

Please provide a short bio. (500 characters)



I have lived in Ellington for over 30 years with my husband Mike Taft. We raised our son Joe here, and he graduated from EHS. I am currently serving my first term on the Board of Selectman, and previously served as Chair of the Zoning Board of Appeals where I was a member for about 15 years; I was also an alternate on the Planning & Zoning Commission. I work as a Privacy & Cybersecurity attorney. I enjoy hiking in the woods, and growing dahlias and vegetables in our gardens.

What qualities and qualifications make you best suited to be an effective Selectman? (700 characters)



I think I am an effective Selectman because I read about and listen closely to learn about any issue that is before the Board, I welcome all points of view, I ask questions if I don't understand any item we are making a decision on, and I always look at the decisions the Board is making from the point of view of our town residents and taxpayers. I value our town and want to see it thrive.

What will be your top three priorities as a Selectman and how you will address them? (900 characters)



My top priorities are (1) to improve the budget process by providing residents with more easily understandable information about what expenditures are being proposed, so that collectively with resident input we can make the right decisions about the budget; (2) Make it easier for town residents to learn about what is going on in town, including what is on the BOS agendas, by making information on the town website easier to access, and making meeting material easier to understand; and (3) having the Board of Selectmen study and research ways in which the town can share resources across departments, or even with other neighboring towns to reduce the tax burden for residents.

Describe your approach to working with people that have opposing points of view. (700 characters)



It is so important to listen, and I also always treat every person with respect. I approach all matters before the Board from the perspective that we want the best outcome for the town and its residents. If I do not understand an issue that is on our agenda, before the meeting I reach out to town staff to gather facts about the matter. During Board meetings I ask questions if there is anything I don't understand, and I frequently ask other Board members to share or explain their viewpoints on issues we are discussing. I explain my own point of view by including the reasons for my position on, or concerns about an issue.

What steps will you take to build and/or maintain a resilient and vibrant community? (700 characters)



Engagement is key to building a resilient and vibrant Ellington, and it is critical to reach out to town residents and encourage them to participate in town decisions. While on the Board, I have made many suggestions on how to increase engagement with Board matters. As I did two years ago, I am going door to door to meet residents and ask them what their concerns and questions are and when issues come before the Board I reach out to residents to ask what their thoughts are on issues. We need to make it easy for people to engage with the decision making processes in town, inviting people to attend and speak out and treating them with respect when they do.