Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting – July 9, 2025
Whitcomb Hall
17 Main Street, Swanzey, NH

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair W. William Hutwelker III, at 5:30pm. at Whitcomb Hall, Main Street, 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 with FACT TV, Town Clerk Heather Estrella, Police Chief Joseph Gonsalves, Colby Zilinski, Kevin Clark, Jonathan Collins, Officer Shawn Collins, Officer Tabitha DiRienzo, Mark Scalera, Jay Ward, John Traynor, Fire Chief Eric Mattson, Lucas Herstek and Brianna Blodgett

MINUTES

- The regular meeting Minutes of June 13, June 25 and July 1, 2025, were considered. There was a **motion** by LaBelle to approve the minutes including the June 25th minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Tempesta and there was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

- The non-public session Minutes of June 25 #1, #2 and #3, and July 1, 2025, were considered. There was a **motion** by LaBelle to approve the non-public session Minutes as presented. 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
- Accounts Payable Manifest
- Special Events Permit – Bands at the Bowl Summer Concert
- DRA RE: PA-28 Inventory Taxable Property Form
- Notice of Intent to Cut – Map 228 Lot 3
- Raffle Permit – Swanzey PTO

PUBLIC INPUT

- Chief Eric Mattson introduced new fire fighters Lucas Herstek and Brianna Blodgett
- John Traynor lives on Railroad Street. His property is abutting the Christian Hill Bridge. Had concerns about the Christian Hill Bridge committee – wished to join but was not allowed. He has been trying to be involved with the disposition of the bridge for the past 10 years but has not been included. Had conversations with the former Town Administrator about the trees which were cut down and had been told they would be replaced. He said it wasn't public knowledge that the bridge was historic. Hutwelker explained how he can present his concerns to the board and welcomed him to do so. Rautiola gave him her card so he could connect with her.

APPOINTMENTS

- Chief Gonsalves: Oath of Office & Ceremony for Officer Shawn Collins & Tabitha DiRienzo
    - Town Clerk Heather Estrella administered the oath to the officers.
    - Chief Gonsalves spoke a few words about each officer.
    - Officer Jonathan Collins pinned Officer Shawn Collins; Chief Gonsalves pinned Officer Tabitha DiRenzo.
- DPW Director, Joe DiRusso: Updates on Water & Sewer and Covered Bridge Update
    - *Waste water plant* – new study moving along well. Considering future buildouts of the treatment plant. They are piloting a program with a new chemical to treat phosphorus. The solar array project for the wastewater treatment center is in progress and approved by DES; the ground mounts are in place. He will be having a meeting with DES. A meeting was held with City of Keene – they have an interest in pursuing grants to connect water and sewer for Swanzey. They need a 20-year plan to see probable development along Route 12 and Route 10. Will have another meeting in August. Ward asked about water pressure; DiRusso said we would have pump stations.
    - *Webber Hill* – substantial completion by next week. The strong grass that was planted to help with retention has been established well. No word from the State about a guard rail. Estimate that it would cost $18K to do a 100-foot section. He recommends keeping the road as one-way direction. Hutwelker said that was the intention for safety reasons.
    - *North Winchester Street* – drainage structures delivered – a bit behind schedule. Base coat and painting should be done by August then will start California Street. Have begun the Railroad Street sidewalk project with drainage improvements. Eaton Road just beyond Railroad Street has a new catch basin and improvements will be made to the road to raise the elevation.
    - *West Street* – they will be starting as soon as Railroad Street project is done.
    - *Fire Station* -will be starting soon. Awaiting the final design.
    - *2003 International 7400 Truck* –the original interested buyer has not followed up. Gordon Industries would give $7,000 credit on future rentals.
        - **Motion** was made by Labelle to sell the 2003 International 7400 truck to Gordon Industries for $7000 credit. There was a second by Tempesta. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***
    - *Thompson Bridge* was recently damaged. The police tracked down the Massachusetts contractor who took responsibility for the damage. No structural damage was found during the inspection. Grayson Smith will be providing a quote. Discussion about suspending a metal bar such as some towns in Vermont have put in place. The bridge inspector cautioned about the liability. More research is needed. Hutwelker asked about progress on cameras. Some have been installed on Cresson Bridge. The others have been on hold to see how this works.

NEW BUSINESS

Construction Management Contract & Letter of Intent for New Fire Station

Rautiola read the Letter of Intent. Signing the Letter of Intent would allow Gordon Services to proceed with limited activities related to the fire station project.

- **Motion** was made by Labelle to authorize the Town Administrator, Lori Rautiola, to sign the letter of intent to proceed with construction activities – prior to finalization of the Construction Management Contract with Gordon Services. There was a second by Tempesta. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Approval of funds from Recreation Facilities Capital Reserve Fund

- **Motion** was made by Labelle to authorize the withdrawal of $1713 from the Recreation Facilities Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of repairs made for the Richardson Park Water System. There was a second by Tempesta. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

OLD BUSINESS

Mission Statement for Grange Committee

Discussion regarding the status of the Grange building and the amount of money needed to renovate the building. Ward asked the perimeters to use the building. No bathroom facilities. Very limited use. Could we have a meeting to determine what the necessary repairs are needed to bring it to a condition to be able to be used by the public. Scalera suggested breaking the project into pieces and having fundraising for these projects. The Town has put money into the building to repair the roof. Ward feels the Town should not be putting more money in – grants can be applied for but no one on the current committee is qualified to create the grant. Rautiola will invite the committee to the August 6 meeting.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

- Hutwelker reported there is an RSA #HB373 where a municipality cannot lease to a third party for more than a year unless there is an agreement for a 5-year lease. This will affect Honey Bee Hollow. We could put it on the warrant to extend their lease to 5 years.
- Follow up on the request by the Wilson Pond Association for assistance from the board: Rautiola said she and Code Enforcement Officer Chris Levy went to the pond; she provided a photo of the sign which shows limitation under enforcement of the selectmen. Levy reached out to the NH Fish and Game office in Keene who said they would put them in touch with the Conservation officer. Rautiola said it is unclear whether there is a policy or ordinance that supports the sign and stipulates fines, etc. Rautiola will meet with the Police Chief to see what can and should be enforced.
- Scalera said a building permit was issued that he thought should have not been – it was for a replacement shed but it should have been for a new shed, but the inspection was of the wrong property. He asked for advice on how to handle this, but he doesn't want to get involved. Hutwelker suggested he go to the Town Planner.

CORRESPONDENCE

- none

PUBLIC INPUT

- none

NON-PUBLIC SESSIONS

Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A:3, II *(e)* Consideration or negotiation of pending claims or litigation threatened in writing or filed by or against the public body, or by or against any member because of his or her membership in such body.

Motion was made by LaBelle to enter nonpublic session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (e), seconded by Tempesta. All in favor by Roll Call and the ***motion passed*.** The Board entered non-public session at 7:11pm. Present were W. William Hutwelker III, James Tempesta and Mark LaBelle. Also present were 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 7:20pm.

Motion was made by LaBelle to seal the minutes because divulgence of the information likely would affect adversely the reputation of a person other than a member of this Board, seconded by Tempesta. All were in favor and the ***motion passed***.

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.*** The meeting adjourned at 7:20pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Ells, Recording Secretary

Approved on August 6, 2025