

BOARD OF ASSESSORS

ANNUAL REPORT

Boxford's Fiscal Year 2023 total property valuation of \$2,382,964,748 includes \$10,927,342 in new growth that occurred during this past fiscal year. This is a decrease of \$8,479,269 from the prior year. Growth is made up of a combination of new construction, additions, and miscellaneous building improvements. This year's decrease was primarily attributable to a decrease in personal property construction as the new electrical substation has now been completed.

New home construction is also a major contributor to new growth. The number of new home permits has decreased over the prior fiscal year.

Fiscal Year	New Home Permits
2011	2
2012	4
2013	4
2014	7
2015	7
2016	12
2017	8
2018	8
2019	3
2020	4
2021	5
2022	2

After a review of home sales that occurred during 2021, the Board determined that overall property valuations increased approximately 14% from the prior year. Valuation changes varied for individual parcels according to style, condition, location, and size. The average residential property assessment for Fiscal Year 2023 is \$841,000, an increase from the Fiscal Year 2022 average residential property assessment of \$739,000. The 2023 tax rate was set at \$13.84 per thousand of assessed value, a decrease of about nine percent from last year. A total of 3,062 real and personal property tax bills were issued for Fiscal Year 2023.

As in previous years, the Select Board voted a multiplier of one for all commercial and industrial properties, which results in the commercial and industrial tax rate staying the same as residential. The town relies heavily on individual homeowners for tax revenues as residential properties account for 97 percent of all properties.

The Board recognizes that the requirement to follow specific state revaluation regulations when determining property valuations creates a hardship for some residents, particularly the senior population. The assessors continue to work with the Council on Aging to ensure that all seniors are familiar with any and all tax lowering programs that are available to them.

Additionally, the Board presented a new exemption option at the 2022 Annual Town Meeting, which residents voted to adopt. This exemption allows Seniors who receive “circuit breaker” tax credits on their Massachusetts state income taxes to obtain a reduction of their real estate taxes up to the amount of their credits.

Of the 3,062 real and personal property tax bills that were issued in Fiscal Year 2022 (prior year), there were:

- 5 abatement filings, which resulted in 1 valuation change granted and a \$2,068 reduction in taxes
- 53 personal exemptions granted, which resulted in \$137,959 in reduced taxes to qualified homeowners based on age, financial condition, blindness or veteran’s service-connected disability.
- 7 Community Preservation Surcharge exemptions granted, which resulted in \$1,902 in reduced surcharges due to age and financial status.
- 9 Senior Tax Work-Off exemptions granted, resulting in a \$6,856 reduction in taxes.

Auto excise taxes resulted in approximately \$1,706,600 in income to the town from over 9,600 vehicles. Vehicle owners should be aware that in order to receive an abatement, the vehicle must be disposed of (i.e. sold, traded, junked, etc.) as well as the plates being cancelled or transferred to another vehicle.

Data collection and maintenance of current and accurate property data is a critical element in the development of uniform, fair market property value. The Assessor’s Department continued our Cyclical Inspection Project, in accordance with the Massachusetts Department of Revenue’s requirement that each property be inspected once in every 10-year cycle. These inspections are being conducted in house by the Assistant Assessor and include both on-site and virtual inspections. Virtual inspections are conducted through the use of mapping imagery and questionnaires. The Board appreciates the cooperation that residents have shown with this project. Inspections of properties that have recently sold or have been affected by building permits continue to be conducted by Kristin Hanlon, Director of Assessment.

In November, the Board accepted the resignation of Mary Murphy. Mary served as a member of the Board of Assessors since 2020. The Board thanks Mary for her valuable contributions to the Board over the last two years and wish her well in her future endeavors.

The Board also accepted the resignation of Heather Thifault, Assistant Assessor, in November. Although Heather had only been employed by the Assessing Department for a year, her contributions and ideas for implementing the new role of Assistant Assessor was invaluable. The Board wishes her the best in her new position.

The Board of Assessors would like to thank Kristin Hanlon, Director of Assessment, for her assistance in our ongoing efforts to maintain fair and equitable assessments. The Board members and office staff also appreciate the help and support received from other town departments and all the townspeople.

Respectfully submitted,

David F. Benson, Chairman
Diana Headrick