MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF CHESHIRE TOWN COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2026, IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE 6:30 P.M. PUBLIC HEARING, COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 84 SOUTH MAIN ST., CHESHIRE, CT 06410

Present:
Peter Talbot
Jim Jinks
Fiona Pearson
Greg Wolff
Lou Todisco
Don Walsh
Patricia Cramer
Deb Manke

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: David Veleber

Peter Talbot called the regular meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

1. **Roll Call.**

2. **Pledge of Allegiance.**

3. **Acceptance and appropriation of the Department of Children and Families Youth Service Bureau Grant in the amount of $36,799 to support programs and activities of the Cheshire Youth Services Division.**

Tricia Cramer motioned:

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town Council approves Resolution #042326-01

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby accepts a Youth Services Bureau Grant from the Department of Children and Families in the total amount of $36,799, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Town Council hereby appropriates $17,098 to the general fund to offset the salaries of the Youth and Family Counselors and $19,701 to the Youth Services Bureau Enhancement Fund to support the programs and activities of the Cheshire Youth Services Division.

The motion was seconded by Jim Jinks. All in favor, motion passed unanimously by those present, 7-0. Greg Wolff and David Veleber were absent for the vote.

4. **8-24 Referral to the Planning & Zoning Commission for the acceptance of property located at Peck Lane from the Department of Transportation and the transfer of said property to the owner of 645 Peck Lane for the purpose of a utility easement.**

Tricia Cramer motioned:

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town Council approves Resolution #042326-02

BE IT RESOLVED, that, pursuant to Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Town Council hereby refers to the Planning and Zoning Commission for their review and report the acceptance property located at Peck Lane from the Department of Transportation and the transfer of said property to the owner of 645 Peck Lane for the purpose of a utility easement.

The motion was seconded by Fiona Pearson. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously by those present, 7-0. Greg Wolff and David Veleber were absent for the vote.

5. Energy Performance Contract 2.0 update and request for approval.

Greg Wolff arrived at 7:00 p.m.

Tricia Cramer motioned:

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town Council approves Resolution #042326-03

WHEREAS, the Town Council approved a resolution entitled "Resolution Authorizing The Execution Of A Lease Purchase Agreement to Acquire Equipment" (the "Resolution") at its meeting held September 9, 2025 for the acquisition and installation of Facility Improvement Measures (FIM) comprised of photovoltaic electric generating equipment and fuel cell systems (the "Project") in an amount not to exceed $23,390,804.00; and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that the amount required to be financed under the Lease needs to be increased to an amount not to exceed $55,014,977.00 in order to increase the scope of FIM to include the photovoltaic electric generating equipment, fuel cell systems, as well as window and roof replacement, energy and computer management system improvements, HVAC improvements, water conservation measures, and other energy efficiency improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Resolution needs to be amended in order to proceed with the Project, increase the amount authorized to $55,014,977.00 and increase the scope of FIM… (Resolution attached in full to the minutes)

The motion was seconded by Fiona Pearson. Vincent Masciana summarized that the current request is to approve the financing of a total of $55 million dollars. He explained that the resolutions the Town Council previously approved in August 2025 were for $23 million in financing, and they are now before the Council to get approval for the full project scope. He explained that they worked with the Town Attorney on aspects of the contract, and the resolutions were reviewed by the Town's bond counsel.

Aaron Alibrio, Johnson Controls, overviewed the $2.3 million dollars of annual energy savings. He reviewed where work will be implemented. He explained that they have removed the fuel cells from the funding at this point.

Discussion was had on how financing would work. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously by those present, 8-0.

6. Public Comment.

Fiona Pearson moved public comment.

Mike Papa, 56 Belridge Road, Tech Director for CPS for 29 years, discussed how budget cuts impact technology being replaced. In lieu of additional funding, the Chromebooks in the new schools will be 7-year-old Chromebooks.

Matt Colehour, 49 Summer Hill Court, explained that he was the only no vote to the budget when the Board of Education was reviewing it. He discussed why this was including stop loss policy and transportation. He explained his belief that those issues will not be resolved for this budget year and that it is clear that there is no extra room left in the Board of Education budget without impacting students. He expressed his belief that the Town Council should approve the full BOE budget.

Fiona Pearson read additional comments received about the budget.

Sam Rosenberg, 106 Stone Bridge Court, explained that the BOE budget is not a wishlist and that families come to Cheshire because of the schools. She mentioned that the State continues to impose mandates without funding them especially in special education.

Heather Fitzgerald, 168 Nob Hill Road, agreed with the previous comments. She requested that the Town Council support the BOE budget as originally proposed.

7. Proposed FY 2026-2027 Operating Budgets.

General Budget Deliberations.
Sean Kimball reviewed some updates that occurred since the last meeting.

Jim Jinks had provided Town Manager Kimball with a list of suggested changes to review with the Town Council. Discussion was had on use of Elim Park funds that go to the Fire and Police Gift Accounts – discussed utilizing $100,000. An increase of $250,000 was assumed for ECS funds. An additional $100,000 was requested in Building Department revenue for next year. Investment income projected revenue was increased by additional $100,000, which was supported by the Finance Director.

Don Walsh asked about the cost of a one-time referendum, which Sean Kimball clarified is about $29,000 with seven polling places, $18-20,000 with about 3 polling places.

Councilors discussed whether to include the $50,000 to place a dumpster at the Transfer Station for bulky waste drop-off, which they ultimately decided to move forward with. Discussion was had on the BOE budget.

The Town Manager's original proposal for the BOE budget reduction of $300,000 was moved forward. Peter Talbot urged the BOE to consider taking the $300,000 from the medical benefits trust fund.

Deb Manke motioned on behalf of the Budget Committee to forward the final proposed FY 2026-2027 operating budgets to the full Town Council, and Don Walsh seconded the motion. Motion passed 2-1, Don Walsh opposed.

8. Adjournment.
Jim Jinks motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Deb Manke seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously by those present, 8-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:53 p.m.

Attest:

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Noelle Shepard, Management Specialist

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town Council approves Resolution #042326-03

WHEREAS, the Town Council approved a resolution entitled "Resolution Authorizing The Execution Of A Lease Purchase Agreement to Acquire Equipment" (the "Resolution") at its meeting held September 9, 2025 for the acquisition and installation of Facility Improvement Measures (FIM) comprised of photovoltaic electric generating equipment and fuel cell systems (the "Project") in an amount not to exceed $23,390,804.00; and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that the amount required to be financed under the Lease needs to be increased to an amount not to exceed $55,014,977.00 in order to increase the scope of FIM to include the photovoltaic electric generating equipment, fuel cell systems, as well as window and roof replacement, energy and computer management system improvements, HVAC improvements, water conservation measures, and other energy efficiency improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Resolution needs to be amended in order to proceed with the Project, increase the amount authorized to $55,014,977.00 and increase the scope of FIM.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED,
1. That the resolution entitled "Resolution Authorizing The Execution Of A Lease Purchase Agreement to Acquire Equipment" (the "Resolution") is hereby amended by replacing all references to $23,390,804.00 with $55,014,977.00 throughout the Resolution and amending the Facility Improvement Measures (FIM) to include photovoltaic electric generating equipment, fuel cell systems, as well as window and roof replacement, energy and computer management system improvements, HVAC improvements, water conservation measures, and other energy efficiency improvements.

2. That, except as so modified by Section 1, all other provisions of the Resolution shall remain unchanged and in full force and effect.

3. That the Resolution as so modified shall read as follows:

"RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A LEASE PURCHASE AGREEMENT TO ACQUIRE EQUIPMENT

WHEREAS, the Town of Cheshire, Connecticut (the "Town"), desires to enter into a lease purchase financing for the acquisition and installation of Facility Improvement Measures (FIM) comprised of photovoltaic electric generating equipment, fuel cell systems, as well as window and roof replacement, energy and computer management system improvements, HVAC improvements, water conservation measures, and other energy efficiency improvements from Johnson Controls, Inc. in the amount of $55,014,977.00 (the "Equipment"); and

WHEREAS, the Town desires to acquire the Equipment and enter into a lease purchase agreement with a financing institution (the "Lessor") to finance the acquisition of such Equipment; and

WHEREAS, the Town Council, at its meeting held on August 12, 2025, has approved resolutions authorizing the entering into a Performance Contract and apply for federal and state grant programs and other financial incentives for the Project.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

1. That (i) the Town Manager and the Town Treasurer are hereby authorized to receive and review a proposal or proposals for the lease purchase financing of the Equipment, and make an award to the Lessor as the Town Manager and the Town Treasurer determine to be in the best interests of the Town, and (ii) the Town Manager is hereby authorized to enter into a lease purchase agreement (the "Lease") by and between the Town and the Lessor for the lease of the Equipment for a period of no more than twenty (20) years, in such form and having such terms and details as determined by the Town Manager and the Town Treasurer, subject to the following limitations.

The amount to be financed under the Lease shall be no greater than $55,014,977.00 and payable in installments of principal and interest, the frequency of which to be determined by the Town Manager and the Town Treasurer. At the conclusion of the term of the Lease, provided all the payments required under the Lease, including payments of rent, have been made, the Lessor's interest in the Equipment shall terminate. Payments in respect of the Lease shall be subject to annual appropriations of the Town. The Lease shall include a "non-appropriation of funds" clause allowing for termination in the event that sufficient funds are not appropriated to make payments of rent and other amounts each fiscal year.

2. That the Town Manager and the Town Treasurer are hereby authorized to make such representations and covenants and to execute and deliver such contracts, financing statements, affidavits, agreements and documents, including but not limited to, an escrow agreement and a tax regulatory agreement, as are determined by the Town Manager and the Town Treasurer to be necessary or desirable to evidence and secure the Town's obligations pursuant to the Lease, to ensure the interest paid on the Lease is exempt from taxation under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"), and to finance the purchase of the Equipment, and that the execution of such contracts, financing statements, affidavits, agreements and documents shall be conclusive evidence of such determination.

3. That the Town Manager or the Town treasurer is hereby authorized to appoint a bank or trust company to act as escrow agent in connection with the foregoing lease purchase transaction and to do or cause to be done any and all other acts and things necessary or proper to further the purposes of this resolution and the terms and obligations in respect of the Lease.

4. The Town hereby expresses its official intent pursuant to Section 1.150-2 of the Federal Income Tax Regulations, Title 26 (the "Regulations"), to reimburse expenditures paid up to sixty days prior to and any time after the date of passage of this Resolution in an amount not to exceed $55,014,977.00 for the Equipment with the proceeds of the Lease. The Lease shall be issued to reimburse such expenditures not later than 18 months after the later of the date of the expenditure or the substantial completion of the purchase of the Equipment, or such later date the Regulations may authorize. The Town hereby certifies that the intention to reimburse as expressed herein is based upon its reasonable expectations as of this date. The Town Treasurer or his or her designee is authorized to pay project expenses in accordance herewith pending the execution of the Lease.

5. Nothing contained in this Resolution, the Lease nor any other instrument shall be

construed with respect to the Town as incurring a pecuniary liability or charge upon the full faith and credit of the Town or against its taxing power, nor shall the breach of any agreement contained in this Resolution, the Lease or any other instrument or document executed in connection therewith impose any pecuniary liability upon the Town or any charge upon its full faith and credit or against its taxing power, except to the extent that the payments payable under the Lease are special limited obligations of the Town as provided in the Lease."