

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF CHESHIRE SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL STEERING
COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2026, AT 10:00 A.M., ROOM
210, 84 SOUTH MAIN ST.**

Present: Diane Calabro, Ron Gagliardi, Ray Bennett.

Staff/Guests: Andrew Martelli, Assistant Town Manager, Savannah Blantz- Maria, Coordinator of Grants & Community Engagement, Kelly Grimshaw, Daughters of the American Revolution, Mitzi Romano, President of Cheshire Historical Society, and Debbie Terrill.

Absent: N/A

1. ROLL CALL.

The Meeting was called to order at 10:05am and a quorum was present.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

The Pledge was recited.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 9TH 2025.

Motion was made by Ray Bennett and seconded by Ron Gagliardi to approve the meeting minutes from the Meeting of December 9th 2025. All voted in favor.

4. BUSINESS.

a. 250th Announcement Letter.

The letter has been posted on the page on the Town's website and hard copies are being distributed across Town to various locations. committee requested a PDF and 50 hard copies to distribute and will be making in person visits. The Committee discussed the presentation to the Town Council scheduled for Tuesday, December 16th.

b. Graphic History Project.

Meghan Jeffrey, the originally identified teaching artist, is not able to participate. Diane will be discussing with ArtsPlace to determine next steps for a new artist. Diane circulated pages that have already been developed highlighting local events, individuals and moments in history. The goal is to have 250 graphic panels for the book. The Community is encouraged to submit pictures for inclusion as are Town Departments. The Chamber would be willing to participate in the printing costs for the final graphic novel. The goal will be to have the graphic history novel complete for the Strawberry Festival 2027 and potentially an initial "phase" for the July 4th event.

c. July 4th, 2026, Event Logistics.

Mr. Bennett is working with Darter Specialty to produce signs for the park highlighting each of the signers of the Declaration of Independence to have around the park. Mr. Bennett inquired about who provided the train for the Tree Lighting and thought it might be a nice add for the July 4th event. The Daughters of the American Revolution will recite the Pledge of Allegiance and The American Creed. John Gawlak will be invited to the next meeting to begin discussing the plan and overall logistics for the event. Police, Fire, and other Town Departments will be invited to future meetings and be integrated into the days event. Diane asked if she could coordinate with the Seadogs and other groups in Town. Ray Bennett will be developing a schedule for the day's events for the next meeting. Mitzi mentioned that the Norton Time capsule will be opened that day and items displayed. The Memorial Day Parade will be themed for America Celebrates 250 and two floats will be in the parade directly related to the Committee.

d. December 16th Town Council Presentation Recap.

The presentation was well received by the Town Council and supportive of the Committee's efforts.

e. Chamber of Commerce meeting with Yetta Diane Calabro on January 5th Recap.

Diane reported that the meeting with the Chamber went extremely well and the Chamber was supportive of the Committee and the Town's efforts. The Chamber will have a page in the graphic history project and may be willing to contribute to its production.

f. January 12th 250th presentation to DAR at Society Meeting Room Recap

Diane provided a recap of the presentation to the Daughters of the American Revolution and discussed the group's interest in participating in the event. Representative, Kelly Grimshaw, presented the group with a check in the amount of \$250 to help with funds for the event.

g. January 18th, 1:00 p.m., Cheshire Historical Society board meeting to present the 250th information.

A presentation will be given to the Cheshire Historical Society and support will be sought.

h. January 20th, 6:30 p.m. Artsplace board meeting to discuss the 250th information.

Diane requested all Committee members attend the board meeting and will follow up on the specific date, location and time.

i. Website Coordination Update: Town of Cheshire, Bennett Family, Historical Society, Artsplace, Library, and others.

Savannah presented the website and the group discussed various edits. It was very well received by the Committee, and the site contains numerous links to various pages and resources.

j. Grant submission and other funding opportunities.

There are no grants or funding being sought at this time.

5. FUTURE MEETING DATES.

Meeting dates have been adopted and recorded with the Town Clerk.

6. ALL OTHER BUSINESS.

Diane shared that she will be scheduling a presentation at the Cheshire Library on either March 11th or March 25th at 6:30pm and requested that the Committee be available to attend. Graphic History will be on display in the Mary Baldwin Room for the month of July.

Ron Galiardi discussed a Safe that could be purchased for a Time Capsule. Ron will be working on an A-Z list of all the aspects of a Farm as to who owns it and all the other uses. On February 18th a meeting at the Grange will be on the Connecticut Patriots, also known as the four signers of the Declaration of Independence.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Ron Gagliardi motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Ray Bennett seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously, 3-0. The meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Attest: Andrew Martelli
Andrew Martelli, Assistant Town Manager