

*Friends of Clifton Park Open Space, P.O. Box 821, Clifton Park, New York 12065*

**SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE QUESTIONS:**

**NAOMI HOFFMAN – ANSWERS:**

1. How would you respond to the sustained depth and extent of public support within the district for keeping the 34 acres in the public domain? Please share your views about a potential future for this property.

*I understand the public's frustration with the board's handling of the land sale. I took part in the gathering signatures and distributing flyers to stop the land sale. If elected, I will work with the other board members, the superintendent, and the town of Clifton Park to keep the land as it is now, in the public domain. I would like to see something on par with Kinns Park. Given the proximity to the schools, there are opportunities for uses such as outdoor science classrooms.*

2. Throughout the RFP and subsequent Referendum process, the School Board appeared to take a subservient position to that of the Superintendent. How would you use your position as a school board member to put the impetus for school policy back into the hands of the school board?

*The Shenendehowa school board provides oversight of the school district and serves as a means of communication with the public. The superintendent serves at the pleasure of the board to carry out the day-to-day operations of the district and administration of board policies. I believe this expectation must be adhered to in order to change the perception that the board is subservient to the superintendent and to gain back public trust. Currently, the political divide among members of the board creates an obstacle to moving forward. At the May 10 meeting, the board formed a committee of five to meet with the Town to agree on use and value of the land. In addition, the public is to be provided an opportunity to vote on the arrangement this fall. It is unclear who will be the spokesperson for that committee, but I believe board leadership remains obligated to report its decision to the community. If elected, I will pursue providing interim progress reports so that the public can weigh in before a final decision is made. I will work diligently on building consensus, will focus on open communication with the public throughout this process, and will remain open to all feedback. I believe it's in everyone's interest to resolve the transition of the land to the Town as soon as possible.*

3. How can the School Board strive for more transparency, and improve communications on key issues in order to interact with residents more effectively?

*The board's obligation to keep the public in the loop was ignored when it decided move forward with a land sale land sale. Fortunately, a process exists (gathering signatures), requiring considerable work on the part of concerned citizens to force a public referendum. If nothing else, the Board members should learn from the recent referendum that they are ultimately and always accountable to their constituents. If elected, I will work toward consensus among the Board members and always keep in mind our obligation to operate in the open and listen to the community rather than making key*

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*decisions in closed committees. Most importantly, if elected to this board I will urge the board to pursue an open dialogue between the Board and the public to avoid such missteps and move toward gaining back public trust.*

Disclaimer: *Friends of Clifton Park Open Space does not endorse or oppose any candidate and provides this information to prospective voters as an educational service. Our intention is to encourage informed and active participation in the upcoming election.*