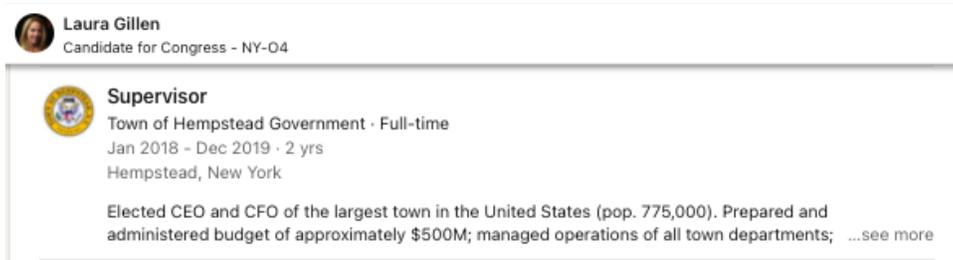


As Town of Hempstead Supervisor, Laura Gillen voted “No” on a bipartisan town budget that would have cut taxes by nearly 3.5 percent.

In October 2018, Laura Gillen, as Town of Hempstead Supervisor, voted against the town budget:

- Laura Gillen served as Town of Hempstead Supervisor between January 2018 and December 2019.



(Laura Gillen, [LinkedIn](#), accessed 8/17/22)

- **On October 30, 2018, Laura Gillen voted against the budget.** “SUPERVISOR GILLEN: ‘As I said earlier, today, when we opened up this Budget Hearing, I believe budgets are more about numbers on a paper and just about cutting spending, it is about the kind of future we want for ourselves and our families. While the Council and I agree on some of the changes, such as, Office of Veteran Affairs and Public Health, there are still some items we do not agree upon. I am very proud that over 95 percent of this budget has remained intact from what I essentially proposed. After the preliminary budget was introduced, I made an attempt to discuss changes that could be agreed upon by all of us, but that request fell on deaf ears. I proposed the amendments that would lower taxes by being honest and transparent, how we delivered services and they chose not to support me. Since I have taken office, I have been asking questions, challenging the status quo, here in Hempstead and making sure you, the residents are heard and it is making a difference. Things are changing, the Town Council is engaged in a way they never shown before. And, it is good for our Town. I will continue to ask the tough questions, challenge things that need to be challenged and fight for our residents. Since 2003, seven of the eight - - last eight non-election year budgets all included tax hikes. In each case, the Town Board unanimously raised everyone’s taxes without controversy or even without a word. These tax hikes on average amount to an increase of over five percent of those years. The budget you see before you, today, would not be this way if I was not here challenging the Status quo in this non-election year. This is why I believe in debate and debating. It is not only healthy but it is required for an issue as large, all-encompassing as our budget. I am not convinced, however, that gambling tax cuts on the backs of the potential employees retirements is fiscally prudent or sound, in fact, I think it is reckless and irresponsible. The Council has not presented, in my opinion, any kind of realistic or structurally sound plan to replace essential Town employees. Once they retire, the Council has also not budgeted money for these potential retirees contractual obligated separation pay. So, the only way to pay out these individual would be to conceivably to borrow money and/or even worse, take the money from our surplus and potentially injure our bond rating. I believe we can pay for tax cuts and still have money to make every employee whole without borrowing, as well as, being able to make responsible decisions on positions that can be eliminated. The Council

has also assumed through this budget plan that these retiring employees who we don't even know who they are yet, do not need to be replaced. Replacements aren't budgeted anywhere. I will operate this Town under the constraints presented to me by this Board and I hope that services to taxpayers can remain as steady as possible. And, I will work starting today on a management plan that relates to this budget so that by this time next year this Town will not be falling into crisis. I vote no.” (Hempstead Town Board, [Agenda](#), 10/30/18)

- **“Laura Gillen vehemently opposed providing a 3.5 percent tax cut.”** “Hempstead Town Supervisor Laura Gillen vehemently opposed providing a 3.5 percent tax cut based on the hoped-for savings, calling the board irresponsible and saying that ‘budgets are about more than just numbers on a page and cutting and spending.’” (Jed Hendrixson, “Experts weigh in on Hempstead’s ‘less savings,’” [the island 360](#), 11/28/18)

On October 30, 2018, the Hempstead Town Board approved the 2019 budget, which included a 3.46 percent tax cut, with a bipartisan vote:

- **On October 30, 2018, five Republicans and one Democrat passed the budget for the Town of Hempstead, which included a tax cut of 3.46 percent.** “Hempstead Town Board members voted 6-1 Tuesday night in favor of a proposed 2019 budget with a 3.5 percent tax cut, but Supervisor Laura Gillen raised questions about savings. About 100 people attended each of two public hearings Tuesday. The five Republican council members and Democratic Senior Councilwoman Dorothy Goosby passed the \$432.5 million budget with a 3.46 percent tax cut, which is largely based on \$8.5 million in expected savings from planned early retirements. Gillen had presented an amended \$442 million budget, with a 2.39 percent tax cut, but remained divided with the GOP majority over about \$10 million in spending. Board members on Tuesday debated the two budget proposals, including the town’s practice of predicting savings for early retirements, known as ‘less savings.’” (John Asbury, “Hempstead town board approves \$432.5 million budget with 3.5% tax cut,” [Newsday](#), 10/30/18)
- **“The board comprises five Republicans and two Democrats, including Gillen.”** (Erik Hawkins, “Hempstead Town Board nixes Gillen’s proposed budget,” [LI Herald](#), 10/18/18)