What Are We Voting For

September 12, 2025

Town of Newtown
Elected Offices Responsibilities

Dan Rosenthal, former First Selectman and not Vice President at Newtown Savings Bank explained the elected town bodies and solicited questions for this year's candidates

First Selectman

First Selectman is the Chief Executive and Administrative Officer of the Town. The First Selectman presides over meetings of the Board of Selectmen and is an ex-officio member of all boards and commissions of the Town,

Board of Selectmen

Supervise the administration of the affairs of the Town, except those matters which by the General Statute or Town Charter are exclusively committed to the Board of Education or other departments. Responsible for coordinating activities of Town departments and for reviewing the present and future needs of the Town.

The Board of Selectmen submit annually to the Board of Finance a proposed budget, not including the Board of Education portion, for the next fiscal year.

Legislative Council (LC)

All of the legislative powers of the Town conferred by the General Statutes on Legislative Bodies shall vest in the Legislative Council with the exception of those items specifically enumerated to other Town Bodies. The Council determines the annual Town Budget and considers Special, and Emergency Appropriations. The Legislative Council has the power to enact, amend or repeal ordinances. LC is the Town's Fiscal Authority.

Board of Finance (BoF)

Recommends a budget proposal and submits it to the Legislative Council for final action. In addition, advises the Board of Selectmen and Board of Education during the budget process and all Town Bodies on preferred financial practices and obligations. The Board of Finance also reviews and assesses financial operations including transfers, regular and Special Appropriations.

Board of Education (BOE)

The Board of Education shall provide and maintain good public elementary and secondary schools and shall provide such educational activities as in its judgment will best serve the interests of the Town. The Board of Education shall perform all acts required of them by this Charter or as necessary to carry into effect the powers and duties imposed upon them by law.

Town Clerk

Performing over 500 duties mandated by the Secretary of the State as well as over 100 duties mandated by the Town. Some of these functions include:
Land Records. Vital Records, issuing licenses, Managing Public Records and Managing Elections

Police Commission

The Board of Police Commissioners appoint the Chief of Police and appoint, promote, suspend and remove officers of the Police Department. The Board of Police Commissioners also serves as the traffic authority of the Town.

Planning and Zoning (P & Z)

Planning & Zoning Commission is responsible to promote the orderly and coordinated development of the Town and the general welfare and prosperity of its residents. The Commission controls and directs the use and development of property in a municipality or a large part of it by dividing it into zoning districts. The Commission regulates the principal and accessory uses permitted within these districts.
Responsible for the town's 10 year Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)

Zoning Board of Appeals is a Commission that has the power to grant variances of the Zoning Regulations where the application of zoning regulations would create exceptional hardship and deprive the owner of the property reasonable use of the land or building involved.

The Zoning Board of Appeals also has the power to correct a decision of a Zoning Enforcement Officer when the board feels the Zoning Officer has made an error.

Edmond Town Hall Board of Managers (ETH BOM)

The Board "shall have the exclusive care and maintenance of Edmond Town Hall and all grounds and buildings appurtenant thereto, together with all powers and duties prescribed for said Board by Special Act No. 98 of the 1931 session by which it was created, as amended by Special Act No. 517 of the 1953 session".

Board of Assessment Appeals (BOAA)

Hear and decide appeals from property owners regarding the assessment of their property

Registrar of Voters

In addition to conducting elections, the Registrars are responsible for voter education, conducting the annual Canvass of Voters, maintaining the accuracy of the voter registry list, the storage, maintenance and set up of all election and polling place equipment, hiring and training all election officials and workers, working with school officials to assure polling places are secure, conducting supervised balloting at care facilities, election day registration and voting, maintaining the chain of custody for election equipment security prior to elections and during the mandatory 2 weeks following a vote, conducting post-election audits as mandated by the state and helping the Town

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Question for Candidates

Row	Question For	Question
1	All Candidates	How do you see or plan to make Newtown an aging friendly community?
2	All Candidates	When will Newtown mobilize members to support Flag Pole correction?
3	All Candidates	What is the most important issue facing Newtown that you want to see addressed ASAP?
4	All Candidates	AARP Livable Community Plan - Will you appoint a committee to actively work on meeting the goals of the plan? There seems to be little town interest in moving this initiative forward.
5	BOE	Based on Newtown's decline in students over the past years/decade, what is the plan to reduce costs, specifically teacher count?
6	BOE	What are projections for school closings and or major renovations?
7	BOE	What additional student safety measures need to be or should be implemented in all schools or any particular Newtown school?
8	BOE	What role could a future BOE take in elevating older adults and to use their experiences and expertise to benefit the school systems?
9	BOE	What would it take to restart teaching Spanish in elementary school?
10	BOE	Lots of talk about Newtown Schools, but they aren't the best. They're good, but not great. What will you do to improve the testing and ranking?
11	BOE and BoF	Student population keeps falling. Smaller families. How will you make the budget reflect fewer students?
12	BoF	Seem like every candidate says they will go through the budget line by line and cut waste. There has been no increase in Newtown population and school enrollment continues to fall, but taxes keep going up. What will you do?
13	BoF & Legislative Council	Newtown Easy Transit Program - Will you support future funding of this transportation program for senior residents? The program is currently funded by ARPA funds through the end of 2026.
14	BoF &Legislative Council	The role of the Board of Finance has been discussed and concerns about the duplication of effort by Finance and the LC has resulted in some suggesting the elimination of the board of finance. What are your thoughts on this?
15	BoF and BOE	Student population keeps falling. Smaller families. How will you make the budget reflect fewer students?
16	BOS	Why not sell some of the properties the Town owns? Millions in ne revenue and new tax revenue every year.
17	BOS	Is there a strategic plan to sell properties owned by the town? If not what would you like it to be?
18	BOS	Is there any plan to increase town water hook-up in Sandy Hook?
19	BOS	What would you (running candidate) offer as a plan to attract new business into town?

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Row	Question For	Question
20	BOS	Why not sell some of the many properties the Town owns? Millions in new revenue and new tax revenue every year.
21	BOS & Legislative Council	Would you consider expanding the Property Tax Relief for Seniors in Newtown, to apply to more seniors and disabled?
22	BOS & Legislative Council	Do you feel "early voting" is a safe and fair way to vote?
23	BOS & Town Clerk	Town Meetings - What will you do to improve resident access/participation for meetings? There seems to be space and audio issues, as well as a lack of virtual access to meetings, as compared to other towns.
24	Legislative Council	If elected your Council will establish and direct the next Charter Revision. Do you have specific changes you would like to see made to Town Charter?
25	Legislative Council	80% or more of my taxes go for people under 21 (schools, Parks and Rec, Community Center, etc.) Services I cannot use. Will you push for senior tax relief.
26	Legislative Council	Define "Smart Development. Seems like every proposal in the past two years has been turned down
27	Legislative Council	Pick an issue that came before LC in 2024. How would you have voted on it.
28	Legislative Council	Town Provided Curbside Recycling - What will you do to re-introduce town paid curbside recycling? This issue is very important to many residents, and the removal of the service is perceived as a big take away.
29	Legislative Council	Aquarion Water Issues - What will you do to work with the railroad to resolve the issues that Aquarion faces with the water supply, due to the damage from the August 2024 storm? This impacts future housing development.
30	Legislative Council & BoF	The role of the Board of Finance has been discussed and concerns about the duplication of effort by Finance and the LC has resulted in some suggesting the elimination of the board of finance. What are your thoughts on this?
31	Legislative Council & BoF	Newtown Easy Transit Program - Will you support future funding of this transportation program for senior residents? The program is currently funded by ARPA funds through the end of 2026.
32	Legislative Council & BOS	Would you consider expanding the Property Tax Relief for Seniors in Newtown, to apply to more seniors and disabled?
33	Legislative Council & BOS	Do you feel "early voting" is a safe and fair way to vote?
34	Legislative Council & P&Z	How will you stop Newtown from becoming like Bethel?
35	Legislative Council & P&Z	FFH - Will you support the refurbishing/renovation of other buildings on the property for town use, commercial or other purposes?
36	Legislative Council & Police Commission	Do you support automated traffic enforcement cameras?

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37	P&Z	What happened to a sidewalk plan. Keep school kids out of the street. Sidewalk from Sandy Hook to Booth Library or Edmond Town Hall.
38	P&Z & Legislative Council	How will you stop Newtown from becoming like Bethel?
39	P&Z & Legislative Council	What will you do to get more housing people can afford? Like new college grads, empty nesters, or seniors
40	P&Z & Legislative Council	Please respond to the changing landscape of the affordable housing issue in Newtown, with new State laws, citizen pushback to development and complexity of long-range planning in Newtown.
41	P&Z & Legislative Council	The latest version of Newtown's POCD seemed to be guided by an outside consultant firm and possibly lacks a true vision for development in Newtown. With every suggested development challenged in some way would Newtown benefit from a formal visioning process to gain maximum citizen input?
42	P&Z & Legislative Council	FFH - Will you support the refurbishing/renovation of other buildings on the property for town use, commercial or other purposes?
43	Police Commission	How will you stop the speeding, especially on Main St and Berkshire?
44	Police Commission & Legislative Council	Do you support automated traffic enforcement cameras?
45	Police Commission:	What is the status of student security at town schools
46	Police Commission:	What improvements need to be made in student security
47	Town Clerk & BOS	Town Meetings - What will you do to improve resident access/participation for meetings? There seems to be space and audio issues, as well as a lack of virtual access to meetings, as compared to other towns.