

It has been amazing to see the outdoor activity during the pandemic. Additional outdoor activities moved to the lake after our normal winter weather returned and Skaneateles Lake began freezing over. It was a delight to see hockey games, figure skating and ice fishing taking place all at the same time. During this long year, everyone has had to change their social activities leaving us eager to find ways to get out of the house.

The Town recognizes the need to make sure that in the future our Parks and Conservation Areas are providing options for a variety of outdoor activities. This year, Courtney Alexander is the liaison to the Conservation Committee and this group has been recharged to move forward with making sure these beautiful lands are accessible and safe for all to enjoy.

We also know that we had to look at options for Austin Park and Pavilion. This was put on hold as we focused on keeping our departments operational, while protecting our employees while at work and our residents when visiting our offices. Now, with spring around the corner we are ready to look at how we can enhance the Parks, bring new services and activities that our residents have asked us to consider.

There are services at the Town that I want to be sure you are aware of. As you know, all property is assessed by the Town, not all of it is taxable. Some properties, such as those owned by religious organizations or governments are completely exempt from paying property taxes. Others are partially exempt, such as veterans who qualify for an exemption on part of their homes, and homeowners who are eligible for the School Tax Relief (STAR) program. In addition, if you qualify under the criteria, the Town offers exemptions for agriculture, seniors, volunteer firefighters and volunteer ambulance workers, nonprofit organizations, clergy, disabled persons and commercial and industrial businesses. Applications for exemption must be submitted by March 1st. If you have any questions, please call the Assessor's Office at 315-685-0745 or email Mike Maxwell, Assessor at mmaxwell@townofskaneateles.com or Kim Benda, Clerk to Assessor at kbenda@townofskaneateles.com

Some of our additional services and support include our Outreach Office. This service is available for members of our community who are experiencing difficulties and need help navigating the road ahead. If you are a resident in the Town of Skaneateles or have a child in the Skaneateles School district and find that you are in the need of assistance, please contact the Outreach office for confidential help. For more information, please email Jacque McConnaghy, Outreach Coordinator at outreach@townofskaneateles.com or call 315-685-0427.

Our Veterans Coordinator is Cindy Meili. Cindy provides communication and access to the many different programs available to assist our veterans and their families, as well as be the conduit in which you can express your concerns and provide suggestions on how to improve the quality of life for those who have or continue to serve our great nation. For additional information please contact Cindy by emailing her at veteransoutreach@townofskaneateles.com or calling 315-704-4127.

Please visit our website at www.townofskaneateles.com to obtain additional information regarding the services available through the Town.

Please remember wearing a mask protects you and others. Stay safe, be well, and be kind.

Janet L. Aaron, Town Supervisor