

BOARD OF ASSESSORS

Samuel P. Chase, Chairman
Michael Donoghue
Gabi Francisco



Chief Assessor

Regan LeMay

Telephone: (978) 250-5220

Chelmsford Town Offices

Assessor's Office

50 Billerica Rd
Chelmsford, MA 01824-2777

Approved by BOA Vote 4 February 2026

Meeting Date: 4 February 2026
Location: Assessor's Office, 50 Billerica Rd, Chelmsford MA 01824
Present: S. Chase, M. Donoghue, R. LeMay, B. Corcoran, M. O'Hagan
Absent: G. Francisco
Public Present: Regina Jackson, Veteran's Agent (partial)

Meeting Called to Order at 10:00 AM

Note: The Assessor's office files abatement, exemption, and hardship files by Account. No., which is the same as the tax bill number. All properties acted upon are referred to either by property address and/or by the Account No. referenced on the corresponding documents.

1. Appointments: None.

2. Discussion: R. Jackson followed up on our 8 January 2026 meeting wherein she proposed increasing Clause 22 Veterans' Exemption amounts above the current statutory amounts (see Assessor's Regular Session Minutes, 3 February 2025). R. Jackson said she met with the Town Manager to request that he draft a Town Meeting Warrant Article that would increase General Disability Clause 22 Exemption from \$400 to \$820 and 22E, 100% disability Exemption from \$1000 to \$2000. R. Jackson said that the total FY 26 number of eligible Veterans under these two Clauses is 237. New limits would be increased from the statutory minimums. Statutory minimum exemption amounts are reimbursable to the town up to 75% of the exemption, but any additional expense must be borne completely by the Town. Approximately \$154,000 would be added to the annual operating budget if Town Meeting were to approve the increases at the amounts indicated. R. Jackson would like the Board to support her efforts to increase these exemptions.

S. Chase explained that the Board generally has no authority to impact any change in Exemption amounts; that authority rests with the Town Meeting acting on a Warrant Article requesting the changes. A Warrant Article may be placed on the Annual Warrant by the Town Manager, the Selectboard by majority vote, or by Citizen Petition following the prescribed process. Thereafter, the Proponent must make a case for approval to the Finance Committee and Selectboard separately. After consideration, the Finance Committee and Selectboard make their recommendations either to approve or not approve passage of the Article. The Town meeting then votes on the article as presented, or as amended on the Floor. The Board of Assessors has no role in that process.

That said, M. Donoghue and S. Chase fully support the intent of the article. Many surrounding towns have increased their exemption amounts to account for the effects of continuing inflation, and it seems reasonable for Chelmsford to do the same. The Board is aware of current budgetary constraints as they will apply to the FY27 Town Operating budget. These were laid out in detail at a recent Tri-Board (Selectboard, School Committee,

Finance Committee) meeting. The Board will support placement of an Article on the 2026 Spring Town Meeting Warrant to increase Clause 22 and 22E exemption amounts by any amounts that the Town Manager determines can be accommodated within the Proposed FY27 Operating Budget.

R, Jackson also asked the Board to support her effort to modify the provisions of CH59, Sec. 5, Clause 22G to eliminate from among the eligibility requirements that a Veteran must be a Trustee as well as the property owner in situations where the veteran's property is held in Trust. The Board indicated its support for this effort.

Executive Session: Motion by M. Donoghue to adjourn to Executive Session, pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(7), to comply with, or act under the authority of, any general law, specifically, to require confidentiality as defined in MGL Chapter 214 Section 1B, Right of Privacy, in the matter of Taxpayer eligibility for full property tax exemption; upon conclusion of Executive Session, to return to Open Session. Second by S. Chase. Voted by Poll of the Board: Mr. Donoghue, Aye, Mr. Chase, Aye, 2-0

Adjourn Regular Session, 10:30 AM.

Return to Regular Session, 10:45 AM. Present: S. Chase, M. Donoghue, R. LeMay, B. Corcoran, M. O'Hagan

Administrative Action, Assessors' Overlay Account: Continuing review of Assessors' Overlay Account balances: We continue to review outstanding balances with regard to anticipated FY 2025 and 2026 appeals and related valuation administrative activity. In view of the accumulated YOY account balances the Board feels that declaring an Overlay surplus of \$153,000 at this time is reasonable, considering the backlog of abatement requests and pending/anticipated Appeals. Motion by M. Donoghue to declare and certify an Overlay surplus as at January 27, 2026 in the amount of \$153,000, to be transferred to Overlay surplus, and further, that the Assessors shall notify the Town Account in writing of this vote. Second by S. Chase, vote to act as moved, 2-0. This amount will be transferred to a reserve fund to be appropriated by April 2026 Town Meeting to assist in funding commercial/industrial property valuation activity for FY 2026.

3. Warrants/Commitments: FY 2026 RE supplemental, \$15,756.80 and CPA, \$236.34. Motion to approve by M. Donoghue, second by S. Chase, vote to approve, 2-0, and signatures. Signatures for prior approvals, (2).

4. End of Month Reports: None.

5. Administrative Action, Residential/Commercial and PP Abatements & Exemptions, resolution and recommendations for action on pending litigation: Remove to Executive session.

6. Approval of 4 February 2026 Regular Session Meeting Minutes, subject to later revision if required: Motion to approve by M. Donoghue, second by S. Chase, vote to approve, 2-0.

Executive Session: Motion by M. Donoghue to adjourn to Executive Session, pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a)(7), to comply with, or act under the authority of, any general law, specifically, to require confidentiality as defined in MGL Chapter 59 Section 60, Records of Abatements, and Chapter 214 Section 1B, Right of Privacy, to discuss abatement and/or hardship exemption actions as required, further, to discuss strategy with respect to pending litigation; upon conclusion of Executive Session, not to return to Open Session. Second by S. Chase. Voted by Poll of the Board: Mr. Donoghue, Aye, Mr. Chase, Aye.

Meeting Adjourned, 11:14 AM

Respectfully submitted:

Sam Chase, Chairman