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## Marriage Equality Advocate Jeffrey Busch Chosen as Wilton Justice of the Peace

By Heather Borden Herve, GMW Editor on February 4, 2015



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On Tuesday evening, Feb. 3, the Wilton Democratic Town Committee unanimously selected Wilton resident **Jeffrey Busch** to serve as a **Justice of the Peace**. Justices of the Peace have several powers under Connecticut statute, most notably the power to join persons in marriage.

According to a press release, the committee was proud to support Busch, who grew up in Wilton, given his advocacy for marriage equality in the State of Connecticut and his deep dedication to the community. Busch and his partner, **Stephen Davis**, were among the named plaintiffs in **Kerrigan v. Commissioner**, which judicially established the right to same sex marriage in Connecticut. The lawsuit commenced in 2004 and was won in 2008. **Busch and his partner married** shortly thereafter on their 25th anniversary.

"Jeff and his husband are two heroes of the marriage equality movement in Connecticut and nationally. Their courage and advocacy has changed the lives of millions of people for the better. We could not think of a more deserving and appropriate person to appoint to this position," said **Tom Dec**, Wilton DTC Chair.

"Perhaps I'm an old fashioned romantic, but I love seeing people get married. All that hope and promise and love — it has a real power to it. As a gay man I spent most of my life unable to marry the person of my dreams. It's old history now, but my husband and I were one of the plaintiff couples that sued Connecticut for the right to marry. We had been together 20 years when we finally got married. And here it is, five years later, and every day I remain incredibly grateful for the

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privilege and now right of being married to him," Busch said. "Having had such a long road to being able to marry, it feels like wonderful irony that as a Justice of the Peace I will be able to help other people with their dreams of getting married. I know I will take [the] responsibility very seriously."

In addition to his advocacy work, Busch is active in town and serves on the board of **Trackside Teen Center**, as a trustee of the **Montessori School**, and as a member of the Back Yard Beekeepers Association. He is the **co-founder and president of Nantucket Spider** and is a real estate agent with **Higgins Realty**. He previously served as an Administrative Law Judge for the City of New York.

The Wilton DTC's endorsement will be submitted to the Town Clerk on Wednesday. The Town Clerk will then swear in Busch as a Justice.

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