

New Ashford Select Board/MLP Meeting

New Ashford Town Hall

March 18, 2026

Board Present: Jason Jayko (Chair), Ken McInerney (MLP Manager), Mark Phelps

Others Present: Lori Jayko, Helen Majchrowski, Emilee Gagliardi, Susan Supranowicz, Maria Welch, Joseph Jordano, Jazu Stine, Ed Grosso, Cindy Grosso, Steven Nielsen, Mary Rojo, Terese Nishimura

Meeting opened at 6:15

1. Approve Minutes from 3/2/2026: On a motion by Mark, seconded by Jason, the minutes from the March 2, 2026 New Ashford Select Board/MLP meeting were approved. Ken abstained.

2. Public Comment: Maria Welch presented her ideas for her Girl Scout Gold Award project. She spoke with the Historical Commission and they identified the need for an outdoor gathering space in town. She is proposing to create a sitting space with a lending area for games and books outside of Town Hall. The project needs approval from the Girl Scout Council. She estimates a cost of \$1,000 for supplies and would like to complete the project by fall of 2027. The Board expressed support for the project and will put this on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant as an article, with additional funds for other work, perhaps including a gazebo. There may also be funding available through the Northern Berkshire Cultural Council.

Ed Grosso from the Historical Commission gave an update on the Church restoration project. He has two quotes for LiDAR scans and drawing sets of the church. GNCB was recommended by Jim Scalise and quoted \$3,220 for LiDAR scans, \$2,760 for base drawings, and \$4,600 for alternate structural drawings that include the framing plans. \$7,500 was approved for scans at a Special Town Meeting, and \$16,500 for repairs. Placeholders will be added to the Annual Town Meeting warrant for work that is not completed by the end of the fiscal year. Some cracking in plaster was noted. Ed will initiate the engineering work with GNCB.

The Board of Health presented the Select Board with contracts for services with the Berkshire Public Health Alliance. The Board reviewed the contracts. The Alliance will bill quarterly for services rendered and permit fees will be paid directly to the town. Online permitting will not be required. Mark made a motion to enter into a contract with the Berkshire Public Health Alliance for the remainder of FY26 and FY27, seconded by Ken. The motion passed unanimously. The contracts were signed and given to Jazu Stine from the Alliance.

3. Road Commissioner: The Road Commissioner put two truckloads of stone on Ingraham Road due to mud conditions. The town will get a bill from Condron. He expects to do additional repair work to Ingraham Road.

4. Old Route 7 Work: There was a meeting with the state and utilities about using Old Route 7 while the bridge on Route 7 is repaired. Some power lines and the internet fiber will be moved. They will add traffic lights and make road modifications to accommodate tractor trailers. There was discussion of the condition of the culvert under the town road. Ken will ask the Road Commissioner or Mass Highway.

5. Budget: The Board reviewed the budget and added funds to the Reserve and IT web accounts. There was a small increase in the Fire Department budget. The Northern Berkshire Regional Emergency Planning Committee is requesting \$500 per town. The Animal Control Officer expense account increased. The School Committee budget is going up due to enrollment. The Board of Health will increase due to the new contract. The total budget is \$758,413, an increase of \$90,464 from FY26. The MLP budget is \$95,925. The Assessor will be invited to the next meeting, on March 31, to discuss the tax implications of the budget and revolving account limits.

6. Annual Town Meeting Warrant: The warrant articles were reviewed. The MLP line item for repairs will include maintenance for vegetation management. An article will be added to repair the basement wall in the Town Hall. The Board discussed fixing the Town Hall ramp. An article was added to create an outdoor community gathering area at the Town Hall for \$8,000. The Board may add an article to use Free Cash to alleviate the budget increase and will discuss the implication on the tax levy with the Assessor.

8. Old and Any Other Unforeseen Business: Senator Paul Mark and Representative John Barrett would like to have a public meeting at Town Hall on April 6 from 10:00 – 11:30. Mark can be present and will let them know. The Town Clerk would like a safe for \$138. The Select Board authorized the Treasurer to make the purchase with the town credit card.

7. MLP: The Board discussed the MBI Connected & Online round 2 funding available and do not feel it fits the town's needs.

9. Warrant: The warrant was reviewed and signed.

Next meeting March 31 at 6:00 for the budget, Annual Town Meeting warrant, and ramp repairs. The transfer station survey will be discussed at the following meeting.
Meeting adjourned at 7:56