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### The General Plan Update

See Tasha Beauchamp's Summary of Community Meetings on page 4. The next General Plan Update event will be a report by the Sonoma State students at a regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting on April 23rd, 7:00 p.m. at the Community Center.

### SDAT

The Core Project secured a grant from the American Institute of Architects that will provide over \$250,000 in design services to "Connect Sebastopol." The AIA Sustainable Design Assistance Team (SDAT) made its initial visit to gather information on February 28, 2013, with City and community leaders, including two representatives from Sebastopol Tomorrow. The team will return in May for additional input. Follow The Core Project on Facebook or join their mailing list to stay informed and to learn how to be part of the SDAT process in Sebastopol.

[www.the-core-project.org](http://www.the-core-project.org)

## Sebastopol is Cittaslow!

By Marty Roberts, Cittaslow Sebastopol steering committee

Did you know that Sebastopol is Cittaslow? Thanks to the efforts of Councilmember Sarah Gurney, who was mayor at the time, and others, Sebastopol received the highly prized designation more than a year ago. The ad hoc Cittaslow Sebastopol steering committee has been meeting for a year to create a structure, plan, and activities to fulfill the Cittaslow mission:

- Support locally made products and agriculture
- Celebrate our culture and history
- Share the joys of our community with visitors

• Integrate technologies for improved well-being

• Promote the health of our environment

• Develop community-friendly infrastructure

Cittaslow (*chee TAH sloh*, translation: slow city) started in Italy as an outgrowth of the Slow Food movement. Cittaslow strives to enhance quality of life and promote the local economy while preserving the unique flavor of small towns — 160+ small towns in 24 countries are Cittaslow cities. The City of Sebastopol received the highest score of any U.S. applicant to date. Cittaslow



Sebastopol is a project of the Sebastopol Community Cultural Center while the group is in the process of obtaining nonprofit status. Look for the snail logo in local store windows soon!

Councilmember Gurney and Vice-Mayor Robert Jacob serve as city council liaisons on the steering committee. Learn more and please like us at our Facebook page: [facebook.com/CittaslowSebastopol](http://facebook.com/CittaslowSebastopol). Sign up for our email list here: [www.CittaslowSebastopol.org/emailupdates](http://www.CittaslowSebastopol.org/emailupdates).

## CVS/CHASE: Status Report

Here's what's going on regarding CVS/Chase and Sebastopol on the 2.45-acre property at the downtown core at the junction of Highways 116 and 12.

The hearing for the suit filed by the Committee for Small Town Sebastopol in August, 2011, has been extended several times at the request of Armstrong Development, agent for the CVS/Chase corporations. The latest date for disposition is now July 8, 2013. The suit claimed that the Mitigated Negative Declaration was based on a faulty traffic study, and is therefore invalid.

Longs dba CVS filed a suit naming the City on Christmas Eve, 2012, claiming that the

City Council's moratorium on drive throughs in Sebastopol cannot be enforced on their project.

A demolition application for the property has now been applied for by Armstrong Development. They have also

submitted a revised design review application for CVS, and have been advised that no permits will be issued until resolution of the suit by Longs dba CVS and Armstrong against the City protesting the City's moratorium on drive throughs.



# Meet Your City Council

## Mayor *Michael Kyes*

I am very honored to be serving as Mayor of Sebastopol this year. Sebastopol is an extraordinary community that truly has a global vision while also maintaining its commitment to a small town identity.

As Chair of the Measure Y Campaign I was very pleased at the confidence shown by voters in our City government. The passage of the Measure Y sales tax has stabilized our City finances at a time when many other small towns are in dire straits. The revenues generated by Measure Y will enable us to maintain our city streets, public safety and quality of life.



a walkable community with trails and bike paths and preventing our traffic situation from becoming worse. I am also proud that Sebastopol City Government's investment in affordable housing ranks best in Sonoma County. I will support policies that will encourage and support diversity in our town. I am also committed to supporting

***I will work to support an updated General Plan that continues the policies of our existing General Plan; supporting a downtown core of local businesses, promoting unique small town architecture, respecting the environment, committing to parks and open space, promoting a walkable community with trails and bike paths and preventing our traffic situation from becoming worse.***

Councilmember Gurney also worked extraordinarily hard on Measure Y, knocking on doors and explaining to voters the importance of the Measure which passed with 71% of the vote.

We need to ensure that our City has its basic business stabilized but we must also continue our commitment to a truly progressive vision. I will work to support an updated General Plan that continues the policies of our existing General Plan; supporting a downtown core of local businesses, promoting unique small town architecture, respecting the environment, committing to parks and open space, promoting

City policies that lead the way to a clean energy future.

I am so proud to live in a town where citizens are truly engaged in and committed to their community, even when we may disagree. Sebastopol's residents are dedicated supporters of free speech, human rights and environmental sustainability. Sebastopol has the highest SAT scores, the lowest crime rate and lowest vacancy rates for housing and commercial properties in Sonoma County. This is something we should all be proud of. Some may call us quirky, but we are clearly a very desirable place to live and work because of our values and quality of life.

## Vice-Mayor *Robert Jacob*

These first few months as Sebastopol Vice Mayor have been challenging, exciting, and rewarding. From studying traffic flow to addressing our water and sewer system to working with Caltrans and PG&E, I am immersed in the diverse and comprehensive services and responsibilities of Sebastopol's City government.

I'm thankful to live in a community that is so informed, engaging, and involved. I'm impressed on a daily basis by the level of knowledge around complex issues that members of our community possess. Thank you for your positive feedback on my monthly City Council and community update and, if you're not on the list, sign up at <http://tinyurl.com/sebupdates>.

I'm most excited about working on the update to the General Plan and other forward-looking documents that will guide the development of Sebastopol for the next twenty or more years. This is a unique time to take part in local government.

Pivotal to our plans for growth is Cittaslow, meaning "slow city," an ad hoc committee of the City of which Councilmember Sarah Glade Gurney and I are members.

The mission of Cittaslow Sebastopol is to preserve our unique town character by collaborating with individuals, businesses, nonprofits and



government agencies to create activities and programs that:

- Support locally-made products and agriculture
- Celebrate our culture and history
- Share the joys of our community with visitors and amongst ourselves
- Integrate technologies for improved well being
- Promote the health of our environment
- Develop bicycle and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure

I envision our community embracing the values of Cittaslow Sebastopol and integrating its mission with our plans for future development to protect our unique culture, enhance the local economy, protect our environment, and achieve social equity. Learn more about Cittaslow Sebastopol at [www.cittaslowsebastopol.org](http://www.cittaslowsebastopol.org).

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as City Councilmember. I strive to make a lasting, positive impact on our community.

**City Council meetings, agendas and reports are listed on the City's website: <http://ci.sebastopol.ca.us/calendar>. And it's easy to contact your representatives by email:**

Mayor Michael Kyes: [michaelkyes@sbcglobal.net](mailto:michaelkyes@sbcglobal.net)  
Vice Mayor Robert Jacob: [robertjacobcc@sonic.net](mailto:robertjacobcc@sonic.net)  
John Eder: [johneder@comcast.net](mailto:johneder@comcast.net)  
Sarah Gurney: [sarahcouncil@yahoo.com](mailto:sarahcouncil@yahoo.com)  
Patrick Slayter: [ps.sebcc@gmail.com](mailto:ps.sebcc@gmail.com)

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## *Patrick Slayter*

*City Council Member*

In the summer of 2010, when I was considering running for a seat on Sebastopol's City Council, I had a conversation with a long-time former elected official (from another county) who said the time serving his community was among the most rewarding things he had ever done. The search for balance, the need to become educated on a wide variety of topics and the ability to disagree heartily with someone he greatly respected were all challenges he faced. After serving more than two years on Sebastopol's City Council I certainly agree with all these things. Praise is nice, agreement comforting, but self respect, honoring our laws and achieving balance is my goal.

A phrase that I seem to be hearing more frequently is, "I had no idea where you stood on a certain issue before the item was discussed." I take this as a compliment; that the public process is sacred and until



everyone has a chance to be heard, true democracy has not been achieved.

Respect for the natural environment, the realities of our urban landscape and pressures exerted on all of us by the fast pace of modern life all weigh heavily on members of the Sebastopol City Council. I believe no single person, or group of people, has the ability to know what is best for Sebastopol; it is through collaboration, civil discourse and compromise that Sebastopol will continue to have the character we cherish.

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## *Sarah Glade Gurney*

*City Council Member, and three-time Mayor*

Last November, Sebastopol voters elected two council members, Robert Jacob and John Eder, who have joined with Patrick, Michael, and me to form a new and dynamic City Council. Our new Council is listening to the community and listening to each other as we nurture ideas that will make Sebastopol a town that all of us will enjoy living in and be delighted to call our home.

Since the election, we have established a moratorium on new installations of Smart Meters, reviewed plans to modernize Ives Park, and adopted a law that protects our pedestrians and cyclists from aggressive drivers. We have held numerous community forums in January and February and have discovered that we have much more in common than we thought. We share an interest in promoting eco-tourism, we want to enhance our relationship to the Laguna, we want to walk and bicycle



around town, the better to meet each other and share our joy of belonging to the Sebastopol community.

This is a most exciting and rewarding time to be the senior member of the City Council. Already, the new Council, together with our involved citizenry, have accomplished much to be proud of. I look forward to many accomplishments between now and the 2014 election.

Let me know any ideas you have to make Sebastopol even better.

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## *John Eder*

*City Council Member*

### **My Vision for Our Future**

My opposition to the proposed CVS/Chase development forced me to look beyond it and consider the greater context of our entire downtown. It caused me to close my eyes and envision what our town could look like ten, twenty or many years from now — a view into our future.

In that vision, I see streets no longer clogged with cars; wide, tree-lined sidewalks bustling with people enroute to multiple destinations, off to work or fulfilling their daily needs



locally on foot. As the sun sets, the windows of the buildings that rise two or three stories above the sidewalks slowly fill with light, as residents return to their homes in our downtown. Some will choose to venture out for a meal in one of the

many restaurants, perhaps eating in an outdoor dining area adjoining the sidewalk, taking in the world passing by. After dinner, the choices include a movie, a play, some live music or a good book waiting upstairs. Others will visit the many varied shops, whose soft light illuminates the sidewalk through large display windows laden with locally-produced products. A group on bicycles glides quietly past, safe within their own dedicated space, away from the menace of car doors and high speed traffic. The sound of vibrant conversation mixed with laughter greets you repeatedly as you seek the next discovery

that lies just ahead.

The importance of preserving and enhancing our small town character as we develop our downtown is of primary importance to me. I see the upcoming SDAT (Sustainable Design Assessment Team) process and General Plan Update as important tools to help achieve this vision. A new General Plan remains many years away, however. In the interim, I hope that you will join with me in the revision of our Design Review Guidelines to help ensure that the Sebastopol of tomorrow is the one that we aspire to today.

# Summary of Community Meetings

By Tasha Beauchamp, Co-Chair, Cittaslow Sebastopol

From January 7 through February 4, the Sebastopol Planning Commission sponsored eight community meetings to gather input concerning elements of Sebastopol's General Plan

In addition to public posting of the meetings, over 150 invitations were sent out to non-profit, government, and for-profit stakeholders in an effort to bring together a broad spectrum of Sebastopolians.

The Community Meetings generated over 370 ideas from roughly 220 attendees. Each evening, those in attendance were asked to share their ideas and concerns on that night's topic. These were written on large pieces of paper and then attendees were invited to indicate their top three priorities.

The major themes that emerged reflected Sebastopol's concern about environmental issues, but also deep concern, and creativity, regarding the economic health of local businesses. Here are the major themes that evolved across the eight meetings:

## **Promotion of Sebastopol as a Tourist destination**

These suggestions looked at ways to attract visitors who appreciate our green and artistic spirit: From creation of a Wetlands Museum, to the development of a free electric trolley making a continuous loop from the Barlow to downtown and back. Residents acknowledged the opportunity to make Sebastopol an eco-tourist destination, and to leverage our international designation as a Cittaslow "Slow City."

## **Open Space and Parks**

Certainly the community is still very interested in finding a location to make a park in the south side of town. In addition, there was a desire to clean up existing parks (e.g., graffiti) and to pull out the weeds in the Railroad Forest (behind The Sebastopol Inn). There was also strong support to seek private funding for landscaping, similar to the way private businesses can donate funds for highway cleanup and receive acknowledgement for their contribution in the form of signage at the site.

## **Attitude, Culture, Education, and Process**

Many ideas defied classic categorization as policies. Instead they were more general. For instance, the most popular idea was a goal of "zero homeless; zero hunger." Other ideas included a greater emphasis on collaboration; looking at all policies through the lens of public health or environmental sustainability; or creating more educational programs regarding a range of topics (recycling, smart meters, climate change, etc.)

Bicycle and Pedestrian Initiatives (52 votes). From meetings on Health, to those on Economic Vitality, Traffic, Environmental Sustainability and Community Identity, making Sebastopol an easier place to walk or bike was always high on the list. Similarly, there were many suggestions about "making Connectors" between one location and another. Sometimes it was between two parks (e.g., the Laguna and Ives Park). Sometimes, as in the "Park Once" suggestion, it was between a centralized parking

structure and downtown. Clearly local residents want ways to move around safely, away from traffic of our two main highways.

## **Business Development**

This is, in many ways, a theme related to "promotion and tourism," however the emphasis was less on visitors from outside the area, and more on locals. Popular ideas in this vein included beautifying the downtown corridor; and creating directories, kiosks or other ways to highlight what is available in Sebastopol, both culturally and commercially. There was strong support for "buy local" initiatives as well as a desire to identify what businesses we would like to see in Sebastopol and to actively court them (e.g., small scale manufacturing, internet or tech businesses, large-scale agriculture, specific retail stores...).

## **Electro-Magnetic Field (EMF) Concerns**

Sebastopol has a strong contingent of citizens who are EMF-sensitive and/or very concerned about the potential harmful effects of electro-magnetic fields. From cell-phones to wifi, smart meters to microwaves, these residents advocated consistently for more education about the issues. They also suggested public policies to reduce or eliminate exposure, such as making Sebastopol smart-meter-free, creation of cell-phone-free safe zones, and no cell towers in public parks.

## **Plant, animal and maintenance practice**

Top vote-getters in this theme included beautifying the wetland entries to town; promoting the use of volunteers to help with city landscaping and open space cleanup; and the creation

of wildlife corridors. Other areas of emphasis included the promotion of water-wise, organic landscaping, and the "daylighting" of local creeks.

## **Density**

There was strong support for infill of town, including changes to allow for more, and larger "granny units." Increasing the density downtown was extremely popular, with suggestions to allow for 2nd and 3rd story residential additions. Annexing some of our peripheral acreage was also a topic brought up in several meetings.

## **Energy/Climate Change**

Most of these suggestions revolved around alternative, non-car forms of transportation (although walking and bikes deserved their own separate theme). Other energy options included making solar panels mandatory on all new construction, and embracing Sonoma County guidelines that could help us to become energy independent.

## **Traffic/Parking**

The most popular idea was the concept of "Park Once" with perhaps a tall, or underground, parking structure that is centrally located and could provide easy pedestrian access to downtown. Implementing a continuous-loop electric trolley between the Barlow and downtown also gained a lot of support. In addition, concerns were raised about the two "pinch spots" where Highway 116 changes from two-way to one-way (at Spooner Park to the south; and just west of the Plaza where McKinley and Main St. intersect).

## **Affordability/Accessibility**

Attendees at the meetings expressed concern for those who do not have ready access

to health care and to affordable housing. Free public health care, a homeless shelter, and moderate-income housing were all popular topics.

### **Waste/Recycling/Pollution**

Many of the attendees were strong advocates for educating the population about the air pollution engendered by the chem-trails of airplanes. Other popular ideas in this theme involved expansion of existing recycling programs to include items that are more difficult to recycle, and passing a law to reduce/eliminate the use of plastics as these are damaging for the landfill.

### **Regulations**

The top vote-getter in this theme was a call to make the zoning and municipal codes more specific so city committees and commissions could have more guidance when making decisions. Another key topic in this theme was the need to give people who live outside the city limits some form of representation in city government as they consider themselves part of Sebastopol and are certainly impacted by decisions made in Sebastopol. Annexation was one possibility, but there could be others. Lastly, there was strong support for offering a longer grace period for regulation compliance when a new business is just getting started. The idea was to make it easy to open their doors as soon as possible. A business should not be held up from opening due to relatively small, inconsequential work that still needs to be done (e.g., lower a window).

### **Funding/Financial Ideas**

Many ideas in this category revolved around ways to make housing more affordable. But a call also went out for creative sources of funding to help the city be more self-supporting.

### **Community Health**

Concerns about EMF exposure were raised so often, that this spun off into its own theme. Other topics pertaining to health included more education and affordable treatment services for Lyme disease, transfer of the city's medical marijuana license to Palm Drive Hospital, and more services for returning veterans.

### **Water and Wetlands**

Sebastopol sits at the western edge of the Laguna de Santa Rosa wetlands. Many concerns were raised about protecting this wild habitat, while others focused on water-shed drainage (e.g., incentivizing rain water capture and grey water systems, requiring permeable surfaces on all new construction).

### **Youth programs**

Acknowledging the predominance of older adults in Sebastopol, there were many suggestions oriented around multi-generational programs, or programs specifically designed to support adolescents, including a private sector initiative to help teens acquire job-skills and jobs, creation of a Teen Clinic, and more effective use of the Teen Center.

### **Noise**

Concern was voiced about noise pollution, education about its effects, and better enforcement of existing regulations. Planting more trees in the downtown core was one suggestion for curtailing noise. Another suggestion was to adopt the noise metric used in Santa Rosa.

*For more information about the Community Meetings, or to get a copy of the compiled data, contact the Sebastopol Planning Department, Monday – Thursday at 823-6167, or email [rmansour@cityofsebastopol.org](mailto:rmansour@cityofsebastopol.org).*

## **City Council Goals and Priorities**

*By Helen Shane*

Sebastopol City Council met on January 29, 2013 to develop Goals and Priorities for 2013. While there was not necessarily consensus on all points, each Council member offered five priorities for discussion. While fairly comprehensive, the City Clerk notes this list is not inclusive of all goals.

### **Mayor Michael Kyes' list:**

- Create a sustainable general fund
- Beautify downtown
- Clean up Railroad Forest
- Increase staff levels for Police and Public Works
- Re-prioritize our Pavement Management Plan

### **Vice Mayor Robert Jacob's list:**

- Develop multi year plan for completion of General Plan Update and related ordinances, codes
- Promote identity of downtown core
- Increase inclusion of disenfranchised communities
- Strengthen position of EMF and Smart meters

### **Council Member John Eder's list:**

- Establish an emergency fund within three years
- Reach out to appropriate new businesses
- Study and resolve downtown parking issue
- Make City Hall and Council more accessible to public
- Create a citizens budget advisory commission

### **Council Member Sarah Gurney's list:**

- Enhance Sebastopol's identity with, and relationship to, the Laguna; improve parks and open space
- Plan to address greenhouse gas emissions via traffic circulation and safety issues
- Improve connectivity with downtown and parking
- Increase affordable housing activities
- Use designations such as Cittaslow city and Peacetown USA in press outreach to increase connections with these philosophies

### **Council member Slayter's list:**

- A bike-pedestrian trail
- Improvement of infrastructure
- Downtown design-rehab
- Revive city staff position of Economic Development
- Improve City website

I hope that the City's experiences with developers of significant projects will induce the Council to require more specific implementation of our General Plan and Zoning Code as codified in our Design Review Guidelines.

It is interesting and enlightening to compare this list with the summary of the eight General Plan Update meetings. From the City's website, go to <http://ci.sebastopol.ca.us/page/commission-and-board-reports> then scroll down to Voting Results from February 23<sup>rd</sup> Community Workshop.

On that same downloadable documents page you will find the meeting-by-meeting tally of subject "popularity."

# The Sebastopol Election of 2012 Citizens Support Local Tax Measures

by Sherry Petersen

Sebastopol voted overwhelmingly to support community services and education on the November ballot. After crippling reductions in state funding, the citizens countered at the polls with resounding support of all local tax measures.

Measure K, the West Sonoma County Union High School District Parcel Tax of \$48, passed with 73.6% approval, and Measure O, the Sebastopol Union School District Parcel Tax of \$76, passed with 72.3%.

Measure Y, the Transaction and Use Tax measure, carried with 71.0%. This measure, a 0.5% sales tax within the city limits, is expected to generate approximately \$1 million per year. The revenue

will go into the city's general fund to support the full range of municipal services. The measure was put on the ballot by a unanimous Council vote.

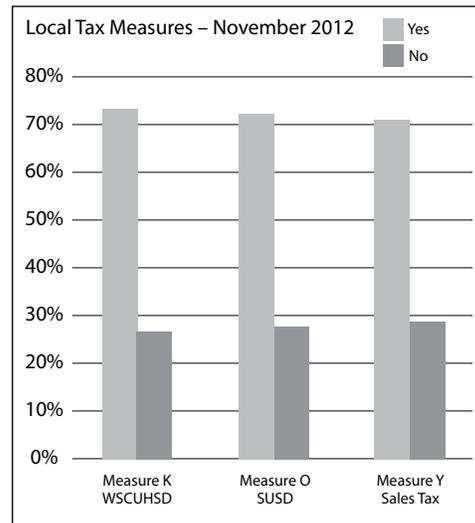
Public awareness of the ballot measure was generated by the efforts of Council Member Sarah Gurney, who walked door-to-door during the campaign with an informational flyer and her personal endorsement. She spoke in support of Measure Y to many citizens and was gratified by the voters' response. "I thank our voters for their confidence in their City governance and in their City Staff, as indicated by this overwhelming vote of support—a notable 71% when we needed 50+%. I repeatedly encountered the most unifying

factor: our people, of whatever political point of view, lifestyle, or history, LOVE this town."

Mayor Michael Kyes, who managed the campaign, expressed appreciation of the strong community support of city services, stating "It was really gratifying to see our community so overwhelmingly support Measure Y.

Most cities in California are in dire financial straits due to the economy and the way local government is financed in California. But, thanks to the citizens of Sebastopol, our city is financially stable."

Kyes, known for his low budget campaigns, said that the Measure Y campaign expenses



were \$1154. The campaign received \$1550 in donations. The remaining \$396 has gone to the City's Community Fund, which can be used for community services. In the past two years the funds have been distributed as community benefit grant agreements with nonprofits.

## The Sebastopol Election of 2012 What happened?

by Bill Shortridge and Richard Nichols

**ACTIVISM:** *a doctrine or practice that emphasizes direct vigorous action especially in support of or opposition to one side of a controversial issue.*

Sebastopol Tomorrow was founded in 1984 to preserve Sebastopol's small town feel with the environment in mind. Two years later, Sebastopol Tomorrow became involved in politics and backed a long shot: Anne Magnie. She won. Then, a very organized Sebastopol Tomorrow backed newcomer, Nick Stewart. They ended up beating the incumbent Mayor, thought to have been an impossible task. So the 2012 elections were politics as usual for Sebastopol Tomorrow.

You're hard pressed to discuss the elections without mentioning

the CVS/Chase controversy. It defined the campaign. It steamrolled its way through every City Council meeting into November and saw citizen after citizen stand up to speak from both sides of the aisle—and it was terrific; community participation at its best. At any given meeting you could hear a majority of citizens state, they would not vote for anyone who voted for CVS/Chase.

Incumbent City Council member Kathleen Shaffer not only supported the project, she was instrumental in manipulating it through the initial processes. Kathy Austin was very public in her support, while John Eder, Robert Jacob and Colleen Fernauld were adamantly opposed. The five

candidates could not have been clearer as to where they stood.

And those opposing viewpoints revealed a fissure in the community. On one side were the supporters of the CVS/Chase; real estate agents, developers and some business leaders. On the other side were the people who meet their friends downtown; the families at the farmer's market, the ice cream parlor after school. And it's not unusual to hear local storekeepers call their customers by name.

It's that community that received the facts through the organized campaigning, letter writing, door-knocking and fund-raising of Sebastopol Tomorrow. In the end, that's how it played out. The community sent the message with their votes that they did not want corporate America taking their town away from

them as it has in so many other towns across America. Not Sebastopol.

Robert Jacob was the clear winner. John Eder surprised most and unseated the incumbent by 62 votes resulting in a progressive council with strong, diverse ideas that will be the prime motivator in conceiving a new, less ambiguous general plan.

There is still a lot at stake for Sebastopol and last fall's election serves as a reminder that constant vigil must be kept through community awareness and participation in our government. This town belongs to its people.

As one SebTom member likes to remind us...

*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.* —Margaret Mead

