



ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
TOWN OF CHESHIRE
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Berkshire SS.

Monday, June 8, 2026, at 7:00 PM
191 Church Street

Moderator: Carol Francesconi
Town Clerk: Whitney Flynn
Board of Selectmen: Chair Michelle Francesconi, Raymond Killeen, Ronald DeAngelis,
Scott McWhirt **Absent:** Vice-Chair Shawn McGrath
Finance Committee: Chair Jeffrey Chaput, Kathleen Levesque, Patrick Pettit, William
McGovern, Michael "Mickey" Biagini **Absent:** Austin Alibozek
Town Administrator: Jennifer Morse

The Town of Cheshire's Annual Town Meeting was held on Monday, June 8, 2026, at the Cheshire Community House Cafeteria; located at 191 Church Street.

Election Workers, Denise Gregoire and Celia Ferro, began voter check-in at 6:30 PM.

Boards of Registrar's, Elizabeth King, and Constable, Alison Warner counted voting cards.

In attendance were seventy-seven (77) voters and seven (7) guests.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Moderator Francesconi and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moderator Francesconi welcomed the voters and thanked them for exercising their free country right to vote and for showing up to manage the Town's finances and government. She asked the non-voters in the room to identify themselves. Each member of the table was introduced.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

BERKSHIRE, SS.

To either of the Constables of the Town of Cheshire in the County of Berkshire, GREETINGS.
In the name of **The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**, you are hereby directed to notify and warn the inhabitants of said Town, qualified to vote in elections and in Town affairs, to meet in said Cheshire.

Place: Cheshire Community House, Cafeteria
(Former Cheshire Elementary School)
191 Church Street, Cheshire MA 01225

Date: Monday, June 8, 2026

Time: 7:00 P.M.

Moderator Francesconi read the warrant heading and asked to waive the reading of the balance of the warrant. Motion was made and seconded. No further discussion. Motion carried.

CHESHIRE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

ARTICLE 1: Reports of Officers

To act on the reports of the Town Officers.

Majority Vote Required

The Annual Town Reports are presented for this article. This year's Annual Town Report was dedicated to the late Reverend William "Bill" Furey. Town Clerk, Whitney Flynn, read a poem and presented flowers in Bill's honor to his loved ones in attendance.

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 2: Elected Officials Compensation

To see if the Town will vote to set the stipends and compensation for all elected officials of the Town as contained in the budget articles and pursuant to the M.G.L., c.41, §108, to be made effective as of July 1, 2026, as contained in the budget, or take any action in relation thereto.

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Finance Committee Recommends 5-0

Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 3: Disposal of Surplus Property

To see if the town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to dispose of any unused town-owned equipment and/or property in accordance with the law or take any action in relation thereto.

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Finance Committee Recommends 5-0

Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: No real estate or other significant property is known yet to be disposed of at this time.

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 4: Authorization for Compensating Balance Agreements

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Town Treasurer to enter into compensating balance agreements for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2026, in accordance with M.G.L. c.44, §53F, or take any action in relation thereto.

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Finance Committee Recommends 5-0

Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 5: State Aid Highway Programs

To see if the Town will vote to borrow and appropriate any additional sum or sums of money which will be reimbursed by the Commonwealth under any applicable State Aid Highway Programs for construction or improvements to Town roads and bridges as requested by the Board of Selectmen, or take any action in relation thereto.

*Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
2/3 Vote Required*

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Card Vote – 63 in favor, 0 opposed; Article Passed

ARTICLE 6: Authorization to Accept/Expend Grants/Gifts to Town

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for, execute contracts and expend grants or monies, or any Federal or State grants or monies, received as set forth in the appropriate application, or take any action in relation thereto.

*Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required*

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 7: RESERVE FUND

To see if the Town will vote to **RAISE AND APPROPRIATE** the sums of **\$20,000** to be used as a **RESERVE FUND**, pursuant to M.G.L. c 40, section 6 for the extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures for Fiscal Year 2027, or take any action in relation thereto.

*Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required*

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 8: GENERAL GOVERNMENT

To see if the Town will vote to **RAISE AND APPROPRIATE** the following sum of **\$1,642,481** for the conduct of **GENERAL GOVERNMENT**, including all charges and expenses of the various town offices, for Fiscal Year 2027, or take any action in relation thereto:

	FY26 Voted	FY27 Proposed
Legal Services	25,000	25,000
Moderator Salary	50	100
Board of Selectmen Stipends (5@\$3,940)	19,315	19,700
Board of Selectmen Expenses	10,400	10,400
Clean Lake Program	28,394	28,394
MS4 – Stormwater Compliance	7,500	7,500
Group Purchasing (Procurement)	800	800
Town Audit	10,000	10,000
Information Technology	52,364	46,000
Town Website	5,250	5,250
Town Administrator Salary	91,800	96,500
Administrative Assistant Salary	0	27,155
Executive Assistant Salary	54,309	0
Town Administrator Expenses	3,250	3,250
Accounting Services	36,880	35,663
Accounting Software (VADAR)	4,566	4,566
Assessors Stipend (Chairperson)	3,883	3,940
Assessors Stipends (Members 2 @\$3,395)	6,656	6,790
Assessors Administrator Salary	33,523	34,529
Assessors Expenses	3,910	3,910
Assessors Contracted Services	32,905	32,905
Treasurer Salary	50,000	39,758
Collector Salary	35,000	34,786
Treasurer/Collector Expenses	12,500	12,000
Treasurer Payroll Processing	4,000	4,500
Treasurer/Collector Tax Title Expenses	4,000	4,000
Treasurer/Collector Certification Stipend	2,000	1,000
Treasurer/Collector Software	3,550	9,949
Finance Committee Expenses	1,750	0
Town Clerk Salary	35,908	36,985
Town Clerk Expenses	3,150	3,213
Town Clerk Dog License Expense	400	400
Town Clerk Book Repair	2,500	0
Town Clerk Census/Lists	3,200	3,200
Board of Registrars/Elections	10,000	22,500
Town Report Printing	2,700	2,700
Conservation Commission Stipends (3@\$530)	1,560	1,590
Conservation Commission Consult	500	500
Conservation Commission Expenses	1,500	1,500
Planning Board Expenses	2,515	2,515

Planning Board BRPC Assessment	2,915	2,987
Planning Board Stipends (5@\$530)	1,635	2,650
Agricultural Commission Expenses	500	500
Historical Commission Expenses	1,000	1,000
Zoning Board of Appeals Expenses	800	800
Berkshire County Retirement	169,650	166,395
OPEB Funding	20,000	19,300
OPEB Actuarial Services Study	3,500	3,500
Health Insurance – Active	301,872	310,279
Health Insurance – Retiree	40,000	47,664
Heath Insurance – Dental	9,861	10,969
Unemployment	5,000	15,000
MEDC Employer Share	17,500	24,720
Town Hall/Police Utilities	25,000	25,000
Fire Station Utilities	18,500	18,500
Town Garage Utilities	12,000	12,000
Senior Center Utilities	7,000	7,000
Town Phone Systems	15,000	15,000
Community House Utilities	70,000	70,000
Town Building Repairs	120,000	120,000
Town Water Accounts	59,000	59,000
ADA Compliance	5,000	5,000
Town Insurance & Bonds	106,633	104,959
Police/Fire Accident/Disability Insurance	16,563	16,810
TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT	1,636,417.00	1,642,481.00

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Finance Committee Recommends 5-0

Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article, excluding items set aside in **bold**, was made and seconded.

Discussion: The article's total amount listed on top did not match the Total General Government amount at the bottom due to clerical error regarding Moderator's \$50.00 increase in stipend; corrected total is \$1,642,481.00 for both. **Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous**

Motion to accept the remaining items set aside in **bold**, was made and seconded.

Discussion: Questions by voters regarding the differences/increases in the line items, and what the plan is; answered by Selectmen Chair, Michelle Francesconi.

Town Administrator Salary – Questioned, why anyone is being paid over the 2 ½ increase cap?

Answered, that a Classification and Compensation Study was completed in 2024, and this position is still under the average median of salary amount; grant funding benefits the Town of Cheshire.

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, with 3 Opposed

Administrative Assistant Salary – Questioned, why just last year the Town voted in a new full-time Executive Assistant and now it is a part-time position again; justification for that. Answered, that a

full-time person is still needed, but due to budget constraints and already using over \$386,000.00 of free cash to offset the general operations is not best practice or sustainable. It was explained that free cash has been utilized outside of its intended purpose for decades, and that a critical 2 ½ override would be needed in the future to avoid significant cuts to services for daily operations in the Town going forward.

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

Accounting Services - Questioned, why can't all the software and tech services be more clearly itemized in the warrant; stated the different line items are very confusing, and it's a lot of money. Answered, that each specific department has unique software; it is not a one-blanket tech service. Suggested by voter, amounts should be clearly listed as to what monies are being generated in revenue through rental fees for town buildings, rents of town properties, etc.

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

Board of Registrars/Elections - Questioned, why the line item has over doubled. Answered, there are four elections budgeted for this coming year, whereas last year only budgeted for two; the Town Clerk will also now receive compensation for mandatory election hours in excess of stipend hours, up to \$2,500.00 (an amount that has, for this year, been reallocated from Book Repair.)

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 9: HOOSAC VALLEY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

To see if the Town will vote to approve the Hoosac Valley Regional School District Budget for Fiscal Year 2027 and **RAISE AND APPROPRIATE \$3,402,983** to pay its assessed share of the budget or take any action in relation thereto.

	FY26 Voted	FY27 Proposed
HVRSD Minimum Local Contribution	2,459,707	2,604,870
HVRSD Over Minimum Foundation	389,514	412,418
HVRSD Transportation	147,422	156,801
HVRSD Capital Expenditure	209,439	228,894
HOOSAC VALLEY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	3,206,082.00	3,402,983.00

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Finance Committee Recommends 3-2

Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion - Questioned, why the Finance Committee members' votes were not unanimous, asked for an explanation of those in opposition. M. Biagini stated that he voted against because every year, the budget for the school goes up on administration costs and salaries, but there has been no improvement in the quality of education he has seen in many years. Other voters presented statistics about the students' average performance numbers being very low and raised concerns about the significant increases being detrimental to the overall budget in Cheshire. Some voters defended that the demographics have changed; believe the School Committee is doing everything they can to keep costs down despite a heavy increase in special needs services. Superintendent, Aaron Dean, explained what HVRSD is planning with the budget to get competitive rates for employees, explained recent benchmark increases in certain grade levels, regionalization discussions, and developmental programs in place for the future of the school.

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, with 3 Opposed

ARTICLE 10: NORTHERN BERKSHIRE VOCATIONAL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

To see if the Town will vote to approve the Northern Berkshire Vocational Regional School District Budget for Fiscal Year 2027 and **RAISE AND APPROPRIATE \$595,431** to pay its assessed share of the budget or take any action in relation thereto.

	FY26 Voted	FY27 Proposed
NBVRSD Budget	586,213	595,431
NORTHERN BERKSHIRE VOCATIONAL REGIONAL	586,213.00	595,431.00

Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: NBVRSD Committee Member, William Craig, stated these costs are driven by DESE [Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in Massachusetts] and increased IEP [Individualized Education Plan] workload, in combination with unfunded mandates from the State.

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 11: BUILDING DEPARTMENT

To see if the Town will vote to **RAISE AND APPROPRIATE** the following sum of **\$42,488** for the **BUILDING DEPARTMENT** for Fiscal Year 2027, or take any action in relation thereto:

	FY26 Voted	FY27 Proposed
Building Commissioner Salary	18,911	19,289
Alternate Building Commissioner Salary	500	500
Building Commissioner Expenses	1,100	1,100
Online Permitting System	5,400	5,400
Gas/Plumbing Inspector Salary	6,199	6,323
Gas/Plumbing Inspector Assistant Salary	549	549
Gas/Plumbing Expenses	500	500
Wiring Inspector Salary	7,204	7,348
Wiring Inspector Assistant Salary	579	579
Wiring Inspector Expenses	1,200	900
TOTAL BUILDING DEPARTMENT	42,142.00	42,488

Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 12: POLICE DEPARTMENT

To see if the Town will vote to **RAISE AND APPROPRIATE** the following sum of **\$403,000** for **POLICE DEPARTMENT** for Fiscal Year 2027, or take any action in relation thereto:

	FY26 Voted	FY27 Proposed
Police Chief Salary	87,592	110,000
Police Full Time Officer Wages (3)	114,465	190,506
Police Full Time Officer Differential Pay	0	17,765
Police Department Part Time Officers	27,557	21,829
Police Department Expenses	13,500	18,000
Police Department Equipment	20,400	20,400
Police Department Auto Expenses	8,000	8,000
Police Department Officer OT/Holiday Pay	12,500	12,500
Animal Control Contracted Services	3,000	3,000
Animal Control Expenses	1,000	1,000
	284,014	403,000

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Finance Committee Recommends 4-1

Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article, excluding items set aside in **bold**, was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

Motion to accept the remaining items set aside in **bold**, was made and seconded.

Discussion: Questions by voters regarding the differences/increases in the line items, and what the plan is; answered by Interim Police Chief, Timothy Garner, and Selectmen Chair.

Police Chief Salary - Questioned, why the salary is so high; asked to amend down to \$100,000.00; does the State Police barracks in town offer coverage? Answered, that this figure is a salary range suggested by the Police Chief search consultation group hired, intended to compete with other local departments to obtain a qualified Police Chief; a salary range is now required by law for all positions. Informed that discussions took place to consider merging departments with Lanesborough for coverage, which was at a much higher cost to the Town of Cheshire than what was being asked for now; can't rely on State Police for coverage.

Card Vote Called - 61 in favor, 6 opposed; Article Passed

Police Full Time Officer Wages (3) - Questioned, why 3 full-time officers are being requested over the two that have been enough for all these years. Answered, that part-time officers are hard to come by now as the academy training required is the same for full-time officers; salaries needed to be raised to where they should be, to be competitive with comparable departments. Mentioned, that Cheshire's Police Department has historically been a "steppingstone" for officers to get their academy training paid for, and then the officers go elsewhere to higher paid departments. A resident stated that for over 35 years, the community has always felt safe, until the past month when no officer patrolling the streets allowed many issues to arise; support for police requested.

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, with 1 Opposed

ARTICLE 13: FIRE DEPARTMENT/EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

To see if the Town will vote to **RAISE AND APPROPRIATE** the following sum of **\$131,805** for **FIRE DEPARTMENT AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT** for Fiscal Year 2027, or take any action in relation thereto:

	FY26 Voted	FY27 Proposed
Fire Chief Salary	12,607	12,859
Asst. Fire Chief Stipends (3@1,730)	5,088	5,190
Fire Department Expenses	62,000	62,000
Fire Department Volunteer Stipends (25)	25,000	26,000
Fire Department EMS Supplies	4,500	4,500
Communications Center (Dispatch)	2,900	0
Emergency Management Director Stipend	1,500	1,530
Emergency Management Expenses	1,000	1,000
Emergency Radio Communications	0	18,726
PUBLIC SAFETY TOTAL	114,595.00	131,805.00

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Finance Committee Recommends 5-0

Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article, excluding items set aside in **bold**, was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

Motion to accept the remaining items set aside in **bold**, was made and seconded.

Discussion: What is the Emergency Radio Communications line item for? Fire Chief, Thomas Francesconi, answered that this is an unfunded mandate by the State to be compliant with the 800 MHZ radios which cost \$2 million for the entire outfit; stated that a leasing agreement ended up being the most viable option for these. Voters asked if a grant could be obtained to help cover this cost; which will be investigated.

Carried, Unanimous

Voice Vote Called - Motion

ARTICLE 14: Radio Stabilization Account

To see if the Town will vote to **TRANSFER FROM THE RADIO STABILIZATION ACCOUNT** the following sum of **\$18,726 for Emergency Radio Communications** for Fiscal Year 2027, or take any action in relation thereto:

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Finance Committee Recommends 5-0

Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 15: HIGHWAY OPERATIONS AND TREE WARDEN

To see if the Town will vote to **RAISE AND APPROPRIATE** the following sum of **\$1,063,044** for **HIGHWAY OPERATIONS AND TREE WARDEN** for Fiscal Year 2027, or take any action in relation thereto:

	FY26 Voted	FY27 Proposed
Highway Workers Wages (3 Laborers, 1 Foreman)	236,336	247,517
Seasonal DPW Laborers Wages	40,322	41,532
Highway Department Longevity (contract)	1,500	0
Department of Public Works Director	88,208	87,674
Custodian Wages	9,872	10,169
Highway Department Non-Winter Overtime	5,000	5,000
Highway Department Dues/Training/Licenses	1,000	1,000
Facilities Wages	51,971	0
DPW Laborer (Part Time)	0	26,769
Road Machinery, Tools, Gas	126,000	126,000
Streetlights	75,000	75,000
Highway Department Repair/Maint. Roads	194,500	194,500
Highway Equipment Rental	5,000	5,000
Snow and Ice	170,000	170,000
Highway Department Engineering	35,000	35,000
Tree Warden Tree Removal	30,000	30,000
Tree Warden Tree Replacement	1,000	1,000
Cemetery Commission Stipends (3@\$923)	2,715	2,769
Cemetery Commission Expenses	4,114	4,114
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS	1,077,538.00	1,063,044.00

Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article, excluding items set aside in **bold**, was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

Motion to accept the remaining items set aside in **bold**, was made and seconded.

Discussion: Questions by voters regarding the differences/increases in the line items, and what the plan is; answered by DPW Director, Corey McGrath, and Selectmen Chair.

Facilities Wages & DPW Laborer (Part Time) - Questioned, what is going on with these positions? Answered, that the Facilities position will now be split into a part-time Highway/Maintenance/Plowing role, and a part-time water operator role to succeed a retiring employee in the water department.

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, with 1 opposed

Cemetery Commission Expenses – Cemetery Commission Chair, Timothy Garner, announced that the Perpetual Care Fund will be utilized for its intended purpose to preserve and maintain the cemetery.

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 16: RECREATION AND CULTURE

To see if the Town will vote to **RAISE AND APPROPRIATE** the following sum of **\$86,347** for **RECREATION AND CULTURE** for Fiscal Year 2027, or take any action in relation thereto.

	FY26 Voted	FY27 Proposed
Recreation General Expenses/Memorial Day	10,300	5,000
Library Assessment	41,439	41,447
Father Tom Campsite	1,700	2,500
Veteran Agent Services (Shared)	2,000	2,000
Veteran Benefits	35,000	35,000
Cemetery Flags	900	900
TOTAL RECREATION & CULTURE	91,339.00	86,347

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Finance Committee Recommends 5-0

Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 17: HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

To see if the Town will vote to **RAISE AND APPROPRIATE** the following sum of **\$101,812** for **HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES** for Fiscal Year 2027, or take any action in relation thereto.

	FY26 Voted	FY27 Proposed
Board of Health Stipend Chair	3,883	1,000
Board of Health Stipends (2 @ \$530)	4,766	1,060
Board of Health Expenses	2,000	2,000
Board of Health/ Health Inspector Services	8,000	20,000
Board of Health MAVEN Reporting	4,639	4,801
Senior Center/COA Expenses	8,470	8,470
Senior Center/COA Van Operating Expenses	3,400	3,400
Senior Center/COA Van Operator Salary	20,107	16,509
Senior Center Director Salary	28,126	28,970
Senior Center Meals Coordinator Salary	14,768	15,602
TOTAL HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES	98,159.00	101,812.00

*Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 4-1
Majority Vote Required*

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: Questioned, why is so much of the workload being outsourced instead of doing the work in-house, as it was in the past? Answered, groups being hired have specialized skills and certifications to complete the various tasks; Board/Committee members no longer have the time to dedicate, essentially as volunteers in these roles. Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 18: TRANSFER STATION ENTERPRISE FUND

To see if the Town will vote to **APPROPRIATE** from user fees or otherwise provide the following sums of money **\$148,890** to operate the **TRANSFER STATION ENTERPRISE FUND** for the Fiscal Year 2027, or take any action in relation thereto.

Revenues	
Department Receipts	148,890.00
General Fund Subsidy	0
TOTAL	148,890.00
Expenses	
Hauling and Disposal	115,000.00
Site Maintenance	3,000.00
Permits and Tags	3,500.00
Attendants Wages	27,390.00
TOTAL	148,890.00

*Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 4-1
Majority Vote Required*

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: Transfer Station Attendant, Gene Pierce, gave a detailed public service announcement regarding best practices while using the facility. Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 19: DEBT SERVICE EXPENSES

To see if the Town will vote to **RAISE AND APPROPRIATE** the following sum of **\$243,101** to fund **DEBT SERVICE EXPENSES** for the Fiscal Year 2027, or take any action in relation thereto.

	FY26 Voted	FY27 Proposed
Fire Truck (2030)	43,848	38,419
Police Cruiser (2026)	0	15,402
Highway Truck (Voted 2022)	51,198	48,729
Highway Truck (Voted 2021)	28,457	26,764
Short-term Debt Interest	5,000	5,000

Fire Engine (Voted 2025)	89,037	108,787
Total	217,540.00	243,101

Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 20: Revolving Funds

To see if the Town will vote to approve the following spending limits for the Revolving Funds noted below pursuant to the Cheshire Revolving Fund Bylaw and pursuant to M.G.L. c. 44, Section 53E 1/2 for the Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2026, or take any action in relation thereto:

Revolving Fund	Entity Authorized to Spend from Fund	Fee, Charges, or Receipts Credited to Fund	Program or Activity Expenses Payable from Fund	Restrictions or Conditions on Expenses Payable from Fund	Fiscal Year
Senior Center/COA	Senior Center Director	Receipts related to program fees	Senior Center Programs	Limit of \$10,000	Fiscal Year 2027
Recreation	Recreation Committee/Board of Selectmen	Receipts related to program fees	Recreation Committee Programs	Limit of \$10,000	Fiscal Year 2027
Police Department	Police Chief	Receipts from Detail Fees	Police Cruiser Expenses	Limit of \$20,000	Fiscal Year 2027
Board of Health	Board of Health	Receipts from Permitting	Public Health Alliance Inspection Fees	Limit of \$20,000	Fiscal Year 2027

Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 21: Revolving Fund – Cemetery Department

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town Revolving Fund Bylaw and to establish pursuant to MGL Chapter 44, Section 53 E ½ a new REVOLVING FUND with a limit of \$10,000 for Fiscal Year 2027 to accept receipts related to the fees and programs (rental fees for tents, chairs and tables) authorized by the Cemetery Commission to be expended for the replacement of

Cemetery equipment , in which any remaining funds may be rolled over into a similar revolving fund for Fiscal Year 2028, or take any action in relation thereto.

Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 22: CAPITAL STABILIZATION

To see if the Town will vote to **RAISE AND APPROPRIATE** the sum of **\$10,000** to fund the **CAPITAL STABILIZATION FUND** for Fiscal Year 2027, or take any action in relation thereto.

Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 23: FREE CASH/SPECIAL PROJECTS

To see if the Town will vote to **APPROPRIATE AND TRANSFER FROM FREE CASH** the sum of **\$14,137** for the Northern Berkshire Vocational School District Capital Assessment (McCann Roof & Window Project), or take any action in relation thereto.

Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 24: CAPITAL STABILIZATION/SPECIAL PROJECTS

To see if the Town will vote to **APPROPRIATE AND TRANSFER FROM CAPITAL STABILIZATION** the sum of **\$20,000** for the Community House Old Section Feasibility Study, or take any action in relation thereto.

Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: Recommendation was made to reject this article to focus on more important plans. Selectmen Chair stated the Town is responsible to research possibilities to take care of existing properties before expanding.

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, with 2 opposed

ARTICLE 25: TRANSFER – COMMUNITY HOUSE OLD SECTION FEASIBILITY STUDY

To see if the Town will vote to **APPROPRIATE AND TRANSFER FROM PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLEX ACCOUNT #03-123-5800-2601** the sum of **\$60,000** to be used to conduct a Community House Old Section Feasibility, or take any action in relation thereto.

Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: Questioned, why the study was never done; recommended setting firm requirements of targeted and intended use for the property; and was a feasibility study done on the building before the Community House moved in? Answered, the \$60,000.00 amount was earmarked last year, but many tiered steps need to be taken to move forward with the broad study; studies done would need to be updated to be accurate. **Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, with 2 opposed**

ARTICLE 26: Water Enterprise Fund

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate, transfer from retained earnings, or otherwise provide the following sums of money **\$419,442** to operate the **Water Enterprise Fund** for the Fiscal Year 2027, or take any action in relation thereto.

Revenues	
Water User Revenues	402,722.00
Retained Earnings	16,720.00
TOTAL	419,442.00
Expenses	
Water Commissioner Stipends	10,344.00
Water Operator Salary	64,928.00
Secondary Water Operator Salary	16,230.00
Water Main Replacements	90,000.00
Water/DPW Laborer Salary	26,769.00
Water Operating Expenses	45,000.00
Water Maintenance Expenses	45,000.00
Water Debt Service	57,240.00
Indirect Costs	58,931.00
Water Vehicle Expense	5,000.00
TOTAL	419,442.00

Board of Selectmen Recommends
Water Commission Recommends 3-0
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 27: Free Cash to reduce the tax rate

To see if the Town will vote to **APPROPRIATE AND TRANSFER** from **FREE CASH** a sum of **\$386,593.00** to reduce the FY27 Tax Rate, or take any action relative thereto.

*If federal or state programs, or other alternative funding sources are available to supplant Town funding for the same purpose, the Board of Selectmen may reduce the Town's portion of said funding in a manner commensurate with the additional federal or state revenue received for said purpose.

Note: The use of Free Cash to balance the operating budget to stay within the limits of Proposition 2 1/2, this is not a reduction to the tax rate.

*Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required*

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: The original warrant article had an amount of \$386,513.00 stated, which was disclosed and updated before the vote was taken.

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 28: LOCAL EXCISE - ROOM OCCUPANCY EXCISE TAX

To see if the Town will vote to accept, pursuant to G.L. c. 64G, Section 3A to impose a local room occupancy excise at the rate of 6%, or take any action relative thereto.

*Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required*

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: Questioned, clarification of article's intention; is this for all rental properties. Answered, this is specific to short term rental properties only.

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 29: STRUCTURED TAX AGREEMENT FOR GORE BROOK, LLC SOLAR

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to the provisions of MGL Chapter 59, section 38H to authorize the Board of Selectmen, on behalf of the Town of Cheshire, to negotiate and enter into a payment in tax agreement for the term of twenty (20) years with the lessee/operator for a 4.6 MW DC on the leased portion of 0 Ingalls Road, owned by Eric Whitney being more particularly described by a deed recorded at the Northern Berkshire Registry of Deeds, Book 1716, Page 1024 upon such terms as the Board of Selectmen shall deem to be in the best interest of the Town, or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Note: Article information: In accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 59, Section 38H the Town can enter into a structured tax agreement, also known as a PILOT agreement, with a developer to establish an annualized payment in lieu of a personal property tax bill. The agreed annual rate is based on an assessment of the value of the project and considers an

annual increase in rate. Approval of a structured tax agreement provides the developer with a predictable cost model and provides the Town with an agreed upon tax payment for the duration of the agreement. The developer is seeking a term of twenty (20) years which requires town meeting approval. This agreement will provide the Town with higher annual tax revenue than standard DOR methodology. Approximate annual revenue would be \$31,129.)

*Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required*

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 30 : HOOSAC VALLEY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT – REGIONAL DISTRICT AGREEMENT

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Hoosac Valley Regional School District – Regional District Agreement as presented, or take any other action in relation thereto.

(Note: The language of the district agreement can be found on the town website and at town offices)

*Board of Selectmen Recommends
Finance Committee Recommends 5-0
Majority Vote Required*

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: Questioned, a brief explanation of what was amended within the agreement. Answered by HVRSD Superintendent, Aaron Dean, the language regarding the calculation for each town's portion of the school's assessment was updated, to have a less drastic fluctuation from each consecutive year with enrollment numbers. Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

ARTICLE 31: AMEND THE ZONING BY-LAWS

To see if the town will vote to amend the Cheshire Zoning By-laws by deleting the current section 225-4.3 replacing with the new language in section 225-4.3 Accessory Dwelling Units; by creating a new section 225-3.14 Performance Standards for Short-Term Rentals, by Amending section 225-3.2 adding Short Term Rentals to the Table of Use Regulations and by amending section 225-6.2 to include Parking Schedule for Accessory Dwelling units as set forth below or take any other action in relation thereto.

Item 1. Amend §225-4.3 Additional dwelling units on a lot, by deleting the language shown below with a strikethrough line and adding the language in italics.

~~§ 225 4.3. Additional dwelling units on lot.~~

~~A. — No more than one dwelling shall be built upon any lot, except that additional dwelling units may be allowed by special permit on a lot that meets the frontage and setback requirements and has a minimum lot size of "n" multiplied by 60,000 square feet, where "n" equals the total number of dwelling units.~~

~~B. Adequate access, as determined by the special permit granting authority, must be provided for each dwelling unit.~~

~~C. Any roads constructed must meet the standards specified in the Rules and Regulations Governing the Subdivision of Land, Cheshire, Massachusetts.~~

§225-4.3 Accessory Dwelling Units

- A. **Purpose:** *The purpose of §225-4.3 is to allow for Accessory Dwelling Units, as defined M.G.L. c. 40A, §1A, to be built as-of-right in residential zoning districts in accordance with Section 3 of the Zoning Act (M.G.L. c. 40A), as amended by Section 8 of Chapter 150 of the Acts of 2024, and the regulations under 760 CMR 71.00: Protected Use Accessory Dwelling Units.*

This zoning provides for by-right Protected Use Accessory Dwelling Units to accomplish the following purposes:

- 1. Increase housing production.*
- 2. Provide more moderately priced housing options.*
- 3. Enable property owners to age in place, downsize, or earn supplemental income from investing in their properties.*

B. Definitions: *As used in this section, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:*

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT: *A self-contained housing unit, inclusive of sleeping, cooking, and sanitary facilities on the same Lot as a Principal Dwelling, subject to otherwise applicable dimensional and parking requirements, that maintains a separate entrance, either directly from the outside or through an entry hall or corridor shared with the Principal Dwelling sufficient to meet the requirements of the Building and Fire Code for safe egress. ADUs may be detached, attached, or internal to the Principal Dwelling*

GROSS FLOOR AREA: *The sum of the areas of all stories of the building of compliant ceiling height pursuant to the Building Code, including basements, lofts, and intermediate floored tiers, measured from the interior faces of exterior walls or from the centerline of walls separating buildings or dwelling units but excluding crawl spaces, garage parking areas, attics, enclosed porches, and similar spaces. Where there are multiple Principal Dwellings on the Lot, the GFA of the largest Principal Dwelling shall be used for determining the maximum size.*

LOCAL ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT: *An Accessory Dwelling Unit that is larger than 900 square feet or ½ the Gross Floor Area of the principal dwelling but not larger than 1,200 square feet.*

PROTECTED ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT: *An attached, detached or internal ADU that is located, or is proposed to be located, on a Lot in a Single-Family Residential Zoning District and is not larger in Gross Floor Area than ½ the Gross Floor Area of the Principal Dwelling or 900 square feet, whichever is smaller, provided that only one ADU on a Lot may qualify as a Protected Use ADU.*

C. Use Regulations:

- 1. One Protected Accessory Dwelling Unit is permitted by right in all zoning districts.*
- 2. A Local Accessory Dwelling Unit is permitted by Special Permit granted by the Planning Board.*
- 3. More than one Accessory Dwelling Units on a lot is permitted by Special Permit granted by the Planning Board. Additional Accessory Dwelling Units on a lot shall be classified as Local Accessory Dwelling Units.*

D. Code Compliance:

1. ADUs shall maintain a separate entrance from the Principal Dwelling sufficient to meet safe egress under the Building Code and Fire Code.
2. ADU construction shall comply with 310 CMR 15.000: The State Environmental Code, Title 5 regulations, and the state Building Code in which the ADU is located.

E. Dimensional Requirements:

1. An Accessory Dwelling Unit shall comply with the same minimum front, side, and rear yard setbacks as a principal dwelling established in 225-4.2.
2. A Protected Accessory Dwelling Unit shall not be larger than a Gross Floor Area of 900 square feet or $\frac{1}{2}$ the Gross Floor Area of the Principal Dwelling, whichever is smaller.
3. A local Accessory Dwelling Unit shall not be larger than a Gross Floor Area of 1,200 square feet.
4. A Protected Use ADU on a Lot with a Single-Family Residential Dwelling Unit shall not have more restrictive dimensional standards than those required for the Single-Family Residential Dwelling or accessory structure within the same district, whichever results in more permissive regulation.
5. A Protected Use ADU on a Lot with a Principal Dwelling that is not a Single-Family Residential Dwelling Unit shall not have more restrictive dimensional standards than those required for its Principal Dwelling, or Single-Family Residential Dwelling or accessory structure within the same district, whichever results in more permissive regulation.

F. Parking Requirements

One off-street parking space shall be provided in accordance with 225-6.2 unless the Accessory Dwelling Unit is located within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile radius of a transit station. There are no off-street parking requirements for ADUs within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile radius of a transit station. All required parking spaces, including the parking space for the Accessory Dwelling Unit must be provided no closer to the street than the building setback line.

G. Administration and Enforcement

1. The Building Inspector shall administer and enforce the provisions of 225-4.3.
2. No building shall be changed in use or configuration without a building permit from the building inspector.
3. No building shall be occupied until certificate of occupancy is issued by the building inspector.
4. The building inspector shall apply the Dover analysis as articulated in the standards in 760 CMR 71.03 (3) (a) to any request for a Protected Use Accessory Dwelling Unit and shall waive any zoning requirement that the building inspector finds to be unreasonable under the Dover analysis.

H. Nonconformance

1. Protected Use ADU shall be permitted within, or on a Lot with, a Pre-Existing Nonconforming Structure so long as the Protected Use ADU can be developed in conformance with the Building Code, 760 CMR 71.00, and state law.
2. A Protected Use ADU shall be exempt from any required finding under M.G.L. c. 40A §6.
3. A finding under M.G.L. c 40A §6, that the extension or alteration of the pre-existing nonconforming structure is not substantially more detrimental than the existing nonconforming use to the neighborhood, shall be made by the Permit Granting Authority in an as-of-right process, without requiring a Special Permit or other discretionary waiver.

Item 2. Create a new section 225-3.14, Performance standards for short-term rentals as written below.
225-3.14. Performance standards for short-term rentals

The Town of Cheshire supports the safe and legal operation of short-term rental dwellings to support the local economy and offer a variety of overnight lodging options for visitors to the Town. The performance standard section will offer the assurance that all short-term rental properties will be acceptable uses within the Town of Cheshire if the performance standards are met for any given property and that the

property owner has applied for and received a registration of the property as a short-term rental and applied for and received a business certificate.

A. The property owner must apply to register the property on a form provided by the Town of Cheshire and receive a business certificate from the Town of Cheshire.

B. The property shall follow all relevant state and local statutes, rules and regulations pertaining to health and safety.

C. The property owner shall provide, with the registration application, a copy of the registration certificate with the MA Department of Revenue for each dwelling unit they are registering.

D. A registration fee of \$100 shall be paid at the time of registration and \$100 at each annual renewal.

E. A lack of compliance with these standard or any complaint arising from the use of the property will be referred to the appropriate Town department for investigation. If the property owner is found to be in violation of a performance standard, the short-term rental registration may be revoked after a hearing with seven days' advance notice and may not be renewed until the property complies.

Item 3. Amend §225-3.2 Table of Use Regulations by adding the following uses to the table.

		Zoning Districts			
(a) Principal Uses		R-1	A-R	B	LI*
Residential Uses					
20.	Short-term Rentals	YES	YES	YES	YES
		Zoning Districts			
(b) Accessory Uses		R-1	A-R	B	LI*
Residential Uses					
20.	Short-term Rentals	YES	YES	YES	YES
21.	Protected Accessory Dwelling Unit	YES	YES	YES	YES
22.	Local Accessory Dwelling Unit	SPP	SPP	SPP	SPP

Item 4. Amend § 225-6.2. Parking Schedule, by adding the requirements for Accessory Dwelling Units as written below.

Structure/Use	Minimum Number of Spaces Required
Accessory Dwelling Unit	1 off-street parking space unless the ADU is located within ½ radius of a transit station. There are no off-street parking requirements for ADUs within ½ mile radius of a transit station.

2/3 Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: Questioned, if this would allow the town to take on appearance of a city, becoming too congested. Answered by Planning Board Chair, Peter Traub, that this is good for the town, allowed by right, while regulating process. **Card Vote – 56 in favor, 1 opposed; Article Passed**

ARTICLE 32: PRIOR YEAR INVOICES

To see if the Town will authorize the **TRANSFER** from the Highway Road Machinery Tool/Gas/Oil (01-420-5480-0000) account the sum of \$550.00 for the purpose of paying invoice from Fiscal Year 2025, or take any action in relation thereto.

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Finance Committee Recommends

~~9/10~~ 4/5 Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: Selectmen Chair stated that the funds would be taken from the FY26 budget to pay for the following three articles regarding FY25 invoices.

Card Vote - 55 in favor, 0 opposed; Article Passed

ARTICLE 33: PRIOR YEAR INVOICES

To see if the Town will authorize the **TRANSFER** from the Town Administrator Expenses (01-123-5308-0000) the sum of \$78.07 for the purpose of paying invoice from Fiscal Year 2025, or take any action in relation thereto.

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Finance Committee Recommends

~~9/10~~ 4/5 Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Card Vote - 57 in favor, 0 opposed; Article Passed

ARTICLE 34: PRIOR YEAR INVOICES

To see if the Town will authorize the **TRANSFER** from the Board of Health Revolving Account (21-512-5580-2135) the sum of \$460.00 for the purpose of paying invoice from Fiscal Year 2025, or take any action in relation thereto.

Board of Selectmen Recommends

Finance Committee Recommends

~~9/10~~ 4/5 Vote Required

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Card Vote - 57 in favor, 0 opposed; Article Passed

ARTICLE 35: To transact any other business that may lawfully come before the meeting.

Motion to accept the article as presented was made and seconded.

Discussion: Selectmen Chair, Michelle Francesconi, thanked everyone for coming; and announced upcoming community event dates for Flag Day Ceremony (6/14), Cheshire Hoedown (6/27), and Cruz Nite (8/8).

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

With no further business to come before the Annual Town Meeting held Monday, June 8, 2026, Moderator Francesconi made a motion to dissolve.

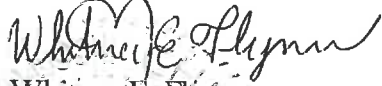
Motion was made and seconded.

Discussion: None

Voice Vote Called - Motion Carried, Unanimous

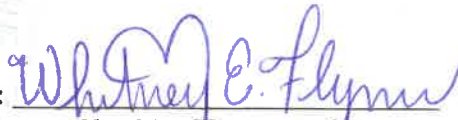
Moderator Francesconi dissolved the meeting at 9:48 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Whitney E. Flynn
Cheshire Town Clerk
June 23, 2026

A true copy, attest:


Cheshire Town Clerk

Special thanks to Gateway Collaborative Media! Cheshire's Annual Town Meeting (6/8/2026) video record can be viewed online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GpYMprGuNog>