



**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF CHESHIRE
TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
7:00 PM, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2026
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 84 SOUTH MAIN ST., CHESHIRE, CT 06410**

Present:

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

Staff/Guests: Sean M. Kimball, Town Manager; Andrew Martelli, Assistant Town Manager; Town Attorney Jeffrey Donofrio; Jim Jaskot, Finance Director; Noelle Shepard, Management Specialist

Absent:

Tricia Cramer

Peter Talbot called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Noelle Shepard called the roll, and a quorum was present.

Peter Talbot took a moment to recognize two long-time members of Town of Cheshire boards and committees who had recently passed - Barbara Ecke and Harold Kramer.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

A. Update on the Cheshire Multimodal Transportation Study.

Marcy Miller, Consultant Project Manager for IMEG, introduced herself and Jim Redecker. She provided a brief update as to where they are with the multimodal transportation study and overviewed the purpose and timeline. She reviewed the methods that they utilized for community engagement including - pop up tabling events, stakeholder meetings, etc. On Wednesday, September 30th 6pm at the Cheshire Public Library, they will be introducing their recommendations in the draft plan and will look to get comments from members of the public. Don Walsh publicly invited State legislators to attend this meeting. Fiona Pearson inquired about bus routes to the North End, and Marcy Miller confirmed that there are recommendations on this including bus shelters. Peter Talbot asked for the workshop at the Library on September 30th to be filmed for the public to view.

B. Public comments.

Joanna Debear, 11 Shire Court, discussed rain gardens as a part of storm water control. She explained that studies show rain gardens can absorb more than traditional lawns. She referenced a report that was previously done for Cheshire that recommended 9 sites throughout town.

Joanna Giddings, 503 Oak Ridge Drive, addressed stormwater management and the value of rain gardens and supporting the ecosystem to manage stormwater. She discussed closely monitoring development compliance with state stormwater laws. She reviewed some example regulations and referenced those from the Town of Hamden.

Joe Kowalski, 1038 Avon Boulevard, asked the Town Council to consider taking the Flock cameras down.

Tim Slocum explained that in August, the Cheshire Land Trust voted unanimously to spend \$500,000 to work with Town of Cheshire on the conservation easement of the former Norton Farms property - contingent upon the approval of the Town of Cheshire. This agreement would protect the land in perpetuity.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Minutes of August 13, 2026 Special Meeting; August 18, 2026 Special Meeting; August 26, 2026 Special Meeting; September 1, 2026 Special Meeting.

Greg Wolff motioned to approve the minutes of the August 13, 2026 special meeting; August 18, 2026 special meeting; August 26, 2026 special meeting; September 1, 2026 special meeting. David Borowy seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously by those present, 8-1.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$30,000 donation from Linda Buckley in memory of Lillian Buckley to the Cheshire Senior Center Gift Account to be used to support Senior Center programming.
- B. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$100.00 donation from Pamela Orton in memory of Rachel Chiginsky to the Cheshire Senior Center Gift Account to support Senior Center programming.
- C. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$267.50 donation from Tours of Distinction, Inc. to the Human Services Gift Account for the Senior Center.
- D. Approval of tax refunds in the amount of \$18,581.08.

Fiona Pearson motioned:

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town Council approves Resolution #090826-1

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council accepts and appropriates the following donations:

- A. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$30,000 donation from Linda Buckley in memory of Lillian Buckley to the Cheshire Senior Center Gift Account to be used to support Senior Center programming.*
- B. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$100.00 donation from Pamela Orton in memory of Rachel Chiginsky to the Cheshire Senior Center Gift Account to support Senior Center programming.*
- C. Acceptance and appropriation of a \$267.50 donation from Tours of Distinction, Inc. to the Human Services Gift Account for the Senior Center.*
- D. Approval of tax refunds in the amount of \$18,581.08.*

The motion was seconded by David Borowy. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously by those present, 8-0.

6. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. School Building Committee update.

Rich Gusenburg explained that the two school projects are on time and under budget. Both buildings have their TCOs, and school started as of today. The remaining punch list items at Barnum will be completed over the next few weeks. At this point, the fields themselves are complete and ready to be turned over to the Town. He discussed that they are close to a total of \$20 million under budget. The ribbon cutting for Norton will be held on September 17th and Barnum on September 18th. Sean Kimball brought up irrigation at the fields. Peter Talbot asked for the future plan for the Committee. Rich Gusenburg explained that work will continue for two more months as there are still bills and change orders. The Committee should be complete with their work by November or December. Peter Talbot invited the School Building Committee members, Arcadis, and O&G to a future Town Council to publicly express their appreciation for their efforts.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval of lease agreement with the Town of Wolcott for the sharing and use of fire apparatus.

Lou Todisco motioned:

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town Council approves Resolution #090826-2

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby authorizes the execution of a Lease Agreement by and between the Town of Cheshire and the Town of Wolcott for the sharing and use of fire apparatus for up to eighteen (18) months, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Manager is authorized and directed to execute on behalf of the Town said Agreement in the form and upon the terms and conditions as presented at this meeting.

The motion was seconded by Fiona Pearson. Sean Kimball explained that the agreement with the Town of Wolcott is for up to 18 months, \$1,500 per month. Should Cheshire need the apparatus, the Town can take it back with 7 days notice.

Don Walsh explained he did not realize we had a reserve vehicle and is concerned that the town is willing to give up an engine. He discussed seeing the sale of one of the rescue trucks. The motion passed 7-1, Don Walsh opposed.

- B. Authorization to apply for the Department of Children and Families Youth Service Bureau Grant Program.

Deb Manke motioned:

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town Council approves Resolution #090826-3

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby authorizes application for the 2026 CT Department of Children's Youth Service Bureau Grant Program in an amount to be determined by the State, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Council authorizes Town Manager Sean M. Kimball to execute any and all agreements and documents necessary for said grant.

The motion was seconded by Fiona Pearson. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously by those present, 8-0.

- C. Authorization to apply for the CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services 2027-2028 Youth Cannabis Prevention – Cannabis Coalition Grant in the amount of \$50,000.

Deb Manke motioned:

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town Council approves Resolution #090826-4

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby authorizes application for the CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services 2027-2028 Youth Cannabis Prevention – Cannabis Coalition Grant in the amount of \$50,000 for the implementation of community-driven prevention strategies focused on cannabis education and prevention for youth and emerging adults under the age of 21, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Council authorizes Town Manager Sean M. Kimball to execute any and all agreements and documents necessary for said grant.

The motion was seconded by Jim Jinks. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously by those present, 8-0.

- D. Acceptance and appropriation of \$200,000 in Legislatively Delegated Funds from the State of Connecticut included in the State's FY 2027 budget: \$150,000 for open space preservation and \$50,000 for the Cheshire Senior Center.

Fiona Pearson motioned:

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town Council approves Resolution #090826-5

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council hereby accepts and appropriates legislatively allocated state funds from the State of Connecticut's Fiscal Year 2027 budget in the amount of \$150,000 for Open Space Preservation and \$50,000 for the Cheshire Senior Center, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Manager Sean M. Kimball is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents necessary on behalf of the Town of Cheshire with the State of Connecticut.

The motion was seconded by Deb Manke. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously by those present, 8-0.

- E. Approval of Conservation Easement Agreement with Kelly's Farm LLC for the property located at 466 Academy Road, executive session.

Greg Wolff motioned:

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town Council approves Resolution #090826-6

WHEREAS, the Town of Cheshire ("Town") prioritizes the conservation of agricultural viability of real property in Cheshire;

WHEREAS, over 60 years ago, the Connecticut General Assembly declared "that it is in the public interest to encourage the preservation of farmland, forest land and open space land in order to maintain a readily available source of food and farm products close to the metropolitan areas of the state, to conserve the state's natural resources and to provide for the welfare and happiness of the inhabitants of the state..." (P.A. 490, Section 1; C.G.S. Section 12-107a);

WHEREAS, in 1971, the Connecticut General Assembly passed Public Act 173 (C.G.S. Sections 47-42a through 47-42c), which authorizes the creation and enforcement of conservation restrictions "whose purpose is to retain land or water areas predominantly in their natural, scenic or open condition or in agricultural farming, forest or open space use;"

WHEREAS, the Town endorses and supports the preservation of land, consistent with the Town Plan of Conservation and Development and the conservation and preservation goals of the Town relating particularly to farmland;

WHEREAS, Kelly's Farm LLC ("Owner") is the current owner of approximately forty-two (42) acres of real property formerly known as 0 and 466 Academy Road, Cheshire, Connecticut (collectively, the "Property");

WHEREAS, the Town and the Owner share the common purpose of conserving the agricultural viability of the Property in perpetuity by Owner's placing restrictions upon the use and development of the Property that will limit the same to those uses, improvements and structures directly and indirectly related to an Agricultural Enterprise (as defined in the Conservation Easement); and

WHEREAS, the Town and the Cheshire Land Trust ("CLT") have agreed that in consideration for the Owner entering into a Conservation Easement, the Town and the CLT shall compensate the Owner to acquire the Conservation Easement and rights to enforce the same, with the Town's share of the purchase price being the sum of One Million Six Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$1,650,000) to be paid by the Town from the funds previously appropriated by the Town for this purpose.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that

- 1. Pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §§7-131b and 47-42c, the Town Council hereby approves the purchase of a perpetual Conservation Easement over the Property for a purchase price from the Town not to exceed \$1,650,000;*
- 2. The Town Manager is authorized, empowered, and directed in the name of the Town to negotiate, execute, and deliver a Conservation Easement and any and all other documents or instruments necessary to finalize the transaction;*
- 3. The Town Manager is authorized to expend up to \$1,650,000 from the Land Acquisition Account to satisfy the purchase price and is also authorized to expend such sums necessary to satisfy associated transaction costs, including title insurance and legal fees;*
- 4. This authorization is expressly conditioned upon (a) a satisfactory report from the Planning & Zoning Commission pursuant to C.G.S. Sec. 8-24, (b) finalization of the negotiation of an acceptable Conservation Easement, including all terms and conditions thereof, and (c) approval as to form and content by the Town Attorney. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Conservation Easement Agreement shall not become effective until completion of the Planning and Zoning Commission's review pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 8-24, and*
- 5. BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, upon satisfaction of all conditions, Town Manager Sean M. Kimball is hereby authorized to execute the Conservation Easement Agreement on behalf of the Town of Cheshire.*

The motion was seconded by Fiona Pearson. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously of those present, 8-0.

F. 8-24 Referral to the Planning and Zoning Commission re: Kelly's Farm, 466 Academy Road.

Lou Todisco motioned:

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town Council approves Resolution #090826-7

BE IT RESOLVED, that, pursuant to Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Town Council hereby refers the proposed Conservation Easement at Kelly's Farms, located at 466 Academy Road, to the Planning and Zoning Commission for their review and to issue a report.

The motion was seconded by Deb Manke. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously by those present, 8-0.

- G. Review and approval of a tax incentive application from Kelly's Farm LLC for the property located at 466 Academy Road, executive session.

Jim Jinks motioned:

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town Council approves Resolution #090826-8

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council approves the Tax Assessment Incentive for Kelly's Farms LLC for the property located at 466 Academy Road under the terms as presented and authorizes the Town Manager to execute an Agreement by and between the Town of Cheshire and Kelly's Farms LLC for said incentive.

The motion was seconded by Don Walsh. Andrew Martelli explained that the EDC received a tax incentive request back in July. This would be a 20-year tax incentive. He clarified that this would not be applicable to personal property or motor vehicle. The Town Attorney confirmed that if the property is sold, the tax incentive agreement is null and void. David Borowy thanked the EDC for their quick review and explained the uniqueness of this situation where the property owner is partnering with the town, Cheshire Land Trust, and the State. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously by those present, 8-0.

- H. Review and approval of a tax incentive application from Poly-Tech America LLC / Power Rangers Properties LLC for the property located at 28 Diana Court, executive session.

Jim Jinks motioned:

BE IT RESOLVED, That the Town Council approves Resolution #090826-9

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Council approves the Tax Assessment Incentive for Poly-Tech America LLC / Power Ranger Properties LLC for the property located at 28 Diana Court under the terms as presented and authorizes the Town Manager to execute an Agreement by and between the Town of Cheshire and Poly-Tech America LLC / Power Ranger Properties LLC for said incentive.

The motion was seconded by Don Walsh. Andrew Martelli provided background on the company. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously by those present, 8-0.

9. TOWN MANAGER REPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Monthly Status Report.

Sean Kimball highlighted the Cheshire Town Square.

B. Department Status Reports: Police, Fire, Economic Development.

10. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

A. Chairman's Report.

Greg Wolff mentioned that there is a Planning Committee meeting tomorrow so will have information next Town Council meeting.

Fiona Pearson updated that the capital budget discussion continues on September 22nd.

Deb Manke explained that the Town audit process has begun.

B. Miscellaneous.

11. APPOINTMENTS

A. Liaison Reports.

Greg Wolff highlighted the life drawing class at Artsplace that will be taught by Tony Falcone.

Fiona Pearson updated that the Energy Commission met and had a representative from C-Pace present. She discussed the Recreation People of the Year award winners.

B. Appointments.

Greg Wolff motioned to appoint:

- Mary DiLeo, D, to Library Advisory Board term of 9/8/2026-1/31/2030
- Coleen Bankowski, D, GWTD, term of 9/8/2026-6/30/2030
- John Wells, D, Youth and Human Services Committee, term of 9/8/2026-1/31/2028
- David Blair, U, to Veterans Advisory Committee, term of 9/8/2026-1/31/2027

Don Walsh seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously by those present, 8-0.

12. TOWN ATTORNEY REPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

13. COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

A. Letters to Council.

Peter Talbot read a letter from the Cheshire Chamber of Commerce thanking the town for their sponsorship of the Fall Festival.

Fiona Pearson read a communication from Winston Hill, 267 Oak Avenue, expressing opposition to the Flock cameras.

- i. Update from the Semiquincentennial Steering Committee.

Peter Talbot thanked the Semiquincentennial Steering Committee and Assistant Town Manager Andrew Martelli as their staff liaison.

- B. Miscellaneous.

14. ITEMS FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon 2/3 vote, convene in executive session, pursuant to C.G.S. §1-200(6) to discuss matters concerning:

- A. Contract negotiations.

- B. Tax incentive agreements.

No items for executive session.

15. ADJOURNMENT

David Borowy motioned to adjourn the meeting, and Fiona Pearson seconded the motion. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously, 8-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Attest: _____
Noelle Shepard, Management Specialist

Considering Rain Gardens as part of stormwater control

Cheshire Town Council meeting

Sept. 8, 2026

A rain garden is a shallow, landscaped area that captures and filters stormwater using plants, mulch, and ground covers. They are beneficial because they manage stormwater, filter pollutants, support wildlife, recharge groundwater, and enhance urban environments.

Rain gardens are designed to capture and absorb runoff from impervious surfaces like roofs, driveways, and sidewalks, preventing excess water from overwhelming storm drains and sewer systems. By temporarily holding rainwater, they reduce flooding, slow water flow, and can minimize stream bank erosion. Studies show that rain gardens can absorb significantly more water than conventional lawns, helping to manage urban stormwater effectively.

In Cheshire, stormwater enters storm drains and discharges directly into local watercourses. The stormwater runoff can harm aquatic life and has negative effects on vegetation and soils. Rain gardens act as natural filters, removing pollutants such as sediment, fertilizers, heavy metals, and motor oil from runoff before it reaches rivers, streams, or groundwater.

In researching this topic, I found a Stormwater Runoff Reduction plan done for Cheshire in 2018. This study was done by UCONN graduate students and UCONN extension faculty via CLEAR (Center for Land Use Education and Research) and the CT NEMO Program (Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials). The report includes very thorough analysis and comprehensive recommendations for green stormwater infrastructure practices at 9 sites of publicly owned land parcels in Cheshire. I believe that only one rain garden was installed out of the nine sites suggested – at Station 2 on Byam Rd. If all projects identified in the report had been implemented, almost 59,000 sq ft of impervious cover would be disconnected from the stormwater drainage system. This means that on an annual basis, approximately 1.5 million

gallons (1,497,632) of untreated stormwater, 10 pounds of nitrogen, and 1 pound of phosphorus would have been prevented from entering local water bodies.

I request that this report be revisited and considered for its potential in dealing with local stormwater runoff, prioritizing any currently appropriate areas that front our local waterways, such as the Mill River. Many Connecticut towns are taking this approach including Hamden and Groton, who have installed rain gardens around municipal buildings using grant dollars, Bristol and Windsor who are partnering with the Farmington River Watershed association, and New Haven and Windham who have installed residential and public gardens via community groups and UCONN extension support. There is also a free Rain Garden certificate course through UCONN CT NEMO, an excellent resource for local land use boards and commissions. Please consider these options when discussing stormwater control.

<https://media.nemo.uconn.edu/stormwater-corps/projects/cheshire/Cheshire-report.pdf>

<https://nemo.uconn.edu/stormwater-corps/projects/cheshire/>

[Rain Gardens | CT NEMO Program | CENTER FOR LAND USE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH | University of Connecticut](#)

Norton Farm has won the hearts and minds of most in Cheshire. Kelly's Farm will be something different but also very much the same. By a wide margin, Cheshire voters authorized \$1.5 million last fall towards open space preservation funding, with an undesignated purpose. Clearly voters were expressing their unease with local development across town on a scale not seen for a very long time.

In August the CLT Board of Directors voted unanimously to authorize the expenditure of \$500,000 to help purchase and commit to a conservation easement with Kelly Farm, LLC and the Town of Cheshire, to permanently protect the historic Norton Farm. CLT's funding is contingent upon the approval by the Town Council for the Town to spend \$1,650,000 toward the purchase. That vote has been set for tonight. Please listen to the voters.

The Cheshire Land Trust is a respectable owner of farms in Cheshire. Our largest is Ives farm at 165 acres and the adjacent 13-acre Pelz Farms. We are working hard to secure another farm in the area.

Beyond those we have Conservation Easements totaling 116 acres, notably the oldest Farm in Connecticut along scenic South Brooksvale Rd., (49 Acres), Leavenworth Tree Farm (38) & Giddings Farm on Boulder Rd. (16). Kelly's Farm is another 42 potentially under our protection.

The agreement protects the land in perpetuity from ever having houses built there. The existing historic Norton home will remain and is already being updated. A new post & beam farm stand is being built. The special permit and site plan for a wedding venue was approved in July.

The importance of this piece of the financial puzzle cannot be overstated. The success of the "The Barn Yard" wedding venue will help sustain the farming operations for years to come.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Tim Slocum