

Brighton-Pittsford Post – “From the Supervisor” column – November 27, 2014 issue
Submitted by Pittsford Town Supervisor Bill Smith

Much for which to be thankful

It's Thanksgiving. As do you, those of us in Town Hall have much in our personal and family lives for which to be thankful. As municipal officers, we have some additional things we're grateful for as well. In particular, we're grateful for the level of engagement by Pittsford residents in our community life, and in guiding and advising us as we shape the policies and make the decisions for which we're responsible.

Our Town Board consists of Pittsford residents with roots in the community and a pedigree of service to it. Town Board members act as liaisons to our various volunteer boards.

I have always thought of our volunteer boards as comprising the beating heart of civic life in Pittsford. The members of these boards are residents with specific interests, skills and backgrounds. Some have decision making authority, such as the Planning Board, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Assessment Review Board, the Design Review and Historic Preservation Board and the Library Board of Trustees.

All of our volunteer boards provide guidance, and carry weight in the town's decision-making even where they are boards of an advisory nature.

Currently there are forty-one Pittsford residents who serve, on a volunteer basis and without pay, on our citizen boards. The time commitment can be significant, especially for those in positions of leadership on the boards. For some of our boards, it means 24 meetings per year, with each meeting averaging 4 to 5 hours. And that doesn't count the many hours out of meetings spent reviewing documents, such as project plans, engineering drawings and design plans, or time spent in site visits.

The members of our boards are people with lives as busy as any of us. They find the time to work in the municipal administration of our community. Their commitment has been essential to maintaining good government in Pittsford.

Our standing Volunteer Boards are:

Assessment Review Board
Design Review and Historic Preservation Board
Environmental Board
Library Board of Trustees
Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Planning Board
Zoning Board of Appeals

We thank our board volunteers and also all the Pittsford residents willing to become involved by making their voices heard on community priorities.

On a personal note, I want you all to know how helpful and important it has been to me, as Town Supervisor, to have the day-to-day-contact with residents I've enjoyed since taking office at the beginning of this year. This is why I answer my own phone. When any of you call in, to report a problem, to comment on some aspect of Town operations, to make a suggestion, I learn something new. I don't know how I possibly could proceed as Supervisor without hearing from you in this way.

For that, and for the great good fortune of living in this wonderful place, I am truly thankful.

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