TOWN OF CHESHIRE

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

191 CHURCH STREET CHESHIRE, MASSACHUSETTS 01225
PHONE (413)743-1690 EXT 100 | EMAIL ADMIN@CHESHIRE-MA.GOV
WWW.CHESHIRE-MA.GOV

Board of Selectmen

MEETING MINUTES –April 7, 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 April 07, 2026, at 6:02 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
Kathy Levesque (Remote)
William McGovern
Patrick Pettit
Austin Alibozek

Finance Committee Absent :
Mickey Biagini

Others Present: Jennifer Morse, Town Administrator; Tim Garner, Interim Chief of Police; Erin Paris, Administrative Assistant; Corey McGrath, DPW Director; Brianna Steele, iBerkshires; Lynn Melchiori; Peter Traub: Bill Craig, Northern Berkshire Vocational Committee Rep: Melanie Medon McCann Business Manager; James Brosman Superintendent, Northern Berkshire Vocational School District; Erica Snyder, Hoosac Valley Business Manager; Mary Ellen Baker; Peter Traub; Bob Tetlow, Hoosac Valley Regional School District Committee member; Aaron Dean, Superintendent, Hoosac Valley Regional School District; Linda Cernick, Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District Director; Christopher Garner, Board of Health.

S. McGrath called the Board of Selectmen meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. Jeff Chaput called the Finance Committee Meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

McCann Technical School, J. Brosnan & Melanie Medon

J. Brosman briefly discussed the area of reduction to sustain current finances, the total budget for the town of Cheshire is $609,567.93, which includes the $14,136.93 Capital Assessment for the roof and window project interest only in the first year. Superintendent Brosnan shared that once the project is complete borrowing for the remainder will happen at which time he will discuss the debt terms with the municipalities. He indicated in the areas that they were increasing why and how they were able to work in the budget to try and stay within prior budget figures. He discussed utilizing the various programs available for the

students and putting their skills to work regarding his school building and district when repairs work or maintenance is needed to cut down on their outside vendor expenses. Indicated that all the applicants to the school were approved and there is not a waiting list to speak of. Superintendent Brosnan indicated the school choice was also working for them as far as being able accept students. He indicated he was diligent in trying to maintain all staff and building maintenance without having to make major cuts and decrease areas. Superintendent Brosnan was asked about the additional vice principal position to which he spoke about the need within the school to have this position.

Hoosac Valley Regional School District, Aaron Dean & Erica Snyder

Superintendent Dean started by sharing documents that address some of the questions presented by the Finance Committee. The budget was discussed, indicating there was shifting and movement of positions along with some reductions in staff as Superintendent Dean stated that he knew the original budget number would not work for either town. Positions being shifts include a school adjustment counselor, media, middle school STEM teacher, SPED coordinator and secretary for a total of $362,000 in staff reductions and $514,000 shifted to rural aid and school of choice funding from the operating budget. Superintendent Dean presented an overview of the administrative model and district report card. Business Manager Erica Snyder presented the budget numbers and a document that explained the changes from the previous year. The total increase to the budget for Fiscal Year 2027 is $196,901 which is a 6.1% increase.

Finance Committee Meeting Dissolved at Approximately 8:00 p.m.

Police Dept Hiring to include /Police Chief Search. T Garner Interim Police Chief

The Chief was asked about the hiring of a new police chief and S. McGrath informed the group that the board discussed hiring an outside consultant. T Garner explained that the proposed salaries are based on other communities wages which are necessary to attract qualified officers. A question was presented about why the town needs three full-time officers and Chief Garner explained it was needed to fill the gaps in the scheduling as part-time officers are in the past due to training requirements. J. Levesque would like to see one additional full-time officer and let a new chief assess if they need another full-time officer. Chief Garner asked why his budget was being scrutinized however no questions were asked of the Superintendent and they have a higher increase. There was conversation on the call load and that the state police cannot "cover" Cheshire. The Town Administrator shared that a recent conversation with the barracks that there is two – three state officers on patrol at any given time that cover the entire region. Chief Garner mentioned how thankful the town is for its support during this time. S. McGrath told Chief Garner to be prepared to address questions related to the budget at the annual town meeting.

Board of Selectman Discussions/decision Items Transfer Station-PAYT

The DPW director and Northern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District Director, Linda Cernik discussed the PAYT program which was adopted by the Town of Cheshire. It was shared that in the month of January 2026 Cheshire had the largest tonnage of the district in household waste with more than 36 tons hauled, Cheshire consistently is the highest with an average of almost 2,000 pounds of trash per year. Linda attended a Board of Health meeting

a couple of years ago to discuss PAYT as the town was not participating correctly and was in jeopardy of losing grant funding. Discussion ensued on the number of permits processed each year with approximately 40% of the sales being permit only. It was noted that blue bags were last bought by the Town in 2018 and the Town went to tags in 2021. There was a great deal of discussion by the board and members of audience regarding the use of blue bags, no decisions were made as the board wants to involve the Board of Health and review the numbers to get a true cost for pay as your throw with no subsidy by the town. R. DeAngelis suggested removing the subsidy from the town so those who use private haulers are not paying for transfer station users fees. M Francesconi was concerned with those who purchased blue bags and are using the transfer station correctly to be penalized. There was discussion about ways the town can move forward with monitoring and charging to have true pay as you throw program. Christopher Garner, Board of Health arrived at the end of the conversation and agreed that the pay it program must be revisited, he did agree with a turn in program for the blue bags or another way for residents to continue use of blue bags. He also spoke about the vast improvements overall at the transfer station under the direction of the DPW Director.

Public Comment – None

Events and Upcoming Agenda Items - None

Adjournment
A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by J. Levesque to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 p.m.
Roll Call Vote: J. Levesque- Yes; R. DeAngelis – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes Ray Kileen-Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Respecfully Submitted;
Erin Paris
Administrative Assistant
April 10, 2026

Document List

1. Agenda - April 7, 2026
2. McCann Technical School Budget Packet
3. Hoosac Valley School District Budget Packet
4. Police Chief Job Search Packet
5. PAYT Information

Approved: April 28, 2026