

**TOWN OF BOLTON, CONNECTICUT**  
**PUBLIC HEARING ON**  
**APRIL 30, 2025**

**PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING**  
**JUNE 30, 2025**

Approved by Finance Committee for Public Hearing



**Total Proposed FY25 Budget: \$26,223,099**  
**Proposed FY25 Real Estate and Property Tax Mill Rate: 33.41**  
**Proposed FY25 Motor Vehicle Tax Rate: 32.46**

## MESSAGE FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee is pleased to present the enclosed budget for FY25 (July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025) to the residents of Bolton at a total of **\$26,223,099** or a **5.62%** increase. This budget represents what is necessary to continue to maintain the current level and quality of services to town residents and our students.

The proposed budget was crafted with much thought and diligence, seeking to balance the needs of our residents and employees and fiscal responsibility against the realities of the current fiscal environment. As such, this budget already reflects significant reductions by both the BOS and BOE/ Superintendent from the original budgets presented to them by their departments and employees.

- The Superintendent reduced the original request by **\$233,656** from an **4.97%** increase to the proposed **3.52%** increase which was approved by the BOE.
- The BOS reduced the Town Proper budget request from the Town Administrator by **\$55,212** from an **5.67%** increase to the proposed **4.85%** increase.
- The BOS approved a Capital Budget of \$601,250, which the Finance Committee increased by \$400K following a discussion on increased revenues.
- The cost of Bolton's debt obligation **decreased** by **3.73%** from FY24.

The primary drivers of the increase in the proposed budget include:

- Increases in salaries and benefits as a result of **contractual obligations**
- Cost of services mandated by law for **Special Education**
- Increased costs of Professional/Technical services such as **software and IT vendors and services**
- Increased costs associated with **early voting** and **refuse (garbage) services** for the town.
- A one-year, part-time intern for the Finance Department to free up the Director's time to implement Department efficiencies
- Increase in Capital budget to prepare for large capital improvement needs coming in the next 5-10 years including: BCS roof replacement, repairs to a bridge, BCS air handlers, air conditioner replacement and air conditioning for classrooms, a long- term solution for Town Hall and community space and more.

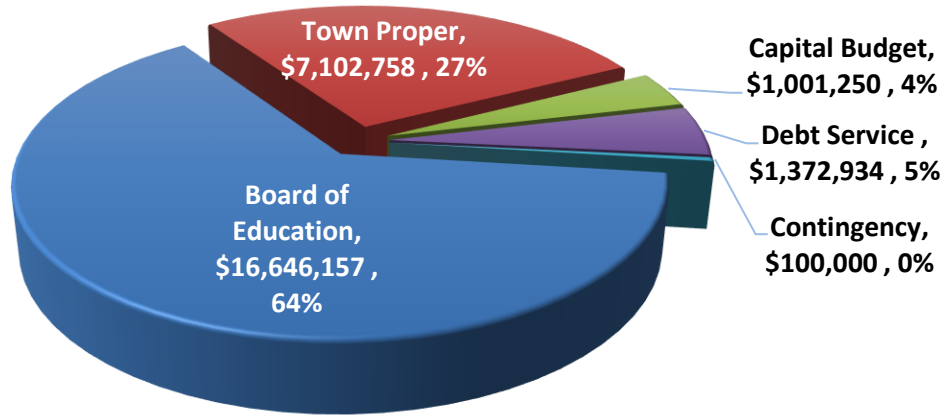
**Due to increased estimated revenue from non-tax sources for FY25 that is \$36.91% higher than FY24, the proposed budget and resulting mill rate will mean no increase in taxes for a household with the average 29% increase in property assessment value.**

### Finance Committee Members

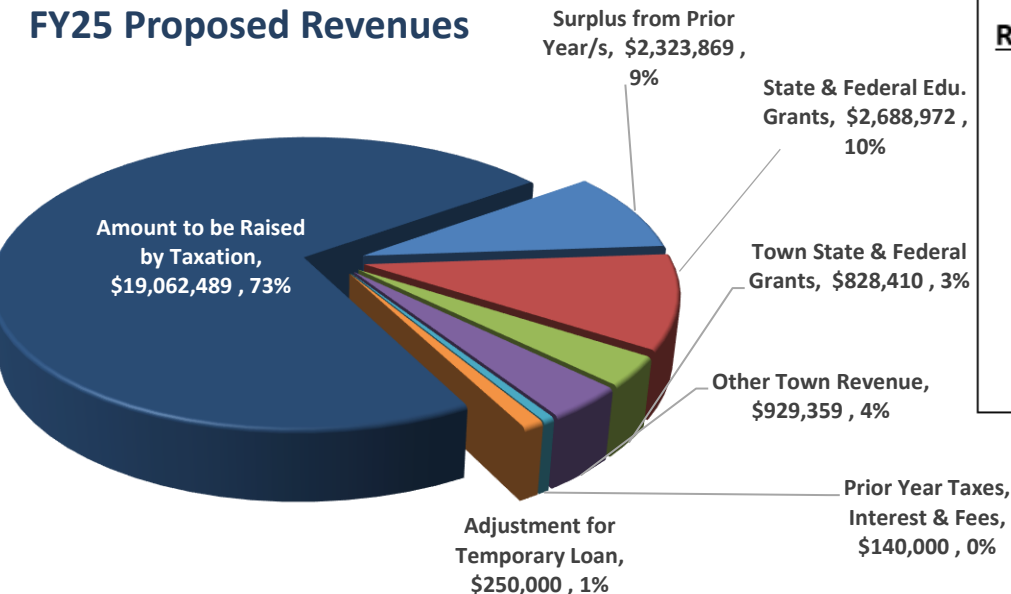
Ross Lally – Chair	Robert Munroe- Vice Chair	Christopher Connelly	<i>(At-large members)</i>
Amanda Gordon	Robert Morra		<i>(BOS Members)</i>
Rhea Klein	Ashley Phelan		<i>(BOE members)</i>

# PROPOSED 2024-2025 (FY25) BUDGET DETAILS

## FY25 Proposed Expenditures



## FY25 Proposed Revenues

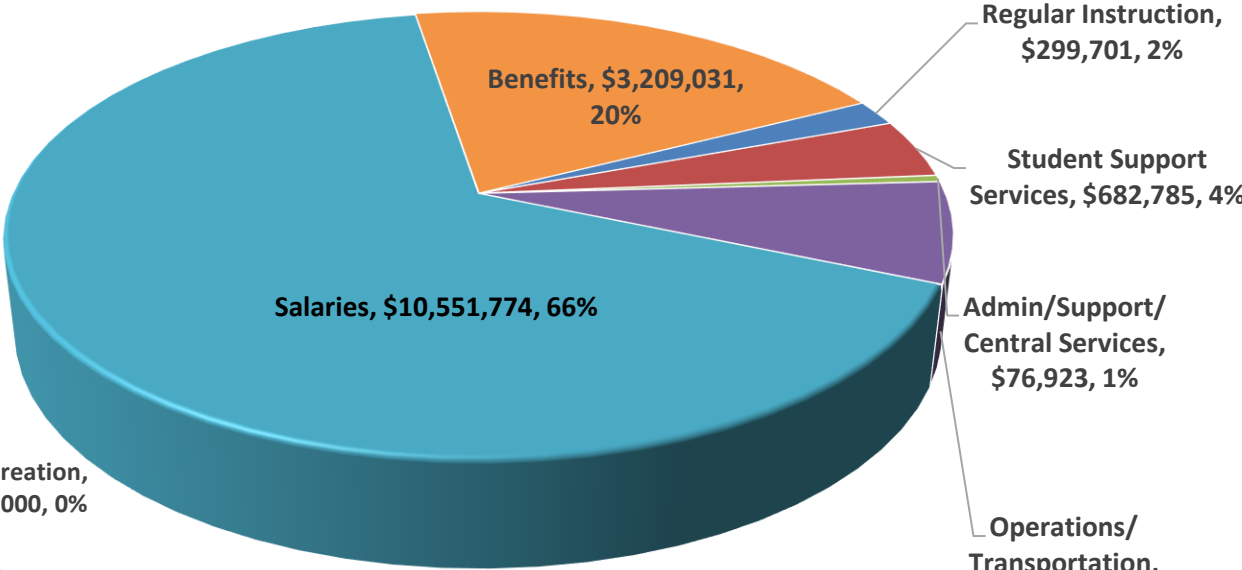
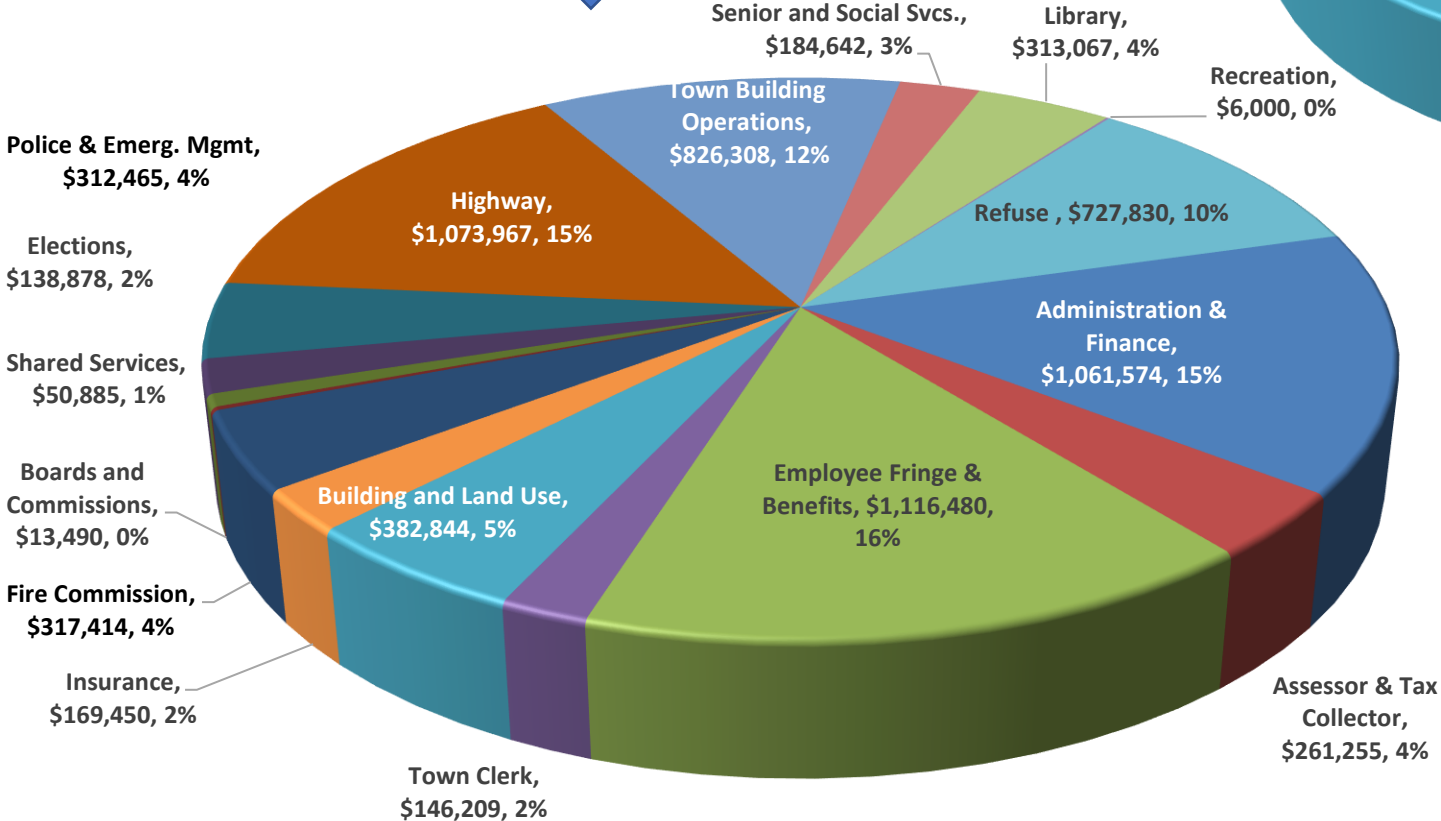


	ADOPTED Expenditures 2023-2024	PROPOSED Expenditures 2024-2025	Difference	Percent Change
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>				
Board of Education	\$16,109,150	\$16,646,157	\$537,007	3.33%
Town Proper	\$6,774,081	\$7,102,758	\$328,677	4.85%
Capital Budget	\$492,380	\$1,001,250	\$508,870	103.35%
Debt Service	\$1,426,168	\$1,372,934	(\$53,234)	-3.73%
Contingency	\$25,000	\$100,000	\$75,000	300.00%
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$24,826,779</b>	<b>\$26,223,099</b>	<b>\$1,396,320</b>	<b>5.62%</b>
	ADOPTED Revenue FY24	PROPOSED Revenue 2024-2025	Difference	Percent Change
<b>REVENUES</b>				
Surplus from Prior Year/s	\$1,163,412	\$2,323,869	\$1,160,457	99.75%
State & Federal Edu. Grants	\$2,632,179	\$2,688,972	\$56,793	2.16%
Town State & Federal Grants	\$562,469	\$828,410	\$265,941	47.28%
Other Town Revenue	\$491,922	\$929,359	\$437,437	88.92%
Prior Year Taxes, Interest & Fees	\$130,000	\$140,000	\$10,000	7.69%
Adjustment for Temporary Loan	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$0	0.00%
<b>Net Amount to be Raised by Taxation</b>	<b>\$19,596,797</b>	<b>\$19,062,489</b>	<b>(\$534,308)</b>	<b>-2.73%</b>
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED REVENUE</b>	<b>\$24,826,779</b>	<b>\$26,223,099</b>	<b>\$1,930,628</b>	<b>7.78%</b>

\* "Surplus from prior year/s" are inclusive of both unused funds allocated for FY22 and FY23 expenses and increased monies realized as a result of revised current year, FY24, revenues.

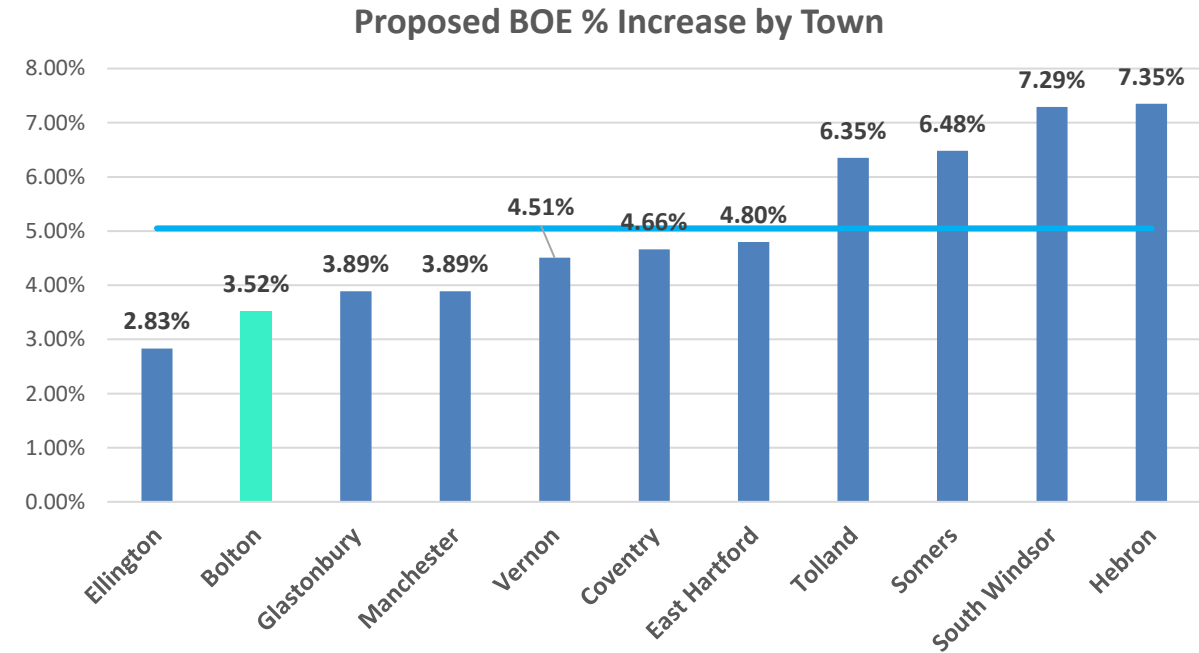
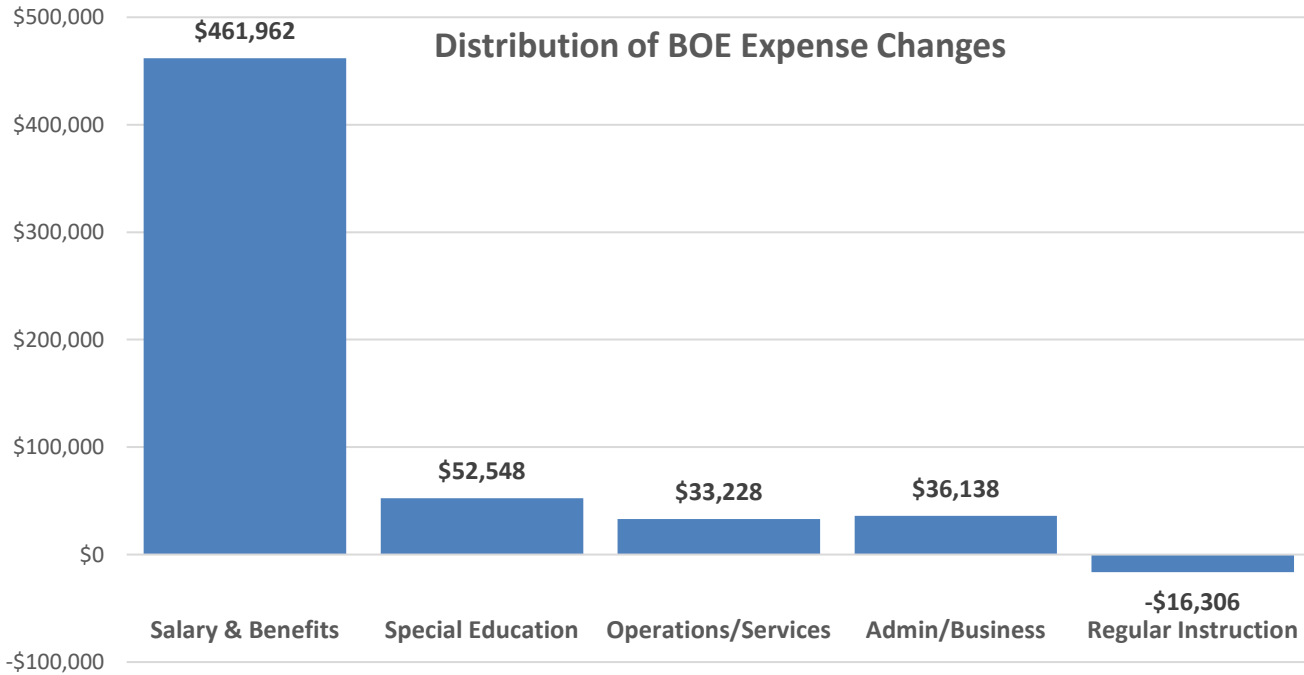
# WHERE THE MONEY GETS SPENT- EXPENDITURES

## Board of Selectmen Budget Breakdown



## Board of Education Budget Breakdown

# BOARD OF EDUCATION INCREASES EXPLAINED



## BUDGET DRIVERS

- Contractual Obligations (salaries and benefits) - 81.39% of increase
- Special Education: 9.26% of increase
  - Mandated programming
  - Transportation
  - Outplacements
- Increased Maintenance & Operations costs- 9.35% of increase
  - Building operations
  - Repairs and Maintenance
  - Instructional needs
  - Technology for students and maintenance
  - School Insurance
  - Transportation

# BOARD OF SELECTMEN INCREASES EXPLAINED

**61.35%**

**of increases are from two categories over which the Town has very limited control**

**1) Refuse Services – 39.74 % of Increase** – The budget is increasing by \$130K to \$727,830 due to the increase cost of garbage pick up. This is a cost of \$150 per person or \$390 per household per year. This is cheaper than the cost of each household contracting for pickup directly.

**2) Elections – 21.62% of Increase** – as a result of early voting the budget for elections is increasing by \$71,048 to \$138,878. This increased expense is largely a result of wages for staffing to cover polling locations, training required for those staff and increased office expenses.

## Other Increases Include

- **Administration – 16.43% of Increase** – Increases driven by professional and other technical services which went up by \$61K. The Town had to separate it's Office 365 accounts from the BOE which increased costs significantly. The cost of our IT Vendor, cyber security (to be insurable) and technology infrastructure upgrades and increases to other Software as a Service vendors all contributed.
- **Fire Commission – 8.99% of Increase** - Increases were made to the proficiency fund which provides stipends to volunteer fire fighters who respond to a certain percentage of calls. Goal is to increase volunteer retention. Raises were provided to officers, including a 94% raise for the Fire Chief bringing the salary to \$29,500 with an eye towards the sustainability of the Department.
- **Finance Department – 6.62% of Increase** – The BOS created a temporary, part-time internship position to free up the Finance Directors time to increase department efficiencies and hopefully relieve the overburdened staff.

Refuse Services  
\$130,600

Elections  
\$71,048

Administration  
\$54,000

Fire Commission  
\$29,533

Finance Department  
\$21,766

Insurance  
\$14,450

Social Services  
\$9,173

# REVALUATION AND MILL RATE

## Revaluation

CT law requires towns to conduct a revaluation every five (5) years, however all towns are not on the same five-year cycle. A revaluation determines the current fair market value of all real estate in town. A properties assessed value represents 70% of its fair market value as of the date of revaluation. Bolton had a revaluation in October 2023 which will impact the FY25 Grand List. Bolton's Total Net Grand List (prior to Board of Assessment Appeals adjustments) increased from \$468,886,431 to 581,164,506 for an increase of 24%.

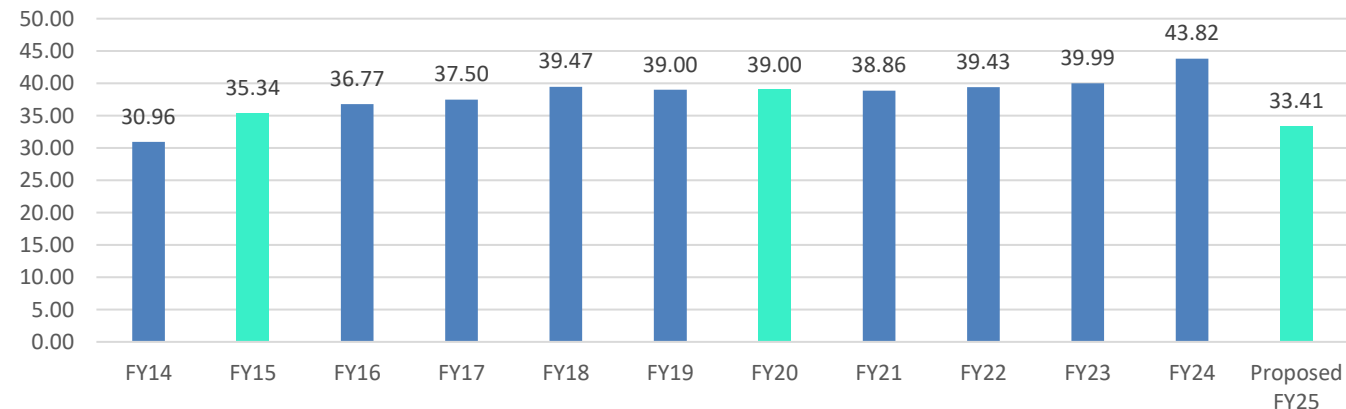
Revaluations make it harder to compare mill rates from year to year since the assessed values against which the mill rate is being applied have changed. A house that was assessed at \$250K last year, may be assessed at \$325K now.

## What is a Mill Rate?

The mill rate is the amount of tax payable per dollar of assessed value of property. 1 mill is equal to \$1 in property tax, per \$1000 of a property's assessed value.

**Example:** A property with assessed value of \$300K, with a 40 Mill Rate would pay \$12K in taxes ( $\$300,000 / \$1000 \times \$40 = \$12,000$ )

Multi-Year History of Bolton Mill Rate



Teal bars represent Fiscal Years following a revaluation.

# IMPACT OF PROPOSED MILL RATE CHANGES

Because it's a revaluation year, you can't just compare last rates mill rate to this years mill rate as the assessed values of your properties have likely increased. The tables below use average increases in car and home values to illustrate the potential impact of the proposed mill rates.

Motor Vehicle Tax Mil Rate by Vehicle Value					
FY24 Fair Market Value of Motor Vehicle	\$5,000	\$10,000	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
FY24 Assessed Value (70% of FMV)	\$3,500	\$7,000	\$10,500	\$14,000	\$21,000
FY24 Taxes (32.46 mil rate)	\$114	\$227	\$341	\$454	\$682
FY25 Fair Market Value of Motor Vehicle*	\$4,750	\$9,500	\$14,250	\$19,000	\$28,500
FY25 Assessed Value (70% of FMV)	\$3,325	\$6,650	\$9,975	\$13,300	\$19,950
Adopted FY25 Taxes (32.46 mil Rate)	\$108	\$216	\$324	\$432	\$648
<b>Change in taxes per year</b>	<b>-\$6</b>	<b>-\$11</b>	<b>-\$17</b>	<b>-\$23</b>	<b>-\$34</b>
<b>Change in taxes per month</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>-\$1</b>	<b>-\$1</b>	<b>-\$2</b>	<b>-\$3</b>

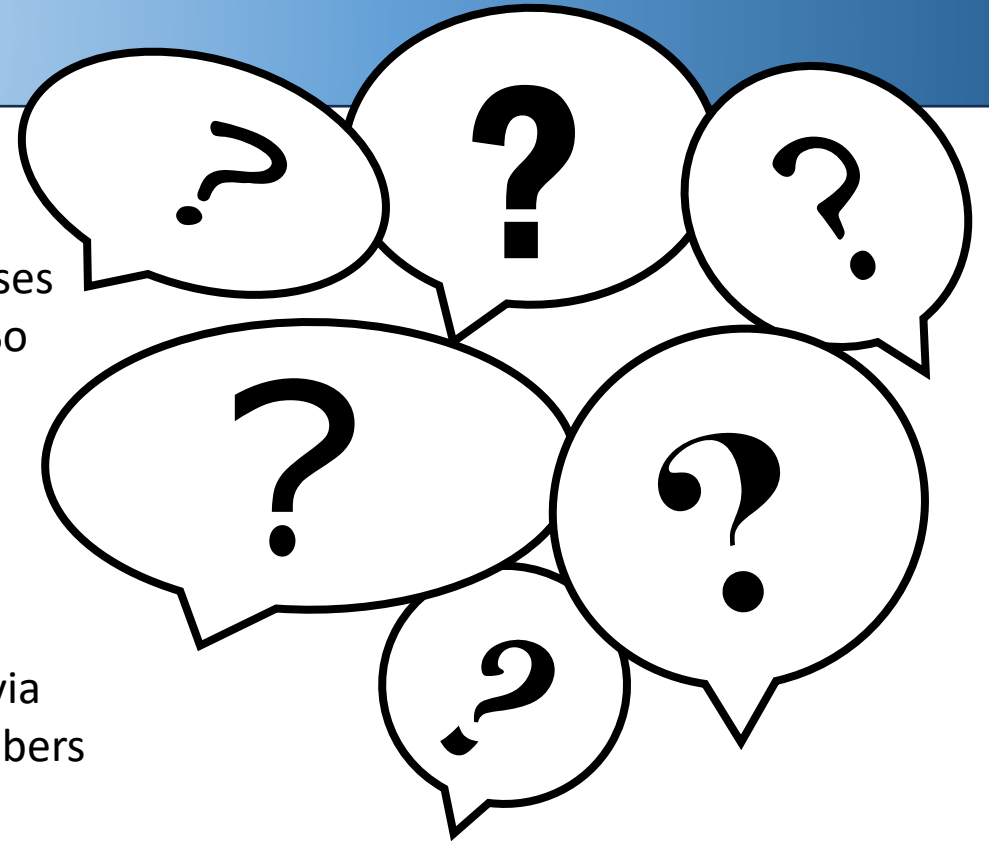
Real Estate and Property Tax Mill Rate by Home Value					
FY24 Fair Market Value of Home & Property	\$200,000	\$300,000	\$400,000	\$500,000	\$600,000
Assessed Value (70% of FMV)	\$140,000	\$210,000	\$280,000	\$350,000	\$420,000
FY24 Taxes (43.82 Mill Rate)	\$6,135	\$9,202	\$12,270	\$15,337	\$18,404
FY25 Fair Market Value of Home & Property*	\$258,000	\$387,000	\$516,000	\$645,000	\$774,000
FY25 Assessed Value (70% of FMV)	\$180,600	\$270,900	\$361,200	\$451,500	\$541,800
Proposed FY25 Taxes (33.41 Mill Rate)	\$6,033	\$9,049	\$12,066	\$15,082	\$18,099
<b>Annual Increase in Taxes</b>	<b>-\$102</b>	<b>-\$153</b>	<b>-\$204</b>	<b>-\$255</b>	<b>-\$305</b>
<b>Monthly Increase in Taxes</b>	<b>-\$8</b>	<b>-\$13</b>	<b>-\$17</b>	<b>-\$21</b>	<b>-\$25</b>

\* Assumes a 5% average decrease in car values and a 29% average increase in home values.



# WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- A budget is a best estimate of projected expenditures and projected revenue from historical knowledge, existing contracts, and best guesses based on information known at the time the budget is constructed. So budgeting is a fluid process.
- The BOS and BOE share updated information with the Finance Committee up until the date the budget must be solidified for referendum.
- The Finance Committee will consider all feedback provided to them via the public hearing and make a decision about what final budget numbers to present to the town at referendum.
- If the budget fails at referendum, the Finance Committee **is required by Town Charter to make a reduction**. The Finance Committee determines how much of that reduction comes from the BOE Budget vs how much comes from the BOS budget. The Finance Committee CANNOT identify which items in the budgets get eliminated. This process repeats for each failed referendum.
- If there have been reductions, necessitated by failed referendums, the BOE and BOS make decisions about which specific items/programs/services will be cut AFTER the final budget has passed.
- It costs the Town an estimated **\$4,200** per referendum



# MILL RATE CALCULATION

<b>Total Poposed FY25 Expenditures</b>	<b>\$26,223,099.27</b>
<b>Less Revenues Other than Current Taxation</b>	
Surplus from Prior Years	\$2,323,869.00
State & Federal Edu. Grants	\$2,688,972.00
Town State & Federal Grants	\$828,410.00
Other Town Revenue	\$929,359.00
Prior Year Taxes, Interest & Fees	\$140,000.00
Adjustment for Temporary Loan	\$250,000.00
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<b>\$7,160,610.00</b>
<b>Amount to Be Raised by Taxes</b> <i>(Total Expenditures- Other Revenue)</i>	<b>\$19,062,489.27</b>
<b>Grand List</b>	
Net Real Estate/Personal Property	\$526,370,426.00
Net Motor Vehicle	\$54,794,080.00
<b>Net Taxable Grand List</b>	<b>\$581,164,506.00</b>

<b>Amount to Be Raised by Taxes</b>	
Current Tax Effort FY25	<b>\$19,062,489.27</b>
Less Motor Vehicle Tax Effort (capped at 32.46 mills, at 95% collection)	<b>(\$1,689,685.04)</b>
Less Supplemental Motor Vehicle TaxEffort	<b>(\$175,000.00)</b>
<b>Property Tax Effort for FY2025</b>	<b>\$17,197,804.23</b>
Adjust for Tax Abatements	\$34,000.00
Adjust for 98% Collection	\$351,669.47
<b>Adjusted Amount to Be Raised by Taxes</b>	<b>\$17,583,473.70</b>
<b>Value of a Property Mill</b> <i>(Net Real Estate / Personal Property Grand list / 1,000)</i>	<b>\$526,370.43</b>
<b>New Mill Rate</b> <i>(Adjusted amount to be raised by taxes/ Value of a Mill)</i>	<b>33.41</b>

**FY24 Mill Rate: 43.82**

**Proposed FY25 Mill Rate: 33.41**

**Change in Mill Rate: - 10.41 mill**

# End Notes- Definitions

**Capital Budget** – Each year, Bolton allocates funds to capital projects that include purchasing large equipment and vehicles and making improvements to our facilities. The Town has a 5-year Capital Plan that includes known current and future needs. The plan is revisited annual to make sure that critical items are taken care of and future needs are planned for well in advance. The Capital Plan is important to our community to preserve the physical assets of Bolton and to properly maintain our infrastructure.

**Debt Service** – is the amount of money that is necessary to pay for the principal and interest on debt that the town has already approved and issued. The Town borrows to fund large capital improvement projects (such as the high school renovation or the purchase of large vehicles). Eighty percent (80%) of the tuition received from the Town of Columbia for sending their students to Bolton, goes towards the high school debt service.

**Contingency** – is funds that are set aside by the Finance Committee to help address shortfalls that may occur each fiscal year. Examples of this might be unanticipated major road repairs, to make up for cuts in State funding, shortfalls due number and intensity of storms to respond to. If at the end of the year there are funds left, a minimum of \$25,000 is put into the town's unassigned fund balance and the rest is used to fund the next year's budget.