

THE BEDFORD CITIZEN

Catherine Cordes – Candidate for Moderator

Caucus Nominee



Events

No events scheduled

Contact information

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Candidate Q&A - February 18, 2016

What major challenges do you expect to face during the next three years?

I don't expect major challenges frankly, but there are two areas that I want to focus on over the next three years. The first is voter turnout at town meeting. I want to explore ways to increase awareness about town meeting and possibly increase attendance. I know this is something that affects every town, so I want to explore what other towns are doing to address attendance and perhaps find some new ideas to try.

The second is civil discourse. Bedford's town meeting has been a place where differing views are welcome and can be expressed without name calling and bullying. There is room for everyone to speak on the issues. I believe this is due in large part to a culture that supports civil discourse and a moderator – Betsey Anderson – who reminded us of our agreed upon standards when it was needed. I hope to continue in this same tradition.

Do you envision any changes for Town Meeting procedures?

We have a well-structured town meeting and Ms. Anderson has done an excellent job as town moderator. Other towns are very envious of our town meeting process. I do not come to this position with any notions about procedural changes.

I do want to encourage a new generation of town meeting attendees however, and appreciate suggestions about how to involve more people in this participatory democratic process of

government. I welcome all suggestions and ideas to make our town meeting an integral part of each citizen's community life.

2016 Citizen's Caucus Statement

I love Town Meeting. In the 40 years we have lived in Bedford I have not missed too many Town Meetings. I did not grow up with this form of government, however. As a member of a military family, I was raised with a deep respect for democracy and our government. In Louisiana schools, we were taught civics and American History at each level – elementary, middle and high school. There was an emphasis on representative government because that was what was the norm there. But we learned about participatory democracy and old fashioned town meetings. I really thought that was a thing of the past. Imagine my joy when we moved to Bedford and found our Town Meeting form of government.

We often hear that Bedford is a well-run town – and it is. We have excellent employees both municipal and school; we have excellent citizens who get involved by running for public office, and by joining the many committees that make this a great community.

Town Meeting also has a roll to play. It is Town Meeting that holds the power to appropriate the funds that make our government work. Town Meeting has the final say on what Bedford values – and will fund – so that our community works the way WE want it to. Our elected officials propose, our Finance Committee and other committees recommend, and Town Meeting decides. Each of us has an important roll to play as members of Town Meeting in making this a great community.

I want to see our open Town Meeting continue for generations to come. I want voters to understand the roll of Town Meeting in governing our town. I am honored and humbled to run for the position of Moderator. I admire Betsey Anderson for the fabulous job she did as moderator – and I only hope that if I am elected to this position and I can live up to the standard that she and the moderators before her have set.

I take this responsibility seriously and, if elected, I will do all I can to ensure the smooth functioning of Town Meeting in Bedford and to encourage a new generation of Bedford voters to participate fully in the governing of this town. I respectfully ask for your vote March 12.

[Click to read Catherine Cordes's candidate announcement in The Bedford Citizen](#)