

Town, village, schools benefit from unique collaboration

Last Thursday, I attended an annual meeting with members of the Town Board, the Village Board of Trustees, the Pittsford Board of Education and the PCSD Superintendent. For several years, this annual meeting has served as an official update for all entities to discuss progress on shared projects and/or important initiatives that involve our mutual constituencies.

In addition to this annual meeting, the leadership from the three boards meets quarterly to review any potential collaborative efforts which will best serve the Pittsford community. Although our three entities have a long history of cooperation, the "Leadership Team" was created to provide a formal and ongoing forum for the Town, Village and School District to use. The idea for the official collaboration stemmed from a community forum held almost 10 years ago. At the forum, residents expressed a strong interest in having the PCSD, the Town and Village establish a way to better open lines of communication.

A formal resolution was first signed on April 29, 2003 and is now signed annually (the most updated copy can be found on www.townofpittsford.org). Our shared mission is to better the lives of all those who live, work, play and learn in the Pittsford community. We have agreed to accomplish this mission by:

- 1) Engaging residents in a continuous dialogue and working collaboratively for the common good.
- 2) Representing the views on individual constituencies.
- 3) Facilitating consensus among the three boards.

The Town, Village and PCSD partnership is very unique and is not common in most communities. We feel that working together is important and results in a direct positive impact on our mutual constituencies. Our efforts have streamlined services, strengthened programs and reduced costs for taxpayers. As an example, we now all use one, shared fuel depot for Town and School vehicles (plows, buses, etc.). Sharing a fuel depot has allowed us to purchase gasoline in bulk, saving significant taxpayer dollars. Additionally, we often share equipment and employees (i.e. building maintenance) to repair facilities and/or pave and seal our parking lots. By sharing costs and assets, we save money.

I am fortunate to have three great working partners in this collaboration – Pittsford Board of Education President Ray Brown, Superintendent Mary Alice Price and Village Mayor Bob Corby. Together, we focus on improving the quality of life in Pittsford and always try to brainstorm creative ideas for working together. In addition, we always remain open to suggestions on how we can strengthen our partnership. Should you have any ideas, I encourage you to email me directly at bcarpenter@townofpittsford.org.