

candidate for:
BOARD OF
ESTIMATE
& TAXATION



STEPHEN SELBST

Party: Democrat

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Q: Please provide a brief biography of yourself for the voters.

A: My wife and I have lived in Old Greenwich since 1993. Our three children are graduates of the Greenwich public schools. I practice bankruptcy and finance law in New York at Herrick, Feinstein LLP. I have served on the BET since 2021 and I also am a member of the Old Greenwich School Building Committee. I am a former co-chair of the Old Greenwich Riverside Community Center and a past Commodore of the Rocky Point Club.

Q: What are two of your favorite things about Greenwich?

A: I love the beauty and variety of Greenwich's public spaces, from its beaches and the ferries to the islands, to the beauty and serenity of Pomerance/Tuchman Park. I love the many ways we can all experience and enjoy our beautiful community. And I love the people of the Town. Our community is rich in diversity and accomplishment. There are so many talented people who have succeeded in so many different areas. Their experiences make them wonderful friends and neighbors, and their commitment to volunteering allows the Town to benefit from their skills and different perspectives.

Q: What professional, volunteer, or public service accomplishment in the last 12 months are you most proud of and why?

A: I am most proud of my service on the BET, where I serve on the Law and Audit Committees, and where I am one of the liaisons to The Nathaniel Witherell. I am also a liaison to the committees that negotiate the Town's collective bargaining agreements with the unions that represent Town employees.

Q: What are one or two pressing challenges of the upcoming term and how would you approach them?

A: The Town has not done enough to address the risk of sea level rise. Long Island Sound is projected to rise by 20 inches by 2050, which will expose thousands of Town residents and Town assets to increased flood risk. The Town needs to do more to assess the problem and develop a strategy to cope with it. This issue will not go away by ignoring it.

Q: How do you plan to serve your constituents who didn't support you in decisions that affect our town and their lives?

A: To be effective in public service, you must be willing to listen to voters who don't agree with you and try to persuade them why your views are correct. And if you listen with an open mind, you may find that your own views may change. I've tried to do that in my two terms on the BET and I promise to continue to do so. Name calling and demonizing your adversaries makes people shut their ears to your message; it's not productive. Despite my frequent policy differences with BET Republicans, I have been able to maintain civil professional relationships with them, and I believe they respect my judgments and experience, even if they disagree with my views.

Q: In April, the Board of Estimate and Taxation (BET) voted to reduce the Greenwich Public Schools budget by approximately \$4 million. This reduction allowed GPS to increase its budget year over year by 3% (vs 5%). [Minutes of the FY 2025-2026 Budget Decision Day Three (3) Meeting of the BET held April 4, 2025]. What is your position on this decision?

A: I have said publicly that this was a shocking abuse by the Republican BET of its tie-breaking vote, and one which was not supported by evidence or analysis. The Republican BET did not identify the program areas or personnel to be reduced, they simply dictated a result and insisted that the schools absorb the cut. And the Republican BET was deaf to the voices in the community, which overwhelmingly opposed the cuts. The cut left the schools very little time to decide how to implement the reductions for the 2025–2026 school year, and it alienated the community. The schools are an integral part of our community, and it was both short-sighted and arrogant to disrespect the schools and Town residents with that unilateral action.