



How Wilton Works

Frequently Asked Questions

What are Wilton's commissions and boards, and what do they do?

The Town of Wilton [website](#)ⁱ has a vast trove of detailed information about each of the commissions and boards, including descriptions of their scope and mandate; calendars of upcoming meetings and information on how residents can participate and/or submit testimony; the agendas and minutes for all meetings; and contact information of all current board and commission members.

As well, the Wilton League of Women Voters, the Wilton Library, and GOOD Morning Wilton co-sponsored an overview of *How Wilton Works* in April 2022, in which the chairs of the Board of Selectpersons, the Board of Education, the Board of Finance, and Planning + Zoning each presented an overview of the scope and mandate of their respective boards as well as some of their current key initiatives. Both the materials they presented and a recording of that session is available [here](#)ⁱⁱ.

What's the difference between getting onto a commission vs. getting onto a board?

Generally, Wilton's board seats are elected positions, while commission positions are made via a process of nomination / appointment by the Board of Selectmen. (Somewhat confusingly, Planning and Zoning is an elected body but uses the term "commission.") The Wilton Board of Selectpersons also appoints six of the 24 members of the Wilton Library's board of trustees.

What kind of qualifications and experience are necessary in order to serve on a commission or board?

This really varies, depending on the mission of the board or commission and the existing skill set of the current members. Some of the appointed commissions, such as the Building Inspectors Board of Appeals, look for specific credentials or experience in specific subject matter as a qualification for appointment. Other commissions seek to balance the credentials, experience, gender and other backgrounds of the members.

For the elected boards, candidates obviously need to convince Wilton voters that they're right for the job. Often this means serving on a commission first to gain experience in how the town works, as well as getting visibility among constituents, before running for elected office.

If I'm interested in serving on a commission, how do I know what positions are open?

The Town of Wilton maintains a register of open commission positions [here](#)ⁱⁱⁱ. This information is updated / available on an ongoing basis so that link remains accurate.

If I'm interested in serving on a commission, how do I go about getting appointed?

There are two routes to consideration for an appointed position:

- an interested resident can be nominated by either of the two major party committees; or
- the resident can self-nominate directly to the Board of Selectmen by receiving and submitting 25 signatures, verified by the Registrar of Voters, in support of the appointment.

The application for either town party nomination or self-nomination to a commission is available from the Town of Wilton website [here](#)^{iv}. Whichever way the interested Wilton resident is nominated, the Board of Selectmen then makes the ultimate appointment decision.

If I'm interested in serving on an elected municipal board, how do I know what positions are open?

Depends on both timing and circumstances, including:

- Which seats are at **end-of-term**: Municipal elections are held every **two** years in odd-numbered years; while BoS, BoE, BoF, and P&Z all have staggered **four** year terms; so the first part of the answer is to count which seats are up for re-election. (The easiest place to start figuring this out is generally to look at the prior municipal cycle's ballot. The CT Secretary of State makes the ballots of prior years' elections available [here](#)^v.)
- Then, there may be **partial term seats** open, if an off-cycle vacancy has arisen on an elected board due to resignation or other circumstances.
- Finally, the State of Connecticut's **minority representation rules** can in some circumstances affect what candidates are eligible to be seated.

What are "minority representation rules" and how do they work?

Connecticut state law limits the maximum number of members (generally two-thirds of the total number of board seats) from the same political party on most state and local boards and commissions. This statute **often** affects how many candidates the major party committees choose to endorse, and occasionally **can** affect who may be seated following the results of an election. Further information about minority representation rules can be found [here](#)^{vi}.

If I'm interested in serving on an elected municipal board, how do I get on the ballot?

Most candidates for Wilton municipal boards get onto the ballot by obtaining the endorsement of one of the two major party town committees.

What if I'm unaffiliated or third party? Can I still run for a Wilton municipal board?

Absolutely. Unaffiliated and third party candidates wishing to serve on a Wilton commission or elected board have three basic routes:

1. Seek endorsement from one of the major parties as an unaffiliated or third party candidate; OR
2. Seek ballot access via signature petition process with the CT Secretary of State (the Secretary of State has published FAQ about this process [here](#)^{vii} ; and a generic nomination application is available [here](#)^{viii} -- the Secretary of State prepares a particular petition application for each upcoming election which is made available during the eligibility window); OR
3. Seek qualified status as an eligible write-in candidate (the CT Secretary of State prepares a particular write-in application for each upcoming election which is made available during the eligibility window; a sample of what it looks like is available [here](#)^{ix}).

The signature petition process requires that candidates obtain verified signatures equal to 1% of the votes cast at the most recent election for the office being sought by the candidate, or 7,500 signatures, whichever is less. Signature collection may begin in January of the year the election will be held.

For further information on ballot access via the signature or write-in procedures, contact Wilton Town Clerk Lori Kaback at (203) 563-0106.

ⁱ <https://www.wiltonct.org/contacts-directory>

ⁱⁱ <https://goodmorningwilton.com/miss-how-wilton-works-live-presentation-watch-the-video-here/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.wiltonct.org/home/pages/volunteer>

^{iv} <https://www.wiltonct.org/sites/g/files/vyhliif4046/f/uploads/20200909appformsbdcommfillable.pdf>

^v <https://portal.ct.gov/SOTS/Election-Services/Town-Ballots/Ballots>

^{vi} <https://www.cga.ct.gov/2017/rpt/pdf/2017-r-0344.pdf>

^{vii} <https://portal.ct.gov/->

/media/SOTS/ElectionServices/Nominating_Petitions_Info/2020/Frequently_asked_questions_nominating_petition.pdf

^{viii} https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SOTS/ElectionServices/Nominating_Petitions_Info/2022/ED-601-Rev-2022.pdf

^{ix} <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SOTS/ElectionServices/Write-In-Candidacy/Write-In-Application-May-2023-Municipal-Election.pdf>