

This is Your Semi-Annual Newsletter from the Town of Swanzey

Inside you'll find…

Introduction of New Town Staff Members

Various Department and Project Reports

Updates from Committees

Employment and Volunteer Opportunities

Recreation Programs

Old Home Day 2024

Important Information for all Taxpayers and Property Owners!

Swanzey is going through an update of property values in 2024. The State of New Hampshire requires that cities and towns perform a revaluation every five years to make sure that all properties are brought to current market value and contribute an equitable portion of the total tax burden.

Market value is defined as the amount a typical, well-informed purchaser would be willing to pay for a property. Market value is calculated by the contracted assessing firm hired by the Town based on sales of similar properties over the two years prior to the revaluation. Properties are assessed based on their physical condition as of April 1st each year.

Based on increases in property sales since the last revaluation in 2019, property values are expected to increase – in some cases, value increases will be significant. Taxpayers should not compare their preliminary values to the 2023 property tax rate because as values increase, the tax rate should decrease. The School District, Town, and County expenditures that determine the amount of money to be raised by taxes have been adopted by the voters at the March elections or by the County. The amount of money to be raised by taxes is not impacted by the revaluation and higher assessed values do not mean the Town is collecting more money.

Visitation of properties that have sold or been improved has been ongoing annually. Properties that have sold over the last two years are being analyzed to update the statistical basis for the assessments. Later in the summer, notices of preliminary 2024 assessed values will be mailed to all property owners. The notice will outline information regarding scheduling an informal hearing with the Town's contracted assessor for any questions or concerns. Property owners may provide information, documentation, or information regarding comparable properties if they feel the preliminary assessment is not accurate. Property values may be changed based on the informal hearings. After the informal hearings, 2024 values will be finalized and then will be reflected on the December tax bill, which may be more or less than the July tax bill based on the tax rate and finalized value. Property owners who still dispute their assessed value may file an abatement request with the assessing department by March 1, 2025.

Introduction of New Town Planner



The Town of Swanzey is pleased to announce that Adam Paquette, previously of Colorado Springs, Colorado, was hired in February to serve as Town Planner. Mr. Paquette grew up in New Hampshire and served in the United States Air Force before earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in Geography and Environmental Studies at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. He then worked as a Planning Technician and City Planner for the City of Colorado Springs for over three years.

Mr. Paquette works with the Assistant Town Planner and Code Enforcement Officer to coordinate the Town's land use efforts by working with the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Adjustment, and various other committees and commissions. The Planning Department oversees processing applications to the land use boards and assists with applying for and administering grants for community projects, among other tasks.

Introduction of New Human Resources Coordinator



Sebastian Villacres was hired as the Town's new Human Resources Coordinator this spring. He most recently worked as a Human Resources Generalist at Cheshire Medical Center and as a Human Resources Generalist at G&H Photonics. Prior to that, he worked in a variety of Human Resources roles at Catholic Health Services in Long Island, NY, where he developed and executed recruiting initiatives involved in the hiring of both clinical and non-clinical employees.

Mr. Villacres is responsible for end-to-end human resources management and initiatives. He is dedicated to cultivating a positive and proactive work environment where employees can thrive. Armed with a passion for talent development and a commitment to operational excellence, he is poised to drive strategic initiatives that align with the Town's goals while prioritizing the well-being and professional growth of its workforce. As the Human Resources Coordinator, Mr. Villacres' goal is to elevate the Town of Swanzey as the employer of choice in the Monadnock Region.

Golden Rod Grange Hall Advisory Committee

The Grange Hall Advisory Committee meets every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month. We have welcomed Stephon Mehu as our liaison with the Town of Swanzey, in place of Julius Peel. In January, we applied for the LCHIP grant to repair the roof. Unfortunately, we did not receive the grant but plan to apply again next year. In February, we worked with the Swanzey Preservation Society to apply for monies through Charitable Gaming with the Wonder Casino in Keene, NH. We are on their roster to acquire funding. In support of The Swanzey Senior Coffee Connections, Linda created a winter months Coffee Connections Newsletter to help keep the attending seniors connected, informed, and to let them know they haven't been forgotten. Coffee Connections resumed in April and meets every Wednesday, 9:00 -11:00 am at the Grange Hall (628 Old Homestead Highway). We have been instrumental in promoting the need for roof funding at the Deliberative Session, and at other platforms. Town funding of $110,000 for repair of the Grange Hall roof was voted in at Town elections on March 12. Griffin Construction, LLC from Langdon, NH, have been selected by the Town to do the work, with completion targeted in late summer. In cooperation with the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance, Andrew Cushing has offered a free window preservation workshop to be held at and for the benefit of the Grange Hall, should we receive this funding. The Grange Hall Advisory Committee thanks Swanzey Town Officials and the Swanzey community for your support.

Appointments of Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chiefs

The Swanzey Board of Selectmen announced in April that Eric Mattson was appointed Fire Chief. Chief Mattson has been serving as Interim Fire Chief since January 1 and has been a member of the Swanzey Fire Department since 1995. He currently is an Advanced EMT, Firefighter II, and most recently held the rank of Deputy Chief and Fire Inspector. He previously worked as a full-time firefighter for the City of Keene and holds an associate's degree in fire science from Lakes Region Community College.

In addition, the Board and Mattson announced the appointments of Michael Burke and Norman Skantze as Deputy Fire Chiefs to serve as part of the Fire Department's leadership team. Burke worked for the City of Keene Fire Department for approximately 20 years, retiring as a captain / shift commander. Skantze has previously served as Fire Chief in Swanzey, Wolfeboro, and several other communities.

Board of Selectmen Chairman Sly Karasinski stated, "Chief Mattson, Assistant Chief Sanchez, and this leadership team have the support of the Selectmen to lead the Swanzey Fire Department. Our goals for the Department include increasing the on-call membership and building camaraderie between the three stations to act as one unified Swanzey Fire Department." Chiefs Mattson, Skantze, and Burke were ceremonially sworn in on April 23.



From Left to Right: Selectman Bill Hutwelker, Selectman James Tempesta, Deputy Fire Chief Norman Skantze, Fire Chief Eric Mattson, Selectmen Chair Sylvester Karasinski, Deputy Fire Chief Michael Burke

Community Volunteer Transportation Company

Temporarily unable to drive? Vehicle not on the road right now? Maybe it was just the right time for you to turn in your "road warrior" badge. But, you still need to get to non-emergency medical appointments, to the grocery store, pharmacy, and bank, etc. That's where CVTC (Community Volunteer Transportation Company) comes in. Our volunteer drivers get you to your essential appointments whether your transportation situation is temporary or long-term. Call 603-821-0569 to request a no-fee ride. Please give us a seven (7)-day notice. And, we are always recruiting new volunteer drivers. Interested in giving the gift of mobility to a neighbor? Call 603-821-0569 and talk to our Transportation Coordinator or go to www.CVTC-NH.org. As one rider stated, "CVTC is such a blessing to all of us. We are so very fortunate to have this organization available in the Monadnock Region. Kudos to all of you at CVTC."

Stratton Free Library

Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:30—7:00 pm, Fridays & Saturdays 10:00 am—2:00 pm 603-352-9391 — strattonfreelibrary@ne.rr.com



It is hard to believe summer is already here! We so enjoyed hosting the Mt. Caesar Union Library's Teen Book Club and Storytime while they were closed for renovations. We loved getting to know their patrons and for them to get to know us. We hope many of you will continue to visit us both now that they have reopened.

It is almost time for our summer reading program to start. This year's theme is Adventure Begins at Your Library. Be sure to stop in to sign up and check out what's happening. A strange cave has appeared on the wall in the children's section. I wonder what might be in there??

We continue to offer password free Wi-Fi that extends out to the curb. Come checkout a novel, a history book, children's books, or a DVD. Use your library card to access e-books and audiobooks through the State Library. Come in and admire the architecture, the beautiful paintings of Lucy Ladd Stratton or peek through the front door keyhole for a surprise. We would love to see you.

Mt. Caesar Union Library Summer Activities

Hours: Mondays 10:00 am—4:00 pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:00 am—5:00 pm, Wednesdays 2:00 — 8:00 pm, Saturdays 10:00 am—2:00 pm
603-357-0456 — mculibrary@yahoo.com — mtcaesarunionlibrary.weebly.com

Summer Reading Program for Kids
Adventure Begins at Your Library!
Running Through August 2

July 20
Old Home Day Parade
10:00 am— Route 32
If you would like to march, contact us ahead.

Old Home Day Annual Book Sale
9:30 am—2:00 pm — MCUL Meeting Room

August 2
SRP Family Movie Night
7:00 pm — MCUL Meeting Room

August 17
Book Sale During Town Yard Sale
9:30 am—2:00 pm — MCUL Meeting Room

Monthly MCUL Lunchtime Book Group
First Mondays, contact us for more info.

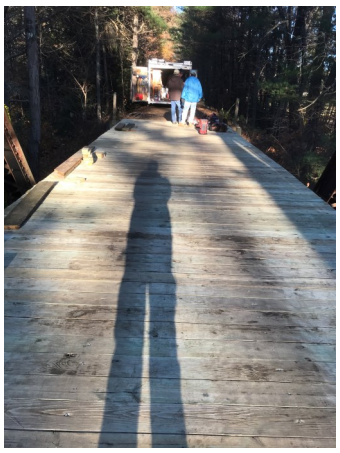
We're back up and running after having the first and second stories reinforced, a new HVAC system installed, and the original flooring revealed. We have an active Summer Reading Program planned with lots of fun activities, put on by our Youth Services Librarian and the Friends of the Library. We're partnering with Beyond the Bell and Stratton Free Library to read and have Adventure Begins at Your Library (summer reading theme). Can't wait to see you!

A Sample of our Offerings
Books, audios, DVDs, magazines, digital books and audios ~ Public computers, scanning, and printing access, free wifi 24/7 ~ Chromebooks, telescope, jigsaw puzzles, toys, Lego, passive crafts ~ Programming ~ Notary services.

Note: Storytime, music & movement, teen book group, and writing club will resume in the fall. A Baby & Toddler Stay and Play group is scheduled to start in the fall. If you are interested in a weekly Homeschooling Family Hang, please contact us.



Rail Trail Advisory Committee



The Rail Trail Advisory Committee (RTAC) is busy continuing to improve and maintain the Cheshire and Ashuelot Rail Trails through Swanzey. Regarding the Cheshire Rail Trail, volunteers are mowing and removing small debris from the trail. The RTAC approved the rental of an excavator to clean the drainage ditches and culverts and the work was completed in May.

The Town of Swanzey and the RTAC, with assistance from Cheshire County, will be submitting a Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant in 2024. The objective of the project is to complete rail trail surface work from Joslin Station Road to the Swanzey/ Marlborough town line. If awarded, implementation will occur in 2025.

Regarding the Ashuelot Rail Trail, the final touches on the truss bridge that spans the Ashuelot River just south of Sawyers Crossing Road will be completed this year. The Keene Snow Riders plan to do decking work on the Ash Swamp Brook Bridge. In June, fill and hard pack material will be laid down on the trail in Westport to create a nice smooth surface. Finally, regular mowing is planned in 2024. Through the Grant-In-Aid process, the Keene Snow Riders submitted an application to fix six of seven washouts that occurred last July. Awards are to be announced in June 2024. If awarded, the plan is to fix the washouts in 2024. The fixing of the seventh washout, located just north of the southern Holbrook Road crossing, which is very large, is in discussions with the Town, the Keene Snow Riders, and NHDOT. — Michael Kowalczyk, RTAC Chair

Safe Swimming

One thing many of us look forward to in the hot summer months is swimming in ponds, lakes or the ocean. One way to ensure where you are going to swim is safe to swim in is by checking out the Healthy Swimming Map from NH Department of Environmental Services.

The NHDES Beach Inspection Program tests for the presence of fecal bacteria in the waters of public freshwater and coastal beaches throughout New Hampshire. To help inform the public of potentially unsafe swimming conditions, NHDES will issue an advisory when bacteria levels exceed the state criteria.
The Cyanobacteria Harmful Algal Bloom Program monitors waterbodies when a potential cyanobacteria bloom is reported by a member of the public. A cyanobacteria advisory is issued lake-wide when cyanobacteria cell concentrations exceed 70,000 cells/mL. Advisories are not based on toxin evaluation but occur at cyanobacteria cell count densities when toxin production may be likely. These are intended as a precautionary measure for short-term exposure to cyanotoxins. When an advisory is issued, resampling is performed weekly until the bloom subsides. Advisories are issued from May 15 through October 15. If the cyanobacteria density exceeds the state's recreational threshold, NHDES will issue a warning. NHDES advises lake users to not wade or swim in the water during a warning. This includes allowing pets to swim in these waters. Warnings are not based on toxin evaluation and are intended as precautionary measures for sort term exposure.

Before recreating this summer remember to perform your self-risk assessments, which includes two parts: 1) looking at the water for any discoloration or unusual growth and 2) checking the Healthy Swimming Mapper for active alerts and warnings. Suspected harmful cyanobacteria blooms can be reported through the bloom report form. The Healthy Swimming Mapper and the Bloom Report Form can both be found on the NHDES website.

Tax Department

By the time you receive this newsletter, the due date for July property tax bills will have passed. July's tax amount is technically considered a pre-payment for the actual tax bill in December. The calculation for July is based upon the current assessed value and the tax rate used is one-half the previous year's tax rate. The 2023 tax rate was $26.87. The rate for this July's bill is $13.43.

JOB OPENING

Town of Swanzey Fire Department

Swanzey's Fire Department is looking for community members to serve as on-call firefighters and EMTs to join our dedicated team. If you have a passion for helping people and serving your community this a call to you. Department members are assigned to one of our three stations throughout the community where they work with their neighbors to protect people and property. Firefighting or EMT prefer but **not** required. Applicants only need an interest in serving their community and have some free time. We will train you!

To learn more, scan the QR Code to visit our website www.swanzeynh.gov or stop into Fire Station #3 at 34 Main Street and speak to a member.

For any questions, please e-mail: svillacres@swanzeynh.gov or contact Fire Chief Eric Mattson at emattson@swanzeynh.gov or (603) 358-6455.

SCAN ME

JOB OPENING

Town of Swanzey Police Department

The Town of Swanzey is currently accepting applications from certified police officers looking for a new opportunity, as well as aspiring candidates with an interest in exploring a career in law enforcement.

New Incentive Program Including

- Sign-on Bonuses
- New competitive rates
- Generous holiday, PTO, and vacation policies

To learn more about our positions and to visit our website www.swanzeynh.gov or scan the QR Code.

SCAN ME

If you have any questions, please e-mail: svillacres@swanzeynh.gov.

Department of Public Works

The 2023/2024 winter was mostly uneventful for the Department of Public Works. The crew took advantage of the mild winter and worked on clearing brush and replacing the roofs on all three of the North Swanzey Sewer pump stations. They also completed some remodeling work at the Swanzey Police Station.

Spring of 2024 came with a gradual warm up resulting in an essentially nonexistent mud season. Stone was added to some of the gravel roads in an effort to combat what little mud was present. The crew graded all of the gravel roads as they dried. In addition, contractors were hired for the annual street sweeping and catch basin cleaning. The crew supported the contractors in the completion of this work.

The following projects were scheduled for 2024 with some of them already underway or completed:

- A new dry hydrant was added to the pond on Arrowcrest Drive for the Fire Department. The hydrant is now in service in the event the Fire Department has to respond to emergencies in the area where water is needed.
- The crew is scheduled to widen and pave a section of the gravel portion of Cobble Hill Road. The work will begin this summer.
- DPW worked with FEMA and a contractor to rebuild a section of slope and the intersection of Eaton and Cedar Roads due to flood damage.
- The following roads are scheduled for paving this year: Oliver Hill Road, Taft Road, Aldrich Road, lower Safford Drive, and a portion of Cobble Hill Road.
- The remaining flood damage repairs to Talbot Hill Road have been completed. The final phase of the work was cleaning all of the blocked culverts and paving a portion of the road.
- The Upper Wilson Pond Dam Reconstruction Project is underway. The work is scheduled to be completed during the early summer months.



Eaton Road Slope Stabilization

- DPW Director Joe DiRusso and Town Administrator Michael Branley continue to work with Underwood Engineers on the Webber Hill Slope Restoration project. The project is in final design with the work scheduled to begin later this summer.
- The Town contracted with Cold River Bridge, LLC to address some deficiencies with the bridge on Denman Thompson Highway over the Ashuelot River. A routine New Hampshire Department of Transportation inspection determined that the deck needed repairs and the expansion joint needed to be replaced. This proactive maintenance and repair will preserve the integrity and life span of the bridge. This work is currently being completed and is scheduled to be finished by September. This bridge is currently closed and will reopen later this summer. Cars may detour to the Thompson Covered Bridge on Main Street, larger vehicles must find alternate routes.



Bridge Repair on Denman Thompson Highway

- The Town contracted with GDS Landmark Group to replace the decking with new white oak deck boards and make cosmetic repairs to the Cresson Covered Bridge on Sawyers Crossing Road. There were also several hazardous pine trees that were removed from the area of the bridge while the road was closed.

The Building and Grounds Maintenance Crew has also been very busy with taking care of the buildings and grounds at the Town Hall, Police Station, Fire Stations, Richardson Park, the baseball fields and cemeteries. Weekly mowing and trimming of all of the Town's property is ongoing on a daily basis.

Swanzey Police Department

Statistics

A review of our "Calls for Service" numbers shows a continuous, robust activity from our officers. The most notable increase is in sex offender "Registrants" needing to update their information or to register. Notable downward trends are found in "Arrests/Booking" and "Warrants". Most of the other numbers have maintained a status quo.

Statistics	Seven Months Nov 2022 – May 2023	Five Months Jun 2023 – Oct 2023	Seven Months Nov 2023 – May 2023
Calls for service	4,892	5,073	5,855
Citations	1,476	852	843
Field Interviews	902	613	714
Accidents	83	34	87
Incidents	355	277	324
Arrests/Booking	122	94	84
Registrants	21	19	41
Warrants	16	14	6

Events

- Chief Gonsalves attended a career panel of senior students majoring in Criminal Justice at Keene State College on the evening of November 8. The event was for students who had questions and are interested in a career in Criminal Justice. The panel provided experiences in their careers and guidance towards succeeding in a career in Criminal Justice. Officers participated at the "Very Swanzey Christmas" event at Whitcomb Hall on December 2.
- The department completed "Use of Force" training on December 20.
- Amer Electric inspected the fire alarm system and smoke detectors in the building on April 11. We are looking to upgrade the fire alarm system.
- We received our new 2023 Chevrolet Tahoe in May.
- We received a letter of appreciation from Cheshire County EMS for the actions our officers, Lt. Cemorelis and Officer Zilinski, took on February 5 in a medical call involving a patient in cardiac arrest.
- Officer Brian Johnson received a letter of appreciation from the Pine Grove Co-Op for his professional assistance for an incident that they had on their property.
- We have hired a certified part-time police officer, Tabitha DiRienzo. Officer DiRienzo previously worked for the Troy Police Department. We are excited to have her on our team and look forward to her contributions to our organization.
- Officer Kyle Titus graduated the New Hampshire Police Academy on April 26 and he is back with us finishing his Field Training.
- Sgt. Mark Labelle retired in December. Officer Joseph Szuch and his family are moving to Washington. We wish them well in their future endeavors.
- Our spring intern, Brian Shaughnessy, completed his internship with our department and graduated from Keene State College. We wish him well with his career and future endeavors.
- The Highway Department updated the interior of the police station with painting and some light maintenance work. Members of the Highway Department have been working on making improvements to the front administrative office and the booking room.



Swanzey Highway Department

Police Department (Continued)

- Officer Kevin Clark was promoted to Sergeant. The interview board was very impressed with all the candidates who interviewed.





- We had two officers run in Torch Run on May 22nd, Officer Colby Zilinski and Officer Jonathon Collins.





I would like to thank the people of Swanzey for their support and encourage anyone who sees or hears something unusual or suspicious to not hesitate to call the Police. Working together, we can keep this great community a safe place to live.

Finally, I would like to recognize everyone in the Police Department for their dedication and professionalism. Thank you.

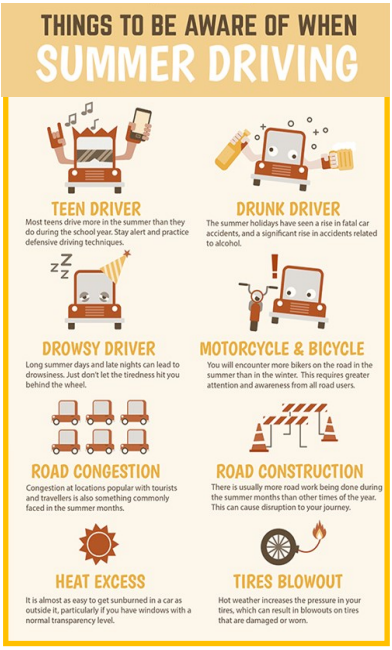
We, the members of the Swanzey Police Department, with the cooperation of our community, strive to improve the quality of life for all, by upholding laws, protecting lives and property, and providing a safe and secure environment.

Integrity/Compassion/Fairness
— Chief Gonsalves









Planning and Economic Development – Summer 2024 Update

Project Name	Location	Type of Use	Units / Project Description	Status as of 7/1/24
SMC	173 Monadnock Highway	Multi-Family	84	Under Construction, estimated completion: Fall 2024
Alotek	Old Homestead Highway	Multi-Family	32	Construction: Foundation Started
Plane View	115 Old Homestead Highway	Multi-Family	74	Awaiting Sitework
Flatley	244 Old Homestead Highway	Multi-Family	208	Construction: Sitework Started
Swanzey West	10 Perry Lane	Multi-Family	76	Complete & Occupied
Swanzey Solar Gardens	Tax Map 232 Lot 20	Solar	7.7 Acre Solar Array and Approx. 3.5 Megawatt	Awaiting Sitework
Lesser's 4 Seasons	West Swanzey Road	Commercial	Commercial and Multi-Family Residence	Modified Approval / Sitework started
Turmoil	735 West Swanzey Road	Commercial	Manufacturing Facility	Awaiting Sitework
Swanzey West Storage	440 West Swanzey Road	Commercial	Self-Storage Facility	Complete & Occupied
FW Webb	471 Old Homestead Highway	Commercial	Wholesale and Warehouse Industrial Facility	Under Construction, estimated completion: Fall 2024
Mt. Caesar School Addition	585 Old Homestead Hwy	School	Cutler and Mt. Caesar School Consolidation	Sitework Started
Asher Construction	Tax Map 209 Lot 4	Commercial	Contractor Bay Facility	Planning Board Approval

Certified Mail: What Does It Mean?

Have you received a certified letter from the Town Offices? Have no fear! Chances are, one of your neighbors has submitted an application to the Zoning Board of Adjustment or the Planning Board. Land Use boards in New Hampshire have a statutory requirement to notify all applicant abutters of pending applications and associated public hearings. What should you do if you receive a certified letter from the Town? You should collect it, open it, and read it! Receiving notification keeps you informed of changes that may impact you. Attending public hearings provides you with an opportunity to voice your concerns and ask questions about upcoming projects. Stay informed, collect certified mailings from the Town.

Volunteer Opportunities

The following Town boards, committees, and commissions currently have openings and are seeking new members:

- The Zoning Board of Adjustment evaluates the requests of property owners who want to use their property in ways that deviate from the Zoning Ordinance, such as variances or special exceptions.
- The Conservation Commission monitors and manages Town conservation land, reviews and provides comments on New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services applications, and reviews new projects with respect to their impact on the environment.
- The Energy Commission works to advise and make recommendations to Town staff and boards, committees, and commissions on matters of policy pertaining to the study, planning, and utilization of energy resources for municipal buildings and built resources of the Town.
- The Rail Trails Advisory Committee is charged with making recommendations to the Selectmen on the options for use, maintenance, fundraising, and other matters, for the two rail-trail corridors in Swanzey.

Planning and Economic Development (Continued)

Volunteering with one of these groups is a great opportunity for residents to get more involved in the community and help with making important decisions about the Town's future. More information on these committees, commissions, and boards can be found on the Town's website, including meeting minutes and packets. If you have any questions, please contact Adam Paquette or Stephon Mehu.

Pre-Application Meetings
Are you interested in starting a project on your property, but not sure if it will comply with local ordinances and regulations? The Planning and Economic Development Department can help you! Call or email our department and schedule a meeting to discuss your options.

Contact Us
Adam Paquette, Town Planner – apaquette@swanzeynh.gov or 603-352-7411 ext. 112
Stephon Mehu, Assistant Town Planner – planner@swanzeynh.gov or 603-352-7411 ext. 108

Recreation Department

Richardson Park, the Town public beach at 60 East Shore Road, is open for the season from 10:00 am to 8:00 pm every day through Labor Day. Beach Attendants will be checking for residency upon arrival to the beach. Please have your ID, car registration, or other documentation with your name and Swanzey address listed.

Town Wide Yard Sale
August 17, 2024
Registration: July 1 - August 16, 2024
Map available on Wednesday, August 14, 2024

Fall Soccer
Six weeks — September 10 - October 19, 2024
Registration: June 15 - August 16, 2024
Divisions - Age by September 30, 2024:
- Mini Kickers 4-5 years old; Wed. & Sat.
- Mighty Kickers 6-8 years old; Tues., Thurs., & Sat.
- Soccer League 9-12 years old; Tues., Thurs., & Sat.

We need volunteer coaches, referees, team sponsors.

Safe Sitter Training Course
October 14, 2024 — Grades 6-8
Safe Sitter programs equip participants with essential skills for staying home alone and caring for younger children.

Halloween Block Party
October 26, 2024
Trunk or treat, activities, costume contest, prizes, and pumpkin carving.

5th Annual Swanzey Festival of Lights
Registration: November 1 - December 1, 2024
Town wide map of registered holiday light displays for all to enjoy! Community voting with prizes awarded to the top three most festive holiday light displays.

10th Annual A Very Swanzey Christmas
December 7, 2024
Tree lighting, letters to Santa, reindeer food making, cookies and cocoa, photos with Santa.

Winter Basketball
Six weeks — January 7 - February 15:
Tues., Wed., Thurs., & Sat.
Registration: October 28 - December 13, 2024
Divisions 2024-2025 school year:
Skills & Drills PreK - 1st grade; Sat.
Hot Shots 2nd grade - 3rd grade; Wed. & Sat.
Basketball League 4th - 6th grade; Tues., Thurs. & Sat.
We are looking for volunteer coaches, referees, team sponsors

Check out swanzeynh.myrec.com to register for programs! Follow us on Facebook and Instagram at Swanzey Recreation for all the latest information!

2024-2025 School's Out Program
8:00 am to 4:00 pm at Whitcomb Hall
Arts & crafts, games, activities, trips to the library and playground, and so much more! September 10, 2024; October 11, 2024; October 14, 2024; November 5, 2024; November 11, 2024; Winter Break (TBA); January 20, 2025; February 7, 2025; February Vacation (February 24-28, 2025); March 11, 2025; April Vacation (April 21-25, 2025).

Conservation Commission—Swanzey Outdoors



Moosewood Ecological, LLC is conducting fieldwork this summer to update Swanzey's 2004 Open Space Plan for the Conservation Commission. In particular, they are studying Swanzey's swamps, marshes, vernal pools and wooded wetlands as part of a Wetlands Evaluation, which will help us identify significant wetlands in town for flood control, wildlife habitat, scenic value, and more. Thank you to landowners who gave Moosewood staff permission to study wetlands on their land.

Wetlands emerged as a significant topic when Moosewood completed an audit of the town's natural resource ordinances and regulations late this winter. We have a robust (better than state requires) septic setback for wetlands, but no setback for buildings, parking lots, etc. And while we have tightened up language in our site plan regulations protecting our aquifer, the lack of a groundwater ordinance leaves loopholes. Moosewood's findings will help us target further updates to our ordinances and regulations in coming years to better protect Swanzey's natural resources. The Conservation Commission is hosting a series of forums to discuss Moosewood's work and get your input on Swanzey's special places; our first two were March 26 and May 30. There will be field trips this summer and another forum this fall! Watch Facebook and local papers for upcoming events.

The Commission is partnering with the Connecticut River Conservancy, Ashuelot River Campground, and Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee to repair badly eroding riverbanks at the campground and the Town's Muster Field property. Flooding has eaten away at properties along the river, as sandy banks give way and trees topple into the water. CRC engineers have developed a plan to stabilize the banks with tree trunks, rocks, and resilient plantings, and their staff are fundraising for this multi-year project. If you are having big hardwood trees removed on your property in the next year or two, please contact the town to donate them to this project!



After two warm winters, Meadowsend is hoping that operators finish logging the Mt. Cesson property on Matthews Road this season. Use caution and avoid using the property when harvesting is active. Mt. Cresson is a town-owned property, open to the public for hiking and hunting, and the timber harvest is part of an effort to keep the forest healthy and improve wildlife habitat. We are soliciting a proposal from Meadowsend to create new hiking trails and re-route an old one when logging is done.

Thank you to Rachel Elkins, who retired as an alternate from the Commission this spring, and to Jane Johnson, who stepped down from a regular to an alternate after many years of service. We have one opening on the Commission—please contact Cheri Domina at cheri.domina@gmail.com if you're interested! Congrats to our 2024 scholarship recipients—college student Delaney Swanson received our annual college scholarship of $1,000, and James Morrison and Dylan Kerylow received scholarships to UNH Extension's Barry Conservation Camp this summer.

Swanzey Lake Watershed Management Project

This May, FB Environmental presented their findings of a yearlong study of Swanzey Lake, as part of the grant-funded project to create a watershed management plan. Staff studied the impact of last July's devastating storms on Swanzey Lake's water quality, and analyzed data gathered from watershed and shoreline surveys. They also created a buildout analysis for the watershed and a lake loading response model.

The study concluded that "Swanzey Lake's elevated total phosphorus load has resulted in degraded water quality and significant anoxia in recent years." Continued development and effects of climate change will increase threats of algae growth and degraded water quality. To improve and protect water quality, the watershed management plan for Swanzey Lake will highlight the following actions: 1) Conserve intact forestland, 2) Consider zoning ordinance amendments that encourage Low Impact Development (LID) techniques on existing and new development, and 3) Improve and maintain stormwater control practices throughout the watershed. The final report will be presented by FBE at the Swanzey Lake Protective Association's annual meeting July 20, 9:30 am at Whitcomb Hall with the public invited.

Energy Commission

The Swanzey Energy Commission was formed after the Community Power Plan was rolled out last year, which gave residents a three-year rate of 11 cents per kilowatt hour for electricity. The benefits of the power plan were realized at a time when Eversource had increased its rate to 22 cents per kilowatt hour. Later, when Eversource dropped its six-month rate to eight cents, Swanzey residents were allowed to switch to the lower rate at no cost. When Eversource's rate goes up again, folks can switch back to the Community Power Plan, again at no cost.

Meanwhile, the Energy Commission, which has been tasked with reviewing the town's energy policy and making recommendations to town staff and its boards and committees. It has also been exploring ways for the town and its residents to keep costs down while also increasing resiliency in our energy supply.

During this year's Town Meeting, residents approved a bond of $500,000 to install a solar array at the Wastewater Treatment Plant in West Swanzey. The 100 KW project will produce 162,323 kwh per year and supply all the power needed to run the plant. In addition to producing energy for the plant, the town doesn't pay delivery costs to Eversource and the investment will pay for itself in lowered electric costs in less than four years.

The Energy Commission is reviewing the town's zoning ordinance in an effort to make it more friendly to alternative energy and fueling stations. Currently there are some restrictions on electric vehicle chargers that the Energy Commission would like to see eliminated.

Another task the Commission has taken up is doing energy audits on the town's buildings and facilities. It is also reviewing town-owned parcels for municipal solar arrays in an effort to localize the town's power supply.

The Energy Commission recently learned Revision Energy is proposing a 5mw solar array at the Dillant Hopkins Airport. This would be in addition to a 1.36mw array approved by the Swanzey Planning Board in 2022 at the Keene Wastewater Treatment Plant. The new array would provide 1mw of energy to residents of Keene and 4mw to municipalities, schools, and other organizations.

The Energy Commission is also scouting around for private landowners who might consider hosting a community solar farm that would supply electricity to their neighborhoods. More information will soon be available.

The Swanzey Energy Commission is always interested in hearing from residents about their experiences with alternative energies and innovative technology such as heat pumps. The Commission meets the second Monday of every month at 1:00 pm at Whitcomb Hall, though that day might change from time to time. To connect with the Energy Commission, email planner@swanzeynh.gov.

Code Enforcement

You got your building permit…

So now it is incumbent on you, the permit holder, to call or to make sure your contractor calls for inspections—but when? The answer is, before you cover "it". Whatever "it" is, as I can't inspect what I can't see.

Building permits and taxes…

As you likely know, one of the purposes to applying for permits is to alert assessors that a structure has been built, been improved or been demolished. It is the third one, been demolished, that throws some people off. A frustrated taxpayer will say, when looking at their property tax bill, "but it is no longer on the property—we tore it down". If we have not received a demolition permit, then we have little way of knowing a structure is no longer there. Once a demo permit is received, assessors will verify the structure is gone and make changes to the property's overall assessment accordingly. The other purpose behind a demo permit is to verify that the material was removed and brought to the proper facility. It is for this reason that the Building Department will request receipts from the dumpster supplier or trucking company verifying that they have taken responsibility for the proper disposal of the material. If you have a question regarding building in Swanzey, please call or write anytime. — Mike Jasmin, Code Enforcement Officer, 603-209-4068 or code@swanzeynh.gov.

Swanzey Recycling Center

The Swanzey Recycling Center is a permit-by-notification DES Permitted facility that started operating as an active landfill in the early 1900s and ceased being used as a municipal waste dump in 1974. The facility currently operates as a permit required facility with mandatory recycling open to Swanzey residents only. The facility handles an average of 2,000 tons per year between material disposal, a very strong and successful material recycling program, and organics.

There is a limit of ten (10) gallons of household hazardous waste per vehicle.

Flammable or reactive household chemicals can release toxic fumes or even explode if they are mixed in the trash, causing fires or injuries. Dumping solvents into septic systems or landfills may contaminate ground and surface waters, ruining drinking water and killing fish and wildlife. Pesticides can damage sewage treatment plants, and oil poured into storm drains can flow directly into streams and ponds.

Allowed

Products marked flammable, combustible, poison, toxic, corrosive, caustic, reactive, irritant, hazardous, and oxidizer are all dangerous.

Mercury containing products:

- Compact fluorescent light bulbs
- Mercury vapor
- High pressure sodium
- Metal Halide
- Thermostats
- Thermometers
- Mercury button cell batteries
- Switches and relays

Not Allowed

- Empty HHW containers
- Latex paint - dry out and dispose with your regular trash
- Makeup and toiletries - dispose with your regular trash
- Fireworks/Flares/Ammunition/Gun Powder - Call NH State Police and leave a message 603-223-8590
- Medications - Bring to Keene Police Department for disposal
- Smoke Detectors - Contact the manufacturer for proper disposal.

If you are not sure, bring item to the next Household Hazardous Waste Collection.

Upcycling

Giving a new life or use for an old piece of wooden furniture is a great way to save money or make money, older furniture is made at a higher quality than modern box store furniture. Bonus if using paint that has been sitting around the house without a use!







Swanzey Recycling Center (Continued)

Composting

Composting at home is a valuable commodity that can be used in many ways while saving space in landfills. Some common uses of compost are mixing it into flower or vegetable gardens to replenish nutrients naturally, improve lawns, and improve soil health. Compost can be made on a small scale with food waste from the kitchen such as egg shells, fruits and vegetables, coffee grinds, etc. Or, on a larger scale, with leaves and grass clippings. It is important to monitor your compost to ensure materials are well mixed and turned regularly.









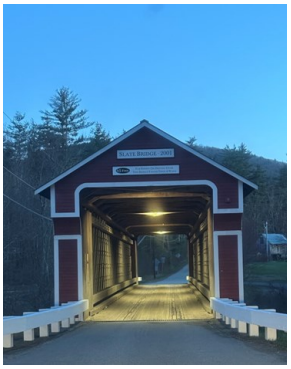
Some Ways to Help the Recycling Staff

- Pre-sorting recyclables.
- No trash in or caps on bottles.
- Breakdown cardboard boxes.
- Greasy pizza boxes are trash.
- Wrapping paper and tissue paper are trash.

Drop off fees can be paid with cash or check. Please ask for a receipt. For more information or to set up a tour, please contact jwhipple@swanzeynh.gov or call 603-338-0339.

2024 Reassessment Important Dates

- July / August — Property owners receive notices with preliminary values.
- August — Informal hearings with the Town's contracted assessors, Marazoff Assessing.
- September / October — Updated assessments finalized.
- October / November — 2024 tax rate set by Department of Revenue Administration.
- November — 2nd tax bills mailed out with final assessments and 2024 tax rate; 2nd tax bills may be larger or smaller than July tax bills depending on tax rate and assessment changes.
- March 1 — Deadline to file property tax abatement applications.
- Questions? Contact Dave Marazoff with Marazoff Assessing at dave@dmarassess.com.



Whitcomb Hall Rental

Located in Swanzey, NH, Whitcomb Hall is a quaint 1916 meeting house rehabilitated in 2020. It offers a lovely setting for all your important events and can accommodate small to large gatherings on two floors. We are ADA compliant, offer tables and chairs, a commercial kitchen, central A/C, a large lawn to hold ceremonies, an elevator, and reasonable rates. The Hall's first floor holds 75 people for your smaller gathering and the second floor holds 115 people for larger get-togethers. The second floor features a beautiful stage and balcony that overlooks the room.

The Hall is located on a charming New England street lined with ornamental streetlights that lead you to a picturesque covered bridge over the Ashuelot River. Next door is an equally delightful bed and breakfast that can house your out-of-town guests.

For availability, contact Katrina at 603-352-7411 x115 or email at kburton@swanzeynh.gov. Dates are booking quickly.









Rates

Rates are based on a minimum three (3)-hour rental on weekdays, Monday through Thursday, and a minimum five (5)-hour rental on weekends, Friday through Sunday.

Swanzey Resident

1st Floor - $40.00 per hour
Full day (8+ hours) at $320.00
Entire Hall - $85.00 per hour
Full day (8+ hours) at $680.00
Wedding - Friday 12:00 pm – Sunday 3:00 pm $1,400.00

Non-Resident

1st Floor - $50.00 per hour
Full day (8+ hours) at $400.00
Entire Hall - $110.00 per hour
Full day (8+ hours) at $880.00
Wedding - Friday 12:00 pm – Sunday 3:00 $1,700.00

Swanzey Fire Department

PO Box 10009 34 Main Street, Swanzey, New Hampshire, 03446

603-358-6455

Fire Chief Eric Mattson ***Deputy Chief Mike Burke***

Assistant Fire Chief Vincent Sanchez, ***Deputy Chief Norm Skantze***

I would like to take a moment to introduce myself, I am Eric Mattson, the newly appointed Fire Chief. I have been on the department for 28 years, mostly as a call member, with the last several years as a full-time employee. I started here in the summer of 1996 and during my employment, I have come up through the ranks: EMT, Firefighter, Lieutenant, Captain of Fire Prevention, Deputy of Fire Prevention, and now Chief of the Department. I have worked for multiple services in the area during these years as well: Keene Fire Department as a FF/AEMT, Golden Cross Ambulance / Speedway Safety Services as a FF/EMT, and DiLuzio Ambulance as a AEMT, to name a few.

I am very pleased with the decision of the Selectmen to appoint me and the staff officers that I have to assist me. These men have all been leaders, mentors, and friends who helped get me to this point. With all that said, we are proud to serve this town and look forward to continuing to provide great medical care and fire coverage through our committed service to the citizens of Swanzey.

Summer Heat

With the summer heat beginning, we at the Swanzey Fire Department want you to know a few key safety measures:

- Stay hydrated—our bodies need six to eight glasses of water daily, but with high temperatures, we sweat a lot of that out. So, try to remember a few extra glasses of water.
- Use sunscreen—it only takes a short time in the sun to get a burn or overheat. Use a high numbered SPF of 30 or above. Gone are the days of our youth using a baby oil product and frying ourselves.
- Be cautious with pets—if it's too hot for you to walk on the pavement or any other hard surface, it's too hot for them. Be sure they have a cool place to be as well, such as shaded areas or inside. If you are traveling with them, don't leave them in the vehicle, even with the windows down.
- Be kind and check on any of your neighbors. Make sure they have a comfortable place to be and ways to hydrate themselves. If your neighbor is elderly, bring their mail to them so they are not exposing themselves to the high temps and possibly becoming overheated.
- Around the 4th of July and other holidays, many people like to see fireworks. Please do so in a safe and open area. Be courteous and speak to your neighbors about your display; time, date, place, etc. as they may have issues with loud noises with their pets; dogs, horses, cows, etc. Sometimes, with enough forewarning, they can make the decision to either move the pets or themselves to other areas or to medicate them. Either way, communication is a great way to keep good neighbors. The Town has an ordinance in place for fireworks, which can be found on the Town's website, All firework displays require a local permit from the Town. Call the Fire Department with your questions at 603-358-6455. Have a safe summer.

TOWN OF SWANZEY
620 OLD HOMESTEAD HIGHWAY
P.O. BOX 10009
SWANZEY , NH 03446

WWW.SWANZEYNH.GOV

PRSRT. STD.
PAID
Swanzey, NH
Permit #11
ECRWSS

Postal Patron

Swanzey, NH 03446



Swanzey Old Home Day is on July 20, 2024, with a parade at Swanzey center, (600 Old Homestead Highway) at 10:00 am. This year's theme is Life On The Farm, and there will be vendor booths, a food court, kid's zone, children's bike parade and decorating contest, live music, and more! Come join us for some good old fashioned New England fun for the whole family.