

Board of Selectman

Name: Cheryl L Doyle

Address: 12 Sumner Street, Norwood, MA 02062

Email address: cherylmichael2@verizon.net

1. Tell us about yourself and how your experiences make you a good candidate for this office.

- I am a veteran of the US Navy, having served nine years including an assignment in South Korea. I am a selectman candidate with formal public service to our country and will be a supportive member for veterans. Norwood is proud of its veterans who have served. Having traveled extensive throughout the United States and abroad, I have great appreciation of our democratic government and for the many resources afforded our country.

- I have lived in Norwood for 30 years and raised two children through Norwood public schools, and one of my children had an IEP/504 plan. I appreciate the challenges of the school department budget and the challenges of special education. I value an integrated approach to education that fosters the development of the whole child. This includes academics as well as fostering well-being in the areas of social-emotional development. A strong educational system is the backbone of a community. Smart budgeting is important as special needs budgets grow. The selectmen representatives to the Budget Balancing Committee need to understand the complexities of the school budget.

- I am also a homeowner and interested in controlling property tax rates, but I also believe in the 1 % percent surcharge for the Community Preservation Act. It is a strategic financial tool to garner more funds that provide quality of life projects in our town that otherwise could never be funded through the regular operational budget. The CPA account is matched with State funds and can only be used in the areas of open space and recreation, historic preservation, and affordable housing.

- I have enjoyed working in Norwood for 30 years managing commercial properties and using my expertise as a Massachusetts licensed construction supervisor. My substantial business knowledge keeps me relevant on property issues, zoning and building codes.

- Because of my long-term commitment to Norwood, interest in public service, building management and land uses, my current volunteer service includes thirteen years as a Town Meeting Member, eight years on the Conservation Commission, and several years on the Community Preservation Committee and the Historical Commission. Past service includes eight years on the Conservation Commission as well as other short-term committee work. My job requires excellent time management skills, dealing with a diverse customer base, and attention to budget and expense details. These skills will be an asset to my term on the Board of Selectmen.

2. What do you think is the biggest challenge Norwood is facing right now and what would

you do to address it?

There is never just one big challenge in a Town because we are many-faceted. One does not solve a problem with tunnel vision. Below are some of our biggest challenges.

Affordable Housing and **housing density** are big issues for residents of all ages in Norwood. I would like to ask for the appointment of a Housing Task Force to address this issue. I believe there is so much more that we can do better in this area to assist seniors, people with disabilities, families, and young professionals. We need to put our collective efforts together on a task force. Norwood could investigate a first-time home buyers' program. A housing task force could learn how the Community Preservation funds can be creatively applied to affordable housing programs and projects. Also, the Norwood Affordable Housing Corporation has been sitting dormant for twenty years. Why? The Selectmen need to put affordable housing expansion in their annual goals.

The need for a **hospital/medical facility** is obvious. While the catchment area may include twenty-one towns, because the facility site is physically located in Norwood, the biggest responsibility is on Norwood to push this topic to the front of the Governor's agenda. All Norwood residents should assist in advocating for an appropriate buyer of the property.

School and Town Budgets need an extremely thorough review, line by line, with a fresh set of eyes. Norwood has the resources to succeed but perhaps we need to realign how/where the money is allocated. Complete transparency is needed to be able to effectively review department budgets. Town meeting members also 'need the details to understand the ramifications of their votes. Budget materials need to be distributed in a timely manner well ahead of the Town Meeting so that members have enough time to review materials.

Storm Water Management issues will not go away. It is not right that some neighborhoods suffer more than others from water damage due, in great part, to continued construction and large-scale projects that increase impervious surface areas. Norwood needs to hear residents' concerns and protect their property from flooding- not just support businesses and outside developers who do not respect the regulations. Developers need to be held accountable for any unresolved storm water runoff. Norwood can also maintain storm water drains on a planned schedule, in addition to taking as needed calls from residents who inform public works of drain maintenance issues on their street.

3. What do you think should be included in Norwood's comprehensive plan?

Norwood's Comprehensive Plan needs to facilitate the growth of a healthy community and economy based on its ever-changing demographics. Norwood experiences ample student and resident turnover over the years. Additionally, Norwood's daytime population expands due to all the businesses, employment opportunities, and benefits of transportation including the airport.

Appreciation of Norwood's history through the restoration of historical buildings bonds everyone in town, including visitors, and residents regardless of the number of years one lives in the town. Historic buildings foster community pride and preserve Norwood's rich cultural heritage. As Norwood ages, planning should encourage the development of historic/cultural districts.

Collection of past, current, and future population and demographics is needed to assist in planning correctly. A plan could include housing and business buildings that are aesthetically pleasing, affordable housing that is located throughout the town and in varied styles, new ideas for zoning that support a variety of small houses (not just large apartment styles), better mixed use options, support of green spaces and places to share community. "Next generation" zoning will be an issue for a mobile society with increased technology use.

4. What is an important issue that you would like the Board of Selectmen to address that they are currently not.

The Board is not obtaining definitive answers to the question of why Norwood's annual budget is escalating at an alarming rate and seems out of control. How many additional staff have we hired in the past five years? Have we examined staff levels? Are we maximizing the use of our buildings? Does the Town's organizational chart reflect the best decision-making process based on the relationships between departments? Greater transparency, public discussion of problem areas, and budget resolutions need to be developed. The burden on taxpayers, both business and residential, adds to the challenge of being able to afford housing. As stated earlier, the Board has not adequately included Affordable Housing as a priority for their Selectmen goals.