

Candidate for Ward Councillor
Sean T. Durkee

Ward 6

1. Please tell us about yourself and why you are running for office.

I'm running for office because I want to improve the quality of life for Ward 6 (and all other Waltham) residents. I like helping to solve short- and long-term issues residents have with city government. COVID shut down the world, yet the Council was able to: build a brand-new high school, acquire the farm at 240 Beaver St., complete the MCRT (rail trail), develop the largest universal park on the East Coast, facilitate building the new Leland House, and update multiple city parks since getting elected. I'm proud to be a part of that unprecedented growth. Facilitating the stop sign at Plympton and Prentice Streets (which took 30 years to get installed), building the sidewalk on Linden St., and drastically improving Elson Road are some long-term issues residents identified that have been or are in the process of being resolved. I continue to serve in the Massachusetts Army National Guard as a Plans Officer on the Joint Staff, still like to run and participate in local road races, and am involved with VFW Post 2152 - Waltham and work on veterans issues.

2. What are the two most important issues in Waltham, and how will you address those issues if you are elected to City Council?

1. Infrastructure - Ward 6 has multiple, ongoing, large-scale municipal projects I'd like to see completed-- a new police station, followed by new public works facilities and eventually a new fire station. These projects are in addition to what we plan at the old Elks building on Lexington Street. And I'm also excited about the Waltham Public Library expansion which is in the early stages. Ward 6 is a major part of multiyear MWRA work in addition to natural gas pipe replacement in addition to water & sewer pipe replacements. Although inconvenient, this work must be done as some of our gas pipes are iron and over 100 years old. [I serve on the Police Building Committee in addition to being on the Library Building Committee].

2. Mental Health -- I wrote a Mental Health Resolution five years ago after seeing the effects of COVID on the community as a newly elected official. The intent was to break the stigma of those seeking help, highlight local resources, and to advocate hiring additional mental health workers by the city. Society has not recovered from the long-term effects of COVID, so I wrote another Mental Health Resolution this year. So far, representatives from the Waltham Police Department's Jail Diversion Clinicians (Co-Response Clinicians), Charles Webster Potter Place, Advocates, and REACH Beyond Domestic Violence have spoken at the Economic & Community Development Committee to discuss mental health. I support and advocate hiring licensed clinicians and social workers to address various needs in Waltham.