

2023 ELECTION GUIDE



**Vote on Tuesday,
November 7, 2023**

**Polls are open
7:00am – 8:00pm**



ROSIE'S PLACE

This Election Guide was prepared by the Rosie's Place
Public Policy Department

For an online version, go to rosiesplace.org/how-we-help/ongoing-support/public-policy

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Rosie’s Place reached out to all candidates listed on the ballot in each race noted in this voter guide.

VOTING LOCATIONS

If you are registered to vote at:

Rosie's Place (889 Harrison Avenue, 02118) vote at:

- **Orchard Gardens Community Center, 2 Dearborn St.**

Woods Mullen (794 Massachusetts Avenue, 02118),
Pine Street Women's Inn (363 Albany Street, 02118),
Pine Street Men's Inn (444 Harrison Avenue, 02118),
vote at:

- **Cathedral High School Gym, 1336 Washington St.**

Women's Lunch Place (67 Newbury St, 02116), vote at:

- **Emmanuel Episcopal Church, 15 Newbury St.**

St. Francis House (39 Boylston Street, 02116), vote at:

- **Metropolitan Community Room, 38 Oak St.**

If you are registered to vote at a different Boston address, please call the City of Boston elections department at **617.635.4635**, visit **wheredoivotema.com** to find your polling location or reach out to the Rosie's Place Public Policy department for assistance.

YOUR RIGHTS

Q: Do I have to register to vote every election?

A: No. You should register to vote if this is your first-time voting, after you move, or if you have not voted in a while.

Q: Can I register to vote on election day?

A: No.

Q: Can I register to vote or update my registration online?

A: Yes. You can register to vote or update your registration online anytime if you have a Mass ID or Driver License by visiting registertovotema.com. You can also pick up a paper application at the front desk at Rosie's Place, or go to Boston City Hall and register to vote in-person.

Q: Can I vote by mail in this election?

A: Yes. If you have not received an application to vote by mail, go to boston.gov/departments/elections/how-vote-absentee-ballot or call Boston City Hall for assistance: 617.635.8683.

YOUR RIGHTS

Q: I forgot where my polling is location, can I vote anywhere?

A: No. Unless you are voting early or by mail, you must vote at your polling location. You can find where you vote at wheredoivotema.com.

Q: Do I have to show a photo ID to vote?

A: No. You may be asked for identification if you are a first-time voter or have not voted in a long time. You may show a piece of mail with your name, voting address or a letter from a shelter where you are registered.

Q: Can I bring this guide into the polling booth?

A: Yes. You can bring this guide, your own notes, and any other helpful information you might need. You can even bring along a friend who can help you vote if you need assistance.

Q: I was once incarcerated, can I vote?

A: Yes. If you have a criminal record, are on parole or on probation, you can vote! Only people currently incarcerated for a felony cannot vote.

Q: What if they can't find my name at my poll?

A: You can still vote! Ask for a provisional ballot and your vote will be counted once your registration has been confirmed.

Have your rights been violated?

Contact the Election Protection Hotline (866.OUR.VOTE), the Dept. of Justice Voting Rights Hotline (800.253.3931), an attorney, or Rosie's Place Legal Program!

Q: Which items are covered in this Election Guide?

A: In this Election Guide we are covering the races for Boston City Council-At Large and individual Districts.

Q: How many candidates may I select for each race?

A: For City Council-At-Large, you may select 4 candidates. For District races you may select 1 candidate.

Q: What is the responsibility of the Boston City Council?

A: There is a brief description about the Boston City Council on page 8.

Q: How do I choose who to vote for?

A: Voting is your constitutional right and it is exclusively YOUR choice. It is up to you to determine who will represent YOUR interests best.

BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

The City Council is the legislative body of the City of Boston. Councilors are elected every two years by the citizens of Boston. The council is made up of four at-large councilors that represent the entire City, and nine district councilors that represent specific areas of the City.

The City Council serves as a link between the citizens of Boston and their municipal government. Councilors help constituents by connecting them to resources, services, and City departments. They serve as advocates for all Bostonians.

Contact:

Tel: 617-635-3040

Email: city.council@boston.gov

1 City Hall Square
Room 550
Boston, MA 02201-2043

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm.

FOUR QUESTIONS

We asked 4 questions to all the candidates about issues impacting our community:

Housing:

For far too many people with extremely low income or no income it is nearly impossible to find an affordable rent in Boston, and even with a voucher there are stigmas and biases that make it challenging to find housing. What will you do to ensure we have housing that is affordable and accessible?

Homelessness:

We believe homelessness is not a human qualifier but a circumstance a person is experiencing. Yet, far too many women experiencing homelessness feel unseen and unheard. What will you do to ensure the voices and needs of those experiencing homelessness are listened to and met?

Supporting Low-Income People:

Given the challenges people face to afford housing, utilities, transportation, food, and attend to their basic survival even while employed, how would you work to improve the financial well-being of low-income people in Boston?

Immigration:

Recently, Massachusetts has been the epicenter of news surrounding immigration policy. How will you work to make Boston welcoming to immigrants of all backgrounds?

There are 8 at-large candidates on the ballot:

Clifton A. Braithwaite

Henry Santana

Catherine Vitale

Julia Mejia (Present Councilor-At-Large)

Bridget M. Nee-Walsh

Shawn Nelson (Veteran)

Ruthzee Louijuene (Present Councilor-At-Large)

Erin J. Murphy (Present Councilor-At-Large)

BRIDGET M. NEE-WALSH

Candidate for Councilor-At-Large



Housing

Housing is a fundamental right and here in Boston, we need to do a better job of ensuring both affordable and accessible housing is available. We can achieve this goal by using intentional planning and building to increase our available housing stock in all neighborhoods, for low and working- middle- class families and individuals. I also support transforming Additional Dwelling Units (ADUs), such as underutilized garages or carriage houses, as of right.

Homelessness

Homelessness doesn't define an individual. It is just that- a circumstance a person experiences- and whether chronic or temporary, this should not strip them from of their voice. We experience homelessness for a myriad of reasons- lack of work, wages that don't meet the high cost of living, mental health, substance use, etc.. When stigmas and biases silence the voices of those who have and/ or are experiencing it, poor policies are created and enforced.

Supporting Low-Income People

First, I would support and increase City services for seniors, families, and low - income individuals. So many of our residents are struggling and living paycheck to days before their next paycheck. As a union iron worker, I believe that all approved projects in Boston should employ union workers, providing fair wages and benefits to residents rather than outsourcing to surrounding states. Additionally, increasing vocational programs in our high schools as an alternative pathway to sustainable career will help set our youth up for success because not everyone will attend college.

Immigration

I will work collaboratively with colleagues at all levels of government, communities across the city, and service providers to ensure that Boston remains the vibrant and successful melting pot that it has always been by meeting the evolving needs with all necessary and available services.

ERIN J. MURPHY

*Candidate for Councilor-At-Large (*Present Councilor)*



Housing

As someone who rents in Boston, and a single mom who raised three kids in Dorchester, I know how tough the housing crunch is. We need to pursue creative solutions to build more affordable housing, working with community partners, repurposing buildings, permitting ADUs, stop wasting unused city lots. We need a more diverse housing stock to attract the families and talent the city needs to stay vibrant.

Homelessness

As Chair of the City Council Committee on Public Health, Homelessness, and Recovery, I believe strongly in the dignity of every human being, and delivered my maiden speech on the importance of youth mental health services, because I think we start there. I've also worked extensively on workforce pipeline solutions, re-entry programs, and substance abuse and recovery services.

Supporting Low-Income People

As a teacher in the Boston Public Schools, I believe we have to start at the beginning: universal pre-K, adequate funding for our special education ESL students, both before-school and after-school programming. That puts young people on the road to success. For low-income families, we need to alleviate the cost of housing in Boston, ensure safe neighborhoods, and invest in workforce training and career pathway programs.

Immigration

We're a city of immigrants in a country of immigrants, and I think it's important we all recognize that we have more in common than not. I've worked extensively on language accessibility, which helps small business owners for whom English is not their first language. As stated previously, we also need to invest in our ESL students, whom the Boston Public Schools have failed for far too long.

DISTRICT ONE

There is one candidate on the ballot, running unopposed:

Gabriela Gigi Coleta (Present District City Councilor)

DISTRICT TWO

There is one candidate on the ballot, running unopposed:

Edward M. Flynn (Present District City Councilor, Veteran)

DISTRICT THREE

There is one candidate on the ballot, running unopposed:

Brian J. Worrell (Present District City Councilor)

DISTRICT FOUR

There are two candidates on the ballot:

Joel G. Richards

John M. Fitzgerald

JOEL RICHARDS

Candidate for District 4 Councilor



Housing

The affordable housing crisis is crushing all Boston residents, but this crisis falls hardest on our low-income sisters and brothers. As a city we must put our money where our mouth is and heavily invest in housing and rental programs. The city must buy empty and abandoned lots and develop them into affordable housing. We must also expand our current rental assistance programs while cracking down on predatory landlords that take advantage of low-income renters.

Homelessness

Through my work as a Pastor I have had the honor to work alongside women experiencing housing instability. I would continue to call on those women to ask for their words of advice and wisdom. I would also make time to frequently visit organizations like Rosie's place and women's based shelters and ask for their input.

Supporting Low-Income People

We are facing an affordability crisis in Boston that is crushing our low-income sisters and brothers. As one of the wealthiest cities in the world we need to use our city's funds to invest in expanding truly affordable housing, provide free fares for the T and buses, and uplift our food pantries and grocery stores that sell affordable groceries. Working people built and run this city, it is about time we invest back into them.

Immigration

I am the proud son of Jamaican immigrants, husband to a wife who is a Dominican immigrant, and teacher to classrooms who are majority immigrants. I see firsthand the challenges immigrants face and have actively fought to break down those barriers. Our immigrant neighbors deserve access to translation services across the city, to feel safe around city employees like our police, and to have healthcare facilities be a more welcoming space for them.

JOHN M. FITZGERALD

Candidate for District 4 Councilor



Housing

I will ensure the city prioritizes the development of new housing to meet the growing demand, especially multi-bedroom housing that we desperately need. In addition, I will push for investments in our first-time homebuyer programs. These programs offer the opportunity to first-time buyers, many of whom would not be able to purchase their first homes, the opportunity to do so by qualifying to make a below-average down payment upon purchase and lower their monthly mortgage rates.

Homelessness

It is our utmost priority to ensure that every individual, regardless of their housing situation, feels seen and heard. In addition to working to find these individuals the housing they need, I would be committed to engaging directly with them to ensure they are not only heard but also so we can develop a greater understanding of the issues they face and find the right solutions.

Supporting Low-Income People

I would push for affordable housing initiatives, utility assistance programs, and increase our investments in job training programs to give individuals the skills they need to succeed. Additionally, I am committed to fostering collaboration between community organizations, non-profits, and government agencies to maximize the impact of our efforts.

Immigration

In recent times, Massachusetts has been at the forefront of discussions regarding immigration policy. It is crucial that we address this issue with compassion, empathy, and a commitment to diversity. To achieve this goal, I will work tirelessly as your Boston City Councilor to implement policies that promote inclusivity and provide support for immigrants and their families.

DISTRICT FIVE

There are two candidates on the ballot:

Enrique Pepen

Jose A. Ruiz

JOSE A. RUIZ

Candidate for District 5 Councilor



Housing

The lack of affordable housing is one of the most pressing issues facing our city today. Residents struggle to pay rent, our families can't find or afford stable housing, and too many individuals are experiencing chronic homelessness. If elected, I will work to create better pathways to homeownership, relieve pressure in the market leading to higher rents, and build more affordable housing.

Homelessness

In addition to working to address the issues facing these individuals and their families, I would ensure that I am always available to them and listening to their concerns. If elected, these women would always have a seat at the table when it comes to shaping the policies that affect their everyday lives.

Supporting Low-Income People

I understand the challenges so many low-income individuals and families face in meeting their basic needs. If elected, I would take immediate action to address these issues and improve the financial well-being of residents by creating opportunities for upward mobility, working to build more affordable housing and offering financial assistance, and increasing our investments in job training programs.

Immigration

As an immigrant myself who came to this country with my mother as a young child, this is an issues I am passionate about. As a City, I firmly believe that our diversity is our strength, enriching our neighborhoods with different perspectives, talents and cultures. If elected, I pledge to fight for the rights of immigrants on the City Council. I know that together, we can work to build a city where every voice is heard and every individual feels valued.

DISTRICT SIX

There are two candidates on the ballot:

William A. King

Benjamin Jacob Weber

WILLIAM A. KING

Candidate for District 6 Councilor



Housing

The high cost of housing in Boston is a significant concern for many residents. I am committed to finding solutions to make it easier for people in our city to find and stay in safe, affordable, and secure housing. As a city, we must focus on implementing policies that increase the housing supply, reduce barriers to building new homes, and incentivize developers to build more affordable units.

Homelessness

I would work to ensure that homeless women and families have the chance to share their experiences, concerns, and suggestions. By actively listening to their stories, we can gain valuable insights into their needs and develop policies that address them effectively.

Supporting Low-Income People

As a Boston City Council Councilor, I will be committed to working tirelessly towards creating policies that help those residents who are struggling with poverty across our city and state. If elected, I would increase investments in job training programs, ensure we are dealing with issues of food insecurity, lower the cost of public transportation for residents, and more.

Immigration

First and foremost, I believe that diversity is our strength. Massachusetts has always been a shining example of cultural richness, and it's crucial that we continue to celebrate and embrace this diversity. If elected, I would always be committed to working tirelessly to foster an environment where all immigrants feel valued, supported, and empowered.

BENJAMIN JACOB WEBER

Candidate for District 6 Councilor



Housing

We have to do more to ensure that landlords are not discriminating against those with housing vouchers, which is not legal but does happen. Additionally, we need important protections like rent stabilization which caps the amount rent can be increased year to year. Additionally, we have to build housing that is truly affordable. 60% of the AMI is 84,000 for a family of four which is above what many families in District 6 make.

Homelessness

Coordination with groups such as Rosie's Place, Pine Street Inn, and others is critical to ensure I am not just hearing the voices of the most engaged. I sat down to speak with Bay Cove Human Services and I would actively solicit feedback and input from organizations like that. I plan to be intentional in my efforts to make my office a place anyone can turn to, and that involves going directly to people rather than waiting for them to come to me.

Supporting Low-Income People

As a workers rights attorney, my job has been to protect worker's wages and ensure they are receiving all of the protections they deserve. I would do more to protect low wage workers and ensure they have knowledge of what legal recourse they have when their employer steals wages or doesn't pay OT. Additionally, I support expanding the city housing voucher program so we can get more people rental assistance.

Immigration

My wife runs the International Institute of New England, which helps find housing for newly arrived refugees. We need to do more grant writing to access funds that are available, make the CNA exam available in Haitian creole so they can find work and build a life here, and generally fast track the work permit process so that people have an opportunity to become part of the community.

DISTRICT SEVEN

There are two candidates on the ballot:

Althea Garrison (Former City Councilor-At-Large, Former State Representative)

Tania Fernandes Anderson (Present District City Councilor)

ALTHEA GARRISON

Candidate for District 7 Councilor



Housing

I would propose that the City of Boston find new and innovative ways to offer greater incentives to developers to provide more affordable housing units in the City.

Homelessness

I am willing to meet with all people facing homelessness or their advocates to hear from them first hand what would help them the most. Listening to exactly what they need to help them overcome homelessness and help them feel safe and cared for is the first step in tackling this issue.

Supporting Low-Income People

Being paid a fair and living wage is the first step to help low income folks have a chance at a better life. And secondly having quality jobs be available to low income people will help improve their quality of life.

Immigration

Massachusetts is already one of the leaders in accepting immigrants into our communities. The State of Massachusetts needs to provide opportunities for immigrants to work to improve their financial well-being and safety.

DISTRICT EIGHT

There are two candidates on the ballot:

Montez D. Haywood

Sharon E. Durkan (Present District Councilor)

DISTRICT NINE

There are two candidates on the ballot:

Liz A. Breadon (Present District City Councilor)

Jacob Deblecourt

JACOB DEBLECOURT

Candidate for District 9 Councilor



Housing

As a renter, I know what it is like to worry about making my ends meet at the end of every month. That is why, as City Councilor, I am going to advocate for a local option for rent control to ensure that as many people as possible can rely on rent stabilization. I will also advocate for zoning reform to require more income restricted housing to be built across Boston.

Homelessness

The Council recently passed an ordinance that makes it easier for the City to do encampment sweeps. I oppose this measure because encampment sweeps have been proven to push people further away from accessing necessary care and services. That is why, as Councilor, I will advocate for a Homeless Bill of Rights, to guarantee that we are treating our unhoused friends and neighbors with the respect they deserve.

Supporting Low-Income People

This is the second year that my landlord has increased my rent, and my family has started going to the food bank in order to cover some basic food needs. I know all too well just how hard it is to make your ends meet in Boston nowadays. That is why I have a comprehensive housing plan to create more income-restricted housing, more affordable rental and homeownership units, and expand access to reduced transit fares.

Immigration

I support expanding the Boston Trust Act to ensure that we are doing everything to protect undocumented residents. When I worked as the Director of Public Policy and Communication for Boston City Councilor Julia Mejia, I coordinated with advocates from across Boston to update the Trust Act to better reflect the needs of undocumented immigrants in Boston. As Councilor, I will continue that work by partnering with advocates throughout the district and Boston at-large.



***“Community and democracy must work hand in hand,
otherwise we have neither.”***

-Kip Tiernan

Founded in 1974 by Kip Tiernan, Rosie's Place was the first drop in and emergency shelter for women in the United States. Rosie's Place is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment to help poor and homeless women maintain their dignity, seek opportunity, and find security in their lives.

The Public Policy department works to seek social justice on behalf of Rosie's Place guests. We work to achieve this goal through direct lobbying, coalition building and by empowering guests to be actively involved in civic life.

889 Harrison Avenue, Boston, MA 02118

617.442.9322

rosiesplace.org

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MY POLLING LOCATION IS:

I WILL VOTE AT (time):
