Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting – June 4, 2025
Swanzey Town Hall
620 Old Homestead Highway, Swanzey, NH
FD Conference Room – Lower Level

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair W. William Hutwelker III, at 4:23 p.m. in the Fire Department at the Town Hall, 620 Old Homestead Highway, Swanzey, NH. Other members present were Selectmen James Tempesta and Mark LaBelle. Also present were Town Administrator Lori Rautiola and Recording Secretary Susan Ells.

OTHERS PRESENT

Garrett Ranney and Liam Mallan with FACT TV, Representative Sylvester Karasinski, Bruce Bohannon, Steve Bittel, Joe DiRusso, Mark Scalera, Jim Jarzabek, and Richard Scaramelli.

MINUTES

- The regular meeting Minutes of May 14, 2025, May 7, 2025, April 30, 2025, and April 23, 2025, were considered. There was a **motion** by LaBelle to approve the regular meeting minutes of the dates listed. The motion was seconded by Tempesta and there was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed*.**
- The Non-public session Minutes of May 14, 2025, May 7, 2025, April 30, 2025, and April 23, 2025, were considered. There was a **motion** by LaBelle to approve the non-public session minutes of the dates listed above. The motion was seconded by Tempesta and there was 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. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed*.**

- Payroll Manifest
- Payables Manifest
- Notice of Intent to Cut – ML261L31 Route 32, M220L181 Arrowhead Drive
- Certificate of Yield Taxes Assessed – M254L38-1, Operations #24-441-11-T
- Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions – M225L31, M101L22
- Raffle Permit – 2025-01 Cheshire Fair Association, 2025-03 Fanelli Amusements
- Open Container Permit – Bea Hammond
- Special Events Permits – Wink Fest Country Music
- Special Events Permits – SC Monster Truck Madness
- Special Events Permits – Cheshire County DX Amateur Racing
- Special Events Permits – Swanzey Old Home Days

PUBLIC INPUT

None

APPONTMENTS

- **State Representative Update – Sylvester Karasinski**

- Karasinski informed the board about activity in the State Legislature. He's not supporting bills that take away local control. There is real concern about the State allowing homes to be constructed on Class 6 roads which would require Towns to maintain the road and provide services. Discussion about other activities in the Legislature, the budget, and impact on towns.
- Karasinski informed the board that he is resigning from the position of Superintendent of the North Swanzey Water & Fire Precinct. This position is being advertised.

- **Trustee of the Trust Fund, Richard Scarameli and Steve Bittel regarding the Lucy Carpenter Home & Cemetery Trusts**
  - Lucy Carpenter Trust
    - Scarameli reported that Michael Branley, the former Town Administrator, had agreed that a committee should be established to manage the Lucy Carpenter trust fund in accordance with Lucy Carpenter's will. Scarameli had offered to have the Trustees of the Trust Fund craft a proposal which he provided to the board at this meeting. They are recommending establishing a dedicated committee of 3 people: a selectman or designee, a Trust Fund trustee or designee, and the Human Services Coordinator. The purpose would be to oversee the distribution of Carpenter funds and to develop stable procedures for considering applicants, determining need, etc. Hutwelker asked where their guidance would come from; Scaramelli said the Human Services Coordinator would be the lynch pin along with legal guidance from Attorney Johnston.
  - Steve Bittell reported on the balance of the New Perpetual Care accounts for the cemetery. What little money comes in and the minimal interest earned on the principal (the principal can't be used) does not cover the cost of maintaining the trust accounts. In his opinion, there are 3 options:
    1. Set a minimum required
    2. Set up a non-restricted fund so the principal and interest can be used. This would require a warrant article for the next ballot for this.
    3. Or, shut the accounts down

    - Karazinski asked if we could supplement the account by charging more for burials, etc. Bittel has discussed this with Lee Dunham. Karazinski said that other towns charge significantly more.
    - Bittel will have Attorney Johnston to create a warrant to put on the next ballot.
- **Update: Railroad Street Sidewalk Extension – Joe DiRusso**
  - DiRusso updated the board on this project. The Snow Sidewalk Fund is providing $81K; the project will now include granite curbing because quotes came in lower than expected on the other sidewalk projects in town and the contractors agreed to provide this upgrade with no extra charge.
- **Appointment of Alternate Member – Trustee of the Trust Fund – Mark Scalera**
  - Scalera was a Trustee of the Trust Fund but in January he determined he needed to resign but expressed interest in serving as an alternate.
  - **Motion** was made by Labelle to appoint Mark Scalera as alternate of the Trust Fund as of 1/30/2025. His term will be until the Town meeting of 2026. The motion was seconded by Tempesta and there was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***
  - Appointment of Cindy Kordy as Trustee of the Trust Fund
  - **Motion** was made by Labelle to appoint Kordy as of 2/3/2025 as Trustee of the Trust Fund to take Scalera's place until Town Meeting 2026. The motion was seconded by Tempesta and there was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed*.**
- **Appointment of Rail Trail Advisory Committee Member – Alan Gross**

- **Motion** was made by Labelle to appoint Alan Gross as a member of the Rail Trail Advisory Committee. The motion was seconded by Tempesta and there was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed*.**

NEW BUSINESS

- **Designation of Authorities for Clean Water SRF Loan**
  - CW-334191-03 Stormwater Asset Management
  - CS-334191-06 Webber Hill Rd Slope Stabilization
  - CS-330191-07 California and N Winchester St Improvements
  - CS-330191-08 Energy Efficiency and Solar Array
  - CS-330191-09 Comprehensive WWTF Study
    - **Motion** was made by Labelle to authorize the Town Administrator, Lori Rautiola as the designated representative for the Town of Swanzey for the following projects: Stormwater Asset Management, Webber Hill Road Slope Stabilization, California and N Winchester Street Improvements, Energy Efficiency and Solar Array and Comprehensive WWTF Study. The motion was seconded by Tempesta and there was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed***.

- **Certificate of vote regarding authorization of bonds and approval of loan agreement with NH Municipal Bond Bank**
  - **Motion** was made by Labelle to enter into the loan agreement with, and to sell its bond to the bond bank, adopting the authorization of bonds as stated below, as documented on the Certificate of Vote regarding authorization of bonds with the NH Municipal Bond Bank with the following resolutions. The motion was seconded by Tempesta and there was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed***.

- *RESOLVED: That under and pursuant to the Municipal Finance Act, Chapter 33, N.H.R.S.A., as amended, the New Hampshire Municipal Bond Bank Law, Chapter 35-A, N.H.R.S.A., as amended, and other laws in addition thereto, and to votes of the Issuer duly adopted on March 11, 2025 under Article 4of the Warrant for such annual meeting of the Issuer there be and hereby is authorized the issuance of a $2,500,000 Bond of the Issuer (the "Bond") which is being issued by the Issuer to finance the costs of preparing plans and specifications, and constructing, equipping and furnishing a new fire station at 321 Old Homestead Highway.*

  The Bond shall be dated as of its date of issuance, shall be in such numbers and denominations as the purchaser shall request, shall mature in accordance with the schedule set forth in Exhibit A to a certain Loan Agreement hereinafter described (the "Loan Agreement"), shall bear a net interest cost rate (as defined in the Loan Agreement) of five and three quarters percent (5.75%) per annum or such lesser amount as may be determined by a majority of the Board. The Bond shall be substantially in the form set forth as Exhibit B to the Loan Agreement and otherwise shall be issued in such manner and form as the signatories shall approve by their execution thereof.

- *RESOLVED: That in order to evidence the sale of the Bond, the Treasurer of Issuer and a member of the Board are authorized and directed to execute, attest and deliver, in the name and on behalf of the Issuer, a Loan Agreement in substantially the form submitted to this meeting, which is hereby approved, with such changes therein not inconsistent with this vote and approved by the officers executing the same on behalf of the Issuer. The approval of such changes by said officers shall be conclusively evidenced by the execution of the Loan Agreement by such officers.*
- *RESOLVED: That all things heretofore done and all action heretofore taken by the Issuer and its officers and agents in its authorization of the project to be financed by the Bond are hereby ratified, approved and confirmed.*
- *RESOLVED: That the Clerk and the signers of the Bond are each hereby authorized to take any and all action necessary and convenient to carry out the provisions of this vote, including delivering the Bond against payment therefor.*
- *RESOLVED: That the useful life of the project being financed is in excess of twenty-nine (29) years.*
- *RESOLVED: That the Bond shall be sold to the Bond Bank at the par value thereof plus any applicable premium.*
    - **Motion** was made by LaBelle to approve and sign the loan agreement with the NH Municipal Bond Bank for the purpose of furnishing a new fire station. The motion was seconded by Tempesta and there was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

- July 4th Holiday
    - **Motion** was made by LaBelle, due to the Fourth of July falling on a scheduled half day for most employees, to give authorization to the Town Departments to close at 1pm on Thursday July 3rd. The motion was seconded by Tempesta; there was discussion about what departments will be affected. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

- Congressionally Directed Spending – Designation of Authority
    - Hutwelker reported that several years ago, Senator Shaheen had designated $200,000 to the Fire Station.
        - **Motion** was made by Labelle to authorize the Town Administrator, Lori Rautiola, as the designated representative for the Town of Swanzey and to sign all necessary documents for the submittal of the grant application for the new fire station. The motion was seconded by Tempesta and there was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

OLD BUSINESS

- Update from Selectman Tempesta on Code Enforcement tasks
    - Tempesta reported that there have been several properties in town that need major clean up; he's started a process to address this. A letter was sent to the five properties in the worst condition; the Town needs a response from the homeowners. He feels they are moving in a good direction in hoping that the properties will be cleaned up without involving legal action. Scalera asked if the Zoning Committee supports this and asked what our ordinance supports. Rautiola stated that Tempesta has been working with the Zone Enforcement Officer to comply with the State's RSA. Jarzabek stated that he believes there are squatters living in a house that has been condemned. Scalera talked about one area that is polluting the right of way on Wilson Pond.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

- New Fire Station Update: Met with the Team to discuss the project. Once the contract is complete for Gordon Services and we receive a foundation plan, the project can begin. Details of the floor plans are being ironed out and we are awaiting final design. The Board's goal is to have the building weather tight five months from the start of the project.
- Fire Station Bond: The loan application for the town in the amount of $2,500,000 for 30 years has been approved, subject to no adverse changes in the town's financial position. The loan agreement is in progress. (Tonight's meeting) The loan agreement includes an estimated maximum interest rate which was set well above the current market as we need to allow for some change between now and the date of sale. However, if rates remain at current levels, we expect the actual interest rate to be less than the maximum rate set in the loan agreement. Grant application (USDA -Shaheen funding) will be sent this week, after tonight's approval to sign the documents.
- North Winchester & California Streets Reconstruction Project: The Town has contracted with J. Evans Construction, Inc. of Brattleboro, VT to serve as the general contractor for this project to reconstruct the streets and sidewalks on North Winchester Street from Route 10 to California Street and California Street from Route 10 to Main Street. Construction is scheduled to take place this summer with the first phase beginning on North Winchester Street on June 2nd. North Winchester Street will be closed to thru traffic at times for most of June and July.
- Carpenter Home: We received a list of maintenance issues from the tenant. Joe, Jimmie and I visited the property and there are some maintenance jobs that need to be done. We will discuss those needs further at the next board meeting.
- Administrative Assistant Position: As of today, there are 9 applicants. The interview process will begin on Friday June 6th.
- Welfare Department Update: In the process of updating the Towns Welfare guidelines. Very busy over the last couple of weeks. Putting a strain on the welfare budget and our employees.
- Hutwelker asked for the process to rename California Street on East side of Route 10.

CORRESPONDENCE

- None

PUBLIC INPUT

- None

NON-PUBLIC SESSIONS

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

Motion was made by LaBelle to enter nonpublic session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of a person., seconded by Tempesta. All in favor by Roll Call and the ***motion passed*****.** The Board entered nonpublic session at 5:42 p.m. Present were W. William Hutwelker III, James Tempesta and Mark LaBelle. Town Administrator Lori Rautiola and Recording Secretary Susan Ells.

Motion was made by LaBelle to come out of non-public session, seconded by Tempesta. All in favor by Roll Call and the ***motion passed***. Non-public session ended at 5:46 pm.

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 5:47p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Ells
Recording Secretary

Approved on June 25, 2025