



## WESTON DTC SEARCH COMMITTEE NEWS & UPDATES

Our Search process includes announcements at the DTC meetings, in our newsletter, Weston Today, and outreach in the community. We meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month to review CVs and conduct interviews of any interested candidates. The Committee then puts forward a candidate for endorsement by the DTC at their meetings held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month (7:15PM @ Town Hall). Endorsed candidates are then introduced to the Board of Selectmen who conduct their own interviews and vote on final appointments.

### OPENINGS

#### Weston Beautification Committee

**Purpose:** The committee is dedicated to enhancing the visual appeal and environmental sustainability of Weston's public spaces. This committee provides guidance on aesthetic decisions related to town properties and leads initiatives to improve the natural environment through sustainable landscaping and native plantings. The committee plays an integral role in projects such as the Town Green revitalization, seasonal decorations, and the maintenance of gardens and public areas around town. Key responsibilities include:

- **Advising on Town Aesthetic Choices:** The committee offers input on both interior and exterior design elements for town properties, with a focus on maintaining Weston's charm and enhancing the community's natural beauty.
- **Sustainable Landscaping and Environmental Stewardship:** The committee emphasizes the use of native plants and sustainable practices, ensuring that Weston's landscapes support biodiversity, pollinators, and eco-friendly practices
- **Community Beautification Projects:** The Beautification Committee oversees various projects such as the Weston Town Green revitalization, which includes native garden installations, creating spaces for public gatherings, and preserving Weston's historic and natural features
- **Seasonal Planting and Maintenance:** The committee is responsible for maintaining and planting seasonal displays at key locations like Town Hall, the Library, and the Senior Center, often collaborating with local organizations for funding and execution
- **Public Engagement and Education:** The committee works to engage the community in understanding the value of native plants and sustainable landscaping, often providing educational materials and hosting events that raise awareness

**Candidate Guidelines:** Are you passionate about making Weston a more beautiful and sustainable place to live? The Weston Beautification Committee is seeking dedicated individuals to help shape the town's landscapes and enhance its natural beauty. As a member of the committee, you'll collaborate on projects that improve public spaces, advocate for environmentally sustainable practices, and work to maintain the charm and character of Weston.

Ideal candidates are creative, environmentally conscious, and eager to contribute to the town's visual and ecological well-being. You will play a key role in shaping important projects like the revitalization of

the Town Green, seasonal planting programs, and community engagement initiatives. If you have a passion for design, nature, and community service, this is a unique opportunity to make a lasting impact on the town.

## Children & Youth Services Commission

**Purpose:** The Commission is a dedicated body focused on enhancing the well-being, development, and protection of children and young people. Its mission is to provide programs, resources, and advocacy to ensure that youth have access to education, healthcare, recreational activities, and social support.

**Role:** The commission collaborates with local schools, community organizations, and families to foster an inclusive and nurturing environment. Through its initiatives, it aims to empower youth, promote mental and emotional health, and create opportunities for leadership, growth, and positive engagement in the community. This commission is a three-year term. It is comprised of seven adult members, to include a simple majority of four registered Democrats, and two student members.

**Candidate Guidelines:** Ideal candidates are passionate and community-minded with a deep commitment to supporting and empowering children and youth. If you are adaptable, empathetic, and driven to advocate for policies and practices that promote the well-being and success of all children and young people in the community, this is a wonderful opportunity to make a difference. Key qualities and qualifications include:

- **Experience in Youth or Social Services:** Background in education, child development, social work, counseling, or community outreach.
- **Leadership Skills:** Ability to lead initiatives, work collaboratively with stakeholders, and inspire others.
- **Strong Communication Skills:** Effective in engaging with children, families, and community partners, as well as advocating for youth-related issues.
- **Cultural Competency:** Understanding and appreciation of diverse backgrounds and challenges faced by young people.
- **Problem-Solving Abilities:** Creative thinker with the capacity to address challenges and develop impactful programs.
- **Passion for Youth Development:** Genuine interest in making a positive difference in children's lives, fostering growth, and building opportunities for success.
- **Organizational Skills:** Ability to manage projects, track progress, and meet deadlines efficiently.
- **Familiarity with Local Resources:** Knowledge of community programs, schools, healthcare services, and other resources that benefit youth.

## Veterans Affairs Committee

**Purpose:** The committee is dedicated to supporting and advocating for the veterans of Weston, ensuring they receive the respect, resources, and recognition they deserve. The committee serves as a vital link between the veteran community and the town, offering assistance with accessing necessary services, organizing events to honor veterans, and raising community awareness of veterans' contributions and needs. Key responsibilities include:

- **Veteran Support and Services:** The committee ensures veterans have access to essential services, such as healthcare, education, housing, and employment opportunities. It works closely with local, state, and federal organizations to connect veterans with the benefits they are entitled to receive.
- **Honoring and Recognizing Veterans:** The committee plays a leading role in organizing events such as Memorial Day and Veterans Day ceremonies, helping the community honor the sacrifices and service of local veterans. It also supports initiatives to recognize veterans throughout the year.
- **Community Engagement and Education:** By partnering with schools, civic organizations, and local groups, the committee raises awareness of veterans' issues and promotes a community-wide understanding of the importance of supporting veterans.
- **Guidance on Government Services:** The committee provides veterans and their families with

guidance in navigating complex state and federal benefits programs, ensuring they are connected to the resources available through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other agencies.

- **Advocacy:** The committee advocates for improved services, funding, and infrastructure at the local and state levels to better support veterans' needs, ensuring that the veteran community's voice is heard within town governance.

**Candidate Guidelines:** Are you passionate about making a difference in the lives of veterans? The Weston Veterans Affairs Committee is seeking individuals dedicated to supporting and advocating for our veteran community. As a member of this committee, you will play a key role in ensuring veterans have access to the services they need, while also leading efforts to honor their sacrifices through community events and ceremonies.

Ideal candidates are committed to promoting awareness of veterans' contributions, have a desire to help veterans navigate government benefits, and are ready to advocate for the enhancement of local services and resources. If you are passionate about giving back to those who have served, this is your opportunity to make a meaningful impact in your community.

## RECENT ENDORSEMENTS/BOS APPOINTMENTS

### November 13, 2024 General Meeting

#### VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

**Search Guidelines:** An individual passionate about making a difference in the lives of veterans, dedicated to supporting and advocating for our veteran community, and ensuring veterans have access to the services they need.

#### **Endorsement (APPOINTED BY BOS 12/1724):**



Jim Day and his wife Shari have lived in Weston for over three years, after raising their sons, Collin (age 12) and Jacob (age 10), in Manhattan. Jim is the founder and managing partner of Claritas Law Group, a law firm specializing in corporate and commercial transactions for companies in highly regulated industries such as finance, technology, energy, healthcare, media, and transportation.

Before moving to Weston and starting his law firm, Jim worked as a corporate and in-house attorney for several major law firms and multinational corporations. His experience includes representing early-stage investors and their portfolio companies from initial funding rounds through the corporate lifecycle, often acting as an outsourced General Counsel. Additionally, he represented the court-appointed trustee under the Securities Investor Protection Act for the liquidation of Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities LLC, coordinating hundreds of legal proceedings and avoidance actions all over the world. He has counseled owners and developers of residential and commercial real estate in addition to debtors, creditors, and acquirers of distressed assets in numerous complex bankruptcies and restructurings.

Before his legal career, Jim served as a Naval Officer and military intelligence analyst. He was deployed to the Middle East in support of UN trade sanctions and to South America as the Anti-Terrorism and Gunnery Officer aboard a guided missile frigate, where he participated in one of the U.S. Navy's most successful counter-narcotics operations. He also taught graduate students as a Visiting Professor in one of Mozambique's first MBA programs, focusing on Finance, Entrepreneurship, and Business Planning. Jim is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy, where he captained the golf team, and holds a law degree and an MBA from Georgetown University. While studying at Georgetown, he worked as an analyst at the Office of Naval Intelligence and interned at the U.S. Department of Justice. Additionally, he has volunteered as an instructor at The First Tee and the Bridge Golf Learning Center of Harlem, organizations that use golf to teach important life lessons to youth in underserved communities.

## **October 9, 2024 General Meeting**

### **PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION** (This position has a 4-year term\*)

*\*Replacing a vacancy; seat will need to be reappointed 1/1/2026*

**Search Guidelines:** An individual passionate about creating vibrant, active communities; dedicated to helping shape the future of our parks and recreational programs; excited about enhancing the quality of life in Weston through well-maintained parks, engaging programs, and innovative recreational opportunities for all ages.

### **Endorsement (APPOINTED BY BOS 12/17/24)**



**Daniel Gershburg:** “Born in New Jersey and raised in Brooklyn, New York, I graduated law school in 2006 and opened up my own firm in New York City, working as a small firm real estate and consumer bankruptcy attorney for many years before starting my current practice (Konner Gershburg Melnick Darouvar) with 3 other partners in 2020. My family and I made the move to Weston in October 2020 (along with most of the people I know in Brooklyn) and have resided here for the past 4 years. I currently practice residential real estate with offices in New York and Westport, CT. I have a 7-year-old son who is in HES and my 4-year-old daughter is currently in Pre-K at St. Francis. My wife and I have put down roots and fostered some wonderful friendships along the way. Weston provided the opportunity for me to quite literally breathe fresh air. It's an idyllic town which fosters a sense of community and an appreciation for our natural surroundings. I spend as much time outdoors as possible with my family, and have come to appreciate everything that makes this place so special. I'd be honored to help foster that same sense of community through a position with Parks and Rec.”

## **September 3, 2024 Special DTC Meeting**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION (\*Elected):** *This is to fill a vacancy for an elected position due to a resignation. Therefore, term ends on 11/4/2025 (day of next municipal election)*

**Search Guidelines:** An individual who is passionate about quality education to help oversee school policies, curriculum development, and resource allocation. A candidate who can make a difference in students' lives and our educational system's success.

### **Endorsement (APPOINTED BY BOS 9/4/2024):**



Lisa Luft moved to Weston with her husband Harvey and their three children over 30 years ago. She is deeply rooted in the community, cherishing her 45-year marriage, her children, and her five grandchildren. After taking a ten-year hiatus to focus on raising her children, Lisa's passion for education led her to return to work shortly after moving to Weston.

Lisa dedicated 32 years to the New York City Board of Education, where she served as an Accounting and Business Teacher before advancing into administration. Her roles included House Coordinator for 650 students, Assistant Principal, and Principal for 250 to 3500 students. Notably, she excelled as a turnaround principal and served as the Director of Campus Initiatives in the Office of New Schools, where she developed policies for multiple school campuses and supported the creation of 400 new schools. She also championed library renovations, securing grants and political backing to modernize two major libraries.

Lisa holds administrative licenses in both Connecticut and New York and earned her MS degrees in Reading and Leadership from Southern Connecticut State University and in Executive Leadership from the University of Connecticut.

Though she retired in September 2022, she continues to coach principals in New York.”

## COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS

**Search Guidelines:** Art enthusiasts to play a vital role in shaping our community's cultural landscape, help organize events, allocate funding, and promote local artists. We're looking for creative thinkers passionate about fostering artistic expression.

### Endorsement (APPOINTED BY BOS 10/7/2024):



Shannon Seymour-Michl has been involved in the community since relocating to Weston in 2020. She has served on the Executive Board of the WIS and Middle School PTOs and Memorial Day Fair Committee since 2021. She is also a member of the Weston Women's League and will serve as their Philanthropy Chair for the 2024-25 season.

Shannon is an opera singer by profession and has most recently performed with the Opera Company of Middlebury, VT and the Unadilla Gilbert and Sullivan Theatre. She also performs as a concert soloist.

Shannon holds a master's degree in Vocal/Opera Performance from the Boston Conservatory and the National Conservatory of Athens (Greece) and a BA in Politics and French from Mount Holyoke College.

When not volunteering and performing, she enjoys spending time with friends and family, traveling, and skiing with her husband and 11-year-old son, Maximilian.