



CHELMSFORD FINANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES

February 12, 2026

MEETING: A meeting was held on Thursday, February 12, 2026, at 6:30 PM at the Town Hall Office Building, 50 Billerica Road, Chelmsford.

PRESENT: J. Clancy, S. Chase, E. MacDonald, S. Kovalck, C. Goodland, and D. Goselin

ABSENT: A. Tanini

ALSO PRESENT: P. Cohen, J. Sousa, and public

HANDOUTS: Fiscal Year 2027 Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets, 2026 Spring Annual Town Meeting Presentation, Contact/Liaison List, Schedule for 2026 Spring Town Meeting Warrant Book

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

Approval of Minutes:

September 25, 2025:

S. Chase made a motion for the Finance Committee to accept the minutes of September 25, 2025, as written. D. Goselin seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion passed. (6 in favor, 1 absent) The minutes were approved as written.

Presentation, Review, and Discussion of Town Manager's Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Recommended Operating Budget:

P. Cohen reported that he was pleased to present the FY2027 Operating Budget. He said that he wanted to acknowledge J. Sousa and everyone's efforts from the two Tri-Board meetings in dealing with the Governor's latest proposed budget and last-minute information on the plan design change by their health care provider. He said that while it is an uncertain time he believes the proposed budget is responsible. He reported that it was a \$176.4 million operating budget for the upcoming fiscal year. He stated that the "leap of faith" in the budget was state aid. He reported that Governor Healey proposed funding the final year of the Student Opportunities Act at the minimum funding level of \$75 per student which would give Chelmsford about \$388,000 based on the October 1st student count. P. Cohen stated that based on history and what he has heard he believed that Chapter 70 funding would be increased. He said that what he proposed in his budget was based on receiving the same level of funding as this year, which was \$150 minimum per pupil.

P. Cohen reported that his budget increases Chelmsford Public School funding by \$2.5 million or 3.3%, which would fund schools from the town at \$78.15 million, which was \$1 million less than

what was discussed at the Tri-Board meetings. He stated that what this means for the schools and across the town is level staffing and level services.

P. Cohen reported that Nashoba Tech was going up by 6.5% or \$263,000 to \$4.32 million. He explained that Chapter 70 funding followed the students. He said that enrollment in Chelmsford public Schools went up by about 40 students but it also went up by 6 students at Nashoba Tech. He added that the relative proportion of increase going from 210 to 216 at Nashoba was greater than the proportion of 40 being added to the 5,000 at Chelmsford Public Schools resulting in a shift in Chapter 70 funding to Nashoba Tech.

P. Cohen stated that funding for General Government had almost the same increase as the schools with a funding increase of 3.2% or \$1.25 million to \$40.1 million. He stated that the debt service increased this year most notably due to the debt service for the fire station project. He reported that the project would be bidding in three weeks and they were at or slightly under budget. He said that they would award the bid and the two stations would close April 1st and construction would take place over the next 18 months. He said that excluded debt service would increase by \$885,000 while non-excluded debt service would increase by \$302,000.

P. Cohen pointed out other increases in the budget including \$51,000 for Biennial State Elections, an increase of \$50,000 in Legal Services due to significant land-use costs and litigation, an increase of \$147,000 in Solid Waste & Recycling Collection and Disposal which was indexed to inflation, an increase of \$210,000 for the Richardson Road PFAS Treatment System due to the need to expand the system, and an increase of \$105,000 for Building Maintenance due to costs of aging buildings. P. Cohen noted that there were items that were worthy of funding which they would like to include in the budget but didn't. He said the most notable of these request omissions were in public safety and public works.

P. Cohen stated that Benefits and Insurance funds are about 38% of the budgetary increase of \$2.77 million. He said that the health plan that Chelmsford was part of dropped the weight loss drug provisions. He stated that in calendar year 2025 over \$800,000 was spent whereas the prior calendar year it was only \$250,000. He added that now that these medicines were coming out in pill form, they have no confidence in what this will mean in terms of cost so the decision was made not to provide this coverage in the plan. This resulted in a 5% decrease in what would have been the premiums. He said that the concern of expecting double digit (or close to) increases in health care was a continuing problem. He noted that 50% of the state budget was going to health care. P. Cohen reported that with the projected 7.9% increase in health insurance premiums the estimated total premium for an HMO family plan would increase to \$38,100 of which the Town funds 75% of the premium, or \$28,575. He said that this was why compensation wasn't just what you were paying the person but also included the benefits. He added that there were almost 1,000 retirees and 700 employees.

P. Cohen reported that on the revenue-side they once again budgeted to the full levy limit under Proposition 2 ½ which will bring in approximately \$135 million. He said that once again the property tax will fund over 76% of the town's operating budget. He said that they were forecasting almost a 5% increase in local receipts with \$631,000 coming from motor vehicle excise tax.

E. MacDonald asked if the town offered any type of incentive for people to get off the town's health insurance plan such as to go on a spouse's plan. P. Cohen replied that they could do that and it is a thought but the problem becomes when do you implement it and what qualifies the person for the savings. He added that they have not seen this occur in Massachusetts communities. He noted that the town insurance was better than most providers and the typical resident does not have the coverage which town employees receive. He added that about a third of the employees didn't take the insurance currently.

P. Cohen stated that he was assuming a 5% overall increase in Chapter 70 funding. He said that for the current fiscal year they received \$776,000 and he was hoping and expecting that it would happen again for the upcoming fiscal year. He stated that the budget priorities remained steadfast in education, public safety (including DPW), and capital infrastructure. He noted that the snow & ice budget has already been exhausted this year as this has been one of the coldest winters in recent memory.

P. Cohen stated that the big increase in the line-item budget is in benefits and insurance at a 7.68% or \$2.7 million increase. He added that the only bump they would get this year was from the final unit at the West Campus. He said that there really wasn't anything significant in the pipeline that can help growth in the future. He stated that the school funding was at \$78.15 million in funding which was a 3.3% or \$2.5 million increase over the current fiscal year. He said that the schools were able to maintain level staffing while absorbing their cost increases. He said that Chelmsford is providing \$2.5 million in additional revenue for the schools and the state formula provides for a \$3.1 million increase. He said that this was not a problem as Chelmsford was already 30% above net school spending. He added that this was an issue for other communities which were operating at or near net school spending. P. Cohen reported that for the latest year available the per pupil expenditure for Chelmsford in FY2024 was \$18,641 per pupil, so was probably approaching \$20,000 per student for the upcoming fiscal year. He reported that the Nashoba assessment was a 6.5% increase with the percentage share going from 27.49% to 28.05% with Chelmsford's enrollment going up by 6 and the district's enrollment in total went up by 6. He said that the Nashoba Tech per pupil expenditure for FY2024 was just over \$24,000 and is probably \$25,000 per student today.

P. Cohen stated that the assessment for Middlesex County Retirement System increases by 6.57% or \$860,000. He said that the state's unfunded pension liability was \$116 million. He reported that Middlesex would be reviewing their actuarial valuation and PRIM had double digit returns in the market which was helpful such that while they expect a minimum increase of 6.5% in the future at least it wasn't getting worse.

P. Cohen pointed out that in the last five years they have added .7 employees to the general government of the town so they now employ 255.5 employees. He noted that they have only added 7.5 employees since he started 20 years ago. He added that in the schools they have added less than 2% or 15 employees in the last five years. He commented that the belief that local government was bloated was not the case.

P. Cohen stated that Chelmsford was now at an 85/15 split of residential versus commercial property with any growth being in the residential. He said that going back a decade the split was 80/20. He pointed out that the average single family property tax bill was now available and

Chelmsford's state rank was now 86 while it was 80 last year, and 61 twenty years ago. He reported that the average single-family bill was \$9,219. He said that taxes were going up everywhere and were going up by greater amounts in peer communities than in Chelmsford. He noted that this could all change if a major capital project is undertaken such as a large school project. He stated that the average home value in Chelmsford is just under \$700,000 and was faring better than Billerica, Westford, and Tewksbury in terms of the tax bill as a % of income at 13.66%.

P. Cohen reported that they were coming into year two of the three-year labor agreements. He stated that the only unresolved agreement was the firefighters for which a mediation session was scheduled in two weeks. He said that there is a placeholder on the warrant for funding the agreement if this gets resolved.

S. Kovalck asked what the contingency plan was, for example, if Chapter 70 funds don't come through or motor vehicle excise comes in low, which could add up to a bit of a risk. P. Cohen responded that it was a risk on both sides but that was why they had reserves. He said that the stabilization fund could be used for the unforeseen. He stated that they would finish the current fiscal year in the black and if things don't break in the town's favor they would need to break into free cash or stabilization. D. Goselin asked how much of a gap they were possibly looking at. P. Cohen replied that it could be \$1 million. D. Goselin commented that at a Tri-Board meeting there had been discussion of a fee for rubbish. He asked if that had any more discussion. P. Cohen replied that he did not see it happening this year but it was more of a "coming attraction". He stated that Westford is launching a one-barrel program in July and they would watch how this went as it may be where Chelmsford ends up.

C. Goodland asked if there was any discussion in changing the percentage that the town covers for health insurance such as possibly covering 70% instead of 75%. P. Cohen replied that they would have to bargain for this as part of the contract and such a change would basically be reducing their pay. He added that they had to also be competitive in their offerings and the 75% - 25% split was the average in the market with some paying more and others paying less.

Presentation, Review, and Discussion of Fiscal Year 2027 Recommended Capital Plan:

J. Sousa reported that the Capital Planning Committee reviewed 30 projects totaling just over \$9.6 million. He said that the Committee voted to recommend 20 projects totaling just over \$6.42 million. He said that the Library, Police, and Fire accounted for 27% of the plan and Public Works accounted for another 27%, and School Facilities accounted for 40% of the plan. He said that they had \$149,000 in recaptured funds from completed projects from the prior year leaving \$6.27 million to be funded through the issuance of municipal bonds. He said that there were a lot of needs on the horizon which were not funded in the plan. He said that the 9 projects not funded this year totaled just over \$3 million and there was another \$65.5 million in project requests over the next 4 fiscal years. S. Kovalck asked if people ever withdrew requests. J. Sousa said that some did drop off as they asked department heads to review them every year. He added that they always had to rebalance and make decisions based on priorities. J. Clancy said that some of these types of requests may come through as requests at Fall Town Meeting for use of free cash. J. Sousa replied that that this was correct and a good point. He said that sometimes the need arose and couldn't be postponed so it was better to use free cash than to add to the town's debt service.

J. Sousa reported that under Public Libraries the plan included the third phase of funding for the HVAC system replacement at the Adams Library at the cost of \$850,000. He reported that a project for the MacKay library at the cost of \$70,000 would replace the ADA ramp and the rear door frame and wall repairs.

J. Sousa reported that the first project under Public Safety was Phase 1 of the HVAC system replacement at the police station for \$650,000. He said that they anticipated this being a two-phase project. He reported that two replacement vehicles for the Fire Department were being requested. He noted that they were older in years, and even though the mileage wasn't high, they had extensive corrosion. He said that the first vehicle, a 2013 Ford Fusion Hybrid, was not cost effective to repair due to the corrosion and the hybrid battery. C. Goodland asked if they expected any salvage value from the vehicles. J. Sousa replied that they would try to do that and the vehicles would be sold on an online platform through Municibid. He said that the second vehicle replaces a 2017 Ford Explorer which has a number of mechanical problems following a collision that the vehicle was involved in. D. Goselin asked how many miles were on the vehicle. J. Sousa replied that it had just over 40,000 miles, had corrosion, and was problematic since the collision. D. Goselin asked if they didn't have insurance. J. Sousa replied that they did and it was repaired but it just hasn't been the same and the reliability of the engine and other components weren't what they once were.

J. Sousa reported that under Public Works, \$425,000 was included for roadway improvements based on the pavement management database maintained by Town Engineer's office. He stated that two heavy-duty trucks were also included for Public Works. He said that both are older vehicles with extensive corrosion. He said that the first was a 2007 6-wheel truck which would cost \$350,000 to replace. He said that it was equipped with a sander, dump body, and snowplow and was deferred from last year's capital plan. He said that the second vehicle was a 2010 10-wheel truck which would be equipped with a sander, dump body, and a wing plow. He said that this was a heavier truck and would cost \$375,000 to replace it. He pointed out that the DPW Director had indicated that there was an 18-month production lead time for this type of vehicle. He said that this played into the Committee's recommendation to move these projects forward. E. MacDonald asked why there was so much corrosion on these vehicles as she did not garage her car and did not have that much corrosion. J. Sousa replied that with steel frames being driven for years in New England they had corrosion. E. MacDonald asked if they had a washing program. J. Sousa replied that they did. He added that the corrosion was more on the under carriage and the vehicles were close to the road. He noted that Massachusetts had to use a lot of salt which played into the corrosion. J. Clancy noted that part of the replacement reason was the hybrid battery and exhaust system not just the corrosion. D. Goselin asked for confirmation that the vehicles were being housed and washed. J. Sousa replied that one of the points of having the new public works facility on Alpha Road was to allow more vehicles to be inside with the larger building. He said that a lot of the vehicles were inside.

J. Sousa reported that the next project under Public Works was a sidewalk snow removal apparatus with a cost of just under \$200,000. He said that they were looking to replace a 2009 unit with 8,000 hours of service. He said that the DPW Director explained that they had four sidewalk clearers in total with one being replaced last year. He said that they had 27 miles of sidewalk to clear and without replacing them periodically a single repair could cost as much as \$24,000. He said that it was not cost-effective to put that much money into an older unit. D.

Goselin asked what the lead time was for this. J. Sousa said that he didn't know but had to believe that it was 12 months or more.

J. Sousa stated that the next Public Works vehicle being replaced was a Rack Body Truck at the cost of \$135,000. He said that it was a 2010 model and the replacement truck would be equipped with a snowplow. He said that the mileage was about 77,000 and there was significant corrosion on the body and frame. He reported that the next vehicle would replace a light-duty 2012 Chevy Colorado which would be replaced with a ¾ ton pickup truck equipped for snowplowing. He explained that the reason for this was that it was becoming more and more difficult to hire private contractors to do snow removal. He said Public Works employees would be able to use the new vehicle so they wouldn't need to rely on a private contractor. He stated that the Chevy Colorado had 89,000 miles and the DPW staff indicated that it would be unlikely to pass the next inspection. J. Sousa reported that the next vehicle was a Cemetery Backhoe to replace a 2008 John Deere backhoe at the cost of \$165,000. He said that this was essential for the cemeteries' maintenance, operations, snow removal, and other duties. He said that the Cemetery Commission has agreed to reimburse the general fund for 50% of the cost of this piece of equipment.

J. Sousa reported that under Municipal Facilities \$48,000 was requested to replace an older 2010 utility van. He said that this would be used by the town plumber who does all of the repairs in the schools and municipal buildings. He said that the mileage on the van was 98,000 and it had corrosion and needed frequent repairs. J. Sousa stated that under Municipal Facilities there was also an elevator replacement at the town offices for \$325,000. He pointed out that this was supplementary funding for a previously approved project. He said that this elevator was 40 years old and there were a lot of new energy codes, electrical upgrades, and ventilation requirements.

J. Sousa reported that under School Facilities there was \$100,000 to fund a roof replacement study. He said that there were a number of school roofs that would need to be replaced in the coming years. He said that this would fund a detailed roof study at Chelmsford High School, Harrington School, and McCarthy School. He said that the age of these roofs varied between 19 and 22 years. He said that this would provide a professional assessment and they would take detailed test cuts. He explained that the test cuts allowed them to see exactly how many layers and what type of material was used. He said that this would allow for more accurate specifications and there wouldn't be surprises during the bidding. He said that the Capital Planning Committee thought that this was money well-spent given millions of dollars for roof replacements.

J. Sousa reported under School Facilities \$251,000 was budgeted for an Integrated Emergency Notification System (ENS) which replaces obsolete systems in the older schools such as clocks, intercoms, and public address systems. He stated that this would fund work at Byam and South Row. He said that a similar system was installed at Harrington last summer and they hoped to replicate this at two more schools. He stated that another \$400,000 under School Facilities would be for security system and fire alarm panel upgrades at Byam and Harrington Schools. He said that this would also provide an assessment and cost estimates for replacing the systems in the other schools. J. Sousa stated that \$700,000 was included under School Facilities for the complete replacement for the pavement at the Byam School. He said that the pavement was past its end-of-life and cannot be further repaired. He stated that this would include paving, curb

replacement, and ADA improvements. He said that the public works engineering staff would be doing the design work which would save about \$75,000 to \$100,000 on the cost of this project. J. Sousa reported that at McCarthy Middle School just under \$114,000 was budgeted to install a bi-directional antenna system. He said that this amplifies the radio signals which would provide better and more reliable radio transmissions for police or fire who may have to respond to the school for an emergency. J. Sousa reported that the last project was a partial roof replacement for \$1 million at Chelmsford High School. He said that this would target the roof over the kitchen and cafeteria areas. He said that the roof was 19 years old and there were leaks in these areas.

J. Sousa reported that Town Meeting would vote in April and they would look to issue the bonds in June to finance the projects. J. Clancy thanked J. Sousa for his presentation and C. Goodland for serving as liaison to the Capital Planning Committee this year.

P. Cohen reported that Fire Chief, G. Ryan, was watching the meeting and indicated that they wash the fire vehicles frequently and said that you don't see dirty police and fire vehicles as they had agreements with the carwash in town and they run them through the carwash which does get the undercarriage. P. Cohen added that the town employees may be more apt to be on the roads in bad conditions whereas the typical person would be staying in.

Review and Discussion of Draft Annual Spring Town Meeting Warrant Articles:

P. Cohen stated that the warrant was in the hands of Town Counsel and he expected to receive their comments next week and the Select Board is scheduled to sign the warrant on the 23rd. He said that there were 36 articles at the front, most of which were the traditional Spring Town Meeting articles. He said there were zoning articles at the end which were under final review for wording. P. Cohen quickly ran through the list of the Spring 2026 warrant articles as follows:

Article 1 - Reports of Town Officers/Committees:

P. Cohen stated that he anticipated having updates on the Parker Middle School building project as well as the fire station construction project, and they would provide a financial overview for Town Meeting.

He stated that he would then move to a consent agenda. He said that there may be up to 14 warrant articles in the consent agenda.

Article 2 - Amend Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget:

P. Cohen stated that there would be operating budget adjustments. He said that he and the Finance Director would work with the Town Accountant and Department Heads over the next several weeks and he hoped to have the amendments ready before the Finance Committee closed their hearings and published their book. He added that thus far the Finance Committee Reserve Fund has not been used and it most likely would be the funding source for this article.

Article 3 - Nashoba Valley Technical School District FY27 Assessment:

P. Cohen Stated that Article 3 was the Nashoba Assessment which was \$4,316,932. He said that

there would be a presentation from a Nashoba Tech representative. He added that the Superintendent will be at a Finance Committee meeting to present the details of the school budget.

Article 4 - Fiscal Year 2027 Chelmsford Public Schools Operating Budget:

P. Cohen stated that Article 4 was the Chelmsford Public Schools operating budget for FY2027 which was \$78,150,000. He reported that the School Committee would be holding its public hearing on the budget the Tuesday after school vacation week. He said that it would be at 6 PM on the 24th over at the School Administration Offices.

Article 5 – Fiscal Year 2027 General Government Operating Budget:

P. Cohen stated that Article 5 was the general government operating budget which was voted by line item. He said that they would have a detailed listing of the 19 line items.

Article 6 - Collective Bargaining Agreements:

P. Cohen stated that this was a placeholder in the event that there was a collective bargaining agreement with the firefighters in time for Town Meeting.

Article 7 - Finance Committee Reserve Fund:

P. Cohen said that Article 7 was for the Finance Committee Reserve Fund which remains at \$400,000. He said that this was not the year to increase this amount.

Article 8 - Fiscal Year 2027 Capital Budget:

P. Cohen stated that Article 8 was for the Capital Budget which J. Sousa reviewed.

Article 9 - PFAS Treatment Plant Upgrades at 54 Richardson Road:

P. Cohen stated that Article 9 was a funding request to upgrade the PFAS treatment plant at 54 Richardson Road. He said that the remediation system was working effectively but there appears to be a second “hot spot” up by the dog park. He said that to attack that they needed to expand the plant and draw the water for treatment. He said that they were going into the fourth year of running this system and it takes money to install the trenching and piping to draw from the dog park area. He added that this work would be done this coming summer.

Article 10 - Fiscal Year 2027 Sewer Enterprise Fund Operating Budget:

P. Cohen stated that Article 10 was for the Sewer Enterprise Operating Budget and was \$5.7 million and was an increase of just over \$100,000 or 1.91%. He added that this was funded entirely from sewer revenues.

Article 11 - Sewer Pump Station Upgrades for Clinton Avenue, Fair Street, and Evergreen Street:

P. Cohen stated that Article 11 is for \$1.5 million in borrowing for a capital project for the sewer. He said that it was to upgrade the Clinton Avenue, Fair Street, and Evergreen Street pump

stations. He said that there have been a series of these over time. He added that the construction would begin over the summer into fall. He said that the new system allows for monitoring of the stations remotely.

Article 12 - Fiscal Year 2027 Stormwater Management Enterprise Fund Operating Budget:

P. Cohen stated that Article 12 was for the Stormwater Management Enterprise Fund with a funding level of \$1.77 million, which was a \$97,000 increase over the current year.

Article 13 - Stormwater Rack Body Truck:

P. Cohen stated that Article 13 was for a rack body truck for \$115,000. S. Kovalck asked about the breakdown between personnel and expenditures between stormwater and sewer. He asked what drove the ratio as it seemed that stormwater had more personnel expenses than operating expenditure whereas the sewer was the opposite. P. Cohen replied that sewer was much more capital intensive with pump stations and sewer lines whereas stormwater had piping but there weren't facilities so it wasn't as capital intensive.

Article 14 - Drainage Improvements for Rainbow Avenue:

P. Cohen reported that they were doing a drainage project on Rainbow Avenue for \$350,000 that will be borrowed and paid for from the debt service of the Stormwater Enterprise fund. He said that this was a known flooding area.

Article 15 - Fiscal Year 2027 Forum Ice Rink Enterprise Fund Operating Budget:

P. Cohen stated that the Forum Ice Rink was level-funded at \$65,000. He said that the Forum was leased out to a third-party management company that operates it.

Article 16 - Amend the Fiscal Year 2026 PEG Access and Cable Related Enterprise Fund Operating Budget:

P. Cohen stated that there were three articles this year for the PEG Access Enterprise Fund. He said that the first one was for costs incurred in the current fiscal year which were unforeseen. He said that they were seeking the transfer from the undesignated fund balance of free cash which had a balance of \$523,920. He reported that this article requests \$43,000 to cover the costs of upgrading the control room equipment, replacing servers and computers, and some of the TV truck communications systems, and live up links.

Article 17 - Fiscal Year 2027 PEG Access and Cable Related Enterprise Fund Operating Budget:

P. Cohen stated that Article 17 was for the PEG Enterprise Operating Budget and was for \$682,000. He noted that this was down slightly because of the revenue constraints on the system.

Article 18 - Chelmsford Telemedia Public, Education, and Government Access Equipment:

P. Cohen reported that Article 18 was a capital article for the upcoming fiscal year for \$92,000 for equipment for the School Committee meeting room.

Article 19 - Fiscal Year 2027 Golf Course Enterprise Fund Operating Budget:

P. Cohen stated that Article 19 provided \$30,000 for the Golf Course Enterprise Fund.

Article 20 - Annual Authorization of Departmental Revolving Funds:

P. Cohen stated that Article 20 was for the annual department revolving funds which were level-funded with last year. He added that they hoped the legislature would do municipal reform this year which would eliminate the need to vote this every year. He said that you would only need to have a vote if the amount was being changed.

Article 21 - Cemetery Improvement and Development Fund:

P. Cohen stated that this article would request \$60,000 from the sale of graves and lots to fund tree removal and safety pruning at all 6 cemeteries, the installation of a niche wall at Heart Pond Cemetery, and plantings in the mausoleum area at Pine Ridge Cemetery.

Article 22 - Property Valuation Services:

P. Cohen stated that Article 22 would fund property valuation services. He said that the amount was \$150,000 from the overlay surplus. He said that overlay surplus was funds set aside for abatements from prior fiscal years which were no longer needed because the taxes have been paid or the claims have been resolved. He said that this was needed because the DOR requires the municipality to conduct inspection of each parcel at least once every 10 years. P. Cohen pointed out that there were over 13,500 parcels in town with over 9,000 single-family homes, almost 2,900 condominium units, 404 commercial, 218 industrial, etc. and if it needs to be done every 10 years then over 1,350 of these inspections needed to be done annually. P. Cohen stated that a similar article was done a year ago and they thought that this two-year effort would get them to a place where they could continue to carry it with their in-house staff. He noted that there had been some turnover in the assessor's office and they did fall behind.

Article 23 - Community Preservation Fund: FY27 Debt Service, Admin. Expenses & Reserves:

P. Cohen stated that Article 23 was the annual article for the Community Preservation Fund which funds the debt service, administrative expenses and reserves. He said that they continued to fund \$50,000 for the administrative expenses, they set aside \$150,000 for the three buckets of open space, historic reserves, and community housing, and \$250,000 for the budgeted reserve. He stated that they were anticipating \$1.67 million in the CPA 1.5% surcharge this coming fiscal year and the estimated state revenue was flat at \$255,000. He explained that the state revenue is flat because this funding from the state comes from the deeds excise tax and there isn't a lot of action going on at the registry of deeds. The total revenue projection for the coming fiscal year is \$1.925 million. He reported that the debt service for the upcoming fiscal year was \$1,168,257.

He said that we were nearing the end of Roberts Field and the turf fields debt service while Chelmsford Arms and the center utilities were just coming on.

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Article 24 - CPC – Transfer Cemetery Restoration Funding:

P. Cohen stated that this article would amend the vote taken at the 2024 Spring Annual Town Meeting for \$8,000 which was restricted to preservation of headstones at Forefathers Cemetery allowing the funds to be used for the preservation of headstones at any Chelmsford Cemetery.

Article 25 - CPC – Varney Playground Accessible Playground Equipment:

P. Cohen stated that Article 25 was for \$74,000 from the Community Preservation Fund General Reserve for the purchase and installation of new handicapped-accessible playground equipment at Varney Playground. He said that the town has recently modernized the equipment at Varney Playground and this is Phase 2. He explained that the new equipment would allow a child in a wheelchair to get on the “We-Go Round” with other children. He added that the \$74,000 was net of a \$10,000 grant received for this project. He said that this has been approved by the Community Preservation Committee. He noted that CPC Funds can only be expended upon a favorable recommendation from the Community Preservation Committee.

P. Cohen stated that Article 26 through Article 34 were zoning articles for which the language was being reviewed by counsel so they would not be part of this evening’s presentation. He said that the Planning Board has completed its legal public hearings and review of the zoning articles with the exception of the Citizen Petition. He said that the two remaining articles were 35 and 36.

Article 35 - Utility Easements for Fire Stations Construction Project:

P. Cohen stated that the two fire station projects involved relocation of the electrical lines so easement approval needed to be obtained to move them underground.

Article 36 - Street Acceptance: Proctor Road:

P. Cohen stated that the last article was a street acceptance of Proctor Road. He said that Proctor Road is not a new street but it had never been accepted as a public right of way. He said that doing this would increase Chapter 90 reimbursement for the community.

P. Cohen stated that this would clearly be a two-session Town Meeting. He added that K. Beatty, the presenter on the general bylaw regarding lighting, is not available for the second session of Town Meeting. He said that the hope was that if the financial articles were done at a reasonable time, they could take up the lighting bylaw on the first night. He said that the article was different from the prior article. He noted that the article was more relaxed and requirements were not mandatory on residential property. He said that the expectation was that this would be better received and understood by Town Meeting.

Reorganization Discussion and Vote:

D. Goselin nominated J. Clancy for chairman of the Finance Committee. S. Chase seconded the nomination. J. Clancy asked if there were any other nominations. Seeing none, he closed the floor from any further nominations. C. Goodland made a motion to approve J. Clancy as chairman of the Finance Committee. D. Goselin seconded the motion. J. Clancy called for further discussion and hearing none called the vote. S. Chase, D. Goselin, C. Goodland, S. Kovalck, and E. MacDonald voted in favor of the motion. J. Clancy abstained from voting. (5 in favor, 1 abstention, 1 absent) The motion passed. J. Clancy will remain the chairman of the Finance Committee.

J. Clancy opened the floor for nominations for the vice-chair of the Finance Committee. S. Chase nominated A. Tanini for vice-chair of the Finance Committee. D. Goselin seconded the nomination. J. Clancy asked if there were any other nominations. Seeing none, he closed the floor from any further nominations. S. Chase made a motion to approve A. Tanini as vice-chair of the Finance Committee. E. MacDonald seconded the motion. J. Clancy called for further discussion and hearing none called the vote. All voted in favor. (6 in favor, 1 absent) The motion passed. A. Tanini will remain the vice-chair of the Finance Committee.

Review and Discuss Liaison Assignments for Fiscal Year 2027 Budget Review:

The committee discussed the liaison assignments and made the following assignments:

Department	Contact	Liaison
Board of Health	Donna Greenwood	A. Tanini
Capital Planning	John Sousa	C. Goodland
Cemetery	David Boyle	D. Goselin
Chelmsford Public Schools	Jay Lang, Joanna M. Johnson-Collins & School Committee	S. Kovalck/D. Goselin/ S. Chase
Community Preservation Fund	Judith Carven	C. Goodland
Senior Center	Debra Siriani	D. Goselin
DPW/Waste/Sewer/Storm Public Facilities	Christine Clancy	C. Goodland/S. Chase S. Kovalck
Finance Department/ Accounting	John Sousa/Darlene Lussier	A. Tanini/C. Goodland
Finance Department/ Assessors	John Sousa/Regan Lemay	A. Tanini/C. Goodland
Finance Department/ Information Technology	John Sousa/Ted Lutter	A. Tanini/C. Goodland
Finance Department/ Treasury and Collection	John Sousa	A. Tanini/C. Goodland
Fire Department	Gary Ryan	J. Clancy/ S. Kovalck
Library	Lesley Kimball	E. MacDonald
Nashoba Valley School District	Denise Pigeon, Michelle Shephard, & School Committee	D. Goselin/S. Chase/ C. Goodland
PEG Access/Cable	Pete Pedulla	S. Chase
Police Department	Colin Spence	J. Clancy/E. MacDonald
Town Manager	Paul Cohen	ALL
Veterans Services	Regina Jackson	S. Chase

Discuss Budget Hearing and Spring Town Meeting Warrant Article Schedule:

J. Clancy said that he would reach out the B. Latina and K. Beatty regarding the citizen petitions and C. Lavallee and the Planning Board for the zoning articles. He stated that there would be no

Finance Committee Meeting next week but the first meeting for warrant articles and budget reviews would be the last Thursday in February. He said that there would be a break for the first week in March since the Zoning Board will be meeting and then there will be three Thursdays in March to meet. He added that, if needed, April 2nd or April 9th were available. He noted that the 2nd would conflict with the Zoning Board, but the School Administration building would be available. He said that the alternative would be April 9th, however, that would be the last day to make recommendations. J. Clancy stated that the book would be ready at the latest on the night of the Town Manager's Pre-Town Meeting. He noted that Town Meeting was a little later this year so there was a little more wiggle room, but it was preferable to focus and get it done.

Public Comment:

None

S. Chase made a motion to adjourn. E. MacDonald seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:19 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela A. Morrison



Fiscal Year 2027 Proposed Operating & Capital Budgets

February 5, 2026

Paul E. Cohen
Town Manager

To the members of the Select Board and the Finance Committee, in accordance with the provisions of Section 6-2 of the Town Charter and Section 35-1 of the Town Bylaws, I hereby submit a proposed Town of Chelmsford Fiscal Year 2027 budget and capital improvement plan.

The proposed FY27 operating budget amounts to \$176.4M and utilizes the entire estimated local property tax levy capacity under the provisions of Proposition 2 ½.

State Aid funding is based Governor Maura Healey's proposed FY27 State budget, with the exception that minimum Chapter 70 education aid will ultimately be enacted by the State Legislature at the same \$150/student amount as the current fiscal year. The Governor's proposal funds Chapter 70 minimum per pupil aid at only \$75/student. Since the State Legislature is not expected to enact a State budget until July, there remains uncertainty regarding the final amount of State aid that the Town will receive to help fund local governmental operations in Fiscal Year 2027. In addition, the actual amount of new growth to the property tax levy and the amount of funding that will be required for a new collective bargaining agreement with the Town's firefighters' union is unknown at this time. Therefore, the Town's FY27 operating budget will need to be modified in the months ahead as additional information becomes available.

FY27 Budget Overview

The proposed \$176.4M Fiscal Year 2027 operating budget significantly reduces the level of Town services, while utilizing the maximum property tax levy within the constraints of Proposition 2½. Extraordinary increase in health insurance premiums, retirement assessment, and wage growth necessitate level staffing of government operations. There is no indication that these inflationary pressures will subside.

The School Department's operations are detailed in the Superintendent of Schools' FY27 budgetary document. The Town would continue to operate at critical minimum staffing levels. Additional staffing is warranted in public safety, education, and human services.

FY27 Budget Overview

The proposed \$176.4M FY27 operating budget provides the following:

- Chelmsford Public School funding increase of 3.3% (\$2.5M) to \$78.15M.
- Nashoba Valley Technical School District assessment increase of 6.5% (\$263K) to \$4.32M.
- General Government Operating Department funding increase of 3.2% (\$1.25M) to \$40.1M.
- Benefits and Insurance funding increases by 7.68% (\$2.77M) to \$38.8M
- Debt service increase of 5.28% (\$548K) to \$10.9M . Non-Excluded debt service increases by \$302K (3.87%), while Excluded debt service increases by \$885K (324.06%).
- State Assessments and Overlay decrease of .72% (-\$27K) to \$3.7M.

FY27 General Government Operating Budget Increases

The proposed Fiscal Year 2027 operating budget level staffs all positions that are funded in the current fiscal year operating budget. Funding is provided for personnel in accordance with the second year of collective bargaining agreements with the unionized employees, with the exception of the firefighters which is currently in mediation. The Town's non-union employees will receive a 3% adjustment to the compensation schedules.

The proposed operating budget also additional funding for the following services:

- Biennial State Elections: \$51,000;
- Legal Services: \$50,000;
- Solid Waste & Recycling Collection and Disposal: \$147,000
- Richardson Road PFAS Treatment System: \$210,000;
- Building Maintenance: \$105,000;

FY27 General Government Operating Budget Omissions

The proposed Fiscal Year 2027 operating budget does not honor the following reasonable requests for General Government operations:

- Additional Police Officers to enhance traffic safety across the community.
- Additional Firefighters to increase apparatus staffing levels;
- Creation of Fire Lieutenant positions to enhance operational safety.
- Additional DPW Highway Laborer positions to improve the condition of the Town' parks, roadways, and sidewalks.
- Safety specialist position to improve workplace safety;

FY27 Budget Impact

from Health Insurance Premiums and Retirement Assessment

Benefits and insurance absorbs **\$2.77M (38%)** of the overall budgetary increase.

\$1.35M has been budgeted to fund the projected 7.9% increase in health insurance premiums for 690 eligible active employees. The estimated total premium for an HMO family plan would increase to \$38,100. The Town funds 75% of the premium, which amounts to \$28,575.

\$487K has been budgeted for an estimated increase in health insurance premiums for Medicare supplement plans for 1000 eligible retirees over the age of 65. The Town funds 60% of the premium.

The Town's assessment from the Middlesex County Retirement System increases by \$860K (6.57%) to \$13.95M.

Budget Revenue Sources

The proposed FY27 operating budget amounts to \$176.4M.

The budget utilizes the Town's entire \$135.1M estimated property tax levy capacity, which is a \$6M (4.67%) increase. The property tax would fund over 76% of the Town's operating budget.

The budget is based upon Governor Healey's proposed FY27 State operating budget with the exception that minimum Chapter 70 education aid will ultimately be enacted by the State Legislature at the same \$150/student amount as the current fiscal year. The Governor's proposal funds Chapter 70 minimum per pupil aid at only \$75/student. This would provide \$23.8M in local aid receipts to Chelmsford. This is an increase of \$1.1M (4.85%).

Local receipts are estimated at \$13.9M, which amounts to an increase of \$631K (4.75%).

Available Funds are estimated at \$3.5M, which decreases by \$502K (-12.95%) for recurring operating costs.

Chapter 70 Education Funding

Governor Healey's proposed FY27 State operating budget increases Chapter 70 educational funding to \$15,838,549. This is an increase of \$388,125. This represents an increase of only \$75/student (2.51%) for the Town's 5,175 students.

For the current fiscal year, the State Legislature increased the Governor's proposed Chapter 70 minimum student funding level to \$150/student. This proposed budget is based upon the same per-pupil funding level. This would increase the Chapter 70 funding level to \$16,226,674, which is an increase of \$776,250 (5.02%).

This would continue the Town's customary annual increase in educational funding levels, which are listed on the following slide:

Chelmsford's State Chapter 70 Education Funding History

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Chapter 70 Education \$</u>	<u>\$ Increase</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
2017	\$10,746,368	\$273,350	2.61%
2018	\$10,894,328	\$147,960	1.37%
2019	\$11,047,148	\$152,820	1.40%
2020	\$11,199,428	\$152,280	1.38%
2021	\$11,199,428	\$0	0%
2022	\$11,348,108	\$148,680	1.33%
2023	\$11,962,155	\$614,047	5.41%
2024	\$14,141,800	\$2,179,645	18.22%
2025	\$14,680,624	\$538,824	3.81%
2026	\$15,450,424	\$769,800	5.24%
2027 (Est.)	\$16,226,674	\$776,250	5.02%

FY27 Capital Improvements Plan Highlights

The proposed Fiscal Year 2027 capital improvement plan recommends a total of \$6.4M in debt service to finance 20 infrastructure projects. This increases the capital funding level by \$460K (7.7%) over the current fiscal year to responsibly address \$9.2M in capital project requests.

Infrastructure investments include:

- High School Partial Roof Replacement: \$1,000,000
- Adams Library HVAC Partial Replacement: \$850,000
- Byam School Parking Lot Resurfacing: \$700,000
- Police Station HVAC Partial Replacement: \$650,000
- DPW Roadway Improvements: \$425,000
- School Security & Fire Panel Assessment \$400,000
- DPW 10-Wheel Dump Truck: \$375,000
- DPW 6-Wheel Sander: \$350,000
- Facilities Town Offices Elevator: \$325,000

Enterprise Funds

The Town operates its sewer, stormwater, public/educational/governmental access programming, ice rink, and golf course through enterprise funds. These activities are independently funded from their operating revenue. The proposed FY27 enterprise budgets accompany this report. In summary,

- Sewer Enterprise budget increases by \$202K (3.13%) to \$6.67M. The wastewater treatment fee to the Lowell regional wastewater facility decreases by \$100K to \$2.3M.
- Stormwater Enterprise budget increases by \$107K (5.15%) to \$2.18M.
- Public Education Government (PEG) Access budget increases by \$92K (13.45%) to \$777K.
- Forum ice rink enterprise is level-funded at \$65,000.
- Golf Course enterprise is level-funded at \$30,000.

Conclusion

The proposed Fiscal Year 2027 operating budget and capital improvement plan will maintain the Town's service level. Health care premiums, retirement assessment, and labor costs significantly outpace the Town's revenue sources within the property tax constraints of Proposition 2½, state aid, and local receipts. There is no evidence that these fiscal pressures will dissipate soon. Health insurance premiums are expected to increase at double digit amounts in the next few years, the Town's retirement assessment will increase by at least 6.5% in each subsequent fiscal year, and the labor shortage will continue to escalate wages for employees and service providers.

These budgetary challenges are not unique to Chelmsford. Other Massachusetts municipalities are confronting these inflationary cost factors. Governor Healey has filed legislation to maintain Chapter 90 roadway funding, increase local option taxes, and implement reforms to local governmental operations. Hopefully, the Governor and the State Legislature will provide adequate assistance to municipal governments during this critical time.

Thank you for your consideration.

Budget Priorities

- Education
- Public Safety
 - Fire Department
 - Police Department
 - DPW
- Capital Infrastructure
- Public Health and Human Services

FY27 Budget Line-Item Changes

		<u>%Chg.</u>
• Municipal Administration:	\$ 281,896	6.80%
• Chelmsford Public Schools:	\$2,500,000	3.30%
• Nashoba Valley Tech:	\$ 263,302	6.50%
• Public Safety:	\$ 427,293	2.37%
• Public Works:	\$ 239,610	2.57%
• Municipal Facilities:	\$ 150,034	5.65%
• Cemetery Commission:	\$ 17,355	3.72%
• Community Services:	\$ 66,753	4.01%
• Library:	\$ 129,059	5.01%
• Benefits & Insurance:	\$2,766,664	7.68%
• Debt Service:	\$ 548,353	5.28%
• State Assessments & Overlay:	<u>\$ (88,723)</u>	<u>(2.40%)</u>
Total:	\$7,301,596*	4.32%

* Does not include funding for the unresolved collective bargaining agreement with the firefighters' union.

Revenue Summary

\$176.4M budget

Additional Available Revenue:

Property Tax:	\$6,032,245	(4.67%)
State Aid:	\$1,101,431	(4.85%)
Local Receipts:	\$631,195	(4.75%)
Available Funds:	<u>(\$520,044)</u>	<u>(12.95%)</u>
	\$7,244,827	4.28%

5 Fiscal Year Expenditure Comparison

	<u>FY22</u>	<u>FY27</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>	<u>%Change</u>
Municipal Admin.	\$3.54M	\$4.43M	\$.89M	2.51%
Chelmsford Schools	\$65.00M	\$78.15M	\$13.15M	20.23%
Nashoba Tech	\$3.72M	\$4.32M	\$.60M	16.13%
Public Safety	\$14.81M	\$18.49M	\$3.68M	24.85%
DPW	\$7.36M	\$9.55M	\$2.19M	29.76%
Municipal Facilities	\$2.04M	\$2.81M	\$.77M	37.75%
Cemetery	\$.38M	\$.48M	\$.10M	26.32%
Community Services	\$1.28M	\$1.73M	\$.45M	35.16%
Library	\$2.19M	\$2.71M	\$.52M	23.74%
Benefits & Insurance	\$26.56M	\$38.77M	\$12.21M	45.97%
Debt Service	\$12.56M	\$10.94M	(\$1.62M)	(12.90%)
State Amts/Overlay	\$3.67M	\$3.61M	(\$0.06M)	(1.63%)

10 Fiscal Year Expenditure Comparison

	<u>FY17</u>	<u>FY27</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>	<u>%Change</u>
Municipal Admin.	\$2.99M	\$4.43M	\$1.44M	48.16%
Chelmsford Schools	\$54.55M	\$78.15M	\$23.60M	43.26%
Nashoba Tech	\$2.83M	\$4.32M	\$1.49M	52.65%
Public Safety	\$11.92M	\$18.49M	\$6.57M	55.12%
DPW	\$6.69M	\$9.55M	\$2.86M	42.75%
Municipal Facilities	\$1.58M	\$2.81M	\$1.23M	77.85%
Cemetery	\$.33M	\$.48M	\$.15M	45.45%
Community Services	\$1.05M	\$1.73M	\$.68M	64.76%
Library	\$1.87M	\$2.71M	\$.84M	44.92%
Benefits & Insurance	\$21.56M	\$38.77M	\$17.21M	79.82%
Debt Service	\$14.07M	\$10.94M	(\$3.13M)	(22.25%)
State Amts/Overlay	\$3.42M	\$3.61M	\$.19M	5.56%

Chelmsford Public Schools

Proposed FY27 Budget Line Item

FY26 Appropriation:	\$75,650,000	
Increase:	<u>\$2,500,000</u>	<u>(3.30%)</u>
FY27 Total:	\$78,150,000	

School Department Funding Increases

<u>FY</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>% Increase</u>
2018	\$57,000,000	\$2,450,000	4.49%
2019	\$59,000,000	\$2,000,000	3.50%
2020	\$61,000,000	\$2,000,000	3.39%
2021	\$61,667,000	\$667,000	1.09%
2022	\$65,000,000	\$3,333,000	5.40%
2023	\$67,500,000	\$2,500,000	3.85%
2024	\$70,700,000	\$3,200,000	4.74%
2025	\$73,880,000	\$3,180,000	4.50%
2026	\$75,650,000	\$1,770,000	2.40%
2027	\$78,150,000	\$2,500,000	3.30%

Chelmsford Public Schools Funding

FY07 Net School Spending:	\$47,244,247
FY07 Required School Spending:	<u>\$44,620,168</u>
Dollars Over Requirement:	\$2,624,079 (5.88%)
FY25 Net School Spending:	\$88,293,650
FY25 Required Net School Spending:	<u>\$67,143,896</u>
Dollars Over Requirement:	\$21,149,754 (31.50%)
FY26 Budgeted Net School Spending:	\$92,168,286
FY26 Required Net School Spending:	<u>\$70,603,389</u>
Dollars Over Requirement:	\$21,564,897 (30.54%)
FY27 Required Net School Spending:	\$73,767,263

Chelmsford Public Schools Per Pupil Expenditure

FY14: \$12,436

FY15: \$13,289

FY16: \$14,216

FY17: \$14,610

FY18: \$14,954

FY19: \$15,637

FY20: \$15,659

FY21: \$17,193

FY22: \$16,808

FY23: \$17,804

FY24: \$18,641

Chelmsford Public Schools Per Pupil Expenditure

Estimate: \$19,500

180 school days = \$108/school day/pupil

22 student classroom: $\$19,500 \times 22 = \$429,000$

180 school days = \$2,383/school day/classroom

Chelmsford Public Schools Foundation Enrollment & Student/Teacher Ratio

	<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>Teachers</u>	<u>Student/Teacher Ratio</u>
FY15:	5,056	359.5	14.1
FY16:	4,987	366.3	13.6
FY17:	4,974	365.7	13.6
FY18:	4,994	372.6	13.4
FY19:	4,961	373.2	13.3
FY20:	5,021	369.5	13.6
FY21:	4,826	376.9	12.8
FY22:	4,943	380.9	13.0
FY23:	5,055	382.9	13.3
FY24:	5,130	381.7	13.4
FY25:	5,068	385.8	13.1
FY26:	5,128		

Chelmsford Public Schools

Average Class Size

- FY15: 18.9
- FY16: 18.0
- FY17: 18.1
- FY18: 17.8
- FY19: 18.1
- FY20: 17.7
- FY21: 19.1
- FY22: 17.8
- FY23: 18.0
- FY24: 18.8
- FY25: 18.8

Nashoba Tech FY27 Assessment

FY27 Assessment:	\$4,316,932
FY26 Assessment:	<u>\$4,053,630</u>
Increase:	\$263,302 (6.50%)

Nashoba Tech Enrollment

Chelmsford's October 1, 2025 enrollment at Nashoba Tech increased by 6 students to 216. The District's total member enrollment increased by 6 students. Nashoba Tech's member enrollment has increased to 770.

The Town's share of the District member enrollment has decreased from 27.49% to **28.05%**.

The District is scheduled to present its proposed FY27 budget with resulting assessments on Friday, January 30.

Nashoba Tech FY27 Assessment: **\$4.32M**

Estimated Increase of **\$263K (6.50%)**

Chelmsford's Foundation Enrollment at Nashoba Tech

- FY17: 184
- FY18: 191
- FY19: 198
- FY20: 186
- FY21: 201
- FY22: 212
- FY23: 207
- FY24: 212
- FY25: 218
- FY26: 210
- FY26: 216 (October 1, 2025 enrollment basis)

Five Year Increase: 4 students (.19%)

Nashoba Valley Tech. Per Pupil Expenditure

FY14: \$16,165

FY15: \$17,030

FY16: \$18,374

FY17: \$19,477

FY18: \$20,530

FY19: \$21,429

FY20: \$20,362

FY21: \$20,829

FY22: \$21,587

FY23: \$22,459

FY24: \$24,046

The per pupil expenditure today (FY26) likely exceeds \$24,500.

FY27 Nashoba Tech Budget Drivers

- Staffing contractual increases, including step and lane changes
- Special education staffing, services and transportation costs
- Increases in building maintenance and capital projects
- Increases in the cost of technical program material & equipment
- Increases in other vendor contracts and fixed costs

Public Safety – Police

Mission: Maintain the peace, protect life & property:

69 full-time employees:

- 54 sworn officers;

 - 1 animal control officer

 - 9 civilian public safety dispatchers;

 - 3 clerical;

 - 1 mechanic;

 - 1 building custodian;

Chelmsford's ratio of sworn officers per 1,000 residents: 1.89;

National average: 2.4;

Police Department Call Volume Answered by Cruisers

<u>Year</u>	<u># Calls</u>	<u># FTE</u>	
2025	37,810	69	Property checks 17,770 (47%)
2024	36,638	69	
2023	37,393	69	
2022	36,763	69	
2021	35,240	69	
2020	36,979	69	
2019	36,746	69	
2018	35,096	69	
2017	32,144	68	
2016	34,062	68	
2015	31,951	68	

Public Safety – Fire

Mission: Emergency response to fire, medical, motor vehicle accident, and other life safety calls; fire prevention.

63.5 full-time employees (level staffing):

- 1 Fire Chief;
- 1 Deputy Fire Chief;
- 7 Captains;
- 52 Firefighters;
- 1.5 clerical;
- 1 mechanic;

At 11 firefighters minimum per shift.

Fire Department Call Volume

Total Number of Calls

<u>Year</u>	<u># Calls</u>	<u># FTE</u>	
2025	6,499	63.5	Medical Calls: 4,448 (68%)
2024	6,369	63.5	
2023	6,363	63.5	
2022	6,041	63.5	
2021	5,910	63.5	
2020	5,475	63.5	
2019	6,602	63.5	
2018	7,234	63.5	
2017	6,605	63.5	
2016	6,667	63.5	
2015	6,853	63.5	
2014	6,622	62.5	

Employee Compensation

The Town's General Government (Non-School Department) consists of non-union employees and five collective bargaining units. All of the collective bargaining agreements, with the exception of the unresolved firefighters' agreement, will enter into the second year of three-year contracts. The Town's bylaws prohibit the funding of anticipated negotiated contractual amounts. Therefore, the fire department's budget does not include any funding for the unresolved collective bargaining agreement.

Personnel Increase: \$700K

Employee and Retiree Health Insurance

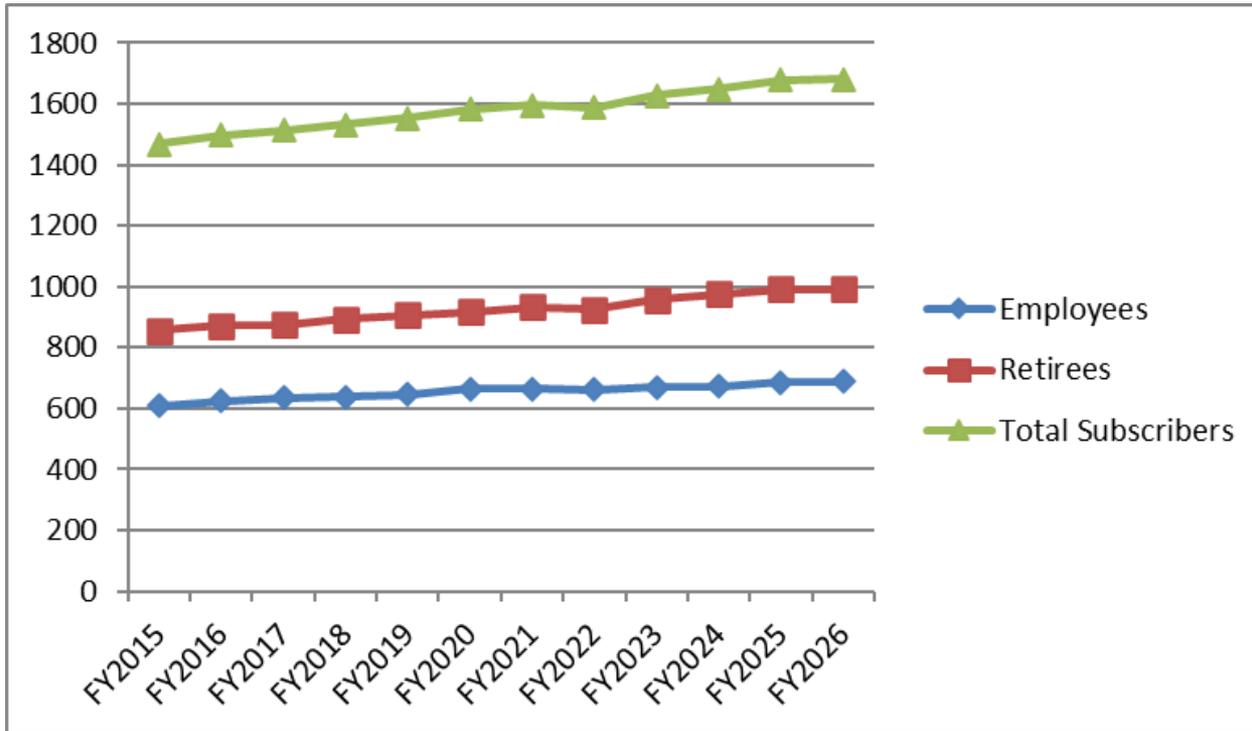
FY27 premiums for the Blue Cross health insurance plans for active employees are projected increased by 7.88%.

The Town's insurance premiums are dependent upon claims experience and enrollment.

The number of insured continues to increase. The Town currently insures approx. 689 employees (School Dept. 467/General Govt 222) and 993 retirees.

Budgeted increase of **\$1.84M**

Health Insurance Subscribers



FY	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Employees	610	625	636	639	646	665	665	661	670	672	685	689
Retirees	857	873	876	893	907	918	932	926	958	977	990	993
Total	1467	1498	1512	1532	1553	1583	1597	1587	1628	1649	1675	1682

FY2026 data for November 2025

Health Insurance Premium

Fiscal Year 2027 Blue Cross HMO Family Plan projected health insurance premium for active employees:

Total Annual Premium: \$38,100

Town's Share (75%): \$28,575

Middlesex County Retirement Assessment

The Town's FY27 assessment is **\$13,950,650**.

This is an increase of **\$860,206 (6.57%)**.

\$12M of this assessment is to amortize the Town's \$116M unfunded pension liability.

Retirement Assessment History

Town of Chelmsford									
Middlesex Retirement Assessment									
10-Year History & Analysis									
Fiscal Year	Normal Cost	+	2002 ERI	+	Payment on Unfunded Liability	=	Total Assessment	Payment Due July 1	Change
2016	\$ 1,155,249		\$ 298,335		\$ 5,778,213		\$ 7,231,797	\$ 7,096,040	\$ 612,334
2017	1,201,459		298,335		6,196,899		7,696,693	7,552,208	456,168
2018	1,269,098		297,748		6,403,153		7,969,999	7,822,651	270,443
2019	1,318,871		297,748		6,869,383		8,486,002	8,329,114	506,463
2020	1,477,302		-		7,556,811		9,034,113	8,872,242	543,128
2021	1,531,438				8,153,659		9,685,097	9,511,562	639,320
2022	1,728,559				8,330,179		10,058,738	9,883,109	371,547
2023	1,791,767				8,933,635		10,725,402	10,538,132	655,023
2024	1,915,464				9,615,459		11,530,923	11,333,552	795,420
2025	1,985,413				10,303,077		12,288,490	12,078,152	744,600
2026	1,981,685				11,336,726		13,318,411	13,090,444	1,012,292
2027	\$ 2,054,495				\$ 12,139,103		\$ 14,193,598	\$ 13,950,650	\$ 860,206

Solid Waste & Recycling Collection and Disposal

- Solid waste collection and recycling collection costs are expected to total \$2.60M. This amounts to an increase of \$126K (5.09%). This maintains one hazardous waste collection event at a cost of \$50K.
- The Town projects to dispose of 17,000 tons of solid waste at the Covanta facility in Haverhill. There is a state and regional shortage of solid waste landfill, trash-to-energy plants, and other solid waste disposal alternatives. Tipping fees are increasing by the Boston CPI to an estimated \$106. The tipping fees/disposal cost for Solid Waste disposal is expected to total \$1.92M. This is an increase of \$22K.

This results is a total increase of **\$147K for collection and disposal.**

Medicare Tax

The estimated Town contribution to Medicare payroll taxes for FY27 is \$1,367,415.

This is an increase of **\$65,115 (5.0%)**.

Debt Service

Standard & Poor's June 11, 2025 credit rating report:

“Manageable debt burden, with plans for additional borrowing”

Excluded Debt Service

The projected FY27 excluded debt service from property taxes increases from \$273K to \$1.16M. This is a result of the fire stations construction project.

This is an increase of **\$885K (324.06%)**.

However, the increase in Proposition 2½ excluded debt does not impact the Town's operating budget.

Excluded Debt Service

FY20:	\$4,233,004
FY21:	\$3,650,909
FY22:	\$3,191,315
FY23:	\$2,079,710
FY24:	\$1,679,444
FY25:	\$1,107,250
FY26:	\$273,100
FY27:	\$1,158,100

Increase of \$885,000 (324.06%) in FY27

Non-Excluded Debt Service

FY20:	\$7,492,663
FY21:	\$7,233,626
FY22:	\$7,040,697
FY23:	\$7,140,974
FY24:	\$7,050,012
FY25:	\$7,090,123
FY26:	\$7,823,140
FY27:	\$8,125,884

Increase of \$302,744 (3.87%) in FY27

Town of Chelmsford

Full-Time Equivalent Employees

<u>General Government</u>	<u>School Department</u>
(without Enterprise Fund Employees)	
FY06: 246.9	695.0
FY10: 215.6	611.1
FY17: 242.9	730.8
FY18: 246.0	753.5
FY19: 248.3	762.3
FY20: 250.4	772.8
FY21: 251.4	786.8
FY22: 253.8	787.4
FY23: 255.0	796.4
FY24: 256.5	794.2
FY25: 259.5	807.8
FY26: 255.5	803.6
FY27: 254.5	802.6

Change since FY06:	7.6 (3.08%)	107.6 (15.48%)	
Change in 5 years:	.7 (.28%)	15.2 (1.93%)	

General Government

Full-Time Equivalent Employees

	<u>FY06</u>	<u>FY26</u>	<u>FY27</u>
Executive Office	4.51	5.10	5.10
Finance Dept	14.48	14.00	14.00
Town Clerk	3.48	4.00	4.00
Planning & Development	3.00	3.00	3.00
Police Department	69.25	70.00	70.00
Fire Department	59.00	63.50	63.50
Inspections	3.98	6.32	6.32
DPW Engineering	5.00	6.00	5.00
DPW Highway	20.00	21.00	21.00
DPW Facilities	0.00	17.50	17.50
DPW Sewer Enterprise	10.70	13.00	14.00
DPW Stormwater Enterprise	0.00	11.00	11.00
DPW Parks	1.50	0.00	0.00
DPW Public Buildings	2.00	0.50	0.50
DPW Recycling/Waste	0.50	0.50	0.50
Cemetery	4.50	4.40	4.40
Human/Community Services	6.15	9.50	9.50
Recreation	1.25	0.00	0.00
Health	3.60	5.80	5.80
Library	26.72	24.88	24.88

FY27 Budget Drivers

School Department	\$2,500,000
Health Insurance	\$1,840,000
Excluded Debt Service	\$885,000
Middlesex Retirement	\$860,000
General Govt. Employee Wages	\$700,000
Non-Excluded Debt Service	\$303,000
Nashoba Tech	\$263,000
Solid Waste & Recycling	\$147,000
Medicare Tax	<u>\$65,000</u>
Total:	\$7,560,000*

* Does not include funding for unresolved firefighters' union collective bargaining agreement.

Available FY27 New Revenue Sources

- Property Tax:
 - Allowed 2 ½% Increase: 3,221,731
 - Projected New Growth: 1,900,000
 - Excluded Debt Service: 885,000
 - State Aid Receipts: 1,100,000
 - Local Receipts: 630,000
 - Available Funds: (500,000)
- Total: \$7,300,000

5 Fiscal Year Revenue Comparison

	<u>FY22</u>	<u>FY27</u>
Property Tax	\$111,899,277 (77.17%)	\$135,138,580 (76.62%)
State Aid	\$17,817,585 (12.29%)	\$23,820,808 (13.51%)
Local Receipts	\$11,693,514 (8.06%)	\$13,925,000 (7.89%)
Available Funds	<u>\$3,587,220</u> (2.47%)	<u>\$3,496,807</u> (1.98%)
Total	\$144,997,596	\$176,381,195

Chapter 70 funding: \$11,348,108 in FY22; \$16,226,764 in FY27;
increase of \$4,878,656 (**42.99%**);

Unrestricted General Govt. Aid: \$5,578,245 in FY22; \$6,475,975 in FY27;
increase of \$897,730 (**16.09%**)

10 Fiscal Year Revenue Comparison

	<u>FY17</u>	<u>FY27</u>
Property Tax	\$94,109,746 (75.61%)	\$135,138,580 (76.62%)
State Aid	\$16,599,846 (13.34%)	\$23,820,808 (13.51%)
Local Receipts	\$10,484,442 (8.42%)	\$13,925,000 (7.89%)
Available Funds	<u>\$3,275,531</u> (2.63%)	<u>\$3,496,807</u> (1.98%)
Total	\$124,469,565	\$176,381,195

Chapter 70 funding: \$10,746,368 in FY17; \$16,226,764 in FY27;
increase of \$5,480,396 (**50.10%**);

Unrestricted General Govt. Aid: \$4,880,124 in FY17; \$6,475,975 in FY27;
increase of \$1,595,851 (**32.70%**)

Property Tax Revenue

	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Estimated</u>
Base Levy	110,234,603	114,695,046	119,071,854	123,552,994	128,869,227
2 1/2% Increase	2,755,865	2,867,376	2,976,796	3,088,825	3,221,731
New Growth	<u>1,704,580</u>	<u>1,509,432</u>	<u>1,504,343</u>	<u>2,227,409</u>	<u>1,900,000</u>
Total Base Levy	114,695,046	119,071,854	123,552,994	128,869,227	133,990,958
Annual Increase	4,460,443	4,376,808	4,481,139	5,316,234	5,121,731

Estimated available FY27 new property tax levy capacity is **\$5.1M.**

FY26 \$9,219 Average Single-Family Property Tax Bill Allocation

Chelmsford Public Schools	\$4,121	(44.7%)
Nashoba Tech	\$221	(2.4%)
Benefits & Insurance	\$ 1,964	(21.3%)
Public Safety	\$986	(10.7%)
Public Works/Facilities/Cemetery	\$682	(7.4%)
Debt Service	\$562	(6.1%)
General Govt. & Human Services	\$313	(3.4%)
State Assessments & Overlay	\$203	(2.2%)
Library	\$138	(1.5%)
Reserve Fund	\$18	(.2%)

Property Tax Valuation

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Residential Valuation</u>	<u>Commercial Valuation</u>
2019	82.09%	17.91%
2020	82.63%	17.37%
2021	83.00%	17.00%
2022	83.42%	16.58%
2023	84.56%	15.44%
2024	84.65%	15.35%
2025	84.99%	15.01%
2026	85.29%	14.71%

Average Single Family Property Tax Bill

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Average Value</u>	<u>Tax Rate</u>	<u>Single Family Tax Bill</u>	<u>State Rank</u>
2007	396,327	12.53	4,966	61
2016	362,736	18.03	6,540	70
2017	385,733	17.92	6,912	68
2018	399,518	17.96	7,175	66
2019	428,333	16.35	7,001	70
2020	447,553	16.45	7,362	68
2021	470,835	15.74	7,411	72
2022	496,467	15.77	7,829	77
2023	573,061	14.37	8,235	77
2024	628,793	13.62	8,575	78
2025	634,510	13.90	8,820	80
2026	694,695	13.27	9,219	86
5-year increase = \$1,808 (24.40%)				
10-year increase = \$2,679 (40.96%)				
2.5% compounded over 5 years = 13.14%				

Property Tax Comparison

<u>Town</u>	<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Average Single-Family Home Value</u>	<u>Average Single-Family Tax Bill</u>	<u>Per-Capita Income</u>	<u>Tax Bill as % of Income</u>
Billerica	FY24	600,018	6,774 +\$254 (3.89%)	46,050	14.71%
	FY25	632,908	7,196 +422 (6.23%)	51,246	14.04%
	FY26	644,586	7,484 +288 (4.00%)	50,638	14.78%
Chelmsford	FY24	628,793	8,564 +\$329 (4.00%)	61,805	13.86%
	FY25	634,510	8,820 +\$256 (2.99%)	66,946	13.17%
	FY26	694,695	9,219 +\$399 (4.52%)	67,479	13.66%
Dracut	FY24	526,154	5,498 +\$185 (3.48%)	39,887	13.78%
	FY25	552,507	5,591 +\$93 (1.69%)	42,616	13.12%
	FY26	593,296	5,737 +146 (2.61%)	42,821	13.40%
Tewksbury	FY24	602,548	8,068 +\$269 (3.45%)	47,985	16.81%
	FY25	629,508	8,322 +\$254 (3.15%)	51,763	16.08%
	FY26	685,343	8,608 +\$286 (3.44%)	52,263	16.47%
Westford	FY24	756,515	10,417 +\$297 (2.93%)	72,500	14.37%
	FY25	796,584	10,730 +\$313 (3.00%)	82,731	12.97%
	FY26	852,122	11,171 +\$441 (4.11%)	81,289	13.74%

State Aid

	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027
	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>
Chapter 70	11,348,108	11,962,155	14,141,800	14,680,624	15,450,424	16,226,674
Charter Tuition Reimb.	235,724	303,661	144,980	135,773	92,664	229,138
School Choice Tuition	263,989	252,481	290,553	401,517	409,499	355,089
Gen. Government Aid	5,578,245	5,879,470	6,067,613	6,249,641	6,318,387	6,475,975
Veterans Benefits	99,397	96,252	121,336	93,958	86,511	112,259
Exemptions: Vets, Blind	222,197	214,018	191,200	172,559	253,414	309,520
State Owned Land	6,440	8,267	9,300	9,524	9,524	9,713
Libraries	<u>63,485</u>	<u>92,863</u>	<u>89,105</u>	<u>99,109</u>	<u>98,954</u>	<u>102,440</u>
Total	17,817,585	18,809,167	21,055,887	21,842,705	22,719,377	23,820,808

\$1.1M increase (4.85%) in FY27 State Estimated Receipts

68% of the Town's State Aid is Chapter 70 education funding

27% of the Town's State Aid is General Government Aid

Local Receipts

	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027
	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>ESTIMATED</u>
Motor Vehicle Excise	5,359,008	5,731,006	5,721,313	6,153,573	6,493,595	6,150,000	6,700,000
Interest on Late Taxes	628,088	486,161	486,345	458,257	510,641	495,000	495,000
Payments in Lieu of Taxes	53,537	50,719	26,538	107,003	56,580	50,000	50,000
Meals Tax - Local	599,979	722,591	805,865	928,271	887,928	950,000	975,000
Fees	321,792	311,902	342,540	329,139	389,550	370,000	370,000
Rental Income	33,973	92,250	46,550	141,862	103,789	90,000	90,000
Dept Revenue - Schools	310	170	145	140	240	150	150
Dept Revenue - Cemetery	173,535	180,460	150,304	147,125	175,580	150,000	160,000
Dept Revenue - Other	234,931	181,779	302,720	238,296	233,273	195,000	230,000
Alcohol & Other Licenses	186,408	230,899	211,883	210,220	224,134	220,000	225,000
Permits	3,044,241	1,617,158	1,383,276	3,254,301	2,130,304	1,704,134	1,700,000
Fines & Forfeits	142,499	138,089	157,293	157,293	169,451	160,211	160,000
Interest on Investments	91,707	(46,470)	513,253	1,018,018	1,219,975	734,500	750,000
Medicaid Reimbursement	522,541	409,921	325,811	377,366	369,894	365,500	365,500
Room/Hotel Tax	351,400	468,208	504,229	585,258	598,438	575,000	566,075
LRTA	44,856	45,254	44,380	44,387	46,973	45,000	47,000
Solar Net Metering/Recurr	999,036	902,807	1,136,973	869,084	988,866	900,000	900,000
IT Contract - Housing Authority						39,310	41,275
Misc. Non-Recurring	<u>33,309</u>	<u>170,610</u>	<u>226,465</u>	<u>70,781</u>	<u>143,660</u>	<u>100,000</u>	<u>100,000</u>
Total	12,821,150	11,693,514	12,385,883	15,090,374	14,742,871	13,293,805	13,925,000

\$631K (4.75%) increase in estimated Local Receipts.

Available Funds

		<u>Change</u>
• Wetlands Protection Act Funding:	\$10,000	\$0
• Sewer Betterments/Capital Fund:	\$1,652,441	(\$639,391)
• Sewer Enterprise Fund (offset):	\$956,681	\$95,267
• Childcare Revolving Fund:	\$357,367	\$26,104
• PEG CATV (offset):	\$95,165	(\$11,915)
• Stormwater Enterprise (offset):	\$414,675	\$9,891
• Excluded Debt Bond Premium Reserve:	<u>\$10,478</u>	<u>\$0</u>
Total	\$3,496,807	(\$520,044)

Inflation

Boston Consumer Price Index (CPI- U)

2014	-	1.6%
2015	-	.6%
2016	-	1.5%
2017	-	2.5%
2018	-	3.3%
2019	-	1.9%
2020	-	1.1%
2021	-	3.3%
2022	-	7.1%
2023	-	3.7%
2024	-	3.2%
2025	-	3.1%

Higher than traditional inflation level are expected to continue.



FY27 Capital Plan

February 5, 2026

Proposed FY27 Capital Plan

Community Services - Library	\$920,000
Public Safety - Police	\$650,000
Public Safety – Fire	\$185,550
Public Works & Cemetery	\$1,735,000
Public Facilities	\$373,000
School Facilities	<u>\$2,565,340</u>
Total:	\$6,428,890

Proposed FY27 Capital Plan

Financing Summary

Total Projects:	\$6,428,890
Less: Other Financing Sources	
Recaptured Funds	<u>(\$149,159)</u>
Net Amount Borrowed:	\$6,279,731

Capital Plan 10-Year History

<u>Fiscal</u> <u>Year</u>	<u>General</u> <u>Govt.</u>	<u>School</u> <u>Dept.</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>School</u> <u>%</u>
2017	1,736,015	1,476,291	3,212,306	45.96%
2018	1,580,684	1,728,792	3,309,476	52.24%
2019	1,532,000	1,748,571	3,280,571	53.30%
2020	2,411,743	1,061,275	3,473,018	30.56%
2021	1,913,450	1,892,844	3,806,294	49.73%
2022	2,257,916	1,636,058	3,893,974	42.02%
2023	2,155,872	1,614,435	3,770,307	42.80%
2024	2,228,102	2,159,105	4,387,207	49.21%
2025	3,469,874	2,413,528	5,883,402	41.02%
2026	3,201,885	2,767,500	5,969,385	46.36%
2027	3,863,550	2,565,340	6,428,890	39.90%

Deferred Capital Needs

- 9 project requests totaling over \$3.1M were deferred from the FY27 Capital Improvement Plan due to funding limitations:

<u>Project</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Library - Adams Roof Replacement	\$ 573,600
DPW - Sidewalk Improvements	\$ 375,000
DPW - Main St. Traffic Improvements -Ph.1	\$ 500,000
DPW - Turnpike Rd. Sidewalk - Ph. 2	\$ 1,000,000
DPW - Town Common Walkway -ADA	\$ 130,000
Facilities - Town Offices Restroom Renov.	\$ 290,000
School - Harrington Kitchen Floor	\$ 107,589
School - CHS Locker Room Renov. Study	\$ 30,000
School - CHS Switchgear System Rehab.	\$ 150,000
TOTAL:	\$ 3,156,189

Additionally, our updated 5-Year Capital Plan includes **\$65.6M** of project requests over the following 4 fiscal years:

FY2028: \$15,335,713

FY2029: \$17,548,164

FY2030: \$18,497,110

FY2031: \$14,280,064

Public Libraries

Adams HVAC System Replacement \$850,000

- Phase 3
- Current system installed in 2000 and is past its expected useful life
- Frequent equipment failures and repairs
- Library has 150,000 visitors annually & serves as emergency heating/ cooling center



Public Libraries

MacKay ADA Ramp and Building Repairs \$70,000

Scope of work includes:

- ADA ramp replacement & site regrading
- Replacement of rear door & door frame
- Rear wall repairs



Public Safety – Police Station

HVAC System Replacement \$650,000

- Phase 1
- Current system installed in 2002 and is past its expected useful life
- System has experienced equipment failures
- Critical facility operates 24/7



Public Safety – Fire Dept.

Staff Vehicle Replacement \$ 90,150

- Replaces 2013 Ford Fusion Hybrid
- Over 67,394 miles
- Extensive corrosion, replacement of hybrid battery and exhaust system is required
- Proposed replacement will be a hybrid model



Public Safety – Fire Dept.

Staff Vehicle Replacement \$ 95,400

- Replaces 2017 Ford Explorer
- Over 40,074 miles
- Recurring mechanical problems following a collision in 2024.
- Proposed replacement will be a hybrid model



Public Works

Roadway Improvements

\$425,000



Public Works

Sander Truck - 6 Wheel

\$350,000

- Replaces 2007 heavy-duty model with extensive corrosion
- Mileage: over 45,000
- Includes sander, dump body, and snowplow
- Essential for snow and ice removal.



Public Works

Sander & Plow Truck – 10-Wheel \$375,000

- Replaces 2010 heavy-duty model
- Mileage: over 38,000, extensive corrosion
- Includes sander, dump body, and wing plow
- Essential for snow and ice removal.
- 18-month production lead time



Public Works

Sidewalk Snow Removal Equipment
Replacement

\$195,000

- Replaces 2009 unit with 8,000 hours of service
- Essential equipment for Highway Div. to clear snow from over 27 miles of high priority sidewalks
- Avoids expensive repairs and downtime during winter storms



Public Works

Rack Body Truck Replacement \$135,000

- Replaces a 2010 model rack body truck
- New truck will be equipped with a snowplow
- Body and frame have significant corrosion
- Mileage: 77,000



Public Works

Pickup Truck Replacement \$90,000

- Replaces light duty 2012 Chevrolet Colorado with a $\frac{3}{4}$ ton pickup equipped for snowplowing
- Mileage: 89,000
- Provides DPW with greater versatility and assistance during snowplowing operations



Public Works

Cemetery Backhoe Replacement \$165,000

- Replaces 2008 Deere Backhoe
- Essential equipment for excavation, roadway maintenance, and snow removal
- Cemetery Commission will reimburse 50% of cost to the General Fund



Municipal Facilities

Utility Van Replacement \$48,000

- Replaces 2010 utility van used by Facilities Division plumber for town-wide projects
- Mileage: 98,000



Municipal Facilities

Town Offices – Elevator Replacement \$325,000

- Existing elevator is over 40 years old
- Provides supplementary funding for additional work required or ventilation, code requirements, and unanticipated building electrical upgrades.



School Facilities

Roof Replacement Study \$100,000

- CHS, Harrington, & McCarthy Schools
- Age of roofs: 19 – 22 years
- Detailed assessment and test cuts will provide accurate information to guide budgeting and prioritization recommendations.



School Facilities

Integrated Emergency Notification System (ENS)
Building Safety & Security Upgrade \$251,490

Byam and South Row Elementary Schools

- Provides an integrated system that replaces obsolete clock, intercom, and public address (PA) systems.



School Facilities

Security System & Fire Alarm Panel Upgrades

\$400,000

Byam and Harrington Elementary Schools

- Replace/ upgrade building intrusion (security) and fire alarm panel systems.
- Provide an assessment with design and cost estimates for replacing the systems in all schools.



School Facilities

Parking Lot Rehabilitation \$700,000

Byam Elementary School

- Pavement and sub-base materials are past end-of-life, requiring frequent repairs.
- Includes paving, granite curb replacement, striping, and ADA improvements.



School Facilities

Bi-Directional Antenna System \$113,850

McCarthy Middle School

- Amplifies portable public safety radio communications for first responders
- Enhances school safety



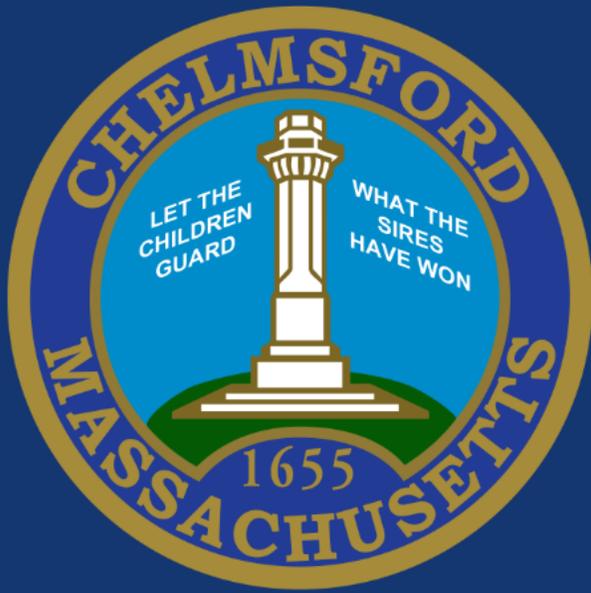
Capital Budget Process

April 2026: Town Meeting Consideration

June 2026: Municipal Bond Issuance

FY2027 PROPOSED CAPITAL BUDGET

Function	Department /Location	Project	Expenditure
Community Services	<u>Adams Library</u>	HVAC System Replacement - Phase 3	\$850,000
	<u>MacKay Library</u>	Ramp Repl. & Rear Entrance Repairs	\$70,000
	<i>Community Services Subtotal</i>		\$920,000
Public Safety	<u>Police</u>	HVAC System Replacement - Phase 1	\$650,000
	<u>Fire</u>	Staff Vehicle Replacement	\$90,150
		Staff Vehicle Replacement	\$95,400
<i>Public Safety Subtotal</i>		\$835,550	
Public Works	<u>Highway</u>	Roadway Improvements	\$425,000
		6-Wheel Sander Truck Replacement	\$350,000
		10-Wheel Dump Truck Replacement	\$375,000
		Sidewalk Snow Clearing Equipment	\$195,000
		Rack Body Truck with Plow Repl.	\$135,000
		3/4 Ton Pickup Truck with Plow	\$90,000
	<u>Cemetery</u>	Backhoe Replacement	\$165,000
	<i>Public Works Subtotal</i>		\$1,735,000
Public Facilities	<u>Municipal Facilities</u>	Utility Van Replacement - Plumbing	\$48,000
	<u>Town Offices</u>	Elevator Replacement - Phase 2	\$325,000
	<i>Municipal Facilities Subtotal</i>		\$373,000
	<u>Harrington, McCarthy & CHS</u>	Roof Replacement Study	\$100,000
	<u>Byam & South Row Schools</u>	Emergency Notification System	\$251,490
	<u>Byam & Harrington Schools</u>	Security & Fire Panel Upgrades	\$400,000
	<u>Byam School</u>	Parking Lot Rehabilitation	\$700,000
	<u>McCarthy Middle School</u>	Bi-Directional Antenna	\$113,850
	<u>High School</u>	Roof Replacement - Kitchen & Cafeteria	\$1,000,000
	<i>School Facilities Subtotal</i>		\$2,565,340
CAPITAL PROJECTS TOTAL			\$6,428,890



2026 Spring Annual Town Meeting

April 27, 2026

February 11th Draft

Wi-Fi: CHELMSFORD PUBLIC WIFI

No Password Required, Agree to Terms

Paul E. Cohen

Town Manager

Website:

slides.chelmsfordtv.org

Lawrence J. MacDonald

Town Moderator



Article 1: Reports of Town Officers and Committees

SUBMITTED BY: Select Board

I move that the Town hear reports of the Town Officers and Committees.



Article 1: Reports of Town Officers and Committees

- Parker Middle School Building Committee
- Fire Stations Construction Project
- Financial Overview



Consent Agenda

SUBMITTED BY:

Town Manager

Two-Thirds Vote

I move that the Town consider at this time, under a consent agenda, the following 14 warrant articles:

- Article 02: Amend Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budget
- Article 07: Finance Committee Reserve Fund
- Article 10: Sewer Enterprise Fund Operating Budget
- Article 12: Stormwater Management Enterprise Fund Operating Budget
- Article 15: Forum Ice Rink Enterprise Fund Operating Budget
- Article 16: Amend FY26 PEG Access & Cable Related Enterprise Fund Operating Budget
- Article 17: PEG Access & Cable Related Enterprise Fund Operating Budget
- Article 19: Golf Course Enterprise Fund Operating Budget
- Article 20: Annual Authorization of Departmental Revolving Funds
- Article 21: Cemetery Improvement and Development Fund
- Article 22: Property Valuation Services
- Article 23: Community Preservation Fund: FY25 Debt Service, Admin. Expenses, & Reserves
- Article 35: Utility Easements for Fire Stations Construction Project
- Article 36: Street Acceptance: Proctor Road



Article 2: Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget Amendments

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

I move that the Town amend the Fiscal Year 2026 operating budget adopted under Articles 3, 4, and 5 of the Warrant for the Spring Annual Town Meeting held on April 28, 2025, by transferring **\$XXX,XXX** from the Fiscal Year 2026 Finance Committee Reserve Fund to the following budget line items:

To Be Determined next month.



Article 3: Nashoba Valley Technical School District Fiscal Year 2027 Assessment

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

I move that the Town raise and appropriate \$4,316,932 to fund the Town's Fiscal Year 2027 assessment to the Nashoba Valley Technical School District.

YOUR
SKILLS FOCUSED
PUBLIC
HIGH SCHOOL



NASHOBA VALLEY TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

AYER · CHELMSFORD · GROTON · LITTLETON · PEPPERELL · SHIRLEY · TOWNSEND · WESTFORD

NASHOBA VALLEY
TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL



Article 4: Chelmsford Public Schools Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

I move that the Town raise and appropriate \$78,150,000 to defray charges for the operations of the Chelmsford Public Schools for the fiscal period July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027.



FY2027 Budget

Chelmsford Public Schools

Jay Lang, Ed.D.

Superintendent of Schools



Article 5: General Government Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

I move that the Town raise and appropriate \$86,406,676; transfer \$10,000 from the Wetlands Protection Act Revolving Fund; transfer \$652,441 from the Sewer Capital Improvement Fund; transfer \$500,000 from the Sewer Betterment Fund; transfer \$500,000 from the Sewer Construction Stabilization Fund; transfer \$956,681 from Sewer User Revenue; transfer \$414,675 from Stormwater Management User Revenue; transfer \$95,165 from Cable Television License Revenue; transfer \$10,478 from Excluded Debt Bond Premium Reserve; and transfer \$357,367 from the Childcare Revolving Fund to defray charges of the Town's General Government operations for the fiscal period July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027 according to the following line items:



Article 5: General Government Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget

- Municipal Administration
 - 1. Personnel Services: \$2,958,410
 - 2. Expenses: \$1,471,350

- Public Safety
 - 3. Personnel Services: \$16,515,102
 - 4. Expenses: \$1,970,340



Article 5: General Government Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget

- Public Works

5. Personnel Services:	\$2,407,338
6. Expenses:	\$5,994,127
7. Snow and Ice Removal	\$1,150,000

- Municipal Facilities

8. Personnel Services:	\$1,538,653
9. Expenses:	\$1,266,950



Article 5: General Government Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget

- Cemetery Commission

10. Personnel Services:	\$404,347
11. Expenses:	\$79,544

- Community Services

12. Personnel Services:	\$1,315,191
13. Expenses:	\$414,370

- Library

14. Personnel Services:	\$2,046,951
15. Expenses:	\$659,500



Article 5: General Government Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget

- Benefits and Insurance

16. Expenses: \$38,774,885

- Debt & Interest

17. Non-Excluded: \$8,125,884

18. Betterment - Funded: \$1,652,441

19. Excluded: \$1,158,100



Article 5: General Government Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget

- \$176.4M Operating Budget
- \$135.1M Property Tax Levy
- \$23.8M State Aid
- \$13.9M Local Receipts
- \$3.5M Available Funds



Article 5: General Government Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget

- Chelmsford Public Schools' budget: \$78.15M (+\$2.5M, 3.30%)
- Other Departmental budgets: \$40.1M (+1.25M, 3.22%)*
- Benefits & Insurance budget: \$38.8M (+2.8M, 7.68%)
- Debt Service budget: \$10.9M (+\$548K, 5.28%)

* Does not include funding for unresolved firefighters' union collective bargaining agreement.



Article 5: General Government Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget

Significant Expenditure Increases

* Does not include funding for unresolved firefighters' union collective bargaining agreement.



Article 5: General Government Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget

Other Expenditure Increases

- PFAS Treatment System Operations: \$210,000
- Building Maintenance: \$105,000
- Biennial State Elections: \$51,000
- Legal Services: \$50,000



Article 5: General Government Fiscal Year 2027 Operating Budget

The proposed Fiscal Year 2027 operating budget does not honor the following reasonable requests for General Government operations:

- Additional Police Officers to enhance traffic safety across the community.
- Additional Firefighters to increase apparatus staffing levels;
- Creation of Fire Lieutenant positions to enhance operational safety.
- Additional DPW Highway Laborer positions to improve the condition of the Town' parks, roadways, and sidewalks.
- Safety specialist position to improve workplace safety;



Article 6: Collective Bargaining Agreements

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

To be determined. The Town has not reached agreement on a new collective bargaining agreement with the firefighters' union.



Article 7: Finance Committee Reserve Fund

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

I move that the Town raise and appropriate \$400,000 to be used as a Reserve Fund at the discretion of the Finance Committee for Fiscal Year 2027, as provided in General Laws Chapter 40, Section 6.



Article 7: Finance Committee Reserve Fund

- The Finance Committee is authorized to transfer moneys from the Reserve Fund to provide for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures.
- Allows for a rapid response in lieu of convening a Special Town Meeting.



Article 8: Fiscal Year 2027 Capital Budget

**SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager
Capital Planning Committee
*Two-Thirds Vote***

I move that the Town (a.) appropriate \$6,428,890 for the following capital projects including, but not limited to, any associated equipping, installation, removal or other incidental and related costs:



Article 8: Fiscal Year 2027 Capital Budget

Adams Library	HVAC System Replacement Phase 3	\$850,000
McKay Library	ADA Ramp & Building Repairs	\$70,000
Police Station	HVAC System Replacement Phase 1	\$650,000
Fire Department	Staff Vehicle Replacement	\$90,150
Fire Department	Staff Vehicle Replacement	\$95,400
DPW	Roadway Improvements	\$425,000
DPW	Sander Truck – 6 Wheel	\$350,000
DPW	Sander and Plow Dump Truck - 10 Wheel	\$375,000
DPW	Sidewalk Snow Removal Equipment	\$195,000
DPW	Rack Body Truck 1.5 Ton & Plow	\$135,000
DPW	Pickup Truck ¾ Ton & Plow	\$90,000
Cemetery	Backhoe Replacement	\$165,000
Facilities	Utility Van for Plumbing	\$48,000
Facilities	Town Offices Elevator Replacement	\$325,000
School Department	Roof Replacement Study	\$100,000
School Department	Integrated Emergency Notification Systems	\$251,490
School Department	Security System & Fire Alarm Panel Upgrades	\$400,000
School Department	Byam School Parking Lot Resurfacing	\$700,000
School Department	McCarthy School Bi-Directional Antenna System	\$113,850
School Department	High School Partial Roof (Kitchen/Cafeteria)	\$1,000,000



Article 8: Fiscal Year 2027 Capital Budget

; (b.) that to meet this appropriation, the Town transfer \$10,023.50 from bond premiums; \$139,135.72 shall be transferred from unexpended bond proceeds for projects that are completed and for which no liability remains, as set forth below, which amounts shall be applied to the appropriation for the High School Partial Roof Replacement project; and authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, to borrow \$6,279,731 under Chapter 44, Sections 7 or 8 of the General Laws or any other enabling authority and issue bonds and notes of the Town therefor; and (c.) that the Select Board is authorized to contract for and expend any federal or state aid available for the projects; and, that the Select Board and Town Manager are authorized to execute any and all documents, enter into all agreements, and take such other action as may be necessary or convenient to effectuate this vote.

PROJECT	AMOUNT TRANSFERRED	ARTICLE	DATE APPROVED	SOURCE
Old Town Hall/CCA Building Insulation	\$49,730.00	Art. 8	June 17, 2021	Borrow
Forum Ice Chiller Refrigeration System	\$16,601.61	Art. 4	Feb. 24, 2022	Borrow
Highway Sander Truck	\$11,673.77	Art. 8	April 25, 2022	Borrow
Facilities Pickup Truck	\$325.75	Art. 8	April 25, 2022	Borrow
Harrington School Boiler	\$29,738.23	Art. 8	April 24, 2023	Borrow
High School Kitchen Renovation	\$21,582.20	Art. 8	April 24, 2023	Borrow
DPW Sander Truck & Brining System	\$758.60	Art. 8	April 24, 2023	Borrow
Westlands School Boiler	\$760.63	Art. 7	April 29, 2024	Borrow
DPW Med. Duty Patch Truck	<u>\$7,964.93</u>	Art. 7	April 29, 2024	Borrow
TOTAL \$139,135.72				

Proposed FY27 Capital Plan

Community Services - Library	\$920,000
Public Safety - Police	\$650,000
Public Safety – Fire	\$185,550
Public Works & Cemetery	\$1,735,000
Public Facilities	\$373,000
School Facilities	<u>\$2,565,340</u>
Total:	\$6,428,890

Proposed FY27 Capital Plan

Financing Summary

Total Projects:	\$6,428,890
Less: Other Financing Sources	
Recaptured Funds	<u>(\$149,159)</u>
Net Amount Borrowed:	\$6,279,731

Public Libraries

Adams HVAC System Replacement \$850,000

- Phase 3
- Current system installed in 2000 and is past its expected useful life
- Frequent equipment failures and repairs
- Library has 150,000 visitors annually & serves as emergency heating/ cooling center



Public Libraries

MacKay ADA Ramp and Building Repairs \$70,000

Scope of work includes:

- ADA ramp replacement & site regrading
- Replacement of rear door & door frame
- Rear wall repairs



Public Safety – Police Station

HVAC System Replacement \$650,000

- Phase 1
- Current system installed in 2002 and is past its expected useful life
- System has experienced equipment failures
- Critical facility operates 24/7



Public Safety – Fire Dept.

Staff Vehicle Replacement \$ 90,150

- Replaces 2013 Ford Fusion Hybrid
- Over 67,394 miles
- Extensive corrosion, replacement of hybrid battery and exhaust system is required
- Proposed replacement will be a hybrid model



Public Safety – Fire Dept.

Staff Vehicle Replacement \$ 95,400

- Replaces 2017 Ford Explorer
- Over 40,074 miles
- Recurring mechanical problems following a collision in 2024.
- Proposed replacement will be a hybrid model



Public Works

Roadway Improvements

\$425,000



Public Works

Sander Truck - 6 Wheel

\$350,000

- Replaces 2007 heavy-duty model with extensive corrosion
- Mileage: over 45,000
- Includes sander, dump body, and snowplow
- Essential for snow and ice removal.



Public Works

Sander & Plow Truck – 10-Wheel \$375,000

- Replaces 2010 heavy-duty model
- Mileage: over 38,000, extensive corrosion
- Includes sander, dump body, and wing plow
- Essential for snow and ice removal.
- 18-month production lead time

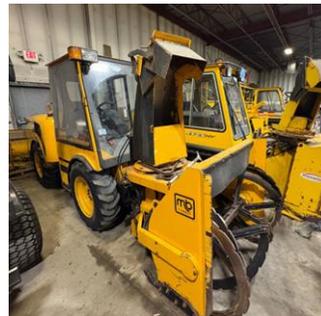


Public Works

Sidewalk Snow Removal Equipment
Replacement

\$195,000

- Replaces 2009 unit with 8,000 hours of service
- Essential equipment for Highway Div. to clear snow from over 27 miles of high priority sidewalks
- Avoids expensive repairs and downtime during winter storms



Public Works

Rack Body Truck Replacement \$135,000

- Replaces a 2010 model rack body truck
- New truck will be equipped with a snowplow
- Body and frame have significant corrosion
- Mileage: 77,000



Public Works

Pickup Truck Replacement \$90,000

- Replaces light duty 2012 Chevrolet Colorado with a $\frac{3}{4}$ ton pickup equipped for snowplowing
- Mileage: 89,000
- Provides DPW with greater versatility and assistance during snowplowing operations



Public Works

Cemetery Backhoe Replacement \$165,000

- Replaces 2008 Deere Backhoe
- Essential equipment for excavation, roadway maintenance, and snow removal
- Cemetery Commission will reimburse 50% of cost to the General Fund



Municipal Facilities

Utility Van Replacement \$48,000

- Replaces 2010 utility van used by Facilities Division plumber for town-wide projects
- Mileage: 98,000



Municipal Facilities

Town Offices – Elevator Replacement \$325,000

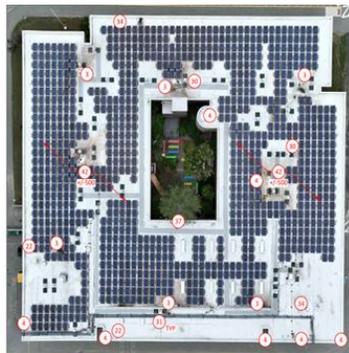
- Existing elevator is over 40 years old
- Provides supplementary funding for additional work required or ventilation, code requirements, and unanticipated building electrical upgrades.



School Facilities

Roof Replacement Study \$100,000

- CHS, Harrington, & McCarthy Schools
- Age of roofs: 19 – 22 years
- Detailed assessment and test cuts will provide accurate information to guide budgeting and prioritization recommendations.



School Facilities

Integrated Emergency Notification System (ENS)
Building Safety & Security Upgrade \$251,490

Byam and South Row Elementary Schools

- Provides an integrated system that replaces obsolete clock, intercom, and public address (PA) systems.



School Facilities

Security System & Fire Alarm Panel Upgrades

\$400,000

Byam and Harrington Elementary Schools

- Replace/ upgrade building intrusion (security) and fire alarm panel systems.
- Provide an assessment with design and cost estimates for replacing the systems in all schools.



School Facilities

Parking Lot Rehabilitation \$700,000

Byam Elementary School

- Pavement and sub-base materials are past end-of-life, requiring frequent repairs.
- Includes paving, granite curb replacement, striping, and ADA improvements.



School Facilities

Bi-Directional Antenna System \$113,850

McCarthy Middle School

- Amplifies portable public safety radio communications for first responders
- Enhances school safety





Article 9: PFAS Treatment Plant Upgrades at 54 Richardson Road

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

I move that the Town raise and appropriate \$242,000 for enhancements to the PFAS remedial treatment system located at the Town's highway yard located at 54 Richardson Road, including any incidental and related expenses.

Article 9: PFAS Treatment Plant Upgrades at 54 Richardson

- PFAS Removal system installed 2022
- Expand zone of capture towards the Dog Park
- Installation and development of a new Recovery well
- Installation and trenching of piping to connect well to existing treatment system
- Sampling necessary to onboard the new system
- \$242,000, summer/fall 2026





Article 10: Fiscal Year 2027 Sewer Enterprise Fund Operating Budget

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

I move that the Town appropriate the following sums to operate the Sewer Enterprise for Fiscal Year 2027:

Personnel Services:	\$1,269,204
Expenses:	<u>\$4,440,017</u>
Total	\$5,709,221

and to meet this appropriation that \$5,709,221 be raised from Sewer Enterprise revenues.



Article 10: Fiscal Year 2027 Sewer Enterprise Fund Operating Budget

- An enterprise fund provides for a separate accounting and financial reporting mechanism for the operation of the Town's sewer system. Revenues and expenditures of the sewer operations are segregated into a fund with separate financial statements from other governmental activities.
- Sewer enterprise budget increases by \$107,016 (1.91%) for the upcoming fiscal year.



Article 10: Fiscal Year 2027 Sewer Enterprise Fund Operating Budget

- Personnel services increase of \$58K;
- Debt Service increase of \$36K;



Article 11: Sewer Pump Station Upgrades for Clinton Avenue, Fair Street, and Evergreen Street

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

I move that the Town appropriate \$1,500,000 to upgrade the Clinton Avenue, Fair Street, and Evergreen Street sewer pump stations, including all costs incidental or related thereto; and that to meet this appropriation, the Town authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, to borrow \$1,500,000 under Chapter 44 of the General Laws or any other enabling authority; and that while the bonds or notes shall be general obligations of the Town, the annual debt service on such borrowing shall be paid in the first instance from the Town's Sewer Enterprise Fund.

Article 11: Sewer Pump Station Upgrades for Clinton Avenue, Fair Street, and Evergreen Street

- \$1.5 million funding request borrowed over 10 years
- Anticipate construction summer/fall 2026



Article 11: Sewer Pump Station Upgrades for Clinton Avenue, Fair Street, and Evergreen Street

Scope of Work

- Construct new buildings to contain new control panels and generators at each pump station
- Provide temp controls to maintain stations online during construction
- Install the following:
 - New control panels including ability to monitor remotely
 - New generators at Evergreen and Fair
 - Re-install generator at Clinton
 - New variable frequency drives (VFDs) for pumps
 - New ultrasonic flow meters



*Example of upgraded station
(Miland Pump Station shown)*



Article 12: Fiscal Year 2027 Stormwater Management Enterprise Fund

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

I move that the Town appropriate the following sums to operate the Stormwater Management Enterprise for Fiscal Year 2027:

Personnel Services:	\$923,130
Expenses:	<u>\$845,912</u>
Total:	\$1,769,042

and to meet this appropriation that \$1,769,042 be raised from Stormwater Management Enterprise revenues.



Article 12: Fiscal Year 2027 Stormwater Management Enterprise Fund

- Budget increase of \$97,083 (5.81%).
- The Town maintains 95 miles of drains, 4,500 catch basins, 600 drainage outlets, 210 culverts, and 50 detention ponds. Drainage outflows must be sampled, catch basins cleaned, and street sweeping performed twice per year to protect 30 miles of streams across the community.



Article 13: Stormwater Rack Body Truck

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager
Two-Thirds Vote

I move that the Town appropriate \$115,000 for the purchase and equipping of a rack body truck for the Department of Public Works Stormwater Division, including all costs incidental or related thereto; and that to meet this appropriation, the Town authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, to borrow \$115,000 under Chapter 44, Sections 7 or 8 of the General Laws or any other enabling authority and issue bonds and notes of the Town therefor; and that while the bonds or notes shall be general obligations of the Town, the annual debt service on such borrowing shall be paid in the first instance from the Town's Stormwater Enterprise Fund, and to authorize the Select Board and Town Manager to execute any and all documents, enter into all agreements, and take such other action as may be necessary or convenient to effectuate this vote.

Article 13: Stormwater Rack Body Truck

- Purchase of Storm Water F550 Tool Truck with plow
- Equipped as a mason truck to repair drainage structures and headwalls.
- Assist in snow removal operations
- \$110,000 borrowed over 5 years





Article 14: Rainbow Avenue Drainage Improvements

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager
Two-Thirds Vote

I move that the Town appropriate \$350,000 for the design and construction of drainage improvements along Rainbow Avenue, including all costs incidental or related thereto; and that to meet this appropriation, the Town authorize the Treasurer, with the approval of the Select Board, to borrow \$350,000 under Chapter 44, Sections 7 or 8 of the General Laws or any other enabling authority and issue bonds and notes of the Town therefor; and that while the bonds or notes shall be general obligations of the Town, the annual debt service on such borrowing shall be paid in the first instance from the Town's Stormwater Enterprise Fund, and to authorize the Select Board and Town Manager to execute any and all documents, enter into all agreements, and take such other action as may be necessary or convenient to effectuate this vote.

Article 14: Drainage Improvements for Rainbow Ave

- Rainbow Ave has flooded in recent years
- The existing drainage system is undersized
- Project includes:
 - Upsize existing pipe
 - Upsize existing outlet
 - Add manholes and replace catch basins to allow for increase flow and in compliance with MS4 permit
- \$350,000 borrowed over 10 years
- Summer/Fall 2026





Article 15: Fiscal Year 2027 Forum Ice Rink Enterprise Fund

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

I move that the Town appropriate \$65,000 to operate the Chelmsford Forum Ice Rink Enterprise Fund for Fiscal Year 2027, and to meet this appropriation that \$65,000 be raised from Chelmsford Forum Ice Rink Enterprise Fund revenues.



Article 15: Fiscal Year 2027 Forum Ice Rink Enterprise Fund

- A professional ice rink management company continues to operate the Chelmsford Forum.
- The Forum enterprise fund budget means that the operations of the ice rink are not funded from the property tax levy.



Article 16: Amend the Fiscal Year 2026 PEG Access and Cable Related Enterprise Fund

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

I move that the Town amend the Fiscal Year 2026 budget to operate the Cable Television Public, Educational, and Governmental (PEG) Access Enterprise adopted under Article 13 of the Warrant for the Spring Annual Town Meeting held on April 28, 2025 by transferring \$43,000 from the Cable Television Public, Educational, and Governmental (PEG) Access Enterprise Free Cash to Expenses.



Article 16: Amend the Fiscal Year 2026 PEG Access and Cable Related Enterprise Fund

Chelmsford Telemedia has incurred approximately \$43,000 for the following unforeseen equipment purchases and services during this fiscal year:

- Upgrade outdated Control Room Equipment and Cameras for Room 204
- Replace HP Server in Master Control
- Replace/Restore capability to Broadcast in SD to cable (Teranex)
- Replace 9 computers to be compatible with Windows 11
- Repair/Upgrade TV Truck Intercom Communication System (RTS)
- Upgrade TV Truck Live Uplink capability (via Peplink bonded wifi system)



Article 17: Fiscal Year 2027 PEG Access and Cable Related Enterprise Fund

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

I move that the Town appropriate the following sums to operate the Cable Television Public, Educational, and Governmental (PEG) Access Enterprise for Fiscal Year 2027:

Personnel Services:	\$482,506
Expenses:	<u>\$199,500</u>
Total	\$682,006

And to meet this appropriation that \$682,006 be raised from cable television licensing revenues.



Article 17: Fiscal Year 2027 PEG Access and Cable Related Enterprise Fund

- PEG Access Enterprise Revenues come from an assessment on the Comcast and Verizon cable television bills.
- Despite the trend of people “cutting the cord”, cable access revenues have remained within budgeted forecast levels.



Article 18: PEG Access Equipment

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

I move that the Town transfer \$92,000 from the Cable Television Public, Educational, and Governmental (PEG) Access Enterprise Free Cash to purchase and install cable access television computer servers and equipment, including all costs incidental or related thereto.



Article 18: PEG Access Equipment

FY2027 CHELMSFORD TELEMEDIA CAPITAL REQUEST

• Truck Switch Replacement (2):	\$7,000
• School Committee Room Switcher Replacement (ATEM):	\$5,000
• School Committee Room Camera Replacement (4):	\$12,000
• School Committee Room Monitor:	\$2,000
• Chelmsford Telemedia Studio Core Switch:	\$12,000
• Truck Xpression GFX Update:	\$50,000
• Chelmsford Telemedia Studio Network Upgrades:	<u>\$4,000</u>
	TOTAL \$92,000



Article 19: Fiscal Year 2027 Golf Course Enterprise Fund Operating Budget

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

I move that the Town appropriate \$30,000 to operate the Golf Course Enterprise for Fiscal Year 2027 and to meet this appropriation that \$30,000 be raised from Golf Course Enterprise revenues.



Article 19: Fiscal Year 2027 Golf Course Enterprise Fund Operating Budget

- A professional golf course management company continues to operate the Chelmsford Country Club.
- The golf course enterprise fund budget means that the operations of the public golf course are not funded from the property tax levy.



Article 20: Annual Appropriation of Departmental Revolving Funds

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

I move that the Town authorize the following total amount of expenditures for Departmental Revolving Funds for the Fiscal Year 2027 which have been established under the provisions of Chapter 35, Section 6 of the Code of the Town of Chelmsford, with such expenditure limitations to be applicable from fiscal year to fiscal year unless sooner revised by Town Meeting prior to July 1 in any fiscal year:

Dog Pound & Licensing:	\$10,000;
Senior Citizen Trip Program:	\$75,000;
Senior Citizen Respite Care Program:	\$150,000;
Police Cruiser Communications Equipment:	\$20,000;
Fire Life Safety Equipment:	\$20,000;
Cemetery Wreath/Floral Decorations:	\$10,000;
Onsite Sewage Facility:	\$75,000;
Public Shade Tree:	\$30,000;



Article 21: Cemetery Improvement and Development Fund

SUBMITTED BY: Cemetery Commission

I move that the Town transfer \$60,000 from the Sale of Graves and Lots to the Cemetery Improvement and Development Fund.



Article 21: Cemetery Improvement and Development Fund

- Tree removal and safety pruning at all 6 cemeteries.
- Installation of a niche wall at Heart Pond Cemetery.
- Plantings in the mausoleum area at Pine Ridge Cemetery.



Article 22: Property Valuation Services

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager

I move that the Town transfer \$153,000 from Overlay Surplus to fund property valuation services to maintain certification by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue.



Article 22: Property Valuation Services

The Massachusetts Department of Revenue Division of Local Services Bureau of Local Assessment (BLA) requires a municipality to maintain a periodic data inspection program that provides for the inspection of each parcel at least once every ten years. BLA's expectation is that no property data is older than ten years at any given point in time. An inspection of the property should be a full measure and listing of the exterior and a concerted effort demonstrated for interior inspections.



Article 22: Property Valuation Services

Town of Chelmsford Parcel Counts

• Single Family Homes:	9,061
• Condominiums:	2,886
• Two Family Homes:	217
• Three Family:	19
• Apartments & Non-Transient Group:	49
• Vacant Land:	559
• Mobile & Multiple Homes on 1 Parcel:	24
• Commercial:	404
• Industrial:	218
• Multiple Use:	52
• Chapter Lands (Forestry, Agric, Recr.):	<u>25</u>
	Total: 13,514

Approximately 10% (1,351) of these parcels must be inspected each year.



Article 23: Community Preservation Fund FY27 Debt Service, Admin. Expenses, & Reserves

SUBMITTED BY: Community Preservation Committee

I move that the Town:

- A. hear and act on the report of the Community Preservation Committee on the Fiscal Year 2027 Community Preservation budget;
- B. appropriate \$150,000 from the Community Preservation Fund Open Space Reserve, \$150,000 from the Community Preservation Fund Community Housing Reserve, \$131,500 from the Community Preservation Fund Community Housing Reserve, and \$736,757 from the Community Preservation Fund General Reserve for the payment of Fiscal Year 2027 debt service;
- C. appropriate \$50,000 from Fiscal Year 2027 Community Preservation Fund revenues to meet the administrative expenses and all other necessary and proper expenses of the Community Preservation Committee for Fiscal Year 2027; and

(continued)



Article 23: Community Preservation Fund FY27 Debt Service, Admin. Expenses, & Reserves

D. reserve for future appropriation amounts from Fiscal Year 2027 Community Preservation Fund revenues as recommended by the Community Preservation Committee, as follows:

- (1) \$150,000 for the acquisition, creation and preservation of open space,
- (2) \$150,000 for the acquisition and preservation of historic resources,
- (3) \$150,000 for the creation, preservation and support of community housing; and
- (4) \$250,000 for the Community Preservation Fund Fiscal Year 2027 Budgeted Reserve

All other monies in the Community Preservation Fund shall remain undesignated until further recommendations by the Community Preservation Committee and action thereon by the Town Meeting.



Article 23: Community Preservation Fund FY27 Debt Service, Admin. Expenses, & Reserves

Community Preservation Fund Fiscal Year 2027 Required Reservations

Revenue Projection for Fiscal Year 2027 Required Reservations

FY27 CPA Property Tax Surcharge:	\$1,670,422
Estimated State Revenue:	<u>\$255,000</u>
Total	\$1,925,422



Article 23: Community Preservation Fund FY27 Debt Service, Admin. Expenses, & Reserves

Community Preservation Fund Fiscal Year 2027 Required Reservations

Open Space – 10% Allocation:	\$150,000
Historical – 10% Allocation:	\$150,000
Community Housing – 10% Allocation:	\$150,000
Budgeted Reserve:	\$250,000



Article 23: Community Preservation Fund FY27 Debt Service, Admin. Expenses, & Reserves

Community Preservation Fund Fiscal Year 2027 Debt Service

• Roberts Field:	\$450K bond:	\$ 42,400	(2028)
• Turf Fields:	\$1.2M bond:	\$83,982	(2028)
• Chelmsford Woods:	\$1.5M bond:	\$109,375	(2029)
• Warren-Pohl:	\$1.125M bond:	\$117,350	(2031)
• Koulas Farm:	\$4.164M bond:	\$408,900	(2039)
• Chelmsford Arms:	\$2.6M bond:	\$274,750*	(2040)
• Center Utilities:	\$1M bond:	<u>\$131,500*</u>	(2035)
	Total:	\$1,168,257	

* = projected



Article 24: Community Preservation Fund Preservation of Cemetery Headstones

SUBMITTED BY: Community Preservation Committee

I move that the Town amend the vote taken under Article 23 of the April 29, 2024 Spring Annual Town Meeting pertaining to appropriation of \$8,000 for the preservation of headstones at Forefathers Cemetery by allowing the funds to be used for the preservation of headstones at all Chelmsford historic cemetery locations.

Click on Tools, Comment and Share to access additional features.

CHELMSFORD

BEFORE PHOTOS



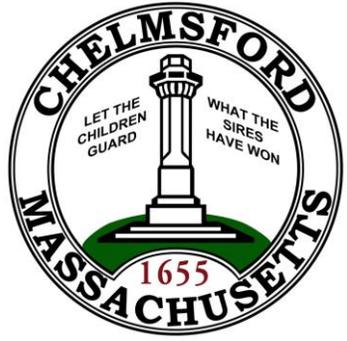


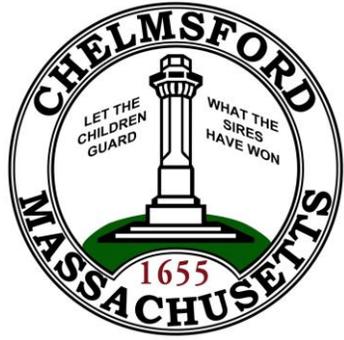
Article 25: Community Preservation Fund Varney Playground Accessible Playground Equipment

SUBMITTED BY: Community Preservation Committee

I move that the Town transfer \$74,000 from the Community Preservation Fund General Reserve for the purchase and installation of new handicapped-accessible playground equipment at Varney Playground.

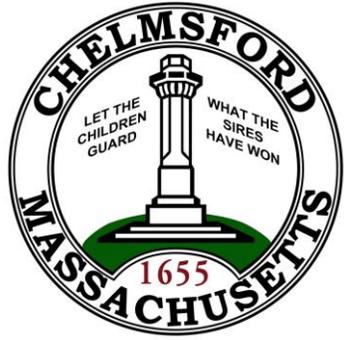
VARNEY PLAYGROUND



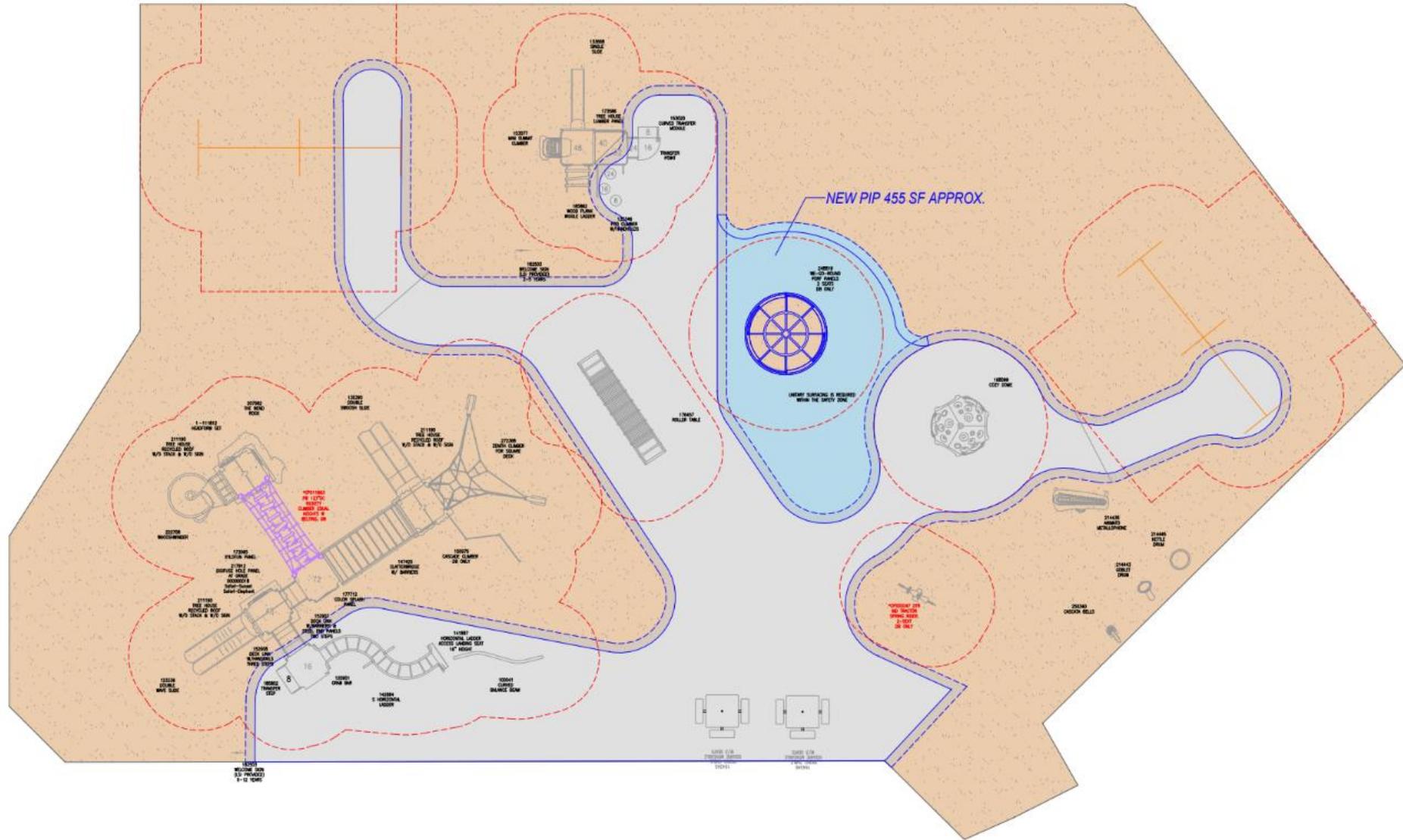


VARNEY PLAYGROUND PHASE 2

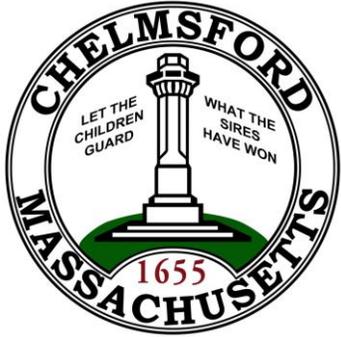




VARNEY PLAYGROUND PHASE 2







PROPOSED BUDGET

Varney Playground Structure Installation		
1	We-Go Round Structure	\$ 48,000
2	Poured in Place Surfacing	\$ 20,000
3	Total site work/installation	\$ 16,000
		\$ 84,000
	Rare Road Foundation Donation	\$ 10,000
	Total CPC Request	\$ 74,000



Article 26: Zoning Bylaw Amendment Definition of Family

SUBMITTED BY:

Brian Latina

Citizen Petition

Two-Thirds Vote

To see if the Town will vote to overturn the adopted 2025 Fall Town Meeting Warrant Article 29 Zoning Bylaw Amendment Definition of Family, changing the Definition of Family in Zoning Article XX, Terminology, from the pre-existing Relationship Based Definition of Family to a Zoning Terminology Based Definition of Family and restore the pre-existing Relationship Based Definition of Family.

; or act in relation thereto.



Article 27: General Bylaw Amendment Chapter 108 Outdoor Lighting

**SUBMITTED BY: Kelly Beatty
Planning Board**



Article 28: Zoning Bylaw Amendment Section 195-34 Outdoor Illumination

SUBMITTED BY: Kelly Beatty
Planning Board
Two-Thirds Vote

I move that the Town amend the Town Code, Chapter 195 Zoning, by deleting Section 195-34 Outdoor illumination in its entirety and replacing it as follows:

195-34 Outdoor Illumination

- A. See General Bylaw, Chapter 108, for applicable Outdoor Lighting standards and provisions.



Article 29: Zoning Bylaw Amendment Rezone Certain Parcels on the Official Zoning Map

SUBMITTED BY: Planning Board
Two-Thirds Vote



Article 30: Zoning Bylaw Amendment Community Enhancement and Investment Overlay District

SUBMITTED BY: Planning Board
Two-Thirds Vote



Article 31: Zoning Bylaw Amendment Revise the Definition of Boarding House



Article 32: Zoning Bylaw Amendment Definition of "Bed and Breakfast" and Add to Use Table

SUBMITTED BY: Planning Board

Two-Thirds Vote



Article 33: Zoning Bylaw Amendment Use Table Commercial Parking Garage/Structure

SUBMITTED BY: Planning Board

Two-Thirds Vote



Article 34: Zoning Bylaw Amendment Zoning Dimensional Tables Change Minimum Depth

SUBMITTED BY: Planning Board

Two-Thirds Vote



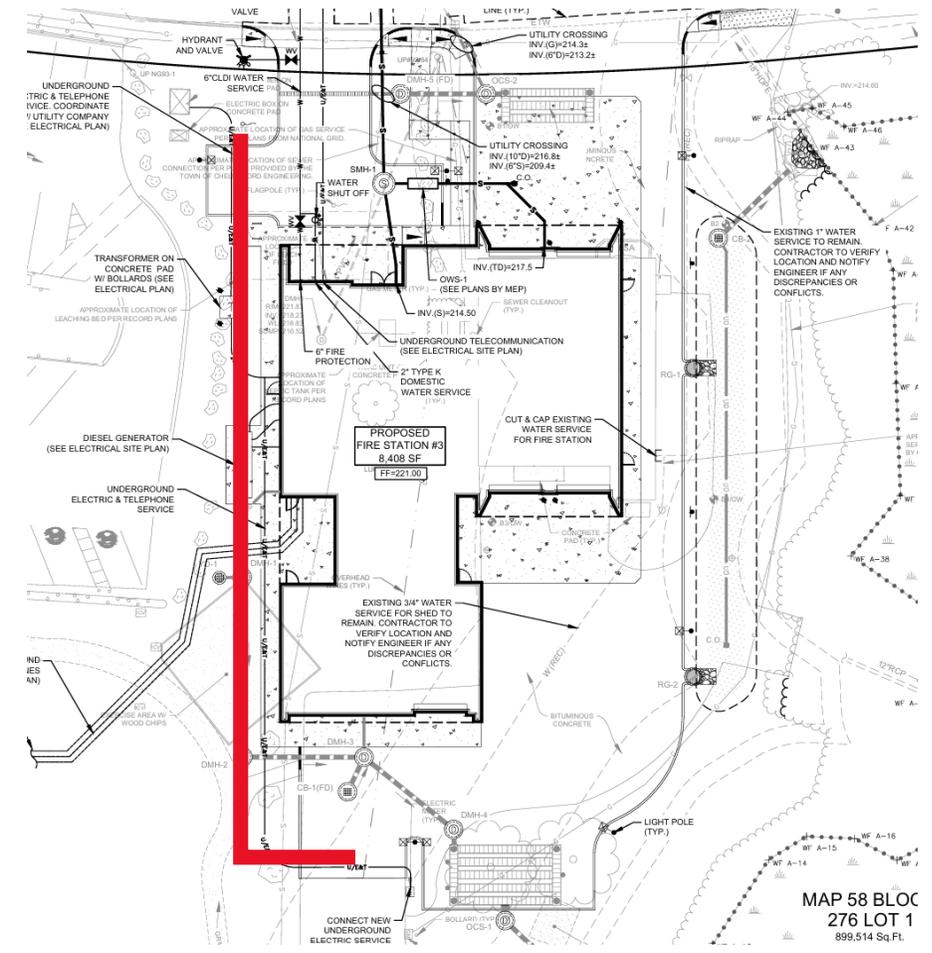
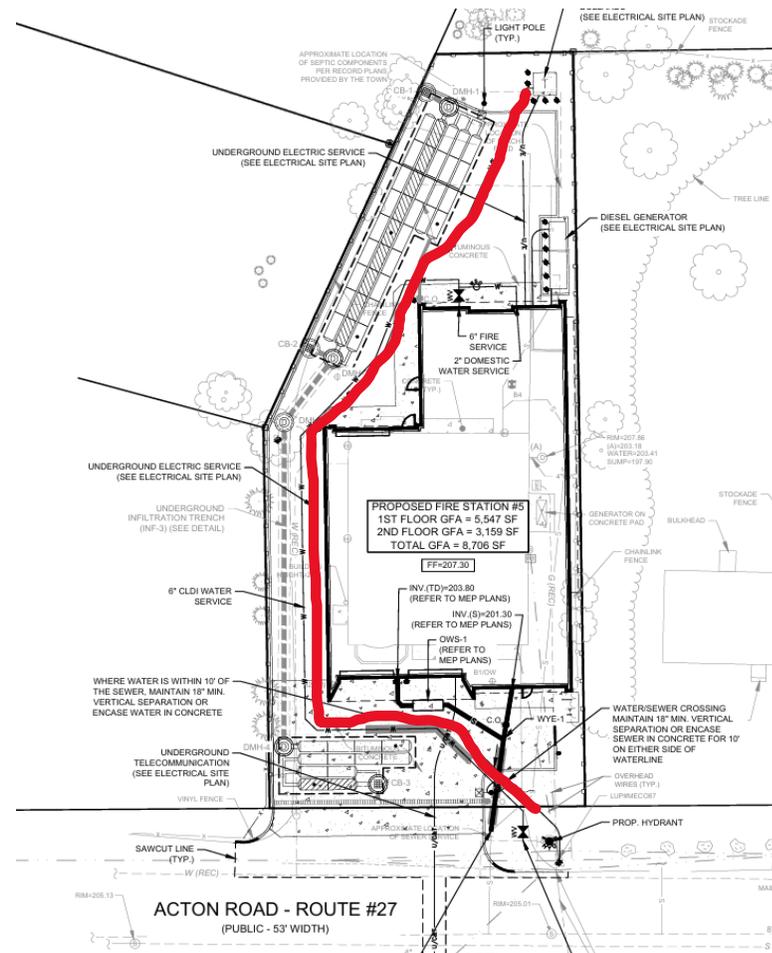
Article 35: Utility Easements for Fire Stations

SUBMITTED BY: Town Manager ***Two-Thirds Vote***

I move that the Town to authorize the Select Board to grant, upon such terms and conditions as the Select Board may determine, easements to public utilities in the following Town properties for the purpose of obtaining new or additional electrical service: 1) 260 Old Westford Road, Assessors Parcel ID 58-276-1; and 2) 295 Acton Road, Assessors Parcel ID 117-421-6 and Assessors Parcel ID 117-421-8, as more or less depicted on documents placed on file and available for review in the Offices of the Town Clerk and the Department of Public Works; and to authorize the Select Board to seek such approvals under Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution or otherwise, if any, as may be required to allow for such grants, and to execute any and all documents, enter into all agreements, and take such other action as may be necessary or convenient in the furtherance of the objectives of this article.

Article 35: Fire Stations Utility Easements

- National Grid Electric utility easements for new electric services to New Fire Stations 3 and 5 (2 – 4" conduit encased in concrete, 800 amp at each location)
- New buildings meeting stretch code, fully electric. Existing gas services removed and disconnected.



MAP 58 BLOC
276 LOT 1
899,514 Sq. Ft.



Article 36: Street Acceptance Proctor Road

SUBMITTED BY: Select Board

Two-Thirds Vote

I move that the Town:

- a. accept as a public town way Proctor Road as laid out by the Select Board and shown by reports and plans which are on file in the office of the Town Clerk;
- b. authorize the Select Board to acquire, by gift, purchase, eminent domain, or otherwise and upon such terms and conditions as it may determine, any and all interests in land, including easements or fee simple interest, with the trees thereon, within said layout and abutting lands as may be necessary for the purpose of completing such acceptance and making traffic safety and road improvements incidental to such acceptance, and otherwise providing for the use and maintenance of said way and drainage facilities incidental thereto for all purposes for which public ways are used in the Town of Chelmsford;
- c. authorize the Select Board to negotiate and execute all necessary and proper contracts and agreements thereto.

Article 36: Proctor Road Acceptance

- Entire limits of Proctor Road never accepted as a public right-of-way
- One of few remaining arterial roadways unaccepted
- Town plows it, has repaired and maintained it
- Existing roadway limits remain, plans formalize that street is a public right-of-way
- Purpose of acceptance is to increase Ch. 90 reimbursement funds from state
- Proctor Road proposed in FY27 Paving plan





Thank You

Save the Date

Fall Annual Town Meeting
Monday, October 19
7:30 P.M.

Finance Committee Liaison List

Updated 02/24/26

Department	Contact	Liaison	Date
Board of Health	Donna Greenwood	A. Tanini	
Capital Planning	John Sousa	C. Goodland	2/12/26
Cemetery	David Boyle	D. Goselin	2/26/26
Chelmsford Public Schools	Jay Lang, Joanna M. Johnson-Collins & School Committee	S. Kovalck/D. Goselin/ S. Chase	2/26/26
Community Preservation Fund	Judith Carven	C. Goodland	
Senior Center	Debra Siriani	D. Goselin	2/26/26
DPW/Waste/Sewer/Storm/ Public Facilities	Christine Clancy	C. Goodland/S. Chase/S. Kovalck	
Finance Department/ Accounting	John Sousa/Darlene Lussier	A. Tanini/C. Goodland	
Finance Department/ Assessors	John Sousa/Regan Lemay	A. Tanini/C. Goodland	
Finance Department/ Information Technology	John Sousa/Ted Lutter	A. Tanini/C. Goodland	
Finance Department/ Treasury and Collection	John Sousa	A. Tanini/C. Goodland	
Fire Department	Gary Ryan	J. Clancy/ S. Kovalck	2/26/26
Library	Lesley Kimball	E. MacDonald	
Nashoba Valley School District	Denise Pigeon, Michelle Shephard, & School Committee	D. Goselin/S. Chase/ C. Goodland	3/12/26
PEG Access/Cable	Pete Pedulla	S. Chase	
Police Department	Colin Spence	J. Clancy/ E. MacDonald	
Town Manager	Paul Cohen	ALL	2/12/26
Veterans Services	Regina Jackson	S. Chase	

Warrant Article Schedule

Art.	Description	Contact	Date
9	PFAS Treatment Plant Upgrades at 54 Richardson Road	Christine Clancy	
11	Sewer Pump Station Upgrades for Clinton Avenue, Fair Street, and Evergreen Street	Christine Clancy	
13	Stormwater Rack Body Truck	Christine Clancy	
14	Drainage Improvements for Rainbow Avenue	Christine Clancy	
16	Amend the Fiscal Year 2026 PEG Access and Cable Related Enterprise Fund Operating Budget	Pete Pedulla	
18	Chelmsford Telemedia Public, Education, and Government Access Equipment	Pete Pedulla	
22	Property Valuation Services	Regan Lemay	
24	CPC – Transfer Cemetery Restoration Funding	Judith Carven	
25	CPC – Varney Playground Accessible Playground Equipment	Judith Carven	
26	Zoning Bylaw Amendment - Definition of Family	Brian Latina	
27	General Bylaw Amendment – Outdoor Lighting	Kelly Beatty	
28	Zoning Bylaw Amendment – Outdoor Illumination	Kelly Beatty	
29	Zoning Bylaw Amendment – Rezone Certain Parcels on the Official Zoning Map	Chris Lavallee	
30	Zoning Bylaw Amendment – Community Enhancement and Investment Overlay District	Chris Lavallee	
31	Zoning Bylaw Amendment – Revise the Definition of Boarding House	Chris Lavallee	
32	Zoning Bylaw Amendment – Add New Definition for “Bed and	Chris Lavallee	

	Breakfast” and Add to Use Table		
33	Zoning Bylaw Amendment – Use Table Commercial Parking Garage/Structure	Chris Lavallee	
34	Zoning Bylaw Amendment – Zoning Dimensional Tables Change Minimum Depth from 0 to N/A	Chris Lavallee	
35	Utility Easements for Fire Stations Construction Project	Christine Clancy	
36	Street Acceptance: Proctor Road	Christine Clancy	

Contact List

Name	Home Number	Work/Cell Number	Email
Sam Chase	978-256-5617	978-888-4760	clochase@verizon.net
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Cindy Goodland		978-302-6168	cagoodland@gmail.com
David Goselin	978-250-8178	508-395-5395	dpgoselin@comcast.net
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Pam Morrison		978-831-8560	pmorrison22@aol.com
Annita Tanini		617-818-8516	atanini@chelmsfordma.gov

Schedule for Finance Committee Report - Spring – 2026

February 12, 2026	Town Manager presents budget to Finance Committee.
February 12, 2026	Finance Committee receives Draft Warrant Articles from Town Manager.
February 19 – March 26, 2026	Budget Hearings
March 16 - 24, 2026	Clerk receives Budget Materials from Finance Director.
March 26, 2026 - April 9, 2026	Finance Committee reviews and votes on Warrant Articles.
April 9, 2026	Last Date for Warrant Article Recommendations to be in book.
March 24, 2026 – April 10, 2026	Clerk puts the Book together.
April 11, 2026	Clerk provides Finance Committee and Finance Director with Draft of the Book.
April 15, 2026	Final Chairman’s Letter sent to clerk.
April 15, 2026	Final Comments and Edits on Book are due to the clerk.
April 15-16, 2026	Clerk finalizes Book.
April 16, 2026	Book delivered to the Printer and Posted on Town Website.
April 21, 2026	Books delivered to Town Hall.
April 27, 2026	Town Meeting Begins.