Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting – March 19, 2025
Whitcomb Hall, Main Street
Swanzey, NH

CALL TO ORDER
The meeting was called to order by Chair W. William Hutwelker III at 5:33p.m. at Whitcomb Hall, Main Street, Swanzey, NH. Present were Selectmen James Tempesta, and Mark LaBelle. Also present was Recording Secretary Meagen Kerris.

OTHERS PRESENT Mark Scalera

ORGANIZATION
Discussion of Selectmen member positions. Hutwelker was elected to serve as Chair, Tempesta as Vice Chair, and LaBelle as Secretary.

Designation of Representatives to the Planning Board, Economic Development Advisory Committee, and Capital Improvements Program Committee. The Selectmen will serve rotationally. Tempesta will start with the Planning Board, switching to LaBelle July through September, and Hutwelker October through December. Tempesta will take Capital Improvements Program Committee, and LaBelle will take EDAC.

There will be a subset group from the Conservation Committee for wetlands and other amendments. Hutwelker requested the Board be involved to stay informed of possible changes that are being brought forward. Scalera stated that the idea of this group will be to work with consultants to help put plans together and play a big role in educating residents of the changes to have more informed votes.

Hutwelker discussed with Scalera the new restrictions surrounding social media posts and comments within Board and Committee members. There is a need to create social media guidelines and possible training to help prevent any liabilities.

MINUTES
- The regular meeting minutes of March 4, 2025 were considered. There was a **motion** by Tempesta to approve the regular meeting minutes of March 4, 2025. Seconded by Hutwelker, LaBelle abstained, and no further discussion, all were in favor. ***Motion passed***.
- The nonpublic meeting #1 minutes of March 4, 2025 were considered. There was a **motion** by Tempesta to approve the nonpublic meeting #1 minutes of March 4, 2025. Seconded by Hutwelker, LaBelle abstained, and no further discussion, all were in favor. ***Motion passed***.
- The nonpublic meeting #2 minutes of March 4, 2025 were considered. There was a **motion** by Tempesta to approve the nonpublic meeting #2 minutes of March 4, 2025. Seconded by Hutwelker, LaBelle abstained, and no further discussion, all were in favor. ***Motion passed***.
- The regular meeting minutes of March 11, 2025 were considered. There was a **motion** by Tempesta to approve the regular meeting minutes of March 11, 2025. Seconded by Hutwelker, LaBelle abstained, and no further discussion, all were in favor. ***Motion passed***.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion was made by LaBelle to approve the Consent Agenda. There was a second by Tempesta. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

A. Payroll Manifest
B. Payables Manifest
C. MS 232 – Appropriations as Voted
D. Permanent Applications for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions – M261/L25, M232/L18, M232/L54/0/2/6
E. Acceptance of Revised Assessing Services Contract
F. Intent to Cut – M232/L39 – Cobble Hill Road
G. Personnel Action Reports

PUBLIC INPUT

Mark Scalera raised concern about the launch area on Wilson Pond. It was meant as a walking path to enter in with kayaks. Someone has plowed it to allow access to ATVs. Scalera requested the Selectmen take a ride out and look at it. This should be foot traffic only. Tempesta suggested exploring the option of putting a chain up.

NEW BUSINESS

Town Meeting Follow Up & Action Items

Hutwelker stated that the architects were targeting late summer or early fall to look at when the fire station would be built. Given the economic climate at this time, Hutwelker wanted to let them know that the Board prefers it to start as soon as possible. He will have the Interim Town Administrator, Alex Torpey, reach out to Fieldstone to discuss the next steps.

Hutwelker communicated with Dan Brown that we would not be taking the financing as the water company purchase did not get the full votes needed to pass. USDA and the engineers will need to be notified as well. Hutwelker feels strongly that the town should reapply in two years. Discussion surrounding a committee took place. The Fire Station Advisory Committee proved very successful, and the same success could be had with a committee for the water company. Tempesta agreed.

Discussion of SB2 and traditional Town Meeting came up. Labelle and Hutwelker recalled the large turnout of people for the previous Town Meetings and how it provided an opportunity to well inform the public before they voted. It was suggested by Hutwelker to consider gathering a committee for Town Government to review of the change in the future. Hutwelker would also like to see that committee put together a review of the setup of the Town leadership with consideration of switching from a Town Administrator to a Town Manager as Swanzey continues to experience considerable growth.

Discussion followed, focusing on volunteers and suggesting ways to draw more in. This may include the process of residents suggesting people they know as good candidates. Hutwelker requested that there be a more volunteer friendly web page on the Town's website. This would include volunteer opportunities and an online fillable form that would be submitted. It was requested to have these options explored with Katrina.

There was review of the final vote to approve a 5-member board in 2026. The current Board of Selectmen disagree with these results. There is research going into adding this as a warrant article in 2026 to have the board return to a 3-member board.

Authorize the Town Administrator and Fire Chief to sign a three-year agreement to retain membership in the Tri-State Fire Mutual Aid Agreement.
There was a **motion** made by LaBelle to authorize the Town Administrator and Fire Chief to sign a three-year agreement to retain membership in the Tri-State Fire Mutual Aid Agreement. Seconded by Tempesta and no further discussion, all were in favor. ***Motion Passed***.

Hutwelker would like the Selectmen to take in what they learned from the training with Interim Town Administrator, Alex Torpey, on March 18, 2025, and come back together for discussion of what they see for goals and visions over the next 5 to 10 years. Labelle asked if the goals would coincide with the Master Plan. It seems the Master Plan is put together and then shelved. Hutwelker suggested the Committee for Town Government also assess the Master Plan.

Hutwelker would like the Board of Selectmen meetings moved to the second floor of Whitcomb Hall with the cooperation of the Planning and Zoning Boards. The intention is to cut down on wear and tear of the first floor and research options for permanent setup of a video live stream / recording system to help people who watch from home see and hear better. Additionally, Hutwelker would like to add the Pledge of Allegiance. The Board then discussed holding meetings at various locations to make them more accessible to residents in different areas of town. Passed by Consensus. Locations of meetings will be arranged with the incoming Town Administrator.

Discussion of interviews for Town Administration and timeline for when someone will be in place. Additional discussion of which Board member will be a liaison for what departments.

PUBLIC INPUT
Scalera suggested disbanding the Fire Station Advisory Committee. Hutwelker agreed and suggested looking at the agendas to decide an appropriate date for this.

NON-PUBLIC SESSIONS
Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A:3II(a) the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee.

> **Motion** was made by LaBelle to enter Non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3II(a) the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee. The motion was seconded by Tempesta. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session at 6:44 p.m. ***Motion passed***. Present was Mark LaBelle, James Tempesta, and W. William Hutwelker III. Also present was Recording Secretary Meagen Kerris.
>
> **Motion** was made by LaBelle to leave non-public session and return to public session. The motion was seconded by Tempesta, with all in favor. ***Motion passed***. Non-public session ended at 7:13 p.m.
>
> **Motion** was made by LaBelle to seal the minutes, seconded by Tempesta. All were in favor and the ***motion passed***

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promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee. The motion was seconded by Tempesta. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session at 7:13 p.m. ***Motion passed***. Present was Mark LaBelle, James Tempesta, and W. William Hutwelker III. Also present was Recording Secretary Meagen Kerris.

Motion was made by LaBelle to leave non-public session and return to public session. The motion was seconded by Tempesta, with all in favor. ***Motion passed***. Non-public session ended at 7:33 p.m.

Motion was made by LaBelle to seal the minutes, seconded by Tempesta. All were in favor and the ***motion passed***.

Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A:3II(e) Consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation which has been threatened in writing or filed by or against this board or any subdivision thereof, or by or against any member thereof because of his or her membership therein, until the claim or litigation has been fully adjudicated or otherwise settled.

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Motion was made by LaBelle to leave non-public session and return to public session. The motion was seconded by Tempesta with all in favor. Motion passed. Non-public session ended at 7:45 pm.

Motion was made by LaBelle to seal the minutes, seconded by Tempesta. All were in favor and the ***motion passed***.

Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A:3II(a) the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee.

Motion was made by LaBelle to enter Non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3II(a) the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee. The motion was seconded by Tempesta. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session at 7:46 p.m. ***Motion passed***. Present was Mark LaBelle, James Tempesta, and W. William Hutwelker III. Also present was Recording Secretary Meagen Kerris.

Motion was made by LaBelle to leave non-public session and return to public session. The motion was seconded by Tempesta, with all in favor. ***Motion passed***. Non-public session ended at 7:58 p.m.

Motion was made by LaBelle to seal the minutes, seconded by Tempesta. All were in favor and the ***motion passed***.

Brief discussion of continued safety planning within the Town Hall. Brief

discussion of Department Head communications.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by LaBelle. The motion was seconded by Tempesta without further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.*** Adjournment occurred at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meagen Kerris
Recording Secretary

Approved on October 22, 2025