

https://madison.com/news/local/government-politics/elections/article_d72bd4bd-fe98-40a2-8cdc-6836617a346c.html

TOP STORY

MIDDLETON | MAYOR

Meet the candidates for Middleton mayor

Mar 4, 2026

Responses to the Wisconsin State Journal's candidate questionnaire. The election is April 7.

Lisa Janairo

Age: 60

Occupation: Retired program manager at the Council of State Governments

Prior elected office: Alder for District 6, 2022-present

Other public service: Chair of Middleton's Sustainability Committee, 2020-2022; member of Middleton's Strategic Plan Advisory Committee, 2021-2022



Janairo

People are also reading...

- 1 **Ohio State's disruptions cost Wisconsin women's hockey late in WCHA title game**

- 2 **Large development on Oscar Mayer parking lot survives concerns about its length**
- 3 **Polzin: Current Badgers runner pushes back to lawmakers on \$14.6M bailout for Wisconsin athletics**
- 4 **Downtown apartment building nominated for landmark status as developer seeks to demolish it**

Education: Bachelor's degree in geology, Lawrence University; master's degree in public policy, University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy

Emily Kuhn (I)

Age: 49

Occupation: Mayor of Middleton, federal project manager

Prior elected office: Mayor, city of Middleton (current); alder for District 4 (Lakeview Park area), 2018-2023

Other public

service: Chair, Women's Caucus, Democratic Party of Wisconsin (2017-18); vice chair (2016) State

Interagency Council on Homelessness (2012-19); Joint TIF Board Chair

(2023-present); Chair, City Buildings

Committee (2023-present); Emergency Coordination Committee, chair (2023-present) Plan Commission, chair (2023-24), Community Development Authority, chair (2023-2025)



Kuhn

Education: Bachelor's degree in international political economy and Spanish, Carthage College; master's degree in public policy, with a focus on community and economic development, University of Minnesota Humphrey Institute

Q&A

What unique expertise or experience would you bring to this office?

Janairo: I'm the only elected official that sends a newsletter to constituents explaining what's happening in city government, how I voted, and why. I spent decades building relationships and crafting public policy at the state and federal levels. I bring those skills and experiences to city government. I have served on committees related to finance, planning, housing, stormwater and public works, so I understand how the city works.

Kuhn: As a federal project manager with 20+ years of budget experience, I manage 1,200 facilities and train thousands in de-escalation and interagency communications. As mayor, I led a zoning rewrite, a nationally recognized housing transformation and secured 1,800 local jobs. My blend of municipal leadership and federal expertise uniquely equips me to deliver results for Middleton.

What is the most pressing problem facing the community, and how would you fix it?

Janairo: Our library, City Hall, and senior center no longer meet our needs. In 2026, we'll decide how to improve these vital community spaces. I want to learn how other cities provide residents and staff with accessible, modern facilities at a reasonable cost. I also want to hear from young people because they'll use these buildings as students now, in 10-20 years as adults and possibly parents, and in 40 years as older residents.

Kuhn: Housing affordability is our community's most pressing issue. The city under my leadership secured \$10 million in TIF funding for an Affordable Housing Fund; I called for a multipronged approach supporting seniors, working families,

homeowners and renters. I also proposed a grant application mechanism, with audits through the Middleton Area Development Corporation, building on a prior successful partnership to ensure accountability

What do you most want for your community?

Janairo: I want Middleton to be a place where we meet the needs of our growing city, strengthen our sense of community, and give people good information about their local government. My vision is “Moving Forward Together.” Moving: Managing growth while preserving what makes Middleton special. Forward: Embracing new ways of meeting our needs while planning for the future. Together: When we work together, good things happen for our city.

Kuhn: I want Middleton to be a city where neighbors of every age and income can live, work and thrive. That means safe streets for walking and biking, a strong local economy with good jobs, quality parks, and housing options for families, seniors and young adults alike — a true Good Neighbor City for generations to come.