



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Office of the Mayor

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February 13, 2023

Honorable City Council
Newton City Hall
1000 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, MA 02459

To the Honorable City Councilors:

I am pleased to reappoint Meryl Kessler of 147 Prince Street, West Newton 02465 as a member of the Sustainable Materials Management Commission. Her term of office shall expire on March 15, 2026 and her appointment is subject to your confirmation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Warmly,

Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

RECEIVED
2023 FEB 24 PM 12:24
CITY CLERK
NEWTON, MA. 02459

Application Form

Profile

Meryl

First Name

Kessler

Last Name

Middle Initial

[Redacted]

Email Address

147 PRINCE STREET

Home Address

Suite or Apt

WEST NEWTON

City

MA

State

02465

Postal Code

What Ward do you live in?

Ward 3

[Redacted]

Primary Phone

Alternate Phone

Retired

Employer

Job Title

Which Boards would you like to apply for?

Sustainable Materials Management Commission: Submitted

Interests & Experiences

Please tell us about yourself and why you want to serve.

Why are you interested in serving on a board or commission?

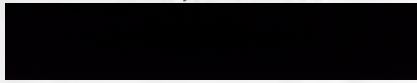
As a member of the Sustainable Materials Management Commission (SMMC) over the last three years, I have contributed to the commission's work in a wide variety of ways. Most significantly, I played an active role in researching and drafting the Commission's recent recommendations regarding residential curbside waste management. I hope to remain on the commission as we work with the City leadership and staff to implement many of these recommendations. As I wrote in my original application, my interest in serving on the SMMC grew directly out of both my professional and personal experience. As Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts (LWVMA) from 2013 to 2019, I helped oversee LWVMA's advocacy efforts on Beacon Hill, including those related to climate change and the environment. In 2014, LWVMA was one of the lead organizations in the coalition advocating for expansion of the Bottle Bill; that experience deepened my interest in the challenges related to reducing, reusing, and recycling our waste. I have closely followed developments and debates related to solid waste management in Massachusetts (especially related to Pay As You Throw programs, curbside composting, and the deteriorating market for recyclables/Chinese National Sword policy). My goal is to apply my experience and knowledge to help my own community as it wrestles with the environmental challenges and increasing costs of solid waste disposal. On a personal level, I am a longtime, committed backyard composter and recycler. I believe that I bring valuable skills and insights to the commission's work. By training, I am a detail-oriented lawyer with a policy background, and I have spent my career working primarily for educational and nonprofit organizations focused on community engagement and civic education. I have lived here in Newton for 27 years and, through my involvement with a variety of community organizations (as a former member of the Newton Community Pride, Peirce PTO Treasurer/Membership Chair, Newton North School Council co-chair, founding member of the NNHS Global Education Leadership Fund) have a good understanding of Newton's culture, traditions, and history. We stand at a critical juncture with regard to solid waste policies. Decisions we make today will have lasting impact not only our environment, but also our municipal finances. As Newton begins to work on its own long-range solid waste plan, I hope to be part of the conversation guiding the city's sustainable materials management policies. Thank you for considering my re-appointment.

[MERYL_KESSLER_RESUME.2023.pdf](#)

Upload a Resume

MERYL A. KESSLER

147 Prince Street
Newton, MA 02465



SUMMARY

Seasoned professional with 30+ years of non-profit, academic, and legal experience focused on civic engagement. As non-profit leader, have played key leadership roles in setting and implementing organizational strategy. Expert at developing partnerships with diverse community partners, maximizing program impact, and managing day-to-day operations while maintaining focus on strategic goals. Experienced at fundraising. Highly analytical problem solver with excellent writing, research, and interpersonal skills.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Candidate for City Council, Newton, MA

March-November 2021

League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, Boston, MA

2013-2019

Executive Director. Led iconic civic engagement and advocacy organization operating statewide. With focus on increasing visibility and re-tooling for the 21st century, initiated reforms to improve external communications, modernize programming, and diversify fundraising. For 2016 and 2018 elections, created and implemented multi-pronged and grant-supported voter engagement and education initiatives. Oversaw small staff and cadre of volunteers. Managed all day-to-day operations, including finances, fundraising, administration, member support, and communications. Represented organization on Beacon Hill, in coalitions, and with media. Initiated strategic process to transform working board of directors into governing board.

Discovering Justice, Boston, MA

2009-2013

Legal Programs Director. Direct report to Executive Director of civic education non-profit located at federal courthouse. Managed operations, curriculum, training, budgeting, evaluation, and volunteer recruitment for justice-related programs reaching 1500+ underserved middle-school students in Boston and Gateway Cities annually. Worked closely with federal and state judiciary, bar associations, school districts, and non-profit partners. Designed and led training of over 70 attorney volunteers annually. Created new curricula and teaching materials for all programs in portfolio. Worked closely with development team, funders, outside evaluators, and strategy consultants.

Harvard Law School, Cambridge, MA

1997-2009

- *Ames Fellow* (2005-2009). Created original case materials for annual upper-level moot court competition, including final rounds judged by U.S. Supreme Court justices; assisted in program management.
- *J.D. Advisor, Office of Career Services* (Fall 2002, 2003, 2004). Counseled students on career choices.
- *Consultant, Office of the J.D. Dean* (2001-2003). Designed and implemented alumni mentoring database.
- *Climenko Teaching Fellow* (1998-2000). Developed and taught First-Year Legal Research and Writing course.
- *Researcher* (1997). Revised *Women and the Law* casebook with Professor Martha Minow.

Brandeis University, Waltham, MA

1997

Guberman Teaching Fellow & Adjunct Lecturer in Legal Studies.

Goulston & Storrs, Boston, MA

1992-1996

Summer & Litigation Associate. Practiced commercial litigation.

Sugarman, Rogers, Barshak & Cohen, Boston, MA

Summer 1991

Summer Associate. Practiced commercial litigation.

World Policy Journal, New York

1984-1986

Assistant/Associate Editor. Solicited, developed, and edited articles for quarterly journal of world affairs.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- Sustainable Materials Management Commission**, Newton, MA 2020-present
Commissioner.
Appointed by mayor, advise mayor and City Council on solid waste (trash and recycling) policy in City.
- Newton Community Pride Committee**, Newton, MA 2003-2008, 2020-present
Secretary/Treasurer.
Organize, support, and run public-private cultural and civic events. Organized *Newton Out Doors*, citywide public art initiative (2021). Co-founded and managed annual citywide arts (*Halloween Window Painting*) program involving over 400 students and 100 merchants annually.
- Temple Shalom**, Newton, MA 2019-2022
Finance Committee.
Provide advice to Board of Directors on budgeting, financial planning, and reporting.
- Generation Citizen**, Boston, MA 2016-present
Director, Massachusetts Board.
Serve on local board of national civic education nonprofit.
- Alray Scholars Program**, Boston, MA 2015-2022
Development Committee; Mentor.
Support/plan fundraising efforts to give Boston students a second chance at college through scholarships and mentoring; mentored Alray Scholar through her graduation from Lesley University (2021).
- Princeton-Blairstown Center**, Princeton, NJ 2015-2020
Director.
Served on board of nonprofit providing adventure-based, experiential education programs, and academic support to vulnerable youth from urban locations.
- Community Action Partners of Harvard Business School**, Cambridge, MA 2013-2014
Consultant.
Member of seven-person team providing volunteer strategic planning and consulting services to literacy nonprofit.
- Families First Parenting Programs**, Cambridge, MA 2003-2014
Board Chair (2006-2008); *Vice-Chair* (2005-2006); *Director* (2003-2010).
Led Board of \$1.2 million parenting education non-profit targeting underserved populations. Served on Executive Director Search Committee (2011) and served on Ad Hoc Strategy Committee (2013-14).
- Global Education Leadership Fund**, Newton, MA 2007-2009
Co-founder and Member.
Working with administrators, teachers, and parents, helped establish educational scholarship program.

EDUCATION

- Harvard Law School**, Cambridge, MA 1990-1993
J.D., *cum laude.*
- Harvard University**, Cambridge, MA 1986-1990
M.A. in Government (ABD), Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.
Teaching Fellow (1988-1990); Head Teaching Fellow (1990); Certificate of Distinction in Teaching (1990).
Honors: CSIA Pre-Doctoral Fellowship; Harvard MacArthur Scholarship; Departmental Honors Fellowship.
Publications: Articles in *Foreign Policy*, *Third World Quarterly*, and *World Policy Journal*. Edited with Thomas G. Weiss, *Third World Security in the Post-Cold War Era* (Lynne Rienner Pub., 1991)
- Princeton University**, Princeton, NJ 1980-1984
B.A., *magna cum laude*, Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs.
Program in Russian Studies, graduated with distinction.