

From the Supervisor

The Supervisor's Town Budget for 2022

2022 Budget Cuts Town Tax Rate

State law assigns to the Town Supervisor responsibility for preparing the annual budget and submitting it to the public and the Town Board. On November 10 the Town Board approved my proposed budget for 2022.

The budget cuts the Town tax rate by an additional two cents (\$0.02), reducing it to \$3.13 per thousand dollars, compared to \$3.15 for the current year.

This represents the third tax rate cut in the last four successive budgets, the one exception being my final proposed budget for 2021 that held the tax rate flat, with no increase. Altogether, these comprise a cumulative cut of more than 9% in the Town tax rate since 2018.

Town tax remains proportionally low. For a number of years, Town taxes have comprised nine cents (\$0.09) of every dollar in property tax paid by Pittsford residents. Now, under the 2022 budget, reflecting our series of tax cuts over the past 4 years, for every dollar each taxpayer pays in property tax, just eight cents (\$0.08) is Town of Pittsford tax.

The comparison with other local municipalities remains stable. Of the 18 towns in Monroe County, Pittsford still has the 7th lowest town tax rate. If you exclude those towns that receive revenues from landfills, and those with commercial areas much more extensive and intensive than Pittsford's, we're the 5th lowest. And Pittsford provides a combination of municipal services that none of the other lower-taxed towns do, such as leaf pickup, yard debris pickup, a recreation program and a Town-financed library.

Quality of Services

The budget maintains the municipal services that support quality of life for all residents. We maintain our stepped-up staffing for repaving of residential neighborhood streets and of main roads under the Town's jurisdiction. The proposed budget recognizes the increased demand in the community for support from Pittsford Youth Services; consequently, the budget provides for double PYS's budget request for next year. Cumulatively, my proposed budgets since 2017 have increased funding of Pittsford Youth Services by nearly 79%.

The budget provides for an additional full-time person in our IT Department, which has been needed for some time. It supports our Town employees with cost of living increases for all non-elected employees in light of the significant increase in inflation over the past year. Elected employees receive no increase. The budget continues funding for grant-writing services. It supports as well the substantial increases in benefit costs that are being imposed by benefit providers for the year ahead.

The proposed budget maintains full funding for senior citizens' programs and services, including lunch and nutrition programs. It funds more youth programs planned and organized by our Recreation staff.



Bill Smith
Town Supervisor

Inside:

- A Place for Teens at the Library
- Senior Lunches Are Back
- Historian's Office Opens at Community Center
- Winter Safety Tips
- New Bus for Seniors & Youth Programs
- Community Gathers for Halloween Fest & Veterans Day Ceremony



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From the Supervisor

Continued from page 1

As the relaxation of pandemic restrictions has made it possible once more for the Town to offer its full slate of community events and programs, the budget funds them all, in addition to an expanded schedule of summer canalside concerts.

A Legacy of Fiscal Leadership

Pittsford taxpayers continue to benefit from the Town's leadership. The Finger-Lakes Municipal Healthcare Trust – a statewide model for shared services, initiated by the Town of Pittsford – continues to save the Town substantial additional expense every year. As a result, the increase in medical costs is confined to 5% for next year, rather than a multiple of that. Costs for employee dental benefits, which are 100% funded by the Town, are up by 2%.

Independently of any funds becoming available to the Town from any other level of government to help cover costs and lost revenue due to COVID, Pittsford's longstanding record of fiscal responsibility withstood the test. Our careful budgeting practices enabled the Town to meet the fiscal challenge of COVID, while protecting taxpayers.

Taxpayers continue to save money because the Town maintains its credit rating. The Town of Pittsford has the highest credit rating possible – Triple-A. This is much more than a report card on municipal fiscal management. It protects taxpayers by keeping down the rate of interest we pay on Town bonds, for such things as the Greenprint, the new Community Center, the Library and our improvements to Athletic Fields and parks.

Pittsford remains the only Town of its size in the United States to hold a perfect credit rating. And the only town in

New York north of Westchester and Putnam counties to have it. Consistently, Pittsford residents continue to pay less for bond financing of municipal improvements than residents of any other place in upstate New York – and any other place of our size in the country.

Summary

Pittsford has emerged from the fiscal uncertainties of the COVID pandemic in a strong position. Any federal or State funding will only help further.

The budget for 2022 supports my administration's commitment to responsiveness to residents, to building stronger neighborhoods, to continual improvement and to services of importance to youth and seniors. We move forward on Pittsford's decades of enlightened and responsible budgetary practices that protect taxpayers.

Thanks to Finance Director Brian Luke and our Town Department Heads for their work and recommendations in preparing this budget. Thanks to our residents for your suggestions. With them, and with the improvements we seek, we estimate expenses for the year. We project revenues and reconcile this data to complete a budget that maintains and improves services and amenities while best protecting taxpayers.

That's what produced the Town budget. That's how we continue to improve services and infrastructure and protect taxpayers. To do the job you expect us to do in the best possible way.

Whether in preparing the budget or at any other time, I need to hear from you to keep abreast of what's on your mind and how Town government can serve you best. My office door is open and I answer my own phone. You can contact me at **248-6220** or by email at wsmith@townofpittsford.org.

Highlights from 2022 Town Budget:

- **Cuts the Town Tax rate**, reducing it to \$3.13 per thousand dollars, from \$3.15 in 2021 – cumulatively since 2018, more than a 9% cut in the Tax Rate
- Maintains stepped-up **repaving of residential neighborhood streets** and of main roads under the Town's jurisdiction
- **Increased funding for Pedestrian Safety improvements** and measures to reduce speeding
- **Increased support for Pittsford Youth Services**, doubling PYS's budget request for next year
- Maintains **full funding for senior citizens' programs and services**, including lunches, social activities, and exercise and nutrition programs
- **Funds a variety of youth programs** planned and organized by our Recreation staff, including afterschool programs, youth sports, teen activities, drama and dance programs, and summer camps
- Funds a full slate of **community events** and programs

Final Phase of East Ave Sidewalk Is Complete – Safer Crossing for Pedestrians

A walkable community helps create a more sustainable future. To improve pedestrian safety, in late October we completed an additional stretch of sidewalk along East Avenue. This completes both phases of the East Avenue Sidewalk project. The new section connects the Landsdowne neighborhood to the upgraded signalized crosswalk at New England Drive. This allows safer crossing on East Avenue, giving access to nearby neighborhoods, the Village, Nazareth College and St. John Fisher College.

Completing both phases of the East Avenue sidewalk represents the beginning, not an end. We're moving forward to seek funds for the additional sidewalks and trails you've asked for, that we prioritized in our Active Transportation Plan.



New Home for the Pittsford Historian

The Pittsford Historian's office has moved to the Spiegel Community Center at 35 Lincoln Avenue. The office is in room 114, a historic classroom restored to its original 1916 appearance. The Historian's office maintains documents, resources, artifacts and exhibits chronicling Pittsford's past: its people, places and events. Town Historian Audrey Johnson and Deputy Town Historian Vicki Masters Proffitt are available to assist with inquiries about ancestry, genealogy, historic buildings, Town history and more. Our historians also give lectures and walking tours, including tours of the cemeteries in Town. The office is open to the public Thursdays from 1:00 – 5:00pm and by appointment. You can reach the Historian Office at (585) 248-6245 or via email to ajohnson@townofpittsford.org or vproffitt@townofpittsford.org. Find further information at www.townofpittsford.org/historian.



New Bus Will Serve Seniors and Youth

In late October the Town took delivery of a new bus for our Recreation Department. It will be used for our senior lunch program and for taking seniors on weekly trips to destinations such as art galleries, local museums, parks, restaurants and the Public Market. It will take kids to our Summer Adventure Camps. In addition, we'll use the bus for hiking trips, skiing trips and other fun activities that require transportation. Thanks to our Spiegel Community Center team for coming up with new and engaging programs for Pittsford residents of all ages!



Emergency Closings Information

In the case of major weather events or other emergencies, information about facility closings and program/event cancellations will be announced on the Town's website www.townofpittsford.org, Facebook page **Town of Pittsford**, and Twitter feed **@pittsfordtown**, as well as on local television and radio stations and Pittsford's Cable TV 12 Channel 1303 government access station. TV-12 Channel 1303 announcements can be viewed live any time via the TV-12 Channel 1303 page on the Town website.

Winter Safety Tips

Fire and Heating Safety

As temperatures drop, our use of fireplaces, space heaters, wood stoves, radiators and other heating devices goes up. **During the winter, most home fires are those involving heating equipment.** Following a few simple rules can help keep you safe this winter.

- Install and test smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors. Test detectors already installed.
- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet from any heat source like fireplaces, wood stoves, radiators or space heaters.
- Never use power strips or extension cords to power heaters. Plug all heating devices directly into wall outlets. Don't plug any other electrical device into the same outlet – this reduces the risk of overheating.
- Store cooled ashes from a fireplace or wood stove in a tightly covered metal container and keep it outside away from structures. Never store ashes in your house or garage.
- Have a qualified professional clean and inspect your chimney and vents.
- Always use a screen in front of wood-burning fireplaces.

Please remember that **coals and ashes from fires can remain hot enough to start a fire for days after the fire appears to be out.**

Initial fire temperature, materials being burned and the amount of unburned fuel left all affect this. To be safe, treat all ashes and coals as hot when disposing of them – whether from your fireplace, a campfire, or a grill.

Winter is a great time for enjoying your fireplace or wood stove. Just remember to be safe, and dispose of your ash and coals properly!

Don't Crowd the Plow

When the snow flies our crews get out on the roads to plow. If you're on the road, please give our plows plenty of room to work. The road behind an active plow truck is safer to drive on, so driving an appropriate distance behind a plow may be your best option, especially during heavy snows. If you must pass, please only pass when it is safe to do so. If conditions get severe, consider staying off the roads entirely, and always do so if a travel ban or state of emergency is declared.

A Snow-Free Car Keeps the Roads Safer for All

On a cold morning after a heavy snowfall or as you get ready to head home after a snowy day, it may be tempting to skip cleaning off your vehicle before you get on the road. But doing so can be quite dangerous to you and to others. It could get you ticketed by the police. Snow blowing from your car can make it impossible for drivers behind you to see. Blocked taillights or headlights can cause accidents. Frozen rooftop snow can slide forward and block your view. To keep the road safe for yourself and others this winter, please clear the snow off your vehicle properly before you drive.

Clear Hydrants = Faster Emergency Response

If there's a fire hydrant on your property, you can help our firefighters by ensuring it is kept clear this winter. Maintaining a 3-foot clearing around it is important. Clearing a path from the hydrant to the street is also very helpful. In an emergency, every second counts, so quick access is key!



Seasonal Parking Rules in Effect Through April 1

To permit snow removal, Town of Pittsford seasonal parking rules are currently in effect. They continue through April 1, 2022. Parking any vehicle on public roads - including state highways and on the shoulder of all roads - is prohibited each year from November 15 through April 1 in all areas within the Town and outside of the Village. During this time, please don't park on or along public roads outside of the Village. Please note violators may be ticketed or towed.

When the snow flies, we need roadsides clear of vehicles so our plows can get through. This is especially true in neighborhoods, where the streets are narrower. Vehicles parked along the roadside can hinder plows in your neighborhood. Please help us keep our streets safe and accessible this winter!

Senior Lunch Programs for Fun and Fellowship

Our seniors braved a rainy day to enjoy a festive fall luncheon at King's Bend Park - one of our **monthly Tuesday themed lunches for seniors**. Chef Julie made a home-cooked meal. Willard Farms donated pumpkins and students in the Mendon High School Art Club demonstrated their creative skills by decorating each. Everyone got a one-of-a-kind pumpkin to take home! Our Tuesday themed lunches for seniors are offered once a month - visit www.townofpittsford.org/seniors for details or call the Seniors Program Office at **248-6235**. We also have a **Seniors Lunch Club 60** program offered by the County that meets every Monday, Wednesday and Friday; seniors can call **248-6235** one week in advance for reservations.



Pittsford Community Library Is a Great Place for Teens!

Did you know the Pittsford Community Library hosts a “Teen Place” on the second floor? There, teens can find fiction and graphic novels for readers in grades 6-12. Nonfiction and biographies for teens are located in the nearby general nonfiction section on the second floor. An array of video games, audiobooks, and movies of interest to teens can be found on the first floor. The Library also has just launched a new web page for teens that features information about its events, collections and services available to teens. Find it at www.townofpittsford.org/library/teens. Teens – and those of all ages – can use the Monroe County Library System library catalog to find a variety of items available at our Library. Find the search tool at <https://catalogplus.libraryweb.org/#bookriver>. Many thanks to our Library staff for their inspired and dedicated service to our teens, and to all of our Library patrons.



Refuse Districts for Lower Cost, Less Traffic

The Town of Pittsford’s Refuse District program lets residents reduce their cost of trash collection and recycling and reduce truck traffic in their neighborhood as well. A Refuse District is a designated area in which a single collector serves all households. The district is defined by the people who live there. The Town solicits bids and negotiates a contract that covers all Town refuse districts. Residents in a district no longer pay the waste hauler directly, but pay through the Town as a Refuse District charge on

the tax bill. So far the program has resulted in reduced costs to residents in the districts, often substantially.

To date, fifteen neighborhoods have organized refuse districts. A typical district consists of a group of adjoining streets. All that’s necessary to create a district is to come up with the parameters of a new district that you and others in your neighborhood can agree on. You’ll then have to get signed petitions from residents representing at least 50% of the aggregate assessed value of the

proposed district. The Town helps by preparing the petitions for you and providing notary services for petition-signing.

The period for creating a refuse district runs from January 1 - April 30 of each year. Neighborhoods obtaining enough petitions see service begin the following January 1. To learn more about forming a refuse district in your neighborhood, visit www.townofpittsford.org/refuse-districts.

Veterans Day Ceremony Celebrated Those Who Served

Supervisor’s remarks recognized Pittsford WWII fighter pilot Lloyd Thornell.

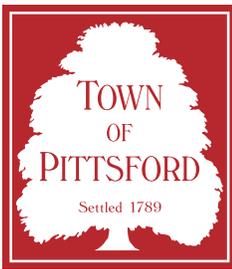
The Rayson-Miller Pittsford American Legion Post 899 held its annual Veterans Day ceremony on November 11 at the Veterans Monument in Carpenter Park. The moving tribute included a presentation of colors, the placement of wreaths, a rifle salute and the playing of *Taps*. Remarks from Town Supervisor Bill Smith included recognition of First Lieutenant Lloyd Thornell, a Pittsford resident and highly decorated World War II fighter pilot who carried out his duties with great skill, conviction and loyalty – and in the ultimate act of service, lost his life in doing so. If you missed the ceremony, the video is available on demand. Visit www.townofpittsford.org/channel12 and click the On-Demand & TV-12 Program Feed icon. Then click the Playlist tab, scroll to and select Town of Pittsford Events, and select Pittsford Veterans Day 2021 to begin viewing.



Pittsford resident and highly decorated World War II fighter pilot First Lieutenant Lloyd Thornell.



Betty Thornell Wilson, sister of Lloyd Thornell, with Town Supervisor Bill Smith. We were proud to have Betty and some of her family members attend the American Legion’s 2021 Veterans Day Ceremony.



11 South Main Street
Pittsford, New York 14534
(585) 248-6200

Supervisor

William A. Smith, Jr.

Town Board

Kate Bohne Munzinger
Deputy Town Supervisor

Kevin S. Beckford

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Stephanie M. Townsend

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Supervisor's Thanks to Staff

The challenges of the pandemic – both fiscal and logistic – have been with us throughout 2021. Our Town employees rose to the occasion with characteristic commitment, creativity and dedication to our residents. Over the past year our staff opened the Erie Canal Nature Preserve and planted our first Native Species Pollinator Garden. They completed an aggressive repaving program improving streets in so many neighborhoods. They offered and expanded programs for all ages at our Library and Community Center, and did so safely. They brought back a full summer program of concerts, movies and more, and a Food Truck and Music Fest in September bigger and better than ever. They fully overhauled the Town website, which is fully ADA compliant and mobile-friendly. They involved residents in recognizing the 25th anniversary of our Greenprint Plan with a self-guided tour, online materials and more.

Through it all, our Town employees carried on the regular Town services on which we all rely, caring for our neighborhoods and our neighbors, our parks, and maintaining Town roadways, sewers and all other facilities. They succeeded despite the constantly changing demands of the pandemic. To every member of our outstanding Town staff, my sincere thanks for a job very well done.

– Bill

Great Fun at the Family Halloween Fest

Our 19th annual Family Halloween Fest was a great day for families and fabulous costumes! Held for the first time at the Spiegel Community Center, the fest featured crafts, games, refreshments, and plenty of indoor and outdoor activities. Plus, our generous attendees helped us collect 18 boxes of canned goods and other food items for the Pittsford Food Cupboard! Many thanks to the volunteers from Pittsford Rotary, the Rotary Interact Clubs of Mendon and Sutherland High Schools, and other community groups who helped provide such fun activities and special treats for all of our guests – while also decked out in some pretty great costumes. Thanks as well to the local Pittsford businesses providing in-kind donations for the event: Bristol's Garden Center, Powers Farm Market, and Willard Farms.

