



Green Party

Waterford, Connecticut

2017 Town Platform

Adopted 08/26/2017

The Green Party of Waterford, Connecticut, strives to follow and uphold the ideals of grassroots democracy, social justice, ecological wisdom, non-violence, decentralization, community-based economics, feminism, respect for diversity, personal and global responsibility, and sustainability while striving to improve our community for the benefit of the people. Our Party hereby puts forth this platform, after carefully and meticulously considering the problems we face, as a list of ways in which our candidates will go about resolving the issues Waterford faces when they are elected to office. We believe that our candidates have the brightest vision of Waterford's future, and will work twice as hard as the next candidate to make that vision a reality.

Local Economy

Our town faces a major economic obstacle in the near future: the closure of the Millstone Nuclear Power Plant. While it is uncertain when the plant will close, it is certain that it will close, and with the closing comes a massive reduction in the amount of money Dominion will pay our government in taxes. We have the opportunity now to take decisive action that can help expand our tax base and ensure that the closure of this plant does not disrupt the services the town provides nor raise property taxes. We will take every action within our power to ensure that citizens are affected as little as possible by the decommissioning of the Millstone reactors, and to strengthen Waterford's position as an commercial center in Southeastern Connecticut.

To better our local economy, elected Greens will:

- Ensure that the town budget remains balanced and that the government does not spend outside its means.
- Support policies that will benefit small, locally-owned businesses over large, corporate chains.
- Incentivize the creation of new small businesses as a means of creating a wider, more sustainable tax base in the town.
- Work with the town's water supplier to better remove carcinogenic materials from the source.
- Plan and create a welcoming "downtown" commercial center in Waterford.
- Reaffirm their commitment to supporting unions and the process of collective bargaining with every vote cast on a town board or commission.



Environment & Wellness

Climate change is the most pressing issue that the global community faces in the 21st century, and we have a responsibility as a town with resources at our disposal to act on it. This changing climate has already begun to affect our town, by allowing tick populations to multiply and further spread disease, by increasing the average temperature of our town's waterways to promote eutrophication and hypoxia, and more. The Green Party seeks to resolve these issues, better our town's ecosystems, and promote general wellness by taking simple steps towards practices and policies that are both sustainable and that respect the natural areas around us.

To better our local ecosystems, elected Greens will:

- Encourage all residents and local businesses to take part in micro-generation through solar panel installation, possibly through tax deductions for properties producing renewable energy.
- Increase littering fines within the town limits, as a means of discouraging pollution.
- Disincentivize individuals and businesses from using unnecessary fertilizers and pesticides near major waterways.
- Promote a small \$.05 charge on all plastic bags distributed by a business in the state of Connecticut, as a means of avoiding plastic litter from entering our ecosystems.
- Launch a town-wide program to curb tick populations with the help of natural, indigenous predators, as a means of slowing the spread of Lyme disease.
- Ban waste from hydraulic fracturing (also known as "fracking") waste from being carried through, deposited, or stored within the town's limits.
- Encourage the town to set aside more undeveloped lands to preserve for posterity.
- Recommend policies to help slow the rate of coastal erosion in town.
- Utilize durable, eco-friendly materials for all new infrastructure projects, including permeable pavement.

Infrastructure & Planning

Our town's infrastructure is deteriorating, and a plan must be made for revitalizing both our physical plants and roadways. Creating and enact this plan is a very delicate process, and must both be financially and environmentally responsible in order to be a successful strategy. We will take the time needed to craft and execute such a plan well, and we will ensure that the people's tax dollars only go to fund projects that will be sustainable and endure the wear and tear of decades to come.

To better our town's infrastructure, elected Greens will:

- Encourage the town to only use permeable materials for all roadways and other paved surfaces to minimize the environmental impact of our infrastructure.
- Request the creation of more bike lanes and sidewalks around town, as a means of promoting health, safety, and eco-friendly transportation.
- Invest in redesigning and repaving roads that are currently dangerous due to their condition.



- Prioritize repairing the Oswegatchie Firehouse, which currently poses a safety hazard due to the whole second floor only being reinforced with two-by-four boards.
- Consider moving power lines underground as the investment becomes cost-effective, so as to avoid massive power outages during hurricanes and snowstorms that can prove to be dangerous for less mobile and older citizens.
- Promote greater physical accessibility to all town properties to accommodate for less mobile citizens.

Education

While our town is regarded by many as having a wonderful school system, there are large areas that could always use improvement, and it is becoming clear in the 21st century that we must rethink the way in which we structure teaching in our classrooms. By the time our students begin their careers, they may be walking into new lines of work that do not currently exist, and, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average Baby Boomer held 10.5 jobs between the ages of 18 and 40. We must prepare our students effectively for each of their individual pursuits, and we must encourage growth in each area in which they demonstrate talent and ability, rather than those considered to be traditional college-track fields of study.

To better our town's school systems, elected Greens will:

- Reaffirm their support for public education with every vote cast on a town board or commission.
- Encourage the expansion of our schools' vocational programs as a means of better providing hands-on learning opportunities and pathways for students interested in pursuing trades and technical careers.
- Support increased access to and instructional use of technology for all students and educators.
- Promote any policy that will help Waterford schools move away from the practice of standardized testing and teaching to the test.
- Work collaboratively with schools in our region to offer more opportunities to students while sharing resources.
- Request that one or two current students in the Waterford Public Schools system be elected to represent student interests at each Board of Education meeting in a non-voting capacity.
- Continue to work towards building a monetarily sustainable, low-cost option for Pre-K education in Waterford, given the town's recent decision to withdraw from the Friendship School agreement.
- Support the movement toward student-centered, personalized learning in our schools.
- Emphasize the need for greater discussion regarding social/emotional health and wellness in our school systems.
- Foster greater cooperation between the town government and Waterford High School so as to encourage more students to complete their Learning Through Service (LTS) hours through volunteerism for the town.



Government Reform

The Waterford municipal government has, in our opinion, many areas in which it can be improved, streamlined, and made more efficient to the benefit of its citizens. The people of any town should be able to expect clear and concise reporting on town affairs from its government, and we believe that this level of communication should be prioritized. Furthermore, we wish to encourage more individuals to partake in the town government as a volunteer to its boards and commissions, and we will make it our mission as your elected representatives to open these processes and make your government more accessible.

To better our town's government, elected Greens will:

- Provide citizens with the opportunity to meet with elected representatives more often, so as to encourage greater dialogue in town and to ensure that your voice and opinion is heard and considered at every turn in the town decision-making processes.
- Prioritize transparency above all else to guarantee that citizens are able to stay informed about how their tax dollars are being put to use practically and efficiently.
- Promote town meetings and vacancies on boards and commissions more publicly, utilizing both widely-circulated media like The Day and social media sites to better reach citizens that otherwise may not know how to get involved in town affairs.
- Support the institution of rank choice voting for the position of First Selectman, so as to ensure that the candidate with the most widespread support will win out in a fair and just election process.
- Encourage the town to televise or otherwise livestream, to the best of their ability under the law, all meetings of the Board of Selectmen, Board of Finance, and Board of Education to further promote transparency and public participation in town affairs.