

MINUTES

Hoosac Valley Regional School Committee
Districtwide Town Meeting
Monday, September 30, 2024 - 6:30 p.m.
Hoosac Valley High School - Auditorium
125 Savoy Road, Cheshire, MA

PRESENT: Superintendent Aaron Dean, School Committee Members, Members of Adams/Cheshire Selectboards, Community Members from Adams/Cheshire, Moderator Tom Bernard, District Counsel

Moderator Tom Bernard called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited

Tom thanked everyone for being here

Moderator Bernard asked anyone recording either audio or video to please identify themselves - Tammy Daniels from Iberkshires and Sten Spinella from the Berkshire Eagle.

There are 234 Adams Voters in the room and 148 Cheshire Voters in the room - a total of 382 voters - a motion requiring a simple majority needs 192 votes to pass. Moderator Bernard asked that anyone that was issued a non voter card please identify yourselves by raising your card.

Moderator introduced the staff from Adams and Cheshire who coordinated the logistics and procedures for tonight's meeting - Adams: Town Clerk Haley Meczywor, Elaine Melillo, Kelly Rice, Kelly Martinek and Chrissy Satko; Cheshire: Town Clerk Whitney Flynn, Lorraine Faucher, Elizabeth King, Celia Ferro, Police Chief Mike Alibozek and Officer Timothy Garner.

Moderator also introduced the S.C. members - Adam Emerson, Chairman, Erin Milne, Vice Chair, Mike Henault, John Duval, Andy Przystanski, Robert Tetlow and Fred Lora

Chair Adam Emerson gave a brief statement reporting that the committee strongly endorses the proposed fiscal year 2025 budget.

Moderator Bernard stated Superintendent Dean will be presenting a brief presentation regarding the budget.

Cathy Foster objected stating the presentation is outside the scope of the warrant article. Moderator ruled it within the purview of the meeting. Cathy appeals the decision. Discussion took place with moderator, superintendent and district counsel. Moderator - the objection was that the Superintendent's remarks were out of scope by the text of the warrant, Moderator states that it is consistent with the laws and rules it out of order, Superintendent may proceed. Cathy Foster - presentation outside of the warrant- moderator rules it out of order. Moderator reported that Cathy has motioned and seconded it, and he ruled this out of order and the Superintendent may proceed with his presentation.

Superintendent Dean presented a brief presentation on the budget and discussed the 5 year assessment numbers (Cheshire); the 5 year enrollment splits; budget increase breakdown; what have we done to support our schools; our impact on growth and what impact would a \$600,000 cut have on our district. See attached budget presentation.

Moderator reported that we have 2 additional adams voters 236 and one additional cheshire voter 149 for 385

Anyone wishes to speak on the warrant article - each speaker must speak their name, address and has 2 minutes to speak. Moderator went over the rules. This article pertains to the school district budget only.

The warrant dated 8-26-24 was posted with the provisions of MGL, Chapter 71, Section 61- Moderator read the warrant twice:

Article 1: To see if the Towns of Adams and Cheshire will vote to approve the \$22,481,719 budget for the fiscal year 2025 proposed by the Hoosac Valley Regional School District School Committee, or take any action relative thereto.

A yes vote accepts the article and a no vote rejects the article

Motion from Adam Emerson, Chair and second from Erin Milne, Vice Chair to accept the warrant.

It is moved and accepted: To see if the Towns of Adams and Cheshire will vote to approve the \$22,481,719 budget for the fiscal year 2025 proposed by the Hoosac Valley Regional School District School Committee, or take any action relative thereto.

The floor is now open for discussion - No Discussions

Motion made to move the article - seconded

Any further discussions - All in favor, aye, the aye's have it we will move the article.

Motion as to form of vote: Motion made to have secret ballot - seconded - No discussion

All in favor - voice vote was very close- proceed to a standing vote - the counters will go section by section - Moderator reported to stand raise your card - voting in favor a secret ballot - 385 votes tonight - simple majority 193 votes - 223 cast in the affirmative - this will be a secret ballot.

Community member approached mic for discussion - discussion is ruled out of order, past the time for discussion, had opportunity for discussion earlier when opened the floor for discussion.

Moderator explained the voting procedure.

Article you are voting on is: To see if the Towns of Adams and Cheshire will vote to approve the \$22,481,719 budget for the fiscal year 2025 proposed by the Hoosac Valley Regional School District School Committee, or take any action relative thereto.

Yes vote accepts the article and no vote rejects the article - 193 votes are needed to pass the article.

378 votes were cast - 160 votes opposed - 218 votes affirmed - the simple majority of 193 votes needed having been met - the motion hereby passes.

Motion to adjourn - seconded - all in favor - The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Aaron Dean, Superintendent

Lisa Bresett, Recording Secretary