

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2026, 7:00 P.M., COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 84 SOUTH MAIN ST.,
CHESHIRE, CT 06410**

Present:

Peter Talbot
Jim Jinks
Fiona Pearson
Greg Wolff
Deb Manke
Lou Todisco
David Veleber
Don Walsh

Staff/Guests: Sean Kimball, Town Manager; Andrew Martelli, Assistant Town Manager; Jim Jaskot, Finance Director; Gina DeFilio, Deputy Finance Director; Jeff Solan, Cheshire Public Schools Superintendent; Emily Taylor, Cheshire Public Schools Chief Operating Officer

Absent: Patricia Cramer

1. ROLL CALL.

Peter Talbot opened the public hearing at 7:08 p.m. Noelle Shepard called the roll, and a quorum was present.

2. EXPLANATION OF HEARING PROCEDURE AND AGENDA.

3. READING OF LEGAL NOTICE.

**A. Consideration of Proposed General Fund, Water Pollution Control Department, and
Community Pool Fund Operating Budgets for Fiscal Year 2026-2027.**

Noelle Shepard read the legal notice.

4. PRESENTATION ON HEARING SUBJECT.

Sean Kimball explained that the capital budget will not be presented at this time. He reviewed the budget timeline and recent budget year histories by mill rate.

He reviewed projected revenue. The revenue projections for next fiscal year for the Building Department at \$200,000. Falling interest rates have impacted investment income.

The grand list growth was a \$110,559,669 or 2.74% increase, which is the highest real estate increase in 30 years. 83% of the increase from real estate values is from the Stone Bridge Crossing development, which is under a Credit Enhancement Agreement because it is located in the TIF District. He explained that the Town must repay \$7,000,000 to the developers for public improvements. He estimated that as of next year, approximately \$2.5 million of this would be outstanding. He reviewed the history of grand list growth and outlined the revenue sources for the Town.

His proposed budget totals \$157,489,033. The Board of Education and debt service are the top two major budget drivers.

The total Board of Education requested increase is \$7,024,766, and Sean Kimball explained that he is recommending a \$300,000 reduction to this request.

Sean Kimball explained that for FY 2027 there will be a debt service increase of \$2,622,792 – almost entirely due to the financing for the two new elementary schools. The proposed mill rate currently is 32.40 mills, which represents an increase of 2.66 mills. Revenue from the Community Pool is projected to hit \$875,000, which is the highest ever. He reviewed the budget calendar.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS.

Tom Ruocco, 6 North Pond Road, thanked the Town Council for their service. He mentioned that tax bills have increased by almost 25% over the last three years and encouraged them to do the best they can. In addition, he requested that revenue from the North End should be allocated towards debt service.

Mandy Miller, 1293 Hoffman Road, Cheshire, expressed concern about a massive budget increase, especially with the Board of Education. She explained that she understands most of the increase is contractual obligations, but there is another 20% of the Board of Education budget that needs a sharper look at.

Mindy Daskal, Southwick, expressed her support for the Senior Library Associate position and explained that she is dependent on tech support at the library.

Carol Steinberg, 330 Sorghum Mill Drive, urged the Town Council to return the Senior Library position to the budget.

Maria Ecker read emails that were sent to the Town Council. She discussed communications she had with the Assessor and Collector's Offices. She expressed concern that there is not enough open space in town. She read a message that she presented to Town Manager's Office yesterday.

Peter Talbot closed the public hearing at 7:52 p.m.

Attest:

Noelle Shepard, Management Specialist