TOWN OF CHESHIRE

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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Board of Selectmen

MEETING MINUTES –December 16, 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 Tuesday December 16, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.

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

Board of Selectmen Absent : Michelle Francesconi, Member

Others Present: Jennifer Morse, Town Administrator; Corey McGrath, DPW Director. Peter Traub; Sabrina Damms, Robert Quintos; Superintendent Aaron Dean, HVRSD; Chris Wentz, HVRSD Elementary Principal; Whitney Flynn.

Summary of Votes:

- Vote to approve all 2026 licenses except for Saldo's Auto Salvage 4-0
- Vote to approval the 2026 license for Saldo's Auto Salvage 3-0-1
- Vote to not allow rentals in Town buildings on holidays 4-0
- Vote to transition to VADAR for all tax collections 4-0
- Vote to approve office rental space to Travis McCarthy 4-0
- Vote to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. 4-0

S. McGrath called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with one recording device (IBerkshires)

Appointment - Bobby Quintos - Clean Energy Grants - 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Quintos moved to Cheshire at the end of 2023 and joined the board to discuss his expertise in electrical engineering and experience working with the Department of Energy. He has been successful applying for funding for the BRTA and is willing to help the Town of Cheshire with energy projects. There was discussion about working on a small-scale solar project. The Town Administrator will reach out to Mr. Quintos after the holidays to discuss possible small-scale projects.

Appointment – Superintendent Dean – Update Collaborative Ed- 6:45 p.m.

Superintendent Dean introduced the new elementary school principal Chris Wentz stating that she has been learning the complexities of the school system. Principal Wentz shared her background including that she is a native of Berkshire County. She shared that there are 379 students from both communities with 85 students from Cheshire. This year there are four classrooms at every grade level including Pre-K. She has been pleasantly surprised

by the community support. Discussion on the new math program, professional development and social emotional learning curriculum.

Superintendent Dean then discussed the Collaborative Education committee that is currently seeking two volunteers from the community. The initial steering committee has developed an RFP for a consultant to conduct a study, having obtained $100,000 in an earmark from Representative Barrett to get the process started. The hope is to look at some different models of regionalization that might be most effective in terms of providing opportunities for the children, at the end of the day he does not expect it to be a huge cost savings for any of the schools. Other districts who have been through the process have a timeline of approximately 4-5 years of feasibility studies before moving forward to the last phase which is implementation.

Board of Selectmen Discussion/Decision Items

- **Liquor Licenses; Common Victuallar Licenses, Automotive Sales**
  The list of 2026 licenses was read into the record.
  A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to approve all licenses as presented except for Saldo's Auto Salvage
  Roll Call Vote: J. Levesque- Yes; R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes
  Motion Carries: 4-0

  A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by R. Killeen to approve the Car Dealer Class III license for Saldo's Auto Salvage.
  Roll Call Vote: J. Levesque – Abstain; R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes.
  Motion Carries: 3-0-1

- **Building Rentals on Holidays**
  The Town Administrator shared that employees must give up their holiday time to deal with rentals within the town buildings on holidays, especially Thanksgiving and the Day after Thanksgiving. She explained that this year there were rentals in both the Community House and Senior Center. The custodian had to come in to clean up after the events on Friday and during Thanksgiving she locked/unlocked and answered questions. Both families who rented this year have already put in requests for next year.
  A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to not allow rental of town buildings on holidays.
  Discussion: R Killeen asked if this was state or federal holidays and S. McGrath stated all employee holidays. The Town Administrator asked for clarification of when this practice will be put into place and it was decided immediately.
  Roll Call Vote: J. Levesque- Yes; R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes
  Motion Carries: 4-0

- **VADAR Software Transition – RE/PP, MV**
  S. McGrath shared that one of the recommendations within the Financial Management Review was to move to one software suite. With a multitude of issues, the water

department is transitioning later this year to VADAR software, which is the same firm currently used for accounting. A copy of the quote for Real Estate, Personal Property and Motor Vehicle was included in the packet. Approval is needed as the transition for real estate, personal property, and motor vehicle can take up to four months and it will be operational by July 1st. The proposal was discussed at the recent Finance Team Meeting and all involved agreed to move forward. J. Levesque asked if there is a downside and the Town Administrator shared that everyone is ready, today the collector was bogged down with QDS when another batch got "stuck", she has been spending more time dealing with customer service and triaging problems. The Town Administrator shared that she was involved in a VADAR conversion as an assessor in a previous community and the transition was seamless.

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to transition to VADAR Real Estate/Personal Property and Motor Vehicle effective July 1, 2026.

Roll Call Vote: J. Levesque- Yes; R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries: 4-0

- **Rental - Bottom Floor Atheneum former accountant office**

  Travis McCarthy is a therapist and is interested in the former accountant office at the Atheneum. The lease amount is $220 and will begin on January 1, 2026. The space has been cleared and will be ready to go at that time. The library has been informed of the new tenant.

  A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to approve the lease of the space to Travis McCarthy beginning January 1, 2026.

  Roll Call Vote: J. Levesque- Yes; R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes
  Motion Carries: 4-0

- **Police Regionalization Subcommittee & Discussion**

  S. McGrath stated that while regionalization with Lanesborough would bring significant operating efficiency, he is confident that the Town cannot afford what is currently being presented and he cannot get behind such costs. The discussion with Lanesborough would have the two towns splitting the cost evenly of a combined department which is expected to cost approximately $750,000 per town. This is approximately $400,000 more than what is currently budgeted, it would add 24/7 coverage for the Town of Cheshire and would require the hiring of three additional officers. An audience member asked if there was a study or documentation and S. McGrath stated that just an initial conversation with Lanesborough was had. With all the upcoming large ticket items including heating systems, district roofs and our own public safety building issues, the board was not comfortable moving forward with an appointment to a subcommittee. The Town Administrator does have a meeting scheduled with Senator Mark and Chief Derksen to discuss funding mechanisms early next month and the board will add the topic to a future agenda.

- **Transfer Station Swap Shop – Lions Club**

  The DPW Director shared that the Town was awarded $6,000 for a swap shop and he has priced a unit that would be a swap shop on one side and bottles/can on the other. The lions club would be willing to donate the additional funds if they had a guarantee

that the space would be available for the foreseeable future. There was discussion about the size of the space and location and use, it was determined that the DPW Director will get pricing on a shed to be used exclusively for the swap shop, it was noted that additional funds could be taken from the recycled dividend account.

Town Administrator Updates

Berkshire Village MHC - The Town Administrator shared that she had participated in a meeting between the Board of Health Agents and William Moreau of the Berkshire Village Tenants Association. The agents explained to Mr. Moreau the details of the septic installation and inspections. Mr. Moreau brought up water concerns and it was noted that there are no water quality concerns and that Housatonic Basin is the Water Operator and oversight of the water is by MADEP. The water concerns are around sediment and there was a discussion about filtration. There was also a discussion about loss of power and generators to operate the system, if a power outage was to last more than a couple of days. Mr. Moreau was advised that some of the issues between the tenants and ownership will need to be worked out between the two parties and unfortunately that may mean that legal consultation is needed.

DLTA Funding - The DLTA funding notice was in the packet. Right now, BRPC is working with the Planning Board on accessory dwelling bylaws. S. McGrath suggested that updating the master plan be considered .

West Mountain Bridge Procurement - Andrea Woods of Woods Consulting will be handling the bid package for the West Mountain Bridge project due to the complexity of the project. Right now, she is working with the engineer and the timeline has the project beginning in early April weather permitting.

Public Comment

Whitney Flynn requested that the minutes of November 18, 2026, be revised to include the borrowing note signed under unanticipated business.

Liseann Karandisecky spoke about dam monitoring and residents' concerns that the level of the lake is too high. The state has said that the gates should not be adjusted and the dam committee has requested that in writing. Liseann noted that it is a liability to be opening the gates especially if something was to get stuck.

Events and Upcoming Agenda Items

It was noted that the Festival of Trees and Tree Lighting are a success. In addition, the first Stuff the Cruiser event was successful with six boxes of toys being donated.

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Roll Call Vote: J. Levesque- Yes; R. DeAngelis – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries: 4-0

Respecfully Submitted;
Jennifer Morse
Town Administrator
January 12, 2026

Document List

1. Agenda - December 16, 2025
2. HVRSD Collaborative Steering Committee Flyer
3. 2026 Licenses
4. VADAR Systems Quote
5. DRAFT Minutes – November 25, 2025
6. BRPC – DLTA Applications
7. W. Mountain Bridget Procurement Timeline

Approved: 1/21/26