

**BOARD OF FINANCE  
TOWN OF BRANFORD, BRANFORD, CONNECTICUT 06405**

JOSEPH W. MOONEY, CHAIRMAN  
HARRY DIADAMO, JR.  
VICTOR J. CASSELLA  
PAMELA DeLISE  
CHARLES F. SHELTON, JR.  
JEFFREY E. VAILETTE



EX-OFFICIO  
JAMES B. COSGROVE,  
First Selectman

CLERK  
LISA E. ARPIN, CMC MCTC  
Town Clerk

**BOARD OF FINANCE  
Minutes  
March 20, 2023**

The Board of Finance held a regular meeting on Monday, March 20, 2023 called to order by Chairman Mooney at 7:00 p.m. at Fire Headquarters, 45 North Main Street, Branford, CT. The meeting was available for remote public viewing via BCTV (Comcast Channel 20) and Facebook Live.

The full Board was seated: Joseph Mooney, Chairman, Victor Cassella, Harry DiAdamo, Pamela DeLise, Charles Shelton and Jeffrey Vailette. Also present were First Selectman James Cosgrove, Jim Finch, Finance Director, Kathryn LaBanca, Assistant Finance Director, Deborah Conklin, Treasurer and Lisa Arpin, Town Clerk. RTM reps in attendance were Judith Barron, Peter Black, Don Conklin, Linda Erlanger, Tracy Everson, Dennis Flanigan, Kevin Healy, Ed Prete, Ram Shrestha, Frank Twohill, Carolyn Sires and Victoria Verderame. Rep Tricia Anderson arrived at 7:30 p.m. and Rep Ray Ingraham arrived at 8:00 p.m.

Board of Finance Chairman Joseph Mooney opened the Budget Hearings for fiscal year 2023-2024 and presented an overview from the proposed budget book; summary pages from the budget book are attached. The Chairman gave a summary of the total budget requirements of \$135,173,946, an increase of \$10,352,881 which represents a 8.3% increase in expenditures. There are estimated revenues of \$16,681,334 which would leave a balance of \$118,492,602 to be raised by taxation. The net grand list is estimated at \$3,879,790,337 or an increase of \$8,921,624 equating to a 31.27 mill rate; an increase of 6.1% or 1.8 mill rate increase if all expenditures were to be approved, and revenues stayed the same.

The following departments presented their budgets with an opportunity for Q&A by the Board, the RTM and the public. No votes were taken during the budget hearings.

Budget hearing presentations to the Board of Finance for fiscal year 2023-2024 began as follows:

**DEPARTMENT**

**PRESENTERS**

(RTM- PUBLIC SERVICES COMMITTEE)

Police Services.....	Police Chief Jon Mulhern
Police Service Special Detail.....	Police Chief Jon Mulhern

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Emergency Management.....Fire Chief Tom Mahoney  
 Fire Services.....Fire Chief Tom Mahoney,  
 Asst. Fire Chief Brian Koczak,  
 Commissioners Bob Massey & Paul Riccio

Engineering.....John Hoeffler  
 Public Works.....Gary Zielinski  
 Docks & Recreational Facilities.....Gary Zielinski  
 Municipal Gov't. Buildings.....Brian Droney  
 Animal Control.....Laura Burban

Solid Waste Management & Recycling.....Tyler Bowne/Paul Muniz

*(RTM-WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE)*

Recreation Department.....Alex Palluzzi, Dale Izzo & Paul Criscuolo  
 Parks & Open Space Authority.....Richard Shanahan  
 Branford Cable Television.....Jamie Cosgrove  
 Board of Finance.....Jim Finch  
 Fiscal Services.....Jim Finch  
 Public Celebration.....Jim Finch  
 Sewer Assessment Fund.....Jim Finch  
 Pensions & Contributions.....Jim Finch/Margaret Luberda  
 Employee Group Insurance.....Jim Finch/Margaret Luberda  
 Municipal Insurance.....Jim Finch/Margaret Luberda

*(RTM-ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE)*

Labor Relations.....Margaret Luberda  
 Human Resources.....Margaret Luberda

Chairman Mooney called for a recess of the budget hearings at 9:43 p.m. The Board will reconvene to hear budget hearings on March 21 and March 23, 2023. The meeting was recessed by motion from Mr. Cassella, seconded by Mr. Vailette.

Dated this 21<sup>st</sup> day of March, 2023.



Lisa E. Arpin, CMC MCTC  
Board of Finance Clerk



BRANFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT  
45 NORTH MAIN STREET  
BRANFORD, CONNECTICUT 06405  
OFFICE OF FIRE CHIEF/EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR



March 22, 2023

RECEIVED

Honorable Board of Finance  
Town of Branford  
1019 Main Street  
Branford, CT 06405

MAR 23 REC'D

BRANFORD TOWN CLERK

Dear Honorable Board,

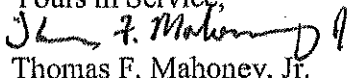
Thank you for hearing our budget request Monday evening. Unfortunately, during the regular budget hearing, there was no time to take a deep dive into our need for additional personnel. We realize that adding staff has the greatest impact on the budget, and we intend to provide you with a comprehensive plan by late May. I intended to ask for additional personnel once we could complete and share our plan, but the last several months have convinced me that we are indeed in crisis.

The fire department has traditionally relied on volunteers for most of our staffing. Four of our five engine companies are volunteer. Despite recruitment and retention efforts that include following recommended best practices, we continue to lose volunteers faster than we can replace them. In fact, we have closed three whole volunteer companies and the volunteer rescue squad due to a lack of membership since 1996. Branford is not alone in this trend; it is a statewide and national problem. Membership has dropped so significantly that in most instances, we can only rely on a single volunteer company by combining the available members of all four. We have added automatic mutual aid from East Haven to compensate for our lack of resources. However, this comes with the quid pro quo of providing the same service to East Haven. Two issues exacerbate our problem along with the decline in volunteer membership. First, we have a steadily increasing call volume that will only worsen with the building projects and development already on the books. The second is a deployment problem: our resources are strategically deployed at multiple stations to reduce time. As outlined in NFPA 1710, the standard is to have an engine/ EMS response within four minutes. It takes eight minutes to get from headquarters to Lenny's and twelve minutes from headquarters to Stony Creek dock. This creates an equity of service issue for a substantial portion of the town.

We've asked for a \$250,000 dollar allocation to our overtime account to address the immediate need. This request was moved to contingency until the issue can be discussed appropriately. We intend to use the additional money to staff the Indian Neck station M-F 0800-1800 until such time that we can fund a full-time engine company there. The plan we are writing intends to provide decision-makers and the public with the information needed to make informed decisions regarding the future of their fire and emergency services. It will give historical background, current status, and future plans based on actual data, the standard of care, and the public expectations.

We humbly request that you approve the contingent amount, we look forward to sharing our plan for the Board's consideration. As always I am available to answer any questions or provide additional information.

Yours in Service,



Thomas F. Mahoney, Jr.

Fire Chief/ Emergency Management Director

TOWN OF BRANFORD  
MILL RATE CALCULATION  
(PROPOSED BUDGET)  
FISCAL YEAR 2023 - 2024

	2022/2023	2023/2024	Change Amount	%
<b>Budget Requirements</b>	\$124,821,065	\$135,173,946	\$10,352,881	8.3%
Less: Annual Receipts Other Than Taxes				
Interest & Penalties on Back Taxes	\$1,842,169	\$2,096,199	\$254,030	13.8%
State & Federal Grants	3,021,698	\$3,464,882	\$443,184	14.7%
Departmental Receipts	6,439,220	\$8,020,263	\$1,581,043	24.6%
Fund Balance Brought Forward	\$3,947,000	\$3,100,000	(\$847,000)	-21.5%
	\$15,250,087	\$16,681,344	\$1,431,257	9.4%
<b>Net to be raised from Taxation</b>	<b>\$109,570,978</b>	<b>\$118,492,602</b>	<b>\$8,921,624</b>	<b>8.1%</b>

	2022/2023	2023/2024	Change Amount	%
<b>NET GRAND LIST</b>	\$3,810,911,114	\$3,879,790,337	\$68,879,223	1.8%

	2022/2023	2023/2024	Change Amount	%
<b>Mill Rate</b>	29.45	31.27	1.8	6.1%
<b>Gross Taxes Available</b>	\$112,249,162	\$121,334,319	\$9,085,157	8.1%
Less: State Reimbursements	\$270,800	\$270,800	\$0	0.0%
Less: Elderly Tax Relief	\$386,899	\$386,899	\$0	0.0%
Less: Allowance for Uncollectible	\$2,020,485	2,184,018	\$163,533	8.1%

<b>Net Taxes Available</b>	\$109,570,978	\$118,492,602	\$8,921,624	8.1%
<b>Collection Rate</b>	98.20%	98.20%		

Deborah F. Conklin  
Treasurer  
Town of Branford  
3/13/2023

(1) Reflects anticipated reductions from tax appeals

## GRAND LIST HISTORY

Grand List Year	BAA 2016	BAA 2017	BAA 2018	BAA 2019	BAA 2020	BAA 2021	2022	Change	%
Real Estate	3,150,003,000	3,163,619,910	3,170,247,090	3,250,687,261	3,255,322,111	3,289,270,491	3,311,764,871	22,494,380	0.68%
Personal Property	179,273,241	195,974,736	209,241,316	219,306,049	230,404,030	240,264,821	272,395,410	32,130,589	13.37%
Motor Vehicles	237,095,461	243,534,685	249,643,138	262,226,502	274,250,285	345,398,902	360,660,753	15,261,851	4.42%
Total Gross Taxable Property	3,566,371,702	3,603,129,331	3,629,131,544	3,732,219,812	3,759,976,426	3,874,934,214	3,944,821,034	69,886,820	1.80%
Manufacturer's Machinery & Equipment	(19,525,197)	(24,775,721)	(37,617,023)	(38,873,775)	(39,850,433)	(38,936,062)	(39,030,606)	(94,544)	0.24%
Veteran's, Blind & Elderly Appeals & DMV Reserve	(8,973,269)	(8,362,355)	(8,388,925)	(8,302,975)	(7,742,602)	(7,342,811)	(7,281,235)	61,576	-0.84%
Total Net Taxable Property	3,537,873,236	3,569,991,255	3,583,125,596	3,685,043,062	3,712,383,391	3,828,655,341	3,898,509,193	116,271,950	3.04%

# TOWN OF BRANFORD

## 2023 - 2024

### Budget Summary

DEPT #	REVENUES	RTM Amended 2022 - 2023	Requested Budget 2023 - 2024	Difference Requested vs RTM Amended	PERCENT
3010	Tax Collector	111,413,147	120,588,801	9,175,654	8.2%
3020	State & Federal Grants	3,021,698	3,464,882	443,184	14.7%
3030	Other Revenues	10,386,220	11,120,263	734,043	7.1%
	<b>Total Revenues &amp; Taxes</b>	<b>124,821,065</b>	<b>135,173,946</b>	<b>10,352,881</b>	<b>8.3%</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>					
4101	Legislative	18,503	18,766	263	1.4%
4102	Executive	310,104	330,091	19,987	6.4%
4103	Finance	100,039	105,676	5,637	5.6%
4104	Fiscal Services	500,706	549,690	48,984	9.8%
4105	Assessor	465,644	494,271	28,727	6.2%
4106	Board of Tax Review	14,360	14,625	265	1.8%
4107	Tax Collector	836,756	761,377	(75,379)	-9.0%
4108	Town Clerk	275,257	277,271	2,014	0.7%
4109	Legal Services	450,000	450,000	0	0.0%
4110	Labor Relations	62,500	93,600	31,100	49.8%
4111	Probate Court	15,900	17,290	1,390	8.7%
4112	Elections	311,512	220,349	(91,163)	-29.3%
4113	Planning & Zoning	370,766	345,313	(25,453)	-6.9%
4114	Zoning Board of Appeals	9,492	10,838	1,346	14.2%
4115	Economic Development	19,150	23,660	4,400	23.0%
4116	Inland Wetlands & Natural Resources	142,431	143,683	1,252	0.9%
4117	Municipal Government Buildings	1,115,381	1,163,013	47,632	4.3%
4118	Cable T.V.	15,100	15,600	500	3.3%
4119	Information Technology	969,871	1,178,342	208,471	21.6%
4120	Human Resources	339,968	345,328	5,360	1.6%
	<b>Sub - Total General Government</b>	<b>6,343,340</b>	<b>6,558,673</b>	<b>215,333</b>	<b>3.4%</b>

# TOWN OF BRANFORD

## 2023 - 2024

### Budget Summary

DEPT #	EXPENDITURES	RTM		Requested Budget 2023 - 2024	Difference Requested vs RTM Amended	PERCENT
		Amended 2022 - 2023				
4701	Debt - Principal	7,210,000		7,135,000	(75,000)	-1.0%
4702	Debt - Interest	2,138,436		2,243,646	105,210	4.9%
	Sub - Total Debt Service	9,348,436		9,378,646	30,210	0.3%
4800	Board of Education	60,931,374		64,477,616	3,546,242	5.8%
4901	Pensions & Contributions	6,515,795		7,039,140	523,345	8.0%
4902	Employee Group Insurance	6,429,059		6,521,580	92,521	1.4%
4903	Municipal Insurance	2,456,858		2,758,365	301,507	12.3%
	Sub - Total Pension & Insurance	15,401,712		16,319,085	917,373	6.0%
4904	Contingency	692,621		2,152,061	1,459,440	210.7%
5000	Capital Project Funds - BOE	163,000		1,102,854	939,854	576.6%
	Capital Project Funds - Town	3,837,632		5,318,265	1,480,633	38.6%
	Trans Out - FEMA Fund	0		0	0	0.0%
	Lease Fund Town	142,000		147,000	5,000	3.5%
	Lease Fund BOE	100,000		116,000	16,000	16.0%
	Sub - Total Capital	4,242,632		6,683,119	2,440,487	57.5%
	<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>124,821,065</b>		<b>135,173,946</b>	<b>10,352,881</b>	<b>8.3%</b>
<b>Composition of Expenditures</b>						
	Municipal Operating Expenditures	49,606,002		52,482,504	2,876,502	5.8%
	Town Capital & Lease Expenditures	3,979,632		5,465,265	1,485,633	37.3%
	Total Town Expenditures	53,585,634		57,947,769	4,362,135	8.1%
	Board of Education Expenditures	60,931,374		64,477,616	3,546,242	5.8%
	BOE Capital & Lease Expenditures	263,000		1,217,854	954,854	363.1%
	Total BOE Expenditures	61,194,374		66,695,470	4,501,096	7.4%
	Contingency	692,621		2,152,061	1,459,440	210.7%
	Debt Service Expenditures	9,348,436		9,378,646	30,210	0.3%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>124,821,065</b>		<b>135,173,946</b>	<b>10,352,881</b>	<b>8.3%</b>