



LITTLE COMPTON TAXPAYERS ASSOCIATION

● ● NEWSLETTER ● ●

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November 1, 2006 Vol. VIV, No. 2

Officers

Chairman: Bob Hayden
1st Vice Chair: Roy Bonner
2nd Vice Chair: Pat Parente
Sec/Treas: Roger Lord

* * Special Election Edition * *

PEOPLE TO VOTE FOR. The question most often asked by our members is, "Whom should we vote for?" While we are sometimes uncomfortable answering the question, we realize that your Taxpayers Association spends a lot of time at meetings of the town's boards, committees and the council. We have observed them over the years and tend to know them pretty well. We draw on that information to help answer the question.

This year we have the opportunity to elect two people to the School Committee that we know will bring a wonderful and diverse background to support the efforts of the School Committee. The two candidates we recommend are **Joseph Quinn** (Incumbent) and **Donald Gomez**. We offer these for your consideration for the following reasons:

Joe has been a teacher of Latin and English for 38 years. He's recognized by his peers and students as a gifted teacher. He "talks the talk and walks the walk" in educational circles. His qualifications, both personal and professional, are of the highest order. Little Compton has the opportunity to continue to have such a qualified individual on the School Committee.

Don has served the town well for many years. An engineer by training and profession, he brings wide managerial and professional judgment to the task. He served well and diligently as Town Council president and is currently on the Budget Committee. Don always had the courage to make the "tough call" that was the right one and not necessarily the most popular one. His integrity and judgment in such an important post is needed. The coming issues in the maintenance of the School qualify him as an outstanding candidate.

A School Committee is at its best with a broad and balanced set of members. The addition of these two people to the five-member committee will enhance that balance. Quinn and Gomez both believe we can have excellent schools and worthwhile programs at an affordable cost.

There are two other candidates, Attorney Michael Harrington (I) and Mr. Ian Scott (R), and we DO NOT offer them our support. Harrington was one of the architects of last year's grueling 3-night Financial Town Meeting where he and others tried to increase the School budget, already in surplus, by an arbitrary \$570,000

without a plan for its use. This was irresponsible and Scott actively supported it.

Last year, Scott had the opportunity to take part in the negotiations with the teachers union but chose not to do so. Joe Quinn, Darryl Harvey, and Cheryl Cady did attend and produced the best teacher contract the Town has seen in a long time. Given that 75% of the School's budget is for salary & benefits, Mr. Scott should have been there.

We suggest that you withhold your vote for these two candidates and vote only for Joe Quinn and Don Gomez to assure that they win a position on the School Committee.

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**STATE BALLOT QUESTIONS.** There are nine statewide questions on the ballot. Total projected costs for 6 of these proposed spending measures amounts to \$400-million. This is not "State money"; it's tax money that comes from you, the taxpayer. With approximately one million people in Rhode Island, that's \$400 per person! The following should be considered when voting on November 7, 2006.

**Question #1:** Change the State Constitution to allow a casino in West Warwick.

**☒ REJECT!** The casino will divert revenue from the State's two gambling facilities. The taxpayers will have to make up the loss (the "Slippage" arrangement).

**Question #2:** Voting rights for felons still serving their terms (including parole).

**☒ REJECT!** This is ridiculous on its face.

**Question #3:** Increase the "rainy day fund" from 2% to 3% of the expected revenues for contingencies, and use surplus over that for capital projects and not for payments on bonds.

**☒ APPROVE!** RIPEC supports this, and so should we.

**Question #4:** New pharmacy building at URI and renovate facilities at RI College (\$72,790,000).

**☒ REJECT!** URI is in desperate need of major repairs to its buildings after years of deferred maintenance (similar to Little Compton's school). A new building won't help and perpetuates the problem.

**Question #5:** Transportation bonds for road/bridge improvements and buses for RIPTA (\$154,316,666). Qualifies RI for federal matching funds.

**APPROVE!** This is a wise investment.

**Question #6:** Roger Williams Park Zoo improvements (\$19,180,602).

**REJECT!** The taxpayers have enough debt. They don't need this especially since the zoo charges admission!

**Question #7:** Fort Adams restoration (\$6,974,764).

**REJECT!** The taxpayers have enough debt.

**Question #8:** Local recreation development - Dept of Environmental Management (\$5,231,073).

**REJECT!** The taxpayers have enough debt. It is unlikely that Little Compton will benefit from this.

**Question #9:** Affordable Housing (\$87,184,557).

**REJECT!** This is more welfare at the expense of the taxpayers. If enacted, will fuel even more in the future.

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CHARTER CHANGE QUESTIONS. There will be 15 questions on the ballot concerning proposed changes to the Town Charter - specifically, questions 10 through 24. The proposed changes were developed by the Charter Commission and approved for the ballot by the Town Council during the month of July.

In carefully examining the proposed changes, three thoughts come to mind: (1) This is a good change; (2) If it isn't broken, don't fix it; and, (3) Losers should not become winners by default.

The Taxpayers Association did identify several proposed changes as being worth doing. But there were some proposed changes that provide no benefit to the Town, or they remove flexibility and make things worse. The most alarming proposals, however, involve altering the way vacancies in several organizations are filled. The current method empowers the Town Council to fill vacancies. The Charter Commission proposes to use an automatic method that would appoint the next highest vote getter from the most recent election. There is a reason why such a person was not elected in the first place. It's because there was something about that candidate's character, qualifications, or positions that were inadequate in the minds of the voters. Why is that any different if one of the winners has to leave office? **LOSERS SHOULD NOT BECOME WINNERS BY DEFAULT!**

The following is a summary of the proposed changes and the positions (approve or reject) taken by the Taxpayers Association for each one of them.

Question #10: Shall the Charter of the Town be amended to allow the Board of Canvassers to keep the polls open to vote for Budget Committee/Beach Commission vacancies following the opening of the meeting place through a half-hour after the Town Meeting adjournment *and to*

clarify that a vacancy will be filled from the most recent election if necessary? (Amends Section 204)

REJECT! Losers should not become winners by default.

Question #11: Shall the Charter of the Town be amended to set a fixed date of one-week intervals for the reconvening of any Financial Town Meeting, if necessary? (Amends Section 302)

REJECT! The current method is to let the people decide when to hold a follow-up Financial Town Meeting. This change would remove flexibility and is unnecessary.

Question #12: Shall the Charter of the Town be amended to clarify that the Assistant Moderator must be an elector of the Town and to allow for an Interim Moderator to be appointed when the Moderator or Assistant Moderator are unable to serve? (Amends Section 303)

REJECT! The Town should retain the flexibility to choose the best qualified person for this highly specialized job. The option to go outside of Little Compton should be allowed when the need arises.

Question #13: Shall the Charter of the Town be amended to include administrative clarifications, set criteria for the ordering of items to be considered and to stipulate that the Budget Committee's recommended budget will prevail in the event a Financial Town Meeting fails to approve the budget prior to the start of the ensuing fiscal year? (Amends Section 305)

REJECT! This change would require a 2/3 majority to change the order of strokes at the Financial Town Meeting (it is currently a simple majority), and use a budget as recommended by the Budget Committee if no budget has been approved before the new fiscal year rather than one that was approved by the voting public. The only voter-approved budget in such an event is the current fiscal year's budget and that is what should be used.

Question #14: Shall the Charter of the Town be amended to delete the words "or disability" in reference to conditions under which the Vice President shall act as President? (Amends Section 404).

APPROVE! It is not clear what the benefit of this change is, but there appears to be no harm.

Question #15: Shall the Charter of the Town be amended to stipulate that a vacancy occurring on the Town Council be filled with the unelected candidate receiving the highest number of votes from the most recent election or by the Town Council if that person is unavailable or unwilling to serve? (Amends Section 406)

REJECT! Losers should not become winners by default.

Question #16: Shall the Charter of the Town be amended to allow five (5) business days to expire between a hearing date and the publication of a Public Hearing on proposed ordinance amendments? (Amends Section 410)

APPROVE! This is a good change.

Question #17: Shall the Charter of the Town be amended to clarify rights of the Budget Committee to access public records, to authorize the Budget Committee to recommend to elected officials changes in their compensation to be used in proposed budgets and to task the Budget Committee with preparing a capital expenditure program for the Town? (Amends Sec 502)

APPROVE! This is a good change.

Question #18: Shall the Charter of the Town be amended to clarify which budgets are under the jurisdiction of the Town Council and allow the Town Council to set a date prior to March 1st for budget requests? (Amends Section 503)

APPROVE! This is a good change.

Question #19: Shall the Charter of the Town be amended to assign the Budget Committee with the responsibility of developing a multi-year program for capital expenditure, rather than the Planning Board? (Amends Section 505)

APPROVE! This is a good change.

Question #20: Shall the Charter of the Town be amended to allow that in the event that a vacancy occurs in the office of Tax Assessor following an election, such vacancy shall be filled for the remainder of the term by the unelected candidate for the vacated position with the highest number of votes from the most recent election for such office, or if that person is unavailable or unwilling to serve, shall be filled by the Town Council? (Amends Section 605)

REJECT! Losers should not become winners by default.

Question #21: Shall the Charter of the Town be amended to allow the Town Council to establish by ordinance for the replacement of the Board of Tax Assessors with a single Tax Assessor employed by the Town Council whom shall have had prior professional training and/or experience in assessment, property appraisal and related matters? (Amends Section 605)

REJECT! The current Board of Tax Assessors consists of 3 assessors at a cost of \$14,500. This change would replace them with yet another full-time Town employee with benefits, a pension (\$70K), and probably a need for consultants or more clerks. How else could one person do the work of three? This is a very **BAD IDEA** with no identifiable basis since the current method is both cost effective and efficient. If it isn't broken, don't fix it!

Question #22: Shall the Charter of the Town be amended to clarify that the Town Council shall serve as the Tax Assessment Board of Review? (Amends Sec 606)

REJECT! There is an existing appeal process covered under State law. It is foolish and futile to burden an

already over-burdened Town Council with this additional duty. If it isn't broken, don't fix it!

Question #23: Shall the Charter of the Town be amended to add language to include the Little Compton Housing Trust which currently exists by ordinance and is identified in the Comprehensive Plan? (Amends Sec 711)

REJECT! The Housing Trust is fully defined in Town Ordinance 2-9. There does not appear to be any tangible benefit to putting it in the Charter. Doing so will make it more difficult to change in the future.

Question #24: Shall the Charter of the Town be amended to allow that in the event that a vacancy occurs in the membership of the School Committee following an election, such vacancy shall be filled for the remainder of the term by the unelected candidate for the vacated position with the highest number of votes from the most recent election for such office, or if that person is unavailable or unwilling to serve, shall be filled by the Town Council for the remainder of the vacated term? (Amends Section 803)

REJECT! Losers should not become winners by default. This is especially true here since the School Department spends nearly 2/3 of the Town's budget!

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## SAMPLE BALLOT

We have included a center page that resembles the ballot that you will be given when you vote on November 7th. We have filled it out in a way that we feel best represents our position on people and procedures.

There is a lot at stake in this upcoming election. People make a difference, and constitution or charter changes make a difference. The Taxpayers Association has weighed these factors and decided which people and which changes should be supported. It was done with the taxpayer in mind.

We strongly urge that you use this sample ballot as the basis for who and what you vote for. Bring it with you when you vote. It will save you time...

...AND MONEY!

**The future is in your hands. Get out and VOTE on November 7th.**

**Sample Ballot**

Congressional District 1  
 Representative  
 Vote for 1  
 Write-in

**OFFICIAL ELECTION BALLOT**  
**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**  
**TOWN OF LITTLE COMPTON**  
 TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2006



**BRING THIS WITH YOU WHEN YOU VOTE**  
 (We added the circles. Don't put them on the real ballot!)

1. To vote Complete
2. To vote Print the choice like
3. To cast

0  
 0  
 your write-in

Complete the arrow pointing to the party of your choice in the straight party section of the ballot. If you cast a straight party vote and also vote for an individual candidate or candidates for a certain office on the ballot, the straight party vote will not be counted for that office and only the individual candidate or candidates voted for will be counted for that office.

~~STRAIGHT PARTY~~  
 To vote "Straight Ticket" complete the arrow pointing to the party of your choice.

~~REPUBLICAN~~  
~~DEMOCRAT~~

SENATOR IN CONGRESS  
 SIX Year Term  
 Vote for 1

Lincoln D. CHAFEE  
 Republican

Sheldon WHITEHOUSE  
 Democrat

Write-in

REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS  
 DISTRICT 1  
 TWO Year Term  
 Vote for 1

Jonathan P. SCOTT  
 Republican

Patrick J. KENNEDY  
 Democrat

Kenneth A. CAPALBO  
 Independent

Write-in

GOVERNOR  
 FOUR Year Term  
 Vote for 1

Donald L. CARCIERI  
 Republican

Charles J. FOGARTY  
 Democrat

Write-in

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
 FOUR Year Term  
 Vote for 1

Reginald A. CENTRACCHIO  
 Republican

Elizabeth H. ROBERTS  
 Democrat

Robert J. HEALEY, JR.  
 Cool Moose

Write-in

SECRETARY OF STATE  
 FOUR Year Term  
 Vote for 1

Sue A. STENHOUSE  
 Republican

A. Ralph MOLLIS  
 Democrat

Write-in

ATTORNEY GENERAL  
 FOUR Year Term  
 Vote for 1

J. William HARSCH  
 Republican

Patrick C. LYNCH  
 Democrat

Write-in

GENERAL TREASURER  
 FOUR Year Term  
 Vote for 1

Andrew M. LYON, III  
 Republican

Frank T. CAPRIO  
 Democrat

Write-in

SENATOR IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
 DISTRICT 12  
 TWO Year Term  
 Vote for 1

June N. Gibbs  
 Republican

Eileen Rice SPELLANE  
 Democrat

Write-in

REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
 DISTRICT 71  
 TWO Year Term  
 Vote for 1

John J. LOUGHLIN, II  
 Republican

Write-in

TOWN MODERATOR  
 TWO Year Term  
 Vote for 1

Grace G. ANDERSON  
 Democrat

Write-in

TOWN CLERK  
 TWO Year Term  
 Vote for 1

Carol A. WORDELL  
 Republican

Write-in

**No Opinion**

TOWN COUNCIL  
 TWO Year Term  
 Vote for any 5

Charles N. APPLETON, JR.  
 Republican

Fred M. BODINGTON, III  
 Republican

Paul J. GOLEMESKE  
 Republican

Gary S. MATARONAS  
 Republican

Robert L. MUSHEN  
 Republican

Write-in

Write-in

Write-in

Write-in

Write-in

TOWN TREASURER  
 COLLECTOR OF TAXES  
 TWO Year Term  
 Vote for 1

Mary-Jane M. HARRINGTON  
 Democrat

Write-in

ASSESSOR OF TAXES  
 SIX Year Term  
 Vote for 1

Daniel A. CURRAN  
 Republican

Write-in

SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
 FOUR Year Term  
 Vote for any 3

Donald T. GOMEZ  
 Republican

Joseph M. QUINN  
 Republican

Ian P. SCOTT  
 Republican

Michael J. HARRINGTON  
 Independent

Write-in

Write-in

Write-in

| STATE QUESTIONS                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.<br><b>AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE (RESORT CASINO IN WEST WARWICK TO BE PRIVATELY OWNED AND OPERATED BY A RHODE ISLAND BUSINESS ENTITY ESTABLISHED BY THE NARRAGANSETT INDIAN TRIBE AND ITS CHOSEN PARTNER)</b><br>(Section 1 of Article XIV of the Constitution) | <p>Question 1 APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 1 REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 2.<br><b>AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE (ELECTIONS - RESTORATION OF VOTING RIGHTS)</b><br>(Section 1 of Article XIV of the Constitution)                                                                                                                               | <p>Question 2 APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 2 REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 3.<br><b>AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE (BUDGET RESERVE ACCOUNT)</b> (Section 1 of Article XIV of the Constitution)                                                                                                                                                    | <p>Question 3 APPROVE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 3 REJECT <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 4.<br><b>HIGHER EDUCATION BONDS \$72,790,000</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <p>Question 4 APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 4 REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 5.<br><b>TRANSPORTATION BONDS \$88,500,000</b> (Chapter 246 - Public Laws 2006)                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <p>Question 5 APPROVE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 5 REJECT <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 6.<br><b>ROGER WILLIAMS PARK ZOO BONDS \$11,000,000</b> (Chapter 246 - Public Laws 2006)                                                                                                                                                                                           | <p>Question 6 APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 6 REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 7.<br><b>FORT ADAMS STATE PARK RECREATION AND RESTORATION BONDS \$4,000,000</b><br>(Chapter 246 - Public Laws 2006)                                                                                                                                                                | <p>Question 7 APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 7 REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 8.<br><b>DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT BONDS \$3,000,000</b><br>(Chapter 246 - Public Laws 2006)                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>Question 8 APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 8 REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 9.<br><b>AFFORDABLE HOUSING BONDS \$50,000,000</b> (Chapter 246 - Public Laws 2006)                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p>Question 9 APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 9 REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |

| LOCAL QUESTIONS                                                                                      |                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10.<br><b>ELECTIONS AT TOWN MEETING</b><br>Filling vacancies                                         | <p>Question 10 APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 10 REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 11.<br><b>FINANCIAL TOWN MEETING</b><br>Reconvening FTM at 1-week intervals                          | <p>Question 11 APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 11 REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 12.<br><b>TOWN MODERATOR</b><br>Asst. Moderator must be from Town                                    | <p>Question 12 APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 12 REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 13.<br><b>FINANCIAL TOWN MEETING</b><br>Use Budget Committee budget if time runs out in fiscal year. | <p>Question 13 APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 13 REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 14.<br><b>TOWN COUNCIL</b><br>Remove "disability" of TC President as reason to use Vice President.   | <p>Question 14 APPROVE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 14 REJECT <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 15.<br><b>TOWN COUNCIL</b><br>Filling vacancies from last election.                                  | <p>Question 15 APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 15 REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 16.<br><b>ORDINANCE PROCEDURES</b><br>5 business days to announce hearing on Ordinance changes.      | <p>Question 16 APPROVE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 16 REJECT <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 17.<br><b>BUDGET COMMITTEE</b><br>Budget Committee access to public records and do capital exp plan. | <p>Question 17 APPROVE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 17 REJECT <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 18.<br><b>FINANCIAL PROCEDURES</b><br>Clarify Charter on budget responsibility                       | <p>Question 18 APPROVE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 18 REJECT <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 19.<br><b>CAPITAL PROGRAM</b><br>Budget Committee responsible for capital expenditure program.       | <p>Question 19 APPROVE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 19 REJECT <input type="checkbox"/></p> |
| 20.<br><b>VACANCIES</b><br>Fill Tax Assessor vacancies from last election.                           |                                                                                                                   |

|                                                                                               |                                                                                                                   |                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Question 20                                                                                   | APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/>                                                                                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Question 20                                                                                   | REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>                                                                        | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| 21.<br><b>FINANCIAL PROCEDURES</b><br>Replace 3 Tax Assessors with one salaried Tax Assessor. | <p>Question 21 APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 21 REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |                                     |
| 22.<br><b>FINANCIAL PROCEDURES</b><br>Change to assessed tax appeal process                   | <p>Question 22 APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 22 REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |                                     |
| 23.<br><b>BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS</b><br>Add Housing Trust to Charter.                         | <p>Question 23 APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 23 REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |                                     |
| 24.<br><b>SCHOOL DEPARTMENT</b><br>Fill School Committee vacancies from last election.        | <p>Question 24 APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Question 24 REJECT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> |                                     |

**Sample Ballot**