Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting – March 4, 2026
Whitcomb Hall
17 Main Street, Swanzey, NH

CALL TO ORDER
The meeting was called to order by Chair W. William Hutwelker III, at 5:37 pm. 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, Jay Ward, Mark Scalera, Alan Gross

MINUTES
The regular meeting minutes of February 25, 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 non-public session minutes of February 25, 2026 #1 and #2 were considered. A motion was made by LaBelle to approve the minutes as presented. Tempesta seconded the motion, and it passed 3-0.

CONSENT AGENDA
A. Payroll Manifest
B. Accounts Payable Manifest
C. Open Container Permit-Whitcomb Hall-5/2/26
D. Open Container Permit-Whitcomb Hall-7/1/26
E. Raffle Permit-Fast Friends-5/17/26
F. Release Tax Deferral Lien- M/243 L/55
G. Solar Tax Exemption- M/210 L/4
H. Solar Tax Exemption-M/255 L/31
I. Solar Tax Exemption-M/103 L/84
J. Veteran's Tax Exemption-M/239 L57
K. Veteran's Tax Exemption-M/235 L/55
L. Surviving Spouse Tax Exemption- M/246 L/11

A motion was made by Labelle to approve the Consent Agenda, adding an Intent to Cut to Map 243 Lot 55. Tempesta seconded the motion, and it passed 3-0.

CORRESPONDENCE
A. Letter from Swanzey Lake Protective Association
Lori Rautiola read a letter from Susan Armstrong who is the coordinator for the Lake Host Program at Swanzey Lake which is run by NH Lakes. The group conducts inspections to remove invasive species from boats before they enter the water. They are requesting an increase in financial assistance the Town provides from $3000 to $5000 to cover the ramp during peak usage. Chair Hutwelker suggested Lori take it under advisement until after the election to determine if we will be working with the default budget and gather more information. Lori will ask Ms. Armstrong to attend the March 18th meeting to explain more about the program to the Board.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

Chair Hutwelker suggested adding an item to an agenda in May to review the list of the Town's streetlights to see where more are needed or where some could be removed; generally, the Board reviews this annually.

The Board also discussed the request by the Energy Committee to sign a letter to support a proposed extension of net metering to municipalities. By consensus, the Board agreed to support SB 538 which would extend the net metering period from 2040 to 2060. Swanzey will join 20 other towns in this support.

Chair Hutwelker reported that he had a meeting with the Swanzey Preservation Society, and they asked for assistance with grant writing for the Grange Hall. He suggested they reach out to Lori and that Stephon handles the maintenance of the Town grants. Lori said they are always looking to find grant funding to help the Town. She went on to say she and Stephon have been working on the Congressional Direct Spending through Senator Shaheen's office for the proposed new DPW facility to include solar/battery. She mentioned Bob Audette from the Energy Commission was applying for solar/battery for the new Fire Station and his request was proposed to include an emergency shelter. The window to submit the application was short and the deadline is March 6th. Additionally, the Town is asking for funding through Shaheen's Office for the Grange Hall as well as the W Swanzey Sewer Project.

The Town reports are in and can be picked up at Town Hall. They will also be available at the Election and can be found on the Town's website. She announced the Open House for the Department of Public Works will be this Saturday (March 7th) from 9am to noon. Hutwelker also noted the Governance Committee's Session on the Warrant articles will be discussed from 10am - noon at Whitcomb Hall.

Chair Hutwelker reported that he received a letter from Economic Development Chair, Cathy Bergstrom, who expressed a desire for a better relationship with the Board and would like an understanding of the Committee's role. Chair Hutwelker mentioned that the Committee didn't get much traction in the past, but he is optimistic that this year will provide opportunities; he described several ways the Committee could participate more in the coming year. This will be added to a future agenda.

Public Hearing 6:00 P.M - Proposed Amendments to the BOS Rules of Procedure
The Chair opened the public hearing at 6:02 p.m. He explained due to the shift of a three-member Board to five members there were some changes needed to the Board's Rules of Procedure. The purpose of these is to codify the duties and operating procedures of the Swanzey Board of Selectmen, and to define the working relationship between the Select Board, Committees, Officials, and Residents.

1.1 – Change: adding the words 'and handbook'.

2.1 – Change: Pursuant to State Stature, the Board of Selectmen shall consist of five (5) members.

2.3 – Change: At the first meeting of the selectboard after the town meeting, the Board of Selectmen shall elect the following officers from its members: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary. A board member elected to any office may serve in that office for no more than a single one-year term in a three-year period. Members may not serve consecutive terms in one specific office.

5.1 – Change: A quorum of three (3) members shall be required to conduct business.

Article 9 – Change: Add the word 'General' to the beginning of the title.

9.2 – Change: "solicit any gifts of accept" to read "solicit any gifts or accept"

New: 9.6 Open Meeting Compliance: Hold transparent and accessible meetings with proper posting thereof, in compliance with the Right to Know law, RSA 91-A.

New: 9.7 Non-public Sessions: Uphold the intent of non-public sessions and "non-meeting" meetings and respect the privileged communication that exists therein.

New: Article 10 - Relations with other Board Members & Employees.
The sections in this proposed Article were discussed in detail.

Mark LaBelle moved to accept the Proposed Amendments to the BOS Rules of Procedure as amended effective 3/11/2026. Jim Tempesta seconded. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

Lori Rautiola reported that the Engineering Services for Swanzey Lake Dam was previously awarded by the Board to Fuss & O'Neil. Engineering work will begin in the Spring of 2026. A contract for the project is currently being drafted, and the engineer is expected to begin work soon. Lori requested the Board's consensus to sign the Authorization to Proceed. The Board concurred for her to sign the contract.

Chair Hutwelker noted changing a few items in the Agenda Packet: he mentioned updating the Fire Station to include "the new Fire Station is right on track." AND

"The NEPA work on the Christian Hill bridge was completed in December, but the study has not been received yet. It is going to be bid early next year."

Chair Hutwelker asked Lori to obtain an update on Brown Field; he feels an assessment is needed of what improvements are required.

PUBLIC INPUT

Jay Ward mentioned at the election on Tuesday that someone will be handing out the rules of electioneering; such as the candidates are required to stay in their designated area.

Alan Gross offered to serve on the 250th Committee once established. Discussion ensued with ideas for the celebration.

Jay Ward said he likes the ideas of events to attract town people together, such as games at ball fields.

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 7:24pm. 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 7:44pm.

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.

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.
A motion was made by LaBelle to enter a non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (e) which was seconded by Tempesta. All were in favor by Roll Call and the motion passed**.** The Board entered the non-public session at 7:45pm. 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 7:55pm.

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.

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 7:58pm. 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 8:09pm.

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 8:09pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Ells, Recording Secretary

Approved on March 18, 2026