

A close-up photograph of a sunflower with bright yellow petals and a brown, textured center. The background is slightly blurred, showing more sunflowers and a clear blue sky.

**VOTE FOR WHAT
YOU BELIEVE IN**

**Green Party of
Waterford, CT**

Official Platform, 2015



I
Voted

ACCURATE REPRESENTATION
FOR WATERFORD

#TRUEDEMOCRACY

Our nation was founded on the principles of liberty, justice, and the idea that all people should have a voice in their government.

But the current town government has grown stale, with the same individuals enacting the same policies, with little regard for changing ideas and opinions.

Electing Greens will allow new and different perspectives to be shared, and for a greater dialogue to be had about key issues in the Town.

BAD NEWS

Approximately 58% of adults in the United States believe that a third political party is needed “because the Republican and Democratic parties do such a poor job”.

Source: Gallup, Sept. 2014

GOOD NEWS

The Green Party seeks to ensure that these 58% are better represented in every level of government, both in appointed commissions and elected positions, and will work to adopt voting methods that enable people to vote for what they believe in, as opposed to voting for a lesser of two evils.

Source: Green Party of the United States Platform, 2014

WE WILL:

- ✓ **Make appointment-process to commissions more available, representative, and transparent.**

WE WILL:

- ✓ **Adopt Instant Runoff Voting for the election of First Selectman, so that all citizens may vote for a candidate they believe in without worrying about the “spoiler” effect.**

WE WILL:

- ✓ **Increase transparency in town decision-making processes.**



**PREPARING FOR LIFE,
NOT A TEST**

#LIFELONGLEARNING

Over the past several years, Waterford has taken many beneficial steps towards improving the quality of education that is provided to our children. But the Board of Education continues to make choices that waste taxpayer dollars and keep the public out of their decision-making process. We believe that Waterford can improve education more cost-effectively than it has in the past, and ensure that students are preparing for more than a test.

BAD NEWS

Waterford spends an average of \$477 per student more than other schools in the same district reference group that rank higher than Waterford.

Sources: Connecticut State Department of Education

GOOD NEWS

Connecticut as a whole is ranked in the top 5 states in the nation for education, and Waterford itself was ranked 40th in the State of Connecticut for education in 2015.

Source: US News and World Report, 2015

WE WILL:

- ✓ Conduct a budget-cost comparison between local school systems and Waterford.

WE WILL:

- ✓ Ensure that schools are accessible and safe environments for all students including LBGTQ+ and gender non-conforming youth.

WE WILL:

- ✓ Oppose over-emphasis on standardized testing and encourage adaptive learning.



**EFFICIENT INFRASTRUCTURE
FOR A PROACTIVE COMMUNITY**

#IMPROVEDINFRASTRUCTURE

Waterford's infrastructure has taken hit after hit over the years due to increasingly damaging storms and apparent changes in our local climate.

But the people of Waterford require improved infrastructure in their daily life, and many citizens would benefit from more sidewalks and bike lanes.

Elected Greens would advocate for safety, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness when working to expand our infrastructure.

BAD NEWS

The consulting firm VHB estimates that it would cost roughly \$13.8 million to “get the town’s transportation system up to snuff”, and increase investment in road maintenance from \$500,000/year to \$1.16 million/year through 2025 just to maintain road quality.

Source: The Day, May 2015

GOOD NEWS

Decreasing wear-and-tear on our roads by increasing our ability to use non-motorized transportation around town and taking proactive steps to protect our infrastructure against the elements before another hurricane arrives will help taxpayers save money.

Source: Al Jazeera America, July 2014

WE WILL:

- ✓ Support creating more sidewalks and bike lanes for safe, non-motorized, safe access to the town.

WE WILL:

- ✓ Support conducting much-needed maintenance in high-traffic areas and the redesign of unsafe roads.

WE WILL:

- ✓ Support investigating means to strengthen and protect our electric infrastructure against increasingly-powerful storms.



CONSERVATION
& SUSTAINABILITY

#SAFECLIMATE

In the last thirty years there has been an explosion in public environmental awareness and activism, with little action from any level of government.

Governments, including Waterford's, must also prioritize action on climate change to avoid devastating harm to our economy, society and environment.

We can take action by investing in eco-friendly materials when conducting repairs, supporting local conservation, and promoting sustainable initiatives.

BAD NEWS

Climate change resulting in a warming of 3° Celsius is projected to cost the United States as a whole \$150 Billion per year, and a warming of 4° Celsius is projected to cost the United States over \$300 billion.

Source: Office of the President of the United States

GOOD NEWS

In 2012, Austria, New Zealand, and Iceland all generated more than 60% of their energy from renewables. Meanwhile, the United States was stuck at a shameful 12.5%. Additionally, it is increasingly cheaper for individuals to invest in renewable energy, such as solar power.

Source: US Energy Information Administration

WE WILL:

- ✓ Support both businesses and individuals as they seek to utilize renewable energy sources and sustainable practices.

WE WILL:

- ✓ Support preserving as much natural land as possible, while supporting plans for environmentally responsible, pertinent developments.

WE WILL:

- ✓ Support enacting an ordinance to ban the distribution of non-biodegradable plastic carryout bags.



AN ECONOMY
THAT WORKS FOR ALL

#FAIRECONOMY

Waterford has always been a center for commerce, and many residents have managed to prosper in their time living in our community.

But many residents continue to face financial hardships, and have trouble paying their mortgages, paying off student loans, and making end's meet.

Our town can adopt policies to ease financial burdens, feed those who are in need, promote locally-owned business, and promote economic sustainability.

BAD NEWS

The wage one would have to earn in Waterford in order to support a family of four on one income is \$24.74/hr. In total, 3.1% of families and 5.4% of the population lives below the poverty line.

Sources: MA Institute of Technology & US Census Bureau

GOOD NEWS

Many towns across the country, such as Los Angeles and Seattle, have already taken the initiative to enact a living wage, and some states, such as New York, have begun discussing the possibility of adopting state-wide single-payer systems.

Source: NPR News

WE WILL:

- ✓ **Keep a balanced town budget and maintain responsible town management while maintaining an open relationship with the community on economic issues.**

WE WILL:

- ✓ **Favor policies and practices that favor local businesses and good employers over low-wage, corporate chains.**

WE WILL:

- ✓ **Support property tax cuts for those who adopt sustainable improvements to their property, such as solar panels, garden space, and water-conserving landscaping.**

Other Policies

Education

- ✓ Support the creation of non-voting student liaison positions on the Board of Ed., so student ideas and opinions are better represented.
- ✓ Promote paperless environments to streamline accessibility and increase eco-friendliness.

Infrastructure

- ✓ Take steps to prevent combined sewage overflow.
- ✓ Support installing eco-friendly, permeable pavement.

Government & Services

- ✓ Encourage equal opportunity for involvement in town government.
- ✓ Support establishment of a regional animal control facility, but believe that the facility should not be paid for with local tax dollars if constructed on State property.

Other Policies (Cont.)

Environment

- ✓ Install refill stations for reusable water bottles and convert electrical switches to sensor-switches in town-owned buildings.
- ✓ Educate people on the harmful nature of many pesticides on personal and environmental health.
- ✓ Promote the conservation of wetlands and coastal zones to protect against sea level rise.

Economy

- ✓ Support a regional push towards adopting a living wage.
- ✓ Maintain an open dialogue with the businesses of Waterford to best promote growth and success.
- ✓ Support tax and zoning policies that spur the creation of high-wage, environmentally responsible jobs.
- ✓ Support the right of workers to collectively bargain and be a part of decision-making processes that greatly affect their employment.

Waterford, CT



Green Party

GET INVOLVED

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ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This publication was created by the Platform Committee within the Waterford Green Party, and is based on the mini-platform of the UK Green Party.

2015 Town Platform