

Candidates for Town Council 2024-2028

Paula Huntley

Mayoral candidate

Originally from Corner Brook, Newfoundland, I settled in Kentville, NS, in 2003. With 40 years of experience in Retail Corporate Management, I have honed skills in recruitment, training, planning, and collaborative work.

As a business owner, I've worked as an Event Planner, Coach, Recruiter, and Mentor, focusing on job employment, community projects, and school co-op programs. This experience gives me a unique perspective on listening to and advocating for local and future business owners looking to invest in Kentville.

My community involvement includes being an active member of Rotary International, serving on the Persons with Disabilities Committee, and being a member of the Valley Women's Business Network, the AV Chamber of Commerce, and the Valley Regional Enterprise Network's Connector Program. These roles keep me connected to the pulse of our town's needs and aspirations.

My vision is to build relationships, collaborate with others, and foster open communication, ensuring that Kentville continues to grow as an age-friendly community that serves everyone. I look forward to working together to achieve this vision.

Brent Platt

Mayoral candidate

As a dedicated resident of Kentville, I am running for mayor to ensure that every voice is heard and that we work together to create a vibrant, inclusive, and prosperous town. My commitment to our community's growth and well-being drives my vision, which includes fostering local businesses, enhancing public services, and promoting sustainable development—with residents at the heart of every decision.

With over 15 years of experience in the non-profit sector, I have a proven track record in planning, organizing, and leading successful fundraising programs and organizations. My expertise includes leadership development and strategic planning, among other skills.

I hold an Executive MBA with a specialization in data sciences and advanced statistical inference, and I am a certified Fundraising Executive (CFRE). Additionally, I have several Google and Microsoft Cloud credentials. My background in digital security and digital design further equips me to address the modern challenges our community faces.

As a volunteer firefighter in Kentville, I understand the importance of public safety and community service. Enhancing public services is a top priority for me. From improving our infrastructure to ensuring that our public safety services have the resources they need, I am committed to making Kentville a safe and welcoming place for everyone. Promoting sustainable development is crucial for our future, and I will work tirelessly to implement environmentally friendly practices that benefit both our community and the planet.

With your support, I will bring dedication, integrity, and a fresh perspective to our local government. I am committed to being a mayor who listens, who cares, and who acts in the best interests of all residents. Together, we can build a brighter future for Kentville, one where every voice is heard, and every person has the opportunity to thrive.

Andrew Zebian

Mayoral candidate

Hello Kentville! My name is Andrew Zebian and I am running for Mayor. Together with my wife, we own and operate Phinneys Clothing Store on Webster Street. We have 4 children.

At a very young, I took an interest in working with my parents, Mike & Mary Zebian, whom established many long standing clothing stores for decades. By their example, I learned the ropes of running a solid and successful business and being fiscally responsible.

In 2020, I was elected to Kentville Town Council thanks to the Citizens of this town, During this term, I am proud of a lot of achievements but mostly the ones that involved me helping give back to the Community. I was a strong voice for the citizens and I wasn't afraid to push for what was right. Everything I ever did or said was always for the people and my intentions were always, and still are, to make this town the best it can be for all.

I am back again asking for your support. This time, I am running for the seat as Mayor of Kentville. Let me be your voice, again. I will never shy away from what is important. I will never sway from doing the right thing. I will always continue to put the needs of this town and the needs of the citizens before anything else. There will always be pushback before positive change and positive growth, and we have seen this in this term. But, if I am elected as mayor, together, we can make Kentville flourish and prosper. I have the experience of running a good business and years of experience being part of Kentville Council. I know, if I am elected as Mayor, this will happen because I am motivated, determined and driven. I am so proud of this Town and I ask for your support on October 19th.

“When We Work Together, We Gain Together”.

John Andrew

Councillor candidate

Biography not available

Rob Baker

Councillor candidate

Rob Baker has been a teacher for over 20 years putting his energies into serving his school community. Most recently as a high school Resource Teacher he has helped many struggling students graduate and achieve their goals. Before teaching he developed his experience in helping people and businesses meet their needs of efficiency and financial stability. As a family man he celebrates loved ones' joys and supports their challenges daily. Raised in Québec City, he is fluent in French. Rob studied at Acadia University (BA, B.Ed), St. Francis Xavier (M.Ed.) and Mount Saint Vincent (M.Ed) He is a life-long learner who knows that he still has lots of learning to do. Having taught at Wolfville School, Kings County Academy, Kingston and District School and West Kings District High School he has shared in the lives of many students and their families here in the Annapolis Valley. Rob's energies have been spent helping young people achieve their goals. Whether through coaching robotics teams, supporting young entrepreneurs or just exploring their passions by getting tools into the hands of a future mechanic without the financial means. Rob has chaired the Board of Trustees of St. Paul and St. Stephen United Church, Kentville and played a part in the search for ministers in their Joint Needs Assessment Committee. Rob is married to Carolyn (Cochrane) Baker and is father to Emily, Isaac, Kady Scott, Gabriel and Oliver. His passion for photography has been shared with many newlyweds and businesses, especially creating stunning images for real estate sales. Rob is honored to serve the Kentville community by having the opportunity to learn about and help be a part of making decisions for the future of this great town.

Debra Crowell

Councillor candidate

Deb retired in December 2022 after 35 years service to the Town of Kentville. She spent those years entirely in the Finance Department- 10 years in accounting and her last 25 years as the Finance Director.

Deb is a specialist in local government holding a Certificate in Local Government Administration (Dalhousie University). She is also a Certified Municipal Manager. For more than a decade, Deb was a course instructor for Dalhousie University's College of Continuing Education program teaching budgeting and financial management to police professionals both nationwide and internationally.

During her tenure, Deb was an integral part of the senior management team. Her job encompassed all budgeting and financial management of the Town's financial resources (6 funds owned and operated by the Town), leading a team in the Finance department, including IT, attendance at Council Advisory Committee meetings and, when needed, Town Council meetings. She also assumed the role of Acting Chief Administrative Officer on several occasions.

Deb was a member of the following committees/boards:

Senior Management

Council Advisory

Council

Investment Advisory (ex officio)

Audit Committee (ex officio)

Kentville Volunteer Fire Department (financial reporting/budgeting)

Kentville Water Commission (resource/budgeting/financing)

In addition to extensive report writing, Deb was responsible for issuing, analyzing and recommending Requests for Proposals for the following:

General Insurance and Risk Management Services

Audit Services

Banking Services

Investment Advisory Services

Deb is a long-term resident of Kentville moving into Kentville when she became the Finance Director. She lives with her mini-poodle, Maggie and her cat Trixie. She has two grown sons both living in Kings with their families. As Finance Director, Deb believed in transparency and fiscal responsibility. She continues to believe these traits are most important in today's government. Her deep knowledge and experience of not only local government but also the Town of Kentville would be a great asset to Kentville's new Council this October 2024.

Craig Gerrard

Councillor candidate

Biography not available

Samantha Hamilton

Councillor candidate

Samantha Hamilton is a distinguished healthcare leader with over 26 years of experience as an Advanced Care Paramedic. She has demonstrated exceptional leadership throughout her career, serving as the President of IUOE 727. In this role, she has championed the rights of her colleagues, built strong alliances across departments, and engaged with key stakeholders to drive meaningful change. Samantha is known for her solid values and unwavering ethics, always striving to do what is right, even when no one is watching. A relentless commitment to advocacy, transparency, and collaborative problem-solving marks her tenure in union representation. She will complete her term in September of this year.

Currently pursuing an Emergency Health Services Management degree at Dalhousie University, Samantha is expanding her expertise in research methods, clinical and professional education, and human resources. This academic pursuit, combined with her Human Resources Certificate, underscores her dedication to continuous professional development and her commitment to implementing evidence-based practices.

Her governance experience extends beyond her professional role as President of the IUOE. Samantha has served as Chair of the Executive Board, as a member of the Town of Kentville Police Commission, and as a former board member of the Canadian Mental Health Association. Her passion for mental health advocacy and ability to foster environments rooted in empathy, trust, and open communication position her as a transformative leader.

Samantha is married to Scott Hamilton, Kentville's Fire Chief, who has devoted 32 years to the community. Together, they have raised three adult children, instilling in them the values of service and community involvement. The Hamilton family has been deeply engaged in community activities, from sports to local initiatives.

Samantha Hamilton's dedication to her profession, community, and family reflects her commitment to excellence in leadership and governance, making her a force for positive change.

Dawn Jewell

Councillor candidate

Dawn Jewell (she/her) is a dynamic professional with a passion for community and governance. With over 20 years of experience working in government, non profit and policy she had demonstrated a clear eye for detail and making sure things are addressed. From taking policy to Province House, to negotiating with major stakeholders at Dalhousie Medical, engagement is a strength for Dawn. Dawn is results driven and adaptable and believes in supporting business while maintaining a conservation policy.

I am running for council to bring fresh ideas, strong leadership and community engagement with a commitment to improving the quality of life for its citizens and business owners.

Sharon Kehoe

Councillor candidate

My name is Sharon Kehoe. I've been a resident in the town of Kentville for almost 40 years. Value of family and the quality of life for all residents of Kentville as a priority to me. I'm a wife, mother, grandmother and a concerned taxpayer.

My husband Dennis and I grew up in small villages in Cape Breton. We travelled and worked around the country in the early years of our married life and finally settled in Kentville. We built our house, ourselves. The very same house we live in today. Nailed in every board, put up every piece of drywall. This is where we raised our children. This is where our grandchildren are being raised. Kentville is home.

I worked for Bell Aliant for 31.5 years. I had a wonderful career that began as a payroll clerk, moved on to Customer Service, then to Sales and ended as the Regional Manager for Enterprise Service Management for the Province. In all the positions I held there was a consistent thread to success- Stand Tall- work hard and follow through on what you have committed too! We were our "Customer's Advocates. Their Champion"

Treat others fairly, be honest, and most of all be upfront. Don't wait for them to ask, ensure they know all the pros and all the cons. Earn their trust and ALWAYS deserve it. I hope to bring those same attributes to Town Hall. Honesty, Transparency and Trust. To Stand Tall! To be our Citizens Advocate.

The next four years we will face many challenges. We need to renew our infrastructure while at the same time promote positive growth that will enhance our quality of living. The key to success is a plan. A plan that Citizens are part of creating and agree with.. We will do it together.

I'm eager to help build that plan. The ultimate goal: to once again be a top notch #1 town in Nova Scotia.

Change will not come if we wait for some other person to act, we need to be the change.

Roz MacKinnon

Councillor candidate

First of all please allow me to acknowledge I live and work in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq people. I recognize that African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose histories, legacies and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years.

I have lived in Kentville since 2010. I was born in Cape Breton and lived in various parts of this Province and then British Columbia for 24 years. When it was time to return home, I chose Kentville, for my then 10 year old son and I. Good choice! We have both thrived and made wonderful connections and memories here.

I hold Bachelor of Arts (Political Science) and Bachelor of Social Work degrees from Dalhousie University. I completed my Masters in Social Work (Community Development) at the University of British Columbia.

Health Care is where I enjoyed a long and fruitful career. In addition to frontline positions, I have held Manager, Director and Operating Officer positions in three different Health Authorities. Managing and directing multi million dollar budgets. Always, without exception, coming in under budget. I have been described as a Servant Leader and chose to interact with heart and humour.

I'm an active volunteer in our community and have received volunteer recognition in both Inverness and Kings Counties. I believe in transparency, open communication and staying in touch with and consulting stakeholders. Since a young age, I have been an avid follower of politics, on all levels. Now is the time to offer to contribute! Please consider supporting me for Council!

I have the experience, passion, enthusiasm and time to devote to Council & Committee work.

Cathy Maxwell

Councillor candidate

Hi, my name is Cathy Maxwell and I am a lifelong resident of the Town of Kentville. I have attended Acadia University and the University of Victoria in BC on my way toward a Masters of Education. I am now a retired teacher after completing a 35 year career with the Annapolis Valley Centre of Education . I was a Jr/Sr High School Physical Education Teacher. I also spent close to 35 years coaching. My Coaching career started right here at home with the Marlins Swim Team.

I have served 2 terms as a councillor and feel I am well equipped to head into a third term if residents would like to see me back. I have been a strong voice for many issues on Council and one that I am very proud of is speaking on behalf of our students at NEKEC who in 2023 wanted to have their prom parade in town. I was helpful in persuading council to overturn an Administrative decision to deny their request.

I have 3 major goals for the upcoming term: the first is to use the storm management plan and schedule areas for replacement in each budget year until complete, secondly I would like to make sure we up grade or replace our large recreational facilities and be the voice for the town on the Kings County Recreational Facility with an indoor pool and finally I would like go through our policies and make changes that would help ensure greater fiscal responsibility. As always communication and transparency are core goals for me.

I ask for your support for another term on Council where I will continue to make decisions in the best interest of this town.

Stephen Pearl

Councillor candidate

My name is Stephen Pearl and I running for Kentville Town Council this year. My wife Andrea (Andy) and I were both born and raised in Kentville .Wé chose to make Kentville our home and raise our two sons Matt and Ryan here. I am a retired teacher/ school administrator with 35 years experience at Central Kings Rural High School.My job gave me the opportunity to work with students and parents from all walks of life as well as all levels of government. Over the years I have served as a Director on many Boards and many committees with the Former AVRSB.. I served 5 years on the Kentville Police Commission and thet last two as Chairman. I was on the hiring committee for 2 Chiefs of Police ..I currently am the Past President of the Kentville Historical Society ad we are working very hard to preserve the history of our town. When called upon, I also volunteer for the Valley Restorative Justice. We live in difficult times right now as a community ,a province, a country and as a world Smart decisions need to be made as money is tight.Kentville needs and deserves strong leadership. There are many issues facing our town right now: such as our crumbling infrastructure , flooding ,lack of transparency , protecting our land and the unhoused just to name a few.We need a functional and cohesive town council. I am here to listen to all of the citizens of Kentville and make strong intelligent decisions for all of you. This is my AGENDA. Please vote Stephen Pearl for Town Council , Together we can make a difference. " If everyone is moving forward together, success will take care of itself" Henry Ford

Why I am running for town council ? I have been to almost every CAC and Town Council meeting over the past 8 years and have seen all the dysfunctionality that has gone on. " I am mad as hell and I am not going to take it anymore" Howard Beale from the movie Network

Holly Rogers

Councillor candidate

Holly is a dedicated and community-focused individual running for Kentville Town Council. Passionate about advocating for accessibility and inclusion, Holly aims to represent all residents of Kentville, ensuring their voices are heard and their needs are met. As a wheelchair user, Holly understands the importance of accessible infrastructure and policies that promote equal opportunities for everyone. With a strong commitment to improving local services, supporting small businesses, and fostering a vibrant, inclusive community, Holly is determined to bring positive change to Kentville. Her campaign slogan, "Moving Forward with Holly," reflects her vision for a collaborative and forward-moving town council.

Holly is a passionate advocate for active transportation in Kentville, recognizing its importance not just as a means for environmental sustainability but as a critical component of inclusive community development. Holly has experience in the recreation department advocating for Kentville's own active transportation and getting citizens involved with being active. Holly firmly believes that active transportation, whether it's walking, cycling or using mobility aids should be accessible for everyone, regardless of physical ability. Her vision includes safer sidewalks, dedicated bike lanes, and improved accessibility infrastructure to ensure that all residents, including those with disabilities, can move freely and safely around town.

Holly enjoys working with the community to promote being active, she has previously led the Women on Wheels program, and currently hosts a Women+ Social Ride in the town of Kentville.

By championing projects that enhance active transportation networks, Holly seeks to create a more connected and livable Kentville where people can thrive.

Through her advocacy, she hopes to encourage more people to embrace walking, wheeling, or cycling as part of their daily routines, contributing to both healthier lifestyles and a greener future for the town.

Cate Savage

Councillor candidate

Deputy Mayor Cate Savage is a long time Banker with over 30 years experience, specializing in commercial real estate. Cate holds the position of Senior Relationship Manager – SWNS (RBC). Cate relocated to the Annapolis Valley from Halifax in 1994 with RBC. Cate has resided in various parts of the Valley but moved to the town of Kentville in 2011. It was clear to Cate that Kentville was “home”. Since moving to Kentville, Cate has looked for ways to improve what was an already gracious ..inclusive and appreciative community.

Deputy Mayor Savage loves the community spirit and commitment the residents of Kentville possess. Kentville offers recreation/business/activities/trails/amazing food. “We really do offer it all in this town” she says. “Kentville is so many things to so many people regardless of age, race or creed. Kentville is proud to be a welcoming and inclusive community. Kentville is, in Cate’s word, a "gem".

Deputy Mayor Savage has served on a number of boards and committees. Cate is a past President of the Kentville Business Community, Past President and Co-Founder of the Valley Women’s Business Network Association, Past Chair and current Director of Landmark East Association, and Past Chair and currently a Trustee of the Landmark East Foundation, past director/trustee of the Valley Regional Hospital Foundation, a group who helped build the Hospice in Kentville. Cate is also proud to call herself a Rotarian and is the recipient of the Paul Harris Fellows Award.

It seemed a natural progression for Cate Savage to reoffer (2024) her name in efforts to effect more change. Cate enjoys process and politics! Cate says, “we are all individuals and it’s a joy to hear all of the opinions of others while making important decisions that will affect the residents of this town”.

Lloyd Schmidt

Councillor candidate

Hello Kentville. My name is Lloyd Schmidt. I was born in Regina and moved to Nova Scotia when I was 10 years old and have lived here ever since. After growing up on the South Shore I married my wife Anne from Kentville in 1979. We have lived in Kentville most of our lives with a short stint in Halifax when we were first married and then recently we moved back from East Lawrencetown where we lived for the last 10 years.

We have 2 sons. Nick who is married to Annie with 3 children and Ben who has a lovely girlfriend Nicole.

I went to high school at Liverpool Regional High and graduated from St. Mary's University in 1974. I am retired now. My working life was spent in the private sector most recently as the owner of a spray foam insulation company. Prior to that I was a sales agent in the clothing business. My longest and most successful relationship was with Columbia Sportswear. I was principal rep for Columbia in Atlantic Canada for 22 years.

My past political experience was as a member of the Reform Party of Canada. I worked as a volunteer with the constituency association for 8 years. We participated in two federal elections in 1993 and 1997. I held positions as vice-president, president and candidate for Member of Parliament in 1997.

Anne and I are happy to be back in Kentville. We feel that Kentville is one of the great places to live. We have been and continue to be challenged by changing times from local as well as global influences. I think and hope that my experience can offer something for the betterment for the town of Kentville.