

Article from the Hampton Union on February 26, 2020

HAMPTON -- Five candidates are vying for two seats on the Board of Selectmen at the March 10 election. The candidates running are incumbent Selectman Rusty Bridle, Hampton Beach Village District Commissioner Chuck Rage, Budget Committee Chairman Brian Warburton, Budget Committee member Michael Plouffe and Zoning Board of Adjustment Chairman Bryan Provencal. Current Selectmen Chairman Rick Griffin has decided not to seek another term on the board.

Russell (Rusty) Bridle. Age: 61

Address: 225 Towle Farm Road

Occupation: 30 years retired firefighter; past three years with the Hampton Area Chamber of Commerce

Public service/public office experience: State representative 2000-08 and 2010-12; Hampton School Board 2009-14; Hampton Board of Selectman 2014 to present; Budget Committee 2013; 2013 Citizen of the Year (Hampton Rotary); 2012 Community Service Award.

Favorite thing about Hampton: The caring people this town has. We are a big town with a small-town feel, thanks to the people who live, work, shop, and play here. We have a great town and would like to continue that.

Explain why you are running and why you feel you are the best candidate?

Over the past number of years, we have worked to keep our tax rate relatively level, in 2016 it was \$16.08 / 2017 \$16.37 / 2018 \$17.02 and in 2019 our tax rate is \$16.01. This comes at some tough decisions, but we are still working on our infrastructure, something that in the past was let go. I always try to keep the taxpayers in mind. We need to continue to work on our roads, sewers and drainage. We need to make sure all of our departments are properly staffed. I feel I have shown strong leadership, willingness to work with others and the ability to listen to others. Something that is lost from time to time. I have lived in this town for my entire life, my parents instilled in me help your neighbor if you can. I have been doing that my whole life. I am reachable and will always listen to all sides of an issue. I ask you for your vote on Tuesday, March 10.

What are the three most important issues facing the town of Hampton (other than trash and recycling) and if elected, how do you plan to address these issues?

- 1.) Infrastructure sewer and drainage: We are working on the treatment plant, we need to continue that progress.
- 2.) Proper manning for our police, fire, and public works departments: Over the years we have done more with less, at some point we will be doing less with less, some have said that we are there now. We need to listen to our department heads. And then make some tough decisions.
- 3.) Downtown area: We need to listen and work with our business community on parking and signage for downtown. We also as a community need to develop a plan for the future of the rail trail and how that will benefit our downtown area.

What should the town do to curb trash and recycling costs? Should it continue to pick up commercial trash? What about implementing a pay-as-you-throw program?

- 1.) Curbing our trash and recycling costs is not going to be easy. We had a committee that was put together of all facets of the community. We need to listen to what they had to say. There is no quick fix to this problem.
- 2.) I do not want to see our beach dirty. The way we pick up trash now we have control of it. If we go to private haulers for businesses, we will have a number of large trucks at all hours of the day or night picking up trash or recycling. We should limit the number of carts per location. Our public works director is working on a plan to address this and we should support him.

3.) I as well as the voters of this town have turned this down at least twice in the past. It will not work here, we depend on and have many seasonal people here. Some of them may not care as we do and just leave it on the side of the road. Then we still have to address it. It will not work here.

Michael Plouffe. Age: 70

Address: 17 Little River Road

Occupation: Self-employed excavating and landscaping contractor

Education: Hampton School System, associate's degree in automotive mechanics

Public service/public office experience: Four years Board of Selectmen; 23 years Budget Committee member

Favorite TV show/ movie: "Hunt for Red October"

Favorite thing about Hampton: All of our townspeople, and our future generations.

Explain why you are running and why you feel you are the best candidate?

I have a lifetime of knowledge of this community and its residents. I have worked for and with our property owners, and understand the needs of the current and future residents. My goal is to improve and oversee town projects, improve our infrastructure, challenge flooding impacts, and participate in a cooperative Board of Selectmen which will focus on the needs of our taxpayers without straining their pocketbooks. I want to be part of a board that cooperates in the best interests of our taxpayers.

What are the three most important issues facing the town of Hampton (other than trash and recycling) and if elected, how do you plan to address these issues?

Accelerated building in our community which has created a great strain on our DPW - more roads to plow and maintain, more stress on the sewer treatment plant, drainage and crumbling roads; flooding; Police Dept. and Fire Dept. lack sufficient personnel to cope with the demands for their emergency services.

What should the town do to curb trash and recycling costs? Should it continue to pick up commercial trash?

What about implementing a pay-as-you-throw program?

Pay-as-you-throw is not the answer, it will cost more than you save. Trash and recycling pickup should be limited to single-family and two-family residences on public roads. Private haulers will benefit with their ability to service the rest of the community including all businesses and all single-family residences on private roads plus all waste related to Hampton Beach State Park.

Bryan Provencal Age: 43

Address: 12 Fuller Acres, Hampton

Occupation: Carpenter/ restaurant owner, Pier at Hampton Beach

Education: Associate's degree

Public service/public office experience: Chairman of the Hampton Zoning Board

Favorite thing about Hampton: It's diversity from the beach to the town, the summers to the quiet New England town winters, our great school system, and town employees and diverse residents that make up our town.

Explain why you are running and why you feel you are the best candidate?

Having grown up in this town and lived here for over 40 years, I have seen the town grow in a positive way. Being from Hampton, I feel there is a delicate balance that needs to be maintained to continue a positive future for the

town. I have been serving the town on the Zoning Board of Adjustment for 15 years and have served as the chairman for many years and have acted in a manner to look at all applications in a fair manner that is in the best interest for the town and townspeople.

What are the three most important issues facing the town of Hampton (other than trash and recycling) and if elected, how do you plan to address these issues?

Basic infrastructure needs to be addressed before anything else. Two years ago when I ran for selectman, the town was asked a question on the ballot to repair sewer lines at the beach and it failed. I feel if the taxpayers/voters were presented with more information they would have spent the money instead of other places. Ultimately in July, when the pipe failed we had to spend more money on an emergency repair that was not planned on. I feel better communication to the people of Hampton will lead to wiser spending decisions.

What should the town do to curb trash and recycling costs? Should it continue to pick up commercial trash? What about implementing a pay-as-you-throw program?

The way the town of Hampton deals with trash cannot continue. It has changed drastically over the past four or five years. We need to completely overhaul the system because, with the way we're going, we will not continually be able to afford to deal with it. There is a town outside of Seattle, Washington and their (trash) budget was \$3 million. By overhauling it and changing the way they process it, their budget is now \$200,000. Composting is one of the ways to save money and completely changing the way we recycle to rid ourselves of the contaminated recycling that is costing this town money is another. We need to make it profitable again for the town. We shouldn't be concerned with the way other towns take care of their trash. We should be the town that everybody wants to follow.

Chuck Rage Age: 54

Address: 121 Ocean Blvd.

Occupation: Hotelier, business owner and real estate developer

Education: Salem N.H. high school, Gemological Institute of America

Public service/public office experience: Chairman, commissioner and treasurer for the Hampton Beach Village District for the last 18 years; Hampton Beach Area Commission; appointed by Governor Sununu to study the pros and cons of starting the school year after Labor Day; appointed by the state to the committee for replacing the Hampton/Seabrook Beach bridge; board member of the Hampton Area Chamber of Commerce and an active member since 1984; served five years on the SHS school board and current school board member for St. Thomas of Aquinas High School

Favorite TV show/ movie: "Friends" and all the Harry Potter movies

Favorite thing about Hampton? The ocean, I love that you can go to a quiet beach or an active beach with hustle and bustle. I like the camaraderie in the community.

Explain why you are running and why you feel you are the best candidate?

Now that my children are older I can give a lot of time to this fantastic town that has been great to me and my family. I feel that my experience in business and my public service as a commissioner can get things done. I've been successful in my businesses and have a track record as chairman of the Village District. The town needs to get more federal and state money. The state of N.H. makes a lot of money on Hampton Beach and we need our fair share. I have a history of working with the state. I've worked with both Democrat and Republican governors, state senators, and representatives. The Select Board has had a lot of discourse. I believe that I have the ability to work with everyone. You won't always agree but you need to be civil.

What are the three most important issues facing the town of Hampton (other than trash and recycling) and if elected, how do you plan to address these issues?

The infrastructure has been neglected from our roads to our sewers. We need to be proactive not reactive. We tend to wait for an emergency situation which in the long run costs us more money. The downtown needs to be revitalized, with the new rail trail coming through we have a perfect opportunity to create an inviting destination. I think that the town needs to address the lack of parking both downtown and at the beach, we also need to create parking for residents who want to enjoy the beach.

What should the town do to curb trash and recycling costs? Should it continue to pick up commercial trash? What about implementing a pay-as-you-throw program?

I've been talking about trash for a long time. Hampton is a town of services and our residents want that. Twice in the past, the town of Hampton has voted to keep our town clean. I do not want to see trash pick up eliminated. We have a unique situation where 12 weeks out of the year we have larger than normal amounts of trash. I recommended to the selectmen to start a trash committee, who in turn recommended a consultant, but that hasn't happened yet. Along with several other business owners we talked with DPW Director Chris Jacobs. He suggested a few ways that we could change our recycling habits to save the town money. I believe that education is imperative so we can recycle better. Reducing the amount of trash we generate should also be a high priority.

Brian Warburton Age: 64

Address: 24 Sanborn Road

Occupation: Technology and customer experience leader

Education: St. Thomas Aquinas High School; University of New Hampshire, B.A. Communications; Executive Leadership Courses

Public service/public office experience: Board of Selectmen 9 years; Rockingham Planning Commission; Recreation Advisory Council; Capital Improvements Committee; Master Plan Committee; current Chairman of the Hampton Municipal Budget Committee; former Hampton Youth Association coach and board member

Favorite TV show/movie: "Criminal Minds" and "It's a Wonderful Life"

Favorite thing about Hampton: Great place to raise a family, superior school system, and a beautiful seaside community.

Explain why you are running and why you feel you are the best candidate?

I have a proven record of being a strong leader. I understand the many facets of this community. I have a strong ability to tackle the important issues which are a major concern for Hampton taxpayers.

What are the three most important issues facing the town of Hampton (other than trash and recycling) and if elected, how do you plan to address these issues?

- 1.) Taxes: I would look for more revenue streams to help our taxpayers.
- 2.) Infrastructure: We are at a critical juncture in town. We need a leader who has been a part of implementing important projects over the years. Our roads, our sewers, etc. are in need of repair and possible reconstruction. We need to make sure we are identifying these needs and having ongoing communication with the public every step of the way and not just during budget season.
- 3.) Planning: This is such a critical component. I urge the adoption of a new updated Master Plan which is an important warrant article to be voted on at the March election. This will help us prioritize which projects should be put at the top of a list to be completed and how Hampton will look in the future.

**What should the town do to curb trash and recycling costs? Should it continue to pick up commercial trash?
What about implementing a pay-as-you-throw program?**

The current system is flawed. It needs to be fair and equitable for all residents, our businesses, and any other stakeholders. This would be a priority for me to come to a conclusion on day one. This issue has been discussed for years and we need to finally put it to rest.