

# Candidates field questions from *Press*, public during forum

By Phil Zahodiakin

Last night, the *Jamestown Press* hosted a forum for Town Council and School Committee hopefuls at the Jamestown Philomenian Library. Moderated by Publisher Jeff McDonough, the two-hour Q&A included some lively give-and-take between the candidates and the public.

The seven council candidates include Robert Bowen, William Murphy, Michael Schnack, Michael Smith, Robert Sutton, Michael White and Ellen Winsor. The school committee candidates are Julia Held, Catherine Kaiser, Dana Long (who was unable to

attend the forum) and Sav Rebecchi.

Instead of posing the same question to each of the candidates, McDonough mixed it up with different inquiries to candidates in the two groups. A selection of the prepared questions, along with responses from the council candidates to whom the questions were directed, follows:

*What is your opinion about funding major town water projects. Who should pay? Is it an island-wide tax burden or a cost only to those in the water district?*

White said, "It's difficult to expect people who aren't on the system to pay," adding that he is "leaning towards not making [unconnected] people pay." Murphy acknowledged the expenses of people maintaining their own systems, and suggested allowing the water-system users to weigh in with a vote on the issue.

*Recently, some residents have questioned the need for the fire horn, given that the volunteers all carry personal pagers. Do you believe the horn is vital to the fire department's operation or has it become obsolete?*

Murphy noted that there are

different safety standards for exposure to loud noise, and said he needs to see more data. He added, however, that he and his wife both have fire department and emergency medical-service pagers, and "they don't always work - or one will and the other won't." He also said, "The council can't be asked to tell the fire department to shut off the horn." White noted that the council will hold a workshop on the horn next Thursday, adding that, "Once we have more information, we'll be in a position to make a decision."

*How do you envision the fu-*

*ture of Ft. Getty?*

Schnack said that Ft. Getty "has been neglected for years," adding that the Master Plan "could be implemented in phases," and that the "rates could be raised if necessary" to fund the work. Sutton said, "I am supportive of Ft. Getty as an RV campground. We should put in a new restroom and implement the Master Plan."

*Do you support the wind turbine initiative and is the location of the turbine important to you?*

Smith said he is "impressed by the ability of Portsmouth to generate energy from their turbine," adding that "we should be going in that direction as long as we're mindful of costs," and that he would prefer a location "closer to the grid," like Taylor Point - although, he added, "there are other possible locations that haven't been looked at." Murphy also expressed his support for wind energy.

*What actions should the town take to make up for the losses [from state-aid cutbacks]?*

Winsor replied, "I don't know if I would increase taxes. We could look at reducing less-important services, increasing efficiencies and saving some money in contract negotiations." Smith said, "The 60% of our tax dollars that go to schools should keep going to schools. The highest cost in that other 40% is personnel, and we have to look at that. The last option would be raising taxes."

Some of the prepared questions to the School Committee candidates included the follow-

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## ELECT BOB BOWEN



## TOWN COUNCIL

Managing the island over the next few years will present some challenges. We should try looking outside the box for ways to maintain our tax rate at a sustainable level.

We need to continue enhancing public access to the water and closely evaluate the best way for the town to utilize the old highway barn, to benefit the town.

We need to continue our trend of land preservation with the recently acquired lots in the Jamestown Shores by finding a permanent steward to save them from development and we need to address affordable housing in the village.

We should be thinking broadly about Ft. Getty as open space for public recreation. For example, development of a sailing center might better be presented as the development of a center for marine recreation and education, with sailing as a component.

Let's not limit our vision, but think broadly and long term about what is best for our town.

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## VOTE FOR EXPERIENCE AND SERVICE



## Vote for Bill Murphy November 3

Bill has been a member of the Town Council and our State Representative. He has budget experience in the U.S. Army on a multi-billion dollar acquisition program, a member of the finance committee for East Bay Community Action Program overseeing a multi-million dollar budget, and owned three small businesses. He enlisted in the military and retired as a Major in 1994.

Bill is dedicated to maintaining our island's rural atmosphere, protecting the environment and maintaining the financial well being of the town's budget. He has always done what was right for the island as a whole.

Service to the community means many things but most of all it means doing whatever you can to improve the quality of life of those around you. Bill has volunteered in numerous community organizations, such as, Jamestown Fire Department, Emergency Medical Services, Jamestown Lions Club, St. Mark Knights of Columbus, and helped other organizations when called upon.

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## MISSING



**Pumba** has been missing from Top of The Mark area since October 8, 2009. Small to medium size Grey cat. Solid grey on back - lighter grey stripes on neck and spotted stomach. If found, please call **423-0853**

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