TOWN OF CHESHIRE

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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Board of Selectmen

MEETING MINUTES –March 5, 2026

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 Thursday March 05, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.

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

Others Present: Jennifer Morse, Town Administrator; Tim Garner, Interim Chief of Police; Erin Paris, Administrative Assistant to the Boards; Corey McGrath, DPW Director; Jennifer McGrath DeGrenier, Historical Commission; Sabrina Damms , iBerkshires; Steven Burgoon, NBCTV; Art Kaufman; Lynn Melchiori; Peter Traub.

Summary of Votes:

- Vote to open a new account for Historical Commission restoration 4-0
- Vote to approve developing a search committee for hiring new Police Chief 4.0
- Vote to approve Cheshire Library acquiring additional space & lease agreement 4-0
- Vote to approve the consent agenda 4-0
- Vote to adjourn the regular meeting at 7:49 p.m. 4-0

S. McGrath called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with three recording devices (iBerkshires NBCTC and Town Administrator)

Appointments

- **Historical Commission, Jennifer McGrath DeGrenier**

Jennifer McGrath DeGrenier discussed that the Historical Commission gained custody of largest known piece of glass from Cheshire Glass. It has been held by the Berkshire Museum in archives. She indicated that she would like to take ownership with the Board of Selectmen present. J. McGrath DeGrenier then spoke about the Historical Commissions plans to host a 250th event at the Stafford Hill Monument on September 19, 2026, and requested that the Board of Selectmen set up a special revenue account to allow for donations to restore the Stafford Hill Monument. Further informing it is documented as the fourth largest Historical monument of its size. It was part of the Battle of Bennington and Revolutionary War and with what funds we could raise locally, she was going to be reaching out to Boston where we may also receive additional funding for the restoration of Stafford Hill monument. Indicating it would take some time and effort to do so , however being such a significant part of Cheshire and History would be a great

project for the Historical Commission, the estimated cost to restore is upwards of $200,000.

A motion was made by S McGrath and seconded by J Levesque to approve the new account for Historical Commission as requested

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque- Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes.

Motion Carries: 4-0

Board of Selectmen Discussion/Decision Items

- **MDAR/APR pr John Gwodz Project if # 26A01**

The original request for the town to fund $30,500 for the project was denied at the February 24, 2026, meeting, due to lack of funds and their already substantial budget. The project coordinator sent an email after the denial asking for an article on the Annual Town Meeting warrant.

A motion was made by S McGrath and seconded by J Levesque to deny placing the request on the Annual Town Meeting warrant.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque- Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes.

Motion Carries: 4-0

- **Police Regionalization /Police Chief Search.**

The Town Administrator requested that the Board of Selectmen discuss the regionalization with Lanesborough so she could relay the intent of the board to Lanesborough. Initial discussions with the Town of Lanesborough indicated that the budget for both departments would be approximately 1.5 million dollars, of which the Town of Cheshire would be responsible for $750,000. S. McGrath stated that there were pros and cons to regionalization, a pro would be 24/7 police coverage, the towns are of similar size and population and if the funding was available the project would make sense. R. DeAngelis spoke about keeping control of the town department and assets, he is concerned that the town would lose control much like the school district. Discussion on working with the proposed police department budget and setting up a search committee to find a new police chief. Interim Chief Garner stated that he was available until July 1, 2026, or after if needed. He suggested that Police Chiefs from other communities be brought in to serve on a committee. The Town Administrator will post for volunteers to serve on the Police Chief Search Committee and this will be added to the future agenda.

A motion was made by S McGrath and seconded by M. Francesconi to create a Police Chief search committee.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque- Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes.

Motion Carries: 4-0

- **Facilities Use Form, Lt Gaylord**

The BOS then discussed recent facilities use request form from the Special Response Team for use of old section of the building for tactical training. The BOS didn't see a problem with it however they wanted the air quality tested prior to said training to ensure safety.
A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by M. Francesconi to approve the Facilities request for tactical unit once air quality test performed as requested.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque- Abstain; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath – Abstain.
Motion Carries: 4-0

- **West Mountain Road Bridge Project**

The Town Administrator shared that she was successful in obtaining the additional funding for the project, the total grant awarded amount is now $770,518. The lowest qualified bidder for the project was CD Davenport of Greenfield MA. The contract and recommendation from Gill Engineering were provided in the packet for review. R DeAngelis inquired about oversight of the project, the Town Administrator shared that Gill Engineering has been contracted for the oversight.
Art Kaufman inquired if West Mountain Road would then be paved, the DPW Director indicated that it would be done in sections as it will be a very costly project and unlikely to be awarded grant funds. There was discussion about ongoing engineering projects on Route 116 and the possibility of future TIP opportunities.
A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to approve the contract with CD Davenport pending proof of insurance and the surety bond.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi- Yes; S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries: 4-0

Consent Agenda
- Minutes – February 17, 2026
- Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrant

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to approve the consent agenda with the edited minutes.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi- Yes; S. McGrath – Yes
Motion Carries: 4-0

Town Administrator Updates.
- **Meeting Schedule March – June 2026** was in the packet. M. Francesconi requested that the board go back to every Tuesday evening schedule for consistency. After discussion it was decided to go every other week through the month of April for budget discussion, after that time the schedule will be revisited.
- **Expression of Interest (EOI) Response- Community House -** The Town Administrator shared that a EOI was submitted to the One Stop Grant Program to determine if a feasibility study would be eligible under the Underutilized Properties Grant. The answer in short was no, that municipal use is not eligible, however if the use was to be mixed use or housing it would. The Town Administrator reminded the board that $60,000 was voted at the Annual Town Meeting for an OPM/Feasibility

Study for a Public Safety Complex. Discussion on needing the study to know what the future uses of space might be. The Town Administrator suggested a Special Town Meeting article to request additional funding for the feasibility study; one estimate has been obtained to date at $74,000. Discussion the feasibility study going to bid with RFP once funding for the study is secured.

- **All Board and Committee Meeting – April 8, 2026, at 7:00 p.m.**
- **Athenaeum Library Rental Space** - The Town Administrator shared that the library proposed three options for renting the storage space on the second floor. After discussion the board decided to lease the space to the library for $150 per month for two years. The Town Administrator will contact the Library Trustees chair to solidify.

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by R. DeAngelis to approve the rental of the space for $150 per month for two years.

Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque – Yes; M. Francesconi- Yes; S. McGrath – Yes

Motion Carries: 4-0

Public Comment –

Art Kaufman asked if Board of Selectmen agendas could be posted to Facebook. M Francesconi indicated that she was not in favor of posting to social media that the official posting location is the website. Mr. Kaufman was informed that some town-based social media sites post the agenda.

Events and Upcoming Agenda Items

J. Levesque informed the committee that the Open Space and Recreation Committee is working with an ATV club for new trails, this topic will be added to a future agenda.

M. Francesconi noted that the Hoosac Hose Fireman Ball is April 25, 2026, and the theme is the 250TH Birthday of the United States. Fundraising letters are being sent out to all residents. , Cruz Nite is scheduled for August 8, 2026, with a rain date of August 9, 2026 and the Bill Lewis Fishing Derby is Sunday September 27, 2026.

Adjournment

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

Roll Call Vote: J. Levesque- Yes; R. DeAngelis – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes

Motion Carries: 4-0

Respecfully Submitted;
Erin Paris
Administrative Assistant to the Boards
March 10, 2026

Document List

1. Agenda - March 5, 2026
2. Berkshire Museum Transfer of Cheshire Glass
3. Email re: Gwozdz APR Application dated 2/18/26
4. Police Chief Job Description
5. Facilities Use Form – Gaylord
6. Gill Engineering Recommendation to Award
7. West Mountain Road Contract with CD Davenport
8. Draft Minutes – February 17, 2026
9. Board of Selectmen Meeting Schedule

Approved: 3/24/26