



RICHARD POTIKER
Supervisor

SHERMAN HAMEL
Deputy--Supervisor

DONNA HAMEL
Town Clerk/Tax Collector

JOHN ROCK
Supt. of Highways

HOWARD NEWTON
Councilman

GEORGE SEYMOUR
Councilman

MARTIN (MIKE) PERROTTE
Councilman

BARRY WHITE
Councilman

TOWN OF SCHUYLER FALLS

P.O. Box 99
997 Mason Street
Morrisonville, NY 12962
e-mail: townofschuylerfalls@charter.net
(518) 563-1129 (518) 563-2503
Fax # (518) 561-7845
TDD NY Relay # 1-800-662-1220

Dear Town Residence

This year in preparation for the 2019 budget it became clear that the time had come where the Highway Department's unallocated fund balance had been reduced to an amount where there would be no choice but to increase the Highway tax rate to once again balance the Highway Department's budget. This increase is not the result of and excessive increased spending but a decrease in revenue.

The events leading to this tax increase started in 2011 when after a NYS Comptroller's audit it was determined that the town had an excessive unallocated fund balance in both the town's general and highway funds. Based on the audit result the board decided to provide a reduction in the tax rate to spend down the excessive balance. At the very same time New York's Governor signed into law a property tax cap. Under the new law, property tax increases were capped at 2 percent or the rate of inflation, whichever is less. These two actions as well as several more tax rate decreases between 2011 and 2016 are what lead us to this year's tax rate increase. The projected increase is still far below the 2011 combined tax rate. While it is easy for a town's board to lower taxes the decision to raise taxes does not come easy. Unless there are added revenues or large spending cuts the return to a balanced budget will always be inevitable. While this tax rate increase balances the Highway budget the town's general tax rate of 15 cents per 1000 assessed value will remain for this year.

The time will come in the next few years where it will be necessary to raise the Town's general tax rate back to or near the 2011 rate. The town still has a healthy unallocated fund balance but unfortunately these funds cannot be used for the Highway. With host fees coming in to the town from the County landfill Schuyler falls will always have a lower than average tax rate as well as recreation, parks and roads that are second to none in the County.

The town is in the process of completing a new comprehensive plan. After this is completed an updated zoning and codes will follow. An unallocated fund policy is being drafted as well as reserves set up for future infrastructure and service projects. These changes will help with long term forecasting so we will continue to provide a safe and vibrant community for all who make the Town of Schuyler Falls their home.

Richard Potiker

Town Supervisor.

