

# Sonoma County 2016 Election Guide

Firstly: I created this on my own, primarily for my own use and the use of friends and family who share similar political perspectives. This has not been endorsed by any of the candidates or parties within, and is only representative of my view on a select few positions.

That said, I made sure to do my research. I know how hard it is for people to know what to vote for, and who to vote for. The political process is not a place where clarity is frequently made available, and I know plenty of people who would rather simply opt out of the process altogether than risk voting in the wrong direction. I also know plenty of people who might simply vote for friends because of the same lack of trust in the system. These are dangerous roads to take, as they lead us away from a clear understanding of the political world that directly impacts our lives - and the lives of our fellow citizens. However, I also know that many people dislike simply having opinions thrown about by third parties. With that in mind I've done my best to keep the language here neutral, while still focusing on support of the areas that matter most to me personally. I have also included numerous links to direct, first-hand sources - as well as sources that offer detailed reviews of their positions (and their own links to first-hand sources). I have read through all of this in my attempt to piece this massive puzzle together, and I hope sincerely that it provides others with - at the very least - a place to start when venturing out into the political landscape.

In Solidarity,

~Odin H. Halvorson

## Sonoma County Supervisor: Noreen Evans

I've spent a significant amount of time comparing the qualifications and records of the two primary candidates for the 2016 election, and between Noreen Evans and Lynda Hopkins, I've come down on the side of Noreen Evans. This is not because because of who supports Lynda's bid for the position of Sonoma County Supervisor - though that is a point to take note of. I do not believe that Lynda is a horrible person, or a one-percenter working to undermine the liberal political center of the county.

I realized that I would be unable to vote for her because she lacks a cohesive, and widespread enough plan, to guarantee that the issues facing Sonoma County are handled with an effective and decisive hand. We need a candidate who is determined to stand up to large business interest - and who has the experience to do so. We need someone who strives to tackle issues including and beyond the pension issues faced by our county, and has a campaign built upon affordable housing in concert with a decided commitment to the limitation of our local urban sprawl.

In short, I'm not voting for Lynda because Noreen Evans already has a certified track record of fighting for the things that are important to our county. She is the candidate that has a solid and transparent plan for solving the budget crisis in the county. To solve this crisis Evans plans to focus 10% of tax income from medical cannabis sales (as well as 10% of tax income for recreational cannabis if voters in CA pass the

Adult Use of Marijuana Act), an intelligent move that mirrors activity in Colorado and other States that have adopted positive cannabis legislation.

Evans also supports rent control and the limiting of sprawl development - and yet at the same time she strongly supports the speedy development of affordable housing in the region, partly by ensuring that all new housing developments include mixed-in affordable housing units. And, as support for county workers, she wants to invest in workforce housing.

A major factor of her campaign rests upon the previously mentioned cannabis laws already enacted, as well as those that may be enacted in the coming election, and use the taxes available from these sales to help fund housing, road work and infrastructure projects, and the pension issues mentioned earlier. This practical support of laws that can generate a large amount of county revenue are positive in every way, and show a pragmatic ability that remains in keeping with a core liberal identity.

Finally, Noreen Evans has publicly thrown her support behind the upcoming "Measure M" ban on GMOs. This is not a repeat of the 2005 attempt to ban GMOs, which was based on pseudoscience and irrationalism, rather Measure M exists to preserve the integrity of the Sonoma County small farm. Small, organic farms in Sonoma County generate a significant amount of revenue - much of which stays within the local economy. With the global financial situation still on unstable ground, it is more important than ever to ensure that our local economy remains strong. Large farms push out family farmers, and operate under ethically-ambiguous agendas. Lynda Hopkins, to her credit, also supports Measure M (she is herself an organic farmer). Yet, again we need to be pragmatic in considering who has the stronger track record of fighting for GMO bans. Noreen Evans has been a part of this fight for a long time, and we need someone with that level of expertise behind us if we want to keep our businesses local.

I do wish that Noreen spoke more openly and clearly about both the protection of the Russian River, and the defense of our coastline from development. The Russian River is facing serious environmental concerns that affect the whole county, and Lynda Hopkins has made this a central feature of her campaign. Lynda has also made the work of protecting the coastline from development a major pillar of her campaign, with special focus on keeping the beaches and parks accessible for everyone - without burdening potential visitors with massive day costs. Noreen has been less open and clear about these issues - though her general track record for defending the environment is superb. Again, it's a matter of experience. I hope that Lynda Hopkins continues to work, regardless of the outcome of this election, to defend our local environment and our coastline; I hope that she diligently continues to work for the securing of permanent protections against the destruction of our County's commons - but I believe that Noreen Evans is the best choice for making certain that developers are denied access to the pristine coastline that makes Sonoma County a true jewel in Northern California.

#### Helpful Links:

1. [Q&A with Noreen and Lynda](https://goo.gl/FGndOK) (https://goo.gl/FGndOK)
2. [Ballotpedia for Noreen Evans](https://goo.gl/WovrkV) (https://goo.gl/WovrkV)
3. [Noreen Evans profile for OWD - you can look at her Significant Authored Legislation here.](https://goo.gl/SAZUAp) (https://goo.gl/SAZUAp)
4. [Sonoma County Green Party \(Endorses Noreen Evans\)](http://sonomagreenparty.org/) (http://sonomagreenparty.org/)
5. [Sonoma County Democratic Party \(Official\): Endorses Noreen Evans.](https://goo.gl/vTCqFN) (https://goo.gl/vTCqFN)

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# Sebastopol City Council

As a resident of Sebastopol I am deeply disheartened with some of the recent developments in my town, including the building of a massive new CVS complex directly next to the downtown area. I believe that we need the strongest leadership possible to prevent the destruction of Sebastopol's identity, while encouraging growth in responsible ways that help maintain and further define that character.

To that end I strongly support Craig Litwin, who is a **write in candidate**. Craig may be a write in candidate, however he is far from inexperience with the rigors of the political life, having already served twice on the Sebastopol City Council in the early 2000's. He has significant endorsements, including Noreen Evans and Mike McGuire ( District 2 Senator). He also has support from previous Sebastopol Mayor Robert Jacob (who is also the owner of the Peace In Medicine cannabis dispensary in town). Litwin has used some questionable political tactics in the past, but he is also an incredibly experienced politician who has been vocal about his support for green initiatives, the creation of affordable housing, and even the boycott of the new CVS in downtown Sebastopol. **As a write in candidate his name will not appear on the ballot, however you can write his name in and support his bid.** I believe that he is the best first choice for the city council, and that with his input Sebastopol can continue to be a leader in the progressive community.

For the second of the two open council seats I fully support Jonathan Greenburg. Besides holding a long and meritorious career as an investigative journalist, Jonathan has consistently opposed corporate interests - nationally, and locally. He has experience in the national field, and will bring new ideas to the City Council, and will be a leader in the fight for the preservation and environmental stability of our town.

Notes on the other contenders:

While I think that both Michael and Nesya have good ideas and honest intentions, I do not believe that they are capable of fighting as hard as is necessary to keep Sebastopol vibrant and free of corporate interests. I am confident in the track record and public profiles of both Greenberg and Litwin, and believe that they are the best possible choices for the open council positions.

Helpful Link:

[A Youtube archive of a talk between all four Candidates at the Sebastopol Grange](http://y2u.be/mscL-QqKG-o)

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# Local Measures to Support?

**YES ON M:** This law bans the use of GMOs in our county. “Santa Cruz, Marin, Mendocino, Trinity, and Humboldt Counties have had similar measures to protect their local farms in place for up to 11 years with no costs to county or taxpayers. Their prohibitions are working as intended. Ours will too!” (<http://www.gmofreesonomacounty.com/>)

**YES ON K:** which will prevent urban sprawl and unnecessary development from damaging the fragile and unique environment of the county. (<http://www.keepcommunityseparators.com/>)

## Statewide Initiatives to Support:

You can read the vital information on all of these, including the PRO and CON options, by going to:

<http://voterguide.sos.ca.gov/en/propositions/>



- **YES on Prop 54:** [Legislature Legislation and Proceedings Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute](#)
- **YES on Prop 55:** [Tax Extension to Fund Education and Healthcare Initiative Constitutional Amendment](#)
- **YES on Prop 56:** [Cigarette Tax to Fund Healthcare, Tobacco Use Prevention, Research, and Law Enforcement Initiative Constitutional Amendment](#)
- **YES on Prop 57:** [Criminal Sentences Juvenile Criminal Proceedings and Sentencing Initiative Constitutional Amendment and Statute](#)
- **YES on Prop 58:** [English language education](#)
- **YES on Prop 59:** [Campaign finance: voter instruction](#)
- **YES on Prop 61:** [State Prescription Drug Purchases Pricing Standards Initiative Statute](#)
- **YES on Prop 62:** [Death Penalty Initiative Statute](#)
- **YES on Prop 64:** [Marijuana Legalization Initiative Statute](#)
- **YES on Prop 67:** [Referendum to Overturn Ban on Single-Use Plastic Bags](#)

## Statewide Initiatives to Oppose:

- **VOTE NO on Prop 51:** [School Bonds Funding for K-12 School and Community College Facilities Initiative Statutory Amendment](#)
- **VOTE NO on Prop 53:** [Revenue Bonds Statewide Voter Approval Initiative Constitutional Amendment](#)
- **VOTE NO on Prop 65:** [Ban on Single-Use Plastic Bags. Referendum](#)
- **VOTE NO on Prop 66:** [Death Penalty Procedures Initiative Statute](#)