

## BOARD OF HEALTH

**Name:** Joan Jacobs

### **Questions:**

**1. Tell us what makes you a good candidate for this office and what motivates you to run for this office?**

I have served on the Board of Health for 30 years, and during that time I have developed a deep understanding of the health needs of our community. My experience has allowed me to work collaboratively with residents, local officials, and state public health professionals to address a wide range of issues.

What motivates me to run for re-election is my continued commitment to protecting and improving the health of our residents. Public health is constantly evolving, and it is important to have experienced leadership that understands both the regulatory responsibilities of the Board and the importance of practical, community-focused solutions. I remain dedicated to ensuring our town continues to promote safe, healthy living conditions for everyone.

**2. What do you consider to be the most important health issues facing residents today and how would you approach communicating with residents regarding the health issues that affect them?**

One of the most important health challenges facing communities today is ensuring residents have access to clear, reliable public health information. Effective communication is essential. I believe the Board of Health should communicate proactively and transparently to ensure residents are informed. It is also important to listen to community concerns and answer questions.

**3. What are the key obstacles to improving local health and what steps would you take to address them?**

One of the key obstacles to improving local health is limited resources. Local boards of health are often responsible for a wide range of responsibilities while working within tight budgets and staffing levels. Another challenge is ensuring consistent public understanding and engagement around health issues.

To address these challenges, it is important to prioritize strong collaboration—with local government, regional health partners, schools, and community organizations. Seeking grants, sharing resources with neighboring communities, and continuing to invest in public health infrastructure can also strengthen local capacity. Finally, maintaining open communication with residents helps build trust and encourages community participation in promoting a healthier environment for everyone.

**4. How important do you feel partnering with other programs such as Connect2Recovery is in improving support and services for Norwood residents?**

Partnering with programs like Connect2Recovery is extremely important in strengthening the support system available to Norwood residents. Public health challenges, especially issues such as substance use and mental health, cannot be addressed by one department alone. They require coordination between healthcare providers, public safety, social services, and community organizations.

I am particularly proud to have been part of the original group that helped establish both Connect2Recovery and NC8. The goal from the beginning was to create a compassionate, coordinated approach that connects individuals and families with the help they need rather than leaving them to navigate complex systems on their own.

These types of partnerships allow us to expand services, share expertise, and respond more effectively to community needs. Continuing to support and strengthen collaborations like Connect2Recovery and NC8 communities help ensure residents have access to the resources, treatment, and support that can truly make a difference in their lives.