

★ KINSTON ★

★ ELECTION ★

FOR YOUR MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

3 GOOD REASONS FOR YOU TO VOTE FOR WHO WILL BE THE CITY'S NEXT MAYOR AND COUNCIL MEMBERS:

- 1. Your one vote can make a big difference in who wins a local election.**
How just one person voted – or didn't vote – determined the winners in elections in 39 North Carolina cities in 2019. Your vote matters!
- 2. The City Council makes decisions that affect nearly every part of your life –**
affordable housing, police conduct, new jobs, street repair, flood control, zoning for a new grocery store (or landfill). But you decide who wins!
- 3. Listen to what other voters say about why they're voting . . .**



"... too many of my ancestors died for me not to be using my right to vote."
- Kristen Marion



"... I want someone in city hall fighting for issues important to our community."
- Robert Dawkins



"... city elections can be very close, so my one vote could have a big impact."
- Angelica Robles



"... it's not just about who's president. Who runs local government also affects me."
- Austin Padilla



"... not voting would be giving my power away; we must use every tool we have to be heard."
- Rena McNeil

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VOTE IN KINSTON'S ELECTION

Election Day is November 2

Early Voting is Oct. 14-Oct. 30

See back page for tips for voting

Democracy North Carolina
Not affiliated with
any party or candidate
3000 Aerial Center Parkway #160
Morrisville, NC 27560

Pick the Winners!

Voters who are residents inside Kinston’s city limits may vote for 1 candidate for Mayor and up to 2 candidates for City Council. The candidate for Mayor and 2 candidates for City Council with the most votes will win and serve for 4 years. Three other Council members will be elected in 2023.

The Mayor presides at City Council meetings. The Mayor and the other Council members appoint the City Manager, adopt ordinances, and oversee the functions listed in the box below.

CANDIDATES FOR MAYOR

DON HARDY

Background: Mayor of Kinston (since 2017), chair of the NC Mayors Association, and board member of the NC League of Municipalities and National League of Cities. I’ve used these positions to advocate successfully for Kinston, including for more COVID-19 vaccines and testing, food assistance, and funds under the American Rescue Plan.



My top 2 or 3 priorities: My major focus is on improving our infrastructure – water and sewers systems, roads, Internet service – and also mitigating against flood damage. I will continue to be an effective advocate for Kinston with officials in Raleigh and Washington on these issues and for workforce training, community development and clean energy.

ZAC HOLCOMB

Background: I’m CEO of an additive manufacturing company supplying “Made in USA” products right here in Kinston. Another of the three businesses I have launched involved renovating the old Parrott’s General Store. I have a history of following my vision and completing large-scale projects that are generally seen as initially impossible.



My top 2 or 3 priorities: My priorities as Mayor of Kinston are to improve infrastructure and education. We need our citizens to be mentally prepared for the new tech jobs coming to our region, and we need our infrastructure to be modernized to accommodate the influx of new businesses and residents coming to our town.

FELICIA N. SOLOMON

Background: I have served our community selflessly for more than 20 years as an educator and city councilwoman (since 2015). I’m experienced with: bringing people together from diverse backgrounds to reach common goals; overseeing budgets for fiscal responsibility; and creating spaces and opportunities to meet the needs of others.



My top 2 or 3 priorities: 1. In an effort to provide a measure of relief to citizens, reducing property taxes is a major priority. Analyzing current revenue structures. Seeking and creating new revenue streams with minimal impact to citizens. 2. Continued economic and infrastructural growth (including broadband). 3. Building bridges within the community.

JEFFERY HIRAM WARREN

Background: I am a native of Kinston and know the people of this city very well. I am an independent contractor and have worked throughout Kinston. I know the conditions of our city and how they can be improved.



My top 2 or 3 priorities: First, Kinston’s infrastructure urgently needs attention. I will immediately focus on improving road conditions and curbside appearance; this will benefit all residents as well as attract new industry. Second, we need lower property taxes, especially to help our elderly homeowners. Third, we need to improve our school system.

CANDIDATES FOR CITY COUNCIL

LES LIPFORD

Background: I served 22 years in the military. I also hold a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and a Masters degree in business administration.

My top 2 or 3 priorities: Two top priorities are town hall meetings and keeping our citizens informed.



What is your view about creating a Citizen Review Board for the Kinston Police Department and its role in selecting the Police Chief? I think a citizen review board would be a great asset to have.

What policies should the city pursue to improve the affordability of housing? The city should pursue policies that would keep it simple. Policies that will help our citizens quickly.

MICHAEL R. MARTIN

Background: I was born in Kinston, attended ECU and have lived my entire life in eastern NC. I’m a sales representative at Massey Toyota, an elder of the First Presbyterian Church, and a former board member of Kinston Crime Stoppers and Flynn Home.



MICHAEL MARTIN CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

WHAT DOES THE CITY COUNCIL DO?

The Mayor and the five other Kinston City Council members make a wide range of decisions affecting your life. They hire and supervise the City Manager, who hires the police chief and other department heads, who all report to the Manager. The Council sets policies and priorities and oversees the many functions of local government, including:

- The Police & Fire Departments
- Economic & Community Development
- Water, Sewer & Flood Mitigation
- Tax Rates & the City Budget
- Zoning & Building Code Enforcement
- Affordable Housing
- Recreation, Parks & Arts Programs
- Streets, Sidewalks & Road Repair

THIS 2021 VOTER GUIDE FOR KINSTON is produced by Democracy NC, Common Cause and Voting Matters Inc., which are not affiliated with any party or candidate.

This Guide provides candidates’ responses to questions and vital information about the voting process. Candidates had word limits for responses; the complete questions and responses are at [NCVoterGuide.org](https://www.ncvoterguide.org). A digital edition of this Guide is available at [NCVoter.org/voter-guides](https://www.ncvoterguide.org/voter-guides).

For questions about voting, call the County Board of Elections at 252-523-0636 or the Hotline: 888-687-8683. Or use the websites in the Resources box on the next page.

CANDIDATES FOR CITY COUNCIL *continued*

My top 2 or 3 priorities: First, work with developers to create more affordable housing for young professionals. Second, address crime and safety and improve communications between the underserved and law enforcement about their needs and duties. Third, the pandemic has demonstrated that everyone needs access to quality internet service, possibly as a public service.

JAMES T. SPARKS JR.

Background: Desert Storm 1990 Gulf Veteran USMC, Educator of NC, Family Advocate, Volunteer with local Salvation Army (6yrs), Ameri Corps (2yrs), Kinston Recreation Associate (22yrs) & a Community Activist.



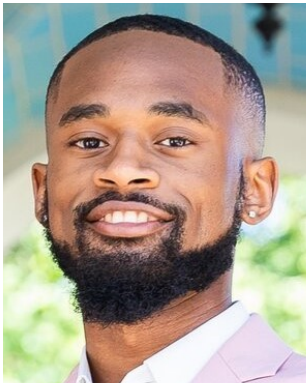
My top 2 or 3 priorities: Infrastructure, Transparency with Law enforcement & the Community

What is your view about creating a Citizen Review Board for the Kinston Police Department and its role in selecting the Police Chief? There should be a Citizen Review Board and transparency within the community collaborating with the City Council members in selecting the next Police Chief.

What policies should the city pursue to improve the affordability of housing? Implementing grants from the Federal & State government provide free seminars for the underprivileged individuals to assist them in pursuit of affordable housing.

CHRIS J. SUGGS

Background: Commissioner, Governor’s Crime Commission; CEO, Kinston Teens; UNC Senior Class President with Degrees in Political Science & Religious Studies; Previous work with: Nickelodeon, Facebook, Teen Vogue Magazine, BET, and First Lady Michelle Obama.



My top 2 or 3 priorities: My top two priorities are Community & Economic Development. Kinston has been ranked as the most economically distressed community in the state, yet we have significant potential in our downtown, East Kinston, and Global TransPark to turn that around.

What is your view about creating a Citizen Review Board for the Kinston Police Department and its role in selecting the Police Chief? I am in full support of a Citizen Review Board. CRBs help increase trust and

Resources for Voters

[NCVoter.org](#) - how to register, check your registration, vote by mail, locate a polling place, find a Hotline for questions.

[NCSBE.gov](#) - NC State Board of Elections website with same info as above; the State Board’s Hotline is 866-522-4723.

[Vote411.org](#) - League of Women Voters resource with candidate profiles in many cities, look up your polling place, etc.

[NCVoterGuide.org](#) - Local voter guides and loads of information about voting.

transparency in public safety, which are critical to improve our City. The voices of our citizens must be reflected in the hiring process for our next Police Chief.

What policies should the city pursue to improve the affordability of housing? - Blight reduction & holding absentee property owners accountable; - Supporting the creation of a tenant’s association and making tenants aware of their rights; - Utilizing public & private investment to create energy efficient affordable housing.

Website: ChrisJSuggs.com

ROBERT A. SWINSON IV

Background: Currently have served 16 years on Kinston City Council



My top 2 or 3 priorities: 1. Jobs 2. Housing

What is your view about creating a Citizen Review Board for the Kinston Police Department and its role in selecting the Police Chief? We have talked to a group about a community citizen review board, however nothing has been put in place yet.

What policies should the city pursue to improve the affordability of housing? We as a city just need to be open minded about housing here in Kinston.

GWENDOLYN WOODS

Background: I am a therapeutic parent for 21 years helping families being a bridge for them and just finished filming in my first movie Freedom of North Carolina that will go into the theaters on October 9, 2021.



My top 2 or 3 priorities: Bring about hope, and a new outlook on the long awaited change. When I'm elected... I will strive with all that is within my power to fulfill my purpose of making a long lasting difference in the surrounding communities.

What is your view about creating a Citizen Review Board for the Kinston Police Department and its role in selecting the Police Chief? When we say budget, we're handing the citizen money always remember when better is possible good is not enough this would produce Transparency, integrity, and accountability. And this is owed to the citizens and the police department as well.

What policies should the city pursue to improve the affordability of housing? Take a good look at the entire community as a whole. Policies that would include the whole city insight, and vision for the community as a whole. I will make this promise I will do my HOMEWORK. When I win We Win. WITH GWEN WILL WIN.

Facebook: Gwendolyn Woods for City Council (We Win With Gwen)

WHERE TO VOTE ON ELECTION DAY		
Vote at the assigned polling place for <u>your</u> precinct on Election Day, Nov. 2; voters in several precincts are assigned to vote at another place for 2021. See list <u>and note</u> below. If you don’t know your precinct, look it up at demnc.co/poll or call the Elections Board at 252-523-0636.		
PRECINCT	POLLING PLACE BUILDING	POLLING PLACE ADDRESS
KINSTON-1	GEORGIA K BATTLE REC CENTER	401 LINCOLN ST, KINSTON 28501
KINSTON-2	GORDON STREET CHRISTIAN CHURCH	118 GORDON ST, KINSTON 28501
KINSTON-3	FAIRFIELD RECREATION CENTER	850 GREENBRIAR RD, KINSTON 28501
KINSTON-4	TANGLEWOOD CHURCH OF GOD	2103 ROUSE RD, KINSTON 28504
KINSTON-5	SPILMAN BAPTIST CHURCH	1900 QUEENS RD, KINSTON 28501
KINSTON-6	TEACHERS MEMORIAL SCHOOL GYM	500 MARCELLA DR, KINSTON 28501
KINSTON-7	SAINT PETERS CHURCH	602 J P HARRISON BLVD, KINSTON 28501
KINSTON-8	HOLLOWAY RECREATION CENTER	100 MYRTLE AVE, KINSTON 28501
KINSTON-9	FIRST PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS CHURCH	711 PHILLIPS RD, KINSTON 28504
NOTE: Neuse Precinct and Southwest Precinct voters go to the polling place for Kinston-1; Falling Creek Precinct voters go to Kinston-4’s poll; Vance Precinct voters go to Kinston-6’s poll		



***"When we all vote, we determine our future."
- Michelle Obama***

Have Your Say!

The ballot box is the one place where we are all equal: *One person, One vote.* Your vote is a powerful way to express yourself. Vote in every election because your future matters!

3 WAYS TO VOTE

1. DURING EARLY VOTING

Kinston voters may vote early at any of the three Early Voting sites in Lenoir County; see their addresses and hours listed below. Saturday and evening hours are offered. Voting early is especially good if you have moved or have not voted in several years because your registration may need to be updated.

You can update a registration or register as a new voter during Early Voting by using **same-day registration**. Show the poll worker one of these with your name and current address: a utility bill, a bank or payroll statement, or any document from a government agency; or your NC driver's license. The document may be a digital image on your cell-phone. Students living on campus may show their campus ID and the name of the dorm where they live.

2. ON ELECTION DAY, AT YOUR PRECINCT

Election Day is Tuesday, November 2, 2021. On Election Day, go to your precinct's assigned polling place between 6:30 am and 7:30 pm. See the list on the previous page to find your poll. If you're in line by 7:30 pm, you will be able to vote. If you go to the wrong polling place in Kinston and don't have time to go to the correct poll, ask to use a *provisional ballot*. If you are properly registered, it will count.

3. MAIL-IN ABSENTEE VOTING

Any registered voter may vote by mail. First, submit a request for the absentee ballot, either by using the online form at demnc.co/mail or by completing and returning a paper form so it arrives at the board of elections at least 7 days before Election Day. The paper form is at demnc.co/request. Vote the ballot sent to you in the presence of two witnesses or a notary. Fill out and sign the envelope sent to you with the ballot and return to the elections office by Election Day at 5 pm. See demnc.co/mail for details. Follow the directions carefully.

7 TIPS FOR VOTING

1. **No photo ID** is needed to vote in 2021. The poll worker will ask you to state your name and address and sign in.
2. If you are not registered to vote or have moved, **register at your current address at least 25 days before the election**. See demnc.co/reg to register to vote online or to download a registration form. If you miss that deadline, you can use **same-day registration** to register and vote during Early Voting (but not on Election Day) – see #1 at left under "3 Ways To Vote" for how to use same-day registration.
3. **Newly registered voters** may need to show a form of ID if there was a problem verifying their registration; they will need to show one of the non-photo IDs listed in #1 at left or any photo ID.
4. Any voter may **get help inside the poll** from a near family member (not a cousin). Voters with a disability (including reading difficulty) may get help from anyone except their employer or union agent. Voters with a physical, mental or medical disability may vote in a vehicle at the polling location's curb ("curbside voting").
5. You don't lose your right to vote if you have an **outstanding warrant, traffic ticket, bankruptcy, civil fine, or misdemeanor**. No elections official will ask you about outstanding fines, tickets, etc.
6. You may **take a list of your choices** inside the polling place to help you remember, but do not show the list to others or leave it. You may view a list on your cellphone but don't use the phone as a **camera**; taking pictures is prohibited inside the poll.
7. If you mark the **wrong choice by mistake**, ask the elections official for a new ballot to replace a "spoiled" one.

**Questions? Call 888-OUR-VOTE or 252-523-0636
or visit NCVoter.org**

Where to Vote Early, Oct. 14–Oct. 30

Take advantage of weekday and weekend hours to vote early. It may rain on Election Day! You may use any of these 3 Early Voting sites. Questions? Call the Board of Elections at 252-523-0636.

TEACHERS MEMORIAL SCHOOL GYM - 500 Marcella Drive, Kinston. Open weekdays (Mon.-Fri.), Oct. 14-Oct. 29, 10 am-7 pm; and also open three Saturdays, Oct. 16 and Oct. 23, 8:30 am-3 pm & Oct. 30, 8 am-3 pm.

FAIRFIELD RECREATION CENTER - 850 Greenbriar Road, Kinston. Open weekdays (Mon.-Fri.), Oct. 14-Oct. 29, 8:30 am-5 pm; and also open three Saturdays, Oct. 16 and Oct. 23, 8:30 am-3 pm & Oct. 30, 8 am-3 pm.

LAGRANGE FRINK ALUMNI CULTURE CENTER - 5766 Aldridge Store Road, LaGrange. Open weekdays (Mon.-Fri.), Oct. 14-Oct. 29, 10 am-7 pm; and also open three Saturdays, Oct. 16 and Oct. 23, 8:30 am-3 pm & Oct. 30, 8 am-3 pm.