

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS CANDIDATES GUIDE

2008

Susan M. Flint – Library Trustee (1 year)

Background and qualifications:

I believe the Fletcher Library is one of the jewels of our town and deserves to be supported by the entire town. The library is a warm, welcoming environment which is largely created by our wonderful Library Director and the hard working, friendly staff. I have been a member of the Friends of the JV Fletcher Library for 15 years and have worked at the library book sales for many years. I served as a Library Trustee for one year. Prior to that, I was a Westford School Committee member for 6 years and have been a member of the town employee salary bands committee. I believe my years of public service within Westford provide a unique perspective on town finances and interdepartmental needs. I work as a senior executive at a pharmaceutical company and continually work in a team environment where consensus must be reached. My goal is to make Westford citizens further realize that the performance and excellence of our library, like our schools, enhances the desirability of our town. I ask for your vote for this position, and I look forward to once more serving the Library as a Trustee.

1. What ideas do you have about moving the library forward in serving the community with the continual changes occurring in technology?

The library needs more funds and more space to keep up with rapidly evolving technology. The library has been able to make some improvements in this area such as having wireless access throughout the library and having public access computers. However, to better serve the town, the library needs more space for technology. I was disappointed to learn recently that this is an area where our library is not currently at the same level as neighboring towns. I will work with the Trustees and Library staff to find more creative ways to utilize more space for technology. Just as books on tape have transitioned to books on CD, technology is turning to innovative content distribution. Downloadable books are a reality now and laptops and iPods have become media hubs. The library needs to consider how to utilize such technology trends. With the Library Director, one of my first priorities will be to evaluate library innovations in neighboring towns (such as Acton, Concord, Weston and Lexington). This evaluation should also include leading local and Boston area university libraries.

2. Do you have any creative funding ideas to keep the library open for more hours?

I believe that we must obtain more community donations to allow the library to remain open for more hours. I think the formation of a Library Foundation would be one way to help us raise more funds. Unfortunately, due to many demands and constraints on the town budget, I do not think we can rely on the town for increased funding. The Friends of the JV Fletcher Library have done a wonderful job of raising money for the library for years, but now this effort must be increased to help the library move forward. We need to obtain more donations from families or library patrons. Specific recognition at the library (plaques, posters, named rooms, press releases) can be used for companies or individuals

that donate money for the extra hours as a way to publicly express thanks. The library also can learn from and adopt some university endowment enrichment measures, such as bequests, to increase donations. Donors can be acknowledged through special events, recognition events, and donor appreciation events – to be held primarily at the library. Auctions and raffles to benefit the library will encourage local businesses to contribute the library.