Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting – May 7, 2025
Whitcomb Hall
17 Main Street, Swanzey, NH

CALL TO ORDER
The meeting was called to order by Chair W. William Hutwelker III at 5:30p.m. at Whitcomb Hall, Main Street, Swanzey, NH. Present were Selectmen James Tempesta, and Mark LaBelle. Also present were Town Administrator Lori Rautiola and Recording Secretary Meagen Kerris.

OTHERS PRESENT Stephon Mehu, Cathy Bergstrom, George Nikiforakis, Steven Bittel, Michael York, Stacy Goodale, Jim Jarzabeck, DPW Director Joe DiRusso, Josif Bicja with Hoyle & Tanner.

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. Notice of Intent to Cut – M86-02/L244-02 – Kempton Road
D. Notice of Intent to Cut – M233/L41– Holbrook Road
E. Notice of Intent to Cut – M233/L20 Summer Street
F. Notice of Intent to Cut – M216/L18 Forest Ave
G. Permanent Applications for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions – M227L28/0/BG/54, M225L31, M101L22
H. Gravel Tax Levy Operation – Operation # 24-441-01-E, Operation #24-441-04-E, Operation #24-441-06-E, 24-441-03-T
I. Personnel Action Reports

PUBLIC INPUT
Hutwelker asked if there was public input, there was none.

APPOINTMENTS
Recognition and Presentation of certificates to West Swanzey TIF Committee
The Board Recognized the work of the West Swanzey TIF Committee, their tremendous work in 2024 and presented certificates of appreciation. The following members were present and received certificates in person; Cathy Bergstrom, George Nikiforakis, Steven Bittel and James Tempesta.

The following will be mailed their certificates; Scott Self, Jon Holden and Keith Thibault.

Hoyle & Tanner – Update on Project #41403
Josif Bicja attended to update the Selectmen on the Christian Hill Rd bridge project. Due to the federal funding for the project, he needed to backtrack a bit to make sure all of the information was provided to keep the funding on course for permitting. Christian Hill bridge is being moved as a historical marker which means that additional information is needed for the funding so Hoyle & Tanner are going to follow the timeline set by that process. Hutwelker asked what the project timeline would be once funding is in place, Bicja said it would be about 4-5 months so do it correctly without rushing. There has been coordination with Concord on the move of the bridge to ensure they are in compliance to maintain the historical expectations. The bridge is set to be

moved to the rail trail crossing where continued washout happens, the DOT did approve this. This process will involve mitigating out the resources from the existing bridge and combining those with more structurally sound materials such as engineered timber to ensure the durability of the bridge holds up. Bicja discussed the span of the crossing will be about 20-25ft for proper access of equipment to maintain the trails.

Tempesta asked when the bid goes out, will there be a request for one company or two, Bicja verified that two companies would be best due to the permits needed (including a wetlands variance to cross) it would be difficult to request a company wait for this process when the whole project can be done in two stages.

This project will also include the replacement of some drainage down Holbrook Ave, in addition to sidewalk extensions. Bicja said Swanzey is 1 of 24 communities in the state that were approved for this funding.

DiRusso stated that Bicja is doing a great job and continues to find ways to support the town. Bicja will continue to work with departments and committees to make sure this project meets the purpose needs and safety requirements.

Regarding funding, the state will cover 100% of the construction. The town needs to contribute to the design cost. DOT will cover 80% of design, leaving the town with just 20%. Bicja will have an estimate on engineering / design cost in approximately one week.

There was an abutter to this project that asked about the town needing an easement, the town does not need one as the project doesn't take place on their property. The issue of a bee house being outside of the abutter's land that will interfere with the project and the state is handling this.

The next step is for the town to review the estimate and then DOT will review it.

Bicja was thanked for all the work he does for the town.

CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS

Contractor Award for Fire Station

The town received 3 bids for this project from the following companies; Hutter Construction, DTW, and Gordon Services. The Selectmen were in support of Gordon Services.

Motion made by Labelle to award Gordon Services as the CM for the new fire station as proposed in their 2025 Fire Station Proposal in the amount of 2.5mm. There was a second by Tempesta. Discussion of collaboration with DPW to save approximately $250,000 for the town. All were in favor. ***Motion passed***.

There was a request by DiRusso to waive the CM three bid requirement for subcontractors for Gordon Services to support the projected finish date. This process can take more time and often CMs have companies they work with.

Motion made by Labelle to waive CM three bid requirements for subcontractors. There was a second by Tempesta. With no further discussion, all were in favor. ***Motion passed***.

Town Administrator Transition Memo from Alex Torpey, Rethink Local

Discussion of which selectboard members this was directed towards. Tempesta wasn't in complete agreement with the memo. Discussion of succession planning to help prevent periods of time without a Town Administrator in the future. The Selectmen didn't feel it was successful to place someone as a part-time

interim Town Administrator. Hutwelker disagreed that the Selectmen shouldn't have contact with Department Heads, it has always been this way. Discussion continued regarding the process and procedures within employees, department heads, and Town Administrator.

DiRusso felt that having a part-time interim Town Administrator was difficult and there wasn't much communication, if any, with department heads which made it difficult to continue business.

In reflection of the choices that were made, the Selectmen felt strongly that they did what needed to be done to ensure a smooth transition process for Lori.

Update from Town Administrator – Fire Station Bond
Rautiola was able to work with Steven Bittel to get all documents and materials together for submission for the July bond and everything went to the Bond Council. The town is still waiting to see if there will be an awarded amount of $200,000 from Shaheen. Rautiola is going to follow up on all the moving parts. Discussion regarding how tight the timing is with the project. Residents have expressed concerns to selectmen. The goal for November is just that. Taking into consideration tariffs and weather, knowing that may be a driving factor in having the project completed as soon as possible. The town is still waiting on temporary approval from the FAA for certain aspects of the project.

Discussion of Town Clerk's Hours
Residents have expressed concerns over inconsistent hours with the Town Clerk's office over the last year. The Board explained the Town Clerk is covered under different RSAs as an elected official. Discussion continued regarding how Town Clerk office hours are set and how the Selectmen can support having someone in the office during posted hours.

World War II Heritage Cities Program
Bud Winsor did research on what impact Dillons Hopkins Airport had for World War II. There have been many opportunities the airport serves for the Military. Documents for this program will be available in the Town Hall.

Acknowledgement of Donation/materials for Attendant's Shelter- Recycling
The Board acknowledged with appreciation the donations of materials to the Recycling Center to improve and build shelters next to the trash dumpsters to help provide better shelter for the attendants through all weather.

DISCUSSION OF OLD BUSINESS
The board will be looking for volunteers for the following committees

- Governance Committee
- West Swanzey Water Company Committee
- West Swanzey TIF Advisory Board

Discussion with Michael York, Stacey Goodale, and Jim Jarzabek with what committee they would like to join. York and Goodale are looking to be a part of the Governance Committee. Jarzabek will return with his selection.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE
Rautiola is getting settled in to her role and prioritizing projects that are both in motion and coming up.

CORRESPONDENCE

General Assistance Report
Discussion of the breakdown in what type of assistance the town is providing through the Human Services department.

Discussion of Clean Energy and their upcoming annual event, Monadnock Clean Energy Round Table".

Discussion of zip codes meeting.

Discussion of items coming before the board next week. Hutwelker discussed the need to replace previous Town Administrator, Michael Branley with Lori Rautiola as signer for Clear Water ARPA Grant fund documents and Clean Water State Revolving Loan funded projects as broken down to the following:

- CW-334191-03: Stormwater Asset Management
- CS-334191-06: Webber Hill Road Slope Stabilization (D2022-0624)
- CS-330191-07: California & N. Winchester St. Improvements (D2025-0203)
- CS-330191-08: Energy Efficiency and Solar Array
- CS-330191-09: Comprehensive WWTF Study (D2024-0609)

Motion made by Labelle to remove Michael Branley as an authorized signor for ARPA Grant and Clean Water State Revolving Loan funded projects as listed and to add Lori Rautiola and the authorized signor for the Town of Swanzey. There was a second by Tempesta. No further discussion. ***Motion passed***.

PUBLIC INPUT
Jarzabek brought up concerns of properties in town that have yards full of trash that are impacting neighboring houses. Tempesta provided an update that he is working with the Code Enforcement Officer, Chris Levy and the Tax Collector, Kevin Westcott and going around to address 5 properties at a time to get them cleaned up. They are starting with the 5 worst properties and then moving on to the next 5. Discussion continued around the challenges of this in New Hampshire.

Hutwelker introduced Susan Ells as the new Recording Secretary for Board of Selectmen, Planning Board and Zoning Board.

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:A3II(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 6:49 pm. ***Motion passed***. Present was Selectmen Mark LaBelle, James Tempesta, and W. Hutwelker III. Also present was Town Administrator Lori Rautiola 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 6:57 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(i) Consideration of matters relating to the preparation for and the carrying out of emergency functions, including training to carry out such functions, developed by local or state safety officials that are directly intended to thwart a deliberate act that is intended to result in widespread or severe damage to property or widespread injury or loss of life.

Motion was made by Labelle to enter non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3II(i) Consideration of matters relating to the preparation for and the carrying out of emergency functions, including training to carry out such functions, developed by local or state safety officials that are directly intended to thwart a deliberate act that is intended to result in widespread or severe damage to property or widespread injury or loss of life. The motion was seconded by Tempesta. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session at 6:58 pm. ***Motion passed***. Present was Selectmen Mark LaBelle, James Tempesta, and W. Hutwelker III. Also present was Town Administrator Lori Rautiola 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 7:00 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***.

Discussion of stipend for flags for the cemeteries.

Discussion of agenda items for May 21, 2025.

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 7:09 pm. ***Motion passed***. Present was Selectmen Mark LaBelle, James Tempesta, and W. Hutwelker III. Also present Town Administrator Lori Rautiola and Recording Secretary Meagen Kerris.

Discussion of committee member suggestions by selectmen for upcoming committees.

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 7:14 p.m.

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 7:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meagen Kerris, Recording Secretary

Approved on June 4, 2025