

Town of Chelmsford Select Board Minutes
50 Billerica Rd., Room 204
Chelmsford, MA 01824

Select Board Regular Meeting MINUTES
February 9, 2026

Attending:

Patrick Maloney, Chair
Patricia Wojtas, Vice Chair
Aaron Cunningham, Clerk

Paul Cohen, Town Manager

Absent:

Jeffrey Hardy, Board Member

Please note that all documents referenced in these minutes are on file at the Town Manager's Office, 50 Billerica Rd., Chelmsford, Mass.

CALL TO ORDER – NOTIFICATION OF LIVE BROADCAST

Chair Maloney called the regular meeting of the Board to order at 6:00PM.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vice Chair Wojtas read the following announcements:

New Sharps Disposal Schedule

Medical sharps waste drop-off days: March 12, June 11, September 10, December 10 at the Health Department between 9:00AM-4:00PM only. Registration no longer required.

2026 Dog Licensing

Every 2025 dog license expired on December 31st. Licensing for 2026 began on December 1st. Information is available at www.chelmsfordma.gov/249/Dog-Licenses.

2026 Annual Town Census

The 2026 annual town census was mailed to all households in January. Please return your census to keep active on the voting list, and if not a registered voter, returning it ensures that the Clerk's office can provide you with proof of residency. An accurate count of residents assists in providing better municipal services.

Nomination Papers Available for the April 7 Spring Annual Town Election

Nomination papers for various town offices are available at the Town Clerk's office for open seats. For further information contact the Clerk's office at 978-250-5205. Deadline is February 12, 2026 at 5:00PM to obtain papers and must be returned by February 17, 2026 at 5:00PM.

GENERAL PUBLIC INPUT

In accordance with Select Board Policies Section 1-2.B, speakers will be limited to no more than three (3) minutes. Speakers may not cede their time to others unless required as a reasonable accommodation because of a disability. Total time for General Public Input is limited to no more than thirty (30) minutes.

There was no public input.

COMMITTEE VACANCIES

Vice Chair Wojtas read the list of current vacancies. Interested applicants can apply online at <http://www.chelmsfordma.gov> or through the Town Manager’s office.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

National Grid and Verizon Pole Petition – North Rd.

Vaz Eng of National Grid appeared before the Board in support of its application to install a pole on North Rd.

Chair Maloney asked for public input. There was none.

MOTION: by Vice Chair Wojtas to close this public hearing. Seconded by Clerk Cunningham. **Motion carries 3-0, unanimous.**

MOTION: by Vice Chair Wojtas to approve pole petition 31344236 to install a new pole, as presented. Seconded by Board Clerk Cunningham. **Motion carries 3-0, unanimous.**

All Alcoholic Beverages Restaurant License – House of Charoen, LLC, DBA Udomsuk Thai Kitchen and Bar – 313 Littleton Rd. Unit 2

Apitchaya Boonawong of the House of Charoen appeared virtually before the Board in support of her application for an all alcoholic beverages restaurant license for the House of Charoen, LLC, DBA Udomsuk Thai Kitchen and Bar on the premises located at 313 Littleton Rd., Unit 2.

Vice Chair Wojtas noted that the ABCC application stated that at least 50% of on premises managers had to be U.S. citizens. Ms. Boonawong is listed as the sole manager, and she clicked on “no” as a U.S. citizen. Ms. Boonawong stated she has a green card. Insofar as the form is generated by the ABCC and the license is contingent on ABCC approval, it was decided that the Board would go forward with its approval.

There was no public input.

MOTION: by Vice Chair Wojtas to close the public hearing. Seconded by Clerk Cunningham. **Motion carries 3-0, unanimous.**

MOTION: by Vice Chair Wojtas that we approve an all alcohol restaurant license for the House of Charoen DBA Udomsuk Thai Kitchen and Bar at 313 Littleton Rd. as presented. Seconded by Clerk Cunningham. **Motion carries 3-0, unanimous.**

All Alcoholic Beverages License Amendment – Alteration of Premises and Pledge of License – Kanissa Inc. DBA Chelmsford Wine and Spirits – 133 Princeton St.

Attorney David Keele appeared before the Board in support of his client’s application for an alteration of premises and pledge of license for Kanissa Inc. DBA Chelmsford Wine and Spirits on the premises located at 133 Princeton St.

In response to Vice Chair Wojtas request for clarification on the pledge of license, Town Manager Cohen stated that the value of the license acts as collateral and is required by the applicant’s lender. Clerk Cunningham noted the unusual square footage of the building with a top floor proposed as a wine tasting area that anticipates the risk of carrying a high inventory. He also expressed concern to approve the application while there were still a number of open departmental items to be resolved. Attorney Keele

stated that there were no plans for an upper floor wine tasting area at the present time. He also noted that the business can offer the best prices because of the leverage of bulk wholesale purchasing.

There was no public input.

MOTION: by Vice Chair Wojtas to close the public hearing for this alcohol license. Seconded by Clerk Cunningham. **Motion carries 3-0, unanimous.**

MOTION: by Vice Chair Wojtas that to approve the application for the alteration of premises and pledge of license on an all alcohol package store license for Kanissa Inc. DBA Chelmsford Wine and Spirits contingent on completing all of the department sign-offs on inputs received on the premises at 133 Princeton St. as presented. Seconded by Clerk Cunningham.
Motion carries 3-0, unanimous.

REQUESTS FOR MONUMENTS/MEMORIALS – RENAMING THE FOOD PANTRY IN HONOR OF SANDY DONOVAN

Vice Chair Wojtas presented the petition for the naming of the food pantry in honor of Sandy Donovan, who founded the Chelmsford Food Pantry and served as Director for twenty-seven years. The food pantry board of directors is in full support. Chair Maloney also expressed his full support.

MOTION: by Vice Chair Wojtas to approve the naming of the food pantry in honor of Sandy Donovan as presented. Seconded by Clerk Cunningham. **Motion carries 3-0, unanimous.**

DISCUSSION – EARMARK REQUESTS FOR STATE DELEGATION

Town Manager Cohen presented the following three earmark requests from last year. He noted that some may be continued this year, and/or others could be included in requests for the upcoming state budget.

Senior Center Food and Nutrition Programs (\$25,000). This will continue to enhance the quality and quantity of food that the Town provides to our senior citizens, especially through the Meals on Wheels program. This would include purchasing high-quality proteins that are no longer available on the commodities list, as well as covering the increased costs of food and packaging.

Freeman Lake Management (\$80,000). Reduce or eliminate nuisance species and prevent the introduction of new aquatic invasive species; improve water quality for swimming, secondary recreation, and aquatic life; and maintain or improve fish and wildlife habitat.

Tree Canopy Restoration and Invasive Species Management (\$50,000). This would enable the Town to plant shade trees along the Town's right of ways and reduce invasive species. This would result in improved air quality, reduce the urban heat island effect, and beautify neighborhoods.

Following discussion, it was agreed to table this agenda item to the next meeting for consideration of other potential projects including those identified by Ms. Clancy. Town Manager Cohen will provide a three-year historical lookback on approved projects.

TOWN MANAGER BID AWARDS

Town Offices and Senior Center Elevator Modernization Project

MOTION: by Vice Chair Wojtas to approve the Town Manager's bid award for the Town offices and senior center elevator project to Enterprise Equipment Company in the amount of \$897,210. Seconded by Clerk Cunningham. **Motion carries 3-0, unanimous.**

TOWN MANAGER REPORTS

Town Manager Cohen presented the following reports:

Massachusetts Attorney General's Office Approval of 2025 Fall Annual Town Meeting General and Zoning Warrant Articles

The general and zoning warrant articles for the fall annual town meeting were approved by the Attorney General's office with the exception of Article 16, where several conflicts with other zoning bylaws were noted.

Draft Warrant for 2026 Spring Town Meeting

Town Manager Cohen presented the thirty-six warrant articles for the 2026 spring town meeting. The warrant is now under legal review for signature by the Board at its next meeting.

Town Manager's Proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Operating and Capital Budgets

Town Manager Cohen reviewed his PowerPoint presentation on the FY2027 operating and capital budgets, including the following highlights:

FY27 budget overview.

- General government operating budget increases.
- General government operating budget omissions.
- Budget impact from health insurance premiums and retirement assessment.
- Capital improvements plan highlights.
- Chelmsford Public Schools.
 - Per pupil expenditure.
- Nashoba Tech.
 - Enrollment.
 - Per pupil expenditure.
- Town of Chelmsford Full-time equivalent employees.
 - General government – full-time equivalent employees.
- FY27 budget drivers.
- Available FY27 new revenue sources.
- Five fiscal-year revenue comparison.
- Ten fiscal-year revenue comparison.
- Property tax revenue.
- FY26 \$9,219 average single-family tax bill allocation.
- Property tax valuation.
- Average single-family property tax bill.
- Property tax comparison.
- Inflation.

Proposed FY27 capital plan.

Town Manager Cohen noted the actions taken to address the previous budget deficit. Health insurance premiums were initially expected to increase by 13%. However, by eliminating GLP-1 drugs for non-diabetic patients, healthcare was cut by 5% resulting instead in an 8% increase. State group insurance is expected to follow suit. Also, the school budget request was decreased from \$3.5M to \$2.5M. Town Manager Cohen noted that, insofar as these decreases are not sustainable, budget pressures are expected for subsequent years. With 40% of the state budget going to healthcare and continued federal pressures, the Governor has appointed a task force to control healthcare costs.

Discussion ensued on the continued pressures on the Town and taxpayer to maintain level services in the face of runaway inflation.

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protections Superseding Order of Conditions for Freeman Lake Aquatic Management

Town Manager Cohen reviewed Mass DEP's superseding order of conditions for the Freeman Lake aquatic management project to commence in the spring.

Southwell Boat Ramp Replacement Project State Bid Results

Town Manager Cohen reviewed the bid results received by the Department of Fish and Game for the Southwell boat ramp replacement project, to be completed by the end of this year.

Employee and Retiree Health Insurance Claims Update

Town Manager Cohen reviewed his PowerPoint presentation on MIIA health benefits trust detail of claims, premiums and loss ratios for the period 12/1/2023-11/30/2025, particularly noting increases in GLP-1 costs.

Double Pole Report

Town Manager Cohen reviewed the double pole report dated February 1st submitted by Verizon.

Police Chief Retirement

Town Manager Cohen reported that he had received a letter from Police Chief Spence notifying the Board of his intention to retire from his position as Police Chief effective June 1, 2026. The Town Manager will commence the interview process with an internal candidate expected to be brought to the Board in a few months.

TOWN MANAGER APPOINTMENTS

Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee: Kevin Baxter – Unexpired three-year term ending 6/30/2026

Community Preservation Fund Committee: David Hamilton – Three-Year term ending 6/30/2028

Council on Aging Board: Mindy Rosen – Three-year term ending 6/30/2028

Historic District Commission Alternate Member: Marie Cumming – Unexpired three-year term ending 6/30/2027

Holiday Decorating Committee Re-appointment: John Floria – One-year term ending 12/31/2026

Vinal Square Strategic Action Plan Committee: Adam McCusker – Unexpired three-year term ending 6/30/2026

MOTION: by Vice Chair Wojtas that we approve the Town Manager's appointments as presented. Seconded by Clerk Cunningham. **Motion carries 3-0, unanimous.**

Other

In response to Chair Maloney's question, Town Manager Cohen stated that the \$1.2M snow and ice budget has been exceeded because of the repeated storms.

MEETING MINUTES

Select Board Regular Meeting Minutes – January 12, 2026

MOTION: by Vice Chair Wojtas to approve the meeting minutes of January 12, 2026. Seconded by Clerk Cunningham. **Motion carries 3-0, unanimous.**

SELECT BOARD MEMBER LIAISON REPORTS AND REFERRALS

Board Member Wojtas

- Chelmsford Library's "One Book" this year is *The History of Sound* by Ben Shattuck, who will review his book on April 16th. Books are available at the library.
- The MIAA has granted the Town a wellness award for the most innovative wellness champion. Lisa Marone was honored for expanding wellness and doubling participation in eighteen months.
- Congratulations to new patrol officer Gabe Murphy.

Clerk Cunningham

- The Vinal Square Strategic Planning Committee is planning a spring revival event in early May.
- Planning Board held public hearing on the Riverneck Rd. water treatment plant which was well attended.
- Board of Health has approved a new regulation with regard to inspections and maintenance of sewer systems.
- Best wishes to the two Chelmsford residents, Jack Eichel and Chevonne Forgan, participating in the winter Olympics.
- Congratulations to the MassCar race team for placing in the top ten.

Vice Chair Maloney

- Congratulations to Polce Chief Spence on his impending retirement.
- School Building Committee approved submission of preliminary design proposal for Parker Middle School for MSBA approval.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: by Vice Chair Wojtas to adjourn at 7:38PM. Seconded by Clerk Cunningham.
Motion carries 3-0, unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Martin Barraford
 Recording Secretary

Supporting documents:

- 2026 Sharps flyer
- Dog license PSA
- 2026 Town census PSA
- Run for local office 2026
- Committee vacancies as of 2026-2-09
- Pole petition – North Rd.
- House of Charoen – alcohol license
- Kanissa Inc. – license amendment
- Memorial request – Sandy Donovan
- House earmark requests FY26
- 1-22-26 bid award memo
- TO and SC elev general bid tab
- Chelmsford12065FA app
- 2026 spring ATM list of warrant articles
- 2026 spring annual town meeting warrant
- FY27 budget presentation 02-05-26
- FY27 Town Manager budget – February 5, 2025
- FY27 Town Manager sewer enterprise budget – February 5, 2025
- FY27 Town Manager stormwater enterprise budget – February 5, 2025
- FY27 Town Manager PEG access enterprise budget – February 5, 2025
- Chelmsford LRB 1223-1125 detail final
- Chelmsford GLP-1 drugs utilization 2025

- SOC 129-0967 Freeman Lake dep superseding OOC January 2026
- Bid summary – Chelmsford
- FEB double pole report spreadsheet
- February 2026 double pole report
- Retirement of Police Chief
- BPAC – Baxter
- CPC – Hamilton
- Council on aging – Rosen
- Hist Dist – Cumming
- Holiday – Floria
- Vinal Square – Mccusker
- 01-12-2026 SB minutes draft2

Draft Only