Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting – January 20, 2026
Whitcomb Hall
17 Main Street, Swanzey, NH

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair W. William Hutwelker III, at 5:02pm. 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

Heather Estrella, Bruce Tatro, Amanda Norcross, Mark Scalera, Scott Self, Jay Ward, Bill Nikiforakis,

MINUTES

The regular meeting minutes of January 13, 2026 were considered. A motion was made by LaBelle to approve the minutes as amended. Tempesta seconded the motion, and it passed 3-0.

The regular meeting minutes of January 14, 2026 were considered. Hutwelker recused himself. A motion was made by LaBelle to approve the minutes. Tempesta seconded the motion, and it passed 2-0.

The non-public session minutes of December 31, 2025, January 9, 2026, January 13, 2026 and January 14, 2026 #1 and 2. A motion was made by LaBelle to approve the minutes as presented (amended). Tempesta seconded the motion, and it passed 3-0.

CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Labelle to approve the Consent Agenda. Tempesta seconded the motion, and it passed 3-0.

A. Payroll Manifest
B. Accounts Payable Manifest
D. Special Events Permit-Rec Departments-Valentine's Dance
E. Special Events Permit-Rec Department-Fishing Derby
F. Tax Exemption- Veteran's-M/243 L/55
G. Tax Abatement-M/248 L/43

PUBLIC INPUT

None

NEW BUSINESS

A. Deliberative Session Preparation

Town Administrator Lori Rautiola thanked Bruce Tatro, Amanda Norcross and Heather Estrella for coming to review the deliberative session. The group discussed how the hall will be set up and what each person will be responsible for. There will be a screen on the stage for the articles to be displayed, and, if amended, they can be edited in real time. The rules of the meeting were reviewed.

B. Timber to Transit

Chair Hutwelker said there was $15 million available in grants from Timber to Transit; Stephon Mehu is working to get a grant to create a walkway from one side of Cresson Bridge to the other. He was told that the span is too wide for a freestanding bridge, so he is looking for other solutions.

Scott Self asked if there would be grants for the Christian Hill bridge; Hutwelker said that the project belongs to the State. There was a discussion among the group about whether there was a way to save the bridge and also use some of the timbers to repair the rail trail as was planned in order to get a TAP grant. Lori Rautiola will try to get clarity as to whether the Town has any ownership in the bridge and what the connection is with the TAP grant for repairs to the rail trail.

Public Hearings- 6:00 p.m.

A. Bond Rescission Public Hearing

Chair Hutwelker opened the public hearing for the Bond Rescission for Safford Drive development at 6pm. This article asks voters to rescind the remaining $900,000 balance of a $3.3 million dollar bond authorization approved in 1999 for infrastructure improvements in the Swanzey Revenue Development District. The original bond funded planning and construction of roads, water, sewer, and utility infrastructure. Rescinding the unused balance would formally close out the remaining bond authorization of $900,000.

There was discussion among the board and Mark Scalera, Scott Self and Jay Ward regarding whether to leave the funds for future infrastructure use for that area, or whether to return it to the general operating account for more flexibility.

When there were no more public comments, the Chair closed the public hearing at 6:09pm

The Chair opened the public hearing at 6:09pm

B. Swanzey Revenue Development Hearing

This article asks voters to approve an amendment to the Swanzey Revenue Development District Plan to formally dissolve the district once all outstanding debts and obligations are paid in full. The Board of Selectmen does not anticipate making any additional infrastructure improvements within that district and therefore recommends terminating the district. This means that any remaining funds (once the bond is paid off) may be distributed in accordance with state law and rolled into the Town's general fund, rather than remaining in the TIF fund to support future infrastructure needs. The article also authorizes the Board of Selectmen to take all necessary actions to complete the termination, including settling obligations and notifying the New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration.

There were no public comments.

Chair closed the public hearing at 6:10pm.

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

A motion was made by LaBelle to enter a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c) which was seconded by Tempesta. All were in favor by Roll Call and the motion passed**.** The Board entered the non-public session at 6:32pm. Present were W. William Hutwelker III, James Tempesta and Mark LaBelle. Also present were Town Administrator Lori Rautiola and Recording Secretary Susan Ells.

A motion was made by LaBelle to come out of the non-public session, seconded by Tempesta. All were in favor by Roll Call and the motion passed. The Non-public session ended at 6:54pm.

A 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; Tempesta seconded the motion, and it passed 3-0.

The group then discussed corresponding with the Keene Sentinel regarding the recent publicity resulting from the meeting on January 14, 2026.

Next, they discussed the $200,000 that will be a grant for the fire station.

Chair Hutwelker asked Rautiola to reach out to Katie Sutherland to find out where they are with the budget.

Rautiola reported the onboarding for the temporary hire for the Finance department will be on Wednesday. They discussed the duties the temp will be helping with.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by LaBelle to adjourn the meeting; Tempesta seconded the motion, and it passed 3-0.

Adjournment occurred at 7:16pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Ells, Recording Secretary

Approved on January 28, 2026