

Dear neighbor,

As June begins the Village of Trumansburg will be sending its annual property tax bills to all Village property owners, the culmination of a months-long budget process that led to the adoption of our 2019-2020 Village budget in April. Through sound fiscal management and the reworking of some of our large vehicle and equipment replacement cycles, we were able to fend off a large tax increase this year.

We use the term “fend off” because, in many respects, increasing taxes are unavoidable over time unless one of two things happens: Services are cut, or the tax base is expanded. There is no third option. Village Board members are sensitive to the impact of property tax increases to a household budget, however, we are not in favor of cutting services as all of the services provided by the Village fall into either the public safety or infrastructure categories. We don't have non-essential “pork” spending at the Village level.

The handful of municipalities in Upstate NY that have seen their property tax rates remain stable have all seen one thing – growth. Growth in housing, growth in population, and even growth in geography. While it is certainly feasible to maintain desired services as an insular community with little growth, this will lead to large segments of the community, both long time residents and would-be newcomers, from being priced out of our Village. It's already happening. The math is inescapable.

Alternatively, we as a Village can maintain an open mind to ideas and proposals that have the potential for growth of the tax base. This is the true history of the Village. The Village did not stop growing after Abner Treman built his cabin, or after Hermon Camp built his mansion. The Village did not close its doors when country stores became family restaurants, or when large houses were built in a “swamp that nobody would want”. Indeed, the very history of the Village, the very character we claim to cherish is the direct result of growth and change.

While no Village Board can force growth, we are able to look for opportunities and attempt to think outside the proverbial box, with the long term viability of the Village as our focus. As the Village moves forward into a new budget year, we ask for your continued support in our mission of sustainability, and our mission to find ways to maintain the quality of life and quality of Village services that is a big part of why so many choose to call “Tremendousburg” their home.

Your neighbors,

Rordan Hart, Mayor
Deb Watkins, Deputy Mayor
Ben Carver, Trustee
Ben Darfler, Trustee
Keith Hannon, Trustee