

BOARD OF FINANCE

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BOARD OF FINANCE

Proposal for Resident Survey

Mission: The goal of this survey is to quantify our residents’ sentiments regarding potential budget and mill rate changes for FY25. As a note, the Board of Finance can only poll residents on matters over which it has jurisdiction. Specifically, it is unable to poll residents on the impact of budget and mill rate changes on specific items under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education, as the Board of Finance does not have line-item authority. As an example, we are unable to ask about trade-offs between certain levels of mill rate change and items within the BOE budget.

Process: The survey will be launched in early March (after the BOS and BOE vote on their respective budgets) and will be available to Wilton Residents until **March 29, 2024** at 5pm ET. The results will be captured in SurveyMonkey, which has specific identifiers to determine duplicate responses. SurveyMonkey captures the data, and once the duplicate responses are excised, the information is tabulated and analyzed by the Board of Finance before its preliminary budget deliberations begin on April 2.

Note: the above Mission and Process paragraphs will not appear in the survey; they are a note to this draft.

Introduction (p.1):

The primary role of Wilton’s Board of Finance is to recommend an annual budget to the town's residents. As part of that decision, the Board of Finance must approve and recommend budgets for the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education. These budgets are the primary drivers in the mill rate calculation. Wilton’s residents will then vote on the town's budget at the Annual Town Meeting, **which this year will be held on Tuesday May 7 at 7:00pm**, with continued voting on **Saturday May 11 from 8:00 AM to 6:00 PM, at the Clune Center at Wilton High School.**

To make its recommendation, the Board of Finance is seeking input from the town’s residents about the Board of Selectmen’s budget, the Board of Education’s budget, and the mill rate. Please note that while the Board of Finance has line-item authority on the Board of Selectmen’s budget, it does not have that same authority on the Board of Education’s budget.

Based on the budgets proposed by the **Board of Selectmen (\$TBDm, \$TBDm / TBD% annual increase)** and the **Board of Education (\$TBDm, \$TBDm / TBD% annual increase)**, the mill rate would ~~increase by~~ **TBD%**. For an explanation of the mill rate and how it’s calculated, please see the Board of Finance’s explainer. If you’d like to review the budgets, please click [here](#) for the Board of Selectman’s budget and [here](#) for the Board of Education’s budget.

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Note that to illustrate a normalized spending change, the projected mill rate increase does not take revaluation's impact on the Grand List into account. Given the revaluation process that recently occurred, **the mill rate is forecast to decrease to TBD from 29.3 currently**, despite the required **the town's total property tax levy increasing TBD%**. The town's total property tax levy can be understood as the entire, aggregate amount of taxes that Wilton collects. Please see the next page for the relationship between the mill rate change and tax rate change for residential property owners. If you'd like to review the budgets, please click [here](#) for the Board of Selectman's budget and [here](#) for the Board of Education's budget.

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Introduction (p.2):

As the Board of Finance evaluates these survey results, in most years it uses the mill rate change as a proxy for ~~the a~~ resident's expected tax change. With this year's revaluation, residential property owners ~~may will likely~~ see a tax change which differs from the mill rate change. **The change in the amount of taxes you will pay is reflective of how much your home assessment has changed.** As a note, the assessment is calculated as 70% of a home's appraisal value (per the state of CT).

Since the Grand List grew by **28.5%**, if your home assessment grew more than that, you will see a tax increase above the town's total tax levy increase of **TBD%**. If your home assessment grew less than **28.5%**, you will see a tax increase below the town's total tax levy increase of **TBD%** (and may potentially see a decrease).

You can determine your new tax level based on these figures by taking your 2023 home assessment, multiplying it by the calculated mill rate of **TBD**, and dividing by 1000. For example, if your new home assessment is \$1,000,000, then your new taxes would be $1,000,000 * \text{TBD} / 1000 = \text{TBD}$.

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Introduction (p.3):

To make taking this survey easier, please see the chart below for an approximation of what the tax ~~change rates~~ would be for residential properties at different ~~home appraisals values~~. You can look up your 2023 home appraisal by searching [here](#). Note ~~these the~~ values in the table below are an approximation based on ~~generalized assumptions~~ the aggregated change by home appraisal category. The table ~~and are~~ not meant to be specific to any individual property. ~~Many residents may see appraisal changes (and therefore tax changes) which differ from the below.~~

Residential Property 2023 Appraised Value Range	Approx. Current Taxes	Approx. Expected Taxes, Assuming x Mill Rate*	Approx. % Change in Taxes, Assuming x Mill Rate*	Approx. \$ Change in Taxes, Assuming x Mill Rate*
<\$500,000				
\$500,001 to \$750,000				
\$750,001 to \$1,000,000				
\$1,000,001 to \$1,250,000				
\$1,250,000 to \$1,500,000				
\$1,500,001 to \$1,750,000				
\$1,750,001 to 2,000,000				
>\$2,000,000				

Note: *The appraised values are based on town records, which can be found at <https://gis.vgsi.com/wiltonct/Search.asp>

Please note that the responses to this survey are completely anonymous. Survey responses will be aggregated and disaggregated by using cross-tabulations. Thank you for your time and consideration in responding to this short survey.

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- 1) How closely do you follow Wilton's town budget process? Please select all that apply.
- I have reviewed the Board of Selectman's budget and / or listened to their budget deliberations
 - I have reviewed the Board of Education's budget and / or listened to their budget deliberations
 - I have listened to the Board of Finance's budget discussions
 - I follow the budget process through media outlets (social media, Good Morning Wilton, Wilton Bulletin, etc.)
 - I do not track Wilton's budget process

Note to Draft: answers above will be in randomized order, except for the last option. Respondent may select all choices, but may only select the last option if that option is chosen

- 2) Do you support the proposed TBD% increase to the Board of Selectmen's budget of \$TBDm, which reflects an annual increase of \$TBDm / TBD%?
- Yes, and I would support a higher level of increase
 - Yes, I support a budget increase at this level
 - No, I do not support a budget increase at this level
- 3) Do you support the proposed TBD% increase to the Board of Education's budget of \$TBDm, which reflects an annual increase of \$TBDm / TBD%?
- Yes, and I would support a higher level of increase
 - Yes, I support a budget increase at this level
 - No, I do not support a budget increase at this level

Residential Property 2023 Appraised Value Range	Approx. Current Taxes	Approx. Expected Taxes, Assuming x Mill Rate*	Approx. % Change in Taxes, Assuming x Mill Rate*	Approx. \$ Change in Taxes, Assuming x Mill Rate*
<\$500,000				
\$500,001 to \$750,000				
\$750,001 to \$1,000,000				
\$1,000,001 to \$1,250,000				
\$1,250,000 to \$1,500,000				
\$1,500,001 to \$1,750,000				
\$1,750,001 to 2,000,000				
>\$2,000,000				

Note: *The appraised values are based on town records, which can be found at <https://gis.vgsi.com/wiltonct/Search.asp>

- 4) Do you support a TBD% increase to the mill rate of TBD, as estimated based on the proposed budgets from the BOS and the BOE? Please note that this mill rate reflects a total town tax levy increase of TBD%, as estimated based on the proposed budgets from the BOS and the BOE.

Please see above for the approximated tax change rates for residential property value ranges based on this projected mill rate. You can search for your home's appraisal here. Note the values in the table above are an approximation based on the aggregated change by category. The table is not meant to be specific to any individual property. Many residents may see appraisal changes (and therefore tax changes) which differ from the above.

- Yes, and I would support a higher increase to the mill rate
- Yes, I support a mill rate increase at this level
- No, I do not support a mill rate increase at this level

4) ~~IF Q4 = YES) What is the maximum mill rate change you would support, understanding that this higher mill rate would mean additional spending (relative to the proposed BOS & BOE budgets)?~~

- ~~x% increase (this will be the expected mill rate increase based on the proposed budgets)~~
- ~~x+1% increase~~
- ~~x+2% increase~~
- ~~x+3%+ increase~~
- ~~Whatever rate the Board of Finance decides is sufficient~~

5) ~~IF Q4 = YES) Where would you want this additional funding to be applied? Please select all that apply:~~

- ~~The Board of Selectmen's budget~~
- ~~The Board of Education's budget~~
- ~~Held as a reserve for infrastructure improvements or other spending priorities~~
- ~~Other (please specify)~~

6) ~~IF Q4 = No) What is the maximum mill rate change you would support, understanding that this lower mill rate would mean reduced spending (relative to the proposed BOS & BOE budgets)?~~

- ~~x% increase (this will be the expected mill rate increase based on the proposed budgets)~~
- ~~x-1% increase~~
- ~~x-2% increase~~
- ~~x-3% increase~~
- ~~No change~~
- ~~1% decrease~~
- ~~2% decrease~~
- ~~Whatever rate the Board of Finance decides is sufficient~~

7) ~~IF Q4 = No) From which budget would you want this reduced funding to be removed? Please select all that apply:~~

- ~~The Board of Selectmen's budget~~
- ~~The Board of Education's budget~~
- ~~Both the Board of Selectmen's and Board of Education's budgets~~

8)5) Is there any commentary you wish to add regarding the FY2025 budget?

- Open text box

9)6) Are you eligible to vote in Wilton?

- Yes, as a registered voter
- Yes, as a property owner, but not as a registered voter
- No

10)7) [IF Q10 = FIRST 2 OPTIONS] Do you plan to vote at the Annual Town Meeting on May 7 or at the Adjourned Town Meeting on May 11?

- Yes, I plan to vote
- No, I do not plan to vote

11)8) How old are you?

- 18 or ~~y~~ounger
- 19-25
- 26-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64

Commented [MR1]: Removing given conversation on 2/13 re: difficulty in interpretation and potential survey bias

- 65-74
- 75 or older
- I prefer not to say

429) Do you have at least one child enrolled in the Wilton Public Schools?

- Yes
- No, my children receive education outside of the Wilton public school system
- No, my children have already graduated
- No, my children are too young to attend school
- No, I do not have children

4310) How long have you lived in Wilton?

- 5 years or less
- 6 – 10 years
- 11 – 20 years
- 21 – 30 years
- More than 30 years

11) According to the town's records (which can be found by searching here), what is the 2023 appraisal value of your home?

- <\$500,000
- \$500,001 to \$750,000
- \$750,001 to \$1,000,000
- \$1,000,001 to \$1,250,000
- \$1,250,000 to \$1,500,000
- \$1,500,001 to \$1,750,000
- \$1,750,001 to 2,000,000
- >\$2,000,000

Conclusion:

Thank you very much for taking the time to go through this survey. The Board of Finance will plan to review the results during its budget deliberations.

Please also remember to join us at the public hearings for the Board of Selectmen at 7:00pm on March 18 and the Board of Education at 7:00pm on March 20.

Please also remember to join us at the **Annual Town Meeting at 7:00pm on May 7 at Wilton High School's Clune Center!** You can also vote at the Adjourned Town Meeting on May 11 **from 8:00am to 6:00pm at the Clune Center as well.**