TOWN OF CHESHIRE

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

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Board of Selectmen & Finance Committee

MEETING MINUTES –March 17, 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 Tuesday March 17, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Board of Selectmen Present:	Shawn McGrath, Chair Jason Levesque, Vice-Chair Michelle Francesconi, Member Ron DeAngelis, Member Ray Killeen, Member
Finance Committee Present:	Jeff Chaput, Chair Patrick Pettit, Member William McGovern, Member Mickey Biagini, Member
Finance Committee Absent:	Kathy Levesque, Member Austin Alibozek, Member

Others Present: Jennifer Morse, Town Administrator; Erin Paris, Administrative Assistant; Sabrina Damms, iBerkshires; Stephanie Boudreau; Joe Boudreau; Jennifer McGrath DeGrenier, Historical Commission; Lynn Melchiori; Bob Tetlow; Corey McGrath, DPW Director

Summary of Votes:

BOS - Vote to approve the accounts payable and payroll warrants	5-0
BOS – Vote to implement four-day work week for highway employees starting the payroll of April 1st to be revisited in June	5-0
Finance - Vote to adjourn at 7:00 p.m.	4-0
BOS – Vote to approve the Berkshire Running Foundation Special Permit Application	5-0
BOS – Vote to adjourn at 7:10 p.m.	5-0

S. McGrath called the meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 6:06 p.m. with three recording devices (iBerkshires NBCTC and Town Administrator)

J. Chaput called the meeting of the Finance Committee to order at 6:06 p.m.

Consent Agenda

- Minutes – March 5, 2026
- Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrants

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to approve the accounts payable and payroll warrants as submitted.

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

Motion Carries: 5-0

Board of Selectmen Discussion/Decision Items

- **Senior Center Van Driver Resignation and Posting**

The Town Administrator shared that a resignation was received from the Senior Center Van Driver, with her last day being April 30, 2026, she will however be available to fill in periodically. The Town Administrator shared that there are currently two back up drivers; to fill any voids, she would like to post the position immediately, the board agreed and the position will be posted.

- **DPW – Daylight Savings Hours**

The DPW Director joined the board to discuss allowing the highway department employees to work ten hours during daylight savings time. He stated that many studies have been done and the benefits outweigh the con's including employee retention, uninterrupted longer workday, more efficiency, overall wellbeing. He is proposing that the new schedule begin in the next pay period. R. DeAngelis stated that ten hours is a long day and it was verified that the employees will retain the half-hour lunch and two fifteen-minute breaks. The DPW Director reminded the board that summer hours are usually made up of four nine hour days and one 4 hour day. The DPW Director also verified this would only be for Department of Public Works – highway workers. S. McGrath stated that he was fine with a trial period with an update in June to see how the new schedule is going. M. Francesconi shared that she was concerned with snowstorms impacting the overtime budget in late spring and late fall. The DPW Director shared that winter storm overtime is budgeted through the Snow and Ice Account. R. DeAngelis suggested that instead of sticking to daylight saving time (ending in November) that the four-day work weeks end on Columbus Day.

A motion was made by S McGrath and seconded by M. Francesconi to implement a four-day work week for the highway department starting April 1st to be revisited in June.

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

Motion Carries: 5-0

- **AGO Receivership Program for 200 School Street and 73 West Mountain Road/Role of Board of Health**

The Town Administrator shared that 200 School Street and 73 West Mountain Road have been condemned by the Board of Health and a request was sent to the Attorney General Office Division of Receivership Programs. A representative of the AGO office will join the board at the next meeting and information will be shared with the board regarding the program. R. DeAngelis inquired about the home at the end of Ingalls Road, the Town Administrator shared that the health agents are currently working on a dozen or more housing issues.

- **Presentation of Cheshire Glass from Berkshire Museum**

Jennifer McGrath DeGrenier, Chair of the Historical Commission and Jason Vivori, Berkshire Museum Collections Manager, joined the board to present a piece of Cheshire Crown Glass to the Town. J. McGrath DeGrenier shared that the Cheshire Crown Glass piece is from 1814 and will be displayed in the Cheshire Museum in a locked display stating that the Historical Commission is honored to take custody.

Joint Meeting of the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee – FY27 Budget

M. Biagini stated that over half of the residents of Cheshire are seniors on fixed incomes and that should be considered as the budget moves forward. S. McGrath stated that is always the top consideration of the Board of Selectmen during budget season.

S. McGrath led the discussion regarding budget increases by department.

General Government

- Decrease to IT Services, new vendor as of July 1, 2026
- Increase to Town Administrator salary to align with other municipalities
- New Software for Collections as recommended by the Financial Management Review and due to ongoing software issues.
- Increase to Elections due to State Primary and State Election cycle
- Increase to Planning Stipends to align with other boards/committees that meet once per month and have access to administrative support
- Increase to Benefits as assessed, retirement and health costs
- Increase to Unemployment due to potential layoff

Public Safety

- Increase to Police Department - S. McGrath shared that regionalization with Lanesborough was not going to be financially feasible with a price tag of approximately $750,000. Further he stated that the Police Department will be starting from scratch and will need to pay more than before to obtain qualified officers to fill vacant positions, including the Chief position. He explained that Part Time Officers are hard to retain and find due to the POST requirements. M. Biagini felt that the salaries were too high compared to the numbers for the North Adams Police Department. M. Francesconi stated that North Adams is known for being underpaid and would not want to compare any salaries to the city. Interim Chief Garner will be asked to attend the next meeting to present his budget request.
- Emergency Radio Communications - The Town Administrator reminded the group that money had been put aside to pay the invoice for the updated state mandated radios, $18,726 will come from taxation and the remaining $18,726 from the Radio Stabilization Account.

Board of Health

- Decrease to stipends due to one meeting per month with administrative assistant from the Public Health Alliance
- Increase to the Public Health Alliance, health agent in office three days per week handling housing cases, food establishments, septic inspections and installations, hauling permits, tobacco permits, public health emergencies. S. McGrath brought up

having the Board of Selectmen take over the duties of the Board of Health as it once was now that the Public Health Alliance is handling most of the duties.

Council on Aging

- Decrease to Council on Aging due to the amount of funding available through the State Formula Grant, $17,444 per year, current balance is approximately $30,000. The Town Administrator will approach the Council on Aging with the proposed use of Formula Grant funds at their meeting tomorrow.

Department of Public Works

- Decrease to Department of Public Works/Highway due to the restructuring of a full-time position, the position will be half time DPW Laborer and half time Water Operator in Training. There was discussion on succession planning and water operator training requirements with the current primary operator looking to fully retire in the future.

Recreation & Culture

- Decrease to Recreation/Events expenses due to the Revolving Account sustaining the various events held. Father Tom utilities increase due to electric and porta potty costs.
- Increase to the Library Assessment is based off the state calculation, average of past three fiscal years plus a 2 ½ % increase.

Water Enterprise Fund

- Increase to Water Enterprise Fund due to part time laborer position, the Water Commissioners will vote to use retained earnings to level fund the budget with no increase to the water users.

School Districts

- Increase to HVRSD, the budget will be reviewed by individuals and questions should be sent to the Town Administrator prior to the budget hearing scheduled for April 7, 2026. McCann budget will be received by the end of the week and will be forwarded to both committees.

Finance Committee Adjournment

A motion was made by P. Pettit and seconded by M. Biagini to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Vote: Unanimous

Board of Selectmen Discussion/Decision Items

- Berkshire Running Foundation Special Event Application

A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to approve the Berkshire Running Foundation Special Event Application.

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

Motion Carries: 5-0

Public Comment- None

Upcoming Agenda Items & Events
J. Levesque asked that the Patriot ATV and Open Space and Recreation Item be added to the next agenda.

Board of Selectmen Adjournment
A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by R. DeAngelis to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m.
Roll Call Vote: R. DeAngelis – Yes; J. Levesque- Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes; R. Killeen – Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Respecfully Submitted;
Jennifer Morse
Town Administrator
March 25, 2026

Document List

1. Agenda – March 17, 2026
2. Draft Budget Workbook
3. Preliminary Budget Notes
4. Police Department Budget Proposal
5. HVRSD Budget