

## The Supervisor's Town budget for 2020

### Town taxes cut for the second consecutive year

### Town's AAA credit rating reflects superior financial stability Sound budget reserves protect taxpayers, uphold fiscal health

State Law assigns to the Town Supervisor responsibility for preparing the annual budget and submitting it to the public and the Town Board. Pending the public hearing on my proposed budget for 2020, I'd like to share with you some of its key provisions.

My budget cuts the Town tax rate by a further 1.5% and cuts the general tax levy. Together with the tax cut in this year's budget, it represents a cumulative cut in the Town tax rate of 8.1% since 2018.

My first duty to Pittsford residents is to deploy Town resources – your tax dollars – as efficiently and effectively as possible. This is the key to the continual improvement that preserves the character of our community and supports our quality of life.

This discipline keeps Town taxes low. My budget maintains and improves our parks, roads, trails and sidewalks; our Library, Community Center and Recreation programs. The budget supports responsible environmental practices. It maintains our regular leaf collection schedule and weekly yard debris collection, matched by few other towns. It provides for timely and effective response to snow, ice and emergency conditions.

This approach to budgeting keeps Town taxes low, maintains necessary budget reserves and upholds our exemplary credit rating – Triple A – the highest of any town in New York north of Westchester County.

#### Protecting taxpayers

We're all burdened by high New York taxes. For the part of the picture my Town Administration controls – we control it! Out of every dollar you pay in property tax, less than nine cents is Town of Pittsford tax.

Of the 18 towns in Monroe County, Pittsford's Town tax rate is 7th lowest. If you don't count towns that make money from big landfills, and towns with big box commercial areas sprawling for miles, we're 5th lowest.

And Pittsford provides municipal services that not all other lower-taxed towns do, such as regular and frequent leaf pickup, yard debris pickup, a community center, recreation programming and a Town-financed library, just to name a few.

#### Triple A credit rating

Pittsford can deliver the best value to our residents because of the Town's AAA credit rating. It's the highest rating possible. Pittsford is the *only* town in all of upstate New York to have it. So when we take on a major project, such as building the Pittsford Community Library or, more recently, renovating the Spiegel Community Center, or refurbishing our athletic fields and parks, we can borrow at the most favorable interest rates available to a municipal government.

Pittsford residents pay the least. Because our credit rating is the best.



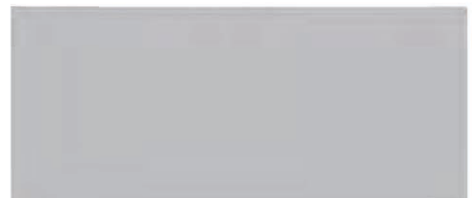
Bill Smith  
Town Supervisor

### New Town services

Cutting Town taxes while preserving the quality and range of services takes resourcefulness, commitment to efficiency, lean staffing and clear understanding of Town operations and needs both current and future.

My 2020 budget cuts the general Town tax rate and the general Town tax levy, preserves existing services and amenities, and funds new services and amenities:

1. Maintains increased funding for residential road repaving program
2. Library improvements
3. Increased funding for Pittsford Ambulance
4. A new kayak launch on the canal, which will be handicapped accessible and easier for seniors
5. More funding for Pittsford Youth Services
6. Provision for environmental initiatives that save taxpayers' money and protect our natural resources
7. Upgrades to King's Bend Park
8. New recreation programs



## The Supervisor's message

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### Budget reserves

These are funds set aside to cover longer-term expenses expected beyond the current budget year and unexpected costs. They're the municipal equivalent of personal savings, to fund a roof replacement you've planned for next year, for example, or to get a new furnace when the old one dies.

If the Town had to borrow in order to buy a \$247,000 truck to plow snow, it would cost taxpayers more. Much more than buying the same truck from available funds. Pittsford prepares properly.

The same principle of intelligent fiscal management applies to preparing for emergencies. Again, Pittsford is prepared. We're not at the mercy of lenders who can gouge with the highest interest rates a municipality that hasn't planned ahead.

Responsible financial management such as this creates tax stability. Towns that suddenly have to borrow at high interest rates to cover an emergency will have to hike taxes to pay for it. Pittsford doesn't have to do that. We're prepared. We have adequate reserves. Our reserves keep to the State Comptroller's guidelines. Most are earmarked for specific purposes, such as vehicle and equipment purchases, building repairs and sewer improvements and repairs, and are required by the State Comptroller to be used solely for the purposes specified.

### Summary

For this 2020 budget and beyond, my priority in budgeting is protecting our taxpayers by continuing to keep Town taxes low, maintaining Pittsford's high standards of services for residents, and planning carefully to provide adequate funding for expenditures down the road and for unexpected expenses.

As ever, should you have any comments about this or any other topic you may reach me directly by phone at **248-6220** or by email at **bsmith@townofpittsford.org**. My door is open and I answer my own phone. I'm always interested to know what matters most to you as a resident.

## Project Updates

### Pittsford's First Dog Park Open

Pittsford's first Dog Park opened on October 8. Located on Town land at 34 East Street, the park features play structures and water fountains for dogs and benches and picnic tables for their owners. It includes an area for small dogs and a dog washing station. The park conveniently connects to two Town trails for access by foot or by bike. Residents who register to use the park have access to all dog parks in the Monroe County Dog Park system. For registration information visit the Parks page on the Town website.



*The new Pittsford Town Dog Park has plenty of room to run and convenient amenities.*

### East Avenue Sidewalk Project Nears Completion

Work on the East Avenue Sidewalk project has continued throughout the summer. Phase 2, extending the sidewalk from the south end of Kilbourn Road to the Brighton town line, is expected to be completed by the end of October. The sidewalk will provide a safe walking route along the west side of North Main Street/East Avenue from the Village of Pittsford all the way to the Brighton town line. Some tree removal has been necessary during the project. In keeping with Pittsford's environmentally conscious policies, for every tree taken down the Town plants at least one more to replace it somewhere in the Town.

During this phase of sidewalk construction State Department of Transportation crews have been repaving and restriping East Avenue. Town crews continue to coordinate with the DOT to minimize disruption and inconvenience for residents and motorists along that section of East Avenue.



*Crews finishing the latest stretch of the East Avenue Sidewalk Project.*

## Sustainability Updates

### New Electric Vehicle Charging Station at Community Center

The new Electric Vehicle Charging Station at the Spiegel Pittsford Community Center will go in any day. It's the Town's second EV charging station. The station was paid for by a State grant the Town won by qualifying as an early adopter of the State's Clean Energy Communities program in 2017. The EV charging station can charge two vehicles at a time, each for up to four hours at a time. The charging speed is up to 25 RPH (miles of range per hour). This means that every hour of charging supplies up to 25 miles of range, depending on the vehicle. The charger operates via the ChargePoint card system.

### Solar Power for King's Bend Park

Town staff are currently finalizing the design for the rooftop solar panel project at King's Bend Park. Panels will be installed on one of the lodges and will provide electricity sufficient for both lodges at the park. Once the design is completed we'll choose a contractor to do the work. The project is funded by a State grant awarded to Pittsford for being an early adopter of the Clean Energy Communities Program in 2017.

### Healthy Lawn Care for the Fall

In keeping with the Toxin-Free Lawn challenge that the Town initiated this year, here's a reminder that fall is a great time for aerating and overseeding. This thickens up your lawn and helps crowd out weeds naturally. In this region it's the best time to fertilize your lawn as well. Doing it now helps sustain your lawn through winter and produces lush growth come spring. To avoid fertilizer run-off, don't fertilize before heavy rain is forecast. Fertilizing shortly *after* a healthy rainfall helps nutrients sink into the soil.

Be sure to continue mowing during the fall. Grass that's too long or too short is more subject to harm from cold weather. Leaving

grass clippings on the lawn and mowing fallen leaves with a mulching mower is an environmentally friendly way to strengthen your lawn for the winter ahead.

Fall is also a good time to re-evaluate your lawn care program for the following year. If you have a lawn service, carefully assess and discuss your needs with your lawn company. Whether you choose extensive or low-maintenance efforts, synthetic or organic lawn care products, caring for your lawn in a responsible manner is important not just to your yard but to the overall environment. If you are interested in working toward minimizing your use of synthetic lawn chemicals or perhaps in going completely organic, you can find tips to help you cultivate a healthy lawn that's healthy for the environment – visit the Town website at [www.townofpittsford.org/responsible-lawn-care](http://www.townofpittsford.org/responsible-lawn-care).

### New Bike Fix-it Stations at Library & Thornell Farm Park

Bike riders – and those who push jogging strollers – can inflate tires and make other adjustments with the Town's two new Bike Fix-it stations. In addition to an air-pump, each station has a full array of tools to make adjustments and fix flats. The stations are located at Thornell Farm Park (480 Mendon Road, next to Mendon High School) and behind the Pittsford Community Library (25 State Street). The Library location has new bike racks as well.



Supervisor Smith makes use of the Town Fix-it Station recently installed behind the Library.

### Water Bottle Refill Stations - a Better Option

Recently the Town installed a water bottle filler station at the Pittsford Community Library. In the short time since it's been available, 2,869 plastic bottles have been removed from the waste stream. At our

Spiegel Community Center, the two water bottle fillers in use for the past year have prevented 8,444 plastic bottles from ending up in our environment. As of the end of September, that's a combined total of 11,313 plastic bottles that won't be found in Pittsford. While water bottles are recyclable, and recycling plastic is commendable, statistics show only 23% of water bottles end up being recycled. And even bottles from the recycling bin can end up in a landfill. When you consider that manufacturing and transporting water bottles requires substantial energy use and resources like petroleum, the choice is clear – the most sustainable option is to use a refillable water bottle whenever you can.



Over the past year, the Town's water bottle refill stations have kept 11,313 plastic bottles out of the waste stream.

### Copper Beech Saplings Thriving

When the iconic copper beech tree in the Town Park near the four corners in the heart of the Village succumbed to disease and was removed in 2018, the Town took steps to preserve its legacy. Over 100 healthy cuttings from the tree were grafted onto rootstock, enabling them to grow over the past nearly four years into healthy saplings. The young trees – actual clones of the grand old copper beech – are maintained at Coldwater Pond Nursery and will remain there for another 2 to 3 years until they're ready for planting. The nursery provides this update: the saplings "have fantastic color and are the epitome of good health." Once the trees are established enough to be planted, they'll be ready to populate our parks and open spaces.



At nearly four years old, saplings from the Town's iconic copper beech tree are thriving.

### Leaf, Brush & Branch Collection

The Town's weekly collection of loose brush and branches, and paper-bagged or containerized yard debris (including bagged leaves) continues through November 29. We start collecting loose leaves in piles on October 21. Unlike weekly pickup of other yard debris, Town crews pick up **loose leaves in piles** approximately **every two weeks**. We collect leaf piles through December 6 or until all the leaves are collected, whichever comes later. For leaf pile collection you can refer to the Town's Leaf Collection app at <http://tech.townofpittsford.org/LeafCollection>. In keeping with the Town's sustainability policies, all yard debris and leaves will be turned into mulch, which the Town makes available free to our residents.

### Clear Drains Prevent Flooding & Driving Hazards

When the leaves fall and the winds blow, stormwater drains get blocked. Rain and melting snow can cause flooding that makes driving dangerous when water can't drain from roads and sidewalks. You can help to prevent this. Periodically, please check storm drains near your home or business and remove any grass clippings, leaves or other debris. And please remember that **the Town Code prohibits piling leaves in the street**. Pile them at the end of your property next to the street. Leaves in the street are the main culprit in storm drains becoming blocked.

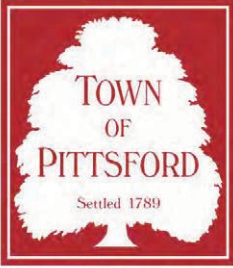


### Supervisor's thanks to staff

#### Hard at Work for Our Residents

We've had a busy summer and head into fall with a full schedule of priorities and projects. Behind all of our efforts, each task, each accomplishment, is a team of truly dedicated individuals. I cannot overstate my appreciation for these fine colleagues. This year our Town staff members have planned and executed a very successful events season. They've ensured completion this season of the East Avenue Sidewalk, a major Town initiative. They brought new projects, like

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*Deputy Town Supervisor*

Kevin S. Beckford

Matthew J. O'Connor

Stephanie M. Townsend

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You can find us on:



**Supervisor's thanks to staff**

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our Dog Park, to reality. They conscientiously and commendably tended to daily infrastructure needs, including road, sewer, parks and facility maintenance. They provided outstanding Library, Recreation and Senior programs. They met resident needs for information and Town services in a timely, considerate, above-and-beyond, and personally vested manner. They achieved all of this with professionalism, efficiency and an open and welcoming commitment to providing outstanding service, day after day.

And the year isn't over yet! Leaf collection, fall programs and services, snow and ice removal, outdoor projects, indoor maintenance, equipment repair, ongoing project inspections and services, scheduling and planning for the coming year – all are still to come, in addition to the day-to-day responsibilities that keep our Town functioning. I am truly thankful and consider myself most fortunate to be a part of this amazing Town team. My thanks to each member of our team for the spirit and commitment they bring to work each day and the positive impact they make on our community.

**Upcoming Events**



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

**Supervisor Saturdays**

Check the Town eNews and website for Supervisor Saturday dates – a casual monthly open house where residents can discuss topics of interest with Town Supervisor Bill Smith.

**eNews**

For updates on Town meetings, projects, programs, services and events, sign up for our weekly eNews. It's quick and easy – visit [www.townofpittsford.org/enews](http://www.townofpittsford.org/enews). One email. Once a week. Receive urgent/emergency notifications as well. We never share your email address.

**Candlelight Night is December 3**

Save the date for the Pittsford Chamber of Commerce's Candlelight Night, Tuesday, December 3 from 5:00 – 10:00pm in the Village of Pittsford. A Pittsford tradition for over 48 years, Candlelight Night is an evening of fun for the whole family, featuring a variety of activities including cookie decorating and a book sale at the Library, treats at Town Hall, and plenty of holiday cheer. There's also a pub crawl to benefit Pittsford Food Cupboard. Find updated information at [www.pittsfordchamber.org](http://www.pittsfordchamber.org).

**Town Can Help Find Lost Pets**

If your pet is missing, if you find a lost pet, or if you spot a pet that might be lost, please contact Animal Control Officer Carolyn Casey at (585) 248-6240. Officer Casey works to reunite owners and pets but needs help from the public to do so. She is often out in the community and looks out for pets in need of assistance. Those calling after hours can leave a message or, for urgent issues, may call the Town's after-hours emergency services number at (585) 248-6212.