

New Ashford Select Board/MLP Meeting

New Ashford Town Hall

March 31, 2026

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

Others Present: Lori Jayko, Richard George, Keith Lacasse, Chris Lamarre

Meeting opened at 6:00

1. Approve Minutes from 3/18/2026: On a motion by Mark, seconded by Ken, the minutes from the March 18, 2026 New Ashford Public Hearing were approved.

2. Public Comment: The Town Clerk requested the Treasurer to purchase a combo ink pack for her printer for \$102.89, using the town credit card. The Select Board approved the purchase.

3. Budget: The School Committee amended its budget to \$372,161.52, making a total town FY27 budget of \$741,413. The School Committee budget is increasing due to higher enrollment, a trend that is expected to continue for at least a couple of years. The FY27 budget for the MLP is \$95,925.

The Assessor, Chris Lamarre, gave the estimated impact on the tax rate. If the tax levy is \$455,564, the tax rate will be \$6.52. It was \$5.66 last year. The median single family home bill would increase to \$2,887 from last year's \$2,456. The town has an excess levy capacity of \$345,000 and new growth of \$2,000,000.

On a motion by Mark, seconded by Ken, the Treasurer was authorized to use the town credit card to purchase propane tank meters, not to exceed \$200.

Ken will ask Walker Haig about getting a propane tank installed at the church and fixing the valve on the sink at Town Hall.

The Board will discuss getting a spare replacement part for the furnace at the next meeting.

They received a quote of \$2,000 and think they may be able to find it for a lower price.

4. Annual Town Meeting Warrant: The article for unforeseen repairs for the MLP was increased to \$15,000, to include vegetation management. The Board discussed the implications on the tax rate if Free Cash is used to offset to the tax levy. If taxes are offset with \$30,000 from Free Cash, the estimated tax rate would be \$6.08 and the median single family tax bill would be \$2,697. The FY23 median single family tax bill was \$3,200. The Assessor explained that the Board can adopt an elderly exemption. The process would take two fiscal years to get in place and would allow for a \$500 minimum off per bill. The Board does not want to pursue the exemption at this time. The Board thanked Chris for his help.

The Board discussed repairing the basement wall at Town Hall and repairing the ramp. An article allocates \$8,000 for creating a community gathering space at Town Hall. The warrant will be cleaned up, sent to legal, and printed.

5. Church Windows: Several windows were shot at the church. The State Police looked at it and took pictures. The Board discussed submitting an insurance claim and will look at the plan and deductible. Mark will talk to Robert Lyon to see if he can do the repairs. Jason replaced the door lock and the wi-fi doesn't reach to do the codes. The Treasurer was authorized to use the town credit card to purchase an extender for the wi-fi, not to exceed \$200.

6. Ramp: Ken wrote the initial proposal. The Board will review it. Bids are not necessary. Keith will price materials.

7. Town Caucus Date Change: The Town Clerk would like to move the caucus to April 25th.

Next meeting April 8 at 6:30

Meeting adjourned at 7:35