# Town of Thomaston





# **Proposed Budget** July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025

# **Board of Finance:**

Richard Sileo, Chairman Luke Freimuth Michael Madow George Seabourne Adam Silverman Stephen Turner

# **Board of Selectmen:**

Edmond Mone, First Selectman Jeffrey Dunn Michael Burr

> Finance Director Tracy Decker

# **Budget in Brief**

The proposed operating budget of \$30,394,185 represents an \$856,678 (2.90%) increase in spending from the previous year's budget of \$29,537,507. The mill rate for real estate and personal property will increase to 34.36. The mill rate for motor vehicles has been capped by the State at 32.46. The 2.19% increase in tax revenue is caused by an increase in the budgeted expenditures along with a decrease in grants and other revenue. The basic elements of the expenditures are as follows:

Total Budget	\$ 30,394,185	\$ 29,537,507	\$856,678
Capital Outlay	303,841	591,897	(288,056)
Debt Service	2,300,000	2,300,000	0
Board of Education	17,688,975	16,886,874	802,101
Town Operating Expenditures	\$ 10,101,369	\$ 9,758,736	\$342,633
	2024-2025	<u>2023-2024</u>	(Decrease)
			Increase

The Budget has two main components – revenues and expenditures. The amount needed to be raised by taxes, or the tax levy, is the result of the budgeted expenditures minus budgeted non-tax revenues (this includes estimates of delinquent taxes and interest from prior years). A mill rate is then calculated using the Grand List as a basis for distributing the tax burden.

The goal during the budget process is to accomplish the following objectives: minimize the potential tax increases to residents; implement efficiency and effectiveness throughout the Town; maintain and enhance services provided to Town residents; maintain or improve Town infrastructure; and maintain an unrestricted general fund balance equal to two months of the total operating general fund expenditures or 16.67%.

When compiling the budget information, there were several items worth noting that impacted the budget process.

Original department requests have been reduced by the Board of Education, Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance by \$135,832 to come up with a sound, fiscally responsible budget which maintains services. Expenditures as a whole compared to the 2023-2024 budget have increased by \$856,678 which includes an increase of \$344,533 in town expenditures, an \$802,101 increase in education, a \$1,900 decrease in transfers and a \$288,056 decrease in contributions to the capital improvement fund.

Over the past several years, the town has taken advantage of lower interest rates and refunded (basically, refinanced) several outstanding debt issuances. This does not extend the payment terms, just reduces the annual payments. There are currently three refunded bonds and two general obligation bond outstanding which represent funds borrowed for school renovations, energy upgrades, sewer plant upgrades, road work, a communications system, roofs for several town buildings, two fire trucks, a dump truck, Phase II of the Nystroms Park project and sewer and road construction in town.

In addition to bonded projects, there are also funds included in the operating budget for capital expenditures. The capital improvement amount included in the 2023-2024 budget was \$571,897. An additional \$20,000 was transferred from fund balance for capital projects during the 2023-2024 year. The 2024-2025 budgeted capital amount is \$303,841. Capital improvement requests from all town departments totaled approximately \$24 million for repairs and replacement of town infrastructure, buildings and equipment.

An important item to consider as part of the budget process is the non-tax revenue. This revenue is flat or decreased in several areas. Due to increased collections of delinquent taxes over the past several years, the

amount that is considered collectible for prior taxes and interest has remained level. Charges for services and other income are experiencing small, if any, increases. Interest income has been increasing over the last year as interest rates have increased. State grants have remained flat or increased slightly.

The Connecticut State Legislature implemented a 32.46 mill rate cap for motor vehicles beginning with the 2021 grand list.

*Fund Balance* – One measure of a Town's financial strength is the level of its fund balances (the amount in which revenues have exceeded expenditures cumulatively). Bond rating agencies consider a 10% ratio of fund balance to general fund expenditures to be deemed a healthy financial balance allowing the Town to be able to adequately address potential fiscal emergencies. The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends, at a minimum, that general-purpose governments maintain an unrestricted fund balance of no less than two months (16.67%) of general fund operating expenditures. The Town's audited unassigned general fund balance at June 30, 2023 was \$6,438,637.

Fund balance, June 30, 2023	\$ 6,438,637
Use of surplus 2023-2024 budget	( 228,000)
Proposed use of surplus during 2024-2025	(200,000)
Remaining fund balance	6,010,637
Total Expenditures as proposed	\$30,394,185
Ratio of Fund Balance to Total Expenditures	19.78%

The Town's current Bond Rating from Standard & Poors is AA due to its ability to maintain a healthy fund balance and its management of Town finances. Reductions in fund balance could affect this rating for further debt issuances and increase the interest rates the Town would have to pay for future borrowing.

The Town's fund balance policy states that fund balance greater than seven (7) percent may be transferred to debt service for future debt payments, transferred to the Capital, Nonrecurring Fund for future capital projects or to reduce the tax rate in the subsequent year provided that care is taken to avoid a major fluctuation in the tax rate in succeeding years. Certain circumstances may justify maintaining a greater than seven (7) percent fund balance such as a volatility in operating revenues or expenditures. While each department has done an excellent job in keeping expenditures level, cuts to State aid have created a gap in revenue. The Board of Finance has deemed it prudent at this time to maintain a greater fund balance anticipating future cuts in State funding.

*Mill Rate Calculation*- The Board of Finance uses a collection rate of 98% for taxes based on past collection rate experience. The value of 1 mill for real estate and personal property equals \$576,191.

Taxable grand list real estate & personal p (net of allowance for appeals) Collection rate	
Value of 1 Mill	\$576,191,010 / \$1,000 = \$576,191
Total Expenditures Less Motor Vehicle tax (capped at 32.46) Less Revenue other than taxes	\$ 30,394,185 (2,747,465) <u>(7,846,751)</u>
Total Taxes needed	\$ 19,799,969 / \$576,191 = 34.36 mills
Your tax bill =	Taxable Assessed Value    X 34.36   1000 X

*Revenue* – The budget includes increases in revenue of \$95,685 in charges for services, \$135,000 in investment income and \$184,388 in state aid.

*Expenditures* – Thomaston's increase in expenditures are primarily contractual and fixed costs. The Town has exercised all savings opportunities in the bid process including heat, electric, telephone, audit, actuary, insurances, information technology services, gas & diesel, HVAC maintenance, and office supplies. The Town has been diligent to shop for all the services it purchases at the best possible prices.

*Efficiencies in Government* - The Town has and continues to look for ways to be more efficient and cut costs. Some of the Town's accomplishments are as follows:

- Entered into an energy performance contract for all town buildings in which energy efficient changes were made to all Town buildings. The energy savings recognized annually pays for the cost of the energy upgrades. Additional upgrades, including LED lights, are ongoing;
- Successfully reduced large increases in employee health care costs by negotiating high deductible health plans for all unions;
- Negotiated the change from a defined benefit plan to a defined contribution plan;
- The Town also recognizes the importance of long-term planning vs. pay-as-you-go, in order to maintain the town's infrastructure, buildings, sewer and equipment, through the adoption of a comprehensive long-term capital improvement policy;
- Management supports its revenue generating departments by providing adequate staffing to insure proper permitting, enforcement of regulations and equitable assessments to all its residents and businesses.

## TOWN OF THOMASTON ANNUAL BUDGET SUMMARY For the year July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025

Based on Mill Rate of 34.36 \*

	ACTUAL	BUDGETED	PROPOSED	Increase	Percent
	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	(Decrease)	Change
REVENUE:					
Property Taxes	\$ 21,578,652	\$ 22,405,756	\$ 22,895,361	\$ 489,605	2.19%
Charges for Services	528,288	485,947	581,632	95,685	19.69%
Intergovernmental	6,459,341	6,177,804	6,362,192	184,388	2.98%
Investment Income	445,366	215,000	350,000	135,000	62.79%
Other Income	11,023	5,000	5,000	-	0.00%
Other Financing Sources	-	248,000	200,000	(48,000)	-19.35%
TOTAL REVENUE	29,022,670	29,537,507	30,394,185	856,678	2.90%
OPERATING EXPENDITURES: General Government Public Safety Public Works Health and Welfare Culture and Recreation Housing and Development Education Operating Subsidies to Other Funds	4,047,358 2,227,292 2,130,629 101,149 423,495 277,550 15,931,434 45,625	4,329,415 2,394,515 2,136,944 103,292 519,525 236,545 16,886,874 38,500	4,549,570 2,373,043 2,236,180 102,479 538,806 264,691 17,688,975 36,600	220,155 (21,472) 99,236 (813) 19,281 28,146 802,101 (1,900)	4.64% -0.79% 3.71% 11.90% 4.75%
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES	25,184,532	26,645,610	27,790,344	1,144,734	4.30%
DEBT SERVICE (See Schedule B)	2,300,000	2,300,000	2,300,000	-	0.00%
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES (See Schedule A)	1,211,188	591,897	303,841	(288,056)	-48.67%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 28,695,720	\$ 29,537,507	\$ 30,394,185	\$ 856,678	2.90%

\* Motor vehicle mill rate is capped at 32.46

#### TOWN OF THOMASTON SCHEDULE OF REVENUE For the Year Ending June 30, 2025 Based on Mill Rate of 34.36

	based on will Kate of	54.50			
	ACTUAL	BUDGETED	PROPOSED	Increase	
	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	(Decrease)	
PROPERTY TAXES:	<b>•</b> • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	<b>•</b> • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	ф оо сия ио и	¢ 405.000	2 2004
Property Tax - Current	\$ 21,222,595	\$ 22,061,511	\$ 22,547,434	\$ 485,923	2.20%
Property Tax - Prior Years	179,689	200,000	200,000	-	0.00%
Interest and lien fees	128,443	100,000	100,000	-	0.00%
Taxes from Housing Authority - P.I.L.O.T.	33,688	32,000	33,690	1,690	5.28%
Telecommunication property tax	14,237	12,245	14,237	1,992	16.27%
TOTAL PROPERTY TAXES	21,578,652	22,405,756	22,895,361	489,605	2.19%
CHARGES FOR SERVICES:					
Building permits	92,542	80,000	90,000	10,000	12.50%
Conveyance tax	94,183	90,000	90,000	-	0.00%
Town clerk fees	-	-	50,000	50,000	#DIV/0!
Special duty police reimbursements	150,695	100,000	125,000	25,000	25.00%
Accident reports	756	500	750	250	50.00%
Gun permits	3,580	5,000	3,500	(1,500)	-30.00%
Vendor permits	60	-	-	-	#DIV/0!
Zoning and land use fees	7,960	7,500	7,500	-	0.00%
Recreation - Nystrom's park	5,464	5,628	5,797	169	3.00%
Fingerprinting	80	100	100	-	0.00%
Dam Patrol	-	19,926	-	(19,926)	-100.00%
Transfer Station	-	-	27,000	27,000	#DIV/0!
Parking tickets	60	500	500	-	0.00%
Dog fines & fees	5,343	2,500	2,500	-	0.00%
Rent of Tower	117,801	117,000	120,500	3,500	2.99%
Rent of Tower (Plymouth)	12,842	29,793	30,985	1,192	4.00%
Rent of Opera House	28,647	12,500	12,500	-	0.00%
PA 09-229 LOCIP project funding	8,275	15,000	15,000	-	0.00%
TOTAL CHARGES FOR SERVICES	528,288	485,947	581,632	95,685	19.69%
INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVENUE:					
Property Tax Relief for Veterans	7,321	7,321	7,399	78	1.07%
Property Tax Relief on Property of					
Totally Disabled Persons	953	953	1,018	65	6.82%
Municipal Grants-in-Aid	395,346	395,346	395,346	-	0.00%
Payment in Lieu of Taxes on Exempt Property of					
Mfg. Facilities in Distressed Municipalities	-	9,790	2,730	(7,060)	-72.11%
Payment in Lieu of Taxes: Tiered Reimbursement	30,645	26,628	29,980	3,352	12.59%
Federal PILOT - Land authorization	1,895	2,109	1,895	(214)	-10.15%
Local Capital Improvement Program (LOCIP)	52,164	53,304	78,060	24,756	46.44%
Education Cost Sharing	5,300,449	5,432,979	5,481,226	48,247	0.89%
Mashantucket Pequot and Mohegan Fund Grant	16,872	16,872	16,872	-	0.00%
Town Aid Road Grants Transportation Fund	220,457	220,457	220,662	205	0.09%
Bus Operations Grant	12,045	12,045	12,045	-	0.00%
Motor Vehicle	270,060	-	114,959	114,959	#DIV/0!
Municipal Revenue Sharing	151,134	-	-	-	#DIV/0!
TOTAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL	6,459,341	6,177,804	6,362,192	184,388	2.98%
INVESTMENT INCOME	445,366	215,000	350,000	135,000	62.79%
	45,500	213,000	550,000	155,000	02.7970
OTHER INCOME:	11.032	5 000	5 000		0.000/
Miscellaneous	11,023	5,000	5,000	-	0.00%
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES:					
Surplus prior years		248,000	200,000	(48,000)	-19.35%
TOTAL GENERAL FUND REVENUE AND					
OTHER FINANCING SOURCES	\$ 29,022,670	\$ 29,537,507	\$ 30,394,185	\$ 856,678	2.90%

#### TOWN OF THOMASTON SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES For the Year Ending June 30, 2025 Based on Mill Rate of 34.36

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	A	CTUAL	ΒU	JDGETED	PR	OPOSED	Increase	
	2	022-2023	20	023-2024	20	024-2025	(Decrease)	
GENERAL GOVERNMENT								
Board of Selectmen	\$	129,088	\$	129,844	\$	133,031	3,187	2.45%
Elections		33,641		33,097		41,621	8,524	25.75%
Board of Finance		1,131		2,150		2,150	-	0.00%
Treasurer		211,651		218,540		225,593	7,053	3.23%
Computer Information systems		66,247		91,916		97,477	5,561	6.05%
Independent audit		63,350		67,000		69,800	2,800	4.18%
Legal		78,419		80,000		80,000	-	0.00%
Tax Collector		120,145		123,219		127,808	4,589	3.72%
Tax Assessor		151,337		156,262		162,808	6,546	4.19%
Insurance		492,261		520,587		527,928	7,341	1.41%
Town Hall Operations & Maintenance		249,259		239,550		261,550	22,000	9.18%
Town Clerk		48,925		54,365		113,765	59,400	109.26%
Probate court		4,352		4,805		5,112	307	6.39%
Social Security		299,870		305,000		315,000	10,000	3.28%
Unemployment Expense		102		-		-	-	#DIV/0!
Retirement - Town Employees		363,095		363,335		376,717	13,382	3.68%
Retirement - Volunteer Fire and Ambulance		174,300		153,700		183,700	30,000	19.52%
Medical / Life insurance		787,286		909,978		944,895	34,917	3.84%
Retirees Medical Insurance		763,517		773,831		770,990	(2,841)	-0.37%
Council of Governments		4,488		4,772		4,731	(41)	-0.86%
CT Conference of Municipalities		4,894		4,894		4,894	-	0.00%
Contingency		-		92,570		100,000	7,430	8.03%
TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT		4,047,358		4,329,415		4,549,570	220,155	5.09%
PUBLIC SAFETY								
Police		1,396,148		1,567,140		1,516,844	(50,296)	-3.21%
Emergency Management		13,970		11,201		11,201	(50,290)	0.00%
Communications and Dispatch		412,874		419,888		423,562	3,674	0.87%
Fire Protection		213,770		211,915		219,675	7,760	3.66%
Fire Marshal		29,438		32,271		32,776	505	1.56%
Ambulance		86,029		75,700		83,760	8,060	10.65%
Tree Removal		50,000		50,000		50,000	-	0.00%
Animal Control		25,063		26,400		35,225	8,825	33.43%
TOTAL PUBLIC SAFETY		2,227,292		2,394,515		2,373,043	(21,472)	-0.90%
		_,,		2,074,515		2,070,040	(21,172)	0.9070
PUBLIC WORKS								
Highways		768,032		763,754		778,286	14,532	1.90%
Town Aid Road		221,971		220,457		220,662	205	0.09%
Snow and Ice Removal		230,569		222,500		228,500	6,000	2.70%
Street Lighting		24,199		22,640		29,070	6,430	28.40%
Fire Hydrants		218,028		226,000		239,000	13,000	5.75%
Solid Waste and Recycling		651,152		660,593		677,192	16,599	2.51%
Transfer Station		-		-		45,470	45,470	#DIV/0!
Engineering - water testing, dams		16,678		21,000		18,000		-14.29%
TOTAL PUBLIC WORKS		2,130,629		2,136,944		2,236,180	99,236	4.64%
						-	-	

#### TOWN OF THOMASTON SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURES

For the Year Ending June 30, 2025

34.36

Based on a Mill Rate of

Duseu of		01.00			
	ACTUAL	BUDGETED	PROPOSED	Increase	
	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	(Decrease)	
IF A L'TH AND WELFADE				(=)	
HEALTH AND WELFARE	4 500	4 500	4 500		0.000/
Medical Services	4,500	4,500	4,500	-	0.00%
Torrington Area Health District	40,694	40,842	40,842	-	0.00%
Social Services	21,211	21,310	21,814	504	2.37%
Elderly Nutrition	6,722	6,722	3,005		-55.30%
Susan B. Anthony Project	2,500	2,500	2,500	-	0.00%
Minibus	19,368	20,883	23,043	2,160	10.34%
Veterans Administration	1,900	2,035	2,275	240	11.79%
Senior Center	4,254	4,500	4,500	-	0.00%
TOTAL CULTURE AND RECREATION	101,149	103,292	102,479	(813)	-0.79%
CULTURE AND RECREATION					
Parks & Recreation	106,719	154,420	163,015	8,595	5.57%
Memorial Day	2,500	2,500	2,500	-	0.00%
Public Library	314,276	362,605	373,291	10,686	2.95%
TOTAL CULTURE AND RECREATION	423,495	519,525	538,806	19,281	3.71%
HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT					
Conservation Commission	1,795	1,795	1,795	-	0.00%
Economic Development	1,888	5,420	6,350	930	17.16%
Housing, Land Use & Development	272,867	228,300	255,546	27,246	11.93%
Brownfields	1,000	1,030	1,000	(30)	-2.91%
TOTAL HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT	277,550	236,545	264,691	28,146	11.90%
EDUCATION					
Education operation	15,931,434	16,886,874	17,688,975	802,101	4.75%
OTHER FINANCING USES					
Debt Service Fund (See Schedule B)	2,300,000	2,300,000	2,300,000	-	0.00%
Hillside Cemetery	26,000	26,000	26,000	-	0.00%
Capital or Nonrecurring (See Schedule A)	1,211,188	591,897	303,841	(288,056)	-48.67%
Seth Thomas/Bradstreet House	9,625	10,000	10,500	500	5.00%
Social Service Crisis Fund	10,000	2,500	100		-96.00%
TOTAL OTHER FINANCING USES	3,556,813	2,930,397	2,640,441	(289,956)	
FOTAL EXPENDITURES AND OTHER					
FINANCING USES	\$ 28,695,720	\$ 29,537,507	\$ 30,394,185	\$ 856,678	2.90%

Schedule A

#### TOWN OF THOMASTON CAPITAL EXPENDITURES For the Year Ending June 30, 2025 Based on Mill Rate of 34.36

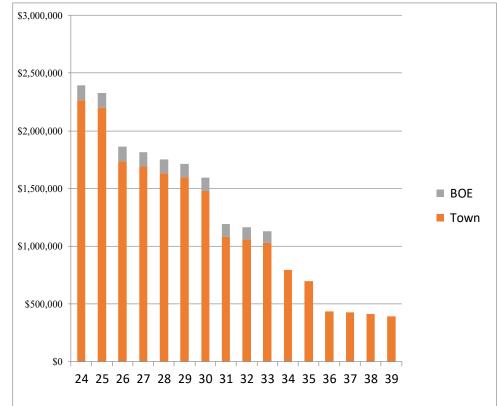
		ACTUAL	BUDGETED	PROPOSED
		2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
TR	ANSFER TO CAPITAL OR NONRECURRING FUND			
*	Assessor GIS mapping update	\$ -	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000
	Assessor revaluation	28,000	22,000	22,000
	BOE: Technology servers	78,571	-	-
	BOE: TCS - boiler burners	-	44,000	-
	BOE: TCS - fire panel	-	50,209	-
*	BOE: TCS - drainage	171,275	-	-
*	BOE: TCS/THS - oil tank removal	155,000	-	-
	BOE: THS - Heating pump	-	-	5,000
	BOE: THS - Stove hoods for culinary classroom	-	-	14,647
	Building/Land Use: Plan of Conservation and Development	25,000	25,000	-
	Fire Dept: Turn out gear	20,000	20,000	20,000
	Fire Dept: Self contained breathing apparatus	28,000	28,000	28,000
	Fire Dept: Pagers	4,000	4,000	6,000
	Fire Dept: Air compressor	-	50,000	-
*	Fire Dept: Tanker Truck refurbishment	18,246	-	-
*	Greenway	25,000	-	-
	Library: Community Room emergency exit	-	19,999	-
	Library: Interior brickwork	-	-	19,503
*	Opera House: Hazardous materials study	2,950	-	-
	Police: Dash/body cameras	20,540	24,246	24,246
*	Police: School zone signs	700	-	-
	PWD: Aera-vator	9,478	-	-
*	PWD: Carter Road over Nibbling Brook culvert	60,000	-	-
*	PWD: High Street Ext culverts	313,000	-	-
	PWD: Highwood Farm engineering	-	-	20,000
	PWD: Sidewalk replacement	50,000	50,000	-
	PWD: Truck #22 (lease purchase)	7,380	-	-
	PWD: Truck #9 (lease purchase)	38,791	38,791	-
	PWD: Truck #14 (lease purchase)	-	38,749	38,749
	PWD: Trucks #42 and #10 (lease purchase)	59,238	59,238	59,283
	PWD: equipment replacement reserve		25,000	-
	PWD/Recreation: Groomer/snowblower (lease purchase)	17,749		-
	Recreation: Nystroms Park reserve	10,000	10,000	20,000
*	Selectmen: Eagle Rock Church study	16,250	-	-
*	Selectmen: Solar study	10,000	-	-
	Seth Thomas Bradstreet House: roof reserve	5,000	-	-
	Streetlight reserve	5,000	-	15,000
	Technology: Cybersecurity upgrade	12,020	_	-
	Technology: Website	-	13,000	-
	Town Hall Building: Facility reserve	20,000	20,000	-
	TVAC: HVAC	-	29,665	-
	WPCA: Operations building roof	-	-	20,000
	Less funds allocated from completed projects	-	-	(28,587)
	SUBTOTAL	\$ 1,211,188	\$ 591,897	\$ 303,841
		÷ 1,211,100		- 200,011

\* Additional appropriations were made from fund balance and contingency during the year.

#### Schedule B

### Town of Thomaston Schedule of Debt Service For the Year Ending June 30, 2025

Name of Loan	Interest	Original	Outstanding				Ending
	Rate	Debt	Principal	Principal	Interest	Total	Balance
Notes:					_		
Clean Water 202	2%	1,394,449	1,075,660	62,926	20,939	83,865	1,012,734
Bonds:					_		
Gen Oblig Bond	3-4%	6,455,000	2,525,000	750,000	73,975	823,975	1,775,000
Bond July 2018	3-4%	8,415,000	5,990,000	485,000	183,150	668,150	5,505,000
Gen Oblig Bond	2-5%	3,750,000	2,680,000	280,000	109,350	389,350	2,400,000
Gen Oblig Bond Ju	ın 2021 (Refunc	4,300,000	2,700,000	255,000	106,425	361,425	2,445,000
Gen Oblig Bond A	ug 2023	6,245,000	6,245,000	315,000	262,425	577,425	5,930,000
BAN maturing Aug	g 2024				154,370	154,370	
less BOE - energy	upgrade					(128,167)	-
less rebates/premit	ums applied					(630,393)	-
TOTAL TRANSFE	ER TO DEBT SE	RVICE FUND	21,215,660	2,147,926	910,634	2,300,000	19,067,734



#### FUTURE DEBT PAYMENTS: