSES TO CLIMATE CHANGE SURVEY

(IN ORDER RECEIVED) For questions, go to [WFCC Candidate Questions](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HL68B6M) <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HL68B6M>)

Name	How serious is climate change	Is NET ZERO high priority for new K-5 schools	OPTED UP under Watertown Electricity Choice	Should town OPT UP on its next elec contract	Town purchase all electric vehicles by 2025	Prohibit gas hook-ups in new buildings	Robust shuttle a priority for town	Food waste pickup by town
	1=low 5	Yes		No		Abstain		
<b>TOWN COUNCILOR AT LARGE</b> Vote for 4								
Tony Palomba	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Michelle Cokonoughter	5	A	A	Y	A	A	Y	Y
Caroline Bays	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Clyde Younger	5	Y	N	A	Y	N	Y	Y
Anthony Donato	4	A	Y	A	A	A	Y	Y
Jimmy Mello	4	Y	A	Y	A	A	Y	A
John Gannon	5	Y	Y	Y	A	A	Y	Y
<b>DISTRICT COUNCILORS (UNOPPOSED)</b> One per District								
Angeline Kounelis	5	A	A	A	A	A	Y	A
Kenneth Woodland	5	Y	Y	Y	Y	A	Y	A
Vinnie Piccirilli	5	Y	Y	A	A	A	Y	A
Lisa Feltner	5	Y	Y	Y	A	A	Y	Y
<b>TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT(UNOPPOSED)</b>								
Mark Sideris	4	Y	N	A	Y	A	Y	A

See candidate comments and explanations



Name	Comment
<b>TOWN COUNCILOR AT LARGE (Four at-large councilors)</b>	
Tony Palomba	Watertown, like other local communities, faces a unique challenge in its efforts to address the global climate crisis - that is to make sure our efforts reflect those being pursued on a regional, national or global level. We want to pursue policies that when combined with other communities have a significant impact on the crisis. I believe our solar ordinance, decision to make our two new schools net zero, and our Watertown Electricity Choice program are good examples of this. The push for greater reliance on solar and other reliable sources of energy is happening globally.
Michelle Cokonougher	I have regularly advocated for the preservation and planting of trees in Watertown for a number of reasons, including its impact on climate change. I know that trees have a significant impact on climate change and I will continue to advocate for their preservation and for new tree plantings. I will also advocate for other ways of combating the growing problem of climate change.
Caroline Bays	Municipalities have the opportunity to take the lead in making a significant dent in our efforts to reduce our carbon footprint. Watertown has already been at the forefront of these efforts, but we can and should do more to combat the climate crisis. I hope to continue in my efforts to ensure that Watertown pursues every avenue available to us to reduce carbon emissions.
Clyde Younger	I have not opted for WEC for my personal household due to unique circumstances. Please note that while on the Council I supported and recommended Kenneth Mervis to be on the DPW Building Committee in order to effectuate at least one person advocating for environmental concerns in our building projects.
Anthony Donato	With regard to the three elementary schools project, I would defer to the priorities established by the School Building Committee. 2. With regard to WEC, I think we need to see how successful the current program is before committing to a specific number in the future as I am concerned more people will opt down or potentially opt out if the level is set at 100%. 3. With regard to electric vehicles, I support the majority of the Town's fleet being electric, but I do not believe all public safety or DPW vehicles can be electric. 4. I would need a lot more information on the elimination of gas infrastructure and what type of back up systems would be necessary/required before supporting such a measure.

Jimmy Mello	My answer for #4, my electric is included in my rent. As for abstaining on many questions I believe the town needs more information on these issues. Most of these questions are just not Yes, No or Abstain answers
John Gannon	Climate change is a vital policy issue of our time, and what we do on the local level matters. Watertown has the capacity to lead, and I'll make sure that we use all financial and technical resources of the state and federal government and private sources, such as the Massachusetts Municipal Association, to achieve real results in the future, as well as right now, including investing in electric or hybrid vehicles for our town fleet (where reliable technologies become available), reducing solid waste tonnage, using the Town's purchasing power to encourage manufacture of climate-sustainable products and promoting energy efficiency. Having served as a municipal attorney for over 100 Massachusetts cities and towns, I have a proven track record of delivering results to promote climate readiness, including initiating litigation to demand better public transportation, drafting local zoning legislation promoting sensible development, working with local officials to maximize energy efficiency in public buildings and vehicles, encouraging use of alternative energy sources, and litigating to preserve vulnerable wetlands.
<b>DISTRICT COUNCILORS (UNOPPOSED)</b>	
Angeline Kounelis	Take the initiative to make a difference on an individual, local and global level.
Kenneth Woodland	Concerning question 6, electric vehicles should be purchased when possible, however many do not have an electric option. Concerning question 7, much more information is needed on this topic. Concerning question 9, the composting market would need to develop much more before implementation.
Vinnie Piccirilli	Some notes: #5) Watertown buys electricity with a multiyear contract through a multi-municipality consortium (not Eversource), so before the contract is up for renewal, the consortium should research a 100% renewable option, in order for us to analyze the budget impact. #6) Yes, for all automobiles, but for other vehicles such as DPW trucks, fire apparatus, and heavy duty police vehicles, commercially available products may not be ready for purchase by 2025, but we should prioritize making the switch when the time comes. #7) No legislation was passed in MA prohibiting property owners from connecting to existing gas mains, so further research is needed on the implication of such a ban before deciding how to proceed. #9) When we last examined curbside food waste pick up, it did not make sense from either a financial perspective, or from a carbon footprint reduction strategy (because of the extra trucks), but we should continue to examine ways to remove food waste from the municipal solid waste stream.

Lisa Feltner	Net zero should be high priority, but also look at definition -as close as possible=goal. Not just about shuttle, also public busses; we should change zoning re: garages, and parking policies need updated. More info needed about the E-grid, and choices for "no new gas" hookups -confirmed at recent "gas leaks" mtg w/NGrid, and discussions at SEBANE. Thanks for your advocacy!
<b>TOWN COUNCIL PRESIDENT (UNOPPOSED)</b>	
Mark Sideris	I have been a strong advocate for building net zero, LEED gold schools to be a model for future building projects in all cities and towns. I continue to support all of the initiatives we as a community are doing to address climate change. The question on town vehicles is difficult because many of the vehicles in the DPW and Fire Dept. are not available as electric vehicles as of now