# TOWN OF CHESHIRE

80 CHURCH STREET | CHESHIRE, MASSACHUSETTS 01225
PHONE (413) 743-1690 | FAX (413) 743-0389

WWW.CHESHIRE-MA.GOV

OFFICE OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN


## Board of Selectmen

## Meeting Minutes –March 7, 2025

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held in person at 191 Church Street (Cheshire Community House) on Friday March 7, 2025, at 3:00 PM.

Board of Selectmen Members Present: Shawn McGrath, Chair
Jason Levesque, Vice Chair
Ray Killeen, Member
Ron DeAngelis, Member
Michelle Francesconi, Member

Others Present: Jennifer Morse, Town Administrator; Ben Gelb

S. McGrath opened the meeting at 3:01 p.m.

Summary of Votes:

- Vote to appoint Ben Gelb as Interim Treasurer/Collector 5-0
- Vote to adjourn the meeting at 4 p.m. 5-0

Appoint Interim Treasurer/Collector – Ben Gelb

S. McGrath welcomed Ben Gelb and made introductions. The Town Administrator shared that on Wednesday morning after the retirement announcement of the Treasurer/Collector that she had contacted two entities: Hilltown Accounting Services and Massachusetts MuniFin. Dave Fierro from Hilltown Accounting provided Mr. Gelbs contact information, and a conversation ensued about the interim position. Massachusetts MuniFin did not return the call. The Town Administrator pointed out that she had never met or spoken with Mr. Gelb prior even though he is currently working in her hometown. The Town Administrator noted that besides being highly recommended by Hilltown Accounting Services that the Town of Plainfield is also pleased with the work Mr. Gelb performs.

Ben Gelb explained his current positions and background. He plans to work in Cheshire on Friday, Saturday and remotely, as most work can be done remotely. He stated that with a town the size of Cheshire, the number of employees and budget size the job can be done potentially in one in-person day..

The board discussed payroll and accruals, Mr. Gelb felt as if the accruals could straighten out by shutting off the accruals within the Harpers system. He is familiar with all the software currently utilized by the Treasurer and Collector. There was discussion on the duties that the position would handle, which include all Treasurer functions including payroll, turnovers, warrants, posting receipts, benefit administration including Berkshire County

Retirement and Berkshire Health Group, etc. Mr. Gelb noted that he will inquire about changing health insurance plans in the future to potentially save money, the Town Administrator shared that she had also been in contact with MIIA regarding health insurance. The Town Administrator office will handle all human resources and will learn the payroll system. Ben Gelb felt as if the top priority was getting tax bills out by April 1, 2025, there was discussion on utilizing mailing services for this function moving forward. The next priority will be employee accruals and fire truck borrowing.

The Town Administrator shared that she had not spoken to Mr. Gelb about salary, after a discussion Mr. Gelb will be paid the same salary as the former Treasurer/Collector until the end of the fiscal year, this will allow for extra hours for the FY2024 audit and to learn the systems. Beginning July 1, 2025, the salary will go to $40,000.

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded J. Levesque to appoint Ben Gelb as interim Treasurer/Collector.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen- Yes, J. Levesque- Yes, S. McGrath- Yes, M. Francesconi- Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Discussion on the role of the Assistant Treasurer/Collector position, it was decided that role will take more of the collection duties for two days a week (Tuesday and Thursday). There was discussion on posting the new hours to the door and website and encouraging residents to pay online or using the drop box during off hours. There was also discussion on the Town Clerk role and Collector roles not overlapping. The Town Administrator shared that she had a recent conversation with the Town Clerk about hours worked per week, which averages 25-30 hours. At the conclusion of the meeting the Town Administrator and Board Chair will reach out to the Assistant/Town Clerk to explain the change in duties.

Public Comment - None

Any other business not anticipated 48 hours prior to the meeting.- None

Adjournment
*A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to adjourn the meeting at 4:00 p.m.*
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen- Yes, J. Levesque- Yes, S. McGrath- Yes, M. Francesconi- Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Respectfully submitted

Jennifer Morse
March 20, 2025
Document List

1. Agenda – March 7, 2025

Approved: April 1, 2025