

From the Supervisor

The Town Budget: It's About *You*

State law entrusts to the Town Supervisor the duty to prepare the Town's annual budget, then to submit it to the Town Board for approval.

In recent months I've been working on the budget for next year. My goals remain the same as they have been: (1) no tax increase; (2) maintain Town services and their quality; (3) provide tax stability. The prospects look good. We're scrutinizing the latest revenue reports. So far this year, those reports have all met our projections. I'll have a new budget put together before the end of October, for the public to review before a final vote.

Taxes and Community Stability

Today's tax rate – \$3.13 per thousand – is **lower than it was in 2018**. From 2018 to 2022, the budgets I submitted to Town Board for a vote of approval gradually lowered the Town tax rate from \$3.44 per thousand dollars of assessed value to \$3.13. The rate remains at that level today, because starting with 2022, every budget I've proposed to Town Board has kept the Town tax rate flat, with no increase. As a result, **Pittsford now ranks 8th lowest in tax rate among the 19 towns** in Monroe County.

For every dollar you pay in property tax, only 8 cents go to the Town of Pittsford. Based on the current average home value in Pittsford – \$302,100 – that amounts to approximately **\$946 in Town tax per year**. While Town tax represents the smallest portion of your total tax bill, I believe it's my duty to keep that share as low as possible – without compromising the civic improvements you expect or the high-quality Town services you've come to rely on and enjoy.

Holding the tax rate steady provides residents with predictability and confidence in their long-term plans. This steady approach helps retirees on fixed incomes remain in their homes, reassures families investing in property here and strengthens the character of our neighborhoods with the services we provide. Even as costs for employee benefits and materials rise and inflation continues, disciplined budgeting makes it possible to maintain every municipal service without shifting those pressures to taxpayers. A stable tax rate fits with Pittsford's reputation for a high quality of life by ensuring that the services and amenities our residents expect are delivered responsibly and consistently each year, and live up to our community standards.

The Town budget has a lot to do with this.

The Budget

A great many of you have expressed special interest in earlier Supervisor's Columns that discussed various mechanics, processes and aspects of Town operations and government. So let's consider how the budget takes shape every year.

Residents' Expectations and Requests

Where it all begins. It's what Town government's all about. We start with the goal of maintaining and improving the entire range of services you've come to

Continued on page 2



Bill Smith
Town Supervisor

Inside:

- Budget Priorities
- More Sheriff's Deputies
- New Sidewalks
- Quicker Yard Debris Pickup
- Improved Doors for Library
- Leaf Collection starts Oct. 20
- Halloween Fest is Oct. 26

**PITTSFORD
COMMUNITY
LIBRARY**



**20 YEARS OF
A NEW CHAPTER**



Celebrating 20 years since opening.

Our Library is celebrating 20 years in the new building! Congratulations to our Library team and many thanks for your outstanding service to our community. Our thanks and congratulations as well to the **Friends of the Pittsford Community Library** for **50 years** of generous support for our Library programs, services and resources.

From the Supervisor

Continued from page 1

expect and rely on. Beyond that, where there's an emerging or growing public consensus for something new, or for special attention to a traditional municipal service, we plan for it when budgeting.

Departmental Reviews

In early summer each year I ask every department head for a complete review of operations. The purpose is to identify potential savings and cost-efficiencies for the next year, including funding necessary to maintain the quality of services for which they're responsible and funding necessary to accomplish improvements in the public interest.

In addition we must account for ever-rising costs for employees and benefits. For example, the cost of medical coverage for employees is 16% higher this year than it was in 2024. Without the benefit conferred by the Town's membership in the Finger-Lakes Municipal Healthcare Trust – a statewide model for shared services, initiated by the Town of Pittsford – the increase would have been even more severe. Sales tax receipts this year have been on track with our projections in the 2025 budget, making it possible to continue all municipal services without any increase in the Town tax rate.

Our Finance Director and I review all proposed departmental budgets. We then consult with the respective department heads to agree on any changes necessary to align the budget with the Town's long-term financial goals. The revised departmental budgets, fund balances that can be appropriated for work scheduled for the year, and projected revenues comprise a balanced budget for the year ahead.

Revenue

Of course, the greatest portion of revenue to finance Town services comes from the Town property tax. We look at the aggregate assessed value of all properties in the Town and apply the rate to determine likely revenues from Town tax. An arithmetical process.

We depend on other funding as well, most significantly Sales Tax and Mortgage Tax shared by the County. For these we must make realistic and principled projections for the year ahead. The evaluation begins with looking at sales and mortgage tax revenues from the previous 12 months. Typically, the County gives us periodic reports. We then do our best to evaluate conditions in the economy that could affect these receipts over the next year, whether up or down.

We don't play fast and loose with projections. We won't. We follow the data to where it leads. And plan from there. For example, one year a delayed County sales tax report left us with limited information. The only serious projection would have left a slight budget shortfall in our preliminary budget planning. Fortunately, the late report arrived in time to revise our projection, so I could present a budget to Town Board for approval that held the tax rate flat at its then rate of \$3.15. The next year I was able to cut the rate to its current \$3.13.

This hard-nosed realism in making projections is unavoidable in honest fiscal management. It represents one of the rigorous budgeting principles that have earned us the confidence of the rigidly objective and stringently hard-hearted credit agencies that give Pittsford our perfect Triple-A credit rating. The only town of our size in the United States to have it. Making us the only town of our size in the country to save residents the significantly higher cost of bonding for major projects that other towns, with lower credit ratings, must pay. Yet another means of putting taxpayers first.

And a contributing factor to Pittsford's consistently perfect score from the State Comptroller confirming no fiscal stress in Town finances.

Grants

In recent years the Town has achieved notable successes in obtaining grant funding. As I write this, we've just won a grant for \$175,000 to renovate the playground at King's Bend Park, to provide a fully inclusive playground for kids of all abilities and ages. We thank the State for approving our application for the King's Bend grant.

Grants give us a jump-start on projects that otherwise would require Town tax increases or bond financing to accomplish, such as sidewalk projects. Most recently, our success in obtaining grant funding has allowed us to start work on four major sidewalk projects. Without the grant money we couldn't have started until much later. Being able to get these projects moving now allows us, in turn, to move other important projects closer to *their* start.

Pittsford's effective intermunicipal cooperation with other levels of government has been important to our success in winning grants from both State and County.

Services

In the effort to keep taxes flat for next year we won't compromise the services you count on.

Our services include our beloved Town-funded Library, a thriving Seniors program at our Community Center, the ever-popular "bookend" events to every summer: Paddle and Pour, and the Food Truck and Music Fest, the summer Canalside Concerts, the After-School Program and Summer Camp programs at the Community Center, our many Town parks, our 50 miles of trails and 40 miles of sidewalks. Our environmental policies and programs



eNews Signup

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



Continued on page 4



New Sidewalks

The Town has four sidewalk projects currently under way.

Mendon and Thornell Roads sidewalk

Currently under construction, the new sidewalk will run along the east side of Mendon Road, starting at Thornell Farm Park, turning east on Thornell Road along the north side, and ending at Oak Meadow Trail. It will fill a gap between existing sidewalks on Mendon and Thornell Roads. Doing so will allow safer access for pedestrians from adjoining neighborhoods to get to and from Pittsford Mendon High School, Thornell Road Elementary School, and our own Thornell Farm Park, the Town's most active park. The project completes a sidewalk all the way to the Village of Pittsford, in the heart of the Town. We expect it to be completed this year by the end of October.

Barker Road sidewalk

This new sidewalk on the south side of Barker Road will connect the Town's Hopkins Park and the Copper Woods neighborhood to the Barker Road Middle School. Drainage improvements needed for the project are currently under construction. The sidewalk is expected to be completed by mid-November of this year.

East Street sidewalk

A new sidewalk will replace the existing asphalt sidewalk on the east side of East Street from Thornell Road to Carriage Court. A new sidewalk will be added to the west side of East Street from Brickston Drive to Arbor Creek Road. It will include several mid-block pedestrian crosswalks. Engineering design is complete for the project. Depending on review by the Monroe County Department of Transportation for project permitting, we hope to begin construction this fall, with completion expected in mid-summer 2026.

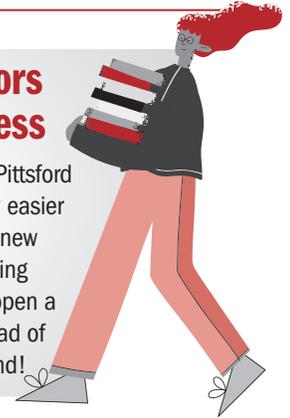
Tobey Road sidewalk

Starting at the intersection of Cricket Hill Drive, Tobey Road and Stone Road, this new sidewalk will run along the north/east side of Tobey Road to the existing pedestrian crossing at the Clover Street intersection. Engineering is nearly complete; public information meetings will be held this fall. Some site work may begin over this winter.

Each project above will enhance pedestrian safety and expand walkable connections in Pittsford. Students, residents and visitors will find it easier and more enjoyable to get to their desired destinations and explore new ones in our community.

New Library Doors Give Easier Access

Getting in and out of the Pittsford Community Library is now easier than ever. We've installed new hands-free automatic sliding doors. No more pushing open a heavy door with an armload of books and a coffee in hand!



Gain Strength and Wellness with Pittsford's Senior Exercise Programs

Seniors, are you seeking a fun and affordable way to stay active? Our **Senior Exercise Classes** offer one of the best deals around – Pittsford residents can attend for free! From yoga, Nia and low-impact fitness to line dancing and Zumba, our classes are a great way to stay active, build strength and flexibility, and connect with friends old and new in a welcoming, upbeat atmosphere. Join us and discover why many local seniors make this program part of their weekly routine! Find a complete schedule of senior exercise programs at www.townofpittsford.org/seniors.



Quicker Collection and Improved Efficiency with New Yard Debris Truck

We've streamlined yard debris collection and boosted efficiency by bringing in-house our bagged, bundled and containerized collection and acquiring a compactor truck. The new process cuts expenses as well.

Town crews previously collected loose brush and branches, while a contractor for the Town picked up debris in bags and containers.



Our new compactor truck works like a garbage truck. It now allows our Town crews to stow both loose brush and yard debris in

bags or containers in the same collection bin. The truck then compacts all of it, allowing us to collect more debris on each collection run. That means fewer trips back to the highway garage, less fuel consumption and lower labor costs. Another bonus: the Town can now recycle the containerized yard debris – producing more of the wood mulch we offer free to residents.

A reminder about yard debris collection:

please don't include any dirt, sod, rocks or plastic bags in your bagged and containerized yard debris. And remember to keep your containers at a reasonable weight, 50 lbs. or less, so our crew members can lift them. You can find full details about our yard debris collection services at www.townofpittsford.org/yard-debris.



Fall Planting Tips: Supporting Native Plants and Pollinators

Fall is one of the best times to plant. It gives new perennials, shrubs and bulbs enough time to develop strong roots before winter. Opting for native plants is especially important. Not only do they thrive in our western New York climate, but they also require less maintenance and provide food and shelter for local pollinators.

If you're planting for next spring, consider early blooming natives such as wild columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*) and violets (*Viola sororia*) which provide much-needed nectar for pollinators emerging from hibernation. Later in the season, New England aster (*Symphotrichum novae-angliae*), goldenrod (*Solidago spp.*) and bee balm (*Monarda didyma* or *M. fistulosa*) are excellent choices

that support bees, butterflies and hummingbirds well into fall. Leaving seed heads on plants like purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*) also supplies winter food for birds.

It's equally important to provide pollinators with safe places to shelter over the winter. Instead of clearing every leaf and stem, **please consider leaving some leaf litter, brush piles and dried stalks in your garden.** These provide natural shelter for hibernating butterflies, solitary bees and other helpful insects.

Planting and planning with pollinators in mind now will lay the foundation for a colorful, thriving garden in spring. It supports the native wildlife that help our environment flourish.

Leaf collection begins October 20 – find details at www.townofpittsford.org/leaf-collection

Use our Leaf app to see where crews are and where they'll be next.



From the Supervisor

Continued from page 2

include extensive improvements and other steps to create a healthier environment.

In Pittsford, our ongoing services, such as leaf and brush pickup, road maintenance and paving, and others I've described, accompany major infrastructure improvements of recent years such as the East Avenue Sidewalk, the Erie Canal Nature Preserve, the Dog Park, new Copper Beech Park. They're in addition to singular accomplishments of somewhat older vintage, such as our renovated Community Center, our new athletic fields, our Town Library. Or, harking back even further to my earliest days in Town government, Pittsford's signature achievement: our Greenprint for the Future, which preserved two-thirds of the remaining farmland in the Town when enacted, protecting it from development and preserving it as unspoiled open countryside for us and for generations to come.

Beyond Services

Newcomers to Pittsford have often told me that our Town's services and their quality compare very favorably to other places they've lived, even in nearby communities.

Different towns make different decisions, hold different priorities, identify different needs and offer different experiences. One hopes it's because the different town governments respect the wishes of the broad consensus of their residents, as Pittsford has done to date. These differences among towns collectively comprise the tapestry of broader community.

Going well beyond municipal services and amenities, repeatedly I hear it from the overwhelming majority of you, our residents, in messages, phone calls, e-mails, letters, encounters at restaurants or at Wegmans, when you visit Town Hall or as I visit your neighborhood: you value the unique Pittsford experience. We have something special in Pittsford: a quality of life, a peace of mind, an outlook of optimism, a justified pride in community.

It's the job of Town government to keep it that way.

Please let me hear from you! I maintain an open-door policy in the office, answer my own phone unless I'm in a meeting or on another line and have a monthly Saturday open house for residents at the Library's Fisher Room. You can reach me at (585) 248-6220 or by email at bsmith@townofpittsford.org.

More Sheriff's Deputies for Traffic and Law Enforcement

Last year the Sheriff's Office added a number of new deputies to Zone A, which includes Pittsford. On top of that increase, the Sheriff now plans to have 3 to 4 additional deputies in place, serving Pittsford, by this coming January.

This higher level of law enforcement is funded by the taxes Pittsford residents already pay to the County, to pay for Sheriff's Office services. No extra tax from Pittsford residents is needed.

Other steps by the Sheriff's Office to strengthen traffic enforcement in Pittsford include:

- Adding a 4th platoon in Zone A to allow more proactive policing and a more visible presence in Town and along the Canal Path.
- Centralizing all traffic enforcement under a Sheriff's Tactical Accident Reduction Unit focused on traffic enforcement.

In addition, the Sheriff's radar speed trailers are available to Pittsford, supplementing our own. Data from the trailers is useful in identifying the best way to mitigate traffic problems at specific points. Our thanks to Sheriff Todd Baxter and his Zone A deputies for partnering with us to make Pittsford even safer.

Supervisor Smith meets regularly with the Zone A Captain to keep on top of issues needing attention from law enforcement. If you're aware of a particular traffic problem, whether in your neighborhood or anywhere in town, please let the Supervisor know, by calling **(585) 248-6220** or by email to **bsmith@townofpittsford.org**.



Other Taxing Jurisdictions: 92¢ **Town: 8¢**

Of every dollar you pay in property tax, only 8 cents is Town tax!

For this, you receive a uniquely broad array of municipal services and amenities, including regular collection of yard debris and leaves, free mulch, a Town-funded Library, an extensive system of public parks and trails and a full schedule of community events and festivals.

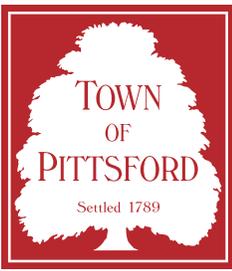


More than 500 kids ages 3 to 13 had a great time at our Summer Camps!

Family fun at our Outdoor Movie Nights.



A concert season full of outstanding performers.



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(585) 248-6200

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Town Board

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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 2025

www.townofpittsford.org

TOWN OF PITTSFORD'S

Family Halloween Fest

*A trick-or-treat
alternative for kids!*



Sunday,
October 26

Our ever-popular **Family Halloween Fest** is Sunday, October 26, from noon to 2:00pm
at the **Spiegel Community Center**, 35 Lincoln Avenue.

This fun, family-friendly event features crafts, games, refreshments, indoor and outdoor activities, and **admission is just one canned food item per person**, benefiting the Pittsford Food Cupboard. Your donation supports the Food Cupboard's vital mission to combat food insecurity and promote well-being throughout our community, enabling local families in need to access essential, nourishing items and face challenges with stability and hope.

Learn more about the Pittsford Food Cupboard by visiting:

www.pittsfordfoodcupboard.net

