

# THE BEDFORD CITIZEN

## **William Moonan – Candidate for Selectman**

*Incumbent and Caucus Nominee*



### **Events:**

No events scheduled

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Candidate Moonan's web page

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## **Candidate Q&A - February 18, 2016**

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

The Town of Bedford is entering a period of needing to refurbish and augment its infrastructure. Some parts of this effort are related to health and safety. Specifically, water mains continue to need relining to ensure the quality of our water supply, and sewers and storm water drains need updating. Most of these systems are 50 or more years old. Roads continue to need repaving on a regular, cost-effective basis and the expense of doing so only increases each year. The fire department, in particular, has outgrown its station, requiring the construction of a new one, possibly in a new location. The police also need additional space. These are public safety and health issues that require the Selectmen's attention over the next few years.

The construction of new, large houses in Bedford, the result of older residents moving out and younger families moving in, has increased the school population. This has created the need to add 4 to 6 classrooms to Lane School by the fall of 2017 and more space to both Davis and John Glenn Middles School in following years. We can hope for some relief from the State for the latter two projects, but nothing is guaranteed. In addition, there is the annual battle for State funds to support the cost of educating high school students who live with their Air Force

families at Hanscom AFB. These payments are often considered for discontinuation by the Commonwealth, in an effort to balance the State budget.

Beyond these capital projects that require attention in the immediate future, there are numerous projects important to the quality of life in Bedford. Among these is funding the creation of an historical museum that would display Bedford's history in artifacts, educating our citizens and encouraging tourism. Springs Brook Park continues to have water clarity issues that reduce its availability for swimming. This fact led to a suggestion by the Recreation Commission to build an indoor swimming pool in the not-too-distant future. And the need for athletic fields continues to grow with the population. The use of artificial turf on an additional field has been proposed to meet this demand.

Funding all of the absolutely necessary projects will stretch our borrowing capacity to its limits and add to the tax burden of town residents. Paying for additional projects that are highly desirable also adds to the financial burden.

In addition to the financial challenges facing Bedford, there are societal issues we need to confront. How do we continue to provide housing that can be afforded by a diverse population, diverse in age, income and ethnic background? How do we encourage more business entities to locate in Bedford to help support the tax requirements of the Town? How do we deal with the traffic that wants to use Bedford roads as a shortcut to other destinations? And, most important, how do we do all of this without losing our identity as an historic small town?

These are the major challenges I see facing us in the next few years. But, I believe we will be successful in dealing with them. While we will need to use bonds to address the requirement for new infrastructure and addition classrooms, this approach will be the most cost-effective solution and it will spread the burden, an annually decreasing burden, over many years to be supported by those who will benefit from the structures we build today. The confluence of demand for school, fire and police space, along with aging sewer and water mains, should not reoccur any time soon, and borrowing capacity will increase as we pay off the debt.

As we put the immediate safety, health and educational demands behind us, we will be able to place more emphasis on those items that add to the quality of life of Bedford citizens. The Town has always been careful with its financial resources, putting money aside in better years and using those funds when resources are tight. I have no doubt that the needs and desires we see today will be given appropriate consideration as resources allow, as Bedford always has.

We are blessed with thoughtful volunteers at all levels of Town government. I want to join them in continuing to bring my skill-sets to serve the Town for which I care so much. I believe that I can help keep Bedford on a course that will maintain our finest attributes while

addressing the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I believe I have the background, experience and capability to help find those solutions while preserving this special place, we know as Bedford, for those who will follow us. (Please see more information about me at [www.moonanforselectman.com](http://www.moonanforselectman.com).)

### **How do you rate the value of expanded transportation options within Bedford?**

Concerned citizens in Bedford, as well as society in general, have become increasingly aware of the fact that our transportation infrastructure has been built around the automobile to the detriment of public transportation, cycling, and walking. Combined with increasing attention to healthy lifestyles and air quality concerns, people have begun to question the need to place exclusive attention on the needs of automobiles.

In 1971, Oregon was the first state to enact policies promoting infrastructure design for pedestrians and cyclists. The US Dept. of Transportation followed suit in 2010, declaring support for these types of accommodations in federal aid transportation projects. This policy is called "Complete Streets," and many states, including Massachusetts, have joined in the effort.

Municipalities such as Bedford are encouraged to adopt a Complete Streets policy. Such a policy requires that all rights of way, when substantially improved, are designed to allow for safe travel by those walking, cycling, driving or riding public transportation. MassDOT has made funding for technical assistance and construction available as further inducement to adopt this policy.

Well before the State began the effort to have municipalities adopt Complete Streets policies, Bedford created committees to address a multitude of transportation issues. Besides the Planning Board's Comprehensive Plan, designed to guide Bedford's development through the next 20 years, committees addressing multiple types of transportation include the: Bicycle Advisory Committee, Community Preservation Committee, Recreation Commission, Trails Committee and Transportation Advisory Committee. The Town also has representatives that interface with State and regional planning groups to ensure Bedford's inclusion and coordination with transportation issues being addressed beyond Bedford's borders.

Currently, the Selectmen have approved three articles dealing with non-automotive transportation issues for consideration at this year's Annual Town Meeting:

- (1) The initial facets of implementing a Safe Routes to School project using MassDOT funding. This project proposes pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements for John Glenn Middle School students starting at the intersection of The Great Road and Mudge Way and continuing through the High School campus to Railroad Avenue. The

goal of the project is to improve walking and bicycling safety and access to and from the JGMS.

(2) An expanded local transit pilot program. As proposed, the service would operate in the afternoon to augment the current BLT, providing public transportation service to senior citizens, students, and business people. As a pilot program, data would be collected and used to design any future service that might be deemed beneficial in the long term. It is my hope that we can use this pilot project to test providing service between Bedford Center and the MBTA Commuter Rail service in Concord, as well as between Bedford and Burlington Center, where MBTA Bus #352 provides express service to Boston.

(3) The Community Preservation budget which includes funding for the Minuteman Bikeway Extension. These funds would be used to complete the final design for the extension of the Minuteman Bikeway on a shared-use path along Railroad Avenue and a new paved bikeway along the Reformatory Branch to the Bedford/Concord line.

Clearly, Bedford is very interested in, and in the forefront of, expanding the types of transportation available and making streets safe for the use by all. As a Selectman, I have consistently voted to support the concept of Complete Streets when our roads are repaved and restriped and the use of CPA funding for construction of sidewalks, biking and walking paths. These efforts, along with the three proposals to be acted upon at Town Meeting, are important contributions to our ability to preserve the small town ambiance of Bedford -- in spite of the pressures of new development -- and valuable in making Bedford a friendly and desirable community in which to live and work.

## **2016 Citizen's Caucus Statement**

Good Evening! I want to thank Mike Rosenberg for his kind words in nominating me. As most of you know, I'm Bill Moonan and I would like to continue to represent you as one of your Selectmen.

During the 40 years I have been a town resident, I have been deeply involved in town activities and committees, but it wasn't until I became a Selectman that I found out what it was like to get really involved. Many of you may not be aware that each Selectman, beyond preparing for and attending the weekly Selectmen's meeting, is also the liaison to seven or eight other Town committees. As such, we attend those committee meetings to help coordinate the committees' interests with those of the Town as a whole. I serve as liaison to the Capital Expenditure Committee, the Cable Television Advisory Committee, the Council on Aging, the Historic District Commission, the Depot Park Advisory Committee, Town Center of Bedford, Inc, and the Chamber of Commerce. I also faithfully attend the Finance Committee meetings to better understand the issues with which they are struggling. I go to the meeting of these

committees not only to listen, but to participate and to work outside those meetings to resolve problems.

As an entrepreneur who has renovated buildings, owned and operated a bird feeder company, negotiated the purchase and sale of companies, and served as chief financial officer of large and small corporations, I find I use my life experiences every day at these committee meetings and in working for the Town. By raising questions regarding the source and use of funds, fellow decision-makers pause to consider the impact of their decisions on the taxpayers and the wisdom of proceeding with a project in its proposed form or on its proposed schedule before taking action.

As I look forward, it is clear that Bedford is facing increasing financial pressures that will need creative solutions. We are a victim of our own success: a well run town with excellent schools has encouraged more people to want to live here and this has lead to an increasing school population and the need for more class rooms in most of our schools. The Police and, particularly, the Fire Departments are in need of additional space, and there is the need to increase contributions to fund post-employment benefits. At the same time, taxpayers need the relief that can only come from growing the business base in the Town.

I want to continue to bring my skill-sets to the town for which I care so much. I believe that I can help keep Bedford on a course that will maintain our finest attributes while addressing the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I believe I have the background and capability to help find those solutions while preserving this special place we know as Bedford, for those who will follow us.

I thank you for offering me this opportunity, and I ask for your support on Election Day.

**[Click here to read William Moonan's candidate statement in The Bedford Citizen](#)**