Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting – January 28, 2026
Whitcomb Hall
17 Main Street, Swanzey, NH

CALL TO ORDER
The meeting was called to order by Chair W. William Hutwelker III, at 5:30pm. 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
Kai Kraemer with FACT TV, Lee Johndrow, Jay Ward, Jacob Wade, and Finance Director Theresa Lounder

MINUTES
The regular meeting minutes of December 23, 2025, January 9, 2026, January 15, 2026 and January 20, 2026 were considered. LaBelle made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Tempesta seconded the motion. Hutwelker recused himself from the December 23, 2025 meeting minutes; the motion passed unanimously.

The non-public session minutes of December 23, 2025, January 15, 2026, January 20, 2026, and January 23, 2026 were considered. LaBelle made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Tempesta seconded the motion, and it passed 3-0.

CONSENT AGENDA
Labelle made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Tempesta seconded the motion, and it passed 3-0.
A. Payroll Manifest
B. Accounts Payable Manifest
C. Yield Tax Levy-M/228 L/6
D. Yield Tax Levy-M/204 L/14
E. Yield Tax Levy-M/218 L/73 & M/218 L88
F. Tax Credit-Solar Exemption-M/226 L/13
G. Tax Credit-Solar Exemption-M/240 L/39
H. Tax Abatement-M/210 L/12

PUBLIC INPUT
Jay Ward commented on the new speaker system that has been installed in time for the deliberative session.

APPOINTMENTS
A. Lee Johndrow - Keene Car Show (Cheshire Fairgrounds)
Lee Johndrow would like to hold a car show at Cheshire Fairgrounds on Sunday, May 17th from 9 - 3pm. There will be food vendors, other vendors, touch-a-truck, activities for children and some non-profits related to the automotive industry. He anticipates 200 to 500 cars will register. He has made the necessary arrangements with Swanzey Fire and Police; the admission will be $5/person (no charge for children) $20/car; some proceeds will go to non-profits.

LaBelle made a motion to approve the Special Events Permit for Lee Johndrow for the Keene Car Show at Cheshire Fair Grounds. Tempesta seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

A. **Consideration of Refund – Whitcomb Hall Rental**

Tempesta explained there had been miscommunication regarding a recent rental. The people who rented the hall showed up and found there was nothing set up and the snow removal was not done, so they had to do the work themselves. Tempesta recommended refunding the rental fee.

LaBelle made a motion to refund Terry Borden the full amount of $200 for the rental of Whitcomb Hall on January 17, 2026. Tempesta seconded the motion. With no further discussion the motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Deliberative Session Preparation

The group discussed the plans for the deliberative session.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

Rautiola informed the Board that there was an error on the list of open seats for the Trustee of the Trust Fund. There should only be one seat for a 3-year term, not the additional seat for a 1-year term as had been listed. She has contacted the town attorney for instructions on how to report this at the deliberative session.

Rautiola reported that the Town's projector does not work and she would like to order a new one; she asked the Board for approval to purchase a new one.

LaBelle made a motion to authorize the purchase of the projector using a withdrawal of $800 from the George Whitcomb Jr Common Trust Fund. Tempesta seconded the motion; the motion carried unanimously.

Hutwelker asked Rautiola to update the Pending Board Matters/Projects.

There was discussion regarding the two petition articles regarding the Christian Hill Bridge. It is undetermined whether the articles are binding; Rautiola has reached out to the Town attorney. It is unclear at this time how this might impact the rail trail repairs if the bridge repair gets halted and whether we would lose the funding.

Rautiola reported on the Fire Station construction budget which is on track.

The Board voted to unseal the non-public minutes of January 9, 2026.

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 6:28 pm. Present were W. William Hutwelker III, James Tempesta and Mark LaBelle. Also present were Town Administrator Lori Rautiola, Recording Secretary Susan Ells, and Finance Director Theresa Lounder.

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 7:37pm.

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.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Adjournment occurred at 7:37pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Ells, Recording Secretary

Approved on February 11, 2026