

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF CHESHIRE SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL STEERING  
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2025 AT 2:00 P.M.,  
ROOM 207/209, 84 SOUTH MAIN ST.**

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Present: Diane Calabro, Vice Chair; Ron Gagliardi

Staff/Guests: Andrew Martelli, Assistant Town Manager, Peter Talbot, Chairman of the Town Council, Ray Bennett

Absent: N/A

**1. ROLL CALL.**

Andrew Martelli called the roll, and a quorum was present.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.**

**3. COMMITTEE COMPOSITION DISCUSSION.**

Mr. Talbot expressed his thoughts on the composition of the Committee and the original direction of their efforts. All ideas are appreciated but volunteerism, logistics, and funding are all concerns. The focus must be for the Semiquincentennial and relate back to this theme.

Mr. Talbot acknowledged Mr. Bennet and his leadership for the annual July 4<sup>th</sup> event on the Town Green with the reading of the Declaration of Independence. July 4<sup>th</sup> 2026 event will be centered around having the Reading of the Declaration of Independence at the new Great Lawn at Bartlem Park in the morning.

A day long celebration is difficult to do on a holiday. Having the Semiquincentennial Celebration begin at 10-am and last for a few hours will allow attendees to enjoy the morning and then go off to their annual celebrations and not compete with other events that are geared toward fireworks etc.

Mr. Talbot encouraged the Committee to involve existing Town civic groups etc. to join in the effort leading up to July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026, such as displays at the library, and historic case in the lobby of Town Hall. Many of these groups have built in volunteers. There unfortunately is not a Town budget to support a year's worth of events.

Ms. Calabro pointed out that some communities are encouraging community events to focus on or be themed around America 250. She suggested that the Committee can coordinate with the Town 's Poette Laurette to write a poem and invite other community groups to have a part of the celebration. The graphic memoir piece can be integrated and there can be encouragement for local groups to submit for the graphic memoir and a series of sandwich boards around the loop of the Great Lawn with images created that integrate the 250 themes. This can be done cost effectively, potentially using the Town's large format printers.

Mr. Talbot suggested that the various local civic groups can all have their own designed sandwich board around the ellipse of the great lawn with a narrative, patriotic theme and idea.

Ms. Calabro mentioned that the Norton School time capsule is located at the Historical Society, and it is stated that it is to be opened on July 4, 2026 and that the opening at the festival would be a great addition.

Communicating the event through the Chamber of Commerce and their mailing list seeking business support and involvement. This could include business specials at restaurants etc. to bring attention to the milestone.

Mr. Martelli stated that he would bring up to the Town Beautification Committee planting Red White and Blue flowers at the Town parklets this year to bring attention and add small signage of the event with the America 250 logo and potentially a "Town Centric" 250 logo that could be added to lamp-post signs and parklet areas.

Mr. Bennet explained the sequence of events of the annual July 4<sup>th</sup> reading of the Declaration of Independence on the Town Green and how the event could be expanded at the Great Lawn.

The Committee discussed encouraging participants to bring a picnic for the event. Local bands or musicians can be sought with a patriotic theme.

Mr. Gagliardi discussed his various ideas for time capsules. These can range from an audio-time capsule that would have minimal cost. A pizza box time capsule that individuals can put keepsakes under their bed for a year then after the year they can determine what they would like to make permanent and what can go in a more long-term time capsule.

Ms. Calabro would like to have an information booth at the Tree Lighting Ceremony where information can be given to residents about the July event and gain support.

**4. DRAFTING COMMUNITY LETTER.**

Dian will work on the Community Letter to be reviewed at the next meeting.

**5. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS/EVENTS**

Ron discussed the game of marbles and how it can connect back to the Semiquincentennial. Ron is thinking about promoting marbles as a game.

Ron is going to bring instructions / ideas for time capsule (Chronos sampler) to the next meeting. Ray Bennet is going to bring additional ideas, information and potential music ideas for the event. Diane to work on details for the display at the Winter Wonderland event at Bartlem Park / program / invite. Ron to gather information on Patriot Trail. Displays of the Declaration of Independence / handouts for Winter Wonderland.

**6. FUTURE MEETING DATES**

**October 7<sup>th</sup> at 2:30pm at Town Hall**

**7. ADJOURNMENT.**

Ron Gagliardi motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Diane Calabro seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously, 2-0. The meeting adjourned at 3:06 p.m.

Attest:   
Andrew Martelli,