

+

Long, Grant, Solomon for board

The field of candidates for the Bedford Central school board has never been stronger. There are four candidates seeking three seats: Erika Long, Jennifer Gerken, Suzanne Grant and Michael Solomon. Due to the vagaries of the system, in which candidates select the board position they are running for, only two of the races are contested. Incumbent Erika Long and newcomer Suzanne Grant are running unopposed. Jennifer Gerken and Michael Solomon, also newcomers, are competing for the seat that had been held by outgoing board member Paula Kumar.

While unopposed in this election, Erika Long has been an excellent board member, showing a great understanding of the issues and an ability to "play well with others." She is an articulate leader who can speak to topic whether it be finance, legislative or educational issues. Suzanne Grant, who will be filling the seat of board member Donna Marino, is well known to us from her involvement in a wide range of community issues. What is relevant here is her participation in the Mount Kisco Elementary School Association and the Bedford Central Budget Advisory Committee. The budget "respects what the voters ask for and is very reflective of what the community needs right now," Ms. Grant told *The Record-Review*. The district wants to maintain programs, "but they want to see some conservatism in the spending."

The contested race brings together two bright, energetic candidates. One, however, has an advantage. Michael Solomon served as a member of the governor's state property tax relief commission, going around the state hearing testimony from government officials, educational experts and the public. The Suozzi commission, named after former Nassau County Executive Tom Suozzi, was a groundbreaking attempt to confront the school funding/property tax logjam in Albany. Mr. Solomon, who is a financial services professional, supports the budget, but is dedicated to keeping property tax increases in the 1 to 2 percent range. He recognizes that the current rate increases are untenable, and that legislative action is needed. "Ultimately Bedford will be a place without great schools, or with great schools and ridiculously high property taxes," said Mr. Solomon in an interview. "That's where we have to focus our energies right now."

He gets it. We urge voters to bring him to the board, along with Ms. Grant and Ms. Long, on May 18.

The Bedford Pound Ridge
RECORD  **REVIEW**