Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting – March 26, 2025
Whitcomb Hall
17 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 were Interim Town Administrator Alex Torpey and Recording Secretary Meagen Kerris.

OTHERS PRESENT Mark Scalera, Michael York, Lisa Thorne, Recreation Director Ashlee Crosby, DPW Director Joe DiRusso, Fire Chief Eric Mattson, and Assistant Fire Chief Vincent Sanchez.

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. Raffle Permit #2025-08 – Elijah Project
D. Permanent Applications for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions – M222/L58, M106/L68, M218/L111, M216/LL6, M217/L1, M220/L162, M243/L55/0/MHO
E. Tax Supplement Warrant M248/L43/0/CGO/37
F. Abatement Recommendations –M256/L21, M104/L11, M249/L122, M218/L50
G. Intent to Cut – M240/L30 – Aldrich Road
H. Personnel Action Reports

PUBLIC INPUT

Mike York is supportive of reviewing the Master Plan and providing necessary updates. Additionally, he is supportive of the Selectmen meeting with the Planning and Zoning Boards.

Lisa Thorne is looking for updates about bridge monitoring from the police department. Thorne still has concerns regarding weight limits and towing that continues to happen on the covered bridges. Thorne would like to see tickets implemented. Discussion of access to live feed cameras on the covered bridges for residents.

APPOINTMENTS

Ashlee Crosby, Recreation Director – Updates on Current and future programs.

Crosby has worked hard to get local sponsorship of programs by local businesses. Continuing to put research into programs and roll out a program that will foster continued sponsorship from companies to keep programs going. Reviewing the programs from last year, this past winter, and what is in place for spring and summer, participation is continuing to grow which means there is a greater need for support. There is a continued concern regarding indoor spacing for programs that require gymnasium use. Crosby noted that having access to the community building for camps makes it much easier to facilitate involvement. In 2025, the Recreation Department has held basketball programs, schools out camps, a Valentine's Day dance, Wilson Pond Fishing Derby was a success after years of the ice not being safe through warm winters, Swanzey Snow Fest was wonderful and the kids enjoyed seeing different Town employees involved. Coming up, Kick Ball will get started, Sweeping up Swanzey, the Easter Egg Hunt, and the Town wide yard sale. Summer camps are filling up fast. Swanzey Rec provides affordable pricing to ensure that parents have a safe place for their children to spend summers. Crosby has designed a step program for camp counselors, starting with Counselors in training.

Hutwelker asked to pause the Recreation updates to go into Public Hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING(S)

6:00 p.m. Acceptance and Expenditure of Unanticipated Funds as follows:

- $25,000 from the Peter N Johnson Trust of 1997 to benefit Whitcomb Hall;
- $407,951.66 from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for 2023 disaster expenses; and
- $51,250 from the Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation for Rail Trail Safety Crossing Improvements on Mathews Road.

Public Hearing closed at 6:11 p.m.

> LaBelle **moved** to accept the unanticipated funds as outlined and authorize the interim Town Administrator to sign relevant contract, grant, and other documents. There was a second to the motion by Tempesta. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed***.

Returning to Recreation Department updates. Crosby stated the agreement between Cal Ripken baseball program is going well. The contract is coming up for renewal in November. No plans to change anything except to extend the length of the agreement terms. The cook shack at Brown Field needs to be replaced but is on hold because it is supposed to be included in the architectural plans when Brown is upgraded. DiRusso said to check in with the architect firm, he believes it could be done in stages and have the cook shack and bathrooms done first. The timeline of these projects depends on funding and grant sources.

The Board thanked Crosby for everything she is doing for the community and Town.

Eric Mattson, Fire Chief and Vincent Sanchez, Assistant Fire Chief- Fire Department updates.

Mattson and Sanchez are looking forward to the new fire station. They are anticipating communication from the architects on the timeline of the construction. The department recently hired 2 new members. One member is certified and returning to the department. The other is not certified and brand new. Both members are excited to join. The certified member will be based out of station 2 and the uncertified member will be based out of station 3. There continues to be interest among people in town to join. Sanchez and Mattson have been discussing ways that will streamline the initial application process so that the delay in communication from their department won't deter those interested.

Sanchez has been watching for FF1 trainings to see what classes will have open spots to get certifications going. The department will be participating in wildland trainings and large animal rescue at the beginning of May. The department has discussed putting a thank you sign at the site of the new station, thanking the town for their support. Equipment has been updated, such as air bags to stabilize vehicles that have been in accidents and new thermal cameras. The new airbag systems will include training. Currently the department is 32 members, Mattson and Sanchez are working to build a team again.

The Board thanked Mattson and Sanchez for their work.

Joe DiRusso, DPW Director – Update from Swanzey Public Works Department.

DPW will be doing everything they can to help with the cost of the new fire department. The crew will start

removing some pavement and preparing the topsoil. The final design is complete and will go out to bid for general contracting. DiRusso has been in discussion with some contractors who are willing to donate the use of their equipment as well. It is suggested that the building have a full foundation poured rather than built on a slab. This will help protect the building long-term. Early next week DPW crew will work on erosion control, dig pit tests, and prepare the RFP for general contracting to go out.

Motion made by LaBelle to authorize the Interim Town Administrator to execute all necessary documents proposed to accept the proposal by Fieldstone Land Use Consultants as provided for design work for drainage test pits, etc. and to authorize for up to $21,000 to be expended from the Fire Station Capital Reserve Fund and/or grant funds as appropriate and available. Seconded by Tempesta and there was no further discussion. ***Motion passed***.

Discussion of the RFP for painting of the Grange, Whitcomb Hall, and Town Hall. CM Minkler Paving and Painting was awarded the bid. This company has done work for the Town before. The quote for Whitcomb Hall was $32,750.00. Town Hall was quoted $20,840.00. The Grange was quoted at $25,665.00. DiRusso suggests getting started at Whitcomb Hall. Hutwelker agrees. Tempesta is not prepared to vote on Town Hall or the Grange, so he is in support of starting at Whitcomb Hall. The preparation can start now and painting can start later in the spring. Discussion of funding sources. The source will be clarified and then will return to the next meeting with funding sources for the Selectmen to vote.

Discussion of Town Hall rear door replacement schedule. The door was installed and DPW crew is finishing up the trim and new flooring in the entryway. DiRusso provided updates on interior lobby door replacement with safety features. The quote is $8,790.30 with one remote access. DiRusso suggests having two remotes for access. Discussion of Homeland Security with emergency planning and training. Updates on Webber Hill Wall, about 70% done. Bids are due on Monday for North Winchester St and California St. In the next week or so, the Town Hall front steps and ramp will start repairs.

Assignment of a Code Enforcement Vehicle
DiRusso had decals made up for the vehicle that the Code Enforcement Officer will use. Discussion of repairs needed to get the vehicle in safe and reliable running condition.

Motion made by LaBelle to approve repairs up to $1,000 for the vehicle coming from the Police Department as a Town Hall vehicle, to assign as requested and authorize the Interim Town Administrator, Chief of Police, and Code Enforcement Officer to take the necessary steps to repair and assign the vehicle as described. Seconded by Tempesta and there was no further discussion. ***Motion passed***.

Tempesta briefly provided an update regarding the Police Chief locating a new cruiser.

Discussion of Matthews Road and Sawyers Crossing Improvements. Matthews Road will be painted this year. DiRussio will be painting the crossings this year for the rail trails, he is waiting to hear back from the state. He will also be doing most of the work for the lights for the crossings.

The Chair asked for public input, with their being none, the board moved on.

NON-PUBLIC SESSIONS

Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A:3II(c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this board

Motion made by Labelle to enter non-public session pursuant to RSA 91:A3III(c) matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this board. The motion was seconded by Tempesta. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session at 7:02 pm. ***Motion passed***. Present was Selectmen Mark LaBelle, James Tempesta, and W. Hutwelker III. Also present was Interim Town Administrator Alex Torpey and 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 7:11 p.m.

Motion was made by LaBelle to seal the minutes of the non-public session. The motion was seconded by Tempesta. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to seal the minutes. ***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.

Motion was made by Labelle to enter non-public session pursuant to 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. The motion was seconded by Tempesta. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session at 7:12 pm. ***Motion passed***. Present was Selectmen Mark LaBelle, James Tempesta, and W. Hutwelker III. Also present was Interim Town Administrator Alex Torpey, and 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 of the non-public session. The motion was seconded by Tempesta. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to seal the minutes. ***Motion passed***.

Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A:3II(c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this board

Motion made by Labelle to enter non-public session pursuant to RSA 91:A3III(c) matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this board. The motion was seconded by Tempesta. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session at 7:14 pm. ***Motion passed***. Present was Selectmen Mark LaBelle, James Tempesta, and W. Hutwelker III. Also present was DPW Director Joe DiRusso, and 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 7:40 p.m.

Motion was made by LaBelle to seal the minutes of the non-public session. The motion was seconded by Tempesta. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to seal the minutes. ***Motion passed***.

Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A:3II(c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this board

Motion made by Labelle to enter non-public session pursuant to RSA 91:A3III(c) matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this board. The motion was seconded by Tempesta. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session at 7:41 pm. ***Motion passed***. Present was Selectmen Mark LaBelle, James Tempesta, and W. 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 8:21 p.m.

Motion was made by LaBelle to seal the minutes of the non-public session. The motion was seconded by Tempesta. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to seal the minutes. ***Motion passed***.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Discussion of members for the Government Study Committee.

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 8:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meagen Kerris
Recording Secretary

Approved on April 23, 2025