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 –August 4, 2026

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, an Executive Session meeting of the Board of Selectmen was held in person at 191 Church Street (Cheshire Community House) on August 4, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Board of Selectmen Present: Michelle Francesconi, Chair
Shawn McGrath, Vice Chair
Ron DeAngelis, Member
Ray Killeen, Member
Scott McWhirt, Member

Others Present: Jennifer Morse, Town Administrator; Corey McGrath, DPW Director; Whitney Flynn; Erin Paris, Administrative Assistant; Northern Berkshire Television;, iBerkshires; Lynn Melchiori; Peter Traub; Peter Gentile; Fred Jayko.

Summary of Votes:

Vote to enter executive sessions at 6:01 p.m.	5-0-0
Vote to approve the Consent Agenda with edits to the minutes	5-0-0
Vote to approve the proposal from Wilkinson Appraisal	4-1-0
Vote to approve the FY26 Line-Item Transfers	5-0-0
Vote to approve Cheshire Rod and Gun Club One Day Liquor Licenses	4-0-1
Vote to approve Two Sisters Mobile Spirits Mobile Bar One Day Liquor Licenses	5-0-0
Vote to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 p.m.	5-0-0

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Executive Session - MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a) Reason: 3 Town of Cheshire vs. Warner

To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares

MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a) Reason: 7 Executive Session Minutes

To comply with, or act under the authority of, any general special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements.

M. Francesconi declared that the Board would enter executive session according to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a), Reason 3 Town of Cheshire vs Warner, to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares and MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a) Reason 7 for executive session minutes, to comply with, or act under the authority of, any general special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements.

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by S McGrath to enter executive session at 6:01 p.m. according to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a), Reason 3 Town of Cheshire vs Warner and MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a) Reason 7 for executive session minutes. The board will convene in the Town Administrator office for executive session to return to the meeting room for regular session.
Roll Call Vote:

The board returned to regular session at 6:27 p.m. with two recording devices (iBerkshires and Northern Berkshire Community Television)

Consent Agenda

- Minutes - July 21, 2026
- Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrants

A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by R. Killeen to accept the consent agenda with two edits to July 21, 2026, minutes.
Roll Call Vote: S. McWhirt- Yes; R. DeAngelis – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes Ray Killeen-Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Board of Selectman Discussion /Decision Items

- **Fire Station -** The consultant who did the fieldwork for the Geotech report recommended additional sampling at a cost of $6,000. R. DeAngelis questioned the additional fee and what information would be provided. After discussion the DPW Director was asked to contact Hill Engineering to say that the Town will not be moving forward with the additional testing until the initial report has been received and reviewed.

- **Fire Department Boat Update–** M. Francesconi stated that just prior to the meeting she was given a quote to replace the motor in the Fire Department Boat,$8,538. She stated that the Fire Chief intends to pay for the motor out of the Fire Department expense account.

- **Hutchinson Water Leak and Road Repair-** The DPW Director received a call regarding a water main break on Wilshire Drive which is part of the Hutchinson Water system. The road was closed and Hutchinson Water company called for emergency repair. The new roadway became compromised due to a one-to-eight-inch void between the pavement and the sub-base. The DPW is working on emergency procurement for the repair and the road remains closed, the only quote received at this time is from Condron for $11,500. There was discussion about billing the Hutchinson Water Company for the repair to the new roadway.

- **Paving Project Updates- Fred Mason Rd, Church St, Main St, Flaherty Rd, Reservoir Rd.-** All the structures, water gates and gas gates on Church and Main Street have been raised. Paving will continue in the next week weather dependent.

- **Adoption of Chapter 90 Section 17C – Reduced Speed Limit Signage Update-** The DPW Director and Town Administrator shared that notification was sent last fall to MassDOT

regarding the adoption of Chapter 90, Section 17C which allows the Board of Selectmen to lower the speed limit from 30 mph to 25 mph in densely populated areas. Notification was sent last week again to the engineering department at MassDOT and the town will move forward with sign placement. M. Francesconi felt that 30 mph on some of the streets is still excessive, there was discussion about getting quotes for solar speed signs.

- **Community House Heating System Update – Funding Discussion** - The DPW Director shared that the gas company is not upgrading existing services which changes the distribution of the system. Tighe and Bond are working to implement the changes to the design. There was no discussion regarding the funding of the project.

- **Electric Bicycles, Scooters, Mopeds and Skateboards – Safety and Discussion-** M. Francesconi shared her concern regarding reckless use of e-bikes noting that some can reach a speed of 45 mph. She has witnessed individuals not wearing proper safety equipment, riding on personal property and on the sidewalk. She had a near accident with one bike almost hitting her with a handlebar and she suggested a zoning bylaw to be worked on by the Planning Board. S. McGrath suggested that the town wait until state laws that are currently being written are complete at which time a bylaw could be put into place. The Town Administrator clarified that the bylaw would be a general bylaw not a zoning bylaw created by the board. Breanna Steele from iBerkshires shared that every town is discussing right now. M. Francesconi also noted that with limited police coverage most of the behavior is happening during evening hours and suggested shifting patrol hours to address youth riding behaviors.

- **Code of Conduct/Professionalism of Town Hall Employees and Department Heads.-** M. Francesconi shared that she has been speaking with town counsel who is recommending training for employees, elected and appointed officials. M. Francesconi stated that she has been receiving numerous complaints regarding professionalism, boundaries, confidentiality and communication among town hall staff, department heads and with the public. The Town Administrator shared that there are professional organizations set up for town hall employees and most staff take advantage of course offerings, she also shared the town insurance company offers many classes at no charge and the town receives credits for employee attendance. S. McGrath felt it would be helpful to have a list of potential classes; the Town Administrator will send the course catalog to board members. A code of conduct for elected and appointed officials was presented in draft form, being a boiler plate document, it will be edited to be town specific and presented at a future meeting.

- **Youth Center Lease Analysis- Wilkinson Appraisal Associates- Appraisal Proposal-** The Town Administrator shared that the proposal from Wilkinson Appraisal Associates was within the packet. If approved the appraisal will be available within two weeks of data collection. R. Killeen expressed his disapproval of having to pay for the appraisal, and other members felt it was important to have accurate square footage and an analysis to be able to negotiate.
  A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by M. Francesconi to approve the proposal from Wilkinson Appraisal Associates

Roll Call Vote: S. McWhirt- Yes; R. DeAngelis – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes Ray Killeen-No
Motion Carries: 4-1

- **Transfer Station Temporary Position -** No applications have been received to date. The Town Administrator stated that it has been posted on the town website and with Berkshire Hire. S. McWhirt agreed to be involved in the hiring process once applications are received.

- **FY26 Line Items Transfers-** The Town Administrator shared that the accountants prepared the transfer list within the packet. The largest deficit was in the Snow and Ice account after a difficult winter, the Town Administrator shared that the deficit could be put on the tax rate recap but with leftover funds within the highway account it makes sense to transfer the funds. There was discussion about the deficit in the cemetery account which is still being reviewed and the Veterans account. The Town Administrator shared that the Veterans account is partially refunded by the state and it is difficult to budget accordingly as the town has no control over the numbers. It was noted that the Finance Committee previously approved the transfers.
  A motion was made by S. McGrath and seconded by R. Kileen to allow line-item transfers for FY26.
  Roll Call Vote: S. McWhirt- Yes; R. DeAngelis – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes Ray Killeen-Yes
  Motion Carries: 5-0

- **Cheshire Rod and Gun Club One Day Liquor License – August 15, 2026 & August 22, 2026**
  A motion was made by R Killeen and seconded by R. DeAngelis to approve the Cheshire Rod and Gun Club One Day Liquor Licenses.
  Roll Call Vote: S. McWhirt- Yes; R. DeAngelis – Yes; S. McGrath – Abstain; M. Francesconi – Yes Ray Killeen-Yes
  Motion Carries: 4-0-1

- **Two Sisters Mobile Spirits Bar One Day Liquor License – August 8, 2026**
  A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by S. McWhirt approve the Two Sisters Mobile Spirits Bar One Day Liquor License.
  Discussion: M. Francesconi noted that the event may be postponed due to weather to August 9, 2026.
  Roll Call Vote: S. McWhirt- Yes; R. DeAngelis – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes Ray Killeen-Yes
  Motion Carries: 5-0

- **Police Chief Search Update & Next Steps-** M. Francesconi informed the board that initially there were seven applicants, one withdrew and four candidates moved to the written exam and initial oral interviews. Two qualified candidates will be moving forward to the assessment center which creates scenarios specific to Cheshire. M. Francesconi noted that there were 118 community survey responses and thanked the community for their input. It was noted that within the results integrity and honesty

were the most mentioned characteristics the community would like to see in the next chief.

- **Meal Excise Revenue – Fiscal Year 2026 -** The Town Administrator shared that two payments were received in Fiscal Year 2026 for a total of $4,027.68. Due to the privacy of the taxpayer, there is no additional information available. The Town Administrator shared that other communities found that estimating the revenue is difficult in the first eighteen months as the program is getting started and information is difficult to obtain from the Department of Revenue.

Public Comment
Fred Jayko of Wells Road inquired about the two properties at the end of Wells Road. M. Francesconi informed him that it could not be discussed as it was not on the agenda and the homes are private property.

Erin Paris mentioned the number of bear sightings and recent attack of a farm animal on West Mountain Road and suggested education for residents.

Events and Upcoming Agenda Items
Fire Department Cruz Nite Fundraiser - Car show with food, vendors, music, raffles and activities – Saturday August 8, 2026, from 4-9 p.m. at the Cheshire Community House grounds.

Adjournment
A motion was made by M. Francesconi and seconded by S. McGrath to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 p.m.
Roll Call Vote: S. McWhirt- Yes; R. DeAngelis – Yes; S. McGrath – Yes; M. Francesconi – Yes Ray Killeen-Yes
Motion Carries: 5-0

Respecfully Submitted;
Erin Paris
Administrative Assistant
August 6, 2026

Document List
1. Agenda - August 4, 2026
2. Draft Minutes- July 21, 2026
3. Email re: Geotech Fire Department
4. Email re: Fire Department Boat
5. Draft Code of Conduct Policy
6. Lease Anaylsis Proposal

7. FY26 Proposed Transfers
8. MassDOT letter regarding Sand Mill Bridge

Approved: 8/18/26