



2024 Candidates for Elected Office

Select Board – 1 position, 3 year term – Allison Knab

Town Moderator – 1 position, 2 year term – Dave Emanuel

Supervisor of the Checklist – 1 position, 6 year term -- Connie Aubin-Adams; James Scamman

Cemetery Trustee – 1 position, 3 year term – June Sawyer

Trustees of the Trust Funds – 1 position, 3 year term -- OPEN

Library Trustee – 2 positions, 3 year terms – Heather Harvey; Sara Rosenthal

SMS School Board Candidates – 2 positions, 3 years – Jennifer Scrafford; Jessica Kliskey; Paul Tusini

School District Clerk – 1 position, 3 years -- OPEN

Exeter Region Cooperative School District (ERCSD)

School Board Member Seat from Exeter – 1 position, 3 year term – Bill Gauthier; Peggy Massicotte

School Board Member Seat from Newfields – 1 position, 3 year term – Amy Ransom; Jackie Tassinari

School Board Member Seat from Stratham – 1 position, 3 year term -- Tami Gunst

ERCSD Budget Advisory Committee (BAC)

Budget Advisory Committee Member Seat from Exeter – 1 position, 3 year term – OPEN

Budget Advisory Committee Member Seat from Kingston – 1 position, 3 year term – OPEN

Budget Advisory Committee Member Seat from Stratham – 1 position, 3 year term -- OPEN

Moderator – 1 position, 1 year term – Katherine Miller

Allison Knab

Candidate for Select Board

Education: B.A., University of Virginia

Profession: Executive Director Great Bay Stewards

Political Experience: Stratham Conservation Commission, 2008-present; Stratham Select Board, 2018 – Present; N.H. State Representative, 2022-present (Environment and Agriculture Committee)

Are you an incumbent? Yes

Why are you running for elected office in Stratham? (200 words or less)

I feel grateful to have served on the Select Board for the past five years, and look forward to continuing the work I have done alongside Mike Houghton and Joe Anderson (and previously, Joe Lovejoy). I want to ensure Stratham remains an amazing place to live for all, from young to old, and honors its heritage while ensuring a strong future.

How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for? (200 words or less)

I think the role of the Select Board is to gather information from and listen to Town staff, boards and committees, and residents, and then make the best decision possible for the community. I am proud that the three current members work together in this way. Issues I think we need to continue focusing on include our special open spaces, ensuring safe drinking water for residents, the importance of our agricultural heritage and history, keeping our property taxes as low as possible, and supporting our amazing town employees.

Dave Emanuel

Candidate for Town Moderator

Education: B.S. Civil Engineering and Business Administration; Master's Degree in Public Administration

Profession: Career Fire Chief

Organizations / Affiliations: School District Moderator; Stratham Scouts Troop 185;
N.H. Association of Fire Chiefs

Political Experience: Town Government and Community Support

Are you an incumbent? Yes

Why are you running for elected office in Stratham? (200 words or less)

I enjoy service to the community as a moderator for the Town and School District.

Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community? (200 words or less)

How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for? (200 words or less)

Connie Aubin-Adams

Candidate for Supervisor of the Checklist

Education: B.S. Business Administration

Profession: Retired Banking Executive

Organizations / Affiliations: N/A

Political Experience: Library Trustee – 2 terms (6 years); Supervisor of the Checklist – 1 term (7 years)

Are you an incumbent? Yes

Why are you running for elected office in Stratham? (200 words or less)

Since beginning in this position in 2017, we've experienced some extraordinary elections! I've worked hard with our team of election officials to assure Stratham stays current with changing regulations and processes and to train our election workers so they can perform this critical work with confidence. More changes are coming as we will work to test, train and implement a new voter information system this year. I love my town, and look forward to continuing to serve.

Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community? (200 words or less)

I will continue to work for Stratham to conduct fair and transparent elections.

How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for? (200 words or less)

I am trained in all systems and have used my business experience to create spreadsheets and other tools to help us meet our obligations for timely and accurate reporting.

James Scamman

Candidate for Supervisor of the Checklist

Education: B.A. U.N.H. Mathematics and Philosophy

Profession: Retired Travel Agent and Comptroller

Organizations / Affiliations: Rockingham Choral Society

Political Experience: Stratham Republican Committee Treasurer; Delegate and Committeeman for Stratham to NH Republican Party; Stratham School District Treasurer

Are you an incumbent? No

Why are you running for elected office in Stratham? (200 words or less)

To contribute my knowledge and intelligence to the efficient operation of the Checklist and to assist voters' needs regarding the checklist.

Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community? (200 words or less)

To ensure the checklist reflects the legal voters of the Town of Stratham.

How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for? (200 words or less)

My education consisting of the following:

Stratham Memorial School

Exeter Area High School

Phillips Exeter Academy

St. Paul's School of Advanced Studies Program

University of New Hampshire

June Sawyer

Candidate for Cemetery Trustee

Education: Graduated from Plymouth State University

Profession: Accountant / AEMT

Organizations / Affiliations: Stratham

Political Experience: Active with several Town boards: Budget Advisory, Stratham Fire, and Curbside Collection, Cemetery

Are you an incumbent? No

Why are you running for elected office in Stratham? (200 words or less)

I did it for 15 years and miss doing it.

Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community? (200 words or less)

I just want to serve the Town's interest.

How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for? (200 words or less)

Having done this, I feel I can continue to assist with the programs.

Heather Harvey

Candidate for Library Trustee

Education: The College of New Jersey – B.A. (2008)
Villanova University School of Law – J.D. (2011)

Profession: Stay-at-home mom and military spouse

Organizations / Affiliations: Undeclared (Independent)

Political Experience: None.

Are you an incumbent? No

Why are you running for elected office in Stratham? (200 words or less)

My desire to run for Trustee stems not from an interest in politics, but from a love of the library. As a military spouse, I have moved often. At every place where we have lived, the library has been a crucial resource – for myself, my husband and my children. Not only does the library afford us ample opportunity to grow intellectually, but it also connects us to the community. As we're feeding our brains with whatever is piquing our interest in a particular season (WWII, cooking, disasters for my eight year old...), we're also meeting our neighbors, learning where the best hiking is, and the best little hole in the wall to eat. The role of the library in a community cannot be overstated. I appreciate the Wiggin Memorial Library and the Board of Trustees and staff who run it. I would love to help it run smoothly, and to elucidate and execute its mission. Its library is an important cornerstone and barometer of any community. I want to ensure that Wiggin Memorial continues and excels in this crucial role of educating and connecting the people of Stratham. Let's be a community of lifelong learners.

Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community? (200 words or less)

I object to the phrase "issues to be addressed," as I believe the current Library Board of Trustees and library staff have been doing a great job. I'd replace the phrase with "goals to be achieved." In terms of goals, I'd like to see more efficiency and decisiveness. A once monthly meeting of the Board itself slows approval of things, just by nature of the timing. As a Board member, it's my hope that my skill set as a former attorney could provide more efficiency, specifically in the area of policy review and approval. More broadly, I would love to see the library more connected to the community and vice versa. For me, walking through the doors of the Wiggin Memorial is almost like coming home after a long day. It's a safe and peaceful place – a refuge in a busy world. I'd love for the whole town of Stratham to view the library in this light. That means ensuring the library is offering the resources the town needs and wants, and making sure the town knows the resources are there!

How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for? (200 words or less)

I graduated from the College of New Jersey with a B.A. in History in 2008 and from Villanova Law School in 2011. During my time at Villanova, I assisted Legal Writing courses, published an article on Pennsylvania's Stream Buffer Zone Rule, and served as the Managing Editor of Student Works on Villanova's Superior Court and worked as an associate at a local law firm, prior to marrying my Air Force husband. The moves, deployments and travel of the Air Force have made a legal career difficult. Since the birth of our first child in late 2015, I have stayed home with our (now) four kids. I've served as a Key Spouse for my husband's squadron, taught Sunday school at every duty station, served on the Board for the Protestant Women of the Chapel, and until recently, homeschooled our kids. And I've never lost my love of or close eye for legal reading and writing! I believe my passion for service, love of the library, and legal background would enable me to be both an effective and easy-to-work-with Trustee.

Sara Rosenthal

Candidate for Library Trustee

Education: PhD, nursing

Profession: Stay at home parent, previously nurse, nursing professor

Organizations / Affiliations:

Political Experience: None

Are you an incumbent? No

Why are you running for elected office in Stratham? (200 words or less)

We recently moved to Stratham and I want to be actively involved in the community.

Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community? (200 words or less)

I look forward to working with the other library trustees to ensure that Wiggin Memorial Library remains a strong part of our community and serves the needs of Stratham residents.

How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for? (200 words or less)

As a nurse I am skilled at listening to and understanding others. I think critically about problems and come up with collaborative solutions to challenges.

Jennifer Scrafford

Candidate for SMS School Board

Education: JD American University, Washington DC
BA SUNY Geneseo, NY

Profession: Attorney, Soteria Solutions

Organizations / Affiliations:

Political experience: School Board, 2021-2023; Budget Advisory Committee SAU16 2020-2023; Town Budget Advisory Committee 2022-2023

Are you an incumbent? Yes

Why Am I Running?

When we moved to NH in 2015, SMS was mentioned over and over as a great place for kids. All three of my kids have been through SMS. I want it to be the best school it can, challenging students and being inclusive and supportive of students who may need extra services. Covid challenges continue as we see students catching up and growing with changes in instruction. The SMS physical building needs to change to meet current educational needs. Both projects excite me. I started during my first term and I'd like to continue that important work.

The primary issues I'd focus on include:

- 1) Budget – the budget is the primary responsibility of the board. It has to be lean to diminish the burdens on taxpayers. But the budget must also be robust enough to deal with pressures from decreasing state aid and increasing special education costs
- 2) Changing Building needs – SMS is 30 years old and faces the challenge all old buildings face. Roof and boilers are aging. Educational standards are also changing. The building needs to be changed to help today's student be the best learners according to modern pedagogy. Accommodating special education needs, smaller meeting spaces and right-sized cafeterias are important and will have to be a focus of the Board in the new term.
- 3) Increased taxpayer input – During my last term, we asked SMS Administrators to present on important issues each meeting. I'd like to continue that work. We also need to increase the accessibility of meetings and remote recordings and I'd like to increase attendance at in-person meetings.
- 4) Increase Administrator and Teacher accountability for student test scores with data driven reports and presentations

Skills and Background

As an attorney, I can understand the impact of policy decisions considered by the Board. I also feel comfortable with staff negotiations. With three kids of varying ages, I have seen the evolution of SMS and will strive to improve the educational experience for staff, administrators and students.

I feel very comfortable with budgets. In my professional experience, I manage very large budgets and a large staff. I have also served on the Budget Advisory Committee for the SAU for the last three years and for the Town of Stratham for the last two years.

Jessica Kliskey

Candidate for SMS School Board

Education: B.A. Health Sciences, Health Coach: certified

Profession: Historical House Manager, Business owner

Organizations / Affiliations: Currently Cemetery Trustee

Political Experience:

Are you an incumbent? No

Why are you running for elected office in Stratham? (200 words or less)

I've been living in Stratham for about 5 years. I take advantage of its trails, family events, and the kind folks who work for and run operations seem to have the residents at heart.

Children are the most precious and vulnerable [members] of a community and they could use someone that thinks a solid foundation is in education and community.

Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community? (200 words or less)

Within my authority, I would like to share and contribute to the education of the children in our community. To make sure we have them ready for the next step for further education while supporting parents and their concerns.

While children attend public school, they should feel comfortable without stress. I believe educating math, reading, writing, and teamwork is the best foundation of any student feeling confident at grade level or as appropriate.

How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for? (200 words or less)

I have been a manager of less than five people over the last eight years.

My skills as a manager include compromise, learning the facts, listening to others side of the story, and making sure the outcome is in line with the mission/goals of the institution.

Having the opportunity to be part of the Stratham public schools. Keeping in mind to stick to the values and priorities of educating within the community.

Paul Tusini

Candidate for SMS School Board

Education: Boston College School of Management (1978)

Profession: Retired

Organizations / Affiliations: N/A

Political Experience: N/A

Are you an incumbent? No

Why are you running for elected office in Stratham? (200 words or less)

My wife Kathy and I raised two sons from infants through college in the same town. Our boys attended the complete public school system. We were aware of town issues and watched as those who volunteered to make it all work tackled them. However, for us extra time never seemed to exist to become involved. We retired to Stratham in 2021. As a bonus our grandchildren live nearby. So now what?

Within your authority as an elected official, what issues do you plan to address in order to improve our community? (200 words or less)

The issues facing towns today are more challenging than ever; a serious struggle at every level made worse by global events. I have a full, 45-year career of experience addressing issues in global business environments. Establishing and achieving performance goals and rewarding results, improving (student) proficiencies to be globally competitive, monitoring costs and looking at tradeoffs to achieve the best value, effective communications, and lending balance to a committee of individuals are all part of what makes a successful business. The fundamental issues are similar with the school.

Kathy and I reasoned I now have the time. Stratham may be a different town, but it's time to give back.

How will your skills/background contribute to the position you are running for? (200 words or less)