

## From the Supervisor

### State of the Town

As I sat down to write this, a message arrived from the State Comptroller’s Office. It’s the Comptroller’s annual evaluation of the amount of “fiscal stress” the Town bears.

The Comptroller rates every municipality in the State on a scale from 1 to 10. The more stress, the higher the number. It’s like a golf score. The lower the number, the better you’ve done.

On the scale of 1 to 10, what number does the Comptroller accord to Pittsford?

**Zero.** For a fiscal stress scale of 1 to 10, we’re not on the scale at all.

To make this evaluation the Comptroller looks mostly at factors for which Town government is directly responsible: the specifics of its budgeting, financial planning and fiscal status. Point for point, category by category, Pittsford’s score is Zero – no fiscal stress whatsoever.

State law confers on me as Town Supervisor responsibility for preparing the Town’s annual budget and for managing the finances of Town government. But I can’t adopt either on my own. The budget and management policies require support of the Town Board.

In addition to considering those Fiscal Stress factors above, that are directly related to budgeting and Town operations, the Comptroller’s Office looks also at what it calls Environmental Stress factors. It considers certain specific data relevant to the Town more generally, such as population change, for example. Towns that lose population are scored worse; those that gain are scored better.

Pittsford was recently identified by Realtor.com as **one of the top 10 places in the United States where people want to relocate.** So, as you could expect, the Comptroller’s score for Pittsford on population change: Zero. (Remember, the lower the number, the better you’ve done.)

Another of the Comptroller’s criteria is the percentage of change in home values. If home values fall, the municipality is rated worse; if values rise it’s rated better. This is true not just for the Comptroller, but for all of us whose home is one of our most important investments. On this point as well, the Comptroller rates us the highest: Zero stress.

Based on these more general factors as well as the specifics of the Town Administration’s financial practices and budgeting, the Comptroller rates Pittsford at *Zero stress* – point by point, category by category. It’s the right Town policies that are responsible for both.

### Benefits to Taxpayers

The Town’s fiscal management means more than just a good report card from the Comptroller. It benefits Pittsford residents directly. It means fiscal stability. There are no surprises from year to year – no sudden tax hikes or cuts to services. It’s why my budgets **have cut the Town tax rate by 9% since 2018** while maintaining and improving all Town services, including our Pittsford Community Library, major improvements to infrastructure with new sidewalks, trails, improvements to parks, adding new parks such as our Erie Canal Nature Preserve and our Dog Park, pursuing

*Continued on page 2*



Bill Smith  
Town Supervisor

### Inside:

- Comptroller’s Report Card
- Credit Rating Helps Taxpayers
- *Town Tax = 8¢ of Each Tax Dollar You Pay*
- Fall Garden Tips
- Town Dog Park
- Fire Safety Month

**LEAF COLLECTION IS UNDERWAY!**

SEE OUR REAL-TIME SCHEDULE AT  
[gis.townofpittsford.org/LeafCollection](https://gis.townofpittsford.org/LeafCollection)

**eNews Signup**

Stay up to date on Town meetings, projects, programs, services and events - sign up for our weekly eNews.

[townofpittsford.org/enews](https://townofpittsford.org/enews)

**From the Supervisor**

Continued from front page

our environmental initiatives and our accelerated program for repaving neighborhood streets.

For all of the services, amenities, programs and events the Town provides, **Pittsford Town Tax remains only 8 cents of every dollar you pay in property tax.**

**Perfect Credit Rating: Triple-A**

Our *zero fiscal stress* status contributes to Pittsford’s perfect credit rating – Triple-A. That in turn protects taxpayers by keeping down the rate of interest the Town pays on borrowing for such things as our Town-funded Library, our *Greenprint* that preserves 2,000 acres of farmland from development, the renovations to our Spiegel Community Center and our improvements to athletic fields and parks.

Pittsford remains the only Town of its size in the United States to hold this perfect credit rating. The only Town in upstate New York. A credit rating higher than the State of New York.

Higher than the credit rating of the United States government.

**Public Policies Make the Difference**

The data and townwide conditions the Comptroller considers in evaluating Pittsford result from the Town’s decades-long legacy of pursuing *the right public policies* over time.

To be sure, the report considers matters directly within the Town’s *short-term* decision making, such as its budgets, financial management and operations.

Yet even more important, I think, are the more general characteristics of the Town that the Comptroller also evaluates for its report, such as growing population, appreciating house values and so much more. These result from longer-term factors. They didn’t come about overnight, or by accident or happenstance. Today’s Pittsford is the direct result of the Town government’s decision-making and policy choices over time.

Take the Town’s **population growth and strong home values**. There are reasons why people want to move to Pittsford. Reasons why the most frequent comment I hear from our residents is that you want to maintain the Town’s character and quality of life. These in turn derive not just from major

policy choices, but from the cumulative effect of thousands of decisions on matters great and small that Town government makes constantly, and over time. Decisions we make every day.

Take our emphasis on **maintaining open countryside** through our Greenprint program that protects farmland from development. Take our emphasis on **historic preservation** of our architecture and landscape. Just two examples of policy choices that make our community more appealing to people. They’re choices that, as municipal planners know well, contribute to stable communities and increasing property values.

Take our **realistic approach to Zoning laws**, that provide for neighborhoods of different types, from single-family homes to apartments, and for all of them protecting neighborhood stability, safety and character. This is why I’ve stood up so strongly against Governor Hochul’s attempts to have the State take over local zoning and will continue to do so.

Take our emphasis on **environmental health and sustainability**. This is something I’ve championed since well before entering municipal government. Because first, it’s the right thing to do and second, because it’s one of the steps that improves the quality of the community.

I could go on and on – about our parks, trails, athletic fields for youth and adults, municipal services, public events, recreational programs and so much more.

The important point is that for decades, Pittsford has had the benefit of municipal leadership that brought these things about. Leadership on the same wavelength as the consensus of our residents. Leadership that possesses the **values** and exercises the **judgment** that enable it to make the right decisions for the Town in the different decisions it’s called upon constantly to make. To make the **policy choices** that have made Pittsford beautiful and prosperous. That make it a place where people want to live. And to keep it that way.

Please let me hear from you! You can reach me at **248-6220** or by email at **wsmith@townofpittsford.org**. I maintain an open-door policy at my office, and you can attend my monthly open house at the Library, usually the first Saturday of each month. It’s announced on my Bill Smith Pittsford Town Supervisor Facebook page and in the Town eNews.

**Tips for Fire Safety Month this October**



Household fires move quickly. Taking precautions to prevent fire and having a fire emergency plan in place can make a critical difference to your family.

**Practice prevention.** Be aware of fire hazards, including open flames and heat sources, flammable materials, and electrical overloads. Install and regularly test smoke detectors.

Keep fire extinguishers in easily accessible locations.

**Have a plan.** Be sure your family members know how to take action in the event of a fire. Develop a fire escape plan for your household and practice it regularly. Get your kids involved!

**Support our firefighters.** The Pittsford Fire Department is comprised of about 75 volunteers. They respond to over 800 calls a year to help Pittsford residents – and always are in need of more help. If you can, consider becoming a volunteer firefighter – they are crucial for ensuring our public safety. Or you can make a donation at **pittsfordfd.org**.

Take the necessary steps today to protect your home and loved ones from fire!

Find more Fire Safety Tips here:



## WHAT YOUR TOWN TAX PAYS FOR



Other Taxing Jurisdictions: 92¢

Town: 8¢

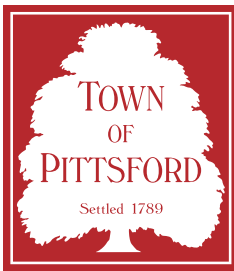
**Only 8 cents of every dollar you pay in property tax is Town of Pittsford tax**

A home of current average value in Pittsford (\$310,000) would pay \$11,736 per year in combined total property tax: County, School and Town. Out of that total, just \$942.13 represents Pittsford Town Tax. Eight cents on the dollar for all Town services, including:

- A Town-funded **Community Library** that offers free access to books, media and other resources and a diverse selection of programs for all ages, including reading groups, story hours, cultural performances, classes, public readings, guest speakers and more
- A **Highway Department** that provides weekly **yard debris** collection and regular **leaf collection** creating mulch that we offer free to residents; **snowplowing** on over 150 miles of roads in Pittsford; and **repaving** and **maintaining** more than 100 miles of Town roads
- A **Sewer Department** that maintains and improves an extensive sewer system and drainage network, including 250 miles of sanitary and stormwater transmission lines and over a dozen pump stations
- A **Parks Department** that maintains and improves 233 acres of active parkland and 1,130 acres of open space, including a dozen parks, a variety of athletic fields, five playgrounds and 50 miles of trails
- A system of **public parks**, including our Erie Canal Nature Preserve, the Isaac Gordon Nature Park, King's Bend Park and lodges, and the Pittsford Town Dog Park
- A full schedule of **community events** each year, including 11 weekly summer concerts, three children's concerts, and four family movies, all offered free to the community
- Our celebrated community festivals: **Paddle and Pour** in the spring and the **Food Truck & Music Fest** in the fall, both free and open to the public
- An extensive range of **programs and events through our Recreation Department**, including pickleball, sports for youth and adults, after school and preschool programs, summer camp and school break camps, exercise, education and enrichment programs, the fall Halloween Fest for families and kids and more – something for everyone at every age
- A full **Senior Citizens program** with daily activities, three Senior lunches each week, field trips, tax preparation services, free transportation with the Town-funded Elderberry Express and more
- A well-staffed **Town Clerk's Office** that issues marriage licenses, dog licenses, provides legal notices and voter information, fulfills public records requests and manages tax notifications, payments and inquiries

**Town of Pittsford residents benefit from these services and amenities and more – for just 8% of your total property tax bill.**





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**GO SOCIAL WITH THE TOWN OF PITTSFORD!**

Stay up to date by following the Town of Pittsford on social media. You can find us on:



The Pittsford Messenger Fall 2023

[www.townofpittsford.org](http://www.townofpittsford.org)

## Fun for Pups and People

Get out and enjoy Pittsford's Dog Park with your canine companion this fall! Our Town Dog Park features two off-leash areas, one each for large and small dogs. Dogs can have fun with the play structures while owners relax on benches and at picnic tables. Water fountains for thirsty pups operate from spring through fall; so does the washing station for cleaning muddy paws.

**You must register to use the Dog Park.** The Town has arranged for registration for its dog park to be done through the County Parks Department. This means that in addition to Pittsford's Dog Park, dog parks throughout the county will be open to you. You can register at [www.monroecounty.gov/parks-DogParks](http://www.monroecounty.gov/parks-DogParks). The Pittsford Town Dog Park is located at 34 East Street. It's open year-round from 7:00am until dusk. In keeping with the Town's commitment to walkability and bikeability, the park is connected to two Town trails as well.



## Fall Garden Tips to Help Pollinators

Whether you're joining the Town's Pollinator Pathway program or just want to have a beautiful, healthy and low-maintenance garden, native plants are the way to go! You can find garden ideas and seasonal tips on our [www.townofpittsford.org/pollinator-pathway](http://www.townofpittsford.org/pollinator-pathway) web page. Below are some gardening tips for the fall that can help you create a welcoming habitat for butterflies, moths, bees and other pollinating insects and wildlife.



**Plant in the fall to see spring blooms.** The combination of cool fall air and still-warm soil stimulates root growth. Early emerging bees will appreciate the springtime food source!

**Use cardboard to keep in moisture and block weeds.** Putting down a layer of cardboard when creating a garden retains moisture to keep your soil healthy, keeps any existing weed seeds from sprouting, and will eventually break down as beneficial organic matter for your soil. Remove all labels from the cardboard, lay it flat, saturate it with water, and add a thick layer of compost and/or mulch on top. Then dig down through the cardboard to plant your plants.

**Keep pollinators safe through the winter.** You can double the value to pollinators of a native tree or shrub by adding native shade plants underneath it or close by. Such shade plants include Woodland Phlox (*Phlox divaricata*), Virginia Anemone (*Anemone virginiana*), and Black Cohosh (*Actaea racemosa*). These plants will provide critical winter shelter and habitat for one or more life cycle stages of moths, butterflies, and beneficial insects such as bumblebees, fireflies, lacewings and beetles. And wherever possible, leave an area with fallen leaves, sticks, etc. – a little “messy” spot in your garden or yard also is the perfect place for a pollinator to safely spend the winter.

Planning now means better success with your garden – and more beneficial pollinating insects – in the spring!