

Minutes of the Town of Chesterfield Public Hearing and Regular Board Meeting Held on Thursday, November 6, 2025 at the Town of Chesterfield Office, 1 Vine Street, Keeseville, County of Essex and State of New York, Pursuant to Due Notice.

Supervisor Barber called the Public Hearing on the 2026 Preliminary Budget at 5:30 PM.

Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Those present:

Supervisor: Clayton Barber
Town Clerk: Bruce Bourgeois
Councilman: David Gload
Councilman: Patrick "Bill" Mitchell
Councilman: John Casey
Town Attorney: Mark Cowen
Supt. of HW: John "Jay" Champine
Budget Officer: Laura Ocasio

Guests present:

Andy Prescott	Brutus Ocasio	Minnie Ocasio
Romeyn Prescott	Zandaleigh Ocasio	Dan Ocasio
Zeus Ocasio	Margaret Sheehey	Zoanne Schnell
Ken Pashow	Landon Morse	Roger Dorr
George Dorr	Harrison Blaise	John Lacy
Walter Chmura		

Town Clerk Bourgeois read the legal notice.

Supervisor Barber noted the 2026 Chesterfield Budget stayed under the 2% tax cap and congratulated the Board and Budget Officer Ocasio on the nice job completing the Budget.

Budget Officer Ocasio noted there was a change from the Tentative Budget due to purchasing a vac-truck in 2025 instead of 2026. Supervisor Barber added the new truck is very nice and training for both the Town of Ausable and Town of Chesterfield employees was completed on October 30. The truck's purchase price and usage will be shared with the Town of Ausable.

Supervisor opened the floor for public comment on the 2026 Budget. There was no comments.

Supervisor Barber closed the Public Hearing on the Preliminary Budget and opened the Public Hearing on transfer of Thompson Road property to Essex County Land Bank at 5:33 PM.

Supervisor Barber noted the Town Board had approved the transfer of 20 acres on the Thompson Road owned by the Town of Chesterfield to the Essex County Land Bank for 6 homes, each on a 3.2 acre lot at the October, 2025 Board Meeting. This Public Hearing is to hear questions and concerns or to listen to better suggestions for the use of this property. The Town board believes this is the best scenario. Mountain Lakes had expressed interest in the property as well. Supervisor Barber has proposed a lot at Commerce Park for their project and has talked with Essex County IDA for options to turn parts of Commerce Park to residential.

Highway Superintendent Champine asked if there would be any new Town roads. Supervisor Barber state that all parcels, as he understood it, would have access on the Thompson Road. He also explained there is no cost to the Town, as the Land Bank will take care of surveying and infrastructure of water and sewer. The property is zoned 3.2 acres and Supervisor Barber would not support any more density. The homes are for low-medium income participants and would cost \$250,000 - \$260,000 but sold for \$150,000 - \$160,000. The homeowner will still be assessed at full market value.

Town Clerk Bourgeois added the buyers must obtain their own financing but with that much equity, the chances of approval were good.

Ken Pashow voiced concerns that it does not turn into a trailer park. Supervisor Barber noted the homeowners will have yearly inspections that do not be announced and can be performed at any time to maintain their property. Budget Officer Ocasio shared handouts with pictures of the homes. Mr. Pashow also wanted to know if these homes would be on Town water or sewer. Councilman Casey reiterated the Land Bank is responsible for all infrastructure.

Walter Chmura asked if all the homes would be off Thompson Road.

Planning Board Chairman Prescott informed the audience that before anything could be accomplished on Thompson Road, the Land Bank has to present their plan to the Planning Board for approval for any subdivisions.

Supervisor Barber expressed the plan was for start of project to be end of March, first part of April, weather permitting, with completion by end of 2026.

Town Attorney Cowen heard a report on NCPR on a completed project of the Land Bank in Newcomb.

Margaret Sheehey asked if the homes would only be for Keeseville residents. Supervisor Barber noted it should be but he thought Essex County resident as well.

Roger Dorr wanted to know the benefit to the Town as the Town purchased the property. Town Clerk Bourgeois mentioned, at current tax rates, the Town, Highway and Fire District share of tax income would be approximately \$8100 for all parcels per year. George Dorr added that Town doesn't need any raffraff.

Ken Pashow asked if all the homes be required to have electric heat installed. Supervisor Barber responded in the affirmative due to New York State's new rules on new construction. All the proposed homes will have generator backup in case of power loss. All homes will also have garages attached.

Andy Prescott thanked the Board for approving this as the Town of Chesterfield's new Comprehensive Plan identifies affordable housing as a primary concern and this project certainly satisfies this concern.

Supervisor Barber closed the Public Hearing on the transfer of Thompson Road property and opened the Regular Board Meeting at 5:55 PM.

Upon a motion by Councilman Gload and seconded by Councilman Casey and unanimously carried it was

#181 Resolved: That the minutes of October 14, 2025 be accepted and the reading of those minutes be waived.

Supervisor Barber congratulated Councilman John Casey on being re-elected to the Town of Chesterfield Town Board and congratulated and welcomed Harrison Blaise for being elected to fill Rick Klages open seat. He thanked Bill Lyons and Zoanne Schnell for running positive campaigns.

Supervisor Barber queried the Board and public if any comments from the Public Hearing on the Preliminary Budget. With no comments coming forward, Supervisor Barber requested adoption of the 2026 Town of Chesterfield Budget.

Upon a motion by Councilman Gload and seconded by Councilman Mitchell and approved by roll call vote

Supervisor Barber: AYE

Councilman Gload: AYE

Councilman Mitchell: AYE

Councilman Casey: AYE

It was

#182 Resolved: to adopt the 2026 Preliminary Budget for the Town of Chesterfield with a change of \$141,000 less appropriation from Fund Balance due to proposed purchase of a vac-truck for the Water Department being accomplished in the 2025 budget year, making the new Fund Balance appropriation equaling to \$235,555 for TCWD.

Supervisor Barber asked the Board of their thoughts on scheduling the End-Of-Year Meeting for Tuesday, December 30 and what would be an appropriate time.

Upon a motion by Councilman Gload and seconded by Councilman Mitchell and unanimously carried it was

#183 Resolved: To schedule the Town of Chesterfield End-of-Year Meeting for Tuesday, December 30, 2025 at 4:00 PM.

Town Clerk Bourgeois will handle the legal notice.

Supervisor Barber opened the floor to public officials.

Town Clerk Bourgeois presented the Board with the October 2025 clerk Report, noting he had not received the bank statements for October yet. He noted the Keeseville Christmas Celebration is scheduled for Saturday, December 13, 2025. He thanked Clerk to the Supervisor Ocasio for making the parade sign-up forms. Town Clerk Bourgeois also gave a brief update on the Keeseville 250 Celebration. Highway Superintendent Champine added he, Diana Zais and the Town Clerk made decisions on the placement of the new Christmas decorations.

Councilman Gload said the Youth Commission meeting will be next week and one AED will be set up at the Civic Center and the Town of Chesterfield will store the second one until spring.

Councilman Casey noted there was a piece of playground equipment missing at JC Park. Highway Superintendent Champine added the Highway Garage has it and is looking for parts to repair it. Councilman Casey said there are bar codes on each piece to be able to order parts for each piece. He also would like to look into making a bicycle track for JC Park modeled after the one in Schuyler Falls.

Highway Superintendent Champine informed the Board all electrical is complete at the salt shed and is being filled up with a sand/salt mix.

Supervisor Barber opened the floor to public comment.

Walter Chmura informed the Board the town of Ausable has a subscription blog on their website that informs their citizens of newsworthy items and suggested the town of Chesterfield model a similar blog.

Supervisor Barber informed the Board Governor Hochul is making all new homes under seven floors to have electricity as a heat source. He asked Town Clerk Bourgeois to read the resolution.

Upon a motion by Supervisor Barber and unanimously seconded it was

#184: WHEREAS, affordable and reliable energy is essential to the health, safety, and economic prosperity of New York families, businesses, and communities; and

WHEREAS, natural gas remains a dependable, cost-effective, and clean-burning energy source used by millions of New Yorkers to heat their homes, cook their food, and power their businesses; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, New York State enacted the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), which mandates aggressive emissions reductions and served as the foundation for sweeping energy restrictions, including efforts to phase out natural gas; and

WHEREAS, building on the CLCPA, Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature in 2023 enacted provisions in the state budget banning natural gas and other fossil fuel hookups in most new residential and commercial buildings, effective 2026 for smaller buildings, and 2029 for larger buildings, thereby eliminating consumer choice and limiting access to affordable energy; and

WHEREAS, Governor Hochul has publicly supported these bans and related measures as part of her administration's climate and energy agenda, despite widespread concerns that such mandates will increase costs, strain grid reliability, and restrict energy diversity; and

WHEREAS, these top-down policies undermine affordability, threaten reliability during peak demand, and strip away the freedom of consumers and businesses to choose the energy resources that best meet their needs; and

WHEREAS, Congressman Nick Langworthy of New York and Senator Jim Justice of West Virginia introduced the Energy Choice Act (H.R. 3699, S.1945), federal legislation that ensures state and local governments cannot restrict consumer access to natural gas and other affordable energy sources, thereby protecting freedom of choice for New Yorkers and all Americans; and

WHEREAS, the Energy Choice Act would safeguard households, small businesses, hospitals, farmers, and manufacturers from harmful government overreach and preserve access to an “all-of-the-above” energy strategy that strengthens reliability and affordability;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Chesterfield strongly supports the Energy Choice Act as introduced by Congressman Langworthy (H.R.3699) and Senator Justice (S.1945) and stands firmly opposed to New York State’s natural gas bans, the CLPA-driven restrictions, and other state energy mandates that eliminate consumer choice; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Chesterfield urges Congress to pass the Energy Choice Act to defend consumer choice, protect energy affordability, and preserve reliable access to natural gas for New Yorkers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to Congressman Nick Langworthy, Senator Jim Justice, the New York Congressional delegation, Senators Chuck Schumer and Kristen Gillibrand, Governor Kathy Hochul, and leadership of the New York State Legislature.

Supervisor Barber reminded the public brush and leaf pickup ends Friday, November 14, 2025 with no exceptions after that date.

Supervisor Barber presented each member of the Board with a proposed contract from IWorQ for digital software for the Code Officer. He asked they review it for discussion at the December Board Meeting. The proposal is for a set-up fee of \$2500 plus an additional \$3000 per year.

John asked for clarification on pricing. Budget Officer Ocasio questioned the use of programs from Essex County. Margaret Sheehey asked if the Town had an IT guru and thanked Romeyn Prescott for filling that role at the Keeseville Library. Romeyn Prescott added maybe the Town could “buy in” to any County programs to save on cost.

Upon a motion by Councilman Mitchell and seconded by Councilman Gload and unanimously carried it was

#185 Resolved: To accept the Supervisor’s Financial Report for October 2025, a copy of which can be found in the Town Clerk’s office.

Upon a motion by Councilman Gload and seconded by Councilman Mitchell and unanimously carried it was

#186 Resolved: To accept the water billing and adjustments for the period of October 14, 2025 to November 5, 2025.

Upon a motion by Councilman Casey and seconded by Supervisor Barber and unanimously carried it was

#187 Resolved: To pay all bills, including credit card usage, received since October 14, 2025. Bills amounting to 456,778.91 were audited and paid from the General Fund. Bills amounting to \$105,905.80 were audited and paid from the Highway Fund. Bills amounting to \$559,919.03 were audited and paid from the Town of Chesterfield Water Department. Bills amounting to \$2,349.11 were audited and paid from the Port Kent Water District. Bills amounting to \$2,763.00 were audited and paid from Village Debt. Bills amounting to \$2,468.09 were audited and paid from the Compaction Station. Bills amounting to \$495,373.60 were audited and paid from TCWD Project. The total of all bills received since October 14, 2025 equals \$1,225,557.54.

Upon a motion by Councilman Gload and seconded Councilman Casey and unanimously carried it was

#188 Resolved: To accept all bank reconciliations for the month of October 2025.

Upon a motion by Councilman Mitchell and seconded by Councilman Gload and unanimously carried it was

#189 Resolved: That all letters brought before this Town Board be filed in the Town Clerk's office.

Upon a motion by Councilman Casey and seconded by Councilman Mitchell and unanimously carried it was

#190 Resolved: To audit and accept all budget amendments for October 2025.

Upon a motion by Councilman Gload and seconded by Councilman Casey and unanimously carried it was

#191 Resolved: That with no other business to come before this Board, the Meeting of November 6, 2025 be adjourned at 6:26 PM.