

# Our Town



SUMMER 2024

**Newsletter for the Town of Lansing**

Issue 2

## Town Offices:

### Court

Judge John Howell  
Judge Maura Kennedy-Smith  
Melody Lombardo, Court Clerk  
**Hours: Monday-Thursday, 7:30am to 4:00pm**

### Highway Department

Mike Moseley, Highway Superintendent  
Jamar Redmond, Deputy Highway Superintendent  
Kevin May, Working Supervisor  
Jenna Hoellerer, Highway Secretary  
**Hours: Monday-Thursday, 6:00am to 4:00pm**

### Parks & Recreation

Patrick Tyrrell, Director of Parks & Recreation  
Tyler Todd, Parks & Rec. MEO/Coordinator  
Meggie Conley, Parks & Rec. Secretary  
**Hours: Monday-Thursday, 7:00am to 3:30pm**  
**Friday, 7:00am to noon**

### Planning & Code Enforcement

John Zepko, Director of Planning/Code  
Mason Molesso, Town Planner  
Scott Russell, Zoning/Code/Fire Enforcement Officer  
Heather Dries, Code Enforcement Officer  
Kelly Geiger, Code/Planning Information Aide  
**Hours: Monday-Thursday, 7:30am to 12:30pm**  
**Friday, 7:30am to noon**  
**or by appointment**

### Supervisor's Office

Ruth Groff, Town Supervisor  
Mary Ellen Albrecht, Bookkeeper  
Jennifer Schenck, Accountant  
**Hours: Monday-Thursday, 7:30am to 4:00pm**  
**Friday, 7:30am to noon**

### Town Clerk's Office

Debbie Munson, Town Clerk  
Jessie Hall, Deputy Town Clerk  
Ashley Workman, Town Clerk Aide  
**Hours: Monday-Thursday, 7:30am to 4:00pm**  
**Friday, 7:30am to noon**

[www.lansingtown.com](http://www.lansingtown.com)

## FROM THE DESK OF THE SUPERVISOR



For the Town Board, the first half of 2024 has been a time of new experiences, challenges, controversy, progress, and building of relationships. With three new members and a new supervisor, Lansing is adapting to the new composition and personality of its governing body. With this changing of the guard comes curiosity, doubt, and uncertainty, but also hope and excitement for the future of our town as this bright and energetic new team embraces the responsibilities of safeguarding the financial future of the town, ensuring that the character of the town is maintained and enriched, and that decisions are made with only the taxpayers' and residents' best interests in mind.

This quarterly newsletter is intended to share with you the news from not only the Town Board but from our staff, committees, and other resources around town, to keep you informed. The goal is to highlight accomplishments, provide updates on issues, announce upcoming topics, inform you of events in the community, and share community interest stories.

We welcome any comments about this newsletter so we may improve future issues, and we encourage you to submit community interest stories that highlight natural features in Lansing, or that shine the spotlight on any Lansing resident who deserves recognition for their accomplishments or dedication.

A handwritten signature of Ruth Groff in black ink.

Town Supervisor

## IN THIS ISSUE:

<b>ACCOMPLISHMENTS</b> .....	3
<b>DEMOLITION OF HOUSE AT 2 AUBURN ROAD</b> .....	3
<b>POWER PLANT CESSATION FUNDS TO BE AWARDED TO LANSING</b> .....	3
<b>OPEN SPACE CONSERVATION PLAN ADOPTED</b> .....	3
<b>DOG ENUMERATION COMPLETED</b> .....	3
<b>EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION DAY</b> .....	4
<b>COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND ZONING CODES GAP ANALYSIS</b> .....	4
<b>STATUS UPDATES</b> .....	5
<b>HIGHWAY FACILITY</b> .....	5
<b>LUDLOWVILLE ROAD REPAIR</b> .....	6
<b>UPCOMING TOPICS</b> .....	7
<b>SOLAR PROJECTS</b> .....	7
<b>ZONING UPDATES</b> .....	7
<b>CONSIDERING THE FUTURE OF THE RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY</b> .....	8
<b>PROCESS TO REPLACE TOWN JUSTICE</b> .....	8
<b>NEW BEGINNINGS IN LANSING</b> .....	9
<b>TOMPKINS COUNTY’S RAPID MEDICAL RESPONSE PROGRAM</b> .....	9
<b>TOMPKINS COUNTY RESOURCE HUB</b> .....	9
<b>INTRODUCING TOWN BOARD MEMBERS</b> .....	11
<b>CHRISTINE MONTAGUE, MEMBER</b> .....	11
<b>JOSEPH WETMORE, MEMBER</b> .....	11
<b>FINANCIAL SNAPSHOTS</b> .....	12
<b>SOURCES AND ALLOCATIONS OF REVENUES</b> .....	12
<b>ASSESSMENTS IN LANSING</b> .....	13
<b>TAX RATES IN TOMPKINS COUNTY</b> .....	14
<b>LANSING TOWN DEPARTMENTS</b> .....	15
<b>HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT</b> .....	15
<b>SIGN UP FOR SIREN</b> .....	16
<b>PARKS &amp; RECREATION DEPARTMENT</b> .....	17
<b>PLANNING &amp; CODES DEPARTMENT – STORM WATER MANAGEMENT</b> .....	18
<b>COURT</b> .....	19
<b>COMMITTEES AND COMMUNITY</b> .....	20
<b>PARKS, RECREATION, AND TRAILS COMMITTEE</b> .....	20
<b>CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL</b> .....	21
<b>TOWN HISTORIAN</b> .....	21
<b>EVENTS COMMITTEE</b> .....	22
<b>LANSING CENTER TRAIL</b> .....	23

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## DEMOLITION OF HOUSE AT 2 AUBURN ROAD

This house had long been a point of concern for most residents of Lansing, but because of asbestos issues it was a lengthy process to locate and engage a company to demolish the structure. Finally, we were able to enlist Contentos to take on this task, and the house came down the last week of April, 2024.



## POWER PLANT CESSATION FUNDS TO BE AWARDED TO LANSING

In 2019, the Cayuga Operating Co. ceased operations in Lansing. The Town suffered the loss of the PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) payments from Cayuga Operating at that point. However, under New York State's Empire State Development division, there exists the Electric Generation Facility Cessation Mitigation Program which will reimburse municipalities for a portion of the lost revenues for seven years following the loss period. On May 15, the application was submitted for the first year, and the application is expected to be approved by the state at their meeting in September. I am told that the funds will be issued to the Town by December. Next year we will begin submitting for the subsequent years, bringing some long overdue funds back to Lansing.

## OPEN SPACE CONSERVATION PLAN ADOPTED

In 2021, the Town Board charged the Conservation Advisory Council with developing an Open Space Conservation Plan. That council worked diligently and with focus on accomplishing that charge, and their dedication was recognized on April 15 of this year when the Town Board approved and adopted that plan.

- See the Conservation Advisory Council article on page 21
- The document can be found here: [www.lansingtown.com/bc-cac](http://www.lansingtown.com/bc-cac)

## DOG ENUMERATION COMPLETED

2024 was the scheduled year for a dog enumeration, which is done every five years. This is the process for counting the number of dogs in the town. Since dog licensing falls under the responsibility of the Town Clerk's office, she and her staff coordinated with the organization that was hired by the Town to undertake this task. As of mid-July, Debbie Munson, Lansing's Town Clerk, reported that they have licensed 384 new dogs, with still more to come, bringing additional licensing fee revenue to the Town.



# STATUS UPDATES

## HIGHWAY FACILITY

At the January 2023 Town Board meeting, the Board passed Resolution 23-58, which authorized the construction of a new Highway Department facility and authorizing the issuance of up to \$15M in serial bonds. Resolution 23-58 was effective 30 days after its passage, allowing for public petitioning. This resolution was put forth only after a public open house was held at the existing Highway Department building where all in attendance agreed that this project was necessary. The current facility was built in 1968, and has outgrown capacity and poses safety issues.

The Town owns a fleet of trucks and a host of equipment to maintain our highways, sewers, water lines, and stormwater districts. These trucks and equipment represent over \$5M of our assets. Trucks and other equipment can cost anywhere from a quarter of a million to half a million dollars, and the lead time on replacing any of them can be up to two years. So, should anything happen to the current barn, damaging the majority of our inventory, it would be disastrous for Lansing, leaving us without the ability to maintain sewers, water lines, and roads. Additionally, with the lack of space, some of the equipment is being stored in the Parks' facilities and in the old salt barn, which is in poor condition and also poses safety issues.

The Town had been working with an engineering and design firm, Bergmann Engineering, receiving estimates as early as 2021, which were the basis for the requested \$15M. Although the Town has continued to work with the consulting firm, now rebranded as Colliers Engineering & Design, the pandemic delayed any forward movement. Fortunately, progress has resumed, and late last year the Town engaged LeChase Construction as the construction management firm. The current timeline is estimating that the project could go out to bid to construction companies as early as December of this year.

It has been three years since the original estimates, and material and construction costs have increased substantially due to the pandemic. Cost increases have been nearly universal across most industries, and equipment and materials have not been immune to the supply chain issues. As a result, the estimates from 2021 are no longer within a probable range. The Highway Superintendent, Mike Moseley, the Town Engineer, David Herrick, the Town Supervisor, Ruth Groff, and the Town Counsel, Guy Krogh, have been meeting weekly with teams from Colliers and from LeChase to review, line by line, the increases of the estimate, in an effort to cut back in areas that are reasonable to do so, such as eliminating certain features but building in a way that those features can be added in the future. These meetings have involved a lot of creative thinking, and it is our goal to minimize the increase as much as possible without sacrificing the function and quality of the new building. The reality of this situation is that the Town may need to come back to the taxpayers to ask for permission to increase the authorization for a bond issuance. Until we determine what the new site plan and building structure will be, we are not able to provide an accurate estimate to the public, but we will keep you informed as the project takes shape. It is the of the Town to keep this project moving forward so as not to incur any more increases due to delays.

For more information on this project, please go to the Town's website to find documents such as the Facility Feasibility study; the Facility Conditions Assessment; a Town Board presentation that included target issues and scope overview; and a document on Mandatory Shortterm Repairs. These can be found at:

[www.lansingtown.com/highway/page/highway-department-building-renovation-project](http://www.lansingtown.com/highway/page/highway-department-building-renovation-project)



## **LUDLOWVILLE ROAD REPAIR**

The section of Ludlowville Road that is closed has been a troubling issue for the residents of Ludlowville as well as the Lansing schools since that slope failure in 2021. It was a favored route for residents of the hamlet to exit in the winter months, and a means to ease the traffic flow for the schools. This particular section has a discomfoting history of slope failures as a result of the poor soil quality that does not support ground cover growth and the severity of the slope. Both conditions contribute to poor drainage that results in destruction of the roads supporting infrastructure. In 1971, it failed and was reopened in 1973. From 1978 to 1993 the road experienced multiple temporary closures for minor repairs. Again, in 1993, it was closed for this same problem, and reopened in 1994. This most recent failure highlighted the fact that the drainage issue needs to be addressed in a more aggressive manner. The Town Engineer, David Herrick, and his team, have proposed a solution that deflects the drainage away from the portion of the road that is most affected by the poor conditions. With newer technologies available and the proposed rerouting of the drainage, they believe that their solution will provide another 40-50 years of life for the road.

During a working session of the the May Town Board meeting, the Board members came to a consensus that they would like to pursue the repair of the road. However, the cost of the repair would be in excess of \$2M, which is more than the Highway Department's annual roads maintenance budget. This project is currently listed in the Town's preliminary Capital Plan and under financial review.



4/25/2024



T.G. Miller, P.C.

9



4/25/2024



T.G. Miller, P.C.

8

## UPCOMING TOPICS

### SOLAR PROJECTS

Solar projects have become a subject of much debate and concern, not only in Lansing, but all around the great state of New York. Projects that are less than 25MW are subject to local land use regulation. However, projects over 25MW are governed through the NYS Public Service Laws (Article 18), and are under the purview of the NYS Office of Renewal Energy Siting (ORES). ORES is responsible for approving applications and ensuring that the project follows protocol in terms of community engagement and other requirements, as well as taking into consideration local laws, public health and safety, and environmental, social and economic factors.

Lansing and Groton have one such large solar farm project, known as Yellow Barn, ready to file its final application with the state. This project will be located near Van Ostrand Road, with the majority of the project residing in the Town of Groton. The Towns of Lansing and Groton have been working together to ensure that both municipalities receive fair remuneration from the project, that the decommissioning plan is solid, that unique natural areas are protected, that neighboring residents are not negatively affected, and that our fire departments are adequately trained and special equipment is provided in order to appropriately deal with this unique situation should an event occur.

Just recently another large project, known as Silverline, has made its presence known, although it is in the very early stages of the permitting process.

The reason Lansing is being inundated with solar projects is because of the vast amount of open land near the power lines that run diagonally across the agricultural area of our town. These solar farms need to be in close proximity to the power infrastructure, placing their substations near the power lines for connectivity to the grid.

### ZONING UPDATES

In 2018, the Town of Lansing adopted a Comprehensive Plan that defines the desired character of our town and sets forth expectations for future considerations. The Plan charges the Town with a variety of zoning preferences/changes. With that in mind, Lansing's Planning & Codes Department has a staff that is working at its maximum capacity right now, so the prospect of updating the current zoning code would mean either diminishing their attention to the needs of the community while they are working on these updates, which is not a desired option, or prolonging the time frame around which they can devote to rewriting, amending, and updating our current code, which could take years with the department's limited time availability.

The Town Board's answer to this dilemma was to hire a consulting firm to assist with this task. Earlier this year we contracted with Colliers Engineering to prepare a gap analysis between the Comprehensive Plan and Lansing's current zoning. Having done that, we are now applying for a grant that is available to provide funds for the purpose of paying for a consultant to assist with updating our zoning. The desired outcome of this project is to rewrite the code to make it 1) easier to read, 2) conform to the Comprehensive Plan, and 3) to minimize the length of time to accomplish this process. Having the Comprehensive Plan and the gap analysis contribute to a strong, compelling argument when applying for the grant.

## **CONSIDERING THE FUTURE OF THE RAILROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY**

2019 saw the closure of Cayuga Operating Company's coal power plant at Milliken Station, leaving a portion of the Norfolk Southern (NS) railroad line without purpose. That section of the railroad, generally from Salt Point to Milliken Station, is expected by most to eventually fall into the "abandoned" category. When it does, the presumption is that NS will put it out to bid. This eventuality has caused members of the Conservation Advisory Council and members of the Town Board to take notice. One Board member has concerns that if it goes out to bid to the public, then there is a strong possibility that neighbor will be bidding against neighbor, and it would be conceivable that a neighbor could outbid a landowner for the strip of land that crosses the landowner's property. This very scenario has already occurred in Lansing in another situation. It was noted that in other municipalities along the lake where a railroad has been sold to the private sector, privacy fences pop up, obstructing the view of not only the homeowners but diminishing the scenic view of the lake. Preliminary discussions within some committees suggest that the ownership of that entire section of railroad would protect the landowners and secure the future of that parcel. So far, the internal discussions about any proposal of a trail would include merely the section from Salt Point to the new Sims-Jennings Preserve, connecting the two parks. Anything north of that would be conserved and protected, and sections near residential property could be turned into neighborhood parks for the benefit of the landowners directly abutting the parcel. These conversations have all been anecdotal and not in any official capacity.

Town Board Member, Joseph Wetmore, has reminded us that one of the factors that allowed Bell Station, now known as Cayuga Shores, to be kept off the auction block, was that the town and county had multiple documents, including the Town's Comprehensive Plan, stating the Town's interest in the property. The county expressed similar interests when it added the site to its Unique Natural Areas list. With this history of Cayuga Shores in mind, the Town Board is planning to discuss the possibility of making a statement for public record through resolution, stating that the Town of Lansing has an interest in that parcel of land currently held by Norfolk Southern.

At this time, there are no specific plans to do anything with the railroad parcel other than make it known that the Town has an interest in it. The intent is merely to set the stage for something that may or may not occur for another five to ten years.

## **PROCESS TO REPLACE TOWN JUSTICE**



Earlier this year, one of Lansing's Town Justices, Maura Kennedy-Smith, announced her candidacy for County Judge. Her campaign is uncontested, therefore after the election in November, there will be an official vacancy for her position in Lansing's court, with the term starting January 1, 2025. Because she is running for County Judge in the middle of the term for which she was elected here in Lansing, and because it is never assumed a candidate will win the election, her vacated position will not be on the ballot this November. It will be up to the Town Board to appoint her replacement for a term of one year, until an election can be held. The position will then be on the ballot in November of 2025, for a new four-year term, which will change the election cycle for this current position.

# NEW BEGINNINGS IN LANSING

## TOMPKINS COUNTY’S RAPID MEDICAL RESPONSE PROGRAM

The Rapid Medical Response (RMR) program, which went into effect on April 2, was established to provide emergency services to the parts of Tompkins County that are most underserved by emergency medical services. The program is intended to supplement current services by providing faster response times to households that are farther away from those current services, and by lending a hand and providing assessments to the ambulance teams when they arrive. One of those three base camps is in Lansing, which greatly benefits all of Lansing, particularly the northern-most portions of our town.

These charts are for the month of June. Chart 1 shows the number of calls that RMR responded to, and Chart 2 shows the average response times and time spent on the scene. The total number of calls, county-wide, as of July 26, were 310.

EMS Calls by Township										
Municipality	Total EMS Calls	Alpha	Bravo	Charlie	Delta	Echo	Omega	Send E.	Send N.	Non-EMS
		Non-Life-Threatening	Possibly Life-Threatening	Life-Threatening	Serious Life Threat	Life Status Questionable	Public Assist Only			
Caroline	7	1		1	3					2
Cayuga Heights	0									
Danby	5	1		1	3					
Dryden	1		1							
Enfield	10	0	3	1	4	1			1	
Groton	1	1								
<b>Lansing</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>				<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Newfield	16									
Ulysses	0									
Totals:	86	21	12	8	23	1	0	0	2	3

Chart 1

Response Times			
Times in Minutes/Car			
	Time to Click Enroute	Travel Time	Time Onscene
Enfield/Newfield	1.39	8.95	21.05
<b>Lansing</b>	<b>1.13</b>	<b>5.56</b>	<b>18.17</b>
Caroline	1.36	8.36	16.18
Other	0	0	17
TEMS as a Whole	0.97	5.72	18.1

Chart 2

## TOMPKINS COUNTY RESOURCE HUB

The Community Justice Center (CJC) is a collaborative between the City of Ithaca and Tompkins County to implement joint Reimagining Public Safety plans. The Resource Hubs in Tompkins County are the result of this collaboration, and we are happy to announce that one of the hubs is now available in Lansing. See the brochure on the next page for information on the types of services provided.

Location: **Lansing Public Library**

Days of operation: **Every second and fourth Mondays of each month**

Hours: **12:00pm to 2:00pm**

# Lansing Community Resource Hub



Located at the Lansing Library  
**27 Auburn Road  
Lansing, NY 14882**

Open Second and Fourth Mondays  
12:00 – 2:00p.m.

Call 607-793-0473 For More Information



**Computers and internet access.**  
*Get online and find information that you need. Print information to take home.*



**Transportation resources and schedules that meet your needs.**  
*We'll help you find reliable transportation.*



**Get help finding and filling out forms for benefits and services.**  
*Free assistance to fill out online or paper forms.*



**Take medical appointments over the phone or internet.**  
*Free internet, computer and phone access are available.*

## More resources from the Lansing Community Library:

### **Borrow Books, Movies, & More**

Get a library card and borrow materials including books, movies, games, park passes, puzzles, and more.

### **Community Programs**

Free community events for adults, kids, and families. Book clubs, story time, and other special events.

### **Access Resources**

Use computers, access the internet, print documents, and more. Find the information you need at the library.

(607) 533-4939 | 27 Auburn Road Lansing, NY 14882 | [lansinglibrary.org](http://lansinglibrary.org)

Hours: Monday through Thursday 10am-7pm; Fri-Sat 10am-2pm



**Everyone is Welcome!**

## INTRODUCING TOWN BOARD MEMBERS

### **CHRISTINE MONTAGUE, MEMBER**



I grew up an army brat, and so when my husband Matt and I moved here to his hometown 18 years ago, I knew the best way to meet people was to get involved. As our three girls played soccer, and joined the musicals or church groups, we cheered for and volunteered with the impressive teens and their families of Lansing. Sporting events bring out the true spirit of a community, and Lansing's is always positive.

We also were introduced to the farming community through Matt's childhood rock-picking and chicken-pulling, and our own (mis)adventures with beef cattle. We will be forever grateful to the farmers who came to help us dig out of literal and figurative ruts.

I started out as an engineer, working at Norfolk Naval Shipyard. After grad school and various research jobs, I landed at a Cornell lab studying tuberculosis. I enjoy working with students and the dynamic nature of research.

On the Town Board, I hope to address the diverse needs of Lansing residents. I will focus on growing our locally owned businesses and finding state resources for walkable small-town development and housing upgrades. Please let us know your ideas for making Lansing a vibrant community.

### **JOSEPH WETMORE, MEMBER**



As a kid I spent most of my summers in the nearby woods. I loved to catch frogs, snakes, turtles, crayfish, etc. and learn more about them. My family lived on a major migration path for monarch butterflies, which gave me the privilege of being able to take home dozens of caterpillars and watch them grow into beautiful orange butterflies. Every fall there would be trees in town that were covered with them as they got ready to fly south for the winter.

In the early 1990's I moved to Ithaca and opened a small used bookstore, Autumn Leaves Used Books, on the Ithaca Commons. I'd never even worked in a bookstore before but had some experience in business running a small t-shirt print shop and helping a friend expand his health food store. After 8 years, Autumn Leaves was popular enough that it outgrew its original space, and I moved it to a much larger space across the street.

I ran for the Lansing Town Board because I wanted to help preserve the rural character of the town. My biggest surprise was how much my skills at running a small business came into use as a member of the Town Board.

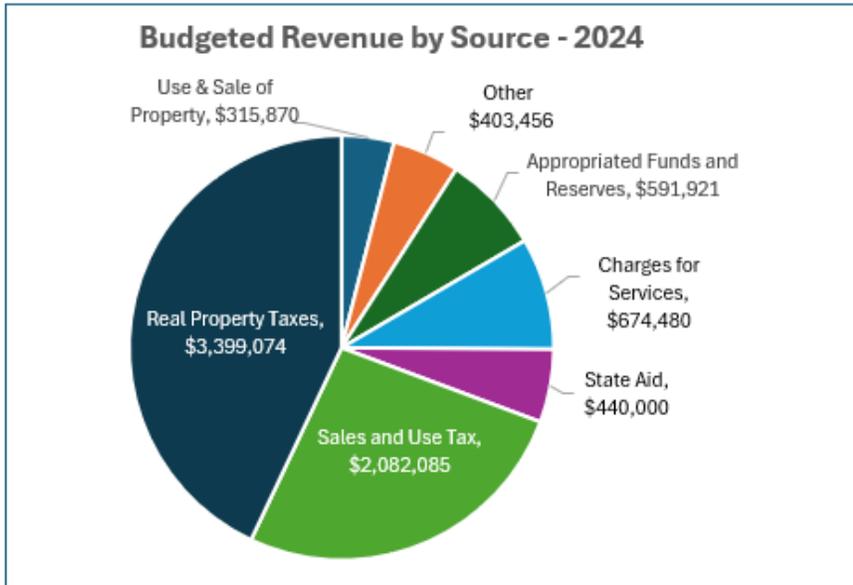
I have recently retired from being a full-time bookseller. Among the many things that retirement has given me, is the time to spend more time out in the woods. I still find the occasional monarch caterpillar; I get just as excited as I did as a kid, only now I only take a photo of it, and move on to experience the next thing on my journey.

# FINANCIAL SNAPSHOTS

## SOURCES AND ALLOCATIONS OF REVENUES

You can always find the Town of Lansing’s annual budget on the Town’s website, but to the untrained eye it can be rather daunting with its 67 pages of numbers. To provide a snapshot of what those numbers represent, here are a few charts that identify the budgeted sources of revenue and the budgeted allocations of those revenues. The 2024 Adopted Budget can be found on the Town’s website at:

[www.lansingtown.com/town-board/page/budgets-auds-audits](http://www.lansingtown.com/town-board/page/budgets-auds-audits)



### Real Property Taxes:

Property taxes assessed

### Sales and Use Tax:

Sales and other consumption taxes

### State Aid:

Consolidated Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS)

### Charges for Services:

Recreation fees, codes and zoning fees and permits, dog licenses, and other fees

### Appropriated Funds and Reserves:

Funds appropriated from prior years

### Other:

Intermunicipal agreements and other local revenues

### Use & Sale of Property:

Rents for facilities and equipment; sale of scrap, excess materials, and vehicles

**HIGHWAY:** 17 FTEs, including Superintendent

**Property tax:** Equipment, facility maintenance, mechanical, snow removal, brush & weeds, flood & erosion, and cemeteries

**Sales tax and State Aid:** Equipment, street maintenance and improvement

**PARKS & RECREATION:** 5 FTEs, up to 60 seasonal employees

Maintenance of parks, playgrounds, and beaches; youth, adult, and summer programs; buildings maintenance

**CODES/PLANNING:** 5 FTEs

Planning, zoning, and safety inspections; ZBA and Planning Board stipends

**Professional Service Costs:**

Town Counsel, Town Engineer, & IT costs, which are allocated to departments based on service utilization

**SUPERVISOR'S OFFICE:** 2 FTEs, all others part-time

Salaries for Supervisor, Town Board Members, Bookkeeper, Accountant, Historian; and cost of annual audit

**TOWN CLERK:** 3 FTEs, including Town Clerk

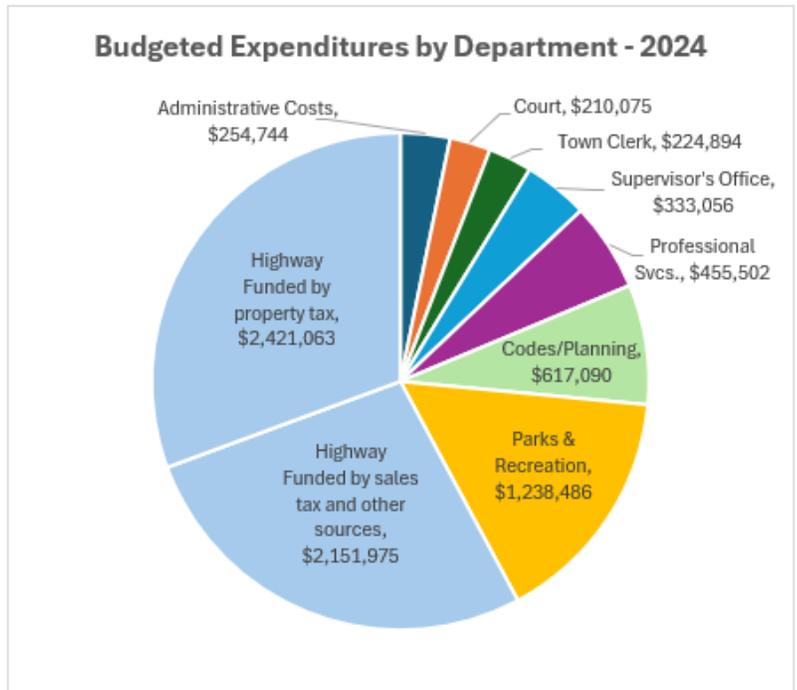
Receiver of taxes, licensing, and records mgmt.

**COURT:** 1 FTE and 2 part-time Judges

Salaries and one contracted police security

**Administrative Costs:**

General administrative costs that are not allocable to departments, as well as support for Youth Services

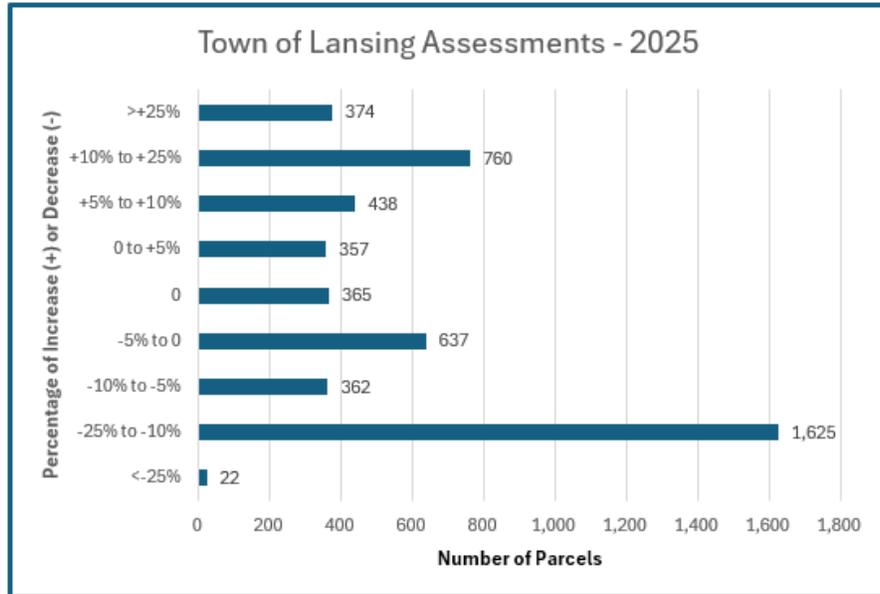


\*Salaries and benefits are included in each of the departments listed above.

\*\*The Highway Dept. also manages sewers, water lines, lighting, and stormwater, which are covered through special district assessments (not included here)

## ASSESSMENTS IN LANSING

The 2024 assessments were issued earlier this year, with 2,646 parcels in Lansing showing a decrease in assessed value, 365 parcels remaining the same, and 1,929 parcels increasing in assessed value. This graph identifies the number of parcels that fell into each range of valuation adjustments. The chart below is based on information provided by the Tompkins County Department of Assessment.



Understanding how assessed values affect your property taxes is important. If your assessed value goes up, that doesn't necessarily mean your taxes will go up by that same percentage, and conversely, if your assessed value decreases, that doesn't mean your taxes will go down by that same percentage. The tax rate for each municipality is calculated by first determining the budget for the year for the portion which is funded through property taxes. That portion of the budget is then divided by the overall tax base, i.e. assessed values of parcels in the town to arrive at the tax rate for that year. So, in a nutshell, your taxes will be increased or decreased based on the budget increase or decrease, not solely on the assessment adjustment.

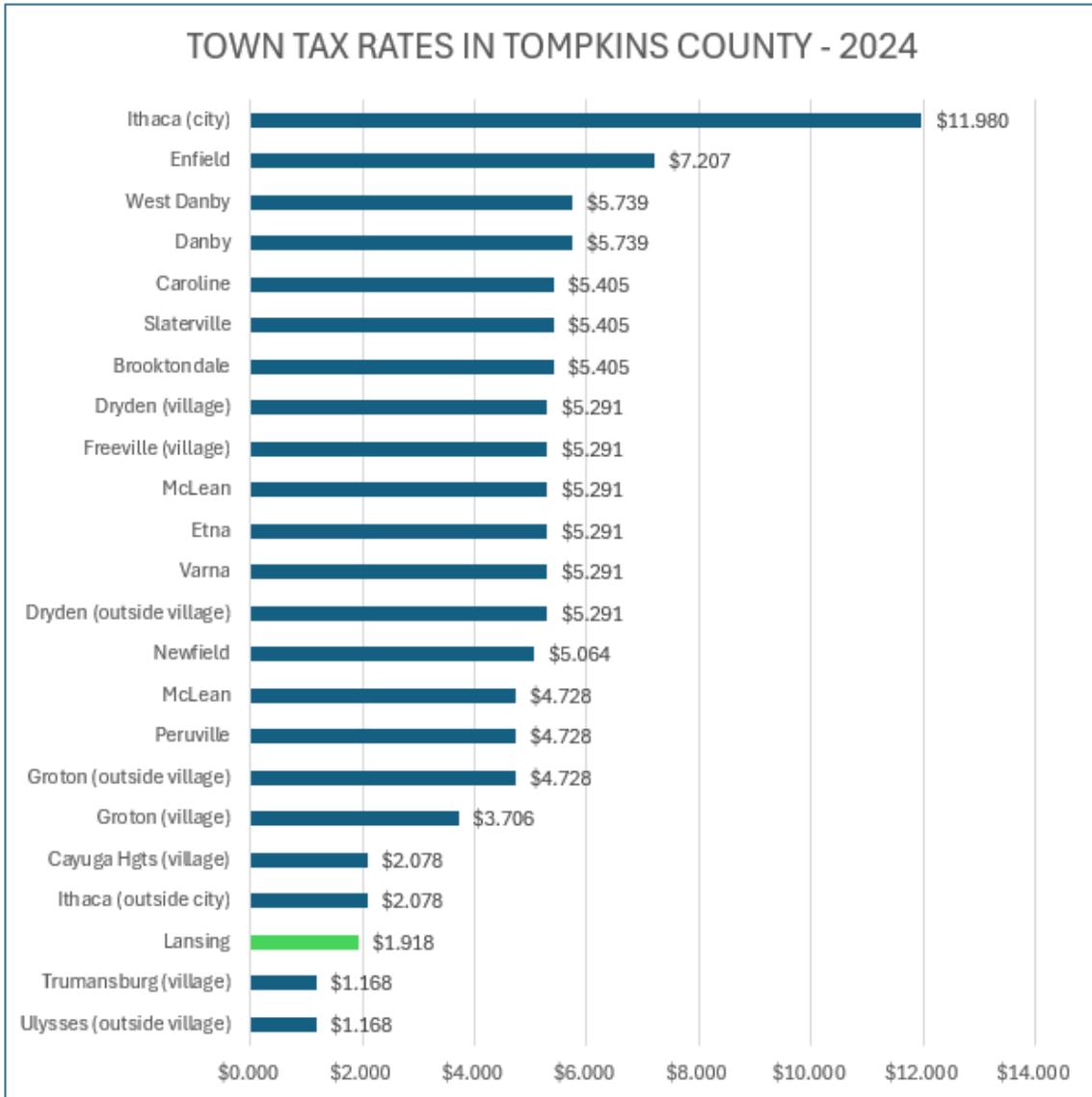
Below is an example of this calculation, assuming a budget increase of 10%, and a total assessed values increase of 15%. Please note that this is simply an example to illustrate the calculation and is not based on any actual numbers in Lansing.

	<u>Year 1</u>	<u>Year 2</u>		
<u>Budget</u>	\$3,000,000	\$3,300,000	10%	Percent increase
<u>Tax Base</u> (Total assessed values in the taxing district)	\$2,000,000,000	\$2,300,000,000	15%	Percent increase
<u>Tax Rate per \$1,000</u> Formula: Budget / (Tax Base / \$1,000)	\$1.500000	\$1.434783	-4%	Percent decrease

For an explanation of how assessments are determined, view the video titled "How Do Assessments Work in Tompkins County?" which is found on the Tompkins County Department of Assessment website: [www.tompkinscountyny.gov/assessment](http://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/assessment)

## TAX RATES IN TOMPKINS COUNTY

Lansing continues to keep its tax rates among the lowest in Tompkins County, at \$1.917300 per \$1,000, for 2024. As we are now heading into the budget season for 2025, the Town Board will make every attempt to keep the tax rate increase to a minimum. However, the Town’s aging infrastructure is going to require repairs and maintenance, medical insurance rates are increasing by double digits, cost of equipment and materials are and have been climbing upward. Necessary repairs will be required for the roofs on both the community center and the old school since they are both leaking and must be replaced to prevent damage and further, more expensive cash outlays. Perhaps more to the point, the costs of the highway facility, as mentioned on page 5, will be ramping up as we head into 2025. It will be a challenge for the Chief Budget Officer and the Town Board to keep the rate increase as low as possible, but we vow to do everything within our power to do so.



*\*This chart shows only the town rates and does not include taxes from county, special districts, villages, or school districts. Note that some town rates may vary within towns based on whether a parcel location is within a village/city or outside a village/city. The full list of all rates within Tompkins County can be found at: <https://tompkinscountyny.gov/assessment/taxinfo>*

## LANSING TOWN DEPARTMENTS

### HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

# Lansing Highway Department

## Tree & Brush:

The Highway Department has been busy working to mow roadsides throughout the town working to improve line of sight issues, clear storm damage and expanding our mulching/spoils location.

## Water & Sewer:

We've had a few water main breaks occur throughout the town: Auburn Road & Horvath. We continue to implement upgrades to our sewer monitoring stations as well as performing routine maintenance. We have began working to identify any lead services.

## Road Maintenance/Improvements:

The Highway Department worked in preparation for paving/road improvements and maintenance as well as assisting in the paving, micro-paving, and resurfacing of roads throughout the town. This was a combined effort between town employees and contractors.

## Drainage:

The Highway Department has been working to inspect/maintain drainage issues throughout the town. In an effort to continue to improve upon drainage of the overall infrastructure of our roads, we continue to work on ditching throughout the town as needed and hydroseeding our ditches with the assistance of Tompkins County Soil & Water.

## Intermunicipal work:

The Highway Department is working with Tompkins County Soil & Water to apply for two potential WQIP grants as well as an upcoming erosion & sediment control project within the drainage system of Hillcrest Road.

**CONTACT US**

607-533-4328  
highway@lansingtown.com

**SIGN  
UP  
NOW**



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*Tompkins County SIREN is the official mass notification system used by Tompkins County, the City of Ithaca, and local towns and villages to communicate with community residents during emergencies. Sign up now to receive alerts from SIREN via text message, email, and/or voice message. There are notification lists covering the Town of Lansing, in addition to any other lists from which you might like to receive notifications.*

*Sign up at*

*<https://www.tompkinscountyny.gov/siren>:*

- *Add your address to receive geo-targeted alerts*
- *Indicate what types of alerts you want to receive.*
- *Indicate how you want to be notified by text, email, and/or voice message.*

**PLEASE NOTE:** *You may have previously signed up for Swift911. Your information was migrated to this new system so you would not miss alerts and notifications during the transition period.*

*However if you had not created a SIREN account/profile by December 31, 2022 you are no longer in the system.*



**Safety & Incident Real-Time  
Emergency Notifications**

## **PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

2024

### ***Music in the Park Schedule***

*July 11th--Darkwine  
July 18th--Back Talk  
July 25th--Iron Horse  
August 1st--Destination  
August 8th--Tailor Made  
August 15th--Bad Alibi  
August 22nd--Ampersand*

*6:30pm at the Gazebo/Bandstand*



*Come out for good music, food and drinks.*

*No charge for park admission.  
Donations appreciated.*

*Myers Park, Lansing NY*

### ***Rec Programs/Events***

#### **SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMS**

Programs include a variety of full-day camps, art camps, swim lessons, archery, bowling, baseball, soccer, football and even wizarding camp!

#### **SUMMER ADULT PROGRAMS**

- Adult programs include:
- Adult Strength & Stretch
  - YogaChi
  - Cardio Step
  - Fly Fishing School
  - Wednesday Adult Sailing

For more information, visit [www.lansingrec.recdesk.com](http://www.lansingrec.recdesk.com) or call our office at 607-533-7388

#### **LANSING COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVES**

- July 26th 10am-3pm
- August 9th, 1pm-6pm

Lansing Town Hall Court Room

Scan to make an appointment



### ***Myers Park***

#### **PARK & MARINA FEES**

Park Admission (per car)

Resident: Free / Non-Resident: \$7

Launching:

Per Launch:

Resident: \$6/ Non-Resident: \$8

Season Passes are available for both resident and non-residents.

Please visit our website to view the full fee schedule:

Website: [www.lansingrec.com](http://www.lansingrec.com)

#### **SWIMMING HOURS:**

Beginning July 1st, the swim area will be open from 10am-8pm through the second week of August.

Swimming with out a lifeguard on duty is not permitted

*Follow us on Facebook for program and event updates!*

*<https://www.facebook.com/Lansingrec/>*

## STORMWATER MANAGEMENT & LANSING’S MS4 PROGRAM

By Mason Molesso, Town Planner & Stormwater Management Officer



Stormwater Runoff Diagram, courtesy City of Syracuse

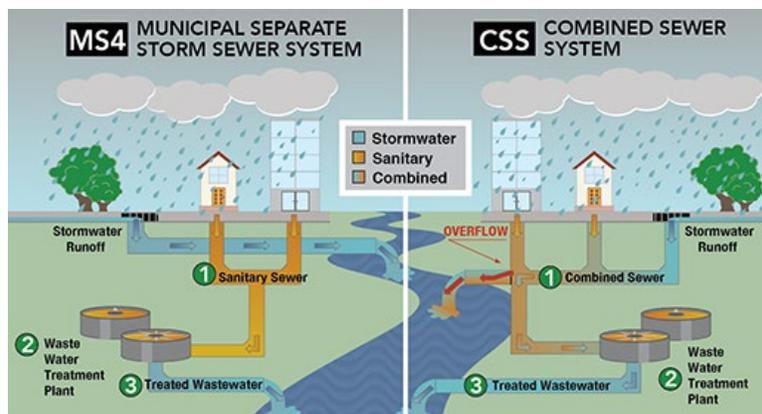
Water on planet Earth is constantly moving and is quite literally “fluid” in more ways than one. This complex process of water cycling between gas, liquid and solid states is known as the hydrologic cycle, which has far-reaching impacts on almost every function on earth. As water vapor condenses in the atmosphere, the precipitate falls to earth in either the form of rain or snow. When that precipitation contacts the solid earth surface, or melts in the case of snow, it becomes “stormwater” or “stormwater runoff”.

It is important to manage stormwater runoff in urban areas, as if left unchecked the impacts can become quite costly as millions of gallons of water end up in potentially unwanted places. Water travels to the lowest point in any given system, and here in Lansing that happens to be Cayuga Lake. As stormwater runoff makes its way down hill and gains velocity, it becomes incredibly efficient at collecting whatever is in its path. Trash, sediments, fertilizers and nutrients, oils and petroleum’s all end up downstream, potentially turning your favorite swimming hole into a place you may think twice about swimming in.

That’s why managing stormwater runoff is so important and something that shouldn’t be overlooked. As we’ve grown as a nation and paved over larger portions of once permeable land, all that water now needs somewhere to go. Techniques are needed to mitigate catastrophic damage.

One of the many ways municipalities across the county manage stormwater is by using a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4). Differing from a Combine Sewer System (CSS), the MS4 is a system of storm pipes that keeps storm water separate from household sewage.

With both systems it is not uncommon to see storm drains along the roadway in many American cities and urban areas. When it rains, stormwater



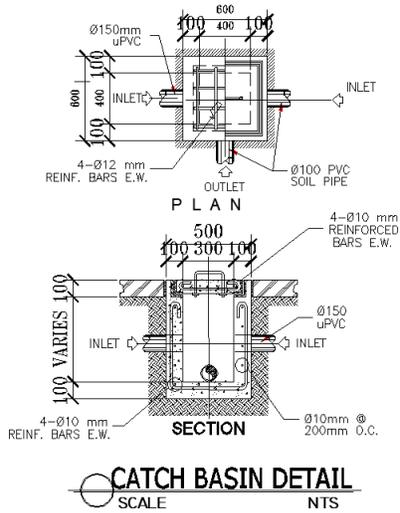
CSS vs MS4 Systems, courtesy USGS

that is collected on impervious surfaces makes its way to these storm drains where it meets a conveyance of underground pipes. These pipes also transport waste from the city’s occupants and functions, usually to a treatment plant for processing and discharge. In this type of shared sewer system stormwater and sewage share the same pipes at the same times. During times of heavy

Continued on page 19

Continued from page 18

precipitation, which is becoming ever more frequent in a changing climate, these types of CSS systems get quite literally overflowed and can create a harmful discharge of toxic waste mixed with stormwater run-off. Because of this, it can often be more desirable and environmentally friendly to operate an MS4 system.



One of the most practical benefits of a functional MS4 system is the prevention of untreated sewage from overflowing into local waterways and important ecosystems. MS4 systems are comprised of open roadside ditches, catch basins, and man-made channels that collect water and divert it to a desired location. A challenge with these open ditch conveyance systems, which drain into local streams and waterways, is keeping pollutants out.

The Town of Lansing currently implements several strategies which help keep our surface waters clean. These include a stringent review process for all new construction projects, routine compliance inspections, and the development of a comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan.

However, responsible stormwater management isn't just the responsibility of the municipality but rather a community engagement. If you see something, say something. We encourage the public to report any illicit discharges, suspicious activity or general concerns regarding stormwater to the Town's Planning Department as we work together to promote a healthier future in the beautiful Finger Lakes!

## COURT

The following is from Lansing Town Justice John Howell:

The Lansing Town Court has returned to our pre-covid busy times again. Most people realize that our local court handles all the traffic tickets in the Town of Lansing, and we also do most of the DWI cases (all felony DWI cases go to County Court). On the Criminal Law side of our court, we deal with all Misdemeanors and Violations in our town, many of which are domestic violence cases that also require issuing an Order of Protection.

Judge Kennedy-Smith and I routinely do intensive training to stay on top of new developments and to find ways to improve the system. In my 33 years as Town Justice, the justice system of New York has certainly evolved, and I strongly feel that we now have additional support avenues at the local level to help defendants and victims. Over the next few newsletters, I plan to discuss some of the positive resources we have available, especially in dealing with the increase in mental health problems and drug/alcohol addiction.

On the Civil Law side of our court we have Small Claims, Summary proceeding eviction cases, and Town code cases involving building code violations or dog owner violations.

Our weekly court sessions are Tuesday evenings and Thursday afternoons, and these often end up being very busy times in our main courtroom.

If you have any questions feel free to reach out to either judge or our excellent Lansing Town Court Clerk Melody Lombardo.

# COMMITTEES AND COMMUNITY

## PARKS, RECREATION, AND TRAILS COMMITTEE

### **Lansing Greenway – multi-use trail project presented to the Town Board**

The Town’s Parks Recreation and Trails Working Group has been hard at work on a project to create a multi-use trail system now called the Lansing Greenway. This Greenway will connect the main hubs of the community with a family friendly, accessible trail. The Greenway is for everyone: bikers, runners, walkers, cross-country skiers and dog walkers (with a leash). All non-motorized uses are welcome.

The idea for this trail began back in 1999 when a survey of town residents for the Year 2000 Recreation Master Plan showed strong interest in a trail system. This interest has only grown. In the survey for the 2022 Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan, walking and biking trails ranked as the most important recreational facility for their household.

The popularity of trails can be seen in all the nearby towns who have created multi-use trails and in the popularity of Lansing’s Town Center and Salt Point trails. Trails are popular because they provide a place for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy nature. They help connect us with family, friends and neighbors. They also offer a much safer alternative to biking along busy roadways while also promoting physical activity. While the exact location of the trail will be developed over time, the main destinations will be familiar to all Lansing residents. Ideally, the proposed trail begins at the Town Barn Fields, runs to the Lansing Center Trail, and continues to the Town Hall, Town Fields and Lansing Community Library. From the town center, the trail will run to the Lansing Central Fire Station, then to the Lansing Central Schools campus, ending at Myers Park and Salt Point. A second trail will connect the town center to The Rink and then to the Village of Lansing and the YMCA. Trail spurs will create connections from the main trail into the many neighborhoods along the Greenway’s path.

The first phase of the Greenway is slated for the Town Center. The Trails Working Group is currently seeking grants for a feasibility study to develop a detailed cost estimate for this phase. The project will then be ready for state or federal construction funds when they become available. They are also writing grants to fund a Comprehensive Trails Plan to guide the development of the Greenway as it branches out from the Town Center.

The Trails Group is available to answer any questions and meet with anyone who has comments or concerns. Please contact them through Pat in the Parks and Recreation Office.

-Steve Lauzun, RLA, CPSI, Chair of the Parks, Recreation, and Trails Committee



## **CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL**

The 2018 Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Lansing called for the creation of a Conservation Advisory Committee (CAC) to perform certain functions for the Town and to act in an advisory capacity under the NYS General Municipal Law § 239-x. By resolution in 2019, the Town Board created a Conservation Advisory Council consisting of community volunteers appointed by the Town Board. As an advisory entity, the actions of the CAC have no regulatory standing in the absence of approval by the Town Board. A broad mandate for the CAC was to “advise in the development, management, and protection of the Town’s natural resources”. As a first step in carrying out this mandate, the CAC worked to develop a Natural Resources Inventory and a Scenic Resources Inventory for the Town. In the acceptance of these inventories by the Town Board, the CAC in 2021 was charged with developing an Open Space Conservation Plan (OSCP). With a generous grant from the Park Foundation, the Town was able to engage with a consulting firm that had expertise in the area of assembling data that existed in various public archives. In consultation with the CAC, a list of natural resources was developed along with a ranking scheme that recognized that certain natural features were more important in a conservation plan than others. With the resources available it was impractical to analyze the data for all undeveloped properties in the Town. This being the case, 70 acres and above was chosen for the OSCP. Public input was solicited using two open meetings and an online (or paper) questionnaire advertised with a postcard mailed to all residents of the Town. A “story map” was posted on the Town website that outlined the features of the plan. For the final plan, 119 properties were ranked for their value in investing in conservation efforts.

The OSCP totally relies on the **voluntary** desire of the landowners to offer their property for a conservation program. The OSCP is a guidance document for the Town as to whether the Town wishes to make a financial commitment to assist in this effort. The ranking of the property as to their natural resource value would be a key element in the Town’s decision. In addition, the OSCP can offer guidance to the planning process for properties not in OSCP so that natural resources on the property might be conserved with adjustments to the development plan.

The OSCP was adopted by the Town Board on April 15, 2024. The OSCP can be found under Supporting Documents at: [www.lansingtown.com/bc-cac](http://www.lansingtown.com/bc-cac)

-Ed Dubovi, Chair of the Conservation Advisory Council

## **TOWN HISTORIAN**

### **KINDERGARTEN IN THE FIELD SCHOOL**

In April I received an email from the Librarians. They said they had invited the kindergarten classes for a ‘Field Trip’ to the Lansing Library where the children would be introduced to the local library. Because there was a total of 68, they would divide the class into three groups. They asked if I would like to open the ‘Field School’ and plan a program there. The Community Center would also be open and there would be a hands-on project.

When the school bus pulled up at 10am on June 7, 2024, I stood in the school doorway and rang a bell. The kids had the same color t-shirt for each group. The first group headed for the school with their teachers, and we began! Because we didn’t have enough desks, the kids shared. As they looked around, I asked if they had their own desk, where do you hang your coat, do you have a bathroom in your room? Do you have a computer at school? Where do you eat lunch? It was then that I opened my lunch box with a peanut butter sandwich, apple and cookie. They said they eat in the cafeteria. Do you play games in school? No, we have gym, archery.

In closing, I asked if they had any questions. Here are some: How did you get food? How do you make pencils? How did they make houses? How do you make a museum?

-Fannie Welch, Town Historian

## **EVENTS COMMITTEE**

**Lansing's Fall Community Celebration is BACK!!  
SAVE THE DATE!! September 5, 6, and 7!**

Let's make this a great event. Please show your support for our town, the Lansing Events Committee, Inc., and the Lansing Fire Department! Thanks to the generosity of several donors, along with the community's support through fundraising efforts, we are able to bring Playland Amusements back for a great three-day event! Wrist band (pay-one-price) days will be available and announced very soon!

We are still looking for volunteers to help with bingo, participation in the parade and booths, and cake donations! Please see our Facebook page or email us at [lansingevents2018@gmail.com](mailto:lansingevents2018@gmail.com) for more information or come see us at our canopy at Music in the Park!

The Lansing Fire Department will be serving up their usual, hot sausage, burgers, dogs, clams, salt potatoes, and sides! New items are added every year! Best burgers and dogs around!

The LEC will have a 50/50 raffle each day. Buy your tickets, you could win big bucks!

Here is a brief line-up of some of the entertainment (subject to change) we have this year for the Carnival:

### **THURSDAY, Sept. 5 at 6 pm**

- Midway rides, games, food
- BINGO!!!!!!!!!!!! That's right, folks – we have BINGO this year, so bring your “good luck charms” and get those ink daubers ready! More details to come!

### **FRIDAY, Sept. 6 at 6 pm**

- Midway rides, games, food
- BINGO (times to be announced later)
- Fireworks will begin around 9 pm. (weather permitting) Stick around for this fabulous show! More entertainment to be announced, stay tuned!

### **SATURDAY Sept. 7 opens at 1 pm**

- Midway rides, games and your favorite carnival food, such as fried dough, snow cones, lemonade, and lots more!
- BINGO (times to be announced later)
- Crowd favorite, the cake wheel! Spin to win cakes, cookies, brownies, and maybe a few special treats!
- Hilby the German Juggle Boy, Cayuga Twisters, Cayuga Lake Seido Karate, Lansing Cheerleaders, and much more already lined up for entertainment, more to come!
- The **parade** will start at 6 pm sharp, so bring a chair and grab a spot! If you are affiliated with Lansing Schools, sign up for the float contest, \$500 prize for the winner. This year's theme is “Family Game Night.” More information and forms are available on our website at <https://lansingeventscommittee.com/>

See you all very soon!

## LANSING CENTER TRAIL



### **The LCT needs some TLC!**

Many of you may already enjoy walking, jogging, or cross-country skiing on the over 8 miles of the Lansing Center Trail across from our Town Hall. Since 2010, volunteers have been working on establishing trails throughout the town land with help from the Parks & Recreation Department. In 2017, volunteers established the 501©(3) non-profit organization "Friends of Lansing Center Trail." These community residents have been working through the years, in coordination with the town, to:

- Expand the trails, build a kiosk with a garden, and a parking area
- Support two Cornell bluebird nesting box research projects
- Help with and offer opportunities for several Eagle Scout projects
- Establish the Short Line Spur with historic signs
- Add benches and picnic tables
- Develop a Native Plant garden next to the parking area
- Add a dog waste station, donated by Meadowridge Vet Clinic
- Build a bridge to connect Scoops Ice Cream to the trail
- Add a storybook walk to encourage kids and families to read while enjoying nature (now maintained by Family Reading Partnership)

In 2018, the Town Board passed a resolution, "Lansing Center Trail Policy", ensuring the trail will remain intact in some form even if parcels of the town owned land are sold for development in the future. Today, the Friends of Lansing Center Trail hosts "Trail Tuesdays" at 7 pm during the summer months to have fun while trimming, weeding, picking up trash, digging up roots, and whatever else needs maintaining throughout the trails. (No one comes every week, just as they can.) The group is always looking for more volunteers...with the promise of stopping for ice cream at Scoops at the end of the work session! The Friends of LCT have purchased, with generous community donations, a riding mower, a push mower, gardening tools, picnic benches, tables, and a beautiful shed for storage. We are grateful for all the support received!

If you are interested in donating, getting involved with "Trail Tuesdays" or to "Adopt" a portion of the trail, email: [lansingtrailsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:lansingtrailsecretary@gmail.com)

For more information about the trail: [www.lansingrec.com](http://www.lansingrec.com)

**Friends of Lansing Center Trail**



**In Memory of Gerald C. “Jerry” Caward, Jr.**  
1953-2024

Jerry was a life-long resident of Lansing, and in his youth was a Lansing High School football player. He served Lansing as a member of the Planning Board and later as the chair of that board.

**In Memory of Scott T. “Weav” Weaver**  
1966-2024

A life-long Lansing resident, he was a graduate of Lansing High School. Scott was a loyal employee of the Lansing Highway Department for 31 years before starting a landscaping business.



**PUBLIC MEETINGS**

**Town Board** – Town Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday, 6:30 PM – **Aug. 21 – Sept. 18 – Oct. 16**

**Town Board Preliminary Budget Meeting** – Town Hall, 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday, 6:30 PM – **Sept. 25**

**Town Board Budget Meeting** – Town Hall, 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday, 6:30 PM – **Nov. 6**

**Planning Board** – Town Hall, 4<sup>th</sup> Monday, 6:30 PM – **Aug. 26 – Sept. 23 – Oct. 28**

**Zoning Board of Appeals** – Town Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday, 6:30 PM – **Aug. 14 – Sept. 11 – Oct. 9**

**Conservation Advisory Council** – Town Hall, 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday, 6:30 PM – **Aug. 7 – Sept. 4 – Oct. 2**

**HOW DO YOU WANT TO RECEIVE ISSUES OF THE LANSING NEWSLETTER?**

**If by USPS mail** – please fill out the form below and send it to:

- Attn: Town Supervisor, P.O. Box 186, Lansing, NY 14882
- Or, send your address via email to [rgroff@lansingtown.com](mailto:rgroff@lansingtown.com), with subject line “Newsletter”

**If by Email** – provide your email at <https://www.lansingtown.com/stay-connected> and check the box for “Newsletter Updates”

Otherwise, if you choose neither, you will find the Lansing Newsletter on the town’s website, and hard copies at Town Hall and other local establishments. Other options will be available for future publications. Tell your friends!

*Fill out this form to receive copies of the newsletter via USPS mail:*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address City State Zip Code

Mail this to P.O. Box 186, Lansing, NY 14882, or email your information to [rgroff@lansingtown.com](mailto:rgroff@lansingtown.com)