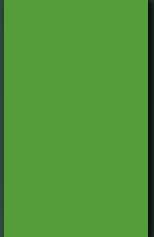




# Town of Cheshire

FY24 BUDGET PRESENTATION

<b>Total FY23 Proposed Budget</b>	<b>\$7,622,477</b>
Total Offset Cherry Sheets	\$8,789
State/County Cherry Sheet Charges	\$65,342
Overlay (Abatements/Exemptions)	\$43,789
<b>Total Amount To Be Raised</b>	<b>\$7,740,397</b>



Total  
FY24  
Proposed  
Budget

**Total FY24  
Estimated  
Revenues/Other  
Revenue  
Sources**

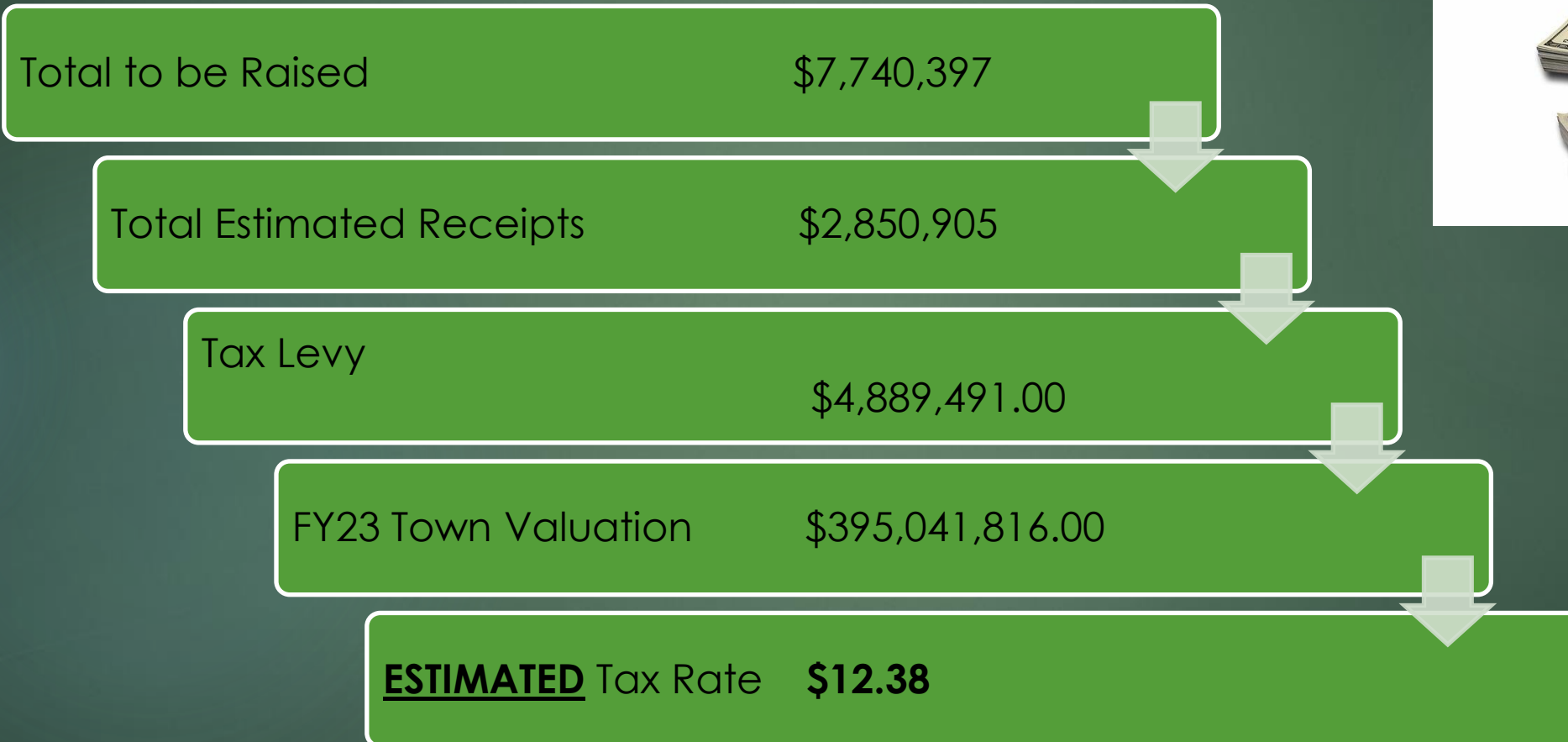
<b>Estimated Receipts/Other Revenue</b>	
Estimated Receipts State Cherry Sheets	\$975,943
Local Receipts (Not Allocated)	\$978,100
Enterprise Fund (Water Dept)	\$332,694
Free Cash Use	\$242,252
Free Cash to Stay Under Tax Levy	\$321,916
<b>Total Estimated Revenues</b>	<b>\$2,850,905</b>

# Levy Limit



FY23 Tax Levy	\$4,294,446
Add 2.5%	\$107,361
FY24 Estimated New Growth	<u>\$20,000</u>
FY24 Subtotal:	\$4,421,807
FY24 Debt Exclusions	<u>\$467,684</u>
Maximum Allowable Levy	\$4,889,491

# Estimated Tax Rate Calculations



# Reserves

Free Cash Certified  
\$797,207.00

Capital Stabilization  
\$242,492.73

Stabilization  
\$550,293



# Free Cash

2013-2024

Used to stay under the Tax Levy



Fiscal Year	Certified Free Cash Amount	FC to Reduce Tax Rate	Tax Rate
2013	\$487,811	\$295,000	\$10.62
2014	\$410,368	\$172,000	\$11.16
2015	\$246,339	\$188,000	\$11.94
2016	\$235,630	\$170,000	\$12.26
2017	\$266,367	\$170,000	\$12.39
2018	\$626,834	\$170,000	\$13.06
2019	\$416,620	\$170,000	\$13.10
2020	\$339,776	\$140,000	\$13.44
2021	\$790,952	\$376,000	\$13.37
2022	\$533,756	\$260,000	\$12.76
2023	\$656,474	\$240,555	\$11.97
2024	\$797,207	Proposed \$321,917	Estimated \$12.38



# Driving Increases

**Public Safety – Proposed Full Time Officer Position & Volunteer Fire Department Stipends**

**General Government - Health Insurance Benefits - Three new plans (COA Director, Municipal Clerk, Full Time Police Officer)**

**General Government - Municipal Clerk/Assistant Treasurer & Collector – Based on a recommendation from the Financial Management Review (page 21)**

**Northern Berkshire Technical School Budget**



# Full Time Police Officer



The Cheshire Police Department is seeking a third Full Time Officer. Over the past 2 years the Cheshire Police Department has not only seen an increase of call volume but an increase in more violent crimes.

- ▶ In 2021 we handled 1973 calls for service. Within that volume we responded to 54 Erratic/Dangerous Drivers, 18 Domestic Violence and had 15 Criminal Arrests.
- ▶ In 2022 we handled 2453 calls for service. Within that volume we responded to 78 Erratic/Dangerous Drivers, 53 Domestic Violence, 32 Criminal Arrests and recovered several stolen guns and vehicles.
- ▶ As of February 22, 2023 we have responded to 428 calls for service and project our need for service to be over 2900 calls for 2023
- ▶ Erratic/Dangerous Drivers and Domestic Violence calls are a couple of the most dangerous interactions an officer can face and has almost doubled over the last year. The addition of a third full-time officer will allow the department to grow in a positive direction and help meet the needs and safety of the citizens of Cheshire and its officers. A detailed analyses will be performed to determine the staffing needs to ensure the best impact to our community.
- ▶ **The third Full Time Officer will enable the CPD to provide coverage Monday – Sunday from 7 a.m. – 11 p.m. with additional coverage Thursday – Saturday nights from 4 p.m. – 2 a.m.**

Chief Michael J. Alibozek

Cheshire Police Department

# Full Time Police Officer

- ▶ Are part time officers harder to hire? Yes. The Massachusetts Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) Commission was established as part of the criminal justice reform enacted in Chapter 253 of the Acts of 2020. The mission was to improve policing and enhance public confidence in law enforcement by implementing a fair process for mandatory certification, discipline, and training for all peace officers in the Commonwealth.
- ▶ The training that was set in place has basically eliminated the part time officer from the Commonwealth. All officers within the Commonwealth are now trained to a full time status. This change has made it very difficult to hire qualified officers to serve in the Town of Cheshire as a part time officer.
- ▶ The Cheshire Police Department has already lost two officers due to the POST. Three of our officers have successfully completed the POST, two of the three have moved into full time positions. We currently have two part officers left that are working to complete there POST training and will be looking for full time employment.
- ▶ Small departments like ours across the Commonwealth are being forced to adjust there staffing due to these shortages of part time officers by creating full time positions, flexible part time hours and better compensation packages.

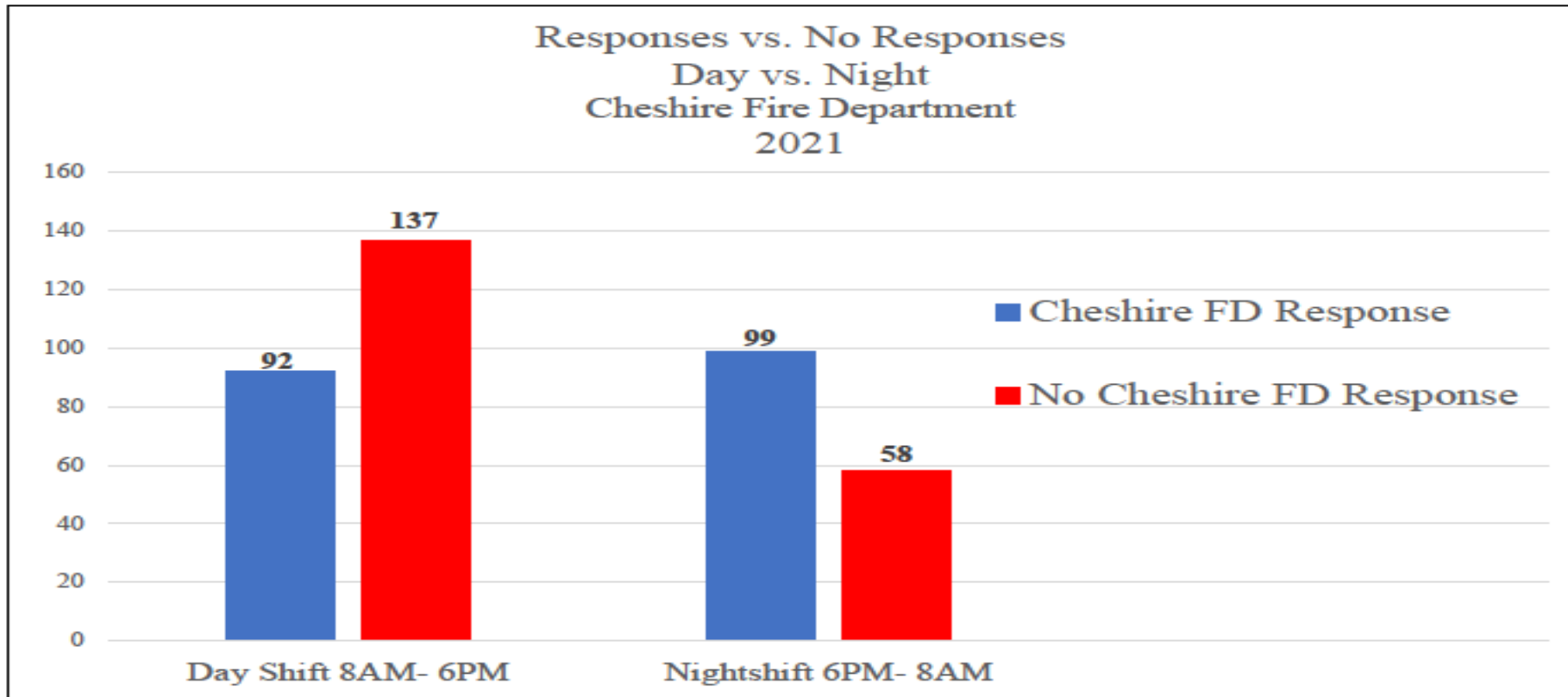
Information Provided by Chief Alibozek

# Fire Department Volunteer Stipends



- ▶ The CFD is unable to provide emergency medical service (EMS) response to 35% of EMS calls during the daytime (8 a.m. – 6 p.m.). The CFD is unable to provide EMS response to 15% of EMS call during the nighttime (6 p.m. – 8 a.m.)
- ▶ Cheshire is asking half as many volunteers to respond to twice as many calls. In 1995, CFD had 62 volunteers who were asked to respond to 200 emergencies. Today 27 volunteers are being asked to respond to almost 400 incidents per year.
- ▶ Emergency Incidents in Cheshire have increased 26% in five years, this kind of growth requires new approaches.
- ▶ Payment of stipends does not change the legal status of the departments volunteers to part-time employees.
- ▶ Stipends will be paid to members who meet the quota for responses to calls and attendance at trainings.

# Fire Department Volunteer Stipends



In 2021, the Cheshire Fire Department was unable to respond to 195 calls for emergency medical service (EMS) out of 386 calls.

The Cheshire Fire Department is 2 times more likely to fail to respond in the daytime between 8AM and 6PM.

# Fire Department Volunteer Stipends

Emergency Incidents- Five Year Trend  
Cheshire Fire Department  
2018-2022

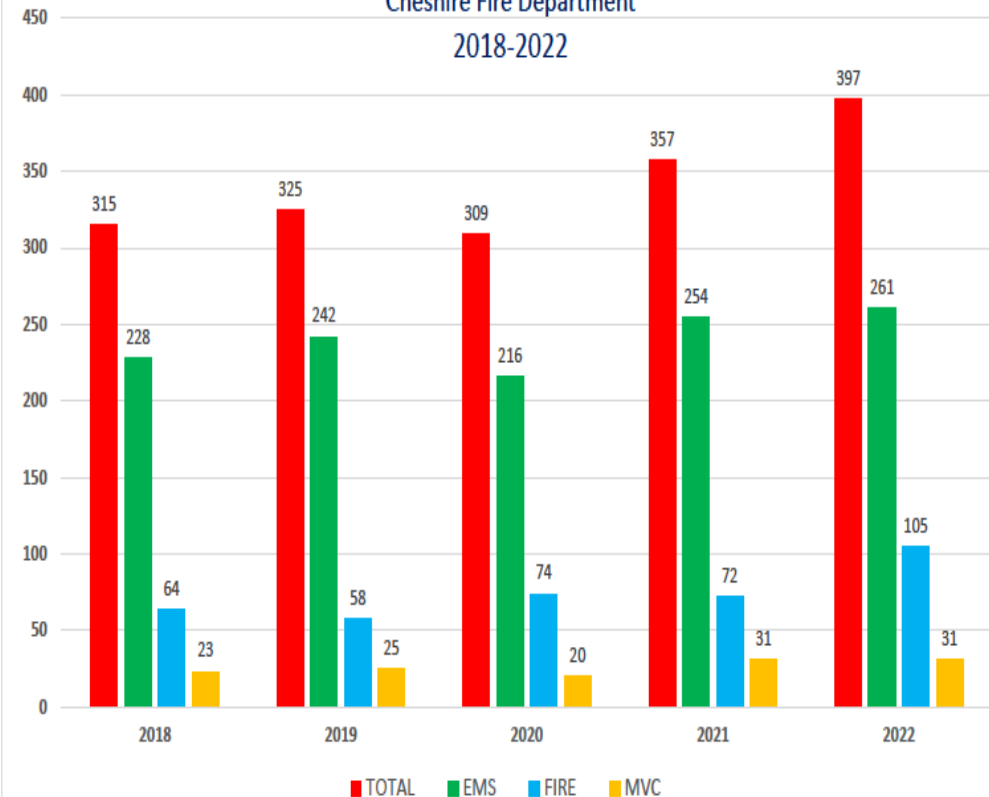


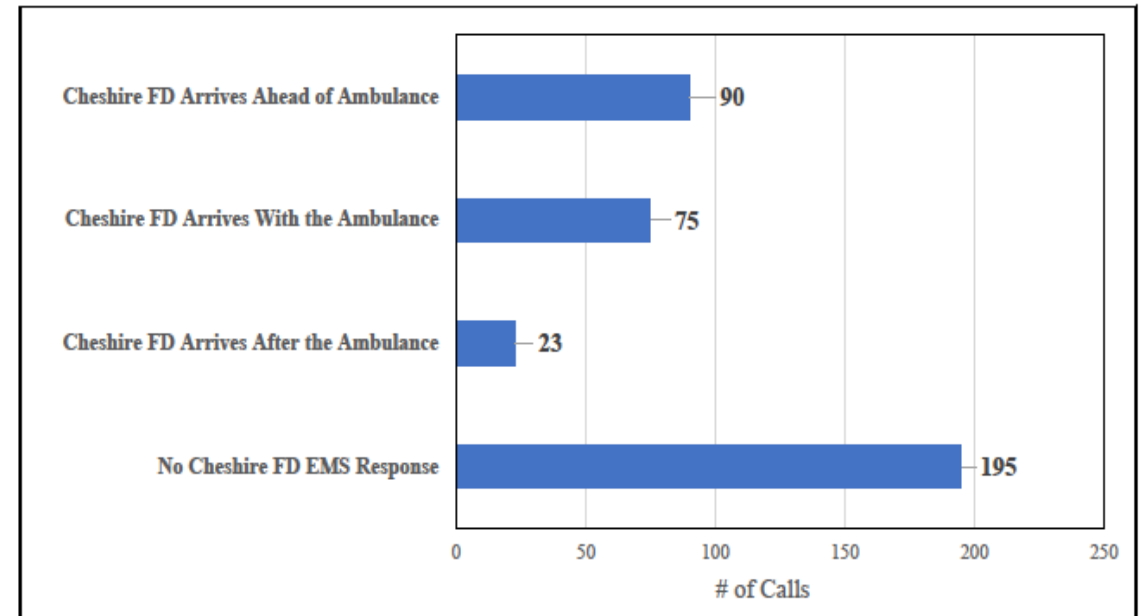
Chart #4

## Arrival Before, With, and After the Ambulance- 2021 Cheshire Fire Department

When the Cheshire Fire Department does respond to a call for emergency medical services (EMS) it is highly effective arriving ahead of the ambulance forty-eight percent (48%) of the time.

The Cheshire Fire Department arrives simultaneously with the ambulance forty percent (40%) of the time.

The ambulance arrives ahead of the Cheshire Fire Department only twelve percent (12%) of the time.



# Municipal Clerk/ Assistant Treasurer and Collector

The Municipal Clerk position will also encompass administrative support to the various Board and Committees (Planning, Conservation Commission, Board of Health and Zoning Board of Appeals) as well as duties of an Assistant Treasurer/Collector as recommended in the Financial Management Review.

*“We recommend the town consider formally appointing a part-time assistant treasurer/collector. Cheshire currently has no employee who can, in the treasurer/collector’s absence, process payroll in Harpers or perform any critical bank transactions. In addition, if the town shifts water collections to the treasurer/collector’s office, it will necessitate more work hours in that office during the three times a year that water accounts are billed. If the assistant works out well, the person could possibly be groomed as a successor to the treasurer/collector when she retires.*

*With the transfer of water collections to the treasurer/collector’s office, the water department clerk could be assigned some new water department tasks or possibly duties that support other departments. The town identified a need for more clerical support across departments, as evidenced by a recent job posting for a part-time administrative assistant to support various boards in town.”*



# Capital Projects

## Wheeled Excavator to Replace 2004 John Deere Backhoe

- ▶ Three pin bucket for larger excavation radius (extends the bucket's angle of rotation to 200 degrees – 10% more than conventional bucket linkage. This increases vertical depth as well as digging forces. Less repositioning and faster work cycles, test have showed that work is 38% faster and uses 4x less fuel. Excavators have more digging power than backhoes.
  - ▶ Shorter hydraulic hoses, longer service life with less power loss and less change of the hoses getting snagged and wear points. Easier general maintenance due to the tillable cab and removable chassis covers.
  - ▶ Backhoe has a 180 degree working radius vs. an Excavator that has a 360 degree working radius which allows more options to load materials and trucks.
  - ▶ Below 74HP, does not require selective catalytic reduction (SCR) system and regular DEF refueling. The proposed equipment is 67.1 HP
  - ▶ Dozer blades in front and support stabilizers for equipment support
  - ▶ Better visibility for operator to see the ground crew, providing for a safer work environment.
  - ▶ Wheeled excavator can travel on roadways, does not need an additional trailer.
- ▶ The Highway Department has been talking about replacement of the backhoe for several years. The Co-Interim Superintendents with Board of Selectmen Member Ron DeAngelis received proposals for three machines, visited dealers and ultimately chose this piece of equipment to replace the backhoe.





# Other Warrant Articles

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## **Revolving Accounts - MGL Chapter 44, Section 53E ½**

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Council on Aging – limit of \$10,000

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Recreation Committee – limit of \$10,000

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Police Department - limit of \$10,000

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## **Stabilization Accounts**

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Terminate Capital Equipment and create a Capital Stabilization Account

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This will allow funds to be used for all Capital purchases over \$5,000 not just “equipment”

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Create a Radio Communications Stabilization Account

# Other Warrant Articles



Town Wide Speed Limits – MGL Chapter 90, Section 17C



Allow the Board of Selectmen to set speed limits of 25 MPH in all areas of Town as needed and defined by state law as "thickly settled or business districts".



MGL c. 90 § 17C defines a thickly settled or business district as "the territory contiguous to any way which is built up with structures devoted to business, or the territory contiguous to any way where dwelling houses are situated at such distances as will average less than two hundred feet between them for a distance of a quarter of a mile or over."

# Other Warrant Articles

Adoption of Renumbering and Revision to Various General and Zoning Bylaws.

The Board of Selectmen and Planning Board have been working with legal counsel since July 2018 on the numbering, codification, arrangement, sequence and comprehensive revisions to the text of the General and Zoning Bylaws in order to make a clear and concise, searchable document. While both sets of bylaws will be encompassed into one document they are still completely separate documents.

There is also a recommendation from the Financial Management Review (page 15)

# Other Warrant Articles

- ▶ **Board of Assessors – Elected to Appointed, Based on a recommendation from the Financial Management Review (page 21), and supported of the Board of Assessors.**

If approved this action would take effect in May 2025, each elected member of the Board of Assessors would serve their full elected term.

*“We recommend the town convert from an elected to appointed board of assessors. Cheshire resembles many other small, rural towns in the state in the scarcity of qualified individuals actively looking to perform key part-time roles in local government. In this light, it would be easier for the select board to seek out and appoint members to the assessing board whenever vacancies occur instead of the town hoping that, on a rolling basis, there will be a resident(s) willing to run for each year. This is especially true given that, after converting to an appointed board, the select board would not be limited to recruiting only from Cheshire’s registered voters. For instance, there might be an experienced appraiser living in a nearby town who could be interested in some extra work for a stipend. If difficulties in filling individual seats persist into the future, an appointed status for the board would also allow the town to consider evaluating the potential for an intermunicipal agreement as a regional option. Beyond the challenge of maintaining full board membership, the notion that an assessing board plays a policymaking role that thereby justifies an election rationale is specious. The board’s duties are defined in statute, its decisions should be based on standardized criteria, and its valuation procedures are reviewed by DLS.”*

# Personnel Bylaw

Based on a recommendation from the Financial Management Review

*"The town's ad hoc personnel committee has drafted an extensive set of personnel policies. This document defines different types of positions; outlines recruitment, hiring, discipline, and employee separation processes; specifies the amount, duration, and uses of available leave-time categories; identifies standards of conduct; and calls for the implementation of an employee evaluation program. Also included are provisions related to discrimination, sexual harassment, whistleblower protection, and allowable uses of electronic communications. There is also a requirement for employees to sign acknowledgments indicating they have read and understood the policies.*

*The work done by the committee is an excellent step forward for the town. Town meeting can solidify the policies by adopting them collectively as a personnel bylaw, which would then stand beside the town's general and zoning bylaws and officially make them applicable town wide. This would provide a strong accountability measure that allows for fair and uniform administration of the policies and would also better protect the town from related legal liabilities. Unlike general bylaws, there is no requirement nor process to submit personnel bylaws for the attorney general's review."*

In the near future the Town will be acting on additional personnel policies recommended in the Financial Management Review.

# Other Warrant Articles

- ▶ Adoption of MGL Chapter 59, Section 5, Clause 17F  
– Senior Citizen, Surviving Spouse, Surviving Minor  
Statutory Real Estate Exemption

If adopted this would authorize the annual increase in the amount of the exemption.

- ▶ Adoption of MGL Chapter 59, Section 5, Clause 17E  
– Senior Citizen, Surviving Spouse, Surviving Minor  
Statutory Real Estate Exemption

If adopted this would authorize the annual increase in the asset (whole estate) limits.

- ▶ Adoption of MGL Chapter 59, Section 5, Clause 41D - Senior Statutory Real Estate Exemption

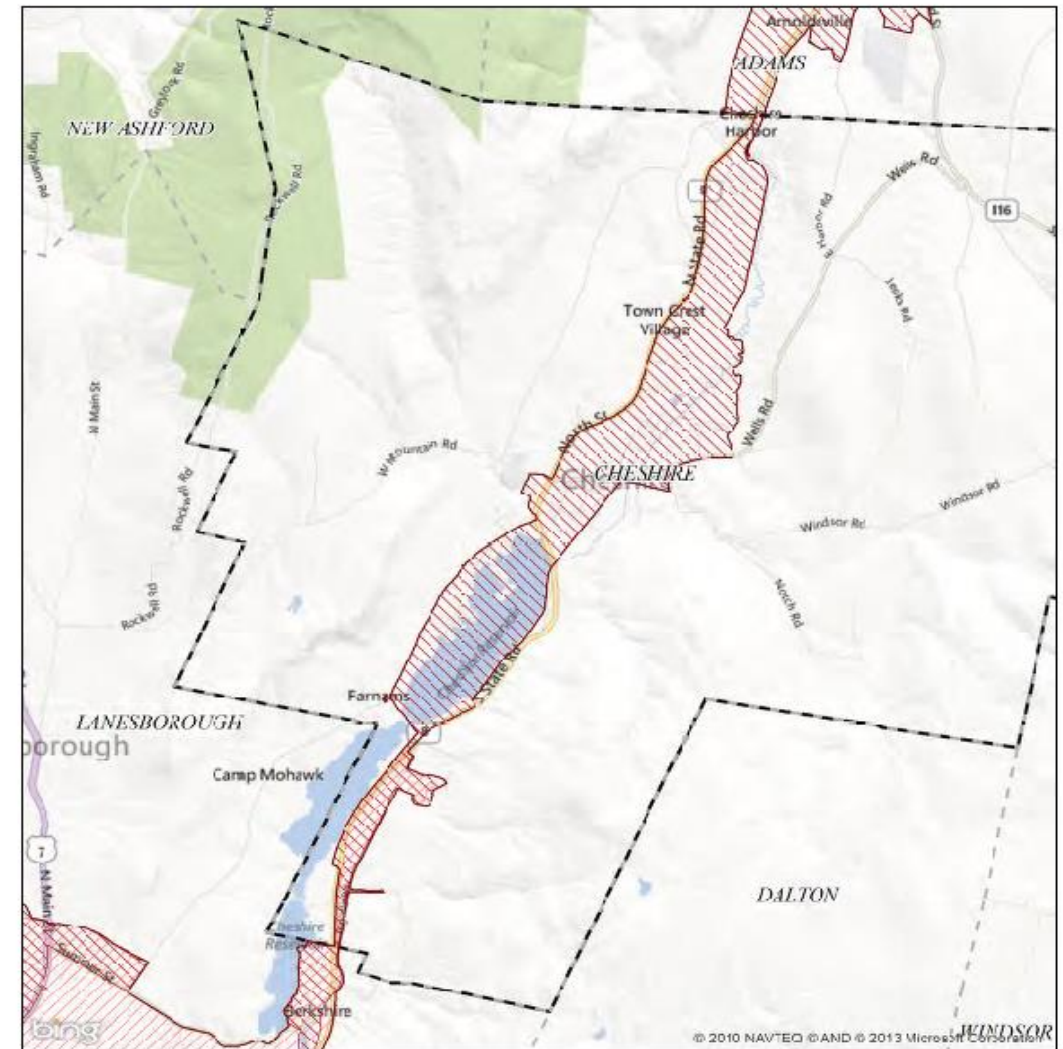
If adopted this would authorize and annual increase in the income (gross receipts) and asset (whole estate) limits.

## Other Warrant Articles

# Stormwater Management Bylaw

Cheshire has been designated as a MS4 Community and the bylaw is a requirement of the MS4 permit by the EPA and the MassDEP. MS4 is a section of the Clean Water Act that regulates stormwater in “urbanized area” According to the 2010 census data Cheshire has sections of town that are classified as “urbanized”. The areas are closely related to those covered by the Wetlands Protection Act.

This bylaw was originally proposed at the FY23 Annual Town Meeting and is required to be proposed until adopted. The Conservation Commission has held informational sessions about this proposed bylaw.



NPDES Phase II Stormwater Program  
Automatically Designated MS4 Areas  
**Cheshire MA**

Town Population: **3235**  
Regulated Population: **1689**  
(Populations estimated from 2010 Census)

**Regulated Area:**

UA Based on 2000 Census	UA Based on 2010 Census
100%	100%

Urbanized Areas, Town Boundaries:  
US Census (2000, 2010)  
Base map © 2013 Microsoft Corporation  
and its data suppliers

US EPA Region 1 GIS Center Map #8824, 8/9/2013