



30 Broad Street – 30<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10004  
212-361-6350

[politics@nylcv.org](mailto:politics@nylcv.org) / [www.nylcv.org](http://www.nylcv.org)

## 2021 Environmental Questionnaire for Westchester Candidates

Thank you for taking the time to fill out the New York League of Conservation Voters Questionnaire.

To ensure your responses address the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please consult [NYLCV's 2021 Westchester Policy Agenda](#) when answering the questions.

The New York League of Conservation Voters is the only non-partisan, statewide environmental organization in New York that fights for clean water, clean air, renewable energy, and open space through political action. This questionnaire is designed to elicit your views regarding what environmental, public health, clean energy and transit, and environmental justice groups consider to be the most important issues of the day. Responses may inform NYLCV's educational and legislative programs and actions NYLCV takes in the election cycle.

Responses should be considered public. Although NYLCV may choose not to publicize the responses to every question, verbatim responses may be reproduced and distributed publicly. If so, your responses may be shortened, if necessary, but will not be edited in substantive ways. If you choose to refer us to a position paper or website, please indicate exactly what text you would like us to cite. For candidates choosing not to respond to the questionnaire, NYLCV will note as much in its public materials.

NYLCV and its partners in the environmental policy arena believe that New York's voters are determined to make the environment a voting issue this year. Candidate positions on issues such as protecting public health, building a clean energy future, and mitigating climate change will help voters decide how to cast their ballots this election cycle. This questionnaire is one of the primary ways the public will get this information.

Here are a few guidelines:

- Questionnaires are due **Friday, April 30, 2021**
- The completed questionnaire is mandatory for endorsement consideration and must be submitted via e-mail as a Microsoft Word file to: [politics@nylcv.org](mailto:politics@nylcv.org)
- Questions or extension requests may be directed to Joshua Klainberg ([jklainberg@nylcv.org](mailto:jklainberg@nylcv.org))
- After receipt of the completed questionnaire, candidates will be invited to participate in a formal interview with a local Chapter Board.
- General election endorsements will be made by the NYLCV State Board on July 29, 2021.

## CAMPAIGN CONTACT INFORMATION

Candidate name: Warren J Lucas

Office sought (& district number if applicable): Supervisor

Campaign e-mail: wjlucas@optonline.net

Campaign phone: 914 261 2636

Website: none

Facebook page: none

Twitter handle: none

Campaign manager's name and email: Currently it is mine, as above. No one is running against me/

Press Secretary's name and email:

Scheduler's name and email:

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Please share your accomplishments or experiences that indicate your commitment to advancing a pro-environment agenda. These experiences may be professional or personal.

I have been on the Town board for 31 years. I have been Supervisor since March 2009. I am running again unopposed. Here are a few of my accomplishments.

- I was on the Board of Energize NY <https://www.eicpace.org/eicopencpace>. I term limited out of the executive Board but the I am still involved. North Salem was the first Town in NYS to pass the needed resolutions for Pace Financing. Energize NY handles PACE Financing (energy improvement financing) throughout NYS. I hired and interview Susan Morth as Marketing manager and then CEO. We had many meetings with NYSERDA Chair John Rhodes and other NYSERDA and DPS when starting the corporation. I also worked closely with our legislators to get the PACE Legislation through Albany.
- I am on the Executive Board (since 2019) at Sustainable Westchester and I am their liaison to Westchester Power and its Community Choice Aggregation program and a variety of other energy saving programs in Westchester County.

- I am on the Executive Board and Treasurer of the East of Hudson Watershed Corporation <https://eohwc.org>. I helped create this corporation in 2011 which now works closely with the NYS DEC and NYC DEP. We have worked to get funding during that time of over \$50,000,000 - which works across 19 municipalities on water quality applying Phosphorus reduction solutions for stormwater. Working with our legislators we have filed to allow the corporation to expand into other water quality directions and just got funding via direct EOHWC line items in the 2021 State budget.

Things we are working on;

In 2019 NYLCV requested that I more vigorously pursue a Climate Smart Community status.

In January 2021, my Town Board has appointed a very aggressive 15 member CSC Board and our own Katherine Daniels, a Town Councilwoman, is our CSC Coordinator. That team is working aggressively on solar placement in our Town as well as the GHG status of all of our Town buildings and vehicles among other items.

GHG: The Town Board just passed a resolution last week, July 12th, committing to the GHG benchmarking of all of our buildings.

NY STRETCH BUILDING CODE TOWN LAW: The Town Board has discussed in our July 12th meeting going with the NY STRETCH Building Code for all new buildings and additions in Town. The Town Board is in 100% agreement, the building inspectors are also. We will have a public hearing and will be implementing and have the public law in place by the Fall of 2021 to have all new buildings in Town constructed to be more energy efficient.

EV HARGERS: Our plan was to install 14 EV chargers in our municipality in 2021.

However, there is a serious pricing issue with electric companies *demand meters* which I have raised and have discussed with the DPS personnel responsible for EV charging and NYSE&G CEO Carl Taylor. I have a July 30th meeting with Carl to go over the issues. The problem is that pricing is not *determinate* when someone plugs into the charger (you have no idea what your charge for that electricity is) so your ability to provide a reasonable price is limited. To get around this issue third parties charge 300% more per KWH for EV level 2 chargers than the cost of the electricity at your home which makes EV vehicles more costly than gas vehicles to operate. DPS is currently not interested in fixing the problem which will limit the placement of EV chargers in NYS.

Support of Agricultural Districts in Westchester County. In 2019 we reupped the Town for 10 more years of Agricultural tax reductions. The Town has thousands of acres of Ag. use and Open Land including a biotic corridor for the protection of animal habitat.

As I mentioned, I helped form the Local Development Corporation called the *East of Hudson Watershed Corporation* for dealing with high phosphorus loading in our local lakes and streams. Our goal is to reduce Phosphorus from entering into our water bodies to reduce algae and seaweed. My Town has exceeded its DEC assigned phosphorus mitigation by 200%. We continue to remove many KG's of phosphorus loading from our watershed to meet the new MS4 requirements.

I was the only Town in the State supporting the Hudson River Clearwater Sloop LLC (Manna Joe Greene/Seth Davis with be a reference) against Constellation Energy, the PSC and Entergy. My goal is to further renewable energy by removing the ZEC charges for those who are paying for RECs and I have been working with NYSERDA through Sustainable Westchester to see if that is doable. That would allow us to reduce the costs to the CCA program to our constituents.

To improve Bimodal transportation we have just finished sidewalks from the Purdy's Hamlet over to the train station. This will include, when completed elevators to get residents from the sidewalks to the train platform

## ISSUES

Each year, NYLCV works closely with New York's leading environmental, public health, conservation, energy, environmental justice, and transportation organizations to identify the most pressing priorities on fighting climate change, conserving land and water, and protecting public health. These issues drive NYLCV's advocacy work throughout the legislative session, influence the bills we select for NYLCV's Environmental Scorecards, and informs the decision on the candidates we choose to endorse. To ensure your responses are in alignment with the issues NYLCV and its partners are most concerned about, please review [NYLCV's 2021 Westchester Policy Agenda](#) when formulating your responses.

Please indicate your level of commitment to, and if applicable your recent personal and professional activity concerning, all the policy priorities of our partners per the following issues:

### Combating Climate Change

The time to act on climate is now. We must make radical changes in short order to avoid catastrophic climate change. New York's Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act will require action at all levels of government to achieve its ambitious goal of reducing economy wide emissions 85% by 2050 and achieving 70% renewable energy by 2030. By allocating resources wisely, local governments can have a significant impact on energy use and the environment. Localities must also adapt to a changing climate and include resiliency planning in all aspects of future governance.

2. Energy (p. 5)

As a Town we are committed to Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) program with renewable electrical. The Town residences are 100% renewable energy which I spearheaded in 2016. We are in the process of signing up with new contracts this coming November. As I mentioned before I am the liaison from the Sustainable Westchester Board to the CCA program for all NYSE&G municipalities. As such I am the one approving contracts, the person Sustainable Westchester meets with to approve strategy and methodologies when we go out to bid. I have been asked to speak to other CCA program around the State including the one run by Joule Assets. As part of our CCA program we are supporting NYS's 2030 strategy in purchasing our renewable energy via NYS Type1 REC's.

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UNIFOED SOLAR PERMIT: We passed the Unified Solar permit legislation in April of 2017 allowing for solar energy with just a building permit, no planning board or site plan approvals required. **In 2018-19** we have the first Community Solar installation in Westchester County's NYSE&G territory.

**In 2018** I signed contracts to replace all streetlights with LED Streetlights. All of the street lights in our municipality have been replaced with LED. In 2020 we also replaced all of our street post lamps in our Croton Falls Hamlet with LED lights. These two changes have

saved us over \$10,000 a year in electricity charged and reducing our electrical usage by 100,000 kwh.

### 3. Transportation (p.5)

By the end of July 2021 the *Transportation Corridor Study for I684/84* will be complete. Sometimes things take awhile. In 2014 I formed a group called the *I684/I84 Consortium* to lobby NYMTC and the DOT and Federal legislators for transportation changes to minimize the traffic in our local towns which ruin our quality of life. Several years later the DOT picked up our challenge and set aside \$1,5M for the study. The study is just finished in time for the Federal \$1.2T infrastructure fund. The study includes; bussing, park and rides and other roadway changes to address a number commuting and transportation issues as well as removing cars from the roadway. The cost of implementation is in the area of \$1B.

### 4. Resiliency (p. 6)

In 2021 I worked with the Town of Southeast to address a flooding issue in our community that is happening on Peach Lake. A larger number of homes are flooded due to the excessive rains we are having. I met with and convinced the Town of Southeast that their drainage system, 1.7 miles away from the flooding, needs to be widened and deepened to allow the lake water to exit in these 100 years storms we are getting every 10 years. It took a few years working with engineers but the Town of Southeast has agreed to address the issue. Both North Salem and Southeast applied together for a grant to do the work which will cost over \$1M. This picture from 2020 will give you an idea of our issues.



Also to protect the waters of Peach Lake and stop eutrophication because of SEPTIC issue built a \$31M sewer plant. Four hundred and eighty four septic tanks were removed. The lake is in better shape than any other time in the past 50 years. The plant was built in 2011 and 2012 and turned on in 2013. We received \$800K grant to install CONTECH Jellyfish in the Peach Lake Stormwater Basin to remove phosphorus from the drainage and streams enter peach lake. The work is completed the spring 2017.

**Water Quality: In 2021 we are installing an additional 50+ catch basin inserts around the lake that remove additional phosphorus.** In 2021 we continue to have the NYS DEC study Peach Lake after an Alum treatment in late 2019. The work we have done; Contech Jellyfish, Catch basin inserts, Sewer system and Alum treatment will hopefully be used as a model for lakes such as ours throughout the State to stop eutrophication of our fresh water bodies. 19% of the homes in my Town are around Peach Lake and covered by the sewer system so this is critical to my Town. The lake's water quality has increased dramatically. Home prices are up, people are much more aware of what they should be doing to support high water quality through ongoing education. Another interesting point is that with the additional light and Alum have caused the Milfoil, an invasive seaweed species to almost be eliminated and the native Pond weed, a plant I remember from 55 years ago, has come back minimally in some areas. We had no idea it was still present in the lake.

5. Solid Waste (p. 7)

We continue to be aggressive with recycling in our Town. North Salem was using Single Stream refuse pickup since 2014. In 2017 we won Westchester's award for the highest recycling community in Westchester County with 34% of refuse recycled. We also handle *electronic waste* disposal in North Salem including paying for the proper disposal of all CRT which have leaded glass passing a \$0 charge onto residents. **In 2019** I renegotiated our municipal refuse contract to a special dual stream contract in which should maintain our recycling levels and in which our non recycled refuse is not going into a landfill but put into a "*energy from refuse*" plant run by Wheelabrator in Peekskill NY which generates 1.4 GWatts of electricity in a year from our 2200 tons of refuse

Protecting People and Natural Resources

All New Yorkers deserve indoor and outdoor environments that are free of contamination and pollution.

6. Clean Land, Air, and Water (p. 9)

Clean water \_ we have been working to clean Peach lake up. Sewers, Specialized catch basins to remove phosphorus. because of the work we have done with the DEC CSSLAP Program; <https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/81576.html>. Peach Lake was selected as one of the HAB Fresh water bodies of interest by the DEC. The DEC has spent \$500,000 on Peach Lake and in 2019,20 and 2021 with alum treatments to lock phosphorus in the sediment.

ROAD SALT: Starting in 2019 North Salem was out in front again with road salt strategies on hoe to reduce its use. The town has invested in Live Edge plows and specialized equipment on our vehicles to meter salt effectively based on road temperature and such. I have also be pushing Basil Seggos and the DEC to come up with a strategy on how to reduce its use. The DEC called me up in march and asked that North Salem do a video of how to reduce salt for the DEC.

I tried to get you guys...the NYLCV.. on board in 2018 but was not able to. I see this years with the Governors focus the NYLCV has taken road salt up as an environmental issue. The Town has reduced is Road salt use by almost 30%.



7. Sustainable Development (p. 10)

See GHG comments under Energy

8. Parks and Open Spaces (p.10 – 11)

We work closely with the Town Open land foundation. We are lucky to have such a great organization in our Town. In some situations the Town has gone in as a partner on some plots to protect them for a variety of reasons. We have over 1200 acres of public land that can be used for passive recreation. <https://www.nsof.org/>

9. Farms and Local Food (p. 11)

We have 50% of the Agricultural District farmland in Westchester County. We have multiple CSA's in North Salem and several of our restaurants to farms to table cooking.