Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire

Capital Improvement Program Committee (CIPC)

Meeting Minutes – October 9, 2025

Whitcomb Hall, 17 Main Street, Swanzey, NH

Note: Draft minutes are subject to review, correction, and approval by the Board. Review and approval of minutes generally take place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.

CALL TO ORDER

CIPC was called to order by Chair Steven Bittel at 11:00 am.

Members present: Chair Steven Bittel, Vice Chair Bruce Bohannon, Larry Crowder, Selectmen's Representative James Tempesta, Planning Board Representative Michael York and Pat Ambrosio.

Others present: Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard, Assistant Town Planner Stephon Mehu, Recycling Center Manager Josh Whipple, and Recreation Director Ashlee Crosby.

Absent: None

MINUTES

York **motioned** to accept the minutes from September 29, 2025. Second made by Crowder with no further discussion. All were in favor, **motion passed.**

CURRENT BUSINESS

Trustee Balances

Bittel said he is working on these as they apply to the workbook.

Police

Yukon versus Ford police cruisers – Bittel said he had a discussion with Police Chief Gonsalves. He said Gonsalves says he is spending $3,000-$4,000 a year on older Ford units in need of repairs and therefore prefers a Yukon. He listed numerous other Yukon advantages. Bittel noted the delta between purchase of a Yukon versus a Ford is a few thousand dollars. He said he can forward the emails from the Chief to the members of the committee for their review if they wish to analyze further.

Recycling Center

Bittel said he didn't see a problem with the numbers thus far, but he noted nothing in the budget for 2026. Whipple said all the numbers were entered improperly. They need to shift to the left, starting with 2026. Bittel asked if there was anything pending this year (2025). Whipple said one purchase came under budget. He added that the 2026 purchase of Skid steer should come in at $60,000 instead of $70,000. Waste Oil building has ~$6,000 grant money available and was deferred to 2026.

Bittel asked about revenues from recycling. Whipple said cardboard has dropped a bit. He estimated $55,000 for this year but said it should be more in the future. Bohannon asked about clean cardboard without any plastic attached and Whipple said that isn't a problem. Whipple quoted some numbers per ton for recyclables. He noted Troy and Marlborough sometimes bring in materials and the State gives them credit for those items.

Bittel asked about the new building. Whipple said it is working out well. Bohannon said Whipple is doing a good job and many others agreed. Whipple left the meeting at 11:16 pm.

Recreation - General

Bittel said the budget balances out other than Brown Field. Bittel suggested covering expenditures other than Brown Field for now and discussing Brown Field later in the meeting. All agreed. He informed Crosby that the Nettie Stone Common Fund is being turned into a Non-restricted Fund, so Crosby can spend some of that on Richardson Pavilion. That is about $8,500. Crosby said there are bee nests that need removing. Bittel said the money can be only used for the building. Crosby suggested moving $15,000 for remediation of retired restrooms to 2026 since that did not happen in 2025 as was anticipated. Hook up water did happen this year, and it came in at less than budgeted. Crosby continued saying item regarding reconstruction of the beach is about fixing continuing drainage issues. Crosby said $5,170 was spent this year on reconstruction of the beach. Mehu said the State Department of Environmental Services (DES) needs to comment on what can be done from the State's perspective. Retired restrooms line item is moving to 2026. Richardson Park deck and roof were discussed briefly; the roof remained at 2029.

Bittel asked about the recreation revolving fund. Crosby said it is about at break-even. She said sponsorships were covering some community events this year, so it cost the Town a bit less for those events. No revolving funds available for capital items.

Tempesta asked about the backstop at Lane Fields on South Road at Mill Lane since there is an issue with balls going into a neighbor's yard and driveway. Crosby said her understanding is that there is not a clear option for re-design. Bohannon asked who is using the backstop and Crosby said both Swamp Bats and younger children are all using the backstop. Crosby said it is an odd possibility for a ball to reach the neighbor given the position of the ballfield and the neighbors property. Crowder suggested a possible solution using netting. Crosby spoke about rope netting that could extend coverage, but it needs to be determined how much it would cost. Crosby said she would look into that including a post for mounting the netting. Crowder said he could do some measurements. Bohannon said he doesn't believe this is happening with town kids playing baseball. Tempesta said the Selectmen are looking into it since the neighbor has complained. $7,500 was suggested for this repair (netting to keep balls from going past the backstop). Crosby did some quick research while at the meeting and said her research shows that a 20' x50' netting costs $750 without shipping. But she noted installation will cost a lot more. $7,500 was added as a place holder for backstop netting in 2026.

Crowder asked about 2027 and 2028 having no numbers for the Recreation budget. Bittel said he moved out the requested Brown Field $1.5 million to a future beyond those dates. He said the amount requested needs further discussion.

Brown Field discussion

Crosby showed the design for a new Brown Field. Parking spaces were discussed. Crosby said there are 104, with delineation. Mehu spoke about grant money that could be obtained which covers 1/3 of the cost. He said total cost is $4.1 million paid for by grants and matching funds by the Town for the final 1/3 of the cost. Bittel said we want a phased-in approach, with specifics for $1.5 million first tranche already proposed and how to reach $4.1 million in general terms. There was a discussion about how the costs were calculated. Mehu said a landscape architect did the plan and provided the numbers, and he believes the number is high. Engineering costs were not included. Bittel asked when the funds would be needed from the Town; 2026 was the answer. $500,000 will be needed. Ambrosio asked about the probability of getting additional grants. Mehu pointed out the grant they are anticipating applying for is specifically for this sort of project.

Bittel asked about projections for use and stressed that we need to know who will be using the facility. Are we building for Swanzey use? Crosby said men and women's softball teams are using the field currently. Crosby added that many of those folks are Swanzey residents. Mehu spoke about additional housing in the area which has increased the number of people in need of recreational opportunities. Crowder suggested adding phase lines on the project design to clarify when each phase would be scheduled. Bohannon said that was a good idea. Bittel suggested the Department of Public Works (DPW) and Fire Truck bonds will compete for funds and therefore a smaller scope of the project might be better able to pass. He suggested the project be downsized. Mehu and Crosby said they could look at that.

Tempesta said $4.1 million is a little too high for the Town when so many other projects need taking care of. He said they should come up with more specific line-item costs, and he likes the idea of a phased-in approach. Bittel said Brown Field is a good asset and deserves some treatment, but we have to be realistic. Crowder pointed out future status of the Cutler School unknown at this point, and it is adjacent to Brown Field. It was also noted that the new fire station did not pass until the scope of the project was scaled down. Bittel suggested Mehu and Crosby work toward three things that are really needed. He said landscaping can come later or be donated as first pointed out by Ambrosio.

The high demand for tennis/pickleball courts was noted.

Mehu said the first item should be the softball field because that creates the additional space. Crosby said the light wiring will go beneath the field and therefore it needs to be done to support future electrical needs for the field. Bittel asked about the need for lights. Crosby said the field needs lights. Mehu suggested solar panels to save on electricity. Mehu said the area of

the project at State Route 10 is becoming a Swanzey commercial center. Bittel said water and sewer are needed there before more growth can occur. Bittel also noted the Town has devoted more funding to West Swanzey than any other part of town.

The committee left it at they need more detailed, time-oriented information on a smaller scale.

Ambrosio said the Town could benefit from food trucks for all of the town. Crosby said she tried that and was not successful. Ambrosio said he is referring to truck use anywhere in Swanzey, not just at Brown Field.

All agreed that more defined practical proposals were needed.

Next: Thursday at 11 am at Fire Station meeting room.
Grange, Carpenter Home, Whitcomb Hall, and IMS Town Hall.

ADJOURNMENT
Bohannon motioned to adjourn, and Crowder seconded the motion without further discussion. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary

DRAFT