

Town of Glenville

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Supervisor Koetzle's 2020 Budget Message

My 2020 budget submitted to the Town Clerk on September 27, 2019 is a conservative spending plan which once again stays within the state imposed real property tax cap limit. **The Town of Glenville has stayed under the tax cap every year since it was implemented,** and we have done so without relying on gimmicks such as new fees or the deferral of required payments to the state retirement system.

The overall proposed 2020 tax rate increase is 2.52%. A typical Glenville homeowner outside the village, with a home assessed at \$171,000, will see a total 2020 town tax bill increase of \$23 which covers all town items on the January tax bill: town general, town outside, highway, water, sewer, and all special districts. A typical village homeowner will see a 2020 increase of \$4. The proposed tax levy increase of 2.94% is below our New York State tax cap.

The 2020 budget will be the tenth consecutive budget in which we have reduced the overall Town debt load. Our philosophy of being judicious in the issuing of new debt and avoiding unnecessary borrowing has resulted in a reduction of the Town debt load from \$23.1 million in 2010 down to less than \$12 million by the end of 2020. We will continue to adhere to this philosophy of prudence regarding debt issuance, and in fact prudence in all things regarding Town of Glenville finances, throughout my tenure as Town Supervisor.

Another key financial tenet we've followed since 2010 has been reducing the use of the Town's fund balance (our savings accounts) in our three main funds of Town General, Town Outside the Village, and Highway. In 2020, we will utilize a total of \$300,000 in fund balance appropriation across these main funds, a reduction of \$40,000 from 2019. When I was first elected Supervisor in 2010, we inherited a budget that used almost \$1,400,000 in fund balance appropriation for these funds. I am proud that we have now cut our reliance on fund balance appropriations by nearly 80% in the past 10 years. We expect to reduce our fund balance appropriation again in the 2021 budget as we near the elimination of using fund balance for operations.

Our reductions in fund balance usage and debt payments have allowed us to create capital reserve and debt reserve accounts to fund large projects and absorb new debt issuances. This financial planning has produced concrete results. In just the past few years we have saved the historic Yates Mansion, constructed a new gun range for our police department, installed street lights, sidewalks, and a multi-modal path throughout Town Center, installed new automatic-read water meters, expanded the Senior Center, replaced aging DPW and Parks equipment, constructed the Andersen Dog Park, improved the roads and playing fields in Indian Meadows Park, added a second entrance at Maalwyck Park, and funded a new pavilion with concession stand, bathrooms, and full utilities at Maalwyck Park.

Each of these projects benefitted from our safeguarding of fund balance to allow the creation of capital reserve and debt reserve accounts.

In 2020, we will add to these achievements by:

- Constructing a new paved road in Indian Meadows Park which will eventually link to a planned second entrance into the park;
- Repairing the town portion of the bike-hike trail along the Mohawk River linking Freemans Bridge Road to Schonowee Avenue;
- Expanding town water service to the Glen Oaks neighborhood, providing residents with improved water pressure at half the cost they now pay;
- Purchasing two new plow/dump trucks, a new parks tractor, and three new police cars;
- Investing a further \$71,000 in the Yates Mansion restoration, including \$16,000 in the operating budget and a transfer of \$55,000 into the Yates Mansion capital project account;
- Switching our highway garage to natural gas and replacing outdated fuel island equipment;
- Re-paving the Senior Center parking lot upon completion of the expansion project; and
- Allocating \$150,000 from capital reserves to augment our annual highway paving program. We plan on doing the same in 2021 and 2022 with the goal of completing paving in the Scotchbush, Glen Oaks, and Indian Hills neighborhoods.

The 2020 budget will also continue our investment in personnel to serve Glenville residents. In 2020, we will add an additional full-time laborer in the Parks department, which comes on the heels of adding a new Highway laborer in 2019, new police officers in both 2018 and 2019, a new part-time Parks laborer in 2019, and a new part-time code enforcement position in 2019.

Additionally, in 2020 the Town Board and I will continue to strongly advocate for Glenville's fair share of sales tax revenue. In the past 15 years, Glenville's sales tax revenues have grown by only \$278,000, an increase of less than 1% per year, while the sales tax revenues kept by Schenectady County have climbed by \$31 million, a total increase of 83%. This is due to the fundamentally unfair sales tax agreement negotiated by Schenectady County and the City of Schenectady, with no input from nor consideration of the towns and villages. This is grossly unfair to all town and village residents in this county. With the Town Board, I will continue to press this important issue until Schenectady County legislators agree to provide Glenville, and all towns and villages, with our fair share of sales tax revenue.

This tentative 2020 budget is fiscally sound, operationally effective, and fair to all. We will, as always, stay within the tax cap, invest in our community, and make significant progress in maintaining a long-term, sustainable economic base for town residents. I offer my thanks to the Town Board, the Town Comptroller, the Highway Superintendent, department heads, our employee unions, and the entire town staff for their hard work on this budget and for helping this Town Board maintain a strong fiscal foundation for the people of Glenville. For more budget information, please visit townofglenville.org.



Christopher A. Koetzle
Town Supervisor
September 27, 2019